The EBLIDA Newsletter is published monthly on European library & information society issues, programmes, news and events of interest to the library, archive and cultural heritage community.

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Contents:

1. Editorial, by Ton van Vlimmeren
2. EBLIDA Conference (Luxembourg, 18 April 2023)
3. EBLIDA and Ukraine
4. EBLIDA studies: methodological considerations
5. SDG-oriented policies: Denmark
6. “Inequality and Sustainability in Access to Information” in Antalya, Türkiye - Report
7. Major library events in 2023

President’s Editorial

A new year is starting and we are still in the midst of a storm with prospects that are hard to decrypt in the short term.
Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24th February 2022, the future of Europe is not resting on solid foundations. Democratic societies abide by human rights, democracy and the rule of law as pillars of peace and mutual respect among people.
For more than seventy years, when a group of far-sighted Europeans chose reconciliation rather than war and opted for peace based on interdependence rather than mutual destruction, this has been the core of European identity.

Therefore, we are calling for library attention to Ukraine. The EBLIDA Secretariat is doing its best to support harmonising the needs of Ukrainian displaced people with those of their European partners; to this purpose, we are going to present a proposal within the framework of a European Commission programme. EBLIDA's commitment towards Ukrainians remains steadfast.

To ally with Ukrainian librarians is to pursue a vision, a mission, and goals that back the concept of libraries working for a sustainable, democratic and equitable society. Through the choice of their targets, the selection of the public they serve – often with special attention for people who have no means to access knowledge and those left behind – libraries are political actors in the broadest sense of the word. They act politically, although they are not linked to any political party. This makes the difference between the ideological library – a link in the propaganda chain of dictatorial regimes – and the democratic library, where people meet, nurture dialogue, exchange opinions based on mutual understanding. A democratic library is a place where everybody dares to be different because he or she feels – and is accepted and respected, and not condemned.

The 31st EBLIDA Conference and 2nd EBLIDA-NAPLE-PL2030 Event, which take place in Luxembourg, National Library, on 18-19 April 2023, are in line with these goals. We call upon everyone to join us in these meetings. French, German and Belgian libraries – which are just a stone’s throw away - can use the EBLIDA Conference as an international conference taking place on their own territory and create together special attention to the libraries of these countries.

This Newsletter also includes some reflections about the ultimate meaning of EBLIDA research – two reports on SDGs and European libraries (May 2020 and January 2022), a report on the impact of Covid on European libraries (May 2020, updated in November 2021), the First Overview on e-lending in Europe (June 2022).

What is the aim of these studies? Do we wish to create some kind of library ranking? The article included in this Newsletter makes it clear that EBLIDA studies are no beauty contest. We work for all libraries, for the rich, best equipped and well tooled up for European exchanges and interaction, as well as for the poorly resourced libraries in need of structural help. There are no winners and losers in the field of libraries.

Finally, we deal again on the SDG-oriented policies and projects. This time our focus is on Denmark – among the most successful examples in Europe of an SDG-oriented library policy.

I wish you an excellent 2023 in all your endeavours. May you work in a much more sustainable, democratic and equitable environment!

Yours sincerely,

Ton van Vlimmeren
EBLIDA President

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2. EBLIDA Conference (Luxembourg, 18-19 April 2023): opportunities for Benelux, French and German libraries!
European routes. The host of some 80 languages and cultures, Luxembourg is at the heart of Europe in many aspects.

From 17 to 20 April, it will be the library capital of Europe with discussions on the nature and the profile of library power. On 18th April, during the EBLIDA Conference, library policies pursued by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, will be presented. For one week, the National Library of Luxembourg will be the European library hub and an engine for European library policies.

Geography tells that Luxembourg is close to major cities in Germany, France and Belgium. Cities like Trier, Saarbrücken, Bonn and Köln are 50 to 150 km away from Luxembourg; other important centres, such as Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Marburg, Heidelberg, Mainz, Wiesbaden are only 200-300 km away. Also cities that seem distant, like Würzburg and Freiburg, are less than 400 km way from the one-week European library capital. For many German librarians, Luxembourg and its National Library will be an easy trip to be made.

The same can be said for French libraries. The regions of Alsace and Lorraine, with cities such as Metz, Strasbourg, Nancy and other remarkable cities as Epinal, Colmar and Mulhouse are well connected with fast trains that make the travel to Luxembourg a short and pleasant journey. Paris is some 400 km away, but a TGV train is connecting the two capitals in less than 3 hours. Should we also add that the Brussels-Luxembourg-Strasbourg line is the most popular road for European Union-related frequent travellers?

In other words, German, French, Belgian and also to a certain extent, Dutch participants in the EBLIDA Conference will attend an international event a few kilometers away from their working place. They will enjoy a real European environment and the usefulness and the flavour to what is European in libraries.

If it happens, librarians will have only learnt from the communities they serve. Every week end, the inhabitants of the German Länder of Nordrhein-Westphalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Hessen, Baden-Württemberg, as well as the people living in the French Alsace and Lorraine regions, in Belgium and Luxembourg visit neighbouring cities. They cross borders and enjoy the meaning of Europe. These borders are very likely the most porous on the continent and the variety of languages – German, French, Flemish, Luxemburgisch - is no impediment to exchanges. Moreover, interesting and well funded Interreg programmes – i.e. the European Union Structural Funds aimed to create a closer and more cohesive Europe – create economic and social links among these regions.

When it comes to libraries, however, it seems that languages and borders are still a stumbling block for more intense exchanges. Here is another reason why German, French and Belgian librarians should be many in joining the EBLIDA Conference. Learn from your communities, be ready to create a new European library space!

- Conference website
- Early Bird registration until 11 February 2023
European libraries support Ukraine in a two-fold way:
a) technical assistance to libraries and library heritage in Ukraine;  
b) national or local support to displaced Ukrainians.

While the first option seems to be limited to specialised agencies able to operate on theatres of war, EBLIDA feels committed to operate in those geographic area where Ukrainian displaced people are now hosted. It has been estimated that between 10 and 15 percent of the Ukrainian population is living outside Ukrainian borders – a percentage that is not likely to decrease in the short term, unfortunately.

EBLIDA is going to explore all possible ways to participate in the European Commission programmes which are open to Ukraine. We have sent out requests for participation in several states in order to match partnerships.

Those who are interested may write to: g.vitiello@eblida.org.

4. EBLIDA studies: methodological considerations

A Europe which aims to create a democratic, sustainable and equitable society needs to set up indicators able to assess the state of the art of a library theme, object, or an area at cross-country level.

EBLIDA carried out a series of studies in the last three years.

A number of reports were produced, which are shaping library thinking in these fields. Worth mentioning are the two reports on Sustainable development and European libraries (May 2020 and January 2022; an update will be presented at the EBLIDA Conference on 18th April 2023), the EBLIDA First Overview on E-lending in Europe (the 2nd report will be available for the EBLIDA Conference on 18th April 2023), as well as the report A European library agenda for the post-Covid 19 age (May 2020, updated in November 2021).

These reports are usually based on input provided by library associations and institutions in 15-20 countries. They do not aim to exhaustiveness, neither do they pretend to have scholarly ambitions. They describe trends and phenomena and report about library themes from a static perspective. Other organisations (UNESCO, European Commission) and professional associations produce similar reports.

These investigations may create the impression that EBLIDA wishes to create hierarchies of
values at European level, on the basis of criteria and indicators which have not been agreed by the library profession. We want to make clear that these implicit classifications do not set rankings of excellence; they do not report about the winners and the losers in the library field. We do not wish to designate champions in the European library environment because, for EBLIDA, all kinds and typologies of libraries are important.

It is the task of scholarly librarianship, and in particular of comparative librarianship, to use these reports to reconstruct the rationale behind the trends and the areas that are described and also find the most appropriate solutions for the formation and the maintenance of sustainable, democratic and equitable library systems.

5. SDG-oriented library policies - Denmark

Denmark strives to be a pioneer in terms of sustainability, climate and the implementation of UN’s 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

SDGs are being implemented in a convincing and active way in almost all libraries.

Country Profile

The Country profile is a sort of Library Manifesto on sustainable development at national or local level, it illustrates the nature and the level of effort deployed by library associations and their partners in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in libraries.

Download the Denmark Country profile with links references and contact information.

(Excerpt from the 2nd European Report on Sustainable Development and Libraries, prepared by EBLIDA and National Library of Latvia.)

Voluntary National SDG Review 2021

(by the Danish Library Association / Danmarks Biblioteksforening)

Download the National SDG Review 2021 Denmark

The Public Library - Citizens' local Gateway to the SDG’s

Denmark strives to be a pioneer in terms of sustainability, climate and in implementing the UN’s 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Legislation and public investment solve only parts of our common SDG related challenges while implementing the goals requires broad support – at both national and local level. Public Libraries, as the most visited Danish cultural institution (37.4 million visits, DS2019), constitute already a natural focal point for all citizens when it
With a Public Library-system in place in every one of the 98 Danish municipalities, the libraries form a unique platform in order to contribute to common societal solutions in collaboration with other bodies/agents - and in cooperation with local citizens.

The Danish Library Association works together with Danish libraries to promote a 2030-focus at local level. Currently more than half of the Danish Public Libraries are involved in 2030 Activities according to official statistics (DS 2019) and more are following and developing local SDG strategies and policies.

To illustrate the importance of libraries in the process of implementing the SDG’s four cases have been chosen:

A. National DB2030 Network. By The Danish Library Association
B. The World’s Best Solutions Live! By Ballerup Public Libraries
C. Library 2030 Certification. By Svendborg Public Libraries
D. SDG Library. By Aarhus Public Libraries

Copenhagen December 2020/For further information kindly contact Michael Steen-Hansen, Director, The Danish Library Association – msh@db.dk.

A. National DB2030 Network

1. Library Org.:
The Danish Library Association (Danmarks Biblioteksforening)

2. Project Title:
DB2030 Network

3. Related to SDG Goal(s):
04 Inclusive Quality Education and Life-Long Learning 11 Sustainable, Strong Communities
16 Promote peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development 17 Partnerships

4. What:
A National 2030 Network of cross-disciplinary character including both Libraries, NGOs etc. Working to stimulate 2030 activities in the library environment and related to Danish municipalities thus supporting 2030 initiatives at both national and local level.

5. How:
After a kick-off Meeting in May 2019 the DLA2030 Network (DB2030 Netværk) was established as an informal network https://www.facebook.com/groups/706609713106254/- now counting more than 210 members on a national scale.
6. Outcome (expected):

A strong 2030 focus in the work of the public libraries in Denmark wherever relevant. Internally – in the organization of the library itself.

Externally – towards municipalities, local schools and other institutions as well as local associations and individual citizens.


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6. Inequality and Sustainability in Access to Information" in Antalya (Türkiye) - Report

IFLA Europe Regional Division Committee was represented at the 10th ANKOSLink International Conference held under the theme of "Inequality and Sustainability in Access to Information" in Antalya (Türkiye) on 21-24 November 2022.

The conference had over 400 participants from several countries including the Balkans, MENA region, Turkic countries, and Türkiye.

On the second day of the Conference, the panel titled "Beyond Sustainability: Academic Libraries in Practice" was moderated by Tuba Akbaytürk Çanak, Director of Koç University Suna Kıraç Library. EBLIDA Vice President, IFLA EURDC member Hella Klauser, MEF University Library Director, and IFLA EURDC member Ertuğrul Çimen attended the session as panelists.

Hella shared information about Sustainability, IFLA, and IFLA EURDC activities in her presentation. In the continuation of her presentation, Hella gave comprehensive information about the sustainability work of academic libraries in Germany and concluded her presentation by explaining the sustainability activities of EBLIDA.

As the second speaker, Ertuğrul gave detailed information about the SDGs activities of IFLA.
7. Major library events in 2023

EBLIDA is promoting major library events in your country in 2023.

If your event is not listed below then please fill in the form here. Thank you!

17-18 January
La bibliothèque à l’épreuve des diversités (Bpi, CFIBD, Enssib)
Paris (January 17th), Lyon (January 18th), France
https://pro.bpi.fr/journees-etude-bibliotheque-diversites-cfibd-enssib-bpi/

25-27 January
BOBCATSSS 2023
Hybrid & Oslo, Norway
https://www.oslomet.no/en/about/events/bobcatss-2023

09-10 February
Association of Danish Library Managers
Billund, Denmark
https://bibchef.dk/aarsmoede/

18-19 April
31st EBLIDA Council & Conference and 2nd EBLIDA-NAPLE-PL2030 Event
Who is afraid of library power? Empowering citizens for a democratic and sustainable society
Luxembourg
https://eblida2023.sciencesconf.org/

27-28 April
Danish Library Association
Odense, Denmark
https://db.dk/events/det-bibliotekspolitiske-topmoede-2023/

02-05 May
Österreichische Bibliothekskongress:
"Arbeitswelten – Realitäten und Visionen"
Hybrid & Kongresszentrum
Innsbruck, Austria
https://www.uibk.ac.at/congress/bibliothek2023/

03-05 May
14th Congress of our Association BAD
Algarve, Portugal
https://eventos.bad.pt/14congresso/
18-19 May
XII Congress of the Estonian Librarians:
"Libraries are the future"
Viimsi, Estonia

23-26 May
111. Bibliothekartag
Hannover, Germany
https://bibliothekartag2023.de/

30 May - 3 June
15th Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries International Conference (QQML2023):
“Library as a promoter of democracy and active citizenship”
Hybrid& Heraklion, Crete, Greece
http://qqml.org

05-07 June
Finnish Library Association: Kirjastopäivät (Library Days)
Kuopio, Finland

12-16 June
European Association For Health Information And Libraries (Eahil):
“Radical positive change agents”
Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Trondheim, Norway
https://eahil2023.org/

14-16 June
British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) 2023 Annual Conference:
"Gaining the edge: investing in our skillset"
Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK
https://biall.org.uk/annual-conference/2023-annual-conference-belfast/

05-07 July
Liber 2023
Budapest, Hungary
https://liberconference.eu

21-25 August
88th IFLA World Library and Information Congress (WLIC):
“Let’s work together, let’s library”
Hybrid & Rotterdam, Netherlands
https://2023.ifla.org/

29-30 September
BIC - Biblioteche Innovazione Comunità
Bergamo, Italy
http://www.retedellereti.org

09-12 October
8th European Conference on Information Literacy (ECIL)
Krakow, Poland
Please look at the Four good reasons to become EBLIDA member and at the membership fee which varies according to the organisation’s turnover and the status of the organisation wishing to join EBLIDA: Full or Associate Member.

For the registration form please fill out the Membership Enquiry Form or contact the Secretariat: eblida@eblida.org

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About the Newsletter

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**Editors:** Unless otherwise specified, all articles are written by the EBLIDA Secretariat.

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