

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Reader,

Policy debates are all around us; while some make big headlines, others are more subtle. The past year delivered no shortage of significant public policy discussions and debates in every corner of the world and at home, here in London. We at *The Public Sphere* are delighted to bring you this year's edition of the journal, which places you at the forefront of several of these important issues – from human trafficking of ethnic minorities in Myanmar, to spatial segregation of the low-income population in Ecuador, and health policy assessment in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Public Sphere Journal, now in its fifth year, was established by postgraduate students at the London School of Economics and Political Science in the Institute of Public Affairs' flagship Master of Public Administration programme. This year was particularly significant for the growth and innovation of the journal. We received a record number of article submissions from public policy institutions across Africa, Asia, Australia, North America, South America and Europe. We also expanded our team and built up our online presence through brand new blog series and digital content on our website that have allowed us to extend the policy conversation to a wider audience. These spaces flourished under the efforts of our team members, who believe that this journal is an ever-growing contribution to evidence-based policy through rigorous contributions to a diverse and important array of debates.

The ten articles in this edition are those selected by our senior editorial team. They represent a range of topics and regions, and were the strongest in policy relevance, methodology, academic rigour and originality out of this year's very competitive pool of submissions. In the following pages, you will be able to examine

a Roma health mediation programme in Bulgaria, assess ethnic minority problems in Myanmar, and evaluate the effectiveness of the Spanish government's management of public resources through its airport system. Through careful examination, you will be able to explore monetary policy at the zero lower bound, dissect the equality of opportunity through fiscal policies, and think critically about spatial segregation in Ecuador's capital city. A series of in-depth interviews with heroin users will shed important light on the development of needle fixation, while a critical analysis of health policy in Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia will enhance your understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa. From here in the United Kingdom, you will be able to assess the effectiveness of soft drink taxation, and learn about the engagement of UK pension funds with the social impact investment market.

We would like to thank our authors for their hard work and dedication, and the LSE's Institute of Public Affairs for their support in our mission. Thank you for reading, and we hope you enjoy.

Ashley, Andrea, Jonathan and Zachary