

11-1-2007

Scopus data ranks the world

Ben Sowter

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.researchtrends.com/researchtrends>

Recommended Citation

Sowter, Ben (2007) "Scopus data ranks the world," *Research Trends*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 2 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://www.researchtrends.com/researchtrends/vol1/iss2/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Research Trends. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Trends by an authorized editor of Research Trends. For more information, please contact r.herbert@elsevier.com.

Continued from page 4

Prize winners

The influence of Germany on science was clear to see this year, with the announcement of two Nobel Prize-winning German researchers. Gerhard Ertl of the Fritz-Haber-Institut der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft, Berlin and Honorary Professor at Freie Universität Berlin and Technische Universität Berlin, won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his studies of chemical processes on solid surfaces. Peter Grünberg shared the Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery of Giant Magnetoresistance, which resulted in a breakthrough in gigabyte hard disk drives.

In addition, Olaf Hohmeyer, University of Flensburg, is Vice Chair of the Working Group III of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. This Group was awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace

Prize for its efforts to spread awareness of man-made climate change and lay the foundations for counteracting it.

To see the analysis for the eight countries mentioned at the start of this article (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Mexico, Poland, Turkey and Egypt), please [click here](#)

To visit the first issue of Research Trends and see the original ten-country analysis, [click here](#).

Expert opinion



Scopus data ranks the world

Ben Sowter

In an editorial in *Current Science*, P. Balam observed that “rankings and ratings enter every sphere of human activity” (1) and even went so far as to compare institutional rankings to a “beauty contest”. With the publication of The THES-QS World University Rankings on November 9, the winners of the 2007 beauty contest were announced.

The Times Higher Education Supplement (THES), a London-based weekly newspaper that reports specifically on higher education issues, has published its World University Rankings annually since 2004. It works closely with Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a leading independent network for higher education and related careers that acts as its research and data analysis arm.

Switch to Scopus

For the first time, the data used to compile the World University Rankings have come from Scopus. “As our own methodology developed and improved, we felt we needed a more comprehensive data source,” explains Ben Sowter, QS’ Head of Research. “We chose Scopus for several reasons: the quality of the data, which will provide enhanced transparency and

clarity for the rankings; strong journal representation outside the United States; and more non-English content than other databases. We believe that the strong data found in Scopus,

combined with other enhancements we’ve made to our methodology, will help stabilize rankings, making them more effective for tracking year-on-year performance. They will also result in a more robust and balanced measure of comparative international university quality.”

In addition to the switch to Scopus for citation data, the key enhancements to QS’ methodology are:

- Z-score aggregation of indicators to generate overall scores
- Peer reviewers prevented from promoting their own university
- Consistent usage of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) data for all personnel-related data

For more information on the effect these changes will have on the data and thus the rankings, please [click here](#).

References:

- (1) Balam, P. (2004) “The Shanghai Rankings”, *Current Science*, Vol. 86, No. 10 from the [World Wide Web](#)

Assessment indicators

Institutions are assessed on six indicators that carry different weightings. These indicators are based on what THES considers the template of a world-class university:

- Research quality (peer review 40%, citations per faculty 20%)
- Graduate employability (recruiter review 10%)
- International outlook (international faculty 5%, international students 5%)
- Teaching quality (student faculty 20%)