

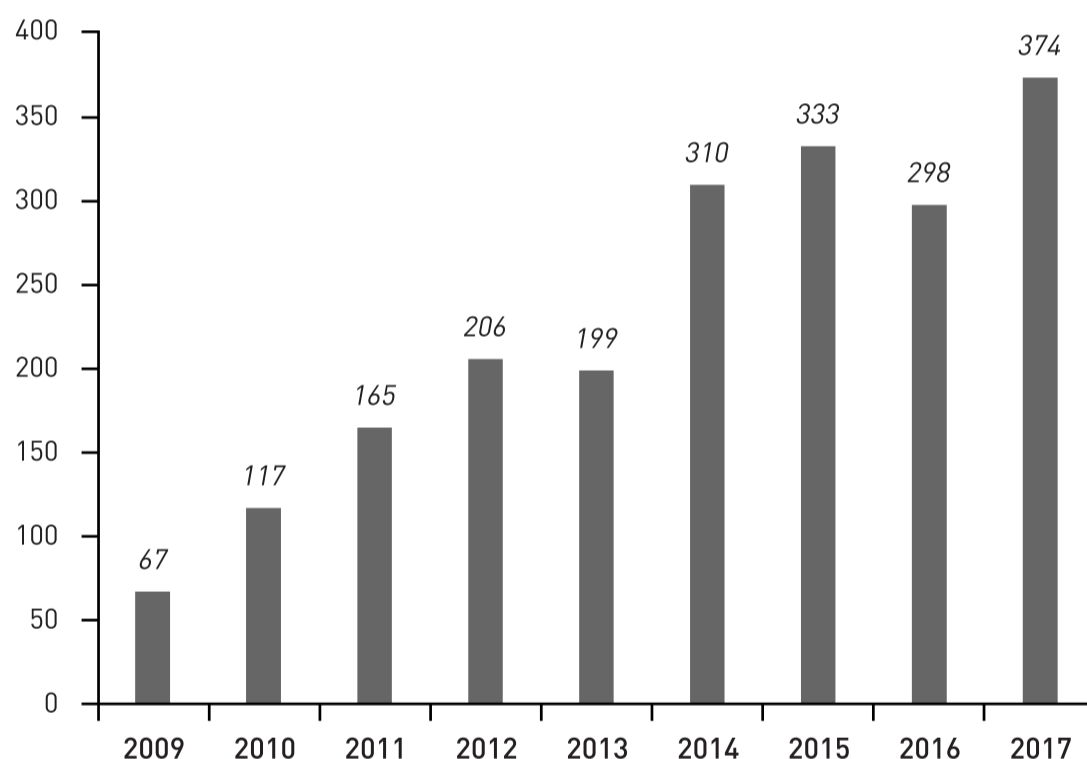
DIREITO GV LAW REVIEW IN NUMBERS:

A BALANCE SHEET OF 2017 ACTIVITIES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR 2018

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We are pleased to present the first 2018 issue of **Direito GV Law Review** (v. 14, n. 1, Jan.-Apr. 2018). In the first editorial of the year, we would like to include a review of 2017,¹ as well as some reflections on the process of evaluating articles, which we hope will serve as a guide for authors and reviewers throughout 2018.

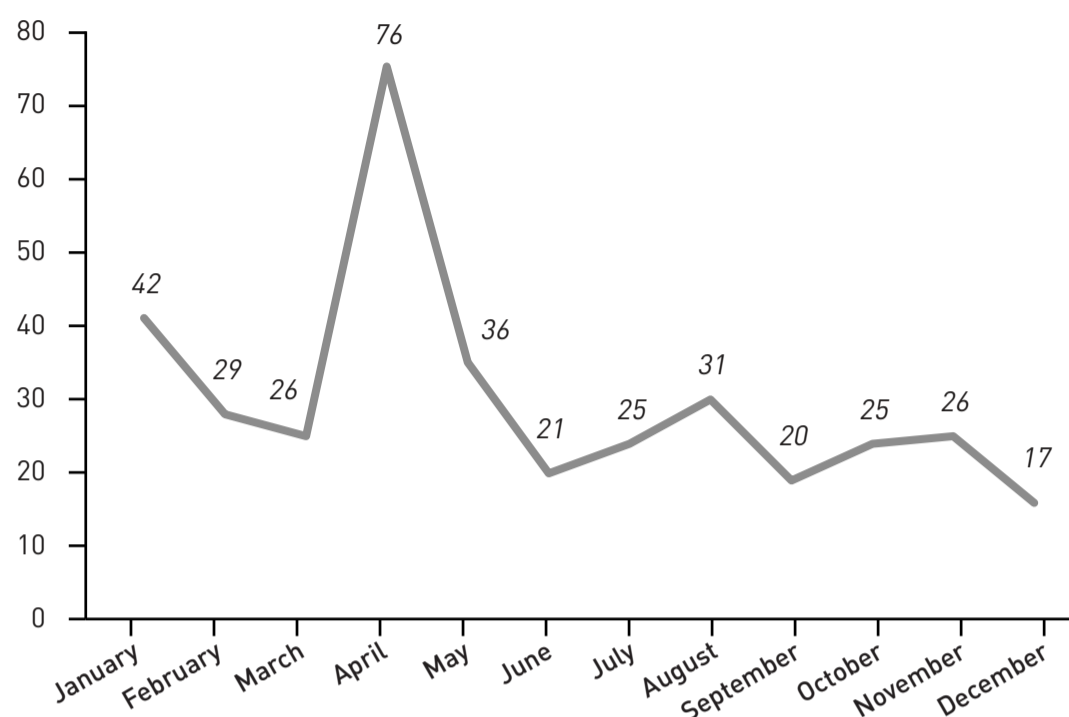
GRAPH 1 – NUMBER OF ARTICLES RECEIVED PER YEAR



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¹ I would like to thank the editorial assistant, Juliana Silva Pasqua, for the collection and preparation of the data presented here.

GRAPH 2 – NUMBER OF ARTICLES SUBMITTED PER MONTH



We had experienced a slight drop in the number of submissions in 2016, possibly due to some factors, as the implementation of the ScholarOne system, the changes in editorial policy, and the stricter enforcement of formal submission rules.

As early as 2017, the number of submissions has significantly increased, as can be seen in the graph above, which may be the result of the launching of the special call, with the theme “Business and Human Rights”, in partnership with invited publishers and the UN Brazil.² As a result, in March and April, 64 articles within this theme were sent and, by 2018, we are preparing a special dossier with the texts approved.

We are very satisfied with the number of articles received, considering that ScholarOne (online manuscript management system) has been implemented only two years ago, and we believe that this mechanism has expedited the editorial process as a whole. There will be even more innovation in the submission system in 2018, as the operation of a new multi-language interface in Portuguese and Spanish, that will count on the support of SciELO. For now, the system can only be accessed in English, have some of the instructions been translated into Portuguese by our editorial team.

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² Available at: <http://direitosp.fgv.br/sites/direitosp.fgv.br/files/arquivos/chamada_especial_empresas_e_dhs_rdg.pdf>. Accessed: Mar. 23, 2018.

We hope that the multi-language system will simplify the submission of articles and the follow-up of the evaluation process, and we especially believe that it will ease the completion of the evaluation forms by the referees. In addition, our system now displays the ORCID number of all authors. ORCID is an identifier of researchers that works as a profile or curriculum. It is able to distinguish homonyms, and allows some interoperability options, for example, links between the SciELO website and the authors registers (PACKER, 2018).

Our deadlines for evaluation are the matter of more positive news. By the SciELO criteria, the average duration of evaluation should be 180 days (SCIELO, 2017). In 2016, we had a 200 days average, but in 2017 we achieved a decrement, albeit small, to 177 days.

In our opinion, our evaluation time could still be greatly improved, because it is important for authors that their production can be promptly evaluated and eventually published. This will be one of our main focuses of action in 2018.

However, there is a complex process of editorial management that goes along with the expectations of those who submit the article. The process consists of editorial decisions on the feasibility of publication of the text, the search for referees, the waiting time for opinions, the possible need for new opinions, the round of feedback and changes in articles, new editorial decisions and possibly new opinions on the amended version of the article. Besides following the lengthy process of each article, the editorial team is also attentive to all texts in evaluation, which helps to guide their decisions.

The peer review phase is often the longest in our entire process. The average time for delivering an opinion is 22 days. Although it is not a too long time, the evaluation phase becomes more time consuming, sometimes because the reviewers do not always respond to the invitations, sometimes because they sometimes agree to make the point but they do not succeed in delivering it. Throughout 2017, 365 invitations for referees has been made, resulting in 200 opinions.

We realize that these difficulties can occur for a variety of reasons – emails and reminders could be filtered to the spam box, unavailability, or other commitments within the deadline for the final submission. We recognize that these professionals perform a thorough and voluntary work, which is in addition to all the professional activities with which they are already committed to. That is why we understand the need to appreciate their role in the evaluation and we again assert our recognition.

Some comments have to be made regarding the origin of the authors who submit the articles for evaluation. São Paulo was the State with the highest number of authors in 2017 – about 22%

of the texts submitted. Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná and the Federal District [Distrito Federal] comes next.

TABLE 1 – **AUTHORS BY STATE (2017)**

STATE	NUMBER OF AUTHORS	RATE (%)
ACRE	1	0,18%
ALAGOAS	1	0,18%
AMAPÁ	4	0,73%
AMAZONAS	1	0,18%
BAHIA	21	3,82%
CEARÁ	23	4,18%
DISTRITO FEDERAL	36	6,55%
ESPÍRITO SANTO	21	3,82%
GOIÁS	5	0,91%
MARANHÃO	11	2,00%
MATO GROSSO	4	0,73%
MATO GROSSO DO SUL	6	1,09%
MINAS GERAIS	52	9,45%
PARÁ	19	3,45%
PARAÍBA	7	1,27%
PARANÁ	37	6,73%
PERNAMBUCO	18	3,27%
PIAUÍ	3	0,55%

RIO DE JANEIRO	32	5,82%
RIO GRANDE DO NORTE	9	1,64%
RIO GRANDE DO SUL	50	9,09%
RONDÔNIA	0	0,00%
RORAIMA	1	0,18%
SANTA CATARINA	19	3,45%
SÃO PAULO	122	22,18%
SERGIPE	4	0,73%
TOCANTINS	2	0,36%
* <i>FOREIGNERS</i>	41	7,45%
TOTAL	550	

It should be remarked that Qualis/Capes imposes some rules of exogeny on the journals of stratum A. One of these rules dictates that number of articles coming from the State of the federation where the journal headquarters are located the number can not exceed 25% of the total (BRASIL, 2016, p. 4). For this reason, and because most of our submissions come from the State of São Paulo itself, the evaluation rule for these articles will always be very rigid.

In relation to foreign articles, we had a slight increase in the number of submissions, which now represent 5.08% of the total texts received. In addition, we noticed a modest increase in the variety of countries: in 2016, we received texts from 9 countries; in 2017, that number rose to 12.

TABLE 2 – ARTICLES BY COUNTRY (2017)

COUNTRY OF THE AUTHOR	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	RATE (%)
ARGENTINA	2	0,53%
BRAZIL	355	94,92%
CANADA	1	0,27%
CHILE	3	0,80%
FRANCE	1	0,27%
GERMANY	1	0,27%
ITALY	2	0,53%
JAPAN	1	0,27%
MEXICO	1	0,27%
PORTUGAL	5	1,34%
SOUTH AFRICA	1	0,27%
SWEDEN	1	0,27%
TOTAL	374	

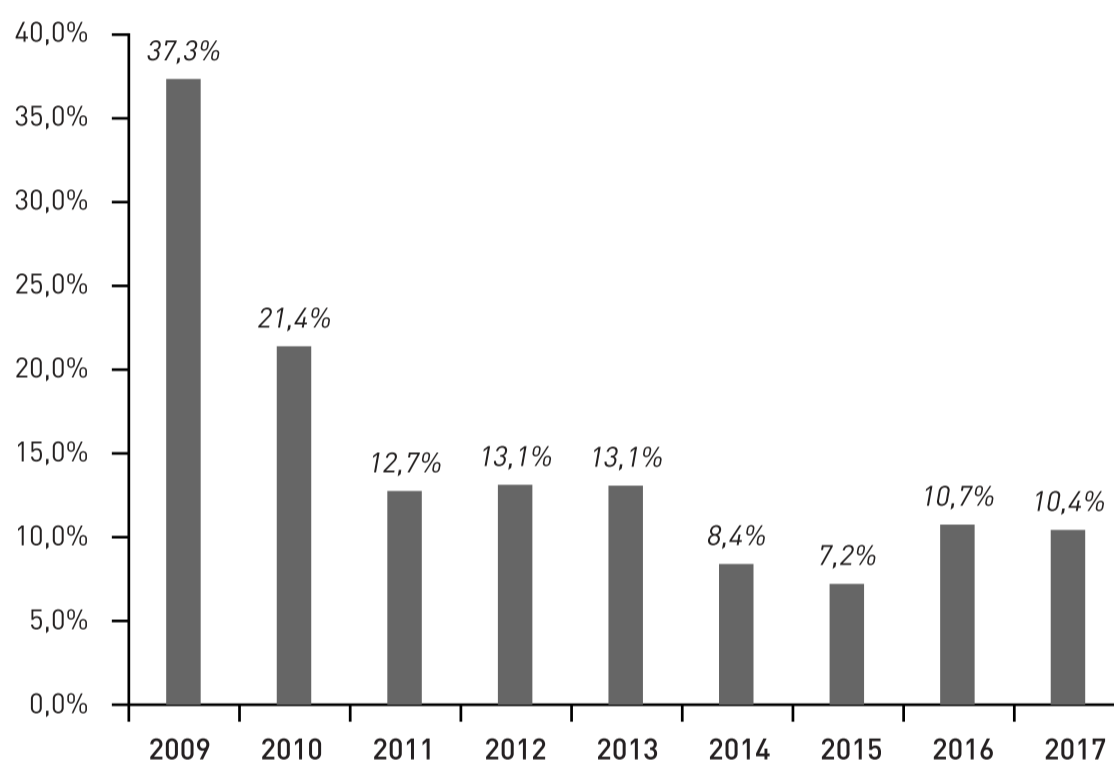
There is still a lot of work on the internationalization of our journal. One of our goals is to receive more contributions from foreign authors who wish to publish here, and whose research is interesting to the Brazilian Academy. Another objective is the internationalization of our body of referees, for what we shall seek specialists from foreign institutions who can bring valuable contributions to the evaluated articles.

Still in the scope of internationalization, another challenge is the reception of articles in English and Spanish, in order to allow a greater circulation of the knowledge published in the journal. On the one hand, as we have already argued in other editorials (BARBIERI, 2016, 2017), we recognize that a great part of law production in Brazil is written in Portuguese and arouses interest only in national media, because it addresses our specificities. However, in opportune

themes, it is always interesting to have contributions in English and Spanish, regardless of the authors' nationality.

Despite the increase in submissions, the ratio between the number of articles published and those received remained similar (10.4%). This maintenance is due in large part to the increase in the number of published texts: from 32 in 2016 to 39 in 2017.

GRAPH 3 – RATE OF ARTICLES RECEIVED *VS.* PUBLISHED PER YEAR (2009-2017)



At the same time, these data point to our high rates of item rejection. This is primarily due to the shortcomings of the articles themselves. Our data show that approximately 70% of the total submitted articles in the desk review phase do not meet the minimum formal and content requirements. That is, they can not even go through the peer review phase. Most of the texts received have serious problems such as the absence of a research question, justification and methodology employed. Another important factor for the rejection of many articles is the lack of innovation, the lack of original argumentative contribution, limiting the author to presenting thematic panoramas and bibliographical revisions in broadly consolidated subjects. However, much value these texts may have, they are restrained by our editorial policy.

All editorial decisions in desk review phase seek to evaluate the articles received with fairness and transparency, considering not only the particularities of each article, but also the totality of

articles evaluated at the time, and the feasibility of their publication. These difficult editorial decisions shape the publishing work in an academic pattern, rather than mere management of texts.

After the desk review phase, it is possible to point out other challenges and trends, such as the frequency of void positive opinions or suggestions of changes in the article. Void opinions are those that suggests a decision, without any relevant commentary on what grounds it. Since this kind of opinion it is not self-explanatory, hardly contribute to text improvement. In these cases, another opinion is needed, which tends prolong the evaluation process.

Another challenge is the articles considered below the average of the set under evaluation at the moment, but whose opinion is positive or partially positive. These texts can be rejected in an evaluation compared to texts that are better evaluated, deeper, richer in detail or more innovative and original. It is an editorial decision, which does not imply demerit.³

In order to carry out this evaluation, the editorial team needs to examine all articles and publication possibilities, as well as critically evaluate the quality of the published opinion, to request a third opinion if there are still doubts. This is because reviewers have different standards of evaluation. For example, a difference in style or dedication of the opinion-taker may result in very strict opinions on already well-developed articles or less critical opinions on articles that would need a major reworking.⁴ Thus, the staff plays always an active role, seeking to balance these evaluations and inserting them in the general panorama of the journal, as well as considering the guidelines of good practices and ethics in publication of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, 2011), the Qualis/Capes evaluation rules, and the guidelines on diffusion of the SciELO platform research.

Finally, contemplating the constant challenges we must face to remain a national and international reference publication, we shall thank the academic community that collaborates with our journal. Authors and referees are essential for the repercussion of our journal and its contribution to the academic debate in the field of Law. We look forward to improving our work and keeping up for another year, always relying on their collaboration.

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3 “Editors are in a powerful position by making decisions on publications, which makes it very important that this process is as fair and unbiased as possible, and is in accordance with the academic vision of the particular journal” (KLEINERT; WAGER, 2011).

4 A key role of the editor is *to check the content and consistency of the opinions, recognizing and respecting the contribution of the reviewer*, but seeking to *ensure a fair evaluation without abuse*. Certainly, a basic premise of the editorial process is to ensure parity among authors (VASCONCELLOS, 2017, p. 12).

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