

Interoperability of Data of Cultural Heritage Institutions in the Digital Space: Terminological Aspect

Authority data as a link between cultural institutions

What connects cultural institutions and what separates them in the field of authority data and their use. How can joint further development succeed under the given conditions and what can and must the authority data files contribute to this?

For several years now, cultural institutions from a wide variety of fields, such as archives, libraries and museums, have been looking for ways to catalogue their holdings using common standards. However, common here does not mean that they all use a common standard and strictly adhere to regulations that apply to all. This assumption was already discarded in the early days of cooperation between cultural institutions as unrealistic. The available resources, the organisational structures and also the target groups are too different. However, this starting position is not counterproductive, but rather motivating. Mutual understanding and the willingness to learn from each other and to further develop the existing instruments is rather the basis for constructive cooperation.

In the German-speaking countries there is already an active cooperation between cultural institutions and research projects that deal with the joint use of authority data for cultural assets. The compatibility of existing standards and the exchangeability of metadata are the focal points of work here. At the same time, important requirements and suggestions from the fields of special materials flow back into the further development of international standards.

Several working groups in the German-speaking communities have been working on the cataloguing of special resources for years. The creation of vocabularies plays a decisive role in this and agreements on common or separate terminologies are essential in this process.

The presentation will show how these different requirements can be handled in one authority file, using the Integrated Authority File (Gemeinsame Normdatei, GND) as an example.

Renate Behrens

German National Library, Office for Library Standards, Expert