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Report on RDA Italian translation.

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ABSTRACT

The Director of the Central Institute for the Union Catalogue of Italian libraries (ICCU) provides an updated overview on some of the several activities of the Institute, with special regard to the adaptation, translation and dissemination of international standards for bibliographic description among a variegated national library community.

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I would like to thank the organisers for their kind invitation to this event, which is a valuable opportunity for a shared reconsideration of the challenges posed by the new cataloguing practices in the international library community. In this context, it is my pleasure to present briefly some of the activities of the Central Institute for the Union Catalogue of Italian libraries, better known through the acronym ICCU. ICCU manages the National Library Service (SBN), the online collective catalogue of Italian libraries and network of Italian bibliographic services. SBN brings together in a unique resource more than 6,000 libraries, connected to a central Index through 99 nodes. The result is a catalogue comprising about 17 millions of bibliographic records, for ca. 87 millions of locations in libraries throughout Italy. Cataloguing rules and standards play a central role in this process, in order to allow an actual cooperation between libraries. This is a crucial point, as in SBN we find national libraries, public libraries, academic libraries, school libraries, religious libraries and even private collections. Despite their different profiles, they all contribute to build up the SBN database. ICCU is the institution responsible for the coordination of cataloguing and documentation activities for the libraries, which are part of the SBN network and the resulting collective catalogue. According to this mission, ICCU is a member of the commission for the development of the REICAT, the first Italian cataloguing code based on FRBR, which was published in 2009 and is now available through a wiki platform. Some chapters have been revised in 2017 and already published as well.[1] A careful revision is in progress and more updated chapters, illustrated through detailed explanations and examples, are forthcoming in the next few months. This is expected to build a national consistency in bibliographic description despite the various types of libraries found in SBN.

The sharing of cataloguing guidelines through a wiki platform is the result of an agreement with Wikimedia Italy.[2] Such cooperation is meant to promote the reuse of data and a wider sharing of knowledge within both the national and international framework. The *Guidelines for cataloguing in the National union catalogue,*[3] which have been developed to adapt international standards to a new and more flexible architecture of SBN, have just been uploaded to the online Wiki too. A pool of experts is working to enrich and update the related documentation. The dissemination of international standards for bibliographic description among Italian libraries is, indeed, another core task of the Institute, which is in charge of the translation into Italian of ISBD, FRBR, metadata elements and RDA. Despite RDA has not been adopted as a cataloguing code for the SBN union catalogue, on March 2014 ICCU signed an agreement with the American Library Association Publishing to secure the Italian translation rights of RDA. The translation into Italian was carried out by a technical working group, composed by librarians of the main national and academic libraries as well as experts from cultural institutions and bibliographic agencies.[4] The Italian translation was published in 2015 and, in January 2016, uploaded on RDA Toolkit, a portal that allows hyper-textual access to the rules through various tools and external resources as well. The technical group is now working to update the translation according to the more recent developments of the standard. In addition to this, the team has undertaken a thorough analysis of RDA in order to evaluate its principles,

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[1] http://norme.iccu.sbn.it/index.php?title=Reicat.

[2] The content of the Agreement is available on the ICCU website http://www.iccu.sbn.it/opencms/export/sites/iccu/documenti/2016/convenzione_Wikimedia.pdf.

[3] http://norme.iccu.sbn.it/index.php/Normative_catalografiche.

[4] http://www.iccu.sbn.it/opencms/opencms/it/main/attivita/gruppilav_commissioni/pagina_0004.html.

purposes, applicability and eventual feasibility within the national context with special regard to the bibliographic domain.

The Institute is involved in several international activities for the definition of cataloguing standards, rules, models and formats in every field of library and information services. The REICAT Committee[5] looks attentively at the work of International Committees and other initiatives of the IFLA for the matching between the new RDA standard and pre-existing national rules for bibliographic description. More specifically, the comparison between the structure of descriptions is intended to establish a correspondence between tools of information retrieval in the wider international framework of activities.

ICCU encourages a straightforward dialogue with foreign countries, especially within the EURIG network, based on the sharing of experiences and targeted on the strengthening of the informational content of data cataloguing, with special consideration of the history, cultural traditions and national identity of each country. In this context, a primary objective of the Institute today is to make available to the large community of Italian cataloguers a comprehensive code to suit all their possible needs as for terminology, concepts, examples and older materials description. This must be apt to respond at the same time to the challenges posed by different traditions, standards, cultural habits, publishing patterns and book collections as found in the Italian regions, in order to improve the quality of the catalogue for users.

On an international level, ICCU is a member of IFLA as a National Bibliographic Agency and contributes accordingly to the activities for the development of international cataloguing practices: an ICCU representative is currently chair of the ISBD Review Group, participates in the Permanent UNIMARC Committee and in the FRBR Review Group for the development of the new IFLA Library Reference Model. Recently, ICCU coordinated the work of a group for the translation into Italian of the ICP (the International cataloguing principles), which have been published online by IFLA.[6] Moreover, ICCU contributes to VIAF, the Virtual International Authority File, by sharing its authority file of personal names identified through an accurate description. To date, 300.000 entities have already been sent from SBN to VIAF in the UNIMARC format.

My hope is to engage in a productive conversation with you all and keep this exchange alive. An ongoing interaction is essential to support our shared effort for the development of international standards and national cataloguing rules.

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[5] http://www.iccu.sbn.it/opencms/export/sites/iccu/documenti/2015/Commissione_REICAT.pdf.
[6] https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/icp/icp_2016-it.pdf.