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# **The Libraries' Role in the Digital World**

## **Reflections on the IFLA Trend Report**

**Jennefer Nicholson, IFLA Secretary General**  
**Copenhagen, 28 April 2015**





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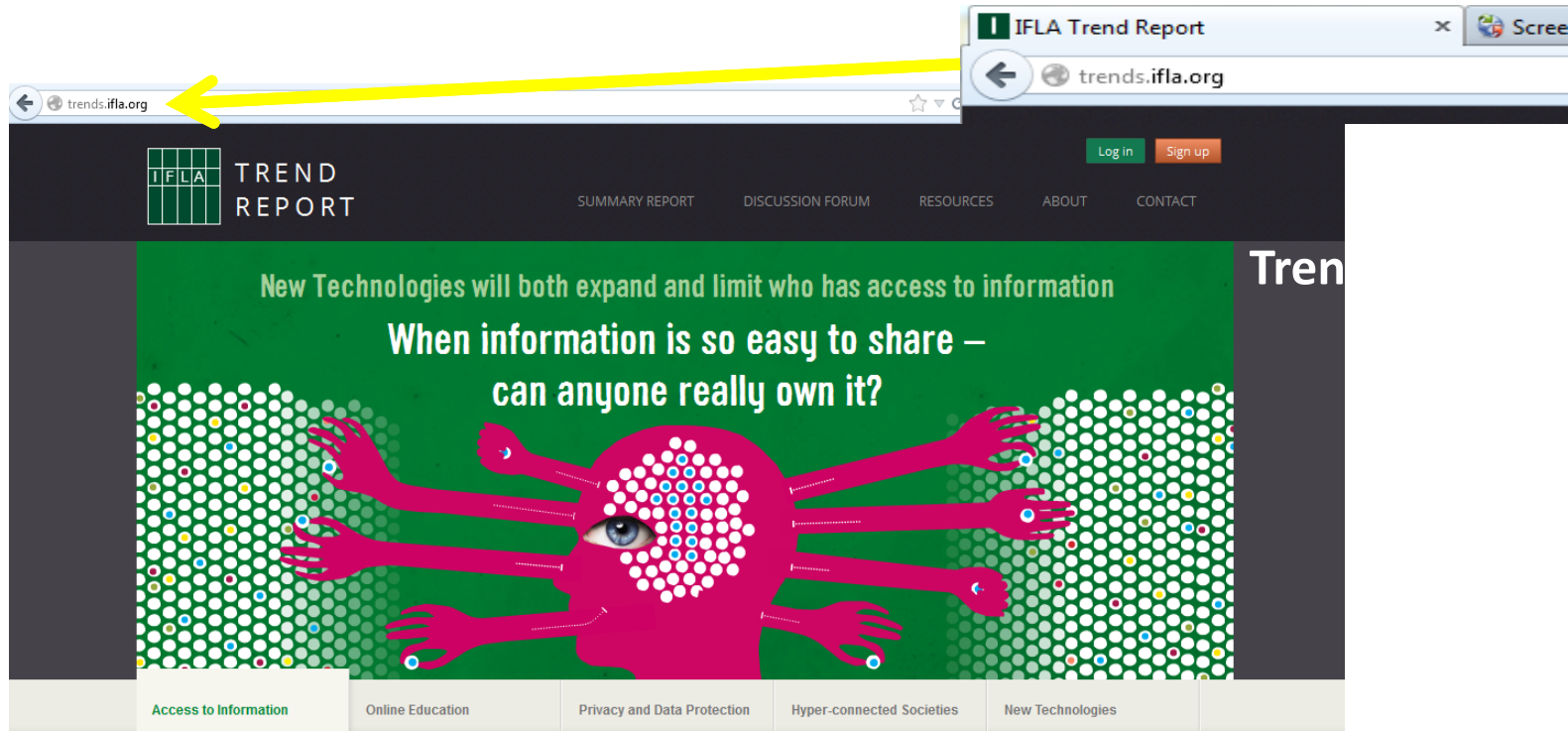
## The IFLA Trend Report

- Is research by IFLA as a foundation for our advocacy and policy, and for use by our members
- Looks across society and access to the digital information environment to identify high level trends which will affect our future information environment
- Brings together the ideas of a range of experts from different disciplines (social scientists, economists, education specialists, lawyers and technologists...)



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- better described as the IFLA Trend ‘Resource’ – a comprehensive, and ever evolving, repository of information and forum for discussion among IFLA members
- Is a starting point for libraries and library associations to consider how they fit in to the fast changing global information economy – asks questions for the libraries’ sector to look for the right answers



## WHAT IS THE IFLA TREND REPORT?

The IFLA Trend Report is a dynamic and evolving collection of online resources designed to foster further discussion and debate about future priorities within the global library community.

The materials provided on this online platform have been used to identify the high level trends which will affect our future information environment – and were drawn together based upon input from a wide range of non-library experts from different disciplines.

- Find out more about the [context and vision](#) behind the Trend Report and how it was put together.
- Learn about [How to Use the Trend Report](#) materials and the range of different resources on offer.

## DISCOVER THE TRENDS

Our information environment is constantly changing. **How will we access, learn from, protect, use and benefit from information in an increasingly hyper-connected world?** We have identified five top level trends which will play a key role in determining our future information ecosystem:

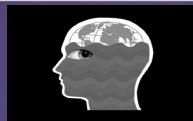
**TREND 1** New Technologies will both expand and limit who has access to information.

**TREND 2** Online Education will democratise and disrupt global learning.

**TREND 3** The boundaries of Privacy and Data Protection will be redefined.

**TREND 4** Hyper-connected societies will listen to and empower new voices.





## TREND 1:

### **NY TEKNOLOGI VIL BÅDE UDVIDE OG BEGRÆNSE, HVEM DER HAR ADGANG TIL INFORMATION**

Et digitalt univers, der konstant udvides, vil tilføre større værdi til informationsfærdigheder såsom elementær læsning og kompetencer inden for digitale værktøjer. Folk uden disse færdigheder vil på et stadigt stigende antal områder støde på barrierer, som står i vejen for inklusion.

De nye online forretningsmodeller vil i høj grad have indflydelse

på, hvem der i fremtiden kan eje, tjene på, dele og få adgang til information.



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REPORT



## TREND 2:

### **ONLINE UDDANNELSE VIL DEMOKRATISERE OG FORANDRE GLOBAL LÆRING**

Den hastige, globale ekspansion inden for online uddannelsesressourcer vil føre til mere talrige, billigere og bedre tilgængelige læringsmuligheder.

Der vil være øget værdi i livslang læring og større anerkendelse af ikke-formel og uformel læring.



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## TREND 3:

### GRÆNSERNE FOR PRIVATLIV OG DATABESKYTTELSE VIL BLIVE REDEFINERET

Voksende datasæt, som regeringer og virksomheder er i besiddelse af, vil understøtte den avancerede profilering af individer, mens sofistikerede overvågningsmetoder og filtrering af kommunikationsdata vil gøre sporing af disse individer billigere og nemmere.

Der vil kunne opleves alvorlige konsekvenser for den enkeltes privatliv og for tilliden i den online verden.



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## TREND 4:

### **DET HYPERFORBUNDNE SAMFUND VIL ÅBNE MULIGHED FOR, AT NYE STEMMER OG GRUPPER VIL BLIVE HØRT**

Flere muligheder for fælles handling realiseres i hyperforbundne samfund, og derved opstår nye talerør, som fremmer væksten for enkeltsagsbevægelser på bekostning af traditionelle, politiske partier.

Borgernes adgang til data i den offentlige sektor vil føre til større gennemskuelse og mere fleksible offentlige ydelser, der er tilpasset den enkelte.



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## TREND 5:

### **DEN GLOBALE INFORMATIONSØKONOMI VIL BLIVE GRUNDLÆGGENDE FORANDRET AF NYE TEKNOLOGIER**

Den hastige vækst af hyperforbundne, mobile enheder, netværksbaserede sensorer i apparater og infrastruktur, 3Dprintning og oversættelsesteknologi vil forvandle den globale informationsøkonomi. Eksisterende forretningsmodeller på tværs af mange brancher vil opleve kreativ forstyrrelse, der anspores af innovative opfindelser, der kan hjælpe folk med at forblive økonomisk aktive senere i livet og fra en hvilken som helst placering.



TREND  
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TREND 1:  
NEW TECHNOLOGIES WILL  
BOTH EXPAND AND LIMIT WHO  
HAS ACCESS TO INFORMATION

TREND 2:  
ONLINE EDUCATION WILL  
TRANSFORM AND DISRUPT  
TRADITIONAL LEARNING

TREND 3:  
THE BOUNDARIES OF DATA  
PROTECTION AND PRIVACY  
WILL BE REDEFINED

TREND 4:  
HYPER-CONNECTED SOCIETIES  
WILL LISTEN TO AND EMPOWER  
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THE GLOBAL INFORMATION  
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*“It’s at these points of impact  
between trends that there are  
profound questions for libraries  
operating in the new information  
environment”*



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## Access to information (1) / new technologies transforming economy (5)

- When information is so easy to share – can anyone really own it? **Core business is now digital rights management** in public and private domains, which moves libraries deep into the information economy
- New technologies have disrupted the traditional information chain (creator, publisher, rights holder, distributor, retailer, library, reader), challenged established business models and regulatory frameworks, while facilitating new sources of competition and new access models. **Who benefits?**



- The **algorithm** has all the answers – so what's a library?
- It's all about metadata/big data [managing across the information chain]
- Digital heritage – “what are you doing about Bit Rot?” [Vint Cerf, one of the fathers of the Internet]



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## The rise of new technologies (1) and the end of privacy (3)?

- Please switch off your wearable technology?
- We promote libraries as ‘safe’, but we need to **redefine** what this means in both physical place and digital space
- Libraries are part of the new information-mining business model



- Are our library policies appropriate for both our commitment to data protection and user privacy, and open attitudes towards sharing personal information and information from others?
- Do libraries have a place in the ‘sharing economy’?



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## Online education disruption (2) / global information economy transformed (5)

- Retaining language and cultural integrity – the machine is the translator; Education goes global and mobile...but loses tactile and local?
- Can libraries serve to assist in providing cultural context for overseas content to support users?





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## Empower new voices and groups (4) and expanding access to information(1)

- Enabling participation in society - access to information at any time in any place
- Breaking down barriers of information and media literacies
- Libraries being at the centre of citizen engagement in open government, citizen science and content creation, and civil society activities – neutrality
- Technology as an enabler, the library as the creative environment



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## Some uses of the Trend Report

- *Riding the Waves...* translated into 17 languages on our website and 1000s of downloads
- Sessions at IFLA WLIC 2013, 2014, 2015
- Conferences, seminars and workshops: such as Denmark, Mexico, Finland, Cuba, Bulgaria, Estonia, SCECSAL, Australia, Austria, IFLA President's Meetings 2014 and 2015...many more



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- Integration into curricula
- Discussions with other sectors, such as e-parliament, publishers, rights holders, cultural sector
- Influencing advocacy at international, regional and local levels



## Library association leadership

- Conference themes, such as Austrian Library Association [June 2014 to discuss “how to react and reposition ourselves”]
- Library association capacity building activities
- ‘Future of the Profession’ summits/planning, such as ALIA, ALA, DLA (Strategy 2020)



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From these there are some common themes for public libraries:

- Everyone is a member
- Reading and literacy - need will increase rather than decrease to better enable full participation in society
- Increasing use of e-books while keeping a balance with print resources, and getting the right business models
- New media - Transmedia opportunities will see highly interactive e-books, book apps, and other exciting developments
- Greater support for the creative economy - for authors, illustrators and publishers



- Enabling people to create and share new works; participation in data collection such as citizen science
- It's not all about the book - Libraries will continue to connect people with information and ideas — and much, much more
- Online learning - Public libraries will partner with tertiary education providers to support students
- Maker spaces for exploration and discovery through the use of shared resources



- Enterprise hubs - expanded services will be designed for job seekers, entrepreneurs, freelance and other home workers
- Libraries participating in national initiatives to deliver access/services, including e-government
- The meaning of ‘free’ – the economic value of services, the cost of access to information resources [who pays]



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## Also, considerations for ‘readiness’

### The changing information environment and employers

Positioning the organisation to be in the right place to incorporate the changing circumstances and conditions:

- for example, need to understand the trends and impacts of the current and emerging information environment and information economy, and interpret these for changing user needs in a library and information services context;





- for example, act on the reality that library and information services are increasingly part of the information economy and information chain, and the creation and keeping of knowledge;
- for example, inspiring and enabling employees to be ‘job ready’ in their knowledge, skills, and attitudes;



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# The changing information environment and employees

- Change is not optional – professional skills and knowledge must match services to meet user community needs;
- The need to understand that libraries are an essential part of the current and emerging information environment and information economy;



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# The changing information environment and the curriculum

Challenge to produce professionals who understand the trends and impacts of the information environment, why things happen and why they look how they look; have the required professional knowledge and skills; and can move into libraries as change agents;

- when what they are mainly thinking about is getting the degree, getting a job



## Key issue - Reading and MIL skills in the digital environment

- Reading and media and information literacies are essential skills for active participation in access to information in any format; and for active participation in society;
- Libraries have a well-established practice in reading and literacy programmes;
- Increasing use of ICT formats has an impact on how we do these;



- Literacy skills in Denmark at 99% [aged 15 and over and can read and write]
- Participation rates in ICT amongst the highest in the world
- Are library services keeping up with the rate of change in access and use?
- What participation is the profession having with other disciplines? With parents and carers? Influence with decision / policy makers?



- Library programmes bring together reading and literacy skills with information needs and ICT access, throughout all age cohorts and across information formats;
- This needs to happen in, and adapt to, a rapidly changing technological environment; and changing user skills [such as use of mobile devices and touch technologies];
- Outward focus of an interdisciplinary approach with researchers and practitioners to share and apply knowledge; such as in fields related to child development and education;



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# Key issue – Libraries and development

UN Sustainable Development Goals are for all

**Goal 16.** *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels:*

16.10 ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements



## **IFLA Lyon Declaration** [543 signatories as at April 2015]

... call on Member States of the United Nations to acknowledge that access to information, and the skills to use it effectively, are required for sustainable development, and ensure that this is recognised in the post-2015 development agenda by:

- Acknowledging the public's right to access information and data, while respecting the right to individual privacy.
- Recognising the important role of local authorities, information intermediaries and infrastructure such as ICTs and an open Internet as a means of implementation.
- Adopting policy, standards and legislation to ensure the continued funding, integrity, preservation and provision of information by governments, and access by people.
- Developing targets and indicators that enable measurement of the impact of access to information and data and reporting on progress during each year of the goals in a Development and Access to Information (DA2I) report.





## Actions for the public library sector

- Public libraries can be key actors in assisting governments to meet targets in the SDGs, such as Goal 16, but more;
- Advocate for the role of libraries to your UN delegation – utilise IFLA's resources  
<http://www.ifla.org/libraries-development>
- Get involved in the preparation of National development plans



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## In it for the long term

IFLA is committed to the Trend Report as a long term initiative.

Plans to prepare a ‘state of the nation’ report in mid year 2016.

Revisit and refresh the Report by end 2016.



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When your phone, your car and your  
wristwatch know where you are at all  
times – who runs your life?

Thank you,