

## **The Development of Open Access in Latin America and Caribbean: Mapping National and International Policies and Scientific Publications of the Region**

**Authors :** Simone Belli, Sergio Minniti, Valeria Santoro

**Abstract :** ICTs and technology transfer can benefit and move a country forward in economic and social development. However, ICT and access to the Internet have been inequitably distributed in most developing countries. In terms of science production and dissemination, this divide articulates itself also through the inequitable distribution of access to scientific knowledge and networks, which results in the exclusion of developing countries from the center of science. Developing countries are on the fringe of Science and Technology (S&T) production due not only to low investment in research but also to the difficulties to access international scholarly literature. In this respect, Open access (OA) initiatives and knowledge infrastructure represent key elements for both producing significant changes in scholarly communication and reducing the problems of developing countries. The spreading of the OA movement in the region, exemplified by the growth of regional and national initiatives, such as the creation of OA institutional repositories (e.g. SciELO and Redalyc) and the establishing of supportive governmental policies, provides evidence of the significant role that OA is playing in reducing the scientific gap between Latin American countries and improving their participation in the so-called 'global knowledge commons'. In this paper, we map OA publications in Latin America and observe how Latin American countries are moving forward and becoming a leading force in widening access to knowledge. Our analysis, developed as part of the H2020 EULAC Focus research project, is based on mixed methods and consists mainly of a bibliometric analysis of OA publications indexed in the most important scientific databases (Web of Science and Scopus) and OA regional repositories, as well as the qualitative analysis of documents related to the main OA initiatives in Latin America. Through our analysis, we aim at reflecting critically on what policies, international standards, and best practices might be adapted to incorporate OA worldwide and improve the infrastructure of the global knowledge commons.

**Keywords :** open access, LAC countries, scientific publications, bibliometric analysis

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