Commemorating our seventh anniversary, the European Summer School for Scientometrics (esss) did not take place at one of the well-tried locations Berlin, Leuven and Vienna. As an exceptional treat the esss organizers brought the event to the beautiful city of Granada and joined forces with the local university this year. Due to the success story of the esss during the last years, several collaboration requests were repeatedly addressed to the esss steering committee. Among them was the proposal of the EC3metrics group, a University of Granada spin-off, to host this year’s esss. With their research focuses on alternative metrics and data sources, the Spanish research group emerged as the perfect fit for this year’s focus topic “New Metrics”.

The six-days event, which took place from 04 to 09 September 2016, was fully booked within only a few weeks after registration opened, thus many requestors had to be waitlisted again like in the previous years\(^1,2,3,4,5,6\).

The kick-off session of the esss 2016 on Sunday, September 4\(^{th}\), traditionally start-
ed with the “Bibliometric Crash Course” in the Conference Room “Sacromonte” at the Hotel Granada Center. The members of the esss steering committee Wolfgang Glänzel (KU Leuven), Sybille Hinze (DZHW) and Juan Gorraiz (University of Vienna) provided this first glimpse, which was particularly addressed to attendees short on experience who could familiarise themselves with the main terms and concepts of bibliometrics.

The theoretical part of the crash course was followed by an introduction to the most renowned citation databases. Massimiliano Carloni, the representative of Thomson Reuters, demonstrated how to navigate across the different content sets in the Web of Science Core Collection (WoS CC), while Tomaso Benedet and Susanne Steiginga, both representatives from Elsevier, co-guided the audience through the most recent version of Scopus. In agreement with the focus topic “New Metrics”, the first day was concluded by Stephan Büttgen from EBSCO who gave a very clear and vivid introduction to Plum Analytics, a tool gathering different altmetrics for scholarly research output.

On Monday, September 5th, the venue was switched to the “Salón de Actos” of the Facultad de Ciencias del Trabajo (University of Granada), where Evaristo Jiménez-Contreras, Director of EC3metrics, Enrique Herrera Viedma, Vice-Rector for Research and Transfer and Pedro Antonio García López, Dean of the Faculty of Labour Sciences, both representing the University of Granada, officially opened the esss 2016 and gave a warm welcome to the attendees of this year’s event.

The lectures day started with a concise overview of the history, institutionalisation and concepts of bibliometrics given by Stefan Hornbostel (DZHW), followed by Wolfgang Glänzel and Juan Gorraiz, providing a brief introduction to the most important bibliometric data sources. Then Sybille Hinze shed light on the most relevant scientometric indicators, their construction, their potential applications and not least their limitations, before Juan Gorraiz took over again to focus on the academic point of view. Based on his long-lasting experience at the University of Vienna, he presented the tailor-made Viennese services for both academic and administrative university staff, particularly considering individual evaluation.

In the afternoon session the time was right to switch from theoretical considerations to practical aspects of applying bibliometrics both as an explorative as well as evalua-
tive tool. A prestigious group of international speakers, well known in the field of bibliometrics impressively reflected on how bibliometrics can be put into action. Anthony van Raan, founder of CWTS at Leiden University (Netherlands), one of the leading institutions with focus on bibliometrics, started off with his presentation on the role of citation- and concept-networks as a basis for the construction of performance indicators and science maps. Afterwards, Koenraad Debackere (KU Leuven) demonstrated how modern science and innovation policies are making use of bibliometric data and indicators to assess the scientific performance of research institutions, research groups and even individual researchers. The central topic of the following talk was to enlighten the assessment methodologies in research management and policy, which Henk F. Moed (independent researcher and scientific advisor) excellently worked out by giving various examples. Although lagging behind the time schedule, Stephan Gauch (DZHW) once again caught the audience’s attention in his inimitable way to demonstrate how effective queries can be designed by uncovering common mistakes and hidden pitfalls.

The following days were characterised by theoretical lectures in the morning and hands-on sessions with practical exercises in the afternoon. Tuesday, September 6th, dedicated to “Data Handling”, was started by Christine Rimmert (Bielefeld University, Germany) who clearly illustrated that accurate data cleaning and processing is the linchpin and an essential precondition of any bibliometric analysis. With his second talk “Journal Impact Measures”, jointly presented by Juan Gorraiz, Wolfgang Glänzel concluded the morning session by focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of the infamous and highly controversial “Journal Impact Factor”, whereas alternative impact measures like Eigenfactor metrics, SJR and SNIP were highlighted by his co-presenter. The exercises in the afternoon reflected these issues and participants had the opportunity to consolidate theoretically imparted knowledge.

Based on a given institution the participants were guided to develop a small case study by processing the different steps of three major tasks common in many bibliometrics approaches: data retrieval & cleaning, visualization and citation analysis. In contrast to previous years, the time schedule was modified to give participants even more time to get into the practical aspects of bibliometrics. Turning knowledge into skills certainly requires sufficient time and after all: Practice makes perfect.

After some busy hours in the computer labs the day was concluded by an entertaining introduction to the visualization and reporting tools of Thomson Reuter’s InCites, given by Massimiliano Carloni.
Subsequently, “Collaboration and Networks” was the main theme of the lectures and practical exercises on Wednesday. Bart Thijs (KU Leuven) eloquently demonstrated how network analysis can be applied to uncover relations, structures and developments among different actors in science. Wolfgang Glänzel then focused on co-authorship, which is used as a proxy for research collaboration on institutional as well as on international level. This approach reveals important information about main actors and their role in the network of scholarly communication.

As visualisation of network relations within science is an important aspect of explorative bibliometrics, esss attendees were given the opportunity to practice the newly acquired knowledge and to create maps on their own by using different visualisation tools such as Gephi, Bibexcel and Pajek in the following hands-on sessions.

Similar to Tuesday the programme was concluded by a short product presentation. This time Tomaso Benedet presented SciVal, a tool that supports evaluation and benchmarking processes.

Thursday was reserved for sessions on this year’s focus topic: “New Metrics”, a topic that received an increasing amount of attention both within the bibliometrics community and in the sphere of science policy.

Juan Gorraiz prepared the ground by giving a witty introduction proposing the dawn of a new metrics era. Why new metrics found their way to the forefront was subsequently addressed by Rodrigo Costas (CWTS, Leiden University, Netherlands), who on the other hand emphasized that the actual meaning, validity and usefulness of these recently developed metrics and related tracking tools are still open questions.

Afterwards Nicolás Robinson-Garcia and Daniel Torres-Salinas (Universidad de Granada) focused on questions of societal impact, a topic closely related to altmetrics, as these new indicators are nowadays used to trace social engagement.

The lectures should be concluded by Ulrike Felt (University of Vienna), who unfortunately had to cancel her participation at short notice. Luckily Esteban Romero Frias (University of Granada) stepped in and presented a highly interesting talk about “Social Knowledge in Digital Society: the case of MediaLab-UGR”, thereby revealing new ways of multi-directional knowledge transfer. Finally, Daniel Torres-Salinas gave an insight into “Livemetrics”, a live bibliometric visualisation site for science communication at the University of Granada and “Knowmetrics”, measuring knowledge in the digital society.

The afternoon was again dedicated to the practical exercises with “Citation Analysis” as the major topic. With the “bibliometric agora”, a discussion forum that has become a popular and valuable feature of the esss course structure within the last years, the programme on Thursday was concluded.

Moderated by Juan Gorraiz, the agora in Granada featuring Rodrigo Costas, Stephan Gauch and Daniel Torres-Salinas picked out some pending discussion points mentioned...
earlier this morning, demonstrating that altmetrics has become both a hot and controversial topic in bibliometrics not at least due to the lack of generally accepted definitions and terms. A vivid and lively dispute developed quickly among the panel members and the audience, and the agora again proved to be an excellent forum to promote the exchange of ideas and opinions.

The last day of the esss was opened by Isidro F. Aguillo (IPP-CSIC, Spain). His overview of Google Scholar with a special focus on the metrics characteristics of this data source perfectly followed the focus topic discussed on Thursday and was additionally enriched by a current case study. Last, but not least, Éric Archambault (Science-Metrix, Canada) finally grabbed the audience’s attention by addressing the intricacies of the Open Access (OA) publishing concept and the potential relevance and consequences for bibliometric analysis. His presentation examined the results of recent studies assessing the free availability of scholarly publications including best practice recommendations for institutional repository management.

This year’s esss was concluded with a dedicated hands-on session, where the participants were asked to present their results to the audience and provide feedback about achievements, challenges and problems. The esss staff who permanently supported the group works, namely Wolfgang Glänzel, Bart Thijs, Pei Shan Chi and Sarah Heeffer (KU Leuven), Sybille Hinze and Stephan Gauch (DZHW), Juan Gorraiz (University of Vienna) and Nicola De Bellis (Medical Library, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy) as well as Daniel Torres-Salinas and Nicolás Robinson-Garcia (Universidad de Granada) were deeply impressed with the high quality of some presentations that strikingly illustrated the great dedication of the attendees.

Finally, the organisers were happy to answer any remaining open questions after a demanding week before officially closing the event in the late afternoon.

esss 2016 was once again an international event beyond European borders with participants from 21 countries from four continents (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iran, Israel, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA).

The overall feedback gained from personal encounters and conversations, mail contacts as well as from the evaluation of an online participants survey, was very positive and inspiring. Besides the overwhelming comments regarding Granada as an outstanding venue, the friendly atmosphere throughout the whole course and the high quality of all lectures made the esss 2016 a great experience for attendees, lectures and staff likewise.

Apart from the official programme the social events were quite some additional highlights: The Alhambra Night visit left the visitors deeply impressed with this unique Moorish palace and UNESCO World Heritage. Moreover, we have experienced real Spanish hospitality at the restaurant La Chumbera, located at Sacromonte, a legend-
ary hill with exotic country houses and gardens, where the esss Gala Dinner took place. This special evening with the dining space set up on a patio overlooking the Alhambra as the sun set, ended with a fascinating private flamenco show and an unforgettable walk through the night life of Granada.

The esss organisers are therefore encouraged to maintain and continuously improve this learning opportunity, which seems to be high in demand with no signs of fatigue even after seven years.

The esss steering committee is already looking forward to next year’s event, which will be held at the Humboldt University Berlin, Germany, September 17-22. Again participants can expect a well-established mix of theory and hands-on training, which obviously results in this proven and tested learning experience.

As usual further announcements will be made via the esss website (www.sciencetometrics-school.eu) and via the esss mailing list (to register please send an informal email to office@scientometrics-school.eu).

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REFERENCES


