National academic library print collections: a Dutch perspective

Bert Zeeman, 8 November 2018
“Academic libraries should continue to work towards a national academic library print collection so that the work of developing a comprehensive archive of the scholarly record can be distributed more broadly.”
UKN Collective Collection: Size

13.5M titles*

23M holdings in UKB libraries

572M holdings in WorldCat

*distinct publications; de-duplicated OCLC numbers

Data current as of January 2016
UKB policies: journals (2006)

1) Keep at least one run, as complete as possible, of all journals ever collected by one of the UKB-libraries

2) Share the burden of this obligation by distributing all academic disciplines over the 13 university libraries (using a specific Dutch subject code, loosely related to the LCC-code)

3) The National Library is the library-of-last-resort for all journals published in the Netherlands
UKB policies: books (2011)

1) Keep all books published before 1901
2) Keep at least two copies of every printed book published from 1901 onwards in the collective collection; a single copy must always be retained
3) No distribution based on disciplines (only a limited number of books have a subject code)
4) The National Library is the library-of-last-resort for all books published in the Netherlands
Strengths

- Voluntary commitment
- Sharing the burden
- Strong sense of cooperation between libraries
- Excellent ILL-system in place
Weaknesses

- Chain as strong as its weakest link
- No formal registration of retention commitments
- Books: a whole different ballgame
Opportunities

- International cooperation, for instance EPICo
- WorldCat and MARC tag 583
- Bigger is not better
Threats

- Differences between university libraries
- Relative importance of print is declining
- Eager university administrators
Journals

• Do we really need a complete run of every journal in every country?
Books

- Is it really necessary to have 2 copies of all books published between 1950 and 2000 in the Dutch national collection?
Shared (high density) storage

• Are we really prepared, and able, to look at our collections from a national (or even international) perspective in stead of from a local one?
• What is really necessary at the local level?

Büron, Switzerland
The Cooperative Swiss Storage Library (2016)