



Editorial: **A New Decade for *European Papers***

*Ramses A. Wessel**

This is the first issue of the 10th volume of *European Papers: A Journal on Law and Integration*. Established a decade ago, *European Papers* was founded with the aim of providing insights into the state of European integration. It is no coincidence that the journal's name may remind readers of the *Federalist Papers*, which articulated the legal and philosophical foundations behind the establishment of the United States of America.

In the editorial of the journal's inaugural issue, written by 'E.C.', the following statement was made:

'This is certainly not the most propitious time to publish a journal 'on Law and Integration'. [...] It is disintegration, not integration, that seems to be the dominant motive behind contemporary events in Europe; it is the panacea offered to soothe the fears raised by the multiple crises that hold the present state of Europe in a tight grip; it is the invisible thread binding together the anxieties underlying scholarly discussions about its future. It is not our task to determine the multifarious factors – social, political, or cultural – that have led to the current state of affairs. But the analysis of law as a possible disintegration factor clearly falls within our purview.'

This statement remains as relevant today as it was then. However, in recent weeks, we have witnessed a new wave of integration rather than disintegration. Additionally, the role of law as a potential integrating force has resurfaced on the agenda, driven less by internal crises and more by global shifts in events.

European Papers is truly a European project. It is not based in any single country or city but is transnational in its structure. Nonetheless, without the strong support

* Editor-in-Chief. This Editorial is also written on behalf of the entire Executive Editorial Board, which also consists of Dr. Justin Lindeboom and Prof. Dr. Nicola Napolitano (Deputy Editors-in-Chief). EP's Managing Editor is Dr. Marco Fiscaro.



of the dedicated teams at Sapienza University and UnitelmaSapienza University in Rome, the journal would not have achieved the status it holds today. Many younger (and a few more senior) colleagues have devoted weeks, months, and even years to reviewing and editing submissions, shaping *European Papers* into one of the leading journals on European law.

Celebrating ten years of existence is also a great opportunity to reflect on some impressive statistics. Between 19 April 2016 and 11 March 2025, our journal's website attracted a total of 7.470.000 visitors. During this period, 70.850 PDFs were downloaded, and 406.270 articles were viewed. We currently have 179.294 active users worldwide, with at least 50 active users in 100 different countries. Over the years, we have published 27 issues, featuring 820 contributions from 680 authors.

The founding of *European Papers* was driven by a sense of idealism. We believed that the academic community itself should control what it publishes, from inception to dissemination. Furthermore, we held the conviction that scholarship on European integration should be freely accessible to all. Thus, instead of relying on a commercial publisher, we built the journal through the dedication and hard work of academics, ensuring that three solid issues are published online each year.

In a way, *European Papers* has become a victim of its own success. Its global reach, ease of access without the need for an account, and capacity to publish more content per issue than most journals quickly made it a highly attractive platform for diverse analyses of European integration. The journal has also become a preferred outlet for *Special Sections* – dedicated thematic parts of issues. In many cases, these *Special Sections* have comprised entire issues, and it is not uncommon for an issue to contain more than one.

Although journal issues continue to form the backbone of our publication structure, individual articles are published online as soon as their final edited versions are available. As we enter a new decade, we do so with a slightly revised team and an updated layout.

Regarding the editorial team, most of our founding members remain, but we have also welcomed new Editorial Board members. The most significant change is that our 'founding father', Professor Enzo Cannizzaro, has decided to shift his focus to other endeavours. Enzo's dedication to the journal has been extraordinary. He has likely read most of what has been published in *European Papers*, spending countless hours reviewing and refining articles. Although he never wished to be seen as the Editor-in-Chief ('*European Papers* is a collective effort'), his leadership has been essential in shaping and advancing the journal. Fortunately, Enzo will continue to be involved as an *Honorary Editor*.

As for the journal's layout and author guidelines, we initially introduced a distinctive and visually appealing format, accompanied by detailed submission guidelines that set *European Papers* apart. Thanks to Nicola Napoletano's boundless creativity and commitment, the journal has maintained its strong aesthetic and editorial standards. However, we have also taken note of feedback from authors suggesting that our formatting requirements were overly complex. Moving forward, articles will align more closely with the conventions of other legal journals, and our submission guidelines will reflect the standard practices familiar to scholars in the field. We remain open to further suggestions for improvement.

The *Forum* was a key feature of our first decade, designed to facilitate the rapid publication of shorter *Highlights* and *Insights*. However, with this issue, we bid farewell to the *Forum*. Several online platforms now provide even faster publication options for short, topical contributions. Additionally, our rigorous review process often resulted in delays that undermined the original purpose of the *Forum*. Moreover, the ambiguous status of *Forum* contributions – neither full articles nor informal pieces – created uncertainty for authors regarding their academic recognition. Going forward, all contributions will be categorised as *Articles*, though there will still be variations in length.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the early-career colleagues who have now left the editorial support team. We hope they take pride in having contributed to this project over the years.

Finally, this issue also marks the last *Editorial*. One reason is that nearly all past editorials were written by Enzo Cannizzaro, whose high standards would be difficult to match. Additionally, alternative platforms now exist for timely analyses of current events in European law. However, *European Papers* remains committed to providing in-depth assessments that collectively capture the state of European integration. The present moment offers no shortage of reasons to continue this important work.

