



European Holocaust Research Infrastructure Implementation Phase (EHRI-IP)

The study of the Holocaust is fraught with difficulties due to its nature. From the intentional destruction of evidence by the perpetrators to the massive dislocation of people, researchers are faced with a complex trans-national patchwork of sources, located in different countries around the world and following different archival practices, hindering a comprehensive study of this period of our history.

To meet this challenge, the [European Holocaust Research Infrastructure \(EHRI\)](#) set out to develop a pan-European distributed Research Infrastructure that brings together the leading facilities and offers users integrated access to Holocaust resources, expertise and training. To do so, EHRI leans on a wide variety of activities and services, ranging from workshops, seminars (online and in-person), online courses to digital tools for Holocaust research. As a prominent example of the latter, the [EHRI Portal](#) provides access, at the time of writing, to more than 380,000 archival descriptions held by 2,318 institutions spread across 61 countries.

EHRI was added to the ESFRI Roadmap in 2018 and since then it has been working in the preparations to become a permanent organisation, under the legal form of a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC), specific legal form for Research Infrastructures under the EU law. The latest step of this endeavour was the [EHRI-IP project](#), which facilitated EHRI's implementation phase and ensured a timely start of its operation as an ERIC. The EHRI-IP consortium consisted of representatives from the emerging national nodes of the eleven countries that expressed support for establishing EHRI as an ERIC, as well as partners from Ukraine and the United States. This consortium undertook a set of coordinated activities to advance EHRI's maturity and capabilities and remove any remaining roadblocks to its implementation and early operation.

The project achieved three overall objectives: (i) to implement EHRI by finalising the governance, establishing an operation-ready Central Hub and linked National Nodes, and turning existing high-level scientific, user and technological strategies into operational reality; (ii) to grow EHRI by acquiring new potential Member and Observer countries, negotiating cooperation agreements with international and strategic partners, and investigating the scope for a future expansion of EHRI with regards to the scientific domain covered, services offered and user communities served; (iii) to manage and valorise EHRI by coordinating between EHRI-IP and concurrent activities, and developing strategies that ensure that EHRI reaches its full potential with regards to innovation and social, economic and scientific impact.

Due to this work, the [EHRI-ERIC was established on 20th January 2025 counting on 10 founding members](#) and culminated its transition from a project-based infrastructure to a fully-fledged distributed International Research Infrastructure (IRI) with a Central Hub in Amsterdam and 10 National Nodes (NNs).

Kazerne Dossin (KD), the only partner in Flanders, has been involved in EHRI since 2016 ([EHRI-2 project](#)) with a leading role in the data integration work package. Later on, during the [EHRI-3 project](#) the institution took responsibility for the technical side of data integration as well. After being engaged in the [EHRI-PP project](#), KD also contributed to the EHRI-IP project on, among other things, the sustainment of the technical infrastructure and liaising with international partners, such as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance ([IHRA](#)), in which KD experts are already involved as part of the Belgian delegation, and to which [EHRI has recently joined as a Permanent International Partner](#).

Another major aspect of the EHRI-IP project was that major steps were taken towards the creation of a Belgian node (EHRI-BE). KD and the State Archives of Belgium dedicated a great deal of effort to communicating with the different federated levels, outlining the envisioned services, building a network that encompasses relevant national and regional partners and procuring political and financial support.

All these experiences have served KD to increase its network of international partners, gain visibility both at a national and international level, and [acquire knowledge and insight about international best practices](#) and how to adopt them better as a medium-size institution. These experiences have ultimately led KD to improve its internal processes helping to fulfil its mission more effectively as well as put Flemish expertise onto the international map.

Partners:

