Reproduction/Contribution by INTAS to the "Study on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe" - Science and Society, European Commission

INTAS - the International Association for the promotion of cooperation with scientists from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union (NIS) was established in June 1993 as an independent international organisation with the aim of supporting scientific co-operation between scientists from NIS¹ and its Members² on the basis of mutual benefit.

INTAS is part of the EU's Framework Programmes for Research and Development. In the period 2002-2006 INTAS manages 70 Mio EURO, which are allocated from the INCO (International Cooperation) Programme of FP6. INTAS promotes scientific cooperation in all scientific fields; namely in the exact and natural sciences, economics, social and human sciences, by funding fundamental and applied scientific research in the following activities:

- Open, collaborative and thematic calls for proposals for research projects and networks;
- Young NIS scientist fellowships;
- Grants for innovation projects;
- Other support actions, including support for scientific infrastructure in the NIS.

INTAS main support for scientific infrastructure is the provision with scientific literature for scientists and students in the NIS. Since 1994 INTAS is funding support actions in this field, acknowledging the necessity that scientists need up to date scientific literature for collaboration in international projects and for keeping NIS science on a high level. In the period up to 2002 this literature has been provided to NIS libraries mainly in form of hard copies; to a limited extent literature has also been sent as document delivery in electronic form. During this period more than 1 Mio EURO have been invested in these support actions.

In 2002 INTAS switched completely to electronic access. Since then INTAS is running its electronic library (e-library) action³, which is providing free of charge access to scientific journals of major publishers via the internet. INTAS has concluded “big deals” with publishers by purchasing a “bundle of journals” for a group of countries; a strategy, which was outlined in the report under discussion.

¹ INTAS partner countries (NIS) are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
² Members of INTAS are the 25 member states of the European Union, the European Community, Bulgaria, Iceland, Israel, Norway, Romania, Switzerland and Turkey.
³ See also: http://www.intas.be/index.asp?s=20&uid
Journals from 1997 until the most recent one are accessible and downloadable in full text. According to current plans, the action will run until end 2007 and a sum of around EURO 1.5 Mio is invested by INTAS into this action. All NIS, except Russia are included into this action; Russia is running its own e-library actions, e.g. [www.elibrary.ru](http://www.elibrary.ru)

Resources which are made available by the INTAS e-library:

- **Springer** publishers - Around 1200 scientific journals of Springer publishers and the database Zentralblatt Mathematik (ZB-Math) are accessible free of charge for all non-profit research and education institutions in 11 NIS (AM, AZ, BY, GE, KG, KZ, MD, TJ, TM, UA, UZ). Access for the NIS is guaranteed until 31 December 2006.

- **Blackwell** publishing – around 400 (or 50%) of Blackwell scientific journals (the Blackwell STM - Science, Technology, Medicine – collection) are accessible free of charge for all non-profit research and education institutions in 8 NIS (AM, AZ, BY, GE, KZ, MD, UA, UZ). Access for the NIS is guaranteed until 30 October 2007.

- **Document delivery** – additional documents are provided via document delivery in electronic form, handled by European libraries.

The implementation of the e-library is done in cooperation with the German National Library of Science and Technology in Hannover, with the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), with library consortia in the NIS and with National Information Points (NIP’s) for FP6 and INTAS in the NIS. Cooperation is established with several other organizations: the German Research Foundation (DFG), with which INTAS is co-funding access to Springer publishers for Belarus, the NATO Silk Highway Project, EIFL.net, etc. Training seminars are regularly held in the NIS to make scientists and students familiar with using the available resources.

The INTAS e-library action is important in the following respects:

- **European support action**: as the action is handled by INTAS, it is perceived as a European support action, well appreciated by the scientific community and governments in the NIS.

- **Increased value of journals**: because of the INTAS e-library action, publishers reach out to eleven NIS countries with a population of nearly 140 Mio people and an important scientific tradition. This increases the spread of journals, citations of articles and therefore the value of journals.

- **Wide outreach in the NIS**: by giving access to all non-profit research and education institutions, support is not limited to a small group of NIS scientists working in international projects, but allows support of a broad range of scientists and even students.

- **Sustainable effect for science in the NIS**: access to top international scientific journals allows NIS scientists to become familiar with concepts of international scientific publishing, increases therefore the quality of their publishing and of
research overall in the NIS. It also helps building contacts to peers, who publish in these journals, it allows NIS scientists to collaborate in international research projects and it helps to improve the education at local universities.

- **Inclusion of marginalized countries:** the action allows support of the science and education sector in countries, which are marginalized in international cooperation or with which cooperation is difficult, e.g. Turkmenistan.

INTAS is indeed facing problems mentioned in the report. On the one hand there is demand by NIS scientists for access to more scientific journals and for support of publication of local journals. On the other hand there are limited financial resources and price increases by publishers. Two points are of crucial importance in this respect for the future activities regarding electronic journals in the NIS:

1. **Access to up to date electronic scientific literature for the NIS should be made available beyond 2006/07**

   It is obvious that most NIS will not have the financial resources to fund access to a broad range of top international scientific journals in the near future. Furthermore it is not clear, whether INTAS can support e-library activities beyond 2006/07. Alternative funding sources, especially on the European level, should therefore be considered. This is the more important as NIS are willing to cooperate in the FP7 and are interested to participate somehow in the European Research Area.

   As a result of the EU enlargement in 2004, several NIS have become neighbours of the EU and are included in the EU’s “neighbourhood policy”. Cooperation in science and education is part of the neighbourhood policy and it is therefore in the European interest to give NIS scientists and students a tool for such cooperation in form of access to up-to-date scientific literature.

2. **Support for electronic publication of national journals in the NIS should be made available**

   In the NIS, financial resources for libraries, for purchasing scientific literature and for publishing journals are in general very limited. There is a strong wish among NIS scientists and journal editors to publish national journals in electronic form; this is a regular feedback from training seminars: “thank you for giving access to international journals, but are there also possibilities for supporting the electronic publication of our national journals”. Open access publishing and activities for publishing journals in developing countries (SciELO) are good examples how a similar initiative could be established in the NIS. The electronic publication of NIS journals would certainly contribute to the further inclusion of NIS science in international scientific cooperation.

   INTAS has not sufficient financial resources to support such an initiative and the European Commission should therefore consider, how to get involved here.

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4 According to the European Commission, INTAS shall be closed at 31. December 2006 with some continuing winding up phase, and no new activities can be undertaken after 2006.