

## Keeping the Journal in the Second Quarter: What Are We Doing and What Will We Do?

The yearly Journal Citation Reports (JCR) 2022 update was made available by Clarivate on June 28, 2023. The JCR report for this year revealed a general reduction in the rising impact factor of journals, which was caused by the increased scientific publication of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

Last year, Balkan Medical Journal became a second-quarter journal for the first time in its 44-year history.<sup>2</sup> Figure 1 reflects the change in the impact factor over the last 10 years. The impact factor of the journal this year was 3.0. With this impact factor, it ranked 75<sup>th</sup> among 167 journals in the general medicine category worldwide. Last year, for the first time in Turkey, a general medicine journal was listed in the second quarter. As the Balkan Medical Journal, we are happy to show the same success this year.

In 2022, 1,387 articles were submitted to our journal, and there was a decrease in the number of submissions compared to the previous year. The decrease in the number of publications, which increased during the COVID-19 pandemic period, effects this. The total number of citations was 1,133 in 2021 and this figure decreased moderately to 1,066 in 2022. In 2022, our acceptance rate was 4.9%. About 25% of the articles submitted in 2021 were from sources outside Turkey, and they made up about 40% of the articles published. Outside Turkey, most submissions were made from China, Japan, and Serbia, respectively.

I would like to talk about the factors that played a role in our success. First of all, all the editors, especially the previous editor-in-chief, Prof. Zafer Koçak, worked hard. The contribution of the weekly editors' meeting to the success of our journal is enormous. There is a debate as to whether an article should go through peer review or get a desk rejection. In addition, the articles brought to the meeting with the acceptance proposal are examined here for the last time. Especially in recent years, it has been difficult to find a reviewer in the academic community, and the editor-in-chief and editorial board meetings have made a great contribution to the article evaluation process. About 70% of the articles in our journal are rejected by the editor-in-chief, and about half of the remaining part is rejected after discussion at the weekly editorial meetings. The remaining few articles go through the peer review process. In addition, all articles are evaluated by the statistics editor before acceptance.



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Available Online Date: July 12, 2023 • DOI: 10.4274/balkanmedj.galenos.2023.03072023

Available at [www.balkanmedicaljournal.org](http://www.balkanmedicaljournal.org)

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Cite this article as:

Altay S. Keeping the Journal in the Second Quarter: What Are We Doing and What Will We Do?. *Balkan Med J*; 2023; 40(4):232-3.

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Editorial policy is undoubtedly the second crucial factor in the journal's success. Adherence to ethical integrity and COPE/ICMJE guidelines is at the forefront of policies. The adoption and implementation of the legal regulation of the journal and the signing of the editorial independence agreement between the dean and its editor-in-chief protected the journal from external influences and applied only scientific criteria.<sup>3</sup> Balkan Medical Journal has been one of the leading journals to set policies on plagiarism, multiple publications, and preprints, which are important issues in publishing.<sup>4-7</sup>

At the beginning of 2023, I took over the post of editor-in-chief from Prof. Zafer Koçak. I am aware that it will not be easy to maintain this success. This year launched a graphical abstract to increase the visibility for every article considered a novel. We accepted the artificial intelligence policy, which has recently had an important place in the scientific world.<sup>8</sup>

I would like to thank the former editor-in-chief, Prof. Zafer Koçak and his team, our current editors, readers, authors, editorial board, and publisher for their devoted work. Remaining the second quarter journal is a crucial responsibility.

### Balkan Medical Journal Impact Factor

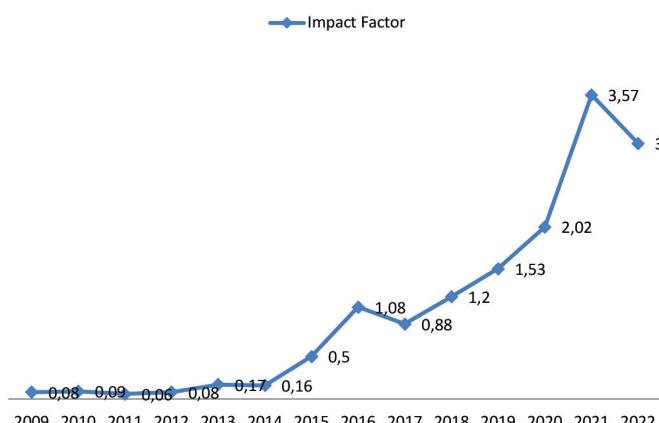


FIG. 1. Change in the impact factor of the journal by years.

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