Our first impact factor

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It's here: the first impact factor for *Eurosurveillance*. On 28 June 2012, Thomson Reuters published the 2011 impact factors: an exciting 6.15 places *Eurosurveillance* at rank 6 among the 70 journals in the category Infectious Diseases [1] and thus puts us prominently on the global scientific community map.

'We don't have one' used to be the answer when we were asked about the impact factor for the journal. This changed in 2009, when *Eurosurveillance* was accepted and listed for the impact factor, and we were able to say 'We'll get it'. Now we have it, we are more than pleased with the encouraging 6.15, which is similar to that of leading journals in the field. We regard it as an endorsement of our work and editorial policy. It also justifies the confidence shown by our contributors in the many strengths of *Eurosurveillance* and our ability to reach the right audience in the years when we did not yet have an impact factor. It is also a testament to the dedication of the Editors-in-chief and various editorial teams during the journal's 15-year history [2], whose hard work has led to making the journal what it is today.

The figure of 6.15 gives us a firm basis on which to build in the future. It will help us to attract the best and most relevant papers for our readers in the field of infectious disease surveillance and epidemiology. *Eurosurveillance* will, of course, continue to serve as a platform for the public health community across Europe, in order to ensure that all relevant findings are shared internationally. We will keep on striving to provide timely information that supports infectious disease prevention and control. In so doing, we aim to influence the public health agenda and stimulate scientific debate.

In 1955, Eugene Garfield first presented the concept of an impact factor in a paper in *Science* [3] and the concept evolved over time [4]. The 2011 impact factor is computed using the total number of citable articles published in a given journal in 2009 and 2010 as the denominator and the number of times these articles are cited in indexed journals in 2011 as the numerator. The resulting figure is widely considered as an indicator of the scientific impact of a journal, and publishing in journals with a high impact factor is a requirement for an academic career in many institutions.

It is not news that the impact factor is a much debated and controversial indicator [5-7], but commonly accepted alternative measures remain to be developed. One way of assessing the impact of articles and journals is the ranking of the Faculty of 1000, which selects articles for post-publication peer review [8]. *Eurosurveillance* is proud to have had five of its papers selected and ranked as 'must read' [9] and 'recommended' [10-13]. Other suggested ways to measure journal impact are the h-index [14] and the Scopus-based SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) [7]. The latter gives an indication of how the average article of a journal influences science: citations from highly cited journals weigh more than those from low-cited ones. Thus the average article published in a journal with a higher SJR is considered more central to the scientific discussion than those of journals with a lower SJR. The 2011 SJR ranks *Eurosurveillance* at 61 of 1,597 journals in the field of medicine [15].

While equipped with a good impact factor and ranking in the SJR and well positioned among other journals in our field, *Eurosurveillance* aims to progress still further and we expect to attract a number of new contributors. An online submission system, due to be launched later this year, will help us to process submissions more efficiently. We have already started using a plagiarism-detection software. Moreover, we have entered the world of social media by setting up a Twitter account earlier this year. A steady increase of 'followers' of the journal, by on average two to three per day, shows we are on the right track. We also plan to set up *Eurosurveillance* pages on several social network sites soon. Watch out for them.

In times when open access 'mega journals' – publishing several thousands of articles a year – are evolving, more journals are moving towards offering open access and new business models are emerging, such as offering authors publishing flat rates. Having a non-commercial publisher allows us to provide a platform also for authors with limited financial resources or those from less-resourced institutions. In this way, we

contribute to broadening the evidence base within our scope.

Even if the impact factor boosts the reputation of the journal, we will keep on doing things the *Eurosurveillance* way. We have developed many strong personal ties with our contributors and have built a solid network of collaborators and advisors: we are grateful for their involvement over the years and thank them once again for their support. By our commitment to serving authors, reviewers and the greater scientific community, we actively participate in providing high-quality information for the benefit of public health.
Acknowledgments

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