



Online Educational Tool on European History and Heritage

REPORT

Second meeting of the Project Advisory Group

November 20-21 2009

Carlton Ambassador

Sophialaan 2

The Hague, the Netherlands

Present:

Prof. Dr. Bodo von Borries – Professor Emeritus in Education, University of Hamburg, Germany;

Jill Cousins – Director EUROPEANA, the digital European Library, the Netherlands;

Dr. Karl Donert – President, EUROGEO, the European Association of Geographers, the United Kingdom;

Ruth Fisher – Program Manager, Learning Project Manager Understanding Slavery Project, the United Kingdom;

Dr. Harald Geiss – Director for Vocational Training and Didactics, Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, Germany;

Prof. Dr. Maria Grever – Professor of Theory and Methodology of History and Director of the Centre for Historical Culture, Erasmus University, the Netherlands;

Cees Hageman – Project Manager, the Netherlands Institute for Heritage, the Netherlands;

Richard Hermans – Director, the Netherlands Institute for Heritage, the Netherlands;

Floris Kolvenbach – Director, Digital Film Center Europe BV, the Netherlands;

Joke van der Leeuw-Roord – Director EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators, the Netherlands;

Dr. Phil. Robert Maier – Senior Research Fellow, Georg Eckert Institute, Germany;

Prof. Dr. Bogdan Murgescu – Board Member, EUSTORY, the History Network for Young Europeans, Rumania;

Laurie Neale, Communication Officer, Europa Nostra, the Netherlands;

Dr. Dean Smart – President, EUROCLIO – European Association of History Educators, the United Kingdom;

Prof. Dr. Robert Stradling – History and Education Expert for the Council of Europe, Director of the Blueprint Research Centre at the University of Edinburgh, the United Kingdom;

Astrid Weij – Project Manager Netherlands Institute for Heritage, the Netherlands;

EUROCLIO staff

Jonathan Even-Zohar – Project Manager;

Cora Glüsing – Intern;

Maria Kazamiaki – Communication Manager;

Blandine Smilansky – Project Manager;

Steven Stegers – Project Manager;

Maaïke Zeeuw – Intern;

Excused:

Sneska Quaedvlieg, Secretary General, Europa Nostra, the Netherlands;

Margarita Sani, Board member, Network of European Museum Organisation, Italy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Project Advisory Group of the programme *Past, the Future of Europe, Windows to Europe's Past and Heritage* convened in The Hague on 20 and 21 November 2009. They reaffirmed their support of the first meeting in November 2008 for the idea of creating an educational online, interactive multimedia tool for key themes in Europe's recent past and heritage, addressing a plurality of perspectives and inter- and intra-state diversity for school history and heritage education in Europe. The Project Advisory Group brings together a group consisting of leading European experts in the field of heritage, history, geography and related education. The event was organised within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission EAC Executive Agency, as part of the EUROCLIO project "*Exploring European History and Heritage. Helping Educators in Secondary Schools to Teach about European History and Heritage from Multiple Perspectives*"

AIMS OF THE MEETING

The first part of the event aimed to update all the participants on the developments which occurred between 2008 and 2009 in order to give evidence of the implementation of the results of the first meeting, of the progress made and of the new challenges ahead. Thereafter the Project Advisory Group was asked to define their future role and responsibilities. The work sessions planned during the meeting were meant to collaboratively identify the main themes/topics to be addressed, the kind of educational material to be developed, and the best format to adopt for the online tool. Eventually, the Project Advisory Group was requested to give inputs in order to build a communication and dissemination plan for the project.

CONCLUSION

A major achievement of this meeting consists in the mind shift operated by all members of the Advisory Group who started to see the whole project **not only as a good idea but also as a feasible plan**. All experts present gave useful feedback on the latest developments and made concrete suggestions about the next steps to be taken. At the same time, the group expressed their interest to keep thinking about the 'bigger picture' and committed themselves to work as advisers for the project on the long term. The members of the Project Advisory Group offered to contribute to the project in practical term by creating awareness on the project within their own (organisations') networks and dissemination of the project results once material has been developed. Several members also offered their help in regard to piloting of the material.

MAIN DECISIONS

- The first themes addressed are '**People on the Move**' (history of human mobility in Europe) and '**Human Rights and Responsibilities**'¹
- A **pilot version** or "proof of concepts" will be developed before November 2010 and will make use of existing opportunities provided by the resources from various partner organisations and EUROCLIO projects. This will proof of concepts will show to what extent the developed ideas will work.
- Four Groups with distinct roles and tasks will be involved in the development of the website:
 - A **Project Advisory Group** of experts on education, history, heritage, and ICT.
 - An **Editorial Team**, consisting of specialists from partner organisations and EUROCLIO member organisations, responsible for the selection of materials and coherence of the teaching units, coaching the work of the authors in close cooperation with the management team;

¹ "*Life and Leisure*", "*War and Peace*" or "*Conflicts and Cooperation*", "*Work and Technology*" were identified as possible themes to be addressed later in the project, see Annex 1: Possible Themes.

- An **Authors Groups** constituted of representatives from a variety of European countries working on the collection of sources and design of teaching units in close cooperation with the management team.
 - A **Project Management team** responsible for the execution of the project monitored by the directors of EUROCLIO and the Netherlands Institute of Heritage who originally created the idea of the website.²
- The educational website will **not be an open source tool** where users can freely upload content which is afterwards evaluated by editors. The editorial and authors groups will be responsible for the quality of the material which will be developed and put online.
 - The educational website will be designed to **complement existing educational resources** and does not aim to replace them or to be comprehensive.
 - The project partner organisations will introduce the project during a variety of **key events** in 2010 (see further decisions). The project management team will fine tune the **promotional material** and create a **separate project webpage**.
 - The **name** 'Past, the Future of Europe' will be changed.
 - The Project Advisory Group will meet again **in about one year time** to assess the pilot version of the educational website, other results and discuss ways ahead.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- The **geographical coverage** will be a major concern in the constitution of the authors group and the fine-tuning of the editorial group but also in the development of the lesson plans in order to give a balance approach of history which is not only the history of the big nations.³
- The **multilingualism** of Europe will hinder the wide use of the instrument, certainly as the present finances offers no space for translations of the online resources into the many languages of Europe. The website will be in a first stage in English.
- **Copyright** of the source material will be an issue because of the costs and ownership of the material. There is a very active debate going on within Europeana on how to deal with copyright and a Charter on the public domain is under development.
- Authors in the project **need to be coached** to produce material that meets the quality criteria and the online format.
- It is crucial to the project to start right away (for pilot themes) with including the **heritage aspect** complementary to the history aspect. A possibility would be to ask the question of the legacy for each topic addressed. Authors can also be asked to make special efforts on heritage materials (for instance pictures of monuments) when collecting sources.
- The ambition of the project goes beyond the three years that are at the moment covered by projects. A **sustainable business model** is needed to materialise this long term ambition.
- The website has to address **different educational levels**, such as primary, secondary, university students, and the great **variety of national and school history curricula**?

²See in further results on page 4 about the distribution of tasks amongst the management team.

³Europe in this context means all countries that are member of the Council of Europe.

SUMMARY OF WORK PROCEDURES

1 - PREPARATORY MEETING

A core group of experts met for a preliminary session. They debated on content issues in order to prepare a thematically framework to be later on presented to the **Project Advisory Group** and further fine-tuned with the whole group during work sessions. The group discussed the potential value of deciding on a timeframe, debated on the best format to be adopted in order to be at the same time applicable in the classroom and innovative in terms of teaching and learning practices. At the end of this session the group was able to draw on paper a first framework proposal including several themes and 'triggers' (to determine periods) which could be commonly taught events, turning dates, but also long term developmental studies or in-depth case studies.⁴

2 - ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

The project coordinators updated the Project Advisory Group about the main achievements between the two meetings. They explained that several projects had been acquired⁵, that representatives of **EUSTORY** and the **Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung** agreed to join the Project Advisory Group and that several follow-up and complementary initiatives are under consideration.

The group considered the initially used term Steering Committee not appropriate as this implied making the final decisions on the project implementation as well as responsibility for this. The following discussion led to the decision to **rename the group in Project Advisory Group**, in which the members have an advisory role to the project, but decision making and responsibility lies with the project coordinators.

In the conversation that followed the group immediately started to operate in such way, each member of the board bringing in the debate his specific expertise. The project management team received some very useful inputs on **governance and financial sustainability** and was made aware how important it was to make a choice from the start of a project. A variety of options were evoked and assessed, such as acquiring governmental support, offering a paying service, writing more project proposals. Asking money directly from users to use the website was generally not perceived as a viable option, but the option to charge for additional services (such as training or printed material) could be. In order to be able to draw a consistent business plan, the opportunities and pitfalls of various models will be explored, copyright issues will be carefully checked, and EUROPEANA will be asked for further advice. The discussions of the Advisory Group also addressed the issues related to **e-learning, online and multimedia educational practices** and helped defining the identity of the project in this regard (see conclusions). In addition to this some group members volunteered to advise on the **educational content**, some to help specifically on the **collection of historical sources and heritage materials**, and others to help with the **testing and piloting of the material**.

3 - GROUP SESSIONS

Two parallel sessions were organised on the 2nd day of the meeting on both the **content of the educational material**, chaired by **Robert Stradling** and on **awareness-raising**, chaired by **Jonathan Even-Zohar**. The discussions during these sessions helped the Editor and EUROCLIO management team get a concrete idea of what should be the next steps and how their work plan for the coming year should look like.

As far as **communication** is concerned, the target groups will need to get a clear understanding of what they can get from the project and how they can contribute to it. This first phase will aim to **share the vision** at the

⁴ See Annex 1.

⁵ The most important project is the Project "Exploring European History and Heritage" sponsored as Comenius Multilateral Project within the EU Lifelong Learning Programme complemented by the Project "Discovering Diversity. An integrative approach to the history of migrants" sponsored by the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures; "Connecting Central Europe through Local History" sponsored by the International Visegrad Fund and sponsorship by the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung.

origin of the project with a wide group of people, who will need to be kept on board until the launch of the website. Before the launch of the website, a wide audience needs to be consulted on what are their expectations, and needs to know what will happen with their recommendations. The issue of the **needs assessment** was extensively discussed and advice was given to make it an efficient tool. A questionnaire, tailor made for the different target groups, is only one component of a consistent research project which could include interviews and focus groups, and would result in a EUROCLIO 'special report. The next logical step will be to **build networks** of users before the **launching**.

The work session on **educational content** gave numerous inputs to **Robert Stradling**, which enabled him to draft a **framework** mentioning available resources, organisation of the material along a timeline, and examples of possible in-depth studies for the first two main themes 'People on the Move' and 'Human Rights and Responsibilities'. The discussions also helped identify some key elements which will need to be stressed by the editorial team when working with authors and website developers, such as the definition of a key question for each main theme, the inclusion of historiography in source materials, the reflection on the functionalities of the front page (introduction on the concept, entry points to the different key ways of approaching history). **Harald Geiss** stressed that the real challenge is not to fill the themes with content, but to arrange the content and to provide it with a structure in such a way that it gets students to think.

FURTHER RESULTS RELATED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

1 – DECISIONS

- The group of experts has been renamed from Steering Committee to **Project Advisory Group**, in line with the role it has attributed to itself within the project. Group communication will be facilitated by the creation of a closed email-group for them.
- Joke van der Leeuw-Roord will **chair** the Project Advisory Group as she was requested to do so by the group.
- Bob Stradling will lead the **Editorial Team**; he offered his expertise that he acquired in his extensive work for the Council of Europe. The other members will be selected on the basis of experience and on regional spread. The team will meet **4 times a year** in order to
 - check the historical accuracy and multi perspectives of the material provided,
 - give guidance on how to include resources from different countries into teaching units,
 - produce introductory and intermediary texts to ensure the overall linkage
- The **Authors Groups** will be constituted with representatives from at least 10 European countries working with other colleagues in their respective countries on the collection of sources and design of teaching units.
- The work within the **Project Management team** is distributed as follow:
 - ✓ Overall management and project acquisition: Steven Stegers
 - ✓ Monitoring: Joke van der Leeuw-Roord in partnership with the project advisory group and editing team
 - ✓ Technical Aspects: Jonathan Even-Zohar (developer: Floris Kolvenbach)
 - ✓ Lobby and Network: Blandine Smilansky
 - ✓ International training opportunities: Maria Kazamiaki
- The possibilities offered by an **interactive tool** as a website will be explored and the learning activities will be oriented as much as possible towards the use of ICT by the students. Various suggestions to get the users involved will be taken into consideration:
 - Creation of a **community of users** able to give feedback and further advice on the use of the online resources, thus constituting a sort of collaborative users' guide;

- Presentation of **exemplar material** displaying the writing and editing process in order to enable teachers to work on a similar way on other topics;
 - Proposition of opportunities for further use of the materials for **students' work**, for instance to create their own timeline;
 - Use and availability of maps (geographical, historical, maybe even topographical) for placing and locating in space the historical events, cultural influences, and the objects and landscapes of cultural heritage
- The **overall timeframe** will remain flexible depending on how far it is necessary to travel back in time to get an understanding of a specific theme.
 - The project will make use of **existing resources** and especially of the Council of Europe CD-Rom on *Turning Points in European History* already for the first 2 main themes to be worked on. In addition, some resources will be found in former EUROCLIO resources books, on the Understanding Slavery website, in two previous Georg Eckert Institute projects, as well as other digital and paper resources.
 - Project information will be disseminated the various networks:
 - Teachers meetings
 - Georg Eckert Bulletin and Website
 - EUSTORY Alumni Network
 - Heritage platforms
 - European educational platforms

2 – CHALLENGES

- The **restricted financial resources** available at the moment for the project, which does compel the project to work very economically.
- The danger of **misinterpretation** of original, non-English source material when translating into English will has to be taken into consideration.
- The project needs to make best use and build on **external resources**. Only hyperlinks are probably not enough, explicit and developed suggestions on how the additional resource can illuminate this or that unit will be necessary.
- The editorial group and project coordinators will need to closely monitor **the work of authors** in order to make sure the work (sources, lesson models) is delivered within the agreed deadlines.
- A good balance needs to be found between **teaching knowledge** and **teaching skills**.
- Different approaches are needed for the two **different types of users** (students and educators) which are targeted.
- The **navigational system of the website** has to support the didactical design (so that users are made to think and to see connections in history and heritage rather than just have access to the sources). Also it should have to possibility to add more material in later stages of the project.
- Many common themes in European History and Heritage are in fact common themes in global history and heritage, in order to be multiperspective **view from outside Europe** need to be included.

3 – ACTIONS TO TAKE

- The EUROCLIO Project Management will use all inputs received during and after the meeting to make a decision on the **website name**.

- A **Yahoo group** will be created to facilitate communication within the Advisory Board.
- The EUROCLIO Project Management team will prepare an **implementation plan** for 2010 defining clearly who will be included in the **editorial group and authors group**, what will be their **tasks** and within which **timeframe**. This document will be discussed and finalised with the members of the Editorial Group during a meeting in Berlin on 28 January 2010, and will then be disseminated.
- The EUROCLIO Project Management team will prepare a **short Power Point presentation** to be sent to all Project Advisory Group Members for their own use.
- A meeting will be organised with **Jill Cousins**, Executive Director of EUROPEANA, to discuss issues related to governance of the project, sustainability and business model.
- A meeting will be organised with **Karl Donert**, EUROGEO President, to discuss various issues related to the management of the Comenius project “Exploring European History and Heritage” and define his specific role as a partner in this project.
- EUROCLIO will register itself as the content provider in the **EDL Foundation**.
- A **business model** will be developed before the next meeting.

ANNEX 1: POSSIBLE THEMES⁶

	Commonly taught events	Turning Dates	Long Term Development Studies	In-depth case studies
People on the Move				
Human Rights and Responsibilities				
Life and Leisure⁷				
War and Peace/Conflicts and Cooperation				
Work and Technology⁸				

⁶ Additional title from 2008 meeting: 'Colonialism, post-colonialism, end of empires'. 'A Changing World' was also proposed, the way to integrate it in the thematic frame will be discussed at the 1st editorial meeting.

⁷ Alternative title from 2008 meeting: 'Social history, everyday life and family history'

⁸ Alternative title from 2008 meeting: 'Technology and mentality'

ANNEX 2

Project Timeline

	People on the move	Human Rights and responsibilities
2010		
January, 28-31	Authors and editors meeting Berlin (Discovering Diversity project)	
February, 19-21	Authors meeting Poland (Connecting Central Europe project)	
March, 22-28	EUROCLIO Annual Conference 2010 Nijmegen Meeting editorial group (to be confirmed) Focus group and workshop for needs assessment	
April		Authors and editors meeting
May	Editors and didactical advisors meeting	
June, 25-27	Authors and editors meeting Hungary (Connecting Central Europe project) (Discovering Diversity project)	
August		Authors and editors meeting
September	Editors meeting	
October	International Training Seminar	
November	Project Advisory Group meeting	
2011		
January	Authors and editors meeting	
February	International Training Seminar	
March		Authors and editors meeting
April	Editors meeting	
August	Launch of the pilot material	
October	International Training Seminar	
November	Project Advisory Group Meeting	
2012		
	<i>Dissemination and implementation, follow up projects</i>	

Partners Events (to be completed)

2010		
January, 20	Ronda, Spain	General Assembly EUSTORY
June, 8-13	Istanbul, Turkey	General Congress Europa Nostra
July		International Geographers Union Meeting
August-October		EUSTORY summer academies
December	the Netherlands	DISH Conference on Education (Netherlands Heritage Institute)

ANNEX 3

Organisational Chart

