

COBISS Conference 2018 – 30th Anniversary

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COBISS Conference 2018 took place from 27th to 29th December at the premises of the Institute of Information Science in Maribor (IZUM). The first conference of this kind took place in 1998, while this year's event was a celebration of the 30th anniversary of introducing the shared cataloguing system in the territory of former Yugoslavia. As a part of the development project of the Scientific and Technological Information System of Yugoslavia (SNTIJ), in 1988 the Institute of Information Science in Maribor was in charge of the task of a shared cataloguing system development which resulted in COBISS system, COBISS.SR¹ and COBISS.net² networks. Over the past three decades many experts from Serbia and other parts of former Yugoslavia have been working on the development and implementation of this system.

The first day of the conference was planned out for the librarians from Slovenia while the second and third day were devoted to attending guests from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia – which are all members of the COBISS.net network.

In its opening speech, Aleš Bošnjak, the Head of IZUM, announced significant changes to the system and revealed the plan of the Institute to switch to COBISS4 which is in line with the strategic decision to move the entire system to an open source platform over the next several years.

The central topic of this Conference was school library and its place within the global bibliographic information network. It was selected in order to mark the completion of the process of connecting all school libraries in Slovenia to COBISS. Participants from Slovenia emphasized all the advantages of this project for the libraries, while Dorothy Williams, professor at the Robert Gordon University in Scotland, provided a general overview,

¹ COBISS.SR (on-line)

² COBISS.net (on-line)

emphasizing the significance of school libraries for education, based on her extensive research in this field.

Mr. Davor Šoštarić, also from IZUM, presented the experiences of the librarians' community in Slovenia in implementation of GDPR directive regarding protection of personal data. The same directive was adopted in Serbia in 2016, and after an interim period for regulatory adjustment, it came into force in May 2018. For the time being, the number of institutions and organizations in Serbia that have successfully managed to adapt their operation to GDPR requirements is relatively small. The Directive stipulates procedures for registration, classification and coding of user data defined as personal data, whereas the participants from Serbia learned from the experience of their colleagues from Slovenia, where these provisions have been in force for some time now, which was very useful.

This year Serbia started with preparations for final implementation of the system of normative control of personal names in COBISS.SR. Persons appointed to coordinate the project are Gordana Mazić from IZUM and Milorad Vučković, the Head of the Serbian National COBISS Centre for Shared Cataloguing. IZUM representative presented an overview of the process: from decision for the initial base scope, the definition of cataloguing rules and referral sources, the definition of the language and alphabet of normative records as well as the initial integration in the first phase of development of the initial database, to testing of the software, print-out and initial connection and training of cataloguers to work in a system which includes normative control in the final phases of implementation. The task of establishing and auditing the initial normative base of personal names was assigned to the library experts working at libraries founders of VBS network in 2013. They were given the instructions and successfully provided the training to all cataloguers in normative control of personal names this year.

COBISS+ as well as the latest application for online search in library catalogues were presented at the Conference. At the beginning of 2019 this application should replace the current version of COBISS/OPAC that has been in use since 1997 with only few minor modifications. New application is simple, navigation is logical and intuitive, and interface is user friendly. It is well suited for use on mobile and touch screen devices and allows personal interface settings (My profile), logging in using multiple identities, facet filtering of hits and many other options.

The last day of the Conference, dedicated to members of COBISS.net network, began with presentation of progress reports from national COBISS

centres for the last two years, followed by the presentation of the new solution for online registration of new library members and an overview of solutions used to protect the network and IZUM data.

We have seen a new generation of firewalls, solutions for early detection of weaknesses in the system and its web applications as well as zero day attack detection and prevention system.

Matjaž Zalokar (IZUM) presented the project for development of COBISS's master list of subject headings – SCG, which was used to implement the normative database of subject headings within COBISS.SI network. Work on this normative database has been going on for 18 years now and it was modelled after normative subject heading databases used by the Congress Library – SHLC and the French National Library – Rameau. After invitation of the VBS Centre, Matjaž Zalokar presented this project in the National Library of Serbia back in 2005, when it was still under development, and it was very interesting to see the project reaching its final implementation.

The Conference also included the meeting of directors of COBISS.net, as well as a number of meetings of representatives of COBISS.SR and IZUM, resulting in an agreement to have the application COBISS+ launched within COBISS.SR at the beginning of next year and to finalize implementation of normative control in March 2019.

All presentations are available at the Conference website.³

IZUM provided financial aid for travel and accommodation expenses for some of the participants from countries participating in COBISS.net and proved to be an excellent host, as always.

³ [The Conference website](#) (on-line)