

CEGESOMA - State Archives

NEWSLETTER

No 100 - January 2025



FOCUS ON THE COLLECTIONS

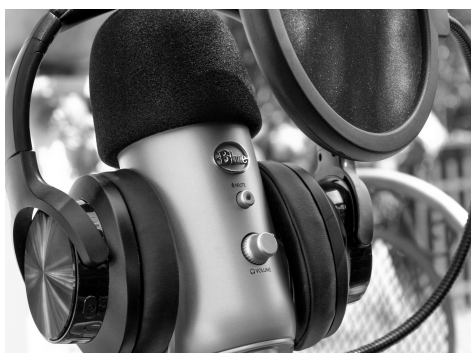
THE SADO PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

A fine collection of archives from the Brussels photographic press agency SADO (40,000 photographs, 15,000 glass plate negatives and 400,000 film negatives) joins CegeSoma's collections!



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NEWS



CALL FOR WITNESSES FROM DUTCH-SPEAKING METIS PEOPLE

In collaboration with Ghent University, the 'Resolution-Metis' project (State Archives) is looking for Dutch-speaking witnesses from metis communities ready to share their stories and experiences in interviews.

► [Read more](#)

EHRI BECOMES AN ERIC

The European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) is launched as a permanent European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) to ensure the future of Holocaust research.

► [Read more](#)



BELGIUM WWII

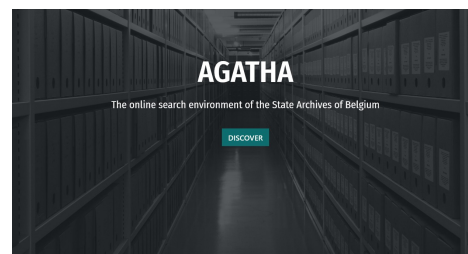
Discover the latest records on local Resistance, the Battle of the Bulge and the administration of occupied Belgium.

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AGATHA



The “Archive inventories” search engine has just been launched in the new AGATHA search environment. It replaces the “Archive Search” engine in the old SEARCH environment.



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PUBLICATIONS

La SNCB et les déportations durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale

Recommandations au gouvernement fédéral

GRUPE DES SAGES



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BELGIAN RAILWAYS & WWII

The Sages Group has submitted its final report on the role of NMBS/SNCB in deportations during the Second World War to Minister Gilkinet. It will be debated in the Senate in February 2025.

RIGHTS, CAPABILITIES, AND THE MAKING OF CITIZENS

In this work, Adina Babesh-Fruchter discusses how new Jewish Romanian immigrants to Israel, with little or no command of Hebrew and limited experience of democratic processes, understand and exercise their citizenship rights.

► [Read more](#)



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The SADO Photographic Archive: A Magnificent Addition to CegeSoma's Collections!



A few weeks ago, the archives of the Brussels-based photo press agency SADO were transferred to CegeSoma / State Archives of Belgium.

The SADO archives are unique not only because of their content but also due to the context in which they were created.

The *Service Auxiliaire de Documentation*, established in 1934 and active until the late 1970s, was one of four photo press agencies authorized to operate under German occupation (1940–1944). Unlike the SIPHO agency, whose (very) fragmentary archives are also preserved by CegeSoma, the owners of SADO were not convicted of collaboration after the war. This was partly because they had provided information to Belgian intelligence networks.

Content-wise, the archives include an impressive collection of positives and negatives on glass plates and film. The archival value of the images purchased or produced before and during the war is evident, but it is not the only reason why this fonds is so significant. SADO photographers produced an enormous number of *reportages* in the postwar period, documenting political events, socio-economic life, cultural festivities, and sports competitions.

They also captured the postwar economic boom through product, advertising, and corporate photography. Joseph Roland, an employee who eventually took over and expanded the company, even specialized in aerial photography.

According to a rough estimate by former colleague Florence Gillet, the fonds consists of around 40,000 photographs, 15,000 glass plate negatives, and 400,000 film negatives. Fortunately, the original order appears to be intact, and all contemporary indexes and repertories seem to have been preserved.

Currently, the archive is in quarantine and, as such, is not accessible until further notice. Conservational measures –particularly replacing the original boxes—are the top priority. The next steps include creating a detailed and efficient inventory and planning the digitization of the most fragile documents.

We will keep you updated on our progress with this project and look forward to sharing the treasures of this new collection with you!

Other news

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Wanted: Dutch-speaking Metis witnesses



The Resolution- Metis project and Ghent University are looking for Dutch-speaking witnesses from Metis backgrounds willing to give an interview about their history and experiences. The emphasis is on individual life stories and people's own experiences. The interviews will be used for the research of the Resolution- Metis project. In each case, an agreement will be signed with the interviewee allowing him or her to approve exactly the way the interview will be used.

The interview will be conducted by a 3rd year history student from Ghent University, under the supervision of the Resolution Metis project and the University.

People willing to be interviewed can apply to nico.wouters@arch.be.

[You will find all practical and content information, in this document](#) (in Dutch).

[For more information about the Resolution Metis project.](#)

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[Home](#) » [News](#) » EHRI Becomes an ERIC to Secure the Future of Holocaust Research

EHRI Becomes an ERIC to Secure the Future of Holocaust Research



The 26th January 2025, on the eve of the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) was inaugurated as a permanent European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) during a ceremony at the Polin Museum in Warsaw.

The establishment of EHRI-ERIC is the culmination of more than 5 years' work in the EHRI-Preparatory Phase and Implementation Phase projects in which the Belgian State Archives/CegeSoma were actively involved, especially for the drafting of the EHRI-ERIC Statutes.

An ERIC

This inauguration ceremony follows the decision of the European Commission (EC) on 20 January 2025 to establish the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure as a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). In doing so, the EC secures EHRI's future and supports its vision to provide seamless access to all sources and expertise from across Europe and beyond that are relevant to the study of the Holocaust. The EU hereby clearly confirms the relevance of Holocaust research for free and open societies with shared democratic values.

The inauguration ceremony



EHRI's inauguration ceremony was opened by Hanna Wróblewska, Minister of Culture and National Heritage of Poland, and Władysław Teofil



Hanna Wróblewska, Minister of Culture and National Heritage of Poland

Bartoszewski, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Poland, on behalf of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Eppo Bruins, Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, spoke on behalf of the hosting country of EHRI-ERIC, the Netherlands.

information about the Holocaust, making it more accessible to researchers and other interested parties. My heartfelt wish is that EHRI can give a face to the horrors of the Holocaust for ever-new generations. That knowledge and research into our past can be a powerful antidote to the antisemitism in our societies, and a reminder that Europe rose from the ashes of Auschwitz. It is an honor to welcome this important research institute to the Netherlands.

Distinguished representatives from all ten founding member countries reiterated their support of Holocaust research and documentation by signing a symbolic declaration. The inauguration ceremony was also attended by high-level representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the longstanding supporters and partner institutions of the EHRI-projects. EHRI-ERIC was particularly honoured to welcome Krystyna Budnicka, Honorary Citizen of Warsaw who survived the Holocaust in the Warsaw Ghetto. In addition to formally launching EHRI-ERIC, the ceremony offered a unique opportunity to reflect on the enduring significance of Holocaust research, documentation and commemoration in contemporary European societies.



Eppo Bruins, Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science



Dr Reto Speck, Co-Director of EHRI

"EHRI has been successfully supporting transnational Holocaust research and documentation since 2010. Becoming a permanent ERIC is a significant milestone for us. Thanks to the support of our founding members and the European Commission, we can ensure the long-term sustainability of our work and expand our activities and services. But establishing EHRI as a permanent European organisation is not only important for scientific reason. It also signals that Holocaust archives and research matter and that Europe can only flourish if it understands its history and continues to consider the lessons and legacies of its darkest chapter. For me, that has been one of the key motivations to work towards becoming an

ERIC, and I am very pleased to be able to celebrate this achievement today." Dr Reto Speck, Co-Director of EHRI.

A distributed research infrastructure

The EHRI-ERIC will be headquartered in the Netherlands, one of ten founding members that further include Austria, Croatia, Germany, Israel, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom. Belgium intends to join EHRI-ERIC in 2025, and EHRI is already reaching out to other countries to join in the near future.

The set-up of this permanent Holocaust research infrastructure and the required staff are paid for by the member states themselves. The Netherlands is the hosting country and will house the central office of EHRI within the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies in Amsterdam. In all member countries of this new EHRI organisation, national nodes will be established, bringing together the leading Holocaust related institutions in coordinated national networks. The establishment of the Belgian national node, coordinated by the Belgian State Archives/CegeSoma and Kazerne Dossin, is well underway and the website www.ehri.be has recently been launched to promote and publicise the objectives and activities of EHRI-BE.



CegeSoma/State Archives : Dirk Luyten, Adina Babesh-Fruchter and Matthew Haultain-Gall;
Kazerne Dossin : Herminio García González

Building on solid foundations



After the launch, EHRI doesn't have to start from scratch but will be able to continue and expand many of its current activities, building on previous European-funded projects that have been running since 2010. Across these projects, the participating institutions have already developed a solid foundation for transnational Holocaust research and documentation facilities, creating substantial benefits for its many users. For instance, the EHRI Portal and the Conny Kristel Fellowship Programme offer users online and in-person access to Holocaust-related archival material held in institutions across Europe and beyond. At the same

time, EHRI's wider portfolio of services offers important training and networking opportunities, as well as tools for the digital analysis, interpretation, visualisation and dissemination of Holocaust archives and research. With its long-term future secured, EHRI can continuously enhance and expand these services. Thereby it will maximise its scientific impact and contribute to Holocaust-related public policy areas such as the fight against Holocaust denial and distortion, antisemitism, racism and xenophobia.

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Belgium WWII: local resistance, the Battle of the Bulge and the administration of occupied Belgium



Resistance at the local level

Thanks to the students of the inter-university seminar at *UCLouvain* and *UAntwerpen*, coordinated respectively by Emmanuel Debruyne and Marnix Beyen, numerous contributions offering a look at the Resistance at local level are now online. These entries focus either on individual members ([August Fruythof](#), [Clotaire Cornet](#), [Sister Marie-Véronique](#), [Mathieu de Jonge](#) and others), or on a specific locality ([Forchies-la-Marche](#), [Mont-sur-Marchienne](#), etc.). They show us both the richness and diversity of commitments, and the potential offered by the Archives Service of War Victims and Cegesoma. They also allow for a microhistorical approach - as shown by the contribution on [Antwerp solidarity networks](#) - and demonstrate that the history of the Resistance still offers countless research prospects. All contributions relating to the history of the Resistance can also be accessed via the thematic page (["Resistance"](#)) dedicated to it, or by activating the "resistance" tab via the various filters provided.

Also of interest is journalist Eric Loze's '4 années de Résistance', which, with the help of numerous archives, eyewitness accounts and more contemporary insights, tells in three series of five episodes the story of these underground fighters whom Belgium curiously erased from the national narrative. [The first five-part series is already available on RTBF-Auvio](#). This series, in particular, received scientific support from several members of CegeSoma's scientific team.

The Battle of the Bulge, 80 years on

In partnership with Liberation Route Europe, some twenty contributions have been put online about the last German offensive in the West. You can access them via the “military history” filter, in the “articles” section. They cover not only key military events ([Operation Greif](#), [Battle of the Crossroads](#), etc.), but also massacres ([Bande](#), [Wereth](#), [Chenogne](#), etc.) and the impact of the offensive on civilian life ([Bourcy massacre](#), [Malmedy](#) and [Houffalize bombardments](#), etc.). These short texts will be supplemented by subsequent publications on the post-war situation of the Ardennes. The anniversary also attracted considerable media interest. In particular, [Cegesoma contributed to the podcast series “Ardennes '44. L'offensive du désastre”](#), produced by Françoise Baré, Anaïs Stas, Benjamin Verpoorten and Françoise Berlaimont.

The administration of occupied Belgium

Understanding the occupation also means looking at administrative structures, whether those that remained in place but operated in a very different context, or the new institutions created in collusion with the occupier or in the spirit of the new order. These include, of course, [major conurbations](#) such as [Greater Brussels](#). In a different vein, the site also features a contribution on the Rural Guard (Boerenwacht/Garde rurale), a force which can be considered a kind of auxiliary police force, operating under the aegis of the [National Agriculture and Food Corporation](#) (CNAA/NLVC).

But the occupier also interfered with civil service organization. [The Ordinance of 18 July 1940](#) gave the occupier the de facto right to prohibit civil servants from carrying out their duties, and at the end of the occupation, this took on the singular form of prohibiting resignations.

In short, these contributions explore many aspects of the history of occupied Belgium.

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AGATHA
The online search environment of the State Archives of Belgium

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Archive inventories

Through this search engine, it is possible to search nearly 20,000 inventories of archives, kept at the State Archives.

SEARCH

- Genealogical sources
- Analyses of records
- Archive inventories**

Free search

Archive repository

All

Heading

All

Period

From 648 until 2024

Contains digitised records

SEARCH RESET

After a transitional period, the “Archive inventories” search engine has just been launched in [the new AGATHA search environment](#)!

It replaces the search engine ‘Search in archives’ from the old search environment SEARCH, which was deactivated on December 23.

From now on, just one address: [AGATHA](#)!

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The final report on the role of Belgian Railways in deportations during WWII

World War II [Rapports](#)



On 17 January 2025, the Group of Sages presented the final report on the role of SNCB/NMBS in the deportations during WWII to Minister Gilkinet, in the presence of Senate President Valérie De Bue and many national media.

The Group of Sages was established by Minister Gilkinet after 8 December 2023, following the presentation by Nico Wouters (CegeSoma) of the report containing the conclusions of the historical investigation. This report clearly proved the major role of the Belgian Railways but also pointed out many nuances in the difficult debate on responsibilities. Based on this historical research and with Nico Wouters as advisor, the Group of Sages began work in early 2024. The Group held several hearings with representatives of victim groups and with experts. In its final report, the Group of Sages makes 30 recommendations to turn the conclusions of the historical research into policy actions, structured around the three major aspects of the mission: truth, transmission and reparation.

The report will be debated in the Senate in February 2025. Of course, these are only recommendations: the next step is to ensure that these proposals are turned into concrete actions.

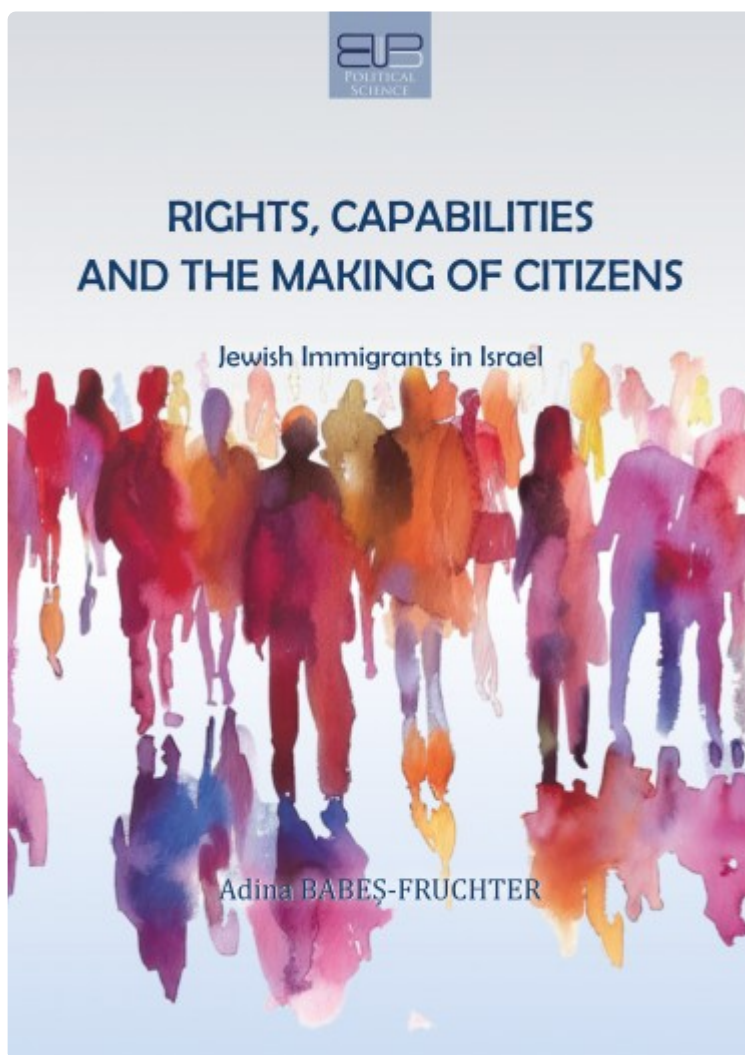
| [The report is available for free download in Dutch](#) and [French](#) from the **Senate site**.

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Rights, capabilities, and the making of citizens : Jewish immigrants in Israel

[World War I](#) [World War II](#) [Cold War](#) [Book](#)



[Adina Babesh-Fruchter](#) began conducting research for this book over a decade ago. As a graduate student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, she was intrigued by how a newly arrived Jewish immigrant in Israel—with little to no knowledge of Hebrew and limited experience with democratic processes—would comprehend and make use of his or her citizenship rights.

This book is based on research aimed at analyzing the processes underpinning the integration of Romanian Jewish immigrants into Israeli society. Its ultimate aim is to introduce a framework for analyzing and evaluating the integration of migrants into a new country and society. This framework is built upon the capabilities evaluative framework and the theoretical context of citizens' social and political rights. It has been tested through an analysis of Romanian Jewish immigrants' perspectives on their integration into Israel. The book also explores the lives of Jewish immigrants prior to leaving Romania, addressing topics such as antisemitism and the Holocaust.

Last but not least, the ultimate goal of this book is to capture the attention of experts working on migration policy development, providing them with a more nuanced understanding of the situations faced by immigrants and,

consequently, inspiring targeted and effective solutions.

The theme of this book fits perfectly with the [EHRI project](#), in which the author has been involved for many years.

PRODUCT DETAILS

Binding: hardcover

Number of pages: 150 p.

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Publishing date: 2024

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Adina Babesh-Fruchter, Rights, capabilities and the making of citizens. Jewish immigrants in Israel, Bucharest University Press, 2024, 150 p.

<https://editura-unibuc.ro/en/rights-capabilities-and-the-making-of-citizens-jewish-immigrants-in-israel/>

AUTHOR(S)

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