

# The New Road for *GE – Portuguese Journal of Gastroenterology*: Into the Highway!

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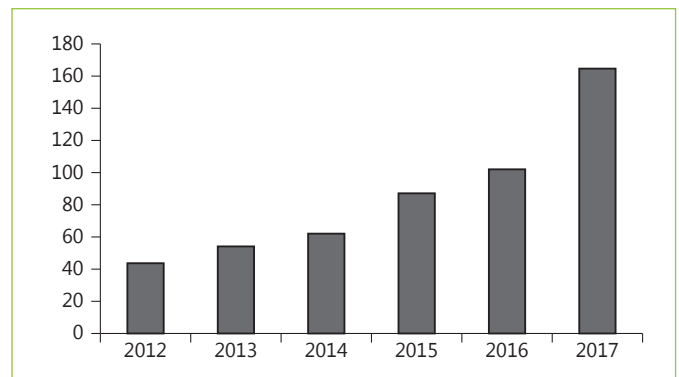
## O novo caminho para o *GE – Portuguese Journal of Gastroenterology*: na autoestrada!

It has been a long path since the current editorial team took control of *GE – Portuguese Journal of Gastroenterology* back in 2014. In the first volume under our responsibility, we did not have enough articles for a complete issue! Some articles had been under review for more than 6 months and we were waiting for resubmissions for almost 1 year! It was a worrisome scenario! We soon realized that serious hard work and some tough decisions would be needed if we wanted to change the route of our journal from a tortuous trail to a smooth and straightforward avenue, with no obstacles to our journey.

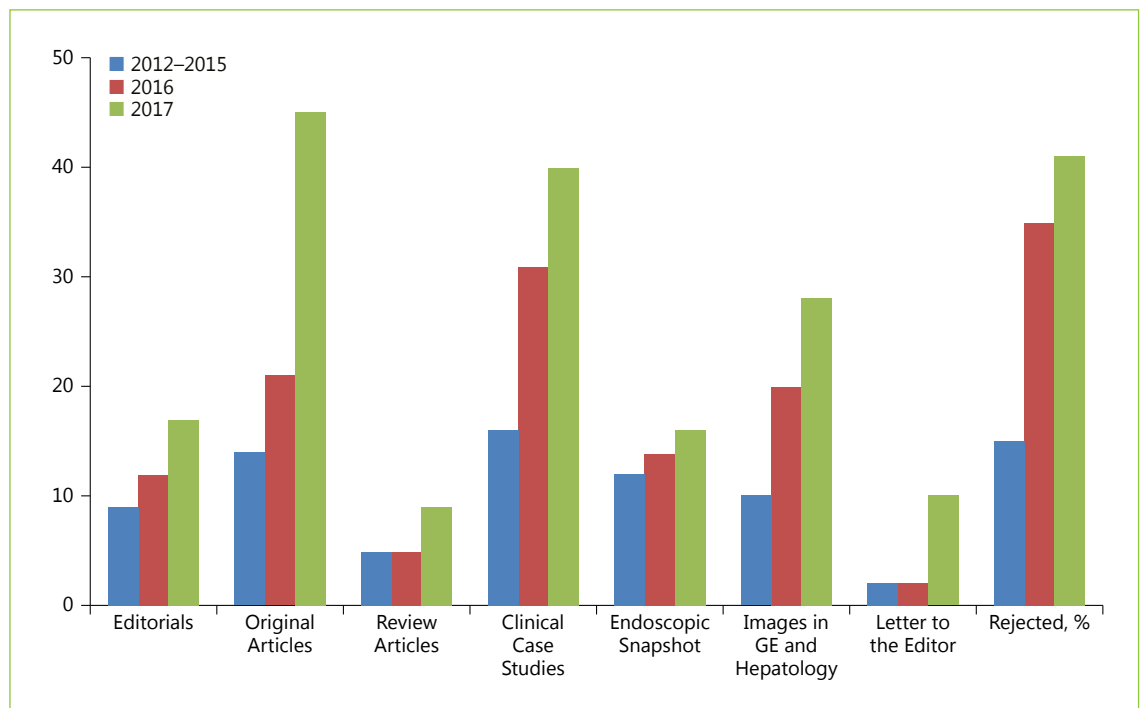
First of all, as the editor-in-chief, it felt little bit puzzling not having the opportunity to choose the co-editors of the journal. It looked clear to me that in order to achieve our ambitious goals, all the team members should row in the same direction. Therefore, the editor-in-chief should choose his co-editors and editorial team in order to build a strong team. Thankfully, all the directors of the journal agreed. All the other changes to the journal are superbly known, such as changing its name and ISSN, making

English its official language, reformulating all the editorial body, and so on. All these were vital steps for success.

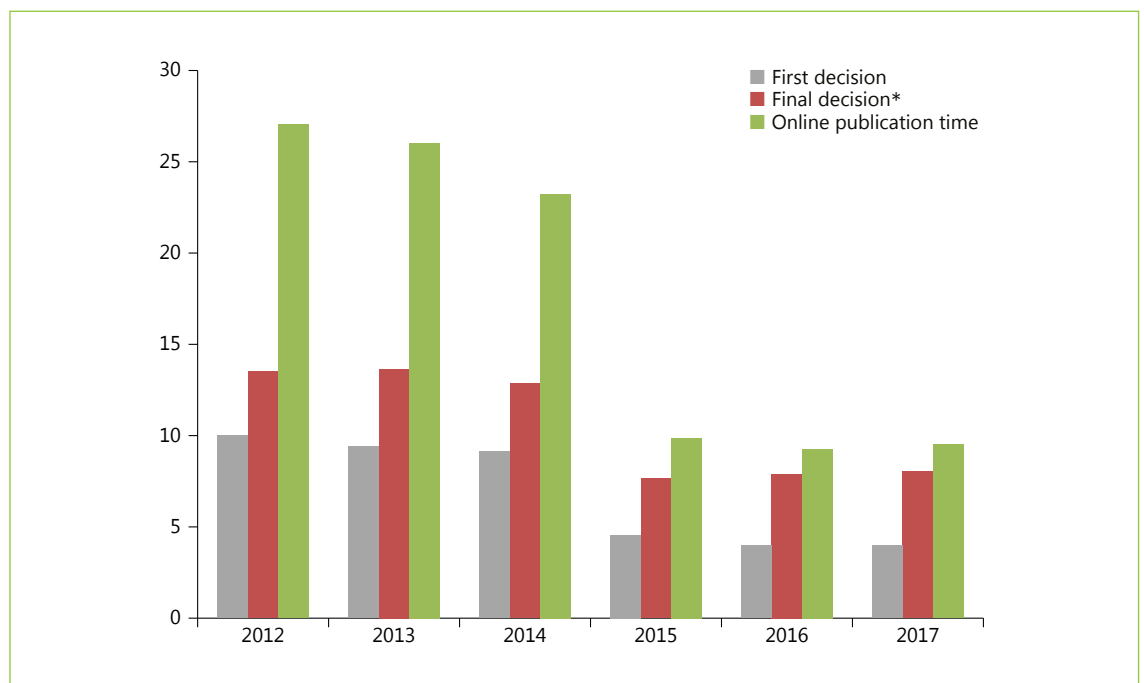
Of course, in every path, even the most planned one, we should be prepared for unforeseen obstacles that may compromise all the hard work. And this happened to *GE* in the summer of 2016, when our publisher at that time



**Fig. 1.** Number of submitted peer-reviewed articles per year. The number of submitted articles more than doubled when comparing 2012–2014 with 2015–2017, with a record number of 162 submissions in 2017.



**Fig. 2.** Type of articles submitted to *GE*. From 2012 to 2016, Clinical Case Studies were always the most frequent type of article submitted to *GE*. In 2017, Original Articles were the most frequent one.



**Fig. 3.** Review and editorial times have greatly decreased and since 2015, are in line with the best journals in the area. Time is expressed in weeks. \* Final decision for resubmitted articles.

informed us that they did not want to renew the contract which ended at the end of the year. At that exact moment we were being evaluated for PubMed indexation and this news came like a bolt from the blue. Dismay took over all of the team and PubMed indexation had become only a mirage. We had to react fast and make some quick decisions. Again, directors and editorial team worked together and we rapidly chose another publisher that gave us guarantee of success. Fortunately, the evaluation process was not compromised and in the summer of 2017, *GE – Portuguese Journal of Gastroenterology* was finally listed in PubMed!

How was this possible? Well, the numbers speak for themselves. The number of submitted articles more than doubled from 2012 to 2016, with a record number of submitted articles over 100 in 2016 (Fig. 1). In 2017, we had 162 submissions, 17% from authors outside Portugal, and for the first time in the history of the Journal, the most submitted type of article was the Original Article (Fig. 2). This allowed us to be more judicious in the acceptance of the articles, with a record rejection rate of 41% in 2017,

translating into a better quality of our articles. Why did authors start to trust *GE* more? A tremendous effort of this editorial team allowed our review times to be aligned with the ones of the most important journals in the area (Fig. 3). A fast answer is an important aspect for the authors, even if it is a negative one.

In 2018, we may say that *GE* is finally what the Portuguese Gastroenterology deserves – a gastroenterology journal with international standard. Now, we may compete with the others for the best articles in the area. Now, we may publish our national data in a journal where others will know about it. Now, *GE* is no longer a local journal but an international one. Of course, with more visibility, we will receive more articles and more hard work will be needed. More interaction with our reviewers and editorial board will be fundamental. *GE* will have to redesign itself if we want to continue our growth. Our road is no longer a secondary one and we are entering into the highway, where we will face new challenges and where, now more than ever, we will need the collaboration of all!