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# INFORMATION LITERACY OF LIS STUDENTS IN SULSIT: SURVEY RESULTS AND ACADEMIC REFLECTIONS

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## Structure of the presentation

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1. Introduction
2. Description of the International Survey ‘Information Behaviors and Information Literacy Skills of LIS Students’
3. Survey implementation in SULSIT
4. Results and academic reflections
5. Conclusion
6. Contacts with the authors

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# 1. Introduction

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- ❑ This paper presents findings from sub-study that explores the transferability of information literacy (IL) competencies to the overall research and learning experience of Library and Information Science (LIS) students in the State University of Library Studies and Information Technologies (SULSIT).
- ❑ LIS students have to be aware about the **importance of Information Literacy concept** and to understand its theoretical and practical implementations in the contemporary science and society.





## 2. Description of the International Survey

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- ❑ This survey is a part of an international survey, titled '**Information Behaviors and Information Literacy Skills of LIS Students**';
- ❑ It's implemented in **eighteen countries** in **2012-2013** (Australia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, France, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Netherland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States);
- ❑ **A total of 1249 responses** were received.





## 2. Description of the International Survey

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- ❑ The international collaboration is headed by **Laura Sanders and Serap Kurbanoglu**.
- ❑ As the data collection instrument was used the **PIL survey** (available at [http://projectinfolit.org/images/pdfs/pil\\_fall2010\\_survey\\_fullreport1.pdf](http://projectinfolit.org/images/pdfs/pil_fall2010_survey_fullreport1.pdf)), designed in the frame of the Project Information Literacy, with some limitations and after permission from the authors.





## 2. Description of the International Survey

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The purpose of the study is to investigate the IL skills and behaviors of LIS students across different countries, both to explore those skills and behaviors generally, and to examine the extent of differences in those skills and behaviors.





## 2. Description of the International Survey

- ❑ In particular, this study examines the following questions:
  - **What strategies and sources do LIS students employ when gathering information for course-related information needs?**
  - **Are there differences in the information seeking behaviors of LIS students in different countries?**
  
- ❑ **The obtained results are summarized and analyzed: at national level - by scientists from the countries concerned, and on the next stage is a joint comparative analysis and scientific publication.**





### 3. Survey implementation in SULSIT - Background

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- ❑ Prior to this study, there had not been examination of research experience, information behavior and IL skills of LIS students in SULSIT, but also in other universities in Bulgaria, training professionals in this field.
- ❑ In SULSIT the survey was headed by Tania Todorova and covered students from Bachelor Programs – **“Library and Information Management”** and **“Librarianship and Bibliography”** and some PhD students.
- ❑ Was held in **December 2012** via web-based survey (Lime Survey).
- ❑ From the target group of **170 students** – 94 of the respondents answered to the all of the questions; 22 did not complete the whole survey.







### 3. Survey implementation in SULSIT

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- ❑ **Demographics** - as regards the students' status, in the survey have participated the most actively bachelors in third (39.6%) and fourth year (21.6%) of training, followed by a second year students (21.6%), first year (10.3%) and PhD (5.2%);
- ❑ **Methodology** - survey questionnaire includes both closed and semi-opened (by applying a 5-point Likert scale) and one open question. Closed questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including the study of frequencies and percentages, and open questions are encoded by content analysis.





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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- ❑ The findings from the survey allow reaching reasoned conclusions and views on improving the quality of training offered by Library Management Department and Library Science Department in SULSIT.
- ❑ The results of the international study show that there are some patterns of IL levels and behavior common to LIS students in general, but that there are also some significant differences in the ways in which LIS students from different countries find and use information for course-related assignments.





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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What are the main problem fields in the information behavior of LIS students in SALSIT that stand out and require corrective action?

The analysis of the data **outlined three problem fields** which need more attention from the academic staff and further improvements, presented below.

**There are summarized the measures** concerning the updating of curriculum and learning content; the methodology of teaching and assessment; and for the effective interaction in the triangle: **teaching - learning - practice**, implemented in SALSIT.





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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**First problems field - starting phase of studying and research:** it is related to the difficulties of students identified at an early stage of implementation of academic tasks - the formulation of a specific topic; the choosing of search terms; the development of search strategy; the identification, selection and evaluation of the relevant information sources; the use of databases.

It was found that LIS students at SULTSIT are generally more confident in the early stages of the implementation of academic tasks and experienced more serious difficulties at the stage of finding, selection and evaluation of relevant resources.

This conclusion is valid for all students participating in the international study.





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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First problems field - starting phase of studying and research:

□ **Our recommendation** is to deepen the attention of faculty harnessing and application of knowledge related to academic writing and research methodology by students.

□ **Right decision** in this direction was the introduction in 2012/2013 Academic Year (AY) of the compulsory discipline “**Academic Writing**” in the first common semester for all first-year students in the Faculty of Library Science and Cultural Heritage (FLSCH).





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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**Second problems field - the effective information search strategies** - is established by the need of improvement of the students preparation for implementation of effective and comprehensive information search strategies.

The achievement of satisfactory results of quality information support of LIS students, we consider that can be achieved through the active use of information search systems (ISS) and databases through the whole process of education in degree "Bachelor" in various disciplines of the curriculum, integrated in the methodology of teaching and assessing the progress of students.





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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Second problems field – the effective information search strategies:

- the teaching staff, especially in the specialized disciplines can turn its attention to:
  - putting the academic assignments related to the implementation of various effective techniques for information retrieval;
  - discussion of approaches applied by the students;
  - analysis and evaluation of the quality of presented bibliography.





## 4. Results and academic reflections

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Third problems field - citing and ethical use of works - is related to the need of the librarians and LIS students to understand what constitutes the plagiarism and the proper citation of sources.

- **LIS students have a professional obligation** to know and observe the law related to the protection of intellectual property (IP), in particular copyright and related rights and the existing exceptions and limitations for libraries in support of education, research and personal development.
- Therefore, an important component of information competence of library professionals in the modern information environment is **copyright literacy**. Knowledge of IP today is a core integral component of the educational content of LIS curriculum.







## 4. Results and academic reflections

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The established differences and gaps in the IL of LIS students at SULTSIT, compared with the findings of valid models and level of IL of LIS students from the multinational study - allow to outline the **specific decisions, which are taken by the LIS departments at SULTSIT**, which might be useful in the international context:

□ **Priority is reviewing the curriculum content** and teaching methodology of disciplines related to: cataloguing, classification and indexing of documents; information management; information retrieval; information provision; academic writing.



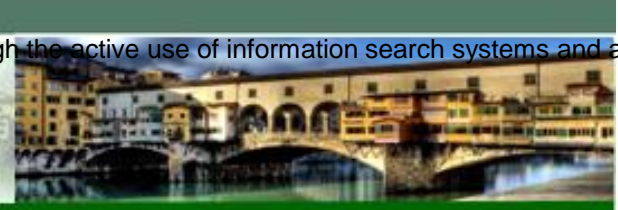


## 4. Results and academic reflections

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- ❑ **Compulsory courses with building character:**
  - “Library and Information Services”
  - “Information Literacy - programs and models”
  - “Information Management”,
  - “Automated libraries”,
  - “National Bibliography”
  - “Intellectual Property”.
- ❑ **As electives academic courses there are:**
  - “Quality Management of Library and Information Activities”
  - “Intellectual Property in Internet”





## 4. Conclusion

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Satisfactory results in regard the information competence of LIS students at SULSIT could be achieved through the active use of information search systems and academic databases in the whole process of education in degree "Bachelor", integrated in the methodology of teaching and assessing at the various disciplines of the curriculum, and with the commitment and contribution of the entire teaching staff. It is necessary to achieve a new quality of cooperation with the university library and other partners from the library sector.





# Thank you for your attention!



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