



# Towards integrating European research information



Hanna-Mari Puuska, CSC – IT Center for Science Ltd., Finland  
Janne Pölonen, Federation of Finnish Learned Societies  
Tim Engels, University of Antwerp, Flanders  
Gunnar Sivertsen, NIFU, Norway



## On the Agenda, but still unsolved...

- Science policy and research evaluation at all levels of the European Research Area need support from reliable, comparable, and comprehensive information on research activity, productivity and quality.
- Commercial databases, Web of Science or Scopus, do not provide complete coverage of research output in any field, and in SSH fields they suffer from severe lack of coverage of publications in books and languages other than English.

# On the agenda, but still unsolved...



A report in 2010 to European Science Foundation and the British, Dutch, French, and German research councils

**Towards a Bibliometric Database for  
the Social Sciences and Humanities –  
A European Scoping Project**

A report produced for DFG, ESRC, AHRC, NWO, ANR and ESF

8 March 2010

Two of the recommendations:

- Negotiate expansions and/or a new database with the suppliers of *Web of Science* and/or *Scopus*
- Integrate national and institutional documentation systems

# On the Agenda, but still unsolved...



## A report in 2014 to European Parliamentary Research Service



### The key recommendation:

- The development of a European integrated research information system having features of a distributed infrastructure, inter-connecting the existing national research information systems, facilitated by CERIF – the European standards for research information systems ([www.eurocris.org](http://www.eurocris.org)).

## On the Agenda, but still unsolved...



At the recent Strategic Membership Meeting of euroCRIS (November 2016), various international organisations agreed to explore the possibilities to cooperate in order to come to/create a European Research Information Infrastructure:

- EARMA (European Research Managers), Science Europe (funders), OpenAIRE, German Research Academies, JISC, ORCID and euroCRIS...

# Challenges of integration



- At least 19 European Union Member States had developed or were developing a national research information system (report to European Parliamentary Research Service, 2014)
- The main difficulty of standardization and interoperability of research information at the European level is the variety of national systems, processes and data models.
- Many countries are facing a similar problem at national level when they compile information from research organizations using various local systems, e.g.:
  - Norway: a nationally integrated CRIS
  - Denmark: data integrated from local PURE systems in a national database
  - Flanders: data integrated from local CRISes to a regional database

# Applying Finnish concept to European level?



- The procedure and technical solution of VIRTATA are expandable to for compilation of publication information from various countries and organizations across Europe
- Adaptation of the VIRTATA concept would establish a convenient and cost-efficient way for developing a **European Publication Information Service**
- Any European country or single organization would be able to provide its data
- Common European standardizations and data content need to be defined in collaboration with ENRESSH - “lowest common denominator” + additional optional information
- Data model already provided by CERIF ([www.eurocris.org](http://www.eurocris.org))
- In the future, the concept is extendable to other European research output and activities, such as research data, research projects and research infrastructures

# Principles for the European Research Information Service

CSC

- Data transfer from national or local CRISes in a standardized format – annually or more frequently
- All information freely available in a public portal
- Via open APIs, the information usable for various purposes



# Benefits of integrating European research information



<b>Completeness</b>	Comprehensive information and indicators on research activity, productivity and quality.
<b>Coverage</b>	Any European country or institution can join. All scholarly publications and other research outcomes included.
<b>Availability</b>	All compiled information openly available. Online access to research literature via metadata including links to full texts.
<b>Quality</b>	Well-structured and commensurable information. Shared standards and automatic validation process.
<b>Transparency</b>	Every country and institution can see, check and compare all other institutions' data.
<b>Usability</b>	Research evaluation, indicators, statistics, CV's, applications, administration, policy, research, information retrieval

# Roadmap

- **December 2016:** Proposal presented in VIRTA steering group in the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture
  - VIRTA concept could potentially be extended to European level and the technical solution implemented by CSC
- **February 2017:** Proposal presented for the euroCRIS Board
- **Currently:** Discussion with potential collaborative and advisory stakeholders at European level
- **Spring/Autumn 2017:** Pilot between 4 countries
  - Finland, Flanders (Antwerpen), Norway (Oslo), Spain (Madrid)
  - Countries report their publication data 2014-15 to VIRTA
- **2018->:** Implementation project - funding needs to be arranged at European level