

Annual Report 2015



international institute
of social history



Mission statement

Work and labour relations deeply influence how we live. The International Institute of Social History (IISH) examines how these relations develop globally over time. To conduct this historical research and support other researchers, we collect archives and data from all over the world. Established in 1935, the IISH is one of the world's leading research institutes on social history.



Since 2015 the rear façade of the IISH features the IISH logo. Photo: Henk Wals.

Summary

The IISH is one of the world's leading research institutes on social history. This appreciation has traditionally derived from the collections, although our research is by now internationally renowned as well. In 2015 the Institute celebrated its eightieth anniversary.

To retain this appreciation, the Institute must adapt continuously to accommodate current demands: substantive, organizational and technical. At the same time, fixed funding has continued to decline in real terms. This has taken its toll on the work floor. Nevertheless, the IISH staff carried on the good work again in 2015, enabling us to progress in several fields after all.

Such advances are necessary, as the research and collections of the IISH have turned out to be more relevant than ever. This was apparent not only from the reading room clientele but also from requests for IISH researchers to appear in person and in the media. Issues relating to social and economic inequality figure high on the social agenda all over the world. This was still more the case in Europe with respect to migration, which arises in part from the state of war in and around Syria. In this debate, the IISH aims mainly to highlight the chronological perspective: the notion that contemporary problems are often deeply rooted in the past or have occurred before. We can learn a lot from historical comparisons.

Appointing four new senior researchers has therefore been very welcome, as this has restored the basic staffing of the Research Department to its normal level. The KNAW has made this possible in the context of the renovation the Academy envisages implementing at its humanities institutes. In 2015 the IISH research group achieved a satisfactory output of quality publications and, as in 2014, successfully applied for *grants*.

Because we expect that in the future social-economic history research will be based increasingly on large data sets, the Institute continues to manifest

Research allocation and publications

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
				Staff	Staff
Research allocation in ftes	14.3	12.5	10.7	11.8	10.6
Permanent staff	5.3	3.5	3.2	4.4	5.2
Temporary staff	4.3	3.6	3.3	3.2	2.9
PhD candidates	4.3	4.9	4.2	4.2	2.5
Contribution to journals - articles					
Peer-reviewed	26	33	15	34	30
Peer-reviewed in Open Access				65%	77%
Not peer-reviewed	5	11	2	4	1
Professional	10	11	12	18	29
Popularizing journals	4	18	10	18	14
Popularizing newspapers	20	9	4	21	13
Contribution to books - chapters	50	70	27	61	18
Peer-reviewed				36	8
Not peer-reviewed				4	8
Professional				19	1
Popularizing				0	1
Books					
Author - Scientific	12	8	2	3	4
Author - Professional				1	3
Author - Popularizing				1	0
Editor - Scientific	9	19	4	4	10
Editor - Professional				1	0
Editor - Popularizing				0	0
Dissertations				2	1

as a globally operating data hub for social and economic history. In 2015 a conference on this subject was held at the IISH with a view toward bringing about international alliances and coordination.

For the second consecutive year, materials catalogued exceeded the quantity of incoming materials, while visits to the reading room surpassed 7,000 for the first time in decades. The anticipated influx of ‘digital-born’ collections did not materialize, largely due to staff shortages at the collections departments. At the end of 2015 funding became available to hire a *digital archivist* to liaise between archive builders and the IISH.

In 2015 the Institute formed partnerships with large, prestigious Chinese universities: the East China Normal University and Nanjing University. We also entered a partnership agreement with the University of Pittsburgh.

NWO, the ERC and other grant providers supplied over 3 million euros in additional income, earmarked mainly for research projects.

We also forged ahead on our quest to enhance our social engagement. We issued more objects on loan than ever for use in exhibitions and doubled the number of public gatherings. Research Director Leo Lucassen acquired thousands of followers on Twitter and ensured that the message of scholarship resounded loud and clear in the social debate about migration and refugees.

The challenges that lie ahead and how we expect to meet them are becoming increasingly clear. We approved an ambitious, detailed collection plan and an open access policy. In 2016 we intend to draft a data policy plan.

We also improved our understanding – thanks also to the launch of the CLARIAH project – of the digital infrastructure architecture that we will need, although we have been able to complete only part of it. We worked on new environments for structured data and ‘digital-born’ archives, while at the same time preparing to build a new website. The challenge lies in

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The IISH supplied extensive materials for an exhibition about the American conceptual artist Seth Siegelaub at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

Photo: Henk Wals.

tying all the information together in an environment that will be easy to support. Open Linked Data will be pivotal in this effort.

Research

From 2015 the IISH *Global Labour History* research programme was focused more strongly on the long-term causes and consequences of economic and social inequality, as well as on exploring which human actions are instigated. The appointments of three new senior researchers with expertise relating to this issue (Bas van Leeuwen, Filipa Ribeiro da Silva, and Matthias van Rossum) gave the programme a new boost.

In the refined IISH research strategy data sets and digital collections are an important foundation for new methods of analysis. Richard Zijdemann was appointed *Chief Data Officer*. The launch of the CLARIAH project (NWO road map for large research infrastructures) will lead data sets on social-economic history at the IISH and other institutions to become available as Open Linked Data.

The IISH also completed the NWO-sponsored CLIO INFRA project, of which the results include a website about economic inequality, featuring visuals, such as maps and graphs. This website has been designed not only for scholars but caters to other professionals as well, such as journalists.

At the conference *Big Questions, Big Data*, organized by the IISH, a consortium was formed with other major collectors of data on social-economic history in the world, such as the universities of Pittsburgh and Minnesota.

With its output comprising over thirty articles in international peer-reviewed journals, four monographs and six edited scholarly collections, the IISH research group had another productive year. The number of refereed scholarly articles in open access rose from 65% in 2014 to 77% in 2015.

Collections allocation and results

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Allocation toward collection duties in ftes	31.1	37.2	24.9	25.2
for collection development	10.2	6.1	7.5	6.1
for cataloguing	11.9	23	6.5	8.1
for services	9.0	8.1	10.9	11.0
Acquisitions				
Incoming collections in metres (especially archives, bequests, documentation)	404	314	249	125
Incoming collections in individual items (books, periodicals, audio visual)			15,908	14,801
Cataloguing				
Processed collections in metres	528	171	755	345
Processed collections in items	11,135	61,206	18,580	307,197
Services				
Collection units consulted	20,140	23,556	20,659	21,581
In archive units	8,380	8,758	8,290	7,595
Visits to the reading room	5,261	5,688	6,401	7,022
Number of visitors			1,180	1,094
from abroad		345	333	331
Loans to exhibitions			117	506
Number of files consulted from digital collections			3,131,784	5,100,784

This productivity is expected to continue in the years ahead. Bas van Leeuwen obtained an ERC starters grant of € 1.4 M for his project *The Historical Dynamics of Industrialization in Northwestern Europe and China, 1800-2010*, Matthias van Rossum received an award in the NWO-VENI competition (€ 250 k) for *Between local debts and global markets: Explaining slavery in South and Southeast Asia 1600-1800*, and Kees Mandemakers was allocated € 500 k as co-applicant in the European Commission Horizon2020 programme *LONGPOP*, a research project on *Methodologies and Data mining techniques for the analysis of Big Data based on Longitudinal Population and Epidemiological Registers*. Together with IISH fellow Jan Kok as the main applicant, Mandemakers prevailed in the free competition, with *Giants of the modern world. A new history of heights and health in The Netherlands, 1811-1940*. The IISH was awarded € 250 k in this endeavour. The two ERC grant awards yielded an income premium of € 176 k for the IISH from NWO.

Collections

The Institute obtained 118 accruals to archives and individual archives, spanning a total of 110.7 metres. This amounts to half the length received in 2014. The envisaged decline in paper use has come about, at least in this calendar year.

Incoming digital materials did not rise as expected during the year under review. The digital archives received totalled 873 gigabytes, in 18 fully or partially digital collections (2014: 4,935 gigabytes in 28 collections). This result is numerically below that in 2014, and no substantial transfer of ‘digital-born’ archives has been made yet by our large archive builders. We have had exploratory conversations with a great many archive builders about the transition from paper to digital.

The Collection Development Department virtually completed its organizational conversion in 2015. We are transitioning gradually from a structure based on several regional desks to an organization consisting of a small

Collection size on 31 December 2015

	2014	2015
Archives (indexed) (m)	11,589	11,740
Archives (available) (m)	17,246	17,337
books (number)	810,185	816,600
books (m)	13,302	13,522
Periodicals (m)	12,756	12,814
Documentation collections (m)	105	150
Photos and negatives (number)	576,994	870,610
Posters (number)	116,631	113,466
Video recordings (number)	2,554	3,011
Audio recordings (number)	10,017	11,200
Prints, drawings etc. (number)	713,834	717,080
Other visual materials (number)	2,986	3,638
Digital collections (number)		14



IISH staff member at work. Photo: Peter van Beek.

team in Amsterdam, supported by permanent or temporary staff and correspondents having a substantive or a regional specialization, based in Amsterdam or elsewhere. This will enable a more project-based approach and will allow for greater flexibility in allocating funding.

At the Collection Processing Department the 'Brünn-Harris-Watts' project was completed. This is one of the largest collections in the world concerning the protest movement of American GIs in the 1960s and 70s. We also arranged two large photo collections: one by the photographer Maya Pejić, comprising over 221,900 photos, slides and negatives, and the other from the PVDA [Dutch labour party], consisting of 3,600 photos. Also in 2015, three new, externally financed archive arrangement projects launched: the archive of the Nederlands Christelijk Instituut voor Volkshuisvesting [Dutch Christian housing institute] (NCIV), the archives of social-democratic pioneers Koos and Irene Vorrink and RNV official Herman Hugenholtz (completed) and the archive of Greenpeace Netherlands (completed).

The IISH reading room remained very popular during the year under review, with 7,022 visitors registering at the desk there, i.e. 621 more than the year before, amounting to an increase of nearly 10%. The incoming students, journalists, scholars and other interested individuals were largely from the Netherlands (5,501 times) but were also from abroad (1,521 times). Like last year, the archives of internationally active organizations were the most popular: the Socialist International and the ETUC, followed by Amnesty International and the International Confederation of Trade Unions. Among the Netherlands-based selection, requests for items from the Communist Party outnumbered those for items from the SDAP/PVDA, and requests for materials on anarchists and squatters, as featured in Provo and the Staatsarchief, drew a great many visits as well. Important newcomers include the House of Representatives faction of the PvdA and the IKV.

In early August the digitized Marx-Engels papers became fully available to the public online. This renowned archive has traditionally been consulted intensively by specialists from all over the world.

Outreach

	2014	2015
Website visits	311,290	312,984
Facebook page liked	1,908	2,912
Followers on twitter	1,797	2,225
Guided tours	49	51
Subscriptions to newsletter	1,586	2,003
Questions answered	2,902	2,923



Visit by South African Minister of Culture, 11 December 2015.

Photo: Jacques van Gerwen.

Social Engagement

In 2015 the IISH was more socially engaged than ever, in part thanks to deliberate efforts but undoubtedly also as a consequence of social circumstances. The collections were very much in demand. Not only did the reading room welcome a record number of visitors, but social history appears to be in vogue in museum circles as well. The number of standing loans to museums rose from 117 to 522. Those receiving standing loans included renowned museums, such as the Reina Sofia in Madrid, the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

At the end of 2015 images from the collection were affixed to the windows at the front and side of the IISH building. The rear façade of the building now features the IISH logo. This makes it easier for those outside to see what is going on inside. In 2015, several camera crews came to visit the IISH. The AT5 programme *Straten van Amsterdam* merits special mention. The show broadcast on 10 December 2015 was dedicated entirely to the IISH. On Friday 11 December South African Minister of Culture Mthethwa paid a visit to the IISH.

We organized twelve successful public gatherings (there were seven the previous year) at off-site venues, including two public symposiums about Utopias, in conjunction with the KNAW. In addition, we arranged several dedicated guided tours and gatherings at the IISH, including an afternoon about the history of the ASVA, a Provo walk (in conjunction with the Amsterdam Museum) and two Marx-Engels guided tours (in conjunction with Cultuurhuis De Brakke Grond).

In the research group Research Director Leo Lucassen was especially prominent as a spokesperson for scholarship in social debate, mainly on the subjects of migration and refugees. Tweets, contributions to dailies and appearances on television were wonderfully effective, e.g. giving rise to requests by the government for advice and invitations to deliver video-recorded presentations and prestigious lectures.

Most important acquisitions

- The first consignment of the archives of the Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial and General Workers Union/Bala Tampoe, CMU General Secretary (1934-2014).
- The Conscience and Peace Tax International Archives (CPTI, 1994-)
- The Francine Mestrum papers (2005-).
- The Aleksandr Ermakov Collection. (late 1980s to the mid-2000s).
- The Daniel Pereyra papers.
- The Stichting African Skies video collection (1982-1994).
- The 'De toekomst van '36' film collection (1983).
- An addition of ca. 275 titles to the collection of Censuses from the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek.
- An antiquarian purchase: *Agenda Perpétuel. A l'usage des Négocians, Banquiers, Agens de Change, Courtiers de Commerce, Gens d'Affaires & Suivi de différents Tableaux utiles à tel genre de Commerce que ce soit* (Paris Cail- lot, circa 1820).
- Several additions to our collection of Chinese propaganda posters, including an accrual to the Stefan R. Landsberger collection and the complete portfolio of Selected Works for the 1975 National Art Exhibition.
- A copy of live broadcasts of Çapul tv from Taksim square, Istanbul, during the 2013 occupation and protest meetings.
- Digital copies of four secret reports from the Turkish Ministry of Interior on left-wing groups, Kurds, Alevites, right-wing and Islamist movements (1972).
- A collection of documents from Reclaim the Streets, Indymedia, Occupy and other UK protest groups 1999-2015.
- Large and/or important accruals were received to the following collections: Amnesty International - International Secretariat, Amnesty International Nederland, Filippijnengroep Nederland, LOSON/sawo, Partij van de Arbeid - Tweede Kamerfractie, Transnational Institute, La Via Campesina, women's league FNV/NVV (national and departments), Peter Custers, Bram van der Lek.

Management

In 2014 we invested in improving the management, thereby benefiting from a more functional organization in 2015, with clearly stated objectives, competencies, cycles and procedures. Overall, the system is working well, although project management and planning could bear improvement. The shortcomings are especially pronounced in planning and managing projects with an ICT component. The IISH ended the year with a financial surplus of € 314,459, enabling a reduction to the negative general reserve.

Key financials

	IISH-KNAW	Stichting IISH	Total
Income			
direct funding via KNAW	€ 5,744,635	€ 284,000	€ 6,028,635
Gov't funded research and contract research	€ 1,493,506	€ 0	€ 1,493,506
Other income	€ 440,418	€ 33,883	€ 474,301
Total	€ 7,678,558	€ 317,883	€ 7,996,441
Expenditures			
Staff	€ 5,255,154	€ 0	€ 5,255,154
Equipment	€ 2,102,698	€ 324,130	€ 2,426,828
Surplus	€ 320,706	€ -6,247	€ 314,459
Total	€ 7,678,558	€ 317,883	€ 7,996,441

Social engagement

	2014	2015
Popularizing articles in journals and newspapers	39	27
Popularizing books	2	2
Media appearances	17	50
Public appearances	47	43
Guided tours and public gatherings at the IISH	49	51
On-site exhibitions	3	0
Exhibitions supported (standing loans)	117	522
Gatherings organized at off-site venues for a general audience	7	12



The IISH staff in July 2015, celebrating the 80th anniversary.

Board of Stichting IISG

Drs H.M. van de Kar (chair), Drs E. Asscher (until May 2015), Prof. Dr. W. Blockmans (until September 2015), Drs. M.L. Engelhart, Ms A. Jongerius, Prof. (Em.) Dr M.J.A. Penninx, W.H. Steenpoorte (from 1 November 2014), Drs G.H. Terpstra, L. de Waal (until June 2015).

Staff figures

	Number	ftes	%
Staff	86	67.7	100%
Permanent employment	61	51.1	71%
Temporary contracts	25	16.5	29%
Male	52	44.0	60%
Female	34	23.6	40%
Average age	50.6		
Absenteeism due to sickness %			4.04%