

# Journals' editorial policies – An analysis of the instructions for authors of Croatian OA journals

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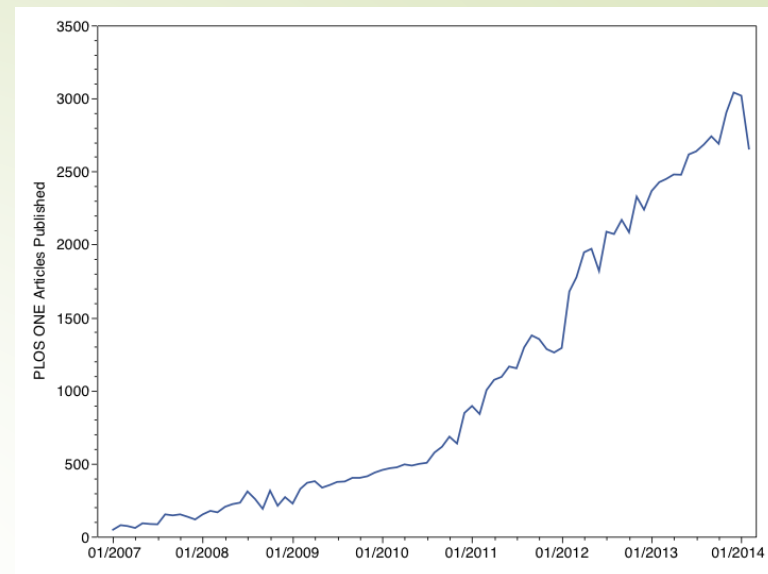


# Outline

- journals
- research integrity
- Croatian OA journals (setting the scene)
- study
- results
- conclusions

# Journals

- print and digital (online)
- fee, free, hybrid
- „open access journal” = gold OA = APC model
- small journals, big journals, very big journals
- prominent journals = high JIF journals = for-profit journals, low impact journals
- „international journals”, „local journals”, „regional journals”
- old concept from the printed world
- main channel of scholarly communication
- not implementing IT advantages, or at very, very slow pace



# Journal - challenges

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- growing number
- „*publish or perish*” pressure
- competition for research funding
- highly profitably scholarly publishing industry
- repeated reports on research misconduct
- need for self-regulation and **guidance** in the conduct of science and the dissemination of scientific results

# Publication ethics become part of major guidelines and publishing standards

- first technical guidelines known as “*Uniform Requirements for the Submission of Manuscript to Biomedical Journals*” (1979)
- UK Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE): “*Guidelines on good publication practice*” (1999)
  - addressed: study design and ethical approval, data analysis, authorship, conflicts of interest, peer review, redundant publication, plagiarism, duties of editors, media relations, advertising, and dealing with misconduct
- additional ethical and legal considerations: acknowledgments, intellectual property, confidentiality, protecting individual rights, and defamation and libel (Atlas, 2003)



# Small research community and ethical guidelines

- Ethical issues are often neglected in small research communities
- In order to respond properly to potentially low quality submissions, editorial policies of small journals should rely on best practices and guidelines
- sharing the responsibility for research integrity between authors, editors and publishers
- **Instructions for authors are a mirror of editorial policies**



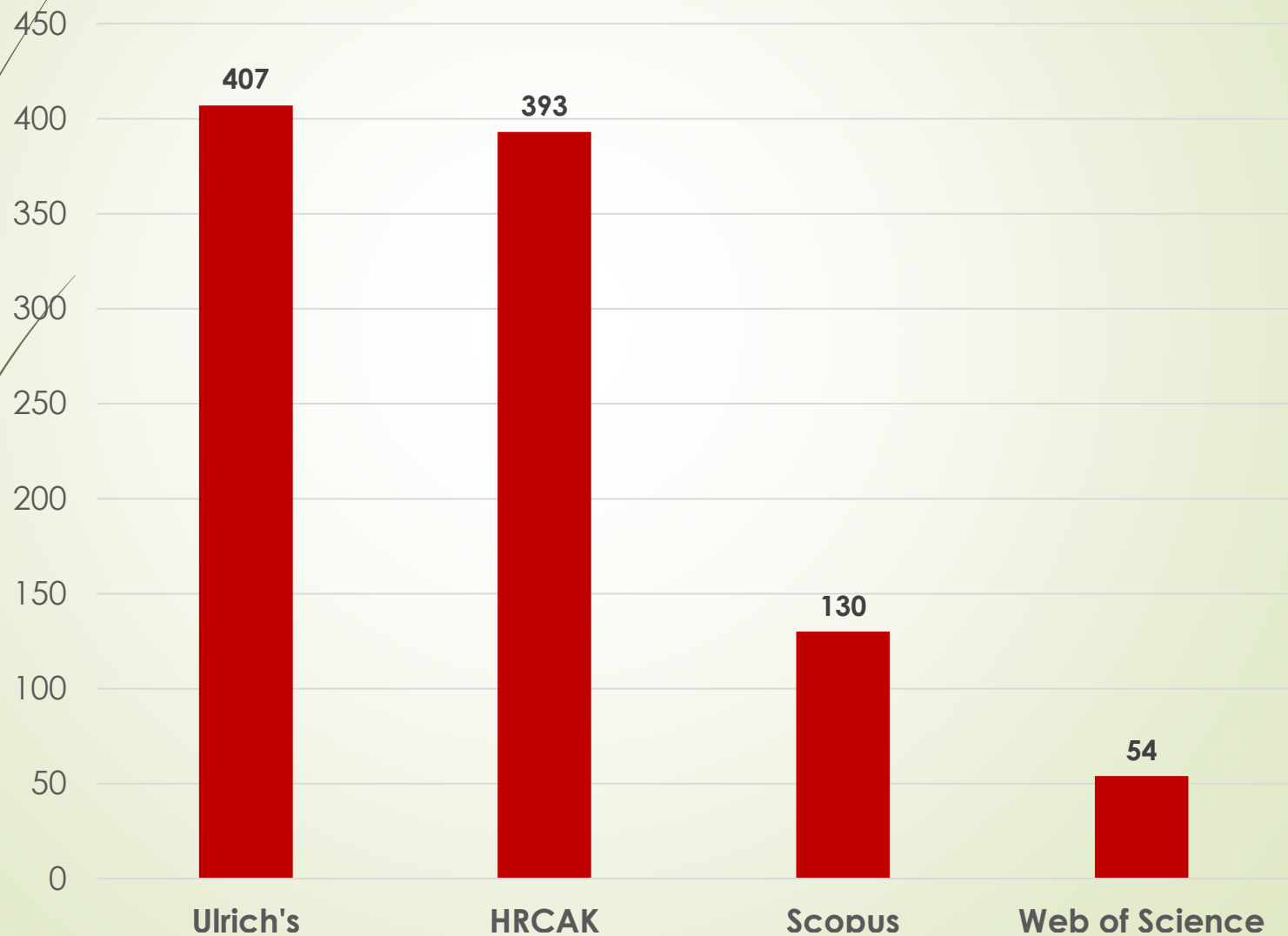
# Croatia

- 4.4M population
- 32,2k registered, 11k active scholars
- 7 universities, 25 research institutes
- Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
  - 241 research projects (National Research Foundation), EC projects
- 25k papers (all types) per year
  - 380 OA journals
- more than 1200 islands



# Croatian journals in numbers

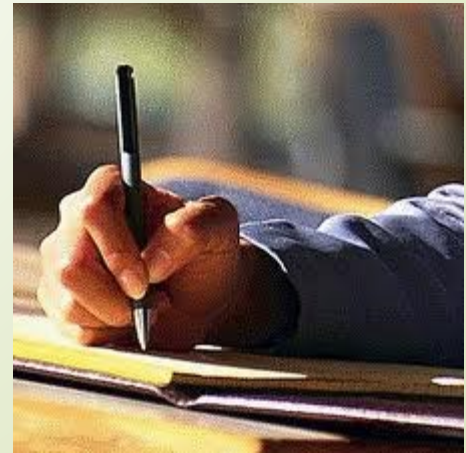
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# Why are Croatian journals important?

- Protect excellence in locally relevant research (Hicks, Wouters, Waltman, de Rijcke, & Rafols, 2015)
- Development of terminology in Croatian language
- Close editorial guidance (young researchers)
- Development of editorial and publishing skills in digital environment
- Bridging the gap between science and application inside community
- Lower cost of publishing concerning high APCs
- Easy access to the research results for the community (OA)
- Content in Croatian language can be spread to a wider local community – no language barriers



# HRČAK

goals

## history

- 2002 – few journals online
- 2005 – HRČAK project proposal
- 2006 – HRČAK launch

➤ infrastructure for **online version** of the (printed) journal

➤ **single access point** for all Croatian open access journals (scholarly, professional and popular)

➤ metadata and **full-text** articles repository

➤ **metadata sharing** – international repositories, databases, archives



# http://hrcak.srce.hr

Home  
Journals alphabetically

Journals by scientific areas  
Natural sciences  
Technical sciences  
Biomedicine and health  
Biotechnical sciences  
Social sciences  
Humanities

Journal editors  
Visit statistics

Authors  
Paper submission



## About Hrčak

Hrčak is the central portal of Croatian scientific journals. Hrčak offers the access to the journals following the Open Access Initiative (more [about Hrčak](#) in Croatian only).

About Hrčak (in Croatian only)

- [for end users.](#)

### Hrčak stats:

Journals: 393

**393 journals**

Published issues: 10.648

Published articles: 135.651

Published articles with full text: 129.874

**129.874 articles**

### 10 newest issues online by publish date

1. Metallurgy, 55(1), 2016
2. Metallurgy, 54(4), 2015
3. Journal of Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and..., 3(3), 2015
4. Acta pharmaceutica, 65(in press), 2015
5. Medicina Fluminensis, 51(3.), 2015
6. CIT. Journal of Computing and Information Technology, 23(3), 2015
7. Journal of Electrochemical Science and Engineering, 5(2), 2015
8. EFZG Working Paper Series/EFZG Serija članaka u nastajanju, (05), 2015
9. Opuscula Archaeologica Papers of the Department of..., 37/38(1), 2014
10. Medica Jadertina, 45(1-2), 2015

### 10 latest issues online published on Hrčak

1. Agronomy journal, 48(3), 1986
2. Croatica Christiana Periodica, 39(75), 2015
3. Medicina Fluminensis, 51(3.), 2015
4. Croatian Medical Journal, 56(3), 2015
5. Practical management, journal of management in theory and..., 6(1), 2015
6. Agronomy journal, 48(4), 1986
7. CIT. Journal of Computing and Information Technology, 23(3), 2015
8. Journal of Electrochemical Science and Engineering, 5(2), 2015
9. Journal for Pedagogical Theory and Practice, 64(1), 2015
10. Agronomy journal, 49(1), 1987



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# The study





# Motivation for the study

- *„Whereas our former Instructions to authors have mostly been concerned with recommendations for manuscript preparation and submission, the revised document additionally describes the editorial procedure for all submitted articles and provides exact journal policies towards research integrity, authorship, copyright and conflict of interest“*

Editors of the Croatian journal *Biochemia Medica*



# Research question

- Were ethical issues in current instructions for authors of Croatian OA journals adequately described compared with information about journal and instructions for manuscript preparation (formatting and style)?
- to investigate the differences between instructions to authors of Croatian OA journals from different disciplines



# Methods

- 363 Croatian OA journals available on Hrčak
- 298 journals with publicly available IfA
- 283 journals with the IfA stored in a machine readable format
- sciences (21), biomedicine (30), technical sciences (29), biotechnical sciences (22), social sciences (87) and humanities (94)
- content analysis (automatic coding), document as an unit (case)
- hierarchical categorisation dictionary: 3 top-categories, 24 first level, 30 second level, and 7 third level subcategories including 243 words, phrases and rules
- Provalis Research software for text analysis (QDA Miner and WordStat for word frequency analysis and text mining)



# 3 top categories (level 0)

- Information about the journal
- Instructions for manuscript preparation
- Ethical issues

2. Journal		
	Business model	additional charge, article processing charges, fee, free of charge, open access
	Carrier	Word categorization based on Boolean (AND, OR, NOT) and proximity rules (NEAR, AFTER, BEFORE)
	Copyright transfer	
	Research data	dataset, raw data, underlying data
	Language	Croatian, English, French, German, Italian
	Media	audio, graphics, multimedia, text, video
	Peer review	anonymous, blind, open
	Scope	discipline, field, subject, topic
	Timeliness	estimated time, timely

### 3. Manuscript

Manuscript elements

title, author, abstract, key-words, introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, conclusion, literature, acknowledgement

Manuscript layout

layout (spacing, margins, header, footer, paragraph), tables&figures (figure, graph, illustration, image, formula, table), typography (font, italic, bold)

Type of paper



article, book review, preliminary communication, review article, conference paper

1. Ethical issues		
	Accuracy	accuracy
	Authorship	authorship, contributorship
	Confidentiality	confidentiality, privacy
	Ethics	ethics
	Funding and Col	funding, grant, project, sponsor, conflict of interest, competing interest
	Misconduct	allegation, fabrication, falsification, fraud, malpractice, manipulation, misconduct
	Plagiarism	plagiarism
	Redundancy	compilation, dual submission, duplicate submission, multiple submission, recycled, redundant
	Reporting	reporting
	Research integrity	research integrity
	Responsibility	author's responsibility, editor's responsibility, publisher's responsibility
	Retraction	expression of concern, retraction, suspicion, withdrawal



# Results



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- At the top level categories there was no significant difference between categories on publishing issues (journal and manuscript)
  - Significant difference was present on **ethical issues**

Category	Subcategory	Sci	Biomed	Techn	Biotech	Soc	Hum	Chi square value	P(Chi square test)
1. Ethical issues		16/21	23/30	20/29	16/22	43/87	52/94	13.141	0.022
	Accuracy	6	9	9	6	11	10	14.266	0.014
	Authenticity	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.008
	Confidentiality	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.022
	Ethical issues	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.001
	Functionality	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.001
	Miscellaneous	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.001
	Placement	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.049
	Recovery	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.001
	Reporting	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.001
	Research integrity	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.008
	Responsibility	1	1	1	1	1	1	27.154	0.001
	Retraction	4	4	5	5	2	1	26.085	< 0.001

- Ethical issues are best represented in the instructions for authors of biomedical journals (77%) - expected
- Science journals followed closely (76%) - not expected
- Less than half of the journals from social sciences have present any ethical issues in their instructions for authors



Category	Sci	Biomed	Techn	Biotech	Soc	Hum	Chi square value	P(Chi square test)
3. Manuscript	21/21	30/30	29/29	22/22	87/87	93/93	2.018	0.847

- Manuscript issues were present in almost **all journals**
- **Manuscript layout** (chapters, paragraphs, margins, page size, line spacing, alignment, indentation, headers and footers) makes large part of IfA
- Journal editors are often describing **manuscript elements**: article title, authors, abstract, key-words, introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, literature and acknowledgement
- The most popular **type of the paper** in all disciplines is article (scientific paper), followed by the conference paper.

	FREQUEN CY	% SHOWN	% PROCESS ED	% TOTAL	NO. CASES	% CASES
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSCRIPT_LAYOUT\_LAYOUT	2939	10,00%	1,50%	1,00%	273	96,50%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\ABSTRACT	1068	3,70%	0,60%	0,30%	261	92,20%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\AUTHORS	1907	6,50%	1,00%	0,60%	253	89,40%
JOURNAL\CARRIER\DIGITAL	1137	3,90%	0,60%	0,40%	251	88,70%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\LITERATURE	1811	6,20%	0,90%	0,60%	250	88,30%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\TITLE	1309	4,50%	0,70%	0,40%	235	83,00%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\KEY_WORDS	510	1,70%	0,30%	0,20%	229	80,90%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSCRIPT_LAYOUT\TYPOGRAPHY	1447	4,90%	0,80%	0,50%	225	79,50%
JOURNAL\MEDIA\TEXT	1865	6,40%	1,00%	0,60%	222	78,40%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSCRIPT_LAYOUT\TABLES&FIGURES	2727	9,30%	1,40%	0,90%	188	66,40%
JOURNAL\LANGUAGE\ENGLISH*	552	1,90%	0,30%	0,20%	171	60,40%
MANUSCRIPT\TYPE_OF_PAPER\ARTICLE*	1474	5,00%	0,80%	0,50%	171	60,40%
JOURNAL\CARRIER\ANALOG	475	1,60%	0,20%	0,20%	169	59,70%
JOURNAL\LANGUAGE\CROATIAN*	560	1,90%	0,30%	0,20%	166	58,70%
JOURNAL\MEDIA\GRAPHICS	1019	3,50%	0,50%	0,30%	161	56,90%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\RESULTS	692	2,40%	0,40%	0,20%	156	55,10%
JOURNAL\LANGUAGE\LANGUAGE*	460	1,60%	0,20%	0,10%	147	51,90%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\CONCLUSION	321	1,10%	0,20%	0,10%	147	51,90%
MANUSCRIPT\MANUSC_ELEMENTS\METHODS	475	1,60%	0,20%	0,20%	147	51,90%
JOURNAL\LANGUAGE\HRVATSK*	615	2,10%	0,30%	0,20%	136	48,10%
MANUSCRIPT\TYPE_OF_PAPER\CONFEREN*	286	1,00%	0,10%	0,10%	118	41,70%

# 4. LEVEL SUBCATEGORIES

# Conclusions

- Ethical issues was **the least** prominent category in our study
- The most frequent ethical issues addressed by Croatian OA journals were **responsibility, funding and accuracy**
- Guidance regarding **redundancy, conflict of interest, reporting, retraction, confidentiality, plagiarism, and research integrity** was addressed by **less than 10%** of the journals
- Addressed more often by medical journals: **responsibility, publishing ethics, conflict of interest, funding, and authorship**
- Ethical issues like **retraction, plagiarism, research integrity and confidentiality** were represented by **few** biomedical journals.





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Thank you for your attention,  
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