

Annual Report 2013



Malta Libraries

“*Piae Postulatio Voluntatis*” bull of Pope Paschal II, 1113
(AOM 6), *National Library of Malta*

ANNUAL REPORT 2013

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Malta Libraries

Annual report 2013 / Malta Libraries. – Valletta : Malta Libraries, 2016.
vi, 36 p. : col. ill., charts ; 30 cm.

1. Malta Libraries 2. Libraries – Malta – Statistics
3. National libraries – Malta – Statistics 4. Public libraries – Malta – Statistics
- I. Title

ISBN 9789995781446 (e-book)

ISBN 9789995781415 (print)

DDC 23: 027.04585

Copyright © 2016 Malta Libraries.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the copyright holders.

Contents

Foreword	1
Functions	3
The National Library of Malta	5
Mission Statement	5
Reader Services	5
Collections Management	10
Photography Service	10
Digitisation Unit	11
Restoration Unit	13
National Bibliographic Centre	13
Outreach	15
Events	15
Exhibitions and Public Lectures	15
Educational and Cultural Visits	17
Librarianship Outreach	18
Publications	20
New Website	21
The Public Library Network	22
Mission Statement	22
Outreach Services	22
Reader Services	26
Audiovisual Library	29
Reference Services	29
Customer Care Services	29
Other Public Libraries' Developments	30
Other Library Operations	31

Information and Communication Technology Support Unit (ICTSU)	31
Financial Statements	34

Foreword

The year 2013 was another productive year for Malta Libraries. During the period under review, the public libraries underwent a restructuring exercise in the cataloguing procedures so as to raise the cataloguing standards and display bibliographic records in a more professional way. Additionally, a weeding and retention policy was compiled and circulated to all library staff and Branch Librarians and consequently, the public libraries' collections started to be weeded out of 'out of date' and worn-out stock to make room for new material.

Educational activities continued to be carried out at the Central Public Library and in various Regional and Branch Libraries. In June, the Central Public Library also celebrated its 30th anniversary in its current premises by holding an open weekend where, for the first time, the library was open till late in the evening and hosted a number of different activities to suit all age groups of the general public.

On the other side of the entity, the National Library celebrated the 900th anniversary of its founder – the Order of St John of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta – through a major exhibition entitled *Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta 1113-2013*.

Moving towards its back office operations, the National Library finalised all work methodologies and training that were required on digitisation and started the actual digitisation work: starting from the capturing of images, going through the processes of editing of these images and their collation in digital binders, conceptualised according to the metadata that was created in parallel. The end result being that every single piece of information on a cultural asset would be brought together within a record on the web portal which we named *DigiVault*. These processes will pave the way for a corpus of digital material to be made readily available to researchers on this portal – a corpus large enough to sustain the launch of the service to the public during 2015.

Functions

The functions of Malta Libraries are defined in Article 5 of the Malta Libraries Act (2011).

The functions are to:

- i. 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 libraries
- ii. 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
- iii. assist Local Councils which run a public library to ensure that the library maintains high standards
- iv. 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
- v. foster and strengthen reading habits and support literacy and other cultural activities and programmes for all age groups
- vi. accept and acquire private records of significance by gift, purchase, bequest or deposit
- vii. explore innovative services, including information, communication and technology services, that can benefit patrons in accessing and using information
- viii. serve as the role model library system for other libraries in Malta

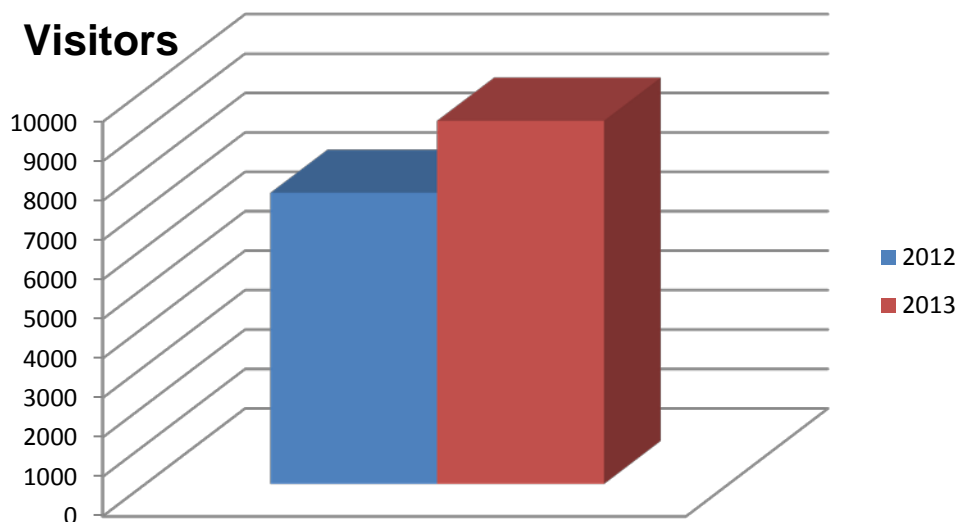
National Library of Malta

Mission Statement

The National Library's mission is 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.

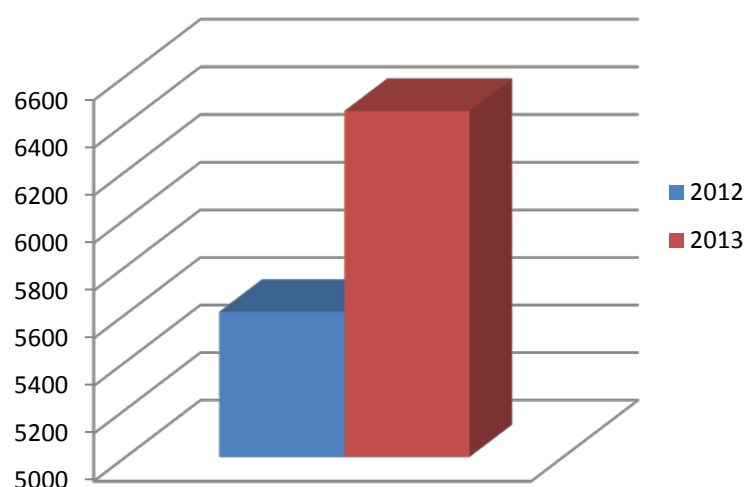
Reader Services

The Reader Services Department welcomes visitors and researchers to the National Library and keeps a record of their identification data both for statistical and security purposes. During 2013 a total of 9,213 persons visited the National Library. These visits showed a 24% increase in visits over the previous year amounting to a daily average of 30 visits. The majority of visitors hailed from Spain but French and German tourists visited the Library in considerable numbers as well. Since this year marked the 900th anniversary of the official recognition of the Order of St John, there were several group visits organised with the purpose of viewing the original 1113 papal bull on display in the Reading Room of the Library. These included the British Residents' Association (17th January), the Shireburn group (21st February), British members of SMOM led by Prof. Jonathan Riley-Smith (24th May), a cultural group from Valencia, Spain (7th September), American members of SMOM led by the President of the American Association Mr Jack Pohrer (11th September), a group organised by Globalair (4th November), a small group of Finnish members of the Order (6th November), as well as two groups of academics from Egypt and Lebanon brought over by Prof. Ronald Sultana (5th and 26th November).



Several researchers patronised the Reading Room throughout the year 2013. In fact a total of 6,453 persons – an average of 21 per day - used the Library for research purposes, a 15% increase over last year. The increase was remarkable considering the downward trend in recent years due to the popularity of the internet as a tool for easy retrieval of information. Reading Room staff fetched an average of 1 item daily per researcher. The majority of patrons conducted research in the newspaper collections while others consulted documents from the Archives of the Order of Malta as well as those of the *Università*. Many research requests addressed general topics related to Melitensia, such as Maltese folklore. Others came to trace their relatives, making extensive use of the Adami Collection. Many made specific or general queries usually regarding cinema and sports events. In view of the Valletta18 event in 2018, this year a number of architecture students came to research the archives to seek information about the design and construction of Valletta.

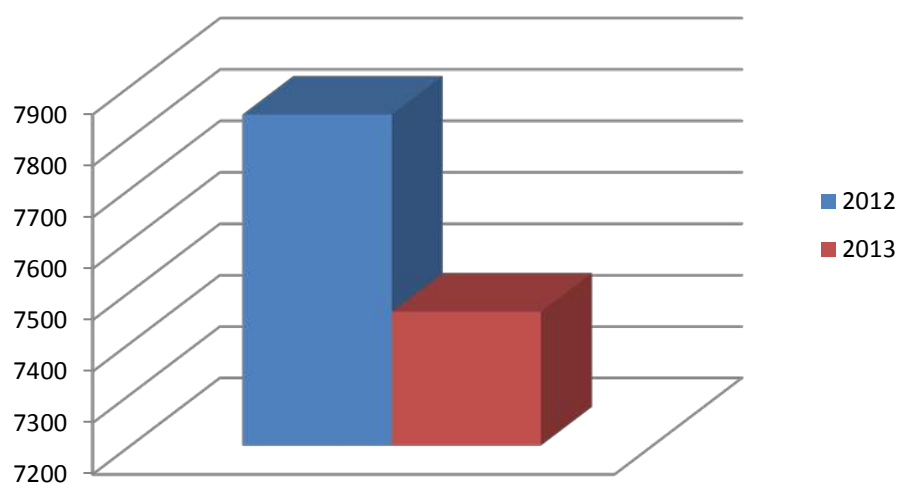
Researchers



This year the Library received 16 new scholars, 13 of whom were foreigners, who came over personally to conduct research, mainly into the Archives of the Order of St John. Others came specifically to consult rare holdings of our library. They presented letters of recommendation from the academic bodies they represented or donated publications of their own in cases where they themselves were heads of University departments or historians in their own right.

Although more researchers frequented the library this year, they requested fewer items from the library holdings. A total of 7,460 items were delivered during the year, a 5% decrease from last year and an average of 25 items per day of opening. The predominance of newspaper consultation remained undisputed.

Items delivered



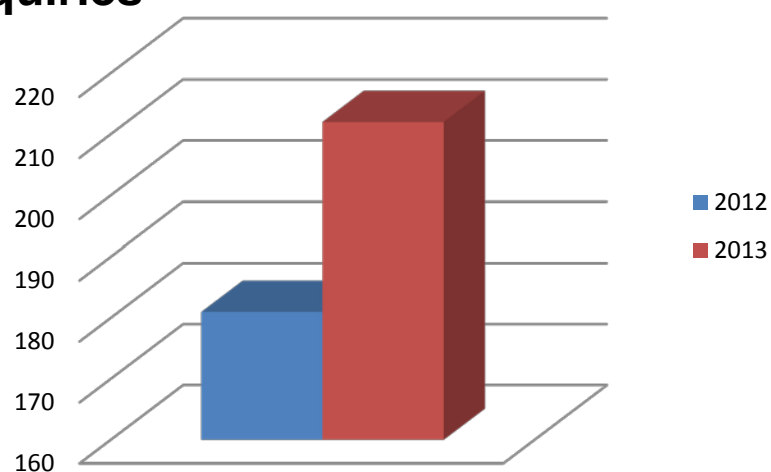
Collections						
Month	AOM/Treasury Manuscripts	University Manuscripts	Library Manuscripts	Adami Collection	Melitensia	Newspapers
January	72	5	31	81	160	347
February	154	11	40	37	139	397
March	97	7	53	67	139	265
April	58	9	35	51	133	342
May	48	5	28	41	132	406
June	26	4	23	36	105	214
July	184	7	36	30	156	262
August	43	9	15	14	146	236
September	44	4	27	37	165	180
October	85	12	45	12	160	356
November	101	8	27	50	181	458
December	51	4	19	28	117	353
Total	963	85	379	484	1733	3816
Grand Total						7460

Information is also requested remotely namely via postal and electronic mail. Such queries requested information predominantly about the Knights of Malta and the National Library holdings. Other queries required copies of newspapers reporting events that occurred in the 19th and 20th centuries. The table below illustrates the country of origin of these requests.

ELECTRONIC AND POSTAL QUERIES: COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

AUSTRALIA	7
CANADA	1
CYPRUS	2
CZECH REPUBLIC	1
FRANCE	18
GERMANY	8
HUNGARY	1
ISRAEL	1
ITALY	47
MALTA	89
NORWAY	1
PORTUGAL	1
SERBIA	1
SPAIN	14
SWEDEN	2
U.K.	11
U.S.	6
VENEZUELA	1
TOTAL	212

Enquiries



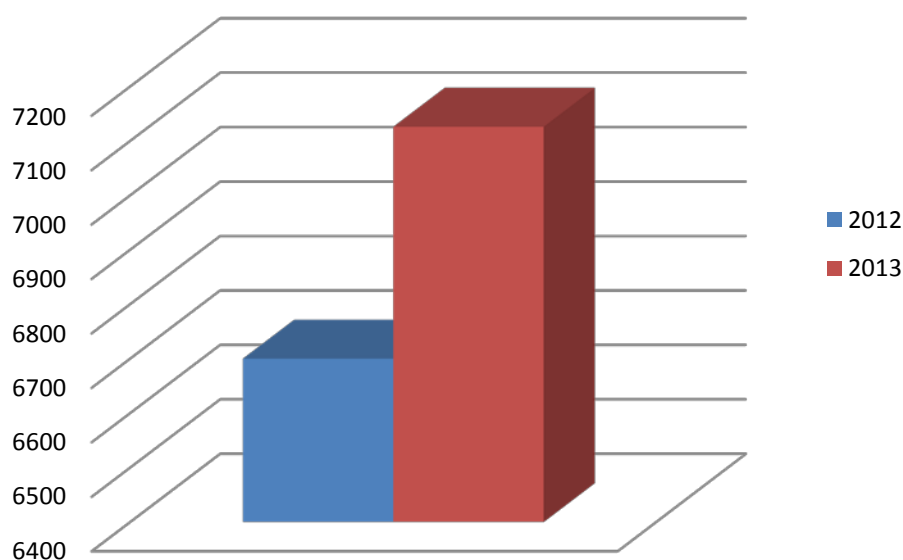
Collections Management

Photography Service

The photocopying of books is generally discouraged since the process inevitably damages the books and manuscripts. Alternatively, when possible, the National Library provides a photography service at the same price through which a digital image is captured and included in the library's digital asset management system. With regard to photocopying and photography for private use, this year registered a 6% increase over last year with the intake amounting to the sum of €7,126.

In the cases where requests for images were expressly made in view of publication, a fee of €10 for each image was introduced this year. An Image Use Agreement was required to be filled in by the applicant. Applications for high resolution images for publication purposes amounted to nine. The income from this service netted the sum of €1,550.

Photocopies/ Photography



Digitisation Unit

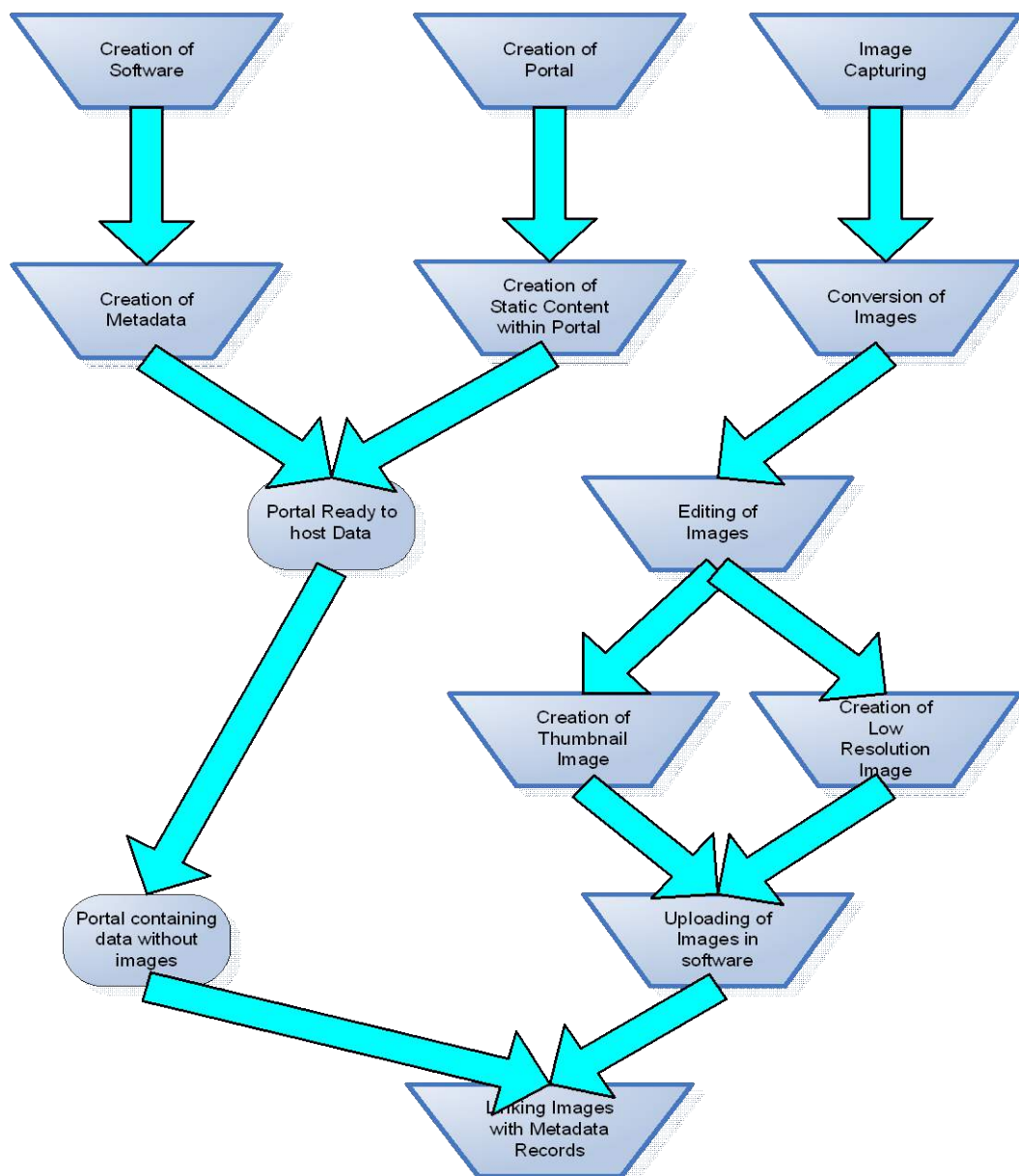
The National Library acquired advanced technological equipment for digitisation through the issuing, evaluating, and awarding of a Contracts Department Tender. The tender for digitisation equipment, as well as that for the required software, included the provision that National Library staff would receive training on how to use both equipment and software. Extensive training was given by the contractors for the benefit of staff. The project was initiated in 2009 and completed in October 2012. Much material has been digitised and although the digitised material is not yet accessible online, the digitisation itself is still ongoing. As such, the original material which has already been digitised, and which continues to be digitised, is already protected from further use and therefore preserved. Besides the digitisation itself, the process entails the compilation of metadata and the editing of digitised material prior to being uploaded on the DigiVault portal. This is a highly laborious and time-consuming undertaking, since the metadata has to be compiled and assessed and the digital material must be edited and uploaded.

The National Library of Malta has benefited significantly from this Project. Since the use of ICT has increased so dramatically in a relatively short period of time, when major international libraries and even less significant libraries worldwide have been engaged in digitising their material and even providing such material on an international basis through the use of internet, it was imperative that the National Library of Malta embark on a similar project. The Project will therefore revolutionise the means by which users can have access to the material housed at the Library. The National Library holds numerous collections of significant historical value. This material will now be made easily available on an international platform, whereby more and more users will be able to explore and enjoy these vast historical resources.

The process is schematically described in the following illustration.



Digitization Project Business Process



Restoration Unit

The work carried out by this Unit includes the day-to-day collation of newspapers and journals. The Unit is also responsible for the restoration of damaged volumes and other library material. The Unit also prepares material for the extensive book-cleaning exercise that is currently underway. This exercise is part of a volunteer exercise predominantly established by New Leaf. Concurrently, the restoration of books sponsored by members of the Lions Club (Sliema) progressed at a steady pace.

The Restoration Unit was instrumental in various activities such as in the mounting of exhibitions at the National Library, during the Malta Book Fair and in third-party activities. The staff of this Unit organised and carried out an extensive book and shelf-cleaning exercise in various parts of the building where a total of 470m of shelving was cleaned and polished.

The table below lists the work carried out by the Unit.

Bookbinding and Restoration Works during 2013	
Item	Number of Volumes
Restoration of Manuscripts	73
Binding and Restoration of Monographs	78
Binding of Newspapers	135
Binding of Periodicals	388
Book Cleaning	20420

National Bibliographic Centre

The National Bibliographic Centre is in charge of compiling Malta's National Bibliography and of the Legal Deposit system with the aim of preserving the country's national and cultural heritage for posterity.

Legal Deposit

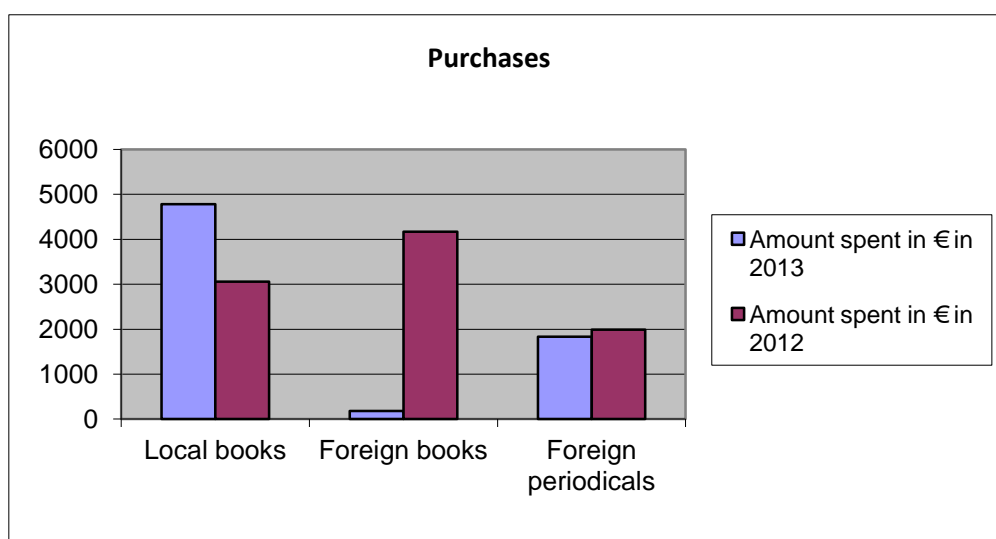
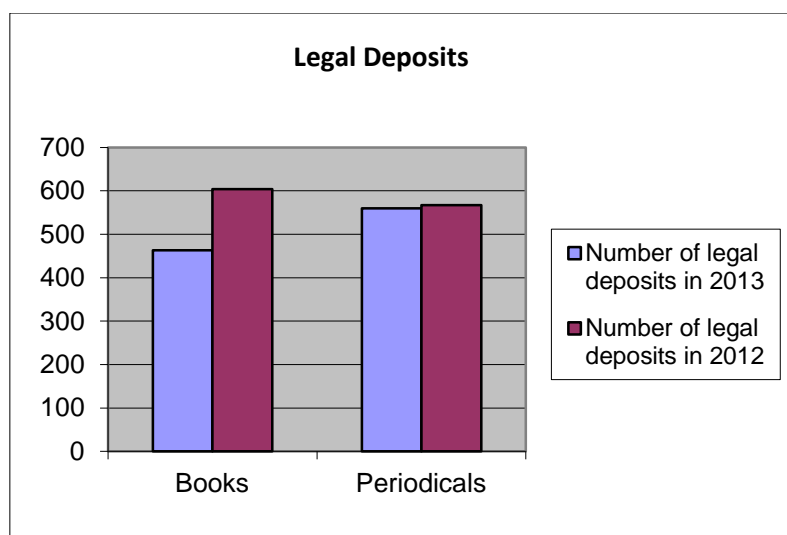
The preservation of the national imprint is one of the main functions of the National Library and this is achieved according to Article 10 of the Malta Libraries Act which stipulates that authors or publishers are legally bound to deliver to the National Library two copies free of charge, of any work printed and published in the Maltese Islands. Throughout 2013, 463 distinct books were deposited in total, together with approximately 560 local periodical titles that include journals, newspapers and magazines.

Acquisitions

Supplementing the works received by legal deposit, the Acquisitions Section purchased an extra copy of most titles published locally. Foreign publications were also purchased. For the latter, priority was given to acquiring Melitensia works published overseas. Several reference works and foreign periodical subscriptions of interest to the general public were also purchased. In 2013, the sum spent on books published locally amounted to a total of €4,784.32, while a total of €181.06 was spent on books published abroad. In all, €1,836.36 was spent on subscriptions and memberships to foreign periodicals.

Malta National Bibliography

In 2013, work progressed on the cataloguing and classification of bibliographical entries for inclusion in the 2009-2010 edition of the Malta National Bibliography. Predominantly based upon the items received at the National Library by way of legal deposit, the Malta National Bibliography lists new works published in the Maltese Islands during a specific period and describes each one in detail. Each item is catalogued according to the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules and classified by subject according to the rules of the Dewey Decimal Classification. It is edited, indexed and formatted with the aid of Infor (formerly GEAC) software.



Outreach

During 2013, the National Library of Malta tried to strengthen its outreach programmes and initiatives by increasing the number of exhibitions, public lectures, cultural events and educational visits.

Events

Exhibitions & Public Lectures

The year 2013 marked two important anniversaries in the cultural calendar, namely the 900th anniversary of the official foundation as a religious order of the Hospital (later Order) of St

John of Jerusalem (1113) and the 400th anniversary of the birth of the artist Mattia Preti (1613-1699). To celebrate these momentous events, two major exhibitions were held.

The Mattia Preti anniversary was celebrated with an exhibition “Mattia Preti (1613-2013) - *Fede e Umanità*” hosted at the Museo Civico di Taverna, Italy, between 24th February and 21st April 2013. The exhibition was then transferred to Malta and mounted at the Palace State Rooms in the Presidential Palace, Valletta, between 3rd May and 7th July 2013. The National Library contributed by lending no less than five volumes from the Archives of the Order of Malta, each including documents highlighting Preti’s career as a Knight of the Order.

The 7th of June saw the inauguration of a major exhibition entitled “*Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta, 1113–2013*”. The exhibition consisted of documents, books and *objets d’art*, illustrating the story of what are today known as the Knights of Malta, starting from their humble beginnings in Jerusalem under their founder Blessed Gérard. The display of exhibits sought to illustrate, not chronologically but thematically, various aspects of Hospitaller life – the initially humanitarian mission and the religious life, the military feats and naval prowess, life among the Maltese population and the exalted level of art and culture the Order has come to epitomise even today. Complementing the archival documents were manuscripts from the Library Manuscript collection, books, as well as objects kindly loaned by entities and private individuals. The centrepiece of the entire display was the original 900-year-old parchment by which Pope Paschal II in 1113 gave his official blessing to the fledgling brotherhood. The panels surrounding the showcases provided information about the Order in the past as well as its humanitarian work today, in hospitals, clinics, care centres, prisons, and in war-torn and disaster-struck countries. The exhibition, which was accompanied by a catalogue, was visited by 3,000 people including many Maltese and foreigners.

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Eucharistic Congress held in Malta in 1913, the Metropolitan Chapter of the Mdina Cathedral, together with the Cathedral Museum, organised an exhibition at Palazzo de Piro, Mdina, entitled “Eucharistic Treasures in Malta commemorating the XXIV International Eucharistic Congress of 1913”. The exhibition, which was open to the public between 13th April and 30th September, included books, manuscripts and artefacts relating to this outstanding international event. The National

Library lent 12 books from its Melitensia collection, all printed 100 years ago, for the occasion.

In October, the anniversary of both the birth and death of national poet Dun Karm Psaila was commemorated with a public event held at the National Library. For the occasion, a small exhibition of Dun Karm's works was set up in the Reading Room.

On 8th November, an activity organised by the Embassy of Spain was held in the Reading Room of the National Library. Dr Michael Frendo and Prof. Peter Vassallo delivered presentations about the *Magna Charta Libertatis* of 1428 and the 20th-century writer Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas, respectively. The activity was very well-attended. For the occasion, an exhibition was mounted in the Reading Room, consisting of a selection of important Spanish documents and books from the National Library collections.

An international exhibition entitled "Reasonable Dreams: Valletta, from Renaissance to Renzo Piano" took place in Paris between 6th December 2013 and 11th January 2014. The exhibition was mounted at La Galerie d'Architecture situated in Le Marais. The event received the support of the Embassy of Malta in Paris, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for Tourism and Culture and the Valletta 2018 Foundation among others. Among the many items on display were Francesco Laparelli's and Bartolomeo Genga's original plans of Valletta, as well as contemporary material. The National Library of Malta loaned Tav. III from Giorgio Grognet's album *Atlantide* (Libr. MS 614) showing Valletta and the Harbour Region in a pseudo-Antediluvian era, as well as a plan of Fort Manoel (M16).

Educational and Cultural Visits

A number of educational and cultural visits were also organised during 2013, as part of the National Library's mission to increase its outreach to the general public. 1000+ students were exposed to the National Library during:

1. Exhibitions
2. Regular school visits
3. Job-orientation visits organised by School Colleges
4. Participation in *Science in the City* and *Notte Bianca* events

A list of cultural events held at the National Library during 2013 can be seen in the Table below:

Cultural Events held at the National Library of Malta during 2013	
Month	Event
February	Exhibition of the <i>Piae Postulatio Voluntatis</i> Papal Bull
April	World Book Day
May	Public lecture entitled <i>The Hospitaller Body: On being a religious knight rather than a lascivious effeminate man</i> , by Dr. Emmanuel Buttigieg
May	Public lecture entitled <i>Censoring nationalism in eighteenth-century Malta: Agius de Soldanis and Acciardi's Mustafà Bassà di Rodi</i> by Robert Thake
June	Opening of the exhibition <i>Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum</i> , 1113 - 2013
July	Private visit by members of the Malta Historical Society
September	Science in the City : UoM Library - EU Corner
October	Notte Bianca - Librerija Magika
October	Jum Dun Karm 18 t'Ottubru 2013
October	Book Launch: <i>Dun Feliċ Demarco u l-Qarċilla fil-Karnival tal-1760</i> by Conrad Fenech
November	Spanish-Maltese Cultural Evening
December	Play: <i>Il-każ stramb ta' Primitiva Rosaria Mifsud</i>
December	Serata Kommemorattiva : 25 sena mill-mewt ta' Marjanu Vella

Librarianship Outreach

Malta Libraries truly believes that internships and job placements give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge in real-world environments. At the same time, they will also develop librarianship skills which will help them perform better at their jobs. To this effect, the National Library has over the past year supported various internship programmes both on a national and international level.

During 2013, three foreign students carried out placements at the National Library. They conducted observation sessions in all the sections of the library and also offered their services where required.

Between 22 February and 14 May 2013, an Italian student from the Università degli Studi di Bergamo carried out an internship at the National Library. He worked in various sections of the library, mainly in the Digitisation and Restoration Units. His principal tasks included editing, grouping and downsizing digitised images as well as helping to bind books and carry out minor restoration tasks on damaged books. Other tasks included performing duties at the reception desk, inputting identification details of researchers into a database, directing researchers to the right sources of information and helping to input basic bibliographical information into a database.

A French student carried out a *stage* at the National Library between 30 April and 29 June 2013. She came from the Lycée St Paul of Vannes in France. Her main duties included manning the reception desk in the Reading Room and welcoming researchers and visitors. She also contributed to the digitisation project by editing images.

Between 25 May and 24 August 2013, a Spanish student carried out a placement at the National Library. Since she had a degree in Librarianship, her work was undertaken primarily in the Bibliographic Services Unit, where the acquisition, cataloguing and classification of books and periodicals take place. Her job focused on retrospective cataloguing which entailed the inputting of data from the manual card catalogues into the online catalogue. Her excellent work proved a great asset to the Library since more titles began to appear on the online catalogue for the benefit of users who access the catalogue from their homes or from other sources outside the National Library. She also performed other jobs within the Bibliographic Services Unit, including the physical processing of new books, filing of official correspondence and sorting and packing of books to be delivered to other libraries. She also updated the Legal Deposit register. In addition, she helped in the Library bindery by sewing damaged book spines.

Publications

On the occasion of the exhibition “*Tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum: The Sovereign Military Order of Malta 1113-2013*” mounted at the National Library between 7th June and 2nd August 2013, the National Library of Malta issued three small publications. One of them carried the exhibition title and contained a list of the items displayed during the exhibition. The other two booklets, entitled *The Archives of the Order of Malta* and *The Grand Masters of the Order of St John in Malta*, provided information both in English and Maltese on the respective subjects.

The year 2013 being the 900th anniversary of the official foundation of the Order of St John, the National Library issued a set of 16 stamps featuring the most important Grand Masters who ruled in Malta during their 268 years of tenure on the island. Each of the 37c stamps was issued every month from February 2013 with the last one to be issued in May 2014. They featured prominent Grand Masters such as de Valette, Verdalle, Perellos, Manoel de Vilhena, Pinto and de Rohan. The first Grand Master to rule in Malta, the Frenchman Philippe Villiers de l’Isle Adam, was the first to appear on the February 2013 issue. The images were taken from the work *Serie de’ Gran Maestri dell’Ordine di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*, one of the National Library’s holdings. This collection of prints shows portraits of the Masters and Grand Masters of the Hospitaller Order of St John from the first Grand Master Blessed Gérard (c.1100-1120) until Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan Polduc (1775-1797).



New Website

A new website for Malta Libraries was developed in order to replace the old Libraries Department website. The content of the new website was eventually integrated into the main website of the Ministry for Education and Employment (www.education.gov.mt).

The Malta Libraries website includes updated information about the history of the National Library of Malta, the Central Public Library, and Gozo Libraries. It also gives general information about all libraries managed by Malta Libraries, including information about different libraries' sections, services, regulations and opening hours. The new website also provides updated information about events organised by Malta Libraries, as well as links to useful websites related to libraries in general. The Online Catalogue is still available on the new website. A section about resources includes links and information about Malta Libraries Catalogues, publications, online exhibitions, as well as access to the Digital Library.

The Malta Libraries website can be accessed at www.libraries.gov.mt.



The Public Library Network

The Public Library network is composed of the Central Public Library, the Gozo Public Library, seven Regional Libraries and 46 Branch Libraries which are spread out around Malta and Gozo.

Regional Libraries are located in Birgu, Birkirkara, Luqa, Mosta, Paola, Qormi and Rabat. The Branch Libraries are located in Attard, Birżebbuġa, Bormla, Dingli, Fgura, Ġhajnsielem, Għarb, Għarghur, Għasri, Għaxaq, Gudja, Gżira, Hamrun, Kalkara, Kerċem, Kirkop, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk, Mellieħa, Mgarr, Mqabba, Msida, Nadur, Naxxar, Pembroke, Qala, Qormi (San Ġorġ), Qrendi, Safi, Santa Luċija, St Paul's Bay, San Ġwann, San Lawrenz, Sannat, Senglea, Siggiewi, Sliema, Tarxien, Valletta, Xagħra, Xewkija, Żabbar, Żebbuġ, Żebbuġ (Gozo), Żejtun and Żurrieq.

Mission Statement

Malta Public Libraries' main aim is to foster and strengthen the reading habits of people of all age groups for informational, educational and recreational purposes as well as to offer support and information assistance to individuals, local enterprises and associations. In addition, they participate in formal and non-formal education and literacy initiatives while promoting both its collections and services.

Outreach Services

Public libraries are also community centres where people meet up for a chat, to view or read library resources on site, carry out joint assignment projects, or participate in public activities. In January 2012, the Central Public Library resumed its children's storytelling sessions and since then it has initiated outreach services for both children and adults. Moreover, these outreach activities were also carried out in several area libraries through the support of other associations.

During 2013, the Central Public Library held storytelling sessions every Friday and a good number of orientation visits for both primary and secondary school students also took place. These programmes mainly follow the scholastic year which meant that they stopped during the summer season. The Central Public Library also offered work experience to nine foreign students mainly through Erasmus Programmes, Future Focus, Easy School of Languages and NSTS and to a good number of local students from secondary schools, MCAST, Youth Inc. , Junior College and the Young Adult Education Resource Centre. In addition, other library promotional, reading and informational activities also continued throughout the year.

Noise Pollution Awareness: Public Talk

On 16th January 2013, NASo Malta (Noise Abatement Society of Malta), a voluntary non-profit organisation, held a morning seminar on the negative effects of noise pollution on our health. The information session was open to the general public from the age of 16 upwards.

World Book Day

On 23rd April 2013, the Central Public Library and several area libraries commemorated World Book Day with extracurricular activities. A special storytelling session for secondary schoolchildren was held at the Central Public Library through the support of the Foundation for Educational Services (FES).



During the day the FES also presented a Reading and Learning Strategies seminar aimed mainly towards parents and guardians.



Minimising the Risk of Cancer Seminar

On 28th May 2013, the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Department organised an educational seminar in relation to the prevention of the risk of cancer as part of their awareness campaign on the subject.

Central Public Library 30th Anniversary Open Weekend

On 11th June 2013 the Central Public Library marked its 30th anniversary at its current premises and it was celebrated with a special open weekend from the 14th to the 16th of June 2013. During the open weekend there were various educational, informational and recreational activities for people of all ages.

Additionally, a number of non-governmental and governmental organisations such as St John's Ambulance, ReFab, Wicked Comics, VersAghtini, Foundation for Educational Services and the Malta Crafts Council participated in this event to promote their endeavours and enlighten visitors on their cause.

Other open weekend activities included a permanent photographic exhibition commemorating 30 years of service at the Central Public Library, storytelling sessions, children's crafts, face painting, games and a huge bouncy castle and train outside the building. There were also live music and dance routines performed by young talents as well as prominent performers on a stage constructed for the occasion outside the building, and a small-scale Book Fair.



Children's Library Day

On 26th October 2013, the Central Public Library organised a Children's Library Day which included craft sessions with children, a games area, film sessions and internet browsing and educational games demonstrations. Moreover, information sessions on reading and learning strategies for children were held every hour, with a resource guide and leaflet being disseminated to parents and guardians who visited the Central Public Library that day. This activity generated a lot of traffic at the Central Public Library and consequently there was an increase in both new members and circulation records when compared to other Saturdays.

Book Festival

On Friday 15th November 2013, the Central Public Library coordinated a special Storytelling and Young Talent event for children at the Book Festival organised by the National Book Council.

Christmas at the Library

On Saturday 14th December 2013, the Central Public Library ended the year's activities with a 'Christmas at the Library' event. This event was open to the general public and featured

both educational and recreational activities. The turnout for this event was yet again a positive one.



The main objectives of the outreach services were to boost literacy as well as enhance communication with community members so as to identify, understand and keep abreast with their changing needs. Consequently, they also supported progression in the library's reader, reference and customer care services.

Reader Services

During 2013, the public libraries registered 5,534 new members and circulated 753,078 book materials. The circulation data registered a sharp drop of around 95,000 when compared with figures of the previous year. This may have been attributable to the fact that 2013 was the year of the general election and many people may have been preoccupied with and distracted by election-associated activities and the change in Government.

The latter also had a negative impact on the Book Fund since its release was significantly delayed with the consequence that acquisitions had to be postponed and new books then reached the libraries later than usual. Furthermore, due to an increase in postal charges, and in view of major budget constraints, the sending of overdue notices was halted due to the fact that the estimated postal cost would have been around €12,000 had all the overdue notices been sent out as usual. In most cases, since the overdue items were the ones most in demand,

book circulation was hindered even further. Another issue which contributed to loan ‘losses’ was the fact that some area libraries – namely Paola, Luqa, Sliema and Żurrieq, were closed for a period of time due to lack of staff replacements. Unfortunately, all of the above-mentioned factors contributed to a figure of around 75,000 overdue items during 2013.

The annual circulation totals according to the various libraries is provided in the Table below.

MALTA	
Location	Total Number of Loans - 2013
ATTARD	16,052
BIRŻEBBUĠA	5,688
BIRGU	4,522
BIRKIRKARA	49,543
BORMLA	3,384
CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY	203,843
DINGLI	4,800
FGURA	12,844
GHARGHUR	5,508
GHAXAQ	6,094
GUDJA	12,138
GŻIRA	7,308
HAMRUN	6,850
ISLA	1,220
KALKARA	5,056
KIRKOP	9,105
LUQA	19,104
MELLIEHA	9,092
MĠARR Malta	4,060
MOSTA	28,244
MQABBA	3,075
MARSASCALA	17,693
MSIDA	7,061
MARSAXLOKK	18,927

NAXXAR	11,902
PAOLA	28,641
PEMBROKE	4,297
QORMI	41,574
QORMI San Ġorġ	4,404
QRENDI	7,420
RABAT Malta	13,408
SAFI	6,719
SAN ĠWANN	7,664
SAN PAWL	9,262
SIGĠIEWI	6,993
SLIEMA	8,117
STA LUĊIJA	2,928
TARXIEN	2,540
VALLETTA	1,165
ŻABBAR	14,559
ŻEBBUG Malta	9,785
ŻEJTUN	14,157
ŻURRIEQ	8,680
Total	665,426

GOZO	
Location	Total Number of Loans - 2013
GHAJNSIELEM	3,573
GHARB	4,346
GHASRI	1,046
GOZO Lending Library	28,764
KERĊEM	1,444
NADUR	26,903
QALA	6,384
SAN LAWRENZ	4,323
SANNAT	1,606
XAGHRA	11,925

XEWKIJA	7,279
ŻEBBUĠ Gozo	4,529
Total	102,122

Audiovisual Library

The Audiovisual Library started circulating its material during 2013 and more items were added gradually. For the period under review it circulated 318 items, which mainly constituted talking books, video cassettes, DVDs and CDs. Internet users also increased and all the computer stations provided were regularly occupied. Since this section is supplied with a Wi-Fi service a number of customers also utilised this service through their own laptop or tablet.

Reference Services

Last year the Reference Library was refurbished and updated with new reference material to suit today's needs. Additionally, the former Melitensia Reference Library was amalgamated with the Reference Library since they served the same purpose. Moreover the new Reference Library could be manned by more professional staff.

Customer Care Services

The Customer Care Unit was responsible for the coordination of the Quality Service Charter, handling any complaints and/or enquiries that might arise from the general public and escalating issues that required attention by superiors. It recorded any book requests from clients and kept a good liaison with the Acquisitions Section for necessary action. Moreover, the Customer Care Unit issued new membership cards for the Central Public Library and also recorded new customers pertaining to the other public libraries in Malta. During 2013, new members for public libraries registered a slight increase from the previous year. The number of new members for the previous year had been 5,456 and reached 5,534 in 2013. These are illustrated in further detail in the following table.

New Members - 2013			
Type of member			
	Malta	Gozo	Total
Total	1,861	197	2,058
Adults	1,339	140	1,479
Adults with additional Junior lending rights	449	40	489
Adults without Maltese citizenship*	69	2	71
Adult foreign visitors*	4	15	19
Total	3,178	284	3,462
Junior - 11 years & under	2,960	280	3,240
Junior - 17 years & under	192	4	196
Junior -17 years & under with additional Adult lending rights**	6	0	6
Junior - 11 years & under without Maltese citizenship*	18	0	18
Junior - 17 years & under without Maltese citizenship*	2	0	2
Junior foreign visitors*	0	0	0
Total	13	1	14
Special Needs Services / staff members	13	1	14
Total	5,052	482	5,534
<i>*Require a Maltese citizen guarantee</i>			
<i>**Require a written permit from guardians</i>			

Other Public Libraries' Developments

Acquisitions

Acquisition procedures were reorganised and all acquisitions for Regional and Branch Libraries were centralised at the Central Public Library. This method ensured that orders were fairly placed to a good number of local vendors, publishers and authors. Moreover, multiple copies of the same items were received collectively which subsequently facilitated processing.

Additionally, each library was allocated a book budget according to performance which was mainly ascribed to the number of loans issued the previous year. This motivated the librarians to work even harder to achieve satisfactory results.

Similarly to the previous year, the Government's budget allocated €100,000 for the purchase of new library material and the Public Libraries utilised €68,990 of this amount –mainly on printed books and also on a good number of talking books, DVDs and CDs.

Cataloguing and Classification Section

During 2013, the Cataloguing Section was also restructured to abide by the set cataloguing standards and ensure consistency in bibliographic records. New bibliographic records were catalogued and classified using the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2nd edition (AACR2) and the Dewey Decimal Classification 23rd edition (DDC) respectively. 27,442 new items were added to the Public Libraries' collection, 4,410 of which required a new bibliographic record.

Other Library Operations

During 2013, a major weeding exercise was initiated in all public libraries to remove any obsolete, damaged and worn-out material. This was part of the process of data preparation for the smooth migration of the existing bibliographic and item records to the new library system which will be up and running by the end of 2014. Furthermore, various instructions were issued to public libraries in order to regularise bibliographic records as well as patron information. Additional information such as borrowers' email addresses and mobile phone numbers were being requested and patron names and surnames as well as patron codes were adjusted where necessary.

New Information and Communication Technology Support Unit (ICTSU)

During 2013, a new ICTSU was established within Malta Libraries to cater for the ever-changing technological needs both of libraries and their clients. Apart from the administration of the current Library Information System and the day-to-day ICT support to library staff including liaison with MITA and managing third-party support, during 2013 the Unit mainly focused on project managing the setting up of the proper business procedures and the streamlining of the backup procedures relating to DigiVault, the National Library's Digital Assets Management System, and the purchase and preparations for the upgrade of the current library information system ADVANCE to V-smart. The following are some highlights of various actions and initiatives that were carried out by the ICTSU during 2013.

Library System Upgrade

The ICTSU project managed all negotiations with the system's supplier with regard to quotations relating to the purchase of all the applications required for V-smart (the main Library Management System), V-insight (the Business Intelligence application), and Iguana (the new interactive portal), and also concluded all the agreements relating to the setting training and the setting up of same, along with the relevant Maintenance Agreements to get the new upgrade up and running. Moreover, the ICTSU also concluded all the negotiations and agreements with MITA to have the new virtual server set up in 2013. Consequently, the system supplier was able to install all the purchased applications on the new server by the end of 2013.

The new upgrade will eventually provide a more concurrent service that is more user-friendly, both for library personnel as well as for borrowers. Moreover, the new system upgrade will migrate and update the library's current metadata formats and standards to the new internationally used standards.

The new library system V-smart will incorporate a more modern WebOpac which allows catalogue enrichment subscriptions. Catalogue enrichments include book cover images, authoritative book summaries and book reviews.

V-smart is in Unicode which therefore conforms to the international character-encoding standards. Consequently Maltese diacritics can be represented in all soft formats. It also includes a V-insight application which is a Business Intelligence (BI) application that will provide real-time information on all types of reports and usage statistics that can be derived from the mother system V-smart. The new portal Iguana will eventually replace the WebOpac in order to provide a fully interactive catalogue experience to Malta Libraries' borrowers. Apart from the obvious advantages, the new system will significantly reduce costs since the yearly maintenance is cheaper than the ADVANCE system.

Additionally, overdue and reservation notices will be sent mainly by email and/or SMS therefore reducing the current yearly postage costs which are estimated at €12000 per annum, apart from eliminating the laborious internal procedures that currently deal with the processing of such land mail.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The following are Malta Libraries' Expenditure Account for the Financial Year ending 31st December 2013. These Financial Estimates have been prepared on the Cash Basis of Accounting. According to this method of accounting, revenue and expenses are recognised at the time that physical cash is actually received or paid out.

RECURRENT EXPENDITURE	Actual in €
Direct operating expenses - recurrent	
Salaries and wages	1,091,965
Bonus and income supplement	46,213
Social Security Contributions	94,298
Allowances	77,457
Overtime	303
Utilities	79,622
Material and Supplies	74,048
Repair and Upkeep	817
Rent	29,262
International memberships	-
Office Services	3,136
Transport	5,417
Travel	484
Information services	39,327
Contractual services	158,037
Professional services	17
Training	273
Hospitality	-
Incidental expenses	325
Bank interest payable	
Bad debts written off	
Increase in provision for bad debts	
Decrease in provision for bad debts	

Other Provisions	
Depreciation charge	
Other recurrent expenditure funded through EU Grants	
Other Expenditure	3,719
	1,704,719
* Entity had € 33,113 in unpaid bills	

The estimates show the various expenditure line items which were expensed during the financial period under each individual vote.

Capital	
Premises	5,570
Information Technology	1,282
Book Fair	20,674
Programmes & Initiatives	
Annual contribution	5,000
Books	4,841
General	1,010
Material	1,584
Membership	

	1,884
Software	88,484
Subscription	1,016
Below the Line Vote	
Other General Expenses	10,355

