

Decisions and Dilemmas – Exploring European Union History through the Lens of Contemporary Issues

Final International Training Seminar
2-7 April, 2017
Donostia - San Sebastian, Spain

REPORT



Historiana

EURO CLIO
European Association of History Educators

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Summary of the Project

Within the EUROCLIO project *“Decisions and Dilemmas: Exploring European Union history through the lens of contemporary issues”*, EUROCLIO and its partners will develop a series of learning resources that are ready to use in history and citizenship classes at secondary school level across Europe.

The focus of these learning resources will be on contemporary issues for the European Union. These issues include: Enlargement; globalisation; foreign relations - particularly with the USA, Russia and China. But also Energy supply; economic imbalance and the north-south divide within the EU; terrorism and border controls in a Schengen world; and the democratic deficit. All issues that are currently troubling the European Union.

The aim is that all these learning resources together, will help students to be aware of the complexity and interdependence of European/international decision-making and diplomatic processes. This will help students to see and understand the complexity of the EU and the dilemmas that policy makers face when they have to take multiple factors and stakeholders into account. All these people have their own perfect outcomes for dilemmas, but there is never one solution that will please all parties involved. This gives the students an understanding of contemporary issues in their historical context and lets them see how issues recur over time and how new challenges (can) result from solving other challenges.

Each of the issues will result in a learning activity based on active learning methods (such as scripted drama, various forms of debate and discussion, and project work) that are best suited to the nature of that particular issue. As a result the project will show various ways in which students can learn about the EU on an active and engaging way.

These learning resources will be developed, tested and implemented by an international group of experienced educators (who are currently teaching citizenship and/or history) with the support of Jean Monnet professors as academic advisors. The involvement of leading academics and school teachers and teacher trainers, will make sure that the learning resources are both academically sound and suited for use in diverse classroom settings

The key project activities are four development meetings and one international training seminar.

About the Meeting

This International Training is the final meeting within this project. It was held as workshops during EUROCLIO’s Annual Conference in Donostia – San Sebastian. During this meeting, four members of development team presented their learning activities to participants of the Annual Conference in engaging workshops. The overall aim of this meeting disseminate the finalised and uploaded learning activities to the public.

Participants:

The following participants were present at the final training in Donostia – San Sebastian, Spain:

Participants	
Development Team:	Bojana Dujković-Blagojević Guido Lessing Ute Ackermann Boeros
Team Leader:	Helen Snelson
EUROCLIO Staff:	Judith Geerling Steven Stegers

Aims of the Meeting:

- To disseminate the developed and finalised learning activities to the participants of EUROCLIO’s Annual Conference through engaging workshops and presentations.
- Strategize the further spread of these learning activities after the project finalisation.

Executive Summary of the Meeting

The final international training seminar was hosted by Ikastolan Elkarte, the Basque school network in San Sebastian. The training is integrated in the EUROCLIO Annual conference that was organised from 2-7 April 2017.

The learning activities developed in the project have been made available online prior to this final training seminar. The complete unit on Changing Europe, which combines both projects of Decision and Dilemmas 1: Learning about the EU from a historical perspective, and Decisions and Dilemmas 2: Exploring EU history through the lens of contemporary issues, can be accessed following this link: <http://graph.historiana.eu/modules/module/changing-europe/>.

EUROCLIO Programme Director Steven Stegers officially presented the re-launched Historiana website to the conference participants. Following the relaunch, EUROCLIO Project Manager Judith Geerling presented the unit Changing Europe, including a short overview of the two projects that contributed to the unit, and the specific activities developed in the current project.

The 6 developed learning activities were presented to the participants in three rounds of workshops spread over two days, to enable participants to learn about multiple activities. In the first round of parallel workshops organised thereafter on Monday 3 April, three learning activities of this project have been presented by Bojana Dujković-Blagojević, Helen Snelson, and Ute Ackermann Boeros. On Tuesday 4 April the other three learning activities were presented by Helen Snelson and Guido Lessing.

The team also used the opportunity to reflect on the project and the development process and discuss lessons learned and possible continuation after the project duration.

Finally, three educators from Estonia, Albania and Sweden were selected to participate as multipliers in the training and spread the results further in their respective history teachers associations and countries.



The development team during the final evaluation in the Provincial council in San Sebastian.

Launch Historiana and “Changing Europe” unit

EUROCLIO Programme Director Steven Stegers relaunched the renewed Historiana website during a plenary session to all participants. He showed the new functionalities, including the search and select of sources of content providers, the improved Learning Section (including the materials developed in this project), and the Content section including Key Moments and Units.

Following this presentation, EUROCLIO Project Manager and project coordinators Judith Geerling presented the updated and finalised unit “Changing Europe: European Decisions and European Dilemmas”. The materials included in this unit were developed within the two respective Decisions and Dilemmas project, looking at historical perspectives and contemporary issues. She showed the navigation of the unit and the ease with which the materials can be downloaded for use in the classroom.



Presentation of the unit “Changing Europe” by Judith Geerling / Presentation of Historiana by Steven Stegers.

Workshops

Opening Europe’s Borders for People and border controls in a (post) Schengen world’

Bojana Dujković-Blagojević led the workshop on the learning activity which she developed and finalised over the course of this project: *Opening Europe’s borders for people and border controls in a (post) Schengen world’*. The core question of this learning activity is how the migrant crisis shook the foundations and principles of the European Union? The workshop aimed at introducing the participants to the developed learning activity which has been designed to help students think about the free movement of people in Europe. Main questions that students will be asked during this learning activity are: to what extent does the Schengen agreement function?, how much real freedom of movement is there within the EU?, how is the EU dealing with the migrant crisis and how has the crisis influenced the ‘shaking’ of the EU foundations?, and Is the migrant crisis a problem for the whole EU

or only for countries on the route? In addition, students will also learn what is necessary for someone outside the Schengen circle to get a Schengen Visa.



The workshop assembled a truly international audience, as a total of nine countries were represented among the participants: Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Macedonia, Norway, and Russia. Bojana organised the workshop as group work and was pleased with the overall atmosphere and the willingness of the participants to follow the roles foreseen in the learning activity. Each group dealt with a different kind of historical source, for example political statements, newspaper articles, personal stories, or photographs. The discussions during and after the workshop were very much based on facts, not only arising from the sources included in the learning activity but also on personal experiences of the participants.

Should we feel anxious about Europe’s energy dependency?



Helen Snelson led the workshop based on Kate Smee’s learning activity: *Should we feel anxious about Europe’s energy dependency?* This learning activity is built around a key dilemma, which translates to a sharp disparity between energy demand and supply. Europe in fact consumes a fifth of the world’s energy, but is only able to supply half of this consumed energy themselves. This means that the European Union spends every year around 350 billion on energy imports. In the workshop, historical examples of energy needs were assessed, as some led to conflict, and others to cooperation. From this enquiry, the core question of the learning activity arises: should we or should we not feel anxious about Europe’s dependence on energy imports. The workshop engaged participants actively with this question, by having to think about the assessed historical examples

affect the participants’ view on the core question and by finally synthesising an answer which ought to reflect the learning process of this workshop.

This workshop has overall been a considerable success. The participants were very pleased with the quality of the resources developed in this learning activity and especially complimented EUROCLIO and the development team on their choice to making all resources available in Word format, which makes

them easily adaptable to a wide range of different classrooms. The participants equally noted with satisfaction the level of the substantive content and were pleased with the modelling of effective learning strategies which encourages evidence-based discussions. The workshop concluded with a lively discussion on where this specific learning activity could fit into a sequence of lessons. The participants in particular felt that the learning activity has the potential to help students understand the context of the energy dependency as well as the contemporary issues surrounding it. Most importantly, this learning activity can incite students to think how they personally can make a difference, be it by simply switching off lights as they exit a room or by supporting the turn towards renewable energies such as wind farms.

The impact of European trade policy on developing countries

The third workshop organised on this Monday 3 April was hosted by Ute Ackermann Boeros. The learning activity builds on the following core question: *What are the moral dilemmas and decisions involving European trade policy and African chicken farmers?* The learning activity aims to help teachers motivate their students to critically reflect on their personal eating habits and how their personal choices can be placed within a global context. The developed activities provide the basis for a thoughtful and critical analysis in the classroom about the impact of European trade policy on developing countries using the specific example of the export of European chicken meat to the African continent. Students will have the opportunity to investigate the role of European consumers and decision-makers using thought-provoking activities focussing on cause and consequence, and analytical and decision-making skills within the context of this captivating topic.

This workshop has been well received by the participants. Ute Ackermann Boeros started by explaining the rationale behind the topic and how to place it in a wider framework, before demonstrating to the participants in practise the various activities developed for this learning activity. All activities in fact focus on different concepts (i.e. cause and consequence) and different skills (such as reasoning, or weighing pro and contra arguments). The participants generally stated that this learning activity is very useful and can easily be integrated in their lessons, especially in lessons which deal with post-colonial developments in a history class or in an economics class. The participants were impressed by the quality of the learning activity, both in terms of the activities themselves and the sources used in it, and acknowledge the highly adaptable character of the learning activity to their specific teaching environment as all documents are made available in open formats such as Word or PowerPoint.



Europe as a Global Power

This workshop was led by Helen Snelson on her learning activity: Europe as a global power. The learning activity foresees students researching, comparing, and discussing two contrasting case studies. While all students initially use the case on the Iraq War, entitled ‘The European Union and the Iraq War 2003 – a study of failure’, the subsequent case studies offer more choice for the teacher. One case study look into ‘The European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN)’, and the other into ‘The 2004 Enlargement of the European Union.’ The teacher can thus choose between these two based on what

they can reveal, what specific interests are prevalent among the students, and whether the class would focus more specifically on the European Union or on Europe in a broader sense. The learning activity however also leaves room for more able and interested students to research autonomously on other topics that are being suggested in the learning activity in order to debate the key question of the learning activity: What makes it possible for European countries to work together to operate as a global power?

This workshop was well received by the participants, and the audience engaged in lively discussion on the complexity of the topic and on the ways the difficulty of operating at as a global power on a European scale can be viewed and interpreted by both teachers and students. The participants have been especially pleased by the quality of the learning materials as they provide them with a chance to improve their own knowledge on this topic and hence increase their confidence to teach this to their students. The fact that worksheets are differentiated for the respective capabilities of students makes this learning activity particularly transferable to a wide range of classrooms. The offered suggestions on other topics that could be researched by students is another feature that has been particularly appreciated by the participants of this workshop.

Economic Imbalances

This workshop was led by Guido Lessing on his learning activity on economic imbalances. The learning activity builds around practical examples from different EU member states demonstrating various types of imbalances that exist within the EU and elaborate on both causes and consequences of these imbalances and possible solutions for them. After completing the activity, students will be able to identify cases of economic imbalances across the European Union and within EU member states. The case studies will help students learn how to define



possible causes and consequences of imbalances in specific historical contexts. Students will learn to categorise different types of imbalances and discuss possible solutions for them. This will help them understand the different dilemmas that decision-makers may face in their quest to tackle these imbalances. A final activity foresees students to acquire knowledge about studying thematic maps on the distribution of GDP across Europe and how this distribution evolved in the period between 2008 and 2013 and will be asked to note their observations on this.

This workshop was well received by the participants, and the participants discussed different economic imbalances that exists within the EU. They also discussed ways how this activity could be used in history lessons or economic lessons. The fact that there is considerable guidance given to teachers in the lesson plan makes this activity accessible for teachers that are not so confident in economics.

Rebuilding Europe after World War 2

The final workshop was provided by Helen Snelson, on a learning activity developed by Kate Brennan: *‘Rising from the ruins: rebuilding Europe after World War 2.’* The activity is built around a scripted drama including 30 different character roles which are suitable for students across varied reading abilities. The script is designed to be acted out in the classroom and will form the catalyst for a subsequent class discussion, analysis, and evaluation of the various arguments put forward on the



formation of the European Union and the role of its Founding Fathers. The learning activity will help students learn that Europe has a long history of internecine conflict in which no European country can be regarded as fully without blame. Students will see that the Second World War inflicted unprecedented damage and suffering to the continent as a whole and that this, in the context of the post-WW2/pre-Cold War era combined with the threat of imminent nuclear destruction

made the impulse towards European unity considerably more urgent.

This final workshop was an impressive success, as for most participants this type of active learning style was a new discovery. The participants have fully embraced the scripted drama and the script has shown its capability to combine active learning with a particularly pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. For a topic which is considerably complex and is often perceived by students as dry, this active learning style proposed by this lesson is a formidable way to engage students with the topic of post-war Europe. After the participants completed the scripted drama, Helen showed them the supporting materials that accompany the scripted drama. Overall the participants have been impressed by the quality of the scripted drama which offers a both balanced and evidenced interpretation of post-war Europe which again enhances the transferability of the lesson as the evidence based interpretation makes it acceptable to a wide range of European (and global) classrooms.

Multipliers from Albania, Estonia and Sweden

The Decisions and Dilemmas project budget allowed for the disbursement of three scholarship fees which enabled Anila Beshaj from Albania, Indrek Makki from Estonia, and Ina Nyfelt from Sweden to join this final training seminar. They are all board members of their respective national history teachers associations and can further enhance the dissemination process of the developed learning activities in the context of this project. All three attended the workshops on the Decisions and Dilemmas learning activities and have overall been impressed with the quality of the content and are looking forward to using them in their own classrooms and share the project’s educational resources with colleagues.

Reflections and Lessons Learned

In the evening of Monday 3 April, the present development team members set together with EUROCLIO's Project Manager Judith Geerling for a reflection session. The team has overall been very pleased with this project, as it allowed them to gain considerable knowledge both about the topics and the methodology. They appreciated the clear communication on the part of EUROCLIO about the amount of work that will be requested, and the amount of meetings that will be organised over the course of the project. EUROCLIO overall provided good and fast communication, which has been appreciated by the team members. They equally appreciated the working time that was planned for them during the various project meetings, as this allowed them from the very first meeting to concretise their ideas on the learning activities. Finally, they were very pleased with the good cooperation with the project advisors, who offered valuable insights at different stages of the development process.

They expressed that for further spread of the materials and use of the activities in classrooms across the EU, translations of the materials would be vital. EUROCLIO is looking into finding the funding for this.

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