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(eds.)

Library 2007

Strategy concept

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Introduction

Germany is a knowledge society. Knowledge and information are key factors in economic prosperity and in the ability to form international connections.

The generation, provision and use of knowledge form a chain of innovation and value creation that, like any chain, is only as strong as its weakest link. How Germany organises these processes determines how it performs against international competition and also how it manages to provide equal opportunities at home – this concerns the number of patent applications and Nobel prizes just as much as it does the provision of education in educationally deprived areas. The targeted promotion and provision of reading and learning skills, or in other words the ability to gain knowledge, is just as important a factor as productive competition in universities and research institutes in the generation of new knowledge and the study of its applications.

Knowledge lives on information and on the exchange of information. Libraries are already managers of information and knowledge at all stages of an individual's learning path – in the form of public libraries or school libraries they support the child's reading skills and childish inquisitiveness; as academic libraries and special collections, they provide an important resource for research and teaching. As a whole, they support and accompany lifelong learning in various ways, from making literature and electronic media available to providing specialised information via the internet and databases.

The variety of information available in today's society is an opportunity, but the sheer amount of information can also be a hindrance – it is not without good reason that people speak of information overload. The targeted location, reliable evaluation and

competent provision of information is a job for professionals, especially when Google and Yahoo provide countless hits, and particularly when 80,000 new titles come onto the German book market every year. The ability to evaluate quality, topicality and relevance of information requires experience and expertise. Libraries have this professionalism – information management is their core competence.

Libraries in Germany fulfil their role as information providers for the public and for academia largely outside of public and political perception – their potential contribution to an improvement in education has hardly received a mention during the current debates on the essential educational reforms. In countries such as Denmark, Great Britain, Finland and the USA, on the other hand, libraries are completely integrated into the educational system and their potential is fully developed, for example as a democratic guarantor of free access to information (Denmark) or as a component in the integration of immigrants (USA).

If Germany is to reclaim a leading international position as a knowledge society and seat of education, the library system must not be omitted from the debate on reform.

The current situation in Germany dictates a clear and urgent need for concrete measures to be implemented. Particular reasons for this are:
– the failure to include libraries in reform strategies for the edu cational system;
– the lack of a comprehensive innovation and development policy for the library system;
– the significant reduction in funding for the necessary further development of public libraries.

The Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Federal Union of German Library Associations (Bundesvereinigung Deutscher Bibliotheksverbände e.V.) intend that this strategy concept should demonstrate how the German library system can become more efficient and competitive – as a strong and indispensable link in the value-creation chain of the knowledge society. At the centre of the proposals is the concept of the BEA, the Library Development Agency (BibliotheksEntwicklungsAgentur), for the national coordination and support of libraries.

"Library 2007" is based on a detailed stock-taking of the German library landscape as is, which was created in collaboration with the Institut für angewandte Sozialwissenschaft in Bonn, and on selected international examples (best practice research), which were collated by the management consultancy Booz Allen & Hamilton. On this basis, a team of library experts has developed this strategy concept. It was drawn up in consultation and agreement with major library associations and is available in a short version and a long version. Further material may be found on the project website.[1] Library professionals were kept informed throughout the course of the project.

[1] www.bibliothek2007.de

1 The aims of "Library 2007"

Libraries can make an effective contribution to quality improvement within the German education system. For this reason, current debates about the future shape of education should include insights into how libraries can be more closely involved in the necessary reforms.

This strategy concept is intended as an exploration of such insights. The primary aim of "Library 2007" is to stimulate a broad, national discussion about what libraries can achieve, between politics, business and the public. The outcomes of this discussion should support the construction of forward-looking structures in the BEA, the Library Development Agency (BibliotheksEntwicklungsAgentur), and guarantee the finances for the necessary resources.

"Library 2007" describes the most important optimisation factors. The starting point is the right of all citizens to information and sources of knowledge, which is anchored in the constitution. The recommendations of "Library 2007" are directed at political decision-makers at regional and national level, at library funding bodies, at supporting committees and institutions, as well as the responsible individuals in the libraries themselves.

Description of the optimisation factors

Awareness of the key role that libraries play within the educational system should be increased. An important aim is the increased integration of libraries into the educational system, for example through the promotion of cooperation between institutions and programmes of work aimed at educational goals. The recommendations of "Library 2007" make it possible to achieve essential improvements in education policy with relatively low financial expenditure and within a manageable period of time.

Libraries as part of education

2 The political and social benefit of libraries in Germany

Information and competition

Libraries in Germany form part of an international network of information provision. High-quality information services are a central factor for success in global competition. Germany's wealth lies in the knowledge and ability of its people. Investing in libraries means investing in our society's ability to deal with the future.

Reading and media skills

Reading and media skills, prerequisites for the acquisition of information, are key qualifications. Libraries – together with schools – play a significant role in educational policy by promoting reading and offering tailored opportunities for the development of media skills.

Lifelong learning

Libraries promote lifelong learning. They support both institutional education and non-institutional private study. Libraries are starting points for learning how to work with information and for the development of knowledge. They help individuals to find their way in everyday life and to use their leisure time creatively.

Digital divide

Particular importance is attached today to supporting the competent use of the internet and other electronic resources. Libraries offer all members of the public access to the internet and skilled support services such as introductory courses or enquiries. In this way, they are helping to bridge the divide in society between digital haves and have-nots.

Equal opportunities and free access

The need for informed citizens entails easy access to quality-guaranteed information. This means that libraries contribute to ensuring the basic constitutional right of the individual to free access to information and to equal opportunities. In order to play an active role in democracy, the public need reliable information. Libraries have a function as a neutral supplier and communicator of information in private, business and academic contexts. They give access to up-to-date media and are a professional source of information in printed and in electronic form.

Information must be organised. Libraries offer ways of coping with information overload. They process information, make it suitable for target groups and provide navigational assistance in real and virtual media environments. They acquire, index, archive and preserve printed and electronic collections of literature and information. Libraries make a significant national contribution to the publication and organisation of electronic online material in the non-commercial and academic sector.

Coping with information overload

Libraries are cultural institutions. They actively promote contact with literature and also with art and music. Libraries are meeting places, locations where communication occurs between different generations, different interest groups and different cultures, centres where people can become involved in cultural events.

Meeting places

Libraries make a contribution to the local quality of life. They are meeting places, leisure centres and inviting places to learn and work. Their importance as attractive hubs in many inner cities should not be underestimated.

There is a great deal of potential in German libraries. If they are provided with a clear remit, supportive circumstances and sufficient means, they will be in a position to greatly increase their contribution to the achievements of the vital educational infrastructure.

Neglected potential

3 The need for reform in the German library system

Comparative analysis of the German library system with other countries makes clear the need for reform which has been made urgently necessary by a structural, financial and management system that is no longer up to the task.

Lack of objectives in educational policy

As is the case for the school and higher-education system, the library system must consistently be orientated towards the demands of the present and the future. There are no current plans for library development at a national level. Previous strategies have had no binding force and have never achieved political determination for implementation. General objectives for educational policy are not sufficiently linked to the library system today at a regional or national political level. The role of libraries is usually defined at local level and determined by funding bodies or library management.

Inadequate coordination

There is a lack of central coordination and direction to supplement the regional and local responsibilities in a meaningful way.

The running and management of libraries is hindered by restrictive legal circumstances. At the same time, there is a lack of binding quality standards for libraries to base their work upon.

Precarious financial situation

Financial provision for libraries in Germany is not sufficient to do justice to the future needs of society. Libraries – particularly municipal and regional ones – face significant financial cuts.

Necessary steps for reform

These observations give rise to the following goals and demands:

▷ Libraries must be obliged to focus on the German education system in their setting of aims and tasks.

▷ Quality-assurance measures and the benefits of the reform process in public administration must also be applied consistently within the library system.

▷ Innovations and cooperative projects must be extended to include more than individual initiatives and schemes and they must be directed at a national level.

▷ The basic financing of libraries must be assured. The available funding must be allocated in a more consistent and efficient manner.

Against the background of these findings, the "Library 2007" strategy concept describes concrete possibilities for solutions. These are aimed at the integration of libraries within the future information landscape and within the German education system.

4 Library development as part of an initiative in educational policy

Libraries as a factor in success

The fundamental debate about a national initiative in educational policy includes discussion of the role that libraries must play in this. The German regions that performed best in the OECD's PISA study do not only have good schools, but also excellently equipped and publicly recognised libraries that are incorporated into educational processes.

Federalism vs. equality of opportunity

Self-determination of the citizen, information skills, ability to integrate and the strength to innovate are important goals for a national education policy, particularly in the context of globalisation and competition between nations. The constitutional decree that guarantees equality includes the role of the education sector in securing equal opportunities and making sure that new generations will cope well with the future.

Sixteen partial solutions at a regional level without shared and binding foundations result in a qualitatively very heterogeneous educational landscape. National coordination as an extension of the educational sovereignty of the regions is absolutely essential. This is required because of the demands of an extended, united Europe, which, in its development and with its competing systems, pays no heed to federal educational structures and their somewhat obstructive effect.

Libraries are an integral element of the educational system, which is based on federalism. Even so, a stronger national legal influence and an overarching responsibility for libraries are essential, with the aim of coordinating and promoting their development. The information and knowledge society requires that institutions that serve the need for free access to information and to lifelong learning require holistic consideration.

No legal requirement for these suggestions exists. At the regional level, there is at most partial definition of the role of libraries.[2]

A national law on education and information is the right long-term solution to guarantee qualitatively equal provision of education and information for all German citizens and at the same time to define a binding role and purpose for libraries. Balance must be sought between the need to act quickly and the long-term nature of the legislative process. However, this definition must be set on a short- and medium-term basis within the context of the future shape of education policy. Existing constitutional, cultural and historical structures must be taken into account during this procedure. They are important principles, but they should not disguise the fact that in Germany there is an urgent need to act in the information sector, when compared with the international competition.

Experiences from libraries in other countries

Examples from other countries[3] indicate a close connection between the success of initiatives in educational policy and the support of the library system. For example, the modernisation of the infrastructure of all public libraries is considered during international discussion to be a significant factor in attempts to bridge the digital divide. The contribution of libraries in a modern form is understood to be an effective support for all educational institutions and for lifelong learning.

Great Britain

In Great Britain there have been government regulations for libraries since 1850. The most recent initiatives, such as the People's Network project (PNP)[4] also fix libraries in the government's national strategy for the promotion of the information society and for

2   Cf. e.g. the 1980 law for the promotion of further education and of the library system in Baden-Württemberg.
3   The comprehensive findings of the international best practice research are available to download from the Library 2007 website (www.bibliothek2007.de).
4   www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk.

bridging the information gap. The main task of the PNP was to link all library networks with the internet and with the National Grid for Learning (online provision of teaching materials for children and young people to support the national curriculum). The British government made available ff260 million for setting up computer workstations and internet access points in public libraries, for the provision of digital content for self-directed study and for the training of all library staff who deal with the public.

At the end of 2002, the three-year-long national project was concluded successfully. Learning centres, computer-supported spaces for learning and working, were set up in all 4300 public libraries.

The principle of support and demand

In Great Britain, an important factor for success was the simultaneous nature of national improvement, accompanying assurance of implementation, and the measurement of quality against binding standards.

Denmark

New library law in 2000

That state support for libraries must take into account the continual changes in academia and IT is clear from the new version of the Danish library law of 2000,[5] which was a reaction to worldwide electronic data provision and the digitisation of information.

The modernisation of the Danish library system is moving ahead consistently and with a great deal of energy. Government plans and promotion programmes and numerous initiatives of individual libraries and groups of libraries are aimed at improvements in the application of technology and the realisation of the concept of the library of the future.[6] Partial or project funding by the state serves as an incentive for the libraries' funding bodies to provide more financial support.

5 An English translation of the text of the law is available at www.bs.dk/index.ihtml?side=http://www.bs.dk/vis_pub.ihtml?id=861_fil=http://www.bs.dk/lovstof/lov340_english.htm.
6 See also the article "Die Bibliothek in der vernetzten Gesellschaft – ein neuer Standard für die Bibliothek" in "Buch und Bibliothek", 53: 2001.

Finland

The Finnish library law, which has existed since 1928, is also constantly updated. Based on the current version of the law, which came into force in 1999, the state plan of action "Library Strategy 2010"[7] was passed in February 2003. The plan names the first three areas for action as regular qualification of personnel, achievement of the highest standards in technological infrastructure and establishment of digital information possibilities for all citizens. A second phase aims to achieve the following objectives:

– customer-oriented information of the best quality
– new models of continued education
– reorganisation of lending procedures and of the roles of the National Repository Library and the National Library
– more effective and efficient digitisation
– new forms of library management and cooperation
– compulsory training in information management during teacher training and as part of the curriculum of secondary schools

The necessity for a national library policy is strongly emphasised in Finland. The past decades in the Finnish library system have been characterised by constant planning and modernisation work in legislation, programmes and strategy development.

Strategic plan of action

Singapore

Singapore is admittedly not comparable with Germany, as a result of its political structure and its status as a city-state. However, a parallel may be drawn: as an increasingly important country in terms of economic policy, which with its human capital and knowledge resources must stand firm in the face of international competition, Singapore faces similar challenges to Germany. The large-

Nexus for education and research

7   See the English version at www.minedu.fi/minedu/publications /2003/ kseng.pdf.

scale expansion of the library system is being pushed forward as part of the "Singapore Science Hub": the city-state is to become a nexus for education, research and teaching.[8]

Criteria for success

In Great Britain, Denmark, Finland, Singapore and in other countries, the successful role of libraries in a national information strategy and the part they play in creating the information society is positively defined and consistently promoted.

Even given the difference in starting points and individual measures, some clear similarities may be established, as far as the central points of departure for the various strategies are concerned:
– clear definition of the task and role of the libraries
– anchoring of the libraries in the education system
– legal foundation and protection
– active government involvement
– cooperation and networking
– a central institution for coordination, creation of development strategies, stimulus for innovations

In all these countries the significance and potential of libraries for the national education infrastructure have been recognised.

8 An English summary of the "Library 2000" plan may be found at www.nlb.gov.sg/fr_abtUs_library2000.html.
Also see the article "Singapur Science Hub" in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 24 August 2002: 51.

5 Innovation factors of a modern German library system

From the stock-taking exercise[9] and the best-practice research in five countries, six recommendations resulted with respect to fundamental structural changes in the German library system. The focus of the considerations is the need for a steering mechanism and the possible form that this might take. This steering mechanism is intended to connect, and thereby optimise, the national and federal structures within the German library system.

The studies of the library systems of Germany, Denmark, Finland, Singapore and the USA have led to the following findings:

1. The existing constitutional, cultural and historical structures in Germany are fixed in the federalism-based sovereignty of the German Länder, or regions, as regards educational and cultural questions. Any reform of the German library system must take this structure into account and can only be realised by national, regional and local authorities working together. At the same time, the current form of library structures must be examined. This includes the functional separation of public and academic libraries, as well as the role that has evolved historically for library associations.
   Fundamental points to be taken into account are:
   – A federal state needs central services.
   – Local problems require local solutions.
   – Regional and institutional cooperation must be emphatically demanded and consistently supported.

Priorities for change

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9 See the results of the national survey carried out by infas (Institut für angewandte Sozialwissenschaft) as part of the "Library 2007" project (www.bibliothek2007.de).

2. Information and knowledge are central raw materials for the competitive ability of a country. For that reason, Germany needs a binding basis that guarantees information provision for the population.
   The following policy requests need to be made:
   – The information and library system must build on a solid and recognised – i.e. ultimately on a legal – foundation.
   – The new orientation of the information and library system must promote innovation in the libraries, must aim for a comprehensive assurance of quality in the sense of the benefit for society and the customer in general, as well as within the library profession, and must demand political support.

3. A system that is publicly desired and guaranteed must also receive basic finance from the public coffers. The level of funding must be in relation to the expectations and objectives of the policies and to their actual achievement.
   The implications of this for the German library system are:
   – The significance and function of the library system for Germany in its development as a knowledge society calls for sufficient financial resources.
   – Libraries are institutions with a public role, which need state funding. New business models, flexibility for libraries in seeking investment from third parties and incentivised development principles should provide a sustainable supplement to public funding.
   – There must be obligatory, national quality standards and common goals agreed by funding bodies and library management. Libraries must demonstrate that they are achieving these standards.

4. Libraries must keep themselves up to date. The individual libraries deliver on-the-spot innovation – central institutions and third parties support them in this and provide incentives.
   For the library system of the future, this means:
   – The customer of the library is at the centre of all innovation.
   – Local, regional, national and international collaboration between libraries is a significant factor in success.

- Libraries must utilise all possibilities for the funding of innovative projects (e.g. seeking third-party investment).
- Innovative changes must also apply to organisational structures at a local level.
- The deployment and development of staff in libraries must be based on the findings of modern and achievement-oriented business management.

A library system that is also going to be able to cater to the future demands of society requires a balance between local initiative and central direction and support.

6 Optimising quality through national coordination for Germany's libraries

Need for overarching coordination

The "Library 2007" strategy concept is designed to support the numerous library funding bodies in regions and local-authority areas through elements of central direction. The duty of national government to guarantee access to good-quality information requires the establishment of an institution for the national coordination and strategic direction of library development. This measure is aimed at:
- the establishment of a multi-level, cross-functional strategy for libraries in Germany
- the development of systematically planned, effective and efficient forms of coordination and cooperation

Lack of national perspective

The necessary national coordination has not been achieved by the German Library Institute (Das Deutsche Bibliotheksinstitut) in the past.[10] The creation of the planned "innovation centre for libraries" failed because of the fundamental financial concerns of some regions. A resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (the Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder, or KMK) led to the creation of the Competence Network for Libraries (the Kompetenznetzwerk für Bibliotheken, or KNB) in 2003.[11] This concentrates on essen-

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10 Until 2001, the German Library Institute was one of the academic institutions supported as part of the "Blaue Liste". In 1999, total level of funding for the institute was DM 13.2m. In the following three years until the institute was dissolved in 2002, the budget sank steadily.

11 See the administration agreement on the Competence Network for Libraries of 6 November 2003. The total level of funding amounts to ff423,000. Regarding the conception, see also the plan of "Runder Tisch der Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Verbundsysteme, des Deutschen Bibliotheksverbands, der Fachstellenkonferenz, der Staatsbibliotheken und der ekz: Kompetenznetzwerk für Bibliotheken. Bericht an die KMK AG Bibliotheken".

tial operational services, such as the German Library Statistics and standardisation.

The national perspective, however, demands another dimension in order to initiate a dynamic development of the library system in the framework of a cross-institution national strategy for education. This assessment is confirmed by practice in other countries.

Countries such as Great Britain, Denmark and Singapore successfully employ national coordination for the optimisation of quality in libraries. National agencies contribute to the nationwide direction and development of the libraries in these countries. In all three of the countries these central agencies have essentially the following functions:
– creation of educational and library development strategies
– implementation of guidelines on information policy
– advising government and government bodies on questions regarding library and information policy
– creating impetus for innovation through development programmes

State support for libraries in Germany is aimed at promoting projects only in the area of academic libraries, for example through the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) and Ministry for Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung). There is, however, also need for an authority for the implementation of national educational policy, as is illustrated by the examples from other countries. Such an authority performs the following roles:

– systematically develops and coordinates concepts and strategies for the whole library system according to current educational issues
– guarantees planning, financing and implementation mechanisms
– takes on a neutral advisory function for government bodies
– designs, initiates and directs systematic development programmes
– promotes the widespread and sustainable impact of innovation projects
– evaluates the results of the programmes to see how effective they are

Uncharted territory in the educational system

None of the existing institutions in the field of education or libraries fulfils these roles as described above with a comprehensive, forward-looking and neutral approach. Therefore, the following chapter suggests a new way to promote innovation and achievement for German libraries.

7 The BEA, the Library Development Agency: the driving force behind innovation in German libraries

The "Library 2007" strategy concept proposes founding the BEA, the Library Development Agency (BibliotheksEntwicklungsAgentur), to give central direction to innovation and quality assurance for countrywide library development.

The BEA has three goals:

1. Consistent incorporation of libraries as an instrument of national education and information policy

   – development of political networking strategies with other bodies involved in education and information
   – presence in national educational-policy discussion contexts and committees

2. Improvement in the quality of library services as seen from the customer's point of view

   – support for modernisation and improvement of library services
   – quality assurance through definition of standards and the implementation of these with the help of incentive and control systems

3. Optimisation of the use of resources in libraries

   – efficiency improvements through support for the improvement of internal business processes and for the solution of organisational questions
   – promotion of international, national, regional and cross-functional exchange of knowledge and experience amongst libraries and particularly the creation of organisational synergy

Based on these goals, the following tasks have been formulated for the BEA.

Tasks of the BEA, the Library Development Agency

Driving force for innovation

As a driving force for innovation, the BEA takes responsibility for the transfer of knowledge within the German library system.

The basis for the development activities of the BEA are plans that have been drawn up in line with national and international developments in education. These include particularly efficient solution strategies from home and abroad, and also make use of related knowledge from comparison with other areas of the service sector.

Learn from the best, promote the best

The BEA systematically gathers models and findings that are worthy of imitation, distils the knowledge gained and makes it available to all libraries, and works to implement new developments.

The core tasks of the BEA are sketched below:

Development planning

1. To devise development plans and frameworks
   - creation and formulation of strategies and recommendations for library development
   - drafting concept papers on relevant themes in library work
   - active and continuous advice to government and regions on questions of library and information policy

The intention of this is to avoid duplication of effort and come up with workable recommendations.

Promotional programmes

2. To provide impulse for promotional programmes and then carry out these programmes
   - provision of funding on the basis of effectiveness indicators
   - coordination and bundling of promotional initiatives
   - fundraising
   - drawing up scorecards to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of project promotion

The promotional initiatives of the BEA are based on the principle of tenders, matching funds and incentive financing. Ongoing funding of libraries by the BEA is not envisaged.

Quality assurance

3. Professional quality assurance for libraries
   - definition of quality standards for library services
   - definition of guidelines for data collection and evaluation

– development and implementation of benchmarking
– implementation of rankings
– promotion of management methods designed to increase achievement

The standards to be used measure the achievement of the libraries with regard to the relevance for the customer (a move from input- to output-oriented consideration).

4. Modernisation of library work
   – promotion of cooperation to create synergies between libraries, with other educational and cultural institutions and the private sector
   – coordination and evaluation of project activities in libraries

Modernisation

5. Development of distribution strategies
   – PR work for BEA initiatives and promotional activities
   – transfer of solutions identified by libraries in other countries through presentation and publication

Distribution

Organisation of the BEA, the Library Development Agency

The BEA should be a lean, flexible and achievement-oriented organisation. The most suitable structure would be an independent, non-profit-making foundation based on public or civil law.

Organisational form

It could also be organised as part of a higher-level, independent foundation with a focus on innovation in the field of education. The expert team has suggested setting up a national foundation for information and education. Alongside the foundation activities at national and regional level, which currently concentrate on artistic areas and the preservation of cultural assets, the "Foundation for Information and Education" ("Stiftung für Information und Bildung") would represent a meaningful form of support for the knowledge society and could – in addition to the area of library development – occupy itself with further current issues in education and information policy, relate these to each other and enable comprehensive, sustainable and efficient solutions.

Establishment as a foundation

The BEA should be founded on the initiative of the government. The funding and decision-making structures are to be organised accordingly, in the sense of cooperative federalism and as a national educational initiative.

The BEA works on the basis of areas and programmes agreed with the funding body, which will determine the focus of the organisation. Goals and targets are set for the BEA within each of the chosen fields of work.[12]

Establishing the BEA in the regions and local-authority areas

The discussion between federal government and the regions about the reorganisation of competences in the field of education and culture has not yet been finalised. Regardless of the outcomes of this debate, an urgent need still exists to regulate the execution of shared tasks in the educational field – in this case, libraries.

The BEA is a link to other state organisations, to the institutions that promote research and educational policy, as well as to the associations and service providers. Partners in the regions support the work of the BEA and establish the link to library staff.

Cooperation with partners is essential to the implementation of the tasks of the BEA and to the coordinated implementation of its promotional activities. This connects to existing regional and local structures. Flexible partnerships and changing cooperative projects are preferred, to permit the motivation of competition.

The following local and regional groups come into consideration as partners of the BEA:
– library institutions, library associations
– Competence Network for Libraries (Kompetenznetzwerk für Bibliotheken, KNB)
– regional libraries
– library support centres
– regional library associations
– ekz. library service (ekz.bibliotheksservice)

12 Agreements of this type are also in place in Denmark between the Ministry of Culture and the Biblioteksstyrelsen, and between the Biblioteksstyrelsen and the central libraries. See www.bs.dk/english/about_4.htm.

Education institutions
– ministries
– schools and nursery schools
– institutes of higher education
– adult education centres
– associations

Business institutions
– companies
– trade associations
– consumer organisations

The BEA announces projects in its promotional programmes for which individual local and regional partners or consortia can apply. The announcement and application procedure should be designed to be transparent and straightforward, so that smaller institutions also have the chance to participate.

    The BEA selects suitable partners and enters into contracts with them. The partners are responsible for advising libraries in their area of responsibility about current projects, communicating the need for support, coordinating the projects at regional or local level and finally disseminating the results.

    For its work, the BEA needs stimulating input from the professional world. For this reason, it must be ensured that practice-related professional knowledge can flow into the BEA's project initiatives, for example via advisory boards set up according to theme and required skills. Additionally, the advisory boards should be composed so as to use knowledge that has not previously been available within the library system, allowing innovative solutions to be found.

Financing of the BEA

The current suggestions for setting up the BEA as a national foundation assume it will have its own foundation capital, which is to be intended as base investment. In addition to this, donations, third-party funds and contributions from the public coffers for recurrent expenditure should be included in the plans. The finan-

cial model therefore follows examples from other countries, as analysed in the international best practice research.

Innovation fund

Finally, an innovation fund will be set up to fund the BEA's annual promotional activities. The innovation fund is supplied additionally by funding from various sources that are sought for specific purposes by the BEA and bundled together.

Entrepreneurial leadership

The BEA is run according to business practices and works to identify opportunities to refinance recurring costs. Such additional means may come from self-generated income, from sources such as advisory activities.

In line with the annual levels of funding of other institutions for academic literature provision and information systems,[13] an innovation fund of around €40m would be a sensible amount at the start of a foundation.

Low per-capita investment

Even with a relatively low expenditure of around 50 Eurocents per citizen, it is possible to achieve essential improvements in educational policy.

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13 Cf. e.g. the annual levels of funding of the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) of around €30m for systems for academic literature provision and information; DFG Annual Report 2002: 237, at www. dfg.de/jahresbericht/.
Also see the annual levels of funding of Biblioteksstyrelsen, the national Danish institution for library development. In 2003, the organisation had at its disposal ff19m for the promotion and development of innovation projects and for coordination activities involving regional libraries. Most of the budget was provided by the Danish government; 14 percent comes from various national funds and lotteries; www.bs.dk. Denmark has around 5.3 million inhabitants.

8 "Library 2007" – the perspectives

Looking back from the year 2007, further developments might look something like this:

Even if the terms "education" and "innovation" had long lost some of their radiance in Germany, in 2004 a change came at the right time, effecting a move away from lethargy into the future. Government had recognised and taken up responsibility for the educational opportunities of people in this country, because they had realised that access to information, provision of information and the optimal employment of the resource of knowledge are the basis for shared success and international competitiveness.

Investment in the education system and the development of libraries as a element of networked educational opportunities are recognised at all political levels as making a fundamental contribution to the future competitive ability of our society. Libraries have become a recognised part of education in Germany – they are perceived and appreciated as active providers of information services for all sectors of society and are partners in learning during all stages of life.

In the newly reorganised federal system, innovation is supported by the understanding that progress can only be achieved together. A series of coordinating institutions has been created, with the transfer of innovation as their main focus.

This occurs in the library world through the independent and effective BEA, the Library Development Agency (BibliotheksEntwicklungsAgentur), which recognises national and international developments, and incentivises their adoption by libraries and library systems in Germany. This prevents Germany from placing its citizens at a technical disadvantage, which would mean that people who are already highly qualified would have to resort to online

information from other countries, whilst the educational opportunities for the wider population would decline.

The success of the work of the BEA is achieved through its innovation, determination and external recognition. As national promoter of the German library system and recognised advisor in all questions related to library and education policy, the BEA takes part in innovation transfer in Germany and is a keystone of the federal system, with the goal of promoting rapid and practical developments towards the creation of an information- and knowledge-based society.

Finally: more than 60% of all German citizens are customers of a library. This makes the libraries one of the most widely used educational institutions and means that they have reached a top level in international terms.

A child born in Germany in 2007 will, during his or her life, be able to access reliable information: to learn how to read and to acquire language, to learn and study and for everyday use, for leisure and for every job that the child will ever have. This easily accessible information, designed for specific target groups and processed to provide a good overview, will accompany that child into its old age.

Germany at the forefront of education

This look back from the future shows that the integration of libraries into the education system can significantly improve the quality of Germany's current educational situation, as can innovation management following international examples. The steps towards this goal may be realised rapidly and within a financially acceptable framework. Germany will once more become one of the leading countries for education. Mobilising the necessary support of the libraries for this goal and developing their full potential serves the education society as a whole.

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