

# Modernising and Harmonising Consumer Contract Law



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edited by

**Geraint Howells**

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## Foreword

In October 2008 the European Commission published the Proposal for a Consumer Rights Directive; a Proposal that suggests far-reaching changes to the core of consumer contract law. Four current directives shall be replaced by a new, overarching piece of legislation and in doing so full harmonisation should for the most part take the place of the minimum standard presently in force in the European Union. In January 2009, legal experts from universities, practice and the civil service met in Manchester to address the question of the extent to which this Proposal can contribute to the modernisation and harmonisation of European consumer contract law. This event was organised under the auspices of the Consumer Law Academic Network (CLAN) jointly by the Manchester University Law School and Münster's Centre for European Private Law and benefited from support from the UK Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), Domestic and General and the Acquis Group. The papers presented at this conference analysed, criticised and suggested improvements for the Proposal and are published in this volume.

The editors would like to thank the contributors and the publisher for their efforts in making the publication possible in such an exceptionally short period. The results from this conference are thereby timely for the further discussions on a Consumer Rights Directive.

Further thanks are due to Eric Sitbon, legislative officer at DG SANCO, and Graham Branton of BERR for their important contributions and valued participation at the conference.

The editors would like to particularly thank David Kraft and Jonathon Watson for their conscientiousness and commendable dedication to the organisation of the conference and co-ordination of this publication, as well as Joana Tolle for her assistance.

Manchester/Münster, January 2009

*Geraint Howells and  
Reiner Schulze*



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