



# Report on the PALOMERA survey on open access policies for books in the European research area

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## Executive summary

As part of the data collection for the project 'Policy Alignment for Open Access Monographs in the European Research Area' (PALOMERA), a survey was designed and distributed on the needs, obstacles and challenges of policy-making for open access books. It was directed at various stakeholder groups and aimed to identify attitudes and levels of knowledge about open access book policies in general and individual measures in particular. The questionnaire was divided into six sections: 1) General information about the respondents; 2) Awareness of open access policy measures; 3) Stakeholders and players; 4) Attitudes towards the design of policies for open access for books; 5) Attitudes and policy measures for open access books; and 6) Policy measures.

420 complete responses were received from 30 countries within the European Research Area. While selecting one country, participants were able to identify with more than one stakeholder type, resulting in two analytical perspectives of different sizes. The analysis per country has a sample size of 420 compared to 574 regarding stakeholder groups.

Most stakeholders state that they have a good knowledge of the areas in which they are active. Declarations and policies are particularly well known in countries where they have been issued. In centrally organised countries respondents are more aware of the existence and dissemination of their policies. In countries where federal states have sovereignty over education issues and initiatives on a national level, they do not have the same impact.

When asked about the importance of stakeholder involvement for the implementation of open access book policies in their country, all countries surveyed stated that all stakeholders should be more intensively involved, with the exception of international publishers. Respondents would like to see this stakeholder group having less involvement. When looked at from the stakeholder perspective, a different picture emerges. In general, respondents not only think that their own group should be more strongly represented, but also state that they would like to see a stronger presence from all other groups.

At the country level, the vast majority thought that an open access books policy at both the national and international level would change academic publishing for the better. However, the interest in shaping national open access policies is less pronounced with only around half of those surveyed being interested in participating. At the stakeholder level, there were similar results, but publishers were much more undecided. However, while being the least convinced about the change for the better to academic publishing, publishers are the most interested in participating in the design of such a policy.

An analysis of the responses regarding the conditions and environment of open access book publishing shows that it is rated more positively at the institutional level than at the national level. Financial resources and sufficient information are still considered to be a clear need. Technical infrastructure for open access books is considered to be slightly better. From the stakeholders' perspective, improving the conditions for the publication of open access books remains a particular challenge.

There was broad agreement from the respondents at the country and stakeholder levels that all quality measures were important for open access books. However, open peer review measures were considered slightly less important by respondents, and this response mirrors that of the DIAMAS survey – although, funders do regard open peer review as important.

All statements about measures to increase the visibility of open access books were considered important to varying degrees by the whole sample. However, there was one exception: 'record of reviews and other texts related to the open access book' was considered far less important when compared to the other statements.

Sufficient and correct entries in the metadata record of open access books was considered the most important aspect of this set of statements and this reflects the widely known issue that metadata for books requires improvement. This statement was particularly supported by libraries and publishers in the stakeholder sample. The use of common persistent identifiers, such as DOIs, was considered almost equally important for similar reasons.

The transparent calculation of book processing charges was regarded as the most important statement in the economic measures section. Separate budget lines for open access and non-open access books are perceived as less important across the whole sample. However, this view may change over time if funders require evidence of payment as a condition of funding.

Regarding technical infrastructure, respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of publicly funded technical infrastructures rather than commercial solutions.

A key issue is the creation of awareness for open access books through a communication strategy. This topic came into light in many parts of the survey. For example, it is noticeable that stakeholders rate the situation of open access books in their own area of interest more positively. By implication, it can be assumed that if the numerous products, services, funding opportunities, platforms and technical infrastructures that support open access books were better known, the status of the transformation of the book market would also be assessed more positively.

Overall, the survey underscores the need for tailored visibility strategies aligned with stakeholder priorities and policy frameworks to maximise the impact and accessibility of open access books.

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# List of abbreviations

BMBF: German Federal Ministry of Education and Research

CC: Creative Commons

CNRS: French National Centre for Scientific Research

COSO: Comité pour la Science Ouverte

DFG: German Research Foundation

DIAMAS: Developing Institutional Open Access Publishing Models to Advance Scholarly Communication

DOAB: Directory of Open Access Books

DOI: Digital Object Identifier

DORA: The Declaration on Research Assessment

ERA: European Research Area

FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable

OAPEN: Open Access Publishing in European Networks

ORCID: Open Researcher and Contributor ID

PALOMERA: Policy Alignment for Open Access Monographs in the European Research Area

PID: Persistent Identifier

PNSO: Plan national pour la Science Ouverte

RFOs: Research Funding Organisations

RPOs: Research Performing Organisations

UKRI: UK Research and Innovation

# 1 Introduction

Academic books continue to play an important role in scholarly production and knowledge dissemination, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. Nevertheless, academic books have not been a focal point for open access policy-makers so far.

The project ‘Policy Alignment for Open Access Monographs in the European Research Area’ (PALOMERA; CORDIS, n.d.) is a two-year Horizon Europe project to support the development of aligned policies for open access books. The project is investigating the open access books policy landscape across geographies, languages, economies, and disciplines within the European Research Area (ERA) through desk research, surveys, in-depth interviews, and use cases. Data collected is being analysed to understand current policy and practice, including respective challenges, and, where possible, will be made available via a knowledge base.

Based on this research, PALOMERA will provide actionable recommendations and concrete resources to support and coordinate aligned funder and institutional policies for open access books, with the overall objective of speeding up the transition to open access for books to further promote open science.

As part of the data collection, a survey was designed and distributed on the needs, obstacles and challenges of policy-making for open access books. It was directed at various stakeholder groups and aimed to identify attitudes and levels of knowledge about open access book policies in general and individual measures in particular. In the following, we report on the results of this survey and draw initial conclusions for measures to promote open access book policies.

## 2 Methods

### 2.1 Rationale

The PALOMERA survey was planned from the very early stages of conceptualising the project. We seek to understand the reasons behind the lack of inclusion of books within open access policies, and it is important for the PALOMERA project to base its recommendations for changing this inadequacy on a wide assessment of relevant voices and indicators. The choice of the survey method was made in accordance with the aim of establishing an overview of attitudes and levels of knowledge about open access policies and specific practical measures that relate to books (e.g. usage of common persistent identifiers such as digital object identifiers (DOI)).

### 2.2 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was planned to be fully answerable within 20 minutes without any research effort and with only one free text field for additional feedback at the very end of the survey (Appendix A). Efforts were made to limit the survey length and format in order to reduce the drop-out rate. The questionnaire was designed through an iterative process of three internal review rounds with members of the PALOMERA project. After each review, comments from test respondents were incorporated into the design. A final review was carried out by the PALOMERA project advisory board. The questionnaire was also made openly available for re-use (Dreyer, Tummes and Varachkina, 2024).

The final version of the questionnaire was divided into six sections:

- (1) General information about the respondents

The first section asked for general information about the respondents, such as nationality or stakeholder group. The categories were derived from the typology that we use internally in the project to analyse all types of data (including interviews, policy documents and papers). We differentiate between:

- Policymakers (national)
- Research funding organisations (RFOs)
- Universities and other research performing organisations (RPOs)
- Publishers

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- Libraries
- Infrastructure providers
- Learned societies
- No organisation
- Other

Definitions of the stakeholder groups in the questionnaire were intentionally omitted because there are always exceptions and the definitions can therefore have a partially exclusionary effect. Furthermore, we were more interested in the respondents' self-attributions than in a factually correct categorisation or one that was in line with the definitions used internally in the project. Internal differentiation of stakeholder groups (e.g. national and local funders, university and non-university research institutions, commercial and institutional publishers, etc.) were also avoided in order to ensure that the set of distinctions in the survey correspond with the differentiations used within the project and to keep the level of complexity manageable. Therefore, overlaps cannot be ruled out, for example between infrastructure providers and libraries. Multiple answers were possible through checkboxes and self-evaluation was most important here. Survey participants' potential professional involvement in open access as well as their perceived level of expertise were further identified as important information for exploration of possibly related patterns among other questions, such as the acceptance of and specific design wishes for open access policies for books.

### (2) Awareness of open access policy measures

In this group of questions, respondents were asked about their knowledge of the existence of certain policy documents and declarations. This group of questions served to determine the extent to which the respondents were familiar with the political level of their own open access landscape and, conversely, the degree to which they were aware of certain policy documents. Here, too, we aimed to gain insights by comparing awareness of open access policies with the respective country as well as with the stakeholder group with which respondents self-identified.

### (3) Stakeholders and players

The third group of questions was concerned with the perceived importance of the above mentioned stakeholders and players in policy development processes. We also asked how important these stakeholders should be. In this case, we aimed to gain insights through the comparison with the country and stakeholder group that respondents self-identified with.

### (4) Attitudes towards the design of open access policies for books

In this section, we asked about attitudes towards open access policies. The question was whether the respondent would trust an open access policy at national or institutional level to bring about an improvement in the academic publishing system. In addition,

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we wanted to know whether there is an interest in participating in the design of such a policy and whether there is knowledge of participation opportunities and relevant policy actors.

### (5) Attitudes and policy measures for open access books

The fifth question group concerned levels of satisfaction with the existing policy measures for the support of open access books, without going into the content of specific measures. Here we asked, among other questions, whether the publication of a book in open access is regarded as equivalent to the publication of a book in closed access. We also inquired how the respondents assessed the information situation related to open access book publishing at national and institutional level as well as funding opportunities and technical infrastructures.

### (6) Policy measures

The last and most extensive section was devoted to individual measures and attempted to find out how important these measures were considered to be on a five-point scale from ‘not important’ to ‘very important’. The selection of measures was based on the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Universitätsverlage’s (2023) quality criteria for open access books, which were evaluated individually to design this questionnaire and - where possible - reformulated as policy measures. For the sake of clarity, subsections were created here that were dedicated to the topics of ‘quality assurance’, ‘visibility’, ‘rights management’, ‘metadata’, ‘technical infrastructure’, ‘costing and budget security’ and the topic of general support measures. A total of 42 measures were evaluated in this way.

## 2.3 Sampling process and responses

The survey questionnaire was set up as a web survey using the software LimeSurvey (LimeSurvey Community Edition, Version 3.27.30+211222). After this setup, the survey was online and accessible for participation from 22 August 2023 until 16 October 2023. Project-internal country teams dedicated to research in specific geographical areas were asked to facilitate the survey distribution. In this way, it was possible to distribute the survey in ERA countries. Mailing lists and newsletters were the key channels of communication for survey distribution within ERA countries. In addition, the survey was disseminated via posts on social media channels, announcements at events and direct contact with potentially interested persons. The relatively long time frame of the survey allowed for several reminders to be sent out to the community. Aimed at supporting distribution efforts during the time the survey was open for participation, internal weekly survey progress reports informed project partners about response rates among countries and stakeholder groups.

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By the end of the sampling time frame, the survey received a total of 859 responses. Among these were 405 incomplete responses, which were counted but automatically discarded. Incomplete, in this case, means that a survey response was started, terminated somewhere in the process, and not finally submitted. The survey setup did not allow for saving the progress and resuming at a later stage. The amount of complete responses that could be used for analysis was 454. 34 responses from countries outside the ERA were further excluded, finally leaving 420 complete responses from the ERA for analysis.

We received between 30 and 40 responses each from Italy, France and Slovenia. Between 10 and 25 responses were received from Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and Norway (Figure 2.1). The lower return rates from these countries are mainly due to the fact that we have no project partners here. In countries with sufficient response rates, on the other hand, we had one or more project partners who were able to professionally engage in the dissemination of the survey.

The country-specific analysis only includes countries from which we received at least 30 responses. Thus, only Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, France and Slovenia are included in the country comparison throughout the report.

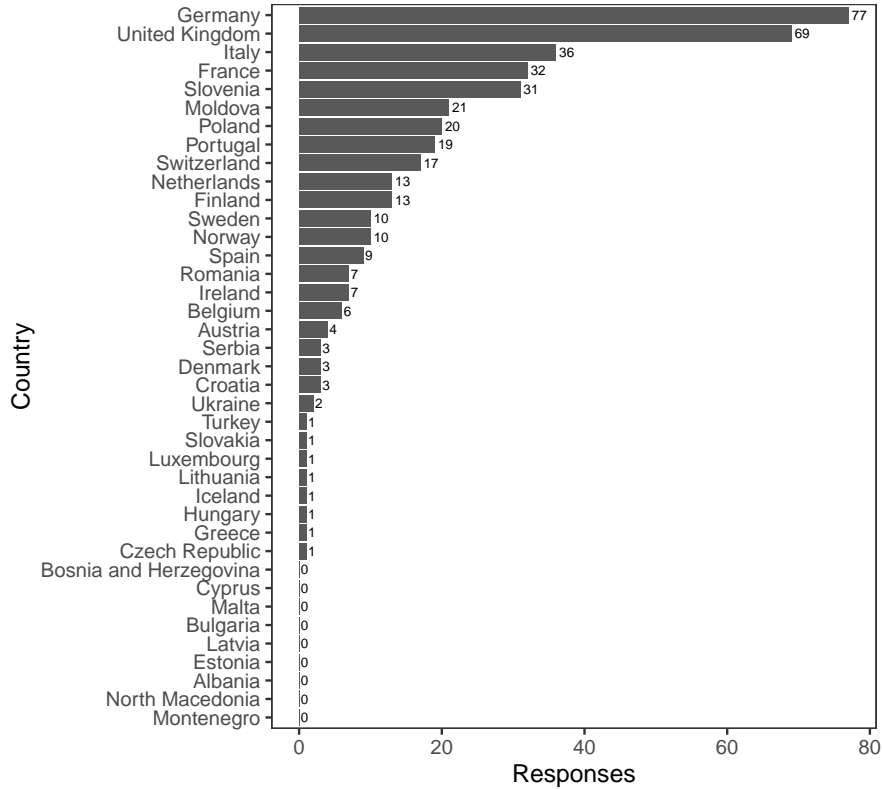


Figure 2.1: Survey responses per country (n=420).

Since participants were able to identify as representing multiple stakeholders but only

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one country, the sample size concerning responses from different countries ( $n=420$ ) differs from the sample size concerning responses from different stakeholder groups ( $n=574$ , figure 2.2, see also chapter 2.4). The responses per (self-identified) stakeholder group included 263 responses from research performing organisations, 166 responses from the professional field of librarians and 74 responses from publishers. Stakeholder affiliations included in the survey responses allow e.g. for identifying connections between the profession of participants and the acceptance of certain policy measures. We decided to include stakeholder groups with 17 or more responses in the dataset. This choice of including RFOs was motivated by the impression that the number of RFOs existing in the ERA is relatively low compared to some other stakeholder groups. It appeared, therefore, that the number of RFOs represented in this survey was relatively higher compared to e.g. represented libraries. However, it is noted in respective sections throughout the report that the analysis of the data from RFOs (17 responses) and infrastructure providers (23 responses) must be viewed with caution as there are limited numbers of responses and no strong trends should be identified.

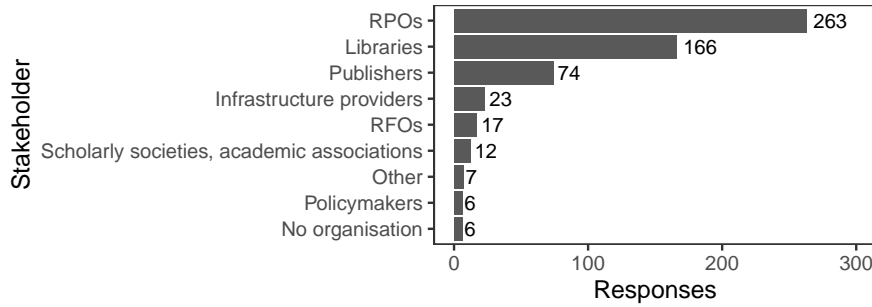


Figure 2.2: Survey responses per stakeholder group ( $n=574$ ).

### 2.4 Method of analysis

After the web survey was closed, the resulting dataset with all full responses was exported from LimeSurvey for further analysis with the programming language ‘R’ (R Core Team, 2024; version 4.4.1) and Tidyverse packages (Wickham et al., 2019). Basic descriptive statistics were used in order to summarise absolute numbers, as well as percentages concerning likert scale answers, as part of the two greater analytical perspectives of this report (country perspective and stakeholder perspective). It is important to note that the two analytical perspectives do not have the same underlying sample size, since all respondents indicated one country in which they or their primary (affiliated) institution are located, but were able to self-identify with possibly several stakeholder groups (Figure 2.3). Furthermore, all but one question analysed, share the full sample sizes of the country ( $n=420$ ) and stakeholder ( $n=574$ ) perspectives, as well as its sub-samples (e.g. answers from ‘France’ ( $n=32$ ), or from ‘Libraries’ ( $n=166$ ; see also Figure 2.1 and

Figure 2.2). The only question differing due to its non-mandatory nature is visualised in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2, in which the individual sample sizes are indicated.

### 2.5 Limitations

The results of the PALOMERA survey are subject to possible errors, including (1) errors caused by the characteristics of the sample of individuals answering as well as (2) errors caused by respective answers themselves (Fowler 2014, p. 13). This chapter follows Fowler’s (2014, pp. 8-13) delineations of error types in surveys and points to important limitations to the presented results.

The most generic kind of error is the sampling error. Due to the fact that the responses are given by a sample of individuals rather than the whole population, chance-based variation of the answers compared to their representation in the whole population is inevitable.

Different from the sampling error and its random effects is how bias affects the survey in a rather systematic way. When interpreting the survey results, it is important to note that the sampling process produced a convenience sample of an unknown target population. This convenience sample is not random since respondents, mainly reached through mailing lists, decided themselves (i.e. self-selected) whether to participate or not. It is therefore most likely that the sample is characterised by patterns originating from this self-selection, producing bias due to over- or underrepresentation of certain groups of individuals. For example, individuals interested in or having a relatively high level of expertise in open access seem more likely to respond to this PALOMERA survey than individuals opposed to it or with a relatively low level of expertise, respectively.

Beyond limitations resulting from the characteristics of individuals answering, the answers themselves are also a possible source of error. Examples of this type of error in a survey include misunderstandings of survey questions, respondents lacking necessary information for answering or distorting responses for different reasons, such as morally desirable ideals. It can thus be the case that given answers differ from the ‘truth’, affecting the validity of survey results.

### 2.6 Data management and research ethics

The survey was carried out in accordance with the PALOMERA data management plan (Tóth-Czifra and Bandura-Morgan, 2023). Participation in the survey was informed, voluntary and appropriate measures were taken in order to guarantee the anonymity of respondents. Best efforts were made to remove any information that might accidentally identify individuals. All answers from a free text field for general feedback at the end of the survey, which were excluded from formal analysis, were removed as part of these



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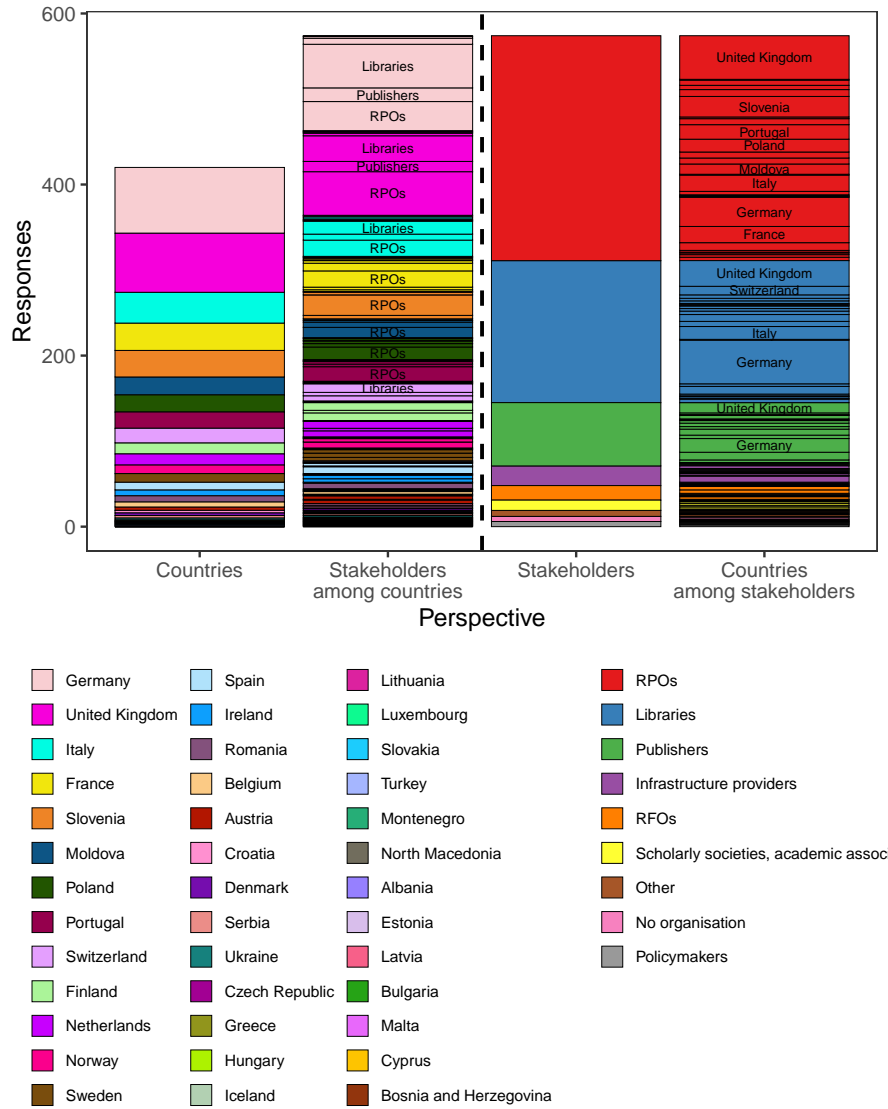


Figure 2.3: Comparison between sample sizes of the country perspective (Bar 1, n=420) and the stakeholder perspective (Bar 3, n=574) used throughout the report, as well as respectively contained stakeholders within each country (Bar 2, n=574) and countries within each stakeholder group (Bar 4, n=574). Subgroups indicated in Bar 2 and 4 are additionally labeled if the subgroup contains at least n=10. Each survey response contained one associated country, and potentially more than one stakeholder affiliation.

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efforts before publication. The final dataset was made openly available (Dreyer, Tummes and Stone, 2024).

## 3 Results and analysis

The following section of this report presents and analyses the survey results. This presentation is based on the order and content of the questionnaire as described in the previous section. Each sub-chapter of the following part is structured as follows:

1. In an introduction to each sub-chapter, the significance of the topic under investigation is clarified and our research interest is explained.
2. We present the wording of the questions from the questionnaire.
3. If background information is required to understand the results, such information is provided in the form of brief descriptions. This is done in particular in chapter 3.2, which deals with policies at national level. Here, the policy situation in the countries of the comparison group is presented in short country reports in the appendix. Chapter 3.2.3 also refers to additional information in the appendix. Here, we provide brief information about the position papers whose level of awareness we have surveyed.
4. Each sub-chapter also contains an analysis of the responses concerning selected stakeholder groups (the stakeholder perspective, n=574) as well as concerning selected countries (the national perspective, n=420). We investigate whether there are any recognizable connections between country affiliation and attitudes to the topics 1-6 presented above. Our analysis includes countries to which at least 30 respondents assigned themselves (see also chapter 2.3). We also ask whether there are any recognizable relationships between the affiliation to a stakeholder group and the attitudes to topics 1-6 (ibid.).
5. The survey results show tendencies in opinion, offer interpretations for understanding existing opinions on open access books and book policies and indicate where follow-up research could be useful. A final interpretation of the data that takes these points into account is provided at the end of each subsection.

### 3.1 Professional involvement in open access and perceived level of expertise

The first question was aimed at a self-assessment of the respondents' level of involvement in open access. We asked the following questions:

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- Are you professionally involved in open access (for example, supporting open access publishing as a publisher or librarian)?
- How would you rate your expertise in the field of open access? (1=Novice, 5=Expert)

These questions were important for evaluating the results of our survey. Firstly, we hoped to be able to attribute any differences in response behaviour to differences in the degree of professional involvement. In addition, this assessment enabled a general analysis of the responses. If, for example, respondents are asked about their knowledge of the existence of an open access policy in a particular country, and a large proportion of respondents state that they are not aware of any policy, even though such a policy exists, this is to be expected if the respondents have nothing to do with open access professionally, but it requires explanation if the majority of respondents are professionally involved with open access. The same applies to many other questions, such as those on interest in participating in policy processes, questions on the assessment of the state of development of the open access ecosystem in a particular country or questions on the assessment of policy measures to promote open access books. The following analysis of the survey results must therefore always be considered against the background of the respondents' statement on their level of professional involvement.

Looking at the respondents' self-assessment broken down by country, it is noticeable that, with the exception of Slovenia, between 83 % and 100 % of respondents state they are professionally involved in open access. In Slovenia, only 45 % of respondents state they are professionally involved in open access (Figure 3.1). Throughout the report, it becomes clear that there are differences between the responses from Slovenia and those from other countries that cannot be explained by country-specific factors. Since respondents from Slovenia are less professionally involved in open access, possible deviations in their responses from other represented countries can also be read as an indication of differences in opinion between those with a high level of professional involvement and those without. This should be taken into account when interpreting the following chapters.

Broken down by stakeholder, it can be seen that between 87 % and 96 % of respondents state they are professionally involved in open access (Figure 3.2). When assessing their own expertise in the field of open access, between 67 % (RPOs) and 87 % (RFOs) rate their expertise as 4 or 5 on a scale of 1–5. Thus, professional involvement is strongly represented in the stakeholders group and relatively evenly distributed across the various stakeholder types. On the one hand, this creates a risk of bias. Those with a high level of professional involvement in open access cannot provide information that is representative of the general scientific community because they are usually more familiar with the topics under discussion. Their answers must therefore be viewed with caution where the perspective of those without professional involvement is actually required for our analysis, for example, when it comes to the degree of general awareness of policies. However, when analysing other questions, the high proportion of professional involvement in our cohort is an advantage, for example, when we ask about the effectiveness of certain policy measures at a legal or technical level. Here, the answers can be given greater

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weight because possible assessments of such aspects often require specific professional knowledge from the field. We will therefore return to this particular aspect of the cohort in given cases and adjust the interpretation of our survey data accordingly.

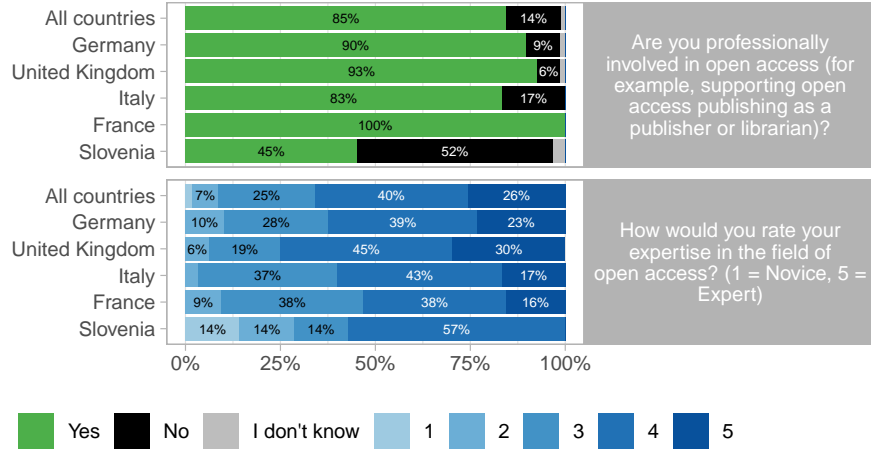


Figure 3.1: Country perspective on professional involvement in open access (All countries (n)=420), and respectively perceived expertise (non-mandatory question; All countries (n)=355; Germany=69, United Kingdom=64, Italy=30, France=32, Slovenia=14).

### 3.2 Open access policies for books: Existence and dissemination

For the purpose of our research project, we have distinguished between two meanings of the term ‘policy’. In a broader sense, policy refers to the document in which certain measures for the implementation of political objectives are set out in writing. In a wider sense the term policy refers to the entirety of all practices and beliefs that guide political action at micro and macro level and aim to bring about or avoid a certain status quo in a defined area of political action – in our case, this is the area of the design of publication systems. Our survey is based on both meanings as we did not want to prescribe a definition of the term in one way or another.

The first content-related questions we asked survey participants were about the existence of open access policies and whether they deal with the topic of open access books. In some cases, the question of the existence of a policy cannot be answered clearly. For example, papers with political content enacted by a country or institution may not be referred to as policies, but as ‘guidelines’ or ‘recommendations’ – there may be cultural specificities.

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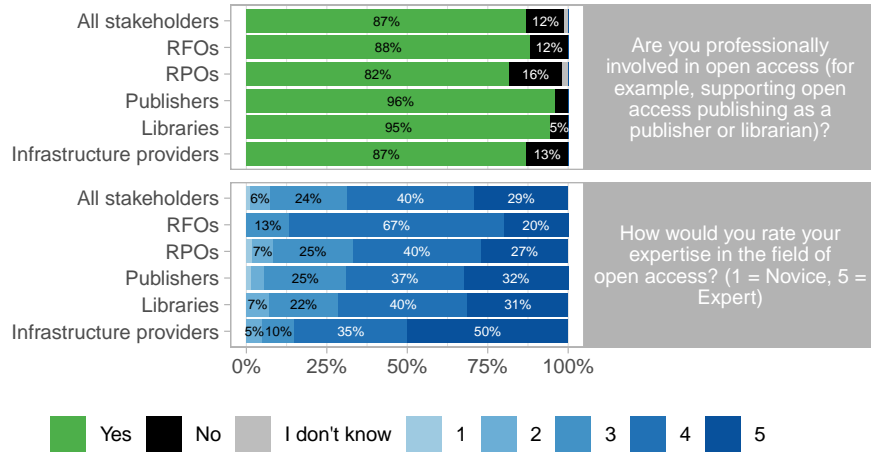


Figure 3.2: Stakeholder perspective on professional involvement in open access (All stakeholders (n)=574), and respectively perceived expertise (non-mandatory question; All stakeholders (n)=500; RFOs=15, RPOs=215, Publishers=71, Libraries=157, Infrastructure providers=20).

However, the information provided by respondents on the existence, dissemination and importance of the topic of books in open access policies is very helpful in getting a picture of how homogeneous or heterogeneous group-related attitudes to the policy situation are. Where clear majorities selected one of the answer options, it can be assumed that the group surveyed has a relatively uniform attitude towards the policy situation. This is the case, for example, among the French respondents, where 100 % of respondents answered ‘yes’ to the question of whether a national policy exists (Chapter 3.2.1). By comparing the results from the stakeholder and country groups, it is possible to identify areas in which different, and in some cases contradictory, opinions exist, indicating possible ambiguities or potential areas of conflict.

The question of whether there is a leading opinion on policies must be distinguished from the question of whether the leading position is justified. In order to determine this it is necessary to know the actual situation in the respective countries. In the case of France, the uniform opinion among respondents that there is a national open access policy can be well explained by the centrally organised policy processes at national level. To contextualise the other survey results, we therefore present the policy situation in short country reports (Appendix B–F) about the situation in the comparison group countries. Considering different local and national open access book policy contexts, it was not possible to produce such a situation report for the self-assessment of the policy situation among RPOs, RFOs, publishers, libraries and infrastructure providers. The analysis of the content of open access policies of these groups would have comprised hundreds of documents. But by comparing only the beliefs of the stakeholder groups we were able to draw conclusions about how widespread a topic is in the discourse.

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Regarding the topic of this chapter, it must also be noted that policies are not designed on a blank canvas but are always set in a discursive and historical context. In order to understand this context, we asked which of the papers and positions already in force are known in the various stakeholder groups. Firstly, the answers to these questions help us to understand the background against which the players assess their own situation. Secondly, it allows for the formulation of future recommendations in such a way that they build on the positions known in their target group. As it cannot be assumed that all readers are familiar with the position papers already in force, these will be briefly presented below.

#### 3.2.1 Policy existence on the national level: Country perspectives

When asking about the existence of an open access policy, our aim was to determine whether there is a uniform opinion in the respective countries about the existence of an open access policy and how widespread knowledge about its focus on books is. In order to find this out we asked the following questions:

1. Does your country have a national open access policy?
2. Are books included in this national open access policy?
3. Does your country have a policy exclusively dedicated to open access books?

All questions could be answered with ‘yes’, ‘no’ or ‘I don't know’. With regard to the policies, the overall picture shows a significant difference between the existence of national open access policies and the representation of the topic of ‘books’ in these policies (Figure 3.3).

To break down the image a bit more precisely, we analysed this question by country. In some countries, there is a more or less heterogeneous, discordant picture of the existence of a national open access policy. Only France shows a clear picture. However, there are different statements as to whether this national open access policy also includes books.

The situation is also diverse with regard to the question of whether a national open access book policy exists. Although a large proportion of respondents are professionals in the field of open access, the figures here reveal that there are different assessments of the existence and scope of national policies for books within the same group.

In order to be able to evaluate this situation a little better, we have described the policy situation of the countries in the appendix and evaluate the survey results against this background in the following section.

#### Germany

Due to its federal structure, Germany has a large number of policy documents: Policies at the level of the federal states, statements from research funding organisations, papers

### 3 Results and analysis

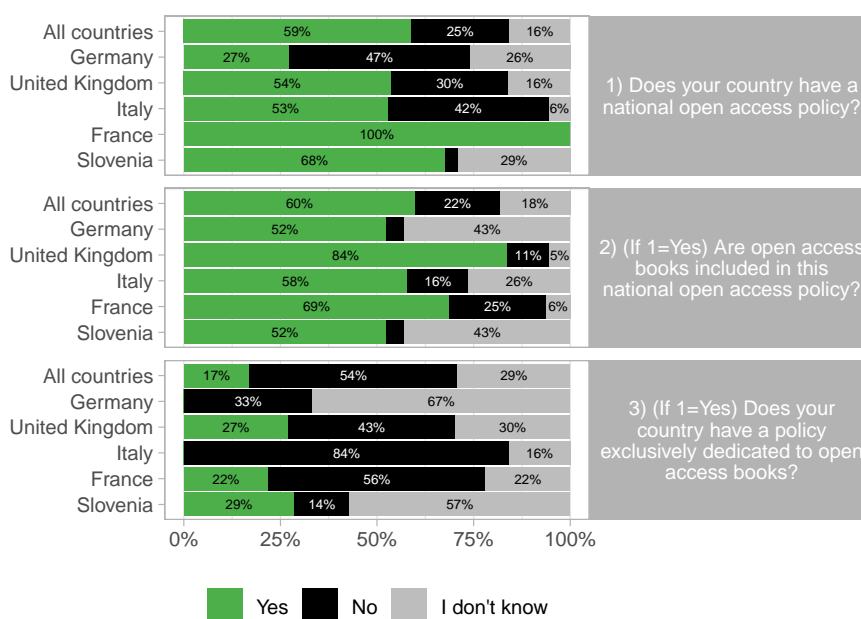


Figure 3.3: Country perspective on perceived existence of national open access policies (All countries (n)=420).

from ministries and many more. 27 % of respondents seem to view one of the existing strategies as a national policy, while 47 % of respondents are convinced that there is no national open access policy in Germany (Figure 3.3). At 26 %, a good quarter of respondents even stated that they did not know whether a national strategy existed or not. In view of the fact that the situation in Germany is not clear, the statement 'I don't know' is presumably not merely due to a lack of knowledge on the part of the respondents. It is even possible that this undecided response behaviour is the consequence of knowledge of the complicated policy situation in Germany (Appendix B). An ambiguous situation corresponds to the undecided response to the question about a national policy. The situation is equally undecided with regard to the scope of this national policy. Of all countries, respondents from Germany (and Slovenia) stated most often that they did not know if their policy includes open access books. Correspondingly, there is also significant indecision about the existence of a strategy for open access books. Here, most respondents stated that they don't know if such a strategy exists (67 %). Although new developments suggest an increased sensitivity about the issue (Appendix B), it seems that there is room for more advocacy and clarity across the region.

#### United Kingdom

The UK does not have one overarching national open access books policy in place that applies to every researcher in every research performing organisation. However, there are



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a number of ‘national’ and other funder policies going through a period of consultation, such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) policy. There are also fixed policies in place, such as the UKRI policy (see Appendix C). 54 % of UK respondents thought there was a national open access books policy in the UK (Figure 3.3). This view could well depend on the position of the respondent. For example, a UKRI funded author or an academic who has their research submitted to the REF could well see these as national policies. The very high numbers of affirmative answers to the question on whether the national open access policy includes books (84 %) can be seen in a positive light, even if it is essentially incorrect. It might well be a reflection on the engagement work of UKRI and its partners on raising awareness of the new open access books policy. The number of respondents reporting that the UK had a national policy relating exclusively to books (27 %) could be a matter of semantics. The UKRI policy applies to journals and has included books since January 2024. However, it is often referred to exclusively as the new open access books policy. Therefore, it is understandable that this policy could be viewed as a separate policy altogether.

#### **Italy**

Despite Italy’s centralised governance structure, the academic landscape relies also on the autonomy of its institutions, organisations, and universities (Appendix D). Consequently, while there exists overarching legislation providing a framework, individual agencies and stakeholders determine their specific approach to open access, highlighting the absence of a comprehensive national policy dedicated to advancing open science in the country. This situation, characterized by the autonomy of individual institutions and a centralized government structure, seems to encourage ambiguous responses. Of those surveyed, just over half (53 %) stated that their country had an open access policy, 42 % answered this question in the negative and a comparatively small number (6 %) said they did not know the answer to this question (Figure 3.3). A good majority (58 %) state that books are also included in a national strategy. However, the clearest answer to the question of whether there is a separate strategy for books was given by the respondents in the country comparison. 84 % answered this question with ‘no’.

#### **Slovenia**

Slovenia has begun to make the publication of scientific books in open access a legal requirement, even if the practical consequences of this provision are not yet entirely clear. For example, it is not yet known what approach the state will take to non-compliance, how this will affect the (bibliometric) evaluation of research results, how Slovenian publishers can be supported and open access publications can be financed for publishers with insufficient infrastructure (Appendix F). The numerous activities at a trans-institutional level are also reflected in the response behavior of the respondents. Apart from the special case of France with its strikingly clear response rate of 100 %

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‘yes’ answers, Slovenia is in the lead with 68 % ‘yes’ responses to the question of whether a national open access policy exists (Figure 3.3). Despite political activities to include book publications in the strategy, only a comparatively small number of respondents (52 %) answered ‘yes’ to the question of whether the national policy also takes books into account. In line with the situation, the question of a national strategy for books is answered rather negatively, as in all other countries, with only 29 % answering yes.

#### France

France is also characterised by a centralised structure that influences policy making processes (Bärwolff et al., 2023b; see also Appendix E). The centralised form of organisation of policy processes, and especially the recent creation of a ministerial body dedicated to supporting open science (Comité pour la Science Ouverte), correlates with a remarkable clarity in the answers to the question of whether France has a national open access policy. It is striking that 100 % of respondents answered this question with ‘yes’. While the result may correspond to the actions of local or specific institutions, it is also probable that it relates to the publication of two national plans for open science (2018 and 2021). This result is all the more remarkable given that, on average, only 59 % from the comparison group (= all countries) answered this question clearly with ‘yes’. Correspondingly, 69 % of the respondents from France stated that they knew that the topic of books was taken into account in their national policy - more than in any other country.

#### 3.2.2 Policy existence at the institutional level: Stakeholder perspectives

Policies at a national level are often unable to address the specific needs and challenges in usually highly specialised research areas, institutions and professional fields. Institutional policies are important in facilitating the implementation of national policies since they are closest to the research communities. It is therefore important that national policies are applied in institutional policies and adapted to their respective fields. We wanted to find out how widespread knowledge of the existence of institutional policies is and therefore asked our respondents the following questions:

1. Does your institution have an open access policy?
2. Are open access books included in this institutional open access policy?
3. Does your institution have a policy exclusively dedicated to open access books?

In evaluating the questions, it was important to gain a pan-European perspective from stakeholders rather than comparing countries as a whole.

Most of the members of the stakeholder groups surveyed stated that their institution has its own open access policy.

A total of 79 % of members of the stakeholder comparison group answered the question ‘Does your institution have an open access policy’ with ‘yes’ – only 21 % answered ‘no’

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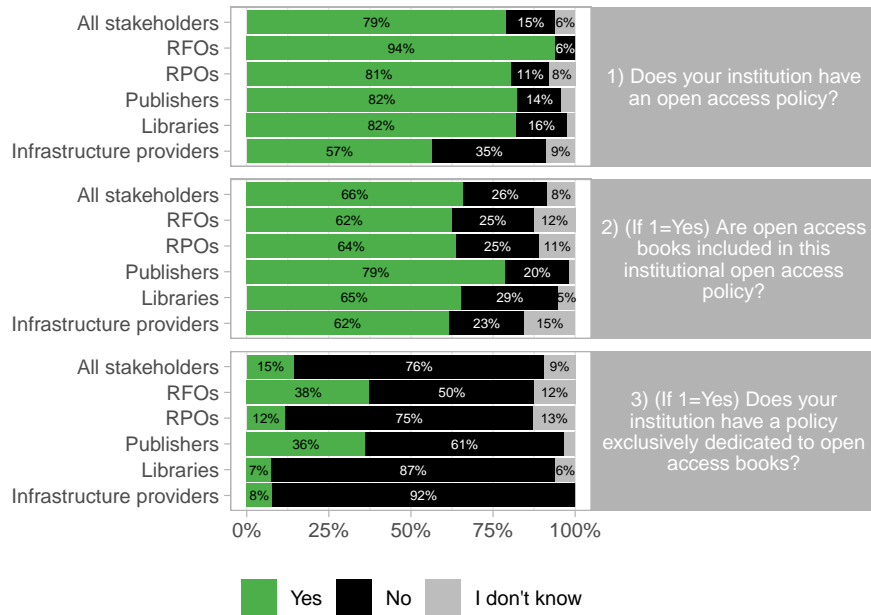


Figure 3.4: Stakeholder perspective on perceived existence of institutional open access policies (All stakeholders (n)=574).

or ‘I don’t know’ (Figure 3.4). A closer look at the individual stakeholder groups reveals very few differences. RFOs lead the field here with 94 %, which is not surprising, given that RFOs are particularly dependent on the transparent communication of funding conditions and policies are an effective and binding tool. RPOs, libraries and publishers are roughly on a par, with 80 % ‘yes’ answers to the question of whether they have their own policy. But only 57 % of infrastructure providers state that they are aware of an institution’s own policy. This could be due to the fact that infrastructure providers are often under the umbrella of a superordinate organisation and therefore do not have their own policy. Finally, it should be noted that the group of infrastructure providers surveyed is relatively small at n=17.

However, the difference between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ is less pronounced when it comes to whether these policies contain books. Here, more respondents (namely 34 %) answered ‘no’ or ‘I don’t know’. Finally, the negative answers predominate in responses to the question of whether there is an open access policy for books. It is not surprising that 85 % of all respondents state that there is none or that they don’t know if there is one. Here too, it makes sense to take a look at the individual stakeholder groups. It is noticeable that the RFOs and publishers in particular stand out clearly from the other stakeholder groups with 38 % and 36 % positive responses to the question of a policy for open access books. This figure is three times higher than that of the RPOs (12 %). The data therefore indicate that awareness of the topic of open access book strategies is greater among publishers and funders than among the research institutions themselves.

At this point, follow-up research could investigate whether this result can be empirically reproduced.

According to the respondents, institutional open access policies are widespread, and many of them mention books. However, policies specifically for books remain a special case.

#### 3.2.3 Familiarity with policies in force

Every policy is embedded in a comprehensive political discourse. It stands in a variety of references to superordinate and subordinate positions that have preceded and followed it in time. If one wants to understand the players involved in this discourse, it makes sense to try to locate their positions in this discourse. This can be done, as in the PALOMERA project, through intensive questioning in interviews. As part of the survey under discussion here, we attempted to determine the positions of the respondents by naming relevant policy documents and asking them whether they were familiar with them. To this end, we compiled a selection of strategy and position papers that followed several criteria:

- The documents have a very high presumed level of awareness.
- Each document corresponds to the focus of the work and interests of at least one stakeholder group.
- Each stakeholder group has at least one document that corresponds to the focus of their work.
- Overall, the documents cover a very wide range of topics (data ethics, reputation systems, open science, etc.).
- The documents are located at different political levels (national, EU-wide and international).
- The documents belong to different text types (recommendation, statement, call, declaration, etc.).

As a result, respondents were offered the following options:

- Amsterdam Call for Action on Open Science (Open Access.nl, n.d.)
- Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities (Max Planck Society, 2003)
- Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing (Brown et al., 2003)
- Budapest Open Access Initiative (Open Society Institute, 2021)
- Joint Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR)-UNESCO Statement on Open Access (UNESCO, 2016)
- San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA, n.d.)
- FAIR Principles (GO FAIR Initiative, n.d.)
- Jussieu Call for Open Science and Bibliodiversity (Jussieu Call for Open Science and Bibliodiversity, n.d.)

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- Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics (Hicks et al., 2015)
- Plan S (cOAlition, 2018)
- UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science (UNESCO, 2023)
- Vienna Principles of Scholarly Communication (Kraker et al., 2016)

Respondents were able to select the papers they were familiar with in a checkbox. For this selection, we asked: ‘Which of the following policies/recommendations are you familiar with?’ The formulation of the question allows an important degree of vagueness. The phrase ‘being familiar with’ includes all possible attitudes on a scale ranging from a feeling of familiarity to profound factual and practical knowledge. This broad formulation was intentionally chosen in order to cover all forms of relationship to the positions mentioned. Our aim was to analyse which thematic and strategic priorities our respondents tend to. In addition, the results give an overview of which principles and objects of open research are particularly well known.

In analyzing the responses, we refer to the best-known positions (>50 %): these are (in average percentages for the countries (=COUN) and stakeholders (=STKH)): FAIR Principles (COUN=77 %/STKH=81 %), PlanS, CoalitionS (COUN=71 %/STKH=75 %), Budapest Open Access Initiative (COUN=64 %/STKH=68 %), Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities (COUN=59 %/STKH=61 %), UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science (COUN=57 %/STKH=59 %), San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, DORA (COUN=55 %/STKH=61 %).

The breakdown by country did not show any significant results other than the unsurprising fact that respondents in countries where a declaration has been adopted are usually particularly familiar with it. Examples for this are the ‘Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities’, which was rated best in Germany (87 %) or the Jussieu Call for Open Science and Biodiversity, which is most common in France (72 %). Although this finding is not worthy of in-depth analysis, it validates the integrity of the data and leads to the recommendation to take these national differences into account when referencing documents in transnational policy-recommendations (Figure 3.5).

An analysis by stakeholder group is more instructive than an analysis at the national level. Below, the documents under discussion are briefly presented and analysed with regard to their significance for open access books and the responses of the stakeholder groups are presented and discussed.

#### **FAIR Principles**

The FAIR principles, introduced in 2014, set out guidelines for making scientific data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable. This framework aims to enhance the value and impact of research by improving the management and sharing of data. In fact, the FAIR principles are important for the production of metadata standards.

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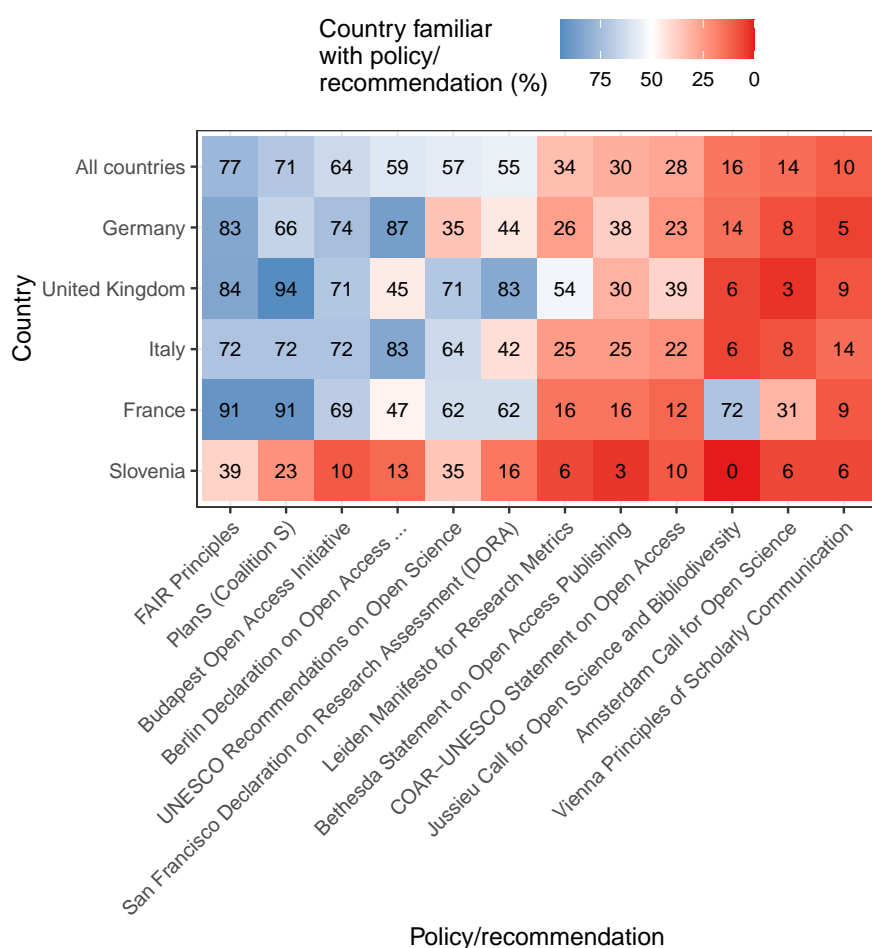


Figure 3.5: Country perspective on the familiarity with policies/recommendations (All countries (n)=420).

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With regard to open access, they are therefore particularly important in the form of a guide to handling metadata for open access books. It is therefore not surprising that infrastructure providers (100 %) and libraries (88 %) are at the top of the list with stakeholders who state that they are familiar with this framework – followed by RFOs (88 %) and RPOs (77 %). Adaptations and adjustments of the FAIR principles to the specific needs of metadata processing in the library context already exist (Koster and Woutersen-Windhouver, 2018). A further extension of this discussion at a policy level also seems to be necessary in view of the heterogeneous data field in the area of access books.

#### **Plan S, cOAlition S**

Launched in September 2018 by cOAlition S, a consortium of major research funders, Plan S aims to make scholarly publications resulting from publicly funded research freely accessible immediately upon publication. The plan stipulates that, from 2021 onwards, research funded by participating organisations must be published in compliant open-access journals or platforms. Principle 7 states: ‘the above principles shall apply to all types of scholarly publications, but it is understood that the timeline to achieve Open Access for monographs and book chapters will be longer and requires a separate and due process;...’. Plan S enjoys a consistently high level of awareness, especially among RFOs (82 %), but also a high level of awareness among infrastructure providers (78 %) and libraries (83 %). Apart from the FAIR Principles, Plan S is the only document listed here that publishers also are familiar with. In this context, the fact that this paper addresses a specific business model with its comments on hybrid publications may play a role.

#### **Budapest Open Access Initiative**

The Budapest Open Access Initiative is one of the founding documents of the Open Access movement and goes back to a conference organised by the Open Society Institute in Budapest, whose participants were largely from the scientific community. Its intention was to bring together existing Open Access activities and initially determine the types of scientific literature for which free access should be made possible (Schirmbacher, 2007, p. 24). One focus of this initiative was on access to journals. When it comes to our survey results, our evaluation does not show any significant differences between stakeholder groups. This declaration appears to enjoy a similarly high level of awareness among all stakeholders. Libraries and infrastructure providers are at the top of the awareness scale with 80 % and 74 %. Among the founding documents of the Open Access movement (Berlin Declaration, Bethesda Statement and the Budapest Initiative), the Budapest Initiative is the best known among the RPO stakeholder group. In fact, certain formulations from that text can be found in the policy documents of numerous

institutions. The significance of this declaration is primarily due to its relevance in the history of science and its importance for the open access movement.

#### **Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities (Berlin-Declaration)**

Alongside the Bethesda Statement and the Budapest Declaration mentioned above, the Berlin Declaration is one of the founding documents of the open access movement. For the first time, both the book-centred humanities and the natural sciences were represented. As with the Budapest Initiative, the Berlin Declaration has the highest level of awareness among infrastructure providers (74 %) and libraries (74 %).

#### **UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science**

The UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science were adopted in November 2021. Aimed at member states and stakeholders, they encourage policies that facilitate open access to scientific information, data sharing, and collaborative practices. As one of the few documents presented here, books are explicitly mentioned in the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science as a form of publication for which the demand for free access is asserted (UNESCO 2023, p. 9). Processing charges are divided into article as well as book processing charges (UNESCO 2023, p. 29). UNESCO as an organisation is located above national units and therefore has an orientation function for stakeholders who have a high degree of influence, act at a higher level than the individual organisations, and adopt policies with a wide reach. This observation corresponds with our results. Regarding our survey it enjoys the highest awareness by far among RFOs (88 %), followed by the infrastructure providers (65 %).

#### **San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, DORA**

The Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA, 2012) was created as a result of the realization of the need to improve forms of research assessment and research results. Although research articles are the main focus of the declaration, the recommendations for reforming the reputation system can be transferred to the book market. At 82 %, members of the RFOs in particular indicate that they have taken note of DORA. What is more surprising, however, is that primarily those who are affected by this declaration, namely the producers and distributors of scientific knowledge, are least familiar with this position. Of all respondents, only just over one in two publishers (54 %) and RPOs (58 %) said they were aware of DORA. Against the background of the importance of DORA, this result once again highlights the need to formulate a strong policy position for the reform of reputation systems in the book market (Figure 3.6).



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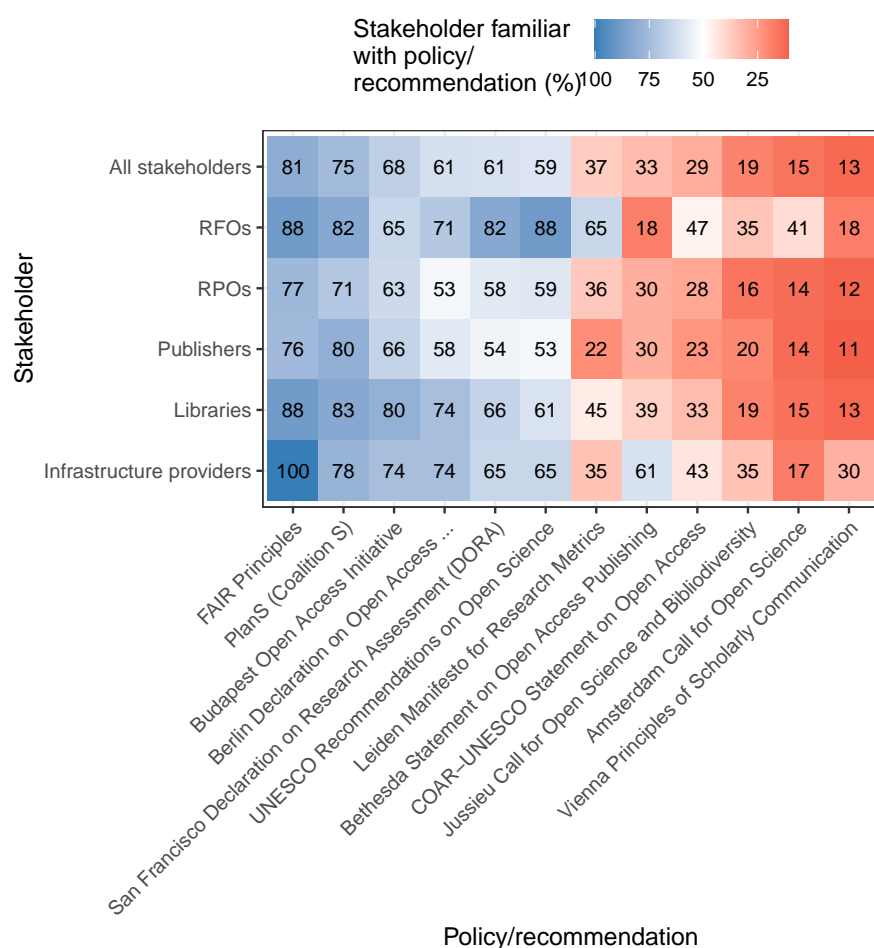


Figure 3.6: Stakeholder perspective on the familiarity with policies/recommendations (All stakeholders (n)=574).

#### 3.2.4 Remarks

Overall, both the results from the brief analysis of the documents presented here and the information on the knowledge of our comparison group are instructive. Not surprisingly, in many cases those declarations are known by those for whom they were made. Stakeholder specific formulations of policy recommendations should take this into account. Additionally, it is noticeable that many of the documents presented here do not address the topic of open access books at all or only in passing. Books are only mentioned by name in the UNESCO Recommendations and Plan S. At the same time, the best-known documents in our comparison group, the FAIR Principles and the Budapest Open Access Initiative, are among those documents that do not mention books at all or do so only marginally. Nevertheless, in view of the high degree of familiarity of the documents presented here, it may be useful to relate future position papers and open access book policies to important parts of these documents in order to be located in these existing discourses.

### 3.3 Opinions on stakeholders and players

Policy processes are participatory processes. Firm decisions on content can already be made by excluding or allowing certain stakeholders to participate. We therefore asked respondents who they thought should be involved in a policy process and which stakeholders they thought were already well represented. This section was divided into two parts, each asking one question:

- How important are the following stakeholders for the implementation of open access book policies in your country?
- How important should the following stakeholders be for the implementation of open access book policies in your country?

Respondents had the opportunity to rate the assumed current or desired relevance on a scale with the items: ‘Not Important’, ‘Slightly Important’, ‘Moderately Important’, ‘Important’, ‘Very Important’ and ‘I don't know’. The selection included university libraries, university presses, scholar-led publishing initiatives, commercial publishers (national and international), individual researchers, scholarly societies, research performing organisations, research funding organisations and research assessment and evaluation bodies.

#### 3.3.1 Estimated and expected importance: Country perspectives

Looking at the accumulated results from all the countries surveyed (above), the first thing we notice is that from 50 % to 81 % of the respondents consider these stakeholders to be important. Publishers are on the lower end of the scale whereas RFOs are considered to

### 3 Results and analysis

be the most important, followed by university libraries. However, the smallest increase between the current and desired political importance is found among national publishers. The international publishers even show a decrease in this question. The majority of respondents therefore stated that they would like international publishers to have less political influence in the future. This finding corresponds with the often expressed desire to give scholar led initiatives more political influence. Here, the difference between the assessment of their current (low) importance and the normative expectation of their (increased) future relevance is particularly high (Figure 3.7).

Broken down to the individual countries it is expected in all countries surveyed that all stakeholders should be more intensively involved in shaping open access book policies. The only exceptions are again the international publishers: most respondents would like to see this stakeholder group having less involvement. This result confirms in part the impression that one of the most significant lines of conflict in this policy area runs along the boundary between the commercial and public sectors.

#### 3.3.2 Estimated and expected importance: Stakeholder perspectives

The picture is more differentiated if you look at how individual stakeholders judge the involvement of other stakeholders. Generally, they not only think that their own group should be more strongly represented, but also state that they would like to see a stronger presence from all other groups. In many cases this is to be expected, but in some cases it is remarkable given the critical attitude towards publishers in the ERA-wide perspective. For example, respondents from libraries, university presses, scholar-led initiatives, academics, scholarly societies, RPOs and RFOs state that they believe commercial publishers should play a greater role than they currently do. Surprisingly, the difference between the assessment of the current relevance in policy making and the vision of how strongly they should be represented is very small, especially among the publishers. The gap between the desire and reality of their own political influence is particularly small in this group. The international publishers even stated that they would like to play a less significant role in future policy processes (Figure 3.8).

Both international and national publishers are also the only respondents who would like to see a smaller presence of another stakeholder in policy processes. Both stated that they wanted libraries and infrastructure providers to have less relevance in policy formulation than they currently have.

### 3.4 Attitudes to and knowledge about policies and policy processes

Open access policies and, in particular, open access policies for books are not uncontroversial. It is not only the specific design of measures to promote books that is the

### 3 Results and analysis

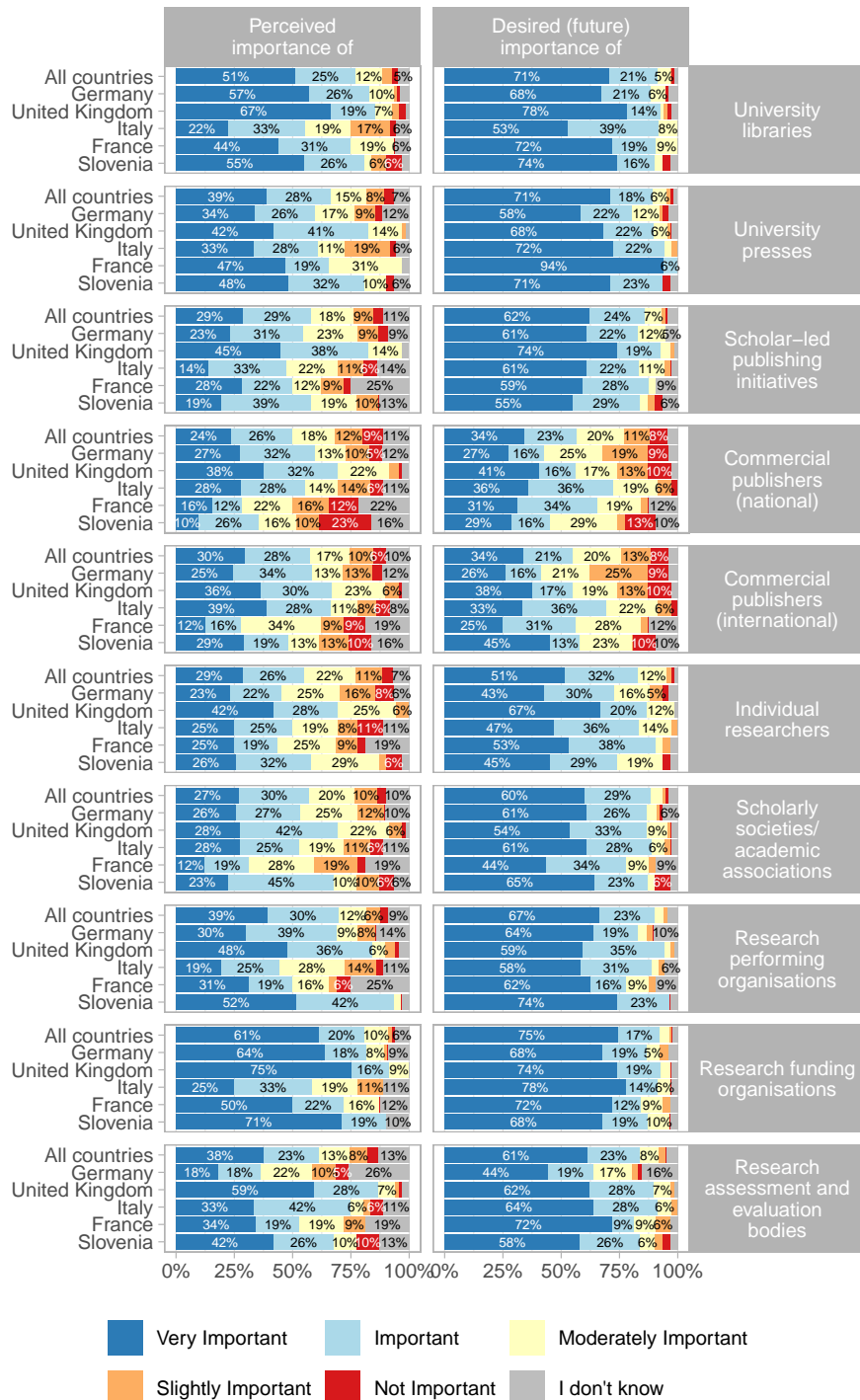


Figure 3.7: Country perspective on the current perceived importance as well as the desired future importance of various stakeholders for the implementation of open access book policies (All countries (n)=420).

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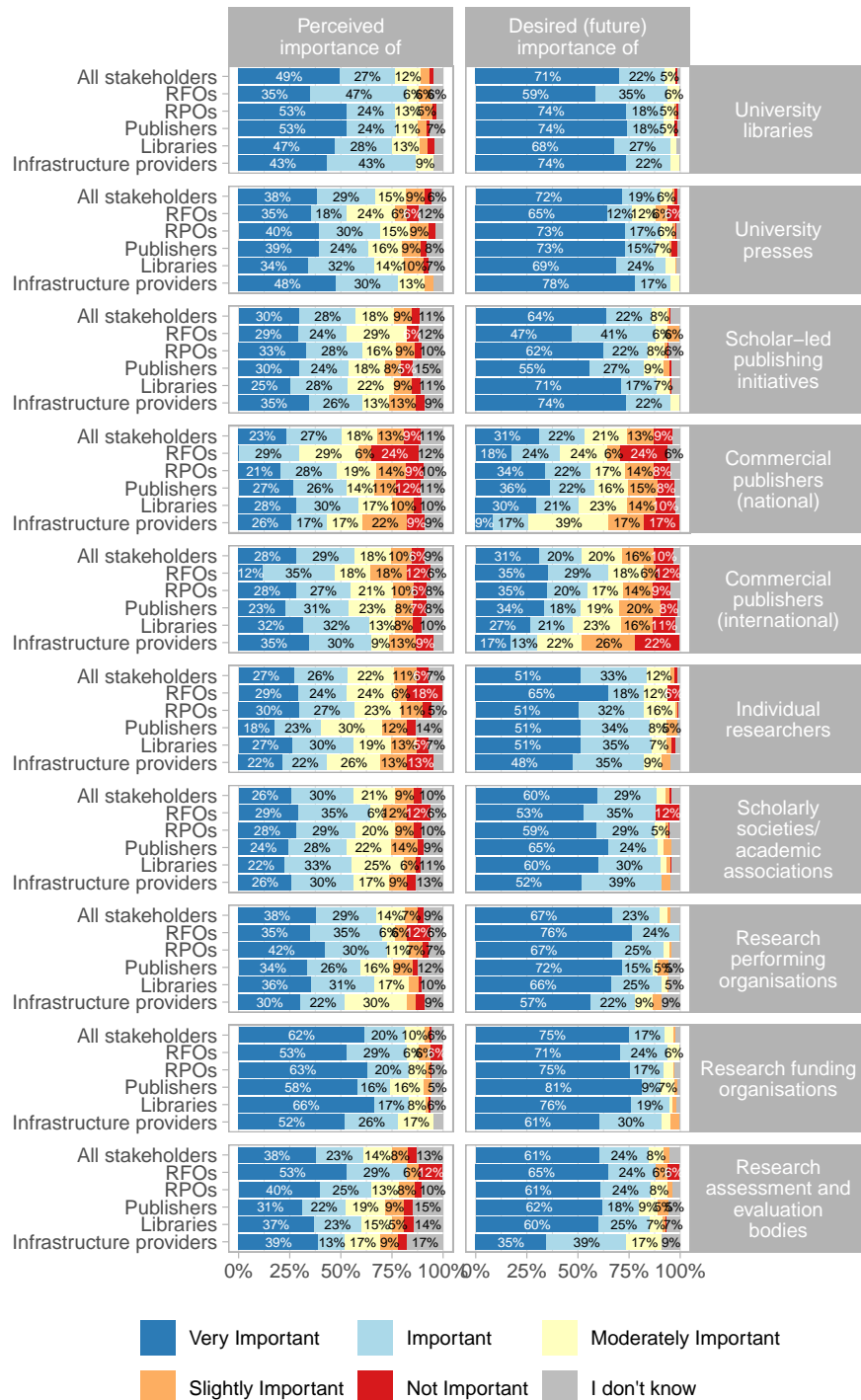


Figure 3.8: Stakeholder perspective on the current perceived importance as well as the desired future importance of various stakeholders for the implementation of open access book policies (All stakeholders (n)=574).

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subject of debate. The question of whether open access policies have any impact at all is also repeatedly discussed. In order to get an assessment of the respondents' attitudes towards open access policies, we asked them in principle what expectations they associate with the existence of an open access policy for books at national and institutional level and whether they are interested in participating. In addition to these questions on attitudes towards policies, we were also interested in the respondents' level of knowledge about participation opportunities and relevant stakeholders. These questions helped us to assess whether there are differences in the basic attitude towards policies between the various stakeholders and countries. The following questions were asked in detail:

1. An open access policy for books on the national level changes academic publishing for the better.
2. An open access policy for books on the institutional level changes academic publishing for the better.
3. I am interested in participating in the design of an open access policy for books on a national level.
4. I am interested in participating in the design of an open access policy for books on an institutional level.
5. I am aware of opportunities to participate in the processes of shaping a policy for open access books.
6. I know which stakeholders are involved in designing a national open access policy for books.
7. I know which stakeholders are involved in designing an institutional open access policy for books.

Question 1 and 2 could be answered with 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'undecided', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. The questions 3–7 could be answered with 'yes' or 'no'. As in the entire evaluation, we compared the perspectives of the stakeholders (RFOs, RPOs, publishers, libraries, infrastructure providers) and the perspectives of the respondents from Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, France and Slovenia.

#### 3.4.1 Country perspectives

When asked whether an open access book policy at national level would change academic publishing for the better, most respondents answered positively. If the agree and strongly agree answers are taken together, the approval ratings are consistently high, with figures ranging from 78 % (Germany) at the lower end to 91 % (Italy) at the upper end. The sceptical perspective is correspondingly underrepresented, with less than 10 % across the board. In all countries surveyed, open access policies for books seem to be linked to the hope of improving the publication system. This very consistent assessment stands in contrast to the statement made above that open access policies for books do not exist at national level and indicates a need for action here.

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We also asked about expectations regarding the effects of an open access book policy at institutional level. The situation here is identical. Consistently high approval ratings contrast with a weakly represented sceptical attitude of less than 10 %. This is instructive as our respondents have stated that open access policies for books are more common at institutional level than at national level (see also chapter 3.2). Experience with policies for open access books in practice does not appear to reduce the positive expectations of these policies (Figure 3.9).

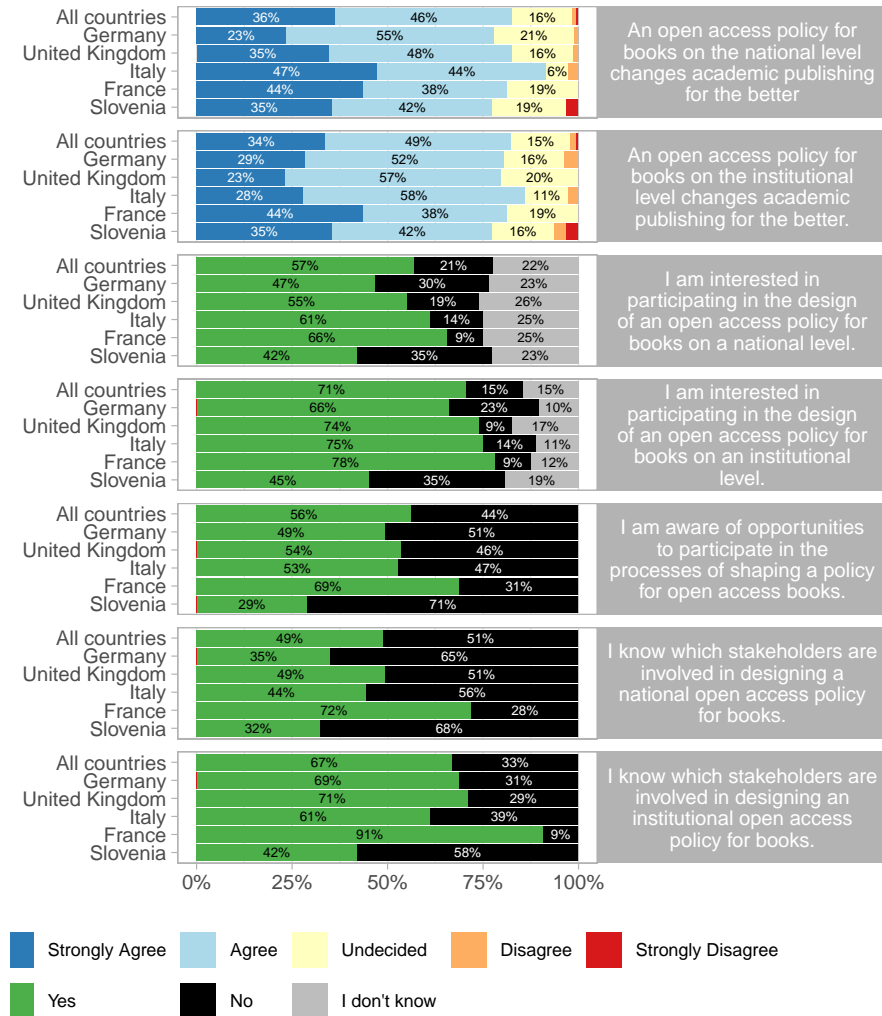


Figure 3.9: Country perspective on attitudes towards policy-design (All countries (n)=420).

In view of the positive expectations regarding the effects of open access policies, it was to be expected that there would also be a quantifiable interest in playing an active role in shaping them. However, the interest in shaping national open access policies is less

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pronounced than the hopes attached to its implementation. Only around half of those surveyed stated that they were interested in participating. France stands out with 66 %, at the other end of the scale is Slovenia with 42 %, followed by Germany with 47 %. At this point, the extremely high level of awareness of the French Open Access Policy should be noted. The interest in participating in policy processes corresponds to the degree of knowledge of how to do so. Over half of respondents (57 %) agree with the statement that they know what opportunities exist to participate in policy processes.

Germany, with its large variety of different, autonomous stakeholders in a complex, federally organised education system, has a relatively low level of 35 % agreement to the question of whether knowledge about participation opportunities exists. The respondents from France are best aware of their national policy processes. France, which has already gone through several national policy processes for open access, is far ahead with 69 % to the question about knowledge of participation opportunities, and the situation is almost identical with regard to knowledge of important stakeholders ('I know which stakeholders are involved in designing a national open access policy for books'). Here too, Germany and Slovenia lag behind, with France in the lead (Figure 3.9).

The data shows a correlation between knowledge of participation opportunities and interest in participation. In countries where more respondents stated that they were informed about participation opportunities, there was also a greater interest in participation (with the exception of Slovenia). The comparison of the policy situation in countries with a high (France) and relatively low interest in participation (Germany) suggests that transparent governance and comprehensible and precisely scheduled policy processes measurably increase interest in open access policy making.

Overall, knowledge of the possibility of participation and interest in participating in a policy process is greater at the institutional level than at the national level. It is interesting to note that in countries with already defined national participation structures and a high level of knowledge and interest in participation, there is also increased knowledge and interest at the level of institutional policy formation. Respondents who state that they want to participate at the national level and know their way around there are even more motivated to participate in policy processes at the level of the single institution. Follow-up research could therefore examine the hypothesis of whether comprehensible, transparent and attractive policymaking at the national level also makes institutional policymaking appear more attractive and/or vice versa.

#### 3.4.2 Stakeholder perspectives

The picture that emerges in this thematic block in relation to the stakeholder groups is largely similar to that at the national level (Figure 3.10). There are similarities, for example, with regard to the question of whether an open access policy for books would improve academic publishing. Here, the accumulated 'agree' and 'strongly agree' answers are similar to the country comparison at 83 % (82 % in the country group).



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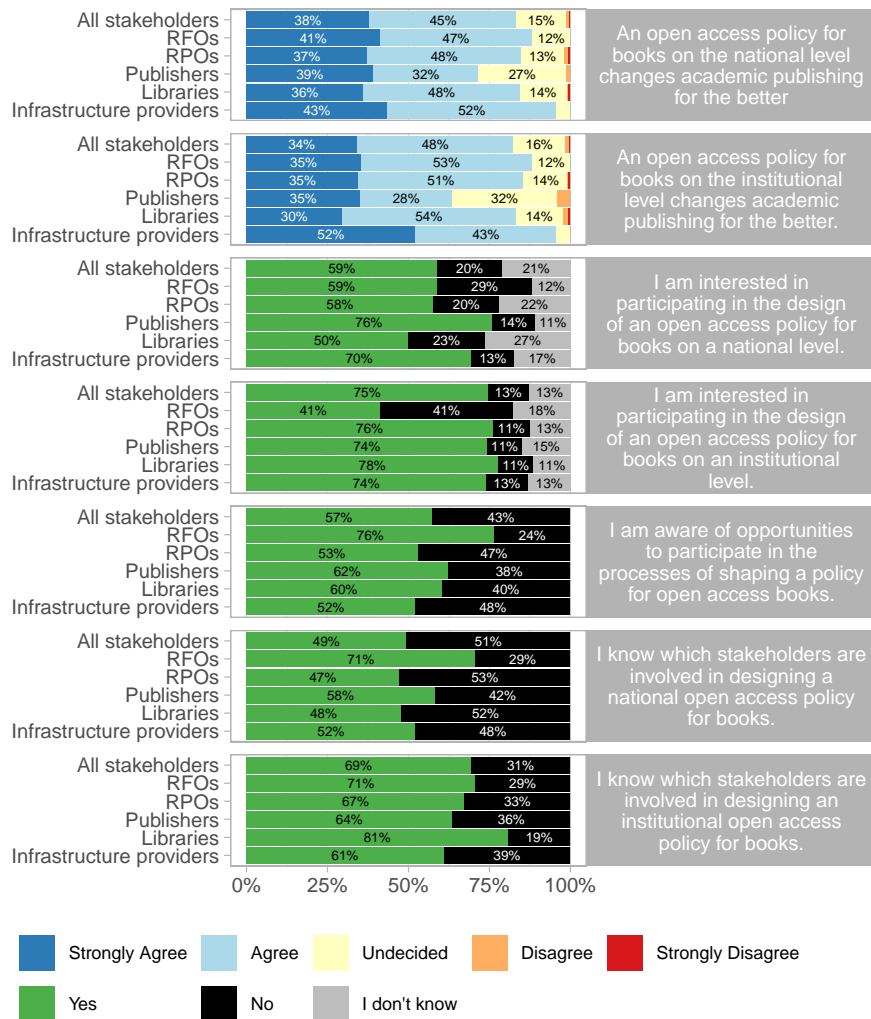


Figure 3.10: Stakeholder perspective on attitudes towards policy-design (All stakeholders (n)=574).

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Publishers, on the other hand, were rather undecided on this question. Although 71 % of respondents from the publishing industry stated that they would agree with the statement that a policy would lead to improvements, at the same time almost twice as many publishers (27 %) answered this question with ‘undecided’ as compared to all other stakeholder groups. This indecision is even more evident in response to the question about the positive impact of a policy for books at the *institutional* level.

Here, 37 % of the publishers surveyed were undecided or disagreed. Only 53 % of the publishers surveyed would agree with the statement ‘An Open Access Policy for books on the institutional level changes academic publishing for the better’. This is more significant as the existence of an institutional policy is met with more positive expectations in all other stakeholder groups. For example, 95 % of infrastructure providers agree both with the statement that a policy at national level leads to improvements and with the statement that a policy at the institutional level leads to improvements. Of the RPOs members surveyed, 85 % expect a positive effect from a national policy and 86 % expect a positive effect from an institutional policy.

Based on the data, it is not possible to make assumptions about the publishers’ hesitation to assess positive effects of institutional policies. However, it should be noted that the respondents from publishing houses take a special position here. Presumably, they believe that cooperation with other stakeholders based on existing business models would be affected to some extent if they introduce an open access policy for books.

Publishers also play a special role in the evaluation of the question of whether there is interest in participating in an Open Access Policy at national level. The result here is surprising: although the publishing house members in the surveyed group are the least convinced that they can change things for the better with a policy, they are the most interested in participating in the design of such a policy. 76 % answered with ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ to the statement ‘I’m interested in participating in the design of an Open Access book policy on a national level’, compared to only 59 % of respondents from the comparison group ‘All stakeholders’ on average.

If we look at Open Access policies at the institutional level, we find that RFOs have the smallest interest in shaping institutional open access book policies. Against the background of the freedom of science guaranteed by law in many ERA countries, the funding activities of RFOs may only have an indirect impact on the shaping of policy at the institutional level. RFOs are often not mandated to actively shape the science policy of the funded institutions, but operate, like the DFG in Germany or UKRI in the UK, at a national and European level. In some cases, state authorities act as funders directly (BMBF, Germany), represented by fully state-funded institutions (CNRS, France) or in the form of partially state-funded organisations (swissuniversities, Switzerland). Knowledge about opportunities to participate in policy processes is required for this activity. In fact, the science funding organisations in our survey stand out with a corresponding self-description. At 71 % (compared to an average of 49 % in the comparison group), most of the funders answered ‘yes’ to the question of whether they were aware of the

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opportunities to participate in the process of designing an open access policy for books (Figure 3.10).

In line with this, they also indicated in significantly higher numbers that they know the stakeholders involved in the design of a national open access policy for books (71 % compared to 49 % on average in the comparison group). The funders share their knowledge of national policy-making processes with the publishers, who follow them at a slight distance (58 %). The situation is different, however, when asking if the respondents are interested in participating in the design of an open access policy for books on an institutional level. Libraries are often responsible for agenda setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies for scholarly communication at institutional level. In fact, 81 % of the librarians surveyed stated that they were aware of the stakeholders who are involved in shaping a policy for books at an institutional level. This sets their self-understanding quantitatively apart from that of other groups. Here, an average of only 69 % state that they are well informed in this regard (Figure 3.10).

Overall, the results correspond to the expectations for the stakeholders' response behavior. Surveyed members of the RPOs are interested in policy-making at national level and state that they have relevant knowledge. The librarians surveyed from the group show an increased interest in policy processes at the institutional level. On the other hand, the fact that respondents from the publishing houses showed an interest in helping to shape national policies remains in need of explanation, given their relatively low expectations of such policies. It could be examined here whether a more detailed investigation would be useful.

In contrast to the comparison of the responses from the different countries, the analysis of the responses from the different stakeholder groups shows no correlation between the knowledge to help shape a policy and the willingness to help shape a policy. Although knowledge of relevant players in policy making and participation opportunities is no better than in the comparison group from the countries ('All countries'), all stakeholders have a similarly strong interest in shaping an open access policy - apart from the exceptions already analysed above. It should also be noted that the stakeholders also have a particularly high level of interest in the design of institutional policies.

## 3.5 Conditions and environment for open access book publishing

The environment in which open access books are published is an important factor in the transformation to open access. Preparing and shaping this environment is a task of all the stakeholder groups surveyed. RPOs, RFOs, infrastructure providers, libraries and publishers each have different strategies, their own interests, and use different methods. We tried to get a picture of this environment and specifically asked about the

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conditions under which open access books are published. For us, these include reputation, the existence of information services, funding opportunities and, finally, technical infrastructures - in each case at institutional and national level. We therefore asked:

1. Publishing an open access book (digital or print) and publishing a closed access book is equally prestigious.
2. Authors willing to publish an open access book in my country have sufficient information to do so.
3. Authors willing to publish an open access book in my institution have sufficient information to do so.
4. There are sufficient funding opportunities to publish an open access book in my country.
5. There are sufficient funding opportunities to publish an open access book in my institution.
6. There is sufficient technical infrastructure to support publishing an open access book in my country.
7. There is sufficient technical infrastructure to support publishing an open access book in my institution.

Each question could be answered with ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘undecided’ ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’. As in the entire evaluation, we analysed the perspectives of the stakeholders (RFOs, RPOs, publishers, libraries, infrastructure providers) and those of the respondents from Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, France and Slovenia.

#### 3.5.1 Stakeholder perspectives

From the standpoint of open access supporters, it is positive that consistently less than 6 % of all stakeholders surveyed state that they would strongly disagree with the statement that open access book publications and closed access are equally prestigious. Apart from the RFOs, who are just below an agreement level of 50 %, over 50 % of all stakeholders even agree with the statement that open access books and non-open access books are equally prestigious. Although it must be borne in mind that a large proportion of respondents are professionally involved in open access and the perspective of researchers who have little or no knowledge in this area could possibly differ. However, the options for obtaining information for people who want to publish open access books are considered difficult. In almost all stakeholder groups, more than half of all respondents see a need for improvement here (Figure 3.11).

The situation is much better in the eyes of the respondents when asked whether those willing to publish receive enough information on open access publishing in their own institution. But here too, in no group do more than half of the respondents state that they (strongly) agree. The difference between the (lack of) satisfaction with the information situation at the national level (18 %) and the satisfaction with the information

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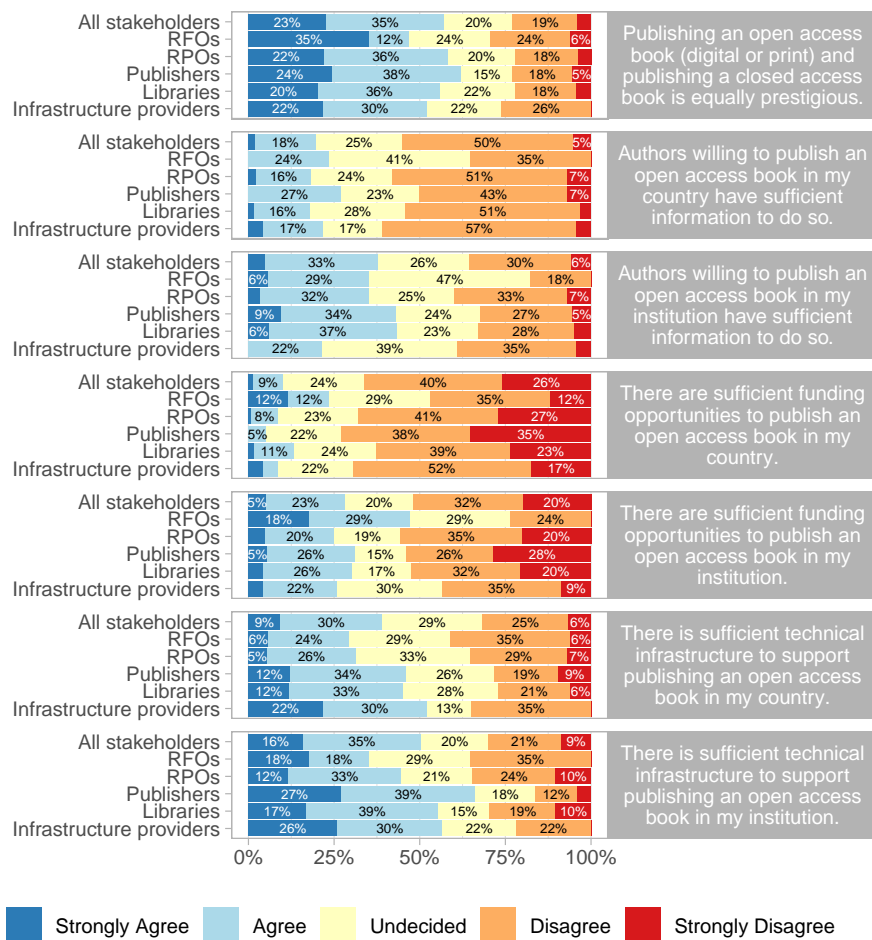


Figure 3.11: Stakeholder perspective on attitudes towards measures to promote open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

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situation on the institutional level (43 %) is highest in the group of respondents from libraries. Librarians thus generally rate the situation at the institutions much better than the national situation. This is not surprising, as library staff are often responsible for providing information about open access books and are therefore well informed in this area. Nevertheless, they are also rather reserved in their assessment of the information situation on open access books. But also in general, it is assumed that more information on the publication process flows at the institutional level than at the national level (Figure 3.11).

The situation is similar when it comes to evaluating funding opportunities. In fact, all respondents rated national funding exceptionally low. Only those stakeholders that have already adopted the national perspective in previous questions, the RPOs, rate the national situation slightly better, with 24 % agreeing with the question of whether national funding is sufficient (compared to 10 % on average in this comparison group; Figure 3.11).

Also the evaluation of institutionally provided funding opportunities performs rather low with values far below 50 %. Only RPOs, whose task it is to promote books at an institutional level, state that the support of open access books at least on the institutional level is satisfactory. 47 % of them agree or strongly agree to the question that there are sufficient funding opportunities to publish an open access book on the institutional level.

If we come to the national technical infrastructures, we see – not surprisingly – that they are perceived as satisfactory by the providers of technical infrastructures. However, RFOs and RPOs in particular see a need for improvement here. Half of all respondents stated that they were not satisfied or undecided. Even though the situation at the institutional level (51.6 % agreement on average) is considered to be better than at the national level (40.5 % agreement on average), there is still room for improvement according to the interviewees. Here too it is clear that the RPOs and RFOs would like to see a better technical environment. At 45 % and 36 % (agree and strongly agree), not even half of them are satisfied with the existing situation. Only publishers are more satisfied with the technical infrastructure – 66 % agree or strongly agree to the question if there is sufficient technical infrastructure to support publishing an open access book on institutional level (Figure 3.11).

Overall, the evaluation of this block of questions shows that the assessment of the situation of open access books is once again rated better at the institutional level than the situation at the national level. The financial resources are still considered to be in clear need of improvement. The information situation is also unsatisfactory in the eyes of the respondents. On the other hand, the technical infrastructure for publishing open access books is considered to be better, but remains below 50 % in the positive assessment of the situation.

In summary, from the stakeholders' perspective, improving the conditions for the publication of open access books appears to remain a particular challenge. However, it is

noticeable that the situation is rated better by those stakeholders whose field of activity corresponds to the area mentioned in the question. Infrastructure providers rate the technical infrastructure, funders rate national funding and RPOs rate institutional funding better than the other respondents. This can be explained by the fact that the respondents have in-depth knowledge of funding opportunities in their own areas and therefore have a much more positive assessment of the situation. The overall picture could therefore be rated better if the flow of information between stakeholders were improved.

#### 3.5.2 Country perspectives

When comparing the responses from Germany, the UK, Italy, France, Italy and Slovenia, the picture of the situation that was already visible in the stakeholder perspective is similar. When asked about the framework conditions (reputation, information, funding and technology), there is also a clear difference in the evaluation of the situation at the national level as compared to the evaluation of the institutional level, whereby the national situation is viewed more critically here. This gap – also visible in the last subchapter – may exist due to the fact that most of the respondents have a more concrete idea and better knowledge of their institution than of the national frameworks. Knowledge of the latter seems to be more abstract and less clear.

This is particularly evident in the question regarding satisfaction with the information about open access book publications provided on the national level. On average, only 21 % of respondents agreed that authors who want to publish open access books in their country also receive sufficient information on this. The funding opportunities were rated even lower - only 10 % of all respondents agreed that there are satisfactory funding opportunities at national level. It should be noted that the UK (below 10 %) and Italy (even below 10 %) are at the lower end here and also record the lowest increase when asked whether institutional funding is well developed (Figure 3.12).

The result for the assessment of technical infrastructures is also comparable with the stakeholder analysis above. Here, as with the question on information policy, Germany has a relatively high approval rate of 48 % at the national level and 61 % at the institutional level. The remarkably high level of satisfaction with the institutions' infrastructures and information policies may also be related to the fact that, under German federalism, financial support for publication services is largely provided at the level of the federal states and the institutions for constitutional reasons. Respondents from France, on the other hand, with its centrally organised funding culture, show no significant differences in satisfaction with national and institutional infrastructures. 47 % of the respondents are satisfied with technical infrastructures on the national level and also 47 % are satisfied with those on institutional level. On the other side of the spectrum, Italian respondents, with an approval rate of 33 % on the national level, are less satisfied with their technical infrastructures. Overall, however, it must also be noted here: from

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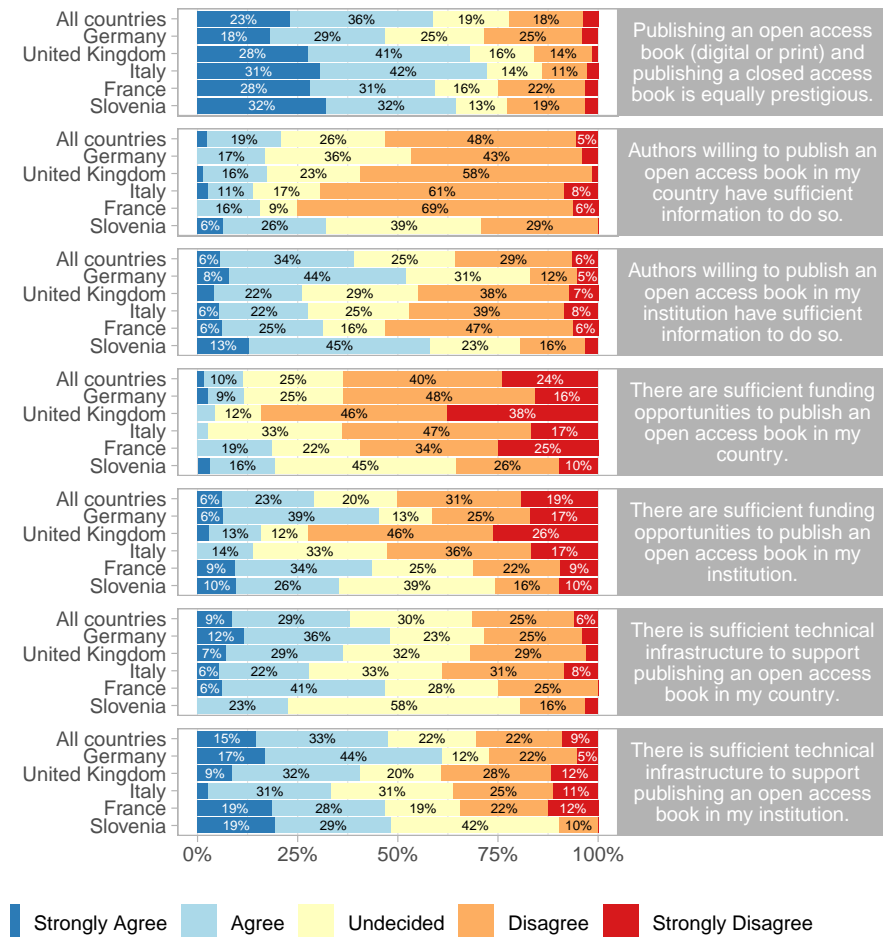


Figure 3.12: Country perspective on attitudes towards measures to promote open access books (All countries (n)=420).



a national perspective as well, the conditions for publishing open access books need to be improved, particularly in terms of funding and information policies.

## 3.6 Policy measures

Respondents were asked a series of questions to gauge their perception of a number of policy measures in relation to open access books. Each question had a number of sub-questions detailed below, which could be ranked ‘very important’, ‘important’, ‘moderately important’, ‘slightly important’, ‘not important’ and ‘I don't know’. Each question is analysed by country group and stakeholder group.

### 3.6.1 Quality assurance for open access books

A common myth about open access books is the perceived lack of quality and prestige (OAPEN foundation, 2024). Therefore, quality assurance is an important instrument for cultural change and reputation in open access publishing.

Respondents were asked to rank a number of statements pertaining to quality measures:

- Clear description of quality assurance measures is on the publisher’s website
- Clear description of research integrity policies for scholarly books is on the publisher’s website
- Peer review or equivalent review process according to subject-specific standards
- Open peer review measures (for example naming reviewers, publishing reviews)
- Information on research integrity contact persons are provided on the publisher’s website
- Transparent presentation of the criteria and processes for selecting and reviewing publications are reported

#### 3.6.1.1 Country perspectives

Data for all countries as well as the individual countries analysed shows broad agreement over the importance of all quality measures, which underscores the importance of evidencing this practice in open access books publishing (Figure 3.13). However, there are some differences by country in the level of importance given to some of the statements. Regarding the clear description of quality assurance measures on the publisher’s website, a higher number of French respondents rated this as ‘very important’ than the sample as a whole. Slovenian respondents differed from the sample with fewer ‘very important’ responses and more ‘moderately important’ responses.

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A similar pattern of responses can be observed for responses to the statement on the clear description of research integrity policies for scholarly books on the publisher’s website and also transparent presentation and reporting of criteria and processes for selecting and reviewing publications. However, both French and Italian respondents selected the ‘very important’ option more often for both questions than the other respondents

There was a contrast between the two peer review statements. The statement regarding peer review or an equivalent review process according to subject-specific standards was considered important by 93 % of all countries, particularly so by French respondents where 91 % selected ‘very important’. However, open peer review measures were considered slightly less important by respondents. There were far fewer ‘very important’ selections. 20 % of UK respondents did not consider open peer review important at all. The exception was Italy, where respondents considered open peer review more important than others. The results mirror those analysed by the DIAMAS survey which showed institutional publishers in that survey hardly used peer review at all (Armengou et al., 2023).

Responses are similar to the statement on information on research integrity contact persons being provided on the publisher’s website. Fewer ‘very important’ responses were received with respondents selecting more moderately and slightly important options than the other responses. The exception again is Italy, showing a higher number of ‘very important’ responses than other countries.

#### 3.6.1.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Perspectives across the range of stakeholders show a similar pattern of results to the countries group (Figure 3.14). Indeed, there is no major difference across the different types of stakeholders when compared to the whole sample group.

For quality assurance measures on the publisher’s website, all stakeholders broadly consider the option as ‘very important’ or ‘important’. However, for RFOs there are fewer ‘very important’ selections. This is mirrored in the responses to the statement on a clear description of research integrity policies for scholarly books on the publisher’s website. For both statements, 12 % of RFOs do not know. This might show that research funders are slightly removed from these quality measures.

Regarding peer review, responses are almost identical across all stakeholders groups and reflect the high importance seen by all groups. Infrastructure providers recorded slightly fewer ‘very important’ responses, but it should be emphasised that response numbers are relatively small.

Once again, open peer review shows a markedly different response to the above statements. Not only are the ‘very important’ responses fewer, there is also a higher proportion of ‘moderately’ and ‘slightly important’ responses. Indeed, 22 % of publishers do not view open peer review as important at all. RFOs had a higher proportion of ‘very

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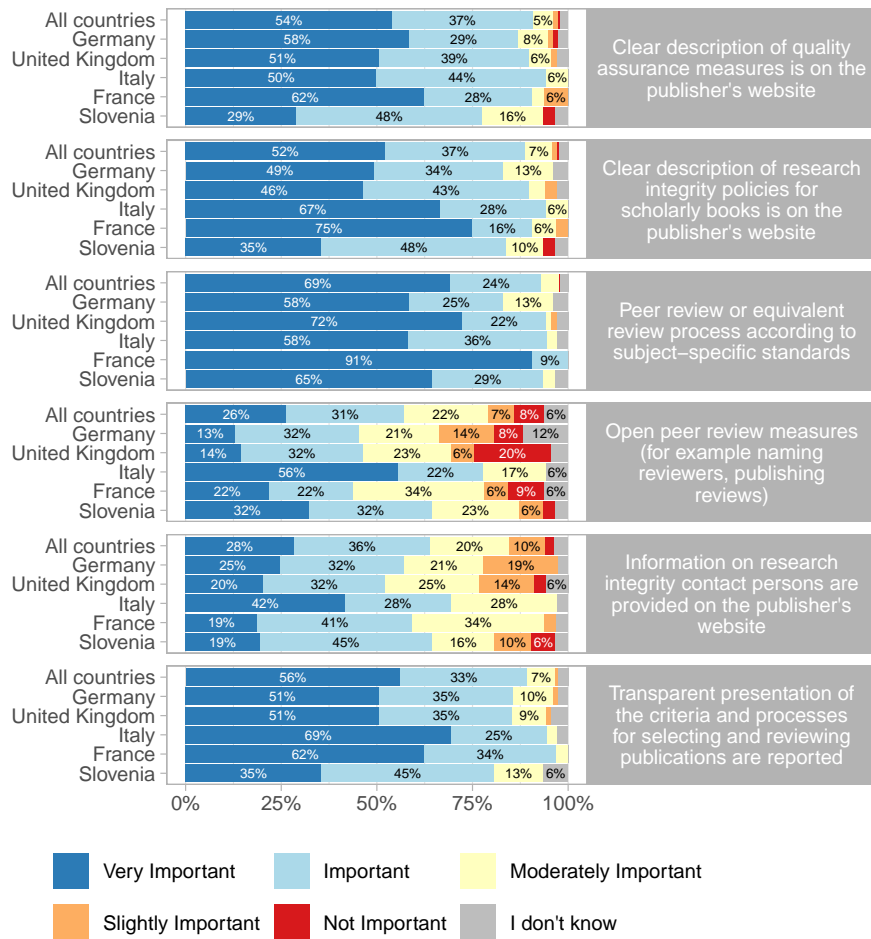


Figure 3.13: Country perspective on perceived importance of measures for quality assurance for open access books (All countries (n)=420).

important’ and important responses to others. This might imply that while publishers see open peer review as less important than other stakeholder groups, it does appear to be on the radar of funders.

Information on research integrity contact persons on the publisher’s website is also seen as less important than other measures by stakeholders. Although, slightly more library stakeholders view this as ‘very important’, possibly because they are the ones who need the contact details.

Finally, the transparent presentation and reporting of the criteria and processes for selecting and reviewing publications displays a similar pattern to the first two statements, with all stakeholders regarding this as important.

Generally speaking, the level of importance given to these quality criteria across the respondents shows the need for appropriate open access information to be displayed. Even though open peer review is seen as less important, especially by publishers, it is important to note that funders do regard open peer review as important. Resources such as PRISM (DOAB, n.d.) and Jisc’s open access tool for books (Jisc, n.d.; currently in beta) will help to support quality measures and point stakeholders towards good practice.

#### 3.6.2 Measures to increase the visibility of open access books

Visibility and usage is important to all stakeholders in book publishing. However, open access books have the potential to reach a far greater audience than print or e-books behind a paywall and have a far greater geographical reach (Montgomery et al., 2017; Neylon et al., 2021).

Visibility is important to stakeholders. Libraries need to justify their investment, funders need to monitor the impact of their open access book policies, and of course publishers need to show their authors that they are being read and cited. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of the following statements on measures to increase visibility of open access books:

- A digital version that is freely and publicly accessible is published at the same time as the print edition for sale.
- Openly available book metadata.
- Clear labeling of the publication as open access on the publisher’s website.
- Access to the open access version via the publisher’s website.
- Record in the national library.
- Record in scientific and scholarly databases.
- Record in repositories and open infrastructures for open access books.
- Record of reviews and other texts related to the open access book.

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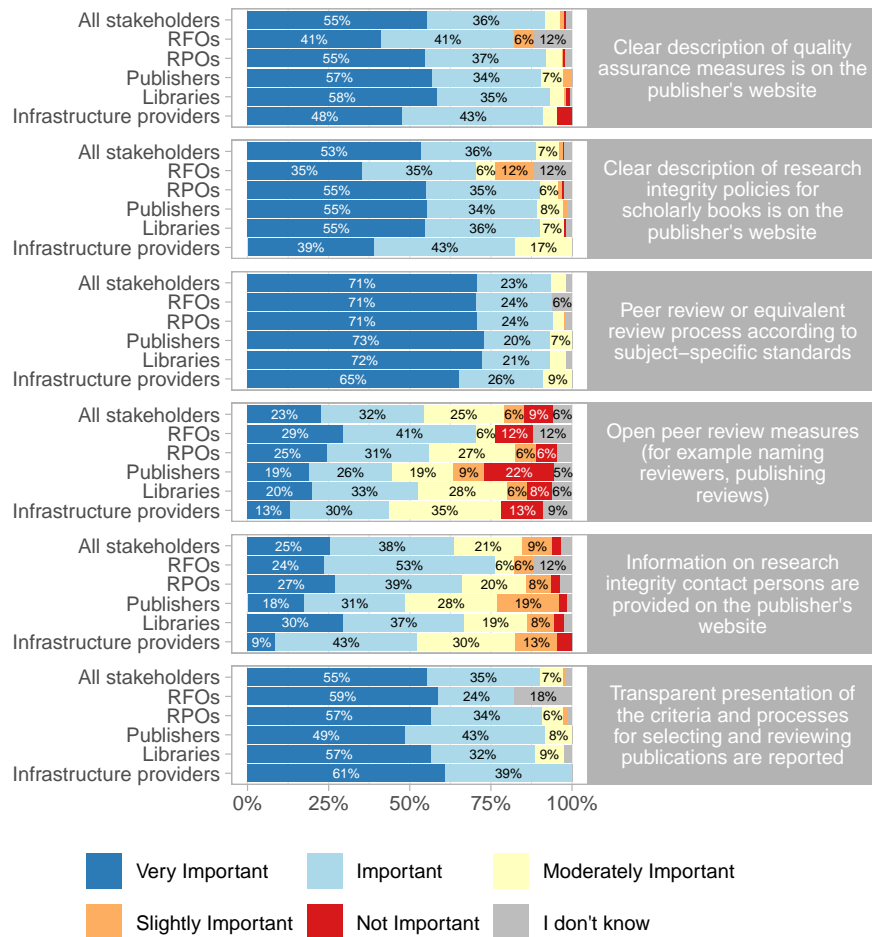


Figure 3.14: Stakeholder perspective on perceived importance of measures for quality assurance for open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

#### 3.6.2.1 Country perspectives

All statements about measures to increase the visibility of open access books were considered important to varying degrees by the whole country sample (Figure 3.15). However, there was one exception, ‘record of reviews and other texts related to the open access book’ was considered far less important when compared to the other statements.

87 % of respondents in the country sample considered the statement on visibility, referring to a digital version that is freely and publicly accessible being published at the same time as the print edition for sale, important. However, this statement does not have as many ‘very important’ responses as could be expected. Apart from Germany, where 77 % regarded this as ‘very important’, all other countries recorded fewer ‘very important’ responses than the country sample (60 %). Slovenia recorded considerably less ‘very important’ responses at 45 %. There were also a number of ‘don’t know’ comments in the UK and German samples, and not important in the Slovenian sample.

Openly available book metadata is another important aspect of visibility. Openly available book metadata as opposed to book metadata created and licensed for commercial use is essential for the free flow of book data across infrastructure. This statement was selected as important by the country sample and all individual countries in the analysis. All countries had high responses for the ‘very important’ category, with the exception of Slovenia, which also had a number of ‘not important’ and ‘don’t know’ responses. Perhaps surprising is that openly available metadata was considered more important than a digital version of the book being freely available at the same time as the print version.

Clear labeling of the publication as open access on the publisher’s website is essential if the open access version is to be discovered. It is of no surprise that this was considered one of the most important elements of visibility of open access books, particularly as print is still an important format for books, and it follows that a link to the open access version in the publisher’s catalogue could increase visibility. Both the main sample (94 %) and the specific countries covered in the analysis found this important. Again, the exception is Slovenia with significantly fewer ‘very important’ selections and 6 % of responses selecting ‘not important’.

Access to the open access version via the publisher’s website was also considered important by all respondents. Although there were fewer ‘very important’ responses from Slovenia and a number of ‘not important’ responses from France. These views may reflect the preference of access to open access content in different countries.

Country-specific practice may also account for the differences in responses to the statement on having a record in the national library. For example, France recorded a higher number of ‘very important’ and ‘important’ responses when compared to the whole sample, whereas the UK has a relatively low number of ‘very important’ responses to the sample.

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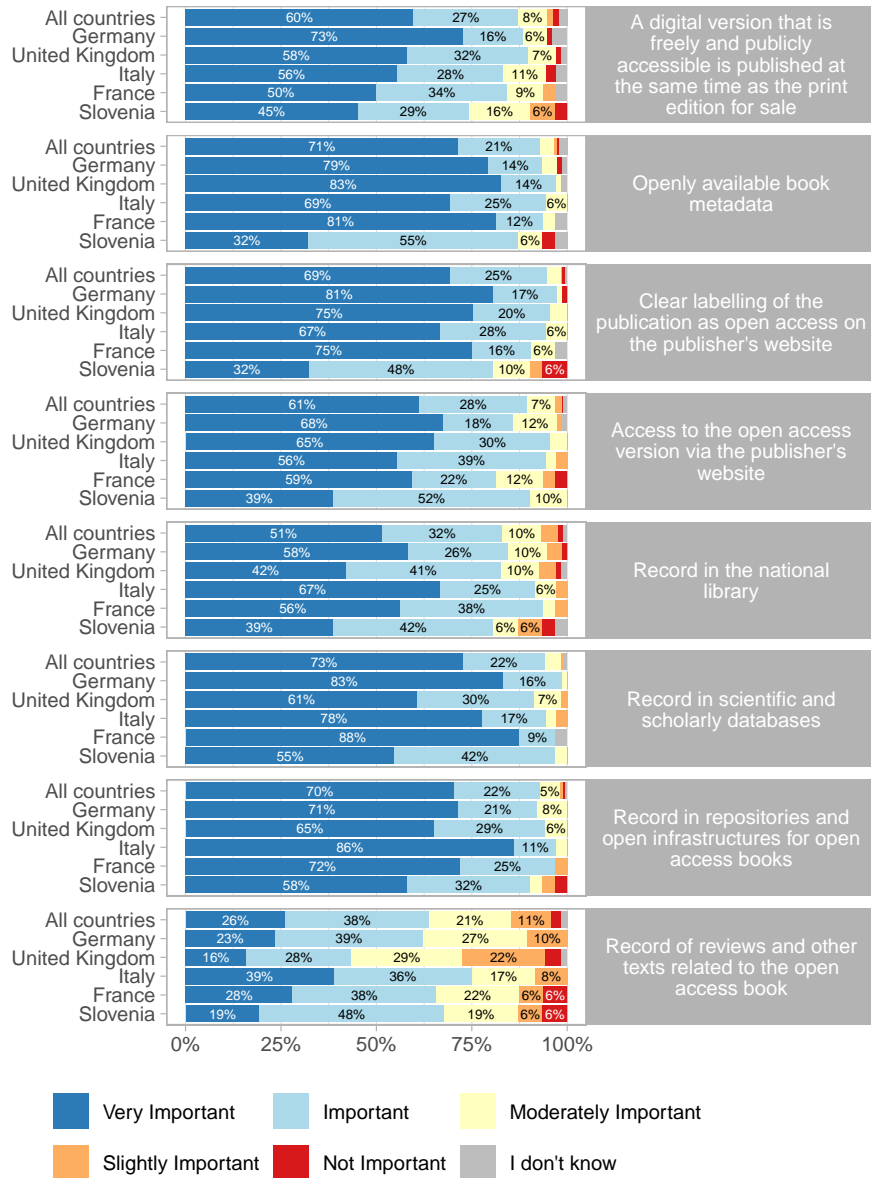


Figure 3.15: Country perspective on perceived importance of measures for increasing the visibility of open access books (All countries (n)=420).

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The visibility of the record in scientific and scholarly databases received the highest number of ‘very important’ and ‘important’ responses from the sample (95 %). All of the countries with the exception of the UK (91 %) recorded 95 % or higher. Comparisons can be drawn here with the results of the DIAMAS survey (Armengou et al., 2023). What is not known from the survey data, are the specific details of the databases and whether resources such as the Directory of Open Access Books, OAPEN etc. were answered as part of this question or the following question, which includes open infrastructures for open access books.

Visibility of the record in repositories and open infrastructures for open access books was rated as ‘very important’ or ‘important’ by 92 % of respondents. This was slightly fewer than publisher websites and databases. However, for Italy, this was regarded as ‘very important’ by the vast majority of respondents, far higher than the same option for publishers’ websites. Slovenia recorded a small number of ‘not important’ responses.

By far the least important of the visibility statements was the record of reviews and other texts related to the open access book. Only 64 % of all country respondents considered this ‘very important’ or ‘important’. The number of ‘very important’ responses was markedly fewer than for the other responses. The UK recorded far lower importance to this than other countries, while Italy attached greater importance than the other countries and the sample as a whole. There were also a number of ‘not important’ responses from the UK, France and Slovenia.

#### 3.6.2.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Stakeholder perspectives on visibility are broadly in line with each other, apart from a few exceptions (Figure 3.16). Some publishers did not think it was important to release the digital open access version at the same time as the print version. RFOs did display fewer ‘very important’ responses to openly available metadata. As could be expected, infrastructure providers had a 100 % response rate regarding the importance of making ‘openly available metadata’.

The clear labeling of the publication as open access on the publisher’s website was considered ‘important’ across all stakeholders. The one exception here was the RFOs who recorded a number of ‘don’t know’ responses. Although the publishers record the highest number of ‘very important’ responses, there were a number of ‘not important’ ‘and don’t know’ responses, however.

All stakeholders agreed on the importance of access to the open access version via the publisher’s website (61 % very important, 29 % important). Libraries and RPOs saw this as slightly more important than publishers. A very small number of publishers thought that this was not important at all and 12 % of RFOs did not know. Although 82 % of infrastructure providers saw this as ‘important’, only 47 % saw this as ‘very important’ which differed significantly from the other stakeholders.



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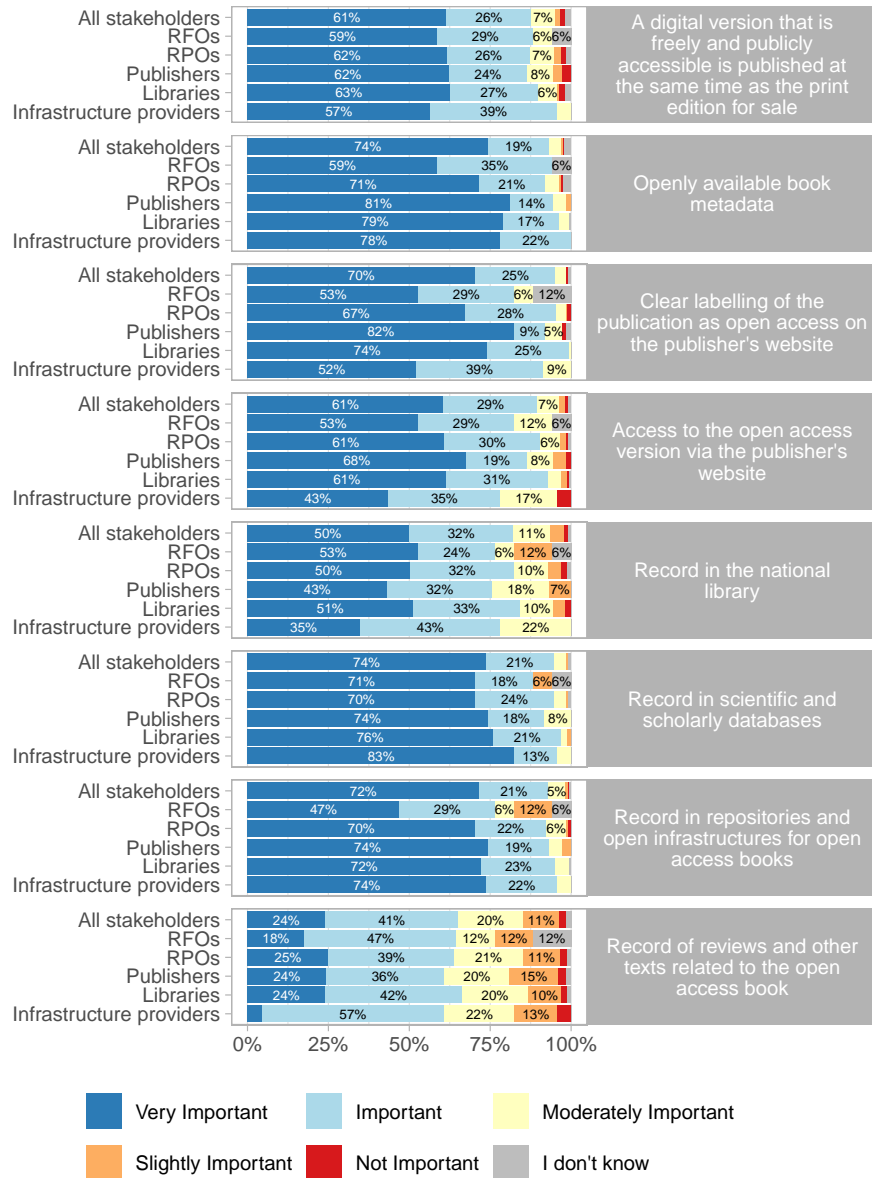


Figure 3.16: Stakeholder perspective on perceived importance of measures for increasing the visibility of open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

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An open access book record in the national library was considered slightly less important than all but the last statement, ‘recording of reviews and other texts related to the open access book’. However, there were consistently fewer ‘very important’ responses across all of the stakeholder groups in the analysis and the sample in total.

Once again, the record in scientific and scholarly databases was considered one of the most important aspects of visibility and this was reflected across all stakeholders and the sample group. One interesting response to note was the higher number of ‘very important’ responses from infrastructure providers. Perhaps they considered some of their services were included under the term databases?

The deposit of an open access book record in repositories and open infrastructures showed almost identical results across the sample and individual stakeholders with one exception. RFOs considered this a lot less important than the other groups. This might reflect policy. For example, in the case that the version of record is included in the funder policy, or perhaps where there is an agnostic view that as long as the book is openly available, the access point is not important.

Finally, the recording of reviews and other texts related to the open access book was by far the least important of the visibility options with only 65 % of the sample considering this important and far fewer ‘very important’ responses than any other response in this category. Again, this could be considered a reflection on the importance of this area in policy development.

#### 3.6.3 Perceived importance of measures for rights management in open access books

Open access funder policies usually require compliance with a number of specific measures regarding right management; author rights, copyright/open licences, metadata and open data. In this section, respondents were asked for their opinion of the importance of the measures listed below:

- Authors retain the right to republish or self-archive their work in other venues.
- Authors use CC BY licences and thus give the public extensive rights of re-use.
- Licence information is provided and is machine-readable.
- Metadata of the publications are provided with information on rights of re-use.
- Linked datasets should be shared as openly as possible, as closed as necessary.

##### 3.6.3.1 Country perspectives

There was broad agreement across the whole sample and the specific countries analysed that all rights management measures included in the survey question were important (Figure 3.17). However, there were variations between country groups and options.

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The majority of respondents (88 %) considered it ‘very important’ or ‘important’ that authors retain the right to republish or self-archive their work in other venues. German responses record a higher proportion of ‘very important’ responses and France and Slovenia fewer. Indeed, the French responses showed that this is perceived as less important than other countries with a number of ‘not important’ responses (6 %).

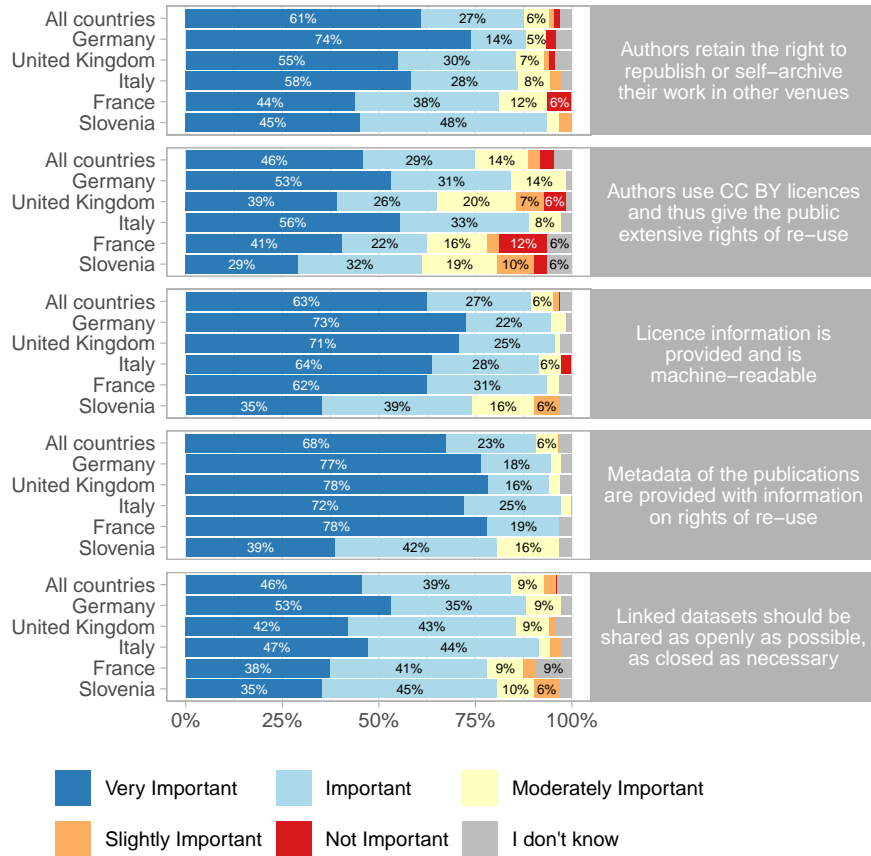


Figure 3.17: Country perspective on perceived importance of measures for rights management of open access books (All countries (n)=420).

Regarding authors using CC BY licences, only 75 % of respondents perceived this as ‘very important’ or important. Results from German and Italy found this more important, while the UK, France and Slovenia considered this less important than the whole sample. France reported this as ‘not important’ by 12 % and 6 % did not know. This response may reflect the way the statement was worded and the ongoing discussion about the appropriateness on some occasions for using more restrictive licences for open access books. The pros and cons of this argument are captured in a blog post by Rupert Gatti from Open Book Publishers (Gatti, 2022). Regarding the UK’s responses, the perception that CC BY is of less importance may reflect information on the UKRI policy available

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at the time. This policy mandates CC licences in general, rather than CC BY. Responses to this question may have been markedly different if the statement had mentioned use of ‘any’ CC licence. It is also worth noting that the cOAlition S statement on Open Access for academic books also refers to CC licences in general, rather than CC BY in particular (cOAlition S, 2021).

Respondents were then asked to rate the importance of the licence being provided in a machine-readable format. With the exception of Slovenia who rated this as slightly less important than other countries, all specific countries and the sample as a whole resoundingly perceived this as ‘important’.

The statement regarding metadata of the publications being provided with information on rights of re-use returned almost identical results to the statement on machine-readable licences with most countries regarding this as ‘important’. However, for both statements responses from Slovenia saw this as less ‘important’ overall, with far fewer ‘very important’ responses.

The final statement in this section referred to the requirement that linked datasets should be shared as openly as possible, as closed as necessary. While being regarded as important by the whole sample and all countries, there were fewer ‘very important’ responses in all categories. This may reflect the use of datasets in many open access books, particularly in the arts and humanities.

#### 3.6.3.2 Stakeholder perspectives

There is strong agreement across all statements and all stakeholders regarding the importance of measures for rights management in open access books (Figure 3.18). Indeed, there are only subtle differences between stakeholders on some of the statements.

On authors retaining the right to republish or self-archive their work in other venues, libraries and research funders see this as slightly more important than other stakeholders. This is perhaps unsurprisingly, especially for libraries who tend to lead on institutional rights retention strategies. What is more surprising, is that 79 % of publishers saw this as ‘very important’ (59 %) or ‘important’ (20 %). However, a significant minority (7 %) do not think this is important.

In parallel with the country data, all stakeholders see CC BY licences as the least important measure. Once again, the importance for publishers is not as high as for others, but it is still significant with 69 % selecting ‘very important’ or ‘important’. 11 % of publishers thought this was ‘not important’. Again, it would have been interesting if the statement had covered CC licences in general.

Machine-readable licence information was considered important by all stakeholders, significantly so by funders and libraries. This is presumably because they need to track the data. Reassuringly, publishers were not far behind in their perception of the importance of machine-readable data.

### 3 Results and analysis

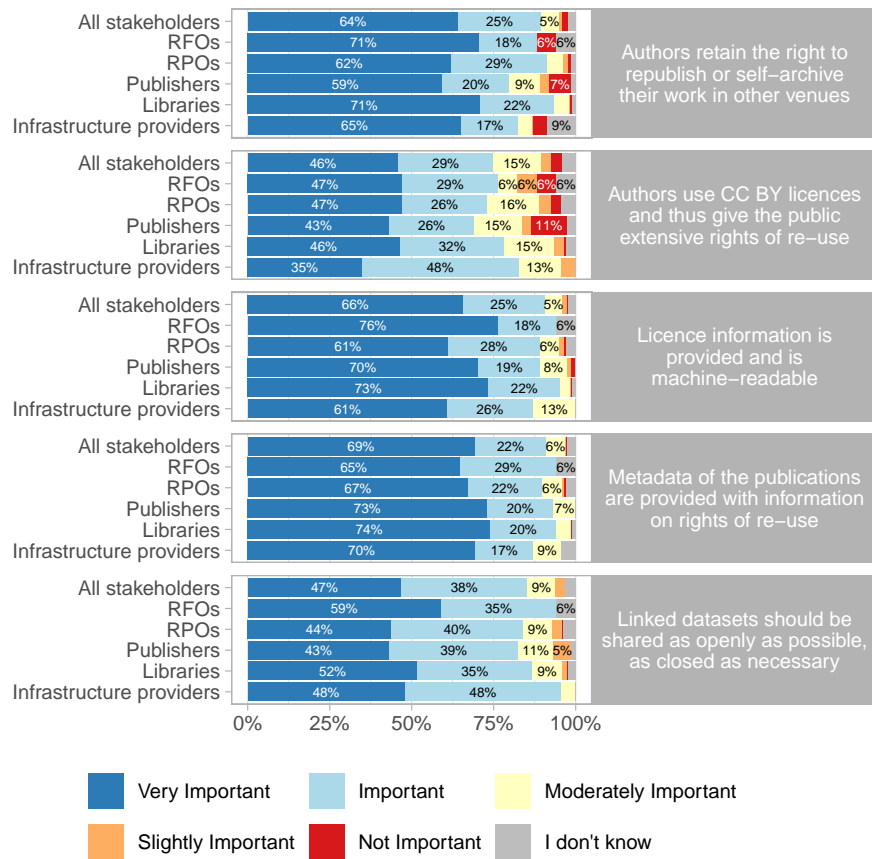


Figure 3.18: Stakeholder perspective on perceived importance of measures for rights management of open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

### 3 Results and analysis

There was unanimity from all stakeholders analysed and the wider dataset regarding the need for metadata of publications to be provided with information on rights of re-use with the vast majority rating this as ‘very important’ or ‘important’.

Finally, when it came to linked datasets being shared as openly as possible, as closed as necessary, responses rated this as important to all stakeholders, but the proportion of ‘very important’ responses was far lower than other statements across all stakeholders responses. One thing to note is that funders rated the importance of this far higher than others. This can probably be explained by the presence of a research data clause in many funders’ open science policies.

#### 3.6.4 Perceived importance of measures concerning data about the book

In order to monitor compliance and evaluate the success and impact of an open access book policy, certain types of data have to be collected about the book and author in order to ensure an efficient process and the exchange of data between infrastructures. For example, book metadata fields (title, author, publisher), persistent identifier (PIDs) to provide unique identifiers for books, chapters, authors and grant numbers, and usage data to track use via different platforms and geographical areas. It is widely known as an issue that for books, the level of data and the flow between different systems is not as advanced as for journals.

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of the following statements regarding data about books:

- Sufficient and correct entries in the metadata record (at least author name, title, publication date, place of publication and licence details).
- Use of a common persistent identifier such as DOI, also for sub-units.
- Use of an ORCID ID for the authors.
- Details of research funders if they have made the open access publication possible.
- Access statistics and transparent presentation of the methods used to track usage

##### 3.6.4.1 Country perspectives

It is unsurprising that sufficient and correct entries in the metadata record was considered the most important of the options presented by all country respondents, and particularly in Germany, the UK and France (Figure 3.19). Slovenia shows a very different set of responses, only 29 % of respondents from Slovenia thought this was ‘very important’ compared to 75 % for the whole sample. There was also a small minority from Slovenia that considered this option ‘not important’. This may be because of a well maintained central system in use in Slovenia.

Use of a common persistent identifier was considered almost as important by all countries in the sample and the highlighted countries with the exception of Slovenia. However,

### 3 Results and analysis

this time the drop off was not as great as in the previous option. PIDs for journals are not widely adopted in Slovenia (Pogačnik, 2022) and this might also be the case for books.

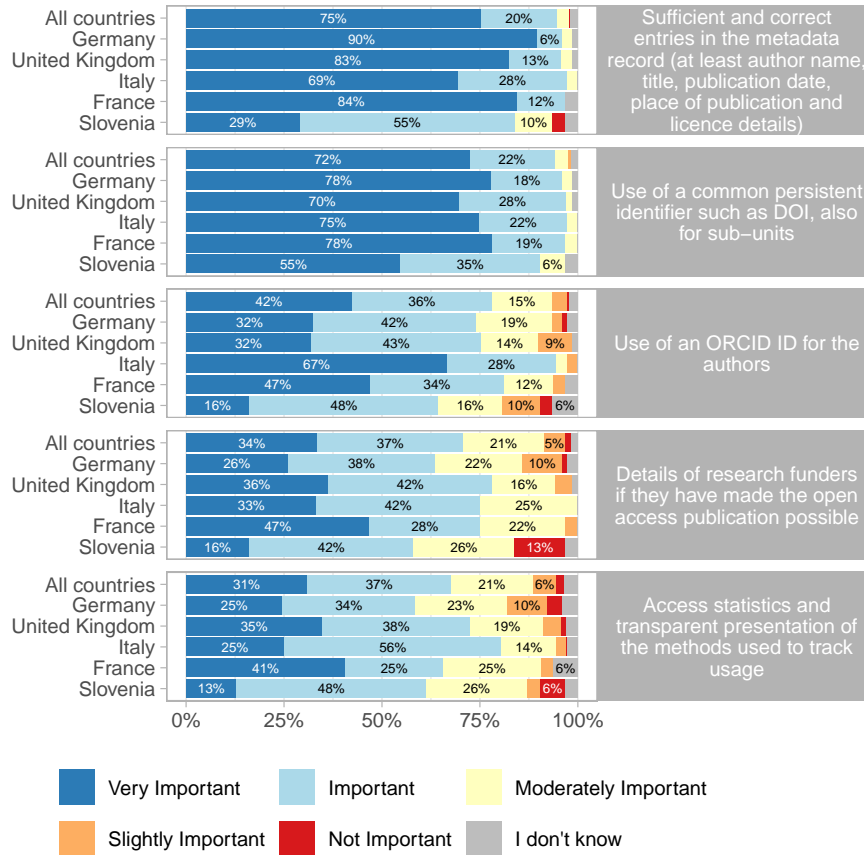


Figure 3.19: Country perspective on perceived importance of measures concerning data about the book (metadata, persistent identifier, usage data; All countries (n)=420).

The remaining three options were seen as less important by countries overall. There were fewer 'very important' and important responses and the number of 'very important' responses were much less than for the first two options. One exception was Italy, which returned similar figures to the previous options. This may reflect the greater use of ORCID in Italy. Again, Slovenia returned lower numbers of 'important' responses than the other countries.

Details of research funders showed a very similar pattern to ORCID. Italy was in line with the other countries and Slovenia perceived this as less important with 13 % of respondents regarding this as 'not important' at all.

### 3 Results and analysis

Of least importance in this category was access statistics and transparent presentation of the methods used to track usage. Only 68 % of respondents considered this important. However, it is interesting to note that 8 % of the respondents for Germany think that access statistics and transparency in tracking methods are not important or do not know where to position themselves.

The differences between countries in this section of the survey could reflect the status of adoption of metadata standards within that country.

#### 3.6.4.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Regarding sufficient and correct entries in the metadata record, it is unsurprising that both libraries and publishers view this as by far the most important option in this part of the survey. Funders regard this as less important than other stakeholders. This could reflect the lack of open access book policies, it might also reflect a pragmatic view that the metadata quality may not be where it should be. However, this does not mean that it should not be considered important, especially for monitoring compliance.

Use of a common persistent identifier was also considered important by all stakeholders. In particular libraries and funders saw this as important. This could explain the response by funders to the metadata option, a DOI might be all that is required. It is noticeable that publishers found use of a persistent identifier less important than other stakeholders (Figure 3.20).

In line with the country responses, there is a marked reduction in ‘very important’ responses for the final three options: ‘use of an ORCID ID for the authors’, ‘details of research funders if they have made the open access publication possible’ and ‘access statistics and transparent presentation of the methods used to track usage’. There are, however, differences in stakeholders’ responses. Regarding the use of an ORCID, funders attached significantly more importance to this than other stakeholders. However, a small minority of funders did not consider this important at all.

Details of research funders if they have made the open access publication possible shows some interesting results. Only 70 % of the whole sample rate this as important. However, 73 % of funders rate this as important, perhaps more intriguing are the 12 % of funders who do not find this important at all. 43 % of publishers also regard this as very important, which is an important indicator for future compliance in this area.

Finally, access statistics and transparent presentation of the methods used to track usage are considered the least important statement by the whole sample and all stakeholder groups in the analysis. Funders find this most important, perhaps with an eye to future impact of policy. Publishers seem to consider this more important than libraries by a small margin regarding ‘very important’ responses.



### 3 Results and analysis

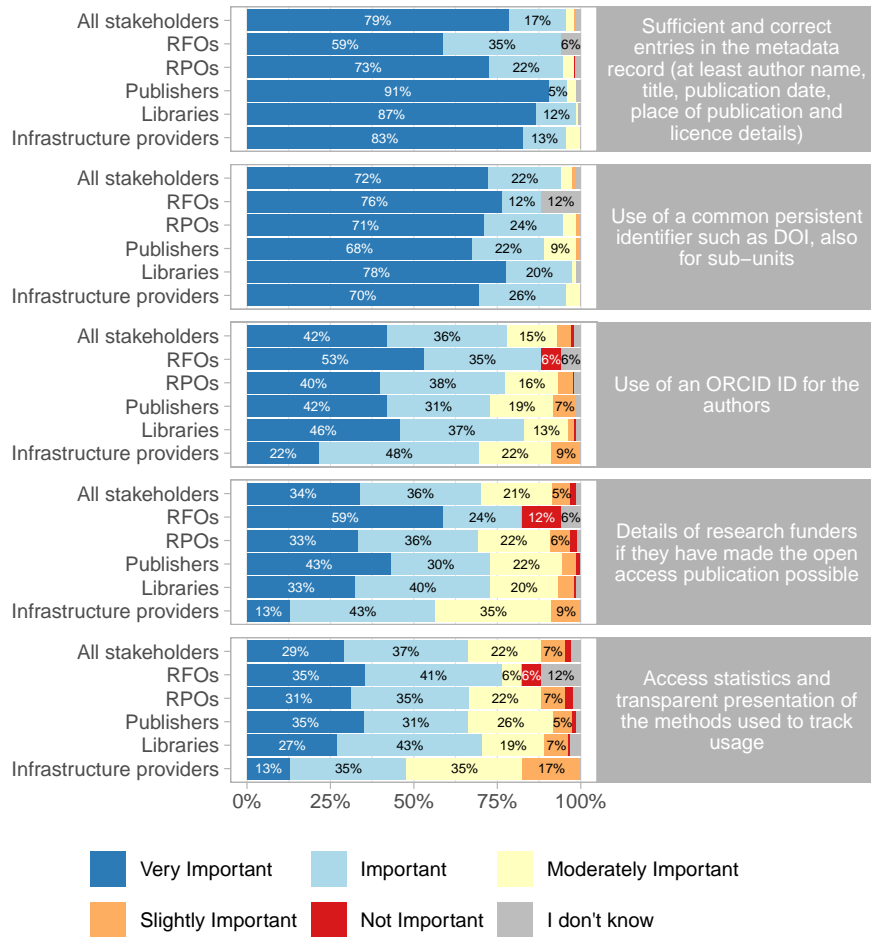


Figure 3.20: Stakeholder perspective on perceived importance of measures concerning data about the book (metadata, persistent identifier, usage data; All stakeholders (n)=574).

### 3.6.5 Perceived importance of properties for open access books

The section on properties for open access books sought to understand the importance of a number of factors pertaining to both print and digital books. Specifically:

- Book cover under free licence.
- Regular print edition or print on demand.
- Accessibility for disabled users.
- Digital bookmarks.
- Textual formats appropriate for machine processing.
- Open file format suitable for copying and long-term archiving.

Fewer of these options were considered as important as other sections and there is a strong argument for saying that some options are not policy related per se. Therefore, this section will be analysed in brief.

#### 3.6.5.1 Country perspectives

The availability of a book cover under an open licence was only considered important by 50 % of all countries and there was very little deviation from this in the countries represented in the analysis. Some countries had ranked ‘not important’ reasonably highly (Figure 3.21).

Perhaps one surprise in this part of the survey was the very low importance given to the availability of a regular print edition or print on demand given that it is often cited as a perceived barrier to open access (OAPEN foundation, 2024). Only France saw this as important overall.

Responses to the statement on accessibility returned more predictable responses, with ‘all countries’ in the sample rating this as important. Both the UK and France regard this as overwhelmingly important. Given the laws on accessibility, perhaps surprising was the number of ‘not important’ responses from the sample, in particular in France and Slovenia.

Digital bookmarks were only considered important by 50 % of the sample, with little difference across countries. Textual formats appropriate for machine processing was considered more important by the sample (79 %), but again there was little disagreement in the country data apart from Slovenia who found this less important.

Finally, an open file format suitable for copying and long-term archiving was considered important by all in the sample (90 %), with France returning a result of 100 % importance for this aspect of digital publishing.

### 3 Results and analysis

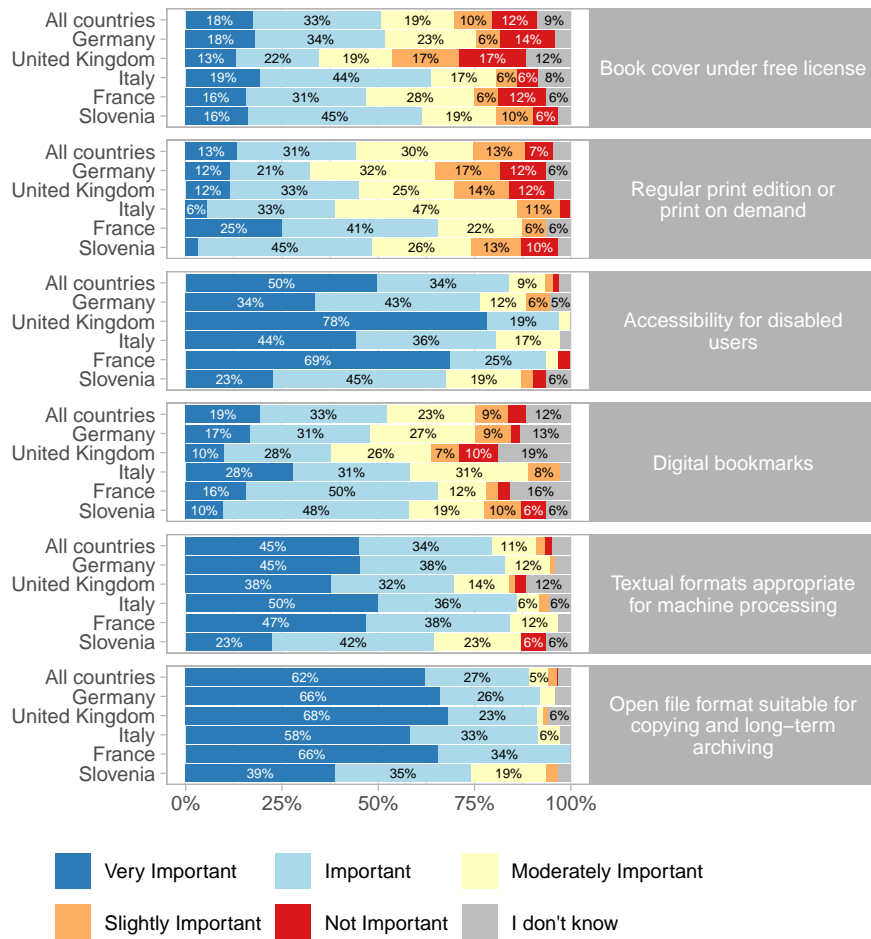


Figure 3.21: Country perspective on the perceived importance of certain properties of open access books (All countries (n)=420).

### 3 Results and analysis

#### 3.6.5.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Once again, the importance of the availability of a book cover an open free licence was not considered particularly important by any stakeholders, with many groups seeing this as ‘not important’ at all. The importance of a regular print edition or print on demand was very low for all stakeholders. However, it should be noted that these results represent a snapshot of views across the stakeholders that responded to the survey and does not imply that this is a widely held view (Figure 3.22).

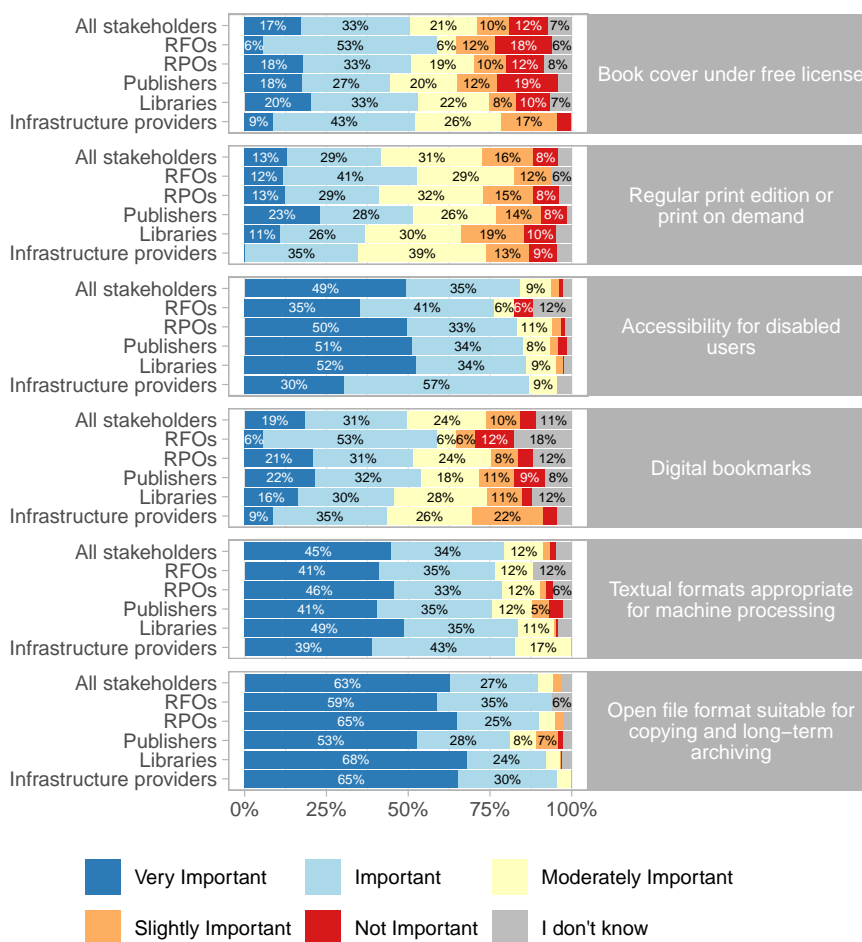


Figure 3.22: Stakeholder perspective on the perceived importance of certain properties of open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

Accessibility for disabled users was seen as important for all stakeholders. However, this may differ from the reality, as the funders from the DIAMAS project show that actual implementation of accessibility guidelines and standards are relatively low. The small minority of funders who considered this ‘not important’ may be regarded as a concern.

The importance of digital bookmarks was less than 50 % for the whole sample and fluctuated around that percentage for all the stakeholders in the analysis. In contrast, textual formats appropriate for machine processing were considered important by all stakeholders and this trend was repeated for open file format suitable for copying and long-term archiving.

#### 3.6.6 Perceived importance of economic measures for open access books

There are many open questions regarding the perceived sustainability of open access business models. This is particularly important to specific stakeholders. For example, libraries (and, to a lesser extent, RPOs) may ask about the affordability of open access books, particularly relating to book processing charges. Publishers will be concerned about the financial sustainabilities of new and often untested on a large scale, revenue models. Those research funders, who financially support their policies may scrutinise how public funding is spent, e.g. on book processing charges and open access' impact on society.

In this section, respondents were asked to rank the importance of the following statements:

- Transparent calculation of book processing charges.
- Costs for open access books do not go beyond those of closed access books.
- Separate budget lines for open access and non-open access books.
- Offers from different publishers can be compared with one another (for example because partial services are shown in price).

##### 3.6.6.1 Country perspectives

Book processing charges are considered by many to be unsustainable (Mackay, 2022). However, they could be considered a dominant model in some European countries where financial support from funders is available. In addition to unsustainability, a further criticism is the opaqueness of many book processing charges in that they represent a price, but do not display how the publisher allocates this to various parts of the publication process. The transparent calculation of book processing charges are a way to show the otherwise hidden costs and help those that pay such charges (usually libraries) to understand the different price points (Barnes and Gatti, 2020). This statement was ranked the most important of the four in this section of the survey by a margin. 84 % of the country sample rated this as 'very important' or 'important'. There were fewer 'very important' responses from France and Slovenia and this may reflect the use of book processing charges in these countries. In the UK, book processing charges are the dominant model and the new UKRI open access books policy, which will fund processing charges for books included in the policy, was probably at the forefront of many respondents' minds and this might account for the high number of 'very important' responses (68 %,

### 3 Results and analysis

Figure 3.22). However, in Balkan countries, such as Slovenia, book processing charges have never been widely used.

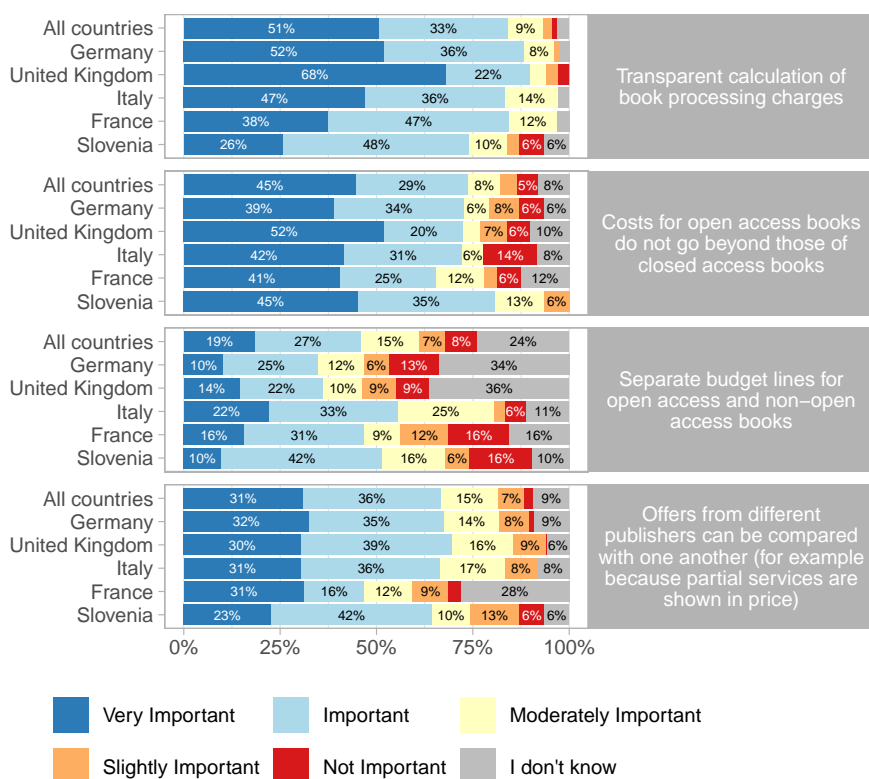


Figure 3.23: Country perspective on perceived importance of economic measures for open access books (All countries (n)=420).

Costs for open access books that do not go beyond those of closed access books was considered the next most important aspect of this section of the survey. There was little fluctuation between the sample and the countries in the analysis. However, there was a significant minority that did not consider this important at all. The exception was Slovenia who considered this more important than the sample as a whole.

Separate budget lines for open access and non-open access books are perceived as less important across the whole sample. However, a significant number of responses did not know, over a third in Germany and the UK. There were also quite a number of 'not important' responses and it would be interesting to see how this perception changes over time, particularly if funders need evidence of payment in order to fund compliant titles.

Offers from different publishers that can be compared with one another were seen as relatively important by all countries in the sample except France where there were a

### 3 Results and analysis

significant number of ‘don’t know’ responses (28 %). It is not clear why this should be the case in France.

#### 3.6.6.2 Stakeholder perspectives

It is perhaps unsurprising that libraries, who often are the ones who pay book processing charges, found transparent calculation of book processing charges by far the most important factor in this section of the survey. 92 % of libraries rated this as important against 84 % for the overall sample. Funders and publishers found this the least important of the other stakeholders analysed (Figure 3.24).

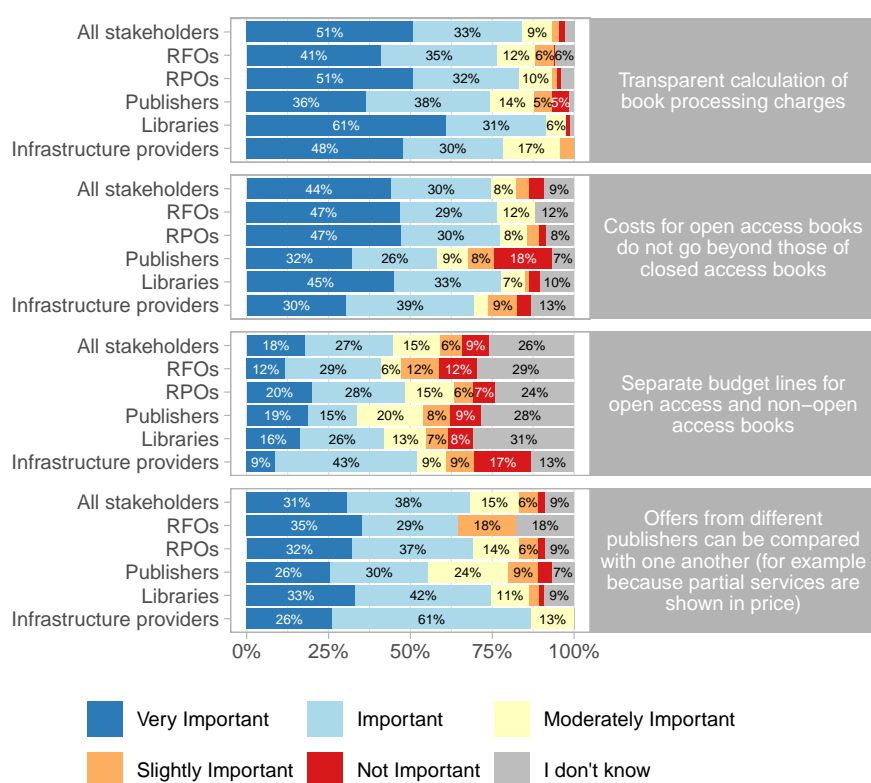


Figure 3.24: Stakeholder perspective on perceived importance of economic measures for open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

Regarding the statement on costs for open access books not going beyond those of closed access books, it is again unsurprising that publishers did not find this as important as other stakeholders and the sample overall. Indeed, 18 % did not consider this important at all. What is interesting is that libraries did not find this more important than other stakeholders groups as they may often hold the budget.

Separate budget lines for open access and non-open access books was the least important factor. However, nearly a third of the stakeholders (with the exception of infrastructure providers) did not know. Both funders and libraries did not consider this particularly important. However, this might create problems in the workflow as budget lines might need to be separate for funding claims otherwise the funder may not know what to fund.

#### 3.6.7 Perceived importance of general measures for open access books

The last set of statements in this section of the report are grouped under the heading ‘general measures’. Essentially, they are statements that did not necessarily fit in the sections above, but were still deemed essential to ask stakeholders to rank their importance. As such, they should not be compared against each other as a whole. However, some of the statements can be grouped. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of the following:

- Not-for-profit open access scholarly publishing models.
- Financial support through open access funds.
- Availability of publicly funded technical infrastructures, such as public repositories.
- Availability of commercial technical infrastructures, such as commercial repositories.
- Advice on open access publishing, such as information services or helpdesks.
- Measures to change the reputation-system around open access publications.
- Appropriate programmes for open access books in publishing houses.
- Promoting alternative publication formats and forms such as blogs or living books (bibliodiversity).

##### 3.6.7.1 Country perspectives

Not-for-profit open access scholarly publishing models and financial support through open access funds are two potential alternatives to commercial models around book processing charges. It is important to note that not-for-profit book publishers utilise book processing charges and that commercial publishers are beginning to pilot different revenue models as an alternative to book processing charges (Research Information, 2023; De Gruyter, n.d.). Financial support through open access funds is considered important by 93 % of the whole sample and there is little variation in the countries analysed. Although, fewer respondents consider not-for-profit open access scholarly publishing models important (83 %), the ‘very important’ responses for both statements are similar. Germany and the UK had much higher ‘very important’ responses to not-for-profit open access scholarly publishing models than others at 67 % and 66 % respectively (Figure 3.25).



### 3 Results and analysis

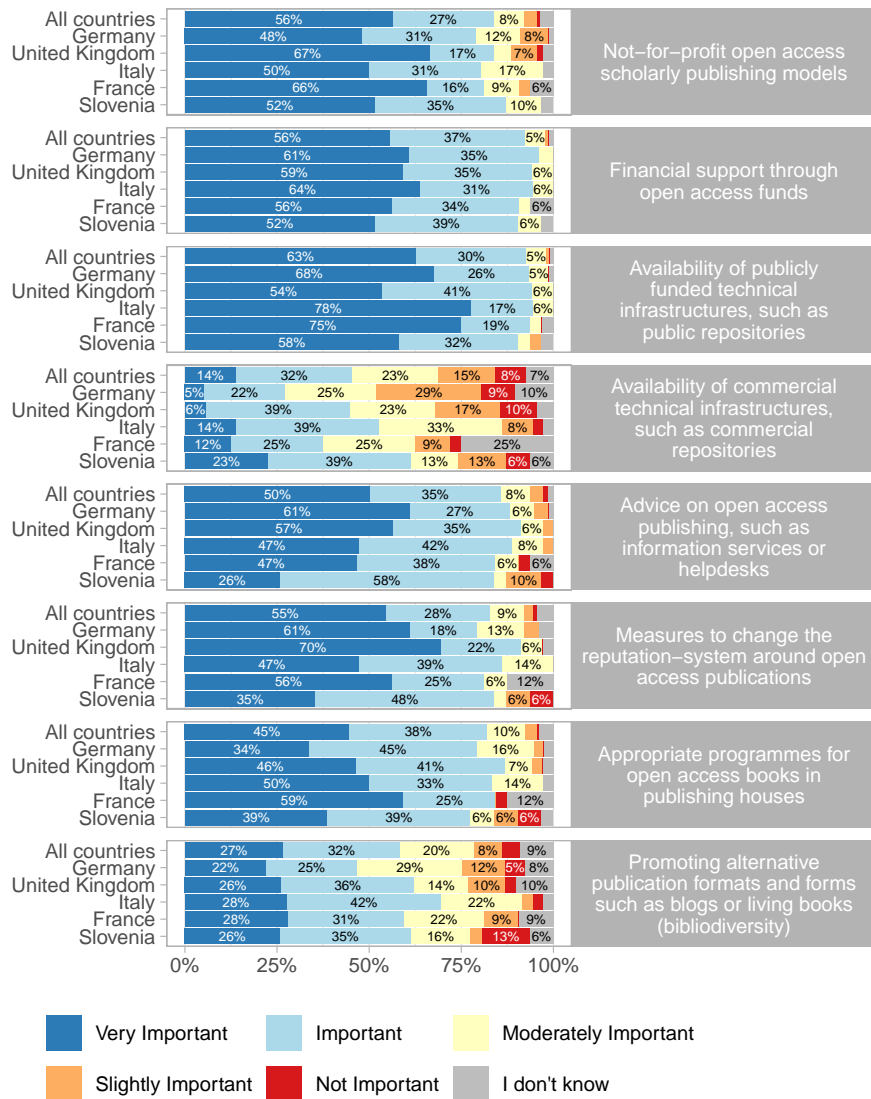


Figure 3.25: Country perspective on the perceived importance of general measures for open access books (All countries (n)=420).

### 3 Results and analysis

The two statements on technical infrastructure, ‘Availability of publicly funded technical infrastructures, such as public repositories’ and the ‘Availability of commercial technical infrastructures, such as commercial repositories’ can also be compared. The response here is overwhelming, with publicly funded solutions being considered important by 93 % of the whole sample and by over 90 % (Slovenia) to 96 % (Germany) of the countries analysed. In contrast, only 46 % thought that commercial solutions were important. Italy and Slovenia recorded slightly higher levels of importance, but still less than for publicly funded solutions. Germany attached less importance to commercial solutions than other countries. A small minority in all countries thought commercial solutions were not important at all.

Advice on open access publishing, such as information services or helpdesks was considered important by the whole sample. There was little difference in the views from the countries in the analysis. This was also true for measures to change the reputation-system around open access publications. Although this was seen as less important by the Slovenian sample.

Appropriate programmes for open access books in publishing houses was considered important by the whole sample and all countries with the exception of Slovenia, this was seen as less important with a small percentage of ‘not important’ responses.

Finally, the statement on alternative publishing formats, such as blogs and living books to promote a form of bibliodiversity was only considered important by 59 % of the whole sample. Germany attached far less importance than this (47 %) and Slovenia also had a significant minority of ‘not important’ responses (13 %). There were also a number of ‘don’t knows’ across the responses.

#### 3.6.7.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Regarding stakeholders, the statements on not-for-profit open access scholarly publishing models and financial support through open access funds were both considered important by the whole sample and all stakeholders in the analysis. Both RPOs and libraries rated this as more important than other stakeholders. While this is not surprising in itself as many not-for-profit open access publishers are based in institutions, often in the library, it might also reflect a bias in the data as the two countries with the most responses (Germany and the UK) have thriving open access presses. Funders had the highest number of ‘very important’ responses for not-for-profit, but 12 % of funders did not know. There was a slightly higher level of importance attached to financial support through open access funds, except from infrastructure providers. Once again, 12 % of funders did not know (Figure 3.26).

Regarding the availability of publicly funded technical infrastructures versus commercial infrastructures, there was a strong importance attached to publicly funded solutions and far less importance given to commercial ones. Although there was a small number of

### 3 Results and analysis

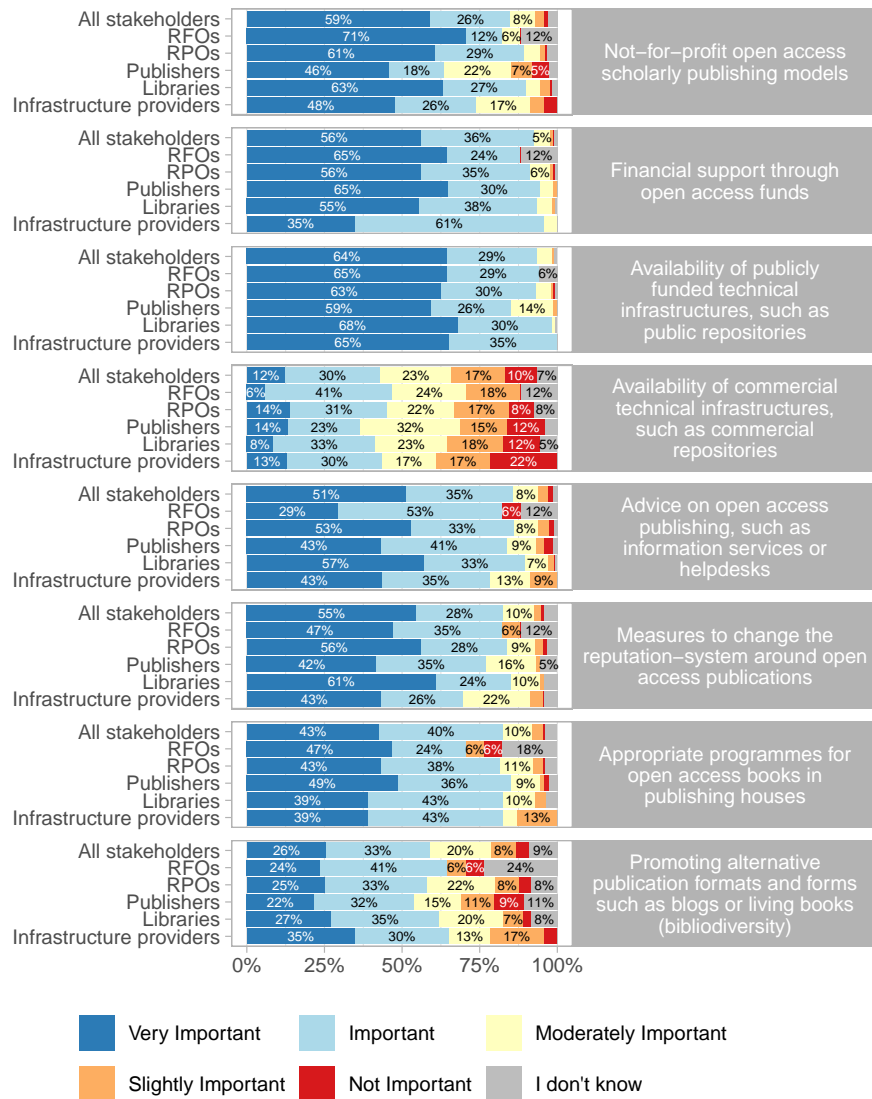


Figure 3.26: Stakeholder perspective on the perceived importance of general measures for open access books (All stakeholders (n)=574).

### 3 Results and analysis

infrastructure providers who responded to the survey, 22 % did not think that commercial solutions were important at all.

Advice on open access publishing, such as information services or helpdesks is seen as important by 86 % of all stakeholders. There is broad agreement across all stakeholders groups. However, what is intriguing is that fewer funders find this ‘very important’ than the other groups (29 % versus 51 % of all stakeholders). A further 6 % of funders do not find this important at all. This seems to be counter intuitive as advice on open access publishing would seem to be in direct support of the aims of a funders open access policy.

Measures to change the reputation system around open access publications is considered important by all stakeholders (83 %). More libraries find this ‘very important’ than the other stakeholders. Prestige is an area that is considered as one of the barriers to open access publishing for books (OAPEN foundation, 2024) and it might have been expected that stakeholders might find this more important. Indeed, 12 % of funders did not know.

Appropriate programmes for open access books in publishing houses was seen as important by all stakeholders and also those individual stakeholders in the analysis. The proportion of ‘very important’ and ‘important’ responses was similar for all with the exception of funders. 18 % did not know and a minority of funders thought that this was not important.

Finally, promoting alternative publication formats was seen as important by just over half of respondents (59 %). 24 % of funders did not know and there was a significant amount of publishers who either did not know (11 %) or thought it was not important (9 %)

#### 3.6.8 Summary

There was broad agreement among the respondents at country and stakeholder level that all quality measures were important for open access books. However, open peer review measures were considered slightly less important by respondents and this response mirrors that of the DIAMAS survey. At stakeholder level, even though open peer review is seen as less important, especially by publishers, it is important to note that funders do regard open peer review as important. The high importance of all quality criteria to all respondents shows the need for open access book publishers to display the appropriate information.

All statements about measures to increase the visibility of open access books were considered important to varying degrees by the whole sample. However, there was one exception, ‘record of reviews and other texts related to the open access book’ was considered far less important when compared to the other statements. One surprising result

### *3 Results and analysis*

was that openly available metadata was considered more important than a digital version of the book being freely available at the same time as the print version.

Once again there was broad agreement across the whole sample that all rights management measures included in the survey question were important. Regarding authors using CC BY licences, only 75 % of respondents perceived this as ‘very important’ or ‘important’. This response may reflect the wording of the statement and the ongoing discussion about the appropriateness of more restrictive licences for open access books. If the statement had referred to CC licences it may have garnered a higher percentage of important responses

Sufficient and correct entries in the metadata record was considered the most important aspect of this set of statements and this reflects the widely known issue that metadata for books is not at the same level as for journals. It was particularly supported by libraries and publishers in the stakeholder sample. Use of common persistent identifiers, such as DOIs were considered almost equally important for similar reasons. Although use of ORCID had fewer very important responses and this might reflect the status of adoption of metadata standards across the country sample.

The section on properties for open access books sought to understand the importance of a number of factors pertaining to both print and digital books. Fewer of these options were considered as important as other sections and there is a strong argument to say that some options are not policy related per se. However, it was surprising to note that very low importance was given to the availability of a regular print edition or print on demand given that it is often cited as a perceived barrier to open access.

The transparent calculation of book processing charges was regarded as the most important statement in this section of the survey and this may reflect concerns around the sustainability of such a revenue model as well as its opaqueness. Separate budget lines for open access and non-open access books are perceived as less important across the whole sample. However, this view may change over time if funders require evidence of payment as a condition of funding. However, in this sample, neither funders nor libraries considered this particularly important.

Financial support through open access funds is considered important by the whole sample, fewer respondents consider not-for-profit open access scholarly publishing models as important. However, the ‘very important’ responses for both statements are similar. Both RPOs and libraries rated this as more important than other stakeholders.

Finally, regarding technical infrastructure, respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of publicly funded technical infrastructures rather than commercial solutions.

## 4 Summary, remarks and recommendations

The PALOMERA project survey was able to analyse various aspects of the topic of open access books. Numerous expected results of this survey confirm the integrity of the data. It is not surprising that most stakeholders state that they have a good knowledge of the areas in which they are active. Declarations and policies are particularly well known in countries where they have been issued. In centrally organised countries, respondents are more aware of the existence and dissemination of their policies than in countries where federal states have sovereignty over education issues and initiatives on a national level do not have the same impact.

However, the expected results are less instructive regarding improving the publishing conditions for open access books. If we want to know in which direction the ecosystem for open access books should be developed, the information on gaps and challenges in the publication system should also be pointed out. Hence, at the end of this report, we would like to highlight two fields of action (so far) that can be identified in the overall results.

### *Knowledge through communication*

A key issue is the creation of awareness through a communication strategy. This topic came to light in many parts of the survey. For example, it is noticeable that stakeholders rate the situation in their own area of interest more positively. By implication, it can be assumed that if knowledge of the numerous products, services, funding opportunities, platforms and technical infrastructures were better, the status of the transformation of the book market would also be assessed more positively. In fact, the existing support programmes at the European and national levels could be better integrated and more closely coordinated. Even experts often find it difficult to maintain an overview of the many initiatives for open access books, many of which have emerged from individual project funding programmes. The aggregation, coordination, standardised presentation and strategic communication of national and European services for the support of open access books could potentially eliminate the differences in assessment that emerge in the survey results and lead to the enforcement of general knowledge about the existence of policies and support services. This would presumably also have a positive impact on the awareness of the importance of the topic of open access books.

### *Participation through clear governance and dialogue at grassroots level*

Another topic area that proved to be exceptionally important across the various stakeholder groups and countries in the survey is the aspect of participation. This is the

#### 4 Summary, remarks and recommendations

case in two respects. Firstly, it is important to raise interest in participation among the relevant stakeholders. The comparison of the political situation in countries with high (France) and relatively low interest in participation (Germany) suggests that centrally organised and politically transparent processes measurably increase the interest in open access policy. Furthermore, the data show a correlation between knowledge about participation opportunities and interest in participation. If we want to increase interest in participation in policy processes, clearly structured governance and powerful communication concepts are needed that can clearly address participation opportunities.

At the same time, ways and means must be found to involve the stakeholders with their different opinions and interests. The diversity of the different positions became particularly clear when comparing the publishers with other stakeholders. With some exceptions, all stakeholders would like to see more intensive involvement of all players in policy processes. Moreover, almost all stakeholders surveyed had little knowledge of existing opportunities for participation. In order to involve all stakeholders at national and European level, concepts should be developed in the near future that provide information on opportunities for participation and demonstrate ways of collaborative policy-making.

An important suggestion that we can provide for such concepts based on the data we have collected concerns the importance of the different levels. Policy making is often thought of as a process at the EU or nation state level. However, we were able to show that the institutional level also plays a considerable role here. For example, we found that the overall awareness of the possibility of participation and the interest in participating in a political process is much greater at the institutional level than at the national level. Those who want to shape policy are more interested in getting involved at their university than on a federal or national level. A strong involvement of the institutions through clever participation mechanisms and a conceptually well designed integration of the institutional level with the state level could therefore be a promising approach for policy-making that involves academics from the outset. In such a bottom-up process, the RPOs would act as a representative body between the level of the scientists and the European or national level.

But at the same time the data also show a correlation between national goals and the commitment to policies on institutional level. In countries with already defined national participation structures and a high level of knowledge and interest in participation in national processes, there is also an increased level of knowledge and interest at the institutional policy-making level. Respondents who state that they want to participate at the national level are more motivated to participate in political processes at the level of the individual institution and vice versa. It will therefore not only be important to strengthen the institutions in the policy-making processes, but also to shape and harmonise the European and national frameworks with activities on the ground.

*Attitudes towards policy measures*

#### *4 Summary, remarks and recommendations*

While there was broad agreement across countries and stakeholder groups in the policy measures section of the survey, a number of areas could warrant further investigation.

Open peer review measures were considered slightly less important by respondents and this response mirrors that of the DIAMAS survey. However, at stakeholder level, it is important to note that funders do regard open peer review as important. The high importance of all quality criteria to all respondents shows the need for open access book publishers to display the appropriate information. It is recommended that the opportunities of open peer review are explored further. An interesting result was that openly available metadata was considered more important than a digital version of the book being freely available at the same time as the print version. Given the importance of openly available metadata to stakeholders it is recommended that funders underline the importance of this in future policy, and that publishers, libraries and infrastructure providers work towards making this a reality.

Regarding the response to CC BY licences, only 75 % of respondents perceiving them as ‘very important’ or ‘important’ may reflect the wording of the statement. If it had referred to CC licences, it may have garnered a higher percentage of important responses and this is worthy of further investigation.

Use of persistent identifiers (PIDs) was considered important and was particularly supported by libraries and publishers in the stakeholder sample. It is recommended that use of PIDs is encouraged and worked into future policy as they become more widely adopted.

The transparent calculation of book processing charges was regarded as the most important statement in its section, and it is recommended that publishers adopt this approach. Separate budget lines for open access and non-open access books were perceived as less important across the whole sample. However, there could be implications if funders require evidence of payment as a condition of funding, so it recommended that separate budget lines are applied. It is also recommended that stakeholders support and stimulate alternative publication formats and forms.

Regarding technical infrastructure, respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of publicly funded technical infrastructures rather than commercial solutions. Therefore it is recommended that measures are taken by all stakeholders to ensure that this technical infrastructure is funded and developed to support future policy.

Overall, the survey underscores the need for tailored visibility strategies aligned with stakeholder priorities and policy frameworks to maximise the impact and accessibility of open access books.



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## **6 Appendix**

### **Appendix A: Survey questionnaire**

#### **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. What type(s) of institution(s) do you work for?
2. In which country are you located?
3. Are you professionally involved in open access (for example, supporting open access publishing as a publisher or librarian)?
4. How would you rate your expertise in the field of open access?

#### **OPEN ACCESS POLICY**

5. Does your country have a national open access policy?
6. Are open access books included in this national open access policy?
7. Does your country have a policy exclusively dedicated to open access books?
8. Does your institution have an open access policy?
9. Are open access books included in this institutional open access policy?
10. Does your institution have a policy exclusively dedicated to open access books?
11. Which of the following policies/recommendations are you familiar with?

#### **STAKEHOLDERS AND PLAYERS**

12. How important are the following stakeholders for the implementation of open access book policies in your country?
13. How important should the following stakeholders be for the implementation of open access book policies in your country?

#### **ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLICY-DESIGN**

14. An open access policy for books on the national level changes academic publishing for the better.
15. An open access policy for books on the institutional level changes academic publishing for the better.

## 6 Appendix

16. I am interested in participating in the design of an open access policy for books on a national level.
17. I am interested in participating in the design of an open access policy for books on an institutional level.
18. I am aware of opportunities to participate in the processes of shaping a policy for open access books.
19. I know which stakeholders are involved in designing a national open access policy for books.
20. I know which stakeholders are involved in designing an institutional open access policy for books.

### **ATTITUDES TOWARDS MEASURES TO PROMOTE OPEN ACCESS BOOKS**

21. Publishing an open access book (digital or print) and publishing a closed access book is equally prestigious.
22. Authors willing to publish an open access book in my country have sufficient information to do so.
23. Authors willing to publish an open access book in my institution have sufficient information to do so.
24. There are sufficient funding opportunities to publish an open access book in my country.
25. There are sufficient funding opportunities to publish an open access book in my institution.
26. There is sufficient technical infrastructure to support publishing an open access book in my country.
27. There is sufficient technical infrastructure to support publishing an open access book in my institution.

### **POLICY MEASURES**

28. How important are the following measures for quality assurance for open access books?
29. How important are the following measures to increase visibility of open access books?
30. How important are the following measures for rights management in open access books?
31. How important are the following measures concerning data about the book (meta-data, persistent identifier, usage-data)?
32. How important are the following properties for open access books?
33. How Important are the following economic measures for open access books?
34. How important are the following measures for open access books?



**FEEDBACK**

35. Thank you for your participation in the survey. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

## Appendix B: Country report for Germany

The policy landscape in Germany is ambiguous, so the question of the existence of a national policy is not easy to answer. Because the federal states are responsible for educational issues in Germany, an open access policy can initially only be implemented at federal state level for formal reasons. In fact, some federal states have adopted their own open access policies. Some mention books, others do not (Landesportal Schleswig-Holstein, 2020). Berlin is an example for a federal state with a policy that includes open access books (Senat von Berlin, 2015). In addition, universities enjoy a relatively high degree of autonomy, and their scientists are independent in their decisions due to the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of research - including the choice of publication venue (Grundgesetz, Art. 5 (3)). A fundamental decision on the right of universities to instruct their academics in this respect is currently pending before the Federal Constitutional Court (n.d.).

One way to ensure standardisation at the national level is for the individual federal states to cooperate and agree on a policy that they all sign together. Separate bodies such as the Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK; The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, n.d.) or the Gemeinsame Wissenschaftskonferenz (GWK; Joint Science Conference, n.d.) exist for this form of cross-state decision-making on cultural and educational issues. In fact, a paper was recently adopted, dealing with framework guidelines for further shaping the transformation (BMBF, 2023). However, it is not entitled ‘Policy’ and is far less detailed than the papers of centrally organised countries such as France (Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, 2021). Coordination processes between the federal and state governments are often lengthy and complicated (Bärwolff et al., 2023, ch. 4). However, the recommendations of advisory bodies, such as of the Wissenschaftsrat (WR; German Science and Humanities Council, 2022), make a significant contribution to harmonised science policy decision-making. Finally, the major research funding organisations such as the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), the Helmholtz Gemeinschaft and the Max Planck Gesellschaft (MPG) have an impact beyond the borders of the federal states. Still, their policies only extend to the projects they fund, and their papers would rarely be recognised as national policies.

The diversity of actors with different scopes and their sometimes tense relationships lead to a variety of policy positions, some of which have national scope and could therefore be misinterpreted as national policy. In formal terms, the paper ‘Gemeinsame Leitlinien von Bund und Ländern’ (BMBF, 2023) comes closest to this claim, but in terms of the concreteness and scope of the measures mentioned therein, it is not comparable to the national plans of France or Ireland, for example. It is therefore not surprising that the question of having a national policy is answered inconsistently in Germany. The data also shows no consensus on the answer to the question of whether this policy includes books.

## Appendix C: Country report for the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom does not have one overarching national open access books policy in place that applies to every researcher in every research performing organisation. However, there are a number of ‘national’ and other funder policies in place or going through a period of consultation.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is the UK’s largest public funder of research. UKRI announced its new open access policy in August 2021 after an extensive consultation period (UKRI, 2021). However, the open access policy for monographs, book chapters and edited collections did not come into effect until 1 January 2024.

The policy applies to all long form publications that acknowledge funding from UKRI or any of its councils. To be compliant, the final Version of Record or the Author’s Accepted Manuscript must be free to view and download via an online publication platform, publishers’ website, or institutional or subject repository within a maximum of 12 months of publication. In addition, the open access version must have a Creative Commons licence or other licence permitted by UKRI.

An extensive implementation period preceded the introduction of the policy and this was well underway at the time of the survey distribution. Although the application procedure and funding information was not released until November 2023.

Another key open access policy in the UK relates to the Research Excellence Framework (REF; UKRI, n.d.b). The REF is the UK’s system for assessing the excellence of research in UK higher education institutions. Research England (part of UKRI) manages the REF on behalf of all four UK higher education funding bodies: Research England, Scottish Funding Council, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland.

The last REF was in 2021 and there was no mandate for open access to monographs, edited collections or book chapters (UKRI, n.d.a). The next REF will be held in 2029. The open access policy is currently out for consultation with key stakeholders and an announcement is not expected until summer/autumn 2024. Until then the REF 2021 policy applies.

Finally, the Wellcome Trust open access policy (The Wellcome Trust, 2024) also applies to all original scholarly monographs and book chapters authored or co-authored by Wellcome grant holders as part of their grant-funded research. Longform publications have been part of the policy since May 2013 and Wellcome provides funding to cover publisher book and chapter processing charges.

## Appendix D: Country report for Italy

The national governance of research and universities in Italy is centralized under the auspices of the Ministry of Research and University. However, the responsibility for developing open access policies in the country has largely rested on research centers and, predominantly, universities to date. The inception of the open access movement in Italy can be traced back to the Messina Declaration of 2004 (JLIS.it, 2012), which followed the principles set forth in the Berlin Declaration of 2003. Despite a centralized policy framework, decisions regarding the adoption of open access and open science are primarily made by individual universities, research centers, and organisations.

A law enacted in 2013 at the national level provided definitions of open access and outlined the legal implications associated with this concept (Dipartimento delle Finanze, 2013). Subsequently, research institution in Italy independently formulated own open access policies. While there is a degree of uniformity among university policies, the primary objective typically revolves around enhancing accessibility to their respective digital repositories (see also OPEN-SCIENCE.IT (2021) for a list of open access policies among Italian higher education institutions). Universities with their own publishing arms, such as ‘La Sapienza’ in Rome, often seek to incentivize open access publications in their journals and monographic series. Although many of these policies do not explicitly mention the production of books, they are frequently included within the broader scope of scientific output covered by such policies.

The standardisation of these policies has been facilitated by Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università Italiane (CRUI), a national organisation representing Italian universities. CRUI initiated the protocol Coordination for Access to Electronic Resources (CARE; CRUI, n.d.) to promote a more cohesive approach to electronic resources within scholarly institutions in Italy, a crucial aspect for fostering open access.

Another significant development at the national level in the promotion and support of open science is the initiative undertaken by the National Research Council (CNR). Recently, CNR introduced a specific policy aimed at supporting open access within its digital repository. Subsequently, the institution published a roadmap outlining its vision for the future of open access in the Italian academic landscape. This roadmap reflects CNR’s commitment to promoting FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles and open access across its digital repositories and physical libraries. Notably, CNR serves as a key liaison for numerous European programs dedicated to supporting open access and open science within academic settings. Available as a website dedicated to open science in Italy, it also supports good practices of diffusion of open access principles in the country (OPEN-SCIENCE.IT, n.d.).

ANVUR, the scientific evaluation agency of Italy, also plays a significant role in the open access landscape. While ANVUR does not have a formal open access policy, it incorporates open access publications, including papers and books, into its evaluation

guidelines. As research environments typically place considerable emphasis on evaluation criteria, ANVUR's role in assessing open access publications contributes to their recognition and impact within researchers' career trajectories.

In conclusion, despite Italy's centralised governance structure, the academic landscape relies also on the autonomy of its institutions, organisations, and universities. Consequently, while there exists overarching legislation providing a framework, individual agencies and stakeholders determine their specific approach to open access, highlighting the absence of a comprehensive national policy dedicated to advancing open science in the country.

## Appendix E: Country report for France

France played an active role in supporting the open access movement in the national context and beyond, especially in recent years. After a first law passed in 2016 (Légifrance, 2016), which already envisioned the development of open access for scientific publishing, a more concrete action was taken in 2018 with the creation of a specific ministerial body for supporting open science in general, including open access policies. This body, named Comité pour la Science Ouverte (COSO) was established within the French Ministry of Research and intended to become a policy-maker for open science in France.

The core activity of the COSO is the establishment of a national plan for open science (Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, 2021). The first plan was published in 2018, the second one in 2021. The COSO therefore provides recommendations, but also funding, through a dedicated fund and the collaboration with the French national funding agency, the Agence nationale de la Recherche (ANR), which makes it also possible to transform policies into concrete strategies. Moreover, like what happens with European-funded projects, projects funded by the ANR now must publish their results in open access. Since 2019, results must be published in an institutional repository or in the national repository HAL.

Besides the traditional centralized character of the French governing model, it is therefore rather the creation of this new body, and its coordination with others, that brought in the country better visibility and consistency to the national open science policies. Furthermore, the support to open access books publishing started before and relied on existing national infrastructures, like for instance OpenEdition. In 2010, the French government launched a funding programme for research and innovation (Rocard and Juppé, 2009), which allowed OpenEdition to publish in open access an important amount of the books' collection of French university presses (to date, more than 12 000 in open access on OpenEdition platform). In addition, universities and research institutes have some autonomy, and this applies in particular to the support of open access publishing. At the level of universities and research institutes, indeed, the support to open science

and open access also relies on libraries and documentation centers, who play an important role for their communities in terms of policy knowledge or even implementation.

However, regarding specifically the open access policies related to books, the French situation might not be as clear as the global support to ‘open science’, a concept that covers many areas and objects. The first Plan national pour la Science Ouverte (PNSO) already contained mentions about supporting open access publishing for articles and for books. Nevertheless, the framework used for such support (funding by projects, green open access repositories) may seem slightly more appropriate for journal articles. However, the second PNSO of 2021 reiterates the support to both articles and books publishing, setting an objective of 100 % open access publishing in 2030, still limited to outputs of public funded projects.

In conclusion, France has a rather clear action in terms of open access policy, either in the sense of general recommendations, or in terms of direct support and mandates. Besides national measures and coordination, the policies are also supported at a local level, depending on the means and strategies of the research institutions. Nevertheless, while the open access publishing seems to be well known and accepted in the research context, the situation appears to be slightly different in the broader publishing ecosystem. A recent official report about open science and authors’ rights expressed some concerns about the extension of the diamond open access model to any kind of publication (Trémolière, 2024). While this report and its conclusions do not hinder the open access movement, it shows that some stakeholders still see value in traditional commercial publishing.

## Appendix F: Country report for Slovenia

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the ‘Plan for the Development of Research Infrastructure 2011-2020’ (NRRI; Vlada Republike Slovenije, 2011) on April 28, 2011, which was followed by the ‘Resolution on the Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia 2011-2020’ (ReRIS11-20; Vlada Republike Slovenije, 2011) on May 24, 2011. One of the first results of these efforts was the National Open Science Portal (n.d.), established in 2013, which partially replaced various institutional and mainly university repositories and was also intended for books. Otherwise, the plan was only implemented slowly and was updated in 2015. The ‘National Strategy for Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data in Slovenia 2015–2020’ (Government of the Republic of Slovenia, 2015) adopted in the autumn of 2015 and the associated ‘Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data in Slovenia 2015–2020’ (Vlada Republike Slovenije, 2017) were more specific and defined various measures.

The planned measures also included recommendations for the publication of books that are the result of publicly funded research: ‘Publishers of scientific monographs based in

Slovenia which receive national public funding in the period from 2015 until 2020 should strive to publish the monographs through business models that will enable open access to their full text immediately upon publication and their licensing with open access licences.<sup>7</sup> They also stipulated that books published abroad are part of the national heritage and that the state must ensure both the archiving of these publications and the reimbursement of book processing charges. The main funder of Slovenian science, the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS), has been designated as the operator of the activity. Since the 1970s, Slovenia has regularly held public tenders for the state subsidisation of scientific journalism, and in recent years this has been the task of ARRS.

Since 2018, when ARRS joined the European initiative Plan S as one of the first RFOs, ARRS has conducted several (annual) tenders (ARIS, n.d.) for the reimbursement of the costs of open access publications of foreign publishers, but the tenders only allowed for the reimbursement of article but not book processing charges. The publication of a book in open access remained only a recommendation, even if the book was, for example, the direct result of a publicly funded project or the Slovenian publisher received a subsidy for it through the ARRS public tender. For various reasons, the strategy was not implemented (again), but some publishers of scientific books actually started to publish in open access on their websites. In Slovenia, the market for digital publications of any kind is practically non-existent, and most scientific publishers are non-profit institutions anyway, which do not mind a possible loss of revenue through free online publications. We estimate that more than a third of the scientific books published in Slovenia between 2013 and 2023 (around 3,500) are freely accessible.

In the autumn of 2021, things got moving again when the new ‘Act on Scientific Research and Innovation Activity’ (ZZrID; Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2021) was passed, and came into force in January 2023. The ZZrID was strengthened by the ‘Regulation on the conduct of scientific research in accordance with the principles of open science’ (Uradni List, 2023), which was adopted in May 2023. The regulation also contains a provision stating that all results of more than 50 % of publicly funded research must be immediately available in open access. In spring 2023, ARRS, now ARIS<sup>1</sup>, published a public tender (ARIS, 2023) for the funding of scientific books for the first time, which already stipulated in the tender conditions that all funded scientific books must be published in open access immediately after publication.

Slovenia has therefore already begun to make the publication of scientific books in open access a legal requirement, even if the practical consequences of this provision are not yet entirely clear. For example, it is not yet known what approach the state will take to non-compliance, how this will affect the (bibliometric) evaluation of research results, how Slovenian publishers can be supported and open access publications can be made possible (financed) for publishers with insufficient infrastructure, etc.

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<sup>1</sup>In May 2023, the Slovene Research Agency was renamed the Slovenian Agency for Research and Innovation (Javna agencija za raziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost, ARIS)