



Minutes of the COBISS.Net Council Meeting

The meeting was held via Zoom on Tuesday, 4 June 2024, between 10:00 and 11:00.

Present:

Members of the COBISS.Net Council:

Dr. Ismet Ovčina; National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina; (Director)
Dr. Aleš Bošnjak; IZUM, Slovenia; (Director)
Arta Kqiku; Library of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo
Žaklina Gjalevska; The National Library of North Macedonia "Sv. Kliment Ohridski"; (head of NCC)
Vjenceslava Ševaljević; National Library of Montenegro "Đurđe Crnojević"; (head of NCC)
Dragica Lompar; National Library of Montenegro "Đurđe Crnojević"; (Director)
Ljilja Petrović-Zečić; National and University Library of the Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina; (Director)
Željka Komlenić; National and University Library of the Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina; (head of NCC)
Daniela Vasileva; National Library of St. Cyril and Methodius, Bulgaria; (head of NCC)
Angelina Grujić; National Library of Serbia; (head of NCC)
Tamara Butigan Vučaj; National Library of Serbia, Deputy director in charge of the COBISS National Centre
Mirlon Buzo, Library of the Academy of Sciences of Albania; (head of NCC)

Invited:

Davor Bračko; IZUM, Slovenia; (COBISS.net coordinator)
Petra Bridges; IZUM, Slovenia; (minutes)

Excused absence:

Rahmetulla Kuqi; The National Library of North Macedonia "Sv. Kliment Ohridski"; (Director)
Vladimir Pištalo; National Library of Serbia; (Director)
Viljem Leban; National Library of Slovenia; (Director)
Bhanu Neupane (UNESCO)

Agenda of the meeting:

- Introductory statements by the COBISS.Net Council President Dr. Ismet Ovčina, Bhanu Neupane (UNESCO) and Dr. Aleš Bošnjak, director of IZUM
- Confirmation of the minutes of the previous two meetings
- Overview of the work report for COBISS.net for 2023

- Development aid project for the expansion of the COBISS.net network

Ismet Ovčina welcomed those present and said in the introduction that the COBISS Days were recently held in Sarajevo, which were very successful. He thanked Aleš Bošnjak and the team from IZUM for organizing this event.

He then asked all present representatives of the COBISS.Net Council to introduce themselves.

Aleš Bošnjak then said that in terms of funding, this year is better than last year, as last year we did not receive funding from the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. This year, IZUM managed to secure EUR 25,000 from the competent ministry and an additional EUR 20,000 from the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, which means a total amount of EUR 45,000. Reports on the use of funds must be accurately drawn up, as they are the use of public funds. He asked the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs what the funds could be used for; unfortunately, they cannot be used for the purchase of hardware, but they will support activities for the expansion of the COBISS.net network, which also includes the organization of COBISS Days and courses, for which there must be proof that they have actually been carried out and they are free of charge. The funds can also be used for travel expenses when attending the COBISS 2024 conference. The accommodation and other expenses of participants from member states of the COBISS.net network in Maribor during the conference for a certain quota of participants are covered by IZUM.

Ismet Ovčina then asked if the minutes of the previous two meetings of the COBISS.Net Council could be confirmed. Both minutes were confirmed.

Aleš Bošnjak added that the meeting in Struga, North Macedonia was very successful. The director of the National Library of North Macedonia invited IZUM to Ankara, Turkey, where the COBISS system was presented to the director of the National Library of Turkey. The presentation was given by Aleš Bošnjak and Davor Bračko. The National Library of Turkey manages more than 1,000 libraries in the country and uses the KOHA system. The director of the National Library of Turkey and the technical manager of the project were invited to attend the COBISS 2024 conference.

Ismet Ovčina thanked for the information and once again praised the organization of the meeting in Struga, North Macedonia.

Davor Bračko then presented the work report for the year 2023. We received EUR 20,000 from the competent ministry to expand the network and include new libraries. They organized courses in all countries and encouraged the integration of new libraries.

An official agreement to establish the NCC Centre was signed in Albania. Thus, IZUM now has a formal partner in Albania. The centre moved to a new building.

COBISS Days were organized in Bulgaria, which were also attended by four representatives from IZUM.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, they worked on the transition to cataloguing with authority control, likewise in Montenegro.

Croatia has still not joined, but we remain optimistic.

In Kosovo, a public tender was held for the establishment of a national library system. IZUM applied twice, but the tender was cancelled both times. When a new tender is published, IZUM will apply again.

In North Macedonia, we met with several directors of national libraries and discussed further cooperation.

In Serbia, we organized the COBISS Days and sponsored the conference of the Association of Librarians.

Many courses were held in all countries – a total of 45 courses with 420 attendees.

All projects had to be completed by December, everyone sent reports and invoices on time. The process will be similar this year as well.

Ismet Ovčina added that one should remain optimistic about Croatia and that nothing is impossible.

All agreed to the activity report and the report was accepted.

The last item on the agenda was development aid for 2024.

Aleš Bošnjak said that the same activities as last year are considered. All reports have been accepted. In terms of training, new software has been introduced, so courses should be prepared to use COBISS Lib and COBISS Cat. The transition to COBISS Lib is planned for the end of 2024, and the old software will no longer be maintained. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and some other countries, they are actively moving to cataloguing with authority control. This is also a good basis for a current research information system, as European tenders require regulated publications. If the member state of COBISS.net does not yet have a authority database, it would be a good idea to decide on it.

Davor Bračko added that the funds are intended for the expansion of the network, integration of new libraries and increased use of services. Proposals for projects must be sent within a few weeks and the deadline for the completion of the project is 15 October 2024. Invoices and a report must also be sent by then. Funds can also be used for the current research information system, dCOBISS, COBISS Days, training of instructors, translations and other purposes. He will send an email with detailed instructions, just like every year. Funds must be used by the end of the calendar year (15 October to be exact).

Aleš Bošnjak added that it is desirable to encourage the inclusion of loan in libraries that have not yet included it, as the participant quotas for participation in the COBISS conference are also based on this. He added that the lecture hall can accommodate a maximum of 200 participants, and this number must also include Slovenian participants. Each country's quota should include the director of the national library, the head of the COBISS Centre and then each country should decide who else to invite. As a suggestion, he added that participants and good colleagues from smaller libraries, not only from the centre of the country, should also attend the conference.

Ismet Ovčina then thanked everyone for attending the session and announced that the next session will take place live in Maribor during the COBISS 2024 conference.

The session ended at 10:55.