

**37<sup>th</sup> CENL Annual General Meeting  
18-20 June 2023 – Paris, France**

**Minutes**

**Executive Committee Present:**

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1) Frank Scholze        | Chair (Germany)  |
| 2) Janne Andresoo       | Vice Chair (Estonia)   |
| 3) Karin Grönvall       | Treasurer (Sweden)   |
| 4) Hans Petschar        | Executive Committee Member (Austria) –<br>(Proxy representing Johanna Rachinger) |
| 5) Sara Lammens         | Executive Committee Member (Belgium)   |
| 6) Ivanka Stričević     | Executive Committee Member (Croatia)   |
| 7) Laurence Engel       | Executive Committee Member (France)  |
| 8) Susanne Oehlschläger | CENL Secretary (Germany)   |

**Members Present:**

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 9) Piro Misha                       | Albania   |
| 10) Anna Chulyan                    | Armenia   |
| 11) Karim Tahirov                   | Azerbaijan  |
| 12) Ismet Ovcina                    | Bosnia and Herzegovina                              |
| 13) Krasimira Aleksandrova          | Bulgaria  |
| 14) Tomas Foltyn                    | Czech Republic                                      |
| 15) Tonny Skovgård Jensen           | Denmark (Proxy – Svend Larsen)                      |
| 16) Kimmo Tuominen                  | Finland   |
| 17) Lola Sanaia                     | Georgia (Proxy – Giorgi Kekelidze)                  |
| 18) Judit Gerencsér                 | Hungary (Proxy – representing Dávid Rózsa)          |
| 19) Ingbjörg Steinunn Sverrisdóttir | Iceland   |
| 20) Audrey Whitty                   | Ireland   |
| 21) Katrina Kukaine                 | Latvia (Proxy – Andris Vilks)                       |
| 22) Wilfried Oehry                  | Liechtenstein                                       |
| 23) Renaldas Gudauskas              | Lithuania   |
| 24) Claude D. Conter                | Luxembourg  |
| 25) Elena Pintelei                  | Moldova   |
| 26) Dragica Lompar                  | Montenegro  |
| 27) Elsbeth Kwant                   | Netherlands (Proxy – Lily Knibbeler)                |
| 28) Rahmetula Kuqi                  | North Macedonia                                     |
| 29) Aslak Sira Myhre                | Norway  |
| 30) Tomasz Makowski                 | Poland  |
| 31) Maria Margarida Lopes           | Portugal (Proxy – representing Maria Inês Cordeiro) |
| 32) Nicoleta Rahme                  | Romania (Proxy – representing Adrian M. Cioroianu)  |
| 33) Vladimir Pištalo                | Serbia  |
| 34) Katarína Krištofová             | Slovakia  |
| 35) Viljem Leban                    | Slovenia  |
| 36) José Luis Bueren Gómez-Acebo    | Spain (Proxy – representing Ana Santos Aramburo)    |
| 37) Damian Elsig                    | Switzerland   |
| 38) Ahmet Aldemir                   | Türkiye (Proxy – representing Taner Beyoğlu)        |
| 39) Roly Keating                    | United Kingdom                                      |
| 40) Amina Shah                      | United Kingdom – Scotland                           |
| 41) Dr. Timothy Janz                | Vatican (Proxy – representing Don Mauro Mantovani)  |

**Proxy Voting Forms Received in Absentia:**

42) Ukraine

**In attendance:**

Fidan Bayramova  
Frédéric Lemmers  
Marcho Apostolov  
Maria Stefanova  
Jagoda Ille  
Mari Kannusaar  
Ophélie Ramonatxo  
Bruno Sagna  
Carlo Blum  
Kim Krier  
Demir Bulić  
Slađana Sjekloća  
Darko Leshoski  
Maja Micevska Rizova  
Tamara Butigan Vučaj  
Lucia Duchajova  
Filiz Berna Gültekin  
Merve Yavuzdemir  
Marcie Hopkins  
Liz Jolly

Azerbaijan  
Belgium  
Bulgaria  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Estonia  
France  
France  
Luxembourg  
Luxembourg  
Montenegro  
Montenegro  
North Macedonia  
North Macedonia  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Türkiye  
Türkiye  
United Kingdom  
United Kingdom

**Apologies:**

Johanna Rachinger  
Demetris Nicolaou  
Svend Larsen  
Giorgi Kekelidze  
Dávid Rózsa  
Luca Bellingeri  
Stefano Campagnolo  
Andris Vilks  
Cheryl Falzon  
Lily Knibbeler  
Adrian Mihai Cioroianu  
Ana Santos Aramburo  
Taner Beyoğlu  
Lyubov A. Dubrovina  
Don Mauro Mantovani

Austria (Proxy Hans Petschar)  
Cyprus  
Denmark (Proxy Tonny Skovgård Jensen)  
Georgia (Proxy Lola Sanaia)  
Hungary (Proxy Judit Gerencsér)  
Italy, Florence  
Italy, Rome  
Latvia (Proxy Katrina Kukaine)  
Malta  
Netherlands (Proxy Elsbeth Kwant)  
Romania (Proxy Nicoleta Rahme)  
Spain (Proxy José Luis Bueren Gómez-Acebo)  
Türkiye (Proxy Ahmet Aldemir)  
Ukraine (Proxy Tomasz Makowski)  
Vatican (Proxy Timothy Janz)

**CENL Secretariat in attendance:**

Dr. Julijana Nadj-Guttandin  
Stefanie Schust

CENL Secretariat (minutes)  
CENL Secretariat (minutes)

**Invited external speakers:**

Sally Chambers  
Guillaume Lafortune

DARIAH-EU Board of Directors  
Vice President and Director of the Office of the  
Sustainable Development Solutions Network  
Chair of IFLA ENSULIB

Harri Sahavirta

**DAY 1 – MONDAY, 19 June**

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## 1. Arrival and registration

All CENL members arrived at the National Library of France/Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), François Mitterrand site, and the business meeting started at 09:15 CEST.

## 2. Words of welcome from Chair and Host

Frank Scholze welcomed all CENL members and said how happy he was to be in Paris after the cultural programme the day before. Good foundations were laid to a productive business meeting and an interesting conference with this year's topic sustainability. He hoped that the members were able to gain new impressions and exchange ideas with each other even before the official start of the meeting. The Chair thanked Laurence Engel and her team for hosting this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and expressed his excitement for both the historic and modern library site.

Early this year news reached us that Filippos Tsimpoglou, Director General of the National Library of Greece, had passed away. He is still vividly remembered by many as he actively participated in the discussions at CENL AGM 2022. Frank Scholze asked to stand for a minute's silence. He emphasised that Filippos Tsimpoglou will be remembered as a personal and professional friend in CENL and beyond.

The Chair then summarised the aftermath of the past COVID-19 pandemic, stressing that we are now in the new "normal" but unfortunately still facing the war in Ukraine. He added that the future problems were not foreseeable: for example, no one could have expected the terrible earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, which have cost many lives. Especially in these difficult times, the role of libraries as guarantors of trustworthy information is more important than ever and ties in perfectly with the theme of last year's AGM "The Relevance of National Libraries in Society." But even though the past year has held some challenges, he stressed that CENL as an organisation has much to be proud of: The Fund and Grants Programme has continued, allowing members to come together to share experiences. In addition to the Network Groups, a new CENL Dialogue Forum "National Libraries as Data Infrastructures" was established, which Sally Chambers will report on the following day. Frank Scholze then introduced the theme of this year's AGM entitled: "National Libraries and Sustainability" and emphasised that he was very much looking forward to the upcoming contributions of the keynote speakers and the discussions that would follow. He concluded by encouraging those present to tweet about the meeting under the hashtag #CENL2023. The CENL Secretariat would also cover it under @CENL\_EUROPE.

The Chair handed over to the host, Laurence Engel, who also extended a warm welcome to all present at the Mitterrand site of the library. She thanked Frank Scholze and emphasised that sustainability is a way for libraries to connect the past with the present and the future. Libraries preserve the past in the resources they archive, thus providing access to the knowledge and ideas of the past. The dissemination of knowledge and information remains an important component for libraries, especially when it comes to making this information available digitally. But Laurence Engel stressed that digitisation in itself is not the answer. Sustainable thinking also requires a rethink of the way libraries are designed, which was explicitly taken into account for the renovation of the Richelieu site. Things like air conditioning could no longer be installed in the same way as before without thinking about sustainability. She thanked all members for their attendance.

Frank Scholze took the floor again and noted that some members have known each other for a long time, but that there are also some new faces this year. Therefore, all delegates introduced themselves to the group.

### 3. Approval of the minutes of the 36th CENL AGM 2022

Paper 02

The Chair asked the members present if there were any objections to the minutes of the CENL AGM 2022 in Ankara. As there was no show of hands for corrections and comments, the minutes were approved and the first vote of the day was taken.

### 4. Matters arising from Minutes

There were no further comments resulting from last year's minutes.

### 5. CENL Annual Report – Highlights

Paper 03

Frank Scholze began his remarks by noting that the Executive Committee (EC) had met on three occasions: on 28 September 2022 in Frankfurt at the German National Library, on 23 January 2023 at the BnF and on 17 April 2023 in a virtual meeting. He also introduced the staff of the CENL Secretariat and thanked them for their work. The Chair reviewed the last AGM that took place from 18 to 22 June 2022 in Ankara, Türkiye, and felt that it had been a very fruitful conference. Some links could be drawn between the two themes of the 2022 and 2023 AGMs as there was a balance in looking at sustainability as a way of thinking. He went on to say that decisions had to be made and these could change over time.

Skills & Knowledge exchange remains one of the main activities of CENL. He reported that the winners of the Erland Kolding Nielsen Grant (EKN) in 2022 were the National Library of Estonia, the National Library of Bulgaria and the National Library of Lithuania. In 2023, the National Library of Hungary, the National Library of France and the National Library of Moldova were successful. Last year, the EC decided as one of its first actions to continue the EKN for another five years.

Applications were received from the National Libraries of Romania and Bulgaria for the Skills & Knowledge Exchange Bursary. Later in 2022, the application of the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina was also accepted. Among other things, this made it possible for staff from the National Library of Romania to visit the National Library of Sweden. Frank Scholze pointed out that this left three possible bursaries available.

The Hidden Stories Fund supports projects that tell stories that don't immediately come to mind, but that play an important role in stimulating debate. In 2022, the CENL Secretariat has received four applications, of which the EC has agreed to support the British Library and the National Library of Scotland. The call for applications 2023 has already been published.

The Chair also reported that the COVID-19 Support Fund, which was set up in 2020 to help CENL members deal with the immediate challenges related to the COVID-19 crisis, has been terminated. The COVID-19 Support Fund has led to some good projects, such as one from North Macedonia. That project aims to create a virtual "BookClub" as a kind of digital replacement for the physical presence of the library halls that were left without readers during the COVID-19 crisis. The "Book Club" will allow library members to interact with each other, share recommendations, experiences and views about the library's collections or books in general, make suggestions to improve existing services in the library, propose new services, etc.

The war in Ukraine remains an ongoing issue: the #StandWithUkraine website on CENL.org has grown continuously over the last year. Currently, the site is rather static, but still contains information on short-term aid and important contact points for refugees. Contributions are still welcome and can be sent to the CENL Secretariat. Frank Scholze pointed out that as a consequence of the war, the Director General of the National Library of Ukraine, Lyubov Andriivna Dubrovina, was unable to attend neither the AGM in Ankara nor this year's AGM. In a pre-recorded video message, she will once again give an insight into the situation on the ground in her library later that day.

The term of the Network Groups ended at the end of last year. At the EC meeting in January 2023, all proposals received were discussed, with the result that for the next term (2023-2025) the two already existing groups Artificial Intelligence in Libraries Network Group (AI) and the Books and Audiences Network Group (BANG) will continue their work. Whereas copyright issues remain to be an important topic for national libraries, the EC unanimously agreed to support the establishment of a new Network Group during this term and thanked the former Copyright Network Group for its work. The proposal of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Network Group was selected as a new group.

Last year, the EC agreed to launch a new format for CENL members to get in touch with other groups and stakeholders. One of the first Dialogue Forums has been the FEP-CENL Dialogue Forum. The group is chaired by Ute Schwens (German National Library). Another CENL Dialogue Forum called "National Libraries as Data Infrastructures" has been established and approved by the EC in autumn 2022. It is intended to facilitate structural and strategic cooperation between European national libraries and research infrastructures. Sally Chambers, DARIAH-EU Director at Ghent University, will explain the idea behind the CENL Dialogue Forum and report on activities to date.

In terms of communication, the CENL Secretariat conducted daily business by providing information via the website, the newsletter and Twitter, which Susanne Oehlschläger will discuss in more detail in her presentation. Frank Scholze underlined that communication is also done by the CENL members themselves and encouraged to continue sharing everything with the community.

In conclusion, the Chair again referred to the loss of Filippos Tsimpoglou, Director General of the National Library of Greece, as an active member of CENL. In the meantime, some new members have also joined, whom Frank Scholze warmly welcomed and looked forward to working with.

## 6. Treasurer's Report – Highlights

Paper 04

CENL Treasurer Karin Grönvall gave the finance report, starting with the budget for 2022.

### 2022 Budget (income)

CENL budget 2022	Budget (AGM 2022)	Actual Income	Balance remaining as of end of Dec 22
Membership fees	104.900 €	104 900 €	----
Transfer from reserves	52.000 €	52.000 €	----
Total income	156.000 €	156.000€	----

The total cash balance as of 31 December 2022 was at 745.711,10€. The financial situation is very strong and the income for the last year was as expected, especially with regard to the membership fees.

2022 Budget (expenses)

CENL budget 2022	Budget agreed AGM 2022	Actual Expenses at 31.12.2022	Balance at 31.12.2022
Financial support AGM	13.000 €	10.387,28 €	2.612,72 €
Travel costs speakers	4.000 €	1.212,57 €	2.787,43 €
Skills & knowledge exchange			
• Bursary Programme	10.000 €	7.040,43 €	2.959,57 €
• CENL working group 2022 budget	15.000 €	2.300,00 €	12.700,00 €
Erland Kolding Njelsen Grant 2022	15.000 €	14.932,23 €	67,77 €
CENL website			
• Maintenance costs	8.000 €	4.146,81 €	3.853,19 €
Banking costs	3.400 €	4.538,88 €	-1.138,88 €
Audit and legal costs	8.000 €	7.823,86 €	176,14 €
CENL Secretariat	78.000 €	78.000,00 €	0,00 €
Other office costs	2.500 €	1.292,13 €	1.207,87 €
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>156.900 €</b>	<b>131.881,21 €</b>	<b>25.018,79 €</b>

Because of the continuing pandemic, some budget lines were underspent again, e.g. the funds from the Skills & Knowledge Exchange Programme have not been spent. The ING bank charges are higher than with Lloyds and resulted in an overspend of 1.138,88€.

The audit, including the 2022 financial statements, was prepared remotely by RSM auditors, completed on 24 April 2023 and submitted to the EC on 17 May 2023. According to RSM, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position, and of its result 2022 in accordance with the regulations in force. During the audit of the financial statements 2022, no indications of fraud came to their attention.

Cash Balance April 2023

CENL - ING	Bank Balance
Opening bank balance as at 01.01.2023	<b>745.711,10 €</b>
Total Income	108.385,07 €
Less Expenses	99.106,27 €
Bank balance as at 30.04.2023	<b>754.989,90 €</b>

Proposed 2023 budget (expenses)

CENL budget 2023	Budget agreed AGM 2022	Actual Expenses at 30.04.2023	Balance at 30.04.2023
Financial support AGM	13.000 €	0,00 €	13.000,00 €
Travel costs speakers	4.000 €	0,00 €	4.000,00 €
Skills & knowledge exchange			
• Bursary Programme	10.000 €	800,00 €	9.200,00 €
• CENL Network Groups 2023 budget	15.000 €	3.454,03 €	11.545,97 €
Erland Kolding Nielsen Grant 2023	15.000 €	0,00 €	15.000,00 €
EKN 2022 Final payment		1.000,00 €	
EKN 2020 return.unspent		- 3.225,07 €	2.225,07 €
CENL website			
• Maintenance costs	8.000 €	2.835,12 €	5.164,88 €
Banking costs	4.000 €	312,57 €	3.687,43 €
Audit and legal costs	8.000 €	8.657,55 €	- 657,55 €
CENL Secrétariat	78.000 €	78.000,00 €	0,00 €
Other office costs	2.500 €	47,00 €	2.453,00 €
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>157.500 €</b>	<b>91.881,20 €</b>	<b>65.618,80 €</b>

The bank balance at the end of April 2023 was 745.989,90 €. Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, Ukraine's membership fees were suspended for 2023. The Treasurer called for a vote, by show of hands, to approve of the suspension of Ukraine's membership fees for the year 2024. 38 members voted in favour of the suspension.

Karin Grönvall then talked about CENL's financial development for the next years. In order to continue to offer bursaries and grants, the plan is to reduce the reserve gradually over the next 10 years. After 10 years, this would leave a reserve of about 226.000€, which is about 2 years' income from membership fees. In any case, for unforeseen events, this reserve should be maintained. A moderate reduction in assets was also judged appropriate by the auditors and should be retained in this form. It should be noted that without drawing on the reserve, the income from the membership fees would not be sufficient to cover the fixed costs.

Proposed 2024 budget

Income	Amount	Expenses	Amount
CENL membership	114 450 €	Financial support AGM	13 000 €
Reserves	47 050 €	Travel-costs speakers	4 000 €
		Skills & knowledge Exchanges	25 000 €
		• Bursary programme (€10k)	
		• CENL network groups budget (€5k x 3 groups - €15,000)	
		Eriand Kolding Nielsen Grant	15 000 €
		• 3 x €5k grant	
		CENL website maintenance	8 000 €
		Banking costs	4 000 €
		Audit and legal costs	12 000 €
		CENL Secretariat	78 000 €
		Other office costs	2 500 €
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>161 500 €</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>161 500 €</b>

The Treasurer called for a vote, by show of hands, to approve the proposed 2024 budget. 38 members voted in favour of the proposed budget for 2024.

Frank Scholze thanked for the confidence placed in the EC. He pointed out that the membership fees will not be raised for the next year and that a discussion about the ways in which the reserve should be used was necessary.

## 7. CENL Strategy 2023-2027

### Paper 05

Frank Scholze introduced the topic and gave an overview of the development of the strategy. At the AGM 2022 in Ankara, a draft of the next CENL strategy for the period 2023-2027 had been discussed. It became apparent though that while nothing concrete was missing, the draft needed to be streamlined in some places. The results also showed that the identity of CENL as an umbrella organisation and the potential it offers to members should be emphasised more. CENL's role should be to support libraries individually by enabling its members to meet, to share experiences and best practices and to support each other locally and virtually.

The EC discussed the issue at length in its following meetings and agreed that the text should be revised accordingly. This concerned in particular the wording tailored to national libraries rather than libraries in general.

The Chair asked if members agreed with the changes made within CENL Strategy 2023-2027. No objections being raised; the strategy was unanimously accepted.

## 8. Amendments of CENL Statutes

### Paper 06

Frank Scholze explained to the members the need to adapt the statutes to the present time. When the statutes were written, no one could have thought of a pandemic. So it is also part of the new normal that not all EC members can always be present at an EC meeting, but this has been necessary for a quorum until now. It was agreed that it is now sufficient for two thirds of the EC members (5 out of 7) to form a quorum. In urgent cases, decisions should be taken in writing and the deadline for objections was reduced from two months to one.



In the course of this, the EC asked the CENL Secretariat to check whether other paragraphs of the statutes also needed to be revised. It was noted that there are no restrictions on the number of EC members. Considering that CENL has (only) 46 members, seven members means that 15,22% of them are members of the EC. For this reason, it was decided that seven members seems to be an appropriate size for the EC.

Frank Scholze asked the CENL Board of Directors to vote on whether they confirm the EC's decision on the amendments to the statutes. No objections were raised. Therefore, in accordance with Article 14, after the notarial registration, the amendments to the CENL statutes become legally binding.

## 9. CENL Action Plan and Communications

Susanne Oehlschläger began her presentation with a quote from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who said in a video message during the Frankfurt Book Fair 2022 that knowledge is the answer. "Lack of knowledge in the population and lies of governments are the basic tools of the policy of terrorist states," Zelenskyy continued. According to the CENL Secretary, this can also be applied to the work of libraries: the material held in national libraries is instrumental in generating knowledge and making it available to the public. She emphasised that she was proud to belong to a worldwide system of libraries whose main goal is to collect books, documentations, articles, reports and much more, but also keeping in mind that this information can be made accessible to everyone. This is why she believes it is so important to communicate with the general public about the work of CENL and its members through the website, newsletter and social media.

One of the first actions taken last year was to extend the contract with Line Industries as the support company for the CENL website to ease the transition of the secretariat from the British Library to the German National Library. In response to the war in Ukraine, #StandWithUkraine was created as a dedicated section on the website in March 2022. The page bundles support offers and activities of the member libraries for Ukrainian refugees. Currently, the site is very static and contains mainly short-term support services and contact points for refugees. Contributions are still welcome and should be addressed to the CENL Secretariat. Susanne Oehlschläger went on to report that the CENL Secretariat had received responses to the survey on aid to Ukraine, but it was difficult to analyse the data as it was so varied. She referred to the Annual Report, which contained some responses, but also stressed that the publication of the results was being planned. In addition, the promotional video clip has been removed from the website as it shows some former members and is no longer up to date. The plan is to make a new film next year.

As for the web statistics, a switch from Google Analytics to Matomo was made at the beginning of 2023, as Google is not compliant with the EU GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). Therefore, the statistics section consists of data from both systems. Compared to last year, the session duration has doubled and the bounce rate of users leaving the website after only one page has also decreased. Susanne Oehlschläger pointed out that there is constant traffic on the website, with around 300,000 page views since it was launched in November 2019. There are currently 500 registered users, but 65% of them are unassigned, which means that the account has not been registered with a member library's email address. For this reason, the CENL Secretary encouraged members to log in with their library address to access the members' area.

In the period May 2022 to April 2023, twelve issues of the CENL Newsletter were published. With currently 402 subscribers, an increase could be achieved compared to the previous year. One should nevertheless bear in mind that the newsletter of the IFLA National Library Section has similar content and the information may therefore already be known.

The Twitter account reaches a broader audience, as it does not require going to the CENL website. Through this channel, currently 395 followers are regularly updated with information from the

member libraries. Like the Chair, Susanne Oehlschläger also asked those present to tweet about the AGM using #CENL2023. Since the takeover of Twitter by Elon Musk, there have been problems: Due to a change in the Twitter API, it is no longer possible to display the CENL-related tweets on the CENL website.

The CENL Secretary then gave a brief overview of this year's daily tasks, including the application process for Network Groups and the preparations for the 2023 AGM with the BnF.

The action plan for 2023/2024 includes the implementation of the CENL Strategy 2023-2027, the notarial amendment of the CENL Statutes, the planning of the CENL AGM 2024 with the National Library of Poland and the continuation of the grants and bursaries. Susanne Oehlschläger concluded by affirming that CENL is an organisation by members for members and that all actions support the current strategic priorities. In this context, the Secretary pointed out once again that members are urged to pass on any changes in membership and contact information to the CENL Secretariat.

Frank Scholze thanked the Secretary for the presentation and underlined that he was already looking forward to the AGMs in Warsaw 2024, in Edinburgh 2025 and in Luxembourg 2026.

## 10. Key note: Guillaume Lafortune, The role of science, culture and ancient philosophy to achieve the universal Sustainable Development Goals

Frank Scholze welcomed Guillaume Lafortune from the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). Guillaume Lafortune joined SDSN in 2017 and is responsible for providing the annual sustainable development report. Before that he worked with the OECD and with the government of Quebec. He is the author of more than 40 scientific publications.

Guillaume Lafortune started his keynote speech with remarking that the topic of this year's AGM is very appropriate, since in 2023 the midpoint of the agenda on the UN development goals was reached. There will be a UN meeting later this year to discuss the status of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Also, just the same week a "Summit for a New Global Financing Pact", hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris, will discuss the financing for sustainability and will also address the injustice between the Global North and the Global South.

The SDSN was launched in 2012 by the then UN Secretary-general, Ban Ki Moon, to support the implementation of the SDGs. It has over 1.700 members and operates under the auspices of the UN. The SDSN's priorities are:

1. SDG policy analysis and support
2. Global network of researches and knowledge institutions
3. Online education (with training programmes and the SDG Academy for research and development)

He explained that the SDSN's leadership council has more than a hundred members from a very diverse background and includes top world scientists, economists, as well as former leaders and head of states, e.g. Tarja Halonen, the former Finnish President and George Papandreou, the former Greek Prime Minister. It also includes representatives from civil societies, NGOs, religious groups and businesses from all over the world, bringing with them a wealth of expertise.

The vital question is: Where do we stand on the agenda right now? The answer will be found in the 2023 edition of the Sustainable Development Report which will be published shortly. It will be the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the global report. Guillaume Lafortune explained, that in order to assess the global situation, about 100 indicators from the 17 SDGs were taken into account and ranked. He pointed out, that, as of today, none of the goals have been achieved and admitted that none of them are on

track. Furthermore, some of the most important and crucial SDGs have progressed the least in the last years and he concluded that many of the goals are not progressing fast enough.

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres published a report in April 2023 stating that only 12% of the goals are on track. The SDSN has come to similar findings. According to their calculations only about 18 % of the goals are on track.

On the one hand, there are some positive developments: Denmark, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia show the largest number of targets achieved or on track, so, there are some good results in Europe. On the other hand, countries like Lebanon, Myanmar, Venezuela, Papua New Guinea and Yemen have the largest number of targets showing reversal in progress.

Guillaume Lafortune pointed out that even before the COVID-19 pandemic, progress was too slow and that it lacked political leadership and financial support to achieve the goals. Looking at the 17 SDGs one has to face the truth: We are just not at all on track to achieve them. The pandemic has hit the poorest countries most and extreme poverty has not yet fallen back to its pre-pandemic rate. Whereas the rich countries (especially from the Global North) have mobilised 17 trillion dollars for post-COVID issues, it has become almost impossible for the poorest countries to get on track with any SDG. Lafortune further elaborated that the world is running the risk of losing a whole decade for sustainable development if the gap between the richest and the poorest countries will continue to increase.

While within the SDSN there was no expectation to reach all the goals by midterm, still, there was hope that countries would implement a framework, a will for cooperation, a political and financial commitment for implementing SDGs. Lafortune explained that the SDSN is not only tracking how individual countries are performing, but also their commitment and efforts. A good indicator for measuring commitment and effort is to see which countries went in front of the UN and presented their national action plans. As of today, 188 countries around the world have done that. Haiti, Myanmar, South Sudan, the United States and Yemen are the only countries which have not yet presented their action plan in front of the UN.

Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Finland come out on top when it comes to measuring governments' SDG efforts and commitments. Benin is the African country which has shown the most effort and Indonesia is the best example in Asia. As in previous reports, the Russian Federation, Israel and the United States show the least effort in government commitment.

Guillaume Lafortune then acknowledged the importance of cultural institutions. He said that they were put at the heart of the agenda from the start. There are many references to cultural institutions in the document and a whole chapter on the intricate relations between science, culture and sustainable development. He then went on to explain that the SDSN puts a lot of stress on cultural institutions and science. There are eight types of capital assets that require some form of (cultural) investment in order to build a sustainable future: human capital, infrastructure, natural capital, innovation capital, business capital, social capital, urban capital and cultural capital. It all comes down to the empowerment of citizens. Information is nothing without wisdom and fact. Libraries and cultural institutions can provide reference and guidance to draw facts from information and therefore play a crucial role in the process of civil empowerment. Libraries are spaces for long-term and comprehensive thinking and a space to bridge information deficits. Lafortune agreed that libraries are a great place to bring together different aspects of expertise.

He then singled out one of SDSN's projects: "The Amazon We Want: Science Panel for the Amazon". The goal of this project is to establish a high-level science initiative dedicated to the Amazon. The panel was established to make clear the scientific, economic, and moral case for conservation and address widespread deforestation, forest degradation, and wildfires that have intensified in recent

years. It aims at spurring investment in science, technology and innovations in the Amazonian region while including the indigenous peoples throughout the process.

This project, Lafortune explained, highlights what brings humanity together rather than focusing on what separates us. Ethical action is an integral part to sustainable development. This idea was developed in an encyclical letter from Pope Francis in 2015 (Laudato Si') in which he wrote that if nature suffers, humanity cannot grow and develop properly.

He then went on to talk about the SDG academy, which was established to act as a source of high-quality resources and guidance on education for the SDGs. It is an online platform and the main goal is not only to provide access to information about the SDGs, but furthermore to create a knowledge base for public options to make governments accountable on the SDGs and for developing the solutions for the challenges of our times at the community, city, national and global levels.

Guillaume Lafortune closed his presentation with the remark that we should all work towards a brighter narrative on SDGs. If people don't know about ways of policymaking, if they can't understand the dealings of the UN, if they don't know about ways to get active, they should not be blamed. Rather, the goal should always be to inform and to communicate better and to reach as many people as possible by using modern digital tools. He thanked everybody for their attention and stressed the important role of libraries in this knowledge-building process.

- *Q&A session with Frank Scholze*

Frank Scholze thanked Guillaume Lafortune for his inspiring keynote and started the discussion.

He referred to the international symposium, celebrating 90 years of National Central Library of Taiwan, which he attended recently. One of the topics of the symposium was libraries' educational work on literacy and numeracy. Teaching young children to read is a task that cannot be valued highly enough and he stressed that libraries should become more active in this task and emphasise it as an important part of their work. Facing the challenges which Guillaume Lafortune talked about in his keynote, it becomes clear that remaining neutral is no option for libraries. Rather, they have to take on a more active educational role.

Ivanka Stričević then asked about the eight types of capital assets presented in the keynote. She suggested that they needed a certain synergy in order for them to bear fruit. How can you achieve this synergy and do libraries have the power for creating this synergy?

Guillaume Lafortune agreed and explained that there are synergies between all of the 17 SDGs. Looking at the SDGs one always takes into account a framework, and addresses key transformations that need to happen to achieve the goals. Libraries have holistic views and they are not looking at just one goal, because they are positioned at a nexus between the social and the cultural sphere. Internally, libraries can make their buildings more sustainable, they can work towards energy efficiency, but more importantly, externally, they can work towards education, and towards advising society by opening up the wealth of knowledge that they store.

Roly Keating tied into this question and agreed that libraries can become the place where people can think more holistically. Libraries are the place where information can be validated and they act as disseminators of information. He then asked how to stay optimistic in the face of such dismal statistics on the SDGs. How does the SDSN continue its work and remain confident?

Guillaume Lafortune argued there is nothing wrong with the goals themselves and that goal-based development was always a good approach, since it helps mobilising people around the world and it streamlines the way achievements can be measured. Having the 17 SDGs, it is the first time that there is a world-wide approach for a global commitment. Last year marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "United Nations Conference on the Human Environment" (held 5-16 June 1972 in Stockholm).

Concerning the optimism that is indeed needed, Guillaume Lafortune elaborated that it is vital to keep those goals alive and that there are questions concerning financing. There is the challenge to scale up for the poorest countries and to better align monetary flow in the European countries to deal with financial help. Furthermore, a better vision and better communications why we are doing what we are doing are needed. Optimism goes hand in hand with an optimism about the benefits of education. Lafortune then stressed his sincere conviction, that democratic principles and information pathways built on science are the keys to achieving the goals.

Amina Shah asked, with regard to the countries that have done best in the SDSN report, what is it specifically that they have done? Incidentally, these well-performing countries are also the ones where libraries and library systems are performing well.

Guillaume Lafortune answered that these countries talk about SDGs in their societies, and their political leaders talk about the goals at national and international level. They participate in various UN-institutions and are active members. But in the US, there is no talk about the SDGs at the federal level. The well-performing countries have published several national reviews and they are also considering how their choices affect others. The countries that we think are the most ambitious take into account this spill-over effect. But nonetheless, all countries have work to do with the main issues being a secure financial support for social protection, health coverage, health services and education.

Laurence Engel asked what digitisation has to do with sustainability. Can it be a solution or does it rather fuel the negative aspects? Libraries tend to focus on the positive effects of the digital world and almost never mention the consequences for sustainability.

Guillaume Lafortune responded that there are many positive aspects of the digital word and digitisation. Digitisation lowers the costs enormously, and it enables access around the world. But it is also true, that if we push our goals we have to work to reduce the carbon footprint of the digital process. Still, he underlined the importance of keeping libraries as places for people to meet and to exchange knowledge.

Frank Scholze tied into this aspect and pointed out that we should be aware that there is a tension between our efforts to archive everything for eternity on the one hand and the aspect of sustainability on the other. But we should go forward and address this tension and find solutions for it. Picking up from the question of optimism, Frank Scholze explained that libraries can create optimism from their cultural heritage of ethics and values. Libraries can make the necessary connections. He admitted that the German National Library is not at the forefront of being and acting sustainably but that it has become bolder to act as a transmitter for SDGs and to focus on the function of the library as an educator.

Liz Jolly picked up on this idea and argued for a focus on information literacy. Libraries have always done this but in the future libraries should put their focus on climate literacy and future literacy. She is convinced that libraries can make a very useful contribution in that aspect.

Frank Scholze thanked Guillaume Lafortune once more for the inspiring speech.

## 11. Key note: Harri Sahavirta, Trends in sustainability in the Library Framework

Frank Scholze introduced Harri Sahavirta, Chair of ENSULIB (Environment, Sustainability and Libraries IFLA Section). He is the chief librarian of the Arabianranta and Vallila branches of the Helsinki City Library.

Harri Sahavirta thanked the Chair for the opportunity to speak and started with an overview of ENSULIB's agenda: The section focuses on green library buildings (the reduction of the carbon

footprint and services for increasing the carbon handprint), on green library services and on social sustainability (referring to UN'S SDGs and the Finnish Library Act).

Sahavirta pointed out that the ideas about green libraries have started with ideas about green buildings, but have grown from there and now, include a wider range of issues. ENSULIB has proven that sustainability is libraries' business. Libraries function as role models, as educational partners, as enforcers of initiatives to promote sustainability. Due to ENSULIB's campaigning, IFLA is now committed to the SDGs and there is an awareness for global rethinking. Libraries have a responsibility to contribute this rethink by ensuring access to reliable information. Harri Sahavirta stressed the fact that access to information is the prerequisite for achieving any SDG.

He then went on to talk briefly about ENSULIB's history and structure: The section has 98 members and 20 standing committee members. It was launched as a Special Interest Group (SIG) in 2009 and only in 2021 it became a full-fledged section. ENSULIB is active on social media and has a webpage where all activities are documented. ENSULIB's resources are all available via open access and include checklists and tools for green libraries.

Since 2016 ENSULIB has awarded the IFLA Green Library Award. There are about 40 submissions every year in two categories: The best green library and the best green library project (e.g. teaching programmes about sustainability). Winners are announced during each year's WLIC. The award's aim is to inspire and encourage libraries all over the world. The criteria (Physical sustainability, Economical sustainability, Qualitative and social sustainability and Environmental management) can be supplemented by special criteria, e.g. national libraries might find preservation and conservation their most important task. The award also raises awareness for the fact that libraries are not sustainable *per se*, but that active commitment is indeed needed.

Harri Sahavirta then addressed the ongoing debate about whether sustainability is an issue for libraries at all. He argued that libraries should take their share of responsibility and make the first move. Libraries should act as responsible actors in this field. The green library movement is a recent development and its most important concepts have been coined in an article by Monika Antonelli from 2008, entitled "The Green Library Movement", in which the role of libraries was described as a service to its communities.

In the beginning, the green library movement focused almost exclusively on green buildings, on issues like location, energy efficiency, lighting, waste management and recycling. ENSULIB has broadened the perspective and included green library services. But the trend for green buildings has been going strong the last years and the wish to reduce the carbon footprint of libraries by diminishing emissions from the building has led to innovation and technological development.

Harri Sahavirta then illustrated his statements by talking about a project that was conducted in Finland in 2020, in which 13 different public libraries calculated their carbon footprint. The interest was to find out which services added up to the carbon footprint. The National Library of Finland also calculated their carbon footprint. It could be shown that heating and electricity are the biggest factors – this was true for both the public libraries and the national library. Public libraries put down the energy needed for their information technology infrastructure as a main factor. Energy consumption for heating and electricity is the main source for emissions – but it has to be borne in mind that the facilities often are not the responsibility of the libraries. Rather, they are tied to decisions made by a city, university or regional authority.

Returning to the initial question of whether sustainability was a topic for libraries at all, Harri Sahavirta raised the question of how far does one's carbon footprint lead? Should libraries take into account the emissions from printing books (including paper production and transportation), or is it the publishers' business and responsibility? Libraries, it could be argued, acquire content and it is not always possible to think about sustainability: National libraries for example are responsible to collect 'everything'. He concluded by pointing out that there is always a selection process going on with regard to the data that is being measured. There is always the question of what is included and what is excluded. Emissions are created at different points of a larger processes and it is thus difficult to calculate them.

Harri Sahavirta then went on to talk about the digital footprint, about storing and transferring data. At the moment, there is no accurate data available for the emissions of servers or data transfer, it isn't even clear how these emissions should be calculated. For example, databases and platforms are shared by many customers. It is difficult to calculate who is responsible for what part of the carbon footprint. But the questions remain: How much redundant data do we store, download and stream? Is there such a thing as sustainable web design? How much do we really have to store, how often do we have to screen digital images? What is the life span of ICT<sup>1</sup> devices?

As he had indicated before, green buildings are not the whole story when it comes to sustainability and, even when focusing on architecture, questions and challenges remain: Green buildings are extensive and expensive projects and not at all affordable. Librarians do not make the decisions to build; principles for green buildings/offices are general requirements, and thus not a characteristic feature of libraries. Sorting waste, circulating and recycling is something we all should be doing, and if everyone is doing it, how can libraries be singled out as "green"?

Harri Sahavirta answered the question himself by focusing on green library services. He argued that sustainability is more than just green buildings. He reminded the audience that not all libraries can be rebuilt, but we must learn to run existing libraries in a more environmentally friendly way. The most important services according to Sahavirta are firstly, open access to reliable and updated information and, secondly, sharing spaces and devices (e.g. working and living spaces, shared IT-equipment).

With regard to the first aspect, he discussed whether it is advisable or even possible for libraries to remain neutral. Should libraries offer all kinds of information or only reliable, scientific information? Should libraries even teach what is right and what is wrong? During all times, libraries have always stored all kinds of information, but sometimes only provided access to accepted information. It is practically impossible for libraries to check all content. There is historical and archival material, that is (from a modern point of view) misinformed, but even that is worth preserving. Libraries should be able to say: This is a fact and this is reliable information. Libraries' fight for democracy and freedom of speech and tolerance is vital for the achievement of SDGs.

Concerning the second aspect, namely the sharing of spaces and devices, Sahavirta explained that when offering shared spaces and devices not everyone would have to buy a computer or a printer. But at the same time he acknowledged that this argument might not hold, because, once again, it is very difficult to measure or confirm it. People can use the library's technology, but still have and use the devices at home, so it is unclear, whether libraries thereby can reduce emissions and increase the carbon handprint. What is true though is that reading is a low-emission recreational activity with

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<sup>1</sup> Information and communication technology

a positive carbon handprint. The carbon handprint of a borrowed book is made up by the positive impact of the borrowing itself. A library book is read often up to 100 times before it is removed from the library collection and recycled. However, with more and more digital resources, the question arises how to calculate the carbon handprint of an e-book?

Harri Sahavirta ended his keynote by discussing the UN Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. There has been a paradigm shift from library buildings to social sustainability. In this context, IFLA advocates for libraries to be recognized as essential partners for sustainable development. Libraries can do more than just archiving books on individual SDG topics. With regard to the aforementioned project in Finnish public libraries, one of the results was that six out of the 17 SDGs were prioritized in these libraries: Good education, Fighting inequality, Sustainable cities and communities, Responsible consumption, Climate actions, Health and well-being. The Finnish Public Libraries Act from 2022 confirmed this agenda and places extra emphasis on the promotion of reading and literature on sustainable topics and on the promotion of social and cultural dialogue on sustainability development.

- *Q&A session with Frank Scholze*

Frank Scholze thanked Harri Sahavirta for his inspiring keynote and started the discussion by pointing out that it was remarkable how many aspects which were discussed during the lunch break were re-enforced in this keynote. He mentioned a more active role of the libraries, acting as enablers, as educators, as sharer of optimism. Access to information is at the centre of sustainable thoughts. Libraries should educate their readers so that they are enabled to judge information.

Frank Scholze asked, if the terms green and sustainable libraries can be differentiated. In the keynote they were used almost synonymously.

Harri Sahavirta explained that ENSULIB has changed its name, and the focus has shifted from “green” to “sustainable”, so in a way, “green” is a more historical approach.

Kimmo Tuominen remarked that it is very difficult to make reliable estimations about the carbon footprint, e. g. the National Library of Finland runs services that are provided jointly by the library and the University of Helsinki or Heureka, the Finnish science centre. He explained that it is not the running of the services that produces the biggest carbon footprint, but the construction of the service. A solution would be that not all institutions need an own server, but should collaborate on the technical infrastructure. Centralising services could be an answer to this challenge.

Harri Sahavirta replied that the co-dependence of library services was indeed a problem. Libraries are not always independent actors, since they are often connected with other stakeholders. He further states that libraries have to choose which information they will collect. How far will our collection go back? If libraries collect books, do we include the production of the paper the book has been printed on? The conclusion is that there are no clear answers for questions like this.

Frank Scholze noted that the ideas he is taking away from this keynote are: To take small steps and, due to the lack of measurable data, to be prepared to work on the basis of assumptions at times. Libraries will need to find a balance between tasks that need to be performed on the one hand and sustainable solutions on the other. For example, if you go for recycled paper, sooner or later you will have an archiving problem. If you go for fresh fibre paper, it will last for centuries.



Harri Sahavirta replied that libraries should not only think about emissions, but also about what there is to be gained by certain services and information. Admittedly, there will never be a zero-emissions situation.

Viljem Leban asked if it was possible to provide the percentage of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Frank Scholze asked if anyone has calculated the carbon footprint for their library? The delegates from Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands indicated that they have done so.

Harri Sahavirta concluded that there is no ready-made formula for sustainability in libraries. It depends on the kind of data you can find. Libraries have to adjust data and findings to their services and needs.

## 12. Update on the situation in Ukrainian libraries (pre-recorded) Lyubov Andriivna Dubrovina

As last year, the Director General Lyubov A. Dubrovina reported in a pre-recorded video message on the current situation in Ukraine and the resulting changes in the strategic priorities of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (VNLU) under wartime conditions.

She began her remarks by thanking CENL for the humanitarian aid and the opportunity to speak again at the AGM. It confirmed the high aspirations of the conference as a strong professional association with common goals for developing a good partnership. Especially today, in such difficult historical conditions, this mission has an extraordinary significance for Ukraine, which has a rich cultural heritage and scientific resources, but is unable to solve and continue the problem of imminent destruction on its own. Therefore, the Director General highly appreciates the efforts of the European national libraries to bring Ukrainian culture and the VNLU to the centre of attention by showing Ukrainian collections, organising conferences and publishing materials about Ukraine and Ukrainian authors.

Special thanks went to the faithful support of the donors in the preservation and digitisation of the collections. With the help of the equipment provided, the European national libraries had created opportunities for the digital rescue of Ukraine's cultural and scientific heritage. Ukrainian librarians who fled to other European countries during the hostilities were also able to find internships and jobs. Lyubov A. Dubrovina also addressed the psychological aspect of helping librarians and researchers. The sincere willingness to support the Ukrainian colleagues in every way and to show understanding for the crisis situation had a very positive effect on the library staff.

Extensive experience was gained in the first year of the war. But this year had shown that the danger of destruction of libraries by military aggression was absolutely real. In this regard, she cited an example from the VNLU, where in October 2022 the Russian army's rocket attacks did not directly hit the building, but nevertheless caused considerable damage. With the help of the Ukrainian government, the Academy of Sciences, private companies and individual sponsors, it was possible to bear the costly consequences of the explosions. On 29 May 2023 there was another attack, this time the main building and some reading rooms were damaged by fragments of rockets fired. According to the Director General, this fact showed that destruction could arrive at any time, even with greater losses.

These events would have led to a change in the library's strategy. The priority now would be to speed up the digitisation of the collections in order to preserve the information and continue to

make it available to the users. Thanks to the efforts of CENL and the support of some European national libraries, it was possible to purchase powerful scanners, servers, computers and other equipment. These resources will form the basis for the National Digital Library of Ukraine, the project which was launched in 2022. In addition, with the help of the British Library and the State Library of Berlin, they were able to ensure the preservation of the collections and the availability of restoration equipment, special paper and packaging.

Another important aspect of the changes in terms of priorities of activities is the possibility to join the European scientific infrastructure. Lyubov A. Dubrovina reported on the information portal project "Science of Ukraine: Access to Knowledge", which was launched back in 2016 to provide integrated access to scientific electronic resources of the VNLU in order to promote the evaluation and accessibility of the scientific achievements of Ukrainian scientists. Nevertheless, the denial of free Russian software products and technical support for the creation of electronic resources remains a major problem. Even under these conditions, opportunities are being explored to implement plans, but the Director General stressed that further support for technical equipment is important.

In conclusion, Lyubov A. Dubrovina underlined that despite all the difficulties of the past year, European solidarity and friendly support have been a great positive experience, enabling to set new strategic priorities and inspiring to believe in the future.

Frank Scholze thanked all members for their support for Ukraine. While this was a hard cut to the main theme of the AGM, one has to be aware that this is our reality. Accordingly, the report would show well under which hard conditions the Ukrainian colleagues have to live day by day.

## 12. All Roads lead to Rome or: National Libraries on their ways to sustainability

Frank Scholze opened the session. The short presentations (approximately 10 minutes each) are intended to form a basis for tomorrow's discussion.

### 12.1 Laurence Engel, National Library of France: The Sustainable conservation centre Amiens

Laurence Engel shared the BnF's planning of a new sustainable conservation centre in Amiens. In a way, this project echoes the situation of the BnF. Although a new building, the stacks of the BnF are already saturated and some collections are showing signs of disintegration, especially the press collection.

Assessing this problematic situation, the following options were discussed:

- Not to build and instead rent storing space
- To build an extension and to renovate the existing site at Bussy-Saint-Georges
- To build a new site in Amiens

The last option has been chosen since it was, in the long-term, the best solution financially and environmentally. The decision was to close two existing conservations sites and to build a new conservation centre in order to be more sustainable and to reduce running costs.

In September 2021 Amiens was selected from more than 70 applicants. It was unexpected that so many municipalities did apply for this project, since the prospective hosts had been asked to contribute to the financing. There were many criteria for the potential site. In the end, the decision for Amiens was based on its proximity to Paris and on the available land area, namely 3,5 hectares with another 2,8 hectares for possible expansions.

The projected capacity at the end of the first construction phase will include 142 workstations and 280 km of shelving. It will be a solely technical building, with no public access. The construction time is three years (2026-2029) and the collections will be transferred to the new building from 2029-2030.

Laurence Engel then elaborated on the main aims of the Amiens project:

- to reduce the overcrowding of the Paris site and to improve conservation conditions, particularly for press collections, by creating a national press conservatory. The Paris site of the BnF is not best suited for it and the space freed up will be used for other collections in the future.
- to reorganise conservations activities by setting up restoration and digitisation workshops at the Amiens site.
- to create a lasting dynamic of cultural cooperation with Amiens and the Hauts-de-France region.

The general objectives of the works project are:

- Architectural quality and working conditions
- Successful integration into a changing urban environment
- Building performance and automated warehousing in oxygen-scarce spaces
- Environmental objectives
- Flexibility and scalability (in contrast to the modern BnF building)
- Upkeep and maintenance

The new conservation site is designed for 142 workstations. There will be 109 BnF workstations, including 69 for conservation staff and 34 workstations for service providers (restoration and digitisation). The capacities should be sufficient for the next 50 years. The building costs amount to 53 million euros, the total budget amounts to 96,2 million euros. It is co-financed by the French state and the local authorities. The project receives subsidies from the French state (57% if BnF's own funds are added), from the local municipality (22%) and from the European Union (21%).

With regard to environmental issues, Laurence Engel highlighted four priority areas: Building performance, quality of working conditions, flexibility and scalability, and upkeep and maintenance. Many environmental standards will be met by the new building and it will be OsmoZ certified. The project is accompanied by a two-stage auditing process, in which the fulfilment of the self-set environmental goals will be checked.

## 12.2 Renaldas Gudauskas, National Library of Lithuania: Social Responsibility Report

Renaldas Gudauskas presented the social responsibility report of the National Library of Lithuania on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The National Library carried out a survey to determine to what extent the individual goals are already being met. The survey was a voluntary

effort by the library and part of the National Library's report for 2020-2022. Gudauskas drew the conclusion that the library's processes can be geared to better suit the SDGs. He then focused on some SDGs in particular.

With regard to SDG 4 "Quality education" he highlighted the library's position as a centre for freedom of information and speech. The National Library participates in international library organisations and seeks to build international and national partnerships. He explained that the National Library implemented several cultural development projects with one focus being quality education for all cultural workers in Lithuania. The other focus is a major project in e-culture with a scope of 26 million euros.

Renaldas Gudauskas then pointed out the National Library's activities with regard to SDG 10 "Reducing inequalities": The National Library is active in developing services for migrants and refugees, especially for Ukrainian refugees, in organising a human rights forum, and in creating partnerships with Ukrainian associations. The National Library sees itself as a vital part of the social infrastructure of society. It has also, in line with SDG 11 "Sustainable cities and communities", been collaborating with Vilnius City Municipality to develop a shared vision for the Knowledge Quarter and, on the whole, aiming for the library to become a cultural attraction centre in Vilnius.

### **12.3 Anna Chulyan, National Library of Armenia: Sustainability at the National Library of Armenia**

Anna Chulyan gave an overview of the National Library of Armenia's (NLA) activities with regard to the preservation of Armenia's cultural heritage.

In 1832 the national book collection moved to the National Library and it was decided that every published book must be in that collection. In 1939 the building of the national library was built by the Armenian architect Alexander Tamanian. Since the building itself is of great cultural and historical importance, it has been deemed a national historical monument, thus making it impossible to install air conditioning systems.

In 2022, the NLA hosted a conference "Heritage Preservation for a Sustainable Future". It was dedicated to 510 years of Armenian printing. The conference's main theme was inclusion and focused on:

- National heritage
- Language Integration
- People with special needs
- Digital skills

Anna Chulyan then pointed out the specific challenges when dealing with Armenia's cultural heritage. Due to the different language forms (Old Armenian, Middle Armenian, Western Armenian, Eastern Armenian) there are many problems. There are challenges when implementing OCR software for Armenian scripts, since OCR only recognizes about 30-40 % of the text. Some other technical providers recognize 50%, but this entails a lot of manual editing. Last year the NLA signed an agreement with Portmind company to create a special OCR software for the Armenian script. With this tool, not only will it be possible to support the accessibility of digital literature in the Armenian language for library users with special needs, but moreover, it will promote the inclusion

of the Armenian language into the digital world, thus enabling search engine indexing, text recognition and speech recognition among other services.

The NLA has launched a new website. It is accessible in four languages (Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, English and Russian). In the run-up to the project, the homepages of other national libraries were examined, and especially the website of the Royal Library of Belgium offered good design ideas. The new design aims at being more attractive to a younger audience and to become more interesting for different groups of users.

With regard to the topic of inclusion (and SDGs 4 “Quality Education” and 10 “Reduced Inequalities”), the NLA signed an agreement with Accessible Books Consortium (ABC) for people with print disabilities. A first project was implemented when an Armenian librarian at the University of California Los Angeles bequeathed money to the NLA. With this money, the Assistive Technology Lab will be established. The Assistive Technology Lab will be fully equipped with everything needed for visually impaired persons. After completing the training provided by ABC, the participants will hold additional training sessions with students, librarians, and library users both from the NLA and from other libraries to share this knowledge and promote the use of accessible format books in Armenia.

#### **12.4 Margarida Lopes, National Library of Portugal: Sustainability at the National Library of Portugal**

Margarida Lopes presented the various activities which the National Library of Portugal has taken towards being more sustainable.

First, Lopes described how the building and surrounding area were transformed. Although there aren't any plans to move into a new building in the next years, from 2020-2021, the library requalified its gardens and surrounding area in order to become a “greener” library. A complete renovation of the meadows, the lawns and the irrigation network has been carried out. Plants and shrubs that manage with little water were replanted. Now, the garden and the surrounding area, which used to be closed, are open for the community, staff and the general public. The library spent 500.000 euros on this.

Second, the National Library embarked upon a thorough renovation of the General Reading Room in order to become more energy efficient. It is planned that by 2024 all windows will be replaced by triple-glazed windows for a better energy efficiency and also to reduce traffic noise from the outside. The project has been submitted and approved. Also in 2024, the library will launch a project of generating energy for self-consumption via solar panelling. The library has currently started working on it.

As a third activity, Margarida Lopes talked about preservation and digitisation. It is the library's biggest effort and project and is part of the “Recovery and resilience plan funds 2022-2025”. There will be a total investment of 7,4 million euros for digitizing the collection. By the end of the project in 2025 there will be 20 million digitized images. It will represent a growth of over 500% of digital images in the next 5 years. The scope will cover rare books and manuscripts as well as music and newspaper collections, cartography and archive collections of contemporary Portuguese culture. The plan is to digitize 10 million items from the special collections and 10 million items from the newspaper collection.

The National Library of Portugal embraced the SDG 4 “Quality Education” by launching the National Digital library, a portal to make resources openly accessible to all readers. Lopes stressed this as the most important task, as it is crucial that libraries allow for open access to their cultural heritage. The library has developed two services in this context:

The first one is the “National Repository of Objects in digital format” (RNOFA), which has been available since 2018. It facilitates access to culture for people with reading disabilities. RNOFA is a collaborative system and the National Library works together with institutions which have resources in alternative scripts or formats.

The second service is the “Digital Newspapers Deposit” (DDJ), which provides a repository for the self-deposit of newspapers in digital formats. It exempts the partners from submitting the newspaper in paper form. The Portuguese legal deposit only applies to printed material but the DDJ makes it easy for providers to upload the pdf version of their newspapers.

Lastly, Margarida Lopes pointed out the need for public initiatives in order to raise awareness for sustainable access. For that matter, the National Library hosts a photo exhibition called “17 faces of Action”, which showcase the 17 UN SDGs. The exhibition runs from June to August 2023.

### **12.5 Elena Pintilei, National Library of Moldova: Sustainability at the National Library of Moldova**

The contribution had to be cancelled at short notice.

### **12.6 Karim Tahirov, National Library of Azerbaijan: Sustainability at the Azerbaijan National Library named after M.F. Akhundov**

The Azerbaijan National Library has launched a virtual exhibition to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the library. A conference to celebrate this milestone will be held in September 2023. Karim Tahirov then presented the highlights of the Azerbaijan National Library’s projects.

An automated library-information system (“VIRTUA”) has been implemented. It consists of different modules for all services and aims to automate all library processes. It addresses the electronic catalogue, the organization of the electronic library, user-registration, book-distribution as well as collective cataloguing for the national bibliography and for all large libraries in Azerbaijan.

The development of automated and computerised services, e. g. the creating of an electronic catalogue, as well as electronic full-text resources, started in 2006. In 2022, already 58,991 full-text electronic resources were prepared and accessible in the National Library of Azerbaijan. These include 5085 full-text E-books, 20,271 full-text E-periodicals, 412 full-text E-dissertations and 33,223 full-text analytical bibliographic resources. A total of 1,484,365 electronic resources are now available in the National Library. Digital newspapers have been included in the collection since 2008.

During the COVID-19 pandemic much progress has been made with regard to online digital services for readers and researchers from within the country but also worldwide. Digital resources now also include audio-books and resources for the blind and the visually impaired. With regard to customer friendliness, the National Library of Azerbaijan is open 24 hours for six days a week.

## 12.7 **Katrina Kukaine, National Library of Latvia: Sustainability at the National Library of Latvia followed by Andris Vilks (online)**

In her presentation, Katrina Kukaine shared how the National Library of Latvia (NLL) is implementing UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in its services by creating a safe and inclusive environment for information sharing. Founded in 1919, the NLL is a state institution of national importance under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, and is based on the Law on the National Library of Latvia, Legal Deposit Law, Library Law and Copyright Law. The library's collection of 4.3 million items is very diverse and serves 9% of Latvia's total population as registered readers. The NLL is equipped with 15 reading rooms and also has facilities for visually impaired readers and readers with physical disabilities.

Katrina Kukaine reported that efforts are being made to make sustainability part of everyday life by raising people's awareness and practicing ways to save resources. In addition, an energy saving project and solar panels were implemented, as well as a natural urban meadow. As part of the NLL's strategy for educational action, 2022 Sustainability has been adapted to implement the measures of the SDGs. The focus is on four thematic areas: Latvian language, digital transformation, responsible and inclusive education, and staff training as a basis for developing a modern library. To enrich the Latvian language, develop terminology and ensure its sustainability in the digital environment, the NLL has created a digital and reliable knowledge resource - the National Encyclopaedia. The encyclopaedia is not only a tool for accumulating knowledge, but also acts as an antidote in the age of fake news. In order to promote the vitality of the Latvian language in the digital age, as few resources as possible are invested by creating each site with the idea that it can be developed. As the main medium for the academic community, it structures and distributes knowledge by reaching the Latvian readership quickly and efficiently. At the same time, it provides online visibility for two other local languages: Latgalian and Liv. In fact, all published articles are also translated into these two relatively underdeveloped local languages.

Another aspect of ensuring sustainability is the establishment of disaster risk management. The Collection Preservation Centre has been involved in the restoration, conservation and binding of library materials for 35 years and has developed a conservation policy for the whole library. With the help of the CENL COVID-19 Support Fund, emergency preparedness measures were introduced in the library. Emergency kits for risk prevention have been created and staff have been trained in their use. It is planned to train not only other NLL staff but also colleagues from other memory institutions.

After Katrina's presentation, the outgoing Director of the National Library of Latvia and long-standing CENL member, Andris Vilks, took the opportunity to address the CENL community online. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend this year's AGM.

30 years ago, Andris Vilks attended his first CENL AGM, also held in Paris - at the Richelieu site. The difference was that the construction work on the Mitterrand site had not yet been completed. He reported that all three Directors General of the Baltic National Libraries were invited to CENL as soon as the countries joined the Council of Europe. Andris Vilks came to the NLL at the age of 32 and reported that the upcoming projects were still in the early stages, e.g. the creation of Europeana was clearly attributed to CENL. When he started his job as Director General, the main focus of libraries was still on national information policy, strategic planning, the standardisation of data

infrastructures, etc. In recent years, a rapid development could be observed, especially in the amount of cooperation networks. This has not only involved cooperation with neighbouring countries, but also with partners such as Austria, France, Israel, Portugal and many more. He shared that he had received wonderful support from the Directors General when he was in the middle of the negotiation process for the new library building in Riga. During the CENL AGM 2001 in Riga, all Directors General present signed a letter demanding that the Latvian government start the construction of the new library building without delay. Andris Vilks thanked all former and current partners for a fascinating time, which he looks back on with great gratitude. He wished CENL continued good cooperation between the national libraries and that the association's role in the community of libraries in Europe would be maintained and further developed.

Frank Scholze thanked both of them for their contribution and underlined once again that Andris Vilks was one of the founding members. He wished him all the best for the future.

### **12.8 Foekje Boersma, National Library of Netherlands (online): KB's new storage facility: A robotized storage system in a passive building**

Foekje Boersma, who is the Head of Collection Care at the KB National Library of the Netherlands, thanked the Chair for the opportunity to give the presentation online. The topic of the presentation is sustainable climate control for the KB collections in general and the KB's new storage facility with a robotic storage system in a passive building.

She stressed the fact that climate change is a global challenge, with the world facing the depletion of fossil fuels and increasing costs for climate control. The other fact is that there are reduced resources for maintaining cultural heritage. The Dutch government enforced ruling to force institutions to reduce their overall energy consumption.

What is the challenge? The traditional approach to collection care is to store and to display collections in a stable environment, with consistent and controlled temperature and humidity. That is why most libraries have air-conditioning systems in their buildings. But of course with straining energy resources and global warming, this is no longer a sustainable approach.

The KB holds over 4,4 million titles and over 120 shelf kilometres. The building itself dates from 1982 and features 27,000 m<sup>2</sup>. It has analysed its energy consumption. 81% of the energy goes to building maintenance, in detail: 28% for heating, 17% for humidification, 17% for ventilation, 13% for lights and 6% for cooling. In 2018 that resulted in a CO<sub>2</sub>-footprint of over 6000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. But by using green electricity produced by windmills the KB could reduce its carbon footprint by over 5000 tons.

Foekje Boersma then presented general ideas for a sustainable climate control for library collections:

- Collecting institutions should seek to reduce their carbon footprint and environmental impact to mitigate climate change, by reducing their energy use and examining alternative renewable energy sources.
- Care of collections should be achieved in a way that does not assume air conditioning (HVAC). Passive methods, simple technology that is easy to maintain, air circulation and lower energy solutions should be considered.
- Risk management should be embedded in collection management processes.

The KB has taken the following steps towards sustainable climate control:



- Shut down installations at weekends in underground storage areas
- Broaden bandwidth for allowable thresholds (this saves some energy)
- Fix easy to maintain system failures like faulty valves
- Replace out of date components with more energy friendly parts (small scale, not a major renovation)

These actions have resulted in a visible reduction of both electricity (minus 30%) and gas (minus 16%). In 2023 dynamic set points allowing for seasonal drift will be introduced.

In the long-term, none of these actions will work with the old building. That is why the KB is planning a new storage facility at the outskirts of The Hague. It will feature a super high density construction, with automated storage and retrieval, passive climate control and it will be energy neutral by producing its own electricity. The concept of this new storage facility is based on the “Kooperative Speicherbibliothek Schweiz” in Büron, Switzerland, which opened in 2015. The new building will have optimal preservation conditions: an average lower temperature (with slow seasonal fluctuations), stable relative humidity, no risk of fire or water damage and no light. All measures will increase the life expectancy of the collection by more than 60%.

### 13.9 Liz Jolly, British Library: Uniting the Sector. The Power of Libraries to Convene for Climate Action

The British Library (BL) has launched its new strategy with sustainability becoming the key factor in the library’s policy.

Liz Jolly talked about the “Green Libraries Partnership” (CILIP<sup>2</sup>, BL, Libraries Connected, Arts Council England, Julie’s Bicycle). Funded by the Arts Council England, it was a response to the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow. The Green Libraries Partnership aims to:

- discover and harness the existing work going on in libraries relating to sustainability
- build and support environmental understanding and action within libraries so they can play their full part in creating a better future for the planet and people
- enable libraries to work with their communities to continue to build environmental understanding and action
- position libraries at the heart of local environmental programmes including those led by Local Authorities

Furthermore, a Green Libraries Manifesto has been published, and on 24 March 2023 the Inaugural Green Libraries Conference was held online. Overall, the initiative adopts a holistic approach towards sustainability and tries to focus on things that can be changed. Liz Jolly stressed the fact that it is important to find the balance between small steps and goals, and taking the initiative to broader development. Finally, libraries should learn from one another and from what has been done before. She concluded by saying that libraries can and should be at the heart of sustainable action.

## 13. Closing Remarks

Frank Scholze said he was glad that the members had challenged themselves to contribute for today and tomorrow. He thanked the keynote speakers for their valuable contributions, which provided a

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<sup>2</sup> Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

good link to all the other presentations. The Chair summarised that it was about what is possible and thinking in small steps, for which more cooperation was needed. Certain things needed to be done, even if they were not measurable. National libraries have many stories to tell to initiate discussions, not just for their own community. Frank Scholze's key takeaway was that more needs to be done in all countries and that he would like to talk about sustainability again in three to five years' time. With this in mind, he emphasised that he was already looking forward to the discussions in the breakout groups tomorrow.

## **DAY 2 – TUESDAY, 20 June**

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The Chair welcomed all members and opened the meeting at 09:40 CEST.

### **14. Report of EKN Grant Holders 2022**

#### **14.1 Early Reading Forum**

Renaldas Gudauskas, National Library of Lithuania

Renaldas Gudauskas expressed his gratitude for the EKN grant and informed about the results of the Early Reading Forum held on 7-8 December 2022.

The aim was to bring together the Lithuanian and international communities to discuss the benefits of promoting early reading at a professional level. The forum was attended by researchers and specialists in children's literature from Lithuania and abroad who focused on the importance of early reading. EURead, the National Library of Latvia and the Estonian Centre for Children's Literature were also involved, as they made a significant contribution to dissemination abroad. In addition to the professional exchange within the community, prospective and current parents were also involved to share best practice.

On the first day of the Forum, presentations were given by specialists in the field of children's reading. The various speakers emphasised the importance of supporting children in reading from an early age and the ways in which early reading skills, which are essential for visual, literacy and media literacy, can be developed. This also provided a good overview of the latest research findings and the influence of the linguistic environment. Apart from the presentations, the first day was dedicated to discussing the impact of libraries in encouraging children to read.

The second day included educational activities for professionals, parents and families with young children. This provided practical discussions for parents on how to teach their children to read, and to share experiences. As a result of the forum, a high level of interest in the area of social media was identified and an article based on the discussions was written and published for a popular news portal and the professional library magazine "Among Books". With the grant from the EKN it was possible to finance a live broadcast, the translation, the moderators and the preparation of the educational material as well as the implementation of the workshops. Overall, the Forum discussions emphasised that parents are the most important actors in promoting early reading.

Frank Scholze thanked for the report and reiterated the importance of children learning to read longer texts. This defines us as human beings, he said, and is all the more important given the rapid developments in the field of artificial intelligence.

#### **14.2 Wealth of Colour and Tradition**

Maria Stefanova, National Library of Bulgaria

Maria Stefanova was grateful for the opportunity to present the results of the project, which was realised in partnership with libraries from Croatia, Georgia, Montenegro, Serbia and Romania thanks to the EKN grant from CENL.

The aim of this project was:

- to promote international library cooperation
- to popularise specific library collections
- to create an exhibition in honour of traditions, ancestors and common human nature in the form of traditional costumes and embroidery found in Eastern Europe
- to improve the skills of librarians to organise exhibitions both physically and digitally, and to enable the creation of new digital collections

Therefore, each participating library did an internal search of its collections for material representative of its national heritage. The selected objects were digitised and made available to the exhibition "Wealth of Colour and Tradition", which had its official opening on 9 November 2022 in the "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" National Library in Sofia, Bulgaria. Representatives from each participating national library presented the images from their collections and explained the overall significance of the special collection. Among the guests at the opening were many ministers, as well as a number of scientists who will continue to conduct research based on the collection. On the same day, a session was held, entitled "Special collections in the national libraries. How to give new life and attract new audiences to the special collections in the national libraries. The role of a contemporary exhibition, featuring items from the national libraries funds". This gave the participants the opportunity to share best practices.

Maria Stefanova reported that it was a very colourful event that showed the richness of national folklore and the commonalities of all the partner libraries. A total of 1,000 people have so far visited the exhibition, which is available in English and Bulgarian. The next step in the project is for the exhibition to travel to the participating libraries, and it has already made its next stop in Montenegro in December 2022. In order to expand the exhibition on a larger scale, it is also planned to invite all interested libraries to join the project.

Frank Scholze thanked for the presentation and underlined how much this project contributes to the communities reaching out to each other.

## 15. National Libraries as Data Infrastructures: The Idea behind the CENL Dialogue Forum

Sally Chambers, DARIAH-EU Board of Directors

Sally Chambers is the Digital Humanities Research Coordinator at Ghent Centre for Digital University, Ghent University and Project Coordinator at KBR, Royal Library of Belgium. In 2022, she has been appointed Director for DARIAH<sup>3</sup>.

She talked about the idea behind the new CENL Dialogue Forum "National Libraries as Data Infrastructures". National libraries have always been the pioneers in the development of data

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<sup>3</sup> Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities

infrastructure, they play an essential role in facilitating (digital) humanities research. Digital (digitised and born-digital) cultural heritage is crucial for digital humanities.

DARIAH currently has 21 members and 15 cooperating partners. CLARIN<sup>4</sup> has 22 members, 3 observers and 1 third party.

DARIAH is a Pan-European infrastructure that enables excellent research in the Arts and Humanities by exchanging and sustaining tools, services, data and knowledge from its member countries and facilitating the wide uptake of digital methods.

CLARIN, a European Research Infrastructure for Language Resources and Technology, makes digital language resources available to scholars, researchers, students, and citizen-scientists from all disciplines, especially in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Sally Chambers stressed the fact that cultural heritage data is always research data for the humanities. While in some countries funding for research and funding for cultural heritage are two different things, DARIAH and CLARIN are, in a way, bridges between the two. With regard to DARIAH, the focus is on “collections as data”. She explained that this meant turning the digital library “inside out”. Sally Chambers illustrated DARIAH’s work with the “DATA-KBR-BE” project “, which deals with text and data mining at the National Library of Belgium (KBR). The focus of the project is on Belgica, especially on digitised newspapers. The goal is to bring the data to the surface to make it workable with, thus facilitating digital literacy. DARIAH Campus is a tool that was developed for this purpose. It is a toolbox of services that acts as a framework and hosting platform for learning resources, data modelling and digital archives.

She continued her talk with an overview of the different tools and services CLARIN offers:

- CLARIN content search

A search engine that connects individual textual collections. It enables researchers to search for specific patterns across collections of data. The data itself remains at the host centres (federated content search), thus making it possible to work with the data even if there are legal restrictions with regard to access or dataset size.

- CLARIN virtual collection registry

This virtual collection brings together a set of links to digital objects (e.g. annotated texts, videos). It works closely with EUROPEANA. Researchers can create and publish their own virtual collections.

- CLARIN Resources Families

This tool consists of more curated datasets. It consists of lexical resources and corpora (e.g. newspaper corpus) as well as various tools. Sally Chambers then pointed out the main differences in the approaches between CLARIN and DARIAH: CLARIN works with data and corpora from a linguistic perspective, DARIAH from a broader humanities perspective.

- Digital Humanities Course Registry

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<sup>4</sup> Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure

This service is aimed at researchers from both the CLARIN and DARIAH contexts, who can publish their courses and even award ECTS credits.

- Social Sciences and Humanities Open Marketplace (SSH Open Marketplace)

As part of the Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud project (SSHOC), the SSH is a discovery portal which provides all kinds of resources for research in Social Sciences and Humanities. It includes tools, services, training materials, workflows and datasets. The Marketplace highlights and showcases solutions and research practices.

Another infrastructure is OPERAS<sup>5</sup>, which focuses on open science and open data. OPERAS' vision is to make Open Science a reality for research in the Social Sciences and Humanities and achieve a scholarly communication system where knowledge produced in the SSH benefits researchers, academics and students across Europe and worldwide.

Sally Chambers emphasised that with such a variety of platforms, tools and search options, the Dialogue Forum on Digital Infrastructure is truly a long-awaited requirement. It is important that cultural heritage institutions share their resources. The EOSC<sup>6</sup> is a first step in this direction, serving all fields of science and covering publications, data, datasets, services and training materials.

The next initiative is the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage. This is builds on EUROPEANA and takes it to another level. It accelerates the digital transformation of Europe's cultural sector and fosters the creation and reuse of content in the cultural and creative sectors. It's looking at data quality, infrastructure, capacity building and digital services for the public. There has been work done towards data checklists in order to show how to make collections available as data. In the context of CENL, it may be interesting to translate these data checklists into all CENL languages.

Another platform is being planned by the European Commission: The Collaborative Cloud for Europe's Cultural Heritage. There is quite a bit of overlap between these two approaches. But whereas the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage functions as a data hub, the Collaborative Cloud aims at fostering cooperation and co-creation among cultural, creative and technology sectors. The Cloud's development will take place under Horizon Europe, the EU research an innovation programme (2021-2027).

Sally Chambers then went on to talk about the importance of libraries' collaboration in portals like CLARIN. On 9-10 May 2022 a workshop "CLARIN and Libraries" was held at the KB, the National Library of the Netherlands, with 30 participants from 15 different countries. The next workshop is planned for 4-5 December 2023 in Oslo and will focus on the creation of language models from digital library collections. The initial workshop was also the starting point for the idea of a CENL Dialogue Forum on digital infrastructure. The idea of such a forum was approved by the CENL EC.

The next step was to find out what the national libraries thought about such a collaboration and whether they would be interested in using such a collaborative infrastructure. In order to gather this information, a questionnaire was sent to all CENL members in May 2023. The aim of the survey was to find out whether national libraries are already participating in national or European research infrastructure initiatives and whether there are specific infrastructural challenges or opportunities.

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<sup>5</sup> Open Scholarly Communication in the European Research Area for Social Sciences and Humanities

<sup>6</sup> European Open Science Cloud

The survey included eight major questions and some conditional 'sub-questions'. 29 CENL members have already completed the survey, the deadline has been extended until 15 July 2023. Sally Chambers encouraged all members to fill out the survey.

She then presented some of the initial results:

- 62% of respondents agree that research infrastructure is a strategic priority
- 72% of respondents already participate in one or more national research infrastructures
- 45 % of respondents participate in a European Research infrastructure

The survey then asked about a number of specific topics to see in which areas libraries were already active. The top three topics were digital humanities, collections as data and data access.

Finally, the survey also asked what was expected from the Dialogue Forum. 24 out of 27 respondents would like to participate in the CENL Dialogue Forum. Most of them were interested in more and stronger collaboration, in data, in knowledge exchange and in implementation of results (development of services, staffing, digital transformation, best practices). The final question in the survey was about the importance of national library involvement in research.

The next steps for the Dialogue Forum:

- Follow-up virtual discussion: 26 June 2023
- Presentation at CLARIN conference: 16-18 October 2023
- CLARIN and Libraries Workshop: 4-5 December 2023 in Oslo

## 16. New Legal Deposit Law in Spain

José Luis Bueren Gómez-Acebo, National Library of Spain

José Luis Bueren Gómez-Acebo explained the history and the changes of the legal deposit legislation in Spain:

- Royal Decree on legal deposit (1957)
- Legal Deposit Law (2011)
- Royal Decree for online publications (2015)
- New Legal Deposit Law (2022)

The main changes in this New Legal Deposit Law are that it establishes the obligation of publishers to deposit the digital pre-print of books and periodicals together with two printed copies of books and one of periodicals. Obtaining the digital pre-print version has many benefits for the library: It saves money on future digitisation, allows for quicker access to contents and increases the digital corpus for artificial intelligence and natural language processing.

The law explicitly includes videogames and print-on-demand publications and integrates the 2015 Royal Decree on online publications. It was developed in coordination with the Spanish Autonomous Regions (which receive the legal deposits of their respective territory) and adopted by a wide majority in parliament. The New Legal Deposit Law was a great coordination effort of the National Library of Spain/Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE) and the 17 regional conservation centres.

He then illustrated the procedure: The publisher has to register either with the national library or with one of the regional centres. In the BNE the only obligation is to name the file with either the legal deposit number, the ISBN or the ISSN. The system then looks for metadata in the ISBN database and transfers the digital object and the metadata to the catalogue and the digital library. Librarians check

the metadata for accuracy and pre-catalogue items that are not found in the ISBN database. Users can access this content either at the national library or at the regional libraries.

At the moment, 419 journals and magazines with almost 20,000 files and more than 3,000 books, with almost 5,500 files have thus been collected and more than 1,400 publishers have already signed in. The next steps are to complete the integration into the library's digital ecosystem, engage all publishers and improve the link between the national library's systems and the regional centres.

José Luis Bueren Gómez-Acebo concluded his presentation by stating that the New Legal Deposit Law makes work easier for the BNE, since the deposited items already come with some kind of cataloguing. It also facilitates artificial intelligence projects as the BNE has larger digital corpora at its disposal – not only in Spanish but also in the other official languages of Spain, e.g. Catalan or Galician.

Aslak Sira Myhre pointed out that a digital deposit act has been passed in Norway in 2016, so publishers have to deposit digitally. He admitted that it worked well for the big publishing houses, but was more difficult for the smaller ones. Norway uses the publisher's aggregators as their own aggregator, so resources come with all the relevant metadata (the national library pays for this service). When the printed items arrive at the library, they are forwarded directly to the stacks, since the catalogue records are already there. The National Library of Norway gives digital access to all Norwegian digital books.

Roly Keating remarked that the UK now has 10 years of legal regulations for non-print works, but there are still many problems. The British Library is planning a small symposium on this topic, which should serve as an opportunity for knowledge exchange.

Frank Scholze stated that it was a fascinating and important topic, which the EC will certainly discuss at one of its next meetings. He suggested that it might even become the main topic for the next AGM in Warsaw.

## 17. National Libraries & Sustainability

### Break-out groups on various topics

For the breakout sessions, three groups were formed to discuss different sustainable topics. The results of these discussions were summarised in three main findings. These were then presented to the other members.

#### Group 1

Tamara Butigan Vučaj presented the results of the group, which was led by Ivanka Stričević. The topic of emergency planning served as a basis for discussion. She reported that the composition of the group was very balanced with countries such as Latvia, Croatia, Poland, the United Kingdom, Moldova, Serbia, Portugal and Vatican City.

The group discovered that although emergency plans existed in the various countries, they were not yet fully developed, with the exception of the United Kingdom. Different topics were discussed, e.g. what to do in case of earthquakes, floods, pandemics or even the outbreak of war. The general conclusion that has emerged is that contingency planning is always part of sustainable planning. For this reason, it is essential to take time for these plans and also to sufficiently strengthen the competences of the staff, because there are not enough qualified people. Besides cyber sustainability, the group also talked about working from home and noted that some countries have different laws regulating this area.

Frank Scholze affirmed that these results serve as input for the next EC meetings, but are also of interest for the next AGMs. He stressed that we all need to be reminded to talk more intensively about staff development. This would also be an essential point in terms of sustainability in the long

run. The Chair was reminded of the Ankara AGM, where the group also had a very active brainstorming session with good results that should be explored further.

Ivanka Stričević added that emergency planning should definitely be extended to sustainability planning. Looking to the future, it is not only about risk management, but also about how to plan for sustainable development.

### **Group 2:**

Ophélie Ramonatxo reported that the focus of discussion in Group 2 was on buildings and architecture. There was thought about storage of collections, but also about the management of reading rooms and staff offices. The group concluded that we have to deal with a constant contradiction. It was urgent to think about sharing in terms of sustainability, e.g. sharing spaces, both nationally and internationally. At the same time, it was difficult to work together in times of a pandemic.

This led to thinking about working from home and energy costs in public buildings. The group thought about third places to work, not in libraries and not at home, to provide an in-between solution. The idea of sharing is not only about energy costs, but also about the exchange of ideas. She explained that many examples were found of what is already being done in each country. This exchange is also possible within CENL, which is why the idea was suggested to possibly form a working group in this area to give the topic more weight.

Bruno Sagna added that measurements in this context were important. Individual countries would try everything, but there was no framework to show whether the efforts were working or not. Therefore, there is a great interest in exchange.

Frank Scholze explained that what is actually covered and what is our experience of it needs to be balanced. The first step would be to develop a sense of what kind of data is needed for what kind of developments. He insisted that it was not only about numbers, but also about values that cannot be measured. Therefore, he also spoke in favour of a shared exchange. Concepts would have to be developed for national libraries that would be a holistic framework or a series of measurements. Thinking about the future should also include moving away from extremes, finding out where those extremes are and what one thinks about them.

### **Group 3**

Karin Grönvall reported that in Group 3 the topics of preservation, user services and architecture were discussed. The main focus also was on collaboration. It was highlighted that more analysis is needed for digital preservation in the long run. When it comes to the digital footprint, it is also worth asking whether it really makes sense to preserve everything forever. It is also crucial for national libraries that what is digitised today does not have the same quality as in 10 years. In 10-20 years' time, important decisions will have to be made. As far as user services are concerned, it is more about the concept of how users see libraries. Karin Grönvall summarised that national libraries have a mandate to follow society and it remains to be seen whether it is better for users to stay at home and look at the collections or whether the library will continue to be in demand as a place of learning.

Hans Petschar concluded that collecting physical material in any form might also require the use of robots underground. The key question is what each library can do for itself. In the group, he presented the plans of the Austrian National Library and pointed out that small steps have to be taken. The CO<sub>2</sub> content in the atmosphere is 0.04 per cent, but this is considered very little in society and therefore raises the question of how much action is needed. It would also mean that the global concentration of carbon dioxide has increased by more than 50% since the beginning of industrialisation.



Frank Scholze pointed out the importance of having at least some risk management and contingency plans in place. He mentioned that the results of the groups contained a lot of good ideas that needed to be followed up. It was a great vision of what could be shared in Europe or even globally. He was referring not only to access to collections, but also to physical and digital preservation. At the same time, there are still many questions to be answered, as people have not yet thought about what will happen in 50 years' time. This would be in line with the discussions in the other groups.

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the discussions.

## 18. Presentation by the 2024 host

with Tomasz Makowski, National Library of Poland

Tomasz Makowski said that he was very much looking forward to welcoming members back to the National Library of Poland in Warsaw for the CENL AGM on 16-18 June 2024, having last hosted it in 1997. He shared that a tour of the National Library was planned and referred in particular to the modernisation of the reading rooms and common rooms. The Director General underlined that everyone was very welcome and that he was excited to spend some wonderful days with the CENL members in Warsaw.

## 19. Closing remarks, Farewell

Frank Scholze thanked Tomasz Makowski for his words and the invitation to attend the AGM at the National Library of Poland in Warsaw 2024. He found this year's AGM very enriching and recalled the start on Sunday at lunch, which was the beginning of a beautiful personal and professional experience. The Chair thanked all participants for their inspiring contributions. Special thanks went to the host Laurence Engel and her staff for the great organisation of this event. He also thanked the CENL Secretariat for their work in organising the meetings and taking the minutes. Frank Scholze wished everyone a safe journey home and closed the meeting at 12:45 CEST.

After lunch, members were given a guided tour of the exhibition "Imprimer! L'Europe de Gutenberg" at the BnF.