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Mario Rusciano, Lorenzo Zoppoli
Diritti Lavori Mercati International (DLM.int)

The *Diritti Lavori Mercati* Journal has come of age by turning eighteen: a remarkable and very significant milestone for a subject that lives essentially in the world of ideas. It all depends on who promotes, encourages, and disseminates those ideas. This includes not only the Editors, but also the entire team, all of whom are incessantly dedicated to the Journal, and even more so the many authors who throughout the years have believed in the potential and success of the original initiative. Thanks to all these fundamental contributions, the Journal was able to reach the age of majority and the fullness of its purpose. This is demonstrated by both its quarterly publications – with its punctual quantitative (thanks also to the publisher’s tolerance for some excess) and qualitative rhythms, as well as the new series (since 2015) of the “Monographic Notebooks”, which runs at high speed. Not only are the “Notebooks” practically responsible for the doubling of the volumes, but above all, they act as a propellant for the scientific study of important issues, not always enabled by the normal periodical. With regards to Journal programming, they allow also for a greater presence of specialisations and skills (for example of judges or other professionals) that only occasionally have found adequate space in the original setting.

Strengthened by these results, the authors of the endeavour – starting with the Editors and the Publisher – could have lived peacefully, perhaps limiting themselves to the always indispensable commitment to refine the quality of the many stages of processing, required by a Journal that for ten years has been conferred class A in the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research System (ANVUR) rating. Perhaps a few decades ago all of this would have been enough. But nowadays the results achieved are not deemed satisfactory: a journal with the aforementioned characteristics cannot afford to

age in serene indolence. Scientific communities, in particular, cannot rest on their laurels, although well deserved. The cheap maxims are wasted in this regard and there is no need to even mention them; except one: publish or perish! A maxim which, if cruel for the individual researcher – in that it condemns him to sacrifice in-depth study to the dissemination of his elaborations – for a journal it represents so much as the condition of its very existence: either it publishes with contents and methods that allow it to be present and timely in the high-level global scientific debate, or it must resign to a merely apparent existence.

For this reason, rather than celebrating the coming of age and therefore the past, the Editors, the Publisher and Collaborators have decided to look towards the future and face it in the best possible way, despite the unknown and the unique difficulties experienced in the last two years due to the pandemic.

Although the success of scientific journals is essentially still entrusted to paper publication, at its best making use of digitalisation, it is impossible to ignore that their future depends on the appropriate use of the most modern electronic means. Ideas must be born and live in spaces as ample as possible without being confined to a single dimension. Therefore, the good old paper – also very much transformed in the processes that look at it as a vehicle of current research – must coexist with the infosphere which adds many materials and immaterial benefits (not least the commercial one, which is rightly the primary interest of the Publisher). It is undoubtedly important to always be able to count on readers – public and private – who guarantee continuity and conservation of printed publications. As a rule, when putting together a new article or preparing reports, lectures, interventions, all scholars and researchers relish leafing through the relatively recent years' issues of a journal. However, it is very useful to be able to read an interesting article while also having at one's disposition another channel that opens the mind and offers a unique standpoint from which to look at the subject matter of the study, all thanks to the association of ideas that seems to have germinated from the written pages. Indeed, the sadness of shelves suddenly emptied of the sequence of volumes and colours seems to open a mental void that cannot be filled by the virtual extension. The foregoing is obviously the thoughts and feelings of those born in the analogue era. But until there are publishers (like ours) who share them, it would be wrong to annul them and not pass them onto new generations of scholars and researchers.

Nonetheless, it would be equally wrong to disregard dramatic changes affecting both publishing and the world of research, even the legal sphere. Consequently, it is inconceivable not to use the infosphere to optimize the work of processing and disseminating ideas. The demand for research published in open access is growing accordingly, guaranteeing almost permanently the utmost use to students or those who need to have their research examined in-depth or cross-checked. This is a great challenge, very dangerous for the survival of the old “containers”, which a modern journal cannot fail to accept. In fact, thanks also to the Publisher’s initiative and foresight, *Diritti Lavori Mercati* has already begun to take up the challenge by offering in open access – albeit temporarily – the *Quaderni della Rivista* (which, however, remaining “out of subscription”, must earn their enduring existence in the “paper world”).

We must go even further, precisely in consideration of the developments and metamorphoses that affect legal research in general and, in particular, the labour law area. This “going beyond” is the very essence of the origin of the Journal’s new editorial line named *Diritti Lavori Mercati International* (abbreviated to DLM.int.). It will constitute a specific section of *Diritti Lavori Mercati*, characterized by contents (more extensive information on this point shortly), languages (primarily Spanish and English), and means of dissemination (everything and always in open access). In this section the Editors will retain their role and relative responsibility, and moreover will make use of two well-known scholars as Scientific Directors – Edoardo Ales and Massimiliano Delfino – who are younger, immersed in the new era, and therefore prepared for the new task. The Journal’s organization chart will inevitably be enriched by specialized editorial staff, including representatives from foreign legal systems and expert referees. Furthermore, the necessary adjustment of the general organization chart will entail Paola Saracini working alongside Massimiliano Delfino, both in the role of editor-in-chief.

The new section meets the necessity to offer authors and readers wider participation in the scientific debate on the regulation of work: wherever it takes place and whatever aspect it concerns. When it comes to times, languages and users, *DLM.int* proposes to assure such participation by virtue of its open and entirely digital design, namely by not restricting its use to subscribers of the printed journal or to buyers of individual issues/essays on the Publisher’s website. That is being obviously done always in full compliance with all the rules and procedures that a class A

journal must guarantee (starting with the condition of using a system of double-blind referees).

The style of the international section of the Journal involves the use of two essential tools: digital interface and the most popular languages worldwide in the field of labour law, bearing in mind the increased relevance of interdisciplinary scholarship. The qualification of *International* is therefore based on these two aspects without precluding the possibility to publish in the same section the contributions relating to national law if they may be utilised by a wider scientific community than that of students and scholars who think and read in languages of lesser diffusion in the world. From this point of view, the decision to create a new editorial line starts from the simple belief that today, to be truly effective, the ideas that animate the research must spread more rapidly and with fewer physical space constraints. Moreover, nowadays the “international” and digital dimensions have virtually merged in one: the latter thanks to the open-access formula that gives everyone the opportunity to read and write without worrying about borders, postal deliveries, archives, accesses and everything related to the physical world.

It goes without saying that a scientific journal must in any case guarantee the quality of the published content. The contributions therefore cannot have exclusively informative and popular content and must always respond to the elementary purpose of science: namely, critical and problem-oriented reflection on the existing issues. There is no need to deny that this is more arduous on a global scale, if only because information alone is often more difficult, and the critical-reconstructive study is much more complicated. Yet, that must not constitute a qualm. We, therefore, tried to equip ourselves by asking for a further contribution from those who already practice scientific research at the supranational and comparative level.

Our intent, however, goes beyond this: we hope that the challenge will be taken up by younger colleagues who enthusiastically appreciated the inauguration of the new section. The intent can be summarized in these terms: the international dimension – understood in a broad sense, that is, including the study of supranational systems and the comparison between different systems – has acquired in the last twenty years a depth that does not allow any scholar to consider it as an ornament or a niche in the national research landscape. This is perhaps one of the most relevant effects of market globalization, but at this point, it is not a phenomenon that can be traced

back to purely economic dynamics. Technology and information – as well as, or rather above all, “false” information – can tear down borders, while simultaneously eroding and transforming the logic and behaviour of all social classes. No class, least of all intellectuals and researchers, are protected from this tsunami. Therefore, the labour law of the future – and with it, those who cultivate it – will have to arise and move in very broad cultural contexts, absolutely not reducible to the borders of a single State or a single macro-region of the vast world; perhaps even for the sole purpose of returning later with greater awareness to deal with the specific problems that still afflict this or that country, *in primis* our fluctuating Italian Republic. *Diritti Lavori Mercati* with the new editorial line wants to be at the forefront in tackling these transformations without any limitations.