EUROPEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION

SETTING SCIENCE AGENDAS FOR EUROPE

Increasing visibility for a multifaceted Humanities research in Europe - the ERIH approach

ESF HUMANITIES UNIT

Challenges for Humanities

What tools to use to provide access to Humanities research and to compare quality:

- across all languages at a supra-national (European) and global (world-wide) levels

- vis-à-vis other research domains, especially 'hard' sciences

Specific publication culture

- Multiplicity of formats for research output: monographs, edited volumes, journals, conference proceedings, web-based content and data, outreach

- Specific hierarchy of importance: monographs - primary importance; peer reviewed journal articles - less than 1/3 of outputs

- Significant, in terms of numbers and importance, part of research output in national languages

ESF SCH workshop (2001)

Conclusions:

- Existing citation indices (AHCI, SSCI) have unsatisfactory coverage of European Humanities research
- Standard bibliometric tools are not appropriate for Humanities research
- Creation of European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH)

ERIH: objectives

- To enhance the global visibility of high-quality European research in the Humanities across all languages

- To encourage 'best practice' in the publication of journals in the Humanities (peer review, active editorial board, openness to new authors, professional bibliographic information)

- To create benchmarking tool for comparisons at aggregate (national, European) level

ERIH: process

➢ Overall responsibility with the ESF Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH)

➢ SCH nominates ERIH Steering Committee

➢ ERIH Steering Committee responsible for:

– Identification of the disciplinary structure

– Definition of methodology including the definition of categories of journals

– Approval of membership of Expert Panels (members suggested by MO's, SCH, ERIH StComm)

– Validation of journal lists proposed by Expert Panels

ERIH: current disciplinary structure

15 disciplinary Panels:

- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Art and Art History
- Classical Studies
- Gender Studies
- History
- History & Philosophy of Science
- Linguistics
- Literarature
- Musicology
- Oriental & African Studies
- Pedagogical & Educational Research
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Religious Studies & Theology

<u>Disciplines under consideration</u>

- Archives, Library & Museum Studies
- Film, Media & Cultural Studies
- Area Studies

Peer review: the basis of methodology

- Peer review recognised as the only practicable method of evaluation in basic research (standard method used in evaluation of scientific communications themselves)

- Peer review introduces comparability into discussions of national discourses in Humanities scholarship

- Peer review can overrule weight of numbers for better (e.g. detect originality) or for worse (e.g. defend conservatism)

ERIH: work in progress

Phase 1:

Focus on journals - a format used in other research domains, to achieve a degree of initial comparability

Phase 2:

Develop methodology for including other formats: monographs, book chapters, edited volumes, etc

ERIH: criteria for inclusion

All journals included must meet threshold standards ensuring consistently high-quality scholarly content:

- Quality control policy governing selection of articles, normally through peer-review

- Active operations of editorial board

- Openness to unsolicited contributions

- Publication on time and to an agreed schedule

- ISSN number and other bibliographic requirements

ERIH: categories (1)

- <u>National Journals – NAT</u>(current category C): European publications with a recognised scholarly significance among researchers in the respective research domains in a particular (mostly linguistically circumscribed) readership group in Europe; occasionally cited outside the publishing country, though their main target group is the domestic academic community

- <u>International Journals – INT1 + INT 2</u>(current categories A and B): both European and non-European publications with an internationally recognised scholarly significance among researchers in the respective research domains, and which are regularly cited worldwide

ERIH: categories (2)

Differentiation between current categories A and B is based on a combination of two criteria: influence and scope:

Category A

- international publications with high visibility and influence among researchers in the various research domains in different countries, regularly cited all over the world.

Category B

- international publications with significant visibility and influence in the various research domains in different countries.

ERIH: peer review at work (1)

- Input: National panels / scientific communities provide lists of journals
- Selection: Expert Panels define scope, analyse and assess input, produce lists
- Consultation: MOs, subject associations (European level and some national), specialist research centres
- Calibration/harmonisation: ERIH Steering Committee;
- After approval by ESF SCH publication of 'initial lists' in 2007
- Open feedback process via on line questionnaire for editors and publishers
- 'Revised lists' to be published in fall 2009

Challenges:

- Wide differences in quality of lists received from MOs

- Domain-specific differences (e.g.: cult./soc./evol. anthropology; philosophy and ethics)

- Some panels more reluctant to overrule authority of (own) national panels

- Outside peer pressure during consultation phases
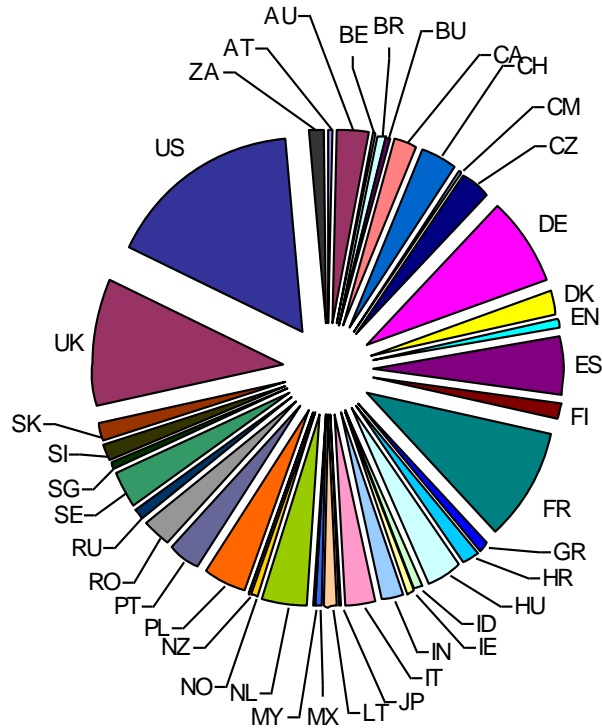
ERIH: towards the « initial lists »

- 2003/04: MO's provide input based on previous national consultation (panels; reference tools)
- 2005/II: Expert Panels work
  - define field / remit ("scope notes"),
  - analyse and assess input received,
  - suggest circles of consultation,
  - consult where gaps are identified (eliminate / add),
  - discuss categories (multiple listing; single listing),
  - produce draft list, explain methods and problems.
- 2006 (mid): Wide consultation of
  - ESF MO's,
  - (European) subject associations,
  - specialist research centres
- 2007: Publication of the lists in three batches
- 2008 - 2009: feedback and revision process
- fall 2009: publication of 'revised lists'
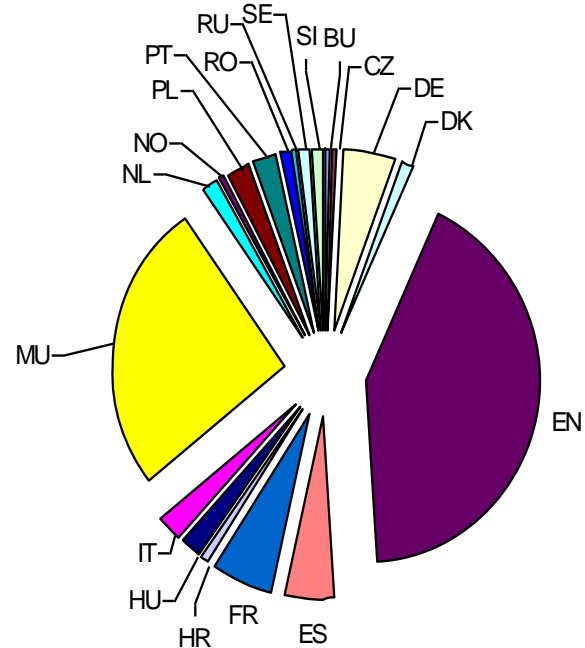
Evolution of ERIH Lists – open process

1st batch of published initial lists are highlighted in yellow					
Discipline	**Initial submission**	**1st draft lists**	**Consultation 1a**	**Consultation 1b**	**Initial lists**
		Mar-Apr 2006	**Spring 2006**	**Summer 2006**	**2007**
Anthropology (social and evolutionary)	752	154	133	17	242
Archaeology	1310	524	290	25	419
Art and Art History	938	445	292	16	472
Classical Studies	619	256	321	11	251
Gender Studies	155	181	37	6	119
History	1419	874	508	71	907
History and Philosophy of Science	806	145	64	4	166
Linguistics	1093	680	391	34	586
Literature	1453	1481	706	10	802
Music and Musicology	204	n/a	187	4	166
Oriental and African Studies	196	588	386	14	505
Pedagogical and Educational Research	666	404	271	92	470
Philosophy	658	320	153	22	305
Psychology	1198	1201	159	4	634
Religious Studies and Theology	745	n/a	580	10	371

www.esf.org/erih

Anthropology (Social) PU distribution

Anthropology (Social) LA distribution

« Initial list » History – does ERIH make a difference?

- 1419 titles suggested from MO's
- 874 titles incl. in 1st draft for consultation
- 579 comments received
- 907 titles included in "initial list"
- A: 15% - B: 40% - C: 45%
- Important percentage "category C"
- 27% multilingual, 41% non-English

Compare: ISI Thomson
- 179 ISI titles included, <30% non-English
- 61 ISI titles (mainly US) not in ERIH

ERIH: challenges and criticism (1)

- Misunderstandings about the character
  of the currently used A/B/C categories: ranking or assessment of audience, distribution and reach?

- Misunderstandings around category C seen as 'low quality' when the idea is to identify quality European journals with (mostly linguistically) limited circulation; ***identification of quality national journals is the main innovation of ERIH***

- Following discussions in the research community, the process of renaming ERIH categories is underway

ERIH: challenges and criticism (2)

More misunderstandings:

- Some research councils and other research bodies are using ERIH as a tool for assessment of individual research production / productivity

- ERIH „initial list" are used when they are still under revision

ERIH – Update 2008/2009

- Recomposition of Expert Panels: panel rotation mechanism and inclusion of new experts
- Online feedback form (i.a. quantitative information): contact with publishers, editors, European subject associations, national subject associations
- Expert Panel meetings revising 'initial lists' based on received feedback (including new journals, deleting journals, changing revising categories) November 2008 – June 2009
- ERIH 'revised lists' to be published in the fall 2009.

Future of ERIH and next steps

- Announcing the ESF SCH decision regarding the renaming of ERIH categories after consulting with Expert Panel Chairs (and other bodies if suggested by SCH)
- Publication of 'revised lists' closing this phase of ERIH
- Preparation of next phases of ERIH including:
  - ✓ Another round of national and disciplinary consultations
  - ✓ Developing methodology for including monographs etc.
  - ✓ Outlining a long-term strategy for developing and sustaining ERIH