

QUESTIONS ASKED TO THE CANDIDATES TO THE EBLIDA PRESIDENCY AND THE EBLIDA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rete delle Reti thanks in advance all candidates for having taken up the challenge to respond to our questions. Please feel free to answer one or more questions.

EBLIDA's policy

First question

According to Eurostat, GDPs of all European countries progressed in the decade 2011-2021, while expenditure for culture remained steady. Following the same Eurostat methodology ("expenditure per inhabitant as a percentage of the GDP, adjusted to the inflation rate"), library expenditure has contracted and sometimes nosedived in European countries having the most prosperous library systems: -33% and -34% (Denmark), -30% and -50% (Netherlands); -19% and -30% (Sweden), -19% and -27% (Finland), respectively, for overall national library expenditure and for library acquisitions. In Germany, Spain and Portugal reductions are less substantial but library budgets in these countries are 5-6 times less than those of Nordic countries. (Full documentation is available on your request). This comes in a time when libraries are given even more challenges than in the past, as the Council of Europe Recommendation on Library Legislation and Policy shows.

Did library expenditure reduce in your country, and how do you explain this trend? In case you are elected, would your work focus on library objectives having European relevance, or would you also consider whether libraries are well resourced to face their renewed challenges?

Second question

There is no doubt that the most important current European initiative for libraries is the Library Priority Action within the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026. The EBLIDA Executive Committee released a statement in July 2023 in relation to the Library Action and the OMC Experts (<https://eblida.org/press-release-eblida-statement-on-the-omc-working-group/>).

In case you are elected, would you continue the policy set up by the EBLIDA Executive Committee 2021-2024, or would you revise it? To what extent do you think that the current work of OMC experts reflects the priorities expressed by the EBLIDA Executive Committee? And how would you ensure communication between the OMC Working Group and the EBLIDA Council?

Third question

Whatever the results of the US election in November 2024, the war carried out by Russia against Ukraine will end up in major financial commitments for the European Union in regard to Ukraine; with all likelihood, all organisations will be asked to contribute to its reconstruction.

Do you share this view? If yes, what (national) policy would you suggest towards Ukraine, to be promoted at European level?

EBLIDA's internal policy

Fourth Question

In 2018, the EBLIDA Council voted a reform of the EBLIDA Constitution extending membership to all Council of Europe Member States. Nevertheless, EBLIDA's geographic constituency has not enlarged and the number of its Members is roughly the same as in 2018 (125-130 members).

In case you are elected, what would be your strategy for an enlarged EBLIDA?

Fifth question

5. The current EBLIDA Executive Committee has made attempts to enhance communication between the EBLIDA Executive Committee and the EBLIDA Council. For instance, the 2022-2025 EBLIDA Strategic Plan was partially drafted with input provided by some EBLIDA Members.

In case you are elected, what would be your strategy to involve more EBLIDA Members in the EBLIDA decision-making process?