

# Optional Common European Sales Law, Private International Law and Uniform Sales Law (article)

Maud Piers (Professor at the Civil Law department, Ghent University), and Cedric Vanleenhove (Assistant and Ph.D Researcher at the Private International Law department, Ghent University), have published *Another Step Towards Harmonization in EU Contract Law: the Common European Sales Law* on SSRN. The article has also been published in *Contratto e Impresa / Europa* (Italy) 2012/1, 427-453 and the *Revista Trimestral de Direito Civil* (Brazil) 2012, 191-218. The abstract reads as follows:

A Common European Contract Law has been in the pipeline for some time now and recently, another step in that direction was taken. On 11 October 2011, the European Commission issued a proposal for a Regulation that would establish such a European instrument. This Regulation aims to remedy a series of legal impediments that sellers and buyers face in their cross-border trade. With the 'Optional Common European Sales Law', the European Commission opts for a secondary regime that the Member States should adopt as part of their national law. This Common European Sales Law will not replace the existing national sales laws, but will exist autonomously, together with and next to the 27 national contract law systems already in place. This is the solution the Commission selected from the seven options listed in its Green Paper of 2010. In the 'Explanatory Memorandum' to the Proposal for a Regulation, the Commission explains that this was considered the most optimal route to achieve the intended objectives while still respecting the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

The goal of this article is three-fold. First, to inform the reader of the Proposal for a Regulation on a Common European Sales Law and introduce its objective and applicability. Second, to examine whether the Optional Common European Sales Law, and the regime that the Proposal for a Regulation introduces, would create a legal environment that stimulates the intra-

Community, cross-border trade in the most adequate manner. Third, to assess the position of the Optional Common European Sales Law vis-à-vis the existing framework of private international law and uniform sales law.

This article consists of six parts. Under Title 1, the authors provide a brief introduction on the background and operation of the Common European Sales Law.

The authors then scrutinize this instrument more critically by raising a number of questions. A first question relates to the scope of this instrument (Title 2). A second question deals with the way in which parties may or should express their choice for the application of the Common European Sales Law (Title 3). A third question they briefly touch upon concerns the way in which the uniform application of the instrument will be safeguarded (Title 4).

The authors also examine how this new and unique instrument may coexist with the already established framework of private international law and uniform sales law. Under Title 5, they will more specifically reflect upon the position of the Common European Sales Law in relation to the regime of the Rome I Regulation. Under Title 6, they also look at how the proposed instrument corresponds with the rules of the CISG.

The authors conclude with a number of observations and recommendations with which they hope and intend to facilitate the drafting proceedings of the European legislators.

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