

The final recommendations of the International Conference on National Bibliographic Services



Endorsing the concept of Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) as a long-term programme for the development of a world-wide system for the control and exchange of bibliographic information,

Emphasising the need to strengthen national bibliographic control as a prerequisite for universal bibliographic control,

Recognising the importance of the national bibliography as a major instrument in ensuring a full record of the national published heritage and achieving effective bibliographic control,

Affirming that national libraries and national bibliographic agencies may work co-operatively with other agencies but that the overall responsibility for co-ordination and implementation of standards should rest with the national bibliographic agency,

Reaffirming the value of legal deposit as a means of ensuring that the cultural and intellectual heritage and linguistic diversity of the State is preserved and made accessible for current and future users,

Makes the following recommendations:

Legal Deposit

1. States should, as a matter of urgency, examine existing deposit legislation and consider its provisions in relation to present and future requirements; and, where necessary, existing legislation should be revised;
2. States currently without legal deposit legislation are urged to introduce it;
3. New deposit laws, or regulations pursuant to such laws, should state the objective of legal deposit; should ensure that the deposit of copies is relevant to achieving the goals stated above; should be comprehensive in terminology and wording to include existing types of materials with information content and others which may be developed; and should include

measures for enforcement of the laws. Such legislation may take into account the possibility of sharing responsibility for deposit among more than one national institution;

Coverage of the National Bibliography

4. National bibliographies should include the current national output, and where practicable they should also provide retrospective coverage. When necessary, selection criteria should be defined and published by the national bibliographic agency;
5. The national bibliography should include records for materials in all the languages and/or scripts in which publications are produced within a state; and wherever possible these records should include the languages and/or scripts in which the publications originally appeared;

The Presentation and Timeliness of the National Bibliography

6. Given the availability of a variety of formats with which to distribute the national bibliography, national bibliographic services should use one or more as appropriate to meet the needs of their users, including users with special needs, and these formats should follow internationally-approved standards. At least one of the formats used to distribute the national bibliography should be capable of meeting archiving and preservation needs of the national bibliography and should be permanently accessible;
7. The national bibliography should list material as soon as possible after publication. Provision should be made for its effective distribution and it should appear in a regularly updated form to meet the needs of the users, thereby enabling them to acquire the material listed there without delay;
8. In each issue of each format produced, the national bibliography should include for identification purposes the following information:
 - title of the bibliography;
 - the period which the issue covers;
 - place and name of publisher;
 - date of publication;
 - its international identification number;
 - copyright information;
 - cataloguing-in-publication entry, if available;
 - details of availability and price;
9. In addition, the national bibliography should include an introduction and where applicable a user guide. If necessary, for example in the case of electronic publication, these may need to be published separately. The following details should be stated:
 - the basis for the records, for example, records made from copies deposited in the national library in accordance with legal deposit stipulations;
 - coverage, including exceptions;

- frequency;
 - arrangement;
 - bibliographic, classification and cataloguing tools used, including any local and national extensions;
 - list of special terms used, with definitions and abbreviations;
 - outline of classified arrangement (if used);
 - outline of script conversion schemes (if used);
 - description of filing system;
 - systems requirements, if applicable;
10. The bibliographic records included in the national bibliography should be based on internationally recognised standards and be arranged in an appropriate manner and with access points which satisfy the needs of the users, in accordance with the characteristics of the format(s) used for distribution;

International Standards Used

11. The national bibliographic agency should undertake responsibility for preparing comprehensive bibliographic records of the national imprint (or co-ordinating their preparation), and should adopt national and international standards and principles for cataloguing, identification systems such as ISBN and ISSN, script conversion, authority control, classification schemes, metadata and permanent naming of digital objects;
12. National bibliographic agencies should adopt the components of the Basic Level Record recommended in the final report of the IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (Saur : Munich, 1998. UBCIM Publications New Series ; vol. 19);
13. The national bibliographic agency should take a lead in the updating and maintenance of national and international standards and principles and in developing all the bibliographic tools categorized under 11 above, including projects to develop and promote standards, guidelines and methods for authority control to facilitate the international exchange of authority data.
14. Urgent attention at national and international levels should be paid to ensuring compatibility, convertibility and accessibility among the bibliographic exchange formats of the library, information and publishing communities, taking care that all elements are identified and none lost in the conversion process;
15. National bibliographic agencies should encourage ongoing work in the harmonization of bibliographic standards established in respect of all forms of publications, beginning with serial publications;

Future Activities

16. IFLA should support revision of existing sets of guidelines to make provision for all new and future forms of publication;
 17. IFLA should promote studies into issuing multinational bibliographies in areas where for any reason it is not feasible at present to publish national bibliographies and where there are geographical, linguistic or cultural links;
 18. IFLA should encourage intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to record their publications in bibliographies (preferably their own), according to internationally agreed bibliographic standards;
 19. Where needed, IFLA should assist national bibliographic agencies to develop their national bibliographic activities - for example: establishing pilot schemes to develop national bibliographies, establishing guidelines for producing national bibliographies, and organizing national, regional or international seminars and training workshops;
 20. National bibliographic agencies should be proactive in promoting new bibliographic standards and new legal deposit legislation, including holding seminars and training courses in order to ensure that both professionals and end-users are familiar with the new practices;
 21. National bibliographic agencies should regularly evaluate their success in fulfilling these recommendations;
 22. Efforts should be made to ensure that national bibliographic agencies without electronic access are not penalized and can remain within the universal bibliographic network;
 23. IFLA or a Unesco Member State should request Unesco to endorse these recommendations.
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