



LITHUANIAN RESEARCH LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

The LMBA 10th Anniversary Conference
Libraries for Science, Studies, Society

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Virtual Library for the Blind: Empowerment of the Visually Impaired

About the author

Rasa Januševičienė since 1997 has worked for the Lithuanian Library for the Blind (Lietuvos aklujų biblioteka, LAB), where since 2007 she has served as a director. In 2005, she earned a doctoral degree from the Vilnius University by defending her dissertation "Library and Information Services for Visually Impaired Persons" (under the guidance of Prof. Audronė Glosienė). Doctor of Humanities and reader at the Faculty of Communication of Vilnius University, she teaches students of librarianship. Is fond of good literature, good movies, good music and travelling.

ABSTRACT

The paper presents the work done by the Lithuanian Library for the blind (Lietuvos aklujų biblioteka, LAB) with particular emphasis on production of alternative format documents designated for visually impaired persons. E-inclusion of visually impaired readers is analysed in Lithuanian context. LAB's project named "Virtual Library for the Blind" (2010-2012) is overviewed, with its goal of Lithuanian mothertongue preservation and popularization by ensuring better access to electronic reading material for persons with visual impairments. The project is financed from 2007-2013 European Union (EU) structural funds. The crucial part of the project are virtual information systems, enabling visually impaired readers to use reading material intended specifically for them without leaving home. Moreover, the paper presents other activities done according to the project, including the production of DAISY books, the work already undertaken. This particular format, meant for academic material, is especially handy for blind students.