



ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY IN POZNAŃ

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# Rare disciplines

REPORT

To the Secretary of The French Higher Education and Research

Łódź, 9 października 2015 r.

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## Rare disciplines

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### Definition retained for rare disciplines

- **disciplines are rare because they are changing or emerging (or ascending)** and should be developed (e.g. web journalism or the emerging specialities in life sciences where pushing the boundaries of knowledge often means adopting an approach taken from a different discipline, particularly through encouraging inter- and transdisciplinarity) as a source of innovation.
  - disciplines which are non-ascendant or threatened with extinction but **inherently rare, with few lecturer-researchers and low student numbers**, but with a complete degree-master-doctorate programme in 4 or 5 different institutions. They should not be allowed to disappear as they constitute an entire branch of knowledge and culture (e.g. Egyptology, modern Greek or metallurgy or crystallography);
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- **the rare disciplines under threat with a small reserve of lecturer-researchers and/or low student numbers**, which potentially require support either at European or national level, or at a particular institution or site. Their disappearance could be disastrous from a scientific, cultural, economic and social point of view, e.g. ancient studies but also certain foreign languages, e.g. Portuguese, which cannot be taught everywhere due to a lack of students. Another example: the entire raw materials sector (mines, quarries, the production of cement and glass). Over the last thirty years there has been a progressive reduction in investment in industry and in the processing of mineral resources. This has led to the disappearance of the related educational and training programmes (geosciences).
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The DGRH carried out a demographic study by examining those CNU sections where the **overall number of lecturer-researchers did not exceed 400**. The choice of 400 as the threshold for lecturer-researchers is of course open to debate, but it seemed pertinent given the decision to use the CNU sections as the observation matrix. Of the 56 sections, 17 fell into this category, these were: 03 (history of law and institutions), 04 (political science), 08 (ancient languages and literature), 10 (comparative literature), 13 (Slavic languages and literature), 15 (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Hebrew languages and literatures and other linguistic fields), 20 (biological anthropology, ethnology, prehistory), 24 (spatial planning, urban planning), 29 (elementary constituents), 34 (astronomy, astrophysics), 36 (solid Earth), 37 (meteorology, physical oceanography and environmental physics), 69 (neuroscience), 72 (epistemology, history of science and technology), 73 (regional languages and cultures), 76 (Catholic theology), 77 (Protestant theology).

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### Creation of the observatory and the steering committee

**The work of the observatory steering committee would be to alert, recommend and communicate.** This would be based, on the one hand, on observations, and on the other, on the collection and analysis of information concerning scientific, economic and cultural needs at both French and European levels.

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