
HUMAN RIGHTS AT RISK ORGANISED CRIME AT SEA AND ACROSS BORDERS (OC-SAB)

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Romanian-American University, Bucharest

With the support of:



GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

- *International Handbook on Human Rights and Transnational Crime: Legal Challenges, Global Responses, and Emerging Threats*
- *International Journal of Human Rights and Transnational Organised Crime (HR-TOC)*

Dear Author,

Thank you for your interest in contributing to our publications.

These Guidelines for Authors have been prepared to assist contributors in the preparation and submission of their manuscripts. Their purpose is to ensure consistency, academic quality, and compliance with the editorial standards of the publication.

We kindly invite you to read the guidelines carefully before submitting your contribution. The following pages provide essential information regarding manuscript structure, formatting requirements, citation style, submission procedures, and deadlines.

We greatly appreciate your contribution to this important academic initiative and look forward to receiving your work by **September 30**.

In the name of Editorial Team,

Silvia Tabusca, cdom@rau.ro

AIMS AND SCOPE

The publications will be developed within the framework of COST Action CA23103 – *Life, Liberty and Health: Ensuring Universal Protection of Human Rights at Sea (BlueRights)*, funded under the Horizon Europe programme. They are intended to support the dissemination of research presented during the international scientific conference *Human Rights at Risk: Organized Crime at Sea and Across Borders (OC-SAB)*. We welcome high-quality academic contributions addressing, *inter alia*, **transnational crime and its implications** for human rights protection, emerging security threats, international and regional cooperation, cybercrime, artificial intelligence, migration, terrorism, environmental crime, trafficking, maritime security, and related legal, institutional, and policy developments.

AUTHORSHIP

Contributions should be prepared by a limited number of authors, and, as a general recommendation, no more than **3 authors** per chapter/paper are advised. Authors are required to indicate the full names of all contributors in the correct order, together with their institutional affiliations. In order to preserve transparency and the integrity of the editorial and review process, changes to authorship are not permitted once a manuscript has been submitted.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The publication accepts the following types of contribution: stand-alone scholarly articles, tertiary literature (digested knowledge and established information in the field), framework analyses, case summaries, full-length academic articles.

Authors are required to ensure that their manuscripts comply with the following requirements prior to submission:

- submissions must constitute original scholarly work and must not be simultaneously submitted to, or under consideration by, another publication, in accordance with the principles of academic integrity and exclusivity;
- the subject matter of the manuscript must fall within the thematic scope of the publication (**human rights, transnational crime and its implications**), ensuring academic relevance and coherence;
- contributions must adhere to recognized standards of academic and scientific writing, including clarity of argumentation, methodological consistency, and the appropriate use of citation and referencing formats;

- manuscripts (main texts) must be fully anonymised prior to submission in order to preserve the integrity and impartiality of the double-blind peer review process.

All manuscripts intended for publication must be submitted through the **online submission form**, available here (Gmail account mandatory for uploading): <https://forms.gle/Wqj5uGVPcxSzkWQP7>

MANUSCRIPT STRUCTURE

1. COVER LETTER (separate information in the form) include:

- Full title of manuscript
- Author(s) name(s)
- Institutional affiliation(s)
- Email(s) address (corresponding author)
- ORCID ID(s) (recommended)
- Biographical note of the **first author** (maximum 300 characters)
- **Abstract:** 200–250 words - clearly state the research objective, methodology, key findings, contribution to the state of the art and conclusions
- **Keywords:** 4-7 keywords reflecting general concepts and thematic relevance
- Acknowledgements (if any).

2. MAIN TEXT

The main body of the manuscript should comprise **5,000–10,000 words** and be organised into clearly defined sections and, where appropriate, subsections. Longer manuscripts (up to **12,000 words**) may be considered where justified by the number of authors and complexity of the subject. Authors should use headings and subheadings that accurately reflect the subject matter and logical structure of their contribution.

In order to ensure consistency, authors are encouraged, although not required, to follow the structure set out below:

- **Introduction:** research problem, context and relevance, aim of the article
- **Methodology:** doctrinal / comparative / empirical approach and data sources (if any)
- **Literature Review or Background:** key academic sources and doctrinal or theoretical foundation
- **Analysis and Discussion:** core argumentation, comparative or doctrinal reasoning, case law / statutory interpretation
- **Findings and Implications:** legal and practical implications, policy relevance or developments (if applicable)

- **Conclusion:** summary of argument, contribution to legal scholarship, future research directions
- **Acknowledgements** (if applicable): only acknowledgements relating to grants, institutional support, funding bodies, statutory obligations, or declarations of conflicts and competing interests are permitted, with the names of all organisations written in full.
- **References:** a comprehensive list of maximum 50 sources cited in the article.

CITATIONS AND REFERENCES

In-text citations should follow the Author–Year system (for example: **Smith, 2026**). Authors are requested to ensure consistency and accuracy in citation practices throughout the manuscript. The authors should follow the [APA](#) referencing style.

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

The manuscripts must be submitted as a **Microsoft Word document** (.doc/.docx) according to the following guidelines:

- Language: **British English**
- Font: Arial
- Length: 5,000–10,000 words
- Size: 10-point (main text)
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Margins: 2 cm (all sides)
- Justified text alignment
- Page numbers included
- Units: metric system
- Financial figures: euro (EUR) equivalent
- Heading 1: Arial 14-point, bold
- Heading 2: Arial 12-point, bold
- Heading 3: Arial 10-point, bold and underlined

TABLES, FIGURES AND APPENDICES (if applicable)

Tables, figures, and appendices may be included where relevant and necessary to support the analysis presented in the manuscript. All tables and figures must be clearly numbered consecutively (e.g., Table 1, Figure 1), accompanied by appropriate captions and source references, and explicitly referred to within the main text. Appendices should be kept to a minimum and included only where essential to the contribution.

Figures must be submitted as separate image files in one of the following formats: JPG/JPEG, GIF, PNG, EPS, or TIFF. The minimum required resolution is 300 dpi for photographs and 1200 dpi for line drawings. Authors are advised not to use images downloaded from the internet. The manuscript should clearly indicate the intended placement of each figure together with its corresponding explanatory legend.

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

Submission must comply with the principles of academic integrity, originality, and ethical scholarly conduct. Authors are required to ensure that manuscripts are **original works**, free from plagiarism and self-plagiarism, and that **all sources** are properly acknowledged and cited in accordance with the applicable referencing standards.

The Conference Proceedings apply a **double-blind peer review process** and expect full adherence to internationally recognized principles of publication ethics throughout the submission, review, and publication stages.

AI USE, HUMAN PARTICIPANTS AND SENSITIVE DATA

The use of artificial intelligence tools for language editing is permitted. However, authors remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and academic integrity of their manuscripts. Where AI tools are **employed for substantive research-related purposes**, such as data analysis or content generation, their use should be appropriately disclosed within the manuscript.

For contributions involving human participants, personal data, or other sensitive information, authors must include a statement explaining how relevant ethical standards, approvals, consent requirements, and data protection considerations were addressed during the research process.

PLEASE AVOID

In order to ensure consistency, academic neutrality, and compliance with the editorial and peer-review standards of the Conference Proceedings, authors are kindly requested to avoid the following practices:

- the use of footnotes or endnotes, including personal acknowledgements;
- the use of first-person formulations where an objective academic style can be maintained;

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- personal acknowledgements to individuals.

Before completing the submission, authors are required to confirm compliance with a set of mandatory formal and ethical requirements.

- ☐ Manuscript (main text) is anonymised
- ☐ Abstract included (200–250 words)
- ☐ Keywords provided
- ☐ References formatted consistently
- ☐ File is in Word format (.doc/.docx)
- ☐ Manuscript follows the requested criteria
- ☐ Ethical standards respected
- ☐ Cover letter with personal data of author(s) – information included in the online form
- ☐ Deadline respected

SUBMISSION WORKFLOW IN 10 STEPS

1. Submission

The workflow begins with the formal submission of the manuscript. Authors are required to submit all manuscripts, as Microsoft Word documents (.docx/.doc), through the online form available at <https://forms.gle/Wgj5uGVPcxSzkWQP7> (Gmail account mandatory for uploading).

At this stage, technical checks are conducted to ensure that the submission complies with formatting requirements, word limits, and the prescribed citation style. These initial validation functions as a screening mechanism, filtering out manuscripts that fail to meet the publication's formal and technical standards.

2. Initial Screening

Following submission, the manuscript undergoes an initial editorial assessment conducted by the Editorial Board. This desk review functions as a gatekeeping stage, determining whether the manuscript is suitable for further evaluation. Key criteria include:

- thematic relevance
- originality
- ethical compliance, and
- baseline academic quality.

Based on this assessment, the editor may reject the manuscript, request revisions prior to peer review, or approve it for external evaluation. For thematic or special issues, alignment with the publication's focus is particularly decisive.

3. Peer Review Assignment

Manuscripts that pass the desk review are assigned to external reviewers under a double-blind peer review model, ensuring anonymity for both authors and reviewers. This system enhances impartiality and academic credibility. Each manuscript is evaluated by at least 2 reviewers. The selection of qualified reviewers maintains the rigor of the evaluation process.

4. Peer Review Process

During the peer review stage, reviewers conduct an in-depth evaluation of the manuscript. Their assessment focuses on several dimensions, including:

- originality
- methodological soundness
- quality of reasoning
- relevance to the scientific thematic scope
- contribution to existing scholarship.

Based on their analysis, reviewers provide recommendations, which may include acceptance, acceptance with minor revisions, a request for major revisions, or rejection. These recommendations are supported by detailed comments intended to guide both editorial decisions and the author's revision process.

5. Revision Cycle

If revisions are required, the manuscript enters an iterative revision cycle. Authors are expected to respond comprehensively to the reviewers' comments and submit a revised version of the manuscript, often accompanied by a detailed response letter. The editor evaluates whether the revisions adequately address the concerns raised. In cases involving substantial modifications, the manuscript may be returned to the original reviewers for further assessment, ensuring the integrity and completeness of the revision process.

6. Final Decision

The final decision regarding publication is made by the editor. This decision is based on the reviewers' reports, the revised manuscript, and the overall quality and relevance of

the submission. In addition to evaluating the individual article, the editor considers its contribution to the coherence and balance of the publication as a whole. A manuscript may be accepted, rejected, or, in rare cases, subjected to further revision at this stage.

7. Copyediting

Once accepted, the manuscript proceeds to the copyediting phase. This stage involves technical refinement, stylistic improvements, and consistency in formatting. Particular attention is given to citation accuracy and adherence to the publication's referencing style. Copyediting ensures that the manuscript meets professional standards of clarity, coherence, and academic presentation, without altering the substance of the author's argument.

8. Layout and Production

In the layout and production stage, the manuscript is transformed into its final publication format. This includes applying the publication's template, structuring the document for readability, and preparing a publication-ready PDF. Additional elements such as issue branding, pagination, and visual consistency are finalized. A Digital Object Identifier (DOI) is assigned, and all associated metadata is completed to facilitate discoverability and indexing.

9. Publication

The publication stage marks the official release of the article. The finalized manuscript is published online under an **open access model**. At this point, the manuscript becomes part of the scholarly record, it is integrated into publications and archived within internal systems. Simultaneously, it is prepared for inclusion in external databases and repositories.

10. Dissemination

The final stage focuses on maximizing the visibility and impact of the published research. This includes submitting the proceedings or individual articles to indexing services, as well as promoting the work through academic networks and social media platforms. The publication is deposited in open repositories such as **SSRN or Zenodo, EU Open Research Repository, OpenAIRE, Open Science Framework, HAL** etc.

Through these dissemination efforts, the research reaches a wider audience and becomes integrated into the global academic community.