



# Unveiling Attitudes Towards Open Access Monographs in the European Research Area

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A decorative graphic of several overlapping, light green leaves on the left side of the page.

# Data collection

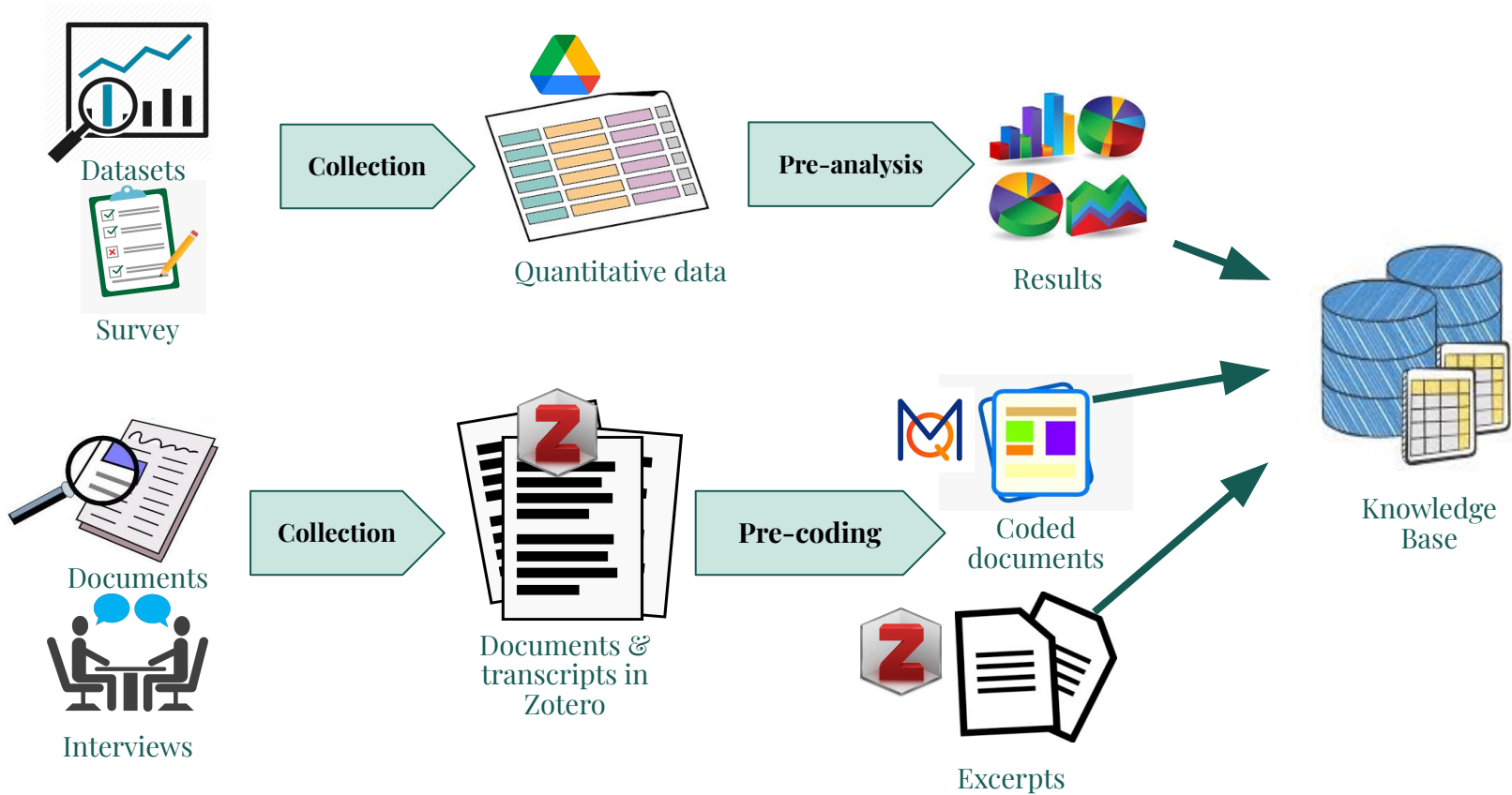
Report on Compiling the Knowledge Base

<https://zenodo.org/records/10777132>



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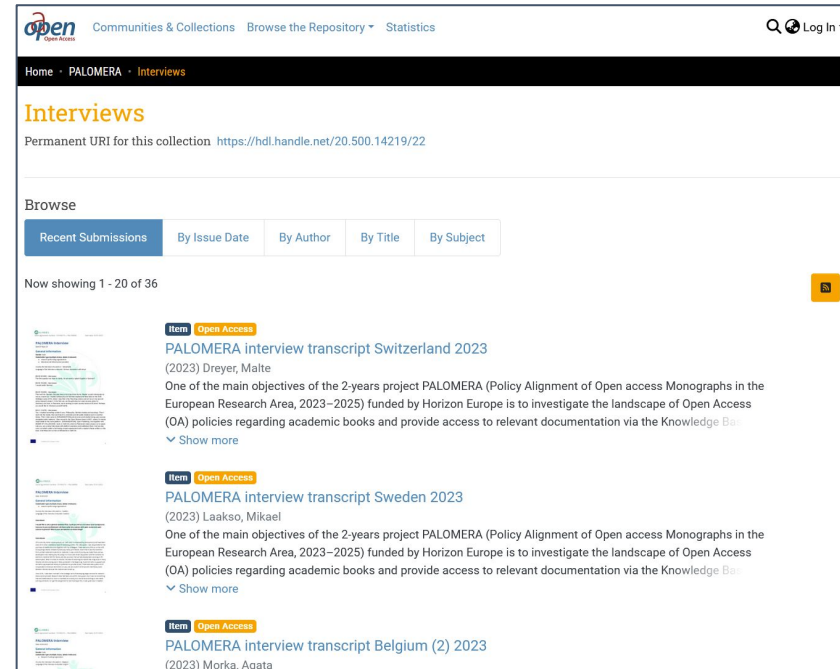


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# Interviews

- The interview questionnaire was designed to assess different aspects of OA policies regarding books, shaped around the PESTLE themes.
- Each interview was conducted over approximately 60 minutes, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the topics covered in the questionnaire
- We conducted 39 individual interviews and 3 group interviews, which focused on a specific stakeholder group, spanning 36 ERA countries and included 47 interviewees. Countries not represented in interviews include Albania, North Macedonia, and Montenegro
- The dataset and analysis contribute to the ongoing struggle to base open science discourse on solid and empirical findings to advocate for comprehensive policies for scholarly content



The screenshot shows the PALOMERA Open Access repository website. The header includes the 'open Open Access' logo, navigation links for 'Communities & Collections', 'Browse the Repository', and 'Statistics', and a search icon with 'Log In'. The breadcrumb trail is 'Home > PALOMERA > Interviews'. The main heading is 'Interviews' with a permanent URI: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14219/22>. Below this is a 'Browse' section with buttons for 'Recent Submissions', 'By Issue Date', 'By Author', 'By Title', and 'By Subject'. A status bar indicates 'Now showing 1 - 20 of 36'. Three items are listed, each with a thumbnail, a title, a year, and a brief description of the project's objectives. The items are: 'PALOMERA interview transcript Switzerland 2023 (2023) Dreyer, Malte', 'PALOMERA interview transcript Sweden 2023 (2023) Laakso, Mikael', and 'PALOMERA interview transcript Belgium (2) 2023 (2023) Morka, Agata'. Each item has a 'Show more' link.

Almost all transcripts found in the Knowledge Base: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14219/22>

## PESTLE Coding

The coding process of the interview transcripts in MaxQDA followed the PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental) framework, with an additional "Other" category for topics not explicitly covered by the PESTLE dimensions.

This approach allowed for a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the various factors influencing open access book publishing and policies.

### 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.

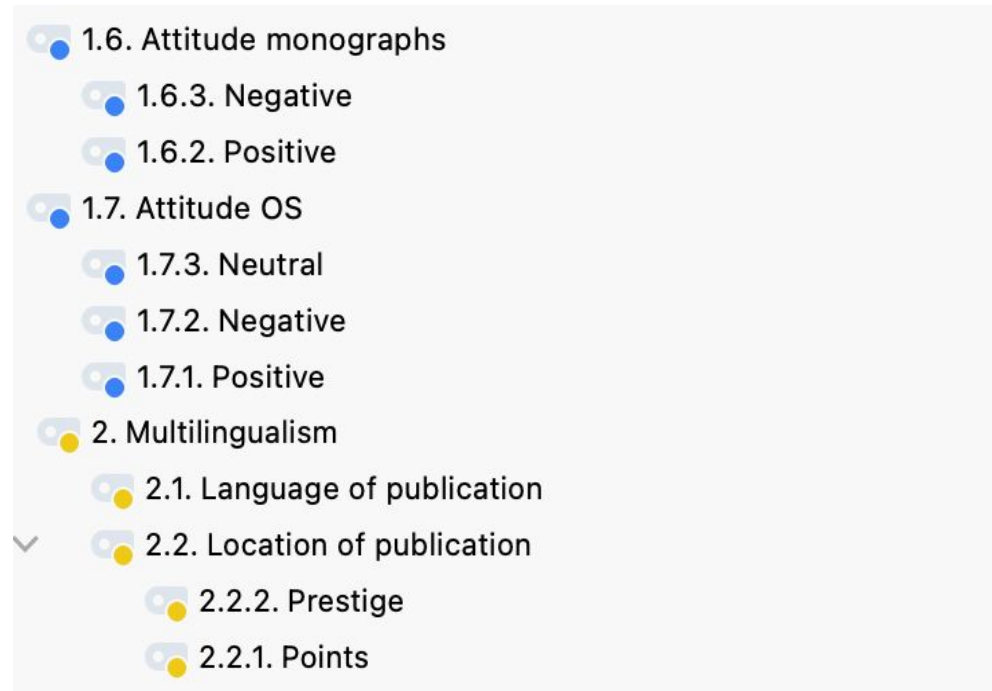
Economic  
Legal

Technological

Social

# MaxQDA – coding scheme for this paper

1. 3601 codes applied
2. PESTLE (pre-coded) – 1841
3. *in vivo* codes – 1760



# Introduction to the *in vivo* analysis

In this part of the analysis, we focused on the attitude towards open access (OA) books. We observed that for many interviewees, this is an extremely important issue, and they are positively inclined towards incorporating OA books into their policy.

After that, we distinguished the key issues that can be addressed:

- 1. Policy gaps & publishing challenges**
- 2. Multilingualism and visibility**
- 3. Prestige**





# Results:

## 1. Policy gaps & publishing challenges



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## Key findings

1. The **lack of clear regulations** and policies regarding OA books does not seem to prevent the publication of them. It leads to **difficulties in the publishing process**.
2. The **absence of national OA policy** is often offset by funder's or institutional regulations requiring the beneficiaries of research or publishing grants to make their work available in OA.
3. In terms of books, **open access is not considered important** since it is not followed by evaluation points.
4. The interviewees made it clear that in **the absence of reward systems**, the funder's requirement remains the only incentive to publish in OA.

# OA books in the policy on the national and institutional level

OA books as a policy element	OA books required by RFOs	No policy
Often the case of smaller countries	[RFO] Grantees are required to publish open access	No rules at all
e.g. Slovenia, Lithuania	e.g. Switzerland, Poland	e.g. Romania, Turkey
quote: <i>a model of policy, written text, which can be used by institutions to issue their own institutional policies. This document or methodology is issued basically by the government, by the Ministry of Education and Sport and Science. (Slovenia, p. 7)</i>	quote: <i>the Swiss Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities, which strongly supports open access books, but only series and not individual volumes. And otherwise it is difficult to finance books. It would be good if there was something in a national policy on funding. (Switzerland, p. 5)</i>	quote: <i>I'm not aware even of very special chapters in those policies regarding the open books. In fact, I just checked our own university's proposal of policy, and I don't think there is the word book in there. (Romania, p. 3)</i>



# Results:

## 2. Multilingualism & visibility

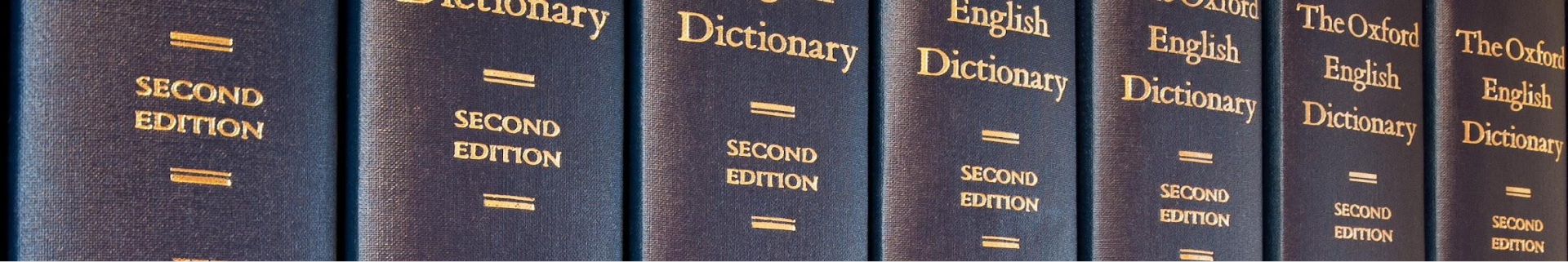


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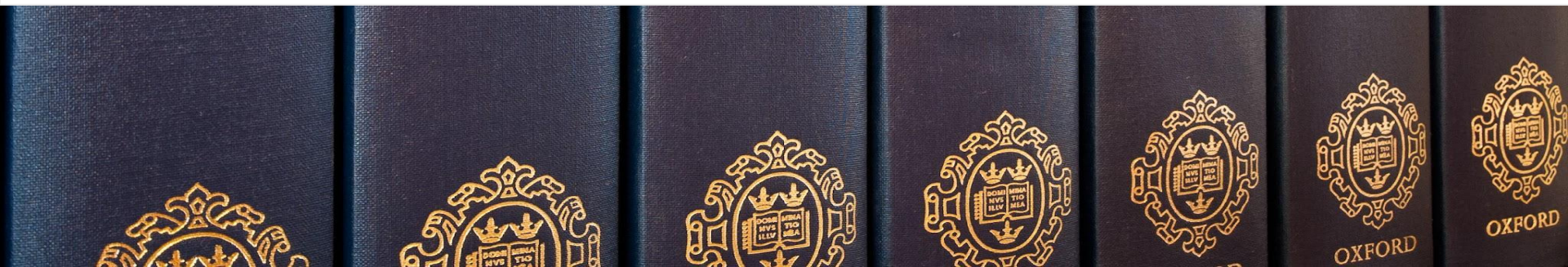
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## Key findings

1. The opportunities to publish open monographs seem to favor the works in **English**.
2. There is **possible domination** of the English-only publishers over the publication in local languages, which is much connected with quantitative research metrics and prestige of the research evaluation system in European countries.



# National language or English?

Visibility	Target groups	Disciplines (SSH)
<p>quote: <i>books in English are more visible than books in [add. national language] Bulgarian.</i> (Bulgaria, p. 7)</p>	<p>quote: <i>Of course, the scholar himself or herself might prefer a wider audience. Also, it is quite common that if a book is published in an international project (add. English language) or corporation, or it has some particular connections.</i> (Hungary, p. 10)</p>	<p>quote: <i>in STEM books clearly don't have the same aura as in SHS. It's important to publish books (add. in national language), because researchers are aware that it's important for them to pass on a whole and not just an article, and that there's a need for different audiences too, and that an academic book will probably not reach a wider audience.</i> France, p. 12)</p>

## Location of Publication – points, points, and prestige...

Metrics	Prestige
<p>quote 1: <i>So if you're a researcher and if you publish a book, you get more points if you get published by Oxford University Press, for example, than if you publish the same book in English at University of Ljubljana Press. (Slovenia, P. 15)</i></p> <p>quote 2: <i>When you start as a young assistant, you want your tenures, you want to go on, you want to progress, you want to be a professor one day. And there are very strict rules of getting the tenures, you need to get ten points. And now listen, if you publish an article in a journal, which is in first or second quartile, you get two points for one article. If you publish a book, good humanistic book in Croatian language and very good publishers publish this book, and you have two peer reviews, you get two points or something very similar. So the book and article are equal. (RPO, s. 8)</i></p>	<p>quote: <i>Personally, I see research incentives to publish in native languages. But other than that, I don't really know. It's getting a bit old-fashioned perhaps, but the prestige of the publisher certainly plays a role, at least indirectly. (Finland, p.16)</i></p>



# Results:

## 3. Prestige



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# Key findings

1. Publication's prestige does not depend on OA but on other factors such as:
  - **quality control**
  - **peer review**
  - **publisher**
2. Decision to publish in OA depends on:
  - **intended format**
  - **career stage**
  - **resources at hand**



# OA books & prestige

<b>No difference</b>	<b>Slight difference</b>	<b>Big difference</b>
<p>quote: <i>[OA is] a bureaucratic requirement, thus something from outside the realm of academia, not engaged with content.</i> (Ireland, p. 15)</p>	<p>quote: <i>it is easier not to publish openly because it requires a lot of knowledge to know how to apply for funding for any book process</i> (Finland, p. 14)</p>	<p>quote 1: <i>There is a tendency to see Open Access journals and I think books also as less prestige as the ones that are for sale.</i> (Library, p. 18)</p> <p>quote 2: <i>Some time ago I heard scholars talking about open access as [...] it was something for them as Wikipedia.</i> Lithuania, P. 9)</p> <p>+ paraphrase: <i>On the other hand, OA books could be valued more due to better accessibility</i> (Lithuania, p. 9)</p>

# Zoom on the Publishers as a source of quality



- Publishers are conceived as a source of low or high prestige.
- The mentioned factors making a publisher prestigious include whether the publisher is international and commercial.

*The prestige is the prestige of publishing the book with certain publishers (Ireland, p. 19)*

*It's very difficult, especially in some scientific sectors, to shift to the academic university, open access books, because the idea is if I ask a researcher, if I publish in the university academic publisher, for example (Italy, p. 6)*

*I think that when it comes to prestige nowadays, the prestige of a book is, of course, built by its content, and here no OA and open access will help if the publication is poor (Poland, p. 12)"*

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