

# Summery from meeting in Nordic Library Network in Reykjavik

There was 25 participants from the Nordic countries at the meeting. **Ingibjörg Steinunn Sverrisdóttir** started the meeting to welcome at the National and University Library of Iceland. Afterwards there was presentation in plenary and in groups. The participants agreed that it still works well with the presentation in groups, so we will do that at the next meeting.

**Cecilia Herdenstam** from Gotland County Library told in the next presentation about Gotland, the library, her work and the Swedish Expert network for libraries working with multilanguages and services for newly arrived.

In Sweden there is 10 million inhabitants of which 1.8 million is born in others countries. In 2015 came 160.000 refugees mainly from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. They are distributed to all municipalities! Gotland has 60.000 inhabitants and 900 asylum seekers. In 2015 Gotland County Library got a strategic plan for inclusion and diversity in the library services on Gotland, and a political decision - library cards for asylum seekers and persons living without permission in Sweden.

The aim for the Swedish Expert network for libraries working with multilanguages and services for newly arrived is: “With this network we want to strengthen the participants knowledge about multilingual aspects in the library and knowledge about the target groups by spreading research reports and good examples of what libraries do.”

The new big user group is a new situation for the libraries and a big challenge! The libraries tried to answered to the needs of refugees, developed new services, methods and strategies.

Library services for newly arrived include eg. Shelves ”New in Sweden” and ”Borrow a swede”. In Gotland it’s call ”Borrow a gotlander”. Read more about the library services in the presentation

After lunch Erlender Már Antonsson from at the National and University Library of Iceland took the participants on a guided tour.

**Jamie Johnson** is a senior lecturer at Lund University in Sweden, and she gave a presentation of her doctoral research focused on language cafes and integration, with particular focus on the social and political aspects of integration and the interaction between participants and volunteers.

Jamie told about Conversation-based programming (CBP) and Integration, Role of Volunteers and Challenges and potential for public libraries.

The conversation-based programs include language cafés and conversation circles eg. Expat dinner. Conversation based programming is different from what we normally do in libraries. The aim is language learning and often integration also is involved but it's rarely defined. We have to be sure about what we want.

The structure of the program is important for integration. We have to remember that Integration have many different meaning. A clear definition is important. Often integration mean immigrants have to be like the majority. Integration is about how we can live together in the best positive way.

What does it mean to be volunteers? Language learning – conversation about topics related to various aspect of life where volunteers can share their knowledge about various aspects of life in the receiving society. Conversation give the possibility to share cultures, traditions, worldview and knowledge.

Read more about Jamies research in the presentation.

**Stina Åmo** is a master's student at Oslo Metropolitan University in Norway. The focus of her BA thesis was on language cafes, with a particular focus on volunteers.

In 2016 13.4% of Norway population was immigrants. Language Cafés became more common from about 2013, almost every public library in Norway had a café by 2016.

Stina have from 2014-2016 been involve in 6 language cafes. It's started with a private language café at home. The experience is it's easier if the language cafes have a topics to discuss. A lot of people whom working with language cafes is asking themselves: How to do it the right way? How do people learn?

It's important to remember volunteers use their spare time at the language cafes. Libraries "pay" volunteers by giving them attention and (your) time! They must feel appreciated and that they make a difference.

It's hard to measure learning. It's easier to measure changes. 3 possible indicators that learning had taken place is:

- Change in language of information aimed at immigrants.
- Change in the multilingual collection.
- Change in services aimed at immigrants.

Importen to have clear expectation. Close interaction gives more opportunities for learning and integration goes both way!

Read more about Stinas experience in the presentation.

By the end of the day, participants discussed how to communicate best in the network. **Vibeke Nielsen** (coordinator of the network) presented Basecamp and it was agreed to work on that opportunity.

**Sunniva Drake and Carola Snell** from Esbo Stadsbibliotek in Finland presented their work. See more in the presentation.

The next meeting is in Sweden this fall. On the program is a workshop on volunteering, presentation of critical friends and Verdensbiblioteket - a Nordic project about acquiring digital materials for multilingual inhabitants in the Nordic region.

After the meeting in the network there was a guided tour of the Reykjavik City Library with Pálína Magnúsdóttir and Barbara Helga Guðnadóttir, and the library hosted a refreshment.