

# PHOTOCONSORTIUM: digitizing Europe's photographic heritage

**Antonella Fresa**  
**Promoter s.r.l.**  
**PHOTOCONSORTIUM vicepresident**

# Building on Europeana Photography experience

PHOTOCONSORTIUM builds upon the legacy of Europeana Photography (2012-2015) and makes optimal use of the expertise, network, know-how and tools that were produced in the context of this project.

Over 450,000 pictures of the first 100 years of photography (1839-1939) were digitized and made available online.



*Boris III of Bulgaria and Giovanna of Italy - the celebration of the royal wedding in Sofia.*

© NALIS (Bulgaria)



## NUMBERS OF EUROPEANA PHOTOGRAPHY, AT A GLANCE



**19** PARTNERS

FROM **13** EUROPEAN COUNTRIES



**3** ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

FROM UKRAINE, CYPRUS AND ISRAEL



**100** YEARS BROWSED

OF PHOTOGRAPHIC HERITAGE



**453.828** IMAGES

AVAILABLE TO EUROPEANA



**16** LANGUAGES

MULTILINGUAL METADATA ASSOCIATED TO EACH IMAGE

**PDM**

**+ 86.000** PDM IMAGES

AVAILABLE TO EUROPEANA

# EuropeanaPhotography's Legacy

EuropeanaPhotography established an expert hub :

- high quality digitization
- aggregation of digital content (to Europeana and other portals)
- metadata standards, indexing, cataloguing
- best practices for the management of digital archives
- expertise and advocacy on IPR issues and promotion of the use of open licenses for heritage photography

Such legacy is now at the core of PHOTOCONSORTIUM.

# Lessons learnt 1/ Photographic cultural heritage

Photographic archives contain a diversity of materials: glass and paper negatives, celluloid film rolls, positive prints as stand-alone photographs, albums, books.

Many photo houses also keep contact prints.

Digitization, but also preservation and restoration, of such a variety of materials need specific skills and professionalism.

## Lessons learnt 2/ Collections

Due to the mix of partners in EuropeanaPhotography, the collection includes:

- ▶ World famous archives with widely known content
- ▶ Undiscovered and unseen material from Central and Western Europe
- ▶ New material researched and acquired from private family holdings

Partners were both public bodies and cultural institution and private companies and press agencies. Their access policies and business models are different.

## Lessons learnt 3/ Documentation and metadata

Large parts of current photographic archives are in fact undocumented, laying often unprocessed in the folders of their original packaging (e.g. when they came from donations).

In order to provide rich descriptions and meaningful metadata to the digitized photographs, a great effort is requested in research and content curation.

Tools such as a metadata processing unit and a multilingual vocabulary helped normalizing and enriching metadata before they were published.

## Lessons learnt 4/ Publication and IPR

Early photography is a very important kind of cultural heritage; research, education, and even business communities have the cultural right to access it.

However, copyright and privacy are important issues for content providers when providing access to digitized images. This applies both to private and public content holders.

Also, many people would love to donate family photo heritage to their local archive, but fear to have it published online as Public Domain, as it could be reused without any moral restraint.

Taking in the due account these elements, it was possible for EuropeanaPhotography to publish a large volume of reusable content in the form of Public Domain marked and Creative Commons labelled works.



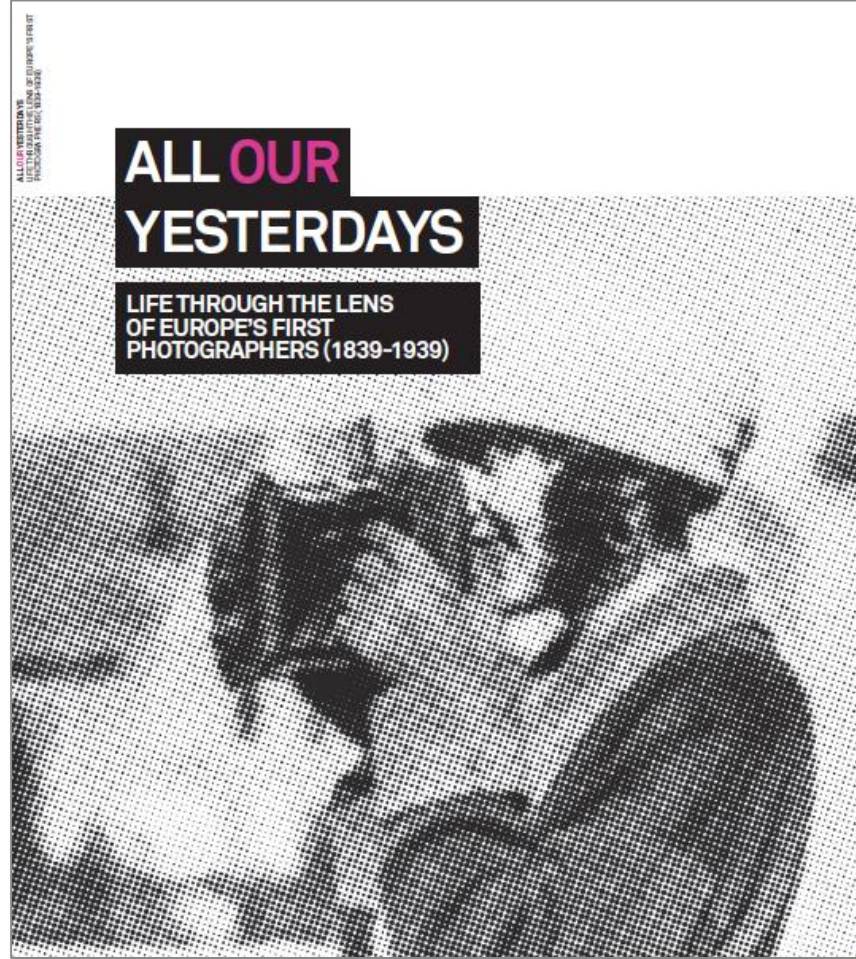
# Lessons learnt 5/ Photography engages people

High quality digital images and open licenses (where possible) are drivers for photographic content reuse and citizens engagement:

- ▶ All Our Yesterdays travelling exhibition and catalogue
- ▶ Laboratories for schools and children
- ▶ Social activities for elderly people
- ▶ European Night of the Museums 2014
- ▶ Collection and digitization days that fed other, more local, exhibitions
- ▶ Heritage Photobingo project

# All Our Yesterdays

Europeana Photography's exhibition All Our Yesterdays was compiled from over 100 early images from partner collections, and was devised as a showcase for their early photographic treasures.



The theme of the exhibition is people's everyday life, joys and sorrows, stories and dreams as witnessed by the first photographers (1839-1939).

# All Our Yesterdays

The exhibition premiered in Pisa (Spring 2014) and then moved to Leuven (Spring 2015) and Copenhagen (Summer 2015). Next dates will be in Antwerp and Barcelona.

**The virtual exhibition is visible at Euromed 2016.**

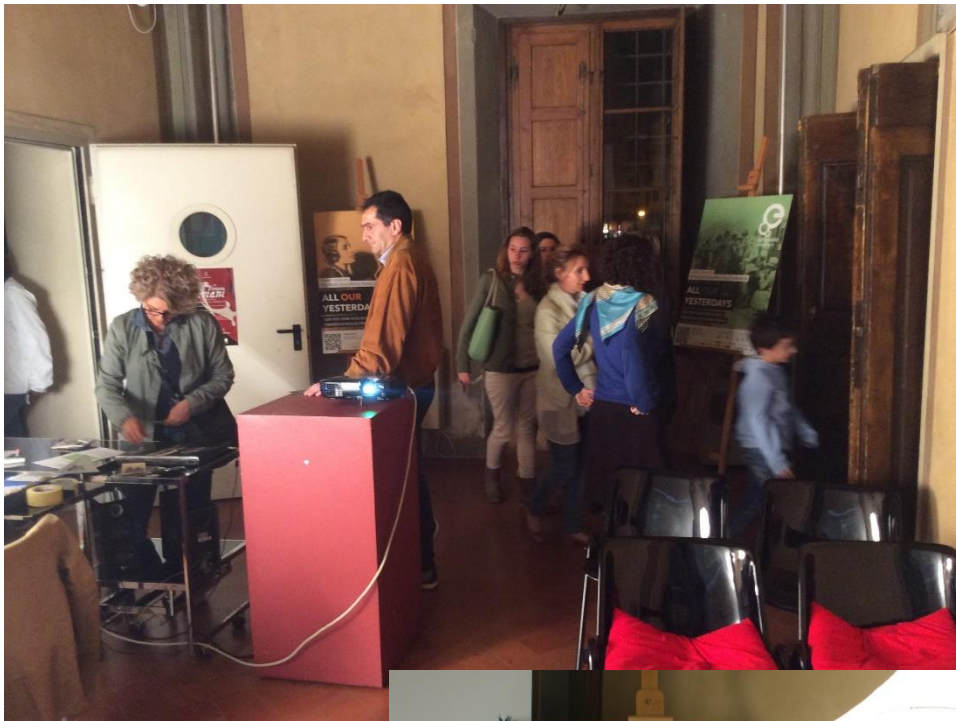
The exhibition includes pictures kindly offered by the Archive of the Municipality of Limassol.

The Digital Heritage Research Lab of CUT is a member of PHOTOCONSORTIUM.

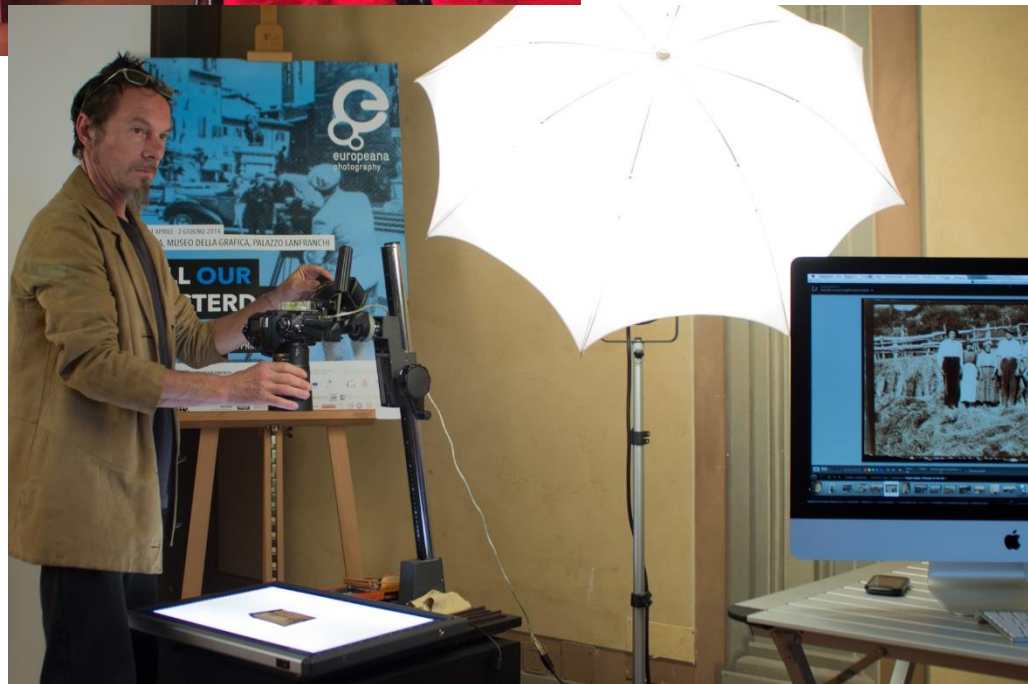


*Ship Himalaya, Anonymous,  
Limassol (Cyprus), 1890*

© Archive of the Municipality of  
Limassol.



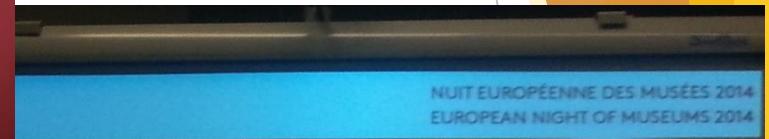
In Pisa (Spring 2014), about 1,000 photos from family album were collected from the visitors, digitized, and constituted the basis for another local exhibition few months later.





All Our Yesterdays in Pisa was part of the European Night of the Museums 2014, attracting over 800 visitors to the exhibition venue in a single day

Overall visitors to the Pisa exhibition were more than 5,400 in 2 months.





## Guided visits and laboratories for children



<<  
The local exhibition in  
Pisa «Ricordi dai nostri  
album di Famiglia»

Collection day at  
«Photographic Memories  
Workshop» in Leuven

>>





## The Heritage Photo Bingo experiment in Leuven senior homes





# Network and Members

PHOTOCONSORTIUM has been established as a non-profit association with a democratic structure, political independence and unlimited duration.

Joining PHOTOCONSORTIUM equals joining a network of top class partners from the field of (historical) photography, and gaining access to specialized services.

Ajuntament de Girona, Spain / Arbejdermuseet, Denmark / Imagno Brandstatter Images, Austria / KMKG, Belgium / KU Leuven, Belgium / Lithuanian Art Museum, Lithuania / Nalis, Bulgaria / National Board of Antiquities, Finland / National Technical University of Athens, Greece / Parisienne de Photographie, France / Polfoto, Denmark / Promoter SRL, Italy / TopFoto, UK / United Archives, Germany / VUB Vrije Universiteit Brussel / Walery Rzewuski Museum of History of Photography, Poland...

PHOTOCONSORTIUM is currently partner of Europeana DSI2 project and within this framework is curating the realization of the Photography Thematic Collection in Europeana.



**PHOTOCONSORTIUM** - International Consortium for Photographic Heritage is a not for profit association whose purpose is the promotion and enhancement of the culture of photography and the photographic heritage.

Follow us: [www.photoconsortium.net](http://www.photoconsortium.net)



@PhotoConsortium



PhotoConsortium