

Newspapers - Foreign

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I. Scope

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

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

For some regions of the world, acquiring newspapers is difficult due to political, geographical, or technological obstacles. In those cases, the Collections Policy Statement for Countries and Regions with Acquisitions Challenges may be used as additional guidance to inform appropriate selecting.

The Library of Congress acquires and retains, on a selective basis, significant newspapers from most politically independent foreign nations, principalities, as well as from highly-significant politically dependent foreign territories and possessions throughout the world. Foreign newspapers are selected to provide the most complete coverage of events and to represent the principal political, economic, and social viewpoints in the various national and territorial areas represented. This policy applies to all

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

II. Research Strengths

The Library's foreign newspaper holdings form an extensive research level collection. It contains titles from all areas of the globe, representative of most of the independent countries that have existed during the last 350 years, and includes newspapers printed in almost all modern languages. Many of these newspapers published outside of the United States are in a foreign language. Both the size and the diversity of the Library's newspaper holdings constitute its major strengths. Members of the United States Congress and scholars doing research in newspapers covering a broad geographic base are able, in a visit to a single institution, to examine a wide range of newspaper titles. The Library is one of the few national libraries that attempts to maintain, on a permanent basis, newspaper holdings from other countries.

III. Collecting Policy

General

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

Due to the voluminous nature of newspapers and the inherent instability of the newsprint and ink used, a recommendation to acquire a newspaper title for permanent retention implies a long-term commitment of resources by the Library. At this time permanent retention is a commitment by the Library to acquire or produce a preservation quality microfilm surrogate. (See Microforms -- Quality Supplemental Guideline.) Therefore, each recommendation to subscribe to or otherwise obtain a newspaper title to be added to the Library's permanent collections must be accompanied by a justification that addresses defined selection criteria below. Also, Recommenders may selectively consider digitized and born digital newspapers for permanent retention since the Library will continue to develop policy and infrastructure to allow permanent collection of born digital and other remote access newspapers as specified in the Electronic Resources Supplementary Guideline, section IV, Specific Guidelines.

Although this statement provides criteria for the acquisition of foreign newspapers for the Library's permanent collections, it does not preclude the acquisition of newspapers from individual foreign areas for temporary use or to meet important information needs of Congress.

Recommenders can consider the option of one year "current issues only" acquisition of titles that might not warrant permanent retention. However, given the difficulty and cost to obtain foreign newspapers, the one year option should be used in exceptional circumstances only.

Specific

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

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

1. **Level of Coverage:** The levels of coverage may be sub-national, national, multinational, or international. If a given title does not provide a national level of coverage, the exceptional significance of the province, region, or city in which it is published may be considered. The extent to which the content of a title overlaps or duplicates that of another title being received at the Library should be taken into account. Titles with better coverage should be selected.
2. **Importance of the title in its place of origin:** The extent of circulation, readership, and influence are key factors. Titles may be chosen on the basis of their importance to political or social elites, to significant special interests, or their importance in a special field (e.g., political or public opinion, economics, religion, etc.)
3. **Issuing bodies:** In addition to standard, independently published general circulation newspapers, selective representation should be sought for titles published by the national government, major political organizations, or other significant organizations or interest groups.
4. **Political or social conditions:** Rapid political or social change is a consideration that argues for wider coverage. This may be achieved by acquiring a mixture of permanent and temporary titles that are regularly reviewed for retention. A change from temporary to permanent must be with the concurrence of the custodial unit chief.
5. **Users:** The anticipation of use by the U.S. Congress is a primary consideration in acquiring specific newspaper titles. Recommendations based on reader demand should take into consideration whether the demand is for current information, or for research in non-current topics, or both.
6. **Research value:** Accuracy and coverage of a title should be such that it would be consulted for serious research purposes. Titles that are the only representatives of minority/lesser-known/dying languages, dialects, or scripts merit special consideration for acquisition.
7. **Cost:** When titles are being acquired in ink print and subsequently microfilmed, the ongoing cost of preservation and permanent retention is extremely high. A factor justifying such expense might be that the Library of Congress is known to be the only source for public access to the title, and long-term demand for it is deemed sufficient.
8. **Unreliability of receipt:** One valuable aspect of a newspaper is that it serves as a continuous published chronology of events. Sporadic publication or receipt of issues justifies discontinuing retention of title or rejecting the title for inclusion in the collections in the first place.

9. Decline in quality of publication: The dynamic nature of newspaper publishing requires regular review of selected titles. Significant decline in the quality or coverage of a publication may justify discontinued acquisition of the title.

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

IV. Best Editions and Preferred Formats

For guidance regarding best editions for material acquired via the Copyright Office, which may apply to state, county, city, and tribal publications, see: <http://copyright.gov/circs/circ07b.pdf>.

For guidance regarding recommended formats for material acquired via all other means; e.g., purchase, exchange, gift and transfer, see: <http://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/rfs>.

For information regarding electronic resources and web archiving, see the following Supplementary Guidelines: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/electronicresources.pdf> and <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/webarchive.pdf>.

V. Acquisition Strategies: Current and Future

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

In addition to maintaining print subscriptions to several newspapers, the Library has access to a number of newspapers through electronic databases. Coverage includes both current news and historical newspaper collections. Since the option to purchase a title or collection is typically only available for historical newspaper collections, the Library's electronic access to current newspapers is provided through subscriptions to database aggregators. This presents challenges as titles can change with little or no advanced warning; there are often more use restrictions; and there may not be perpetual access to the content.

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

VI. Collecting Levels

Collecting Levels for foreign newspapers generally mirror those for U.S. newspapers with the exception of Pre-1801 newspapers that have a collecting level of 4 (not 5).

	Collecting Guidelines	Collecting Levels
Current newspapers	Selectively with microfilm preferred format	4
Post-1801 newspapers	Selectively with microfilm preferred format; originals selected for artifactual value	4
Pre-1801 newspapers	Highly selectively with ink-print preferred format, but only selectively for microfilm	4
Historic events newspapers	Highly selectively with ink-print preferred format, representing artifactual value (to provide support for interpretive programs)	3

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