

Evaluation 1999-2004

Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis (ING)

Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Scope and context of this evaluation	5
1.2	The Evaluation Committee	5
1.3	Data supplied to the committee	5
1.4	Procedures followed by the committee	6
1.5	Aspects and assessment scale	6
2	Institutional framework of the ING	9
2.1	Mission	9
2.2	Research	9
2.3	Organisational structure	10
2.4	Financial matters	10
2.5	Staff	11
3	Assessment of the institute	13
4	Assessment of the ING research programme	15
4.1	Quality	16
4.2	Productivity	16
4.3	Relevance of the research	17
4.4	Vitality and feasibility	17
5	NWO questions	19
5.1	General questions	19
5.2	Questions specific to the ING	20
6	Conclusions and recommendations	23
	Annex 1: Curricula vitae of committee members	25
	Annex 2: Programme of the site visit	29

1 Introduction

1.1 Scope and context of this evaluation

This assessment concerns the research carried out at the Institute of Netherlands History (ING) since 1999. The evaluation was commissioned and organised by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). The ING had submitted a self-evaluation document covering the period 1999-2004. This was approved by the Governing Board of NWO in April 2005.

This external assessment follows the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 for Public Research Organisations (SEP). The aims of the assessment system are:

- Improvement of the quality of research through an assessment carried out according to international standards of quality and relevance;
- Improvement of research management and leadership;
- Accountability to higher levels of the research organisations and funding agencies, government, and society at large.

The committee was asked to produce a reasoned judgment on the mission, strategy and performance of the institute. The SEP calls for an evaluation addressing both the research organisation itself and the research programme(s) it conducts. Each research organisation must submit details of the results achieved in each of its research programmes over the previous six years (including quantitative data about staff input, key publications and a list of publications), a short outline of the mission statement of each programme, and details of any changes expected to occur in its research profile. Site visits form an important part of every evaluation and include interviews with the management of the institute and its programme coordinators, as well as visits to laboratories and facilities.

1.2 The Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee was appointed in December 2004 by the Governing Board of NWO. Its members were:

Mrs. Prof. dr. E. Witte, chair	VU Brussel
Prof. dr. M. Boone	Universiteit Gent
Prof. dr. J. Roegiers	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Prof. dr. J.D. Tracy	University of Minnesota

A short curriculum vitae of each of the members is included in Annex 1.

The committee was supported by NWO staff (Patricia Vogel and Foekje Grootoink).

All members of the committee declared that their assessment had been free of bias, personal preference or personal interest, and that it had been reached without undue influence by the institute, the programme or other stakeholders.

Any existing professional relationships between committee members and programmes under review were reported and discussed in the committee meeting. The committee concluded that there were no conflicts of interest.

1.3 Data supplied to the committee

The Evaluation Committee received a detailed self-evaluation document from the ING. A number of sample publications were listed in an annex and copies of all the selected publications were available to the committee.

The documentation included all the information required by the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 and the answers to the additional questions put by NWO.

1.4 Procedures followed by the committee

The committee proceeded in accordance with the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009. The assessment was based on the documentation provided by the institute, the key publications, and the interviews. The interviews took place during the site visit made in May 2005. The programme of the site visit is included in Annex 2.

The self-evaluation document, the selected papers and an explanatory letter were sent to the committee one month before the site visit.

The chair and secretary of the committee established a timetable for the site visit. The committee met on the afternoon preceding the site visit to discuss and plan the interviews with the ING's Management Team, theme and project coordinators, Governing Board, Scientific Advisory Committee and support staff. They also decided which researchers to interview. The committee agreed procedural matters and aspects of the assessment as described in the following paragraphs.

At a formal dinner in The Hague, the committee had the opportunity to meet with prof. dr. C.H.C.M. Buys, vice-chair of the Governing Board of NWO.

The interviews with the ING Management Team, Governing Board, Scientific Advisory Committee, researchers and support staff took place during the site visit on 19 and 20 May 2005. All the interviews and discussions were conducted by the entire committee.

After the interviews, the committee discussed the scores and comments for the institute and the research programme and determined the final assessment.

At the end of the site visit, a meeting was held with the ING director and a member of the ING Governing Board to report the main findings of the committee.

In August 2005, a draft version of this report was sent to the ING director for factual correction and comment. The report was subsequently submitted to the Governing Board of NWO in August 2005.

1.5 Aspects and assessment scale

The Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009 requires the Evaluation Committee to assess four main aspects of the research, namely:

- Quality (international recognition and innovative potential)
- Productivity (scientific output)
- Relevance (scientific and socio-economic impact)
- Prospects (vitality and feasibility, management and leadership)

The ratings specified in the Protocol are: excellent (5), very good (4), good (3), satisfactory (2), and unsatisfactory (1).

EXCELLENT

Work that is at the forefront internationally, and which most likely will have an important and substantial impact in the field. Institute is considered an international leader.

VERY GOOD

Work that is internationally competitive and is expected to make a significant contribution. Institute is considered an international player, national leader.

GOOD

Work that is competitive at the national level and will probably make a valuable contribution in the international field. Institute is considered internationally visible and a national player.

SATISFACTORY

Work that is solid but not exciting, will add to our understanding and is in principle worthy of support. It is considered of less priority than work in the higher categories. Institute is nationally visible.

UNSATISFACTORY

Work that is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc. Work not worthy of pursuing.

2 Institutional framework of the ING

2.1 Mission

The Institute of Netherlands History exists to promote academic research on the history of the Netherlands. This mission dates back to 1902, when the first of the ING's predecessor organisations was established. Since then, it has been regularly modified to take account of changing circumstances and aspirations. In its 2002 mission statement, the institute formulates its present *raison d'être* as follows: 'The ING exists to lay the foundations for current and new historical research concerning the history of the Netherlands in all its facets and in an international context'. The purpose and scope of the ING's work can be described in terms of three dimensions. The first is Dutch history. The second is the nature of the work in uncovering and disseminating information about this. The third is the purpose of the work in facilitating further research done elsewhere. The ING's primary target group consists of professional historians in the Netherlands and elsewhere. In addition, however, the institute aims to serve the many other people who are interested in a scholarly approach to the history of the Netherlands.

The ING's parent organisation is NWO. The institute has a Governing Board, whose duties include the establishment of policy, strategy and the annual budget. It also has an advisory committee which it consults on long-term policy matters and the position of the ING in the field of scholarship.

The day-to-day management of the institute is in the hands of the director. The director and programme coordinators together make up the Management Team, the responsibilities of which encompass general policymaking and the overall running of the institute.

The ING is housed in the premises of the National Library of the Netherlands (*Koninklijke Bibliotheek*) in The Hague.

2.2 Research

During the period under review (1999-2005), the ING's research programme focused on the production of two types of publication: reference works and works unlocking historical sources. It encompassed the following specific projects or programmes:

Reference works

- *Repertorium Geschiedenis Nederland* (Repertory of the History of the Netherlands)
- *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (Netherlands Biographical Dictionary)
- *Broncommentaren* (Introductory guides to historical sources)
- *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (journal published in cooperation with the Royal Dutch Historical Society, KNHG)

Work on publications unlocking historical sources

- Editing and unlocking charters prior to c. 1300
- Development of the state in the late Middle Ages/reconstruction and editing of documents from government archives
- Inventorying and editing narrative sources
- Politics and governance during the Dutch Republic
- The Batavian Republic/French era 1795-1813
- Post-war reconstruction and the emergence of the welfare state
- The Netherlands and the world since 1940
- Other projects

The institute's Governing Board has recently finalised the research programme for 2006-2011 following an extensive round of consultations with university and other researchers. The new programme includes the maintenance and further development of a number of semi-permanent reference works. Work to unlock historical sources is to focus on three areas:

- Representation and governance in the Netherlands
- Cross-border cultural influences
- Societies and associations.

The ING is also open to external projects, set up and conducted by researchers from outside the institute.

Moreover, the ING believes it is important to be in a position to respond to opportunities to undertake contract research that is compatible with the institute's mission and meets the standards of academic methodology, quality, rigour and independence that the institute sets for all its projects.

The ING strives to achieve knowledge transfer in a number of ways. These include a series of publications designed for the general public (the *Horizon* series), articles in general historical journals or yearbooks, articles in the popular press concerning or prompted by projects, book presentations, lectures on projects for a general public, contributions in the media, etc.

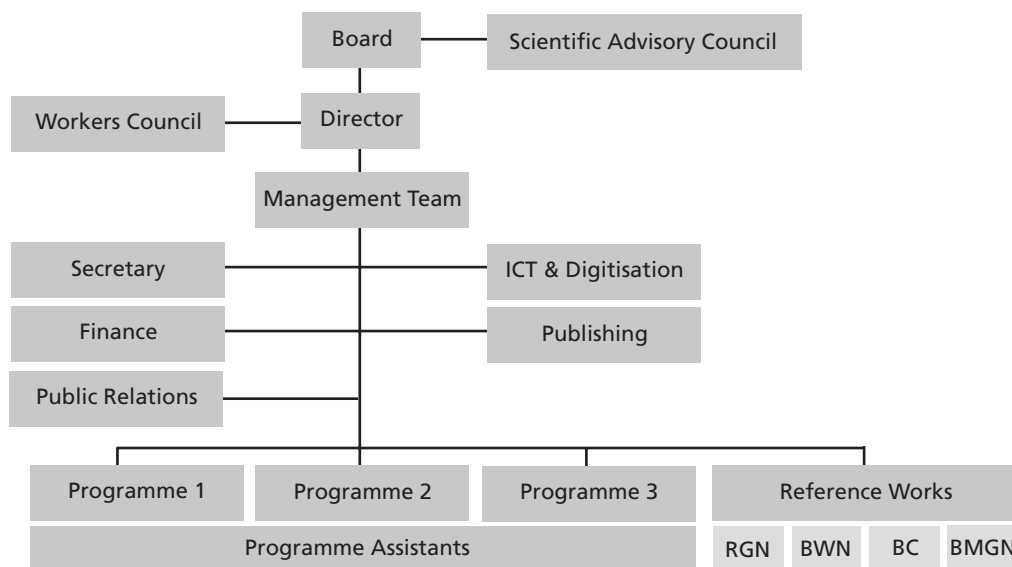
In the next plan period, the ING aims to:

- Continue the retrodigitisation of sources already published in print
- Establish a European platform or network of organisations similar to the ING.

The institute will also continue to play an advisory role in relation to the selection of contemporary government records for the archives.

2.3 Organisational structure

The organisational structure of the institute is:



The Management Team consists of the director and the programme coordinators.

2.4 Financial matters

The budget for 2004 was K€ 2,738, of which K€ 2,275 (83%) came from NWO in the form of basic funding and the remainder from third parties.

2.5 Staff

Staff composition in 2004, in FTEs:	
Researchers in tenured posts	15.4
Researchers in temporary posts	11.0
Research assistants	8.3
ICT staff	1.6
Other support staff	7.3
Total	43.6

3 Assessment of the institute

Overall assessment of the institute

Evaluation of the institute with respect to	Score
1 Leadership	5
2 Mission and goals	5
3 Strategy and policy	4
4 Adequacy of the resources	5
5 Funding policies	4
6 Facilities	5
7 Academic reputation of the institute	4
8 Societal relevance of the institute	5
9 Balance of the strengths and weaknesses of the institute	4
10 Overall assessment of the institute	Very good to excellent: 4.5

The ING is a unique institution with an excellent reputation both in the Netherlands and abroad. It occupies a leading position in the study of Dutch history. Nowhere else in the world is there another such coordinating institute. For this reason, the committee would like to see the position of the ING maintained, for the sake both of the content of its work and of the methodology that the institute has developed. In this respect, the ING can serve as a model for other countries, where many lessons can still be learned from it.

The ING is developing fast, not only organisationally but also as regards the expansion of different parts of its programme, the inclusion of recent history in its research programme, and the digitisation of material. With an eye to the increasing internationalisation of research, the ING may also be expected to lead the drive to establish international cooperation, both at institutional level (by creating an international platform) and as regards the content of programmes (via comparative research). The committee expects that this will increase the importance of the institute still further as time goes on.

Leadership

The committee was extremely impressed by the leadership of the institute, the unity that has been achieved (teamwork) and the coherence of the programme. Morale in the institute is high and a new culture of cooperation has replaced the earlier, more individualistic approach. This is also having a positive impact on the integration of KNHG activities into the work of the ING. These are now being incorporated into a larger and already more coherent whole.

Strategy & policy

Cooperation with universities can be further encouraged. The ING could organise more international symposia.

Resources

The budget is sufficient to fund the institute's current research portfolio, but provides no scope for the implementation of the committee's recommendations (see final section). The committee greatly approves of the funding system and appreciates NWO's efforts with regard to the ING. These have placed the ING in a unique position, which is now paying off.

Funding policy

The ING conducts the relevant projects but the committee feels that the institute is not itself very proactive in setting up projects for which additional resources could be obtained. Its policy of restricted growth in this respect is sensible, but need not preclude a limited expansion of the programme to include a certain number of new initiatives.

Facilities

The institute's facilities are excellent. The ING's accommodation is ideal and it has access to the technical facilities it requires.

Academic reputation of the institute

The staff of the institute are outstanding and acknowledged experts in the editing and publication of sources. Their work has a very great academic impact and provides the basis for academic analyses and further research. Citations of ING source editions confirm this.

It was difficult for the committee to gauge the institute's academic reputation or academic impact. The ING's work on unlocking historical sources and publishing source materials is a highly specific area of historical research. Historical research is extremely cumulative in nature: the research of today builds on the achievements of researchers in the past, for example in terms of editing and publishing source materials. The particular role of the ING is to make such basic materials available. The specific and unique mission of the institute (to facilitate historical research and to achieve methodological innovation in the technical aspects of source editions) demands, by its very nature, longer-term planning and evaluation than is required for standard university research. Accordingly, its success can only be 'quantified' after a certain lapse of time and only then (if at all) evaluated via the customary systems of measurement, such as citation indices.

4 Assessment of the ING research programme

Programme assessment	Score
Quality	4 to 5
Productivity	5
Relevance	5
Vitality	4 to 5
Overall assessment of the programme	4 to 5

The committee greatly appreciates the manner in which the programme coordinators oversee their areas of research and help to steer the projects. It also has a high regard for the volume, quality and relevance of the work done under the programme for the period to 2005 and is extremely positive about the plans for the new programme. The chosen areas of research are original. The ING is clearly in touch with current research developments and is doing pioneering work in opening up promising areas of research, many of which have remained virgin territory because of the difficulty of the necessary heuristics. An example of its alertness and ability to respond to current needs is the *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon* (on-line dictionary of women in Dutch history), a welcome addition to *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (Netherlands Biographical Dictionary).

Although in itself laudable, the decision to organise the programme thematically (and so to escape from the traditional straitjacket of chronological periods) presents the inherent risk that, in the case of certain programmes, the necessary technical know-how will not be available to tackle chosen themes for all periods. This need not be a problem, provided that the institute maintains the flexibility it has shown in the recent past in deploying resources and staff in areas of work where they can be most effective. However, the need to do this will increase the pressure on the programme coordinators.

With regard to the programme on representation and governance in the Netherlands, the committee heartily approves of the project's broad chronological range, which is very much in keeping with the previous evaluation committee's recommendation regarding chronological depth. It urges ING to take this project as a model for themes that permit research reaching back into the medieval and early modern periods.

In the case of the programme on cross-border cultural influences, special attention is to be paid to "sources that provide information on mutual influences and clashes between different cultures" (self evaluation report, p. 57). This is a laudable starting point, and would seem to create a basis for international collaboration, e.g. with scholars specialising in the history of countries formerly colonised by the Dutch. But the projects launched in connection with this theme all have to do with Dutch agency – general policy, Christian missions, plantations, and travel accounts – and may in that respect not be the best way of uncovering material that relates to the "mutual influence" of two different cultures. The committee is not in a position to recommend specific projects, but suggests that the ING should consult with scholars who have found in their own work how important Dutch sources (e.g., the archives of the Dutch East India Company) can be for uncovering the internal history of lands where the Dutch had a presence. In this respect, the *Dagregisters for Taiwan (Grote Serie, vols. 195, 229, 234, 241)* could be a model for other collaborative projects.

The committee feels that more work needs to be done to develop the programme on societies and associations (see also par. 4.1 and 4.4).

4.1 Quality

Quality	Score
Originality of the approach and ideas	4
Significance of the contribution to the field	5
Coherence of the programme	4
Publication strategy	5
Quality of scientific publications	5
Overall assessment of quality of the programme	4.5

One of the recommendations that emerged from the last evaluation of the ING in 1999 was that the programme should be organised in a more thematic fashion (diachronic approach). The committee notes that the ING has taken this recommendation to heart in the new research programme. This represents a change in the institute's culture which the committee regards as an extremely welcome development. The quality of the broad-based research programmes is enhanced by the complementarity of the selected constituent projects. A good example of this is the programme on cross-border cultural influences, where the long time span (17th - 20th century) and range of projects (Christian missions, plantations and personal travel accounts) are potentially complementary and will provide a basis for interesting comparisons. The same is true of the programme on office holders and other officials, where the broad chronological range (1428-1861) offers interesting prospects for research into continuity and discontinuity in senior posts at moments of change in the political regime.

The ING leads the field in Europe (and beyond) as regards the use of new media. The institute's achievements in this area set a good example for others in this field of scholarship. The committee is impressed by the diversification in the ING's publication strategy and by the quality of the actual products. It is highly laudable that the projects are designed to produce such a wide range of end-products: not just source editions, both of the traditional kind and of more innovative types, but also research guides, repertories and many different kinds of reference works (in both print and digital formats).

The committee rates the contribution to the field, the publication strategy and the quality of scientific publications as excellent: the quality of the ING's publications is outstanding. The programme coordinators and members of the research teams are expert in their disciplines and individual areas of study and their publications are of exceptional quality. About the new research programme, the committee is generally extremely positive but feels that more work needs to be done to develop the project on societies and associations. The initial coordinator of the programme, Dr. Smit, is due to leave the institute in 2007 and his replacement will be of great importance to ensure that the programme produces effective results.

4.2 Productivity

Productivity	Score
Number of scientific publications	5
Number of professional publications	3
Distribution of professional publications	4
Overall assessment of productivity of the programme	5

The ING's core business is the production of scientific publications and its work is regarded as excellent in this respect. The committee is particularly struck by the institute's efforts to present individual products as parts of a greater whole. For example, the *Biografisch Woordenboek Nederland* (Netherlands Biographical Dictionary) and the *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon* (on-line dictionary of women in Dutch history) are seen as constituent parts of a broader "biographical portal for the Netherlands".

The committee is aware that the work needed to prepare texts for scholarly use has grown steadily more demanding, in keeping with the growing sophistication of historical scholarship; the fact that scientific editions now need to meet a growing number of demands may make them initially a greater investment in terms of manpower, but ultimately leads to higher productivity. Scholars will always need quality source editions to work from, but this need has to be balanced against the ING's human and institutional resources: to process all of this mass of documentation that remains unpublished could easily absorb all the available manpower. The committee believes that the ING has taken sensible decisions in sorting out its priorities for long-term projects of this kind.

The committee feels that ING staff should have greater opportunities to publish more academic articles and monographs as well as the institute's publications. In the period under evaluation, the ING had only one PhD student and members of staff have only occasionally obtained doctorates. ING policy in this respect has recently changed and the new programme includes some PhD projects in cooperation with universities. The recently launched *Horizon* series has yet to prove itself. The committee regards it as a good first step in the direction of serving a broader public, and one that the ING can expand on.

Internal cooperation and dissemination of results are satisfactory; staff are well-informed about each other's work.

4.3 Relevance of the research

Relevance	Score
The advancement of knowledge	5
The dissemination of knowledge	5
The implementation of knowledge	(not applicable)
Overall assessment of relevance of the programme	5

All of the themes currently being addressed respond to demands in the field of contemporary historiography and are highly relevant. The many examples include the considerable attention being paid to the "French era" between 1795 and 1813 (a traditional lacuna in Dutch historiography). It is also worth pointing out the broader social relevance of themes like "social security" and "health insurance" or "cross-border cultural influences" at a time when issues like the welfare state and the multicultural society are matters of public debate to which the study of history can also make a contribution.

4.4 Vitality and feasibility

Vitality and feasibility	Score
In view of past performance	5
In view of future plans and ideas	5
In view of staff age and mobility	4.5
Overall assessment of vitality of the programme	4.5

The present research programme has produced excellent results.

With regard to the Middle Ages, the committee points out that the continuation and forthcoming completion of the project on sources for the history of meetings of states and cities will put the Northern Netherlands ahead in this important area, in which obviously political but also economic, financial, monetary and legal problems converge, but where it has lagged behind for many years. (A relevant comparison is with the '*Handelingen van de Leden en Staten van Vlaanderen*' series published by the Royal Historical Commission (KCG) in Brussels).

A methodologically extremely challenging project is the new 2004 edition of the *Rijmkroniek van Holland* (ed. J.W.J. Burgers), published both in a traditional print version and on line. The print version shows great respect for the traditional type of erudition, while the on-line format opens the door to research (relating to political vocabulary, discourse analysis, etc.) which it would be difficult, if not impossible, to undertake on the basis of a traditional print publication, but which the use of the new technologies renders feasible.

Then again, the guide to the archives of the sovereign territories of Gelre, Holland, Zeeland and the Bishopric of Utrecht (Het Sticht) can be regarded as a lucky spin-off from a project essentially being conducted by the French CNRS (via the IRHT) and aimed at inventorying sources relating to the Burgundian territories, to which these areas of the Northern Netherlands once belonged. It illustrates the flexibility of the ING as an institute that it is able to respond so quickly to opportunities of this kind, even though this 'guide' did not originally feature on any of its agendas.

The new programme can be assessed by the committee only in its initial form, but about this the committee is generally extremely enthusiastic. The programme includes many innovative features and the committee is delighted that the university research world has been consulted about it in advance. The new programme pays more attention to recent history. The committee has reservations about the societies and associations programme, where the purpose and methods require further definition. The ING should strive to tackle the project in accordance with international standards, such as those developed for archives (ISAAR/CPF) and those applied in similar projects outside the Netherlands (e.g. the Belgian ODIS project on intermediary structures in Flanders in the 19th and 20th centuries).

The committee rates the ING's personnel policy ideas as generally good, but feels that more attention could be paid to developing a policy for career paths leading to senior posts within the ING or elsewhere.

In thinking of possible connections between ING researchers and university departments of history, the committee has the impression that academic historians, especially in the early stages of their training, would have much to learn from the special expertise of their ING colleagues.

The committee appreciates the efforts of the ING to host related research and to publish research of a similar kind being undertaken at universities.

5 NWO questions

5.1 General questions

1 *What is and what could be the position of the institute in the near future, compared to leading institutes in the world that operate within the same field?*

The ING is a unique institution with an excellent reputation both in the Netherlands and abroad. It occupies a leading position in the study of Dutch history. Nowhere else in the world is there another such coordinating institute. For this reason, the committee would like to see the position of the ING maintained, for the sake both of the content of its work and of the methodology that the institute has developed. In this respect, the ING can serve as a model for other countries, where many lessons can still be learned from it.

The committee regards the institute as extremely dynamic and expects that this will increase its importance still further as time goes on. The ING is developing fast, not only organisationally but also as regards the expansion of different parts of its programme, the inclusion of recent history in its research programme, and the digitisation of material. With an eye to the increasing internationalisation of research, the ING may also be expected to lead the drive to establish international cooperation, both at institutional level (by creating an international platform) and as regards the content of programmes (via comparative research).

2 *Should NWO continue to support the mission of the institute and for what reasons?*

The committee whole-heartedly agrees that NWO should continue to support the ING. NWO must certainly go on funding the institute. The nature of the ING as an umbrella and coordinating body gives it greater clout. See the response to the previous question (1). No institute outside the Netherlands measures up to the ING in terms either of quantity or quality. The concentration of resources in this single institute is the best way for NWO to spend its money; it is more efficient than dividing up tasks in a fragmented way between a number of different institutions, as happens in other countries.

Dutch society now recognises the importance of investing in research of societal relevance. The work done at the ING lays the foundations for further research of value to Dutch society. The ING is certainly not avoiding topics of societal relevance. The committee judges the results of the ING's work to be important both to historical research and to present-day policymaking and society.

3 *Are there more effective ways for NWO to support the same type of research and/or facility?*

No, the work done by the ING is not duplicated by any other body in the Netherlands. This is implicit in the coordinating role played by the ING in relation to the (unlocking) aspect of its historical research, which is not being done anywhere else. Through this aspect of its work, the ING facilitates the academic research being undertaken at the universities. The committee is extremely positive about the coordinating role played by the ING and therefore does not see the transfer of ING tasks to other institutions (i.e. the universities) as an alternative, since this would be likely to produce fragmentation.

4 *What is your view of the analyses (made by the management of the institute) of the consequences if these institutional activities were to be discontinued?*

The committee endorses the importance and content of the institution's plans for the future.

5.2 Questions specific to the ING

1 *How compatible are the source editions that the ING publishes under contract to third parties with the mission of the institute?*

The source editions are perfectly compatible with the institute's mission. This is equally true with regard to the (digital) method of publication. The ING is a repository of knowledge and an oracle on the provision of access to it. The institute is now extending this role to present-day issues (e.g. emigration, social security and development cooperation). The committee appreciates this. The projects commissioned by third parties also help to stimulate new interests. The committee endorses the ING's policy of not accepting every project offered by third parties but feels that some expansion is still possible and might prove interesting for the ING. The projects have a multiplier effect, internally as well as externally. Digitisation makes it possible to use the material available to answer other questions, adding to its usefulness. This provides a spur to methodological innovation and expands the armoury of methods available to researchers.

2 *How does the committee rate the cooperative relationship between the ING and the KNHG?*

The committee believes that both the KNHG and the ING stand to benefit from cooperation. It creates a win-win situation. The closer relationship can prove highly beneficial to the *Repertorium* and the *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden (BMGN)*, two projects of importance to the ING. The committee appreciates the efforts of NWO to upgrade the journal. The *BMGN* is the leading journal of Dutch history and it is important that it should continue to be regarded as a class A international academic journal. Its present high quality must, therefore, be safeguarded for the future. The ING management has confirmed that the editorial board will retain its autonomy. The committee stresses the importance of retaining Dutch as the journal's principle language, supplemented by English-language abstracts. The ING has a major role to play in relation to the digitisation (and retrodigitisation) of the *Tijdschrift*. The committee expresses the hope that the relationship between the KNHG and the ING will continue to develop smoothly, while respecting both the autonomy of the editorial board of the *Tijdschrift* and the separate identity of the KNHG. The committee is entirely confident that NWO will be able to work with the parties concerned to foster and develop the present relationship.

3 *How can the ING best exploit the (perhaps limited) opportunities available to it for further internationalisation of its activities?*

The committee applauds the idea of organising symposia and creating an international platform. Opportunities for further internationalisation are available both in the area of research cooperation on projects and in institutional cooperation (creating the platform). Where research cooperation is concerned, the ING should not confine its attention to opportunities within Europe, but should also look to the rest of the world (Asia, e.g. the Dutch East India Company). Its coordinating function in the Netherlands puts the ING in a unique position. In other countries, tasks are divided up between different institutions. In terms of leading the drive for international cooperation, however, this fact means that the ING has to make special efforts not simply to look for a single initiative in each country where international cooperation is a possibility, but to adopt a broad focus, looking first for similar institutions in neighbouring countries, particularly Belgium.

Further international cooperation can also be achieved in relation to digitisation. The ING could participate in international digitisation projects via the National Library of the Netherlands (KB). The ING could present proposals to the KB in this respect. The committee is pleased to see that work is now being done to make the ING website multilingual.

4 How important are the ING's activities and its project portfolio to the Dutch research community?

The ING's role in relation to the Dutch research community is both supportive and inspirational. The ING lays the foundations for future work. Its choice of projects has a major influence on the research done at the universities and stimulates researchers in the entire field. Its source editions are a particularly important contribution to academic research. The committee is pleased that the ING consults the university community and seeks its views. ING projects are extremely relevant to Dutch research, offering tools that enable researchers to explore new territory. Now that Dutch degree courses are shorter, the ING's ability to use its expertise to guarantee continuity is more vital than ever. The committee was given many examples of this during its site visit. The ING occupies a specific niche with its source editions and should definitely maintain its efforts in this respect.

5 How is the transfer of knowledge to the research community and to society organised, and what attention is paid to valorisation?

The transfer of knowledge to the research world is the ING's main task and its work in this direction is excellent both in print and via on-line publication. As regards the transfer of knowledge to society, a huge effort has been made (*Horizon*) but this could be further diversified. The appointment of staff with PR expertise has led to very good initial moves in this direction (attractive forms of knowledge transfer, e.g. the presentation of the correspondence of William of Orange) and the committee will be interested to see further developments. The new programme includes projects which are likely to interest a more general public and offer good opportunities for knowledge transfer to society. The committee advocates the maintenance of free access to the ING's digital publications.

6 What dilemmas does the institute expect to face in seeking to attract and retain excellent researchers from the Netherlands and abroad and to offer career prospects to in-house research talent?

The committee has the impression that the ING is trying to strike a balance between staff on temporary and permanent contracts, movement of staff into university posts, etc. It is doing this efficiently, within the limits of its present constraints. It is a pity that good members of staff can be offered almost no prospect of a future career within the ING and that there are few openings at the universities either. The committee appreciates the ING's efforts to encourage researchers to develop ties with universities. Secondments, guest researcher arrangements and occupancy of endowed chairs are valuable ways of doing this. A possible disadvantage of mobility/temporary appointments is the risk that projects may not be rounded off properly. The focus of the institute's work makes it difficult to attract researchers from abroad. The recruitment of foreign researchers from e.g. Belgium, Germany, the UK or the US (where many researchers have an excellent command of Dutch) will continue to be incidental, but can be promoted by offering research bursaries of various kinds.

7 How does the ING expect to resolve the perceived dilemmas?

The committee feels that the ING has responded well to the situation, which it sees as presenting challenges rather than dilemmas. ING management is aware of the specific situation of the institute. The standing of the ING is undisputed.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Summary of conclusions:

- The committee supports the ING's choice of direction. It feels that the new culture with regard to (diachronic) programming and the coherence achieved in the institute's work are very good developments. It also rates the content of the programme extremely highly.
- Morale at the institute is good and productivity is high.
- Researchers are expert in their particular areas of study.
- The resources available are sufficient for the institute's present activities and the ING deals with them efficiently; however, the committee notes that they allow no scope for further strengthening of the institute (innovations in methodology and content, and the development of an international role).
- As regards the transition to new media, the ING currently leads the field in Europe.
- The committee is positive about the relationship with the KNHG and hopes that it will continue to develop quickly.

Recommendations:

- 1 In addressing the new themes, the institute should remain active across the entire chronological range; the new programme should therefore include work on the Middle Ages and early modern period.
- 2 The ING should pursue its proposed two-track policy of strengthening internationalisation via international symposia (cooperation on research, comparative projects) and institutional cooperation (the proposed international platform); the institute should be proactive in these respects.
- 3 The ING should cooperate more with the universities. It should be more proactive in initiating joint doctoral research projects with universities and should explore the opportunities for joint NWO-funded projects.
- 4 The ING should do more to exploit the potential for attracting (i.e. actively recruiting) relevant projects.
- 5 ING researchers could publish more. The ING should develop appropriate policies to give good researchers more opportunity to obtain doctorates and to publish. This is important with an eye to their career prospects. Only 15% of staff time is currently available for individual research. The committee feels that this is inadequate and that it must be increased to at least 20% if the ING is to attract and/or retain excellent researchers. The ING needs to adopt a more generous attitude in this respect if it wants to do more to foster in-house talent.
- 6 The ING should further diversify its publication strategy in order to interest a broader public in specific projects.
- 7 Free access to digital publications should be maintained.

Annex 1: Curricula vitae of committee members

Els Witte

Els Witte has worked as a historian at the Free University of Brussels (VUB) ever since 1974. As a professor of the university, she now teaches a number of courses on subjects such as the political history of Belgium, contemporary society and institutions, uses of historical criticism, and the political functions of mass communication. Her research focuses mainly on various aspects of the political history of Belgium. She has authored numerous books and articles published in Dutch, French and English.

Els Witte is director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Study of the Brussels Language Situation (BRUT). In recent years she has also conducted research on the school and university funding controversy of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Els Witte is a member of various academic organisations, including the Centre for Socio-Political Research and Information (CRISP), the Flemish Political Science Association (Politologisch Instituut) and the Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary (SOMA). She has won various academic awards and is a member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts (KVAB).

Between October 1994 and October 2000, Els Witte was vice-chancellor of the VUB, being both the first female vice-chancellor and the first vice-chancellor ever to hold the post for six years running. Since October 1999 she has been chair of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VIR). She has also been chair of the Flemish Research Funding Agency (FWO) and is a member of the Federal and Flemish Science Policy Councils (FRWB and VRWB). From 1988 to 1994 she was chair of the governing board of the Belgian Radio and Television Network (BRTN).

Since 1997 Els Witte has also been a member of the Dutch Language Union (Nederlandse Taalunie). In 1996 she was decorated by the King for her outstanding services to Belgian academia, science and society and she was awarded the Flemish Community Prize following her nomination by the Flemish Minister for Brussels Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

In the speech she made on becoming vice-chancellor, Els Witte touched on a number of problems and themes which are still in the news. During her time in the post, the Flemish government was pursuing a policy directed at the reorganisation of the university and higher professional education system. Since this process is still on-going, her analyses, ideas and views on matters such as the improvement and rationalisation of university education in Flanders, access to university education, the entrance examination for courses in medicine and dentistry, the reform of university funding, and the tension between academia and the market continue to provide a frame of reference for all those involved in the field of university policy in Flanders.

Marc Boone

Marc Boone was born in Ghent in 1955 and trained as a medievalist at the local university, where he is now Professor of Medieval History. His degree dissertation (1977) and doctoral thesis (1987) dealt with aspects of the social and political history of Flemish towns in the late Middle Ages. He began his career as an assistant at the University of Ghent, later became a researcher with the Flemish National Fund for Scientific Research (NFWO, now the FWO), and in 1999 assumed a professorship at the University of Ghent, where he has since remained. His teaching responsibilities at that university now relate both to the medieval period and to historical method (the latter as part of a course on historical criticism). In 1999 he was visiting professor at the University of Bourgogne (Dijon) and in 2005 at the College of Higher Studies in Social (EHESS) in Paris.

Marc Boone has received various academic awards, including awards from both the Belgian academies. He has published in the fields of urban history, the socio-political and financial history of the Middle Ages, and the history of the Burgundian period. In the context of the

POD-IUAP project, he is now editor of an international series being published by Brepols (Turnhout). He has been and is responsible for various international and interuniversity research projects (VNC: governing elite in the Burgundian state, 1994-98; bourgeoisie, finances and urban government, 1999-2002; IUAP: Urban society in the Low Countries, Late Middle Ages-16th century, 2002-2006). He has also served on the editorial boards of the *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* (1984-1992), *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (1997-2003), the *Revue du Nord* (1997-2001 and again since 2005), and the *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* (since 2005). He is a member of the Commission internationale d'histoire urbaine and the executive committee of the European Association of Urban Historians, secretary of the history committee of the Dexia Bank and secretary of the Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde in Ghent.

Jan Roegiers

Jan Roegiers was born in Sleidinge (Eastern Flanders, Belgium) in 1944. He studied history and theology at the Episcopal Seminary in Ghent and at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, where he received a first degree in history in 1970 and in ethics and religious studies in 1972. From October 1970 to December 1974 he worked as a researcher at the Flemish National Fund for Scientific Research (NFWO, now the FWO). On 1 January 1975, he joined the K.U. Leuven as an archivist. In 1979 he received his doctorate for a thesis on Leuven theologians and the Enlightenment.

Since 1978 he has performed various teaching duties within the Arts and Theology faculties in relation to courses on archive management and the cultural history of the modern period and on the ecclesiastical history of the modern period; since the 1996-1997 academic year, he has also taught the general undergraduate course on the history of the modern period. From 1993 to 2001 he taught the interuniversity postgraduate course on the principles and terminology of archiving (now the degree in archive studies and contemporary document management).

He became a professor in 1992. Since 2001 he has been chair of the History Department. In the 1996-1997 academic year he also held the Emperor Charlemagne Chair in European Cultural History at the University of Nijmegen.

From January 1981 to July 1996 he was chief librarian at the K.U. Leuven and remained the university archivist after that period. Since 1983 he has been head of the university's art collection.

Jan Roegiers has published principally on the history of the University of Leuven and on the political, religious and intellectual history of the Austrian Netherlands and the revolutionary period. He has been and is a member of the editorial boards of various historical journals. Since 1969 his various positions have led to his involvement in more than forty exhibitions in Belgium and elsewhere.

In 1996 he became a member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts (KVAB).

James Tracy

James Tracey is a Professor of Modern European History. He received his BA from St. Louis University in 1959 and his doctorate from Princeton in 1967. He joined the department at that university in 1966. For some years his research interests focused on Erasmus of Rotterdam (*Erasmus: The Growth of a Mind*, a revision of his dissertation, appeared in 1972, and *The Politics Of Erasmus: A Pacifist Intellectual And His Political Milieu* in 1979). He has developed a certain interest in European voyages of discovery (*True Ocean Found: Paludanus' Letters On Dutch Voyages To The Kara Sea* was published by the James Ford Bell Library in 1980). As Director of the Center for Early Modern History, he organised a major international

conference on "The Rise of Merchant Empires", held in October 1987. He also edited conference papers published in two volumes by Cambridge University Press. *The Rise of Merchant Empires* appeared in 1990, and *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* in 1991. He organised another research conference, on "City Walls in the Pre-Industrial World," held in the autumn of 1995. He has recently shifted his major research interest to the political and fiscal history of the Low Countries in the half-century or so prior to the Dutch Revolt; *A Financial Revolution In The Habsburg Netherlands: Renten And Rentiers In The County Of Holland, 1515-1565* appeared in the fall of 1985, and *Holland Under Habsburg Rule: Formation Of A Body Politic, 1506-1566* in 1990 (University of California Press). Current projects include "Portraits in Powers" and a book on the finances of the Dutch Revolts. He is also managing editor of the new *Journal Of Early Modern History*, which began publication in 1995.

Annex 2: Programme of the site visit

note: each interview session was followed by a 10-minute slot for closed discussion

Wednesday 18 May 2005	
17.00 - 19.00	Closed session at hotel (synchronising planning & approach)
20.00 - 22.00	Welcome dinner
Thursday 19 May 2005	
8.15	Transport hotel - ING
08.30 - 09.30	Director: dr. D. Haks
09.40 - 10.10	J.G. Smit (programme coordinator pre-1550 and member of the MT)
10.20 - 10.50	I.J.A. Nijenhuis (programme coord. 1550-1813 and member of the MT)
11.00 - 11.30	J.P. de Valk (programme coord. 1813-present and member of the MT)
11.40 - 13.00	Individual meetings with project coordinators for "reference works"
11.40 - 12.00	G. van der Plaat, ed.secr. KNHG
12.00 - 12.20	S.C. Derks, <i>Repertorium Geschiedenis Nederland</i>
12.20 - 12.40	A.J.C.M. Gabriëls, ed.secr. <i>Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland</i>
12.40 - 13.00	G. Van Syngel, ed.secr. <i>Broncommentaren</i>
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch (closed session)
14.00 - 15.00	Scientific Advisory Committee (drs. Chr. Baljé, prof. dr. D.F.J. Bosscher, dr. J. van Goor)
15.10 - 15.40	Presentation of ING projects: <i>Rijmkroniek van Holland</i> , J.W.J. Burgers Social Security, T. Kappelhof
15.45 - 16.15	Tea break & informal meeting with ING staff
16.15 - 16.45	Support staff: ICT support: E.C.M. Huysman & F.G. Hoekstra coordinator assistants: M.T.A. Schouten publisher: F.J.H. Aussems
17.00	Transport to hotel
17.30 - 19.00	Closed committee session at hotel
19.15	Dinner with NWO vice-president, prof. dr. Charles Buys
Friday 20 May 2005	
08.15	Transport hotel - ING
08.30 - 11.00	Meetings with research staff (to be selected)
11.00 - 12.00	ING Governing Board (prof. dr. D.E.H. de Boer (chair), drs. J. Calff, dr. B.M.A. de Vries)
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch with director (D. Haks)
13.00 - 16.30	Closed committee session
16.30 - 17.00	Plenary with director & dr. B.M.A. de Vries (on behalf of the Governing Board)

