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## **Fundamental Character and Indeterminacy as Characteristics of Legal Principles In the Discourse of Croatian Legal Science**

The topic of legal principles remains a well-discussed one in legal theory, as it was when it emerged from the discussion about the nature of legal norms and sources of law in the second half of the previous century. The well-known distinction between legal rules and legal principles put forward and elaborated by Ronald Dworkin and Robert Alexy, among others, initiated discussion and the topic remains in the focus of contemporary authors. Continuing in the framework of the broader research on legal principles I plan to conduct, this paper builds upon the analysis of how legal principles are understood in the discourse of Croatian legal science. Approaching the issue from the analytical point of view, using the method of logico-linguistic analysis of the discourse, some fundamental parts of Croatian legal doctrine are analyzed: civil and criminal law (both substantive and procedural), constitutional law and administrative law, among others. The purpose of this inquiry is to identify the conditions under which a norm is considered a principle, and then to compare it with the contemporary views of legal principles in Croatian legal theory, determining the degree in which Croatian legal theory is based on the discourse of Croatian legal doctrine and the degree in which Croatian legal doctrine uses the analytical tools developed by Croatian legal theory. The positions in Croatian legal doctrine and legal theory regarding legal principles leave open questions: from ambiguous and vague differentiation between legal values, legal principles and legal norms to vague classifications of legal principles. The insights derived from the research regarding Croatian legal doctrine, however, show the importance of the distinction between explicit and implicit legal principles, the importance of the addressees of the principles and especially the fundamental character and indeterminacy as the characteristics of legal principles. The fundamental character of legal principles is recognized in the discourse of Croatian legal science, but the indeterminacy has not been given detailed attention. The paper discusses open questions arising from the relationship between legal doctrine and legal theory in these aspects.