



Project no. 018340

Project acronym: EDIT

Project title: Toward the European Distributed Institute of Taxonomy

Instrument: Network of Excellence

Thematic Priority: Sub-Priority 1.1.6.3: “Global Change and Ecosystems”

C8.4.2.3. Evaluation report on the Modern Taxonomy programme

Due date of deliverable: Month 58

Actual submission date: Month 58

Start date of project: 01/03/2006

Duration: 5 years

Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable: 13-RBINS

Revision [Final]

Project co-funded by the European Commission within the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006)		
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

www.taxonomytraining.eu/content/modern-taxonomy-course-programme-2010-2011

The Modern Taxonomy programme is a training component of the Distributed European School of Taxonomy (DEST). Primary objective of this theoretical course programme is to provide future professionals (students, technicians, early career researchers) with fundamental expert knowledge on basic taxonomy. The courses are short intensive training sessions from 1 to 2 weeks at European institutions. The course programme targets topics such as: nomenclature; describing, writing and illustrating biodiversity/species; phylogenetics, DNA-barcoding, collection conservation. Registrations are evaluated by the training providers and the RBINS training coordinator.

The Modern Taxonomy programme 2010-2011 was launched in May 2010 and will run till the end of the EDIT project (1 March 2011). Unlike the Summer Schools and the Expert-in-training programme, courses are open to trainees from Europe and outside of Europe and participation is on a self-financed basis. A subscription fee is asked. EDIT awards a limited number of grants to help defray subscription fee, travel and subsistence costs (partial funding). When registering for a course, trainees have to indicate their interest for an EDIT grant when submitting the registration form. In awarding grants, priority is given to trainees coming from less economically favoured regions. The Modern Taxonomy programme is a test case for sustainability of training activities after EDIT.

Trainees who have completed the course receive a certificate specifying the dates of their training period, the content of the training, the training provider and the institution where they received the training. In order to improve the training programme, the trainees were asked to complete an evaluation form after the end of the course.

The Modern Taxonomy programme 2010-2011 offers/offered the following 7 theoretical courses, 5 of them were particularly developed for the DEST programme(*), 2 of them are accredited courses (°):

Title	Place/Date
Zoological Nomenclature *	Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, Madrid 30 July-1 August 2010
Conservation and Care of Natural History Collections *	Natural History Museum, London 11-15 October 2010
Basics of taxonomy: describing, illustrating and writing biodiversity * °	Sven Lovén Centre for Marine Sciences, Kristineberg 8-19 November 2010
Biological Nomenclature *	Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris 8-12 November 2010
Phylogenetic Systematics and Molecular Dating °	University of Copenhagen 17-28 January 2011
Botanical Nomenclature *	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew 24-28 January 2011
DNA-Barcoding	Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris 7-11 February 2011

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The number of places available on the courses was 123. In total, 206 registrations were received. The first course in the programme, the 'Zoological Nomenclature' course only received 6 registrations whereas 20 places were available. Reason for that was the very short time slot between course announcement and course date. The remaining courses received many more registrations than the allowed maximum number of participants the course could support, excepted for the 'Biological Nomenclature' course where the number of registrations equals the number of available places (Fig. 1).

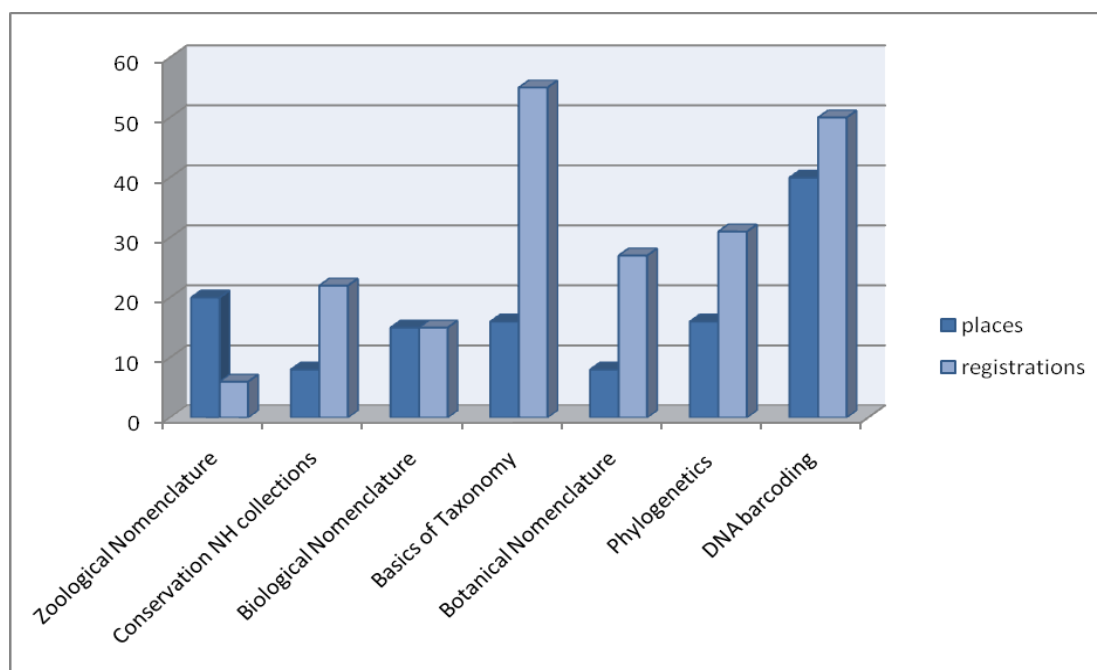


Fig. 1 Modern Taxonomy programme 2010-2011 - Registrations received and available course places.

One of the conclusions is that there is a striking difference in registration procedure: the 'Conservation and Care of NH collections' course, targeting collection curators/managers, showed that museums are willing to invest time and money to send their staff to the course. The 'Basics of Taxonomy' course, targeting students and early career researchers, received particularly registrations with grant request. Furthermore, there is a large interest in the Modern Taxonomy courses from trainees outside Europe, especially from the Global South.

At the end of the 2010-2011 programme, 99 trainees will have received training. Within the anticipated EDIT budget (25.000 EUR) 30 trainees were granted and 69 followed the course on a self-financed basis. These numbers indicate that courses could run without external funding.

Basics of Taxonomy: one of the successful courses

The 'Basics of Taxonomy' course received 55 registrations of which 7 with no grant request. Selection procedure became a very important process for admission to the course and awarding grants as only 16 places were available. Fig. 2 shows the applicant's institution country. As can be seen there was a global interest in this course: registrations were received from 32 countries: 15 EU countries and 17 non-EU countries. Even selected students with grant request but not granted, decided to follow the training on a self-financed basis. Within the anticipated EDIT budget 8 trainees were granted. In allocating grants, priority was given to selected participants coming from economically less-favoured regions. The University of Göteborg supported part of accommodation costs and bench fee.

The course was attended by 13 Ph.D. and M.Sc. students and three post doc: two Belgian, two British, two German, two Indian and the remaining eight were Estonian, Bulgarian, Dutch, Portuguese, Ukrainian, South African, Brazilian and Colombian.

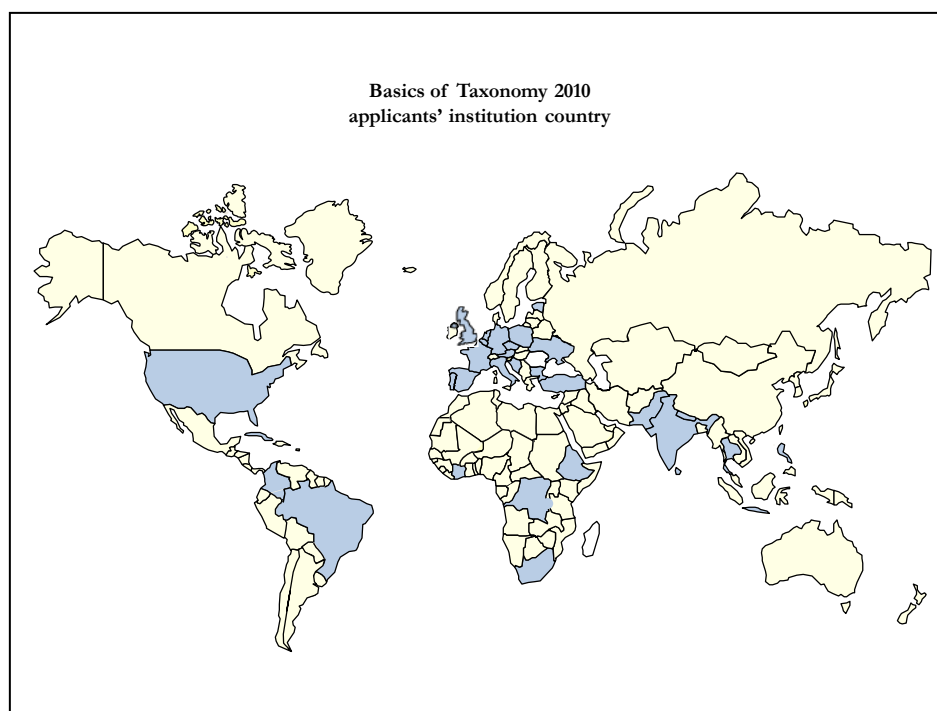


Fig. 2 'Basics of Taxonomy' course - Applicants' institution country.

The Basics of Taxonomy course report is available at the DEST website:
http://www.taxonomytraining.eu/sites/default/files/Edit_coursereport.pdf

PERSPECTIVES OF THE MODERN TAXONOMY PROGRAMME BEYOND EDIT

The DEST was evaluated as being a successful EDIT product and the EDIT Board of Directors (7th BoD, June 2010, Paris) recommended a continuation of its activities and the integration of EDIT into CETAF.

In view of the success of the Modern Taxonomy programme, the course providers expressed their enthusiasm and willingness to re-organise the courses. BE-TAF, and in particular RBINS, is willing to maintain the training activities and will invest staff to organise and manage the training programme. Trainees' participation will be on a self-financed basis. Depending on available funding, student grants may be awarded.

A Memorandum of Understanding on training cooperation in DEST is being signed at present, providing evidence of a continued coordinated international effort to sustain the taxonomic training programmes of DEST beyond termination of the EDIT contract.