



## Welcome Address

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Directorate-General for Research & Innovation, European Commission)

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking you for your invitation. It is a pleasure to be here to talk to you about what the European Commission expects from your project EuNaMus.

Your project is funded by the 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework programme, via the Social Sciences and Humanities 2009 call for proposals.

Please allow me to remind you the **broader policy context** in which **EuNaMus** has been selected:

The research area concerned is that of **“diversities and commonalities in Europe”**.

- In the recent years of EU enlargements, research was needed to address how collective representations and uses of history in Europe shaped and continue to shape the image of Europe for its citizens.
- In other words, research should explore the role of different collective memories as they have been shaped by the past and its interpretation as well as the perception of Europe by its citizens.
- We need contributions from research to develop new ideas on how the dialogue between European citizens can be strengthened in the light of different memories and how **a shared view of the past, present and future of Europe can emerge**.

### **Great interest of the European Union for EuNaMus research: “National Museums in Europe: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European citizen”**

All over Europe, national museums are “*temoins vivants*” (live witnesses, if you wish) of the richness and diversity of our cultural heritage. They outline the historical cultural dimension of our countries in terms of national belongings and identities.

This is precisely why your research on mapping and framing national museums as well as the comprehensive overview and comparative analysis of the development of these museums in Europe is very important for European citizens.

Understanding what national museums are, how they are defined, exposing their content in a didactical and modern way, classifying them by clusters following historical criteria... all of these elements provide strong tools for people to understand their past, their origins.

Some of the main questions put forward by EuNaMus include:

- How did national museums contribute to the emergence of contemporary Europe?
- Which are their differences and commonalities?
- What roles have they played in the re-drawing of the European map of nations-states?
- How do national museums interact with historical and contemporary globalizing forces?

These are all vital questions for European societies

### **EU expectations from EuNaMus research**

As you know all research projects supported by Socio-economic sciences and the Humanities should be **"Problem oriented with policy relevance"**.

Research projects should generate **"scientific evidence"** or new knowledge for policymakers at all levels: regional, national and of course European. A project such as yours can help policymakers to better invest public culture funding. You tackle questions that are key for the process of renewal of our museums. Your research will offer new data which should provide a reliable and strong basis for policy decisions.

I am convinced that your research will succeed in describing and measuring the evolution of museums users and in analysing the role of museums in developing social cohesion.

I wish you a fruitful continuation and a lot of success in your work.