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UNESCO to make its publications available free of charge as part of a new Open Access policy

Paris, 14 May—UNESCO will make its digital publications available to millions of people around the world free-of-charge with an open license. Following a decision by the Organization's Executive Board in April, UNESCO has become the first member of the United Nations to adopt such an Open Access policy for its publications. The new policy means that anyone will be able to download, translate, adapt, distribute and re-share UNESCO publications and data without paying.

Janis Karklins, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, announced the new policy during the opening of the [World Summit on the Information Society Forum](#) in Geneva on 13 May.

“Researchers from all countries, but especially from developing and least developed countries will benefit and capitalize on Open Access to knowledge,” said Janis Karklins, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information. “Our new policy will enable us to increase the visibility, accessibility, and rapid distribution of our publications.”

By adopting this new publishing policy, UNESCO aligns its practice to its advocacy work in favor of Open Access and strengthens its commitment to the universal access to information and knowledge.

The Open Access (OA) movement was born in the scientific community to address the spiraling costs of the scientific literature, which is essential to researchers. A wide range of universities, institutions and governments support it as an alternative to the traditional model of knowledge dissemination through costly academic journals.

Starting from July 2013, hundreds of downloadable digital UNESCO publications will be available to users through a new Open Access Repository with a multilingual interface. All new publications will be released with an open license. UNESCO will also seek ways to apply it retroactively, i.e. to works already published. If UNESCO enters into special agreements with publishing partners the Open Access policy need not apply. Co-publishers will be strongly encouraged to adhere to the requirements of the new policy.

By championing Open Access for its publications, UNESCO reinforces a fundamental goal of an Intergovernmental Organization - to ensure that all the knowledge it creates is made available to the widest possible audience.

The full text of the policy is available on UNESCO website at: www.unesco.org/new/en/openaccesspolicy

The new publishing policy is in line with UNESCO's [Open Access to Scientific Information Strategy](#) and its main components as well as its work on [Open Educational Resources](#) and [Free and Open Source Software](#).