

# Finding Bioethical Literature

## - Databases and Databiases



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- 1. Ethical Pluralism (in the Western World)**
- 2. Example Stem Cell Research**
- 3. Literature Databases and their -biases**
- 4. Eurethnet**

# Talking about ethics...

## Descriptive Ethics

- Analysis of contemporary or historical ethical debates

## Normative Ethics

- Moral Values

## Meta-Ethics

- Elements and forms of moral statements

## Bioethics

- Applied Ethics concerning Life-Sciences

# On what basis do we make moral decisions?

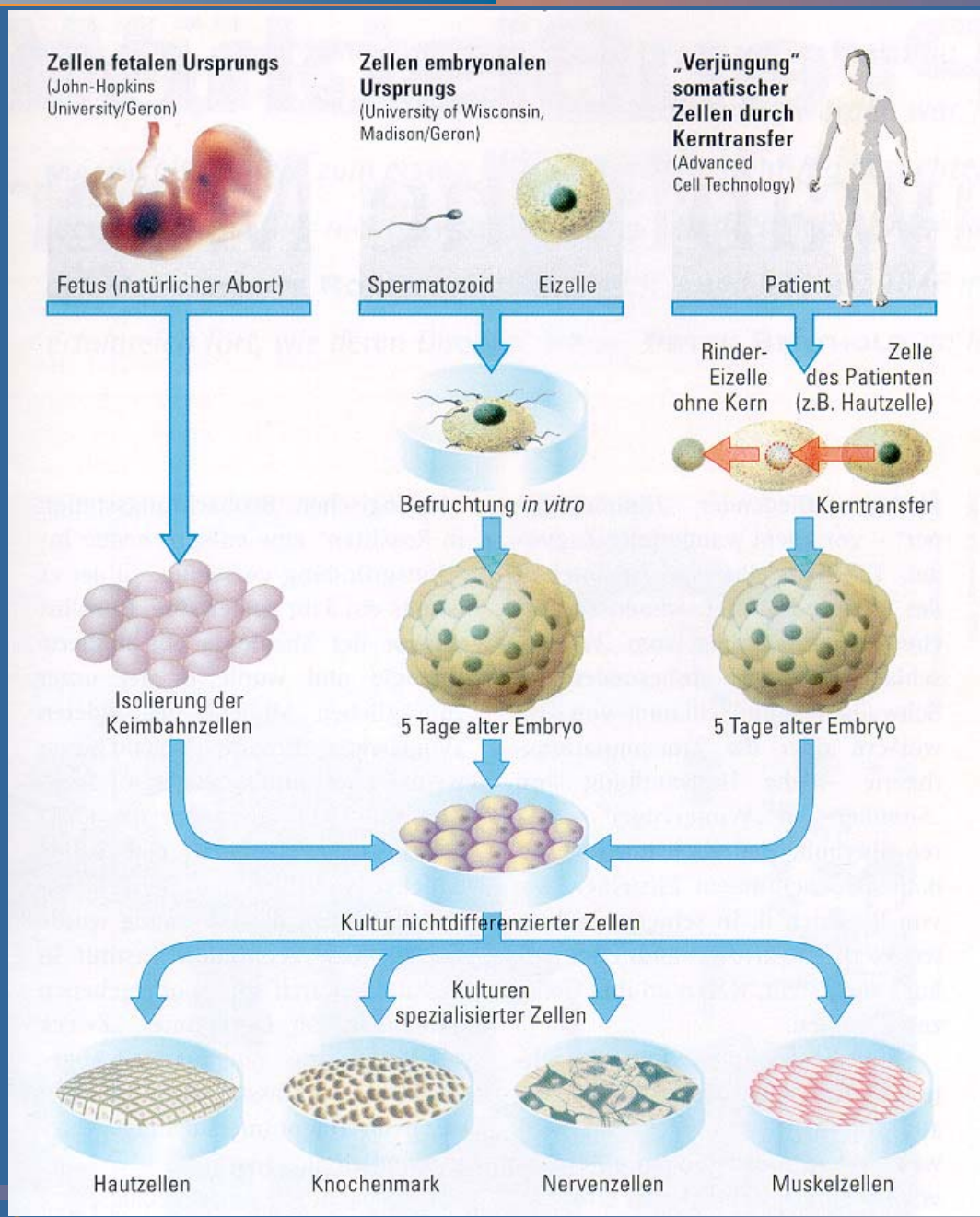
## Deontological

- “Do what the Bible tells you” Divine Command Theories
- “Do the right thing” The Ethics of Duty
- “... certain unalienable Rights” The Ethics of Rights
- “Daddy, that’s not fair” The Ethics of Justice
- “Be a good person” Virtue Ethics

## Teleological

- “Make the world a better place” Utilitarianism
- “Watch out for #1” Ethical Egoism

(Lawrence Hinman 2002)



## Problems

- Potential Human Beings
- Continual Development
- Human Dignity?
- „Living Beings“

# Cultural Differences concerning Stem Cell Research

## Christian Religion(s)

### Catholic Church:

Embryo as Human Being from the moment of conception

### Protestants:

Differing views

(e.g. Presbyterians pro research,  
Southern Baptist Convention contra research)

## Judaism:

Embryo as potential Human Being,  
Soul 40 days after conception

## Islamism

Soul 40 days after conception

## Agnosticism

Differing Opinions, Question of Human Dignity, Instrumentalisation  
etc.

**Table 1. Stem cell derivation and research – European regulatory situation**

Country or jurisdiction	Embryonic stem cells				Adult stem cells research seen as relevant or equivalent alternative to embryonic stem cell research
	research allowed on stem cell lines already derived	research permitted using spare embryos	creation for research permitted	creation for research permitted using cell nuclear replacement	
Oviedo Convention of the Council of Europe	Yes	Yes	No	No	N/A
European Union	Yes	Yes, but moratorium on funding until end of 2003	Yes, but moratorium on funding until end of 2003	?	?
USA <sup>a</sup>	Yes, if on specified list of stem cell lines	Yes, but not federally funded or in federally funded institutions	Yes, but not federally funded or in federally funded institutions	Yes, but not federally funded or in federally funded institutions	Yes
Austria <sup>b</sup>	Yes	No	No	No	?
Belgium <sup>b</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes, but only if scientifically necessary	Yes	?
Denmark <sup>c, d, e</sup>	Yes	No	No	No	No
Finland <sup>c, d, e</sup>	Yes	Yes	No	No	?
France <sup>a</sup>	Yes	No	No	No	?
Germany	Yes, if stem cell line derived before January 2002	No	No	No	Yes
Greece <sup>c, d, e</sup>	Yes	Yes	No	No	?
Ireland <sup>a</sup>	Yes, in theory	No	No	No	Yes
Italy <sup>a, b</sup>	No regulation				
The Netherlands <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	No, 5-year moratorium (can be lifted earlier)	No, 5-year moratorium (can be lifted earlier)	No
Portugal <sup>a</sup>	No regulation, but has ratified the Oviedo Convention				
Spain <sup>c, d, e</sup>	Yes	No, not unless embryo is non-viable	No	No	?
Sweden <sup>c, d, e</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
United Kingdom <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes, but only if scientifically necessary	Yes	No

(Soren Holm 2004)



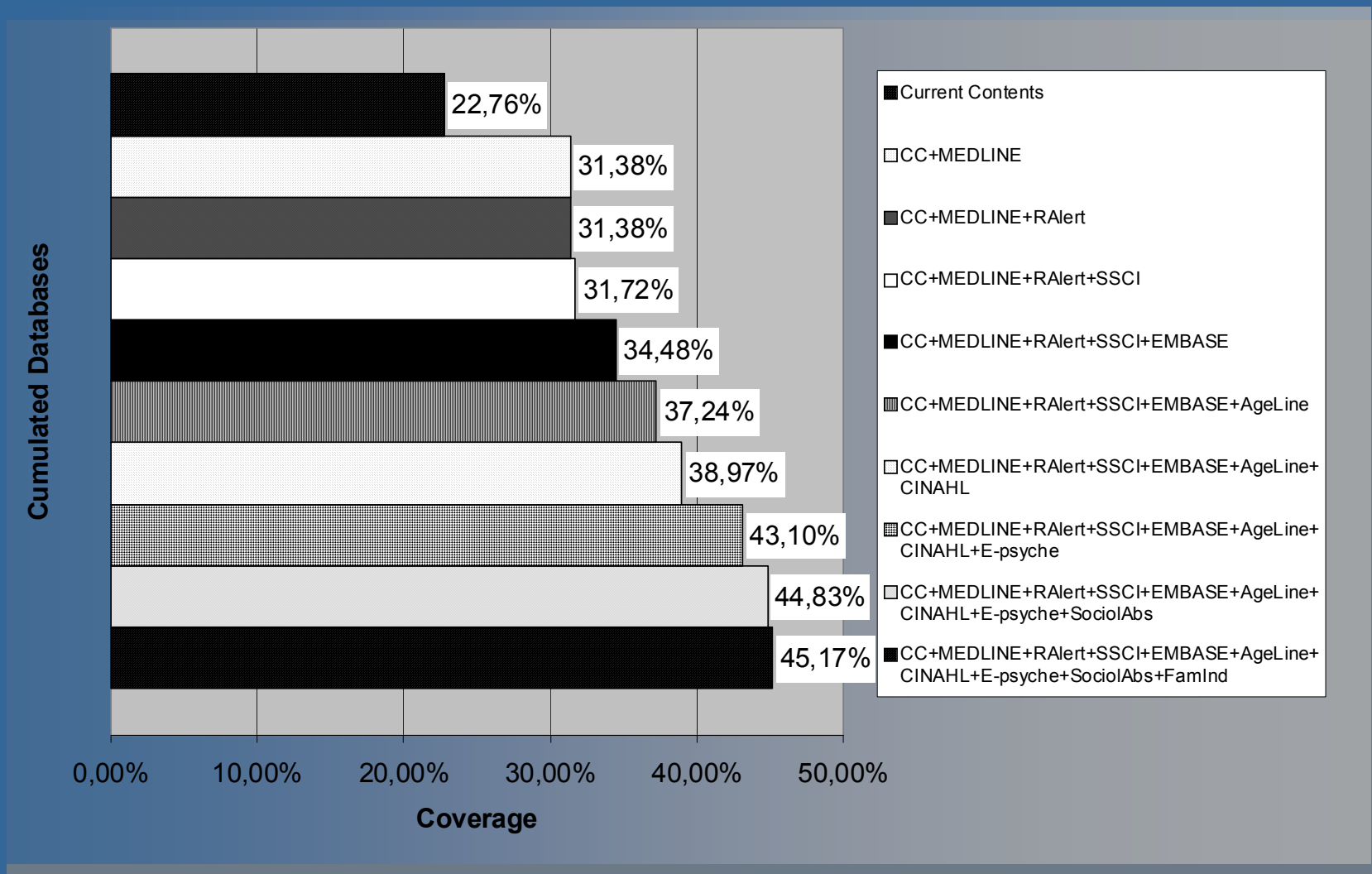
## Finding bioethical literature in electronic bibliographies

- **which databases index how much bioethical literature**
- **do these databases show regional or language preferences (and thus an ethical bias)**

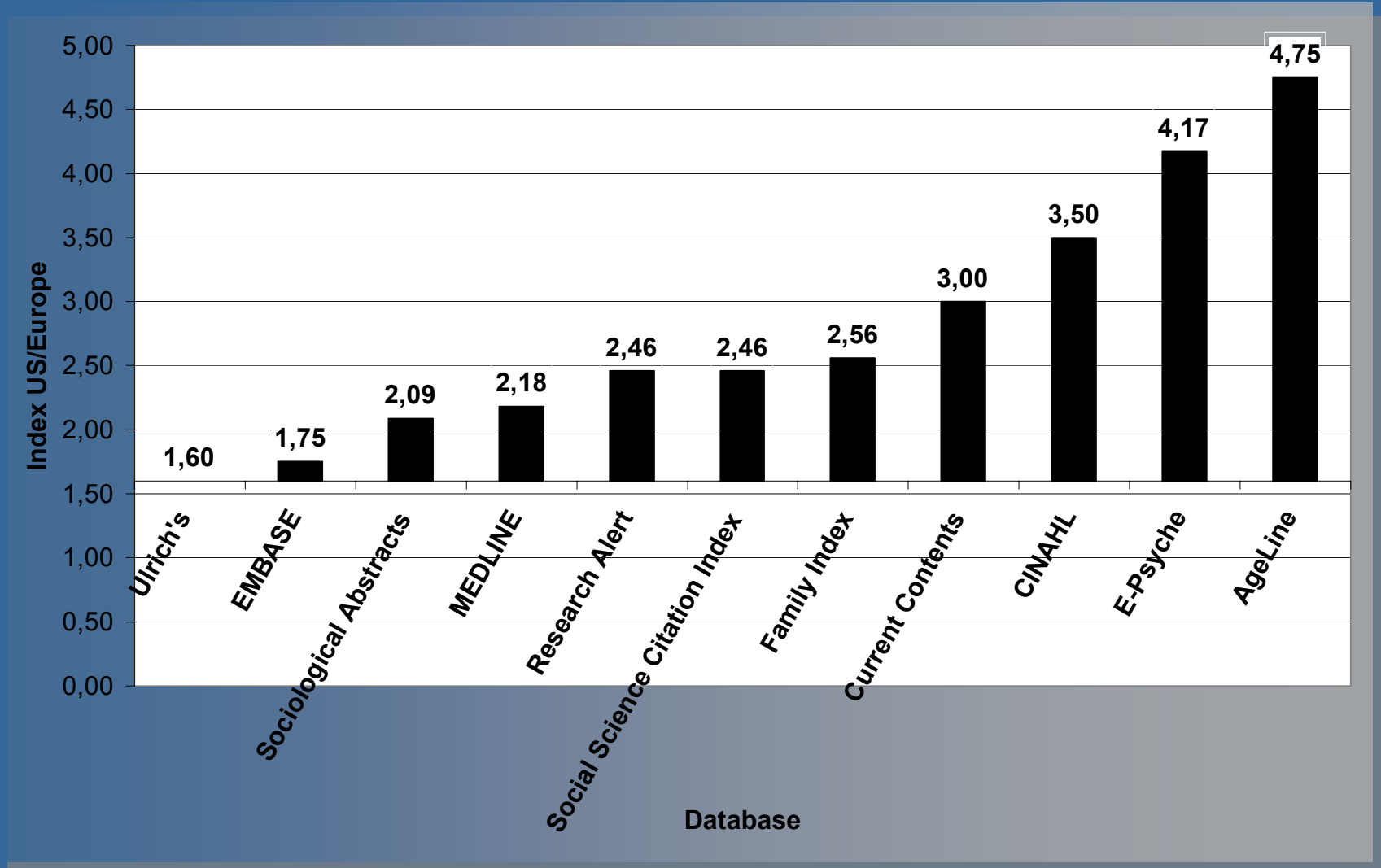
## Top „Abstracting and Indexing Services” collecting at least 15 periodicals dealing with medical ethical issues

1. Current Contents (22.8%) (<http://www.isinet.com>)
2. MEDLINE (22.1%) (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov>)
3. Research Alert (18.6%) (<http://www.isinet.com>)
4. Social Science Citation Index (18.6%) (<http://www.isinet.com>)
5. EMBASE (17.6%) (<http://www.excerptamedica.com>)
6. AgeLine (17.2%) (<http://research.aarp.org/ageline/home.html>)
7. CINAHL (14.5%) (<http://www.cinahl.com/>)
8. E-psyche (13.5%) (<http://www.e-psyche.net>)
9. Sociological Abstracts (13.1%) (<http://www.csa.com>)
10. Family Index (12.4%) (<http://www.famindx.com>).

# Coverage of international medical ethical journals by several databases in combination



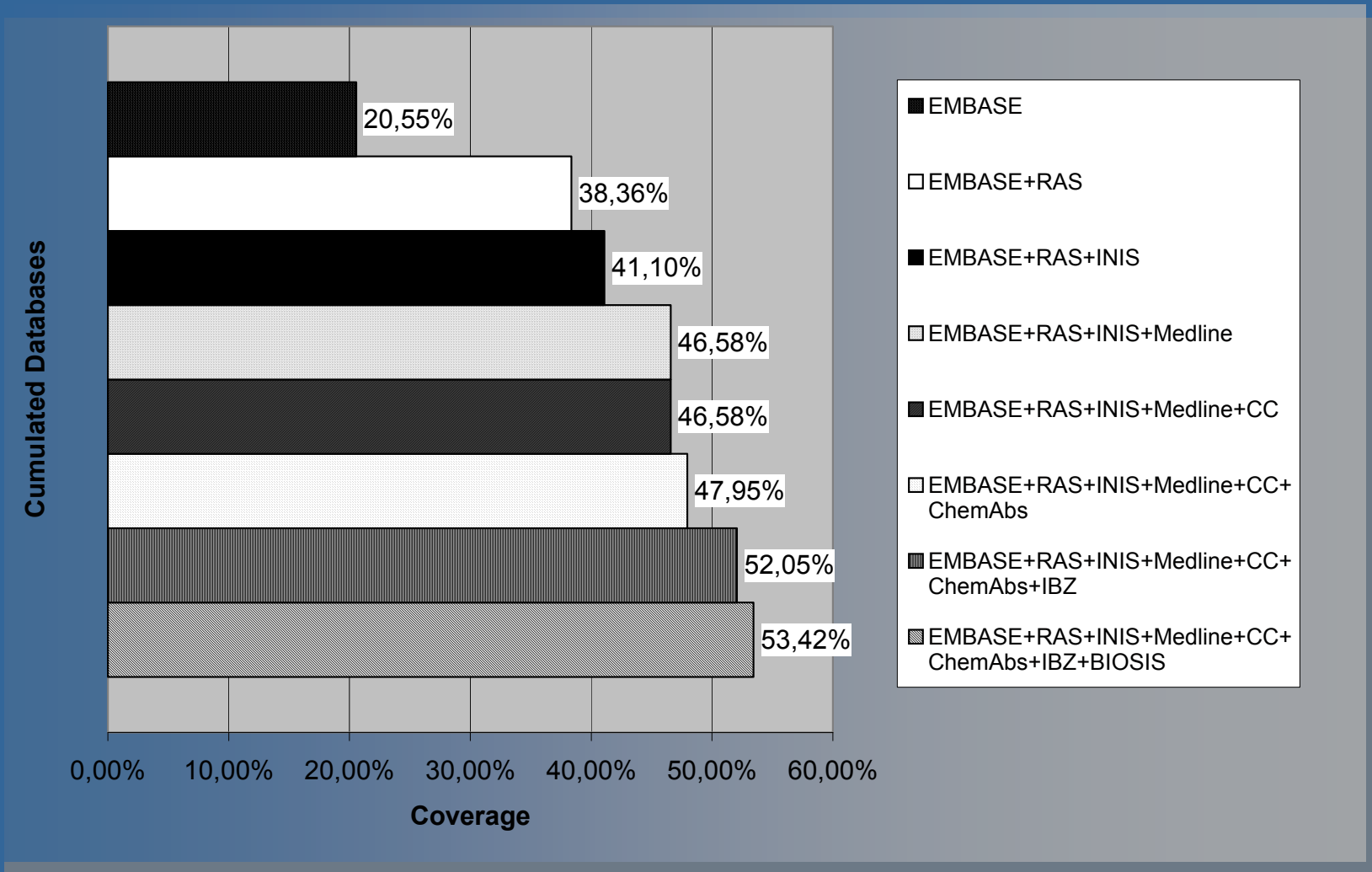
# Regional Preferences



## Top „Abstracting and Indexing Services” indexing European journals dealing with medical ethics

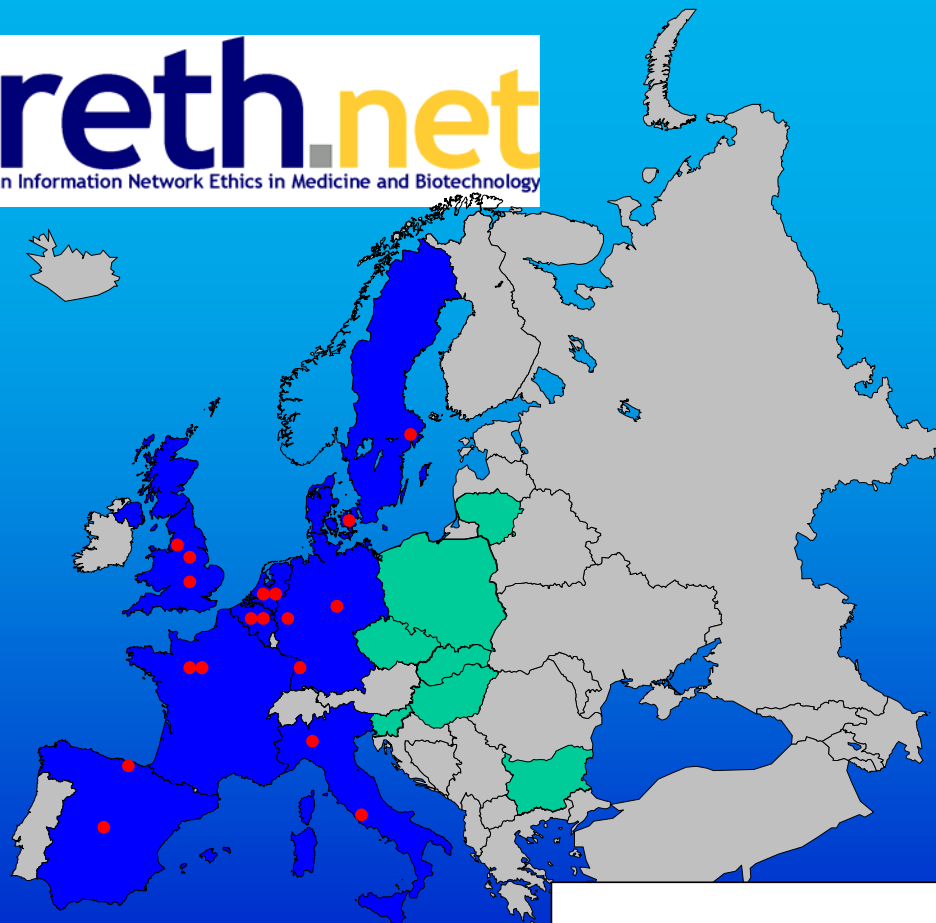
1. EMBASE (N=15/ 20.6%) (<http://www.excerptamedica.com>)
2. Russian Academy of Sciences Bibliographies (RAS) (N=14/ 19.2%) (<http://www.rlg.org/cit-ras.html>)
3. I N I S Atomindex (N=13/ 17.8%) (<http://www.iaea.org/inis/inisdb.htm>)
4. MEDLINE (N=13/ 17.8%) (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov>)
5. Current Contents (CC) (N=10/ 13.7%) (<http://www.isinet.com>)
6. Chemical Abstracts (ChemAbs) (N=10/ 13.7%) (<http://www.cas.org/>)
7. I B Z Internationale Bibliographie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Zeitschriftenliteratur (N=10/ 13.7%) (<http://www.saur.de/dietrich/>)
8. BIOSIS (N=9/ 12.3%) (<http://www.biosis.org/>).

# European medical ethics core journal coverage of several databases in combination



# Improving information systems:

## EURETHNET



**26 partners**  
from 16 countries





