

EDITORIAL

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JOINING THE GLOBAL SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY – UBJ ON ITS WAY

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Over the last decade, The Ukrainian Biochemical Journal (UBJ) has taken a number of measures that have allowed it to leave its narrowly domestic past behind and come a step closer to the international community of scientific publications. In the first phase of the UBJ transformation the journal was made English-lingual only, its manuscript handling process was somewhat streamlined, and a brand-new website for the journal was developed. The range of international databases, in which the UBJ was listed, was also significantly extended. The second phase of the UBJ upgrade began in October 2018, when the journal received a grant from the Regional Cooperation for Health, Science and Technology (RECOOP) to implement the project “Scientific communication of RECOOP partners using the UBJ platform”. The project’s objectives include raising the journal’s quality level to international standards, globalizing it, and making it a reliable platform for the RECOOP publishing activity in Eastern Europe by promoting articles within the scope of RECOOP research strategy.

Keywords: UBJ, RECOOP, translational medical research, COMET Journal Edition system, project implementation.

Next year will be the first of the 21st century’s third decade. By now, Elon Musk has already launched the first batch of satellites for its Starlink Internet Constellation, self-driving cars are no more a fantasy, and sending people to camp on Mars is discussed from a practical point of view. So one can hardly believe that, as recently as the last year of the century’s first decade, authors of what we call now The Ukrainian Biochemical Journal were required to bring or send their manuscripts to the journal’s editorial office both on paper and on a CD, and the editors used pencils and erasers as their main editorial tools. What we have done over the decade is a leap taken to catch up with the fast-moving world, and this UBJ issue can be seen as a milestone in the process.

What has been done and what has been achieved? In the first phase, we made the UBJ nearly totally English and somewhat streamlined the manuscript handling process, switching from pencils and hard copies to emails and MS Office. We developed

a brand-new website for the journal [1]. We also significantly extended the range of international databases in which the UBJ was listed, and now you can find it in Scopus, WoS, CrossRef, Medline, DOAJ, Embase, CAS, and Google Scholar. Its online version is posted on the EBSCO and Elsevier portals as well as on the website of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine. In fact, we have opened up the UBJ for the world.

Our endeavors have born fruit. The number of visitors and visits on the UBJ website has rocketed from 878 unique visitors and 1,633 visits on average per month in 2015 to 7,535 and 14,039, respectively, in 2019 (Fig. 1). We have begun receiving more and more manuscripts from authors outside Ukraine (from 10 in 2016 up to 22 in the first seven months of 2019) and the percentage of rejected manuscripts has rocketed (Fig. 2). And what is most important, the readings on our Scopus dashboard have very much improved: SJR, from 0.127 in 2013 to 0.195 in 2018; SNIP, from 0.126 in 2013 to 0.313 in 2018; and

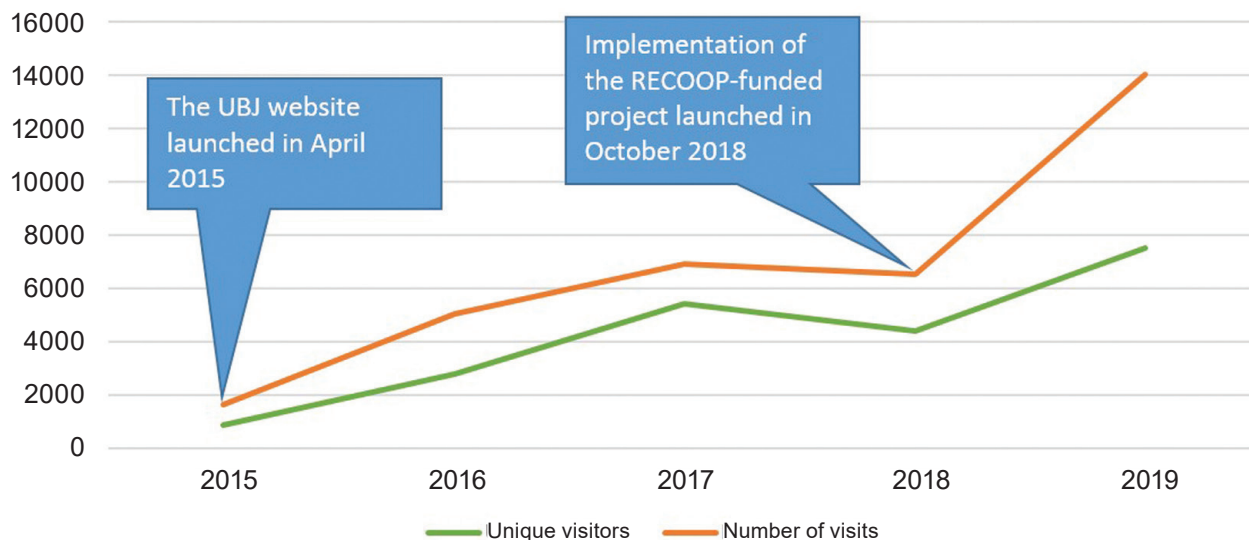


Fig. 1. The average monthly numbers of unique visitors and visits on the UBJ website in 2015-2019. (Source: MiroHost.net site statistics)

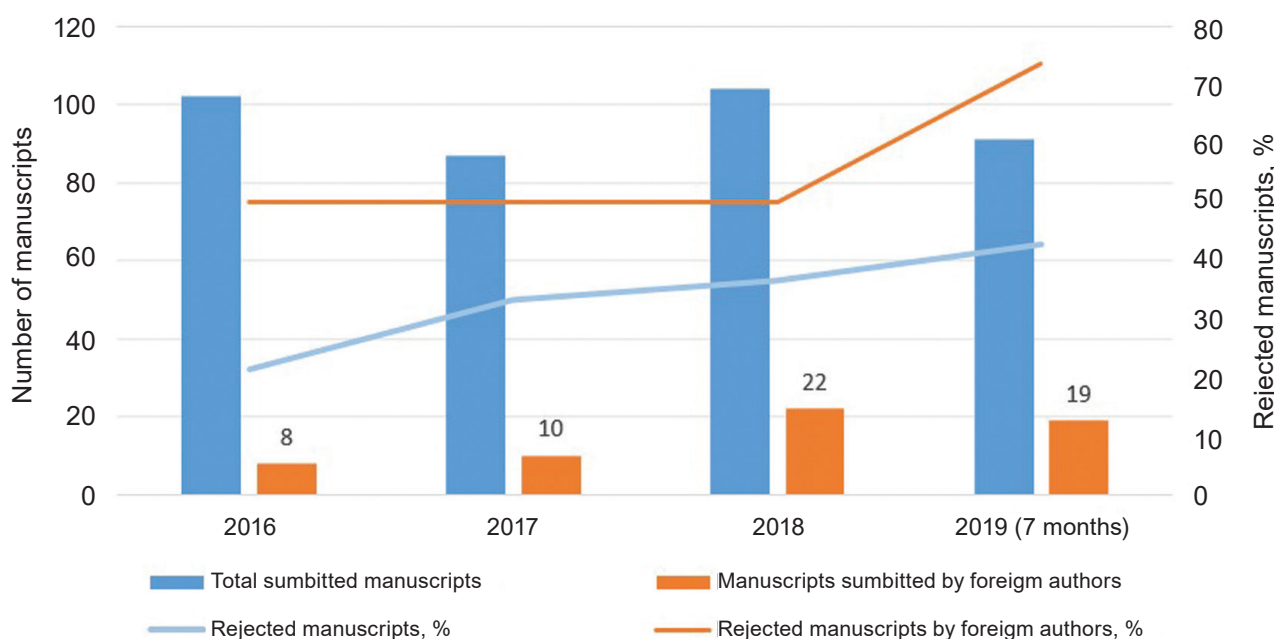


Fig. 2. The numbers of manuscripts submitted to the UBJ (total and received from abroad) as well as the percentages of rejected manuscripts. (Source: UBJ records)

CiteScore, from 0.16 in 2015 to 0.47 in 2018 (Fig. 3) [2].

We have entered the second phase of the UBJ upgrade now, which is closely connected to the Regional Cooperation for Health, Science and Technology (RECOOP).

In October 2018, the UBJ received a RECOOP grant for implementing the project “Scientific com-

munication of RECOOP partners using the UBJ platform”. The project’s objectives include raising the journal’s quality level to international standards, globalizing it, and making it a reliable platform for the RECOOP publishing activity in Eastern Europe by promoting articles within the scope of RECOOP research strategy [3].

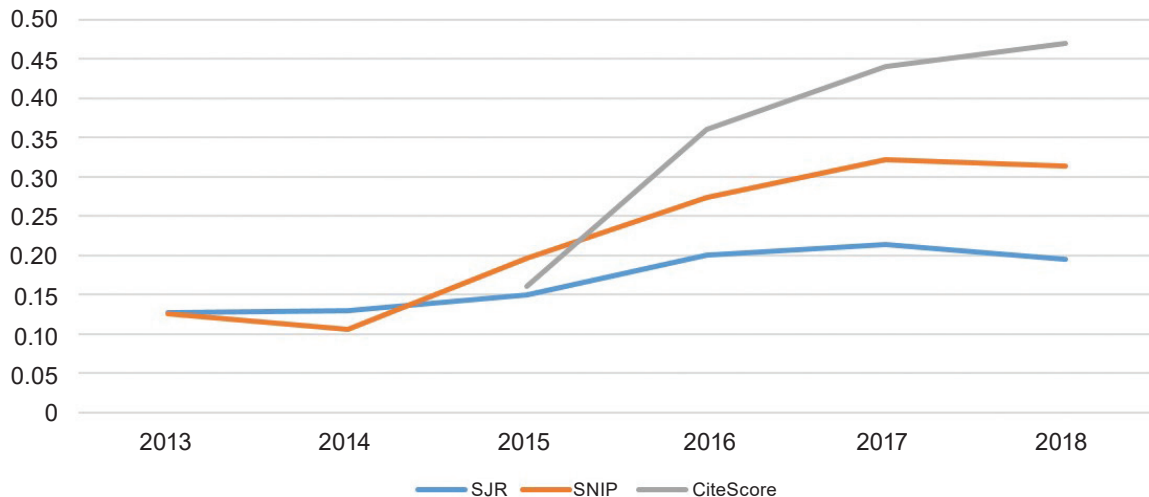


Fig. 3. Changes in the Scopus indexes for the UBJ in 2013-2019. (Source: Scopus, <https://www.scopus.com/sourceid/21100395051>)

SWOT analysis of the future project, which preceded our grant application, helped us outline our prospects and develop a strategy and specific ways for achieving the project's objectives. For the first year of its implementation, these included: (i) implement COMET Journal Edition, a manuscript handling automation system; (ii) improve English editing; and (iii) produce at least one UBJ thematic issue.

By now, the implementation of the COMET Journal Edition system is nearly complete. The system has been adapted for specific requirements of the UBJ, and RECOOP, the Croatia-based SDEWES Center (the COMET owner), and the Palladin Institute of Biochemistry (the UBJ publisher) have signed a trilateral agreement on the system's usage. It is now accessible from the UBJ website, although its debugging is still in progress [4].

One of the UBJ issues in 2019 [5] contained RECOOP-supported papers edited by skilled English editors and its 200 copies were distributed among participants in the 14th RECOOP meeting, Bridges in Life Sciences, and the 2nd RECOOP-KFSD International Students Conference (Bratislava, April 10-14, 2019).

The UBJ Editorial Board was rejuvenated in early 2019 [6], with six new members joining it, including one from the United States and one from Switzerland. Most of the new members have reinforced the medical component of the Board. Moreover, all of the current Editorial Board members have registered with ORCID.

Finally, the task of having at least one UBJ thematic issue produced has been also completed. A proof is the issue you are reading right now, which is dedicated to translational medical research.

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УВІ НА ШЛЯХУ ДО ГЛОБАЛЬНОЇ НАУКОВОЇ СПІЛЬНОТИ

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За останні десять років The Ukrainian Biochemical Journal (UBJ) зробив кроки, які дозволили йому залишити позаду своє локальне минуле та наблизитися до міжнародної спільноти наукових видань. На першому етапі перетворень журнал перейшов на публікацію статей виключно англійською мовою, був дещо

оптимізований процес обробки рукописів, розроблений новий веб-сайт для журналу. Також було значно розширено перелік міжнародних баз даних, до яких увійшов UBJ. Другий етап оновлення розпочався в жовтні 2018 року, коли журнал отримав грант від асоціації «Регіональне співробітництво в галузі охорони здоров'я, науки та технологій» (RECOOP) на реалізацію проекту «Наукова комунікація партнерів RECOOP із використанням платформи UBJ». Проект спрямований на підвищення рівня якості журналу до міжнародних стандартів, його глобалізацію і перетворення на надійну платформу для публікацій RECOOP у Східній Європі через просування статей у рамках дослідницької стратегії RECOOP.

Ключові слова: UBJ, RECOOP, трансляційні медичні дослідження, система COMET, реалізація проекту.

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