



**Public Libraries Supporting the Service Needs of People with Print Disabilities: The Swedish model**

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**Abstract :**

*Users in the target group for Talking Books can choose between 90 000 titles in every public library in Sweden. Even the smallest library branch has talking books in open shelves or offers talking books via downloading from the national catalogue. All public library staff support and help the patrons locating the books. The loans are free of charge. The library services to persons with print disabilities are developed in collaboration between public libraries, regional libraries, and the Swedish Library for Talking Books and Braille.*

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# Public Libraries Supporting the Service Needs of People with Print Disabilities

The Swedish model

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I am Heidi Asplund Carlsson and work as a regional advisor in the region of Västra Götaland. I work with library development, supporting and educating library staff in the region.

I am Bitte Kronkvist, manager of the Marketing Division in the Swedish Library of Talking Books and Braille. I am working with marketing digital services and accessible media all over Sweden.

People with print disabilities  
– at least 6 %

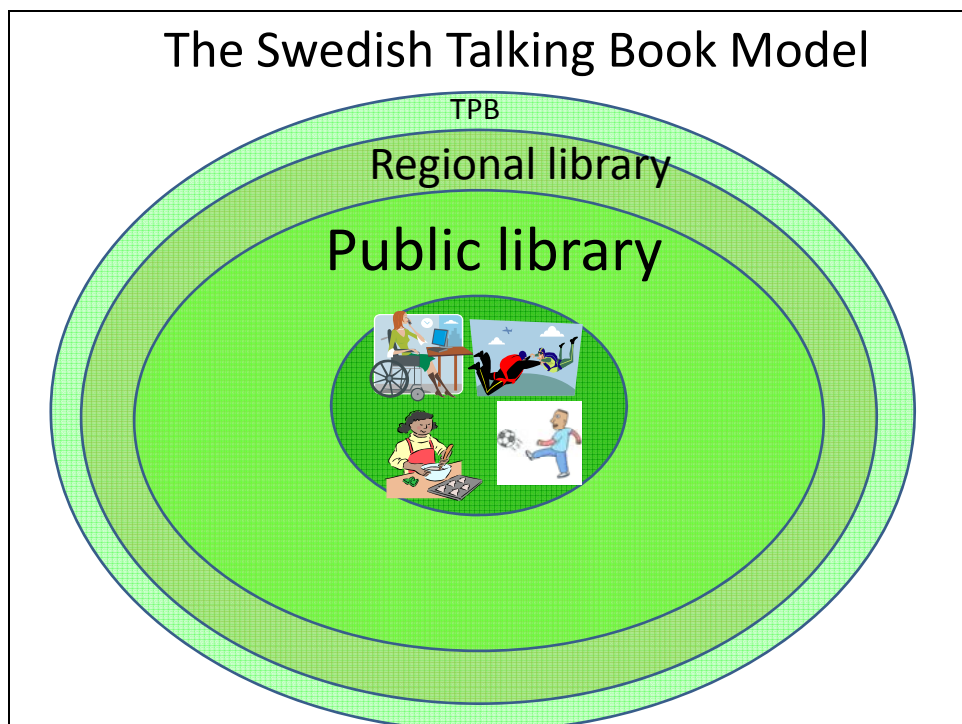


6% of the Swedish population has an impairment that gives reading and writing disabilities, according to information from the interest organisations.

90 000 Talking Books  
+  
55 000 users  
=  
1 500 000 loans annually

We have around 90 000 talking book titles on all subjects, novels and non-fiction, for children and for adults, and in many languages.

Around 1.5 million loans of talking books are executed in the Swedish public libraries every year. We have around 55 000 users of talking books in Sweden



In Sweden there is collaboration between different libraries to reach out to the users of talking books. We call it the Swedish Talking Book Model and the collaboration runs between public libraries, regional Libraries, and the national library. Its focus is on user needs and that all the various libraries cooperate in giving full services to all users. We will describe the different roles later.

## Sweden

9.3 million population  
Stockholm is the capital  
Abba, Volvo, Pippi longstocking



## Swedish Public Library Network

- 1300 public libraries
  - 290 main libraries
  - > 1000 branches

Sweden is a small country in the northern part of Europe. We have a population of 9.3 million. Stockholm is the capital of Sweden. We have 1 300 public libraries, 290 main libraries and more than 1 000 local library branches

## Legislation

- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
  - Ratified 2008 and came into force January 2009
- Library law (since 1996)
  - Library in every municipality
  - Loans are free of charge
  - Special service to persons with print disabilities
- Exception in the Copyright Law - § 17

Sweden has legislation guaranteeing services to persons with print disabilities. The Library Law states that there shall be a library in every municipality, loans shall be free of charge, and the library shall offer special services to persons with print disabilities. The Copyright Law holds an exception, §17, that gives libraries the right to make books accessible for persons with print disabilities. Sweden ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008 and it came into force in January 2009

## The roles of the public library

- Face to face contact
- Support, guide, and help
- Distribute /loan
- Downloading
- Help register for digital services
- Marketing and outreach
- Provide their own digital services – web sites



The legislation helps us to develop services for persons with print disabilities. In this library collaboration called The Swedish Talking Book Model different libraries carry different roles. The role of the public library is to meet the users Face to face; Offering Support, guidance, and help to, for example, register for digital services; With distribution and loans through downloading. The public library also has to do a lot of marketing to reach users. Finally, the public library also has to develop local digital services to meet the needs of the target groups.

## The roles of the regional library

- Networking
- Link between public libraries
- Link between public libraries and national library
- Other regional services
- Education and counselling
- Marketing together with public libraries
- Develop services and technology
- Support to library staff



The role of the regional libraries is primarily networking, being the link between the public libraries within the region and be an important link to the national library. They also work

with counselling and are in charge of the education to the public libraries in the region, and develop the marketing activities in collaboration with the public libraries.

They also develop services and technology, Act as support to the library staff, and work together with other regional services active within the same field of responsibility to develop the services to the target groups

## The roles of the national library – TPB

- Build and maintain a national collection
  - Production
  - Catalogue
  - Internet download site
- Develop services and technology
- Information and counselling
- Support to libraries
- Market accessibility, Daisy etc
- Networking – national and international



The role of the national library is to build and maintain a national collection; produce all the books, catalogue them, and offer them at an internet download site; develop services and technology; support libraries via information and counselling, and work nationally and internationally with other organisations to market accessibility and DAISY and other formats

## Future focus for libraries serving people with print disabilities

- From distributor to guide and advisor
- How do you want your book?
  - Format? Distribution channel? Playback device?
- More dialogue with end users
- Reach new end user groups
  - dyslexia, cognitive disabilities, neuropsychiatric disabilities (ADHD, Aspberger) etc
- Education to the library staff about different target groups and their needs of talking books

What happens in the future? We think that librarians will change from being a distributor to be more of a guide and advisor, since the user will in the future need talking books in formats that suit their way of reading and also the future possibilities of DAISY-players. The library staff will spend more time in dialogue with the user group and they will also work more with marketing activities to reach new users in the target groups.

## Contact information

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Thank you for listening to us