We are pleased to open the 13th volume of the *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, bringing with it a number of new developments. Our journal concluded 2025 very successfully, especially after receiving the results of the four-year-long evaluation (2021-2024) from CAPES, which classified us in stratum A2. This reflects the excellent work carried out by professor Pedro Heitor Barros Geraldo (UFF) and professor Camila Nicácio (UFMG), whose editorial term concluded in 2025

We thank the two editors for their outstanding effort in conducting the journal. There is no doubt that the Network of Legal Empirical Research (REED) opened space for a fundamental movement in Brazil 15 years ago, allowing us to affirm that it is now a consolidated front in research on the legal phenomenon.

The Journal of Legal Empirical Studies is a product of this effort, initiated in January 2014, with the excellent work of professors José Roberto Franco Xavier and Paulo Eduardo Alves Silva. At that time, the editors outlined guidelines that the Journal continues to follow: (i) to publish methodologically rigorous research - qualitative, quantitative, or mixed - with clearly specified techniques and strategies; and (ii) to prioritize thematic diversity and interdisciplinarity as key features of the journal's output.

Twelve years later, we are convinced that this volume reaffirms these objectives, as reflected in the plurality of methods employed by the authors, the diversity of their backgrounds, and, above all, the shift away from dogmatism as the dominant axis of legal discourse.

It is important to remember that the dedication spent on the editorial management of a scientific journal can be both intellectually rewarding and institutionally challenging. This is an activity that, despite its relevance to the consolidation and circulation of knowledge - the main intellectual product - still lacks proportional recognition as an academic task in our universities and has only partial funding. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the work carried out by the editors who succeeded this volume is based, above all, on adherence to a collective project committed to strengthening a fundamental area in the field of Law.

The undertaking generated 36 published articles, with 110 submissions received in 2025. Two thematic dossiers were published:

"Anthropology of Law in Brazil: Directions and Reflections from the VIII ENADIR" and *"Ten years of implementation of custody hearings in Brazil: ruptures and continuities"*. Both expand the Journal's analytical repertoire and reaffirm REED's commitment to rigorous, plural, and methodologically consistent empirical research on the legal phenomenon.

In this year of 2026, the Journal of Empirical Legal Studies is headed by two new editors: professor João Vitor de Freitas Moreira (UFJF-GV) and professor Alexandre Veronese (UnB). We accepted this responsibility for the benefit of the scientific community. Working on the editing of a journal is a major challenge. However, it would not be possible without the collaboration of the dedicated editorial team, composed of Indaiá Mota, Isabella Mesquita Martins, Leonardo Custódio da Silva Júnior, Maria Eduarda de Castro Carneiro e Corrêa, Mariana Morais Zambom, Mário José Bani Valente, Raymundo Nonato de Almeida Santos, Roberta Custódio Cavedini and our manager Yuri José de Paula Motta, in addition to the careful work of the layout designers Caroline Ramos Bacic and Iasminne Rodrigues Pereira.

With this team, we want to expand the reach of the Journal in the upcoming years, reaffirming our editorial commitment to the Network of Empirical Studies in Law (REED), while also announcing the main challenges for improving the journal. Among these, particular emphasis should be placed on the reduction in manuscript evaluation time as a fundamental improvement. This challenge involves the aforementioned structural barrier:In our rigorously applied double-blind review system, reviewers carry out their work alongside the many teaching, research, outreach, and administrative responsibilities that define academic life in our country.

Another axis we will pursue with particular dedication is the strengthening of the Journal's internationalization process. We are pleased to observe a growing interest in the journal, especially in Latin America. In this regard, we will seek ways to enable the publication of manuscripts in their original languages, accompanied by translations, thereby expanding the possibilities for the circulation and democratization of knowledge.

In light of ongoing transformations in the legal field, we consider it essential to expand our networks, especially by securing indexing in major national and international databases, such as SciELO. We are attentive to the recent changes in evaluation metrics of journals in Brazil, which directly impact our editorial policies and require responsible and strategic responses.

Another undeniable impact concerns the expansion of the use of Artificial Intelligence technologies in legal research, especially in the treatment of empirical data. This calls on us to advance in building an editorial policy that articulates ethics in research, methodological transparency, and the duty to inform. We recognize the ongoing transformations in the legal field and seek to adapt to them in a critical and committed manner in the following years.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude for the institutional support received from the Institute of Comparative Studies in Conflict Management (INCT-InEAC), the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), and the Network of Empirical Studies in Law (REED). They were fundamental to maintaining the editorial activities carried out so far. Diversifying sources of support will remain a priority in the coming years, as it constitutes a strategic challenge to further strengthen the Journal and ensure its continuity with quality and autonomy.

Enjoy your reading!

João Vitor de Freitas Moreira
Alexandre Veronese
EDITORS