

PUBLICATION FORUM REVIEW OF RATINGS IN 2022

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Federation of Finnish
Learned Societies

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1 INTRODUCTION

AT THE BEGINNING OF 2023, a new Publication Forum classification (JUFO classification) was published. This report describes the implementation and main features of the 2023 classification. The report describes JUFO's background (chapter 1), maintenance and operations (chapter 2), the classification criteria and processes of the re-evaluation of levels 2 and 3 carried out in 2022 (chapter 3), the characteristics of the 2023 classification (chapter 4), and the key changes in university publishing in 2016–2021 (chapter 5).

Publication Forum is a rating and classification system to support the quality assessment of research output in Finland. It started operating in 2010 and the first JUFO classification was published in 2012. The aim of the classification is to make visible and promote the quality of Finnish research and publishing on forums that are recognised as reliable and high-quality by the scientific community.

The classification covers academic journals, book series, conferences and book publishers. The four-level classification rates the publication channels as follows:

- 1 = basic level
- 2 = leading level
- 3 = highest level
- 0 = publication channels that don't meet the criteria for level 1.

The evaluation is performed by 23 discipline-specific expert panels composed of some 300 distinguished Finland-based scholars. The evaluation work is supported by the secretariat operating in the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, and by a steering group consisting of experts in academic disciplines and representatives of science administration organisations.

New channels are continuously added to the classification and the panels evaluate new channels to level 1 or 0. Levels 2 and 3 are re-evaluated every four years. The re-evaluation was last carried out in 2022 and the new classification came into effect at the beginning of 2023. The classification is valid in 2023–2026.

The founding of the Publication Forum was based on [the report \(in Finnish\)](#) of the working group of the Council of Rectors of Finnish Universities (current Universities Finland UNIFI), which discussed the development of quality assessment. Compared to the international Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus citation databases, JUFO covers a wider range of diverse scientific publishing activities in different disciplines and languages. In addition, “the scientific community itself determines what is good research and what criteria are valid for evaluating it”.

Since 2015, the classification has been used as a quality indicator of the universities' research output within the university funding model established by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Scientific and other publications account for 14% of the basic funding to universities in the contract period 2021–2024.

Additional information about the Publication Forum can be found from the following reports:

- [Publication Forum and changes in funding and evaluation systems in the Nordic countries and Europe \(in Finnish\) \(2022\)](#)
- [Publication Forum 2010–2020: Self-evaluation report of the Finnish quality classification system of peer-reviewed publication channels \(2021\)](#)
- [User guide for the Publication Forum classification 2019 \(2019\)](#)
- [Final report on 2014 review of ratings in Publication Forum \(pdf\) \(2015\)](#)
- [Classification of scientific publication channels: Final report of the Publication Forum project \(2010–2012\) \(2012\)](#)

2 MAINTAINING AND OPERATING THE PUBLICATION FORUM

THIS CHAPTER DESCRIBES the secretariat, steering group and panels of the Publication Forum responsible for the 2023 classification.

2.1 PUBLICATION FORUM SECRETARIAT

The Publication Forum operates in the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV), which is also the employer of the secretariat. Three persons worked full-time in the Publication Forum in 2022: secretary general Janne Pölönen (from 2010), senior planning officer Elina Pylvänäinen (from 2020) and information specialist Anna-Kaarina Linna (from 2022).

The secretariat is responsible for the preparation and coordination of the work of the expert panels and the steering group. It also maintains and develops the publication channel database and its user interface [JUFO portal](#). The secretariat also participates in national and international networks related to publication channel evaluation and classification, scholarly publishing, information systems, open science, and responsible researcher evaluation.

2.2 STEERING GROUP FOR 2020–2023

The board of the Federation appoints a steering group to the Publication Forum for a four-year term. The steering group draws the outlines regarding the maintenance, development and evaluation criteria of Publication Forum, informs the background communities about the classification and appoints new panellists.

The steering group is composed of experts representing the academic disciplines as well as The National Library of Finland, Ministry of Education and Culture, Academy of Finland, FUN Finnish University Libraries' Network, CSC – IT Centre for Science, Universities Finland UNIFI and Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV). The members of the steering group are appointed based on the proposals of learned societies and science academies, as well as the organisations represented.

Steering group composition for 2020–2023

Chair, professor Ulla-Maija Forsberg (University of Helsinki / TSV)
 Vice president Taina Pihlajaniemi (University of Oulu / UNIFI)
 Professor Paula Eerola (University of Helsinki, natural sciences)
 Counsellor of education Jukka Haapamäki (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 Professor Heikki Hiilamo (University of Helsinki, social sciences)
 Director of services Kristiina Hormia-Poutanen (The National Library of Finland)
 Professor Satu Lahti (University of Turku, medical and health sciences)
 Library director Riitta Lähdemäki (FUN)
 Vice president Riitta Maijala (Academy of Finland)

Professor Anne Mäntynen (University of Helsinki, humanities)
 Emeritus professor Risto Nieminen (Aalto University, engineering and technology)
 Development manager Hanna-Mari Puuska (CSC)

The members of the steering group secretariat are executive director Tanja Risikko (UNIFI), executive director Lea Rynänen-Karjalainen (TSV), secretary general Janne Pölönen (TSV), senior planning officer Elina Pylvänäinen (TSV) and information specialist Anna-Kaarina Linna (TSV).

There have been some changes in the steering group composition during its term. Vice rector Jaakko Aspara from Hanken acted as a representative of UNIFI until October 2020, professor Helmi Järviluoma from the University of Eastern Finland represented humanities until August 2022, counsellor of education Matti Kajaste represented the Ministry of Education and Culture until March 2022, and development manager Eeva Nyrövaara represented UNIFI until the end of the year 2022.

2.3 PANELS FOR 2022–2024

The steering group of the Publication Forum appoints new panels based on proposals made by learned societies, science academies, universities and research institutes every four years. In addition, researchers can stand for a panellist on their own initiative. The main task of the Publication Forum expert panels is the evaluation and classification of scholarly publication channels.

The panels are discipline-specific and each panel is composed of 9 to 17 experts. The members of the expert panels for 2022–2024 are listed on the [Publication Forum websites](#). The panels are as follows:

1. Mathematics and statistics
2. Computer and information sciences
3. Physical sciences, space science and astronomy
4. Chemical sciences
5. Geosciences and environmental sciences
6. Biosciences I
7. Biosciences II
8. Civil and mechanical engineering
9. Electrical and electronic engineering, information engineering
10. Chemical engineering, materials engineering and environmental engineering
11. Medical engineering, biotechnology and basic medicine
12. Clinical medicine I
13. Clinical medicine II and dentistry
14. Health sciences and other medical sciences
15. Agricultural sciences
16. Economics and business
17. Social sciences, media and communications, interdisciplinary social sciences
18. Psychology and educational sciences
19. Political science, public administration and law
20. Philosophy and theology

- 21.** Languages
- 22.** Literature, arts and architecture
- 23.** History, archaeology and cultural studies

The members of the panels are representatives of the national research community in their field of research. The panellists are chosen from amongst academics with experience in research, scholarly publishing and research evaluation. In appointing the panellists, the main concern is to ensure that the expertise of the panels covers the research fields they are responsible for. Attention is also paid to a fair representation of women and men, advanced and early career researchers, as well as different organisations in the panels.

3 CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION PROCESS

THE PANELS CARRIED OUT a re-evaluation of levels 2 and 3 during 2022, following the criteria and processes confirmed by the Publication Forum steering group in 2021. This chapter describes the distribution of publication channels among the panels, the criteria for level categories 1, 2 and 3, the volume-based quotas for levels 2 and 3, other aspects taken into account in the evaluation, and the main features of the panels' work.

3.1 DIVISION OF PUBLICATION CHANNELS AMONG PANELS

In total, the 2023 classification includes 35 500 publication channels. The number of channels varies from 483 (panel 4) to 1998 (panel 23) by panel (Figure 1). Series publications and conferences are divided by discipline among the panels so that the responsibility for the evaluation of each publication channel is carried by one panel only. Instead, the most multidisciplinary journals (e.g. Nature and Science) are placed in panel 24 together with all book publishers. Panel 24 contains 227 journals/series and 3751 book publishers. All panels can participate in the evaluation of the publication channels placed in panel 24.

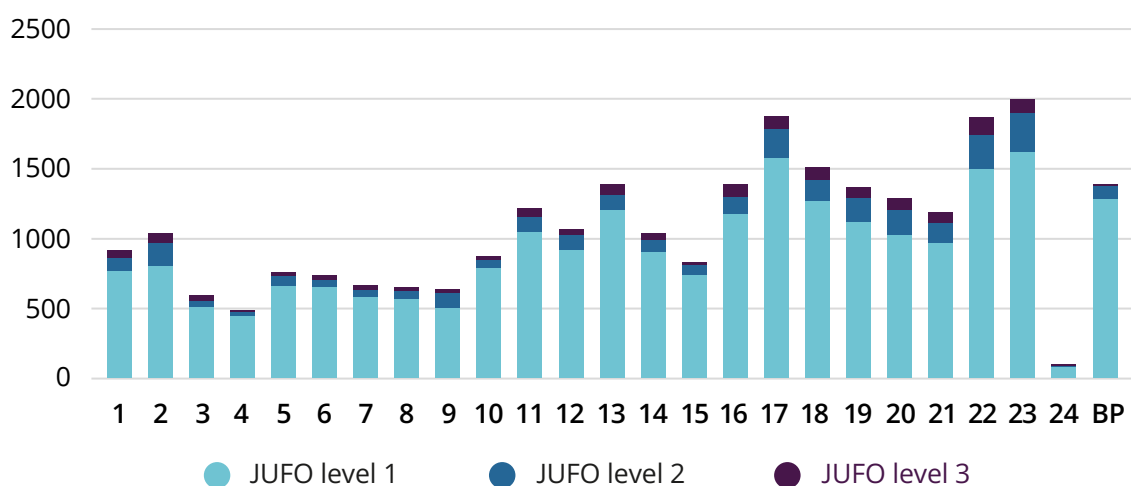


Figure 1. Journals/series and book publishers (BP) classified in the Publication Forum by panel at the beginning of 2023 (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

If necessary, a series publication can be transferred from the list of an individual panel to the list of panel 24 by decision of the steering group. Correspondingly, by decision of the steering group, a series publication in panel 24 can be transferred to the list of an individual panel. In addition, the panels can propose the steering group for allocating the publication volume of a publication channel between more than one panel if the channel has been proposed to level 2 or 3.

3.2 LEVEL 1 CRITERIA

Level 1 is the basic level of the classification and the majority of all publication channels are classified as level 1. It includes peer-reviewed publication channels that are specialised in the publication of scientific research outcomes and have an editorial board of experts of the discipline.

The steering group updated level 1 criteria in 2021. As from the beginning of 2022 the publication channels accepted to level 1 must have a transparent description of the editorial board and the peer review process on the publication channel's website. However, a book publisher may meet level 1 criteria even if the editorial board and peer review process are not described on the website.

Level 1 criteria:

- **Identifier:** The publication channel has a registered ISSN or ISBN number.
- **Transparency:** The publication channel's website has a transparent description of the editorial board and the peer review process. (A book publisher may meet Level 1 criteria even if the editorial board and peer review process are not described on the website.)
- **Scientific focus:** The publication channel is specialised in the publication of scientific or scholarly research outcomes and it publishes peer-reviewed scientific publications on a regular basis.
- **Editorial board:** The publication channel's editorial board constitutes of experts, who mainly include researchers working in universities or research institutes.
- **Peer review:** The entire manuscripts of scientific or scholarly articles or books are subject to peer review, which is carried out blindly or openly by external scientific experts invited by the editors. (A book publisher may meet the Level 1 criteria if it has a credible quality assessment by the book's editors.)
- **Scope:** The publication channel is used by a national or international scientific community, with over half (1/2) of the editorial board or authors coming from a different research organisation than the publisher organisation.
- **Credibility:** The publication channel is scientifically relevant in its field for the international or Finnish scientific community, and its procedure for ensuring scientific quality is credible.

Publication channels that have been evaluated but do not meet all of the level 1 criteria are marked as level 0. From the classification point of view level 0 equals any publication channel not included in the Publication Forum. Level 0 includes many types of publication channels of varying quality, from professional journals and university publication series to suspicious or predatory journals. Also a new, otherwise valid publication channel may first be rated level 0 if it is only recently established and the panel is not yet able to evaluate its contents.

3.3 CRITERIA FOR LEVELS 2 AND 3

Levels 2 and 3 are awarded to a limited number of journals, conferences and book publishers of the highest level and impact. Most of them are international publication channels but in humanities and social sciences level 2 can also be awarded to Finnish- and Swedish-language channels.

3.3.1 Level 2

Level 2 can be awarded to leading publication channels of the various disciplines that meet the following requirements:

- Publication channel has a wide reach and high respect among international experts in the field.
- Researchers from different countries seek to publish their best results in it.
- Editors, authors and readers represent various nationalities.

In humanities and social sciences panels (14 and 16–23), level 2 can also be awarded to the highest quality Finnish- or Swedish-language publication channels that meet the following minimum requirements:

- The quality assessment of the scholarly writings must be in line with the best practices.
- The publication series must cover research in the respective discipline – and the book publishers in their main discipline – most widely and be used by the entire national research community in the discipline.
- The context of research problems is strongly focused on the Finnish society or the Finnish or Swedish-speaking culture.
- Publishing in these channels is regarded to be equal merit to publishing in foreign Level 2 channels.

The rating of Finnish- and Swedish-language publication channels is based on a joint consensual decision by the chairs of the SSH panels.

3.3.2 Level 3

Level 3 can include the supreme-level publication channels of various disciplines meeting the following criteria:

- The research published in them represents the highest level in the discipline and has extremely consistent impact (e.g., as measured through citation indicators).
- The channels cover the discipline comprehensively, and is not limited to the discussion of narrow special themes.
- The channels have international authors and readers and the editorial boards are constituted by the leading researcher in the field.
- Publishing in these channels is highly appreciated among the international research community of the field.

The panel chairs take consensual decisions to include publication series in the level 3 category.

3.4 QUOTAS FOR VOLUME-BASED RATING

The quotas determine how many series publications each panel can classify in levels 2 and 3. The purpose of the quotas is to balance the JUFO classification between the main fields of research. Starting from the year 2015, the quotas have been calculated based on the publication volume so the number of publication channels in levels 2 and 3 varies between panels. Publication volume refers to the aggregate three-year average of scholarly articles in the series or conference proceedings.

In 2021 the Publication Forum steering group decided to increase the publication volume share of levels 2 and 3 in order to allow the panels to take better into account specialties and multidisciplinary publication channels in the classification. In addition, the extended quotas allow more attention to be paid to the balance between different publication types and languages.

The combined publication volume of the series rated to levels 2 and 3 can be maximum 25% of the aggregate publication volume (levels 1–3) assigned to the panel in question, and level 3 10%. The previous shares were 20% and 5% respectively.

In order to prevent the large publication volume to unreasonably limit the panel's possibilities to place high-quality, large-volume publication series in levels 2 and 3, journals/series consume level 2 and 3 quotas only up to 2000, even if the journal's actual publication volume exceeds 2000. The publication volume of large multidisciplinary journals can also be divided between two or more panels if necessary.

3.5 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.5.1 International impact and prestige

Secretariat provides for the use of panels impact factors and level rating indicators that the panels can utilise in the assessment of the impact and prestige of the publication channels in the international scientific community.

Various impact factors are available for the journals indexed in the Scopus database, most importantly CiteScore, Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP), and SCImago Journal Rank (SJR). These indicators try to measure the impact of publication channels based on the number of references they have received in their publications.

In the use of the impact factors, it should be noted that they are not comparable between different disciplines. The citation databases cover the natural and medical sciences better than the journals/series of engineering, social sciences and the humanities. In the case of social science and humanities, the focus of citation databases in English journal articles is also problematic.

In addition, the panels use the Norwegian and Danish classification systems corresponding to the Publication Forum expert-based evaluation. The Norwegian and Danish panel ratings create a more comprehensive basis for evaluating the international prestige of journals and series, especially in social sciences and humanities.

3.5.2 Suggestions of the research community

Members of the research community have the opportunity to give panels feedback on ratings by proposing level amendments on the JUFO portal. In addition, members of the research community can each determine the ten most important journals/

series and the book publisher for their own research on the JUFO portal.

The research community was asked to participate in the re-evaluation by making proposals for level amendments and by commenting on the panels' preliminary classifications. More than 1000 proposals were received and they concerned more than 700 publication channels. The panels used the suggestions to support their re-evaluation work and ended up changing the level of nearly 300 of these publication channels.

3.5.3 Review journals

In the natural and medical sciences review articles typically gain the most citations because of their nature, so the impact factors for journals that only publish reviews are higher than those publishing original research papers. The best review journals can be classified to levels 2 and 3 as long as they do not fill the entire quota.

3.5.4 Open access publication channels

Open access journals are evaluated using the same criteria applicable to other publication series. In the evaluation of publication channels, the priority is scientific quality, impact and appreciation. However, open access can be promoted in level 2 and 3 evaluations by upgrading the one allowing open access or self-archiving from the two candidates in the same field and equal impact and prestige.

Open access information in the publication channel database and [JUFO portal](#) was reformed in the spring of 2022. The new information includes details on openness of the publication channel, the self-archiving policy and the possible FinELib benefit associated with the channel. The purpose is to help researchers in identifying publication channels that enable the immediate open access for research articles.

3.5.5 Representativeness of different fields

The panels are wide-ranging, so they have to be responsible for fair representation of channels from different fields in levels 2 and 3. The level 2 and level 3 shares of publication volumes are monitored within disciplines, so that special attention can be paid to areas with significant under- or over-representation at level 2 and level 3. Consideration should also be given to journals for these disciplines which belong in the same category and which are placed in the lists of other panels.

To support the evaluation work, the secretariat produced a panel-specific Excel file for each panel, which contained all the series publications at levels 1–3 on the panel's list. With the help of Excel, it was possible for the panellists to make discipline-specific reviews, as they contained statistics for all fields of research under the panel's responsibility, utilising the discipline classifications of Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, Norway, Denmark and Ministry of Education and Culture.

In some disciplines, the publication channels are divided between the lists of several different panels. The panellists were encouraged to look at such fields as a whole and to also take into account channels outside their own panel's lists.

3.5.6 Conflicts of interests

Panellists must declare their engagements each time a panel discusses channels linked to them. This applies to publication channels where the panellists have published more than once in the past five years or have been editors or members of

the editorial board. In these cases, the panellist will not be excluded from the decision making, but the panel can draw attention to the engagements in the assessment situation. The secretariat has compiled information on the engagements at the beginning of the panel term in spring of 2022.

3.6 PANEL WORK

The panels carried out a re-evaluation of levels 2 and 3 during 2022. The research community was informed about the re-evaluation in December 2021, and proposals for level amendments were asked to be made by the end of March 2022.

To support the panels' evaluation work, the secretariat produced Excel files for the panels, which contained information on the channel's level classification in Norway and Denmark, Scopus-based citation indicators (CiteScore, SNIP and SJR), indexing in DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), and proposals received from the research community. With the help of Excel, it was possible for the panellists to test in advance how individual level amendments affect the level 2 and 3 quotas. The secretariat also provided proposals for classification based on the indicators and suggestions received from the research community, which the panels could use as background information for the discussion if they wished.

The panels made use of the proposals received from the research community and the material produced by the secretariat when preparing for the spring 2022 panel meetings. At the spring meetings, the panels prepared preliminary proposals for new classifications. The preliminary proposals were available for the research community to comment on until the end of August 2022. The panels discussed the received comments at their autumn meetings and finalised their proposals for new classifications.

The spring meetings of the panels were organised as on-site meetings in Helsinki, and the autumn meetings varied between on-site, remote and hybrid meetings. In addition, additional panel meetings were arranged remotely for the panels if the actual meeting time ran out. The minutes of the meetings are openly available on the Publication Forum's website in the [Panels section](#).

In addition to the panel-specific meetings, meetings were organised to the panel chairs. Two meetings were organised for the chairs of the humanities and social sciences panels, where they decided on the classification of book publishers and Finnish- and Swedish-language journals. In addition, one meeting was organised for the chairs of all panels and in this meeting decisions were made regarding the classification of multidisciplinary journals belonging to panel 24.

The steering group of the Publication Forum decided to increase the quotas for levels 2 and 3 in 2021. The increased quotas allowed the panels to focus on new upgrades and the equality of the classification between different disciplines. The panels also had the option to downgrade the level of publication channels if, for example, the quality of the channel had changed.

Not all panels used all of their available quota for levels 2 and 3. Some of the panels left a bit of the quota unused so that they'll have the opportunity to make new upgrades later during the term.

4 2023 CLASSIFICATION

THE RESULTS OF THE RE-EVALUATION of levels 2 and 3 in 2022 were published on the JUFO portal at the beginning of 2023. This chapter describes the 2023 classification and the changes in the classification of Finnish- and Swedish-language publication channels and multilingualism, classification of book publishers and conferences, and open access. In addition, it is described how balanced the 2023 classification is from the perspective of main disciplines, publication types, publishing languages, and open access, as well as how the classification compares to the Norwegian and Danish classifications and impact factors.

At the beginning of 2023, the rating covered almost 35 500 publication channels (table 1). In the 2023 classification, the panels have made a total of 1497 new upgrades. The upgrades include 888 new upgrades to level 2 and 609 upgrades to level 3. In addition, the panels decided to downgrade the level of 51 publication channels. The changes entered into force at the beginning of 2023, and they apply to peer-reviewed articles and books (publication types A1–A4 and C1–C2) published from 1.1.2023. Levels 2 and 3 will be updated next time in 2027. Before then, it is possible for panels to make individual corrective changes to level categories 2 and 3.

Table 1. Number of journals/series and book publishers in JUFO classification.

JUFO level	Journals/series	Book publishers
3	1333 (4.2%)	14 (0.4%)
2	2707 (8.6%)	92 (2.5%)
1	21 239 (67.1%)	1278 (34%)
0	6359 (20%)	2367 (63.1%)
Total	31 638 (100%)	3751 (100%)

4.1 FINNISH- AND SWEDISH-LANGUAGE PUBLICATION CHANNELS AND MULTILINGUALISM

Humanities and social sciences panels decided on six new upgrades of Finnish-language series publications to level 2: *Kulttuurintutkimus*, *Lähikuva*, *Musiikki*, *Näyttämö ja tutkimus*, *Puhe ja kieli* and *Sosiaalilääketieteellinen aikakauslehti*. As a result, there are in total 29 Finnish- and Swedish-language series publications at level 2.

This strengthens the position of the domestic language publication channels in the classification which is especially important for humanities and social sciences. In addition, there are four Finnish- or Swedish language book publishers at level 2. No changes were made to their classification.

At this re-evaluation the panels also discussed the possibility to accept Finnish- or Swedish-language journals to level 3 if Finnish or Swedish is the language of the research community in the journal's field of research, and the journal is the leading

publication channel in its field. Especially the journals concentrating on the study of Finnish language were discussed because the publishing language of the field is Finnish.

The panel chairs expressed a concern whether a domestic language journal could meet the level 3 criterion for genuine internationality and didn't support the proposal. In addition, the steering group stated that peer-reviewed journal articles in Finnish in linguistics already produced on average more JUFO points per publication than articles in English. Upgrading the Finnish-language journal to level 3 would have increased the imbalance between the languages. The steering group decided at its December 2022 meeting that Finnish- or Swedish-language journals will not be accepted to level 3 in the 2023 classification.

Finnish- and Swedish-language journals/series at level 2:

- *Ajatus*
- *Elore*
- *Folkmålsstudier*
- *Hallinnon tutkimus*
- *Historiallinen aikakauskirja*
- *Historiallisia tutkimuksia*
- *Historisk tidskrift för Finland*
- *Kasvatus*
- *Kirjallisuudentutkimuksen aikakauslehti avain*
- *Kulttuurintutkimus*
- *Lakimies*
- *Lähikuva*
- *Media ja viestintä*
- *Musiikki*
- *Näyttämö ja tutkimus*
- *Oikeus*
- *Politiikka*
- *Psykologia*
- *Puhe ja kieli*
- *Sananjalka*
- *Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland*
- *Sosiaalilääketieteellinen aikakauslehti*
- *Sosiologia*
- *Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seuran toimituksia*
- *Taidehistoriallisia tutkimuksia*
- *Teologinen aikakauskirja*
- *Terra: maantieteellinen aikakauskirja*
- *Virittäjä*
- *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka*

Finnish- and Swedish-language book publishers at level 2:

- Gaudeamus
- Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland
- Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura
- Vastapaino

In the 2023 classification, attention is paid to multilingualism of university publishing. For example, in the languages panel level 3 was awarded to publication channels focusing on single major languages or linguistic groups, deviating from the former practise of the panel. Level 2 was also awarded to several publication channels publishing in languages other than English (table 2).

Table 2. *Language of series publications by JUFO level.*
*Number of channels before new upgrades.

Language	Level 1	Level 2*	Level 3*	New upgrades to level 2	New upgrades to level 3
English	16526	1595	702	768	550
Multiple languages	2867	132	25	64	42
German	440	26	4	11	5
French	499	31	3	5	7
Dutch	92	9	3	5	2
Finnish	136	23	0	6	0
Spanish	296	3	0	5	0
Russian	160	4	0	2	1
Italian	229	4	0	2	0
Portuguese	121	0	0	2	0
Polish	37	1	0	1	0
Danish	65	0	0	1	0
Swedish	106	8	0	0	0
Other	373	0	0	0	0
Unknown	379	33	0	14	1

4.2 CLASSIFICATION OF BOOK PUBLISHERS

Classification of book publishers was discussed as a part of the levels 2 and 3 re-evaluation work. In the analyses of the classification it was discovered that a significantly larger proportion of English-language monographs and book articles are placed at level 2 and 3 than other types of publications.

The panels discussed the level 3 book publishers and whether they are selective enough for level 3, and the need to balance the classification between the publication types. Routledge and Palgrave Macmillan were especially discussed as their publication volumes have increased exceptionally in recent years (figure 2).

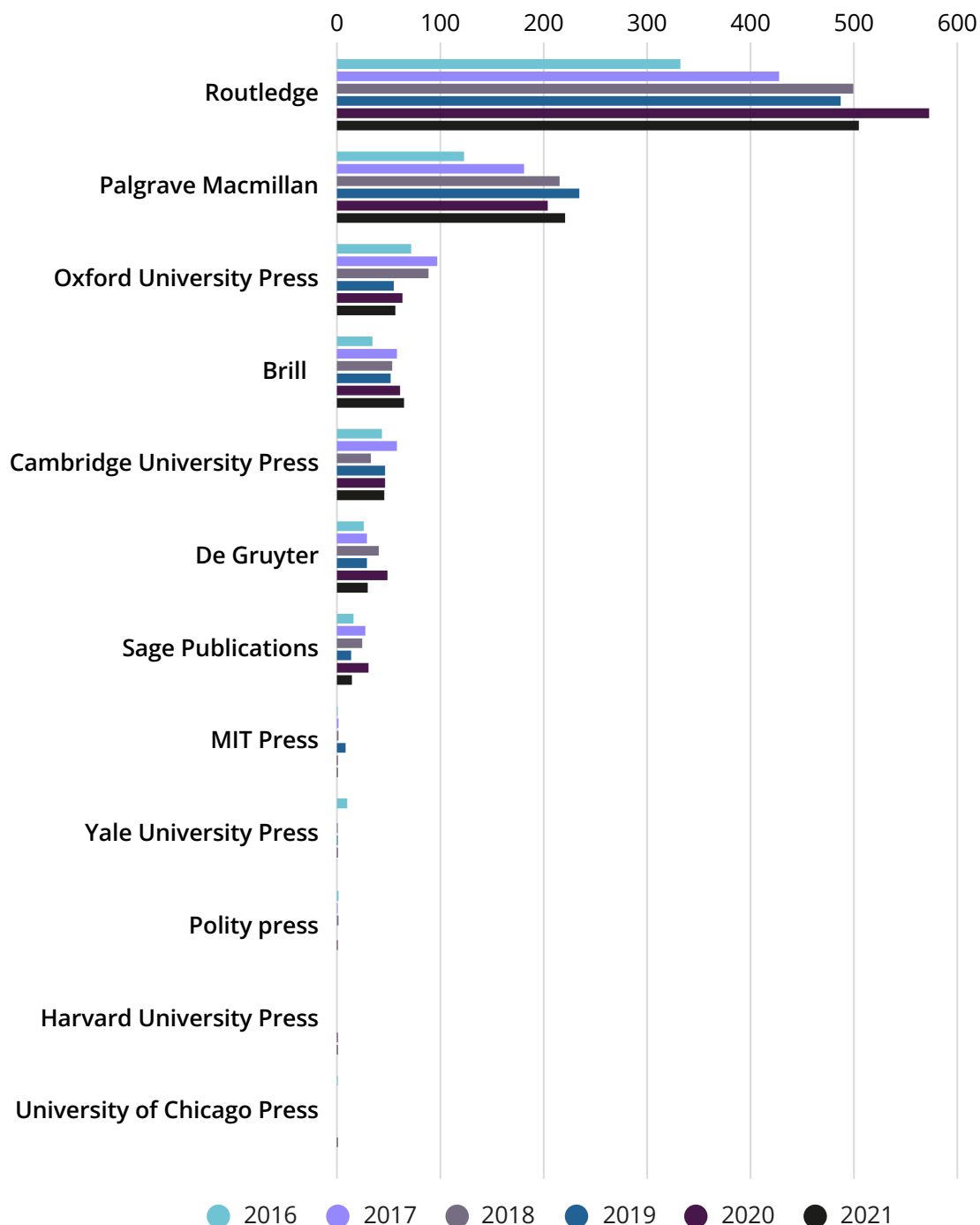


Figure 2. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 by JUFO level 3 book publishers. Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

Based on the panel discussions and the feedback received from the research community, there is increasing variation in the quality assessment of Routledge and Palgrave Macmillan publications. The steering group decided that these publishers will be downgraded to level 2 from the beginning of 2024. However, the panels have an opportunity to identify the highest quality book series of these publishers and upgrade them to level 3 during the spring of 2023. The change balances the classification between different publication types.

4.3 CLASSIFICATION OF CONFERENCES

Computer and information science panel (panel 2) can classify conferences independently by the established name of the conference in cases where the JUFO level of the main publication channel, i.e. the publisher or the publication series, does not reflect the actual level of the conference publications.

In panel 2, conferences have been accepted for level 2 at most, but the panel has regularly discussed whether conferences should be accepted for level 3. The conferences have been treated as publication series, but the publication volume information for conferences is incomplete because the indexing to the Scopus database used as a data source is incomplete.

The steering group decided that the classification of conferences (similar to the classification of book publishers) will be separated from quotas based on publication volume. Panel 2 was asked to make a moderate proposal for upgrading the absolute top conferences to level 3 by the spring 2023 meeting. Therefore, no changes were made to the level categories of the conferences in 2022 but the classification can be updated during the spring of 2023.

4.4 OPEN ACCESS

The panels have been encouraged to prefer publication channels that enable open access in cases where the two candidates for level 2 or 3 are equal in terms of scientific quality and impact. The steering group increased the quotas for levels 2 and 3, so in the 2023 classification, even more channels enabling immediate open access could be upgraded to levels 2 and 3.

In the 2023 classification, the share of immediately open (open access journals and those allowing self-archiving or covered by FinELib agreement) publication channels increases with the JUFO level (figure 3). The increase is mainly due to FinELib coverage (figure 4) and policies allowing immediate self-archiving (figure 5) as there are fewer open access publication channels at JUFO levels 2 and 3 compared to JUFO level 1 (figure 6).

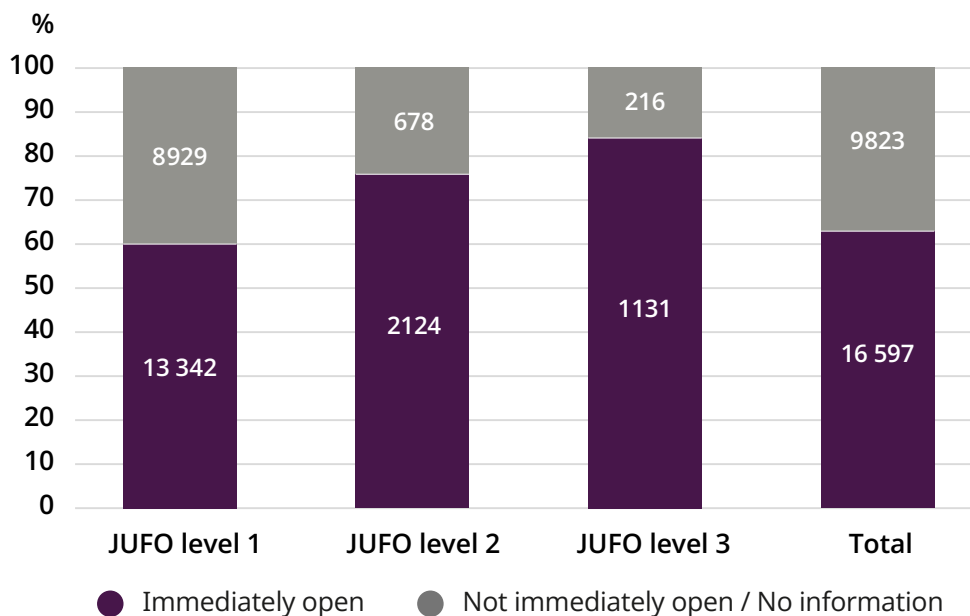


Figure 3. A share of journals/series classified in the Publication Forum that allow immediate open access (open access journals and those allowing self-archiving or covered by FinELib agreement) by JUFO level (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

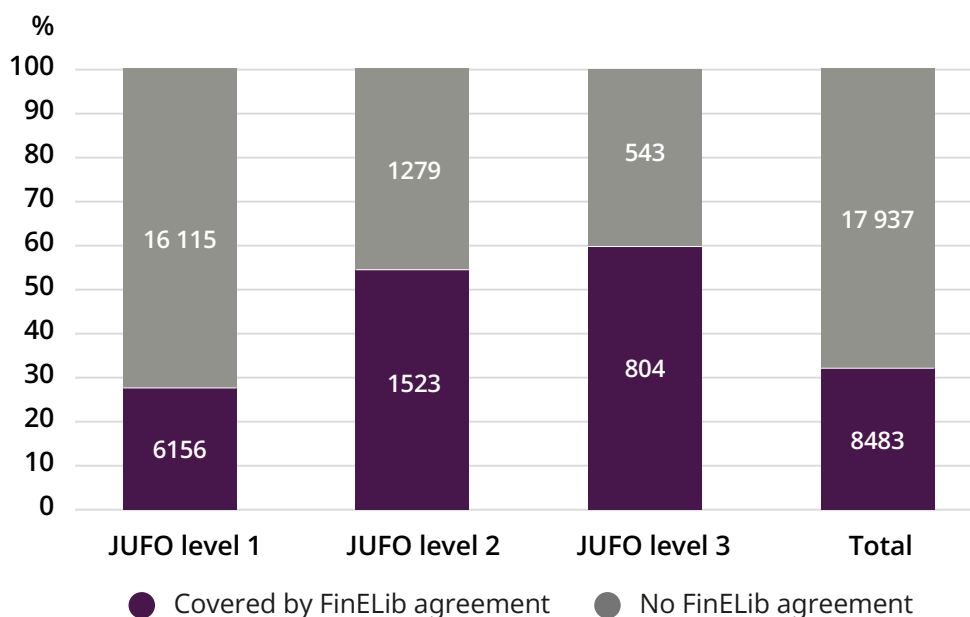


Figure 4. A share of journals/series classified in the Publication Forum and covered by FinELib agreement enabling immediate open access by JUFO level (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

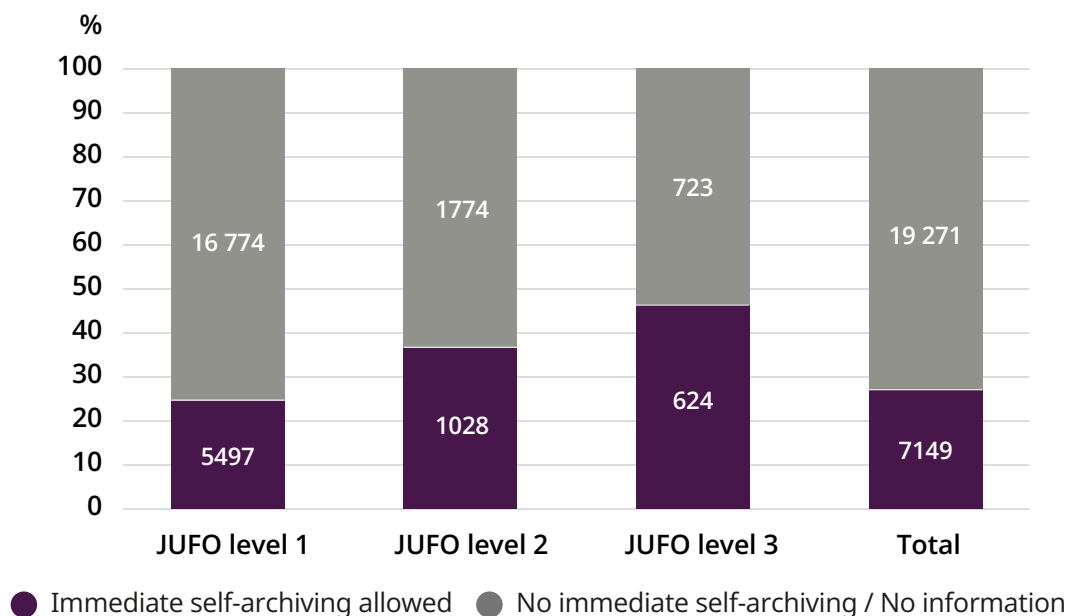


Figure 5. A share of journals/series classified in the Publication Forum that enable immediate open access through self-archiving by JUFO level (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

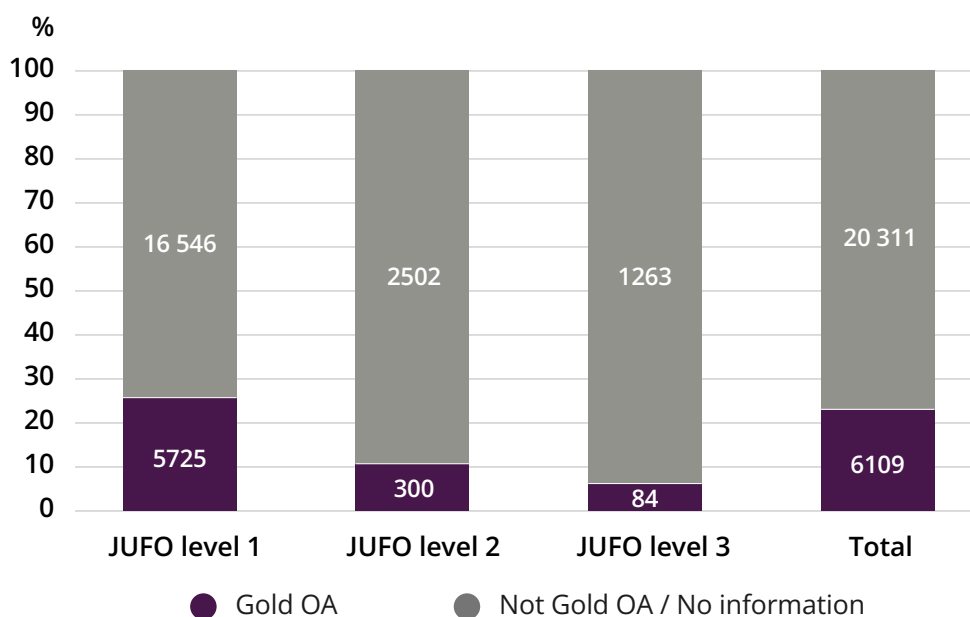


Figure 6. A share of gold open access journals/series classified in the Publication Forum by JUFO level (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

4.5 COMPARISON WITH NORWEGIAN AND DANISH CLASSIFICATIONS AND IMPACT FACTORS

The re-evaluation work of the panels was supported by Norwegian and Danish classifications. In the case of the Danish classification, levels from 2021 were used as Denmark has since discontinued updating the classification.

There are some differences between Norwegian, Danish and Finnish classification systems. In Norway, fewer levels are used as they only use levels 0, 1 and 2. Denmark

has the same number of levels in use as Finland, but the quota for level 3 is much lower so there are very few level 3 publication channels. Therefore only levels 0, 1 and 2 of the Danish classification were used in the following analyses.

The Finnish classification is consistent with the Norwegian and Danish classifications (figure 7): more than 70% of JUFO level 3 publication channels are classified at level 2 both in Norway and Denmark. Also a larger share of JUFO level 2 publication channels are classified at level 2 in Norway and/or Denmark compared to JUFO level 1 channels.

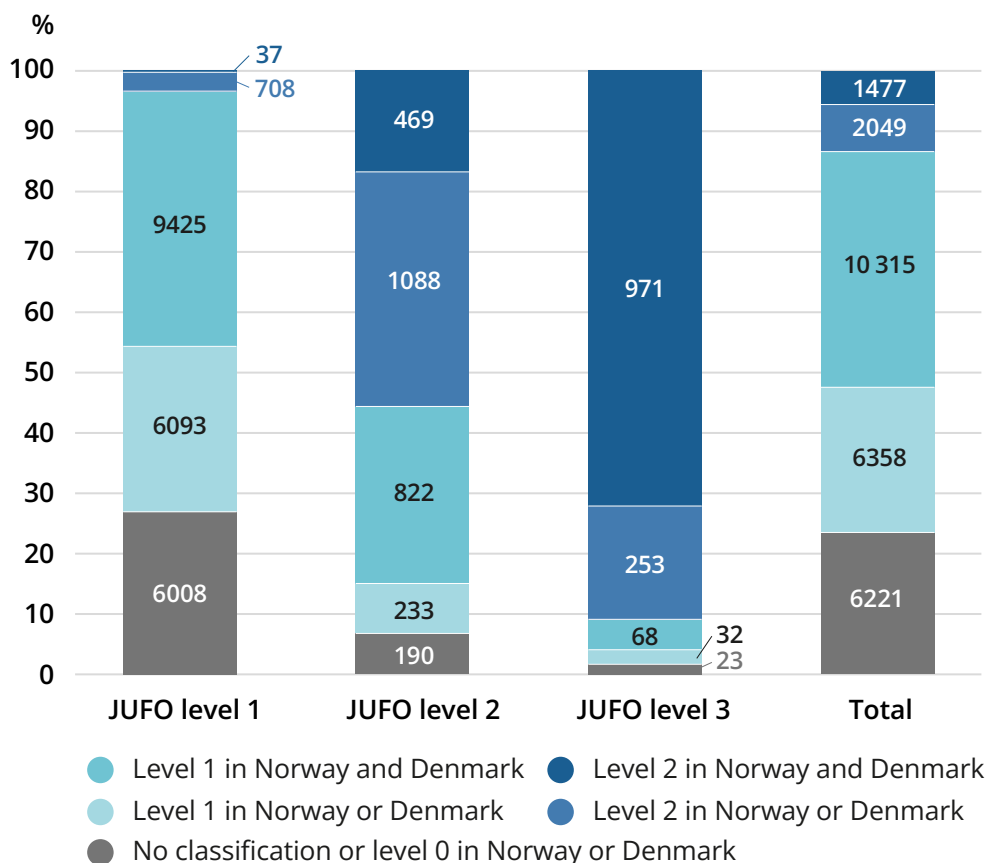


Figure 7. Journals/series classified in the Publication Forum (2023 classification) by JUFO level and compared to Norwegian and Danish classifications. Denmark level 2 also contains Denmark level 3 publication channels. Source: JUFO portal.

To support their evaluation work, the panels also used Scopus-based, openly available impact factors: CiteScore, Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) and Scimago Journal Rank (SJR).

The 2023 classification is also consistent with international citation-based indicators. Publication channels at JUFO level 3 have higher Scopus-based metrics (CiteScore, Source normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) and Scimago Journal Rank (SJR)) compared to JUFO level 2 publication channels (figure 8). Correspondingly, publication channels at JUFO level 2 have higher impact factors compared to JUFO level 1 publication channels.

In 2022, no information on the Journal Impact Factor (JIF) values of the journals was produced to support the evaluation work of the panels. However, when the final

result of the classification work is compared to the JIF indicator, it can be stated that a significantly larger share of JUFO 2 and 3 level publications channels belong to higher JIF quartiles compared to JUFO 1 level channels (figure 9).

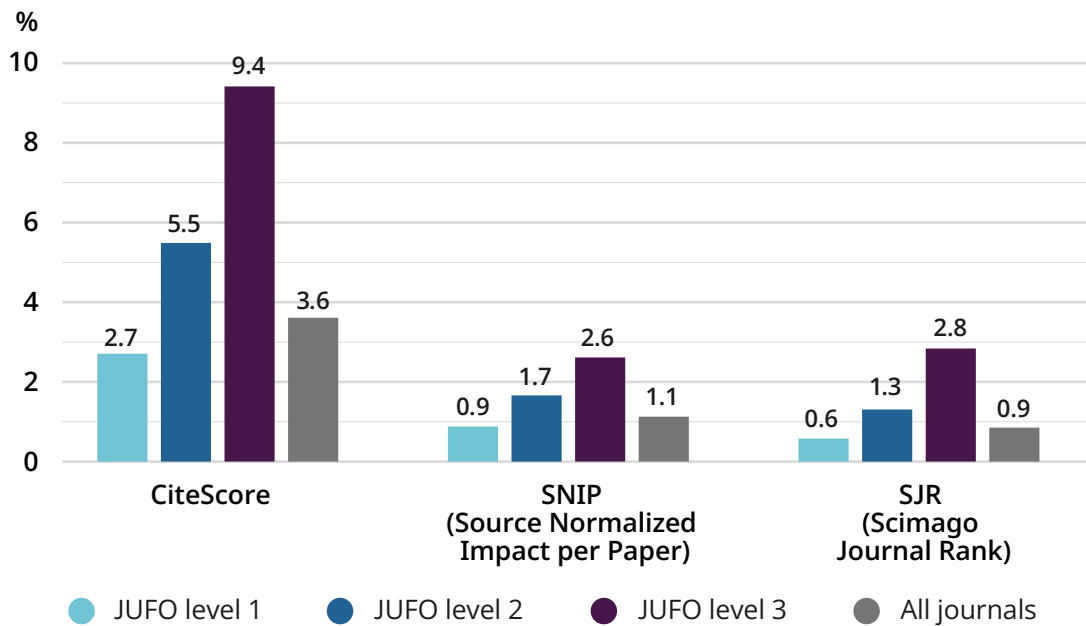


Figure 8. Average CiteScore, SNIP, and SJR for journals/series classified in the Publication Forum at the beginning of 2023 (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

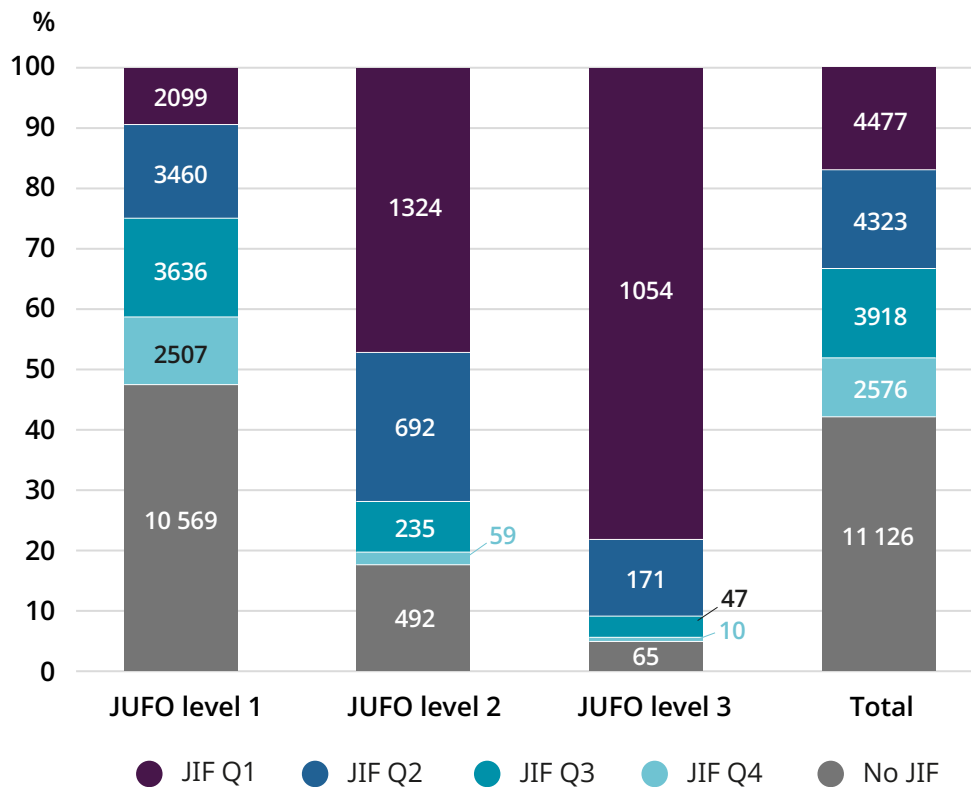


Figure 9. Journals/series classified in the Publication Forum at the beginning of 2023 by JUFO level and compared to Journal Impact Factor quartiles (2023 classification). Source: JUFO portal.

4.6 EQUITY AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASSIFICATION

In this chapter, we describe the fairness of the JUFO classification for the diverse and multilingual peer-reviewed publication production of different disciplines. The analyses have been carried out by calculating the average JUFO points per publication for different publication groups, using coefficients based on the publication types and JUFO levels of the universities' 2021–2024 funding model (table 3). In the analyses of open access publications, the additional factor (1.2) for open access publications has also been taken into account.

Table 3. *Coefficients used in the universities funding model in 2021–2024.*

MinEdu publication type	JUFO level			
	0	1	2	3
A1 Journal article, original research	0.1	1	3	4
A2 Review article, literature review, systematic review	0.1	1	3	4
A3 Book section, chapters in research books	0.1	1	3	4
A4 Article in conference proceedings	0.1	1	3	4
C1 Monograph	0.4	4	12	16
C2 Edited book, conference proceedings or special issue of a journal	0.1	1	3	4

4.6.1 Disciplines and publication types

The basis of the review of ratings is to increase the balance across the different fields of research. The increased quota for levels 2 and 3 allowed upgrading publication channels in under-represented fields which improved the neutrality of the classification.

In the years 2011–2014, there were considerable differences between the main disciplines in the average number of JUFO points produced by the publications (using the coefficients of the university funding model). Since 2015, level 2 and 3 quotas have been calculated on the basis of publication volume. This change balanced the classification between the main disciplines. When the 2023 classification is applied to the publications of the years 2019–2021, it can be stated that the differences between the main disciplines even out a little more, especially when viewed with the 2024 classification, when the changes in the classification of book publishers take effect (figure 10).

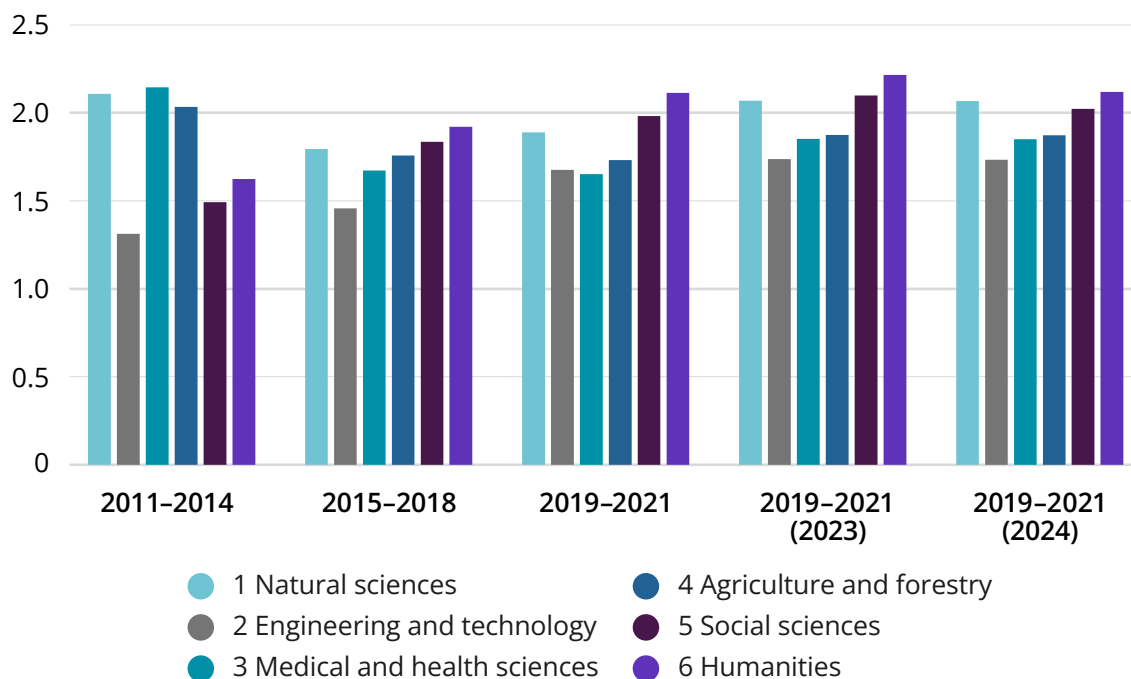


Figure 10. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2011–2021 ($N = 305\,065$) by discipline. Points per publication in the universities' funding model are weighted by 2011–2014, 2015–2018, 2019–2021, 2023 and 2024 JUFO classifications. Additional factor 1.2 for open access has not been taken into account in this analysis. Source: VIRTA publication information service and JUFO portal.

The new classification balances the productivity of different types of publications. Due to the new upgrades of journals and series to levels 2 and 3, journal and book articles are almost equally productive (figure 11). In 2024, the changes in the classification of book publishers level out the difference between journal and book articles even further.

The productivity of conference articles is still lower than that of journal and book articles, because conferences have been classified at level 2 only in the computer and information science panel. So far, no conferences have been accepted to level 3. The panel will make a decision on the classification of conferences during the spring of 2023.

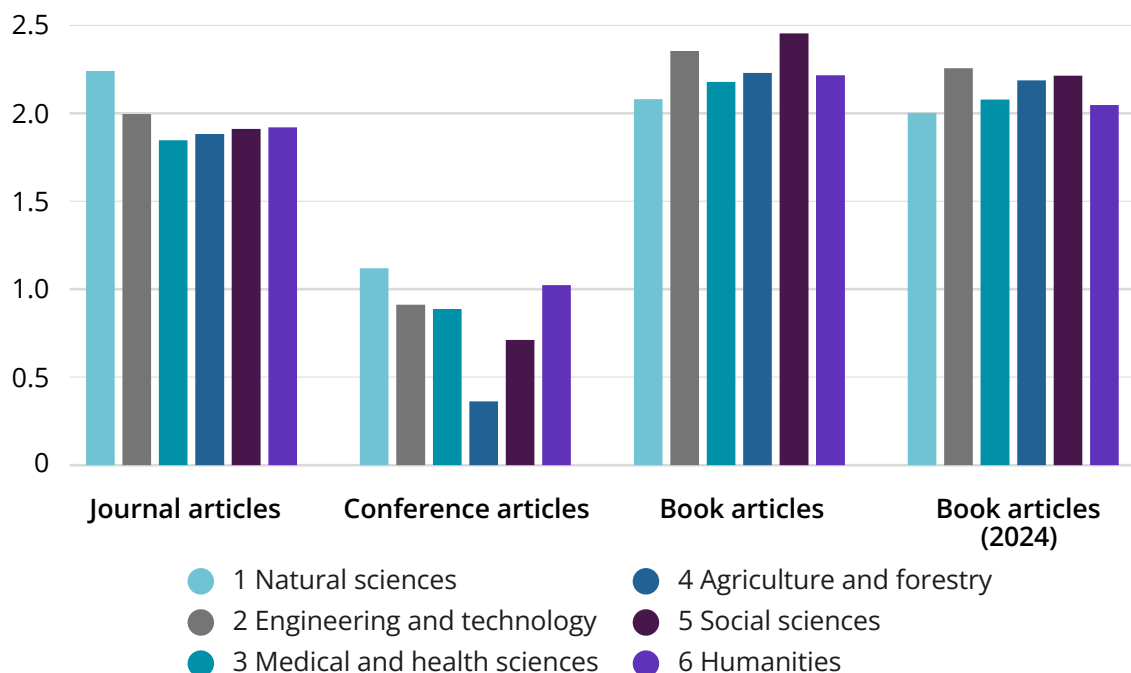


Figure 11. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2019–2021 ($N = 91\,262$) by discipline and publication type. Points per publication in the universities' funding model are weighted by 2023 and 2024 JUFO classifications. Additional factor 1.2 for open access has not been taken into account in this analysis. Source: VIRTA publication information service and JUFO portal.

4.6.2 Publishing language

In the 2023 classification, English-language articles and books produce on average more JUFO points per publication than Finnish-language publications (figure 12). The difference is particularly pronounced in the "hard sciences" (natural sciences, engineering, medical and health sciences, and agriculture and forestry). In these fields, the vast majority of scientific publishing takes place in English, and there are fewer scientific publication channels publishing in domestic languages. However, the panels have deemed it important to classify Finnish- and Swedish-language publication channels in level 1.

In the fields of humanities and social sciences, research focuses on the special features of Finnish society, culture, history and language, so a significant part of peer-reviewed publications is published in domestic languages. There are also plenty of scientific publication channels that publish in domestic languages, and humanities panels have considered it important that they can also be accepted for level 2.

In the humanities and social sciences, publications in Finnish are on average almost as productive as publications in English based on the coefficients of the funding model (figure 12). The importance of English-language publications in the humanities is especially emphasised by the productivity of book articles, which is slightly balanced by a change in the classification of book publishers starting in 2024 (figure 13).

Articles and books published in Swedish and other languages are a very small part of the universities' peer-reviewed publication production, so there is more variation in the average productivity of JUFO points. Publications in languages other than English, Finnish and Swedish are on average less productive from the point of view of JUFO points.

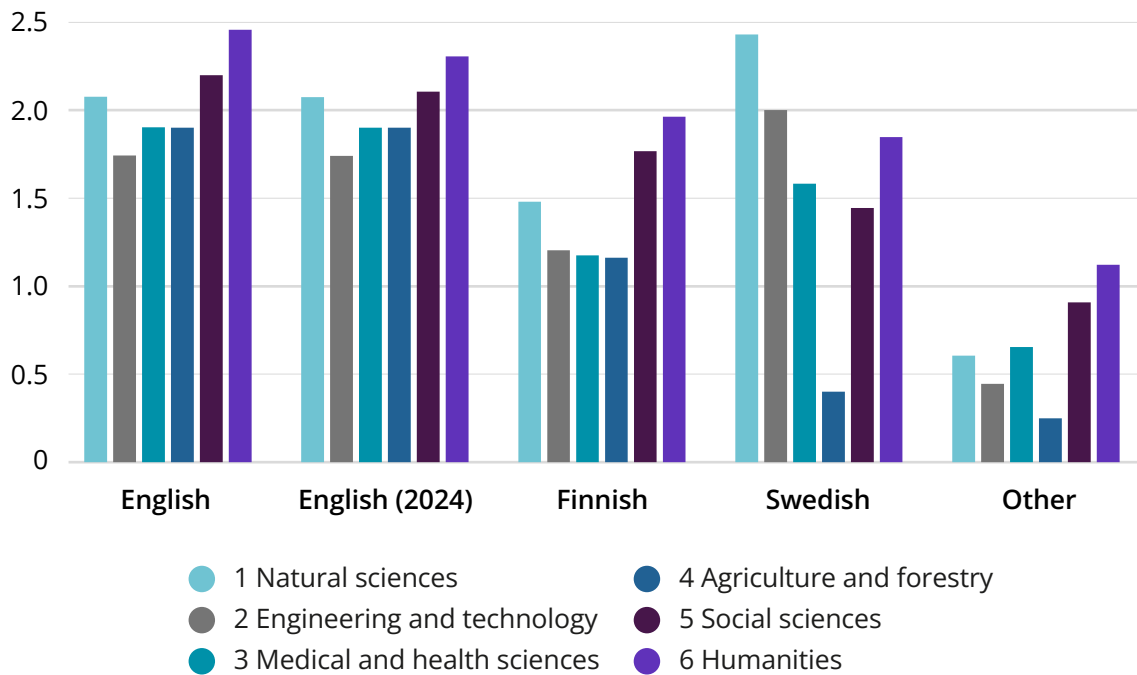


Figure 12. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2019–2021 (N = 91 262) by discipline and publishing language. Points per publication in the universities' funding model are weighted by 2023 JUFO classification. Additional factor 1.2 for open access has not been taken into account in this analysis. Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

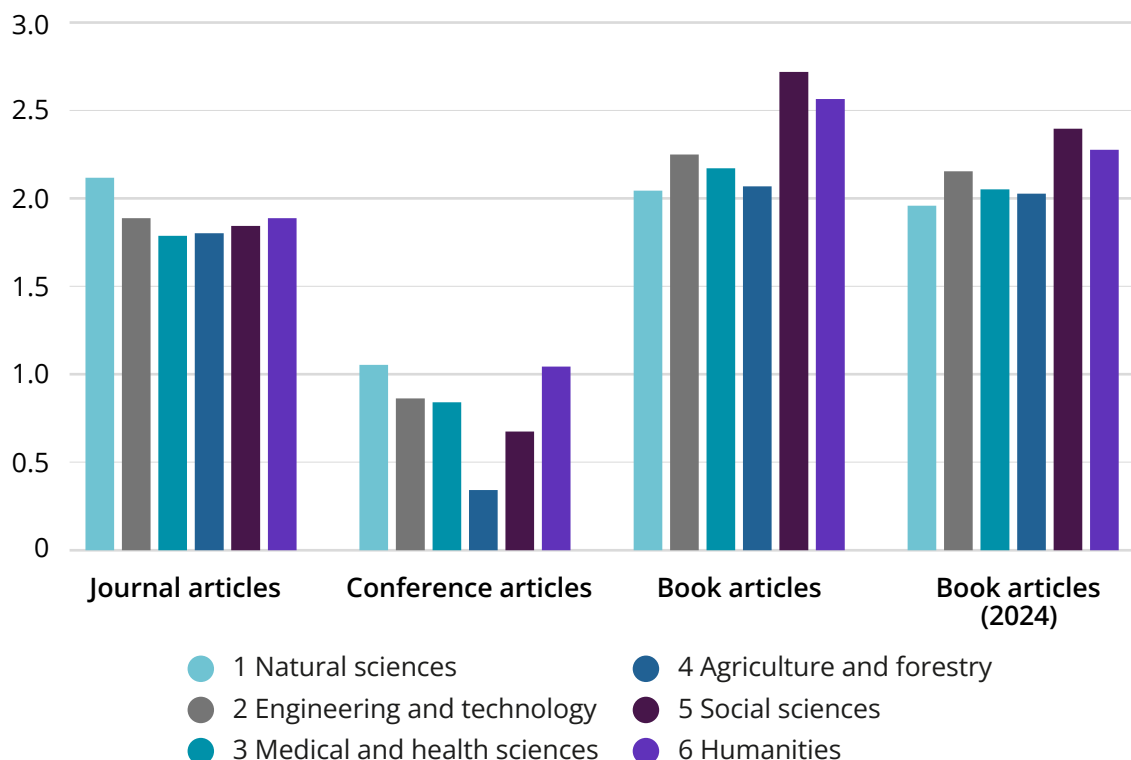


Figure 13. Peer-reviewed English-language publications of Finnish universities in 2019–2021 (N = 82 135) by discipline and publication type. Points per publication in the universities' funding model are weighted by 2023 and 2024 JUFO classifications. Additional factor 1.2 for open access has not been taken into account in this analysis. Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

4.6.3 Open access

In the 2023 classification, publications that are openly available in hybrid publication channels or by self-archiving are on average almost as productive from the point of view of JUFO points as publications that are not openly available (figure 14). When the coefficients of the funding model for open access publications is also taken into account, publications that are openly available in hybrid channels or by self-archiving are slightly more productive than closed publications. Studies published in open access publication channels are on average less productive.

An examination by discipline shows that closed publications are more productive than openly available publications in open access publication channels, especially in the humanities and social sciences, where the importance of book publications is greater than in other fields (figure 15).

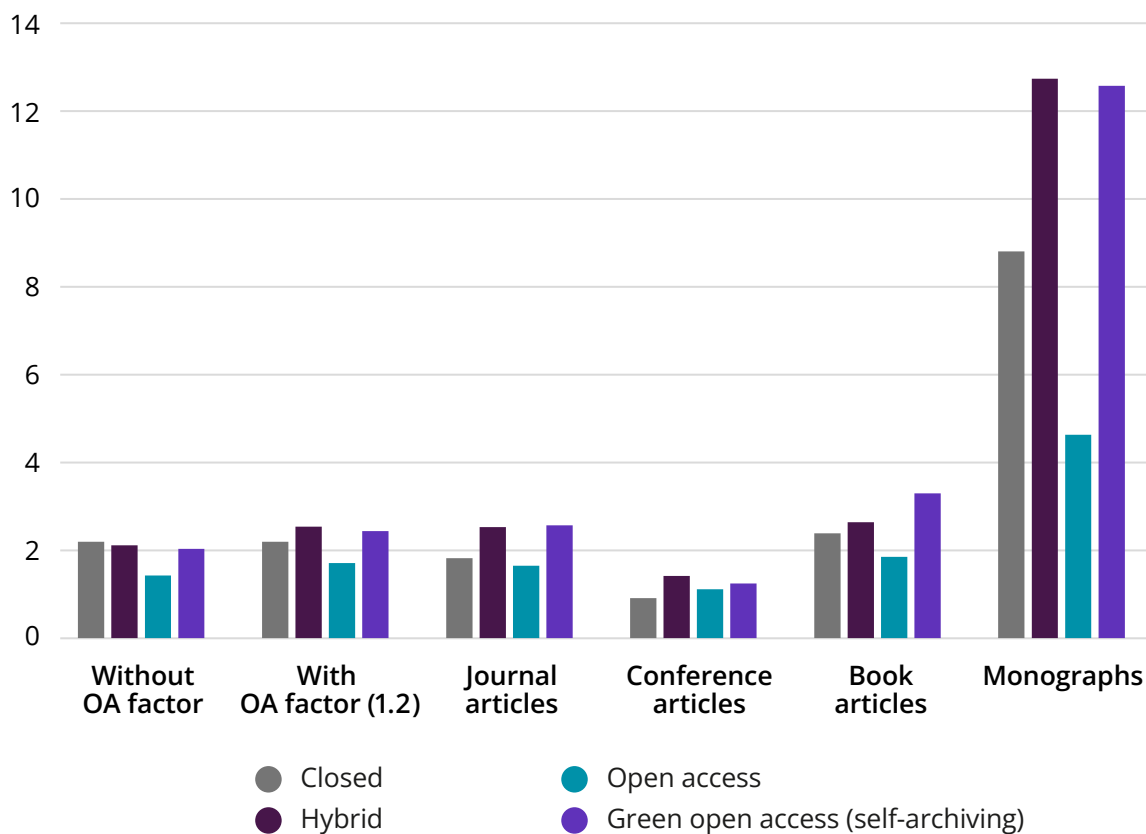


Figure 14. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2019–2021 (N = 91 262) by open access status and publication type. Points per publication in the universities' funding model are weighted by 2023 JUFO classification. The average JUFO points per publication have been calculated with coefficients based on publication types, JUFO levels and open access in the university funding model. Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

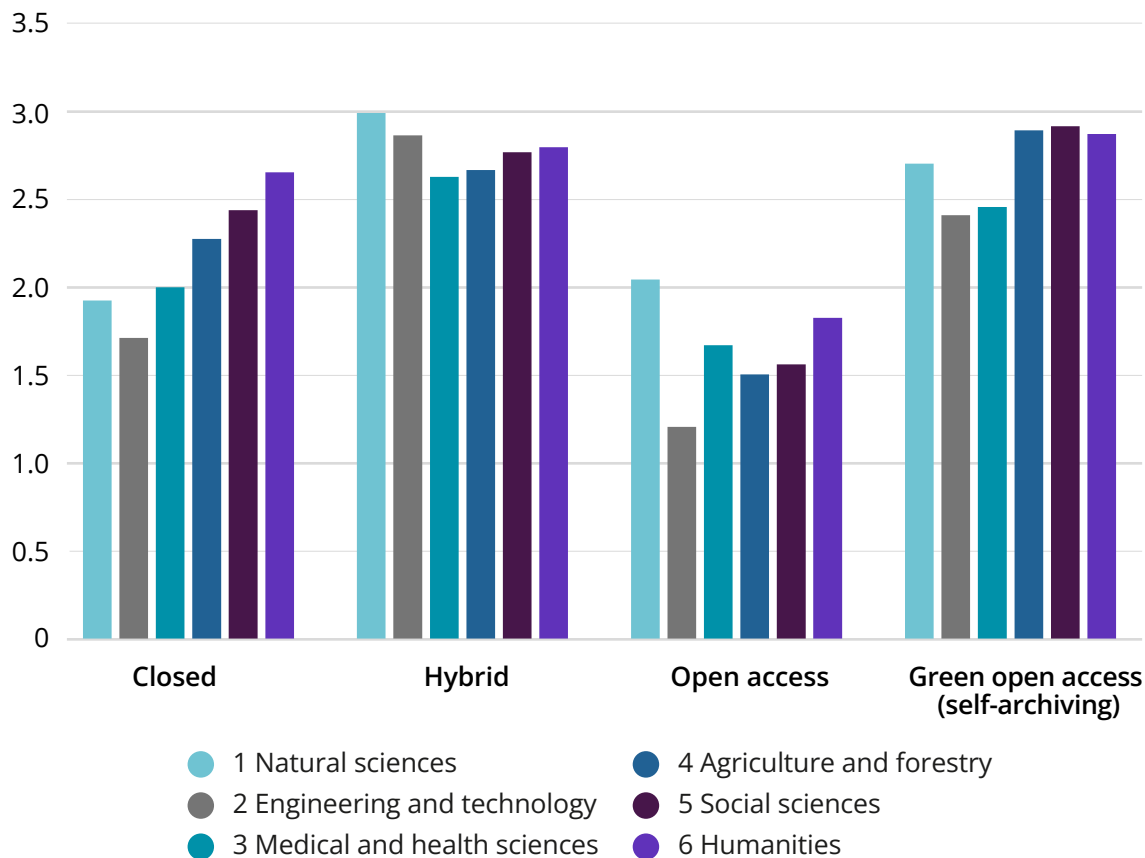


Figure 15. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2019–2021 (N = 91 262) by discipline and open access status. Points per publication in the universities’ funding model are weighted by 2023 JUFO classification. The average JUFO points per publication have been calculated with coefficients based on publication types, JUFO levels and open access in the university funding model. Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

5 DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITIES' PUBLISHING IN FINLAND

THROUGH THE UNIVERSITIES' funding model, the JUFO classification is part of the steering of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and it has also been used in varying degrees in the universities' internal funding and evaluation processes. The user guide for the JUFO classification recommends that the classification should not be used to evaluate or compare individual researchers, for which publication channel based publication metrics are poorly suited. Despite this, the JUFO classification has also been applied in individual-level assessments in some cases.

It is possible that JUFO classification has affected the publishing activities of universities. In particular, identifying unwanted or harmful effects is part of the responsible use of publication metrics. On the other hand, it is important to follow whether there are changes in publishing activities that would significantly limit the usefulness of the JUFO classification. The changes in the publishing activities of universities have been examined in more detail in the 2010–2020 self-evaluation report of the Publication Forum.

The VIRTAs publication information service has comprehensive information on universities publications from 2011–2021, of which publication data for 2021 will still be supplemented in the 2023 data collection. The JUFO classification has been a part of the university funding model from 2015, so this report examines the publishing activities in 2016–2021. The joint publications of the universities appear several times in the data, but from the point of view of the funding model, it describes the publishing activities well.

5.1 PUBLICATION CHANNELS

The JUFO classification is a publication channel based indicator for publishing activities. In the funding model, the classification is not used to examine an individual researcher or article, but the entire peer-reviewed publication output of universities. When the publication production is examined on the basis of the publication channels, it is assumed that the individual articles or books represent an average quality level of the publication channel.

The quality and impact of individual articles varies in relation to the average quality level of the publication channel, so an evaluation based on the publication channels works more reliably when a publication channel is selective in terms of scope and number of publications. There is presumably more variation in publication channels with a large number of publications and a low publication threshold.

The transfer of publishing activities from a large number of specialised publication channels to fewer large and less selective publishing platforms would limit the functionality of the JUFO classification. However, an examination of universities' publishing activities shows that the number of journals/series used as publication channels for peer-reviewed articles has increased from 6830 to 7020 in 2016–2021 (figure 16). The importance of the publication channel in the examination of the universities' entire publication production has not therefore decisively decreased.

However, the number of book publishers as a publication channel has clearly decreased in 2016–2021 (figure 17). This may have been influenced by the aforementioned strong concentration of foreign book publications (articles, edited works and monographs) on Routledge and Palgrave Macmillan. For these publishers, the aim is to improve the functionality of the JUFO classification by downgrading them from level 3 to level 2 from the beginning of 2024, and by identifying their highest-quality book series and upgrading them to level 3.

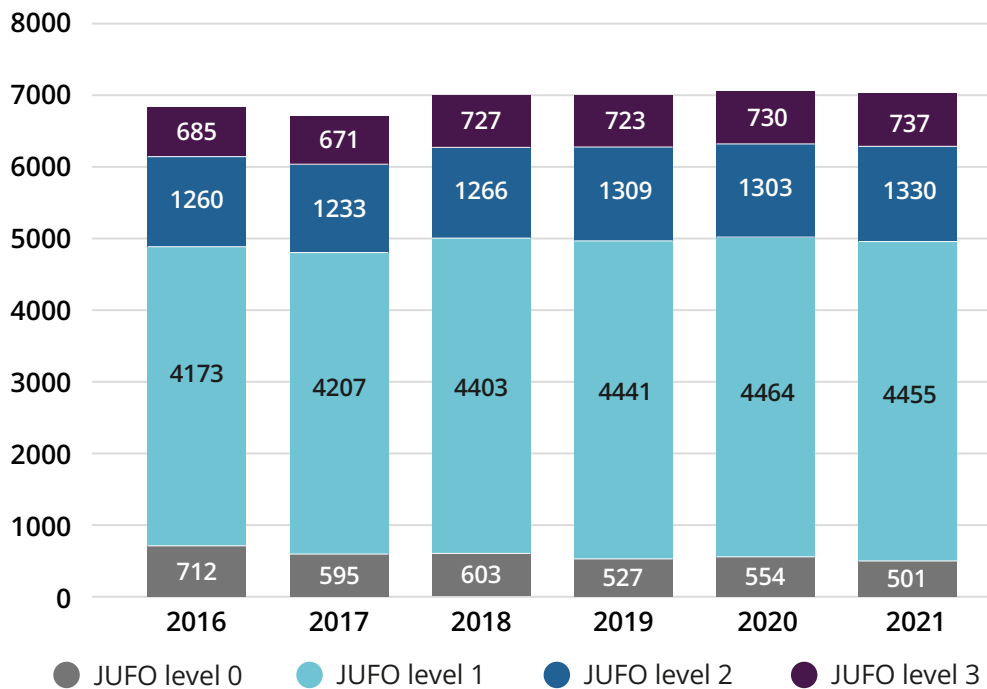


Figure 16. Number of journals/series in 2016–2021 where at least one peer-reviewed article from a Finnish university has been published. Source: VIRT A publication information service and JUFO portal.

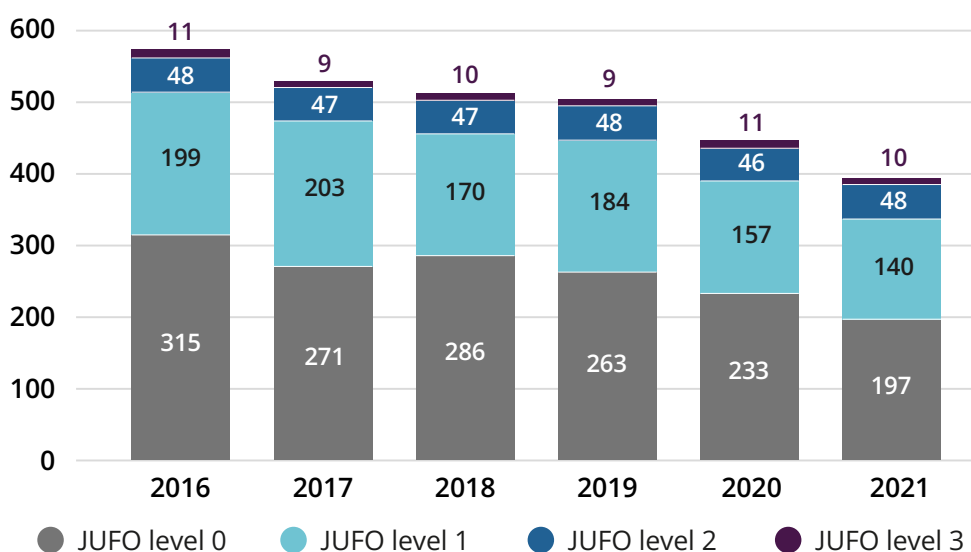


Figure 17. Number of book publishers in 2016–2021 where at least one peer-reviewed article from a Finnish university has been published. Source: VIRT A publication information service and JUFO portal.

5.2 NUMBER AND TYPE OF PUBLICATIONS

The number of peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities has grown moderately in recent years, and the share of different publication types has remained almost unchanged (figure 18). The share of journal articles in publication output has grown accordingly, while the share of other publication types, i.e. monographs, edited works and book articles, has remained relatively stable. The biggest change has occurred in the number of conference articles: In 2016, 13% of the peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities were conference articles, in 2021 only 8%.

In the case of monographs, the number of publications has decreased at level 0 and 1 book publishers (figure 19). The number of publications at level 2 and 3 book publishers has alternately increased and decreased. The number of publications at level 2 was lower in 2021 than in 2016, while at level 3 the number of publications was higher in 2021 than in 2016.

In total, university publishing activities have decreased in level 0 publication channels and increased in level 1, 2 and 3 publication channels between 2016 and 2021 (figure 20). The growth has been relatively strongest in level categories 3 and 2.

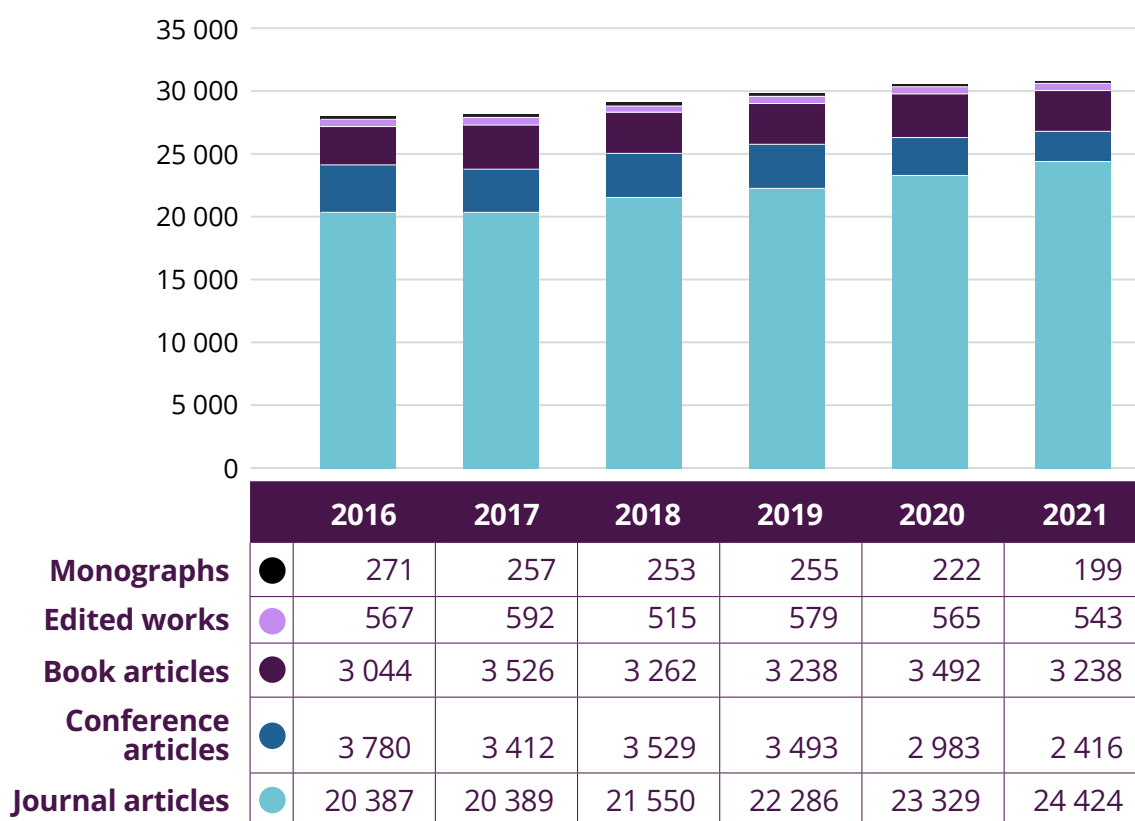


Figure 18. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 (N = 176 596) by publication type. Source: VIRT A publication information service.

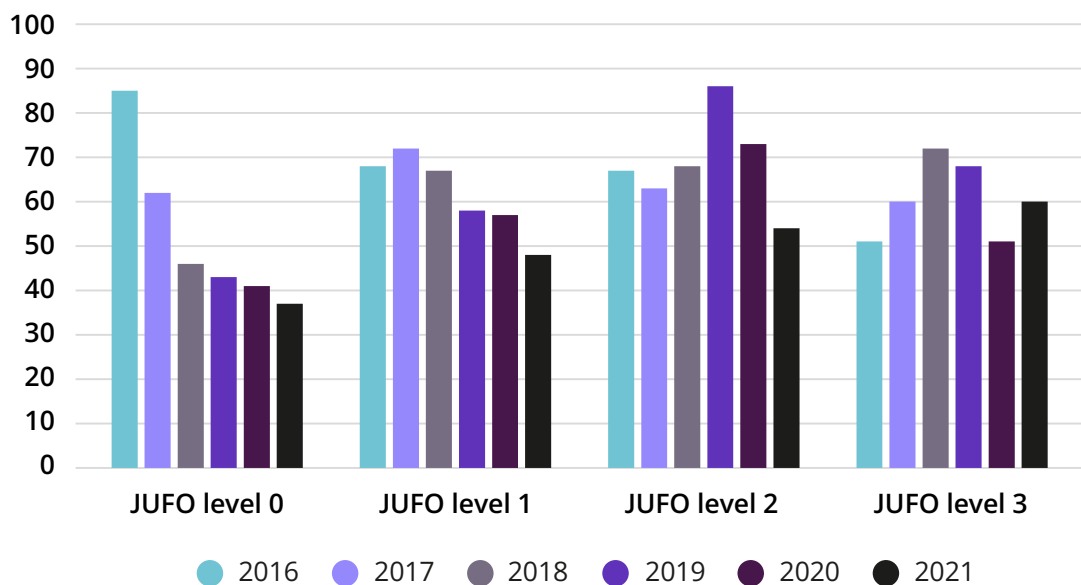


Figure 19. Peer-reviewed monographs of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 (N = 1457) by JUFO level (2016–2023 classifications). Source: VIRT A publication information service.

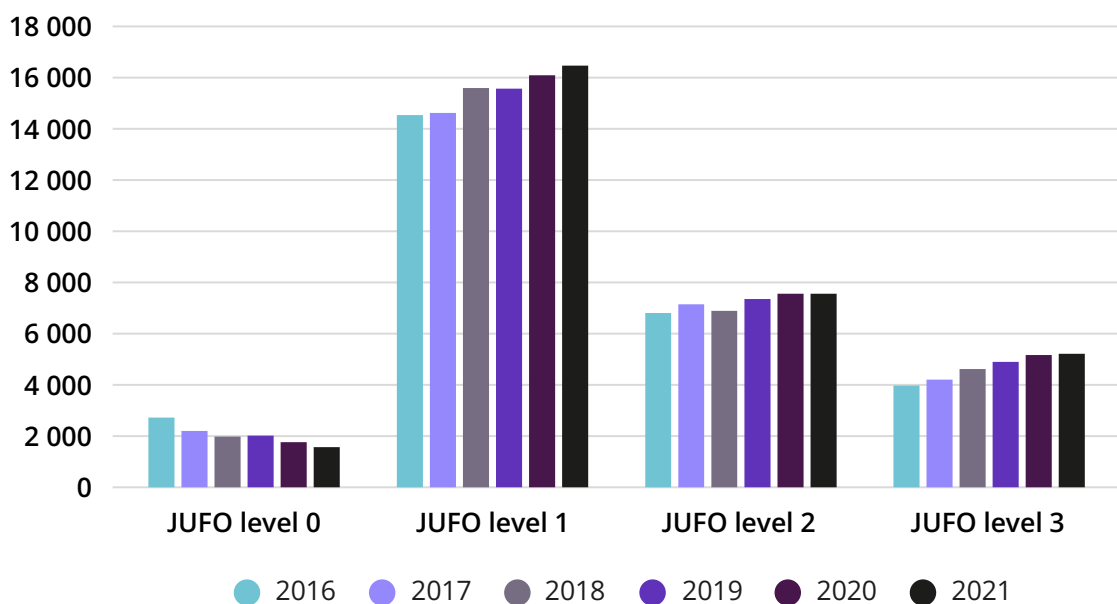


Figure 20. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 (N = 176 596) by JUFO level (2016–2023 classifications). Source: VIRT A publication information service and JUFO portal.

5.3 PUBLISHING LANGUAGES

The share of different publishing languages in the peer-reviewed publication output of Finnish universities has remained steady in recent years. The shares of English, Finnish, Swedish and other languages have remained the same between 2016 and 2021, i.e. the increase in the number of publications has been evenly distributed among the different publication languages (figure 21).

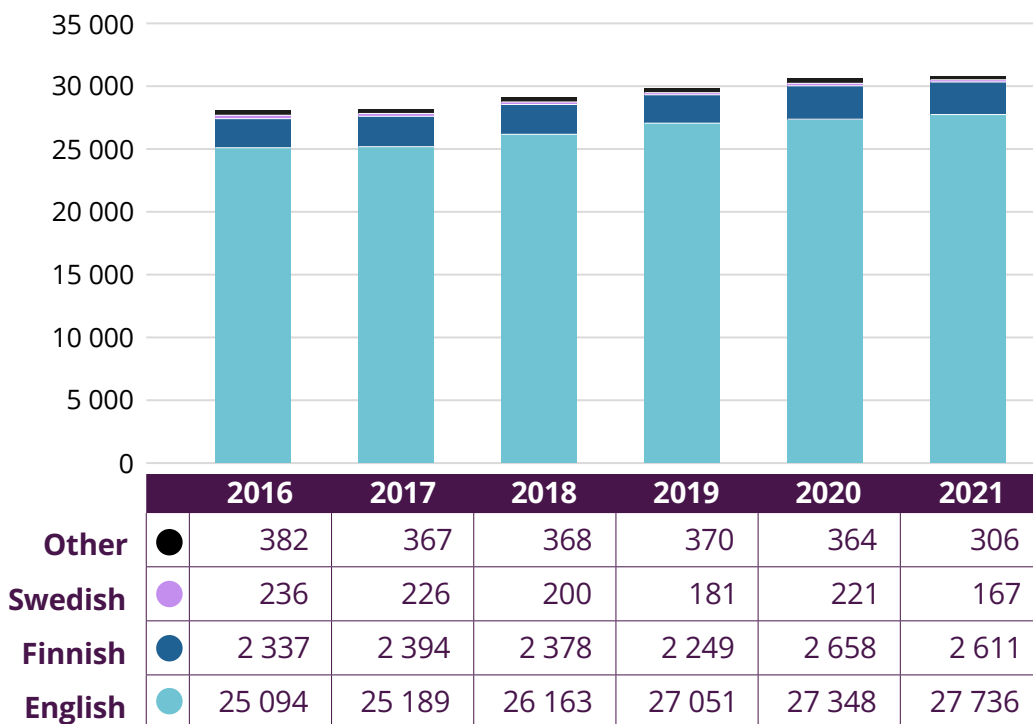


Figure 21. Peer-reviewed publications of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 (N = 176 596) by publishing language. Source: VIRT A publication information service.

When looking at the universities’ peer-reviewed publishing activities in Finnish, the number of publications has decreased at level 0 and correspondingly increased at levels 1 and 2 (figure 22). In 2016, 347 peer-reviewed Finnish-language publications were published at level 0, and in 2021 257. At level 1, the number of publications has increased from 1418 to 1548, and at level 2 from 572 to 806. In total, the number of Finnish-language publications has increased since the JUFO classification was adopted as a quality indicator of the universities’ funding model.

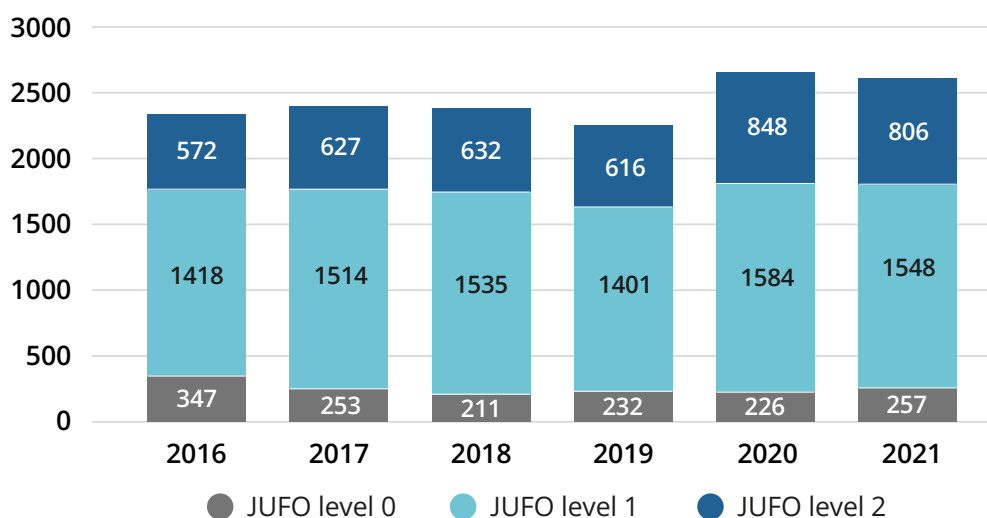


Figure 22. Peer-reviewed Finnish-language publications of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 (N = 40 840) by JUFO level (2016–2021 classifications). Source: VIRT A publication information service and JUFO portal.

5.4 OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

Open access publishing has increased very positively in all JUFO level categories. The openness of Finnish universities' peer-reviewed journal and conference articles started to increase especially after 2016 and was strongest in level categories 1–3 (figure 23). For the past couple of years, the share of open access publications has remained at around 80 percent, but especially in 2021, the shares may still increase after the embargo periods for self-archiving have expired.

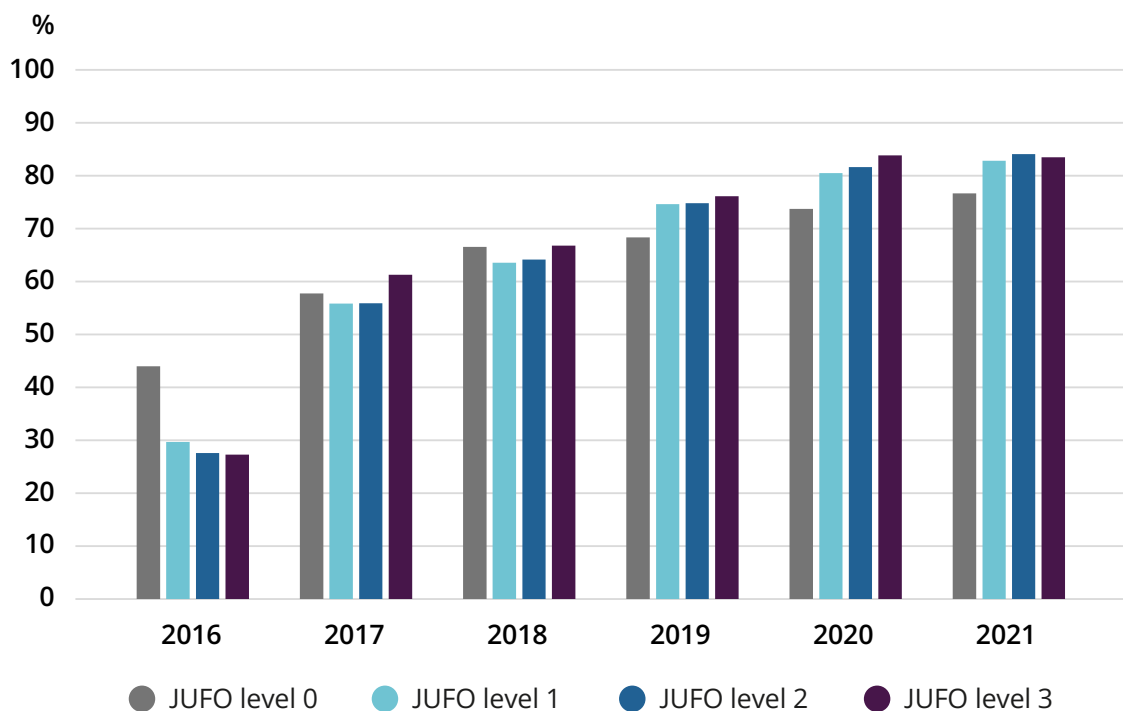


Figure 23. Peer-reviewed open access journal and conference articles of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 ($N = 151\,941$) by JUFO level (2016–2021 classifications).
Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

Regarding book articles, edited works and monographs, the increase in open access publishing has been more moderate (figure 24). There has been an increase in all JUFO level categories, but a larger share of JUFO level 0 and 1 book articles, edited works and monographs are openly available compared to JUFO level 2 and 3 publications. Also with these publication types, it can be observed that the share of open access publications has remained unchanged for the last couple of years, but especially in 2021, the share may increase after the embargo periods for self-archiving have expired.

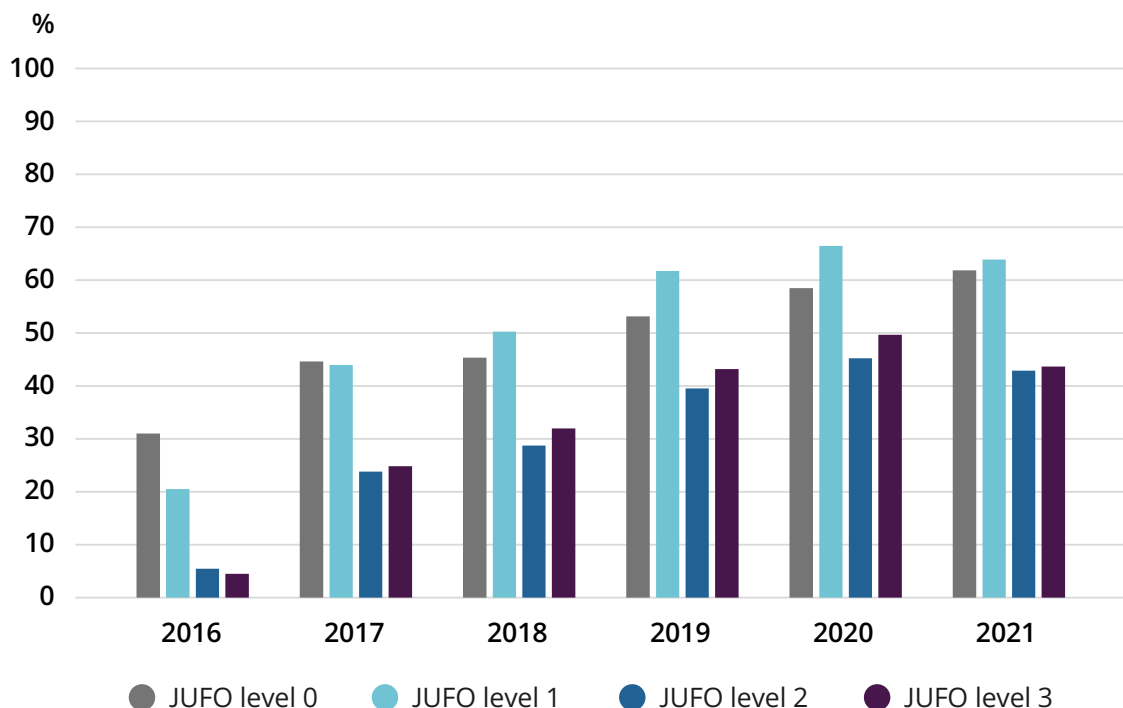


Figure 24. Peer-reviewed open access book articles, edited works and monographs of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 (N = 40 840) by JUFO level (2016–2021 classifications).
Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

In 2021, 42% of Finnish universities' openly available peer-reviewed journal and conference articles were published in open access publication channels and 36% in hybrid OA publication channels. In addition, 22% were openly available through self-archiving. The number of gold OA articles has increased significantly, especially at JUFO level 1 (figure 25). The number of hybrid OA articles has increased at JUFO levels 1, 2 and 3. The relative share of self-archived and hybrid OA articles is the largest at JUFO levels 2 and 3, but numerically the most hybrid OA articles are published at JUFO level 1.

The number of closed articles has decreased strongly in all JUFO level categories (figure 25). A total of 2890 closed journal and conference articles were published in JUFO level 1 journals in 2021, i.e. more than the total of open (1991) and closed (394) articles in JUFO level 3 journals. Progress in open access requires that at all JUFO levels, including level 1, researchers choose publication channels that enable immediate open access.

JUFO level 3 includes publication channels that the expert panels in different fields regard as the highest quality and impact. The other extreme of scientific publishing are so-called predatory journals, which attract submissions in order to obtain author fees (APC) by providing misleading information about editorial boards, peer review process and scientific impact. In 2021, Finnish universities reported only 15 peer-reviewed journal or conference articles published in potential predatory journals indexed in Cabells Predatory Reports.

From the Finnish research perspective, a more significant phenomenon is the growth of scientific publishing in the "gray zone", i.e. in the area between predatory

journals and JUFO level 1. Commercial open access publishers compete for APC payments by publishing as many articles as possible with the least possible time spent on editorial work and quality assessment.

An example of such a publisher is MDPI, whose journals have been critically discussed both internationally and nationally. MDPI's Sustainability journal was downgraded from JUFO level 1 to level 0 from the beginning of 2023. The journal also publishes high-quality articles, but the broad scope, large publication volume and fast publication processes have undermined confidence that the journal's procedures to ensure scientific quality work reliably down the line.

The number of articles reported by Finnish universities in MDPI journals has grown very quickly from 177 articles in 2016 to 1921 in 2021. Compared to JUFO level 3 journals, the growth in publishing activity in MDPI journals in JUFO categories 1 and 0 has been significantly stronger in all main disciplines except in humanities (figure 26). In engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, and agriculture and forestry, more articles were published in MDPI journals than JUFO level 3 journals in 2021.

The Publication Forum has an important task of encouraging, monitoring and making visible the quality and transparency of scientific publishing. Also in the era of open science, a forum is needed where researchers, as experts in the best practices of their disciplines, can assess the quality of publication channels and critically discuss changes in publishing activities.

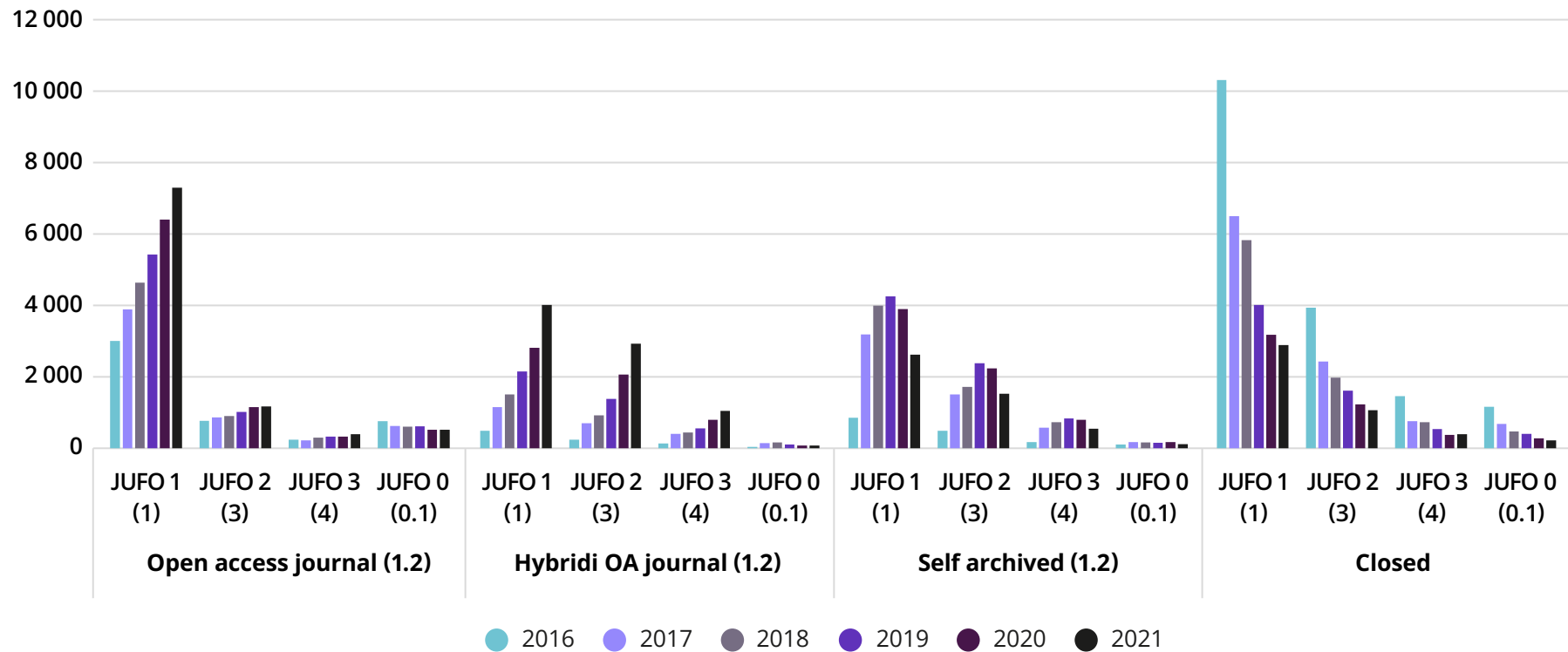


Figure 25. Peer-reviewed journal and conference articles of Finnish universities in 2016–2021 by open access type and JUFO level (funding model coefficients in parentheses) (N = 151 941). Source: VIRTa publication information service and JUFO portal.

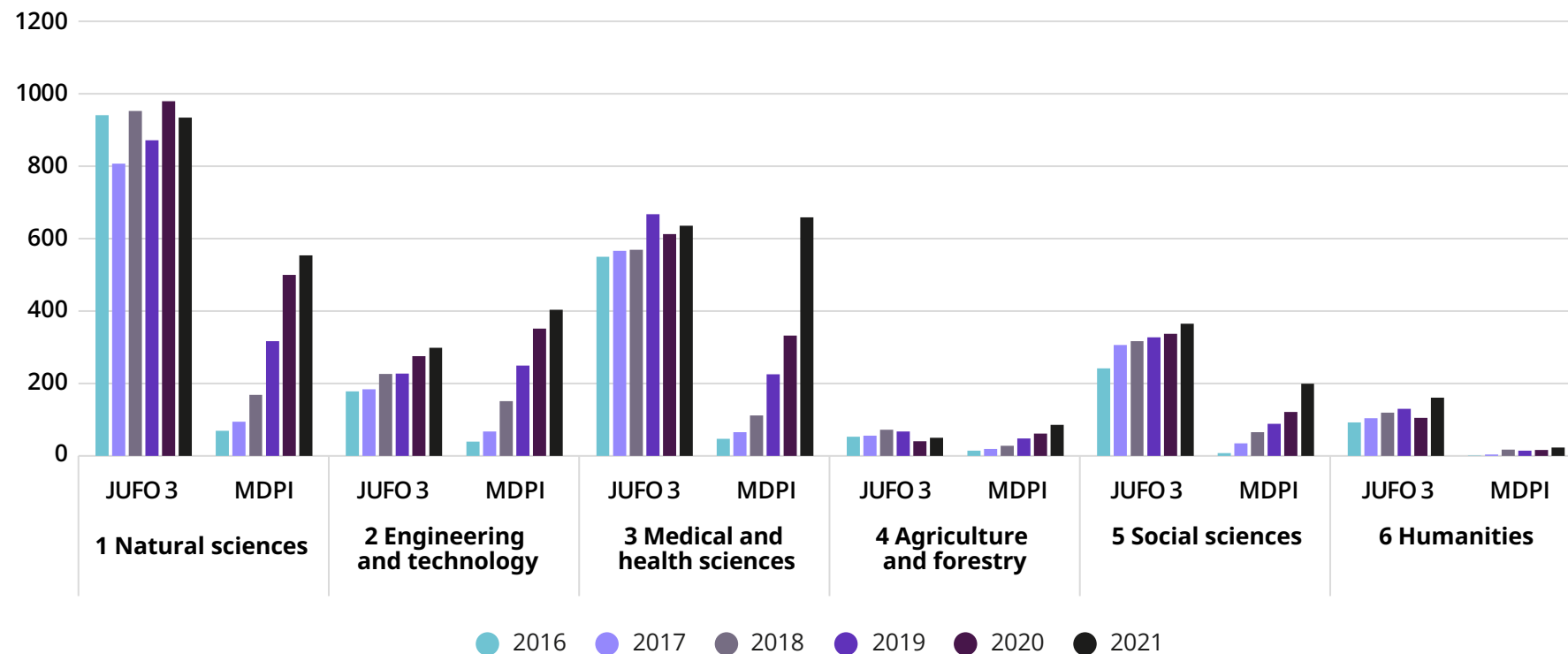


Figure 26. Peer-reviewed journal and conference articles of Finnish universities in JUFO level 3 journals and in MDPI journals in 2016–2021 (N = 18 656). Source: VIRT A publication information service and JUFO portal.



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