

Editorial: You have an impact!

The 2009 impact factors for neurological journals that are based on citations of articles published mainly up to 2008, have been released. Bad news for the *Acta Neurologica Belgica*: our IF has dropped from 0.770 to 0.597! This is not a drama per se, as *ANB* has not the ambition of attracting the most original, cutting-edge studies in the clinical or basic neurosciences, but the more realistic objective of offering young, unexperienced or less known neuroscientists a vehicle for communicating their work to the scientific and clinical community. *ANB* also has educational purposes welcoming review articles and requesting them from its editorial board members. A lower IF should not be an obstacle to pursue this policy, although it does not help to attract the best contributions.

Besides impact factor level, many other factors influence a scholar's choice of a journal for his manuscript. One of them, and not the least important one in our fast-living world, is speed of publication. It is the experience of any editor of a scientific journal that the delay between submission and publication of an article depends chiefly on the velocity at which the peer reviewers are sending in their reports. Surprisingly and contrary to all expectations, this delay has dramatically increased since *ANB* is using a web-submission system. In the beginning when the new system was implemented, this could have been

due to technical problems like difficulties with logging in. At present, however, there are no major bugs anymore although the system still has to be improved by the webmaster in order to render it more user-friendly. The situation is worrisome as it takes certain reviewers up to 6 months to respond, although some of them are members of the editorial board at large. Reminders are sent regularly, either by the system automatically or by myself ... without success. One reason for this lack of enthusiasm might be that the previous personalized e-mail contacts with the editorial staff are almost totally replaced by stereotyped messages that were written by the webmaster in the standard version of the system and that are still not replaced by the wordings requested by the editor.

Whatever the reasons for this negative evolution may be, I would like to appeal to your support by putting *ANB* on your priority list not only for the submission of some of your scientific production, but also by accepting to be a peer-reviewer and provide your evaluation within the shortest possible delay. At the end of the day, the quality, attractiveness and thus ... impact factor of the *Acta Neurologica Belgica* depend on you!

Jean Schoenen
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