London Meeting of National Experts Summary
Working Together to Promote Open Access Policy Alignment in Europe

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Summary

The **PASTEUR4OA** Europe-wide project meeting of national experts was held in December 2014 in London. It was attended by 55 participants representing the PASTEUR4OA consortium and the recently founded **Knowledge Net**. The Knowledge Net is comprised of a set of expert organisations, *Key Nodes*, where each represents an European country and where all work collaboratively in monitoring and championing an aligned Open Access policy environment across Europe (for more information on the Key Nodes and their roles see section 3).The meeting aimed to build on the experience of Member States (MS) and neighbouring countries in developing and implementing national Open Access (OA) policies. Moreover, it aimed to provide information on the rationale for advancing an aligned OA policy agenda across Europe which is in agreement with the European Commission (EC) **Recommendation on Access to and Preservation of Scientific Information** and the **Open Access Mandate for Horizon 2020** (H2020). It also aimed to promote discussions on the role, priorities, framework and strategy of the nascent Knowledge Net.

On the first day of the meeting issues related to OA policy, policy formulation, compliance and alignment, challenges, best practices, incentives and solutions were addressed. In the second day of the meeting discussions evolved around considering a sustainable strategy to support the effective development and implementation of the Knowledge Net. The sections below summarise the highlights of the presentations delivered and discussions held during the meeting.

Day One

1. Evidence that Europe is Leading Open Access Implementation: An International Policy Analysis by *Alma Swan*

OA Policy numbers
At the global level, there were 651 OA policies at the time of the meeting. Europe is the region with most OA policies, with a total of 356 OA policies. Northern America has 153 OA policies and a further 142 OA policies are in place around the rest of the world.

Policy Formulation
Results from the research being conducted on the analysis of OA policies have demonstrated that the following elements are essential in policy formulation if policies are to succeed:

- Policies must be mandatory;
- Publications must be deposited immediately (at acceptance for publication);
- Deposit is required, but OA itself may come later;
- Deposit must be connected to research assessment.

Mandates

OA mandates are policies that require rather than just recommend that researchers make their peer-reviewed publications available on open access. Europe has 203 of the total of 356 mandates. North America is in second position with a total of 70 mandates.

Deposit

OA policies are more effective if immediate deposit is required. A total of 52 Green OA policies, or 15% from the total sample, require deposit on the acceptance date. However, the largest number of Green OA policies do not mention when deposit is required – 143 policies from a total of 335 policies or 41% in total. A higher percentage of institutional policies (31%) than funder policies (16%) fail to stipulate the time of deposit. A similar pattern is observed with OA mandates. At the global level, 41% of mandates do not mention when deposit is required. In Europe this percentage is higher, totalling 48%. Only 15% of mandates in total require deposit at the acceptance date (16% for European mandates) and 18% of mandates require deposit at the publication date (9% for European mandates).

Research assessment

OA mandates that relate deposit with research evaluation have proved to be successful in ensuring policy compliance. However, the number of mandates linking deposit to research assessment is still low. Only 5 mandates in Europe, 4 in North America and 5 in Asia relate these two elements.

2. PASTEUR4OA: Exploring the Co-ordination of OA Strategies, Activities and Policies across Europe by *Victoria Tsoukala*

The concept of the PASTEUR4OA project is centred on:

- Expediting understanding and awareness on open access;
- Facilitating policy development that is aligned with the EC Recommendation and Horizon 2020, particularly for funders and universities;
- Delivering a coordinated network of expert organisations across Europe (Knowledge Net) for advocacy.

Challenges in promoting OA policy development, implementation and alignment in MS and neighbouring countries include:

- Different levels of progress in different MS towards policies (funders and universities/research centres);
- Lack of awareness among policymakers;
- Open access to scientific information may not be a priority for policymakers in some countries;
- Lack of information on policy effectiveness (in countries with policies) – detailed information is necessary.

To overcome these challenges, the PASTEUR4OA project proposes to:

- Analyse OA policies: to assess the current situation and provide evidence based argument;
- Potentiate the Knowledge Net: to develop tools that can assist the Key Nodes to address national challenges, to develop regional and country-specific approaches (for more information see section 3);
- Engage with policymakers: to promote policy development, implementation and alignment in a direct a systematic mode;
- Liaise with related projects (FOSTER, OpenAIRE) and activities: to explore synergies.

PASTEUR4OA expected outcomes encompass:

- Contribution to coordination of OA policies;
- Address Key Nodes' needs at the national level;
- Support Key Nodes' roles in advancing the OA policy alignment agenda.

3. P*ASTEUR4OA: The Knowledge Net* by *Eloy Rodrigues*

The foundation of the **Knowledge Net** is linked to the EC recommendations that MS develop and align OA policies with that of H2020 and promote coordinated activities at the MS and EU level. It also recognises that various European countries are faced with identical challenges:

- Disparate levels of OA awareness, activities, infrastructures and policies;
- Lack of alignment/consistency on OA policies;
- Lack of coordination between OA initiatives, infrastructures and organisations.

As a result, the Knowledge Net aims to:

- Establish a network of national centres of expertise – known as Key Node organisations – in MS that can monitor and champion an aligned OA policy environment across the EU and in neighbouring countries;
- Establish a Europe-wide network of Key Node organisations that represent national expertise on OA and scholarly communication issues in each member state;
- Promote coordinated work among the Key Node organisations and the EC into the future and after the PASTEUR4OA project ends.

The Key Nodes responsibilities include:

- Identifying national policymakers;
- Creating or taking advantage of any existing OA working groups;
- Developing a programme of activities to engage with policymakers;
- Identifying policymakers who will attend one of the two types of regional workshops;
- Acting as the national centre of expertise on OA into the future;
- Acting as the Key Node for their country within the Europe-wide Knowledge Net.

The Knowledge Net is currently composed by 33 member organisations that act as Key Nodes. The current structure of the Knowledge Net is sub-divided into 5 regions that are coordinated by:

- CRIStin – Regional Coordinator of the Nordic region;
- EOS – Regional Coordinator of the North West Europe region;
- EIFL – Regional Coordinator of the East Europe region;
- EKT – Regional Coordinator of the South East Europe region;
- UMINHO – Regional Coordinator of the South West Europe region.

4. Voting Session

The meeting participants were requested to vote in four questions and to select one of possible six answers to each question. The voting results informed the discussion in the first work group session.

Questions	Answers with the most votes
1. At this moment which is the most relevant challenge in your country?	OA appears to have low priority with research performing organisations and funders.
2. In 3 to 5 years which challenge do you consider to be the most relevant?	Maintaining and sustaining effective coordination at national and EU levels has difficulties.
3. At this moment which challenge do you feel least empowered about being able to address in your country?	Member States' arrangements with publishers to secure deposit rights and short embargo periods are fragmentary and inconsistent.
4. Which of these challenges do you consider to be the priority for the Knowledge Net to help with?	Maintaining and sustaining effective coordination at national and EU levels has difficulties.

5. Member States OA Policy Alignment with H2020 by *Alma Swan*

The **H2020 OA policy** in brief:

- ▪ Mandatory for peer-reviewed publications;
- ▪ Mandatory for Green OA:
    - ▪ Researchers publish as usual in subscription-based journals;
    - ▪ Researchers place copy of peer-reviewed publications in repositories;
- ▪ Payments for OA journal publication (Gold OA) are eligible as grant expenditure;
- ▪ Mute on monographs;
- ▪ Definite on data, announcing an open data pilot for H2020.

In the '**Recommendation on Access to and Preservation of Scientific Information**' and the **H2020 OA policy**, the EC recommends MS to:

- ▪ Develop OA policies;
- ▪ Ensure consistency between MS and H2020 OA policy;
- ▪ Promote coordination at EU level;
- ▪ Report on progress at MS and EU level;
- ▪ Establish multi-stakeholder dialogue.

The rationale to promote OA policy alignment in MS is to:

- ▪ Iron out dissonances for researchers working in interdisciplinary areas or on international teams;
- ▪ Support EU harmonisation agenda for ERA (research conditions, researcher mobility, etc.);
- ▪ Change authors practices and norms;
- ▪ Allow generic infrastructural services to be established in support of policy.

The H2020 OA policy embeds:

- ▪ Coordination across the EU;
- ▪ 28 Member States (some of which already have policies of their own);
- ▪ Some countries have centres of expertise, many do not;
- ▪ Some countries may welcome support, others may happily offer support;
- ▪ Coordination is key.

6. Country Cases: Ireland by *Niamh Brennan*, Norway by *Nina Karlstrøm* and Belgium by *Bernard Rentier*

Three country case studies – **Ireland**, **Norway** and **Belgium** – sought to demonstrate some of the successful cases in which OA policies have been developed and implemented at the national, funder and institutional levels. The case studies sought to present some of the factors that have fomented the development, implementation and compliance with the respective OA policies. They also sought to raise awareness about some of the advantages related to promoting an aligned OA policy environment across Europe. For instance, to harmonise the EU's innovation strategy, to facilitate researchers' mobility, and to advance economic and social well-being. The cases demonstrated that promoting OA to scientific information – for instance by supporting an incremental increase in the levels of policy compliance or by promoting policy alignment – is a continuous exercise where there is always scope for further improvements to be made.

7. Countries Share and Compare: Work Groups Session I

In the first work groups' session, participants gathered in the regional groups that correspond to the Knowledge Net's five regions: Nordic, North West Europe, South West Europe, East Europe and South East Europe. In regional groupings, participants looked at the most voted challenges from the Voting Session and identified which is the most relevant challenge in their region now. Subsequently, participants were asked to identify as many ways as possible that have worked in addressing that challenge.

The ***Nordic countries*** considered that the fragmentary and inconsistent arrangements with publishers to secure deposit rights and short term embargoes is the most pressing issue in the region and presented solutions to address this issue. The ***North West region*** considered that the most relevant challenge is the fact that OA appears to have low priority with research performing organisations and funders, and highlighted various success stories that can be used as evidence of the positive effects of OA. The ***South West region*** considered that different countries within the region experience different challenges. The most relevant challenges identified considered that: developing OA policies is difficult, the current infrastructure hinders OA, and the arrangements with publishers to secure deposit rights and short embargo periods was the most relevant challenge are fragmentary and inconsistent. The ***East Europe region***, identified two major challenges. The first is that OA appears to have low priority with research performing organisations and funders and the second also relates to arrangements with publishers to secure deposit rights and short embargo periods. The ***South East region*** considered that the low awareness about OA and the low priority given to OA by policymakers has hindered progress in developing and implementing effective policies in the region.

Day Two

8. European Collaboration on OA and the Knowledge Net: Work Groups Session II

In the second work groups' session, participants gathered in regional work groups. Each participant was asked to complete a few post-it notes with a sentence starting '***The Knowledge Net will have succeeded in five years if…***' Considerations on how the Knowledge Net will have succeeded, on what it should do to achieve success and on what each member should do to ensure its success were numerous. Examples of issues that the KN should consider include: developing a clear mandate that fills a real gap in the existing landscape, taking into consideration that member states will have achieved different levels of development and that each will have different objectives, promoting policy related work with a focus on advocacy, increasing policymakers awareness on OA issues and its importance, and promoting harmonisation and alignment of policies and infrastructures.

9. Developing a Roadmap for the Effective Development and Implementation of the Knowledge Net

In the final session, participants were asked to share their views on how the Knowledge Net can be effectively developed. A preliminary roadmap was developed during the session.

First, participants considered how the Knowledge Net will be successful:

- Define what KN will be… Programme or Organisation? – **sustainability**;
- Recognised as an **advisory body**: interaction with other organisations;
- Visible **results**: policy alignment; consistent funder policies;
- **Sustainability**, relevance, recognition internationally, raise priority of OA;
- Facilitate development of **infrastructure**;
- **Metrics** for evaluation of research/benefits of OA;
- **Advocacy** improvements – clear understanding of policies;
- Practical help; united voice towards policymakers; **action plans** for specific stakeholders.

Second, participants considered what the Knowledge Net will do in practical ways:

- Clear **goal** setting;
- Provide **guidelines, statistics, documentation, case studies**;
- Create **national task groups** to report to KN;
- Identify **work areas** (real!);
- **Monitor** developments/tools to monitor compliance levels;
- Recognise **needs** of individual countries;
- **Recommendations** regarding licences/embargoes.

Finally, participants considered the mission, activities, outcomes and goals, and sustainability of the Knowledge Net…

- Mission: clear concept and definition of the Knowledge Net, a 'sharing' organisation providing direction to Key Nodes, promote alignment and monitor compliance across stakeholders and countries, provide evidence-based information regionally and internationally;
- Activities: quarterly updates, workshops with institutions and funders, develop a harmonised mandate proposal, produce advocacy materials;
- Outcomes and goals: develop a clear, concise policy (template) on alignment with H2020 policy
- Sustainability: consider the long-term sustainability of the Knowledge Net.