

PRESS RELEASE

PUBLISHERS AND NATIONAL LIBRARIES UNITE TO PRESERVE EUROPE'S ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING OUTPUT

European national libraries and publishers have completed the successful revision of the Statement on the Development and Establishment of Voluntary Deposit Schemes for Electronic Publications. In a meeting in Brussels in December 2005 a Committee of the Federation of European Publishers (FEP) and the Foundation Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) welcomed the news that both their annual assemblies had endorsed the Statement.

The Statement is a revision of an earlier statement, issued in 2000, that provided guidance for national libraries and publishers on the voluntary deposit of electronic publications. The revision reflects the experience of, and progress made by, national libraries and publishers in the acquisition of, and provision of access to, electronic publications. Best practices could be particularly useful in the framework of the European Commission's i2010 initiative on digital libraries.

The aim of deposit is to ensure that a nation's published output (and its intellectual record and future published heritage) is collected systematically and made available to current researchers within the premises of national libraries and, importantly, to preserve the material for the use of future generations. Most nations have laws requiring publishers to deposit their publications with national libraries. This practice of legal deposit dates back several hundred years and has been a vital element in preserving and making available the published record of previous generations for researchers of today and tomorrow.

The CENL/FEP Committee has also received a mandate to: Monitor deposit practices and legislation; Give advice on deposit practices; Function as a platform for discussion and as an exchange of information on matters of common interest; Produce clarifications, definitions, agreements on issues of mutual interest to national libraries and publishers. The Committee will continue to investigate acceptable methods of working together to meet societal needs in ways which are acceptable to both national libraries and publishers.

The full statement is available at www.fep-fee.be and www.cenl.org.

FEP represents 25 national associations of book and learned journal publishers of the European Union and of the European Economic Area Member States. The European book publishing industry forms the leading cultural industry of the European Union.

CENL is the Foundation Conference of European National Librarians, representing 45 national libraries from 43 European countries. This body puts forward a collective voice for Europe's national libraries, at the most senior level, and strives to facilitate co-operative actions and agreements between the members.

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February 2006