

NEWSLETTER

MARCH-APRIL

2017

Song Festival “Songs from Exhile” was organized for the Forth Time

A traditional event “Songs from Exile” took place at Varėna Cultural Centre on March 28th. The festival marks not only the deportation campaign “Roaring Waves” (Bangų mūša) that took place in 1949 March 25-28th, but also loss of Lithuanians in exile during the Soviet occupation. Teachers and students from 25 Lithuanian schools took part in the event. The song festival involved popular songs that were composed in Lithuania, exile and working camps fifty-sixty years ago.

Songs were sung in different methods: some were performed in an old way they used to be sung whilst others were newly adapted by teachers and students.

The song festival was organized by the Secretariat of the International Commission together with Varena’s “Azuolas” gymnasium Tolerance Educational Centre.



Seminar “Losses in History and Historical Awareness”

On March 8-9 th, at Kedainiai Multicultural Centre was a seminar “Losses in History and Historical Awareness” for teachers and educators. During a two days seminar teachers and Museums’ specialists were included into lectures on Yiddish development in Lithuania, famous Litvaks who wrote in Yiddish as well as their faith during the Holocaust. The lecture was given by Mordechai Yushkovsky. A member of the International Commission Arūnas Bubnys read a lecture on the Holocaust in Lithuania. The executive director of the International Commission Ronaldas Račinskas opened an intense debate with participants on historical memory, significance of educational projects and their status in schools’ communities. Teachers also had a chance to get acquainted with multinational heritage of Kedainiai during their excursion in the old town. The seminar was organized by the Secretariat of the International Commission with partners: The Regional Museum of Kedainiai and World Jewish Congress International Jiddish Culture Centre in Vilnius.





The Exile of 1949s was marked in Vilnius



On March 29th, there was a commemoration of a tragic event - the deportation campaign "Roaring Waves". The event took place in Vilnius in Aukų street. This exile is known for its exorbitant numbers: thirty two thousand people from Lithuania and one hundred thousand people from all Baltic countries were deported during this deportation.

The gathered former political prisoners, deportees, Members of Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania gave speeches on history, memory and current issues. Ronaldas Racinskas, the Executive director of the Secretariat of the International Commission shared his impressions on the song festival in Varena, he also expressed his joy that there were active teachers cherishing history, sparking students to participate in projects

promoting citizenship.

The event was organised by Lithuanian Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees Vilnius department together with partners: the Secretariat of the International Commission, The Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania.

Seminar "The Historical Past and Challenges in the Educational System"

The seminar for teachers, schools' headmasters, Museums' specialists took place in Kedainiai on April 6th. On the first day of the seminar, it was discussed about the current educational system its challenges that impact on teachers, headmasters, university lecturers. Lecturer Mordechay Yushkovsky from Israel told about old traditions of European Jews in the Yiddish language as well as their creative works in Yiddish during the Holocaust.

On the first day, participants were acquainted with Klezmer music; "Klezmer klangen" band was invited to perform the tunes by composers who worked in Eastern Europe.

On the second day, the coordinator of educational programmes Ingrida Vilkienė presented the Qualitative Research on Tolerance Development Centres carried out in 2016. There was a wide ranging discussion on the status of Tolerance Development Centres in Lithuanian educational system as well as about future plans and guidelines.

There were 72 participants altogether: teachers, headmasters, university lecturers, museum specialists cooperating with schools

The seminar was organized by the Secretariat of the International Commission with partners: The Regional Museum of Kedainiai, Multicultural Centre and World Jewish Congress International Yiddish Culture Centre in Vilnius.



The Soviet Past Analysed in a One-day Seminar in Radviliskis

A one day seminar “The Soviet Past in Historical Documents” was in Radviliskis on April 11th. The educational programme of the Secretariat of the International Commission was presented to teachers and activities, projects on the theme of Soviet occupation were presented as well. A historian Algirdas Jakubcionis, a member of the International Commission, analysed reasons of totalitarianism in Russia and highlighted cases of corruption in Soviet Lithuania. There were 42 teachers from Radviliskis town and region.

The seminar was organized by the Secretariat of the International Commission with Tolerance Educational Centre in Radviliskis Vaidzantas progymnasium.

The Seminar on the Holocaust was in Kaunas the Ninth Fort Museum

The seminar „Holocaust in Formal and Non Formal Education“ took place in Kaunas the Ninth Fort Museum on April 24th. Noa Sigal - lecturer and coordinator of educational programmes in Yad Vashem international school for the Holocaust studies presented Yad Vashem institution, its history of opening, mission in teaching the Holocaust. There was an excursion aimed at familiarising with the display at the Ninth Fort on the Holocaust period in Kaunas, Lithuania. The seminar also involved a didactic workshop for participants who worked in groups, discussed in order to pre-

pare posters using visuals from Washington Holocaust Museum. There were 30 participants. The part of these educators will participate in the international seminar in Yad Vashem, Israel in summer of 2017.

The seminar was organized by the Secretariat of the International Commission together with Yad Vashem institution and Kaunas the Ninth Fort Museum.





An International Seminar for teachers, educators took place in the Centre of Lithuania - Ariogala Gymnasium

On April 25-26th, the seminar for educators, who had participated in an international seminar in Yad Vashem international school for the Holocaust studies in 2016, was organised. The theme was "The Holocaust in the Process of Education". The seminar was opened with an extraordinary ceremony, Tolerance Educational Centre was named after the name of the Righteous Among the Nations. The ceremony involved not only pupils, teachers, educators, but also a Jews' rescuer Janina Tarapaite Sliburiene. Later teachers presented their implemented activities with students, shared future plans. Seminar participants went to Kedainiai to get acquainted with Jews' history during a pre-war period, they also visited a mass killing sight where 2076 were massacred in Kedainiai in 1941.

Noa Sigal - a lecturer from Yad Vashem international school presented to teachers various stories about the people who survive the Holocaust and their return to normal life. Teachers also could watch extracts of videos, read texts depicting Jews' rescuers. Participants also visited a mass killing sight in Ariogala town and they also learned about the synagogue that had been on Vytautas street, about the flourishing life before WWII.

The seminar was organized by the Secretariat of the International Commission with Tolerance Educational Centre at Ariogala Gymnasium and Yad Vashem institution.



ACTIVITIES OF TOLERANCE EDUCATIONAL CENTRES

⇒ Tolerance Educational Centre at Panevezys Mykolas Karka progymnasium has been holding a Song Contest for seven years which marks the Day of Restoration of Independence of Lithuania. The event took place on March 9th.



⇒ Mazeikiai "Gabijos" gymnasium Tolerance Educational Centre is running a project on preserving a historical memory, namely,



reminiscences of Jews, their killing and their rescuers. The project is coordinated by teachers of Ethics Regina Dirginčienė and Rima Skrodenytė.

⇒ English teacher Jolita Stačiokaitė from Jieznas gymnasium (Prienei region) together with her students visited the 4th Fort of Kaunas in order to familiarise students with the history of Jews who lived in Vilijampole, Kaunas and who were massacred in the forts of Kaunas.





⇒ Two Austrian volunteers Sebastian Redl ir Ganael Dumreicher from Vilnius Gaon Jewish State Museum visited Tolerance Educational Centre at Ariogala gymnasium, Raseiniai region. These volunteers gave a lecture to students on the Holocaust in Lithuania, they also discussed about the prevailing stereotypes, antisemitism or hatred. The volunteers also headed for another Tolerance Educational Centre in Telsiai at Vincentas Borisevičius gymnasium.



⇒ Teachers and students from Alytus Adolofas Ramanauskas – Vanagas gymnasium went to Auschwitz – Birkenau museum (Poland). There were 47 people from Alytus who visited the biggest death camp established by Nazis during WWII.



⇒ On April 21st, around 3500 oak trees were planted by 500 students from Vilnius, Anykščiai, Vilkaviškis, and Kupiškis Povilas Matulionis progymnasium. The trees grow in Rukainiai village, Vilnius region, the latter initiative is held by the Embassy of Israel to mark the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Israel.



⇒ On April 27th, there was a concert “We are the Children of our Homeland” held by a multifunctional Tolerance Educational Centre at Vilnius “Saulėtekis” school. All participants and guests could taste traditional dishes of ten national minorities who attend that particular school.



⇒ Photographer Richard Schofield residing in Lithuania visited Jieznas gymnasium, Prienai region on April 28th. This person is working on the project “50 Schools” and he was invited by English teacher Jolita Stačiokaitė. The meeting was on local history, students’ family roots, heritage and local area.

Two newly established Tolerance Educational Centres joined the network:
Vilnius Jonas Basanavičius gymnasium and Daugai Vladas Mironas gymnasium.

