

	<p style="text-align: right;">Date : 09/07/2007</p> <p>The new "Guidelines for national bibliographies in the digital age"</p> <p>Maja Žumer University of Ljubljana Slovenia</p>
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Abstract:

The Working group on Guidelines for (electronic) national bibliographies was established in 2004 has started the work with an analysis of users and contexts of use of national bibliographies (NB) in the digital age. National bibliographies are changing dramatically: they include more and more also bibliographic records for digital resources and national bibliographic agencies are increasingly complementing (or even replacing) printed versions of NB with electronic. The guidelines will be soon posted for the world-wide review; this paper gives and overview of the document prepared so far.

1. Introduction

This is the third paper devoted to "Guidelines for (electronic) national bibliographies", now renamed "Guidelines for national bibliographies in the digital age". The first in 2003 was stating the need for such guidelines (Žumer, 2003). The second in 2005 was already reporting on the progress of the working group (Žumer, 2005). As an introduction an excerpt from the latter is used:

"National bibliography in the modern sense of the word is defined as a cumulation of the authoritative and comprehensive records of the national imprint (i.e., products of the national publishing industry) of a country, published regularly, and with the least possible delay. It is produced in

accordance with international standards by the national bibliographic agency. Publication details and authorship are investigated and verified in detail.

The definition of the national bibliography seems relatively simple and straightforward, but it still leaves many questions unanswered:

- How is the national imprint (or, production of national publishing industry) defined?
- What are its borders (geographically, conceptually)?
- Which standards should be followed?
- What is the appropriate delay in publication of national bibliographies?
- Which format of the national bibliography is the most appropriate?

The working group of guidelines for (electronic) national bibliographies is aware of all these questions and has started to address them. The answers are not easy and simple, though."

Now the group is already preparing the final version of the guidelines.

2. The use of national bibliographies

While there is good evidence and understanding of the use of national bibliographies in libraries, there is lack of substantial data on other users. In some countries (Czech Republic, Norway) national libraries started investigating who the users are and in what context, but broader studies are very much needed. In addition to current users we also have to focus on future and potential users not only to justify the production of the national bibliography, but also to implement the required services. The present and potential users therefore include (Zumer, 2005):

- **Librarians**
 - *Cataloguers*
Cataloguers need national bibliographies directly (i.e. for copy cataloguing) or indirectly, as support in cataloguing. In the latter case they look for similar bibliographic records and, probably even predominantly, for authority records (names, corporate bodies)
 - *Acquisitions librarians*
They need national bibliographies to order publications, identify publishers and distributors, publication status.
 - *Collection development*
To analyse available publications, to select according to collection development criteria, also awareness of future publications (e.g. using CIP records)
 - *Reference librarians*
They act on behalf of end-users (including library patrons, formal and informal groups, corporate bodies)
 - *Legal deposit management*

Because of the strong tie of national bibliography with legal (or voluntary) deposit, the data in national bibliographies can be used to analyse and control the deposit.

- *Preservation*
To determine trends in publishing and plan preservation procedures.
- **End-users**
This is the most heterogeneous group ranging from library patrons to users who access the online national bibliography remotely. Formal or informal groups and corporate bodies are included into this category. There is considerable variation between different national models: in the UK, for example, the NB is a commercial product and is not widely used by the general public. In Scandinavian countries, in contrast, NB is widely used as a complement to union catalogues. But regardless of business models behind the NB, the working group identified vast potential of NB for the general public.
- **Book trade**
 - Publishers
Commercial and non-commercial sector, also government and official publishers use national bibliographies to analyse the market and competition
 - Booksellers
In their needs this group is similar to collection development and acquisition librarians. In addition they may perform the function of a reference librarian and possibly even refer customers to libraries for out-of-print publications.
- **Agencies**
 - Funding bodies
To study the impact of existing funding or to plan future funding policies.
 - Official statistics
For statistical account of a country's publishing output.
- **Rights management organisations**
Because of high-quality authority control and authoritative data on authorship national bibliography data can be (and is) used to support management of intellectual rights by collecting societies, but also government bodies for management of lending right remuneration.
- **Others**
Many other specific users can be listed. Some examples from Norway:
 - printers identifying publishers to offer cooperation
 - journalists to identify language/genre/origin patterns in publications
 - organizers of book fairs
 - identification of translators from/to specific language
 - identification of illustrators

And, finally, we have to be aware that in addition to 'human' users of electronic national bibliographies, there is also computer software which directly accesses national bibliographic records such as federated/distributed searching and harvesting. While not users in the real sense, these cases pose additional technical requirements that have to be taken into account when planning an online national bibliography.

We started with a discussion of the mission of NB in the new environment. Then the users and their specific needs and requirements have been identified. At the same time the working group also focused on types of materials for inclusion into the NB and selection principles when not everything can be included due to quantity. The next steps include specification of functionality and guidelines for the interface. We also have to focus on conceptual and technical interoperability with other environments and systems.

2. Structure of the Guidelines

The chapters of the Guidelines draft reflect the methodology of the preparation and the analysis used. As mentioned before, we started from the analysis of users and contexts of use of national bibliographies. The analysis was extended beyond the obvious: librarians and library users. Other uses and users were identified such as publishers, booksellers, funding bodies, rights management. In addition we have to be aware that electronic national bibliographies are also accessed by harvesters or serve as targets in distributed searching.

- *Introduction*
Includes background information, covering both the history of national bibliographies and development of recommendations. Scope and purpose of the document are stated.
- *Value of national bibliographies*
Mission of modern national bibliographies is discussed, followed by detailed analysis of users of NB, the reasons and contexts in which they access NB. As the foundation for next chapters, the requirements for each user group and context are listed. The emphasis is on search formulation requirements (such as typical queries), required display of bibliographic/authority information and additional functionality when needed.
- *Selection Criteria*
This chapter presents selection principles to aid national bibliographic agencies in formulating their selection criteria. There is no one set of selection principles that can serve every national bibliographic agency. This chapter provides a discussion of the various criteria to be considered; the rationale to be taken into

account; and the constraints that come into play as each national bibliographic agency tackles the challenge of defining its selection criteria. From this panorama of choices, each national bibliographic agency may devise a framework of selection criteria that meets its needs for administering its country's national bibliography and that fulfils any legal mandates that must be met.

- *Cataloguing Levels*

The integration of web and other electronic resources presents a challenge for national bibliographic agencies. Traditional cataloguing practices, assuming book-in-hand analysis of all resources are not scalable to the whole of the World Wide Web. The proliferation of digital media and formats also raises new challenges for the organisation and presentation of information and provision of access. National bibliographic agencies need to allocate their limited resources as efficiently as possible to achieve comprehensive coverage while continuing to satisfy existing user needs. The Web has also altered expectations. Users are no longer satisfied with the knowledge that a specific resource exists; they are accustomed to instant access to information directly through their computer. Current IFLA Recommendations and previous guidelines have emphasised the need for national bibliographic agencies to treat all resources equally. In the new context this approach is no longer sustainable. In future a graduated approach will be required in which the level of cataloguing appropriate to different types of resource will be determined in relation to the type of resource, the level of metadata associated with the resource, and the significance of the resource for the national bibliography.

- *Cooperation with Publishers*

Some National Bibliographic Agencies have already established successful working relationships with publishers. The benefits of such cooperation include improved timeliness (publishers deposit their publications promptly), sharing and re-use of metadata, mutual promotion.

- *General Guidelines for Creating a National Bibliography*

This part of the document provides a general organizational overview of preparation of NB and is intended to be used both by well established national bibliographic agencies and by those which are now being established. The content includes the legal framework, organizational alternatives and possible business models. NBs are produced in very different organizational frameworks and particularly newly established national bibliographic agencies need an overview of alternative approaches.

- *Functionality of the Electronic National Bibliography*
The electronic national bibliography is an important information resource for various user groups in different contexts as discussed in previous chapters. The interface should, as much as possible, enable all the functionality needed by these user groups. The list of user groups is long and it is clear that their information needs, contexts, and, consequently, requirements differ very much. In order to serve best all the users, we analyse the requirements regarding interfaces, access points (search forms, display formats, and added functionality, when needed). A section on interoperability issues is included, too.
- *Bibliography*
The bibliography includes references to a number of existing resources, relevant to all aspects of production of NM, from setting up the organisational framework to actual production, including various recommendations, guidelines and standards.

3. Next steps

The final versions of chapters are being prepared. After a meeting during the conference in Durban, the final editing will start and the working group has set the goal to have the document ready for general discussion and world-wide review by the end of 2007. Some national bibliographic agencies have already expressed their interest in reviewing the document and testing its practical value in real setting. The working group would appreciate such feedback.

After several years we are slowly approaching the most important milestone: the publication of the guidelines. After that the Bibliography Section will have to perform occasional periodic reviews in order to keep the guidelines current, useful and used.

References:

Žumer, M. (2003). Guidelines for electronic bibliographies: are they needed? *69th World Library and Information Congress, Berlin, 1-9 August, 2003* (<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla69/papers/108e-Zumer.pdf>)

Žumer, M. (2005). Guidelines for electronic bibliographies: work in progress. *71st World Library and Information Congress, Oslo, 1-9 August, 2003* (<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla71/Programme.htm#17August>)