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For a reasoned study of jurimetrics

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FOR A REASONED STUDY OF JURIMETRICS

The application of mathematical and statistical methods to social phenomena is essential in the study of many human sciences. In France and in many countries of continental Europe, the application of these methods to the legal field has long remained confidential, as they did not correspond to the usual practices of legal scholarship, which was often trapped in dogmatic positivism. The use of mathematical and statistical methods in relation to legal phenomena came either from authors from other academic disciplines (sociologists, economists, etc.), or from members of institutions and research centres peripheral to the French legal scholarship (the CNRS in particular), from the judicial institution, within the framework of the evaluation of public policies (in particular, statistics and various judicial indicators). The evolution of technologies and the easier access to certain legal materials that were previously little disseminated (for example, court decisions of first instance and appeal) as well as the developments of economic actors (legal tech) proposing commercial uses of such methods have led to a new interest in the legal community for knowledge derived from the statistical and mathematical analysis of legal phenomena. However, the conditions of production of this new knowledge, whether it is purely descriptive or also anticipatory, must raise questions for researchers.

Thus, the ambition of *Jurimetrics, Journal of the measurement of legal phenomena* (in French *Jurimétrie, Revue de la mesure des phénomènes juridiques*) is to gather scientific contributions related to jurimetrics, whether they expose or criticize its methods, propose its results or develop a reflection on it. If its vocation is to gather studies on legal phenomena, this journal will welcome in its columns contributors regardless of their disciplinary affiliation.

Jurimetrics (or jurimetry, n. from *jus, juris*, law, and *metrum*, measurement) is defined as the set of methods in the study of law which use mathematics to process statistical data relating to legal phenomena in order to improve their analysis or to identify laws or constant relationships. The applications of these methods can vary vastly, in terms of the field of application (branch of law or litigation studied), the “process” involved (legistics, legal or administrative practice outside litigation, pre-litigation phase, litigation, enforcement of decisions) or the material considered (court decisions, contracts, transactions, justice management software). Jurimetrics thus refers to all research and activities aimed at quantifying or describing legal phenomena (such as court activity, content of court decisions, transactions, contractual activity and content of contracts, production of standards from a quantitative point of view) using mathematical tools (counting, statistics, mathematical or logical modelling, etc.).

We hope that this journal inspires researchers to develop new methods for understanding legal phenomena and that it will also demystify the application of mathematical and statistical methods to our scholarship.

Vincent Rivollier and Christophe Quézel-Ambrunaz,
Chambéry, September 2022