

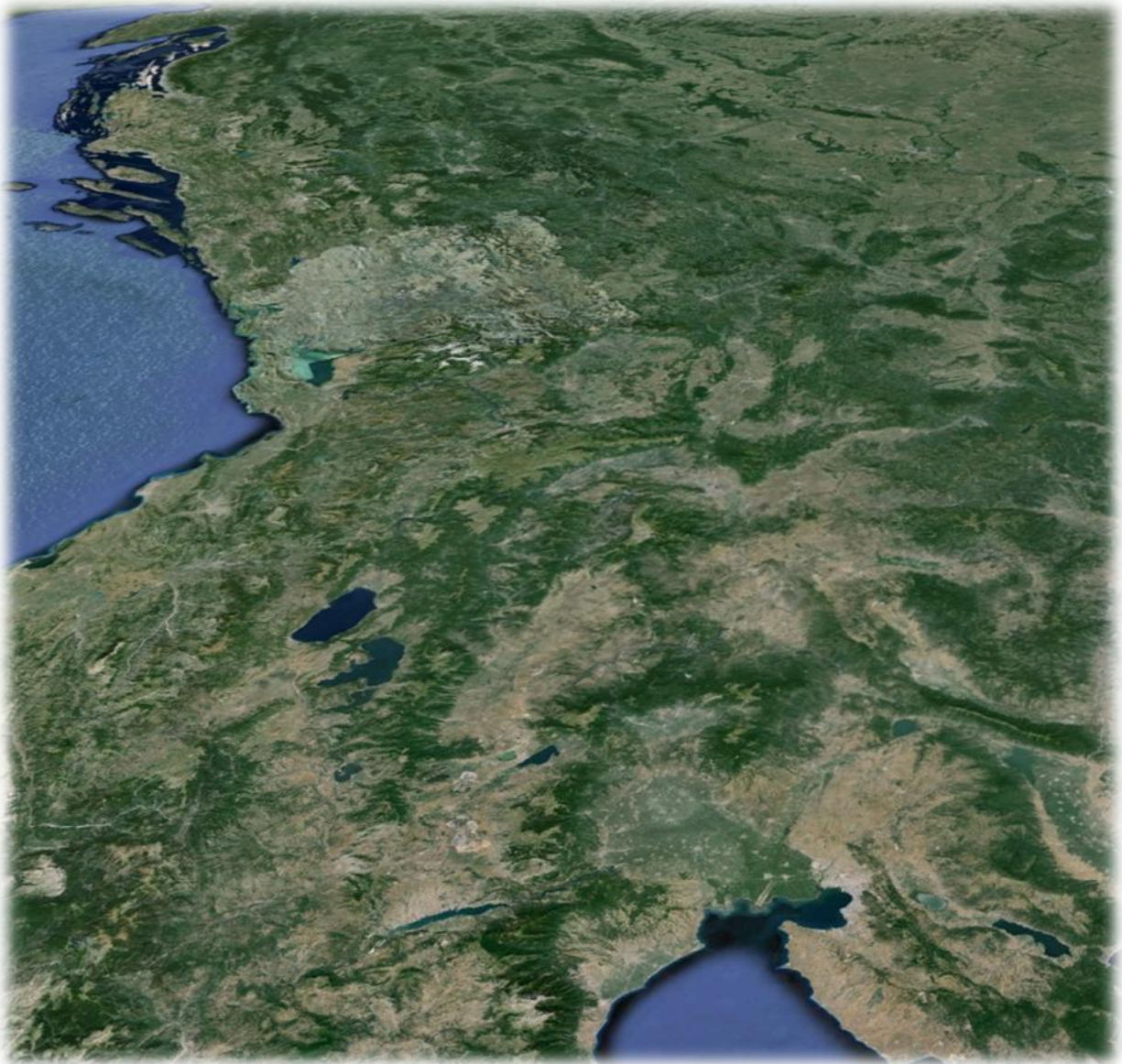
HISTORY EDUCATION BEYOND BORDERS

HOW CAN WE SHARE OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE?

31 March- 6 April 2014
Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia

Background Document

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Why this theme?

Educating young people is a responsible task of a society. History and heritage education in Europe and beyond has been given a special role in enhancing the national sense of belonging of younger generations and therefore developed a strong national focus. Such approach has proven to be not without danger. Unfortunately, already only in the late 20th century in Europe, internal struggles in a variety of countries have demonstrated that nationally biased historical interpretations of recent and distant events in the past have played a negative role in sustaining a mindset of conflict.

In the 1990's the dissolution of Yugoslavia disrupted life in the region immensely. After peace agreements were signed, communication and mutual understanding between the different societies had to be rebuilt. **Sharing history and heritage became, as it has been before, a formidable challenge.**

History Education

A variety of International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, have worked to address this challenge in many different ways. Textbooks had been first blackened, and then revised. Curricula have been revamped to include innovative methodologies and outcome-based learning. Yet a lot remains to be done in the region to continue to ensure the implementation of responsible and innovative history education. Investing in High-Quality History and Heritage Education through Teacher Training, Professional Development,

Cultural Heritage

Cultural Heritage has been placed prominently on the agenda in the region through joint initiative of the European Union and the Council of Europe within the *Ljubljana Process*¹. The responsibility to identify, initiate and run a wide range of regionally integrated projects aimed at rehabilitation of cultural heritage has been taken up by the Regional Cooperation Council and its Task Force on Culture and Society.

On a European Level, large networks such as Europa Nostra have spearheaded the European Heritage Alliance, which aims "to work more closely together to promote the untapped potential of Europe's heritage, cultural and natural, immovable and movable."²

¹ <http://tfcs.rcc.int/en/projects/ljubljana-process>

² <http://www.europeanheritagealliance.eu/about/>

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EUROCLIO – the European Association of History Educators and the Association of History Educators of Macedonia, in close cooperation with its other members in the countries of former Yugoslavia and the region, have chosen to dedicate the 21st Annual Professional Development Conference to focus on addressing this challenge: **How can we share our cultural heritage?**

Why in Republic of Macedonia?

EUROCLIO has worked in the Republic of Macedonia since 2001, and in the wider region since 2003. History Teachers Associations in the region have been very engaged with the work and further network of EUROCLIO as well as other international initiatives. This has resulted in the creation of a large and extended network of history and heritage educators, able and very willing to host the 21st EUROCLIO Annual Professional Development Conference. Leaders of the History Teachers Associations in the countries of former Yugoslavia agreed together to put forward the bid to host this conference in Ohrid, Republic in Macedonia.

Moreover, the past in Republic of Macedonia is an issue of controversy; different communities have dissimilar accounts of the Country's past. Currently, the divided communities of the Republic of Macedonia follow different educational pathways. The country is ethnically diverse and its nationhood and history are complex and often contested. Since the Ohrid Agreement on August 13 2001, there is a growing gap between the educational systems of the Albanian and Macedonian speaking populations, as well as a large lack of acknowledgement for the other minorities in the country. History educators for each community focus primarily on the history of their own 'nation'; learning about the other is not compulsory in national history education.

Many history educators in Macedonia and beyond feel responsible to develop history education into a modern school subject, appropriate for students in the 21st century global society. They have expressed this feeling through various projects and activities, under the umbrella of EUROCLIO, but also in partnership with a variety of stakeholders in the regional and international community.

Significant progress has been achieved, recently through the official adoption of the "Steps toward Integrated Education"-policy of the Ministry of Education and Science. Implementation of this policy has been challenging, but certain progress has been made.

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In 2012, EUROCLIO published a detailed analysis report entitled “**A Key to Unlock the Past. History Education in Macedonia. Analysis of today, recommendations for the future**”.³ The report concluded that:

The continuation of the divided histories will do little to promote social cohesion between the differing ethnic groups, and continue to exacerbate overt societal tensions. These differing interpretations of the past lead to disputed interpretations today and despite numerous calls from international political actors, including the Council of Europe, OSCE, UNICEF and the European Commission, there remain vast challenges within education in the Republic of Macedonia to address the ethnic divide and prevent future conflict. The region needs this conference as there is a need for greater innovative expertise in the teaching and learning of history, especially with a cross border regional focus, empowering dialogue and critical thinking on sensitive topics in the recent history.

Without enhanced innovative high-quality professionalism, history curricula, history textbooks and the (in-service) history teachers training might continue to play a dividing force in this region. It is much needed to develop a bottom-up understanding of European standard curriculum development key and transversal competencies as laid out in the European Reference Framework, Council of Europe and UNESCO recommendations, also relevant for responsible and innovative learning in history classes.

The Association of History Educators in Macedonia (ANIM), an inter-ethnic association of professionals, has proven massive commitment to work for the quality of history education. Around 130 people have worked together to seek ways to address difficult history without creating a heavy burden for future generations. They face great obstacles in achieving this. Also they have built bridges of understanding to their friends and colleagues in similar associations in all neighbouring countries, including Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Kosovo and Albania. Innovative teaching material developed by the Association has been recognised and awarded best practice status by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and

³ The report is freely accessible on http://www.euroclio.eu/new/index.php/resources-publications-a-websites/recommendations--advise-on-education-policies/doc_download/1296-2012-a-key-to-unlock-the-past-history-education-in-macedonia

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Human Rights.⁴ In addition, a team lead by the Association has created the only alternative for a history curriculum to date which deals with the period after 1991.⁵

The international delegates to the conference will experience excellent hospitality representatives of the country and the wider region. In addition, the diversity of the society as reflected by issues today, as well as in history, will provide the history educators coming from all over Europe and abroad with new insights and understanding into complex histories of the Balkan.

Why Ohrid?

The Conference will be held in Ohrid. Ohrid is considered to be a holy city, referred to also as “Jerusalem of the Balkans”, as it was the seat of Saint Clement of Ohrid, a most holy man for the Orthodox church. He was the most prominent disciple of Saints Cyril and Methodius, founder of the Ohrid Literary School and associated with the creation and popularisation of the Glagolitic and Cyrillic scripts.

In 1979 and in 1980, Ohrid and Lake Ohrid were accepted as Cultural and Natural World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. In fact, Ohrid is one of only 28 sites that are part of UNESCO's World Heritage that are both Cultural and Natural sites. The lake of Ohrid also is shared with Albania. Around the lake many historic sites have been found.

In addition to the religious and cultural importance and its historic importance, the city of Ohrid boasts immense natural beauty, with forest-covered, high mountain ranges, ancient cave dwellings, it is a true jewel on the Balkans.

Ohrid is since 2001 also famed for the place where the Ohrid Framework Agreement was signed, creating a facility for sustained dialogue and preventing wide-scale conflict the Republic.

The conference will also include visits to Skopje and Bitola. This will add to the understanding of the diverse nature of the country's population, in terms of language, culture and religion.

⁴ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/39006?download=true>

⁵ http://www.euroclio.eu/new/index.php/component/docman/doc_download/2-teaching-material-retelling-the-history

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Conference Aims

1. To promote **cooperation among History Educators in Republic of Macedonia** from all communities through the uniting banner of ANIM – the Association of History Educators in Republic of Macedonia, an extensive an inter-ethnic group of historians and education professionals
2. To enhance the **ongoing reform “Steps towards Integrated Education”** of the Ministry of Education in Republic of Macedonia to the peers and experts under the umbrella of EUROCLIO
3. To launch a sustainable platform for **regional cooperation** on history, heritage and cultural education by bringing together heads of international missions (CoE, EU, OSCE, UNICEF, UNESCO as well as a variety of donor/stakeholders) with key history education policy makers, curriculum developers and textbook authors
4. To present and valorise the results **common project “History that Connects”** of the History Teachers Associations of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia by exploring the theme of how to teach sensitive and controversial history.
5. To explore **multi-religious and multi-cultural society** in the Republic of Macedonia through the lenses of Bitola, Struga and Ohrid by sharing experiences and on-site learning with heritage preservation experts.
6. To discuss with a wide European History and Heritage Education public of Education leaders about the relevance and complexity of the **history of the Balkan region** by stressing the history of dialogue, everyday living together and mutual understanding
7. To develop a common understanding of innovative and responsible history as a tool for **reconciliation, peace, stability and democracy.**
8. To transform the shared experiences of **integrated and cross-border history education** in diverse societies into tangible guidelines for educators and policy-makers

Key Challenges

- How to promote History Education beyond Border in Europe and the World?
- How to foster a Multiperspective approach to History and Heritage in Republic of Macedonia?
- How to promote a History that Connects the Balkan, instead of dividing the regions populace into religious, ethnic and cultural groups who view each other through simplified stereotypical lenses?
- How to address the shared and layered heritage around Ohrid locally and in the wider region?

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- How to sustain initiatives like EUROCLIO within the funding landscape of 2014?

Key Themes

- Traces of diversity
- Multiperspectivity
- Complexity and multi-layeredness of history
- Shared cultural heritage / breaking down stereotypes
- Discovery of layers or memory
- How Heritage sustains an image of the other

Objectives and results: The conference will provide a platform of intercultural exchange in which the participants will actively learn, share best practices, and network. The core group of teachers and heritage educators will be involved in manifold activities that will empower them to engage their students and other target groups with critical debate from multiple perspectives, promote pluralism, and combat the idea that history is a single, unchangeable truth. An important part of this is the development of innovative and responsible high quality teaching methods and materials in preparation of and during the conference, and their promotion and further improvement in transnational work groups over a longer period of time. Furthermore, through cooperating with national and regional partners, the conference will involve and strengthen sustainable participatory, independent civil society networks in South-eastern Europe and beyond, e.g. by creating an online regional teacher associations' platform to facilitate small- to mid-scale cross-border projects and other future cooperation among different kinds of people.

On the whole, this will result in intense professional empowerment, capacity building, and knowledge exchange. It will connect a large number of professionals, stakeholders, and multipliers both in the Republic of Macedonia and the wider South-eastern European region and bring them together with peers and experts from the whole of Europe. In addition to this, the conference's specific objectives for its hosting country Macedonia are (1) to provide a framework for intensive cooperation among history educators from all communities under the interethnic banner of ANIM, and (2) to enhance the national Ministry of Education's ongoing reform "Steps Towards Integrated Education" with contributions from a large number of stakeholders and experts under the transnational umbrella of EUROCLIO. These undertakings are meant to serve as positive examples for innovation both in education and society-at-large not only in Macedonia, but throughout all of South-eastern Europe and beyond.

The conference engenders lasting change since it is part of a long-term process of transnational cooperation in form of professional training, empowerment, capacity building, and policy innovation in education and international relations. Through reflecting history, heritage education, and remembrance,

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the 2014 EUROCLIO Annual Professional Development Conference will strongly promote interethnic and transnational cooperation, understanding, and reconciliation with a special geographic focus on South-eastern Europe, reaching out further through the extensive European and growing global network of EUROCLIO.

EUROCLIO and the ANIM greatly look forward to taking these matters in a hands-on fashion, not letting ourselves get caught in webs of politicized debate, but freely engaging each other as History, Heritage and Citizenship Education Professionals with a keen eye on progress.

The Thematic Programme

During the conference, the general theme is broken down into six unique day-themes, where the programme is structured to foster a shared thinking process. We will try to answer a series of questions through interactive panels and a varied range of thematic workshops. These themes are developed as special programmes:

31st March – The Intercultural Conference

Every year the EUROCLIO Annual Conference takes place in another country. Early arrivals will have the opportunity to visit the country's capital Skopje, with a special tour given by experts on the city's rich cultural and religious heritage.

In the late afternoon, the informal opening of the conference will provide the opportunity for the participants to get familiar with history education in the host country, with EUROCLIO and ANIM, as well as with each other – through the culturally rich "Intercultural Evening".

1st April – Europe and the World

The first formal day will be officially opened by the Ministry of Education, Mr Spiro Ristovski and a host of dignitaries representing national, regional and international organizations. In this day we want to open as broad as possible. How do societies share cultural heritage across ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic divides? Through the lens of history and heritage education in Europe and beyond, a large collaborative efforts – including break-away workshops and plenary reflections - will be done obtain a wide European understanding of the challenges and opportunities to share cultural heritage – taking history education beyond borders.

2nd April – The Rainbow of Macedonia

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As one of Europe's youngest countries, the Republic of Macedonia has faced numerous challenges, some of which being anchored in different perspectives on history and heritage. On this day, we will engage with a community of practitioners, policy makers and representatives of various national efforts at integrated and/or multiperspective approaches to deal with history and heritage. The day will include a mixture of theoretic reflection on the substance as well as sharing of hands-on experience, through workshops as well as school visits.

3rd April – Connecting Europe through History

The 21st EUROCLIO Annual Professional Development Conference includes the official launch of EUROCLIO's latest innovative and responsible teaching tool. Within the project *History that Connects. How to Teach Sensitive and Controversial History in the countries of former Yugoslavia*, leading history educators from across the region have collaborated to produce a resource dealing with the history of 1900-1945 in the region.⁶ During this day, we will first learn about a range of international and regional initiatives which sought to connect, heal, reconcile and/or develop the countries of former Yugoslavia and the region of South East Europe through History and Heritage Education. The attendees will have the opportunity to be the first to receive the English-language edition of the new teaching resources, as well as be trained on usage of this resource by the authors and editors of the material. A discussion will be facilitated on the lesson learned from such projects and a joint understanding on future needs of the community will be drafted.

4th April – On-site learning

A unique combination of sites will be visited in small groups on this conference day, taking us from antiquity until the more recent history, as well as among the much older and well conserved natural surroundings. But this day is not about tourism. Rather it will facilitate the attendees with a direct

⁶ This project is the latest element in the History that Connects programme, which was started in 2003 by EUROCLIO and its partners in the Western Balkans. It aims to improve education in a way that it furthers peace, democracy, tolerance and critical thinking. Educators in the region work together towards developing inclusive and multi-perspective materials on the sensitive history of the region. The development of the material can be understood as an intense competencies-building course and be used as basis for an alternative approach for national curricula. At the moment history education in the countries of the Former Yugoslavia does not contribute to peace and intercultural understanding. Many sensitive issues in the region are still addressed from a nationalistic point of view. <http://www.euroclio.eu/new/index.php/work/history-that-connects>

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interfacing with the educational officers and programme developers of the sites. On location the challenge of how to address a shared history through cultural heritage can be accessed and addressed.

5th April – EUROCLIO Day

The EUROCLIO Annual Conferences are not only unique International Training events, bringing together history educators and policy makers from over 50 countries on average, but also the single most important gathering of the democratic organization that is EUROCLIO. On this day of the conference the EUROCLIO General Assembly will be held, where the leaders of History Teachers Association from all over Europe and beyond will reflect on the work of the Association in the previous year and together develop plans for the future. This will include elections on new members and approval of the work of the Board.

Who will be organizing this conference?

EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators, promotes a responsible and innovative teaching of history based on multi-perspectivity, critical thinking, mutual respect, and the inclusion of controversial issues. The association was established in 1992, supports the development of responsible and innovative history, citizenship, and heritage education by promoting critical thinking, mutual respect, peace, stability, and democracy.

The association advocates a sound use of history and heritage education towards the building and deepening of democratic societies, connecting professionals across boundaries of countries, ethnicities, and religions. It seeks to enhance the quality of history and citizenship education through capacity building for educators and producing and implementing innovative teaching tools. Its approach is process-oriented and believes in reinforcing professional talents as fundamental resources for innovation and change. In 2013, EUROCLIO represents 68 independent and volunteer non-profit history, heritage, and citizenship educators' associations and related institutes from 45 mostly European countries. It reaches out to a network of at least 25.000 history, heritage, and citizenship educators who work with up to 5 million students and pupils per year. The association receives core funding from the European Commission, is an NGO official partner of UNESCO, and enjoys participatory status at the Council of Europe.

EUROCLIO works on preventing abuse of history by promoting respect for diversity, human rights, intercultural dialogue and collaboration between stakeholders. It stimulates the transfer of reliable academic historical knowledge and innovative educational theory and inspires methodological discourse to the school and training institute levels, and the development of history and citizenship curricula, teaching tools and assessment procedures. In order to achieve these goals EUROCLIO utilizes knowledge

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and experience transfer through peer-learning, exchange of expertise and a system of expert, peer and student reviewing.

ANIM, the Association of History Educators in Macedonia is an interethnic, non-political and volunteer civic society organization, protecting and developing history teaching in primary and secondary education in Macedonia, promoting peace, democracy, stability and improvement of interethnic relations in its home country and the wider region. The organization strives to improve the teaching of history and the cultivation of remembrance into a tool for cooperation and understanding. In order to achieve their missions, EUROCLIO and ANIM have since 2000 worked together in several projects. From 2000 to 2003 they worked together with the History Educators Associations from Albania and Bulgaria in the project *Understanding a Shared Past, Learning for the Future, Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia*. This project developed a cross-border, innovative and comparative approach to teaching about the recent past in these countries. The project published a common Teacher Resource Book *Change and Continuity in Everyday Life in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia 1945-2000*, also available in Macedonian and Albanian. The book was developed and implemented through national and international capacity building seminars. In 2006 and 2007 EUROCLIO and ANIM worked again together, this time in the project *Macedonia: Retelling the History*. This project focused on developing a common, interethnic curriculum on the twentieth century and related teaching materials, respecting diversity and multi-perspectivity. The publication *Retelling the History* contains 4 interactive teaching modules about independent Macedonia. Both projects combined innovative content with new ideas about methodology of history and pedagogy.