



# Open Access: Reflecting on Two Decades of Progress and Future Horizons

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# Outlook

1. Pioneering (2004-2013)
2. Consolidating (2014-2023)
3. Reinventing (2024-2033)

# Pioneering (2004-2013)

Together, we have been shaping the story of open access in a multifaceted, complex, and ever-changing environment

# A complex European Institution

- The European Commission acts as a **policy-maker**, a **funder**, and a facilitator
- Since 2004, only for the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, there have been
  - 3 Presidents
  - 5 Commissioners (& their private offices)
  - 4 Director-Generals
  - 5 Directors
  - 5 Heads of Unit
  - A dozen Policy Officers and a few Project Officers
  - And five major internal restructuring (incl. the creation of Agencies)

# Coordinated & informed decisions

- **From the start e.g. in 2006**, release of a [Study](#) on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe commissioned to **independent experts**, followed In 2007 by a **multi-stakeholders [Conference](#)** 'Scientific Publishing in the European Research Area' shortly after the **Commission** adopted [Communication](#) on 'Scientific information in the digital age: access, dissemination and preservation'. In the same year, led by the Portugal Presidency, **EU Member States** adopted [Conclusions](#) on 'Scientific information in the digital age: access, dissemination and preservation'
- **Till now e.g. in 2024** with the [Scoping paper for Open Research Europe](#) 'Towards a collective open access publishing service'

# Moving targets in an evolving landscape

- We learned by doing with **FP7**, then **Horizon 2020**, now **Horizon Europe**
  - Pilot, 'best effort', embargoes, open access, 'open data', open science (open *research*), IPR, licences, DMP (data management plan), RDM (research data management), FAIR data, exceptions to openness, repositories, hybrid journals, APCs...
- We had to rethink and adapt our narrative evolved as **experience** and **knowledge** grow
  - Economic aspects, ethics, reproducibility, terrorism, security, sovereignty, academic colonialism...
  - Staying vigilant all the time e.g. *As open as possible, as protected (sic) as necessary* 😊

# Co-funding of inspiring projects

- From e.g. [OAPEN](#) (*Open Access Publishing in European Networks*) or [PEER](#) (*Pilot Programme Investigating the Effect of the Deposit of Author Manuscripts on the Ecology of European Research and Publishing*) in **2008**,
- To e.g. [NECOBELAC](#) (*Network of Collaboration between Europe and Latin American-Caribbean Countries*), [SOAP](#) (*Study of Open Access Publishing by Key Stakeholders*) or [OpenAIRE](#) (*Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe*) in **2009**,
- Then e.g. [MedOANet](#) (*Mediterranean Open Access Network*) or [ACUMEN](#) (*Academic Careers Understood through Measurement and Norms*) in **2011**

# Consolidating (2014-2023)

Europe leads the battle for open access by promoting and implementing Open Science principles, and proposing innovative solutions



# Open science became an EU priority

- 2016 Council Conclusions on the 'Transition Towards an Open Science System'
- 2018 EC Recommendation on 'Access to and Preservation of Scientific Information'
- 2021 EC Scoping Report 'Towards a reform of the research assessment system'
- 2022 Council Conclusions on 'Research Assessment and Implementation of Open Science' and the EC endorsed the DORA Declaration
- 2023 Council Conclusions on 'High-quality, transparent, open, trustworthy and equitable scholarly publishing'

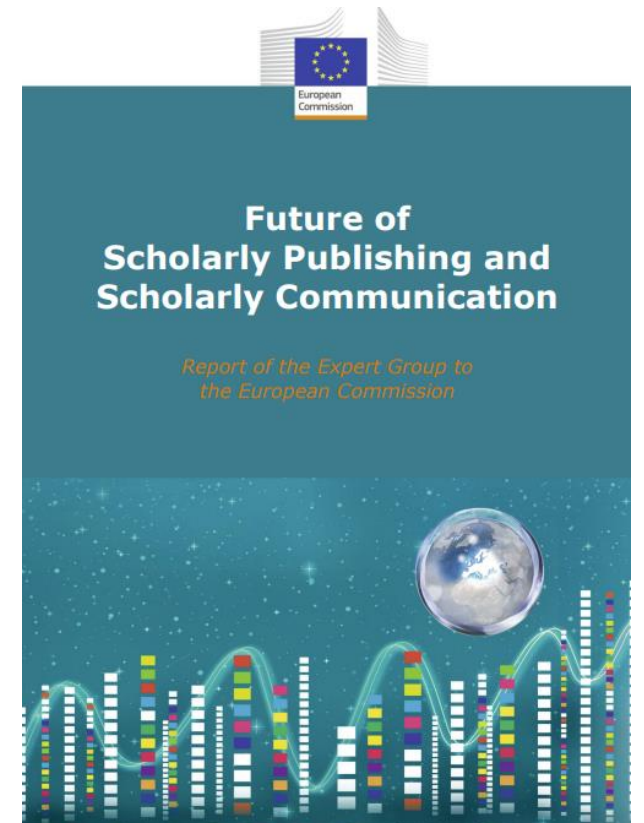
All those various documents – and the list is far from being exhaustive – are important because **they federate us**, and we can **refer to them when necessary**

# More targeted projects, tailored for policy

- From e.g. [PASTEUR4OA](#) (*Open Access Policy Alignment Strategies for European Union Research*) in 2014, or [FutureTDM](#) (*Reducing Barriers and Increasing Uptake of Text and Data Mining for Research Environments using a Collaborative Knowledge and Open Information Approach*) in **2015**
- To e.g. [OpenUP](#) (*Opening Up new methods, indicators and tools for peer review, impact measurement and dissemination of research results*) in **2016**
- And then e.g. [DIAMAS](#) (*Developing Institutional open Access publishing Models to Advance Scholarly communication*) in **2022**

# A comprehensive vision to move forward

1. Maximizing accessibility
2. Maximizing usability
3. Supporting an expanding range of contributions
4. A distributed open infrastructure
5. Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI)
6. Community building
7. Promoting high-quality research and its integrity
8. Facilitating evaluation
9. Promoting flexibility and innovation
10. Cost-effectiveness



**Study:** Future of Scholarly Publishing and Scholarly Communication' (2019)

# Launch of Open Research Europe (ORE)

- The EC open access, peer-reviewed publishing [platform](#) for original research launched in 2021
- No author-facing fee (procurement to bring price of service down)
- A funder's approach, with long-term commitment
  - Ambition to open up to research grant recipients outside Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe
  - Make ORE collectively driven, owned and supported by other research funders and research institutions



**Study:** Operationalising Open Research Europe as a collective publishing enterprise (2022)

# Reinventing (2024-2033)

Challenging times shape the political landscape and its priorities,  
yet there are pockets of hope

# Twenty years later, we are still not there

## What we still have

- Large part of content **closed**
- Rewarding **individual** competing scientists
- Publish **as much** as possible
- ‘Excellence’ defined largely on **where** a **research paper** is published
- **Inequitable** system
- **Ever-increasing, non-transparent** prices
- **Limited reusability**
- Strong influence of **commercial** players

## What we want to have

- **Open** access
- Rewarding **collaboration** and **sharing**
- Share as **early & openly** as possible
- **Composite** definition of excellence
- More **equity**
- More **transparency** & right price for a service
- **No legal barrier** to **reusability**
- Governance-ownership & knowledge as **public good** with no lock-in

# The failed promise of a brave, new world?



- Open access has **inherited many traditional inequality structures** present in everyday practice
  - **Current** traditions and practices **shape** the system of knowledge co-production and sharing in open access and open science
- Open access aims to enhance transparency, accessibility and participation in research, where **equity** was often *assumed* rather than explicitly stated
  - Recently, researchers and stakeholders have begun to question some assumptions about equity in open access
- Open access should help **democratise** the research process and **reduce** structural barriers in research and innovation

**Study:** Scientific publishing in Europe (2024)



# An EU legislation fit for research

- Expert studies and workshops on **EU copyright legislation** and access to and reuse of publications and data and on the possible impact of EU data and digital legislation on research
- Study published in April 2024
  - Evaluates effects of EU copyright framework on research, and effect of potential interventions and identifies and presents provisions for research in EU data and digital legislation, focusing on rights and obligations
- Follow-up through actions in the European Research Area



[Study](#): Improving access to and reuse of research results, publications and data for scientific purposes (2024)



# The vision for Open Research Europe

- A top-quality, trusted collective open access publishing service for the **public good**
- **Collectively** owned, driven and supported by research funders and research institutions, as a service for researchers, with no author fees
- Ambition for a publishing service **without** institutional/funding **eligibility criteria**
- Supported by an **open-source infrastructure**



**Study:** *Towards a collective open access publishing service – Scoping report (2024)*

# The future of Open Research Europe

- Open Source Infrastructure
  - Technological autonomy, interoperability, community governed & owned for public good, compatible with European Open Science Cloud (EOSC)...
  - Public procurement awarded to [PKP](#) in August 2024
- Practical discussions with circa 20 interested national research funders and research organisations in Europe
  - Estimation of required budget and equitable cost-sharing mechanism, details of governance, collaboration, operation and financing...
- Launching of **new ORE scheduled by mid-2026**

# A journey to continue together

- A new **European Parliament** in place since summer 2024, with new political dynamic
- A [new European Commission](#) to start in December 2024 (?) with possibly (?) Commissioner-designate Ekaterina Zaharieva for **Startups**, Research and Innovation
- New [Political Guidelines](#) (2024-2029) and [Draghi Report](#) (2024)
  - R&I at the heart of the **economy**, with **increase** (?) in research spending.
  - Need for ‘a new approach for a modern and reinforced EU budget’ – ‘more focused’ (policy-based budget, **not a programme-based budget**), ‘simpler’ and ‘more impactful’
- A new **Framework Programme for R&I** (?) to succeed Horizon Europe
  - Heitor Report (2024) on maximising the impact of EU Research and Innovation programmes in the future [‘Research, technology and innovation to boost European competitiveness’](#)

# Happy Anniversary *Dichiarazione di Messina!*



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