

## **INTRODUCING THE SPORTS LAW, POLICY & DIPLOMACY JOURNAL**

The launch of a new academic journal is always an exciting occasion, but it is only the first step of a very long journey. In this case, the phrase that "it is not a sprint, it is a marathon" might not even be accurate, as it is rather an ultra-trail and very long term race. Nevertheless, the anticipation, emotion and excitement whilst waiting at the start line for the starting gun is the same, if not bigger.

The Sports Law, Policy & Diplomacy Journal is, above all, a journal from academics for academics. It is a bottom-up initiative carefully discussed over the years with many colleagues who felt that, despite the open mind of some traditional journals (to which we are incredibly thankful!) and the creation of some new outlets for publication, we still never felt completely at our academic home. The socio-scientific study of sport politics and regulation has been traditionally led by legal research and political science analysis. But the two disciplines, although talking to one another more than ever, still had their different journals. We have seen increased collaboration and excellent multi-disciplinary research published with an open mind, but there was no journal advocating for an active integration and multidisciplinary approach. We felt that, with the proactive development of sport policy regulation, and the recent raising of sport diplomacy, it was the right time and the right focus to start a new journey that can offer a new home for more established and upcoming scholars in this area.

And we also felt it is the right place. Rijeka University and its Law Faculty's Centre for Sports Law, Sports Policy and Sports Diplomacy has been at the forefront of academic production and debate ever before it was formally created. The Association for the Study of Sport and the European Union vindicated the legitimacy of the study of sport as a discipline of its own within EU studies, law, management and the wider socio-scientific study of Europe. It was only natural that these two organisations made the step forward to try and launch a new journal.

The launch of the Sports Law, Policy & Diplomacy Journal is also an attempt to get academic dissemination back from publishing houses. This is a gold-standard open access journal, from academics, for academics and the wider community. It might be a naïve idea, we know, but the journal's intention is to remain open access and not to charge neither publishing nor subscription fees. We believe in open access science and the need to empower academics to recover a fundamental part of the scientific process. For that reason, we will need the collaboration of authors to send their papers, and reviewers to ensure the quality of the journal. Because open access does not mean, by any stretch of the imagination, less scientific rigour. And it is only on a strong, demanding, and rigorous approach to accepting papers that we can build the journal up, even if that is a long process. We are aware this is a major undertaking, but we believe our scientific community shares much of this approach, and we now rely on you to support us to make this possible. Please have this new journal in mind for your upcoming publications. Also, send us your ideas for special issues or for a better development of the journal.

Our first issue features six original research articles, authored by a mixture of young upcoming academics and more established names. The articles focus on issues of sports law, sports policy, and sports diplomacy, but we must also add that some of them are also

interdisciplinary. We are proud to say that some of the articles came out of papers presented at the 16th Sport&EU Annual Conference, which was held in Lausanne, Switzerland in 2022. This is something we will also use for future issues of the SLPD Journal.

We are already working on the next issue and the plans for future development of the journal. Contact us if you are interested in joining the editorial board or our pool of reviewers. You can also contact us if you have ideas for future issues or conferences where you feel the journal can find suitable articles. We hope you find our first issue useful and the research is of enough quality to be included and cited in your own work. That would be an indication that we are on the right track.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who have enthusiastically supported the journal launch. First, we need to thank the members of our editorial board and the reviewers of the first issue. We would not be here without them. Second, we would like to thank the Association for the Study of Sport and the EU, and the University of Rijeka, specially their Law Faculty, for their support to the journal.

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*Editors-in-Chief*