

# My IFLA 2010 experience

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Zunächst möchte mich bei BI-International für die Bewilligung eines Reisekostenzuschusses bedanken, welcher mir als Student die Teilnahme am IFLA-Kongress 2010 erst ermöglicht hat! Auch bei meiner dritten IFLA gab es wieder einiges Neues zu entdecken, darunter mein erstes Satellite Meeting, diverse Sessions und Arbeitstreffen, zu denen ich als Convenor der [New Professionals Special Interest Group](#) (NPSIG) eingeladen war, den IFLA Night Spot, leckeres schwedisches Essen und vieles mehr. Im Weblog der NPSIG habe ich auf Englisch unter dem Titel „[My IFLA 2010 experience](#)“ bereits einen ausführlichen Bericht über meine Aktivitäten in Borås und Göteborg veröffentlicht. Dieser soll im Folgenden in leicht veränderter Form wiedergegeben werden.

## Monday | The Global Librarian | Prologue

Without a doubt, my first highlight of this year's IFLA journey was the NPSIG's satellite meeting [The Global Librarian](#), which was a big success. We were very happy to have around 70 people attending this one day event in Borås as participants and speakers – a lot of them being New Professionals and IFLA first timers.

The **program** was built around the internationalization of LIS careers and the profession in general. During the day we were dealing with topics such as [library associations and new librarians](#), case studies from different countries, an [innovative Library School model from the Netherlands](#), [mobility and community building of New Professionals](#), mobile libraries, and [how to become a global librarian](#).

As part of the **organizing team** I was really busy that day, all the more we had to cope with a difficult situation, because the key person of our team arrived only in the late afternoon due to a family emergency. Therefore, we had to do most of the organizational part on the fly



and improvise a little bit along the way. But this was fun actually and things worked out quite well anyway. More than once I was thinking back to organizing the [BOBCATSSS](#) symposium in 2008 which had posed quite similar challenges to the organizing team (the other similarity was the atmosphere during the sessions with so many New Professionals involved, which reminded me of being at BOBCATSSS – quite a good sign in my opinion). One thing I particularly liked was the moderation of the sessions, which

gave me the possibility to actively join a couple of presentations and to get some input as well. This also included the first presentation via Skype I experienced at a conference – nice!... although Robin could not see anything of us, which must have been quite strange for her while, on the other hand, being largely displayed on our screens.

The daily agenda was surrounded by two great **keynotes**. Right in the morning, Erik Boekjestein and Jaap van de Geer took the audience on an [exciting ride](#) through the last couple of years they have been on the road with their [Shanachietour](#) and, recently, with [This week in libraries](#). At the moment, you will hardly find better persons to ask for advice, when it comes to global librarianship. Erik and Jaap are traveling the world looking for best practices and are telling fascinating stories from local libraries in a global context. They even filmed some parts of their presentation. I am curious when this stuff will be available online... you can already watch an [interview with Scott Nicholson](#) about gaming in libraries recorded the same day at the LIS school in Borås.

[Pernille Drost](#), current President of the [Danish Union of Librarians](#), held the Closing Keynote of our satellite meeting that was entitled “How library associations and library decision makers could work things out to retain, meet expectations and needs, and involve new members in their work.” In the context of an [ongoing debate](#) about the challenges of membership in many library associations around the world, she gave us valuable insights into her experiences in the case of Denmark and raised some very inspiring ideas and points to be considered by all parties involved:

- Technology and its pace are pushing the library organizations. If social media lets you meet your colleagues, why going to conferences, becoming a member of the library association anymore?
- Marketing is extremely important for library associations. Let people know about the benefits of joining them. Interesting comparison: Imagine food or beverage in a grocery store without any label about the ingredients... would you buy it anyway?
- Stakeholder analysis: Ask the people leaving the association and thereby create awareness (example from Denmark: phoner campaign).
- People are getting involved for a couple of years and then move on to another activity. This should be fine for us (maybe goals like “10-15 years” not achievable anymore).
- Danish Library Association: 1 President, 10 council members. One of them is a student – no voting rights, but very valuable input for the council.
- Generational gaps: Forming “youngster groups” could be difficult – tendency of patronizing these people and no impact on the Governing Board etc. This doesn’t solve the problem. We should rethink the hierarchical structures of library associations.



- Tendency: The young have the ideas, are innovative... but also the older generation has very valuable knowledge! They probably even have been library revolutionizers themselves in an earlier stage of their career, but maybe forgot about it meanwhile.
- Many initiatives in the Danish Library Association are addressing ALL the members. Of course, there are different attitudes amongst New Professionals and the older generations. But at the same time they just really often have similar opinions.
- A goal helps to get involved – join a section!

After a [day full of sessions and input](#), all the participants gathered in the lobby for some networking drinks. We were also joined by the attendees of a [second satellite meeting](#) in Borås, organized by the Sections Library Theory and Research as well as Education and Training. Finally, I think the whole satellite meeting was a perfect starter for the IFLA week, because it gave everybody lots of thoughts about the very idea of IFLA on the way (internationalization and networking) and many contacts and new faces to get back to later during the week.



It is exactly this kind of intensified exchange of experience and networking between participants in a smaller group of people that gives satellite meetings a slightly different but very agreeable flavor than the main IFLA Congress. Another strange thing for me in this context: While leaving Borås on Monday evening I was feeling like I would need some vacation... but the really big event had not even started yet.

## Tuesday | IFLA 2010 | [Day 1](#)

Apart from the social events and the networking factor, another very interesting kind of event during the IFLA Congress are the **Standing Committees (SC)** of all the [IFLA sections](#). When joining these meetings as part of the SC or as observer, you can gain excellent insights into the way IFLA works in terms of the sections' activities. It also provides perfect opportunities to get in touch with people of certain fields of special interest within our profession. As NPSIG Convenor I am supposed to participate as observer in the SC of our sponsoring section which is the **Management of Library Associations Section (MLAS)**. The first SC of two meetings took place on Tuesday noon...

It was my first time at a MLAS meeting. In comparison to former standing committees of other sections, I was really impressed by the amount of people and at the same time how many "IFLA V.I.P.s" joined as part of the SC or as guest speakers. On the other hand, this is no big surprise, if you think about the [scope](#) of this section and the close cooperation with IFLA Headquarters and IFLA's [core activities](#). These conditions led to a tight schedule with lots of things to be discussed during the meeting. We heard a report on the [MLAS Mid-Term Meeting](#) in Stellenbosch in February, which took place in joint cooperation with Ellen Tise's first Presidential Meeting. [Stuart Hamilton](#) and [Fiona Bradley](#) updated the SC on IFLA's advocacy activities, including the latest news on [ALP](#) and [BSLA](#), which is just about to [start](#).

Like every other SC, we talked about the upcoming Congress programme of the section (main MLAS events: two joint sessions on Thursday entitled *Towards national library strategy: opening up access to research* and the National Associations Meeting on Friday).

Another important topic was the discussion of [IFLA's Strategic Plan 2010-2015](#). Every section like MLAS has to align its own mission statement to the overall Strategic Plan regarding connection points and pick up some specific action lines to be worked on as a section. MLAS has already worked out an extensive Strategic Plan based on the IFLA one. We discussed several single action lines and particular expressions that still need to be changed or smoothed. One issue of particular interest to me was the discussion of a "template 'Share your knowledge'" on the MLAS website for sharing best practices and telling stories about the national associations' work. So far, MLAS is thinking about establishing a wiki and presenting the best practices in a more [Success stories database](#) like way. Of course, this is one way to go. But then social media is definitely needed for pushing the content and making it viewable for a wider audience. Personally, I am in favor of a blog as the place for



this kind of success stories. There will be more time to talk about these things later – the main purpose of our discussion was the Strategic Plan as general framework. Since we had no opportunity beforehand, both the NPSIG and the [WILSIG](#) (second SIG sponsored by MLAS) still have to include their mission statements in the MLAS Strategic Plan as well. We agreed on changes until mid of September.

Furthermore, [Ellen Tise](#), [Jennefer Nicholson](#) and [Micheal Heaney](#) gave brief updates in terms of the IFLA Presidency, IFLA Headquarters and [Division IV](#). Sabine Stummeyer from the German library professional association [BIB](#) presented the project [BIB-Exchange](#), which aims at helping students with finding internships abroad (focus so far: USA). I am curious about further connection points to MLAS and the NPSIG. Finally, it was time for an update on the NPSIG's activities (a tough thing for me after almost three hours of discussion and sitting in a heavily air conditioned conference room 😊). I briefly [talked](#) about our new mission statement, The Global Librarian and ongoing as well as future plans.

After having some sweets and coffee and talking to a couple of people along the way, I was joining the last part of the **Government Libraries Section (GLS)** Standing Committee. The GLS is the section I am connected with as Student Affiliate via the "[Adopt a Student](#)"-programme. Besides the GLS activities during the Congress and the section's dinner we also talked about the new vision/mission statement of the section and a [project](#) that collects vision/mission statements from government libraries worldwide. Important remark in this context: The collection of statements should not be seen as a directory but rather as a source of getting inspired as Government Library, which is working on its own statement.

Finally, there was an interesting discussion going on regarding the programme for next year's IFLA Congress in Puerto Rico. There is the idea of a joint programme with the [Law Libraries Section](#) on law conditions in Puerto Rico between U.S. territory, statehood and something in between. This seemed to be an extremely relevant and hot topic. GLS

members even were unsure, if this would be too political for an IFLA session and would lead to too emotional discussions amongst the audience. The success and the feasibility of such a session will definitely depend on a well balanced group of speakers and facilitators.

As every year, the **Caucus of the German speaking participants** later that day provided a good overview regarding all the German colleagues on-site. The best part of this meeting usually is the update session: Everybody involved in an IFLA section or body is asked to stand up and to report briefly about ongoing activities and the latest news – a really nice and entertaining way of staying informed. Of course, I also used this possibility to share news about the NPSIG. Furthermore, I was very happy that [Tatjana Hoeink](#) had the chance to introduce herself to the audience as new staff member of IFLA Headquarters – being a New Professional herself, she just got started a couple of months ago as Membership Officer in The Hague. Congratulations again!



We all spent the whole evening at the **IFLA Night Spot** that was situated at the lower level and in the huge backyard of the [Gothenburg City Library](#). It was great to have this central spot for all IFLA people to get together for some drinks and to have a nice time. I hope the Night Spot was not only [reactivated](#) because of the high prices for alcoholic drinks in Sweden and we will see it again at future IFLA conferences! The setting was even more impressive because of the ongoing [cultural festival](#) in town. Several bands and acts were performing on a stage nearby, so we had a nice musical background all night. 😊 The Night Spot had opened every night from 8 pm to 1 am until Saturday. Depending on other evening activities, I stopped by from time to time and always had a lot of fun!

### Wednesday | IFLA 2010 | [Day 2](#)

Wednesday was the day of opening the IFLA Congress and getting started with the official programme. The **Opening Session** began with a couple of [speeches](#), including a very nice [keynote](#) of Jan Eliason (former President of the United Nations General Assembly) about the power of words, the distinction and sometimes identity of words and action, and the globalization of knowledge, often referring to his former activities as a diplomat and personal experiences. Right in the beginning, he made a remarkable statement saying that standing in front of the IFLA attendees would be the closest reminder for him of his time at the United Nations since back then.

The session ended with a big surprise. Some time after the last speaker had finished, an ABBA cover band entered the stage and played all their greatest hits for almost 20 minutes – yay! Everybody was getting up, dancing and turning the Opening Session into a real [Opening Party](#). 😊

In the early afternoon the **Newcomers Session** took place in the same room, addressed to all IFLA [first timers](#). The main purpose of this session is to give these people an introduction to

the structure of IFLA (which can be quite confusing, if you are new to it) and also give advice on how to get the best out of this conference for yourself. During several [presentations](#) some well-known IFLA colleagues talked about areas such as the professional programme, the [use of social media](#), and the exhibition. A special block called “Hot and happening – IFLA’s greatest hits” highlighted some initiatives that could be of particular interest to first timers, assuming a lot of them are students and New Professionals. In short bits of 5 minutes the Newcomers were informed about the [“Adopt a student”-programme](#), the [IFLA LIS Student Paper Award](#), [BSLA](#), the work of the [Blue Shield in Haiti](#), and, of course, the NPSIG. 😊 Only the presentation about Blue Shield seemed to be a little bit off-topic in this setting.



All speakers were introduced with their own story how they got involved in IFLA. This added a nice personal and informal ingredient to the session. In general, I think this year’s Newcomers Session was a really good approach. Next year I hope to see more interaction with the audience and maybe some new ways of presenting the content. I am thinking about ad hoc surveys (asking all students, New Professionals etc. to stand up), a social media happening (we had some slight approach already), and a question and answer session for example.



The **Exhibition Opening** in the afternoon was really enjoyable because one could relax a little bit, have a drink and some snack, meet friends, get in touch with other IFLA participants, or just explore the huge exhibition area.

### Thursday | IFLA 2010 | [Day 3](#)

My Thursday morning started with a very interesting **get-together**. Loida (Garcia-Febo, advisor and former Convenor of the NPSIG) and I met with Luisa Vigo-Cepeda, Chair of the National Organizing Committee for the [IFLA Congress 2011](#) in Puerto Rico (at the same time Acting Director of the [University of Puerto Rico](#) (UPR) and also involved in [ACURIL](#) as well as in the Library Association of Puerto Rico). Loida had connected us in front of the conference, so this was the first opportunity for me to meet Luisa face-to-face. She kindly offered us the support of the UPR in terms of an appropriate venue for our NPSIG off-site session in 2011 and the organization on-site. During our short meeting we exchanged first ideas regarding our cooperation and talked about next steps to be considered. I really appreciate her support, all the more the UPR has just been facing really [tough times](#)!



Afterwards we directly headed over to the first part of the **Poster Session**. I am always very much looking forward to poster sessions at conferences. Usually, you can gain a lot of input on exciting projects in only one or two hours, get directly in touch with the people involved and also collect some really beautiful ideas concerning the design of a poster. All of these attributes totally applied to the IFLA poster session this year! Situated in the exhibition hall, the poster area was divided into several corridors like the one below, which resulted in an intensive atmosphere and nice discussions during the session. Only the posters on the outside of the first and last row seemed to be placed a little bit off-site.



Having in mind the huge amount of over [150 posters](#), you would have never been able to talk to all poster presenters during the session. One way to go then could be to preselect some posters based on the list in your programme and by taking a look at the posters before the session starts. Otherwise, you could also just dive into the crowd and spontaneously talk to the people whenever a poster or a presenter has caught your attention. Here are some of the many interesting projects I stumbled across...

- [Ramasjang Live](#), a TV program which is broadcasted from the main library in Aalborg, Denmark. Further coordination via the [Danish children libraries](#).
- [Meetingpoint@lasipalatsi](#) is an information desk at the Helsinki City Library. Services: Laptop Club (classes), Laptop Doctor (help with software problems), Jobcenter, Enter ry (IT association for seniors) etc.
- [The Library development program](#) in Poland, supporting public libraries in all rural and rural-municipal communes (including nice [trailer](#)).
- [Love, Power and Sisterhood](#), a website dealing with the Swedish women's movement during the 1960s and 1970s, Gothenburg University Library, Sweden.
- [Special Collections](#) at the Manchester Metropolitan University, UK.
- [Share.TEC](#) (=“Sharing Digital Resources in the Teaching Education Community”) is developing an online platform that aims to foster access, retrieval and reuse of resources across Europe for Teacher Education.

Later in the afternoon, I was joining a couple of [FAIFE](#) (Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression) people in an informal meeting about the **Media Plan** the committee is just about to develop. Its major goal is to foster **FAIFE**'s online visibility through social media (I was part of the meeting because of the NPSIG's recent experiences with social media and a close connection to [Federica](#), who was the facilitator). In general, the best way to establish social media support is to explore different tools in practice and to really try things out – in fact, there is already a [Facebook Fanpage](#) and a [Twitter account](#). But during the meeting it soon became clear that this web2.0 attitude can also be a difficult approach in the particular case of FAIFE because of possible obstacles faced in the process. Against the background of the scope of FAIFE's activities and the sometimes sensible and rather political topics included: When posting on Facebook and Twitter, what about the distinction between neutral information and individual statements?

Would it be dangerous to create a Facebook Group and to allow everybody to become a “member” of FAIFE, risking that political questionable parties join as well? To be honest, as kind of newcomer to FAIFE I had not been aware of these possible difficulties before. Despite these concerns, in the end we agreed on experimenting for a couple of months and see how things work out – a good approach in my opinion. By the way, looking for some space and electricity previous to the meeting, we ended up taking our seats in the childrens’ corner on big colored plastic chairs, which was actually very comfortable. And guess *what* was sitting next to us... 😊



The beautiful [Dicksonska palatset](#) had been chosen as the venue of this year’s **Goethe-Institut reception**. Although me and some friends had slight problems with finding the place, we spent a really [nice evening](#) with all the other German IFLA delegates and some special guests. After lots of conversation, some tasty seafood and Swedish folkmusic, I had to get home quite early that day for some preparations because Friday promised to be packed full of meetings and sessions.

#### Friday | IFLA 2010 | [Day 4](#)

Usually, every IFLA President-Elect gets the possibility to facilitate a session about his/her presidential theme during the IFLA Congress. So did [Ingrid Parent](#) this Friday morning during her **President-Elect Planning Session**. The purpose of this event is to start a conversation about the drafted presidential agenda and to get some useful feedback from the participants along the way. For now, the theme of Ingrid Parent is “Libraries Shape Our Future”. To describe all the multi-faceted activities of libraries, she located four appropriate subcategories: Most of all, libraries are *inclusive, transformative, innovative, and convergent*.



After a general [introduction to the session](#) and the theme itself, four invited panelists gave short presentations on each of the four subtopics to tease the audience for the upcoming table discussions. Being one of these panelists, I was supposed to talk about a couple of issues that are connected to innovation from my New Professional’s point of view. I decided to include Copyright in the digital age, social media, the semantic web, mobile innovation, new library concepts, and New Professionals. Have a look at my [slides](#).

During the following hour the participants were asked to discuss two of the four subtopics at each table and to come up with general statements as well as comments and ideas how IFLA could actively support these areas of our profession. At our table we first started a conversation about inclusion by looking at populations or specific matters within the society that are likely to be affected (during the short presentation there had been a strong focus on indigenous matters in New Zealand). Among others, we came up with gender issues, multicultural populations, people with disabilities, information literacy, the digital divide, and political limitations. We agreed that IFLA has not much financial resources to give

support in this context. Therefore its role should rather be to lobby important stakeholders and to create awareness within the society. Besides developing statements and guidelines, this could also include raising money by cooperating with foundations. We also saw the need for more horizontal communication within the profession. Especially in terms of IFLA, it is quite difficult to stay updated on all activities of sections dealing with inclusion, for example. As time was running, we went on with a discussion around innovation and mobility. This touched mobile technologies in connection with the digital divide and sustainability trends as well as the physical outreach of libraries in terms of moving libraries. We noted that the term innovation so much depends on the individual context of a human being. A final



interesting thought was built on mobility in a very basic sense: In a certain culture or environment information could be seen as a tool to innovate every day routines.

Finally, every table reported about the findings of the discussion, which showed quite a few similar thoughts in some groups like the communication amongst IFLA sections or the strong interrelations

between the four subtopics. Additionally, several groups suggested modifications on the overall theme “Libraries shape our future”. They wanted to add a pro-active notion (“Libraries shape your future”) and to emphasize the current impact on society and people (“Libraries shape our lives”). I really enjoyed taking part in this event. Unlike most of the other sessions in the official programme, this one gave everybody the possibility to get actively involved in the discussion.

Directly after the Planning Session the **IFLA President’s Information Society Working Group / ICT4D Group** held its business meeting. This body is an informal working group of IFLA members, founded as the IFLA President’s Information Society Working Group during the [World Summit on the Information Society](#) (WSIS) 2003-2005. Since IFLA 2009 the group is focussing on a cooperation with the ICT4D community (NGOs working in the field of Information and Communication Technology for Development) – more information on this process can be found [here](#). This year the group had invited many IFLA Sections and Special Interest Groups (like ours) with possible similar interests to attend the meeting, which was facilitated by [Christel Mahnke](#) (coordinator of the group) and [Stuart Hamilton](#).



It soon became clear that a lot of the people around the table (me included) were not quite sure about the actual function of the group besides the Sections/SIGs and the Core Activities of IFLA, so this issue somehow became the main focus of the further discussion. Here is a collection of proposals that were raised by the participants concerning the possible scope of the group (compiled by Christel):

- to make it an information hub for ICT4D related activities and issues inside IFLA (best practices, lessons learned, manifestos and guidelines with developmental scope or impact),
- to gather and provide information about the ICT4D community and its activities for the IFLA membership,
- to raise awareness for successful cooperations of libraries and ICT4D,
- to promote practical activities like publications, workshops, competitions, conference participation on behalf of IFLA (including reporting back to the group),
- to give special attention to developments of Open Access and Open Source Software,
- to act as 'sounding board' and think tank for IFLA's policy unit and headquarter,
- to sustain relations with important partners such as UNESCO, development agencies and universities with focus on developmental/ICT4D issues,
- to keep track of the WSIS implementation and stocktaking in regard to libraries.

Finally, several next steps were identified like updating former relevant [statements](#) and working papers ('Libraries at the heart of the information society', Tunis 2005), compiling a calendar of interesting events regarding WSIS/ICT4D, and preparing a panel discussion about ICT4D for the IFLA Congress in Puerto Rico. One general problem seemed to be the lack of time to actually work on things because of everybody's commitments regarding other IFLA sections. Nevertheless, we agreed on staying tuned and on supporting Christel and Stuart with further input on everything.

In the course of the IFLA week, the lobby of the [Gothia Towers](#) (part of the Congress Center) turned out to be the ideal place for any kind of gathering or informal meeting. For this reason, we [spontaneously](#) decided to let our **NPSIG business meeting** take place there on Friday afternoon. With the seven of us attending, we mainly discussed several issues regarding the NPSIG programme for IFLA 2011 in Puerto Rico. Loida and I first updated the others on our Thursday morning meeting with Luisa, before all of us went on with brainstorming on possible topics and formats for our off-site session. This led to some very nice ideas even including an off-off-site session at the Puerto Rican beach. 😊

We also talked about the next steps for our to-do-list: The most important upcoming tasks would be the ongoing cooperation with Luisa and her local organizing team, to secure sponsors for every kind of possible expense (keynote speakers, catering etc.), to deal with the registration process, and to work on the Call for Papers as well as the programme. Regarding the coordination of all these activities, we agreed on using the working wiki Dierk and I are already maintaining internally to share information and ideas. We will soon collect all findings and ideas of this business meeting and will invite all those New Professionals to join who would like to work with us on this exciting event! There was not much time left, but we shortly touched the involvement of some of us in upcoming conferences like the [Frankfurt Bookfair](#), the [Internet Librarian 2010](#) or [BOBCATSSS 2011](#). The collection of interesting conferences and the preparation of corresponding NPSIG activities on-site would be another point to be realized via the working wiki. Due to our lack of time, we could not speak about another important issue, namely how to foster the online involvement of New Professionals in the NPSIG besides our blog and the [Facebook Page](#), so they could actually work on topics of current interest with each other. During the whole week I have met so many highly motivated New Professionals with great ideas – it would be a pity not to continue the conversation. Fortunately, Mace has already [started a discussion](#) around this

issue. I am looking very much forward to exploring further ways of bringing New Professionals together!

After being actively involved almost seven hours, I was feeling very comfortable by just sitting down in one of the cozy seats in the huge Congress hall and by listening to the first two presentations of the **FAIFE session** [Have the censors retired or just gone to the Internet? From classic censorship to the age of network control](#). One of them, the keynote speech by [Ismail Serageldin](#), included the incredible amount of 232 Powerpoint slides. ^^ Although kind of rushing through his presentation, he gave us a short summary on the evolution of censorship, which was quite informative and entertaining.

Later in the evening we all headed to the [Brewhouse](#) for the IFLA **Dance Night**. Being very much into [music](#), but not at all into [dancing](#), I was really enjoying myself with all the others in front of this nice location listening to the music and having some drinks under the Gothenburgian sky – believe me or not. 😊

### **Saturday | IFLA 2010 | [Day 5](#)**

In comparison to the first **MLAS Standing Committee** (Tuesday) the second one this Saturday morning was a little shorter and run with a smaller group of people and observers. As the schedule was less packed than it had been on Tuesday, we had some time to talk about a draft for a [GLAD/BSLA](#) framework. Both programmes have similar aims in terms of strengthening the work of library associations. Therefore a cooperation only seems to be reasonable. So far, a joint training preconference focussing on Latin American associations is planned to be held close to the IFLA Congress 2011 in Puerto Rico. Talking about upcoming events, we also learned from [Ingeborg Verheul](#) that the second Presidential Meeting will take place at IFLA HQ on 14/15 April 2011. Furthermore, [Edita Basic](#) gave us an update on the preparations for the next MLAS workshop, which will be held on 17 February in Split, Croatia, prior to the Mid-Winter meeting on 18/19 February. Some SC members proposed to follow up this year's workshop ideas from Stellenbosch during the next one. As for IFLA 2011 activities, [Janice Lachance](#) (chair of MLAS and facilitating the SCs) also informed the SC about a request from the [Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Section](#) for a joint programme on advocacy and related issues in Puerto Rico. Everybody agreed on supporting this one year cooperation. Before closing the session Janice pointed out the upcoming elections of the SC members in 2011. As four of the current members have already served two terms and therefore have to leave (they are probably going on as corresponding members), others should get involved instead to support the work of the section.



Finally, two interesting details by the way: 1. The new membership system at IFLA Headquarters contains a module for the registration of participants, which could be used for future satellite meetings. 2. BSLA is using [Moodle](#). This is just nice to know for me because [my university](#) is also maintaining this Course Management System. As you can see, with a

focus on planning future activities this second MLAS SC was maybe less “glamorous” than the first one, but it was just as informative and relevant to the work of the section.

I had missed Dierk’s presentation about green library buildings during another conference earlier this year, so I was glad to be able to join his talk “Ecological sustainability in libraries – a building concept” during the session “[Greening the library in a sustainable way](#)“, hosted by the **Environmental Sustainability and Libraries SIG**. After providing some background on the history of the term ‘sustainability’, he highlighted various aspects that should be considered in the process of building a green library. Have a closer look at the [nice presentation](#).

Apart from the topic of his talk, I had also been very curious about seeing a [prezi](#) “in action” for the first time at a conference. I am very impressed by the way you can illustrate lines of thoughts or relationships visually in an open environment that makes you forget about the boundaries of a powerpoint slide soon. On the other hand, it maybe takes some time to get used to this total flexibility, without being overwhelmed by it. Anyway, I am looking forward to working on my first prezisoon!

Actually, the session turned out to be a place for creative presentations. Chelsea Urness, a student from the [University of Calgary](#), Canada, [discussed](#) sustainable collection management and the environmentally, economically, and socially responsible management of information media life-cycles in the library. Within her Powerpoint presentation she used a lot of stylish handdrawn pictures to make her points without much text in a very clear and comprehensible manner – nice!



My last session this afternoon was the **General Assembly** that was facilitated by [Ellen Tise](#), [Jennefer Nicholson](#) and [Barbara Schleihagen](#) ([agenda](#)). Although associations’ general assemblies are not known as the hottest and most exciting events, it is worth going there. You will get a really good overview on several aspects of IFLA including details you would probably never look up by yourself like information on the finances or membership figures.

Furthermore, we got a useful overview on IFLA partnerships, funding programmes and other ongoing and future initiatives. In terms of restructuring the process of planning and organizing IFLA conferences, I had already heard about a new mode of locating IFLA host cities in different parts of the world, but was not aware of the actual plan before. Have a look at the 7 year planning cycle for the upcoming Congress venues, which is going to be put into practice from 2013 on:

2013 Asia & Oceania

2014 Europe

2015 Africa

2016 North America

2017 Europe

2018 Latin America & Caribbean

2019 Europe

(2020 Asia & Oceania...)

The heavy weight of Europe is quite apparent. Of course, there are reasonable points for this listing like the economic crisis in combination with the distribution of members with a focus on Europe. Nevertheless, I was wondering, whether 2xEurope/1xNorthAmerica-combinations would be a better way, providing even more space for regions besides the “Western world”. (I am sure this was a very tough item accompanied by lots of negotiations.)

Another interesting part of the General Assembly was the voting procedure on a couple of issues. Like several other German delegates, I had volunteered at the Caucus meeting for taking the voting slips and for joining the General Assembly as a voting delegate (I am not sure how other National Committees handle this). So what is this about? Until a certain deadline during the IFLA Congress, motions and resolutions on diverse topics can be handed in.



During the voting process, we only dealt with the motions. In the case of Motion 2 (see the [agenda](#) for more information) this led to quite a bit of discussion and took several steps such as a modification of the original proposal, until it had passed. The two [professional resolutions](#) that had been handed in, are going to be discussed in the [Professional Committee](#). I think it would have been very interesting to deal with these topics in the broader audience of the General Assembly as well – if not voting about it, then at least collecting some statements. Finally, the voting delegates had to agree that the General Assembly would adjourn to meet again at 16.15 the next day. To everyone’s big surprise, this motion passed as well... ^^

In addition to the Standing Committee meetings, I think almost every IFLA section is also having a social event during the IFLA Congress, mostly in the form of a section dinner at a nice restaurant in town. This evening there seemed to be IFLA delegates all over the place: On my way to the **MLAS dinner** I accidentally ran into a crowd of FAIFE people heading to their social dinner. After leaving them, the next thing I saw was the IFLA Headquarters crew sitting in the restaurant nearby. Finally, I arrived at the right spot. The MLAS dinner took place at [Smaka](#), a beautiful located restaurant with traditional Swedish food. I was really glad to be there, because, unsurprisingly, the atmosphere turned out to be way more informal and convenient in this setting than in the air conditioned Congress rooms and you could really get to know (at least) the people sitting around you. A general recommendation for

everyone new to IFLA: Join not only the standing committees, but also the dinner of the sections you are interested in (if possible)! And it was not only about being around with the others...



...this was also the first time I had the famous Swedish Köttbular – extremely tasty! Me and some friends were even heading to Smaka again next evening. Back home I am still struggling: Should I also try Köttbular, when I am at the IKEA store next time? I doubt they will be roughly as good as the ones I had in Gothenburg this evening. 😊

### Sunday | IFLA 2010 | [Day 6](#)

During the week there had only been few time for sightseeing (largely in the evenings), so I decided to take most of the day off with some friends. Among others, we climbed the [Lipstick](#) for a beautiful view over the harbor and tried a very special kind of Hot Dog that is typical for the Gothenburg area. The 'kalv special' is served with two bowls of mashed potatoes on top. If you are really hungry, you could go for it. But in general, I think I prefer the standard one. 😊



In the afternoon, we headed back to the Congress Center for the **Closing Session**. During the [well organized ceremony](#), special honours were handed over to IFLA Past President [Claudia Lux](#), [Elizabet Ramos de Carvalho](#), INIST ([L'Institut de l'Information Scientifique et Technique](#)), and to the Swedish library association for doing such a marvelous job by hosting the IFLA Congress 2010. Kabou Kamboukadio from Burkina Faso received the Best Poster Award 2010 for her poster about the "African Water Information and Documentation System (African WIS)" (poster #2). The Newsletter of the Year Award was going to the [Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section](#). Of course, a section's newsletter is a very valuable publication. But especially against the background of IFLA's ongoing great [efforts](#) regarding social media, this award seemed to be a little bit 'old school'. At least, [Patrice Landry](#), who handed over the award, said that there are plans to open the award to section's websites as well.

We watched a really beautiful teaser about Puerto Rico and even enjoyed some local sweets, then Luisa Vigo-Cepeda (National Organizing Committee for the IFLA Congress 2011, remember from above?) invited all the delegates to come to Puerto Rico next year. After Ingrid Parent's Vote of thanks, Agneta Olsson (Chair of the Swedish National Committee) closed the session with a slideshow of pictures from the Congress week, accompanied by ABBA's "[Thank you for the music](#)" – the ideal good-bye song for this great IFLA Congress 2010. Thanks very much to everyone for turning this conference into a unique experience! It was a big pleasure!

