

# Towards open access by default



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring Commission for the implementation of article 37 on Open Access Dissemination of the Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation Act

The aim of EU Member States for 2020 is open access to 100% of scientific publications financed with public funds. The European University Association (EUA) has spoken in the same terms. Achieving the goal could be delayed due to differences between the degree of development of open access and national policies in Member States. Various public documents and official declarations published recently have highlighted that the scientific publishing market is currently going through an uncertain transition process that requires common action of all stakeholders involved in producing and funding research in European countries.

The traditional pathways to open access (OA) for scientific publications, the Green and Gold routes to OA, have been insufficient to achieve the goal. The decision of the United Kingdom to favour Gold OA has encouraged publishers, both commercial and scientific societies, to offer the possibility of OA publishing via payment of article processing charges (APCs). Researchers, pressured to publish in top academic journals and also provide open access to their work, can be inclined to pay the APCs to comply with both requirements. APCs are added in this way to the journal subscription fees paid by institutions, so they are paying twice for the same thing. These extra costs are affecting public funds aimed at research.

The recent co-ordinated action of the governments of some European countries (such as United Kingdom and Holland) and universities and research institutions (such as the German Max Planck Society) has focused on changing joint subscription deals with commercial publishers, known as Big Deals, to agreements that include the APCs for the authors of the institutions signing the licences (offsetting agreements).

In Spain, the economic resources invested annually to pay for subscriptions to scientific journals are also shifting the scientific publishing market. Journal subscriptions and the promotion of open access, which in the past went separate ways, are now walking hand in hand to achieve a common goal. The complexity of the issue should not hold back promoting any measure that favours open access to scientific papers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON OPEN ACCESS:



### Monitoring compliance with open access publishing

Compliance with the national mandate, which requires depositing scientific publications in OA, should be measured comparing the amount of open access publications deposited in institutional repositories with the total amount of publications of an institution.

Institutional repositories should distinguish between peer-reviewed articles and other resources published open access.

Institutional repositories, together with CRIS, should monitor open access compliance and distinguish between open access articles, subscription articles and articles with embargoes, following the international guidelines.



### Optimizing archiving

Articles should be deposited in repositories and CRISs in a single process that is simple for researchers.

Interoperability between repositories and the websites gathering scientific publications should be facilitated.



## Focusing on researchers regarding OA and new indicators

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In line with the international guidelines, and regardless of the use that will be given to the data in repositories, indicators that are not based exclusively on citation and reflect the characteristics and special features of each discipline should be included.



## Reducing journal costs

The current resources set aside for subscription fees to journals and APCs should be enough to pay for scientific communication during the 21st century. Subscription renewals should not have annual increases higher than the national CPI. Increased contents or services should be covered with increased productivity deriving from ICT and not higher prices.

More than 10-year-old contents in journals should be considered paid off and deducted from the price, in exchange for a reasonable fee to access the publishing platform.

Licenses to access scientific contents should include open access publishing with no APCs for a certain number of articles.

Research performing organisations should not pay twice for subscription and APCs (double dipping), regardless of what institution has paid for the APCs of the article. All subscription agreements should specify the price reduction for open access articles funded by APCs paid by any institution worldwide.

When negotiating subscriptions, institutions should insist on the requirement to self-archive articles following the deadlines established in Article 37 of the Science Act.



## Transparency in journal subscription agreements and control mechanisms

Public expenditure on subscriptions to journals, either global or per institution, should be published following the example of countries such as Holland or Finland.

All institutions should establish mechanisms to get to know and publish the costs for APCs. Therefore, we recommend participating in the INTACT initiative (*Transparent Infrastructure for Article Charges*).