

# Usage of grey literature in open archives: state of the art and empirical results<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

*The purpose of our communication is to present first results from a current research on the development and usage of open archives in France. This study aims to gain empirical insight in usage patterns of freely available scientific items deposited in open archives, especially of non-commercial material, e.g. grey literature, mostly not distributed through other channels. We present a state of the art of published empirical data, standardization, research projects etc., together with a survey on the development and the usage of French open archives, based on open source methods and investigation.*

*The usage of grey literature in open archives is a recent field of professional and scientific interest. So far, little has been published on usage of open archives, and even less, on usage of deposited grey literature. Nevertheless, there are some promising new initiatives and projects and first empirical data. Our communication will combine review, quantitative and qualitative survey data and case study in order to provide a realistic insight into this emerging field.*

*Expected results: Empirical data allowing for first comparison between different archives and document types. Awareness on the scientific but also professional and economic interest of these data. A contribution to standardization (recommendations on data production, delivery and analysis).*

## 1. Introduction

Grey literature represents a substantial part of the scientific production (Schöpfel & Farace, 2009). Since the Seventh International Conference on Grey Literature at Nancy in 2006, the GreyNet community intensified its research activities on the impact of the open access movement on the grey literature.

The purpose of this communication is to provide a follow-up study to our 2008 evaluation on the integration of grey literature in French open archives (Schöpfel & Stock, 2009) that described "a landscape in movement", with a significant increase of university institutional repositories supported by the academic consortium COUPERIN.

We considered that "the impact of grey material (...) in open archives is real and will stay", with an overall part of 17% of the deposited items. On the other hand, our survey revealed three major problems:

"(1) Policy statements need improvement. Often, the strategy and positioning of repositories are not explicit or simply missing.

(2) Especially grey items in open archives need improved bibliographic control. Compared to traditional cataloguing standards, metadata for grey material are less specific or again, simply missing. This is a problem for referencing, efficient search strategies and evaluation.

(3) Mostly wanted are detailed usage statistics on access and download of documents and other items in open archives."

The 2009 follow-up study surveys data on the development of the archives, e.g. evolution of deposits, and investigates usage statistics. The GL11 communication provides preliminary results from ongoing empirical and statistical analyses.

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