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.

European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations

EBLIDA Newsletter

The voice of Libraries in Europe - Lobbying for Libraries

www.eblida.org

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The *EBLIDA 2nd European Report on Sustainable development and libraries (Full version)* is RELEASED!

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1. Editorial

After a gloomy New Year start, the Omicron factor seems to be fading away; bars and restaurants have opened again, at least in The Netherlands. We are witnessing a delayed take off – but a take off, indeed.

There is no better way to celebrate the advent of 2022 than a new EBLIDA creation: the full version of the _EBLIDA 2nd European Report on Sustainable development and libraries_.

The report is very timely, indeed. Resilient libraries need to consolidate their current basis into the

the EBLIDA Newsletter to the EBLIDA report and its communication.

The EBLIDA 2nd European Report brings not only fresh information, but also the good news that librarians' attitudes have radically changed. One year ago, the message provided by library associations was disparate; some of them were front runners in their commitment to SDGs; some others showed instead a purely theoretical level of awareness. One year later, in 2021, not only is the level of understanding much broader and deeper than in the past, but a good number of library associations have convincingly embarked upon the Agenda 2030 pathway with coherent practices, fully-fledged policies and inspiring projects. At least at top level, there is a clear understanding that libraries should convincingly follow this trend and that they can make the most out of SDG strategies pursued at national and local levels.

The report examines SDG advances in Europe under different angles. The first part – the *Synthesis*, already published in December 2021 – draws unambiguously two conclusions. First, that that there is no SDG that libraries cannot reasonably pursue or on which they may develop a strategy or a project. The second conclusion is that, in spite of SDG 4 – Quality education – being central in library operations, libraries indirectly pursue SDGs that may be complementary to SDG4. This multi-fold orientation is what qualifies library commitment to the Agenda 2030. In other words, when libraries educate, they do it for a specific societal purpose.

The *Synthesis* of the EBLIDA 2nd European report on sustainable development and libraries is followed by seventeen country profiles, which describe the national strategy followed by library associations at national level. The number of approaches and the variety of proposed solutions show that, very much in compliance with the Agenda 2030 working methods, libraries contribute to SDGs in relation to their distinctive character and according to their capacity.

Sustainable development will also be the core concept shaping two important meetings:

- The first is the Round Table organised by the French Presidency of the European Union on 24th February 2022, where EBLIDA will present the EBLIDA 2nd European Report on Sustainable development and libraries;
- The second is the EBLIDA Annual Council and Conference, which will take place in Athens from 14 to 16 June 2022.

Two events where libraries will show, once more, how committed they are towards a sustainable, democratic and equitable society.

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2. What challenges for books and reading in Europe? / Quels enjeux pour le livre et la lecture en Europe ?
Online - 24 February 2022
A Round table organised by the French Presidency of the European Union in collaboration with EBLIDA

In 2015, the UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda, and committed themselves to do everything possible to achieve its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This agenda commits

including libraries, which, through their associations, have worked to enshrine access to information as a means to achieve these goals.

Speakers will be invited to discuss how European libraries are implementing SDGs, in particular by working towards greater accessibility and how to make their content available for all audiences, especially the most vulnerable.

Why and how can libraries be more visible in national and local public policy regarding sustainable development? How do we raise awareness on this subject among decision-makers and librarians and how do we convince them that libraries have a part to play? How do we increase the legitimacy of libraries to apply for project funding and use existing European structural funds? How do we create new partnership networks on these issues?

This topic will be discussed in the Round Table organised by the French Presidency of the European Union, organised in collaboration with EBLIDA.

Ms Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin, Minister of Culture of France and **Mariya Gabriel**, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Education and Youth will open the Round Table.

Moderated by **Ton Van Vlimmeren,** EBLIDA President**.**

Contributors are:

- **Raphaëlle Bats**, co-director of the URFIST at the University of Bordeaux, leader of the working group "Library and Agenda 2030" (www.agenda2030bib.fr).
- **Reiner Schmock-Bathe**, head of the section Urban culture, libraries, archives, art and music schools, cultural affairs and European funding of the Berlin city council,
- **Giuseppe Vitiello**, Director EBLIDA,
- **Eva Maydell**, Member of the European Parliament from the European People's Party Group and member of Library lovers.

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in French, English, German, Spanish and Italian.

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3. Announcement: EBLIDA Annual Council and Conference 14-16 June 2022, Athens, Greece

14-16 June 2022 - Athens, Greece

This is a time when libraries are opening their doors to debate and inclusive dialogue in order to be meeting places for citizens. This is also a time when the ways knowledge is accessed in libraries is challenging traditional practices and governance. In 2022, EBLIDA will celebrate its 30 years of existence. There is no better way to celebrate an anniversary than delivering value for EBLIDA members, as a present for their loyalty and trust. Together with delivery, we would also like to show that library organizations active at European level may follow a methodology based on cooperation and a savvy repartition of their tasks.

Many things will be out of ordinary in the 30th EBLIDA Annual Council and Conference, with a mixture of internal and external activities. EBLIDA's activities will take place over three days, and not 2 days as in previous years. The EBLIDA Conference is one of the first events taking place in the post-Covid age; therefore we wish to create an open forum for professionals coming back to real life who wish to renew links, exchange ideas about new proposals and plan together their common library future.

In Athens, EBLIDA will approve its 2022-2025 Strategic Plan during the Annual Council, which takes place on 14th of June 2022. During the EBLIDA Conference, on 15th June, we wish to open a debate about EBLIDA's core message to and about libraries striving towards a sustainable, democratic and equitable society. We have opted for a traditional formula; after two years homeworking, librarians have reached saturation from virtual talks - working together is first and foremost a manifestation of human understanding. Parts of the conference, however, will be recorded and "broadcast" on social media.

There are quite a few library organisations working in Europe, all of them with excellent programmes and objectives. At the moment, these organisations are operating in an uncoordinated way and their results are shared among their respective constituencies. On 16th June, a common EBLIDA-NAPLE-PL 2030 Programme will be offered to participants with the title: ""Libraries on the European Agenda – network and co-creation", especially designed to strengthen exchange, innovation, and cooperation between European libraries bringing together the members of the three organisations, in learning and interacting activities and do-it-yourself networking. We wish to open a permanent forum in order to show that specific policies and objectives, even when not perfectly aligned, are contributing to the prosperity and the vitality of the library community in Europe.

As background to these events, EBLIDA will make available to European libraries:

- The new EBLIDA 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, to be approved by the EBLIDA Council;
- The draft Council of Europe/ EBLIDA Guidelines on Library Legislation and Policy in Europe, to be incorporated as a medium-term operation within the work of the EBLIDA

specific products generated from it for ad hoc purposes;
- A draft review of e-lending practices in some European countries.

View the Draft Conference programme.

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4. The 2nd European Report on Sustainable development and libraries (Full version)

Last December, EBLIDA released the *Synthesis of the 2nd European Report on sustainable development and libraries***, which provides many hints on how SDGs are perceived in libraries and how libraries can be perceived in society. This Synthesis is now endowed with a series of 17 country profiles. Each of these profiles includes a general background, SDG priorities and policies, a selection of the best SDG-oriented projects and some hints about the funding sources and evaluation.**

Input has been provided first and foremost by national library associations and, where they were not available, by qualified experts having a close understanding of SDG-oriented activities in their own country. The country profile is a sort of Library Manifesto on sustainable development at national level. It is not limited to storytelling alone; it is also an orientation on how to move ahead, how libraries can connect with society and act as a source of inspiration for best practices, simulations, and practical know-how. Country profiles also include policies designed to orient library policies in each country and tackle obstacles to the full attainment of sustainable development goals in libraries.

All library organisations are placing SDGs as a priority in their current work plans. EBLIDA is ready to support them with its European, project-oriented and thorough policy, which is valid for small and big libraries, be they public, university, school or national.

The EBLIDA 2nd European report adds to the tools EBLIDA already makes available. It will be used to feed the EBLIDA Matrix, which is not looking for model stories, but for stories that can be used to get library awards, funding, and political visibility at local level. In the Matrix, we are recording stories having received the *Sello* award in Spain, libraries included in Bulgarian and German cultural routes, waste disposal activities in Danish libraries and other small, but very popular projects.

EBLIDA's approach goes beyond telling stories for advocacy purposes; we are closely following SDG-oriented policies in the conviction that every library,regardless of its size and budget, should grasp the opportunity offered by the European 2030 Agenda. An ad hoc tool, the SDG-KIC, will work as useful Guide, both at European and national levels.

This approach is practical in its fundraising strategy. We have deliberately set apart complex EU programmes where networking is in itself a challenge. Advice and consultancy is provided by EBLIDA on the European Structural and Investment Funds - the richest, closest to communities and culture-oriented source of income for public and university libraries with a territorial mission.

5. Research libraries and sustainable development

Is sustainable development exclusively a public library's business? Factual evidence does not justify such assumption. It is true that public libraries are more closely linked to social communities; therefore, they are allegedly committed to the advancement of the Agenda 2030 on sustainable development to a greater extent than, for instance, research libraries. Research libraries serve academic communities and, at first glance, it may seem that their scope is limited and connected to social trends only to a limited extent.

The university library stories mentioned in the EBLIDA 2nd European report disprove this assumption. Sustainable development in research libraries is equally central and impetuous and has a great variety of orientations. The most frequent stories concern open access and open science (SDG 4 – Quality education) and they are aimed to promote unhindered access to scientific information in spite of the high cost of the distribution of e-resources. But they are not the only ones.

Research libraries are often hosted in historical monuments. Some projects, therefore address the issue of cultural heritage (SDG 11). Several research libraries used, for instance, the European Structural and Investment Funds to restore illuminated manuscripts, old and rare books and other typologies of ancient materials. The link with SDGs show that these historical libraries have carefully envisioned a strategic socio-economic impact of their collections, both at local and national levels. Most library heritage projects fall within the scope of SDG 11 *"Sustainable cities and communities"*, where library collections are at the service of city restructuring and regional development.

Citizen science is also becoming a permanent activity within the universities' third mission - contributing to the social, economic, and cultural development of the regions in which universities operate and transferring knowledge and technologies to industry and to society at large. The attainment of the Agenda 2030 is a way to demonstrate that universities have a sense of responsibility towards social communities and are able to manage public funding through strategic management. (Creation of scientific networks and Citizen science projects SDGs 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15).

Artificial Intelligence is a methodology and technological development that is changing how libraries operate and interact with citizens. These applications in public libraries are not yet widespread but, being better funded and more technologically advanced, research libraries play a cutting-edge role with virtual assistants through voice-based interaction and fact-checking and analysis of sites that publish news and information (AI-based projects *SDG* 1, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16).

Topics of politics, democracy, tolerance are threatened by disinformation, intolerance, polarisation and hate speech. Together with public libraries, university libraries train young people to stand up for their opinions and views in a well-founded and convincing manner or in attaining gender equality in courses and workplaces (SDG 16 and 5).

Joining EBLIDA!

provide our products and our resources free of charge to the community of the European Librarians.

We rely on membership fees to support our work for them, therefore your Membership Matters.

Please fill out the [Membership Enquiry Form](#) or simply contact the Secretariat by email: eblida@eblida.org

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Events and Dates

15-16 February
[Open Science Retreat on Infrastructures and Tools: Sustainable and reliable Open Science Infrastructures and Tools](#)
Place: Online Event
Organizer: CILIP

24-25 February
[18th Italian Research Conference on Digital Libraries (IRCDL 2022)](#)
Place: Padua, Italy
Organizer: IRCDL

08-10 March
[Open Science Conference 2022](#)
Place: Online event
Organizer: Leibniz Research Alliance Open Science

14-16 March
[RLUK22: Mapping the new open for research libraries](#)
Place: Online event
Organizer: RLUK

17-20 March
[Leipzig Book Fair 2022](#)
Place: Leipzig, Germany
Organizer: Organizing Committee

About the Newsletter

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