

CEGESOMA NEWSLETTER

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CONFERENCE - 'LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN TIMES OF WAR' WITH NICO WOUTERS, PETER ROMIJN & JAN NAERT

On the occasion of the publication of our colleague Nico Wouters new book 'Mayoral Collaboration', the CegeSoma organises a conference about local government in wartime on Friday 21 April. Two other experts in this field, Peter Romijn (NIOD, University of Amsterdam) and Jan Naert (Ghent University) will comment on this topic from their respective perspectives of the Netherlands and the First World War. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3436&pag0nbr=31&pagofs=0)

BELGIUM WWII – A VIRTUAL PLATFORM ON THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The team "Public History" has been working very hard on a virtual platform on the Second World War in Belgium. The aim is to make clear, concise and correct information available for the public through various formats (such as digital storytelling and an encyclopedia), and to make 'Belgium WWII' the prime online reference on our wartime history. The platform will be launched at the end of September 2017. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3444&pag0nbr=32&pagofs=0)

ARCHIVES - JOIN OUR TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS!

Are you retired and passionate by the history of Belgium? Or are you a student or recently graduate looking for useful experience to strengthen your cv? Do you have a heart for volunteering? The CegeSoma is looking for new volunteers to complement the existing team and offers you the opportunity to explore archives that are often closed to the public and to strengthen your archival competencies. Please contact: cegesoma@cegesoma.be or 02/556 92 11.

[\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/actu_en.php?article=3450)

PUBLIC HISTORY - IVTH CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR PUBLIC HISTORY

The conference organized in Ravenna by the International Federation for Public History from 5 to 9 June 2017 will be of particular relevance to everyone interested in public history. CegeSoma has taken as its mission to promote an approach with and for a large public, engaging itself actively within the Federation. Programme of the Conference : <https://events.unibo.it/ifph2017>

[\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3454&pag0nbr=32&pagofs=0)

DIGITAL CATALOGUES - 3 TIPS TO FIND MORE SOURCES AND REFERENCES

The MADDLAIN research project has recently been finished. The CegeSoma puts some of its findings in to practice in order to improve the digital access to our collections and those of the State Archives and Royal Library. On our website, you can find the first tips emanating from this study. These will enable you to find more references and digital sources in the institutions' catalogues. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3439&pag0nbr=32&pagofs=0)

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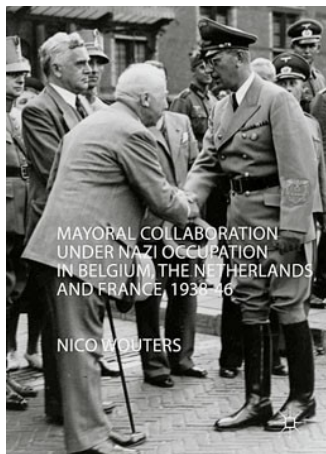
SYMPOSIUM - VIOLENCE IN 20TH-CENTURY EUROPEAN HISTORY: COMMEMORATING, DOCUMENTING, EDUCATING

From 6 to 8 June 2017, the 6th symposium organised by the European network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS) will be held in Brussels. It will be dedicated to violence in 20th century European history, from the perspective of commemoration, documentation and education. For this purpose, seven institutes, among which CegeSoma, have joined forces with the ENRS. [\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3455&pag0nbr=32&pagofs=0)

[\[MORE INFO\]](http://www.cegesoma.be/cms/index_en.php?article=3455&pag0nbr=32&pagofs=0)

CONFERENCE - Local Government in Times of War - with Nico Wouters, Peter Romijn and Jan Naert.

Following the publication of the book '[Mayoral Collaboration](#)' by CegeSoma-researcher [Nico Wouters](#), CegeSoma will organize a conference on local government in times of war on **21 April 2017** at 2.30 p.m.



Nico Wouters will first briefly present a few of the main conclusions of his book. Next, **Peter Romijn** (NIOD, University of Amsterdam) and **Jan Naert** (Ghent University) will successively respond. At the same time, they will present some of the results of their own research.

Themes that will be discussed are: international comparison between Belgium, France and the Netherlands, comparison between the First and the Second World War and initiatives for new research on (the impact of) occupations.

The conference will be moderated by [Dirk Luyten](#), the conference language is **Dutch**.

Registration is free via email to: isabelle.delvaux@cegesoma.be

The programme

2.30 p.m. - Nico Wouters: Key aspects from the book 'Mayoral Collaboration'

3 p.m. - Peter Romijn: The Role of Functional Elites

3.20 p.m. - Jan Naert: Mayors during the First World War in Belgium and Occupied France

For those who cannot participate in this conference, there is the possibility of attending an international conference in June 2017 in Canterbury:

Conference website: <https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/munitions-of-the-mind/conference/>

Registration:

<https://kenthospitality.kent.ac.uk/Register/Registration/Welcome.aspx?e=178FD42DF40032309E42F4F73168115D>

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BELGIUM WWII – A virtual platform on the Second World War

At a time when reliable information on sensitive subjects seems more important than ever, CegeSoma is developing a virtual platform on Belgium and its inhabitants during the Second World War. The website **Belgium WWII** will be launched at the end of September 2017.

We offer a glimpse of the first themes.

Collaboration, Repression and Justice in Time of War



Today, answers to questions are mostly looked for online. Through digital media, this federal project wants to provide the three language communities with quality information on our wartime history. The website will be online at the end of September 2017 with multilingual content (Dutch, French and partly German) on two main themes:

- **Collaboration and repression.** The website wants to shed some light on this delicate subject, while trying to defuse and explain it. The purpose is to dispel the myths that still dominate this issue.
- **Justice.** The functioning of the Belgian justice is confronted with the justice of the German occupier. How did the occupier intend to maintain order in the country? Did he receive help of the Belgian magistrates?

At a later stage, *Belgium WWII* wants to raise other issues, such as daily life and food supply in time of war, the resistance...



The young Brussels resistance fighter Henri Malfait, whose war portrait is presented on the website, at his return from the concentration camp of Buchenwald

Digital Storytelling

Belgium WWII presents the war past in different formats, adapted to the varied public. Among them, there are the **"war portraits"**: life stories of Belgians who have experienced the Second World War in their own specific way. Photographs, letters and audiovisual sources will bring these stories to life. These key documents give a good impression of the real impact of war on the life of known and lesser-known Belgians. This bottom-up approach introduces the visitor to our history of the war.

Digital Encyclopedia

Via the war portraits, the visitor will be able to navigate to a 'digital encyclopedia'. For this guide, brimming with information, the texts will be written by specialized historians. They will be illustrated with archival documents, interviews with the authors, photographs, graphs, diagrams, a bibliography and links. Thus, *Belgium WWII* meets the needs of a wide audience as well as students, teachers, researchers, public history researchers and journalists for accurate elementary information online.

CegeSoma wants to inspire public engagement with academic historical research. Therefore, we want Belgium WWII to become the prime online reference on our wartime history.

For more information

Follow the news on this project via the hashtag #BELGIUMWWII, the [Facebook page](#) and the [website](#) of CegeSoma.

Realization : [Margot Brulard](#) and [Tamar Cachet](#)

Coordination : [Chantal Kesteloot](#)

The accompanying scientific committee : Sébastien Dubois (State Archives), Bruno De Wever (Ghent University), Koen Aerts (Ghent University), Xavier Rousseaux (UCL), Jonas Campion (UCL) and Christoph Brull (ULg).

Discover their views on the project [here](#).

13 / 4 / 2017



Belgian children return to Brussels after spending a six month vacation in Germany under the wing of the "DeVlag", February 28th, 1944. Collection Sipro (CegeSoma nr. 14282).

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Join our Team of Volunteers!

As you may have read [in these pages](#), CegeSoma continuously acquires new archive funds, documentation and photographs.

When these funds arrive at our Centre, we first of all ensure their best possible conservation by eliminating everything that could damage them. We do this by transferring them to non-acidic maps and boxes. We then try, as quickly as possible, to make these archives available for research by making inventories, catalogues and data bases.

Without the help of **our team of volunteers**, trainees and student workers, we would not be able to keep up the work involved in the acquisition of archives. We therefore want to celebrate them in this Newsletter and via a series of [Facebook posts](#) !



Working in the Archives

To file the [Van Merode fund](#) (paper documents) concerning war aviation, to make the inventory of the [exhibits seized by the Military Prosecutor's office](#) for the collaboration trials, to draw up a detailed report on the state of preservation of our poster collection, etc.: our volunteers and trainees all have the ability to immerse themselves in these documents, often still unavailable for research purposes and to participate directly in the advance of research on the history of the 20th century.

Taking into account availability and personal interest, we propose either short and specific projects, or more lengthy and complex ones to our volunteers. For this purpose, they can count on the help of the archivists and historians of CegeSoma. The work is carried out according to the existing regulations at the State Archives. In this way, volunteers and trainees can develop their competences in archival preservation work and treatment of documents.

A Motivated Team, Young and Less Young

Our team consists of persons still studying or just graduated who wish to gain experience which will be of use to them on the job market, but also of persons who dispose of some free time in their career, or who wish to make good use of their retirement by pursuing their personal interest in Belgian history. Each of them wishes to combine the useful to the pleasant by participating in the valorization of our heritage in a pleasant and intellectually stimulating environment.

If this kind of voluntary work appeals to you and you would like to join our team, do not hesitate to contact us by telephone (02/556 92 11) or via cegesoma@cegesoma.be !

[Mathieu Roeges](#)

18 / 4 / 2017

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IVth Conference of the International Federation for Public History

From **5 to 9 June 2017**, the fourth conference of the [International Federation for Public History](#) (FIHP/IFPH) will be held in Ravenna. In just five days, some fifty international panels will discuss key questions with regard to public history.

At the same time, the [Italian Association for Public History](#) will also organize its first conference. The Polish historian and Director of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk, Pawel Machciewicz, will be the honorary guest during this event. His presence will present the opportunity to reconsider the historical and memorial debates that shake Poland today.

The Ultimate Even of Public History

The Conference of Ravenna will be of key interest to everyone taking an interest in public history. The presence of some two hundred international speakers, and an equal number of Italian historians, will doubtless lead to interesting discussions. Among the themes are the question of the relation between museums and public history, the challenge of contemporary events in the context of public history, the digital (public) history and the issue of difficult pasts and memories that are put into question. Furthermore will be treated the question of the use of diverse and varied sources and the question of training and working methods specific to public history.

The programme and the information concerning registration can be found via the website: <https://events.unibo.it/ifph2017>



A Young Federation of International Dimension

This dynamism is the achievement of a young federation and illustrates the recent development of public history. Originally, the federation was created under the auspices of the [National Council on Public History](#), a leading American organization. It was launched as early as 2012 during a symposium dedicated to the "Digital Humanities", organized by the Luxembourg Virtual Centre for Knowledge about Europe (CVCE). The interest for public history was born on the North American continent and has gradually conquered the rest of the world. The policy of the IFPH must be seen in this international perspective, in that it firmly refuses a narrow Eurocentric approach. Indeed, in 2016, the yearly conference was held at the Universidad los Andes de Bogota. The IFPH has individual and institutional members. In several countries, national structures have recently been set up. The Italian federation is the most recent and also the most dynamic so far.

CegeSoma, a Key Player in the Public History

From the start, CegeSoma has taken as its mission the promotion of an historical approach with and for a large public. The institution has always been alert to social demand. In 2012, this concern resulted in the creation of a "Public History" sector. This commitment has now been embodied in a Royal Decree that integrates CegeSoma in the State Archives. In this decree, the implementation of public history projects is clearly outlined. Therefore, we feel it is essential to extend this commitment by actively participating in the activities of the International Federation.

Chantal Kesteloot IFPH Corresponding Secretary

19/04/2017

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DIGITAL CATALOGUES - 3 tips to find more sources and references

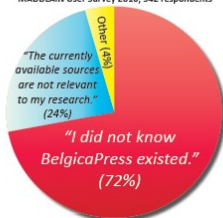
The consultation of the digital catalogues of institutions such as the [Royal Library](#), the [State Archives](#) and [CegeSoma](#)* is one of the first steps researchers take to reach an understanding of our history. Therefore, we give you **three tips** to find more references and digital sources in the catalogues of these institutions.

These tips are based on the first results of the MADDLAIN-project, a two-year research project that examines the uses and needs of the public of the three institutions in the area of digital access to the collections. The goal is to improve the digital services of the institution in the future.

Tip 1: The digital catalogues do not only contain references but also digital sources

"Why do you not make use of the digital sources offered through BelgicaPress?"

Question posed to users who indicated they never use BelgicaPress,
MADDLAIN User Survey 2016, 342 respondents



Nearly all participants of the MADDLAIN User survey who consult paper sources confirm using the digital catalogues of the institutions to find descriptions and reference numbers. However, only 60 to 70 % of these persons also use the catalogues to consult digital sources. The majority of persons who only use the catalogues for finding descriptions did not know that the catalogue also provides access to digital sources.

In the catalogues of the [State Archives](#) and the [Royal Library](#) an option can be ticked which enables the search of digital collections only:

The screenshot shows a search interface with a sidebar on the left containing search filters. The 'Uniquement fonds digitalisés' checkbox is checked and highlighted with a yellow box. The main search area includes fields for 'Recherche libre...', 'à partir de [année]...', 'jusque [année]...', and 'rubrique...'. Search criteria like 'All full', 'Author', and 'Title/keyword' are also visible.

At [CegeSoma](#) this option is not available, but the major part of the digital collection consists of photographs and it is possible to search specifically on photographs by ticking 'Photo Library'. In addition, several archive collections have been digitized and made available via a [tree structure](#).

The institutions also have separate platforms aimed specifically at digital collections.

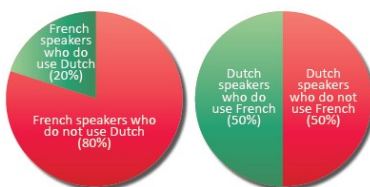
Below we give a brief overview of the digital sources available to researchers studying **the First & Second World Wars**:

- **Press:** The [Belgian War Press](#) and [BelgicaPress](#) (click BelgicaPress in 'advanced search')
- **Archives:** the [digitized archives of CegeSoma](#); [Archives 14-18 en Wallonie](#), [les rapports de paroisses de la Guerre 14-18](#); les [rapports d'activités du Comité national de Secours et d'Alimentation](#) (Note: to have access to the former documents, it is necessary to register on the website of the State Archives)
- **Publications:** the [Cahiers d'Histoire de la Seconde Guerre mondiale](#); the [Digital Library Belgica](#) (click Digital Library Belgica in 'advanced search')
- **Iconography:** the [collection photographique concernant la Première Guerre mondiale](#) of the State Archives, and the [Photo Collection of CegeSoma](#) (click 'Photo Library' in 'search in'), the [posters](#) and [tracts](#) collections of CegeSoma
- **Maps, floor plans, sketches and aerial images:** [Cartesius](#)

Tip 2: Enter your keyword also in the other national language or in the old spelling

"Which language(s) do you use when entering search terms into a digital catalogue?"

Question posed in the MADDLAIN User Survey 2016,
1191 Belgian residents responded: 698 French speakers and 493 Dutch speakers



According to the MADDLAIN user survey, half of the Dutch speakers would never enter a French keyword in digital catalogues. Yet, due to lack of personnel, most of the sources are described in only one of the national languages. In some cases, keywords are linked to the descriptions in both languages, but the institutions do not pursue an active metadata policy and do not make use of methods such as Linked Data that enable the users to obtain the same results, regardless the language they are using. It is therefore important to introduce your keywords in both national languages so as not to miss any references.

In some catalogues, such as BelgicaPress, the digital newspaper archive of the Royal Library, it can be useful to enter keywords in the old spelling, because the search is not made in the metadata but in the texts of the actual newspapers. In the example below, the researcher was looking for information on war monuments. She obtained five times more search results when entering the keyword 'gedenkteken' also in the old spelling:

Trouvé pour (gedenkteken)

Trouvé pour (gedenkteken)

27/099 pages en 30 journaux

5455 pages en 21 journaux

[Affiner la recherche](#) [Nouvelle recherche](#) [Affiner la recherche](#) [Nouvelle recherche](#)**Tip 3: Do not limit your search to the digital catalogue. Consult also the paper inventories and the index card collection**

Digital catalogues that make the collections accessible are very practical. We only have to enter a keyword and a mouse click later we know which bibliographical references we must consult to find the information we are looking for. Many researchers however do not know that putting metadata online for the whole collection of an institution is a long-term project and that only in CegeSoma this task has nearly been completed. In the State Archives, the situation varies in the different repositories, but in some as much as 50 % of the collections cannot be searched via the digital catalogue. Paper inventories that are available in the reading rooms can also offer interesting avenues of research.

In the Royal Library for instance, not all references of the index card collection of the general reading room have been added to the digital system. The index card collection contains the references of all documents that were acquired by the Royal Library before 1985 and these references can be consulted on name of author or on subject. Through interviews with the library personnel, the MADDLAIN researchers found that approximately 20 % of the index cards have not been entered in the digital catalogue. The index card collection remains therefore an important search tool for researchers studying the First World War.

[Jill Hungenaert & Karla Vanraepenbusch](#)

12/04/2017

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Violence In 20th-Century European History - European Conference ACCESSIBLE ONLINE

Between **6 and 8 June 2018**, the [European Remembrance and Solidarity Network](#) organized its eight conference in the Brussels Palace of the Academies. This conference, with CegeSoma as co-organizer, had '**Violence**' as an umbrella theme.

Almost the entire conferencing is now accessible online, which includes the [opening statements](#) (Rafal Rogulski, Freddy Dumortier, Réka Földváryné Kiss, [Nico Wouters](#)) and the session 'Documenting Violence' (chaired by Nico Wouters). The [opening keynote lecture](#) by Michel Wieviorka is also available.

Spotlight on the goals of the Symposium - To Commemorate, Document and Teach the Violence of European History

The goal of the [2017 Symposium](#) is to understand the phenomenon of violence in its theoretical dimensions through the contributions of several experts, but also to consider the question via panel presentations dedicated to memorial aspects. Finally, the possibility to address violence through the use of archives and other documentary sources, and the integration of the question in education, will be examined. The last session will concern the concept of reconciliation.

Is there a Common Commemorative European Culture ?

Since 2012, the ENRS has pondered the question of the construction of a European memory and a common European narrative perspective. To this end, it meets on a yearly basis as part of the symposiums of the researchers and institutions passionate about European history. The past meetings were largely dominated by the wave of commemorative events and the questions these events raised in a European perspective. Therefore, in 2014, the focus was not just on the 100th anniversary of the Great War, but also on the 75th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall. Throughout these three events, the difficult construction of a European memory inevitably arises. Each state has of course integrated these events in a national perspective which cannot easily be ignored or integrated. The same considerations were reflected on during the 2015 symposium, dedicated to controversial categories of the Second World War, whether they be actors, victims, losers or onlookers. The "reading" of these categories has not just changed over time and throughout historiography, but can also vary according to the individual trajectories or the scope of our analysis.



11/07/2017

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