Preface

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The Center for Open Education Research (COER) is an international research consortium, that was established in 2018 in order to increase international collaborative research projects, furthering innovation and understanding in the areas of open education, educational technology, lifelong learning, and international education.

At a meeting in September 2019, hosted by Maltepe University in Istanbul, the COER Group agreed that "open education in the context of higher education refers to a set of educational practices, in which the notion of access is complex and has broadened over time, from the initial understanding of it relating only to university entrance. Such efforts are supported by a variety of media, learning materials, assessments, tools, and systems to provide flexible learning opportunities" (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2020, p. 320).

Open Educational Resources (OER) are a constituent element of open education and open educational practices. OER has flourished globally over the last two decades, enjoying funding from prestigious organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In many countries, supporting infrastructures have been established for the distribution of digital learning materials as OER. Now with the global Covid-19 pandemic, the sharing of digital content for teaching and learning that has been created in times of emergency online teaching and beyond, the topic of OER has gained additional importance.

The aim of a research project as part of a wider project on distributed learning infrastructures for OER and digital learning content in higher education (EduArc), coordinated by Professor Michael Kerres (Learning Lab, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany), was to provide an overview and comparison of the international developments of OER. The project was funded from October 2018 to March 2022 by the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF, Grant 16DHB2129).

By using the macro, meso, and micro (3M-)Framework outlined by Zawacki-Richter (2009) and Zawacki-Richter and Bozkurt (2022), COER members from Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, South Korea, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, and the USA explored issues of OER on the three levels:

1. questions about national policies and frameworks for the design of a cross-university (national) infrastructure for the dissemination of OER (macro-level),
2. issues related to the provision of OER in higher education institutions, e.g. technical and support infrastructure, professional development, and quality assurance (meso level), and
3. questions about the creation and use of OER in higher education teaching and learning, and their sharing between faculty members (micro-level).

This book is a collection of the full country reports and working papers created by the COER members from the countries that were included in the study. Cross-comparative analysis of the country studies are also published in a series of journal articles: *Open Praxis* (macro-level), *Open Education Studies* (meso-level), and *Research and Practice in Technology Enhanced Learning* (micro-level) - see Marín et al. (2020), Marín et al. (2022a), and Marín et al. (2022b).

I would like to express my gratitude to Victoria I. Marín who played a leading role in coordinating the international comparison study in the EduArc research project, and to our distinguished COER members for their dedicated contribution to this book and the journal publications. Furthermore, I thank Laura N. Peters for the editing and preparation of the manuscript for publication in the EdTech Books Series and Beate Grojsman for her support in editing the country reports.

I hope that this volume will be helpful for practitioners, administrators, and researchers, who wish to gain a solid overview of international developments in OER.

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August, 2022

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