The Third National Information Day: Open Access to Scientific Information

Peter Stanchev[1,2]

[1]Institute of Mathematics and Informatics, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria
[2]Kettering University, Flint, USA
pstanche@kettering.edu

Abstract. The paper presents in brief the "Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe" project and what is done in Bulgaria in the area of open access to scientific information.

Keywords: Open Access, OpenAIRE project

The OpenAIRE project supports the implementation of Europe's open access (OA) policies as outlined in the European Research Council's Guidelines for Open Access and the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) Open Access Pilot.

In its efforts to reach out to research institutions, researchers, project coordinators and publishers in the individual European countries, OpenAIRE is facilitated by a network of National Open Access Desks (NOADs). The NOADs also provide support to institutions in developing their OA policies: in implementing the European Commission's OA Pilot and the ERC's Guidelines on OA, in building synergies within institutional OA policies, and in making repositories and OA journals compliant with OpenAIRE's requirements for metadata harvesting (as laid out in the OpenAIRE Guidelines).

OpenAIRE's three main objectives are to:

— build support structures for researchers in depositing FP7- and ERC-funded research publications through the establishment of a European Helpdesk and by reaching out to all European member states via 27 NOADs;
— establish and operate an electronic infrastructure for handling peer-reviewed articles as well as other important forms of publications (pre-prints or conference publications). This is achieved through the OpenAIRE portal that is the gateway to all user-level services offered, including access (search and browse) to scientific publications and other value-added functionalities (post authoring tools, monitoring tools through analysis of document, and usage statistics);
— work with several subject communities to explore the requirements, practices, incentives, workflows, data models and technologies for depositing, accessing and otherwise managing research data sets in their various forms.

The main challenges in the course of the implementation process are:

— making the EC/ERC's policies known to researchers and project coordinators of all research areas involved and making them aware of their contractual obligation to honour these policies,
— supporting researchers and institutions with the depositing process through a network of open access experts: the NOADs;
— enhancing the repository network by introducing rules for grant re-porting in repositories that would support the linking of publications and projects (the OpenAIRE Guidelines);
— involving and engaging all stakeholders in the implementation proc-ess and further facilitating the workflows for researchers, research administrators, repository managers and scholarly publishers.

The Bulgarian research community is well informed about the benefits of open access and uses open access research publications, but the promotion of open access is more of an individual effort than the result of institutional support or policy. There is a certain level of awareness among libraries, though still very few institutions are involved in managing repositories. At a special meeting of the Association of University Libraries (AUL) in 2010, the steps to build open repositories were outlined.

The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), which coordinates research in Bulgaria, intends to establish a network of scientific open access centres. The Institute of Mathematics and Informatics at the BAS (IMI-BAS) coordinates this network and provides support for academic institutions and researchers. IMI-BAS has also launched a national project to develop the research infrastructure and digital repositories for researchers, educators, public bodies and companies who need contemporary scientific and education information and resources. This fosters the integration of academia, the public sector and industry; it also strengthens the institutional links between all major research and education organisations (the universities, the institutes of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, etc.). In 2010 IMI-BAS organised the first national information day called Open Access to Scientific Information which was broadcasted on Bulgarian National Radio and other Bulgarian news media.

IMI-BAS is a partner of the European Digital Mathematics Library (EuDML) project that design and build a collaborative digital library service to collate the current distributed content. It also help plan the long-term preservation of digital mathematical literature through a network of academic libraries that eventually be provided as open access.

As of June 2012, there are six Bulgarian open access repositories registered in OpenDOAR: those of the New Bulgarian University, IMI-BAS, Burgas Free University, Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski", and Medical University of Sofia. There are currently 32 Bulgarian open access journals available in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). In addition, a pilot repository of the University of Rousse and the Medical University of Sofia (MU Sofia) is now being tested which will be-come the Electronic Repository of the Central Medical Library of MU Sofia.

During the last year, we present the concept of the open access to scientific information on the following national events:

- on September 12, 2011 - The Second National Information Day "Open Access to Scientific Information" with focus on the use of the National Open Access Desks, the development of networks among researchers, research institutions, and policy makers at a national level on the one hand, and the European project services, on the other;
- on October 24, 2011 – "e-Archives for e-Science" conference as a part of the Open Access Week, organized by: Bulgarian Information Consortium, Institute of Mathematics and Informatics - BAS (OpenAIRE NOAD in Bulgaria) and the Library of the New Bulgarian University;
- on November 18, 2011 at a round table on "e-Infrastructures: the new highways of European development of Bulgaria." This was an event organized by the Bulgarian president and the Director General of UNESKO with the participation of President of the Republic of Bulgaria Georgi Parvanov;
- on November 21, 2011 at the international NALISF (National Academic Library and Information System) Forum. Leading figures in top libraries, archives and other cultural institutions in USA, UK, Italy, Germany and Bulgaria shared their experience and knowledge in the creation of digital libraries, use of library software, public engagement and other activities aiming to preserve the valuable collections;
- on November 24, 2011 on the seminar organized by the Foundation "13 Centuries Bulgaria" with representatives of the most Bulgaria museums.

Among the outreach and dissemination strategies tried thus far, some have already been identified as particularly successful. These include the early outreach to researchers (i.e. when a FP7-funded project is launched), the active involvement of FP7 National Contact Points, personal interaction with repository managers and the sharing of success stories to encourage new developments. The main issues that still need to be resolved in the coming years include the effective promotion of open access among research communities and support in copyright management for researchers and research institutions as well as intermediaries such as libraries and repositories.