



RCL

Research Council of Lithuania

2025

Open Access in Practice: From Community Engagement to Data-Driven Foresight

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- 1. Do we need more initiatives – or more intention?**
- 2. What if being small country is not a limitation – but an advantage?**
- 3. What if people, not platforms, are the real infrastructure?**

1. Do we need more initiatives – or more intention?

- Meaningful transformation in Open Science does not depend on the number of projects launched, but on the clarity of purpose behind them.
- True progress comes when initiatives are guided by coherent strategies, sustainable commitment, and aligned incentives that reward openness and collaboration.

2. What if being small country is not a limitation – but an advantage?

- In large systems, progress can be slow, trapped in layers of procedures, politics, and legacy structures.
- Smaller systems can act with greater agility, coherence, and focus.
- While larger structures struggle with inertia, smaller ones can pilot change, integrate feedback faster, and scale only what truly works.

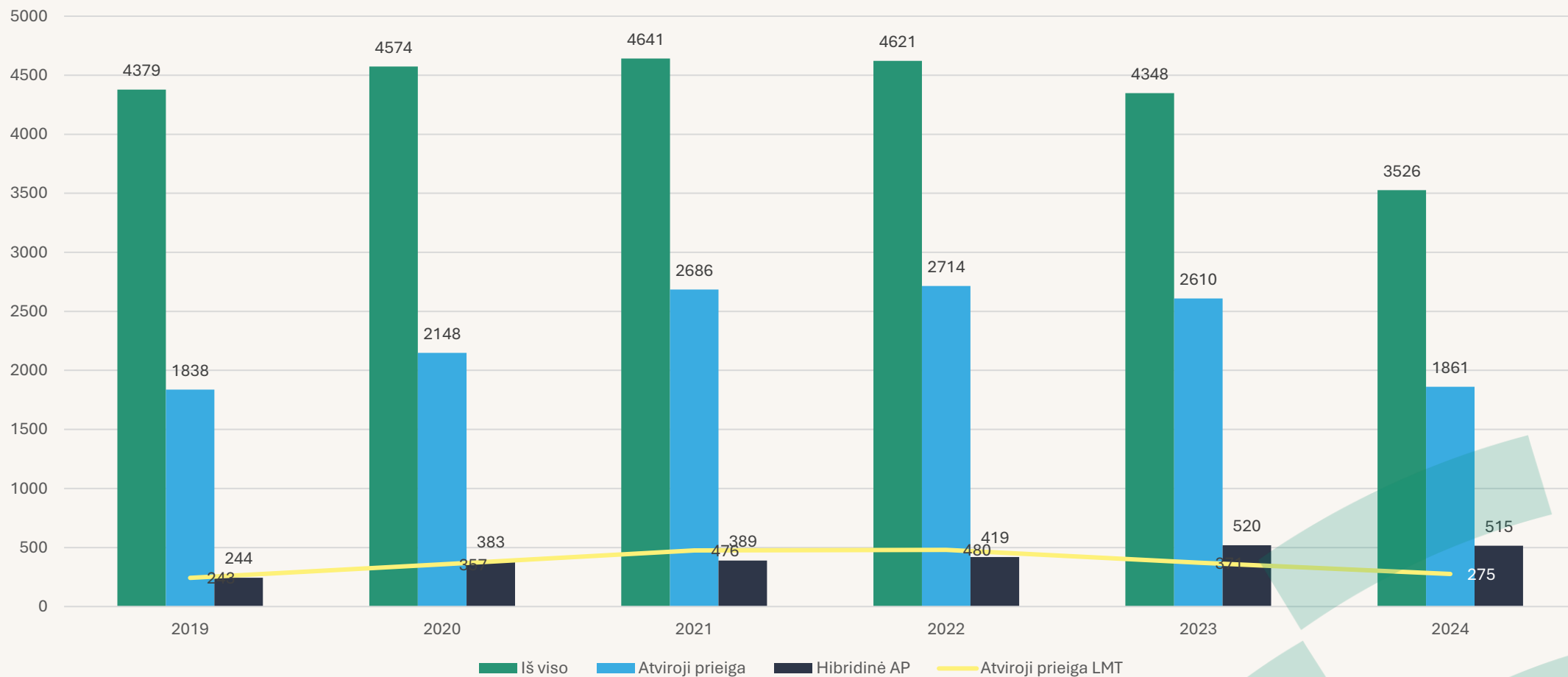
3. What if people, not platforms, are the real infrastructure?

- Technology enables Open Science, but people sustain it.
- Skills, trust, and shared values form the invisible infrastructure behind every policy or platform.
- Investing in communities, data stewards, and knowledge exchange is the most durable foundation for openness.

Legal and Policy Foundation

- In **2016** the Research Council adopted the first *Guidelines on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Data*.
These guidelines laid the conceptual groundwork for open access in Lithuania
- The foundation lies in **Article 51 of the Law on Higher Education and Research**, which establishes that *all results of research and experimental development funded from the state budget must be made publicly available through open access channels and tools*, insofar as this does not conflict with data protection, intellectual property, or national security regulations [uoroda\)](#)
- In **2024**, implementing Article 51 of the Law, the Council approved the new **Description of the Procedure for Open Access to the Results of Research and Experimental Development (V-385)**

Open Access Publishing Practices in Lithuania



Lithuania's Digital Foundation

- Lithuania ranks 22nd globally in the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Index (2024). Its public data infrastructure already operates under a FAIR-ready model.
- Through the VSSA programme, Lithuania developed DCAT-AP-LT, a national metadata specification aligned with the European DCAT-AP standard. It provides a unified ontology and controlled vocabularies for describing public sector datasets.
- The European Commission currently supports the creation of sectoral data spaces — including Industry, Green Deal, Mobility, Health, Finance, Energy, Agriculture, Public Administration, and Skills.
- Although publicly funded research data are formally part of the public sector, they require distinct governance and legal treatment due to intellectual property, ethics, and scientific standards.
- This distinction forms the basis for Lithuania's EOSC Feasibility Study, which aims to establish an interoperable yet autonomous research data layer.

EOSC Feasibility Study – From Vision to Structure

- Project launched in 2025;
- Maps infrastructures, assesses readiness;
- Prepares ~€10M investment roadmap (2026–2030)
- Focus: metadata frameworks, repository links, and Data Steward training.
- A metadata interface bank will possibly be established (not confirmed yet)

For more information: <https://lmt.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/forumas-kelias-i-eosc-lietuva-siekia-tapti-visaverte-europos-mokslo-duomenu-erdves-partnere/>

Dialogue in Practice – The Road to EOSC Forum

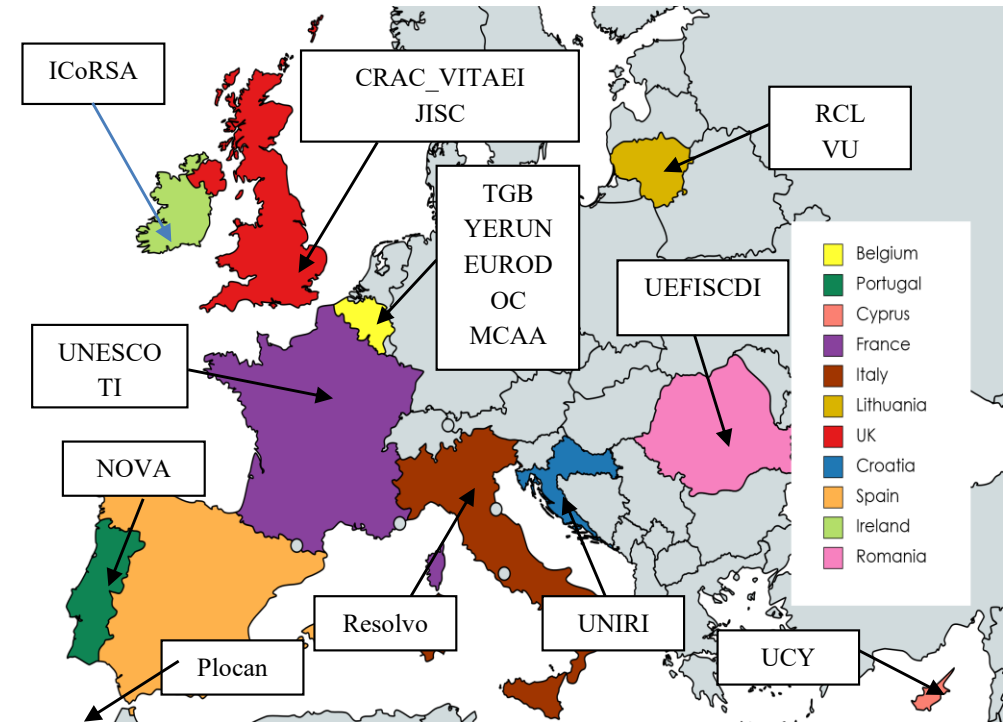
"The results of the feasibility study will be the cornerstone of the planned EU investment of almost 10 million euros from 2026. We aim not only to join EOSC, but also to become equal partners in shaping a common European scientific data space.,, RCL Chairman dr. G. Valinčius



Overview

- Project start: 01/09/2022
- Finish: 31/08/2025
- 36 months
- Pilot phase: 2024/10/01-2025/06/30

Led by Julija Baniukevič, RCL



- Coordinate and support measures to reform the assessment of research and researchers at Research Performance Organisations (RPO) and Research Funding Organizations (RFOs) towards a system that incentivises researchers to practise Open Science.

Lithuanian Cohort structure and activities

Cohort participants

23 PIs from six Lithuanian science and innovation institutions:

1. Vilniaus universitetas
2. Kauno technology university
3. Lithuanian medicine sciences university
4. Vytautas Magnus
5. Nature Research Centre
6. Lithuanian Foretry Institute



■ Medicine ■ Psychology ■ Astronomy
■ Mathematics, IT ■ Physics ■ SSH
■ Nature research ■ Life sciences ■



Pilot activities

Pilot activities were running from 2024.10.01 till 2025.06.30:



Selection of participants

The 13th call was chosen and all 136 PIs who received funding from RCL has been invited; 46 of them showed the interest and participated in the introductory session in September 2024. Finally, 26 PIs agreed to participate in the OPUS cohort activities, based on the voluntarily basis 3 of them left the cohort at the beginning and 23 PIs were through the project. Only 19 of them made it to the end.

The OPUS Project – From Policy to People

21 ambassadors completed a 9-month training programme.

Skills covered:

1. Open Science
2. Open Access
3. Open Data, FAIR principles, DMPs
4. Openness in the proposals, in HEU context
5. Citizen Science principles
6. Open Science policy: Lithuanian context



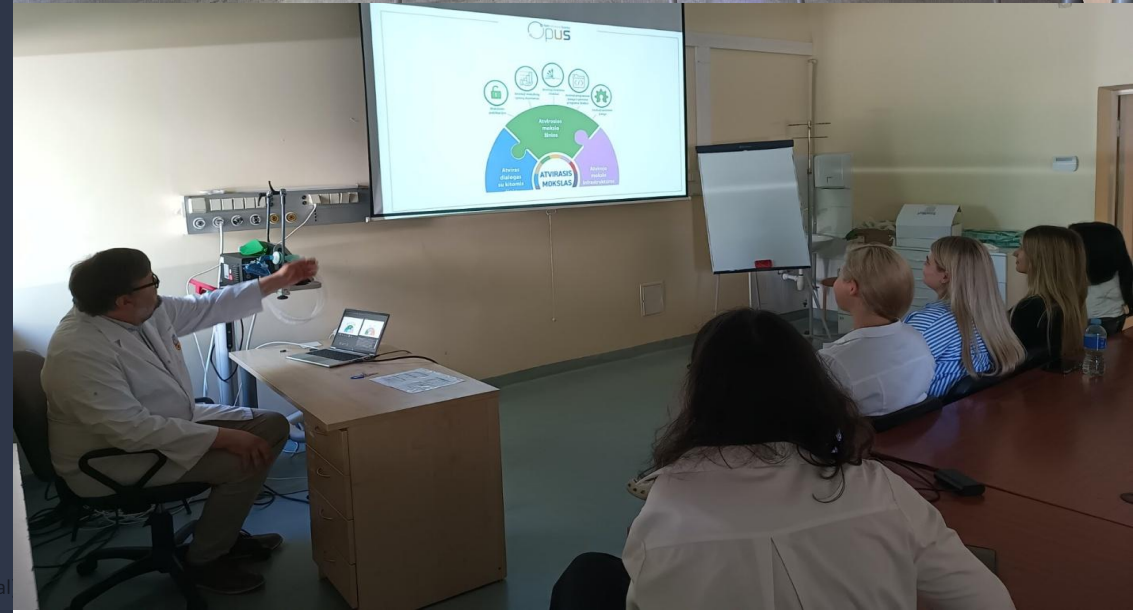
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211 researchers trained by RCL-OS ambassadors

Project Target: 50 % of the cohort to deliver OS training.

Result: 95,24 % delivered – **190 %** of the target achieved

95,24 % trainers (20 out of 21) organized trainings for their projects and members of their laboratories



The OPUS project and the **Ambassadors Network** were nominated for the Open Education Global Award for Excellence in the Open Collaboration category.

„**Ambassador Programme** builds national capacity, fosters a culture of openness, and drives institutional change—setting powerful example <...>“



(ID 353) “Open and Universal Science” (OPUS)

Nominated for the 2025 Open Education Awards for Excellence

Award Category and Specific Focus

Open Practices Awards: Open Collaboration

Top Reason to Give This Award

A transformative initiative that empowers researchers to embrace Open Science through hands-on training, the Research Council of Lithuania's Ambassador Programme builds national capacity, fosters a culture of openness, and drives institutional change—setting a powerful example of Open Education advancing sustainable research practices.

From Compliance to Support

- Openness cannot be imposed – it must be enabled.
- Next steps: support, training, investment, guidance.
- €10M programme to strengthen infrastructure and human capacities.



THE ENGINE
FOR YOUR IDEA