



EDITORIAL

Further growth in 1999

The past year has been one of continued development for the journal. The steady rise in submitted manuscripts has continued. Typically the EJHG Editorial office now receives between 20 and 30 manuscripts every month. Although our rejection rate has risen (modestly) to about 55%, we have been confronted with a greater backlog of accepted manuscripts than in the previous years. We have relieved this partly by increasing our planned publication volume of 480 pages for 1998, to 640 pages. This has come as a free bonus for readers since the Society has been able to cover the cost.

The steady increase in interest in the EJHG is reflected in a major rise in our Citation Index score. This is now 3.12 up from 2.5 last year! We expect that this will further stimulate submissions and we have acted on this. In order both to reduce the time from acceptance to publication and accommodate more submissions, we are increasing the frequency of the journal: from six to eight issues. The journal will now be published about every six–seven weeks.

In addition to publishing the journal in its print format, institutional and personal subscribers may choose also to receive the journal in on-line format, or to opt for the on-line format instead of the print version. In 1999, members of the European Society of Human Genetics, who receive the print version of the journal as part of their subscription, will also receive the electronic version of the journal at no extra cost. A reason if ever there was one, for ESHG members to enlist a few more of their colleagues! The more members the stronger the Society ... and the sooner we will have a monthly EJHG.

In parallel to the manuscript surge, in 1998 we had to establish new routines for the in-house editorial office.

Implementing a manuscript-tracking system with such an increasing flow of manuscripts, and reviewing existing procedures, and keeping both processes going at the same time, has turned out to be a moving target. We have also been building the relationship with our new publisher, Stockton Press. Occasionally, these changes have led to some flaws in the processing of manuscripts and we apologise to the authors who may have suffered and who have had to contact us after getting rightfully impatient.

Overall, we have kept the average time between receipt of manuscripts and an editorial decision at around nine weeks and the average time between acceptance of a manuscript and its appearance in print at 15 weeks. Moreover, on several occasions, we have been able to reduce the production interval from 15 to eight–nine weeks when the subject matter called for speedy publication. Clearly we will continue our efforts in tracing and resolving causes of delay and, hopefully, 1999 will become a year of stabilisation and further improvements.

Contentwise, we will seek to expand the journal with more news items and viewpoint contributions, as genetics and genomics receive an increased exposure and regularly get to the forefront in the news media. In parallel, we aim regularly to publish review papers on current topics. Thus, let me close with a call to our readers for contributions to the discussion and background information in human genetics, in Europe and world-wide. Feel free to submit, besides your research papers, review articles on any matter of your expertise, and to occasionally consider if you have something of a more reflective nature to contribute to the advancement of the field.

G.J.B. Ommen
Editor-in-Chief