



European
Coordination
Committee on
Human
Rights
Documentation

**Report of the 26th meeting of the
European Coordination Committee on Human Rights
Documentation
(ECCHRD)**

22-23 May 2003, Vienna, Austria

Rapporteurs: Bert Verstappen (HURIDOCs) and Saskia Bal (SIM)

The 26th meeting of the European Coordination Committee on Human Rights Documentation (ECCHRD) was organised by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Vienna, in collaboration with the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM) in Utrecht, acting as secretariat for the ECCHRD. The meeting was held at Hotel Ibis in Vienna.

Thursday 22 May 2003

1. Opening of the meeting

On behalf of the ECCHRD secretariat Saskia Bal, from the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), welcomed the participants and thanked the local organisers EUMC and Cathrin Larimian of EUMC for making available the meeting room and organising this 26th meeting.

2. Opening address

Beate Winkler, director of the EUMC, welcomed the participants. She pointed out that the EUMC as a networking organisation is interested in collaboration with others. She gave a broad overview of the work of the EUMC. The EUMC is a relatively new organisation financed by the European Parliament and works together with the European Commission, the EU member states and NGOs. The primary task of the EUMC is to provide the Community and its member states with objective, reliable and comparable information and data on racism, xenophobia, islamophobia and anti-Semitism at the European level in order to help the EU and its member states to take measures against racism and xenophobia.

EUMC also works on positive aspects such as diversity and equality. It is also the task of the EUMC to work out strategies to combat racism and xenophobia and to highlight and disseminate examples of good practice regarding the integration of migrants and ethnic and religious minority groups in the EU Member States.

The EUMC coordinates the European Racism and Xenophobia Network (RAXEN) which is composed of 15 National Focal Points (NFP), one in each member state, which are the entrance points of the EUMC at national level regarding the collection of data and information. The NFPs are consortia between research institutes and NGOs, the NFPs collect data on employment, migration, cases of discrimination, research and campaigning activities.

3. Adoption of the agenda

Saskia Bal explained the recent modifications to the agenda. A few changes to the agenda were made. Harriet Nyback will give a demonstration on a new feature in HURILIST on Thursday before lunch (agenda item 8). Geneviève Bador will tell something about free access to electronic journals on Friday afternoon before the coffee break (agenda item 15).

4. Election of the chairperson

James Lawson (Council of Europe) was elected –for the sixth year in succession– as chair of the meeting. He welcomed the participants, and noted with satisfaction that, especially in a time where a lot of organisations face budget cuts and where libraries and documentation centres are often first affected by these measures, so many participants were present at this meeting. He regretted the fact that there were not many participants from Central- and Eastern Europe.

5. Presentation of participants and their organisations, interests and motivation

All the participants presented themselves (see list of participants in annex).

6. Minutes of the 25th meeting (Geneva 2002)

Some minor corrections were made.

The revision of the metadata standards was not yet done.

After the 25th meeting there were several organisations that replied to the “call for expression of interest”. A group of approximately 15 people is looking into the possibility to develop XML based or related standards.

Jeff Howarth informed the participants that Anti-Slavery will launch an educational website in the framework of the UNESCO project “Breaking the Silence” on slave trade and racism at end of August. (<http://www.antislavery.org/BreakingtheSilence>)

7. Documentation work in the area of racism

Cathrin Larimian of the EUMC gave a presentation of EUMC’s documentation work and the new EUMC database, which is freely accessible to the public via the EUMC website:

<http://eumc.eu.int/>. She distributed documents on the Jean Kahn Award and EUMC databases.

Cathrin informed the participants about the RAXEN network. RAXEN consist of national focal points in each of the 15 EU member states, ideally consisting of a research institute, an NGO and a specialised governmental institution. In practice some are more research-oriented, others are more action-oriented. RAXEN aims to provide the European Parliament and public with comparable data in various areas of discrimination, such as the labour market, legislation, education, acts of racist violence and housing, by collecting information about organisations, their activities and events, publications and AV media related to the various areas of discrimination.

The collection of some of this data is difficult because of different approaches on data collection. These differences can even occur at a national level and on an international level there is also a difference in legislation and the interpretation of concepts. Therefore it is difficult to answer “simple” questions like: “How many moslim women are living in Europe?”. Because the definition of moslim woman can be different in various countries.

The data in the EUMC database contains information in the field of combating and researching racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. The main part of the data is collected via RAXEN. The database contains information about publications, organisations, activities and events as well as AV media. Currently the database contains 23.000 entries, which still need to be structured. The EUMC database is a multilingual database. This means that the web surface is available in three languages (German, French or English) and that the data entry itself is multilingual. International organisations for example have different names in different languages, and can be found by searching for any official name in any language, the data entry itself will be displayed in the language version of the database (German, French or English). It is possible to do a full-text-, field- or thesaurus search. At this moment there is no thesaurus on discrimination, racism and xenophobia, so at this moment several thesauri are in use, but EUMC is working on the development of a thesaurus. Jeff Howarth mentioned that it might be interesting to have a look at the JIAMCATT (Joint Inter-Agency Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology) website (<http://jiamcatt.unsystem.org/english/jiamcate.htm>). Bert Verstappen mentioned that the Anti-Racism Information Service in Geneva has developed a thesaurus on this theme. After the demonstration of the database Cathrin Larimian answered several questions, most of the questions were about the thesaurus and the collection of comparable and reliable data.

8. HURILIST

Harriet Nyback-Alanen from the Institute for Human Rights, Åbo Akademi University showed the participants a new feature of HURILIST (Human Rights Libraries Search Tool). HURILIST (<http://www.abo.fi/instut/imr/commondb/>) is a cross-database search facility for four databases using the HURIDOCs Bibliographic Standard Formats. So far the databases of the Institute for Human Rights, Finland, the Danish Centre for Human Rights, the Norwegian Institute for Human Rights and the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (SIM) are searchable through HURILIST.

The new feature is to convert and copy records from the four databases. This feature is still in progress, the copying can not be done yet. Harriet explains that a php script does the search and conversion. The demo version can be found at: <http://www.abo.fi/~jocki/huridocs>. Harriet wants to include the HURILIST databases in BookWhere (<http://www.balboa-software.com/bookwhere.html>). BookWhere allows you to search hundreds of library catalogues and related databases, including thousands of public and private libraries worldwide. An advantage is that you can copy records from BookWhere into your own database. This will save a lot of time. BookWhere uses the Z39.50 protocol to access library catalogs, a problem is that the databases that are currently available in HURILIST do not use the Z39.50 protocol. Harriet will look into the possibility of compatibility of WinISIS with the Z39.50 protocol. The use of BookWhere costs approximately \$ 100,= per year.

9. News from other regional networks

Chiku Mchombu from the Human Rights & Documentation Centre, University of Namibia, informed the participants on developments in Southern Africa. She pointed out that it is hard to have a network like the ECCHR in Africa because of the lack of funding for activities like this. Therefore she was very happy to be able to attend this ECCHR meeting.

The Human Rights and Documentation Centre (HRDC) was created in 1996 under memorandum of understanding between Ministry of Justice and the University of Namibia. The main purpose of the HRDC is to create a sustainable culture of human rights in Namibia and Southern Africa. The HRDC achieves its goals through a number of objectives: teaching human right program to the University students, providing training on human rights to public officials such as law enforcement agents, organizing workshops and seminars at different levels (national, regional and international), conducting research on human right issues and disseminating information on human right issues in Namibia and the sub region as a whole through its documentation centre.

The HRDC documentation centre receives materials and support from institutions in Europe (Raoul Wallenberg Institute and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) and several embassies.

Chiku Mchombu gave an overview of the activities and services of the documentation centre which inter alia include an online library catalogue, a collection of newspapers and newspaper-clippings and a collection of videotapes. Furthermore the HRDC took part in setting up a website on Research and Teaching on Human Rights, Gender Issues and Democracy in Southern Africa. (<http://www.hrdc.unam.na/home.htm>) The idea of creating this website was conceived in December 1998 after a Regional Conference on Vienna Plus Five: Promoting a Sustainable Culture of Human Rights in Southern Africa which took place in Windhoek, Namibia. One of the recommendations, was to create a website which enables researchers to share information. The website is hosted by the HRDC and operated in partnership with other universities and NGOs in southern Africa. Human Rights Internet (Ottawa, Canada) provided a mirror site and interns who developed the site.

Issues that can be found on the website are: human rights protection system, democracy, gender, minority rights, rights of the child, academic freedom, human rights education and the right to peace, health, environment and development.

Further to the Information Capacity Building Workshop for Human Rights NGOs in Anglophone Africa, organized by HURIDOCS and the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative in Kampala, Uganda (June 2001), the **Human Rights Information Network for Anglophone Africa (HURINAA)** was established. The participating organizations maintain contacts, among others through a mailing list.

10. HURISEARCH

James Lawson, member of the HURIDOCS Continuation Committee intended to give a demonstration of HURISEARCH. Since there were some problems with the Internet connection, he explained what HURISEARCH is about.

A lot of human rights organisations are on the Internet for a long time. HURIDOCS has always promoted the use of the Internet to human rights organisations. At this moment there are a lot of human rights organisations that have information available on the Internet. The search tools available on the Internet all serve a general purpose. The result list after a search in one of the general search tools like Alta Vista or Google can contain irrelevant information and some websites cannot be found at all. Therefore HURIDOCS sought and found funding for a pilot project to create a specialised human rights search engine. The result is HURISEARCH (<http://www.hurisearch.org/>), which is still a proto-type. HURISEARCH seeks to make material of smaller NGOs more visible and has a transparent ranking system. Currently HURISEARCH contains approximately 600 websites, but organisations can submit their website for inclusion in the search engine. The criteria for inclusion in HURISEARCH have to be developed and there will probably be an editorial committee. The correct use of metadata will be stimulated by the transparent ranking system. HURISEARCH enables users to search in various languages. Furthermore after a search, HURISEARCH shows a list of topics related to the search term. The software behind HURISEARCH is titled "FAST Data Search". This software is specifically good with the use of different languages. It also has a lot of possibilities to index pages, it does not only index the first words of a document but it indexes the entire document and it can index several document-types (html, word, pdf etc.).

Funding of HURISEARCH will end on the 31st of December 2003 and HURIDOCS is still looking for sponsors to make a final version of the proto-type and to fund HURISEARCH for the future.

James responded to various questions and asked all participants to use HURISEARCH and send feedback.

11. Discussion and establishment of interest groups

Four interest groups were established:

- Torture documentation
- (Racism) terminology
- Statistics
- HURISEARCH

These interest groups had separate meetings the rest of the afternoon.

In the evening EUMC invited all participants for wine at a *Wiener Heurigen*.

Friday 23 May 2003

12. Reports of thematic working groups

Torture

Sven-Erik Baun Christensen reported on the torture documentation working group. The group consisted of Patrick Muller, Leyla Schoen, Carla Schubert and Sven-Erik Baun Christensen. The main issue in this group was a discussion on controlled vocabulary on torture. ICTR planned to make a draft version, but this was not done yet. The group decided to divide the work into manageable parts and exchange existing lists. They intend to divide tasks before the end of June 2003.

Furthermore the torture documentation group talked about catalogue record sharing among organisations which are using the HURIDOCs Bibliographic Standard Formats. The export function of the web version of CDS/ISIS does not work yet. The group will look into the possibility to solve these technical problems and see how they can exchange records.

(Racism) terminology

Agnethe Olessen reported on the (Racism) terminology working group. The group consisted of Cathrin Larimian, Genevieve Bador, Bert Verstappen and Agneth Olessen. EUMC plans to develop a discrimination thesaurus in different languages. The working group discussed about problems of multilingual thesauri. As concepts are different in different languages and sometimes certain terms do not even exist in particular languages, it is of great importance to have good translators. The use of good scope notes is an important part of the thesaurus, the scope notes will contribute to consistent indexing. The use of scope notes is of particular important when indexing is done in different countries with different legislation and understanding of issues. However there should not be too much scope notes in the thesaurus. In order to develop a thesaurus on discrimination experts from different fields need to be brought together. The thesaurus requires regular updates and revisions.

Statistics

Ion Iacos reported on the statistics working group. The group consisted of Cathrin Larimian, Claude Bruylant, Bert Verstappen and Ion Iacos.

In order to get reliable and comparable statistics there need to be collaboration with statisticians who can explain concepts and methods. It is hard to compare statistics because different methods and definitions can be used and concepts can be totally different. An other problem is that there are lots of statistics on several commercial issues, but there are hardly any statistics on human rights (e.g. how many court decisions on human rights issues). However there is a need for reliable and comparable statistics. Claude Bruylant will raise the issue of the need for comparable statistics in the European Parliament. It was suggested to compile a list of resources on statistics. This list should include projects and publications. The list can be published on the HURIDOCs website. The group will continue to exchange experiences after the meeting.

HURISEARCH

Saskia Bal reported on the HURISEARCH working group. The group consisted of a large number of participants.

The working group had a demonstration of HURISEARCH in the bar, where the connection to the Internet worked. The working group found HURISEARCH a useful tool to further develop. There is a need to define criteria for inclusion of websites, this needs human intervention.

Furthermore it was suggested to have a possibility to search by subject and have predefined searches, but this also requires human intervention. The use of metatags will be an easier solution to index the pages by subject. It could also be considered to have an own HURISEARCH keyword metatag. The group also thought that it would be useful to have the search page as well as the help texts available in different languages. It would also be an improvement if the search results could be sorted by country and date. Another point discussed was if HURISEARCH is also accessible for blind and visible impaired persons. "Bobby" (<http://bobby.watchfire.com/bobby/html/en/index.jsp>) can be used for checking whether a site is friendly to use for this group. Ideas for improvement and for funding are welcome.

13. Developments within HURIDOCS

Bert Verstappen gave a summary of the activities of HURIDOCS since the last meeting of the ECCHR. Continuation Committee members James Lawson and Agnethe Olesen gave additional information on some points.

Training

HURIDOCS has organised several training courses. A Francophone Africa train the trainers workshop was held in Senegal and was co-organised by RADDHO. The participants of this workshop came from French-speaking African countries and Haiti. Manuel Guzman (Director of HURIDOCS) was a resource person in Ghana at the Programme on Peacebuilding and Good Governance for African Civilian Personnel. There was a training in Nigeria at the Legal Research and Resource Development Centre LRRDC, and Sven-Erik Baun Christensen and Ion Iacos from the IRCT did a training for HURIDOCS in Hungary.

The documentalist of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Jan Jalloh, was an intern at HURIDOCS in November 2002.

The HURIDOCS training manual was translated into French.

Plans for future HURIDOCS training courses include; Georgia beginning of June, Kyrgyzstan in July or August, Iran, Lebanon, India, Rwanda in cooperation with Utrecht University and Sudan.

Tools

At the end of June there will be a meeting on the development of the *WinEvsys* software.

Among others, a new configuration called *WinEvsys light* will be discussed. *WinEvsys light* will have less formats and fields and will not be a separate programme but just a possibility to run a different configuration.

HURIDOCS and the Science and Human Rights Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) have been working on several tools to monitor economic, social and cultural rights. In the framework of this project the French translation of *Promoting and Defending Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Handbook (Promouvoir et défendre les droits économiques, sociaux et culturels: Un Manuel)*, was recently published. This handbook provides practical information on how the international ESCR monitoring system operates, with an emphasis on the work of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), and it explains how NGOs can participate in the Committee's work.

Furthermore the translation in French of the *Thesaurus of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* is being finalised.

Also recently published within the framework of the HURIDOCS/AAAS project is *Core Obligations: Developing a Framework for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. It consists of a series of papers written by international experts on the various rights articulated in the

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Each of the papers focused on arguing what constitute the core minimum obligations of states with respect to each right.

HURITOOLES is a collection of numerous articles, books, manuals, software and other materials produced and/or distributed by HURIDOCS, all placed together in one cd-rom. These materials are mainly about various tools and techniques that human rights organisations can employ for more effecting monitoring, documentation and handling of human rights information. The HURITOOLES cd-rom was recently revised and is now similar to the HURIDOCS website.

HURISEARCH is a new HURIDOCS tool of which a prototype is now available. James Lawson gave a presentation of HURISEARCH earlier during this meeting (see agenda item 10).

The *Human Rights Monitoring and Documentation Series* will be available in book form in English, Spanish, French and Russian. A new volume on indexing is available in draft, comments are most welcome. Furthermore the list of index terms has been translated into German.

After the 25th ECCHRD meeting HURIDOCS sent out a "call for expression of interest" to develop human rights standards for the use of XML. There were about 15 positive replies and this group is communicating about the possibility. The IT person from Amnesty International is doing some work in this regard.

Information and outreach

The consultative status of HURIDOCS with ECOSOC was approved.

HURIDOCS is no longer secretariat of the Martin Ennals Award after ten years the secretariat is now with the OMCT. Hans Thoolen, as representative of HURIDOCS, is President of the Martin Ennals Foundation. The award ceremony of the winner of the 2003 Martin Ennals Award (Alirio Uribe Muñoz, Colombia) was broadcasted live on Swiss Television.

The HURIDOCS Newsletter and website were recently re-styled and re-designed.

Institutional development

At the request of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), HURIDOCS was evaluated. The aim of this evaluation was to assess the relevance and quality of the HURIDOCS programmes, activities and products, with a view to identify lessons learned and provide basis for future directions. The evaluation was carried out by Hanne Lund Madsen. The text of the evaluation is confidential but a summary is available upon request. It was recommended that HURIDOCS establishes more long-term partnerships with particular organisations, and that it also provides more institutional support beyond practical needs for training and tools. Furthermore it was recommended that HURIDOCS develops a Strategic Review and carry out a needs assessment in different regions.

The next HURIDOCS General Assembly and Conference are planned for 2004. The conference will be held in The Hague. The relations with the International Criminal Court will be the theme of the conference that probably will be titled "Communicating Human Rights". The main question will be how can the NGO community by documenting violations on an ongoing basis contribute to work of the ICC?

At this General Assembly a new Continuation Committee has to be elected.

14. The Martus human rights bulletin system

Marc Levine, Senior Product Manager, The Martus Project, gave a presentation on Martus (<http://www.martus.org/>). The Martus Human Rights Bulletin System is an open source technology tool designed to assist human rights organisations in collecting, safeguarding,

organising and disseminating information about human rights abuses. It enables grassroots NGOs to securely store their records on backup servers with easy-to-use software, preserving crucial evidence for research, investigation and prosecutions. Organisations have the possibility to make information public, this public data can be searched through a web search engine. Martus was created after consulting grassroots NGOs in Sri Lanka, Guatemala, and Russia. Out of this consultation came some requirements for the development of the software; it must be easy to install on a p.c., easy to use and learn and must be open source software. Furthermore the data must be encrypted without having any effort. Benetech received funding from the Open Society Institute (<http://www.soros.org/>) to develop Martus, which meets all of the above-mentioned requirements. At present there are four Martus servers (Budapest, Toronto, Manila and Seattle) on which organisations using Martus can safely store their data. After the demonstration of the Martus software, Mark Levine answered several questions about *inter alia* the search functions and defined fields in Martus, encryption, safety of the Martus servers, on how "open door" the software is and if there are any "backdoors" for governments. All participants received a flyer and a cd-rom with the Martus software. Some participants pointed out that Martus seemed to be in particular useful for securely communicating and backing up information. However, its very minimal structure appeared to make it less useful for documenting cases of violations where a more precise classification is required.

15. Access to electronic journals

Geneviève Bador pointed out that UN agencies have formed a consortium to get cheaper access to electronic journals. It was also considered to include NGOs in this consortium. As a result of these negotiations Oxford University Press offers developing countries free (or greatly reduced) online access to many of journals (initially until the end of 2004). The offer is made in conjunction with the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). This offer is available to NGOs and educational institutes. A list of countries eligible for this offer as well as a list of participating journals and an application form can be found at: <http://www.oupjournals.org/devel>. Organisations that publish journals with Oxford University Press can decide whether they want to make their publications available free of charge under this initiative. UNCHR has made available two journals in this context.

At last years meeting it was mentioned that ODS (Official Document System) might become available free of charge, until now this is not the case.

16. Role and future of the ECCHR

At the 25th meeting the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM) offered to act as the secretariat for the ECCHR for a period of three years. This means that SIM will still hold the secretariat for the next (2004) ECCHR meeting, but that a new secretariat has to be found to take over the secretariat and organise the 2005 meeting. Participants were asked to consider who could take over the secretariat after the 2004 meeting.

The secretariat has made a website for the ECCHR (<http://www2.law.uu.nl/english/sim/library/ecchr/ecchr.html>). A part from some general information about the ECCHR, reports of previous meetings can be found on these pages. However, the collection of reports of previous meetings is not complete, participants who have missing reports were asked to send a copy (electronic or a photocopy) to the ECCHR secretariat. Any other suggestions to improve and or expand the website are most welcome. Please contact the secretariat: SIM.documentation@law.uu.nl

The secretariat asked for ideas for the structure of the next meeting. At the 25th meeting there was a day of excursions before the meeting and at previous meetings the meeting was preceded by a day of training. Is this something we want to do for the future meetings?

Sven-Erik Baun Christensen opened the discussion and said that the ECCHR website and the possibility to register electronic for the meeting is a great improvement. Furthermore he said that the structure of the meeting is strongly related to the agenda items.

The low attendance of participants from Central and Eastern Europe is probably caused by the lack of funding. It might be easier to find funding for participants to attend the meeting if a day of training is included in the program. It was suggested that the ECCHR could try to get funding from the TACIS programme or the 6th Framework in Europe, although this might not be easy.

As for the need of training in Europe the following topics were suggested:

- statistics and human rights
- more in-depth training on XML and Dublin Core
- PHP
- HURIDOCS tools
- working with graphics, images, pictures – multi-media
- project management in the field of human rights
- dissemination of information: mailing lists, who is audience
- data analysis
- find human rights information on the Internet

It was recognised that there are various needs for training in Europe. Then followed a discussion on when and how to organise these trainings, as a separate activity or as a joint activity of the ECCHR and HURIDOCS. Additional topics for training can be send to the ECCHR secretariat.

It was decided that the ECCHR secretariat will set up a discussion group for the ECCHR so that people can more easily share their thoughts, post questions and stay in touch.

17. Any other matters

There were no other matters to discuss.

18. Date and place of next meeting

In order to get more participants from Central and Eastern Europe to the 27th ECCHR meeting, it would be good to have the meeting in one of the countries in Central or Eastern Europe in 2004. It might be easier for participants from CEE to find funding if the meeting was held somewhere in the East. It was suggested that maybe the Estonian Information Centre for Council of Europe might want to host next years meeting.

Furthermore it was discussed that we might consider having the next ECCHR meeting immediately before or after the 5th HURIDOCS General Assembly that will be held in 2004, because it can be difficult (financially) for participants to attend two meetings in one year. Combining the ECCHR meeting with the GA would solve this problem but it will mean that people are away from their offices longer. Decided was that the secretariat will consider the suggestions and decide on the date and place of the next meeting.

19. Closing of the meeting

For practical reasons it was decided to formally close the meeting before the coffee-break and have the Market-Place after the coffee-break. James Lawson thanked all participants for attending this meeting. Saskia Bal, on behalf of the ECCHR secretariat, thanked the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia for making available the "first-class" meeting room and their hospitality. She especially thanked Cathrin Larimian from the EUMC for being a superb local organiser. Furthermore she thanked Bert Verstappen and James Lawson for their help and useful suggestions in drafting the agenda for this meeting. And last but not least she thanked James Lawson for being –for the sixth year in succession- an excellent chair.

21. Market-place

At the market place Patrick Müller gave a presentation of the -just published- CPT cd-rom. This cd-rom contains a complete copy of the CPT website (<http://www.cpt.coe.int/>). It includes details of the CPT's visits, press releases, CPT reports to governments, government responses, CPT annual reports, CPT reference documents and pdf versions of documents.

Geneviève Bador presented the –also just published- 2003 RefWorld cd-roms. The four RefWorld cd-roms are a information tool comprising more than 70.000 full-text searchable documents, the International Thesaurus of Refugee Terminology, national legislation on issues pertaining to asylum and statelessness, international and national jurisprudence, newly added documents in Spanish and German, and 270 maps of countries of origin and of transit. One can also browse through UNHCR's library catalogue, which contains more than 15,000 references to books, refugee magazines, articles and conference reports.

Bettina Scholdan did an off-line presentation of the European Country of Origin Information Network website (<http://www.ecoi.net/>). ECOI-net is a joined initiative of ACCORD (Austria), GEA2000 (Slovenia) and Informationsverbund Asyl (Germany) in cooperation with ECRE and UNHCR. The ECOI-net website contains country of origin information.