

# Norwegian National User Group Annual report 2024 - Sikt

## Background

Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research is a public administrative body under the Ministry of Education and Research. Our mission is to help Education and Research entities achieve their goals by providing shared, value-adding services they can trust. Sikt delivers Primo and Alma to the BIBSYS Consortium and Leganto to the Reading list consortium.

The BIBSYS Consortium consists of 77 institutions with a total of 230 libraries spanning the areas of higher education in the private and public sector, research institutes, museums and hospitals. The consortium has a shared catalogue of bibliographic metadata with holdings and items being managed on the institution level. The consortium collaborates on resource sharing, configuration and best practice workflows.

The Reading list consortium consists of 27 members and has been live with Leganto since 2017. Leganto has proven to be a success within the institutions and has resulted in a more efficient handling of reading lists by the staff and a better user experience for the students. Some institutions have begun moving over to the new graphical interface, and we're still building experience in this area.

## Consortium working groups

Different working groups have been established within the Sikt consortia, each focusing on various functional areas. This structure ensures that the systems are configured and set up to suit the unique needs of each institution. The working groups consists of members from the institutions that form part of the specific consortium and are selected to represent the diverse range of institutions, needs, and competencies within the consortium.

Currently there are five working groups in the consortium, all managed by Sikt:

- Resource Management
- Acquisition
- Fulfillment
- Oria (Primo)
- Leganto

## A new tender and contract for Library system and Discovery Solution

The consortium went live with Primo in 2013 and Alma in 2015. BIBSYS was among the first large consortia to adopt Alma. As the current contract with Clarivate is set to expire at the end of 2025, the work towards a new contract is well under way.

The purpose is to carry out a procurement process for a Library Services Platform (LSP) and a discovery-system that ensures the BIBSYS Consortiums needs are met even after the expiration of the current LSP supply contract.

The Sikt working groups have been key in collaborating with Sikt to prepare the requirements specification for the tender, ensuring that the systems will cater to the needs of libraries, students,



researchers, and other users alike, to manage and access physical, electronic, and digital resources in the library collections in the most uniform way possible. The National Library of Norway has also been involved in this process.

Procurement process timeline:

1. February-April – Preparing the requirements specification.
2. February-May – Preparing the procurement documents.
3. June-September – Tender open.
4. October-November – Evaluation of tenders and negotiations with suppliers.
5. December 2024/March 2025 – Select supplier and signing contract.

The List of Requirements has been published and can be read here: [List of Requirements](#)

Sikt and the BIBSYS Consortium are still concerned with the dysfunctional market for ILS and LSP solutions. There are few options and very little competition.

## Primo BO/VE

The BIBSYS Consortium is still using Primo BO. We are concerned that required functionality for us to switch to Primo VE is still lacking. We have begun testing Primo VE to form a better opinion on the current state of affairs. Our biggest concern is that most functionality related to consortia management / configuration is underdeveloped or not present at all. We need a simple way to configure and maintain all of the institutions allowing for a central configuration with the possibility for local adjustments. We should not have to go into every instance to perform a change in configuration, code-table, display fields etc. The recent “Consortia Central Configuration Dashboard” is a very welcome addition in Alma which gives us hope that this will get better in the future, and we’re following the development of this feature closely.

We welcome all initiatives to interact with the community on this topic. We are especially glad that the Primo Working Group started the “Primo BO to VE Feature Alignment Project” which resulted in a very useful report for our consortium. These kinds of initiatives really help us understand the challenges and benefits that Primo VE represents for our consortium.

## Accessibility and GDPR in Clarivate products

Accessibility and conformance with the WCAG 2.1 AA requirements are mandated in Norwegian law for all public facing services. Primo and Leganto conforms with the requirements in general, but we experience that when we report issues related to accessibility it takes long time to get this fixed. We believe that accessibility must get a higher priority within the development and maintenance of the products.

GDPR, data privacy and data security are some of the main strategic areas related to the systems. It must be balanced against the need to have an open system in regards of functionality and data. It is a continuous effort to make sure that all systems are in compliance with GDPR and data privacy. This will also be an important aspect in the tender process.

We are particularly interested in the Next Discovery Experience and the new AI features being developed by Clarivate and how they integrate Accessibility and GDPR considerations in the development process.



## Support and quarterly releases

In general, we are satisfied with the support provided by Clarivate. Some cases still take an excessive amount of time to complete though, often with little to no information provided about their status. If a case remains stagnant for an extended period, we appreciate receiving an update from the case handler to inform our expectations moving forward, rather than us having to continually follow up.

The move to quarterly releases for Alma has resulted in more complete and tested functionality in the releases. However, we believe we can see that some new functionality is released premature, maybe as a result of lower frequency to the releases. We still encourage Clarivate to use the new cadence to include the user community/working groups in the design of the functionality. As a minimum we ask for a better description of what a solution will involve, rather than just stating that an issue will be solved in a future release. When issues occur following a release, we expect a fix earlier than the upcoming release in a three months' time.

We regard the Support Advisory Group as a positive initiative with the potential to enhance Clarivate's support workflow. We are optimistic that this group, in collaboration with the wider community, can provide feedback and recommendations that will result in meaningful improvements. Sikt is represented in the group.

## Other Projects

### **NVA – National open access repository**

The development of the National Knowledge Archive (NVA) began during the fall of 2019. There have been some delays underway, but the project is now working on the final structured testing.

The old service "Cristin" will be set to read-only mode during the fall of 2024, before all content is migrated over to NVA. Then, in agreement with each individual institution, we will begin to move institutions over to NVA.

We expect all institutions to have transitioned to NVA by the end of 2024.

### **Printing barcode labels in Alma**

Sikt has looked at different solutions to replace our homegrown solutions for printing labels in Alma. There are two possible solutions that are integrated with Alma: Spine-o-matic (freely accessible, but limited functionality) and Libstick (commercial solution, with more functionality).

Sikt expects that Spine-o-matic would fulfil the needs of the smaller institutions while the larger institutions would need some more advanced functionality. Thus, Sikt has been working on establishing a framework agreement for Libstick on behalf of the consortium. The framework agreement has been agreed upon, but there are still some legal aspects that needs to be sorted out in regards of GDPR and use of sub-contractors before the solution can be put into production.

### **Importing user data to Alma – New SIS-integration underway**

Sikt is working on a new technical solution for importing user data to Alma from the Norwegian student information system (FS).

The new solution is "event-based" and near-real-time. An event is when "something" happens with a user profile (changed address information, semester registration, paid semester fee, etc.). When such events occur, this will be put in a message queue. The integration will listen to the message queue and update the user records accordingly.



Sikt aims to create a standardized solution for the higher education sector. However, it is important to account for increasing complexity in the solution, as there will likely be some different needs between the institutions. The uncertainty lies in what is standardized in FS across the sector at the individual institutions, and what is not. Sikt has developed a new import API for Alma that we are now starting to test.

Retrieving employee-records from FS is currently outside the scope of the project but will most likely become the next development step.

## **ILL – Digital article delivery direct to end user**

Sikt has implemented a new feature for automatic delivery of ILL article requests digitally to the end user. The solution for digital delivery, when allowed, is based on several components that are now in place:

- New legal rights
- New support in Alma
- New license terms for interlibrary loans
- Coordination between Alma and Edvarda (manages the consortium license agreements).

Lenders that provide a document delivery service can now indicate whether the supplied document can be made available to the patron in digital form, or whether the digital content requires manual handling by the borrowing staff, such as printing a physical copy that can be shared with the patron as a non-returnable physical item. This new option enhances copyright control by enabling the lender to specify to the borrower how the document can be shared with the patron.

An extra field has been added to the 'Send item digitally' screen when the Lender sends an article, with two alternative values for conditions: 'Electronic to end-user permitted' and 'Print only to end-user'.

Libraries use an Analytics report that retrieves information from the licenses as a tool to know what the correct delivery condition is.

Some of the advantages are:

- No unnecessary time delay.
- No manual work for the borrowing library.
- Avoids the need to print the article before delivery to the end user by mail or hold shelf.

The solution is developed in collaboration with Clarivate for Norwegian Alma libraries that are part of the consortium license agreements.

## **RDA**

The consortium started using Original RDA in 2019, in compliance with the central work done by the National Library of Norway.

So far, we are still using Original RDA in Norway, but this will be phased out as soon as the transition to Official RDA is ready. At present, we are waiting for the time-consuming work of finalizing the application profiles.

The collaboration between Sikt, the University of Oslo and the National Library exploring entity-based cataloguing was concluded in 2023 and the report delivered. Based on this work, The Norwegian



Catalogue Committee (which is an advisory body for the National Library) recommended that we in Norway should use the RDA/LRM model when we switch to entity-based cataloguing. Sikt will continue to support this transition.

On a side note, it is worth mentioning that Clarivate is working on integrating Alma and the Sinopia metadata editor for linked open data, with development currently in the proof-of-concept stage. Such integration would allow cataloguers to create new LC BIBFRAME records in Sinopia and use them in Alma workflows as part of Alma's standard functionality.

There are several libraries in the BIBSYS Consortium that are eager to test this functionality when it becomes available.

## Topics for the INUG-meeting

- BO to VE Switch for consortia
- Accessibility and GDPR demands in Clarivate development of new products
- Introduction of "Premium" versions of the standard products – what does this mean?
- AI in library software – how to ensure that data privacy, security and accuracy are taken into account meanwhile leveraging on the benefits of the new technology.
  - How will this affect the cost and bundling of products?
  - How is the AI Advisory Board meant to work/influence on the development of products?