

# Annual Report 2019



**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.

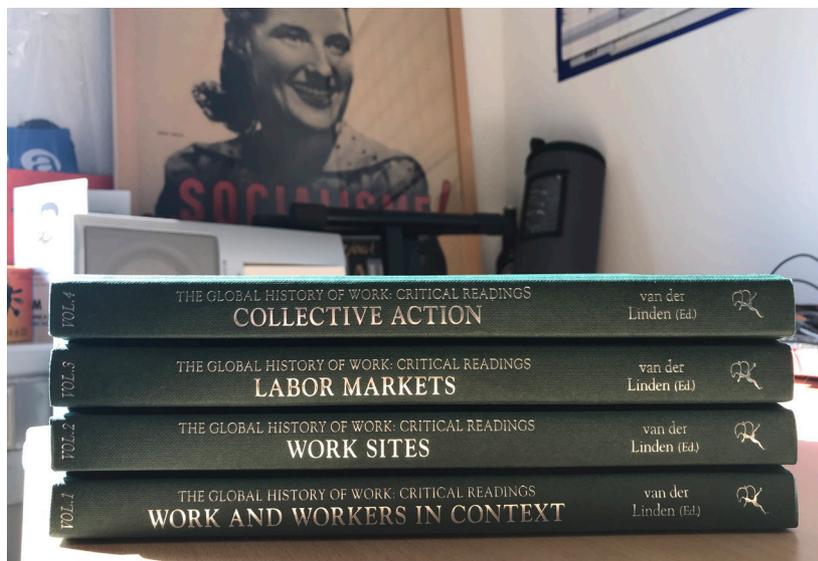
## Introduction

In 2019 the IISH operated according to the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023, as it was adopted in late 2018. In this period the institute will optimize its impact on scholarship and society. The objectives include: (1) continue our pioneering scholarship, (2) become more socially involved and (3) advance technologically. To this end, we need to be (4) a resilient organization that is (5) fully dedicated to partnership in networks. This annual report reflects our progress toward these five objectives.

## Scholarship

Over the course of the year the IISH Research Department leveraged its global edge in scholarship thanks to several major publications on the history of work. These covered virtually all continents: *The Global History of Work: Critical Readings* a five-part series edited by Marcel van der Linden; *The Social Question in the Twenty-First Century: A Global View*, edited by Jan Breman and Marcel van der Linden, together with Kevan Harris and Ching Kwan Lee at UCLA; *The Making of a Periphery. How Island Southeast Asia Became a Mass Exporter of Labor*, a new monograph by Ulbe Bosma; *Work and Workers in Latin America (Trabajo y Trabajadores en América Latina, Siglos XVI-XXI)*, edited by Rossana Barragán; and *General Labour History of Africa*, edited by Stefano Belluci and Andreas Eckert.

Expressing the IISH ambition of working with other discerning historians crystallized in a recalibration of Dutch history in *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, where Pepijn Brandon and Ulbe Bosma published a trailblazing article on the economic history of slavery: “De betekenis van de Atlantische slavernij voor de Nederlandse economie in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw.” This article (of which the English translation will appear in *Slavery & Abolition* in 2020) conveys the first methodologically substantiated calculation of the importance of operations relating to Atlantic slavery in the Dutch economy during the second half of the eighteenth



**Marcel van der Linden's four volume series *The global history of work: critical readings* published by Bloomsbury Academic in 2019.**

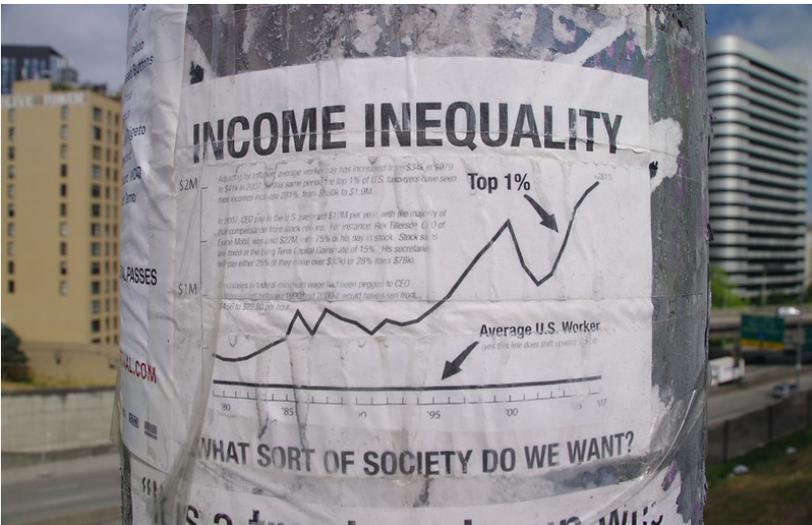
## Board of Directors

Henk Wals, General Director

Yildiz van den Akker, Director of General Services / CFO HuC

Afelonne Doek, Director of Collections and Digital Infrastructure

Leo Lucassen, Director of Research



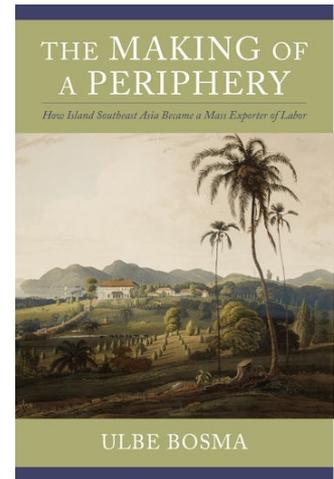
<https://iisg.amsterdam/nl/blog/sociale-ongelijkheid-wat-heeft-arbeid-ermee-taken>

century. In 1770, no less than 5.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product in the Netherlands turned out to derive from slavery, comparable to the share of the Rotterdam harbour in the economy today. This marked the culmination of a four-year NWO-funded project involving a team of researchers from the VU (Free University Amsterdam) and the IISH.

Another research ambition of the IISH concerning contemporary labour relations in the Netherlands led to a project exploring changing workplace relations in the Netherlands between 1970 and 2010. In this study co-financed by the FNV and conducted with supervision from Matthias van Rossum and Leo Lucassen, Rosa Kösters hopes to complete her PhD four years from now.

Because substantive stagnation means decline, the Research Department explored new horizons for the Global Labour History programme in 2019. The idea is to align shifting labour relations more closely and more explicitly with long-term changes in patterns of social inequality within and between countries. One example is the attempt to explain the emergence of a new “precariat” as a consequence of ever growing flexibilization and the rise of the platform economy for workers, subcontracting and self-employment. Changes in labour relations and the effectiveness of connected social movements seem pivotal among deepening social inequality. On 22 November the Research Department organized a workshop on this theme, featuring experts from the Netherlands and abroad, including the renowned economist Branko Milanović and the historian Walter Scheidel.

IISH Director of Research Leo Lucassen had a successful year in personal respects as well. He was elected member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and together with Professor Manon van der



<https://iisg.amsterdam/en/blog/new-book-ulbe-bosma-making-periphery?back-link=1>

## IISH Foundation

The IISH Foundation Supervisory Board was revived following an amendment of the articles of association in 2019. Dr. Lily Knibbeler (director of the Dutch National Library), Drs. Petra Stienen (Arabist and member of the Dutch Senate for the D66 party) and Prof. Dr. Sarah de Lange (Political Science, University of Amsterdam) were welcomed as new members. Incumbent board members included Drs. Agnes Jongerius (European Parliament member on behalf of the PvdA and historian), Drs. Marens Engelhard (Director National Archive) and chair Prof. Dr. Jan Lucassen (Professor Emeritus of Social History and former IISH research director). The new composition radically shifts the gender balance of the foundation board, as it has prevailed since 1935.

## Most significant grants

- *Tussen Solidariteit en Fragmentatie*, Rosa Kösters, FNV (300K)
- *Tolerant Migrant Cities*, Leo Lucassen, NWO Free Competition (750K)
- *Worlds of Related Coercions in Work*, Matthias van Rossum, COST-European Cooperation in Science and Technology (20K)
- *Amsterdam en de Slavernij*, Pepijn Brandon, Gemeente Amsterdam (91K)
- *Linking Lives*, Karin Hofmeester, Eric de Ruijter and Richard Zijdeman, Rothschild Foundation (40K)
- Metamorfoze subsidie voor de digitalisering van het archief Centraal Bureau voor Sociale Adviezen (159K)

Heijden at Leiden University obtained a grant in the NWO Free Competition. In the years ahead their project *Tolerant migrant cities? The case of Holland 1600-1900* will be conducted by a team operating in Leiden and at the IISH.

The strategic plan for 2018-2023 presents a major substantive challenge to the Collections Department as well. How can collection development and cataloguing remain relevant in a rapidly changing world, in which social movements and resistance manifest in new ways? Moreover, we aim to make our practices more inclusive to avert “discursive silences” in our archive holdings. To achieve that goal, in 2019 the memorandum *Combating Discursive Silences at the IISH* was drafted by Leila Musson, Camila Puig Ibarra, Thijs van Leeuwen and Hannah Mackay. This is intended to elicit concrete proposals for new ways of collecting. Closely related is the project *Documenting Informal Labour* in which we explored ways of making collection development more inclusive, together with a group of *informal labourers* doing housekeeping in the Netherlands. In another project, *Taal van Herkomst*, we worked with a group of *native speakers* to catalogue documents and printed matter in non-European languages. This will make it easier for those interested – especially those from the region of origin – to find and consult them.

## Society

Social impact is one of our chief areas of interest for the period 2018-2023. In addition to supporting scholars, the IISH aims to reach out to and involve more non-professionals in research and collections in the years ahead. We aim to figure more prominently in social debate through our research results. In this respect, 2019 may be a turning point, with this policy intention transitioning to an internalized practice. Many co-workers expressed interest in reaching out to society and acted accordingly. This has helped us raise our (social) media profile and has led to hundreds of standing loans to museums and fruitful contacts with (potential) social partners. Below we will highlight two topics among the many publications and activities of value to society: slavery studies and research on labour relations in the Netherlands.



<https://iisg.amsterdam/nl/nieuws/slavernijonderzoek-pers>

### Academic Advisory Board

Prof. Dr. Jan Luiten van Zanden (chair), Utrecht University  
 Drs. Kurt de Belder, Director University library Leiden  
 Prof. Dr. Ewout Frankema, Wageningen University  
 Prof. Dr. Frank van Harmelen, Amsterdam Free University  
 Drs. Maria Heijne, Director University Library Amsterdam  
 Prof. Dr. Luuk de Ligt, Leiden University (from December 2019)  
 Drs. Johan Oomen, the Netherlands Institute for Media Culture  
 Prof. Dr. Pál Nyiri, Amsterdam Free University (until December 2019)  
 Prof. Dr. Hilde de Weerdt, Leiden University  
 Prof. Dr. Anne Winter, Brussels Free University

In 2019 the most striking of all was undoubtedly the presentation of the study mentioned above by the team headed by Ulbe Bosma and Pepijn Brandon. These researchers quantified the proceeds of operations concerning Atlantic slavery-related operations during the eighteenth century in the Dutch Republic. That the share of these activities in the GDP has now been scientifically determined is invaluable for social debate about slavery and the question as to the present-day significance of this history. Examples of the coverage the study has received include the front-page listing in the NRC daily and the television appearance by Brandon on *Nieuwsuur*.

On 26 June the research was presented in the IISH, with former anchor woman Noraly Beyer as the moderator. The packed Nettleau Auditorium conveyed the immense public interest in the study. Thanks in part to the KNAW Humanities Cluster communications team, our presentation of the research reflected a professional standard previously unattainable. The importance of the study is moreover confirmed by the request from the Amsterdam city council to the IISH to explore the role of the City of Amsterdam in the slave trade and related activities. The results of the initial survey project will be presented in the summer of 2020. Hopefully, the next step will be more in-depth follow-up research.

The second complex of socially relevant activities concerns Dutch labour relations in the most recent period. Labour relations appear to be changing, but little (historical) research has covered the period since 1980. In 2017 we signed a covenant with the FNV, which led not only to financing the inventory and partial digitization of their vast archive but also to a descriptive study headed up by Matthias van Rossum, which was summarized in the booklet *Precaire Polder*.

We also recorded on video the memories of trade union leader Wim Kok (deceased in 2018) and his successor from later years Lodewijk de Waal. The recordings of the conversations that journalist Leonard Ornstein had with De Waal were presented at a festive gathering in May 2019.

In addition to Minister of Social Affairs Wouter Koolmees, the presence of a few former chairmen from the federation of employers led to a new proj-



<https://iisg.amsterdam/nl/nieuws/twee-decennia-fnv-vakbondserfgoed-toegankelijk>

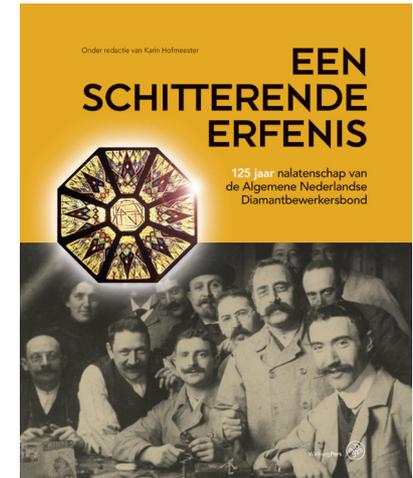


<https://iisg.amsterdam/nl/nieuws/lodewijk-de-waal-tapes>

ect financed by VNO-NCW, in which former chairmen and directors of the organization will be interviewed as well. Contacts with the FNV board at this presentation culminated in financial support for the study by Rosa Kösters mentioned above.

The early days of the Dutch trade union movement were showcased in the project that Karin Hofmeester and Susan Leclerq conducted on diamond workers; this project addresses the overlap between research and collections. In 2019 the General Dutch Diamond Workers Union (ANDB) celebrated its 125th anniversary Hofmeester and Leclerq obtained financing from different sources and assembled an impressive array of products and activities, some designed for the general public. First, all ANDB membership cards were entered in a database via the Many Hands crowd sourcing platform. Grant proposals submitted to the KNAW and the Rothschild Foundation then led to related research and data projects, which launched in 2019. In October the book *Een schitterende erfenis* was presented.

FNV chair Han Busker received the first copy from Karin Hofmeester at the former ANDB headquarters in De Burcht on Henri Polaklaan. In this building designed by Berlage, Hofmeester and Leclerq also organized thirteen *story telling events* and had a lighting art work installed by Machteld Aardse and Femke Kemkes. Together with the Jewish Historical Museum, they produced a well-attended exhibition as well.



<https://iisg.amsterdam/en/blog/welk-vieren-de-schitterende-erfenis-van-de-andb>

## Collection acquisition

Among the many accruals this year, two large economic-history collections merit special mention: the Historisch Fondsenarchief Amsterdamse Effectenbeurs [Historical funds archive of the Amsterdam stock exchange] (1850-1996) and a complete set of official price gazettes published in Amsterdam (1796-...).

Large digitization projects are in progress at the International Trade Union Confederation Africa (Lomé, Togo), the Ghana Railway Company Limited (Takoradi, Ghana), the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), the Ceylon Mercantile Union (Colombo, Sri Lanka) and the All India Trade Union Congress (Delhi, India). Born-digital collections increased. In discussions with researchers and social partners we are drafting plans to gather sources on agrarian movements and about informal work. Inclusiveness is becoming a key consideration in our discussions about policy and in our practical work, the objective being to highlight underrepresented topics, narratives and people in our collections and activities.



<https://iisg.amsterdam/nl/nieuws/neha-slaat-de-gong-op-de-amsterdamse-beurs>

## Methods and techniques

The IISH aims to be a trailblazer in methodology and technology, both in cataloguing the collection and in conducting research. In 2019 innovation consisted of ongoing implementation of the Archivematica and ArchiveSpace systems and of streamlining the automated process for incoming digital archives. We examined how to import metadata from various Document Management Systems now in use among archive depositors. Another project concerned setting up systems, procedures and manuals for importing email, websites and social media.

By now the IISH has the capacity for largely automated collection, processing and reliable storage of born-digital archive materials. In late 2019 we were only one, small procedural step away from obtaining the international *Core Trust Seal* for storing data and digital archives (which was awarded finally in May 2020).

The IISH is responsible for conducting the CLARIAH Project Kit 4 (Structured Data), in which a digital infrastructure for Dutch humanities is constructed. In 2014 CLARIAH Core, the first CLARIAH project, was launched. In 2019 this project was concluded, and CLARIAH Plus was started as the follow-up. In CLARIAH Core Project Kit 4, tools were built for converting datasets to Linked Open Data (LOD). These resources were used at the IISH to convert the bulk of our metadata and datasets to RDF (the LOD format), making IISH collections and data traceable and retrievable in the Semantic Web and enabling connections with the data and digital collections of other institutions. As a result, the IISH is one of the first institutions in the Netherlands to meet an essential criterion of the Netwerk Digitaal Erfgoed [Digital heritage network] (NDE). Finally, in 2019 we launched a new website, with a fully LOD-based search feature.

## Collection processing

A total of 122 archives and 35 collections has been made available via a list. All archives and collections may now be searched by topic as well, according to assigned themes. A joint project with EYE and UvA Media Studies based on Cineclub movies led to recommendations for processing and preserving movies for the IISH. Other projects in 2019 addressed improving metadata (including the introduction of Resource Description and Access - RDA) and the IISH thesaurus. These steps are necessary to prepare to offer and use linked data and enable exchanges of files on other platforms. Opportunities for sustainable recording of information concerning copyrights and (re) use of and access to (digital) materials were explored as well.

## Partnerships

The Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 states that we intend to transition from an institutional to a network approach: partnerships and organizational networks are increasingly decisive for (combined) success in scholarship and world heritage. The so-called portfolio analysis of KNAW and NWO institutes, performed in 2018, was therefore dedicated largely to exploring the extent to which the institutes had ties with other operators in the knowledge landscape; institutes “should operate as independent spiders in the national knowledge web of their respective disciplines” and should assume a connecting and coordinating role in their research field. Regarding the IISH, the evaluation commission concluded that the institute definitely meets this requirement. By combining scholarly research with making collections (inter)nationally accessible, the IISH clearly adds value to the national knowledge landscape, so the review commission concluded. The course charted with the KNAW Humanities Cluster (HuC) may further enhance the position of the institute. In other words, the IISH ranks among the class of “national institutes.”

Encouraged in part by this acknowledgement, we continued elaborating our (connecting) role in different organizations and networks in 2019. Our organizational integration in the HuC continued, retaining the IISH identity. The HuC is one of the five hubs in the NDE and has been pivotal in the emerging CLARIAH infrastructure. We are building a connection between the NDE and CLARIAH; between digital heritage and humanities, in a manner of speaking. The IISH co-directs Adamnet, the network of Amsterdam libraries and heritage institutions. Partnerships add value here as well. Afelonne Doek, the IISH Director of Collections, was also Acting Director of Collections for the NIOD in 2019 to strengthen ties between the HuC and the NIOD. We connected with Dutch universities through endowed chairs, various joint projects and project proposals. The HuC partnership agreement with the Fryske Academy on historical-geographic information systems (HisGIS) is an important milestone.

Of course the IISH manifests in international partnerships as well, such

## Services

Reading room visits soared to an unprecedented high: 7,001 (compared with 6,721 in 2018). Interest online increased as well. The number of requests received by email (4,285) was significantly higher than in the five previous years.

Digitization projects were prepared with several major publishers and are expected to yield preliminary results in 2020. Digitization also continued via the national Metamorfoze programme. In late 2019 the vast CNT/FAI collection was made available online. This also marked the first collection disclosed via the new IIF standard and viewer.

Despite the growing supply of digitized and born-digital collections, requests for collections from the stacks remained comparable to previous years.

The collection remains very popular for standing loans: 266 items were lent for 18 exhibitions, including substantial contributions to exhibitions on women's suffrage at the Groninger Museum, on Zonnestraal at the Museum Het Schip and on Fré Cohen in the Stedelijk Museum Schiedam. The CUNY Graduate Center in New York borrowed several posters and brochures on anti-colonial movements.

as the International Association of Labour Institutions (IALHI), which we have helped organize, and the European Labour History Network, which was hosted at the institute for its biannual congress in the summer of 2019. About two hundred participants attended this event. Introducing HisGIS at the HuC paved the way toward exploring opportunities for international collaborative efforts in geodata. Understandably, the IISH was involved – and in some cases coordinated – various proposals relating to European research programmes.

## Organization

The ambitions described above clearly require a professional and resilient organization. Since 2016 much has been done to bring this about in the HuC. The director of operations and her team are pursuing this initiative with a vengeance. Procedures, arrangements and work flows have systematically undergone review and improvement. Employee wellbeing now receives more explicit consideration. In Communications, Facilities, Finance and Human Resources service levels meet higher standards than before the HuC was formed, and additional improvements are expected in the years ahead. The Digital Infrastructure Department formed in 2018 from the IT departments of the different institutes reflects the same potential, although in this case integration has yet to be completed.

In keeping with the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023, the IISH Collections Department focused more on raising funds externally, succeeding among archive depositors, who have agreed to contribute toward the cost of conducting the inventory and maintaining the heritage they entrusted to the IISH. The total amount of the external contributions has given the department additional latitude in setting up and conducting projects.

We concluded that making the IISH and the HuC organization fit for the future will benefit from organizational adjustment within the IISH. Because processing datasets and digital collections is becoming very similar – both

# Output

## Research

| Societal          | 2017      | 2018      | 2019      |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Articles          |           |           |           |
| Popularising      | 13        | 16        | 30        |
| Professional      | 33        | 21        | 15        |
| Chapters in books |           |           |           |
| Popularising      | 0         | 1         | 3         |
| Professional      | 5         | 10        | 3         |
| Books             |           |           |           |
| Popularising      | 1         | 1         | 1         |
| Professional      | 0         | 3         | 3         |
| Reports           |           |           |           |
| Popularising      | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Professional      | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>52</b> | <b>52</b> | <b>55</b> |

| Scholarly         | 2017       | 2018      | 2019      |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Articles          |            |           |           |
| refereed          | 41         | 29        | 27        |
| non-refereed      | 5          | 2         | 0         |
| Chapters in books |            |           |           |
| refereed          | 30         | 41        | 31        |
| non-refereed      | 11         | 2         | 1         |
| Books             |            |           |           |
| refereed          | 7          | 11        | 17        |
| non-refereed      | 3          | 1         | 0         |
| Reports           | 2          | 2         | 1         |
| PhD thesis        | 3          | 2         | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>102</b> | <b>90</b> | <b>79</b> |

are largely subject to the *data life cycle* principle – we decided to open a new department, where research and collections converge. In this Data and Collection Processing Department, digital expertise is combined and strengthened. In late 2019 a reorganization proposal serving this purpose was submitted to the Staff Council. The reorganization is expected to take place in early 2020.

Several long-term IISH members left upon reaching retirement age. After Tineke Faber, Marcel van der Linden and Joke Zwaan left the Institute at the end of 2018, Hans Drieman, Huub Sanders, Vimala Tummers and Guusje Varkevisser followed in 2019. Sanders concluded his career by taking his PhD on a thesis about the history of the IISH. Head of Services Anne Oechtering transferred to the Rijksmuseum at the start of the year. This exodus is offset by new and in many cases young co-workers joining the IISH.

Former director and fellow Jaap Kloosterman vacated his workstation at the institute for medical reasons. Although we miss his daily presence here, many co-workers remain in touch with him. Kloosterman's recollections of the institute have been recorded as part of an oral history project for future historiography.

# Output

## Collections

| Category   |          | 2015    | 2016    | 2017    | 2018    | 2019    |
|--|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Archives - length on 31 December                 |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Archives – total                                 | Metres   | 17,217  | 17,409  | 17,773  | 17,918  | 18,719  |
| Archives - acquisitions and processed            |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Archives – acquired                              | Metres   | 111     | 237     | 572     | 218     | 661     |
| Archives - increase                              | Metres   | 28      | 192     | 364     | 145     | 801     |
| Books - length on 31 December                    |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Books – total                                    | numbers  | 899,891 | 908,596 | 914,628 | 920,044 | 925,039 |
| Books - acquisitions and processed               |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Books – acquired                                 | numbers  | 4,120   | 9,180   | 7,571   | 5,416   | 4,995   |
| Books – increase                                 | numbers  | 3,473   | 8,705   | 6,032   | 5,416   | 4,995   |
| Audio/video - length on 31 December              |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Audio/video – total                              | numbers  | 23,592  | 23,003  | 23,877  | 23,734  | 181,734 |
| Audio/video - acquisitions and processed         |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Audio/video – acquired                           | numbers  | 717     | 897     | 874     | 133     | 150     |
| Audio/video – increase                           | numbers  | 690     | 589     | 874     | 143     | 158     |
| Visual materials - acquisitions and processed    |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Visual materials – acquired                      | numbers  | 6,276   | 615     | 15,048  | 4,378   | 3,007   |
| Visual materials – increase                      | numbers  | 599     | 5,093   | 15,016  | 34,953  | 4,378   |
| Periodicals - length on 31 December              |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Periodicals – total                              | Metres   | 12,895  | 12,902  | 12,959  | 12,968  | 13,009  |
| Periodicals - to be described                    | Metres   | 68      | 38      | 42      | 16      | 10      |
| Periodicals - acquisitions and processed         |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Periodicals - acquired*                          | Metres   | 11      | 18      | 61      | 8.74    | 18.56   |
| Periodicals - increase                           | Metres   | 35      | 7       | 57      | 9       | 41      |
| Digital collections - acquisitions and processed |          |         |         |         |         |         |
| Digital collections - acquired*                  | Terabyte |         | 14      | 5       | 6       | 3       |



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