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Newspapers - Foreign

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I. Scope

The Library of Congress maintains one of the largest collections of newspapers in the world, comprised of important titles from most independent countries and many dependent states that have existed during the past three centuries. For the purposes of this statement, a newspaper is defined as a serial publication which is mainly designed to be a primary source of written information on current events, either local, national, or international in scope. Newspapers contain a broad range of news on all subjects and activities and are not limited to any specific subject matter. They are intended either for the general public or for a particular ethnic, cultural, or national group. Print newspapers usually appear without a cover, with masthead, and are normally larger than 12 x 17 inches (297mm x 420mm). Individual issues are listed chronologically or numerically and usually appear at least once a week. These characteristics are qualified to allow for exceptions, but they define elements which clearly distinguish print newspapers from other serial publications (e.g., periodicals, journals, newsletters, etc.) that also report general news. Once the Library establishes a system for digital archiving and access, the Library will acquire digitized and born digital newspapers using the same collecting guidelines as those of current acquisitions. Future holdings will incorporate web harvested newspapers.

Newspapers published inside the United States are addressed in the Collection Policy Statement for Newspapers - United States. Newspapers published to serve a particular ethnic or cultural group within the United States are addressed in the Collections Policy Statement for Ethnic Publications. Periodicals in newspaper format that serve a particular industry (e.g., *Advertising Age*, *Hollywood Reporter*), association (e.g., *Jewish Chronicle*), or subject (e.g., *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Coin World*) are addressed in the subject collection policy statement.

The Library of Congress acquires, on a selective basis, significant newspapers for its permanent collections from each politically independent foreign nation, principality, or other territorial unit, as well as from the more important politically dependent foreign territories and possessions throughout the world. Foreign newspapers are selected to provide the most complete coverage of events and to represent the principal political, economic, and social viewpoints in the various national and territorial

areas represented. This policy applies to all foreign newspapers, whether currently published or older retrospective files, that may become available for acquisition. Retention designation of permanent or temporary status will determine the most appropriate format (either paper, microfilm, electronic or a combination of formats) held.

II. Research Strengths

The Library's newspaper collection is the most extensive research level collection anywhere. It contains titles from all areas of the globe, representative of most of the independent countries that have existed during the last 350 years, and includes newspapers printed in almost all modern languages. Both the size and the diversity of the Library's newspaper holdings constitute its major strengths. Members of the United States Congress and scholars doing research in newspapers covering a broad geographic base are able, in a visit to a single institution, to examine a wide range of newspaper titles. The Library, in fact, acquires more foreign newspapers than any other library, and it is one of the few national libraries that attempts to maintain, on a permanent basis, holdings from other countries. Patrons access the collection onsite through the Newspaper & Current Periodical Reading Room; newspapers on microfilm are also available to offsite researchers through interlibrary loan.

III. General Collecting Policy

The Library of Congress will acquire, on a selective basis, significant newspapers for its permanent collections from each politically independent foreign nation, principality or other territorial unit, as well as from the more important politically dependent foreign territories and possessions throughout the world. Foreign newspapers are selected to provide contemporaneous coverage of a wide range of events and to represent the principal political, economic, and social viewpoints in the various national and territorial areas so represented.

Due to the voluminous nature of newspapers and the inherent instability of the newsprint and ink used, a recommendation to acquire a newspaper title for permanent retention implies a long-term commitment of resources by the Library. At this time permanent retention is a commitment by the Library to acquire or produce a preservation quality microfilm surrogate. [Collection Policy Statement, Microforms - Quality] Therefore, each recommendation to subscribe to or otherwise obtain a newspaper title to be added to the Library's permanent collections must be accompanied by a justification that addresses defined selection criteria below.

Although this statement provides criteria for the acquisition of foreign newspapers for the Library's permanent collections, it does not preclude the acquisition of newspapers from individual foreign areas for temporary use or to meet important information needs of Congress and other core constituencies. Recommenders can consider the option of one year "current issues only" acquisition of titles that might not warrant permanent retention.

IV. Specific Collecting Policy

In choosing titles from individual countries the Library desires to achieve a balance of broad geographic news coverage with wide readership and a diversity of perspective that will serve the needs of the U.S. Congress and the broader research community.

The prioritized criteria listed below are considered to be those most generally applicable for choosing new titles to include in the Library's permanent collections. They are also to be applied when reviewing titles acquired for temporary use that are under consideration for permanent retention.

1. Level of Coverage: The levels of coverage may be sub-national, national, multinational, or international. If a given title does not provide a national level of coverage, the exceptional significance of the province, region, or city in which it is published may be considered. The extent to which the content of a title overlaps or duplicates that of another title being received at the Library should be taken into account. Titles with better coverage should be selected.

2. Importance of the title in its place of origin: The extent of circulation, readership, and influence are key factors. Titles may be chosen on the basis of their importance to political or social elites; to significant special interests; or their importance in a special field (e.g., political or public opinion, economics, religion, etc.)

3. Issuing bodies: In addition to standard, independently published general circulation newspapers, selective representation should be sought for titles published by the national government, major political organizations, or other significant organizations or interest groups.

4. Political or social conditions: Rapid political or social change is a consideration that argues for wider coverage. This may be achieved by acquiring a mixture of permanent and temporary titles that are regularly reviewed for retention. A change from temporary to permanent must be with the concurrence of the custodial unit chief.

5. Users: The anticipation of frequent or even occasional use by the U.S. Congress is a primary consideration in acquiring specific newspaper titles. Recommendations based on reader demand should take into consideration whether the demand is for current information, or for research in non-current topics, or both.

6. Research value: Quality, accuracy, and coverage of a title should be such that it would be consulted for serious research purposes. Titles that are the only representative of a particular language, dialect, or script merit consideration for acquisition.

7. Cost: When titles are being acquired in ink print and subsequently microfilmed, the ongoing cost of preservation and permanent retention is high. A factor justifying such expense might be that the Library of Congress is known to be the only source for public access to the title, and demand for it is deemed sufficient.

8. Unreliability of receipt: Sporadic publication or receipt of issues may justify discontinuing retention of title.

9. Decline in quality of publication: Significant decline in the quality of a publication may justify discontinued acquisition of the title.

New title: The emergence of a new newspaper title providing significantly higher quality of coverage may be justification for discontinuing the current acquisition of a now less important title retained by the Library.

V. Acquisition Strategies: Current and Future

Currently the Library of Congress seeks to acquire both permanent and temporary holdings of foreign newspapers by various means. Many of our paper, microfilm and electronic holdings are purchased from commercial publishers. In some instances microfilm is produced by the Library's Overseas Offices from printed newspapers published within those regions. A significant number of our foreign microfilm acquisitions result from participation in cooperative microfilming projects. Participation in these newspaper microfilming programs is an important part of our acquisitions strategy for newspapers, allowing us to work with the library community to influence which newspaper titles and which time periods are preserved. Opportunities may also arise for exchanging materials (either paper copies or microfilm) with other libraries.

Library of Congress collection policy for electronic versions of foreign newspapers poses a variety of opportunities, shortcomings, and problems. Currently when digital newspaper files which meet our selection criteria become available commercially, the Library may purchase access to these files for onsite use. This data is hosted by the commercial source on its servers and is available for access purposes only by a limited number of onsite patrons in the Library's reading rooms, and is available only as long as the subscription is maintained.

In the future, as retrospective files of foreign newspapers consistent with collection criteria become available through digital conversion efforts, the Library of Congress will develop the means to aggregate, preserve and serve that content, consistent with the approach of the National Digital Newspaper Program's Chronicling America web site.

For those newspaper web sites where the content is consistent with the criteria listed in this statement, some of which may be equivalent to print versions, the Library of Congress will need to employ web harvesting to acquire this content. To date, Library of Congress web harvesting projects have been predominantly thematic in approach, and while that approach may contain select content from newspapers, it fails to provide a day-to-day chronicling of a broad range of news on all subjects that equates with what is offered with analog newspapers. Born digital and web-based newspapers will be acquired via electronic deposit, purchase or gift as archiving technology and policies will allow.

VI. Collecting Levels

	Collecting Guidelines	Collecting Levels
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Current newspapers	Selectively with microfilm preferred format	4
Post-1801 newspapers	Selectively with microfilm preferred format; originals selected for artifactual value	4
Pre-1801 newspapers	Comprehensively with ink-print preferred format, but microfilm also acquired	5
Historic events newspapers	Selectively with ink-print preferred format, representing artifactual value (to provide support for interpretive programs)	4
Born digital or web newspapers	Selectively (not presently acquired)	4

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