

## Activity Report 2021 Executive Summary

The ISSN International Centre continued its activities despite the still problematic health situation in 2021. The ISSN IC staff worked mainly remotely until the end of August 2021 and partially thereafter. Weekly coordination meetings helped to maintain a good team spirit and move key projects forward.

### **A Network Record of three New National Centres**

The ISSN International Centre planned and implemented the opening of three new national centres at the Ivan Fedorov Book Chamber of Ukraine, the Hauptverband des Österreichischen Buchhandels in Austria, and the Biblioteca Nacional del Perú, raising the total number of ISSN National Centres to 93. All meetings, training, and press conferences were done remotely, as were all large Network meetings in 2021. The opening of three national centers in the same year is quite exceptional and proves the dynamism of the ISSN Network.

#### Total Numbers at a Glance (% year increase)

2,235,523 confirmed records (+3%)

322,608 online resource records (+9%)

52,758 open access titles (+8%)

5,435 publishers using the ISSN Portal (+28%)

### ***The 2020-2024 Strategy***

In the second year of the 2020-2024 ISSN IC Strategic Plan, much progress was achieved on the various objectives as described below:

1. Develop the global interoperability of the ISSN Portal by improving the management of ISNIs within the ISSN Portal:
  - An internal wiki was set up to identify about 300 multinational publishers, their affiliated publishers and related brands that populate the ISSN database. ISSN International Centre extracted data regarding 50 publishers with no ISNIs to run a batch test with OCLC, which manages the ISNI database. Before a formal metadata exchange process can be established, it is necessary to work on the ISNI data model for this type of organization.
2. Encourage the creation of new ISSN National Centres to extend the ISSN Network worldwide:
  - It was an exceptional year for three National Centres to open.
3. Implement the sixth version of the ISSN standard by creating the family ISSN and other cluster ISSN:
  - The ISSN Review Group explored the possibilities of new cluster ISSN. The Family ISSN concept was distilled to a plan for the Title History ISSN, ISSN-H, an identifier that will group the successive titles held by a publication over time. The ISSN International Centre

submitted a MARC Advisory Committee (MAC) discussion paper in May 2021 for the creation of a repeatable new tag for cluster ISSN, the 023, so that a URI subfield in \$0 or \$1 would be unambiguous from that in the 022, where the cluster ISSN-L is currently encoded.

4. Implement the sixth version of ISO3297 - ISSN by assigning ISSN to various types of continuing resources:
  - An ISSN proposal was passed by the MARC Advisory Committee in January 2021 to include additional types of continuing resources defined for the control field (tag 008 position 21) to reflect the full scope of continuing resources covered by ISO 3297:2020. Three code definitions were revised, and six new codes were added. A change request for the equivalent codes for UNIMARC followed suit in April, and by Fall 2021, the new codes were officially published in both schemes.
5. Develop interoperability of the ISSN Portal through the management of persistent identifiers and URLs of digital continuing resources:
  - In conjunction with the National Library of Finland, a discussion paper was submitted to the MARC Advisory Committee in December 2021, entitled Enrichment of Web Archive Information in Field 856 in the MARC 21 Formats. The goal is to redefine some of the subfields to track archiving information and persistent identifiers (PIDs) and find a solution to link rot and content drift.
6. Promote and develop Keepers Registry to associate new agencies and increase the number of identified archived resources:
  - Three new agencies have signed a memorandum of understanding with ISSN International Centre in 2021: the Bibliothèque nationale de France for Gallica data, the California Digital Library for Merritt Repository data and the Internet Archive for Fatcat data. Keepers Registry is also a partner of DOAJ, CLOCKSS, Internet Archive and Public Knowledge Project in the JASPER project, which aims to reduce the number of unarchived open access journals.
7. Promote the ISSN Portal as a professional tool for the ISSN National Centres to improve the ISSN assignment process:
  - The ISSN International Centre, with the approval of its Governing Board, decided to abandon this objective in 2022 as the ISSN Portal needs to be overhauled and functionalities will be reviewed.

## **Standard Reviews**

As the registration authority for ISO 3297, the ISSN IC is closely involved in the revision process of the standard, which has evolved considerably since 2015. The sixth edition of ISO 3297 standard was made available to the public in October 2020. A minor revision was voted in 2021 to introduce editorial amendments. The final vote took place in May 2022 and the Final Draft International Standard was approved. Publication will ensue in 2022.

The ISSN Manual revision by the ISSN Review Group is ongoing. The project team now meets on a bi-weekly basis. In parallel, two members of the ISSN IC represent ISSN interests in other

standard reviews, notably the ongoing ISBD revision, and on the IFLA Advisory Committee on Standards.

### **Key numbers**

There is a significant decrease in the number of records produced in 2021 by the ISSN Network compared to 2020, returning to the production volume of 2019. This may be the consequence of national centres having still to deal with difficult sanitary circumstances, and less retrospective cataloguing projects. The ISSN International Centre contributed 2,588 new ISSNs to the database in 2021 and carried on with several projects to improve data quality with partner services such as DOAJ and Latindex, as well as with publishers such as Springer.

In 2021

176,930 new and updated records from National Centers

2,588 ISSN assigned by ISSN IC

6,094 OA records added to ROAD

16,021 Keepers records added

790 CIDEMIS requests processed

### **Outreach**

In 2021, the ISSN International Centre worked on a new design for some of its communication materials, and continued to sponsor and participate in various online conferences. The monthly ISSN newsletter, which had a redesign for its 100th issue in September 2021, is very popular and its subscriber base continues to grow. A beautiful promotional video was also produced for the IFLA annual conference. It is available online, subtitled in the six official languages of the United Nations and will be shown again in 2022. Besides issuing press releases for the opening of new national centres and joint projects with external partners, the ISSN International Centre focused its communication campaigns on the ISSN Portal, its API, OAI-PMH, and subscription services.

### **Investment in IT**

The IT infrastructure was reinforced with a new external framework of dedicated servers, hosted by OVH company, to fully control a range of virtual servers which are automatically backed up in more than one server farm. They are used for the safe hosting and management of our major professional applications, the ISSN Portal and the metadata production tool ISSN+. The full launch of ISSN+ was delayed by the difficult pandemic context. ISSN+ will actually be made available to National Centres in June 2022. A complete description of its functionalities appears in the full annual report. From July 2021, the Information Systems Department started to manage the hosting and the daily administration of the ISSN Portal server directly. The Keepers Registry is a stable part of the ISSN Portal, and the different data updating streams from the participating agencies as well as the overarching ingesting and checking process were fully automated over the course of 2021. The statistics page has been significantly enhanced and automated and now offers a “coverage overlap chart”.

For more information, please read the full report on [www.issn.org](http://www.issn.org).