

Just released: Lenka Válková on 'Choice-of-Court Agreements under the EU Regulations in Family and Succession Matters'

A comprehensive and detailed volume by Dr. Lenka Válková was just released providing a dedicated analysis of the private international law framework as it applies to jurisdiction agreements in the framework of the EU Regulations in family and succession matters.

The blurb reads:

Party autonomy has been traditionally considered as one of the leading principles used in cross-border trade law. In fact, choice-of-court agreements have been embedded into the majority of EU Regulations governing civil and commercial matters. On the other hand, mandatory approach to family and succession law slowed down the progress of recognition of party autonomy in these fields. Only in recent years, the trend towards acknowledging choice-of-court agreements has spread into almost all areas of international family and succession law. This publication follows this development: firstly, it analyses the reasons and concerns of the recognition of choice-of-court agreements in civil and commercial matters, whereby it is questioned whether the considerations established in relation to commercial contracts may apply also for personal relationships. Consequently, different treatment of choice-of-court agreements family and succession law, where the freedom to choose the competent court is far from being unlimited, is examined. Accordingly, the attention must be paid to functions of choice-of-court agreements in family law. The second chapter subsequently investigates the position of parties in personal law relations and their protection. In particular, partial and full exclusion of party autonomy, formal and substantive validity, time limits, substantive review and public policy and overriding mandatory rules are considered as tools for protection of vulnerable parties in family and succession law relations when entering into choice-of-court agreements. Finally, last chapter provides for in-depth

analysis of rules on choice-of-court agreements under different EU Regulations (the Brussels IIa and Brussels IIter Regulations, Maintenance Regulation, Regulations on Property Regimes and Succession Regulation), where the strengths and gaps of the rules are highlighted. This analysis includes also an attempt to clarify the problem of derogation from jurisdiction in favour of Third States in presence of choice-of-court agreements. Lastly, effectiveness of the rule on *lis pendens* is stress-tested.

Overall, in her manuscript Dr. Válková successfully combines complex theoretical analysis with concrete propositions in a multifaceted and developing area of the law. Notably, Dr. Válková exemplifies the contribution of party autonomy in private international law in addressing the challenges arising in the context of family relations in the cross-border context: in doing so, she illustrates the complex status quo of party autonomy in this area of the law, its limitations, and how policies may be promoted via private international law. As such, her book is a highly recommended source for academics, notaries, and legal practitioners.

Lenka VÁLKOVÁ, *Choice-of-Court Agreements under the EU Regulations in Family and Succession Matters* (Wolters Kluwer / CEDAM, 2022), 548 pp., available for purchase [here](#).

This volume is a welcome addition to Wolter Kluwer / CEDAM's already thriving 'Studi e pubblicazioni della Rivista di diritto internazionale privato e processuale' series.