Checklist

Selecting databases

When you select the databases you will use to search for literature for your literature review, take a look at:

- The list of journals covered - you may already know some important journals within your field: are they covered in the database? Search for headers like Journal list, Browse Sources, View title list, etc.
  - TIP: You can also do the reverse: most scholarly journals provide abstracting and indexing information – this gives you information about important databases in a field. See for example Women’s Studies International Forum and The Journal of Creative Behavior.

- How to get access to the database: does the EUR have a license? You can check the alphabetical list of databases. Most university libraries offer such an overview on their website. If you would like to access a database in another university library, please contact that library in advance to discuss the options and requirements.

- The types of publication in the database: some databases include more than just academic journals, they also cover trade publications, working papers, books, newspapers, etc. When the database offers a good filter to limit to or exclude certain publication types, this doesn’t have to be a problem!
  - Some databases exclude certain publication types. For example, Scopus doesn’t include book reviews.

- The coverage in time: when did the database start? Is that long enough for your topic?

- The update schedule: how often are new publications added to the database? How up-to-date is the content?

- Can you create a personal account or register yourself to save searches or records and create alerts?

- The search options: is there a thesaurus? Is there an advanced search option? Which search fields are available? When there is a basic search option – which fields are searched by default?

- The export options: how can you export the metadata of the articles found to a reference manager, like RefWorks or Mendeley? Can you export of list of references or do you have to do this title-by-title? Check for example Exporting references to RefWorks (based on databases the EUR has access to).

- The options to locate the full text of articles. Most databases will use the link resolver of the EUR to link you to the full text.

We advise you to start with a scoping search in the databases you selected, to get an overview of the content and the functionalities of the database.