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Editorial Note

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This is the closing issue of *LAPSS Politikon* for the 2018 calendar year. In the course of the last twelve months, the journal published four issues with 17 contributions altogether. Each of them addresses a noteworthy segment of social reality, contributing to our understanding and interpretation of the world around us. Each of them is a result of a detailed evaluation process. Each of them shows the dedication of the authors to revise and improve their initial manuscripts, taking into consideration the comments from the Editors, Reviewers and Editorial Assistants. This commitment is crucial for the success of the submissions, as not one of these 17 contributions were deemed publishable straight away, in the form they had been received; at least minor revisions were necessary for each of them to be accepted in the end.

The content of this collection varies thematically from political philosophy, through political communication and election studies to international relations and conflict studies—few conventional subfields of Political Science remain without representation. The same holds true for the methodologies and methods employed by the authors. This means that the journal has an added value to readers interested in a diverse selection of latest results of Political Science research and reflections. At the same time, the articles deserve attention within the specific research subfields they belong to. Some of this year's articles are particularly focused at providing new findings and perspectives to policymakers, such as international and European institutions or governments. Others call for further attention (including academic research) of understudied problems. The Editorial Board hopes that they will generate a cross-cutting conversation, and invites proposals for structured responses to individual articles published in *LAPSS Politikon* in the form of stand-alone research papers or research notes.

Next year our ambition is to uphold and further improve the publishing standards of the journal, which seem the more important in the current academic environment where poor scholarship can be published without material peer review, in exchange for high fees, in predatory journals. Furthermore, with growing concern we witness attacks on the academia alongside the more general backlash against expertise (Nichols, 2017). While this is nothing new 'under the sun', the attacks have reached unprecedented levels with the forcing out of the Central European University from Budapest, Hungary. Hungary is a member state of the European Union that took pride in upholding standards of openness and academic excellence. Hence the sheer fact that this could have happened may encourage further steps along similar lines by other non-democratic actors (for an academically

rigorous elaboration on these developments Bárd, 2018; Enyedi, 2018). Critical discussions in academic journals such as *LAPSS Politikon* as well as other platforms that stick to the standards of academic work play an important role in assessing current developments in a more in-depth fashion.

We proceed by introducing the four research articles in this issue, starting with Jessica Neafie. Her research puts forward a hypothesis that, contrary to conventional assumptions, foreign direct investment decreases access to clean water. She presents and statistically tests the validity of this hypothesis, as well as of several possible explanations of it. Her findings contribute to the broader debate about the ways how potable water access can be increased. The issue continues with Paola Imperatore's analysis, based on her paper presented at the IAPSS World Congress 2018 in Paris. She shows how the opposition movement towards locally unwanted land use (LULU) has emerged in Italy, and how it functions. Applying frame analysis to evaluate primary sources from a number of these oppositional movements, she discovers the pushback of infrastructure owners to these movements, and the subsequent ways of reacting to it. These ways indicate how a particular contentious issue may be generalized so that it speaks to general public concerns such as democracy, corruption, the application of public finances and social justice. The background of these discursive constructions point to the dialectic between the local and the global, exemplified in the IAPSS 2018 Annual Theme 'Diversity and Globalization' as well. Thirdly, Adil Nussipov presents the revised and abridged version of his graduate thesis which argues that there is an inverse U-shaped relationship between the 'international authority' of international organizations and the levels of access these IOs provide to transnational actors (such as international NGOs or multinational companies). His article explains how organizations with medium authority provide the most access through a perspective of rationalist self-interest: it is these organizations that can gain most by allowing the participation of transnational actors in their decision-making processes. In the final article of this year, also based on a presentation at the IAPSS World Congress 2018, Fiammetta Colombo explores the possible connections between several phenomena that are frequently associated with economic globalization (such as growing rates of inequality and unemployment rates), and the rise of nationalist political parties in the Western Balkans. While no causal relationship emerges, she shows how nationalism goes hand in hand with support of economic globalization in the majority of the nationalist parties of the region, and suggests avenues for further research based on this observation.

¹ Among the continuing sources of concern are the violations of academic freedom in Turkey (Özkirimli, 2017; Öztürk, 2018) and the case of dismissal of a tenured faculty member on the basis of fabricated criminal charges in Japan (Kim, 2018).

Each issue of *IAPSS Politikon* is a result of hundreds of hours of work of the authors, editors, reviewers and editorial assistants. As this is a non-profit publication available open access to all interested readers around the globe and considers high-quality evaluation (including peer review) process a core feature of its mission, this investment of time and effort is essential for its functioning. Thus, this year has witnessed the largest growth in the number of Editorial Assistants (currently ten positions) and reviewers (currently over 130) in the journal's history. The Editorial Board would like to thank each contributor for the time and expertise they invested in the management and publishing of the journal and looks forward to the continuation and development of this cooperation. Here, special thanks go to the senior scholars who are members of our Advisory Committee.

Although the Editor and Editorial Assistant positions might be limited, there is no limit to the number of authors submitting manuscripts for evaluation, and to reviewer applications. Hence, please accept our invitation to consider your first or next active contribution in one of these forms in 2019, or contact us with your suggestions.

Max Steuer

Editor-in-Chief

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