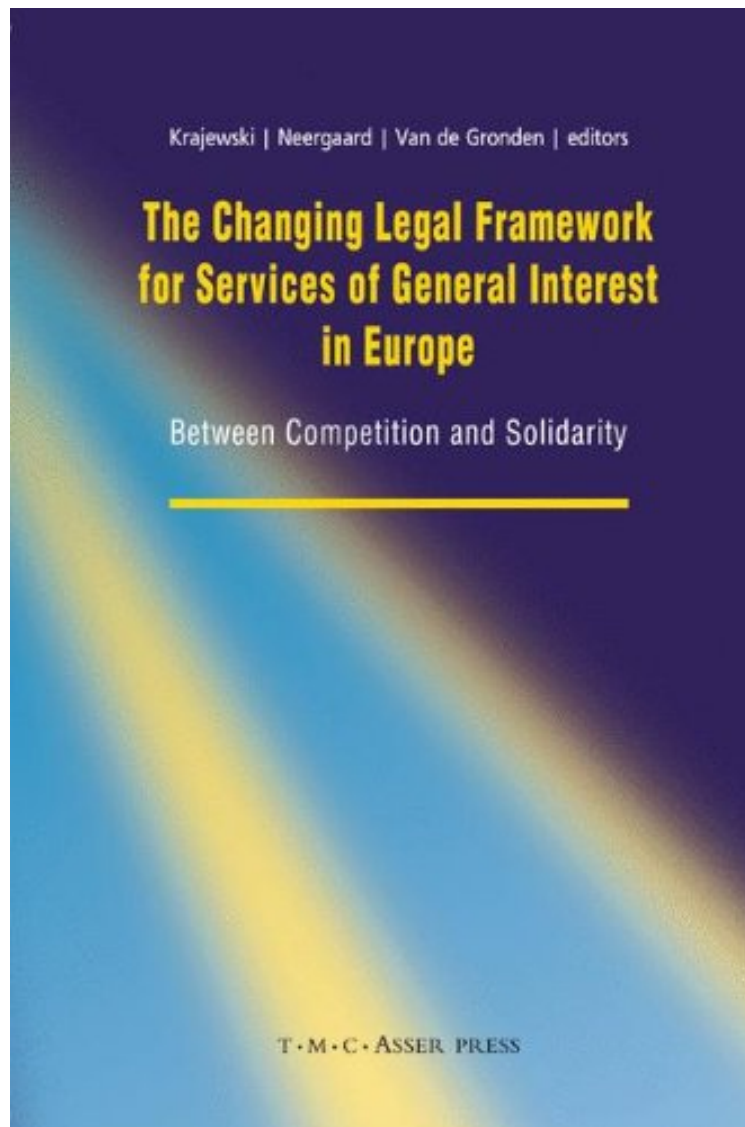


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INTRODUCTION Markus Krajewski, Ulla Neergaard, Johan van de Gronden I. The changing framework of public services in Europe In recent years, the body of European law affecting public services services of general economic interest as they are called in the EC Treaty has been subject to a significant transformation. Until the mid-1990s, services provided by public - thorities on the basis of monopolies or other forms of restrictions of market access were regarded as derogations from the disciplines of the internal market and c- petition law. The underlying assumption was that the open and competitive market order established by the EC Treaty was also an appropriate framework for the p- vision of services of general economic interest. The early liberalisation of telec- munication and postal services were also driven by the assumption that more competition will lead to better and cheaper services for the consumers. However, soon the European institutions, in particular the European Commission noticed that high quality public services were not only important to consumers, but that these services also formed a significant element of the European social model which could at times be in conflict with the strict application of the logics of free markets and unrestricted competition. Hence, greater emphasis was placed on the specific requirements of services of general economic interest as core values of the Member States and the Community.

About the AuthorMarkus Krajewski is Assistant Professor at the University of Potsdam, Germany, where he teaches European, international and German public law.Ulla Neergaard is Professor of Competition Law at the Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, with special focus on public distortions of competition.Johan van de Gronden is Professor of European Law at the Radboud University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands, where he teaches European and competition law.