Acta Informatica Pragensia
2025, Volume 14, Issue 3, 296–305
https://doi.org/10.18267/j.aip.274

PRAGUE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Editorial Open Access

Current Woes and Pitfalls of Publishing Scientific Journals: Development of Acta Informatica Pragensia and Reflection on Using GenAI Tools

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Editorial Record

First submission received:
August 7, 2025

Accepted for publication:
August 18, 2025

How to cite this article:
Smutny, Z. (2025). Current Woes and Pitfalls of Publishing Scientific Journals: Development of Acta Informatica Pragensia and Reflection on Using GenAI Tools. *Acta Informatica Pragensia*, 14(3), 296–305. https://doi.org/10.18267/j.aip.274

Abstract

The editorial summarises the development of the Acta Informatica Pragensia journal over the last three years and complements the journal statistics for the years 2019–2025. Thanks to the indexing of the journal in Web of Science and Scopus citation databases, the world's most prestigious scientific citation databases, the journal began to profile itself as international with regional roots and a core community of Editorial Board members from Central Europe. The paper also presents the journal metrics and statistics of submitted and accepted articles for the observed period. Against the background of the current development of tools based on generative artificial intelligence, the perspectives presented in selected articles previously published in Acta Informatica Pragensia are discussed in the context of current and future directions of academic publishing. Finally, unfair practices of authors that I have encountered in our journal as Editor-in-Chief are presented and some others that are currently resonating in academic communities are also listed.

Index Terms

Acta Informatica Pragensia; Article retraction; Authors' mistakes; Cheating; Editorial; Experience with journal publishing; Generative artificial intelligence; GenAI; Paper mill.

1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF JOURNAL DEVELOPMENT

Acta Informatica Pragensia ends its 14th year of existence with this issue and has undergone further development since the last summary editorial (Smutny & Mildeova, 2022). The journal has been published electronically since its inception by the Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic (formerly University of Economics, Prague). Acta Informatica Pragensia still adheres to the basic idea: to be a peer-reviewed journal that uses the Diamond Open Access model of sharing scientific knowledge — meaning **fully open access, no fees for authors or readers, free English proofreading**[1]. The journal has regional roots with a core community of scholars from Central Europe and publishes around 30 articles annually, and desktop publishing is ensured by our own efforts.

[1] We are able to provide English proofreading thanks to financial support from the Faculty of Informatics and Statistics, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic. As Editor-in-Chief, I am very grateful to the faculty for this support.

Although the regional roots remain and are strengthened by new members of the Editorial Board, the focus of the articles is shifting towards an international audience (whether it is authors or readers). In this regard, an important moment was the indexing of the journal in the Web of Science (Emerging Sources Citation Index) and the assignment of the first impact factor in 2023, including the retroactive indexing of all articles from 2021. The journal is currently indexed in the world's two most prestigious citation databases in the following categories (the rank in a particular category according to Journal Impact Factor or CiteScore for 2024 is in square brackets):

- **Web of Science** (Clarivate)
  - Computer Science – Interdisciplinary Applications [#147/175],
  - Social Sciences – Interdisciplinary [#122/271].
- **Scopus** (Elsevier)
  - Computer Science Applications [#527/947],
  - Information Systems [#252/474],
  - Library and Information Sciences [#86/287],
  - Management Information Systems [#72/139].

In terms of evaluating the position of Acta Informatica Pragensia compared to other journals indexed in the above databases and categories in 2024, it can be stated that it is in the top half of the best journals in at least one of the categories, i.e., Q2 as the best quartile for the journal impact factor, CiteScore and SCImago journal ranking (SJR). However, we do not yet have five-year indicators (5-year impact factor, article influence score), which we expect to receive for the first time during the evaluation in 2026. An overview of the indicators for both citation databases can be found in Tables 1 and 2. It is wonderful to see that Acta Informatica Pragensia, after 14 years of existence, is among the best scientific journals in the world in the field of applied informatics that covers a broad range of topics, especially dealing with the social and business aspects of informatics (including computer science, information science and information systems).

Table 1. *Development of main indicators used in Scopus citation database since first article was indexed.*

Year	CiteScore	SCImago journal ranking (SJR)	Source normalized impact per paper (SNIP)
2019	0.0	N/A	N/A
2020	0.3	0.109	0.119
2021	0.8	0.153	0.349
2022	1.2	0.205	0.449
2023	1.7	0.202	0.374
2024	2.8	0.247	0.504

Table 2. *Development of main indicators used in Web of Science citation databases since the journal was first awarded an impact factor.*

Indicator	2023	2024
Journal impact factor (JIF)	0.8	1.1
5-year impact factor	N/A	N/A
Journal citation indicator (JCI)	0.3	0.31
Article influence score (AIS)	N/A	N/A
Immediacy index	0.2	0.3
Normalized eigenfactor	0.01404	0.01782

A total of 277 articles were published from 2012 to mid-2025. Google Scholar has recorded a total of 1530 citations for these articles, of which 1273 were obtained from 2020 to mid-2025. The official Google Scholar h5-index is 15. I am delighted that scholars from other universities are involved in creating Acta Informatica Pragensia. Thanks to them, the following journal sections exist, each headed by at least one Associate Editor:

- **Data Science**
  Michal Munk, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia
- **Cyber and Information Security**
  Kang Leng Chiew, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia
- **Health Informatics**
  Jan Bruthans, Czech Technical University in Prague, Czech Republic
- **Information Science**
  Adela Jarolimkova, Charles University, Czech Republic
- **Information Systems Development**
  Bartosz Marcinkowski, University of Gdańsk, Poland
  Ahad ZareRavasan, Masaryk University, Czech Republic
- **Knowledge Technology and the WWW**
  Stanislav Vojir, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic
- **Public Administration Informatics**
  Miloslav Hub, University of Pardubice, Czech Republic
- **Social Informatics and Human-Computer Interaction**
  Jost Bartol, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
- **Systems Engineering**
  Stanislava Mildeova, University of Finance and Administration, Czech Republic

Since the last summary editorial (Smutny & Mildeova, 2022), the journal has published four special issues, in which mainly academics from abroad participated. We are currently preparing a fifth special issue. The journal is newly subtitled as a *Journal of Applied Informatics*. This broadened the focus of the journal and the Editorial Board had to be expanded, especially the number of Associate Editors who independently ensure the review of submitted manuscripts. The stated direction of the journal was already announced in Smutny & Mildeova (2022). Without the involvement of new Associate Editors, it would not be possible to handle the ever-increasing number of manuscripts submitted. The Associate Editors have my complete trust from a professional and ethical perspective.

The challenge for the coming years is to ensure specialised Editorial Board members and Associate Editors for other subfields of applied informatics, or to strengthen those sections that are currently most overwhelmed with manuscripts. Referring to Table 3, it can be assumed that by 2025 we will reach almost one submitted manuscript every day. For most authors, we are not the journal of first choice. That is why we try our best to select articles that go through the peer review process. This means a large workload associated with assessing manuscripts and ensuring peer review, which all the editors do for free as a service to the scientific community.

In addition to personnel reinforcement, we are also preparing other formal changes inspired by foreign journals. This will primarily involve the creation of new article types that are typical for various subfields of applied informatics. At the same time, we want to ensure that the assessment of manuscripts is more rigorous and applies to all article types except editorials.

The average acceptance rate when counting all types of articles is approximately 14% (calculated since 2019), in 2023 it was approximately 13% and a year later the acceptance rate was only approximately 10%. However, the trend is clear. The number of submitted manuscripts is constantly increasing, but their quality is usually not high. The question is whether this is due to obtaining new indexing in the Web of Science or the development of tools that make it easier for authors to produce more manuscripts that they submit to various journals more quickly and easily. Personally, I believe, also with regard to the increasing number of articles being sent to journals published by major publishing houses, that the reason is more likely the latter, along with the continuous development of tertiary education in developing countries and therefore the pressure for their academic staff to publish in quality journals. After all, the majority of manuscripts sent to Acta Informatica Pragensia are from developing countries in Asia and Africa; see also the increase in the relative numbers of articles from large developing countries published between 2012 and 2022 (NSF, 2023). In this context, I have also noticed seasonal surges in manuscript submissions, especially from India, which are related to the fact that some MBA students must have an accepted scholarly article in a journal indexed in Scopus instead of their thesis.

Table 3. *Basic statistics of article processing since 2019.*

Year	Accepted and published articles**			Refused articles **		Total number of articles submitted	Total number of citations of articles published in given year according to Crossref database ****
	Absolute number	Numbers according to article types***	Share of total submitted	Absolute number	Share of total submitted		
2019	6	A:6	35.3%	11	64.7%	17	51
2020	14	A:11; M:3	20.6%	54	79.4%	68	44
2021	23	A:16; R:4; M:1; E:2	20.4%	90	79.6%	113	78
2022	27	A:20; R:4; M:1; E:2	18.5%	119	81.5%	146	104
2023	27	A:21; R:5; E:1	13.4%	175	86.6%	202	80
2024	25	A:18; R:4; M:2; E:1	9.8%	230	90.2%	255	51
2025*	17+10 (FA)	A:22; R:2; M:2; E:1	11.3%	213	88.7%	240	1
Total	149	A:114; R:19; M:9; E:7	–	892	–	1041	409

Notes: * As of 31 July 2025, only two issues have been published; articles in Forthcoming Articles (FA) section are also included. ** It includes all article types. *** Article types are A = Article, R = Review, M = Miscellanea, E = Editorial. **** Only citations from publications with a registered Digital Object Identifier or DOI (these are mostly journal articles). The total number of citations is higher.

Major and well-known publishing houses (e.g., Springer, Cell Press, Elsevier, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, SAGE and others) are already responding to the increasing numbers of submitted manuscripts and increasing their capacities, i.e., the number of articles and new journals published annually (see, e.g., Nature, 2025; Springer Nature, 2025; NSF, 2023; Štys, 2023). In the case of new journals, these are very often fee-based open-access journals, which in previous years teetered on the edge of being labelled as predatory (Smutny, 2016) despite their inclusion in so-called "white lists" such as Web of Science, Scopus, Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Open Access Scholarly Publishing Association (OASPA) or the Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers. At the same time, academics warn of the dangers of such behaviour and the associated negative effects, for example, referring to the negative effects of the rapid growth of publishing houses such as MDPI or Frontiers[2] (Csomós & Farkas, 2022; Crosetto, 2021; Enserink, 2015), which are or were mentioned on the so-called Beall's list.

However, where there is demand, there is also supply. This increase in capacity is very aptly described in the contribution by the Strain Team (2025) entitled *Springer Nature discovers MDPI*. Indeed, it seems that even major publishers are adopting at least partially the business model "successfully" introduced by MDPI. While in the Czech Republic, due to the intervention of universities and interest groups (Inspektor, 2023), the number of articles published in MDPI[3] decreased significantly after 2021, in Western Europe the situation is institutionally addressed

[2] Regarding my potential bias, I should add that although I have not published with Frontiers, I have published seven of my articles in MDPI journals and have also reviewed for some of them. My experience has been mixed, not all bad. As an author, I liked the speed of the review process; the quality of the reviews (at least in my case) seemed similar to other publishers, except for one case in 2021, where both reviews were very general and short. Since that year, I have not published in MDPI journals based on recommendations from colleagues. As a reviewer, I saw how all the articles went (even those that I refused to review). In addition to the time pressure, I was bothered by the fact that when the authors submitted a manuscript to a prestigious impact factor journal and it was rejected by the editor based on the review process, the authors sent the same unedited manuscript to another MDPI journal, which was not so prestigious, and there it went through a new review process. In other words, previous reviews were not considered and the reviewers' work was wasted. This problem is solved, for example, by the possibility of transfer in the event of a manuscript rejection in JMIR or Elsevier, where previous reviews are taken into account if the reviewers agree.

[3] For example, in 2021 alone, when a number of Czech and Slovak universities (e.g., Charles University, Czech Technical University in Prague, Brno Technical University, Comenius University in Bratislava, University of Zilina) had a contract supporting publication in MDPI journals and were part of the Institutional Open Access Programme, according to Web of Science, over 3,700 articles were published where at least one author's affiliation with a Czech organization or university was listed. In 2024, it was only 1,600 articles. In 2025, no Czech university or organization is anymore part of the MDPI Institutional Open Access Programme; on the contrary, four universities in Slovakia are still part of it (but most of the Slovakian universities have withdrawn). By the end of July 2025, a total of over 17,200 articles indexed in the Web of Science were published by MDPI, where at least one author's affiliation with a Czech organisation or university is listed. The largest number of articles is affiliated with the Czech Academy of Sciences, followed by large Czech universities. For comparison, in the case of authors affiliated with Slovak organisations and universities, there are more than 9,200 articles in total.

In the Czech Republic, individual universities or interest and research organisations have expressed their individual opinions on publishing in MDPI (see, e.g., Inspektor, 2023). An example is the agreement of the Academic Senate and the Rector's Board of Charles University with the

differently from country to country, despite critical voices from the academic community (Grove, 2025; The Strain Team, 2025). I will give two illustrative examples. On the one hand, in Finland, they decided to "downgrade hundreds of Frontiers and MDPI journals in their quality rating system, in a move that may discourage researchers from submitting manuscripts" (Kincaid, 2024; Machek, 2025). On the other hand, a new institutional agreement was concluded at the same time between a consortium of more than 100 German universities and MDPI (2024; Grove, 2025), which will result in an increase in the number of articles published by German universities with this publisher. The above problem is, of course, more complex and, as some have already pointed out (Štys & Štysova, 2024), is not necessarily associated with only one or two large publishers that I mentioned, but as the published articles and business in this area increase, it concerns all major publishers.

The continuous trend of increasing the number of manuscripts produced and the adaptation of major publishers, including prestigious ones, to this trend by increasing the number of published articles and new journals serves as an introduction to my other sections. First, I would like to discuss the earlier views and questions that authors have raised in selected articles published in Acta Informatica Pragensia in the past, against the background of the current development of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools and the possibilities of new artificial actors. In the last section, I will follow up on the above and draw attention to some of the problems that I have encountered as Editor-in-Chief of this journal in connection with inappropriate behaviour of authors.

2 REVOLUTIONARY TIMES

Let me digress. Let us first look at the technological progress that has occurred since the publication of the first issue of Acta Informatica Pragensia in 2012. In their articles, our authors presented their views and asked questions regarding technological and social developments. In this context, I would like to go through the journal archive, stop at selected publications and discuss them in the context of today and the technological possibilities that have been newly brought not only by large language models.

The very first article (Fišer, 2012) published in Acta Informatica Pragensia pointed out the traditional problem of creating applications or computer models, where one person (designer, architect) proposes a solution, but someone else has to convert it into a program, which entails a number of problems during the "translation". And since machines at the time of the article publication were not very good at directly translating our thoughts (in natural language) into a program, humans were expected to partially adapt to the capabilities of machines and use language that would be understandable to both the machine and the human. In other words, "overcome the gap between abstract human formal notation and low-level semantics of contemporary programming languages" (Fišer, 2012) and use more domain-specific languages that the designer, programmer and therefore the machine would understand. Domain-specific languages offer "alternative representation of formalism and medium for (inter-human) communication" (Fišer, 2012). After more than a decade of technological development, companies are coming up with solutions that use large language models to create (so far simple) programs using natural language. In this regard, it seems that technology has finally adapted to humans.

Another example of the technological shift that has occurred since the first issue was published can be the reflection by Bébr (2012), which pointed out the discrepancy between visions of technological progress and later reality. At the same time, he described the (often laughable) reality of using computers at the time[4]. Although the visions from 2005 mentioned in the article about how computer systems would compete with lawyers, doctors and other specialists

recommendation of a study by the Center for the Support of Open Science (CPOS, 2022), which states that the MDPI publishing house cannot be described as a whole as predatory and its journals need to be assessed individually. This study recommends that authors diversify not only the journals in which they publish but also the publishers, and in the case of MDPI, exercise great caution. Charles University is continuously and transparently monitoring this issue. In the current analysis by Drtinová et al. (2025), the authors state that between 2016 and 2023, 2,410 articles were published by their academics with MDPI (which is 3.5% of the total publications), and their number is decreasing every year. Another example is the position of the council of vice-deans for research of the Prague University of Economics and Business (VŠE, 2023), which explicitly recommends against publishing with this publisher and also stops supporting it financially with immediate effect. Between 2015 and 2025, academics from this university published a total of 80 articles in MDPI journals (which is approximately 0.6% of all the publications).

[4] Referring to Bébr (2012), where the author was disappointed with the way the computer translated the sentence *Save our souls* into Czech as *Ulož svůj vášeň* [Save your passion; wrong grammatical gender used]. Today, we can say that we are in a better position. Google Translate translates the above as *Zachraňte naše duše*, although it could be better in terms of possible meanings (it does not draw attention to the term's meaning as SOS). However, ask a GenAI chatbot and it will explain it quite nicely.

within five years did not previously have solid technological support, they do today, thanks to GenAI. For example, in China, they are already testing internet hospitals in real operation (Zhang et al., 2024), which are already actively integrating artificial intelligence tools and are also preparing to involve artificial actors (à la ChatGPT) to be able to provide care in the event of a shortage of doctors (not only during a pandemic). These online hospitals provide patients with, e.g., online medical consultations, electronic prescriptions, medication deliveries and pre-diagnosis triages.

We are living in revolutionary times – again, and in fact, for several centuries now. Technology accelerates people's capabilities, but today's groundbreaking progress is in some ways exceptional and incomparable to the technological progress of the past. I can mention just a few things that make the current technological shift unique. Any important technology created previously (e.g., steam engine, computer) was always created by humans and intended for humans to expand their possibilities and promote their welfare. The intentional purpose was given by the designer and without a designer, it could not evolve on its own. Now, with technologies built on GenAI, a new quality is emerging in the form of artificial actors/agents that have unique characteristics and capabilities compared to other technologies.

Humans created the internet, a virtual environment, where, with the digitalisation of society and the development of social media, the first artificial actors emerged as a parallel to robots in the physical world many years ago. Currently, the remaining differences between human and artificial actors are being erased in this internet-mediated environment (Smutny & Janoscik, 2019). New artificial actors actively (intentionally) change the subjectivity of human actors without this being the direct goal of the people who created them. The reason is that the purpose of artificial actors (such as ChatGPT) is very general, and their domain or task purposefulness arises when communicating with human actors. In other words, the intentional activity of an artificial actor may be, to some extent, independent of the purpose for which it was designed or is used. A vast terra incognita is appearing before us.

GenAI has another important potential, which is still largely like a genie trapped in a bottle[5]. This technology can create and, in a strong sense, invent new technologies or bring solutions. It is/will be able to do this faster than humans, but for now, humans are indispensable in this process; see, e.g., current articles focused on chemistry (Ishida et al., 2025; Ramos et al., 2025). On a speculative level, artificial actors based on GenAI could, in the future, design technologies that humans will no longer be able to understand, including themselves, as Kokotajlo et al. (2025) pointed out.

The uniqueness of the current progress is that it is the first technology not only to talk to us and imitate natural human communication and behaviour, but also that new artificial actors will have a much greater influence not only on the virtual[6], but also on the physical world in which we live. It can be assumed that in time, they will have the ability or power to change the physical conditions in which we live. They can call an ambulance or arrange our shopping, just as they can fire us from work or be a seemingly neutral colleague in complex internal corporate politics. Not only at work, we will increasingly meet our virtual teammate Jeff, who will help us and facilitate the project team. We will be able to fall in love with Jeff much more easily than with any other technology, because he imitates us and is usually nice to us and one day, it will be someone who understands us best of all. Already today, thanks to their positive experience, people turn to these artificial actors with confidence and discuss even the most intimate topics together like old friends (Sasínová, 2025). In other words, artificial and human actors from the perspective of intentionality (especially for future generations) will be equal[7], even though the artificial actor does

[5] It is similar to when humans discovered their potential in the modern age. Humans then (after moving away from a religious worldview) realised that if they understood the principles of nature (the emergence of natural sciences), they could create technology, machines and generally invent solutions to problems (the emergence of engineering, medicine) and thus dominate the world. GenAI has this ability in its blood, judging by its name.

[6] A decade ago, there was talk of softbots that behaved intelligently only in a specific service for which they were created. For example, softbots on Twitter (now X) are/were able to influence the subjectivity of a human user by spreading pre-prepared posts and simple reactions to people's posts. Based on such simple communication, a human user could conclude that he or she should, for example, buy a particular thing or vote for someone.

[7] I would like to draw attention to the fact that social technologies have driven users into physical isolation for the last 25 years. Technologies isolate us from physical social contact with other people. When most social contact is mediated by social media (especially among the younger generation), there is an excellent opportunity for artificial actors, which will minimise any form of real social contact to a new level.

not have a physical (humanoid) form. At least not yet. None of the previous disruptive technologies have been able to do this. In this context, it will also be necessary to rethink the concept of sociotechnical interaction towards a weak social constructivism.

Today's acceleration is driven by capitalism and has developed into the form of platform capitalism, where power is centralised not in states but in multinational technology companies. In this context, I hope that today's revolutionary times will not plunge humanity into a near future that is difficult to imagine and highly speculative today. For example, similar to the one presented in AI 2027 (Kokotajlo et al., 2025) – these are informed scenario-based estimates by the authors based on trends in GenAI over the last two years. Then the Technocene epoch (López-Corona & Magallanes-Guijón, 2020) would be the last for humans. Nevertheless, let us return to academic publishing based on the aforementioned progress background.

Just before the GenAI chatbot boom at the end of 2022, the article by Strossa (2022) was published in Acta Informatica Pragensia, pointing to the exponential growth of publications in the past decades. It claimed that unless the scholar focuses only on a small niche, he or she is not able to read the increasing volume of texts or at least actively navigate them. In a broader perspective, this leads to a decrease in the base value of these papers in our future, "or we are heading towards a time point where an increasing number of publications find no readers (if that point is not already behind us)" (Strossa, 2022). Strossa, therefore, logically asked what good would publications be if no one reads them, and who would bear the costs associated with preparing and publishing such papers? Today, we can answer that those readers will be artificial actors who can learn from (even less significant) texts, and therefore no text will remain unused. We will not create publications primarily for human readers (perhaps this is also true today), but for artificial actors. An example is the article (Silva et al., 2025) in which the authors show the possibilities of AI-assisted tools to create review articles; in other words, artificial actors will be able to theorise about a given issue.

After all, we will increasingly access these texts indirectly through the interface of chatbots (Galloway, 2012), which will put their content in the context of other articles or topics and summarise it into the necessary overview. Of course, other issues arise, such as to what extent we can trust such summaries and whether we have the strength and determination to verify them. This example also shows the potential for the enormous power of artificial actors to change or manipulate human subjectivity, human view of the world and its understanding (Smutny & Janoscik, 2019).

While people create texts for other people so that GenAI can learn from them, new business approaches are also flourishing that take advantage of the fact that adopting new GenAI tools is gradual in some areas and it takes a long time for people to change their behaviour. An example would be the generation of new books on a massive scale and their electronic sale (compared to prestigious publishers at ridiculous prices) on large marketplaces such as Amazon. When my colleagues and I were finishing a book on social informatics (Hara & Fichman, 2025) this year, after almost three years of work, we discovered that this is not a new English book on the subject in a long time. In 2024 and 2025, two other books by authors unknown in the social informatics community were published[8]. Upon further investigation, we discovered that these authors publish a new book every few months or weeks and their expertise ranges from contemporary poetry to social informatics and pharmacy[9] to romance novels. Although these are slim books of around 100 pages, their number (each author with 16 books published per year) and thematic diversity leave no doubt that the authors make very proactive use of GenAI tools. When I got acquainted with the content of one of these books, I discovered that it was a reprint of ideas from open-access articles that my colleagues and I had published in previous years; the book did not cite any of the articles.

In the above context, this period raises a number of questions that only time will answer. I will list at least a few of them here so that I or someone else can answer them in a few years:

- Will further progress lead to a new automation of "scientific work" on the part of scholars, universities and publishers?
- Are we heading into a spiral of generation based on generation from previously generated text?

[8] For completeness, I state that these books are *Social Informatics: Exploring the Interaction between Technology and Society* by Feri Sulianta and *Social Informatics: The Intersection of Technology, Society, and Culture* by Oluchi Ike.

[9] Such books without real professional proofreading can be life-threatening.

- Are we heading towards a time when articles will be created mainly by artificial actors and consumed by artificial actors who will also be a natural interface for humans?
- And if so, is such a direction sustainable with regard to the problems of artificial actors (hallucinations, blackmail and manipulation of users, etc.)?
- In other words, will future progress in GenAI not mean a gradual degeneration of machines and us humans, because first the use of GenAI tools will deprive us of basic skills such as deep thinking, and then the artificial actors will fall into a spiral of re-generation of texts or other things and begin to degenerate themselves?
- Are we heading towards a time when artificial actors no longer need us to conduct and publish cutting-edge research?

We live in an accelerated era where scholars also want (or have to) be more productive. For this purpose, they use GenAI tools as well as institutional knowledge of the environment or their social capital to assert themselves. The next section will show some of the unfair practices that I have encountered as Editor-in-Chief. I will also point out some practices frequently mentioned in academic communities.

3 AUTHORS' MISTAKES AND PUBLISHERS' PROBLEMS

As part of adapting to current trends in academic publishing, we have made two changes to the journal. The first is a new, more modern template, where all metadata about the article are listed on the first page. The second change is associated with the modification of the journal ethics policy in connection with GenAI tools and their use by authors and reviewers. Starting in 2025, authors shall provide a statement on using artificial intelligence tools.

I have not yet identified a reviewer who would have the entire review generated by GenAI. I greatly appreciate that reviewers make an honest effort to read the manuscripts, think about them and prepare their reviews based on that. More problematic is the behaviour of some authors who submit the same manuscript to multiple journals in parallel and wait for the one that will require the least editing and publish the manuscript as soon as possible. Once a manuscript is accepted by one journal, the authors withdraw from the review process in the remaining journals. This behaviour by authors is especially disrespectful to the work of reviewers and editors, who spend considerable efforts and time to improve the manuscript and help the author prepare it for publication. Moreover, ensuring thematically relevant reviewers is difficult and time-consuming, especially when the topic of the manuscript is more specific. It often happens that we have to contact 6-8 scholars to get a reviewer if we cannot ask one of our close colleagues.

Although it is currently not ethically acceptable for a manuscript review to be completely prepared by an artificial actor, it cannot be ruled out that in the future, due to the overwhelming number of manuscripts and the improvement of the capabilities of artificial actors, some publishers or journals will move towards domain-specific artificial actors who will provide basic manuscript reviews. Their results will be further assessed by an academic editor, and the editor will decide on the basis of their results how the review process will continue. Alternatively, human reviewers will only be involved in the final phase of the review process.

An increasingly serious problem is the more and more frequent use of GenAI without the authors of the article checking the generated text and without reporting this fact in the statement on the use of artificial intelligence tools. There are even authors who explicitly state that they did not use GenAI, even though this is (obviously) not the case. This is usually discovered in the final stages of manuscript review or preparation for publication. In some cases, they have also been subsequently rejected, even though the manuscript had already been accepted. However, these are more likely to be accidental revelations. Unfortunately, the publisher has not yet provided us with a tool for detecting GenAI-generated text, similar to how we currently use iThenticate and Odevzdej.cz to detect plagiarism.

In addition to scholars using GenAI tools to help prepare manuscripts without properly acknowledging GenAI involvement, other unfair approaches to securing their publishing activity can be registered in the academic community. This is often done by buying authorship on manuscripts prepared for submission, a so-called paper mill (Abalkina, 2023; Parker et al., 2024). Despite the fact that there is an effort to cover up the scheme on the part of companies or academic mafias, such manuscripts and published articles can be traced, and participation in publication mafias is also revealed by the unusually high number of articles published annually, most often in large author collectives (Ansede, 2023; Abalkina, 2023). Publishers take a clear stance on this and punish any doubts

regarding a published article with its retraction; see, e.g., the massive retraction of eight thousand articles—later the number jumped to eleven thousand (Aksenfeld, 2025)—after the takeover of Hindawi by Wiley (Van Noorden, 2023), retraction of 1,500 articles (Aksenfeld, 2025) only in the Journal of Intelligent & Fuzzy Systems published by SAGE or the recent retraction of three thousand articles by Springer Nature (Travis, 2025). Retractions are beginning to reflect the solidity of both the researcher and the publisher, although not entirely ideal. In the entire history of Acta Informatica Pragensia, we have retracted only one article when we discovered that the same article had previously been published in another journal.

We see that scientific publishing is also a huge business, and it is not surprising that academics approach it pragmatically when they are under pressure to publish or perish, not only institutionally, due to university or regional rules for distributing financial support, but also from the point of view of social status in their academic community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As Editor-in-Chief, I would like to thank everyone who has supported the journal with their work. Acta Informatica Pragensia is created thanks to the tireless work of dozens of academics and researchers who serve the informatician community. In particular, I would like to thank the Associate Editors, Editorial Board members and all the external reviewers for their tireless work. Their voluntary activity is not remunerated.

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Acta Informatica Pragensia is published by the Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic | eISSN: 1805-4951