



Minutes
of the
COBISS.Net Council Meeting

The meeting was held in Maribor on Tuesday, 22 October 2024, between 18:00 and 18:45 CET.

Present:

Dr Ismet Ovčina; National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina; (former director)

Dr Aleš Bošnjak; IZUM, Slovenia; (director)

Marijan Rupert; National and University Library of Slovenia; (acting director)

Jovica Nikchevski; National Library of North Macedonia "Sv. Kliment Ohridski"; (acting director)

Žaklina Gjalevska; The National Library of North Macedonia "Sv. Kliment Ohridski"; (head of NCC)

Dragica Lompar; National Library of Montenegro "Đurđe Crnojević"; (director)

Vjenceslava Ševaljević; National Library of Montenegro "Đurđe Crnojević"; (head of NCC)

Ljilja Petrović-Zečić; National and University Library of the Republic of Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina; (director)

Željka Komlenić; National and University Library of the Republic of Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina; (head of NCC)

Dr Vladimir Pištalo; National Library of Serbia; (director)

Tamara Butigan Vučaj; National Library of Serbia, Deputy director, Head of the Virtual Library of Serbia Sector

Mirlona Buzo, Library of the Academy of Sciences of Albania; (head of QKPISH)

Azra Smajić Gačić, National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina; (head of NCC)

Arjeta Sadiku; IZUM, Slovenia

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

DDr Bhanu Neupane, UNESCO (via Zoom)

Rebeka Bibič, on behalf of Gašper Hrastelj (UNESCO) (via Zoom)

Agenda of the meeting:

- Opening statements from Ismet Ovčina, COBISS.Net Council President; Aleš Bošnjak, director of IZUM
- Confirmation of the minutes from the previous meeting
- The election of a new COBISS.Net Council President
- Development aid project for the expansion of the COBISS.net network
- AOB

The meeting agenda was adopted.

Opening statements from Ismet Ovčina, COBISS.Net Council President; Aleš Bošnjak, director of IZUM

Aleš Bošnjak greeted everyone and checked attendance. He continued that IZUM is very much engaged in its 'third pillar', i.e. supercomputing (HPC). The first pillar is library and information science, the second the CRIS systems and the third HPC. All the Slovenian newspapers write about the next proposal – a new supercomputer, which will be one of the largest in Southeast Europe with a value of about EUR 100 million. Two proposals have to be finished by the end of February, the first proposal is for HPC and the second for the AI Factory. He is confident that next year the financial support for COBISS.net will be at least in the same amount as it is this year.

He passed the floor to Ismet Ovčina.

Ismet Ovčina thanked for the hospitality. He asked the members to briefly introduce themselves: *Ismet Ovčina, president of the COBISS.net Council, former director of the National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, now officially retired; Aleš Bošnjak, director of IZUM; Mirlona Buzo, head of the information centre dealing with COBISS.net at the Academy of Sciences in Albania; Arjeta Sadiku (IZUM), Tamara Butigan Vučaj, deputy director of the National Library of Serbia, Vladimir Pištalo, director of the National Library of Serbia, Ljilja Petrović Zečić, director of the National Library of the Republic of Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina.; new member: Marijan Rupert, acting director of the National and University Library in Ljubljana; Vjenceslava Ševaljević, head of the National COBISS Centre in Montenegro, Dragica Lompar, director of the National Library of Montenegro, Azra Smajić Gačić, head of NCC in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jovica Nikchevski, acting director of the National Library of North Macedonia, Žaklina Gjalevska, head of NCC at the National Library of North Macedonia; Davor Bračko, COBISS.net coordinator at IZUM; Bhanu Neupane from UNESCO (via Zoom); Rebeka Bibič, student at the Slovenian office for UNESCO (via Zoom), Željka Komlenić; head of NCC at the National and University Library of the Republic of Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

Confirmation of the minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

The election of a new COBISS.Net Council President

Proposal for the new President of the COBISS.Net Council to preside the Council: Tamara Butigan Vučaj from the National Library of Serbia. Nobody else was proposed to be the next President of the Council. Nobody objected to the proposal. Voting was done by raising hands. **Tamara Butigan Vučaj was elected unanimously as the new COBISS.Net Council President.** Aleš Bošnjak thanked Ismet Ovčina for his work and everyone congratulated the new President.

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

Davor Bračko provided this year's report. EUR 45,000 from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia were available. The funds were intended for the expansion of the COBISS.net network with the inclusion of new libraries. This amount was divided between the countries. Reports from other countries were sent in already. Some highlights:

An agreement was signed with the Academy of Sciences of Albania for a formal status of connection between NCC and IZUM. Agreements for cooperation with individual libraries are being signed.

In Bulgaria, the manual *Instruction for working in the COBISS Lib application* was translated. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, COBISS Days were organized in cooperation with the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina in spring and several COBISS courses took place.

In the Republic of Srpska, COBISS Days were organised and the transition to cataloguing with authority control in all libraries in the COBISS system was carried out.

In Montenegro, COBISS Days were organised by the National Library of Montenegro "Đurđe Crnojević" and IZUM, several COBISS courses took place, visits to libraries that had problems using the COBISS software were carried out.

In Croatia, there were no activities regarding the implementation of COBISS due to lack of political support.

Aleš Bošnjak added that IZUM's representatives were also in Ankara (Turkey) and received good feedback but have not had any further information since then.

Davor Bračko added some information about Croatia: Representatives from the City Library of Zagreb will presumably come to the conference the next day. Aleš Bošnjak added that two representatives from the National Library of the Czech Republic in Prague had visited IZUM as part of their Erasmus exchange for a week.

In the Czech Republic, they are interested in changing their system – by 2028 at the latest. They would like to see other library systems that are being used in this part of Europe. They would like IZUM to come to Prague and present the COBISS system.

In North Macedonia, COBISS Days will be organised by the National and University Library and IZUM when their National COBISS Centre is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Several COBISS courses took place, translations of manuals into Macedonian were performed.

In Serbia several COBISS courses were organised, the integration of the tax register and loan of audiobooks is underway. IZUM is participating at the 21st conference of the Serbian Library Association in Pančevo.

An important notification for all the libraries: all libraries should update their operating systems if they still use Windows 7, the use of which is not secure. All the financial support for IZUM and COBISS.net is intended for expanding the system, education, repositories, implementing new applications, etc., but unfortunately not for hardware.

Tamara Butigan Vučaj remarked that even larger libraries struggle with this in Serbia, and smaller libraries have financial problems.

Aleš Bošnjak replied that in all COBISS.net countries there are many libraries that do not have adequate operating system and 30 % of all users within COBISS.net still use Windows 7.

Tamara Butigan Vučaj asked if it was possible to postpone the deadline for the introduction of the new applications – COBISS Lib, etc.?

Aleš Bošnjak replied that turning off COBISS3 will probably have to be postponed in Slovenia and also in COBISS.net, especially due to hardware issues – the applications will run in parallel for a while, likely until the end of June 2025.

Žaklina Gjalevska added that hardware problems are experienced by 35% of users in North Macedonia (who use Windows 7 or even older systems). For national institutions, the deadline for applying for projects and financing is at the end of June, and for local institutions (e.g. public and school libraries) by the end of October which must be taken into account in terms of the deadline for using COBISS Lib.

Davor Bračko emphasised that the problem is not just the software and it will not be sufficient to buy a later version of it; the hardware must also be replaced.

Aleš Bošnjak added that many use Linux.

Bhanu Neupane (via Zoom) congratulated the new chair of the COBISS.net Council and said that they heard about the new supercomputer that is supposed to be hosted at IZUM. He emphasized that if any of the COBISS.net countries have an initiative or a proposal in the field of open access and open science, they should write not only to IZUM, but also to UNESCO for support and co-funding. His other suggestion was that now is a very good time for IZUM to share its expertise with other countries beyond its existing borders if any other country is interested, in which case UNESCO will be happy to help.

Aleš Bošnjak thanked Bhanu Neupane and said if anybody from the Council is willing to work together in the Open Science initiative, they are welcome at IZUM with their proposals. He also explained about the open science monitor project in cooperation with the University of Maribor and the Central and Technical Library in Ljubljana, and at the end of the year, a webpage will be published with the display of different levels of open science performance in Slovenia.

AOB

There were no remarks under AOB.

Aleš Bošnjak thanked everyone and said that he was happy to see them all in one place, this is all a result of good collaboration, we will continue our work.

The newly elected president Tamara Butigan Vučaj closed the meeting at 18:45 CET.