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The Government Information Landscape and Libraries

Edited by: Kay Cassell, James Church and Kathryn Tallman,

with editorial assistance from Carol Church

Introduction

Dr. Kay Cassell, School of Communication and Information, Rutgers University

The purpose of this IFLA Professional Report is to demonstrate the inherent complexity of the government information ecosystem and the need to maintain expertise in libraries to assist users. Government information is here defined as any information issued by an organization considered to be an official body, and available to a public wider than that body, which is adapted from the definition of "official publication" issued by IFLA/Government Information and Official Publications Section (GIOPS) in 1982 (Johansson, 1982) to be relevant in the world of digital government information. A "government publication" (or official publication) as codified by many countries refers to "lawfully published materials by the executive, legislative, and judicial functions of government at all levels at the government expense" (Kamar & Tsuma, 2021) and is also used throughout the report.

Government information may be presented in one of several formats, including print, microform, and digital. This report provides a summary of the government information landscape for selected countries and regions worldwide—the United Kingdom, Canada, Greece, the Russian Federation, Korea, the United States, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa. It also includes an overview of information from International Governmental Organizations and a special postscript on cybersecurity. For each country or region, information is provided about government publishing practices, depositories, the legislature, access to information, government libraries, preservation practices, and digitization. Many think that it is easy to find government information. This publication makes the point that it is not easy to do so, and many complexities and challenges exist for users worldwide. Government information professionals are needed to assist users in finding the information they need and to advocate for more access for all.

Nerisa Kamar and Dr. Clive Tsuma contribute an overview of access to government information in Sub-Saharan African countries, which include Kenya, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, South Africa, Nigeria, and Uganda. They have provided examples of the legislation that has been passed to provide their citizens with access to information, including such initiatives as the Open Data Initiative in Kenya. There are still many challenges to access. But much progress has been made with the establishment of legal depositories, such as in South Africa; e-government programs, such as the Huduma Centers in Kenya; collection and access to statistical information and long-term preservation strategies, such as in South Africa; and the establishment of government libraries. For many, there are still limited outlets to access government information and no way for citizens to get responses to their queries. Work by information professionals has also provided more access to government information. Eleven countries are part of the Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Eastern and Southern Africa, and many countries have country-wide library associations.

Susan Paterson discusses the many issues concerning Canadian government documents. Canada's depository library system began in 1927 at the urging of the Canadian Library Association. This system provided free distribution of government documents. In 2014, the

printing of government documents ended. By this time, most government documents were available online. The Depository Services Program (DSP) became the DSP E-collection. Many publications are not included because of strict guidelines for acceptance. Canada has had a legal depository program since 1953, and two copies of each publication must be deposited at the National Library of Canada, including digital publications. All Canadian Parliamentary records from 1867 to date are available. Research publications from the Library of Parliament assist in finding needed information. Many government publications are available on the Open Government Portal.

Mohammed Zuheir Bakleh and Lize Denner focus on government libraries in the Middle East and North Africa. They provide us with details about the types of government libraries in these regions, which include legislative libraries, judicial libraries, and executive libraries (such as the libraries of ministries and departments of government) and the services they provide. These services include document delivery, research assistance, and current events awareness. These libraries lack adequate budgets, staff, and technology. Collections are weak because of the lack of acquisitions plans, as well as a lack of Arabic tools for doing research. The authors point out that there is a lack of understanding of the value of libraries in many Middle Eastern and North African countries and suggest that libraries need to work cooperatively through their library associations to strengthen their role. Library associations can offer a venue to discuss current issues and offer support to each other. There is also a need for increased training of librarians.

Anna Mastora, Maria Koloniari, and Maria Monopoli write about the status of Greek government publications, services, and access. Access to information is a right described in the Greek Constitution. Depository libraries have been designated as the National Library of Greece, the Library of the Hellenic Parliament, the General State Archives, and the National Center for Audiovisual Media and Communication. In 2010, Diavgeia was established, requiring government institutions to upload their acts and decisions on the Internet immediately after being formally signed. In 2014, a new transparency portal was established with more powerful searching capability to strengthen Diavgeia. Two e-services have been established: the Citizens Service Center, introduced in 2002, which provides a wide variety of services, such as registrations for births and marriages and applications for unemployment and drivers' licenses, and the Portal ERMIS, which informs citizens about potential transactions with public administration.

James Church addresses the nature and origins of International Governmental Organization (IGO) Information, summarizing various systems of documentation, publishing practices, and access to information policies. Differences and similarities between major IGO publishers are explored. He explores former and current functions of depository libraries and documentation centers, trends in IGO open access, and the "counter-movement" of subscription-based digital libraries. He recommends strategies for locating substantive material within large bureaucracies often characterized by "too much information." Finally, he discusses access to historical print and microform collections, IGO reference tools, flagship publications, research guides, statistical data, and access to IGO archival collections.

Jungwon Yang has compiled information on government publishing and preservation in Korea. Modern government publishing began in the 1950s after the Korean War. In 1991, the Government Publishing Office was established in the Ministry of Information; it now is a

part of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Government publications include those of the local governments as well as the national government. There is no centralized or systematic government publications method. Each government agency publishes and distributes their own publications. Government publications are deposited at the National Library of Korea, the National Assembly Library of Korea, and the National Archive of Korea by the individual agencies. Since December 2013, government publications are no longer copyrighted. The Korean government recognizes the importance of public access to government publications. The most recent creation is the National Digital Library, which is still under development, but will make access to government publications much easier. Yang states that there is a need for better regulations regarding the deposit of digitized materials and more uniformity regarding assigning ISBNs/ISSNs to all government publications.

Anastasia Drozdova documents the progress made in the Russian Federation towards more access to government information. In addition to three official printed government publications, since 2011 there has been the website www.pravo.gov.ru, the Official Internet Portal of Legal Information, which publishes a wide range of legal, parliamentary, and judicial information. Other state bodies have developed official websites: the Federal Tax Service, the Federal Bailiffs Service, the Federal State Statistics Service, and the Ministry of Education and Science. Starting in 2003, when legislation mandated that certain federal and local information must be placed on government websites, efforts have been made to increase access to and transparency of government information. A great deal of information is now on the *Open Data Portal* of the Russian Federation. Although little has been done to archive government information, there is now the National Digital Archive of Russia, an independent project, with a section which is labelled as "Preserved Government."

Hannah Chandler and Jennie Grimshaw contribute a very useful guide to the development of official publishing in the United Kingdom. Six legal depository libraries have been designated in the UK: the British Library, the National Library of Scotland, the National Library of Wales, the Library of Trinity College Dublin, the Bodleian Library of the Oxford University Library, and the Cambridge University Library. The legal depository libraries have worked collaboratively to ensure that government information is collected, preserved, and made accessible to the public. Beginning in 1994, UK government departments began to publish on the Internet. This continued to evolve until in 2001, the *UKOnline* website was launched to improve access to government information; in 2012, it became GOV.UK. The National Archives is responsible for preserving the government online presence by capturing its websites and social media. A committee of the Charter Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) launched the *OfficialPapersUK* blog in 2015 to keep professionals up to date on what is happening in government information and to promote interesting collections.

Kian Flynn, Cass Hartnett, Maya Swanes, and Robert Loprest provide a wealth of information on how to access various parts of U.S. government information through government sources and private ones as well. Most US government information is now digital, so it can be found on the Internet. For the public, the best place to start is USA.gov, which is an interagency portal providing a wide range of useful government information. The Government Publishing Office (GPO) was established in 1861 to centralize the printing of government information. In 1895, the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) was

established. Over 1,000 libraries are part of FDLP and collect, preserve, and provide access to government documents—now mostly in digital form. The CGP (Catalog of Government Publications) provides online access to all publications distributed by the FDLP. Govinfo.gov provides access to all information related to Congress while Congress.gov provides a tracking system for all legislation. NARA.gov is the website for the National Archives, which collects and preserves government records.

Two essays speak to work by International Governmental Organizations in a special postscript on cybersecurity—one from the Cybersecurity Section of the United Nation Office of Information and Community Technology, and the other from the ITS Office of Information Security of the World Bank Group. Both groups speak to their organization's work to deal with the increasing problem of cyber-attacks. Employees and users are crucial in the work to protect each organization and its information. Employees receive regular training in this area with a focus on prevention. A major threat is phishing, as well as business email compromise or CEO fraud. The UN encourages the public to assist in reporting vulnerabilities, and the World Bank emphasizes a robust risk-based cybersecurity program. The Standing Committee of GIOPS is grateful to the IFLA Professional Committee for recommending this special section, as it is now more important than ever.

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Complexity of the Government Information Landscape in Sub-Saharan Africa

Nerisa Kamar, Information Africa Organization, Kenya, & Dr. Clive Tsuma, California State University Maritime Academy, USA

Introduction

Government Information access is an intricate part of the social contract between the citizens of a country and its government. Maintaining such a contract requires an unimpeded access to information necessary to continually evaluate and assess government activities by an informed citizenry. While the government bares the responsibility of collecting, maintaining and disseminating public information, the impediment of unsound government policies on public information especially in Sub-Saharan Africa intentionally or otherwise limits access to such information which in turn makes it impossible for citizens to hold governments accountable.

This chapter is informed by the complexity of government information domain in Sub Saharan Africa and the challenges faced in collecting, maintaining and disseminating government information. We focus on the status of materials, media and format of information published by governments that is available in library depositories as well as the barriers to accessing government information. We also highlight the mitigating efforts by various government to make information not only available but also affordable to the people who need it.

Background

The day-to-day business of government is built on information. Information is a critical resource that helps to ensure the accountability of government, enables governments to manage their operations, and allows the public to participate in the governance of their country. In general, this becomes possible through effective access, retrieval, and utilization of government information. Government information refers to all information products (regardless of format) emanating from government offices. This type of information is usually compiled or created by a government and published and uploaded at the government's expense, or as required by law.

Access to and use of government information is a basic human rights issues that is enshrined in both domestic and international statutes of freedom of information, also known as "right to know" or "access to information." Article 19, of the UN *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, makes reference to such rights (which members of the public in any society have) can not only access information held by government officials and institutions but also the right to express their opinions without interreference from government. Freedom of information means being able to walk into any government ministry or government establishment and request to view certain information, such as contracts awarded and tenders. The same sentiments are echoed in the African Union's Article IV of the *Draft Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression* that illustrates the freedom of information by describing how informational records can be obtained, such as the right to access records and how to apply for access (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 2019). Although little is mentioned about the online domain, the *Draft*

Declaration of 30 April 2019, paras. 84-100, provide for the protection of right to public information in an online context. This overrides the refusal by some heads of government and public institutions to disclose records and information and must be governed by clearly defined rules established by the laws of the government of the day.

Today's Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have increased access to, retrieval of, and use of timely government information. When government information is published online, beginning with rules and regulations, documents, and forms, this is referred to as e-government. E-government enables citizens and businesses to readily access timely and current government information without having to travel to government offices, stand in long lines, or, in some cases, pay bribes.

In most African countries, the use of ICT, such as that necessary to provide e-government services, is minimal when compared to its use in other parts of the world. Countries that have embraced ICT, however, have integrated it innovatively into government and e-government services. In Kenya, for example, the Huduma Centres Programme, a Kenya Vision 2030 flagship project captured under the Mid-Term plan for 2013–2017, has integrated most of the government services in the Huduma Centre Programme (Government of Kenya, 2013).

Huduma Centre is a programme by the Government of Kenya that aims to transform public service delivery by providing citizens with access to various public services and information, from one-stop shop citizen service centres through integrated technology platforms. Huduma Centres improve access to government information that is useful to citizens' daily lives; they provide government services and offer new opportunities to participate in government processes (such as issuance of national identity cards, birth certificates, registration of business names, and applications for business licenses, drivers' licenses, and police abstracts). The online e-Huduma web and mobile portal provides integrated services offered by various government ministries, departments, and agencies. The Centre not only allows for timely access to required information, but also facilitates ease of payment for government services

Government Publications

Changes in information technology has necessitated the evolution of the nature of government publication. However, the definition of government publication as codified by many countries still places much emphasis on government publications as the lawfully published materials by the executive, legislative, and judicial functions of government at all levels at the government expense. Typically, government publications provide current and historical information on a wide range of subjects in primary and secondary research and information sources, as per the prioritization of the government of the day. These subjects include, but are not limited to:

- art and architecture
- business and economics
- consumer protection
- criminal justice
- culture and folk life

- education
- energy and the environment
- foreign and international relations
- health and medicine
- labor
- laws and regulations
- nutrition
- science and technology

E-government publications also include information on public operations and can provide significant savings in areas such as public procurement, tax collection, and customs operations, allowing better and more continuous contacts with citizens, especially those living in remote or less densely populated areas.

Types of Materials, Formats and Media Published by the Government and Found in Depository Libraries

The impact of government information and publications on citizens of the region must be judged not only by that information's availability, but by how information is disseminated, accessed, and used for growth and informed decision-making at all government levels. Government information is available in different formats and scope, depending on the target audience, their geographical location, and information technology infrastructure. Formats can include print or tangible collections, such as books, research, statistics, reports, periodicals, scientific and technical reports, legal resources, maps, posters, kits, and pamphlets. These are printed by government printers for government departments and agencies and sold to the public at subsidized cost.

Nonprint format information includes CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, DVDs, and audio and video cassettes, as well as digital resources, e-books, e-reports, proceedings (parliament, senate, and county governments, where applicable) and other online collections emanating from national and local governments. These are located in government document libraries and bureaus of statistics, as well as government libraries in various government ministries and departments.

To increase access, different government libraries have developed specific guides and tutorials for navigating government information in physical libraries and on library websites. These include simplified user guides that enhance access to and usage of these resources. These guides are revised regularly to accommodate user views and to increase access and usage.

Access to Information and its Constraints

The UN 2030 Agenda recognizes access to information as a target under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, which discusses the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Target 16.10 of SDG 16 ensures public access to information and protects fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements (United Nations, General Assembly, 2015).

Government information contributes to good governance if governments are willing and transparent in disseminating timely and relevant information when required. Access to government information is critical for enabling citizens to exercise their rights and voice, to effectively monitor governments and hold them to account, and to enter into informed dialogue about decisions which affect their lives. It is the responsibility of governments to create awareness on available government information, categories of government information and the level of access, as well as to build the capacity of its citizens to access this information where required. Likewise, citizens (including the poor, marginalized, and those within a government's geographical boundaries) must have the ability to seek, access, and utilize the availed information.

Access to information (or Freedom of Information legislation) is seen as an essential part of the enabling environment for citizen access to information. In theory, a legal right to information can increase government openness and responsiveness to requests for information. But most countries in Africa do not have adequate legal provisions regarding the right to information.

Crucially, the passage of an access to information law may be a necessary, but insufficient step towards meaningful access to information. Therefore, governments and citizens must be able and willing to implement, enforce, use, and amend their laws to suit the ever-changing information needs of citizens.

Access to information is recognized internationally as fundamental in a society that is governed by the rule of law, as it provides individuals with the knowledge required to participate effectively in the democratic process. Knowing what the government is doing is also key to providing oversight, which ensures accountability in the long run. For many countries, the bill and access to information act provides for the disclosure of information by the government to make public all the relevant facts when formulating important policies that may affect its citizens. This provision makes it possible for the public to participate in policy formulation.

Access to information held by the state can be seen as a fundamental right of the individual and a crucial component of democracy. It enables the citizens to be part of governmental decisions that have direct impact on their individual lives. Access to information also allows the citizens to participate in criticizing, and thereby improving, governmental decision-making for effective services delivery.

In Zimbabwe, access to information is governed by Zimbabwe's Post and Telecommunications Act of 2000 (Republic of Zimbabwe, 2000). This act allows the government to monitor email usage and requires ISPs to supply information to government officials when requested. The government's oversight was strengthened again by the Interception of Communications Bill of 2006, which created the "Monitoring and Interception of Communications Center to oversee, among other things, all telecommunications and postal services."

In South Sudan, the *Right to Access to Information Act 2013* (South Sudan, 2013) was drafted for the purpose of giving people the constitutional right to access information and aims at promoting maximum disclosure of information in the public interest and establishing effective mechanisms to secure that right, as well as providing for incidental

matter. The Act is also a guide on the use of information for transparency, with guides on wide circulation of information in an accessible form. This enhances access to information by citizens for informed decision-making. This act provides the right to access information, which is fundamental to the fulfillment of human rights and is essential to fighting corruption, as well as the right to access information held by the public body. This includes national information and publications, among others. In a nutshell, the act applies to all matters relating to Access to Information throughout the territory of South Sudan.

Kenya's *Access to Information Bill 2015* (Republic of Kenya, 2015) enables citizens to access and use information to hold the government accountable and to promote legitimate good governance in the country. It calls for transparency and accountability in all government transactions, therefore promoting legitimate good governance in the country. This includes:

- affirmation of a legally enforceable right for every citizen to access all information held by public entities and private bodies;
- clear and simple procedures for assessing information, and the creation of a comprehensive and proactive disclosure regime;
- provision for exempt information subject to international standards.

Also included are the promotion of access to information, the hearing and determination of complaints, and the review of decisions arising from breach of provisions of the Act.

The Access to Information Act of 2015, signed into law by Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, enables the public to put all public and private entities to task to explain their actions, policies, or decisions upon request (Republic of Kenya, 2016). The principal object of this Bill is to facilitate access to information held by Government Ministries and other public authorities. The Bill recognizes access to information as a right bestowed on the Kenyan people, and seeks to promote proactive publication, dissemination, and access to information by the Kenyan public in the furtherance of this right. It also spells out the mechanisms for ensuring public access to information, as well as the factors that may hinder the right to this access. The Bill was borne of the realization that access to information held by the Government and public institutions is crucial for the promotion of democracy and good governance, and therefore, a right for citizens and media.

The Act restricts the public from getting information that may otherwise undermine the national security of Kenya, including military strategy, intelligence activities and their sources, foreign relation affairs, and cabinet deliberations and records. Information is also deemed classified and may not be given to the public by the state according to the Act if:

- the information sought puts the health or life of any person in danger;
- the information infringes on the privacy of an individual and/or the confidentiality of the profession of an individual;
- the information prejudices commercial interests or intellectual property rights.

Before this bill was enacted into law, access to information in Kenya had long been inhibited by legislative provisions that restricted sharing of information by government and public entities, thus excluding citizens from decision-making in public affairs. Other Kenyan legislation that restricts and hinders access to information by the public includes the *Official Secrets Act*, the *Evidence Act*, and the *Preservation of Public Security Act (*Government of

Kenya, 2012*).* These Acts allow for restriction of access to information that is deemed "sensitive," with the definition of what actually qualifies as sensitive information left to the authorities. As a result, essential information is kept out of public hands. Acts similar to these Kenyan acts are common in most African countries.

A Freedom of Information Act guarantees the right of access to information held by public institutions irrespective of the form in which it is kept and is applicable to private institutions where they utilize public funds, perform public functions, or provide public services. The Nigeria *Freedom of Information Act* (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011) advocates for free availability of public records and information to the public, while at the same time protecting public records on grounds of public interest and personal privacy. It also punishes public officers who provide such information without authorization. Even with the Act, virtually all government information in Nigeria is classified as top secret; this veil of secrecy makes it difficult to obtain information from any Nigerian state agency. Further restrictions are contained in the Evidence Act, the Public Complaints Commission Act, the Statistic Act, and the criminal code, among others.

In Rwanda, the Access to Information Law of 2013 provides a comprehensive framework for access to information. Its purpose, as declared in Article 1, is as stated in the Rwanda Access to Information law (Republic of Rwanda, *Official Gazette*, 2013): "enable the public and journalists to access information possessed by public organs and some private bodies." It further states that information shall be disclosed where the public interest in disclosure outweighs the interest of not disclosing such information. Despite this, the law contains five exceptions. These cover disclosures that may:

- destabilize national security;
- impede the enforcement of law or justice;
- involve interference in the privacy of an individual when it is not of public interest;
- violate the legitimate protection of trade secrets or other intellectual property rights protected by the Law;
- obstruct actual or contemplated legal proceedings against the management of a public organ.

The Act is meant to promote transparency and budgetary accountability within the country, a democratic value for citizens.

Uganda's Access to Information Act (ATI) of 2005 grants every citizen the right to access information "in the possession of the state" or any other state agency, except when the release of information affects state sovereignty or interferes with privacy rights. The Act established procedures for citizens to request government-held information and for the government to respond to citizen requests (Republic of Uganda, 2005).

To enhance access, ATI Act Section 7 requires every public agency to publish a manual on how to access information held by that agency at least once every two years. Though the Act advocates for transparency and accountability, availability and access to information is regulated by the creating department/agency through classification of information by its sensitivity. Classifications include secret, top secret, confidential, and public records. The other challenge is that the regulations include a number of burdensome provisions that

make access unnecessarily costly and difficult. As such, they are not in the spirit of the strong right to information provision found in Uganda's Constitution. Uganda's ATI Act also includes a number of exceptions, such as permitting the government to withhold information related to the operation of public bodies, as well as commercial information, if release of the information could put the third party at a disadvantage in contractual or commercial negotiations. Highlighted challenges of the ATI Act that hamper access of information include:

- the cost of accessing information (payment of fees for each request/non-refundable access fee)
- the procedures that citizens must follow to request information (long detailed forms)
- the guidance provided for implementation procedures for public agencies

This makes access to information prohibitively expensive and difficult for most Ugandan citizens. These issues are similar to the challenges in South Africa, where *The Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) of 2000* requires that the requester must use the form which has been printed in the Government Gazette to make a request. This has frustrated applicants and officials who cannot accept requests by letter or email, and hampers illiterate and disabled requestors. The PAIA also restricts anonymous requests because of the requirement to provide a name in the form (Republic of South Africa, 2000).

In Tanzania, the Information Bill (2015 Section 5(5), which was highly supported by former president Kikwete as a means to foster the Open Government Partnership (OPG), a global movement to make government information and data easily available to the public, recognizes the right of any citizen to access to information that is under an authority Yet section 18 (1) of the same act denies publication of the information to the public and gives a punishment of not less than five years' imprisonment to defaulters. (Daruwala & Nayak, 2015).

Other African countries with freedom of information include Angola, Ethiopia, Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Niger, and Tunisia.

Challenges and Barriers to Accessing Government Information

Production, generation, access, retrieval, and dissemination of government information relies on the political, social, and economic structures of the government of the day. However, factors such as political barriers hinder both the capacity and initiatives of governments to produce information and the ability of citizens to claim their right to information and to use it to demand better governance and public services.

One major challenge to accessing government information is the official classification of government information and access rights. Governments typically classify information using a classification system put in place by the generating government department/agency. Generally, government information is classified into the following categories:

- secret (must remain in the originating ministry/department; not accessible to the public);
- top secret (accessible to public as determined by the originating ministry/department);

- confidential (accessible only to authorized people or groups due to the sensitivity of its content);
- public record.

This classification creates legalistic obstructions to the flow of information to the general public.

Other factors that hinder timely access to e-government information are:

- poor information communication technology infrastructure, mostly in semi-periphery countries and rural and remote areas;
- poor staffing due to poor remuneration;

staff with inadequate skills in government libraries and government offices (registries, record centres, health centres, provincial and district offices, county governments).

These offices are mandated to assist in creating awareness and dissemination of government information, especially in semi-periphery countries and rural and remote areas, and poor staffing contributes to underutilization of government information.

Despite challenges, governments have developed good initiatives aimed at promoting access to government information. For example, in Kenya, the Kenya Open Data Initiative (KODI) and the Open Governance Partnership (OGP) were developed for citizens to access key government data through a single online portal, creating an action plan to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. This effort has been slowed down, however, by irregular updates to the portals, attributable to reluctance of public government agencies to disclose this information. This may be linked to poor remuneration, poor policies, and political power changes that lead to the reshuffling and sometimes dismissal of staff, which affects continuity. Lack of real structures and political barriers also hinder the capacity and incentives of governments to produce information.

On the part of the citizens, their inability to claim their right to information and to use it to demand better governance and public services is a setback to the utilization of government information and the capacity to hold governments accountable. Other common challenges and barriers to the underutilization of government information include:

- governments not being keen to support the right to information, particularly in cases where governments have a history of poor and undemocratic political systems or closed government;
- lack of awareness by citizens of their legal rights to government information;
- official classification of government information and access rights that hinders access;
- poor information communication technology infrastructure in semi-periphery, rural and remote areas that hinders, and in some cases, slows access;
- poor staffing and inadequate training of staff who have been mandated to create awareness of and disseminate government information—especially in semi-periphery, rural and remote areas.

Developing Access to Information Legislation

Citizens generally seek state information that has not published or publicized. States need to publish information on their operations where citizens can access it without having to request the information, and they should do it at minimal or no cost. This promotes the right to access government information. Article 35(3) of the *Constitution of Kenya* obliges the government to publish and publicize any "important information" affecting the nation. However, it does not clearly state what important information is, thus making it ambiguous. When there are efforts to access information, issues of trust cannot be ignored. Measures to protect citizens' information privacy and personal information are crucial as governments move towards one-stop services for citizen to access timely, relevant, current, complete, and up-to-date information whenever and wherever required. In addition to protecting privacy, governments must also secure e-government sites from attack and misuse. These privacy and security issues extend beyond Africa; they are global issues.

E-government has the potential to involve citizens in the governance process by engaging them in interaction with policymakers throughout the policy cycle and at all levels of government. Strengthening civic engagement contributes to building public trust in government. Interactive e-government involves two-way communications, starting with basic functions like email contact information for government officials or feedback forms that allow users to submit comments on legislative or policy proposals.

Some countries in Africa have policy initiatives to support disabled persons, including those who are blind, deaf, or otherwise handicapped, in using the Internet as freely as any other person in accessing government information at any government information outlet. This is another crucial aspect of providing access to government information.

Depositories

Legal deposit is an internationally recognized practice within the global library community which ensures that the documentary or cultural heritage of a nation is collected, accessioned, stored, protected, preserved, and made accessible for the benefit of its citizens and future generations. Legal deposit is a statutory obligation that requires publishers who publish material, including digital content, to deposit a copy or copies of their publications in specified national and regional repositories within the context of national legal deposit legislation. All countries have adopted and formalized legal deposit to suit their domestic situations, with the main objective of preserving their national published documentary heritage and making it available to the public (Larivihre, 2000).

South Africa's *Legal Deposit Act* No. 54 commits to collecting and preserving South Africa's recorded cultural heritage through legal deposit in one form or another from 1842 through the present. As a result, extensive and valuable collections of printed materials, including books, reprints, periodicals, newspapers, maps, films, sound recordings, and other works have been built up in nominated legal deposit libraries in different parts of the country. These depositories are entitled to receive a copy of each official (government) publication published in South Africa, making these publications more accessible to all communities throughout the country, with a depository in each province.

With transformation in South Africa, *Legal Deposit Act No. 54* was updated and enacted in 1997 to address the digital environment to include multi-media and e-publications. The 1997 Act designated six libraries:

- City Library Services, Bloemfontein (now Bloemfontein Public Library)
- Library of Parliament, Cape Town
- Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg (now Bessie Head Library)
- South African Library, Cape Town (now National Library of South Africa)
- State Library, Pretoria (now National Library of South Africa)
- National Film, Video and Sound Archives

These six are prescribed by the ministry to be in charge of certain categories of documents. They constitute the Legal Deposit Consortium of South Africa. The 1997 Act, alongside the 2001 Regulation, also led to the establishment of provincial publications depositories (OPDs) with a functional five of the nine provinces responsible for sourcing, collecting, making accessible, and preserving printed government official publications or those that are provided digitally through free or subscription-based online services.

In Kenya, the law provides for the deposit and registration of a maximum of three copies of books and newspapers published in Kenya to the Kenya National Library Services, University of Nairobi, and Kenya National Archives (*Books and Newspapers Act (Act 5 & 6, Cap. 111*, 1960). Most of the depository materials are not gifts, but loans, and remain the property of the creating government.

The Act establishes the National Library Division (NLD) as the repository for legal deposits in accordance with the Books and Newspapers Act Chapter (CAP) 111 of the Laws of Kenya. This act facilitates the preservation of the national imprint in the tangible form of paper, microforms, CD ROMs, software, and audiovisual materials, which are represented in types such as monographs, serials, maps, posters, and pamphlets. The act gives the National Library responsibility for the creation, acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of local content on a global scale.

In 2011, the Library of Parliament was included as a depository library through the proposed amendment law of 2011 by the then-deputy speaker, Farah Maalim, with the justification that "a legal deposit system at Parliament is important as it acts as a mirror wherein all the glory of a nation's literature is faithfully reflected. It stands as a permanent record of the thoughts, aspirations, and discoveries of successive ages and further operates as an instrument to gather a permanent record of the nation's published works."

The Legal Framework

The right of access to information in Kenya is contained in the Constitution, as well as several other pieces of legislation. In the context of the Constitution, this right was first contained in the post-independent Constitution. It is also found in the Constitution that was promulgated in Kenya in August 2010. In the context of the previous Kenyan constitution, this right was contained in the general provisions that governed freedom of expression. Section 79 of the former Constitution granted every person in Kenya the freedom to "hold information" as well as to "receive ideas and information" "without interference" from the State or non-State agencies (Abuya, 2013). Even so, this right was not absolute. On the

contrary, it could be limited on grounds of risk to public health or national security or safety. To put it another way, the State, upon whom the burden of proof fell, had to demonstrate that its national safety, health, or security was threatened before it could seek to limit an individual's right to receive and transmit information (Article 35 of the Constitution and Section 96 of the *County Government Act*, 2012).

The 2010 Constitution, like its predecessor, also contains provisions that govern the right of access to information. However, under the terms of the new constitutional order, this right is limited. As was the situation with the pre-2010 Constitution, the right of access to information is not absolute. In the first place, it is only available to citizens, unlike under the former Constitution. In other words, non-Kenyans cannot enjoy the right of access to any information that is held by the State or any non-State actor. Article 35 of the Constitution states that every citizen has the right of access to information held by the State and to information held by another person and required for the exercise or protection of any right or fundamental freedom.

However, article 24 of the Constitution of Kenya spells out limitations to the right of access to information based on human dignity, equality, and freedom, taking into account all relevant factors, including:

- the nature of the right or fundamental freedom;
- the importance of the purpose of the limitation;
- the nature and extent of the limitation;
- the need to ensure that the enjoyment of rights and fundamental freedoms by any individual does not prejudice the rights and fundamental freedoms of others;
- the relation between the limitation and its purpose and whether there are less restrictive means to achieve the purpose.

The entrenchment of the right of access to information in the Kenyan Bill of Rights means that legislation restricting access to official information is a limitation on the right and would be unconstitutional and invalid, unless justifiable in terms of the limitation clause of the Constitution. There are other Acts that promote access to information in Kenya. The Kenya *Broadcasting Corporation Act* (1988) established the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, which is a Government institution that is charged with the responsibility of producing and broadcasting programmes by sound or television). *The 2007 Media Act* underscored the importance of promoting and protecting the freedom and independence of the media. The *Films and Stage Plays Act* (1998) recognizes that films and plays are another powerful tool for promoting the right of information.

Regardless of the Acts, some of the laws limit rights of access to information on the basis of national security. For example, the Official Secrets Act Chapter 187 of Kenyan law provides for the preservation of State secrets and State security and prohibits any person from obtaining and transmitting any information that in the opinion of the State "is calculated to be or might be or is intended to be directly or indirectly useful for a foreign power or disaffected person," (*Official Secrets Act*, 1970). Similarly, the *National Assembly (Powers and Privileges) Act* (1998) and the *Service Commissions Act* (1985) significantly limit the amount of information that is available to the public. Under the terms of these pieces of

legislation, wide powers are granted to the Government to limit the circulation of information that is in the custody of the State.

Challenges Facing Access to Information

Although the right of access to information is guaranteed in Kenya, there are several prohibitive requirements, as stipulated in some of the laws. These include the need for consent of the president or of the Speaker of the National Assembly before any information can be released to any member of the public. For example, the *National Assembly (Powers and Privileges) Act* (1998) prohibits public officers from giving evidence or producing "before the National Assembly or a committee of the Assembly any paper, book, record or document" that relates to "correspondence of any naval, military or air force." Tough legal frameworks are in place, but they lack a clear procedural framework—therefore curtailing the right of access to information in the first place. What's more, the procedure that an applicant seeking disclosure must follow is not provided by the law.

On the other hand, governments in developing countries have embraced e-government, with most of them developing e-government programmes for dynamic and enhanced availability of online information as well as interactions with its citizens. Countries such as Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have taken the lead in designing Internet portals for integrating government activities and processes in order to facilitate online interaction between citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders. The major challenge is that citizens may not be confident enough to participate in e-government programmes and they may not trust the system if their privacy is not guaranteed.

Access to information (or Freedom of Information) legislation is seen as an essential part of the enabling environment for citizen access to information. In theory, a legal right to information can increase government openness and responsiveness to requests for information. But developing countries often do not have adequate legal provisions for the right to information. Experts suggest the main obstacles include a failure of political leadership, a culture of secrecy, low public awareness, and institutional barriers (Carter Centre, 2010).

Access to information is recognized internationally as fundamental in a society that is governed by the rule of law, as it provides individuals with the knowledge required to participate effectively in the democratic processes. Knowing what the Government is doing is also key to providing oversight, ensuring accountability in the long run. The Bills and Acts provide for the disclosure of information by the government, requiring them to make public all the relevant facts while formulating important policies that may affect its citizens. This provision makes it possible for the public to participate in policy formulation. Other forms of information which are deemed classified by the Act and may not be given out to the public include: if the information sought puts the health or life of any person in danger; if the information infringes on the privacy of an individual and/or the confidentiality of the profession of an individual; and if the information prejudices the commercial interests of intellectual property rights.

Statistics, Surveys and Data

Governments collect original key data on economic, social, demographic, and environmental conditions. When processed, this data results in statistical information that is disseminated and made accessible to the public, allowing the impact of government policies to be assessed, thus improving accountability. The World Bank Open Data policy necessitates free access to global data that anyone can access and use without restrictions. Governments in Africa utilize these data and other data collected by their agencies for use in the Microdata library, a World Bank library that provides data on people living in developing countries, their institutions, their environment, their communities, and the operation of their economies.

The two types of data (numeric and categorical) are used to generate statistics published by government agencies or other public bodies, such as international organizations, for public use. They provide quantitative or qualitative information on all major areas of citizens' lives. These are referred to as official statistics, which are usually characterized by their ease of access on a continuous basis when required. Statistical surveys using key indicators (household income, agriculture, and level of education, among many) are used by governments to calculate the GDP per capita, making them useful for policy and prioritization by governments in service to their citizens.

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics is the main organ for carrying out surveys in Kenya. It is tasked with a duty to collect, organize, retrieve, repackage, and disseminate annual data emanating from government bodies and agencies. It also releases statistical reports on various sectors that include those with direct impact on citizens—such as the Producer Price Index (PPI) that measures the gross changes in the trading price of products on the domestic and non-domestic markets, at all stages of processing. Another statistical survey with direct impact on citizens is the *Household Health Expenditure and Utilization Survey* (HHEUS), which provides the national government with crucial information for the development of healthcare policy. The survey estimates healthcare-seeking behaviour, including out-of-pocket payments by people seeking services, so as to obtain information on household healthcare utilization and expenditures. This informs planning and budgeting at the county and national levels for improved service delivery.

Several countries in Africa are guided by Statistical Bills. In Tanzania, for example, the Bill contains a stiff penalty for anyone who publishes data or statistics outside the publications produced by the Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

Government Publishing

The provision of accurate information provides individuals with the data and knowledge that they require to participate effectively in the democratic process in any political society. Information enables individuals to make informed choices about their lives and livelihoods. In Sub-Saharan Africa, just like in most parts of the world, government official publications are published by designated government printers. Typical prints include catalogues of state holdings, training manuals, national development plans, government reports, legislation, police and statistical findings, proceedings, reports, maps, gazettes, and acts. Regardless of the fact that they are government publications, the prints are not available for free nor at subsidized prices, making access and use difficult. Government printers also serve as

distribution outlets to government departments, ministries, and institutions. Citizens who require the prints must walk to the printing press bookshops, which in most cases are situated in capital cities near governments' major activities. Whereas most of the governments have interactive government printers/press portals, most queries are never responded to, resulting to underutilization of resources and uninformed citizens.

In South Africa, the Government Printing Works (GPW) has a long history of producing security- printed matter such as passports, identity documents, visas, and related publishing. They offer services of the highest quality for government institutions. GPW is ranked as one of the most progressive security printing specialists in Africa, boasting a high-tech production facility with world-class technologies. However, rarely do citizens get a response to queries on its interactive portal. Physical outlets are also limited. Governments often invest a great deal in equipment and resources towards the operation of printing of government resources. Yet in Zambia, even with this input, the government printing department was left to deteriorate over the years. Its obsolete equipment was scarcely operated by a demotivated workforce whose lack of interest may be attributed to poor wages.

The government press of Kenya is an offset printing entity under the Office of the State (the President). It is one of the oldest printing organs in Kenya and was established by the colonial government. The government's press mainly prints Kenyan government publications, which include the government catalogue, service charters, and the Kenya gazette, among other state publications. It has remained a key resource for the publication of legal documents in Kenya. A major challenge, as in most Sub-Saharan countries, is limited outlets and an interactive portal that does not respond to queries from the citizens.

Government and Parliamentary Libraries

Parliament libraries serve members of Parliament (MPs), staff of Parliament, and former MPs and assist with carrying out research on bills, motions, and formulation of policies and questions, as well as with the use and borrowing of books within the library (acquired with their subject matter in mind). They also provide access to e-resources.

To build capacity, enhance the sharing of information, and share best practices for legislative information, the Sub-Saharan part of Africa has established the Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Eastern and Southern Africa (APLESA). APLESA was founded in Harare, Zimbabwe in October 1994. Participants from eleven countries in the region met; these countries were Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

APLESA strives to promote co-operation, thereby creating a forum for information exchange that will support the function of parliaments in the region. The primary mission of APLESA is to establish a forum for professional networking and resource sharing, implementation of exchange programmes, exchange of parliamentary documents, publication of a regular newsletter, and initiation of informal training programmes amongst parliamentary libraries in the sub-region. Governments play a big role in ensuring that APLESA's vision and key objectives are achieved by providing maximum support. For example, during the fourth APLESA conference in Lusaka, Zambia, the then-minister of education challenged the

delegates to provide MPs with reliable and current data that would enhance the legislative and decision-making process.

In Kenya, government librarians have established *The Association of Government Librarians* with the main aim being to bring all government librarians together to exchange ideas and challenges faced in the modern library environment. This is very crucial in supporting county government libraries amid devolved governments in Kenya.

Consortiums in Kenya, just like in other African countries, have included government and state- owned libraries in their forums. The Kenya Library and Information Services Consortium was established in 2003 with the main objective of collective subscription to electronic resources to cope with the increasing cost of information resources. Subsequently, it was agreed that the Consortium would draw its membership from university libraries, research institutions, and public/national libraries.

Preservation Policies and Practices

In South Africa, legal deposit legislation in the *1997 Act* preamble seeks to provide for the preservation of the national documentary heritage through legal deposit of published documents (Republic of South Africa, 1997). It ensures the preservation and cataloguing of, and access to, published documents emanating from, or adapted for, South Africa. The Act also provides for access to government information, a Legal Deposit Committee, and for matters connected there within. To achieve this, government agencies and departments and citizens must play their role.

As an advanced country, South Africa has established a long-term preservation strategy for the digitization and preservation of cultural heritage resources so that these resources are accessible now and for future generations. This is a compliment to *the National Archives and Records Service Act No. 43 of 1996*, amended in Act 36 of 2001[1], that calls for the proper management and care of the records of governmental bodies and the preservation and use of a national archival heritage.

Governments have unique responsibilities to preserve the historical record. Historical documentation is of special importance for governments. ICT not only allows for quick and cheap dissemination of data, but is also useful due to its compact and convenient storage.

Among the Act's provisions for the disclosure of information is a requirement that the government make public all the relevant facts while formulating important policies that may affect its citizens. This provision makes it possible for the public to participate in policy formulation.

Complexities and Challenges for Users

Complexities and challenges in Africa include significant delays in passing Bills and Laws, which can make their content obsolete. An example is Nigeria's *Freedom of Information Act*, which was first submitted as a bill in 1999 yet not signed into law until 2011 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011). The passing of this law was delayed by legislators who claimed

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[1] See http://www.nationalarchives.gov.za/sites/default/files/u92/arch_act.pdf

the law would compromise national security. Other challenges include issues of "sacred cows" (those laws favored by the government of the day) and the removal of sections of the Act on grounds of national security.

Government Information Literacy

Information literacy and e-literacy is fundamental to the use of information resources in the knowledge age. Information literacy refers to a person's ability to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information" (Braaksma, 2004). Government information literacy includes ICT literacy and skills for interacting, accessing, retrieving, and disseminating government information in government portals hosted by government departments, agencies, and ministries. Government portals that citizens have direct interaction with include e-procurement of services and products, e-revenue systems, government revenue systems, e-health systems, and e-agricultural systems. To assess these systems, citizens must keep abreast with ICT and keep improving their skills, as this is critical to the implementation of e-government. Yet major challenges exist due to the inadequacy of information literacy policies at all literacy levels. In Kenya, most e-government services are offered in a one stop e-shop; the Huduma centres are spread across all 47 counties, bringing services close to the citizens.

The Evolving Role of the Information Professional

Information professional associations ensure their members utilize available opportunities, build competence, and commitment to the profession. They are committed to providing patrons with access to information that is, according to Brenneise (2017), "Exactly what they need, and often may not realize they need, in a form that they find helpful and usable, from a source that is highly accurate and reliable, and in a way that saves them time and money."

Various umbrella professional associations, such as the Uganda Library Association, the Kenya Library Association, the South Africa Library Association, and similar associations can be found in each country within Sub-Saharan Africa. There are also specialized information associations that target particular groups of professionals. For librarians and information professionals working in the government sector, the establishment of the Association of Government Librarians in some countries and the Association of Parliamentary Librarians as a regional umbrella has enhanced capacity-building through conferences, workshops, and exchange programmes that have led to improved service delivery based on shared best practices.

Conclusion

Changes in government political structures and open democracy have enhanced access to government information in most countries in Africa. When coupled with increased literacy rates, improved ICT infrastructure, and devolved government functions in some countries, these changes mean that citizens are better able to engage governments for accountability, transparency, and inclusivity. This contributes to more functional structures, better contextual decision-making and improved service delivery, putting Africa on the right path towards a more knowledge-based continent.

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The Government Information Landscape in Canada

Susan Paterson, University of British Columbia Library

This chapter provides an overview of the current situation of government information and government information professionals in Canada. It builds upon two key papers: "Facing change: a perspective on government publications services in Canadian academic libraries in the Internet age" and "What the heck is happening up north? Canadian federal government information, circa 2014" (Smugler, 2013; Wakaruk, 2014). There are comparatively few published works that examine the issues surrounding access to government information in the Canadian context, especially in comparison to the United States, for which a much larger body of work exists. The chapter also outlines how changes to Canadian government policies in recent years have impacted access to government information, and describes collaborative projects and advocacy initiated by government information librarians across the country. It also provides an overview of Canada's Federal Depository Services Program (DSP), Legal Deposit Program, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), and the National Library.

The focus of this chapter is primarily on information and activities at the federal government level and secondarily on the provincial and territorial government levels. It also describes how government information librarians in Canada are collaborating on preservation projects to ensure that Canadian government information is preserved for future generations. Canada is a bilingual country with two official languages: English and French. LAC serves as the national library and archives for the entire country, while Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ) fulfils many of the same functions for Québec. The focus of this chapter will be on activities in English Canada[2].

Overview of the Depository Services Plan

Prior to 1927, there was neither a central system for libraries to receive federal government documents nor a reference guide or catalogue to find recently published Government of Canada (GoC) publications. Librarians had to write to departments to request copies of publications on an individual basis. Frustrated with the lack of a coordinated approach to collecting federal documents, Canadian librarians campaigned for an efficient and systematic way to freely distribute important official documents to larger libraries (Dolan, 1989, p. 55).

A group of concerned librarians met at the 1927 American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference in Toronto to discuss their difficulties in accessing and collecting government information (Dolan, 1989, p. 55). They pressed for change and advocated for a free distribution system modelled on the U.S. Federal Depository Library Program. The Depository Services Plan (DSP) was created by order-in-council 1471 (P.C. 1471) on August 2, 1927 (Dolan, 1989, pp. 55-56). As Hardisty writes, "[P.C. 1471] appears to be the first official announcement of general free distribution, two types of distribution being indicated:

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[2] Many of the government bodies, documents and websites referred to in this paper exist equally under English and French names or in English and French versions. Names, references and links are to the English forms unless otherwise noted.

automatic full distribution, and selective, on the basis of requests received from libraries and individuals" (Hardistry, 1978, p. 59).

It is important to understand some of the limitations of an order-in-council compared to other instruments. As Dolan (1989) explains:

> Several observations may be made regarding PC 1471. As an order-in-council it certainly had the force of law, but it was an executive instrument and as such did not pass through the legislative process like public bills introduced in the House of Commons. Furthermore, it was subject to change according to the wishes of Cabinet: its amendment did not require the full attention of all members of Parliament. (p. 63)[3]

This distinction becomes significant when considering some of the obstacles that the DSP faced in regard to departmental compliance. To complement the new program, a catalogue of federal government titles was created to assist in documenting the publishing output of the Canadian government. The catalogues helped librarians identify titles of interest and allowed them to order titles in a centralized fashion.

The first *Catalogue of Official Publications* appeared in April 1928 and went through several changes of title and publishing frequency before it ceased in 1992 as the *Government of Canada Publications*: *Quarterly Catalogue* (Public Works and Government Services Canada [PWGSC], 2013b, p. vi). Beginning in 1952, the government issued a *Daily Checklist* of materials available through the DSP, which became the *Weekly Checklist* in November 1978 (PWGSC, 2013c, p. ix). The *Weekly Checklist* was occasionally accompanied by *Supplementary Checklists,* which "list electronic publications acquired by the Depository Services Program after the print editions have been listed in the *Weekly Checklist*, or after it has been determined that a print edition is not available. *Supplementary Checklists* may also appear as topical bibliographies" (PWGSC, 2013a). The *Weekly Checklist* was replaced in April 2015 by the *Weekly Acquisitions List* (PWGSC, 2015b). No further instances of a *Supplementary Checklist* have appeared since 2015.

The *Weekly Checklist* also started to appear online and to include URLs in 1995 (PWGSC, 1995). New materials are regularly added to the E-Collection and are discoverable through the Government of Canada Publications' online catalogue. The *Weekly Checklist* and its successor *Weekly Acquisitions List* have provided links to files of MARC records for the materials they enumerate since 2006 (PWGSC, 2015a). Libraries upload these MARC records into their discovery systems, making the government material accessible and findable.

The End of the DSP

In 2006, the newly elected Conservative government of Stephen Harper presented an ambitious economic plan: *Advantage Canada: Building a Strong Economy for Canadians*, which emphasized eliminating Canada's total government net debt in less than a generation (Canada. Dept. of Finance, 2006). One of the principles outlined in *Advantage Canada* is "Focusing Government," of which one element is "a new Expenditure Management System

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[3] Dolan provides an in-depth history and exploration of the DSP from its inception through 1989.

to ensure existing spending is effective, efficient, focused on areas of federal responsibility and provides value for money" (Canada. Department of Finance, 2006). The government pursued its goals vigorously and in the years that followed, departments were required to assess their programs regularly and to identify areas where they could contain or eliminate ongoing costs. These reviews became a normal part of government operations and eventually came to be known as the Deficit Reduction Action Plan (DRAP).

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) announced on July 5, 2013 that the government would transition almost exclusively to electronic publishing and that print materials would only be produced for selected programs, such as health, safety and security (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2013b). As Wakaruk explains, "The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS), akin to the Office of Management and Budget in the United States, leads the Government of Canada (GC) information management strategy. This includes the development of policies and directives, standards, guidelines, and tools that inform departmental policy implementation" (Wakaruk, 2014, p. 15).

The DSP also "announced its response to the Deficit Reduction Action Plan in April of 2012, informing its community of users that, as of April 2014, they would no longer produce, print, or warehouse hard copies of publications" (Wakaruk, 2014, p. 19). The appetite for electronic publications was increasing and by 2013, almost 92% of the publications listed in the *Weekly Checklist* were already available online (PWGSC, 2013d).

At the time the DSP was dissolved, there were approximately 800 active depository libraries, both in Canada and in other countries (PWGSC, 2018). Other DSP responsibilities that ceased included the warehousing of print copies for distribution and centralized responsibility for Crown copyright and licensing, which was devolved to individual departments (Wakaruk, 2014, p. 16). Two immediate consequences for libraries followed from the dissolution of the DSP. First, the government realized that depository libraries would no longer be able to comply with several terms of the Depository Library Agreement, signifying the DSP agreement would be null and void as of 2014 (Burns et al., 2013). Second, librarians realized that if the government's IT infrastructure was to be the sole means of accessing the electronic materials, there were not necessarily a guarantee that the materials would remain stable and viable over time. Government information librarians would have to start considering questions regarding the digital preservation of government publications in ways they had not before.

Changes to the Government's Web Infrastructure

The GoC had articulated a set of large, interdependent goals around improving its online presence, improving its use of social media and making its content "easy to find, clear, accurate and up-to-date" (TBS, 2012a). Part of these plans included reducing the number of federal government websites from 1,500 to six, and then ideally to one (TBS, 2012b). Although the goals of simplification and streamlined access are laudable and forward-thinking, their implementation caused concern for people interested in the accessibility, stability and longevity of government information. An internal GoC document explains that the President of the Treasury Board of Canada was instructed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to develop a Web Renewal Action Plan (WRAP), deliverable by the end of 2012 (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012b). One of WRAP's mandates was to

"significantly reduce [the] number of GC websites and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of web publishing" (TBS, 2012b). One of the techniques used to further the goals of WRAP was the effort to "reduce redundant, outdated and trivial [ROT] content" in order that GoC "websites should deliver easy-to-find, clear, accurate, up-to-date information to their visitors" (TBS, 2012a).

WRAP and ROT were intended to promote a healthy, normal content life cycle for GoC web content. An analysis of the results, however, showed that they resulted in the disappearance of much valuable information. The Canadian Library Association (CLA), which dissolved in 2016 and was replaced by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA), wrote in its *Response to Canada's Action Plan on Open Government: Consultation on Year 1 Progress* that "the Web Renewal plan as it relates to federal publications, including websites, presents a number of concerns. Some details of the Web Renewal Action Plan are at odds with the overall aim of better access and openness envisioned by the CAPOG" (*Canada's Action Plan on Open Government*) (2013, p. 1). Wakaruk comments that "in most cases, subjective decisions about which web content was ROT(ten) were being made by program managers, not librarians or others concerned with issues of stewardship" (Wakaruk, 2014, p. 18).

McNally, Wakaruk and Davoodi (2015) provide an excellent summary of the background and development of the ROT initiative in their 2015 presentation, "Rotten by Design: Shortened Expiry Dates for Government of Canada Web Content." Through a series of Access to Information (ATI) requests, they found that ROT had grown out of earlier attempts to identify and remove what GoC departments considered to be outdated content. For example:

- Between 2006 and 2011, Fisheries and Oceans removed 40% of its web content;
- Between Feb. 2008 and July 2009, the TBS removed 88,900 of 127,000 of its web pages (77%);
- The TBS has instructed departments to completely remove 50% of their departmental web content.

Two concerns that many information professionals share are the lack of broadly accepted or standardized metrics to determine when and why content is considered outdated; and the fact that, in most instances, there is no online archive of the removed content—it is simply deleted. As early as 2013, government information librarians had been told that "unofficial sources estimate that upwards of 60% of website content will be removed by July, 2013" (Burns et al., 2013, p. 1).

Impact on Federal Libraries

GoC efforts to reduce operating costs have had an enormous impact on departmental libraries. These libraries were greatly reduced in number and saw some of their major collections either discarded entirely or transferred to storage facilities that are not readily accessible to the public (Hill, 2014). Following the budget cuts in 2012, federal library closures were extensive, and included libraries from the Public Service Commission, Citizenship and Immigration, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Transport Canada and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Canada Revenue Agency consolidated nine libraries into one; Parks Canada consolidated five regional libraries into

one; Fisheries and Oceans Canada consolidated its library services into two principal and two subsidiary locations and closed seven others; and Natural Resources Canada closed six of its 14 libraries (Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians (CLA), 2014; CLA, 2012; Hill, 2014).

Elgee et al. (2012) point out that "only LAC and CISTI, along with the Supreme Court Library and the Library of Parliament, have a legislative foundation for their existence" (p. 101). The practical consequence of the lack of legislative foundation was that some of the departmental libraries without this legislative foundation were seen as targets to reduce costs and could be eliminated or reduced under DRAP. As of early 2018, only 26 federal libraries remain in addition to the Library of Parliament (Canada, 2017).

Federal libraries not only house unique collections but also are responsible for specialized databases used by information professionals and the public to access content through searchable interfaces. Some current federal databases that are heavily used include the *Government Electronic Directory*; *Canadian Geographical Names Database*; *GeoScan*, a bibliographic database for scientific publications; *Geogratis*, which provides free topographic data; and Health Canada's *Drug Product* database, which provides information on drugs approved for use in Canada.

Another consequence of WRAP was the elimination of a substantial number of government databases. Wakaruk, McGoveran and Lake analyzed the changes in content available from publicly accessible databases from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Health Canada and Industry Canada between 2005 and 2015 (Wakaruk, McGoveran & Lake, 2015). Their findings reveal that many databases disappeared, that the content was not transferred elsewhere, and that the number of departmental databases with unique content was greatly reduced. While it is likely that some of the databases in question contained outdated or redundant information, the scale of the reductions remains disconcerting.

Limitations of the DSP E-Collection

Not all publications produced by GoC are contained within the DSP e-Collection, generally for one of three reasons. First, all documents to be deposited in the e-Collection must be in PDF format; second, the publication may be overlooked for inclusion, later becoming fugitive; third, GoC must be the copyright holder. Despite these limitations, the e-Collection continues to grow. In August 2017, the results of the Publishing and Depository Services Directorate's (PDSD) *Client Satisfaction Survey* indicated that the e-Collection contained "more than 355,000 bibliographic records, with over 235,000 downloadable electronic publications which can be accessed through the online catalogue via publications.gc.ca" (PWGSC, 2017). As of 2019, to reflect the changes in Directorate's activities, the name changed to the Government of Canada Publications Directorate, as publishing has not been part of the department since 2014.

GoC has prioritized XHTML for its websites as part of the web accessibility standards built into the *Common Look and Feel Standards for the Internet 2.0* (CLF 2.0) (TBS, 2013a). CLF 2.0 incorporates the World Wide Web Consortium's *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0* (World Wide Web Consortium, 2008). PDF is the preferred file format for the DSP E-Collection, and this conflict can result in the exclusion of published GoC content that exists

in the form of spreadsheets, slide presentations, word processing documents, databases, digital maps and data files.

Departmental compliance in submissions has been a long-standing issue for the DSP, and as early as 2005, DSP staff estimated that that anywhere from 40% to 80% of publications were not deposited with the DSP (PWGS, 2005, p. 4). As Wakaruk explains, "Electronic publications exacerbated the problem because many departments were publishing PDFs without an ISBN or GoC catalogue number. Thus, there was no systematic way for the DSP or LAC to identify everything that was being published in electronic formats" (Wakaruk, 2014, p. 16).

One of the reasons why compliance has been difficult is that the DSP, like most GoC departmental libraries, lacks any firm legislative foundation. Although P.C. 1471 created the DSP in 1927, later governments were able to modify the scope and mandate of the program without full legislative review; at best, only Cabinet approval was required (Dolan, 1989, p. 63). The existence of the U.S. FDLP is mandated by Title 44 of the U.S. Code, and although the FDLP has seen its share of trials and tribulations through its 150-year history[4], that legislative grounding has provided it with more authority and legitimacy than the DSP. As James Jacobs (2017) explains, "Chapter 19 of Title 44 is the very core of the FDLP. It not only defines the FDLP but it is the only legal guarantee that the government will provide its information for free to the General Public" (Jacobs, 2017). The DSP's lack of authority has made it difficult to ensure that departments deposit all of the publications they are supposed to.

The original order-in-council, P.C. 1471, was later replaced by a series of Treasury Board (TB) Minutes and Policies. TB policies are communication policies for the GoC and TBS provides departments with advice on the interpretation of policies and oversees adherence to TB policies (Smith, 2009, p. 8). The TB *Policy on Communication and Federal Identity* came into effect on May 11, 2016 and replaced the former *Communications Policy of the Government of Canada*. Part 3 of the *Policy on Communication and Federal Identity* states that, "the Government also ensures that its publications, including audio recordings and videos, are preserved as part of Canada's documentary heritage and are easily accessible by using emerging technologies and traditional methods" (TBS, 2016b, sec. 3, Application).

The *Procedures for Publishing* support the *Policy on Communication and Federal Identity*. The DSP's roles and responsibilities are outlined under Part 8, specifically 8.2, "Public Services and Procurement Canada," which oversees the Publishing and Depository Services. The Procedures for electronic and print publications state:

- 8.2.1 producing a weekly checklist of new publications in electronic or tangible format, and making it available to the depository library network and to the public until March 31, 2014;
- 8.2.2 producing an online report of new publications that is updated regularly, effective April 1, 2014;

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[4] James Jacobs' *freegovinfo* blog provides an overview: https://freegovinfo.info/node/12546.

- 8.2.3 cataloguing all submitted publications in the Government of Canada's central database;
- 8.2.4 issuing International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and Government of Canada catalogue numbers to departments;
- 8.2.5 developing and maintaining an online collection of electronic publications on the Government of Canada Publications at publications.gc.ca website;
- 8.2.6 printing, distributing, warehousing and commercializing the Canada Gazette Part I, II, and III and print publications on behalf of departments until March 31, 2014; (TBS, 2013c, sec. 8, Roles and responsibilities).

Procedures for Publishing apply to "all departments listed in Schedules I, I.1 and II of the *Financial Administration Act*, unless excluded by specific acts, regulations or orders in council" (TBS, 2013c, Application). The *Procedures* also provide exemptions for a short list of GoC offices. Part 6.4 of the *Procedures* directs agencies to maintain an index of all departmental publications in electronic or print format and to forward the index semi-annually to the Publishing and Depository Services Directorate (PDS) and to the Digital Legal Deposit Unit at LAC (TBS, 2013c, Requirements). This is the principal mechanism by which the DSP becomes aware of these publications so that they can be added to the e-Collection. Unfortunately, gaps in reporting exist. Gay Lepky (2005), former Manager of Documentation Services, notes that:

> There was no specific, in-depth study of the reason for departments' lack of compliance with the DSP, but the reason usually offered was affordability. The Program's check of one large [unnamed] department revealed both the resource argument and confusion within different parts of the organization. Nonetheless, there is also a need to educate departments about the DSP and its benefits and this requires more resources – at present the Program has three people chasing copies of publications and dealing with communications – and hopefully the Treasury Board will understand and respond to this need.

This somewhat loose constellation of electronic publishing guidelines, departmental tracking and reporting, cost containment and lack of legislative authority behind the DSP begins to explain the growth of "fugitive documents" from GoC. Compliance remains an issue today. According to the *Publishing and Depository Services Directorate (PDSD) Client Satisfaction Survey - Report*, compliance is still one of the most challenging issues facing the DSP:

> Limited understanding and compliance among departments: Although mandated by Treasury Board requirements to provide all publications to PDSD, departments provide their publications at different rates, in different formats, and with imperfect understanding of new (web accessibility) standards and some do not comply with the requirement which requires PDSD to harvest publications. [...] As a result of the fast-paced changing Government of Canada landscape related to information management and more specifically publishing, government departments no longer have a clear understanding of their responsibilities associated with publishing and citizens have an imperfect awareness and understanding of the role played by each organization responsible for disseminating information. (PWGSC, 2017, p. 15)

Legal Deposit

Legal deposit was created in 1953 when the National Library of Canada was created and is now governed by law (Canada. *Library and Archives Canada Act,* 2004). Unlike the DSP, which is administered by TBS policies, as described above, legal deposit is governed by a federal statute that legally empowers Library and Archives Canada (LAC) to collect Canadian published materials. Sections 8.2 and 10 of the law authorize LAC to collect government publications. All publishers who publish material in Canada must abide by legal deposit regulations and deposit two copies of their publications with LAC. These regulations apply to all material published in Canada, making LAC's scope broader and theoretically more comprehensive than DSP's. Authority for the types of categories included or excluded from legal deposit are determined by the *Legal Deposit of Publications Regulations*. (Canada Justice Laws Website, n.d.). Initially, legal deposit only applied to monographs, but eventually expanded to include all other formats. As of January 1, 2007, legal deposit now extends to digital publications and thus requires all Canadian publishers to deposit their e-publications with LAC (Library and Archives Canada, n.d.)

In the context of GoC materials, DSP assists LAC by acting as the principal liaison with federal departments. DSP generally obtains electronic publications first and then passes brief bibliographic information on to LAC for complete cataloguing (DSP, 2017). Government materials required for deposit include books, serials, research and working papers made available to the public. Provincial and territorial government publications as well as unpublished documents, newsletters, bulletins and alerts are excluded (LAC, 2017, Legal deposit exclusions). Sub-federal materials are not collected by any federal organization in a systematic way, which can contribute to them becoming "fugitive documents."

Legislative Libraries

The Library of Parliament (LOP), which is attached to the Parliament of Canada, was formed in 1871. LOP provides support to Members of Parliament and Senators, including producing research publications on current topics, policy issues and legislation (Library of Parliament [LOP], 2018). LOP also maintains a number of specialized research tools, most prominently *LEGISinfo* and *Parlinfo. LEGISinfo* is a key means of tracking information on legislation before Parliament. *Parlinfo* presents "current and historical information about the institutions, people and events that have shaped Parliament since 1867" (LOP, 2008).

Parliamentary publications were some of the first official publications to move entirely online. They are extremely important resources that document Canada's history. As Beelen et al. (2017) state:

> Without doubt, the Official Report stands out as the most comprehensive and complete corpus for studying political speech and decision making in Canada. It spans more than one century, and touches upon a wide range of social, economic and political issues that moved Canadian public opinion at some point in time. As a crucial piece of heritage, its contents are relevant to myriad scholars such as legal historians, political scientists and critical linguists—to name only a few. (p. 851)

Canadian Parliamentary Historical Resources (CPHR) is a searchable, open access database for the debates ("Hansard") and the journals of the House of Commons and Senate. CPHR is a collaboration between LOP and Canadiana.org, a coalition of organizations devoted to Canadian history and memory (http://parl.canadiana.ca/). CPHR covers from 1867 until 1994 for the House of Commons and until 1996 for Senate documents. After these dates, coverage is available on the LOP website.

Lipad is an open-source dataset based on the parliamentary debates since 1867 ("Hansard") and is part of the *Digging into Linked Parliamentary Data (Dilipad)* project, an international collaboration between researchers at the University of Toronto, the University of Amsterdam and the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London (Beelen et al., 2017, p. 850). The *Lipad* dataset was derived from PDFs created by Canadiana.org for the *Canadian Historical Debates* project. The PDFs were OCRed to produce a machine-readable resource. One of the key advantages of the *Lipad* dataset is the ability to search and filter accurately by politician, party and date. Earlier projects did not provide a solid textual corpus from which to work; they focused, instead, on page images. *Lipad* also contains recent data, offering users a unified platform, rather than having to find historical data in one place and current data in another.

Canada is made up of ten provinces and three territories, each having its own legislative body and accompanying library. Legislative libraries typically collect the official publications of their own province or territory comprehensively and those of other Canadian jurisdictions selectively. Their place in the Canadian government information landscape is critical, especially given that most provincial and territorial material is not collected by either the DSP or LAC. Provincial and territorial legislative libraries, combined with the academic and public libraries in their jurisdictions, thus accept considerable responsibility for preserving these publications.

Some provincial and territorial legislative libraries collect other provincial and territorial publications via exchange agreements; some selective federal documents are similarly collected. Not all provinces and territories have depository programs in place, and the programs that do exist vary in their "design, administration and scope" (Lake, Campbell & McGovern, 2017). Alberta and Ontario, for example, maintain depository programs, while Manitoba ended its in 2010. Nunavut does not have a program, but, like the other legislative libraries, they actively collect all official publications from the Government of Nunavut.

Many of the libraries create monthly checklists listing the publications received by their legislative library. As with the DSP's *Weekly Acquisitions List*, the provincial and territorial governments primarily publish digitally, and the records in their monthly checklists generally include stable URLs for the documents. Publishing practices between the provinces and territories differ. Nunavut, for example, still produces print materials along with electronic versions, whereas most provinces have ceased publishing in print.

Like the DSP, many legislative libraries play an important role in preserving publications by downloading the electronic files onto their own secure servers. Changes in government, departmental and agency name changes, new content policies and fiscal situations have all resulted in publications being removed from the servers of the issuing agency. The work of the legislative libraries to prevent link rot and to provide stable platforms for these

materials helps to ensure that the publications are preserved. Legislative libraries generally provide access to these publications via their online catalogues, using PURLs or their digital repositories. Earliest dates for access to digital publications vary between jurisdictions, but 1995 is a common start date.

Many of the legislative libraries are either leading or are partners in historical digitization projects and providing online access to legislative materials such as bills, debates (Hansard), records of votes and proceedings, gazettes and regulations. One example is the collaboration between the Legislature and the Legislative Library of British Columbia and the University of British Columbia Library to provide digital access to the Sessional Papers of the province between 1876 and 1962 (https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/bcsessional).

The Association of Parliamentary Libraries in Canada (APLIC) was founded in 1975 with the goal of improving parliamentary services, communication and cooperation between Canadian legislative libraries (Association of Parliamentary Libraries in Canada [APLIC], 2018b). APLIC's Government and Legislative Libraries Online Publications Portal (GALLOP) indexes full-text and bibliographic content from the electronic government documents collections of 12 of the provinces and territories, plus the DSP E-Collection (APLIC, 2018a). As Lake, Campbell and McGoveran (2017) note, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island, the Yukon and the legal deposit electronic publications from Québec are excluded.

Open Government Initiative

Canada joined the Open Government Partnership in 2012 and is a member of the Steering Committee for 2018-19 (TBS, 2017). The *Directive on Open Government*, under the responsibility of TBS, took effect October 9, 2014 and provides guidance on the ways in which federal departments and agencies can increase the availability of online information and data (TBS, 2014). The *Directive* defines open government as "a governing culture that holds that the public has the right to access the documents and proceedings of government to allow for greater openness, accountability, and engagement" (TBS, 2014. Appendix A, "Definitions").

GoC developed and implemented the *Open Government Licence - Canada* (OGL-C) to support the *Open Government Directive*. To date, GoC has concentrated their open information efforts on data and working papers. There have been three reports since 2014 detailing GoC's open government initiatives, the most recent of which is the *Third Biennial Plan to the Open Government Policy* (2016-2018). The plan contains 22 commitments, including a continuing one to provide and preserve open information by creating government-wide platforms and tools to ensure the discoverability and accessibility of open government information (TBS, 2018).

One of these discoverability tools is the *Open Information Portal* also known as the *Open Government Portal* (https://open.canada.ca/en/open-information) which débuted in November 2014. The *OIP* initially included all of the publications from the DSP's and LAC's collections of electronic government publications. These PDF publications had to be removed, however, due to Crown copyright restrictions, accessibility issues or lack of a version in one of the official languages. The portal was relaunched in the fall of 2016, this time containing only materials covered by OGL-C and appearing in both official languages. Interestingly, it appears that the only GoC materials covered by OGL-C are those presented

on the *Open Information Portal*. Releasing a comparatively small quantity of information under OGL-C while continuing to issue a much larger quantity under Crown copyright presents an apparent conflict with GoC's stated aspirations of pursuing the goals of the Open Government Partnership.

Since the 2016-2018 report, the GoC has released Canada's *2018-2020 National Action Plan on Open Government*, which was guided by a Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Open Government. Part of the government's commitments and guiding principles include a focus on gender equity, inclusion and reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across Canada.

Crown Copyright

Government of Canada official publications are protected by Crown copyright. The whole question of Crown copyright in Canada has become something of a contentious issue in recent years. As Wakaruk (2014) notes, 'In late 2010, the Crown Copyright Licensing Program (CCL) announced that (with some exceptions) the non-commercial reproduction and use of GoC publications and web content no longer required written consent' (p. 16). Although this is something of a step forward, some feel that it does not go far enough. Freund and How (2015) explain that

> Crown copyright, a special case of intellectual property rights in which the Crown holds the rights of materials created by government employees, set up an obvious conflict with current notions of Open Government, and with democracy more generally, by placing restrictions on the reuse of government materials. (p. 11)

Amanda Wakaruk, Copyright Librarian at the University of Alberta, spearheaded e-petition E-1116 (https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-1116) in 2017, calling for the abolition of Crown copyright during the scheduled revision of the Copyright Act in 2018. There is significant appetite for change, evidenced by the fact that the e-petition, which Wakaruk (2019) details on her *Fix Crown Copyright* website, received almost triple the number of signatures necessary for certification. A further complication to Crown copyright administration was introduced when centralized clearance via Publishing and Depository Services (PDS) ceased in 2013. Crown copyright clearance devolved to the individual federal departments, which has allowed for more inconsistencies (Dryden, 2017).

Preservation of Canadian Government Information

Collection development practices have changed over the past two decades for government information librarians, who often cannot readily rely on their content being provided by commercial or vendor platforms. The transitory nature of digital government information, changes in government policy, departmental name changes and the removal or alteration of content all underline the importance of acting quickly to secure government information for future use.

Numerous organizations as well as academic, public, special and legislative libraries across Canada are engaged in web archiving and digitization activities. Due to the breadth of the topic, this paper will touch on some activities being undertaken by two of the main national

organizations, LAC and Statistics Canada, and will discuss selected collaborative archiving and digitization projects undertaken by academic and legislative libraries.

Section 8(2) of the *Library and Archives Canada Act* (2004) gives LAC the authority to archive web content as per:

> The Librarian and Archivist may take, at the times and in the manner that he or she considers appropriate, a representative sample of the documentary material of interest to Canada that is accessible to the public without restriction through the Internet or any similar medium.

LAC has revitalized their web archiving efforts after ending their web harvesting programs in late 2007. Their collection development priorities include subdomain crawls of the GoC web presence, Canadian historical events, thematic collections and events-based harvesting. Some of their web archiving collections include Truth and Reconciliation websites of national importance, cultural and linguistic information about the First Nations and the Inuit peoples, the Olympics, Arctic Sovereignty, the Keystone Pipeline, the 100th anniversary of Canadian Confederation ("Canada 150"), the centenary of the First World War (2015-2018) and large-scale research collections such as the 2015 federal election. LAC also engages in events-based harvesting and has archived sites ranging from the train disaster at Lac-Mégantic to the shooting incident at Parliament Hill and the Fort McMurray wildfires. LAC crawls the Prime Ministerial and the Privy Council domains proactively. Previously, LAC archived provincial and territorial government domains but due to policy changes in 2012-2013, they no longer do so. There are considerations to restart crawling these sites in the future. Just as provincial and territorial publications are not collected in a systematic way by LAC, it remains the responsibility of each province and territory to preserve its own web content (LAC, 2017b).

LAC has increased their participation in national projects and is a member of Canada's National Heritage Digitization Strategy. The strategy was created in 2016, with the goal of preserving Canada's national heritage collections, including government records. LAC is home to a number of databases of digital materials, including the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Index to the Federal Royal Commissions on important topics of national interest.

The digital holdings of Statistics Canada (StatsCan), the country's national statistical agency, currently exceed 1.4 petabytes (Michaud, 2015). StatsCan has been at the forefront of digitizing their publications for many years and all historical StatsCan publications have recently been digitized, comprising over 130,000 files. The work was completed in collaboration with Publications and Depository Services Directorate (PDSD). StatsCan is working with the DSP to ensure that all of these files are available in the DSP E-Collection (PWGSC, 2016, Statistics Canada project). StatsCan consistently holds some of the most in-demand and accessed materials across the GoC. StatsCan has also digitized all of the *Canada Yearbooks* from 1867-1967.

Like the statistical agencies for many other countries, StatsCan participates in the open data movement and encourages open access to their datasets. StatsCan contributes over 75% of the non-geospatial content found in the OIP (Statistics Canada [StatsCan], 2017b). In 2012,

StatsCan opened one of their main databases, CANSIM, which houses socio-economic data tables and which is, along with the Census, one of the main StatsCan research tools.

After much discussion among Canada's web archiving professionals, the Canadian Web Archiving Coalition (CWAC) was formed in November 2017 under the aegis of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) Digital Preservation Working Group and the Advancing Research Committee. CWAC's goal is to create a national community of practice around web archiving the content of memory institutions in Canada. It aims to be as open and inclusive as possible and will form working groups focused on the areas of collections, training and advocacy. On the inaugural call in January 2018, there was a wide variety of participants from academic and government libraries across Canada.

The Canadian Government Information - Digital Preservation Network (CGI-DPN) is a collaborative archiving project established in 2012 by Amanda Wakaruk, former Government Information Librarian and current Copyright Librarian at the University of Alberta. The CGI-DPN's mission is to preserve digital collections of government content (CGI-DPN, 2017). After the demise of the print depository program in 2014, the country became dependent on the DSP E-Collection. Librarians became extremely concerned about the stability of federal government documents because there was no longer a network of copies to ensure the safety of the materials. To add to their concern, the agreement between the DSP and depository libraries was no longer in force, meaning that libraries were no longer required to keep their depository collections. In the age of increasing pressure to turn collections space over to new uses, this could mean the uncontrolled loss of our government collections.

Modelling itself on the U.S. Digital Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), which uses LOCKSS to secure electronic materials from the US Government Printing Office Federal Department site (FDSys), CGI-DPN uses LOCKSS to distribute copies of replicated Canadian government information in secure dispersed locations. Eleven Canadian academic libraries, plus Stanford University (where LOCKSS is based), constitute this coast-to-coast partnership. CGI-DPN collections include copies of the DSP E-Collection, at-risk government websites (federal, provincial and territorial) and thematic collections. The collections are all available via the Canadian Government Information PLN Web Archive (https://archive-it.org/organizations/700).

The Internet Archive Canada Portal (IACP) has digitized over 20,000 Canadian government documents for the Canadian Government Publications Portal, with the help from Canadian government information librarians at academic and legislative libraries. The collection is at https://archive.org/details/governmentpublications%26tab=about&tab=about.

At the time of Smugler's paper, a registry similar to the U.S. Digitization Projects Registry had not yet been created in Canada. Smugler (2013) comments, "The US Federal Depository Library Program maintains an outstanding directory listing of US Government publication digitization efforts through its Digitization Projects Registry. Unfortunately, a similar registry does not currently exist in Canada" (p. 5). In 2015, the Registry of Canadian Government Information Digitization Projects (https://govreg.library.utoronto.ca/) was created at the University of Toronto with the goal of becoming a central access point for digitized Canadian government information.

The registry helps prevent the duplication of digitization projects, helps keep the community up to date with current projects and helps to identify potential project partnerships (Wall, 2017). At the time of this writing, a total of 90 projects created by 21 institutions are listed. Margaret Wall, the registry's project lead, comments that much of the registry's success relies on the participation of communities. Wall (2017) states, "The vision for the Registry is that it will evolve to function as a central index of digitized Canadian government information. This is dependent on participation from the library community and government itself" (p. 8). This project exemplifies the importance of collaboration in trying to preserve the enormous output of information that is created by governments. Canada does not enjoy a large array of commercial products to support its government information. *Des Libris*, formerly called the Canadian Public Policy Collection, is a subscription database which itself includes two collections: the *Canadian Electronic Library* (CEL) and the *Canadian Documents Collection*. The CEL concentrates on electronic books published since 2005, while the Canadian Documents Collection includes various federal, provincial and municipal government documents, political party platforms, policy and discussion papers.

Canadian Research Index provides indexing of depository and non-depository materials from all levels of Canadian government. Documents described in Canadian Research Index are available on microfiche in *Microlog*. *Microlog* provides "English and French publications from federal, provincial, and municipal government agencies and departments. It includes research, scientific, technical and annual reports, policy papers and statistical materials" (Proquest, Microlog). In recent years, many Canadian research libraries have cancelled their subscriptions to *Microlog* due to mounting costs and the perception that the materials are available freely online.

The Changing Role of the Government Information Professional

After reviewing some of the current projects and endeavors to preserve government information, one might wonder who is doing all of this work. When asked to write a paper for GIOPS on the landscape of government information in Canada, I thought it was important to survey the number of Canadian academic government librarian positions, especially since many of my colleagues have retired in recent years or transitioned into other positions. I reviewed subject guides and librarian contact pages at the 29 research libraries that are members of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)[5]. I saw that government information librarians were responsible for anywhere from two to four additional subject areas, among them law, data, research data management, political science, open access, classical studies, history, sociology and criminology.

Only five librarians appeared to solely be responsible for government information. I followed up with these five librarians via email to confirm if, in fact, government information was their sole responsibility. Four of the five people indicated that they were either involved in other subject areas or had been given responsibility and oversight for large departments, including User Experience and User Services, Acquisitions and

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[5] CARL also includes two federal government libraries: LAC and the National Research Council (NRC).

Bibliographic Service and the library's Research Data Centre. Only one librarian out of these 29 CARL institutions has government information as their sole focus.

Conclusion

Starting in late 2015, with the new Liberal government in place, Canada saw improvements in access to government information. The long-form Census was reinstated and received a 97.8% response rate, the highest rate in history (StatsCan, 2017a); Bill C-36, *An Act to amend the Statistics Canada Act*, was passed (received Royal Assent Dec. 12, 2017) and strengthens the independence and powers of the Chief Statistician (*Statistics Act*, 2017); and LAC resumed its web archiving activities and is now leading the Canadian National Heritage Digitization Strategy.

In 2016, the Honorable Scott Brison, president of TBS, revealed previously undisclosed budget cuts under DRAP dating back to 2012 (Siekierski, 2016). In a letter to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, Brison writes:

> Our Government is committed to setting a higher bar for openness and transparency. We are guided by the principle that government data belongs to all Canadians. With that in mind, please find enclosed further program level details. As part of my mandate to improve the effectiveness of the public service, I am looking to improve the measurements of outcomes and service levels in government. (TBS, 2016a)

The data provided in the *Strategic and operating review* document provide some idea of how drastic the cuts of 2012 were in federal departments, particularly in the areas of research and science. It is difficult to determine the extent to which these cuts affected government services as only the budget figures are listed[6]; the service impacts are not described (Siekierski, 2016). But government information librarians across Canada remain dedicated to ensuring that Canadian government collections are preserved for future generations. Although the DSP print program has ended, librarians and the DSP continue to work together.

The former DSP-Library Advisory Committee, established in 1981, has been renamed to the Depository Services Program Advisory Committee (DSP-AC) and has revised its terms of reference to reflect the changes to the program and to ensure that stakeholders still have the opportunity to provide input and advice to the DSP. The DSP and the library community remain committed to ensuring that a secure preservation network for federal documents continues to exist.

The results of the 2017 *Publishing and Depository Services Directorate (PDSD) client satisfaction survey report* indicate that PDSD services continue to be in demand and that government information continues to be seen as highly valuable for the public, information professionals and researchers. In 2016-17, the publications.gc.ca website saw approximately 150,000 visitors and 100,000 document downloads per month (PWGSC, 2017). As the PDSD

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[6] See the Strategic and operating review at:
https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/corporate/transparency/strategic-operating-review.html

report states, "Library professionals deem government publications 'unique', of particular resonance, part of an important historical record, and essential to government accountability, an engaged citizenry and the nation's capacity to learn from the past" (PWGSC, 2017, p. 10).

The Canadian Library Association (CLA) disbanded in 2016, and along with it its Government Information Network (GIN)[7]. CLA had been a strong voice for not only the federal depository program but also for all types of government information since 1946, encouraging the continued accessibility of government information through numerous advocacy campaigns. Without a strong advocate, government professionals more than ever need to advocate for access to and preservation of government materials. The year 2018 also marks the 20th anniversary of British Columbia's Government Information (GovInfo) Day; librarians in Ontario have held their own GovInfo Day since 2014. These annual events bring government information professionals together to discuss topics of interest ranging from information privacy, access to information, and issues pertaining to information from all levels of government. With the demise of the CLA-GIN, GovInfo Day has become a very popular event at which government information librarians can collaborate and learn from each other.

Canadian government information professionals have learned much from the swift changes in their environment over the past several years. We have become more collaborative and self-reliant and are forging new frameworks to help ensure that the people's information is secure today and in the future.

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[7] CLA has since been replaced by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA).

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The Government Information Landscape in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region: Challenges and Recommendations

Mohammad Zuheir Bakleh, Library, United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia; & Lize Denner, Statistics, Information Society and Technology Cluster, United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia[8]

"The library is no longer a "place." The library is a collection of information across multiple formats, organized and disseminated in a method designed to provide access to high quality resources. Library services reach beyond the mere collection and organization of information. Library professionals provide services that deliver content, as well as providing instruction on accessing that content effectively through training, teaching, and demonstration." (American Association of Law Libraries, 2015.)

Introduction

Government libraries are a special type of library; their parent organizations give them importance, aims, and objectives. These libraries have a responsibility to contribute to and support the goals of their parent organizations and to support their basic functions, from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation (Bihani, 2014). In the case of government libraries, the parent organizations have governing responsibilities at national and local levels. These libraries' main target audience is their governments and their entities, staff, officials, and decision-makers. However, most have extended their audiences to include other organizations, researchers, and the general public. The information services provided by libraries are essential for government organizations who are seeking the efficient and effective implementation of mandates and who want to achieve a competitive advantage and deliver quality services to citizens (IFLA, 2008). These libraries are, therefore, meant to be governmental tools that ensure access to the best information resources and offer modern information services to staff and decision-makers (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Types and services of government libraries

Types of government libraries	Services
- Parliamentary libraries (legislative) - Court libraries (judiciary) - Ministry and department libraries (executive) - Governmental agency and organization libraries (executive) - Museum libraries (executive) - Diplomatic mission and embassy libraries (executive) - State, regional, and local government libraries (executive) - National libraries (executive)	- Information skills training - Document delivery - Current events awareness and alerts - Digital and print collection management - Advice on knowledge management - Reference information/consultancy service - Media and documentary services (in parliamentary libraries, for example) - Research assistance - Promoting organizational knowledge products (web and social media)

(Bihani, 2014)

In fulfilling these objectives, libraries not only ensure that customer information needs (scientific, technical, and administrative) are satisfied, but also help customers to develop

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[8] This chapter presents the opinion of the authors solely. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA) does not represent or endorse any opinion, statement, or information provided.

their own knowledge, personal skills and competencies, and scientific skills, while keeping them abreast of the latest development in their fields.

As countries move increasingly toward knowledge-based economies and governments become more open, the role of government libraries as providers of government information becomes more and more important. As such, libraries may be envisioned as a key player in transforming nations into knowledge-based economies; indeed, libraries' purpose clearly extends beyond the mere collection and delivery of information services. As a governmental tool, the main objectives of a government library are to:

- Support the mandate of the parent organization;
- Promote the use of information resources and satisfy staff/user information needs;
- Act as the organization's information centre by collecting, organizing, and analysing data, information, and knowledge and making it available at the right time and in the right format;
- Create a robust collection of knowledge and information resources (print and electronic);
- Offer information services that would satisfy the needs and expectation of its community, e.g. reference and training;
- Manage the organizational knowledge and information of the parent organization;
- Preserve the organizational memory of the parent organization; and
- Increase institutional and public awareness of government information and services.

Government libraries have a long history within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Globalization and new developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have brought opportunities in the form of new services, better library technologies, and increases in the availability of data, information, and knowledge. These developments, together with organizational transformation and economic pressures, have also brought many challenges to the service delivery of government libraries, including to their basic survival. The lack of information in MENA countries is a major impediment to the development of their people. This state of affairs is due not only to scarce material resources, but also to a lack of appreciation for the developmental role which the library and information sector could play in the economic, social, and environmental development of a country and its people.

Government Libraries in the MENA Region: A Look Back

Although the MENA region hosted the first libraries in the world, such as Ebla in Syria and Nippor in Iraq (dating back to 2500 B.C.), the modern history of governmental libraries in the MENA region is a different story. Egypt was the first Arab country to start such a library at the Ministry of Justice in late 1895. Soon after, several other ministries started their libraries: the Ministry of Finance in 1918, the Ministry of Agriculture in 1920, and the Ministry of Education in 1972 (Radi, 2000). Afterwards, other countries in the region founded ministerial libraries. For example, Sudan started the Ministry of Health library in 1902, and Jordan started the Ministry of Justice library in 1940, which grew to 31 ministerial libraries in the 1960s (Kandeel, 2000). In 1946, Tunisia created the Arab National Documentation Center at the Ministry of Information, and in Bahrain, the Document

Education Center Library was established in 1976 at the Ministry of Education (Khalifa, 2003).

In Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Finance was the first government organization to establish its own library in 1943. After 1960, the other ministries followed suit (Qahtany, 2011). In Syria, the first special library, meant to support cultural activities, was opened in the 1950s, while Jordan had about 104 special libraries by the end of the 20th century (Al-Issa, 2009). National libraries were established earlier than the ministerial and parliamentary ones (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 National libraries in the MENA region

Country	National Library	Year
Algeria	Bibliothèque Nationale	1835
Bahrain	Manama Central Library	1946
Egypt	Egyptian National Library and Archives	1870
Iraq	Iraqi National Library and Archives	1961
Jordan	National Library	1994
Kuwait	National Library of Kuwait	1923
Lebanon	Bibliothèque Nationale du Liban	1921
Libya	National Library of Libya	1973
Mauritania	Bibliothèque Nationale de Mauritanie	1965
Morocco	Centre National de Documentation	1966
Qatar	Qatar National Library	2012
Saudi Arabia	King Fahad National Library	1968
Somalia	National Library	1970
Sudan	National Library	196?
Syria	Assad National Library	1984
Tunisia	Bibliothèque Nationale	1885
UAE	National Library	1981
Yemen	National Library	1967

(Routledge, *World of Learning*, 2020)

The development of government and government-related libraries in the MENA region continued into the 21st century. In 2004, the United Arab Emirates had 14 ministerial libraries that were considered well-established. The country also had 29 libraries for local administration, 6 libraries in public media organizations, 6 libraries in policy departments, and 9 libraries in Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Given the reality of government libraries at the present time, a large degree of discrepancy between them can be found in terms of the lists of services offered, the sources obtained, and the integrated library management systems used. This could be linked mainly to the parent organisation and how important library services are considered to be at the national level. Generally, there is good governmental interest in developing libraries at the national level, with a slight difference between countries in the region.

Government Libraries and Sustainable Development

The essential role that information and knowledge play in planning and decision-making is undeniable. Organizations (both private and public), civil society, and the general public all require information and knowledge to make decisions for their activities and in their daily lives. Data, information and knowledge can therefore be considered national resources that should be harnessed by governments and their entities to improve economic growth, social well-being and environmental protection, and to aid in the achievement of national sustainable development goals (Mbambo-Thata, 2014).

The concept of sustainable development was described by the 1987 *Brundtland Commission Report* as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[9] The sustainable development framework rests on four pillars—society, environment, culture, and economy. Thus, it envisages a future in which there is a balance between social, economic, cultural, and environmental objectives. On 25 September 2015, Resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" was adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. Agenda 2030 is a plan of action focused on achieving the goal of sustainable development through the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the accomplishment of 169 targets over the next 15 years (United Nations, 2015). The SDGs define the way forward for the international community to tackle global challenges and issues related to sustainable development.

Agenda 2030 considers data, information, and knowledge to be essential components that need to be available and accessible to the government and the citizenry. As such, SDGs include a specific target under Goal 16, namely 16.10, which is to "ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements" (United Nations, 2015).

In order to ensure information accessibility and availability for sustainable development, a mechanism is needed that can collect and disseminate it. Libraries are especially geared toward delivering on this need (Mbambo-Thata, 2014). This includes government libraries that can provide decision-makers and government officials with the necessary data, information, and knowledge to plan and implement development activities needed to achieve the SDGs.

These social and information objectives also require government libraries to play a role in supporting sustainable development targets. As key municipal agencies and focal points for community education, libraries are major players in creating liveable, environmentally friendly cities and towns. They can take the lead in supporting local initiatives, which helps in fostering community resilience, self-reliance, and a culture of sharing. Libraries also play an important role in the political life of a community. They are pivotal in encouraging informed political involvement and helping citizens learn how to become advocates for themselves and their communities.

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[9] For more information on the *Brundtland Commission Report*, see www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf.

In providing access to information for the public sector and citizens, government libraries also help strengthen public institutional development, enabling greater transparency, accountability, participation, and collaboration. When the public and the government have access to the same data, information, and knowledge, they can work together more effectively and efficiently to find solutions for development challenges. Government libraries can also aid in the alleviation of poverty and assist in the empowerment of women, youth, and those living with disabilities. The skills that people learn from libraries—for example, basic computer literacy—provide them with increased opportunity. Libraries also help increase the general literacy rate of the country, which is empowering for its people and creates the opportunity for them to see a better future for themselves and their communities.

Government libraries are, therefore, key in providing information in the fields of economics, environment, culture, and other related knowledge. They can effectively contribute to social development, promote intellectual freedom, work to maintain civil rights, and promote social solidarity through services.

Some countries in the MENA region have already realised the importance of government libraries and information centres to the improvement of national development and to achieving sustainable development. In the United Arab Emirates, government libraries are considered key partners in achieving the objectives of the government; they are responsible for satisfying user information and knowledge needs to further the achievement of national development agendas. The UAE has also invested extensively in the ICT sector to achieve a better transition to the knowledge economy. Currently, the country is seen as a leader in the MENA region; it is perceived to provide broad-scope, high-quality government online services (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2014). Its government websites provide both basic and enhanced information on public policy, governance, laws, regulations, documentation, and types of government services. The United Arab Emirates achieved this by realizing the crucial role of information institutions in the knowledge economy and the many goals that can be achieved via investment in information. This is evident when one considers the recent increase in the number of libraries in the country and the multiple announcements regarding the launch of large new library projects and digital library content initiatives.

Meanwhile, in Egypt, the Egyptian Cabinet Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC)[10] was established in 1986 and serves several purposes, such as collecting resources (local and international) on social development and economic development; management and information technology; publishing information and research; digitally disseminating information; and organizing events and training programmes. The library has also focused on collecting all Egyptian legislation from 1828 to date and hosting it in a national database that has been made available to other governmental libraries (Government of Egypt, 2014; Ibrahim, 2014).

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[10] For more information on IDSC see http://www.idsc.gov.eg/IDSC/.

Challenges Experienced by Government Libraries in the MENA Region

Although government libraries in the MENA region have continued to develop, they still face challenges that hamper their service delivery and consequently their contribution to sustainable development. Central challenges include: low status of the library in the eyes of parent organizations and their services and administration; issues with providing access to information; and the limited development of national library associations in the region.

Library Status and Service Delivery

A fundamental challenge faced by government libraries in the MENA region is a lack of recognition of the value of the library by the parent organizations. Even though librarians may have high levels of knowledge on resources and literature available in specific disciplines, as well as on current topics of interest to the parent organization and technologies and tools that add further value, the organization itself may not be aware of these services, or may simply not appreciate the contribution that the library could make to its work.

This lack of understanding of libraries' value is evident in the position of libraries in IGOs' organizational structures and their reporting lines. Most government organizations do not follow international recommendations to place the libraries under the direct supervision of top management and as close as possible to decision support functions. In Saudi Arabia, Qahtany (2011) found that more than 40 per cent of government libraries report to either the international relations or the general services sections, which increases the challenge of gaining recognition for the library and its services.

Apart from a few exceptions, most government library services in the MENA region are still characterized by simplicity, offering only basic traditional services such as loans, basic reference enquiries, photocopying, and current awareness services. This limited range of information services makes it difficult for the library to provide for the knowledge and information needs of their customers. This could lead to insufficient use of the library and amplify the pre-existing lack of recognition it experiences from the parent organization. The library may be labelled out of date and be considered only to contain old, unusable information. In the changing digital atmosphere, this could threaten the very existence of the library. Government libraries also struggle to deliver services across vast distances (Bakleh, 2011).

In a recent study, Mousleh and Jarjees (2016) looked at the services offered by ministerial libraries in the United Arab Emirates and found that the main services offered are loans, reference services, document delivery, current awareness services, and searching e-resources. These libraries face multiple challenges, including limited budgets and staff, inadequate technology, and unsuitable library equipment.

The ever-changing digital environment also provides a major challenge to the service delivery of libraries as well as to the capacity of librarians to fulfil customers' information needs and expectations. Librarians have to keep abreast of new technologies, information resources, and knowledge stores along with changes in the opinions of government officials on the provision and safeguarding of information. Customers demand access to multiple sources of information and expect the information to be customized to their purposes.

The challenge of serving a shifting constituency is made more challenging by insufficient funding and complicated budgetary methods. This hampers effective collection development, as well as the provision of technologies necessary to access new electronic databases and provide customers with information retrieval skills. Many libraries also lack clear acquisition plans that allow for effective and efficient collection development with regard to subject matter and resource format. A study by Qahtany (2011) of the ministerial libraries of Saudi Arabia found that, due to the absence of an acquisition plan, most collections focused on printed books (94 per cent); audiovisual materials made up 5 per cent of collections, while only 1 per cent were electronic materials. This indicates that libraries still focus on traditional materials, though specialists recommend that collections consist of a mix of traditional and nontraditional materials.

Many of the government libraries in the MENA region are not equipped with sufficient skills to independently provide quality information to their organizations. A few exceptions do exist, like the Qatar Governmental Libraries; here, a recent study showed that libraries recruit very well-qualified personnel, though most of them are expats from other countries (Abdallah, 2013; Meho and Nsouli, 1999). In Saudi Arabia, only 40 per cent of the staff in ministerial libraries was found to attend specialized training courses that would help them to develop new skills and learn about the latest developments (Qahtany, 2011). Overall, the education and training of librarians in the MENA region is still lagging behind the rest of the world. It is hampered by the limited availability of degrees, especially postgraduate degrees, at universities in the region; it is compounded by a lack of training materials in Arabic and a lack of awareness among young people of librarianship as a field of study. Many still hold to the belief that librarians do not require formal education (Meho, 2015).

AlSulaimi (2009) carried out research to measure the quality of services offered in medical libraries in Riyadh and to find out whether those libraries are meeting the needs of users. The study found that the most important obstacles that hinder the offering of quality services were lack of support from management and decision-makers. The libraries also experienced other challenges, including shortage of staff, a lack of continuous training and development for employees, and a shortage of financial resources. There was also a noticeable gap between the services offered and user expectations.

Table 1.3 shows that Egypt has by far the most Library and Information Science education programmes in the region. It is also where the first library school in the region was established in 1951. Sudan has the second-most programmes, with 10, and is home to the second library school to be established in the region in 1966 (Meho, 2015). Even though some countries have developed LIS programmes, most countries in the region need to develop and expand their programmes further. The focus should not only be on the provision of recognised degrees, but also the content of available and newly created programmes. In addition to working to expand the delivery of traditional library services, there should be efforts to include new services and their technologies, as well as specialised libraries. Additional subjects, such as knowledge management, record management, knowledge-based economies, and community development could also be considered.

Table 1.3 LIS Programs in MENA

Countries	Number of LIS Programmes
Egypt	22
Sudan	10
Saudi Arabia	6
Algeria	5
Jordan and Libya	4
Iraq	3
Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Yemen	2
Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates	1

(Meho, 2015)

Government Librarians and Access to Information

Since 2010, the MENA region has entered a new phase caused by a wave of political changes that continue to affect daily life throughout the region. These changes offer unique opportunities to advance democratic governance reforms, but also present multi-faceted challenges. Access to official government information in whatever form or through whatever method is the cornerstone of freedom of access to information. Information is needed by citizens in order to understand public affairs. It is crucial to achieving government transparency, integrity, efficiency, and accountability. Access to official government information:

- Enables individuals to participate in government decision-making and enhances their ability to help the government in solving economic, social, environment and political problems.
- Enhances the degree of transparency in parliamentary work and the involvement of citizens in that work by providing free access to information for the public and the media.
- Is a prerequisite for democracy, and grants citizens the right to obtain accurate and reliable information in a timely manner, with minimal restrictions.
- Helps to build a relationship of trust between the citizen and the government, as long as the information obtained is accurate, thus enhancing the government's position and citizens' confidence in them (Open Society Foundation, 2011).
- Makes it possible for civil society and the general public to hold the government and its officials better accountable for its actions.
- Enables better collaboration with the government in the building of services tailored to the needs of the citizens, civil society, and the private sector.

As the demands from citizens for better government service delivery, greater transparency, and accountability increase, and global challenges become more intense, hampering sustainable development, governments have realised that they need stronger public institutions. This realisation is leading governments towards openness, and more specifically, the implementation of open government initiatives. Governments have recognized that citizens, the private sector, and civil society have data, information, knowledge, skills, and experiences that can aid in finding solutions for development challenges customized to the country. The two-way flow of information between the

government and citizenry, coupled with collaboration and shared decision-making and responsibility for planning, implementation, and evaluation of initiatives, provides government and the citizenry with the opportunity to harness all available data, information, and knowledge to find these solutions (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). As such, many countries in the region have begun moving toward open government and implementing open data initiatives. Such nations include Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates (Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, 2013). These libraries should promote the opening of government data and information and the benefits that this effort would have for the public sector and national development in general.

Although the national burdens of social inequality and persistent structural inequality are immense, it is clear that many political and moral arguments are available to support calls upon government and their social partners to ensure the right of access to information. Reading print and electronic documents, whether for business or pleasure, is fundamental for any society. It is the foundation of democracy, capacity building, and modernization. It should be considered as an important method for development, as it offers visions and dreams, learning, skills, and a creative impetus to the individual and the government (IFLA, 2003). However, for the average Arab citizen, access to official government information remains difficult. Citizens in the MENA region are still generally unaware of their right to access information. They mainly believe that in order to access any information, especially government information, permission is required from the institution that has the information.

Unfortunately, in many countries, freedom of information is still not upheld as a human right.[11] Many lack the laws necessary to provide for freedom of and access to information. In most case, the laws are still in draft and undergo long debates in the government system. There is also difficulty in distinguishing between confidential information and information available to the public due to lack of clarity in the law, as shown in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 MENA countries with laws on the right to access information

Countries	Stipulated in the Constitution	Stipulated in law	Year adopted
Jordan	Yes	Yes	2007
Tunisia	Yes	Yes	2011
Yemen	No	Yes	2012
Sudan	No	Yes	2015
Lebanon	No	Yes	2017
Morocco	Yes	Yes	2018

(United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, 2020)

Government libraries in the region have an important role to play in the development and maintenance of a democratic society. They provide the conditions by which people achieve free access to information and knowledge. They should provide opportunities to participate actively in the country's further development into a democratic society, and provide access

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[11] The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 1948) recognized freedom of information as a basic human right in Article 19 as far back as 1948.

to national and global information via the Internet. The ability to access information as well as its public diffusion is essential for the well-being of the information society. Making full use of the right of access to information is a decisive operation in modern society, and the source of wealth and power (Castells, 2003, p. 40).

Jawad (2014) found that the Iraqi parliament library, which was established in 1924, offers a list of services to the members of the parliament, including: loans, current awareness and selective dissemination of information, bibliographic lists, photocopying, media archives, indexing of journal articles, Internet and reference services, a profile on the most important local and international subjects, and a list of the latest acquisitions to the library. The library offers its services to a wide range of users, not only the members of the parliament. Users include managers and consultants in the public sector, researchers who support deputies and committee members, researchers in other sections within the parliament, and postgraduate students. The key challenge those users faced is the shortage of bibliographic tools in the Arabic language. The study found that users wanted more training on how to find information and use online resources, and concluded that the library should add more international databases on parliamentary legislation to its collection. The lack of training and poor availability of Arab tools hampers the right to access information. Government libraries should be the leading player on the ground, working with their organizations to acknowledge the public's right to access information and data, while respecting the right to individual privacy. Libraries should also collaborate with parent organizations to adopt policies, standards, and legislation to ensure the continued funding, integrity, preservation, and provision of information by governments, and access by people (IFLA, 2015).

Library Associations in the MENA Region: Missed Opportunities

The role of a library association in the MENA region (see Table 1.5) is very different than the role of such an association in other regions in the world. Worldwide, these associations typically represent the link between library schools and the labour market; their role is to enhance the capabilities and skills of staff while working to make the academic curriculum more practical.

In the MENA region, however, it still depends to an extent on the acceptance and willingness of individuals to contribute to the activities of an association and its supporting institutions, as well as on the willingness to invest time and money for the benefit of the profession. Apart from a few exceptional cases, most of the library associations in the MENA region do not meet the needs of the profession. Very few of the associations offer or organize training programmes for librarians so that they can build their skills and knowledge. Many also do a poor job of providing moral support to professional librarians who deal with a lot of challenges in their daily work, especially government librarians. Associations that are active allow librarians to understand fears and problems, cope with issues, and search for solutions. A library association that has had an active role in the creation of a professional culture is a source for joint action, allowing librarians to discuss the challenges and professional difficulties that they face, such as the increase of information and control bibliography via electronic methods, as well as facilitating communications on an international scale between the relevant associations (Agee & Lillard, 2005).

Table 1.5 Library associations in MENA

Country	Association title	Year
Algeria	Librarians and Archivists Association of Algerian notaries	1989
Bahrain	Bahraini Libraries Association	1994
Egypt	Egyptian Society for libraries, Information and Archives; first created in 1944 under the name "The Egyptian Association for Libraries"	1985
Iraq	Iraq Society for Library and Information	1967
Jordan	Jordan Library Association	1963
Lebanon	Lebanese Library Association	1960
Libya	Libyan Association for Libraries, Information and Archives; started in 2000 under the name of the Libyan Association for Libraries	2012
Mauritania	Mauritanian Association of Librarians, Archivists, and Documentalists	1979
Morocco	Moroccan Association for Information Specialists	1973
Oman	Omani Libraries and Information Association	2007
Palestine	Palestinian Libraries and Information Association	1994
Qatar	Qatar Association for Libraries and Information	2014
Regional	Arab Federation for Library Associations	1986
Saudi Arabia	Library and Information Association of Saudi Arabia	1979
Sub regional	Special Library Association: Gulf Office	1992
Sudan	Sudan Library Association	1969
Syria	Library and Documentation Association	1972
Tunisia	Tunisian Association of Librarians and Documentalists	1965

(Alhadri, 2012)

Strong library associations that can exercise influence at decision-making levels to promote library development are lacking in the region. This is especially true of government libraries that already have a negative status in the parent organization, with little to no support from other libraries, nationally, locally or regionally. The positive impact that library associations can have on service delivery in libraries is, therefore, extremely limited or simply non-existent.

Recommendations for Government Librarians

- *Develop library consortiums:* Local, national and regional library consortiums should be established for government libraries. These would be cooperative associations of libraries that will provide systematic and effective resource coordination for government libraries and information centres in order to improve services to library customers. Benefits of such consortiums include, but are not limited to:

  o Cost reduction achieved through group purchasing;
  o Improvement of expertise due to training, continuing education, or professional development programmes for library staff;
  o Encouragement of resource sharing (content, technology, expertise, and funding) as well as the development of shared electronic content (e.g., group database licenses);
  o Creation of opportunities for joint advocacy, marketing, and fundraising for libraries;

- Undertaking special initiatives for the group, such as digitization, technology implementation, information sharing, or creation of a union catalogue, shared digital repository, and digital services (digitization of objects) (Horton, 2015; Mousleh & Jarjees, 2016).

- *Develop and implement training programmes for librarians:* Focus on continuous staff training and development and encourage staff participation in national and regional library associations. Some organizations see the shortage of skilled workforce as their responsibility to overcome, while others see this as the responsibility of library schools and job training. Saudi Arabia's 2030 vision, for example, is aimed at training 500,000 staff members and at creating a section in every governmental organization that would lead staff training and development and ensure they have the skills necessary for the jobs.

- *Improve the availability of formal tertiary education in librarianship and information science:* This is a general challenge that applies to more than just government libraries. Better tertiary education in librarianship and information management, as well as promoting these courses to increase the number of students, is essential. This will ensure the development of local talent, which is important, as this can help in overcoming language barriers and miscommunication in service delivery.

- *Play a role in decision-making:* Government librarians should be a part of the management team so that they can participate in discussions on actions and activities that the parent organization is planning. This will result in them being aware of priority areas and able to ensure that correct and current information is available. It also creates an opportunity for them to participate, making suggestions on actions and activities that can increase the status of the library.

- *Act as government information hubs:* Businesses today consider themselves learning organizations in which information and knowledge sharing plays an integral part; as such, they rely on information hubs. Government libraries can assume a similar role as hubs of knowledge sharing and development, building information networks across all staff in the organization. Librarians need to be at the forefront of information provision through the application of their skills, and especially their synthesizing skills. This will transform the library into a physical and virtual learning centre.

- *Help approve laws on the freedom of information and open data*: Amendments to relevant laws need to be enacted so that it will be easier for citizens and organization staff to exercise their right of access to information. If these processes are not completed, then availability of government information will be complicated and government libraries will be unable to deliver on services offered.

- *Promote awareness across all available platforms:* Promoting library services to all staff and decision makers within the organization is essential. It is, however, necessary to use more than one platform or medium; government libraries should consider technologies such as email, mobile applications, and websites in the promotion of materials and services. More traditional options can also be used, such as a newsletter or brief, depending on the needs of the customers.

- *Promote information literacy and build information system:* There is no more important developmental policy than one oriented towards eradicating illiteracy,

promoting information literacy, and building a modern, efficient, and equitable library and information system. Government, together with its social partners, the private sector, civil society organizations, households, and international aid agencies, should support this.

- *Actively include government libraries in sustainable development initiatives:* Government libraries in the MENA region should actively be part of the implementation of the SDGs. This means that libraries and librarians should be included when planning occurs regarding SDG initiatives. This will ensure that they can provide the necessary information. They should also partner in the implementation of initiatives through training programmes and access to technology infrastructure.

- *Support the Lyon declaration:* It is important that government libraries consider supporting the Lyon Declaration[12] as this will help to determine priorities in development. Special attention should be paid to providing equitable access to information and ensuring that freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, and privacy are promoted, protected, and respected.

Conclusion

It is clear that government libraries should be essential elements in the decision-making processes of the government, as they can provide access to specific and accurate information and knowledge needed to make governance decisions that will affect the economic growth and social well-being of a country, province, or municipality. New ideals, such as sustainable development, open government, and the movement towards knowledge-based economies, have highlighted both the need for better information and the possibility of libraries as a mechanism to provide access to such information, as well as training programmes, research support, and the maintenance of organizational memory.

Government libraries in the MENA region, however, are experiencing various challenges that are hampering their ability to serve as the data, information, and knowledge partners of their parent organizations. The advent of technology such as the Internet and its easy-to-use search engines has also brought to the forefront the question whether there is still a need for government libraries. However, government libraries are still considered the main source of official government information. This, however, may also change as open data and open information become more and more prevalent and government entities publish their studies and other information on their websites.

The global challenges countries face and the push for inclusive sustainable development and open government necessitate that governments have access to current information and that they make use of citizens, the private sector, and civil society to plan, implement, manage, and monitor national and local initiatives. The ever-increasing need for information increases the need for government libraries as central repositories of data, information, and knowledge, but also the need to upgrade these facilities and their services so that they can better provide for customers both internally and externally.

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[12] For more information on the Lyon Declaration, see http://www.lyondeclaration.org/.

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The Government Information Landscape in Greece

Anna Mastora, National Library of Greece; Maria Koloniari[13], Economic Research and Documentation Unit of the Hellenic Competition Commission; & Maria Monopoli, Economic Analysis and Research Department of the Bank of Greece

Introduction

The aim of this report is to shed light on how citizens access publicly available Greek government information and publications. *The Constitution of Greece* (Hellenic Parliament, 2008) especially Article 5A, defines the right to information for everyone. Specifically, it states:

> 1. All persons have the right to information, as specified by law. Restrictions to this right may be imposed by law only as far as they are necessary and justified for reasons of national security, of combating crime or of protecting rights and interests of third parties.

> 2. All persons have the right to participate in the Information Society. Facilitation of access to electronically transmitted information, as well as of the production, exchange, and diffusion thereof, constitutes an obligation of the State, always in observance of the guarantees of articles 9, 9A and 19.

Other laws, such as 1599/1986 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 75, 1986), 2690/1999 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 45, 1999), 3448/2006 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 57, 2006) or joint ministerial decisions, such as 11764/653/2006 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series B, 327, 2006), determine the citizens' right to access or re-use public information.

In Greece, government institutions make many efforts towards the collection, preservation, and publication of information. Among them are Legal Deposit Institutions, which aim to collect and preserve print and electronic government publications and audiovisual material, as well as web domains. A key role is played by the General State Archives, who are responsible for collecting the administrative and historical archives of each government organization. As far as other types of publications of government organizations, according to the Law 3149/2003 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 141, 2003), as amended by the Law 4452/2017 (Greece. *Official Gazette*, Series A, 17, 2017) the National Library of Greece (NLG) is responsible for collecting four copies of each publication. The NLG also acts as an intermediary for the Parliamentary Library, the second depository library of the state, to which one copy of each publication is forwarded by the NLG. Furthermore, there are individual government institutions that aim to produce, preserve, and provide access to information, although institutional repositories have not been developed yet. The collection of government publications is performed (to some extent) by the libraries of each government organization, though libraries of government institutions have not yet found their rightful place within the government services ecosystem. However, a significant

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[13] The report expresses personal opinions and does not represent the views of the Hellenic Competition Commission.

development towards this direction occurred recently (late November 2020) with the announcement of the revised organizational chart of the Presidency of the Greek Government (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 236, 2020). According to the Presidential Decree 98/28.11.2020, the newly established department of Archives, Research and Documentation will be responsible (through the development of both a print depository and a digital repository) for the collection and management of publications produced by the central public administration. Finally, there are official government initiatives as well as important e-services which aim to reduce bureaucracy and provide easier access to information for citizens. The most important initiative for digital transformation, the implementation of which was expedited in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, was the gov.gr portal, which will be discussed further in a following section.

This report will discuss legal deposit institutions and individual government institutions in terms of their production of, access to, and preservation of information. To be more specific, it will discuss executive, legislative, and judiciary institutions, as well as institutions that produce information of common interest, such as the government gazette and the official statistics of Greece. Finally, it includes information regarding official government initiatives and some of Greece's most popular e-services. It should be noted at this point that all information provided here was collected until December 2020.

Legal Deposit Institutions

Greece's Deposit Libraries, governed by the Law 3149/2003 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 141, 2003) as amended and in force according to the Law 4452/2017 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 17, 2017) are the National Library of Greece and the Parliamentary Libraries. Both libraries also have additional roles in terms of collecting and disseminating resources. Apart from libraries, other institutions, such as the General State Archives and the National Center for Audiovisual Media and Communication, collect and manage resources following either a format-oriented or a subject-oriented approach.

General State Archives

The legal or physical entities that hold archives are obliged to declare them at the General State Archives (GSA) under the Law 1946/1991, Article 40 (Greece. *Official Gazette*, Series A, 69, 1991). For monitoring the overall process of archival production as well as serving the research community, the National Index of Archives was developed. The GSA is primarily responsible for:

- Supervision, rescue, collection, preservation, recording, micro-filming, classification and indexing of the country's archival material;
- Dissemination for research of all public and private archives, documents and manuscripts that refer to the history and cultural heritage of the Greek nation, as well as the administrative, economic, and social life of the Greek state;
- Identification and inventory of public archives having historical interest, their selection and introduction to the General State Archives, and their preparation for availability to researchers;
- Cooperation with Church authorities and ecclesiastical and monastic institutions;
- Cooperation with religious institutions to rescue archival material;

- Collaboration with owners of private archives of historical interest;
- Supervision of special archives established and operating in the wider public sector;
- Publications (serials and monographs) that increase knowledge of the country's historical sources;
- Participation in research projects in collaboration with other national or foreign scientific bodies; and
- Purchasing or accepting donations of archival material and reprints of archival material from foreign states or organizations.

As already stated in the introductory section, the General State Archives compile administrative and historical archives from each government organization. Public records that have been imported by organizations from both the centralized (Ministries, General Secretariats) and the decentralized (regions, prefectures, municipalities) administration make up the overwhelming volume of material and the primary responsibility of the Greek State Archives. More specifically, the Acquisitions and Management of Archives Department, as organized by Law 4610/2019 (Greece. *Official Gazette*, Series A, 70, 2019), is responsible, among others, for the following tasks:

- Highlighting and inventorying public sector records and supervising active archives to prevent loss and damage to public documents;
- Monitoring the clearance of public service records and ensuring the introduction of archives in the GSA;
- Co-operating with liaison officers appointed by the document production services;
- The development of the Greek Archives Inventory (https://greekarchivesinventory.gak.gr/).

Cartographic Heritage Archives

The Cartographic Heritage Archives (http://www.maplibrary.gr/en.htm) was established in 2013 by Law 4109/2013 (Greece, *Official Gazette*, Series A, 16, 2013) as an organizational unit or department of the GSA, with the intent of resuming the aims and activities of the Hellenic National Map Library (1997-2012). The department's aim focuses on the management and diffusion of cartographic heritage in the context of the General State Archives of Greece. Its main concern is to ensure the distinctive role of maps in the archives, and to support and expand the accessibility of the GSA's cartographic material, using digital information and modern communication technologies. The Cartographic Heritage Archives are cooperating with map collectors and with public and/or private institutions that keep and curate important map collections.

The National Library of Greece

The material deposited at the National Library of Greece (NLG) (http://www.nlg.gr) includes every object created for storing or carrying (by any means) information in the form of manuscripts and in any other format: printed, graphic, digital, optical, sound, etc. (National Library of Greece, 2021a.). Although it is not explicitly stated in the aforementioned laws that governmental publications should be deposited at NLG, such an obligation could be assumed by the overall context of the law and by NLG's overall Strategic Development Plan (SDP) (National Library of Greece, 2021b). The SDP states that it is within NLG's mission to

collect, organize, and disseminate to the public written material of science and culture referring to Greece in any format. Additionally, NLG is responsible for publishing the *National Bibliography*.

The entities under obligation to legally deposit material at the NLG are publishers (or authors when a publisher is not applicable) and typographers. The obligation of legal deposit also applies in the case of audiovisual and electronic editions in physical or digital form. Publishers of journals and newspapers are also obliged to deposit an item of each publication within one month of its circulation. Unpublished documents are also accepted in some cases, but this type of material must abide by certain format and binding guidelines to be incorporated in the collection.

Web Archive

Under the Law 4452/2017 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 17, 2017), the National Library of Greece is responsible for archiving the Greek web; that is, the National Library of Greece is responsible for initiating and coordinating all the actions aiming to preserve the Greek online heritage at the national level. In this context, in September 2016, the National Library of Greece launched its web archiving project in cooperation with the Athens University of Economics and Business[14]. The project, entitled "Feasibility Study for Archiving the Greek Web", was divided in two parts. The first part comprised a collection of Greek web pages as well as their semantic classification. The second was the implementation phase, the results of which have not yet been made publicly available, but there is a collection of 232,203,535 URLs (~18TB). Additionally, there has been a harvesting process of subject-oriented pages, namely local government, news, and education. The Greek Web Archive will also offer a subject directory of the indexed web pages. Due to legal restrictions concerning the protection of personal data, the user API that has been created for this purpose cannot currently be used outside the library's network. The service is expected to be delivered to the public for research purposes in the near future[15].

The Library of the Hellenic Parliament

The Library of the Hellenic Parliament[16] was founded during the first Parliamentary Session following the 1844 Constitution. It is a multi-disciplinary library, aiming to support parliamentary work, especially that of the Members of Parliament (MPs) and their assistants as well as all the departments of the Hellenic Parliament. It provides information on matters of parliamentary interest, such as:

- Information, research, and documentation for parliamentary issues, in cooperation with other public services;
- Printed and digital material accessible via general and specialized databases and electronic publications;
- Loan and inter-loan services;
- Information on European Union issues through its European Documentation Center;

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[14] See http://transition.nlg.gr/i-ethniki-vivliothiki-archiotheti-ton-elliniko-isto/ (in Greek)
[15] See https://www.nlg.gr/collection/archeio-toy-ellinikoy-istoy/ (in Greek)
[16] See http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/I-Bibliothiki/

- Training and support for search facilities throughout the extensive primary collection of the Library.

The Library is also open to the public, who can get information on parliamentary activities, the legislative procedure, current legislation, and records of parliamentary debates. The public may also consult the Library's collections at its reading rooms.

The Library's collections are developed according to the Law 3149/2003 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 141, 2003) and as amended by Law 4452/2017 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 17, 2017). The Library also holds one of the largest collections of Greek and foreign newspapers and journals, dating from the 18th century to the present. The collection is in high demand and is available in print; a great part of the collection is also available in microfilm and digital format. The largest part of the collection is searchable via http://catalog.parliament.gr. The Library also administers the Parliamentary Collection (The Historical and Modern Parliamentary Archives) which makes the records of the Parliament accessible to all. The historic archives, the modern archives, and the photographic archive are also held by the Library. The historic archives include public and state documents from the 19th and the 20th century as well as personal archives of historical personalities of the same period. The modern archives consist of personal archives of politicians whose political action has formed the modern political era, and contain the BBC's Greek Programming Archives, with a selection of audio records from 1939 to 2005.

The photographic archive contains many photographs, especially from official ceremonies, conferences, and congresses that have taken place in the Parliament, a collection of photographs of politicians, and a small number of historic photographs. Records of all exhibitions organized by the Parliament on historical and political issues are also kept and documented. Admission to the Library's Archives is granted by special permission. The Collection also includes maps of the Greek territory produced by the Geographical Service of the Hellenic Army and the Forestry Service.

The Library of the Hellenic Parliament keeps a record of Introductory Reports and Committee minutes submitted to the Parliament for each Law Proposal; all the issues of the *Official Government Gazette* since 1833; the Constitutions and Standing Orders; the *Official Journal of the European Union* (Issues L and C) since Greece's accession to the European Economic Community; as well as:

- the Parliament Proceedings since 1844;
- the Gazette of the Parliamentary Debates (1862-1967);
- the Senate Proceedings (1844-1864 and 1929-1935);
- the Gazette of the Senate Debates (1929-1935);
- the Parliament Archive (1912, 1927-1966);
- the Senate Archive (1929-1934);
- records of the National Assemblies, the Constitution's Revisions, and records of the Committees on the Constitution's Revision;
- indexes of the National Assemblies, Parliament and Senate Records (1843-1862, 1909-1936, 1946-1967, 1974 until today); and
- committee records (according to Article 70 of the Constitution).

- Some of the records can be accessed online at https://library.parliament.gr/. These include:
- the National Assemblies Proceedings and the Parliament Proceedings (1843-1862);
- the National Assemblies Proceedings and the Parliament Proceedings (1862-1910);
- the National Assemblies Proceedings and the Parliament Proceedings (1910-1935);
- the Senate Proceedings (1844-1861); and
- indexes of the National Assemblies, Parliament and Senate Records (1843-1867).

The digitization project of the Library is still ongoing and the Digital Library is constantly updated.

National Center for Audiovisual Media and Communication (EKOME)

The "National Center for Audiovisual Media and Communication S.A." (in Greek this is referred to as "EKOME")[17] was established by the Law 4339/2015 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 133, 2015). Within the scope of EKOME are the organization, digitization, management, and utilization of the national archive of audiovisual media and the media of digital promotion, digital communication, and information[18]. EKOME is supervised by the Ministry of Digital Governance and is responsible for the national repository of audiovisual archives. In compliance with contemporary international practices, it creates and preserves the film archive by collecting, digitizing, filing, and conserving moving images, print items, photographs, or other objects related to the film industry. Film producers and any owner of original material related to films are required to deposit a copy with EKOME, which reimburses them for the production cost of the copy. Anonymous Societies (SAs) and other legal entities existing in the wider public sector but governed by private law are obliged to deposit a copy of their audiovisual archive[19].

When it comes to Greek audiovisual heritage, it is apparent that several institutions appear to collect and preserve audiovisual material, which might be perceived as a conflict of interest among stakeholders. As far as EKOME is concerned, it is responsible for the national coordination of all institutions that collect, possess, and promote audiovisual material in Greece as well as the creation of an integrated catalogue of all audiovisual archives owned by the public or the broader public sector, according to the clauses of the Law 3429/2005 (Greece, *Official Gazette,* Series A, 314, 2005).

Publications of Individual Government Institutions

Presidency of the Hellenic Republic

The Presidency of the Republic (http://www.presidency.gr/en/homepage/) is administratively and financially an independent public service. Its composition, organization,

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17 See https://www.ekome.media/audiovisual-archives-digitise/

18 Another institution engaged with audiovisual material is the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT A.E.), which is the owner of the audiovisual material of public TV and radio broadcasters. In cooperation with the Secretariat General for Media and Communication, it digitizes the broadcasted audiovisual material, archives it, and disseminates it to the public through its website. See http://archive.ert.gr/.

[19] Film productions and TV programs are also collected and archived by the Greek Film Archive. See http://www.tainiothiki.gr/en/greek-film-archive/profile.

and functions are regulated by Presidential Decree 351/1991 (Greece. *Official Gazette*, Series A, 121, 1991). It comprises departments and offices that assist the President of the Republic with his duties. Although the office of the President is largely a ceremonial one, and his or her powers are only meant to be used in the event of a national emergency (where the safety of the Republic is compromised), these departments help the President keep track of the office's day-to-day duties. The official website of the Presidency of the Hellenic Republic provides introductory information on the concept of the Greek Presidency and on current and former Greek Presidents. There are five main sections: the President, the Presidency, the organizational departments, the presidential mansion, the President's speeches, and the President's engagements. More specifically:

- The "Homepage" section provides a brief biography of the current Greek President and gives detailed information about the national anthem and the presidential guard.
- The "The President" section lists biographical information on current and former Greek Presidents and describes election procedures and the meaning of the power of each President of the Republic.
- The "Presidency" section describes the national symbols, the orders and decorations, and the organization and functions of the Presidency. The national symbols are the flag, the national emblem, and the national anthem, while the orders and decorations are the Order of the Redeemer, the Order of Honour, the Order of the Phoenix, and the Order of Beneficence. The organization and functions subsection present the Presidency's structure and the presidential guard.
- The "Presidential Mansion" section describes the president's official residence, providing valuable information about its location, history, architectural features, and garden.
- The "Contact" section provides contact information and informs about when the garden of the Presidential Mansion is open and whom to contact to arrange a group visit.

Hellenic Parliament

The Parliament (http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/) is the supreme democratic institution that represents the citizens through an elected body of Members of Parliament (MPs). Through the official website, citizens and all other interested parties are informed on the legislative work, the processes and progress concerning parliamentary control, the tasks undertaken by parliamentary committees, and information regarding the available minutes for most of the activities. Additionally, there is access to the mini-site of the Digital Library and the one dedicated to Publications and Exhibitions. To elaborate, the following information is available through the main page of the Parliament's website.

- Legislative work: information is available about the Legislative Process, the Order of the Day, the Weekly Newsletter, the Submitted Bills, the Elaboration in Committees, the Plenum Debates and Voting, and the Enacted Legislation. Users can also search for laws using selected criteria.
- Parliamentary control: information is available about Procedures, Means of Parliamentary Control, Special Procedures, the Weekly Newsletter, Interpellations'

Order of the Day, Current Questions Table, Petitions and Questions Table, and the Special Orders of the Day.

- Parliamentary Committees: information is available about Categories, Sessions, Reports and Findings, and the Weekly and Monthly Newsletters.
- Minutes available on the Parliament website include Plenary Sessions, Constitutional Revisions, Plenary Audio and Video Archives, and the Committee Audio and Video Archives[20].
- The Library of the Hellenic Parliament (see also the "Library of the Hellenic Parliament" section) has digitized part of its collections to preserve it and make it accessible to the public. Currently, the digital library comprises Newspapers and Journals (microfilms), Historical Parliamentary Archives, and Constitutions and Standing Orders.
- The Publications and Printing Directorate holds the overall responsibility for a) designing, producing, and distributing parliamentary documents, such as bills, draft laws, findings, and parliamentary reports, as well as parliamentary and committee proceedings; b) the publication of brochures, manuscripts, and any other printed and digital publication in the framework of the activities of the Parliament, as well as their distribution. More specifically, the Department of Productions and Management of Publications are responsible for:

  o monitoring, collecting, storing, classifying, and disseminating any type of print or digital publications of the Hellenic Parliament, in addition to informing the public about these publishing activities; and
  o managing and distributing the publications of the Parliament and all the bodies directly and indirectly to their mission, after approval by the Head of the Directorate, to each recipient, such as libraries, schools, exhibitions, conferences and social or other operators, and recordkeeping of an electronic and printed file for the receipt and distribution of all items.

Hellenic Parliament TV

The Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT A.E.) (http://int.ert.gr/#) is obliged to dedicate one of their transmission frequencies to the uninterrupted broadcasting of Hellenic Parliament TV,[21]

operating since 1999 as an autonomous television network and a non-profit mass medium. Administratively, it is an organic unit of the Hellenic Parliament placed hierarchically under the Speaker of the Parliament. Its primary focus is to inform and familiarize the citizens with the work of the Parliament regarding crucial decisions that directly affect Hellenic society. The broadcasting agenda of Hellenic Parliament TV includes the broadcasting of all the sittings of the Plenum, the Standing Committees (previously recorded), and the Recess Section of the Parliament (Summer Session), as well as part of the work of the other parliamentary committees, after permission has been granted (Law 4324/2015) by the

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[20] See https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/ for a complete listing
[21] See http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/Enimerosi/tileoptikos-stathmos-tis-voulis/

Presidium and the Hellenic Parliament TV Directorate (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 44, 2015). Another important goal of Hellenic Parliament TV is to promote Greek culture.

Hellenic Republic – Government

The portal of the Hellenic Republic - Government (https://government.gov.gr/) aims to present citizens with information about the Hellenic government's activities in all areas of its responsibilities, such as 'development and economy', 'work, insurance, and solidarity', 'education', 'health', 'environment and energy', 'agricultural development', 'public administration and justice', 'culture and sports', and 'foreign policy and defense'. It aims to bring the Hellenic government closer to its citizens by introducing the Prime Minister and all members of the ministerial council. In addition, the portal describes the government's commitments, decisions, and work.

Specifically, this portal is particularly focused on describing the profile of the Prime Minister through presenting his speeches, statements, comments, visits, and interviews. Also, it presents the Government's Representative, describing his work, speeches, statements, comments, visits, and interviews. Visitors to the portal can become informed about all current and former issues that concern Greek society via four sections: timeliness, work, Prime Minister, and Government.

National Printing House

The National Printing House (http://www.et.gr/), under the Presidency of the Greek Government, is responsible for publishing and disseminating the *Official Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic* as well as printing publications of other public sector organizations. The *Government Gazette* includes 11 active and 4 ceased Series.

Active Series:

- Series A: includes the Constitution, the laws, the international treaties, and international agreements.
- Series B: includes regulatory decisions taken by the Ministers or other administrative institutions.
- Series C: includes notices of appointment, resignations, and transfers of civil servants, and presidential decrees concerning the award of medals, pardons, or the lifting of certain sentences.
- Series D: includes acts determining publicly owned real estate transfers and land use.
- Series on Acts of other Public and Private Sector Entities: includes acts relating to the creation and management of public and private limited companies.
- Series on the Special Supreme Court: includes court decisions.
- Announcements by the Supreme Council of Personnel Selection Series: includes vacancies held by the Supreme Council for Personnel Selection (the authority responsible for the recruitment of civil servants).
- Public Works Contracts Series: includes tendering and public procurement.
- Political Party Financing and Coalitions Series: includes special reports on the electoral income and expenditure of the political parties.

- Series on information concerning Special Positioned Employees of Public Sector: includes notices of appointment, resignation, etc. of special positioned employees of public sector.
- Series on Compulsory Expropriations and City-Planning: includes decrees and decisions concerning urban planning and town planning.

Ceased Series:

- Series on Public Legal Entities (publication ceased in 2006): includes acts relating to appointments, transfers, and resignations of members of the clergy, public undertakings, associations, etc.
- Development Acts and Agreements Series (publication ceased in 2006): includes acts relating to regional planning.
- Annex Series (publication ceased in 2006): includes indexes; announcements of vacancies in institutions of higher education; the results of civil service entrance examinations; and national lottery tables.
- Series on Commercial and Industrial Property (publication ceased in 2012): includes industrial and commercial trademarks and patents.

All 15 Series of the *Government Gazette*[22] are freely available online under Law 3861/2010 (Greece. *Official Gazette*, Series A, 112, 2010) through the National Printing House website, while those that are not yet digitized are provided via email upon request. Hard copies are available by payment order or annual subscription. Table 1.1 presents a list of the available Series in both print and electronic format. Furthermore, the *Official Government Gazette* and other publications of the National Printing House as well as the Official Journal of the European Union are available to the public in the National Printing House Library.

Table 2.1: Series of government gazettes

Series	Print format	Electronic format
A	From 1833	From 1833
B	From 1930	From 1930
C	From 1930	From 1984
D	From 1959	From 1959
Acts of other Public and Private Sector Entities	From 1926	From 1987
Special Supreme Court	From 1978	From 2000
Announcements by the Supreme Council of Personnel Selection	From 1996	From 2000
Public Works Contracts	From 1999	From 2000
Political Party Financing and Coalitions	From 2004	From 2004
Special Positioned Employees of Public Sector	From 2006	From 2006

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[22] Laws published in the Government Gazette are also searchable on the Hellenic Parliament website at: http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/Nomothetiko-Ergo/Anazitisi-Nomothetikou-Ergou)

Compulsory Expropriations and City-Planning	From 2006	From 2006
Public Legal Entities	From 1938 to 2006	From 1984 to 2006
Development Acts and Agreements	From 1981 to 2006	From 2000 to 2006
Annex	From 1930 to 2006	From 2000 to 2006
Commercial and Industrial Property	From 1981 to 2012	From 2000 to 2012

Source: http://www.et.gr/index.php/f-e-k/diathesi-fek (in Greek)

Hellenic Statistical Authority

The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) (http://www.statistics.gr/en/home), an independent Authority, produces and publishes the official national and European statistics of Greece. More specifically, the Hellenic Statistical Authority conducts statistical surveys and produces, on a regular basis, official statistics which:

- cover all the fields of activity of the public and private sector;
- underpin the processes for decision making, policy drawing, and evaluating the policies of the Government and public sector organizations (evaluation indicators);
- are submitted to international organizations in compliance with the obligations of the country; and
- concern the public or specific categories of users of statistics in Greece and abroad.

All print publications from 1859 onwards are freely available through the Digital Library of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (http://dlib.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE). The Digital Library includes maps, three general publications (*Concise Statistical Yearbook of Greece*, *Monthly Statistical Bulletin of Greece*, and *Statistical Yearbook of Greece*) and special publications on agriculture-livestock-fisheries, codes, construction, culture, education, elections, environment, health, income and expenditure of households, industry-mining, justice, labor-market, maritime transport, national accounts, population, price indices, public finance, public services-human resources, tourism, trade, and transport and communications.

Furthermore, the Hellenic Statistical Authority produces three publications (*The Greek Economy*, *Living Conditions in Greece*, and *Greece in Figures*) solely in electronic format. These are available for use and browsing on the ELSTAT portal (https://www.statistics.gr/en/the-greek-economy) but there is not a unique online catalogue. Finally, primary data from surveys and tailor-made data not available via the above publications are provided electronically upon request and payment of a fee.

The Library of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (http://www.statistics.gr/en/library) is open to the public and responsible for the management, conservation, and preservation of all ELSTAT publications, printed and electronic. The Library's collection, which also includes publications from other countries' statistical authorities and publications of international organizations such as Eurostat, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is searchable through the online library catalogue.

Justice

The Greek Constitution establishes two jurisdictions, administrative and civil/criminal, which are organized into three systems: the courts of first instance (lower courts), the courts of appeals (higher, appellate courts), and the Supreme Courts. The current report focuses on the highest courts in the nation: the Council of State, the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court, and the Court of Audit.

The Hellenic Council of State

The Hellenic Council of State[23] is at the top of the hierarchy of ordinary administrative courts and decides, along with the ordinary administrative courts, on all matters of administrative-law disputes, such as money claims, the function of the civil service, social security claims, public works and supplies' competitions, compensation claims against the State, and challenges to the legality of administrative acts in general. The judgments of the Council of State provide the highest authority on legal precedent for the lower administrative courts and set the standards for the interpretation of the Constitution and the laws and for the advancement of legal theory and practice. The judgments of the Council of State are subject to compulsory enforcement against the Public Sector, local government institutions and public law legal persons. Through the website of the Council of State, interested parties can search for judicial decisions by implementing a variety of search criteria. Unfortunately, the website is not highly informative regarding the chronological coverage of the database.

Supreme Civil and Criminal Court

The Supreme Civil and Criminal Court (http://www.areiospagos.gr/en/INDEX.htm)is the highest court in Greece for civil and criminal law. The Supreme Court provides online access to the decisions issued from mid-2006 onwards, with special attention to personal data: the decisions are anonymous and cannot be used as legal and accurate copies. Court rulings are searchable by type (civil cases, penal cases, number, department, and year)[24]. Penal cases are also searchable by subject, either by entering free text or using controlled vocabulary. Lists of rulings by type and year (from 2006 onwards) are also available.

Court of Audit

The Hellenic Republic's Court of Audit (https://www.elsyn.gr/en) was established under the Constitution. It is part of the Hellenic judicial system and is constitutionally on par with other Hellenic courts. The Court of Audit has authority on the audit of the expenditures of the State, local government institutions, and other legal entities. It provides online access to decisions of major importance, special and annual reports, declarations, and statistics. Application forms, pleadings, cases, applications, and major important decisions are also searchable via an integrated information system. To have access to this system, authorized users are required to log in.

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[23] See http://www.adjustice.gr/webcenter/portal/SteEn
[24] See http://www.areiospagos.gr/nomologia/apofaseis.asp (in Greek)

Initiatives to Improve Access to Government Information

The Transparency Portal

In October 2010, the Greek Government launched a major transparency initiative called "Diavgeia," available from https://diavgeia.gov.gr/ (in Greek, this word means "clarity"). This Transparency Portal, under the Law 3861/2010 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 112, 2010) of the Ministry of Administrative Reform and e-Governance, obligated, for the first time, all government institutions (ministries, independent authorities, local governments, and all entities supervised by them) to upload their acts and decisions to the Internet (with special attention to issues of national security and sensitive personal data) as soon as they were formally signed, or without any deliberate delays. The program aims at achieving maximum publicity for government policy and administrative actions, including commitment of funds and financial decisions, thus eliminating corruption, increasing accountability of public bodies and decision makers, establishing a more transparent relationship between citizens and the state, and securing citizens' constitutional rights to access regarding information and participation in the information society.

However, at some point it was realized that information provided online was out of date and/or inaccurate (OECD, 2011, p. 63). To deal with this issue, Law 4210/2013 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 254, 2013) was introduced, strengthening the initiative with an innovative and advanced addition: administrative acts and decisions not published in the *Official Gazette* become valid only when they are published on the Transparency Portal. Furthermore, each document must be digitally signed and automatically assigned a unique Internet Uploading Number (IUN), which can be used by citizens during their interactions with the public sector.

The new, enhanced Transparency Portal, launched in June 2014, offers a powerful search mechanism with a wide range of search options using keywords and thematic metadata. However, citizens must deal with an overwhelming amount of information that is occasionally found to be inconsistent. It is also worth noting that the "Diavgeia" program allows the dissemination and reuse of public sector information, with an Open Data API available from https://diavgeia.gov.gr/api/help. As a result, various applications have been built using the "Diavgeia" program, such as UltraCl@rity (https://yperdiavgeia.gr/), a research project offering free access to Greek open public data, searching (among others) the portal of "Diavgeia".

The major challenge for this transparency policy was that public organizations and citizens did not have the necessary experience to work electronically, and to collaborate via the Internet[25]. For that reason, a dynamic human network of Project Task Forces was established to educate workers, solve common problems, share best practices, collect feedback, and ensure broad participation from all government authorities. Training courses were also held in every region covering all legal, business, and technical issues. Furthermore, training and supporting material is provided by the official website, while an online help desk is offered not only for requesting assistance but also for submitting

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[25] See https://web.archive.org/web/20200201010502/http://eparticipation.eu/2012/12/clrity-program-every-government-decision-on-the-internet/

suggestions. At the beginning of this program, there was significant resistance from public officials; however, this is now minimal (Karamagioli, Staiou, & Gouscos, 2014).

Within ten years, 41.9 million acts and decisions have been published in the Diavgeia Transparency Portal from 4,989 public authorities and entities (Greece, Ministry of Digital Governance, 2020). Most of the acts concern public expenses, although the program also provides additional statistical data, such as the number of decisions uploaded per day, per month, per authority, and per kind of act[26]. The Transparency Program is an example of an open government best practice, and has been presented to many European and international conferences, and other events, receiving positive feedback; for example, at the Open Government Partnership (OGP), an international platform of 70 Countries committed to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens (Open Government Partnership, 2016).

Geospatial Data

The Geodata website (http://geodata.gov.gr/en/) was the first attempt to make Greek geospatial data publicly available. Since August 2010, it has provided open geospatial data and services for Greece and serves as a national open data catalogue and an INSPIRE-conformant Spatial Data Infrastructure, as well as a powerful foundation for enabling value-added services from open data. It was one of the first open data catalogues in the world, contributing to the national and international open government agenda. It is designed, developed, and maintained by Information Management Systems Institute 'Athena' (IMIS/Athena RC—see http://www.imsi.athenarc.gr/en) with the aim to provide a focal point for the aggregation, search, provision, and visualization of open geospatial information. It includes 247 datasets on 19 topics, published by 39 public organizations (Geodata.gov.gr, 2020).

In 2010, the Greek Government enacted the Law 3882/2010 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 166, 2010) on the creation of the National Geospatial Information Infrastructure, which transposes the INSPIRE Directive (Directive 2007/2/EC) of the European Parliament and Council. The Greek Cadastre and Cartography Organization, responsible for the development of the above infrastructure, designed and developed the national Geoportal[27], which provides a search and browsing option.

Public Data (data.gov.gr)

In the context of implementing the national strategy of Open Public Administration and Governance, since 2011, Greece has been actively participating in the international UN initiative known as "Open Government Partnership – OGP"[28]. The official national portal (http://www.data.gov.gr/) is the tool developed to enforce the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union (Directive 2013/37/EU) regarding open data. It hosts and ensures access to public data generated by governmental bodies, and its main goal is to increase public access to high-quality, machine-readable datasets through

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[26] See https://diavgeia.gov.gr/stats (in Greek)
[27] See http://geoportal.ypen.gr/geonetwork/srv/eng/catalog.search#/home
[28] See http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/greece

integrated record-keeping services as well as storing, searching, and retrieving infrastructures.

Until this portal was initiated, public sector datasets were scattered among governmental websites, and the available formats of the datasets did not easily enable re-use of data. Nevertheless, even though a large amount of public sector information is made available through this portal, there is still a significant amount of information hidden within governmental websites, following different standards (if any), and using different structures. The portal is now in transition, allowing access to limited datasets and functions, but the legacy portal[29] is still active.

The 2016 Public Data Report (Greece Public Data Annual Report, 2017) stated that the largest percentage (31%) of open datasets were deposited by municipalities, which aligns with their representation rate (32%) in the portal overall. As far as website traffic statistics are concerned, access has increased by 154% since the previous report [30]. Systems or persons from 104 countries have accessed the portal, downloading 10,603 datasets.

eProcurement

The portal for public procurement, "Promitheus",[31] is the national electronic procurement system. It was launched in 2013 and implemented after the publication of Law 4155/2013 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 120, 2013); as amended by Law 4254/2014 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 85, 2014). The portal functions under the Division of Information of the General Secretariat of Commerce and Consumer's Protection of the Ministry of Economy and Development. Its aim is to modernize and simplify the procurement process, as well as the support of interested stakeholders: e.g., citizens, contracting authorities, suppliers, and supervisory authorities. All institutions of the general government are obliged to use this system, conducting procurement planning, tenders, and past-award procedures electronically for all contracts above €60,000. In addition to procedural information, the portal provides search options for locating public contracts and registries of technical prerequisites or entities, links to laws (national or European), regulations, and controlled vocabularies. The portal also provides access to the central electronic registry for public procurement, which includes documents concerning the procurement procedures for public works, studies, and related services budgeted above €1,000. It also includes the primary (needs) request, the request approval, the tender notification, the tender award, the contract, and the payment order, constituting an extension/specialization of the Transparency Program, "Diavgeia".

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[29] In December 2020, the legacy portal (available through http://beta.data.gov.gr/ or http://catalog.data.gov.gr/) stored 10,439 datasets from 341 institutions, falling in 17 broad categories, such as public administration, elections, labor, statistics, transport, economy/ business, geospatial data and environment, and health.
[30] From 5 Feb 2016 to 20 January 2017.
[31] See http://www.promitheus.gov.gr

eServices

Citizen Service Center (KEP)

Citizen Service Centers (KEPs: see http://www.kep.gov.gr/portal/page/portal/kep/) are state-owned centers established under the Law 3013/2002 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 102, 2002) of the Ministry of Administrative Reform and e-Governance (currently the Ministry of Administrative Reconstruction) with the aim of reducing bureaucracy and providing faster service to citizens in their dealings with the Public Sector. The role of the KEPs is to be the contact point of the Public Services for citizens and to provide one-stop services. The KEPs portal is a portal designed and developed for online information and service from home and office. It is updated daily with the latest information and covers the entire range of the Public Sector, making it a reference point on the Internet for many transactions with the Public Administration. In addition, it now enables people to submit electronic applications to the KEPs for a series of Administrative Procedures, implementing an essential step towards e-government in Greece.

KEPs can supply citizens with a variety of registrations, insurances, and certificates, such as:

- the registration or transfer of registration of vehicles or motorcycles;
- the issuance of birth and marital status certificates;
- the issuance of criminal record duplicates for general or legal use;
- the issuance of registry birth, death, and marriage certificates;
- the issuance of public transport passes for individuals with disabilities;
- the application for seasonal unemployment benefits in accordance with Article 22 of Law 1836/89 (Greece. *Official Gazette,* Series A, 79, 1989) - OAED (Greek Manpower Employment Organization);
- the application for the OAED (Greek Manpower Employment Organization) family subsidy;
- the issuance and renewal of drivers' licenses;
- the issuance of military status certificates;
- the application for a change in passenger vehicle or motorcycle ownership; and
- the issuance of judicial interdiction certificates.

Portal ERMIS

The ERMIS portal (http://www.ermis.gov.gr/portal/page/portal/ermis/) is the central national portal of the Greek public administration. It aims, first, to inform citizens about all potential transactions with the public administration and, second, to allow the submission of electronic requests for public administration services. The outcome of an electronic request, such as a certificate, is received either electronically via the ERMIS portal or physically by visiting a Citizens' Service Center (KEP). Registration with ERMIS is essential to submit an electronic request. Information and services provided cover the following areas:

- city planning and land registry;
- civilization and free time;
- education and research;
- environment and natural resources;
- finance and economy;
- health and social care;
- information and communication;
- international affairs and European Union;
- justice, state, and public administration;
- people, communities, and way of living;
- public order and defense;
- services for companies;
- transportation means, trips and tourism; and
- work, insurance, and pension.

In addition, the ERMIS portal provides citizens with an electronic mailbox. This allows registered users to store documents for handling their affairs with the public administration. Finally, citizens can check at any time the validity of a printed and/or electronic document provided by the electronic services of the ERMIS portal by using a validation control mechanism offered by the portal, and find information on how to obtain a digital signature of the Certification Authority of the Greek government.

Portal Gov.gr

Towards fulfilling the goal of digital transformation in Greece, the gov.gr (https://www.gov.gr/) portal was launched in March 2020 to serve as the single digital gateway of public administration for citizens and businesses. It hosts all digital services of ministries and other public organizations. It provides 1,054 services so far, such as solemn declarations, authorizations and e-prescriptions, all of which are directly available to citizens. In its current implementation it functions mostly as a catalog of electronic services, but the goal is to serve as the center of digital services for all transactions taking place in the context of public administration. Essentially, following the development of ERMIS portal, the gov.gr portal is the next step in the digital era for public services in Greece.

Conclusion

This report's intent was to describe the actual government information landscape in Greece. To summarize its main findings, a vast amount of Greek government information is available online. However, that information is published on each organization's website, following different templates and guidelines, and offering different search options, while no library in Greece is responsible for collecting and cataloging all government publications. In practice, this means that collecting, managing, and disseminating government publications depends on each organization's efforts, commitment, and expertise, based on individual policies.

Greek Governments are committed to transparency and to ensuring the citizens' constitutional rights to access information. Towards this end, several initiatives have been introduced, which include the online publication of administrative records. However,

initiatives such as Diavgeia and eProcurement indicate not only duplication of work but, most importantly, create issues with duplicate points of access for the same information. This is also observed with the *Government Gazette*, where Greek laws are published, as well as some court rulings. Furthermore, citizens deal with a huge volume of information, which is not properly documented, mainly because metadata are not generated by information professionals. Most of the time, it is not an easy task to locate the desired information.

In conclusion, while an overwhelming amount of Greek government information is available online, it is published on a plethora of different websites and is not systematically catalogued. Thus, the Greek Government should take steps toward a uniform structure of governmental websites. To fulfill this purpose and serve as a starting point for further research, a detailed description of the governmental material of each organization should be provided, adhering to international description standards. These standards could ensure interoperability among different organizations and re-use of governmental material.

Any scenario for ensuring access to and preservation of government publications should address two issues of immense importance. The first issue is finding a way to officially engage the libraries of government institutions in collecting and documenting the publications of their parent organization. The second issue is the creation of a network of government institutions' libraries. This network would be of extreme importance because it would act as an advocate throughout the overall process, and it could also act as a liaison with any institution having the responsibility of collecting, preserving, and disseminating government publications at a national level.

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The International Governmental Organization Information Landscape

James Church, University of California Berkeley Libraries

Introduction

An International Governmental Organization (IGO) is a body comprised of government representatives from at least three nation states. It must have a permanent office, such as a secretariat or board of governors that performs ongoing functions, and be governed by a set of written principles, such as a charter, constitution, or articles of agreement[32]. Some IGOs, such as the United Nations, European Union, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, are among the most powerful and influential organizations of our time. IGOs authorize military interventions, levy international sanctions, arrest and convict perpetrators of war crimes, and bail out nations facing sovereign debt crises. They create and oversee international standards ranging from aeronautics and maritime travel to telecommunications and intellectual property. They initiate and oversee multilateral treaties or declarations on issues of global concern, such as the *Framework Convention on Climate Change*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Right*s, and the *Convention on the Prevention of Genocide*. While interest in IGOs may wax and wane depending on political regimes, international relations, and the changing missions and cultures of IGOs themselves, it is impossible to imagine the modern world existing without them.

IGOs also employ thousands of civil servants and produce immense quantities of information. They publish books and scholarly articles written by academics and practitioners. They conduct surveys, gather data, and publish copious statistics. They create international technical standards and recommendations on tasks that nation states undertake cooperatively. Given the breadth, scope, importance, and complexity of this work, as well as the number of IGOs operating in the world today, Government Information professionals need a strong understanding of IGO missions, documentation, data, and publishing practices.

IGO Information Origins

Although the earliest IGOs, such as the Concert of Europe, the Universal Postal Union, and the International Telecommunication Union date back to the nineteenth century, the twentieth century is when most IGOs formed and began to produce information of civic and scholarly interest. The League of Nations (LoN) deserves special mention here, although it is also notorious for its failures. Among the most notable (if less acknowledged) was the racism of some of its founders, in particular Woodrow Wilson, who was instrumental in overturning a racial equality proposal for the League Covenant introduced by the Japanese delegation (Shimazu, 2003). Yet it was the League that initiated the intergovernmental norms and practices that continue to this day. The League was the first universal national

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[32] Author's definition. IGOs are defined in the *Yearbook of International Organizations* as bodies "based on a formal instrument or agreement between the governments of nation states, include three or more nation states as parties to the agreement, and have a permanent secretariat performing ongoing tasks" (Union of International Associations, 1992/93, p.1649).

government membership organization, and many IGOs owe their existence to the League or can trace their roots to it. The International Health Organization was the predecessor of the World Health Organization; the Permanent Court of International Justice preceded the International Court of Justice; and the Permanent Central & Opium Board preceded the International Narcotics Control Board (Church and McCaffrey, 2013, p. 28). The Inter-Allied Women's Conference took part in the Paris Peace Conference, and the League of Nations Committee for the Study of the Legal Status of Women investigated and advocated for women's rights. While economic and financial questions were not initially part of the League's mandate, the League's economic and financial section published some of the best compilations on the international financial system during the first half of the twentieth century.

League of Nations publications also offer an underutilized wealth of early twentieth-century global history, and until recently were largely unavailable in digital format. The League of Nations *Statistical and Disarmament Yearbooks Collection*, previously hosted at the Northwestern University Libraries,[33] was one of the few exceptions until the National Library of Scotland completed a digitization project of League publications in Economics and Finance, Health, International Law, Armament, Intellectual Cooperation, and more (2018). An effort is now underway at the League of Nations Archives in Geneva to comprehensively digitize all League documents and publications.

Systems of Documentation

What is the difference between an IGO document and a publication? In 1982, IFLA/GIOPS defined an "official publication" as "any document, printed or produced by any other reprographic method in multiple copies, issued by an organization that may be considered to be an official body, and available to a public wider than that body" and also noted that "the terms official publication and government publication shall be taken to be synonymous" (Johansson, 1982). But with IGOs, there remains an important distinction between "information IGOs publish for public consumption (publications) and information created for internal use in the exercise of their function (documentation)" (Church and McCaffrey, 2013, p. 27). Virtually all IGOs print and sell publications, and many academic, parliamentary, and government libraries have both monographs and serials from the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Union, OECD, and UNESCO. Some of these are standard library reference titles, including the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the *World Development Report*, the *Human Development Report*, and the *World Economic Outlook*.

IGO publications are intended for public consumption and have long been available to libraries. IGO documentation—the information these organizations create for internal use—is another matter. Generally, this information is much more difficult to manage and understand. Among the different systems of documentation used by International Organizations, the UN system is the most recognized, but many IGOs have their own (and often similar) systems of documentation. IGO documents typically reference: 1) the agency

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[33] Previously at https://libguides.northwestern.edu/c.php?g=451276&p=7286618; now on the Internet Archive.

that produces the item; 2) the type of document; and 3) the date or session when it was issued. It is therefore helpful to understand not only what these symbols represent, but also the purpose of the bodies within an international bureaucracy. To use UN documents effectively, it helps to be familiar with the main UN bodies and their corresponding documents symbols ("A" for General Assembly; "S" for Security Council, "E" for Economic and Social Council, and "ST" for Secretariat). It is also helpful to understand the types of documents the agencies create, which can also be determined from the symbol. UN official records, for example—the final and official outcomes of the work of various UN bodies—are marked "official record" on the title page. These include meeting records, voting information, resolutions and decisions, reports of major organs, and budgets. Speeches made in the General Assembly and Security Council are denoted with the document symbol "PV" (from the French, "proces verbal"). Other meeting records, such as those from General Assembly main committees, are issued in summary format, denoted by "SR" for "summary record."

The system is complicated, but there seems to be no other option. Due to the sheer number of committees, commissions, working groups, ad-hoc working groups, resolutions and decisions, annual reports, meeting records, assemblies, conferences, sessions, special sessions, emergency special sessions, letters, concluding observations, rules of procedure, provisional rules of procedure, policy reviews, and quadrennial comprehensive policy reviews (one could go on) this information can be difficult to find and interpret. A very important skill for the international documents specialist is to be able to determine which documents have value and which are more likely to be ephemeral.

The UN is not the only IGO that uses such a classification system: it is one among many. Until recently, this was not an issue, since many IGOs distributed few to no documents outside the organization proper; at best, they maintained a limited patchwork of depositories, typically at national or parliamentary libraries (Schaaf, 1990). But in a digital era characterized by the vocal demands of civil society, many, if not all, IGOs have "liberated" their documents and now publish them online. Table 3.1 shows a sample of organizations that publish documents using these specialized systems of classification.

Table 3.1 Sample IGO systems of documentation

Organization	Information System	Web Site
United Nations	UN Digital Library	https://digitallibrary.un.org/?ln=en
European Union	Official Documents	https://europa.eu/european-union/documents-publications/official-documents_en
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	FAO Governing and Statutory Bodies	http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome
World Health Organization	WHO Governance	https://apps.who.int/gb/
World Bank	World Bank Documents and Reports	http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/home
UNESCO	UNESDOC	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ulis

International Fund for Agricultural Development	IFAD Corporate Documents	https://www.ifad.org/en/corporate-documents
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	OSCE Documents Library	https://www.osce.org/resources/documents
International Atomic Energy Agency	IAEA Documents & Conventions	https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents
International Labour Organization	ILO Digital Repository (Labordoc)	https://labordoc.ilo.org/
World Trade Organization	WTO Documents Online	https://docs.wto.org/

There is probably not a person alive with expertise in all these systems of documentation. Each one represents a specialized body of knowledge. Explanations of these systems are sometimes not even published. As Schaaf (1975) elucidates, the origins of these classifications and rationale for developing them can be obscure: the well-known United Nations and European Union systems of documentation are among the exceptions. To be confronted with such symbols—without a key to how they work—can be likened to trying to understand and navigate library call numbers without an official classification system.

A large and growing number of regional organizations also have systems of documentation. Regional organizations can be defined as a sub-set of IGOs encompassing traditional geographic boundaries (such as continents, sub-continents, or maritime regions) as well as political, economic and trading alliances. Among these include the various "regional development banks" (such as the Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and African Development Bank) as well as organizations created to foster economic and political cooperation or integration. These include the various regional "unions," "leagues," and "communities," such as the European Union or African Union. But there are also customs unions, councils, communities, and cooperation organizations, as well as organizations based on historic, linguistic, or cultural heritage—e.g. the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. Many of these have their own systems of documentation and publications and even their own depositories[34].

Depository Libraries and Documentation Centers

The first IGO depository library system was initiated by the League of Nations. While its origins remain obscure, the system dates back at least to the early 1920s, and by 1935 there were approximately 90 complete depositories worldwide, receiving both documents and publications (League of Nations Secretariat, 1923). The LoN system later gave birth to the United Nations Depository Library Programme, which still includes 351 institutions, although with the cessation of print deposit at many of them the designation is less meaningful.

The UN depository library system is well documented, and the rules, expectations, and procedures can be found at https://www.un.org/en/library/page/information-depository-libraries. The primary document governing UN depositories is entitled *Principles Governing United Nations Depository Libraries* (United Nations Secretariat, 1995). The original version, which has been revised several times, unequivocally states: "In order to make the

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[34] The Asian Development Bank and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe are examples of two regional organizations that had depository library programs,

documents and publications of the United Nations freely available throughout the world there shall be maintained a system of depository libraries to which documents and publications will be sent without charge" (United Nations Secretariat, 1955). The vision of the founders (supported by the American Library Association) was to make UN documents and publications freely available to world citizens. That vision has arguably diminished over time, as Church (2015) demonstrates in an article on the history of the UN depository library program. At present, with some exceptions, UN Depository Libraries no longer receive print documents and publications and rely exclusively on digital access for current information.

The European Union's system of EU Documentation Centres and Depository Libraries is also well documented. In the United States there were once over 50 EU Depository Libraries, whose operations were coordinated by the US Delegation of the European Communities (EC) and later the European Union (EU). The website detailing the scope and the participants of this program has been taken down and can only be found on the Internet Archive.[35] In the past, however, much EU and EC information was received and still can be found in these libraries. A community of European Documentation Centres (EDCs) Centers also still exists and is listed at https://europa.eu/european-union/contact/meet-us_en. These institutions house historical material on print and microform, help users find EU publications, documents, and data, and offer training and outreach sessions for their communities.

It is an obscure footnote in the history of government information that many other IGOs also have or had depository library systems, typically on much smaller scales. Many were limited to National libraries, libraries at other International Organizations, or academic libraries specializing in the IGO area in question. Table 3.2 shows a selective list of these systems and their directories:

Table 3.2 Sample IGO depository library and documentation center websites

International Government Organization	Depository Program Details
Asian Development Bank	https://www.adb.org/publications/depository-library-program
European Union	https://europa.eu/european-union/contact/meet-us_en
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	http://www.fao.org/publications/fao-depository-libraries/en/
International Civil Aviation Organization	https://www.icao.int/publications/Pages/depository-libraries.aspx

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[35]See https://web.archive.org/web/20170803171428/http://www.euintheus.org/resources-learning/academic-resources/depository-libraries-in-the-us/

International Labour Organization	https://www.ilo.org/inform/about-us/partner-libraries/lang--en/index.htm
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	https://www.osce.org/secretariat/70076
United Nations	https://library.un.org/content/united-nations-depository-library-programme
World Bank	http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/899641468137712205/Directory-of-libraries-the-World-Bank-Depository-Library-Program
World Trade Organization	https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/db_e.htm

Historical documentation and records of these organizations is in danger of becoming lost in the mists of time. One can also find evidence of a system of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) depositories[36] and others like UNESCO and the World Health Organization (with some effort) by looking through the literature (Schaaf, 1975). Other institutions received documents as gifts: Princeton University Library received documents from the International Atomic Energy Agency and UNESCO dating back to the 1960s. A listing of all these would help, but until this is compiled, there is a risk that records of this system of distributed government information may be lost.

Access to IGO Information

The era of IGO depository libraries is thus arguably drawing to a close, but fortunately much IGO information is now online. Although the IGO systems can be complex, there are several information-seeking strategies for accessing them effectively.

Reference Tools

Reference volumes can be effective sources for locating IGO information. Key publications (sometimes called "flagships") offer summaries of issues and/or provide citations to important documents. The *Yearbook of the United Nations* (http://unyearbook.un.org/) is a primary example. Issued annually since 1946, the *Yearbook* presents over a thousand pages of text summarizing important UN topics, ranging from international security to public health, climate change, and refugees. It contains the full text of important resolutions and citations for hundreds of documents. The experts do the work of deciding which documents, out of the thousands the UN publishes in a given year, are most germane to a topic. Table 3.3 displays a selective listing:

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[36] Although the information distributed was very insubstantial. In the words of one Stanford University faculty: "milquetoast" (see https://news.stanford.edu/pr/03/gattstory1015.html).

Table 3.3 Selected IGO flagship publications

Publication Title	Organization	Web Site
Yearbook of United Nations	United Nations	https://unyearbook.un.org/
World Development Report	World Bank	https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr/wdr-archive
Human Development Report	United Nations Development Programme	http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/global-reports
World Economic Outlook	International Monetary Fund	https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO
State of Food and Agriculture	Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa
State of the World's Children	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	https://www.unicef.org/sowc/
World Investment Report	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	https://unctad.org/en/Pages/publications.aspx
The Global Report	UN Refugee Agency	http://reporting.unhcr.org/publications

There are also IGO statistical yearbooks. With the advent of online data, these are not as important as they once were, but in some instances, they remain crucial for discovering facts and figures. Among these are the *OECD Factbook*, the *Statistical Yearbook of the United Nations*, the *EU in the World*, and the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*. The various UN Regional Commissions also publish such yearbooks, including the *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific, the African Statistical Yearbook,* and so on*.* The UN Statistics Division maintains a list of many UN Statistical Publications (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publications/). For historical statistics, print copies may be the only sources, and should not be overlooked.

Another strategy is to consult online research guides. The United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library (DHL) in New York has an excellent series of these (http://research.un.org/), as does the International Labour Organization[37] and the World Bank[38]. IGO librarians have even constructed their own databases. *UN Member States on the Record,* published by the DHL, (https://library.un.org/unms) provides information about statements, speeches, and sponsored resolutions of UN Member States over time. Library research guides, particularly at law libraries, are plentiful. Last, but not least, academics often write about IGOs and cite documents in their research.

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[37] See https://www.ilo.org/inform/online-information-resources/research-guides
[38] See https://researchguides.worldbankimflib.org/WBGInfoguide

Documentation Databases

When one does need to look for documentation, there are a number of substantial—and at times unwieldy—IGO digital information systems available. The United Nations currently has two of these: the *UN Digital Library* and the *Official Documents System* (ODS). These offer access to a wealth of UN Documentation, but unless one is familiar with the structure of the UN system, the user may become frustrated and potentially misinformed. The UN *Official Documents System* (https://documents.un.org/), for example, functions as a general UN documents search engine, allowing users to locate documents from 1993 to present. It also uses interoperable technology across multiple UN information systems. But it is not user-friendly, and functions best if the user knows the symbol of the document in question. The novice user who attempts a random keyword search will often get overwhelmed with hundreds of ephemeral documents with little guidance on which ones are impactful.

This problem is becoming less common. The UN Digital Library (https://digitallibrary.un.org/), for example, is a new and much improved system which provides users with needed facets and limits, such as date, UN body, document type, etc. It has a strong advanced search function where one can specify multiple fields (author, title, abstract and full text) and provides access to voting records, maps, images, and sounds. Another example is the World Bank "Documents and Reports" database (https://documents.worldbank.org/). The same principle applies: if a keyword search yields too many results, applying limits to narrow the scope is helpful. The "topic" categories of this database are astonishing: there are 691 of these, defined by the Bank as a "hierarchical classification scheme which provides a representation of the bank's knowledge domains" (World Bank, n.d.). Most World Bank documents are tagged with dozens of these, some of which do not seem within the Bank's domain of expertise (there is a section on "culture," for example, with 13 subcategories). There are also World Bank "document types," defined by the bank as a "controlled reference source that identifies the type of content contained in institutional collections" (World Bank, n.d.). Altogether there are 192 different types of World Bank documents and publications.

The World Bank deserves praise for this, but the complexity of IGO information retrieval remains staggering. These organizations produce copious amounts of information, and most of it remains entrenched within these digital warehouses. And there are many others, which have similar strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes these systems include a mixture of documents and publications, at other times not. A system with a name ending in "doc" is usually a clue that one is searching a documents database: among these are UNESDOC (UNESCO) and ILODOC (ILO). In some cases, the terminology is so complex that the organization has created its own thesaurus. The United Nations and UNESCO each have one of these.

Publications

There have been substantial and arguably "revolutionary" steps taken to improve access to IGO documents and publications over time. A decade ago, many IGO documents were simply not accessible—selected IGOs considered them to be confidential or purely of internal interest. Publications were typically sold in print, or later within subscription-based digital libraries. Some IGO "early adopters" began posting free publications online as soon

as it was feasible for them to do so, but the degree of access was uneven. With the growing demands of civil society organizations (including IFLA) for access to information, the open-access trend in IGOs has gained traction. The Bretton Woods institutions of the World Bank and IMF deserve much praise for making their publications accessible in free online repositories.

Table 3.4 Selected open-access IGO publication sites and repositories

Repository Name	Web Site
World Bank Open Knowledge Repository	https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/
Asian Development Bank Publications	https://www.adb.org/publications
IMF eLibrary	https://www.elibrary.imf.org/
UNESCO Digital Library (UNESDOC)	https://unesdoc.unesco.org/
IAEA Publications	https://www.iaea.org/publications
Publications Office of the European Union	https://op.europa.eu/en/home
ILO Publications	https://www.ilo.org/global/publications
UN Habitat Knowledge Repository	https://unhabitat.org/knowledge/repository

Table 3.4 shows a selective listing, and overall, we have seen a significant open-access trend. However, there has also been something of a "counter-movement." Cash-strapped IGOs need funding to produce these information systems, and there are competing priorities. There are also IGO inequities. Wealthy international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF can provide open access to publications via state-of-the art digital systems: they have the means to do so. For IGOs who cannot produce such systems, offering content via a commercial provider has been an enticing consideration.

Indeed, IGO content is often overlooked except by those who already know it is there. Many users simply will never consider IGOs as sources in their quest for information. IGO documents and publications often do not show up in Google Scholar or in the Indexing and Abstracting databases that libraries purchase. They are often not cited, or cited poorly. This is the paradox of the grey literature information domain: as Toby Green from the OECD once remarked in a personal communication, it is a "lost world" (Green, 2016).

Subscription-Based Digital Libraries

Due to this issue, several IGOs developed subscription-based digital libraries. For years, this was the only option to access this content. Given the amount of content in these systems and the availability of catalog records, many libraries chose to invest in them. IGO digital library titles often sound the same (see Table 3.5). The first one of these was developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It was initially called "Source OECD" and offered access to OECD digital publications and numeric data, with catalog records for libraries. The World Bank launched the World Bank eLibrary soon after, followed by the IMF eLibrary and a host of others. Much later, the UN launched the UN iLibrary, in partnership with the OECD and using their platform. The OECD platform is used by several other IGOs, all called "iLibraries," although several are being renamed, phased

out, or becoming open access at the time of this writing. Table 3.5 displays a selected list of these products.

Table 3.5 Selected IGO subscription-based digital libraries

Digital Library	Website
OECD iLibrary	https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/
World Bank eLibrary	https://elibrary.worldbank.org/
UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) eLibrary	https://www.e-unwto.org/
UN iLibrary	https://www.un-ilibrary.org/
Commonwealth iLibrary (OA beginning in 2021)	https://www.thecommonwealth-ilibrary.org/
Nordic iLibrary (OA beginning in 2021)	https://www.nordic-ilibrary.org/
ITU iLibrary (Ending in 2021)	https://www.itu-ilibrary.org/
WTO iLibrary	https://www.wto-ilibrary.org/

These digital libraries often share a feature: "freemium" access, where users can search the database at the chapter level and read publications—but not download them. In the case of the UN iLibrary, the database may inform the user that a download is not available when the publication is in fact open access elsewhere in the UN system. To make matters more confusing, some IGOs also license publications to commercial ebook providers. The result of this is that a library might have access to both a free publication and a firewalled publication, or even two firewalled publications, sometimes in the same catalog record. At the time of this writing, several IGOs are migrating their publications to open access platforms, or commercial systems managed independently from the OECD, so the situation continues to evolve.

Access to IGO Libraries

Members of the public do not typically have easy access to IGO library buildings. While this can sometimes be arranged for (e.g. for visits to archives) these libraries are staffed primarily to serve delegates, institutional bureaucracies, and the occasion scholar. While systems of depositories exist to address the needs of citizens, in practice these depositories are often few and far between, and thus often inaccessible to citizens, even those who know of their existence. Academic libraries also purchase IGO materials, but these too can also be difficult for members of the public to visit. For years, the information products of many International Organizations, it is fair to say, remained largely inaccessible for many.

This era is largely over. We are now seeing a democratization of IGO information resources as well as challenges for preservation and bibliographic control. Although online access is now flourishing, a significant corpus of IGO information nevertheless remains within the vaults of physical libraries. To access this content, one often needs to visit in person and consult specialized resources.

Print and Microform

For historical research, print and microform cannot be overlooked. They are sometimes the only options. Numerous IGO publications can be found in library catalogs: however, the further back one goes, the harder it becomes to find these. The modern information professional may be astonished to discover that item-level access to historical IGO documents and publications is not always available. League of Nations and UN documents were often bound in sets and organized by session. In order to retrieve such titles, one may need to locate the League of Nations Sales Number or Document Symbol by consulting titles like *A Repertoire of League of Nations Serial Documents, 1919-1947* (Ghebali & Yves, 1973) or the *League of Nations Documents, 1919-1946; a Descriptive Guide and Key to the Microfilm Collection* (Reno, 1975).

Upon rare occasions one may also need to consult historical print United Nations indexes, such as those listed below. Historical indexing practices, in which one may need to be familiar with IGO acronyms and systems of documentation, can be bewildering, and make discovery of older UN documents a daunting experience. Yet these can be particularly useful when looking for speeches and voting records:

- *Check List of United Nations Documents*, 1946-1949
- *Index to Proceedings of the Economic & Social Council*, 1952-
- *Index to Proceedings of the General Assembly*, 1949-
- *Index to Proceedings of the Security Council*, 1964-
- *Index to Proceedings of the Economic & Social Council*, 1946-
- *Index to Proceedings of the Trusteeship Council*, 1952-
- *United Nations Documents Index*, 1950-1973
- *UNDEX*, 1970-1978
- *UNDOC: Current Index*, 1979-1996

Fortunately, the Readex *AccessUN* database indexes UN documents back to 1946, with limited full text. Originally intended as a discovery tool for the Readex UN microfiche collection, one can still use it to identify historical UN documents by symbol. The United Nation *Indexes to Proceedings* have also been digitized and are available from the Dag Hammarskjöld Library website at https://library.un.org/index-proceedings.

Some depository libraries understandably chose to withdraw the vast quantities of UN documents received (over 100,000 annually at times) and subscribe to the Readex UN microfiche set as an archival substitute. Other libraries withdrew the numerous "masthead" working documents, and only retained the final UN official records. Some libraries chose to retain everything, but it is unclear how many—which is cause for concern, as these libraries are the only locations outside the UN where print UN documents exist. In most instances, documents were not cataloged at the item level; they were bound together by session or document symbol. Until more UN documents become available in digital format (the backlog is substantial), the best strategy is to identify the document symbol and request it from a UN depository. If the depository does not own it, librarians can contact the staff at the UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, who can assist in locating, scanning, and dispatching documents.

Historic microform collections are relevant for other IGOs as well. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN distributed substantial quantities of publications and documentation to their network of depositories on microform, while also offering publications for sale. The *Official Journal of the European Union* is online, but is still distributed and sold on microfiche by Proquest from 1954 (according to them, this is "the only full archive of this content available anywhere" (Proquest). Other historical microform collections are detailed by Robert Schaaf and include collections for the UN Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Organization for American States, and UNESCO (Schaaf, 1988).

Digitization

Some IGOs have made impressive strides to digitize their historical collections, making this information accessible at a scale previously unimagined. Some of them (such as the League of Nations) are attempting to scan the entire corpus of their publicly available information. Unfortunately, such projects are not always readily identifiable, and may be integrated into current discovery systems, making the scope of what is included challenging for users. Some of these are listed in Table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6 Selected IGO digitized collections

Digital Collection	Website
United Nations	https://digitallibrary.un.org/
World Bank	https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports
International Telecommunication Union	https://www.itu.int/en/history/Pages/DigitalCollections.aspx
International Labour Organization	https://www.ilo.org/inform/online-information-resources/ilo-collections/
UNESCO	https://digital.archives.unesco.org
World Trade Organization/GATT	https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/gattdocs_e.htm
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	https://www.osce.org/resources/documents

These organizations are to be applauded, but not every international organization has embarked on such projects. There is also overlap—for example, the World Bank and UN sites noted above contain both born digital and digitized documents.

Statistics, Surveys and Data

The amount of statistical information published by International Organizations is vast. Virtually every IGO compiles data from national governments or generates their own statistics and data from surveys. For years, much of this information was locked behind firewalls and/or sold as part of IGO digital library packages, but with few exceptions, this is no longer the case[39]. Much needless bickering also takes place about the difference

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[39] One exception is the UN World Tourism Organization: see https://www.unwto.org/data.

between "data" and statistics. The distinction is not difficult to grasp, so a brief explanation follows.

Statistics

Statistics can be defined as the results of statistical calculations performed on a data set, often obtained from surveys or administrative data. IGOs publish copious statistics gathered from their own surveys. The underlying data they often keep to themselves, although this is changing. But IGOs also compile and consolidate data from surveys and administrative data gathered by member governments. In such cases, the IGOs act as statistical clearinghouses: they standardize the data, allowing users to select and compare standardized metrics across countries and regions, and publish it in official languages. Table 3.7 has examples of freely available statistical databases. (Governments use the words "data" and "statistics" interchangeably, adding to the confusion).

Table 3.7 Sample IGO statistical databases

Statistical Database Name	Web Site Address
UN Data	https://data.un.org/
World Bank Databank	https://databank.worldbank.org
FAOStat	http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data
ILOStat	https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/
Human Development Data	http://hdr.undp.org/en/data
IMF Data	https://www.imf.org/en/Data
Eurostat	https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat
OECD.Stat	https://stats.oecd.org/

Many of these systems contain "aggregate data." The total metric tons of exported potatoes, automobiles manufactured, or registered live births are aggregate data, not statistics. Often these are derived from "administrative data"—tallies made by governments in the course of doing their work or as required by law. Many of the databases above contain both aggregate data and statistics. Developing expertise to locate this information efficiently requires skill and experience, so do not hesitate to contact a government agency if help is needed. Using secondary literature to track down elusive statistics and data can also be productive.

Numeric Data

A data set is called microdata when the "unit of observation" is a person, household, or firm— as opposed to aggregate data, where the unit of observation is typically a country, state, city, county, etc. Microdata is said to be "anonymized" when steps are taken to protect the identities of the respondents. IGOs do not always publish their microdata, but this is changing. The World Bank publishes catalogs that provide strong global coverage of microdata, including the *International Household Survey Network* (https://ihsn.org/) and the *World Bank Microdata Library* (https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/home). To access the data, one may need to register with the organization that created it and agree to the terms of use. This is not trivial, since misuse of the data can lead to legal consequences. Before directing users to such data, it is prudent to help them determine whether or not the

data is appropriate by examining any online codebooks or questionnaires (codebooks typically provide descriptions of variables, geographic coverage, time periods, and characteristics of the respondents).

Frequently used IGO microdata sets include the *World Bank Living Standards Measurement and Impact Evaluation Surveys*; the *UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys*; and the *World Health Organization's Multi-Country Studies*. *IPUMS*, the world's largest population database, has census microdata for countries around the world as well as a host of demographic, labor, and health surveys (University of Minnesota Population Center, 2021).

Archives

In recent years IGO archives have also undergone substantial changes (Church, 2019). For many decades, access to archives at some IGOs was virtually impossible: everything at the World Bank and IMF, for example, was for internal use only. At other times, archives were theoretically open but access was prohibitively bureaucratic: until recently, to use the FAO archives one needed to secure permission from a country's FAO representative. Things have improved (although obstacles remain) and many IGOs now publish detailed online finding aids according to international standards. The League of Nations Archives in Geneva, the UN Archives in New York, and the Historical Archives of the European Union are examples, and more IGOs are taking steps to make this material more accessible.

What is troubling, though, is the lack of an *access to information policy* at many International Governmental Organizations. The World Bank (2015) has a policy, as does UNESCO (n.d.), but there is no such policy for the United Nations as a whole, nor for many agencies in the so-called UN "family" of organizations. In other instances, it can be difficult to determine whether or not an IGO even has an archive, if it is open to the public, and how to access the material. In the modern era of open government, this is unacceptable. As noted by the UN Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression in 2017, "The United Nations does not have an access-to-information policy that applies to every department and specialized agency; it does not even have ad hoc standards to provide a response to access-to-information requests" (United Nations General Assembly, 2017). It may be up to the archivist or the agency or department that created it to determine whether a document can be declassified. Ironically, "Access to Information" is a target of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Indicator 16.10) which is to "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements" (United Nations. Department for Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.).

IGO Preservation Policies

All this begs the question about IGO digital preservation. It has been some time since a survey of IGO digital preservation policies has been conducted, but an Internet search uncovers few such policies. In the absence of such a policy, IGO regimes may arbitrarily remove their content. Instances of IGO publication take-downs have occurred but do not seem egregious. More disturbing and better documented is the removal of IGO data (Church, 2018). The United Nations Development Programme, for example, has continually updated its methodologies for the famous *Human Development Index* (HDI) and has deleted

or overwritten previous versions.[40] The International Labour Organization has also removed significant quantities of data when they migrated from their legacy statistical system, LABORSTA. The ILO Statistical office disclosed this to me via personal correspondence ("a massive cleaning exercise was done when moving data from LABORSTA to ILOSTAT and this is why some data can be missing in ILOSTAT compared to the previous system") (Church, 2018).

If flaws were found or revisions needed to a data set, change of course is necessary. But the best practice is to archive the superseded data and document the changes. Deleting data, even poor data, makes transparency and reproducibility problematic or impossible. Various efforts have been made to archive government information on many levels, with some libraries subscribing to services such as Archive-it in order to intentionally curate and preserve IGO digital collections. But labor, costs, and storage are concerns, and given the breadth and scope of IGO material, most of these efforts have failed to solve the problem.

The Evolving Role of the Information Professional

This chapter attempts to summarize the scope and issues of information created by IGOs, and to provide guidance and strategies for information professionals seeking to use and access these sources. IGO information is vast, complex, and often difficult to understand. It is a specialized and important domain of expertise, and to not acknowledge its value by "consigning it to the basement" (literally or symbolically) deprives library users of access to crucial sources needed for scholarly research and public awareness. It is grey literature of global importance. The modern IGO information professional thus not only needs to understand traditional forms of IGO documentation and publications: they need to be familiar with a multitude of complex and swiftly changing IGO databases. They need to be increasingly numerate and to be able to work with different types of numeric data. At a time when so much information and data are online, users also risk drowning in a glut of it, or simply finding and using the wrong content. Interpretation of international government information and being able to discern what is crucial and what is ephemeral matter more than ever.

Global-minded libraries also need to foster IGO expertise, preserve collections, and advocate for open access policies. Access to IGO information is an advocacy issue we cannot ignore, and one that groups such as the American Library Association (ALA, 2016) and IFLA have acknowledged (IFLA, 2019) in public statements and resolutions. At a time when democratic erosion is increasing, now more than ever, the government information professional needs to include advocacy and a passion for access to information in their professional toolkit.

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[40] The current version http://hdr.undp.org/en/data has different values and years than the historic version at https://web.archive.org/web/20170301010747/http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/data.

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Korean Government Publications: Publishing, Preservation and Access Policies

Jungwon Yang, University of Michigan Library

Nature and Scope of Korean Government Publications

In Korea, the nature and scope of Korean government publications and their publication, preservation, and accession policies are governed by the *Public Records Management Act*. This act was completely amended by Act No. 8025 on October 4th, 2006. The most recent amendment occurred in November 2014. According to Article 3.1 of the *Public Record Management Act* (PRMA) in Korea, public records are materials published by a public institution in order to communicate the purpose of the government institution or the performance of its activities to the public, and the term "public institution" means a state agency, a local government, and any other institution prescribed by presidential decree (Republic of Korea, 2014, Article 3.1).[41] The scope of Korean government publications, therefore, includes not only publications from executive, legislative, and judicial government agencies of the central government, but also those from local governments and legislatures, government-invested enterprises, and research institutions.

The act also defines what kinds of government publications should be archived in an archive management institution. According to Article 3.2 of the PRMA, "archival information and data in all forms, such as documents, books, leaders, cards, drawings, audiovisual materials, electronic documents, web archives, and administrative information data sets which are sent, received, or stored by public institutions, are classified as needing to be preserved in archive management institutions" (Republic of Korea, 2014, Article 3.2).

Government Publishing Policies and Practices

Modern Korean government publications and their depository system were developed in the 1950s in the aftermath of the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910–1945) and the Korean War (1950–1953). The nature and scope of government publications at that time was quite limited. Due to the economic success of the 1960s, the Korean government was most interested in collecting information about the central and local administrations. In 1970, through *Executive Order No. 5150*, an advisory council for the Control of Government Publications was created under the Office of the Prime Minister in order to review the most effective methods for centralizing government publication activities and for distributing official publications. This advisory council was reassigned to the Ministry of Education after a 1990 amendment. In December 1991, the Government Publication Office (GPO) was created as part of the Ministry of Information.

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[41] For more detailed information about the Scope of Public Institutions, please see Article 3, Enforcement Decree of the Public Records Management Act (Enforcement Decree of the Public Records Management Act 2016)

In 1998, the Ministry of Information was absorbed by a new Ministry of Culture and Tourism, so the GPO office has been reassigned as part of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In reality, the GPO does not have the authority to centralize all government publishing materials. While the number of government publications issued by various agencies has dramatically increased since the 2000s, no centralized or systematic government publication distribution methods have yet been adopted. The majority of government publications are compiled and edited by an issuing government agency. They are often printed by private printers, and are distributed by the issuing agency for free, or are sold through designated sales centers.[42]

The most effective resource to help users understand the status of government publications in Korea is the *Dae HanMinGuk GukGaSeoJi* (National Bibliography of the Republic of Korea), which is issued by the National Library of Korea (2011) or NLK. According to Article 17 of the *Library Act of 1963*, the NLK collects a list of government publications, which are deposited in the NLK (1945–present), the Korean Educational Research and Information Service (KERIS), the Korean Academic Libraries (KOLIS-NET), and the Association of Korean Special Libraries. Until 2004, the *DaeHanMinGuk GukGaSeoJi* was published in a CD-ROM format. Between 2005 and 2012, this publication was issued in DVD format. The *GukGaSeoJi of 2013, 2014, and 2015* is available as an e-book on the official website of the NLK. Both e-pub and PDF formats are available, and all information in these publications is open to the public. In 2016, the NLK developed a search engine service for national bibliography information (National Library of Korea, 2011).

Korean Government Publications Classification

The National Archives of Korea, one of the government publications depository institutions, provides the following Korean government publications classification (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 The National Archives of Korea, classification of government publications[43]

Type	Contents
Yearbook	A book published annually to record, highlight, and commemorate the past year of a government, including government agencies' performances, event information, and statistics
White paper collection	A government report or guide that informs readers concisely about a complex issue and helps readers understand an issue and make a decision
Statistics collection	All aspects of data (e.g., census data)

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[42] For more detailed information regarding the history of government agencies related to Korean government publications, please see (Wilson, 2000) and (Kim, 2008).

[43] The laws and statutes were classified as a type of government publication classification by the National Archive of Korea (NAK) in 2006 (Jeon, 2011). In the current classification of the NAK, laws and statutes are no longer classified as a type of government publication. These laws and statutes, however, can be searched by keyword search or issuing institution on the NAK's website (National Archives of Korea, Government Publications)

Business manual	A concise book on work contents and procedures, written so that public authorities can understand and utilize the relevant work (e.g., a business manual for water pollution management)
Business report	A project report from public institutions related to their performance results (e.g., a child abuse prevention project report)
Research, survey, and review report	A research report conducted by public institutions
Feed and history of a public institution	(Feed): Editing and publishing process record of a government agency while the agency conducts research (History of a public institution): Publications related to history of specific institutions, people, and events
Bronchus	Publications issued by public organizations to inform about trends and events
Training Materials	Materials created by public organizations to promote the effectiveness of public relations, education, etc.
Meeting Materials	Materials created by a public agency for the purpose of a meeting, including congress hearings, congress meeting records, and reports of international conferences
List	Publications issued by a list of records, documents and documents related to a specific subject, fields, etc. (e.g., lists of agenda items of a State Council)
Speeches and Lectures	Lecture manuscripts. Materials made for a public institution's gathering speech.
Exhibition, illustration books, photo books	Pictures and photographs collected by public institutions.

Access and Preservation: Depository Libraries and Preservation Policies

The government publications of Korea are currently deposited in three public institutions: The NLK, The National Assembly Library of Korea (NAL), and The National Archive of Korea (NAK). These institutions are called *Nappon ToSŏgwan*. Although the word *Nappon ToSŏgwan* is translated as "depository library," it has a very different meaning conceptually from the way that "depository libraries" are used for government publications in other countries. For example, U.S. federal government agency publications are deposited in designated libraries by the Government Printing Office. Based on the *Depository Library Act of 1962*, all federal government documents are available to U.S. citizens from these depository libraries for free. In Korea, the deposit of government publications is made by publishers, not by the GPO. The original purpose of depository libraries in Korea was for preserving cultural heritage, protecting the copyright of publications, and supporting communication among government agencies. The importance of public access to

government publications and the legal framework to support Korean citizens' right to know has been well recognized since the 1990s.

The National Library of Korea (NLK)

The NLK was established in October 1945 after four decades of Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945). The NLK was the successor to the Chosun Government General Library, established in 1923. In 1949, the library was legally authorized as a national library of Korea by a presidential ordinance regarding the "Organization of the National Library". The 1991 Library and Reading Promotion Law stipulated that the NLK is "responsible for the acquisition, processing, analysis, accumulation, and preservation of books, other types of documents, and audiovisual materials, as well as making them readily available to the public" (Wilson & Choi, 2001, p. 484). Western books in the NLK are classified according to the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system, while the Korean Decimal Classification (KDC) system is employed for East Asian books and non-book materials, as well as for old and rare books (Wilson & Choi, 2001, p. 484).

According to the *Library Law Act of 2016*, all published materials are supposed to be deposited to the NLK within 30 days of the material being published (National Library of Korea, *Legal Deposit and Acquisition, n.d.*)[44]. In principle, online materials are exempt from this mandatory legal deposit to the NLK, but the NLK can request that any online materials be deposited in order to enhance library services, especially for people with disabilities (Republic of Korea, 2012).

Since 1984, the NLK has been operating a Serials room, which includes serials, official government publications, and newspapers. Government publications in the Serials room include publications from the Korean government, international governmental organizations, and the United States government. All publications are stored in microfiche format. As of 2010, the government publications room holds 151,388 volumes of publications (Jeon, 2011, p. 23). Materials published before 2006 are stored in closed stacks, and materials published after 2006 are available in open stacks.

One of the most important responsibilities of the NLK is to manage the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) service. In Article 21 of the *Libraries Act*, the law states that "Any public agency, individual, or organization that intends to publish or produce a book or periodical (including books and periodicals published or produced online) shall be assigned an international standard book or serial number from the National Library of Korea with respect to such book or periodical" (Republic of Korea, 2012). As of 2006, 95.3 percent of books and serials as well as ebooks and e-journals have received an ISBN from the NLK. The NLK, however, has reported that many government publications tend to distribute or sell without an ISBN/ISSN because their

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[44] "Anyone who publishes or produces library materials (excluding online materials, but as prescribed in Article 21, including the online materials with an international standard identifier) shall deposit the library materials in the National Library within 30 days from the date of publication or production. It is also the case for the revised version" (National Library of Korea, Legal Deposit and Acquisition, n.d.)

publishers are not familiar with the fact that a government publication should acquire an ISBN or ISSN from the NLK (Kim, 2008, p. 33).

The National Assembly of Korea Library (NAL)

The NAL, under the National Assembly of Korea, is another national library of Korea. The main purpose of the NAL is to provide resources and information in order to support the legislature's activities, government agencies' affairs audits, bill examination, and budget review and settlement. The NAL, therefore, has been responsible for collecting government publications on behalf of the legislature since the 1960s. The collections of the NAL opened to the public in 1998. The collection of the NAL is also classified according to the DDC system, but is cataloged under Korean Cataloging Rules (KCR). Since 1990, the NAK has provided a government publication room for users and managed these publications separately from other library materials. Services related to government publications ceased in March 1994 due to a lack of physical space and a shortage of librarians. Consequently, government publications are currently managed with other library collections.

According to Article 7 of the *National Assembly Library Act*, "Where any of the public institutions publish or produce library materials, it shall ensure a legal deposit of two copies and a digital file of such library materials is made within 30 days from the date such the library material is published or produced" (Republic of Korea, 1995, Article 7). The online publications of public institutions can also be collected in the same manner. Furthermore, the NAK can request that ten copies of any material from public institutions be submitted if they include materials necessary for legislative activities and international exchange. For library materials that are not published by public institutions, two copies will be deposited in the library within 30 days from the published date. In this case, the library will pay the publisher for these copies.

The National Archive of Korea (NAK)

The NAK was established in 1969 and was originally affiliated with the Ministry of Government Administration. The institution was reassigned to the Ministry of Government Affairs and Home Affairs in 1998. The NAK became the central records management institution according to Article 9 of the PRMA (Republic of Korea, 2014). Currently, the NAK consists of three regional offices (Seoul, Busan, and Daejeon) and one presidential archive (Republic of Korea, 2016, Presidential Archives). According to the PRMA, the responsibility of the NAK can be defined as follows:

- Formulate basic policy on archives management and system improvement;
- Formulate a policy for standardizing archives management;
- Manage archives and compile and manage statistics related to archive management;
- Establish and standardize an electronic archive management system;
- Research methods of archives management, preservation, and dissemination;
- Educate and train persons engaged in archives management;
- Supervise, guide, and evaluate archive management;
- Connect and cooperate with other archives management institutions.

Article 22 of the PRMA states that when a public institution intends to issue a publication, it shall be issued a publication registration number from the NAK. The public institution must

immediately send three copies of the publication to the competent record repository or special record repository, the competent permanent archives management institution, and the NAK.

Access to Digitized Government Publications

The NLK, the NAL, the Research and Development Information Center, the Korean Education and Research Information Center, and the KAIST Science Library planned the "Digital Library Development" project in 1997. This project had three aims: 1) to improve the national information capacity by linking domestic libraries to promote balanced development among the local regions, 2) to expand the sharing system of national information resources, and 3) to provide useful online information to researchers as well as to the general public.

In 1998, 118,000 texts, including the *Chosun Government General Gazette* and other government documents in the NAK, were added to the electronic publishing system. In 2001, a standard Z39.50 protocol-based integrated search service enhanced original text protection by applying encryption/decryption in original text transmission. It also linked copyright and billing systems to enable copyrighted texts. In 2002, the Korean Government focused on improving accessibility for visually impaired library users. As a result, the National Digital Library, the NLK, and the NAL's websites were redesigned to be more accessible to the visually impaired.

Rare books and library materials related to Korean studies and humanities in the National Digital Library were digitized by the NLK. Monographs and serials related to social sciences and government publications were digitized by the NAL. The NAK also digitized government publications, which are preserved in their system.

Copyright and Statistical Database

Copyright Law of Government Publications

According to Article 7 of the *Copyright Act*, the following works are not protected by copyright laws in Korea: 1) The Constitution, acts, treaties, decrees, and municipal ordinance and rules; 2) Bulletins, public notifications, directives and others similar thereto which are issued by the central or local government; 3) Judgments, decisions, orders, or adjudications of courts, as well as rulings and decisions made by administrative appeals procedures, or other similar procedures; 4) Compilations or translations of works as referred to in subparagraphs 1 through 3 which are produced by the central or local government; and 5) Current news reporting which delivers simple facts (Republic of Korea, 2017) .

Laws and regulations, and some publications of judicial and executive offices, therefore, are exempt from copyright. Until 2013, most publications from government-invested enterprises and research institutions, however, could claim the protection of copyright. The publications from these government agencies could claim copyright protection for 50 years from their publication date (Kim, 2010, p. 25). In December 2013, Article 24-2 ("Free Use of Public Works") was inserted into the *Copyright Act*. According to this Article, "A work, produced as part of official duties and already made public by the State or a local government, or a work of which the author's economic right is owned in its entirety by the State or a local government under a contract, may use without permission: provided, that the same shall not apply when the work falls under any of the following cases:

- Where it includes any information pertaining to national security;
- Where it corresponds to an individual's privacy or confidential business information;
- Where it includes any information of which disclosure is limited under other Acts;
- Where it is registered with the Korea Copyright Commission under Article 112, and is managed as State-Owned property under the *State Property Act* or as public property under the *Public Property and Commodity Management Act*" (Republic of Korea, 2017, Copyright Act, Art. 24-2).

Moreover, "when it is acknowledged as necessary for free use, the State or a local government may permit the use of public works among those prescribed in paragraph 4, as prescribed by Presidential Decree, notwithstanding the *State Property Act* or the *Public Property and Commodity Management Act*." This amendment, therefore, allows all government publications owned by the state or local governments to be subject to free use, unless the publication is either related to national security or personal privacy.

Statistical Surveys and Data

As a gateway for Korea's official statistics, the Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS) offers a convenient one-stop service for a full range of major domestic, international, and North Korean statistics. Users can find data on more than 500 subjects, which are aggregated from over 120 domestic government agencies and international governmental organizations (Korean Statistical Information Service, *What is KOSIS?*). The KOSIS database is available in Korean and English versions, but the English version is a little more limited than the Korean version.

As of February 2018, official statistics on 1,083 subjects (93 designated statistics and 990 general statistics) were officially approved under Article 18 or Article 20 of the *Statistics Act* (Republic of Korea, *Statistics Act*, 2017). These statistics are organized by the method of collection/production. 475 statistics are collected via surveys, 475 statistics are administrative statistics, and the remaining 133 statistics are derived. 894 statistics—60 of which are produced by KOSTAT—are produced by government agencies, while 189 statistics are produced by designated organizations that are nongovernmental (Korean Statistical Information Service, *Official Statistics Status*, n.d.).

Public data offered from KOSIS is available to anyone in accordance with the *Act on Promotion of the Provision and Use of Public Data*, and can be used for the purpose of profit. Alternatively, information that is subject to nondisclosure under Article 9 of the *Official Information Disclosure Act*, or information which involves any third person's rights protected under the Copyright Act (or under any other Act and subordinate statutes and the use of which is not duly authorized under the relevant law) cannot be freely used (Republic of Korea, 2017, *Act of Promotion of the Provision and Use of Public Data*).

Conclusion

Since 1998, Korea's publishing, preservation, and accession policies related to government publications have significantly changed. Three depository libraries are officially able to request the deposit of government publications from public institutions. The requirements of an ISBN/ISSN and a publication registration number for government publications help users to more easily access government publications. The development of the National

Digital Library significantly resolved the issues of cost related to the digital government publications' duplicates. The online interface improvement of the National Digital Library website as well as other government publications depository libraries' websites is helpful for enabling visually impaired users to access government information. The newly amended *Copyright Act* related to government publications in 2017 will help users to access government information and use it for noncommercial purposes without unnecessary restrictions. There, are, however, some areas in need of improvement.

- Currently there are three national government publications depository libraries: the NLK, the NAL, and the NAK. The deposit policies of these institutions are quite different from each other. This causes a lot of confusion to the publishers, who might not understand who is responsible for depositing library material, when the deadline for the submission is, and in what format the material needs to be deposited.
- ISBN/ISSN should be mandatory for government publications. According to a 2010 survey related to the usability of government publications, only 20 percent of publishers in public institutions requested an ISBN/ ISSN number from the NLK, due to the fact that they did not believe that government publications need an ISBN/ISSN (Jeon, 2011). When one considers that over 95 percent of total domestic literature acquires an ISSN/ISBN from the NLK, this percentage is clearly low. The NLK should provide information related to ISBN/ISSN to public institutions to highlight the importance of ISBN/ISSN to these publishers.
- The current regulations related to digital materials' deposition, preservation, and accession should be reconsidered. Depository libraries request multiple hard copies when a publisher deposits a book or serial, but the deposit of digital copies is not required. Preservation of digital copies will soon become an important issue because the number of born-digital government publications will increase over time. In order to create digital library materials, the NAK currently scans the hard copy of the original publication, converts it to a TIFF file format, and uploads the TIFF file to a special viewer from which the user cannot download or print the content. Users report that the quality of the scanned file is not good compared to the original texts, and that the special viewer is not easy to navigate in order to access information (Park, 2014, p.177). The quality and usability of digital government publications needs to be improved.

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Government Information and Official Publications in the Russian Federation

Anastasia A. Drozdova, International Affairs Department, Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library

Nature and Scope of Government Publishing in Russia

In Russia, government information is published in a variety of ways. Any statutory acts and laws, the content of which concerns the rights, freedoms, and duties of citizens of the Russian Federation, are published in the mass media for general knowledge. Those normative and legal acts which are adopted by relevant authorities but are not made public cannot in practice be applied, and are not considered to have entered into force. The right to publish decisions of government bodies is available to any media outlet, but the initial publication is carried out only by those that have official status.

According to the Law of the Russian Federation, "On the procedure for the publication and entry into force of federal constitutional laws, federal laws, acts of the Chambers of the Federal Assembly," federal constitutional laws and federal laws are subject to official publication within seven days after the date of their signing by the President of the Russian Federation (Russian Federation, 2019).

These official publications include printed publications in the following three newspapers: *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, *Parlamentskaya Gazeta*, and the *Collection of Legislation of the Russian Federation*. Additionally, since 2011, the website www.pravo.gov.ru, the *Official Internet Portal of Legal Information*, has been considered an official publication.

Rossiyskaya Gazeta was established by the Government of the Russian Federation (Internet portal of Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 2019). The first issue of the newspaper was published on November 11, 1990 as an official publication; state documents come into force after publication therein. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* also targets everyday readers. It has everything from news, reports, and interviews of public officials to comments on documents. The circulation of the newspaper is more than 400,000 copies.

Parlamentskaya Gazeta is the official periodical publication of the Federal Assembly (Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, 2021a). Federal constitutional laws are subject to mandatory publication, meaning that any decision of the Federal Assembly to adopt an act must be published in the *Parliamentskaya Gazeta*. The newspaper was registered with the State Committee of the Russian Federation on the Press on December 10, 1997.

Finally, the *Collection of Legislation of the Russian Federation* (Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, 2021b) is an official periodical that publishes a long list of federal legislation, including: federal constitutional laws, federal laws, acts of the chambers of the Federal Assembly, decrees and orders of the President of the Russian Federation, decisions and orders of the Government of the Russian Federation, decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation on the interpretation of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and on the compliance of the Constitution of the Russian Federation with laws, normative acts of the President of the Russian Federation, the State Duma, the Government of the Russian Federation, and certain provisions of the aforementioned acts (Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, 2019). This journal is published weekly.

Today, the easiest way to obtain most of this information is by visiting the *Official Internet Portal of Legal Information* (www.pravo.gov.ru). The Portal provides:

- official publication of legal acts
- free round-the-clock access to legal acts in "Legislation of Russia" and "Official Publication of Legal Acts"
- public information about new legislative materials of the Russian Federation
- information about the state system of legislative publication and updates about the direction and results of this system, and
- individual spaces and interactive services for visitors to the portal.

The status of the Portal as an official publisher of legal acts is defined by Federal Law No. 289-FZ of October 21, 2011: *On amendments to the federal law*; *On the procedure for the publication and enforcement of federal constitutional laws, federal laws, acts of the Chambers of the Federal Assembly*, and the decree of the President of the Russian Federation of February 2, 2013 No. 88: *On amendments to some acts of the Russian Federation* President (Russian Federation, Official Internet Portal of Legal Information, 2021).

The *Official Internet Portal of Legal Information* includes the following publications:

- Federal Constitutional Laws and Federal laws;
- Acts of the Chambers of the Federal Assembly;
- Decrees and Orders of the President of the Russian Federation;
- International treaties for the Russian Federation and international treaties that are temporarily applied by the Russian Federation (with the exception of inter-agency agreements);
- Decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, the determination of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation on the clarification of the decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, as well as other decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation;
- Decisions and Orders of the Government of the Russian Federation;
- Normative legal acts of federal executive bodies registered by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation;
- Laws and other legal acts of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law "On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection" contains a list of information that cannot be limited. Within this list is an interesting requirement that information about the activities of state and municipal authorities (due to their special social and political significance) may not be limited. The principle of openness to this type of information corresponds to the concept of the "electronic state," in which the state shall use information and communication technologies in public policy to develop civil society, improve the quality of public bodies, and increase the level of citizens' involvement in political processes (Gorbunova, 2016).

It should be noted that in the Russian Federation, for many years, official information was of a closed nature. For example, the Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 98 of February 12, 2003, "On providing access to information on the activities of the

Government of the Russian Federation and Federal executive bodies," established which information was limited to a particular list for federal authorities and other levels of government.

Currently, the main legislative act concerning official government information is the Federal law "On providing access to information on the activities of state bodies and local self-government bodies". Article 1 of this law contains a definition of this kind of information. As defined, this is data created within the limits of its powers by state bodies, their territorial subdivisions, local self-government bodies or their subordinate organizations, or information received by these bodies or organizations (Gorbunova, 2016).

It is worth repeating the fact that Russian legislation refers to these official Internet sites as the main sources of information dissemination about the activities of the government. The federal law "On providing access to information on the activities of state bodies and local self-government bodies" provides a list of information that is subject to mandatory placement on the designated websites. It includes:

- General information on the status and activities of the body;
- Information on norm-setting activities—in particular, texts of normative and legal acts issued by this body;
- Information on the results of inspections conducted by the body or its subordinate organizations;
- Statistical information on the activities of the body and data on its staffing; and
- Information on the work of the body with citizens' requests.

Therefore, provisions of the current legislation are aimed at increasing transparency within the government. However, access to state and official secrets from state and municipal bodies can be limited.

In 2009, the President of the Russian Federation signed Federal Law No. 8 of February 9, 2009, "On providing access to information on the activities of state bodies and local self-government bodies", aimed at increasing the transparency of government bodies for citizens. Today, the tasks defined by the federal law have been further expanded by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of May 7, 2012 No. 601, "On the main directions for improving the system of public administration". The President set the following goals:

- Comprehensive improvement of the quality of official websites of government agencies available on the Internet, which should contain up-to-date information on the activities of state bodies and the provision of public services;
- An increase in the transparency regarding the activities of state bodies and local self-government; and
- The provision of access to publicly available information on the Internet in the form of open data.

In this regard, within the framework of improving public administration, work is being carried out in the following areas:

- Monitoring official websites of state bodies and local self-government bodies;

- Placing publicly available information on the activities of state bodies and local governments onto the Internet in the form of public data.

In 2014, the Government of the Russian Federation approved the Concept of Openness of the Federal Executive Bodies (January 30, 2014 No. 93-r), which defined the main principles and tasks of openness for state bodies. The main goal of this program is to improve the quality of publicly accessible information resources online, and to provide up-to-date information about public services and activities of state bodies.

Official government websites or portals of other executive bodies provide additional important information resources for reliable information in the Russian Federation. Approximately 1 million unique visitors per year access each of the largest official portals of federal executive bodies within the Russian Federation: the Federal Tax Service (https://www.nalog.ru/eng/), the Federal State Statistics Service, the Federal Bailiffs Service, and the Ministry of Education and Science.

In 2011, an automated information system (AIS "Monitoring state websites") was developed to monitor official state websites and local self-government bodies in order to increase the amount of information accessible to the public (https://gosmonitor.ru/). At the time of publication, however, this monitor appears to be no longer accessible.

Open Government Data

Open government data contains information about the activities of state bodies in a format that ensures automatic processing (machine-readable format) and that can be used freely by any person, regardless of format or location. In the movement towards "open government" and "e-democracy" in Russia, open government data plays an important role in promoting the transparency of public authority activities. Providing information on the activities of state bodies and local self-government bodies in the form of open data will allow government, business, and public users to develop and use a variety of information services.

By 2019, there were over 22,000 datasets located in the *Open Data Portal* of the Russian Federation, with 8752 from the federal government, 9904 from regional governments, and 3485 from the municipal level (http://data.gov.ru/site-usage). Data topics include education, housing and public utilities, public health, public procurement, and statistical data. The Open Data Portal of the Russian Federation contains information on 242 socially significant applications or services that use data directly or indirectly (http://data.gov.ru/o-proekte). The Open Data Portal is the core open data ecosystem of the Russian Federation and one of the key tools for implementing state policy in the field of open data.

The Portal focuses on the most current information about federal authorities, regional authorities and other organizations. It includes data sets, links and metadata, information about software products, and information services created from open data. It also publishes legislation that governs the activities of state bodies with regards to data, methods, and journalistic resources.

Today, the main features of the *Open Data Portal* are:

- selecting and searching sets of open data by specific criteria and keywords;

- data visualization using charting tools, graphs and map data;
- automatic downloads of open data from organization's websites;
- the opportunity to help determine subject priorities for data publication;
- conversion to "open formats" and data certification;
- various API applications (search, downloading datasets to specified selection criteria, executing SPARQL queries).

By 2015, the total number of views of data sets in the *Open Data Portal* exceeded 2.5 million units, and the number of download sets exceeded 115,000. Currently, the total number of published sets is more than 22,000.

Digital Preservation

Currently, there are no initiatives for the long-term conservation of born-digital materials from Russian websites. It is common for online content and publications to disappear from the public space and to become inaccessible for a variety of reasons. At the same time, international initiatives such as the Internet Archive (https://archive.org/) ensure the preservation of only the most basic and most visible websites (main web pages). As a result, many materials presented as PDF documents, MS Office files, ZIP archives and other formats are lost forever.

Worldwide, there are dozens of digital preservation initiatives, the main one being the Internet Archive. There are also initiatives to create compulsory web archives of websites and other digital objects in national libraries of most developed countries in the world. Unfortunately, in Russia, the archiving of official web resources, social networks and other materials is completely absent. There are no formal requirements for the compulsory long-term preservation of information.

The only Russian project to mention is *The National Digital Archive of Russia*, which consists of many different projects connected by the general idea of archiving modern digital heritage. One of these projects is "Preserved government". This project conducts regular archiving of official materials in the following areas:

- Official accounts in social networks;
- Official websites of government bodies, officials, and political parties;
- Historical data, key historical documents and, especially, databases.

A number of resources that are inconvenient for archiving in the form of websites have been archived by converting them into databases. For example, this has been done with Dmitry Medvedev's blog, and with a database of voting of deputies of the State Duma (https://ruarxive.org/). They also collect the following data:

- budgets and statistical directories of the USSR, the RSFSR, and the Union republics;
- registers, telephone directories and other historical databases in paper form;
- historical data in tabular form, suitable for conversion to public data.

Thus, it can be concluded that, despite all attempts by the government to make state information more open and convenient to use, much remains to be done. In particular, the Russian Federation must solve the issue of web archiving at the state level.

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Government Information and Official Publications in the United Kingdom

Hannah Chandler, Bodleian Libraries Oxford, & Jennie Grimshaw, British Library, with thanks to Fiona Laing, National Library of Scotland

Nature and Scope of Government Publishing in the UK

This chapter looks at the dynamic and complex environment of official publishing in the United Kingdom (UK) in terms of print and e-formats and the web domain. It explores how the UK's six official legal deposit libraries are working together collaboratively to provide public access to both individual government and parliamentary publications, and to provide access to important websites in perpetuity. The chapter also looks at other initiatives in the UK intended to facilitate access to official publications, such as information services in the form of blogs and special interest groups.

Within the UK, there are six legal deposit libraries: the British Library (which is the national library for the UK), the National Library of Scotland, the National Library of Wales, the Library of Trinity College Dublin, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, and Cambridge University Library. Each legal deposit library was originally entitled to receive one copy of each item published in print in the United Kingdom. From April 6th 2013, this entitlement was redefined by the Legal Deposit Libraries (Non-Print Works) (*Legal Deposit Regulations* 2013) to receive a print copy or one copy in an e-format. For example, under the Regulations, the libraries were entitled to receive one copy of an e-book, e-journal, handheld electronic media, and material from websites. There are approximately another 950 academic libraries in the UK, and figures for 2015 show 3917 public libraries in the UK (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), 2015). By 2019/20 the number of public library service points had dropped to 3667 as cash-strapped local authorities cut spending and sought to do more with less (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), 2020).

Until the advent of publishing on the Internet, the majority of government and parliamentary material was published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), now TSO (The Stationery Office), though some government departments chose to publish independently, a trend accelerated by the privatisation of HMSO in 1996. No library in the UK until the late 1990s systematically catalogued all parliamentary and government material, so it did not necessarily appear in library catalogues. Therefore, it was necessary for information professionals in academic and public libraries to understand and guide users through this large and complex body of information. Finding aids included: indexes to parliamentary publications, departmental publications lists, the HMSO/TSO annual catalogues and electronic indexes such as UKOP. Some departmental material could, however, be hard to track down due to the paucity of bibliographic information on the item itself and it not being included in a publications list or on UKOP; this type of material came to be known as 'grey literature'. Tracing current and historic Parliamentary materials was made easier by large scale digitisation by commercial companies and the appearance of searchable full text databases such as Proquest's *UK Parliamentary Papers* and Dandy Booksellers' *Public Information Online*. Access is fee-based and costs put such resources out of reach of public libraries.

Government literature is also difficult to track down due to changes in the machinery of government. Responsibilities for different areas of government often shift from department to department and are often accompanied by a name change. For example, the Department for Education has had six name changes since the beginning of the 1990s.

Government departments were quick to realise that publishing on the Internet was a cheap and easy way to disseminate information to the general public. From 1994, government departments published a variety of information and documents on the web in a plethora of different house styles. The government web domain was not uniform in appearance or structure. Documents and information were taken down, moved, and often updated without notice. UKOnline (http://www.ukonline.gov.uk) was launched in 2001 as a portal to improve access to the government web estate. This was superseded by Direct.gov (http://www.direct.gov.uk), which not only acted as a portal but provided access to government e-services for the citizen[45]. By 2009, Direct.gov reported traffic of circa 20 million hits a month from 8 million unique users. These are impressive statistics for the time.

However, government websites still differed in appearance and types of search functionalities. Documents were amended or removed with no notice, whilst the number of documents published in print format diminished. As documents were being published only in e-format, government departments stopped producing publications lists, making it very difficult for even the experienced user to know what should be available. Without a doubt, publications and information were being lost. Links cited in documents were very quickly found to be broken. At the time there was no legal means to comprehensively archive the government web estate, either. For the period 1997 to 2006, research by the House of Commons and The National Archives showed that 60 percent of the links in the URLs cited in answers to Parliamentary Questions were broken (Spencer, 2008). Until the 2013 regulations came into force, the only way to guarantee long-term access to a document published on the web was to print it out. Due to the size of the government web estate, this was not practicable. To deal with many of these issues, GOV.UK was launched on 16th October 2012 (Maude, 2012). This brought a large proportion of the scattered government web estate into one site—but it must be noted, not all. Those government websites that migrated to GOV.UK had the same branding, structure, and appearance, with one search box for all. However, at the point of migration a significant amount of material was removed from the live site, causing links cited in books and journal articles to break. Case study research with users of government documents undertaken by the British Library in the Summer of 2020 showed that this was causing intense annoyance to researchers eight years later!

There are also four parliamentary websites in the United Kingdom. The website of the Westminster Parliament is at http://www.parliament.uk. Following devolution in the late 1990s, separate parliaments and assemblies were set up for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and the Northern Ireland Assembly each have their own distinct web estate (UK Parliament, 2019).

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[45] Archived instances of UK Online and Direct.gov can be found on http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk

One of the major changes that has come with publishing material on the web is the form a 'publication' is taking. A publication in print was a distinct entity with a beginning and an end. You could get an idea of size and chronology of a periodical by looking at it on the shelf and reading the description from the bibliographic record. Publications on the web can be dynamic, may be split into parts over different websites, and may consist of Excel data sheets published on the web with no narrative commentary.

Indeed, the concept of the pdf publication as a discrete, free-standing entity is disappearing. Government departments and agencies now publish packages of information, especially guidance, as sets of linked html pages. Attached to the narrative pages are PDF documents, Excel and CSV datasets, infographics and embedded videos. A simple example of this trend is the guidance on *Oil and gas: offshore environmental legislation* published on GOV.UK by the Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/oil-and-gas-offshore-environmental-legislation. These pages include links to primary and secondary legislation on the UK Government's portal at https://www.legislation.gov.uk/, consultation documents and responses in PDF and Word, reporting and application forms, research reports in .pdf, and online interactive planning tools, including maps and templates.

Going forward, the Government Digital Service which is responsible for GOV.UK will expand this approach. As set out in their latest roadmap, they will:

- Structure packages of information around the holistic needs of citizens and businesses, such as navigating Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic, at scale and to open standards;
- Consider models for structuring content to enable updating at scale, optimised search results, and integration with voice assistants (like Siri and Alexa) as well as search engines through structured data mark-up;
- Build pages with a mobile-first mindset;
- Archive non-current content, but provide links to it;
- Include more video content, more images, or graphs;
- Work with third parties to implement a channel-agnostic approach;
- Develop a more personalised approach to government information for users (Cummings, 2020).

Publishing on the Internet can mean quick and cheap dissemination for the publisher. For many publications, this means that they can be easily found and accessed. However, the official publications landscape is not easy to navigate. The researcher needs to be aware that official UK government papers published before approximately 1995 will be in print, but may have been digitised and made available via open access or fee-based databases. From 1995 onwards, an official publication may be available in both print and e-format, in web archives only, in online databases (free or priced) or on current websites.

It must be noted that both expertise in, and access to, government documents in the public library sector have been greatly reduced. By 2016, 343 public libraries had closed, with the loss of 8000 paid staff, whilst over 15,000 volunteer staff were recruited (BBC News, 2016). Thus, access to terminals where the public can view online publications has also been greatly reduced in public libraries. According to the 2019/20 CIPFA survey, the trend of

libraries growing increasingly reliant on volunteer hours has continued, with a reduction in both the number of full-time employees and volunteers but an increase in the total number of volunteer hours worked. Since 2018/19, the total number of paid staff had reduced by 2.4% (from 15,300 to 14,925). In the same year, the number of volunteers had reduced by 2.6% (from 51,478 to 50,128) and their total hours worked had increased by 1.4% (totalling more than 1.8 million volunteer hours) (CIPFA, 2020).

Access to publications in print format has also been reduced by the removal of the Public Library Subsidy, which was introduced in 1924. This entitled public libraries to a 50 per cent discount on print government and parliamentary material from recognised suppliers, in order to ensure access for the general public. However, from September 2015, the discount has been withdrawn for purchase of government or parliamentary publications that are freely available on the Internet (The National Archives, n.d.).

With pressures on budgets and space, both public libraries and academic libraries are now also disposing of their print collections of government and parliamentary material. Over the Summer of 2020, for example, the British Library Government Information Team received donation offers from Hertforshire Public Libraries and Westminster Central Library, which were disposing of their entire UK government publications collections. So, what is being done?

Collaborative Work among the Legal Deposit Libraries

Until April 2013, the legal deposit libraries had a dual role:

- Fulfilling their statutory duty to collect, preserve and make available the information produced in hard copy by the UK central Government, the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and local authorities.
- Ensuring that patrons could access information published by overseas national governments and by inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), such as the United Nations and the European Union.

So the British Library, for example, fulfilled its statutory obligation as a legal deposit library by collecting both formally and informally published UK government documents in print as comprehensively as possible and providing access through its public catalogue, backed up by a specialist reading room reference team and a range of published guides and indexes. In the UK, the 2013 regulations made under the *Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003* provided the legal basis on which the six legal deposit libraries became entitled to delivery of copies of works published online. There are two options for delivery:

- Documents with metadata may be pushed to the libraries by publishers;
- Documents may be pulled from websites in the UK web domain by crawlers or downloaded manually.

The downside of the 2013 regulation is that the documents can only be used by one researcher at a time, on the physical premises of the legal deposit libraries. This mirrors the situation with print, where only one person at a time can read a document. This restriction has been overcome for departmental and agency materials published on GOV.UK by invoking the UK Open Government Licence, which allows downloaded documents to be

stored and made freely available remotely. This licence trumps the 2013 regulation. The libraries are also opening branches around the UK, such as the planned British Library in the North in Leeds City Centre. Such initiatives will expand the locations from which access to e-legal deposit materials will be available (British Library, 2020).

The legal deposit libraries have collaborated to create a shared digital infrastructure for ingest and storage of electronic documents, creation of metadata, and export of records, with links to full text of documents to their public catalogues. They formed a working group in 2014 to work together to ensure that UK government information was collected, preserved, and made accessible in the new digital age. The task is too great for the libraries to work independently of each other as they did in the print world, so the national libraries of Scotland and Wales took responsibility for collecting the publications of their respective governments, while the British Library and the three universities tackled UK central government material. While not formally a legal deposit library, the library of Queens University Belfast has traditionally supported local researchers by comprehensively collecting the print publications of the Northern Ireland Assembly and government. It continues this role in the age of electronic government publishing, and voluntarily streams copies of the documents it collects and the accompanying metadata it creates into the legal deposit libraries' shared digital infrastructure.

The vision of the British Library is for UK government information to be collected and preserved at the level of: 1. the whole website, 2. the 'landing page' which links sets of related documents, and 3. the individual paper. However, as the concept of the individual free-standing document recedes into history, the British Library's focus will have to shift more towards the 'landing page approach', which should enable us to archive the packages of information being produced by government online, together with their attached documents, videos, etc., and related web links, and link to them from records within the legal deposit libraries' catalogues.

Web Archiving

The National Archives (TNA) preserves the online presence of UK central government by capturing its websites and social media (tweets, Flickr images, and YouTube videos) in the UK Government Web Archive (UKGWA) at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/. Users can browse an alphabetical list of sites or search the collection by keyword or phrase. They can limit keyword searches to specific websites. Archived instances of sites are available as far back as the late 1990s, so the service can be used to explore how design has evolved over time, as well as to locate specific documents or information. The UK Government Web Archive is open and available to all worldwide.

The UK Parliament Web Archive at http://webarchive.parliament.uk/ is a collection of 'snapshots' capturing the content of the websites and social media accounts of Parliament at various points over time. Each snapshot reflects what the website or account looked like on the day it was taken. The first snapshot was taken in July 2009, and they currently take three snapshots per year. This ensures that there is a record of the changing information and style of Parliament's websites and social media. The legal deposit libraries also run a major web archiving programme that includes an annual crawl of the entire UK web domain

under the 2013 e-legal deposit regulations. This of course includes national and local government sites, but due to the sheer volume of material in the domain crawl, they do not in many cases benefit from any form of quality assurance check. Certain sites in the domain are designated as key sites and are crawled more frequently. The crawls of these sites are closely monitored and quality assured by the Web Archiving Team based at the British Library. GOV.UK, the UK government web portal, has been designated as a key site.

As explained previously, the websites of all government departments and many other agencies and public bodies have been merged into GOV.UK. It provides a single point of access to all policies, announcements, publications, statistics, and consultations, and so is crucial for finding government information and for tracing policy development over time. Crawl parameters have been adjusted to ensure that most documents are gathered and that the site renders correctly. The legal deposit libraries also select a number of themes or events to form the basis of 'special collections' each year. Each special collection includes a few hundred websites selected by appropriate curators from the legal deposit libraries. These themed collections include in scope official materials at the national and local level. For example, the Brexit collection and the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak collection both contain significant amounts of official material alongside comment from think tanks and interest groups. Crawled sites are ingested into the shared digital store and are made available to researchers through the legal deposit web archive known as the UK Web Archive (UKWA) https://www.webarchive.org.uk and via catalogue records describing the themed collections Most archived sites can only be accessed on the premises of the six legal deposit libraries, but licences permitting off-site access have been negotiated in some cases, including GOV.UK.

Landing Page Approach

As government publishing evolves, departments and agencies are increasingly disseminating sets of related documents via a single landing page. For example, the landing page for *Health Survey of England* on NHS Digital at https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-survey-for-england provides access to all the surveys from 2004 to 2019. The landing page for the 2019 survey offers a summary in html, data tables, reports and a quick guide in pdf, and links to related resources. In order to present all information related to a survey in context, the British Library will attempt to set up crawls to gather the landing page of each annual survey and all linked documents. It is envisaged that NHS Digital Health Surveys would be designated as a collection within the Library's web harvesting software and the individual surveys as sub-collections. A link back from records in the catalogues to the collections and sub-collections within the UKWA would enable researchers to explore successive instances of the survey and view the reports and data together.
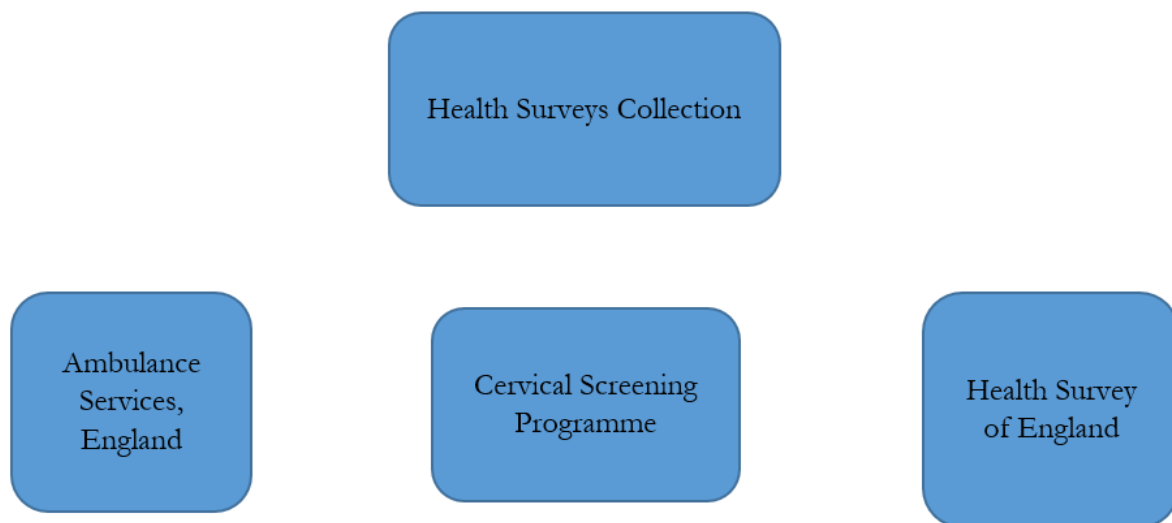
A similar approach could be used for documents in series, such as Home Office circulars. Circulars published in a single year share a landing page on GOV.UK. For example, the 2018 circulars are listed at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/home-office-circulars-2018. In this case, a historic Home Office circulars collection would be made up of gathers of the completed list for each year through a one-off crawl at the end of December. Once the landing page approach has been fully developed, all six legal deposit libraries will share in the creation and maintenance of collections.

This approach can also be used to solve the problems of providing access for researchers to frequently updated and fluid packages of information presented as linked html pages and the attachments described previously, and dealing with sprawling local government and NHS websites. These are document-heavy, but we do not have the resources to catalogue individual reports and papers, so pointing users from within the catalogues to a collection of the archived websites of a given local council or NHS body and encouraging them to explore would at least give them a starting point and would facilitate comparative research.

Selected issues with this particular situation include:

- Limitations of web archiving technology. The current generation of crawlers cannot collect dynamic content, Wix sites or documents stored in the cloud. They also struggle with collecting all documents on very large sites, such as legislation.gov.uk. This problem could be tackled by increasing the speed of the crawl, but risks crashing the site.
- Lack of availability of staff resources to monitor and tweak crawls (so that gathers are comprehensive and consistent) and to create and maintain catalogue records.
- Limited funding to enhance our online tools and redevelop our systems. Work on estimating costs will begin in 2021, followed by presentation of a business case.

Individual Documents

Looking for individual known documents in a massive unstructured database such as the UKWA can be both frustrating and time consuming. In order to identify, ingest, and make

individual documents available through the catalogues of the legal deposit libraries, the British Library and its partners have developed a number of strategies and tools:

- The Digital Document Harvesting and Processing Tool (DDHAPT) is a pull mechanism based on web archiving technology that enables a selector at any of the six legal deposit libraries to set up a list of unique URLs called watched targets to be crawled at set intervals. Frequency of crawl depends on the volume of publications the organisation produces. After each crawl, the system presents a list of links to PDF documents added to the site since the last visit for selection for cataloguing and long-term preservation in the UKWA. Using guidelines agreed on by all six legal deposit libraries, the selector then creates basic metadata for documents in scope, which is loaded into Aleph (the British Library's integrated library system) and exported to the libraries' catalogues with hotlinks to the full text. The basic metadata is enhanced at load into Aleph by automatic addition of a broad Dewey number based on the primary subject heading assigned by the selector. The DDHAPT is currently used exclusively to crawl and retrieve publications of UK central government departments and agencies published on GOV.UK. Their publishing activities are distributed among departmental sections, units, and working groups, and are not centrally coordinated. Therefore, there is no reliable mechanism under which documents could be pushed to us with accompanying metadata. The DDHAPT was designed to retrieve and process PDFs, as these were the dominant format in which official documents were published. It cannot cope with material published in html, Excel, CSV or open (ODF) formats. Gaps are therefore opening up once again in the collections, and the system is in urgent need of re-design. A business case for its upgrade will be written and presented in 2021 (Grimshaw, 2020).
- In the devolved administrations, the national libraries of Scotland and Wales have close collaborative relationships with their legislatures, departments, and agencies and are seeking to reach agreements for documents and metadata to be delivered to them by electronic transfer. The National Library of Scotland (NLS) receives Scottish Government and Parliament documents reliably by electronic transfer, but is struggling to persuade the agencies to deposit. Documents are catalogued by the NLS and are then sent with their metadata to the British Library by FTP for upload to the shared digital infrastructure. Understandably, the feed was suspended during the pandemic. The National Library of Wales receives lists of publications and web links from the Welsh Government. They then download the documents and create full catalogue records. A feed into the shared digital infrastructure was being developed when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. They plan to use the DDHAPT for some agencies which do not deposit.
- Queens University Belfast (QUB) Library has created a DSpace repository to hold its collection of Northern Ireland Assembly, departmental, and agency born-digital publications. The Assembly and some agencies are co-operating by pushing documents to QUB using Dropbox, but departments cannot be relied on to deposit consistently. QUB Library therefore monitors department and agency websites manually and downloads the documents to a 'holding' file from which they are then catalogued and uploaded to DSpace. In order to save duplication of effort, QUB Library worked with the British Library to develop a workflow to stream documents

and their metadata from DSpace into the shared digital infrastructure. These copies are considered to be the legal deposit copies collected on behalf of the six legal deposit libraries by QUB Library acting as their agent. The feed was suspended in Autumn 2019, but should be resumed in the New Year of 2021 with enhanced metadata following internal reorganisation at QUB.

- Dandy Booksellers, a commercial publisher, owns the *Public Information Online* website, which offers subscribers access to the papers of the UK Parliament, the Scottish Parliament, and the Northern Ireland Assembly. In fulfilment of their legal deposit obligations, they are sending the British Library electronic copies of the UK Parliamentary papers and accompanying metadata weekly for ingest into the shared infrastructure.

Future Developments

Official publishing in the UK is continuing to evolve. Some publications once produced in print have transformed themselves into searchable databases, and this trend is set to continue. The Official Report of Commons and Lords debates (Hansard) is a substantially verbatim report of what is said in Parliament. Members' words are recorded and then edited to remove repetitions and obvious mistakes, albeit without taking away from the meaning. Hansard also sets out details of Divisions and reports decisions taken during a sitting. Hansard Online (https://hansard.parliament.uk/) is a joint project involving Hansard in the Commons and Lords and the Parliamentary Digital Service, with development led by Parliament's Rapid Apps Team. New features on the site include a much-improved search function, the bringing together of all Hansard records into one easy interface, and the ability to link to particular contributions. Unfortunately, the legal deposit libraries do not currently have the technical capability to archive and preserve dynamic databases, but can only manually download the embedded .pdfs, which offer a transcript of the day's debates.

Government websites are becoming more dynamic and interactive and including more personalisation, video, and graphics. Government information is increasingly being disseminated via social media. The concept of the discrete document itself is disappearing and being replaced by information conveyed as suites of .html pages that can be readily amended, updated, and deleted. How information conveyed in this way can be preserved, indexed, and made discoverable remains to be seen. Current access is not the problem so much as long-term preservation and provision of indexing that will make the information discoverable in massive unstructured databases consisting of archived websites with textual, audio, and video content.

Other Initiatives in the United Kingdom

Set up in 1971, the Standing Committee on Official Publications (SCOOP) is an Information Services Group (ISG) of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals which 'aims to improve the access to, and availability of, UK official publications; to identify problems in the provision of access to UK official publications' (CILIP, 2019). SCOOP therefore launched the OfficialPapersUK blog (https://officialpapersuk.wordpress.com/) in June 2015 for information professionals across the UK and further afield. The blog aims not only to keep interested parties up to date on relevant topics, but also to promote interesting collections from academic libraries and institutions across the UK (Standing

Committee on Official Publications, 2019a). Recent posts, which are simultaneously tweeted, have included information about large-scale text analysis of the digitised versions of the *Britain and UK Handbooks* in the NLS Data Foundry and two new services for EU legislation being offered by the National Archives. As mentioned previously, many academic and public libraries are reducing their print collections of official papers. SCOOP has drawn up relegation guides to help identify what should and should not be easily discarded (Standing Committee on Official Publications, 2019b).

The Scottish Working Forum on Official Publications was set up in 1989. The group aims to 'increase awareness of, and access to, official publications, and to encourage best practice in the production, dissemination and use of official information in Scotland.' The Working Group also has a blog, SWOP (https://swopforum.wordpress.com/), which has been active since 2014, and a Twitter account, @SWOPforum. The Scottish Parliament transitioned to digital publishing in 2015, with the Scottish Government delivering some content electronically as early as 2009; therefore, very little printed official material is being received by public libraries, unless specifically ordered through print-on-demand. SWOP provides a network of expertise offering guidance and training on tracing and accessing Official publications.

Blogs have been successful at explaining complex issues and subjects. Two very good examples are the *House of Commons Library Blog*, found at https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/, and the UK Web Archive blog, found at http://blogs.bl.uk/webarchive/.

The *House of Commons Library Blog* https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/ gives access to the latest impartial policy analysis and statistical research; it is produced for MPs and their staff, but available to all. The blog is produced by the Commons Library and other parliamentary research services and is a fantastic resource for researchers. You can subscribe to the blog and choose alerts from over 30 topics, which include, for example, 'Brexit and the EU' (https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/brexit/).

These blog posts are very effective in providing brief introductions to what can be very complex subjects, and some link to the more in-depth research briefings and papers that the House of Commons Library's subject specialists produce.

The British Library's *UK Web Archive blog* (https://blogs.bl.uk/webarchive/) gives information on its many archive projects and about the previously mentioned LEAG. Posts include information on how collections are being curated—e.g. 'Collecting Interactive Fiction' (Clark, 2019). The blog post, 'Ten years of the UK web archive: what have we saved?' (Jackson, 2015), shows how quickly websites and information on the Internet are lost or moved and how necessary the UKWA is in its role of harvesting and preserving this information in perpetuity.

 Another blog of interest to information professionals is the *Inside GOV.UK* blog at https://insidegovuk.blog.gov.uk/. This blog gives information on how the large web estate that comes under GOV.UK is created and managed. GOV.UK not only gives access to information on government policy and procedure but is also the place where the citizen interacts with government, whether it is filling in tax returns or applying for a driving licence. A recent interesting blog post looks at a trial of a single account for each user on

GOV.UK. The team are aware that there are more than 100 places a user can currently log into the GOV.UK system—see https://insidegovuk.blog.gov.uk/2020/12/09/five-things-weve-learned-from-researching-the-gov-uk-account/. By having a single GOV.UK account for each user, the Government Digital Service are hoping to personalise the system and make users' experience more intuitive.

The *FLAG Foreign Law Guide* (https://ials.sas.ac.uk/flag-foreign-law-guide), from the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, was created between 2000 and 2002. The database 'gives legal researchers details about holdings of foreign, international and comparative law in the UK's academic, national and specialist law libraries' (Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, 2019). The database was itself updated and the holdings of the libraries checked in 2014. This work was extremely important because, as mentioned previously, many collections have been disposed of or moved in recent years, so up-to-date records of holdings are essential. This is an excellent free resource for hard-to-find primary source material in print format for both the information professional and researcher. Types of material that can be searched for include official gazettes, legislation, court reports and parliamentary debates.

Institutions have also collaborated to provide the very useful 'West European Government Publications' guides (https://www.bl.uk/collection-guides/west-european-government-publications). These collection guides indicate the main series of West European national government publications that are held by the British Library, the Bodleian Libraries, and London School of Economics (LSE), and also include selected holdings of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library (British Library, 2019). The guides, managed by and hosted at the British Library website, provide information on printed collections, with links to key series online. As the majority of government/parliamentary information in Western European countries has transitioned to e-format, the guides provide a link guiding the user from the print to the electronic versions.

The National Library of Scotland publishes digitised materials openly and in re-useable formats on its Data Foundry—this includes a suite of official publications data, including the *Britain and UK Handbooks* and a selection of Military lists. Many research projects are now being undertaken which exploit these data; for example, digital humanities are taught at the Medical History of British India site at https://digital.nls.uk/indiapapers/. The British Library is also becoming involved with the exploitation of digitised texts as data. The Living with Machines site at https://livingwithmachines.ac.uk/ is a major new five-year inter-disciplinary research project led by the Turing Institute which uses 'radically collaborative' methods to analyse a massive database of digitised historical texts at scale to provide new insights into the human impact of the industrial revolution. The British Library's collection of ca. 1500 eighteenth century Road Acts is being digitised for inclusion in the database.

Across the United Kingdom, a lot of work is being done to make official papers easily accessible to the user, as has been shown by the examples given. The continuing need for information professionals in the field of official publications is apparent. The output from governments, parliaments, and assemblies in the UK is enormous. To navigate the dynamic environment of official publishing and be aware of all relevant collections does require expert knowledge. The care and attention once lavished on print collections by the legal deposit libraries is now focused on e-format and web collections for the users of the future.

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Government Information in the United States

Kian Flynn & Cass Hartnett, University of Washington Libraries; Maya Swanes, Gallagher Law Library, & Robert Lopresti, Western Washington University Library

Background: Nature and Scope of Government Publishing

The federal government terrain in the United States, like the nation itself, is massive, exciting, and diverse. There exist huge caches of remarkably organized content (such as the U.S. Federal Depository Library Program and the HathiTrust Digital Library U.S. Documents Collection), and vast regions in need of further work, such as born-digital content and social media capture. Open access to publicly generated information is a longstanding American ideal, in many minds correlated directly with the strength of our democracy. The hope is that citizens will never again be "distant from the depository of their Public Records," as they were during the colonial era (Declaration of Independence).

Government Publications Policies and Practices

It would be misleading to think that there is one simple entry point into understanding or finding government information in the United States. Nonetheless, the U.S. federal government does have an online starting point: http://usa.gov, an interagency portal administered by the General Services Administration (GSA). USA.gov allows users to find government agencies and services using a simple interface, but does not give any sense of the historic or current landscape of government publishing. Looking back in time, we discover that the Government Printing Office (GPO) was established in 1861 to centralize government printing. GPO went on to establish the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) in 1895, which was then updated in 1962 and 1993. The FDLP put into place what is now a system of over 1000 libraries designated by Congress to collect, preserve, and provide access to federal government information. In the pre-Internet era, the program mailed hundreds of thousands of documents to depository libraries free of charge. As of this writing, the system is up for modernization through a Congressional bill (U.S Congress, 2018) introduced to revise the statute, 44 USC 1701, which governs the process by which GPO obtains government publications and distributes them to the public. Although this governing statute is critical, also of importance are the regulatory circulars of the Office of Management and Budget (https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/) which provide rules such as the definition of a publication and the standard definitions of certain variables used in U.S. federal statistics-taking, such as race, ethnicity, and ancestry.

The Fight for "the Types and the Presses"

After much debate over the course of the preceding decades, Congress established the Government Printing Office in 1861. Prior to its establishment, the government contracted out its printing to private firms, which led members of Congress to worry about wasteful printing expenditures on questionable content. Below find excerpts from the heated debates on the establishment of the Government Printing Office.

> "What is the remedy for this? It is to do what every other Government in the civilized world does—to establish a Government Printing Office, where there will be no contracts to be let—where the government will own the types and the presses."–Maryland representative Henry W. Davis, Know-Nothing Party (U.S. Congress, *Congressional Globe*, 1856).
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> "Corruption may penetrate the best organized and most skillfully guarded system."–New York senator George Taylor, Democratic Party (U.S. Congress, *Congressional Globe*, 1859).
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> "It will be the worst job, the worst nuisance, an incubus that you cannot get rid of, unless you set it on fire, and burn it down." –Ohio senator George E. Pugh, Democratic Party (U.S. Congress, *Congressional Globe*, 1860).

Government Publications Classification Schemes

The FDLP uses the Superintendent of Classification (SuDocs) scheme. Many, although not all, depositories use this system for arranging materials in sequence on a library shelf, such that an individual traveling from library to library would be apt to find all materials organized in the same way. A typical SuDocs number might be *HE 22.2:M 46/64/2018 Enroll in Medicaid: For Yourself, For Your Family, For Your Community*. The various elements stand for agency, sub-agency, publication, volume, date, and so forth. For a full explanation of the system, see GPO's *Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) Classification Scheme* manual. (U.S. Federal Depository Library Program, 2018a).

Although the Government Publishing Office[46] continues to generate SuDocs numbers as a way to organize documents by provenance (agency/sub-agency), genre (press releases, annual reports, etc.), and series, the classification system is mostly associated with tangible collections. Many libraries choose to integrate their publications into the same classification system as the rest of their subject-oriented collections using the Library of Congress or Dewey Decimal systems.

Agencies also tend to have their own special series numbers, such as the Environmental Protection Agency's various numbered series (the "600 series") or the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey reports (the "P-20 series"), or the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's eight numbered series (https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs).

Jargon and Controlled Vocabularies

The *Catalog of Government Publications* or *CGP* (formerly the *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications*) is the main catalog listing all publications distributed via the FDLP. Since 1976, it has included full bibliographic descriptions up to Library of Congress cataloging standards (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2 (AACR2), now Resource Description and Access (RDA), making publications increasingly discoverable via library online catalogs. Recent years have seen a tremendous push by many institutions to cooperatively catalog all historic federal publications. There are many taxonomies in use to

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[46] The Government Printing Office was renamed the Government Publishing Office in 2014.

organize government publications beyond the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), such as Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) for medicine/NLM (https://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/), National Agricultural Library Agricultural Thesaurus (NALT) (https://agclass.nal.usda.gov/agt.shtml), export codes (https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/schedules/b/index.html), and industrial codes (https://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics).

Government acronyms and agency name changes can make it difficult to track information over time, but there are guides to help. The *U.S. Government Manual* includes a section on the History of Agency Organizational Changes, and a three-volume commercially published *Guide to U.S. Government Publications* offers brief notes on publishing patterns of all known federal series and a wonderful sense of agency genealogy (Andriot and Andriot, 2018). The American Library Association's (ALA) Government Documents Roundtable (GODORT) Cataloging Committee[47] is a professional group devoted to description and access to government publications. The committee works with the ALA Cataloging Committee: Description and Access (CC:DA) to improve retrieval of government information (American Library Association, n.d.).

Depositories

The *Library of Congress* is the Mandatory Deposit institution for works created in the United States. US Copyright law (U.S. Government Printing Office, 17 U.S.C. § 407, 2006) mandates two copies of every copyrightable work be sent to the Copyright Office for use by the Library of Congress (US Copyright Office, n.d.). When we mention depositories in this chapter, however, we are speaking exclusively of government documents depositories found throughout the United States.

Through the *Federal Depository Library Program* (FDLP), Congress has designated 1137 U.S. libraries to take on a stewardship role with federal government information. At a depository library, one can expect to find direct unfiltered access to government publications on the federal web, with assistance from a trained librarian. Open, drop-in, and unfettered access to government information is a hallmark of the system, and most, although not all, depository libraries maintain tangible collections of documents in print, microform, and CD-ROM/DVD. The legal requirements for the program spell out the need for access to all forms of federal information via publicly accessible computer equipment in depository libraries (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2018). Today, many depositories are designated "electronic only" and are no longer receiving tangible materials. The remaining print-on-paper materials still distributed through the depository system are largely Congressional, legal, regulatory, or cartographic publications, or of very high general interest. Deposited publications remain federal property and can be, and occasionally have been, recalled by the authoring agency. The FDLP page on Withdrawal/Recall/Destruction contains recent examples (U.S. Federal Depository Library Program, 2018b).

A *regional federal depository library* (of which there are currently 46) traditionally served a special role by receiving 100% of the literature GPO distributes to libraries and retaining it in

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[47] For more information see http://www.ala.org/rt/godort/catalogingcommittee [Accessed: 22 August, 2018].

perpetuity. Regionals have also taken a leadership role among depositories in their geographic region. Depository libraries that select the kinds of materials they want to receive from the FDLP are known as "selectives." The past fifteen years have seen an increased focus on the many challenges of maintaining large regional collections, culminating in a revised Regional Discard Policy, whereby regionals may seek GPO's permission to withdraw materials that are over seven years old and fully represented digitally on http://govinfo.gov (U.S. Federal Depository Library Program, 2016). Debate in the profession has centered around approaches for maintaining an outstanding level of preservation, access, and service for users of government information, even with a smaller number of regionals nationally (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008).

A *public library with FDL status* exemplifies the modern library's role as a community computing commons, gathering space, and learning center. These libraries emphasize consumer-oriented tools (like the protections listed at http://identitytheft.gov), government services (assisting patrons with finding tax forms at http://irs.gov and navigating the social services system), and help for students (highlighting *Ben's Guide to the U.S. Government*: http://bensguide.gpo.gov/). Librarians refer patrons with legal research questions to county law libraries for further assistance. The St. Charles City-County Library in St. Louis, Missouri is an example of a public depository library. In their *We the People* programming series of 2016, librarians created exhibits featuring pocket-sized Constitutions, civic engagement games, eye-catching government documents from NASA, the White House and more, and displays with titles like "Today in Congress" or "What Did I Hear in the News?" The library held programs with authors speaking about the role of government, a "write your representative" workstation, voter registration stations, digital/media literacy awareness days, and chances to explore iCivics (Griffith & Gewirtz, 2017).

Academic FDLs tend to emphasize curricular tie-ins in their collections and services, with many focusing on collecting in the sciences, health, history, demography and data services, legislative/policy studies, and homeland security/cyber security. It is in academic FDLs that formal classroom teaching around government information is most apt to take place. At universities that offer a library and information science (LIS) program, there may be a semester-long graduate course in government information, as at the University at Buffalo's Department of Library and Information Studies, the University of Arizona's School of Information, the University of Washington's Information School and approximately 40 other such institutions nationwide. Academic FDLs often offer exhibits and themed programs using government information. Recent examples are a University of California Berkeley Doe Library exhibit chronicling the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) civil rights movement through government documents (University of California Berkeley Library, 2018).

Law libraries have a special role to play in the depository program given the expertise of their librarians and the generally law-focused interests of their patrons. In 1972, only 40 of the then-existing 1,059 depository libraries were law libraries (Willis & Hutchins, 1972). Today, over 150 academic law and tribal college libraries and nearly 50 state, court, county, and government law libraries participate in the FDLP.

Other Forms of Depository

Other U.S. federal agencies also have, or once had, depository library-like systems. First, there are about eighty designated Patent and Trademark Resource Centers (https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/support-centers/patent-and-trademark-resource-centers-ptrcs). Patent searching requires specialized databases not available on the open web (PubEAST and PubWEST); assistance from government-trained patent librarians is essential for those researching intellectual property. The Patent and Trademark Resource Center Association (PTRCA) lists historical, regional, and specialized databases (http://ptrca.org/history).

Secondly, research libraries have long collected federally funded scientific and technical reports from the self-supporting National Technical Information Service. Because the funding model of this government agency is different, the deposited technical reports (disseminated in microfiche) were not distributed free, but required a subscription payment. Today, this system is represented by the National Technical Reports Library (https://ntrl.ntis.gov/NTRL/) where some, but not all, of the technical reports are digitized and available for free.

For many decades, FDL librarians could choose to receive maps and/or charts directly from the US Geological Survey (USGS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and others. Digital mapping expertise has become a critical skill for government information specialists, since so much data is geocoded, and agencies ranging from the Census Bureau to the Centers for Disease Control offer downloadable shapefiles for import into geographic information systems (GIS).

Forty-two states have depository systems that work directly with libraries to disseminate state publications, such as the Alaska State Publications System, Illinois Depository Libraries, and South Carolina State Documents Depository Program (see https://wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/State_Depository_Library_Systems). Inter-agency programs may also work directly with libraries in depository-style arrangements. For example, for the interjurisdictional tri-party cleanup of the Washington State's Hanford Site (a former U.S. nuclear production facility), libraries hosting Hanford documents are designated as Public Information Repositories or PIRs (https://pdw.hanford.gov/arpir/). Depository designations, just like agreements to serve as institutional repositories or IRs, are typically enforced by signed contracts or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).

Government Libraries

The *Library of Congress* is the world's largest library, with over 167 million items. It is the nation's parliamentary library, the research arm of Congress, and the home of the Copyright Office. In addition, there are four U.S. National Libraries in the areas of Agriculture (http://www.nal.usda.gov), Education (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/nle), Medicine (http://www.nlm.nih.gov), and Transportation (http://ntl.bts.gov). Each library plays a critical role in developing nationally adopted controlled vocabulary in their various subject areas; users can follow the taxonomies and the growing repositories as a way of learning about emerging knowledge in these fields. States and territories also have official state library agencies; see the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (http://cosla.org) for more information.

The *National Archives and Records Administration* (NARA) (http://www.archives.gov) collects and preserves the records of government. Founded in 1934, its holdings date back to 1775, and include 10 billion pages of textual records, 25 million photographs and graphics, 133 terabytes of electronic data, and more (U.S. National Archives, n.d.) The holdings of this enormous repository are distributed among the two main Archives buildings in the Washington, D.C. area and thirteen NARA facilities throughout the country, such as the National Archives at Kansas City, MO. These are complemented by federal records centers and Presidential Libraries (covering the presidencies of Herbert Hoover through Barack Obama). Although an increasing amount is available digitally, many researchers are still impelled to visit NARA in person.

This unpublished record of government is a critical accompaniment to published works housed by libraries. NARA estimates that only 1-2% of an agency's output is important enough for permanent retention and access, while the rest is managed by federal records retention policies. Archives are generally organized by Record Group and use finding guides rather than online catalogs.

The U.S. National Park Service and a series of national museums (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_national_museums#United_States) represent additional sets of public information. The non-profit Digital Public Library (http://dp.la) is a large-scale collaborative digital archive bringing nearly 30 million freely available digital objects from dozens of institutions together in one portal, including a sizable amount of government information. Projects like dp.la break down silos between institutions and make evident the larger ecosystem of libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs).

The Legislature

In the bicameral U.S. Congress, one chamber dwarfs the other in size. The House of Representatives has 435 voting members serving 2-year terms, proportionally representing the population of the U.S., with nonvoting designated officials from the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico. In the Senate, two legislators from each state (100 total) serve staggered 6-year terms. The chambers work together to produce legislation for the chief executive's (President's) signature or veto. If approved, the resultant statutory law allows the executive branch agencies to write and enforce regulations, and the courts to interpret the law.

Forms of Congressional Publications

Readers across the globe expect and rely upon open access to congressional publications provided by GPO. All forms of Congressional literature are valuable, but certain genres are frequently sought by researchers: committee hearings (e.g., *"Titanic" Disaster*[48]), committee reports (e.g., *Comic Books and Juvenile Delinquency*[49]), the *Congressional Record* (e.g., a 1950 speech on the "Declaration of Conscience" from Sen. Margaret Chase Smith[50]), bills

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[48] See U.S. Congress (1912).
[49] See U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on the Judiciary. Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency. (1955).
[50] See U.S. Congress. (1951). *97 Congressional Record*. 6674

(e.g., the *Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite Act of 2009*[51]), and laws (e.g., the *P.L. 115-59 Social Security Number Fraud Prevention Act of 2017*). For the contemporary era (1994–present), all these materials may be found on http://govinfo.gov (GPO's main repository) and http://congress.gov. Govinfo.gov allows for more advanced confederated searching across diverse government content, while Congress.gov is a dedicated portal just for Congressional resources. Each chamber has its own online presence at http://house.gov and http://senate.gov; these sites include the work of dozens of standing and special committees. As of this writing, GPO has added the historical run of the *Congressional Record* to Govinfo.gov. It is anticipated that all pre-1994 Congressional published documents will be digitized and added to Govinfo.gov over the next decade.

Legislative Tracking

To view a detailed visualization of Congress's legislative activity, including bills and resolutions making their way through "the dance of legislation," refer to http://legex.org. LegEx.org tracks legislation back to 1973, making it one of many new ways to study Congress using big data. For example, through LegEx.org, a researcher can see that the 114th Congress (2015-2016) introduced 10,935 bills, but only 220 became law (or 2%). Clicking on a bill takes the user to that bill's page on Congress.gov. This is one of many new ways to study Congress using big data.

Resources produced by nongovernmental organizations can be useful for analyzing and making sense of government information as well. The website http://govtrack.us is used by journalists and researchers to track bills through Congress, read summaries, and review scorecards and other visualizations. Govtrack.us pulls from and contributes to GitHub @unitedstates (n.d.) a "shared commons of data and tools for the United States." C-SPAN, a collaborative nonprofit company created by cable news networks, provides video coverage of Congress. Its entire backfile starting in 1980 is available from http://cspan.org, and is searchable by over a dozen different facets (person, organization, type of video, historic event, descriptive tags, and more).

Congressional publications are a prime example of information that must be considered in context. Without a working understanding of basic lawmaking, the power of this literature will be lost on many—even those who can appreciate the appeal of an absorbing hearing or impassioned speech. Librarians rely on numerous commercial tools, briefly outlined below, to make sense of an information flow that can seem at turns both breathtakingly fast and stultifying. See the list below for essential commercial services.

- *CQ.com:* daily and weekly news coverage, written for a wide audience;
- *CQ Almanac:* Annual synopsis/legislative summaries, written for a wide audience;
- *HeinOnline:* Historic runs of many works, including the *Congressional Record* and its predecessor, ProQuest Congressional. Detailed indexing and abstracting of Congressional publications, with many additional modules, such as Legislative Explorer, that add value through linked data and legislative tracking;

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[51] See *"Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite Act of 2009, H.R. 2248, 111th Cong."* (2009).

- *Readex, U.S. Congressional Serial Set Digital Edition:* Digitized version of the Serial Set, which compiled all House and Senate reports and documents from 1817-1980[52];
- *VoxGov by EastView:* A dynamically updated collection of Congressional documents, press releases, and social media posts.

Congressional Research Service Reports

Reports from the Library of Congress' Congressional Research Service are prepared by about 700 expert researchers to assist Congress in its work. These boiled-down reports (usually 30 pages or less) have been a staple of policy scholars for decades, even though the reports were not meant for public distribution. PL 115-141, The Consolidated Budget Act of 2018, mandated that CRS reports (except those exempt for reasons of confidentiality) be made public at last, to the satisfaction of longtime advocates. The reports will reside on a GPO website where they can be freely downloaded.

Data Projects

The Congressional Data Coalition (http://congressionaldata.org) seeks to improve long-term access to Congressional publications and is an online space for participants to find and build Congressional data tools. Similarly, the Legislative Innovation Hub is a coder's hub "to highlight Legislative branch activities that use technology to cultivate collaboration, foster data standardization, and increase transparency" (U.S. Government Publishing Office, *Legislation Hub*, n.d.). Both the GPO and the Office of the Law Revision Council of the House of Representatives now make use of United States Legislative Markup XML (USML XML), with schema and guides available from https://github.com/usgpo/uslm.

Despite these multiple avenues for keeping track of Congressional content and publications, documents librarians and scholars point out that there are gaps in the Congressional literature. Some hearings are confidential due to matters of national security, trade secrets, witness confidentiality, or criminal investigations. GPO consults with Congressional printing staff and is working to address librarians' concerns about the sometimes-slow publishing of basic hearings, as well as the claims that they are not released quickly from a committee, or not deposited on Govinfo.gov (Hall, Ramos, and Ebaneus, 2014). Some committees also lack a detailed accounting of their daily activities. Although the process strives for transparency (stenographic transcriptions of hearings, etc.) the public does not know or understand much about what transpires in everyday committee work.

Agencies and Ministries

Scope

The *Federal Register* serves as the official publishing outlet for notices, proposed regulations, and final rules for U.S. executive branch agencies, which are sometimes referred to as the bureaucratic arm of government. Dating back to 1936, the *Federal Register,* or *FR,* is considered a core information resource and has a sophisticated online

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[52] For more information on the Serial Set, see Sevetson (2013).

expression at https://www.federalregister.gov, though this version is not yet considered legal or official (the print and Govinfo.gov versions are official). But what agencies does it cover? An official listing of U.S. executive branch agencies resides at https://www.usa.gov/federal-agencies. Additionally, the organizational chart in the https://usgovernmentmanual.gov lists the major Cabinet-level departments (those headed by Secretaries) and independent executive branch establishments, such as the Peace Corps, with more agencies listed in the manual's Appendix.

The exact number of U.S. federal agencies is a matter of debate, depending on how one counts an agency; current estimates range from 252 to 443 (Crews, 2017). There is disagreement over whether or not to include quasi-government or hybrid public-private entities, some of which are required by statute to publish notices in the *FR*. The website http://usa.gov contains a brief list of quasi-governmental agencies, e.g. the Smithsonian Institution, but many more exist. Quasi-governmental entities have grown in number since the early 1960s, and their publications may be more difficult to identify and access, as some fall outside the FDLP. For a detailed discussion, consult *The Quasi-Government: Hybrid Organizations with both Government and Private Sector Legal Characteristics* (Kosar, 2011). Newly formed sub-agencies within the executive branch, like the oddly named 18F (a small agency dealing with web design), may come and go quickly, yet have an influential impact on government.

Executive branch agencies write regulations to enforce the laws passed by the legislature. Agencies publish the proposed rules in the *FR*, and final rules are codified annually in the 50-title *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR)—these are all the federal rules currently in force. The official online edition is available through Govinfo.gov, with http://regulations.gov, http://federalregister.gov, and http://reginfo.gov being additional recommended portals for all things regulatory. The regulatory system remains a mystery to many Americans, even though citizens have opportunities for direct input into the process. Initiatives like http://icivics.org can help people learn the regulatory process. President Donald J. Trump's administration has taken a strong stand against excessive regulation, passing an Executive Order to require that a new regulation only be put forth when two previous regulations have been cut (U.S. Office of the Federal Register, 2018). It is safe to say that how presidents and executive agencies work with, or against, Congress to solve problems will keep political scientists busy for years.

Discovery

Textbooks and guides, such as *Fundamentals of Government Information*, the *United States Government Internet Directory*, *Government Information Essentials*, and *Finding and Using U.S. Government Information*, offer several strategies for discovering published content of federal executive agencies. The strategies outlined below are offered as additional techniques:

Site-Limited Web Searches on the Government Web

One method that can be used to discover relevant information on a particular web domain is a site-limited web search. This allows a user to search only the site of interest instead of the entire web. To perform a site-limited web search, the user enters the search term,

followed by the word "site," followed by a colon and the domain he or she wishes to search. See below for examples.

- *"yoursearchterm* site:.gov" - Searches the entire U.S. federal web (and some state sites);
- *"yoursearchterm* site:.mil" - Searches the U.S. military web;
- *"yoursearchterm* site:epa.gov" - Searches the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Searches Within Online Federal Portals

The below sites also provide much opportunity for targeted web searches.

- http://archives.gov: Searches archival finding guides and other digital content at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA);
- http://bookstore.gpo.gov: Searches documents you can purchase at the GPO;
- http://catalog.gpo.gov: Searches material catalogued for the FDLP;
- http://govinfo.gov: Searches GPO's content management system with content from all three branches; still largely Congressional;
- http://www.metalib.gpo.gov: Searches ten major government collections simultaneously;
- http://pubmed.gov: Searches over 28 million biomedical citations from the National Library of Medicine;
- http://regulations.gov: Searches thousands of proposed and final regulations and over one million public comments about regulations;
- http://science.gov: Searches scientific literature from 2200 federal websites (over 200 million pages).

Searches Within Other (Nongovernmental) Portals

- *HathiTrust U.S. Documents Library:* https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/mb?a=listis&c=2062901859: Searches over one million digitized U.S. federal documents. Custom download capabilities based on institutional membership in the HathiTrust[53]
- *Homeland Security Digital Library***:** https://www.hsdl.org: Open, curated database on homeland security topics
- *Worldcat.org:* https://www.worldcat.org: Cooperative union catalog of library holdings worldwide. After searching for a keyword and getting results, use the Topic filter to limit to Government Documents
- *Archive.org:* https://archive.org: Includes searchable, cached snapshots of federal government websites from various timepoints back to the 1990s

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[53] The HathiTrust U.S. Documents Library (https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/mb?a=listis&c=2062901859), the work of a membership group of 130 libraries and consortia, is an initiative with major impact. Here one finds digitized U.S. federal documents generated from the print collections of member libraries. Although the digitization was not performed by the government, Hathi has received Center for Research Libraries (CRL) certification as a Trusted Digital Repository (TDR). The utility of this collection of over one million scanned documents, and its library catalog-style interface, cannot be overstated.

- *Technicalreports.org/trail/search/:* http://technicalreports.org/trail/search/ (TRAIL): Searches U.S. governmental technical reports

Commercial Sources

The following is a very selective list of commercially available products related to executive branch literature:

- *ProQuest Executive Branch Documents*: Digitized documents with indexing, 1789–1932;
- *ProQuest Regulatory Explorer*: Hyperlinked sources connecting decades of regulations;
- *HeinOnline*: Extensive document libraries, strong historic regulatory & Presidential content;
- *Nexis Uni*: Commercially annotated legal codes and regulations at the U.S. federal and state levels;
- *Readex:* Publisher known for highly indexed digital products, including the historic *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)* reports and annexes;
- *U.S. Documents Masterfile:* Aggregated, federated indexes of U.S. publications from 1774.

Selected Major Works of the Federal Government.
The following are executive agency publications that are still being published and that are considered of major governmental significance. This highly selective list is only intended to illustrate the range of offerings.
1.a. *Budget of the United States Government* -- President's proposals, analysis, and history
https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/BUDGET
1.b. *Financial Report of the Federal Government* -- Full overview of nation's finances
https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/fsreports/rpt/finrep/fr/fr_index.htm

1.c. *Daily treasury statement* -- Summary of cash and debt operations, like a bank statement
https://www.fms.treas.gov/dts/index.html
1.d. USAspending.gov -- Federal spending, simplified data visualizations, and downloads
https://usaspending.gov
2. *CIA World Factbook* -- Standard overview of people, government, economies of all nations
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/
3. *Compilation of presidential documents & public papers of the presidents* -- Daily and annual compilations of speeches, public remarks, and executive actions
https://www.govinfo.gov/app/browse/category/budget-presidential
4. "Contract Opportunities" -- List of current opportunities to do business with the federal government https://beta.sam.gov
5. *Foreign Relations of the United States* -- Official record of policies, select correspondence
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments
6. *Health, United States* -- Report and chartbook of annual health indicators, with tables
https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus/index.htm
7. *The Nation's report card* (suite of Education resources) -- Ongoing assessment of students
https://www.nationsreportcard.gov
8. *Quadrennial Defense Review* -- Military strategy, priority, and threat review
https://history.defense.gov/Historical-Sources/Quadrennial-Defense-Review

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9. *Threatened and endangered species* -- Endangered animals, plants, and habitats
https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp
10. *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics* -- All classes of immigrants, and enforcement actions
https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/

Statistics, Surveys, & Data

The United States government is a prodigious collector and publisher of data about all facets of American life. There are 13 principal statistical agencies in the executive branch of the government whose primary mission is the "collection, compilation, processing, or analysis of information for statistical purposes" (U.S. Congress, 2002). There are more than 100 additional federal agencies that spend more than $500,000 a year on statistical activities (U.S. Executive Office of the President. Office of Management and Budget, 2017). The collected statistics cover topics ranging from educational attainment to consumer prices to land use. Government statistics can tell us basic demographic information, like how many people between the ages of 18-24 are living in the United States, and also more detailed information, like how much an average gallon of milk cost in a given year or how many fatal traffic accidents involved passenger cars, trucks, and buses.

The government's statistical gathering provides great civic value for the country, and these statistics are used heavily by academic researchers and corporations. A page on http://www.data.gov lists several examples of companies utilizing government data, including travel website Kayak, using data from the Federal Aviation Administration; social networking employment website LinkedIn, using data from Department of Labor and Department of Education; and farm management software Farmlogs, using data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution mandates that a complete enumeration of all people living in the United States must take place every ten years for the purposes of apportionment of congressional representatives. Today, the Census Bureau—one of the 13 primary statistical agencies—administers this decennial census, as well as the annual *American Community Survey* (ACS), which surveys approximately one percent of the U.S. population each year. The ACS was introduced by the Census Bureau after severe budget cuts forced the Census Bureau to discontinue the decennial census' long-form questionnaire after the 2000 Census. The 2016 ACS questionnaire featured 47 questions about persons in each household and 23 questions about housing characteristics. By comparison, the 2010 Census questionnaire was a relatively brief 10 questions. Data for each question on both the decennial census and ACS are tabulated at several different geographic levels, including national, state, county, city, and census tract (neighborhood) levels. In addition to being used for congressional apportionment purposes, Census and ACS data is used to ensure equitable funding for government assistance programs across the country (U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey Office, 2013). Questions on the Census questionnaire have changed considerably over time. Planned questions for the 2020 Census, for example, include questions on same-sex marriages for the first time on a decennial census and questions on U.S. citizenship for the time since 1950 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018).

There is no single clearinghouse or central aggregator for all of the other government statistical agencies, but the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* comes closest. Published from 1879 up until 2012, the *Statistical Abstract* was a statistical compendium published annually by the Census Bureau. The *Statistical Abstract* tracked everything from number of vessels wrecked at sea to the number of telephones in use in the U.S. Budget cuts forced the Census Bureau to discontinue the *Statistical Abstract*. Fortunately, private publisher ProQuest has continued publishing an annual online version of the *Statistical Abstract*. The 2018 edition featured statistical tables from approximately 80 governmental departments and agencies and dozens of nongovernmental and international organizations. Unlike Census and ACS data, which is open and free to use on the Census Bureau's data platform (https://data.census.gov/cedsci/), ProQuest's Statistical Abstract requires a paid subscription. Fortunately, many public and academic libraries subscribe to the resource, so individuals can access the database at their local library.

On one of former President Barack Obama's first days in office, the federal government pledged a greater commitment to publishing free government information online as part of their *Open Government Directive*. As part of this directive, each agency was required to "publish online in an open format at least three high-value data sets...and register those datasets via data.gov." Data.gov, which launched in May 2009, now has over 280,000 government-produced datasets on topics ranging from agriculture to science.

Case Law

Background, Nature, and Scope

In the United States, primary law can be created by each of the three branches of government. This means that in addition to the law created through legislative and executive processes, judges create law when resolving legal disputes. This type of law (often referred to as case law) exists in the form of the opinions written by judges to explain their decisions. There are three levels of courts in the federal judicial hierarchy: the 94 district courts (trial courts), the 13 courts of appeals (intermediate appellate courts), and the Supreme Court (highest level appeals court).[54] Decisions from lower-level courts can be appealed to the higher levels, and decisions issued by the higher levels are binding on those below. When a written opinion[55] is first issued, it is released by the court in a draft form called a "slip opinion." Those opinions deemed worthy of publication[56] are eventually consolidated and published in sets of books called *case reports* or *reporters*. The official reporter for Supreme Court opinions is the *United States Reports* published by GPO. Opinions from the courts of appeals and district courts are not published in an official government reporter. Rather, a commercial publisher, Thomson Reuters (West), publishes

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[54] Note that there are also other, specialized federal courts (e.g., bankruptcy courts, tax courts, military courts, etc.) that are beyond the scope of this general overview.

[55] What constitutes a "written opinion" at the district court level is somewhat ambiguous, as judges issue rulings, orders, and decisions over the life of a case. The Judicial Conference of the United States, however, broadly defines "written opinions" as "any document issued by a judge or judges of the court sitting in that capacity, that sets forth a reasoned explanation for a court's decision." (U.S. District Court. District of Columbia, n.d.).

[56] Only a fraction of district court and circuit court opinions are published. See: Swenson (2004) and Grunwald (2018).

the *Federal Reporter* for opinions from the court of appeals and the *Federal Supplement* for opinions from the district court. Private case law publishing of this type has deep historical roots. Because of that history, the opinions in these reporters are considered law, despite not being government publications.

Access

The Supreme Court opinions published in the *United States Reports* are currently the only set of federal case law distributed to FDLP libraries. Print copies of West's *Federal Reporter* and *Federal Supplement* are not distributed through the FDLP, but generally are readily available in U.S. state, county, public, and academic law libraries. The landscape for obtaining copies of opinions online is a bit more complicated, as there are a number of different sources. If a few pieces of identifying information about the desired opinion are known (e.g., issuing court, names of the parties, date issued, etc.), a copy can sometimes be obtained directly from the associated court's website.[57] The Law Library of Congress' *Guide to Law Online* provides a useful page with links to many of the individual court websites (http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/federal/usjudic.php). However, each court's website is different, and finding the opinions on each often requires some serious sleuthing, especially on the district court sites. Opinions are also available from the federal government's PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) website (https://pacer.uscourts.gov/) free of charge, though users must sign up for an account, and those unfamiliar with the system may inadvertently incur fees when searching.

Another fairly new option is the USCOURTS collection on GovInfo.gov[58]. In 2011, the GPO (in collaboration with the Administrative Office of the United States Courts [AOUSC]) launched a nationwide project to make digitally authenticated copies of decisions from the federal judiciary available through GovInfo.gov. Court involvement in this project is not mandatory, however, and although all of the U.S. courts of appeals and a number of district courts participate, this is not yet a comprehensive source for federal judicial opinions. It should be noted that the opinions available from the courts' websites, PACER, and GovInfo.gov are all slip opinions. This does not mean that they are not "the law," but for academics or those wishing to cite the case in a legal brief or paper, it is generally necessary to obtain the citation to the relevant reporter. Other, nongovernment sources of federal case law include the paid commercial legal databases (Westlaw, Lexis Advance, Versus Law, etc.), and a number of other free websites, such as Google Scholar, Justia, OpenJurist, and the Free Law Project. As always, researchers should assess the reliability of any nongovernment sources before trusting the content they provide.

Government Information Access and Preservation

Without metadata—that is, standardized description of content—and proper preservation of files, access becomes a meaningless concept (imagine sifting through poorly identified

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[57] Pursuant to the *E-Government Act of 2002* (U.S. Congress, 2002) all US federal courts are to provide free access to "written opinions issued by the court" directly on their website or via sites linked to on their website. Some courts consider the availability of opinions on PACER to satisfy this requirement.
[58] GovInfo replaced FDsys as the GPO's website providing digitally authenticated documents in December 2018.

files on a computer). GPO's GovInfo system was designed with metadata, preservation, digital authentication, and long-term public access in mind, conforming to *ISO standard 14721:2012* for open archival information systems, or OAIS (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2018). Files are generally created as .xml and may be rendered as text, pdf, or html. The metadata and preservation protocols used are PREMIS, MODS, and METS. Files with this level of mark-up are more discoverable by machines and receptive to reuse in linked data projects and are preserved with their digital context or "wrapper." GPO uses PKI[59] for its digital signature authentication so that users can be assured of file integrity. All of this is the good news.

The bad news is that government information is being produced faster and on a wider scale than can be successfully captured, tagged, and preserved in one single system. Resources within Govinfo.gov enjoy a high standard of digital authentication, metadata, and preservation—but this is not the case with everything described in the *CGP* or appearing on federal websites. Throughout its history, the FDLP has been affected by the issue of agency compliance with the program, with much government content remaining fugitive from depository cataloging and distribution. As one strategy, GPO has now created the FDLP Web Archive with harvested content from over 150 federal web domains, using Archive-It. Discoverable at https://archive-it.org/home/FDLPwebarchive, these materials are fully cataloged and preserved by GPO, and included in the *CGP*. Detailed workflow about the project is at https://www.fdlp.gov/project-list/web-archiving.

Various organizations are carrying out projects to strengthen collections and expertise. The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) has a Cooperative Federal Depository Program (CFDP) made up of libraries from ten states (Association of Southeastern Research Libraries, 2020). Libraries sign print retention commitments, agree to serve as Centers of Excellence for specific agencies' publications, and coordinate collection management via a shared database. In cooperation with the Center for Research Libraries, eight institutions are completing a two-year Preservation of Electronic Government Information (PEGI) project, bringing together technologists and librarians to focus on preserving at-risk digital government information of major historical importance (see https://www.pegiproject.org/). The Library of Congress also engages many of the nation's preservation stakeholders through their resources, available from http://www.digitalpreservation.gov.

Complexities and Challenges for Users

Government Information Literacy, User Challenges, Access to Information

In an act in 1813, the Senate and House of Representatives agreed for the first time to print "two hundred copies beyond the number usually printed" of public House and Senate journals and "documents published under the orders" of the Senate and House for the "present and every future Congress." The resolution went on to stipulate that the documents should be distributed to the "library of the United States," state executives and

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[59] See U.S. Government Publishing Office (n.d*.). Public Key Infrastructure*.

legislatures, and colleges, universities, and historical societies in each state (U.S. Congress. 3 Stat. 140, 1813).

The Government Printing Office was established in 1861, and GPO would go on to establish the FDLP in 1895 for the purposes of providing government information to representative libraries, which would in turn provide government information to the public. Over a century later, the FDLP was still the "primary means by which the general public obtain[ed] access to government documents" (Brown, 1999). In the late 1990s, however, with Internet use rapidly expanding, Congress began to explore the prospects of delivering government information online, in part because of its potential cost-saving benefits.

This transition, which unfolded over the following decade, resulted in a massive increase in the amount of government information being made available to the public. In total, the FDLP distributed roughly 3 million documents in its first 120-plus years. In contrast, over 160 million URLs from federal government websites were identified and harvested in 2008 (Jacobs, 2014a).

A lot has changed in the way the public interacts with government information since Congress authorized those two hundred additional copies of House and Senate Journals in 1813. With these changes have come new challenges for users that policymakers would not have predicted over 200 years ago. Today, at least 97% of government documents are "born digital"—meaning they are created and distributed online without a tangible print counterpart—and that number is expected to grow in the years ahead. Although FDLs are not receiving these born-digital documents in print form, libraries can link to these born-digital documents and websites in their OPAC (online public access catalog). However, in the digital era, these links are prone to failure over time for a variety of reasons—from abandoned domains to redesigned sites to content deletion. This failure is known as "link rot" and it is a common threat to the long-term preservation, discoverability, and access of government information (Jacobs, 2014b). To combat this problem, the GPO has been using persistent identifiers (PURLs) since the late 1990s, but this still only represents a small fraction of government information. And even PURLs are not foolproof.

Scrubbing

Online government content is also at risk for careless or calculated deletion. There is a particular worry that content and research on politically charged issues can be targeted for deletion by politicians. In the absence of a government-led effort to systematically preserve online government information, civic-minded organizations such as DataRefuge (DataRescue) stepped up to capture publicly available federal government datasets during the transition between the Obama and Trump administrations. During more than forty DataRescue events held at locations around the country, citizens identified federal environmental and climate data as candidates for capture and preservation in multiple trusted locations (Flynn &Hartnett, 2018).

In 2018, the Sunlight Foundation launched the Web Integrity Project, which monitors changes to government websites and the public's access to government information. In just the first few months of its existence, the Web Integrity Project documented the removal of 26 documents regarding the training of asylum officers from the United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) website and the deletion of pages about Medicare and breast

cancer screening coverage through the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) from the Department of Health and Human Services' website (Sunlight Foundation, n.d.).

Freedom of Information Act

The public does have a mechanism for requesting government records that are not made readily available. The *Freedom of Information Act* (FOIA), enacted in 1966, guarantees the public the right to request access to documents from federal agencies. In turn, these agencies are required to fulfill these requests unless they cite one of the nine exemptions (among them personal privacy and national security) to FOIA. While the spirit of FOIA is noble, the process of requesting documents can be quite frustrating and labor-intensive for the average user. In Fiscal Year 2019, for example, the Department of Defense processed over 54,000 FOIA requests and granted the full request in just 27.3% of cases. The average response time to successful requests for information from the Department of Defense was 28.64 days for "simple" requests and 208.42 days (or over half a year) for "complex" requests (Department of Defense, 2019). FOIA also requires each agency to make certain types of records available to the public in electronic form, which most agencies have complied with by creating FOIA Reading Room areas on their websites, where frequently requested documents and other declassified materials are often posted for public access.

Thanks to advances in telecommunications over the past several decades, the American public has access to more government information today than ever before. However, preserving digital information is much more challenging than preserving information in physical formats. Concerns about link rot, content scrubbing, and the instability of online information raise questions about whether future generations of Americans will be able to access this content in the future. The conversations today among information professionals about access to online government information are centered around long-term preservation and information usability. Drawing from recommendations outlined by the Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems (2012) librarians are advocating for government information systems to facilitate the discoverability, deliverability, readability, understandability, and usability of government information (Jacobs, 2018).

Evolving Role of the Information Professional

Dating back to at least the late 1990s, there has been a trend away from "government documents only" librarians to those whose duties are blended across library functions (Frazer et al.). Information professionals have had to stay current with technological and societal changes ever since S.R. Ranganathan revolutionized the field in India (Ghosh, 2015). There has been much thought given to what libraries will mean in the future and what role they will play in academia and public life (Janes, 2013). In *The New Librarianship Field Guide*, David Lankes et al. offer a list of reasons for a community to have a library at all in the current age. To link Lankes' themes directly to U.S. government information, a library can be: (1) a collective buying agent (to purchase commercial products that greatly enhance the usability of government output); (2) an economic stimulus (when citizen-entrepreneurs have access to government stimulus information); (3) a center of learning (about the government in all three branches and jurisdictions); (4) a safety net, steward of cultural heritage, and cradle of democracy (as a redundant depository of both print and digital

collections, and location of expertise); and (5) a symbol of community aspirations (in programming and outreach around government themes) (Lankes, 2016).

The advent and widespread adoption of social media and mobile and cloud-based applications over the last decade have completely changed what we think of as government documents. In addition to traditional forms of publication, government entities also offer up interactive dashboards, troves of data, and a variety of different content types for download and manipulation. The FDLP's 2015 biennial survey found that half of depository library coordinators identified "keeping up with technology" as a major or minor problem in their work. Fifty-two percent worried about "permanent public access to and stability of digital content" (Outsell, 2016).

A newly available profusion of recorded talks and webinars has made it possible for a global audience to learn the techniques, joys, and frustrations of this library specialization. The flowering of the webinar era has been a major advance in continuing education. Two educational series are noteworthy here: *Help! I'm an Accidental Government Information Librarian* and the *FDLP Academy*. The former is sponsored by the Government Resources Section of the North Carolina Library Association. The series debuted in April 2011 and is designed to help librarians increase their reference prowess by increasing their familiarity with government information resources and discovering the best strategies for navigating them (http://www.nclaonline.org/government-resources/help-im-accidental-government-information-librarian-webinars). The FDLP Academy (https://www.fdlp.gov/about-the-fdlp/fdlp-academy) boasts over 200 sessions, which consist of a mix of recorded training sessions, conference presentations, Depository Library Council (DLC) recordings, and contributions by FDLP community members or GPO staff. Other associations offering webinars and recordings include the American Library Association (ALA), Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), Reference & User Services Association (RUSA), Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), Government Documents Round Table (GODORT), American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), Special Libraries Association-Government Information Division (SLA-DGI), Digital Government Society, and Center for Research Libraries. Another helpful resource is GOVDOC-L.org, a documents librarians' discussion list, which has a searchable archive back to 1990. FreeGovInfo.info, a blog that began publication in 2004, is another venue for discussion and activism among librarians and allies.

Conclusion

Free public access to government information has long been an ideal of the United States. Since the establishment of GPO in 1861, much has changed in the information world, but the basic goal of providing access to government information in order to cultivate a well-informed public has remained constant through the decades. The online world of electronic-only publications, downloadable datasets, and social media presents the U.S. public and government information librarians with a new set of 21st century challenges for securing long-term access and preservation of government information. At the same time, it presents a new set of 21st century opportunities for active civic engagement with government information.

One way that government and government information librarians will have to tackle these challenges is through collaborative partnerships. This work is already beginning. Recent projects of the GPO include building a network of committed Preservation Stewards among the depository libraries and developing a multi-party Federal Information Preservation Network (FIPNET) initiative (US Federal Depository Library Program, 2020). Thus, librarians' efforts are coordinated, not duplicated. Whether learning about web harvesting, digital curation, new approaches to linked data, or how to critically evaluate government information, government documents librarians cannot work in isolation.

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Postscript: International Organizations and Cybersecurity

The Human Dimension of Cybersecurity

United Nations Cybersecurity Section, Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT)

Introduction

While our societies increasingly rely on digital infrastructure, connected technological tools remain inherently vulnerable. The cybersecurity industry has seen an unprecedented rise in cyber-attacks targeting particularly global organizations. Additionally, the overnight spike in remote working caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced new threats that require effective prioritization of actions to reinforce cybersecurity defense and resilience.

In order to maintain a trusted environment in this highly threatened digital era, the United Nations Secretariat has deployed a comprehensive cybersecurity programme, which includes a variety of technical and procedural controls. These controls are essential to ensure that systems are regularly updated and adequately protected, that malicious content is identified and blocked, and that unauthorized activity is detected and mitigated. However, beyond the technological aspect of cybersecurity lies the human interaction with technology, which brings more complexity and potentially new forms of vulnerability. It is therefore imperative to note the key role that employees play as a first line of defense in protecting the organization against an increasing variety of cyber threats.

Human Dimension of Cybersecurity

The United Nations system employs thousands of personnel around the globe to carry out its essential mandates, and each and every one of them plays a crucial role in keeping the organization's technology services and information assets secure. The IT department is no longer seen as the sole organ responsible for cybersecurity, as employees are the most vulnerable to malware through the use of organizational email, the Internet, as well as other communication tools. As the majority of personnel work from their homes, using organization provided and privately owned devices on a home Wi-Fi network as well as the organization's network, their devices are exposed to a range of threats and exploits. This is mainly due to a combination of weaker security controls on home networks and a higher probability of users clicking on COVID-19 related links given the resulting natural human behaviors of fear, concern and the desire to help.

At present, the most common threat vector through which attacks succeed against global organizations is phishing, ultimately leading to accounts being compromised. For the United Nations Secretariat phishing accounted for almost half of the total security incidents recorded in the first half of 2020. These incidents occurred despite the UN's automated systems that block hundreds of millions of malicious email messages, with a significant number specifically targeted at the organization.

It only takes one wrong click from one user to put the entire organization's network in jeopardy, potentially creating a serious impact on the organization. It is therefore imperative that the organization looks beyond the technology and policy aspect of

cybersecurity, and also focuses on the core of the human element. This approach promotes information security capacity building and strengthens user knowledge and awareness within the organization.

Awareness and Training

Although cybersecurity is one of the biggest challenges that organizations face today, its visibility and user awareness still remains limited. As part of the organization's prevention efforts, employees must be able to identify the types of cyber-attacks that may compromise their account and must also be ready to apply best practices against any potential threat.

One of the key fundamentals of the UN's cybersecurity programme is to ensure users are aware of information security and adequately trained. A mandatory computer-based information security training has been developed to provide all ICT users the fundamental tools and knowledge to stay cyber safe and to effectively protect themselves, their families and the organization. Advanced courses and additional resources are also available, providing everyone with comprehensive information to protect not only UN assets but personal data even from home. Furthermore, to ensure continued compliance with this requirement, adequate internal procedures are established, whereby as part of the induction training each new staff member is required to successfully complete the foundation security assessment course before access has been granted to the organization's ICT resources.

Cybersecurity concerns focus far too often on incidents themselves and how to resolve them after the fact, however the UN Cybersecurity programme has been focusing on prevention efforts that start with educating and guiding users with simple Dos and Don'ts to follow in their daily work. These tips are beneficial and applicable to all actors in public and private sector organizations. Borrowing from the Secretary-General's guidance for how to respond to the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is aligned around three characteristics:

1. **Be Safe**

   There are many ways to keep the organization's information systems safe but for a start keeping computers updated and installing security software are critical. Downloading reputable software avoids exposing computers to malware. Users must all make sure to use strong passwords to protect their identity as well as their data and are all required to enable Multi-Factor Authentication to provide an extra layer of protection against potential account compromise.

2. **Be Smart**

   Users must also use extra caution when handling email. Any suspicious messages should be immediately deleted and reported. Confirming an email with the sender by using other communications tools (i.e. telephone) can prevent users from clicking on malicious links or attachments. Passwords should only be entered on genuine login pages.

3. **Be Kind**

It's important to note that while technology provides multiple instruments for information security, the human element plays an essential role in protecting themselves and their colleagues. Hence, being polite, forgiving and avoiding the hurry when sending a message helps build trust in the user community. Cyber attackers tend to use rude language, put pressure and don't use context when sending malicious messages.

In addition, to improve the organization's ability to identify and mitigate vulnerabilities, the UN Cybersecurity team established a Responsible Disclosure Programme (Hall of Fame), encouraging the public (e.g. security researchers, professionals, academia, etc.) to assist with identifying vulnerabilities in the United Nations' publicly accessible information systems. To recognize their contribution to this "crowd sourced" process, the UN publishes the name of everybody who reported a verified vulnerability.

Evolution of Cyber-attacks

Cyber-attacks will continue to evolve constantly as adversaries continue to shift their behavior as well as the attacks they develop over time. This requires the organization to continuously strengthen its prevention and mitigation measures which can help avoid the risk of heavy financial and reputational losses. Over time, weaker security can jeopardize the organization's ability to deliver its mandates. The traditional cybersecurity tool set is being augmented by advanced tools and methodologies that leverage artificial intelligence and machine learning, in an attempt to detect and mitigate cyberattacks earlier in the process, but technological tools alone will never prevent users from clicking on a malicious link. Understanding and acknowledging the human dimension in the implementation of information security measures avoids the ironic risk of producing human vulnerability.

Cybersecurity at the World Bank Group

The World Bank Group ITS Office of Information Security

Introduction

Cybersecurity threats are expected to continue to increase with adverse impact on the global economy and organizations. From ransomware to state-sponsored attacks, the past several years have seen an explosion in cybercrimes. Nation-state actors and criminal organizations operate with a level of competence and sophistication that exceeds the protective and detection capabilities of most security teams.

The World Bank Group (WBG) is one of the world's largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries. Its five institutions share a commitment to reducing poverty, increasing shared prosperity, and promoting sustainable development. Its mission is to end extreme poverty by reducing the share of the global population that lives in extreme poverty to 3 percent by 2030; and to promote shared prosperity by increasing the incomes of the poorest 40 percent of people in every country. Similar to other global

organizations, the WBG faces a shifting threat landscape and business landscape, especially with the recent adoption of remote work and the global COVID-19 pandemic and related events. The accelerating trends of digitalization, remote access, and increased use of cloud and third-party solutions, together with the backdrop of ongoing changes in the business, technology and threat environments, bring new challenges to the security organizations. We will need to evolve and adapt our cybersecurity protection, detection, and response architecture and capabilities to address these challenges.

Cybersecurity Threats and Attacks

The Work Bank Group Institutions remain an attractive target for cyber criminals for several reasons. As many other international financial institutions (IFIs), the WBG institutions work with foreign governments and use government information as part of the WBG operational activities. Such data attracts cyber criminals who are active in the geopolitical domain. The WBG institutions are financial bodies that are active on the global financial markets. Any financial information obtained by cyber criminals can be used to influence or gain from the financial markets the WBG operates in. Lastly, the WBG institutions are development organizations that use data and research in a variety of social and economic sectors of global economy. Any deliberative data or prematurely disclosed data can negatively impact the development work in the client countries.

As a global organization, WBG operates in more than 180 countries and 240 locations around the world. This geographically diverse operation therefore presents a large attack surface to cyber adversaries. The considerable number of laptops and mobile devices from the mobile user population also could be used by cyber adversaries as entry points into the WBG environment if not properly secured. The WBG Information Security Operations Center observes thousands of attacks attempts every hour of the day, putting the cyber defenses at play across WBG information and technology systems.

More than 26,000 staff and contingent workers are part of the WBG's workforce who transact information over the Internet on a daily basis. While people are our greatest assets, they also pose a source of cyber risks as cyber criminals continue to take advantage of the unpredictability of the human nature. Cyber criminals target the WBG institutions using a variety of constantly evolving methods. The most prevalent method remains social engineering, including phishing, CEO fraud or business email compromise, phishing and others, all of which are methods to deceive and manipulate individuals into divulging confidential or personal information. Phishing is the most common attack method against the WBG workforce, which is the use of deceptive messages like email and text to try to steal sensitive information, like credit cards and passwords, or install malicious software on a computer. Over 93 percent of incoming email traffic is blocked by the WBG cyber defenses, much of which is phishing. Business email compromise, also known as CEO fraud, is another method cyber-criminals are attempting to get access to sensitive information for financial gain. In such attacks, WBG senior-level officials are impersonated to authorize financial transactions by other WBG staff or clients.

WBG Cybersecurity Strategy and Organization

The World Bank Group has evolved its information security approach and organization over the past ten years, starting with the consolidation of several information security

departments anchored across the WBG institutions into a central WBG Office of Information Security. In addition to the formation of a central security organization, we developed a multi-year information security strategy and plans that are aligned with the WBG business and WBG IT strategy and objectives. We are now in the second refresh of the multi-year cybersecurity strategy, WBG "Cyber-SAFER Strategy", to address the evolving threat landscape and achieve the encompassing goals of protecting the World Bank Group information assets while enabling the business. This significant shift from managing security and risk to enabling the business requires a robust risk-based cybersecurity program that focuses on continuous improvement with strong support from senior management and business leaders.

The WBG Cyber-SAFER strategy encompasses people, process, technology with a focus on more than just prevention, aiming to balance initiatives across prevention, detection and response. According to Gartner, an IT research organization, attacks and compromise are inevitable, and, by 2020, 60% of security budgets will be in support of detection and response capabilities. A key goal of the Cyber-SAFER strategy is "equipping users to carry out shared security responsibilities". WBG users are part of the security solution and therefore we invest in a robust security awareness program, with the annual mandatory training forming the foundation, complemented with awareness communications to influence users' behaviors and experiential training such as phishing exercises. As part of this strategy, an aggressive campaign is made to staff to report any suspicious emails to the Office of Information Security.

Another ongoing focus area for the WBG cybersecurity program has been security monitoring and incident response. The World Bank Group continues to adapt our detective and response capabilities such as the WBG Information Security Operations Center which runs 24x7 from multiple locations for improved resilience, centralized log management supported by analytics and AI technologies and incident response procedures. As 100% prevention is not possible and cybersecurity incidents will occur, the industry trend has been moving from protecting the perimeter to protecting the organization's critical data, and towards an adaptive security architecture. This architecture integrates attack protection with access management, combining prevention, detection, response and prediction capabilities with continuous monitoring and analytical capabilities and serves to strengthen our security posture in the current environment of remote work. With the ongoing shortage of security specialists, our focus has also been on increasing automation and leveraging artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The WBG Office of Information Security serves in an oversight role with respect to IT governance, risk, and compliance and performs the following core security functions and services:

- Security strategy, planning and governance
- Security monitoring and incident response via a 24x7 Information Security Operations Center
- Security engineering and cyber intelligence
- Threat and vulnerability management
- Security event management and analytics

- Application security, including security architecture and security testing and certification
- Technology risk management and third-party risk
- IT policy, compliance, and audit
- Security awareness and education

The final component of a strong information security program is effective governance processes resulting in clear accountability and authority for security risk decisions. Strong accountability models, in which risk is owned by the business stakeholders, ensure that systemic security problems are addressed in a timely manner.

The WBG continues to emphasize cybersecurity user awareness and training as a critical component of our cyber defense with the goal of helping users recognize and prevent social engineering and other types of cyber-attacks. The WBG Cybersecurity Awareness Program includes a variety of initiatives which aim to educate the WBG staff and contractors of the shared responsibility of cybersecurity and the roles and responsibilities they play in protecting the WBG information assets. The Program includes the annual mandatory cybersecurity awareness course for all employees, regular outreach to all WBG staff and contractors on evolving cyber threats as well as targeted awareness and training to higher risk user groups due to the nature of their job functions. The Program also includes outreach to senior management and governance groups to ensure continued business and management support for the awareness program and the Cyber-SAFER strategy overall.

Conclusion

Kathryn Tallman, University Libraries, University of Colorado Boulder

Government information and official publications are a rich and diverse source of information for billions of citizens around the world. This professional report only begins to scratch the surface of this complex system of publications, policies, agencies, archives, and libraries. Each chapter in this report presents a unique case study of a particular government information publication system. Some of these systems are very structured, with clear delineations between services, portals, agencies, or governmental bodies. In Greece, for example, it seems that nearly every element of a citizen's interaction with the government is managed by a distinct portal, publication, or service. Most of these systems, however, are made up of a complex patchwork of legislation, policies, libraries, archives, and agencies. The United States serves as a prime example of government complexity, with hundreds of federal departments, agencies, bureaus, commissions, programs, and a centralized government publishing office that doesn't have the legal authority to enforce its own policies. Similarly, the International Government Organization (IGO) publication landscape is complicated. Locating and accessing information within this system requires a sophisticated set of skills that is difficult to cultivate in even the largest research library, not to mention a small rural library or underfunded urban public library.

The inherent complexity of government information and official publications can prevent even the most skilled Internet searcher from locating the information that they need. Therefore, the primary hope of this professional report is to unpack this very complicated system of official government information. Each chapter describes the official publications and sources of information for a different nation, region, or institution. Despite the many unique systems detailed throughout this report, there are a few notable commonalities that will serve as the focus for the remainder of this conclusion: (1) Access to information is seen by most as a fundamental right; (2) common barriers to government information and official publications are the result of emerging digital technologies; and (3) while much government is accessible online, this complex environment still requires the development of a highly skilled, specialized network of government information professionals.

Access to Information as a Fundamental Right

Beginning on an optimistic note, most of the entities in this report endorse the idea of "access to information" or "freedom of information" as a fundamental right. Despite the myriad of challenges and barriers to government information access and preservation, this is very encouraging news. With a few exceptions, this freedom is found in constitutions, statutes, or official policies throughout the world. It is widely accepted that publicly accessible government information is good for transparency, education, development, and a well-functioning civil society. There is no doubt that this commitment to public information has increased the visibility and accessibility of government publications in many countries. In Greece, for example, after public data was required to be published in the country's official national data portal (http://data.gov.gr), access increased by 154% from 2016-2017 (Greece Public Data Annual Report, 2017).

In Kenya, Korea, the United States, and many other countries, this concept appears directly or indirectly in the Constitution. Others have codified "access to information" through legislation or statutory policies, like Nigeria's *Freedom of Information Act 2011* or the Russian Federation's amendments to federal law that formed the *Official Internet Portal of Legal Information* (2021). The United Nations incorporated "public access to information" into its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) under Goal 16.10 (United Nations, 2015). While the freedoms of expression, thought, opinion, and information are already featured in Articles 18 and 19 of the United Nations *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the UN's SDG 16.10 is one of the first examples of an IGO supporting access to information as a specific development target.

In practice, such access has taken the form of new technologies, like open access data portals. The World Bank Open Data policy, for example, provides governments and citizens around the world with free, open access to much of the Bank's valuable research and data. But it isn't always this straightforward. In Tanzania, the *2016 Access to Information Act* recognizes the basic rights of citizens to receive information from the government. However, regulations and penalties for the unauthorized dissemination of government statistics outside of those official publications produced by the National Bureau of Statistics contradict the nature of this law. And despite the statutory and constitutional support for "freedom of information" found throughout this report, there are still considerable barriers to the access, use, and preservation of government information and official publications.

Barriers and Challenges to Access and Preservation

Each chapter in this report describes a unique set of challenges to the dissemination, access, and/or preservation of government information. In Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions, issues related to training, budgets, staffing, information technologies, and physical library locations limit public access to government publications. Other barriers are more subtle. For example, limits on public access might appear in the form of a robust national security or classification system, where most publications are deemed top secret or classified. The depository system of the Russian Federation depends on the national media to publish official government information. Legislation in Russia doesn't go into effect until it has been published by one of the four official publication outlets (three newspapers and one Internet portal). This dependence on the state-run media, along with potentially low circulation numbers—little over 400,000 for the *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*—may limit access to government information. Another unique challenge is mentioned in the chapter on Korea, where the deposit policies of the three main government publication depository libraries are complicated and confusing for users. The author of this chapter points to the lack of a uniform numbering system for government documents that, if improved, would lead to better access for all.

The most common barriers and challenges to government information access and preservation are the result of disruptive technologies—born-digital publishing, the digital divide, and a growing dependency on information and communication technologies (ICT). For many countries in this report, the speed at which government entities transitioned to online publishing quickly outpaced any one agency's ability to track, provide access to, and preserve digital publications. Government information professionals struggle with a massive influx of born-digital documents, all of which can be published, manipulated, or removed on

a whim, whether by official policy or even cyberattack. Documents disappear, links break, and file formats change over time. A compelling argument is made in the United Kingdom chapter that the static government publications of yesteryear are being replaced by more dynamic websites and digital products, and that information professionals need to take a more flexible and creative approach to digital preservation

At the same time, governments and intergovernmental organizations have used these advances in technology to disseminate and promote more content to more people through web portals, data portals, and databases. Canada's decision to move to an all-digital depository system is one example of how significant this transformation has been. However, this type of digital depository system does not work everywhere, and the ever-growing digital divide further disadvantages populations in communities with little to no access to ICT.

These challenges and opportunities are vast, and the answers are not to be found in this report. However, the barriers presented here are surmountable if organizations like IFLA, IGOs, and national library associations understand the sheer complexity of government information and support the need for educated and experienced government information professionals.
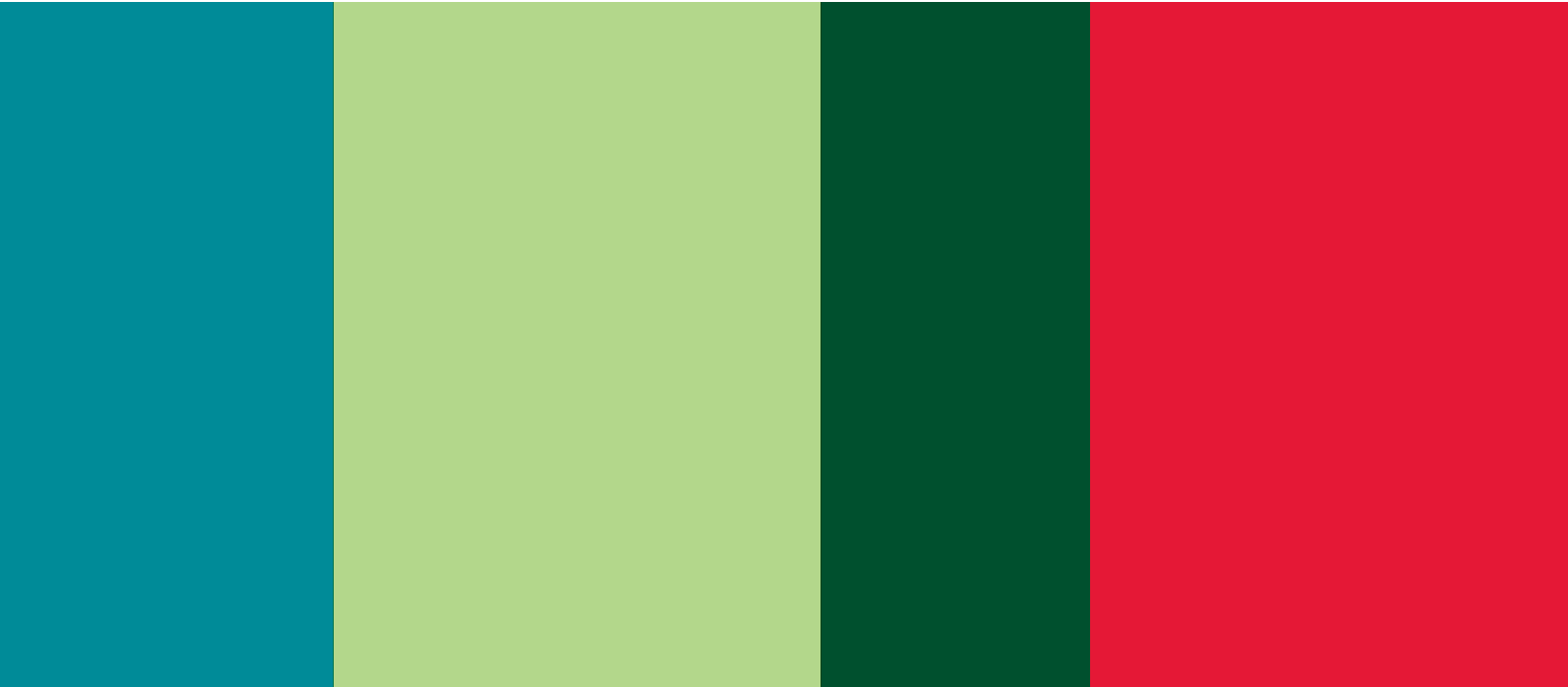
Complexity Requires Expertise

The authors of this professional report set out to describe, and maybe even demystify, the inherent complexity of the government information landscape. Ultimately, this report highlights the need for librarians and information professionals to receive specialized training and education in the access, use, and preservation of official government publications. Most governments know that public access to information can result in positive developments for civil society. What they may not know is that there is an entire community of dedicated and passionate information professionals who stand at the ready to promote and preserve access to this essential source of information. As the government information lifecycle continues to move online and grow in complexity, these skilled professionals are more important than ever before. Supportive and well-informed library organizations and associations like IFLA and its Government Information and Official Publications section (GIOPS) are critical to the continued growth and development of these government information and official publications experts.

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