

Consortia Enterprises, Alliances and Partnerships

Another View from Europe : Germany

Last year in the beginning of December the Second European Conference of the International Coalition of Library Consortia took place in Berlin. I was asked to present a country report belonging to the German experiences. My talk was the last one and the starting time 7 p.m. short time before dinner.

At least one person of all the listeners was not exhausted, tired and/or almost sleeping : our moderator of the today afternoon Tommaso Giordano. Hopefully his attention and not his tiredness was the reason to ask me at the end of January to contribute to this session with a paper on library consortia in Germany. So again we are late in the afternoon and I hope you have saved some attention to listen to a rough and not very detailed overview about consortial experiences in Germany.

First let me show you, where I'm coming from (Fig.1) : My town Siegen and with it my University is placed in North Rhine-Westphalia, a fact that sometimes is not known even by colleagues in Germany. Why it might be important to which of the federal states a university belongs will be explained afterwards. Siegen is to be found near the Hessen and Rheinland-Pfalz border, and what is important for me and my staff, we are a university which is far away from the next one in North Rhine-Westphalia the University of Cologne as there are concentrating processes in this state with respect to the universities. As many or perhaps all of you visited the Frankfurt Book Fair the one or other time it's marked in the small map too.

With respect to our topic "CONSORTIA" it's necessary to give some remarks about the meaning of FEDERAL for Germany (Fig. 2). The 16 states (three of them consist of only one city) that constitute the Federal Republic of Germany are particularly independent and responsible within the fields of Culture, Education and Research. One consequence out of this is the funding of the Universities and the Fachhochschulen, nowadays named Universities of Applied Science and grew out of Polytechnics. They are all funded for the regular part by the single federal states. Of course they all try to raise extra funds especially for research projects from private and commercial companies as well as from the German Science Foundation or comparable institutions.

The Statistical Yearbook of the Federal Republic for the year 2000 shows that we have 94 Universities with about 1.3 Million Students and about 172.000 FTE's of Scientific Staff. Within North Rhine-Westphalia there are 16 universities including the German Sports University, one distant university and one private university. In addition there are 12 Fachhochschulen. We have to serve 400.000 students in the universities and furthermore 92.000 in the Fachhochschulen. The greatest university (perhaps in Germany) is to be found in Cologne with 60.000 students the smallest one is at Siegen with 10.000 students.

In the seventies of the last century cataloguing cooperatives or if you like consortia grew up. Nowadays (Fig. 3) there exist SIX cooperatives which are no longer limited in their activities to the cataloguing business. Often these cooperatives are germ cells for consortia. Looking at the map you can see, that Bavaria is the only cooperative which consists of one state only.

Looking at the existing consortial landscape in Germany you will find a great variety of organizational models. There is only one – in the language of German lawyers - real Consortium : The Friedrich-Althoff-Consortium in Berlin-Brandenburg is the only one with a legal entity. The others are more or less purchasing cooperatives which are represented in negotiations and where the organizational work is done by central institutions like the Bavarian State Library in Munich or staff groups like the Working Group Electronic Journals and Databases North Rhine-Westphalia. Sometimes for example in Baden-Württemberg a single university library does the negotiating for all

others for a special product. Up to now very often the negotiations are done for the libraries of one federal state. Sometimes there are agreements for all universities within one of the federal states. In most cases the signed agreements are only for those institutions who are willing to pay for. There are no NATIONAL licences till now and for the near future.

Fig. 4 shows two things. First, some and of course not all publishers, where consortial agreements exist. On the other hand it indicates that there are now agreements that do not stop at borders. The slash between the states in the second line with Academic Press indicates that in this case 13 libraries out of these three federal states of Germany came together to build up this consortium, which started officially on Jan. 1st 2001. Where the slash is given, it indicates such cooperations.

Some remarks belonging to the Elsevier Consortia: as this has some importance for Germany for the one or other reason : The first consortial agreement in Germany was signed in 1997 with Elsevier by eight North Rhine-Westphalian libraries. It was valid for the years 1997 to 1999 and was extended for all universities and for the year 2000 at a flat rate. An agreement for 2001 was impossible.

After the failure of the negotiations for North Rhine-Westphalia as a consortium, in February this year a proposal was made by Elsevier that shows a relevant new aspect, which may appear with other publishers in a similar way in the future. The proposal meets more and suits more to the wishes of an individual library who can choose bundles of their own need, but there is no more a consortial cross access as we are used to it.

The great problem still in this proposal was and is that the libraries have to guarantee the turnover for a certain period and accept a price increase of a certain degree each year what is almost impossible for most of the libraries. By budget circumstances the libraries in North Rhine Westphalia were forced to cancel more than 2500 journal subscriptions 1999, a worth of about 4 Million Deutsche Mark, with a great part belonging to Elsevier journals. Again in the year 2000 many journal subscriptions and as far as I know again a lot of Elsevier-subscriptions had to be cancelled. In these two years the turnover for Elsevier as a single publisher had to be diminished by somewhat between 2 and 3 Million Deutsche Mark.

So now there are four existing agreements, in Bremen (ending in 2001), Hessen (with an end in 2002), the Friedrich-Althoff-Konsortium (till 2001) and the last one was signed in December 2000 for the years 2001 to 2003 for the Bavarian libraries. Within North Rhine-Westphalia some few libraries are negotiating for their own purposes with Elsevier for 2002.

Another remark belongs to Blackwell/Munksgaard. Here we decided for the first time to build up only two consortia in Germany. May be there will be more of this kind in the future.

Fig. 5 shows some few examples of consortia with regard to databases, in most cases bibliographic databases. The last line "Web of Science" shows the biggest existing German consortium which brings together libraries out of seven states.

Perhaps we will have a consortium with participants from nearly all states very soon : As there are new conditions since last year coming from the American Psychological Association for the use of PSYCINFO, which are prohibitive for many institutions in Germany, the Friedrich-Althoff-Konsortium is now looking for a solution by negotiating for more than 40 research libraries.

Why it is important in which of the federal states a university is located is shown here by the funding or not-funding of the consortial costs. Until now there are only a few of the federal states who spend some special extra funding for electronic products (Baden-Württemberg [just for databases], Bayern, Hessen and Nordrhein-Westfalen). In part it is meant only for a start-up, others can hope for an

ongoing funding. Of course the amount of the central funding depends on the size of the states. So in North Rhine-Westphalia it were more than 4 Million DM, in Hessen about 1.9 Million DM in 2000.

In January 2000 the German-Austrian-Swiss-Consortia Organization GASCO was founded. It's not a consortium itself, it's more an ICOLC of these three countries. Besides a better information exchange we expect, to sum up our competences and to claim for the same formulations and perhaps prices within agreements. There are not only academic consortia in our organization, it includes as well the consortium of the Max-Planck-Institutes as it is open for consortia of public libraries.

One common aim of GASCO was and is to stop buying the complete portfolio, the bundling by the publishers. We look for agreements with a Core Collection plus a Pay-per-View part. Within North Rhine-Westphalia a first proposal of this kind was made by Springer this year. In this special case it turned out that the model did not work. The core collection was build out of those journals with the highest numbers of subscriptions together with those with the highest use. Out of usage statistics (being aware of the Springer base license for the printed subscriptions) we calculated that we would have to pay much more for the pay-per-view than the price we were asked by Springer when accepting their price for cross-access and additional access. So in this special agreement our idea gave no reasonable results. I hope it will do with other publishers or perhaps for single libraries.

If you want to learn more about consortia in Germany and other European countries I recommend to you the first issue of volume 11.2001 of the journal "LIBER quarterly" where you find papers discussing the situation in Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the UK.

Let me conclude with some personal remarks regarding to the future of electronic publishing and consortial agreements :

FIRST : The change from a printed to an electronic environment has to be done consequently by the libraries. This means to give up printed subscriptions if we offer the electronic versions - especially within the journal literature of the STM subjects. The As-Well-As is the wrong way to support the electronic way with its advantages.

SECOND : Electronic Publishing is no solution within the STM journals crisis. Here the Scientific Associations and Communities are those who can and must find ways for an accepted new way of publishing (surely - to a certain amount - apart from commercial scientific publishers - perhaps apart from libraries).

THIRD : Publishers together with libraries have to find a new basis for their business relations. It cannot be the future to look at subscription prices of the printed age to sell content in the electronic age. Journals of one or more publishers are to be handled as databases of content within the bracket AND without the bracket of the journal titles. I am sure the model of an electronic core collection plus pay-per-view will be a successful one for single libraries.

And this means

FORTH : Consortial agreements as we know them today will be a transitional phase. To buy or license the whole package of the one or other publisher can't be financed if there is no central or extra funding (what was and still is necessary in the starting phase). Consortial agreements will give the frame for the legal paragraphs of the license agreements, the relevant scientific content must be chosen by each library or university.

Let me return to the beginning and come to the end : my home city is called SIEGEN. The translation of this is "TO BE VICTORIOUS" or "TO WIN" and this reminds me and perhaps others of the so called WIN-WIN-Situation in the electronic environment. Did You find it somewhere?

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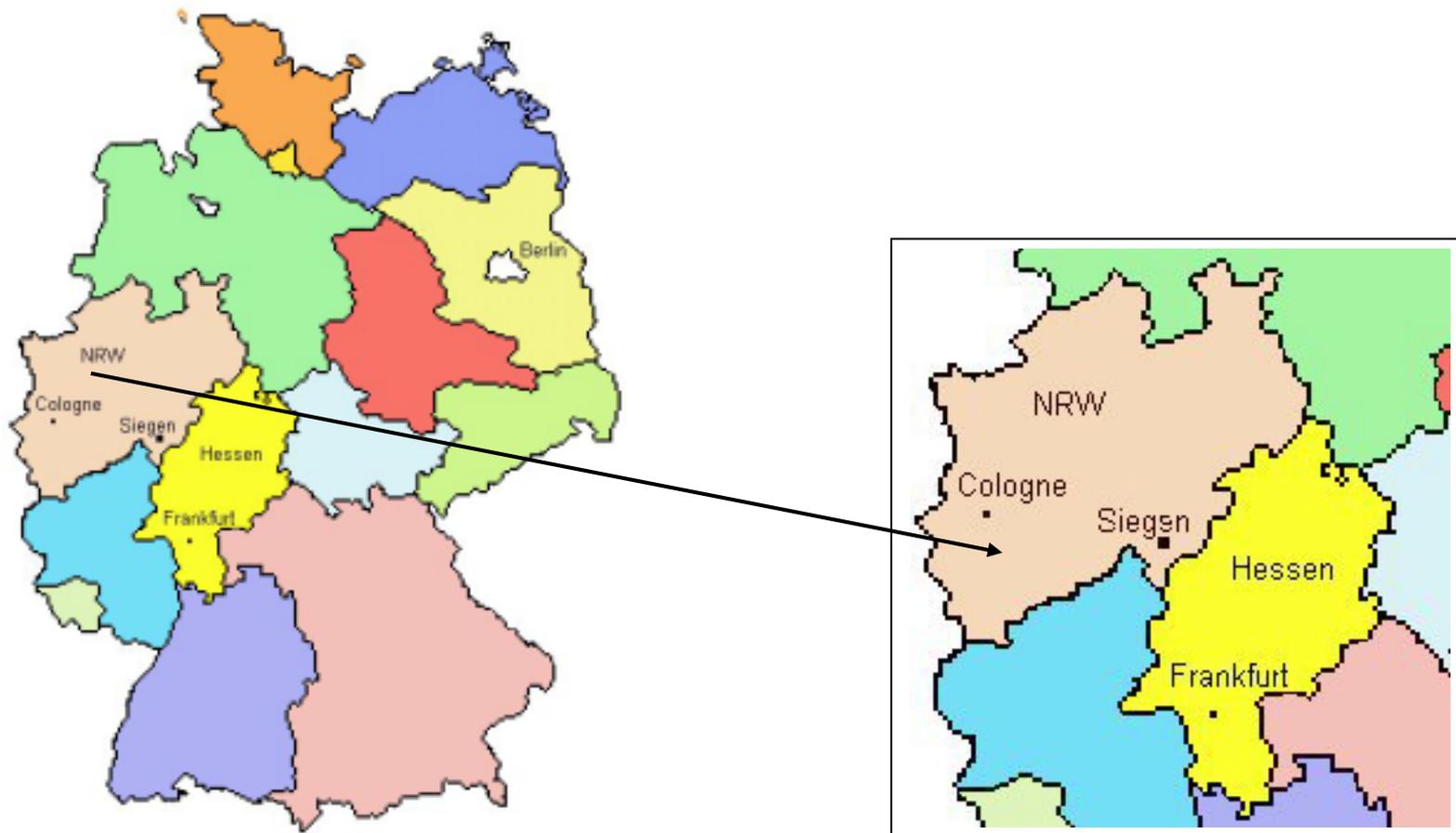
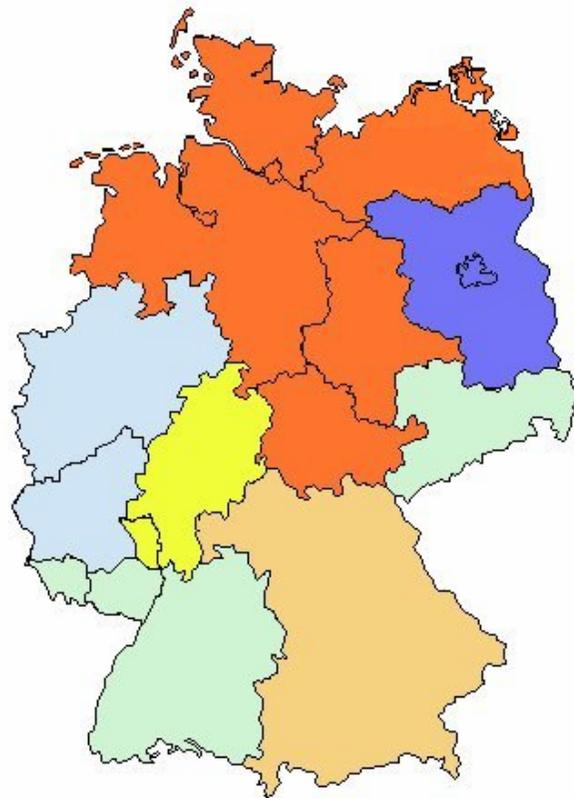


Fig. 1 : Where to find Siegen



Fig. 2 : States of the Federal Republic of Germany



-  Gemeinsamer Bibliotheksverbund
-  Hessisches Bibliotheks-Informationssystem
-  Kooperativer Bibliotheksverbund Berlin-Brandenburg
-  Bibliotheksverbund Bayern
-  Nordrhein-Westfälischer Bibliotheksverbund
-  Südwestdeutscher Bibliotheksverbund

Fig. 3 : Cataloguing Cooperatives (Consortia) in Germany



Academic Press	Bayern/Sachsen, Berlin-Brandenburg, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen/Rheinland-Pfalz/Saarland
ACS	Bayern/Sachsen/Baden-Württemberg, Berlin-Brandenburg/Bremen/Thüringen, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen
Blackwell Science/Munksgaard	Northern German Consortium (Friedrich-Althoff-Konsortium) Southern German Consortium (Bayern)
Elsevier	Bayern, Berlin-Brandenburg, Bremen, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen (until 2000)
Kluwer	Berlin-Brandenburg/Bremen/Thüringen, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen/Saarland
Springer	Nearly all states (without for example Baden-Württemberg and Bayern)

Fig. 4 : Consortial Agreements / Electronic Journals



ABI / Inform	Baden-Württemberg, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen
GBI / WISO	Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Saarland
INSPEC	Baden-Württemberg, Berlin-Brandenburg, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen
WoS / ISI	Bayern, Berlin-Brandenburg (for participants out of 7 states), Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen

Fig. 5 : Consortial Agreements / Databases (examples)