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Internationalisation strategy

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Introduction

The Holocaust, as a process of exclusion of Jews and Roma from society, their deportation and extermination took mostly place on the European continent. The EHRI project consortium and the future ERIC cover many countries on whose territory these events unfolded and where key archival holdings are available. But the Holocaust was also a major event with a global impact. Around the world, governments, humanitarians, journalists, families of the persecuted and others struggled with how to react to the unfolding genocide and later with its consequences. The migration of refugees and survivors, as well as their family archives created a global web of interest and of dispersed and fragmented documentation. As a horrifyingly new form of persecution and extermination, the Holocaust continues to be an important subject of research in modern history of racism, war and genocide. International cooperation and reach beyond the countries directly integrated into the EHRI-ERIC are therefore of key significance for its operation in the future.

In the long-term perspective, the EHRI-ERIC aims to systematically identify and integrate relevant data, promote the usage of its resources and network with Holocaust archives and research institutions, as well as educational and memory organisations, beyond the European Research Area (ERA). The EHRI Internationalisation strategy addresses the relationships with stakeholders outside of the ERA who, or whose governments, cannot be expected to be able to join the EHRI-ERIC. Yet, the development of sustainable connections is important for EHRI to fulfil its global mission and to support innovative and transnational research. To achieve this, international institutions require different arrangements to advance and formalise such cooperation and data provision.

EHRI already provides services and data to global research communities through, i.e. the EHRI Portal, the EHRI training site, the EHRI Document Blog and the EHRI editions platform. It also provides transnational access (Conny Kristel Fellowships) and offers participation in methodological seminars to researchers from outside of ERA. A sustainable cooperation with the USHMM and other international organisations will make it possible not only to continue and grow this engagement, but also to make it multidirectional and reciprocal.

This deliverable is a result of the EHRI-PP task 4.3 “Internationalisation strategy” and outlines the main principles and focus areas of EHRI’s internationalisation efforts. As a result of the reallocation of resources of the USHMM between EHRI-PP work packages, MUA took the leading role in the preparation of the deliverable, in close cooperation with USHMM and NIOD. This report first analyses the best practices in the field of European research infrastructures with respect to internationalisation and examines the institutional and other specifics of the field of Holocaust archives and research. Further, it summarises how the integration of international partners is proposed in the governance structure of the future EHRI-ERIC. It explains the specific role of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in EHRI’s internationalisation efforts. Finally, it provides a snapshot of a growing list of potential international partners with which EHRI could develop cooperation.

Approaches to internationalisation

EHRI examined selected available business plans, internationalisation guidelines and further strategic documents of established ERICs or research infrastructures in their preparatory and implementation phases. These documents outline the strategic approaches of the research infrastructures and policies towards non-European stakeholders. These include in particular the establishment of synergic and durable relationships with research organisations and RIs outside of Europe, the accessibility of the RI services and cooperation over methodology. In contrast to similar rules and structures governing the creation and governance of European ERICs, the examined documents show a diversity of approaches to how such ties with international partners are organised and formalised.

It transpires very clearly that research infrastructures tailor internationalisation solutions according to their specific focus as well as their needs and take into account the particular characteristics and best practices of international institutional and research landscapes in their respective fields of research. The documents produced by other infrastructures therefore react to the particular global landscapes of institutions, services and users. The research infrastructures also take different

approaches to formally establishing such connections, from working via established international networks, through dedicated agreements to generic agreements.

In designing its internationalisation strategy, EHRI has to reflect on the specific landscape of Holocaust documentation and of Holocaust-related research institutions and archives. In comparison to other research infrastructures which advance data and services that are universally accepted across the globe, the particular histories of migration of people, documents and objects and of building of archives as well as research centres focused on the Holocaust Studies resulted in an uneven geography. Outside of Europe, the strongest existing cooperating institutions are located in countries and regions with a history of the immigration of Jews before the Second World War and of Holocaust survivors later. In these countries, more archives and documentation projects have been established and more additional funding have been available.

The institutional landscape also reflects the significance which the memory of the Holocaust attained, especially since the 1970s, as a part of Western debates about genocide, refugees and human rights. EHRI's Internationalisation strategy is therefore related to the discussions about the role of Holocaust research and memory in the global context and the different readings and interpretations of the Holocaust in the post-colonial world. Researchers and institutions advance varying views on the relevance of the Holocaust in countries and regions which have a less immediate connection to its history and where its relevance is necessarily elaborated in and through comparison with other cases of racism, violence and genocides. In developing its international connections, EHRI has to take these different prehistories, experiences and imbalances into account.

In order to develop a feasible and efficient Internationalisation strategy, EHRI will necessarily build on the existing network of institutions and initiatives in documentation and research, remembrance and education. In cooperation with its international partners, however, EHRI will also attempt to reach out to countries and regions so far largely unaffected by Holocaust documentation and research. It will proceed reflectively in showing sensitivity to local contexts and topics, including histories of colonial domination.

In doing so, it will mobilise the existing international connections of the EHRI partner institutions and of the USHMM. It will also build on the geographic expansion of research which now allows the consideration of the Holocaust more as a global phenomenon. Historians and researchers in other disciplines documented the effects of the Holocaust, mostly through refugee migration, in places and spaces far away from the sites which figure in every traditional history of the Holocaust.

In cooperation with its partners and based on the available information, EHRI will continuously assess the global landscape of Holocaust research. For example, it can use anonymised statistics of the largest Holocaust history conferences (Lessons and Legacies) and - where possible - journal applications to make sense about trends and possible cooperations.

EHRI governance structure and international cooperation

The proposed governance structure of the EHRI-ERIC takes into account the cooperation with and the involvement of international stakeholders of different types. The draft Statutes of EHRI-ERIC, which was approved by the EHRI-PP Board of Governmental Representatives, and its draft Business Plan include the option to integrate international partners. **Cooperating partners** are institutions, either public or private, located on the territory of a Non-Participating Country which are willing to contribute to the EHRI-ERIC. Cooperating Partners can use tools, services and other offerings provided by EHRI-ERIC as well as participate in activities as agreed upon in a binding agreement with the ERIC that may include a financial contribution. While full membership would remain impossible for legal and/or financial reasons, these options will give such institutions a better understanding of the inner workings of EHRI, a platform to consult and discuss policy and to suggest particular steps in data collection or the development of EHRI's services. The status of a Cooperating partner will have a motivating effect on the willingness of such institutions to contribute data, cooperate and to provide access to their holdings and expertise to EHRI users. In its Implementation phase, EHRI will design a plan for the inclusion of Cooperating partners in the governance structure of the EHRI-ERIC.

With respect to data integration, EHRI created and uses a Content Provider Agreement which governs the sharing of data which is integrated into the EHRI Portal or in other EHRI services. The model document makes it possible for international partners to provide data, in compliance with European privacy protection rules and other applicable laws. Currently, in the framework of the EHRI-3 project, EHRI is working on a Content Provider Agreement tailored towards the needs of data providers in countries outside of the jurisdiction of the GDPR.

US Holocaust Memorial Museum

Developing a long-term cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) is of paramount significance for EHRI and for building and strengthening its relationships beyond Europe. In fact, the two by far most important Holocaust archive and research institutions – Yad Vashem (Israel) and the USHMM (US) – are both located outside of Europe. However, their respective situations with regards to their future cooperation with EHRI-ERIC differ. Israel has been participating as an Associated Country in European research and innovation framework programmes since 1996, and is a prospective founding member country of EHRI-ERIC. Yad Vashem, which has been involved in all EHRI project consortia, is currently preparing the future Israeli National Node of EHRI. The United States, on the other hand, lacks the associated status, and for domestic legal reasons cannot become a member of an ERIC as a third country. USHMM, which has been involved as full partner in EHRI project consortia since 2015, therefore needs to be integrated within EHRI-ERIC in a different way.

The USHMM has already participated in all EHRI projects and contributed significantly to the EHRI's services. As of the time of writing, the EHRI Portal offers access to more than 70.000 top level archival descriptions from the USHMM holdings. The USHMM is strongly involved in EHRI's development of new data services and the support provided to archives and research institutions, as well as individual researchers. In the EHRI-3 project, USHMM leads the work package "New Approaches to Holocaust Research and Archiving" and provides access to its collections, data and services through the EHRI's Conny Kristel Fellowships.

Both EHRI and the USHMM understand the significance of this cooperation and intend to more clearly define and formalise the cooperation during the Implementation phase of EHRI. In continuation of the already existing cooperation, the USHMM contribution to EHRI will include the provision of data and the development of digital methods and approaches for archives and for research, as well as fellowship opportunities for both collection infrastructure specialists wishing to expand their knowledge and gain expertise in museum practices, collections access, and infrastructure development and for scholars conducting research on the future of Holocaust Studies, trends, new approaches or methodologies, and programs to support them.

Moreover, EHRI prioritises the cooperation with the USHMM not only for the extent and significance of its collections and its research activities, but also as an institution with global outreach and networks. For decades, the USHMM developed contacts with institutions around the globe, digitised and copied collections, organised scientific meetings and helped to devise educational strategies. The experience, contacts and authority of the USHMM in such regions, for instance Southern and Latin America, will be an invaluable contribution to EHRI's internationalisation.

List of potential international cooperating organisations and networks

As a part of this task, EHRI established a list of potential organisations with which EHRI already develops cooperation or which should be approached in the future. The following is a snapshot of a live and growing list:

[US Holocaust Memorial Museum](#)

[Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany](#)

[Holocaust Educational Foundation of Northwestern University](#) (and Lessons and Legacies conferences), United States

[Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University](#), United States

[USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive](#), United States

[Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies](#), United States

[Holocaust Geographies Collaborative](#)

[University of New South Wales Sydney](#), Australia

[Sydney Jewish Museum](#), Australia

[University of Sydney](#), Australia

[Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington](#), New Zealand

[Ottawa University](#), Canada

[University of Toronto](#), Canada

[Brazilian Center for Nazism and Holocaust Studies](#) (NEPAT)

[National University of La Plata](#), Argentina

[Federal University Dutse](#), Nigeria

[Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre](#), South Africa

Conclusion

The Internationalisation strategy outlined in this deliverable defines the most important principles for EHRI's internationalisation efforts and proposes key agendas which will be followed by EHRI in its future activity. The experience of the task T4.4 will flow into the work of EHRI during its Implementation phase, making sure that EHRI's implementation and further development of the Internationalisation strategy will continue in a systematic manner.