

EPOCH Summer courses in Eastern Europe

In Summer 2004 EPOCH started the series of supported courses. There were four such courses, selected for having submitted to the June bid for the Interim Bursary Plan, two of which were placed in Eastern European countries. Practically all the partners organizing courses had no budget (one had a very small sum for other tasks) and course support was a concrete advantage of partnership. In practice, EPOCH support for at least one of the organizers really made the difference, allowing to reach the minimum number of participants with the substantial number of EPOCH supported ones. Supporting training in Eastern European New Member States is one of the goals of EPOCH and is explicitly quoted in the contractual arrangements.

Two of the four courses were organized by the *University of York*, the well known home of the Master in Archaeological Information Systems and ADS. They were titled "Managing digital archives" and "Think globally, act locally" and took place in late June and September.

One of the Eastern Europe courses took place in Hungary at Százhalombatta under the supervision of the *Archaeolingua Foundation*. This city with a hard-to-pronounce name (even our Hungarian colleagues sometimes shorten it as Batta) is the home of an archaeological park focusing on Iron Age. Some reconstructed huts and a multimedia instalment guide the visitor in understanding the life of this period. The course was titled "Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Preservation within the Light of New Technologies" and was aimed mainly at young researchers, most of them coming from Hungary with some students from Germany, Greece, and Romania. Several teachers came from Hungarian Universities, with a presence of lecturers from abroad. It is planned to publish the lecture notes of the course in the series of EPOCH publications, due to appear soon. The archaeological park and the nice "Matrica" archaeological

museum were the natural destination of one of the students' excursion, the other being the Lake Balaton.

The other Eastern European course was organized in Romania, in the tourist mountain city of Busteni, which also hosts a state training centre where the course took place under the management of *CIMEC*. The course titled "Museums and the Internet. Presenting Cultural Heritage Resources on-line" was aimed at museum directors and curators and was attended by some 30 participants, coming from all the Romanian museums. Additionally, there were students from Croatia,



The Caraiman mountain, logo of the Busteni course

Bulgaria, Greece, Israel and Finland. The faculty was international, including some outstanding Romanian lecturers. The social activity included a visit to Peles Castle, the 19th century residence of King Carol I and walks in the surrounding mountains. Also the lecture notes of the Busteni course are planned for publication in the EPOCH series.

EPOCH funded partially the organization of both the Eastern European courses and provided grants for 12 participants, 7 of which were women. In all, EPOCH supported courses totalled more than 100 hours and more than 100 participants. EPOCH fellowships supported more than 20% of course attendants in Eastern Europe courses.

The results of the first EPOCH call for course support are satisfactory. Together with some very positive results, some drawbacks have been evidenced, as it was expected, in this first experience. Perhaps some partners were discouraged from organizing courses by the necessity of advance planning with short notice, and information about EPOCH support did not reach all the perspective fellows. Some eligibility limitations proved to be too strict and will be relaxed as much as possible in next calls. Nonetheless, the overall conclusion is that EPOCH course support is a great opportunity that partners should not miss.



School children activity at the Százhalombatta Archaeological park