COPIM • Academic Libraries and Open Access Books in Europe: a Landscape Study

Germany

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Key findings

- **The federal government system results in a decentralised library system across the country, with different systems used in different regions and a fair amount of independence on an institutional level**
- **There is a number of library consortia across the country for different regions. The interests of the German speaking countries are collectively represented by the GASCO consortium**
- **Open Access is a topic widely discussed among librarians, with a large number of organisations and working groups**
- **Although there is a strong push towards OA in Germany, no national OA policy exists. However, a number of institutions and funders have adopted OA mandates**
- **There is a fair number of institutional and national funding available for OA books**
- **There are several scholar/library-led OA book publishing initiatives**
- **Libraries rely on aggregators for OA book coverage**

General library system for e-content and OA publications

Germany's governmental system relies on a federal structure, as the country is divided into 16 federal states (Länder). Within this framework, HEIs are subject to higher education legislation, but at the same time enjoy a fair degree of autonomy, their libraries included. With nearly 400 universities (including universities, universities of applied sciences, and colleges of art and music and other subjects), Germany possesses a large number of academic and research libraries, operating under a variety of governance and administrative structures (German Rectors' Conference). Regional and institutional differences make for a complex ecosystem, where libraries are often confronted with challenges of interoperability.

GASCO (German, Austrian and Swiss Consortia Organisation) is a library consortium for German speaking countries. GASCO consortium works across the countries' and federal states' boundaries, negotiating e-content deals with publishers.

Library community and OA books

OA Tage ("OA days") is a conference and a meeting point for the OA community, taking place each year in a different German city. German librarians play a big part of the OA Tage community, and this event serves as a platform for discussion and exchange of best practices.

The Deutsche Bibliotheksverband (**DBV**), the Association of German Libraries, has a special Section 4, devoted to academic libraries.

DINI (The German Initiative for Network Information) is an organisation aimed at

“improving the information and communication services in higher education institutions and learned societies, and the necessary information infrastructures regionally and nationally” (*DINI - Project Details*, n.d.)

Among the four organisations that came together to form the DINI network, academic libraries are represented by the DBV Section 4. The remaining institutions include: Consortium of German Higher Education Institutions’ Media Centres (AMH: Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Medienzentren der deutschen Hochschulen), Association of German University Computing Centers (ZKI: Zentren für Kommunikation und Informationsverarbeitung in Lehre und Forschung e. V.), and the research institutions and research organisations (Wissenschaftseinrichtungen und -organisationen).

ENABLE! (Bibliotheken, Verlage und Autorinnen für Open Access in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften), a brand-new initiative, strives to connect libraries, publishers and researchers in an effort to facilitate Open Access in SSH. Since its formation at the beginning of 2020, the platform currently hosts over 100 OA titles, organised in publishers’ portfolios (for example, from Transcript) and discipline-specific packages, such as Open Access IT Law. The platform doubles as a networking space, with discussion boards for members. It wants to push towards and explore collaborative publishing models for OA monographs in SSH. It remains to be seen which collaborative publishing projects will be created under the aegis of ENABLE!.

OA book policies

Although Germany has been one of the foremost countries to express its commitment to the OA values with the 2003 Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities (*Berlin Declaration*, n.d.), there exists no official OA policy on a national level in the country. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research launched its OA strategy in 2016, calling for open access to become a standard for all publicly funded publications, and a year later introduced a directive on the funding for Open Access (*BMBF / FMER*, 2016).

However, numerous academic institutions and funders have introduced their own OA policies. Four of the largest research institutes — the Helmholtz Association (*Mitgliederversammlung der Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft*, 2016), the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft (*The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft’s Open Access Policy*, 2008), the Leibniz Association (*Open Access Policy of the Leibniz Association*, 2016) and the Max Planck Society and network’s institutes — have policies encouraging OA publications using their funds. The major national funder in Germany, the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) has also introduced an OA mandate.

74 institutions currently show in the ROAR map with registered OA policies. Out of these 74, twelve have OA policies that specifically include books:

- Bauhaus-Universität Weimar
- Bundesanstalt für Wasserbau (BAW/Federal Waterways Engineering and Research Institute of Germany)
- Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft
- Freiburg University
- Freie Universität Berlin
- Max Planck Society
- Technical University Braunschweig
- Technische Universität Chemnitz
- Technische Universität Dresden
- University Passau
- Universität Konstanz
- Wuppertal Institut für Klima, Umwelt, Energie

OA book funding

Funding is available for OA books on both the national and institutional levels. The DFG offers a dedicated fund to cover Book Processing Charges and so do other funders, such as the Volkswagen Foundation and the Leibniz Consortium. A number of universities have OA book-dedicated funds, with Berlin leading the way in the number of available resources through the Humboldt University and the Technical University of Berlin OA funds.

Library/scholar-led OA book publishing

Two university presses in Germany publish the largest number of OA books in the country: KIT Scientific Publishing, affiliated with the Karlsruher Institute for Technology (**KIT Publishing**), and **Goettingen University Press**. The former operates on a BPC-basis. **Goettingen University Press**, as part of the Electronic Publishing division of Goettingen State and University Library, offers publishing services to both its affiliated authors, and to researchers coming from outside of Goettingen University.

Language Science Press (LSP) is a relatively new player in the academic publishing landscape — in 2012, the Open Access in Linguistics initiative was set up, which subsequently led to the creation of LSP — in Germany. It is an academic-led initiative with a focus on linguistics, strongly embedded in the linguistic community. With supporters from prestigious universities around the world, the press publishes both open access monographs and edited volumes in SSH, and does not charge BPCs to authors. In its first three years of operation, it was subsidised by a grant coming from DFG (Nordhoff,

2018). Currently, it operates on an institutional membership model, with participating libraries collectively funding publication, using Knowledge Unlatched as a middle-man.

Integration of OA books in library systems

There is no one common discovery system used across all academic libraries in Germany. The inclusion of OA books in discovery tools and library catalogues depends largely on discovery system providers/aggregators. If OA books are not automatically included in them, then there is little chance that they will be manually added, due to the lack of human resources.

Important contributors

- **GASCO** <https://www.hbz-nrw.de/produkte/digitale-inhalte/gasco>
- **DINI** (Deutsche Initiative für Netzwerkinformation e. V.) <https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/projects-research/project-details/projekt/dini/> and <https://dini.de/>
- **DFG** (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), Schwerpunktinitiative "Digitale Information" https://www.dfg.de/dfg_profil/allianz/digitale_information/index.html
- **National Contact Point Open Access 2020 DE:** <https://www.oa2020-de.org/>
- **Open Access Network:** <https://open-access.network/>
- **ENABLE** <https://www.enable-oa.org/>
- **The Consortium of Library Networks (AGV)** <https://www.dnb.de/EN/Professionell/Standardisierung/AGV/agv.html>
- **OA Tage** <https://open-access.net/community/open-access-tage>
- **DBV (Der Deutsche Bibliotheksverband) Association of German Libraries** <https://www.bibliothekverband.de/fachgruppen/sektionen/sektion-4.html>
- **Goettingen University Press** <https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/publishing-open-access/goettingen-university-press/>
- **Transcript:** <https://www.transcript-publishing.com/>
- **Language Science Press** <https://langsci-press.org>
- **KIT Scientific Publishing** <https://www.ksp.kit.edu/>

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