



News from the European Federation of Serials Groups

News from the Finnish Serials Group: Seminar on Scientific Electronic Journals

On August 21st 1997 a great number of Finnish serials people including librarians, information specialists and representatives of publishers, subscription agents and bookstores attended the seminar 'Scientific Electronic Journals' held in Otaniemi, Espoo, Finland.

An annual day-long seminar is a traditional activity of the Finnish Serials Group (FSG) i.e. the Serials Section of the Finnish Research Library Association. The FSG is one of the four permanent Sections. The Association has also a number of temporary working groups dealing with special affairs. (For a brief description of the FSG, see *Serials*, Vol.10, no.2, July 1997.)

The seminar, chaired by Mr Sauli Laitinen, Head of VTT Information Service, was opened with product reviews from Academic Press, Blackwell's, EBSCO, Elsevier, OCLC, Swets and two Finnish scientific bookstores (Suomalainen kirjakauppa, Akateeminen kirjakauppa).

There followed an overview of the different aspects of the effective use of electronic journals in the information services presented by Ms Pirjo Sutela (VTT Information Service). Many Finnish scientific libraries already use electronic journals. On the whole, however, the situation in the field is still quite heterogeneous. In the panel discussion we heard opinions of the representatives of Jyväskylä University Library, National Library of Health Services, University of Kuopio Library, Helsinki University of Technology Library and Merita Bank. These five are among those Finnish libraries which already

have experience in implementing electronic services.

Based on his own experience, Dr. Markku Aaltonen (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health) discussed the ways in which 'the ordinary user' benefits from the use of net-material and also the problems he encounters.

Ms Annu Jylhä-Pyykönen told us the latest news from the Ministry of Education. There are presently under way a variety of projects, guided by the Ministry, all aiming to turn Finland into a true information society. Recent developments in the field of the 'National Electronic Library' program include the significant agreement between the Finnish Academic Consortium and Academic Press, giving members of the Consortium access to articles in electronic journals published by Academic Press this and last year. The Consortium comprises all Finnish universities, some polytechnics and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland.

The annual FSG seminars have always been popular, but this year the number of participants, 130 in all, was the all-time record. The popularity of the meeting is partly explained by the themes centered on practical aspects, and partly by the co-operation with other parties: the Finnish Society for Information Services and the VTT Information Service took part in organizing the seminar. Because of the success, the Group decided to repeat the seminar early in 1998, preceding the fair "Information 98" in Helsinki.

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