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Launch of the online tutorial and accompanying documentation

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Abstract (for dissemination)	The Online Tutorial was launched in June 2017. It comprises a short introductory video to EHRI and, particularly, the EHRI Portal, and an in-depth manual that describes and illustrates to users the information content of the Portal, the methods that were used to gather and integrate this information, and the main functionalities to search, share and annotate Portal information. The tutorial has been implemented as a unit on the EHRI training site and is available at https://training.ehri-project.eu/unit/7-ehri-portal-manual.
Management Summary	n.a.

Table of Contents

1   Introduction

The EHRI Portal (https://portal.ehri-project.eu) offers users free access to rich information about Holocaust-related institutions and their collections, and a set of tools to search, analyse and share such information. According to EHRI's Description of Action, the objective of an online tutorial for the EHRI Portal is to maximise the benefits users have from the Portal by teaching them about the available information and functionalities.

Prior to the development of the online tutorial, users in need of more instructions on how to use the Portal already had access to an email helpdesk and a set of Frequently Asked Questions (https://portal.ehri-project.eu/help/faq). The present tutorial does not replace these existing help provisions, but rather supplements them: the tutorial is both wider and deeper in scope, providing detailed instructions about all relevant portal functionalities rather than short and succinct information for a few selected areas as is the case with the FAQ. The email helpdesk, on the other hand, will remain fully operational and offer users bespoke advice in case the tutorial does not answer their questions.

There were a number of key requirements that informed the development of the tutorial:

- It should address the diverse needs of a wide range of users. In particular, it should both offer a concise introduction to the Portal for casual users; and in-depth information for advanced users.
- Apart from fulfilling the needs of our existing users, it should also act as a tool to attract the interest of new potential users.
- The tutorial should be easily updatable in the future in order to remain current in case Portal functionality is changed.

In order to address these requirements, we decided to develop a tutorial that consists of two distinct, yet interrelated, parts:

1. A short animated video of approx.3 mins duration.
2. A comprehensive online manual, consisting of texts, illustrations and screenshots.

We are confident that we can thereby cover all the essential information needs of our users. Moreover, while the manual can be easily updated at any point if a need arises, the video content is unlikely to change in the medium-term, and it is therefore not envisaged that the video needs to be updated within the current EHRI project. The video, finally, has already been used as a dissemination and outreach tool in a variety of presentations about EHRI and thereby already proved to be very valuable in helping us to raise EHRI's profile, and attract new users to the Portal.

The content for both the video and manual were developed by WP4. However, we collaborated closely with WPs 2, 7 and 9 to draw on their respective expertise about the Portal and to ensure that the tutorial is aligned with EHRI's overall dissemination strategy. The Video itself was produced by an external consultant (Zeezeilen, Amsterdam; animation Jos den Brok) in close collaboration with WP4.

Both parts of the tutorial were launched in June 2017. They are now freely available as a unit on EHRI's training site at https://training.ehri-project.eu/unit/7-ehri-portal-manual, and linked to from the Portal's help menu and main website.

2   Video

The aim of the video is to offer a short, concise and visually appealing introduction to the Portal, particularly focusing on the basic questions: "What is EHRI and what is the Portal?"; "Why do we need a Portal for Holocaust Sources?"; "What kind of information can I find in the Portal?"

Figure 1: EHRI Portal Video screenshot

The video's script was written by WP4, while the video itself was developed by Zeezeilen, Amsterdam. It was produced in several iterative loops, whereby a succession of drafts were reviewed by the WP4 team that resulted in a series of suggestions for improvements that were implemented. The final video consists of spoken text, including subtitles to ensure maximum accessibility; pictures of Holocaust-related documents, photographs and historic film footage; screenshots; and a series of animations. For documents and photographs included in the video we used sources from the following EHRI partners:

- Bundesarchiv
- CEGESOMA
- Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute
- International Tracing Service
- The Jewish Museum Greece
- The Jewish Museum Prague
- Mémorial de la Shoah
- NIOD
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

- Yad Vashem

3 Portal Manual

The accompanying manual offers much more in-depth information about the Portal than the video. It is a much extended version of the existing Frequently Asked Questions, offering readers comprehensive information about the Portal, its information architecture, EHRI's identification and investigation work, and available functionalities. It consists of the following ten chapters:

- The Information Content of the EHRI Portal
- The Basic Structure of the EHRI Portal
- Identification and Description of Countries, Archival Institutions and Collections
- Searching the Portal: Search Scopes
- Searching the Portal: Advanced Search Options
- Customising Search Result Lists: Filters and Sort Order
- Finding Related Archival Descriptions by Using Controlled Vocabularies
- Reading Descriptions of Archival Holdings
- Creation of a Profile on the Portal and Advanced Functionality Available to Registered Users
- Further Help

Chapters typically combine text, illustrations and screenshots. To increase the practical value of the chapters concerned with the Portal's search functionality, potential search strategies are developed as step-by-step instructions on how to complete typical research tasks on the Portal (for instance, "How can I use the Portal to locate all archives in Thessaloniki that hold information about Greek Holocaust survivors?").

Hierarchical relationships

The information on countries, archival institutions and archival holdings is structured hierarchically in the portal – that is to say that each country may host several archival institutions, and each such institution in turn may have several archival holdings with archival descriptions. Conversely, each archival description relates to the holdings of one institution which is located in a country. Moreover, archival descriptions are themselves often hierarchical: i.e.. a top-level collection description may lead to one or several file descriptions, each of which may further lead to one or several item descriptions, and so on. The diagram below illustrates this basic structure:
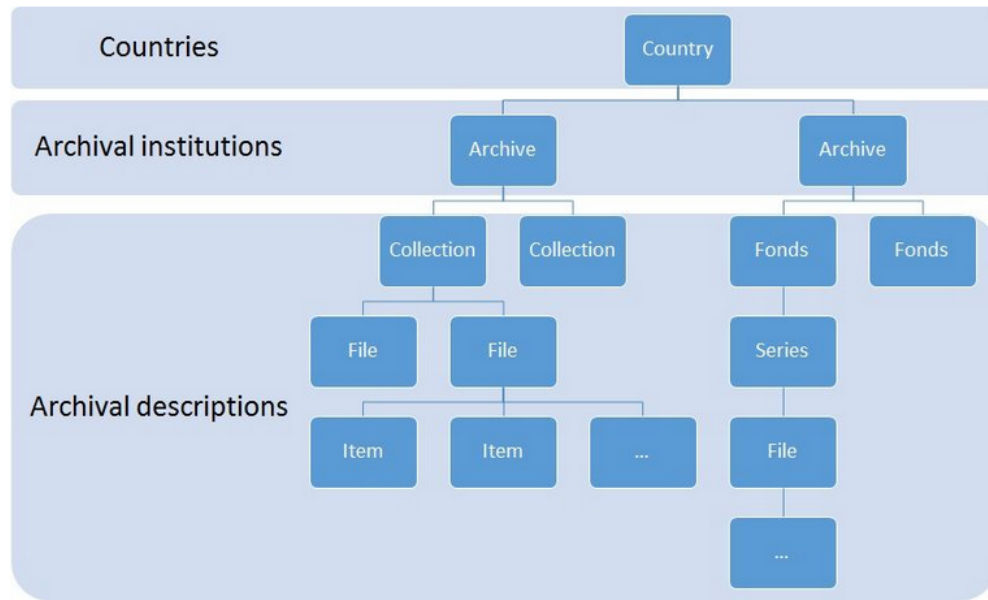

Figure 2: Portal Manual Screenshot

As the Portal keeps on evolving both in terms of content and functionality, it is anticipated that we will have to periodically update the manual. However, we do not anticipate that the basic structure of the manual will need a major overhaul in the medium term, and given its relatively straight-forward format – text and images – necessary adjustments and additions can be undertaken with minimal effort.