

## **LIBRARY AND INFORMATION UNIT (LIU) COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

### **Purpose and Audience**

This collection development policy has been developed to provide a set of guidelines to help in the management and definition of the collection of resources for the betterment of the service that the LIU offers to its users. These guidelines should be flexible enough to allow for initiatives for the benefit of the LIU, keeping in mind the objectives of the NSO. This document should be used by senior management, as the basis for future planning, decision making and priority settings in collection management. It should provide consistency and continuity to the process of collection development.

This document is also intended to increase staff/public awareness of the contents and resources of the library collection. It is also intended to raise awareness of the increase in use of electronic resources and the possible advantages and alternatives they should provide us with in the future.

### **Institution and Clientele**

The NSO is the official statistical agency of the Maltese Islands. Its overall objective is to collect, process and publish statistical information on social and economic conditions. These figures are the basis on which every, economical, political and business decision is made. The client base encompasses a wide spectrum of people and organisations. The Public Service, trade associations, social partners, industry sectors, academics, researchers, the media, students and the public in general are all prospective clients of the NSO.

### **Mission Statement / Collection Management Objectives**

The mission statement of the NSO is "to serve the statistical information needs of parliament, government and the community by striving for excellence through vigorous protection of confidential data, quality information respondents and a timely, objective and responsive statistical service". The objectives of the collection management are to support the mission statement of the organisation by:

- provision of access to local and international statistical information;
- providing the specific resources required by the staff to sustain the collection;
- provision of necessary equipment for the use of electronic resources.

### **Intellectual Freedom/Censorship**

Due to the particular nature of the organisation certain confidential data available within the NSO cannot be made available in the LIU. This is in accordance with the Malta Statistics Authority Act, 2000 that protects the confidentiality of the data suppliers. The access to online resources (Internet) is also subject to filtering operated by the Malta Government Network (MAGNET).

## **Collection Overview**

The collection of the LIU is made up of over 10,000 items. These include local and foreign publications, documents, papers, serials, journals and CD-ROMs. The local collection of statistical publications goes back to the 1950's and a very rare collection of Blue Books, today's equivalent of the Annual of Statistics, date back to the 1870's. National statistical publications emanating from more than 20 countries are available. Europe is the most represented area although some statistical publications from North African countries are also available. The LIU has extensive coverage of recent Eurostat statistical publications thanks to an agreement with the same organisation. Statistical publications from the main international organisations such as UN, IMF, ILO, OECD and others also form part of the collection.

The LIU also holds an index of local newspaper articles that report the data published by the NSO. Newspapers cuttings are presently filed according to subject and the relevant units within the NSO are also supplied with copies of the articles for their reference. Plans to digitize the process are at an advanced stage.

The LIU presently receives around 20 journals mostly dealing with statistics. A reasonable number of pamphlets and news releases of statistical organisations also form part of the collection. Most of the journals are received as complimentary copies and the LIU can only afford a limited number of subscriptions. The provision of a Table of Contents (TOC) service to main statistical journals is currently being proposed.

The statistical publications are arranged on the shelves according to country and originating agency. The library classification systems used are the Dewey (DDC) and the ISIC, which is a specialised statistical classification system. The collection of statistical publications cover most of the themes, e.g.: population, labour force, living conditions, education, environment, foreign trade, economic development, prices and wages, business and other economic activities.

An increasing number of CD-ROMs concerning various statistical subjects are available within the collection. Access to the collection is through an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) that is available on the Local Area Network to all staff within the Public Service. All other users can access the OPAC through the NSO website. The ability of the system to facilitate access to electronic resources is one of the major issues currently being discussed by the management. Another major issue is the capability of the system to convert the present bibliographic records into MARC 21 format.

The LIU is aware that the inclusion of electronic resources in its collection is necessary to compliment the present collection. Increasingly, important statistical data and publications are being published exclusively in electronic format. The access to electronic journals, monographs and websites dealing with statistics will surely enhance the collection of the LIU. The selection criteria for such electronic resources shall be included in the *Selection Policy*.

## **Cooperative Agreements**

The LIU has a standing exchange agreement with a number of international statistical organisations. Until recently, only print publications have been exchanged but the

production of NSO publications in CD-ROM format means that we are now in a position to exchange electronic publications.

Cooperation agreements with other organisations in the area of resource sharing are being considered. The prohibitive costs of on-line databases and electronic journals and the restricted financial resources of libraries have increased the importance of resource sharing. The specific nature of the LIU makes it difficult to find partners with the same interests.

### **Organisation of Collection Management**

The Manager Information Services is responsible for the organisation of the collection. The Manager Information Services may consult the Librarian and a representative from the IT Unit where necessary.

Electronic resources are becoming increasingly important and the IT representative should provide the Manager Information Services with the necessary information and expertise on possible software and hardware requirements for certain electronic resources.

The CDP is revised every year due to the rapid changes being imposed by technological developments.

### **Relationship with Other Policies**

The CDP should respect the other policies of the organisation. It is inextricably linked with the funding policy and depends on the budget allocated to reach its objectives. The CDP is also related with the Training Policy of the organisation. Continuing education and specialization have become indispensable to re-equip collection development librarians with the skills essential to perform efficiently.

### **General Policies**

#### **Language**

The LIU is generally inclined towards providing material in the English language.

Materials in Maltese, though minimal, *are* also available in the collection. A number of partner organisations in the exchange programme supply the LIU with materials in their vernacular language since they do not publish an English version. A possible advantage of electronic exchange of publications could be the ability to acquire bi-lingual publications. The CPD, at the moment, does not impose any restrictions with regards to language of materials for the LIU.

The following is a list of formats already in the collection and other formats that are being considered for inclusion in the collection:

#### **Monographs/ Serials:**

These make up a reasonable part of the collection. Methodologies, textbooks,

economics, yearbooks, annual compilations, reports, collections of papers and other subjects dealing with statistics in general are the basis of this part of the collection. Emphasis is made on material of lasting and statistical value. The currency of the materials is also a very important factor. The use of electronic monographs should be seriously considered in the near future. Some of these are free and will therefore contribute to reduce the high costs of most printed materials. The main issues to be considered when acquiring electronic monographs are ease-of-use, presentation, added value and costs-rights issues. The *Selection Policy* should include detailed selection criteria re electronic monographs/serials.

#### **Journals:**

The LIU presently receives about 20 journals all in print format. The majority are statistical-related journals. The cost factor has restricted the extension of this collection and the cost effectiveness of subscribing to e-journals is being considered. An increasing number of journals are being published in electronic format and references to papers within electronic journals are proliferating. The LIU cannot afford to miss out on information that is of relevance and great importance to the collection development. If a journal exists in both print and electronic format some considerations are important. Evaluation and selection criteria must be clearly set out in the *Selection Policy*. The archiving issue of e-journals must also be taken into consideration. Some publishers are giving free access to the electronic version if a subscription to the print version is made. The issue of resource-sharing mentioned earlier might be considered for e-journals.

#### **Pamphlets/ News releases:**

A number of statistical organisations send various pamphlets and news releases to the LIU. These are also shelved according to the origin of the material. Some of the news releases are being received electronically and then printed out.

The LIU should consider storing the resources electronically and making them available through the LAN (Intranet). In this way shelving space could be saved and also reduce the printing costs.

#### **CD-ROMs/Diskettes:**

At the moment these formats are still a relatively small part of the collection. An increasing number of CD-ROMs, however, is available but are still not widely used. Some of the CD-ROM's may need guidance to use especially with inexperienced users. This again raises the issue of librarian/staff/ user training. As greater experience is gained more definite criteria for selection will be developed.

#### **Internet:**

Access to resources on the Internet is offered to the staff/users of the LIU. The LIU staff also act as intermediaries to the requests of the staff. The present situation demands from librarians that:

- be well informed about research developments and the demand and supply of information;

- be familiar with computer applications and programmes, the use of CD-ROM's, online databases and Internet resources and with document delivery services.

The introduction of the Automated Library System will enable the LIU to provide a much more efficient and user-orientated approach. The electronic resources will all be catalogued and eventually made accessible directly through the OPAC. The supply of a number of gateways to quality Internet resources and databases will save the users of the LIU time and money. The LIU binds itself to provide the necessary training and assistance to the staff and the users. The resources will be selected following the selection criteria set out in the Selection Policy. These will include:

- reference sources;
- electronic monographs;
- electronic journals;
- discussion groups;
- review sources.

Not all these resources are free. Indeed some of them are very expensive. The LIU should make use of the free resources where possible. Other important resources will require subscription and licensing agreements. The CM Committee is responsible for such agreements and should try to find partners for resource sharing agreements that will reduce the costs significantly.

### **Digitised Collections:**

As stated earlier, the LIU will start digitising newspaper articles dealing with statistics in the near future. The physical filing system could be stopped and the articles will be indexed and searchable via the Intranet. Historical collections and particular materials needed for preservation will also be digitised.

#### *Multiple copies*

As a general rule for print copies, the LIU acquires only one copy of each title for its collection. The NSO publications are considered separately and 6 copies are held in the collection. The electronic resources issue represents particular considerations. Licensing agreements generally specify the allowed access at a particular time of a particular resource. Special attention will be given to this issue when considering agreements with suppliers.

#### *Weeding*

Statistical publications (excluding local) that simply provide data will be removed from the collection within 15 years of publication. As materials become worn, dated, damaged or lost, replacement will be determined by the librarian depending on the particular item. The weeding exercise is carried out every 2 years and falls within the responsibility of the librarian. The material removed from the collection will not be discarded but stored in a separate building for 10 years after which it will be

evaluated and passed on either for preservation or disposal. All users of the LIU will be issued an ID card for circulation purposes. Only a small part of the collection is for reference only. The majority of the collection is available for circulation. The LIU has a number of circulation options depending on the particular item.

|               |                                            |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Standard loan | 3 weeks                                    |
| Short loan    | 3 days                                     |
| Extended loan | 3 months (available only to staff members) |

All extended loan items must be handed-in for a renewal every 3 months. Users may not remove items from the LIU without the authorisation of the LIU staff.

### **Detailed Analysis of the Subject Collections**

Analysis of the collection is according to the origin of the work. This is determined by the particularity of the collection and from the fact that two different classification systems are used. A conspectus-like approach has been applied to determine the strength of the resources. For our collection, the broader three-point, whole number scale has been applied. The basic levels are:

|                     |                                                                                              |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Minimal Level       | collection that supports minimal inquiries about this subject/organisation                   |
| Intermediate Level  | collection supports this subject/organisation well through a reasonably wide coverage        |
| Comprehensive Level | collection strives to be as exhaustive as possible for this particular subject/ organisation |

Normally this scale would include a 0 - Out of scope level but since the collection is relatively small and very specialised this scale was not included for the moment. This does not exclude the inclusion of such category after future evaluations.

The following is a basic list of the collection materials classified by origin, the present strength of the collection together with a projection for 2005.

| <b>Origin</b>                              | <b>2003</b> | <b>2005</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| National collections (foreign)             | 2           | 2           |
| Statistical methodologies                  | 2           | 3           |
| Statistical textbooks                      | 1           | 2           |
| Classifications                            | 2           | 3           |
| Dictionaries'                              | 1           | 2           |
| Special Topics                             | 2           | 3           |
| Academic Journals (Economics & Statistics) | 1           | 1           |
| Conference Proceedings                     | 1           | 3           |
| Foreign Periodicals (Economics)            | 1           | 1           |
| Eurostat Publications                      | 2           | 3           |
| Eurostat Serials                           | 2           | 3           |
| Eurostat CD-ROMs                           | 1           | 2           |
| UN Statistical Yearbooks                   | 3           | 3           |
| UN Serials                                 | 2           | 2           |
| UNESCO Statistical Publications            | 1           | 2           |
| UNDP                                       | 1           | 2           |
| UNEP                                       | 1           | 2           |
| UNICEF                                     | 1           | 2           |
| FAO                                        | 1           | 2           |
| ECE                                        | 2           | 3           |
| WTO                                        | 2           | 2           |
| WHO                                        | 1           | 2           |
| EMI                                        | 1           | 2           |
| Council of Europe                          | 2           | 2           |
| European Commission                        | 1           | 1           |
| OECD                                       | 1           | 2           |
| ISI                                        | 1           | 2           |
| IMF                                        | 1           | 2           |
| IMF Serials                                | 2           | 3           |
| IMF Yearbooks                              | 2           | 2           |
| The World Bank                             | 1           | 2           |

| <b>Origin</b>            | <b>2003</b> | <b>2005</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| ILO                      | 1           | 2           |
| ILO Yearbooks            | 1           | 1           |
| ECB                      | 1           | 2           |
| Malta - Reference Works  | 1           | 1           |
| Malta Annual Reports     | 2           | 2           |
| Malta Government Finance | 2           | 3           |
| Central Bank of Malta    | 2           | 3           |
| NSO Publications         | 3           | 3           |
| IT Periodicals           | 1           | 1           |
| NSO Operations           | 3           | 3           |
| Statistical Papers       | 2           | 3           |
| Historical Blue Books    | 3           | 3           |
| Malta Government Gazette | 3           | 3           |
| Library Science          | 1           | 2           |
| CDROM databases          | 1           | 3           |

For this methodology to succeed a continuous evaluation of the collection and possible mediations are necessary. The collection will be evaluated and analysed every year and the Librarian is responsible for the assessment process. The assessment process provides better knowledge of the collection, an action plan for collection management, justification for budget increase/decrease and support for grant applications. With the introduction of electronic resources the evaluation process will assume even more significance and may indicate possible shifts for the allocation of funds towards access or vice-versa. This use of this system for collection analysis might be considered innovative in the Maltese Islands but has been used for a number of years in organisations all over the world. It helps us to grasp how or whether in real terms, we are improving the level of accessible information resources needed to support the needs of staff and users. It presents a convincing rationale in lobbying for funds.

This collection development policy is not a static document but it is a way of effectively communicating with senior management, the staff, the users and other libraries.