EBLIDA Online Workshops 2020: "Think the Unthinkable"

A European library agenda for the post-Covid 19 age

In April 2020, EBLIDA launched a survey aimed to detect measures, practices and possible services that were initiated during the crisis and could be pursued in one way or another in the post-Covid 19 age.

EBLIDA got responses from 17 countries from Europe, which is as diverse as always, countries managing restrictions differently. After evaluation, EBLIDA published the report “Think the unthinkable” ...
EBLIDA Online Workshop N°3, 16.10.2020, A European library agenda for the post-Covid 19 age

EBLIDA & Covid-19

EBLIDA is helping European libraries go through the Covid 19 crisis and prepare an agenda for the Post-Covid Phase.

EBLIDA Checklist in the face of the Covid-19 crisis
EBLIDA May 2020 Newsletter: Special Issue (No. 4)

The Editorial

EBLIDA checklist for library associations and libraries in the face of the Covid-19 crisis

Library Associations in the face of the Covid-19 crisis:
- Cyprus: Cyprus Association of Librarians and Information Specialists (CALIS) and the EBLIDA Checklist by Panagiotis Themistocleous
- Denmark: The Danish Library Association and the EBLIDA Checklist
- Finland: Finnish Library Association and the EBLIDA Checklist by Rauha Maanro
- Ireland: Library Association of Ireland and the EBLIDA Checklist by Marian Higgins
- Latvia: National Library of Latvia and the EBLIDA Checklist by Silva Vucena, Evija Vlsters and Māra Ēksūsone
- Poland: National Library of Poland and the EBLIDA Checklist by Tomasz Gruszewski
- Switzerland: Bibliomedia / Bibliosuisse and the EBLIDA Checklist by Franziska Baetcke

The Report outlines a *European library agenda in the post-Covid age* along *five new normals*:

1. **Exponential social distancing: a well-connected two-meter library**

   ![Central Library Zurich (CH), training during World War II](image)

   Barth, R.: Bibliotheken, Bibliothekarinnen und Bibliothekare in der Schweiz, 1997, p. 181
2. Technologies are mutating and shaping libraries in new ways

3. Uncharted economic territory: review the library budget composition

https://www.davegranlund.com/cartoons/2010/06/06/library-budget-cuts/
4. Library governance at central and local levels

City librarian facing alone the City Council (USA, 1956)

“Trial” scene in the film “Storm Center” (1956) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gst7BKUbObY
5. Do not forget the climate change opportunity and threat

$10,00
$9,00 (for members)
New York Public Library Shop

$12,99
$11,69 (for members)
New York Public Library Shop
EBLIDA’s 15 recommendations

SOCIAL AXE

Libraries should:

1) be integrated into national health policies and services through voice calls, audiobooks and making (3D printers), as a complement to visual-based services (consultation of websites, and visual tools).

2) Social distancing ... re-designing people flows-in/flows-out matching them with movements of resources, ideas, and equipment.

3) be a one-stop access to accurate health information produced by national and international governmental authorities combatting misinformation and disinformation through fake news.

4) Social exclusion ... embark upon a fully-fledged strategy aimed to the vulnerable, the elderly and left-behind, also delivering food where necessary, and adopt hybrid methods (physical and technological) to reinforce their action.
When Covid closed the library: staff call every member of Victorian library to say hello

Libraries find ways to keep in touch with regulars, from phone calls to delivering books to live-streaming author talks

When Melbourne's Yarra Plenty regional libraries first went into lockdown in March, shut the doors and left the remaining unborrowed books on their shelves, staff were sent home with a phone.

“One of the hardest things about lockdown was people being separated from their community,” said Lisa Dempster, Yarra Plenty's executive manager of public participation.

“The library is often a hub for the community, and we identified the most vulnerable cohort of our community would be the elderly.”

So the library staff pulled from their database the phone number of every library member over the age of 70 – a total of 8,000 records.

Then the librarians started calling those members. All of them.

By Stephanie Convery. In: The Guardian, 12.08.2020

TECHNOLOGICAL AXE

Libraries should:

5) **reinforce its focus on e-copies and design new models of e-copy distribution** in libraries, taking into account the strategies of information service providers and aggregators.

6) **reinforce digital literacy activities for targeted categories of people** in order to fight the **digital divide**, foster digital intelligence in libraries and stimulate multiple use of technologies.

7) **be active partners in national digitization and artificial intelligence plans**, and combining physical and digital in order to meet library objectives.

8) **pursue distance-learning objectives in alliance with educational establishments**, stretching out as far as possible the virtual dimension.

9) in compliance with privacy regulations, **exert control over data and metadata affecting library operations** and re-use them for policy-making and decision-making processes.

10) **be active actors in the distribution cycle of the post-production events** likely to be built around [animation] music, performing arts and live performance, and request cultural agencies to re-design the system of local aids, fiscal incentives, policy measures to culture in a broader holistic perspective.
University Library

on Planet Mars

founded in the year 2636

outside ...

... and inside: the “largest library collection in the Western Universe” on two discs!

Vision in: FUTURAMA, American animated science fiction TV series (1999-2003), created by Matt Groening (The Simpsons), Season 1, aired on 03.10.1999 - https://theinfosphere.org/Mars_University_(place)
GOVERNANCE AXE

Libraries should:

11) **request local governments to find additional budget** for library services **at national and European level** in order to compensate for shortcomings in library’s future budgets.

12) think of themselves as **“structurally” essential to the development of a country** and, in this way, manage possible financial resources generated from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2021-2027.

13) **link the development of the public library to sustainable development activities** at local and national level.

14) **encourage libraries to be champions of sustainable development** by and **apply the social development taxonomy [sustainable finance]** set up by the European Commission.

15) **adopt flexible forms of library governance** in order to manage European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2021-2027 in an appropriate way.
**Bi-Bus** (started: 2020)

« Bi » for Binational/Bilingual/Bibliobus

**Electric bus** (climate! sustainable!)

Initiative of the City Library of Saarbrücken (D) with **German & French books for children**

Supplier of 40 primary schools in France (*Moselle*) and Germany (*Saarland*)

**Financed by the European Fund for regional development**

[https://www.bi-bus.eu/](https://www.bi-bus.eu/)
The community Hub of Libraries in Europe!
Striving towards an equitable, democratic and sustainable society
The European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations is an independent umbrella association of library, information, documentation and archive associations and institutions in Europe.

http://www.eblida.org/publications.html
Example of “Think the unthinkable”, think inside the box ...

IFLA Congress, Milan, podium session, 27.08.2009
Libraries on the Agenda: IFLA and the economic crisis

Question from the public: "Do you have any tip how to deal with the next crises, plural?"

1st reply from the podium, only in 1 sentence:
"Focus on core business!"
said Bob McKee, CEO of Cilip (†August 2010) …

… so: What is your core business in your type of library?
Example of “Think the unthinkable”, think outside the box …

Starbucks™ response to the pandemic and the ongoing evolution of the THIRD PLACE

Starbucks-President and CEO Kevin Johnson
16.07.2020

- build on experience with the pandemic, be prepared for the next ones;
- build a sense of trust with customers;
- create safe environments for them, that trust will continue beyond the pandemic;
- continue to offer positive emotions;
- don’t give up the Third Place, but offer more services, new digital ones included;
- … and for climate: open more rapid pickup stores in urban areas for pedestrians.

What Starbucks learned about COVID-19 from its China stores / by Beth Kowitt, July 16th, 2020
https://stories.starbucks.com/stories/2020/navigating-through-covid-19/ (Video interview)
The End

of the EBLIDA Online Workshop N°3, 16.10.2020, A European library agenda for the post-Covid 19 age

presented by Jean-Marie REDING,
Luxembourg, Jean-Marie.Reding@bnl.etat.lu
ALBAD – Vice pres. for Europ. Affairs / EBLIDA treasurer

3rd place - future of libraries? As bar decoration? - www.librarybar.dk

Blackboard, in English: Library = Books for the people!