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**AIKATERINI BALAPANIDOU**

UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA, Greece

, Greece

## **LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

### **Abstract:**

Public libraries support both organised and self-conducted learning in all education forms, i.e. formal, non-formal and informal learning for all age groups. They have been for centuries an integral part of the society offering free places and equal access to resources for educational and leisure purposes. However, the global technological developments have changed the demands for easier access to knowledge. In order to survive in this competitive environment, libraries found ways to redefine themselves as a vital part of the community. Nowadays, they provide guidance to information retrieval and offer value-added services supporting their users both for social and personal skills development. For example programs for literacy, digital citizenship, training and re-skilling are offered to anyone interested. This paper reviews the literature and presents an overview of the future role of public libraries as lifelong learning institutions connected to the community needs.

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### **Keywords:**

public libraries, library services, lifelong learning, lifelong education, information literacy