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# BASIC FACTS ON THE LIBRARY OF THE KIEL INSTITUTE OF WORLD ECONOMICS AND ITS INFORMATION SERVICES

**Ekkehardt Seusing**

**Abstract:** This paper outlines the main characteristics including the acquisition policy of a special library in economics. The emphasis is on the diversity of its information services described in detail. In Germany and world-wide researchers as well as librarians have been relying on the unique services provided by the Library for decades.

In 1966, the function as the Zentralbibliothek der Wirtschaftswissenschaften in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland - ZBW- (National Library of Economics in the Federal Republic of Germany) was transferred to the Library of the Kiel Institute of World Economics, one of the leading institutes of economic research in Germany. Since its establishment in 1914, the Library has developed into one of the largest and most famous libraries for economic literature in the world. As a central subject library it has the nation-wide function to collect, classify, index, and lend economic publications from all countries and in all languages to its national and international clients.

## 1. Essential qualities

In the 20's Wilhelm Gülich<sup>1</sup> developed the fundamental ideas for a new type of library and he introduced them step by step in the then Library of the Institute für Seeverkehr und Weltwirtschaft (Institute of Ocean-Traffic and World Economics).

Comparing to other libraries the first difference is the Library's organisation by regional units, and not by subjects, i.e. each working group is responsible for all activities in its regional area as mentioned above: collecting, classification, indexing. There are working groups e.g. for Latin America, Africa, the French speaking countries in Europe, South-Eastern Europe, or for international

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Mr. Seusing's paper was delivered at the Meeting of the Scandinavian Group of the European Business Schools Librarians' Group, Aarhus, Denmark, 24 March 1993 and revised for this issue of INSPEL.

organizations such as the EC, the OECD, and the UN.

Another special feature of the Library was its catalogue system consisting of seven different catalogues that were discontinued in 1985 by introducing data processing:

- bibliographical and biographical catalogue of authors
- catalogue of administrative authorities
- catalogue of corporations
- catalogue of geographic units
- subject catalogue
- shelf list of periodicals
- title catalogue

These catalogues base on an indexing system that was developed from 1930 onwards to satisfy the needs of a special library in social sciences. Up to now the Library has its own thesaurus - the "Thesaurus der ZBW" - containing more than 7,000 controlled terms and almost 3,000 regional subjects. The thesaurus is supplemented by roughly 8,000 cross references.

A further characteristic of the ZBW is the indexing of articles in journals and contributions in collected works (such as conference volumes or Festschriften) since topical economic life is more frequently reflected in periodicals than in books. This activity started in 1935 according to the same lines as for monographs. The quality assurance (controlled by the indexers) is given by selecting articles only published in scholarly journals and of long standing interest.

Besides the regional units, the system of catalogues, its thesaurus, and the indexing - the information services have to be mentioned as they form a further pillar of the Library according to Wilhelm Gülich. They will be described in detail further on.

Any damage or loss during World War II was prevented by evacuating the complete stock of the Library into the "Ratzeburg Cathedral" near Lübeck from 1942-1949, after which it was restored to Kiel and housed in former barracks from 1949-1971. The old building of the Institute including the Library has been completely destroyed during the war. In 1971, the Library moved to its present location in the newly constructed wing of the restored Institute's building.

## **2. Acquisition policy**

The acquisition policy of the ZBW concentrates on special literature in economics, including all economic branches and products<sup>2</sup>. The area of collection covers all

aspects of economics, and political economy, as well as a selection in business economics.

In detail the collection includes publications for economic research as follows:

- economy theory
- market theory
- methods in economics
- economy history
- national accounts
- economic policy
- financial policy and the budget
- capital markets and the banking sector
- business cycles
- labor market
- competition policy
- international economic relations
- development and growth economics
- research and development
- regional planning
- natural resources
- transportation
- demography
- social security
- educational economics

Beside these criteria describing the key collection there are overlaps and border areas with other libraries in Germany; e.g. the Library of the University of Cologne has responsibilities within the German special subject fields programme for literature concerning business administration.

Literature on sociology, law, politics, geography, or history belong to the boarder areas and is only acquired when the economic relation is obvious.

The same is valid for publications of inter-disciplinary publications and broad subjects such as family, women, household, children, culture, or environmental questions.

Economic statistics of central and federal states as well as theses form main issues of the Library's collection.

Additionally, the Library is especially interested in reports and statistics published by international organizations, public administrations, economic associations,

chambers of commerce, banks, trade unions, political parties, as well as the publications of research institutes such as working papers, and the annual reports of the most important enterprises.

Special emphasis is laid on non-conventional literature; approximately 60% of the stock belong to the grey literature.

The international field of the collection is reflected in the variety of languages: 43% of the stock are in English, just 25% in German, and 7% in French resp. in East-European languages.

The following indicators should give some statistical information about the importance of the Library. Its holdings amount to more than 2.2 million volumes. 19,200 journals and annual publications are processed per year. Articles from roughly 1,700 journals are regularly indexed, 148 of them from cover to cover.

The card catalogues discontinued - as mentioned above - in 1985 by introducing data processing to the description department contain 9.2 million catalogue cards and are still at the client's disposal.

In 1986 the Library established its own database ECONIS (Economics Information System). The 1992 addition was approximately 64,000 records, including 21,360 monographs, 20,564 journals articles, and 3,608 articles in collected works. At the end of 1992 the clients could refer in ECONIS to approx. 434,000 records, including 155,157 monographs, 140,135 journals articles, and 22,529 articles in collected works<sup>3</sup>.

### **3. Information services**

It should be stressed that the ZBW has all publications indicated by its different information services in its stock; i.e. the Library is in a position to provide an effective and speedy document delivery system. The Library's holdings are used in different ways by its wide information services.

#### **3.1. Interlibrary loan**

Interlibrary loan is an intensively-used traditional service in German libraries. Since the end of the 19th century interlending has become inevitable due to the decentralised system of library affairs) fall under the responsibility of each individual "Land" and, consequently, the political coordination is difficult and not always satisfying. The holdings of the ZBW can be used according to the conditions of the national and international interlibrary loan systems.

### 3.2 Direct ordering

Another well-established business is the direct ordering service for libraries, research institutes, enterprises, or other organizations. Monographs are sent according to the request. Articles from journals are photocopied, for bound volumes of periodicals or single issues are not mailed.

Private individuals are excluded from this service. They have to order monographs via the interlibrary loan. But they can obtain photocopies from articles in journals or collected works straight from the Library. They only have to send a not specific letter.

### 3.3 Printed media

#### 3.3.1. Reprint of the card catalogues

The most extensive service is offered by the US-publisher G.K. Hall & Co. through the publication of the card catalogues of the ZBW in book form. From 1966 to 1968 the complete collection of catalogue cards at that time was filmed and published in 207 volumes organised according to the catalogue system of the Library as mentioned above.

Up to that time the Library has become an all-encompassing research center for the social sciences in order to illustrate economic life. The standard and reference works in biology, psychology, science, and philosophy are included, while material such as fiction, memoirs, or popular magazines show the impact of economic factors upon daily life. But times have changed and the acquisition policy of the Library was substantially changed, too, within the last twenty years as mentioned above.

By the way, the volumes of the Hall catalogues can be consulted in many libraries; e.g. in the USA or in Japan (as far as we know by interlibrary loan).

#### 3.3.2. Bibliographies

In 1968 the ZBW became editor of the "Bibliographie der Wirtschaftswissenschaften"<sup>4</sup> (Bibliography of Economics). Since that point of time the bibliography has held a unique position in the bibliographic control of economics. The extensive coverage of non-English publications, of publications from Eastern Europe, and from the Third World make this bibliography to an outstanding instrument for resesarchers and librarians. Two semi-annual volumes containing 20,000 titles are published, selected from the Library's annual addition of roughly 45,000 bibliographic units. The bibliography has an optimal currency, with volumes published in the year following the date on the cover.

Bibliographies concerning special economic subjects are published in the irregular series "Kieler Schriftumskunden zu Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft" (Kiel Imprint of

Economics and Society). The latest bibliography in this series is a complete list of Herbert Girsch's publications, a former president of the Kiel Institute of World Economics.

Since 1990 the also irregular published "Kieler Bibliographien zu aktuellen ökonomischen Themen" (Kiel Bibliographies of Current Economic Interest) have given lists of literature on economic questions of utmost importance. The latest publications are bibliographical information on "Czechoslovakia - a country and its reforms at the crossroads", Poland - the long way to the market economy", and a "Bibliography on migration - Bibliographie zur Wanderung".

The "Verzeichnis der ausgewerteten Zeitschriften" (List of indexed journals) has also to be mentioned. This irregular bibliography gives the journal coverage for the database ECONIS that has risen to roughly 1,700 journals indexed on a regular basis shortly after publication. A special marking identifies the journals that were indexed from cover to cover.

In cooperation with commercial publishers the ZBW has edited two further bibliographies:

- Bibliography on German unification. Economic and social development in Eastern Germany. November 1989 to June 1992.
- Bibliography on economic transition in Eastern Europe. English and German language titles published in the years 1990-1993.

### 3.3.3. Other publications

The printed edition of the "Thesaurus der ZBW" consists of two parts. It is a complete list of all controlled terms and all cross references. A separate publication gives the regional subjects. Because of the permanent revision of the thesaurus there are new editions on an irregular basis.

Another special publication of the ZBW is a study concerning the Library's information services and its effects on interlibrary loan in Germany. This performance measurement concentrates on the evaluation of the compound of the collection, of the information services, of the document availability, and of the regional employment in interlibrary loan.

## 3.4. Selective dissemination of information

### 3.4.1. Kiel Card Service

Since 1960 the Library has produced quality catalogue cards for libraries, information centres, and private individuals<sup>5</sup>. This service has refined and expanded the Library's services throughout the years. It resulted from the idea of Knut Borchardt in 1960 to make available the Kiel inventory of catalogue cards by increas-

ing their production and sending them out to other libraries. The starting point for this service is the comprehensive collection of the ZBW: The Library offers its extensive cataloguing of monographs and indexing of contributions in journals, annuals, and collected works. The share of grey literature - as mentioned already - amounts to roughly 60% of the holdings. The same criteria for collecting, cataloguing, and indexing are applied to these as to conventional publications, which requires a substantial effort of work that smaller libraries - usually understaffed - cannot afford. The acquisition of grey literature is of great importance, because the most recent results of research are published at first in working papers, reports, etc. Essential information and statistics by government agencies are not published for general use.

The Kiel Card Service gives main entry cards (some with overprinted headings) according to RAK-WB (the German cataloguing rules for research libraries). They include such data elements as main entry, statement of responsibility, place and year of publication, physical description, series statement, notes, and the indexing printed on cards of the international library standard format.

The selection for this card service is mostly made by subjects, regions, or a combination of both. Libraries participating in this specialised information service by subscription receive complete and up-to-date information about the latest literature on any subject area. Twenty percent of the users request cards for articles in journals only. This reflects the traditional documentation activities of the ZBW.

In 1992 there were 74 clients which received roughly 350.000 cards.

#### 3.4.2 Information retrieval

Upon written request the staff of the information department selects relevant titles from the database ECONIS or the card catalogues. A search is mainly done by subject, region, and/or time period; the "Thesaurus der ZBW" serves as basis for a search. On the average twenty titles are provided to the clients requesting a bibliography. The list of the selected bibliographical items from ECONIS is sent to them. Cards selected from the old card catalogues are photocopied and the copies are mailed.

#### 3.4.3. Printed lists

As another specialised information service on demand the ZBW offers printed lists from ECONIS to its clients. The extent of these lists depends on the specific question and the number of items found in the database. A search can be done along the lines as mentioned for the information retrieval.

#### 3.4.4. Economic archives

A written request is forwarded to the Wirtschaftsarchiv (economic archives), if it is impossible to find references pertaining to front-page issues (e.g. current economic or business policy), as topical events are reflected in journals or books with a time lag. Since 1920 the archives have collected newspaper clippings regarding economic and social problems from more than a hundred newspapers and weeklies. More than ten million clippings - systematically arranged by subjects, regions, and time period - are available. For external users, relevant clippings are photocopied and mailed.

#### 3.5. Electronic media

##### 3.5.1. ECONIS online

At present approximately 170 clients are online connected to the database via the X 25-network (e.g. WIN or Datex-P). These search criteria are the same as for other clients of the Library according to the "Thesaurus der ZBW", authors' names, key words from the title or free key words, names of corporations or organizations a.s.o. A combination of two or more of these criteria by using the Boolean logic is possible. In addition codes for languages, countries of publication, or for special kinds of publications such as bibliographies, statistics, or theses may be used.

##### 3.5.2 Magnetic tapes, diskettes

The output from the database ECONIS is not only offered as a printed list or on catalogue cards - as mentioned above - but clients can also order the bibliographic information on magnetic tapes or diskettes.

##### 3.5.3 CD-ROM

"Helecon on CD-ROM" is the combined index of seven major European databases, one of them is ECONIS. The search and retrieval software is easy to use. Authors' names, index terms, key words from the title, and phrases from the text are searchable. Concepts can be combined by using Boolean logic and the results can be both displayed on screen and printed. Search commands can be given in English, French, or Swedish.

##### 3.5.4. Online document ordering

The "Zeitschriftendatenbank" (Serials Database) is a union list of serials in Germany administered by the German Library Institute in Berlin. This database is combined with an online ordering module and the ZBW is one of the suppliers of photocopies of articles in journals within this system<sup>6</sup>. Online access to the Serials Database is via Datex-P. During the online search the client identifies the journal required. The system offers a list of the holdings' locations of the libraries which participate in online ordering. Now the client can decide which library he will ask for the copy. Having completed the online order the client has to mark for a rush

order or a regular order. The request is then stored in the order file of the database. Once a day they are called up by the ZBW via Datex-P. The rush-orders are processed and mailed the same day, the others within ten days.

#### 3.5.5. Fax service

For very urgent demands a fax service is offered to transmit copies of articles or selected pages from monographs.

#### 4. Final remarks

In the past many librarians ignored the use of their collections to a large extent. Wilhelm Gülich, however, changed the library to a modern center for specialised information in social sciences, that nowadays is concentrated on economics. The shift from the conventional library to a progressive library and information center was done by the essential qualities especially developed for a library in social sciences, consisting of its system of catalogues, its thesaurus, the indexing of articles in journals, and the information services developed for the particular interests of economists. The menu of distributing the information is reviewed at regular time intervals for the old and new services have to be economically reasonable.

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Ekkehart Seusing  
Bibliothek des Instituts für Weltwirtschaft  
Zentralbibliothek der Wirtschaftswissenschaften in  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
24100 Kiel  
Germany