

Editors' Introduction

Welcome to Volume 7, Issue 1 of the *International Journal of Rural Criminology*! It seems like a very long journey from the previous issue to this one. One reason is that in March 2022, it was still unknown if various conferences, such as the European Society of Criminology, would be held on-site or once again by online means of communication. Then, a cyber- attack in July 2022 caused The Ohio State University Libraries – who host the Journal's web presence and all the 'behind the scenes' functionality – to shut down their servers, including those that manage all of the journals in their digital library. Immediately, IT personnel at OSU worked diligently to bring everything back up online, giving priority to the most frequent users of the library system, namely staff and students accessing library resources of various kinds for teaching and class assignments. One day short of a month's hiatus, IT eventually restored the online status of all its journals, including IJRC. During this time, not a single manuscript associated with this special issue on rural policing could be accessed from the website, processed for review, edited and readied for publication.

We sincerely hope to catch up by the March 2023 issue, which will include a second installment of manuscripts on rural policing, plus a number of articles on other topics of a rural criminological nature.

One piece of good news is that IJRC was approved earlier in 2022 for listing in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). This is the *crème de la crème* of listings for journals such as the IJRC, which is proudly open and accessible to contributors and readers the world over. By being listed – and listing is a fairly onerous process with only high quality, peer reviewed, open access journals being considered for inclusion – the IJRC's metadata will be incorporated into search engines and other online discovery results, meaning even further reach for the excellent scholarship contained in the journal. This is the first major step, on a careful and strategic journey, to extend the reach of the journal on the path towards ranking on the Scimago Scientific Journal Rankings and elsewhere.

By the time of the March 2023 issue, most readers accessing IJRC will hopefully have attended one or more annual meeting of professional societies, such as the British Society of Criminology (27 July to 30 July 2022), the European Society of Criminology (21 September to 24 September 2022), the Asian Criminological Society (20 July to 23 July 2022), the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology (28 November to 30 November 2022), the American Society of Criminology (16 November to 19 November 2022) or any of a large number of other conferences covering various regions of the world, as well as more focused topics in criminology and criminal justice.



Within each conference agenda, there is an increasing presence of rural-focused papers, representing the recent growth of rural criminology – growth which we hope continues through this decade and beyond. For example, in 2023 (1 September to 14 September 2023), the 14th Biennial International Conference on Criminal Justice and Security in Central and Eastern Europe will reprise a theme from its online conference of 2021. That theme is “Rural and Urban Safety and Security Perspectives.” At the 2023 conference – which is only a few days after the ESC annual meeting in Florence, Italy so that it will be easy to travel from there to Ljubljana, Slovenia by train, plane or car – will be considered safety and security from the perspective of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In the words of just a few select languages: *Bonne lecture et bons voyages. Dobro branje in dobra potovanja. Liánghǎo de yuèdú hé liánghǎo de lǚxíng. Buona lettura e buoni viaggi. Kusoma vizuri na safari nzuri. Achchha padhana aur achchhee yaatra.*

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