



INCLUSIVE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Collaboration for Greater Accessibility

Ljubljana City Library, Oton Župančič Library
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Miran Jarc Public Library, Novo mesto, Minka Skaberne Library for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Dr Franc Sušnik Central Carinthian Library, Ravne na Koroškem, are particularly dedicated to integrating the local community into the library environment and, by extension, in social life. This inclusion of community is conditioned by accessibility, however the consistency between the declarative and real levels is subject to research and negotiations. Conference with a comprehensive illumination of the field contributes to the harmonisation of both levels of accessibility and the realisation of the public library as a critical, equitable and safe space.

New findings and technological solutions constantly expand the complexity of our environment, while they simultaneously offer ways to make it accessible. In 2025, the regulations on more detailed conditions for accessibility of audio-visual media services to people with disabilities took effect and the European Accessibility Act became enforced. The day of the conference also marks the deadline for all public facilities to become accessible to people with physical and sensory disabilities.

In light of ensuring the accessibility of services as the basis for implementing public library services, the authors of the contributions emphasise the importance and way of cooperation between related institutions, the principle which they are directly putting into practice with this conference.

The target audience are the employees of Slovenian libraries, along with, primary and secondary school teachers, educators, various organisations or associations, government and municipal organisations as well as the interested professional and general public.

THE PROGRAMME

9:30–10:00	Registration of participants
10:00–10:20	Introductory greetings
10:20–11:00	Kirsi Ylänné, Accessibility Library Celia, Finland Collaborating for More Accessible Libraries in Finland
11:00–11:30	Anja Rebolj, Miran Jarc Public Library, Novo mesto Competency Centre for Specific User Groups
11:30–12:10	Inga Davidonienė, Lithuanian Audiosensory Library, Lithuania Shared Goals, Shared Resources: Strategic Cooperation Across Library Network
12:10–12:30	Odmor
12:30–13:10	Brigita Kosi, Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Slovenia Board Games – Connection, Opportunity, Fun – for All
13:10–13:50	Andrej Tomažin, Accessibility Services of RTV Slovenija Programmes Accessibility of RTV Slovenia
13:50–14:30	Branka Mrđenović, Dr Franc Sušnik Central Carinthian Library, Ravne na Koroškem Presentation of the Competency Centre for Easy Reading's Professional Recommendations Titled <i>Library Services for Users from Vulnerable Target Group</i>

We reserve the right to change the programme.

Additional information about the event:

- The event is organised with the help of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Union.
- It will be held in both Slovenian and English language.
- The event will be recorded.
- Attendance is free.
- To register, send an email with the title and date of the event alongside your personal information (name, surname, library/organisation, email address) to the following address: ucni.center@mklj.si.

Contact us in case of possible questions regarding the conference:

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Kirsi Yläanne, Accessibility Library Celia, Finland

Collaborating for more accessible libraries in Finland

The Finnish Accessibility Guidelines for Public Libraries were developed between 2014 and 2016 by a group of Finnish librarians and accessibility experts. The aim of the Guidelines was to raise awareness and strengthen inclusive services in public libraries. The need for these guidelines became clear during a national *Library for All project*, which was creating a collaboration model between public libraries and Celia Library, a special library for the print disabled in Finland.

The presentation will explore the development and implementation of *Finnish Accessibility Guidelines for Public Libraries*, how it was introduced to library professionals, and how it is used in training future librarians. It will also highlight broader efforts to promote accessibility in the Finnish library field.

The presentation will explain the details of the collaboration model between public libraries and Accessibility Library Celia, showing how this collaboration has successfully reached out to persons with print disabilities, expanded the use of Celia's online services, and enabled public libraries to offer accessible book formats to their patrons.

About the author

Kirsi Yläanne has worked at Accessibility Library Celia, formerly Library for the Visually Impaired, since the year 2000. She started as Editor for Educational material, and then worked as Production Manager 2005-2014. Since 2015 she has worked as Accessibility Specialist advising and training librarians on accessibility and publishers on accessible publishing.

Kirsi was a Standing Committee member of IFLA section *Libraries Serving Persons with Print Disabilities* and served as Chair of the section 2017-2021. Kirsi was also a member of the Finnish Braille Authority 2005-2018. During 2020-2023 she was a member of steering group in a national project *Clearly for Us – Accessible Communication for All* which improved cognitive accessibility of websites for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Currently she is a member of Finnish ITC localisation group led by the Finnish National Library.

Kirsi was a co-author in the *Finnish Accessibility Guidelines for Public Libraries* (2016).

Anja Rebolj, Miran Jarc Public Library, Novo mesto

Competency Centre for Specific User Groups

The article discusses the terms inclusive and accessible in the context of public libraries and presents the work of the Miran Jarc Public Library, Novo mesto, in the field of integrating the local community into the library environment. This is a vast and complex domain, but it represents an integral part of public library services and therefore of the library's strategic management. It requires library staff to study research and have a good understanding of local communities, and to cooperate both with them and to cooperate with the experts. It entails discovering, verifying and implementing ways to address their needs through acknowledging changes in society, the normative framework, scientific achievements and practices of related domestic and foreign institutions, additionally it entails educating and sharing knowledge and work results.

About the author

Anja Rebolj has been employed at the Miran Jarc Public Library in Novo mesto since 2021 as the Head of the Coordination of Special Tasks of Central Regional Library and Development Department. She coordinates the work of the competency centre, acts as the regional editor of the local digitised heritage web portal Kamra, and participates in local history, development and international projects, as well as the library's event activities.

Inga Davidonienė, Lithuanian Audiosensory Library

Shared Goals, Shared Resources: Strategic Cooperation across Library Network

One-third of Lithuania's population uses the services offered by libraries. More than half of million could use the services of libraries, but these people think libraries are not open for them because they have disabilities, print impairments, or other individual needs.

In autumn of 2021, the Lithuanian Audiosensory Library took the lead and together with the county public libraries organized the event "Library for All. Conference+". Lithuanian librarians gathered to agree on the main directions of ambition to deeper inclusion of people with disabilities and individual needs. During this conference, the Library Accessibility Manifesto was created and signed.

How has the situation changed in the years since the Manifesto was signed? There have been many positive changes, but we also have challenges. The situation is particularly challenging in the remote regions of Lithuania, where elderly people face information, social, and cultural isolation. Former active readers cannot access suitable format publications in public libraries. This problem brought the need and idea for a project – growing a network of partners, promoting digital library services, and initiating mobile services in regions to bring back the joy of reading to everyone.

This presentation will explore how cooperation between special and public libraries has evolved from recognizing a need to driving meaningful change. It will also highlight strategies for sustaining progress, such as continuous partnership-building, impact measurement, and inclusive service design.

About the author

Inga Davidonienė is the CEO of the Lithuanian Audiosensory Library since 2019. In 2023 she has been awarded as the best CEO of the library in Lithuania. Inga is a Lithuanian Library Council member since 2020, has given presentations at the IFLA conference on library accessibility and inclusion of older people. Areas of interest include accessibility of the information environment, inclusive publishing and the implementation of the European Accessibility Directive, human rights advocacy.

Before joining the Library, she was leading a design and publishing company. Inga holds a master degree in Communication and Information sciences at Vilnius University.

In her free time, she enjoys reading books, bicycling, going on mountain hikes, and dedicate attention to civil society education activities.

Brigita Kosi, Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Slovenia

Board Games – Connection, Opportunity, Fun – for All

We are becoming increasingly aware of how harmful excessive screen time can be. This has an exceptionally negative impact on numerous areas of human life, which applies to both children and adults, whereas it is even more dangerous for vulnerable groups of people. Public institutions, including libraries, have and will continue to have an extremely important role as a meeting place that creates opportunity for: encountering, socialising, and cooperation among people.

One of the more interesting »tools« that can help us in this regard, are board games. Play is a fundamental human activity through which we can: learn, connect, have fun, develop and preserve various skills, and much more. It is crucial that we strive to make play accessible for all. Time, energy and resources dedicated to accessibility are by no means lost. We must be aware that solutions that enable services to people with special needs, are more user-friendly for everyone. To illustrate, let us remember the railings and contrasting edges of stairs. The same is true with games. Realising the importance of accessibility and a willingness to seek information are the first steps.

The Slovenian Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired has been working on adapting the board games for the blind and visually impaired for a long time. During this period, we have gained some knowledge and experience, both of which we are eager to share.

About the author

Brigita Kosi is a special education teacher who has spent most of her career at the Slovenian Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired. She has worked in various fields and has gained a wide range of experience. In recent years, she has been actively involved in adapting board games for blind and visually impaired, which allows her to transform the acquired experience into concrete practice.

Accessibility of RTV Slovenia

There are two special websites available at MMC RTV Slovenia, both intended for all citizens, but especially for people with disabilities.

The first, Dostopno.si, provides simple access to adapted radio and television content and news, while the other website, Enostavno.info, provides news written in a more easily understandable language. It features news on various topics – events in Slovenia and around the world, interesting facts and other useful content.

About the author

Andrej Tomažin has been employed in Accessibility Services of RTV Slovenija Programmes for many years and participates in various international projects (EASIT, SELSI, ENACT). He completed his studies in Slovenian language and comparative literature at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana.

Branka Mrdenović, Dr Franc Sušnik Central Carinthian Library, Ravne na Koroškem

Presentation of the Competency Centre for Easy Read's Professional Recommendations Titled *Library Services for Users from Vulnerable Target Groups*

Competency Centre for Easy Read operates in the field of easy read or easy language and accessibility for users from different vulnerable target groups. It operates as a service and spreads expertise to the Slovenian public library network.

In 2025, the centre published professional recommendations titled *Library Services for Users from Vulnerable Target Groups*. The recommendations cover the fields of easy read placement of the collection for vulnerable target groups' users, adapting library spaces (accessibility), and the services and professional competences of employees.

About the author

Branka Mrdenović is a member of the working group of the Competency Centre for Easy Read. She is a co-author of the easy-to-read publication *A Visit to the Dr Franc Sušnik Central Carinthian Library* and of the professional recommendations *Library Services for Users from Vulnerable Target Groups*. Her article titled *Operation of the Competency Centre for Easy Read at the Dr Franc Sušnik Koroška Central Library* has been published on the portal Knjižničarske novice. She serves as a member of the working group for promotion at the Dr Franc Sušnik Koroška Central Library and is a member of the management board of the Dobreknjige.si portal. In addition, she is the president of the Carinthian Librarians Association.