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The idea for this presentation is to make an overview about Ethics in Libraries. So I've organize this presentation in four subjects: academic and professional overview, associations and ethical codes, current and future issues.

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In Spain, there are currently sixteen universities offering degrees in Library and Information Science with a wide geographic distribution.

Before the Bologna Process there were two degrees. A "diplomatura", that was a three years degree equivalent to a BA (Bachelor of Arts); and a "licenciatura", a two years degree equivalent to a MA (Master of Arts). To access to the "licenciatura" you needed a previous degree in any field.

These degrees were very young. Even there was a higher education title in library science in the 80's, the first degree in LIS is from 1991. So the first graduates in LIS in Spain are now 36-37 years old.

And now, with the Bologna Process there is only a four years degree.

The presence of Professional Ethics in the degrees is limited despite it is considered an important competence for graduates. Only three universities offer a non compulsory class.

And, what about the profession?

According to data from 2008, there are six thousand, six hundred and one libraries in Spain. Eighty four percent of them are public libraries at any level (national, regional or local).

At these libraries, work almost thirty thousand people, seventeen thousand of which (including assistants) are considered librarians. But only forty-two percent of these librarians are graduates in a field. There is no need of a LIS graduate to be a public librarian.

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In Spain there are more than twenty professional associations for LIS workers. But there are only two "colegios profesionales" and two more in process. The difference between "colegio" and "asociación" is that the "colegio" is legitimated to represent a profession, while the association represents its members. And that's why they are regulated by the Constitution and the law.

Now, FESABID, the Spanish Federation of Societies of Archivist, Librarians, Documentalist and Museology, plays this role.

For LIS professionals, membership is not compulsory, and like there is no need of a graduate in LIS to be a librarian, there are different prerequisites for membership.

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This situation I've just explained has different consequences.

LIS is a very young degree, so the graduates aren't in the top of their career yet, and the presence in the market is recent. In fact, most librarians and university teachers don't have a degree in LIS, or have acquired it later. Because of this, one must respect, recognize and admire what the profession has done during these years. Our teachers, our senior professionals have worked in LIS in Spain with no official degrees, but with a lot of effort, serious work, and a lot of passion for Libraries.

So now, we have a long journey ahead of us, but we are still young and can learn from previous experiences.

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Of these two "colegios" I've just mentioned, only the Catalan has a code of ethics published in two thousand and six. It has thirty one articles with general and concise statements.

It's based in the principles of no discrimination, fight against censorship, free access, quality of service and professional cooperation.

From my point of view, a very interesting fact of this code is that it clearly situates international declarations and all legislation above itself.

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According to this code, the scanty professional literature, the news and professional debates; we can identify four main ethical issues today in Spain: censorship, control of access by minors; social responsibility for professionals, limitations of Internet access.

Censorship.

Last year, in a public library in Barañain, a small city in Navarra, has suffered censorship by the local government. A councilor took the decision (unilaterally) to not buy two newspapers: Gara and Berria. These newspapers had an ideological relationship with the terrorist group ETA, but they were popular newspapers. Despite allegations, all levels of the regional government agreed with that decision, so the librarians decided not to buy newspapers.

Control of access by minors.

In May 2008, in IWETEL (the main mailing list about LIS in Spain), there was an intense debate about how to regulate loans to teenagers.

Social responsibility.

For the last three years this has been a recurrent issue. A group of teachers has begun a movement to demand an active social responsibility in the LIS field. They demand for a more active participation in social and political issues.

This group of teachers have published a collaborative book, and proposed a manifest.

Payment for borrowing

In response of the public lending right in Europe and Directive 92/100/CE, a professional movement started. They saw in this directive a threaten for libraries' budgets, and they demanded for its removal.

Internet.

The government of the Community of Madrid has recently decided to limit the access to certain webs from the public library. For three days there was a very intense debate in IWETEL, with opposite opinions.

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And to finish my presentation, I am going to talk about the ethical issues that will arise in Spain.

In my opinion, the main issues will be related to the profession and to demography.

Because of the demographical structure in Spain, there will be the need to study the immigrate population to adapt the libraries to them. Also, the increase of the senior population will be a situation that libraries must look at.

LIS graduates and professionals also have a challenge for themselves. There needs to be an internal debate about the profession, about the need of a national "colegio", about the process to integrate graduates and non-graduates.

We also have to be more aware of our ethics, so there is the need to include specific courses about professional ethics in the degrees; and increase the professional debates about this topic.