Instructions for Authors

General information
When considering to submit your work to the International Journal of Public Health (IJPH), please first make sure your article fits the IJPH Aims and Scopes.

You may also look into the IJPH archive for related articles and find out more about the suitability of your article for IJPH. Due to the large interest, Editors cannot advise on the suitability of the article before submission of the manuscript.

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IJPH encourages authors to make their datasets on which the conclusions of the paper rely available to readers as Electronic Supplementary Material or in publicly available repositories. Please see Springer Nature’s information on recommended repositories.

http://www.springernature.com/gp/group/data-policy/repositories

The Editors-in-Chief select articles for the peer review mainly based on the title and abstract. Make sure your abstract is well-written in good English and includes a rationale for the study (Objectives), the sample size and study design and a conclusion. If possible, mention the international relevance.

More about peer review in the specific section on peer review.
More about language editing in the specific section on language editing

Further editorial policies are available here.

**Types of papers**

**International Journal of Public Health** publishes original research and reviews, either empirical or theoretical, that contribute to understanding and improving public health. IJPH does not publish essays or opinion articles. Commentaries and Editorials are invited by the Editors.

Conflict of interest is mandatory for all article types published in IJPH. Such a statement appears in the title page, before the reference list, and in the online submission data.

We encourage authors to refer to the minimum reporting guidelines for health research hosted by the EQUATOR network when preparing their manuscript. Checklists are available for a number of study designs.


Manuscripts should be written in view of their submission to one of the following sections: Peer reviewed or Not peer reviewed.

**Peer reviewed**

- **Original Articles** (4000 words max. without reference list, structured abstract 180 words max., 40 references max., up to 6 figures and tables). Original Articles report on original quantitative or qualitative research. The main structure is Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion.

- **Hints and Kinks** are short methodological reports (1000 words max., no abstract) presenting topics relevant to survey research and surveillance. They report on experience with techniques in a variety of areas and topics, such as writing questions, questionnaire design, survey implementation, or new and original ways to analyse data and show results. Authors are free to structure the text as they like.

- **Research Reviews** should concentrate on the most recent developments in the field. Authors should confirm during submission in the comments for the editors (appearing during online submission) that the topic was not covered in a review recently in IJPH or in other journals. Literature searches for all Reviews should be systematic and comprehensive. Reviews may or may not include a meta-analysis or statistical summary of the individual study results.

The text body of Reviews should be structured in Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion and should be in the length range of 4000-4500 words (without reference list), with up to 60 references, and up to 6 figures and tables. A short Introduction should put the area into context and define the aim. The Method section should explicitly describe how the studies were identified and selected for inclusion in the review. Search terms, Prisma flow-chart and eligibility criteria should be provided. The Discussion should address the international relevance of the findings.
Narrative Reviews are particularly welcome for the section “Knowledge Synthesis, Translation and Exchange”. Di Ruggiero (2018) [see the link below] specifies the contents for narrative reviews within this section. Narrative reviews should also have not more than 4500 words and the structure Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion. Methods should be explicit, transparent and clearly stated.

Di Ruggiero (2018)

Central and Eastern Europe: IJPH encourages authors from Central and Eastern Europe to submit their work. IJPH is dedicated since 2006 to making the increasing public-health knowledge from Central and Eastern Europe available to the scientific community and promoting the transfer of knowledge in survey, surveillance and health promotion research between East and West. The journal adopts the WHO definition of Eastern Europe comprising the 13 countries that formerly belonged to the USSR and the countries of Central and Oriental Europe that used to belong to the influence zone of the USSR without being part of it and/or had planned economies.

Not peer reviewed

- **Editorials** are invited short essays that express the author’s viewpoint or explain journal policies (800 words, 10 references max).

- **Young Researcher Editorials (YREs)** are unsolicited editorials on topical discussions in public health written by advanced PhD students (up to 12 months after completion of the PhD) from across the world. YREs convey one single, clear message. They have a short and catchy title, are 800 words long, and have up to ten references. Doctoral students of the Swiss School of Public Health+ review all YREs. After acceptance, YREs receive free professional copyediting funded by the Swiss School of Public Health+. YRE are eligible for review when they comply with one or more of the following criteria:
  - Raise novel issues in public health
  - Discuss recent publications or themes addressed in IJPH or elsewhere
  - Debate public health science and related policies
  - Promote discussions about science careers in public health and related challenges
  - Place public health challenges in a broader context
  - Address matters of global or multi-regional relevance

YRE is a capacity-building project for PhD students, offered by the Swiss School of Public Health+. Please find more details about the YRE project at the links below.

- **Commentaries** are invited, more in-depth opinion pieces (1000 words, 10 references max) usually on peer-reviewed articles.

- **Letters to the Editors** are reactions relating to recently published articles in IJPH. Letters should be submitted no later than 3 months after online-first publication of the article. Usually, we invite the authors of the article to respond to the Letter.

  Young Researcher Editorials
  
  Swiss School of Public Health-YRE
Manuscript submission

Implications of manuscript submission

Submission of a manuscript implies that the work described or parts of it has not been published before; that it is not under peer review or consideration for publication anywhere else; that its publication has been approved by all co-authors (if any), as well as by the responsible authorities – tacitly or explicitly – at the institute where the work has been carried out. The publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any claims for compensation.

Before submission, the sections Ethical Responsibilities of Authors and Compliance with Ethical Standards should have been carefully considered and the required relevant paragraphs added to the Title page of the manuscript.

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Please follow the hyperlink “Submit online” on the right and upload all of your manuscript files following the instructions given on the screen. Please prepare your submission files following the advice below. We prefer editable text files for texts and tables (Word).

Please note that you have to upload all required submission items for the first submission and to replace these with the revised files from the first revision onward. Failing to submit the most recent and mandatory files and information will cause unnecessary delays in the peer review and production process.

Editors and reviewers are obliged to handle your manuscript confidentially.

Ensure that information in the submitted files and in the online data are identical for:

- Manuscript title
- Corresponding author name, affiliation and email address
- Co-authors (if any - names and affiliation)
- Order of authors

During the submission process, authors can enter comments to the editor. Although such comments are optional, it is recommended to mention the main message and international relevance of the work.
**Author list**

The authorship should be clarified thoroughly before submission. Please follow the standard guidelines (e.g. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, http://www.icmje.org/)

Changes of the list of authors or order of authors should be avoided once the manuscript is submitted.

**Submission of a new manuscript**

Submission requires the following files (mandatory):

- Title page: see the paragraph below for details.
- Author blinded manuscript text file, preferably in Word: including the article type name and article title, as well as the captions of all figures and tables after the reference list, lines numbered consecutively through all pages, excluding author names, affiliations, acknowledgements, and the section Compliance with ethical standards which is part of the title page.
- Abstract (only for Original Articles and Reviews; preferably in Word), please see details for Abstracts below), with up to 6 keywords

Acknowledgements, figures and tables, and electronic supplementary materials are optional.

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- Revised manuscript file without tracked changes (preferably in Word): including article type name, article title, author names (first names first, in full, without titles), affiliations, acknowledgements (if any, not a mandatory part of the text file), and the section Compliance with ethical standards. The numbered affiliations should contain institution, town/city, and country (but no streets and post codes). Please remember to add the captions of all figures and tables after the reference list.
- Blinded revised manuscript with tracked changes (preferably in Word): including the article type name and article title; excluding author names, affiliations, acknowledgements, and the section Compliance with ethical standards. Please use an editable format (Word preferably) and consecutive line numbers and page numbers. Please remember to add the captions of all figures and tables after the reference list.
- Abstract (only for Original Articles and Reviews; preferably in Word, please see details for Abstracts below) with up to 6 keywords

Acknowledgements, figures and tables and electronic supplementary material are optional.

**Title page**
The title page should be uploaded separately from the manuscript as an individual file and include the following:

- The article type and a short, concise title (20 words max., preferably shorter). According to standard reporting guidelines, the title should include the study design. Adding a verb to the title often makes it more attractive. The title should not contain abbreviations. The study name can be presented in the keywords.
- The name(s) of the author(s) (starting with the full first names, without titles).
- The numbered affiliation(s) of the author(s): institutions, cities/towns, and country (without streets and post codes).
- The e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers of the corresponding author and the e-mail addresses of all other authors. Please make sure to provide the same e-mail addresses on the title page and in the online system.
- The number of words of the Abstract, the text body (including ethical statements for unblended versions, excluding reference list).
- A section **Compliance with Ethical Standards** (for Original Articles, Reviews, Hints&Kinks) including subsections and disclosure of Conflict of interest (mandatory), and, as applicable, Funding, Ethical approval, and Informed consent. Please read more about Compliance with Ethical Standards below.
- Please note: Conflict of interest statement is mandatory for all article types.
- Acknowledgements (if applicable, optional).

**Abstract**

Please provide an Abstract for Original articles (180 words max.) and Reviews (180 words max.). Abstracts should be structured into:

- Objectives (stating context and the purpose of the study-why was it done?)
- Methods (describing how the study was performed and the statistical tests used, sample size, data source, etc.)
- Results (main findings)
- Conclusions (potential implications, international relevance)
- Key words (4 to 6 keywords which can be used for indexing purposes. The keywords have to be provided also during the online submission.)

Abbreviations should be explained at first appearance in the Abstract.

Hints&Kinks, Editorials and Commentaries require no Abstract. During submission of these article types please enter “not required” when you are asked for an Abstract.

**Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgements of people, grants, funds, etc. are optional. They should be initially submitted within Title page. Acknowledgements should not be part of the manuscript file in the initial submission. Please omit author names and affiliations from the Acknowledgements. The names of the funding organizations should be written in full (not abbreviated).

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Authors are asked to suggest three suitable reviewers and/or request the exclusion of certain individuals during the submission of their manuscripts. When suggesting reviewers, authors should make sure they are totally independent and not connected to the work or authors in any way. It is strongly recommended to suggest a mix of reviewers from different countries and different institutions. When suggesting reviewers, the Corresponding Author must provide an institutional email address for each suggested reviewer, or, if this is not possible to include, other means of verifying the identity such as a link to a personal homepage, a link to the publication record or a researcher or author ID in the submission letter. Please note that the Journal may not use the suggestions, but suggestions are appreciated and may help facilitate the peer review process.

**Manuscript text body**

**Text formatting**

The blinded manuscript version should be free from any information that allows the reviewers to identify the authors. Such information may include funding information, self-references and conflict of interest statements.

- Use a regular plain font (e.g., 10-point Times Roman) for text.
- Use italics for emphasis.
- Use the automatic line numbering functions to include continuous line numbers.
- Use the automatic page numbering function to number pages.
- Do not use field functions.
- Use tab stops or other commands for indents, not the space bar.
- Use the table function, not spreadsheets, to make tables.
- Use the equation editor or MathType for equations.
- Apart from the first word of the article title, headings, captions of figures and tables and text sentences should begin with lower case letters. Exceptions are names and fixed expressions.
- No bold or underlined characters may be used throughout the text (except bold type for headings).
- Do not use footnotes and endnotes throughout the text. Footnotes are permitted only for tables.
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of the Discussion. Please do not use more than three levels of displayed headings and do not number headings.

- The Introduction presents the actual state of knowledge, the problems dealt with, objectives, and hypotheses.
- Methods presents material, methods, and the population studied
- Results presents the core results of the analysis
- Discussion should explain what the results mean, present limitations and should end with clear conclusion.
- References
- Table and figure captions (if applicable)

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Abbreviations should be defined at first mention in the text body and used consistently thereafter. Abbreviations should not be used in the title and in captions of figures and tables.

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Footnotes and endnotes are not allowed in the text body. However, footnotes (not endnotes) are allowed for the tables and figures.

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**References**

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Cite references in the text by name and year in parentheses. Cite all last name(s) for publications with one or two authors. For publications with three or more authors, cite the last name of only the first author, followed by “et al.” Some examples:

- Negotiation research spans many disciplines (Thompson 1990).
- This result was later contradicted by Becker and Seligman (1996).
- This effect has been widely studied (Abbott 1991; Barakat et al. 1995a, b; Kelso and Smith 1998; Medvec et al. 1999, 2000).

Please do not use & instead of “and”, and do not add comma or colon between name and year.

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- Journal article
  Ideally, the names of all authors should be provided, but the usage of “et al” in long author lists (more than three authors) will also be accepted. Please present three author names and then use et al:

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- Book

- Book chapter

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  Trent JW (1975) Experimental acute renal failure. Dissertation, University of California

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• Tables in online appendices (Electronic supplementary material) should be numbered separately

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In captions, please do not use any abbreviations, even if they have already been explained in the manuscript text body or elsewhere
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All words of the caption apart from the first one in a sentence should begin with lower case letters. Exceptions are names and fixed expressions.
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• All figures are to be numbered using Arabic numerals.
• Figures should always be cited in text in consecutive numerical order.
• Figure parts should be denoted by lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc.).
• For each figure supply a caption. Figure captions should be placed after References section in the manuscript text, not in the figure file
• Figures and captions should not be presented within the text body. Instead a placeholder should be added to the text body, e.g. “insert figure 1 here”
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Compliance with ethical standards

To ensure objectivity and transparency in research and to ensure that accepted principles of ethical and professional conduct have been followed, authors should include information regarding sources of funding, potential conflicts of interest (financial or non-financial), informed consent if the research involved human participants, and a statement on welfare of animals if the research involved animals.

Authors should include the following statements (if applicable) in a separate section “Compliance with Ethical Standards” in the Title page when submitting a paper:

• Conflict of interest (mandatory for all article types)
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• Ethical approval (including record number) (if applicable)
• Informed consent (if applicable)
• Research involving Human Participants and/or Animals (if applicable)

The corresponding author should be prepared to collect documentation of compliance with ethical standards and send if requested during peer review or after publication.

The Editors reserve the right to reject manuscripts that do not comply with the above-mentioned guidelines. The author will be held responsible for false statements or failure to fulfill the above-mentioned guidelines.

Conflict of interest
Authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could influence or bias the work. Although an author may not feel there are conflicts, disclosure of relationships and interests affords a more transparent process, leading to an accurate and objective assessment of the work. Awareness of real or perceived conflicts of interests is a perspective to which the readers are entitled and is not meant to imply that a financial relationship with an organization that sponsored the research or compensation for consultancy work is inappropriate. Examples of potential conflicts of interests that are directly or indirectly related to the research may include but are not limited to the following:

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- Financial support for attending symposia
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- Employment or consultation
- Support from a project sponsor
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The corresponding author will include a summary statement on the title page that is separate from their manuscript, that reflects what is recorded in the potential conflict of interest disclosure form(s).

See below examples of disclosures:

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If no conflict exists, the authors should state:
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**Research involving human participants**

**Statement of human rights**
When reporting studies that involve human participants, authors should include a statement that the studies have been approved by the appropriate institutional and/or national research ethics committee and have been performed in accordance with the ethical standards as laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration or comparable standards, the authors must explain the reasons for their approach, and demonstrate that the independent ethics committee or institutional review board explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study.

If a study was granted exemption from requiring ethics approval, this should also be detailed in the manuscript (including the name of the ethics committee that granted the exemption and the reasons for the exemption).

Authors must - in all situations as described above - include the name of the ethics committee and the reference number where appropriate.

The following statements should be included in the Title page:

**Ethical approval:** “All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee (include name of committee + reference number) and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.”

**Ethical approval of studies using pre-existing data**

Data should be anonymized and irreversibly de-identified to protect patient, health care professional and/or hospital privacy. For studies using pre-existing and de-identified data, formal approval from the ethics committee is not required.

**Informed consent**

All individuals have individual rights that are not to be infringed. Individual participants in studies have, for example, the right to decide what happens to the (identifiable) personal data gathered, to what they have said during a study or an interview, as well as to any photograph that was taken. Hence it is important that all participants gave their informed consent in writing prior to inclusion in the study. Identifying details (names, dates of birth, identity numbers and other information) of the participants that were studied should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, and genetic profiles unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the participant (or parent or guardian if the participant is incapable) gave written informed consent for publication. Complete anonymity is difficult to achieve in some cases, and informed consent should be obtained if there is any doubt. For example, masking the eye region in photographs of participants is inadequate protection of anonymity. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic profiles, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning.

The following statement should be included:

**Informed consent:** “Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.”

If identifying information about participants is available in the article, the following statement should be included: “Additional informed consent was obtained from all individual participants for whom identifying information is included in this article.”

**Electronic supplementary material**
International Journal of Public Health (IJPH) accepts supplementary files to be published online along with an article. The material will be published as received from the author without any correction, conversion, editing, or reformatting. There will be no proof reading for supplementary material. Please make sure, before submission, that all material is free from errors and typos and follows the IJPH rules for presenting figures and tables and their captions.

**Submission**
- Supply supplementary material in a single file. In case it is necessary to submit multiple files, please name them consecutively, e.g. “ESM_3.mpg”, “ESM_4.pdf”.
- Please include in the supplementary file(s) at the top of the first page the journal name and the article title to make sure to readers the material is part of your article. Please do not provide author names to make sure the material is blinded for reviewers.
- Submit your supplementary material in PDF format; .doc or .ppt files are not suitable for long-term viability. A collection of figures may also be combined in a PDF file.
- To accommodate user downloads, please keep in mind that larger-sized files may require very long download times and that some users may experience other problems during downloading.
- If supplying supplementary material, the main text of the article must make specific mention of the material as a citation, similar to that of figures and tables.
- Refer to the supplementary files as “Online Resource” in the manuscript text, e.g., "as shown in the animation (Online Resource 3)”, “... additional data are given in Online Resource 4”.

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