

POINT BY POINT RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS:

Reviewer comments are marked with red, while authors' response is provided in plain, black font. We would like to thank to both reviewers for their valuable comments.

Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade D (Fair)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Major revision

Specific Comments to Authors: Major concerns are as follows:

1. "Introduction" section, "a stabilization of the incidence in most but also suggest an increase in northern European countries.²⁻⁴ On the other hand, there is a trend of increasing incidence in areas with traditionally lower incidence rates, such as the countries of eastern Europe" The incidence of IBD in western European and North American countries should be reported.

We thank the reviewer for the comments. The „instruction“ section in the main document was revised and highest incidence rates were mentioned at the page 4.

2. "Methods" section, the criteria of IBD should be reported.

The criteria of IBD are reported at the page 5, within „Materials and methods“ section.

3. "Results" section, the total patients and UC, CD, IC demographic data should be reported, including risk factors and co-morbidity.

Demographic data was added at the page 5, at the beginning „Materials and methods“ section. The results regarding complications and co-morbidities were analysed at the page 11, within „Results“ section, while risk factors related to the region were mentioned at the page 15, within „Discussion“ section.

4. "Results" section, a logistic regression analysis was preferred to analyze the risk factors of IBD.

Unfortunately this research was planned as a long term epidemiological survey, so we do not have all data to create regression analysis. Still, we amended the text with descriptive data regarding risk factors. We hope that this will be sufficient addition for your criteria.

Reviewer #2:

Scientific Quality: Grade B (Very good)

Language Quality: Grade A (Priority publishing)

Conclusion: Minor revision

Specific Comments to Authors: Well written manuscript. Well described data and figure. What is MC in the figure 2. Colour indicator of UC is missing in figure 3.

We thank the reviewer for affirmative comment. „MC“ in the figure 2. is abbreviation for „Morbus Crohn“. We resolved the issue by changing the abbreviation to „Crohn's disease“, as it is the case in main text. Missing colour indicator of ulcerative colitis in figure 3. is resolved.

Reviewer #3:

Scientific Quality: Grade D (Fair)

Language Quality: Grade C (A great deal of language polishing)

Conclusion: Rejection

Specific Comments to Authors: This article did a general descriptive study on the incidence of IBD patients in the author's area, and did not put forward its own view which based on the actual situation.

We thank the reviewer for this comment, but we tend to slightly disagree. The whole body of discussion in our article is addressing the loco-regional poor knowledge about incidence in our country and the region of Eastern Europe and especially addressing several issues raised in previous research especially in papers and reviews by Lakatos who is responsible for most of the contributions in this area. Our paper and discussion is particularly addressing some of the possible reasons for lower IBD incidence in Eastern Europe and combined with our previous reports underlines the low ascertainment as probably the main reason for this.

We thank you for this fine opportunity for a short scientific debate, we hope that you will acknowledge our reasoning, but should you still choose to remain in your position, we would be much grateful for more specific comments.

Dear editor,

After making appropriate corrections, we are resubmitting our paper titled "Inflammatory bowel disease in Tuzla Canton in Bosnia-Herzegovina: A prospective 10-year follow-up" to your attention.

We accepted all of the comments and suggestions provided by reviewer and corrected the manuscript according to your instructions. The original figure document is provided as a PowerPoint file, with a change regarding to reviewer's #2 comment. PMID and DOI numbers are provided where applicable. The „Article Highlights“ section is provided within the main text. STROBE checklist is provided in the previous submission. Audio core tip is provided as *.mp3 file. „Core tip“ section was modified for language polishing. Five new references were added, in accordance to reviewer's comments. Images and tables were excluded from the main text and provided within PowerPoint and Word files.

We would like to thank you for the interest in our work and to thank the reviewer for valuable comments and suggestions that significantly improved scientific content and message of our manuscript.

Best regards,

Dr Emir Tulumović, MD

on behalf of all authors