

OPEN ACCESS FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF YOUNG RESEARCHERS

Gintare Tautkeviciene, Vilma Petrikaite, Marija Eidukeviciute

Open science, open educational resources, open source software, open access – these are the terms, which become increasingly frequent in the academic community settings. A decade ago, a global campaign launched by the Budapest Open Access Initiative¹ was designed to promote open access of the peer reviewed research results and has gained the attention and support of the academic community and information specialists from all over the world. The topics of science openness around the world are getting more attention, and discussions and events on open access issues involve an increasingly wider range of scholarly communication stakeholders.

The scholarly communication stakeholders recognize that the development of open access provides the opportunity to disseminate research results, ensures better visibility throughout the world, and grants better access for the academic community players to the resources of scientific knowledge and global science information resources. This in turn ensures faster creation of new scientific knowledge and at the same time scientific and economic development. Open Access Initiatives are supported and promoted by many institutions financing and implementing scientific research including the European Research Council, the European Commission's research programs, EIFL, UNESCO, SPARC and other organizations, universities and research institutions.

The stated aim of Open Access to ensure free access to the scientific literature: articles, conference proceedings, doctoral dissertations and their summaries, and other published or unpublished materials rarely raises the question of why Open Access is necessary. Scientific communication process participants are increasingly seeking ways to ensure open access to scientific results (Kronman, 2012). At the same time it must be recognized that open access issues are still being discussed and debated among information professionals, librarians, administrators

financing research. For many of the scientific community these issues are less known or are not considered as very important.

Open Access initiatives in Lithuania

Since 2005 the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LMBA)² has for nearly a decade executed wide promoting campaigns for open access to scientific knowledge. During that time a series of events were organized: conferences, seminars, reports, training etc.³.

In 2011 the organization of EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries)⁴ has provided support for two projects that promote open access in Lithuania. One of the projects "*Promoting Open Access in Lithuania*" has been implemented by LMBA with the Lithuanian Scientific Periodicals Association (LMPA) and Kaunas University of Technology (KUT) (Tautkevičienė, 2012) as partners. The goal of the second project "*Promoting Open Access via Implementing Open Journal System*", conducted by the Association of Lithuanian Serials was to encourage open access scientific journal publishing (Dagienė, 2012). Training sessions presented OJS and online publishing, sharing experiences and best practices in installing and using OJS.

The project "*Promoting Open Access in Lithuania*" primarily aimed to evaluate the open access situation in Lithuanian higher education and research institutions. For this purpose, the administrators of all the Lithuanian higher education and research institutions were surveyed. The results of the survey revealed, that the institutions give little attention to the initiatives of open access and that open access related activities usually are performed by information and communication specialists and librarians. During the project also interviews were carried out with the known scientists, representatives of science

¹Budapest Open Access Initiative, <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/openaccess>

² Lithuanian Research Libraries Consortium, <http://www.lmba.lt>

³ Open Access, <http://www.lmba.lt/en/open-access/events>

⁴ EIFL, <http://www.eifl.net>

administrators and sponsoring administrations, librarians and publishers in order to determine their attitudes towards open access (Banionyte, Vaskeviciene, Tautkeviciene, 2011). Based on these interviews informative videos about open access were created⁵. The position expressed by various stakeholders revealed the increasing need for new scientific knowledge and possibilities for worldwide visibility of the scientists. Then again, the issues of publishing costs, scientific assessment and quality related to open access were highlighted.

While implementing the project during the international Open Access Week 2011 at LMBA the conference *Opening the Scientific Knowledge*⁶ was organized in partnership with the Research Council of Lithuania and the Academy of Sciences of Lithuania. The conference was dedicated to the promotion of OA. A key speakers of the conference, Lars Bjørnshauge, SPARC Europe director, delivered the presentation „*Why open access to results is good for researchers, for science, for research funders and for society*”, reviewing OA from the historical perspective.

During the conference, among other presentation of theoreticians and practitioners supporting OA, the member of Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers Tatjana Iznova presented the results of the young scientists survey „*Open access through the eyes of young scientists*”⁷. The survey results showed that 86 % of doctoral students and young scientists welcome the idea of open access and 90 % believe that open access to the scientific publications could improve the dissemination of the scientific information, however, as many as 50 % of the respondents know little about open access. They also lack knowledge about possibilities to publish their scientific research data in open access. In order to fill these spotted gaps in knowledge it was decided to organize training about open access for the young researchers.

Open access through the eyes of the young scientists

In 2012, after receiving the support of EIFL, KUT together with LSYR and partners LMBA and LMPA had implemented the EIFL project "*Open Access through the eyes of young scientists*." Three seminars on open access were organized. During the first seminar the doctoral students, young scientists and other

researchers familiarized with worldwide and regional open access initiatives, the possibility to become more visible for the world, the European Commission, the European Research Council and other funding bodies' requirements for access to research publications and scientific data. During this seminar Gintare Tautkeviciene, EIFL OA coordinator in Lithuania, introduced the open access situation in the world and in Lithuania, and presented the position of the European Commission and the European Research Council on open access.

The vice-chair of the Lithuanian Research Council Ruta Marcinkeviciene introduced the recommendations of the UNESCO Regional Consultation on "*Open Access to Scientific Information and Research – Concept and Policies*", which took place in Minsk.

The presentation "*OA journals in the light of bibliometric indicators*" was delivered by the guest Krzysztof Szymanski (Thomson Reuters). The president of the Society of Young Researchers Vilma Petrikaite organized the discussion "*Does young researchers want to be visible?*"

During the second seminar Marija Stonkienė introduced the issues of intellectual property and copyright in open access. Jurgita Gradauskaitė presented the possibilities given by Creative Commons licenses. Eleonora Dagienė presented *the advantages of the open-access journal for young researchers*. Gintarė Tautkevicienė introduced the activities of the international organization *Right to Research Coalition*⁸ and the first General Assembly in July, 2012, in which also participated the representative of the Society of Lithuanian Young Researchers.

The third seminar was devoted to the open science issues "*Open Science. What's in it for me?*". The goal of the seminar was to introduce doctoral students, young scientists and other researchers to open science initiatives are the increased opportunities to communicate and collaborate, to become a global scientific network, and to be more visible to the world. This seminar was conducted by the guest from Poland, Pawel Szczesny, who is an active researcher in the area of systems biology and at the same time an open science advocate, a member of the Open Science Working Group of the Open Knowledge Foundation, Director of the Systems Institute. During the seminar,

⁵ Open Access Video, <http://www.lmba.lt/en/open-access/video>

⁶ Opening the Scientific Knowledge, <http://www.lmba.lt/renginys/atverkime-mokslo-zinias-pasauliui>

⁷http://www.lmba.lt/sites/default/files/Atviroji_prieiga_LJMS_Iznova.pdf

⁸Right to Research Coalition, <http://www.righttoresearch.org>

the young scientists prepared recommendations for the development of Open Access in Lithuania.

Parts of the workshop reports were broadcast on the Internet, so they could be heard by a wider audience of young researchers. The workshops attracted considerable attention of the young researchers, involving more than 280 participants.

The series of workshops for the young researchers concluded with a public discussion "*Open access development in Lithuania*." This debate called on young scientists, science and education administrators, funding institutions, information and publishing professionals, librarians, and other scientific communication players to discuss the issues of open access to scientific knowledge and research literature, promote open access initiatives related to the publishing of research results in open access, to give momentum of research results to load them into an open access Lithuania. The event took place during the global "Open Access Week 2012", now is organized for the sixth consecutive year in the last week of October.

Discussion participants had the opportunity to hear the competent national and international expert opinions and to discuss current scientific knowledge, openness, access, and dissemination issues.⁹.

The reviews of the young researchers

At the end of the project, it was interesting to hear the views of young scientists about open access. "Openness is recognized as one of our most important values of our Union as it is the base for collaboration, creativity and development," said the President of LSJR Dr. Vilma Petrikaitė. "Open access can help ensure the quality of research, whereas the open publication of research results helps to protect against plagiarism and falsification". The member of this organization, University doctoral student Ramojus Reimeris also believes: "he personally believes that an open access is the ability to obtain the necessary knowledge easier, faster and with less effort." This view is shared by the other doctoral student from the same university Loreta Tauginienė, claiming that "open access allows us faster dissemination of scientific knowledge, to develop research networks – it thus promotes scientific development, and prevents dishonesty and plagiarism."

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⁹ <http://ktu.lt/turinys/atvirosios-prieigos-reminiai>



Dr. Gintare Tautkeviciene, Head of Information Services Department at Kaunas University of Technology, Associated Professor at Kaunas University of Technology, EIFL OA coordinator for Lithuania



Dr. Vilma Petrikaite, President of Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers, Associated Professor at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Scientist at Vilnius University, Institute of Biotechnology



Dr. Marija Eidukeviciute, member of Lithuanian Society of Young Researchers, Associated Professor at Kaunas University of Technology, Mechanics and Mechatronics Faculty, Department of Theoretical Mechanics