

Jon Birger Østby:

Norway: "The integrated model –1"  
with a national focus.

A New Kind of Access

CALIMERA /NAPLE Conference  
Copenhagen 20 January 2005

# The situation in the 1990s

## Archives:

- **The National Archives and the regional state archives together form the National Archival Services of Norway, headed by the Director General, under The Ministry of Culture**
- **The authority of the Director General and the National Archival Services is vested in the Archival Act of 1992.**

## **Libraries:**

- **The Norwegian Directorate for Public Libraries, under The Ministry of Culture**
- **The National Office for Research, Documentation, Academic and Special Libraries, under The Ministry of Education and Research**
- **The National Library, under The Ministry of Culture**
- **Public libraries are regulated by law**

## **Museums:**

- **The Norwegian Museum Authority, under The Ministry of Culture**
- **Many “national” museums, most of them under The Ministry of culture but also under other ministries**
- **No museum law**

## The White Paper:

***“Sources of knowledge and experience  
Archives, libraries and museum in a society  
based on information technology”***

**Presented by the Ministry of Culture to  
Parliament in December 1999**

## **Why create a new governmental institution for archives, libraries and museums?**

- **The information technology**
- **Overlapping of sources across sector borders**
- **Focus on the users**
- **Three small sectors ought to be stronger through cooperation**
- **Need of new orientation and new focus in the existing institutions**
- **Inspiration from England and the establishment of Resource**

# ABM-utvikling

## Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority

- Established on 1 January 2003
- A merger of the Norwegian Directorate for Public Libraries, the Norwegian Museum Authority, and the National Office for Research Documentation, Academic and Special Libraries
- The Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority is a public institution under the authority of the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, but works across departmental and other administrative boundaries

## Vision:

**Archives, Libraries and Museums are places of new knowledge and experience for all**

**The activities of *ABM-utvikling* are founded on the following basic values:**

- tolerance, freedom of speech and democracy
- the inherent value of culture
- the right of access to information
- the diversity of culture
- social integration
- universal design
- the effective use of the resources of society

## To bring about this vision, *ABM-utvikling* uses the following major strategies:

- to focus our activities on the users
- to stimulate and initiate development and the evolution of ideas within and across the sectors
- to have an open dialogue with participants within their chosen fields
- to develop and strengthen co-operation between archives, libraries and museums, and other institutions, organisations and participants
- to further knowledge of archives, libraries and museums
- to promote valid ideals
- to be a driving force in dealings with other public authorities

## **The core areas towards which *ABM-utvikling* will direct its efforts for the period 2004-2006 are:**

- the advancement of learning and imparting of knowledge in archives, libraries and museums
- the broadening of online access to knowledge and culture
- the identification and development of regional and local archive facilities
- the development of new policies for libraries that reflect changes in society towards technology, new demands for knowledge, and culture
- an improvement in the quality of museums by means of the Museums Reform programme
- a raised public awareness of the tasks and activities undertaken by the archives, libraries and museums
- New area from 2005: collection management

## **Advantages and challenges in the process so far:**

- making one institution out of the three, which had different priorities and strategies, different leadership and different cultures
- finding a new balance between the existing tasks in these three institutions and a new focus on development rather than inspection and control
- finding a good balance between sectorial and cross-sectorial challenges
- strengthen the cooperation within the library sector, which is traditionally divided into one sector for public and one for research and educational libraries
- using and developing the competence within the institution across traditional barriers between the sectors
- In the White Paper we were promised a large growth in these first years in our budget especially for projects, but we have not seen this new money yet

## **What has been achieved so far:**

- created a new organisation with new plans and perspectives, and there will be an evaluation of the organisation this year
- created new cross-sectorial arenas
- a stronger focus in governmental and political institutions on the importance of the archives', libraries' and museums' roles in society
- stimulated cross-sectorial cooperation, not at least on the regional and local level
- reorganized the Norwegian Culture Net on the WEB
- established a project for creating a national digital library, which is also to give access to sources in archives and museums

## What are the future challenges?

- to continue the work to create an effective and competent institution and to find a good balance between the sectorial and cross-sectorial challenges
- to stimulate and initiate good projects
- to keep focus on the users

For the users it is not important whether the sources of knowledge and experience are kept by archives, libraries or museums, but to get access to the sources they want, and to be able to use these sources across types of sources and sectors of institutions.