Transformative Agreements – Stairway to Heaven or Highway to Hell?
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Fact: Transformative agreements (TAs) increase the share of articles published open access (OA)

Fear: TAs are a threat to fully OA publishers
Fear: TAs with big publishers are a threat to small publishers
Hope: TAs will help transform subscription-based business models into OA

Method
• Publication output of Germany (D), Austria (A), and Switzerland (CH) from 2015 to 2020 taken as basis (Web of Science, corresponding author publications from the respective countries)
• Output grouped according to country, publisher, and publication year
• Publishers associated with one of the groups “Gold OA”, “TA”, or “Subscription” (per year and country); information about TAs extracted from the ESAC Registry

Results
• Varying increase in all publications (total), Ø 3.4%
• Increase in subscriptions was similar to total but smaller, with a decrease of 4.2% in 2020
• TAs saw a large increase in 2016 (Austria only), after which increase was slightly smaller than total
• Gold OA saw a considerable increase, Ø 19.4%, outperforming all other business models
• Combined share of Elsevier, Springer Nature, and Wiley decreased from 40.2% to 37.1%
• Share of fully OA journals at Springer Nature decreased from 2017 (21.1%) to 2022 (19.4%)

DACH countries: Annual change in number of publications for different business models