

## EDITORIAL

# ARP Rheumatology 2020-2025: 5 years at a glance

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ARP Rheumatology is the official journal of the Portuguese Society of Rheumatology. For more than 50 years, the journal has been publishing the work of the rheumatology community open access without article processing charges. In a time when “predatory journals” emerge more rapidly than we can account for, we should celebrate the existence of credible scientific journals that will ask nothing from the authors, other than scientific rigour and innovation to get published.

For the less involved reader, it is worth remembering that “Acta Reumatológica Portuguesa” has been the journal title for most of its existence. The official change from the Portuguese name to the current English title occurred in 2022 and was highlighted in an editorial explaining the procedure in detail.<sup>1</sup> A journal does not change its name overnight. The preparatory work leading to this change began in 2020 and involved several people from both the Portuguese Society of Rheumatology and the journal's Editorial Board. In this editorial, we will highlight the most significant modifications that came with the new name, as well as some key figures on the journal statistics from January 2020 to July 2025.

The new name came with a new website, also launched in 2022, and an improved manuscript submission system. The new website was created to provide readers with rapid and intuitive access to the most relevant content directly from the homepage. Highlighted content includes the latest issue, the editor's choice of articles, as well as the list of the most cited and most read publications. Key performance indicators, including the journal Impact Factor, CiteScore and acceptance rate, are also visible on the homepage.

Changes in the manuscript submission system covered several areas. One important aspect was the im-

provement of the communication between the journal and authors, reviewers and editors with new email templates (e.g., acknowledging reviewers for their contributions). Another major change was to allow authors to upload the manuscript files instead of requesting them to complete text boxes. All files are then automatically merged resulting in a single pdf file to be handled by editors and reviewers. A more efficient manuscript handling was also achieved by postponing the submission of the copyright form to only after acceptance, and by the creation of an algorithm for reviewer selection that matches the article and the reviewer's keywords.

ARP Rheumatology publishes original articles (including clinical practice recommendations), review articles, case-based reviews, images in rheumatology, letters to the editor and invited editorials. A new article category, *Correspondence & Reply*, was introduced in 2022 to encourage scholarly dialogue. Submissions to this section must be made within six months of the “online first” publication and are evaluated by the Editor, who determines their suitability for publication.

Over the past five years, the journal has published 22 quarterly editions, comprising 309 articles. In addition, each year, the journal publishes a supplement with abstracts from the Portuguese congress of rheumatology. Approximately three in four published articles are from Portuguese authors, a figure that remained constant over time but that might change by the end of 2025, with nearly half of the manuscripts coming from international authors so far (Figure 1). These data show that ARP Rheumatology remains the privileged home of the scientific output in the field of rheumatology in Portugal. Still, a significant proportion of the articles come from international authors.

The continuous work towards the optimization and internationalization of ARP Rheumatology includes invitations for submissions to colleagues from abroad, enhanced visibility of the journal and faster article handling processes. In fact, in addition to the improvements in the manuscript handling system mentioned above, there was a significant reduction in the official number of days for editors, reviewers and authors to take action on manuscripts. The full manuscripts also became “online first” before the final production design. These changes contributed to a 36% reduction in the average time between submission and “online-first” over the last five years (Figure 2). Visibility improvement included the correction of previous issues in the

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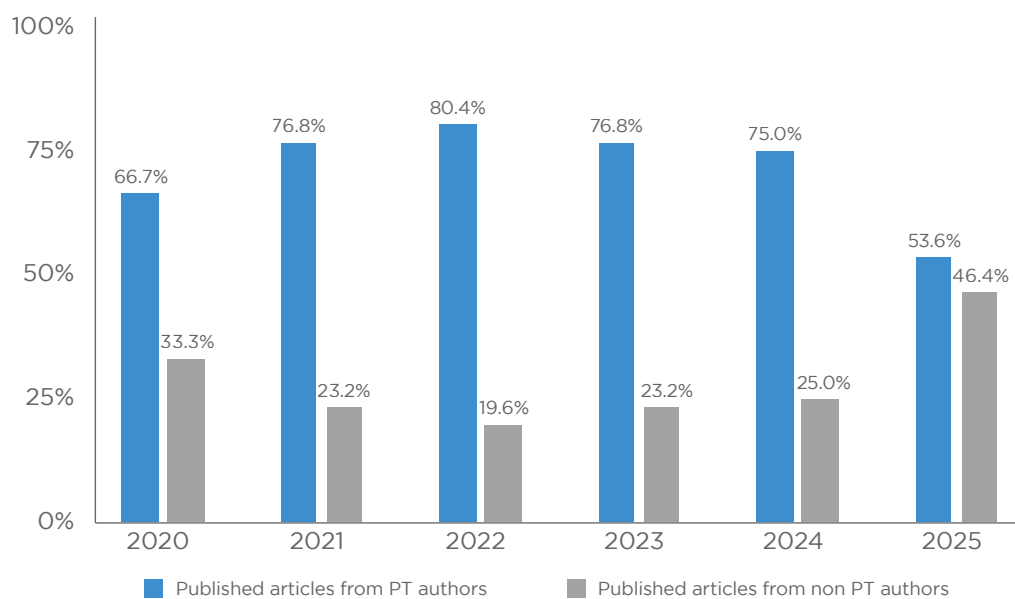
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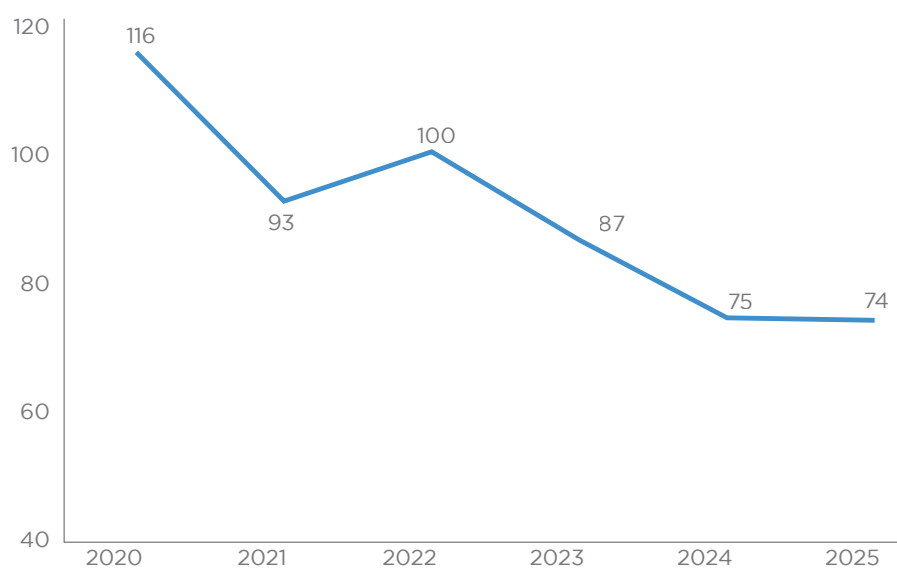
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linkage of articles to PubMed, article doi implementation, linking ORCID ID to authors, monthly newsletters with “online first” articles (in addition to the quarterly newsletters) and a stronger presence in social media platforms. The journal has maintained active pages on X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook, where all published articles—both in regular issues and “online first”—are shared. Since 2024, the journal has also expanded its social media presence with a dedicated LinkedIn page.

Several relevant articles have been published over the past five years. Here, we will not highlight individual scientific contributions. Any attempt to do so will almost certainly reflect a personal opinion and carry the risk of missing important contributions. It is, however, worth noting that over this 5-year period, 20 articles published in ARP Rheumatology report studies performed with data from Reuma.pt, the Portuguese Registry of Rheumatic diseases. Among these, six focused on



**Figure 1.** Percentage of articles published each year in ARP Rheumatology by Portuguese and non-Portuguese authors over the last 5 years (up to July 2025). PT, Portuguese.



**Figure 2.** Average time (days) between article submission and online-first publication in ARP Rheumatology over the past 5 years (up to July 2025).

rheumatoid arthritis,<sup>2-7</sup> three on juvenile idiopathic arthritis,<sup>8-10</sup> two on spondyloarthritis,<sup>11,12</sup> two on systemic sclerosis,<sup>13,14</sup> two include data on both rheumatoid arthritis and spondyloarthritis,<sup>15,16</sup> and one on psoriatic arthritis,<sup>17</sup> idiopathic inflammatory myopathies,<sup>18</sup> early arthritis,<sup>19</sup> Behcet disease,<sup>20</sup> and Sjogren's disease.<sup>21</sup> Nothing could make more sense than to publish the studies performed with data from the Portuguese registry of rheumatic diseases in the Journal of the Portuguese Society of Rheumatology. The interested reader is invited to read some of these works and be inspired for future submissions.

The last five years marked a period of profound conceptual and practical changes, which could only have occurred with the collaborative work of many people. The Journal's long and rich history is well-preserved in the memory of those who contributed most to its success. This historical memory was paramount to shape the current status of ARP Rheumatology, and it will certainly continue to do so in the many more years to come, ensuring continuous success and growth.

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