

Editorial

Dear friends:

We're bound to remember 2020 as the year of the covid-19 pandemic. Last January, there was absolutely no warning that a tiny virus would mark the before and after of the economy, social relations, healthcare systems and production and working procedures worldwide. Much of the world's population has been 'locked down', obliged to reinvent our working methods and seen our scale of values change. Health has prevailed over the economy, and that is as it should be, but it has come at a very high price.

Although science is turning a major share of its economic resources towards health-related issues, we should not lose sight of the need for all manner of science, including research to enhance our understanding of construction materials and their applications. Science in this field is essential if we are to rise to the circular economy challenge and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The construction industry, like so many others, has been severely and adversely impacted. Many of the world's construction, rehabilitation and demolition works have been suspended, with the loss of too many jobs and a drastic decline in the demand for construction materials. The cement industry, which had begun to recover from the dire consequences of the 2008 crisis, has seen the demand for cement swoon to alarmingly low levels in just 3 months' time. In China and India, two of the world's major producers, cement consumption has slid by 19 % and 15 %, respectively. Oficemen reports that in Spain domestic consumption drooped by 21.2 %

in the first 5 months of the year, which in absolute numbers translates to over one million tonnes less than in 2019.

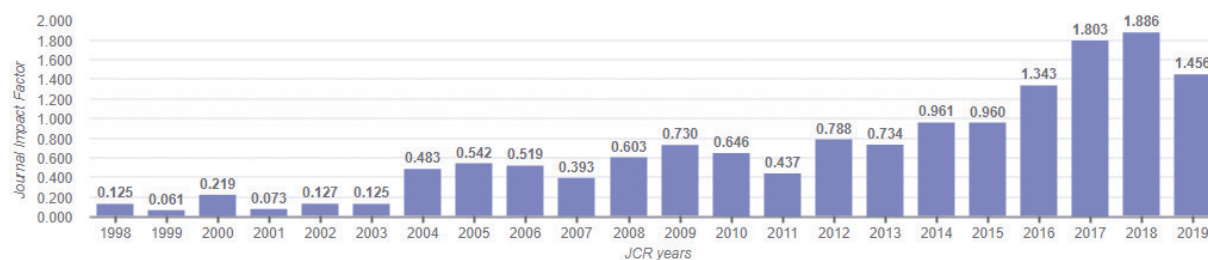
Against that backdrop, a number of employers' associations and business groups are demanding urgent measures to tackle this new and unexpected crisis, including direct aid for the industry and support for construction and infrastructures in line with the 'European Green Deal' and 'Agenda 2030'.

Lockdown has affected us all globally, including of course scientific journal release and publication. The *Materiales de Construcción* team has been home-officing since lockdown, confronting the additional difficulties with our usual unrelenting enthusiasm. And we are gratified to be able to report that despite those problems, article editing and journal processing have followed their normal course. I wish to take this opportunity to explicitly thank everyone who has contributed to that ongoing efficiency in such difficult times: colleagues at the Eduardo Torroja Institute for Construction Science and the CSIC Editorial department; members of the editorial boards; linguistic evaluation, printing and editorial services; and of course our authors and reviewers, who have made notorious and much appreciated additional effort.

According to a famous saying, often attributed to Einstein, 'The crisis is the greatest blessing for people and nations, because the crisis brings progress'.

Many thanks, then, for having risen to this exceptional crisis so worthily, for giving the very best of yourselves against the very worst of times.

In a completely different vein, I should report that the impact factors for 2019 were released in



June. The factor for 2019 awarded *Materiales de Construcción* by Clarivate Analytics' JCR was 1.456, down from the 1.886 assigned in 2018. Since 1998 the journal's IF has followed a rising pattern with minor ups and downs, as the figure below shows.

The Scimago Journal Rank (SJR), in turn, positioned *Materiales de Construcción* in Q2 in 2019, with a value of 0.624, also slightly lower than in 2018.

Scopus's Citescore number was slightly higher than in the preceding year. The new score is 3.3 (up from 3.1 in 2018), with the journal ranking 46th of the 174 (73 %) under the heading Building and Construction.

I honestly believe that *Materiales de Construcción* has consolidated its position as a journal specialising

in construction and building materials and these fluctuations, although forming part of an upward trend, invite us to reflect on the importance of working to the rigorous standards that have been in place for many years. I would encourage all of you to continue to make the same uncompromising effort as you have up to now in your engagement with the journal as authors, reviewers or journal staff.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to making *Materiales de Construcción* such a high quality journal.

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