

OPEN ACCESS IN FINLAND 2014

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Introduction

The present article on the open access situation in Finland is partly a follow-up on the country report for Finland presented in the study *Open access in the Nordic countries from 2007* (Hedlund and Rabow 2007). In this study the focus will be on the present situation regarding the following sectors: national journal publishing, open access repositories, and ongoing projects and policy issues regarding open science and research data.

Journal publishing and impact

A researcher's choice of which journal to publish in, is naturally a decision made by the author or authors in the first place. The decision, however, might be influenced by the publishing practices of the scientific field in question. Also the policy of the university might have a strong impact on publishing pattern as university funding principles and research assessments affect how quality in publishing is perceived.

University funding in Finland was changed as a new funding model was introduced in 2013. In the funding model 13% of the public funding (Ministry of Education and Culture) to universities is distributed on the bases of research publications, number as well as quality (Ilva 2014a). At the same time there was a need to rate and list varying publication channels to match the publishing practices in different scientific fields. A new "JUFO classification"¹ was introduced following the Norwegian model, see also Auranen and Pölonen (2012). Panels consisting of leading scholars did the rating of the publication channels in each scientific field. The publications were listed in three categories, levels 1-3 where level 3 includes top journals in each scientific field. Most journals included

in the publication forum are international publications published abroad. For national publishing an important lobbying result is that about 20 key Finnish language journals were included and classified as level 2 and more than 100 at least on level 1 (Ilva 2014a). In the publication forum the open access aspect was not taken into account.

In Table 2 we can see the growth in number of peer review journals published in Finland comparing the years 2007 and 2014. The language in many of the journals is however English. A notable fact is that the number of journals published in Finland and present in the National JUFO classification is considerably higher than those present in Journal Citation Report (JCR).

Source: Ulrich's				
Year	Total number	online	online OA	JCR
2007	98	39	6	12
2014	156	76	25	11
Source: DOAJ				
2007			20	
2014			40	

Table 2. Number of scientific peer review journals published in Finland, classified according to type (Source: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory and DOAJ)

The JUFO classification will be used as a component in the decisions and negotiations on university funding from the year 2015. As we can see, the important thing for journal publishing in Finland is that the national journals also are included and classified as important in the publication forum.

¹ <http://www.tsv.fi/julkaisufoorumi/english.html?lang=en>

Business models for scholarly journal publishing in Finland

A special case is that most scientific journals published in Finland are published by learned societies within each respective research field. The journals vary a lot in size and budgets but usually they struggle with very small resources for their publishing. In many cases journal subscription is connected to a membership fee. Public funding from the government, distributed by the Federation of Learned Societies on a yearly base, is a central source of income for many of the journals. It is also important to note that the public funding is usually only allowed in order to cover budget deficiencies, so other sources of income are needed.

Comparing the facts above to the country report by Hedlund and Rabow from 2007 very little has changed. It appears that small publishers, especially those that publish in other languages than English, have not been convinced to change their publishing model towards more open access. National learned publishing is seen as important, so the means to ensure sustainable business models for these journals has been discussed in many seminars during the years.

In 2013, as a result of the recommendation of the “Tiedon saatavuus”(Access to Knowledge) project, a small working team was appointed, consisting of Jyrki Ilva from the National library and Johanna Lilja from the Federation of Learned Societies. The task for the team was to prepare a report on the national open access publishing channels and possible business models that could be used.

In their recommendations the working team focus on openness and access. The goal should be to increase the percentage of open access journals from 30% to 50% of the journals that are receiving public funding. As a mean to reach the goal, technical solutions and services should be developed. In practice national journal publishing should be connected to the infrastructure of international publications, for example using DOI identifiers. Visibility of and access to journal articles and long time accessibility should be secured as well as the future of ways to link research data. (Ilva 2014a)

As a basis for a sustainable model for the financing of domestic journals the working team suggests broad national collaboration between the publishing parties and those utilizing the products and services. This means a consortium model where resources that compensate subscription fees are distributed to open access journals that publish without an embargo period. The financing parties in the consortium would be the Ministry of Education and Culture, universities, research institutions and research funders. A three-year pilot period (2015-2017) to test the practices and effects of the proposed consortium solution is recommended.

The freedom to choose which way to go for open access should be granted for the domestic journal publishers. Publishers that aim for an international public could also for example choose the alternative of author-financed article processing charges. The journals are encouraged to allow parallel deposit of articles and to include their copyright policies in the international Sherpa/Romeo database.

Open access repositories

At present there is no comprehensive study on the content of OA repositories in Finland. However, the trend is that self-archiving of articles in repositories is not very popular (Ilva 2014a) even though the repositories have been quite successful in collecting other types of publications as for example masters and doctoral thesis. The mandates that a few universities started to apply have thus not been able to solve the situation. Also the research funders have only recently started to recommend open access publishing in their funding decisions. For example the Academy of Finland strongly recommends open access publishing channels when possible and advise on “green” open access to increase availability.²

Interestingly a recent study by Holopainen, Koskinen & Piipponen (2014) shows that about 50% of the scientific journals published in Finland do not allow self-archiving of articles. The same study also reveals that most of the journals apply an embargo period of

² : <http://www.aka.fi/en-GB/A/Funding-and-guidance/How-to-apply/Guidelines/Publishing-open-access-and-making-data-available/>

about 12 months. There is also a lack of policy or policy declaration in many scientific journals published in Finland.

The recommendations on how to develop scientific journal publishing in Finland by the working team Ilva and Lilja, might have an impact also on open access repositories as there might be a possibility to connect funding to those journals allowing green open access of their journal articles. The important thing is to inform and discuss with publishers about different alternatives to allow for open access, as there is still a lot of unawareness in the editorial boards and learned societies on what would be the sustainable way to move forward.

An interesting factor for the future is also the integration and relationship of CRIS systems and repositories that is ongoing in the universities in Finland (Ilva 2014b).

Open science projects

Compared to the country report in 2007 the focus in recent years has been on how to open up science, including research data as well as publications.

The “Open Science and Research” project 2014-2017 established by the Ministry of Education and Culture has the ambitious goal “that Finland becomes the leading country in openness of science and research by the year 2017”³. The “Open Science and Research” initiative is focused on three different sections complementing each other: 1) Scientific publications (storage, metadata service and accessibility services of publications) 2) Research data (storage, metadata service and accessibility of data) 3) Research methods (storage, metadata services and accessibility of methods) ⁴

As the project is ongoing we can expect results in the form of new and developed services during the project as well as final outcomes.

Also the universities and especially the university libraries are actively engaged in promoting practical open access solutions for researchers. The university libraries are involved in ongoing European projects such as OpenAire 2020 and Pasteur4OA. During the Open Access week an international event was arranged at the University of Helsinki Meilahti Campus targeted towards researchers. (Siipilehto 2014)

As concluding remarks I find that there has been several improvements to the situation of open access in Finland since the report in 2007. The enthusiastic spirit from 2007 has been realized into building infrastructure and into practical work in embedding open access principles into the practices of researchers and universities. However, even though the knowledge of open access has increased there is still much to be improved in how researchers acknowledge open access principles in their everyday work. The research funders have made recommendations to the researchers to apply open access in opening up their research publications and results. However, the awareness among researchers of the funders’ recommendation was found to be weak Siipilehto (2014).

In putting into practice the task to collect and reuse research data, the Finnish Social Science Data Archive in The University of Tampere is a forerunner in implementing the OECD recommendations and guidelines for opening up publicly funded research data, see also Kuula and Borg (2008).

³ The initiative and the project is to be carried out with partners such as CSC – IT center for Science, the National library and the Open knowledge Finland program funded by the Ministry of Finance.

⁴ <http://openscience.fi/>

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