

PALOMERA Interview

Date:

General information

Gender: male/female

Stakeholder type (multiple choice, delete irrelevant):

- policy makers
- research funding organisations
- **research performing organisations**
- publishers
- librarians and infrastructure providers
- other (specify)

Country the interview is focused on: Lithuania

Language of the interview conducted: English

INTERVIEWER

Recording is in progress. I would like to also inform you that this interview is conducted as a part of the PALOMERA Project. We're going to focus on different perspective of open access to academic books such as political, economical, social, technological, and environmental issues. I Would really want to begin with a warm-up question. Could you tell me, briefly, about yourself and your professional experience, academic experience related to the issue of open access and maybe to open access books?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, firstly, thank you very much for your invitation to get engaged in your project. I think it's very important to analyse open access books. I know about books, not so much (about open access books) because I think that everyone knows more about open access journals and repositories. The same with me. My relation with open access was that I defended PhD before two years in 2021, in which I analysed the scholars' Open Access publishing behaviour, but I concentrated only on scholarly articles and repositories. So I know more about this field of open access, not so much about open books, but I still hope that my knowledge about the whole situation in Lithuania, scholarly publishing will help you somehow. It's interesting, if I am the one that you interview from Lithuania, you will have more people that you will discuss this question?

INTERVIEWER

No, we really try to reach more people from Lithuania, but it was really hard to, not only reach, but to set the interview. But also, we've got this methodology that from each country, you've got one representative. I saw your paper on open access, and I was like, this is the perfect candidate. And also, of course, no worries, because this is just a new subject and open access to books or to monographs. It's not something that we are using now, but we are trying to introduce this idea and to be more aware that it's something that is missing somehow in the policies and the new strategies for open access. It's more about to know and understand the challenges and problems which are connected to it. We are aware that it's normal. Like in Poland also, we don't have a policy to open access books, but we want to analyse why is that and maybe where the problem lies. Thank you for introducing yourself. I think that it will be perfect for sure you know everything about Lithuanian situation. So firstly, I would like to ask you about national policies in your country.

INTERVIEWER

In our project, we define academic books as scholarly, peer-reviewed books, including monographs, book chapters, edited collection, critical editions, and other long-form, scholarly works. And so if you've got maybe in your country, in your institution, some a definition of academic books, are they defined the same or is something missing in this definition?

INTERVIEWEE

As far as I know, it is defined the same.

INTERVIEWER

To confirm something, they need to be peer-reviewed to be considered an academic in your country?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, they should be peer-reviewed.

INTERVIEWER

Can you tell me the current status of national or maybe regional, of course, in small countries or maybe more national policies or regulation concerning open access books. When you've got a strategy or policy, do academic or open access books are the element of their policy, or they're not there?

INTERVIEWEE

As far as I know, there is no regulation that would be dedicated exactly for open access books as a separate, only for open access in general. But in the definition of open access there is also books included, so even though open access books is not



mentioned separately, we have books in our policy as a part of open access publishing. Open access concept is understood as open access journals, books and repositories. The open access books as a term is mentioned in Lithuanian research council policy (Guidelines of open access to scholarly publications and data <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalActPrint/lt?jfwid=tu0odns4k&documentId=8113c930e0b811e5b18181b790158f61&category=TAD>):

- Article processing charges (APC), **book processing charges** (BPC) and the costs of publishing in open access journals or **open access books** may be covered by projects funded by the Council.
- All books and articles published in open access journals for which article processing charges and/or **book processing charges** have been paid must be published under a Creative Commons CC-BY licence.

So, there is a possibility to get funding from Lithuanian research council to publish open access book.

The Lithuanian Research Council is the coordinating body for Lithuanian open access activities. And then we have universities and research institutes that have their own policies also on this. So, we have regulation on national and institutional levels. There is no separate national policy or regulation that would be dedicated to open access book publishing only (just in corporate with open access publishing as a whole).

INTERVIEWER

That's perfect. We did some data collection, of course, about it, and I couldn't see anything about the monographs itself. It was a part of a publication somehow in a definition, but not as a different element. But please check it if you can.

INTERVIEWEE

I think that nothing's changed. But still, I will check these documents, maybe they included something. But as far as I know, no, that's not the case.

INTERVIEWER

Yes. Is there any motivation or incentives for open access publishing in the national and regional?

INTERVIEWEE

Level.

INTERVIEWER

Or system?

INTERVIEWEE

Talking about open access books, yes?

INTERVIEWER



Yes, but open access also.

INTERVIEWEE

As I mentioned before, there is a possibility to get funding for publishing scholarly article or book from Lithuanian research council. So, you can publish it as open access. Also, you as an author if you publish a book, you can upload it to repository (it doesn't matter if it was published as open access or not). Of course, it should be in line with the copyright.

Well, we have eLABA, a repository (<https://www.elaba.lt/elaba-portal/>) it's like the main repository that covers almost all scientific institutions of Lithuania (it includes 47 institutions: <https://www.elaba.lt/elaba-portal/elaba/institucijos>). And so, actually, we have this repository for all universities, colleges, universities of Applied Sciences, universities and institutes. It's very convenient because you can find publications from the authors from all Lithuanian institutions. So, I think it works very well. There are also books and parts of books in this repository. Well, I think it's the same tendency in other countries also that scholars are encouraged to write more articles than books. And I think this tradition comes from more technological sciences. And so, scholars in humanity and social science are also encouraged to publish more articles than books. There are attestation requirements to publish in high level journals that are referred in Scopus or ISI Web of Science databases. The impact factor of the journal is important. You need to put a lot of effort to write a book, but still you have requirements to write articles. So, it seems to me that scholars tend to write more articles and fewer books. Monographs are more common for humanities and social sciences fields. Also, scholars are encouraged to write articles in English to increase the international visibility of the publication.

INTERVIEWER

We will go to this social, maybe more social issues later. But thank you for that. It's super helpful. Amazing that you're studying behaviour of this and this environmental and social aspect. But I'm sorry for that, but I need to go back a little bit for a political component because this is also something important for us to understand if, this is the question, if there are any forms of support for policy creation in the institution, universities, colleges, et cetera, from ministerial or governmental level, like recommendation or workshop or maybe even grants for introducing the policies for open access in your country.

INTERVIEWEE

Well, we have initiatives, as I said, in universities. In my university there are workshops organised for researchers about open access, we also have conferences and other events that aim to encourage researchers to publish in open access. Also, university



librarians are very helpful and researchers can ask their advice about publishing in open access when it is needed.

Also, Lithuanian Research Council financed research about the current status of open access in Lithuania in 2022. It aimed to evaluate the practice and progress achieved in the application of the guidelines of open access to scholarly publications and data (<https://www.lmt.lt/lt/doclib/wakj1omienmt1ct479xhq5by9ht26dy>). According to the results of this research, Lithuanian research council will improve the Guidelines of open access to scholarly publications and data (<https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalActPrint/lt?ifwid=tu0odns4k&documentId=8113c930e0b811e5b18181b790158f61&category=TAD>) in the near future.

INTERVIEWER

Can you tell me one more time what was the period of this working group and the whole guidelines? When was that exactly?

INTERVIEWEE

It was 2022, September to December.

INTERVIEWER

Okay, that's perfect. Thank you. Can you tell me in your institution, because you are [UNIVERSITY], do you have open access policy?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, we have open access policy. We have open access policy, we have open science policy. Also, we have the separate guidelines, how exactly we are going to implement those provisions in open science guidelines. Yes, we have. I think it's quite good, those guidelines, and in line with the European Union directions.

INTERVIEWER

But still, you tell me that you are not paying so much attention on books, but they are somehow involved there, or maybe as a definition of the scientific publication. Are there any comments or any fragments on the books.

INTERVIEWEE

As far as I know, no. The books are not separate, but I need to check. I can do it now if you have to be sure. I can check now. As far as I remember, there are no books mentioned. But in the definition of open access there is also books included, so even though open access books is not mentioned separately, we have books in our policy as a part of open access publishing. Open access concept is understood as open access journals, books and repositories.



INTERVIEWER

I saw the open access policy scheme by [UNIVERSITY 1] on its website. The guidelines for open access to research results. Yeah, this is what I saw. But I couldn't see any books.

INTERVIEWEE

It's written. I can send you a link. It's open access.

INTERVIEWER

You can also tell me now, and it's going to be in this transcript, so it's even better.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes. We have, Open Science Policy Guidelines, and there is written in the infrastructure part of the guidelines that the [UNIVERSITY 1] – support open access platform for the journals and books published by the University.

INTERVIEWER

They are mentioned somehow.

INTERVIEWEE

It's good.

INTERVIEWER

Sometimes they are even not mentioned. So we covered the political part. Can we go to the economic component? If you're ready, of course. Can you tell me a little bit about general funding model in Lithuania? Are there any differences in funding opportunities for open access and non-open access? This time books, of course, monographs, because we are talking about it. But for example, I've got this case when you've got support from public funding, sometimes you need to publish it in open access. Do you have something like this in your country?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, we have. We have opportunity to write a project proposal for Lithuanian Research Council to ask for... To fund the publishing article in the Golden Open Access Journal or to publish a book. So there are opportunities and there are opportunities also talking about the university I work, it's [UNIVERSITY 1]. So there is also an opportunity inside the institution to ask for funding if you want to publish a book. We have quite a really strong publishing house that has page, like electronic page. So we can find books in electronic formats on [UNIVERSITY 1] publishing house page. It's really very convenient. There are quite a lot of open access books published by the University in which I work. I also noticed that other universities in Lithuania also publish open access books, and they are available on the internet. So, I think that there are real possibilities to publish open access book in Lithuania.

Also, there is a requirement to upload full-text article after it was published to the repository eLABA and make it publicly available (if the licence agreement signed with the publisher allows it). There is also a recommendation to upload other scientific production (books also) to eLABA. So, you can make your book publicly available also by uploading it to the repository and scholars are encouraged to do it in our university.

INTERVIEWER

What about other alternative business models? You told me about the Golden Way, but for example, diamonds or auto-accepted manuscript, delayed open access, this models, do you use it or support it?

INTERVIEWEE

In Lithuania? Talking about Lithuania, yes?

INTERVIEWER

Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWEE

We have green model when all publications that are published should be uploaded to national repository eLABa.

When we talk about Lithuania, we can see that there is no, like scholarly publishing business in Lithuania. About 90% of all scholarly journals are published by universities, and research institutes. They publish diamond open access journals and no fee is applied for authors nor readers. Publication costs may be covered by project funds (from the Lithuanian Research Council or other institutions) or by institution. Also, as I mentioned, there are quite a lot of open access books published by my University and other Universities in Lithuania as well.

Publishing scholarly journals in Lithuania is not a business field because it's a small language country. I don't know how to say it, it's a private-like business.

INTERVIEWER

Like the private sector, right?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes. So when we talk about scholarly journals that are published in Lithuania, almost all of them are diamond open access. Publishing costs are covered by Lithuanian Research Council and by the institutions themselves. And we have some of the golden access journals, but it's really a very small number.

INTERVIEWER

And when it comes to books, there is not yet this monitoring system of that, right? Because you are talking about journals, but when it comes.

INTERVIEWEE

No, there is no monitoring system how much open access books were published.

INTERVIEWER

Not yet implemented somehow, right? This is just a support, but not.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Complex for a journalist.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, not complex. And yes, for books, but there is still opportunity. Really, there is opportunity. We have opportunity to publish open access books.

INTERVIEWER

Yeah, that's perfect. And now we're going to talk a little bit about the social component of Open Access books. Can you tell me what is the role of academic books in general? I know that is your expertise also to understand the behaviour of researchers. In the national and institutional system research assessment. For example, our Open Access books are taken into consideration when it comes to the research performance assessment of the researchers. What is it like?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, it comes with the assessment. There is a requirement in national legislation mentioned (Lithuanian research council <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/e3bac890645c11eb9dc7b575f08e8bea>) that you can become a research fellow in a University or research institute if you conduct research and publish its results in monographies, articles and / or in other scholarly publications.

INTERVIEWER

To go to the next level?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Are there any differences in how much credit is given to... Between different types of academic books, for example, when it's edited volume or single author monographs or academic or-.

INTERVIEWEE



Yes, there are. I don't know the exact numbers, but there are... If it's the length of your text, if it's part of a book, or it's a whole book, and how many authors there are, so it's counted. It's, and those requirements are written. They are clear for scholars, and if they want to make a career in the university, they know these requirements and they usually follow it. But if you need the exact numbers, I can check.

INTERVIEWER

For that. I think that it's super nice to have them, but you don't need to check it now. You can just write it to me after, and I will add it to our research data collection. Is there any motivation to publish in the local languages or rather in English?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, scholars are encouraged to write in English for higher international visibility of the publication.

INTERVIEWER

But it's not mandatory to have more, for example, points in the assessments or something.

INTERVIEWEE

This? As far as I know, no.

INTERVIEWER

Can you also tell me something about the prestige of the open access books? Are there, for example, if the book in the open access is more prestige or less prestige than the one which is like sell?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes. Well, for me, as an open access ambassador, I think that I value more open access to books and I don't see any difference in its quality. I think it's especially booking, because we have a lot of articles in open access, but many books are for sale. . And sometimes you see the book that you would like to read and that is very good for your lessons and your research, but you cannot access it straightly. You need to check if it is available through the library. And sometimes if it is not accessible through the library, it costs really a lot of money, so you cannot buy it. And it is not good. And I know a lot of books that are really very good quality and that are in open access, and I use them. But talking about how others see it, what I noticed that in Lithuania also, there is a tendency to see Open Access journals and I think books also as less prestige as the ones that are for sale. Some time ago I heard scholars talking about open access as about something that if you cannot count on, it was something for them as Wikipedia.

INTERVIEWEE



that is not good to use for scholarly purposes. But now it changes. That attitude changes. I think it changes very rapidly. And if four years ago, open access, even journals were something like Wikipedia, something not clear, what it is, now, I think, that more and more scholars know what it is, and they... They see that open access journals are more cited and so on. So, I think the same with the books. I think the same with the books, if a scholar sees that it is peer-reviewed, it is published by a good publishing house that has a good reputation. So, I see that if the publishing house is well-known and prestigious, then there is no difference if it's open access or not. But if the publishing house is new or not very well known, then the book is also seen as less prestige, and it doesn't matter if it is open access or for sale. I think that the understanding if the book is prestigious or not highly depends on the publishing house.

INTERVIEWEE

But the same with the journals as well. I think that.

INTERVIEWER

The author, yeah?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, I think that here, prestige is the publishing house.

INTERVIEWER

Okay, so.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, and maybe for books more, the publishing house is important. The name of the publishing house.

INTERVIEWER

Yeah, it's rational also. I do understand a little bit. Does the open access books appear in any public discourse or like, of course, in the research or academy level in your environment?

INTERVIEWEE

Well, not so much. Scholars are talking more about scholarly journals and in which to publish, which have higher impact factor, what are the requirements for authors and so on. But talking about books, well, not so much. Some of my colleagues discuss it, how to get funds for publishing books. And what I see that it is very common in Lithuania to publish traditional print book and to have electronic version of it. So it's quite common in Lithuania to do both formats.

INTERVIEWER

Yeah, two product.

INTERVIEWEE



Two products, yes.

INTERVIEWER

And of course, we are talking about the prestige and this academic perspective. But if you are talking about open access and maybe about open access to the books sometimes, do ethical consideration appears like equity or public funding focus on society, taxpayers, money sometimes, et cetera?

INTERVIEWEE

Well, not much. Not much. I should say that, not much. Not much talking about open access books in this context. And what I think why it is because authors still want printed books, and it costs.

INTERVIEWER

And.

INTERVIEWEE

It costs, and that is why maybe it's not fully open access books.

INTERVIEWER

I understand. Thank you. We are now approaching the technological component. I know we were talking quite a lot about this repository, the general repository, but can you tell me a little bit about this infrastructure? How does it work exactly when it comes to the university? All university has the access to it. How do you do it?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, all universities have access to it. Me, as author of publications, I can put it myself, my publication to it, upload it. And sometimes it is open. If it's open access, it comes automatically. I didn't need to do anything. It just comes and libraries do it, I think, or somehow automatically it comes from some databases. I don't know how technical it is, but really many of publications, they come there automatically. I don't need to register them, they just appear there. And when the assessment time comes, then they take it from this repository or the list of your publications, and they use it for your attestation. And also all the publications come to our website. So we have our website. We have all scholars and there are individual pages and there are publications and all information comes from this eLABa, from this repository.

INTERVIEWER

Is that something that interest me? It is the librarian's role to introduce or implement, sorry, upload the books and your work into this repository, right?

INTERVIEWEE

Well, yes, I think that the librarians do a big job on this. Yes, I'm not sure if it's done automatically or someone does it in library. I'm not 100% sure, but what I know that



almost all my publications, they are put there. Then, when I check if there is and there usually is, maybe because I publish in Open Access. So maybe somehow automatically it comes, or I don't know how it works technically.

INTERVIEWER

No, it's okay. But I felt really interested when you tell librarians, and I was like, Okay, maybe that's how it works. I've got one more question. I know it's a bit experimental and I noticed that there is nothing like this in majority of the countries, but maybe there any technological support for innovative or, again, experimental type of academic books, for example, something beyond just a PDF or HTML, like extended monographs, visual monographs, publication with data and linking with another publication, this new type of monograph?

INTERVIEWEE

I don't know any. Maybe there is, but I haven't heard about it. It could be that something is published, but I didn't know.

INTERVIEWER

No, that's just a new note. We are just going there, I think. Okay, and one more question about the legal component. Do you know what open licenses are promoted in Lithuania or in your institution?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, so we have a CC-BY. Yes, so it's promoted this license. I think that all the [UNIVERSITY 1] journals are under this license. And yes, when we talk about open access in Lithuania, we talk about CC-BY license.. I think that open access books also are published under this license.

INTERVIEWER

And they are the most promoted, like in copyright law.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes. Even some of the scholars think that if the publication doesn't have this license, then it's not fully open access.

INTERVIEWER

What do you need to make it better, this progress? To open all the books and monographs.

INTERVIEWEE

In legal environment, yes?

INTERVIEWER

No, like in academic environment. Like to promote.

INTERVIEWER



Support it, or to inform students. What do you do? Or what do you need to do? What do you think?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, what we need to do to promote open access books.

INTERVIEWER

I.

INTERVIEWEE

Think that it is very important to the financial support here. I think it's core because without financial support, it's impossible to publish an open access book.

INTERVIEWER

To.

INTERVIEWEE

Publish open access book. Students are very excited when they find an open access book on the web and when they can use it. Okay. I think that in study process, it's very good when you can use open access books, not only journals, not only articles, and also for study, like in English, like exercise books for students also.

INTERVIEWER

Like text books?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, they are also very needed. And what is being done? Yes, in our university. Well, in our university, there is open science encouraged. The scholars are informed about the possibilities to get financial support, about how you can get, well, how to say it? How you can benefit from sharing your data, publishing your articles, open access books, what you can benefit you yourself from it, why it is good for the university, for your field, for your research field, and so on and so on. In our university, we have this open environment that encourage to publish in open access articles, books, and also to share research data.

INTERVIEWER

We have that. Yeah, for the future.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, for the future. So yeah, yes. I think that if you, as a scholar, want to publish open access books, there are really ways to do it to get the funds. But maybe the problem is that not all scholars see the value of it.

INTERVIEWEE

And maybe here is, I think that in this field, there are some problems.



INTERVIEWER

Also, communication and promoting.

INTERVIEWEE

Yes.

INTERVIEWER

Okay, that's perfect. Thank you. Do you use this environmental arguments to promote open access? Open access books, of course, but open access in general in your country, like this Green strategy for Europe, this argument. Do you use it in the discussion?

INTERVIEWEE

Yes, we are talking about it, and while talking about my university, we have a very strong library and librarian do really a big job here. They do trainings for scholars about open access, about open science data, and about all those things. Furthermore, they also provide information on their website and so on and so on. In our university, there is a lot of information, promotional work, and I see that it comes from the university library.

INTERVIEWER

Okay, that's perfect.

INTERVIEWER

I think that is it from me. But do you feel that I missed something? Maybe, do you have something important to add for our interview? Maybe I didn't ask you about the subject of Open Access books.

INTERVIEWEE

Well, I think, yes, what I mentioned before in the beginning of our interview, that interned that your project is very valuable because open access books is somehow missing. It's strange why it happens because when I'm thinking about my thesis. Me, myself, I think that know why I didn't analyze Open Access books, but yes, it's something that is missing. I think there is a need to talk about this now because now everyone knows about journals and repositories, and now it's time really to talk about the books. I also think that it is important to see open access and open access books publishing in a wider open science context. It is important not only to write scholarly books, articles and publish them, but also to make research data openly available in the repositories.

