

Goethe-Institut, Israel

BII- (Bibliothek & Information International)

Dear Sirs,

We are happy and honored to give this report on our professional tour to the Frankfurt region in Germany, which was organized and sponsored by you. The visit was a very important lesson to all of us.

In all sites that we visited, we received a very warm welcome by our hosts. All of them were waiting for us, gave us very deep explanations about their work. We got answers to all our questions during every visit.

We learned a lot about the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek Frankfurt and about the unique problems they have in controlling double collections, the special architecture which is being preserved in order to keep the cultural tradition, was very interesting. The process of the decision making related to the computerization books, were very much familiar to us.

In the University Library we saw how a library in a university gives service to the whole public who needs help in getting books or scientific information. We were amazed by the high standards of digitations of the Jewish newspapers. The whole section of Judaica was very impressive and from our point of view, very important as well.

The visit to Stiftung Lesen, in Mainz showed us how this organization encourages people to read and learn a new language in schools, in libraries and in many other possible places. We were very much impressed by the activities we were exposed to, related to the absorption of the immigrants of various countries in Germany. Making everything that can be done in order to improve their German language on one hand and keep their mother language, on the other. In this aspect, after visiting the Stadtteil-Bibliothek Gallus we understood and saw that Libraries do not work alone. They have projects with other countries with the sponsorship of the European Union. This fact is especially interesting because it obliges to work in united standards tracing and constant evaluation of all processes.

In Gallus, they also showed us how to build a special section for youth in a library, along with them. We all know it is so important these days.

The self borrowing points made us smile as we saw that we have the same problems here in Israel regarding this kind of service. Nevertheless, we were very much impressed to see the option of returning books without going into the building.

In EKZ, we felt like in a big industrial factory. To see the whole process that the book has to pass until it gets to the library, was a sight we have never seen before.

Moreover, we were very much impressed to see all kinds of furniture and accessories that are so useful in libraries.

In the Stiftung Buchkunst, we saw the serious work done in the process of books publishing, not only in the aspect of teams but also in the aspect of esthetics, colors etc. The explanations we had about the whole process of giving awards to published books were very interesting.

The meeting with Mr. A. Budjan, who told us about the roles of the public libraries department, showed us that we deal with the same problems here in Israel.

Finally, we would also like to mention the good hotel we had. Good rooms, good service and an excellent place (near the central railway station).

The city tour in Frankfurt, the visit in Mainz with a professional guide was great. The Gutenberg Museum, the Cathedral, and the visit the new synagogue in Mainz were very interesting.

We would like to express our deep thanks to Mrs. Tony Buda who was a great escort, a great translator, and organizer. It was a pleasure to be every moment with her. She knew how to relate the places we visited to each and every one of us.

To the Goethe Institute and BII, we wish to bless you and thank you for the opportunity we had to be part of this tour and for letting us have a small glimpse to the world of libraries in Germany.

We will be more than happy to host librarian from Germany here in Israel.

Sincerely yours

Amalia Kochen

Eva Rochmann