

Taking back publishing ownership for academia through diamond Open Access

Scientific publishing continues to expand at a remarkable pace: between 2000 and 2023, over 80 million research outputs were published worldwide (EUA, 2025, p. 5). Even though open access (OA) publications are growing faster than traditional subscription-based models, it has not resulted in greater equity or sustainability in academic publishing. The global scholarly publishing market, valued at \$28 billion, is still dominated by a small number of commercial publishers. Meanwhile, academic institutions and researchers are bearing the rising costs of publication, restricted access and increasing pressure to publish in prestigious outlets [EUA, 2025, pp. 5–6].

To challenge this trajectory, the Finnish Journal of Social Research has always operated under the diamond OA model. Under the diamond OA model, neither authors nor readers pay fees. Instead, publishing is based on scientific community governance and supported financially by public and institutional infrastructure. The publication of this special issue in the 2025 volume was made possible by **additional funding from the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies** (<https://www.tsv.fi/en>), dedicated specifically to developing and strengthening diamond OA publishing in Finland. This kind of support is increasingly essential. It also reflects a growing international consensus that scientific publishing must be reclaimed by the research community itself (EUA, 2025), expressed also in initiatives like the Global Diamond Open Access Alliance (launched by UNESCO) and the European Diamond Capacity Hub (supported by the EU).

The diamond open access model is a non-profit, inclusive, community-owned alternative to other publishing models. However, it also faces real structural challenges. One significant concern is indexing and visibility. Current research shows that many Diamond OA journals, particularly those in the humanities and social sciences, are underrepresented in major databases such as Scopus and Web of Science (Simard et al., 2024). This limits their visibility and affects their citation metrics, creating barriers for researchers whose work is not recognised by mainstream evaluation systems.

Another critical issue is sustainability. A detailed study of the German Diamond Open Access landscape found that, while the diamond OA model works well for small to mid-sized publications particularly in the humanities and social sciences, the larger journals struggle to maintain operations. The authors identified multiple discontinued journals and noted that many rely on a small number of individuals and unstable funding structures, raising concerns about long-term viability (Taubert et al., 2024).

To challenge commercial models, the success of diamond OA model must rest not only on its ethical foundations, but on its ability to maintain high standards of scientific quality. This is where the scientific community plays a pivotal role—not only authors and readers, but also editors and reviewers. Initiatives like DIAMAS and the development of the Diamond Open Access Standard are important steps toward professionalizing and coordinating the diamond OA ecosystem (DIAMAS, 2025). Such frameworks will help ensure that diamond OA journals not only survive, but are recognized as trusted venues for reliable, peer-reviewed research.

Koivula, Prix & Karhula (University of Turku). Corresponding author's e-mail: finnresearch@utu.fi. © Author(s) 2025. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). ISSN 2736-9749 (print), 2814-5038 (online)

The reform of scientific publishing is about more than just the structure of publishing platforms. It also affects the type of scientific research that can be produced, shared and valued. By choosing a diamond open access model, our journal supports not only equitable access, but also the publication of research that may be overlooked by market-driven logics. The articles in this issue are examples of the journal's commitment to producing new knowledge: each article offers empirically grounded and critically examined work that challenges prevailing narratives in public discourse, examines political decision-making from a new perspective, and opens new perspectives on the long-term development of society. In particular, the articles **examine the position of families and children in contemporary society** from various perspectives and demonstrate how questions related to these population groups are closely linked to political decisions and demographic trends.

The issue begins with **Marina Lundkvist** and **Mikael Nygård's** article, "*Stability or change? The long-term construction of ECEC rationales on the governmental and parliamentary levels in Finland*". Through a qualitative analysis of government bills and parliamentary debates, the authors trace how **rationales for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)** in Finland have evolved across three recent legislative reforms. While discourses around **equality, children's rights, and lifelong learning** have remained stable, more recent emphasis has shifted toward **quality of services and parental involvement**. The article offers an important view into how educational policy discourse adapts within broader political and institutional contexts.

The second article, "*Partnership pathways associated with lifetime childlessness in Belgium and Finland*" by **Alice Yolann Rees**, **Christine Schnor**, and **Marika Jalovaara** compares family formation trajectories leading to childlessness in Finland and Belgium. Using comprehensive national registers, the authors show that in line with previous studies never partnering and partnership instability were important life course trajectories associated with childlessness in both countries. The research also highlights to potential influence of contextual factors as in Belgium, with moderate childlessness levels compare to Finland, the family life courses were more diverse whereas in Finland the role of never partnering life courses was more significant. The article contributes an interesting country comparison to the literature on partnership trajectories associated with childlessness that has previously mostly concentrated only on the Nordic countries.

Finally, **Jenni Alisaari** and her co-authors **Keith O'Neill**, **Anna Kuusela**, **Aleksi Seger**, **Anuleena Kimanen**, **Svenja Hammer**, **Kara Viesca**, and **Samaneh Khalili** explore young people's perceptions of diversity in relation to social inclusion and exclusion in school settings. While minority experiences may strain students' sense of belonging, particularly if they experience discrimination within an otherwise culturally homogeneous school community, this article highlights how context-dependent the relationship between students' backgrounds and perceptions of inclusion can be. For the students interviewed in this qualitative study, ethnic diversity was perceived as fostering social inclusion in a school context characterized by a culturally heterogeneous student body, without however necessarily removing other challenges to an inclusive school climate.

We thank the authors, reviewers, funders, and supporting institutions that made this issue possible. We remain committed to a scholarly publishing model rooted in **equity, openness, scholar community and academic independence**, and we invite others to continue building that vision with us.

We end this editorial note as a team of three co-editors, as **Aleksi Karhula** has joined us this year to substitute for the period of **Aki Koivula's** paternal leave, which fittingly connects with the theme of this issue's articles.

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