

# LSE RESEARCH ONLINE 15 years providing global access to LSE research



Camilla Ridgeway - Digital Scholarship and Innovation Group – LSE Library

## Introduction

Created in 2004, LSE Research Online is a repository of research produced by LSE academics, wherever possible providing access to the full text of the research. It contains many different item types, from journal articles to images and data sets, and it provides a reliable source of information for all audiences.

By adding research to LSE Research Online, researchers can increase the number of citations their work receives by increasing its online visibility in addition to being confident that it will be preserved over time.

LSE Research Online is shaping the world by providing access to LSE research to researchers and interested parties all over the world.

## The crisis in scholarly publishing

During the 1990's and 2000's, subscription costs for academic journals rose massively, putting pressure on university libraries who struggled to keep pace with the prices set by the publishers. Meanwhile the volume of research being produced also rapidly increased, with a resulting swell in the number of journals, and adding even more strain to library budgets. To the universities' and funding bodies, who were both paying for the research to be conducted as well as paying to buy back the results of the research at increasingly high prices, the traditional model of scholarly publishing began to feel increasingly unfit for purpose in the new digital age. Not only were the costs spiralling, but the end products of the research were hidden behind paywalls with those who had ultimately paid for them (the tax payer) unable to get access.

Attempting to find a resolution to this dilemma was in part responsible for the movement towards open access, and in 2012 the UK Government accepted the recommendation of The Finch Report that open access to research should be mandatory for project outputs funded by the UK Research Councils (ESRC, EPSRC, AHRC etc).

## Public good

Whilst the move towards open access started in part from a desire to reduce the increasing costs being levied on library budgets, another fundamental reason was to increase the access to research.

It was realised that putting research behind a paywall unnecessarily blocked many groups from being able to benefit from it, and it was of no benefit to the research itself.



Nor was it only the readers who benefitted from open access research. Making research open access has consistently been shown to improve visibility and increase the citations of the research, benefiting the researcher as well.

**The OA effect** How does open access affect the usage of scholarly research?

- 50% more citations
- 7x more downloads
- 10x more online mentions

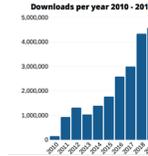
## Key facts

- LSE research online contains approx. **76,000 records** with more being added everyday.
- LSE research online can be used to feed through to LSE person profile pages.
- 67%** of LSE research online records include the full text.
- An average of **270,000 items** are **downloaded each month**.
- Since its creation, nearly **20 million** items have been downloaded.

## LSE Research Online today

LSE Research Online today boasts amongst the highest download figures of any university repository in the UK (according to the independent website IRUS-UK), and these figures are increasing year on year.

Via LSE Research Online, LSE research is being downloaded and read all over the world, influencing policy and news.

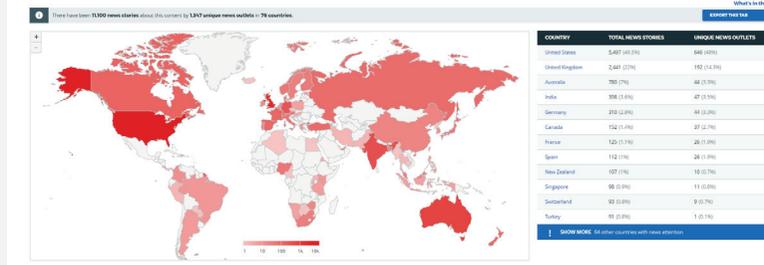


## Research download figures from LSE Research Online (2018/2019)



## Global impact

The impact of LSE research is also indicated by the number of news and policy mentions from sources across the world. Whilst these measures include research accessed from a variety of channels, research held in LSE Research Online consistently appears within the top 5 hits in a Google search.



source: Altmetric



## LSE Research Online and REF



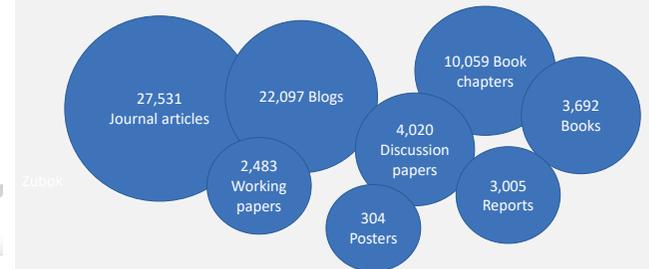
With the implementation of the policy on Open Access for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2021, LSE Research Online experienced a surge in the number of research outputs being deposited. In order to comply with the policy, journal articles and some conference proceedings must be deposited within three months of acceptance for publication.

## % Open Access

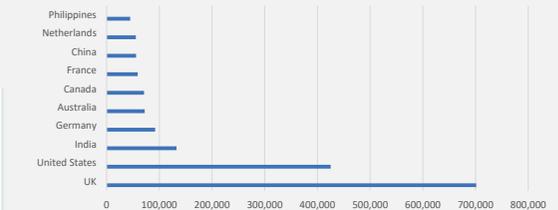


Compliance with the REF policy has undoubtedly led to an increase in the volume of research becoming openly available, as was hoped, however the downside is that many researchers now view making their work open access a matter of complying with the rules, rather than a positive way to promote and disseminate their research to the wider world.

## What does LSE Research Online contain?



## Countries most likely to download research from LSE Research Online



## What next for LSE Research Online



Plan S : the next step on the open access journey?

"With effect from 2021, all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional, and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo." <https://www.coalition-s.org/>