

OPPORTUNITIES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

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SUMMARY

In this paper, the authors present the professional development opportunities for the university librarians from the Republic of Moldova within three international projects: Modern Information Services for Improvement Study Quality (MISISQ); ERASMUS + „Library Network Support Services (LNSS): modernizing libraries in Armenia, Moldova and Belarus through library staff development and reforming library services" „Modernization of academic library services in Moldova" funded by the Norwegian Cooperation. Also, the authors focus on national and international basic legal acts on continuing professional development. Librarians' training facilities, participation in conferences, trainings, and workshops have increased thanks to the implementation of these projects.

Keywords: *continuing professional development, international projects, legal acts, Deontological Code, skills, university librarians, innovative libraries.*

Staff development remains one of the most important aspects of activity in any field. It is a necessity that grows with the emergence of new information and communication technologies, various information formats and media, services and demands of the community. In an environment, in which employees may prefer training experiences, where staff development funds are becoming more austere, the authorities are looking for other ways and means to provide education and training to socio-professional groups either in working hours or depending on people's own rhythm and time preferences, either within national and international projects.

The importance of continuing education is included in several state documents and acts regulating the activity of a particular library domain.

With the implementation of international projects, librarians' opportunities for continuous professional training have greatly increased.

Here are some examples. MISISQ - TEMPUS - Modern Information Service for Improvement the Quality of Studies - (2013-2016), <http://misisq.usmf.md/index.php/en-us/> implemented by seven university libraries, coordinated by the European partners in Kaunas, Lithuania and at national level by the Medical Scientific Library of the State University of Medicine "Nicolae Testemitanu".

The librarians of the seven institutions have learned to work in the ALEPH software, the best integrated library software, and on the ExLibris Primo platform they have set up the shared catalog that reflects not only their catalogs but also the institutional repositories created in this

project, as well as the subscribed databases. Local, national and international information resources can be found from a single search in this modern and rational instrument.

As a result of these trainings and Training of Trainers Campaigns in the summer of 2016, *the Curriculum* and *the Syllabus* for the discipline *Basics of Information Culture* were updated; the contents of the Modules of the *Basics of Information Culture* course have been adjusted in line with international standards and the implementation of modern information management technologies based on the materials learned within the Project trainings; the training of librarians-trainers related to the search, selection, localization, use and evaluation models; Guidance practices for bibliographic references with the application of EndNote, Mendeley, Zotero personal software.

ERASMUS+ Capacity building in the field of higher education, Project CBNE Library Network Support Services (LNSS): modernizing libraries in Armenia, Moldova and Belarus through library staff development and reforming library services (LNSS), Project no. 561633-EPP-1-2015-1-AM- EPPKA2-CBHE-JP (2015-2018) <http://www.lnss-projects.eu/amb>, <http://www.aap.gov.md/biblioteca/article/library-network-support-services-lnss>, <http://libruniv.usarb.md/nou/Erasmus/erasmus.html>, coordinated by the Academy of Public Administration from Yerevan, Armenia, has as aim:

- strengthening and modernizing libraries, improving the skills and abilities of library staff in Armenia, Moldova and Belarus by developing innovative libraries - an inherent partner for education, research and lifelong learning;

- developing a library staff development strategy focused on improving the quality and performance of libraries in line with international standards in the field, so as to improve the quality of library and higher education services in general, increase their relevance to the labor market in society;

- creating the Network Support Service in the Eastern Partnership countries to promote and use the project's results at international and national level, sharing knowledge, best practices, training opportunities and special abilities.

Together with the academic libraries of Armenia and Belarus, the Scientific Library of the Academy of Public Administration of the Republic of Moldova and the Scientific Library of the State University "Alec Russo" in Balti will create new information and library conditions and services for the members of the university community, due to their participation in this Project, the specific objectives being:

- to create an innovative course focused on the modular training of librarians;
- to develop initiatives aimed at ensuring access to library collections and services for people with special needs;

- to publish the manual with the contents of the Training Modules and streamlining the activity of the libraries;

- to update the regulatory framework and library policies in line with international standards.

The new opportunity, supported by international trainers at the Institute of Technology in Limerick, Republic of Ireland, has increased the professional knowledge and skills of the collaborators of the AAP and USARB Scientific Libraries. 38 librarians and 25 teachers, researchers and master students have been trained in English for Specific Purposes Training, an important module being the information culture.

Representatives of nine higher education institutions, LNSS consortium members, librarians and teachers from Armenia, Belarus and Moldova from the Erasmus + European Program benefited of the training *Curriculum Development for Librarians* at the Institute of Technology from Limerick, Ireland in August-September 2016. The specific objectives of the

Training included the improvement of knowledge in the LNSS curricula modules: English for Specific Purposes:

- Module 1. Libraries and library terminology
- Module 2. Marketing for librarians
- Module 3. Management in libraries
- Module 4. Information Culture
- Module 5. Innovative On-line Services for 21st Century Libraries
- Module 6. Electronic library
- Module 7. Access to Libraries for Users with Special Needs
- Module 8. Library Collection Development Policy.

Immediate effects:

Launching during the "Bibliological Year" Symposium of the initiative of promoting the National Awareness Day on Libraries with the generic *Your Library - Your Progress*, which was marked on the Librarian's Day in Moldova - on April 23.

In 2017, the Curriculum of Module No. 8, considered the core of any change in the library, linked to the most advanced policies in European countries was written and submitted. The training Module - Pilot no. 8 *Library Collection Development Policy* took place on the premises of the USARB Scientific Library, attended by 21 university library staff and program monitoring experts in the Republic of Moldova Dr. Eng. Angela Repanovici (Transylvania University of Braşov, Romania) and Dr. Manolis Koukourakis (University of Crete, Greece). The training included the presentations of three trainers: ERASMUS + Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education (CBHE) "Library Network Support Services (LNSS): modernizing libraries in Armenia, Moldova and Belarus through library staff development and reforming library services: objectives, work packages, modules; LNSS Module No. 8 Presentation: Library Collection Development Policies; *Collection Development Principles* - Elena Harconita, Director of USARB; Collection Development Terms and definitions - Lina Mihaluţa, Deputy Director SL USARB; Study questionnaire of the fullness of collections and access to information resources through SURVEY MONKEY - Valentina TOPALO, Head of SL Service USARB.

The Academy of Public Administration, in partnership with the Belarus Academy of Public Administration, developed and presented Module 3 of the Curriculum: "Essential Management and Skills Training for Librarians and Library Staff", which included the following topics:

- International standards of IFLA, ISO, Congress Library, NISO;
- negotiating strategic planning of the library: Strategic business and strategic planning skills for librarians;
- user care, services and strategies in libraries;
- time management: efficient planning of time and workload;
- Leadership staff and staff structure of the library;
- communication and listening skills;
- a guide for librarians to develop presentation skills;
- decision making in the library, leadership skills for librarians;
- interviewing skills for librarians;
- the management of change in the 21 century;
- financial management in libraries, acquisition and processing of documents purchased by the library.

The pilot training (February 9, 2017) focused on the theoretical and practical aspects of effective communication, communication and listening specifics in the university library. It took place within the AAP Scientific Library, attended by 24 representatives of library staff office, academic staff, the administrative staff, researchers of the Academy. The training was monitored by the international experts Dr. Angela Repanovici (Transylvania University of Braşov, Romania) and Dr. Manolis Koukourakis (University of Crete, Greece). The trainers were members of the project team Silivia Dulschi, Head of Science and Doctoral Studies Section, PhD, Associate Professor, and Angela Zelenschi, Head of the Department of Administrative Sciences, PhD, Associate Professor.

The training aimed at improving the level of skills and abilities of the participants in the field of communication and listening culture in the university library, so as later the acquired knowledge to increase the quality of access to information and library resources of the library, to facilitate the process of searching, selecting, evaluating and using the information needed for the Academy's training and research.

Immediate Effects of the Project:

- Strengthening the role of the Academic Library as the only credible information provider and as a partner in the lifelong learning and research process;
- new skills and abilities for librarians, changes in organizational structure of the library, staff management, including continuous professional training, changes in marketing activity, national and international partnerships, knowledge of best practices;
- librarians have direct access to European reality, the culture of the most representative libraries, developing their sense of belonging to European values;
- knowledge, skills, competencies acquired by participants in their field of qualification will contribute to increasing the visibility and prestige of libraries;
- Strengthens the path to international cooperation in the field of professional training;
- the opportunity to exchange experience on the content and methods of training, internationalization.

The sustainability of the project and its impact is guaranteed. The Management of the Scientific Library quarantines the ability to implement the 8 Project Modules, compatible with international milestones. The Scientific Library is open to the academic and library community, participates in updating knowledge, modernizing library services and products to support education, research, thus increasing its impact on the community.

The modules proposed by the Project will be developed and disseminated in libraries. New methods of professional training, lifelong learning, modernizing knowledge and professional skills at work will be promoted and implemented. The library community will be more prepared for changes in the internal and external environment, implementing strategic continuous training programs, appropriating the facilities offered by modern technologies.

The Modernization of the University Libraries Services Project in the Republic of Moldova <https://ne-winformationservices.wordpress.com/> funded by the Norwegian Cooperation Program with Eurasia in the field of higher education, conducted in partnership between 18 university libraries in the Republic of Moldova, coordinated by the ASEM Scientific Library, the University of Bergen, Norway, and the Transylvania University of Braşov, Romania (April 2016 - November 2019) provides for the development of the professional skills of librarians by conducting trainings, workshops, summer schools in Romania, annual Project meetings with a positive impact on the modernization of the activity of 18 university libraries.

Within the Project, librarians have benefited from numerous training facilities: Professional Workshops “Advocacy. Marketing: Promoting the Image of University Libraries”, “Open Access and Institutional Repositories” (19-20 September 2016); “Information Culture” (February 7-8, 2017) Summer School (July 3-10) Transylvania University; 5 Strategic Planning Workshops (2-3 November, 8-9 December 2016, March 31, 2017) that took place at the scientific library of ASEM.

By participating in international projects librarians have direct access to European reality, the culture of the most representative libraries, developing their sense of belonging to the European values; the knowledge, the skills, the competences acquired by the participants in their field of qualification will help to increase the visibility and prestige of libraries; this strengthens the path to international cooperation in the field of professional development, the opportunity to exchange experience on the content and methods of training, internationalization.

The implementation of projects contributes to strengthening the role of the academic library as the only provider of reliable information and as a partner in the lifelong learning and research process; the diversification of electronic services and library products, knowledge of best practice.

It is very important that the participation in these projects further contributes to the development of the innovative library as support for education, research and lifelong learning, connecting the institution to the European tendencies for the provision of modernized information-documentation services.

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