Dear colleagues,

As we enter further into the new Year, new horizons are opening for EBLIDA, and for libraries as a whole. Many library organisations are preparing their annual conferences and meetings. Remarkably enough, the link between libraries and society is very often the key theme in these conferences.

A good example is Italy, where the Stelline Conference in Milan – the most important Italian Library Conference - is dedicated to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. The Municipality of Milan has kindly proposed EBLIDA to co-organise an international session on EBLIDA and Sustainable Development Goals in Europe. The venue is prestigious - the Stelline Foundation, inches away from The Last Supper, the famous painting by Leonardo da Vinci. Also the date – 13th March - is timely for EBLIDA, three months before the EBLIDA Annual Conference in Belgrade (23rd June).

EBLIDA is also launching three + 1 Europe-wide surveys.

They focus on:
- a) Library Legislation and Policy in Europe;
- b) Sustainable Development Goals and their implementation in European libraries;
- c) E-Lending practices in Europe. The Questionnaire on Library Legislation and Policy in Europe has already circulated; responses keep coming to the EBLIDA Secretariat. The two other questionnaires will be distributed soon.
An additional questionnaire is also circulating. The focus is not on copyright, but is strictly related to copyright: it concerns the future of EGIL (Expert Group on Information Law) and has been sent to EGIL Experts. To refresh your memory, EGIL is the EBLIDA Group of Experts who have strenuously and valiantly worked on the EU Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market approved in 2019. Now that the Directive has been approved, what should the role of the group be? And what should the relationship between the EGIL Members and experts in e-lending and in library legislation look like?

February is also the month when EBLIDA’s most important 2020 events are being intensively prepared. The Agenda of the EC meeting in Riga (3rd April) will be rich with important decisions to be taken, also concerning the future of EBLIDA’s leadership. In one-year time the current EBLIDA Executive Committee will end its term: there is room, therefore, for new candidates and proposals.

The intellectual content of the EBLIDA Annual Conference in Belgrade (23 June 2020) is also being worked out in-depth, with the assessment of the current EBLIDA methodology and the formulation of library policies and library indicators on SDGs. This methodology is not an exercise in itself; it will prove to be essential also for the implementation of the European Commission Work Plan 2020. The Climate Plan – and Ursula von der Leyen’s statement that the European Commission will invest one trillion Euro in the so called Green Deal – is only one of the Headlines of the EC Work Plan 2020. Other headlines include a sustainable Europe based on active citizenship, digital inclusion, educational skills and other topics which are at the centre of library missions. EBLIDA’s next step will be the adaptation of the methodology already used for Sustainable Development to the EC Workplan.

And finally, in this Newsletter we continue our exploration of UN SDGs: under observation are SDGs 9 and 10.

So far in the pipeline, we are working together with, and at the service of, European libraries.

Yours sincerely,

Ton van Vlimmeren
EBLIDA President

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Joint EBLIDA - Municipality of Milan International Session at the Stelline Conference in Milan
13 March 2020

The Stelline Palast is a 17th century building which, in the past, hosted female orphans. Since 1971 it has been home to prestigious events and exhibitions, among others the most important annual Library Conference in Italy. Now at its 25th meeting, the Library Conference gathers some 2,000 participants. This year, the international session is co-organised by EBLIDA and the City of Milan and is devoted to Sustainable Development in European libraries. It will be the first time that tools and services made available within the EBLIDA SDG European House will be presented
Stefano Parise, EBLIDA Vice President, will introduce the 2019-2022 EBLIDA Strategic Plan, its lobbying effort with European institutions and its work on library legislation and policy-making in libraries. He will also highlight the EBLIDA projects linked with the socio-cultural and educational impact of libraries. In particular, the EBLIDA Matrix will be presented and its comprehensive package which describes EU programmes, goal after goal and programme after programme.

Marjolein Oomes, researcher at the Royal Library of the Netherlands, will point out that, although the role of libraries in realizing the global Sustainable Development Goals is widely emphasized in the library world, attempts to actually make the translation of library impact-indicators into these goals are scarce, so far.

Christophe Evans, Head of the Research Department of the Bibliothèque Publique d’Information in Paris, will underline some of the factors that may undermine the usefulness of impact studies in the field of libraries. Individual perceptions, may alter data and undermine the scientific validity of the results of the impact studies. Moreover, data trends may infer judgements which are not supported by logical evidence.

Two SDG stories will be presented in Milan:

The first was implemented in 2012 in Serbia in the Jagodina municipality, where half the population lives in villages and 70% of the economy is agricultural. The Agrolib project revitalised five rural libraries and endowed them with modern technologies and services aiming to link farmers with the State, farmers among themselves and farmers with potential sellers and buyers of agricultural products, machinery and services.

The second SDG Story is a citizen science project focused on air quality in Brussels and aims to create awareness about air pollution in European cities. Transport & Development, the NGO campaigning for clean air, used the capillarity of the library network in Brussels to install sensors in libraries which regularly check air quality. Moreover, sensors are given to library users who install them at home.

The round table following the presentation of SDG stories will see the participation of both SDG story-tellers (Pierre Dornier and Vesna Crnković) and library evaluators (Christophe Evans, Marjolein Oomes and Ulla Wimmer). Library evaluators will evaluate SDG stories under an SDG perspective and will adopt / adapt SDG indicators to them. Evaluators will assess to what extent the SDG projects in libraries contribute to the attainment of SDGs.

The final session – SDGs in action - will be dedicated to free access to information – what can be considered a basic mission of libraries. In particular, SDG 16 Target 10: “Ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms” will be evaluated in libraries. Leonie Martin, President of the Young European Federalists, will expand upon the political meaning of fake news and its impact on the society. In this respect, libraries can play a big role in supporting the formation of a well-informed citizenry, encourage democratic participation and build up a transparent political decision-making process.

Giampiero Gramigna, Senior Analyst at NewsGuard, will present NewsGuard’s fight against fake news, disinformation and misinformation. NewsGuard provides credibility ratings and detailed “Nutrition Label” reviews for the news and information websites that account for 90% of online engagement with news in each country in which it operates (France, Germany, Italy, the U.K., and the U.S., with more coming soon). European libraries rattle off figures and quantitative statistics. These statistics do not shed enough light on the intrinsic value of the library to the user. In the case of fake news and how libraries manage them, other indicators may be needed, which take into account methodologies provided by library impact studies, SDG policies at European level and UN/Eurostat/NGO indicators where inclusive societies are evaluated for sustainable
Questionnaire on library legislation and policy in Europe

Some decades ago, any study concerning library legislation would have followed an uncontroversial approach:

a) to list library legislations in as many countries as possible;

b) to find common points in library bills;

c) to extract a list of items worth being part of an ideal library bill.

A good example is the UNESCO comparative study on library legislation by Frank M. Gardner, published in 1967 and in 1978 (2nd edition). This approach has spurred the approval of a few library acts in European countries.

Partially different is the approach that was followed by the Council of Europe and EBLIDA when drafting the 2000 Council of Europe-EBLIDA Guidelines on Library Legislation and Policy. At that time, it was clearly understood that “hard” legislation at national level is only one of the ways library policies may unfold. Some European countries, for instance Germany, France and Italy have functioning library systems, but no national library act. Therefore, attention should also be paid to “soft” legislation – regulations, informal agreements, professional documents – which can inspire library practices and be just as effective as, and sometimes more operative than, “hard” acts. It is the reason why, in 2000, the Council of Europe and EBLIDA did not speak about library legislation, but about guidelines, in line with a public policy approach which includes both legislation and economic incentives.

The EBLIDA 2020 Questionnaire, elaborated by EBLIDA in collaboration with ADBGV (Association des directrices et directeurs des bibliothèques municipales et groupements intercommunaux des villes de France) and the French Ministry of Culture, was circulated on 17th January 2020.

Recipients were some 30 thirty colleagues, experts in library legislation, designated by EBLIDA Full and Associate Members. The Questionnaire is divided into three parts:

- Questions on legislation at State / intermediate – Regional / intermediate- provincial or departmental / local municipal - city level:
- Public policy for libraries;
- Miscellaneous
Legislation and policy, but more agile and wider in its scope - also covering, for instance, the social activities of libraries. The final aim of our endeavour is to revise the Council of Europe-EBLIDA Guidelines on Library Legislation and Policy in Europe.

In Europe there is a great need to legislate about, and to provide incentives to institutions willing to carry out policies compliant with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SDGs applied to libraries do not consist only of restructuring eco-buildings; the implementation of SDGs may imply additional tasks and perhaps a re-orientation of library missions.

This Questionnaire is therefore not static: our final objective is not only to suggest what items would be required in an ideal library bill. We would also like to identify policies which can expand the scope of libraries and their missions.

A provisional report will be ready late Spring. EBLIDA will circulate the report in order to encourage further comments and suggestions. The final report will be available in Autumn 2020; after that, we will proceed to the revision of the Guidelines.

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**Questionnaire on Sustainable Development Goals and their implementation in Europe**

The UN Sustainable Development Goals have had a pervasive effect on libraries. Libraries are setting up SDG projects with a view to meeting SDG objectives and enlarging their scope of action. Never in the past, a UN or EU programme encompassing such complex social, economic and environmental issues was so spontaneously and enthusiastically received in libraries – and libraries are a good barometer for assessing the success of innovative ideals in the society.

By launching the Questionnaire on Sustainable Development Goals, EBLIDA wishes to keep track of policies, partnerships, funding opportunities, best practices and models for innovative thinking in the SDG field. Our aim is not only to record how enthusiastically SDGs have been received in libraries, but also to build up a shared administrative culture of sustainability which may prove to be useful when the EBLIDA Executive Committee Workplan 2020 will be released.

**The EBLIDA Questionnaire on SDGs has the following objectives:**

- To identify experiences in SDGs applied in libraries which are likely to turn into library policies;
- To detect partnerships and funding opportunities which can open new avenues in library development;
To assess the European dimension of SDGs and their relevance for library activities. Questions will focus on the orientation of SDG projects in libraries, funding organisations, partnerships, indicators, EU funding for sustainability plans, and the usefulness of EBLIDA tools. We will also try to detect those SDG projects which are ambitious, long-lasting and involve partnerships other than libraries.

The Questionnaire will be launched in the second half of February.

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**Questionnaire on e-lending practices in Europe**

Despite the unquestioned development of e-books, libraries still encounter many difficulties in implementing e-lending. The nature of these difficulties is disparate; they can be legal (in most European countries, e-lending is not regulated by law), linked to the access-to-information chain (editorial offer, use of DRM systems, etc.), and financial.

In a decision handed down on 10th November 2016 (C-174/15), the Court of Justice of the European Union made an important step forward in the development of e-lending in libraries. The CJEU ruled that lending e-books in libraries may be assimilated to the lending of printed books, as long as books are lent in accordance with the “one copy-one user” model. As a result, e-lending falls within the scope of the directive 2006/115 of 12 December 2006 on rental rights and lending rights and on certain rights related to copyright in the field of intellectual property. Unfortunately, this important decision has not yet been implemented in many countries.

The goal of the Questionnaire on e-lending practices in Europe is to understand how EU member countries chose to develop e-lending and the challenges libraries are now facing. The Questionnaire should be triggering a reflection on ways of improving e-lending and how access to information and culture for all European citizens can be enhanced.

The EBLIDA Questionnaire on e-lending practices in Europe will be launched in March 2020.

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**EBLIDA Matrix**

European Union SDG policies / indicators and possible library policies in SDGs 9 and 10

We continue our reviews of SDGs. Previous Newsletters have dealt with SDGs 1 and 2 (September 2019 Newsletter), SDGs 3 and 4 (October 2019 Newsletter) and SDGs 5 and 6 (November 2919 Newsletter) and SDGs 7 and 8 (December 2019 Newsletter).

**Focus on SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**
sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation. Inclusive and sustainable industrial development is the primary source of income and allows for rapid and sustained increases in living standards for all people. Research & development (R&D) and innovation drive economic growth, job creation, labour productivity and resource efficiency. They are crucial for a knowledge-based economy ensuring EU companies remain competitive. Similarly, investments in sustainable and energy efficient transport and mobility systems are key elements for achieving sustainable development.

Targets for SDG 9 would include the development of a quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure (9.1) and an inclusive and sustainable industrialisation (9.2). Access of small-scale enterprises to financial services is considered indispensable (9.3) to upgrade infrastructure and make industries sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes (9.4). Scientific research should aim to upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries and increase the number of research and development workers per 1 million people (9.5).

Eurostat has set up a series of indicators for SDG 9. The most important is the “Gross domestic expenditure on R&D” which comes together with the “Employment in high- and medium-high technology manufacturing and knowledge-intensive services” and the number of “R&D personnel”. Also important to assess the level of innovation is the “Number of Patent applications to the European Patent Office (EPO)”. A resilient and innovative infrastructure and its impact on environment can be measured through the “Share of busses and trains in total passenger transport”, “Share of rail and inland waterways activity in total freight transport”, and “Average CO2 emissions per km from new passenger cars”.

**How can European libraries be relevant in the Europe 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

The Cohesion policy, which is so relevant for programmes aiming to fight poverty, is also pivotal to support industry, innovation and infrastructure. Enhancing access to, and use of information and communication technologies is done, in particular, through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) Funds, while the European Social Fund (ESF) is the financial instrument for digital literacy, education and training. The EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy establishes an ambitious programme of action, with measures covering the whole cycle, from production and consumption to waste management, with a view to recycling 65% of municipal waste by 2035 and to recycling 70% of packaging waste by 2030. Through a 6-Target Strategy the EU
Plan on Biodiversity aims to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU. A strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas is set in place.

Innovation in libraries is often pursued through the organisation of makers fairs. Some libraries are also starting to work on artificial intelligence schemes applied to library operations. Libraries should develop permanent infrastructures for innovation having social purposes and links with private companies of philanthropic, activist, or charitable nature. Partnerships should be tied with social enterprises whose “bottom line” cannot be restricted to "profit" or "loss" accounting as in traditional business, but extend to social and environmental concerns - what is called “Triple Bottom Line”. Libraries as “third” place is the concept that often designates a socially committed library.

Focus on SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

It is widely agreed that economic prosperity alone will not achieve social progress. High inequality levels risk leaving much human potential unrealised, damage social cohesion, hinder economic activity and undermine democratic participation. Although economists believe that some income inequality is necessary for a market economy to function effectively because it allows for incentives that support investment and growth, an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor is a matter of concern.

EU action complements national governments' policies on social protection and inclusion. The EU Cohesion Policy covers social inclusion and fights poverty and discrimination. The European pillar of social rights promotes equal opportunities, access to the labour market, fair working conditions, adequate and accessible social protection and inclusion. The EU relies on racial and employment equality legislation in order to tackle discrimination arising from racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and sex.

SDG 10 Targets include sustaining income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average as well as the promotion of the social, economic and political inclusion of all. SDG 10 targets also provide for equal opportunity and reduction of inequalities of outcome through the adoption of fiscal, wage and social protection policies ensuring enhanced representation and voice in global international economic and financial institutions. More effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions are needed in order to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people.

Indicators for Goal 10 are both economic and social. A socio-economic indicator is the “Reduction of inequality within and among countries” which is often combined
are also measured through the “Income distribution” and, more in detail, the “Income share of the bottom 40% of the population”. Migration flows are evaluated through the number of “Asylum applications”. Multipurpose indicators are: “People at risk of income poverty after social transfers”, “EU financing to developing countries” and “EU imports from developing countries”.

How can European libraries be relevant in the Europe 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

EU Programmes of active inclusion are extremely useful in helping citizens getting a job. They are mainly achieved through the European Social Fund. EU action includes both funded programmes and legislative, incentive-based measures. The series of EU legal instruments shows the indivisibility of civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights and is illustrated by the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Other instruments include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms against Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to name a few. Incentive-based measures include EU programmes supporting integration, such as the EU framework for national Roma integration, the EU programme for employment and social innovation (EaSI), and other measures. Support is also given to projects supporting public understanding of EU's history, values and diversity.

A wide range of instruments is designed to integrate minimum rights at work concerning health and safety, equal opportunities for women and men, protection against discrimination based on sex, race, religion, age, disability and sexual orientation. Fight against all discriminations also include migration policies, residence of non-EU nationals for highly qualified employment and the protection of a non-EU national or stateless person. Standard for the reception of applicants for international protection are also implemented together with incentives for family reunification, migration and integration Fund.

Activities providing support to the individual development and the integration of socially excluded people (from people below the level of poverty to immigrants, from minorities to imprisoned people) help reduce inequalities. Library unites are in close proximity to people living in socially sensitive areas or in difficult situations; they provide access to media and culture, exchange systems for books and other cultural products.

In this respect, the implementation of library exceptions to the EU Copyright Directive approved in 2019 is a measure which supports libraries in their effort to reduce inequalities where the free market fail. Digital illiteracy is a serious problem and library contribution to repair it is a strong drive for sustainable development.
In the EBLIDA Newsletter (November issue) it was stated that Ms. Ulrika Domellöf-Mattson was on the EBLIDA Executive Committee from 2009-2018. In fact she was Member of the EC from 2012 to 2018.

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**About the Newsletter**

**Responsible for the Newsletter:** Giuseppe Vitiello  
[contact him by email: g.vitiello at kb.nl]

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

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**Events and Dates in February**

February 12-13  
[Chancen 2020 - die Bibliothekskonferenz](#)  
**Place:** Hamburg, Germany  
**Organizer:** DBV, BIB, EKZ

February 17-20  
[15th International Digital Curation Conference](#)  
**Place:** Dublin, Ireland  
**Organizer:** Digital Curation Centre (DCC)

February 24-25  
[Researcher to Reader Conference](#)  
**Place:** London, UK  
**Organizer:** Organizing Committee
EBLIDA-LIST is a general mailing list intended to foster communications between EBLIDA, its membership and members of the European library community. The goal is to facilitate information exchange as well as professional communication and development within the EBLIDA community. Subscribe now!