



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

Digital Agenda: more open access to scientific information - Commission seeks views

Brussels, 15 July 2011 - A public consultation on access to, and preservation of, digital scientific information has been launched by the European Commission on the initiative of European Commission Vice President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes and Commissioner for Research and Innovation, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn. European researchers, engineers and entrepreneurs must have easy and fast access to scientific information, to compete on an equal footing with their counterparts across the world. Modern digital infrastructures can play a key role in facilitating access. However, a number of challenges remain, such as high and rising subscription prices to scientific publications, an ever-growing volume of scientific data, and the need to select, curate and preserve research outputs. Open access, defined as free access to scholarly content over the Internet, can help address this. Scientists, research funding organisations, universities, and other interested parties are invited to send their contributions on how to improve access to scientific information. The consultation will run until 9 September 2011. Accessing and re-using knowledge is a key objective of the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) and the [Innovation Union](#).

Neelie Kroes, European Commission Vice President for the Digital Agenda, said: *"The results of publicly funded research should be circulated as widely as possible as a matter of principle. The broad dissemination of knowledge, within the European Research Area and beyond, is a key driver of progress in research and innovation, and thus for jobs and growth in Europe. Our vision is Open Access to scientific information so that all of us benefit as much as possible from investments in science. To accelerate scientific progress, but also for education, for innovation and for other creative re-use. For the same reason we must preserve scientific records for future generations"*.

Interested parties are invited to express their views on the following key science policy questions:

- how scientific articles could become more accessible to researchers and society at large
- how research data can be made widely available and how it could be re-used
- how permanent access to digital content can be ensured and what barriers are preventing the preservation of scientific output

What next?

By the end of 2011 the European Commission intends to adopt a Communication on access to and preservation of scientific information. It will be accompanied by a Recommendation on actions to be implemented by EU Member States to improve access to scientific information.

Background

A Communication on Scientific Information in the Digital Age: Access, Dissemination and Preservation was adopted in February 2007.

In August 2008, the European Commission launched an Open Access Pilot in the 7th Research and Development Framework Programme (FP7). This pilot, which covers about 20% of the FP7 budget, sets out requirements for researchers working on projects funded under the FP7 programmes Health, Energy, Environment, parts of Information & Communication Technology, e-Infrastructures, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities, and Science in Society toward making their resulting publications available under open access.

For more information:

Online public consultation on scientific information:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/consultations/scientific_information/consultation_en.htm

Digital Agenda website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda>

Innovation Union:

<http://ec.europa.eu/innovation-union>

Neelie Kroes' website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kroes/

Follow Neelie Kroes on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/neeliekroeseu>

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/geoghegan-quinn/

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