



## Minutes of the COBISS.Net Council Meeting

The meeting was held via Zoom on Friday, 7 November 2025, between 11:00 and 12:00 CET.

### Present:

#### *Members of the COBISS.Net Council*

Angelina Grujić; National Library of Serbia; (head of NCC)

Arjeta Sadiku; IZUM, Slovenija

Arta Kqiku; Library of the Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts

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

Daniela Vasileva; St. St. Cyril and Methodius National Library, Bulgaria; (head of NCC)

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

Dr. Aleš Bošnjak; IZUM, Slovenia; (director)

Dr. Xianhong Hu; UNESCO

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

Sonja Prža; National and University Library of the Republic of Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Tamara Butigan Vučaj; National Library of Serbia, deputy director, head of the Virtual Library of Serbia Sector at the National Library of Serbia – COBISS.Net Council President

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

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

### *Minutes*

Petra Bridges; IZUM, Slovenia

### Meeting Agenda:

1. Opening statements by Tamara Butigan Vučaj, COBISS.Net Council President, and Dr. Aleš Bošnjak, Director of IZUM
2. Introduction of Dr Xianhong Hu, the new representative of the UNESCO Director General
3. Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting
4. Development assistance for the expansion of the COBISS.Net network for 2025
5. Any other business (AOB)

The agenda for the meeting was adopted.

Tamara Butigan Vučaj welcomed everyone and announced that the meeting would be held in English.

Dr. Aleš Bošnjak welcomed the new UNESCO representative and said that IZUM had also undergone an evaluation for retaining the title of regional center. They had numerous discussions, the conclusions were very positive, the evaluators were satisfied, and IZUM hopes for successful cooperation with UNESCO in the future. He hopes that we will receive more donations next year. In November, COBISS Days will take place in Slovenia, which will also be available via Zoom with simultaneous interpretation into English. He invited the council members to follow the event.

Tamara Butigan Vučaj began by suggesting a warm-up exercise. Everyone had to say which book they were currently reading.

Dr. Xianhong Hu said that the previous representative, Bhanu Neupane, now works in a new sector and that she had also heard that the evaluation had been very successful. She then gave a presentation on how UNESCO supports the global network and librarianship, mentioning in particular some interesting IFAP projects around the world and calling on IZUM to extend its work to countries outside Europe and the Western Balkans. The presentation was also sent to the members of the Council by e-mail after the meeting.

Dr. Aleš Bošnjak added that IZUM is limited in expanding its network due to the number of employees.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were approved without comment.

Davor Bračko presented a brief report on the use of funds from donations. This year, EUR 50,000 was made available by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. The amount was distributed proportionally among countries. The funds were primarily intended for expanding the network, integrating new libraries, training, and incorporating new functionalities. In Albania, COBISS Days will be held in Tirana on 19 November in cooperation with the Albanian Academy of Sciences, the NCC has finally been formally established within the Academy, and 25 libraries are now participating in the network. In Bulgaria, COBISS Days were organized in June, and several libraries have shown strong interest in joining the network. Discussions are also underway regarding the training of students. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, courses were organized, and in the Republic of Srpska, extensive translations were prepared. In Montenegro, visits to libraries were conducted to improve integration. In Kosovo, COBISS has not yet been officially adopted. The strategic orientations of Kosovo and IZUM currently differ. In North Macedonia, translations were prepared.

Statistics for the first six months of 2025 show that a total of 72 days of training were completed in the COBISS.Net network, with 175 participants.

COBISS Days will take place in Slovenia on 25 November 2025. The event will be held in Slovenian, with simultaneous interpretation into English provided via Zoom. There will be three main topics: artificial intelligence, digital services, and connecting people and technology.

Under AOB, Tamara Butigan Vučaj asked how librarians in the network could be happier and what could be improved.

Azra Smajić Gačević said that they had held many courses and that the situation was improving.

Željka Komlenić said that they would like to involve more libraries, but that financing was a problem. She suggested that IZUM organize (online) seminars on the topic of open access.

Dr. Aleš Bošnjak added that open access is also a very current topic in Slovenia, which has an action plan for establishing open science that covers a wide range of tasks and requirements. To date, they have successfully established the Open Science Monitor in collaboration with the University of Maribor, the Central Technological Library, and the relevant ministry. The principles of fair data storage and data reproducibility are very important.

Angelina Grujić said that COBISS.SR has successfully established audiobook lending in cooperation with IZUM and provider Sluš Audio.

Žaklina Gjalevska added that a new generation of librarians with new ideas is entering the workforce in North Macedonia, and that coordinating between generations is quite a challenging task.

Daniela Vasileva said that they are training new course instructors and had a meeting with the library of one of the private universities interested in joining COBISS. They had a lot of work adapting to the new COBISS Plus application.

Tamara Butigan Vučaj added that she had expected more comments on the new COBISS Plus application.

Arta Kqiku said that they are planning to digitize all materials. The National Library has now also officially selected KOHA for the national system, but it cannot be compared to COBISS. Librarians would like to continue working in the COBISS system, but they have been asked to transfer all their records from COBISS to KOHA. Eight additional libraries wanted to join, but now, due to this change, they do not know what will happen.

Mirlona Buzo said that NCC is part of the Academy of Sciences, so they would now like to include institutions in E-CRIS. Negotiations are also underway with libraries regarding their inclusion.

Davor Bračko added that the situation is difficult in all countries, but we must communicate well with each other and stick together.

Dr. Aleš Bošnjak thanked everyone for their successful cooperation and added that we will definitely succeed if we continue to solve problems together.

Tamara Butigan Vučaj concluded the meeting. She thanked everyone for attending and encouraged them to support each other.

The meeting ended at 12 noon.