

## **The bright side of procedures in a period of crisis: acquisitions decision-making at the EUI Library**

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**Abstract:** As demand for new resources increases and purchasing powers diminish, libraries are obliged to apply selection and revision criteria in their collection development policy. The European University Institute, an international research institution for post-graduate studies on social sciences, has developed a firm workflow from the initial proposal of a new resource to annual renewal / cancellation /switch from print to online. Decisions are made considering specific criteria, including costs, usage statistics, academic feedback, technical specifications, preservation availability, alternative ways of providing information required. The EUI Library's technical environment includes: ILS Millennium with ERM module integrated with Primo Discovery tool, statistics software managing a collection of data and P.I. according to the Sconul scheme and SAP accounting system.

**Keywords:** acquisitions, collection development, procedure, workflow, decision-making, organisation, renewal, usage statistics, performance indicators.

### **1. Introduction**

The EUI opened its doors in 1976 by the six European Community member states as a postdoctoral Institute with the mission to “foster the advancement of learning in fields which are of particular interest for the development of Europe”. It offers a PhD programme in the disciplines of history, law, economics, and political and social sciences.

The EUI also counts a Master programme in Law (LL.M.) and two big research centres, the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies with its mission to develop high quality interdisciplinary and policy-oriented research on the dynamics of European integration and Europe's global role and the Max Weber Programme, which is the largest international postdoctoral programme in the social sciences and humanities in Europe. The EUI also hosts the historical archives of the European Union.

Nowadays, the EUI has 21 member states, a multi-national staff and an academic community with more than 60 professors and 900 PhD students and

fellows from over 60 countries. More than 100 PhD theses are defended each year. The campus includes 14 buildings on the hills overlooking Florence and close to Fiesole.

The EUI Library is recent and serves a relatively small community of specialised and demanding users. It offers a collection of 57.000 e-journals and 1700 current print serials, 545.000 print volumes, 460.500 e-books and 16.400 items listed in Cadmus, the EUI research repository, of which 4500 are in full-text. Print collections are mostly open shelf, but the library has a remote storage. Fully automated since its opening in 1976, the EUI Library runs its activity in a complex technological environment. This includes the ILS Millennium (Innovative), Primo as discovery service (Ex-Libris), Cadmus, the research repository run by Dspace and searchable through Primo, a hosted software for the collection of Library statistics (Simonlib) and an accounting system managed by SAP in connection with the Millennium acquisitions module.

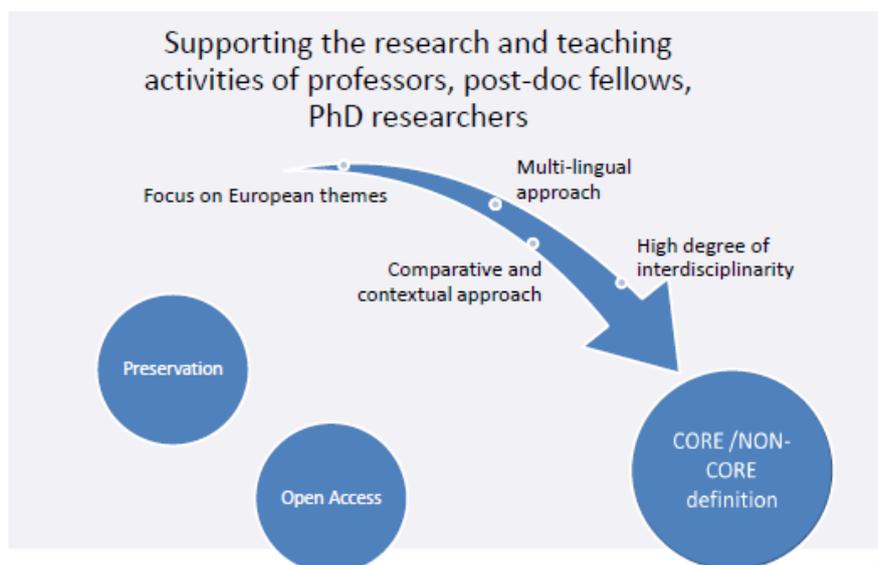
## **2. Collection Development Policy**

The mission of the Library is to support the research and teaching activities of professors, post-doc fellows, PhD researchers and masters students.

The collection development policy of the Library takes into account the changes that occur in its research programmes and activities as it tries to follow the emergence of new research interests in the academic departments and centres. The following essential elements have been identified:

- Focus on European themes
- Multi-lingual approach
- Comparative and contextual approach
- High degree of interdisciplinarity
- Preservation
- Open access

The EUI supports the principle of Open Access: in 2011 the Berlin declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities was signed and faculty and researchers are encouraged to deposit their work in Cadmus, the EUI institutional repository which also contains all PhD theses.



**Table 1**

The collection policy is now under revision by a new working group in the light of the new trends putting into evidence the shift from print to electronic, from ownership to access, from collection to service. Nevertheless the procedures described in the *Collection Policy: Coping with change* document are still valuable in the current period of crisis.

Around 2005, while managing its resources which were mainly in print format, the EUI Library identified different levels of collection development:

- *The first consists of the large themes that are a constant in the research interests of the EUI, forming what we can define as the “core collection”.*
- *The second consists of collections in support of research programmes destined to conclude in a definite time frame, or doctoral theses and postdoctoral programmes and other academic activities on specialised topics, which sometimes are peripheral to the major trends of research at the EUI. These are defined as “non-core collection”.* European University Institute Library, Collection policy working group, (2010).

In this context also the Interlibrary loan service has an essential role, ensuring the satisfaction of individual, rather than general, needs located in marginal areas of research.

In support of its mission, the Library has four information specialists (one for each Department) and an EDC librarian. The information specialists are responsible for the collection development within their own subject areas taking into account the feedback of their respective department and specific priorities of each sector. They stay up to date with new courses, programs, and faculty

interests, and any other developments likely to influence the need for library resources and services. Central to any decision-making is the acquisitions working group where research needs and collection development policy are identified and put into practice.

### **3. Quality management: identification of “core” and “non-core” resources**

EUI users are encouraged to submit their research needs in various ways: regular meetings of Information specialists with academics, meetings with Library researcher’s representative, presence of the Librarian in the Academic Council, regular Library user survey, contacts with individual users, purchase suggestion forms on the Library web site.

Following these needs the Library identified important criteria for its decision-making policy on new acquisitions and renewal of its subscribed resources.

As a basis and starting point for this quality management, and following its collection policy, the Library collection has been tagged with codes indicating their subject area together with the core and long-term preservation status.

In the past years all individually subscribed journals have been identified as core or non-core. A designated code has been inserted in the bibliographic record of each journal, indicating the title as core or non-core, together with the associated subject area which correspond with the departments at the EUI. Information specialists are responsible for assigning these codes which are periodically reviewed.

An additional code is used in the bibliographic records of subscribed journals reflecting their desired format as print or electronic or print plus electronic. This code indicates whether the Information specialist prefers to subscribe to the print or electronic or print+electronic format, regardless of whether this format is available. Based on these codes acquisitions staff regularly checks availability of new (online) formats for print titles. While the general collection policy is geared towards a move to e-only of all our journals, some titles are considered mainstream core publications for the EUI and a decision has been made to maintain these subscriptions also in print format.

### **4. Long-term preservation policy**

An important role in the EUI Library’s collection development is played by preservation. The Library has been active for years in this area, as subscriber to Portico, and through its participation in the LOCKSS and CLOCKSS digital preservation services. With the ongoing move to e-only of its print collections, digital preservation plays a key role in this decision-making process.

A Florence-area library cooperation for shared preservation of print journals was established in order to facilitate the shift to e-only.

Information on preservation coverage is stored in a specific MARC field in the bibliographic record, as well as in the licence record, in case of e-resources.

### **5. Quality management identification of resources : criteria for evaluation of acquisitions**

Acquisitions of new resources (especially journals and e-resources) are identified with codes based on our selection criteria.

In the case of suggestions for subscription of new journals, a journal proposal form is filled out by the Information specialist. Here the journal is already identified as core/non-core and the desired format is indicated, as well as details about post-cancellation access and long-term preservation. The form is discussed in the monthly Acquisitions meeting of the Library. Should a subscription be approved, the data in the form serve to populate the record in the ILS.

A similar workflow is handled for new e-resources (Table 1). The Information specialist sends a proposal to members of the Acquisitions staff. They contact the publisher, request for pricing information on licensing and acquisitions terms and if possible, ask for free trial access. Once a trial is set up and publicized on the EUI Library webpages, a precise evaluation procedure is followed. Fundamental in this evaluation phase are the criteria for the evaluation of new e-resources which are laid down on a form. Questions on content, coverage, compatibility for openURL linking, preservation, subscription option and licensing information is filled out by the Information specialist, Electronic resources librarian and Acquisitions librarian. The availability of (similar) content in open access is included in the criteria and is always checked. Comments on the database from end users, who are invited to provide feedback during the trial, are incorporated on the form.

At the same time staff members review a copy of the licence agreement with the terms and conditions of use. Also in this area the EUI Library has a basic set of requirements which the license agreement should meet. Cf. Harris L.E. (2009). A list of crucial requirements has been spelled out, according to the type of resource, including: access mode (IP access, simultaneous users, walk-in users), perpetual or post-cancellation access rights, archival rights (along with long-term preservation clause), usage (downloading and printing, ILL/document delivery, remote access), usage statistics (COUNTER compliance) and opt-out terms. Cf. Lipinski T.A. (2013)

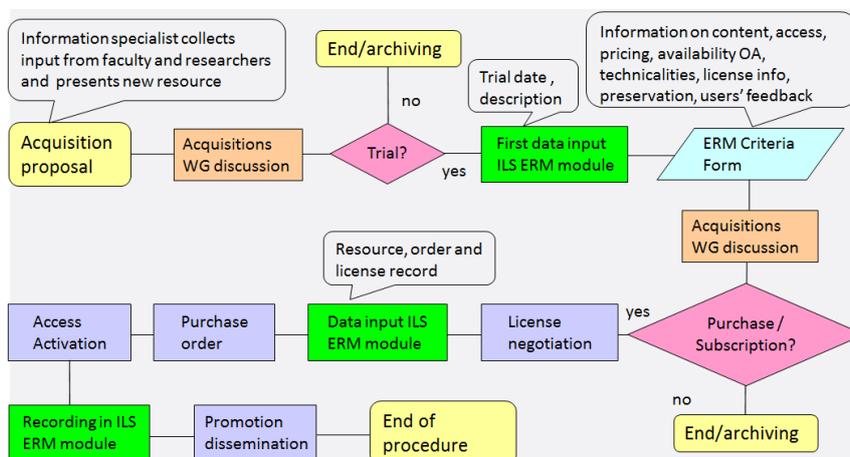


Table 2

Once the trial access has expired, a possible purchase or subscription is evaluated and discussed at the Acquisitions meeting where the completed e-resources form serves as a basis. Budget availability is also part of the discussion and in case of lack of funds the proposal can be accepted pending the cancellation of some other resources. Should the database be approved for purchase, a new phase for negotiation starts. The availability of the resource through a library consortium is checked. The price is negotiated and all terms and conditions of the contract are carefully reviewed and negotiated where needed. Once an agreement is found with the publisher or supplier, the Library finally confirms its purchase or subscription. See interesting similar cases in Agee, J. (2007).

## 6. Renewal decision-making

Decision-making on the renewal of various resources takes place during specific moments of the year.

In May electronic resources subscriptions are evaluated for renewal. A list of paid e-resources is circulated among the information specialists. Various types of information are offered on a spreadsheet including cost, publisher, expiry date and a link to the shared folder where the specific usage statistics are collected, elaborated and stored (Table 2).

Information specialists have the possibility to analyse the statistics, re-evaluate the resource in the light of the current research profile of the EUI, and eventually request feedback from users, thus presenting the results of their evaluation to the Acquisitions working group during the renewals meeting.

Often this exercise leads to cancellation of resources, making room for acquisition of newly demanded titles. In 2014 subscriptions for new individual journal titles were 16 (of which 9 e-only), while 16 electronic resources were put on trial or negotiated. 54 journals were moved to e-only generating cost

savings of more than 10% on subscription, of more than 1,000 Euros on binding, without taking into account hidden costs.

TITLE	ORDER	EXP. DATE	2014 paid	2015 paid	INITIALS	STATS	STATS TO	format	Consortium
Franco Angeli	o1234562	31/10/2015	5,000.00		MN	Casalini	12/2014	ejournal	
HEINONLINE FILRD	o1234573	31/05/2015	5,000.00		MN	Hein	4/2014	ejournal	
HEINONLINE KLUWER LAW JL	o1234584	31/05/2014	cancelled 2014.06.		MN	Hein	12/2014	ejournal	
HEINONLINE INDEX TO FOREIGN LEGAL PERIODICALS	o1234595	31/12/2015	5,000.00	5,200.00			12/2014		
HEINONLINE UNITED NATIONS	o1234606	31/10/2015	5,000.00		MN	Hein	12/2014	database	
HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS	o1234617	31/12/2015	5,000.00	5,000.00	SN	Ebsco	12/2014	database	CARE
Historical Statistics of the United States	o1234628	01/12/2015	5,000.00		TB	Cambridge	6/2014	database	
IBR	o1234639	31/12/2014	5,000.00		PK/SN	RefGlobal	4/2015	database	
IBSS	o1234650	31/12/2015	5,000.00	5,300.00	PK	ProQuest	4/2015	database	
IBZ	o1234661	31/12/2014	5,000.00		PK/SN	RefGlobal	4/2015	database	

Journal Report 1 (JR1) Number of Successful Full-Text Article Requests by Month and Journal														
Customer: Istituto Universitario Europeo [48FIR0P]														
Date run:	12/01/2015													
PUBLISHER	PLATFOR ONLINE IS	Jan-2014	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-2014	Jun-2014	Jul-2014	Aug-2014	Sep-2014	Oct-2014	Nov-14	Dec-2014	YTD Total
Total for all Journals		149	123	77	95	224	215	200	110	179	188	213	345	2118
Costruzioni psicoanalitici Franco Angeli	torrossa 1972-5744	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Diritti umani e diritto li Franco Angeli	torrossa 1972-5485	13	34	11	55	22	55	28	13	23	24	10	33	321
Diritto, immigrazione e Franco Angeli	torrossa 1972-4799	12	22	58	44	65	33	16	8	33	24	44	23	382
Economia delle fonti di Franco Angeli	torrossa 1972-4950	11	15	7	9	21	0	0	0	16	18	11	8	116

Table 3

During the summer the renewal of all the individual journal subscriptions is reviewed on the basis of quality standards as identified in the collection policy and helped by the associated codes in the bibliographic records.

The trend to reduce paper and gradually move towards e-only subscriptions is governed by firm criteria. Both core and non-core subscribed titles should, in principle, be e-only, if certain conditions are met. Maintenance of the print version must be justified. The decision whether a title is eligible to move from print+online to e-only, based on the aforementioned criteria, is pictured in a 'decision-making tree' (Table 3). The desired format is weighed against EUI Library licensing and long-term preservation values which enable a title to be moved to e-only. Two conditions have been identified as essential in this decision-making process: a core title may be converted to e-only if post-cancellation access from the licensor is guaranteed and the title is preserved by trusted repositories, such as Portico or CLOCKSS. The condition for a non-core title to move to e-only requires only the post-cancellation access guarantee.

After this exercise Acquisitions staff is ready to complete the renewal procedures with the subscription agents in October.

Tag: SUBJECT\_CORE, NON-CORE  
Desiderata: E, P/E, E-ONLY

AUTHOR	110	2	European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes
TITLE	245	1 4	The European journal of development research
IMPRINT	260		London :JFrank Cass,lc1989-
MARC	998		ECO_NONCORE
MARC	998		ECO_E
MARC	997		PORTICO_preserved_2013 (palgrave)
MARC	997		PORTICO_postcanc_yes_2013 (palgrave)
MARC	997		CLOCKSS_preserved_2013

Information Specialist		Serials/Acquisitions Staff	
Actual CORE Status (in 998)	WANT Format Desiderata Status (in 998)	HAVE Actual EUI holdings have P/E	CONDITIONS REQUIRED TO MOVE TO DESIDERATA
CORE	want E (E-ONLY)	have P	E version must meet <b>two conditions</b> (Post-cancellation access and Preservation)
CORE	want P/E	have P	Justify keeping P and Obtain E (no conditions)
NONCORE	want E (E-ONLY)	have P/E	E version must meet <b>one condition</b> (Post-cancellation access)
NONCORE	want P/E	have P	Justify keeping P and Obtain E (no conditions)

**CONDITIONS**

- Post cancellation access per license
- Long term digital preservation (Portico, Clockss, etc.) or shared print preservation in cooperative context: only for CORE titles.

**Table 4**

The described procedure is included in a broader plan foreseeing, along with the regular weeding of the print collections to remote storage, a complete collection evaluation process, which has just begun and is carried out in a complete and systematic way, considering the lack of space and the budget stagnation that the Library is suffering, cf. as a case Wiersma, G., (2014).

### 7. Promotion and dissemination

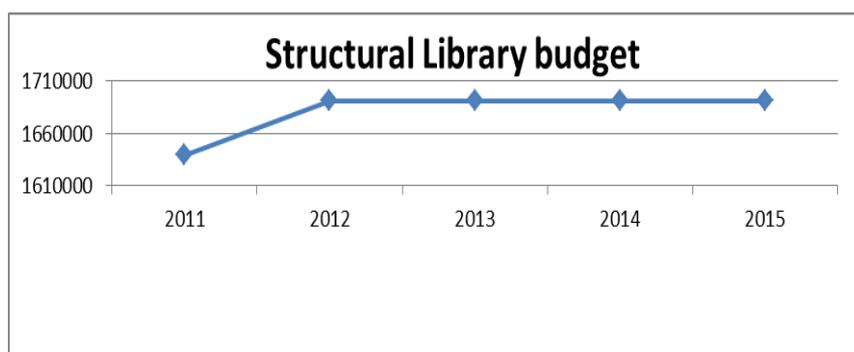
Promotion and dissemination of new resources is guaranteed through several means: activation of library holdings in the EUI Library Discovery service and Worldcat, Google-Scholar, a current display of print journals together with a virtual display based on Journal TOCs service, a display of newly acquired books and EUI Theses, new titles lists on the web-site, announcements on the Library blog, the web-news, E-Resources Focus e-newsletter, specific Library courses and other specialised information such as the e-Bulletin of the Economics and Statistical Data Collections or the conference series “Atelier multimedia”.

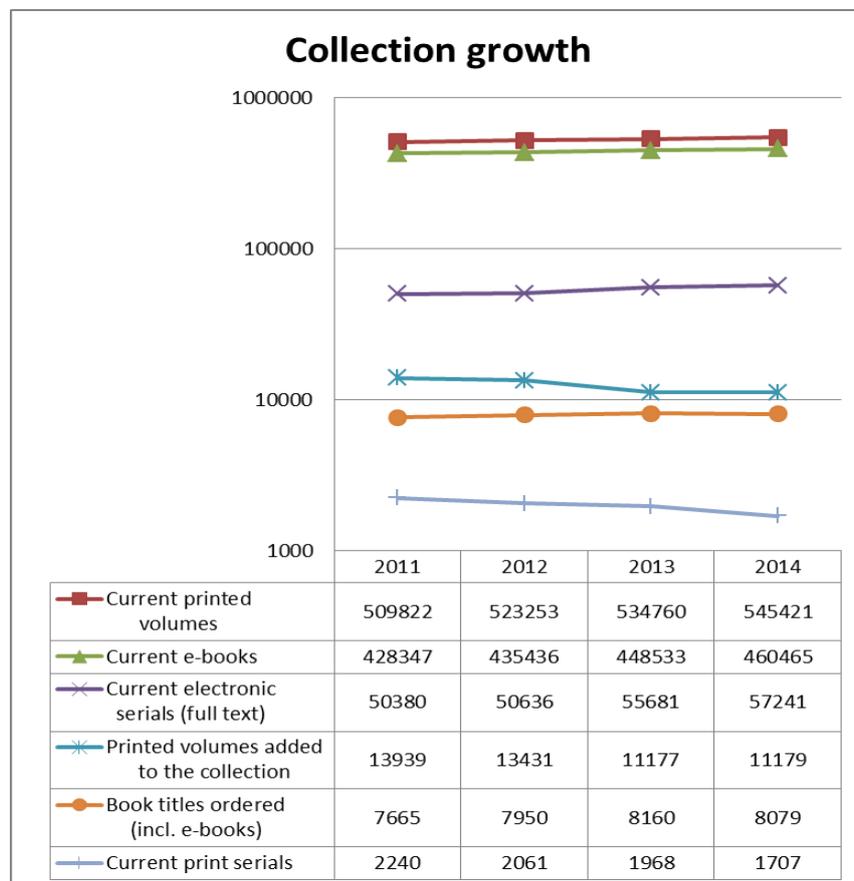
### 8. The bright side of procedures: towards the future

Since 2012 the Library budget has not increased, while in the previous three years the increase was less than the inflation rate in these fields. This caused a decrease in acquisitions power taking into account the yearly inflation, sometimes amplified by currency fluctuations. As a result a firm workflow with a sound procedure is essential to meet the needs of our academic community. Moreover an outstanding revision of policies and procedures should accompany the Library in this rapidly evolving period. Giordano, T., (2013).

New strategies in collection development are usually carried out as pilot projects, before being adopted for the entire Library. Important steps have already been accomplished in the area of economics in 2014, with a pilot project on journals and books based on the following specific parameters: the decentralization of the economics department, the limited use of its members of the Library (25% of the average Library gate entries of the other three departments) and the relatively high rate of obsolescence of literature in these fields. Nearly all economics journals were moved to e-only and one publisher was identified to replace all recent published print books with e-book collections. In the meantime, reference information on the Library website was enriched and updated, becoming an important and highly used information tool. The positive results of this project suggest extending the experiment, taking into account the specificities of the various departments and centres, thus enforcing the intention to shift from print to electronic, from ownership to access and from collection to service, which will be the core of the new collection development policy.

The continuous efforts of carefully monitoring the collection together with user needs enable the Library management to make decisions on new acquisitions and offer the possibility to purchase new resources in a period of budget deficit (Table 4). The well-established structure of selection and renewal procedures based on strictly defined parameters enabled the EUI Library to make the most efficient use of its resources providing academic users with the highest quality materials in a user-oriented environment.



**Table 5****References**

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