TEMPUS Project
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Building Cooperative Academic Library Network in Serbia: Library Information System Development at the Universities of Belgrade, Nis and Kragujevac

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Project goal

• To modernize the work of all academic libraries
• To build strong connections between them through shared electronic catalogue
• To educate librarians and users
• To modernize the university
1. step: Electronic catalogue

The only complete network software for shared electronic cataloguing with HELP and Interfaces in Serbian, whose quality and price were affordable for the project was COBISS software. Consortium members from EU decided that it was the right solution.

In year 2002, National Library of Serbia applied to OSI with the project for establishment the Centre of Virtual Library of Serbia, and decided to use COBISS software.

Shared electronic catalogue

People involved in both projects concluded that it would be the best to join forces and build one center for Serbia that would include national and academic libraries. Tempus partners were informed about the idea, they all agreed, and National Library of Serbia became official partner in the second year of the project.
1. Establishment of shared cataloguing system and shared union catalogue for Serbia on COBISS software

- Shared union catalogue was formed in February 2003 with 1,500,000 records
- The electronic catalogue of the Library of Matica srpska was the main database, and databases of the National Library of Serbia, JUBIN and University Library “Svetozar Markovic” were added.
Participation

• All 3 university libraries
• 17 out of 31 faculties from the University of Belgrade
• 3 out of 4 faculties from University of Arts in Belgrade
• 7 out of 10 faculties from Kragujevac
• National libraries

Other libraries

• All faculties were informed
• Some of them joined the system in the meantime, some plan to join the system in the future
• Some even now, when COBISS.Sr is part of the regional system with about 6 million records freely available to all members, do not see that the time of small independent libraries is over.
2. Preparation and printing of manuals for shared cataloguing (2.1)

- All manuals were translated to Serbian language and printed
- UNIMARC and two ISBD standards were translated to Serbian and printed
- Preparatory manuals for working in e-environment were prepared in print and e-version.

2. Training of librarians (2.2)

- 19 one day preparatory courses with 252 attendees at the University Library
- 7 five days courses for licenses for work in COBISS Shared Union Catalog with 84 attendees were conducted at the National Library of Serbia
3. Data conversion for e-catalogue

- Conversion started in the University Library in Kragujevac
- Followed conversions for University Library in Niš, Faculty of Law Belgrade and Philological Faculty Belgrade
- Conversion has economic reason if databases have more than 20,000 standardized records

4. Workshops

- Workshop on data conversion in Belgrade
- Workshop on coordinated acquisition in Vienna
- Workshop on Interlibrary Loan at the University Library in Belgrade
- Workshop for web design for libraries in Belgrade
- Workshop on organization of university libraries in Belgrade and Nis
Library marketing and user education

- Training course for electronic resources librarians was conducted by an expert from Middlesex University at the University Library in Belgrade
- 7 training courses for academic librarians were conducted at the University Library in Belgrade with 108 attendants
- Training and promotional material is prepared for printing and electronic publishing
All partner libraries from Serbia are founders of Consortium for coordinated acquisition KoBSON

Management of the Project

• Two coordination meetings were held in Berlin and three in Belgrade
• Coordination meetings of the partners from Serbia were held once in two or three months, depending on the development of the Project activities
• Communication was mostly by e-mail
Dissemination activities

Dissemination activities were through presentations by coordinator and other members of the consortium on various occasions:

- Tempus Day in Belgrade and Niš
- Annual sessions of the assembly of the Serbian Academic Library Association
- Library Days in Belgrade, Niš and Kragujevac
- Professional conferences in Serbia
- Poster session at the 69th IFLA Congress

Dissemination activities

- Three issues of the journal “Visokoškolske biblioteke” were published
- The Special issue TEMPUS INFOtheka was published before the end of the Project
- Aleksandra Vraneš: “Visokoškolske biblioteke” - text book for LIS students and professionals was published
Conclusion

• Our Project was successful thanks to all members of the Consortium, both from Serbia and EU
• The main goals of the project were not changed during the project, but the main goal was changed to include the whole country, not just 3 universities
• we developed very good relations and keep contacts
• If we get the chance, we will continue to cooperate in some new projects

Conclusion

• We got support from the Ministry of science, who provided academic libraries with PC and network equipment and licenses for e-resources through KoBSON
• We did not get support from Ministry of education, so many faculty libraries are still out of the system of shared cataloguing
• We hope that universities will recognize the importance of the project during the accreditation process.
Development of libraries in Serbia after the project

COBISS.net is the leading regional library cooperative system with free exchange of created records (more than 5 million).
System is supported by Slovenia, who is the world champion in the number of library users through Internet.
In Serbia system includes 59 institutions with more than 80 libraries and 1.7 million records. Center is at the National Library of Serbia and 300 librarians got licenses.
KoBSOn is the best regional consortium with 680,000 downloaded articles, 17000 full text journals and growing usage.

Usage of the catalogue COBISS/OPAC.Sr
In year 2005, catalogue was searched 1,424,947 times.
Shared union catalogue – Virtual Library of Serbia (VLS) is included in the European portal - The European Library http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/

Portal enables the simultaneous search of 17 European national union library catalogues

VLS will soon be included in Google Scholar, the biggest world search engine for scientific literature.

Electronic catalogue, websites and coordination is just the first step. What should be next?

• Digitization of important materials
• Establishment of digital repositories for scientific publications, dissertations and teaching materials of our universities
• User education and production of virtual tutorials
• Support for distant learners…
Transformation of academic libraries is necessary, but it needs more than librarians good will!