OPEN ACCESS IN LTHUANIA

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Open Access principles and regulations in Lithuania

The main outline for the policy concerning Open Access (OA) is set up in the Law on Higher Education and Research adopted on 30 April 2009[1]. One of the articles from this document states that "in order to ensure the quality of research conducted with funds of the state budget, the transparency of the use of funds of the state budget, to enhance the scientific progress, the results of all research works carried out in state higher education and research institutions must be communicated to the public (in the Internet or in any other way), to the extent this kind of communication is in compliance with the legal acts regulating the protection of intellectual property, commercial or state and official secrets". However, a coherent policy with clearly stated concrete objectives and plans for their implementation still does not exist and there is no OA mandate in Lithuania.

The Ministry of Education and Science is seeking to speed up these processes. It was suggested that the Research Council of Lithuania (RCL) should become a coordinating body concerning OA issues. The RCL agreed to take on this mission at the end of 2013. Concrete policies and implementation plans are expected to be developed in the coming few years. An important input for this issue is expected from the FP7 project PASTEUR4OA (Open Access Policy Alignment Strategies for European Union Research) that aims to support the European Commission's Recommendation to Member States of July 2012 that they develop and implement policies to ensure OA to all outputs from publicly-funded research. This PASTEUR4OA project started in February 2014, and the RCL is a project partner.

In 2012 the RCL started to support Lithuanian researchers in their efforts to publish their research papers in high-level research magazines or research books. Payments for OA are eligible, but the main criteria for the publications is high quality. By allocating this support the RCL seeks to promote the development of Lithuanian science and its global visibility. Furthermore, this support will ensure Lithuanian researchers that the financial capacities of the researcher or of the institution at which she or he is working will not affect the dissemination of the achievements in the area of research. However, this is not the main funding activity of the RCL. Since 2012 the total financial allocation for this activity is below 50 thous. Eur. Nevertheless, the payments for OA publications produced during the project duration are eligible costs in the research projects funded by the RCL.

One of the main supporters of Open Access initiatives in Lithuania has been the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LMBA) which represens 52 academic and research libraries. Since 2005 LMBA has organized various OA related activities. Most of these events,[2] together with video promotional material on OA,[3] were organized with the support of EIFL (Electronic information for Libraries)[4]. LMBA organized the international conference "Opening the Scientific Knowledge" in 2011. LMBA and its partners the Kaunas University of Technology, the Vilnius University, the Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers and the Association of Lithuanian Serials implemented a number of projects supported by EIFL

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[1] The Law on Higher Education and Research, 2009 [viewed 17 October 2014]. Available from:
http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=438419

[2] Open access events. *Lithuanian Research Libraries Consortium* [viewed 24 October 2014]. Available from:
http://www.lmba.lt/en/open-access/events
[3] Video on OA. *Lithuanian Research Libraries Consortium* [viewed 24 October 2014]. Available from:
bbhttp://www.lmba.lt/en/open-access/video
[4] EIFL [viewed 24 October 2014]. Available from:
http://www.eifl.net/

open access grants: "Promoting Open Access in Lithuania"[5] in 2011, "Promoting open access via implementing Open Journal System"[6] in 2011 and "Open Access from the Perspective of Young Researchers"[7] in 2012.

An important role in the stakeholder dialogues is played by the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO which invited stakeholders to focus on this area of expertise. The first meeting of various institutions linked to the OA to scientific information representatives was held in January 2013. The participants expressed a need to form a working group constituted from various authorities and stakeholders that could summarize the situation in Lithuania and provide suggestions for further development. This kind of group was formed by the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO in February 2013. The group was composed of the representatives of LMBA, the RCL, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, the Vilnius University library, the Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers, the Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre (MOSTA), and the Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology (MITA). The aim of the group was to mobilise the interested parties, to analyse the situation of OA in the country and to provide possible solutions for the authorities. The group had two meetings in 2013 and shared information throughout the year. Based on the situation summarised by this group, the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO approached the Ministry of Education and Science suggesting to appoint a coordinating institution for the OA issues.

Open Access infrastructure in Lithuania

The Lithuanian thesis and dissertation (ETD) database

was started on the initiative of the joint activities of the Lithuanian higher education institutions. An agreement for this project between the Kaunas University of Technology and UNESCO was signed in 2003. The project was implemented by Kaunas University of Technology together with 13 Lithuanian state universities and Riga Technical University. Database development regulations were approved by the Ministry of Education and Science in 2004. The Lithuanian ETD Information System became a part of the national repository of the Lithuanian Academic e-Library (eLABa) in 2006.

The Electronic Academic Library of Lithuania (eLABa) as the national OA repository of the Ministry of Education and Science and all academic institutions was launched in 2006. Since 2010 eLABa was maintained and developed, the Consortium of the Lithuanian Academic Libraries for the Maintenance and Development of an Information Infrastructure for Scientific and Studies. eLABa stores 42,7 thousands documents of all types (more than 33 000 ETD documents, 300 books, 8 100 journal articles and others) from 6 collections.

Since 2006 the RCL in cooperation with Lithuanian educational institutions and libraries manages the database *Lituanistika*[8] which aims to accumulate and disseminate certified, high-quality information about research in Lithuanian studies in Lithuania and in the world. The *Lituanistika* database is created according to the projects supported by the European Structural Funds. This database is planned to be used and developed in the period 2015–2020.

6 institutional repositories which serve the needs of specific institutions are registered in the OpenDOAR catalogue:

- ISM Science Box, http://archive.ism.lt/
- Kauno Kolegija Repository, https://dspace.kauko.lt/
- LUHS eDoc Institutional Repository, http://eknygos.lsmuni.lt/erepository/

5 TAUTKEVICIENE, G. Promoting Open Access in Lithuania: case study, 2012 [viewed 24 October 2014]. Available from: http://www.eifl.net/system/files/201202/oa-case-studylithuania-oaadvocacy-final.pdf

6 DAGIENE, E. Promoting open access via implementing Open Journal System: case study, 2012. [viewed 24 October 2014]. Available from: http://www.eifl.net/system/files/201202/oa-case-study-lithuania-oa-ojspublishing-final.pdf

7 TAUTKEVICIENE, G. Open Access from the Perspective of Young Researchers, 2013 [viewed 24 October 2014]. Available from: http://www.eifl.net/system/files/201301/lithuania-oa-case-study-final.pdf

8 Database *Lituanistika* [viewed 17 October 2014]. Available from: http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/home.html

- Mykolas Romeris University Institutional Repository, https://repository.mruni.eu/
- VGTU Repository http://dspace.vgtu.lt/
- Vytautas Magnus University Institutional Repository, http://etalpykla.vdu.lt/

In addition, 33 journals published in Lithuania were registered in the DOAJ catalogue in 2014.

Open Access to research data

The Lithuanian Data Archive for the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) LIDA[9] was established in 2006 by the Policy and Public Administration Institute at Kaunas University of Technology in partnership with Vilnius University, the Institute for Social Research, the Ministry of Education and Science. LiDA is a social science data service that allows users to search, browse, analyse, and download social science survey data. LiDA catalogues contain social survey data, historical statistics and data about the Lithuanian political system. All metadata are bilingually documented in English and Lithuanian. LiDA is a national member of ICPSR. LiDA coordinates international data collection initiatives in Lithuania, e.g. the European Social Survey (ESS), the European Election Study (EES) and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP).

The project National Open Access Research Data Archive MIDAS funded by EU Structural Funds was launched in 2012. The purpose of this project is to establish the infrastructure of national research data archives that enables collection and storage of research and empirical data and ensures free, easy and convenient access to the data. 13 institutions of research and higher education and medical institutions participate in this project together with Vilnius University as the leading institution and Vilnius University Hospital Santariskiu Klinikos as project partner. According to the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania MIDAS should be created as an information system for research data. Regulations of MIDAS information system have been approved and it has begun to purchase technical equipment and software development.

Future objectives

Lithuanian authors still lack the motivation to publish their research results – publications and data – in an OA manner. Therefore, more attention should be given to the OA information campaigns both at individual and institutional levels including national policy makers. A positive impact on the development of OA in Lithuania is expected next year with the start of an updated national repository of scientific publications eLABa and with the realisation of the MIDAS project dedicated to the storage of research data.

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[9] LiDA [viewed 17 October 2014]. Available from: http://www.lidata.eu/

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