

The GAELIC System Investigation Project Team's visit to International Consortia

From our diary

The GAELIC System Investigation Project Team consists of :

- Lettie Erasmus from UNISA (Project leader)
- Soekie Swanepoel from University Pretoria
- Maria Sibanda from University of Limpopo, MEDUNSA campus
- Carina Malan from University of Johannesburg

The purpose of the visit was to:

- Assess the system functionality being used, identify problem areas and suggest ways of overcoming variances
- Assess current cost and ROI of running and supporting the Millennium system and problems encountered.
- Benchmark the use of the system against other libraries and consortia, as gap analysis and for the support of new initiatives in the digital environment.

Why did we choose the consortia in Europe and not in the USA?

The team decided on the Spanish consortium : Consortium of University Libraries in Andalucia (CBLA) which consists of University of Almería, University of Cádiz, University of Córdoba, University of Granada, University of Huelva, University of Jaén, University of Málaga, University of Sevilla, International University of Andalucía, Pablo de Olavide University. We chose the CBLA due to the similarities in the infrastructure of the CBLA and GAELIC consortia and the fact that English is not their official language. ELNET is the consortium in Estonia and the team chose this consortium due to the similarities with SEALS and also the fact that English is not an official language in Estonia.

Spain:

Day 1, 05 April 2008

We left OR Tambo Airport at 18:55.

Lettie Erasmus



Maria Sibanda



Soekie Swanepoel

Day2, 06 April 2008

We landed in Frankfurt at 05:25 and left for Madrid after 2 hours. We landed in Madrid at 10:00 and we had to "disign" a route through the Metro of Madrid to catch the only train to Sevilla wich will leave at 14:00. O, yes I forgot! We had to "drag" our luggage through the Metro by hand! We caught the train on time and enjoyed a 150 minutes scenic trip from Madrid to Sevilla with very tired eyes!

Carmen Baena Diaz, the director of the library at the University of Pablo de Olavide accompanied us to our hotel. An hour was granted to us to freshen up before we were spoilt with a 3 hour tour (walking) through Sevilla.



Lettie, Soekie, Carmen and Maria



Carina, Carmen, Lettie, Soekie and Maria

Maryvonne Enjolras, Innovative Incorporated's Vice President of Sales for Europe, Africa and the Middle East, joined us for dinner and she was our "compass" and interpreter during our visit to Spain.

Day 3, 07 April 2008

The project team's first meeting was with Julia Mensaque Urbano. She is the Assistant Director: Head of Electronic Resources at the University of Sevilla. We thought Sevilla to be a small city, but the University library has 300 staff members. It consists of 20 libraries and one central library spread over 5 campuses in Sevilla. They are busy restructuring and the plan is to centralise the Technical services department. (Does this sound familiar?!) An interesting fact is that their subject headings HAS to be in Spanish thus they do original cataloguing for all their resources. We gained all the information needed and left for our next meeting with Carmen at the University of Pablo de Olavide at 11:30.



The University of Sevilla



The Project Team

The Pablo de Olavide University Library is quite small. Click on the link for more information about this library. http://www.upo.es/ingles/investigacion/biblioteca/index_biblioteca.html

After our visit to Carmen, we had an appointment with Miguel Alvarez Delgado at 14:00 He is the technical director of CBUA and the Technical specialist at the University of Cadiz Library. He shared with us the structure of his university's library, then explained his position in the CBUA and how the consortium works and he answered all the questions from the project team.

The visit to Sevilla ended with the train trip back to Madrid, racing past orange and olive trees.



In Madrid that same evening, we were invited to enjoy dinner with Maryvonne and Charo Diez. Charo is a Systems Librarian at the Customer Services Department: Innovative Interfaces. Many South African site coordinators have communicated with her by e-mail and telephone in the past. It was really a good experience to see one of the faces of the ILL helpers.

**From left:
Soekie, Maria, Carina, Maryvonne, Lettie
and Charo**



Day 4, 08 April 2008

The next morning we met with the director of the University of Complutense, Eugenio Tardon Gonzalez and the system administrator, Angeles Morillas Lopez, in Madrid. The university is quite big with 30 libraries in the different colleges distributed over Madrid. By using Metadata Builder, they have 5,5-6 million records on their database. Between 70 000 and 80 000 students study at the university and about 10 000 lecturers. In 2006 they were serving 104 836 active users. The library has about 400 professional librarians and 100 students. Then they explained the organisational structure of their library which was a consortium on it's own!



Eugenio and Angeles



Maryvonne and Lettie

Eugenio Tardon Gonzalez is the chair person of the Spanish Innovative User Group, the same as South Africa's IUG:SA. We also had a chance to discuss the successes and challenges of our Spanish counterparts.

We left Madrid the next morning to complete our international investigation in Tallinn, Estonia.

Lettie, Maryvonne, Maria and Soekie



Estonia:

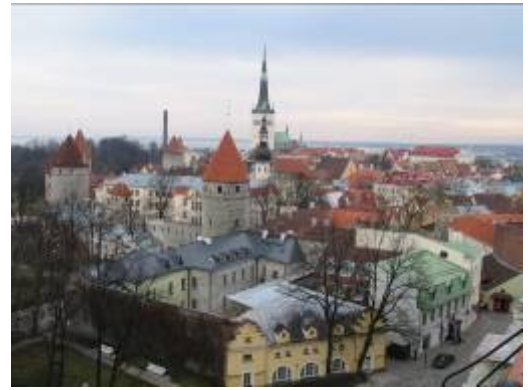
Day 5, 09 April 2008

We left Madrid at 09:05 and arrived in Tallinn at 17:50 via Frankfurt.

Day 6, 10 April 2008

The team realised just in time that there is an hour time difference and we rushed to our 09:00 appointment at the National Library of Estonia.

Tallinn, Estonian capital



Our visit was constructively planned to the finest details:
Between 09:00 and 10:00 they treated us with a tour of the National library of Estonia.

The National Library of Estonia was built from the national stone, limestone. You can read more about the library here: <http://www.nlib.ee/html/inglise/indexi.html>

At 10:00-13:00 we had the GAELIC-ELNET meeting where representatives from the members of the consortia had discussions about the structures, objectives and functions of the consortia. Their shared catalog is "ESTER". Read more about ESTER at : <http://helios.nlib.ee/search/>



Between 13:00-14:00 we had lunch at the National Library before we left to visit the library of the Tallinn University of Technology (TUT).

You may have a look at ELNET here, unfortunately in Estonian: <http://www.elnet.ee/>

GAELIC and ELNET representatives

But here is more information about the consortium: <http://www.eifl.net/cps/sections/country/estonia>



During this visit the staff of TUT concentrated more on the e-activities in their library such as Patron API, Web-based library courses for students and their digital collection of TUT publications.

Click here for more information : <http://www.lib.ttu.ee/eng/overview.html>

Soekie, Carina, Jüri and Maria

The team was invited to join some of the ELNET members at the Restoran Maikrahv, a medieval restaurant. <http://www.maikrahv.ee/>. Where we celebrated Graham Woodruff's birthday in his absence.



The birthday cake



Ilvi from EAMT blows the candle out



Ilvi and Carina



Aneli, Lettie, Riin, Mikhel and Maria



Restoran Maikrahv

Day 7, 11 April 2008

A meeting with the National Library was scheduled for 10:00-12:30 where we discussed the shared system as an option. The support structures, training etc. and other issues such as the National library's e-library strategy, digitising activities and the library portal.



The project team - hard at work!



National Library staff and the project team

We joined the staff from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (EAMT) at 13:00 for lunch at the Academy.

The visit to EAMT included a tour of the campus. Then we had a short overview of the EAMT Library and the walk in the library. We then discussed the library activities with the library specialists and more about the functionalities they use within the system.



EAMT staff and the team

The EAMT url:

<http://www.ema.edu.ee/?lang=eng>

Day 8, 12 April 2008

The project team left cold Tallinn's warm hearted and sharing librarians at 18:20 for South Africa via Frankfurt.



The System Project team would like to use this opportunity to thank FOTIM-GAELIC and our institutions for this opportunity to visit international consortia. The visits to these consortia have helped us a lot with our investigation and it has confirmed our findings.