Editorial

Innovations in polymers and composite materials

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The constant process of innovation in the field of polymer technology has determined that the polymer industry is nowadays among the fastest growing industries in the world. Furthermore, the introduction of polymer composite materials has driven the research to the discovery of novel and sophisticated materials.

An idea of the growth in the area of polymers can be reflected through the increasing number of patents and publications through the years. A search on the database Google Scholar using just the keyword "polymer" displays an explosive number of publications (Figure 1). According to the database, in the period 2001–2015, about 1.26 million articles have included the word polymer. A search in the area of patents shows that 3,250,797 patents in the area of polymers have been filled during the same period in all the world.

The present issue of *e-Polymers* contains 12 specially selected manuscripts submitted to the 2016 Global Conference on Polymer and Composite Materials (PCM2016), which was held in Hangzhou, China from May 20th to 23rd, 2016. Following previous successful conferences in Ningbo and Beijing (1), the technical program in 2016 consisted of six international keynote speakers, invited speakers, oral presentations in four parallel sessions, and a poster session. The electronic submission and handling of manuscripts were identical to the procedures applied to manuscripts submitted as regular contributions for publication in *e-Polymers*.

The selected papers in this issue highlight current topics in the area of polymers and polymer composites, such as novel synthesis methods; their optical and mechanical properties; thermal aging, cure reactions, swelling, wetting, novel polymer composites with graphene, as well as new advances in characterization and modeling thereof.

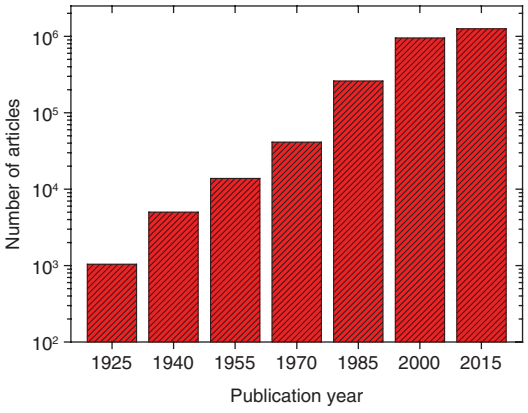

Figure 1: Number of published articles using the keyword "polymer". The information was retrieved from the database Google Scholar on 22/11/2016. Each column represents the number of articles during the previous 15 publication years.

Reference

1. Broitman E. Novel insights in polymer and composite materials. e-Polymers. 2015;15(5):285–6.

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