

# Helsinki Initiative of Multilingual Scholarly Communication

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DOI: [10.5072/zenodo.1115104](https://doi.org/10.5072/zenodo.1115104)

PUBLICATION DATE

5/16/2022

ABSTRACT

*Evaluation of Social Sciences and Humanities in Europe. Hcéres Colloquium Proceedings - Paris IAS, 16-17 May 2022. Session 1*

The Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication was launched in 2018. It values multilingual scholarly communication, science communication and open access. The long-term goal of the Helsinki Initiative is to ensure the continued availability of languages needed across the world for effective communication of research knowledge.

The Helsinki Initiative arose from the joint effort of the COST-Action ENRESSI (European Network for the Social Science and the Humanities), Universities Norway, and three organizations: the Learned Societies, the Committee for Public Information in Finland, and the Signatories from over 70 countries agree that multilingualism in scholarly communication is a local concern.

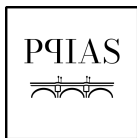
Helsinki Initiative has three main goals:

1. to promote multilingual dissemination of research knowledge within and beyond the research community
2. to ensure sustainable open access transition of non-profit scholarly publishing where possible
3. to promote language diversity and multilingualism in research assessment and funding

It is important to communicate research results to international expert audiences in each discipline. However, if research is communicated exclusively in English, it may limit its impact and responsibilities toward society. In addition to international excellence, science, innovation and open science. Broad access to scientific knowledge and interaction with research is communicated and used in multiple languages.

## Why we need multilingual scientific knowledge

According to statement by the European University Association supporting the Helsinki Initiative, it is relevant for Europe, as its research is characterized by geographic, cultural and linguistic diversity.



and locally produced knowledge requires critical discussion and dialogue between local conditions and different actors within society. The COVID-19 pandemic communication, not only between researchers, but also to reach decision-makers,

To cope with grand challenges and to meet sustainable development goals, we need to communicate in languages and formats suited for the diverse audiences. Especially an important part of research is contextualised, creating a need for original research that affects citizens who are affected by this research. It is impossible to imagine that all Finnish or French society, history and culture would be published only in English publishers.

A study of users of open access journals on the Finnish Journal.fi platform shows that Finnish and Swedish are vital for reaching important users of research both who participated in the survey, and the two largest groups were students (40%) and other experts, teachers, journalists, civil servants, entrepreneurs and politicians. The study was focused on articles available in Finland's national languages.

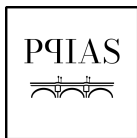
## Why we need the infrastructure of journals and publishers in different languages?

The national journals and book publishers across Europe play a vital role in the communities' outlets for publishing and critically discussing research results in reviewed journals and books are published in the local languages mainly by societies or research institutions, relying on voluntary work. Providing open access without subscription fees is a real sustainability challenge for the scholar-led publishers in Europe.

It is of utmost importance that multilingualism for European scholarly publication and the impact of Open Science policies and practices across Europe. Translation technologies are part of the solution for facilitating multilingual access to scientific research. To promote and implement multilingualism needs also to address how to secure publishing locally relevant research and developing scientific terminology in the local languages.

## Why it is important to address language bias and funding?

Ideally, language is a non-issue in assessment. Researchers should be recognised regardless of the impact of their research, despite the language of application or publication. In practice, it is far from language-neutral, and this is an issue with metrics as well as expert assessment. High-quality research is valued regardless of publishing languages, and that the



they spend time on writing to policy-makers, professionals or general public, or in journals.

Because assessments steer research through distribution of resources, rewards, compromise equal opportunities for individual researchers and institutions. assessment may lead to systemic undervaluation of SSH research compared to S of locally relevant research and knowledge transfer beyond academia. To ensure scientific knowledge in all researchers' and citizens' main languages, the global to address well-known language biases in metrics and expert-assessment.

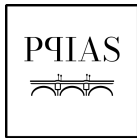
## Recommendation of the Helsinki-Initiative

1. Support dissemination of research results for the full benefit of the society.
  - Make sure researchers are merited for disseminating research results beyond academia and society.
  - Make sure equal access to researched knowledge is provided in a variety of languages.
2. Protect national infrastructures for publishing locally relevant research.
  - Make sure not-for-profit journals and book publishers have both sufficient resources and standards of quality control and research integrity.
  - Make sure national journals and book publishers are safeguarded in their transition to digital.
3. Promote language diversity in research assessment, evaluation, and funding systems.
  - Make sure that in the process of expert-based evaluation, high quality research is published in a wide range of publication channels.
  - Make sure that when metrics-based systems are utilized, journal and book publication is taken into account.

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