



IFLA Section of Public Libraries

Newsletter

Issue no 21, May 1999

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



The voice of the chair:

The Revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries

The Section of Public Libraries' main project is the revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries. Published in 1986 these now need to be up-dated and the Section Committee set up a working group of six members to carry out the revision. A seminar was held in Noordwijk, Netherlands in August 1998 with an invited group of librarians from twenty-one different countries to discuss what should be included in a revised version of the guidelines. A report of the outcome of the seminar was given at the IFLA conference in Amsterdam in August 1998. The proceedings of the seminar have now been published and details are given below.

The seminar was an important first stage in the consultation process which will be necessary to ensure the revised document has relevance world-wide. Since then working group members drafted different chapters of the new document and met in Barcelona for two days in February 1999 to discuss these drafts and plan further progress. The draft will be revised further during summer 1999 and will be sent out for consultation to other standing committee members, chairs of other sections in Division 3, delegates at the Noordwijk seminar and those who attended the Open session on the seminar results at the IFLA conference in Amsterdam in August 1998. We

hope that those consulted will reply as quickly as possible

The draft will also be introduced at the Open Session of the Section at the IFLA conference in Bangkok in August 1999 and the working group will be there to listen to the comments from delegates. The group will then meet again with the aim of having a final draft ready to present at the IFLA Conference in Jerusalem in August 2000.

We all realise the challenge of producing a document which can be used by public librarians in different parts of the world and in libraries at very different stages of development. How successful we

are will to a large extent depend on receiving constructive comments when the draft is sent for consultation and discussed at the Bangkok conference. We will look forward to hearing from you.

Philip Gill
Chair, IFLA Section of
Public Libraries &
Guidelines Revision
Working Group.

*Proceedings of the IFLA /
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as the Gate-way to the Infor-
mation Society:*

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Spring Meeting 1999

The spring meeting of the Section of Public Libraries was held in Barcelona, Spain this year, 27th and 28th of March. 10 members of the section attended. The Pati Manning Building was a very convenient venue for the meeting, being in the centre of the city of Barcelona, not far away from the well-known "Ramblas" but a very quiet place.

As 1999 is an election year for IFLA, the section membership matters was one of the items in the agenda. There were more nominations for new Standing Committee members than free places which is a very positive sign for the section. The section is running several projects and new members are very welcome to support the sections work actively.

Projects of the Section of Public Libraries:

- National Information Policies: results of an international questioning leading to a written report, which is expected to be ready at the Bangkok Conference in August 1999 and will contain proposals for further action to be taken by IFLA.

- Developing Libraries in a Future Aspect: a revision of the IFLA Public Library Guidelines based

on the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto. A Working Group of Standing Committee members, who met two days before the spring meeting started, discussed a first rough draft after the input of a Pre-conference Seminar, which was held in Noordwijk (Netherlands) last August. The Working Group will report on the progress of their work in a panel presentation during the Bangkok Conference.

- West African Conference: the Section helps to implement the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto in Third World Countries. For 1999 a regional conference in West Africa is planned. As in Malaysia and Brazil the years before, this conference shall support the development of public libraries in Africa, using the manifesto.

The section is planning two more new projects on Lifelong Learning and on dissemination of informa-

tion on UNET (UNESCO Public Library Network). Action on these project proposals will be part of an action plan 1999-2001 of the Medium-Term-Programme. Current reports of the committee members had been given on national developments of libraries and librarianship. As usual these reports will be published in the section's newsletters.

The meeting ended with a tour around the Servei de Biblioteques of the Diputació de Barcelona and the visit to a beautiful and very busy new branch library of Nou Barris as an example of an ambitious and well structured development plan for Barcelona's public Libraries. The committee members thank Assumpta Bailac Piugdellivol for organising the meeting in Barcelona so well and thanks to her institution for their hospitality.

Ilona Glashoff

Secretary, IFLA Section of Public Libraries

Editor's note: Since the meeting we have learned that the 1999 conference will be held in Nigeria on The Development of Library Associations. A Pan-African conference on the Unesco Public Library Manifesto is now planned for 2000.

IFLA/PL Newsletter

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IFLA Conference 1999 in Bangkok
Programme of the Section of Public Libraries

Monday, 23rd of August
09:00 - 10:25

Meeting No. 79

Open Forum: Division of Libraries Serving the General Public

1. The Public Library in Thailand

Kulthorn Lerdsuriyakul (Ministry of Education, Bangkok, Thailand)

2. The Division of Libraries Serving the General Public: an overview

Ilona Glashoff (Hamburger Öffentliche Bücherhallen, Hamburg, Germany)

3. Highlights of the work of the Section of Libraries for the Blind

Rosemary Kavanagh (Toronto, Canada) & Stephen King (London, United Kingdom)

Highlights of the Work of the Section of Libraries Serving Disadvantaged People

Sue Lithgow (Aberystwyth, United Kingdom)

Highlights of the Work of the Section of Public Libraries

Philip Gill (Stoneleigh/Coventry, United Kingdom)

Wednesday, 25th of August
12:30-15:00

Meeting No. 139

Open Session of the Section of Public Libraries

'Developing the Public Library'

1. Public Library Services to Rural and Remote Communities:

Malaysian and Australian Models

Norma Abu Semon (MARA Institute of Technology, Malaysia) and
Robert Pestell (State Library of Queensland, Australia)

**2. The Challenges in Providing Public Library Services
in a Multicultural and Geographically Remote Area**

Christine Ku Scott-Smith (Guam Public Library, Guam)

3. Developing Public Libraries: revising the IFLA Guidelines for Public Libraries

Panel discussion of the Working Group: Barbabara Clubb (Canada), Philip Gill (UK),
Ilona Glashoff (Germany), Kerstin Hassner (Sweden), Robert Pestell (Australia)

Bangkok Conference Schedule

Division 3: Libraries Serving the General Public

Friday, 20th of August

09:00-13:00 Professional Board (PB)
14:00-18:00 Coordinating Board (CB)

Saturday, 21st of August

09:00-11:50 Standing Committees
(SC:Public; Children)
12:00-14:50 SC (Disadvantaged; Multicultural;
School)
15:00-17:20 SC (Blind; Mobile RT)
17:30-18:30 National Caucuses
19:00 Reception IFLA Officers
(on invitation only)

Sunday, 22nd of August

09:00-10:20 Orientation for Newcomers
10:30-11:25 UNESCO Open Forum
10:30-12:00 Discussion groups
12:30-16:30 Council I
16:00 Opening of Exhibition/Reception

Monday, 23rd of August

09:00-10:25 Open Forum: Division of Libraries
Serving the General Public
09:00-13:00 Workshop Multicultural
joint with Africa
10:30-11:50 Orientation to IFLA
10:30-11:50 Discussion Groups
12:00-12:50 Guest Lecture
12:30-15.30 ROTNAC RT
(Executive Committee)
13:00-13:50 Information Coordinators
16:00-18:00 Opening Session
(must be seated by 15:30)
Plenary Session
19:30-23:30 Gala Reception /
Dinner and Cultural Performance

Tuesday, 24th of August

09:00-11:20 Library Services to Multicultural
Populations joint with
Management and Marketing

11:30-12:25 Guest Lecture II (FAIFE, Free
Access to Information and
Freedom of Expression)

12:00-14:00 Poster Sessions

15:30-17:50 School Libraries and
Resource Centres

15:30-17:50 Libraries for the Blind
Evening Library Receptions

Wednesday, 25th of August

09:00-11:20 Libraries Serving
Disadvantaged Persons

09:00-11:20 FAIFE

11:30-12:25 Guest Lecture III

12:00-14:00 Poster Sessions

12:30-15:00 Public Libraries

13:00-16:30 Study Tours/Library Visits

15:30-17:50 Libraries for Children and
Young Adults

15:30-17:50 Mobile Libraries

Evening Free for receptions at Embassies

Thursday, 26th of August

09:00-13:00 FAIFE Workshop

09:00-17:00 Workshop "Education and Training
of Children's Librarians"

09:00-17:00 Workshop "UNESCO School
Library Manifesto: Dissemination
and Implementation"

13:00-17:00 Study Tours/Library Visits

Friday, 27th of August

08:30-10:20 SCs (Disadvantaged;
Multicultural; School)

10:30-12:20 SCs (Children; Blind; Public)

12:30-14:25 CB II

14:30-14:50 PB II

15:00-18:00 Council II and Closing Session

Saturday, 28th of August

Excursions

Overview of Standing Committee Members 1999

Section of Public Libraries

21 members, List approved by PB/EB, joint meeting in The Hague, 24th March 1999

Elected	Term
Frode Bakken, Norway	1997 first
Jarmila Burgetová, Czech Republic	1997 first
Barbara Clubb, Canada	1997 first
Nic Diament, France	1997 first
Vladimir Firsov, Russia	1997 first
Philip Gill, UK	1997 second
Ilona Glashoff, Germany	1997 first
Tuula Haavisto, Finland	1997 first
Britt Marie Häggström, Sweden	1997 second
Kerstin Hassner, Sweden	1997 first
Nerses Hayrapetyan, Armenia	1997 first
Bernard Margolis, USA	1997 first
Dick Scheepstra, Netherlands	1997 second
Reinhard Stridde, Germany	1997 first

Re-elections for 2nd term

Assumpta Bailac, Spain	1999 second
Robert Pestell, Australia	1999 second

New Members of the Committee

Clara Budnik, Chile	1999 first
Georgeta Clinca, Romania	1999 first
Florence Poncé, France	1999 first
Mary Sherman, USA	1999 first
Boerge Soendergard, Denmark	1999 first

Corresponding Members:

Shahaneem Hanoum Dadamcah, Malaysia
Frenc Nagy, Hungaria
Gloria María Rodríguez Santa María, Colombia
Tiiu Valm, Estonia



Canada

by Barbara Clubb, February 1999

Information Rights Week 1999

The Canadian Library Association has announced that March 22-28, 1999 will be the sixth annual Information Rights Week in Canada. The theme of the event is *Put People in the Picture*. It is an opportunity to increase public awareness of information policy issues, such as the information highway, privacy and access to government information.

The convergence of computers and high-speed telecommunication networks provides an increased opportunity for public access to information and participation in the democratic processes of society, but there is a concern that access and participation may be reduced through the imposition of user fees and monopoly control. Libraries and librarians can play a leadership role within the community by ensuring that the public understands the impact of these issues.

Brian Campbell is director of systems and technical services at the Vancouver Public Library in British Columbia and this year's

convenor of the CLA Joint Committee on Information Policy. He writes that "access continues to be confused with interaction and participation. Issues such as the need for training of trainers and of the public, encouraging new voices in Internet content, recognition of the barriers to access for women, minorities, the poor and the under-educated have received only token recognition."

The Information Rights Week theme reminds us that recognition of libraries as Internet access points is but a small step to assuring equal access to telecommunication and information resources for the public. Campbell continues "Universal access does not yet exist in Canada... Equality of access recedes with each corporate merger and marketplace strategies overwhelm the small pockets of public space on the Internet. As we lobby for short-term capital grants to introduce Internet or small digitization projects, we must be active in the larger political picture."

Information Week Rights kits are available from the Canadian Library Association office at a cost

of \$5.00 CN per kit. Tel: 613-232-9625.

Gates Learning Foundation comes to Canada

On October 1, 1998 the Gates Library Foundation, (since renamed the Gates Learning Foundation) announced the Canadian version of their library support program. The total program is a \$400,000,000 initiative of Bill and Melinda Gates to ensure that all Americans and Canadians have access to the internet through their local public libraries. Eligibility details and applications are expected to be ready in early March 1999.

All public library branches are eligible for funding provided that they qualify under the definition of community poverty. No specific funding level has been established for Canada as a country. Program roll-out is expected to take 18 months. For further information see the foundation website at www.glf.org.



(Canada, cont.)

Web Awareness Week 1999

The 350+ public library systems of the province of Ontario, Canada (population 10 million) are joining forces with the national *Media Awareness Network* to produce a Web Awareness Program as the main theme of Ontario Library Week in October 1999. Working with the media, school divisions and a host of partner organizations, the week will focus on helping citizens and especially children to use and evaluate the world wide web safely and wisely. For additional information contact B. Clubb, Ottawa Public Library.

National Library of Canada

Canadian librarians, researchers, historians and archivists are eagerly awaiting the public results of a major study on the future of the National Library of Canada and the National Archives of Canada. The study, conducted by Dr. John English, involved research and significant consultation both public and sectoral, and was designed to help guide these two major national institutions as they enter the 21st century particularly in light of the impact that digitization is having on all facets of library and archival activities. In Canada the National Library and the National Archives are two

separate institutions although they do share some administrative functions.

Customer Service and Public Libraries

An October 1998 study entitled *Citizens First*, was conducted by the Erin Research Group on behalf of the federal government, five provincial governments, and the Canadian post office authority Canada Post. Public libraries came second to the top as institutions in which citizens had confidence and received good service (the fire departments came first). This complements another survey by the Ekos Research Group commissioned by Industry Canada and the Canadian Library association among others. This second study released in January of 1999 revealed that seven out of 10 Canadians considered that public libraries were a good and appropriate place for Canadians to get access to the Information Highway. The study compared both private and public sector organizations. For further information contact B. Clubb, Ottawa Public Library.

Smart Communities

In the 1997 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada made the following pledge:

"We will make the information and knowledge infrastructure available to all Canadians by the year 2000, thereby making Canada the most connected nation in the world. This will provide individuals, schools, libraries, small and large businesses, rural and Aboriginal communities, public institutions, and all levels of government with new opportunities for learning, interacting, transacting business and developing their social and economic potential."

This has become known as the federal government's Connectedness Agenda.

One of the six pillars of the agenda is the development of Smart Communities and in January 1999, the government released the report of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Smart Communities. The Canadian library community was very pleased to have Wendy Newman, President of the Canadian Association of Public Libraries appointed as a member of the panel. It is believed that her membership had significant impact on the recommendations some of which are:

That the Government of Canada and the business community, in partnership with provincial governments, should continue to support programs such as SchoolNet, LibraryNet, Compu-



(Canada, cont.)

ters for Schools and other complementary programs that provide opportunities for learners to develop a basic set of information and communication technology skills and contribute to the development of learning applications within the community.

That the Government of Canada, in partnership with the provincial governments, should make available resources that will allow communities to provide sustainable ongoing public access, development and organisation of content, and orientation and assistance to users so that they remain current in the use of leading edge technologies and services that make up the community networks. The fields of learning and health offer many opportunities to demonstrate the potential of network based infrastructures that support Smart Communities and ultimately Smart Nations.

The February 16, 1999 federal budget announced \$60 million

(CN) for the development of 20 smart community initiatives. For the full text of the report see the website:

<http://smartcommunities.ic.gc.ca/smart/sc/english/index2.htm>

Connecting Canadians

Many other initiatives are underway to make Canada the most wired country in the world by the year 2000. This includes federal government initiatives such as VolNet (for volunteers), CAP (community access program) and UrbanCAP.

UrbanCAP which is scheduled to be formally announced in March 1999, has been designed to support access initiatives in the 100 Canadian communities serving over 100,000 population. Although funding levels have not been confirmed, leaders of large public libraries are being urged by the federal government to take the initiative with their municipal councils to develop "community connectivity plans". [Note in Ca-

nada, public libraries are usually administered as separate agencies from the municipal government and governed by a board of trustees appointed by the municipal council]

The UrbanCap program will provide initial seed funding to create access sites and will help urban public libraries and other community institutions secure Internet workstations. However, there is a persistent concern that the lack of on-going sustaining funding could mean that many access sites could disappear after initial funding and libraries in the original CAP program (for communities under 50,000 population) have had to redirect funds from other budget items such as the physical collection, in order to fund the ongoing costs of internet access.

In Canadian public libraries internet access is provided free to users. Further information contact the Canadian Library Association at 613-232-9625.



Denmark

by Hellen Niegaard, February 1999

Revision of the Library Act in 1999?

Issue number one right now is the long needed substantial revision of the Danish Library Act. Last revised in 1993. The revision is based on the recommendations made by the national UBIS Committee (The committee on the libraries in the information society) and its report made in the autumn 1997 to the government.

The most important UBIS result was recognition of a broader library concept and of the fact that a number of sources provide relevant information, knowledge and culture in today's (information) society. All media types and information sources should therefore be mandatory (today only printed materials are) and considered equally important for public libraries when fulfilling their task as gateways to information. A principle that when adopted will demand further funds.

A small majority of the UBIS committee members suggested that municipalities might decide to cover these extra expenses by

special fees (CD's, videos, CD-ROMS, access to external databases etc). A solution that if carried out in the end once more will favour books and printed materials. A solution differing with a long Danish tradition of free access to information and to cultural experiences via local libraries, and a solution that all library organisations etc and the minister of culture in principle object!

Latest news is that the government might decide to postpone the revision instead of taking a stand in the course of this spring as planned. Apparently the minister of culture Ms Elsebeth Ger-

ner Nielsen has not yet convinced the other members of the government.

Other hot issues are copyright problems, registration of electronic documents and the consequences of the new national library education. As the two first things are of general concern and well known to libraries all over the world let me just mention the latter.

In 1998 the Danish library education, maintained by the Royal School of Library and Information Science, was formally converted from a traditional four years high school to a traditional academic education (bachelor, master, Ph.D.). The task is now to convert it in reality, an action closely followed by the entire library sector. More information see: www.db.dk.



Reports from Public Libraries Around the World

(Denmark, cont.)

Projects:

Denmark's Electronic Research Library (DEF)

A number of activities have taken place since the DEF office was established a year ago. The aim is to create a structure for research libraries in Denmark, which will contribute to the development of a Danish virtual library, of digital capacity and user interfaces of the electronic library systems for the benefit of researchers and users of research results in the first part of the project and later – hopefully for the benefit of the general public by including public libraries.

The first part of the project is based on co-operation with the largest academic libraries in Denmark. In relation to this development the minister of culture has recently launched the idea of “DanBib for the general public” which would in fact provide all Danish citizens with the possibility of accessing the national library database DanBib.

One of the interesting project results so far is the license part. One example is the contract with the Springer-Verlag. Last No-

vember the DEF project signed a contract with Springer-Verlag for a one year test licence which covers all Danish research and public libraries. The license entitles you to unlimited search in the complete texts of all electronic journals published by Springer Verlag in LINK. The agreement is independent of current subscriptions for printed materials.

For more information see www.deflink.dk.

New Library Co-operation Structures

Since last year the National Library Authority encourage smaller libraries to form new structures of co-operation, be it public or research libraries. The idea is two-sided. One is to obtain better financial conditions when making contracts with suppliers of library automation systems and other IT-projects, but also to ensure a more efficient management through resource sharing. The National Library Authority offers special start funding to promote such co-operation between smaller municipalities and research libraries.

Statistics:

Circulation

From late 80'ies (1987 a total of 93,6 mio units) till 1996 most public libraries experienced a decline in the circulation. Since 1996 this development stopped and circulation went up again. The total number of circulation (public libraries only) amounted from 85,1 mio units to 85,9 units in 1997 and the 1998 figures not yet ready equally reflect this tendency. Of the 85,9 mio units 72,3 represent books and 13,6 other materials.

Public Libraries and the Internet

A recent survey by the National Library Authority (Oct. 1998) says that 224 libraries have access to the net, of those 184 offer access to the general public while 40 only allows the staff to search on the net for the moment. Of the 184 100 even offer access from the Children's department. This means that 88% of all potential library users (the citizens of 275 municipalities) have access to the Internet.

101 public libraries (municipalities) have established their own WEB-site, 75 including a WEB catalogue, while 29 today allows the users to make reservations.



France

by Nic Diament, February 1999

As far as networked resources are concerned, new city libraries based in regional cities have opened recently such as the new one in Limoges, whose architect (Pierre Riboulet) has also designed the Paris VIII university library at Saint-Denis inaugurated in spring 1998 as well the new one in Marseille.

Besides, several major city libraries, among them Montpellier or Lyon are changing their automated data systems, in a form of second wave evolution, adding to the automated management of their acquisition, cataloguing and lending systems introduced between 1985 and 1990, access to digitalized data on networks, either their own - such as CD-Roms - or external (internet access).

Further developments currently taking place are the continuation of departments associated with the BnF (Bibliothèque nationale de France), of the national catalogues whether by the BnF (CCF = Catalogue collectif de France) or by the ABES (Agence Bibliographique de l'Enseignement Supérieur) designed for university libraries (the SU = Système Universitaire de documentation).

In autumn 1998, the BnF first opened its reading spaces for

graduate research on the ground floor of its building. The problems they were confronted show how difficult it is to display such a variety and such a number of resources on a network.

On a political level there have been bitter discussions, not mainly on the law ruling French libraries, whose elaboration is stalled, but on the European recommendation on lending fees. There has been a lot of intolerance on both sides in the contacts between librarians and publishers. Following the Borzeix report that had met with some sort of agreement in spite of some major differences, a recent meeting organized by the ministry of culture showed how deep misunderstanding was.

The official professional status of librarians working for local authorities dates back to 10 years. It is being reshaped today, with the risk of creating a gap

between them and state-employed librarians. The IFB - French librarians' training institute - used to provide the training of a category of the senior librarians, has merged with the ENSSIB (National school for libraries and information sciences) that will from now on be in charge of all senior librarians.

Finally we are glad to see that public libraries are increasingly becoming a subject for research. The OPLPP (Observatoire Permanent de la Lecture Publique à Paris), an association of all Parisian main libraries, organized a conference titled «How and by whom are Parisian libraries used: how to cooperate»? On the occasion, the results of a very enlightening large-scale survey on the real habits of our readers were made public. Finally, a dissertation by Anne-Marie Bertrand titled «Les villes et leurs bibliothèques municipales : légitimer et décider 1945-85» (Cities and city libraries : legitimation and decision 1945-85) will be issued in March.



Spain

by Assumpta Bailac, 20 January 1999

Information Technology in Public Libraries in the Network

Diputació de Barcelona

Department of Culture Library Services

Installing information technology in public libraries is one of the strategy objectives being pursued by the Diputació de Barcelona (Provincial Council of Barcelona) in its co-operation with municipalities in the province. There have been numerous initiatives from 1990, when the computerisation of libraries started, to the most recent action taken to set up Internet services in libraries in the network. All libraries in the Network will offer public access to the Internet under the plan approved for 1999-2000.

According to the 1994 UNESCO Manifesto for Public Libraries, "Freedom, progress, and the development of society and individuals are fundamental human values. These will only be achieved through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend as much on full training as on the free, unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information."

The public library is a local information centre that provides all

kinds of knowledge and information to the public. It is not sufficient simply to say that people have a right to knowledge; the means to enable citizens to access it must also be made available.

The basic objective to the Diputació's work on public libraries is to ensure that they serve as a local access point to information and they are able to offer users the full resources they may require so that they can all access information on an equal footing. There are three concepts involved in the process: accessibility, contents and training.

Background

The Law on the Library System in Catalonia expresses a clear determination to surmount the existing situation in our country, where there are a number of different networks within the same geographical area. There are in fact four networks defined by the regional public reading systems. On the basis of its clear wish to make services more municipal in nature, provincial councils need to "facilitate" the networking of libraries within their area.

The networking tradition of the Diputació de Barcelona dates back a long way. Just like in so many other services, particularly in Culture and Education, the Diputació has continued, in politically difficult times, the work started by the Mancomunitat de Catalunya (an association of municipalities in Catalonia). The Network is growing: the 120 libraries in the Network at the end of 1998 will number 137 by the end of 1999.



Reports from Public Libraries Around the World

(Spain, cont.)

Computerisation and the union catalogue

The technical services providing support to libraries have always had the concept of the "union catalogue" as a feature of their work ever since their origins during the time of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya. In the 1920s, it was of course a manually-kept union catalogue but it operated on the basis of the same criteria used now with the computerised catalogue: one record for every bibliographical title, which gave details of which library had that particular volume.

The first computerised library in the Network was the Joan Miró Library in the Eixample district of Barcelona. This was in 1990.

The process of computerisation had begun earlier in 1988 with the setting up of a committee consisting of both librarians and computer experts, which was established to define the Network's computer needs. Following an open competition, the software selected was the VTLS (Virginia Tech Library System), which is a multi-functional, integrated, on-line package designed to automate all the tasks carried out in a library or in a network of libraries: acquisitions, cataloguing, monitoring authorities, public enquiries, loans, monitoring mass-market publications and statistics.

The Diputació was the first institution in Catalonia to introduce this software. Now it is used in almost every library centre in the country (Catalan university libraries, the Library of Catalonia and other public libraries in the country). There are now over 430 libraries in 38 different countries using VTLS installations.

61 of the 120 libraries in the network (114 libraries and six mobile libraries) are computerised.

The technological conditions of the time meant that the initial computerisation project was designed as a model based on decentralised data and programs. One computer was to centralise the libraries in the city of Barcelona and L'Hospitalet del Llobregat and the union catalogue, while in the remaining towns and cities in the province, one computer was to be set up with the software and the locally installed catalogue.

This structure leads to problems in maintaining the software and in the remote usage of the hardware, and only remains in operation in the first computerised libraries (1990-1994). When the quality and cost of telephone lines reached the level required by the service, the design of the computerisation project was altered and became a centralised hardware, software and data model (1994-1996).

Another major change occurred in 1996: local networks were set up in libraries, which has made it possible to use office automation and e-mail, and to provide access the Internet. Libraries are connected via frame relay dedicated lines at speeds of 128 or 64 kbps depending on the number of PCs installed.

At the end of 1998, the union catalogue held 1,811,706 volumes and 176,174 different titles. There were 370,151 networked library users sharing a library card.

In 1995, the Diputació de Barcelona invested almost Pta 45 million in its computerisation programme. The provision for 1999 is Pta 300 million, not including the investment required for setting up public access to the Internet.

It is important that support for library computerisation be maintained. Regardless of the benefits for public libraries arising from the Internet as a means to access information, the process of computerising libraries needs to be continued. This is also true of the compilation of the union catalogue, which should include all the documentary records held in libraries.



(Spain, cont.)

The Scientific Ring and the accord with Catalan universities

In 1995, the Diputació de Catalunya Department of Culture signed a collaboration agreement with the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the University of Barcelona, Pompeu Fabra University and the Polytechnical University of Catalonia on facilitating communication and providing computer access to all the stocks of libraries in these institutions through the Scientific Ring. The agreement involves information exchanges and facilities for copying bibliographical records and for interlibrary loans.

New documentary supports in libraries

Books continue to be the main element in any kind of library. Paper is still the key feature. From 1987, when the first audio-visual material section started up in the library in Rubí, to the situation as it stood at the end of 1998 when there were 35 libraries in the network with material of this type, not only has the equipment installed changed, but the very concept of the service is now different.

The so-called "materials on other supports" are not physically isolated from the books held in the library on the same issue. Mate-

rial on CD-ROM, acquired directly by town and city councils, is incorporated into stocks in the same way.

In 1996, a CD-ROM tower was installed in the Library Service building, essentially with material of use to the Cataloguing Unit and the Selection and Acquisitions Department.

In 1998, following analysis to define the type of service needed and technical requirements, an applications server with Windows NT Terminal Server was acquired, making it possible for computerised libraries to access information and to consult reference works on CD-ROM.

It is planned that in 1999 a service will be started up offering access to a database of newspaper information in Spanish (news, biographies, organisations and events) via the Internet to nine libraries in the Network. This is an Efedata product and is the start of subscriptions to publications on the Web.

The Web and information resources

The Library Service collaborates on the Diputació de Barcelona Web site (www.diba.es/biblio) in order to accomplish three basic functions:

1. To present the activity of the Diputació de Barcelona related to public libraries

2. To serve as the access to the mass of information in public libraries at a general level
3. To provide resources on the Internet of interest to public libraries and their users by locating, selecting, analysing, structuring and approving such resources.

All the work on the page contents is done by the Computer Applications Unit using information provided by the various sections in the Service and by the libraries themselves, with support from the Local Government office. The information will be fully operational for all three headings by the middle of 1999.

The Internet and networked libraries

In a study/survey conducted by the Canadian Library Association (1998) on the Internet and public libraries, seven out of every ten replies considered providing access for the public to the Internet to be one the functions of a public library. 66% believed that libraries should offer training to users on how to use the Internet, while six out of ten believed that public libraries should contribute towards providing information on the Internet that is closely linked to residents' real lives and in their own language.

I do not know what the results of a similar survey held here would



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be, but our needs are not so very different.

The decision to support providing Internet connections in public libraries has a very clear ultimate objective: to provide citizens with the infrastructure, assistance, tools and connection to the network.

This action has aspects: firstly, there is the infrastructure required; and secondly there is the training for both library staff and users. The first step towards providing Internet access in public libraries in the Network was taken by giving this access to library staff as a tool for the library information services and in libraries that were already computerised. This process began in 1997 and will finish in the early part of 1999. Access will be via the Scientific Ring.

In order to be able to take the initiative forward, it was necessary to change the computer structure in libraries by establishing the local network, increasing the amount of existing equipment and extending the bandwidth of the frame relay communication line.

The second step was to provide this tool to other libraries (57) which were not computerised. The investment and installation of equipment took place in 1998. In addition to office computerisation, e-mail and access to the resources of the Internet, libraries can

also, like any other Internet user, consult the network union catalogue through a Web interface.

At the end of 1998, all 120 libraries (114 libraries and 6 mobile libraries) have office computerisation, e-mail and access to the Internet as an information tool for librarians.

The Internet as a public service

In 1998, the Library Service and the IT and Telecommunications Service of the Diputació de Barcelona organised a public tender process to select suppliers of software and hardware suitable for providing Internet access for users. A report was drawn up on the entire evaluation process and issued to all the town and city councils with a library in the Network. The objective of the tender process and the subsequent evaluation was to provide tools to those councils interested in having this service in their libraries.

Four councils in the province (Castelldefels, Granollers, St. Boi de Llobregat and Terrassa) have a public Internet service in their libraries. In most cases, users have to pay to use the service. The Diputació had planned to incorporate this service into computerised libraries starting in the year 2000. The pace at which the technology is developing and

the determination that public libraries should play a central role in the "information society" means that the initial schedule has had to be reviewed.

The process will begin in 1999 and early expectations are that it will continue until 2000. The service will initially be offered free of charge. Printing and floppy disks will be charged for. The library will concentrate its efforts on monitoring time and usage. Computers that provide access to the Internet are to be used to seek information, do research and to aid learning. It is not the intention that they should be used for games or chatgroups.

Training

Training has been a key feature in tackling the entire process of change. In 1997, the Library Service in conjunction with the Training Unit of the Staff Planning Service began computer training courses in Windows, Word and Excel for staff in eight libraries. In 1998, a further 45 libraries took the courses. The plan is for another 34 to do the courses in 1999. A total of almost 250 librarians and specialist library assistants will have taken these courses by the end of the year.

A further training package has been set up on technologies on managing access to information through a course entitled Information Resources on the Internet.



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(Spain, cont.)

The course is designed for groups of ten people, one librarian from each library, and gives the basic tools on accessing the Internet and understanding the opportunities it provides that may be useful to public libraries and their users. In 1998, five groups, covering a total of 50 people, took this course. Six more groups will be given this course in 1999, meaning that one librarian from every library operating in the Network will have taken this course by the end of the year.

The complexity of the information technology equipment in libraries in the Network has led us to boost direct IT support for libraries using a model similar to that of the supply librarians, who are attached to the central library but provide support to the libraries in the rest of the area. Two specialist IT assistants have begun to work in the service in this field.

Every time a new library is opened or computerised, the service's Computer Applications Unit sets up training sessions on VTLS and on its basic applications. Four training packages have been established: Consulting and Locating

Documents in the Catalogue (25 people from 12 libraries); Loans and Gathering Statistics (38 people from 11 libraries); and the User Interface and E-mail (38 people from 11 libraries). The fourth package was a training session run for 111 people in 49 libraries at the time when Microsoft Outlook was installed in computerised libraries.

The Intranet

New technology has a considerable direct effect on working systems. Obviously, it aids communication and the sharing of procedures and resources. The libraries in the province have always worked in a network. The Intranet for the whole of the Diputació de Barcelona will now make all internal processes much easier.

1999 is a key year for setting up on the Intranet all internal, technical and procedural material shared by libraries. In March, the *Manual de Supervivència* (Survival Manual), which gives all the basic information on the service and the Network in a well-structured manner, together with

all the operating instructions and forms used, will be on the IntraDiba for consultation and use. It is clear that the combination of information and communication technologies makes it easier to provide and convey information, and that it has a major impact on public library management and services alike.

Ensuring that modern public libraries are well positioned in terms of technology and networking are two keys to their success.

Everything is moving so fast...

These are the challenges we face at the moment, but we can already envisage the forthcoming demands that we will shortly confront: the need to be able to make progress in a balanced manner, ensuring equal opportunities for all throughout the province and fostering the autonomy of each of the libraries by setting up their own Web page or through producing their own materials. In the use of telematics, the future will be the same as the way it has developed in other areas.

En nuestro website tenemos versiones en catalán, euskera, gallego, valenciano y bable (en formatos html y pdf), de las que pueden disponer libremente. Se encuentran en <http://www.fundaciongsr.es/documentos/frames.htm>

La Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez