

**MARIBOR DECLARATION**

**ON**

**THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN EVALUATING AND ACCREDITING  
UNIVERSITIES**

At the COBISS 2006 Conference, held in Maribor from 28 to 30 November 2006, participants from the 12 countries who took part in the Round table, organised by the Danube Rectors' Conference and IZUM, devoted special attention to the position of libraries and library information systems both in terms of the system layout and practice of evaluating and accrediting higher education institutions.

The participants found that only in rare cases the contribution of libraries to a higher quality of higher education has been adequately taken into account. But what is more worrying is that in national standards and criteria for evaluation and accreditation libraries are not even mentioned, or are mentioned only in passing. This relates to cases in which new higher education institutions have been established and new programmes introduced, yet no library information support for them has been provided. And this in particular needs to be pointed out to students, who in these conditions will not be able to achieve success in their studies, and to financiers investing in unproductive projects in the area of higher education.

Librarians and library IT professionals are making an appeal to the university managements and governments of the region to accept it in their development strategies and policies as a proven fact that the quality of higher education cannot exist without good library information systems. We expect that within the national evaluation systems libraries will play a vital role in achieving a competitive edge for higher education in the region within the common European higher education environment. Library information systems ensure the transparency of research and pedagogical results, which is required not only for an efficient exchange of students and teachers, but also for entering into joint projects.

Adopted in Maribor, 30 November 2006

