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Editorial

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The first issue of the European Journal of Ageing (EJA) has been published in December 2004 and we are very happy about this event. The first publication of the EJA has met quite positive responses in the European gerontology research community and beyond, for which we are very grateful.

The goals of the EJA in the years to come are ambitious. Our first goal is very concrete, namely to publish four issues each year with contributions on cutting-edge European and world-wide ageing research from the social, behavioural and health sciences. To make a good start, we have decided in 2005 to have a special section in each of the four issues, which reflects key interdisciplinary themes in current ageing research. Furthermore, we are launching a new section titled *Critical Issues in Ageing Research*.

In the current issue, we begin with the new section *Critical Issues in Ageing Research*, in which we are happy to announce the article *A European Perspective on Quality of Life in Old Age* by Prof. Alan Walker (University of Sheffield, UK) as the first entry (Walker 2005, this issue, DOI 10.1007/s10433-005-0015-8). The current issue's special section is on *Social Engagement and Health in Older Age*, guest-edited by Peter Bath (University of Sheffield, UK) and by Dorly Deeg. For further details, we refer to the section's own introduction (Bath and Deeg 2005, this issue, DOI 10.1007/s10433-005-0019-4). In addition, we are happy to report an increasing number of free submissions. The current issue features the first of these articles (Kliegel and Zimprich 2005, this issue, DOI 10.1007/s10433-005-0017-6).

A second goal for the EJA is to steadily increase its impact on the international gerontology research community. The distribution of the EJA to an audience as wide as possible in 2005 is an important means to increase such impact, and we will do all possible to achieve this to the maximum—supported by our consulting editors, the editorial board, and together with our publisher, Springer-Verlag, Berlin Heidelberg New York. For example, we plan to advertise the EJA at the major ageing-related conferences in 2005, particularly the 18th Congress of the International Association of Gerontology in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 26–30 June of this year.

As a third goal, we aim to play a role in the strengthening and integration of European research on ageing. Specifically, it is our ambition to use the EJA as a continuous means to bring European ageing research to the attention of the European Commission. A specific goal in this regard is to achieve serious consideration of social, behavioural and health-related ageing research in the EU 7th Framework Programme. In the same vein, the EJA stimulates submissions from researchers on ageing working in the new member states of the EU.

Finally, we are very thankful to all colleagues who have invested and will be investing visible and invisible effort into activities to help the EJA reach the level which we are striving for. We would like to call on all colleagues to please provide us with their continuing feedback and to stimulate other colleagues to do so. This is how we can learn and improve the EJA from its very start.

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