EBLIDA/NAPLE Conference
“Ready? Read ‘e’. E-services in Libraries, from European thinking to local Actions”

13.45-1500
Interactive breakout session: Local is critical

The strategic roles of Flemish and Dutch public libraries in urban development
... an explorative research

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1. Introduction

A “wider” perspective on e-services of public libraries (PL) in a local/urban perspective

- Contribution of PL to urban development
- Strategic roles for PL**
- Implications for the (strategic) decisions of PL (incl. decisions on e-services)

... Critical = explicit embeddedness of e-services in PL strategy for urban development

** The research results of an explorative research project realized in 5 Flemish and 4 Dutch Public libraries involved in urban innovation projects (2009-2010) ... a new research project in 12 small and medium sized Flemish PL (2013-2015) ... a European research project ?!

2. Input break-out session

Identification strategic roles = future challenges and core functions of PL in an urban setting and associated fundamental and identity-related policy issues:
Open and modern centers of information dissemination, knowledge development, cultural participation and social interaction (city forum)

(1) Location
(2) Architectural design
(3) Infrastructural facilities (incl. ICT)
(4) Collection (incl. digital collection)
(5) Public services or activities beside “lending books” (incl. +/- e-services)
(6) Necessary staff competences

(7) Historical evolution PL
(8) Partners
(9) Special policy domains (e.g. finance, communication, organization, ...)

1 generic strategic role and 3 specific strategic roles ... combined!

The generic strategic role (* ... implications for e-services?):

(1) Open architectural design
(2) Flexible library zones (changeable and adjustable walls and furniture)
Market-wise/lively/easy accessible areas + intimate/quiet areas
Digital equipment and facilities (e.g. PC’s, digital databases and new media)*

(3) Variety of information carriers (e.g. books, journals, CD-Roms)*
Variety of information/knowledge topics (e.g. education, literature, leisure)
Variety of audiences (in age, physical condition, social position, language competences) *
... democratic distribution of information and power !

(4) Intermediate platform services (PL at the disposal of individual and/or collective third parties*
Educational services (e.g. languages, ICT, social skills) *

(5) Different phases of development *

(6) Complex and heterogeneous set of actors with different interests and preferences*

(7) Financial management, project management, participation management, strategic management and organisation management*
The **specific strategic** roles:

Essential features and characterizing metaphors of the 3 specific strategic roles *(reference to important local policy themes of urban governments):*

**Urban landmarks, area-oriented herald and target-group patron**

An overview ... see extra page (* ... implications for e-services ?):

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3. **Some interesting and/or useful concluding remarks...**

PL can play an important role in the future development of (Flemish and Dutch) cities, but this strategic role is **not necessarily homogeneous or uniform** in nature .... not a homogeneous or uniform set of e-services ?!

It is not self-evident that other partners and local governments are **aware/know** of the PL contribution (e.g. image building, urban quarter development, target group support) ... e-services of PL ?!

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