



Section of Public Libraries Newsletter

Issue no.20, December 1998

Medium Term Programme 1998-2001

Update November 1998

Revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries

Preliminary Programme of the 65th IFLA General Conference

Bangkok, Thailand, August 20 - August 28, 1999

European Parliament Resolution on Role of Libraries

Meeting of Public Libraries of Latin American Countries

Reports from Public Libraries Around the World

Germany, Ireland, Romania, Russia and South Africa



**your dynamic connection to the
international world of library
and information services**

Medium Term Programme 1998-2001

Update November 1998

1. Promote equal access for all to information at a local level and ensure public libraries are part of the national library network.

1.1 Evaluate and disseminate current research into implementing the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto in Sweden, Portugal, Estonia and Zimbabwe, including a session at the 1988 IFLA conference in Amsterdam.

Paper on project given at Open Session in Amsterdam. Bid for funds to support project made in December 1998.

1.2 Conduct a survey into National Information Policies and disseminate the results.

Survey conducted. Paper on project given at Open Session in Amsterdam. Report to be complete in 1999.

2. Promote and make recommendations on the role of the public library in supporting lifelong learning and encourage information and computer literacy among public library users.

2.1 Prepare guidelines on lifelong learning and public libraries.

Working Group to examine feasibility of project established in August 1998. Funds to support group sought in December 1998.

2.2 Make recommendations on the development of information and computer literacy among public library users.

Not yet started.

3. Promote the effective provision of information technology and multi-media in public libraries, based on different levels of development, including the enhancement of the skills of staff and users in their effective implementation and use.

3.1 Prepare guidelines on the implementation and use of information technology in public libraries, based on different levels of development.

Not yet started.

4. Promote the development of public library standards, the use of quality management and performance measurement in public libraries and encourage research into their funding models and the collection and dissemination of comparative public library statistics.

4.1 Revise IFLA standards for public libraries

Working Group set up in 1998. Pre-conference seminar held in August 1998. Consultative group identified. Project bid up to 2001 made in December 1998. Final draft timetabled for Jerusalem Conference 2000.

4.2 Conduct research into comparative statistics and funding models in public libraries.

Further action postponed pending outcome of major EU project.

4.3 Publish the proceedings of the seminar in Berlin August 1997 on performance measurement and quality management in public libraries.

Published 1998 by Deutsches Bibliotheksinstitut.

Have you consulted the IFLA / PL-Section web site?

www.ifla.org/VII/s8/sp1.htm

5. Support action to combat illiteracy through the use of public libraries in conjunction with other appropriate bodies within and outside IFLA.

5.1 Increase awareness of the results of the IFLA literacy working group in conjunction with other appropriate bodies within and outside IFLA.

No special action.

6. Promote the importance of the public library as a place for people to meet, communicate and exchange ideas and as a centre for cultural and leisure activities at the local level.

6.1 Update the brochure about the Section of Public Libraries.

Update completed in November 1998.

7. Disseminate information about the effects on public libraries worldwide of copyright regulations.

7.1 Disseminate information about the effects on public libraries worldwide of copyright regulations.

Not yet started.

8. Arrange seminars on public library services and policy, particularly in developing countries, which will lead to an improvement in public library provision.

8.1 Organise a seminar on public library and the promotion of the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto in Asia (Malaysia) in 1997 in cooperation with ALP, the Regional Section for Asia and Oceania and the National Library of Malaysia.

Regional Conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November 1997.

8.2 Organise a seminar on public library and the promotion of the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto in Latin America in 1998 in cooperation with ALP, the Regional Section for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regional Conference held in Salvador, Brazil, in March 1998.

8.3 Organise a seminar on public library and the promotion of the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto in Africa in 1999 in conjunction with ALP and the Regional Section for Africa.

Proposal under discussion with Africa Section. Awaiting further details.



**We wish you all a merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!**

The Newsletter Editorial Staff

European Parliament resolution on role of libraries

At the Libraries Programme's website under URL: <http://www2.echo.lu/libraries/en/green-ryyn.html> you can find a summary of the European Parliament's debate held on 23 October prior to the adoption of Mirja Ryynaenen's report "The role of libraries in modern societies", the European Commission's response and a link to the text as adopted.

The European Commission is now well equipped to take the next steps. Please note that the Commission is now no longer planning to produce a "Green Paper" but a "Communication". While a Green Paper is a document for consultation, a "Communication" is already a concrete action plan with details about different steps and budgets. It was felt that during the course of the last one and half years there was already a lot of consultation being carried out, and that it is now necessary to act as quickly as possible.

(In the past, a lot of confusion came unfortunately from the fact that for a long time the English translation of Ms Ryynaenen's report title was wrongly called "Report on the Green Paper on the role of libraries...". This has been corrected in the meantime - there was never a Green Paper and therefore there could not be a report on it. The European Commission was only planning to write the Green Paper but did never publish it.)

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Meeting of Public Libraries of Latin American Countries

A Meeting of Librarians in charge of public libraries of Latin American countries will be held in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia) in November 18-20 1998.

The meeting has been organized by the Dirección General del Libro, Archivos y Bibliotecas of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain. This meeting is sponsored by the AECI, Spanish Agency of International Cooperation. It will bring together the librarians in charge of the coordination of the public libraries systems in the Latin American countries.

The IFLA regional section from Latin America and the Caribbean, the IFLA Public Library Section and representatives of other international organizations, such as CERLALC and UNESCO, will also be invited to attend this meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to contribute to spread information and collaboration among the organizations in charge of the development and national coordination of public libraries in all Latin American countries. Another objective is to emphasize and strengthen the role of public libraries as vehicles for cultural communication in Latin American, and as information and documentation centres on all countries that make up the Latin American community.

The meeting will deal with the following topics:

- Discussion on the situation of public libraries in Latin American countries,
- The model of the public library in the Latin American community,
- Possibilities of cooperation in the field of public libraries in Latin America.

More information

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Archivos y Bibliotecas
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura
Plaza del Ray, 1
28004 Madrid, España
Fax. 91 531 92 12

The Public Library as the Gateway to the Information Society: the Revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries

Seminar held at the Hotel Noodzee, Noordwijk, Netherlands, 11-14 August, 1998

This pre-conference seminar was organised by the Section of Public Libraries in collaboration with Unesco as an important step in the process of revising IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries. The objective was to get guidance from public librarians from different parts of the world and different cultures about what should be included in the revision.

Twenty-two librarians from twenty-one different countries took part and the programme included nine papers by speakers drawn from the participants. There were also discussion groups on the key issues facing the Working Group responsible for the revision. Both the papers and the discussions were of a high standard and on the final morning agreement was reached on the main conclusions which will be used by the Working Group in the next stages of drafting a new document. These conclusions are summarised below.

- The revised Guidelines should be based on the Unesco Public Library Manifesto.
- They should be available in print and electronic format with multiple links.
- It will be a joint Unesco/IFLA statement and aimed primarily at librarians
- It will include both guidelines and standards and suggest ways in which standards can be developed at local level. It will also refer to existing standards where appropriate.
- It will aim to be applicable world-wide and be sensitive to variations in local conditions and cultures
- It must be clear and use examples and stories to illustrate the text.
- The public library should be seen as an important gateway to the global information network.
- The emphasis should be on library services not libraries.
- The importance of developing partnerships with other agencies at all levels should be stated.
- The public library is an agency for social change. It is a locally based service at the core of the local community.
- The importance of local, regional or central government support for the public library through legislation and funding should be stressed recognising that there may be transitional phases in reaching this goal.
- The library is important as a place within the local community and recommendations on design should be included.
- The document should identify the wide range of services a public library can provide.
- Policies and strategies should form the basis of services provision
- Community profiling and needs analysis should be used to set priorities.
- The importance of management to public library development should be recognised
- The impact of public library services should be measured and evaluated.
- Public libraries should be promoted using techniques like public relations, marketing and advocacy.
- The importance of ICT in all facets of the service should be stressed.
- The training and education of library staff is a key issue.
- User education particularly in the use of ICT is important.
- The need for community participation in service development should be recognised.
- Differing traditions in the method of communication and in delivery systems should be reflected in the document.

- The role of the public library as publisher should be identified.

The seminar's conclusions were presented at the Section's Open Session at the Amsterdam Conference. The seminar participants with some additions will form an advisory group throughout the revision process. A further progress report will be presented to the IFLA conference in Bangkok in August 1999 and it is hoped to have a final draft by the Jerusalem conference in 2000.

I would like to thank all those who took part in the seminar. With their breadth of experience and their hard work during the seminar they made a major contribution to this exciting if rather daunting project.

For more information on the pre-conference seminar consult the Section of Public Libraries web-site www.nlc-bnc-ca/ifla/vii/s8/spl/htm.

Philip Gill

Chair, Section of Public Libraries

Preliminary Programme of the 65th IFLA General Conference **Bangkok, Thailand, August 20 - August 28, 1999**

Friday, August 20 1999

Morning: Professional Board
Afternoon: Coordinating Boards, Division Executive Board

Midday: Guest Lectures,
Poster Sessions
Evening: Library Receptions

Saturday, August 21, 1999

All day: Standing Committees and Executive Committees
Afternoon: Caucuses (late)
Evening: Reception for IFLA Officers (by invitation only)

Wednesday, August 25, 1999

All day: Section and Round Table Programme Sessions
Study Tours / Library Visits (1/2 day)
Midday: Guest Lectures, Poster Sessions
Afternoon: Professional Board

Sunday, August 22, 1999

Morning: Introduction to IFLA for Newcomers Open Forums, Core Programmes and UNESCO
Afternoon: Council I
Evening: Exhibition Opening / Reception

Thursday, August 26, 1999

All day: Workshops / Seminars
Study Tours / Library Visits (1/2 day)
Afternoon: Standing Committees (late)

Monday, August 23, 1999

Morning: Contributed Paper Sessions, Division Open Forums, Section and Round Table Programme Sessions
Afternoon: Opening Session followed by Plenary Session
Evening: Gala Reception / Dinner and Cultural Performance

Friday, August 27, 1999

All day: Section and Round Table Programme Sessions
Standing Committees
Coordinating Boards, Divisions
Midday: Professional Board Executive Board
Afternoon: Council II followed by Closing Session

Tuesday, August 24, 1999

All day: Section and Round Table Programme Sessions

Saturday, August 28, 1999

All day: Tour day



Reports from Public Libraries Around the World

Germany

"Ich brauche meine Bibliothek"

Deutschen Bibliotheksverbände have collected meanings about the library from the general public. All the "meanings" are published in a special issue of *Buch & Bibliothek*, titled *"Ich brauche meine Bibliothek"*.

Some quotations from the book:

"... weil ich nicht dumm sterben will!"

Susanne Theimer, Glppingen

"Weil die Bibliothekarinnen so nett sind!"

Dr Michael Hess, Geldern

"Die Bibliothek!!!"

Die Bibliothek ist super toll.

Ein ganzes Haus mit Büchern voll.

Jeder geht öffer mal hinein

Um auf dem neusten Stand zu sein.

Ich gehe in die Bibliothek zum Lesen und Lernen.

Da kann ich zu Hause noch von Schwärmen.

Aber auch Bücher leih ich mit aus,

und weil sie so spannend sind haben ich sie zu Hause längst aus.

Auch der Lesestoff geht mit nie aus,

denn ich komme mit vielen Büchern nach Haus.

Spannende Bücher die find ich toll,

denn Nachts gruseln sie mich wundervoll.

Ich Träume von Hexen auf Besen,

von Monstern und auch anderen Wesen.

Die Bibliothek ist super toll,

ein ganzes Haus mit Büchern voll."

Miriam Kleidt und Ramona Staudt.

"... Weil sie mich kostenlos in andere Welten endführt."

Otto, Christina, Fürth

"... Denn eine Welt ohne Bibliothek wäre eine Welt ohne Gedächtnis."

Viola Schnee-Eichhorn, Padenstedt

Ireland

These are very exciting times for public libraries in Ireland. On November 26 th the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Mr. Noel Dempsey, T.D., will launch the report of the Public Library Policy Review Group

"Branching Out – A New Public Library Services" The report looks at existing library services, examines their role in broader public policy and in particular addresses their social impact. It gives a blueprint for improving and

developing the service for the future and outlines the steps to be taken to achieve this. In advance of the report the Minister has already announced a grant of an extra £ 1 million, from lottery funding, to authorities to add to their current spending for bookstocks in 1999. In his speech announcing the extra funding the Minister stressed that having high quality stock on the shelves is one of the most important factors in attracting and keeping library users. He went on to say, however, that the success of public libraries should not be measured by the number of volumes on the shelves but by how they are meeting the needs of their users.

Elsewhere in Ireland, An Chomhairle Leabharlanna/The Library Council, is managing a project to develop a framework for a national

policy on libraries and information services in Ireland. The report of the project team will be presented to the Minister for the Environment and Local Government in Spring 1998. The project has been widely consultative, inviting submissions from all stakeholders in the sector and consulting with key players. As part of the research for the policy framework the project team surveyed all public libraries and commissioned qualitative research involving focus group of users and non-users of public library services. An analysis of the surveys and qualitative research will be included in the final report. It looks like 1999 is going to be a very busy year for public libraries in Ireland.

Norma McDermott
Assistant Director
The Library Council, Ireland

Romania

Here is some information about things happened in connection with public libraries in Romania lately:

1. A new Public Library Regulation was published in Nov. 1998.
2. A draft for a Public Library Law exists for the first time in Romania this year.
3. We have an Automatisation Program for Public Libraries 1998-2000.

4. Probip 2000 is a program for the evaluation of public library activities that has begun in 1997. For these activities the Ministry of Culture cooperates with the Public Library Association and the Public Libraries' Directors Council (logistically and financially).

Ana Andreescu, director
Ministry of Culture of Romania
Book Departement

Russia

As in the whole world public libraries in Russia serve the bulk of population, i.e. 37.4%. However, the designation "public" is not overall applied. During the Soviet period this type of libraries was called as a "mass" one, today it is often called as a "popular" one, or, free access library. In the total number of the libraries of our country they make one third, i.e. 49 377. Since 1989 both total number of libraries and number of public libraries decreases by force of economic difficulties in our country. More than 1 700 public

libraries were liquidated during last five years. Average number of residents per a library is 3 000. However, this figure strongly differs for cities (10 000 per a library) and for rural area (1 000). Aggregate library stock also decreases insignificantly. Today it is 978 million, which on one resident basis equals to 6.6 books (5.6 for cities and 9.4 for rural area). In spite of some decrease of resource basis, the figures of library users increase insignificantly (both readers number and the number of book borrowings).

Public libraries in rural area are in great demand as they are the only cultural institutions with free of charge service. The main categories of readers remain invariable, first of all they are young people, children, and pensioners. Last years the importance of libraries as information centres assisting in education, retraining, and small business increases. Local municipal information became more interesting to socially active readers. Level of computerization in public libraries is still low. Very few public libraries (first of all located in the largest cities) have Internet entry or their own electronic information data bases.

Majority of public libraries in Russia are consolidated in library systems with fairly high extent of corporate interaction (joint collecting, book exchange, consulting etc.).

Since 1991 process of the decentralization of state administration actively takes place in the country, and since 1995 the development of local self-administration is on. Earlier public libraries were financed on account of both state and local budget, now it takes place only on account of the local one. However, not all local communities turned out to be ready to charge oneself fully with libraries. This fact generates problems in

relation to both financing and the interaction of libraries within systems.

In 1995, the Federal law "On librarianship" was adopted. It enumerates the main requirements to public libraries, lists the services to be fulfilled at no charge for any citizen. Since 1995 the work on the distribution and implementation of UNESCO Public Library Manifesto organized by National Library of Russian and Russian Library Association is on. National Library of Russian develops also the Model Standard for Public Library. Its draft has already been published, in 1999 a number of seminars to discuss will be held, whereupon it will be examined by Russian Library Association. In 1997, the Public Library Committee has been established in Russian Library Association.

The social and professional agency, Library Assembly of Eurasia, including the librarians from countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States has developed the Model Act "On Public Libraries". At an early date it has to be adopted by the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

V. Firsov,
Standing Committee member

South Africa

South Africa has a population of 40 million with some 1500 agencies administering over 3000 library service points. This excludes school libraries but includes almost 2000 public library service points. While there are some excellent libraries with relatively sophisticated infrastructure, the vast majority of South African's do not have access to library and information services. Recently a Commission on Gender Equality Speakout on Poverty concluded that 29% of the adult population is illiterate, one in four schools has no water in walking distance, 57 % of schools have no electricity, 20 % of African women older than 20 years of age have no formal schooling and 53 % of the country lives on less than £30 per month (Naidoo, 1998).

It was hoped that the advent of a democratic government in 1994 would herald a major change in library and information services provision. While proposals for a new library and information service dispensation were drawn up, little has come to fruition. In fact many public libraries, user fees have been instituted, many school libraries have ceased functioning, and there have been severe financial cutbacks at university and national libraries. (Lor, 1998 (a)).

While this does present a depressing scenario, progress is being made with the development of "telecentres", "community service centres" and the extension of library services to previously unserved communities. The forthcoming amalgamation of the two national libraries, the

South African Library, founded in 1818 in Cape Town, and the State Library, founded in 1887 in Pretoria, into the National Library of South Africa will present an opportunity for renewal. (Lor, 1998 (b)).

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