The EHRI Project: Developing a Pan-European Archival Infrastructure for Holocaust Research

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CONNECTING COLLECTIONS
Outline

What?  EHRI background, ambitions and context
Why?  The need for international co-operation
How?  Methods of international co-operation
So what?  General conclusions
The main objective of EHRI is to support the Holocaust research community by

1. **integrating** information on key archival **collections** and **institutions** into an online portal ([https://portal.ehri-project.eu](https://portal.ehri-project.eu))

2. **encouraging** collaborative Holocaust **research and archiving** and investigating new methodologies

[www.ehri-project.eu](http://www.ehri-project.eu)
What? A Digital infrastructure and a human network

Digital infrastructure

- Online Portal (https://portal.ehri-project.eu)
- Online Training (https://training.ehri-project.eu)
- Document Blog (https://blog.ehri-project.eu)
- Online Editions (work in progress)
- Digital Methods and Tools (work in progress)

Human Network

- Fellowship programme
- Training seminars
- Workshops and conferences
What? EHRI Facts

EHRI-1

October 2010 - March 2015
~ EUR 7 mio funding (EU FP7)
20 partners

EHRI-2

May 2015 – April 2019
~EUR 8 Mio (EU H2020)
24 partners

EHRI-forever?

Efforts to transform time-bound project into a permanent European organisation

Long term goal of establishing an European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC).
Why co-operation? Geography of the Holocaust

- Holocaust as a European phenomenon taking place over a vast geographic space.
- Migration and refugees
- Multiplicity of documentation projects after the war
Why? Fragmentation of the archival record

So far EHRI has identified **1,942 archival institutions** located in **51 countries** that hold relevant archival sources.

*Location of institutions holding Holocaust-related collections as described in the EHRI Portal*
EHRI focuses on Eastern Europe because ...

- Main locus of the crime
- Majority of Holocaust victims lived in Eastern Europe
- Local archives often still underexplored and under-described
- In places, weak institutional networks and infrastructural support

Why? Capacity gaps between European regions
How? EHRI Consortium

24 partner institutions from 17 countries, representing archives, libraries, museums, research institutions & a large network of associated partners
How? Exchange of knowledge across borders

Principles

- Plurality, diversity and horizontality
- Foster a decentralised network
- Knowledge is held locally but distributed globally
- Evidence based: surveying the needs of archival institutions

Local partners provide EHRI with

- Access to local knowledge (collections, research trends, etc.)
- Access to local archival and research networks

Local partners receive

- Integration into international research infrastructure landscape
- European/global reach
- Access to innovative methodologies, tools, et al.
How? Capacity building in Eastern Europe

… Help regions without strong networks and infrastructures …

Enhance information
Support institutions
Support individuals

- Data integration activities
- Co-organisation of events
- Fellowship and Training programmes
So what? Benefits of international co-operation

**Broadening of horizons**
- Historiographical progress through integration of sources, knowledge and expertise

**Mutual benefits**
- access to expertise
- cross-fertilisation
- widening of audience

**Transnational framework**
- access to funding
- access to a support network
NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NL)

CEGESOMA Centre for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society (BE)

Jewish Museum in Prague (CZ)

Center for Holocaust Studies at the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich (DE)

YAD VASHEM The Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority (IL)

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USA)

Bundesarchiv (DE)

The Wiener Library Institute for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide (UK)

Holocaust Documentation Centre (SK)

Polish Center for Holocaust Research (PL)

The Jewish Museum of Greece (GR)

Jewish Historical Institute (PL)

King’s College London (UK)

Ontotext AD (BG)

Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of Holocaust in Romania (RO)

DANS Data Archiving and Networked Services (NL)

Shoah Memorial, Museum, Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation (FR)

ITS International Tracing Service (DE)

Hungarian Jewish Archives (HU)

INRIA Institute for Research in Computer Science and Automation (FR)

Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum (LT)

VWI Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (AT)

Foundation Jewish Contemporary Documentation Center (IT)
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THANK YOU

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