The *European Thyroid Journal* Reaches Adulthood: Starting Its Fourth Year of Publication

When has a journal matured sufficiently so that one can say it has reached adulthood? There is no fixed set of criteria to judge adulthood of scientific journals, but being in existence for just 1 year does not sound very convincing. If not 1 year, what about 2 or 3 years? Of course, the longer the journal has been published, the higher the likelihood the journal has grown up. Thus, entering its fourth year of publication, the *European Thyroid Journal* (ETJ) might well be considered an established journal. This contrasts with many of the commercial open access journals. Almost every week announcements are delivered in our e-mail inbox that a new open access electronic journal is going to be published, depending according to its business model on heavy page charges (up to USD 1,200 for a paper). Such journals may be tempted to publish anything, even against the recommendation of reviewers, just to pocket the article-processing fee (Scientific Publishing: Grand Openings. *The Economist*, September 27, 2014). They are always soliciting for papers. If such a journal fails commercially, the company behind it can just let it go and start another one. It would be nice to have statistics on the survival of such commercially driven journals: probably the majority will never see their 4th year of publication. We are proud, as the official journal of the European Thyroid Association to have no submission or page charges.

I feel more criteria have to be fulfilled before we can accept ETJ has reached adulthood. The adjective 'adult' is used to indicate physically and mentally fully grown, to have reached maturity. A journal depends physically on submission of papers, and in this regard I think we are mature. In 2014 we received 130 papers, of which only 8 were solicited. The monthly number of submissions was already increasing before ETJ got a listing in PubMed in April 2014. This is really a booster for the journal. All of the ETJ articles

(including those that appeared before April 2014) can now be found on PubMed (www.pubmed.gov). In 2014 the journal published 4 Editorials, 1 ETA Guideline, 6 Reviews (2 on basic, 1 on translational and 3 on clinical topics in thyroidology), 32 Original Papers, and 3 Letters to the Editor. Whereas all papers are directly available to ETA members, we are pleased to announce that non-ETA members will now also have free access to all papers starting 6 months after release of the paper for publication (www.karger.com/etj). Of course we hope to accommodate even more papers in the future, meaning there will be more issues in each volume of the journal or, in other words, each issue of the journal will become thicker – the journal becoming 'fatter' is perfectly compatible with adulthood.

What about the other criterion for an adult state, to be mentally fully grown? I translate that characteristic in respect to scientific journals into the quality of the published papers. All papers submitted to ETJ are routinely sent out for peer review, and our reviewers are the custodians of the scientific quality of ETJ. I think they have done a very good job, and we would like to thank them very much for all the time and effort they have devoted to such honourable tasks. As a token of our gratitude, please read the names of our reviewers in the list below. The present state of ETJ in terms of quality looks mature indeed, but it does not mean we will not continue to try to increase the quality of our papers, becoming 'more mature' if you will. It is perfectly possible for adult persons to see further mental development, becoming 'wiser' with advancing age. And that we hope will also happen to ETJ.

Wilmar M. Wiersinga
Editor-in-Chief, European Thyroid Journal

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