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EHRI

European Holocaust Research Infrastructure

Research funding under the EU's framework programmes is geared to the construction of a competitive, inclusive and sustainable society. Meeting this ambitious objective for Europe will require vision, ingenuity and dedication. And it will also require a thorough understanding of our past. By integrating currently fragmented archives online and streamlining the access to these information resources, the EHRI project aims to facilitate research into one of the most traumatic aspects of Europe's shared history: the Holocaust.

Piecing together a picture of a not-so-distant past

Scholars investigating Holocaust topics must be prepared to travel. Ample historical records do exist, but it is unlikely that a single archive or collection will hold the answers to all their questions. In many cases, the documents relating to a given site or event will be scattered throughout Europe and the world. Past attempts to destroy or hide documentary evidence and the migration of those who managed to salvage such records are two of the factors that have led to this high degree of geographical dispersion.

Digitisation provides opportunities to overcome some of the logistical problems, and many Holocaust institutions have started this process. Nonetheless, handling, referencing and sharing the material remains a huge challenge. The difficulties lie in the sheer amount of information, the range of cataloguing approaches and technologies, the complexities of interfacing divergent database structures and the disparate nature of the material, which includes papers, photos, films and art.

A new initiative striving to integrate dispersed Holocaust collections is about to take the field to the next level. In the EHRI project, 19 partners from 13 countries have set out to take stock of key archives and to provide online access to these materials through a single interface.

Aiming for excellence in Holocaust research

The EHRI partners will pool their expertise to develop tools and methodologies in order to build a virtual research environment (VRE). EHRI investigates thousands of collections in about 1 500 institutions, fostering the pan-European capacities and cooperation needed to design and run integrated virtual research services for the Holocaust research community.

Beyond this unique attempt to bring collections together, EHRI activities will include an analysis of user needs and an assessment of relevant e-science standards, technologies and methodologies, the fine-tuning of metadata, appropriate contextualisation of the various resources, and user support. To ensure the ongoing operation of the portal, the partners will also examine the long-term sustainability of the service.

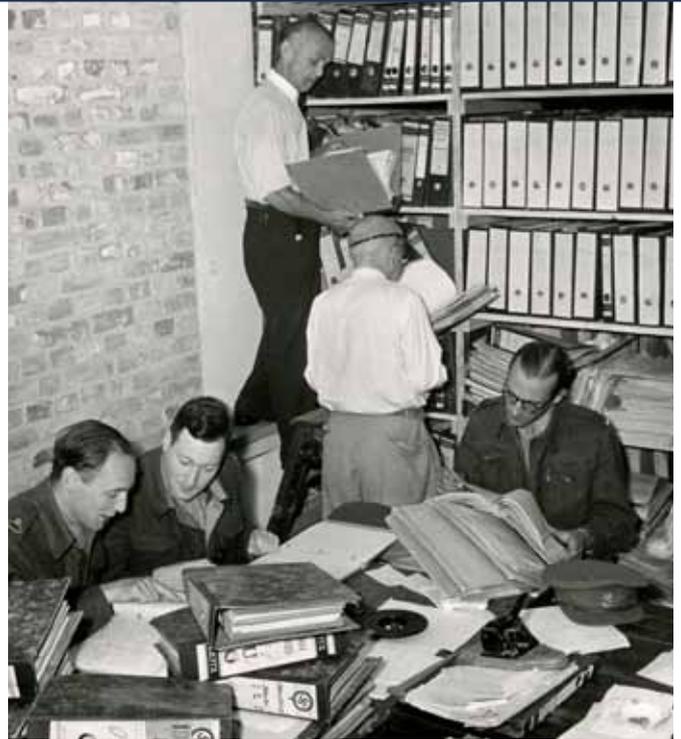


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Teaching, learning, sharing

EHRI is broadening the scope for researchers to engage with the wider scholarly community and to intensify their dissemination activities. It offers opportunities to work on-site in a number of leading institutes and also organises a training programme. The project strives to promote a Europe-wide approach and encourages localised research endeavours to link up and address new questions, share information and continually raise awareness among successive generations.

By developing a central point of access to crucial Holocaust collections, EHRI will become a forerunner in the online integration of data for the humanities. It will provide an invaluable service to researchers investigating the history of contemporary Europe, but also to the families of Holocaust victims, and most importantly to the memory of the victims themselves.



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Partners:

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 Centre d'Etudes et de Documentation Guerre et Sociétés
 Contemporaines (BE)
 Židovské Muzeum v Praze (CZ)

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 Yad Vashem — The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance
 Authority (IL)
 The Wiener Library Institute of Contemporary History (GB)
 Holocaust Dokumentációs Központ és Emlékgyűjtemény
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