Suriname Slave and Emancipation Registers Data Description

1. Introduction

The slave register in the former Dutch colony of Suriname was established by Royal Decree in 1826 to combat the illegal international trade in enslaved people. Slave owners had to report the people in their possession and every mutation (such as births, deaths, purchases, and sales) to a civil servant. By registering people and their transfers, a closed registration was created that made it almost impossible to smuggle people illegally into Suriname.

The registration in the slave registers was a continuous process which was maintained until the abolition of slavery in Suriname on 1 July 1863. Once every three to ten years, civil servants started a new series of registers into which the information that was still relevant was copied. As a result, there were a total of five series of slave registers. Not all the books of the slave registers have been preserved. The 1826-1830 series is completely missing. By estimation, a third of the slave registers from 1830 onwards have been lost, mainly from the older series. Of the 1830-1838 series only 42% of the registers still exists. Later series are much more complete: the survival rate is 55% of the series 1838-1848 and 72% of the series 1848-1851. The last series from 1851 to 1863 is more than 95% complete.

Within the slave registers, a distinction was made between enslaved people owned by plantations and people owned by private slave owners. This distinction makes it possible to research the workforces of different plantations. However, one has to be aware that slave registers registered ownership, not the actual workplace of enslaved people. People could be hired to other plantations. Between 1830 and 1848, the information for each enslaved person is limited. Beside the name of the owner, only the name of the enslaved, the gender and sometimes the age were registered. By new-born children the name of the mother was also mentioned. The dates mentioned in the slave registers are the 'mutation dates', the date of registration of each event, not the actual date of the event. Because some plantations only registered new-borns and deaths only twice a year, there could be months between an event and its registration. Over the years, the information recorded in the slave registers increased. Starting in 1848 the slave registers mention the birth year and the name of the mother of each person, which makes reconstructions of female family lineage possible. From 1850 onwards, the actual dates of births and deaths had to be registered also. Fathers were never registered, and neither was cohabitation. Families were not normally registered together as a group.

When slavery was abolished in 1863, two new registrations were generated. Slave owners had to hand in lists of the people they owned, in order to claim a compensation from the Dutch government. These list, called 'Borderellen', contains information on owner, name of the enslaved, sex, age, religion and occupation. Furthermore, a register of names was created for each district in which the emancipated former enslaved were registered with their new family name, first names, year of birth, name they had before 1863, place of living and sometimes information on family relations. The information in these two sources was combined by Lamur et al (2004) in one Emancipation dataset.[1] This dataset is added to the database with the permission of the authors.

2. Files

The database consists of Slaveregister_Suriname_V1.0 stored as a .csv according to the open standards.

- Commas (,) as separators
- Quotation marks (" ") to signal text fields
- Stored in UTF-8

Slaveregister_Suriname_V1.0 contains enslaved life course information. Each row in the data represents a unique entry within the slave registers for one individual. Individuals can have multiple entries within the registers, for example, when they were sold to another owner or when they appeared in several series. The enslaved life course between 1830 and 1863 can be reconstructed by linking all entries using the Id_person variable.

The second file contains this data description, stored as a pdf.

3. Data quality

The current release builds on the public release of the Suriname slave register data: Van Galen, C., AB, M., Mourits, R. & Rosenbaum-Feldbrügge, M. (2019). Suriname: Slavenregisters Dataset 1830-1863. Nationaal Archief.[2]

The original slave registers were scanned by the National Archives of Suriname in April-July 2017. They were transcribed by some 400 volunteers on the online crowdsourcing platform Velehanden.nl between June and November 2017. Each scan was transcribed by two different volunteers. Both transcriptions were checked by a third volunteer and corrected if necessary. After completion of the input, the entire database was checked again by Maartje A.B., Matthias Rosenbaum-Feldbrügge and Coen van Galen of Radboud University Nijmegen. Typos were removed from this database, but it was not edited further.

For the current release, we corrected minor mistakes in the earlier release and reconstructed the individual life courses between and within the four series with the help of matching algorithms developed in the statistical software R. Using basically the same algorithms, we additionally

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[1] Lamur, H.E., 2004: Familienaam & verwantschap van geëmancipeerde slaven in Suriname. Amsterdam: LM Publishers.
[2] https://hdl.handle.net/2066/214235

matched the final series of the slave register with the emancipation register. For more information on the matching procedure have a look at the appendix below.

As the Surinamese slave registers are incomplete, it is not possible to fully reconstruct all individual life courses. Moreover, we regard this first version as work in progress as it still contains incorrect matches. Furthermore, not all correct matches have been successfully identified so far, as our goal was to minimize the total number of incorrect matches. These issues will be addressed in the next releases.

4. Variable overview

Table A1. Variable overview of the variables in Slaveregister_Suriname_V1.0

Category	Variable	Description	Type
Identifiers	Id_person	Person identifier (primary key)	constructed
	Id_source	Entry identifier	unaltered
General	Name_enslaved	The name of the research person	unaltered
	Sex	Sex of the research person	logical edit
	Age	Age of the research person as stated in the register	unaltered
	Age_Sex	Categories for age and sex as stated in the register	logical edit
	Day_birth	Day of birth	constructed
	Month_birth	Month of birth	constructed
	Year_birth	Year of birth	unaltered
	Year_birth2_ER	Second year of birth from emancipation register	unaltered
	Day_death	Day of death	constructed
	Month_death	Month of death	constructed
	Year_death	Year of death	constructed
	Name_mother	Name of the mother of the enslaved person	unaltered
	Plantation	Name of the plantation for that entry	standardized
	Name_owner	Name of the owner for that entry	unaltered
Start entry	StartEntryDay	Start day entry	constructed
	StartEntryMonth	Start month entry	constructed
	StartEntryYear	Start year entry	constructed
	StartEntryInfo	Reason for start entry (Dutch)	unaltered
	StartEntryEventDetailed	Detailed reason for start entry	constructed
	StartEntryEvent	Reason for start entry	constructed
End entry	EndEntryDay	End day entry	constructed
	EndEntryMonth	End month entry	constructed
	EndEntryYear	End year entry	constructed
	EndEntryInfo	Reason for end entry (Dutch)	unaltered
	EndEntryEventDetailed	Detailed reason for end entry	constructed
	EndEntryEvent	Reason for end entry	constructed
Emancipation register	First_name	First name after emancipation	unaltered
	Family_name	Family name after emancipation	unaltered
	Baptized_name	Baptized name	unaltered
	Family_relations	Information about family members	unaltered
	Occupation	Occupation on emancipation register	unaltered
	Remarks_ER	Further remarks on emancipation register	unaltered
Source	Inventory_number	Inventory number of the original source	unaltered
	Folio_number	Folio number of the original source	unaltered
	Serieregister	Year of the register	unaltered
	Typeregister	Type of the register	unaltered

A. Extensive variable description

Id_person
Unique person identifier which contains all observations of an individual.

Id_source
Entry identifier for records from the slave registers. It is empty for records from the emancipation register. For instance, the entry identifier 21240465315 is build up out of the following:
- 21 stands for the inventory number
- 2404 stands for the folio number
- 65315 is a random unique number and has no meaning

The source order can be used to identify the original source and retrieve the original scan.

Name_enslaved
The name of the enslaved person as transcribed from the original source. It is the original name as stated in the source, which implies that the name might vary across the unique person identifier.

Sex
Sex of the enslaved person. When the sex was not written down in the original source, it was added based on the first name. When the missing sex could not be derived from the first name either, we added the category "unknown". The emancipation register does not contain information about sex.

Age
Age of the enslaved person, which was only registered in Serie 1. For the other series, the age can be derived from the birth date (Day_birth, Month_birth, Year_birth). Ages above 80 were verified manually based on the original source.

Age_Sex
A categorical variable indicating whether the enslaved person was registered as a girl, woman, boy, or man. This variable can be used as a crude indicator for whether the enslaved person was of working age or not. This information was only registered in Serie 1.

Day_birth
Birth day of the enslaved person as stated in that particular entry (often missing in earlier series). Also derived from StartEntryInfo.

Month_birth
Birth month of the enslaved person as stated in that particular entry (often missing in earlier series). Also derived from StartEntryInfo.

Year_birth
Birth year of the enslaved person as stated in that particular entry (often missing in earlier series). Also derived from StartEntryInfo. Birth years below 1770 were verified manually based on the original source. Implausible birth years (such as 1700) were kept when they were registered in the original source.

Year_birth2_ER
Second possible birth year of the enslaved person as stated on the emancipation register.

Day_death

Death day of the enslaved person as stated in that particular entry (often missing in earlier series). Also derived from EndEntryInfo.

Month_death

Death month of the enslaved person as stated in that particular entry (often missing in earlier series). Also derived from EndEntryInfo.

Year_death

Death year of the enslaved person as stated in that particular entry. Also derived from EndEntryInfo.

Name_mother

The name of the enslaved person's mother as transcribed from the original source. It is the original mother's name as stated in the source, which implies that it might vary across the unique person identifier.

Plantation

The standardized name of the plantation the enslaved person was associated with. More information about the particular plantations may be found on the separate Plantations_Suriname V1.0 dataset (Rosenbaum-Feldbrügge, van Galen & Swaters, 2023).

Name_owner

The name of the owner of the enslaved person as stated in the original source.

StartEntryDay

The day on which the observation starts.

StartEntryMonth

The month on which the observation starts.

StartEntryYear

The year on which the observation starts.

StartEntryInfo

This field contains information regarding the start of the observation. If the field was empty, the start year of the specific series was used, but month and day were specified as missing (-1). The information in this field is as stated in the original source (and therefore in Dutch).

StartEntryEventDetailed, StartEntryEvent

Based on the key words in the column StartEntryInfo the entry event of an observation was standardized. They range from a detailed entry to a more general start or transfer observation. The extraction method can be found in the appendix.

StartEntryEventDetailed	StartEntryEvent
Start Series	Start Series
Acquired (executie)	
Acquired (vendu)	
Acquired/Inherited for Freedom	Transferred
Acquired/Transferred	
Exchanged	

Inherited	
Birth	Birth
Unknown	Unknown

EndEntryDay
The day on which the observation ends.

EndEntryMonth
The month on which the observation ends.

EndEntryYear
The year on which the observation ends.

EndEntryInfo
This field contains information regarding the end of the observation. If the field was empty, the end year of the specific series was used, but month and day were specified as missing (-1). The information in this field is as stated in the original source (and therefore in Dutch).

EndEntryEventDetailed, EndEntryEvent
Based on the key words in the column: EndEntryInfo the end event of an observation was standardized. They range from a detailed entry to a more general end or transfer observation. The extraction method can be found in the appendix.

EndEntryEventDetailed	EndEntryEvent
End Series	Ended
End Series/Freedom	
Freedom	Freedom
Escaped	Escaped
Diseased	Diseased
Death	Death
Drowned	
Killed	
Exchanged	Transferred
Given away	
Given away by Inheritance	
Sold	
Sold/Given away for Freedom	
Sold (executie)	
Sold (vendu)	
Transferred	
Written off	Written off
Unknown	Unknown

First_name
Unaltered first name of the formerly enslaved person as stated on the emancipation register made available by Lamur (2004). Corrected for typos.

Family_name
Unaltered family name of the formerly enslaved person as stated as stated on the emancipation register made available by Lamur (2004). Corrected for typos.

Baptized_name
Unaltered baptized name of the formerly enslaved person as stated on the emancipation register made available by Lamur (2004). Corrected for typos.

Family_relations
Unaltered information about family members as stated as stated on the emancipation register made available by Lamur (2004) [in Dutch].

Occupation
Unaltered information about occupations as stated on the emancipation register made available by Lamur (2004) [in Dutch].

Remarks_ER
Unaltered additional remarks as stated on the emancipation register made available by Lamur (2004) [in Dutch].

Inventory_number
Inventory number of the original source (only available for slave registers).

Folio_number
Folio number of the original source (only available for slave registers).

Serieregister
Period of the specific series (1830-1838; 1838-1848; 1848-1851; 1851-1863). For emancipation register it is 1863.

Typeregister
Type of the register. For the slave registers we differentiate between private owners and plantations.

B. Cleaning

1. Slave registers

Cleaning started with the slave registers which are published with the Dutch National Archives by Van Galen, C., AB, M., Mourits, R. & Rosenbaum-Feldbrügge, M. (2019). The cleaning scripts are called *Standardization.do* and *Cleaning_Slaveregisters_1.1.R.*

1.1 Split and standardize certain variables

Variable	Action
Naam	• Split names and attributes ("klein", "2e") • Standardize attributes • Write out abbreviated names
Geslacht	• If the sex is unknown, the correct sex has been inferred by looking at other entries with the same/similar name. We corrected all names where <25% had the alternative sex, except for: Cato, Jannie, Jantje, Minosabi(e), and Pietje.
Geboortedatum	• Split into day of birth, month of birth and year of birth (if applicable) • Derive additional birth dates from the variable *datumtekst_inschrijving*
Leeftijd	• For individuals with an age instead of a birth year (only in Serie 1), the birth year is derived based on the age and the year of entry. • Children below age 1 (such as "1/3" or "4 maanden") are defined as age zero. • If an age range is given ("40-45 jaren") the lowest value is taken. • If the age range is too wide ("van 20 tot 80 jaren") no age is given.
Moedersnaam	• Derive additional mothers' names from the variable *datumtekst_inschrijving* ("uit Flora") • Split names and attributes ("klein", "2e") • Standardize attributes • Write out abbreviated names
Eigenaar	• For plantations: split into plantation name and district; standardize plantation names and districts • For private owners: identify the last name which is later used for matching; add information on widows, representatives etc. in separate columns; standardize last names to a certain degree (i.e., remove white spaces)
Datum_inschrijving	• Split into start day, start month, and start year (if applicable)
Datum_uitschrijving	• Split into end day, end month, and end year (if applicable)

1.2 Add start event

The start event is inferred from the variable *datumtekst_inschrijving* based on certain key words. The events have additionally been checked manually.

Start Event	Start Event General	*datumtekst_inschrijving contains…*
Acquired (executie)	Transferred	executie
Acquired (vendu)	Transferred	vendu, veiling

Acquired/Inherited for Freedom	Transferred	vrijdom
Acquired/Transferred	Transferred	geko; aankoo; gek; gekt; van…; verkr; overgeschr; overschrijv; ingeschr; inschrijv; overgega; overgebra; overgenom; afgeschreven
Birth	Birth	gebo; uit…; birth year equal to entry year; birth year equal to entry year -1
Exchanged	Transferred	ruil
Inherited	Transferred	geschonken; geschenk; schenking; donat; ervenis; erfenis; lega; erfgena; geerfd
Start Series	Start Series	if day_entry missing and month_entry missing and year_entry equal to 1830 or 1838 or 1848 or 1851
Unknown	Unknown	If nothing else applies

1.3 Add end event

The end event is inferred from the variable *datumtekst_uitschrijving* based on certain key words. The events have additionally been checked manually.

End Event	End Event General	*datumtekst_uitschrijving* contains
Written off	Written off	afgeschreven
Death	Death	overl
Diseased	Diseased	besmet; lepra; batavia
Drowned	Death	verdronken
End Series	Ended	if day_exit missing and month_exit missing and year_exit equal to 1838 or 1848 or 1851
End Series/Freedom	Ended	if day_exit equal to 1 and month_exit equal to 7 and year_exit equal to 1863
Escaped	Escaped	ontvlugt; gelopen; geloopen
Exchanged	Transferred	ruil
Freedom	Freedom	vrij; manum; gemannu
Given away	Transferred	geschonken; geschenke; donat; gecede, schenking
Given away by inheritance	Transferred	lega; erfenis; ervenis; geërfd
Killed	Death	moord; geschoten
Transferred	Transferred	overg; overschr
Sold	Transferred	verk; aan…
Sold/Given for Freedom	Transferred	verk + vrijdom; vrijdom
Sold (executie)	Transferred	executie; executive
Sold (vendu)	Transferred	vendu; veiling
Unknown	Unknown	If nothing else applies

1.4 Add date of death

Often the date of death is recorded in the variable *datumtekst_uitschrijving*. If present, this date is extracted and split into day of death, month of death, and year of death.

2. Emancipation Register

Cleaning started with the emancipation dataset which is published with the Dutch National Archives by Lamur (2004). The cleaning script is called "*clean Emancipation_register.R*".

2.1 Correct obvious typos and inconsistencies from the original dataset

Some examples:

Variable	Original version	Corrected version
Geboortejaar	,850 1302 1959	1850 1802 1859
Vestiging	Paramaribo li Rae a Rac Merveiiie	Paramaribo II Rac a Rac Merveille
Eigenaar	B randt. C Cruder). G LierJ. van	Brandt. C Cruder. G Lier. J. van
Naam voor 1863	Le eentje CarolinagedooptVinitia Charles=Cornelis	Leentje Carolina gedoopt Vinitia Charles of Cornelis
Geslachtsnaam	5251 Christian! | 197 Adnis 29977 vander leende	5251 Christiani 197 Adnis 29977 van der Leende

2.2 Split and standardize certain variables

Variable	Action
Geboortejaar	Split into day of birth, month of birth, year of birth 1 and year of birth 2 (if applicable)
Vestiging/Negernaam	• Split into Vestiging (official name of place of residence) and Negernaam (slave name of place of residence) • Vestiging standardized according to plantation names in slave registers
Eigenaar	Split into last name and the rest
Naam voor 1863	Split into first name, second name, third name, attributes (klein, I) and baptized name (if applicable)
Beroep/Aantekening	Split into Beroep (occupation) and Aaantekening (remarks)

2.3 Adjust place of residence according to Lamur's footnotes

In the original dataset there are footnotes added mentioning the enslaved individual's actual place of residence. This information has been used to replace the originally stated place of residence with the actual place of residence.

2.4 Assign unique identifier to each record and save

The unique identifier Id_person begins with "ER-" and is followed by a random 5-digit-number. It is saved as *Emancipatieregister_cleaned.csv*.

C. Record linkage

1. Between and within the slave registers

The script *matching.R* contains the matching programs to match entries between and within series.

1.1 Standardize enslaved names and mothers' names

Individual names and mothers' names were prepared to make linkage easier and more effective:
- Leading blanks, internal blanks, and trailing blanks were removed
- All names were stored as lower case
- Certain letters and letter combinations were replaced to increase linkage success:

Original letters	Replaced by
of	
ç	c
é	e
kw	qu
ph	f

1.2 Levensthein distance

We matched names of enslaved, mothers, and owners with a maximum Levenshtein distance based on the length of the name. Names of enslaved and mothers are matched with a maximum Levenshtein distance based on the length of the name:

Characters	Max Lev distance between series	Max Lev distance within series
3	1	1
4-8	2	2
9+	3	3

Names of plantations are standardized and therefore matched exactly; private owners are matched based on the last name with a maximum Levensthein distance based on the length of the last name.

Characters	Max Lev distance between series
3-5	1
6-8	2
9+	3

1.3 Matching procedure

Entries are matched in five steps as shown in the table underneath.

Step	Between matching	Within matching
0. Data selection	**Filter** - Out event entry 1 is end series *or* event year is last year of series - In event entry 2 is begin series *or* event year is first year of series	**Filter** - Out event entry 1 is a transfer - In event entry 2 is a transfer

1. Retrieval	**Match entries by** - Name enslaved - Name owner	**Match entries by** - Name enslaved
2. Rule-based filter	**Select matches if:** - Sex is identical *or* unknown - Name mother matches *or* is unknown - Year of birth is identical *or* unknown *or* names enslaved in preceding and proceeding entries match *or* name enslaved in preceding entry matches and no proceeding event entry 1	**Select matches if:** - Prevent that entries match themselves - Sex is identical *or* unknown - Name mother matches *or* is unknown - Year of birth is identical *or* unknown *or* month and day of birth are identical - Year of transfer is identical *or* unknown *or* month and day of transfer are identical
3. Probabilistic matching	**Score matching indicators and select highest scoring match per entry:** - Identical name match (0.5 pts) *only between 1-2* - Name mother (2.5 pts) - Addendum name mother (1 pt) - Addendum name enslaved (1 pt) - Year of birth (2 pts) - Name enslaved in preceding entry (1 pt) - Name enslaved in proceeding entry (1 pt)	**Score matching indicators and select highest scoring match per entry:** - Name mother (2.5 pts) - Addendum name mother (1 pt) - Addendum name enslaved (1 pt) - Year of birth (2 pt) - Year of transfer (2 pts) - Month of transfer (1 pt) - Day of transfer (1 pt) - Month *and* day of transfer (1 pt) - Name enslaved in preceding entry (1 pt) - Name enslaved in proceeding entry (1 pt)
4. Remove matches	**Remove matches that have** - Match scores lower than 1 for matching between Serie 3 and 4 - Match scores lower than 0 for matching between Serie 2 and 3 - Match scores lower than 0 for matching between Serie 1 and 2 - Match scores lower than 0 for matching between Serie 2 and 4 - Match scores lower than 0 for matching between Serie 1 and 4 - Match scores lower than 0 for matching between Serie 1 and 3	**Remove matches that have** - Match scores lower than 7 for matching within Serie 4 - Match scores lower than 7 for matching within Serie 3 - Match scores lower than 8 for matching within Serie 2 - Match scores lower than 8 for matching within Serie 1
5. Add unmatched cases	**Append** - Matches records from step 3 - Unmatched records from step 0 and step 4	**Append** - Matched records from step 3 - Unmatched records from step 0 and step 4
6. Add metadata	**Show Levenshtein distance:** - Name enslaved - Name owner - Name mother - Name preceding entry - Name proceeding entry	**Show Levenshtein distance:** - Name enslaved - Name mother - Name preceding entry - Name proceeding entry

		Add variables - Remarks entry - Remarks exit
	Flag matched information: - Entry - Addendum name enslaved - Name mother - Addendum name mother - Birth year - Name preceding entry - Name proceeding entry - Out event	**Flag matched information:** - Entry - Addendum name enslaved - Name mother - Addendum name mother - Birth year - Name preceding entry - Name proceeding entry - Year of transfer - Month of transfer - Day of transfer

2. Between end of slave register series4 and emancipation register

The script *matching.R* contains the matching programs to match entries between the slave register and the emancipation register.

1.1 Add sex to emancipation register

As sex is not available in the emancipation register, before starting the matching procedure we inferred the sex of the individuals based on their first names. To achieve this, we used information on sex and name combinations derived from the slave registers.

1.2 Standardize enslaved names

Individual names were prepared to make linkage easier and more effective:
- Leading blanks, internal blanks, and trailing blanks were removed
- All names were stored as lower case
- Certain letters and letter combinations were replaced to increase linkage success:

Original letters	Replaced by
of	
ç	c
é	e
kw	qu
ph	f

1.3 Matching procedure

Step	Matching between slave registers and emancipation register
0. Data selection	**Filter** • Everyone in the emancipation register • Everyone in the slave register who was present on 1 July 1863
1. Retrieval	**Match entries by** • Name enslaved (allowed Levensthein distance == 3)
2. Rule-based filter	**Select matches if** • Sex is identical *or* unknown • Plantation name is identical for those on plantations • Owner's name is similar for those with private owners (allowed Levensthein distance for owner's name ==3)
3. Probabilistic matching	**Score matching indicators and select highest scoring match per entry:** • B_year1 is in the range [0-1] with birth year in slave register (3pts) • B_year1 is in the range [2-3] with birth year in slave register (2pts) • B_year1 is in the range [2-3] with birth year in slave register (1pt) • B_year2 is in the range [0-1] with birth year in slave register (3pts) • B_year2 is in the range [2-3] with birth year in slave register (2pts) • B_year2 is in the range [2-3] with birth year in slave register (1pt) • Name number is identical (1pt) • Owner's name is very similar depending on the length of the owner's name (2pts)

4. Remove matches	**Remove matches that have** • Identical match scores but higher Levensthein distance • Match scores lower than 1 for individuals on plantations • Match scores lower than 2 for individuals with private owners
5. Rerun with less restrictions	• Rerun the analysis (step 1-4) for the unmatched individuals but now also allow matches between individuals on plantations and privately owned individuals
6. Create final dataset	**Append** • Matched entries • Unmatched entries • Entries with more than one possible match to the final dataset. Flag unmatched entries and those with more than one possible match. Add relevant variables from the original dataset.

D. Creating the final reconstituted dataset

The final dataset containing the matched entries from the slave registers and the emancipation register has been created in the following steps.

Step	Action
1. Prepare the matched datasets	• Remove unnecessary variables and assign (identical) English names to the remaining variables • Assign emancipation records the StartEntryDate 01-07-1863 • Only keep emancipation records that have successfully been matched to not more than one entry from the slave register
2. Append dataset	• Append the two datasets and add a unique identifier for each individual starting from 1 (Id_person) • Arrange the entries according to Id_person. StartEntryYear, StartEntryMonth, and StartEntryDay
3. Save	• Save the final dataset as .txt and .xlsx

E. Work in progress

The current version of the database is work in progress. We are aware that there remain many problems that need to be solved in the future. Researchers need to be aware of the following caveats before using the data. These issues will be addressed in the next releases.

- As the Surinamese slave registers are incomplete, it is not possible to fully reconstruct all individual life courses. Particularly Series 1 and 2 are missing many registers which implies that conclusions based on those two series are less trustworthy.

- This first version still contains incorrect matches.

- Individuals may have different birth years as we kept the information from the original sources.

- As our goal was to minimize the total number of incorrect matches, not all correct matches have been successfully identified so far. Accordingly, we aim to improve our matching algorithms in the future to add more correct matches to the database.