

Message by the Editorial Committee: A new journal, a fascinating new journey

In March 2022, the Laboratory for Black Sea and Mediterranean Studies (Faculty of Political and Economic Sciences, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) and the School of Law of the University of Nicosia announced their new partnership for the operation of the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Review (BSEMR). The newly appointed Editorial Team, with the valuable support of both founding institutions, initiated due efforts to start planning and executing this new, prospectful and fascinating project. As an idea, the BSEMR emerged out of the collaboration of the founding institutions in the framework of the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Academic Network (BSEMAN), which was founded back in May 2018 in Thessaloniki, Greece and ever since constitutes a solid pillar for cooperation and the common ground for joint initiatives among the participating institutions.

The BSEMR is an open access peer reviewed e-journal focusing on the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean (BSEM) and it is the first of this kind. It aims to publish and promote original research pertinent to the BSEM on a cross-section of disciplines, including politics and international relations, history, social and economic issues, energy, sustainable development, governance, culture, media and education. The broader purpose is to open up the discourse and shape the discussions on regional issues through a rigorous scholarship selection and editing process by meeting the highest international standards.

Consequently, the BSEM is approached not exclusively as a geographic area that spans three continents, but notably also as a broader human and cultural space, that bridges diverse ancient and

contemporary civilizations, as well as different social, political and economic systems of governance. In this framework, the BSEMR aspires to promote not only interdisciplinary but also cross-cultural and intercultural research in ways that may develop existing scholarly knowledge and promote regional and international cooperation, sustainability, peace, welfare and stability. Articles submitted to BSEMR may also focus on particular countries in the BSEM region, or other forms of entities (governmental or non-governmental organizations, sub-state entities, social groups, private institutions etc.).

The journal's content includes scholarly research articles, brief analysis articles on current affairs, policy papers and book reviews. Research articles constitute the main part of the journal. They should be based on a combination of substantive theoretical and empirical analysis. For research articles the journal issues general or thematic open calls twice a year. The submission of research papers is followed by an editorial review and, if deemed publishable in the first place, are subsequently sent for double-blind peer review. Brief analysis articles, policy papers and book reviews may be submitted by invitation.

The BSEMR is jointly managed by the co-founding institutions. All decisions regarding the content, the calls and other related matters are made by the Editorial Committee. The composition of the Editorial Committee includes faculty members from both institutions. The Editorial Board is composed of high-profile academics from the co-founding Universities, as well as from other Universities both in the BSEM and further internationally.

The first issue includes three research articles, one policy paper and a book review. In the first article, Alexandros Moutzourides discusses the use of popular social media platforms by individuals and

institutions acting on behalf of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, in relation to the ongoing war between the two countries. Petros Petrikkos evaluates the routinised construction of security issues in a comparative outlook in the Baltic Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. Nikolaos Stelgias analyses the Turkish-Russian conflictual cooperation through the lens of the Turkish magazine ‘Kriter’, which reflects the positions of the Turkish Government, over the last six years.

Apart from these three research articles, the volume also includes a policy paper written by Menahem Blondheim and Andreas Stergiou, who attempt to challenge some basic notions of the Conflict Resolution discourse as applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict relating to the fields of religion, economics and communication. Finally, Michalis Kontos reviews Zenonas Tziarras’ book titled ‘Turkish Foreign Policy: The Lausanne Syndrome in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East,’ which was published by Springer in 2022.