

An Introduction to

Historiana

Purpose of this Document

The introduction has been developed to inform people who are interested about the Historiana Programme.

What is Historiana?

Historiana is an international programme initiated by EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators and the Netherlands Institute for Heritage, on history and heritage education in Europe. The main outcome of this project is a thematic website that enables young generations to learn about their past. Historiana offers access to a plurality of historical sources and well-developed teaching and learning ideas to educators, students and other users.

The website is currently organized around seven themes: People on the Move, Rights and Responsibilities, Conflict and Cooperation, Life and Leisure, Work and Technology, Ideas and Ideologies, and the Environment. These themes are relevant for all people, regardless of their cultural, religious or ethnic background and highlight shared historical experiences in Europe and beyond. Each theme has an introduction and timeline that show that local, regional and national histories are connected to wider European narratives. Historiana does not only promote historical knowledge and critical thinking, but also enables the acquisition of key competences and the skills that are important for active citizens.

Historiana contains a great variety of digital historical sources and national case studies that are ideal for use in a trans border and culturally diverse settings. Historiana offers the opportunity to compare and contrast various locations and periods in Europe's past, to highlight similarities as well as differences in the experiences of people, the causes and consequences of historical developments; and in the legacies that remained. Historiana offers a first real alternative solution to the idea of a European History Textbook.

Why is Historiana initiated?

History is an inseparable part of the project of European integration. National histories are traditionally introspective and teach little about linkages between the nations. History can help young people understand the European space and its relation to their own identities.

Undoubtedly most nations in Europe count large numbers of students whose immigrant or minority families do not share a common historical experience. To that extent, history teachers increasingly deal with heterogeneous historical cultures as reflected by the plurality of their pupils. Indeed, they cannot simply create 'more inclusive' historical narratives as the diverse student population also introduces different and frequently conflicting perspectives in an attempt to give meaning to the 'same' events.

Therefore, it is evident that a new approach towards history education based on mutual understanding and multi-perspectivity is of urgent need in the history education. Historiana will provide such an approach and also include audiovisual sources and interactive features. By doing so, it will make use of the wealth of digitized source materials by museums, archives and other heritage institutes offers unprecedented opportunities to make history and heritage tangible for students.

Historiana will help educators to find material and resources that are already online, making it easier for them to relevant educational material. Historiana will achieve this, by enabling users to access the by theme, period and location. Since the focus of the project is on implementation, the selected material will be complementary to the different curricula in Europe.

A Thematic Approach

The thematic approach has been chosen because looking into history from a thematic angle makes it easier to see connections between historical events, the relevance for the world we live in and legacy that remains. The broad nature of the themes that are chosen makes them relevant for various contexts, so that the material can be used for multiple purposes. The thematic approach makes it possible to trace back long term developments, see and analyze turning points in history and see similarities and difference between events and locations. Through this, it shows what people share, with respect for diversity.

People on the Move

People on the move is a common theme in history and heritage as people have been on the move throughout history to escape poverty, famine, plague, war, unemployment, pogroms and political and religious persecution, and many have left their homes in search of a better standard of living for themselves and their families. They moved from rural communities to towns, they crossed borders within Europe, many left Europe in search of a better life and many came to Europe from the rest of the world for the very same reason. All these migrations have contributed to making the Europe and the world what it is today.



- Economic Migration
- Forced Migration
- Refugees
- Post-Imperial Migration
- Conquest and Colonies
- Travelers and Explorer

Rights and Responsibilities

Rights and Responsibilities is a common theme in history and heritage as ordinary people have been engaged throughout history in a prolonged and sometimes violent struggle against those who wield power and authority over them, whether they are tyrants, absolute monarchs, dictators, totalitarian states, multi-national corporations or democratically-elected governments. Here we look at that struggle; the events, developments, ideas and movements that have shaped this struggle; the steps that have been taken to protect those hard-won rights and the growing recognition that with rights come responsibilities - not least the responsibility to exercise our rights in such a way that they do not infringe on other people's rights.



- Social Rights
- Economic Rights
- Civic Rights
- Political Rights
- Cultural Rights

Life and Leisure

When we look at the history of ordinary people we get a whole new perspective on historical events. We usually know what the generals thought about the battles they fought and won because most of them wrote their memoirs to remind us of their successes and to explain away their failures. But what did the ordinary soldiers, the ones who did the fighting for the generals, think about it all? Well some of them kept diaries, or wrote letters home, or, if they came home safely afterwards, talked about their experiences to other people who had the foresight to write down or record what they were told. Similarly, ordinary people have provided vivid impressions of their individual experiences of social life and leisure activities. Through studying not just the historical record but also art, fashion and literature in different historical periods we can get insights into how aspects of life that everyone experiences can have a very different meaning for people at different times.

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- Home and family life
- Childhood
- Medicine and hygiene
- Pastimes, recreation and sport
- Tourism: from the Grand Tour to Disneyland
- The age of cinema
- Television and the Digital Age

Work and Technology

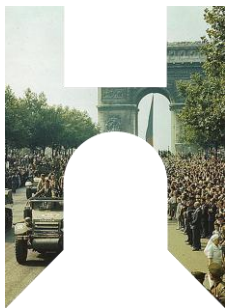
In the 21st century, people associate work with paid employment with technology and the practical application of scientific knowledge. But these are modern definitions. Further back in time work simply meant physical effort - the technologies people used were the tools that they had created to help them do this work. Work and technology have always been two of the main drivers which shape the way we live and behave towards each other. On the one hand they reflect people's ongoing struggle to sustain themselves and their families. On the other hand, they also reflect the capacity we humans have for creativity, invention and problem solving. No matter what kind of work people are doing, you can be sure some of them are looking for ways to make that work easier, more productive and more efficient.



- Hunters and Gatherers
- Agriculture
- Commerce and Banking
- Industrialisation
- Transport and Mass Communications
- The post-industrial society

Conflict and Cooperation

Conflict is a normal part of human behavior. Sometimes conflicts are launched by deliberate intent; often they arise because of miscalculation and misunderstanding. Conflicts tend to arise when individuals or groups find themselves in competition with other individuals or groups. Conflicts may be over sharing a disputed homeland, or sharing scarce resources. Conflicts may occur because people want to protect their own interests, even if this is at the expense of the interests of other people. Conflicts may arise because people want to be the ones who are in control of their area. Conflicts may arise because people fear other people's intentions towards them, perhaps because efforts at cooperation have broken down. Or it may just be because people feel threatened in some intangible way by others who have a different way of life, different beliefs and values, different friends and allies. However they arise, conflicts are not a permanent way of life and they do not last forever. Conflicts usually get resolved in some fashion, leading to cooperation and perhaps reconciliation.



- Important historical battles and wars
- The emergence of Diplomacy
- Religion and conflict
- Uprisings and Revolutions
- Peace and the Balance of Power
- Civil Wars

Ideas and Ideologies

For most of human history religion had a monopoly of providing answers to many of the questions people ask about their world. From the 16th century onwards science increasingly offered an alternative set of answers to those questions. But, of course, people are social animals. People ask questions which scientists are not interested in and, often cannot answer. What is right and wrong? What is good and bad? How does living in a state of nature differ from living in a society? What are our responsibilities and obligations as a member of society and what are our rights? Should our positions in society – our status – depend on who our parents were and how wealthy we are or should everyone be treated as equals? These are important questions about society's values: how we should live and how we should treat each other.



- Scientific Ideas
- Religious Ideas
- Political Ideologies
- Philosophical Ideas
- Cultural Ideas

The Environment

Traditionally history is the story of human beings, the cultures and societies they have created and the relations between them. But we also need to understand our relationship with nature and, in particular, our relationship with the environment we inhabit. We usually associate the study of the environment with geographers, geologists, biologists, botanists and ecologists. However, the historian provides an additional perspective by looking at the ways in which nature and environment have influenced the course of human history and the impact that human beings have had on their environment. This includes looking at how the environment has changed over time and the impact that this has had on people; the development of human settlements and the creation of a built environment; the ways in which people have used and tried to control natural resources; and the issues that now confront humanity as a result of climate change, rapid population growth and urban development, pollution, deforestation and the depletion of natural resources that cannot be renewed.

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- Energy
- Pollution
- Landscape/Use
- Manmade Environment
- Scarce Resources

What will Historiana offer?

To users:

- A wide variety of historical sources including extracts from important documents, photographs, cartoons, maps and audio-visual material.
- Timelines that show how Europe has changed over the centuries and how it has been influenced by important global events and developments.
- Activities that help one to develop and test historical skills and suggestions for educators on how to use the material here to support their teaching.
- The choice to focus on the history of a country, a region or the whole of Europe.
- Ways to show how events that took place in the long and distant past are still influencing the way we live today and the ways in which we perceive each other.
- Educational modules that are structured around a number of historical themes that help to understand the forces and the dynamics of history and show that there is rarely just one way of interpreting historical events and developments.

To educators:

- Easy access to high quality sources and educational tasks which can be used for direct implementation on a variety of themes.
- Teaching ideas from contributors, editors and peers on how Historiana can best be used in various contexts tailored to each target group as inspiration to further improve teaching practices.
- Ideas to make best use of the opportunities that are offered within the EU Lifelong Learning Programme that are offered to stimulate international cooperation including school partnerships and the eTwinning workspace.
- Historiana Training Courses on one of the themes to get further training on and exchange innovative teaching methodologies with an international group of educators.

To museums, archives and heritage institutions:

- The opportunity to make collections accessible and visible in an educational framework and reach out to new communities of users.
- The opportunity to make best use of collections that cannot be displayed in the museum or archive itself

The people behind Historiana

Programme Coordinator

- Steven Stegers, EUROCLIO - European Association of History Educators
- Geert Kessels, EUROCLIO - European Association of History Educators

Editor-in-Chief

- dr. Robert Stradling

Advisory Group

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- Bogdan Murgescu, EUSTORY - History Network for Young Europeans
- Dean Smart, HTEN - History Teachers Education Network
- Harald Geiss, Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung
- Harry Rogge, EUROGEO – European Association of Geographers
- Jill Cousins, Europeana – Think Culture
- Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, EUROCLIO – European Association of History Educators
- Margherita Sani, NE-MO – Network of European Museum Organisations
- Maria Grever, Centre for Historical Culture – Erasmus University
- Richard Hermans, Netherlands Institute for Heritage
- Robert Maier, GEI – Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research
- Ruth Fisher, Understanding Slavery Project
- Laurie Neale, Europa Nostra – The pan-European Federation of Heritage Organisations

Historiana is developed with the project ‘Exploring History and Heritage’



The ambitious goal of the Exploring European History and Heritage is to build an educational online tool on history and heritage from a European perspective. A European perspective on history and heritage help us to look at our own past through the eyes of the “other” and to understand differences in order to overcome divisions. The thematic approach makes it possible to trace back long term developments, see and analyze turning points in history and see similarities and difference between events and locations. Multiple perspectives on the past and inter- and intra state comparison help, with respect for diversity, to show what people share.

More info on this project can be found on: www.exploringhistory.eu

Frequently Asked Questions

Whom does Historiana address?

The primary target group are history students between 12-18 years and their teachers. However, all visitors who are interested, are more than welcome to come and visit the website.

When will Historiana be online?

The team of web-developers is working hard to put the developed material online. They have developed a click-model to test the navigational structure and will start to apply the design after the upcoming editing meeting in July. It is the expectation that the first demonstration model will be online after the summer, before the Historiana Seminar in Hungary.

How far back in time does Historiana go?

There is no fixed limit in time when it comes to the timespan that Historiana covers. The timeline of Historiana goes back to 20.000 BC, but so far the case study that goes furthest back in time, The Knights of St. John, starts in the 12th century. There is no reason why other case studies could not go further back in time.

What is the geographical scope of Historiana?

Although much of the material that is European, the focus of Historiana is not exclusively on Europe. History doesn't stop at the borders, and it would not be correct to study Europe's past without a global context. For example, one has to know at least some history from the United States, China and the Soviet Union in order to understand the Cold War in Europe.

The history and heritage from outside Europe appears frequently in the bigger picture of case studies, and many case studies are examples of interaction between continents. They include the case studies on Migration from North Africa or the Irish Exodus. Other case studies that are planned focus on Latin America, The Middle East and Russia.

The reason that most material does focus on Europe, is that many contributors from the EUROCLIO network, chose to develop material on the histories that they are most familiar with. People who familiar with other regions are encouraged to contact the coordinators and look together for possibilities to add material on those regions as well.

How is the quality of the material checked?

All material developed is scrutinized by an international editing team from a variety of countries and cultural backgrounds. The editing team is supported by Academic Advisors to which they can turn to for advise for specific issues.

The coordinating team holds regular feedback sessions with educators during Historiana Seminars and at research institutions (such as the Center for Historical Culture - Erasmus University, and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research). More feedback comes from visitors to the website who have the option to 'let us hear your thoughts'. This continuous stream of feedback is used by the development team to improve the quality of material.

Will Historiana become multilingual?

The ambition is to make Historiana available in multiple languages. For the time being, it is only feasible to make material in English because of limited resources. Ideas that will help the team to achieve this ambition are more than welcome.

How is new content selected?

The people who develop material for Historiana have been free to decide what the focus of their material would be. Although there will always be a fair amount of freedom for contributors to determine what the focus of their material will be, the editors are now encouraging them to choose material and themes and subthemes that are less developed than others.

How can I help?

There are various ways to help the development team: It is helpful to get constructive feedback on how we can improve what has been developed so far; to get informed about digital collections that are free for educational re-use; and to hear from people who are interested to help with the development of new material and who would be willing to join the development team.

Last but not least, people can help by telling spreading the word about Historiana and the opportunities for educators in schools, archives and museums to go to Historiana Seminars.

How many countries are involved in Historiana?

At the moment people from more than 30, mostly European countries, are involved as coordinator, contributor, editor, academic advisor or advisory board member. Countries involved are: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Germany, Kosovo, Latvia, Malta, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey.

Whom can be contacted for more questions?

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