



The 26th Meeting of the Permanent UNIMARC Committee
2016 April 4-6, National Library of Portugal
Lisbon, Portugal

A report by Jay Weitz, Vice Chair of the PUC
OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Dublin, Ohio, USA

The 26th Meeting of the Permanent UNIMARC Committee

On 2016 April 4-6, IFLA's Permanent UNIMARC Committee (PUC) gathered at the National Library of Portugal in Lisbon for its Twenty-Sixth Meeting. In attendance were Dr. Nijolė Bliūdžiuvienė (National Library of Lithuania), Ms. Maria Inês Cordeiro (National Library of Portugal, Director of the UNIMARC Strategic Programme), Ms. Rosa Galvão (National Library of Portugal), Mr. Massimo Gentili-Tedeschi (Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense and ICCU), Ms. Gordana Mazić (IZUM, Slovenia), Ms. Mirna Willer (University of Zadar, Croatia, Honorary Member and Special Consultant), Ms. Olga Zhlobinskaya (Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library, Russia), and Mr. Jay Weitz (OCLC, USA, Vice Chair and Rapporteur). Also present for portions of the meeting was Mr. Gordon Dunsire (Independent Consultant, Scotland, and Chair of the RDA Steering Committee).

During the three days of meetings, the PUC discussed a total of ten UNIMARC/Bibliographic (U/B) and UNIMARC/Authority (U/A) change proposals, the draft of the UNIMARC Guidelines for Archives, issues that have arisen in the course of Mr. Dunsire's work on the UNIMARC in RDF Project, and other topics. Minutes from the informal PUC meeting in Cape Town, South Africa (August 2015) were reviewed, updated, and corrected.

On the afternoon of 2016 April 6, following the PUC meeting proper, Mr. Dunsire and Ms. Willer presented a seminar entitled "Unleashing UNIMARC to the Semantic Web: UNIMARC in RDF" to an audience of around fifty attendees.

UNIMARC Formats and Guidelines

The UNIMARC change proposals were discussed mostly in numerical order. Unless otherwise noted, the proposals were accepted or accepted as amended. In some cases, these actions represent final approval of previously accepted proposals that were subsequently found to need additional work.

- UNIMARC/Bibliographic (U/B): The current 3rd edition was published in mid-2008. Updates through December 2012 are currently available at <http://www.ifla.org/publications/unimarc-bibliographic-3rd-edition-updates-2012>. Work is underway to make available on the Web a consolidated set of U/B updates through 2016.

- U/B Record Label Position 09 (Type of Control) has a new code “m” (Museum) to better accommodate control of museum objects for artefactual value and curatorial information.
 - U/B Control Subfield \$2 (System Code) was broadened to allow its use for any controlled vocabulary.
 - U/B 183 (Coded Data Field – Carrier Type) had several changes and clarifications approved including the definition of subfield \$a as Carrier Type Code.
 - U/B 240 (Physical Characteristics) is a newly defined field allowing for greater detail in describing Dimensions (subfield \$a), Materials and Technique Display (subfield \$b), Medium Material (subfield \$c), Support Material (subfield \$d), and Technique (subfield \$e), particularly for cultural objects.
 - U/B 600, 601, 602, 604, 605, 606, 607 (Subject Analysis and Bibliographic History Block): A proposal to add subfields \$o (Relator Term) and \$4 (Relator Code) was not accepted.
 - U/B 631 (Occupation) and U/B 632 (Function) are new fields functioning as collection-level subject data regarding the persons, families, and/or corporate bodies documented in the archival material being described.
 - U/B 700, 702 (Personal Name) subfield \$k (Attribution Qualifier) was defined for attribution qualifiers for a personal name (such as “follower of”). Clarifications will also be made to the corresponding subfields \$4 to limit their use to relationships between a name and a work (such as “formerly attributed to”).
 - U/B 700, 702, 710, 712, 720 (Responsibility Block, Personal, Corporate Body and Meeting, and Family Names): Subfields \$j (Relator Term), \$2 (System Code), and \$8 (Materials Specified) were added to each field. The definition of subfield \$4 (Relator Code) was broadened to include the use of non-UNIMARC code lists.
 - U/B Appendix C: Relator Codes: Two new Relator Codes have been defined for “Author, Attributed” (062) and “Former Attributed Author” (385). Proposed new Relator Codes for “depicted” and “setting” were not accepted.
- UNIMARC/Authorities (U/A): The current 3rd edition was published in July 2009. Updates through December 2012 are currently available at <http://www.ifla.org/publications/unimarc-authorities-3rd-edition-updates-2012>. Work is underway to make available on the Web a consolidated set of U/A updates through 2016.
 - U/A Control Subfield \$2 (System Code) was broadened to allow its use for any controlled vocabulary.

- U/A 200 (Authorized Access Point – Personal Name) subfield \$k (Attribution Qualifier) was defined for attribution qualifiers for a personal name (such as “follower of”). Clarifications will also be made to the corresponding subfield \$4 to limit its use to relationships between a name and a work (such as “formerly attributed to”).
 - U/A 223, 423, 523 (Authorized, Variant, and Related Access Point – Character) were approved in principle to accommodate the names of characters primarily in performance-related resources.
 - U/A 340 (Biography and Activity Note) subfield \$c was defined for Occupation/Profession and subfield \$d for Field of Activity. Defining the Second Indicator to differentiate structured from unstructured notes and defining subfield \$3 (Authority Record Identifier) were not accepted.
 - U/A 600, 601, 602, 606, 607 (Subject Analysis and Entity History Block): A proposal to add subfields \$o (Relator Term) and \$4 (Relator Code) was not accepted.
- UNIMARC Guidelines for Archives.
 - The Draft 3rd Version of *Guidelines for Archives* (dated 2016) is still in need of non-Russian examples.

UNIMARC in RDF Project

Various issues that have arisen in the course of Mr. Dunsire’s work on representing UNIMARC codes and terms as a Resource Description Framework (RDF) vocabulary in the Open Metadata Registry (OMR) were discussed. He strongly suggested that the Library of Congress (LC), Music Library Association (MLA), and International Association of Music Libraries (IAML) try to consolidate their various controlled vocabularies for medium of performance, format of notated music, and form of musical work, incorporating the best qualities of each.

Within UNIMARC itself, the consolidation, harmonization, and rationalization of code lists and vocabularies would also be greatly advantageous. UNIMARC currently has codes and vocabularies that purport to cover the same areas (including formats of notated music, colour, sound, and illustrations) with inconsistent and/or contradictory lists. Members of the PUC are working on this.

There are also occasional confusions over the use of the letter “l” (el) versus the numeral “1” (one) and between the letter “O” (oh) and the numeral “0” (zero) that need to be straightened out. The UNIMARC namespace can be found at <http://iflstandards.info/ns/unimarc/>.

“Unleashing UNIMARC to the Semantic Web: UNIMARC in RDF”

Following the 2016 April 6 session of the PUC meeting, Mr. Dunsire and Ms. Willer presented the seminar entitled “Unleashing UNIMARC to the Semantic Web: UNIMARC in RDF” to an audience of around fifty attendees, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. The Resource Description Framework (RDF) is designed for worldwide machine processing of metadata, requiring disambiguation, simplicity, and machine-readable identifiers. In contrast to most common Web searching, which has no intelligence behind it, RDF allows data to be expressed as simple irreducible statements called “triples,” consisting of subject, predicate [nature], and object [value].

In this way, IFLA standards including UNIMARC may be represented for use in the Semantic Web. Legacy data can be published as Linked Data using RDF, backed by the authority of the IFLA brand. Universal Resource Identifiers (URIs) have no intrinsic meaning; they are just identifiers. RDF requires the subject and the predicate to be URIs, but the object can be a URI or a literal string. Controlled terminologies are represented as RDF value vocabularies, with entities, attributes, and relationships as RDF element set vocabularies; attributes and relationships as RDF properties/predicates; and entities as RDF classes. UNIMARC Bibliographic has one entity, “Resource.” URIs must be globally unique. In UNIMARC, this is achieved thanks to the domain and the local UNIMARC part. Lossless data require the finest level of detail, including coded indicators and subfields. Blanks are represented by an underscore.

Both the UNIMARC and RDA element sets are housed in the Open Metadata Registry (OMR). For the most part, UNIMARC has historically kept semantic and content separate, with the one major exception being the parallel title indicated in U/B 200 subfield \$f followed by an equal sign. When the same URI is used for translated elements and vocabularies switching among different languages for equivalent terms is allowed. Aggregating statements (such as place, publisher, and date being located together in U/B 210) are yet to be developed, as are aspects of sequencing and repeatability. Application profiles may help with some of these issues yet to be dealt with. UNIMARC and ISBD have corresponding elements, but they have not yet been updated to account for the Consolidated ISBD. The alignment of terms can be equal (“same as”), broader, or narrower, depending upon circumstances.

Both Ms. Willer and Mr. Dunsire remain hopeful that these and other issues will eventually be resolved at Semantic Web levels above that of library data. UNIMARC Level 0, which is the most granular, is based on the OMR MARC 21 element set. BIBFRAME (BF) is coarser, so lossier. UNIMARC mostly separates content/values from structure/encoding, whereas MARC 21 mixes them regularly. The BF model is largely based on data found in legacy records.

In Memoriam: Mr. Alan Hopkinson

It was with great sadness that members of the PUC learned right after the April 2016 meeting that the committee's former chair, Mr. Alan Hopkinson (Middlesex University) passed away on 2016 April 7. Mr. Hopkinson had been involved in UNIMARC work since compiling and editing the original *UNIMARC Handbook*, published in 1983. He served as chair of the PUC from 2005 until 2013.

Upcoming UNIMARC Meetings

There will likely not be an informal meeting of the PUC in August 2016 at the IFLA Congress in Columbus, Ohio, USA, because the majority of members are not planning to attend. The venue for the 2017 formal PUC meeting is yet to be determined, although it is expected that a UNIMARC Users Meeting will be held in conjunction with it.