
Editorial

NEW WINE IN NEW BOTTLES

Johan Mackenbach, editor-in-chief

This is the first issue of the 15th year of the European Journal of Public Health. If you are reading the print version of the paper you will have noted immediately that the journal has been newly designed. And if you are reading the on-line version of the journal you will see even more changes, which all contribute to greater functionality. These changes are part of a range of measures that have been taken simultaneously at the 1st of January 2005, and that intend to offer more than old wine in new bottles.

After 14 years of existence, the journal's owners (European Public Health Association, Karlstad University, and Oxford University Press) have concluded a new agreement. This gives the European Public Health Association sole ownership of the journal, but preserves the roles of Oxford University Press as its publisher, and that of Karlstad University (Sweden) as one of its main sponsors and holder of the editorial office. The new agreement implies that individuals who, through their national associations, are members of the European Public Health Association can choose between a very reasonably priced on-line subscription to the journal, and a slightly more expensive subscription to the print version of the journal. The journal now also has 6 issues per year, instead of 4. It will therefore be able to better cope with the increasing number of submitted manuscripts that testify to the vitality of public health research in Europe.

The expansion of electronic facilities that are provided by Oxford University Press not only improves the accessibility of the journal for readers world-wide, but also increases the accessibility of the journal for authors. Papers can soon be submitted electronically, and the peer review process will soon be transformed in an entirely web-based system. Accepted papers will be published online ahead of print, so that any delay in publishing (which we hope to diminish substantially in the future) will be minimal. Please check out our website (<http://www3.oup.co.uk/eurpub/instauth/>) regularly to follow the implementation of these new facilities for readers and authors.

The European Journal of Public Health already is a major player in the field of public health research, and at the interface

between research and public health policy and practice. It has an immense readership (including more than 7000 members of the European Public Health Association in 38 countries), and attracts large numbers of manuscripts from authors around the continent, of which only about a quarter can be published. Our (Social) Science Citation Index impact factor increased in 2003 to 1.281, and the Editors aim to continue improving the scientific quality of the journal.

At the same time, we also want to extend the journal's role as a forum for the interaction between public health research, and public health policy and practice. We have therefore created a new 'Viewpoint' section, which provides a forum for discussion on issues of relevance to European public health. Each section will consist of a number of interrelated, but contrasting, opinion or reflection pieces that should be of interest both to researchers and to policy-makers or practitioners.

In order to support these new developments, the group of editors and associate editors has undergone a number of changes. After having worked as an editor for 12 years, Professor Carlo LaVecchia (Milan) has left the journal. We are very grateful for his long-lasting and efficient support. We welcome Professor Walter Ricciardi (Rome) as a new editor. Among the associate editors, we welcome a number of new members too: Professors Josep Anto (Barcelona), Thierry Lang (Toulouse), Mark McCarthy (London), Fred Paccaud (Lausanne), and Menno Reijneveld (Groningen). In order to increase the interaction with our main stakeholders, the national associations of public health that together form the European Public Health Association, we also intend to create a new advisory board that will act as a sounding board for the editors of the journal.

In conclusion: we will try to serve you new wine in new bottles! Please help us by reading the journal, by sending us your suggestions and comments, and by submitting your best scientific work. Public health in Europe deserves it.