

## **PUBLICATION POLICY**

### **Goal and Scope**

The academic journals of TÜBİTAK are open-access, peer-reviewed academic journals published electronically and bimonthly by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK). The goal of the journals is to improve the research culture and help knowledge spread rapidly in the academic world by providing a common academic platform. All the TUBITAK academic Journals are published in English.

The TÜBİTAK academic journals are available online for free at <http://journals.tubitak.gov.tr> and <http://dergipark.gov.tr/>. All manuscripts published in our journals are licensed under CC BY 4.0 (Creative Commons license).

All responsibility for the scientific content and statements in an article published in the TÜBİTAK academic journals belongs to the authors.

### **Assessment and Publication**

All manuscripts submitted to our journals undergo preliminary evaluation for their compliance with the instructions for authors, language, contribution to science, and originality. Manuscripts that are evaluated as insufficient or noncompliant with the instructions for authors may be rejected without peer review.

Subject Editors and referees who are expert researchers in their fields assess scientific articles submitted to our journals. A blind peer review policy is applied to the evaluation process. The Editor-in-Chief, if he/she sees necessary, may assign a Subject Editor for the article or may conduct the scientific assessment of the article himself/herself. Editors may also assign referees for the scientific assessment of the article and make their decisions based on reports by the referees. The Editor-in-Chief makes the final decision regarding the publishing of the article.

Articles are accepted for publication by the Editor-in-Chief in accordance with the journal's instructions for authors. Authors can access these instructions online by the [journals' websites](#). Articles are accepted for publication on the understanding that they have not been published and are not going to be considered for publication elsewhere. Authors should certify that neither the manuscript nor its

main contents have already been published or submitted for publication in another journal with the [Copyright Release Form](#).

### **The Role of Journal Editors-in-Chief**

The crucial role of a journal Editor-in-Chief is to monitor and ensure the fairness, timeliness, thoroughness, and civility of the peer-review editorial process. The main responsibilities of our editors are:

- Selecting manuscripts suitable for publication while rejecting unsuitable manuscripts,
- Ensuring a supply of high-quality manuscripts to the journal by identifying important “hot topics”,
- Increasing the journal’s impact factor and maintaining the publishing schedule,
- Providing strategic input for the journal’s development,
- Organizing the flow of manuscripts by communicating with the authors, referees, and publishers,
- Describing, implementing, and regularly reviewing policies for handling ethical issues and allegations or findings of misconduct by authors and anyone involved in the peer-review process,
- Treating all authors with fairness, courtesy, objectivity, honesty, and transparency,
- Protecting the confidentiality of every author’s work,
- Setting up a reliable panel of expert reviewers.

Editors are also responsible for offering feedback to reviewers when required and ensuring that any feedback to authors is constructive.

### **Cancellations/Returns**

Articles may be returned to authors in order to increase the authenticity and reliability and to prevent ethical breaches, and even if articles have been accepted or published, they can be withdrawn from publication if necessary. The Editors-in-Chief of the journals have the right to return or withdraw articles in the following situations:

- When there is proof of ruling out the findings obtained by the research,
- When the article is undergoing an assessment or publication process by another journal, congress, conference, etc.,
- When the article is not within the scope of the journal,

- When the scientific quality and content of the article does not meet the standards of the journal and a referee review is not necessary,
- When the article was not prepared in compliance with scientific publication ethics,
- When one of the authors of the article is punished by TÜBİTAK's Committee on Research and Publication Ethics (TÜBİTAK AYEK),
- When high similarity to another work is detected by the plagiarism detection software (iThenticate) used by TÜBİTAK,
- When any other plagiarism is detected in the article,
- When the authors do not perform the requested corrections within the requested time,
- When the author does not submit the requested documents/materials/data etc. within the requested time,
- When the authors make changes that are not approved by the editor after the article was submitted,
- When an author is added/removed, the order of the authors is changed, the corresponding author is changed, or the addresses of the authors are changed without the consent of the Editor-in-Chief,
- When a statement is not submitted indicating that approval of the ethics committee or permission of the related hospital administration was obtained for the following (including retrospective studies):
  - a. Studies in which hospital records services are used,
  - b. Studies in which pathology preparations are reevaluated or additional stainings are applied,
  - c. Studies in which social insurance/ministerial records systems are used,
- When human rights or animal rights are violated,
- When data used in the study cannot be provided upon requested.

## **Ethical Issues**

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors definition of conflicts of interest is as follows: "A conflict of interest exists when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (such as patients' welfare or the validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (such as financial gain). Perceptions of conflict of interest are as important as actual conflicts of interest."

A conflict of interest defines the situations that might raise the question of bias, direct or indirect, in the work reported. These situations occur when an

individual's objectivity is potentially compromised by a desire for financial gain, prominence, professional advancement, or a successful outcome. Conflicts can also arise for other reasons, such as personal relationships or rivalries, academic competition, and intellectual beliefs.

Authors should avoid entering into agreements with study sponsors, both for-profit and nonprofit, that interfere with authors' access to all of the study's data or that interfere with their ability to analyze and interpret. In order to preserve the reliability of the TÜBİTAK academic journals, authors are required to disclose all and any potential conflicts of interest when they submit their manuscripts.

Conflicts of interest are the most likely to undermine the credibility of the journal, the authors, and science itself. That is why our editors are working diligently to ensure that what is published in our journals is balanced, evidence-based, and evaluated independently. In this manner, Subject Editors and reviewers are required to notify the journal if they find they do not have the necessary expertise to assess the relevant aspects of a manuscript, if they decide that the manuscript is very similar to one in preparation or under consideration by another journal, or if they suspect the identity of the author(s), which raises potential competing or conflicting interests.

## Human and Animal Rights

Ensuring that the studies published in our journals are conducted in a fair and ethical manner is one of our major missions. We publish across multiple research areas, many of which have their own standards and methods of governing research practice.

When reporting experiments with human subjects, authors should indicate whether the procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible committee on human experimentation. For manuscripts reporting medical studies involving human participants, authors are required to provide a statement identifying the ethics committee that approved the study and confirming that the study conforms to recognized standards, for example:

- Declaration of Helsinki
- US Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects
- European Medicines Agency Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice

These standards encourage authors to conduct studies in a way that ensures adequate steps have been taken to minimize harm to participants, to avoid

coercion or exploitation, to protect confidentiality, and to minimize the risk of physical and psychological harm.

If the editors or referees doubt whether the research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards, they may ask the authors to explain the rationale for their approach and demonstrate that the institutional review body explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study. The Editorial Board has the right to reject any studies not meeting the criteria.

One of our main principles in studies involving human subjects is to ensure that a patient's right to privacy has not been infringed without prior informed consent. Authors are encouraged to follow the [ICMJE](#) guidelines for reporting on human subjects. For publication of material that contains detailed patient information about a living individual, it is compulsory for a signed patient consent form to be obtained. Any identifier that might reveal a patient's identity must be removed (from X-rays, MRIs, charts, photographs, etc.). Written informed consent is required from any potentially identifiable patient or legal representative and should be presented in either the Materials and Methods section or the Acknowledgments.

Research involving animals should be conducted with the same rigor as research involving humans. When reporting experiments on animals, authors are asked to indicate whether the institutional and national standards for the care and use of laboratory animals were followed.

Where animals are used in research we expect them to have been treated in a humane manner and complying with the [ARRIVE](#) guidelines and the [Consensus Author Guidelines For Animal Use](#) developed by the International Association of Veterinary Editors. Our editors and referees also handle submissions involving these guidelines. Editors may ask authors to describe in their manuscripts how discomfort, distress, and pain were avoided and minimized, and to confirm that animals did not suffer unnecessarily at any stage of an experiment. Editors may request that reviewers comment on the standard of experimental reporting, experimental design, or any other aspects of the study reported that might cause concern. If concerns are raised or clarifications are needed, they may need to request evidence of ethical research approval or question the authors.

Animal ethics-based criteria for manuscript rejection are:

- Manuscripts and authors that fail to meet the aforementioned requirements,
- Studies that involve unnecessary pain, distress, suffering, or lasting harm to animals.

Editors retain the right to reject manuscripts on the basis of ethical or welfare concerns.

### **Advertising**

The TÜBİTAK academic journals do not accept advertising and sponsorships that are believed to create a potential conflict of interest.