



Finnish government libraries - what's next?

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Abstract:

The Finnish government libraries are facing new challenges at the moment. The Finnish central government itself is facing a big reform; a project is set up to study if the joining of the ministries into one single agency would be a possible option in the future. The aim is to foster the relations within the ministries in their functions and in their finances.

Now there are 12 ministries of which 10 have a library. The role and the services of the libraries and information services are being thought through - partly due to the Central Administration Reform -project, partly from the need of the libraries themselves to examine their functions. The aim of this study is to figure out if there is something more that could be done together by sharing resources or organizing differently. What would be the benefits of reorganizing? How would a centralized model work?

As the project is still going on, this presentation is a snapshot of the situation in July 2012 and many things remain open. By now, the actual situation of the ministries libraries has been gathered together, but the planning of the new concept, a common Information Center, has still got many unclear points. This presentation is the author's view of the project, and it is not the official statement of the ministries libraries.

The reorganization of the library services and collections seems important at the moment. The research support for the projects is a valuable service, but can't be fully offered and exploited without sufficient resources. The common library - organization, services as well as the premises and collection - might be the way that the Finnish government libraries should choose for the future. This doesn't mean that all the changes should be done quickly and at the same time - it's more probably going to be a process that goes forward step by step. The important thing is that there is a destination where to aim, and that all involved are aiming to the same destination.

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1. Introduction

The Finnish government libraries are facing new challenges at the moment. The Finnish central government itself is facing a big reform; a project is set up to study if the joining of the ministries into one single agency would be a possible option in the future. The aim is to foster the relations within the ministries in their functions and in their finances. The project will have the definitions for the policy made by the end of October 2012, and the changes will apply in 2015 the latest (when the new government begins.)

Now there are 12 ministries of which 10 have a library. The role and the services of the libraries and information services are being thought through - partly due to the Central Administration Reform -project, partly from the need of the libraries themselves to examine their functions. The basic mission of the libraries has not changed: it is to provide the information needed to the ministries staff and help them with information and knowledge management. Libraries are mostly responsible for the external information, but they are also involved in publications and record management (quite often they are in the same unit in the ministries with record management etc - the units as "Knowledge management" or "Information services"). They also have a role in being information specialists in the projects, and this role will be reasserted and developed by organizing the services in a different way.

The libraries have many functions that are similar regardless of the ministry. Librarians, information specialists and other information professionals also have partly same kind of tasks in different ministries. The government libraries are providing services mainly to the officers of their own ministry. A steady cooperation between the libraries has evolved during years, and at the moment there is for example a common library catalogue that covers the collections of eight ministries (ninth library is joining the common system this year 2012). Libraries collaborate also by developing services together: for example there is a model of a tailor-made information support for the preparation of the legislative proposals developed together (in this report called "research support for the projects").

The aim of this study is to figure out if there is something more that could be done together by sharing resources or organizing differently. What would be the benefits of reorganizing? What kind of possibilities are there to reorganize? How would a centralized model work? What could be the role of the Library of Parliament? What about the collection: what do we have, what do we need, what can we let go. We are already relying on other libraries collections: Library of Parliament, universities libraries, sector agencies libraries and other special libraries and information services.

In this study a possible model for reorganizing the government libraries is formulated and compared to the existing situation. We try to find out the benefits and the risks of the model, and then give concrete proposals how the improvements could be done.

Among other starting points of this project were the financial situation that affects the ministries and the findings of other projects. In one recent project it was found out that the information services are not utilized in some key processes in the governmental administration. The role of the information services and libraries in these processes will also be discussed.

As the project is still going on, this presentation is a snapshot of the situation in July 2012 and many things remain open. By now, the actual situation of the ministries libraries has been

gathered together, but the planning of the new concept, a common Information Center, has still got many unclear points. This presentation is the author's view of the project, and it is not the official statement of the ministries libraries.

The project was set up by the ministries, and the author was hired to work in it in February and March 2012. There's a working group which members are information professionals from the ministries. The group has met six times by now. The outcome of the project will be discussed in the network of the ministries information services (Valtipa). As said, here in IFLA the author is giving you her personal view of the project.

The information about the numbers (collection, staff, acquisitions etc) presented here are not exact, they are more or less just giving an idea of the amounts. This goes for both, the present situation and the planned Information Center's numbers.

In the paper, first the present state of the government libraries will be shortly presented; then the results of the working group's work envisioning a possible model of the services in the new operational environment. Finally a comparison between the actual situation and the elaborated model will be made, and some ideas given about which changes would be appropriate and how they could be done.

2. Government libraries today

There are 12 ministries in Finland at the moment (July 2012), and 9 of them have their own library. One has outsourced the library services to an agency, and two ministries provide some library services but don't have their own collection. One of these two is the Ministry of Defense, that made the decision of closing its own library recently; the library was shut down in February this year 2012 and the material was partly placed to different units in the ministry, partly sent to the National Repository Library and partly thrown away. There is also the Office of the Chancellor of the Justice that has a library. As the Office is situated at the same premises than few ministries, they have a tradition to collaborate with the ministries in many tasks, for example library and information services. The Office's library has a large collection and the information specialist has been very active in the collaboration regarding to the information services.

So, how are the libraries organized today? What kind of collections there are in the libraries and what kind of services they offer to the civil servants? There will be a short introduction to the present state of the libraries today, and answers to these questions in this chapter. The chapter is based on information gotten from a questionnaire that the libraries' personnel answered in March 2012. We also had an older survey that dates to 2009 that could be used as a starting point. Some of the information gathered here is the pursuit of the working group meetings in February, March and June 2012 (six meetings). The common library collection database (VNLlib) also gave us some data regarding the collection and loans.

2.1 Collections

Government libraries have different pasts: for example Ministry of Justice's library has been there "always", so that there is material dating from the 19th century; Ministry of Education and Culture's library was founded in the end of 1980's. That means that some of the collections vary a lot, in content as in size. Still, most of the collections are quite similar, topics varying by the subject of the ministry.

The common library catalogue, VNLib, was founded in 2004 and libraries have joined it one by one, so that now there are 8 libraries collections gathered to the same catalogue. Ministry of Finance and Prime Minister's Office have a joint library service, so that library is counted as one. The Office of the Chancellor of the Justice's library's collection is also included in there. The library of the Ministry of Employment and Economy is about to join the catalogue, the plan is this year 2012; then there would be only two libraries that are outside of the common catalogue, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Transport and Communications doesn't have a collection (they gave it up on it in 2007). Ministry of Defense still has some material at the ministry and that material is also included in the VNLib. There hasn't been other cooperation regarding the collections of printed material, and at the moment the classification is different in every library.

Ministries libraries' collections contain mostly material from the ministries key areas. There is also quite a lot more common material, for example topic as administration, justice, communication, leadership and management, IT, environmental issues etc. The size of the collection is about as follows:

- VNLib libraries about 72 000 titles
- Ministry of Justice about 14 000 titles
- Ministry of Employment and the Economy about 7300 titles (joining VNLib this year)
- uncatalogued titles (number is not known)

Altogether this means at least 93 000 titles. Measured as shelves (meters) the size of the collections all together is about 3800 m (includes the material that's not catalogued). A preliminary evaluation of the collections is one part of this project.

The libraries also have periodicals and electronic material. There are a lot of printed and e-periodicals in the collections. The electronic material is for the most part purchased together, that means that there is a unit at the Prime Minister's Office that negotiates the contracts for all the ministries at the same time. At the moment the material purchased like this consists for example of dictionaries, statistics, newspapers, databases, standards, legal databases, news services and country databases. There is an experts' network that decides the material purchased, and every ministry has their own member in that group. The actual negotiations and agreements are done by the special units' experts. The material is offered to the customers through the Government's offices common intranet, Senaattori. This model is working very well. In this project we try to find out if a same kind of model could be used for purchasing e-books and e-journals in the future. The material bought straight to the ministries will also be examined in this project, so that we'll find out if there are some materials that would be beneficial to acquire together.

2.2 Services

The libraries and information services mission is to provide the needed information material for the personnel of the ministries. This is to be done fast, easy for customers, reliable and cost efficiently. The material should be in the form that the customer wants it (print, electronic). Libraries are responsible to follow the information landscape of the area of their ministries and to proactively acquire material and tools for the officers, organize the material and help the customers use it. The information professionals also do the information searches, and take part to the projects as information specialists. The information professionals take care of the acquisitions (books, newspapers, magazines, journals, e-material), organize the acquired material and offer it to the customers.

Most ministry libraries only serve the government customers, but there are few libraries that are open also to the public. The biggest is the library of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where the collection is unique in Finland, and many researchers, journalists and students use the library services. Other libraries collections are not that specialized, and most of the material can be found in other libraries in Finland.

The list of the services provided includes at least

- acquisitions (books, articles, magazines, newspapers, reports, statistics etc): choosing, ordering, making agreements, billing etc
- cataloguing and descriptions
- organizing the material in intranets
- marketing the services
- new material watch
- communication of the new acquisitions and new material of the specific areas
- loans and interlibrary loans
- periodicals circulations
- information searches
- tailor-made information support for the projects
- publications responsible
- knowing the customers' needs
- helping in the use of the information sources and tools, education

2.3 Some numbers

The loans from the library collections have been slightly decreasing, if we look at the loan statistics of VNLib over five past years (2007-2011). These statistics are not the real picture of the library usage, because material is being loaned also without being marked to the records. Some of the material is also left out of the catalogues. The numbers of the Ministry of Justice OJC's and the Ministry on Environment libraries' are not available.

Last year 2011, there were about 5000 loans delivered from the collections of the ministries' libraries' that are in the common catalogue VNLib (the recorded number). There were also a little more than a thousand interlibrary loans, of which about a third were between ministries libraries. So we have to take that number off the real loans, reducing the number of loans to about 4700. Altogether the VNLib-libraries delivered about 5700 recorded loans. Of the VNLib libraries' interlibrary loans 20-25% were asked from the Library of Parliament, 15 % from the National Repository Library and one third from the university libraries. The statistics include all

the interlibrary loans, of which about 75 % were books. The rest 25 % were mainly articles. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy's interlibrary loans increase this number with 220 loans, so that makes about 1200 interlibrary loans.

There were 22 people in the ministries that have some library or information service (related to library) tasks. The resources counted as person-years were about 18. Many of these 22 persons had other tasks too, and the resources are not equally divided between ministries. Some ministries find this a problem, as they can't offer the same kind of service to their staff than other ministries. The costs of the personnel were approximately 900 000€ in 2011.

Acquisitions are also difficult to calculate, and this number is based on the information the ministries told in the questionnaire (March 2012). Acquisitions by the libraries / information services in total were about 1,1 million euros last year 2011 for the printed material (books, magazines, newspapers etc) and for the e-material acquired by the libraries. In addition to that there are the commonly acquired e-material and the material that's acquired directly to the departments and units (=not via library). Ministry of Environment's information was not available.

The premises of the libraries are in total about 1000 m² and the costs were about 330 000€ last year 2011. The premises costs were about 15 % of the total costs of the libraries, based on these numbers.

2.4 Research support for the projects

The libraries offer deeper going, tailor-made information support for the projects. There was a project in 2006, where a model for that kind of function was developed (Säädösvalmistelun tietotuki, 2006). The model was developed in co-operation with the staff of the information services and libraries, and clients were involved also. In every ministry there were clients interviewed, and the information gathered by the interviews was used as the base for the new service concept. The research support model was formulated for the legislative projects.

It was a successful project and the model is still regarded as a good and functional model. Still it hasn't been used widely in the ministries. Why is that? In this now on-going project, a full evaluation of the model wasn't possible (due to lack of time), but to have a good opinion from the librarians the issue was brought to conversation both in one of the workshops as well as in one of the research supporters network's meetings.

It became clear that the model is useful and very good. The main problem is that the deep information support for the legislative projects needs resources and new working methods. Only a couple of libraries have put the service concept in action. In many ministries the model has been piloted, but it has been difficult to reorganize the resources so that this service could be fully applied and offered to the projects. The great number of the cases realized are actually cases where the Library of Parliament has searched the international legal sources for the project. The ministry's library has only acted as a liaison between the project and the Library of Parliament's experts.

One example of the research support model was told by the library staff of the Ministry of Employment and Economy. They have been involved in two important legal projects in the end of year 2011 and beginning of 2012. The information search was made in a team of three

persons and the international legal sources were gathered by the Library of Parliament. In the ministry's library the work was discussed and divided with the three persons by the sources: one researched the articles, one books and other literature (reports etc) and one statistics and other sources. The topic was related to the subject of the ministry, but as it quite often is, it was new to the librarians. The results were excellent and useful for the project, but the time put to the support project was huge. In many ministries there are no resources to offer this important service.

As the other problems in applying the model were also recognized, they all seem to be related to the fact that there's not enough time (resources).
The information professional...

... can't promote the service, because she/he knows that won't be able to participate to the projects (no time)
... doesn't know how to promote the service (and doesn't have time to plan)
... is afraid that is not capable to assist an important project (and doesn't have time to learn and familiarize with topics or tools)
... is afraid that every project wants to use the service, and knows that it's impossible to offer it to every project

In conclusion the research support service as planned in the 2006 project can't work because the resources in a single ministry are not adequate.

In a centralized service, the research support could be organized more efficiently by allocating certain resources only for this service. Then the expertise of the information professionals could be fully exploited. They could work as a team of specialists and the work would be easier and faster than when one tries to do it alone or aside of some other major projects.

We have several examples where the centralized service works well for the research support: Library of Parliament does the legal sources searches regardless of the topic; the internal information service of the Parliament (Research Service) analyzes and researches everything that the Members of Parliament or other clients request; the VTT information service has also a centralized information service, and all requests are managed there. It's a different approach than for example in the law firms, where the information specialists are often lawyers themselves and work as a member of a smaller unit.

3. Government libraries tomorrow

3.1 Project: what's going on

The project started in the beginning of this year 2012 and is ending in the end of September. In February and March there were four meetings of a working group that consisted members of the personnel of the ministries libraries and information services. In June there were two more meetings.

Group meetings had a few aims:

Firstly, to get information from the professionals that work in the libraries and information services at the moment. They know best the actual situation, the functions, the services and the needs at their own organization. They know their customers, the changes in the information needs, the actual working environment, the resources and the possible points that need change or refreshment.

Secondly, we had speakers from other organizations, to give us ideas how things are done elsewhere and what we might be able to learn from them. That was a great opportunity to reflect the functions and aims of different information services to our actual situation and to benchmark the two Finnish organizations, Bank of Finland's library and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, Information Services. We also had Swedish government libraries as a benchmarking target, but we didn't have anyone present from there, so the presentation was based on the information gotten from e-mail interview and documents.

Third task was to form a common vision of the future of the libraries. Something that every ministry involved would accept to be the target, and the project would try to find the way how to reach that target. It was a big task and it took quite a bit of the time during the meetings (sessions three and four), also due to the changed situation of the Central Administration Reform -project. When the Library and Information Service -project was launched, the Central Administration Reform -project was not yet started. And when it started we were asked to form a common vision a lot faster than originally scheduled.

In addition, the chair of the Research Service of the Parliament was interviewed and other organizations information services and solutions were studied from the documents. In the questionnaire that ministries answered they also told about the future plans of the library, and about the role of the library and information services at the ministry. The concept is being formulated at the moment, so the plans in this paper will probably change before the end of the project.

3.2 Common library and information services for the ministries

The real results of these meetings were a lot of good discussions, sharing knowledge and experiences, lot of information for the project about the actual situation at the ministries, good benchmarking and also a common view of the way the ministries want to choose for the future and that need to be examined more carefully: a common library and information service for the ministries.

In this chapter we'll have an overview of the planned common services for the ministries, and discuss the risks and benefits found so far, as well as the things that should be done to achieve the wanted result. The complete evaluation of the model will be done during the project.

The points that need to be examined and defined in this project are discussed here and are the author's ideas of the vision. They will be discussed again with the working group and other stakeholders.

Define the concept of the new library and information service, resources gathered together.

The new Information Center will be the place where the staff of the ministries will have the information material they need in their work, as well as deeper going research support from the information professionals. It will change its services fast when needed, and proactively listen to the trends of the information field and its customers. Work will be team work, so that the staff of the Center will have an opportunity to learn from each other and specialize in different fields of the information (sources, tools, management, subject topics etc). The work tasks will be organized cost efficiently and resourced enough, so that the different tasks are going on smoothly and simply, and there will be constant development work going on, regarding the services and the collections.

The Center will be essential supporter partner of the ministries staffs' work, it will add value to the work by saving time and reassuring the right sources to be found and used. The value will be evaluated systematically. The clients know the services and easily ask for them; the Center is close to the customers. The Center's image will contain things like: reliable, fast, "perfect" in the aspect of resources, close to me, fun, easy and modern. The slogan could be something like "Ask anything!". In the government organization the Information Center would be seen as important partner in providing external information and in providing research support.

The name and branding of the Information Center is still under thinking. It's important, that the customers understand that the idea of offering the services together doesn't mean that the services are going further away from the customers. The information support can't be outsourced the way for example some of the IT-services are. Information services have to stay close to the core tasks of the ministries. For that, even the name "Information Center" must be thought through once again: does it make people think of an outsourced service center? Maybe some other name would be better, a short and positive one. Maybe even just "Library".

Define the processes of the customer service

Also examine the possibilities to link the Library of Parliament to these processes.

There will be few different processes of the customer service: getting the material the client wants and the process of the deeper information support for the projects. In the project, among other processes of the Information Center the customer service processes will be described.

The basic customer service process will have the following steps:

- 1) Contact: clients are encouraged to contact the information service whenever they need help or want some material.
- 2) The clients can contact the Center by e-mail, a form in Senaattori ("Information request", "Feedback"), by material request in the database (VNLib), by phone, visiting the Center or by chat.
- 3) All the contacts will be answered as soon as possible, and the client will know that his/her request is being taken care of.
- 4) The interlibrary loans available from the Library of Parliament will be forwarded directly to them. The possibility of direct delivery to the customers from the Library of Parliament will be examined.
- 5) Other material will be acquired where possible. The collections of other libraries will be preferred to buying the material to the own collection. Purchases are made only if the material has clearly a lasting value for the clients.

The client service process will be different for the deeper information support for the projects. There will be a short introduction of what it is about in Senaattori, and the clients can contact the Center the way they want. Still, probably the most important way is through direct contact with a starting project. The projects are being followed, and all the starting projects will have a possibility to have the support. The main projects of the Government Program will be proposed to have an information specialist's visit, so that she/he can explain what this research support is about. The Library of Parliament will be asked to continue the international legislative material research that they are doing now.

The unification of the collections

How that should be done, when and by whom. Preliminary evaluation of the collections and the collection policy will be made during this project. Examine the possibilities of more specific collection collaboration with the Library of Parliament.

The common collection has got a good base:

- common library catalogue
- active loaning
- the consortium model in purchasing the electronic material
- common projects related to library and information services
- the will of the information professionals to develop a common collection

The information about the existent collection has been gathered during this project. The evaluation of the collections will be done before the collections are unified together, and the evaluation should be made by the person that knows the collection best. There should be collection policy guidelines that must be followed when evaluating the collection, and the new unified collection will not be as large as all the existent collections put together.

The 'when' is a quite difficult question, as it depends on many things we can't really impact, for example the space given to the Center: when it would be available, what kind of space we would eventually have, how big collection would be able to have etc. Even if we plan now the space that would be needed, it can be difficult to find at the Government's premises. Then again, there is the Central Administration Reform -project, which scope is also to foster a new kind of way of working - how will the library eventually be seen there?

Find out if there will be need for "local" services in some ministries. If so, how theses would be organized.

The need for the "local" services has many aspects. These questions arose, when the group was talking about the library and information services being moved away from the core of the organization.

- Is it possible to know what's going on in the organization, if the information specialist belongs to another organization?
- How can the information services be a natural part of the processes of the organization, if the information specialist is not physically present?
- How will the clients find the information services, if they are moved?
- The service has often a face, meaning that the information specialist is well known by the clients; how can the good relations be kept?

These questions are relevant and we examined them in this project. This also includes the fact, that at the moment many information professionals have so many different tasks, that they don't have enough time for example to be part of the main processes as an information specialist.

The ministries are situated quite near to each other, and in the new central library concept, the contacts with the customers and the ministries would be carefully taken care of. Each ministry would have their own contact person, and that contact person would concentrate on that/those ministry/ies.

The Information Center should be situated to be easily accessible for the most of the staff, in the middle of the so called Government Campus. The information specialists would be able to have lunch at the same restaurants as they are used to, with the clients they know already, and also easily visit the clients that need guidance, or pop in to the team meetings to tell about the possibilities there are etc.

It's important that in every ministry there are contact persons that regularly tell the client's opinions about the Information Center's services and collections, and suggests for example acquisitions. Also it's important that everybody knows what the Information Center is doing, and knows how to contact the Center.

A special case regarding the "local" services is the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Ministry doesn't have its own library, but has a contract with the *Information Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry*, aka *Tike*, that provides, among other things, the library services. *Tike* is situated in another part of the city, in about 3 km away from the Ministry, and employs about 200 persons. There are three persons who are mainly responsible of the library and information services for the ministry. They are experts in the information when it comes to the field of this specific subject. Library service are still seen in a way as "local" - even if they are situated in another organization and physically far away.

In the library's point of view (as the above was clients), the circulation of the magazines could be one example of a local service. The subscriptions and contacts with the supplier of magazines and newspapers will be done in the Information Center, but the material will go straight to the postal addresses.

Collecting together the information about the e-material in use at the moment in the ministries

Also the costs. Check if there is something that could be purchased together.

At the moment most of the electronic material is purchased together, in a consortium. In every ministry there's a person that participates in the acquisition process by evaluating the material, communicating the needs of the ministry, and following the existing material of his/her ministry's field, also the new technology and tools and the information field in a larger point of view.

In this project one aspect was to check if there is some more e-material that would be wise to acquire together. The materials were listed, and there was only one clear service that at the moment would be justified to purchase together to everyone. The other aim was to have listed all the material for the new unit, the Information Center, so there's an idea of how much material there is and how much work it would require to take over that. The free of charge material hasn't been listed yet, but should be, because lot of the material collected and organized by the libraries are free. It will be good for the officers too, to have a possibility to look at the other

topics' links. The links will be organized to the common intranet Senaattori. The access to the e-collection must be planned in co-operation with Senaattoripalvelut (Senaattori-services).

At least one person must be resourced to the e-material collection (responsible), and the rest of the staff will also have to know the material well, to be able to teach and guide the users and to be able to fix or reclaim the problems that appear in the material.

Define the process of the acquisitions (print and e-material). Define the process of the management of the materials.

Print material will be purchased to the library collection. The supplier will be selected by tendering, and the Center will join the Hansel general agreements when possible. There is a new service, TILHA, which maybe in the future enables anyone to make a suggestion for acquisitions. In the meanwhile the customers can suggest material via e-mail, phone, chat, feedback-formula and direct contact with the staff. Some basic material will be purchased without suggestions. The Center will promote new books and materials, also the free e-publications, and then buy the book if enough officers ask for it.

Many reports and publications that the officers need are published free in the internet. Those won't be purchased as prints, but the sites are collected together and presented in an easy accessible way in the common intranet Senaattori. The new Center would collect together all the links to the material ministries need, and have them gathered at the same "portal" in Senaattori. It would need at least two persons to do it (at least in the beginning). The rest of the staff would have to be able to use and update the material also, but the planning and responsibility would be at someone's priority work task.

The magazines, journals and newspapers (periodicals) will be managed in the Information Center. The amount of the subscription is great, and the administration of the subscriptions includes the contact with the dealer, reclaims, subscriptions, checking the bills, the renewal of subscriptions. It takes a lot of time, even if the arrival control and the circulations of the magazines would be done "locally", in the ministries. There should be a person whose main responsibility would be the print and e-periodicals, and as for the other areas, the rest of the staff should know it too, for example they should be able to use the administration tool and be in contact with the provider when needed.

Cooperation with other libraries and information services

Define the cooperation with the Library of Parliament and other libraries and information services. Examine the need for the service agreements.

The co-operation with other libraries and information services is very important to the new Center. As the own collection will be kept modest as size, just the most essential material will be acquired to the own collection (print and e-collection), it is important that the other libraries' collections will be accessible and possible to be consulted. Also the expertise in sources and information services will be kept in a reasonable level, so that for example the legal information expertise of the Library of Parliament will be consulted in the future as it is now.

The cooperation with the Library of Parliament will be based on the actual situation. In the future the possibilities of deepening the cooperation will be developed. The future Information Center will be a core customer of the Library of Parliament, as the government's civil servants and information services. All the services are available free of charge. As explained above, the

experts of the Library of Parliament are cooperating with ministries' information services to provide information support to the projects and individuals involved in the drafting of legislation. In the Government network of information services professionals (Valtipa) the Library of Parliament is an active member, and they participated also in this project.

As we discussed about the collection cooperation, it's clear that the Library of Parliament would be the part that gives and the Information Center the part that uses the services. Maybe in the future the Information Centre and the Library of Parliament could cooperate in providing information services. For example the Information Center could be involved in producing some material for the Library of Parliament (ELKI database, LATI e-collections of legislative history material).

It also has to be discussed once, if a formal contract would be necessary between the new Center and other libraries or information providers. For example, the decisions about the collection policy may mean that certain materials won't be acquired to the ministries as they are part of Library of Parliament's collection. Proper documentation would promote already existing important and steady cooperation.

The Center will cooperate with many other libraries and information services as well. The actual cooperation was found out and written down in this project, and it's a good starting point for the new Center. The cooperation includes mostly interlibraryloans (all kind of material) and some research support. The cooperation is more frequent and common with some places than with others. In some cases the cooperation includes just the confidence that the material that could be needed is available somewhere, so it's not performing cooperation. On the other end is the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's agreement with the Information Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Tike. That contract would probably continue as before, at least for the research support part.

The opportunities to cooperate with other information centers and libraries will have a constant attention, and the new models of cooperation will be developed in the future as well.

Information Center's place in the organization

The library and information services will be organized as one function in the government so that there will be only one library. The library can have more than one premises in the beginning, but eventually the collections and the personnel will be gathered together in the same place.

At the organizational level the Information Center could be situated for example near the communications unit or other information services unit. The Information Center's place depends on the Central Administration Reform -project.

For example in the Parliament of Finland: the library, research service and information office (communications) form a unit called "Information and Communication Department". In the Swedish Government, Regeringskansliet, the library / information services are situated in the Office for Administrative Affairs, and in the same unit with communications ("library issues and information and communication").

Proposal of the situation of the library premises in the Government Offices

Where would be the best place, why? How much space will be needed for the collections and for the personnel?

The Center should be as close to the clients as possible. Compared to the present situation the centralized service will be closer to some clients than to some others because the ministries are situated in several premises. It would be most efficient that the personnel of the Information Center would be placed at the same premises: this way the teamwork model would also construct smoothly and naturally.

The space needed for the collection depends on the decision of what will actually be moved. Now it seems reasonable that not very much of the collection would be moved around, and for example all of the Parliamentary documents and old Finnish Law -books could be stored in a basement-type-of premises. They are needed, but they will be accessible enough if in some archive-store-type stores.

Define the personnel of the new function

How would the job descriptions be, what kind of knowledge and skills and how many people will be needed.

The leadership and management of the new unit is important, and must be planned well. The work would be done in teams, and the teams need a person in charge. At least these topics can be found for the teams: collection, tools, communications and marketing, clients, research support.

For the research support in the new Information Center the skills of the staff would be defined as: good in analyzing, fast, familiar with different sources and tools of research, able to forward the results with ease. Of course it's important to know what's going on in the ministries, and it will be carefully planned, how to keep the good relations with the clients. The information centre is not the only place that gives this kind of service: already in some ministries the project assistants have been trained to do the research support. The information centre would be there to help them too - at least by acquiring the needed materials they found for the projects.

The evaluation of the new model in the future operational environment

The evaluation of the new model will be done during this project.

3.3 Benefits and risks

The benefits hoped to be achieved with this change of organizing are:

The knowledge of the information professionals will be gathered together and the improvement of the quality of the information services is to be made possible. The professionals will be able to concentrate and specialize in certain subject areas. These deeper skills can be used to serve a larger group of clients. At the same time the work of the professionals becomes more rewarding.

The tailored information service model can be resourced efficiently and will be easier to offer to the customers as one has a team that can share the job and do teamwork doing the research.

The acquisitions will also be simpler when every ministry doesn't have to handle their own tendering processes and agreements.

The common collection and the common collection policy will help to avoid the overlapping acquisitions and decrease the time spent to the acquisitions and the cataloguing and other tasks.

The common premises for the collection will relief space at the ministries. For the library personnel, the common working place will promote a professional learning environment, as well as offer a possibility to work as a team and to offer standardized services to their customers.

The aim of the reform is to provide better services to the ministries officers, but the savings in money could also be done, for example by avoiding the overlapping acquisitions and avoiding overlapping development work.

The decision regarding the foundation of the common library and information services is depending on the results of the Central Administration Reform -project. At the moment the project is due to the end of March 2013. If the reorganization takes place the changes for the personnel and premises will be settled in a bigger frame. In the case the reform will be postponed or cancelled, the libraries can still use the results of this project as the guidelines for the development of their future cooperation.

4. Conclusion

This paper is done in the middle of the project. We don't know yet the results of the Central Administration Reform -project which will have an important impact for the reorganization of the libraries. Also the benefits and risks of the reorganization of the libraries are still being evaluated. This project is ending in September 2012. For that, there still remain quite a few matters to resolve and discuss.

The reorganization of the library services and collections seems important at the moment. The research support / deeper information support for the projects is a valuable service, but can't be fully offered and exploited without sufficient resources. The collaboration between the libraries as it has been for several years, has been good - even excellent - with a lot of outcome during the years, but insufficient for some parts of the developing working environment. At the moment, the premises are being looked at a new angle; print material is still important but library space has lost a lot of its importance. The contact with the customers is mostly made in everyday life through e-mail or phone, and customers seldom visit the actual library premises.

The common library - organization, services as well as the premises and collection - might be the way that the Finnish government libraries should choose for the near future. This doesn't mean that all the changes should be done quickly and at the same time - it's more probably going to be a process that goes forward step by step. The important thing is that there is a destination where to aim, and that all involved are aiming to the same destination.