

The Research Unit evaluation report

Code of the RU: JU_FF_61

Name of the panel: History and Archaeology – Panel 6.1

Introduction

Short description of the RU (field focus, positioning in the EvU, competitive positioning nationally and internationally, research strategy) **200 to 400 words**

The RU - founded in 2006 - is a recent institution with solid experience of research in some specific fields due to the richness of the archival funds in the region, and special support on the regional and national levels. Historical research has a very good level, recognized in Czech Republic's scientific landscape as well as increasingly also abroad. The rather narrow research foci are the strength and the weakness of the RU in the same time. The FF-JU is a medium sized RU with a strong emphasis on early modern history which is integrated in the European scientific community. In this field, it proved to be a trans-border player following clear strategies of implementing theoretical and conceptual currents in humanities (a) into curriculum-building and (b) into research based on local, regional and to a rising degree, international material (sources, topics). The strong emphasis on editing sources helps to uphold the positivist tradition in Czech historiography and is completed by a publication strategy that enhances international exchange – a strategy which brings the history of the Czech lands to the attention abroad.

The research strategy of the RU successfully combines (1) strong aspects of the AVCR (editions, sources, rigour) with (2) convincing international orientation and conceptual innovation, as well as (3) a European perspective and cooperation with (4) a consistent scientific, international and popular promotion (publication-strategy) of research results. This is a big success in the frame of a new and rather small university.

Results of the panel evaluation

Overview of the quality levels reached by the RU:

Criterion number	Quality criteria	Quality level reached
I	Research environment	B
II	Membership of the national and global research community	B
III	Scientific research excellence	B
IV	Overall research performance	B
V	Societal relevance	B

Criterion I Research environment

Please highlight the final score as shown below

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	The RU is a Global Leader In terms of the quality of the research strategy and management, the Unit's research environment is fully comparable to that of global leaders in the field. It can attract the highest quality international researchers
B	Very good	The RU is a Strong International Player The Unit is able to provide an internationally comparable excellent research environment to high-level international researchers in the given field
C	Good level	The RU is a Strong National Player The Unit is able to provide a research environment that is comparable with internationally recognised research organisations in the field
D	Adequate	The RU is a Satisfactory National Player The Unit's research environment is still evolving to achieve a level that is expected in the international research community of a respected research organisation in the field
E	Poor	The RU is a Poor National Player The Unit is still only in the process of creating an internationally comparable research environment
Unclassified		N/A

In this criterion, 'global', 'international' and 'national' refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the geographical scope of the strategy or management activities

Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The development strategies of the RU are clearly outlined. The research environment is determined by a consistent system of internal evaluation, monitoring of both pedagogical and scientific activities (use of personal bibliography database, linked to RIV database) is striking. Career development is supported via inviting applications for postdoc positions, or through internal grants (help for publication). The RU got the accreditation for the implementation of habilitation or professorship (by the National Commission of Accreditation) in Czech History and Czech Literature. Significant assistance provided by the RU (1) in elaborating scientific projects to be submitted to Grant institutions, (2) in promoting PhD program (internal science foundation).

For being a leader (score A), more international staff and international fellowships (ivy-league or centre for advanced-studies-like) would be necessary. The international reputation of many members in the staff is well consolidated as much for fundamental research, for originality and for internationality. This makes the RU a research environment with high potential. For early modern history, it is by now one of the best places to be and to cooperate with in Europe.

Criterion II Membership of the national and global research community

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	The RU is a Global Leader The Unit participates and is recognised in excellent international networks involving global leaders in the field.
B	Very good	The RU is a Strong International Player The Unit participates and is recognised in international networks in the field.
C	Good level	The RU is a Strong National Player The Unit participates and is recognised in excellent national networks involving national leaders in the field.
D	Adequate	The RU is a Satisfactory National Player The Unit participates and is recognised in national networks in the field.
E	Poor	The RU is a Poor National Player The Unit has little to no substantive collaboration.
Unclassified		N/A

Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The provided overview of current collaboration offers an impressive picture of the insertion of the RU in the national research community. Collaboration concerns mostly other universities (with joint publications as results) as well archives (in Prague). Various awards testify the recognition of the RU at the national level. Internationally members of the RU collaborate with European (Germany, Italy) and non-European (Japan) universities in the fields of history and archaeology. Although several members of the RU's staff were active as visiting researchers abroad for two or more months (in Germany, Italy or UK) no foreign researcher could have been attracted to Ceske Budejovice for a longer stay.

Researchers of the RU are (1) present in editorial boards of numerous scientific journals (mostly Czech, but not only), hold (2) prestigious positions in significant editorial boards and organize (3) important international conferences. For this purpose the RU has a long-term-strategy of internationalization (including the attempt to make its research accessible to people who do not read Czech). For being a global leader, the RU needs attract international staff and more long-term-fellowships. The potential is there.

Criterion III Scientific research excellence

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	The RU is a Global Leader In terms of <u>originality, significance and rigour</u> , the Unit's research output is comparable with outstanding work internationally in the field. The research possesses the requisite quality to meet the highest international standards of excellence. Work at this level can be a key international reference point in the field. The RU output profile is comparable to the one of the best international research organisations in the field.
B	Very good	The RU is a Strong International Player In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output is comparable with excellent work internationally. The research nonetheless does not yet meet the highest standards of excellence. Work at this level can arouse serious interest in the international academic community. The RU output profile is comparable to the one of very good international research organisations in the field.
C	Good level	The RU is a Good International Player In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output is comparable with the best work internationally. The research possesses the requisite quality to meet high international standards. Internationally recognized publishers or journals could publish work of this level. The RU output profile is comparable to the one of good international research organisations in the field.
D	Adequate	The RU is a Good National Player with Some International Recognition In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output is comparable with good work internationally. The research possesses the requisite quality to meet international standards only to a certain extent. The RU output profile is comparable to the one of modest international research organisations in the field.
E	Poor	The RU is a Poor National Player In terms of originality, significance and rigour, the Unit's research output falls below the international quality standards. The RU output profile is not comparable to the one of modest international research organisations in the field.
Unclassified		N/A

In this criterion, 'Global', 'International' and 'National' refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the geographical scope of the research outputs and/or publication channels.

Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The seven products presented as proof of the RU's excellence (out of 45 books presented in the complete list) address important topics. Publishing activity of the RU-members can be considered as comparable with the international standard in respect to (1) Originality: the RU is quick to absorb the latest important new developments in the field of early modern history, successful in implementing innovation in the curriculum and promotion of junior staff and very apt in financing and processing research-results based on local and regional sources as well as sources and topics which require research in other European countries; (2) Significance: when it comes to discuss innovation, the RU is one of the first places in the Czech Republic many European historians (who are interested in international exchange) are interested in (for which the series *Opera Historica* helped a lot); (3) Rigour: the RU upholds high standards of its publications, and it devotes some of its resources on important editions of sources (Documenta-Series) which sets high scientific standards.

Criterion IV Overall research performance

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	The RU is a Global Leader In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is internationally excellent, i.e. at the level of the best international research organisations in the field.
B	Very good	The RU is a Strong International Player In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is optimal, i.e. at the level of very good international research organisations in the field.
C	Good level	The RU is a Strong National Player In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is at a good standard.
D	Adequate	The RU is a Satisfactory National Player In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is at an acceptable standard.
E	Poor	The RU is a Poor National Player In terms of research output and competitiveness, the Unit's overall research performance is poor.
Unclassified		N/A

In this criterion, 'global', 'international' and 'national' refer to quality standards. They do not refer to the geographical scope of the research activities.

Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The RU has maintained a steady pace in the publications, the research performance is very good. The number of publications and their quality remained stable over the years, as well as the ability to attract national funds (especially from GACR). The RU was not (yet) able to gain European projects. The output is remarkable, as well as for senior and junior researchers. Some of the publications are of very high importance (Ryantová), many are fundamental (editions) or of significance due to the combination of primary archive research with latest conceptual innovations (Buzek et al.), others put Czech history into a European perspective (Cerman). A clear strategy of international promotion of research activities helps a lot, as show titles in foreign languages (Spanish, German) as well as translations.

Impressive results in the field of early modern history approve the strong position of the RU. Very good results are provided also in archaeology (environmental archaeology and archaeology of mezzo-lithicum. In overall respect and absolute figures the topical focus makes the RU more relevant on national level, than on international level.

Criterion V Societal relevance

Quality level	Definition	Description
A	Outstanding	Work in the RU has a Very High Potential for Societal Impacts In terms of <u>reach and significance</u> , the RU is an important driver of societal development. The RU's collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public) stand out in terms of their extensive and dynamic nature.
B	Very good	Work in the RU has a High Potential for Societal Impacts In terms of reach and significance, the RU strongly contributes to societal development. The RU's collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public) are at a very high level.
C	Good level	Work in the RU has a Good Potential for Societal Impacts In terms of reach and significance, the RU contributes well to societal development. The RU's collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public) are at a good level.
D	Adequate	Work in the RU has a Low Potential for Societal Impacts In terms of reach and significance, the RU contributes to societal development. The RU has some collaborations and/or interactions with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public).
E	Poor	Work in the RU has Little to No Potential for Societal Impacts In terms of reach and significance, the RU makes little to no contributions to societal development. The RU does not collaborate and/or interact with non-academics (i.e. business, policy-makers, the public).
Unclassified		N/A

'Societal' impacts refer to impacts on the economy and social welfare, the latter including health, environment, culture, social inclusion, education and gender.

Explanatory text for the quality level – 100 to 200 words

The self-report mentions collaborations with museums, archives, libraries in the field of pedagogy and formation. This kind of contacts with the society is based on mutual interest or pedagogical relations rather than on contractual relations. Besides that the societal relevance of historical studies of the RU is given by the research topics (transnational and trans-border history of local/regional nobility) to be used even in the spheres of regional politics. Part of the publication strategy of the RU is to promote science for scientists (editions, studies), as well as for the larger public (for instance 10x10 osobnosti, biographies, collective popular versions of studies on popular topics). Nonetheless Czech history is put into perspective, international, European, cultural, and political.

Conclusions and recommendations

Target: 100 to 200 words

Research activities of the RU have a strong international dimension. Moreover, members of the RU actively participate in the national scientific research, thanks also to the support of projects of excellence provided by the university itself through its internal grant system. It should be also appreciated the involvement of young scientists in these activities.

A weakness seems to be detected in the low ability to attract foreign students and researchers, but the room for improvement in this field seems to be good due to the possible participation in European programs. The RU is very competitive and enables junior researchers to go for national and international careers.

We recommend to pay attention (1) to the opening gender-gap among PhD-students and (2) to career-options of the assistant-professors (being a hub vs. danger of stagnation).

It needs to be stressed that the RU despite its relative short existence is (1) offering bi-lingual doctoral programs in several fields and (2) very successful in GACR competition. 12 standards projects and 2 postdoc projects founded by the Agency are a higher average than in other institutions, despite a lower ratio of researchers.

Concerning international cooperation we recommend to complete the process of accreditations of study programmes (2015 implementation of Department of Cultural studies – BA, MA, doctoral study programme).