



The International Commission  
for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania

## In this Issue:

- International Commission Secretariat Activities 1–3 p.
- Activities organised by the partners of the International Commission and Tolerance Education Centres 3–4 p.

## International Commission Project about Chiune Sugihara

The month of September started with the project initiated by the International Commission about the Japanese Consul-General Chiune Sugihara. The project is dedicated to mark the 75th anniversary since the summer of 1940 when the Japanese Consul-General Chiune Sugihara, who had been issuing transit visas to



people, who were trying to escape WWII in Europe. The project was joined by 12 Tolerance Education Centres (hereafter TEC), which attended different educational activities and got acquainted with the personality and activities of Chiune Sugihara and his choice to save people's lives during WWII.

## Seminar “The place of Kaunas IX Fort in Historical Memory Perception”

10 September the Secretariat of the International Commission and Kaunas IX Fort museum organised a seminar “The place of Kaunas IX Fort in Historical Memory Perception”. A coordinator of scientific research programmes at the International Commission, historian Alfredas Ruksenas gave a lecture on the Jews annihilation in the IX Fort. After reminding the facts the lecturer noted, that the way of killing people in the IX fort and the other places is well depicted in the Karl Jäger Report. Ronaldas Racinskas – the Executive Director of the International Commission had a discussion with teachers on history evaluation and historical event analysis. According to Ronaldas Racinskas “there is a common practice among particular groups of people to depict historical events only in black and white, which is rather biased, affected by stereotypes and prejudices. I would invite you yourselves, and to encourage your students to be able to put aside ready formed clichés and often narrow “ethnic” or even personal experience (real or imaginary) story. I am inviting you to acquire ability to evaluate historical events in the context of common human values”. Two teachers from TECs shared their experience in the Holocaust education in History and English lessons. The second part of the seminar was dedicated to introduce the ideas of IX Fort Museum educational programmes, such as “Jewish input into the history and culture of Lithuania”, “Punishment Mercy Impossible”, “The Rescuers of Jews”, “Things – death witnesses”, “The Escape”. The teachers made analysis on the introduced samples of educational programmes and had some active discussions on the applicability of these programmes to the students of different age groups. The seminar was attended by 40 teachers, TEC representatives, school administrators, teachers of history, languages and moral education.



## There are new TECs in Tolerance Education Centres network

In September **3** new TECs were created and joined the network:

- ⇒ **Obelynas basic School, Silale district,**
- ⇒ **Vilnius Naujamiestis School,**
- ⇒ **Birzai “Saules” Gymnasium.**



## 23 September “Memory Road” commemoration of the National Memorial Day for the Genocide Victims of the Lithuanian Jews

To commemorate the numerous Lithuanian Jewish communities destroyed during the Holocaust the International Commission encouraged education institutions to join the civic incentive “Memory Road” and visit the mass extermination sites and make the road, which was the last for the Jews who were herded to their execution. The participant of commemoration had gained some knowledge on Jewish culture, traditions, local Jewish community history, and brought to the mass extermination sites small stones with the names of Jews who perished there. More than 130 schools of Lithuania and TECs organised non-traditional lessons, exhibitions, initiated commemorations locally.



The commemoration event in Paneriai Holocaust and the other Nazi victims Memorial was held on the 22nd September. More than 200 students and teachers from 10 Vilnius and Traku Voke schools made a symbolic “Memory Road” commemorating people for whom this road became the last in 1941-1944 and was leading them to death. School communities attended the official state event together with the representatives of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the members of Lithuanian Jewish Community, the representatives of foreign embassies in Lithuania. Students brought to the Paneriai Memorial small stones with the names of people who were killed there. The chair of the International Commission Emanuelis Zingeris: “Here we commemorate the killed; there is nothing left, only bones and ashes. Unfortunately the whole Lithuania is full of such places.” Concluding his speech the Chair of the International Commission addressed his words to the Vilnius mayor Remigijus Simasius and noted that “Vilnius should become a memorial place, as 40% of Vilnius inhabitants were killed here.”



The Chair of the International  
Commission Emanuelis Zingeris



The Executive Director of the International Commission





### Moments from the commemoration event in Paneriai:



### Activities organised by the partners of the International Commission and Tolerance Education Centres

#### Commemoration of Kedainiai Jewish community extermination

On the 31st of August, 2015 the symbolic commemoration of 74<sup>th</sup> anniversary since Kedainiai Jewish community was exterminated in Dauksiai village, was held. At the same time the perished were honoured in Tel Aviv, Israel, they were commemorated by the ancestors of Kedainiai region Jews. On the 28th of August, 1941 in the village of Dauksiai 2076 Jews from Kedainiai, Seta, Zeimiai and the other localities were shot to death.



#### The Japanese Consul-General in Lithuania Chiune Sugihara and “Visas for Life” commemorated in Kaunas

The Embassy of Japan and Sugihara House museum initiated commemorative events on the 4th September to honour the Japanese Consul-General in Lithuania Chiune Sugihara and his activities. The commemorative plaques were unveiled on the front, external wall of the Metropolis Hotel and on the wall at the platform of Kaunas Railway Station where Sugihara departed from. The exhibition at the Kaunas Railway Station which deals with the life and work of Mr. Chiune Sugihara was opened; a commemorative stamp to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of issuing of “Visas for Life” was released. The Japanese and Dutch sides released a customized stamp of Chiune Sugihara and Jan Zwartendijk who was an acting Dutch Consul in Lithuania, the Lithuanian Post Office released an envelope of Chiune Sugihara and Jan Zwartendijk. As a part of the event 3 DVDs were presented. Kaunas Art Gymnasium students and their teacher of History Saulius Mikuckis were active participants of the commemorative events in Kaunas.

#### The European Day of Jewish Culture



“Bridges” – the topic of the European Day of Jewish Culture, marked on the 6th of September. The topic of bridges was meant to draw attention towards the bridges between the past and the present, mutual cooperation and the ties among different communities. A great number of events were held to mark the European Day of Jewish Culture in Vilnius, Kaunas, Garliava, Ziezmariiai, Panevezys, Siauliai, Kalvarija, Jonava, Kedainiai, Radviliskis, Sveksna, Rokiskis, Pandelys and Telsiai. The TECs also added some variety to the events:

##### Garliava, Kaunas district

7 September Jonučiai Gymnasium recalled the history of Garliava Jewish community and introduced composition “Bridges”, and the drama studio “Vaidyba” acted some extracts from the play “Benjamin’s Journey”.



##### Kaunas

10 September Kaunas Synagogue organised a presentation of postcards issued with the etchings of Ester Lurje, who was a Kaunas Ghetto inmate. Those postcards have some educational goals; they were issued as the supplementary material which illustrates Kaunas Ghetto history. The event was attended by the TECs teachers, who are actively involved in Lithuanian Jewish history and the Holocaust education. The event was organised by Kaunas Religious Jewish Community together with its partners and sponsors.



### Kalvarija

6 September commemorative hour “Building Bridges, Creating History Together” was held in Kalvarija Synagogue, Jewish history was recalled, Jewish culture and heritage were introduced.

Kalvarija Gymnasium TEC representatives Arūnė Vaičiūnaitė-Levuškinienė and Daura Jonylienė read some works of Icchokas Meras and Jakob Josade, the discussion on the topic “Are we creating our history together?” was organised. The conclusion was reached that it was and it is impossible to create the history separately.



### Kedainiai

6 September the Multicultural Centre of Kedainiai Regional Museum organised an educational tour for the TEC teachers “The history of Jewish communities of Kedainiai region” The head of the Multicultural Centre Audrone Peciulyte gave an introduction to the history and together with the TEC teachers visited mass execution sites in Josvainiai, Krakes, Dotnuva, Seta, Kedainiai and Dauksiai.

### Panevezys

An exhibition “Ana Frank – history for present day”

Panevezys “Sauletekis” Progymnasium, Panevezys Jewish Community and the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum initiated an exhibition at Panevezys “Sauletekis” Progymnasium (September 9-21) of Anna Frank home, and dedicated it to mark the National Memorial Day for the Genocide Victims of the Lithuanian Jews.

## Photo exhibition: “Lithuania – the First Love. Israel – My Home”

22 September in Vilnius “Sauletekis” school-multifunctional centre a photo exhibition by Gregory Fridberg “Lithuania – the First Love. Israel – My Home” was opened. The event was attended by the school community and guests from Lithuania, Israel and the USA. The Executive Director of the International Commission Ronaldas Racinskas in the opening speech noted: “this school pays a great attention to historical memory. This exhibition depicts life and present day, but looking at the photos one can feel a touch from the past.” The author of the exhibition Gregory Fridberg not only introduced his creative work, but also told his life story related to the Holocaust.



The Executive Director of the  
International Commission



Pupils of Vilnius „Sauletekis“ school-multifunctional centre

## Tolerance Education Centre representatives visit a former death camp Auschwitz

23-25 September Panevezys “Sauletekis” Progymnasium TEC teachers and students visited Auschwitz museum. This visit was suggested by the TEC coordinator, history teacher Irena Gasiuniene. In 2014 together with the group of the TECs teachers she participated in the external seminar in Poland, organised by the International Commission. The images she saw and the history she learned encouraged her to organise an educational tour for her students. According to Irena Gasiuniene: “You may tell the students a lot of stories, even you can show some images, and film extracts, but I think that only after visiting Auschwitz museum the students would be able to realize what people committed to the others”.

In October the groups of teachers and students from Kaunas district Garliava Jonuciai Gymnasium TEC, Alytus Ramanauskas Vanagas Gymnasium TEC, and Varena “Azuolas” Gymnasium TEC are going to visit Auschwitz museum. The group leaders and TEC coordinators had also participated in the external seminars in Poland Auschwitz- Birkenau museum in 2011 and 2014, organised by the Secretariat of the International Commission.

