1. **Welcome and introductions** [Interim Chair]
   TS opened the meeting, welcomed all attendees, and asked them to introduce themselves.

2. **Minutes of last Thema ISC virtual (LBF) meeting held 11 March 2020, and matters arising** – TS introduced the minutes which were approved and there were no matters arising

3. **Brief updates on adoptions from Thema national groups and observers.**

   Germany – TS began by saying that about 20 people in the Metadata group who form part of the German book association (Badenheim) successfully translated and modified the new codes for v.1.4 two months ago. Peer review for Science and Hobby sections were sent to the Metadata group, in particular, by specialist publishers, for feedback with corrections. Published an article about the procedure and new translation and
instructions for publishers on how to update their catalogues. Also started a survey to ask aggregators and systems delivery companies who have yet to implement Thema 1.4 - either including or excluding the new translation will be integrated and hope to announce the outcome at the annual Metadata interest group meeting, and an update on Thema 1.4. TS mentioned that the (Wahrengruppen Systematish) WGS mapping is currently being worked on and will send to EDItEUR to publish on their website. And hopes to promote and implement Thema in the German book market.

Finland: IH – the Finnish translation was updated in May 2020. Working with publishers and retailers to adopt Thema which is still very new in Finland. In their database, there are about 80% of the available titles have Thema codes now.

UK: HW – reported since the release of v.1.4 in April 2020 they have completed BIC to Thema and Thema to BIC mappings which are now available on EDItEUR website. This took longer than usual as they had to restructure mappings significantly with view to future proofing them. BIC has released a ‘BIC Bite’ which is a short information sheet, for booksellers to encourage them to adopt Thema – as the UK need more booksellers to use Thema. Under the circumstances COVID-19 has helped online book shops with awareness of metadata. The group looked at adding synonyms or alternative search terms for the online browser to improve the search function. This process enables them to add current and up-to-date terms without waiting for a new release. Various publisher at different stages of adopting Thema 1.4 which can take several months to incorporate fully into systems and work-flows. KU mentioned that BIC has done some online Thema training with EDITEUR, which went really well and has had some great feedback. Thema will be compulsory at all levels of BIC’s revised product data accreditation scheme.

Australia: CC – reported they aim to increase the use of Thema as there are only a small number of publishers currently able to implement Thema, so booksellers do not have much to work with yet, although there are a few keen booksellers waiting to use it. Now publishers have ONIX 3 so Thema is on the agenda to be adopted over the next six months. Taking advantage of Nielsen’s mapping and currently investigating a mass translation.

Sweden: LHP – said that in Sweden, Thema has been main classification scheme for a while and they have translated the new version which has been implemented into Bokinfo system which used by all book retailers and publishers. Had some Thema training under the COVID-19 situation.

Denmark: MB reported that Thema has been implemented for a while, both in the supply chain for digital books physical books. Discussions with publishers working with Thema codes, but there is also so confusion whether to combine fictions codes with subject code. MB requested EDItEUR to provide some guidelines about how and when to use narrative as oppose to combining fiction code to that of a subject code. Ongoing work on translation to complete.

To Action: CS said he will provide some guidance via a paper in the future
Italy: SP – confident that translation will be completed and ready by end of year – already converted ca. 3 mil. of catalogue records last year and currently use Thema but despite decision to use Thema as the standard classification for ONIX 3.0 still have a few e-commerce customers and a few small to medium size retailers who use ONIX 3.0 and Thema. However, working well with Thema together with Library Service providers that receives and uses Thema through ONIX data feeds. Also working with Amazon for transition of ONIX 3 and Thema for a year but not had much progress and at a standstill. Amazon are requesting complete dates (dates & months) and in some cases these dates are incomplete. SP wondering if anyone else has the same problems with dates. Due to deadline of December 2020, somehow the data will be resolved through discussions with Amazon.

JMRM (Amazon) said cannot control how data from Thema are added but is familiar with Italy’s problems and are more involved with ONIX 3.0 and the deadline of December 2020. And requested people to contact her with any queries about Thema.

GB reminded people that Amazon had announced in December 2019 that all data feeds using ONIX should be ONIX 3.0 by December 2020. This applies globally all versions of Amazon, currently only applies to physical products. ONIX will still accept ONIX2.1 for digital products, however, expectation is to have a similar deadline for digital product to be within 2021.

Spain: JP said that BIC has been mandatory in Spain since 2011 and last year made an automatic translation from BIC to Thema and Thema to BIC to enable publishers to use either systems – based on Nielsen. In April 2020 it was announced that Thema would be compulsory for ISBN registrations – all publishers must use native Thema codes (not mapped codes) to register their books with the ISBN Agency. Currently, in Spain have both BIC and Thema - ca. 40% have native Thema codes that publishers have revised and uploaded which is about 370K books. The whole catalogue provides consumers with choice of system to use. Thema 1.4 is delayed due to mappings supplied by Nielsen which need fine tuning – working on translation and mappings side by side and expect to update to Thema 1.4 by end of year.

Belgium: SP reported completion of Thema 1.4 translation and working on synonyms which should be ready by end of year and will send to EDItEUR to add to browser. Has been working with publishers association on education codes – and other national extensions which are up for approval next.

Norway: FF said focussed on translation on Thema 1.4 which was completed in summer for both official languages. Also added bookstore versions of headings to use as short version if needed for display. Currently working on reclassifications and updating v.1.3 codes to new 1.4 for back list titles and putting in synonyms to facilitate codes. There is a shift in Norwegian bookstores implementing Thema and they are also more active using Thema in their systems, apps, and services. Training in person not possible because of Covid-19 situation, but they do provide training online via webinars.
**France:** SS reported that they are working on translation of v.1.4 and mapping is about to be published. Also working on translation of documents for better use of *Thema* for publishers and booksellers.

**Elsevier, The Netherlands:** EB as an Observer, said they reach out to end-consumers who are sent ONIX feeds to promote *Thema* on their side – some are ingesting *Thema* and others are not – but is trying to push end-consumers to use *Thema*.

**Amazon EU, JMRM as an Observer,** added that they were implementing 1.4, now working closely with Turkey to add *Thema* codes - they were using BISAC before – now using *Thema* extensively in Europe for all books in Amazon.

**EDItEUR:** CS – received an update from Czech-Slovak interest group (not yet a formal group) mainly publishers who are interested in creating a group, but now a national library is keen to learn more and would like to setup a formal group and hope to move to structure in 2021. Also had some news from the Japanese group who have completed a full new translation. They are working on documentation and pushing *Thema* in Japanese market.

4. **Review of *Thema* Proposals and national extensions.**

   CS – reported that Belgium, Finland and The Netherlands have proposed a few new national extension qualifiers, for Place (1*) and Educational Purpose (4*)

   SP said that Meta4Books currently only in Flanders so mainly Flemish publishers hence why a basic structure was proposed for Belgium with more details for the Flemish community and a basic outline for the French and German speaking communities.

   CS – asked if anyone had any reservations about the new codes and extensions? TS – all extensions were approved and agreed.

5. **Activity Report** – CS reported that v.1.4 was published in April 2020, and the web browser and the documentation – excel, HTML, JSON and XML versions of all the code lists were made available. They consist of previous translations plus any new terms that have been added. As EDItEUR receives updated translations all the documents are updated and made available on the EDItEUR website and the browser version is also updated. With regards to the translation template there is an extra column which includes extra search terms or in short term ‘synonyms’ – these are only used on the online browser and not visible to public but do enrich the search results by allowing categories to be found by different terms. Provided the national group has validated the procedure, these can be added at any time, as they do not appear as ‘visible’ terms to users of the browser and are not included in the publicly available documentation. They are only used ‘behind the scenes’ to help users find the appropriate codes when a search is made for particular words.
Languages are very rich with many variations as in English, German, French, Spanish, Italian – it allows common search terms that are popular in publishing or booksellers market to be added so that anyone can be guided to the most suitable code. Any groups can submit these to EDItEUR at any time using this template. Synonyms do not have to be validated by the steering committee as they are only used to enhance the search on the browser. It is better to receive such changes from each national group as a single point and avoids any conflicts.

EDItEUR also makes available, to members, the SQL file that is behind the browser version and contains everything in all different language versions. With regards to the browsers – v.1 and v.1.1 have been removed from the online browser. As they were getting very few hits a week – 1.2 – 1.3 – 1.4 across all languages is ca. 60K-page request per day. And a small but significant proportion is the search bots. All help and guidance documents that have been published and available for Thema have all been updated including v.1.4 changes are all available on the EDItEUR website.

EDItEUR recently published a new document specifically aimed at Booksellers, both ‘online and bricks-and-mortar’ who want to understand Thema; how it works and could be used by them to improve product selection, discoverability of books they stock, or to improve the tools they have to recommend their customers. This document is valuable as more small and independent booksellers have found their online presence is a vital way of staying in touch with customers and extending their commercial reach during the Covid-19 pandemic. If anyone interested in translating this document or bringing out your own version of the document, please let EDItEUR know and a Word template can be sent to you.

GB added there was a short and long version of this document – EDItEUR version is the long one and a sub-set is in the BIC Bite (2-page short version) contact Karina Urquhart - the link to the BIC Bite on Thema for booksellers is here: https://www.bic.org.uk/files/pdfs/BIC%20BITES/BIC%20Bites%20Introduction%20to%20Thema%20for%20Booksellers_FINAL.pdf

**Diversity and Inclusion document** – CS said a major update was made to the document “using Thema and ONIX to improve discoverability” which came out with 1.3 but extended it with a lot of 1.4 examples – also includes more information about optimising ONIX 3 metadata – to improve the visibility of inclusive titles and diverse authors. Questions around diversity and inclusion are important in a lot of our markets now. Alongside this, a new annex of worked examples will be published as a supplement to the diversity and inclusion paper and this is currently under review. Just received a new translation of basic instruction in Japanese. If there any translations ready, happy to put them on EDItEUR website if made available.

CS gave an update on translations - since the publication of v1.4 – the German, Norwegian Bokmal, and new translation into Norwegian Nynorsk have been completed. The Norwegian translation have also been made available with a standard presentation of headings for Norwegian bookshops as a separate column within the Norwegian Excel files. Also completely updated translations for headings in Finnish, Flemish and Swedish.
There has been a complete new translation from Japan of the ‘Basic Instructions for use of Thema’ as part of a wide range of effort to introduce Thema across the Japanese book market.

**Mappings** – as already reported by HW Nielsen have updated the mappings from BIC 2.1 to Thema v1.4 and from Thema v1.4 to BIC 2.1 and these are available on EDItEUR website. BISG also updated of their BISAC mapping of 2019 to Thema v1.4. A version of this is made available for the public as BISAC is subject to a licence fee – so the public can only view the codes from BISAC and not the headings – also available on EDItEUR website. The French mapping from CLIL codes to Thema v1.4 about to be published by end of October 2020.

**Training** – due to Covid-19 training has been restricted, EDItEUR has not done any in-person training since February 2020. However, CS has done the first online version of EDItEUR half-day Thema essentials training course beginning of October for an in-house group of staff at an educational publisher. This is done via pre-recorded videos which has proved to be successful.

For the online version of BookNet Canada’s Tech Forum 2020, CS delivered three talks, which included one on ‘Using Thema and ONIX to boost discoverability and visibility of Canada’s diverse voices’ - this is available on YouTube. And other interesting talks on Tech Forum 2020 event. CS asked if there were any other questions/comments about the update?

TS – asked about the translations of synonyms – are they all in English and completed in the Excel files? GB added that one should not simply look at the English synonyms but should look for synonyms in original language. If someone searches for your synonym, which category do you want them to discover? Although the English synonyms will give a good starting point but not good to simply translate the English and accept it as this can differ in meaning.

TS – requested if there were anyone has created synonyms for a national group for a language and have some tools for or successful procedures he would like to hear from them as they would like to start their first synonym list at the end of year.

JP – asked if there was a record of search terms that are used for the online searches and is this done for all languages?

CS – replied yes . JP thought it was a good way to find out what people are searching incorrectly and find any errors. GB said they used that log to help improve the list of English synonyms. EDItEUR keeps an anonymous log of hits on the Server – cannot tell who is searching for what but only see what search string was used – this can be provided to any group on request. SP (Belgium) said they would be interested to receive a list of search terms for the Flemish & Dutch versions of Thema. SP (Italy) would also like a list. GB will create a single log file which has all the search streams in it and distribute it to all rather than for individual language. GB added that vast majority of hits
are not searches as people often look for a term but find they browse through the hierarchy as not sure what to look for.

6. **Timetable for Thema v.1.5 and New Proposals** – it was agreed in 2019 that next v1.5 is due for approval in October 2021 since more people gather at FBF and convenient. It took a long time for v.1.3 and v.1.4 as there were a lot of details to go through such as headings, adding note, language, making sure all clear and reflecting on comments made over time. Hence v.1.5 will be hopefully a much smaller revision with only existing changes that come in from groups and do not want to make a major revision. The next plausible revision would be v.1.6 to be submitted possibly in October 2023. But this is always dependent on demand – so national groups should discuss with own implementers in the markets to see if they wanted any changes in the update. It is about striking a balance in this industry and adapting to changes as they arise. Hence why synonyms are used to enable your search terms to fit your versions without waiting for the next update. Need to strike a balance of stability as it all entails a lot of work to implement changes.

National extensions – the additions to the national qualifiers can be proposed and validated every six months (March and October) each year. CS will send each group a new document for discussion points for possible inclusions in next update v.1.5 – as some points/suggestions came in late and/or left over from v.1.4 or didn’t have enough expertise or input in the group to agree with – it was put on hold. For example, in the M section – the medical section– originally the German group requested to add something to the complimentary medicine section – but the Japanese group felt it was very important for their market and suggested that we wait until further discussions with Japanese medical publisher who publish medical textbooks on complimentary medicine. Another request came from South African University Press about the notion of decolonisation and post-colonial studies – not to reject it because uncertain about the needs. That is what this document is about – points that have come in v1.4 or questions that come up in discussion which can be used to form feedback.

7. **Any Other Business** – Denmark suggested to add documentation/guidance on Fiction and non-Fiction codes for Adults, teenagers and children.

8. **Next Meeting** to be held on 20th April 2021 at 10:00 am (BST) - perhaps virtual LBF videoconference meeting TBA

Chris Saynor/Suzanne Rozario

EDItEUR
14 October 2020