

Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism

Hi!

HELSINKI INITIATIVE ON MULTILINGUALISM IN SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

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Policy-makers, leaders, universities, research institutions, research funders, libraries, and researchers are invited to sign the Helsinki Initiative to promote multilingualism in scholarly communication: www.helsinki-initiative.org



Federation of Finnish Learned Societies



U:R Universities Norway



1. Support dissemination of research results for the full benefit of the society.

- Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) and Open Science policies call for increased access to research, interaction between science and society and public understanding of science.
- This is not possible without multilingualism
- Science, when communicated exclusively in English, risks not fully meeting its mission to inform the public. Never before have we seen this phenomenon as intensified as it has been throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 1)

2. Protect national infrastructures for publishing locally relevant research.

- National journals and book publishers play a unique role in scholarly communication by making research results available in national languages to all sectors of society.
- In Finland, almost 12% of all peer-reviewed publications across all fields are published with the national publishers (Figure 2).
- National publishing is especially important for the SSH research that often focuses on local language, culture and society.

3. Promote language diversity in research assessment, evaluation, and funding systems.

- 53% of 25,365 SSH researchers in 7 European countries published peer-reviewed articles in more than one language (Figure 3).
- Yet many evaluators and funders think that research of any value to science and society is published in international English language journals.
- We need a better balance of science policies and rewards & incentives between international excellence and local relevance of research.

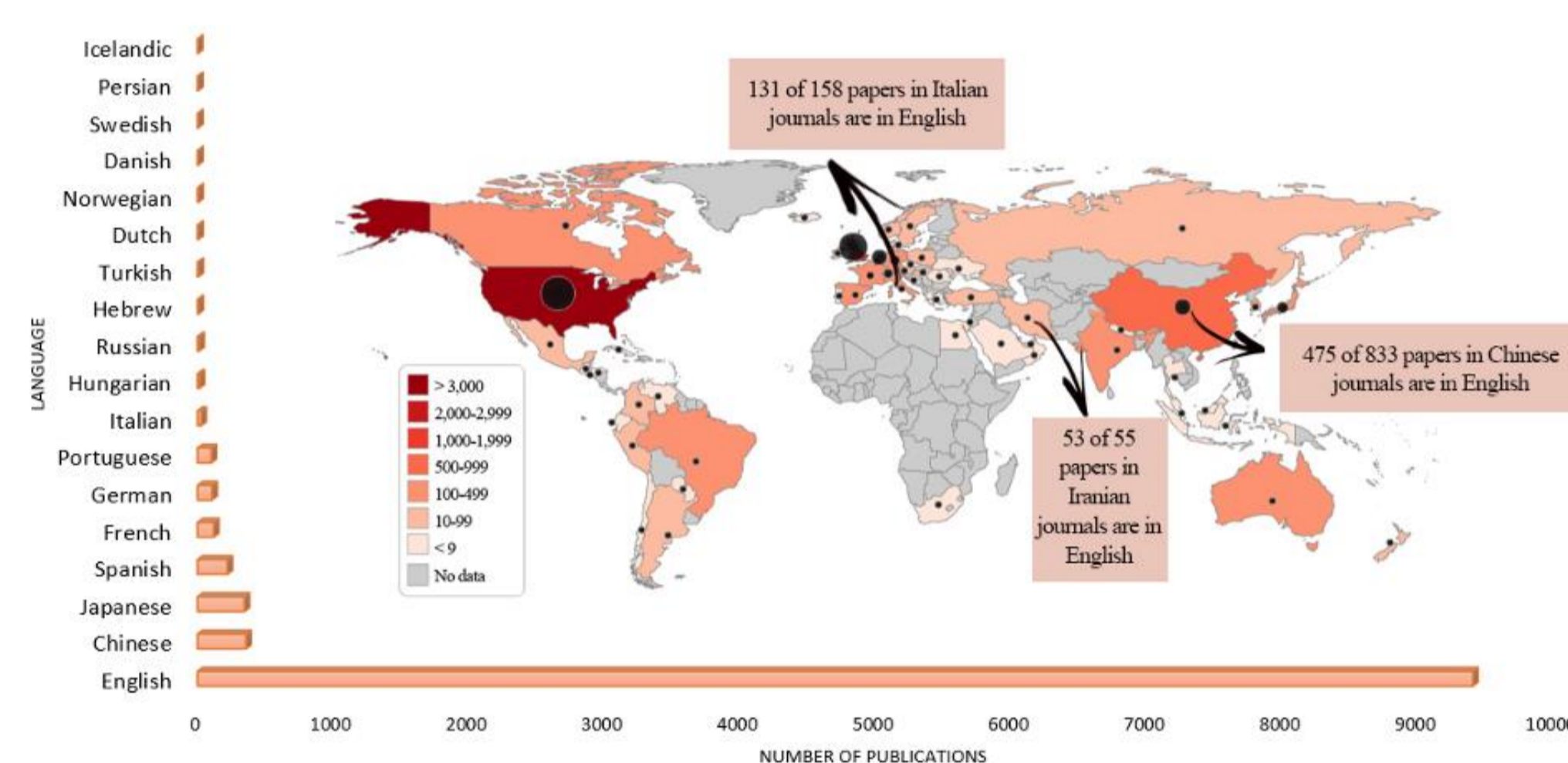


Figure 1: According to the World Health Organization, a total of 10,728 papers were published from the day of the novel coronavirus outbreak (now known as COVID-19) to April 28th, 2020. Up to 85% of the articles has been published in the English language. Source: Taşkın, Z., Doğan, G., Kulczycki, E. & Zuccala, A. (2020). "Science needs to inform the public. That can't be done solely in English", *LSE COVID-19 Blog*, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/covid19/2020/06/18/long-read-science-needs-to-inform-the-public-that-cant-be-done-solely-in-english/>

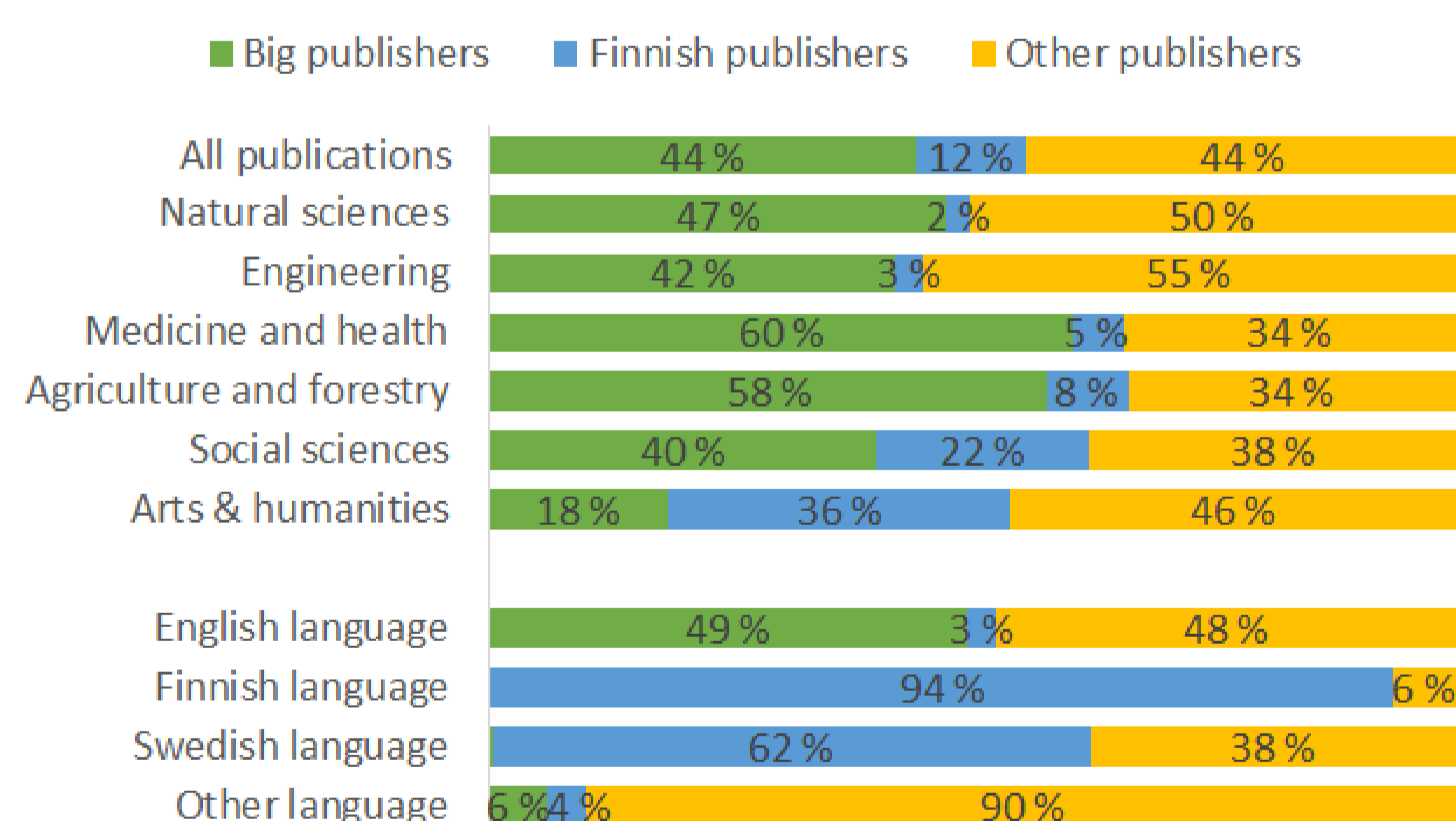


Figure 2: Publisher shares of peer-reviewed publications of 14 Finnish Universities 2016-17 (N=48,177). Source: Pölönen, J., Laakso, M., Guns, R., Kulczycki, E. & Sivertsen, G. (2020). "Open access at the national level: A comprehensive analysis of publications by Finnish researchers", *Quantitative Science Studies*: https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00084

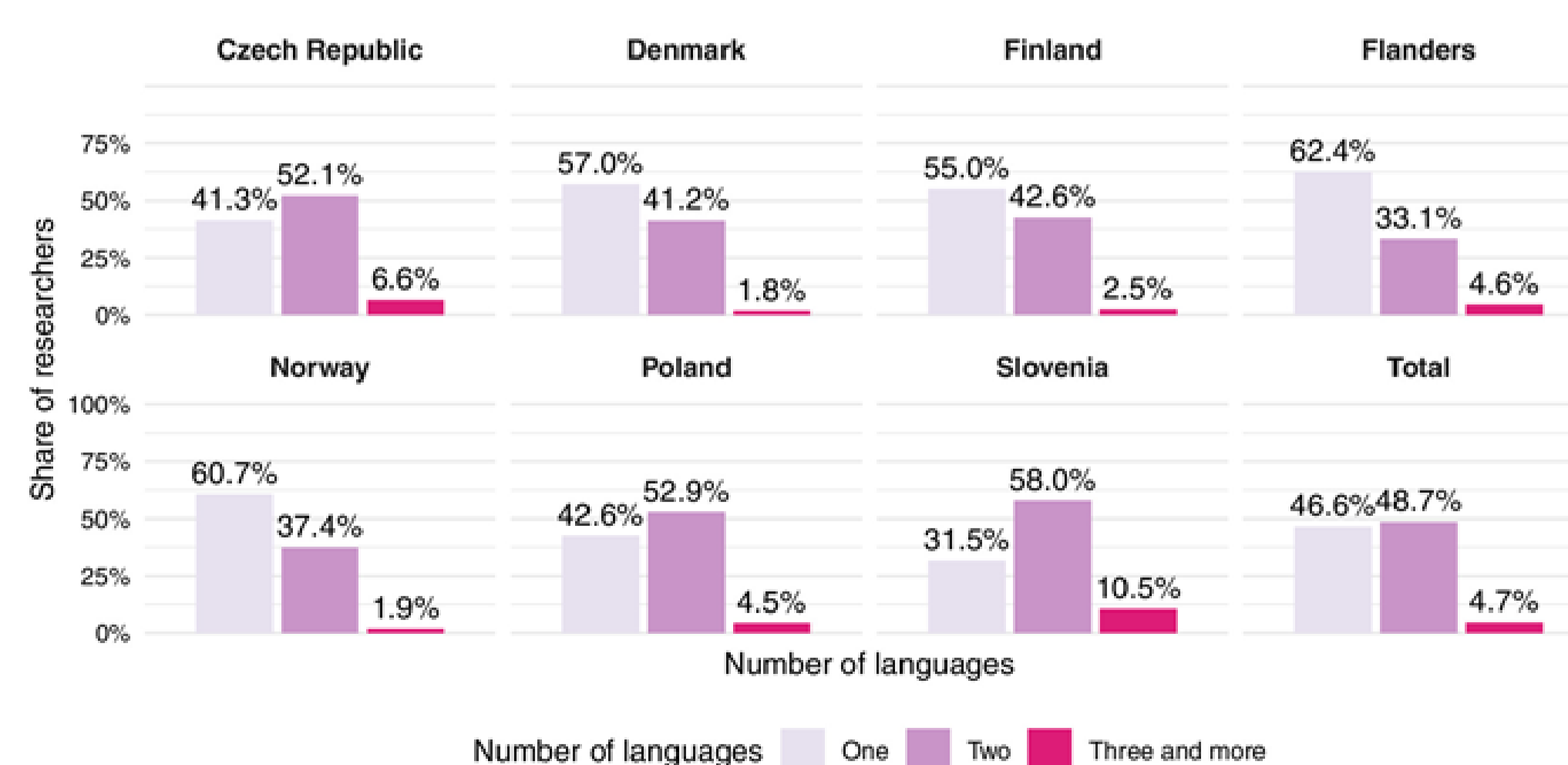


Figure 3: Language-pattern of SSH researchers from 7 European countries. Source: Kulczycki, E., Guns, R., Pölönen, J., Engels, T., Rozkosz, E. & Zuccala, A., Bruun, K., Eskola, O., Starčič, A.I., Petr, M. & Sivertsen, G. (2020). "Multilingual Publishing in the Social Sciences and Humanities: A Seven-Country European Study", *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24336>