



MALTA  
LIBRARIES



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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REPORT  
2019

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## Malta Libraries

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# MISSION STATEMENT

“

The mission of Malta Libraries is to ensure the collection and conservation of Malta's documentary heritage for present and future generations, to maintain and develop the libraries regulated under the Malta Libraries Act, and to encourage reading for study, research, self-development and lifelong-learning information and leisure purposes.

MALTA LIBRARIES ACT 2011

”

# FUNCTIONS

As established by the Malta Libraries Act, the functions and responsibilities of Malta Libraries are:

- to continue to acquire, assemble, conserve for posterity, and make accessible to the public, the collection of the nation's documentary heritage and published current output, regardless of form or medium, to be found in the libraries;
- to manage, administer, and develop the libraries under its control, and to provide leadership to other libraries in Malta in such areas as management and conservation of library materials, and to promote national cooperation schemes and the professional training of librarians and information professionals;
- to assist Local Councils which run a public library to ensure that the library maintains high standards;
- to enhance the quality of life of the public by providing library reference and lending services and library material, in whatever form or medium, for education, self-development, lifelong learning and recreation purposes;
- to foster and strengthen reading habits and support literacy and other cultural activities and programmes for all age groups;
- to accept and acquire private records of significance by gift, purchase, bequest or deposit;
- explore innovative services, including information, communication and technology services, that can benefit patrons in accessing and using information;
- serve as the role model library system for other libraries in Malta;
- to perform such other functions as may from time to time be assigned to it by the Minister.

MALTA LIBRARIES ACT 2011

# FOREWORD

## FROM

## THE CEO



**Cheryl Falzon**  
*National Librarian & CEO*

**2019 was another productive and eventful year for Malta Libraries. Malta Libraries is moving away from the traditional library scene where services are usually based on functions. The entity is now focusing on community and user needs and moulding its services and resources to suit these requirements. This change in objectives has brought about positive results for the entity's key performance indicators.**

Some of the year's highlights were undoubtedly the increase in outreach activities both at the National Library and the public libraries. These events proved to be very successful and brought about an increase in visitors and users. The National Library also reported a 27 per cent rise in tourist visitors over the previous year. Nonetheless, the actual number of researchers visiting the National Library dropped again in 2019. This downward trend has been noticed during the past few years. It might be attributable to the lack of physical access to the actual library and/or the fact that information requests could be delivered through ICT platforms making it easier for the researcher to acquire the required documents digitally. The accessibility issue is also being addressed and in 2019 a tender was awarded to initiate works on a passenger lift for a step-free access to the National Library Reading Room.

During 2019, the National Bibliographic Office ensured continuation of the work processes initiated in the previous year such as the inventory of current publications. Nevertheless, during the year the National Bibliographic Office also embarked on new projects that included retrospective cataloguing and the capture of born-digital government material.

Finally, the public libraries continued to increase their popularity and registered an increase of 2.3 per cent in book loans, reaching 1,045,869 from 1,022,346 in the preceding year. This was mainly attributable to an increase of 70.7 per cent in eBook usage which amounted to 14,001 from 8,200 loans. During 2019, the Central Public Library also launched a new initiative in collaboration with several embassies and community groups to create a multilingual and multicultural library collection. This was initiated in a bid to reach out to more foreign communities living in Malta and to create a safe haven for all.

# NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MALTA



**Maroma Camilleri**  
*Deputy Librarian - National Library of Malta*

## NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MALTA

In 2019, the National Library of Malta continued to expand its services and adapted to reflect changing social and technical realities, also aiming to continue working on a number of strategic priorities and objectives as the main focuses of its vision over the next few years. By defining and reaching such objectives, the Library is adapting to reflect changing

circumstances in the now as well as for the foreseeable future. It is important that services are reliable and oriented towards users' needs. In order to reach its strategic objectives, the National Library relies also on the commitment, creativity and enthusiasm of its employees. The overall goal is to make any successes and changes visible.







# READERS' SERVICES

The hub of the National Library of Malta's activity is undoubtedly the Reading Room frequented by researchers and visitors throughout the year. The stately Reading Room, which houses the historic collection consisting of books previously belonging to the Knights of St John, is manned by three staff members who in the course of 2019 were promoted to the rank of Senior Assistant Librarian. They continued to provide a professional service to patrons while also performing back-office duties in the library's stacks and off-limits areas. Their tasks were not limited to fetching and shelving books since their duties naturally also comprise tackling researchers' queries – both verbally and electronically – and guiding them to the appropriate finding aids depending on the nature of the queries. This service culminates in editing and sending via WeTransfer the images ordered by the client. Having familiarized themselves with the library holdings, the staff also act as guides during specialized tours for students and visitors. Through the Deputy Librarian, they liaise with the Conservation and Digitization Units to ensure a smooth workflow and provide an optimum service to patrons. The Reading Room continued to open until 16:00 every third Saturday of the month, a move introduced in 2018 which was greatly welcomed by those researchers unable to frequent the National Library during the week.

During the year under review, a total of 3,883 users frequented the National Library's Reading Room, an average of 13 per day and a nine per cent drop from last year's figure of 4,244. This downward trend has been noted over the past years and may be

attributed to the fact that most researchers now seek information on the internet where the images of primary documents from various sources may also be accessed. The lack of accessibility for elderly or disabled persons has also been a disadvantage up to now. However, this issue is being resolved and the installation of a passenger lift is envisaged for 2020. It is hoped that a step-free entrance will go a long way towards bringing back elderly, seasoned researchers back to the National Library to pursue their research hitherto abandoned due to inaccessibility issues.

Items requested in the Reading Room amounted to 6,333, a 5 percent decrease from last year's total of 6,888, an average

of 21 per day and of two items per user. Requests reached their peak in October with a total of 674 items, an average of 26 per day of opening during that month. Newspaper material was mostly in demand with a total of 3,737 requests. Melitensia items proved to be, as always, very popular and staff fetched 1,140 items. A total of 802 volumes were requested from the Archives of the Order of Malta. The Library Manuscript collection drew a total of 292 requests followed by the Adami collection which this year totalled a record of 204 items. The Treasury record group received an unusually high number of 129 requests while a mere 29 users consulted Univ. documents.

## REQUESTED ITEMS 2019

	AOM	TREAS.	UNIV.	AD	LIBR. MSS	MELIT.	N/PAPERS	TOTAL
JAN	95	22	3	10	28	67	389	614
FEB	65	3	2	27	12	70	363	542
MARCH	83	14	2	11	25	94	360	589
APRIL	40	3	2	11	28	150	241	475
MAY	45	2	3	14	29	99	321	513
JUNE	32	19	2	4	27	94	233	411
JULY	42	20	2	13	24	119	295	515
AUG.	36	26	2	6	20	109	326	525
SEPT.	8	2	2	35	11	58	274	390
OCT.	155	5	2	34	39	84	355	674
NOV.	150	11	5	31	26	102	325	650
DEC.	51	2	2	8	23	94	255	435
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>1140</b>	<b>3737</b>	<b>6333</b>





# QUERIES

The dearth of users who physically visited the National Library was amply compensated for by the record number of requests received by email or via social media. During 2019, the National Library received 653 requests, 18 per cent over last year's total. Well over half of the requests (369) arrived from Maltese researchers, students and the general public who sought information about library holdings and services. Others were submitted mainly by Italian researchers (107) and requested information from the Archives of the Order. This year, requests from France numbered 50, seeking information about the Knights of Malta. Sixteen mails each were received from the UK and Spain, while the US and Australia followed closely with 15 requests each. Greece came next with 12 mails. Requests reached the library from distant countries such as China, Japan and Thailand. In general, the

majority requested information from the library collections, mostly from newspapers, books and the Archives of the Order. Where images were requested, these were sent via WeTransfer once payment was effected.

Here the Reading Room worked hand in hand with the reprographic unit of the library which scanned the material on an on-demand basis, i.e. according to the researchers' requests. Given the considerable number of requests, the collection of scanned material continued to grow, thus supporting research activities. The scanning process would not have been complete without the input of students who assisted also in the editing of the images.

## QUERIES 2019

<b>369</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>MALTA</b>	<b>ITALY</b>	<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>SPAIN</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>AUSTRALIA</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>GREECE</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>GERMANY</b>	<b>BULGARIA</b>	<b>PORTUGAL</b>	<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	<b>BRAZIL</b>	<b>CANADA</b>	<b>CHINA</b>	<b>HUNGARY</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>IRELAND</b>	<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>LITHUANIA</b>	<b>MEXICO</b>	<b>POLAND</b>	<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	<b>TURKEY</b>	<b>BELARUS</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>TOTAL:</b>		
<b>ISRAEL</b>	<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	<b>RUSSIA</b>	<b>THAILAND</b>	<b>UKRAINE</b>	<b>653</b>		



# ACQUISITIONS

During 2019, the National Library intensified its collection activities and also actively expanded its retrospective acquisitions by means of the purchase of rare antiquarian items, including books, engravings and maps, from auctions and private sources, thus continuing to enrich the National Library of Malta's collection. Additionally, by working hand in hand with the National Bibliographic Office as well as with local publishers, the National Library procured the lists of latest publications and purchased second copies which were kept on the premises in order to be consulted by the public.

A total of €4,040.63 was spent on the purchase of extra copies of books deposited at the National Bibliographic Office by way of legal deposit, while €2,180 were spent on the purchase of 247 Melitensia items from private sources. As regards foreign publications, the National Library purchased 30 items either penned by Maltese authors abroad or in some way related to Malta for a total cost of €3,412.79. Outstanding among these was the three-volume work by Italian cartographers Stefano Bifulco and Fabrizio Ronca *Cartografia e Topografia italiana del XVI secolo : Catalogo ragionato delle opere a stampa* published by Edizioni Antiquarius in 2018. This monumental work reconstructs an ideal sixteenth-century atlas composed of maps of cities and countries published by Italian printers of the time. The work includes 1,280 colour maps including some of Malta. All the maps are accompanied by detailed catalogue entries. The work appeals not only to cartographers and map collectors but also to librarians and archivists who catalogue maps in their collections. A total of 78 old photos of Malta as well as an early eighteenth-

century engraving showing St Paul's shipwreck on Malta were purchased from eBay for a total of €301.77. Two maps of Malta by the French cartographer and engraver Nicholas de Fer (1646-1720) were purchased from the Parisian antiquarian firm Librairie Le Bail for €400.

During the year under review, there were some important donations of books, namely a collection of past MCAST periodicals, a set of publications of the sentences of the European Court of Justice, the manuscripts of the late author Carmel Attard and a collection of Melitensia books from the library of the Ministry of Finance. Furthermore, the National Library also received 28 foreign publications by way of donation, mainly books based on research conducted at the National Library. There were also three deposits of albums of old photos and views of the Maltese Islands by British and Australian citizens who had these items in their respective family collections and decided to kindly donate them to the National Library of Malta.

## Purchases by auction:

### March 2019

An eighteenth-century manuscript on vellum in Italian entitled 'Privilegio del Dottorato', with calligraphic writing in brown ink, illuminated initials and words and pages ruled in gilt. The work describes three doctorate graduations from the Archiginnasio della Sapienza in Rome respectively in 1742, 1747 & 1790 of the following: the Marquises Lodovico and Carlo Antonio Barbaro,

Giovanni Andrea Crispo from Tacco and Carlo Antonio Barbaro (1721-1793), the antiquarian who wrote an essay on the 1768 archaeological finds in Malta, *Degli avanzi d'alcuni antichissimi edifizii scoperti in Malta l'anno 1768*, published posthumously in 1794. The manuscript was acquired from Chiswick Auctions UK at the price of €233.41, including premium and charges.

### June 2019

A two-volume work by M. Demeunier translated from the original English text by Patrick Brydone. The work, entitled *Voyage en Sicile et à Malthe* was published in Amsterdam in 1775 and contains a very interesting travel report of Sicily and in Malta with interesting information about the places and the customs of the area, as well as the sculpture and architecture of the regions

described. This fine copy boasts a contemporary full leather binding, gilt ornaments on the spine, title on calf label, red edges and decorated endpapers. It was acquired from Antiquariato Librario Bado e Mart, Padova, Italy, for €774, including shipping and insurance.

### July 2019

MONSON, W.I. *Extracts from a journal*. This is the first edition of Monson's work published in London by Rodwell and Martin in 1820 describing a tour of Sicily, Malta and Calabria in 1819. The book in octavo format and with original drab boards has uncut and largely unopened pages and contains two engraved plates. It was acquired from Mayfair Book Auctions UK for €267.69, including premium and shipping.

## ACQUISITIONS 2019

ITEM	NUMBER	COST
2019 local publications	187	€4,040.63
Melitensia items from local sources	247	€2,180
Foreign publications	30	€3,412.79
From antiquarians overseas	2	€400
From auctions overseas	3	€1,275.1
Via eBay	79	€301.77

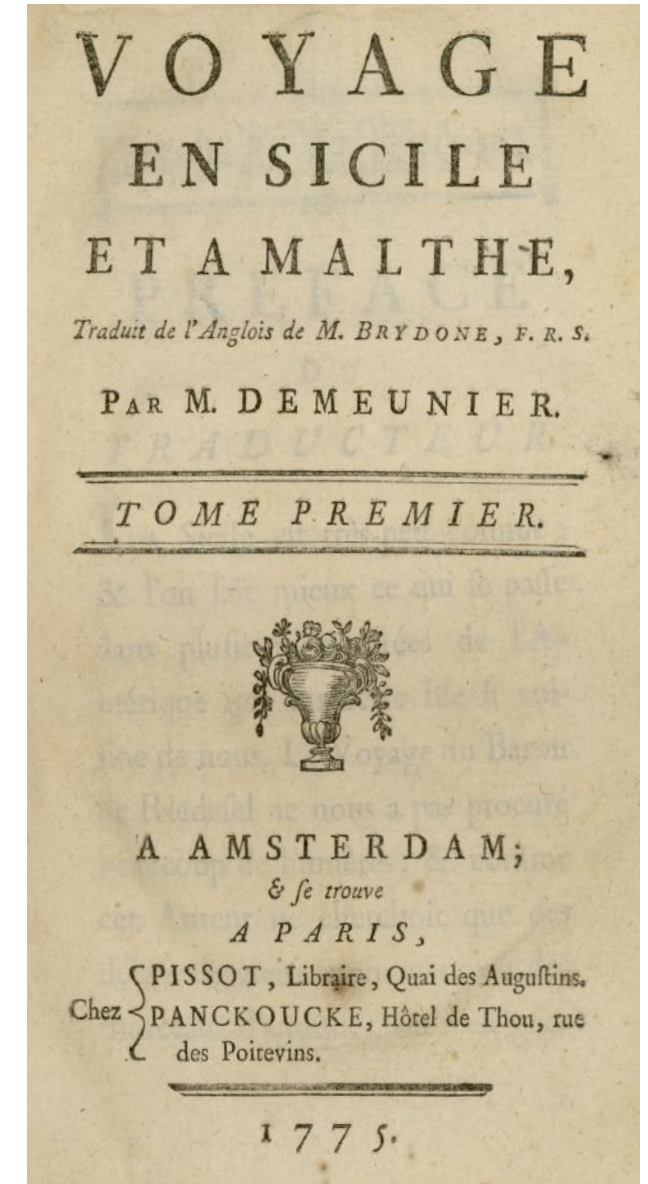




An early 18th-century engraving showing St Paul's shipwreck on Malta



Privilegio del Dottorato



Voyage en Sicile



# CONSERVATION UNIT

The National Library has unique treasures which it is its duty to safeguard and preserve. The conservation of parchment and paper presents particular problems, given the climatic conditions in Malta. The dedicated staff encounter these issues on a daily basis and seek to deal with them in a professional manner, always updating themselves with the latest developments in book restoration techniques.

During the year under review, the fumigation project entrusted to SalvArti Co. Ltd continued to be undertaken with 230 metres of books and manuscripts being treated with anoxia in order to be disinfested. The insect screens which were installed last year in the windows and doors of the library's storage deposits in order to enable air to flow in without allowing insects to enter from the exterior have helped enormously to preserve the collection. The same may be said for the insect traps which were placed on the shelves in order to combat as much as possible the breeding of insects within the volumes. Meanwhile, the staff continued to be occupied with the day-to-day work of the laboratory which consisted mainly of the painstaking restoration of manuscripts, the repair of brittle newspapers, and the binding of current newspapers and journals. They also manufactured customised preservation boxes in order to preserve the covers of the fine book bindings, as well as customised acid-free boxes to house artefacts.

Apart from the above, the Conservation Unit staff manned a section of the Malta Libraries stand at the Malta Book Festival and conducted demonstrations of book stitching and basic book

care techniques to the public visiting the festival. They also held hands-on sessions for schoolchildren visiting the National Library and supervised the work assigned to practicum and Erasmus students conducting their placements at the library.

Through the good offices of conservator Joseph Schirò who continued to lend his services to the National Library by curating the library's map collection, Kinds Auto Sales Ltd sponsored the restoration of a portolano for €1,500. The large folio volume, entitled *Carte de la Mer Méditerranée en Douze Feuilles* was published in Marseille by Joseph Roux in 1784. This particular edition was used on board the brigantine *La Rosine* under the command of Captain Tour and is the only known copy in the world. Since it was important to preserve the bibliographical details of this special item, the intervention was kept to the barest minimum, with all repairs being carefully done in situ. After the intervention, a special solander box was manufactured to protect the volume from dust, abrasions, and light.

The volunteer Felix Rizzo continued to lend a precious helping hand in the upkeep and maintenance of the book collection. During 2019, he succeeded single-handedly in cleaning 257 metres of books, besides disinfesting and waxing the shelving. Thanks to persons like Mr Rizzo, the Library pursues its endeavour to conserve in the best possible way the already existing material. Over the next years, it is envisaged to acquire the latest equipment and adopt the most updated best practices in order to ensure the enduring value of the National Library collections for posterity.



## Conservation Unit 2019

- Restoration of 81 manuscripts
- Repairs and rebinding of 76 Melitensia books
- Binding of 136 daily newspapers
- Restoration of 28 volumes of newspapers
- Hardcover binding of 278 volumes of periodicals
- Making of 36 preservation boxes for fine bookbindings
- Making of 46 customised acid-free mounts for artefacts
- Cleaning and restoration of 8 volumes of bibles for Bibles exhibition
- Conservation of Governors' Letter Patent
- Repair of National Library plans kept at Restoration Division
- Fumigation of 230 mtrs of books and wooden shelving
- Mounting of Bibles exhibition & small exhibitions related to public lectures
- Shelving of 56 mtrs of periodicals and journals
- Hands-on activities with schoolchildren
- Tutoring of 8 Erasmus students and volunteers
- Bookbinding demos on the Malta Libraries stand at Malta Book Festival



# THE NATIONAL LIBRARY (GOZO)

As a legal deposit library as per the Legal Deposit Act of 1925, the National Library (Gozo) has an equivalent role as its Malta counterpart with the mission of collecting and conserving the national imprint. During 2019, 114 new publications were deposited there since the library staff monitored the book publication sector in Gozo and collected the legal deposit copies for the National Library (Gozo). It also sent copies to be deposited at the National Bibliographic Office (NBO) in Floriana. Conversely, the new books published in Malta were collected for Gozo by the NBO. Due to current lack of space at the Gozo library, however, these books were retained at the NBO until adequate space outside the present Gozo library premises could be identified and made available for use.

The National Library (Gozo) welcomed members of the public from all walks of life, mainly students and the general public some of whom came expressly to make use of the free internet service

provided by the library. During the year under review, 880 users conducted research while 114 persons used the internet service. As always, the majority of researchers viewed newspapers (736), while a good number of Melitensia books (945) and periodicals (157) were requested too. Four manuscripts and eight reference books were consulted besides 581 miscellanea items which included government publications, past examination papers and school project material since the staff of the library assisted primary and secondary school students in their projects by guiding them to the appropriate reading material. A total of 345 persons requested 2,311 photocopies which yielded an income of €830.11.

Visitors to the library numbered 1,276. Various schools also organized visits to the library for their students. These included the Minor Seminary, Sir M.A. Refalo Post-Secondary School, the Gozo College Junior Lyceum and the Bishop's Conservatory both junior and senior schools. The visits were attended by 736

students. During 2019, a number of activities were organized at the library both by the library itself and by other bodies. Such activities included exhibitions, book launches and literary evenings. This year, new showcases were used for exhibitions and events. Outstanding among the activities was the Gozo Book Fest held in the last weekend of November, during which various cultural activities were organized.

Through the outreach section of Malta Libraries, library activities were promoted on the Malta Libraries Facebook page. All activities organized by the library were also advertised through printed material such as invitations, posters and flyers, designed by the Malta Libraries outreach team. TV programme 'Ghawdex

Illum' by CVC Media on the national television station, produced various slots, featuring activities organized by the library, thanks to Mr Alvin Scicluna, Director of CVC Media. Moreover, various community radios promoted the library's activities in their community notifications programme.

Other measures implemented during the year under review included the completion of the reorganization of the periodicals section, the re-covering of the chairs in the Reading Room in maroon imitation leather and the installation of a new system of fire extinguishers around the building.

## Requested Items NLG 2019

<b>736</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>2431</b>
N/PAPERS	MELITENSIA	PERIODICALS	MSS	REF. BOOKS	MISC.	TOTAL



# PARTICIPATION IN EXHIBITIONS HELD IN OTHER VENUES

'Tracing the Path of Women in Maltese Politics' organized by the Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms, Citizenship & Simplification at Parliament House, Valletta

The exhibition was inaugurated in the foyer of the Parliament building on 4th March 2019 and ran until 17th March. Between 11th and 30th April, the same display was set up at the Ministry for Gozo in Victoria. It was then transferred to the Old University, Valletta, where it was open to visitors between 6th May and 28th June 2019. The National Library of Malta contributed to the exhibition with the following items: The Royal Commission 1931: Minutes of Evidence Part III, Libr. MS 1528 (National Assembly 1945-47), The Malta Constitution 1947, the Electoral Register 1947, the Election Results 1947, the issue of *The Torch* dated 6 November 1947 and *Il-Berqa* of 1947.

'Music in Malta – From Prehistory to Vinyl', organized by Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti at the Cathedral Museum, Mdina

This visually stunning display of old and recent musical instruments, scores and related items telling the story of music in Malta and the Mediterranean was held between 14th April and 16th June 2019. The National Library participated with the manuscript of a play by Enrico Magi entitled 'Le Dafne ovvero La Verginità Trionfante' from the Library Manuscript collection (Libr. MS 775).

Culhat al Belt, Sette Giugno 1919-2019, organized by Heritage Malta at Parliament House, Valletta

On the occasion of the first centenary of the Sette Giugno events, Heritage Malta set up an interesting exhibition consisting of contemporary newspapers, photographs and sundry objects documenting the dramatic incidents that occurred in June 1919. For the occasion, the National Library lent 3 items: *Malta Taghna* issue of 5th April 1919, *Bandiera tal-Maltin* issue of 1st August 1903 and *Unjoni Maltija* issue of 17th May 1919. The exhibition was held at Parliament House from 6th June to 31st August and was then transferred to the National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta, where it was on display between 1st September and 31st December 2019.

A Nation of Achievers: an exhibition commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Foundation of the University of Malta, organized by the University of Malta at the University Campus, Valletta

This interesting exhibition documenting the history of the University of Malta from its inception in 1769 under Grand Master Pinto ran for a month, between 26th September and 23rd October 2019. The National Library helped to enhance the display with the copy of the University foundation decree (AOM 1993) and the magnificent diploma by Grand Master Pinto in favour of Fortunato Vella.





# VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENT INTERNSHIPS

The input of volunteers and students is always welcome at the National Library and they are assigned a programme of tasks based in several units operating within the Library. Thus they are given an all-round experience. They primarily assist in the Digitization Studio by scanning books and newspapers as part of the library's ongoing digitization programme as per users' requests. They also help in the Conservation Unit by learning and practising basic bookbinding and restoration techniques. This enables them to appreciate the richness of the collection and become acquainted with the best practices used for its conservation and preservation. The students also spend time in the Reading Room where they are given the opportunity to interact with clients by welcoming them at the reception desk and inputting their data into the database. They perform supervision duties in the Reading Room and help the staff fetch requested items from the stacks. Such back-office and front-office tasks enable them to get acquainted with those library operations which respond in the best possible manner to users' needs.

During the year under review, a steady flow of students and volunteers continued to lend their assistance at the National Library as part of their internship. Two employees from the Mdina Cathedral Archives spent two weeks at the National Library Conservation Unit in order to acquaint themselves with the basic principles of book care, repair and conservation. A student sent by the Ministry of Education spent two months conducting voluntary work at the Conservation Unit. Two DLIAS students conducted their practicum at the library while 14 Erasmus students from Italy, France, Germany and Turkey performed their

internship placements. Volunteer Mr Felix Rizzo was assigned the job of cleaning the shelves and books in the Reading Room gallery, a task which he continued to undertake painstakingly and meticulously. Mr Joseph Schirò, book restorer and former Director of the Restoration Division within Heritage Malta, Bighi, continued to lend his expertise by giving advice on best practices in book conservation.



## Students & Volunteers 2019

### Volunteers:

Gabriel Farrugia

Gabriel Zammit

Chanelle Abela

### Practicum students:

Janyl Buhagiar

Desiree Bondin

### Erasmus students:

Reyhan Yanar	20 February	20 May
Damla Tuncer	14 March	5 April
Hadjadj Nour	1 May	1 July
Leila Benhassen	1 May	1 July
Marius Guddorp	6 May	31 May
Laura Oriol	9 May	28 June
Ekrem Ozdemir	1 July	27 September
Sonia Pugliese	22 July	30 September
Eleonora Pisano	22 July	30 September
Serena Tarantino	30 July	30 September
Alexander Rupprecht	14 October	3 December
Norraine Arraki	11 November	21 December
Najma Bahassa	11 November	21 December

# VISITS

During 2019, the National Library received a record number of 19,609 visitors, a 27 per cent increase over last year and an average of 65 per day. Visitors are allowed to view the Reading Room and the display in the showcases; however, access to the researchers' area is prohibited. Access is granted against the presentation of an ID card or other document of identification.

The majority of visitors hailed from France and Spain with 2,707 and 2,496 persons respectively. Over 1,000 persons each from Germany, Italy and the UK, besides Malta, visited the National Library. However, visitors from the US, Belgium, Poland, Portugal, the Netherlands and Australia were quite numerous too. Several persons from a number of countries in South America, the Far East and Africa who were visiting Malta popped in at the National Library during the year.

Apart from these, Exclusively Malta, an agency which organizes specialized visits for particularly interested small groups, organized 27 visits to the National Library this year. The groups consisted of not more than four persons, most of whom were US citizens.







# VISITORS 2019

2707	2496	1791	1633	1623	1514	924	664	17	17	17	15	13	10	10	10
FRANCE	SPAIN	GERMANY	ITALY	UK	MALTA	USA	BELGIUM	LUXEM- BOURG	BELARUS	SINGAPORE	SOUTH AFRICA	CHILE	TUNISIA	BOSNIA	PERU
632	464	431	412	339	251	239	223	9	8	8	7	6	5	5	5
POLAND	PORTUGAL	NETHER- LANDS	AUSTRALIA	CANADA	GREECE	IRELAND	SWITZER- LAND	PHILIP- PINES	MONTE- NEGRO	ALBANIA	GEORGIA	VENEZUELA	MOROCCO	JORDAN	LEBANON
222	206	205	187	183	179	150	143	4	4	4	3	3	2	2	2
JAPAN	DENMARK	ROMANIA	BRAZIL	UKRAINE	RUSSIA	TURKEY	AUSTRIA	AZER- BAIJAN	PAKISTAN	URUGUAY	SAUDI ARABIA	GUATE- MALA	ICELAND	THAILAND	ANDORRA
126	120	117	108	99	95	90	88	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
SWEDEN	HUNGARY	CHINA	LITHUA- NIA	FINLAND	CZECH REPUBLIC	SLOVENIA	LATVIA	LIBYA	CAMEROON	COSTA RICA	LIECH- TENSTEIN	PARAGUAY	ARMENIA	MOLDOVA	ALGERIA
84	81	69	69	62	54	51	48	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	19,609
SOUTH KOREA	ARGENTINA	BULGARIA	ISRAEL	SERBIA	CROATIA	COLOMBIA	MEXICO	BANGLA- DESH	BOLIVIA	GABON	INDO- NESIA	QATAR	TOTAL		
47	31	30	28	25	24	23	18								
NORWAY	ESTONIA	NEW ZEALAND	CYPRUS	NORTH MACEDONIA	SLOVAKIA	INDIA	MALAYSIA								

During the year under review, special visits were organized for the following upon request:

- 22nd January – H.E. Mr Walter Haussmann, Ambassador of Germany
- 7th February – David Roderick Lyon and Malgorzata Asch, Staatsbibliothek, Berlin
- 28th February – History of Art students with Ms Christina Meli
- 10th April – H.E. Ms Consuelo Femenia, Ambassador of Spain
- 15th May – students of Pre-Tertiary Certificate Course in Baroque Architecture with Arch. Hermann Bonnici
- 22nd May - Mr Helge Maistry-Rehders, Head of Strategy for Arts and Culture, Berlin
- 13th June – Erasmus students from the Universities of Split (Croatia) and Cadiz (Spain)



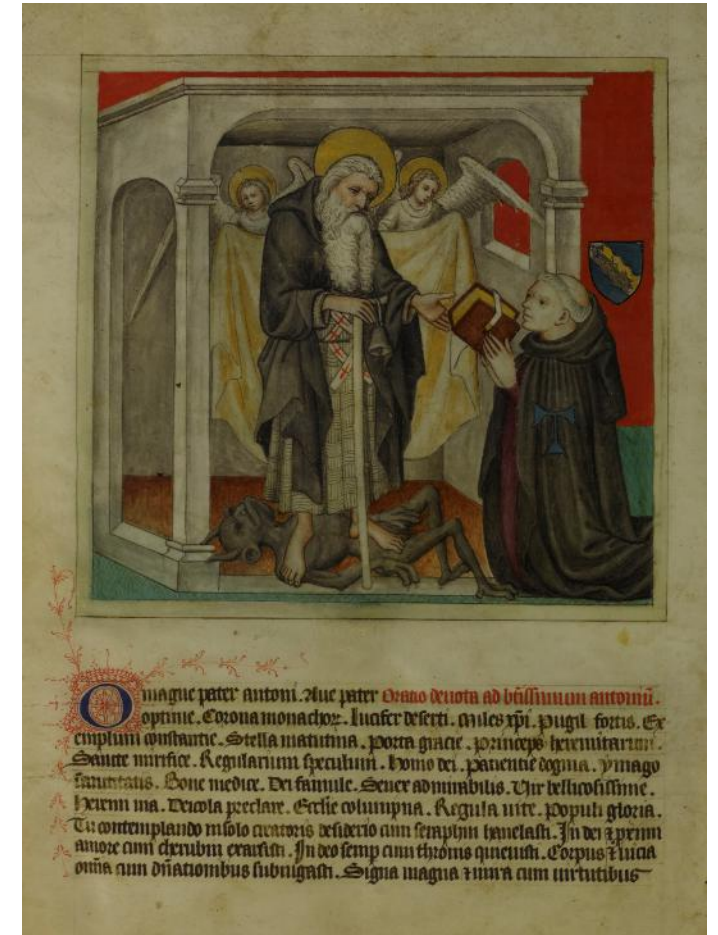
- 1st August – British librarian with Ms Monique Chambers
- 4th September – SMOM Federal Association (US) with Mr Bill Williams
- 4th October - SMOM Western Association (US) with Mr Bill Williams
- 26th October - BA Maltese students with Dr Olvin Vella
- 30th October - MA Archaeological Practice students with Mr Mevrick Spiteri
- 18th November - Baroque Institute students with Dr Joan Abela
- 19th November - BA History students with Dr Emmanuel Buttigieg
- 2nd December – Japanese group with Ms Roberta Gafa', MTA



# UNESCO MEMORY OF THE WORLD WORKSHOP IN MALTA

Between 11th and 14th September, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO held a Memory of the World (MoW) Workshop in Malta. The three-day event was coordinated together with the Maltese National Commission and was held at the DB San Antonio in Qawra. The MoW Programme was established in 1992 by UNESCO in order to help to protect and improve access to documentary heritage around the world. The vision of this programme is that the world's documentary heritage belongs to everyone, and should thus be preserved, protected and made freely and permanently accessible to all. The MoW Register is one aspect of this programme and has been a powerful tool for increasing global awareness of the existence and significance of documentary heritage.

The workshop organized in Malta to showcase documentary heritage in the Arab region provided a rare opportunity for the participants to share their knowledge about the respective selected items of documentary heritage and to receive direct technical assistance from international experts, thus allowing them to enhance their nominations to the MoW International Register. Ms Maroma Camilleri, Deputy Librarian National Library, participated in the workshop on behalf of Malta Libraries. Representatives from academic or cultural institutions in Oman, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and Morocco attended the event. Mr Dong Hyun-Robert Lee, Programme Specialist in the Division of Culture of South Korea, and Mr Philip Vella from the Maltese National Commission coordinated the workshop.



Participants in the workshop were requested to select one important item of documentary heritage and present a draft nomination for the International Register. Malta Libraries submitted the nomination for Libr. Codex I, a fifteenth-century manuscript on parchment illustrating the life of St Anthony Abbot, the hermit saint of Egypt. This item was selected because of its timeless and universal theme illustrating the fragility of the human condition in the struggle against evil, notwithstanding the fact that the subject matter is confined in time and space. Moreover, the intrinsic and extrinsic value of the work are undisputed. The manuscript is in itself a fine work of art from the aesthetic and technical point of

view, being embellished by 196 pictures beautifully executed in a late Gothic style. It was thus both for its form as well as its content that this manuscript was deemed worthy to be presented for inclusion in the International Register. Ms Camilleri's Powerpoint presentation was well-received and the international experts from Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, Barbados and South Korea were very encouraging in their comments and suggestions. Following the three-day event, the 20-strong group of experts and participants visited the National Library in Valletta and the National Archives in Rabat.



PUBLIC  
LIBRARIES  
NETWORK



# PUBLIC LIBRARIES' NETWORK



**Margaret Zammit**

*Deputy Librarian – Public Libraries' Network*

The Malta Public Libraries network is made up of 57 libraries comprising the Central Public Library (CPL), the Gozo Central Public Library (GCPL), seven Regional Libraries, 37 Branch Libraries in Malta and another 11 Branch Libraries in Gozo.

The mission of the public libraries is to promote reading habits and support literacy by providing open and equal access to resources and library services to meet the educational, informational and recreational needs of our community. The Central Public Library continues to outreach its services through the regional and branch libraries around Malta and Gozo.

The main purpose of the public libraries is:

- To foster and strengthen reading habits for informational and recreational purposes;
- To offer support and information assistance to individuals, local enterprises and associations;
- To participate in formal and non-formal education and literacy initiatives;
- To promote Malta Libraries' collections and services;
- To act as a community centre.

The Deputy Librarian Public Libraries is responsible for the day-to-day running of the CPL, GCPL and the Regional Libraries. The departments at the CPL include the Adult and Junior Counters, the Reference Section, the Talking Books Service, the Acquisitions and Collection Management Section as well as the Cataloguing and Classification Section.

Furthermore, the network of public libraries including the branch libraries is continuously maintained and updated, with Regional and Local Councils being involved and advised in the administration of regional and branch libraries according to the standards of best practice regulating such libraries.



# READER SERVICES

In 2019, the Public Libraries Network kept growing, reaching 57 public libraries across Malta and Gozo. On Thursday 16th May a branch library in Xghajra was officially inaugurated in the presence of the local Mayor and members of the Local Council. Like the other libraries in the network, the Xghajra library was allocated a book fund from Malta Libraries and new books were purchased. The Local Council assisted in the refurbishing of the library and new staff were trained by Malta Libraries.

During 2019, the Public Libraries Network registered an increase of 2.3 per cent in book loans, reaching 1,045,869 from 1,022,346 in the preceding year. This was mainly attributed to an increase of 70.7 per cent in eBook usage which amounted to 14,001 from 8,200 loans. The top five libraries with the greatest number of loans registered were the CPL followed by the regional libraries in Birkirkara, Qormi and Luqa together with the Nadur Branch Library respectively. Conversely, the libraries with the least number of loans registered were the branch libraries in Xghajra, Isla, Kerċem, Valletta and Bormla respectively. The most significant increases in book loans were registered by the branch libraries in Qrendi, Isla, Mtarfa, Mqabba and Gudja. On the other hand, the libraries of Qala, Mosta, Safi, St Paul's Bay and Birgu reported the highest drops in book loans.



6,071

NEW MEMBERS



1,045,869

BOOK LOANS

2.3%

INCREASE



14,001

eBOOK LOANS

70.7%

INCREASE



eBOOKS

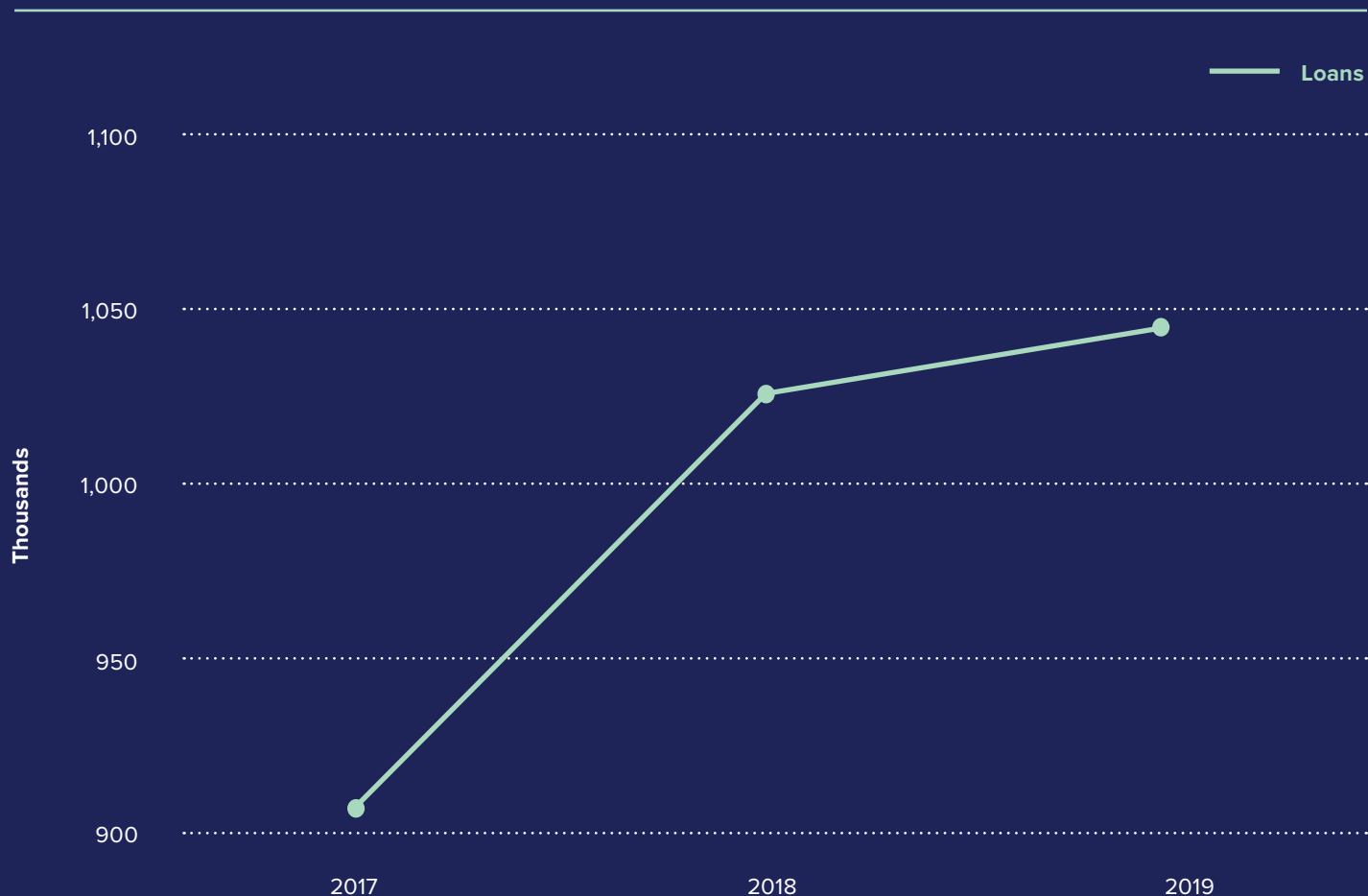


# LIBRARY BOOK LOANS 2019

Factors contributing to the overall increase in book loans, may be attributed to extensive collection development and refurbishment in libraries, investment by the respective local councils, increased opening hours, more efficient book processing procedures, more investment in outreach activities, and extended storytelling activities in most public libraries, in collaboration with the National Literacy Agency.

In 2019, new members registered to the Public Libraries Network reached 6,071. Members under the age of 18 made up 65.4 per cent of the new members of the public libraries, with the majority falling between the age group of 0-12 years.

### Book loans



During the last quarter of 2019, a total of 40 Local Councils were presented with the sum of €94,579 given through the scheme 'Financial Scheme – Transforming Local/Regional Libraries into Community Centres'. The aim of this scheme is to transform local and regional libraries into inclusive community centres where citizens will have the opportunity to attend and participate in

innovative activities, and further strengthen their knowledge in various areas within a social environment. Those local and regional councils with a public library in their locality were eligible to apply for funding and this scheme was encouraged and supported by suggestions from Malta Libraries. The scheme covered 85 per cent of the cost, up to a maximum of €3000.

### NEW MEMBERS 2019

Type of Membership	Number of members
<b>Adults - 18 and over</b>	
Adults <sup>1</sup>	1,935
Adults residing in Malta without Maltese citizenship <sup>1&amp;3</sup>	90
Adult foreign visitors <sup>1&amp;3</sup>	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,029</b>
<b>Juniors - under 18</b>	
0-12 years	2,502
13-17 years	1,372
17 years & under with additional adult lending rights <sup>2</sup>	4
0-12 years residing in Malta without Maltese citizenship <sup>3</sup>	86
13-17 years residing in Malta without Maltese citizenship <sup>3</sup>	8
Junior foreign visitors <sup>3</sup>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,973</b>
<b>Others</b>	
Guests <sup>4</sup>	1
Staff members	0
Teachers	68
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,071</b>

<sup>1</sup>From 2014 all adults have additional junior lending rights

<sup>2</sup>Require a written permit from a parent or guardian

<sup>3</sup>Require a Maltese citizen guarantee

<sup>4</sup>Temporary borrower category for new members who enrol themselves online



# REFERENCE SERVICES

The Reference Library at the CPL welcomes all researchers, students and visitors. The collection comprises reference material for research purposes and a vast collection of Melitensia including reference material published in Malta or by Maltese authors. The Reference Library offers photocopying services in colour both in A4 and A3 formats. Moreover, the Library also sends scans of library material to borrowers' mailboxes upon request. During 2019, the Reference and Melitensia Sections were frequented by 551 users who consulted books, carried out research and used the PC stations. A reference interview is indirectly held with every client so that librarians acquire as much relevant information as possible to offer the best experience and guidance for clients. Daily statistics are kept on Reference and Melitensia users including arrival and departure times, the books and newspapers they consult and even requested resources which may not be available. A request is then sent to the Acquisitions Section as a suggestion for when new library material is acquired. In this way, the staff ensures that the resources at the Reference and Melitensia sections are relevant to library users' needs.

During 2019, the area was refurbished with new curtains, armchairs and a sofa to make the area more comfortable for users, with the aim of creating a welcoming and comfortable environment. Apart from the printed material (books), a wide selection of various periodicals is offered. These include *Sagħtar*, *Tagħna t-Tfal* and *National Geographic* among others. Daily local and weekly newspapers are provided and kept in the Reference Section for a specific period of time. All local newspapers are reviewed on a daily basis and any material which may be relevant is selected, copied, classified and filed. These are then made available for public research. Through this initiative, aspects of the collection are highlighted and organized.

The clientele at the Reference Library is not age specific. There are resources to suit everyone's needs; from elderly people who come daily to read newspapers and spend some relaxing time reading, to students who decide to use the area for teamwork such as a school project or a study group. Some clients may choose to carry out personal research for their own research assignments while others commonly frequent the audiovisual section to make use of computer and internet facilities free of charge.



# TALKING BOOKS SECTION

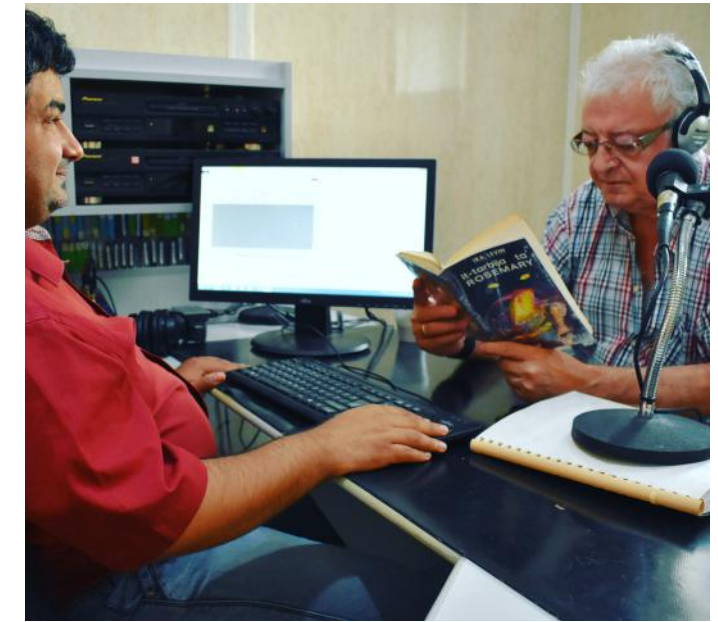
The Talking Books Service (TBS) aims to reach out not only to visually-impaired library members and the housebound but also members with reading difficulties or those who require or prefer the audio format of a book.

In 2019 the number of patrons registered with the Talking Books Section was 132. These included: 105 persons with visual impairments; one person with dyslexia; five people who were housebound and 21 people with various needs. Talking book loans amounted to 2,429, an increase of 23.4 per cent over 2018. During the year 2019, the Talking Books Section attracted volunteers who offered their services in reading aloud and recording books for our patrons. These included media personalities such as broadcasters and actors as well as footballers, retired teachers and others. There were also authors who read their own published books. Furthermore, throughout the year, personnel from the National Literacy Agency (NLA) came to read aloud various textbooks. These books will be available on the Talking Books catalogue.

In the first quarter of the year under review, the new updated catalogue was launched and new genres were included. A User Satisfaction Survey was carried out in August 2019 from where it emerged that members are quite satisfied with the service provided and they expressed the desire to be able to borrow more titles as well as for more titles to be added to the catalogue.

The Section is always looking for ways of meeting patrons' requirements. Many of the suggestions expressed in the questionnaire handed to them as part of the research mentioned above, have been taken on board.

In November 2019, as part of its mission to promote inclusive publishing, the Section concluded an agreement with the Accessible Books Consortium (ABC). This agreement will increase the number of books in the English and foreign language section. The Accessible Books Consortium (ABC) is an alliance comprising WIPO (an organization that caters for persons with print disabilities) and other affiliated organizations representing authors and publishers. The ABC includes the following international organizations: the World Blind Union, the DAISY Consortium, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, the International Publishers Association, the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organizations and the International Authors' Forum.

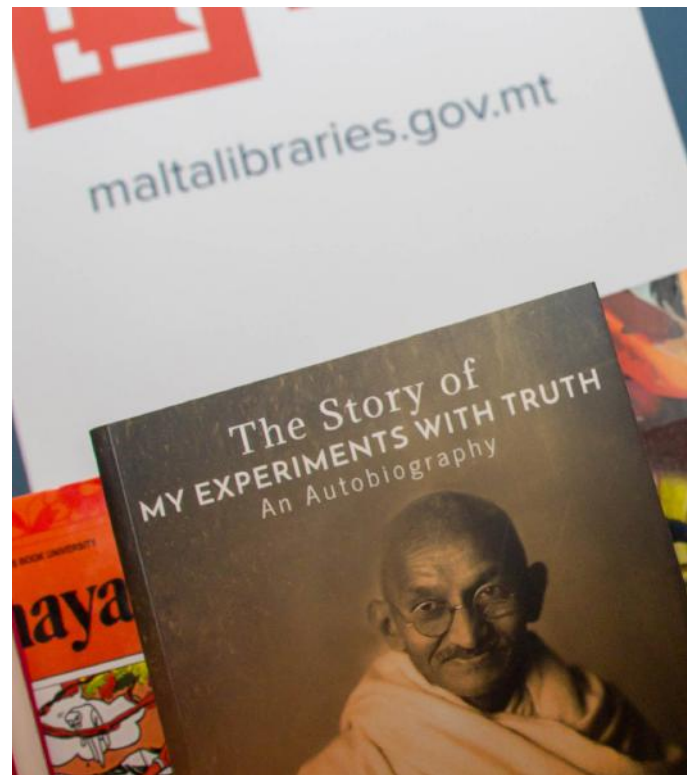


# ACQUISITIONS & COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

The Acquisitions Section is responsible for purchasing books and eBooks. Its primary goal is to steadily add to the library collection in such a way as to fulfil and reflect users' needs within a world that is constantly in flux. It strives to regularly refresh and augment each collection with the latest and best book releases – both local and international – while also doing its best to acquire the specific library material that readers request to see on library shelves. Once again public libraries were allocated a book budget that reflected their performance as to the number of loans issued during the previous year. This provides an impetus to motivate librarians to work harder to achieve better results.

During 2019, the public libraries acquired €89,871.32 worth of library material. This amounted to 12,413 printed books and 475 eBooks, totalling 12,888 items. This increase encompassed not only traditional books but also a special focus on expanding the number of graphic novels, dyslexic-friendly titles, level-readers, eBooks and audiobooks to the libraries' collections. Donations were again the main source of acquisition, reaching 34,866 items. In 2019 the most generous contributor by far was the National Literacy Agency (NLA) – surpassing its own record of 2018 – donating 8,037 printed books and 1,164 eBooks. Thanks to the reinforcements provided by the NLA, the public libraries' collections were boosted and diversified by a good number of dyslexic-friendly titles and graphic novels which helped cater for clients' differing needs. Other contributors included the National Book Council, Local Councils, Gutenberg Press, the Parliamentary Secretariat for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, and EcoGozo among others. In conjunction with this year's theme for Malta Libraries Day – entitled Celebrating Multicultural Libraries

– various embassies responded enthusiastically to the appeal to donate books relevant to the various communities residing in the Maltese Islands. Consequently, books in the German, Italian, Greek, Russian, Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Czech and Slovak languages were added to the collection.



# CATALOGUING & CLASSIFICATION SECTION

The Cataloguing and Classification Section is responsible for providing access to the volume of material at the respective public libraries in Malta and Gozo. The main task is to create and maintain a database of bibliographic records for reading material of educational, informational and recreational value in a variety of reading formats. These records enable members to conduct searches for relevant material via the library's online catalogue. The preparation of the bibliographic records entails descriptive cataloguing and subject classification. Malta Libraries employs the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (23rd ed.) system, Dewey Decimal Classification, Library of Congress Subject Headings and the MARC 21 format standards of cataloguing.

Cataloguing tasks are carried out mainly at the central Cataloguing Section at the Central Public Library in Floriana and by individual members of staff operating from various libraries. The cataloguing team is made up of 35 staff members. In 2019, the cataloguing

team added 58,075 items to the Public Libraries' collections, out of which 804 were donated by various embassies. Titles were in English, Slovak, German, Czech, Japanese, Russian, Italian, Greek, Chinese and Indian. The cataloguing team also merged multiple ISBNs and updated bibliographic records to be in line with the standard cataloguing format in view of the management of the Public Lending Rights (PLR) scheme. During 2019 another ten school libraries migrated onto Malta Libraries' V-smart system. The unit ensured that duplicate bibliographic records from the school libraries' information system (OLIVER) were merged with the existing bibliographic records in V-smart.

Continuous training is provided so all cataloguers are familiar with the latest developments in cataloguing and classification. The unit strives to ensure that all acquired material passed on from the Acquisitions Section, is available to users within the shortest possible time.





# INTERNSHIPS & VOLUNTARY WORK

During 2019, the CPL accommodated four foreign interns mostly through the Erasmus+ Programme. These interns came from Germany and were given training on general library tasks and familiarisation with the library services. They carried out duties at the Junior and Adult counters, the Reference Library and the Talking Books Section. Other tasks included book processing under the supervision of library staff.



Three Maltese students from St Nicholas College were also given the opportunity to carry out hands-on experience at the CPL and be exposed to a team-led environment. One Maltese university student who is reading for a Diploma in Library and Information Science also carried out his practicum at the CPL where he was familiarised with all the sections in the Library.

Volunteers are welcome at the CPL and in the year under review two volunteers made a valuable contribution to the library. Besides contributing to the everyday running of the library, they also assisted in special library events which are aimed to reach out to a wider audience.

# GOZO CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Gozo Central Public Library (GCPL) serves the same mission as the CPL, that of promoting reading habits and supporting literacy by providing open and equal access to resources and library services to meet the educational, informational and recreational needs of the community. Situated in St Francis Square in Victoria it houses the biggest collection of library material in Gozo, having a lending library as well as housing reference material and PC stations.

At the beginning of the year, the Ministry of Gozo, in collaboration with the Works Department and Malta Libraries, assisted in the refurbishment of an area in the library and toilet facilities were installed.

In April of the year under review, the Minister for Gozo, the Hon. Dr Justyne Caruana, donated 127 books sponsored by EcoGozo to the library. The collection donated included audiovisual books, dyslexia-friendly books and a collection of books written in braille. The GCPL also liaised with the Victoria Local Council to obtain funds through the 'Financial Scheme – Transforming Local/Regional Libraries into Community Centres' which were used to replace the existing chairs with new modern and colourful chairs and stools. These are to be used by both adults and children visiting the library during activities and daily use and help give the library a fresh modern look.

For the first time, the GCPL extended its winter timetable until the end of June to cater for such activities.







# NATIONAL BIBLIO- GRAPHIC OFFICE

# NBO NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC OFFICE



**Oliver Mamo**  
*Director – National Bibliographic Office*



During 2019, the National Bibliographic Office ensured continuation of the work processes initiated in the previous year such as the inventory of current publications. However 2019 is the year when the NBO also embarked on

new projects that include retrospective cataloguing and the capture of born-digital government material. The detailed account of the work carried out by the NBO during 2019 follows.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC WORK

As explained in the 2018 annual report, the NBO embarked on an inventory exercise of the publications that were released post 2011. The aim of the exercise was to create enough bibliographic data on such publications allowing resource discovery through the catalogue (OPAC) in a reasonable time. This would facilitate the NBO in the creation of a full bibliographic record within the national bibliography. Following last year's coverage of the 2012-2015 period, during 2019, this inventory backlog has been cleared. Inventory work is being carried out on currently-received items only.

In the 2018 annual report reference was made to the publications that, due to past malpractice, were never captured through cataloguing. Reference was made to the parish feast publications which was at the time scheduled for 2019. The latter collection was superseded by the discovery of a similar collection which was yet to be catalogued. These are the monographs containing the Judgements of the Superior Courts of Malta that had been given from 1854 to the present date. The ca. 800-volume collection is now fully catalogued in the library management system. Attention has now reverted to the local feasts' publications, which collection will be continued to be catalogued during 2020. It is worth remembering that these omissions, when discovered, have to be processed in the first instance prior to any further publication of the national bibliography so as to approach completeness in bibliographic control as much as our resources permit.

The national collection housed at the National Library and the repositories managed by the NBO is composed of material that has been collected for the past four and a half centuries. To manage such a collection and to provide a 21st-century service, such material needs to be accessible through an online library

catalogue. Such a monumental work of retrospective cataloguing, which could span generations, needs to be broken down into manageable segments and projects, so that progress can be easily monitored and measured, while ensuring that limited resources are targeted towards the most effective use. Apart from the monograph collections mentioned above, the NBO has focused on serial items, since serial issues are not accessible through the OPAC.

During 2019, the serials project commenced. The aim of this project is to have 100,000 issues available on the OPAC by the end of year 2021. Following the mass transfer of such material from the 'Custodian's House' at the National Library to the NBO in Floriana, which necessitated sorting and physical organizing, the NBO managed to reach the 33,000 issues target that was set for the year.



# THE DIGITAL LIBRARY

Whilst DigiVault is still up and running in a frozen state, work has commenced on the new system. As reported in the 2018 annual report, the metadata was migrated to the new system. During 2019 studies were conducted on two primary areas, the first being how the data will be edited to a full bibliographic record and the workflow required to include retrospective cataloguing in the process; the second area dealt with how the photographic process could be enhanced to produce manageable digital assets and provide a better service to the general public. Such work has been finalised, allowing the first publications to be made available through the new digital library by mid-2020.

# RECOVERY OF RETROSPECTIVE MATERIAL

## Primary recovery exercise

This involves the daily scrutiny of material that is donated to charity outlets. On retrieving Melitensia publications in all their various formats, these are placed temporarily in carton boxes to await evaluation in order to stabilise their microclimate. Strong carton storage boxes are obtained as the evaluation process commences. Verification is made through the online Malta Libraries catalogue in order to determine if a document is already held in both national library sites. A second copy is held should there only be one copy in each.

# OFF-SITE REPOSITORIES

Maintenance works at the Hal Far and Floriana repositories are ongoing. The Floriana repository is the storage space in which the legal deposit copy is being permanently housed for posterity. The second purchased copy of publications are sent to the National Library to be made accessible to the public. While guarding the national collection for future generations, this methodology is saving precious storage space at the National Library site in Valletta. Additionally, through the catalogue, staff can easily locate materials and copies across sites since both the NBO and the National Library are adopting a detailed fixed-location shelving approach, which assists in the storage planning and management while facilitating retrieval time of material.

All book publications prior to the 1940s are held, given that in the pre-war period the malpractice of removing original covers to replace with 'in-house' binding deprived the National Library of possessing them as true whole copies. The chosen documents are cleaned from any residue or particulate matter, checked for missing pages, scribbling, enclosures or attachments. Should there be an evident presence of silverfish (*Lepisma saccharina*), the holding is covered in thin tissue paper in order to isolate it from the other documents.

## Printed documents

All approved documents are listed in a spreadsheet that has been created with relative mandatory fields, including bibliographic data and physical status. These include name of author or corporate body; title and subtitle; publisher and place of publication, year of publication, number of pages, physical condition, number of holdings (if any) and general remarks. The statuses for the physical condition are merited as poor, fair, very good and mint. References are made in the remarks section for documents that have a specific attribute, such as being signed by the author, having limited circulation or requiring repair or fumigation.

The different formats recovered are: books (including monographs of 8p plus), periodicals, compact discs, digital video discs, audio cassettes and ephemera, which includes calendars, recipe cards and posters.

The majority of the 1,011 books recovered during 2019 were in the Maltese language, followed by those in English and a few in Italian and German. This is the third consecutive year in which over a thousand retrospective publications were recovered, and there were also several instances when similar holdings that had been recovered in previous years were encountered in the process and therefore uncollected.

Among the most salient acquisitions were a collection of poems in *Kwiekeb ta' Sliem* (1982) by Vincenzo Maria Pellegrini [1911-1997], that included an original signed photograph by the author with a dedication to fellow poet Mario F. Bezzina, that was recovered in excellent condition. Other important recoveries were the first edition of Ġużè Chetcuti's *Fra Martin u novelli oħra* (1961), Kilin's autographed *Djar is-Sultana: ktieb ta' kappelli u knejjes żgħar* (1969), *Il-Kitbiet ta' San Franġisk u Santa Klara* (1986), which is signed with personalised dedications by the various contributors, and Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi's *Nazju Ellul*, that includes a portrait photo and several etchings relative to the narrative (1947).

## The different formats recovered are:



### Books

Including monographs of more than eight pages



### Periodicals



### Compact discs



### Digital video discs



### Audio cassettes



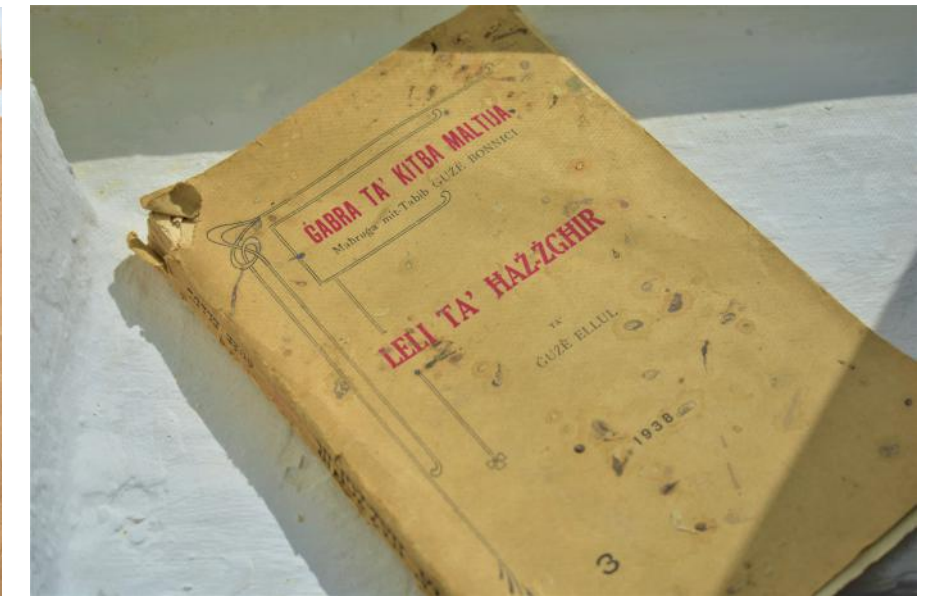
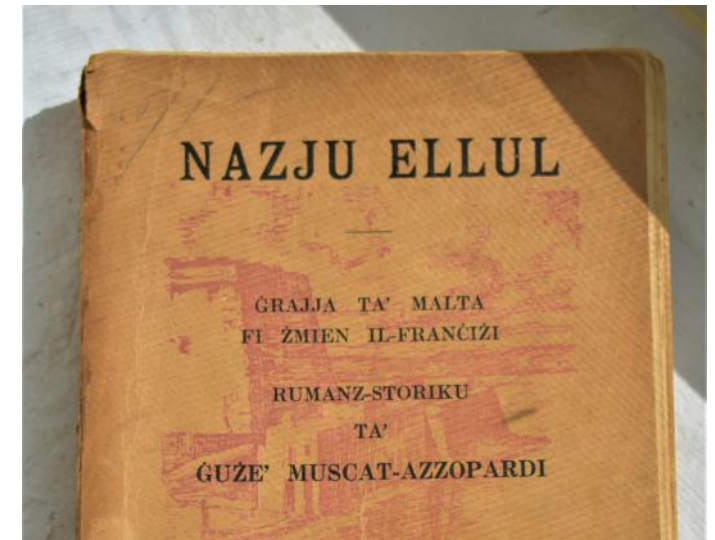
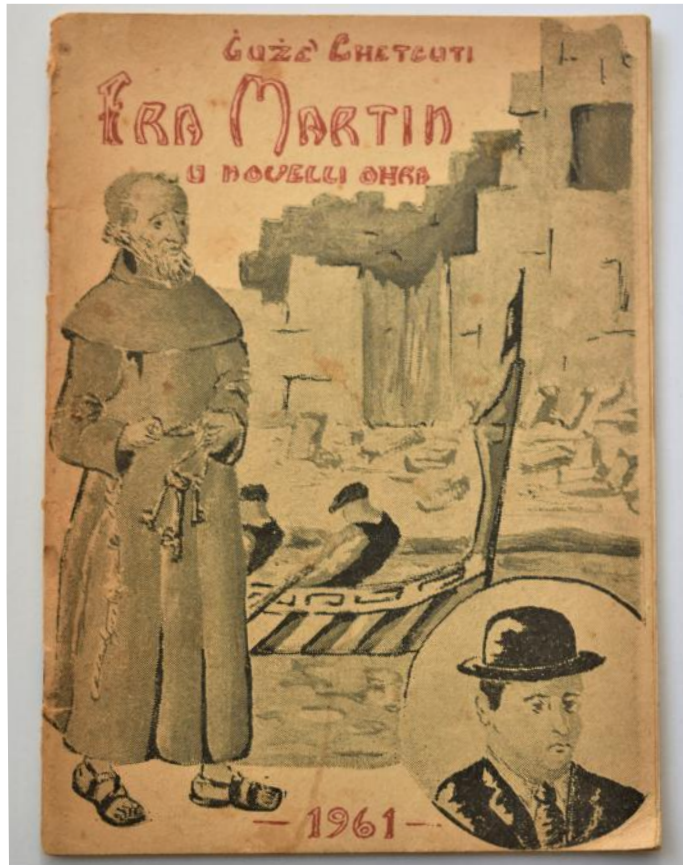
### Ephemera

Includes calendars, recipe cards and posters



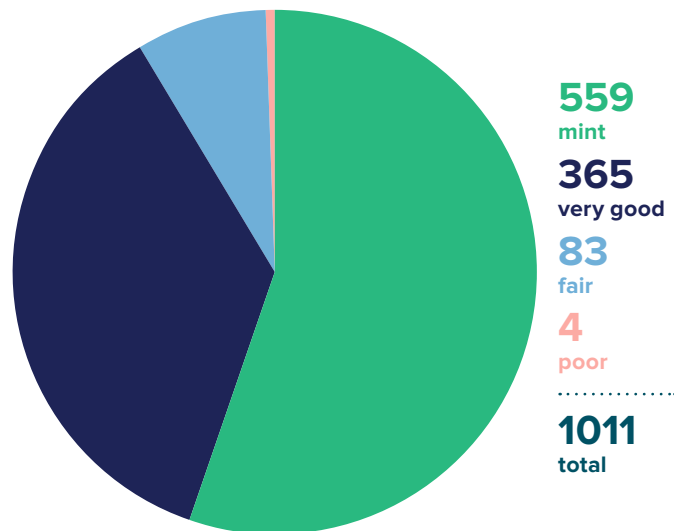
Other records include the very rare first edition of Ġużè Ellul Mercer's masterpiece *Leli ta' Haż-Żghir*, published by Dr Ġużè Bonnici (1938), Victor Apap's *Blanzuni* – one of the first post-war publications (1945) – and Giuseppe Cumbo's *Il Hodbi ta Parigi jew Il Vendetta ta Mejjat* published by Studio Editoriale Maltese (1917-1919). This 677-page volume was published as a facsimile and obtained through subscription. Interestingly enough the last issue came out on 7th June 1919, Sette Giugno.

A whole set of the original children's series of Maltese legends written for children – *Leggendi* – published by Klabb Kotba Maltin in 1974 was also recovered, as well as a mint set of subsequent reissues of the same titles by Kotba Merill in 1982. All these featured cover designs were the artistic work of Joe Mallia, other than the iconic *Ghar Hassan* cover by George Casha.





## Condition of books recovered

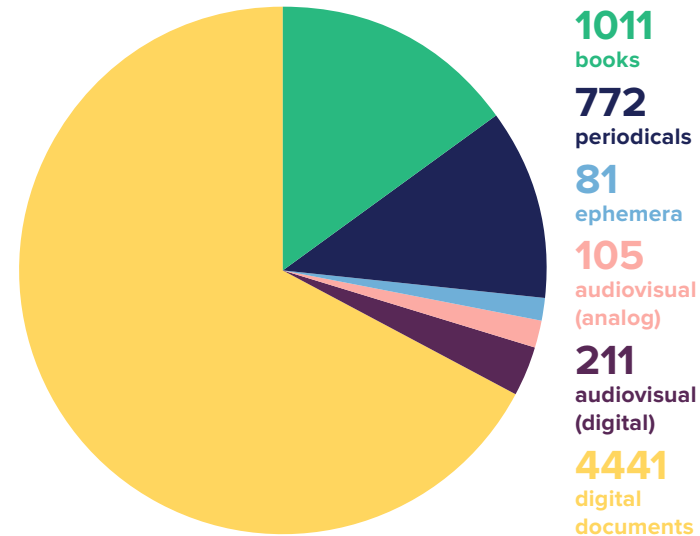


From this pie chart one can notice the considerably higher amount of 559 mint publications (55.3%), up from 395 (32.7%) in 2018, that were acquired. These had either been purchased by their owner or received as a gift, and remained unread. Several of these had autographs or dedications. The predominant genre of mint publications was, as in 2017 and 2018, of a devotional content or else Maltese poetry books. There was an overall positive increase of 365 very good books (36.1%), including several that were nearly in mint condition but had some erasable pencil scribbling.

In 2019 a new approach to collection development was adopted, that of keeping books recovered in a fair and poor state on reserve until a copy in a much better condition was chanced upon. This policy resulted in a very successful decrease of those classified as fair from 22.4% in 2018 to 8.2% in 2019 and as poor from 3.9% in 2018 to a negligible 0.4%.

The evaluation process undertaken took several factors into

## Types of records recovered



consideration. These included a thorough inspection of all documents with regard to the complete text as published by verifying page number sequencing, fragility or brittleness of paper, removal of third matter irrelevant to document – such as paper scraps or rusting paper clips or creases on the spine area that signified that the book had been opened and leaved, stains, moisture or fungal growth, silverfish etc.

The rationale behind the categorisation of Melitensia books by decade of publication, was implied by the significant historical changes that Malta experienced throughout the 20th century. The pre-1920 category covered those documents published prior to the 1921 self-government period, the 1930s included the turbulent years when Maltese was declared as an official language instead of Italian (in 1934), while the 1940s were dominated by the war years.

## Periodicals

An amount of 772 periodicals were recovered including twenty-one issues of *Kana: familja Maltija, familja Nisranija* from the 50s and early 60s, the first twenty-five issues of the *Malta Gardening Club* published between 1977 and 1980, a nearly complete set of *Heritage* (1979-1988), *Il-Pulizija's* first sixty copies (1977-1985), editions of *Taste & Flair, Town, Homeworks, Treasures of Malta, Hyphen, Birdlife (Malta)* and *Malta Missjunarja*. Many of these consolidated the national collection at the National Library, either filling any lacunae or else held as a preservation copy at NBO.

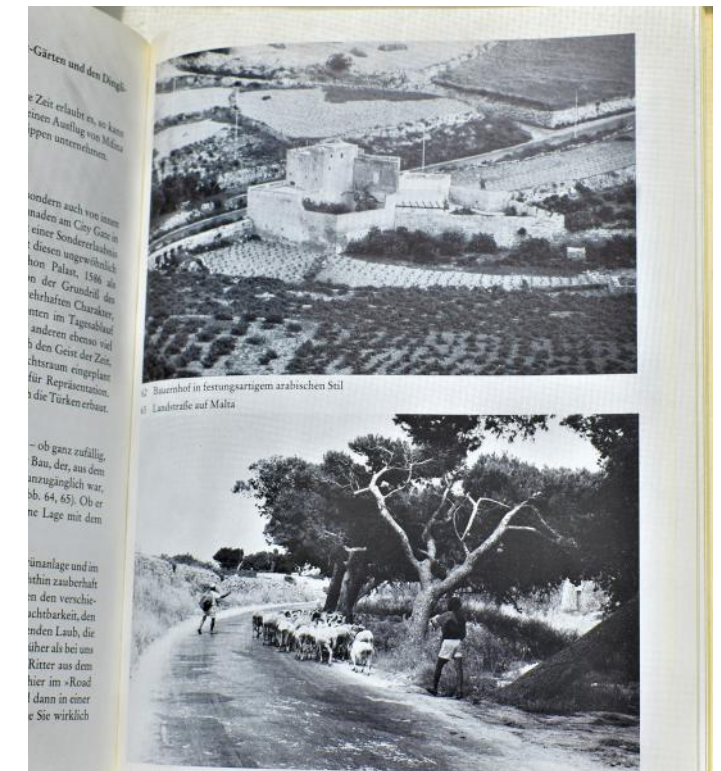
## Ephemera

The ephemera records, a total of 81 documents, included sixteen out of the twenty note cards published undated in colour by Cathedral Library, Sliema; sets of full-colour flyers by ERA featuring the Maltese natural environment; *Heritage Malta* calendars and a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle featuring Caravaggio's *Beheading of Saint John* among others.



## Non-book materials

The recovery of non-book material recovered totalled 105 documents, divided into compact discs, digital video discs, VHS audiovisual cassettes and audio cassettes. These included several publications in VHS cassette format, such as touristic features by the National Tourism Organisation of Malta, Medialink Communications' two audiovisual documentaries *Fuq il-Passi ta' Pawlu*, two Partit Nazzjonalista's political releases, annual spiritual sermons for Easter by Dun Victor Grech of Caritas Malta, six mint editions of BICREF 2002 environmental documentaries, and Elija Vella's series *Satanizmu u Okkult* in audiocassette format, mostly dating from the 1990s.





## DIGITAL PUBLIC DOCUMENTS HARVESTING

Following the creation of client information accounts (CIA) for Malta, which enables NBO to keep open contact with all known publishers, a second phase was implemented with the digital harvesting of government documents that are available online. This reaped an impressive 4,441 documents in digital format, mostly born-digital and a few copies of scanned documents that had been previously published in print format. The content ranged from targeted annual reports, audits or national strategy plans and case notes to promotional literature.

National strategy plans captured included a very wide fora, including those for infrastructure, health, sports, tourism, environment, investment and others. Environment impact assessment documents, hosted by the Planning Authority or Environment Resources Authority, were also harvested when the subject involved an application that prompted national public interest, such as open-sea aquaculture or mineral mining such as the proposed Gozo to Malta tunnel, or heritage and natural sites, monuments and sites.

## HARVESTING ONLINE GOVERNMENTAL AUDIOVISUAL PUBLICATIONS

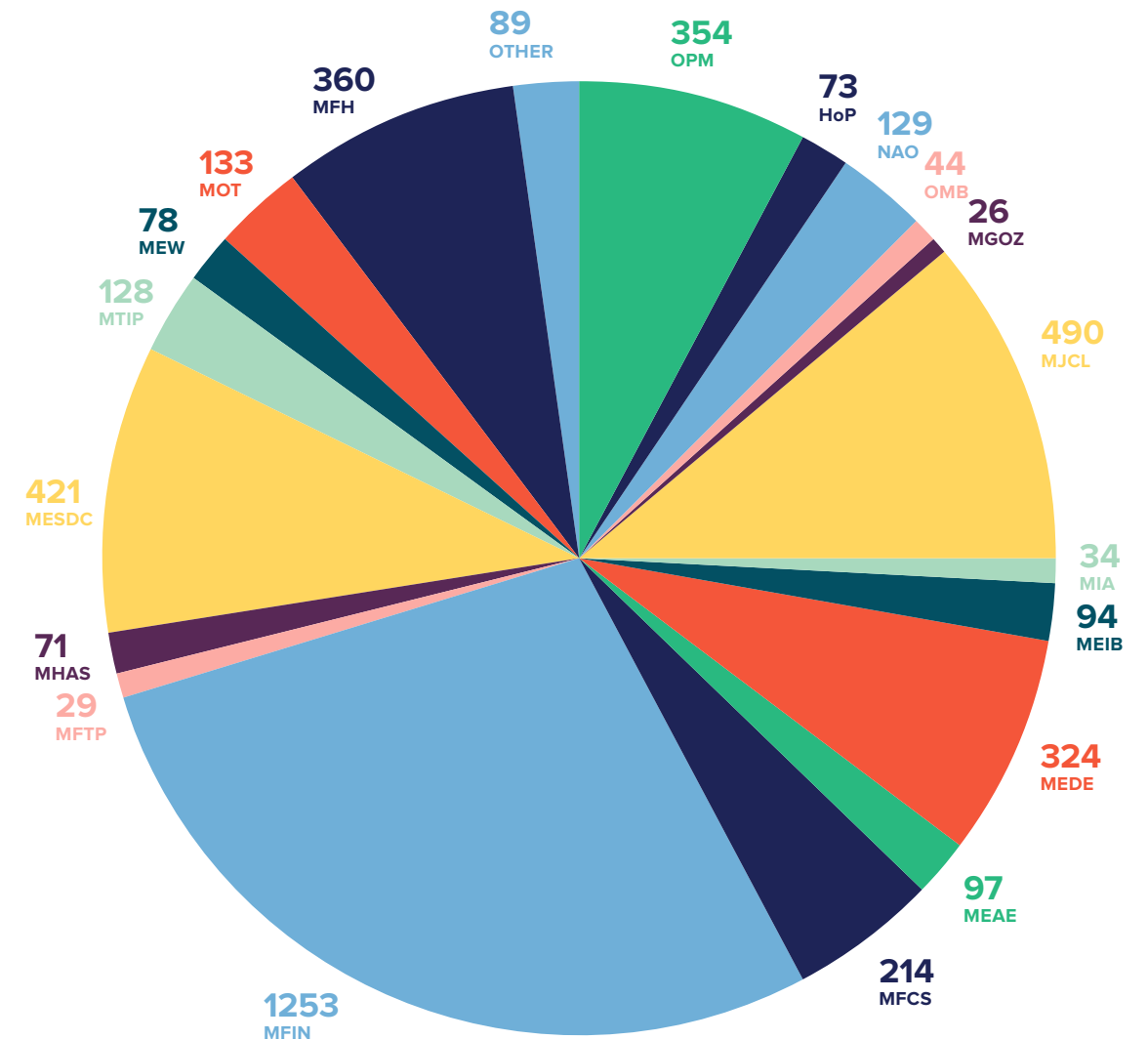
The harvesting of born-digital audiovisual publications commenced this year. The targeted harvests were the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry for Gozo, Heritage Malta, Environment Resources Authority and Enemalta. Content ranged from the outgoing prime minister's addresses to the nation, touristic items

The Health Promotion Unit is a prolific publisher of promotional literature and respective digital flyers on healthy eating, rare diseases, care and prevention pertaining to their specific awareness campaigns, all of which were also captured.

The haphazard original naming of digital files gave rise to the need for organizing a file naming process. The Broadcasting Authority hosts 56 annual reports, commencing from its first covering 1961, following its constitution following Ordinance 20 of 1961, up to 2018. NBO targeted to harvest digital content retrospectively back to 2004, when documents were already being created digitally-born. It has already started communicating with government entities to provide digital copies of their public documents, even if hitherto they had only provided a hard copy. NBO has also successfully harvested all online retrospective Central Bank documents dating back to 2000.

and infrastructural work in Gozo to the dismantling of the Marsa and Delimara power stations. By the end of 2019, 211 publications were harvested. This harvesting shall continue in earnest and on a wider catchment during 2020.

### Harvested Government digital documents by ministry or entity



## Harvested Digital Documents of Government Entities: 2004-2018

### Annual report by year

Entity	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	Remarks	File size
Aġenzija Appoġġ																See FSWS	26.2MB
Aġenzija Support																See FSWS	48MB
Aġenzija Sedqa																See FSWS	30MB
Aġenzija Żgħażaġh																	108MB
Airmalta																	46.4MB
Animal Welfare Commissioner																	11.4MB
Arbiter for Financial Services																Constituted in 2016	30.8MB
Bank of Valletta																	54MB
Broadcasting Authority																Up to 1961	610MB
Budget Directorate																Annual budget speech	332MB
Central Bank of Malta																Up to 1998	441MB
Commissioner for Children																	83.2MB
Comm. Rights of People with Disabilities																Formerly KNPD	295MB
Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine																	1.43MB
Department of Information																	20.2MB
Customs & Excise																	1.98MB
Embryo Protection Authority																Constituted in 2012	33.3MB
Enemalta																Online annual reports not downloadable	29.8MB
Environment Resources Authority																Formerly part of MEPA	111MB
Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit																Up to 2003	59MB
Foundation for Educational Services																	5.25MB
Foundation for Social Welfare Services																	88.3MB
Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools																	21.9MB
Heritage Malta																	51MB
House of Parliament																	229MB
Housing Authority																	81.8MB
Jobsplus																Formerly ETC	67MB
Kunsill Malti għall-Arti																Constituted in 2015	81.8MB
Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb																	131MB
Lands Authority																Formerly Gov. Property Div.	1.62MB

Entity	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	Remarks	File size
Local Government																Up to 2002	114MB
Malta Libraries																	24.2MB
Malta Air Traffic Services																	39.6MB
Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology																	31MB
Malta Communications Authority																	71.4MB
Malta Competition & Consumers' AA																	
Malta Council for Science & Technology																	24.2MB
Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector																	43.2MB
Malta European Union Action Committee																	65.1MB
Malta Financial Services Authority																	86.4MB
Malta Freeport Corporation Limited																	12.5MB
Malta Gaming Authority																Formerly Lotteries & Gaming Authority	340MB
Malta Information Technology System																Up to 1998	209MB
Malta International Airport																	104MB
Malta Marittima Agency																Constituted in 2016	12.1MB
Malta Medicines Authority																	20.6MB
Malta Statistics Authority																Up to 2002	22.1MB
Malta Stock Exchange																Up to 1995	40.3MB
Medical Council of Malta																	10.3MB
Mental Health Commissioner																	20.1MB
National Archives																	115MB
National Audit Office																	475MB
National Commission for Further & Higher Education																Formerly Malta Qualifications Council	98.4MB
National Commission for the Promotion of Equality																	59.8MB
National Statistics Office																Up to 2002	189MB
Occupational Health & Safety Authority																	18.1MB
Ombudsman																	84.8MB
Planning Authority																Formerly part of MEPA	
Plant Health Directorate																	70MB
Property Malta Foundation																Constituted in 2018	15.1MB
Regulator for Energy & Water Services																Up to 2001	140MB
Superintendence of Cultural Heritage																Up to 2003	298MB
Transport Malta																	259MB
University of Malta																	90.9MB
Valletta 2018																	145MB
Water Services Corporation																	16.9MB
Wild Birds Regulation Unit																	36.3MB



# ICTSU REPORT

## THE INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT UNIT WITHIN MALTA LIBRARIES

**Simon Cutajar**  
*Manager – ICT Support*

The ICT Support Unit (ICTSU) is directly responsible for the management of all ICT-related functions, hardware and infrastructure within Malta Libraries including the entity's enterprise system and other ancillary systems together with their related online portals. The Unit also contributes directly to the creation of the entity's ICT-related policies and is responsible for their implementation while also monitoring the entity's adherence to general Government ICT-related policies.

Although the ICT Support Unit's remit currently spreads over 61 libraries hosted in 58 different locations between Malta and Gozo, the Unit is also responsible for the maintenance and use of the entity's enterprise system within other entities

including 18 school libraries that were migrated to the entity's Library Information System by 2019. It is also responsible for the management of third-party suppliers, including MITA and the enterprise system's supplier, to supervise all hardware and software-related faults reported daily, as well as requests for password changes and the configuration of accesses to Malta Libraries employees. Moreover, the ICTSU handles a good number of daily requests for information on the use of desktop software such as Microsoft Office and the use of the Library System, and various other matters through telephone calls and emails. The ICTSU also handles all purchasing relating to ICT hardware for the Malta Libraries and monitors all ICT-related contracts on behalf of the entity.

### MALTA LIBRARIES' ENTERPRISE APPLICATION

V-smart is the core business application used by Malta Libraries for all its library business requirements and to showcase and provide its services online. Like all large business applications, this system requires regular maintenance and upgrades to keep up with emerging technologies and/or services, while staying focused on the needs of its users, mainly being the libraries' clientele. In 2019, the virtual server of Malta Libraries' application was successfully upgraded to MITA's new Azure cloud server hosting environment. The original single server configuration has now been divided into two separate servers being the Database and the Web servers, where originally, the latter was hosted as yet another virtual server residing within the Database server. The regularly scheduled upgrades were also implemented on all its modules by the system's supplier and monitored and tested by the ICTSU. This year a total of 66 incidents and/or requests for enhancements and information were raised by the ICTSU with the system's supplier. All these cases were followed up, tested, concluded and documented by the same unit.

### MIGRATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES ONTO MALTA LIBRARIES' ENTERPRISE APPLICATION

The second set of school libraries from mainly ten secondary schools were migrated in 2019 thus bringing the total number of school libraries merged with Malta Libraries up to 18 libraries. The bibliographic and borrower data of these school libraries were successfully migrated and tested during summer. In October, 23 teacher librarians were trained within Malta Libraries by the ICTSU in three separate training courses comprising three full days of training each. In the meantime, preparations and the necessary configuration and testing have already been initiated in the last quarter of 2019 in preparation for the migration of the third set of school libraries in the first quarter of 2020.

### SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL LITERACY AGENCY

The ICTSU continued to provide ongoing support to the remaining school libraries within the National Literacy Agency that were still operating on the OLIVER Library System, and that were still not

migrated to V-smart. The ICTSU also supervised the required upgrades performed by the school libraries' system supplier to ensure continuity of this system's performance until all pending school libraries are migrated within Malta Libraries' enterprise application.

### INFORMATION OF TOURISM (ITS) LIBRARY

The ITS library will also be included within the Malta Libraries' enterprise application during 2020. The required configuration within the entity's library information system was thus completed in 2019 to allow for the ITS library to catalogue its material onto its new access to the Malta Libraries' information system.

### XGHAJRA BRANCH LIBRARY

The Xghajra Local Council has agreed to merge its local library as a branch library within Malta Libraries. Malta Libraries replaced quite a number of books within this library out of its own funding, while the ICTSU provided the new hardware required for this new library to operate, together with all the configuration required within the entity's library information system, and all other required accesses to the respective librarians. The ICTSU was also responsible for the training given to the same librarians during the second quarter of 2019.

### UPGRADING OF ST PAUL'S BAY BRANCH LIBRARY

The St Paul's Bay Branch Library's shelves were refurbished and the whole library improved by the respective Local Council. The ICTSU was responsible for the relocation of the library's hardware and connectivity.

### DIGITAL ASSETS MANAGEMENT

With the planned migration of the V-smart servers onto the new MITA's Azure cloud environment during the beginning of the year, the image repository could now be created within the same cloud environment, offering almost limitless expansion to start hosting the National Library's digital assets over the coming years.

## PUBLIC LENDING RIGHTS

The ICTSU, on behalf of Malta Libraries, undertakes the task to issue the Public Lending Rights report on a quarterly basis to be submitted to the National Book Council for the latter to be able to issue payments to Maltese authors for loans performed from libraries within Malta Libraries. A total of four reports were issued to this Council.

## NEW HARDWARE

Following the hardware replacement project whose implementation was initiated during the last quarter of 2018, the second phase of this new hardware implementation was performed and concluded in the first quarter of 2019. 71 new machines were installed in 55 branch and regional libraries



Malta Libraries also provides the possibility of browsing its online catalogues through other public-facing PC terminals installed in the various libraries within the Central Public Library. This hardware has now also been replaced and secured with yet another 'kiosk' software product that specialises in securing business portals onto terminals and other devices. The software automatically resets and maintains itself after every use thus requiring very minimal staff intervention.

around the islands.

## UPGRADING OF PUBLIC-FACING PC TERMINALS

Malta Libraries not only provides a free internet service in all its main libraries, but it also provides the PC terminals equipped with internet and MS Office to be freely used by the public. There are 11 such machines distributed in the mentioned main libraries. The machines have now been replaced with newer hardware and the previous 'kiosk' software was replaced by a more resilient product that although it efficiently secures and automates certain functions on these public-facing PCs, it also allows for certain minimal flexibility by the respective users. Moreover, the new 'kiosk' software enables remote support and automated configuration possibilities.



## GENERAL NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

Six branch libraries currently deriving their connectivity from MITA, have now had their network hardware upgraded to allow for their future migration to the main government's CORP domain.

The offices within the 'Dar tal-Kustodju' and the Restoration Lab within the National Library, were installed with Admin Wi-Fi connectivity.

# OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

# OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT



**Joanne Sciberras**  
*Director Library Operations*

The Operations Department within Malta Libraries incorporates the Finance, Human Resources, Procurement and Administration Units. This Department also encapsulates the Outreach Unit and works closely with the Curatorial Affairs Unit.

The main roles of the Operations Department include:

- Personnel administration,
- Programme initiation and implementation
- Direct co-ordination of the preparation of the entity's

- annual Financial Estimates and administration of the entity's Budget
- Capital Projects
- preparation and delivery of the entity's strategic and business plans
- Overseeing of personnel administration for library staff.
- Overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Finance, Administration, HR and Marketing Departments
- Managing and co-ordination of the holding of cultural/literary events on Malta Libraries' premises
- Revenue-generation through the holding of activities, hire of premises

## HR MATTERS & ADMINISTRATION

During 2019, the Human Resources Section contributed to the areas of HR planning, capacity building, training and development.

By the end of 2019, Malta Libraries had a staff complement of 97 employees across all units in Malta and Gozo as can be seen in the table below:

### Staff Complement



Throughout 2019, the Operations Department fulfilled its obligations of recruiting new employees according to its approved HR Plans for the year.

Internal Calls	External Calls
Internal Post of Senior Assistant Librarian (National Library Gozo)	Position of Director Library Operations – Malta Libraries
Internal Post of Senior Assistant Librarian (Contemporary cataloguing and Gozo NBO)	Post of Library Assistant – Malta Libraries
Internal Posts of Senior Assistant Librarians	Position of Deputy Librarian (Public Libraries) – Malta Libraries
Internal Post of Head Finance and Administration	Position of Deputy Librarian (National Library) – Malta Libraries
Internal Posts of Assistant Librarian within Malta Libraries	
Internal Post of Administrative Officer within Malta Libraries	
Internal Post of Assistant Administrative officer within Malta Libraries	



This Department also continued to effectively implement its Performance Appraisal Programme for all employees, which aims to evaluate each staff member's skills, performance and needs. In fact throughout 2019, Malta Libraries continued to encourage career development and members of staff benefited from training, seminars and workshops in Malta and abroad. Main areas of training included librarianship, management, marketing,

Library Information Systems, Procurement, Payroll Systems and Accounting.

During 2019, this unit transferred all leave and sick leave records online. With regards to registry files, a total of 86 new files were opened in 2019. Besides, during 2019, this unit also provided terms of reply to 36 Parliamentary Questions.

## FINANCE & PROCUREMENT

During the financial year of 2019, Malta Libraries started operating its accounts through the tranche system as approved by the Ministry of Finance, whereby the entity received its annual recurrent budget of €3,000,000 in quarterly tranches of €750,000.

During 2019, the Procurement Unit was responsible for the formulation, publication and processing of various closed quotations and expressions of interest as per Public Procurement Regulations. The Unit also provides other Directorates and Sections within Malta Libraries with the necessary support and advice on public procurement. During 2019, the Unit has collaborated with the Central Procurement Unit at the Ministry for Education and Employment for the publication of the following tenders:

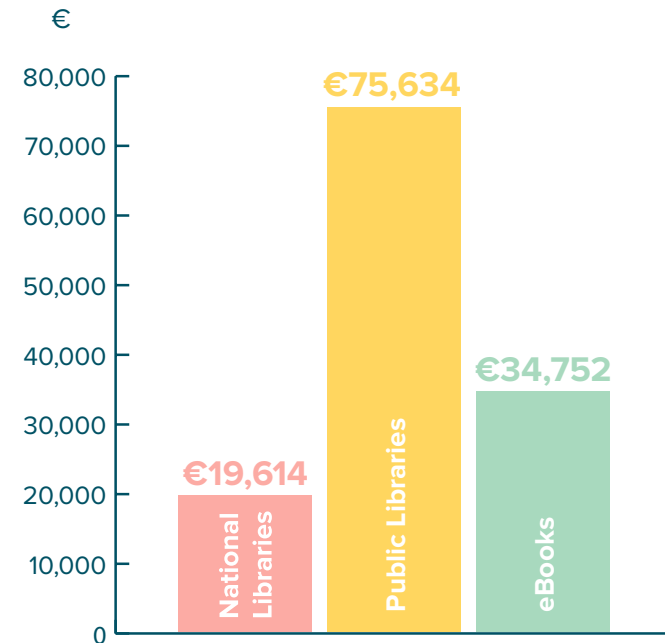
### MEDE/MPU/ML/002/2018-Re Issue

Tender for internal alterations and construction of lift shaft at the National Library of Malta

### MEDE/MPU/ML001/2019

Tender for the provision of environmentally-friendly cleaning services at Malta Libraries

The Procurement Unit was also in charge of administering the sum of €130,000 granted by the Government for the acquisition of books. This sum was also supplemented by a refund given by the National Literacy Agency for the purchase of children's books.



## OUTREACH & MARKETING

2019 was an incredibly busy and exciting year for the Outreach team of Malta Libraries. We had a packed programme of events and activities that reached a wider spectrum of people. In providing spaces for people to meet, learn and exchange ideas Malta Libraries was able to reach new communities from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This year's Libraries Day theme, Multicultural Libraries, was purposely chosen with the aim of addressing cultural diversity in its library programmes and collections.

## EXHIBITIONS

Everything Malta Libraries does is underpinned by its mission to make a significant contribution to knowledge. The highlight of the National Library's exhibition programme this year was undoubtedly **LIBER LIBRORUM: Texts, Translations and Exegesis**, officially inaugurated by H.G. Mgr Charles J. Scicluna on 25th April and which remained open till 26th July. The exhibition showcased a wealth of material relating to Bibles from the National Library of Malta's collections. The display of items was supported by the most thought-provoking series of talks and a comprehensive exhibition catalogue.

On 11th May the Maltese-Bulgarian Cultural Association organized a poster exhibition to mark the 100th anniversary from the birth of the leading Bulgarian author and playwright Nikolay Haytov. The literary evening included poetry readings by the Bulgarian Sunday School, flute music interludes and the presentation

of the first edition of 'Wild Tales' to Ms Chery Falzon, National Librarian & Malta Libraries' CEO. The event was supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria, Malta Libraries and PAMET Foundation chaired by Architect Zdravets Haytov, Nikolay Haytov's son.

In November the National Library was again selected by Prof. Tiziana Leopizzi, co-founder of ARTOUR-O as one of the venues for her travelling artistic exhibition. To mark the 500th anniversary from the death of Leonardo da Vinci an artistic installation created by Lorenzo Damonte and Pietro Cristini depicting the famous painting Lady with an Ermine was set up in the library staircase. We rounded off the year with a world photography exhibition by Krenare Maxhuni and Kawa Bahrami – the first art exhibition ever at the Central Public Library in Floriana.

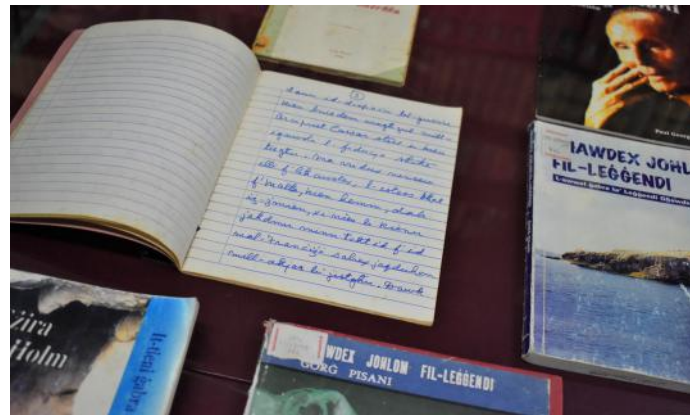


Outreach initiatives in **Gozo** paid tribute to Gozitan poets and authors who have made a huge contribution to the literary scene in Malta and Gozo. On 9th March an exhibition and literary evening to commemorate the 20th anniversary from the death of poet Ġorġ Pisani was held at the Gozo National Library.

On 24th August excerpts from literary works by Anton F. Attard and Ġanninu Cremona were read during a literary evening held in their honour.

A two-day programme of activities as part of the **Gozo Book Fest 2019** included a Marian exhibition commemorating 400 years since the arrival of the painting of the Madonna ta' Pinu.

On November 30 the public was invited to join a guided tour tracing the history of Victoria Gozo Libraries, while the evening saw a discussion dedicated to Maltese publishing pioneer Pawlu Mizzi with the participation of Sergio Grech, Ġorġ Mallia and Trevor Żahra. The discussion was led by Chev. Joe M. Attard.



## PUBLIC LECTURES

Promoting research is a defining characteristic of the National Library. To this end Malta Libraries' 2019 events programme kicked off with the third in the series of eight monthly lectures on the theme 'Cities, Harbours and Artefacts: transformations of an early modern landscape' coordinated by Maroma Camilleri and Mevrick Spiteri. The speakers delivered talks on a diverse variety of topics related to the general theme, often followed by a lively discussion with the audience that attended. Later in November of the same year the second themed eight-lecture series entitled 'Power, Costume & Scenography: Making Fashion a Statement in 18th-19th Century Malta' kicked off. In this ongoing series, the one-evening only exhibits complementing the lectures are set up in collaboration with Heritage Malta.

In November the National Library embarked on yet another initiative to further encourage research and at the same time provide a platform for University students as well as local and foreign researchers to share their findings with the public. We

partnered with the Department of History and the Department of Conservation and Built Heritage of the University of Malta in delivering a series of mid-monthly lectures entitled 'Discoveries from the Past: Promoting Research Findings' at the National Library providing the public with the opportunity to learn about the richness of Malta's archival collection.

The European Graduate School returned to the National Library again this year for four evening lectures during their October session. Themes discussed were: Temperament and Discrepancy; Dramaturgy and Dialectic; Migration and Politics; The Rhythmic Figure.

On 13th February President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici was invited to deliver a talk about his autobiography *Konvinzjoni u Esperjenza* at an event held at the National Library organized by Club Melita members.





# CONFERENCES & BOOK LAUNCHES

As an iconic landmark in the heart of Valletta, the National Library makes an inspiring venue for conferences and book launches.

The National Book Council launched its first edition of the **Doreen Micallef National Poetry Contest** on 3rd June during a press conference at the National Library.

On 17th June Prime Minister Joseph Muscat and the Principal Permanent Secretary Mario Cutajar inaugurated **The Digital Literacy Strategy Conference**.

Kite Group launched *Black Monday, A Night of Mob Violence* by former Times of Malta editor, Victor Aquilina on 15th October.

On 28th October the Minister for Education and Employment Evarist Bartolo addressed a **press conference** about budgetary measures, among which he referred to the investment of a spellcheck software in the Maltese language to ensure linguistic standards.

In December Daniel Borg launched a Malta University Press publication *The Joannes Gennadius Maltese treasure trove in Athens*. Speakers at the launch were the Ambassador of Greece to Malta, Demetrios Tsoungas and the four authors of the book Prof. Arnold Cassola, who recovered the Gennadius materials in Athens, Judge Giovanni Bonello, Prof. William Zammit and Dr Theresa Vella. Prof. Henry Frendo chaired the discussion.

As in previous years the National Library was open for public viewing during Notte Bianca. This year attendees were also treated to a Magic Night at the Library.



Photo by Vincienne Bezzina

# CONCERTS

The Reading Room at the National Library also offers the space for an intimate concert.

A regular feature in January 2019 was a lunchtime concert as part of the **Valletta International Baroque Festival**. This year the National Library hosted a harpsichord concert 'In the King's Chamber' by Ensemble Flame who gave an outstanding performance.



Dans la chambre du roy by Ensemble Flame



Alexandra Alden

On 17th May another concert at the National Library was organized by TAO productions where **Alexandra Alden** and her Netherlands based band members took us on a lovely musical journey.

**Your Song** concert on 25th, 26th and 27th October paid tribute to Sir Elton John's classic songs performed by Malta's finest voices. Revamp Malta treated fans to some fresh music arrangements from Elton John's extensive repertoire of all-time hits.



Photo by Justin Mamo



# NETWORKING WITH SCHOOLS

Malta Libraries ensures that the National Library's collections make an important contribution to education and learning. As in previous years Malta Libraries worked in partnership with the Maltese department within the National Curriculum Centre to deliver the project *Mixjet il-Malti – minn Caxaro sa Aquilina* for Year 10 students. In the year under review there were 322 Year 10 students from eight state colleges and one church school viewing material from the National Library collections and participating in workshops related to this exhibition. The exhibition was also attended by 27 Junior College students and undergraduates specializing in the Maltese language.

Our reach across schools and higher educational institutions has continued to increase. This year National Library staff conducted tours for 158 students: 16 from Sacred Heart Senior School, three from St Margaret College Verdala Secondary, 80 from San Andrea School and six from the Russian Boarding School 'Malta Crown.' The National Library also welcomed 18 students from Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary, 15 from Junior College, five from the Institute of Tourism Studies and 15 geography undergraduates from York St John University. In total 507 students benefited from orientation visits and workshops. This year the activities of the



Bulgarian Sunday School in Malta went beyond the classroom. A literary evening organized by the Maltese-Bulgarian Cultural Association was held at the National Library on Nov 1st to celebrate the day of National Enlighteners and Educators. Students from the Bulgarian Sunday School gave a presentation related to Bulgarian traditions, language and cultural heritage and read excerpts from Radoslav Gizgindjiev's novel *Lepirs* whose main storyline unfolds precisely in Malta.

Networking with schools is not limited solely to the National Library. Similarly, school visits to the Central Public Library have become a regular feature on Malta Libraries' calendar. Our Outreach Team has devised a series of educational workshops consisting of an animated reading session as well as a hands-on activity ranging from crafts, treasure hunts and other fun things where students can get creative. In 2019 the Central Public Library hosted 616 students: 448 of kindergarten age and 124 of primary school age. Apart from schools, 44 Žejtun Girl Guides participated in challenging library treasure hunts as part of their orientation visit leaving the library having gained knowledge on how a public library works and what services the Central Public Library has to offer.



# OUTREACH WITHIN THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES' NETWORK

Apart from school visits the family-fun thematic events and summer programme have continued to meet with an amazing response. New audiences were attracted to Central Public Library via the annual **Summer Programme of Events**. Through the sessions, members of all ages discovered the services on offer and participated in creative workshops ranging from drawing book illustrations, to book binding, textile making from recycled material and origami.



In line with UNESCO Malta Libraries has made World Book Day and Libraries Day a yearly event. A hugely successful event on **Libraries Day** was a celebration of various cultures through readings in different languages, traditional dances and food from around the world, inviting the public that attended to share in the experience of becoming culturally aware of customs beyond their own. Multicultural recognition, however, was not limited to just one day. Malta Libraries hosts Czech and Slovak reading sessions on a fortnightly basis, while the Gozo Book Club offers book lovers a service with which to explore the reading experience not only as a group, but that is even more enriching when shared with people

from different countries. A multilingual collection has also been set up at the Central Public Library to respond to communities' literacy needs.

Ongoing links with partners that share the same mission have also enabled Malta Libraries to offer a more varied programme of activities. A beginner's course in Comic Book Drawing, the Magic: the Gathering Library Club, academic lectures about graphic novels *Between the Gutters*, the launch of the bilingual graphic novel *TAHT* and Free Comic Book Day with celebrations held at three libraries: the Central Public Library, Birkirkara Regional Library and the Gozo Central Public Library. All of these activities were all joint collaborations with **Graphic Novels Library Malta** culminating in our annual participation at the Malta Comic Con in November.





The storytelling/acting sessions to promote Greek Classics *Meta nikber nixtieq insir eroj / When I grow up, I want to be a hero* were made possible thanks to the **Malta Classics Association**.

As in previous years Malta Libraries continued to work closely with the **National Literacy Agency** to contribute to children's literacy, learning and development. Apart from animated reading sessions in Maltese and English, Malta Libraries supported the Storytelling Festival run this year by renowned storyteller Chip Colquhoun and for the fifth year running the annual Summer Reading Challenge 'Aqra fis-Sajf'.

'Managing your finances for today and tomorrow' were three workshops in Żurrieq, Mosta and Birkirkara libraries which **HSBC Bank Malta plc** held in collaboration with Malta Libraries to offer the general public an opportunity to learn a bit more about financial literacy. Another collaborator was Gemma - Know, Plan, Act who introduced the same subject to a younger age group.

Our participation in **Europe Code Week** attracted new audiences interested in computer science. In collaboration with the **eSkills**



**Malta Foundation** and **Easypeasycoding** we were pleased to introduce Virtual Reality and Robotics sessions as well as the Stem and Bio Plastic workshops at the Central Public Library.

Following the success and positive experience of the previous year with the introduction of **Book Club Gozo** for adults, on 27th April Gozo Central Public Library launched the **Kids Book Club**. Sessions for the Kids Book Club are held every last Saturday of the month, all year round. Agenda bookshops, Merlin Library and Merlin Publishers sponsored the books given to children attending the book club.

Gozo Central Public Library is also a social hub for a range of other activities such as the **Board Game Club Gozo**; open to ages 5 and older. This club meets every last Thursday of the month to play classic children's games such as *Ludo* and *Snakes and Ladders* or pit their wits against *Carcassonne* and *Catan* boardgames. The regular readings, craft sessions and demonstrations at the **Nadur** and **Xagħra Public Libraries** were very well-received too.



## MALTA BOOK FESTIVAL 2019

2019 again saw Malta Libraries participate in the **Malta Book Festival**. Apart from the registration of new members and the promotion of events and services, elderly residents who usually attend reading sessions at St Vincent de Paul, Mtarfa and Mellieħa residential homes were this year invited to attend these sessions at the Malta Libraries' stand. The Book Sewing Demonstrations by the National Library's Restoration Unit were again the main attraction.



## FILMING

Throughout 2019 the National Library continued to maintain a constant presence on both local and foreign media.

The TVAM feature was another opportunity to showcase the awe-inspiring gem of the National Library and its holdings to TVM viewers. The Reading Room of the National Library was the perfect setting, and befittingly so, for the filming of a documentary about Dr Lillian Sciberras following the National Book Council's 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award for her sterling contributions to Maltese literary culture and pioneering research in the field of Melitensia and library studies. The National Library also featured regularly on *Kultura News* and *Maltarti* to promote its services and programme of events.

This media exposure has also served to bring forward foreign TV crews and film producers. On 14th May the National Library made a perfect backdrop for a National Geographic production about World War II in Malta.



On 29th July the National Library featured in a documentary to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malta and Spain.

In September Warner Bros filmed a programme in the series of the Australian version of *Who Do You Think You Are?* and the National Library was again selected as a location for the Maltese production *JUST NOISE* narrating events leading up to the 1919 Sette Giugno riots, starring Harvey Keitel and Malcolm McDowell.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

As part of our commitment to extend our reach beyond the physical library, Malta Libraries in collaboration with the Active Ageing and Community Care Directorate has for the past three years been running weekly leisure reading sessions at the Mellieħa and Mtarfa residential homes for the elderly. Interest in these sessions persists as can be seen from the attendance figures below:

## Attendance for reading sessions in Residential Homes

	2017	2018	2019
<b>MELLIEHA HOME</b>	500	465	409
<b>MTARFA HOME</b>	348	393	451
<b>ST VINCENT DE PAUL</b>	n.a.	790	1150

A library lending service is also offered at the Mellieħa residential home for the elderly. In the year under review 2,245 books were loaned compared to the 1,620 in 2018 an increase of 625 loans.

Malta Libraries is aware of the vital role it plays in supporting the well-being of our ageing population. As from October the reading service was also extended to Villa San Lawrenz and Dar Pompej in Gozo. Similarly, reading sessions are also being offered at St Vincent de Paul Dementia Day Centre. Evidence has shown that while plot details of books might not be recalled, through the rekindling of emotions, reminiscing can be beneficial for those with dementia. The challenges are varied but Malta Libraries responds

to differing needs to ensure that members of the community, who cannot easily access libraries owing to age, health issues or caring responsibilities, can still benefit from library services.

Another community outreach first happened on February the 14th - #LibraryLoversDay where we decided to honour all libraries and library lovers in our life by hosting a group of volunteers from 'Experience: adventures and more'. The group helped the National Library of Malta Restoration Lab staff to clean several volumes from the The Archives of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta and prepare the material for the next stage in the restoration process. Later, we all savoured some food prepared from recipes published in 'Ctieb tal Chcina' by E.L.Vella (Malta A. Aquilina e Co. Librari-Edituri, StradaReale Nu 58, il-Belt, 1894).



# CURATORIAL AFFAIRS UNIT

Works carried out by the Manager of Curatorial Affairs within the Library Operations Directorate in 2019 were several but a highlight among which was surely the curatorship of the exhibition entitled "Liber Librorum: Texts, Translations and Exegesis" which opened to the public in April. The exhibition was complemented by the publication of a comprehensive exhibition catalogue including several plates as well as five presentations spread over four lectures by: Prof. Anthony J. Frendo, Dr. Joseph Ciappara, Judge Giovanni Bonello, Rev. Dr. Martin Micallef and Carmel Bezzina. The exhibition aimed primarily at showcasing some of the Bibles from the National Library of Malta's collections. The chosen theme, on the other hand, encouraged visitors to appreciate the fascination that lies within the Bible's complexity, as well as to stimulate further reading and research in biblical studies.

The Curatorial Affairs Unit was also in charge of the continuation of a collaborative project between Malta Libraries and the Records and Archives Section of the Works and Infrastructure Department concerning a set of 19th and 20th-century plans and drawings of the National Library. During 2019 the restoration of each document was undertaken by the Restoration Unit of the National Library, following which the items were digitized at the Library's Digitization Studio. This preparatory work will culminate in an exhibition entitled 'Folder 78A: Library Plans and Drawings' in 2020.

In 2019, the Curatorial Unit was responsible for the initiation of works related to the project of the installation of a lift at the National Library, including those related to the necessary structural alterations. This project is ongoing and a priority for the entity so as to ensure accessibility for all.

The historic building of the National Library itself requires constant attention and to this end, in the year under review, the



Curatorial Unit oversaw the implementation of works related to the restoration and repair of apertures on the roof of the national Library by the Manufacturing and Services Directorate of the Works and Infrastructure Department; and the drafting of a Policy for the Preservation and the Care of Collections at the National Library.

Additionally, the unit was also entrusted with the responsibility of consultation in the enhancement of the National collection through the acquisition of a number of Melitensia documents and books from foreign auctions; as well as the responsibility of works related to Health and Safety at the National Library including involvement in the drafting of a Risk Assessment and the coordination of a number of courses for National Library employees.

# REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the financial year ended 31st December 2018  
Excerpts from the Audited Accounts

## Malta Libraries Management responsibilities for the year ended 31st December 2018

The Malta Libraries Act requires the National Librarian to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Corporate Body and of the surplus or deficit of the entity for that year. In preparing these the management team are required to:

- adopt the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Corporate Body will continue in the business;
- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- account for income and charges relating to the accounting period on the accruals basis;
- value separately the components of asset and liability items; and
- report comparative figures corresponding to those of the preceding accountant period.

The National Librarian is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and to enable him to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Malta Libraries Act (Cap. 511) enacted in Malta. This responsibility includes designing, implementing and maintaining such internal control as the management team determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. The management is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Corporate Body and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.



## Independent auditors' report to the shareholders of the company

### Report on the audit of the financial statements

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Malta Libraries, which comprise the balance sheet as at 31st December 2018, and the income statement, statement of changes in reserves and cash flows statement for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Corporate Body as at 31st December 2018, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Accountancy Profession (General Accounting Principles for Small and Medium-sized Entities) Regulations, 2015 and the Schedule accompanying and forming an integral part of those Regulations (GAPSME).

#### Basis for opinion

We have conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibility under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Body Corporate in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in accordance with the Accountancy Profession (Code of Ethics for Warrant Holders) Directive issued in terms of the Accountancy Profession Act (Cap. 281) in Malta, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Responsibilities of the Management

The National Librarian is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with GAPSME, and for such internal control at the National

Librarian's that is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the National Librarian is responsible for assessing the Body Corporate's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Body Corporate or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Body Corporate's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

#### Other matter

Malta Libraries implemented the Accountancy Profession (General Accounting Principals for Small and Medium-Sized Entities) Regulations, 2015 and the Schedule accompanying and forming an integral part of those Regulations ('GAPSME') as from 1st January

2018. Previously the entity kept the accounts on a cash basis whilst as from the 1st January 2018 the accounts were prepared on an accruals basis.

To provide a true and fair view of the current financial period a prior year adjustment was made for any accrued or prepaid expenses. However no adjustment was made for any Heritage Assets or Property, Plant and Equipment the Corporate Body might have owned previously. In view of this fact the Balance Sheet of the Corporate Body is understated by these assets.

#### Christian Zammit

For and on behalf of

**Steven Galea and Associates Limited**

**Certified Public Accountants**

37, St. Mary Street Naxxar NXR 1406 Malta

Date: 15th March 2020

## Income statement for the year ended 31st December 2018

	Notes	2018 €	2017 €
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3,001,204</b>	-
Cost of sales		-	-
<b>Net Revenue</b>		<b>3,001,204</b>	-
Administrative expenses		(3,004,759)	(62,712)
Other operating income	<b>4</b>	<b>49,817</b>	-
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit)</b>		<b>46,262</b>	(62,712)
Other interest receivable		<b>114</b>	-
<b>Surplus/(deficit) before tax</b>		<b>46,376</b>	(62,712)
Income tax	<b>6</b>	<b>(17)</b>	-
<b>Retained surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>		<b>46,359</b>	(67,712)
Retained surplus brought forward		<b>30,249</b>	92,961
<b>Retained surplus carried forward</b>		<b>76,608</b>	30,249

## Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2018

	Notes	2018 €	2017 €
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Heritage assets	<b>7</b>	<b>19,664</b>	-
Property, plant and equipment	<b>8</b>	<b>164, 872</b>	-
		<b>184,536</b>	-
<b>Current assets</b>			
Trade and other receivables	<b>10</b>	<b>8,110</b>	95,586
Cash and bank balances		<b>237,171</b>	-
		<b>245,281</b>	95,586
Total assets		<b>429,817</b>	95,586
<b>EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Reserves</b>			
Capital expenditure fund		<b>100,000</b>	-
Accumulated fund		<b>76,608</b>	30,249
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>176,608</b>	30,249
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Deferred income		<b>76,831</b>	-
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	<b>11</b>	<b>176,378</b>	65,337
<b>Total equity and liabilities</b>		<b>429,817</b>	95,586

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 15th March 2020 and signed on its behalf by:  
**Cheryl Falzon** (National Librarian and CEO) and **Joanne Sciberras** (Director Library Operations)



## Income statement for the year ended 31st December 2019 (UNAUDITED)

	2019	2018
	€	€
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>3,055,942</b>	3,001,204
Cost of sales	-	-
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>3,055,942</b>	3,001,204
Administrative expenses	(3,170,085)	(3,004,759)
Other operating income	49,900	49,817
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>(64,242)</b>	46,262
Other interest receivable	96	114
<b>Surplus(deficit) before tax</b>	<b>(64,146)</b>	46,376
Income tax	(14)	(17)
<b>Retained surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>(64,160)</b>	46,359
Retained surplus brought forward	76,608	30,249
<b>Retained surplus carried forward</b>	<b>12,448</b>	76,608







