

Marzena Przybysz
Polish Librarians' Association
biuro@sbp.pl

Прегледни рад
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POLISH LIBRARIANS' ASSOCIATION

Abstract: The Polish Librarians' Association is one of the most experienced organizations in the cultural field. The Association's structure consists of 16 provincial units acting as regional boards. The Polish Librarians' Association has approximately 7,000 members and is one of the largest professional organizations in Poland. The Association established professional sections, committees and units to perform specific tasks related to the librarians' skills, to solve important problems or to discuss new ideas thus changing the librarianship. Its activities are supported by many libraries, local and government institutions as well as non-government organizations operating in areas connected to the development of libraries and reading. The Polish Librarians' Association is the largest and most important Polish publisher in the field of library and information science. In 2017, the Polish Librarians' Association celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Keywords: Poland, library, organization, structure, activity

History

The Polish Librarians' Association (PLA) is one of the most experienced organizations in the cultural field. It was established within the Commission of History and Knowledge of Libraries (Komisja Historii Książnic i Wiedzy Bibliotecznej) in Warsaw in 1915. In 1917, the Commission members formed the Polish Librarians Union (Związek Bibliotekarzy Polskich), the first organization unifying librarians in Poland. The year 1917 is considered as the beginning of the Association's activity.

After 1918, in the newly independent Poland after 120 years of occupation, the Union made a great effort to promote reading and create new libraries. It struggled to rebuild Polish culture from the devastation caused by the long

period of occupation and from civilization backwardness. It also nurtured the status of the library profession.

In 1927, the Polish Librarians Union, the Associations' predecessor, joined the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and became the founding member of IFLA. Many professionals representing Polish librarianship worked for IFLA's specialized agencies.

Following the outbreak of the World War II (1939-1945) during the Nazi occupation of Polish territories, the Union began to function as an underground organization protecting the library collections from damage and plunder.

After the War, in 1946, the organization was reborn under the name of Polish Librarians and Archivists Union (Związek Bibliotekarzy i Archiwistów Polskich). In 1953, it adopted its present name, Polish Librarians' Association (Stowarzyszenie Bibliotekarzy Polskich). Despite the name changes, it has always been and still remains devoted to the librarianship and incessantly serves the needs of readership and librarianship. These ideas have always been supported by the organization and, nowadays, they are accomplished on a national and international level. In 2017, the Polish Librarians' Association celebrates its 100th anniversary.

The PLA Structure and Activity

The PLA is an incorporated entity operating within the Republic of Poland under the relevant laws on associations. The Polish Librarians' Association supreme governing body is the National Congress of Delegates convened every four years. It adopts the statute and elects the PLA's president and members of the General Board, the Audit Board and the PLA Fellows General Arbitration Committee. The General Board appoints the Presidium from its members to manage the PLA's activities between the meetings of the General Board.

Following the Poland's administrative division, the Association's structure consists of 16 provincial units acting as regional boards. The basic organizational bodies, known as circles, function within the 55 sections subordinated to the regional boards. There are 277 circles of the Association, most commonly situated in significant libraries, usually public libraries. The Polish Librarians' Association has approximately 7,000 members and is one of the largest professional organizations in Poland.

Apart from regional structure, the PLA has professional sections, committees and units to perform specific tasks related to the librarians' skills, to solve important problems or to discuss new ideas thus changing the librarianship.

Their activities improve library profession and practical skills of librarians by initiating conferences, workshops, training courses, preparing reports and publications.

Within the PLA structure function the following professional units:

- Information Literacy Committee,
- New Technologies Committee,
- Committee on the Preservation and Conservation of Library Materials,
- Awards & Honors Committee,
- Classification Schemes Committee,
- Marketing & Management Committee,
- Music Libraries Section,
- Research Libraries Section,
- Section for Libraries of Non-State Universities,
- Section for School and Pedagogical Libraries,
- Public Libraries Section,
- Section for Readership Among Patients and People with Disabilities,
- Sound Libraries Section,
- Regional Bibliography Unit,
- PLA Publishing House Program Committee.

The PLA members: librarians, researchers, and educators enrich the organization with their different experiences, creating a broad platform for professional discussions. Every year the PLA organizes conferences, workshops, national and international seminars, publishes professional journals and monographs.

The PLA's activities are supported by many libraries, local and government institutions, as well as non-government organizations operating in areas related to the development of libraries and reading.

The PLA is a member of many international organizations:

- IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (from 1927),
- IAML – International Association of Music Libraries,
- LIBER – Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche,
- EBLIDA - European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations.

The PLA Strategy 2010-2021

For the first time the PLA members have prepared the document defining aims and goals of the organization for the next decade. The PLA' mission and vision have been formulated in a new way. The value of the Strategy lies in implementation of its projects leading to the empowerment of significance and potential of the Polish Librarians' Association. The Strategy was adopted by the National Congress of Delegates of the PLA in the resolution passed on May 31th, 2009.

(http://www.sbp.pl/repository/wersja_angielska/about_sbp/PLA_Strategy_2010-2021.pdf)

In 2009, the PLA members prepared a document defining the following strategic development goals:

- Gaining strong influence on the shape of the Polish library policy and practice;
- Becoming a strategic partner in building the information society;
- Integration of the professional community;
- Making various modern forms of education and vocational trainings more available to every librarian.

The PLA Publishing House

The Polish Librarians' Association is the largest and most important Polish publisher in the field of library and information science. The PLA has its own publishing department since 1954, producing now four research and professional periodicals and two organizational newsletters owned by the PLA. The PLA publishes about 20 books every year, most of them in five series. The broad circle of authors is recruited from the academic community, from research, public, school and other types of libraries, and from specialists cooperating with information centers and services. The PLA Publishing House works with many Polish LIS academic institutions, as well as with libraries and other institutions interested in librarianship, reading, information science, and other related matters.

Our publications address all library professionals and academic staff looking for new ideas, concepts, and information pertaining to library and information science, as well as historical issues of libraries, bibliography, and librarianship.

Most of books produced by the PLA Publishing House appear in the following series:

- Nauka-Dydaktyka-Praktyka (Science-Education-Practice)
- Propozycje i Materiały (Proposals and Materials)
- Biblioteki – Dzieci – Młodzież (Libraries – Children – The Youth)
- Literatura dla Dzieci i Młodzieży (Literature for Children and the Youth. Studies)
- Bibliotekarze we Wspomnieniach Współczesnych (Polish Librarians in Memory)
- FO-KA (Formats and Catalogues)
- Biblioteczka Poradnika Bibliotekarza ('Librarian's Guidebook' Handbooks Collection)

The Polish Librarians' Association publishes the following periodicals:

Przegląd Biblioteczny (The Library Review) – The oldest Polish scholarly journal covering library and book studies, bibliography and information science, with abstracts in English and contents indexed in Library and Information Science Abstracts. Published quarterly since 1927, the periodical from the very beginning has cooperated with the most outstanding scholars and practitioners of Polish librarianship.

- ZIN. Issues in Information Science. Information Studies – Published since 1962, the periodical covers the wide range of topics in information science.
- *Bibliotekarz* (Librarian) – Published since 1929, *Bibliotekarz* is prepared by the Polish Librarians' Association and Warsaw Public Library.
- *Poradnik Bibliotekarza* (Librarian's Guide) – Published since 1949, it is a popular journal for public, school and pedagogic library staff.
- *Newsletter SBP* (PLA Newsletter) – Published by the General Board Office Express ZG SBP, it includes short messages and reports documenting the PLA activities.
- *Biuletyn Informacyjny Zarządu Głównego SBP* (PLA General Board Bulletin) – Published since 1993.

Web portal

Since 2011, the PLA has been running the national web portal for librarians available at www.sbp.pl, which is a powerful tool for spreading information and communicating with the leaders of the Polish book and culture sector. It provides updates on the Association's recent activities as well as on libraries and other cultural institutions, interesting events, initiatives, conferences, workshops and programs aiming to foster the potential of libraries. Its daily news feed also features other relevant information such as job postings for librarians, changes in legal regulations and self-study materials. Through the website, users can purchase publications of the PLA and use an online library which gives access to digitized versions of the PLA periodicals and book series. Over a brief period, the PLA web portal has gained much credit among professionals in the library field and has become a highly inspiring place of information exchange and sharing, as confirmed by statistics. In one month, between 17,000 and 25,000 users visit the website. In its first year of operation (2011), ca. 188,000 sessions and 82,000 users were recorded. Over the recent period, the analogical data were as follows: 330,000 sessions and 166,000 users.

The PLA Librarians Profession Code of Ethics

In 2005 the Polish Librarians' Association has drawn and published the Librarians Profession Code of Ethics, an important document presenting a modern and positive image of library profession, largely promoted among Polish librarians.

PLA Research Prizes

The Polish Librarians' Association awards annually The Adam Łysakowski Research Prize for the best Polish books in librarianship, documentation and information disciplines published the previous year.

Every two years The PLA awards the best MA thesis in Library and Information Science, promoting young future librarians with the Maria Dembowska Prize for Young. The prizewinner is rewarded with the publication of the thesis by the PLA Publishing House.

May 8 – Librarian Day/The Libraries Week

The PLA undertakes numerous initiatives for promoting libraries and reading. The Association actively works to increase public awareness of the crucial value of libraries and librarians in cultural and social life, as well as in education of the society. It supports lifelong learning initiatives and other ones helping children and adults to develop reading and computer skills and effectively utilize internet information resources.

The Librarian Day, celebrated on May 8 as organizational holiday in many libraries in Poland, aims to promote books and libraries in the Polish society. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on professional achievements, as well as needs. It is on this day that the best libraries and librarians are honored and that the achievements of librarians and the role of the profession in cultural development is remembered and further promoted.

May 8 also inaugurates the annual Libraries Week, which turns public attention to readership problems and the role of libraries in social and cultural life. The Libraries Week stimulates public interest in cultural policy and helps promote different ways of work with readers. Each year, the libraries presenting the best and most original program of activities and performances during the Libraries Week are awarded special prizes by the Polish Librarians' Association.

During the UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day (April 23) the PLA, together with publisher and bookseller organizations, awards the prize titled Master of the Reading Promotion for libraries actively promoting learning, reading, books, and protection of intellectual property through copyright during all precedent year.

Марзена Пшибиш
Друштво библиотекара Пољске

ДРУШТВО БИБЛИОТЕКАРА ПОЉСКЕ

Сажетак: Друштво библиотекара Пољске спада међу организације са најдужим искуством у области културе. Структура Удружења састоји се од 16 провинцијских јединица које делују као регионални одбори. Друштво библиотекара Пољске има око 7.000 чланова и једна је од највећих струковних организација у Пољској. Друштво има стручне секције, комисије и одељења за обављање специфичних задатака везаних за вештине библиотекара, за решавање важних проблема или за расправљање о новим идејама које доносе промене у библиотекарству. Активности Друштва су подржане од стране многих библиотека, локалних и владиних институција, као и невладиних организације које послују у областима везаним за развој библиотека и читања. Друштво библиотекара Пољске је највећи и најважнији пољски издавач публикација из области библиотекарства и информационих наука. Друштво библиотекара Пољске 2017. године слави 100 година постојања.

Кључне речи: Пољска, библиотека, организација, структура, активност

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