A Multinational Study on Copyright Literacy Competencies of LIS Professionals

Tania Todorova[1], Tereza Trencheva[1], Serap Kurbanoğlu[2], Güleda Doğan[2], Aleksandra Horvat[3], and Joumana Boustany[4]

[1] State University of Library Studies and Information Technologies
Sofia, Bulgaria
{t.todorova,t.trencheva}@unibit.bg
[2] Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey
{serap,gduzyol}@hacettepe.edu.tr
[3] University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia
aleksandra.horvat@zg.htnet.hr
[4] Dicen-IDF EA 7339 Université Paris Descartes, Paris, France
Jboustany@gmail.com

Abstract. This paper presents findings from a multinational study on copyright literacy competencies of LIS (Library and Information Science) professionals. An online survey instrument was developed by the authors in order to collect data from professionals who work in cultural institutions such as libraries, archives and museums regarding their familiarity, knowledge, awareness, and opinions on copyright related issues. The survey garnered a total of 622 complete responses (148 from Bulgaria, 82 from Croatia, 311 from France and 81 from Turkey). Copyright competencies are getting more crucial for information professionals because managing and meeting copyright related challenges and trends will play a key role in shaping the future of the profession. The findings and conclusions are expected to help the LIS education community, experts of professional associations, managers and other specialists from cultural heritage institutions to discover gaps in copyright competencies of information professionals and take measures to fill those gaps.

Keywords: LIS education, information literacy, copyright literacy, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Turkey.

1   Introduction

As a result of recent developments in technological and communication devices; changes in information formats; and trends such as consortial collection development, open access and digitization, today's information professionals face more and more complicated intellectual property and copyright issues than in the past. Therefore, developing high level copyright competencies (knowledge and skills) and the ability to implement the institutional copyright policy becomes essential for LIS professionals.

Today, as awareness and interest have increased towards copyright issues, discussion of library copyright problems and policies has become widespread and the amount of information available on the subject is growing. There is a large body of literature on copyright issues in general as well as regarding libraries.

For this study, relevant recent and past publications have been reviewed. Library copyright guidebooks and handbooks prepared/written by some organizations and individuals such as eIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries) [1-3], an international not-for-profit organisation which works with libraries to enable affordable access to digital information, Crews [4], Jones [5], and Russell [6] are some important publications to mention. These publications aim to provide a basis for understanding and working with copyright issues in libraries, including how to develop library copyright policy as a tool to provide clarity on copyright issues that arise during the provision of library services, and how to manage and avoid risk for the library. Additionally, there are numerous initiatives which raise awareness regarding copyright issues in the library and university environment. The University of Connecticut Libraries Copyright Initiative [7] is an example of institutional-level initiatives.

Consequently, on one hand the importance of copyright issues for libraries has long been debated, accepted and well addressed in the literature. On the other hand, copyright the competency of information professionals is a serious issue which was neglected; however, it requires attention.

Having known the necessity of *copyright competencies* for information professionals, one can pose a question of whether or not LIS professionals are equipped with these essential competencies. The aim of this paper is to present results of a multinational survey on copyright competencies of LIS professional and address the gap in the literature.

2 The Aim, Background and Methodology

2.1 The Aim

The main goal of the survey *"Copyright Literacy of Specialists from Libraries and Other Cultural Institutions"* is to investigate actual copyright competency levels of LIS professional in different countries.

In this paper, the following research questions are explored:

- to what extent LIS professionals are familiar with copyright related issues;
- to what extent they are aware of copyright policies and practices within their country and institutions they work for;
- what their opinions are in regard to the inclusion of copyright-related issues in LIS education and training;
- to what extent there are differences among countries.

Findings of this study are expected to highlight gaps in copyright literacy competencies of LIS professionals.

2.2   Background

This study is carried out as part of a scientific project with international participation *Copyright Policy of Libraries and Other Cultural Institutions*, funded by the National Science Fund of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science.

During the first phase of the project, an extensive literature search and review was carried out. As a result, a thematic bibliography which includes about 3200 records, titled as *Copyright Publications,* was prepared and published [8]. This bibliography covers scientific publications, such as monographs and articles, on copyright-related issues within the cultural institution context. A search in library catalogs, publishers' catalogs, scientific databases and open repositories was carried out to locate and access related publications for the period of 2003-2013 [9].

During the second phase of the project, based on the literature review, a survey instrument was developed and a multi-national survey was conducted. Bulgaria, Croatia and Turkey were involved in the project at the beginning and surveys were conducted in these countries during July-October 2013. In 2014 France joined in the project and the same survey was conducted in France during January-March 2014. Detailed information about the survey is presented under Methodology.

2.3   Methodology

An online survey instrument was developed by the authors in order to collect data from professionals who work in cultural institutions such as libraries, archives and museums, regarding their familiarity, knowledge, awareness and opinions on copyright-related issues. Because of the multi-national scope, during the development of the questionnaire, eIFL, IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) and WIPO guidelines were primarily used, however specific conditions of participant countries and their national copyright legislations were not taken into account.

The questionnaire consists of four main parts and includes mainly closed (some based on 5-point Likert Scale) and a few open questions. The first part of the questionnaire aims to find out about the knowledge and awareness of the respondents regarding copyright-related issues in an LIS context. The second part covers questions regarding the opinions of the respondents towards institutional level copyright policy. The third part is about LIS education (tertiary education and in-service training). The last part aims to gather demographic information including age, gender, educational background and the professional experience of the respondents.

As mentioned earlier, the survey was conducted in four countries, namely Bulgaria, Croatia, France and Turkey. Each author translated the original survey (which was prepared in English, the common language among researchers) into their own languages with an effort to keep the meaning and the intent of the original survey. Methods of sampling varied in each country. Convenient sampling is mostly used. Researchers tried to reach as many LIS professionals from different cultural institutions as possible, through professional discussion lists and personal contacts, to be able to draw meaningful conclusions out of the data collected.

LimeSurvey was used for on-line data collection. Survey data was processed by the statistical package SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for Windows 21.0. Descriptive statistics were mainly used for data analysis. Chi-square test was run to test correlations between certain variables.

3 Findings

The survey garnered 622 totally complete responses: Bulgaria - 148 (24%); Croatia - 82 (13%); France - 311 (50%); Turkey - 81 (13%).

3.1 Demographics

Out of 622 respondents, 76% are female and 24% are male. The majority of the respondents from Bulgaria, Croatia and France are female (94%, 82% and 73% respectively), while Turkey has almost equal rates by gender (47% female and 53% male).

The majority of the participants are ages 30-49 (61%). This is followed by those in the age range of 50-60 (24%). 11% of respondents are younger than 30 and 4% are over 60 years old. Age difference by country is found statistically significant ($\chi^2_{(12)}$ = 87.179, p = 0.000). 76% of Bulgarian respondents and 59% of Croatian respondents are ages 40-60, while 64% of Turkish and 66% of French respondents are ages 30-49 (see Figure 1).

The difference by country is statistically significant ($\chi^2_{(9)}$ = 102.590, p = 0.000). The Masters degree is common, over 50%, in all countries, except Turkey (35%).

The majority of respondents (72%) specialized in Library Science while the rest specialized in History (9%), Archive Science (6%), Cultural Heritage (4%), Museology (0.5%) and other disciplines (9%).

As for institutional affiliation, the majority work in libraries (78%). The rest work in archives (2%), museums (1%), and other cultural institutions (19%). While almost half of the respondents from Turkey and France work in university libraries, the majority of respondents from Bulgaria and Croatia (over 35%) are from public libraries.

More than half of the respondents (57%) hold a Masters degree. This is followed by the Bachelors degree (27%), and PhD (8%). Only 8% indicated "other" option.
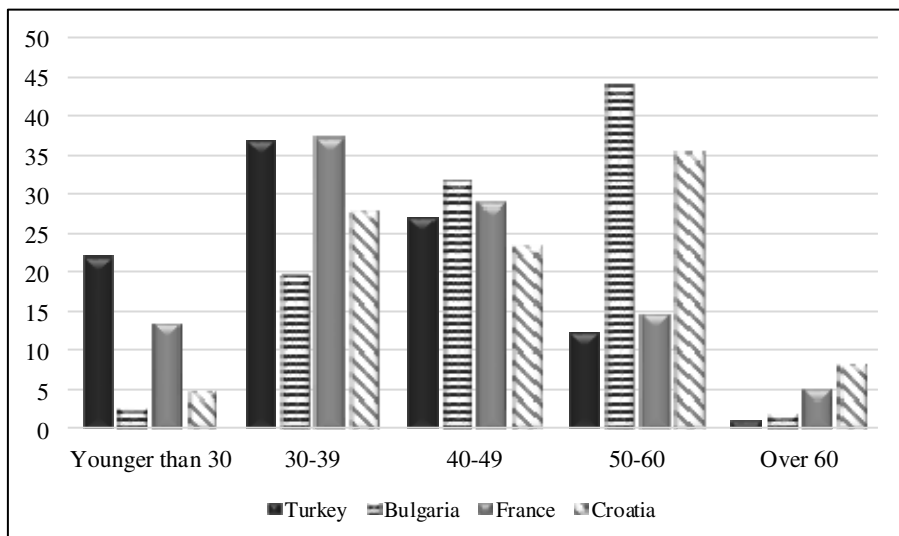

Fig. 1. Age distribution by country

Work experience of the respondents are as follows: less than five years (30%); 5-9 years (23%); 10-14 years (13%); 15-19 years (12%); 20 and more years (23%). The length of work experience is significantly different by country ($\chi^2_{(12)}$ = 119.742, p = 0.000). 65% of respondents from Turkey and 66% of respondents from France have 0-9 years of work experience. Almost half of the respondents from Bulgaria and Croatia are more experienced, with over 14 and over 19 years respectively.

3.2   General Knowledge and Awareness Regarding Copyright Issues

The first part of the survey is designed to collect data about the knowledge and awareness of respondents on issues related to copyright. The first 18 questions are on various aspects of copyright, analyzed together, such as national copyright legislation (Q1); international copyright legislation (Q2); national copyright institutions (Q3); international copyright institutions (Q4); collective rights management organizations in the country (Q5); clearing rights (Q6); licensing for information sources (Q7); licensing conditions in respondent's institutions (Q8); copyright issues regarding the development of institutional repositories (Q9); copyright issues regarding virtual services within e-learning practices (Q10); Creative Commons Licences (Q11); copyleft (Q12); open access, open data, open educational resources (Q13); fair use (Q14); copyright issues regarding digitization (Q15); copyright issues regarding materials from public domain (Q16); copyright issues regarding out-of-print works (Q17); copyright issues regarding orphan works (Q18).

Responses to these questions required responses on a 5-point Likert scale, in which 1 corresponds to *not at all familiar* and 5 corresponds to *extremely familiar*.

Figure 2 presents the results according to country: Bulgaria (BG), Croatia (HR), France (FR) and Turkey (TR). Because LIS specialists who work in cultural institutions are heavily involved in dissemination of information, they are expected to have high level competencies regarding copyright issues. Therefore on a 5-point Likert scale the *ideal zone* is determined between point 4 (*moderately familiar*) and point 5 (*extremely familiar*). However, results of the survey indicate a level far from the desired *ideal zone*; in other words, the findings indicate a level far from being satisfactory.

As the findings clearly show, respondents' answers hardly reach and pass the point 3 (somewhat familiar) level. Among four countries, the familiarity leader is France. In terms of knowledge of national copyright legislation (Q1); national copyright institutions (Q3); licensing for information sources (Q7); licensing conditions in respondents' institutions (Q8); Creative Commons Licenses (Q11); open access, open data, open educational resources (Q13); copyright issues regarding digitization (Q15); copyright issues/solutions regarding materials from public domain (Q16); copyright issues/solutions regarding out-of-print works (Q17), the respondents' familiarity level indicates point 3 or above (see Figure 2).

For the rest of the questions, familiarity levels of respondents are below point 3 (somewhat familiar), which indicates a weaker level of knowledge and awareness compare to the importance of the subject addressed. Familiarity- and awareness-wise, France is followed by Turkey. The lowest familiarity level belongs to respondents from Bulgaria and Croatia. Findings indicate that, in general, knowledge and awareness levels of respondents are hardly at the desired level.
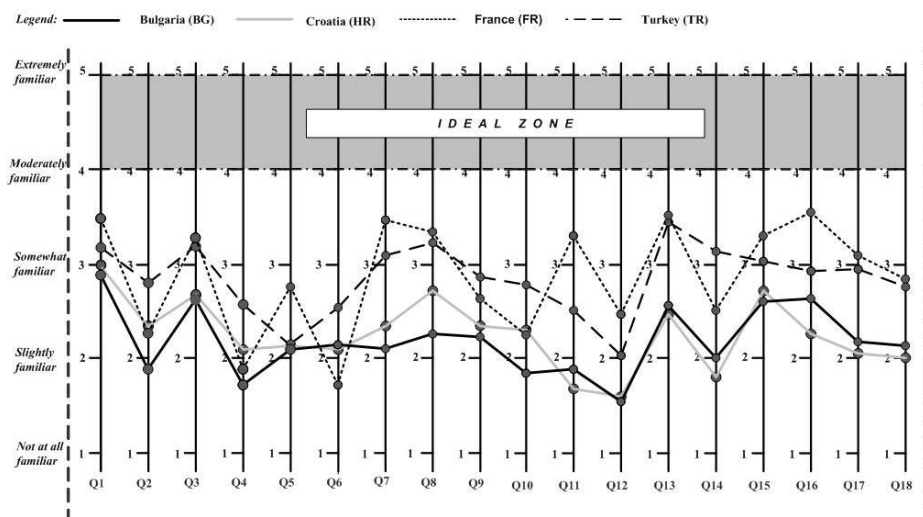
Fig. 2. Familiarity/awareness level of respondents regarding copyright issues by country

Copyright-related international institutions (Q4), clearing rights (Q6), copyleft (Q12) and fair use (Q14) are among the issues with which respondents are least familiar. Respondents are slightly more knowledgeable and aware of licensing issues. This could be possibly because they deal with licencing issues in their work practices.

Respondents were required to answer several additional questions. When they are asked to rate their level of awareness regarding intellectual property and copyright issues, only 6% indicated the *extremely aware* level. 26% rated their level as *moderately aware*, 28% *somewhat aware*, 28% *slightly aware* and 8% *not at all aware*. Difference by country on self-rated awareness levels of respondents is found statistically significant ($\chi^2_{(12)} = 101.409$, $p = 0.000$). The self-evaluated awareness level is lowest for Croatian and Bulgarian respondents, and highest for French respondents. Turkish respondents have a moderate awareness level (see Figure 2).

Findings indicate that self-rated awareness levels of respondents differs by gender ($\chi^2_{(4)} = 37.804$, $p = 0.000$). Male respondents seem to be more confident than female. Statistically significant correlation is also found between awareness level and the degree respondents hold - awareness level increases when the degree increases - ($\chi^2_{(12)} = 101.298$, $p = 0.000$); awareness level and the subject studied in favor of Library Science ($\chi^2_{(4)} = 9.164$, $p = 0.057$); and awareness level and length of work experience - awareness decreases with the increased length of work experience - ($\chi^2_{(16)} = 30.003$, $p = 0.018$). On the other hand, data indicates no statistically significant correlation between self-rated awareness level and age ($\chi^2_{(16)} = 18.125$, $p = 0.317$). There is a moderate awareness level for all age groups.

Although, relatively lower familiarity level and self-evaluated awareness level of Bulgarian and Croatian participants pose a question regarding whether or not their affiliation (predominantly public libraries) is an important factor - since public librarians generally are not as heavily involved in copyright issues as academic librarians - on this difference, results indicate moderate awareness level for librarians from both public and university libraries.
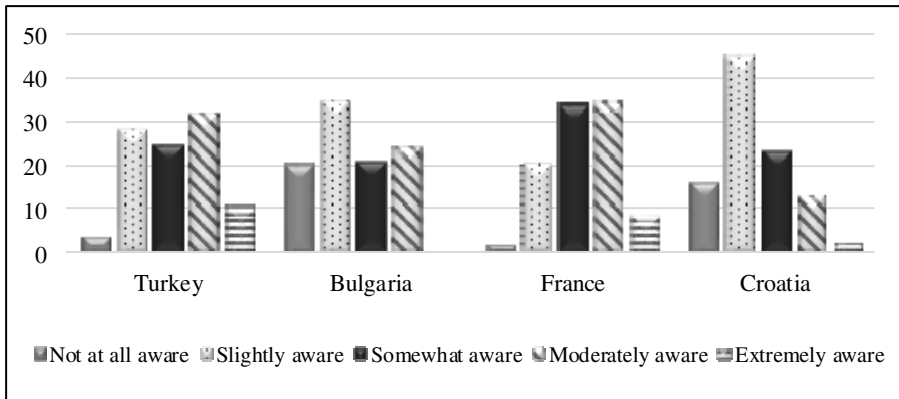
Fig. 3. Self-rated awareness level of respondents on issues related to intellectual property/copyright

Successful strategic management in digitization - one of the tasks of contemporary cultural institutions - combines the realization of three main stages: digital conversion; management of digital information sources and offering services based on digital collections. The survey recorded that about 40% of respondents are either moderately or well familiar with copyright issues regarding digitization including digitization of materials from public domain. They are least familiar (below 30% are either moderately or well familiar) with copyright issues regarding orphan and out-of-print works. When the number of materials with orphan and out-of-print works status is considered, increasing the existing level of respondents' competence regarding these types of materials seems critical.

When respondents asked about their preferred sources when they search for information regarding intellectual property and copyright, books and articles are indicated as the most preferred and referred information sources (73%). This is an indicator that shows the need for literature on the subject from national authors and translations of materials of recognized foreign experts and organizations (if not already available). Internet sources such as specialized websites (71%), colleagues (56%), professional discussion lists (40%), experts from the academic and scientific community (33%), Blogs/Wikis (31%), lawyers (26%) and WIPO (17%) are also among the sources they consult when they need information. Quite a number of respondents prefer professional associations, such as the national library and other professional associations (43%), IFLA (24%) and the Electronic Information for Libraries Network (12%), as a source of information and consultation. This data demonstrate the important role of professional associations to provide information on copyright-related issues.

About half of the respondents (59%) claimed either moderate or extreme level of interest (38% and 21% respectively) in copyright-related initiatives of professional organizations. Country differences are statistically significant ($\chi^2_{(12)} = 94.735$, $p = 0.000$). Respondents from Croatia are the most interested group. They are followed by their colleagues from France, Bulgaria and Turkey (with rates of 73%, 66%, 57% and 25%, respectively).

A statistically significant correlation is found between respondents' interest in the initiatives of international and national associations and the degree they hold ($\chi^2_{(12)}$ = 75.337, p = 0.000). Respondents who have Masters and PhD degrees are more concerned with these initiatives. On the other hand, no correlation is found between respondents' interest towards the initiatives of international and national associations and gender ($\chi^2_{(4)}$ = 7.661, p = 0.105), age ($\chi^2_{(16)}$ = 14.278, p = 0.578) and work experience ($\chi^2_{(16)}$ = 16.188, p = 0.440).

Awareness of the IFLA and eIFL initiatives regarding copyright exceptions and limitations for cultural institutions is, in general, low (lower than 30%). This differs by country and the difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2_{(3)}$ = 43.128, p = 0.000). The percentage of Bulgarian and Croatian respondents who are aware of the above-mentioned initiatives are similar (about 30%). The French respondents' percentage is lower (18%), while the Turkish respondents' percentage is higher (over 50%).

As for the existence of a national copyright strategy, while 46% of respondents' answers are positive, 22% are negative and 32% are unsure. Data analysis by country indicates contradictory answers from the same country. For instance, although there is a national copyright strategy in Croatia, only 34% of respondents gave a positive answer to this question; 28% of answers were negative and the rest were unsure.

The same applies for the following questions regarding knowledge of limitations and exceptions in national copyright laws (duration of copyright protection; exceptions for private use, educational, scientific and research purposes and exceptions for libraries, educational institutions, museums, archives). Contradictory answers for such kinds of straightforward questions, no doubt, indicate an unsatisfactory level of knowledge and awareness of copyright law and the policies of implementation.

Respondents also were asked to indicate their opinions regarding certain copyright-related statements. 81% of respondents agree that services offered by libraries and other cultural heritage institutions should comply with copyright legislation; 74% agree that worldwide harmonization of copyright exceptions and limitations for memory institutions is necessary; 75% agree that WIPO should better define copyright exceptions and limitations regarding digital content; 82% agree that WIPO's *Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled* is an important achievement. Although, there is a positive attitude in general (at least 75%), the percentage of negative and neutral answers (lower than 5% and about 20% respectively) should not be underestimated. Especially concerning is an almost 20% non-positive (either negative or neutral) answer rate for a statement on the necessity of copyright compliance of services offered by cultural institutions.

3.3 Knowledge and Opinions on Institutional Copyright Policy

The majority of respondents (84%) declared the need for an institutional copyright policy for libraries, archives and other cultural institutions. About three fourths (76%) indicated that their institutions possess resources protected by copyright and related rights. While 13% were uncertain, 11% think that their institutions do not possess resources under copyright protection. This is an indicator, no matter how they

evaluate their awareness level, which proves that at least about one-fourth of respondents (24%) are not aware of the scope of copyright issues with which cultural institutions are dealing. The percentage (24%) of those who are uncertain about whether their institution has an institutional copyright policy also verifies this finding. Only 34% of respondents claim that their institution has a copyright policy; the rest (42%) claim the opposite.

71% of respondents claim that in their institutions there are no personnel specifically appointed to be in charge of copyright issues, while 14% are unsure and 15% claim the existence of such personnel. It is important to find out the actual reason for the low number of employees in charge of copyright issues despite its increasing importance. If it is because of the lack of knowledge and expertise, an active collaboration with LIS schools and professional associations for training could be suggested. However, if it is because institutions find it unnecessary, this could be an important indicator for the lack of awareness at the institutional level.

3.4   Opinions on Inclusion of Copyright as a Subject in LIS Education

A high majority of respondents (97%) agree that intellectual property and copyright subjects should be included in the curriculum of Library and Information Science and Cultural Heritage Science Education, as well as in the continuing education programs. Intellectual property and copyright subjects are included in LIS curricula in surveyed countries, however in every school they are on a different depth and level (a more general level in undergraduate programs and more in-depth in graduate programs).

As Joint [10] indicates, knowledge-based economies require experts such as librarians and information specialists who can interpret issues related to intellectual property. They are the specialists who are responsible for creating a policy of promoting understanding and resolving legal disputes and conflicts that are unique to this aspect of the Information Society. One way to achieve this is to include the topic of intellectual property in the LIS curricula. In this respect, it is a positive finding that the vast majority of respondents believe that intellectual property and copyright subjects should be a part of LIS education. Since it is to some extent already included in the curricula, further investigation is needed to elaborate in what ways it can be improved.

As for the appropriate level for including copyright issues in the curricula of LIS education, most of the respondents agree that it should be included in more than one level of the 3-cycles in higher education (undergraduate, Masters and PhD). While more than three fourths (71%) of respondents claim that undergraduate curricula should cover copyright issues, the percentage of respondents who think the Masters and PhD curricula should cover the subject is relatively smaller (54% and 22% respectively).

The preferred forms - preferred by more than half of the respondents - for continuing education on intellectual property and copyright are as follows: thematic workshops (69%), training courses (56%), websites, blogs and wikis (54%), and distance learning, including online courses, videos, etc. (51%).

4   Conclusions

The main findings of this multi-national survey conducted in Bulgaria, Croatia, France and Turkey can be summarized as follows: the level of knowledge and the awareness of respondents (managers and specialists responsible for information services in cultural institutions) regarding copyright issues are far from being satisfactory. Their knowledge regarding national copyright strategy and policy are contradictory. Although it is a small percentage, 16% of respondents are either unsure or do not find it necessary for cultural institutions to have an institutional copyright policy. One-fourth of respondents (25%) are either unsure or do not think that their institutions possess resources under copyright protection. The same number of respondents (almost one-fourth) are uncertain of whether there is a copyright policy in their institution. The vast majority of respondents are in favor of including copyright-related issues in LIS education as well as in continuing education programs. The findings highlight some commonalities as well as differences among countries.

The findings indicate a need for improvement. Measures should be taken to increase both awareness and the knowledge level of information professionals regarding on copyright issues. Both the LIS curricula and continuing education programs should be revised to include intellectual property learning content which that provides in- depth information along with case studies. Issues which indicate the lowest awareness level, such as knowledge of the limitations and exceptions in the national copyright laws, solutions about digitization of orphan and out-of-print works, international copyright institutions, clearing rights, and concepts of copyleft and fair use should be included in these programs. Development and actualization of training programs in different forms, including face-to-face and distance learning are needed. Training programs, conferences, and workshops can be organized in collaboration with LIS schools and professional associations. Distance education and on-line consultations could be a good option since they are easier to attend and therefore generally the most preferred by those professionals who are working full-time.

The findings indicate a high degree of interest in the initiatives of the international and national professional associations on copyright- related issues. This interest could be a good basis for planning future initiatives by professional associations. We should also keep in mind that a lot of good practices and initiatives already exist, which aim to raise awareness of copyright issues in the memory institutions - these models could be popularized and implemented.

The findings of this study indicate a need for further research and can be used to strengthen the relationship between education/training and practice by addressing the gaps in copyright competencies of LIS professionals.

5   Future Plans

Researchers from other countries continue to be interested in the survey. In the period of June - September 2014, the same survey will be conducted in Finland, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Romania and the USA. These will give authors a chance to make comparisons more widely. The development of the project can be followed on its website: http://copyrightlib.unibit.bg/en.

References

1. Developing a Library Copyright Policy: An eIFL Guide (2012), `http://www.eifl.net/english-developing-library-copyright-policy`
2. Copyright for Librarians: The Esential Handbook. Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University (ed). eiFL, Utrecht (2012)
3. Treaty Proposal on Copyright Limitations and Exceptions for Libraries and Archives. Version 4.3 (2012)
4. Crews, K.: Copyright Law for Librarians and Educators. ALA, Chicago (2012)
5. Jones, B.M.: Protecting Intellectual Freedom in Your Academic Library. ALA, Chicago (2009)
6. Russell, C.: Complete Copyright: An Everyday Guide for Librarians. ALA, Chicago (2004)
7. Oakley, B., Pittman, B., Rudnick, T.E.: Tackling Copyright in the Digital Age: An Initiative of the University of Connecticut Libraries. J. Access Services 5, 265–283 (2008)
8. Vasileva, R.: Copyright Publications: Thematical Bibliography. Za bukvite-O pismeneh, Sofia (2013) (in Bulgarian)
9. Yankova, I., Vasileva, R., Stancheva, S., Miltenoff, P.: A Bibliographical Overview of "Copyright Literacy" as a Key Issue in Memory Institution Management. In: Kurbanoğlu, S., Grassian, E., Mizrachi, D., Catts, R., Špiranec, S. (eds.) ECIL 2013. CCIS, vol. 397, pp. 655–661. Springer, Heidelberg (2013)
10. Joint, N.: Teaching Intellectual Property Rights as Part of the Information Syllabus. J. Library Review 55, 330–336 (2006)