Open access and the Nordic publication indicator

Friends or enemies?

Janne Pölönen, Federation of Finnish Learnd Societies

Vidar Røeggen, Universities Norway

Gunnar Sivertsen, Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education

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Open Access agenda and the Nordic Publication Indicator: Conflicting issues?

Using channel as proxy of output quality…

- **The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment** (DORA) general recommendation is ”not to used journal-based metrics, such as JiF, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist’s contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions.”
- **The Leiden manifesto** and the **Metric tide** –report recommend that “quantitative evaluation should support – but not supplant – qualitative, expert assessment”

Reinforcing dominant position of commercial publishers…

- DORA and responsible metrics principles are endorsed by **European Commission**, **League of European Research Universities**, and **European university Association** open science recommendations and roadmaps. EUA Roadmap on Research Assessment in the Transition to Open Science point at two main problems with the way we assess research today:’
  1. The quality of an article produced by researchers is not evaluated directly, rather through a proxy, i.e., the reputation of the journal it is published in;
  2. This situation **reinforces the dominant position of commercial academic publishers** and disproportionately adds to their power in shaping the way research is funded and conducted.

Rewards and incentives for Open Access publishing…

- European research funders cOAlition S: “**By 2020 scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants provided by participating national and European research councils and funding bodies, must be published in compliant Open Access Journals or on compliant Open Access Platforms**.”

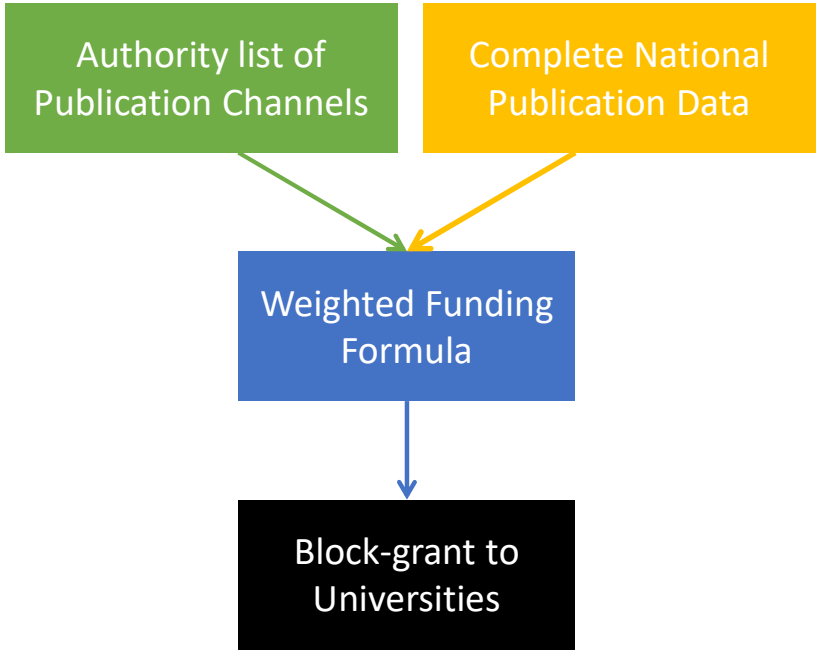
Outline

1. How does the Nordic Publication Indicator (NPI) advance Open Access?
2. Does NPI conform to responsible metrics?
3. Is it responsible to use publication channel quality as proxy indicator in NPI?
4. Discussion and conclusions

How does the NPI advance open access?

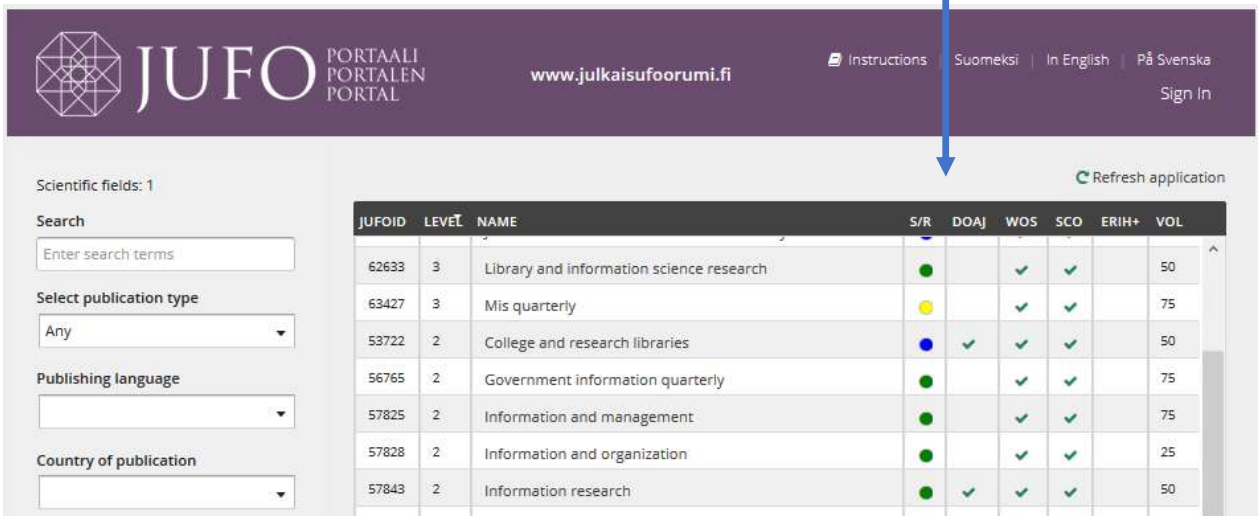
- Dissemination of OA information
- Inclusion of OA journals at level 1
- Effort to exclude questionable OA
- Promoting OA journals to level 2 and 3
- Exclusion of other than OA publications?
- OA in the funding formula?

Denmark, Finland and Norway use the "Norwegian model" of block-grant allocation that links national publication data to a weighted quality index of publication channels.



Dissemination of OA information

- **Reliable OA-channels**
- **DOAJ-indexing**
- **Sherpa/Romeo codes**



Inclusion of OA journals at level 1

- **New channels added every year, allowing inclusion of emerging OA channels and platforms**
- **Same criteria for OA and traditional channels:**
  - **expert editorial board**
  - **reliable peer-review**

NPi NORWEGIAN PUBLICATION INDICATOR

Norway:

Level 1 Criteria

1. Established procedures for external peer review. The concept of external peer review refers to various forms of editorial procedures that differ between academic fields and publication channels, and which indicate that the manuscript has been evaluated by one or more independent experts on the subject matter
2. An academic editorial board (or an equivalent) primarily consisting of researchers from universities, research institutes etc.
3. International or national authorship

Exception: Do not include local channels, understood as when more than two-third of the authors are from the same intuition.

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Finland:

Level 1 Criteria

1. specialized in the publication of scientific or scholarly research outcomes
2. editorial board constituted by experts
3. entire manuscripts of scientific or scholarly articles or books subject to peer review
4. registered ISSN or ISBN number

Exception: channels that are local (mainly used by researchers of a single research organization) or the quality and relevance to Finnish research community is questionable (e.g. predatory journals).

Effort to exclude questionable OA

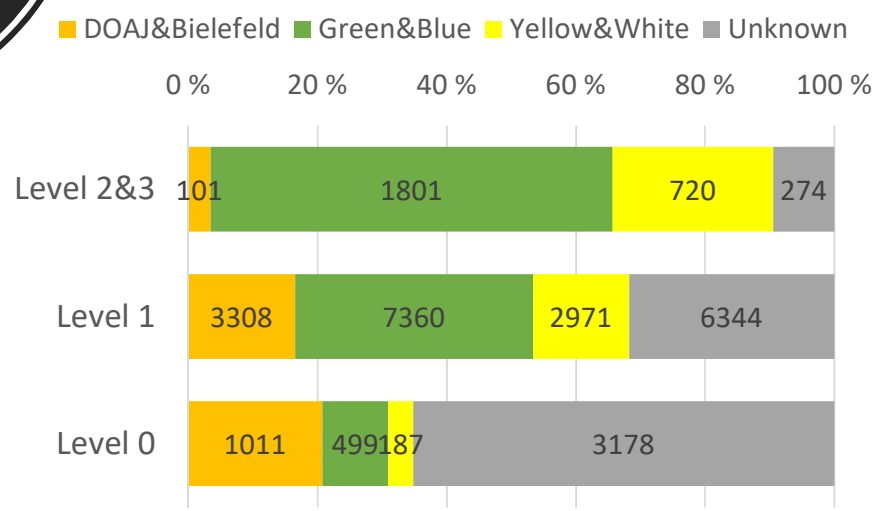
- **Whitelist instead of blacklist**
- **Sharing methods and information to identify questionable OA**
- **Nordic list collaboration with and sponsors of DOAJ**

DOAJ DIRECTORY OF OPEN ACCESS JOURNALS

Promoting OA journals to level 2 (and 3)

- **Expert-panels advised to promote open access**
- **Too few serious alternatives among DOAJ-journals**
- **Most leading journals are hybrid and/or allow self-archiving (embargo?)**

OA of journals in different levels in Finland



OA in level 2&3 nominations

Norway:

The National Board for Scholarly Publishing support open access publishing. When open access channels meets the general requirements for level 2, to be absolute leading, and the scientific community assess the channels to hold the same reputation as alternative choices for level 2, the channels of open access should be given priority.

Finland:
If channels considered for Level 2 or Level 3 in the same field have equal impact or prestige, an open access journal or one permitting self-archiving of the peer-reviewed version of the manuscript with reasonable embargo is chosen for higher level, over the channel that does not support open access. Openness of data can also be considered an advantage.

OA in the funding formula?

- **Indicator to promote both quality and open access**
- **Weights based on publication type, channel level and open access**
- **1.2 extra-weight for Gold, Bronze, Hybrid and Green OA**

OA-incentive in Finland

Plan is to make openly available peer-reviewed articles, monographs and edited works 20 % more rewarding to universities in terms of funding than not openly available publications.

1.2 extra-weight to all openly available peer-reviewed publications:

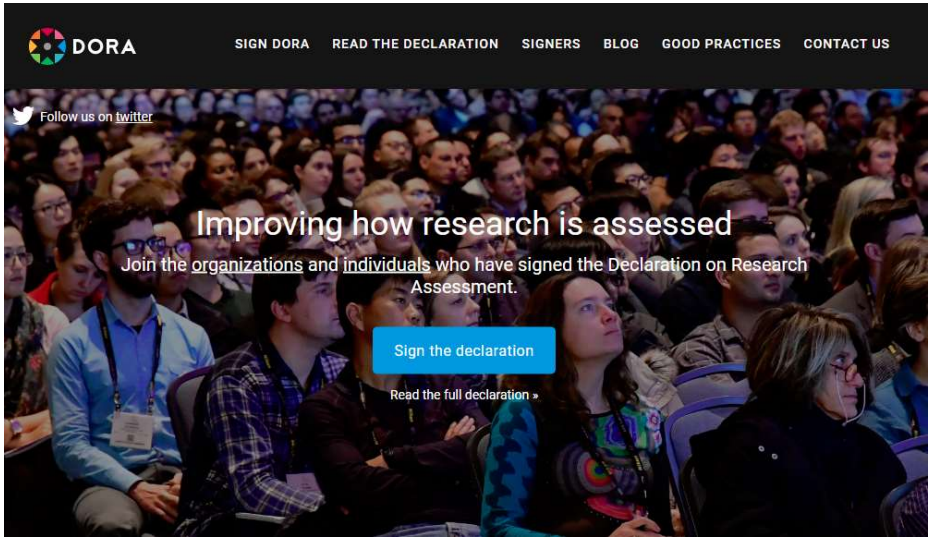
- in OA-channels where all publications are openly accessible
- in hybrid channel containing both open closed publications
- peer-reviewed version archived in organizational or field repository

Vision 2030 working-group set up by the Ministry of Education and Culture has proposed changes to the funding model of universities from 2021 onwards.

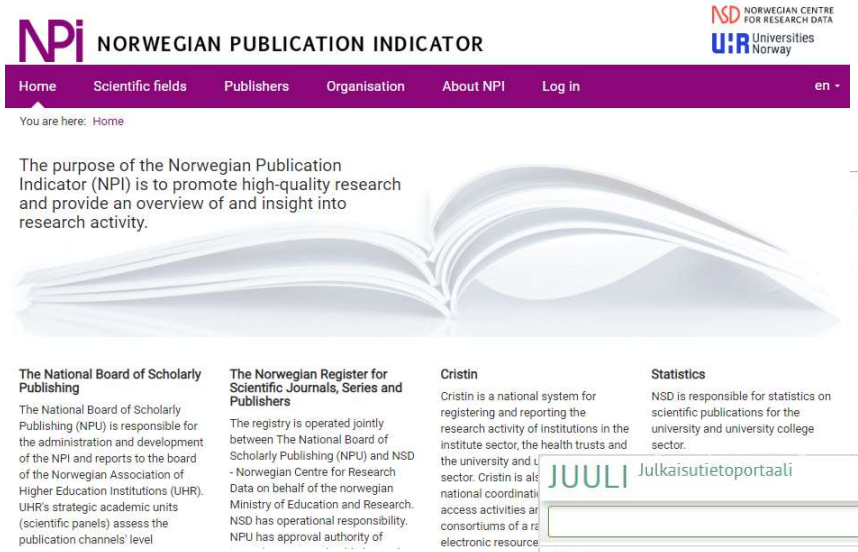
Publication type	Not OA publications				OA publications			
	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Level 0	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Level 0
Peer-reviewed monograph	16	12	4	0.4	19.2	14.4	4.8	0.48
Peer-reviewed article in journal	4	3	1	0.1	4.8	3.6	1.2	0.12
Peer-reviewed article in book	4	3	1	0.1	4.8	3.6	1.2	0.12
Peer-reviewed article in proceedings	4	3	1	0.1	4.8	3.6	1.2	0.12
Peer-reviewed edited work	4	3	1	0.1	4.8	3.6	1.2	0.12
Not-peer-reviewed monographs	0.4				0.4			
Not-peer-reviewed articles	0.1				0.1			

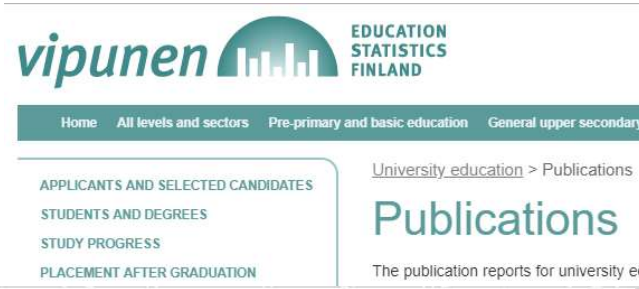
How does NPI conform to responsible metrics?

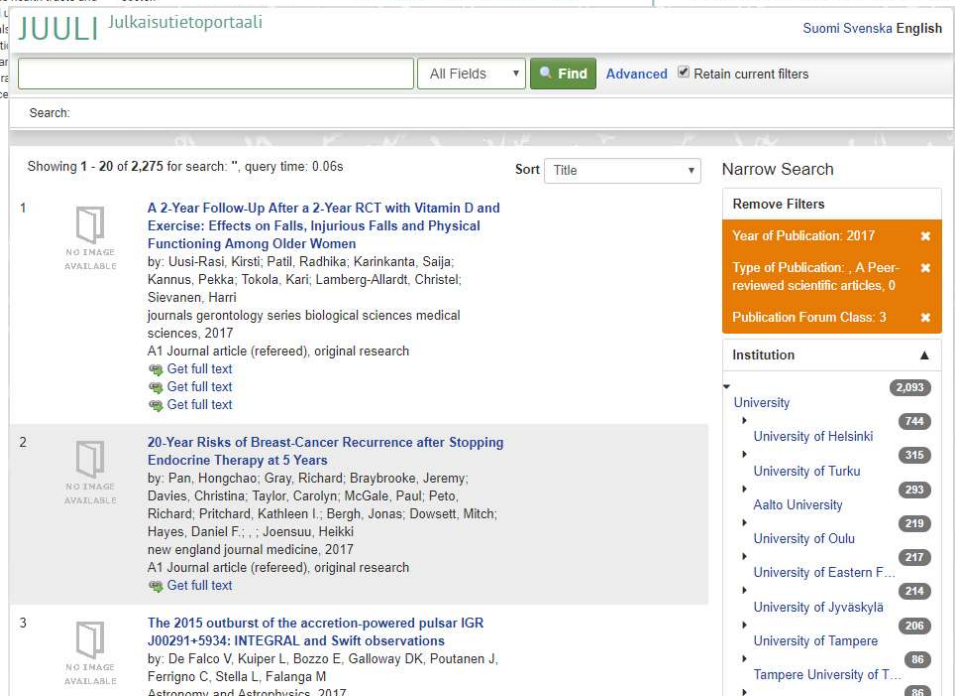
- Data and analysis simple, transparent and controllable
- Promotion of locally relevant research
- Consideration of field variation in publishing
- Recognizing systemic effects
- Indicator is scrutinized and updated



Data and analysis simple, transparent and controllable



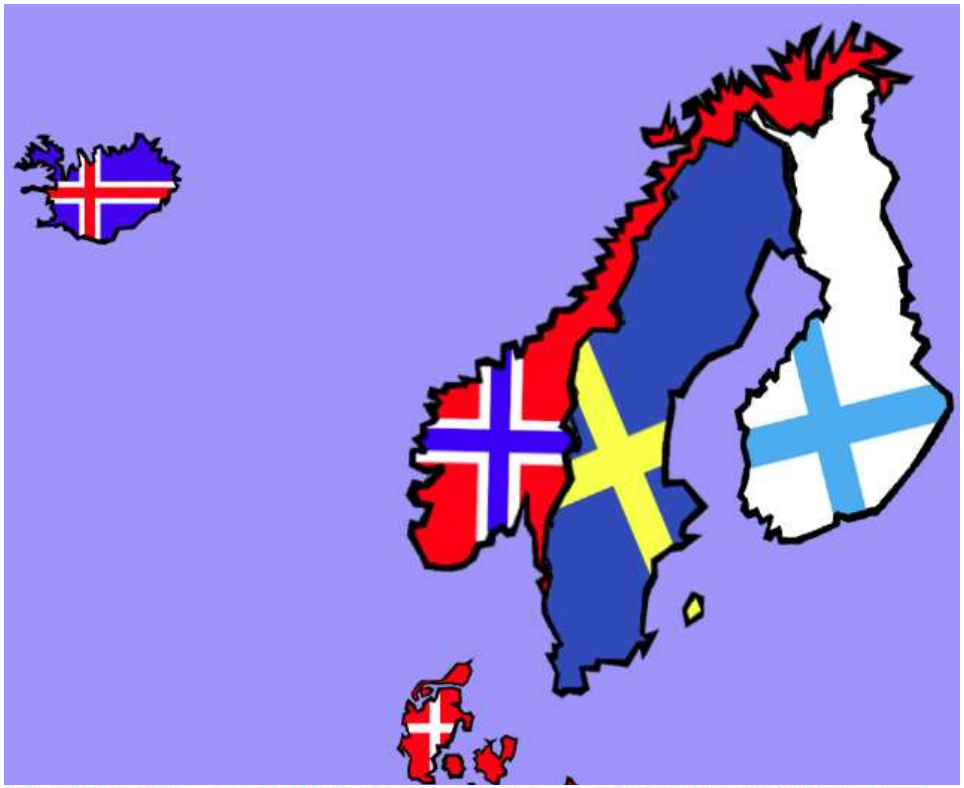




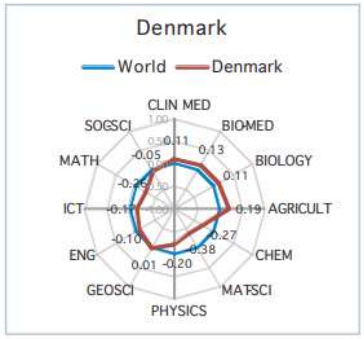
- **Universities can check the data on basis of which they are funded**
- **Data is accessible to also to researchers and public**
- **Authority list with level ratings is openly available**

Promotion of locally relevant research

- **Indicator can include all publication languages**
- **National language channels can be included at levels 1 and 2**
- **Adaptation to national research profiles and interests**

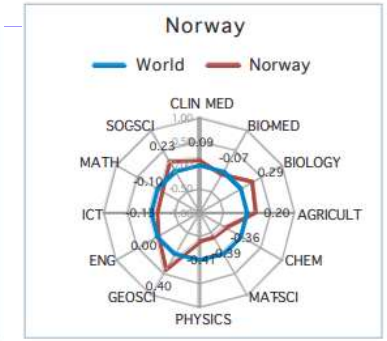


RSI FOR DENMARK, 2004-2008



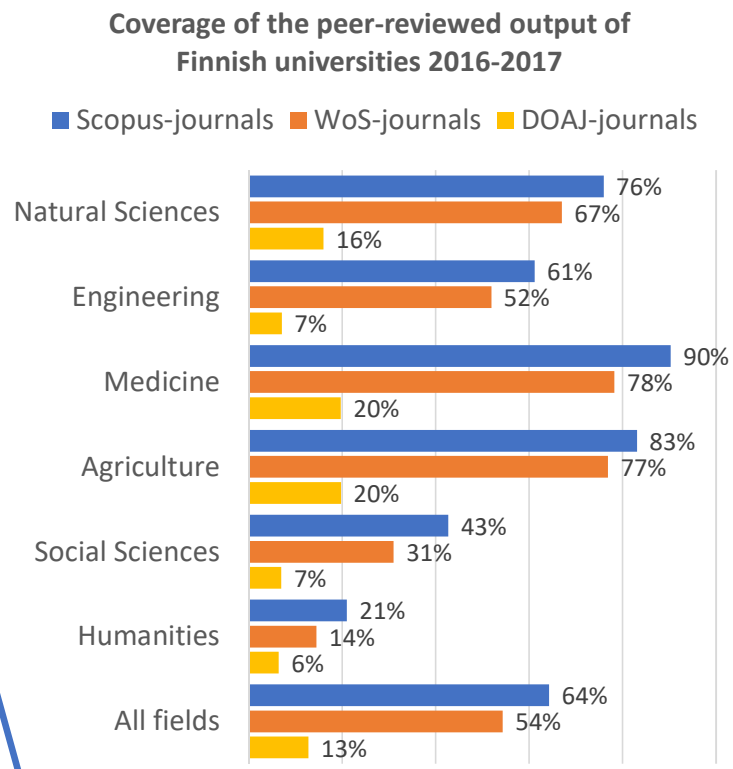
RSI FOR FINLAND, 2004-2008

RSI FOR NORWAY, 2004-2008



Consideration of field variation in publishing

- **Complete coverage of peer-reviewed outputs in all fields**
- **Indicator can take into account all publication types**
- **Indicator can give differ weights per publication type (article vs. monograph)**
- **Publications can be fractionalized by author and/or organization**



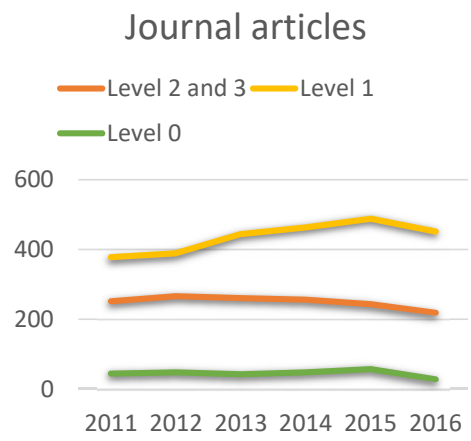
Resultater fordelt på publikasjonsform og kvalitetsnivå

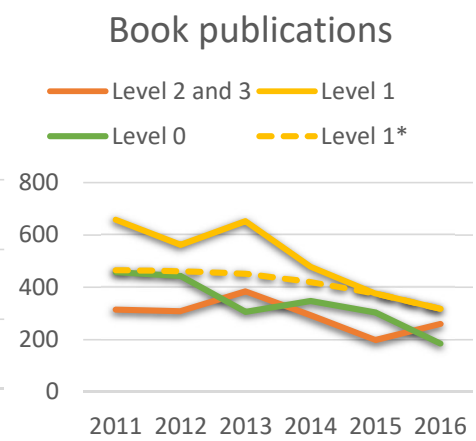
	Monografi			Antologikapittel			Artikkel			Grand Total
Forskningssektor	Nivå 1	Nivå 2	Total	Nivå 1	Nivå 2	Total	Nivå 1	Nivå 2	Total	
Universiteter og høgskoler	172	62	234	2 713	990	3 703	13 451	4 089	17 540	21 477
Helsesektoren	2		2	39	5	44	3 255	947	4 202	4 248
Instituttsektoren	14	17	31	459	184	643	3 458	983	4 441	5 115
Grand Total	184	75	259	2 996	1 117	4 113	15 961	4 700	20 661	25 033

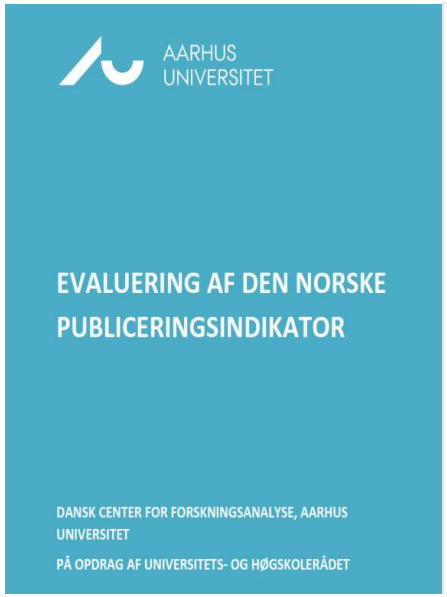
Recognizing systemic effects

- **Data enables monitoring of possible systemic effects**
- **Indicator can be subject to self-evaluation and external evaluation**

Number of peer-reviewed Finnish language SSH outputs in different levels 2011-2016.



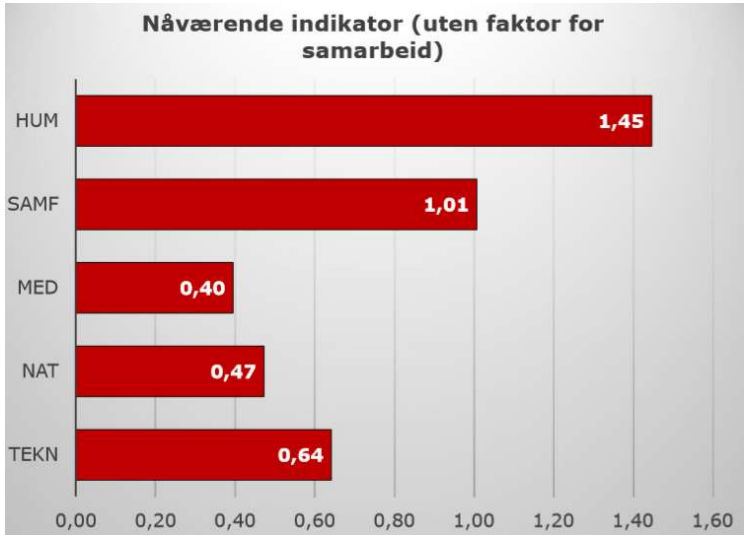


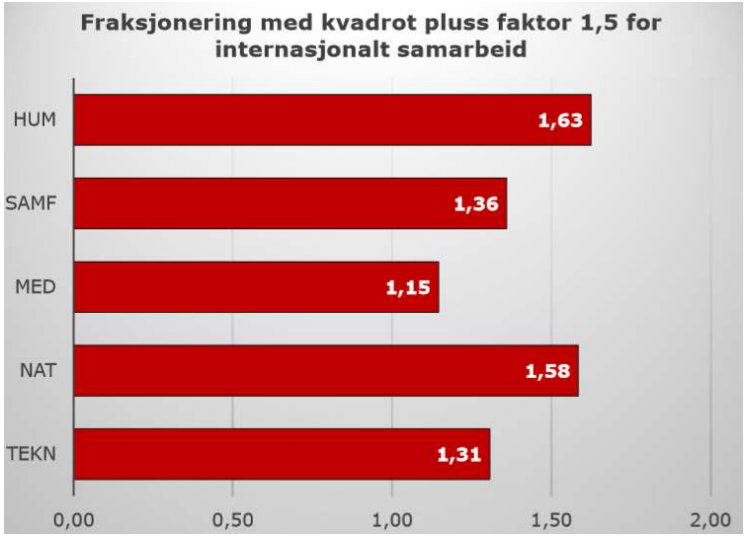


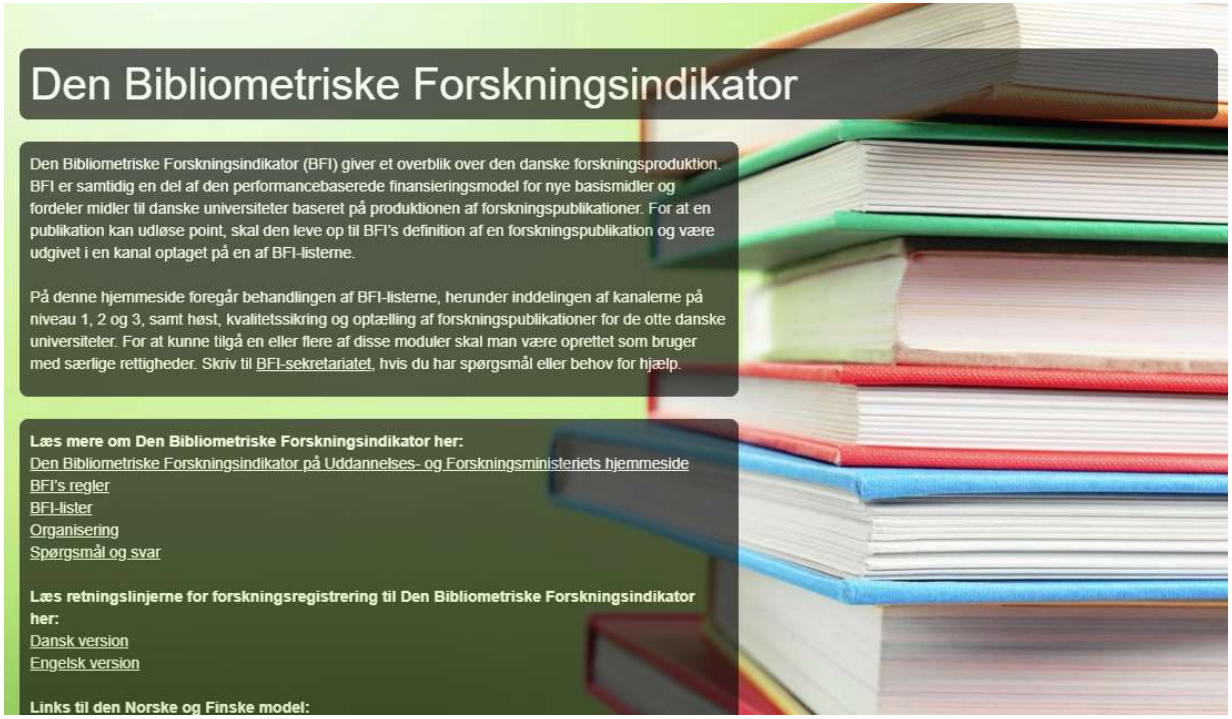
Indicator is scrutinized and updated

- **Indicator is subject to public debate and inspection**
- **Research community can comment, suggest additions and changes to ratings**
- **Level ratings of publication channels are regularly updated**
- **Funding formula and model can be updated**

Performance-based funding indicators	**Share (%)**	
	2017	**2021**
Education	41	42
• Master's degrees	13	19
• Bachelors' degrees	6	11
• Study credits in open university, specialization studies, studies based on cooperation and in non-degree programmes	2	5
~~• Number of students who have gained at least 55 study credits~~	~~10~~	
• Student feedback	3	3
• Number of employed graduates	2	4
~~• Master's degrees awarded to foreign nationals~~	~~1~~	
~~• Student mobility to and from Finland~~	~~2~~	
Research	33	34
• PhD degrees	9	8
• Scientific publications	13	14
~~• International teaching and research staff~~	~~2~~	
• Competed research funding	9	12
Other education and science policy objectives	28	24
• Strategic development	12	15
~~• Field-specific funding~~	~~9~~	
• National duties	7	9





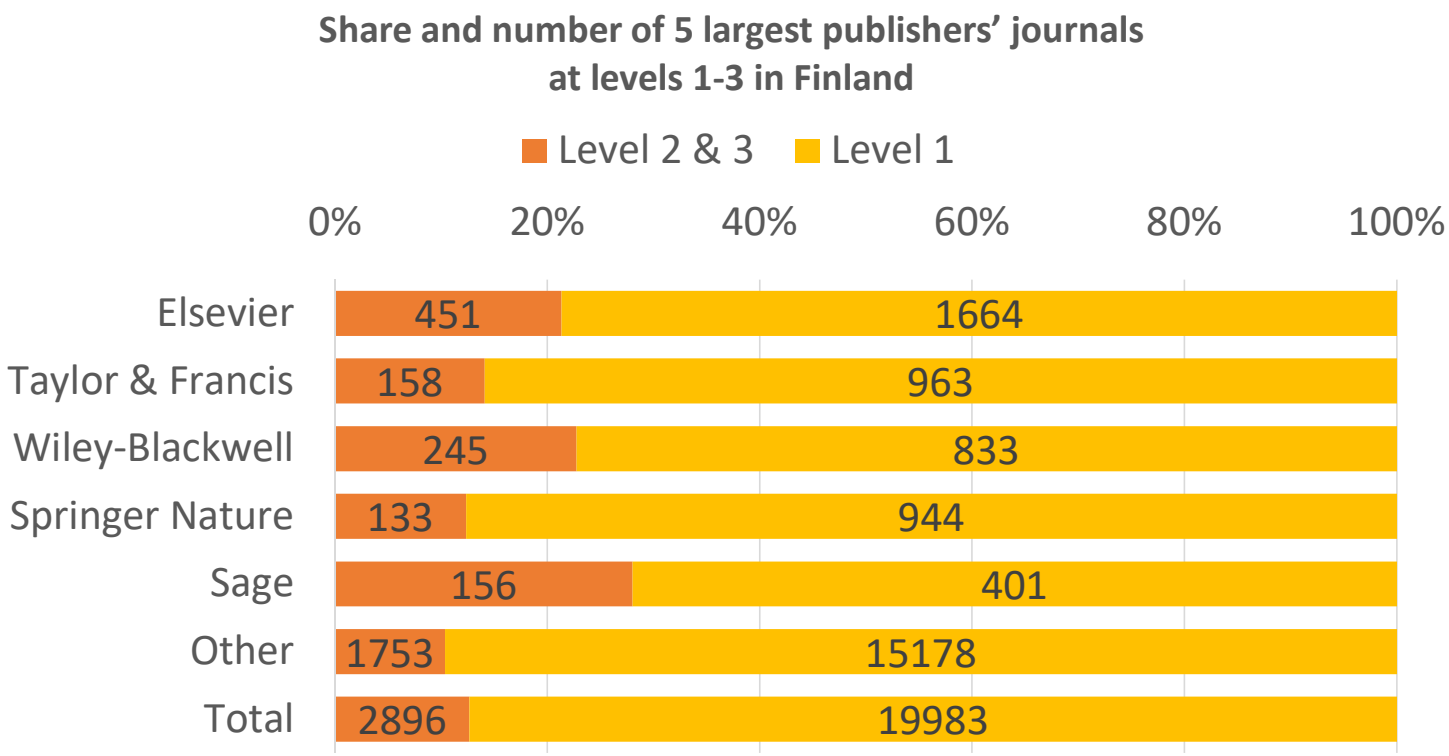


Is it responsible to use channel as proxy in NPI?

- Channel rating is not based on publisher
- Expert-based rather than JIF-based rating
- Macro level funding-scheme
- Responsible use at individual level

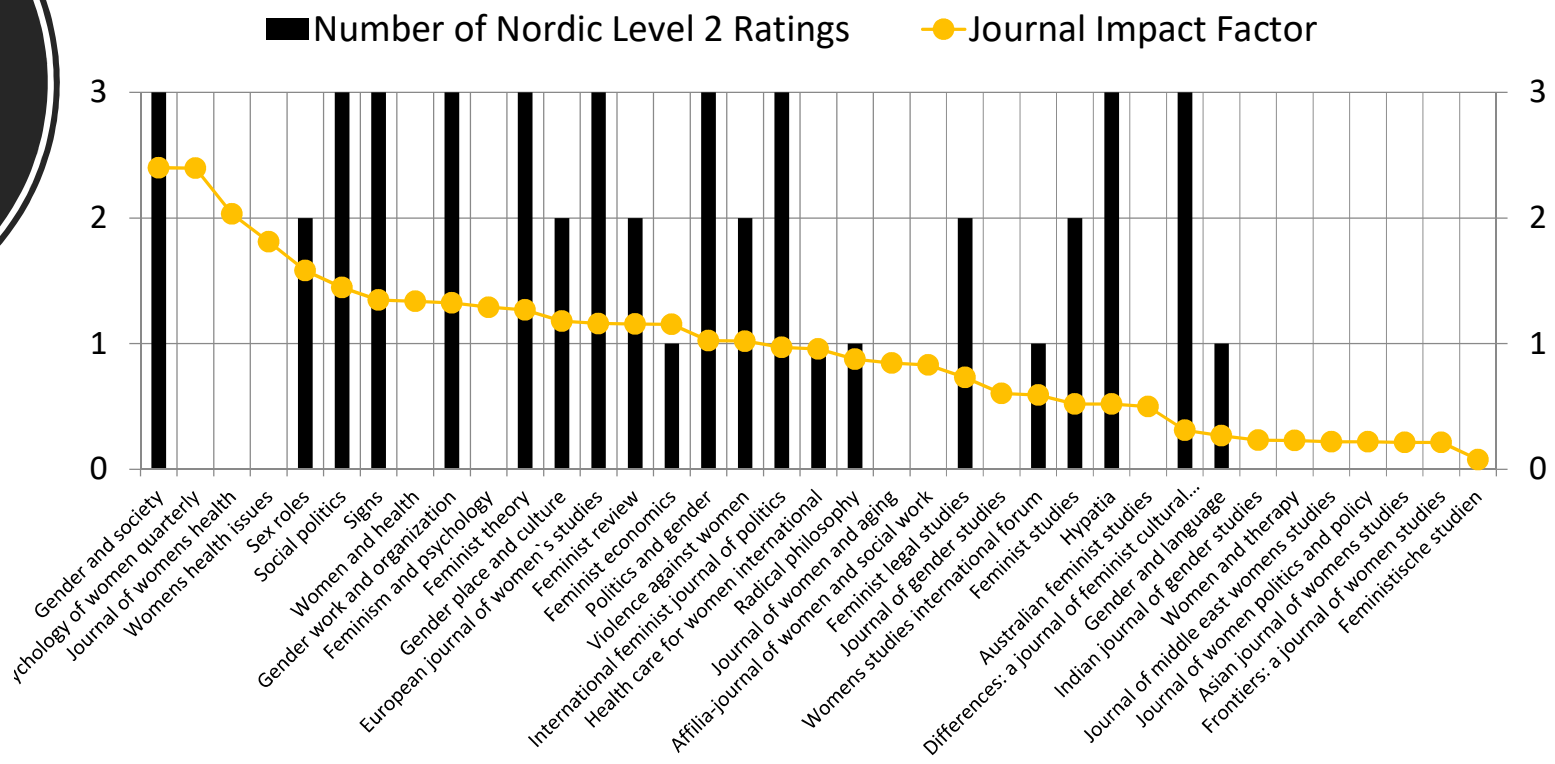
Rating is not based on publisher

- **Publisher does not determine the rating of journals**
- **The big 5 have some advantage at level 2**
- **Vast majority of the big 5 journals are at level 1**



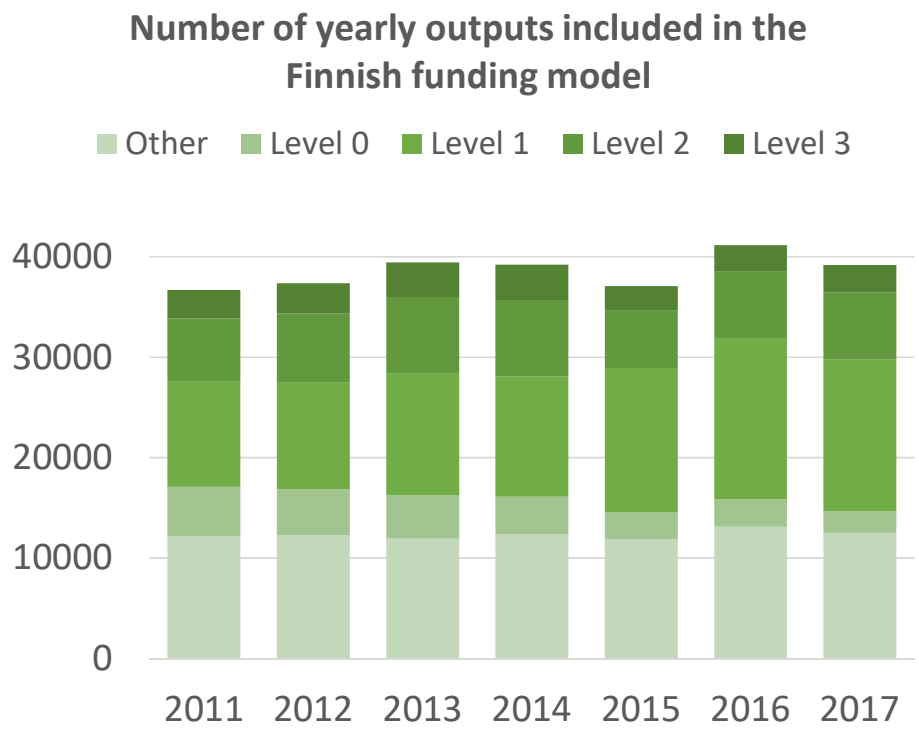
Expert-based rather than JIF-based rating

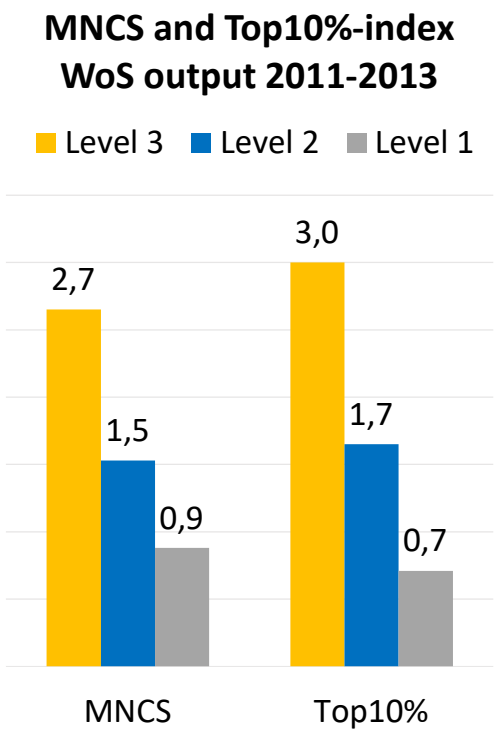
- **Rating of journals and book publishers is entrusted to field-specific expert-panels representing the national research communities**
- **High Journal Impact Factor does not guarantee Level 2 or 3.**



Macro level funding-scheme

- **Indicator is designed to distribute funding to universities at the macro level**
- **The scale of outputs warrants the channel based indicator's use in place of expert-evaluation**





Responsible use at individual level

- **Indicator is not suited for the evaluation of individual researchers**
- **It is possible to produce national level guidelines in accordance with DORA, Leiden manifesto and the Metric tide**

Norway:

Recommendation – The publication indicator used at local level or for individual researchers

"As a rule then, the indicator should not be used as a decisive basis for budget resource allocation, career development, the distribution of tasks, internal resources and benefits, nor in employment contexts. Academic managements must also take into consideration the researchers' contributions related to education, dissemination and innovation, as well as the employees' professional and social contributions to the academic community.

Pure mechanical application of the indicator is discouraged."

Finland:

Publication Forum Steering-group:

"The Publication Forum classification is too approximate to be used as a tool for evaluating or comparing the publications or merits of individual researchers... The classification cannot substitute for peer evaluation as a criterion or grounds for decisions on an individual researcher's recruitment, financing or rewarding."

- Federation of Finnish Learned Societies has set up a working-group to establish national guidelines for responsible evaluation of researchers

Discussion and conclusions

- NPI involves consultation of the expert-panels representing the research community with the implementation of OA agenda.
- Level ratings of journals and book publishers rely on expert-assessment, not just publisher brand or the Journal Impact Factor.
- NPI framework is dynamic and flexible, the authority list and the funding formula can recognize and promote both OA and quality
- NPI supports responsible metrics in terms of data coverage, transparency, publishing cultures, scrutiny and updates.
- The scale of outputs warrants the use of NPI instead of expert-evaluation at macro level funding scheme.
- Content-based expert-evaluation of research takes place in other evaluation contexts (research assessments and project funding).
- DORA, Leiden manifesto and Metric Tide concern the responsible use of metrics at the level of individual researchers