



# Library Services to Multicultural Populations

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions



## Message from the Chair

**Adjoa K. Boateng**

Dear Section members,

Once again I will start by wishing you all the best. The past months have again been very busy for the section and I will try to provide a clear overview of activities.

At the start of March many of us met again at the Mid-Year meeting in Timisoara. We were hosted by colleagues at the Central University Library „Eugen Todoran” Timișoara. Our meeting was timed to coincide with the Library conference which had the theme of “Multicultural information services: Supporting identity and diversity” - <https://mcultp2018midyear.wordpress.com/>

The full minutes from the Mid-year meeting will be sent out again shortly for discussion during our business meetings in Kuala Lumpur. One of the key points reviewed was updating the stated mission and purpose of our Section.

After much debate the following purpose was agreed (subject to all SC member’s approval):

### **What we do**

- Enable and inspire libraries and information sector professional to meet the needs of cultural and linguistic minorities.

### **How we will do it**

- Connecting (one to one and one to many)
- Highlighting models (Activities in practice)
- Guidelines (Manifesto – *Toolkit*)

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## IFLA Mid-Year Meeting 1-2 March 2018 Report

**lasmina Martiniuc**

The IFLA Mid-Year Meeting this year took place in Timisoara, Romania on the 1st and 2nd of March 2018 and it focused on *Multicultural Information Services: Supporting Identity and Diversity*. Hosted by the [Central University Library Eugen Todoran \(BCUT\)](#), the conference coincided with the library’s 25th anniversary since the inauguration of its new building in January 1993 and it brought together key local figures, international partners and members from the Standing Committee of the IFLA Section 32 (IFLA MCULTP).

Spread over two days, the programme included presentations and paper sessions delivered by delegates from Germany, Norway, Serbia, Romania and France, workshops and meetings of the IFLA Standing Committee, a visit to the Eugen Todoran Library and a short city tour.

The Chief Executive of BCUT, Vasile Docea delivered an ample introduction on the history and variety of programmes delivered by the library, its mission statement and goals for the future – most of these aimed at promoting and fostering cultural exchanges and collaborations between the different local communities and extending to international partnerships. Romania’s province of Banat, with its capital city in Timisoara, has a rich ethnic background with minorities of Serbian, German and Hungarian heritage and it’s known for its multiculturalism – one of the reasons why the city was chosen as location for the event. More on the cultural heritage of Banat can be read [here](#).

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## Message from the Chair

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Another key decision was for our section to establish an award to highlight the activities and work of colleagues internationally. The proposed award has been given a working title of 'Multiculturalism now in libraries 2018-2022' or 'the multiculturalist library now 2018-2022'. The award will focus on people who are providing materials supporting multiculturalism (meeting our purpose). We would request of award winners to present case studies which meet our purpose now or on what will happen in the future. They can use Twitter, PowerPoint, Videos, or whatever formats or creative alternatives. More detail will be given and discussed during our Business meetings.

The goal is that by 2022 the Section would have a 'Body of evidence' to use (for example) as cases studies, in IFLA webpages, in a blog, in our social media and for future WLIC sessions.

We now have a varied program for WLIC 2018 in Kuala Lumpur. Just as a reminder - our Session theme is;

"Library Services: Empowering people to develop their inter-cultural identities".

This year's speakers are our colleagues John Spears and Teona Shainidze Krebs, from the Pikes Peak Library District in the State of Colorado. Leslie Kuo who will be speaking about Immigrant library staff in Germany. Dr Raquel M. Ortiz who present on the Puerto Rican Heritage Cultural Ambassadors Program. Bernadette M. López-Fitzsimmons who is Associate Librarian Instruction, Outreach, & Research; Special Faculty, Camino Program, SCPS Manhattan College. Eleonore Clavreul, at the Bibliothèque publique d'information who will speak about the language cafés (Ateliers de conversation in French). The following link gives a brief overview.

[« Atelier de conversation » : un havre de paix dédié à la parole en plein Paris](#)

I hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend and/or follow events via our Social Media accounts.

Best wishes,  
Adjoa

## Mid-year meeting

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On the first day, the keynote presentations began with Adjoa Boateng's introduction to the work of IFLA's Section 32, its mission and some of their achievements so far ([guidelines](#), manifestos, newsletters and [toolkits](#)). It was then followed by Oddbjorn Hansen's paper on "Multilingual library services in Norway" and the vital role played by libraries in helping migrant and/or refugee groups integrate and assimilate new cultures whilst also providing access to material in their original languages. Following that, Leslie's Kuo did a presentation on *Cultural and Ethnic diversity among library workers in Germany* and provided good insight into the work life of a librarian in Berlin.

Second part of the day set forth to a number of paper sessions delivered by local scholars and librarians from local university libraries. Historian Thomas Remus Mochnacs gave a talk on the idea of creating a *Library Collection based on a self-defying cultural concept* and touched on the need to create an online platform that would bring together resources hidden in local private collections. One of his initiatives was to make available a collection of postcards and stamps of old Timisoara and Banat region from his own personal archives. Part of the collection can be seen [here](#).

On the second day we went on a tour of the Eugen Todoran Library and had a chance to speak to staff working in the reading rooms as well as curators working on collections, exchanging ideas and comparing practices. We discussed the benefits of using a RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) management system and the need of an overall inventory for the British Library collections. The highlight of the tour was to see an old collection of children stories and a brilliantly adapted mobile shelving system using real Dacia (Romanian car) steering wheels as handles to move the shelves.

The conference ended with a historical city tour, looking at examples of multiculturalism reflected in architecture and urban design across the city centre.



Entrance to Eugen Todoran Library



Romanian organising committee



Eugen Todoran Library tour

# Two Meetings on Multicultural Library Services in Japan

By Kenji Murakami and Yasuko Hirata

The Japan Library Association (JLA) Committee on Multicultural Library Services conducted the survey by questionnaire on multicultural library services in 2015 and published the result report in March, 2017. We held two meetings in Tokyo and Osaka based on the survey report.

## The 103rd All-Japan Annual Library Meeting in Tokyo

JLA held the 103rd All-Japan Annual Library Meeting at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo, from October 12 to 13, 2017. On October 13 our committee (Multicultural Library Services) had a half-day session in the afternoon. Our purpose of this session was to explain the challenges found in the survey results

and discuss how to improve multicultural library services in Japan.

There were three speakers: Ms. Yumiko Kita reported the results on public libraries; Mr. Kenji Murakami did on academic libraries; Ms. Yasuko Hirata, using IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto toolkit, talked how to start multicultural library services.

After all presentations, we had a discussion with audiences why libraries in Japan had problems with services to multicultural populations.

## Seminar on Multicultural Library Services in Osaka

We had a seminar in Osaka on January 20, 2018. As Osaka is about 400km far from Tokyo, we decided to have another



Seminar on Multicultural Library Services in Osaka



103rd All-Japan Annual Library Meeting in Tokyo

same meeting in Osaka for colleagues living in Osaka area. There were about 30 attendees.

In addition to two presentations on public libraries and academic libraries, we had a group discussion on what the problems librarians were facing now in delivering on these services.

After having the two meetings, we learned that some libraries in Japan were proceeding multicultural library services, however many libraries were struggling for what to do. We are planning to publish a Q and A book in next year to help those libraries.

# Language and Belonging: A Mini Handbook for Creating a Language Café

By Shelli Lake, Language and Adult Education Advisor  
Deichman Stovner/ Oslo Public Library, Stovner, Norway

Twelve years ago I got to know a boy named Gustav. Gustav loved ice cream. I loved ice cream. Needless to say it was a match made in heaven. Having moved to Norway from the U.S. and not having a job, very little Norwegian, few friends and very little spending money, I spent a good deal of my time teaching myself Norwegian from children's books borrowed from the public library. *Gustav og den gjerrige iskremdamen* or *Gustav and the Stingy Ice Cream Lady* was one of my favorites. Soon after borrowing the book and learning the word stingy in Norwegian, I was sadly able to use it in context.

I sat my mountain of books down at the check-out desk and handed my husband's card to the librarian. I had my own temporary library card which allowed me to borrow two books but it was much more logical to use my husband's which allowed me to borrow up to twenty. I had used his card more than a handful of times but this was the first time I saw the stern eyes of who I would later call 'den gjerrige bibliotekdamen' or 'The Stingy Librarian'. She scolded me and denied me use of his card. I had to use my own. I chose two books out of the twenty and walked away holding back tears. I often felt raw and vulnerable trying to navigate my way in my new country. At that time I couldn't imagine I'd ever conquer the Norwegian language or that I'd one day call Norway home.

I find it strangely fitting that my journey in Norway has led me to a position at the Oslo Public Library where my language learning first began. As Language and Adult Education Advisor, I welcome participants weekly to the

## Together we create a safe place to make mistakes, learn and laugh.

Norwegian Language Café at the Stovner branch. Each week the participants, volunteers and I discover new words and expressions and share experiences together. Each week we encourage and learn from each other. Together we create a safe place to make mistakes, learn and laugh. While the Language Café's goal is to practice Norwegian, what is perhaps more important is the sense of belonging it brings to everyone in the room.

There are many ways to run a language café and it is important to find a style that suits both the participants and those that are responsible for the language café.

### **That said, here are my best tips for creating a successful language café:**

#### **1) Recruit dedicated, enthusiastic and caring volunteers who want to learn themselves.**

I tend to recruit my volunteers from library users that I have already formed a good relationship with. This greatly aids in creating a warm and playful dynamic that helps to immediately put the participants at ease. Don't be afraid to say no to someone that wants to be a volunteer but doesn't seem to have the skills needed to

create an open, positive and equal learning environment. The volunteers learn equally as much as the participants.

#### **2) Create a welcoming and safe environment where participants can dare to make mistakes.**

This is done through the chemistry between the leader of the café and the volunteers. Enjoyment is contagious. If the volunteers and I are having fun then the chances the participants will as well are high. Take 10 – 20 minutes to get to know each other. We do a round each week where everyone quickly presents themselves - name, where they're from, how long they've been in the new country and I throw in a 4th question that varies from week to week. For example: Are you a couch potato or an outdoor person? The varying question usually makes the group laugh and see the commonalities and differences we share. In terms of mistakes, I'm all for them. Finding a balance in correcting a language learner is important and it depends on the goals of your language café. For us at Stovner, we aren't striving for perfection. We are

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# Language and Belonging: A Mini Handbook for Creating a Language Café

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striving for expression of thoughts and ideas and therefore we don't stop a participant's flow if we understand them. We do discuss common mistakes we hear with the group as a whole either right before we take a break or towards the end of the two-hour café.

### 3) Use a variety of structured activities that encourage (kindly force) participants to talk to each other.

Board games and drama games (I don't use role-play) are excellent for lowering the threshold for participation. I use a generous helping of storytelling activities, for example Story Cubes. I do you texts as well and when I do, I usually give specific assignments such as underline all the verbs and make flash cards.

### 4) Make room for playfulness and seriousness.

As mentioned we use a good deal of activities that are based in 'play' but there are definitely times where we get a bit more serious. Sometimes this is through discussion about the challenges we face finding our places in our new society or

reading an article and discussing our viewpoints. We recently went on a field trip to The Intercultural Museum where our guide led a discussion on prejudice and stereotypes. People are more willing to talk and find the words they need when they care about the subject and this topic definitely lured everyone in.

### 5) Set a language requirement.

At Stovner the participants should already be able to communicate the basics in Norwegian. This isn't because we don't want to help people that can't speak any Norwegian. It is, quite honestly, that we don't have the resources (space, time, competence and human resources) to give the foundations of the Norwegian language.

### 6) Set guidelines.

We also have three guidelines that we go over at the start of each café:

1) We use the new language as our tool for communicating. Once in a while there are exceptions to this – but for the most part we keep explanations in the language we are learning or we draw or use body

language. However, due to the following guideline it is allowed, if one absolutely must, to explain a word or expression in a shared language.

### 2) We help each other

Everyone in the room can contribute to helping each other. This builds trust and confidence and community.

### 3) Dare to ask

This is the most important guideline of all. Everyone in the room, including myself and the volunteers are there to learn and we will only slow down our own growth if we don't dare to ask.

Each library must decide for themselves if running a language café is right for their users and feasible for the library staff. It does take resources and it is essential that the responsibility is given to someone who truly wants to take it on. My manager has prioritized this within my position and that means that I have been given the freedom to shape the café to best meets the needs of the users and the goals of our branch.

My journey with Norway and the Norwegian language started 12 years ago. Every day I learn something new about the place I can now truly call home. It's incredibly rewarding being able to share language and experiences with others on their journeys to find their voice in Norwegian and their sense of belonging in Norway. 'Tilhørighet'. Belonging. It starts with language.

To see a video in English about the Stovner language café check out this link: <http://107.6.168.106/~legemidd/tradeunionandlibraries.no/language-cafe/>



Stovner Language Cafe

# 2018 IFLA Annual Convention • World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) Session



*Transform Libraries, Transform Societies*

**World Library and Information Congress**

84th IFLA General Conference and Assembly

**24–30 August 2018, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**



## **IFLA WLIC 2018 Congress Programme,**

### **Room: Conference Hall 2**

**28.08.2018, 13:45 – 15:45**

Session 210a: Library Services:  
Empowering people to develop their  
inter-cultural identities - Library Services  
to Multicultural Populations

**Session Chair:** Lan Gao, Cleveland  
Public Library, United States

### **Presentations**

#### **Bringing Bilingual Books to Life**

Raquel M. Ortiz, Center for Puerto Rican  
Studies, Hunter College, City University  
of New York, United States

#### **Barriers and Bridges: Lived**

#### **Experiences of Immigrant Staff in German Libraries**

Leslie Kuo, Humboldt-Universität zu  
Berlin, Germany

#### **Multicultural Engagement**

John Spears, Pikes Peak Library District,  
United States

Teona Shaindze Krebs, Pikes Peak Library  
District, United States

#### **Conversation workshops at the Public information library**

Eleonore Clavreul, Bibliothèque  
publique d'information (Paris), France  
Cecile Denier, Bibliothèque publique  
d'information (Paris), France

#### **Libraries Exploring Ways to Empower the Development of Intercultural Identities and Multicultural Competencies**

Bernadette M. López-Fitzsimmons,  
Manhattan College, United States



**Dr. Raquel M. Ortiz** is an anthropologist, storyteller, educator, and children's book author who creates curriculum and educational materials for

the Puerto Rican Heritage Cultural Ambassador Programs (Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College). She has created textbooks and educational material for children in Puerto Rico and the U.S. as an editor and writer for Santillana. She is the author of *EL ARTE DE LA IDENTIDAD: APROXIMACIÓN CRÍTICA AL JIBARISMO PUERTORRIQUEÑO EN LA LITERATURA, LA MÚSICA Y LAS OBRAS DE ARTE* (University of Granada, 2011) and directed the documentary, *MEMORIES ON THE WALL: EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY MURALS*. Her picture book, *SOFI AND THE MAGIC, MUSICAL MURAL / SOFI Y EL MÁGICO MURAL MUSICAL* (Piñata Books, 2015), was named to the 2016 Tejas Star Reading List and placed second for the International Latino Book Awards Best Educational Children's Picture Book. She is the author/illustrator of *PLANTING FLAGS ON DIVISION STREET* (Colores Editorial House, 2016), and her new picture books, *SOFI'S PAINTS HER DREAMS / SOFI PINTA SUS SUEÑOS* and *DANCING WITH THE TALKING DRUMS / BAILANDO CON TAMBORES QUE CANTAN* will be published by Piñata Books in 2019.



Leslie Kuo is a communications designer turned library worker, as well as a first-generation immigrant in Germany. She is completing her MA

LIS as a continuing education student in Berlin. In both her design work and her library research, she is interested in cities, public spaces and public libraries, migration, marginalization, and belonging.



**John Spears** has been Chief Librarian & CEO of the Pikes Peak Library District (PPLD) since early 2016. Mr. Spears has nearly 20 years of

experience working in urban, suburban, and rural libraries. Prior to joining PPLD, he served as the director of libraries in Salt Lake City (UT), Naperville (IL), and Joliet (IL).

Mr. Spears is a past president of the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA) and was the 2015 Utah Librarian of the Year. He is active in PLA as a contributing editor to Public Libraries magazine and co-author of "Forward Thinking," a column that explores trends in public librarianship. He believes that libraries act as a catalyst in the artistic, cultural, economic, and civic development of their communities, and that the strength of a library resides in the staff and the connections they form with those they serve.

# 2018 IFLA Annual Convention - World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) Session

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In addition to his work in the library profession, John's passions include serving those experiencing homelessness, working with young addicts to overcome their dependency and reach their full potential, and promoting and participating in the arts. Within his own community, he serves on the governing board of the Pikes Peak Continuum of Care and the boards of the Colorado Springs Youth Symphony Association, Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region, the Ithaka Land Trust and Downtown Partnership of Colorado Springs. He also enjoys traveling, cooking, and taking care of their three dogs with his partner, Brian



**Teona Shainidze Krebs** serves as the Adult Education Division Head for the Pikes Peak Library District in Colorado Springs, Co. She has

many critical responsibilities, including the provision of leadership and facilitation for a multi-site adult education program for a diverse population. Some of the most important programs provided by her Division are comprehensive instruction for ESL (English as a Second Language), HSE (High School Equivalency preparation classes), and Career Online High school. She works closely with other community support organizations, assuring that the importance of education and related services are promoted throughout all of the communities served by Pikes Peak Library District.

Teona is a board member of the Colorado Adult Education Professional Association, and a corresponding member of Library Services to Multicultural Populations at IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions).

She was born and raised in Batumi, in the country of Georgia. She met her husband in Russia, and married in Georgia. Teona speaks Georgian, Russian and English. She has two children who are fluent in both English and Georgian.



**Eléonore Clavreul** has been working in and around libraries for the last 20 years. After having worked in public libraries in Parisien suburbs, she then worked for the French Ministry of Culture on subjects relative to the economy of books. She now heads the delegation of the international and national cooperation of the Public Information Library, in Paris.



**Bernadette M. López-Fitzsimmons**, M.L.S., M.A., M.A., is Associate Librarian for Research, Instruction, & Outreach at Manhattan College,

Riverdale, N.Y. She has delivered presentations on teaching information literacy to non-native speakers of English (NNE) at local and national conferences such as the Georgia International Information Literacy (GIIL 2014-2016),

LOEX (2017), ConnTESOL (2016), National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE 2018), Connecticut Information Literacy (CIL 2018), and others. In December 2017, Academic Research Libraries-New York (ACRL-NY) and Library Association of the City University of New York (LaCUNY) invited Bernadette to deliver a presentation on multicultural techniques in library instruction at a jointly hosted professional development event. In fall 2017, she taught a three-credit language-assisted (English/Spanish; inglés/ español) course, *Intercultural Communication/Comunicación Intercultural*, in the two-year associate's degree program, Camino Program(CP)/ Programa Camino (PC), in the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS) at Manhattan College. Bernadette has also published a couple of articles in TESOL International's professional development periodicals, addressing linguistic challenges for NNE speakers in library instruction classes. She will deliver the presentation, *Library Services: Empowering People to Develop their Inter-Cultural Identities at a 2018 IFLA WLIC session*.

# Visit to Scandinavian Multilingual Libraries, October 2017

By Susan Appleby



## 1 The Opportunity

As a Network Librarian I have a wide remit. Based in a school library in Inverness in the Highlands of Scotland, I also have managerial responsibilities for local public library (and prison library) provision. Each of these areas involves working with people whose first language is not English. As such, I am interested in

how libraries might develop effective strategies to reflect and support the language requirements of linguistic minority groups within our communities. I was delighted, therefore, to be given the opportunity by the John Campbell Trust to visit colleagues in Norway and Sweden, where national multilingual library services already exist. This enabled me to see first-hand how these services are managed, and consider whether anything from their best practice could work in Scotland. The visit included the opportunity not only to meet colleagues responsible for national strategy, but also those based in local libraries, who deal with and know their end user, and where the resources are highly valued.

## 2 The National Multilingual Libraries

Both Norway and Sweden offer a coordinated national approach to sharing multilingual resources, and both give priority to minority languages, primarily to serve those who are 'Ny i Norge' (new to Norway or Sweden, ie immigrants and refugees), as well as others with an interest in language learning. The services are also responsible for providing Norwegian and Swedish language course materials.



Norway's national library card (available since 2005 and compliant with their Personal Data Act) permits a completely joined up approach. The Norwegian collection was originally housed in the Deichmanske (Oslo's city library), but 2015 saw the National Library Strategy develop a new model to ensure long term sustainability, as well as to streamline delivery. [Det flerspråklig bibliotek](#) (The Multilingual Library)<sup>i</sup> was

incorporated into the national repository in Mo-i-Rana and launched in May 2017; by the time I arrived in October, the staff could testify that the overall number of national inter-library loans had *doubled*. Such statistical evidence is a clear indication of the impact and value of the multilingual service across the country.

Simply stated, the remit is to provide native language literature for linguistic minorities in Norway, allowing individual borrowers equal access to the entire collection via their local library, regardless of geographical location or size of community. The strategy is threefold: to oversee stock purchase and cataloguing (Oslo); to provide a National Lending Centre for Literature and Media in Languages other than Norwegian (now run from Mo-i-Rana) and to provide guidance on library services to a multicultural Norwegian society.

I was also introduced to 'chaos storage,' an incredibly fast and efficient automatic storage and retrieval system where stock is stored according to barcode. However, the language experts are based in Oslo National Library, where they offer a choice of 69 languages. Currently, the collection comprises 87,000 books, 7,000 films and 600 language courses (films are of particular significance because not everyone can read their own language).

Unlike Norway, Sweden's Internationella Biblioteket (International Library)<sup>ii</sup> based in Stockholm is not connected to the Kungliga Biblioteket (The Royal Library, Sweden's National Library), although it is a recognised partner. The 2013 Library Act, is their guiding document, with one of its designated priority groups being people with a mother tongue other than Swedish. Since 2000, there has also been an 'open' library, for anyone with a Stockholm library card, although anyone else has to borrow via an interlibrary loan request.

I spent a delightful afternoon discussing Arabic children's fiction with the Language Manager for Arabic, who has generously offered to share her network of publishers.

It was lovely to meet some of my colleagues from IFLA's standing committee *Services to Multicultural Populations*, both in Norway and Sweden, and some of whom have been directly

See [Visit to Scandinavian Multilingual Libraries](#), page 9...



involved in developing strategy for their respective national library services. This group produced the IFLA/UNESCO multicultural library manifesto and toolkit [IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto](#)<sup>iii</sup> which can be used as a standard by any library, anywhere in the world.

### 3 The Public Libraries

Just north of the Arctic Circle, Bodø's beautiful Stormen Biblioteket sits right at the harbour, with one of the most stunning views that I have ever seen from a library window. The library opened just 3 years ago as a joint complex with the town's concert hall. The cultural centre brands itself as 'Stormen' ('the Storm'), a metaphor in complete contrast to the concept of a library being a refuge of peace and tranquillity; literature, language and learning challenges the mind, creating a storm. I was told that "the only thing that we cannot guarantee here at the Stormen library is silence."

All Norwegian Public Libraries have a statutory responsibility to provide stock which supports the official indigenous languages, Finnish and (three surviving versions of) Sami. Around Bodø, Lulesamisk is most common, and a children's book box is devoted to this in the Barnebiblioteket (Children's Library). A Sami playgroup is run regularly from a library meeting room.

In every library, signposting and signage is clear, and attractive. Most significantly, languages are written in their own scripts,

such an obvious thing to do. At Asker (outside Oslo), the whole library layout has recently been redesigned to provide a multilingual welcome, with clear pathways towards the language resources. The Swedish libraries I visited around Stockholm were equally inviting, and I particularly loved the children's book boxes at Hallonbergen, where even the picture books are sorted according to language. It was so colourful, and a wonderfully inclusive way to combine languages and visual literacy right from the early years. (Note the bear: Mrs Appleby's Travelling Companion loves to visit libraries!)

Helpful statistics at Hallonbergen mapping the local communities (provided to the library via school rolls) give insight into the wealth of languages spoken locally, and help to understand and respond to current and emerging needs and trends. And at Hallunda, the staff gave an impressive presentation about their local communities, the need to listen and be prepared to try out new ideas. Their emphasis (clearly demonstrated via a Venn diagram) is on interculturality: 'from co-existence to co-operation.'

Sometimes in the most stunning settings, and sometimes in very ordinary surroundings, each library demonstrated an appreciation and understanding of its own particular context, which is fundamental to providing a relevant, inclusive local service, underpinned by an efficient and supportive national strategy of sharing resources.

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# Visit to Scandinavian Multilingual Libraries

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## 4 The Overall Experience

An Oslo University Mooc released shortly before the visit provided a taster of the Norwegian language, so that I could at least say *“hyggelig å hilse på deg,” “Jeg kommer fra Skottland”* and *“Jeg liker å møte nye venner i Norge”* (“nice to meet you,” “I come from Scotland” and “I like to meet new friends in Norway”)! I made less progress in Swedish, but it was a token of interest in what are globally considered to be minority languages themselves. The intention is to carry on learning, not least because of the bi-annual multilingual library conferences offered by the Norwegian team.

It is impossible to pick out what I enjoyed the most: collaborative discussions with dedicated colleagues; colourful, fun, inviting library shelves full of resources in other languages, or just seeing for myself how effective a national strategy can be. Of course, the landscape and scenery made it extra special, with possibly the best autumn weather that could be hoped for.

## 5 The Next Steps

Academic research clearly points to the value of plurilingualism, on many different levels. As part of an overall Scottish strategy of inclusion, outreach, and wellbeing, our libraries should have a key role in coordinating, supporting and sustaining linguistic minorities, as well as our own national languages, and language learning in general.

There is scope for developing a working partnership with our Scandinavian counterparts, and building on their expertise and experience to create a similar national model for the Scottish context. A fuller report will be submitted to Scottish colleagues for analysis, in the hope that this vision might become a reality. This will also help build the economy and promote Scotland as being a welcoming nation, with its library service at the heart of our communities.

Meanwhile, my grateful thanks are extended to the John Campbell Trust for their generosity in granting the Travel Bursary which made this trip possible, and also to my Scandinavian colleagues for their welcome, hospitality and willingness to share their expertise.

<sup>i</sup> Det flerspråklige bibliotek (2018) The multilingual library - a library for libraries [Online] Available at: <https://dfb.nb.no/> [Accessed 12 May 2018].

<sup>ii</sup> Stockholms Stadsbibliotek (2018) The International Library, Stockholm [Online] Available at: [http://www.interbib.se/Files/Images\\_news/medieomångspråk%20111012%20eng.pdf](http://www.interbib.se/Files/Images_news/medieomångspråk%20111012%20eng.pdf) [Accessed 12 May 2018].

<sup>iii</sup> International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (2012) IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto [Online] Available at: <https://www.ifla.org/node/8976> [Accessed 9 Feb 2018].

# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

By Susan Appleby

## Norway: Bodø Library



Norway: Bodø Library, Stormen Biblioteket; right beside the harbour, on a perfect October day above the Arctic Circle



Who wouldn't mind working here?



Bodø library: book box promoting the indigenous language Lulesami to families. Bodø also accommodates a Lulesami playgroup.



Mrs Appleby's travelling companion never missed an opportunity to look at the foreign language collection.



Every Norwegian library visited had a 'Ny i Norge' section welcoming the 'newly arrived' and providing much needed Norwegian language learning resources, as well as helpful information (in easy Norwegian) about the local area, and how to deal with officialdom.

See Reflection in Pictures, page 12...

# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Mo-i-Rana: National Library of Norway Repository

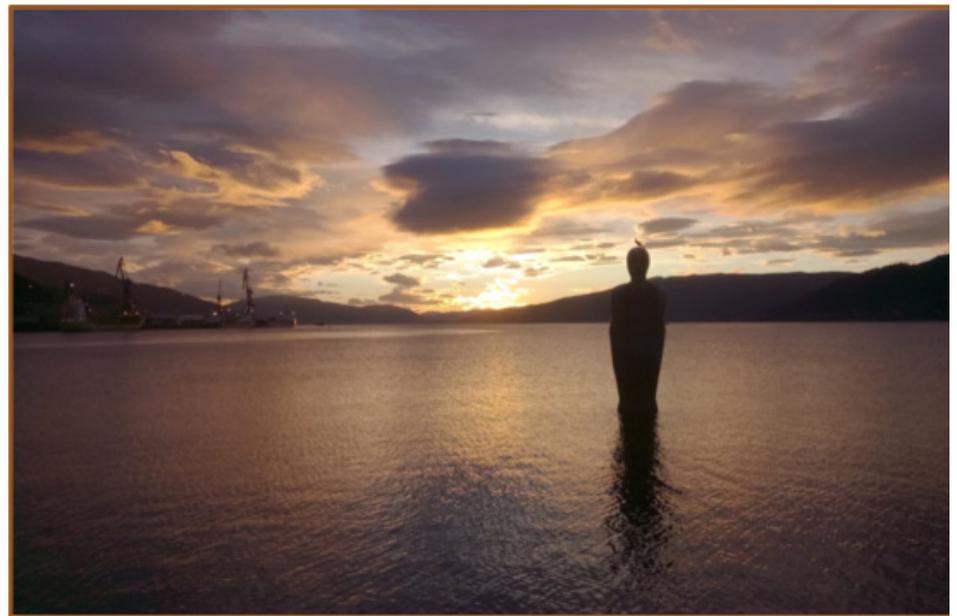


'They keep the books in the mountain' said my colleague, the librarian at Bodø – and they do.

Chaos storage; it doesn't matter which box the book goes in; it's all done by barcode. Apparently a team from the British Library came here to see how it was done. Super-efficient, and exciting to watch. Noisy: the workers need earmuffs. Everyone in the team takes a turn checking books in and out, including the managers.



The multilingual collection at Mo-i-Rana town library – no official visit here; we just popped in.



Mo-i-Rana's answer to the Angel of the North: the 'Man from the Sea'

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# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Asker Library



Leaflets in a variety of languages are right at the entrance, welcoming all local residents to their public library.



Impressed with the signage at Asker library, as well as the layout; the multilingual collection is right beside the travel books, creating a sense of adventure and possibility, and giving languages pride of place. Seventeen languages are on offer here as part of Asker's own collection, ranging from Amharisk to Vietnamesisk, reflecting the local population. Signage in own language (including script) as well as Norwegian.



The children's library is also well catered for: 'books in many languages'

Should you wish to learn another European language, books are available here at Asker.



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# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Oslo's Botanic Gardens



Mrs Appleby's travelling companion takes some time out to enjoy the sunshine in Oslo's Botanic Gardens.



On the way home, a true librarian can't resist having a look inside yet another library. This is in Grünerløkka, an area of Oslo where there is a diverse ethnic population. Inside, the library was full, with people reading and studying, and others upstairs waiting for their Norwegian language class to begin. This is clearly a well-valued public amenity.

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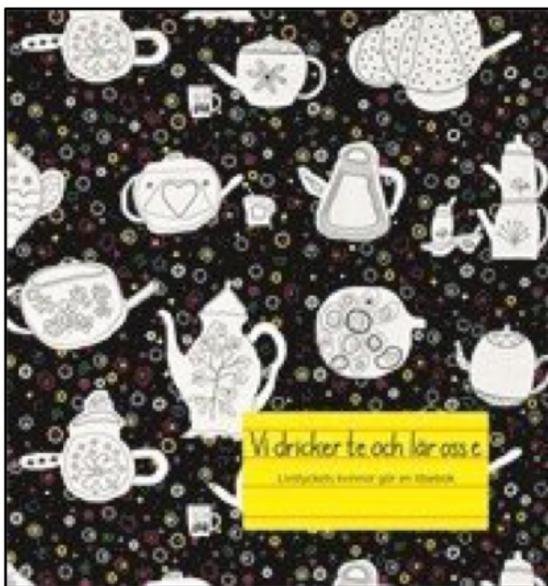
# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Sweden: Hallenbergen library



Picture books in a range of languages, reflecting the diversity of the local ethnic communities.



My colleague Kerstin Blømbäck told me that this is one of her favourite books: *We drink tea and teach ourselves* follows 16 Swedish women as they learn to read and write together and at the same time share artistic skills, as they sew, embroider and paint. Far from their homelands, they learn that, given the right opportunity, language is a friend, not a strange thing.

This is so like the work that Highland Multicultural Friends does in Inverness, quietly but powerfully working alongside women who have made their home in our country. Lovely that the Swedish story has been documented in this book.

Discussion with Kerstin about how to balance the importance of cultural heritage with what is actually going to entice young people to read: what is the best language strategy when it comes to stock purchase policy? Arabic stories tend to be moralistic; Persian is poetic, beautiful but hard to understand. Whilst recognising the immense value of cultural heritage, this has to be balanced with providing material that will get young people reading at all, and reading in their home language in particular, so start by providing what their peer groups are reading – even if this means a title in translation rather than an indigenous text. This is a slightly different approach to the one taken in Oslo National Library, where the feeling is that traditional, culture-based texts should be given priority, because 'cultural identity' trumps more 'Westernised' translations. It is a fine balancing act. Interestingly, the person I spoke to in Oslo never deals with the actual end user; her customer is the public library, so perhaps that is why her stance is a little idealistic. At Hallonbergen they know their end users well, and understand the cultural dichotomy for a teenage girl whose family has settled in Scandinavia. The right text plays a significant role in discovering and maintaining one's identity, but also in developing a love of reading, in any language.



Loved this – the Arabic version is rarely on the shelves.

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# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Hallunda public library



At Hallunda public library, the multilingual collection is given central stage, surrounding the carpet. Here all sorts of events take place involving (and often led by) the local community. Mrs Appleby's travelling companion is enjoying Roald Dahl in Polish.

At this library, the emphasis moves away from multilingual to *intercultural*, where people are actively encouraged to learn from each other's culture and experience, and promote 'social sustainability.' For the staff, this is more than just a job. They know their community, and are committed to making the library a welcoming place, where residents can play an active role. They are not afraid to try new thing for the sake of inclusion: 'a lower service for some means equal access for everyone,' says the library manager, Marie Johansen.

They are experimenting with an integrated signage system; the clear symbols make the collections accessible for adults with learning difficulties as well as those learning Swedish; 'very easy reads.'



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# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Internationella Biblioteket



Sweden's Internationella Biblioteket is in the heart of Oslo, part of the city library and right next door to the National Library. One level offers full access to stock, whilst the top floor is the power house, where stock-based decisions are made.



Sweden's version of chaos storage, easily recognised by any librarian!



My colleague from IFLA's standing committee 'Services to Multicultural Populations,' Alireza Afshari (Ali), who had organised the Swedish visits, met me here. He was delighted when, at our meeting, Elisabet Risberg showed him all these versions of the famous *Little Black Fish* story, originally written in his own home language, Farsi (Persian), and which he has known since childhood.



Posters are attractive, informative and accessible, offering advice and guidance; here, languages services are advertised using QR codes.



Meanwhile, Elisabet has the remit for ordering Arabic stock. A regular attendee at the Lebanon Book Fair, she is delighted to have recently discovered a title where the girl and the boy (actually) hold hands.

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# Multilingual Library provision in Norway and Sweden, October 2017 – a reflection in pictures

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## Stockholm's City Library



Reflecting Stockholm's pervasive (and very impressive) environmental policy, a *Readcycling* bin sits in the foyer of Stockholm's City Library. Nearly all of Stockholm's 40 libraries have these, where borrowers can help themselves to an extra read, and donate what they have finished with. It's very popular, doesn't detract from what the library has to offer.



Kista's children's library (Barnbiblioteket) offers 'books in many languages.'



They also partner with the job centre to provide information in home languages

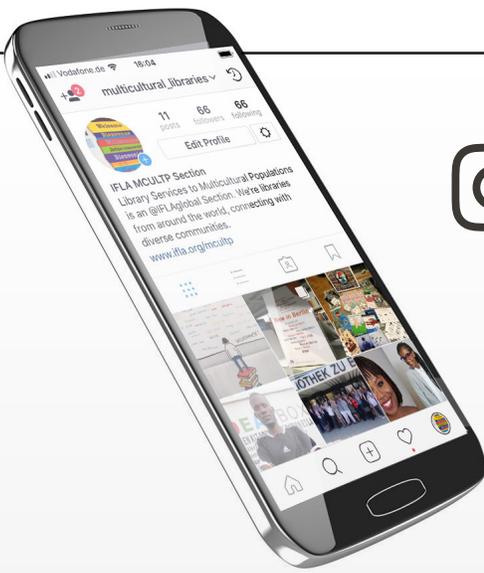


They demonstrate another practical way to offer dual language resources: one of each.

## National Library of Sweden



A treat: ending my library sight-seeing at the Reading Room in the National Library of Sweden, where languages include Greek and Latin!



## Connect with us on Instagram and Twitter

Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section is now on Instagram. To connect with us, look for @multicultural\_libraries on the free Instagram app or visit [https://www.instagram.com/multicultural\\_libraries/](https://www.instagram.com/multicultural_libraries/)

We also have a Twitter account: [www.twitter.com/ifla\\_mcultp](http://www.twitter.com/ifla_mcultp) and a Facebook account: [www.facebook.com/ifla.mcultp](http://www.facebook.com/ifla.mcultp)

The Indigenous Matters Section is also on Facebook. Please visit [www.facebook.com/groups/66990630010/?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/groups/66990630010/?fref=ts)

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## Additional Resources:

### IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto

<http://www.ifla.org/node/8976>

### Multicultural Communities: Guidelines for Library Services, 3rd Edition

<http://www.ifla.org/publications/multicultural-communities-guidelines-for-library-services-3rd-edition>

### An Overview: Multicultural Communities: Guidelines for Library Services Four page summary

<http://www.ifla.org/publications/an-overview-multicultural-communities-guidelines-for-library-services>

### Multicultural Library Manifesto Toolkit

<http://www.ifla.org/node/8975>