



# Creating better places to live

## Public access enriches job search and free time

### Overview

This review is based on "Impact planning and assessment – making it happen. Lithuania" by Ugne Lipeikaite and Renata Sadunisvili and "Impact planning and assessment – making it happen. Latvia" by Kristine Paberza.

The Global Libraries initiative in Latvia started in 2006 and it is now possible to use free Internet access in all public libraries. These libraries – in a country recovering from the impact of major economic, political and demographic challenges – play an important role in reducing the digital divide. No one is left behind and the public library offers opportunities for everyone, with a library always in reach within 20 minutes.

Library Internet users report on benefits and improvements in many areas. While the greatest improvements were seen immediately after delivery of equipment and training, the picture continues to stay positive. By providing free PAC with librarian assistance, public libraries help users to enrich their free time, to communicate with family and friends abroad or to support health by providing essential information.

During a time of economic crisis, increasing numbers of people value the chance to save time and money by using e-banking in public libraries. Growing numbers of people report that the use of free Internet access, training and librarians' assistance have helped them to find a job or to improve an existing one. The opportunities offered by free Internet access have made many communities better places to live.

### Lithuania improves the image of public libraries

In Lithuania, the "Libraries for Innovation" project has been operating since 2008 with the involvement of more than 1,200 public libraries and approximately 2,000 librarians.

Library staff agree that during the project implementation, the image has constantly improved and libraries are perceived as modern, up-to-date institutions which provide relevant knowledge and tools to access information. Prior to the project, libraries were perceived as being detached from the community. There is general agreement that the library mission has been extended to embrace informational, cultural, educational and social roles. This shift in perception is important, indicating that libraries have accepted that the new services offered to the community form a significant part of their mission.

### Comment

In Lithuania the library's image has constantly improved and libraries are perceived as modern, up-to-date institutions. In Latvia growing numbers of people report that use of free internet access, training and librarians' assistance have helped them find a job.

### References

Lipeikaite, U., Sadunisvili, R. (2012), "Impact planning and assessment – making it happen. Lithuania", *Performance Measurement and Metrics*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp.53-57. ISSN: 1467-8047.

Paberza, K. (2012), "Impact planning and assessment – making it happen. Latvia", *Performance Measurement and Metrics*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp.44-52. ISSN: 1467-8047.

### Potential quotations

Libraries are perceived as modern, up-to-date institutions which provide relevant knowledge and tools to access information.

People value the chance to save time and money by using e-banking services in public libraries.

Keywords: Global Libraries initiative, Libraries for Innovation project, Public libraries, Latvia, Lithuania.