

2015

MFG Innovation Agency
Media and Creative
Industries

Ines Kreitlein
Petra Newrly

Version April 10, 2015



Regional Analysis Report Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Open Educational Resources uptake in adult education



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

THE OERup! CONSORTIUM





TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION.....	3
1. Methodology.....	4
2. OER for adult education in the regional/national context	5
3. Current implementation of OER in adult education in the regional context	7
3.1. Perception and attitudes	7
3.2. OER usage and practice	7
3.3. Availability and quality of OER	8
3.4. Barriers and drivers for the use of OER.....	9
4. Conclusion and recommendations for the OERup! training package.....	10
4.1. Need for training	10
4.2. Format of the training and ways of organizing learning	11
5. A few more thoughts beyond the OERup! training package	12
Bibliography	13
Legal Notice.....	14
Annexe I	0

INTRODUCTION

This country report presents the data collected during the need analysis carried out by the German partner Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg (MFG), on the use of OER in adult education.

As the state agency for innovation in media and creative industries, MFG has been promoting technology enhanced learning and digital culture through application-based research and projects. One of its goals is to raise awareness for future trends and to analyse their successful implementation in adult learning, covering all areas from formal, to non-formal, and informal learning. Both, cooperation partner and target group, are adult learning and higher education institutions, research centre, as well as small and medium sized enterprises.

Concerning the open movement, topics like open source and open data are on the list of priorities at MFG within the framework of digital innovation. Open education has completed this list as logical next step with the initiation and implementation of the project OERup! in 2014.

The need analysis conducted within the OERup! project illustrates the status quo on the current use and development of OER in adult education. Also, the purpose of the need analysis was to map existing policies on OER at a national, regional and European level, as well as to identify training needs of adult education staff in relation to the use of OER in their teaching and educational practice.

All statements are based on the results of qualitative research. Whilst making no pretence to being an extensive scientific study, this report provides a useful overview of the current situation.

1. Methodology

Up to 6 semi-structured interviews were conducted with adult learning professionals, institutional decision makers and experts from adult education. The purpose of the interviews was to explore the current use and development of OER in the educational practice of the interviewees, as well as to identify their specific training needs in relation to OER development. In addition, a round table workshop was organized to explore the main drivers and barriers identified during the interviews, which also allowed participants to provide input for the development of the OERup! training package.

Semi-structured interviews in Baden-Württemberg:

8 interviews of about one hour were conducted (6 via phone or skype, 2 in person). The group of interviewees consisted of 4 educational professionals and 4 institutional decision makers (manager or head of department) most of whom had prior teaching or training experience.

The interviewees range from freelance trainers to different types of organizations: a center for general scientific education, private further education provider (vocational training, coaching, and languages), community college (vocational, general and basic education), the association of community colleges Baden-Württemberg, public center for further education on the issues of management and staff, and a private language school.

Roundtable in Baden-Württemberg:

The roundtable workshop took place in Stuttgart on the premises of MFG Baden-Württemberg, on February 18th 2015. 8 relevant actors participated in the workshop. Represented were the association of community colleges Baden-Württemberg as well as the head of one adult education centre, the Knowledge Media Research Centre, the University of Technology Stuttgart, and the professional association for trainers, consultants, and coaches. The focus of the discussion was “OER and OEP implementation in adult learning: drawbacks and drivers, needed measures and next steps”.

2. OER for adult education in the regional/national context

The topic of Open Educational Resources has been taken on in Germany rather slowly, compared to other OECD countries. So far, most significant approaches have arisen in the field of school and higher education, while the discussions around adult learning play a more marginal role. The following paragraphs outline the development evolving around open content in education in Germany as a whole, pointing out Baden-Württemberg initiatives, where they can be found.

First approaches were single grass-root projects, initiated by individual teachers, and open declarations of interest by actors of the education sector. All of which acting on their own efforts, and not being centrally organized. *Open Content Baden-Württemberg* (www.opencontent-bw.de) was one of the pioneer initiatives, which released the “Stuttgart Declaration” in 2007. In this declaration, 14 signatories claim to sensitize the broader public, relevant institutions, and policy makers of the topic, and to support the broad implementation of open content projects (www.lmz-bw.de). Another example is “ZUM.de, Zentrale für Unterrichtsmedien im Internet e.V.”, an online platform founded by teachers in Freiburg in 1997 to create and disseminate educational resources (for school and adult education). All of its content is licensed under creative commons from 2008 on. Unfortunately, successful projects remain single initiatives or as in the case of the Stuttgart Declaration, peter out without any considerable impact. Top-down support from federal or state government is not in sight at this point.

Eventually, in 2011 the so called “Schultrojaner” (School Trojan) incident triggered a heated nation-wide debate about open content: The State Ministries of Education had reached an agreement with educational publishers to search school computers for copies of educational resources violating copyrights (www.wikiversity.org). In the interest of OER supporters, the agreement was called off due to public protest, and the topic has gained a broader audience. At the same time diverse practitioners of education use this gained impetus and found the project “Freie Bildungsmedien” in the aftermath of the EduCamp at the University of Bielefeld. The project sets its goals to standardize OER in German-speaking regions and initiate discussions about the pros and cons of a centralized platform (Dobusch et al., 2014, p. 7).

The federal government showed first engagement in the topic in November 2012. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the conference of ministers for education initiated the first expert meeting about OER, inviting representatives of higher education institutions, publishers, and NGOs. Most important aspects of this meeting were on the one hand the acknowledgement of the advantages of OER as sensible supplement to traditional resources, and on the other hand the critical points of quality assurance,

copyright issues and business models for publishers of educational resources were stressed (Dobusch et al., 2014, p. 7). Further, three studies*¹ around these topics have been commissioned within this framework.

The Open Education movement in Germany seems to be on the way up. To name a few among many other initiatives and relevant players: Wikimedia Germany, Creative Commons Germany, and the Open Knowledge Foundation play a very important and active part by organizing the first successful OER conferences in Berlin (2013 and 2014) or by co-founding the Free Education Alliance “Bündnis Freie Bildung”. Furthermore, the Federal Agency for Civic Education has been showing engagement as public institution since 2010 in a practical manner by creating a discussion forum and lab environment around OER on their platform werkstatt.bpb.de. In Baden-Württemberg, important players are, for example, the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW) participating in European OER projects such as Open Educational Ideas (www.idea-space.eu), as well as the Leibniz Knowledge Media Research Center (www.iwm-kmrc.de), which offers an open online course on the topic OER and runs the portal e-teaching.org, where information on OER can be found.

Up until today the entire process is defined by a clear bottom-up approach, pushed forward by the commitment of single actors and initiatives of civil society. Even though first positive steps have been taken by public authorities, OER supporters still demand of them stronger involvement in order to ensure a sustainable and nationwide implementation of Open Educational Resources and Open Educational Practices. In February 2015, the Free Education Alliance (“Bündnis Freie Bildung”) publishes its policy paper stating the need for a clear strategy, sustainable structures and conditions for the support of OER (Albers et al. (Free Education Alliance), 2015). Hopes are now being pinned on the fact that for the first time, the federal budget foresees means explicitly for Open Educational Resources and learning software (Esken, 2014), as well as in the commitment and formulated recommendations for next steps, published by the working group on OER from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the conference of ministers for education (BMBF, 2015).

In terms of content, initiatives and discussions that have been held have a strong focus on school education and higher education. Main emphasis lies on the questions of quality assurance, financing, how to integrate existing infrastructures and players of the German education system (platforms, publishers, etc.) and how to sustainably mainstream Open Educational Resources and Practices among educational professionals. Most of these questions play an important role for adult learning as well, nevertheless the particular

* Blees et al. „Handlungsfelder, Akteure und Entwicklungsoptionen offener Bildungsressourcen in internationaler Perspektive“, Till Kreuzer „Open Educational Resources, OpenContent und Urheberrecht“, and Ziedorn et al. “Metadaten für OER”

realities of this sector of education, for example the issue of business models for adult education institutions and professionals, and the strong lobby of publishers and business around further education have been rather disregarded.

The year of 2015, however, seems to forecast that this gap in the debate will be closed. Goaded by the experiences made in higher education but also due to the growing demand of relevant practitioners, the topic of OER in adult learning makes itself heard. In May 2015 the first whitepaper on OER in adult education will be released. Further, the Bertelsmann foundation, in cooperation with other players, plans to launch an OER platform (probably by the end of 2015) explicitly including resources for adult learning. Significant engagement on the part of state governments (Länder) cannot be recorded yet.

3. Current implementation of OER in adult education in the regional context

3.1. Perception and attitudes

The topic of Open Educational Resources in general is perceived with curiosity but also strong scepticism. Actors of adult learning are insecure about the meaning of the terms in use and mistrust the claimed benefits. Concerns are: *“doesn’t it mean more work for teachers and trainers, for which they have to sacrifice more of their free time?”*, *“who profits from open content online? I don’t want to lose control over who I am supporting with my work?”*, or *“if our offer is available online free of charge, who pays our bills?”* Many concerns, however, are not OER specific but seem to show a precaution associated with new developments like digitalization in general.

Nevertheless (or maybe because of that), there is a strong interest in finding out more about the topic and the philosophy behind. Most interviewees have heard of Open Education and are intrigued to learn about its benefits.

3.2. OER usage and practice

In general, it can be stated that the majority of the developed material is not licenced under creative commons or uploaded on relevant platforms and therefore does not fulfil the criteria of OER to be reused, revised, remixed, and redistributed.

Concepts of open education play a considerable role in the didactical methods of adult learning professionals. But Open Educational Resources are deliberately being used for this

purpose only on rare occasions and, if so, always connected with great insecurities about acting outside the law. These worries concern for example the copyrights of learners, if they are being included in the process of developing material, as well as the restrictions of the institutions teachers or trainers are working for.

Most teachers and trainers claim to have always been developing their material, or parts of it, themselves. Within this process they include single elements, which they find online (pictures, videos, etc.), into their material. But only in rare occasions final products are being openly shared in return. Sharing or revising and mixing educational material only takes place within small, hence “trustworthy”, environments among colleagues of one institution and friends, or within the context of a project related cooperation among learning institutions which secures an immediate win-win situation.

3.3. Availability and quality of OER

Educational professionals look for material online (via google search, for example) and state that they do not find Open Educational Resources and do not know any respectable platforms that could ease the search for them.

A variety of platforms offer to publish, sort, search, discuss and create educational resources in German. Operators and authors of these platforms and its content are either very committed educational professionals themselves or public and private initiatives. Concerning school education, federal and state server, Elixier for example (www.bildungserver.de/elixier/), play an important role.

The execution of spot checks have shown that some of these platforms have Open Educational Resources in their portfolio but only in very small numbers, and even less for adult learning purposes. Examples like zum.de, which offers all of its content under a creative commons licence, are very rare. In addition, OER seem to be not sufficiently marked as such and are not provided with the relevant metadata. Therefore these resources cannot be used without reservation and cannot be found via common search engines. Educational professionals also criticize the lack of available resources in German.

Due to the lack of experience of educational professionals and institutions in working with OER, a general statement concerning quality cannot be made. However, many interviewees seem to be suspicious concerning the quality of open content. Being asked the question for quality criteria, most of them stated that a known and reputable source is an important indicator. One manager of an adult learning provider states that they have a system in place according to which they assess the resources they use, no matter if they are open or not.

3.4. Barriers and drivers for the use of OER

Barriers to the use of OER evolve around the following strongly associated points:

First of all, there is a **lack of basic information** concerning Open Educational Resources and Open Educational Practices. The majority of actors in adult learning are not yet familiar with the terms in use and the benefits deriving from them.

Strongly connected to this lack of basic information is the fact that many actors of adult education are reluctant to participate in Open Education. If we look at education practitioners there still seems to be a considerable **lack of an “open educational culture”**. They have to be willing to release the content they produce and the responsibility linked with it. But many only see that they have to “give up sovereign rights”, and the benefit of having the opportunity to use someone else’s resource in order to mix, create and develop it further is being overlooked.

The state of the art of the **quantity of Open Educational Resources online** is another barrier. Interviewees criticise that, at the moment, it takes too much time to search for reliable open content online and to adapt it for their own purposes (*“In the meantime I could have produced material myself”*).

One more barrier concerns economic aspects. In adult education in particular, learning providers, trainers, auditing agencies for specific certificates, and publishers have a strong business interest in selling content, and therefore controlling resources. But also specific learning formats of trainers and institutions are part of their business concept, which, as a result, they do not want to share with their competitors. Sustainable **business models**, which consider Open Educational Resources and Practices, **are missing**.

Furthermore, there is **no considerable support from public authorities** concerning the uptake of this topic in adult learning. Also, the **adult learning scene is very diverse and heterogeneous**, compared to school and higher education, and therefore difficult to grasp. Any attempt to find general supportive structures or frameworks that could lead to a broad implementation of Open Educational Practices is not an easy task.

Drivers for the use of OER are threefold:

Firstly, the **increasing implementation of new didactical methodologies and open learning practices** leads to a natural demand for Open Educational Resources. Interviewees that have already tackled the issue of creative commons licences, for example, clearly express their appreciation of a legal solution concerning the topic of copyrights.

Secondly, values concerning **social responsibility** that derive from Open Education are recognized by actors. In particular by those, for which these values play a paramount role compared to business interests (e.g. state and church supported institutions).

And finally, **positive economic aspects**: In terms of marketing, for example, the benefits of the modern and innovative image of Open Educational Practices play an important role, as well as the opportunities for an extensive brand communication, which has been stated by some interviewees.

4. Conclusions and recommendations for the OERup! training package

4.1. Need for training and recommendations for training content

The need analysis shows that there is a definite need for training addressing educational practitioners and activities to raise awareness for policy and decision makers. Well directed training and activities may ensure the uptake of OER and OEP on a sustainable, nationwide and long term basis, by pointing out the added value of Open Education, by providing the relevant tools and skills to reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute OER in a very practical way, and by provoking a sense of entrepreneurship and project development for Open Educational Practices.

The training should cover the following **basic information** and **practical advice** concerning Open Educational Resources and Open Educational Practices.

- What does 'open' stand for? What is the definition of 'resources' or 'practices' in this context?

Educational practitioners but also institution managers and educational policy makers need to be aware of the meaning of the terms in use, its scope and the philosophy behind it. The material and information for this very basic but crucial knowledge can easily be used from the higher education and school education sector, where it has already been gathered. Approaches where OER and OEP provide a clear added value in new teaching and learning methodologies need to be introduced.

- Where do I find open resources and how do I identify them?

The training content needs to provide information on existing repositories with reputable resources, but also point out sources where open content as elements for educational resources can be found (e.g. pictures, icons, audio files, etc.). Furthermore, participants of

the training have to be informed about the different open licences, and learn how to assess the usability of the resources they find.

- How do I label my own resources according to the parameters of OER?

In order to ensure that more good quality OER circulate, training participants need to learn how to produce, reuse and further develop OER. This includes the following training elements: how to select and use suitable open licences, how to equip all resources with relevant metadata, and how to ensure accessibility (e.g. usability concerning different devices, formats, and languages).

In addition, the training needs to **emphasize success stories** of Open Educational Resources and Practices in adult learning. Besides pointing out some of these success stories, activities and the execution of the training should contain strong elements of openness, so participants could have an immediate experience of the benefits of sharing.

Furthermore, and most specifically for a training concerning practitioners on adult learning, the **development of new business models** that include OER in a sustainable manner needs to be support within the training. Participants have to be equipped with tools (guidelines, project plans, etc.), methodologies (stakeholder analysis, etc.), and first ideas that help them to develop their own OEP. Again, experiences already made in higher education, for example, should be made use of.

Since most OER are digital, media savvy could be included in the training to some extend as well. In addition, it is important that all tools, or platforms that are being introduced for the production of OER and OEP, meet the needs and abilities of adult education practitioners.

Finally, the training needs to spotlight relevant forums, communities or platforms, where future developments concerning OER and OEP are being discussed, for anyone interested in the topic to stay informed.

4.2. Format of the training and ways of organizing learning

Interviewees preferred a blended learning approach consisting of:

- flexible web-based units with mostly informational content
- face to face working sessions to share experiences and developing ideas and strategies for OEPs (mostly interesting for people working in the same context)

In terms of sequence and emphasis, prospective participants ask for a large part of expert input, which needs to be given before any collaborative exchange of experience or practical

group work can be done. The adaptation and integration of learning input into their individual context needs to be piloted over a longer period of time.

5. A few more thoughts beyond the OERup! training package

OER for adult learning purposes is currently produced by individual engaged teachers and initiatives only. The development and implementation of Open Educational Practices or the uptake of Open Educational Resources on a broader level is not in sight. At this stage, adult learning is clearly behind the approaches of school and higher education in Germany.

At this point, raising awareness with information and emphasize on best practices envisages to be the most sensible next steps. Developing and implementing new business models play as much of an important role in this regard as teaching practitioners how to find, produce, and develop open content. While trainings may provide basic skills through expert input, small personal experiences of collaborative working and the use of digital tools, among colleagues, with learners or other institutions, should not be underestimated. These experiences leave lasting impressions of the benefits of openness and sharing and have a strong effect on people.

The heterogeneity and diversity of adult learning actors demand a strong approach covering a great variety of multipliers, if Open Educational Practices are supposed to be implemented in a sustainable and effective way. On the one hand, progress concerning general essential issues, such as quality assurance and legal aspects, can only be reached by the unity of the OER community as a whole. On the other hand, structural challenges in the sector of adult learning may also need a political will. Either way, experiences made in other sectors, like higher education, or concerning similar topics, like the open access or Open Education debate in general, should be shared and made use of.

For further information on OERup!, please check out our website: www.oerup.eu

And join our google+ community to exchange experience as well as information on relevant initiatives, studies, or platforms: plus.google.com/u/0/communities/109090515452084003343

Bibliography

(in alphabetical order)

- **Albers et al. (Free Education Alliance)**, “How to strengthen Open Educational Resources” Position Paper, February 2015 (http://buendnis-freie-bildung.de/files/2015/03/Paper_BFB_Feb_2015_final_EN.pdf)
- **Blees et al.** „Handlungsfelder, Akteure und Entwicklungsoptionen offener Bildungsressourcen in internationaler Perspektive“, Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF): Frankfurt am Main 2013 (http://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2013/7868/pdf/DBS_2013_OER.pdf)
- **Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF)**, „Bericht der Arbeitsgruppe aus Vertreterinnen und Vertretern der Länder und des Bundes zu Open Educational Resources (OER)“, January 2015 (http://www.bildungsserver.de/pdf/Bericht_AG_OER_2015-01-27.pdf)
- **Dobusch, Leonhard et al.** „Open Education in Berlin: Benchmark und Potentiale“, Technologie Stiftung Berlin: 2014 (http://www.technologiestiftung-berlin.de/fileadmin/daten/media/publikationen/140514_Studie_OER.pdf)
- **Esken, Saskia** (MdB) press release „Digitale Bildung wird im Haushalt erhöht“, Der Deutsche Bundestag: 2014 (<https://netzpolitik.org/wp-upload/PM-Esken.pdf>)
- **Kreutzer, Till** „Open Educational Resources (OER), OpenContent und Urheberrecht“, Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF): Frankfurt am Main 2013 (http://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2013/8008/pdf/Kreutzer_2013_OER_Recht.pdf)
- **Ziedorn et al.** “Metadaten für Open Educational Resources (OER). Eine Handreichung für die öffentliche Hand, erstellt von der Technischen Informationsbibliothek (TIB)“, Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF): Frankfurt am Main 2013 (http://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2013/8024/pdf/TIB_2013_Metadaten_OER.pdf)

Web links (in order of mentioning):

- www.opencontent-bw.de [01.04.2015]
- www.lmz-bw.de/bildungsbuendnis-open-content.html#c7804 [15.03.2015]
- de.wikiversity.org/wiki/Schultrojaner [01.04.2015]
- werkstatt.bpb.de/ [01.04.2015]
- www.idea-space.eu [01.04.2015]
- www.iwm-kmrc.de [01.04.2015]
- www.e-teaching.org [01.04.2015]
- <http://www.bildungsserver.de/elixier/> [01.04.2015]

Legal Notice



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

This work has been funded with support from the European Commission. It reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Annex I

A selection of relevant platforms and initiatives

open-educational-resources.de

Gathering information and material around OER with national focus Germany.

Author: Jöran Muuß-Meerholz

[zugehOERt! - the OER podcast](https://open-educational-resources.de/kategorie/podcasts/)

Episodes focusing on one field of work, a specific question or project in the world of school education, higher education, further education, or the “The Great Wide Open”.

(open-educational-resources.de/kategorie/podcasts/)

werkstatt.bpb.de

With a great variety of different topics and projects, run by the Federal Agency for Civic Education Germany, the future of digitalization in education is being researched, piloted, and discussed.

Examples: OER digital spreadsheet (werkstatt.bpb.de/2014/12/virtuelles-arbeitsblatt/), ebook on the use of OER (werkstatt.bpb.de/ebook-oer/)

[buendnis-freie-bildung.de - The Free Education Alliance \(BFB\)](https://buendnis-freie-bildung.de)

The BFB is a coalition of organizations and individuals with the common goal of establishing and promoting OER in politics and society. It was founded on the initiative of Creative Commons Deutschland, Open Knowledge Foundation Deutschland and Wikimedia Deutschland.

e-teaching.org

A platform run by the Knowledge Media Research Center (Tübingen, Baden-Württemberg) providing information around OER and partner in a variety of projects, such as the online course on OER #COER13 (www.coer13.de)

[OER Conference 13/14](https://wikimedia.de/wiki/OERde14)

Conference on the status quo and future of OER in Germany, initiated by Wikimedia Deutschland (wikimedia.de) in 2013 and 2014 (wikimedia.de/wiki/OERde14)

serlo.org

OER for mathematics (mainly addressing students)

netzebilden.de

OER learning modules on the topic Web 2.0

[OER-Trainernetz](https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/110841886248051752353)

Google+ community to exchange information on OER for adult education practitioners

<https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/110841886248051752353>

edu-sharing.net

Edu-sharing is an open source software for educational practitioners providing a technical

infrastructure for Open Educational Practices, including content and document management as well as tools for authors and search options for content. The edu-sharing network coordinates and fosters the development of this software and informs about OER.

edutags.de

Social bookmarking and tagging tool of the German education server.

L3T.eu

First German text book on e-teaching and learning with an OER license, by Sandra Schön and Martin Ebner, published by BIMS e.V.

For further information on OERup!, please check out our website: www.oerup.eu

and join our google+ community to exchange experience as well as information on relevant initiatives, studies, or platforms: plus.google.com/u/0/communities/109090515452084003343

