

# Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC Core Programme (UBCIM)



## *International Conference on National Bibliographic Services Copenhagen, 25-27 November 1977* **COVERAGE**

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### **The Recommendations of 1977 say of Coverage:**

National bibliographies, as a minimum, should include the records for monographs and first issues and title changes of serials, including official publications, of the national imprint; and other categories of materials should be included as rapidly as possible to meet the requirements of the national library community and the resources of the national bibliographic agency. ... The national bibliography should include records for materials in all the languages and/or scripts in which publications are produced within a country; and wherever possible these records should be in the languages and/or scripts in which the publications originally appeared

In the years following the 1977 Conference several studies on the issue of coverage were produced, fulfilling the third recommendation concerning coverage that

"Further study should be undertaken to define additional categories of materials and to suggest priorities for their inclusion in the national bibliography"

In 1982, a working group issued recommendations concerning levels of coverage of documents, and the Annex to the article included "Definitions of the main types of documents".

Interesting and worth noticing is the subtle, but significant change in vocabulary from "imprint" to "document". While the 1977 recommendations seem to indicate the primacy of the printed media, and using the word, "materials", to cover all other media, the use in the 1982 recommendations of

the word "document" indicates that the unit to be included (or not as the case may be) in the national bibliography may come in several forms.

However, looking at the types of documents, suggested for inclusion at various levels, it is evident that printed materials still hold the primacy.

- Level one (the same as the minimum laid down in the 1977 recommendations) comprises monographs, serials (first issues of new or altered titles) and official publications.
- Level two encompasses printed music, cartographic materials (presumably in print), standards, patents, dissertations, conference proceedings and research reports, all of which point to print as primary medium for carrying information.
- Level three expands the coverage to articles, engravings, art reproductions, posters, trade literature, and foreign publications in the national collection, all of which are exclusively or primarily printed materials, along with sound tapes, gramophone records, videorecords, film strips, publications in Braille, microforms, slides, other audio-visual materials and machine-readable information carriers.

Since 1982 coverage has not been the object of much debate, attention having been focused on the record, its form and compatibility with other records, as a mean to achieve universal bibliographical control. Recent development in the methods of spreading information in the form of documents call for another look at coverage of the National Bibliography.

I shall now consider first the definition of the object for inclusion in the National Bibliography, second the issues involved.

**Definition:** In 1982, a "document" was defined as: "the information carried, irrespective of its physical form or the character of its content, which can be used for any purpose". Another key concept was "published document", defined as "a document created with a view to disseminating it in multiple copies", and being available to users. In the criteria, governing selection for inclusion in the Danish national bibliography, the phrase "of general interest" is used. In other words, the National Bibliography is not to be a register of a unique collection but a register of documents that are available to any user either through purchase or through borrowing.

This definition is no longer sufficient. It is necessary to specify whether the document has a final and physical form, that is, whether it is a book, a slide, a tape, a disc, a cd-rom, a filmstrip, a combination of these or a document in a database, such as the Internet. If the document has a final and physical form, all copies of a given document will have the same final form, the one provided by the publisher. The national bibliographic record will, then, describe all copies of a given document accurately. Documents, published on the Internet or other nets, differ radically. A document published on the net will obtain a physical form only the moment the user turns the bits and bytes from cyberspace into recognizable signs on paper or on screen. This form has a variety of potential appearances dependent upon the downloading person's browser, printer and software, even if the content is the same. Should the creator or the publisher of the document decide to change it just after it is downloaded, the content will also be different from the document, that the next person

to download will get. This means that a record of such a document in the National Bibliography will describe only the document, that the bibliographer downloaded on a given point in time using specific soft- and hardware. In addition, given that the average life of a document on the Internet has been calculated to 42 days, any national bibliographical registration will be obsolete by the time it appears if no legal deposit will save it, or - as is the case of Denmark, where a new Legal Deposit Law includes Internet documents - the record will describe only the holdings of the Legal Deposit Library. The record will not fulfill two of the objectives of a National Bibliography: to be an authoritative and and a comprehensive record of the national imprint. I shall return to this point later.

## Documents having a Physical Form

Let me first consider documents having a physical forms, using Denmark as an example. The Issues involved in discussing coverage of the National Bibliography are

1. The types of documents covered
2. The territory to be covered

The best way to begin the discussion of the first issue is by asking: How many of the published documents are to be included in the National Bibliography? Using Denmark as an example, we find that in 1997, when the old legal deposit law from 1927 was still in force, which claimed legal deposit only for printed documents produced by professional printers, the Royal Library as a legal deposit institution received around 200.000 documents. Of those, 12.000 were regular monographs, an additional 6.000 were yearbooks and monographs, appearing as parts of serials, both of which were included in the (Danish) *National Bibliography.Books*, 900 were new serial titles, listed in the *National Bibliography.Serials*, 450 were cartographical documents and 450 documents with printed music, both of which were listed in separate parts of the National Bibliography (all numbers rounded). Altogether some 20.000 documents were included in the Danish National Bibliography, in effect about 10% of the printed output of the country.

The remainder of documents were about 80.000 issues of serials and 100.000 pieces of ephemera or - to employ the term of the 1982 list - trade literature, that is, documents published by corporations (businesscompanies, associations) and dealing with internal affairs of the issuing corporation. These documents are arranged according to archival principles and can thus be retrieved and utilized without the assistance of the National Bibliography.

It should be noted, that the Danish National Bibliography also comprises an index of articles and reviews, which in 1997 listed 33.000 articles and 17.000 reviews in 7 newspapers and 750 periodicals (out of the 19.000 periodical titles, received by the Royal Library), as well as lists of sound and music recordings (2.000 of each in 1997).

This means that we are not by any means aiming at a complete record of the published documents in Denmark. Knowing the material, excluded from the National Bibliography, I also sincerely question the value of even considering inclusion of these materials. So the issue it not whether to aim for

completion but where to cut off for inclusion.

In addition to these published and deposited documents, there are the many forms of documents, called Grey literature, represented in the 1982 list (level 2) as dissertations, conference proceedings, research reports and standards to which may be added pre-prints, conference papers and "working papers". These documents share a common feature; they are not published and generally not available through ordinary channels. They hover between archival and library materials and thus cannot be said to be part of a nation's **published** documents. While access to these materials is important and some sort of registration is needed to enable the research community to retrieve and thereby utilize the information contained in the grey literature, this registration cannot be said to be part of the national bibliographical services. The problem may solve itself within a few years, or rather become absorbed into another problem, as the net has proved to be eminently suited to these materials. I dare venture to suggest, that soon all grey literature will be either on the net or they will, as is the case today, in some cases become proper published documents having a physical form to be included in the National Bibliography.

The second issue concerning coverage of documents in physical form in the National Bibliography, is that of territory covered. By this is meant, as the name implies, a nation. A nation is generally understood to be a political unit, covered by one legal system and one language (usually unique to that unit). This is a European concept and fairly recent one at that (at most a few hundred years). Will it last in an age of globalisation, on the one hand, and regionalisation, on the other?

Let us assume for sake of simplicity, that the concept "nation" will continue to mean a delimited political unit, governed by one political system and one law with an interest in producing a National Bibliography, and that "nation" will continue be more dominant than federal and regional political configurations for some time - at least until the next conference. In short, I am assuming stability in the concept of nation. This does not solve all problems concerning territory covered.

I shall here use Denmark as an example. Denmark is not a perfect country nor a perfect society - though we like to believe so - nor is the Danish National Bibliography perfect - though it comes pretty close - but Denmark along with its National Bibliographic Services is the perfect example to use because it is a small fairly homogenous country. It has developed through a millenium, from a collection of petty kingdoms, to one kingdom, then to a state, and finally to a nation, with its identity expressed in law, history and language. It has had a fairly strong national identity for about 200 years, and best of all - for the present purpose - it has a language that very few people outside Denmark read, speak and write, and that even fewer has any use for. Danish will never become a global language. Consequently, documents in Danish can safely be presumed to be created by and for Danes and most often in Denmark. So when it comes to national coverage this is fairly easy as far as documents having a physical forms are concerned:

Considered for inclusion in a National Bibliography should be what has been produced of published information, whether in text, pictures or sound, and of general interest

1. within the borders of a nation

2. outside the borders but aimed at public inside
3. outside the borders aimed public outside but dealing with the nation or its inhabitants

Of these, the first two groups should be included in the National Bibliography, while the third is desirably but perhaps only possible for smaller nations, such as Denmark. The Danish National Bibliography includes an annual bibliography of books and articles by or about Danes and Denmark in languages other than Danish and for the most part published outside Denmark.

To conclude on the coverage of published documents having a physical form: These should be listed in the national bibliography according to 1977 recommendations with levels as suggested in 1982, albeit subject to revision should the primacy of the printed medium disappear. A few items could perhaps be moved between levels two and three, but in general the three-tiered list is a commendable instrument for selection to the National Bibliography.

Grey literature: should not to be registered in the National bibliography, instead international cooperation in registering should be pursued further, such as the Greynet <http://www.greynet.org/pages/1/index.htm> which is an international network, and EAGLE which is a European project [www.konbib.nl/sigle/](http://www.konbib.nl/sigle/)

## NETPUBLICATIONS

I have now come to the most challenging of the issues confronting National Bibliographical Service, the documents on the net, which currently means the Internet first and foremost.

The challenges concern types of materials to be covered as well as territories to be covered. We may begin with the usual litany: monographs, serials ... and very soon we run into troubles. What is a monograph on the net? What is the difference between an article or a monograph? Should the definition be based upon the number of bytes, a file contains? Then what about pictures, one of which take up more bytes than a plain text of many hundreds words. What is the difference on the net of a multi-volume work, a continually updated monograph and a periodical? between a homepage and a periodical, not to mention the hybrid forms: websites containing finished articles/monographs as well as continually updated databases, regularly updated lists etc.

The new Danish legal deposit law which went into effect on January 1, 1998, includes static documents on the net. On January 2, we began to collect static documents from the net, registering them and placing them on a server to be preserved for the future

In anticipation of the law, a project was begun last year, named INDOREG, which aimed at defining the types of documents on the net that were to be included in the National Bibliography. The principle guiding the INDOREG-project and the registration of deposited netdocuments is to pick out documents that looks like documents having a physical form and treat them like the latter. I don't believe this is the road, that National Bibliographic Services should take in dealing with netdocuments in the future, but for the present it serves the very useful purpose of giving those of us

who work with legal deposit on the net and with National Bibliographical Services the opportunity to analyse what is on the net and to follow developments. So far we are lucky in that the creators of net documents - in Denmark at least - are all children of a print culture and thus still act within the mental frame that Gutenberg created more than 500 years ago. In addition, a good part of the Danish net documents are official documents, produced by local, regional and national authorities, and while the new medium was eagerly utilized by those authorities, the form they give their document is still that of a static document, which retains the same content over a longer period of time. We are, however, working on borrowed time. Soon the creators of netdocuments will break the Gutenberg mold and adjust to the ways, information is distributed in cyberspace. If National Bibliographical Services don't adjust to that, they will be incongruous with the objects of registration.

The first issue in coverage of netdocuments: what types to cover, thus appears to be an insoluble one. So does the second issue, that of territory covered.

How does one define a place of publication for a net document? Is place of publication where the server is physically located? or the domain in the URL of the document? The first can be difficult to ascertain. Therefore, place of publication can be determined by domain-name in URL.

In case of Denmark, this should at first glance be easy to define: documents with a URL ending in ".dk", ".gr" (for Greenland) and ".fa" (for the Faeroe Islands) are published in Denmark, regardless of where the actual server is located. But how do we handle ".com", ".org.", and all the other international domains, where for example the Danish Company, Lego, has its websites.

Here, again a first glance, language could be a help. Everything on the net in Danish, Eskimo and Faeroese can be assumed to be aimed at an audience in Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Soon, however, we run into the problem, that cyberspace was born with a language: 'cyberenglish' - not necessarily a pretty language but one that makes it impossible to tell who the nationality of intended audience, and hence where the responsibility for registration lies. Internet, it should be recalled, is inherently border- and barriercrossing.

Summing up, I will venture to posit as a fact, that as far as documents on the Internet is concerned, changes will occur before the next conference, and that National Bibliographical services in their current form will not suffice for finding, retrieving and preserving these types of documents.

So I would suggest for consideration that we drop determining coverage according to document categories and territorial definitions that are incongruous with the object of registration. Instead we should look at current registration.

How does one access net documents now? Some enterprising people have set up search engines based not on any traditional library scheme of classification or description but on categories dear to the constructor's heart and using words occurring in the documents. National Bibliographical Services should build upon the idea of organizing information and using the internal clues, that all documents on the net provide, by using search engines. These can be

- commercial engines but perfected by the professional skills of librarians  
or
- search engines, specially produced by the National Bibliographical Agency, perhaps supplemented with traditional bibliographical control of net documents that have been produced as traditional documents.

In short, I am arguing for a complete coverage of information on the net, but also a transient coverage (search machines only gets what is on the net at the moment of search). The National Bibliography will provide access to published information but not permanent records **separate** from the object of registration. It will provide access together with the registration.

I will here mention the The Swedish Royal Library's project, entitled Kulturarw<sup>3</sup> (The Swedish Archiw<sup>3e</sup>) <http://www.kb.se/kw3/>. The aim of this project is to test methods of collecting, preserving and providing access to Swedish electronic documents which are accessible on line in such a way that they can be regarded as published. The guiding principle is to take a snapshot of the published information including periodicals, both electronic magazines and newspapers, static documents, e.g. texts in electronic text archives, and dynamic documents with links, e.g. HTML pages and preserve it. Harvested (to use current internet lingo) is information at Web sites with addresses ending in ".se", on web servers which are located in Sweden but whose addresses end in ".com", ".org" and ".net". In addition webpages produced by Swedes but placed on a foreign server and foreign produced pages with a Swedish connection, such as travel in Sweden or translations of Swedish literature are harvested. In the project, various ways will be tried of making the documents accessible locally and on the Internet. Some selections for cataloguing and basic registration will also be considered as well as possibilities of searching and finding documents without special registration. Dinally, developments in the fields of metadata and automatic cataloguing will be kept under observation. The end result will then be snapshots of published information on the net with a National Bibliography embedded. I find that this project points in the right direction of providing National Bibliographical services to the information on the net. Goals to be pursued will then be to

1. determine who will be responsible for which domains or parts of domains
2. develop search engines
3. encourage producers to use standard metadata, such as the Dublic Core
4. determine which parts of the net will need traditional cataloguing
5. urge that legal deposit laws be revised to cover information on the net

On issue need to be considered: that of registering the publications of International Organisations (governmental as well as non-governmental), whether these publications have a physical form or are on the net)

1. published inside borders of one country/ with a national domain (e.g. .dk)
2. published by organisation located in one country but published in other countries (or non-national domain, e.g. org)
3. published in many countries by organisations without a defined headquarter

The recommendations of 1977 say of Publications of intergovernmental and international non-governmental organisations that

[16] Intergovernmental and international non-governmental organization should introduce cataloguing-in-publication schemes in accordance with international bibliographical standards

[17] Intergovernmental organizations should co-operate in a joint effort to produce a current bibliography of all their publications.

For documents having physical form these recommendations could still stand with the modification that a current bibliography be superseded by a current listing of all available publications on the website of the individual organisation. This listing should contain bibliographical information according with international bibliographical standards

For information on the net, one should urge those organizations, who do not have a website, to produce one and to provide it with good search machines, according to the (future) standards for search machines.

## **Abstract**

The discussion of coverage is divided into two parts

1. Documents having a physical form
2. Netpublications

For Documents having a physical form (a book, a slide, a tape, a disc, a cd-rom, a filmstrip, a combination of these) the recommendations of 1977 along with a set of recommendations, issued in 1982 by a working group concerning levels of coverage of documents with an annex on "Definitions of the main types of documents" are still valid.

It is proposed that published documents having a physical form should be listed in the national bibliography according to 1977 recommendations with levels as suggested in 1982, albeit subject to revision should the primacy of the printed medium disappear. A few items could perhaps be moved between levels two and three, but in general the three-tiered list is a commendable instrument for selection to the National Bibliography.

It is also pointed out that only published documents should be included in the National Bibliography and that coverage including every single item published will not be achieved nor is desired.

A solution for the so-called Grey Literature must be found, but separate from the national bibliography.

For netdocuments the proposal is for NBS to cooperate in providing access to published information, not as permanent records separate from the object of registration but registration together with access in the form of search engines. It is also proposed that following goals be pursued to



1. determine who will be responsible for which domains or parts of domains
  2. develop search engines
  3. encourage producers to use standard metadata, such as the Dublin Core
  4. determine which parts of the net will still need traditional cataloguing
  5. urge that legal deposit laws be revised to cover information on the net
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