Preface

This handbook is the outcome of the research project 'Rethinking News and Media Law in Europe', carried out at the Institute for Information Law (IViR), University of Amsterdam. As the media landscape has undergone significant structural transformations in the past decades, this research project sought to address complex challenges for media policy by bringing together leading academics specialising in human rights law, media regulation and governance, copyright law, competition law and economics.

Today's information order and the conditions of the media have generated much regulatory attention at various levels in Europe. In rapid succession, a number of legal and policy initiatives have been put forward to recognise digital media formats, combat mis- and disinformation, address the gatekeeper function of digital platforms, protect media actors from political and commercial pressures and ensure revenue streams to publishers and the media more broadly. These interventions, however, cannot alleviate the broader transformation of the information sphere that plagues the public discourse and media's economic resilience. All the while, the spectre of politicised media and media governance institutions continues to loom large in certain national media systems in Europe.

Connecting the dots between the different regulatory instruments forming the complex patchwork of laws and policies that currently govern European media, the 'Rethinking News and Media Law' project aimed at drawing the contours of an integrated approach to European media law that would ensure an enabling environment for media freedom and pluralism, including appropriate remuneration mechanisms for quality journalism.

The research project sought to rethink the legal patchwork that makes up European media law and its policy rationales, assumptions and interventions. Evolving from this research approach, the chapters in this handbook trace the shifting spheres of influence in European media law and policy where European countries, European human rights standards and European Union measures are enmeshed. The handbook integrates the various strands of media law and policy that are commonly discussed in legal silos, in order to overcome the legacy of media

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regulation. In line with this overarching objective, the chapters engage in a critical and forward-looking way with European multi-level governance of the media. Seeking to support a free and pluralistic media environment, the authors reflect on proposals for improving legal responses and the conditions for the media. These chapters provide a compass for a principle-based, integrated approach to European media law, offering new avenues for policymakers, academics and practitioners to explore for a resilient media policy.

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