



The International Commission

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

Politicians from the Kaunas Region Attended Seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem

In early April, a group of politicians from the Kaunas Region attended a seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem. The group was comprised of mayors, vice-mayors and directors of administration.

Historical and educational lectures, a guided tour of the Holocaust History Museum, and meetings with Holocaust survivors were included into the seminar programme. Kaunas Region politicians had a meeting with Mayor of Jerusalem Nir Barkat and Lithuanian Ambassador to Israel Edminas Bagdonas.

At the seminar for Lithuanian politicians, an updated cooperation agreement was signed between the Secretariat of the International Commission and Yad Vashem - the World Holocaust Remembrance Center. The agreement defines the cooperation between the two institutions in the field of Holocaust education, integrating historical research and the use of Yad Vashem's vast archives.



Seminar for Alytus district history teachers on the crimes against humanity

12 April the Centre of Education and Pedagogical Psychological Help of Alytus District hosted one-day seminar for Alytus district history teachers on the crimes against humanity during the Soviet and the Nazi occupations, on historical memory and its perception in the modern society. Ingrida Vilkiene the Coordinator of Education Programmes of the



International Commission introduced the seminar participants the education programme which is being implemented by the International Commission and provided them with some methodological recommendations. Dr. Doc. Algirdas Jakubcionis, (Faculty of History, Vilnius University) gave a lecture: "The 4th decade. Lithuania and her Neighbouring Countries. Collisions and Reality".

The seminar was organised by the Secretariat of the International Commission.

Horrid experiences in exile and hard labour camps were recalled at the song festival "Songs from Exile"

15 April Varena Culture Centre hosted the National song festival "Songs from Exile". The event aimed to remind the mass deportations in the spring of 1948 and 1949 and pay tribute to the people who experienced the Soviet repressions and had kept their hope alive to get back home one day.





The festival was attended by more than a hundred participants from Vilnius, Kaunas, Panevezys, Alytus, Prienai, Raseiniai and Varena. The teachers who prepared their students think that such events are not only a good opportunity to demonstrate artistic abilities of their students, but also act as live history lessons on the deportations of Lithuanian citizens and their life, relationships, hopes and dreams in exile. The song



festival “Songs from Exile” was co-organised by the Secretariat of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania and Varena “Azuolas” Gymnasium Tolerance Education Centre (hereafter TEC).



“Visas for Life” film watching at TECs

In 2015 the Secretariat of the International Commission initiated an educational project “Who was Chiune Sugihara?” The project implemented by different schools revealed that the situation in 1940 when Jewish people fled from Nazi occupied Poland to Lithuania, which was on the 15 June occupied by the Soviets, is not well known by the society. The Embassy of Poland in Vilnius in cooperation with the Secretariat of the International Commission proposed to organize a film “Visas for life” (editor. A Miłosz) watching in schools. The film reveals the heroic deeds of Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara and the other people who were involved in rescue of Polish Jews in 1940. Archive materials and stories of witnesses are used in this film.

During April and May the film watching was organised in the TECs of these schools: the Old Gymnasium of Palanga, Kalvarija Gymnasium, Balbieriskis Basic School and Varena “Azuolas” Gymnasium. When the new school year starts the film will be watched in the other TECs.



Musical performance “Survival Stories through the Eyes of Children” introduced in Kaunas

16 May Karalius Mindaugas Vocational Training Centre in Kaunas hosted a musical performance “Survival Stories through the Eyes of Children”. The performance is created by the community of Vilnius “Sauletekis” multifunctional centre. The life of Lithuanian Jewish community before WWII and three stories of life of Jewish children who survived the Holocaust are introduced in the performance.



The event was attended by teachers from TECs of Kaunas city and Kaunas district. The introduction of the performance was initiated by the Secretariat of the International Commission with the idea of sharing the best creations within the educational community of Lithuania.

The first public presentation of a film about the Holocaust survivor Fania Brancovskaja

16 May the first public presentation of a film “Fania Brancovskaja’s Story – We Remained Human” and the meeting with one of the film creators Frederik Drachinsky, Development Coordinator in the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem were held in the Tolerance Centre of the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum. The film was created in 2015 by the incentive of Yad Vashem. The film reveals a life story of the Holocaust survivor Fania Brancovskaja. The film is intended for Israeli and Lithuanian societies, educational communities and people who are interested in history and who perceive the significance of historical memory and meaningfulness of the Holocaust education. The Israeli Ambassador to Lithuania Amir Maimon attended the premier and pointed out that Fania Brancovskaja is an example of a positive person, who even being 94 is very active, guides the sightseeing tours, meets teachers and students and bears the witness on the events during the Holocaust in Lithuania.

The premier of the film was co-organised by the Secretariat of the International Commission, the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum and the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem.

Seminars for teachers of Lithuania “The Holocaust Education”

In the middle of May in Karalius Mindaugas Vocational Training Centre in Kaunas 2 seminars for teachers of Lithuania were held. More than 60 participants attended the seminars. The target audience were those teachers who had already participated at the summer seminars of the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem and the teachers who are actively involved in different activities related to the Holocaust education, but haven’t attended the traineeship in Israel yet.





The institution of Yad Vashem - the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre was introduced to the seminar attendees, the lectures on the Holocaust education were given and methodological workshops on the topics of the Righteous among the Nations and of the Holocaust survivors coming back to the life after the Holocaust were conducted. The seminar participants watched and discussed two films: "Fania Brancovskaja's Story – We Remained Human" and "Uncle Chatzkel". The teachers also had an opportunity to attend the evening sightseeing tour in Kaunas, related to the intellectuals, who rescued Jews during WWII.



The seminar was conducted by Ingrida Vilkiene the Coordinator of Education Programmes of the International Commission and the lecturers of the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem Noa Sigal and Frederik Drachinsky. Seminar was held on the basis of the cooperation agreement between the Secretariat of the International Commission and Yad Vashem - the

World Holocaust Remembrance Centre.



1948 mass deportations were commemorated in Auku str.

20 May in Vilnius at the monuments to political prisoners and deportees in Auku str. a commemoration of mass deportations of Lithuanian citizens on 22-23 May 1948 was held.

Former deportees shared their memories about the events in 1948. Some politicians reminded the period of the Soviet occupation and emphasised the topicalities of current life. The Executive Director of the International Commission Ronaldas Racinskas in his speech pointed out the significance of historical memory and historical perception education.

The event was co-organised by the Union of Political Prisoners and Exiles (Vilnius association), the Secretariat of the International Commission and the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania.

