



# **Multicultural Communities: Guidelines for Library Services**

**3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2009**

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## Preface

These Guidelines constitute the third edition of the IFLA '*Multicultural Communities: Guidelines for Library Services*'. This revision follows the IFLA Section of Library Services to Multicultural Populations' *2006-2010 Strategic Plans*: to review and revise the Guidelines, taking into account new technologies, and professional and societal developments which have impacted upon service provision and directions. The *Strategic Plan 2009-2010* also specifies that the revised Guidelines be translated, published and disseminated via the IFLA website in all official IFLA languages, and others as desirable.

This edition follows the IFLA publication, '*Multicultural Communities: Guidelines for Library Services*' (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised 1998), which in turn was based upon the '*Standards for Multicultural Public Library Service*', published in 1982 by the Working Group on Multicultural Library Services (Victoria) and the Library Council of Victoria, Australia. Anne Holmes (Australia) and Derek Whitehead (Australia), in consultation with the Standing Committee of the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations, compiled these Guidelines 1987. The development of electronic media and introduction of new forms of transmitting information created the necessity to revise the original Guidelines. In 1996, Virginia Balance (Canada) and Marie Zielinska (Canada) undertook a revision, in consultation with the Section's Standing Committee. Benedikte Kragh-Schwartz (Denmark) and Charles Townley (USA) assisted in the preparation of the final version of the second edition.

The Guidelines now presented are the culmination of a number of years' work by members of the Standing Committee of the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations. The Committee regards the revision of the Guidelines as an important step in promoting the development of library services to culturally and linguistically diverse members of our communities and we trust that you will find them beneficial to your library service. The structure of these guidelines corresponds to that of '*The Public Library Service: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development*', 2001, so that librarians may more easily use them in conjunction with each other. However, these Guidelines may be applied to all libraries for, as the *IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto* states (see Appendix A),

*'libraries of all types should reflect, support and promote cultural and linguistic diversity at the international, national, and local levels, and thus work for cross-cultural dialogue and active citizenship.'*

A Working Group to review the Guidelines was established at IFLA Buenos Aires in August, 2004; Chaired by Robert Pestell (Australia) and comprised of Clara M. Chu (USA), Domenico Ciccarello (Italy), Fred Gitner (USA) and Christine McDonald (USA). Particular thanks are due to Clara M. Chu (USA), Ann-Katrin Ursberg (Sweden) and Lourina K. de Voogd (Netherlands) for their very valuable editorial input. The Standing Committee, under past Chairs Jane Dreisig (Denmark) and Kirsten Leth Nielsen (Norway), and current Chair Mijin Kim (Canada), has discussed the draft Guidelines at each of its mid-year and annual meetings in Rome, Oslo, Girona, Seoul, Ljubljana, Durban, Heidelberg, Quebec and Osaka, and a cooperative, international effort has resulted in this new edition of the Guidelines.

Robert Pestell

<http://www.ifla.org/en/library-services-to-multicultural-populations>

# 1 The Multicultural Library

All people live in an increasingly heterogeneous society. There are more than 6,000 different languages in the world. The international migration rate is growing every year resulting in an increasing number of people with complex identities. Globalization, increased migration, faster communication, ease of transportation and other 21st century forces have increased cultural diversity in many nations where it might not have previously existed or has augmented the existing multicultural makeup.

*IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto, 2008*

## 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines have been compiled and published in order to promote fairness and equity of access in library services to multicultural communities. The guidelines,

- provide a basis for the planning of library services to all groups in the community;
- provide criteria against which the adequacy of existing multicultural services may be assessed;
- provide an equitable basis for the acquisition of materials and the provision of services;
- encourage understanding and engagement among the multicultural groups represented in all societies.

It is intended that these guidelines should be used in conjunction with standards and guidelines for particular types of libraries in each country and with international standards, rather than taken in isolation. The central principle of these guidelines, that of equity, should be used in applying existing standards and guidelines for public, school, academic and other libraries.

It is also important that library services to multicultural communities should be seen as an integral part of any library's full range of library and information services, rather than in isolation or as an addition to traditional library services.

## 1.2 The principles of the multicultural library

Each individual in our global society has the right to a full range of library and information services. In addressing cultural and linguistic diversity, libraries should:

- serve all members of the community without discrimination based on cultural and linguistic heritage;
- provide information in appropriate languages and scripts;
- give access to a broad range of materials and services reflecting all communities and needs;
- employ staff to reflect the diversity of the community, who are trained to work with and serve diverse communities.

Library and information services in a culturally and linguistically diverse context include both the provision of services to all types of library users and the provision of library services specifically targeted to underserved cultural and linguistic groups. Special attention should be paid to groups which are often marginalized in culturally diverse societies: minorities, asylum seekers and refugees, residents with a temporary residence permit, migrant workers, and indigenous communities.

*IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto, 2008*

Notwithstanding the above, there are a number of factors which may affect the application of these principles:

- In many minority languages, the scarcity of published resources may make it impossible to provide library materials to the same standards as for the majority language. In such cases, it is inevitable that provision will be less adequate in range, balance, collection size or physical quality. Providing access to information in a diversity of formats, including print, multimedia and digital, assists in addressing this inequality.
- The degree of multilingualism and retention of linguistic or cultural identity, and the level of social integration within a society, are all important in determining the level of service to multicultural communities. Members of multicultural groups may wish to identify as bicultural, multicultural or transnational, which will influence what is deemed a fair and equitable provision of library services.
- The demand for library services is a crucial factor. For a variety of reasons, demand may not correspond to the proportion of the population in a particular multicultural community. Low demand may reflect inadequate provision, poor or inappropriate services, low expectations of the users, inadequate publicity or unfamiliarity with library services. Decisions on service level provision need to be based upon community analysis and needs assessment, which includes research into the reasons for the lack or low level of demand. In contrast, people from a highly literate multicultural community may make a disproportionate demand on the library service, which may be unable to be met without compromising the equity of service provision. In these cases, economic grounds may be a determinant of the level of service provision.
- Official publications of a country, such as information relating to government, law, education and business, are likely to exist only in the official language/s of that country. This situation is understandable, although it may be perceived as inequitable. Library staff can play a vital role in assisting multicultural groups to gain the information in the language, and at the level of understanding, they require.

### 1.3 Defining the multicultural library

All persons in Canada will receive library and information services that are respectful to them as individuals. Libraries in Canada endeavor to provide services that recognize and affirm the dignity of those they serve, regardless of a person's heritage, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental capabilities, or personal wealth.

Libraries understand that an acceptance of differences can place individual and collective values in conflict. Libraries are committed to tolerance, understanding and personal discovery. Libraries act to ensure that people can enjoy services free from any attempt by others to impose values, customs or beliefs.

Canadian libraries recognize that a diverse and pluralistic society is central to our country's identity. Public institutions, including libraries, have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion.

*Canadian Library Association, 2008.*

“Cultural Diversity” or “Multiculturalism” refers to the harmonious co-existence and interaction of different cultures, where “culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature; lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs”.<sup>1</sup> Cultural diversity or multiculturalism is the foundation of our collective strength in our local communities and in our global society.

Cultural and linguistic diversity is the common heritage of humankind and should be cherished and preserved for the benefit of all. It is a source for the exchange, innovation, creativity, and peaceful coexistence among peoples. “Respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding are among the best guarantees of international peace and security”.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, libraries of all types should reflect, support and promote cultural and linguistic diversity at the international, national, and local levels, and thus work for cross-cultural dialogue and active citizenship.

*IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto, 2008.*

Libraries need to pay particular attention to the culturally diverse groups in their communities, including Indigenous peoples, immigrant communities, people with culturally-mixed backgrounds, transnational and diasporic individuals, asylum seekers, refugees, residents with temporary stay permits, migrant workers and national minorities.

#### 1.4 The role and purpose of the multicultural library

As libraries serve diverse interests and communities, they function as learning, cultural, and information centres. In addressing cultural and linguistic diversity, library services are driven by their commitment to the principles of fundamental freedoms and equity of access to information and knowledge for all, in the respect of cultural identity and values.

*IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto, 2008.*

The *Lena Resolution* calls for ‘increase support for libraries, museums and archives in the access to and preservation of multilingualism and dissemination of information representing cultural and linguistic diversity’....

*International Conference, Linguistic and Cultural Diversity  
in Cyberspace, Yakutsk, Russian Federation, 2008*

Libraries of all kinds play an important role in education, social engagement and global understanding. Library services, in reflecting the needs of the population they serve, impact greatly upon people’s lives.

- **As learning centres**, libraries promote and provide access to learning materials, language programmes and other relevant materials in appropriate formats for lifelong learning. By providing this access the whole society has the opportunity to support educational needs in general, and learn about each other’s communities, understand each other’s linguistic needs, learn each other’s languages and gain knowledge of the wealth of experiences of different cultures.

- **As cultural centres**, libraries preserve, promote, highlight and give voice to different cultures, including their heritage, traditions, literature, art and music. This access provides people from all cultures the possibility to experience and learn about diverse forms of cultural expression.
  - **As information centres**, libraries acquire, produce, organize, preserve and make accessible information that addresses the needs of all communities, as well as disseminating information on the culturally diverse communities.
- 1.4.1 Libraries should aim, in acquiring materials, to reflect the multicultural composition of society and to foster an understanding of cultural diversity, racial harmony and equality.
- Library materials acquired should enable access, in the multicultural user's own language, to other cultures.
  - Library materials should include material in the majority language/s relating to the culturally diverse communities and their heritages.
  - Libraries should promote the dissemination of knowledge about multicultural groups and their cultures.
- 1.4.2 Libraries should encourage and cater for language learning, in particular to self-learning students, and libraries should work closely with local educational agencies and/or oral language communities so that the best possible provision is made.
- Libraries should provide resources which will facilitate learning of the national language/s and other languages. Such resources should be in heritage or indigenous languages as well as in the national language/s and should include all appropriate media, particularly the use of computers with literacy and language software. In the case of oral languages, speakers from the local community should be engaged as resource persons.
  - Libraries should promote or co-sponsor activities to assist the newly arrived immigrants adjust to their new country, on such topics as citizenship, employment, and social services.
  - Libraries should conduct, promote or co-sponsor activities for learners of the national language/s and other languages.
  - Libraries should participate in the preservation and promotion of oral, indigenous and less-used languages as appropriate to the needs of their multicultural and Indigenous communities.
- 1.4.3 Libraries should foster lifelong learning and social engagement through community education and training programmes, and public programme activities that celebrate and foster cultural diversity.
- 1.4.4 Libraries should participate in the life and welfare of the community. This may include providing multicultural communities with information to address their self-determined goals, and involvement and taking initiative in local events such as cultural activities, festivals, and the commemorative events of the multicultural groups in the area.
- 1.4.5 Libraries should bring multicultural communities together. As meeting places libraries can form arenas of interaction among people from all kinds of cultures. Events, exhibitions and joint sessions on cultural issues and social engagement will give people from all kinds of cultures the opportunity to learn

from each other, practice or improve their language skills, understand each other's lives and perspectives, and make new friendships.

- 1.4.6 Libraries should provide a reference and information service in those languages most commonly used, and to those groups with greatest need, such as recently arrived immigrants. It is particularly important that community information, involving data for everyday decision-making should, where possible, be provided in the language of the user.
- 1.4.7 The same range and quality of service should be available to persons seeking inter-library loans and specific title or subject requests in all languages and for all multicultural groups.

## 2 The legal and financial framework

Everyone has the right to freely express affiliation with his nation or national community, to foster and give expression to his culture and to use his language and script.

*Slovenian Constitution (Article 61).*

Governments and other relevant decision-making bodies are encouraged to establish and adequately fund libraries and library systems to offer free library and information services to culturally diverse communities.

Multicultural library services are in essence global. All libraries involved in activities in this field must participate in relevant local, national or international networks in policy development. Research is needed to obtain the data necessary to make informed service decisions and secure appropriate funding. Research findings and best practices should be widely disseminated in order to guide effective multicultural library services.

*IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto, 2008.*

### 2.1 The multicultural library and its governance

- 2.1.1 The funding and provision of library services is a function of government, whether National, Regional, State, Provincial, Local, or a variation thereof.
- 2.1.2 It is a responsibility of all library authorities, whether public, state, national, school, academic or other, to meet the needs of its multicultural communities. Different models may be used to effectively provide library services, depending upon the diversity, demographic size and dispersion of the communities.
- 2.1.3 All culturally and linguistically diverse communities should be provided with an equitable level of library service, and in the case of public, academic and school libraries, initiatives should be taken at all government levels to ensure that small or widely scattered minorities are adequately served; for example, by centralising circulating collections, or by the formation of cooperative networks, such as the provision of joint services with other libraries, cultural institutions and community organizations.
- 2.1.4 The centralisation of multilingual collections, from which libraries are able to borrow and renew lending collections, is a viable option when minorities

served are small in number, dispersed and changing, or demand for particular languages is lower. Governance is generally a National, State or Provincial responsibility, or may be coordinated as a multi-type cooperative network.

## **2.2 The administration of the multicultural library**

The library should cater for its administrative functions in a way that assures best practices are followed, which include, but are not limited to, the following areas.

- 2.2.1 The determination of standards for library service to multicultural communities, for both centralised and localised services, as part of the development process of library standards in general.
- 2.2.2 The promotion of equitable standards of library service, and of principles and policies of library service, which fairly reflect multicultural and social participation principles.
- 2.2.3 The collection and dissemination of statistics relevant to the application of these guidelines and other applicable standards.
- 2.2.4 The compilation and distribution of information relating to existing collections for multicultural communities in all types of libraries.
- 2.2.5 The provision of advisory and consultative services to libraries on services to multicultural communities.
- 2.2.6 The provision of forums for regular consultation with multicultural communities.
- 2.2.7 The conducting and sponsoring of research into the future needs and use made of the library by members of multicultural communities.
- 2.2.8 The maintenance and fostering of professional and international exchange relations with libraries, publishers and other relevant bodies in the original countries and communities of origin of multicultural groups.
- 2.2.9 The support and encouragement of publishing in heritage languages and publishing of material by or about members of multicultural groups.
- 2.2.10 The development of on-line databases for materials and the promulgation and implementation of international standards for the exchange of data in non-Roman and diacritical scripts.
- 2.2.11 The global exchange of experiences and best practices on multicultural issues.
- 2.2.12 The evaluation, in consultation with multicultural communities, of the application of guidelines, standards, best practices and policies.

## **3 Meeting the needs of the users**

### **3.1 Analysing needs within the community**

Multicultural library services should be based upon knowledge of the culturally diverse communities they serve and their needs. Such data will ensure that services are not developed and provided based upon assumptions or best intentions. These data are obtained by conducting a community analysis and a needs assessment.

### **a. Definitions**

*Community analysis* - The process of identifying the characteristics of the user community (both users and non-users) and the environment in which they live, and assessing their needs of library and information services.

*Needs assessment* - The process of studying the information required and used by the community, and its availability (for both users and non-users).

### **b. Purpose**

- To learn what the community (both users and non-users) thinks about the library and its services.
- To identify the gaps that may exist between the current services and the needs of the community, and those areas filled by other services.
- To provide the information to effectively plan services, in the short and long term, that will meet the needs of the community.

Community analysis and needs assessment are key aspects in the planning process. The factual findings of a community and needs study are used in the following manner:

- incorporation into the goals and objectives of the institution;
- translation of the goals and objectives into specific policies, programmes and activities, based upon the findings; and
- usage of the empirical data as benchmarks, from which to gauge progress in the future.

### **c. Community Analysis**

Data and information to be gathered about the community:

- demographic and socioeconomic data;
- characteristics of the community environment within the library's catchment area:
  - general environment,
  - information environment of the information service provider, and
  - existing library resources and services.

Types of data to be collected:

- Primary - from individuals, community groups or leaders;
- Secondary - previously collected and recorded data from government institutions, business and industry surveys and marketing studies, local chambers of commerce and community organizations.

### **d. Needs assessment**

Data and information to be gathered about users/non-users:

- cultural and behavioural dimensions of the information seeking process;
- information needs e.g. types, levels of complexity, formats, languages, purposes;
- information environment of users.

Types of data to be collected:

- Primary - from individuals, community groups or leaders;
- Secondary - needs assessments of comparable groups, studies of cultural and behavioural dimensions of the information seeking process of specific user groups.

### ***An example of community needs assessment***

#### **The public library consultation process.**

Strong emphasis is placed upon the consultative process. The principle of consultation is the acknowledged value of communicating between the service providers and those for whom the service is proposed.

Consultation begins at the local government level with collaboration between all those areas within council involved in service provision to multicultural communities. Local governments should develop and document their own approach to the integration of access and equity principles into their planning and corporate operations. The documentation should provide guidance to the relevant areas of responsibility within local government.

Collaboration at an early stage reduces service duplication and identifies opportunities for partnership in information gathering, service planning and programme delivery. It also provides the library service with greater knowledge of, and access to, community organisations active in the community.

Communication with community organisations should be sought very early in the design and planning process for library service delivery, particularly in regard to collection development and programme delivery. Involving local community organisations offers the optimum opportunity for,

- accurately defining the profile of groups being served,
- identifying at the local level the needs and priorities of the linguistically and culturally diverse, and
- providing promotional opportunities for new and existing programmes.

Collaboration at government agency level (by peak library bodies) also offers significant benefits in terms of access to information regarding funding opportunities and/or resource sharing, participation on broader steering committees, as well as offering the opportunity to participate in policy development at government level.

*Adapted from: The Library Board of Victoria: Responding to our diversity. Multicultural Library Service Guidelines for Victorian Public Libraries. Melbourne, Australia, 2001.*

### **3.2 Services to users**

The following functions are appropriate activities of individual libraries and library authorities.

- Each individual library should clearly state its objectives, goals, strategies, priorities and policies relating to its services to multicultural communities. These should form an integral part of the library's development programme. Such a local multicultural services plan will act as guide to staff and an explanation to users.

- Individual libraries should adopt policies of clear commitment to social inclusion and equity of service provision.
- Each individual library service should continuously assess the nature and needs of its community, in consultation with multicultural community members, and should base services upon such assessments and consultations.
- The composition of governing or advisory bodies of libraries, such as boards of trustees or library committees, should reflect that of the community served. Library managers should seek opportunities to encourage the adoption or establishment of such representative bodies.

### **3.3 Cooperation and resource sharing**

Many small to medium-sized libraries find it difficult to cater on an equal basis for the needs of their multicultural communities. With high demands from national majorities and finite budget resources, the needs of multicultural groups are often compromised. This is particularly so where the community is comprised of a multitude of multicultural communities. Cooperation in acquisition, cataloguing and resource supply is seen as a vital means to increase the range of resources and enhance their availability. Local, regional and national cooperative arrangements can substantially improve the quality of access to resources.

Large library institutions and services may adopt a centralised role in the provision of multicultural resources and professional advice. The provision of centralised collections from which smaller libraries can borrow and exchange lending collections is a viable, cost-effective model for meeting the needs of diverse communities. Centralised purchasing, cataloguing and processing has a number of positive outcomes,

- duplication of effort is avoided;
- many of the difficulties experienced by smaller libraries in the acquisition of resources in other languages are obviated;
- a much wider range and depth of materials can be provided;
- local library collections are able to be continually refreshed through the exchange of books and other media;
- a union catalogue can be provided for use by all libraries;
- an effective inter-library lending system can be implemented.

Promotion and marketing are two other areas which readily lend themselves to cooperative effort. The cooperative production of multilingual library information brochures and signage enables many libraries to benefit from the one production.

### **3.4 Electronic resources**

#### **Access to and development of multilingual/multicultural resources**

The Internet has revolutionised global communication and provides a vital link for all users to access information online. The multiscript and multilingual capabilities of computers enable multicultural communities access to reading, communication and information in their own languages, which is particularly important for speakers of those languages in which there is a limited print publishing output. It has opened up a whole new range of resources which may have previously been inaccessible, such as folklore, traditional music, newspaper content from all over the world, and access to the oral heritage from multicultural groups on a global basis. Most importantly it also

provides the opportunity for people from all cultural backgrounds to become information creators as well as consumers.

Web 2 technologies are contributing to a Library 2 environment, in which users can create and share their own primary source web content, develop access to resources which specifically meet their own communities' needs, and engage in social networking (often referred to as Web 3.0). This has particular relevance to multicultural communities that lack printed publications, audio-visual resources or web content in their own languages, as well as to geographically dispersed communities. Libraries provide an ideal environment for individuals and communities to create their own web content by utilising and customising Web 2.0 technologies to meet their own needs. Libraries can facilitate the use of these technologies by providing the hardware, software and training for their communities. Examples of these technologies include:

- *Social Content*: Blogs and Wikis enable individuals and members of multicultural communities to create and broadcast information, news, photos and topics of communal interest, whether on a local or international basis.
- *Social Networking*: e.g., Facebook (general), Hyves (Netherlands), Odnoklassniki (Russia), Orkut (India and Brazil), Xiaonei (China); see, [wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_social\\_networking\\_websites](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites)
- *Digital Image sharing*: e.g. <http://www.flickr.com/>, <http://www.youtube.com/>
- *Social Bookmarking/annotation*: enables collaboration and sharing of net-based resources. Communities can develop their own virtual databases of on-line resources to meet their own specific needs, such as resources in a particular language; users may save a URL or citation and, in some cases, a personal copy of any page on the web or other digital content, and tag it using keywords for one's own use or to share with others, e.g. <http://del.icio.us/>, <http://www.connotea.com/>
- *Web Feeds*: e.g. RSS (Really Simple Syndication), may be set up to enable multicultural groups to easily access sites in their own language, and tailored to their own needs, by customising searches to harvest information of interest and relevance.
- *User-driven social content*: community moderated news sites e.g. <http://digg.com/>
- *Aggregators and tagging*: e.g. <http://technocrati.com/>. Librarians are in an ideal position to assist users in developing on-line communities, in particular by providing guidance on the allocation of descriptors (tags) to the social networks.

### **Online Communication**

New technologies are continually being developed which ease communication between the librarian and user, and between community members. Text messaging, generically referred to as SMS (Short Message Service), is particularly useful for sending short, written texts to library users, which may be more easily comprehended than oral communication by people from linguistically diverse backgrounds. Video chat, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and other Internet technologies are enabling non-textual communication, which are useful in supporting and enhancing communication among oral communities. Podcasting recordings of music, songs, videos, language learning, or digital storytelling in different languages, all contribute to the library's on-line role.

### **3.5 Multilingual Integrated Library Systems**

Unicode is an international industry standard designed to allow text and symbols from the writing systems of the world to be consistently represented and manipulated by computers (*Wikipedia definition*). It forms the foundation for software internationalisation in all major operating systems, search engines, applications and the Web, which facilitates the development of multiscript library information management systems. Libraries, when acquiring integrated library systems and

software, should ensure that they support Unicode in order to manage and provide multilingual access to all collections, and enable users to utilise the libraries' computer services in any language.

## **4 Collection development**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Resources identified to meet the needs of particular cultural groups may vary in format and content, covering the range from Internet access to newspapers, periodicals, audio-visual items, captioned DVDs, story books, magazines, light reading paperbacks and graphic novels, through to traditional fiction and non-fiction books. All ages and interests need to be catered for, and cultural sensitivities borne in mind, such as of a religious or political nature. Community research should be carried out to assess preferred formats and subject topics (rather than individual titles) and to establish collection development priorities. Information gathered can be incorporated into a collection development policy which serves the needs of the multicultural communities. Particular care should be taken to achieve balance in addressing potentially conflicting interests. Every opportunity should be taken to promote the individual language collections to their target group in the community to ensure effective use of resources.

*Adapted from: The Library Board of Victoria: Responding to our diversity. Multicultural Library Service Guidelines for Victorian Public Libraries. Melbourne, Australia, 2001.*

### **4.2 Collection management policy**

A collection management policy for multilingual and multicultural resources should form an integral part of the library's overall Collection Management Policy. The content of the policy should be developed through consultation with multicultural communities and may include the following:

#### General:

- purpose of the collection management policy and its relation to the corporate plan of the library service;
- demographic community profile;
- long and short term objectives of what the library aims to achieve with regard to its multilingual and multicultural resource collections;
- access strategies to maximise the use of collections;
- history of the collection and/or library service;
- identification of relevant legislation or policy which impacts upon the provision of multilingual and multicultural resources;
- regular evaluation schedule of the policy.

#### Specific:

- analysis of community needs;
- priorities of the library service;
- parameters of the collection, including specialised resources for people with particular needs, such as large print material, talking books, literacy materials, language courses and resources for people with disabilities;
- selection and de-selection principles and practices;
- budget allocation;

- responsibility within the organization for collection development, selection and de-selection;
- access to electronic resources, including online access to periodicals and newspapers, data-bases and other information sources;
- the role of the library as an electronic gateway to information;
- financial accountability;
- a resource management plan assessing the current and future needs of the collections;
- review and assessment timetable of the policy.

### 4.3 Range of resources

4.3.1 Library materials should be provided for all peoples, in their preferred languages and relating to their own cultures. Materials should be provided in all formats and from multiple sources.

- A relevant and balanced collection should be maintained for each multicultural group.
- The provision of library materials for members of multicultural groups should be related to the size of the group and its reading needs, but with a minimum collection size standard.
- Library materials provided for multicultural communities should include resources published within the country of residence, from the country of origin and elsewhere.
- Library materials reflecting the experiences and interests of the multicultural group, and intended for use by them, should include materials published in the majority or official language of the country.
- Library materials should include resources in languages widely used as second languages.

4.3.2 Books are likely to form the main basis of a library's multilingual collection and these should be provided in the languages of the multicultural groups. The range of materials should cater for all age ranges and consist of a wide variety of genre. New acquisitions should, in the main, be recently published works, with a mixture of local (national, indigenous) authors and translations of internationally popular material. Where books are published in more than one script (such as Serbian), a representative collection in each script should be developed.

4.3.3 Current periodicals and newspapers should be provided, with on-line access to the world's newspapers complementing print-based copies.

4.3.4 Sound recordings, including music and spoken word CDs and tapes, should form an integral part of library services to multicultural groups. Facilities should be provided for the downloading of electronic books or music to MP3 players, iPods and other digital devices.

4.3.5 Digital media have become an essential part of library collections for multicultural groups. A variety of digital formats may need to be collected, such as DVDs, VCDs (Video Compact Discs) and video recordings, depending upon availability. DVDs present their own particular problem for multilingual collections as most are produced specifically for use in six different world regions. Many cultural minorities live in a different region of the world from their origin, but require access to DVDs from their original region.

While it would be preferable that collections consist of DVDs in the local regional format, most collections would be severely limited by this restriction. Other world region classifications should be acquired to reflect the origins of the multicultural communities (DVD players are commonly available which will play multiple regional formats).

- 4.3.6 When national copyright or classification laws restrict the use of imported digital media for public lending, negotiations with the appropriate bodies should take place at a national level for library exemption. The high cost of having audio-visual material reclassified can severely restrict access to productions such as feature films and documentaries.
- 4.3.7 Libraries should make available a diverse range of non-book material, including CD-ROM products, maps, images, games and language-learning kits.
- 4.3.8 Libraries with networked databases or web sites should assure global access to these services through a multilingual interface.
- 4.3.9 Where there is a lack of any one type of library material, the increased provision of other appropriate materials or services should be considered as an alternative.
- 4.3.10 Where there is a lack of print material, a low reading level in a multicultural community, or a significant level of illiteracy, then non-print materials, particularly sound and image recordings, should be emphasised, when these are available.
- 4.3.11 Current reference resources should be provided in the collections, with Internet access to information complementing the book stock.

#### **4.4 Multilingual Collection development and maintenance**

The main criteria for collections should be:

- a range of resources that caters for all members of the community;
- resources in formats that encourage all members of the community to make use of the library service;
- a regular inflow of newly published resources;
- replacement of standard works which become worn or damaged;
- a wide range of fiction categories and non-fiction subject coverage;
- access to electronic resources, such as the Internet and databases;
- discard of out-of-date, old and worn resources.

#### **4.5 Bibliographic control**

- 4.5.1 In order to make the best use of scarce resources, to prevent duplication, and to make the most effective use of financial resources, the selection, acquisition and cataloguing of materials in diverse languages should be carried out centrally or cooperatively wherever or whenever possible.
- 4.5.2 The cataloguing of materials in all languages should, where practically possible, be to the same standard as that of material in the main language/s of the country, if the catalogue records are in the original language/s.
  - Cataloguing of all library materials should, where practically possible, be in the original language and script; and subject access in the national language/s may also be provided.

- Libraries using automated systems should ensure that their systems are capable of maintaining data in scripts additional to that used for the national language; and that the data conform to internationally recognised standards such as Unicode, thereby facilitating the exchange of automated records. Library users should have access to these databases via the library's public access catalogues.
- The production and maintenance of union catalogues for all languages, in print or electronic form, is an important element in an equitable national or regional service, in order to facilitate cooperation and enable specific title and subject requests to be met. The Internationella Biblioteket in Stockholm for example, provides access to its catalogue in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Persian (Farsi), Polish, Russian, Spanish and Swedish. (<http://www.interbib.se>).

4.5.3 Transliteration of bibliographic information is often the only viable way of recording holdings in multiple languages, due to cost considerations, the shortage of linguistically qualified library staff, or the inability of library cataloguing systems to manage the characters of other languages. A transliterated record is often not intelligible to a user of a particular language and there is justification for limiting the depth of bibliographic information on the cataloguing record.

4.5.4 Collections should be maintained so that they are as current as possible.

- New material should be acquired regularly in all languages and for all multicultural groups.
- Older and out-of-date resources should be deselected on a regular basis.
- Where central collections exist, locally discarded material should firstly be offered to these centralised repositories so that at least one copy of each title is available within the system.
- Care should be taken to ensure that the physical quality of stock for all groups is adequate, through such measures as rebinding, purchase of multiple copies, and the acquisition of replacement copies.

## 4.6 Standards for book collections

The following proposed standards relate to book collections. Local and financial circumstances could lead to variations in these proposed standards. Where resources are severely limited these may be regarded as target figures and medium and long-term strategies should be developed to work towards achieving these standards in the future.

- As a general guide an established book collection should be between 1.5 to 2.5 books per capita
- The minimum stock level for the smallest service point should not be less than 2,500 books.

*The Public Library Service: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development, 2001*

4.6.1 As a general principle, book collections provided for each multicultural group should be provided at least at the same per capita level as for the general population. However, it should be recognised that for small groups it may be necessary to have a higher per capita provision than that generally applied, in order to provide an effective and more equitable service.

- 4.6.2 In the case of very small minorities, or widely scattered groups, materials and services for multicultural groups may need to be provided on a centralised or cooperative basis in order to achieve a more equitable service.
- 4.6.3 A viable target to which smaller libraries may aim is the provision of 1.5 to 2.5 books per capita per multicultural group. Where resources are severely limited, medium and long-term strategies should be developed to work towards achieving these standards in the future.

#### 4.7 Acquisition Rates

Annual items added through purchase per 1,000 population:

216 additions per 1,000 population.

These include 'Books' and 'Other items' which include audio-visual materials, electronic publications and other formats but excludes newspapers, periodicals and other materials.

*Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Public Library Service Standards, U.K., 2008.*

For general book stock in an established library service the following acquisition rates may be applied:

Population	Books per capita per annum	Books per 1000 population per annum
Below 25 000	0.25	250
25 000–50 000	0.225	225
50 000+	0.20	200

*Adapted from: The Public Library Service: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development, 2001*

#### 4.8 Electronic resource provision

Total number of electronic workstations with access to the Internet and the libraries catalogue (available for public use through both static and mobile libraries, and other service outlets available to users per 10,000 population).

6

'Electronic workstation' means a computer terminal with access to the Internet and on-line catalogue.

*Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Public Library Service Standards, U.K., 2008.*

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The number of OPACs (On-line Public Access Catalogues) provided by a local government should be,

- Populations under 10 000 – one OPAC
- Populations 10 001 to 60 000 – one OPAC per 5 000 population
- Populations over 60 000 – one OPAC per 5 000 up to 60 000, and one OPAC per 10 000 for the remaining population

In addition to the OPACs, public access personal computers with CD/DVD drives should be provided,

- for populations up to 50 000 - one pc per 5 000 population
- for populations over 50 000 – one pc per 5 000 population up to 50 000 population, with one pc per 10 000 for the remaining population.

These standards recommend that at least half the public workstations should have access to the Internet and all should have access to a printer.

*Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines, Australia, 2004.*

- 4.8.1 In globally networked library systems, all multicultural communities must have access to, and be able to participate in, the global network.
- 4.8.2 All public workstations should have multilingual capabilities which reflect the needs in the community. Keyboards may be provided in the script of diverse language groups to facilitate access to the Internet and utility programmes such as word processing. Software applications are available which enable standard keyboards to be configured to 100s of different scripts, or to provide visual, virtual keyboards on the pc. However, not all operating systems support all languages and alternative input mechanisms for the unsupported languages, such as standalone workstations with different operating platforms, may be required.
- 4.8.3 Access to popular multilingual electronic databases should be provided whenever possible. Cooperative licensing agreements with providers should be negotiated locally, regionally or on a national basis to ensure cost-effective provision. When networked database access is not possible due to technical or financial reasons, CD or DVD alternatives may be used.
- 4.8.4 All libraries should endeavour to provide their webpages with multilingual access to reflect the local community served. Care must be exercised in the creation of multilingual web pages, and they should be developed in consultation with members of the community to ensure the cultural norms are met. The internationalisation of the User Interface, which is what the user first encounters, is an important consideration. Care should be taken in the use of culturally specific components, such as colours, sounds and images; human figures, pictures of animals and national flags, and animations should be limited. Other elements such as date and time formats, font size, the correct form of names and addresses, and language tagging need to be considered.
- 4.8.5 The web is often used, in a multilingual context, to provide information about the services offered by the library to the local community. The Helsinki City Library, for example, (<http://www.lib.hel.fi/>) describes its services in Finnish, Swedish and English, while the Auckland City Libraries' site contains English and Maori (<http://www.aucklandcitylibraries.com/>). On a wider scale, libraries may be reaching out on a regional or national level, such as The Danish Library Centre for Integration (<http://www.indvandrerbiblioteket.dk/>), which presents its services in Danish and 16 other languages and scripts, and the State Library of Queensland, Australia, whose *Multicultural Bridge* site is in 19 languages (<http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/lang>).
- 4.8.6 Libraries can provide a diverse range of multilingual electronic services to make their resources available to linguistically and culturally diverse communities. These may include,
- digitised collections of important documents and pictures of Indigenous population groups, such as Library and Archives Canada (<http://www.collectionscanada.ca>), and the National Library of Australia's Picture Australia project (<http://www.pictureaustralia.org/>);
  - a range of informational resources, such as the collaborative Australian *MyLanguage* site which provides links to search engines, web directories and news in over 60 languages (<http://www.mylanguage.gov.au/>);
  - information for immigrants and other new arrivals about life in the new country, on a national, regional or local basis, such as:

Denmark: <http://www.finfo.dk/>  
Finland : <http://www.infopankki.fi/>  
Germany: <http://www.interkulturellebibliothek.de/>  
Norway: <http://www.bazar.deichman.no/>  
United Kingdom: <http://www.multikulti.org.uk/>  
The Netherlands: <http://www.ainp.nl/>  
Andalusia, Spain: <http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/ba/c/biblioMulticult/espanol/default.asp>  
New York, Queens Library: <http://www.worldling.org>

## 5 Human resources

### 5.1 Introduction

The success of library services to a culturally diverse community is largely dependent on the staff delivering them. The roles of staff should be determined by the objectives of the multicultural library service plan. While it is important to have staff with the language skills that mirror those spoken in the community, it is equally important for staff with good communication skills to work with the community, establishing and maintaining contacts to ensure effective service delivery.

*(Adapted from: The Library Board of Victoria: Responding to our diversity. Multicultural Library Service Guidelines for Victorian Public Libraries. Melbourne, Australia, 2001.)*

### 5.2 The skills of library staff

The public library is a service aimed at all members of the community who will have varied and changing needs. Public library staff will require a range of skills and qualities, including interpersonal skills, social awareness, teamwork and leadership and competence in the practices and procedures of the organization. The fundamental qualities and skills required of public library staff can be defined as:

- the ability to communicate positively with people
- the ability to understand the needs of users
- the ability to co-operate with individuals and groups in the community
- knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity

The composition of the staff should, as far as possible, reflect the make-up of the population it serves. Where, for example, there are a significant number of people from a particular ethnic group within the community, the library staff should include members of that group. This demonstrates that the library is a service for all members of the local community and will help to attract users from all sections of the public.

*The Public Library Service: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development, 2001*

- 5.2.1 Libraries should attempt to reflect the multicultural societies they serve by ensuring the staff truly reflect the different multicultural groups in the community.
- 5.2.2 Libraries should implement positive action strategies to ensure that people from multicultural communities are aware of existing employment opportunities.
- 5.2.3 Library authorities should encourage the employment of people with relevant linguistic and cultural knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Appropriate means of doing so include the adoption of local employment policies, creation of specific positions, and use of interns, trainees or cadetships.
  - It is important that linguistic and cultural characteristics be appropriate for the tasks for which a person is employed, and that libraries recognise the wide range of categories of ability. These include oral fluency, reading and writing skills, familiarity with the general culture, and high-level formal education within the culture, or any combination of these.
- 5.2.4 Library authorities should institute education programmes designed to enrich the cultural knowledge of their staff and improve their abilities in serving a linguistically and culturally diverse society.
- 5.2.5 Library schools should encourage people of multicultural background to undertake courses in librarianship and related areas; library schools should ensure that all courses deal with multicultural issues.
- 5.2.6 The cooperative use of library staff with appropriate expertise should be encouraged.

## **6 The marketing, publicity and promotion of multicultural library services**

- 6.1 The promotion, encouragement and support of literacy and of literacy programmes is an appropriate function for libraries, and should include both literacy in the national language/s and in other languages.
- 6.2 The promotion and support of computer literacy in the languages of the community should be undertaken whenever possible.
- 6.3 Social and cultural community activities organised by the library and in collaboration with community members, as appropriate, such as story-telling, concerts, drama and exhibitions, should be directed towards all multicultural groups.
- 6.4 Library service to persons unable to use the library personally should be provided, in the preferred languages of the users, and should be offered to all multicultural groups. These include services to the geographically disadvantaged, housebound, hospitals and correctional institutions. Mobile library services should stock multicultural collections to reflect the composition of the community served.
- 6.5 Extension activities of libraries should be conducted in the preferred languages of users; such services include those to factories and other workplaces, and service to multicultural community organizations.
- 6.6 Provision of library service to multicultural communities, including information services, may be provided in alternative and familiar locations when necessary.

- 6.7 Libraries should be designed to be user-friendly to all members of the community. This is particularly true for new immigrants who may not have had access to similar library facilities in their own countries. Apart from general library design criteria, which apply to all libraries, there are a number of specific factors that can particularly familiarise multicultural communities about their library services, and encourage their use:
- 6.7.1 Free public access and use of services, which is a cornerstone in encouraging the use of libraries.
  - 6.7.2 Well-signposted libraries with signage in the languages of the main user groups or, where appropriate, international symbols. A *Multilingual Glossary* database is a signage tool designed for libraries by the State Library of New South Wales, Australia. The glossary contains common library phrases in 49 languages which can be downloaded to facilitate communication between library staff and users from diverse linguistic backgrounds:  
<http://www2.sl.nsw.gov.au/multicultural/glossary/>
  - 6.7.3 A wide-range of multilingual resources, including periodicals, newspapers and multi-media.
  - 6.7.4 Marketing strategies to provide relevant services to multicultural communities will increase library use by these communities. New areas of service should include innovative uses of free multilingual Internet access, multilingual office applications, forums for multicultural dialogue and interactivity, community capacity building, etc.
  - 6.7.5 Collections which are easily accessible, on open access and located in a prominent position.
  - 6.7.6 Enrolment forms, overdue notices, reservation forms, rules, guides to use of the library and other forms of communication between the library and its users which are in the languages of users.
  - 6.7.7 Promotional material, such as lists of resources, which are in the languages of members of multicultural groups, and reflect their interests.
  - 6.7.8 The library's website in languages which reflect the linguistic diversity of the community.
  - 6.7.9 The use of ethnic media in the community, such as local ethnic newspapers or radio broadcasts, to publicise library services.
  - 6.7.10 The promotion of multilingual library services to politicians and decision makers.

The management and marketing of public libraries is given comprehensive treatment in *The Public Library Service: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development (2001)*, and it is recommended that these be consulted for more in-depth information:  
<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s8/news/pg01.htm>

## 7 International Best Practice

Many countries have established practices in providing multicultural library services. These may be seen in examples of best practices, recommendations and policies. The following are selected examples of best practice existing around the world.

### Canada

#### Multiculturalism Messaging

Canada's approach to multiculturalism is premised on the principle that diversity is a fundamental value and characteristic of our country. By virtue of its historical approach and legislation, Canada views diversity as a source of strength and innovation, as a source of inspiration and competitive edge in our ever-shrinking global village.

Multiculturalism is a key component of Canadian legislation, of our country's heritage and of our identity.

In 1971, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt an official Multiculturalism Policy. This policy provided for programs and services to support ethnocultural associations and to help individuals overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society.

In 1982, the multicultural character of Canada gained constitutional recognition in Section 27 of the newly adopted *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It specified that the courts were to interpret the Charter "in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canada".

In 1988, Canada became the first nation ever to proclaim a *Multiculturalism Act*, setting a unique model for inclusive citizenship. The preamble to the *Multiculturalism Act* states:

*"To preserve and enrich the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equity of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada."*

The Act is addressed to all Canadians, not just visible or ethnocultural minorities, and strives to:

- Eliminate racism and discrimination
- Promote equality and cross cultural understanding
- Foster inclusive citizenship
- Help federal institutions to be responsive to Canada's diversity

Many other legislative documents, such as the *Official Languages Act*, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and the *Employment Equity Act* have been adopted to protect the fundamental values of equity and respect.

Through multiculturalism, Canada recognizes the potential of all Canadians, encouraging them to integrate into society and take an active part in its social, cultural, economic and political affairs.

#### Toronto Public Library

Toronto Public Library serves a population of over 2.5 million people. Toronto is recognised as one of the most multicultural cities in the world with almost half of its residents born outside of Canada. Furthermore, almost half of all Toronto Newcomers are recent arrivals, having arrived within the last 15 years.

Toronto Public Library holds materials in over 100 languages, while actively developing collections in 40 languages and in a variety of formats, including electronic materials. As the largest and busiest public library system in North America, Toronto Public Library circulated almost 31 million items in 2006, of which 16% were non-English items. This multi-lingual circulation has grown by a phenomenal 69% since 2000.

Toronto Public Library also provides a range of programming, often provided through partnerships with other agencies or levels of government, which support the diverse population of Toronto. These include: English as a Second Language Citizenship classes; English Conversation Circles; Storytimes in local branches in English and French and other languages, such as Bengali, Russian, Persian, Cantonese, Polish, Urdu and Tamil; English Can Be Fun, a conversational language program for Newcomer children; and Dial-a-Story, a storytelling service provided in 10 languages that builds oral literacy and comprehension skills

Toronto Public Library provides free access to over 1,400 computers in its branches, all of which have improved multilingual support through multi-language virtual keyboards. Through *NewsConnect*, a web portal, access is provided to newspapers and magazines from around the world in 85 languages and 147 fonts, enabling Newcomers to stay in touch with news from home.

**Mijin Kim**

*Library and Archives, Canada*

## **Denmark**

### **Act regarding Library Services, 2001**

*§2 The objective of the public libraries shall be achieved by observing quality, comprehensiveness and topicality in the choice of materials to be made available. These criteria alone must be the decisive factors and not any religious, moral or political views which might be expressed in the material.*

*§14.2 [The State and University Library acts as the main loan centre for the public libraries by] providing the public libraries and other relevant institutions with material specifically intended to fulfil the needs of refugees and immigrants.*

### **Copenhagen Public Libraries**

[www.bibliotek.kk.dk](http://www.bibliotek.kk.dk)

Since the 1960s Denmark has received refugees and immigrants in substantial numbers from outside Europe and the English-speaking parts of the world. Consequently, Copenhagen Public Libraries, in cooperation with nationwide centres for materials in immigrant languages, began establishing collections of books and music CDs in relevant languages. However, many Newcomers were semi-literate or illiterate, and in order to service these persons, KKB-LYD (Audio Department of Copenhagen Public Libraries) started production of audio books in immigrant languages. In Copenhagen the most needed languages were Arabic, Kurdish, Serbian, Croatian, Turkish and Urdu. The audio books (in the beginning on cassette tape and later on CD) were offered for sale to all library systems in Denmark and later worldwide. These audio books all had notes of content in Danish and English.

For more information: [www.kkb-lyd/about.htm](http://www.kkb-lyd/about.htm)

In the last ten years the focus has changed and Copenhagen Public Libraries/KKB-LYD now primarily seeks to provide immigrants/refugees with assistance in learning Danish as a second language.

In cooperation with a publishing firm we have produced bilingual picture books in Danish (text and audio CD) + printed text in the following languages: Arabic, Kurdish, Serbian, Croatian, Turkish, Persian, Somali and Urdu.

<http://kbb-lyd.dk/mantra.php.htm>

In Copenhagen all children now receive a postcard on their second birthday with an invitation from the library. They are subsequently presented with a gift of a story book+CD (in Danish) upon their first visit to the library.

Several branch libraries have a special service to children in multicultural families; a librarian offers to visit each child four times between birth and school-age. Through story-telling, the child (and its family) is introduced to various library services. Upon each visit the child receives a new book.

[www.sprogporten.dk](http://www.sprogporten.dk)

Since 2008 daily recordings of news from Copenhagen in Danish can be heard free of charge on the internet.

[www.kbb-lyd.dk/daglig](http://www.kbb-lyd.dk/daglig)

**Vibeke Stage and Susy Tastesen**

*Københavns Biblioteker/Copenhagen Public Libraries, Denmark*

## **Estonia**

### **Extract from the law of public libraries**

#### § 13 Collections

The content of public library collections is universal. The collection has to contain different types of holdings in different languages according to the basic needs of people living in the service area of a particular public library.

**Martin Hallik, Estonia**

## **The Netherlands**

### **Literacy**

In the Netherlands, 1.5 million people (10%) are semi-literate, which means their reading and writing skills are inadequate for filling in common forms, reading to their children, handling their mail, understanding information leaflets, reading the newspaper, and using the internet etc. One third of this group has an immigrant background.

Semi-literacy is a major issue nationwide. Due to the number of people involved and the prospect of large numbers of young people leaving school with inadequate reading and writing skills, illiteracy is a serious problem. In the National Offensive against Illiteracy, the National Public Library Association (NPLA) cooperates with a large number of national partners in the war on illiteracy. Cooperation also continues at provincial, regional and local levels. The public library now places more emphasis on its service regarding literacy issues and aims to train its front- and back-office staff accordingly. For this purpose a training module has been developed which is offered nationwide.

Libraries may also take out a free subscription on [www.netnieuws.nl/](http://www.netnieuws.nl/), a weekly online newspaper for new readers wanting to practise their newly acquired language and reading skills. Reading and writing exercises are in the programme on two language

levels.

To increase awareness of the problem of illiteracy to the public at large, the NPLA, in cooperation with the Reading and Writing Foundation, offers a travelling exhibition *Taal Centraal*. This exhibition is presented in a different library every month, with an awareness-raising opening organised by the local library in the community.

### **Integration**

In the Netherlands a new *Law on Integration* was enacted in January, 2007. Every citizen from abroad, who has less than 8 years of school education in the Netherlands, has to pass a test on language and integration skills. The public libraries are an important instrument to apply the policy locally and information points have been set up in a number of libraries. Libraries can use the Toolkit on integration *NL Kompas*, which is available for all public libraries in the country.

### **Partnership**

Public libraries need to acknowledge that they are a crucial partner in the local community - because of their widespread and easy accessible infrastructure - to contribute to civil society and participation of diverse groups at the local level. Also this role is important to anchor in society. (*Vision document Cultural Diversity, the Netherlands Public Libraries Association, 2006.*)

**Lourina K. de Voogd**  
*Netherlands Public Library Association, The Netherlands*

## **Norway**

### **Globalisation**

Libraries offer access to global, national and local knowledge and culture. Digital innovation makes library collections ever more widely available and the flow of information recognises no national borders. The digitisation and Internet publication of conventional library collections are necessary prerequisites to making contents easily accessible. At the same time as globalisation increases and brings its influence to bear on many areas of society, including education and language, so too will there be a greater need among people for a sense of cultural belonging, for cultural identity and for a dialogue with other cultures. (*Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum. Library reform 2014 – part 1 strategies and initiatives. 2006*)

### **Strengthening libraries as contributors to greater inclusiveness, integration and cultural diversity**

Libraries are to contribute to a strengthening of immigrant integration in Norwegian society, with the arrangements marking 2008 and with the government's plan of action for the integration and inclusion of the immigrant population. (*Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum. Library reform 2014 – part 1 strategies and initiatives. 2006. Strategy 1.6*)

Strengthening of multicultural library services with special focus on Russian, Sámi and Finnish, but also to offer literature and other services to new immigrants. (*Finnmark County Library. Strategic plan 2005-2014*)

**Kirsten Leth Nielsen**  
*Oslo Public Library, Norway*

## **Spain**

### **Spanish Guidelines for Services in Public Libraries.**

#### **Staff**

Staff is an essential element, a basic resource for the correct and efficient operation of a public library. Public libraries must have enough staff, and the staff should have the correct training to practice their functions.

#### **General**

Public libraries are open to everyone, no matter their circumstances or profession. One of their main principles is the service to the whole community and not to specific groups.

#### **Cooperation**

Public libraries must not work in isolation, but must search for ways to facilitate a network with other libraries and agencies with the aim of improving the quality and range of services offered, and to foster cooperation, especially within the local environment.

**Susana Alegre Landáburu,**  
*General de Coord. Bibliotecaria, Ministerio de Cultura, Spain*

## **United Kingdom**

**Welcome To Your Library...connecting public libraries and refugee communities**  
[www.welcometoyourlibrary.org.uk/](http://www.welcometoyourlibrary.org.uk/)

### **Introduction**

Welcome To Your Library (WTYL) began as a pilot project in five London boroughs in 2003-4 to connect public libraries with refugees and asylum seekers. The project developed from clear evidence that refugees face huge barriers in society, that public libraries are well-placed to support their information, language and cultural needs, but that library staff needed support to change traditional ways of thinking and working for them to fulfill these roles effectively. Funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and coordinated through the London Libraries Development Agency, the project was extended nationally to the end of 2007.

### **Aims of 'Welcome To Your Library'**

By increasing opportunities for engagement, WTYL aims to improve access to quality library services for everyone. The vision is to nurture learning, well-being and a sense of belonging for all through:

- Participation of refugee communities throughout the work.
- Partnerships to raise awareness and increase library use.
- Confident, trained library staff.
- Sharing good practice based on evidence.
- Advocacy for public library work with refugees and asylum seekers.

## Project activities

These have included:

- Development of the library staff's project planning and evaluation skills to enable effective positioning of work in a wider policy setting and improve the evidence base.
- Mapping refugee communities and support organizations.
- Identifying barriers to library use and ways to overcome them.
- Awareness training for library staff on issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers.
- Development of partnerships with refugee community organisations and others.
- Structured *taster* visits and ICT sessions.
- Simplifying library joining procedures.
- Providing ESOL (English as a Second Language), community languages and reading support.
- Acquiring new stock with input from refugee communities.
- Storytelling and other events and workshops bringing different communities together.
- Library volunteering and work placements for refugees.
- Development of e-list and website to support shared learning and spread good practice.

## Examples of impacts

Impact on individuals and communities includes:

- **Access to employment:** at least 25 refugees have been employed (some in libraries and some in other sectors) as a result of work experience programmes in two participating WTYL services. Many participants have reported gaining confidence, self-esteem and feeling less isolated.
- **Confidence and sense of ownership:** refugees who have seen their needs met through libraries are acting as champions, leading to an increased sense of ownership, trust, and willingness to engage.
- **Increased exchange between people from different cultures:** more contact between library staff and refugees and asylum seekers; library spaces used for activities that bring people from different backgrounds together; development of opportunities for established refugees to help new arrivals through self-help groups based in the library.

Impact on library services includes:

- **Positioning library work more effectively:** particularly in the context of national and local council-wide policy and activities to tackle social exclusion and deliver more cohesive communities.
- **Partnerships leading to funding and learning from other sectors:** experience and practice in both phases have led to libraries accessing new sources of funding for project and mainstream work.
- **Workforce development:** promotion of opportunities for broader staff base e.g. with refugees working in library services. This also includes skills development to support library staff to work directly with communities through local outreach to build trust, identify barriers to library use and share, across the library service, ways of overcoming barriers at strategic and practical level.

**Ayub Khan**  
*Warwickshire Library and Information Service, U.K.*

## U.S.A

### Five Strategies for Success

These five strategies support successful immigrant transitions and help communities deal effectively with the effects of rapid worldwide change...libraries in cities and suburbs across America are using them to great effect.

1. **Libraries Understand Local Immigration Dynamics.** Public libraries are gathering population and geographic data from both public sources and informal connections to immigrant networks. When libraries understand neighborhood-level information about new residents, their needs, and the resources available to them, libraries can shape their services and form their partnerships effectively. Especially in cities that have not been traditional immigrant destinations, libraries are often leading their communities in the discovery and description of immigrants' needs and concerns.
2. **Libraries Bring Cultural and Language Sensitivity to Service Delivery.** The biggest barrier for new arrivals is language. Libraries are addressing this with innovations in signage, websites, collections, and provision of basic services in the first languages of their residents.
3. **Libraries Build English Capacity.** English proficiency is the most important factor in immigrants' chances for success. Public libraries, drawing on their century-long experience as builders of literacy of children and families, are expanding their reach to new residents. Early literacy and family literacy programs are preparing young children for school. Adult English instruction is equipping learners with better life skills and job opportunities. With schools and other learning providers as partners, libraries are also delivering focused programs on job-hunting, health and nutrition, and other survival needs.
4. **Libraries Create Connections to Local Institutions.** Most communities are equipped with a broad array of agencies and institutions. Although these organizations provide assistance for work, education, health and housing, recent immigrants are often unable to benefit from their services. Language barriers, geographic isolation, and culture shock are significant impediments. Libraries are connecting the agencies and services aimed at the general population with the newcomers' needs. Business support, health information, and school engagement are leading examples of this work.
5. **Libraries Encourage Civic Engagement.** Participation in public and civic life is not a traditional expectation for many immigrants. Even the simple American act of registering for a library card can be a strange and frightening experience for some. Libraries encourage both community inclusion and newcomer participation. Using their historic role as strong, unbiased public spaces, dedicated to learning and exploration, they are fostering public discussion of the challenges faced by both newcomers and the communities receiving them.

**Rick Ashton and Danielle Milam.**  
*Welcome, Stranger: Public Libraries Build the Global Village.*  
*Urban Libraries Council, USA, 2008.*

## **Australia**

### **MyLanguage**

MyLanguage provides access to search engines, web directories and news in over sixty languages. MyLanguage is a partnership between the State Libraries of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia, VICNET (a division of the State Library of Victoria), and the Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory Library and Information Services.

MyLanguage is an electronic multicultural library service that enhances access to online information resources for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) individuals and community groups.

This interactive site features:

- Public access to search engines, web directories and news in over sixty languages.
- Training materials for CALD individual and community groups including: translated fact sheets and training manuals for introductory courses on using the Internet and email or searching the web.
- Assistance to libraries in providing both traditional and electronic services to CALD communities. This includes access to guidelines, standards, reports, articles, research and conference papers on many aspects of multicultural library services.
- A growing resource bank of specialist technical information of interest to CALD community groups, libraries and government agencies.

<http://www.mylanguage.gov.au/>

### **Multilingual Glossary**

The Multilingual Glossary database is a professionally generated signage tool designed for libraries. The glossary contains common library phrases in 49 languages. This tool facilitates communication between library staff and patrons from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

<http://www2.sl.nsw.gov.au/multicultural/glossary/>

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## Appendix A: The IFLA Multicultural Library Manifesto

### **The Multicultural Library – a gateway to a cultural diverse society in dialogue**

All people live in an increasingly heterogeneous society. There are more than 6,000 different languages in the world. The international migration rate is growing every year resulting in an increasing number of people with complex identities. Globalization, increased migration, faster communication, ease of transportation and other 21st century forces have increased cultural diversity in many nations where it might not have previously existed or has augmented the existing multicultural makeup.

“Cultural Diversity” or “Multiculturalism” refers to the harmonious co-existence and interaction of different cultures, where “culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature; lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs”.<sup>1</sup> Cultural diversity or multiculturalism is the foundation of our collective strength in our local communities and in our global society.

Cultural and linguistic diversity is the common heritage of humankind and should be cherished and preserved for the benefit of all. It is a source for the exchange, innovation, creativity, and peaceful coexistence among peoples. “Respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding are among the best guarantees of international peace and security”.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, libraries of all types should reflect, support and promote cultural and linguistic diversity at the international, national, and local levels, and thus work for cross-cultural dialogue and active citizenship.

As libraries serve diverse interests and communities, they function as learning, cultural, and information centres. In addressing cultural and linguistic diversity, library services are driven by their commitment to the principles of fundamental freedoms and equity of access to information and knowledge for all, in the respect of cultural identity and values.

### **Principles**

Each individual in our global society has the right to a full range of library and information services. In addressing cultural and linguistic diversity, libraries should:

- serve all members of the community without discrimination based on cultural and linguistic heritage;
- provide information in appropriate languages and scripts;
- give access to a broad range of materials and services reflecting all communities and needs;
- employ staff to reflect the diversity of the community, who are trained to work with and serve diverse communities.

Library and information services in a culturally and linguistically diverse context include both the provision of services to all types of library users and the provision of library services specifically targeted to underserved cultural and linguistic groups. Special attention should be paid to groups which are often marginalized in culturally diverse societies: minorities, asylum seekers and refugees, residents with a temporary residence permit, migrant workers, and indigenous communities.

## **Missions of multicultural library services**

In a culturally diverse society focus should be on the following key missions, which relate to information, literacy, education and culture:

- promoting awareness of the positive value of cultural diversity and fostering cultural dialogue;
- encouraging linguistic diversity and respect for the mother tongue;
- facilitating the harmonious coexistence of several languages, including learning of several languages from an early age;
- safeguarding linguistic and cultural heritage and giving support to expression, creation and dissemination in all relevant languages;
- supporting the preservation of oral tradition and intangible cultural heritage;
- supporting inclusion and participation of persons and groups from all diverse cultural backgrounds;
- encouraging information literacy in the digital age, and the mastering of information and communication technologies;
- promoting linguistic diversity in cyberspace;
- encouraging universal access to cyberspace;
- supporting the exchange of knowledge and best practices with regard to cultural pluralism.

## **Management and operation**

The multicultural library expects all types of libraries to adopt an integrated service approach. The core activities of library and information services for culturally and linguistically diverse communities are central, not “separate” or “additional”, and should always be designed to meet local or specific needs.

The library should have a policy and a strategic plan, defining its mission, objectives, priorities and services related to cultural diversity. The plan should be based on a comprehensive user needs analysis and adequate resources.

The library activities should not be developed in isolation. Cooperation with relevant user groups and professionals at local, national or international level should be encouraged.

## **Core actions**

The multicultural library should:

- develop culturally diverse and multilingual collections and services, including digital and multimedia resources;
- allocate resources for the preservation of cultural expression and heritage, paying particular attention to oral, indigenous and intangible cultural heritage;
- include programmes supporting user education, information literacy skills, newcomer resources, cultural heritage and cross-cultural dialogue as integral parts of the services;
- provide access to library resources in appropriate languages through information organization and access systems;
- develop marketing and outreach materials in appropriate media and languages to attract different groups to the library.

## **Staff**

The library staff is the active intermediary between users and resources. Professional education and continuing training focused on services to multicultural communities, cross-cultural communication and sensitivity, anti-discrimination, cultures and languages should be provided.

The staff of a multicultural library should reflect the cultural and linguistic characteristic of the community to ensure cultural awareness, reflect the community the library serves, and encourage communication.

## **Funding, legislation and networks**

Governments and other relevant decision-making bodies are encouraged to establish and adequately fund libraries and library systems to offer free library and information services to culturally diverse communities.

Multicultural library services are in essence global. All libraries involved in activities in this field must participate in relevant local, national or international networks in policy development. Research is needed to obtain the data necessary to make informed service decisions and secure appropriate funding. Research findings and best practices should be widely disseminated in order to guide effective multicultural library services.

## **Implementing the Manifesto**

The international community should recognize and support libraries and information services in their role of promoting and preserving cultural and linguistic diversity.

Decision makers at all levels and the library community around the world are hereby requested to disseminate this Manifesto and to carry out the principles and actions expressed herein.

This Manifesto complements the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, the IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto and the IFLA Internet Manifesto.

This Manifesto was approved by the Governing Board of IFLA in August 2006 and endorsed in April 2008 by the Intergovernmental Council for UNESCO's Information for All Programme with the recommendation that it be submitted to the 35th session of the General Conference of UNESCO for consideration.

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

## ***Raison d'être*** **for Multicultural Library Services**

### **IFLA Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations**

*What and why “multicultural library services” (MLS) continue to be questions asked by the library and information professions.*

First, MLS include both the provision of multicultural information to all types of library users and the provision of library services specifically targeted to traditionally underserved ethnocultural groups. Often we consider MLS as mainly benefiting “minority” communities as it is these communities whose ethnocultural background is different from that of mainstream society and whose needs are often not or minimally addressed. MLS ensure equity in access to library and information services. However, multiculturalism is a condition that is related to the diverse make-up of a whole community so as such, the whole community should benefit from “multicultural library services.” Thus, the other half of delivering MLS is the provision of multicultural information that will benefit the totality of a user community. Members of a community can learn about each other’s respective cultures, languages, contributions to society, values, etc. The end result being increased understanding and communication.

Second, MLS should be the de facto library services rather than add-on or separate services. The following rationale makes this explicit.

#### **Ten Reasons to Offer Multicultural Library Services**

1. A library’s mission is to serve its community, which in many cases is multicultural and multilingual, or becoming increasingly culturally diverse.
2. Multicultural and multilingual library services ensure equality of service and access to information.
3. In an era of globalization with more ease in transborder communication and travel, individuals need to learn about other cultures, languages, and peoples, which foster appreciation for different experiences and broaden one’s outlook on life.
4. Information in languages and through channels accessible to diverse user communities enables their democratic participation in civil society.
5. Information on one’s own heritage as well as others reinforces one’s own culture and promotes understanding of other experiences and perspectives, respectively, and contributes in the development of a more harmonious society.
6. Information in languages and through channels appropriate to diverse user communities promotes multiple literacies, which facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and skills to ensure equality of opportunity in all realms of civil society.
7. The world’s knowledge, creative forms of expression, and cultural practices are documented in diverse formats and languages, thus, the offering of a multicultural collection should be made available for all to access.
8. Learning of different forms of creative expression, work and problem solving lead to fresh insights and opinions which can result in novel ways to innovate, act and resolve situations.
9. Information about and for a library’s multicultural community demonstrates that community members and their cultures are valued.
10. Libraries are spaces for intellectual and recreational engagement and libraries offering multicultural and multilingual services, and collections become a community space to bring people together.