



## OPEN ACCESS FOR RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

In the present-day academic community, publications are a means of communication in the research environment, as well as between scientists and those consumers who are interested in the results of their research. At the same time, by publishing results of their research, authors accomplish both high goals of advancing scientific progress and more pragmatic goals of protecting their intellectual property and obtaining their individual reputation through citation. For many scientists, publications have turned into requirements, on fulfilling which their further career depends.

Traditionally, results of all types of research have been published and continue to be published in scientific peer-reviewed paper journals and conference proceedings. However, the advent of the Internet and digital technologies has made revolutionary changes in the process of publishing scientific information (as well as any other information in general). A new format has emerged – open access journals, which have a number of differences from traditional types of publications.

An open access publication is defined as digital, online information, free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. As opposed to traditional journals, open access journals do not charge a subscription fee or a pay per view. Authors, their agencies or funding organizations pay for “open access” to make it free for readers. As a result of a number of studies, it has been proved that publications in open access journals are viewed more often than those published in traditional journals. Accordingly, this may lead to a greater number of citations and an increase in the h-index, which is the indicator of a scientist’s performance.

An obvious benefit of open access journals to readers and libraries is that there is no need to pay for a single article or a journal subscription. This is important for researchers from low-income countries. Open access can help scientists in such countries participate in the international research community. Important advantages of open access publications, along with increased availability and visibility, are shorter publication times compared to non-open access journals. Studies show that the number of readers is also constantly increasing. From the social point of view, it is assumed that if information and ideas are free, they contribute to improved research, education, and economic growth. Open access is not limited to

the academic world. Enterprises and business structures also have access to research results, which can help them contribute to economic growth and the development of the knowledge economy, thus leading to a greater economic impact. Finally, if research funding comes from a government wallet, that is, from taxpayers, advocates of open access argue, then almost all members of society should have the right to scientific information obtained from this research. True, not every government in the world fully supports R&D; for example, the governments in Japan and Switzerland pay only about 10%. In such cases, possibilities for publishing research results commissioned by corporations are definitely lower.

If government agencies or professional communities do not subsidize open access journals, then authors themselves should pay for the publication of their articles in journals, with some experts citing such figures as \$1,000-3,000 for an article in a serious open access journal. In addition, there is an article processing charge to be paid at the preliminary stage of the article review process. However, some open access journals offer a discount or waive a fee for articles submitted by authors from low-income countries.

However, it should be recognized that today’s subscription journals, which are published in the traditional format, still have a higher level of prestige and value in accordance with their impact factor. Many open access journals have greatly enhanced their reputation, and they publish fresh content on new topics with innovative approaches, while print journals with established traditions, experience, and a certain degree of prejudice can sometimes narrow possibilities for publishing trial or too innovative materials. Yet many researchers and readers do not dare to publish in or consider open access journals, because they question the quality of a published work. There are certain grounds for this distrust. Since such journals have to cover their expenses, and a significant part of their income comes from publication fees, they may want to publish as many articles as possible, which adversely affects the overall quality. In addition, there are cases of online publisher companies or predatory journals that mostly charge money to put research on the Internet.

Open access journals do not always have a peer review level like established print jour-

nals that have strict quality criteria and experienced reviewers. In this situation, the format of journals combining both versions of publications seems to be expedient. Therefore, some publishers have created a hybrid system of publication levels. The so-called “Golden Open Access” means that once an article is published in a traditional journal, its final version will be freely available directly from a journal website. Another option is that publishers give authors the choice of whether they want to publish their article for free in the traditional way with a subscriber access – or pay a commission to make an article available on an open access basis. Most academic societies continue to publish their journals simultaneously in print and on the Internet, charging for “print on demand”.

Along with this practice, open access is also often seen as a solution to difficult situations with periodicals, when many libraries are forced to reduce journal subscriptions due to price increases, or in another rare, but possible situation, when a journal is forced to stop accepting articles for publication due to a large amount of accumulated materials. However, academic publishing is an expensive service. Experts believe that any emerging models must be economically stable in order to have chances for successful development, and the open access system does not yet provide a stable and tangible income for publishers. Meanwhile, few people know that the publishing system is a large-scale business that earns a lot of money owing to publications of researchers; some experts estimate profits of publishers at more than 35%. Therefore, a publication policy that does not guarantee a steady income is unlikely to exist for a long time.

Proponents of open access to scientific literature often optimistically portray it as the ultimate and inevitable model for academic publishing, but obviously it is only one of the possible options for the development of the publishing activity and will further develop in search of new solutions, ways and opportunities for researchers. In Kazakhstan, many academic journals use a hybrid form of publications, that is, they have a subscription paper version of a journal and an electronic website with open access to published articles. As for foreign journals, Kazakhstani users are under the same conditions as researchers and readers from other countries of the world.

## Politics, Foreign Affairs, and Security

- During his visit to Russia, U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and other officials. The negotiations focused on the U.S.-announced withdrawal from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.
- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and Russian President Vladimir Putin met in Istanbul to discuss prospects of political settlement in Syria. Main issues addressed at the multilateral summit were the situation in the Idlib province, humanitarian aid, a new constitutional draft, and the eventual reconstruction of Syria.
- U.S. Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Emily Puma visited Tajikistan and Turkmenistan to hold bilateral political consultations. The parties discussed ways to intensify mutual trade, energy, security and humanitarian cooperation.
- The Turkmen governmental delegation visited Japan to hold talks with the country's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, other officials, and heads of private companies. The parties signed a number of documents aimed at enhancing cooperation in various areas.
- President Putin signed an edict providing for the imposition of special economic measures against Ukrainian individuals and companies in response to Kiev's unfriendly actions. The Russian government will specify entities to be targeted by sanctions.
- Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kairat Abdrakhmanov met with his newly appointed Kyrgyz counterpart Chingiz Aidarbekov in Astana. The ministers discussed bilateral political, economic, and humanitarian relations, as well as issues of regional cooperation, including on water and energy.
- The delegations of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan met in Ashgabat to discuss a draft protocol on cooperation in the fight against illegal extraction of biological resources (poaching) in the Caspian Sea. Participants paid special attention to the issues of preservation and reproduction of the sea's fish stock.
- The eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes was held in Astana. Participants discussed issues related to the implementation of the convention.

## Economy, Finance, and Energy

- During his visit to Kazakhstan, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross met with President Nazarbayev and Kazakh government officials. The parties discussed prospects for expanding economic, trade and investment cooperation between the two countries. The Kazakh-U.S. bilateral trade in January-August 2018 reached \$1.462 billion, which is 29% higher than in the same period in 2017 (\$1.133 billion).
- The U.S. Business Week was organized for the first time in Uzbekistan by USAID and the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Trade. During the annual business forum held as part of the event, U.S. and Uzbek companies signed 13 agreements worth \$2.5 billion.
- The first Forum of Regions of Belarus and Ukraine was held in the Belarusian city of Gomel with the participation of presidents of the two countries Alexander Lukashenko and Petro Poroshenko. As a result, the forum participants signed contracts worth \$101.5 million.
- The government of Uzbekistan issued a decree specifying 17 national sustainable development goals until 2030. The list includes such objectives as promoting healthy lifestyle, ensuring access to affordable energy for all, strengthening food security, reducing inequality, achieving economic growth through increased productivity, infrastructural development, industrialization, etc.
- The Eurasian Economic Union's (EEU) third annual forum titled "Eurasian Week" was held in Yerevan. More than 2,500 participants from 25 countries attended the forum that focused on the ways of developing favorable business climate in the EEU, strengthening industrial relations and export capacity, and creating attractive conditions for foreign investors.
- The sixth meeting of the subcommittee on energy of the Turkmen-Chinese intergovernmental cooperation committee was held in Ashgabat. During the negotiations, the parties discussed prospects of mutually beneficial cooperation in the oil and gas, gas chemical, and electric power industries.
- The National Bank of Kazakhstan published data on its interventions in the foreign exchange market during 1996-2018. The bank made the largest interventions in 2014, when it sold over \$22 billion, which was caused by the downward market pressure on tenge. The minimum yearly purchase was recorded in 1999 when the bank bought only \$10 million.

## Society and Culture

- On the 95th anniversary of the proclamation of Turkey as a republic, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan officially inaugurated a new airport in Istanbul. When fully completed, the airport will become the world's largest civil aviation hub.
- The Global Conference on Primary Health Care, entitled "From Almaty towards Universal Health Coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals", was held in Astana. The event organized by the government of Kazakhstan, the World Health Organization and UNICEF, concluded with the adoption of the Declaration of Astana calling all countries of the world to strengthen their primary health care systems as an essential step toward achieving universal health coverage.
- The ministries of foreign affairs of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan held consultations in Astana to review the state of bilateral consular affairs. The parties also discussed an introduction of the Silk Road visa that would help promote tourism by allowing visa holders to visit both countries with a single visa.
- A unified system for registering international mobile equipment identity (IMEI) codes of mobile devices will be launched in Uzbekistan starting April 2019. The measure is directed at protecting the Uzbek domestic market from counterfeit mobile products.
- The Kazakhstan-made film "Amre" ("Paris Song") won the Silver Screen Award at the first stage of the Hollywood Film Festival held in Los Angeles. The film about legendary Kazakh tenor Amre Kashaubayev was commissioned by the Kazakh Ministry of Culture and Sport and jointly shot by Kazakhfilm and the DAR Play company.
- The Zhambyl Zhabayev Kazakh Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra started its week-long tour in Ireland and Great Britain by performing a concert in Dublin. The tour was organized by the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Kazakhstan with support from the Kazakh Embassy in the UK as part of the Modern Kazakh Culture in a Global World project to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan's diplomatic relations with Ireland and the UK.
- The Days of Culture of Turkmenistan were held in the Russian Federation, with a number of exhibitions and concerts organized in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The cultural events were aimed at promoting bilateral cooperation and friendly relations between the two countries.