

New structures and new perspectives for Social and Preventive Medicine: the International Journal of Public Health

Dear Readers!

In the year 2001 Social and Preventive Medicine (SPM) – as you have just observed – comes with a new cover, some changes in its layout and a new subtitle (International Journal of Public Health). More importantly, however, the journal has revised its content, structure and style. Aims and scope of SPM will continue to include original works from many disciplines and topic areas in Public Health. Yet, within this broad perspective the new SPM will put more emphasis on research based on Health Surveys, Risk Factor Surveillance and Health Promotion. SPM will provide a scientific forum to publish findings from research studies in these areas, encourage international comparisons, support and stimulate the debate on methodology and ethics.

You will still find in SPM high quality articles in three languages: English, German and French. Authors need to be aware that a paper written in English will have a broader readership. It can also be reviewed by a larger community of experts. Nevertheless, we also see the need to acknowledge good work that is produced in German or French. The main abstract, available on Medicine, will be in English, but all abstracts will be systematically translated into German and French and published in the journal. The new content of SPM is consistent with what can be usually found in leading public health journals: editorials that define topical priorities and encourage scientific exchange, original articles, brief reports and scientific letters that present peer reviewed research findings of different length, and communications which are Public Health news from various sources.

With the current issue SPM starts two new sections presented in separate editorials (p. 3–5).

The first of these Sections (“International comparison of health determinants”) deals with a standardised format that aims at harmonisation and integration in the reporting of

results from surveys on health determinants. Data published in this section will help to improve the quality of reporting and also support comparative analysis of survey data. Similar initiatives have recently been taken in the fields of clinical research and evidence-based medicine. The Editorial Board of SPM feels that there is a strong need to develop guidelines allowing survey and surveillance data to be presented in comparable format. To our knowledge, SPM is the first journal to offer a specific section for this kind of scientific findings.

The second new section is dedicated to a series of papers on the history of epidemiologic methods. We hope that this series will stimulate an international reflection on the foundations of a major discipline of public health and also provide teachers throughout the world with a material that can be used in various types of curricula.

Our new Advisory Board, the Swiss Society for Public Health, the Swiss Foundation for Health Promotion, the German Society for Medical Sociology, and a dedicated publisher collaborate closely to open new perspectives in Public Health. As for the daily work, a core team of editors has been assembled that reflects the broad range of expertise needed to progress in the right directions. The new editors have recently met in Arolla, Switzerland for the first Annual Meeting of the Editorial Board. On the following picture gallery you may recognise some of them. With your help, readers and authors, SPM can reinforce its recognition as a leading Public Health journal.

*On behalf of the Editorial Board
The Editors-in-Chief*

Thomas Abel and Alfredo Morabia

The Editorial Board*

Pictures from the First Editorial Board Meeting in Arolla, Switzerland

Thomas Abel



Nicole Graf

Thomas Kohlmann



Alfredo Morabia



David V. Mc Queen

Mary Northridge



Salvatore Panico

Herman Van Oyen



* Following members of the Editorial Board are missing in this collection: Serge Hercberg, Petra Kolip, Nino Künzli, Jouke van der Zee