

The cost of publishing in Danish astronomy

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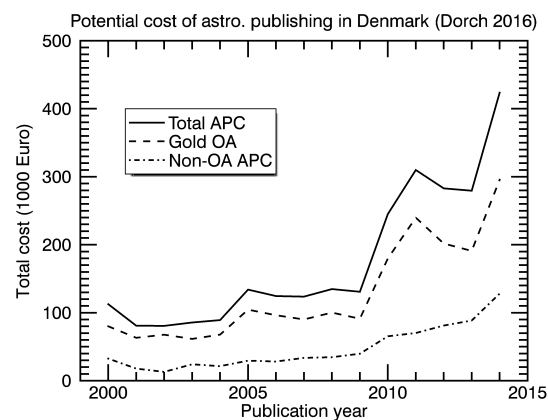
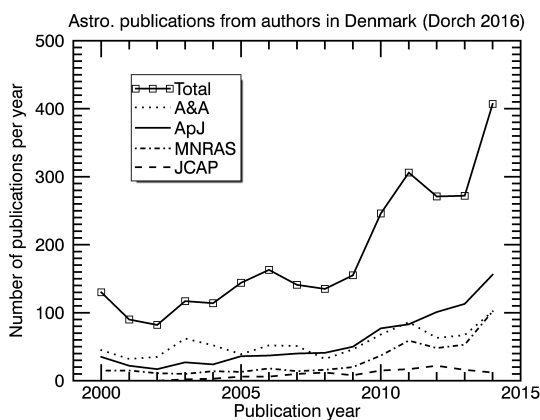
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The cost of publishing in Danish astronomy



ABSTRACT

March 2016 The New York Times wrote that “Journal publishers collectively earned 10 billion USD last year, much of it from research libraries, which pay annual subscription fees ranging from 2,000 to 35,000 USD per title if they don't buy subscriptions of bundled titles, which cost millions. The largest companies, like Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, Springer and Wiley, typically have profit margins of over 30 percent”.

Recently, a Max Planck Digital Library White Paper on Open Access makes the case for a large-scale transformation of the current scholarly publishing system to an Open Access model. It argues that “the current library acquisition budgets are the ultimate reservoir for enabling the transformation without financial or other risks.” Similarly, Gauffriau et al. (2016) conducted an analysis showing that the funds spent on journal licenses by universities in Denmark is sufficient to pay for the number of publications from the same universities should they be subjected to Open Access APCs.

However, Gray (2015) showed that the Open Access APCs and the indirect costs of handling Open Access mandates costs may be unexpectedly high for individual institutions: the study added an estimate for the other publication charges currently paid by research institutions, an element which has been neglected by other studies. When page charges etc are included, the total cost to institutions for the Great Britain as a whole, means a total cost of around 213 million GBP against a conservatively estimated journal cost of 180 million GBP, with non-Open Access APCs representing an extra 3.6 million GBP.

I investigate the cost of publishing in Danish astronomy on a fine scale, including all direct publication costs: The figures show how the annual number of publications with authors from Denmark in astronomy journals increased by a factor ≈ 4 during 15 years (Elsevier's Scopus database), and the increase of the corresponding potential (maximum) cost of publishing.
