

First Q1 Medicine Journal in Türkiye: Balkan Medical Journal

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Balkan Medical Journal Editorial Board

Clarivate published the Journal Citation Reports 2024 update on June 18, 2025.¹ This year's report presents significant developments for both the Balkan Medical Journal and Türkiye. For the first time since its establishment in 1979, the Balkan Medical Journal has been placed in the first quartile (Q1) in the field of general medicine. This milestone represents the first time in our nation's history a health sciences journal has been accepted into the Q1 category.²

Figure 1 illustrates the evolution in the impact factor over the past decade. The journal's impact factor has reached an all-time high of 3.80, positioning it 50th among 332 journals globally in the general medicine category. This represents the highest impact factor ever attained by the journal.

In 2024, the journal received 1,677 manuscript submissions, representing a 20% increase compared to the previous year. The acceptance rate was 5.8%. Approximately 33% of submissions originated from 65 countries outside of Türkiye, contributing to approximately 53% of the published articles. The highest number of international submissions originated from China, followed by India,

Pakistan, and Serbia, respectively. Citations also demonstrated a significant increase, rising from 1.151 in 2023 to 1.361 in 2024-another record high for the journal (Figure 2).

The Balkan Medical Journal entered our nation's first Q2 general medical journal category in 2022 and has maintained its position for three consecutive years. With the 2024 update, the Balkan Medical Journal not only attained Q1 status but also achieved the highest impact factor among all medical journals in both Türkiye and the Balkan region.

After sharing this proud achievement, I would like to reflect upon the key principles and practices that have driven our steady progress. As outlined in earlier editorials by myself and former Editor-in-Chief Zafer Koçak³⁻⁵, all submitted articles are reviewed daily by the editor-in-chief, and approximately 70% are desk rejected. The weekly board meeting is one of the principal components of our editorial process; it is when all manuscripts assigned to national editors are reviewed and submissions deemed unsuitable are eliminated. These meetings promote transparency, enhance the efficiency of the evaluation



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Balkan Medical Journal Impact Factor

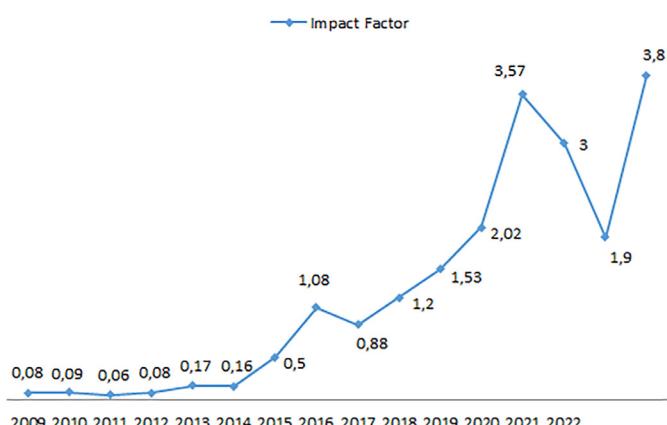


FIG. 1. Variation in the journal's impact factor over time.

process, and facilitate timely decision-making, thereby minimizing delays for authors. This proactive strategy helps prevent “suspected editorial misconduct,” which has led to delisting from the Directory of Open Access Journals and other databases.⁶

I would like to highlight that, in 2024, the mean peer-review duration for accepted articles was 39 days. For manuscripts rejected through editorial review, the mean peer-review duration was four days, while for those rejected through the peer-review process, it was 29 days. In today’s challenging editorial landscape-characterized by rising submission volumes and difficulties in securing qualified reviewers-timely editorial rejections play an even more vital role.

Another key to our journal’s success is the rigorous adherence to publication ethics and established editorial norms. The journal’s editorial independence-safeguarded by a formal agreement between the dean and the editor-in-chief-and its compliance with COPE and ICMJE guidelines have been instrumental in preserving scientific objectivity and credibility.⁷ The Balkan Medical Journal has been among the leading journals in establishing policies on plagiarism and multiple publications, which are critical issues in academic publishing.^{8,9}

Over the past three years, Selçuk Korkmaz, our statistics editor, has made vital contributions that have greatly improved our statistical rigor. Prior to publication, each manuscript is subjected to statistical and linguistic review, as well as final checks by the national editor, deputy editor, and editor-in-chief.

The Balkan Medical Journal remains committed to closely monitoring current scientific developments and actively contributing to both policymaking and guiding readers on these issues. In particular, in recent years, we have updated our journal policy on artificial intelligence, which has a significant role in scientific publishing, and disseminated information on ethical standards in this regard.^{10,11} Furthermore, to enhance visibility and accessibility, we introduced

Balkan Medical Journal Citations

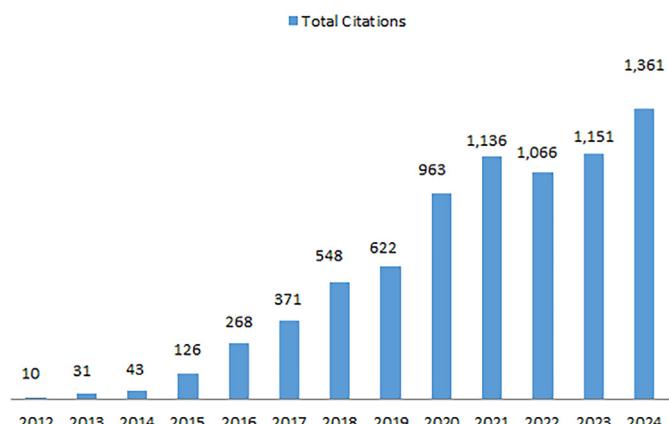


FIG. 2. Change in the total number of citations of the journal by years.

graphical abstracts three years ago and have since actively promoted our content through the web and social media.

As we commemorate this momentous milestone for both our journal and nation, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all former and current editors, members of the editorial board, authors, reviewers, readers, publishers, and the Trakya University community for their unwavering contributions and steadfast support.

Finally, I pay tribute to the memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the pioneer of contemporary science in our country, to whom this saying is attributed: “If one day my words are against science, choose science.”

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