

IISH Collections: International Organizations

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Introduction

International organizations figure prominently in the collections at the IISH. The rise of early workers organizations was closely linked to labour migration both within Europe and among countries in Europe and other nation states. The workers movement tried to inspire international solidarity by furthering socialism and trade unionism. Sources relating to the Internationals - from the First to the Fourth and beyond - are core collections at the IISH. Several classics among the archives, for example [Karl Marx](#), [Friedrich Engels](#), [Karl Kautsky](#) and [Moses Hess](#), reflect the historical impact of socialist theory far beyond national borders. The IISH holds the records of various international trade union federations, student groups, and grassroots peace organizations. [Amnesty International](#), [Greenpeace International](#), and other new social movements have entrusted their collections to the Institute.

The IISH reference library aims to provide a comprehensive variety of perspectives on the history of international labour organizations and global social history since the early modern period. Special library collections included in the IISH library have broadened its scope considerably. These collections include the autonomous and anti-globalist movements, alternative economy, ecology, the women's movement, and the gay rights movement worldwide.

The collections may be accessed in various ways. The [archives index](#) contains individual archival descriptions and a list of all archives by country (browse: International Organizations and/or the country of birth/establishment of the organization or person involved).

Books, periodicals, and image and sound materials are retrievable via the [library catalogue](#). The archives index, library catalogue, and other data collections may also be consulted via a single [search](#).

Archives

The Internationals

Most archival items on the First International ([International Working Men's Association](#)) and the [Second International](#) appear in personal papers from this period. Examples include the IWMA cofounder [Johann Philipp Becker](#) and [Hermann Jung](#), who served on the General Assembly for many years. The IISH also has the papers of [Victor Adler](#), [Karl Kautsky](#), [Henri van Kol](#), and [Pieter J. Troelstra](#), who served with the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International. This Bureau's internal rift and the controversies during World War I are reflected in the papers of the Swiss delegate [Robert Grimm/Zimmerwaller Bewegung](#). The archive of the [Labour and Socialist International](#) and the papers of [Friedrich Adler](#) contain a wealth of sources on the interwar period. The

[Socialist International](#) (*1951) and its associated organizations including the [Socialist International Women](#) and [Socialist Educational International](#) have deposited their archives at the IISH.

Reproductions of holdings at other institutions such as the Moscow RGASPI facilitate research on the [Communist Third International](#) at the IISH. Specific discussions and country bureaus of the Comintern are to be found in the collections on [Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey](#), [Indonesia](#), and [Holland](#).

Many persons and organizations tracing their roots back to the Fourth International have entrusted their archives to the IISH, including [Trotsky/International Left Opposition](#), [Sania Gontarbert](#), [Ernest Mandel](#), [Rodolphe Prager](#), [George Vereeken](#), and the [Quatrième Internationale Posadiste](#).

Greenpeace and Amnesty International

The international secretariat's archives of both [Greenpeace](#) and [Amnesty International](#) are noteworthy recent accessions to the IISH collections.

Greenpeace has entrusted its photo and film archives to the IISH as well. From the middle of the 1980s Greenpeace has become active all over the world. Today there are national and regional offices in 41 countries. The archives of the European Environmental Bureau of Greenpeace are expected in the next future. The archives of Amnesty International cover the period from its establishment in 1961 until recently. A wealth of research reports on specific countries is included.

Labour and Student Organizations

The extensive archives of the [International Confederation of Free Trade Unions](#) (ICFTU) provide a frequently consulted source for the development of trade unions in the Global South since the 1950s. The [European Trade Union Confederation](#) (ETUC) regularly deposits its documents with the IISH, as do the [Miners' International Federation](#), federations of [chemical and factory workers](#), and [postal service employees](#). The [International Labour Organization](#) (ILO, founded in 1919) in Geneva is well represented. The [World Crafts Council](#) (1964), an international non-governmental organization, aims to offer help and advice to craftsmen and to foster wider knowledge and recognition of their work, giving due regard to the different cultural and national backgrounds and traditions.

International student and youth organizations of various types are represented at the Institute, including the [International Union of Students](#), [World Federation of Democratic Youth](#), [World Assembly of Youth](#), and [International Union of Socialist Youth](#).

Peace movement

By definition, the peace movement has an international outlook. The [War Resisters International](#) archive includes sections from the period preceding its establishment in 1921. Together with the archives of the [European Bureau for](#)

[Conscientious Objection](#), the WRI archives are a rich source for research on conscientious objection. The [Rassemblement Universel pour la Paix](#) (1935) tried to organize popular support for the peace-keeping tasks of the League of Nations by coordinating relevant activities of groups and individuals from communist to conservative, atheist to religious. The [Balkan Peace Team](#), or the [Comité Palestine et Israël vivront](#) share a thematic approach to the peace process.

Library and Documentation Collections

Of course the IISH reference library contains all relevant publications on global labour history, the theory and history of the international labour movements, labour relations, and migration. In addition to this, the publications of the social movements themselves, such as periodicals and leaflets, are available for research on this subject. Printed sources originating from the International Working Man's Association (IWMA) from 1864 to 1876 are fully covered. Extensive documentation deals with the Second International from 1889 to 1914 and its social-democratic successors after World War I. Despite a few gaps, the collection of the communist Third International is also respectable. Here, too, the original periodicals are major pillars of the collection.

The IISH library holds many subject-based collections of books, leaflets, pamphlets, and periodicals. These can be retrieved by searching the library catalogue under Special Collections. Three large collections are mentioned here:

- Nearly 6000 publications of consumer and production cooperations worldwide (collection code: Cooperations)
- International Mass Media Research Center (IMMRC), a special library of marxist writings on mass communication and culture that includes books, magazines, manuscripts, and documentation on all aspects of communication and culture in over 50 countries. (collection code: IMMRC)
- Nearly 1000 publications from new social movements worldwide (collection code: CSD Library)

Many archives and collections also contain photographs and other audiovisual materials. These have been transferred to the [Image and Sound Department](#). Other Image and Sound items have no direct connection with archives. For instance, all materials relating to the anti-globalist demonstration in [Hong Kong in December 2006](#), including T-shirts, life jackets, flags, pictures, and gadgets, is but one example; these are stored in the IISH Image and Sound Department. These multimedia records may be retrieved through various types of searches in the IISH [library catalogue](#) and/or [search portal](#).

Highlights

Here you will find Web presentations featured previously. These are intended to highlight a special collection, a particular aspect of a collection, or a new acquisition. Click on this recent example or on one of the other highlights from the list.

[Disputed Tourist Destinations](#)

The tourist paradise and the police state may very well go hand and hand. A dozen of these controversial tourist destinations, from 1933 until now, are presented below. The viewpoint is always that of the opposition.

Other highlights related to International Organizations:

[Alexander Herzenstichting](#) / [Amnesty International Campaigns](#) / [Art to the People](#) / [Button collections](#) / [The Chairman smiles](#) / [Communist manifesto](#) / [European elections posters](#) / [Greenpeace photo archive](#) / [Holiday greetings](#) / [IALHI Webmuseum](#) / [Internationale Situationniste](#) / [Images of Lenin](#) / [Little Red Books](#) / [Labour Olympiads](#) / [Peace movement](#) / [Postcards from IISH collections](#) / [Press Freedom posters](#) / [Tourist destinations and boycotts](#) / [Safety at work](#)

See also [highlights](#) concerning other collections.

Contact

Please contact the Reading Room for general information about collections: ask@iisg.nl.

If you would like to have an archive or collection transferred to the IISH, please contact Huub Sanders, accessions at hsa@iisg.nl.

See [Services](#) for information on consulting the collections.

To support the institute you can join the [Friends of the IISH](#).

Of related interest: [IALHI - International Association of Labour History Institutions](#)