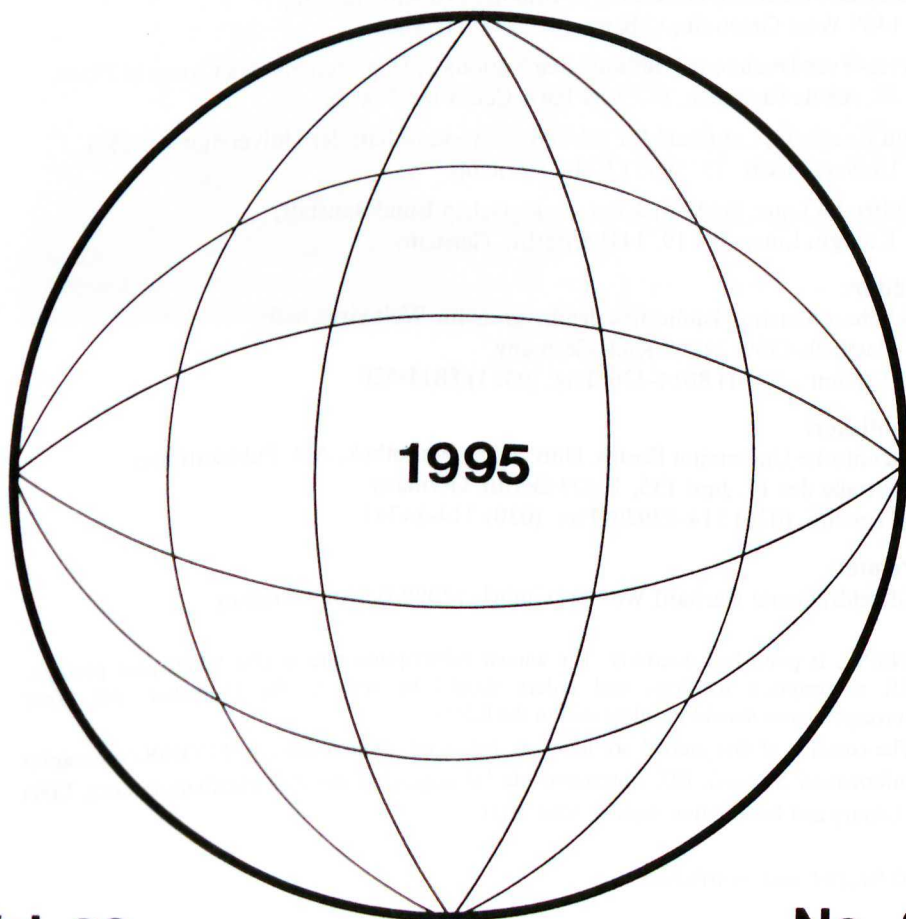


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The Journal is directed to an international readership among librarians in government and international agencies, as well as in universities and research institutions. Librarianship is a key subject in a rapidly changing world. Improved practice will help produce economic benefits, and special attention should be given to problems concerning libraries in Developing Countries.

Articles will be drawn primarily from activities conducted within IFLA. But on occasion the Journal will publish articles on specified topics by non-IFLA contributors. Any reader interested in preparing such an article is invited to submit the paper to the Editor. Material on all aspects of librarianship will be considered eligible for publication.

The views and interpretations in articles published are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the policies of IFLA or ASpB.

Comments or brief notes responding to Journal articles are welcome and will be considered for publication to the extent that space permits.

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THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

By Yolanda Ricardo

Abstract: Library and research: this correlation turned into a system in Cuba, implies an important aspect for the development of social science libraries. If this correlation is highly worthy for the rest of the sciences as a main mean that helps avoid the stagnation in the process of knowledge and in the scientific search, then, for the social sciences, it is a vital requirement in the progressive self-development these sciences demand. Special research is carried out in most of the Cuban libraries which have important social science book stock and which may be special in these fields or not. Therefore, the social science documental stock is increasingly enriched by the regular entry of reports of results of the scientific research, term papers, university works among others. This supports the progressive deepening and self-development of each single science.

Cuban social science special libraries systematically work on saving and preserving the documental heritage, even having material difficulties. They carry out a careful selecting policy to increase the special book stock which finds support not only on the analysis of the public's applications but also on the prospects of self-development of the science as much, closely related to the programmed researches, and they regularly carry out the review of the most current information of the special science to spread it selectively, international. This daily feedbacks the knowledge system of the science and favours the chances to develop this field of thought and its social influence in a future time.

Coming mainly from the great trends of Humanism thoughts, the current social sciences reward the endless stock of information and knowledge that meant the Western Renaissance, as well as, the wish of knowing typical of the Encyclopedism subsequent to the Renaissance and of the emergence of the most diverse scientific fields of study of the modern times and of the most recent contemporaneous discoveries. If the work of humanist scholars and experts has been fairly considered to play an important role, it is likewise important to highlight the fact that significant documental stock was stored in the great centers

Ms Ricardo's paper was delivered at 60th IFLA General Conference, Havana, Cuba, 21-28 August 1994.

of the Latin, Islamic and Eastern cultures and in numerous Christian monasteries, abbeys and convents of the supposed obscure Middle Age.

Since then, great impulses for the development of knowledge were concentrated in specific centers of knowledge which are, nowadays, worthy sources of the most prestigious libraries of the world.

Historically, there has been an special emphasis on Humanities which have been enriched by the contributions of the different sciences until turning, though in a different way, into the current sciences which comprise a very diverse spectrum where sciences like Philosophy, History, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Linguistics, Economics and Literary sciences among others are included.

A remarkable effort to store documents was carried out by the Economic Societies of Friends of the Country that were created and developed by two great Spaniard cultural groups - the Basque and the one coming from Madrid - and under the auspices of King Charles III's well-read policy, favoured the chances to found similar societies in America among the New World born inhabitants, societies which were interested in the self-development of knowledge and of the local economy.

Stimulated by this policy, academies, scientific and cultural institutions and libraries emerged. This is the case of the most ancient Cuban library founded in 1793 under the government of Don Luis de Las Casas. This 200 year old library has its current seat in the Research Center of Literature and Linguistics in Cuba.

Library and research: This correlation turned into a system in Cuba, implies an important aspect for the development of social science libraries. If this correlation is highly worthy for the rest of the sciences as a main mean that helps to avoid the stagnation in the process of knowledge and in the scientific search, then, for the social sciences, it is a vital requirement in the progressive self-development these sciences demand. Special research is carried out in most of the Cuban libraries which have important social science book stocks and which may be special in these fields of study or not. Therefore, the social science documental stock is increasingly enriched by the regular entry of reports or results of the scientific research, term papers, university works among others. This supports the progressive deepening and self-development of each single science. For instance, this is the case of the José Martí National Library (JMNL), of the Science and Technique National Library (STNL) and of the Havana University Library (HUL). The JMNL whose documental stock and methodological work are extended all over the country, has research priorities concerning Cuban themes - specially those regarding the correlation between reading and the library and heritage stock - and promotes special informative publications of first importance like the General

Index of Publications. The 23% of the STNL stock is devoted to the social sciences and this library is organizing the joint catalog of these disciplines; fact that would ease the general reference of their subjects. Finally, the HUL which looks after a network of special libraries, has the 77,62% of its non-serial collection devoted to the social sciences addressed to the library service and backing up the research.

These libraries daily work on saving, preserving and making public the national documental heritage. They do not ignore that if there have been lots of talks about library environment, even about the ideal but unachievable surroundings expressed by Duncan Cameron (Museum News, (46) 9: 17-22) in 1968 - who foresaw elaborated installations free of any living creature - this does not stop being a permanent goal though in reasonable ways and periods of time. The ideal relative temperature and humidity, between 15,6^o C and 26,7^o C (the former) and between 50 and 60, (the latter), are not achieved yet either totally or at large scale but they are taken into account for future projects in restricted areas and in areas of prior importance when the material conditions allow it. The same happens with the plaguicides: experiments with nitrogen carried out by the California Getty Institute are known but they are still just expectations. Anyway, a sustainable effort has been expanded in different directions like for instance:

- the good use of natural environmental conditions with an emphasis on a proper storage.
- the stocktaking of documental heritage.
- the prior selection of documents for their save.

Without taking into account saving, just preserving century old documental heritage is a task of giants because of the work magnitude as well as the large amount of resources this task demands. That is why there is an urgent need to improve the hygienic and organizing devices in each Cuban library; an effort which is regularly carried out aiming being better day by day,

There is a great variety of informative services in libraries of social science research special centers, though unequally developed. The main services are the following:

Document Loan:

inner loan in reading rooms

outer loan (researchers and special institutions)

interlibrary loan

Reference:

special advisory service, requests applied beforehand through different communicating ways.

Selective Dissemination of Information:

the daily and current display of the new documents of the book stock to the public.

Table of Contents:

daily divulgation of special magazine indexes.

Bibliographical Elaboration:

it is generally carried out depending on the author and theme application for an specific research or other searches.

Indexation:

Index elaboration which satisfies specific applications.

Bibliographical Search and Delivery:

it includes the most diverse applications of the public which have to do with special objectives of institutional researches, and in some cases, of particular research.

Photography and Document Reproduction:

according to the available library resources, it is carried out with paper, micro-cards, microfilms or by automatized means but the paper is the most usually used by means of photocopies.

Scientific-Technical Translations:

carried out in the economic branch, in three languages: English, Russian and German, the translation service is offered mainly by the Information Center of the Planning Central Council (JUCEPLAN).

Promotion of Scientific-Technical Information:

tough poor, this promotion has been carried out by different special libraries. The History Institute, the Literature and Linguistics Institute (ILL) as well as JUCEPLAN systematically work on the documental displays.

Technical and Scientific-Methodological Assistance:

the development of other libraries in the country and abroad (JUCEPLAN, ILL) has been supported by means of post-graduate courses and of advisory services.

Systematic Review of the Most Current Information of the Special Science:

this is an scarcely spread experience but the prospects are to extend it.

Generally, some institutions have achieved certain developing levels in the service area. This is the case of the History Institute which has been applying a work organizing policy that at the same time has allowed it to combine the library work and records with the laboratory of documental saving and of paper and microcard reproduction. It counts on automatized processing of databases and prepares the future automation of its library stock. Besides, it has been supporting the informative search for the elaboration of a work of national importance: the *History of Cuba*. The Information Center of JUCEPLAN has advanced in the processing of databases and in the methodological advisory service to other national institutions. The library of the Science Organizing and History Center, heir of the stock of the first Science Academy in the country, is applying the automation and has offered information to carry out a multilateral study of Fidel Casto's thoughts mainly from a scientific point of view. The Center of Studies about Martí also offers automatized services and an informative back up for the critical edition of José Martí's *Full Works*. The Literature and Linguistics Institute works combining the processing over half a million of documents with the documental heritage restoration and paves the way for a more frequent use of the electronic mail and for a future automation and at the same time gives professional advice in the country and abroad. On the other hand, the informative platform was insured to elaborate and conclude decisive research works of the Cuban culture: *the Cuban Literature Dictionary*, the *Cuban Literature History* and the *Cuban Phraseology Dictionary*. The research of other works of first importance like the *Cuban Dictionary of Contemporary Authors*, the *Dialect Atlas of Cuba*, the *Dictionary of Cubanisms* and the *Search of Cultural Identity in Latin America*, is also backed up. The HUL offers different services like the scientific video, processed information of the press, technical norms, vertical files among others.

This is the perfect chance to mention the role of two associations as organizers in the whole country, associations which have to do with informative services: the Scientific Center of Humanities and the Cooperating Committee for economic information (COSDE). The former comprises a group of institutions to look after in advance an universal problem: the Cuban heritage saving and preservation. It works on this line to create a program of informative services and a social science special reference division. Concerning COSDE which groups 20 institutions related to the social sciences, it has, as a main objective, the combination of the work in the economic branch with the advisory service of the Science Academy of Cuba to insure that researches of prior importance in the country are supplied with the necessary information. One of its main contributions has been the database processing of the joint catalog for economic type information in the whole country.

A current problem to face by experts and executives of the social science libraries field is the insertion of this kind of institution in the economic prospects. We depart from the fact that public special libraries are financed by a stable budget that supports microcards, personnel, equipment, services and resources to reproduce information. There is a widespread comment which expresses the urgent need to carry out a permanent self-assessment of the service efficiency which can be measured by means of the production cost of the resources and of the time invested in each informative service and of its precision and rigor: essential elements to evaluate the profitability of these institutions and the prospects of economic compensation. Unluckily, there are not even reliable indicators to analyze, within the service cost, the special work which goes along with it, or to measure the cultural and bibliographical worth of each processed document offered.

Anyway, some specialists agree with the need of economic assessment of the informative services; fact that would result not only in a compensation to the institution expenditures and in a possible introduction of a new technology and of new services but also in the increase of the social and scientific prestige of the work carrying out. Broadly speaking, two first measures are suggested:

- the improvement of the work organizing systems which may include the introduction of economic controls.
- the study of the experiences of the different countries to assess institutional price policies which can be applied to the special services.

Conclusions

1) Cuban social science special libraries systematically work on saving and preserving the documental heritage, even having material difficulties. They carry out a careful selecting policy to increase the special book stock which finds support not only on the analysis of the public's applications but also on the prospects of self-development of the science as such, closely related to the programmed researches, and they regularly carry out the review of the most current information of the special science to spread it selectively, later. This daily feedbacks the knowledge system of the science and favours the chances to develop this field of thought and its social influence in a future.

2) Departing from this analysis, a debate will be carried out in the IFLA workshop concerning the experience of other libraries in the world, specially in the Third World and in Latin America, in order to interchange points of view that stimulate the progressive development of the social sciences and of the libraries

encharged of the divulgation and introduction of its results in the prospects of the development.

Aspects to assess in the suggestions

- 1) Divulgation of knowledge: how and what for.
- 2) Promotion of activities which favour self-development.
- 3) Program of sustainable development.
- 4) Program of technological appliance.
- 5) Economic strategy.

Debating issues

- 1) Self-development processes of social science libraries: technical and economic aspects.
- 2) Program of sustainable development.
- 3) Economic assessment of the scientific-technical services.

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS IN THE ENGLISH SPEAKING CARIBBEAN: ADVANCES IN THE OECS SUBREGION (1992-1994)*

By Claudette de Freitas

Abstract: Instruction is one of main resources used in making major decisions and as key actors in the development process, governments are responsible for collecting, organising and disseminating a great of information; hence the importance of official publications. Against the background of a 1984 survey on official publications in the English-speaking Caribbean, this paper examines recent development in the area of official publications within the OECS - a sub-region of the English-speaking Caribbean. The paper makes some observations and recommendations on official publications and notes that change will only come when informed decision making becomes a societal norm.

Introduction

Information is one of the key resources used inmaking major decisions as well as carrying out day-to-day activities: the extent to which informed decisions are made depends on access to relevant and timely information. As key actors in the development process, governments are responsible for collecting, organising and disseminating a great deal of information, hence the importance of official publications.

For the purposes of this paper, official publications include any print or non-print items produced by an official department, or other agency of government. It includes both published items as well as materials not available through normal book channels (grey literature) commissioned or sanctioned by the respective organisation. These include statistical data, legal information, research papers, feasibility studies, and a variety of reports of ongoing activities.

While not being agencies of central governments, the Caribbean Community,

* The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the position of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.

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(CARICOM)¹, the economic community of English speaking Caribbean countries, and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)¹, a similar grouping of Windward and Leeward Islands, are two key regional institutions which work jointly with the Member Governments on economic and social policies for development. I will draw on some of their experiences and activities in discussing official publications in this paper.

Although the OECS sub-region may not be representative of all of the islands in the English speaking Caribbean, I will be examining the state of official publications in the OECS and this could form the basis for later comparisons or discussions.

No survey was undertaken in preparing this paper, but discussions were held via telephone, with Documentalists in the National Documentations Centres of the OECS region, in order to obtain an up-to-date picture on the state of official publications in their respective countries.

Official Publications - Historical situation

A major contribution to the literature on public documents in the English Speaking Caribbean is the study commissioned by UNESCO and prepared by Daphne Douglas in 1984. Ms. Douglas noted "... the area of government publishing in its entirety is one which has not yet received priority treatment in this region."²

The UNESCO study outlined many problems such as the overall lack of publishing policies and comprehensive listings of public documents. In addition to the absence or non enforcement of legal deposit legislation, there were no controlling centres for official publications, a general lack of publication standards, poor quality and limited numbers of items being produced.²

These problems resulted in very limited access to government publications both on the part of the general public and the government itself.

Official Publications 1992-94

Production

Douglas noted that in pre-independence times control of government printing and

¹ CARICOM is made up of **Antigua and Barbuda**, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, **Dominica**, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Monserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. The **British Virgin Islands** and the Turks and Caicos Islands are associated members.

The Countries in **bold** are member of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

publishing was the responsibility of the government printery. However, even in 1984, "the growth of publishing activities greatly outstripped the capabilities of printing offices."²

Today, with the availability of desk-top publishing, some government printing departments seem to have been relegated to the role of binding, printing of covers, or coordinating the sub-contracting of materials to private printers. With the exception of items such as gazettes, laws, and estimates of revenue and expenditure, the responsibility for the preparation, printing and distribution of government documents seems to have been almost entirely taken over by individual government departments. Documents may be sent camera ready to private printers, or prepared 'in-house' using desk-top publishing facilities. In some cases the Government Printery now functions as simply a printer and does not play a role of sanctioning items for publication. In at least one OECS island, (Antigua & Barbuda) control over the reproduction of laws and the gazette by government officials outside of the Government Printery, is still enforced. Recently the Ministry of Labour was prevented from reproducing copies of the Labour Code, even when the Government Printery had historically not been able to supply copies of same. In light of the capabilities of desk-top publishing the legal department there is considering stiffer penalties for violators.

Publication standards have not been developed by most of the islands, and while official publications such as Budget Speeches, Estimates and Statistical reports seem to be generally of an acceptable standard, 'in-house' research reports or studies still suffer from poor document identification. While the potential exists for improved document quality as a result of the printing and publishing technologies available, with a myriad of amateur printers getting into the act, the need for publication standards is probably more critical at this time. Timeliness has been identified as a key factor in the provision of information to users and this applies of course to official publications. Discussions reveal that in many OECS islands, official publications, such as statistical reports may have gaps ranging upwards of two years to as much as over five years. Hence it is not merely the issue of availability of government publications that should be considered, but also the issue of timeliness. This is particularly critical for socio-economic data.

In addition, the number of copies of official publications in many of the OECS countries still fall short of demand; efforts to identify potential demand for certain official publications should continue. It has also been observed that the publication of some government documents such as Annual reports seem to be on the decline for various reasons, including financial constraints. At the same time, it is generally agreed that with access to word processing, desk-top publishing and

photocopying facilities, much more material is being generated than ever before. However, there is no evidence that this phenomenon has been translated into increased diffusion and distribution of official publications.

Diffusion and distribution

The majority of OECS Governments do not have national coordinating agencies responsible for official publications. The distribution of government publications is often limited to senior public and private sector officials, as well as regional and international organisations. The material is often placed on files or in private collections from which retrieval is difficult. Even where Documentation Centres or Public Libraries have expressed a willingness to organize the material, there seems to be marked reluctance by many public officials to give up control of documents.

A limited range of official publications is usually available at Public Libraries and National Documentation Centres within the OECS, where they are usually treated as reference material. Some islands may also provide loans to government officials.

Legal Deposit

A search of the most recent Consolidated Index of Statutes and Subsidiary Legislation revealed that most of the OECS islands still have on the books the West Indian Publications Legislation of pre-independence times, and have not adopted the model legal deposit legislation drawn up by CARICOM in the 1970s.

Some islands such as the British Virgin Islands (BVI), Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica, have included provisions for legal deposit in the Public Libraries Act, although in most cases there is still very limited enforcement of these laws. Where items are printed 'in-house' or by private printers it is expected that a copy should be lodged with the Government Printer. However, this requirement is seldom met. Even where there is a designated legal depository, access can quite often be provided only to official publications such as some basic legal documents, budget addresses and estimates of revenue and expenditure.

However, information professionals are conscious of this state of affairs and are constantly battling to correct this situation. For example at this time BVI is currently in the process of drafting a separate Legal Deposit Act aimed at upgrading the clause on legal deposits in the Public Libraries Act. Montserrat is also attempting to upgrade provisions under the Public Libraries Act, as well as examining the issues involved in legal deposit.

Since the establishment of the OECS National Documentation Centres in 1987, as part of the OECS Information Network, these centres have been functioning as

depositories for official publications in respective OECS countries, in a limited manner. The mandate of the National Documentation Centre is to collect material produced locally, including official publications. However, constraints of staffing, space and other resources have often limited this role to collecting materials produced by the Ministry within which the Centre is located.

The Documentation Centre databases are currently the only source of bibliography lists of official publications in the respective OECS countries, but can hardly lay claims to being comprehensive.

Classification and access

Another issue of concern with respect to official publications is the classification of documents. Classifications range from restricted to confidential. The nature of the restriction is sometimes not easy to identify and may vary with the type of document. None of the National Documentation Centres reported a set criteria for classification and there were no declassification policies or guidelines in place. The declaration of a document as classified has traditionally been done by the Government department responsible for preparing the item or it is sometimes done at the discretion of the information professional.

The CARICOM Secretariat, however while having no official policy uses a set of guidelines to assist their handling of restricted materials. Paper presented at meetings of officials are usually declassified after three years, although the specific institutions may declassify the material at their discretion. However, papers presented in caucus, papers discussing member states' contributions, particularly defaulting members, and papers deemed to be of a politically sensitive nature are never declassified.

In order to ensure future availability, classified materials should be handled in light of its ultimate status; hence the necessity to develop not only declassification but also classification policies. Of course policies formulated should ensure "an acceptable equilibrium between the claims for secrecy and the demands for public disclosure". Every effort should be made to ensure that agencies or groups responsible for making decisions on classification are as objective and non-partisan as possible.⁶

Official publications - a few observations and recommendations

There is still the growing concern that developing countries are not utilizing the available information technology to organize their local information and make it accessible to users. In the English speaking Caribbean, Governments have a major role to play in the information sector and this involves not only collecting and dis-

seminating information, but also formulating policies to guide developments in the field.

Modern technology has placed the printing function within the reach of anyone with access to desk-top publishing facilities, therefore, the control of official publications is now more than ever a major issue. The process by which items become official publications will need to be clearly identified. Member states could go through a process of discussion and approval at the departmental or Ministry level then at the policy level, before any document is officially published. This is currently done in the BVI. A publications committee could be appointed at the departmental level to be responsible for selecting or commissioning items for publication, implementing local publication policies and standards, cost and pricing, printing, promotion and distribution.

Even with policies in place at the departmental level, it will be necessary to have a central body responsible for updating and policing publication policies at a national level, including the enforcement of legislation or initiating of actions to get the necessary legislation in place.

While central control of official publications has been stressed, the concept of centralized collections may now be outdated, since information technology can allow access to the relevant information without physical control of the material.¹⁰ However, the resources necessary to manage centralized collections must be weighed against the management and co-ordination of a series of departmental collections form a central point. In the OECS sub-region, decentralized collections may contribute to the development of more comprehensive bibliographic control since government agencies, often reluctant to relinquish control of their publications, may be more easily persuaded to have the item included in a central database.

The technology revolution facilitates the storage and retrieval of large amounts of data at minimal cost. All OECS islands have some basic hardware and software, which with a certain amount of upgrading, would provide the facilities to organise local networks. But central bibliographic control will still be necessary and another issue of concern, particularly with ongoing regional integration efforts, is the availability of bibliographic data for official publications on a regional and sub-regional level. Based on the experience of the CARICOM bibliography, Gorman and Mills observed that "the CARICOM Bibliography falls short of its avowed aim to treat publications in all of members the Caribbean Community, ... most adequate coverage is achieved for those countries which already possess national bibliographies."⁵ Hence a regional information system will only be as

good as the information systems existing at the local level. The CARICOM Bibliography ceased publication in 1990.

The introduction of ECLAC/AMBIONET in 1992, provides the opportunity for the distribution of official publications across the region online. A major deterrent to online communication had been the high cost of intra-island telecommunication. However, it was revealed in January, 1994, that Cable & Wireless, the regional telecommunications facilitator, was currently making provision for inter-island links, within the OECS and wider English speaking Caribbean, it is anticipated that these facilities would be available by early 1995.

The infrastructure already exists for linking local networks into the existing information system, both at the level of the OECS as well as CARICOM, although further investment in human resources and equipment may be necessary. Regional institutions such as CARICOM and OECS could continue to assist with the coordination of activities at the sub-regional and regional levels.

Over time, as collections of official publications increase in size, the problem of providing access to current items while still maintaining easy access to historic information, will need to be addressed. The use of CD-ROM for storage of retrospective information, including the feasibility of joint publication of the volumes of conference papers which form part of the OECS and CARICOM collection, should be examined.

The possibility of editing classified materials to improve access to information from official documents should continue to be explored. This was the thrust behind the launching in 1993, of the OECS Occasional Paper series, since quite often when materials are declassified they may only be of historic importance. The CARICOM Secretariat also ensures distribution of information on key regional issues such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the banana issue, regional integration and trade relations, through the use of serial publications such as, the CARICOM Perspective, the CARICOM Press Release and CARICOM News.

In 1993, CARICOM began the co-ordination of the International Research Centre (IDRC) sponsored project on information for decision making. This project is designed to conduct research on the information seeking habits and needs of a wide cross section of regional policy makers, researchers and other users of information. Project results will be used to make recommendations for tailoring information systems and services to meet the needs of the majority of users. Preliminary analysis of results points to a relatively high demand for locally generated infor-

mation and data, such as current socio-economic and trade statistics which is usually generated by the government and would be found in official publications.

Conclusion

A review of the literature, including a follow-up paper by Daphne Douglas in 1991³, and discussions with information professionals in the OECS sub-region as well as CARICOM, confirmed that in the OECS sub-region, the situation with respect to official publications, was similar to that of 1984. It is likely that countries such as Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica, Barbados and Guyana, with more developed information sectors may have advanced further with respect to the drafting and implementation of policies relating to official publications and compulsory legal deposit.

There have been major advances with respect to the potential created by the technology available to assist the physical printing process and reproduction of official publications. However, there needs to be a clear distinction made between the printing function and the process by which documents become official publications and move into the public domain. The publication of official documents needs to be coordinated to ensure access to timely, accurate, high quality, user friendly government publications by a wide cross section of users. Computer and telecommunications technology have made it possible to provide access to official publications at the local, regional and international levels in a variety of formats.

Efforts have been made for some time now to sensitize senior decision makers about the importance of developing our capability to access information, as well as the potential opportunities and technology available to assist this process. Discussions with many senior policy makers have led one to believe that they are at least aware of the issues involved. But, until they are ready "to put money where their mouth is" (according to a local proverb) and commit the necessary financial and human resources to implement policies and programmes in the information sector, we have to assume that they still have not been convinced. Information professionals will need to continue their efforts to build strategic alliances with professionals in other sectors, and lobby for the necessary actions to improve the publication and access to official publications in the English speaking Caribbean.

Change will only come when informed decision making is the norm and the society recognizes that a deficient decision support system is expensive and often results in lost opportunities, particularly in the very dynamic global environment in which we find ourselves today.

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AR^v

ONLINE ACCESS TO U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

By Vicky York

Abstract:

Online access allows users worldwide to tap into a wealth of U.S. government information sources. Traditionally much of this access has been provided by commercial vendors. One of the most widely available and one which offers over forty U.S. government databases is Dialog Information Service. The author highlights five particular useful databases for online searching of government information. By this the presentation gives a taste of the many possible ways to search for U.S. government information online.

The United States government is the largest publisher in the world. Each of the three branches of the U.S. government - executive, legislative and judicial - are sources of government publications. Executive branch publications include presidential documents, reports and statistical publications from the various agencies such as the Department of Commerce, National Institutes of Health, Environmental Protection Agency and so forth, and regulations issued by these agencies. Legislative branch publications are those related to both houses of Congress - the House of Representatives and the Senate - and include bills, hearings, reports from the committees and subcommittees and the laws as passed by Congress. Publications from the Judiciary include the decision of the Supreme Court as well as those courts which deal with particular types of cases such as the Tax Court and Court of Military Appeals.

Not only can these publications be elusive but the need is often for up-to-date, timely information which can be obtained as quickly as possible. Online access allows users worldwide to tap into a wealth of U.S. government information sources. Traditionally much of this access has been provided by commercial vendors. One of the most widely available and one which offers 40 U.S. government databases is DIALOG Information Services, Inc. Many of these have been

Ms York's paper was delivered at 59th IFLA Council and General Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 22-28 August 1993. The author has corrected some minor errors in the preprint version.

been brought together for searching under the DIALINDEX category GOVT (Government). Other U.S. government databases for searching census, patents, trademarks, and technical report literature are also available. I would like to highlight five particularly useful DIALOG databases for online searching of government information: GPO/PRF, NTIS, ASI, CIS, and Cendata.

As I will discuss further on, the United States Government Printing Office (GPO) is not the sole publisher of government information, but it is the U.S. government's primary information cataloger and distributor. In 1976 the U.S. Government Printing Office began producing its index, the *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications*, in machine readable form. File 66, is the online version of the GPO *Monthly Catalog*. Descriptors are assigned using standard Library of Congress subject headings. Searching by agency name can take some practice even for documents librarians. As the example shows, using the Corporate Source (CS=) prefix and the (S) operator is often the most efficient way when unsure of the exact agency name. A companion to File 66, is File 166, GPO Publications Reference File. The Publications Reference File (PRF) is often referred to as the U.S. government publications "books in print". It lists the publications currently for sale by the GPO along with forthcoming sales titles. It is particularly useful for determining the availability of a publication, and obtaining the stock number and foreign price for ordering purposes.

As mentioned earlier, the Government Printing Office is not the only distributor of government publications. In fact one of its weaknesses is the limited number of technical reports represented in *The Monthly Catalog* (File 66). For technical report literature, especially from the Dept. of Energy, the Dept. of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), one of the best sources is the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the U.S. Department of Commerce. NTIS is searchable from 1964 forward as DIALOG File 6. NTIS serves as the clearinghouse for unclassified government-sponsored research reports, including machine readable data files and software. Increasingly it includes reports prepared by non-U.S. governments and unpublished material originating outside the U.S. NTIS can also be used as a source for locating "out of print" publications, no longer sold by the Government Printing Office but available for purchase from NTIS.

An all purpose, very useful file for statistical information is American Statistics Index (ASI), File 102. ASI is a comprehensive index of the statistical publications from more than 500 different U.S. government agencies covering 1973 to the present. A unique feature of ASI is that the citations are often directly to tables, charts or graphs within the publications, with descriptive abstracts provided.

For census data specifically, there is CENDATA, produced by the Bureau of the Census. It appears on DIALOG as a menu-driven database, CENDATA, and as a File 580, using standard DIALOG commands. Personally, for this kind of statistical data, I find the 18 category menu search easier to use. CENDATA is most useful for data from the most recent 1990 Census of population and Housing and the forthcoming data from 1992 economic censuses, but it does include some historical data. It is updated at least once each working day.

All of the previous files discussed provide access primarily to executive branch publications. However, a number of databases focus on the legislative branch and congressional publications. On DIALOG, File 101, Congressional Information Service (CIS) is a comprehensive index to the hearings and reports of the nearly 300 congressional committees and subcommittees. Coverage goes back to 1970. In addition to Congressional Information Service, other commercial vendors provide daily updated legislative and regulatory information. These tend to be much more expensive but offer "value-added" services such as full text, detailed indexing and some analysis. LEGI-SLATE provides the full text of all versions of all bills introduced since 1985 with the 99th Congress. Legislative histories are provided for bills since the start of the 96th Congress in 1979. It is also possible with LEGI-SLATE to track how individual representatives and senators have voted. The NEXIS/LEXIS database is one of the most comprehensive but also one of the most expensive. NEXIS information is grouped into several electronic "libraries". The Executive Branch Library includes detailed news coverage of the White House and executive agencies, full text of the *Code of Federal Regulation* and the *Federal Register*. The Legislative Library covers legislative activity in the U.S. congress and the 50 state legislatures and includes full text of the *Congressional Record*, committee reports, and public laws.

There is no question that cost is a factor in online searching. Initially there is the cost of the equipment itself, the computer, modem and printer. Then there is the cost of the telephone line and charges for the connection through the telecommunications carrier. Sometimes there is an annual subscription fee, in addition to the cost of the search itself which is usually based on the amount of time connected to the database as well as the charge for display of citations or full text. It is a good idea to fully explore with a vendor all the charges involved, since databases can vary considerably. Against cost, must be weighed the amount of searching that will be done, the skill level of the searchers, and the need for timeliness and comprehensiveness. Online searching can certainly be cost-effective, but must be considered within the overall context of financial resources and information need.

There is currently much interest in access to government information through the Internet. Initially conceived by the U.S. Dept. of Defense in the late 1960's as a way of linking the supercomputers throughout the United States, the National Science Foundation originally funded the supercomputer network NSFNET; subsequently, regional, state and local networks sprung up from this backbone network. The Internet as its name suggests links these various computer networks and today is truly global, linking more than 5000 computer networks in over 50 countries. Access was originally limited to research, educational and government institutions. Since 1991 when the law changed, commercial providers increased dramatically, making it possible for those not previously eligible to now gain access to the Internet.

Finding government information on the Internet seems to me to be an area worth exploring for a several reasons. More and more, U.S. government agencies are making their bulletin boards, information systems and online catalogs available on the Internet. For those institutions with access to the Internet, particularly those outside the United States, long-distance telephone charges may be eliminated. Many academic institutions, through their university computer services offer campus-wide information systems (CWIS), which are in essence a group of databases. Usually one of the databases is the library online catalog, but a host of other databases and information resources, including U.S. government information, can be found. Users may connect directly to these campus-wide information systems by using a computer with a modem and the telnetting to the address of the host computer. The telnet command allows the searcher to interact with a remote computer as though connected directly to it. It is also possible to select from literally hundreds of sites by way of Gopher, a menu-driven program to help users find and select particular Internet information sources.

Another means of access to the electronic community is through FidoNet, a computer bulletin board system comprising over 10,000 nodes on every continent. Again, it is necessary to have a computer equipped with a modem and communications software. FidoNet works from a geographic hierarchy of zones, regions, networks and nodes. Gaining access to FidoNet for some may be easier and less costly than a direct Internet connection, but would provide a gateway from which search.

Now let's move into some of the specific sources. The list of Internet sources at the end of the paper is designed mainly to introduce several categories and provide examples of each.

Global networks such as FidoNet and the Internet have encouraged communication among colleagues worldwide through electronic mail. Electronic discussion

groups using the LISTSERV program expand on the concept of electronic mail by distributing messages to all the subscribers in the group. LISTSERs in general, and certainly GOVDOC-L serve two main purposes: timely and accurate exchange of information and a pool of experienced colleagues from which to draw advice and discuss issues. GOVDOC-L is the best source I know to stay abreast of what is happening in the area of U.S. government information. Contributors regularly identify sources of information, provide answers to reference questions, for example: an excellent short bibliography of materials including court cases related to gays in the military and information on the North American Free Trade Agreement. When you subscribe you will receive back from the LISTSERV management further instructions on how to leave the list, retrieve archival files, and other useful commands. I would encourage those in the audience with Internet access to subscribe to GOVDEC-L to gain a feeling of what is currently being discussed in the U.S. government information community.

The second group is electronic publications. I have called these electronic publications because they are not really discussion groups, but they are not truly electronic journals either. ALAWON authored by the American Library Association's Washington D.C. office, provides up-to-date information and analysis of federal legislation related to libraries in general but specifically the current batch of bills related to the implementation of an information infrastructure known as the National Research and Education Network.

Many library online catalogs are now accessible on the Internet. I have included CARL because among it offers the database of the GPO tapes from 1976 so that it can be used to search, identify and verify government publications. Two campus-wide information systems of particular note are those at the University of California at Santa Cruz and the University of Nevada. Both of these include a number of government information resources: the text of U.S. Supreme Court cases can be found at UC- Santa Cruz and Nevada has mounted much of the 1990 census data at the state level as one of their databases.

Finally as I mentioned earlier, the federal agencies themselves are making information available through the Internet. From the examples on the list, I would like to highlight two. In May the Library of Congress announced access to its information system over the Internet. Of particular interest may be the section on federal legislation. This section tracks legislation introduced in the U.S. Congress from 1973 to the present. Each Congress has its own file and can be searched by keyword.

The second example is the Food and Drug Administration's bulletin board system which offers a several kinds of information, including the drug and device product

approvals list, federal regulations issued by the FDA, an index to and selected articles from its publication *FDA Consumer*, and a section on AIDS information.

I have barely scratched the surface, but I hope this presentation has provided a taste of the many possible ways to search for U.S. government information online. I am confident that this is an area that will continue to grow and develop ensuring that libraries truly are centers for the global availability of information.

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ONLINE ACCESS TO U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Commercial Vendors

DIALOG Information Services
P.O.Box 10010
Palo Alto, CA 94303-0993

LEXIS/NEXIS
Mead Data Central, Inc.
9443 Springboro Pike
Miamisburg, OH 45342
513-865-1245

LEGI-SLATE, Inc.
111 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-898-2321

Internet Sources

Listservs and Discussion Groups

To subscribe, send an Internet mail message to the address shown. Leave the subject field blank. The body of the message should read: Subscribe lastname yourname

1. GOVDOC-L is a moderate, interactive e-mail discussion list for anyone interested in government information issues, federal depository concerns or just information on current topics such as gays in the military or Clinton's economic plan.

Internet: LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU

To subscribe: subscribe GOVDOC-L firstname lastname

Electronic Publications

1. ALAWON electronic publication of the American Library Association Washington Office highlighting legislation related to government information and library issues.

Internet: LISTSERV@UICVM.UIC.EDU

To subscribe: subscribe ALA-WO firstname lastname

Contact: ALA Washington Office
110 Maryland Ave. NE
Washington, D.C. 20002-5675
202-547-4440

2. Electronic Releases from the Whitehouse

You can sign up to receive the following categories: Economy Foreign, Social, Speeches, News or All.

On the Subject line, send the command RECEIVE followed by the category name

Internet: Clinton-Info@Campaign92.Org

Subject: RECEIVE ECONOMY

Contact: Send an e-mail query as follows:

To: Clinto-Info@Campaign92.Org

Subject: HELP

The server will respond by sending you a detailed form that will guide you through the process of signing up for the various distributions.

Library Catalogs and Gophers

1. CARL (Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries)

For government publications select #22 from Main Menu, then select #83 Government Publications

telnet pac.carl.org

Contact: Carl Systems
3801 East Florida St., Suite 300
Denver, CO 80210
303-758-0606
Internet: help@carl.org

2. University of Nevada

University of Californiae - Santa Cruz

telnet consultant.micro.umn.edu

login: gopher

U.S. Government Agencies

1. EPA online library system computerized list of bibliographic citations compiled by the EPA library network that can be used to locate books, reports, and articles. Materials are updated every two weeks and can be searched by numerous access points such as titles, author, and keyword.

telnet EPAIBM.RTPNC.EPA.GOV

Contact: EPA Library
Research Triangle Park, NC
919-541-2777

2. FEDIX provides information on federal research and education programs, scholarships, contracts and grants, and minority assistance

telnet fedix.fie.com

login: fedix

userid: new

Contact: Federal Information Exchange
555 Quince Orchard Road, Suite 200
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
301-975-0103

3. FDA (Food and Drug Administration) BBS offers news releases, consumer information, AIDS info and agency regulations
telnet fdabbs.fda.gov
login: bbs
4. LOCIS is the Library of Congress information system which includes over 15 million catalog records, copyright registrations, federal legislation and selected foreign legal materials.
telnet locis.loc.gov
no login required

Selected Bibliography

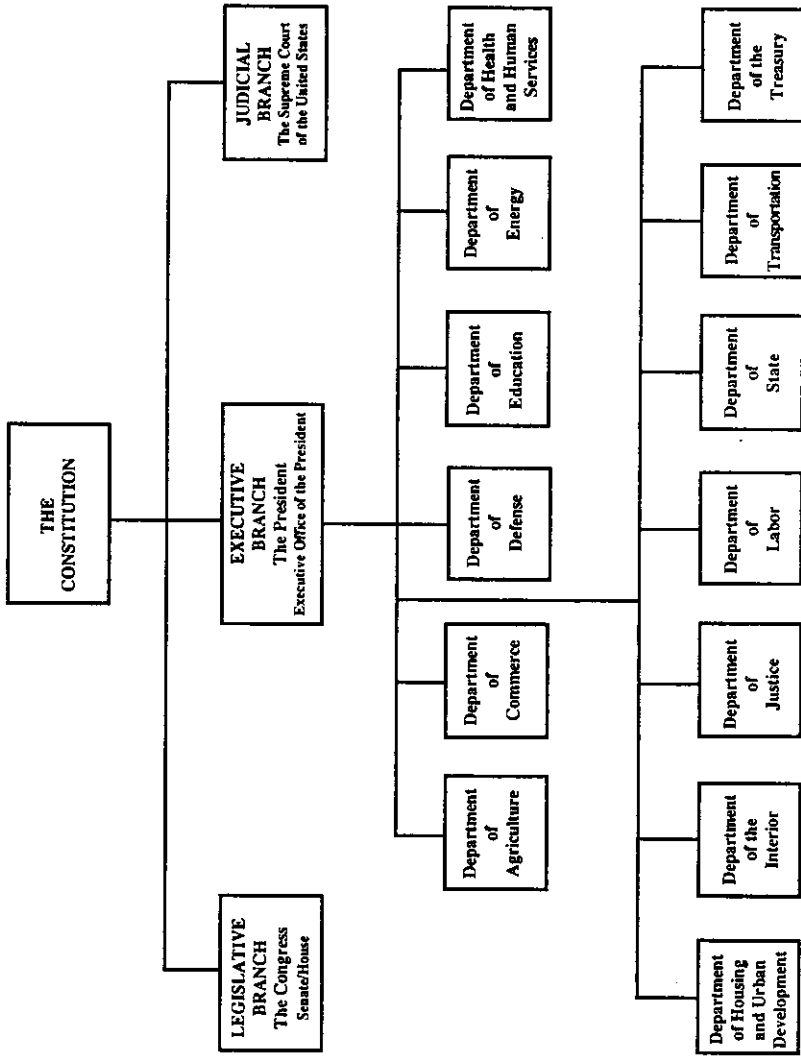
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Strangelove, Michael and Diane Kovacs. Directory of Electronic Journals, Newsletters and Academic Discussion Lists. 3rd ed. Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, 1993.

Available from: ARL Office of Academic and Scientific Publishing, 21 DuPont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036 \$42.00 (prepaid in US dollars; plus \$12.00 airmail - Europe)



DIALINDEX CATEGORY GOVERNMENT (GOVT)

- 22 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS INFOSOURCE™
- 47 MAGAZINE INDEX™
- 49 PAIS INTERNATIONAL
- 66 GPO MONTHLY CATALOG
- 88 ACADEMIC INDEX™
- 93 U.S. POLITICAL SCIENCE DOCUMENTS
- 101 CIS (CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE)
- 120 U.S. COPYRIGHTS
- 135 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ABSTRACTS
- 136 FEDERAL REGISTER ABSTRACTS
- 146 WASHINGTON POST ONLINE
- 148 TRADE & INDUSTRY INDEX™
- 150 LEGAL RESOURCE INDEX™
- 166 GPO PUBLICATIONS REFERENCE FILE
- 169 INSURANCE PERIODICALS INDEX
- 211 NEWSEARCH™
- 227 BRITISH OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS (HMSO)
- 243 LABORLAW II
- 244 LABORLAW I (closed)
- 468 PUBLIC OPINION ONLINE (POLL)
- 485 ACCOUNTING & TAX DATABASE
- 627 EIU: BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL
- 636 PTS NEWSLETTER DATABASE™
- 647 MAGAZINE ASAP™
- 648 TRADE & INDUSTRY ASAP™
- 650 TAX NOTES TODAY
- 655 BNA DAILY NEWS
- 660 FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE
- 665 FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATIONS (FARS)
- 669 FEDERAL REGISTER

Dialog level 31.07.01B

Enter an option number or a Begin command and press ENTER:
/H =Help /L =Logoff /NOMENU =Command Mode

? b 66

File 66:GPO Monthly Catalog JUL_1976-1993/Sep

Set Items Description

? s nafta

S1 12 NAFTA

? t 1/5/2

1/5/2

1719150 Y 4.F 49-S.HRG.103-66

U.S. trade policy and NAFTA : hearing before the Committee on Finance,
United States Senate, One Hundred Third Congress, first session, March 9,
1993

Variant Title: US trade policy and NAFTA

Corporate Source: United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Finance.

Series: S. hrg. ; 103-66; United States.; Congress.; Senate. S. hrg. ;

Washington : U.S. G.P.O. : For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs.,
Congressional Sales Office, 1993. iii, 61 p. ; 24 cm.

Publication Date(s): 1993

OCLC No.: ocm28353132 System Control No.: (DGPO)93083285

Place of Publication: District of Columbia GPO Item No.: 1038-A

ISBN: 0160409411

Languages: English

Document Type: Monograph

Geographic Location: United States; Canada; Mexico

Distributed to some depository libraries in microfiche. Shipping list
no.: 93-0340-P.

Descriptors: Free trade-United States; Free trade-Canada; Free trade-
Mexico; United States-Commercial treaties; United States-Commercial policy

? b 66

File 66:GPO Monthly Catalog JUL_1976-1993/Sep

Set Items Description

? s cs=disease(s)cs=control

1301 CS=DISEASE

2664 CS=CONTROL

S4 1030 CS=DISEASE(S)CS=CONTROL

? t1/3/1

3/3/1

1720181 HE 20.7002-ST 8/3

The National strategic plan for the early detection and control of breast and cervical cancers

Corporate Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S.)
[Atlanta, GA] : U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention : Food and Drug Administration : National Cancer Institute, [1993?] xi, 82 p. ; 28 cm.

Publication Date(s): 1993

OCLC No.: ocm28478089 System Control No.: (DGPO)93084491

Place of Publication: Georgia GPO Item No.: 0504

7 b 6

File 6:NTIS 1964-1993/Sep B2
(c) 1993 NTIS

**FILE006: See HELP NTISCODE for current prices for NTIS documents.
Call NTIS at 703/487-4650 to order.

Set Items Description

? ss handbook/ti and thermodynamic()data/ti

S1 4512 HANDBOOK/TI
S2 2302 THERMODYNAMIC/TI
S3 78489 DATA/TI
S4 114 THERMODYNAMIC/TI(W)DATA/TI
S5 1 HANDBOOK/TI AND THERMODYNAMIC()DATA/TI

? t5/5/1

5/5/1

373127 NTIS Accession Number: PB-226 722/7

Handbook of Thermodynamic Data

(Final rept.)

Naumov, G. B. ; Ryzhenko, B. N. ; Khodakovsky, I. L.

Geological Survey, Menlo Park, Calif. Water Resources Div.

Report No.: USGS-WRD-74-001

Jan 74 373p

Document Type: Translation

Journal Announcement: GRAI7406

NTIS Prices: C A16/MF A01

A compilation by Russian scientists of thermodynamic data, entropies, enthalpies, free energies, heat capacities, mole volumes, solubilities, ionization, activity coefficients, electrode potentials, and activity and fugacity coefficients for inorganic solids, liquids, gases, and solutes. The compilation includes many data previously unavailable in English.

Descriptors: *Thermodynamics; *Handbooks; *Inorganic compounds; Minerals; Geochemistry; Chemical reactions; Tables(Data); Entropy; Enthalpy; Gibbs free energy; Heat capacity; Solubility; Activity coefficients; Fugacity coefficients; Translations; USSR

Identifiers: NTISUSGS

Section Headings: 7D (Chemistry--Physical Chemistry); 8G (Earth Sciences and Oceanography--Geology and Mineralogy); 48F* (Natural Resources and Earth Sciences--Geology and Geophysics); 99F* (Chemistry--Physical and Theoretical Chemistry)

Set Items Description

? help ntiscode

PRICES FOR NTIS REPORTS

--Effective October 1991--

NTISCODE: The standard price schedule for paper copy and microfiche reports from NTIS is shown below. Prices for North America apply to customers in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

PRICE CODE	PRICES FOR NORTH AMERICA	PRICES OUTSIDE NORTH AMERICA
A01	\$ 9.00	\$ 18.00
A02	12.50	25.00
A03	17.00	34.00
A04	19.00	38.00
A05	19.00	38.00
A06	26.00	52.00
A07	26.00	52.00
A08	26.00	52.00
A09	26.00	52.00
A10	35.00	70.00
A11	35.00	70.00
A12	35.00	70.00
A13	35.00	70.00
A14	43.00	86.00
A15	43.00	86.00
A16	43.00	86.00
A17	43.00	86.00
A18	50.00	100.00
A19	50.00	100.00
A20	50.00	100.00
A21	50.00	100.00
A22	59.00	118.00
A23	59.00	118.00
A24	59.00	118.00
A25	59.00	118.00
A99*		

*Contact NTIS for a price quote.

For magnetic tape prices (T code) see ?NTISTCOD. For
for diskette prices (D code) see ?NTISDCOD. For published
searches and special directories (N code) see ?NTISNCOD.

7 b101

File 101:CIS (CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE)70-93/JUN (COPR. 1993
CIS)

Set Items Description

? s spain/ti

S1 68 SPAIN/TI

1/5/6

492056 CIS ACCESSION NUMBER: 90-S384-8

TITLE: Income Tax Convention with the Kingdom of Spain.

SOURCE: July 27, 1990 CONGRESSIONAL SESSION: 101-2 iii+59 p S Doc
Rm

FICHE: 3 ITEM NO: 1008-C; 1008-D

REPORT NUMBER: Exec. Rpt. 101-29

SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS CLASS NUMBER: Y1.1/6:101-29

DOCUMENT TYPE: EXECUTIVE REPORT

JOURNAL ANNOUNCEMENT: 9007

ABSTRACT: Recommends Senate advice and consent to ratification of an
income tax convention and protocol between the U.S. and Spain, signed Feb.
22, 1990.

DESCRIPTORS: Treaties and conventions; Spain ; Income taxes ; ;

File 101:CIS (CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE)70-93/JUN (COPR. 1993
CIS)

7 b 102

File 102:ASI (American Statistics Index) 1974-1993/Jun
(c) 1993 CIS

Set Items Description

7 ss spain/de and trade/de and agriculture/de and py=1992

S1 1319 SPAIN/DE
S2 24567 TRADE/DE
S3 9820 AGRICULTURE/DE
S4 5641 PY=1992
S5 10 SPAIN/DE AND TRADE/DE AND AGRICULTURE/DE AND PY =1992

7t 5/5/3

5/5/3

153635 ASI ACCESSION NUMBER: 93-1524-4 NUMBER OF ANALYTICS: 1

TITLE: Agriculture and Trade Reports, Situation and Outlook Series (Foreign countries agricultural production, trade, and prices, by country, 1980-91 and forecast 1992, annual world area rpt series)

CORPORATE SOURCE: Economic Research Service

SOURCE: Annual GPO: \$20.00 per yr; single copy \$5.00; ERS-NASS: \$20.00 per yr; single copy \$9.00. For individual bibliographic data, see below RS-(yr.-nos.)

ITEM NO: 0078-A GPO STOCK NUMBER: 701-052-00000-5

DOCUMENT TYPE: ANNUAL

JOURNAL ANNOUNCEMENT: 9302

ABSTRACT: Annual series of reports, for 5 country groups or countries, reviewing economic development and agricultural production and trade in 1990-91 and outlook for 1992, with trends from the 1960s.

Data are derived from U.S. agricultural attache situation reports, published and unpublished FAS reports, Census Bureau publications, official foreign government statistics, and other governmental and international organization sources.

Most reports contain narrative country or regional summaries, with 1-43 charts and 22-67 tables showing agricultural and other data, by country with regional totals, selected years 1980-91, with some trends from the 1960s and forecasts through 1992.

Tables cover all or most of the following topics:

- a. General economic data, including population, GDP, consumer prices, government agricultural expenditures, and balance of payments.
- b. Inputs use; and area or inventory, yield, production, consumption, and

market and support prices of grains, livestock, fruits and vegetables, and selected specific agricultural commodities.

c. Quantity and value of agricultural imports by country of origin and commodity.

d. Exports by country of destination and commodity.

Some reports also include 4-6 feature articles and data on special topics.

Reports are listed below in order of receipt. Feature articles and special data topics are noted; those with additional statistical material are briefly described.

Reports have been issued since 1950; ASI coverage began with reports issued in 1972 (see ASI Retrospective Edition under this number).

DESCRIPTORS: Foreign agriculture; Agricultural forecasts; Agricultural exports and imports; Agricultural productivity; Agricultural prices; Tariffs and foreign trade controls; Food supply; Food consumption; Farms and farmland; Agricultural stocks; Agricultural subsidies; Grains and grain products; Livestock and livestock industry; Vegetables and vegetable products; Fruit and fruit products; Citrus fruits; Fertilizers; Wheat; Rice ; Corn; Soybeans; Animal feed; Nuts; Cotton; Sugar industry and products; Tobacco industry and products; Poultry industry and products; Dairy industry and products; Oils, oilseeds, and fats; Meat and meat products; Hides and skins; Natural fibers; Wool and wool trade; Coffee; Cocoa and chocolate; Tea; Spices and herbs; Rubber and rubber industry;

CATEGORIES: Foreign Country; Commodity

ANALYTIC RECORD ACCESSION NUMBER: 0153635 MAIN RECORD
ACCESSION NUMBER:

0153636 ASI ACCESSION NUMBER: 93-1524-4.1

TITLE: Western Europe Western Europe: Agriculture and Trade Report, Situation and Outlook Series (Agricultural production, trade, and prices, by country, 1970s-91, and forecast 1992, annual world region rpt)

ABSTRACT: <No. 92-4. Dec. 1992. 171 p. A93.29/2-9:992. ASI/MF/4>

DESCRIPTORS: Europe; European Community; Belgium; Luxembourg; Denmark; France; Germany; Greece; Ireland; Italy; Netherlands; United Kingdom; Portugal; Spain; Austria; Finland; Norway; Sweden; Switzerland;

File 102:ASI (American Statistics Index) 1974-1993/Jun

(c) 1993 CIS

? b cendata

SYSTEM:CENDATA

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      CCCC  EEEEE N   N DDDDD  AA TTTTTT AA
Welcome C   C   E     N M  N D   D A A T A A
      to   C   E     N M  N D   D A A T A A
      C   C   E     N M  N D   D A A T A A
13 Aug 93 C C E     N M  N D   D A A T A A
<24B>    CCCC  EEEEE N   N DDDDD  A A T A A
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The Online Information Utility of the U.S. Bureau of the Census on DIALOG.

A very small portion of the Census Bureau's vast data holdings has been included in this "information utility." In addition to limited amounts of current and historical data, also included is information on products released during the past month and press releases issued during the past week. If you have any questions about census data or products, see our "For Further Information" section of the "Introduction to Census Bureau Products and Services", the first item on the CENDATA main menu.

Do you wish to see the CENDATA menu? If yes, enter Y or <return>.

If not, enter LOGOFF to end session

? y

- CENDATA MAIN MENU

- 1 Census Bureau Products, Services, and Contacts
 - 2 What's New in CENDATA
 - 3 U.S. Statistics at a Glance (Including Economic Time Series Data)
 - 4 Press Releases |-----|
 - 5 Census and You (Selected Articles) | If you're a new or infrequent |
 - 6 Product Information | user of the CENDATA menu |
 - 7 CENDATA User Feedback | system, key HELP <cr> to learn |
 - 8 Profiles and Rankings | of the available short cuts in
 - 9 Agriculture Data | using the system. |
 - 10 Business Data |-----|
 - 11 Construction and Housing Data | For a listing and a location |
 - 12 Foreign Trade Data | key of all Census Bureau |
 - 13 Governments Data | reports contained in CENDATA |
 - 14 International Data | in whole or in part, key |
 - 15 Manufacturing Data | M1.3 <cr> |
 - 16 Population Data |-----|
 - 17 Genealogical and Age Information
 - 18 1990 Census Information
- Enter choice:

Enter choice:

? 3

3 - U.S. STATISTICS AT A GLANCE (Time Series Data Available)

- 1 Economic Indicators (Time Series Data)
- 2 Household Economic Indicators
- 3 Social Indicators
- 4 Historical Statistics at a Glance

Enter choice, or <return> to see previous menu:

? 1

3.1 - ECONOMIC INDICATORS (Time Series Data)

- 1 Value of Manufacturers' Shipments, Orders, and Inventories
- 2 Retail Trade Sales, Inventory, and Inventory/Sales Ratio
- 3 Wholesale Trade Sales, Inventory, and Inventory/Sales Ratio
- 4 Housing Starts and Building Permits
- 5 New One-Family Houses Sold
- 6 Total Expenditures for New Construction
- 7 Exports, General Imports, and Merchandise Trade Balance
- 8 Civilian Labor Force and Unemployment Rate
- 9 Consumer Price Index and Producer Price Index
- 10 Index of Leading Indicators and Index of Industrial Production
- 11 Personal Income
- 12 Money Supply (M1)
- 13 Three-Month U.S. T-Bill
- 14 New Home Mortgage Rate
- 15 GNP, Personal Consumption Expend., Gross Private Domestic Investment
- 16 Consumer Installment Credit Outstanding
- 17 Prime Rate

Enter choice, or <return> to see previous menu:

? 15

? b 166

File 166:GPO Publications Reference 1993/Aug B1

Set Items Description

7 s nafta

S1 8 NAFTA

1/5/8

9202635 Y 3.T 22/2:2 M 57

United States-Mexico Trade: Pulling Together or Pulling Apart?

Congress, Office of Technology Assessment

1992: 231 p.; ill.

052-003-01306-1 UNIT: 4 DOLC: 07-19-93

Each \$12.00 DOMESTIC \$15.00 FOREIGN Discount PRICE-ESTABLISHED: 09-10-92

RELATED-DATA: Perfect Binding; Paper. Weight: 1 lb. 5 oz.

IN STOCK - WAREHOUSE & RETAIL (PRICED) STATUS CODE: 04 STATUS

DATE:

10-07-92

PUBLICATION DATE: 921007

SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY NUMBER: 123SD 287UN

NB1232

OTA-ITE-545. Provides OTA's analysis of possible results from implementation of the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement. Includes sections on: Mexico's needs; labor relations in both countries; economic models as predictors of NAFTA's impacts; the border, a boundary, not a barrier; autos and parts; apparel; electronics; and agriculture. Item 1070-M.

DESCRIPTORS:

OTA ITE 545

Mexico

Foreign Trade

Pulling Together or Pulling Apart, United States Mexico Trade

File 166:GPO Publications Reference 1993/Aug B1

3.1.15 - July 26, 1993
 GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, PERSONAL CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURES,
 GROSS PRIVATE
 DOMESTIC INVESTMENT
 (Last Updated 07/15/93)

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
 (1987 bil. dol.)

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
1st Qtr	4,655.3	4,817.6	4,890.8	4,796.7	4,873.7	4,999.9
2nd Qtr	4,704.8	4,839.0	4,902.7	4,817.1	4,892.4	
3rd Qtr	4,734.5	4,839.0	4,882.6	4,831.8	4,933.7	
4th Qtr	4,779.7	4,856.7	4,833.8	4,838.5	4,990.8	

Personal Consumption Expenditures

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
		-more-				
1st Qtr	3,128.2	3,203.6	3,259.5	3,223.5	3,289.3	3,366.5
2nd Qtr	3,147.8	3,212.2	3,260.1	3,239.3	3,288.5	
3rd Qtr	3,170.6	3,235.3	3,273.9	3,251.2	3,318.4	
4th Qtr	3,202.9	3,242.0	3,248.0	3,249.0	3,359.9	

Gross Private Domestic Investment

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
1st Qtr	756.9	802.9	763.0	646.0	668.9	784.0
2nd Qtr	769.4	794.5	770.2	649.5	713.6	
3rd Qtr	782.2	769.0	743.1	672.0	724.9	
4th Qtr	785.0	769.5	680.0	676.9	743.1	

Note: Figures are shown at seasonally adjusted annual rate.
 Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

-more-

ACCESS WITHIN THE UNITED KINGDOM TO U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ONLINE

By Linda E. Williamson

Abstract: The United Kingdom had had a long-standing interest in American Studies, and recent initiatives at the British Library and at the University of Oxford indicate that this is on the rise. Electronic access to U.S. government information offers the potential for increasingly timely and detailed exploration of research topics relating to the United States. It also represents the most promising contemporary breakthrough in transborder information flow. What are the actualities of U.K. access to electronic information sources released by the U.S. government? Ms. V. York's paper, "Online Access to U.S. Government Information", examines an array of data sources produced and distributed within the U.S.; this paper follows on from that, exploring whether and under what differing conditions these same data sources may be accessed within the U.K. It is assumed that this picture of U.S. electronic data availability within the U.K. is illustrative of the potential, if not the actuality, of transborder data flow to countries world-wide.

American Studies is an interdisciplinary field of considerable interest in the United Kingdom. Since the end of World War II, it has become established as a significant part of both secondary and tertiary education in Britain. In recent years, demand has risen steadily for undergraduate admission to American Studies programs¹. The principal U.K. organizations in the field are the British Association for American Studies (BAAS; founded 1955) and the American Studies Library Group (ASLG; founded 1978). Recent institutional initiatives include establishment of the David and Mary Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library and the proposed Oxford Institute for American Studies.

As a U.S. documents librarian working in the field of American Studies in the U.K., I am vitally interested in promoting access to U.S. official material. Not only is the U.S. government the largest publisher in the world, but it has a long-

Ms Williamson's paper was delivered at 59th IFLA Council and General Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 22-28 August 1993.

standing tradition of making its publications widely available through depository libraries in the U.S. and official exchange libraries in foreign countries². But what of the burgeoning amount of information in electronic form? What is available online here in the U.K. and how can it be accessed? That is the subject of this paper, which follows on from Ms. V. York's paper, *Online Access to U.S. Government Information*, by exploring some of the same examples which she has outlined. Where prices are indicated, please note that these were the figures on hand at the time of writing this paper, and in future may be as likely to decrease as to increase, given the rapid expansion and competition in the field of electronic information.

To begin with the databases which are offered by DIALOG, all those relating to U.S. government information are available to DIALOG subscribers in the U.K. DIALOG's European office is located in Oxford, so assistance can be obtained for the cost of a telephone call. In cases where a query cannot be answered by U.K. staff, it is relayed to DIALOG headquarters in California. This usually means the answer will not come until the next day, as U.S. West Coast time runs eight hours behind U.K.'s Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). This time difference poses no problems for online searching, however, as DIALOG files are accessible around the clock.

The same U.S. dollar prices which are charged to American customers also apply to U.K. subscribers for the annual service fee, for searching the databases, for typing output, for offline printing, and for relevant telecommunications charges. Monthly invoices show U.S. dollar charges, converted to pounds sterling in accordance with the current exchange rate. It is a great convenience for U.K. subscribers to be able to pay in local currency, and saves the costs associated with submitting payment in U.S. dollars.

Other DIALOG offerings, such as training sessions held in the U.K. and assorted publications available from the DIALOG Europe office, are priced in pounds sterling. It probably goes without saying that these pound prices have been fixed at a level sufficiently high to account for possible unfavourable (to DIALOG) fluctuations in the exchange rate. This is a common practice with firms having distribution arrangements in foreign countries, and in DIALOG's case is not exploitative of its overseas customers.

Telecommunications charges for accessing DIALOG are variable. The most expensive method is long-distance direct-dial to California, but most overseas subscribers, and certainly those in the U.K., have less costly alternatives.

DIALOG itself provides details on a number of telecommunications networks which are on offer, though pricing information is not always given. Comparison shopping and an ongoing alertness to new or changed offerings are essential for getting the best price for the service. The cheapest access of which I am aware is provided by the Internet, at present available primarily within academic institutions. Charges of \$ 3.00 per connect hour are assessed on the monthly DIALOG invoice. This compares, for example, with \$ 10.00 per connect hour for both SPRINTNET and DIALNET EUROPE services.

For libraries which collect U.S. government publications, DIALOG file 166: GPO Publications Reference File (GPOPRF) facilitates the ordering of items for sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office. Using the DIALORDER feature, a publication which is identified in GPOPRF as being in stock can be ordered online. Thus, there is no need to retype title, stock number, and price details onto order forms to be posted to Washington, D.C. This greatly expedites the transaction and reduces the paperwork, at a relatively modest cost of \$ 70 per connect minute, \$ 20 per online type/print.

For public service use, searching of DIALOG databases is generally done by a trained librarian on a fee basis. Paying for the service, especially when the cost cannot be accurately predicted, is likely to be problematic for most U.K. readers, and it poses some administrative problems for the library, as well. Alternatives are worth exploring. While discussion of CD-ROM products is out of scope for this paper, it should be noted that most of the DIALOG files mentioned by Ms. York are available on CD-ROM. A number of them, also noted by Ms. York, have been mounted for free access via the Internet, and more will likely become available through Internet channels in the future.

The above-mentioned possibilities of CD-ROM and/or Internet access exist for some of the files offered by the two other commercial vendors described in Ms. York's paper, namely LEGI-SLATE and LEXIS/NEXIS. As noted, both are very expensive. LEGI-SLATE offers the same terms to U.S. and to U.K. clients, with annual subscriptions (beginning around \$3500.00) to an assortment of individual and packaged services. LEXIS/NEXIS offerings are much more complicated, with pricing options ranging from paying for each search to unlimited searching for a fixed monthly fee. Pricing is dramatically different between the U.S. and the U.K. The publisher, Mead data Central, offers U.S. customers unlimited searching on the LEXIS and NEXIS files combined for \$1000.00 per month. In the U.K., however, \$1000.00 per month buys access to only the single NEXIS Country Information file. Costs increase for other NEXIS individual files or combinations of files. Oddly, although LEXIS files are also available, no illustrative prices are

given in the promotional literature received from the Mead Data Central International office in London. To further complicate the picture, there is another vendor in the U.K. for LEXIS files only. This is Butterworth Telepublishing, with again a different pricing structure, in pounds sterling rather than in dollars. Since large amounts of money are involved in any sort of subscription arrangement for LEXIS/NEXIS files, thorough investigation of all offerings and options would be in order before making any commitment.

Moving quickly from high price to no price, Internet access opens up possibilities for unlimited free searching on an expanding number of U.S. government data sources in electronic form. Ms. York describes a sampling in her paper; many others are available. Some of the more popular files may be offered by more than one host site; for example, U.S. Supreme Court material is available from Cleveland Freenet as well as from U.C. Santa Cruz. Here, I would echo Ms. York's enthusiasm for the GOVDOC-L LISTSERV, which frequently carries details about host sites for U.S. government data files accessible via the Internet.

For U.K. Internet users, time zone differences affect connections with U.S.-based electronic files. In the case of databases which are available virtually around the clock, a British user will not face heavy competition for access for much of the working day. From 9:00am to 2:00pm GMT, the U.S. is effectively not at work; even at 2:00pm GMT, it is only East Coast that's beginning its day; the West Coast doesn't become seriously active until 5:00pm GMT. Databases whose availability is geared toward the U.S. working day are more problematic. British users may not be able to connect until late in the workday or on into the evening, and at those times would face competition from U.S. users.

Also, it's often not a straightforward procedure to make the necessary connection to a U.S. host computer. Traffic can be heavy on the various networks through which the access code is transmitted, thus thwarting the connection. The host computer may be unavailable for any number of reasons. Without knowing the cause of a failed connection, the only recourse is to "try, try again". This may mean trying at different hours of the day and extending those trials over several days until connection is made or the acuteness of frustration calls the exercise to a halt.

It also happens that the connection may be dropped, sometimes through user error, such as failing or respond rapidly enough to the host computer, but more often for no ascertainable reason. The frustration of reconnecting can be considerable, especially if access to the desired database is through an extended series of menus or if the search strategy is especially complicated. Another frustration comes with delayed response time from the host computer, a condition due at least

in part to the path which an electronic message must travel between the U.S. and the U.K. If a U.K. user makes a mistake in typing a query and transmits it before the host computer echoes it back, it can be extremely annoying to wait for the processing of a wrong query.

All of the above irritations, however, must be weighted against the cost of the service. Much can be endured for free access, especially if the need is great, if timeliness is a factor, and if access by other means involves expenditure of money and/or time.

In sum, then, U.S. government information which is widely available online in the U.S. is also accessible within the U.K. Fee-based services may be comparatively more expensive for the U.K. market, especially if the vendor has a Europe-based office, and telecommunications charges may be costlier unless Internet access is available. The free availability of databases via Internet connection offers the greatest promise for U.K. exploitation of U.S. government information in electronic form. What is required is institutional implementation of Internet access, provision of terminals for reader access, menu systems which facilitate telecommunications connections, ongoing implementation of additions and changes in available databases, and promotion of these resources to library readers.³ Once such systems are installed in U.K. institutions with American Studies programs, the increasing availability of U.S. government information online will greatly enhance teaching and research in the field. Indeed, the very nature of research undertaken in the U.K. is likely to change with the availability of more information obtainable in a more timely fashion. The present is good and the future holds great promise, not only for the U.K., but for transborder flow of online U.S. government information throughout the world.

Notes

1. The Fulbright Commission. *The Future of American Studies in the United Kingdom*. [London: The Commission] 1991.
2. Within the U.K., both the British Library and the London School of Economics' British Library of Political and Economic Science receive full exchange sets of U.S. government documents; the National Library of Scotland receives a partial set.
3. The Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford has the exemplary system within the U.K. BARD (Bodleian Access to Remote Databases), using a system of menus, provides automatic connection to a world-wide array of sources, including those offering U.S. government data. Updating is done on a weekly basis, and

printed material helps to inform and promote use of the resources, which are accessible through public-use terminals located throughout the Bodleian system.

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United Kingdom

ONLINE ACCESS TO UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM INFORMATION

By Lilia Vázquez

Abstract: This overview of the current status of availability of electronic sources of United Nations information presents the role of the United Nations Advisory Committee on the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) in promoting the accessibility of United Nations information systems and highlights several of the databases produced by the United Nations and those of the Specialized Agencies which are presently available or will soon be available, online or on CD-ROM. It also discusses the role of the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in providing UN information.

The views expressed and the information presented in this paper are the result of my own research and do not necessarily represent the official views or position of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, the Advisory Committee on the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS), or any other component of the United Nations system.¹ This paper is based on a paper I presented at the Summer Institute of the American Association of Law Librarians, held at Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, July 6-9, 1993, entitled Electronic Sources of United Nations Information. In it I will highlight online databases and only mention briefly those on CD-ROM. I will use the term "external user" to mean actual and/or potential users of United Nations databases other than those who are affiliated with the UN system, or with permanent missions or foreign ministries of Member States.

Accis

ACCIS is an interagency body of the United Nations which promoted cooperation among all organizations and specialized agencies of the UN system, in order to enhance effective usage of their information systems and services within the UN

Ms Vázquez's paper was delivered at 59th IFLA Council and General Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 22-28 August 1993.

system and by Member States. Its two main aims are: 1) to facilitate access by Member States to United Nations information and 2) to promote the improvement of the information infrastructure of the United Nations system. ACCIS has itself produced databases, described below, and is making them available on tape, diskette, online and soon on CD-ROM. Similarly, other UN offices and specialized agencies are making their data available to internal and external users.

United Nations information on Internet

While the Electronic Services Division (ESD), of the United Nations Secretariat, has taken steps to join Internet, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been a node on Internet for quite some time and has recently set up a gopher to provide access to the ACCIS-produced UN-EARTH database, and other UN information such as documents from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), as well as a directory of UNDP addresses. It is available through the University of Minnesota gopher service and the University of Kansas gopher service and probably others as well. You can access these gophers by telnetting to:

University of Minnesota	consultant.micro.umn.edu	login: gopher
University of Kansas:	ukanaix.cc.ukans.edu	login: kufacts

To access the UNDP gopher service directly on nywork1.undp.org, port 70, you need a gopher client. You can obtain a gopher client for your platform by anonymous FTP from boombox.micro.umn.edu. With it you do not need an ID and password to access the information. If you have a gopher client you can access the United Nations via the gopher by contacting 'nygate.undp.org'. There you can access a file called 'The UN, what it is and what it does'.

The ACCIS UN-EARTH database which was mentioned above as being available on the UNDP gopher, is also available in two diskettes that require 12 Mb of space on the hard disk and 500K of memory when UN-EARTH is in use. Once the program has been installed the user can make use of the accompanying manual. This PC-based information system contains factual information which describes the activities of the UN organizations. Information can be found on the objectives, membership, administrative offices, information services and databases of the organizations and agencies, the location of their field offices, development activities, as well as tabulated data on human resources, development projects and expenditures. Since this type of information gets outdated very quickly, a 1993 updated version is planned. The diskette version of UN-Earth is available from the UN Sales Offices in New York and Geneva. United Nations Publications, Sales Section, Room DC2-853, Dept. 701, New York, N.Y. 10017, tel. (212) 963-8302,

fax: (212) 963-4879 or United Nations Publications, Distribution and Sales Section, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10 Switzerland, tel + 41 22 734 6011 Ext. Bookshop, fax: + 41 22 733 98 79. The UN Sales No. is GV.E. 9304. The price is US\$ 60.

Two of the bibliographic files: the United Nations Documents file (DOCFILE) and the non-UN materials file (CATFILE), which are included in the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS), are available on the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN), tel. + 415-691-2207, Internet: bl.ric@rlg.stanford.edu.

edu. With an RLIN account one can access it via Internet as well.

The United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) provides the full text of UN press releases to Global Education Motivators, a non-governmental organization (NGO) responsible for GEMNET. They were providing the Information Service on the United Nations (UNISER) via DIALCOM on the Telecommunications Cooperative Network (TCN) and will soon be providing this and more UN information via Internet. At present this service can be accessed via an 800 number and negotiations are under way with a university to continue to provide this service via Internet. In the meantime questions can be addressed to GEMNET, Chestnut Hill College, Germantown and Northwestern Avenues, Chestnut Hill, PA 19118-2695, Attn: Mr. Wayne Jacoby, President, tel.: (215) 248-1150, fax: (251) 248-7056, Internet address: [SSY00076@LLPPTN.LINKNET.COM](mailto:ssy00076@LLPPTN.LINKNET.COM).

Another example of close cooperation between NGOs and the UN is NGONET. The secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) has an information system running on TCN and other networks, including Greenet in the United Kingdom. It contains the documents relating to the conference, speeches, press releases, and other material. In addition, the framework has been established for an information system of UNEP to be managed by INFOTERRA. Both systems are accessible on several networks around the world.² NGONET UNCED Resource Library provides a complete set of the Alternative Treaties signed by the NGOs present at Rio de Janeiro, Agenda 21 in 4 languages, the NGONET document store which lists background material about the process and NGO-originated critiques. You can access the NGONET document store to request a catalog with the following addresses: ngonet-lib@chasque.apc.org or NGONET P.O. Box 1539, Correo Central, Montevideo, Uruguay, tel.: + 598 (2) 496192, fax + 598 (2) 419222.³

The UN Information Centres (UNICs) in Sydney and Rome, have been providing UN Press Releases and other UN data via the Pegasus and Agora networks and

these are equally accessible on other networks on Internet, such as EcoNet in the U.S.

The United Nations Criminal Justice Information Network (UNCJIN), also available via DIALCOM on TCN. It is run by the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at Vienna. It contains a wide variety of information such as selections from the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems, legislative updates, directories of criminal justice research organizations around the world, directories of criminal justice journals, reports from research institutes, and an extensive collection of Bureau of Justice Statistics reports, many available well before they are actually published in hard copy. There are seven agencies or UN-related networks available on the system. All of these networks have their own user base and messages and documents may be freely passed between them. They are:

UN International Emergency Network-UNDRO (UNIENET),
UNICEF Electronic Information Network (UNET),
UNDP Electronic Mail Service (UNDP),
UN Criminal Justice Information Network (UNCJIN),
HIV/AIDS Global Network (HIVNET),
Pan American Health Network (PAHONET), and
UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

Most of the data bases on UNCJIN are also available if you access UNCJIN via Internet. If you have access to Internet, you can join UNCJIN up until September 1993, by simply sending an e-mail message to LISTSERV@ALBANYVM1 as follows: Subscribe UNCJIN-L YourFirstName YourLastName. After September 1993 you will have to contact the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, United Nations Office at Vienna, directly at P.O.Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria, fax: + 43 1 21 92 599 or + 43 1 23 21 56.

FAO has recently set up a listserv for UN system libraries as part of the work of the ACCIS Technical Panel on Inter-Library Cooperation, Standards and Management (TP/LIB). UNDP also plans to run a listserv on the UN in the near future.

Online access to specialized agency information via
the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and
the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) via ECHO⁴.

The IDRC is a corporation which was created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to stimulate and support scientific and technical research by developing countries for their own benefit. The Library offers access to eight databases to non-profit organizations: three are in-house, IDRC databases: ACRONYM, BIBLIOL and IDRIS; six are from other international organizations, U.S. AID, FAO, ILO, Unesco, UNIDO, and WHO.

This service is provided free to more than 120 organizations around the world. Users must however obtain permission for access in writing from any one or all of the agencies listed above and pay telecommunications costs.

Prospective institutions interested in obtaining access to the Development Data Bases Service should send their requests to the IDRC Library and meet the following criteria: 1) have an interest in one or more of the data bases; 2) have some on-line experience; 3) have a controlled user group; and 4) be willing to provide the IDRC Library with feedback.

Requests should be addressed to: Mr. Alain Lamirande, Coordinator, Regional Information Services, IDRC Library, P.O.Box 8500, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3H9, Canada, tel.: (613) 236-6163 ext. 2417, fax: (613) 238-7230, BITNET: IDRC@UOTTAWA.BITNET.

IDRC produced a CD-ROM database which contains the full text of the documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). This is the only complete source for United Nations materials pertaining to the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. Technical and other questions should be addressed to IDRC Books, P.O. Box 8500, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada E K1G 3H9, tel (613) 236-6163 ext. 2087, fax: (6613) 563-0815. The UNCED documents are also available on Internet via the UNDP gopher, as explained above.

In addition to IDRC, ECHO (the host of the CEC) provides free online access to UNESBIB, the bibliographic database produced by Unesco. Documents on the database include the main documents, working series, conference papers, mission reports, speeches of the Director-General, Executive Board and General Conference documents. Publications include monographs and articles of Unesco since 1946. To access UNESBIB on ECHO contact ECHO, BP 2373, L-1023 Luxembourg GD, fax + 352 488040.

Commercial Hosts

Several of the specialized agency databases have been available on commercial hosts for many years now, such as FAO's AGRIS, IAEA's INIS, and ILO's

LABORDOC. The Unesco Courier and the UN Chronicle are no longer available on the Mead Data Central Lexis/Nexis files. However, the International Court of Justice information is still provided on Westlaw.

United Nations information on CD-ROM

In addition to the forthcoming ACCIS Inter-agency CD-ROM of bibliographic records of the United Nations system, the Readex UN Index on CD-ROM, the upcoming UNBIS Plus on CD-ROM, the CD-ROMs of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the INRES-SOUTH CD-ROM produced by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Popline CD-ROM, funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the UNCED CD-ROM, produced by IDRC, and the prototype CD-ROM of the United Nations Statistical Yearbook, the November, 1992 issue of the ACCIS Newsletter lists several CD-ROMs that contain United Nations system information.

Future Prospects

ACCIS will have its annual meeting in September, at which time its work programme and the reports of the Technical Panels will be discussed.

Hopefully the work in progress will receive recognition and needed support from the UN system and its Member States and yield increased awareness of the information resources available at each of the organizations within the United Nations system which will hopefully result in greater access to these resources.

Notes

- 1 The United Nations system includes: the principal organs of the United Nations (the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, Trusteeship Council, Secretariat, International Court of Justice), other United Nations organs and operations, main committees, standing committees, other subsidiary organs, UNRWA, UNCTAD, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, UNITAR, UNDP, UNEP, UNU, UN Special Fund, World Food Council, HABITAT, UNFPA, the Military Staff Committee, the peace-keeping operations, the regional economic and social commissions, functional commissions and other committees, and the specialized agencies and other autonomous organizations (IAEA, ILO, FAO, Unesco, WHO, IMF, IDA, IBRD, IFC, ICAO, UPU, ITU, WMO, IMO, WIPO, IFAD, UNIDO, and GATT).
- 2 JUNIC/1991/25 Progress report on a common approach to ICC on the establishment of the data bases Note by UN/DPI p.3

3 DTTP June 1993, p. 99

4 Information on online access to specialized agency databases via IDRC is taken from the following sources.

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INFORMATION ON EDUCATION EURYDICE. THE EXPERIENCE OF A NETWORK

By Luce Pépin

Abstract: Over the years, the number of information networks has multiplied. However, there is still a certain amount of frustration with the difficulties of gaining access to and achieving mastery of information. How can networks provide a solution to this problem while encouraging greater transparency and accessibility and better dissemination of information?

Introducing the EURYDICE Network

EURYDICE is the education information network in the European Community. It is composed of 15 National Units located mainly within the education ministries of the 12 Member States and a European Unit created by the EC Commission in Brussels. The network is scheduled to be enlarged to include the member countries of EFTA (except for Switzerland) on 1 January 1994. EURYDICE's activities concern mainly systems and policies of education. Political officials in the field of education at both Community and national levels are the principal target audience which the network serves by providing a system of inquiry within the network to answer these officials' questions. The goals of the EURYDICE network are to incorporate a European dimension into education reform at the national level and to contribute to better mutual understanding among the Member States. EURYDICE is creating a bibliographic database and another on education systems (based on UNESCO's CDS-ISIS software) and is specialising increasingly in the production of comparative analyses on issues of common interest to the Member States. Its products are available to a wider audience and in particular to those involved in education.

Issues of Concern to the Network

Networks are vital, although complex, interactive tools, the purpose of which is to make information as effective as possible through sharing and collective

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management of resources. In order to be effective, networks must operate based on objectives, a goals and resources which are clear to and well understood by each of the participants. The human dimension of networks is essential and should not be neglected, as it is the cornerstone of the interactivity of exchanges. European and international networks are characterised by additional complexity and greater challenges due to their intercultural dimension. It is essential to develop a real "network culture and spirit." The activities of the national centre or European hub are, for this reason, crucial. Dealing with diversity requires joint definition of a lowest common denominator with which each participant in the network can identify, allowing it to develop while taking the others into account. Cooperation among similar and other networks and is im important for the effectiveness of information. EURYDICE cooperates closely with the EUDISED network of the Council of Europe and the CEDEFOP network of information on vocational training.

Introduction

Our society revolves first and foremost around information, and the multitude of information networks which have come into being are essential tools for exchanging and disseminating this information. We could also say that we live in an age of information networks, at both national and international level and in all fields of endeavour. However, along with this burgeoning of synergistic networks, questions and widespread frustration remain concerning the issues of access to and mastery of information. How can inform networks, in their future development, help to improve this situation? Better dissemination and greater transparency seem to be the keys to meeting current expectations.

The EURYDICE Network

The EURYDICE network, the education information network in the European Community, has been evolving as the principal focus of and foundation for cooperation among the Member States of the European Community in the area of education since 1980. The advantages, difficulties and potential of such a network given the need for information as the century draws to a close and we approach the year 2000.

Cooperation in education among the EC Member States has been a source of inspiration for more than 16 years now, covering a number of areas of common interest to the Member States, including language instruction, inter-university cooperation, mobility, initial and vocational training for young people, equal

opportunity, teachers and teacher training, intercultural education, school failure and new technologies in education, to mention but a few.

With the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, this cooperation is bound to intensify. There has always been universal agreement on one major point, namely the need for high-quality information to ensure ever-greater mutual understanding of and familiarity with the education systems and policies in place in each Member State. How can we take appropriate decisions together at Community level if we are not thoroughly familiar with each Member State's special characteristics and our cultural and educational differences, without, however, overlooking areas of existing and potential convergence? This was the concern of the ministers of education when they adopted the first Community programme in the area of education in 1976. The need for basic information on education systems had always been at the heart of dialogue and cooperative efforts. The EURYDICE network was therefore created in 1980 to meet this need and to promote cooperation in education, almost as soon as such cooperation began. The main target group consisted of education officials and decision-makers at national and Community level. The Commission established a European Unit within the network to be responsible for coordination and leadership. For their part, the Member States created, either within or working closely with their education ministries, at least one National Unit each (two in Germany, Belgium and the UK). The network thus consists of 15 National Units.

The objective behind the creation of an interactive network was to contribute to political cooperation among the EC Member States and to build bridges between Community institutions and national education ministries, as well as among the ministries themselves. By creating synergistic exchanges of information among the ministries and with Brussels, the EURYDICE network, as early as 1980, presaged the more profound meaning which would be given to the concept of subsidiary more than ten years later.

In its role of providing support for Community cooperation in education, EURYDICE makes a vital contribution through the production of descriptive and cooperative documents on issues of common interest to the Member States. EURYDICE facilitates contact and exchange among the Member States by providing policy-makers within the education ministries with an inquiry mechanism which allows them to query the Network about national education policy or planned reforms. The goal is to encourage ministries at the highest level to take into account the policies and reforms under way elsewhere and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge about "good practice". In order to strengthen this "backbone" of its services, EURYDICE is completing a relational database on the

education system of the Member States. This database will be updated annually and will be installed in all of the National Units in September. Based on UNESCO's free documentary software, CDS-ISIS, the database will allow a user to move among its various elements and from one dossier to another and to print out the results. The Units are currently preparing additional files which will be integrated directly into the database. These include a bibliographic file, legislative references, a glossary of terminology and a list of institutions. When completed, this database will provide rapid and accurate access, at both Community and national level, to basic data about education systems, thus improving both the operation of the inquiry system and the service given to policy-makers. The database will also be made available on a server and on CD-ROM in order to reach a larger audience, including those involved in education and interested libraries. This audience already has access to EURYDICE publications.

EURYDICE primarily provides a service to political officials, but is being called upon more and more to meet the growing demands of a larger community. This development, which is making itself increasingly felt over the years, raises the crucial issue of dissemination of information. The world of education is very large. How can all parts of it be reached? How can the information which EURYDICE produces be made accessible to all interested parties? This issue is on the EURYDICE agenda and will be addressed beginning with an assessment of official distributors of information about education at national level. This inventory will contribute to the development of a dissemination strategy based on the use of existing national links. In the area of education, Europe is currently seeing a strong trend towards decentralisation and regionalisation. Information services and networks in general, and the EURYDICE network in particular, will be increasingly called upon to adapt to this new situation by forging closer links to the new centres for decision-making and innovation.

In addition, 13 years after its founding, the network is on the verge of expanding to encompass the six member countries of EFTA (Sweden, Austria, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) which have signed the EEA (European Economic Area) cooperation agreement with the EC. This near-50% increase in the number of members of the network, while stimulating enthusiasm and interest, is also reason for concern and consideration. An information network is a living entity which ensures its own survival through adaption to perceived needs and renewal. An expansion of this scope requires a re-examination of the network's operations. The establishment of an electronic mail service will be a first step towards more interactive exchanges.

Initially created mainly as a documentation service, the EURYDICE network, after more than a decade of intense cooperation among the Member States and of significant growth in their needs. As an information network, EURYDICE was not alone in being forced to determine how to go beyond the stage of collecting and exchanging purely documentary information and to participate in the creation of high-quality, "processed" information? How can EURYDICE avoid making documentary information and objective in itself and see it as a means of achieving the broader goal of producing information which meets the needs of a society suffering from an overflow of documentation and a shortage of real information?

Documentation should no doubt remain an essential element in the creation of information, but over-emphasis on documentation in the area of education, which concerns EURYDICE, could have created the illusion that the reality of education was confined to the information contained in documents. Education policies and systems are constantly changing, and information should provide as faithful a depiction of this as possible, while providing a true and reliable picture of these changes and their deeper meaning. Information should be at the service of political decision-makers.

This is the challenge which EURYDICE strives to meet. The network will, to this end, be obliged to streamline its operations. The information collected must meet strict criteria for selection in keeping with the objectives at hand. Documentation must be as current and as relevant as possible, covering not only basic documents on education systems and policies, but also major innovations and results of research in education. This approach will allow for optimum use of the documentation collected for the drafting and production of comparative information tools at various levels and in different forms. In this way, stored information is put to use and documentation is brought out of the dark corners where it is too often left.

The EURYDICE European Unit currently has a document database containing some 12,000 units of data, of which over 60% are Community documents, 40% being of national origin. The network recently decided to create a collective bibliographic database using the CDS-ISIS software.

Issues surrounding information networks "Developing a true Network Culture"

Discussions of the main difficulties which networks and documentation networks in particular face often emphasise technical, data-processing or financial problems. However, an important dimension of the operation and the effectiveness of these networks, their human dimension, is often forgotten. This dimension is the

foundation for exchange and represents the driving force behind the dynamic of interactivity, which is the capstone of the network concept. A network is, **first and foremost, a living entity.**

A network's level of activity and its potential are strengthened when the education professionals who make up the network are well informed about the collective objectives and goals which are its entire justification. The concept of participation in the achievement of a common goal is a crucial element of the proactive and positive attitude which those involved must demonstrate. This concept must be thoroughly understood and internalised. A lack of clarity and consensus can be a major obstacle to performance within a network and to its vital dynamic, which depends on the interdependence of its participants. Difficulties in collective decision-making on issues which are basic to the operation of a network (such as the definition of common standards and the development of joint databases) may follow. This situation can lead to a negation of the very concept of a network, which is based on the objective of greater effectiveness through collective management and the sharing of resources.

It is thus vital for the objectives of a network and the framework of operations to be clear to all those directly involved as well as from the outside, and that mechanisms be provided for adjustment of objectives and resources in response to developments in the demand for information. A network requires that its constituent parts feel themselves to be participants in a **true network culture**. This attitude is essential to the development of mutual understanding, to the shoring up of weak points without weakening the strongest points and to the development of a **lowest common denominator** with which each participant can identify and which provides a foundation for growth.

This holds true for all networks, whether national, European or international. In the case of EURYDICE, a European network, an additional dimension adds to the complexity and to the challenges of work within a network, i.e. the intercultural dimension. Representatives from 12 countries, soon to be 18, interact and work together, bringing widely varying resources and professional backgrounds, while processing and exchanging information about very different cultures and education systems. Europe, to a greater extent than any other continent, is a complex and rich mosaic, and the network cannot help but reflect this fact.

The central element, whether national, European or international, which coordinates and leads all of the activities of a network has a crucial role to play in the development of this network culture and to the strongest possible cohesion concerning joint objectives.

It is also vital that this living entity which constitutes a network does not operate as a closed circuit. Its openness to the outside world of information and the target audiences for information is essential. Links and synergies with other information networks with similar or identical objectives are basic to the effectiveness of information. Networks must contribute to greater transparency of information, and the information processed must therefore be made accessible. EURYDICE is developing ever-greater synergies with other European and international networks for information about education, including the EUDISED network of the Council of Europe and the INED network of UNESCO/BIE. The enlargement of the European Community and the strengthening of its relations with third countries is likely to lead EURYDICE to play a role in an increasing number of countries. It is therefore important for this cooperation to serve the goal of more effective information.

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INFORMATION AND DOCUMENT ACCESS: AN ITALIAN EXPERIENCE

By Deonilla Pizzi

Abstract: Because of rising prices it is important to foster the cooperation between all the bio-medical libraries in such a way as to assure a sufficient standard in health information. An interesting experience of cooperation devoted to document exchange is presented by the author. One aim of the bio-medical libraries is to organize a coordinated acquisition and a more stringent cooperation at least for all those libraries that are financed by the Italian National Health Service. Another important aim is the establishment of a national photocopy centre at least for bio-medical documentation.

One important aspect of information and document access at least for public institutions seems to be of an economic nature.

Tight Government budget policies are expected to be enforced in the coming years in Italy (but this should be a common feature to all European countries). This will have heavy consequences on the library financial resources, at least in real terms; in a inflationary environment, where publication prices (both books and journals) are increasing in general at a higher rate than the inflation rate, it will be hard, from a quantitative viewpoint, to keep up the same level of acquisitions.

In this situation an improvement of document supply is highly necessary; moreover this problem has grown for those countries like Italy whose currencies depreciated strongly and especially for medical libraries which buy the largest part of publications abroad.

As an example let me show you some figures which are the revised results of a previous study by Senior and myself. This study was based on samples of medical journals published in different countries. It showed that in the period 1980-89 the rate of increase of the subscription prices for Institutions was well above the inflation rate of the countries under consideration. This trend in fact continued

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during the period 1990-93. Taken as a basis 1980=100 for the subscription price index of each sample and comparing it with the consumer price index (1980=100) of the corresponding country we got the following results. The USA subscription price index was 275.2 in 1989 and in 1993 it has reached 498.5 (these results were obtained by considering subscription prices for domestic institutions), while the consumer price index was 143.36 in 1989 and 170.2 in 1992 (for the consumption price index we refer to the previous year for a practical reason, given that the 1993 figure is not still available, however this is a good "proxy" for Italian libraries as the 1993 budget is made at the end of 1992).

For British periodicals the subscription price index passed from 284 in 1989 to 585.4 in 1993 and the consumer price index passed from 159.9. to 207.1. Subscriptions to French journals increased from 194.2 in 1989 to 234.01 in 1993 and the consumption price index rose in the same period from 171.9 to 194.9.

The situation worsened for those countries whose currency devaluated during the eighties. For the Italian libraries the subscription index price, valued in Italian liras, passed during the period 1989-1993 from 440.9 (1980=100) to 905.3 for US journals, from 320.38 to 627.20 for British journals and from 250.7 to 365.4 for French serials.

Even taking into account the fact that prices charged to foreign institutions is higher than those charged to domestic institutions, it is obvious that the main source of these price increases has been the strong devaluation of the Italian lira against the currency of the countries under consideration.

Financial resources for Government institutions, like universities and of course their libraries, decreased drastically in real terms. EgG. the resources of my library passed from 275.8 (1980=100) in 1989 to 327.1 in 1993, while in the same period the Italian consumer price index passed from 228 to 283.7.

It is obvious that in these conditions we are not able to buy new specialized serials, but it is also hard to maintain all current subscriptions. So it is important to foster the cooperation between all the biomedical libraries in such a way as to assure a sufficient standard in health information. A solution to this problem could consist in planning acquisitions, but at present this solution is impossible, at least in the short run, given the different legal status of the various institutions. In fact from a legal viewpoint the Italian bio-medical libraries are part of different bodies: Ministero dei Beni Culturali, Ministero della Universita' e della Ricerca Scientifica, Ministero della Sanita', local and regional Health Service. Of course some of them are also part of private hospitals and of large pharmaceutical companies.

An interesting experience of cooperation devoted to document exchange has been developed by these last ones. They formed a consortium, GIDIF, RMB = Gruppo italiano documentalisti industria farmaceutica e istituti di ricerca biomedica, whose main result has been a union catalogue. This consortium can be joined also by public sector libraries, like University Libraries. The only requirement is the payment of a share in proportion to their serial collection. Unfortunately this Consortium is the only experience in this field in Italy.

Of course the Italian SBN= Servizio Bibliotecario Nazionale is obviously our main referent for the problem at hand.

A special SBN working group, coordinated by Mrs. Mandillo, has developed a set of documents about some aspects of the workings of the loan and reproduction services: one of the most striking result of their study was that photocopy delivery is used for internal readers, but its use in the framework of interlibrary loan seems to be negligible. Of course the usual caveats apply to these results; the sample from which they derived these results was in fact formed by 504 libraries, and most of them (382) were university libraries and the authors themselves admitted that probably the same standards do not apply to last mentioned ones, given the strong differences in terms of quantitative consistency between them.

I would add a personal impression to all that: a further bias in these results was introduced by the fact that the largest part of the libraries forming the sample were specialized in Humanities. But at least in the Italian tradition in these fields of study, the finding and/or discovery of information and documents represents a relevant part of the scientific work, and consequently the librarian is not the main reference source of access to information.

But, as we know very well, the problem is reversed in the bio-medical libraries for two main reasons. First of all the results of our search are often the basis to make diagnoses and plan therapies for patients needs. Moreover our researchers tend strictly to cooperate with the librarians in getting information. Then our duties can be summarized as follows:

- a) to furnish doctors with quick replays;
- b) to find the most up to date information in the shortest time;
- c) to get documents efficiently, which are often unknown by the users.

However the SBN works are still in progress, and so, while we are waiting for the SBN loan and document access rules, we found and use many formal and informal ways to get information and document access for our users.

The first problem we deal with is to locate the library where the document we are searching actually is. At present in Italy no complete catalogue of the serials present in all the libraries is available. As a consequence, the first part of our search consists in consulting paper catalogues the most important of which is in our field the *Catalogo collettivo dei periodici-Archivio Isrds/CNR*, Roma, ICCU, 1990. Other catalogues has been published by large Italian bio-medical libraries, e.g. the Trieste Medical Library and the Biblioteca Pinali of Padua. As in Italy no central Institution is devoted to supply photocopies, the publication of their catalogues has transformed de facto these Libraries into centres which supply copies to the largest part of the Italian libraries. This situation has created heavy problem to them on the ground of internal organization and of the scarcity of staff as well. Other problems for them arise from the increasing budget constraints. As a consequence each library has to charge a price to cover at least reproduction and delivery costs and, in some cases, also all those costs deriving from hiring extra personell, that in Italy are seldom financed by the Central Body. Recently a more efficient search tool is available: the Italian academic network. By this tool each library is able to access to the catalogues of the other University Libraries, provided that their catalogue is available on-line.

Time has come to reach our aims by the use of the resources online through telematic networks and the use of the E-mail for the correspondence, to shorten waiting times and to reduce costs, given the low price reserved for academics for access to the network.

Unfortunately all this has not yet spread enough, and traditional systems still survive: in my experience, the average waiting time to obtain a copy of a document from a "traditional" library may be longer than 30 days.

Of course sometime the document is not available in any Italian library. In this case the most common source is the British Library Document Supply Centre. (It is worth to say that no similar Institution exists in Italy).

Given its high level of efficiency, the copy demands to BLDSC by Italian libraries are so frequent that recently the Rome British Council started to distribute the BLDSC coupons, the international loan / photocopies requests forms and the units of deposit account. Of course many libraries, especially those offering a more sophisticated Document Supply Service to their users, make their demand directly to British Library by ARTEL.

From what we said above, some conclusions may be drawn. An impelling political aim of the bio-medical libraries is to obtain a coordination of acquisition and a more stringent cooperation at least with all those bodies who are financed by

National Health Service, such as University Medical Schools, public and private hospitals. Another important aim is the establishment of a national photocopy centre at least for bio-medical documentation. In the meantime we will carry on document exchange in an inventive, but satisfactory enough, was, using advanced technology, relying on the cooperation willingness of all the medical librarians.

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ADONIS: FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES?

By Sharon Grant

Abstract: The document delivery system ADONIS was developed to protect publishers copyright royalties which they felt were being lost due to unlimited photocopying. Development of ADONIS made use of the large storage capacity of compact disks read only memory (CD-ROM); catered to the established need for delivery of biomedical information; and supplied this information quickly. The search features of ADONIS, its basic hardware requirements, and the hard currency needed to subscribe are usually taken foregranted by libraries in industrial countries. But what about developing countries? Their requirements for biomedical information are based on the critical health needs of their populations. The challenges faced by their biomedical libraries and information centres are daunting. Is ADONIS a relevant product for countries who are 'information isolated', and perhaps becoming even more so with the construction of the information highway. The feasibility of CD-ROM technology for developing countries is just one aspect which must be examined when considering ADONIS. The appropriateness of the information contained therein must also be considered. For developing countries to meet the particular health needs of their citizens, the relevant biomedical information must be accessible for them, economically and quickly.

What is ADONIS?

ADONIS is the CD-ROM based subscription service which provides full text articles of over 600 academic publications from more than 40 different publishers. These publications cover primarily biomedicine, but publications from related disciplines such as biotechnology, biochemistry and bioengineering are included in ADONIS coverage. Each CD-ROM contains over 100 journal issues. The CD-ROMs, which include the page images and indexes (copied to a pc's hard disk) are issued weekly. The fields indexed are: author, article title words, ISSN or journal title, year of publication, volume, issue and pages. The use of boolean logic is possible, but neither keyword nor subject searching is an option. Articles retrieved may be viewed on screen before printing; several may be selected and

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printed together; or, articles may be printed immediately. All printing is done by laser printer which reproduces the article as it appears in the journal, including graphics. The new version of ADONIS (ADONIS II) scheduled for release in May 1994, runs under Windows, a program which provides a graphic interface for DOS. A subscription to ADONIS for 1994 is about 15,000 US dollars. Additionally, each copy printed is recorded in the ADONIS system's built-in cost centre which collects information on printing activity for future billing of publishers' copyright charges. Charges are set by individual publishers and range between a high of 10 US dollars to a low of 3.50 US dollars, averaging about 7.00 dollars. Charges incurred are billed back to the institution quarterly by the ADONIS consortium which then distributed the payments to publishers.

Who is ADONIS?

ADONIS emerged in the early 1980's as a consortium of some of the most important biomedical publishers in the world, including: Elsevier Science Publishers; Blackwell Scientific Publications, Pergamon Press and Springer Verlag. The catalyst which brought these publishers together was their concern over lost revenue and cancelled subscriptions due to the availability of material through photocopying. The "fair use" copyright clause of many national governments ensured that such photocopying would continue. This was equated by publishers as unlimited use without payment.¹

Elsevier was concerned enough about potentially lost revenue due to photocopying to enlist the help of the British Library Document Supply Centre (BLDSC) to determine the nature and extent of the material being supplied to other libraries. The BLDSC participated in two studies and several other document supply centres were approached in the early years of the consortium to provide comparative data.² These studies and other market research compiled over a decade provided the consortium with a wealth of data about the document delivery market. In particular, they learned that biomedical information was in greatest demand especially if articles were less than three years old.³ The development of optical discs as a full text storage medium merged with the document delivery idea and became known as the 'ADONIS concept'. It is important to point out that ADONIS was developed primarily as a means of ensuring that publishers were able to gain control over some of the revenue that was being lost to them through photocopying, 'fair use' or otherwise. Several articles, written by people who were involved with ADONIS at various stages of its development, bear this out.^{1,4-5} Another aspect which is important to note is that the initial ADONIS titles and recent additions were based on major input from the pharmaceutical industry whose companies form a substantial part of the customer base of ADONIS.⁶⁻⁸

In order to examine the potential and relevance of ADONIS for developing countries, it is necessary to look at some of the factors which influence the ability of libraries and information X in developing countries to meet the information needs of their users. The information explosion, health priorities, economic and professional issue are some of the key factors.

Information explosion

The information explosion is changing the face and the function of libraries worldwide. The spiralling cost of journal subscriptions and the proliferation of biomedical information have combined to place additional pressure on biomedical libraries to meet the needs of their users. The information explosion is forcing libraries everywhere to become dynamic access points which lead to a wide range of information sources in varying formats. It is no longer sufficient to attempt to fulfill the information needs of patrons solely from in-house collections of books and journals. Today's libraries must meet the challenge of the information explosion and satisfy the information needs of their patrons by 1) locating and accessing information stored electronically in local and remote sites; 2) delivering said information to patrons by photocopies, fax, etc.

Recently, the information explosion has gained headlines beyond the library and information world. The United States government's focus on its National Information Infrastructure (NII) has brought the terms "information superhighway" and "INTERNET" to the attention of the general public in North America. Despite the expanding information highway, there remains widespread absence of coherent national information policies in developed as well as developing countries.⁹ Unfortunately, it is all too often that the integral role of libraries and information centres, from the local level to the national level, is understated or overlooked. Lack of information policies perpetuates the lack of status for libraries and information centres as well as for the people who staff them. It is critical for national governments to realize that access to health information is a solid foundation for the growth and development of viable health care systems. The health of a nation's population contributes greatly to its potential for economic growth.¹⁰

Health priorities

Lack of information policies is just one of the problems facing biomedical libraries in developing nations. The challenges facing these libraries are daunting: their need for biomedical information is crucial because the health needs of their citizens are critical. An estimated 50 million people die each year worldwide, 46,5 million of these deaths are attributed to illness and disease. 7 million from the

least developed countries, 32 million from other developing countries. Reliable data is only available for about one-third of deaths, mainly from developed countries.¹¹

What are the health priorities facing developing countries? Tropical diseases such as cholera, yellow fever, dengue and malaria are epidemic. AIDS is spreading hand in hand with pulmonary tuberculosis. Statistics now indicate that these communicable diseases have been joined by diseases which were formerly more prevalent in developed nations; diseases such as cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Diarrhoeal disease continues to be a major cause of morbidity especially among infants and young children.¹² The information needs of health professionals in developing countries, as well as medical researchers, teachers and students are based on these health priorities.

Economic issues

Economic issues are the most important factors influencing the ability of biomedical libraries in developing countries to provide the relevant resources and services needed to support their health professionals and researchers. Many libraries throughout the world face similar problems: under-staffing combined with the demand to provide more services; shrinking book and serial budgets combined with escalating prices and devaluing local currencies; lack of space; inadequate facilities. In developing countries, these conditions are particularly acute and solutions are difficult to find. There is often much bureaucratic manoeuvring necessary to obtain funds, and subsequently foreign currency - whether for collection basics such as journals and books, or for equipment such as photocopiers, computer, printers. In addition, the upkeep and maintenance of such equipment adds to its cost. These economic realities may prohibit libraries from providing adequate services and resources.

Professional issues

Professional issues also affect the ability of biomedical libraries in developing countries to effectively meet the information needs of their users. Low status of librarians, lack of trained staff, and few opportunities for staff development in the rapidly changing area of information technology are all pressing issues. The challenges faced by libraries and information centres in developing countries are well-documented.¹³⁻¹⁷

CD-ROM and developing countries

What is the potential of ADONIS to address the information needs of biomedical libraries in developing countries? ADONIS is a CD-ROM based product. CD-ROM has often been seen as an distribution mechanism which could go a long way towards alleviating the 'information isolation' of developing countries.¹⁸ The results of a 1991 UNESCO survey of member states regarding their information needs seemed to confirm this idea. The same survey also found that CD-ROM with full-text capability was highly valued.¹⁹ Some of the benefits of CD-ROM for developing countries include:

- Immediate and convenient identification of world literature via user friendly interfaces where search intermediaries are not a necessity.
- Access to information without online charges. These charges are substantial for developing countries because of the distance between them and the countries where databases are produced and stored.
- Access to information without the need for sophisticated national and international communication infrastructures.
- Large storage capacity and durability of the medium.
- CD-ROM and the value added service it provides, enhances the image of libraries and their staff, thus contributing to greater awareness and utilization of library services.

The above-mentioned features are inherent to ADONIS as a CD-ROM based product. In addition, it appears to have features which set it apart from many CD-ROM based products already in use in the libraries of developing countries.

ADONIS versus other CD-ROM products

Bibliographic databases such as MEDLINE and POPLINE are the most common applications of CD-ROM technology in biomedical libraries of developing countries. In some libraries, CD-ROM technology can be seen to increase the severity of the existing challenges and create new problems. User satisfaction with the ability to search a large body of literature and to identify relevant information quickly may fade just as quickly into frustration when that information is not available immediately, or within a reasonable delay. If the information identified is not available at a regional or national level, requests may be sent to international document supply centres. Delivery may take weeks or months, due to limitations of communications and/or transportation.

As a full-text CD-ROM based system, ADONIS incorporates the best features of the technology: providing immediate access to information. The ADONIS difference is that it also provides rapid delivery of that information in the form of laser printed copies. Even considering the cost of publishers royalties for copies printed, ADONIS could be considered as a less expensive alternative for biomedical information needs of some developing countries. A library subscribing to ADONIS adds over 600 titles to its collection at a fraction of what it would cost to subscribe to a portion of the same titles in print. Libraries can also avoid paying for expensive subscriptions to journals which are under used. The immediate availability of a substantial number of additional titles is significant for libraries in developing countries. Contrary to biomedical libraries in industrial countries, most of the ADONIS titles are unlikely to be duplicated, nationally or regionally. ADONIS is updated more frequently than most bibliographic databases which are commonly updated monthly or quarterly. Under the ADONIS II production schedule, its producers estimate the turnaround time from receipt of journal issues to CD despatch will be two weeks. Users will receive a new disk weekly.

The fact that the ADONIS turnaround time is quick and delivery of CD-ROMs is frequent does not eliminate the age old problem of journal issues not being received. One of the problems which has been noted with ADONIS is that some issues are missing from the CD-ROMs because they were not received in time to be scanned onto the discs within the production schedule. Another limitation of ADONIS is that it does not have the sophisticated search features or the variety of access points found in bibliographic databases such as MEDLINE. ADONIS supplies full-text documents, but this full-text is not keyword searchable because the documents are page images. With 600 predominately European titles ADONIS is also limited in its scope, and coverage is only from 1991 onwards. The ADONIS difference is that it is a document delivery product.

ADONIS and UNESCO

ADONIS was initially greeted with interest and enthusiasm by UNESCO. UNESCO sponsored ten 1991 and 1992 ADONIS subscriptions for libraries and information centres in developing countries: India, Thailand, Tunisia, Egypt, Venezuela, Slovakia, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Nigeria and Senegal. According to Paul Harman of the ADONIS Head Office in Amsterdam, eight of the ten sites could not find the funds to renew subscriptions for 1993 onwards; therefore, only two active installations remain from the UNESCO group - India and Egypt. Reports from the 10 UNESCO sites indicate that ADONIS use has not been very heavy, and in some cases it has not been used at all. One librarian at a UNESCO/ADONIS site which did not renew considers that ADONIS was not

very useful as it did not contain enough clinical journals, particularly journals originating in the United States. It was considered to be too expensive in light of its limited scope.

Criticism levied on ADONIS that it is 'European biased' has been partially addressed in the new release which adds more titles from American publishers. Still, ADONIS is no more or no less biased towards the information needs of industrialized countries than any other CD-ROM information system. In all fairness, ADONIS does not pretend to have as its focus the information needs of biomedical libraries and information centres of developing countries. It would be incorrect to assume that the biomedical information delivered by ADONIS lacks international relevance and usefulness. There are ADONIS sites in developing nations, particularly in Central and South America, as well as sites in developed nations.

Conclusion

The CD-ROM technology exemplified in ADONIS has the potential to fulfil the information isolation of developing countries. CD-ROM is embraced as a promising solution by both librarians and end-users from these countries.²⁰ The full-text, document delivery component of ADONIS makes it appear all the more promising. As is often the case with a great deal of information available, the question must be asked as to the relevance of the information for developing countries. It has been suggested that much of the information produced in developed nations is not appropriate to the needs of developing nations.²¹⁻²³ The opposing view is that biomedical information and literature is universal.²⁴ It can be agreed upon that in order to satisfy information needs, material must not only be accessible and timely, but also language, content and context specific. The information needs of ADONIS's target market of pharmaceutical companies and those of biomedical libraries of developing countries are based on different realities and priorities.

The limitations in context and content render ADONIS inadequate to meet the biomedical information needs of developing countries based on their health priorities and their economic realities. Before the administrators of biomedical libraries in developing countries consider using their limited resources for a CD-ROM product like ADONIS, they must also be ready to invest in the accompanying information technology - computers, cd-rom drives, software, laser printers, etc. There is a large capital outlay beyond the cost of the CD-ROM product. Limited financial resources would not be wisely channelled into a CD-ROM document delivery product which lacks journals focusing on primary health care; public

health; health promotion; preventative medicine and clinical applications. Therefore, is imperative that such a product be highly relevant, qualitative and selective; combining biomedical literature sources from developing as well as developed nations.

Solutions for the information needs of biomedical libraries in developing countries do not rest with ADONIS. The development and marketing of ADONIS can be a framework for the development of a similar full-text, CD-ROM based, document delivery product. Such a product would have as its nucleus the goal of meeting the biomedical information needs of developing countries based on their health priorities. Biomedical information which addresses the health priorities of developing countries can be identified from information sources currently available. This literature, combined with local and regional biomedical literature from developing nations, would result in a product which is highly relevant, qualitative and selective.

These features, incorporated with the CD-ROM based, document delivery concept of ADONIS, would ensure substantial use of the product and make it economically viable for the biomedical libraries and information centres of developing countries.

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