A bottom-up approach to building a publication indicator for the Social Sciences and Humanities

Ana Ramos, Maria Arménia Carrondo, Cláudia S. Sarrico

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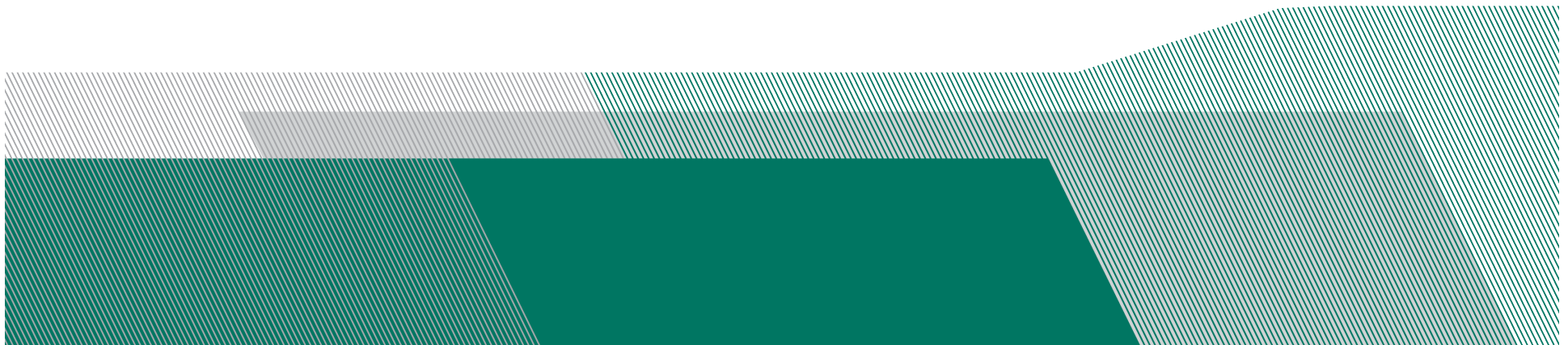
Research evaluation and funding in Portugal

- *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* (FCT) is the main entity responsible for evaluating and funding research units, human resources, projects and infrastructures **in all scientific domains (manages approx. 35% of the public R&D expenditure; 90% of the publications indexed in Scopus 2008-2012)**

- **International peer-review underpins FCT selection processes**

- The reliability of tools employed by policy makers and **funding agencies** for assessing research performance is highly scrutinized

- Bibliometric analysis has been increasingly used in institutional assessment as a tool for measuring productivity and impact

- Bibliometrics was used to **complement** the peer evaluation of Portuguese research units (bibliometric indicators were provided to the members of the evaluation panels)

- **…..Inadequacy of citation indicators for evaluation in the Social Sciences and Humanities**
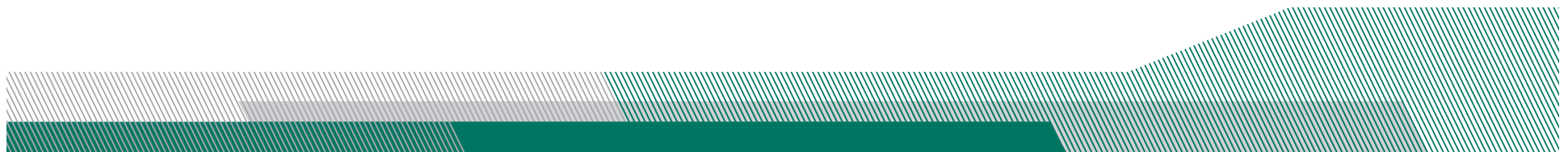
The Norwegian model

- Implemented in 2004 (when it was unique in an international perspective)

- Relies on a national research documentation system

- Authoritative list of publication channels (in all disciplines) defined by a committee of experts

- Publication channels classified in two levels. Level 2 includes the most prestigious channels - at most 20%

- Confers "points" to scholarly publications according to their type (article in periodical, book chapter or book) and level

- 10-year evaluation (2014): main criticisms concerned the classification of publication channels and the optimal number of levels ("opaque processes" or "sometimes influenced by special interests")
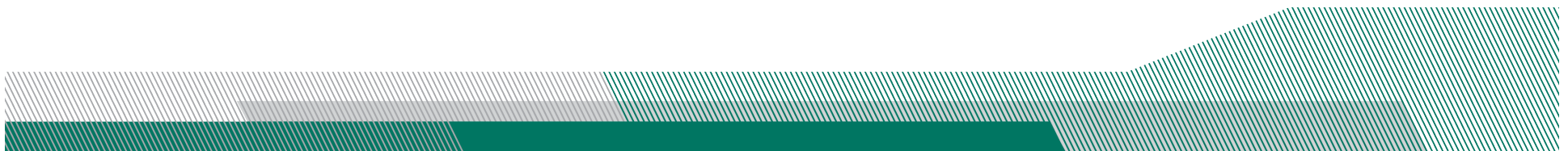
Goals of this project

- Develop an instrument to extract a suitable indicator for SSH, inspired by the Norwegian model but built from the input of researchers

- **Built with the input of researchers in SSH to involve the community and minimize criticisms about lack of transparency.**

- Obtain a complete register of the scientific literature produced in Portugal in the SSH

- To be used, **together with peer-review**, in the evaluation of R&D units/teams/projects in SSH
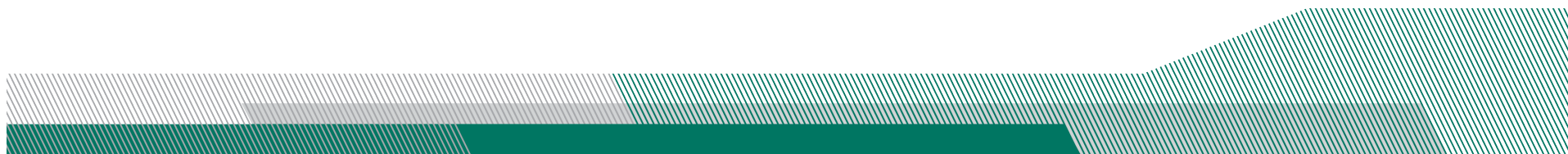
Methodology

- Two stages

- **1ST STAGE**, the researchers answered a survey that had as starting point the lists of journals and publishers used in Norway. After selecting a **SSH subfield**, the researcher could **add or remove** journals and publishers according to their perceived relevance

- **30 SSH subfields** resulting from the matching of the areas of the Norwegian list with the OECD/FOS classification. Some of the FOS two-digit fields were subdivided to decrease the number of journals in each list

- Survey carried out in HTML, PT and EN versions, hosted on a web page and open for participation during three weeks (reminder at the end of the second week)

- In the **2ND STAGE**, the researchers received the lists of journals and publishers built from the first inquiry and classified the journals and publishers in two levels: level 1, comprising approximately 80% of the publication channels, and level 2 (20% of higher prestige (*in progress*)
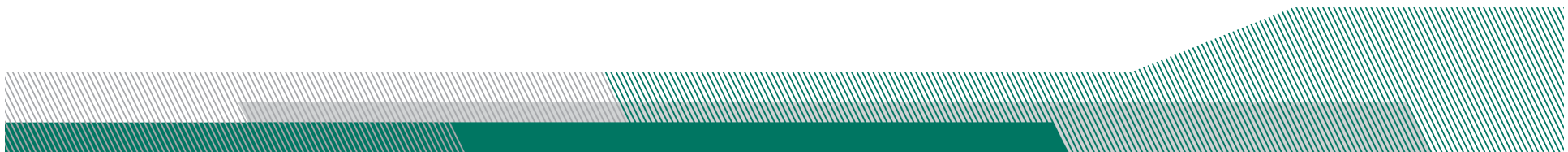
Results 1ˢᵗ stage and construction of the PTList

NUMBER OF PhD HOLDERS IN SSH	9,200
NUMBER OF SCIENTIFIC AREAS	30
SUBMITTED QUESTIONNAIRES (RESPONSE RATE)	2,382 **(25.9%)**
JOURNALS ADDED	± 20,000
JOURNALS ADDED (UNIQUE RECORDS)	6,622
PUBLISHERS ADDED	± 2,750
PUBLISHERS ADDED (UNIQUE RECORDS)	1,032

- Duplicates were removed, missing ISSNs and/or eISSNs were added and the resulting list (**PTList**) contained 6,622 journals added by the SSH researchers

- 2,610 journals (39.4%) were not indexed to any of the following reference databases; Scopus; Web of Science Citation Indexes; European Reference Index for the Humanities Plus (ERIH Plus); Scientific Electronic Library Online (Scielo); International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS); Wilson Humanities/Social Sciences Abstracts; Association of Business Schools (ABS) Journal Quality Guide 2010

- The lists of non-indexed journals, organized by sub-field, were analysed by experts (belonging to or appointed by the SSH Scientific Council)

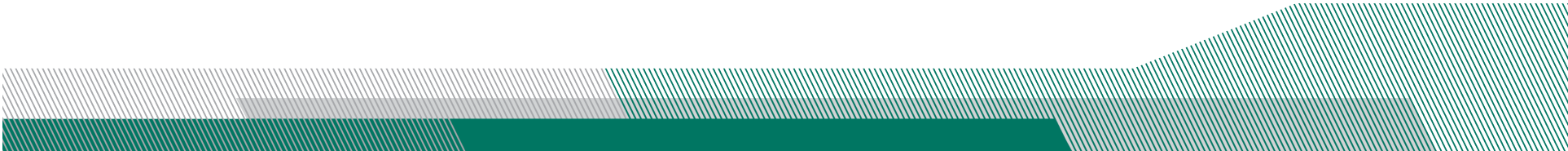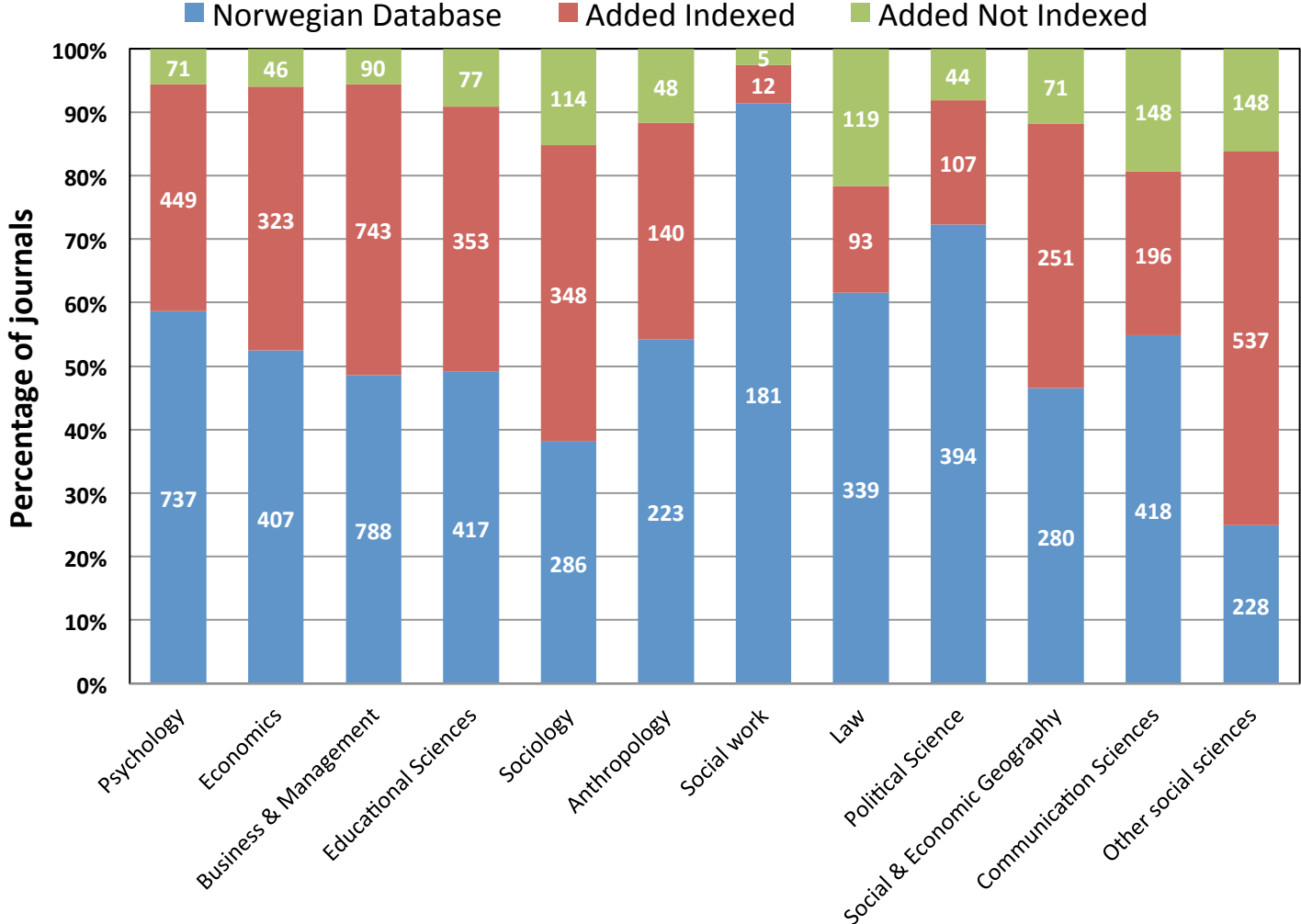- The composition of the editorial boards was checked

Criteria for the inclusion of journals in the PTList:

1. Indexation in databases

2. Considered relevant by experts, regardless of indexation to databases

3. International scope of the editorial board for the remaining journals

- **This inclusive approach is aligned with the fundamental objective of the project, i.e. the construction of an instrument with a wider coverage than that of the "common" databases**

- Researchers could also **remove journals** that they did not consider relevant. But any journal that was indexed in at least one of the reference databases was **kept in the PTList**, regardless of having been "removed" by one or more researchers

- **Total PTLIST = 10,892 journals**: 6,817 Norwegian list (**63%**); 2,664 added indexed (**24%**); 1,411 added not-indexed (**13%**)
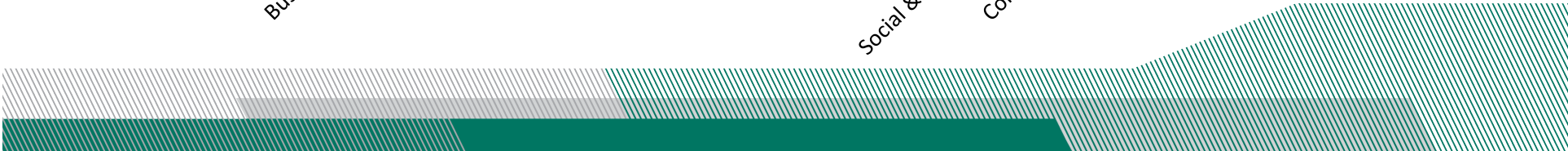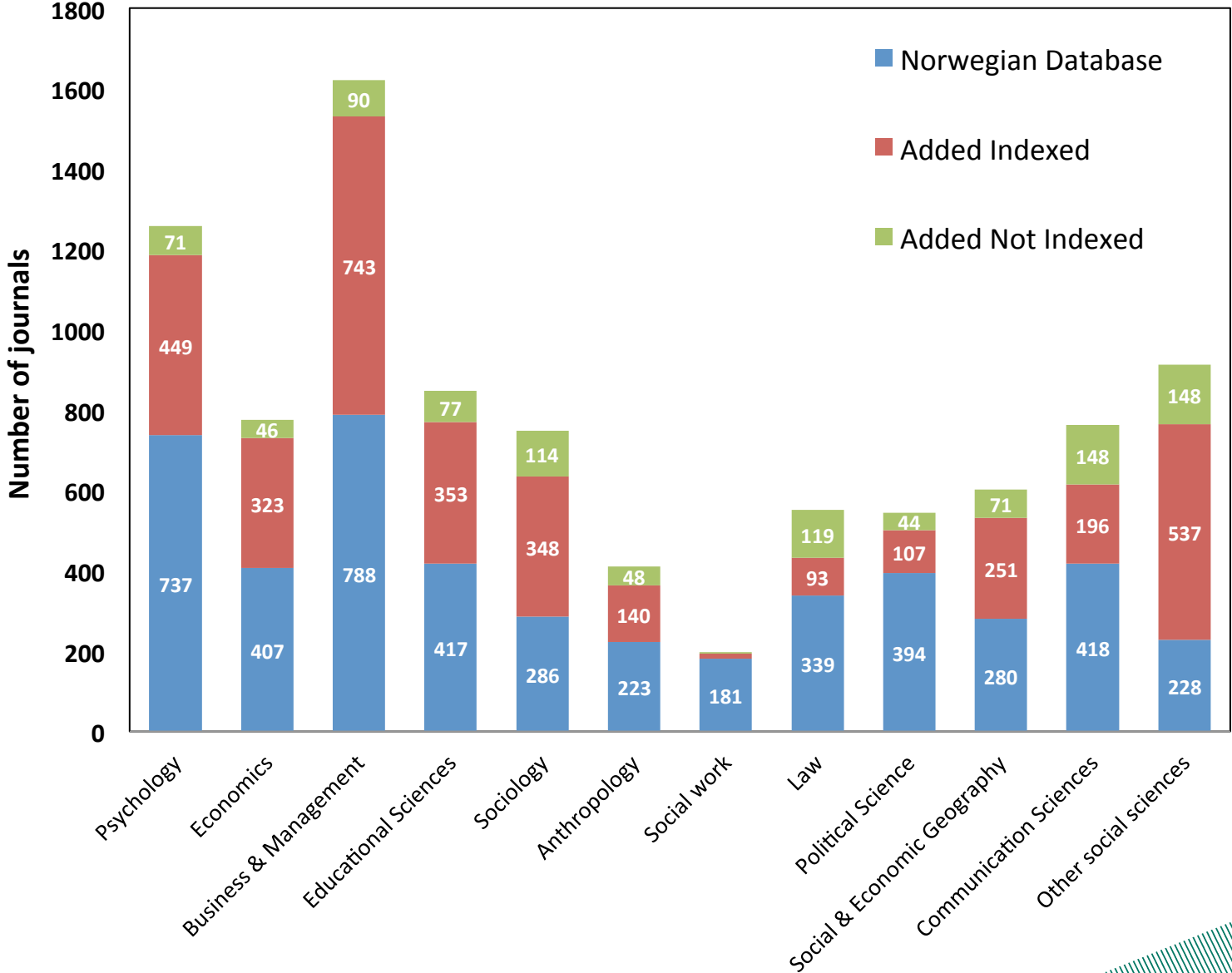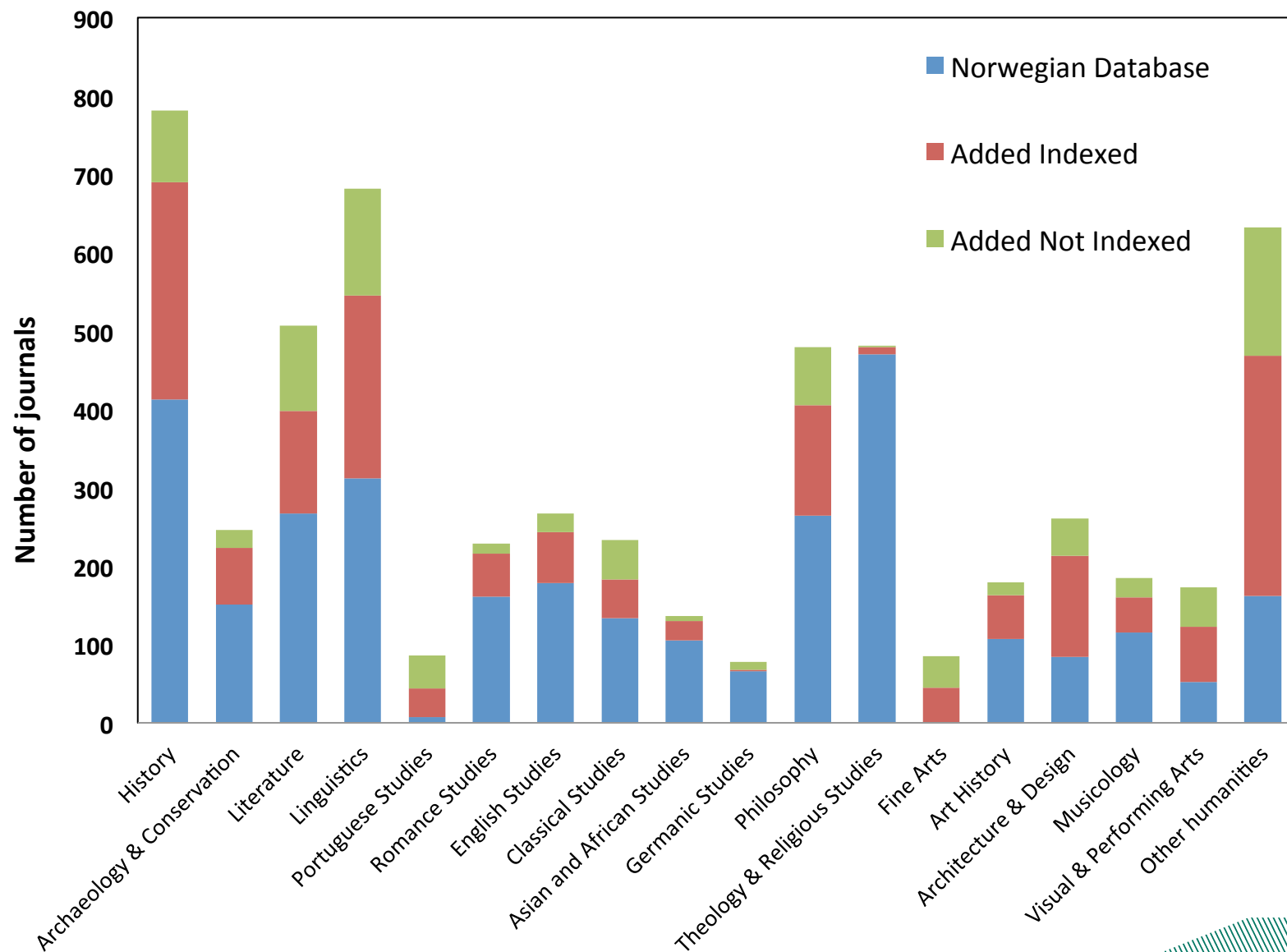
# Sources of journals in the PTList – Social Sciences

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Legend: Norwegian Database, Added Indexed, Added Not Indexed

Categories and values:

Category	Norwegian Database	Added Indexed	Added Not Indexed
Psychology	737	449	71
Economics	407	323	46
Business & Management	788	743	90
Educational Sciences	417	353	77
Sociology	286	348	114
Anthropology	223	140	48
Social work	181	12	5
Law	339	93	119
Political Science	394	107	44
Social & Economic Geography	280	251	71
Communication Sciences	418	196	148
Other social sciences	228	537	148

# Sources of journals in the PTList – Humanities

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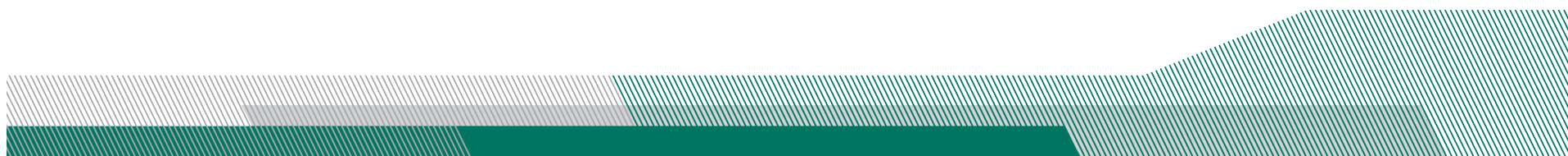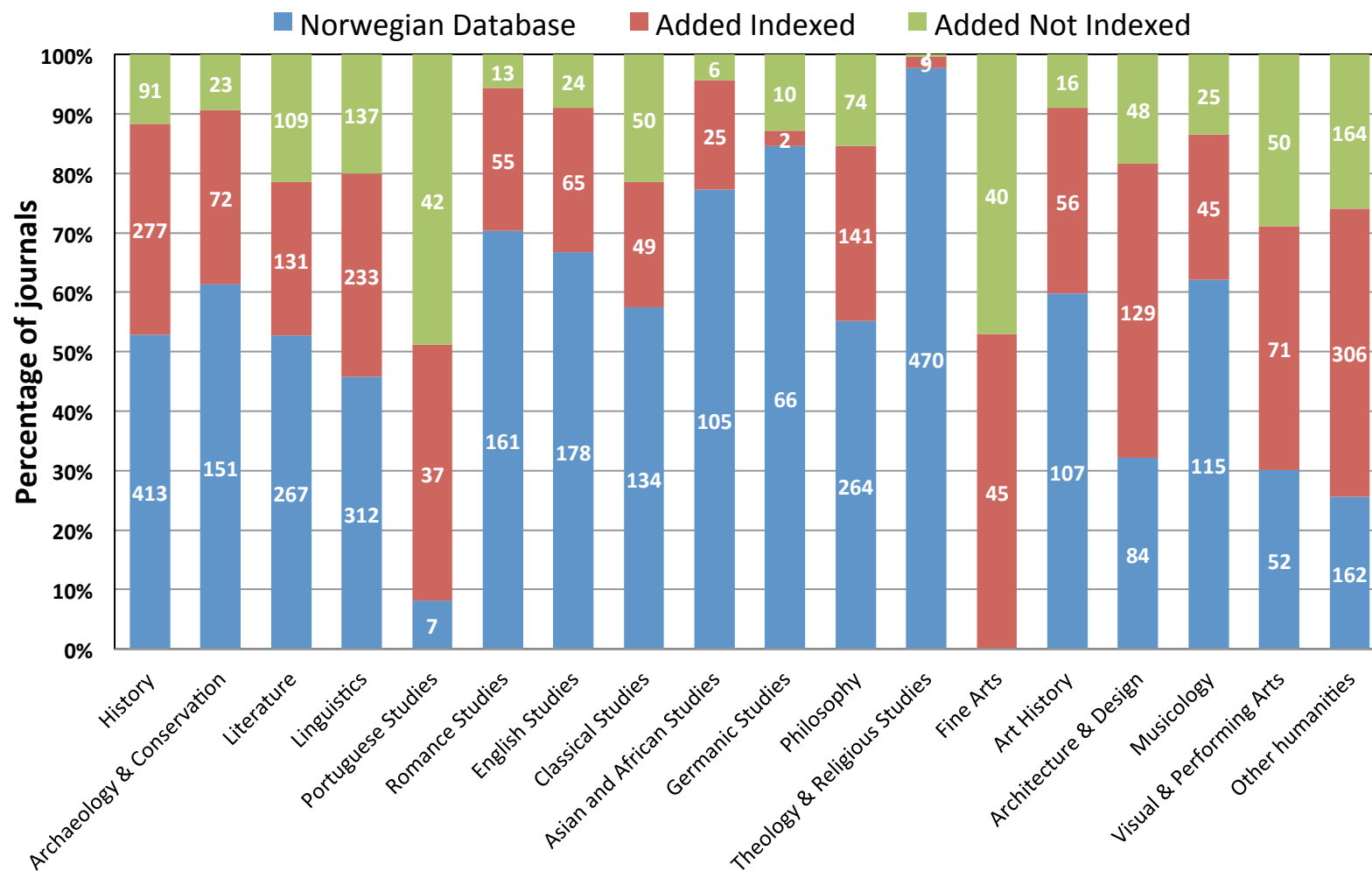
2nd stage

- Survey carried out in HTML, PT and EN versions, hosted on a web page and open for participation during three weeks

- Researchers (9,200 PhD holders in SSH) received the lists of journals and publishers that resulted from the first inquiry

- All journals/publishers **added in the first stage were classified as level 1**

- The journals/publishers that were already in the Norwegian list maintained their pre-existing level, 1 or 2

- The maximum percentage allowed of level 2 journals/publishers is 20%

- **To be classified as level 2, a journal/publisher must be voted as level 2 by at least 80% of the respondents of each sub-field**
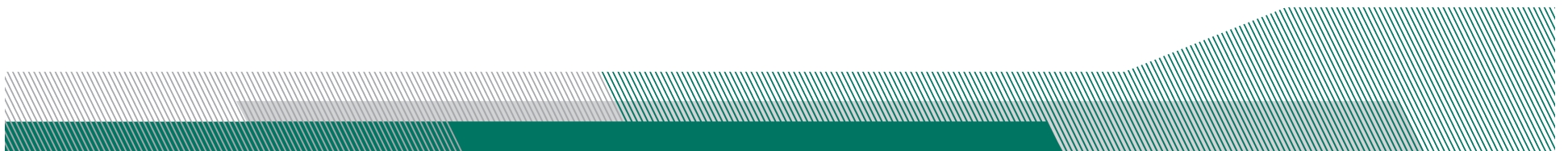
Future work and challenges

- 3rd stage (define the score to be given to each publication type according to the classification of the publication channel)?

- Pilot study?

- **Collect and validate the complete scientific output of SSH researchers working in Portuguese R&D institutions**

- **Data quality and transparency**

- Coordinate with institutional CRIS and the PTCRIS that is being implemented

- Implement the annual update of the authoritative lists (new publication channels and level assignment)

- Avoid the misuse of the indicator (individual level)

- Follow-up
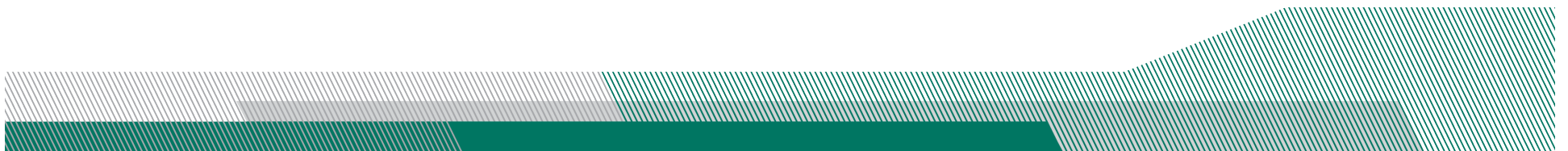
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Thank you!

ana.ramos@fct.pt

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