

FOURTH FORUM ON HISTORY EDUCATION

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMME
ON HISTORY EDUCATION

WHERE LEARNERS MEET HISTORY:

REAFFIRMING THE ROLE OF
HISTORY EDUCATION IN THE
21ST CENTURY

PROGRAMME



EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE,
BUDAPEST, ZIVATAR U. 1, 1024
HUNGARY



11 > 13 JUNE 2025



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History Education
at the Council of Europe

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Built upon the shared values of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, the Council of Europe's Intergovernmental Programme on History Education serves the organisation's mission when it comes to how history is taught, summarised in a single motto: "Teaching history, grounding democracy". The aim is to reinforce democratic principles, foster historical awareness, and promote cultural understanding across Europe. At the heart of this effort are the Annual Forums on History Education that provide a platform for learners, educators, policymakers, academics, curriculum developers, and civil society to rethink, refine and develop guidelines for improving history education, as well as reaffirm its role in building democratic societies and safeguarding human rights. Three Forums have been held so far, in Belgrade (2022), Brussels (2023), and Bologna (2024), tackling the themes of historical sites, the digital age, and higher education respectively.

At this Fourth Forum for History Education, under the title "Where Learners Meet History: Reaffirming the Role of History Education in the 21st Century", the role of learners will be emphasised through an examination of the spaces and conditions in which they engage with history, as well as the challenges they face in doing so. This theme aligns with the Council of Europe's 'Learners First' Education Strategy (2024-2030) and actively promotes the values expressed in the Reykjavík Declaration (2023) and the New Democratic Pact for Europe (2025). In this spirit, the location of the Forum, the Council of Europe's own European Youth Centre in Budapest, is symbolic of the role of young people in shaping the future of democratic societies.

The Forum will seek to integrate the conclusions of the three preceding Forums and position history education as a lifelong learning experience, one which may take different forms across traditional and non-traditional formats or formal and informal education. Participants are invited to reflect on and discuss the conditions, innovations and frameworks needed to ensure high-quality and inclusive history education. Their diverse backgrounds are an acknowledgement of the unique and vital roles that different actors – from public institutions and academia to schools and civil society organisations – play in this process.

The Forum also includes a specific focus on the continuing impact of digital technologies on history education. This not only reflects the commitments outlined in the Reykjavík Declaration regarding international standard-setting in education, but also supports the ongoing effort to draft a new Committee of Ministers recommendation to member states on history education in the digital age. The planned recommendation is a response to rapid technological changes and their impact on teaching and learning, including challenges such as the distortion of facts or the dissemination of disinformation. By providing a space for participants to debate such issues, the Forum will inform the development of guidelines that are practical, constructive, and firmly anchored in the defence of democratic values.

As a concluding event of the current Intergovernmental Programme, the Forum offers key stakeholders the opportunity to jointly reflect on its outcomes, lessons learned, and achievements. Additionally, it will pave the way for the development of the new Intergovernmental Programme scheduled to be launched in 2026, building on the Council of Europe's New Democratic Pact for Europe. As we look forward into the 21st century, along with the challenges and opportunities it brings for Europe and the world, history education will be reaffirmed as an integral cornerstone of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

DAY 1

11 JUNE 2025



Moderator:

Balint MOLNAR,

Executive director, European Youth Centre Budapest, Council of Europe

OFFICIAL OPENING

17:00

Welcome remarks

Matjaž GRUDEN,

Director for Democracy, Council of Europe

17.30

Overview of Forum programme

Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX,

Head of Unit, Remembrance and Intergovernmental Programme on History Education,
Council of Europe

KEYNOTE SPEECH AND PLENARY DEBATE

Reaffirming the role of history education in the 21st century

Niklas AMMERT,

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Professor of History Didactics and History Education,
Linnaeus University

17:30

Why is history still relevant in the 21st century? What are the roles of institutions and individuals in upholding our memory of the past? How can we respond to challenges to history in our contemporary societies?

18:30

With his expertise on how people encounter, interpret and use history in different societal contexts, Niklas Ammert will discuss the diverse ways in which these questions have been dealt with, as well as the challenges posed by the current geopolitical environment. He will reflect on the intersection between history, historical consciousness and moral values, as well as the importance of life experiences and knowledge in meaning-making in history. In the plenary discussion, participants will be invited to debate the role that history education should play in the 21st century, setting the stage for further discussions throughout the Forum.

18:30 Joint dinner

DAY 2

12 JUNE 2025



PANEL 1: WHERE AND HOW DO LEARNERS MEET HISTORY?

We all meet history in different ways: as a school student in a classroom lesson, as a tourist at a museum or memorial, as a pedestrian encountering the name of a street on a sign... How might we recognise the spaces in which learners come together with history? And how might we support them in their engagement with the past?

Drawing from their diverse backgrounds, the speakers on this panel will address the manifold contexts in which learners connect with history today, ranging from formal education and textbooks to memorial sites and digital media. In doing so, they will explore the evolving but enduring role that history plays in the 21st century and discuss strategies for defending its relevance to building and maintaining democratic culture. Participants will be asked to reflect on the conditions needed to shape an inclusive history education, considering a lifelong learning perspective that recognises the links and tensions between different contexts, whether traditional and non-traditional formats or formal and non-formal education.

9:00

10:30

Moderator:

Andreas HOLTBERGET,
Project manager, EuroClio – European
Association of History Educators

Learners' representative:

Panagiotis CHATZIMICHAIL,
Head of external affairs, Organising
Bureau of European School Student
Unions (OBSESSU)

Speakers:

Hendrik ATZE VAN DOEZUM,
History teacher and YouTuber, Buitenpost

Inês FIALHO BRANDÃO,
Head of cultural and digital mediation,
Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon and
member of the Scientific Advisory Council,
Observatory on History Teaching in
Europe, Council of Europe

Aleksandar TODOSIJEVIĆ,
History teacher, textbook author and
President, UDI-EuroClio Serbia

10:30 – 11:00 - Coffee break

11:00 WORKING GROUPS

12:30

Participants will divide into three working groups, each moderated by a member of the Forum preparatory team and joined by a speaker from Panel 1. In the session, they will have an in-depth discussion on the issues raised during the panel, with the opportunity to ask questions and exchange experiences. One group rapporteur per working group will take notes on the main outcomes of the session and communicate these to the General Rapporteur.

12:30 – 14:00 - Lunch

PANEL 2: HISTORY EDUCATION AND THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

In 2025, there is no doubt that many learners meet history through digital media. The rapid evolution of new technologies has a direct impact on how history is transmitted and perceived, bringing with it both opportunities, such as increased access to information, as well as challenges, such as the spread of disinformation and manipulated historical content.

During this panel, speakers will take stock of developments like social media and artificial intelligence and consider how these have shaped domains from formal education to public archives. They will further reflect on and provide perspectives for the future of teaching and learning history in light of the changing tools and methods available to learners. Participants will be invited to discuss the innovations and frameworks that are needed to ensure quality history education in the contemporary digital age.

14:00

15:30

Moderator:

Monika LENDERMANN,
Project officer, Intergovernmental
Programme on History Education and
Observatory on History Teaching in
Europe, Council of Europe

Learners' representative:

Luka LEŠIĆ,
Equality Coordinator, European Students'
Union and student, University of Zadar

Speakers:

Tom DE SMET,
Deputy Director, National Archive of the
Netherlands

Sophie GEBEIL,
Lecturer in contemporary and media
history, Aix-Marseille University

Mykola MAKHORTYKH,
Lecturer, Institute of Communication and
Media Science, University of Bern

15:30 – 16:00 - Coffee break

16:00

WORKING GROUPS

17:30

Participants will divide into three working groups, each moderated by a member of the Forum preparatory team and joined by a speaker from Panel 2. In the session, they will have an in-depth discussion on the issues raised during the panel, with the opportunity to ask questions and exchange experiences. One group rapporteur per working group will take notes on the main outcomes of the session and communicate these to the General Rapporteur.

17.30 – 18.30 - Working meeting
between group rapporteurs and
General Rapporteur

19:30 Joint dinner



DAY 3

13 JUNE 2025

Moderator:

Raul CĂRSTOCEA,

Chair *ad interim*, Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, Council of Europe and Professor of History, Maynooth University

9:00 FEEDBACK FROM THE GENERAL RAPPOREUR ON THE PREVIOUS DAY'S WORKING GROUPS

9:30

Susanne POPP,

Honorary President, International Society for History Didactics

PLENARY DIALOGUE AND DEBATE

Ethical and practical challenges for history education in the 21st century

This closing session brings together the various topics debated throughout the Forum by concentrating on actions and obligations. Each speaker will first contribute an analysis of the role of institutions in relation to history and memory, taking into account different political environments and human rights perspectives.

9:30

In the plenary debate, the speakers and participants will engage in a dialogue focusing on the future. In discussing what history education might look like in the 21st century, they will reflect on what institutions, civil society and individuals can and should do, in light of both ethical and practical considerations, to reaffirm the democratic mission of history education.

11:00

Speakers:

Antoon DE BAETS,

EuroClio Emeritus Professor of History, Ethics and Human Rights,
University of Groningen

Andrea PETÓ,

Historian and Professor,
Central European University

11:00 – 11:30 - Coffee break

11.30

GENERAL RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT AND REFLECTIONS

12:30

CLOSING REMARKS

12:30

Luz MARTÍNEZ SEIJO,
Chair, Sub-Committee on Culture, Education and Democratic Values, Parliamentary
Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and PACE rapporteur, "Multiperspectivity in
remembrance and history education for democratic citizenship"

13:00

Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX,
Head of Unit, Remembrance and Intergovernmental Programme on History Education,
Council of Europe

13:00 – 14:00 - Lunch
