

Library for All!

Bringing Talking Books and Accessibility Thinking into Finnish Public Libraries



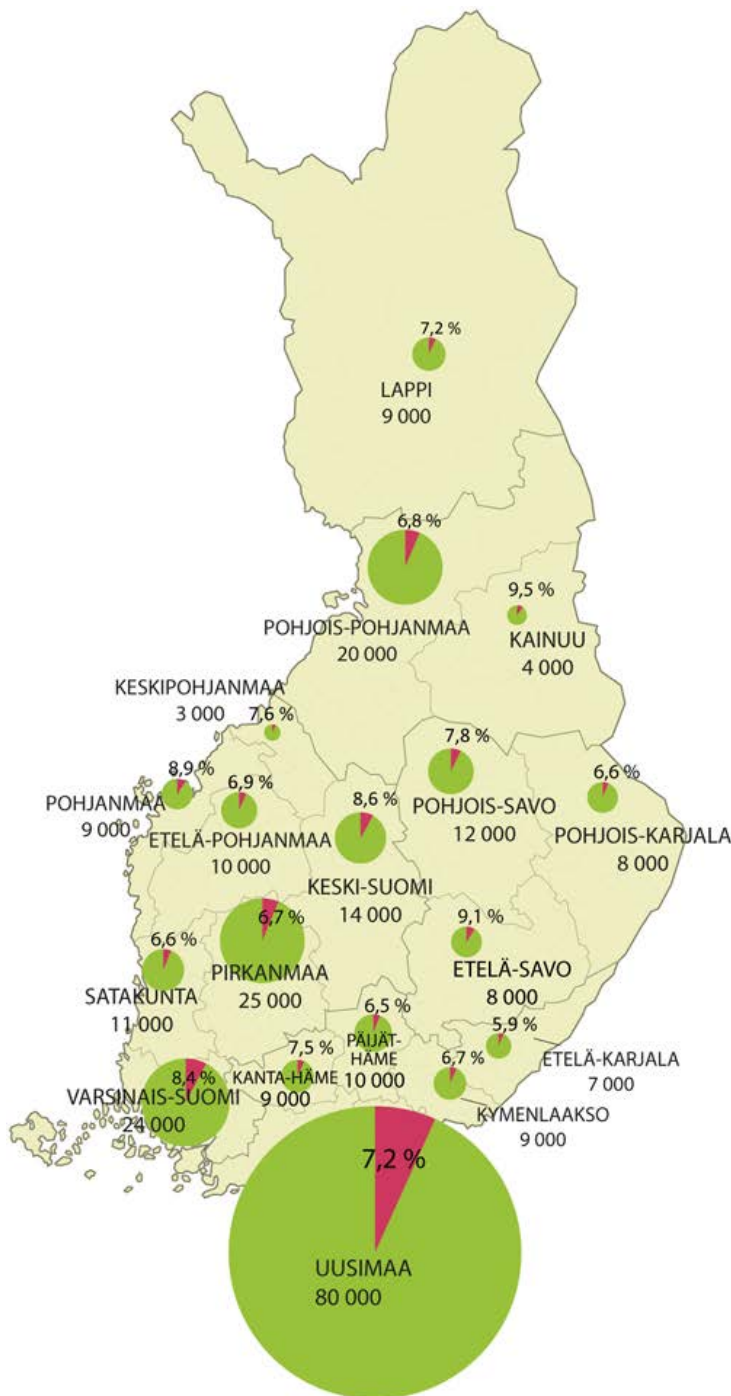
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Session 100 - Libraries serving persons with Print Disabilities.
IFLA WLIC 2014, 16-22 August 2014, Lyon, France.

Where We Are Now

- In Finland (pop. 5.5 M), library services for persons with print disabilities are relatively centralized
 - Celia is a government organisation serving persons with print disabilities
 - At present, Celia reaches only 5% of potential users
 - As in many European countries, Celia's activities are based on the limitations and exceptions clauses in the copyright law that make special provisions for persons with print disabilities
 - A proof of print disability is needed, which creates a threshold for using the services
 - The current Finnish Library Law is quite vague on the subject
 - The need for accessible library materials and services is growing constantly
- **Library for All project launched in October, 2013**

How Celia reaches users at the moment



-  Number of potential users in the area (2013, estimate: 5% of inhabitants)
-  Percentage of users reached by area (2013)

What is a Print Disabled Person?

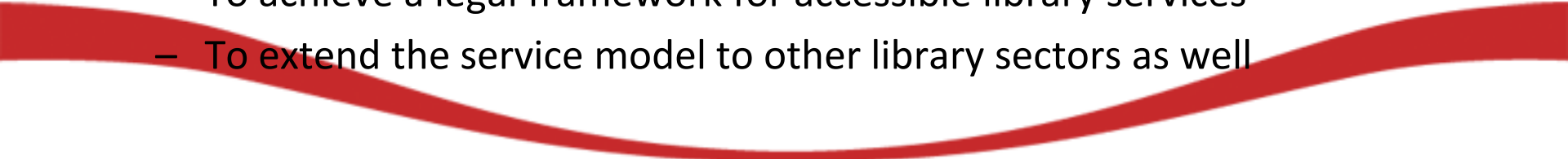
"a person who cannot effectively read print because of a visual, physical, perceptual, developmental, cognitive, or learning disability".

A print disability prevents a person from gaining information from printed material in the standard way, and requires them to utilize alternative methods to access that information. Print disabilities include visual impairments, learning disabilities, or physical disabilities that impede the ability to manipulate a book in some way.


The terminology was coined by George Kerscher, a pioneer in digital talking books.



Where We Want to Go with Library for All

- The network of public libraries covers all municipalities in Finland → A natural network for cooperation
 - Design for All based solutions enhance usability for **all** users, disabled or not
 - Our goals are
 - To lower the threshold for library use for persons with print disabilities
 - To create permanent cooperation and a new working model with libraries
 - To bring library accessibility thinking into the mainstream in Finnish libraries
 - To achieve a legal framework for accessible library services
 - To extend the service model to other library sectors as well
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Some Keywords

- **Cooperation and cocreation** = It's a question of partnership with local libraries!
 - **Users** = Our common goal is to reach new library users and develop a talking book service that meets their needs.
 - **Pilots** = Pilot libraries (over 30 libraries around Finland) take part in planning the service. Through pilots and tests we aim to find the models that work best.
 - **Online services** = Users are primarily encouraged to use online services, either by themselves or with the help of the library.
 - **Extending the service model** = After the initial project phase (in the fall of 2015), the model will be extended to the whole country.
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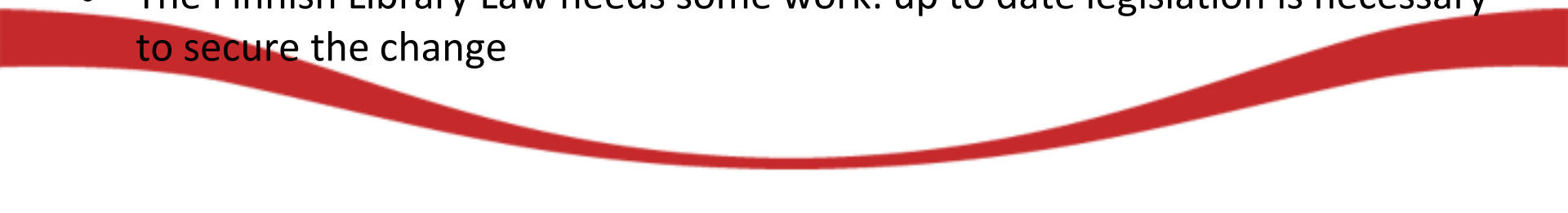
What Have We Done So Far?

- Worked out the issue with proof of disability, a printed proof is no longer needed
- Organized training and workshops for the pilot libraries around talking books and different user groups → the service model has been developed together
- Made changes in Celia's library system → Users can be registered for the service at local libraries
- Published a how-to-guide for public libraries
- Created a pilot module for accessible library services training. It will start in September, 2014, at the Turku University of Applied Sciences.
- Marketing, advocacy work, also towards decision makers
- **Started working on national guidelines for accessible library services**





Challenges on Our Way

- Committing the pilot libraries: some libraries are very excited, some find it harder to create working solutions to deliver the service
 - Service dependent on single individuals is doomed to fail
 - Turning theory in practise is often difficult: "We know there are talking books but we do not know how to offer them to users"
 - Learning to use new online services can be a challenge also for the library staff
 - To identify and reach potential users can be tricky → libraries need guidance and support in finding users groups with print disabilities
 - Attitudes and know-how need changing: there is still quite limited understanding and knowledge of how to create accessible and usable services in libraries – ***libraries are not really for all at the moment***
 - The Finnish Library Law needs some work: up to date legislation is necessary to secure the change
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What Next?

- In September all pilot libraries will be able to register users for the service
- The service will be launched nationally on September 15th (although it is not yet available in all public libraries)
- A seminar in Tampere on November 27th to share first experiences and get more ideas.
- The LSN Dyslexia Guidelines will be translated and localized into Finnish conditions



Thank you!

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