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Publishing reliable and trustworthy journals that offer good service to professional societies is a challenging task. There are widely publicized instructions and recommendations that have been drafted and regularly updated by global editorial associations. These are currently the main documents enforced at quality scholarly journals that aim to publish evidence-based and innovative works. The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE; <http://www.icmje.org/>) is perhaps the only organisation that unites the most influential medical journals and updates its recommendations annually to keep the global scientific community informed of the latest developments in research reporting and quality publishing. The membership scheme of the ICMJE with its relatively small number of journals and a wide scope of interests, ranging from authorship to referencing and ethical publishing, is a good example for editorial groups and emerging societies taking their

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Launching Ukrainian Council of Science Editors and Educating Regional Journal Editors

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Global editorial associations have accumulated knowledge and resources that could be helpful for emerging editors groups and societies. Increasing awareness of and enforcing the available editorial recommendations is essential for improving the quality of scholarly journals. Journal editors operating in non-Anglophone environment may benefit from a platform enabling discussion of their daily problems, upgrading their skills, and networking with like-minded experts. Ukrainian journal editors can take the lead by establishing their Council with an online communication and publication forum. Such a forum can serve professional interests of regional editors across academic disciplines.

Keywords: Periodicals as topic, professional societies, writing, publication ethics, Europe, Ukraine.

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first steps. Although the ICMJE is primarily representing interests of medics, allied specialists and research managers across academic disciplines may also benefit from adapting their recommendations to specific professional circumstances.

The Council of Science Editors (CSE; <https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/>) is another international organization with a large member base that may be of interest to representatives of any scholarly journal. Their updated recommendations and the official journal (*Science Editor*) are essential sources for advancing editorial credentials and disseminating knowledge accumulated by several generations of the world's leading science editors.

The emerging editorial societies, particularly those in non-Anglophone countries, may benefit from those two successful examples for organizing their own work and improving

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Започаткування української ради наукових редакторів та навчання редакторів регіональних журналів

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Авторитетні міжнародні асоціації наукових редакторів володіють знаннями та ресурсами, вкрай необхідними для новостворених національних організацій редакторів, які ще не мають достатнього власного досвіду в інтеграцію у світові наукометричні ресурси. Найбільш актуальним завданням для редакторів наукових журналів з неангломовних країн є дотримання загальноновизнаних міжнародних рекомендацій, що стане основою забезпечення високої якості власних наукових журналів. Вільний доступ до ресурсів і співпраця з міжнародними організаціями редакторів сприятиме отриманню усіх необхідних знань, що можуть бути використані для втілення власних національних проєктів. Започаткування української ради наукових редакторів наблизить нас до розвитку та дотримання високих світових стандартів наукового редагування українськими фаховими журналами.

Ключові слова: наукові журнали, професійні організації, етика наукової публікації, Європа, Україна.

the quality and visibility of regional journals. The role of such journals is impossible to overestimate in the challenging times, when limited access to global sources of information may jeopardize evidence accumulation locally and result in dire societal consequences. Editorial societies that guide their members and propose solutions to a variety of ethical editing, reviewing, publishing, and indexing issues may integrate with other structures and contribute to the safety and prosperity of the society.

For decades, Eastern European, and particularly Ukrainian scholarly journals, have been operating in a non-mainstream and non-Anglophone environment, with limited guidance from English experts and inadequate representation at global databases, such as Scopus and Web of Science. In such a scenario, quality assurance and development have been hindered, primarily affecting viability

and international recognition of the regional medical and life science journals. The lack of adherence to globally acceptable research reporting standards, limited space for English works, and inertia of responsible editors have marginalized several potentially valuable journals. Such a negative scenario is also a result of the absence of regional professional societies interested in regularly examining journal publication practices and development strategies, supporting their representatives, and advocating their interests at global editorial and indexing organisations.

With that in mind, a group of Ukrainian journal editors gathered for an online meeting on 7 April, 2020. There were 35 participants representing *Medical Sciences* journal of Taras Shevchenko Society, other regional journals, Danylo Halytsky Lviv National Medical University, Western Scientific Center of National Academy of Sciences and Ministry

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Всі автори в рівній мірі брали участь у підготовці цього огляду. Всі автори прочитали та затвердили остаточний варіант рукопису.

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of Education and Science of Ukraine, Ivan Franko Lviv National University, Institute of Cell Biology, Institute of Animal Biology (National Academy of Agrarian Sciences of Ukraine), Ukrainian Catholic University. The meeting was chaired by Professors V.Chopyak and O. Zayachkivska and moderated by Dr. O. Zimba. Dr. A.Gasparyan, an invited lecturer of the meeting, covered editing and reviewing issues and highlighted the importance of adhering to the global editorial recommendations (Fig.1). He also stressed the importance of opening a channel for online communication for Eastern European and Ukrainian science editors and directing their efforts toward improving indexability of Ukrainian scholarly journals. All participants agreed to establish Ukrainian Council of Science Editors to host regular online meetings, upgrade editing skills of their members, expand cooperation with established editorial organizations, and expedite indexing of Ukrainian peer-reviewed journals by global databases.

Within the frames of the meeting below listed questions and answers were recorded.

Question (R. Stoika): Due to the current situation, it is expected that the publishing enterprise will face some difficulties. How should editorial policy of scholarly journals respond to the expected decrease in scientific research productivity?

Answer (A.Gasparyan): Scholarly journals should set their priorities and upgrade journal instructions accordingly. To fulfil their journal's main function - knowledge transfer – responsible editors have to act promptly, distinguish evidence-based data from unsubstantiated claims, and publish truly influential articles. The flow of research articles may change in some countries in the foreseeable future. International journals with advanced editorial policies and practices will attract the best articles. Ukrainian authors, reviewers and editors should strive to advance their skills to successfully compete and contribute to the global science growth.

Question (R. Stoika): How scholarly journals should respond to the expected quality issues in the submissions?

Answer (A.Gasparyan): Journal editors and reviewers should not downgrade the quality threshold for processed manuscripts.

Rejection rates can be increased to lower annual publication activity across most medium- and lower-rank journals. Peer review specifications can also change in line with the ICMJE recommendations, i.e. slightly increased timelines for peer review rounds (7-21 day) and flexibility in the number of external reviewers (3-1) without any negative impact on the quality of published articles.

Question. (O. Zayachkivska): What about the fast-track publication of articles? Is it possible to publish accepted articles online ahead-of-print without Digital Object Identifiers (DOI)?

Answer (A.Gasparyan): DOI is now essential for article visibility and dissemination via social media. Fast publication implies assigning DOI and posting accepted and tagged with DOI articles on journal websites prior to composing a regular issue. Ahead of print online publication is now the optimal option for fast publication and timely attracting readers' attention.

Question (G. Koterlyn): Shall we launch an editors association as a NGO?

Answer (A.Gasparyan): The editors association should be launched to unite efforts of all those who are involved in quality assurance and editorial decision-making. The optimal format for the association is definitely a NGO with several founding and endorsing organizations (universities, professional societies, and publishing houses).

Question (S. Shakhno): Is there a future for print journals?

Answer (A.Gasparyan): Print publications are an unacceptable luxury for small professional societies and emerging scientific powers. Most print journals have ceased to exist. Printed copies of journal issues are now required in small quantities (10-20) for archiving at journal offices and for shipping to major established libraries such as the British Library. Online journals with appropriately registered electronic codes (ISSN) are the future of scholarly publishing.

Question (O.Tomeniuk): What is your opinion about switching from national language to English journals? How about national scientific terminology? Is it possible

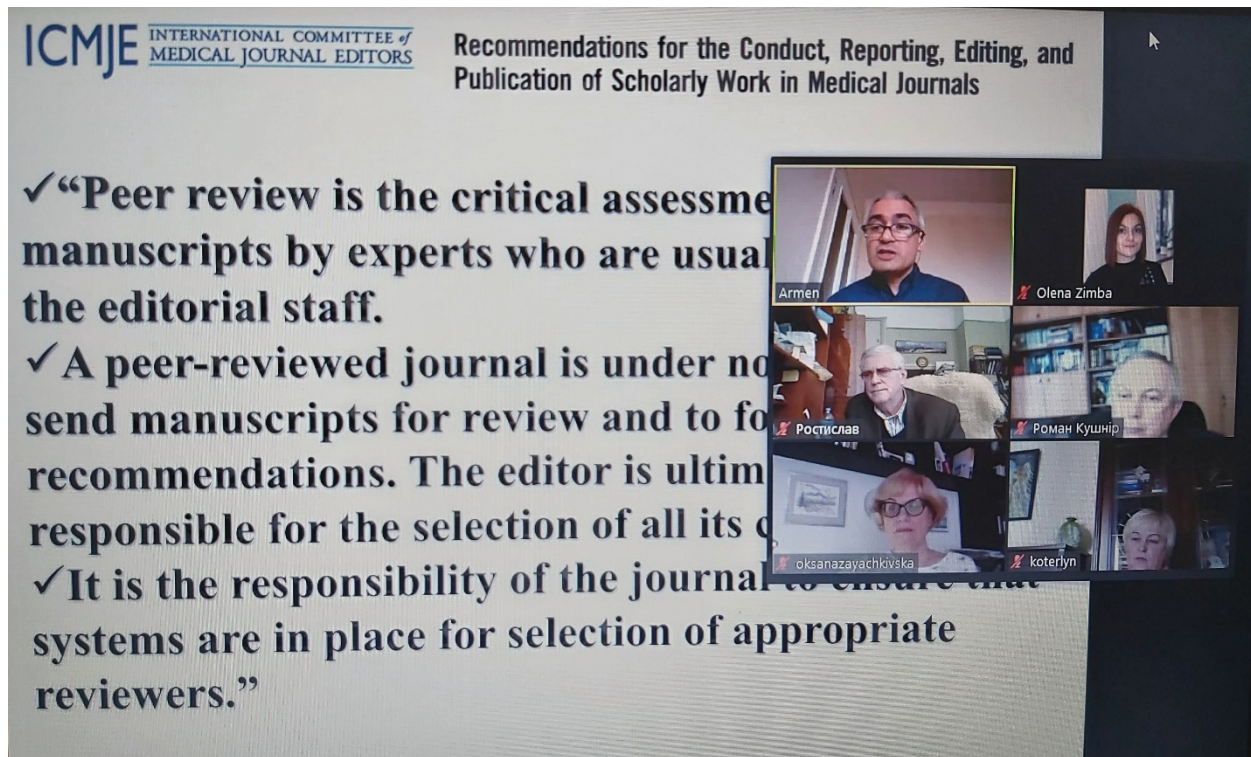


Figure 1. Webinar: Journal Editorial Policies in the Modern Scientific World and the Role of Editors Associations, 7 April 2020, Lviv, Ukraine

to decrease the percentage of English articles in a national journal?

Answer (A.Gasparyan): English articles are becoming increasingly important in the era of digitization and open access. Journals with established infrastructure and English editing are prioritized by global indexing services. Arguably, English journals will continue playing a crucial role in the knowledge dissemination and research evaluation. International/regional/global biomedical journals should rely on English as the main language of scientific communications and online collaboration. National terminology is required for abstracts and full texts in journals of local importance. A limited number of national journals in arts and humanities and social sciences may also choose to continue publishing in national languages.

To sum up, we ask all our fellows and collaborators support our initiative to launch a new editors society in this challenging time and contribute to the science growth in the country and in the Eastern European region. All interested regional journal editors, information facilitators and publishers are welcome to join the Ukrainian Council of Science Editors and participate in the upcoming online trainings on science editing, publication ethics and indexing. We also plan to establish a new publication platform and online channels for sharing regular updates and maintaining ties with our members and collaborators from all over the world. Hopefully, our joint efforts will help advance editorial credentials and increase international recognition of numerous emerging scholarly sources.