Documentalistes sans frontières: taxonomy design for a multi-disciplinary, pan-European subject gateway
The ELISAD Gateway

• European Association of Libraries and Information Services on Alcohol and other Drugs
  – http://www.elisad.eu/

• European Gateway on Alcohol, Drugs and Addictions
  – http://www.elisad.uni-bremen.de/
Gateway Participants

• EU-funded project
• English-speaking
  – across the EU, incl. new member states
  – Scandinavia
• Information providers
  – chiefly qualified information professionals
  – some academics
Keyword Review

• Keywords were created in 2003
  – by committee, bottom-up design

• Subject area has evolved and expanded

• 2 years’ experience using the Gateway
  – inputting data, searching site

• Funding for translation

• New search screens & input forms
Professional Responsibilities

• Project Sponsor (Toxibase, France)
• Project Manager (Archido, Germany)
• Taxonomy Designer (DrugScope, UK)
• Translation Manager (DrugScope, UK)
• Programmer (ZAIT, Germany)
• Graphic Designer (ZAIT, Germany)
• Marketing (Anne Singer, France)
Challenges

• Time – deadlines, other commitments
• Distance – remote working
• Communication
  – cultural differences
    • national
    • professional
  – linguistic differences
• Respect
Lessons Learned

• Know your own role
  – define “taxonomy”

• Make sure others understand your role
  – especially those before & after you

• Make sure you understand others’ roles
  – don’t assume skill-sets based on British / information professional culture
Lessons Learned

• Be clear about responsibilities
  – make sure “extras” are acknowledged
  – be wary of treading on toes
    • especially communicating by email

• Consult, consult, consult: taxonomy is all about hierarchies, but working across national and professional boundaries is about learning & sharing.