

Introductory words

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this special issue of the *Croatian Annual of Criminal Sciences and Practice* (*Hrvatski ljetopis za kaznene znanosti i praksu*, hereinafter: *Ljetopis*) devoted to the international conference “Integration of the European Public Prosecutor’s Office in National Criminal Justice Systems: Institutional, Procedural and Cooperative Challenges” which the Croatian Association of Criminal Sciences and Practice organised on 11-12 April 2019 in Zagreb. The conference dealt with issues concerning the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor’s Office and its integration in national systems. The presentations were delivered in English and Croatian with simultaneous interpretation, and the occasion attracted over two hundred participants. Besides national experts, the conference also brought together a large number of specialists from European institutions (the European Commission, OLAF, EUROJUST, EUROPOL, the European Parliament), foreign competent authorities, such as ministries of justice, European legal practitioners, and eminent professors specialising in European criminal law. The conference was part of a project under the same name funded by the EU HERCULE III Programme, which also included two other activities: a meeting of the Presidents of the Associations for European Criminal Law and the Protection of Financial Interests of the EU, which was held on 10 April 2019 in Zagreb, and the Conference Proceedings. The conference was co-financed by the Croatian Science Foundation through Project 8282 “Croatian Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters in the EU and the Region: Heritage of the Past and Challenges of the Future” (CoCoCrim), the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb, and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia.

The contributions from the conference are divided into five parts. To begin, there are the welcome addresses and these are followed by four topics, which mirror the conference sessions: I Europeanisation of criminal prosecution: institutional challenges at national and EU level; II Integration of the EPPO in national criminal justice systems: procedural challenges; III External relations of the EPPO: cooperation challenges with States and EU agencies; and IV Integration of the EPPO in the Croatian criminal justice system: institutional and procedural challenges. In this section, you can find fifteen papers and seven meeting abstracts that consider the various institutional, procedural, and cooperation challenges brought about by the establishment of the EPPO. Three papers previously published are translated here into Croatian in order to present them to the Croatian scientific and professional community. To the greatest extent possible, the order of papers adheres to the sessions, as well as to the order of

the presentations during the conference. In addition, in this publication you can find one contribution in the permanent section “Court Chronicle” and one in the section “Reviews”.

This issue has brought some novelties for *Ljetopis*; in its long history of almost 30 years, this is the first issue with a guest editor, which is indicated on the special cover page. This is also the first time that papers in English prevail, which is due to the above-mentioned European project of the publisher of the journal, the Croatian Association of Criminal Sciences and Practice. Even though *Ljetopis* strongly focuses on the development of national criminal-law theory and practice, this project has enabled the publication of papers in *Ljetopis* by eminent foreign authors. The published work in this issue will therefore help *Ljetopis* position itself as a scientifically relevant journal at the international level, which, in these times, has become increasingly important for a number of reasons. It will also provide an opportunity for Croatian authors to present their papers, some for the first time, to the international scientific community. The issue comes out with a delay of four months compared to what had been foreseen in the project, because, in the meantime, the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic which, due to the lack of a vaccine and treatment, led to the lockdown of economic activities, prevented mobility and introduced physical distancing for a period of time. As if this was not enough, on 22 March 2020 Zagreb was hit by a strong earthquake that caused substantial material damage and, sadly, took one human life. The building of the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb, which is the seat of the Association as well as of the publishing house, was seriously damaged and will require extensive renovation. Finally, with sadness, we inform you that in August 2020, at the age of eighty-four, Mihajlo Arsovski, the famous Croatian designer and the creator of the distinctive cover of *Ljetopis*, passed away. Despite all this, we hope that this issue of *Ljetopis* will send a positive message about overcoming challenges together. We also hope that you will find what interests you in this collection of papers on the EPPO, its cooperation with other authorities and its integration in national criminal justice systems, as well as in other contributions. The editor would like to thank all the authors and reviewers, translators and proofreaders, the publishing house, and the members of the project team, as well as all those who have supported the project and helped to bring it to fruition.

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Guest editor