

## Editors' preface

Space applications and services have become an essential part of the everyday life of humankind in recent years. While the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the beginning and gradual development of space activities, mostly in the context of rivalry between the superpowers, the first decades of the third millennium have brought about a development of unprecedented intensity, mainly due to the increasing involvement of private actors. Even though it remains the case that few actors possess autonomous launch capabilities, more than ninety states, almost half of the international community of states, already have some kind of space experience. The global space economy is continuously and dynamically growing, and has proven to be extremely resilient; according to certain forecasts, its value may reach one trillion U.S. dollars within fifteen years. As outer space is becoming increasingly contested, congested and competitive, and as space systems are increasingly regarded as critical infrastructures, sensitive questions and considerations relating to defence and security are unavoidably emerging, further complicating the overall picture.

The normative framework of space activities must adapt to these new realities and challenges. Although selected national legislations have begun to react to the altered circumstances, international regulation in this area has barely changed in the last fifty years, leading many commentators and stakeholders to openly question its effectiveness. Keeping in mind that the prevailing geopolitical environment is rather unfavourable for the further development of international space law due to a lack of consensus on most of the topical issues, it is more important than ever for the scholarly community to engage in a constructive and progressive dialogue in an effort to propose feasible solutions to political decision-makers. Equally important is the task of educating the future generations of space lawyers and policy-makers.

These ambitions led twenty-five academics and professionals to contribute to the present volume on the legal and policy perspectives of the new space age. The twenty-three chapters in this book cover four main topics. The first part

presents a panoramic view of the new space age, followed by three further parts discussing the topics of regulation, sustainability and defence.

This book could not have been completed without the essential support of several outstanding colleagues. We would like to seize this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Mónika Ganczer, Philippe Ch.-A. Guillot, Heinrich Kreft and András Mező for their thorough and constructive reviews, to the Ludovika University Press for their professional work and guidance, and to Kincső Enikő Gyalog, Barbara Horváth and Borbála Telek-Huszár for their continuous and invaluable assistance. We are also grateful to the National Media and Infocommunications Authority for the generous financial support.

Together with our co-authors, we sincerely hope that the present volume will make a valuable contribution to the ongoing scientific discourse, and that it will benefit not only academics and professionals, but also students who are interested in space law and policy. It is most likely that it will be the task of these students to find solutions to many of the problems discussed in the present volume, and to continue, improve and complete the work of the preceding generations.

Budapest, 15 September 2024.

*Balázs Bartóki-Gönczy and Gábor Sulyok*