

OPEN MINDS – INTERVIEW WITH ELEONORA DAGIENĖ, CHAIR OF COUNCIL OF THE LITHUANIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLAR PERIODICALS

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There is a lot of talk around the world about open access (OA) to scientific information; various initiatives related to open access are pursued.

What do you know about them and what do you think about them?

We think very highly about open access. Open access gives greater opportunities for Lithuanian journals. One problem exists: if the reader does not pay for the journals, then someone else has to pay for the preparation and publishing of journals.

In order for readers to know about open access journal it is necessary to make efforts to organise funding and work processes.. The reader reads free of charge, information is provided free of charge in library, but someone must cover the costs for programs, installations, and renewals.. It is necessary that universities and associations think about these problems. Open access is not only a file published on the internet, but it is a much more complex procedure to prepare, present and supply to the reader. Lithuanian journals do not get any help. There is a lack of that knowledge in the academic community - knowledge about the invisible side of open access.

As every initiative, open access to scientific information receives different evaluations. What are the positive and negative aspects of open access to scientific information in your opinion?

If information is presented openly to scientists and members of the academic community, then I would consider open access only positively. The open access initiative must be more widely supported by all. For Lithuanian scientists, publishing articles in Lithuanian journals, it is important that journals support open access, that information about their research would be spread more widely.

In your opinion, does the quality of open access journals correspond to the required scientific quality in the journals published by commercial publishers?

Sometimes you can hear the opinions that quality of open access journals is bad. I do not agree with such opinions. The processes of selection, review, and preparation are even more qualitative in open access journals. The open access journals published in Lithuania do not meet the same level of quality as the open access journals published in Scandinavia do. Lithuanian publishers and editors of journals must follow the experience of their Scandinavian colleagues. Lithuanian journals do not get any help.

Your journals are included in one of the most famous open access catalogues, i.e. The Directory of Open Access Journals. Has the readership and popularity of the journals changed since they became open access journals?

I think that it has changed. The journal gets more manuscripts. The DOAJ – it is very good initiative and a wonderful opportunity for Lithuanian journals to be more visible.

Has the number and the geography of authors wishing to publish in your published journals changed since they were included into the Directory of Open Access Journals? If so - how?

We do not have exact statistics. We did not investigate that question, but manuscripts and reading geography has spread significantly: different visitors from many countries were observed. According to research, 30-40 percent of the authors of publications published in Lithuanian journals are foreigners. Foreign authors trust Lithuanian journals, announce their research in Lithuanian journals, but sometimes those journals are not valued in Lithuania. We must not forget, that Lithuanian journals often do not have finances for management and marketing. No one is occupied with their popularization abroad, and therefore the advantages of open access directories are obvious.



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