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# Report on 2021

## Foreword

Stichting De Onderzoeksredactie (The Investigative Desk) was established on 16 November 2018 and commenced operations in March 2019.<sup>1</sup>

It has two core activities:

- The Investigative Desk
- The Research Lab (a training programme in cooperation with De Coöperatie)

Because of its international ambitions, De Onderzoeksredactie has been called The Investigative Desk - abbreviated to TheID - since the beginning of 2020. It sees itself as a production house for thematically specialised and cross-border investigative journalism and publishes its stories as much as possible through existing media. It focuses mainly (but not exclusively) on five major areas: defence & security, energy & climate, pharma & healthcare, tobacco, and food & alcohol. Within these areas, TheID mainly studies the large industries and their interactions with the public sector.

In the year 2021, despite the COVID-19 crisis, TheID has made progress on almost all fronts: in the number of studies, in the budget (and its funding), in international collaborations.

At the end of 2021, we started a search for some new members of the Supervisory Board. In the meantime, Ad van Liempt and Mireille Derks have agreed to join the Board. Ad was at the forefront of NOVA, the predecessor of Dutch current affairs television programme Nieuwsuur. Mireille has experience in both journalism (including at Dutch television news service RTL Nieuws) and publishing. Chairman Kees van den Bosch resigned as of 1 February 2022. I thank him very much for his unflagging support during the development stage of The Investigative Desk. His position has been taken over by André Knottnerus.

Our simultaneous search for editorial reinforcements was also successful. Details are provided elsewhere in this report.

Editor-in-chief and director, 24 May 2022

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<sup>1</sup> In 2014 - 2016, there was also a Stichting De Onderzoeksredactie. It was set up by Marcel Metze and De Groene Amsterdammer. This cooperation ended in the summer of 2015. The foundation in question has continued under a different name. The current Stichting De Onderzoeksredactie is therefore legally new.

# 2021 Annual Report



## General

TheID was very productive in 2021. In 2020, we published 10 investigations; in 2021, this increased to 27. Due to follow-up stories and parallel international publications, the number of actual publications surrounding these investigations is much higher.

The number of publications from international collaborations amounted to 14 (in 2020: 9).

The available budget increased by 15% from around €439,000 to around €506,000. This includes the reserves available from the previous year and includes the personal project grants actually spent (which are partly outside the formal budget).

Not all journalistic investigative projects lead to publishable results. On average over 2020-2021, this is around 7% of our paid fees. The Board believes that this means we are spending our resources effectively.

We publish as much as possible in and together with existing media. Most of our productions received wide media coverage. For more details see the section 'publications' below. We are especially proud of our international collaborations. Our experience in this field is growing all the time and we now occasionally act as project managers.

In October, we moved to Broedplaats Tempel, located in the former theosophical temple on the Tolstraat in Amsterdam, in the De Pijp district. We have better facilities there and the surroundings are more atmospheric than those near our previous location.

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## Investigations

You can find our articles, abstracts and links to our publications at [www.onderzoeksredactie.nl](http://www.onderzoeksredactie.nl) and [www.investigativedesk.com](http://www.investigativedesk.com)

### January

#### **BAT channelled millions of euros to the Netherlands, now Brazil wants its share of the pie**

The Brazilian government is demanding 350 million euros from tobacco giant British American Tobacco for tax avoidance, research by The Investigative Desk shows. This

money was channeled through the Netherlands, which Brazil considers as having a “preferential tax regime”.

*Read the full article on [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Brussels pressured drug regulator to approve Pfizer vaccine**

Leaked documents show that the European Commission put pressure on the European Medicines Agency to approve the first Covid-19 vaccines simultaneously with the American FDA. This happened when the regulator still had serious questions about the purity of the vaccine.

*This story was part of the international [Behind the Pledge](#) project.*

*The full article has been published on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).*

### **How Gazprom gained influence in the Netherlands**

Gazprom is much more influential in the Netherlands than is commonly thought. The company developed into an indispensable pillar of the Dutch energy supply. The Investigative Desk and Follow the Money mapped the Russian gas giant’s business interests.

*Read the full article on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).*

## **March**

### **Tobacco giants feel at home in the ‘land of clean skies’**

The Investigative Desk has discovered that until 2015 a remarkable amount of money from cigarette manufacturers flowed to Switzerland via the Netherlands. After that year, the money flow is no longer traceable due to Dutch regulations.

*Read the full article on [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Departments of the Red Cross received money from Philip Morris against instructions**

Local offices of the Red Cross accepted more than 3 million dollar in donations from tobacco producer Philip Morris. This goes against the instruction of the international umbrella organization that had urged to reject such donations in 2015.

*Read the full article in [Trouw](#) (in Dutch).*

### **MH17 no obstacle to concealed gas talks with Putin**

When flight MH17 was downed by a Russian missile in 2014, the Netherlands froze diplomatic and trade relations with Russia. At least, to the outside world. Behind the scenes they quickly re-established ties, which the Dutch government did not inform parliament about. The reason: Russian gas.

*Read the full article on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).*

## **April**

### **Government helps multinationals to cover up fiscal money flows**

A government measure to reduce paperwork for small entrepreneurs helps multinationals to conceal their activities in the Netherlands. Billions of euros in foreign revenues are not visible.

*Read the full article on [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

### **The sheep’s clothing of tobacco giant Philip Morris**

The Foundation for a Smoke-Free World claims to strive for a ‘smoke-free world’. In reality, founder and financier Philip Morris uses the foundation to influence the scientific debate on new ‘smokeless’ products to promote these emerging products and to prevent their further regulation.

*This story is the result of a cooperation of The Investigative Desk and Le Monde, and was published in a collaboration of [Le Monde](#) (France), [Knack](#) (Belgium) and [FTM](#) (The Netherlands).*

### **Two million euros for a drip**

Pharmaceutical company Novartis asks 2 million euros for one bag of drip fluid. The Dutch Care Institute announced that the fluid may not cost more than 155,000 euros. The Investigative Desk looked into how it is possible that medicines are so much overpriced and noticed how scientists enjoy illustrious careers and shareholders collect billions of euros. Meanwhile, desperate parents try to help their mortally ill children via crowdfunding.

*Read the full story on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).*

## **May**

### **How two business associates of Dutch 'COVID envoy' Feike Sijbesma raked in millions of euros in state aid**

In the middle of the pandemic, the 'last medicine factory in the Netherlands' was to close its doors. As this was politically unpalatable, the government bent over backwards to keep the factory in business and, with state support, to get it into the hands of two entrepreneurs for whom special COVID envoy Feike Sijbesma put in a good word, according to research by The Investigative Desk. It remains a mystery what social interest there was in saving the factory. It plays no role whatsoever in the fight against COVID-19.

*Read the full story on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Only one in twenty-five Europeans infected report this through a COVID-19 app**

The Dutch CoronaMelder app and its equivalents in other countries are used in around one in twenty-five COVID-19 cases. This has been shown by research conducted by journalists from four European media outlets, led by The Investigative Desk.

*This article was published at [NOS](#), [VRT NWS](#) (Belgium), [Die Zeit](#) (Germany) and [Le Monde](#) (France).*

## **June**

### **Covid 19: How harm reduction advocates and the tobacco industry capitalised on the pandemic to promote nicotine**

Scientific papers suggesting that smokers are less likely to fall ill with covid-19 are being discredited as links to the tobacco industry are revealed.

*Read the full article in the [British Medical Journal \(BMJ\)](#).*

### **Dairy multinational FrieslandCampina finances 'independent' science, but only if it leads to increased milk production**

FrieslandCampina is the largest private funder of dairy science at Wageningen University & Research, the world's top agricultural university, based in the Netherlands. The dairy multinational wants to maintain growth and mainly supports science that serves that goal. Meanwhile, research into sustainable alternatives has trouble getting financed.

*Read the full article on [Vrij Nederland](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Tax claim against Unilever Brazil**

The Brazilian tax authorities are demanding more than 2 billion euros from Unilever in connection with a restructuring of the food group in 2001. The total claim has now risen to 2.9 billion euros. It concerns various tax matters in Brazil, according to the **2020 annual report**.

*Read the full article on [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Oligarchs to pay Putin's COVID-19 bill after his suspension of tax treaty with the Netherlands**

**By Jochem van Staaldoune en Gidi Pols**

Two prominent oligarchs have become victims of Russia's termination of the tax treaty with the Netherlands, according to research by The Investigative Desk. The journalistic collective investigated the Dutch activities of the 25 largest privately-owned Russian companies. Three of these companies – owned by two oligarchs – appear to use the Netherlands as a transit country.

*Read the full article on [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

### **How Microsoft wants to profit from 'Big Brother' software**

The COVID-19 crisis gave a huge boost to remote working. Microsoft is profiting handsomely from this development. The use of the company's software provides Microsoft with enormous amounts of data and opens the door to productivity measurements that leave little room for privacy on the work floor.

*Read the full article on [Vrij Nederland](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Harmful neonic pesticides still widely used despite EU-ban**

Scientists and activists were euphoric when the EU banned the extremely harmful neonic pesticides in 2018. During the next three years, sixteen EU countries used a legal loophole to circumvent the ban. Research by The Investigative Desk shows that they succumbed to the united lobby of farmers, the sugar industry and pesticide manufacturers.

*Read the full article on [Knack](#) and [Vrij Nederland](#) (in Dutch).*

## **July**

### **How the Netherlands facilitates global warfare**

The Netherlands plays an important role as a financial hub in the international arms trade. The Investigative Desk took a closer look at the fifty largest arms manufacturers in the world, looking for fiscal constructions and money flows to tax havens. By combining data from annual reports with data about arms deals from Swedish peace organization SIPRI and its Dutch counterpart PAX, it was possible to link money flows to actual arms sales.

*Read the full article on [De Groene Amsterdammer](#) (in Dutch).*

### **Dutch PM Rutte informs House of Representatives 'incorrectly and incompletely' about gas contacts with Russia**

The Dutch and Russian governments regularly discuss energy projects. The Working Party on Energy, which had been suspended in 2014 after the shooting down of flight MH17, was restarted in 2017. In this working group, government officials hold talks with companies such as Gazprom, Shell and Lukoil on gas and oil projects, but also on wind power and hydrogen projects.

*Read the full article on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).*

## September

### **Shoe brand Crocs found alternative route to continue avoiding taxes through the Netherlands**

Footwear company Crocs bypasses European and US efforts to end a widely used form of tax avoidance in the Netherlands. Due to interventions by both Brussels and Washington, the Dutch CV/BV structure is no longer fiscally attractive for U.S. companies as of 2020. Crocs had been using that route since 2006. By shifting trademark rights, Crocs has now found a new way to avoid taxation via the Netherlands.

Lees het hele [achtergrondartikel](#) en het [nieuwsbericht](#) over dit onderwerp op NRC, of download hier [het achtergrondverhaal CV/BV in pdf](#) of [het Crocs nieuwsbericht in pdf](#).

### **Amsterdam Medical Center creates 'hijacked' medicine**

Using a set of legal tricks, the pharmaceutical industry was able to turn an animal gallic acid into a medicine that costs tons of money per year. Responsible pharmacist of the Amsterdam Medical Center Marleen Kemper and professor in metabolic diseases Carla Hollak decided in 2018 to start preparing the drug chenodeoxycholic acid (CDCA) for patients with the rare hereditary metabolic disease cerebrotendinous xanthomatosis (CTX) in their own pharmacy in order to circumvent the much more expensive Italian manufacturer Leadiant. Now, the Amsterdam Medical Center produces a new 'hijacked' medicine: cholic acid, an affiliated substance of CDCA, which is used in the treatment of gallic acid synthesis defects.

Read the full article [NTvG](#) (in Dutch).

### **How Shell influenced the Dutch political position on Russian gas**

With a sophisticated lobby, oil company Royal Dutch Shell influenced the political position of the Netherlands on Nord Stream 2, The Investigative Desk revealed in a reconstruction. The Dutch House of Representatives wanted to subject the exploitation of the controversial gas pipeline to European anti-monopoly rules. Instead, the government served the agenda of Shell, which supported its business partner Gazprom in its wish to keep as much Russian control of the pipeline as possible.

Read the full article on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).

## October

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Read the full article on [NRC](#) (in Dutch).

### **'Beter Leven' chicken provides a better life, especially for supermarkets**

From 2023 onwards, only chicken with at least one star of the 'Beter Leven' (Better Life) quality mark will be available in supermarkets. It represents a modest improvement in the well-being of chickens, but farmers and the environment will be worse off. Supermarkets will benefit most.

Read more on [FTM](#) (in Dutch).

## November

### **Vaping: The real dollars behind fake consumer organisations**

An investigation by “Le Monde” and “The Investigative Desk” (Netherlands) reveals the alliance between the tobacco lobby and the networks of American oil tycoons to prevent regulations on electronic cigarettes.

Under the guise of defending individual freedom, fake consumer organisations are promoting e-cigarettes. They are an illusion to the public and decision-makers, aiming to influence regulation of these new products and to hamper tobacco control. They are secretly funded by the tobacco lobby and the networks of American oil billionaires. The stakes are not just financial. This elusive nebula is working to disseminate a radical right-wing ideology, hostile to government intervention, in the heart of Europe: libertarianism.

*This article was published in [NRC](#), [Internazionale](#) and [Le Monde](#). Read the whole article in English on the website of [Le Monde](#).*

### **Stricter rules for the e-cigarette are way down the road**

International negotiations on tobacco policy and smuggling in the past two weeks have had little effect. Decisions on stricter guidelines for tobacco products have been moved to the next meeting, that will take place two years from now. The corona crisis forced the participating countries to negotiate online. The wide variety in time zones made this difficult, according to the World Health Organization WHO, the UN body that organised the conference.

*Read the full article in [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

## December

### **How did the Netherlands end up with three proton centres?**

The Netherlands built three state-of-the-art centres for proton therapy. Costs: 230 million euros. But the number of cancer patients treated with this new form of radiotherapy has been greatly overestimated. This is exactly what the government had been warned about.

*Read the full article in [NtuG](#) and [NRC](#) (in Dutch).*

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## Organisation and editorial team

In the 2021 policy plan, we formulated the following goals (extracted from Concept Note 2021-2022):

*We want to take steps in 2021 to:*

- *bring our organisation up to a truly professional level;*
- *build a stronger core staff;*
- *create a sustainable environment and infrastructure; and*
- *provide a 'push' towards real internationalisation.*

*Our first priority is to create a more solid financial basis for the next three years.*

What has been achieved?

### The organisation

TheID is a small organisation. To make it work as efficiently and effectively as possible, we have taken steps on two fronts.

In early 2021, we formed a 'triangle' of an editor-in-chief and two senior editors. They are jointly responsible for:

- the assessment of action plans and the decision on whether or not to carry out proposed projects
- the make-up of the project teams
- the supervision (gap sessions, construction sessions, proofreading of drafts, etc.)
- the monitoring of the projects, up to and including the publication stage.

This triangle then formulated standard criteria for the budget and turnaround time of the projects.

Both steps have proven to be very useful. The projects are better monitored both in terms of content and finances, the teams are more balanced, the available capacity is used more effectively, supervision is better, and the turnaround time is shorter. All in all, the production process runs more smoothly.

### The editorial team

At the end of 2020, the workforce consisted of 16 people. There were some staff changes in 2021. After a recruitment campaign at the end of 2021, the pool will again consist of 16 people at the beginning of 2022: 8 permanent (freelance) employees, 1 trainee and 7 casual employees.

The changes in brief:

- Natascha Eder decided to pursue an education; Gidi Pols and Jochem van Staalduine decided not to continue their work with TheID.
- Stella Braam has been contributing to the topic of tobacco since 1 January 2022, Lennart Hofman (formerly working for De Correspondent) and Laurens Groeneveld (BNR Nieuwsradio) have been carrying out investigations in the area of defence & security since the same date. Maarten Bakker, who previously did research for SOMO, among others, uses his extensive experience for investigations into tax avoidance.

The trainee started work on 1 January 2022. As of 1 October 2021, we have an Editorial Assistant who spends about one day a week on practical tasks such as keeping the agenda of editorial meetings, the project list, the website, etc., and on administrative tasks.

With the same size of staff and roughly the same editorial costs, we were able to publish a significantly larger number of investigations. This reflects our increased effectiveness and efficiency.

### *Diversity*

Of the 16 employees, only 2 were women at the end of 2020. Efforts to improve this ratio have paid off. At present, the team includes 6 women.

### Projects

In 2021, we worked on approximately 45 projects, in all specialisations. This number only includes projects that have reached the preliminary investigation stage; it does not include small-scale explorations around tips and ideas that are still undeveloped. In 2020, this number was around 30.

In total, 34 projects were closed, 27 of which with publications, 7 were discontinued due to lack of (qualitative) results. For more details see the above monthly overview. Another 10 projects have been/will be published in 2022.

### *Defence & security*

This is not an easy area, partly due to the inaccessibility of the organisations and companies involved. OSIFE's start-up funding, granted in June 2019, expired at the end of 2020. Our principal investigator was not able to develop new projects due to long COVID.

Nevertheless, we did start one new investigation in 2021, into the money flows of arms manufacturers passing through the Netherlands. This led to a publication in July.

After a recruitment campaign, we were able to recruit two investigative journalists with expertise in this area by the end of 2021. They started at the beginning of 2022.

### *Energy*

We published 3 investigations in this area. An investigation into Gazprom's economic and political presence in the Netherlands led to two articles on the subject. An investigation into gas ties between the Netherlands and Russia led to two publications, in March and July. An investigation into Shell's influence on the Dutch government's position on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline led to a publication in September.

Two investigations were still ongoing at the end of 2021. One concerns the role of Dutch businesses and science in the fossil exploration/exploitation of the Arctic. This led to two publications in 2022. An investigation into the Dutch role in exploration for deep-sea mining in the Pacific Ocean, aimed at extracting precious metals, was still underway at the time this report was finalised.

### *Pharma & health*

We published 7 investigations in this area. Three were COVID-19 related. One was the interference of the European Commission in the approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. We also discovered that two business associates of the Dutch 'COVID envoy' Feike Sijbesma raked in millions of euros in state aid. An international collaborative project with journalists from four countries concluded that only one in twenty-five Europeans with a COVID-19 infection reported it via a COVID-19 app.

Our investigations into orphan medicinal products led to two revealing articles, one on Zolgensma, a medicine that costs two million euros per drip, and one on Kolbam, which costs hundreds of thousands of euros per year and is now being reproduced by the Amsterdam UMC.

An investigation into the question of what happens to the profits on the COVID-19 vaccines resulted in an article on tax avoidance via the CV/BV construction. Until recently, this was used by many American companies, including Pfizer.

Finally, in late 2021, we published an article on the construction of three proton irradiation centres in the Netherlands, based on extremely weak evidence of effectiveness and inflated numbers of expected patients.

Our major investigation into orphan medicinal products was published in both *The British Medical Journal (BMJ)* and the *Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde (NTVG)*.

In line with the programme as formulated in our policy plan, we continued to work on investigative projects on value-based pricing (one of the most important mechanisms behind the price pressure of orphan medicinal products), the establishment of a financial database on the pharmaceutical industry, the continuing education of specialists, the position of women in clinical trials, the EMA procedures for the authorisation of new medicines and the Dutch and EU policy on combating COVID-19.

### *Food*

In early 2021, some of our employees visited several experts on the subject of nutrition. This led to the formulation of a research agenda and the start of several concrete projects.

In June, we published the results of an investigation into the influence of FrieslandCampina on livestock research at Wageningen University. That same month, we published an article on harmful neonicotinoids, which are still used throughout Europe despite a European ban and thanks to generous exemptions.

In October, our Research Lab published the results of an investigation into the Beter Leven quality mark for chicken meat. The results showed that the supermarkets' promise to sell only one-star Beter Leven chicken brings little joy to the animal itself and actually harms the environment.

At the end of 2021, we also started investigations into the use of commercial teaching packs in primary schools, the sustainability of JDE Peets' coffee production, the PFAS scandal in Flanders (harmful chemicals used for example in non-stick coatings), and the new agreements between the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the food industry on reducing the salt, sugar and fat content of foodstuffs.

### *Tobacco*

We published six investigations in this area. In January, NRC published our article on a tax dispute between BAT and Brazil, in which a Dutch construction plays a role. In March, the same newspaper published our investigation into the cash flows channelled by Philip Morris to Switzerland via the Netherlands. We also incidentally discovered that various departments of the Red Cross still receive money from Philip Morris.

Together with Le Monde, we conducted an extensive investigation into the *Foundation for a Smoke-Free World*, which was established by Philip Morris. In June, *The British Medical Journal* published our story (produced in collaboration with Le Monde) on how the tobacco industry and e-cigarette propagandists tried to use the COVID-19 crisis to promote nicotine sales (via e-cigarettes) under the 'harm reduction' label. In November, NRC and Le Monde published our investigation (in collaboration with Le Monde) into how the tobacco industry is lobbying against stricter European regulation of e-cigarettes through bogus consumer organisations.

That same month, we also reported on the FCTC conference in Geneva.

At the end of the year, four investigations into the tobacco industry were still ongoing:

- An investigation into the tax advantages that Philip Morris manages to secure with regard to the production of tobacco and IQOS in Indonesia (a collaboration with Tempo Magazine).
- An investigation into the way in which the tobacco industry tries to strengthen its image through all sorts of prizes for sustainability and being a good employer.
- An investigation into the tobacco investments of Dutch pension funds.

- An investigation into the possible transfer of tobacco sales from supermarkets to newly established 'convenience stores'.

## Collaborations

### *Netherlands:*

- o Our publication network now consists of Follow the Money investigative journalism platform, online), NRC Handelsblad (daily newspaper, paper and online), Vrij Nederland (monthly magazine, paper and online), the Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde (scientific magazine, paper and online) and Argos (radio and online platform). In practice, it appears to be impossible to work with multiple newspapers and weeklies: we have received explicit signals from De Groene Amsterdammer and Trouw (both of which state that they have an exclusive cooperation agreement with another non-profit organisation), while De Volkskrant apparently only wants to collaborate if one of their own editors is involved in the project.
- o We will continue our collaboration with research bureau IVO Research. At the end of 2021, KWF approved a grant for a four-year collaborative project between IVO Research, TheID, SEO Research and Maastricht University. TheID will take care of the investigative journalism part of the project, including the associated journalistic publications.
- o Together with De Coöperatie, we have been running the Research Lab since early 2020. The fourth round ended in early 2022. In the meantime, the Stimuleringsfonds voor de Journalistiek has awarded another grant for this lab.

### *International:*

- o The collaboration with *The British Medical Journal* continued in 2021. Publication of our investigation into orphan medicinal products was followed by a publication on Remdesivir as part of the international collaborative project Behind the Pledge, in which we participated. In the spring of 2021, *The British Medical Journal* also published a co-production of Le Monde and TheID on conflicts of interest of scientists in the harm reduction movement (advocates of e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products).
- o The collaboration with Le Monde led to two major productions:
  - An investigation into the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World (a cloak organisation of tobacco manufacturer Philip Morris) resulting in a publication in Le Monde, Knack (Belgium) and on FTM.
  - An investigation into the way in which the tobacco industry lobbies against stricter European legislation for e-cigarettes via bogus consumer organisations.
- o Belgian weekly *Knack* has also become a regular publication partner. We published two investigations in Knack in 2021, followed by a third in early 2022.
- o The collaboration of a team of journalists from Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland in the project Behind the Pledge (about the agreements between the EU and the pharmaceutical industry concerning COVID vaccines) was followed up in 2021 by the Follow the Doses project (about the donations of COVID vaccines to Third World countries).

- An investigation into the tax advantages that Philip Morris manages to secure with regard to the production of tobacco and IQOS in Indonesia (a collaboration with Tempo Magazine). This resulted in a first publication in early 2022.

The number of publications from international collaborations amounted to 14 (in 2020: 9).

## Impact:

Collaboration and publishing its articles as widely as possible is The Investigative Desk's main method to achieve social impact. As can be seen in the publication overview and the section on collaboration above, we are successful in this. Several of our publications reached an audience of millions, not only in the Netherlands but also in other European countries.

Based on circulation, as far as known:

Tobacco: 8 articles (including follow-up) in NRC, Trouw, Nu.nl, FTM, NPO Radio 1, Argos, Knack, Le Monde, Internazionale, The BMJ and more.

**Total reach of these articles: approx. 10 million readers.**

Pharma and health: 7 articles (incl. an interview) in Le Monde, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Il Fatto Quotidiano, The BMJ, Business Insider Germany, RAI television, FTM, Knack, NRC, Nu.nl, NTVG.

**Total reach of these articles: approx. 1 million readers.**

Food: 3 articles in NRC, Vrij Nederland, FTM, Nu.nl, Volkskrant, Het Financieele Dagblad, Leeuwarder Courant, Nederlands Dagblad, Reformatorisch Dagblad, Knack.

**Total reach of these articles: over 1 million readers.**

Energy: three articles in FTM, Nu.nl, NPO Radio 1, Business Insider, Telewizja Polska and more.

**Total reach of these articles: 14.8 million readers**

Defence and security: 2 articles in Le Monde Afrique and De Groene Amsterdammer.

**Total reach of these articles: approx. 570,000 readers.**

## *Political impact*

Dutch House of Representatives:

- Questions about money flows of defence companies (Socialist Party - SP).
- Questions on report that gas companies dominate Groningen gas research.
- Questions about incorrect information to the House by Prime Minister Rutte concerning gas contacts with Russia.
- Answers of State Secretary Blokhuis to questions regarding the influence of the tobacco industry on the National Prevention Agreement.

## Research Lab

The second group consisted of three participants and carried out an investigation into the monitoring of homeworkers through the software used. This investigation started in the autumn of 2020, ran into April 2021 and was published in June 2021. The third group also consisted of three participants. It started in March 2021 and investigated the consequences of the supermarkets' switch to the 1-star Beter Leven chicken. This article was published in October. The fourth group started in September 2021 and investigated the negotiations between the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the industry and the health funds to reduce sugar, salt and fat in food. Their article was published in April 2022.

The Lab also wants to help participants in obtaining funding for their research. They generally appear to be successful in obtaining grants for training and projects, and thus recouping at least part of their investment (in time and course fees).

## Funding and revenue model

For the period 2020-2021, we obtained a structural contribution from the KWF Dutch Cancer Society in the amount of €262,130 (excluding VAT on part of the fees and expenses), i.e. €131,065 per year. This contribution concerns our investigations into the tobacco industry. KWF has no influence on the selection of specific projects, the way in which we conduct our research, or on the manner and timing of publication. An evaluation followed in the middle of 2021, which had a positive outcome and led to the allocation of a further €65,532 for the period January-June 2022.

At the end of 2021, KWF decided to award a grant to a consortium of IVO Research, SEO Research, Maastricht University and TheID. The grant will run from 1 April 2022 to 1 April 2026. TheID's share is €143,118.

The Stimuleringsfonds voor de Journalistiek (SVDJ) granted us a subsidy of €141,680 for 2021. The final settlement in 2022 showed that €137,382.86 of this had been used. At the end of 2021, the SVDJ granted us a subsidy of €302,500 for 2022-2023.

The annual report only gives a partial picture of the 'leveraging effect', whereby we use structural funding and reserves for our preliminary investigations and acquire project grants on the basis of those preliminary investigations. Some of those grants are paid directly to individual editors and are not part of the financial statements of the Investigative Desk.

In 2021, our editors acquired around €89,000 in individual project grants, an increase of almost 60% compared to 2020. Just under 30% of this (€25,600) came from European grant funds.

For the development of the revenue model, it is important to look at the ratio of core funding - project funding - own resources. This also includes the individual project subsidies actually spent and the reserves available from the previous year. As can be seen below, the share of core funding decreased in 2021 and the share of project grants and own resources increased significantly (due to changes in the definitions of the various categories, the amounts below differ from those in the 2020 management report).

	2020	2021
Total budget*	438,700	505,800
of which		
- core funding:	274,400 (62.5%)	266,200 (53%)
- project funding:	98,600 (22.5%)	127,300 (25%)
• of which actually spent		
○ collective subsidies**	85,600	60,900
○ individual subsidies**	13,000	66,400
- own resources:	67,500 (15%)	112,300 (22%)
• of which		
○ fees and charges	41,000	64,300
○ available reserves***	26,500	48,000

\* Income plus actual spent personal project grants plus available reserves.

\*\* Project grants actually spent in the relevant year.

\*\*\* Reserves available from the previous year.