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Open Access in Romania

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Romania has come a long way since the fall of the Ceausescu regime in 1989. Since then the democratic liberal reforms have set free the creation of knowledge that previously was controlled and sanitized by the Socialist dictatorship. The steps that Romania has taken as a constituent member of the European Union in implementing Open Access are worth revisiting as these will allow us to track the success of Open Access within Romanian institutions of Higher Education. In this article, I will survey some basic information on the status of OA in Romania as well as provide information related to some key sites of the academic libraries that host OA Romanian journals that might be of interest to the librarian community.

In 2014, the Romanian government released a report entitled, "STRATEGIA NAȚIONALĂ DE CERCETARE DEZVOLTARE ȘI INOVARE: 2014-2020 (http://www.research.ro/uploads/politici-cd/strategia-cdi-2014-2020/strategia-cdi-2020_-proiect-hg.pdf)", that outlined the plan for the development and evolution of research in Romania through 2020.^[1] This plan is part of public policy developed in 2007 that envisions improvement and strengthening of research infrastructure. While the report discusses the specifics of how to improve research infrastructure, it also communicates Romania's public policy goals when it comes to the furthering of Open Access (OA) in Romania. The report asserts that the "*accesului deschis*", or OA, should be part of providing access to all scientific research that is produced using public funding as well as for the provision of funding for gold select OA.^[2]

This strategy envisions an investment of 2% of the GDP in research infrastructure; however, the specifics of how these investments will be diverted to improve OA were not outlined.^[3] According to World Bank Data, at the time of the writing of this article, the current GDP of Romania in 2015 US Dollars was \$177.95 billion and the population was 19,832,382.^[4] While the specifics of how this portion of the GDP might get spent on OA might not be of immediate importance to us as librarians, knowing that OA is one of the defined priorities of the Romanian State is important. The individual institutions of higher education that are subsumed under the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (*Ministerul Educației și Cercetării Științifice*) are mandated to make their publicly funded and subsidized scientific research available to a wide audience along the Open Access model. To this end, there are several important websites that provide succinct information on the state of OA in contemporary Romania.

One of the important websites that highlights the OA in Romania is Kosson.ro. It was launched in 2014 and is considered to be a new network for OA actions in Romania. The network collates new OA-related initiatives as they appear in Romania. However, contributions of scientific work to the Kosson repository is voluntary.^[5] The screenshot below of the landing page of Kosson project highlights the dynamic development of OA in Romania. The project provides integrated access to the libraries, archives and other relevant websites.



Image 1: The landing page of the Kosson project

There is a separate tab for OA that highlights some of the latest developments as well as OA policies of Romania. The English language version of the OA facet is captured below.



Image 2: The English interface of Kosson

According to OpenAire website’s following description, “The ultimate goal is to become a clearing house for advocating, dissemination and sharing good practices concerning OA and information management (setting the future web point [www.acces-deschis.ro www.acces-deschis.ro]) in Romania and neighboring countries.”^[6] OpenAire is a European Union project that provides OA infrastructure to its participants and allows its users to search for OA publications. Besides providing access to the OA publication, the site also provides access to multiple datasets. It informs users of upcoming collaboration plans, like the EU and Latin America OA

collaboration.^[7]

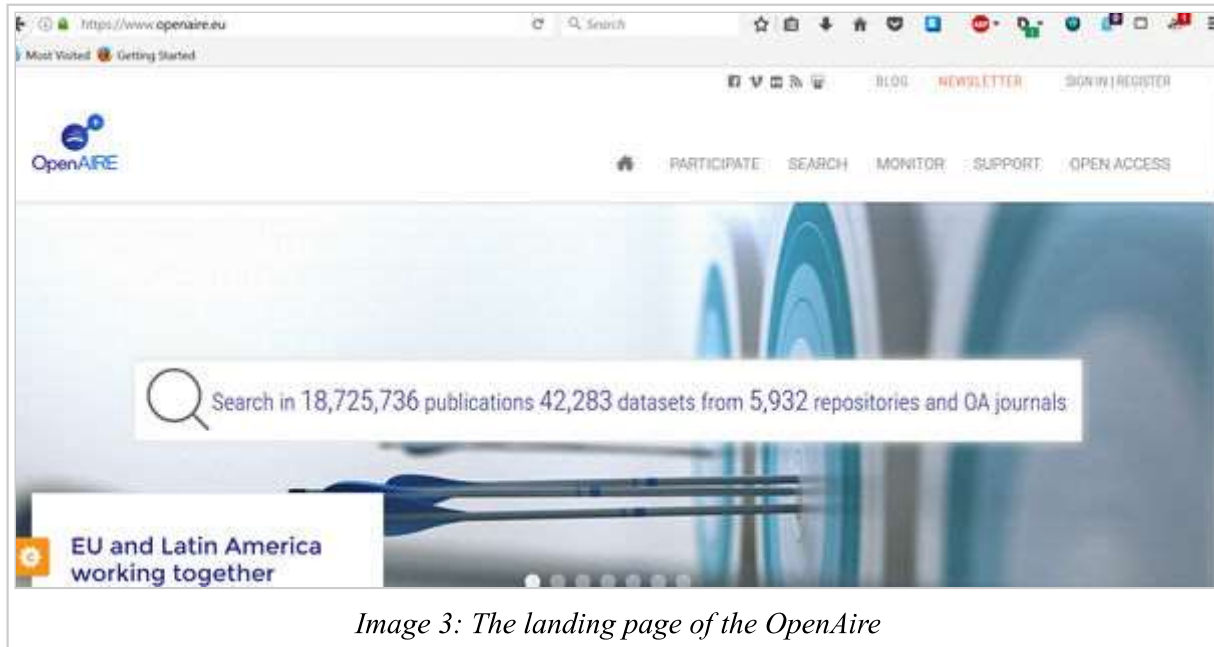


Image 3: The landing page of the OpenAire

While Kosson has served as a community of users who voluntarily contribute, Romanian OA policies have led to the creation of an integrated website called Access-Deschis.ro (<http://www.acces-deschis.ro/>). This site is a one-stop shop for OA in a Romanian national context. In addition to policy documentation and linkages to other OA initiatives, the site also has an interesting GIS-related feature.



Image 4: The web-site of the Romanian Open-Access community portal.

As shown in the image below, the site's landing page hosts an interactive map of Romania that allows visitors to the site to gain a "quick tour" of OA institutions. Visitors can quickly see how many OA titles are available at each

site.

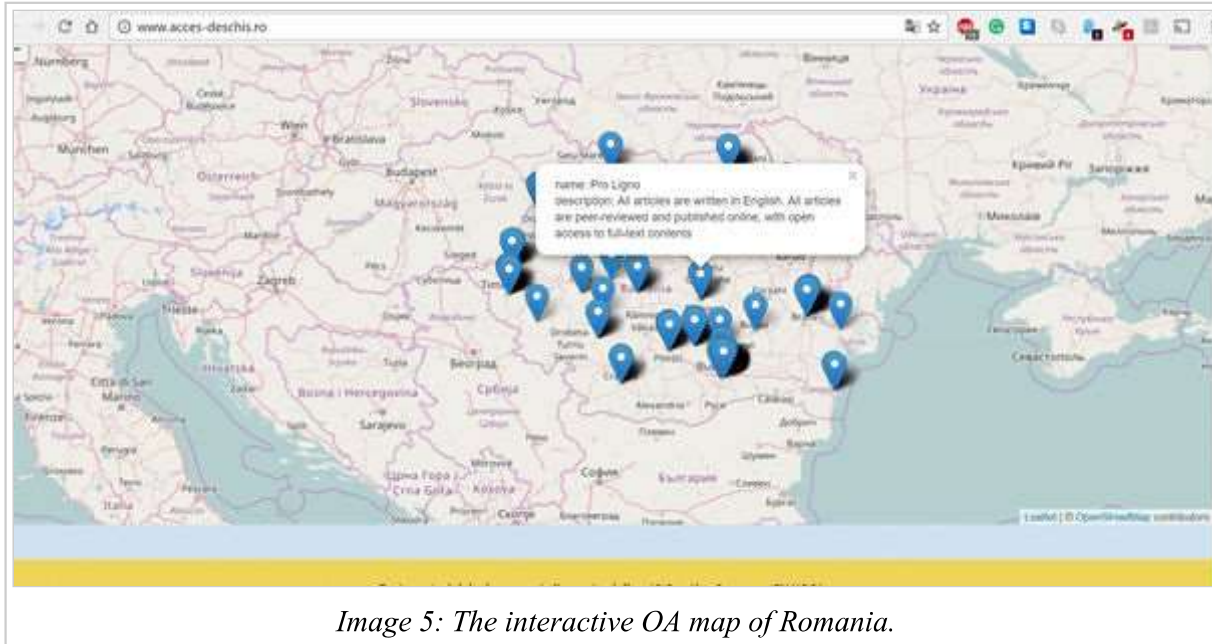


Image 5: The interactive OA map of Romania.

This interactive map allows users to zoom in to a particular city or a region within Romania. For example, if one looks at the city of Iași that is located in Eastern Romania, one can see multiple OA titles as shown in Image 6 below. One of the disadvantages of this website, in my opinion, is the fact that I was unable to find an index to OA journals on this website that are depicted on the map in a user-friendly format. This led to the creation of such an index using Excel files. I was able to create two indexes to this end. The first was OA journals by the places of publication as well as their subject disciplines (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2X4Dwwb8kQpdIVfOWFSSjg4RjA/view?usp=sharing>) and the second index (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2X4Dwwb8kQpOUw2YjIHdJgtcW8/view?usp=sharing>) was created to indicate the dates of publication, from the most recent to the oldest issues that are available for these journals along the OA model.

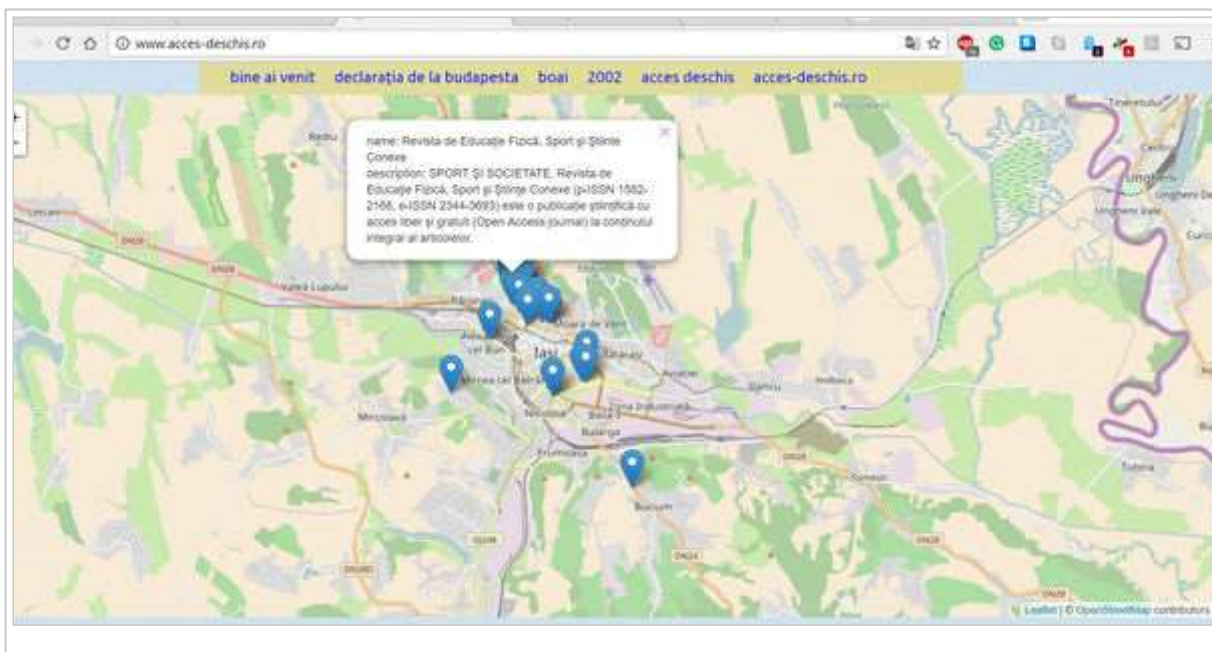


Image 6: The OA titles from Iași.

For the purpose of this article, I decided to look at five major cities of Romania and what OA titles they host, excluding Bucharest for several reasons. First, Bucharest being the capital of Romania can be construed as a major location where OA will be dominant. Second, the other Romanian cities in the context of OA infrastructure development need closer scrutiny as literature about OA in the regional centers of Romania in the North American Library and Information Science context remains scant.^[8]



Image 7: LISA Open access articles on Romania as of February 4, 2017

The cities that I chose for the purpose of this article were Craiova, Cluj-Napoca (Kolozsvár), Constanța, Iași, and Timișoara. These cities are regional urban centers with populations greater than 250,000 and which host several institutions of Higher Education.

This link (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2X4Dwwb8kQpdIVfOWFSSjg4RjA/view?usp=sharing>) provides in-depth information on each title that this map indexes. There were 102 titles that were indexed as OA titles.

The breakdown by general subject areas and cities is listed here (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BwuvOfK95NMmaTBSYVVLT2xqbDQ/view?usp=sharing>). A snapshot of what you'll find is below.

City	Institutions	Number of OA titles	Arts and Humanities	Social Sciences	Engineering, Mathematics and Physical Sciences	Biological Sciences
Craiova	The University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Craiova	6	0	4	1	1
	University of Craiova	4		4		
Cluj-Napoca	Babeş-Bolyai University	19	6	9	4	0
	University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine	6				6
	"Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	2				2
	Technical University of Cluj-Napoca	3	1	1	1	

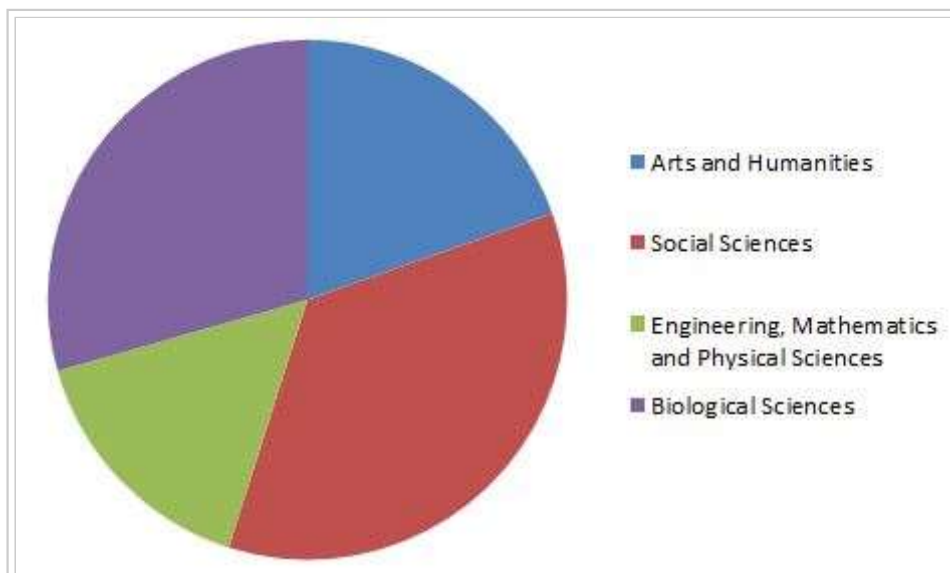
The number of OA journals by institution and broad subject categories.

The distribution by subject of these journals shows an interesting trend. The split between the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences group when compared with the Biological Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics and Physical Sciences group is approximately 55% to 45%.^[9]

Number of OA titles	Arts and Humanities	Social Sciences	Engineering, Mathematics and Physical Sciences	Biological Sciences
101	20	36	16	30

Subject distribution of OA journals.

A graphical distribution of journals by broad subject categories is shown below.



The distribution of the OA journals by broad subject categories.

While the data that I have analyzed on OA journals informs us about the subject distribution, it does not provide a complete picture about the nature of access. I was curious to know, given the OA mandate from the Romanian government, how many institutions from the city have made their publications publicly accessible. And more importantly, I wanted to know the following: what were the earliest issues that were available for patron to access? Thirdly, at the time of writing this article in February of 2017, I wanted to see how many journal titles had the latest issues that were accessible in their full-text format?

From this link (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B2X4Dwwb8kQpOUw2YjlHdjgtcW8/view?usp=sharing>), one can see each journal title has its own specific way of providing access to the latest as well as earliest issues. For example, in the *Annals of the University of Craiova: Mathematics and Computer Science Series*, the oldest issue that is available for access is from 1970 and the latest issue that is available online is volume 43, no. 2, from 2016. For the *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai: Series Informatica*, the oldest available issue is no. 2, 1999 and the latest issue is from 2016. However, for most journals, the oldest issues are mostly from the years 2000-present. The

lag in the latest issues appearing online is due to several reasons. Some plausible explanations are: the frequency of publication, which can vary from title to title; the issues are perhaps first released in paper format and have a sort of moratorium on their online appearance; or an institution is simply late in putting them online.

As one can see, for this article, I was able to present some relevant data on the evolution of OA in Romania since the fall of the Socialist regime. OA-related government-mandated policies and the EU framework have continued to have positive effects on the individual institutional level. Whereas on the urban level we see definitive growth in OA, the institutions that are hosting these journals are also dependent to a certain extent on governmental subsidies. While a certain percentage of GDP is envisioned to be dedicated to OA within the Romanian framework, it is difficult to understand how this funding gets transferred or distributed on the urban local level. The analysis of data from 100+ Romanian OA journals shows an interesting mix of the "Sciences" and the "Humanities and the Social Sciences" subject disciplines. I suppose that to this end more research will be done in North America in the near future.

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2. ↑ Ibid., see note i.
3. ↑ "Despre Proiect." Elaborarea strategiei nationale in domeniul cercetarii dezvoltarii tehnologice si inovarii pentru perioada 20142020. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Jan. 2017. <<http://www.cdi2020.ro/>>.
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5. ↑ Kosson. "Kosson." Kosson | OpenAIRE partners. N.p., 19 Oct. 2015. Web. 29 Jan. 2017. <<https://www.openaire.eu/kosson>>.
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8. ↑ A quick search in LISA (Library and Information Science) on 4 February revealed 7 results for keyword search for Romania and Open Access. See also <https://www.qoam.eu>
9. ↑ The data was rounded up to the next decimal point.

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