INFORMATION LITERACY :
AN INTERNATIONAL STATE OF THE ART REPORT

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II. French Speaking Countries:
Belgium, France, Quebec, Switzerland
Information Literacy State-of-the Art Report
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A. Introduction

The State of the art will concern Belgium, France, Quebec, Switzerland, and will be extended to French speaking African countries in the update of this 2010 report. In French speaking African countries, we will speak about Senegal, Togo, Ivory Cost, Burkina Faso, Congo Democratic Republic.

The concept of Information Literacy appears in the different countries but

— at different levels
— with different ways to organize it

In all these places, the most visible part of Information Literacy takes place in the educational field (secondary and college-university levels).
There are many initiatives of life-long training in Information Literacy offered to citizens but it is not as visible and organized than the previous one.
Information Literacy is not visible at an institutional or State level (no law as there is in other parts of the world, no mention of the term in political statements).

1. Basic concepts of information literacy

There is an agreement on the definition of the concept –although no clear, written, stated definition as the ALA definition- but no term equivalent to Information Literacy is commonly used by the different countries. It is difficult to translate the expression, because "literacy" is used for reading literacy and wouldn't have the same meaning as it has in English. The term chosen by IFLA to translate IL is "Maitrise de l'information" and it might be the better one.

Other terms that are frequently used are "formation des usagers" (users training) or "competences informationnelles" (Information competencies) .

2. General organisation

These French speaking countries have different ways of organizing Information Literacy depending on their own political and educational structure.

a. Belgium is a bilingual-multicultural country. In the French speaking part of Belgium, the situation is quite different from France since there is no unique national policy, and no institutional funding for developing IL. However, efforts in the field have been made since the late 80's (Thirion, 2003). From this time, some convinced librarians created a working group, named initially "Training user group", then in 1997 the "Edu*Doc* Group". But the EduDOC group, a non profit organization, has unfortunately decided to discontinue its activities in 2010.
Between 2006 and 2008, the EduDOC group, in collaboration with the Interuniversity Council, has been working on a survey on IL skills of first-year incoming undergraduate students. Created in 2003 by the Sub-committee of libraries of the CREPUQ, the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities (Mittermeyer, 2005), this survey[1] has already been replicated and adapted in several European countries in 2005 (but the results are not yet known) and was adapted to the Belgian situation. The questionnaire was sent anonymously, in September 2007 to 4388 students selected randomly in 34 higher education institutions. The response rate of over 42% was particularly high (in order to maximize the response rate, organizers give the opportunity to participate in a raffle of a Laptop, sponsored by Dell). The analysis (Thirion, 2009) of the data collected helped to assess the IL skills of students and to determine what factors influence those skills. The main goal was to adapt the IL existing programs and to promote the creation of new IL programs.

The objectives of the EduDoc Group have been to reflect on and to observe the IL situation in the French speaking part of Belgium and abroad and to promote IL for librarians, teachers and decisions-makers. The group developed its activities in multiple directions: meeting and conferences, web site, papers and an Email discussion group about IL on the internet http://www.lists.ulg.ac.be/mailman/listinfo/edudoc

Each of the 7 French speaking universities has its own policy. There still is a positive trend in universities who created some IL courses or training sessions (Pochet, 2004). This was reinforced by the Bologna process who gave a positive sign in the inclusion of Information Literacy in the new definition of ECTS. Various new IL teaching initiatives are being carried out. Another positive sign comes from outside the universities: an introductory course in "information retrieval" (15h) is now required for all future school teachers (primary schools and the first three years of secondary school)." Unfortunately, at this moment, this political initiative remains isolated.

b. France is a centralized country where the State plays an important role both by financing activities and controlling them. It is not surprising therefore that Information Literacy in secondary and higher Education is ruled by the State.

IL in France, as in many other countries, started to become a key issue at the end of the 90's. It is a law in 1996 that helped to embed IL courses in the curricula, while the reform of the studies at the European level –known as "Bologna Agreement" introducing 3 levels of diplomas in 1999–emphasized the embedding. [2]

There is an important financial and institutional support from the State, especially for the publishing of pedagogical resources. Many of these resources are gathered on the French speaking website FORMIST. http://www.enssib.fr/formist

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[1] http://crepuq.qc.ca/documents/bibl/formation/etude.pdf
[2] < http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf >

Formist is a service of the French National LIS School, Enssib, which plays a role in keeping a network among teaching librarians through its annual Conference and website

There are libraries in secondary schools and the librarians there are called "teachers-librarians". They take specific exams, similar to those of disciplinary teachers.

The trend is to identify the convergences and divergences between the different literacies : media literacy, information literacy and digital literacy. A team of researchers, ERTé *Culture informationnelle et curriculum documentaire*, works together to fill the gap between secondary schools and colleges or universities concerning IL education[3]. They pointed out the necessity to build an unified curriculum from school to university.

c. Quebec has its specificities, but being so close to the United States and being part of Canada has a strong impact on Information Literacy there. Information literacy started earlier than in Europe. The annual Conference WILU /AAFD started in 1971.

> *Two important points:*
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> — the bilingual situation which leads Quebec to translate in French many English documents (ACRL standards for example)
> — as in many other countries, universities are quite independent in defining their own policies. This is why some of them, such as the Université de Montréal, for example, wrote a statement concerning IL in the University.
> http://www.direction.umontreal.ca/secgen/pdf/reglem/francais/sec_30/ens30_9.pdf

a. In French speaking Switzerland, it is difficult to identify at a regional scale a specific policy concerning Information Literacy. As universities and schools are autonomous, it would be better speaking of the local initiatives spreading out.

b. In French speaking African countries, the major issue still remains ICT and the lack of information systems or OPACS. But now Internet made progress, though facilities are not spread enough. Some countries like Ivory Coast, Benin, Congo democratic Republic (RDC), Senegal, Burkina Faso or Burundi start to train the users and try to make students Information literate.

The network RESSAO (Réseau pour l'excellence de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique de l'ouest), born in 2005, bring together 18 universities from 6 French speaking Western African countries. In their recent meeting in 2010, the academic libraries defined the development of Information literacy among the 6 key objectives in the strategic plan.

In Kinshasa, DRC, the CEDESURK (Centre de Documentation pour l'Enseignement Supérieur et la Recherche de Kinshasa - http://www.cedesurk.refer.org/), offers several training programs to librarians, teachers and researchers of higher education institutions. These programs are supported by the AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie) and the CUD (Belgian French speaking Academic Cooperation). In 2006, the Defist project (see "B. IL products for users") was adapted for a new distance learning IL program (Kasajima, 2008). This initiative is part of an extensive program for the interconnection of major universities in RDC. It will be the first source of developing IL skills in RDC, alongside access to full text, catalogues and databases.

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[3]http://geriico.recherche.univ-lille3.fr/erte_information/?/

B. IL Products for users

Most of these countries propose **tutorials**. The main ones are (see more in the directory http://www.infolitglobal.net/directory/en):

1. Tutorials

a.   **Defist** (*Développement d'une Formation à l'Information Scientifique et Technique* = Development of scientific and technical information training programs) was launched in 2003 in Belgium (Pochet, 2005). It is a research program whose aim was to create a Web-based adaptive distance learning information literacy system. http://www.bib.fsagx.ac.be/edudoc/defist.htm
This project is being used as a template to develop a new IL tool in the Democratic Republic of Congo (see below)
There are also a lot of other tutorials created by several universities :
http://www.bib.ulb.ac.be/fr/aide/faq/index.html (Brussels Free University)
http://www.bib.fsagx.ac.be/edudoc/Metho.DOC/ (Ulg - Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech)
following the FAQ model

b.   In France, many libraries are working on tutorials for self training inside their universities. We won't mention all of them but rather talk about **Cerise** -Conseils aux Etudiants pour une Recherche d'information Specialisée Efficace- which offers a basic step by step method. http://urfist.enc.sorbonne.fr/anciensite/cerise/index.htm
A database collects all the informations concerning courses and tutorials in the French universities : SinFoDoc http://adbu.fr/sinfodoc/presentation/index.php

c.   In Quebec, **Infosphere** http://www.bib.umontreal.ca/infosphere/ is a tutorial providing a methodology for step by step information seeking in Human and Social Sciences or in Sciences. It has been adapted in different universities : in Quebec and in France (Strasbourg university) and in Belgium (4 universities forming the *Académie Louvain*).

d.   In Switzerland, **CALIS** (Computer-Assisted Learning for Information Searching) is a tutorial on information retrieval and the use of scientific information in an academic environment, developed between 2001 and 2003. Since 2005, CALIS has been adapted in order to meet the needs of several fields : economic and social sciences , business studies, psychology etc.
http://www.unige.ch/biblio/ses/calis/index.html
It has been adapted for other countries in French Speaking Africa. The version is called CALIS Sud [4]

2. Credit courses

Almost all the universities offer courses, library tours or workshops on a facultative basis. But in the different countries, the objective is to embed Information literacy in the curriculum and to have it compulsory and credit given. More and more places fulfil the

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[4] Angeloz, Joëlle, Bessero, Carole, « CALIS Sud », *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, 2010, n° 1, p. 63-69 <http://bbf.enssib.fr/>

objective but there are still big differences :

— only facultative/optional courses or workshops on an individual basis
— both credit given courses in the curricula AND optional type of courses
— IL workshops with or without assessment integrated within larger methodological courses

In Belgium, the main universities (Liege, Louvain, Bruxelles) are offering credited courses (Pochet, 2004). [5]

In France, a 2005 survey showed that since the Bologna agreement and mostly since 2003, the trends were to have more and more courses in the curricula. [6]
In 2006, general statistitics noticed that more than 120000 students out of 170000 were trained within the curricula[7]. The national plan called « Réussite en Licence » intended to help the success in the first years at University, was an opportunity to develop IL courses into the curricula.

In Quebec, the main universities and university libraries are more and more involved in the subject of information literacy. We already cited the General Policy at the University of Montreal, but in other universities, Information literacy activities are more and more included in the curricula. The Library of the Université Laval in Québec made a very interesting document for academy, relating the ACRL standards to the discipline. This document explains to the teachers the information literacy requirements, step by step.[8]

In Switzerland courses are offered both in and outside the curriculum. The universities of Lausanne and Geneva are very active in courses.

No shared evaluation or assessments tools in the different communities. In France there is an ICT test at the university, called Cii (Certificat Informatique et internet / Computer and internet certificate) with an information seeking part http://c2i.education.fr/ . Several universities used this opportunity to integrate IL objectives and develop IL courses[9]

In French speaking African countries, four universities from the REESAO (two in Senegal, one in Togo and one in Burkina) has integrated information literacy into curricula.

C. Publications

1. Guidelines

The different countries publish general and specific guidelines, for example:

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[5] Pochet, Bernard (2004) in Chevillotte, Sylvie

[6] Noël, Elisabeth, Cazaux, Marie-Annick. ,« Enquête sur la formation à la méthodologie documentaire », *Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France*, 2005, 50, 6, pp. 24-28 < http://bbf.enssib.fr >

[7] Blin, Frédéric. Panorama restrospectif de la formation à l'information dans les SCD. 8e Rencontres Formist, Villeurbanne, 2008 <http://www.enssib.fr/bibliotheque-numerique/document-1781>

[8] Carrier, Pierre. Le développement des compétences informationnelles à l'université Laval : l'approche par compétences. *Babel - edit -,* Rencontres Formist. ENSSIB - novembre 2005 http://www.enssib.fr/bibliotheque-numerique/document-1171

[9]Goubatian, Yves (2009) in Elbekri-Dinoird, Carine.

a. In France;
    Former les étudiants à la maîtrise de l'information
    http://www.enssib.fr/guideformer/

    EruDist : référentiel de compétences documentaires
    http://domus.grenet.fr/erudist/index.php
    The target audience is librarians and faculty in charge of IL programs

    Certificat Informatique et Internet : Référentiel C2i
    http://www.educnet.education.fr/textes/reglementaires/competences/referentiels/c2i/niveau-1
    Part B2 is specific to IL competencies

b. In Quebec;
    Apprivoiser l'information pour réussir
    http://www.bib.umontreal.ca/db/apprivoiser-information-reussir_2004.pdf
    http://hdl.handle.net/1866/18
    The target audience is faculty. The guidelines introduces them to IL.

CREPUQ in Quebec translated the ACRL Standards in French.
    http://www.crepuq.qc.ca/IMG/pdf/normeacrl-web-03-05-v4.pdf

2. Monographs, articles

Different authors publish on the subject of Information Literacy or on the Methodology of Information seeking. This is not an exhaustive list.

a.   Chapron, Françoise and Delmotte, Eric (2009). *L'éducation à la culture informationnelle.* Villeurbanne : Presses de l'enssib, 2010. ISBN 978-2-910227-75-3

b.   Chevillotte, Sylvie (dir) (2004). *La formation à la maîtrise de l'information à l'heure européenne : problèmes et perspectives.* Villeurbanne : Presses de l'enssib, 2004. ISBN 978-2-910227-54-8

c.   Chevillotte, Sylvie (2005). Bibliothèques et Information Literacy : Un état de l'art. *Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France*, 2005, t.50, 2, 13- 20 http://bbf.enssib.fr

d.   Elbekri-Dinoird, Carine (dir) (2009). *Favoriser la réussite des étudiants.* Villeurbanne : Presses de l'ensibb, 2009. (La boîte à outils ; 17). ISBN 978-2-910227-72-2

e.   Gagnon, Maryse, Farley-Chevrier, Francis. *Guide de la recherche documentaire.* Montréal : Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2004. ISBN 2-7606-1956-7

f.   Mittermeyer, Diane, Sauve Diane (2003). *Étude sur les connaissances en recherche documentaire des étudiants entrant au 1er cycle dans les universités québécoises.* Groupe de travail sur la formation documentaire, Sous-comité des bibliothèques. http://www.crepuq.qc.ca/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=170&lang=fr

g.   Mittermeyer Diane. (2005). Incoming first year undergraduate students: How information literate are they? *Education for Information,* **23**(4), 203-232.

h. Pochet, Bernard, Thirion, Paul. (2003). Information literacy in Belgium : An overview by the Edudoc Group. In C., Basili (Ed.), I*nformation literacy in Europe : a first insight into the state of art of information literacy in the European Union*. Roma, Italy: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto di Studi Socio-economici Sull'innovazione e le Politiche della Ricerca, 12-24 (http://hdl.handle.net/2268/500).

i. Pochet, Bernard (2005) *Méthodologie documentaire Rechercher, consulter, rédiger à l'heure d'Internet*, 2e édition, de Boeck Université, 2005. ISBN 9782804146320

j. Pochet, Bernard, Thirion, Paul (2008). Quelles compétences documentaires et informationnelles à l'entrée dans l'enseignement supérieur ? Résultats d'une enquête EduDOC-CIUF en Communauté française de Belgique. *Cahiers de la documentation*, 2008, 45, n°4, 4-17. < http://hdl.handle.net/2268/15802 >

k. Pochet, Bernard, Thirion, Paul. (2009). Information Literacy in Students Entering Higher Education in the French Speaking Community of Belgium: lessons learned from an evaluation. *IFLA Journal*, **35**(2), 152-170 (http://hdl.handle.net/2268/15799).

l. Salaün, Jean-Michel, Arsenault, Clément (dir). *Introduction aux sciences de l'information*. Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2009. ISBN 978-2-7606-2114-5

m. Serres, Alexandre (2007). Maîtrise de l'information : la question didactique. *Les dossiers de l'ingénierie éducative*, avril 2007, 57
http://www.cndp.fr/archivage/valid/89418/89418-14447-18257.pdf

n. The main French journal, Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France published a special issue on Information Literacy : Formation des usagers (2005) *Bulletin des Bibliothèques de France*, 50, n°6 http://bbf.enssib.fr/

o. Some LIS students write interesting papers about Information Literacy. Some are online from the digital library of ENSSIB http://www.enssib.fr/bibliotheque-numerique/ .

D. Organizations

As stated in the introduction, these countries have different ways of organizing themselves.

Belgium has the working group EduDOC

In France, ERTé *Culture informationnelle et curriculum documentaire*, a group of researchers, teachers, librarians was created in 2004 to build a whole curriculum in information literacy from school to university.
http://geriico.recherche.univ-lille3.fr/erte_information/?/

Quebec has several associations. CREPUQ, association for Universities and colleges presidents from Quebec- Recteurs et principaux- has a working group on libraries and IL: Sous Comite des Bibliothèques, Groupe de travail sur la Formation Documentaire.

E. Training the Trainers

In Belgium, following an Edu*Doc* meeting on the librarian's professional training on IL, some LIS schools have been implementing IL courses in the professional training. Furthermore, a training session was organised in 2004 for higher education teachers.

In France, librarians both in initial and continuous training follow "training the trainers courses", even though these courses could become compulsory in the LIS curricula. Students are mainly instructed at Enssib –National French LIS school- http://www.enssib.fr/. They attend at least 2 days courses on Information Literacy and several of them choose to attend an optional course on training.

The network of URFIST(Unité régionale de formation à l'information scientifique et technique) is in charge of developping information literacy in the academic environment : faculty, advanced students, librarians. The 7 units existing in France are very active in the training of professionals.

In Quebec, EBSI – Ecole des Bibliothèques et Sciences de l'Information- at the University of Montreal - offers an optional course for student in initial training.
http://www.ebsi.umontreal.ca/

Continuous development is organized differently and it seems that professionals attend meetings and seminars in order to keep up to date.

F. Communication

1. Listservs, weblogs, websites

Belgium and Quebec have specific list serv: Edudoc, available in edudoc@lists.ulg.ac.be; and Formadoc, in FORMADOC@crepuq.qc.ca

In France, the weblog URFIST Info http://urfistinfo.hypotheses.org/ has a wider objective of news in the field of information science.

EduDoc (http://www.edudoc.be/) and Formist (http://www.enssib.fr/formist) have websites dedicated to IL.
Formist website gathers resources about IL –articles, proceedings, students papers- but also methodological courses on different disciplines and tutorials.

EduDOC proposes resources and publications about IL.

The website Form@net (Quebec) http://www.ebsi.umontreal.ca/formanet/culture.html is dedicated to IL at the secondary level. It gives definitions and develops ideas about IL.

2. Conferences on the Subject

All the countries organize conferences or seminar, some on a regular basis.

Edudoc group, in Belgium organizes seminars on specific topics.

The most important French speaking conference is Rencontres Formist, an annual conference, which started in 2001 (France). It gathers about 150 attendants, librarians or academic from France but also Belgium and Switzerland.

There are printed proceedings of the 3rd Rencontres (see publications).
Since 2005, 5th Rencontres, there are electronic proceedings on enssib website: http://www.enssib.fr/formist

— In Canada WILU/AAFD started in 1971. It originally was in English and French but during the last years it is English speaking only.
— But Information Literacy is often the topic of general conferences or specific seminars. For example, very recently

Some conferences were held once:

— Trainers from different French speaking countries participated to these colloquiums or workshops :
— ABCDEF Conference, Université Laval, Quebec, 1995. (Printed Proceedings)
— Les Ateliers francophones pour la formation documentaire, Gembloux, 1997- Proceedings on line http://www.cfwb.be/ciuf/bibliotheques/publications/bppd.htm
— Equipe de recherche en technologies éducatives (ERTé). L'éducation à la culture informationnelle. Colloque, Lille, 2008 Proceedings are online : http://archivesic.ccsd.cnrs.fr/ERTE