

THE TEMPUS PROJECT IN LITHUANIAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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Lithuanian academic libraries started planning their library automation long before independence was declared in the country, to be more precise, in the 1980's. What does one do in order to start something new and unknown? He/she must look at what is already done in this field in other countries. As Western resources were limited before independence, we examined Eastern ones. To tell the truth, we did not dare trust those library automation systems we saw mainly in Russia. The main reason: they did not correspond to international standards. Some libraries (e.g. The National Library of Lithuania) tried to develop their own systems.

After the declaration of independence on March 11, 1990, the Iron Curtain fell down and the whole world opened for us. Even librarians got a possibility to go and see how Western libraries functioned. It was amazing to see a dream in reality. We realised very soon that library automation might become a reality in our libraries as well. All we needed was money and knowledge. Where could we get them? Among the variety of possibilities one could choose TEMPUS-PHARE. PHARE is a wide-encompassing program of the European Union supporting economic and social reform in Eastern and Central Europe. A specific part of the program called the TEMPUS-PHARE scheme supports and encourages the development of higher education and international cooperation within the education area. TEMPUS finances goal-oriented projects developed by at least three universities

from different EU countries. All projects should correspond to the priorities set up by the local government. In 1995 one of the priorities in Lithuania was: "Development of information structures, networks and technologies within higher education; for example modernisation of libraries and access to databases." It fully corresponded to our needs, and several academic libraries in Lithuania started working on the project application. We invited partners from European countries and launched the three year (1995/96–1997/98) TEMPUS-PHARE Structural Joint European Project "**Integrated Information Systems in Academic Libraries**" (S_JEP 09493-95).

Partners

Eleven partners are involved in the project: six from Lithuania and five from EU countries:

University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Mr. Albert Boekhorst – Contractor and Coordinator

Vilnius University, Lithuania

Ms. Elona Malaiskienė

Vilnius Technical University, Lithuania

Ms. Regina Pugžlienė

Vilnius Pedagogical University, Lithuania

Ms. Emilija Banionytė – Administrator in Lithuania

Klaipėda University, Lithuania

Ms. Janina Pupelienė

Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute, Lithuania

Ms. Gražina Augienė

Lithuanian Police Academy, Lithuania

Mr. Rimantas Kanopa

Lund University, Sweden

Ms. Tove Person

The State and University Library in Aarhus, Denmark

Mr. Henning Midtgaard Hanssen

The Royal School of Librarianship, Denmark

Mr. Niels Ole Pors

Riget InfoConsult, Denmark

Ms. Lilli Riget

Objectives and Goals

The overall objective of the **TEMPUS S_JEP "Integrated Systems in Academic Libraries"** is improving access to information by establishing a joint database and installing decentralised integrated library systems in each academic library participating in the project in Lithuania. All Lithuanian partners were interested in improving the methods of their work and facilitating access to information, which could only be done effectively by using the integrated library and information system. The level of automation of partner institutions was rather different: Vilnius University Library (VUL) had a functioning on-line integrated library system based to a high degree on international standards and rules, but running on NORD machines from Norsk Data (Norway) which, for several years, have been out of production and without possibility for maintenance or repairment. It should be stressed that the existing applied software was created using modern tools (UNIQUE 4GL, language C). It was compatible with RDBMS (relational database management system) as, e.g., ORACLE, and required few resources for reprogramming.

Vilnius Technical University Library (VTUL) and Klaipėda University Library (KUL) were in the primary stages of automation. They had few stand alone IBM type PC's and used either in-house developed input software and/or CDS/ISIS for PC's. Vilnius Pedagogical University Library (VPUL), Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute Library (SPIL), and the Lithuanian Police Academy Library (LPAL) had absolutely no experience in working with computers. The Computer Center at the Lithuanian Police Academy developed their own in-house system.

The structure of the Lithuanian libraries was very traditional and library and information management was not developed well enough. One of the problems was a lack of broader knowledge of library automation. The enormous demand of obtaining training in this area referred to library staff at each level, starting with staff librarians who had never worked with a computer, through a

few specialists working on library automation, who were badly in need of an exchange of experience in this field with other specialists. Especially strong retraining needs were required not only for the cataloguers, but also for the reference librarians, information specialists, and automation specialists.

The goal of the project is very pragmatic: To make possible the necessary upgrading and modernization of the VUL automated system (porting to the UNIX platform, open system standards, etc.) at one time and provide VUL with enough capacity (hardware/software) to be the host for a common Union Catalogue with functions for both shared cataloguing and local on-line catalogues (OPAC's) for the participating partners. All partners will be provided with basic equipment and software for the different library system modules and communication purposes. On the other hand, it is considered very important to start data input at the very beginning of the project for all the participating libraries.

Activities

The main objective of the project can be achieved by realising these six main activities. Some are divided into subactivities/tasks:

- Management and monitoring of the project
- Establishment of the Joint Database/Union Catalogue, and implementation of a computerised system and cataloguing modules
- Porting and adapting the existing library system at VUL to a new platform (UNIX)
- Realisation of OPAC's on the UNIX platform with an implementation of local area networks in each of the participating Lithuanian libraries
- Improved access to information by using Internet tools and facilities
- Retraining and further education of library staff and computer specialists.

Management and Monitoring of the Project

At a planning meeting in September 1995, the contact persons of all the participating institutes met in Vilnius and formed a smaller Steering Committee: **Albert Boekhorst**, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, **Emilija Banionytė**, Vilnius Pedagogical University, Lithuania, and **Lilli Riget**, Riget InfoConsult, Denmark. In the following years, members of the Steering Committee and all the Lithuanian partners will meet at one of the Lithuanian partner's locations, evaluate the results of the previous year, and plan activities for the following year. Members of the Steering Committee continuously correspond via fax/e-mail.

Outcome of the Activity: This will ensure a well organised project which is sensitive to the needs of the eligible partners, good communication, and monitoring possibilities.

Establishment of the Joint Database/Union Catalogue, and Implementation of a Computerised System and Cataloguing Modules

This activity is divided into three subactivities/tasks:

- Cataloguing
- Conversion of data
- Analysing the local area network situation

Cataloguing. It was considered very important to start data input at the very beginning of the project for all the participating libraries. Therefore, the data input, print, and export modules developed at the Vilnius Technical University Library were implemented at VPUL and SPIL. LPAL started using their own module. The aim was to create bibliographic records and export them to the joint database.

Due to the present lack of fit transmissional lines (not each library has direct connection to the Internet) the transmission (export) of data is provided either by using dial-up lines or by diskettes mailed to the Computer Centre of VU for central import to the database. Data is created using the UNIMARC format

which is standard for Lithuania. Import/export is provided according to the ISO 2709 for the exchange of bibliographic records.

In order to implement this activity, a considerable amount of hardware had to be obtained: PC's, fax/modems, scanners, printers and copy machines. Each partner purchased what was needed. It is impossible to start cataloguing in UNIMARC without special training. Some preliminary internal courses on cataloguing and formatting had already been arranged before the project started. That was not enough. An expert from Denmark was invited to Lithuania to deliver a course on cataloguing rules, formatting, standards, and use of modules/equipment.

Conversion of Data. Two partners, Klaipeda University Library and Vilnius Technical University Library, started their automation before the project started and had some data that did not correspond to international standards. It was decided that the machine readable records be analysed at both libraries, aiming to develop conversion tables and convert data, followed by export to the joint database. An expert from Denmark was invited for 1 week to help evaluate the situation and write the conversion tables. Part of the data is already converted and joined to the Union Catalogue.

Analysing the Local Area Network Situation. The aim of analysing the LAN at the participating Lithuanian libraries/universities is to get connected to the Internet/LITNET following the development strategy of LITNET (Lithuanian Academic Network) and the strategy of the universities' network structure. At present, LAN's are established at VUL, VTUL, KUL, and LPAL. VPUL and SPIL are currently working on it. Not all the libraries have direct connection to LITNET. These problems are to be solved together with the respective universities.

Our aim is a network infrastructure in which it is possible to share resources by:

- Sharing bibliographical information
- Reusing data (shared cataloguing)

- Locating literature
- Carrying out inter-library loans based on on-line access to the holdings in the joint database
- Distributing lists of newest acquisition

The total *outcome of the activity* is the realistic ability to achieve maximal access to the information resources locally collected and maintained by libraries which use different hardware and software or only manual routines to create a joint database.

Porting and Adapting the Existing Library System at VUL to a New Platform (UNIX)

As the present capacity of the VUL system is too weak for a longer support of the Union Catalogue, it is necessary to increase the main parameters of the system for a wider perspective. The Norsk Data platform is not realistic for further development, as its production stopped some years ago. The applications/software with a database structure definition, etc., as well as existing data have to be ported to a UNIX platform to support this integrated library system in order to improve it. This work is presently nearly over. Of course the existing system has been running during this phase. A powerful UNIX/RISC computer, licensed DBMS software, and 4 PC's were purchased for VU to implement this activity. Two computer specialists were sent to the Netherlands to examine how the PICA system functions.

Outcome of the Activity: The software applied on UNIX will be suitable for implementation in all Lithuanian participating libraries. It will be the basis of the further development of the system.

Realisation of OPAC's on the UNIX Platform with an Implementation of Local Area Networks in Each of the Participating Lithuanian Libraries

This activity should include the purchase of a minimal amount of hardware (servers, terminals, PC's, etc.) and licensed

software for establishing initial LAN configuration in the participating Lithuanian libraries, equipment installation in defined places, transference of necessary modules of these to the adapted UNIX platform VU library software, and a previously cumulated catalogue in UNIMARC format. Brief training courses for librarians and computer staff will be provided.

Outcome of the Activity: A distributed integrated library system in each participating Lithuanian library (local OPAC's, acquisition, cataloguing, import/export modules, etc.) and access to the Internet/LITNET, direct or indirect, will be provided.

Improved Access to Information by Using Internet Tools and Facilities

The objective of this activity is to facilitate the task of locating and retrieving information accessible via/on the Internet. In order to achieve this goal, the libraries have to have access to the Internet, hardware, and a better trained staff. Knowledge of English is of crucial importance in order to work with the Internet.

Some libraries (which have access) use the Internet every day: e-mail and WWW are the most popular services. The ones that still have no connection will have to analyse the facilities on the Internet to get acquainted with its possibilities and services. Colleagues and teachers from Lund University Library are going to help librarians train in using the Internet, according to each library's interests and user's needs: using e-mail facilities, file transport possibilities (FTP), Gopher, WWW, and WAIS will be provided as well as publishing local information on WWW. The most advanced specialists from two Lithuanian libraries will go to the Lund University Library for one week for a study visit. PC's will be bought for each participating library in order to serve the readers.

Outcome of the Activity: through knowledge of the international community and connection to the international environ-

ment arise expanded user service, better support for academic research, and the possibility to publish various information from the participating institutions.

Retraining and Further Education of Library Staff and Computer Specialists

The skills of the librarians/staff working in Lithuanian libraries are not up to date. Some do not even have professional training, and others graduated from library school some 10-30 years ago. The automation staff needs much more knowledge pertaining to library tasks. To ensure an outlook to the future and a better understanding of the role of libraries in a modern information society, there is a need for both general and special courses dealing with:

- Knowledge of potential information sources
- Knowledge of relevant technology, both computer-based and other technologies
- Storing and retrieving information
- Modernization and management of the library
- Information retrieval
- Attitudes to user services (last but not least).

All the participants of the project will have to learn or improve their English. As it is not possible to learn the language very soon, all the training courses provided in Lithuania will be translated into Lithuanian. Participants, going on study visits to Western libraries, have to be fluent in English.

The variety of courses/workshops offered are:

- Cataloguing and Formatting
- Library Management and Administration
- Information Searching
- The Modernization Process in a Western Library (real-life experience).

Study visits to various Western libraries will be held during the implementation of the project (some of them have already taken place).

Outcome of the Activity: Specially trained and well motivated staff will be of service to readers to disseminate knowledge and information. Computer specialists will be integrated in library work and ready for close cooperation with library staff in the defining and realisation of information tasks.

Impact and Perspectives

This was not a very brief description of the project, which has already been running for the whole year. What is the impact of the project on our libraries and institutions?

In short, the TEMPUS grant allowed us to start *real* library automation in Lithuanian academic libraries. Data input, import/export modules, OPAC's, LAN's, and the connection and use of Internet facilities are changing our libraries: the routines are different and the quality of library service is improving. As a consequence, the efficiency of libraries will improve because of the possibility to share resources: cooperation within cataloguing, inter-library loan, acquisition policy, and access to a broad variety of information sources are some examples.

We are proud of creating the first Union Catalogue in Lithuania. It is already available via the Internet, either via the WWW home page of Vilnius University (<http://www.vu.lt/>) or using "Telnet": telnet munin.vu.lt. User name: OPAC; password, OPAC.

The staff involved in the project is continuously seeking improvement: they study languages, return back from various courses or study visits much more active, make friends with their colleagues from their partner libraries, work in teams, and enjoy their work.

I would not be honest if I did not mention some difficulties we are facing while implementing the project. The biggest one is a lack of real help from institutions. The authorities are glad to participate in the international project, but when it comes to concrete help or decisions, the project is only considered a matter concerning libraries (with very few exceptions). Another problem is that the highly professional staff – both computer specialists and librarians – are leaving academic institutions because of very low salaries. Sometimes they stay part-time, as the work is very interesting. In one year the computer staff has changed in four participating Lithuanian institutions. The situation with library staff is a bit better. Instead of people leaving, new people are coming. Let's hope they will be as enthusiastic as the ones who left. The problem is we need time to train them.

The general attitude towards the library has changed in universities. Participation in the TEMPUS project and the implementation of new technologies (very often unknown not only for the students but also for the teachers) gives the library much more power and prestige. The libraries participating in the project have established a basic cooperation and information infrastructure, so the grant from TEMPUS will become a needed stimulus to continue and increase the extension, quality, and speed of this work.

All the libraries participating in the project are members of the Consortium of the Lithuanian Research Libraries and are looking forward to participating in the LIBIS (Lithuanian Integrated Library Information System) project. The speed of further development will depend, to a very large degree, upon the national policy and national support for the country's information infrastructure, the development of LITNET, and the possibility of obtaining foreign support.

LIETUVOS AKADEMINIŲ BIBLIOTEKŲ TEMPUS PROJEKTAS

Santrauka

TEMPUS-PHARE projekto padedamos šešios Lietuvos akademinės bibliotekos (Vilniaus universiteto, Vilniaus pedagoginio universiteto, Vilniaus Gedimino technikos universiteto, Klaipėdos universiteto, Šiaulių pedagoginio instituto ir Lietuvos policijos akademijos), kartu su užsienio partneriais (Amsterdamo universitetu, Lundo universiteto biblioteka, Karališkąja bibliotekininkystės mokykla Kopenhagoje, Valstybine ir universiteto biblioteka Orhuse bei Riget InfoConsult firma Danijoje) kuria pirmąjį Lietuvoje Jungtinių elektroninį katalogą, kompiuterizuoja projekte dalyvaujančias bibliotekas, apmoko specialistus.

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