

Transfer Workshop European Perspectives on Rare Disciplines, 02.11.2023

Mapping of „Kleine Fächer“ in Germany

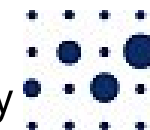
Katharina Haas, Annemarie Deser, Uwe Schmidt

Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer
Zentrum für Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung (ZQ),
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz

Contact: kleinefaecher@uni-mainz.de;
Website: www.kleinefaecher.de



Project "French-German model mapping of rare disciplines" (2018-2023) funded by



Volkswagen**Stiftung**

What we are going to talk about ...

- A bit of context: Germany and HE-politics
- Our office: who we are and what we do
- How we define (small) disciplines
- Small disciplines in Germany
- Requirements for mapping small disciplines

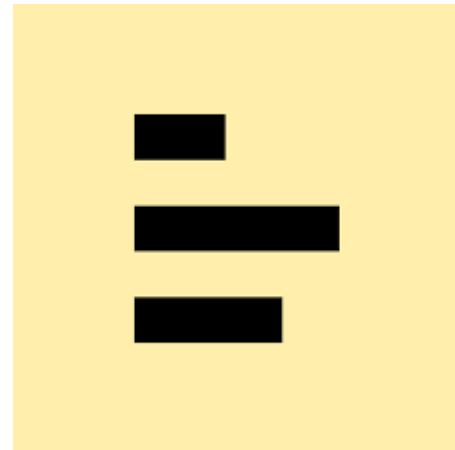
German higher education system

- Federalism
- Autonomy of higher education institutions
- Unity of research and teaching
- Different types of higher education institutions



„Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer“

The German Office for
Research on Small Disciplines



“Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer” Office for Research on Small Disciplines

Service and Research institution established in 2012 at Johannes Gutenberg- University Mainz (JGU)

– Led by

- Prof. Dr. Uwe Schmidt
(Professor of research on higher education)
- Dr. Katharina Bahlmann

- **Affiliation:** Center for Quality Assurance and Development (ZQ)
-> Expertise in university research and science management



“Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer” Office for Research on Small Disciplines

- **Long term funded through:**
 - Ministry of Science, Continuing Education and Culture of Rhineland-Palatinate (MWWK)
 - Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU)
- **Partner:** Digital Academy, Mainz Academy of Sciences and Literature (AdW), Prof. Torsten Schrade and Team

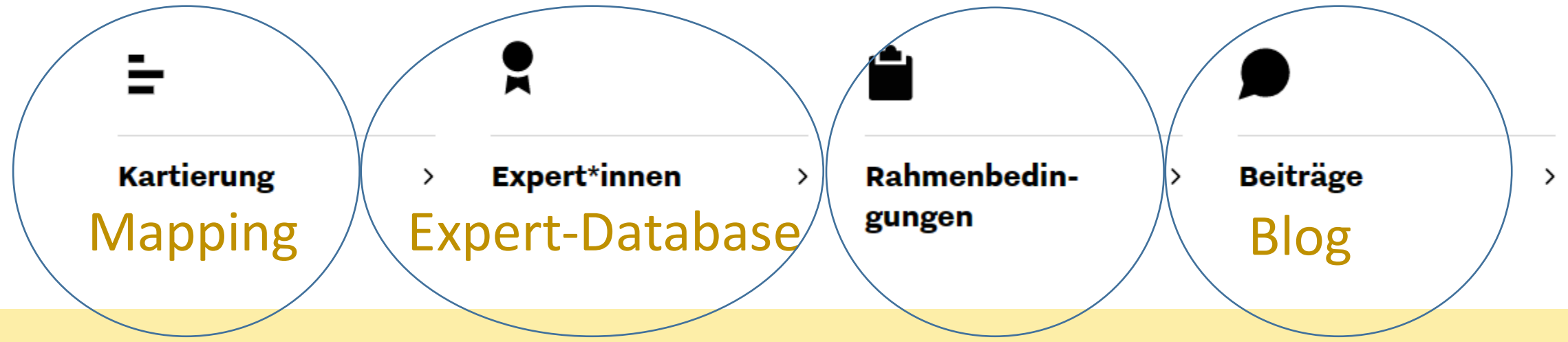


Activities, aims and tasks

Mapping of “Kleine Fächer” at German universities /
Progress reports

– Increase of visibility

- Database for structural and profile development planning (university)
- Starting point for disciplinary and interdisciplinary networking (scientific community)
- Detection of potentials and threat situations (higher education system)



STAATLICHE UNIVERSITÄTEN
Kleine Fächer

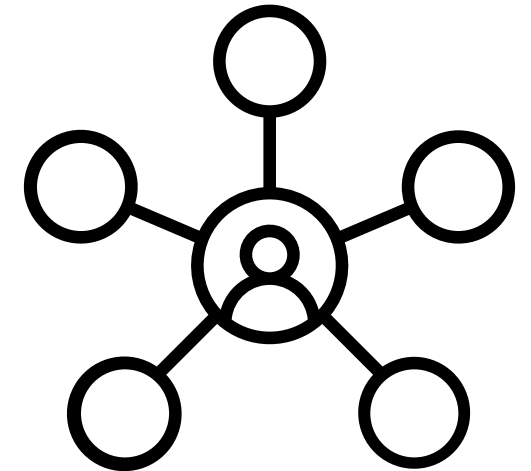
Higher Education Professuren
Parameters and Funding

163

2372

Activities, aims and tasks

- Exchange of perspectives and ideas in accompanying workshops
- Consulting services (upon request)
- Research
- Science communication



Third-party funded projects



- **Study on “Dynamics of small disciplines”** funded by the BMBF (2019-2023)



- **“French-German model mapping of rare disciplines; Germany”** funded by Volkswagen Foundation (2018-2023)



- **“Exchanging experience, networking & increasing the visibility of rare disciplines”**, funded by the BMBF (Development of the Online Portal Kleine Fächer etc.) (2017-2019)



- **Study on internationalization processes of small disciplines**, funded by the BMBF (2014-2016)

How we define
(small) disciplines

To qualify as “small”...

...a discipline should have no more than a
maximum of three professorships per HEI

(two exceptions on a national level)

Example

Egyptology

is located at **13 German universities** and at each with one to three professorships (as of 2022).



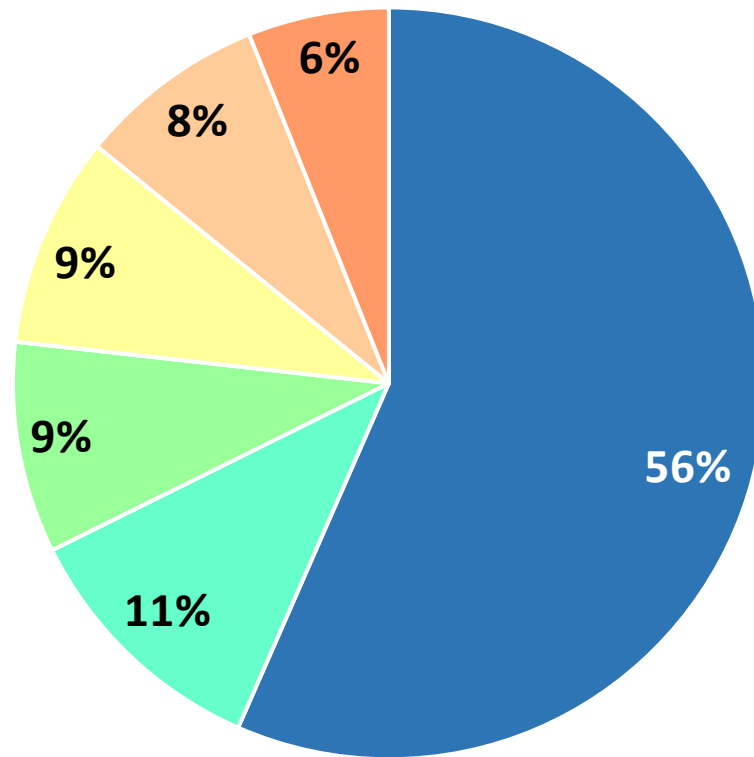
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To qualify as “discipline”...

1. ... is understood by the professors of the respective scientific branch as an autonomous discipline (**disciplinary self-concept**).
2. ... is represented by a national or international **scientific society**.
3. ... has a **designated medium of communication**, such as a national or an international scientific journal.
4. ... is represented by **designated professorships** at German HEIs.
5. ... is represented in **specific study programs** at German HEIs.

„Kleine Fächer“
in Germany



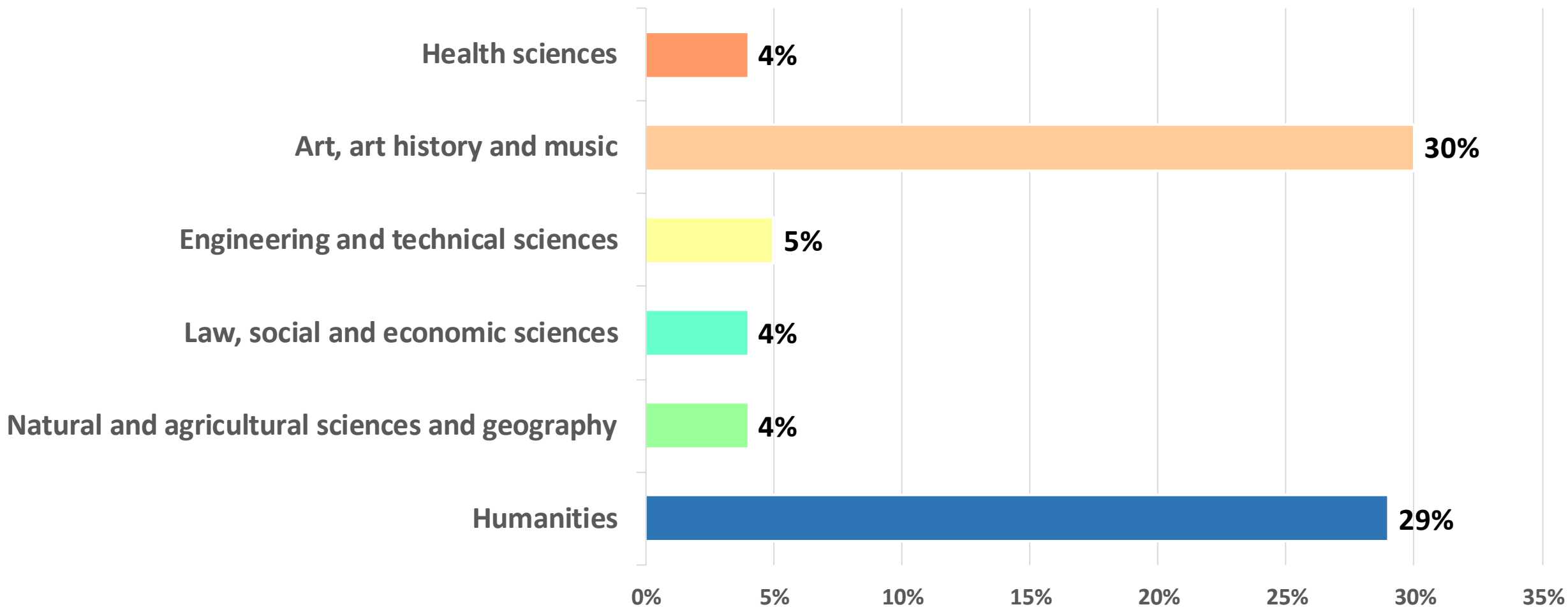
- Humanities
- Law, social and economic sciences
- Natural and agricultural sciences and geography
- Engineering and technical sciences
- Art, art history and music
- Health sciences

Distribution of 163 Kleine Fächer according to disciplinary culture

Source: Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer, December 2022

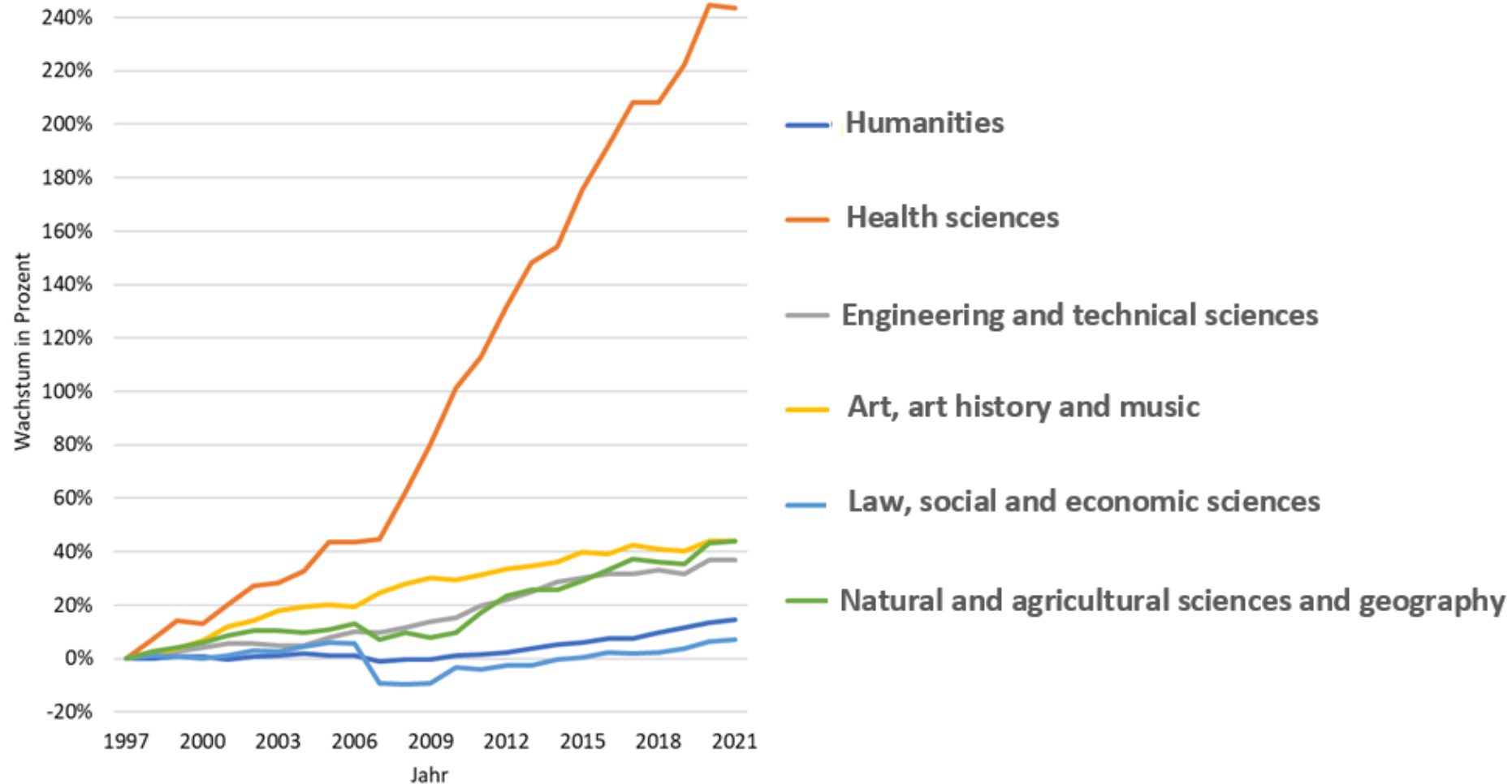
Proportion of professorships of small disciplines in total number of professorships per disciplinary culture in % 2021

Arbeitsstelle
Kleine Fächer



Source: Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer, December 2022, Statistisches Bundesamt 2022,
N (small disciplines) = 2.328, N (all disciplines) = 25.499

Growth of professorships in Kleine Fächer by disciplinary culture since 1997



Source: Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer 2021 Own representation.

Development of Small Disciplines 2007 to 2022

– „classical“ universities only –

Increasing (No. of Prof.) - Top 3

- German as a Foreign Language (+35)
- Digital Humanities (+32,5)
- Health Service Research (+22,8)

Decreasing (No. of Prof.) - Top 3

- Crystallography (-13)
- Mineralogy (-9)
- Indo-Germanic Studies (-7)

→ Many relatively young, small disciplines, are growing strongly

→ 38 out of 163 of the small disciplines have a negative balance

Source: <https://www.kleinefaecher.de/kartierung/kleine-faecher-von-a-z.html>, Zugriff am 22.05.2023

Requirements for mapping rare disciplines

Requirements for mapping „Kleine Fächer“

History: Topic „Kleine Fächer“ with a long tradition in Germany

Statistics: General Statistics on Higher Education do not show suitable categories for many rare discipline

How are rare disciplines determined? Mapping is not complete or closed: Proposals from scholars for new entries are reviewed by Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer; involvement of scholars through preliminary discussions with proposers and a self-perception survey; in addition, disciplines that have become "large" are excluded.

What is mapped? Permanent professorships are mapped; initially limited to university locations; project-related expansion of mapping to include higher education institutions of other types since 2019

Requirements for mapping “Kleine Fächer”

- Secure Commitment (Data quality, Data protection)
- Operational challenges
- Keeping up to development of the scientific system

Future vision and challenge

- Connecting European countries

Thank you for your attention!

Please contact us for further or in case of any questions

➤ **Arbeitsstelle Kleine Fächer**

Prof. Dr. Uwe Schmidt and team,

kleinefaecher@uni-mainz.de,

www.kleinefaecher.de (in German)