

Preface and acknowledgements

This book set on European Family Law was a massive undertaking, with 35 chapters by 37 contributors and was fraught with many practical difficulties, including joyful family events and also differing interpretations of the term ‘final deadline’. Therefore it took much longer than expected, and I am very, very grateful to the publisher (and especially the Commissioning Editor John-Paul McDonald and Deputy Managing Editor Jane Bayliss as well as Sally Philip and Gillian Pickering) and the contributors for their patience and understanding. This applies especially to those colleagues who contributed the national reports in Volume II of the series and who therefore not only had to put up with my rigid ideas regarding the basic structure of horizontal, vertical and individual family law and the equally rigid ideas about the contents of these reports, but in many cases also had to update their chapters (even several times) when the finalisation of the book took longer than expected.

I would like to thank the Newton Trust for the support in the form of a Small Research Grant, which enabled me to get some editorial assistance. This was undertaken by Charlotte Leslie, and I am very grateful for her support as well, and also to Rosie Šnajdr and Elizabeth Aitken who helped securing the grant in the first place and with administering it.

Many people have contributed to this book in its various stages, particularly in the beginning when discussing its structure with me, which jurisdictions and topics to pick and which colleagues to approach to write them; and towards the end, with additional editorial assistance and when discussing my contributions and especially Volume IV with me. So I would like to thank (in no particular order) Anne Röthel, Claire Nielsen, Joanna Miles, Albertina Albors-Llorens, Claire Fenton-Glynn, Ruth Lamont, Brian Sloan, Walter Pintens, Joshua Baker and Peter Dunne – this book set would not be the same without you and your support, and perhaps it would not exist at all.

Finally, I would like to thank my nuclear (!) family: First, my two daughters, Helma and Lilo, who were both born during the period in which this book set was written and thus did not really contribute to the book set apart from being most delightful distractions, but undoubtedly saw a little less of me than they could have because of it – please do not hold this against me when you are old enough to do so, and no, it

certainly does not entitle you to a pony. And second, my wonderful wife, Ann-Christin, who very often had bear the brunt of my frustration with the lack of progress and of course with my foul moods when my own writing did not come together as I had hoped – you could have a pony if you really wanted one (although I would of course try to talk you out of it), but I am very grateful that you do not. Thank you so much for everything.

Jens M. Scherpe, St. Nicholas' Day 2015.