

Why is UNIL withdrawing from Read & Publish licenses?

The University of Lausanne's decision to gradually withdraw from Read & Publish licenses is part of the evolution of its institutional policy on Open Access and its increased alignment with the Swiss national Open Access strategy, revised in 2024.

This strategy aims in particular to reduce the scientific system's dependence on a small number of large commercial publishers, promote academic quality and bibliodiversity, and ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the scientific publishing model.

However, despite the progress made possible by Read & Publish agreements, the current model is now showing its limitations. In 2025, nearly two-thirds of the subsidy allocated by UNIL to BCUL for electronic resources was spent on products from ten major publishers, to the detriment of a wide range of other resources essential to teaching and research (specialized databases, journals from small publishers, electronic books). Furthermore, the costs of these licenses are rising steadily, at a rate of 5 to 10% per year, which calls into question their sustainability in the medium term.

Continuing with this model would ultimately lead to a weakening of the diversity of collections and increased dependence on a few dominant players in the scientific publishing market, without fully achieving the objectives of Open Access.

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