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

Greece

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Key findings

- **There is no national OA strategy in Greece, yet there are bottom-up initiatives pushing towards a plan for national transition towards OA**
- **The academic libraries consortium, HEAL-Link, represents the interests of libraries when negotiating deals with publishers**
- **There are no OA book-specific funds for researchers in Greece**
- **Project Kallipos and Kallipos+, supported by governmental funds, is the largest publishing initiative for OA textbooks and monographs**
- **OA books are not included in academic library catalogues**

General library system for e-content and OA publications

Academic libraries in Greece, affiliated with 25 Higher Education Institutions and 40 public research centres, are supervised by the Ministry of Education.

The Hellenic Academic Libraries Link (HEAL-Link) is a national academic and research library consortium, offering access to e-content to all Greek Higher Education Institutions along with certain research centres and organisations. In its current shape (as of September 2020) HEAL-Link covers nearly 27,000 journals and 139,000 books, and comprises of 43 members, uniting all HEIs in Greece. The consortial budget is centralised and individual institutions depend both on the national funding coming from the Ministry and their local budgets. Certain acquisition decisions for electronic sources are made at the consortium level, while others are taken on the institutional budget level, depending on each institution's specific needs.

The HEAL-Link participates in various initiatives and schemes, such as **SELL**, the Southern Eastern Libraries Link. The consortium's General Assembly meets on a biannual basis and approves resource allocation for e-content on a national level. The e-content budget is proposed by the Permanent Committee for Electronic Resources, which first asks for the approval of the Board of Directors before submitting its proposal to the G.A. Among the tasks of this Committee is to negotiate renewals and/or subscription to electronic content with scientific publishers, to promote and support open access, to participate in and represent the consortium actively in actions, initiatives and schemes, and to advise the consortium on matters of scholarly communication. HEAL-Link actively supports open access initiatives, amongst other things by funding the Open Library of Humanities.

Library community and open access

The Permanent Committee of Electronic Resources plays an active role in advocating for OA in the Greek academic community. It advises the HEAL-Link consortium on matters of scholarly

communication, preparing guidelines and training materials. The most recent development is the launch and operation of the Scholarly Communication Unit under HEAL-Link, which aims to promote OA, to support and guide the community regarding the routes of implementing OA, to inform about available options provided by HEAL-Link, to publish in OA mode, and to monitor OA publications.

OA book policies

While Greece has not adopted any kind of national OA strategy, it still has active OA advocates, notably in the librarian environment, who push for developments in this area. The Hellenic Academic Libraries Link (HEAL-Link) published a document called *The Declaration on Open Access in Greece*. It recognizes the importance of free access to knowledge and calls for a “smooth transition” of subscription-based academic journals to OA. The Declaration focuses solely on journals and does not mention books (Hellenic Academic Libraries Link, n.d.).

In 2018, SELL released a statement supporting the transition to open access, yet also solely focusing on journals. At the end of 2019, Open Science Task Force, a bottom-up initiative consisting of representatives of HEIs and OA nodes in Greece, prepared a proposal for a National Open Science Plan.

Individual institutions are slowly adopting OA policies in Greece. Currently, there are five institutions with registered OA policies in the ROAR map. Among them, three mention books specifically: the International Hellenic University, the Technical University of Crete, and the University of Patras.

OA book funding

No specific OA book funds exist in Greece. Open access monographs, book chapters and/or proceedings can be funded as part of larger research projects – as the output of research projects.

Library/scholar-led OA book publishing

While some Greek academic libraries run OA publishing programmes, they are mainly focused on journals, a good example being [Prothiki](#) at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Library-led publishing initiatives for monographs have not, however, gained much popularity.

It is on a national level that the innovation in OA book publishing is taking place in Greece. The Kallipos project, launched in 2016 and funded jointly by the Ministry of Education and the European Social Fund, is an initiative aimed at publishing textbooks in Greek in open access. The project is led by HEAL-Link, together with the National Research Network and the National Technical University of Athens. In 2019, a new edition of the project was launched. Kallipos+ will include OA monographs alongside its more general textbooks inventory (*Project Kallipos - Open Educational Resources*, n.d.).

Integration of OA books in library systems

OA books are generally not included in library catalogues. There is a certain scepticism about bringing them into the existing discoverability systems, especially those records that are incomplete and missing permanent identifiers. OA textbooks by Kallipos are integrated with the library catalogues.

Important contributors

- **Hellenic Academic Libraries Link (HEAL-Link)** <https://www.heal-link.gr/en/>
- **SELL** <https://www.heal-link.gr/SELL/about/>
- **Kallipos (Hellenic Academic Ebooks)** <https://www.kallipos.gr/en/>
- **Scholarly Communication Unit** (under the aegis of HEAL-Link) (scholarly.heal-link.gr).

References

Hellenic Academic Libraries Link. Declaration on Open Access in Greece. https://www.heal-link.gr/librarians_files/other/Declaration%20on%20Open%20Access%20in%20Greece.pdf

SELL statement on Open Access. (2018). https://www.heal-link.gr/SELL/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/SELL_Thessaloniki_statement_may_2018.pdf

Project Kallipos - Open Educational Resources. (n.d.). Retrieved December 3, 2020, from <https://www.kallipos.gr/en/component/k2/itemlist/tag/Open%20Educational%20Resources.html>

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