



## All you can read – and more

*Everyday needed, little understood: The critical link in the supply chain of scientific production is ... the library. When library services are down, science comes to a standstill. How is digitization transforming our library? Are internet sources the end of the traditional library? The chief librarian, **Edeltraud Haas**, discusses the latest trends and looks into the mechanics of the future library.*



### **How many books are there on the shelves of the HSG library? Is nowadays everything available on the E-reader? What is the trend?**

Our collection consists of 550'000 printed books and journal volumes (240'000 located in an external storage), 170'000 e-books and 46'000 e-journal titles. The trend clearly goes towards electronic resources with remote access (24/7 from all over the world) for members of our university. Still, not everything is available electronically, as some publishers either do not offer an electronic form or, if they do, the pricing is prohibitively high. Yet, the "library as a place" is continuing to be in high demand, not just during exam preparation. We are continually striving to optimize our study space and improve the quality of our learning environment, often with input from our students ([Speaking Wall](#)).

### **Students and professors like to click on the journal websites and working paper series to access the latest research. How is the library involved in this?**

Providing electronic access to literature is one of the core tasks of our library. Many steps are involved: from negotiating / licensing with publishers up to integrating electronic content in our finding tools, e.g. our discovery service [Metasearch](#) or the [Electronic Journal Library](#). If you should be running into trouble finding specific information or documents, you can contact the library's [Search & Find](#) service that will help to locate and access these.

### **Are students still coming to the library when all is available on the internet? What other services does the library offer? Is it simply a hot meeting place?**

The library is one of the central hubs on campus, not just due to its location. We are providing a quiet study and learning environment that is rather popular. In addition,



during exam preparation, even if you are mainly learning on your own, you are not alone in this. Preparing becomes some sort of a social “event”.

We are offering much more than just content and learning space: you can consult our experts if you cannot find the information you need. Furthermore, we are offering a range of additional services: courses for improving the quality of your research, support for reference management, research data management, open access publishing, the academic writing helpdesk (in collaboration with the university’s writing lab) – to name just a few.

**Is the HSG library a big one, or rather small compared to others? Is being big an advantage? Are you worried about rising costs when the university CEO talks all the time about cost cutting?**

Compared to major universities, we would be perceived as small. If you compare us with business schools like INSEAD, then we are much bigger, e.g. with the amount of content and services that we provide. Moreover, our collection has a natural focus in management and economics. In this area, we are among the leading libraries in Europe. By library benchmarking numbers, we have a lean structure.

Given budget limits, we try to provide access to as much content and data as possible. The cost for e-journals and databases is constantly rising and the hunger for data is growing exponentially. This often means balancing between the desirable and the feasible. New forms of publishing like Open Access may alleviate some of the financial burden in the long term. Still, budget cuts could well mean that we would have to reduce our portfolio of available content and our services for academia, researchers, students and the public.

**What is your most preferred place in the library? What is your favorite private reading? Is it a traditional book or is it on your E-reader?**

My favorite place in the library is standing under the cupola. If you look up, you perceive it as a round structure, still knowing that – while looking at it from the outside – it is in the shape of a pyramid. Personally, I prefer printed books. The haptic experience with an e-reader is just not comparable.

For more information visit <https://biblio.unisg.ch> and see the [film](#) about the library.