Access to scientific information in the digital age: European Commission initiatives

Deirdre Furlong

European Commission, Research Directorate-General
Science, Economy and Society Directorate
Governance and Ethics Unit

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Outline

1. Scientific information in the digital age: the European Commission’s approach
2. European level policy development
3. Open Access in FP7
4. Capacity building activities
5. Conclusions and next steps
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5. Conclusions and next steps
EC approach (1)

- Importance of access, dissemination and preservation for research
- The internet has led to unprecedented possibilities which are not yet sufficiently exploited
- Need to improve return on investment in R&D, and thus maximise socioeconomic impact
- A question of principle: reliable access to results funded by taxpayers’ money
- Fair remuneration for scientific publishers for the added value they bring to the scientific publication process
- International developments: many existing policies, e.g. Wellcome Trust, NIH, CNRS, Harvard University, etc.
Evolving legal foundations

**Current**: European Community Treaty, Title XVIII (Research & Technological Development)

- **Art. 163**: “The Community shall have the objective of strengthening the scientific and technological bases of Community industry and encouraging it to become more competitive [...]”.

- **Art. 164**: In pursuing these objectives, the European Community is responsible for “dissemination and optimisation of the results and activities in Community research [...]”.

**Future**: Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (Lisbon Treaty) Title XIX (Research & Technological Development and space)

- **Art. 179 (ex Art. 163)**: The Union shall have the objective of strengthening its scientific and technological bases by achieving a European research area in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely, and encouraging it to become more competitive [...]”.

EC approach (2)
EC approach (3)

Roles of European Commission

- **Policy-making body**: launch of policy debate at the European level; encourage Member States to take coordinated action

- **Research funding body**: set access and dissemination rules for the EC-funded research (Framework Programmes)

- **Capacity-building / supporting body**: fund digital infrastructure and relevant research and networking activities
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European policy development (1)

Consultation phase

- 2006: “Study on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe” (public consultation)
- 2007: Green Paper (public questionnaire) on the future of the European Research Area; knowledge sharing axis included section on open access
European policy development (2)

Decision-making phase


European policy development (2)

Implementation phase

- Aug. 2008: Launch of Open Access Pilot in FP7
- 2009: follow-up of Member State actions
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Current Framework Programme: FP7 “7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development”

Duration: Seven-year programme, 2007 to 2013

Budget: over €50 billion (substantial increase compared with FP6)

In its role as funding body, the Commission can set rules for access to research results financed through Framework Programmes

Goal of maximising socio-economic impact of R&D investment
Open access in FP7 (2)

Reimbursement of publication costs in FP7 “Gold” open access

- New in FP7
- Publication costs (including “gold” / author pays open access fees) are “eligible” costs for 100% reimbursement
- Limited to duration of project
- Uptake to be monitored during and at the end of FP7
- Legal reference: FP7 Model Grant Agreement II.16. (Upper funding limits): [...] 4. For other activities not covered by paragraphs 1 and 2, inter alia, management activities, training, coordination, networking and dissemination (including publications), the contribution may reach a maximum of 100% of the total eligible costs. [...]

Open Access Pilot in FP7: scope

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/open_access

• Launched in August 2008; covers ca. 20 % of FP7 budget
• Pilot action based on self-archiving / “green” open access
• Applies to seven areas of the 7th Framework Programme:
  • 12 month embargo: “Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities” and “Science in Society”
Open Access Pilot in FP7: requirements

- Special Clause 39 (legal basis) requires:
  - deposit of an electronic copy (published version or final manuscript) in an institutional or subject-based repository at moment of publication.
  - best efforts to ensure that this electronic copy becomes available “open access” (freely and electronically available to anyone):
    - immediately if the publication is published "open access", or
    - within 6 or 12 months of publication, depending on area
- Applies to all new FP7 grant agreements signed after August 2008 in these areas
Open Access Pilot in FP7: implementation

- **Applicable until when?** During project and after project end
- **Where should publications go?** Institutional or subject-based repositories (Commission to provide temporary repository to store ‘orphan’ publications)
- **Why “best effort”?** Formulation strongly encourages researchers to comply while guaranteeing scientific and academic freedom
- **What does “best effort” mean?** Details to be provided in FP7 IPR Guidelines (check publisher policy, if necessary request change to copyright agreement, provide feedback to Commission)
European Research Council (ERC)

- “Significant worries concerning the ability of the system to deliver wide access and therefore efficient dissemination of research results, with the resulting risk of stifling further scientific progress” (ERC ScC communication in December 2006).

- December 2007 adopted guidelines on open access to ERC funded research results:
  - Peer reviewed scientific articles: deposited on publication to an appropriate repository and available open access no later than 6 months
  - Research data: consider it essential that underlying data are deposited to the relevant databases as soon as possible, preferably immediately after publication, no later than 6 months
ERC Guidelines: Implementation

- Guidelines apply during and after project duration
- “.....make best effort to ensure that the ERC guidelines on Open Access will be followed ” in line with the ERC grant agreement which states “...the beneficiary shall ensure that the foreground of which it has ownership is disseminated as swiftly as possibly”
- Modification of grant agreement to ensure open access becomes a legal requirement foreseen for the grant agreements in 2009
- Preference for “green” open access
- Exceptionally (e.g. exclusivity of journal, targeted scientific community): “gold” open access
Open access in FP7 (8)

Monitoring and implementation

INFRA-2009-1.2.3: Scientific Information Repository supporting the European FP7 Research Programme

• Call for proposals published on 9 Dec. 2008; deadline 17 March 2009, budget: € 4 million

• Seeks projects to support the establishment and operation of a technical infrastructure of digital repositories to deposit and access scientific articles and data produced under FP7 (incl. ERC)

• Infrastructure to build on existing work on repositories

• Expected impact: Enhancement of access to scientific information produced in the context of FP7; linking of many different repositories as a service and e-infrastructure

• Information day: December 16th 2008, Brussels

Relevant Work Programme: Research infrastructures 2009
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Capacity-building (1)

Studies on access to scientific information / open access

Current:
- e-SciDR – Study of European repository infrastructure
- OAPEN - Open Access Publishing in European Networks
- PEER - Pilot Programme Investigating the effect of the deposit of author manuscripts on publishing

Planned:
- Study on different types and future of open access publishing ("gold" open access)
- Projects focusing on networking, knowledge-sharing and training on access to and dissemination of scientific information

→ Input for FP8 policy
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Conclusions and next steps (1)

Steady progress over the past years

European policy makers have recognised the importance of access and dissemination for research and technology policies

→ These issues are now firmly on the European policy agenda

→ A lot of work ahead …
Conclusions and next steps (2)

The challenges ahead

• European policy: mobilisation of Member States; support coordinated initiatives

• Research funding body policy: monitoring of ongoing initiatives; towards an access and dissemination policy for the 8th Framework Programme (from 2014)

• Capacity-building activities: continuing support the development of sustainable e-infrastructure in all Member States
Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

deirdre.furlong@ec.europa.eu

Further information:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/scientific_publications

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/open_access

Questions about the open access pilot: rtd-open-access@ec.europa.eu