

BOOK REVIEW

Elena Lazăr, Nicolae Dragoș Costescu, **Dreptul european al internetului** (translated *European Internet Law*),
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The development of the Internet and all communication technologies have certainly changed many areas of our life, especially the way we transmit messages, ideas, opinions, and access services or goods. Although the influence of the Internet is generally seen as a positive one, the negative impact represented by the abusive or excessive use of the permissive framework and the lack of complete regulations by States or international bodies are subject of study in identifying appropriate solutions to address these risks.

In this context, the authors Elena Lazăr and Nicolae Dragoș Costescu have created, through the book *Dreptul european al internetului* (translated *European Internet Law*), an extremely useful tool that will prove to be indispensable in understanding some essential technical terms in this area and their legal implications. Overall, publishing this book satisfies a necessity for the national academic legal environment. It is an original and well-structured work that fully meets the challenge of identifying possible answers to extremely important questions on cybersecurity, limits on freedom of expression in the online environment, principles applicable to liability of media platforms for user-generated content, electronic signatures, E-Commerce, issues related to establishing jurisdiction within the digital environment, *cybercrime*, *cyber operations*, artificial intelligence.

In establishing the content of the book *Dreptul european al internetului*, the authors carried out very rigorous research of the said topics, considering the relation between the existing regulations at the international and European levels. In addressing the impact of the Internet and technology in our life, the scientific legal approach is characterized by interdisciplinarity and originality in tackling the interaction between the offline and online environment, public law and private law, including the sensitive issue of balancing the rights and obligations of all actors participating in various forms in the new environment.

The main idea that emerges from the entire work is that of integrating the Internet into aspects of daily life. The authors depart from the premise that the

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Internet is part of our daily reality, regardless of our profession, education, and quality in which we operate (consumers, authors, holders of fundamental rights). Another interesting idea that the book follows is that there is an uncertainty on the concrete and real boundaries between the offline and online environment that changes entirely the reality in which different actors and stakeholders interact. At the same time, the extension and confusion of the environment has determined the extension of the sphere of coexistence of the rights and obligations of all these legal subjects.

The authors tend to affirm that the solution in identifying the limits for the allowed actions and, therefore, the balance between rights and obligations in this new environment is influenced by the principle of legality under which the content and the structure of the work were set.

A central question in the book and, in fact, the biggest challenge, is how the rights of all stakeholders can be protected in the context of the development of the Internet and communication technologies that determined a confusion between the online and offline environments. The authors refer to the current regulations of the information society in finding answers to questions such as: the implications of using the electronic signature; what are the defining elements of the European Union regulations on E-commerce and specific problems that may arise, considering the operation of Uber, Star Taxi and Airbnb; who are the online intermediaries and what is the specific legal regime applicable to them, including the types of liability regulated within the European Union; what are the limits of sanctions such as filtering and blocking the online content; what are the special rules of the European Union for establishing jurisdiction in the online environment; how conflicts of law are resolved online; what is specific about the regulation of cyber operations and cyber security within the European Union and who are the actors involved in ensuring it; what is the scope of cybersecurity: whether it only concerns the protection of virtual assets within cyberspace or it concerns physical assets, such as industrial control systems or production lines as well; how cyberattacks can be defined; what are the limits of the regulation of cybercrime by the Budapest Convention, the only legally binding international instrument on the Internet and the digital environment; how artificial intelligence is defined by the European Union, what are the challenges and implications of its development, especially with regard to profiling and respect for the protection of personal data; to what extent can the principles set out in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights on freedom of expression in the online environment be applied for the online communication; under what conditions can online media platforms be held liable for user-generated content and hyperlinks; the relationship between freedom of expression and copyright protection in the virtual space; how sarcastic, aggressive, hostile messages and *hate speech* can be distinguished from admissible manifestations of freedom of expression.

The authors certainly manage to address the relevant questions in such a wide and complex range of topics, to highlight the current issues and to substantiate both theoretical and practical answers, with reference to the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union or the European Court of Human Rights. The book includes definitions of technical terms used to refer to various notions specific to the virtual environment, such as *malware*, *ransomware*, *spyware*, *cybercrime*, *cyberterrorism*, *cyberwarfare*, and *safe harbour*; they are used in connection with real events, which helps to clarify the legal implications of digital activities for both online and offline environment. The authors also present details on the use of viruses and actual operations such as *Operation Aurora*, *Operation Buccaneer*, *Love Bug*, *Goxi Virus*, *Stuxnet*, *Shamoon*.

The variety of situations analysed and their impact on the legal evolution are elements that will certainly make the book a landmark of the scholarly works on this topic. By meeting all academic requirements regarding the quality of research, *Dreptul european al internetului* is not only a course for students but a very useful tool for all legal professionals facing questions or situations involving the use of the Internet and interaction in the virtual space.