State of the art in SSH research evaluation
This is a brief presentation of activities carried on so far in the three main work-groups of the COST Action CA 15137.

Members of our Action publish on all the topics covered here, COST is about coordination of their various researches.

A public bibliography, as well as other documents, will be available via our webpage (section downloads): [http://enressh.eu/](http://enressh.eu/)

To date, we can recommend the following books covering various aspects of SSH research evaluation:


I. Representations of research quality in the SSH

WG1

Michael Ochsner
WG1: Conceptual Frameworks

Main objective:
- Further understanding of knowledge production in the SSH
- Link evaluation procedures to SSH knowledge production

Main Issues
- Scholars opposition to evaluation
- Peer Review vs. Metrics
- Internationality vs. local rootedness
- Interdisciplinarity vs. disciplinary expertise
Questions raised in SSH

- What is research quality in the SSH?
- What are criteria for research performance in SSH?
- What are (expected) effects of evaluation in SSH?

What can we learn from the SSH?

- Aims of evaluation
- Recommendations
SSH scholars objections

- Methods originate from natural sciences
- Strong reservations against quantification (especially hermeneutic disciplines)
- Fear of negative steering effects
- Lacking consensus
Research Quality in the SSH

Time

traditional

modern

Career oriented
- Determined by others, predictable
- Negatively connoted ‘modern’ research
- Economic
- Internationalist

International
- Interdisciplinary
- Positively connoted ‘modern’ research
- Public orientied
- ‘Small-step’ innovation

Simplifying
- One-sided, repetitive
- Negatively connoted ‘traditional’ research
- Self-focused
- Isolated

‘Ground-breaking’ innovation
- Autonomy
- Positively connoted ‘traditional’ research
- Disciplinary
- Individual effort

Negatively connoted
- ‘traditional’ research

Positively connoted
- ‘modern’ research

Quality

negatively connoted

positively connoted
What is Research Quality?

- **orange**: reaching consensus in all disciplines;
- **blue**: reaching consensus in two disciplines

1. Scholarly exchange
2. Innovation, originality
3. Productivity
4. Rigour
5. Fostering cultural memory
6. Recognition
7. Reflection, criticism
8. Continuity, continuation
9. Impact on research community
10. Relation to and impact on society
11. Variety of research
12. Connection to other research
13. Openness ideas and persons
14. Self-management, independence
15. Scholarship, erudition
16. Passion, enthusiasm
17. Vision of future research
18. Connection between research and teaching, scholarship of teaching
19. Relevance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Criterion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citations</td>
<td>Recognition; impact on research community; relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prizes</td>
<td>Recognition; impact on research community; relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third party funding</td>
<td>Recognition; impact on research community; relevance; relation to and impact on society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborations</td>
<td>Scholarly exchange; recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers to society and economy</td>
<td>Relation to and impact on society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>Scholarly exchange; productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board memberships</td>
<td>Scholarly exchange; recognition; impact on research community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Continuity, continuation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measures of Research Performance

What criteria are measured in evaluations?

**bold and italic**: commonly used in evaluations

1. **Scholarly exchange**
2. Innovation, originality
3. **Productivity**
4. Rigour
5. Fostering cultural memory
6. **Recognition**
7. Reflection, criticism
8. **Continuity, continuation**
9. **Impact on research community**
10. **Relation to and impact on society**
11. Variety of research
12. Connection to other research
13. Openness ideas and persons
14. Self-management, independence
15. Scholarship, erudition
16. Passion, enthusiasm
17. Vision of future research
18. Connection between research and teaching, scholarship of teaching
19. **Relevance**
Measures of Research Performance

Valid measures for research quality?

orange: three disc.; blue: two disc.; bold and italic: commonly used in evaluations

1. Scholarly exchange
2. Innovation, originality
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18. Connection between research and teaching, scholarship of teaching
19. Relevance
Some SSH disciplines are linked to professions

- Differences in quality criteria for research
- Differences in usage also from the public → societal impact
- E.g. Law Studies (Lienhard et al., 2016; van Gestel et al., 2012); Theology/Religious Studies (Mertens et al., 2016)

Disciplinary differences with regard to criteria and evaluation (Czellar & Lanarès, 2013; Ochsner et al., 2013; Hug et al., 2013)

- E.g. personal skills built through a career vs. methodological skills

Different publication and knowledge production than STEM (Nederhof, 2006; Giménez-Toledo et al., 2016; Sivertsen, 2016)

Impact of indicators → opportunity but also risk (de Rijcke & Rushford, 2015; Kaltenbrunner & de Rijcke, 2016; Monegon et al., 2016)
Questions Raised by SSH

- What is evaluation for?
  - What do we want to measure and why
  - What are the consequences
  - What kind of incentives do we want to give

- Societal Impact vs. Quality
  - Until recently, societal impact was dull (no worth publishing in the feuilleton or creating exhibitions)
  - Now, it’s hip but mainly as economic impact (because of STEM dominance)
  - What if societally relevant but academically crap?

- What if society is wrong?
  - The danger of mainstreaming
  - Nobody was interested in Oriental Studies until 9/11 2001
What we can learn from SSH

- Know why and what: aim of the evaluation
  - Different countries, different problems
    - different evaluation procedures

- Diversity
  - Of disciplines, approaches, paradigms, time of reception, impact

- Critical thinking
  - Applied to evaluation but also to demands of society and to priorities of ministries

- Validity of measures: Know what we want to measure
  - Intelligent selection of indicators and measures, link to concept
Recommendations

- Bottom-up approach
  (quality: scholars; societal impact: all stakeholders)

- Research performance is even broader than quality:
  → Multidimensional concepts

- Adapt procedures to evaluation context
  → Aims, country, university (profiles), disciplines...

- Combine metrics with peer-review; sound measurement

- Focus on what you can do, not on what you cannot do
  → Limit promises in/of evaluations, limit expectations, be cautious with interpretation
II. Societal impact and relevance of the SSH research

WG2

Reetta Muhonen, Julia Olmos Peñuela & Paul Benneworth
Overview of how SSH engages with society

Overview of conditions for success by context

Policies and measures to stimulate SSH benefiting society

Options for better measuring and monitoring SSH societal engagement

Co-ordinator drafts synthetic typology of ‘modes of SSH engagement’

Co-ordinator drafts structural requirements for SSH valorisation

Co-ordinator synthesises national SSHV practice overview

Co-ordinator proposes measures to better value SSH

YEAR 1

YEAR 2

YEAR 3

YEAR 4

TASK 1

TASK 2

TASK 3

TASKS 4, 5

DELIVERABLES
Data to develop a typology of the modes of SSH engagement

Grant period 1

- Successful impact cases, "fiches"

  *Fiche* = *survey form which is internationally comparable*

- Fiches are produced by members of WG2

- Total of 60 fiches at the moment
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries (15)</th>
<th>Social sciences</th>
<th>Arts and Humanities</th>
<th>STEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland, Norway, Iceland</td>
<td>public finance, administrative law, human geography</td>
<td>history, archeology, ethnology</td>
<td>medicine, chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany,</td>
<td>sociology, political science, social work, criminology, educationl sciences, psychology</td>
<td>philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Croatia, Estonia, Slovakia</td>
<td>journalism, communication sciences, science studies, gender studies</td>
<td>linguistics, music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy, Spain, Portugal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>multidisciplinary research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of knowledge</td>
<td>Idea originator/orientation of research</td>
<td>Pathways</td>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>content, product, concept</td>
<td>academic, applied or both</td>
<td>policy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>method, technic</td>
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<td>legislation</td>
<td>professionals, practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expertise</td>
<td></td>
<td>media, public engagement</td>
<td>citizens, NGOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>approach</td>
<td></td>
<td>epistemic training</td>
<td>business and industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cultural industry</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Aiming at the typology of social engagement modes of SSH - pathways of social impact

1. Expertise – researcher plays a role as an expert in the project commissioned outside university

2. Cocreation activities – researcher collaborates regularly with stakeholders

3. Research process by itself as an action of societal impact – targets of the study get recognition and sense of empowerment

4. Media and public engagement – results of research are taken into action by using society as a laboratory
Aiming at the typology of social engagement modes of SSH - pathways of social impact

5. Epistemic training – researcher gives lessons and produce training modules on the basis of new way of thinking the research they’ve conducted has brought up

6. Evaluation study – researcher produces quality checking tools, makes policy recommendations

7. Knowledge dissemination – policy makers, business and NGO representatives, citizens etc. become aware of the results of research through publications, social media, websites, databases, broadcasts etc.
Examples of fiches:
Philosophy professor Vetlesen (Norway)

Starting point: two psychiatric reports with conflicting conclusions on the extent of the defendant’s criminal responsibility in the case against mass murderer Anders Breivik.

Impacts – policy and practice
- Government established a committee and appointed Vetlesen to it.
- Vetlesen contributed significantly both to the report and to the ensuing debates, making use of Hegelian approach.
- His essay “Narratives of Evil” was particularly relevant for the work of the committee.
- Committee concluded that influence should be moved from the domain of forensic psychiatric competence to that of law.

Pathway to societal impact
- Expertise – researcher plays a role as an expert in the project commissioned outside university
Examples of fiches:
Compensating the past – redress scheme for child abuse (Finland)

The research interest was to identify the failures of Child welfare system in Finland (1937-1983).

Impacts

- **Policy and practice** – development of practices
- **Moral dimension** – empowerment of the former clients of child care
- **Economic dimension** – changes in research funding allocations

**Pathways to societal impact**

Cocreation activities – research group or researcher collaborates regularly with stakeholders

Research process by itself as an action of societal impact – targets of the study get recognition and sense of empowerment
Examples of fiches
Quality control of tourist destinations (Croatia)

The main research interest was to develop a research instrument which would serve as a practical tool for quality control of tourist supply value chain in every type of tourist destination in Croatia.

**Impact**

- Practice

- The results of the research served as the basis for annual competition in quality of tourist destinations which was broadcasted by Croatian National Radio-Television.

- The research boosted Croatian enterprises to go for better quality of tourist attractions

**Pathway to societal impact**

Media and public engagement – results of research are taken into action by using society as a laboratory
Next steps

Question for you:

- Which kind of dimensions would be interesting from the view of policy makers as ‘good’ proof or evidence of SSH creating an impact?

- What are the societal responsibilities and challenges that SSH research should address?
III. Databases and uses of data for understanding, monitoring and evaluating SSH research

WG3

Tim Engels
Tasks for WG3

Our tasks in the action are

1: To compare publication patterns across countries and disciplines
2: To analyse characteristics of dissemination channels
3: To develop rules and procedures for databases
4: To design a roadmap for a European SSH research information system
5: To develop alternative metrics

Milestone July 2017 (@RESSH 2017 conference in Antwerp): overview of existing databases
What we did already

- Present situation on research information systems to each other during Poznan meeting July 2016: countries covered (or info available) included Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Belgium/Flanders, Finland, Greece, Latvia, Lituania, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, and Swiss ➔ get to know (better) how systems in different countries work

- European survey on databases and repositories of social sciences and humanities research outputs (by Linda Sile)
Results of survey so far

- Responses from 35 out of 41 countries
- 18 national databases *(in red)*
- Regional, multi-institutional, institutional databases in 16 countries *(in yellow)*
Other ongoing work

- Bi- and multilateral comparisons, e.g. Finland – Norway – Flanders – Croatia – Poland
- Attempt at estimating the total European volume of SSH output
- Survey book evaluation processes throughout Europe (extension of Gimenez-Toledo et al, Scientometrics, 2016)