

Newsletter



The International Commission

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



Preparatory visit for educators invited to participate in the international seminar in Yad Vashem, 2017

A one-day seminar for teachers and educators invited to participate in the international seminar in Yad Vashem - International School for Holocaust Studies, took place in Vilnius, June 22.

Ronaldas Račinskas, the executive director of the International Commission spoke about long-term cooperation with Yad Vashem and presented the aims of the seminar. The teachers met a holocaust survivor Fania Brancovskaja. A former prisoner of Vilnius ghetto, Fania Brancovskaja took them on a tour to show the buildings which used to be a hospital, library, magazine, Judenrat and so on.

Preparatory seminars for educators before their visit to Israel is part of an educational program, implemented by the International Commission.



Live history lessons “Lithuania In My Heart”

A rally “Lithuania In My Heart”, organised by Lithuanian Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees, took place at the beginning of August, in the valley of the Dubysa river in Ariogala. It was the 27th event when not only the survivors, but politicians, educators, historians, soldiers and common young people came together.

It was also not the first time that teachers from Tolerance Education Centres (TEC) spread around Lithuania took part in the event in Ariogala. The TEC teachers attended an exhibition about basketball in Soviet labour camps, listened to the presentation of the book written by the International Commission historian Arvydas Anušauskas, and watched a film “Emilia. Breaking Free”.

The TEC teachers’ meeting in Ariogala was initiated and supported by the Secretariat of the International Commission.



Getting to know the history of Kaunas Jews in a one-day seminar

At the beginning of August there was a seminar for teachers and educators held in Kaunas. The subject of the seminar – the history of Kaunas Jews: life before war, the Nazi occupation and the Holocaust.

The teachers visited Kaunas Seventh fort where they learnt about the 1941 July Jewish massacre that began in this location. Later, the group of educators went to Kaunas synagogue to have a lecture about the Jewish religious traditions.



Thirty teachers and educators from Tolerance Education Centres participated in the seminar organised and funded by the Secretariat of the International Commission.



A group of Lithuanian educators attended an international seminar in Israel, Yad Vashem - International School for Holocaust Studies

On 19-28 of August a group of Lithuanian educators attended an international seminar in Israel, Yad Vashem - International School for Holocaust Studies. During the ten days visit the teachers learned about the situation of Lithuanian and European Jewry before the Second World War, the Yiddish language and its destiny, the Nazi policy, antisemitism, the Holocaust in Europe and Lithuania and other genocides around the world. The seminar attendees visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust history museum and had some workshops. They also met the survivor of the Holocaust in Lithuania, a former member of the International Commission and the first director of Yad Vashem – Yitzhak Arad and the survivor of the Holocaust in Poland – Yakov Wexler.



The visit was so useful not only because teachers and educators studied and dealt with the XX century history problems, but also because they had a unique opportunity to perceive the Old town of Jerusalem and visit the places related to the history of Christianity. In addition, the teachers were met by a representative of the Embassy of Lithuania – the Minister-Counsellor Ramūnas Davidonis who told them about close cooperation between the Lithuanian embassy and Litvak community in Israel and the projects they implement together.

A group of Lithuanian educators attend the international seminar in Israel every year. The seminar is organised accomplishing the cooperation contract between the International Commission and Yad Vashem - International School for Holocaust Studies.



THE ACTIVITIES INITIATED BY TOLERANCE EDUCATION CENTRES

A summer camp project for children in Panevėžys

Panevėžys “Saulėtekis” progymnasium Tolerance Education Centre students participated in a two-week summer camp ‘I Do Love Lithuania’ funded by Panevėžys city municipality. The project was meant for promoting civil education, learning the history of Lithuania and resistance movement, visiting the graves of Lithuanian volunteers and taking care of them, having discussions about tolerance, forbearance and human values.



Kėdainiai Regional Museum conducted an international project “The Past for the Mutual Future”

In 2016-2017 Kėdainiai Regional Museum and their partners from Lithuania, Latvia and Poland conducted an international project “The Past for the Mutual Future”. The project is meant for remembering the 20th century history, the 2nd World War and the Post-war period which was extremely painful for all the countries mentioned above. Students and teachers from three countries took part in the project.

On June 16 Kėdainiai Regional Museum hosted the final conference where the project results were presented and some lectures were given. The attendees had a look at public art objects, created in Kėdainiai during the period of implementation of this project.

Kėdainiai Regional Museum Tolerance Education Centre actualised this project via the European Union program “Europe for its Citizens”.



Youth intercultural exchange for getting to know the Jewish and other nations' history in Kalvarija and Vitebsk region

In July and August Kalvarija gymnasium Tolerance Education Centre and Vitebsk Babinich school administrated a youth intercultural exchange project. Student groups visited each other in Kalvarija and Vitebsk. Kalvarija gymnasium Tolerance Education Centre and Vitebsk Babinich school representatives gained historic and cultural knowledge, learned about local Jews and other nations, their history and destiny.





Kėdainiai “Atžalynas” gymnasium Tolerance education Centre administrates an international project on Jewish festivals

Since 2012 Kėdainiai “Atžalynas” gymnasium Tolerance Education Centre has been administrating a project aimed at educating students about the Jewish community history in Kėdainiai region. A special guest from Australia Eli Rabinowitz visits the gymnasium every year to share his knowledge and insights. The project is conducted in English, thus the students not only broaden their outlook, but use the foreign language and develop their English skills.



This year the project focused on Jewish festivals. In winter Eli Rabinowitz held a virtual conference to introduce a festival for the students and in summer, during the visit to Lithuania, the guest continued with stories about other traditional Jewish celebrations.

Last Sunday of August – to commemorate the Jewish people massacred in Biržai

An annual commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust takes place in Pakamponys – a location of mass torment of Jews. The event is held in the memory of the summer of 1941 when almost all of Biržai Jewish community was eradicated. The commemoration is organised by “Saulės” gymnasium Tolerance Education Centre, Biržų District Municipality and Šiaulių County Jewish community.



Teachers from two Tolerance Education Centres attended a seminar in Osvencim, organised by Maximilian Kolbe fund

In the middle of August, the International Commission Secretariat invited two English teachers Janina Banienė from Kuršėnų Pavėnčių school and Jolita Stačiokaitė from Prienų district Jieznas gymnasium to attend a seminar in Osvencim, Poland, organised by Maximilian Kolbe fund. The seminar was intended for acquainting teachers with people's experiences and personal stories in Aushwitz concentration camp.

