Foreword

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Accepted: 8 March 2021 / Published online: 18 March 2021

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Law and economics is a discipline naturally creating bridges between places and cultures. We strongly believe that in particular there is a special legacy linking Europe and US. Law and economics is an American shoot born from a European seed and this is probably one of the feature making it so powerful. It embraces centuries of debate that moved from one continent to another.

In this dialectical process of course, US are the gravity centre of the scholarly debate and the newly born discipline made the travel the other way round, spreading it all around the world and especially in Europe, where it attracted an increasing number of scholars and practitioners. The latter created associations, that became very important in the development of the field. The European Association of Law and Economics was one of the firsts, if not the first, in Europe. Recently, national associations were created and are growing in size and in importance. This includes the Asociación Española de Derecho y Economía (AEDE), the Association Française de Droit et Economics (AFED), the German Law and Economics Association (GLEA), and the Società Italiana di Diritto ed Economia (SIDE).

These smaller communities, we believe, have grown enough for contributing to the academic debate and providing new insights coming from different legal systems. This is why we have decided as a journal to offer a yearly window on the ongoing debate in the old continent. These associations are also at an arm length of local scholars and they organize in general a yearly conference where many of the new contributions are presented and discussed. They are in a good position for detecting interesting themes and contributions. Therefore, we have asked them to select some of the best papers that were presented during their annual conference. These are the articles that are gathered in this special issue—the first of what, we hope, will be a long series of special issues devoted to these European Associations of Law and Economics.

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We heartily thank the presidents and board members of these associations for their help. Without their input, without their enthusiasm, without their cooperation, this would not have been possible.

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