

EDITORIAL

Farewell to the first Editor-in-Chief and some thoughts from the new Editors-in-Chief

*Min Reuchamps & Luana Russo**

Upon assuming the position of Editors-in-chief of *Politics of the Low Countries* (PLC) for the three upcoming years, it is inspiring to start this adventure in a moment in which PLC has successfully moved into a new, more international phase, with a growing reputation while still maintaining its well-crafted niche. We are grateful to our predecessor, Nicolas Bouteuca, and the outgoing Editorial Assistant, Lorenzo Terrière, as well as to the whole editorial board, both as BeNeLux political scientists and as new Editors-in-chief, for leading the transition of the journal to a fully English research outlet. This was not only important for the journal's visibility and accessibility worldwide, but also to reflect the growing international composition of political scientists in the three BeNeLux countries, as they are the backbone of PLC and constitute both its primary readership and its content producers.

With the help of a new Editorial Assistant, Rebecca Gebauer, we step into this position well aware of the history and the position of this journal in the field and we are ready and keen on having the opportunity to further consolidate its well-respected reputation and long tradition (sixty years of history under the name *Res Publica*) and its more recent international vocation. In its new form, PLC continues to provide scientific insights in Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg politics, from a wide variety of methodological perspectives and on a broad range of topics. In this sense, the journal kept and strengthened its identity as the official journal of the Flemish (VPW), Francophone (ABSP) and Luxembourg (LuxPol) political science associations, in cooperation with the Dutch Political Science Association (NKWP). The increasing number of submissions by authors from the Low Countries, but also from elsewhere, reaffirms the need for a scientific journal that explores the politics of this small, yet politically lively region of Europe and of the world.

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Thanks to the extraordinary work done during the last few years, PLC has reached a consolidated position that will allow us to undertake three constructive new challenges.

The *first challenge* consists in further increasing the number of submissions while maintaining high quality. We will direct our effort in trying to balance the number of contributions from the three countries in the region – which are mainly coming from Belgium now.

The *second challenge* consists in rebalancing the submitted topics. Currently, most of the submissions belong to the broad category of national or comparative politics in a multi-level perspective, followed by papers focusing on public administration, and, finally, few papers investigating international relations. Although comparative politics is likely to stay the most popular topic, we believe that it might be beneficial for the journal to make the other two subfields more prominent, as this will make interconnections more visible and broaden the scope of the journal without losing its focus.

The *third challenge* concerns pursuing increased visibility of the journal and its content. Visibility will be increased by undertaking two strategies: by making the journal more active on social media (e.g. Twitter and academic social media) and by being actively presenting at national and international conferences and events.

Finally, we commit to encourage, through the use of specific guidelines we will offer to reviewers, *kind and constructive as well as speedy feedback*. We firmly believe that for all authors, and especially for young authors, it is important to submit their work to a journal that cherishes their hard work and promotes a constructive and fair environment.

We conclude this brief editorial by extending an invitation to all the talented BeNeLux researchers, and beyond, to continue to support PLC by submitting their research, and playing an active role in the review process. We look forward to this adventure and working together with the editorial board and our publisher Eleven International Publishing.

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