

French press release on the Summit Meeting on National Open Access Strategies

Upon invitation by Horst Hippler, president of the HRK, a high-level summit meeting was held on May 2nd in Berlin in the presence of Robert-Jan Smits, the recently appointed EU envoy on Open Access.

Teams of university presidents, funding agencies and librarian organizations involved in ongoing independent negotiations with the major publishers (Elsevier, Springer Nature, Wiley) in different countries shared their experiences. Policies and concrete actions to accelerate the transition from the current subscription-based publishing system to a fully open access system were discussed.

Participants agreed to align their strategies and to establish transparency with respect to the procedure and outcome of the negotiations. Pursuant to France's commitments into the Open Government Partnership¹, expenditure on publications will be made public, thus contributing to this joint effort of transparency.

Furthermore, as a group the participants considered that "the limits of the partnership of academic institutions with these major publishers have been reached"² and that "we are seriously considering alternative solutions which do not involve these scientific publishers"³. The development of a publishing ecosystem under the supervision of the scientific community appears to be a key driver to change the historical system which is going through a serious crisis and to free itself from the quasi-monopolies of certain international publishing groups.

The French delegation fully endorsed the firm position held by all participants in the negotiations with the publishers whose prices are increasingly disconnected from real costs. The delegation stressed the need for an open science policy encompassing all dimensions of the subject, which therefore is to extend far beyond these commercial negotiations alone.

¹ <https://www.etalab.gouv.fr/opengov-openparliament-les-plans-daction-du-gouvernement-et-de-lassemblee-nationale-pour-une-action-publique-transparente-et-collaborative-ont-ete-lances>

² <https://www.hrk.de/press/press-releases/press-release/meldung/european-high-level-summit-meeting-on-open-access-negotiations-4364/>

³ <https://www.scienceguide.nl/2018/05/open-access-negotiators-prepare-for-a-future-without-publishers/>