

Discussion Group

Convenor: Dame Lynne Brindley (British Library)

Topic: e-Legal Deposit

Scope Note

e-Legal Deposit

1. The most essential task of national libraries, the one which more than any other makes them what they are, is that they are responsible for acquiring, preserving and making accessible the publications (of all kinds) of the country. Therefore it follows that legal deposit – the objective of which is to build a collection of the national literature – must be of fundamental importance for national libraries.

2. CDNL's Vision for the Global Digital Library states:

“Our long-term vision is the development of a global distributed digital library - comprehensive, open, seamlessly-connected, and universally accessible on the internet - giving ready access to library materials in the collections of all the national libraries of the world in the interests of scholarly research, education and lifelong learning, innovation and economic development, and the promotion of international understanding”.

3. The Vision recognises that to this end, *inter alia*, CDNL must:

- Ensure that learnings on digital library developments and best practice are shared between national libraries
- Increase digital capability and support digital developments in the national libraries of the developing world
- Advocate for the development of the global digital library and for regulatory support (particularly through legal deposit and intellectual property regimes) and financial support for digital developments.

4. In 2009, the British Library conducted a survey of national libraries, to ascertain the then current state of play internationally with regards the legal deposit of electronic publications. The survey was based on responses from members of the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL), plus the remaining G8 countries and a number of other nations.

5. At last year's CDNL meeting in Gothenburg, Discussion Group A on e-Legal Deposit considered the findings and broad conclusions of the 2009 survey and also generally explored progress in participating member countries with regards both the adoption of electronic legal deposit legislation and technical implementation. Participants:

- noted the importance of such comparative international data to support advocacy and as a means of sharing best practice;
- agreed there would be value in updating the survey, broadening its scope to CDNL members;
- recognised the value of distilling the principles relating to e-legal deposit;
- and also of developing a CDNL advocacy pack, identifying the arguments that resonate in support of legal deposit / e-legal deposit.

6. The British Library duly conducted the broader survey of CDNL members in early 2011 and the results and conclusions are to be reported in the plenary session at the CDNL meeting in Puerto Rico.

7. The Discussion Group on e-Legal Deposit at the CDNL meeting in Puerto Rico will provide an opportunity:

- to discuss and distil the principles relating to e-legal deposit
- to discuss and develop the key advocacy messages in support of securing e-legal deposit legislation and also drafting/revising legislation for e-legal deposit.
- to consider the desirability and potential contents of a CDNL Advocacy Pack in support of securing e-legal deposit legislation and also drafting/revising legislation for e-legal deposit.
- to consider other issues arising (eg information/experience exchange) which CDNL might address and make recommendations as appropriate.