

Decisions and Dilemmas – Exploring European Union history through the lens of contemporary issues

First Development Meeting
15 - 17 January 2016
York, United Kingdom

REPORT



Historiana

EURO CLIO
European Association of History Educators

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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 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 meeting was the second international meeting and first development workshop as part of the Decisions and Dilemma's part 2 EUROCLIO project. This meeting was held to introduce the new team members to the project and start the development on the learning resources.

Participants

The following participants were present at the meeting in York:

Participants:	
Historical Content Team:	Bob Stradling Francesco Scatigna Chris Rowe
Development Team:	Bojana Dujković-Blagojević Guido Lessing Kate Smee Ute Ackermann Boeros
Team Coordinator:	Helen Snelson
EUROCLIO Staff:	Judith Geerling Steven Stegers

Aims for the Meeting:

- To get acquainted with Historiana and the Decisions and Dilemma's Project.
- To discuss how "*Decisions and Dilemmas: Learning about the EU from a historical perspective*" and "*Decisions and Dilemmas: Exploring European Union history through the lens of contemporary issues*" relate to each other, and make up the bigger Decisions and Dilemmas programme.
- To get to know each other, among and between the development team and the historical content team.
- To identify how the Historiana historical content team and the project advisors can best support the development process.
- To decide on who will work together in pairs on the key issues.
- To discuss and agree on how to develop the learning activities described in the project.
- To decide what will be ready before the next meeting in May.

Outputs:

- Division of team members over the key issues in pairs.
- First draft key questions for the key issues.

Executive Summary of the Meeting

The development team exists of a group of history educators teaching in secondary schools across Europe. The new team members were introduced to Historiana by EUROCLIO Programme Director Steven Stegers and Historiana Editor-in-Chief Bob Stradling. This provided the team with the chance to learn more about the Historiana platform, its functionalities, goals and ambitions. This introduction was combined with a presentation about the first Decisions and Dilemmas project to explain the connection between the two projects and how they would feature in the same unit on Historiana.

Following this general introduction, the team was introduced to the goals of this project, the timeframe and the outputs and outcomes that need to be realised within the project. This programme gave the new team members a good overview of what this project is supposed to accomplish and deliver but also an understanding of the two consecutive Decisions and Dilemmas projects and how they feature on Historiana.

The development team brainstormed about the selected Key Issues and the ideas that were introduced during the Strategic Meeting. They discussed the team composition for each activity, what the geographical focus should be for each issue and came up with a preliminary key question for the different issues.

Meanwhile the Historiana Historical Content team worked on the Historiana modules on World War Two and the Cold War period which will become available on Historiana in 2017. At the end of the meeting they provided useful feedback and tips on the initial ideas on the focus and key question presented by the team members.



The development team together with the Historical Content team of Historiana at Mount School York.

Key Issues

1. Economic Imbalances in Europe

The first key issue will focus on the existing and (possible) candidate member countries of the EU, looking at the challenges that the EU faces regarding economic imbalances between and within different member states. The ‘rich’ North and the ‘poor’ South is a contrast that is a popular topic of discussion within EU countries, but the discussion is often with little regard for nuance. The strategy for this learning resources is to depersonalise the issue by showing many perspectives to students. This will provide them with new ideas about how different people see this problem.

The suggested preliminary key question is: *“Shall we create equal living conditions in Europe and what would be the consequences of this?”* The idea is that by adding historical examples such as East and West Germany, former Yugoslavia, North and South Italy and the solidarity tax, a decent historical context is provided to show that this issue is not new. The contemporary lens on the problem is to show the investments of the EU in the South, and the consequence of this investment: creating consumers instead of producers in the South. As this issue is very complex and might be hard to understand, the tip was given to create evidence files. These files would contain statistics and statements to help students make up their minds and give information for possible discussions. Guido Lessing and Bojana Dujković-Blagojević will develop this activity.

2. Energy Dependency

The second key issue will focus on the energy supply of the EU, looking at the dependency on other countries. Europe imports around 65% of its total energy supplies from outside the EU. Almost all natural gasses and oil come from Russia, the Middle East and other parts of the world, which makes Europe highly dependent on other countries.

By using the preliminary key question: *“Are our energy needs more likely to lead to peace or war?”*, this section tries to cover a highly relevant contemporary issue the EU is facing today. Within this section, students are presented several case studies of energy dependency situations to make up their own conclusion to the key question. Kate Smee and Ute Ackermann-Boeros will be the two members who will develop this learning activity.



Team members Kate Smee and Ute Ackermann-Boeros working on initial ideas for the learning activities.

3. Trade in a global context

The third key issue will focus on the EU and trade in a global context. The difficulty here is that a global context is too big to cover in just one learning resource. During the discussion sessions there was an idea to split this issue in three topics which could be:

- TTIP and the Mediation Courts;
- Ukraine Trade Agreement and the Dutch referendum;
- EU trade policy and impact on outside the EUR → Africa

As global trade is a very big topic and hard to teach, the team discussed how to formulate a key question that interest students on the one hand, and does justice to the broadness of the topic on the other hand. This resulted in the key question: *“How do European policies affect an African Poultry farmer?”*. The suggested focus is on the fact that within the EU there is a strong demand for (only) chicken breast and as a consequence the EU ‘dumps’ the overload of chicken legs outside the EU. On the other side, it would also be good to show how EU policies influence the lives of African farmers. In this case it might be possible to use personal stories of African farmers to show the magnitude of the problem. Also this section will be developed by Kate Smee and Ute Ackermann-Boeros.

4. Europe as a potential global power.

During the Strategic Meeting in Brussels, this key issue turned out to be very complex. As the European Union operates on many levels, but does not in itself have any real power, it is almost impossible to teach students in a short time span how this situation works. Another complicating factor is that the ‘global power’ has so many aspects it is not possible to cover everything in one learning resource.

Four case studies were identified as possibilities for this section. Kate Brennan of Act the Facts joined the team, and offered to make a ‘Scripted Drama’ of this section. With this, students have to do a role play making a short play with their classroom. This method offers active learning and motivation to the students, while at the same time offering a great opportunity to cover such a complex situation.



Team members Guido Lessing and Bojana Dujković-Blagojević working on initial ideas for the learning activities.

5. Opening Europe’s borders for people / Schengen.

The final issue will focus on Europe’s borders and the Schengen agreement, looking at the perspective for people travelling from outside the EU. To give this section a good historical context, the team members will develop several sub-learning resources which give a good understanding on how the EU

came to the Schengen agreement and how the situation was before the Schengen agreement. These resources could look at:

- Perspectives from ‘Behind the Wall’ - regarding the Iron Curtain during the Cold War and the travel between East and West.
- Perspectives from commuters into Luxembourg every day from Germany, France and Belgium.
- Perspectives on Sweden and Denmark and their difficulty to commute with each other.

To be able to cover all these perspectives, it is necessary to keep the Key Question as broad as possible. After long brainstorming, the team decided to go with the preliminary key question: *“What do open borders mean to me?”*

This key question offers students the opportunity to make up their own minds about the impact of the Schengen agreement and what they think is good or bad if borders are opened up. Also, by using this question, there can be political perspectives embedded in the learning resource. When combining several political viewpoints, it gives a multiperspective overview of different ways to think about open borders. Team members Guido Lessing and Bojana Dujković-Blagojević will develop this activity.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The First Development Meeting was very useful for the new team to get insights into the details of the project, and the expectations of delivery of materials. The conceptual debates held in the Strategic Meeting in November 2015 offered a good basis for the first team work on the key issues.

The development team agreed on the following division for the development of 6 learning activities:

	Key Issue	Team members (<u>lead</u>)
0	La Memoire de l'Europa	<u>Kate Brennan</u>
1	Economic imbalances in Europe	<u>Guido Lessing</u> + Bojana Dujkovic Blagojevic
2	Energy dependency	<u>Kate Smee</u> + Ute Ackermann Boeros
3	Trade in a global context	Kate Smee + <u>Ute Ackermann Boeros</u>
4	Europe as a potential global power	<u>Kate Brennan</u>
5	Opening Europe's borders for people / Schengen	Guido Lessing + <u>Bojana Dujkovic Blagojevic</u>

All materials will follow the Historiana template, as they will be features on the Hlstoriana website when they are finished.

The next development meeting will be in May with the Project Advisors. During this meeting, the team will present their ideas and the advisors can help and advice on content and further development.

During the next team meeting, the team members will present their learning ideas and work on the topic, methodology, enquiry questions, indicative age, and need for advice or challenges with finding sources or content.

Acknowledgements: The 'Decisions and Dilemmas: Exploring EU history through the lens of contemporary issues' is implemented with the support of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union.

Disclaimer: "The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein."

Copyright: This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence (CC BY 4.0).