

January 12, 2026 Claire Redhead

Latest OASPA data shows dramatic growth in OA articles from past decades is plateauing

Share this article:



Each year, OASPA surveys its members about their publication output to report on volumes of published open access content and licensing. OASPA members were once again invited to share their data to update our previous post on this topic, from January 2025. Figures were supplied as number of articles published per year since implementation of the license by that publisher¹. See the downloadable spreadsheet for full details here.

*As previously, Delta Think has taken on the analysis, structuring and presentation of the data we collected about full and hybrid OA outputs in 2024 resulting in the analysis below **by Dan Pollock**.*

Overall growth in OA articles published by OASPA Members slows further

Growth in the volume of publications from OASPA members has slowed further compared with previous years.

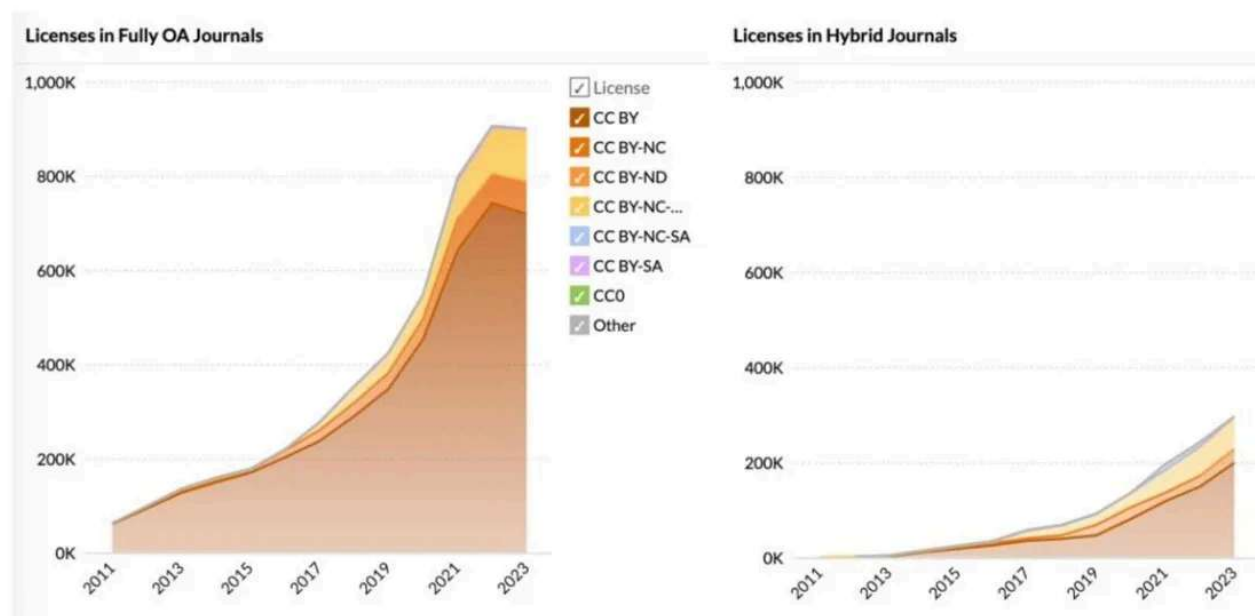
The OASPA dataset shows that just over 1.2m articles were published in 2024. This grew by just 1% over 2023, compared with 4% growth the previous year, and significantly lower than the long-term average.

Just over 7.5 million articles were published in the period 2000-2024. 2024's output therefore represents around 16% of the total across all years. The total number of OA articles reported has more than quintupled since 2017 and grown almost 40x since 2011.

CC BY in fully OA journals continues to dominate output, accounting for 57% of 2024's output (although representing a slight fall compared with 60% in 2023). However, beneath the headlines some interesting observations can be made.

Output in fully-OA journals continues to shrink while hybrid OA grows

In 2024, 72% of the Open Access articles covered by this dataset were published in fully OA journals, down from 75% the year before, and 84% the year before that. The chart below compares publications in fully OA journals with those in hybrid ones.

Figure 1: Open Access Articles Published by OASPA Members

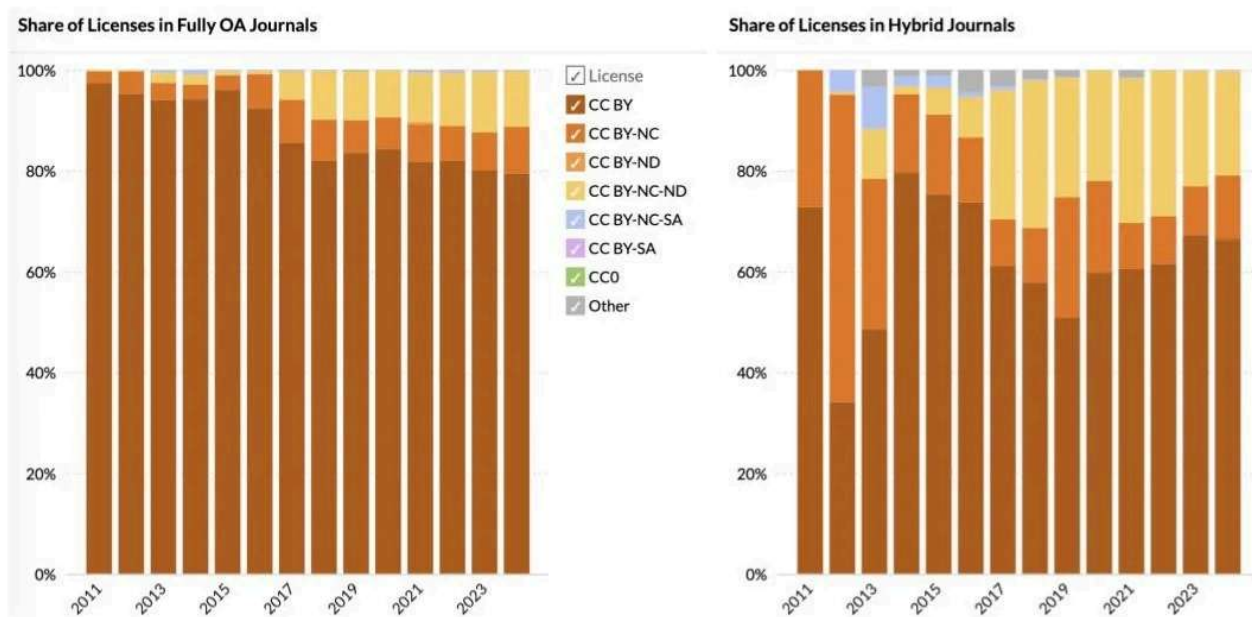
Sources: OASPA publisher survey, OpenAlex, Delta Think analysis.

Numbers of articles in fully OA journals shrank again in 2024. OA articles in hybrid journals continue to grow strongly, making up for the lost ground in fully OA and so total output grew overall. In 2024, the volume of articles in fully OA journals shrank by 4%, compared with a shrinkage of just under 1% in 2023, and a growth of 14% in 2022. Hybrid OA articles grew by 17% in 2024, down slightly from 22% growth in 2023 and 24% in 2022. So, despite double digit growth, there are some signs here too that growth in hybrid OA article output is also starting to slow down. Overall output across all OA journals grew by 1% in 2024, compared with 4% over 2023, and 16% over 2022.

The data show that CC BY articles in fully-OA journals continue to be by far the dominant type of articles published. Just over 5 million articles in the OASPA dataset were published with the CC BY license in fully OA journals during the period 2000-2024. Around 684,000 of those were published in 2024 (down from 720,000 published in 2023).

CC BY remains dominant in hybrid journals too, which saw just over 965,000 articles published with the CC BY license during the period 2000-2024. Just over 230,000 of these were published in 2024 (up from 200,000 in 2023).

CC BY continues to dominate, but is slowly losing share



Sources: OASPA publisher survey, OpenAlex, Delta Think analysis.

In fully OA journals, after a period of steadiness, the proportion of CC BY licensed content appears to slowly be shrinking (now falling to just below 80% of output). CC BY-NC's share grew slightly to 9%, while CC BY-NC-ND's share fell back to 11%. These are all single percentage point changes over 2023's shares, so it remains too soon to tell if this represents a change to long-term trends.

Licenses with some restrictions are significantly more prevalent in hybrid journals. This trend has previously shown signs of reversing, although it may be stabilising. By 2023, they accounted for 67% of hybrid output and this fell only very slightly to 66% in 2024. So although we see a slight decline in CC BY's share, it still accounts for two thirds of hybrid OA output. Usage of the CC BY-NC license appears to be slowly increasing. CC BY-NC's share rose to 13% in 2024 (up from 10% in 2023), while the proportion of CC BY-NC-ND fell to 21% (down from 23% share in 2023, and 29% in the years before that).

Output remains highly consolidated

The top 3 publishers by volume of output now account for 69% of the OA content in this dataset, up from the previous figure of 54% showing a higher degree of consolidation. Beyond that the picture is similar to last year, whereby the top 10 publishers by volume account for over 90% of the total output represented in this dataset. We see slightly lower levels of consolidation for CC BY licenses overall, and in particular for CC BY licenses published in fully-OA journals – this likely reflects the falling back of fully OA output.

¹ Figures for Springer Nature's 2023 and 2024 output were estimated by projecting trends in its previous OASPA data onto publicly available figures from OpenAlex. We leave this in so we can compare like-for-like with previous analysis.

Many stories remain untold

Our annual reporting at OASPA has, to date, focused on volume of open access outputs, and has most often focussed on journals rather than books. It is well established that the quantity of journal output is only part of an overall (and much more varied and complex) picture of open access

publishing across OASPA's diverse network. Much remains hidden including about the way that open access models are evolving; by which method/model content is made open; outputs from the long tail of smaller publishers; ongoing transition journeys from closed to open access; and examples of OASPA members evolving and improving open access in other ways. Future posts and ongoing work from OASPA can delve further into these untold stories. Please do share any thoughts, ideas or requests you may have for what you most want to see reported on by writing to us.

ABOUT DELTA THINK, INC.

Delta Think is a strategic consulting and advisory firm serving organizations in professional and academic communications as well as professional membership societies. Since 2005, Delta Think has engaged with more than 120 organizations across the scholarly enterprise by creating effective business and product strategies, developing and analyzing customer and market intelligence, and translating strategies into actionable and execution focused roadmaps and work plans.

To support data-driven decisions surrounding Open Access, in 2017 Delta Think launched its Data and Analytics Tool, a subscription-based product which allows users analyse data about journal output in detail and to stay abreast of the continually evolving market through carefully curated data, visualizations, and expert commentary on business models, pricing, market sizing and dynamics, and more.

Learn more at www.deltathink.com