

EERQI Policy brief No. 1 September 2008

Acronym:	EERQI
Project full title:	European Educational Research Quality Indicators
Coordinator:	Prof. Dr. Ingrid Gogolin University of Hamburg Institute for International, Comparative and Multicultural Education Von-Melle-Park 8, D-20146 Hamburg, Germany Phone (Ingrid Gogolin Office): +49 40 42 838-2127 Phone (EERQI Project Office): +49 40 42 838-3398 Fax: +49 40 42 838-4298
Duration:	2008 April 01 - 2011 March 31
Programme:	7th Framework Programme for Research in the Socio-Economic Sciences and Humanities Theme (SSH)
What is at stake	Traditional methods of assessing research quality of scientific publications have depended heavily on ranking methods according to citation frequency and journal impact factors. Both are based on methodologies which do not reflect adequate coverage of European scientific publications. Hence, if European science or institutions are exposed to these evaluation methods, not only individual researchers, institutions are ignored, but also complete subject domains, and even language areas are disadvantaged, as they are not – or only sparsely – included in the traditional instruments. The initiators of the EERQI project, as well as numerous researchers and evaluation bodies within the European Union, recognize the need to remedy the inadequacies of this situation.
Research objectives	The EERQI-project will provide a prototype framework for adjusting research quality indicators and methodologies to the European context. The prototype framework relies on research about how quality and relevance in research publications can be determined. This includes the use of new technological possibilities provided by natural language processing tools for content analysis and for text mining of digitally-available scientific documents. By carrying out contextual contentanalysis, the traditional merely quantitative indicators based on citation counts and ranking will be complemented by content-based quality indicators and might inform evaluation processes. The EERQI project brings together researchers in the field of educational research as pilot for such an endeavour. Education research is in itself multi-disciplinary, as it covers the whole range of methodologies used in Social Sciences and Humanities. Hence, the project offers the possibility of a resource which can be applied widely across these disciplines.
Work done	Since the beginning of the project (1 st April 2008) until September 2008, the following work has been done: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Kick off meeting was carried out (April 4th – 5th in Hamburg University). ● The first public EERQI-workshop was carried out in Leuven (20th – 21st June 2008. Documentation under http://www.earli.org/EERQI_project/First_EERQI_workshop ● An extended analysis of existing methods of quality assessment has been produced and published electronically (see http://www.earli.org/resources/)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An additional internal workshop was carried out (11th – 12th September 2008 in Gothenburg, Sweden). The documentation is in preparation. ● The EERQI-website has been designed; a test version has been discussed and an amended version has been published under www.eerqi.eu. An Internal website has been set up as common work-space. Instruments for internal communication (e.g. a Wiki) have been set up and tested. ● EERQI-Flyer No. 1 has been produced and distributed; 50 copies have been sent to EU. ● Resources and locations of relevant data have been specified by EERQI technical partners; three internal meetings of technical partners have been carried out; testing procedures have been refined. ● Access rights have been arranged with publishers, respective contract has been developed by Project Coordinator and University of Hamburg Administration. ● Contracts with two new publishers who contribute to the project have been closed (Waxmann; Barbara Budrich). ● Other publishers have been contacted, information meeting with interested publishers on 10th September 2008 in Gothenburg, Sweden, was carried out. Springer Publishing House approached the EERQI Coordinator, indicating interest in participation. ● The French Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique (INRP) has been welcomed as a new cooperating partner. ● The set up of an aggregated, federated content base has been started by the collection of relevant electronic resources (journal articles, books, book chapters in the four languages involved: English, German, French and Swedish). Currently 2 GByte full text is available. ● A prototype set of relevant indicators has been developed during first workshop. Assessment procedures were suggested, discussed and finalized during two workshops. ● The first test version of quality indicators is currently being tested by semantic analysis and other data analyzing processes. ● Several doctoral dissertations related to the EERQI research agenda have been initiated. ● The project was presented to the public at the following events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 21st Conference of the German Educational Research Association, Dresden, Germany (Ingrid Gogolin, Diann Pelz-Rusch, 19th March 2008) ■ EPROS-meeting, Luxemburg (Ingrid Gogolin, 4th June 2008) ■ Fourth International Conference on Webometrics, Informetrics and Scientometrics (WIS), Berlin, Germany (Stefan Gradmann, 29th July 2008) ■ European Conference on Educational Research (ECER), Gothenburg, Sweden (Fredrik Aström, Ingrid Gogolin, Stefan Gradmann, Agnes Sandor, 11th September 2008). ■ <u>IuK-Initiative Wissenschaft</u>: Annual Meeting, Berlin, Germany (Ingrid Gogolin, 25th September 2008)
Emerging findings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) An extended report on the advantages and disadvantages of existing indicators and methodologies for quality assessment has been produced, serving as starting point for further analysis in EERQI First Workshop. 2) The extended report has again substantiated that European research is only sparsely covered by the conventional methodologies of research assessment. A strong indicator for this is the fact that 95% of educational research publications which are covered by the most widely used exist-

	<p>ing instruments are published in English. 1,9% are published in German; 0,6% in Russian. No other European language is considered in these respective instruments.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) In the light of these findings, the EERQI-project will have to develop new technological approaches as well as qualitative sets of indicators which will have to be applied in <i>multilevel</i> procedures. These procedures have to be adjusted to the specific purposes of an evaluation task. 4) In order to tackle the problem of multilinguality, the method of 'Cross Language Information Retrieval' will be applied in the testing phase. This method is based on dictionaries and thesauri on one hand, on the 'Comparable Corpus Translation system' (COCOT) on the other hand. Also semantic full text analysis, which has been applied on a first test base, turned out as a powerful tool, and has promising perspectives with regards to solve the 'problem' of multilingual research traditions in Europe - and turn it into a specific European strength. 5) In order to find dynamically new documents in the field of educational research and in order to make the content of all documents available for searching, text mining and analysis, a search and query engine is being evolved. The development of an intelligent crawler will be very interesting not only to the EERQI-project but also to the computer science world as it doesn't exist yet. 6) Contemporary assessment of the quality of research publication rests to a great degree upon 'peer review'. This is an important comparator for newly developed strategies and methodologies which are offered either in its place or to complement it. For this reason EERQI requires an additional set of assessments based on expert peer review which it can use in comparison with the results from other forms of evaluation of texts. A process by which such a set of assessments will be developed has been initiated, as an additional activity which has not been foreseen in the research proposal. 7) All in all, the EERQI consortium agrees on the position that effective procedures of assessing research quality in future will have to apply a combination of methods, not a single (set of) indicator(s).
<p>Further information and documents</p>	<p>See the Project's website: www.eerqi.eu</p>