



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

NEWSLETTER

The events and activities held by the Secretariat of the International Commission (Autumn, 2016)

Teachers and Students Marked the Civic Initiative “The Remembrance Road” to Honour the National Memorial Day for the Genocide Victims of the Lithuanian

A ceremony to honour the victims of Lithuanian Jewish genocide was held on September 23rd, on the Remembrance Day of the Victims of the Jews Genocide in Lithuania. More than two hundred students from ten schools in Vilnius and from Tolerance Development Centre in Varėna “Ažuolas” gymnasium participated in the civic initiative “Memory Road”. This initiative was aimed at going together from Paneriai Railway station to the Paneriai Memorial Complex, the same road the Jews had been marched to their ultimate trip in 1941-1944. A signatory of Independence and a chairman of the International Commission Emanuelis Zingeris in his speech claimed that it was very important to know what had happened in that place and pass on the message from generation to generation so that the appalling massacre of innocent people would never take place.

At the ceremony the topic of memory was also unfolded by the Holocaust survivor Fania Brancovskaja and other honourable people. The ceremony of the Victims of the Jews Genocide in Lithuania was closed by guests from Israel, to be more precise, choir Adam le Adam. Teachers and students who took part in the civic initiative “Memory Road” gave their honour to the victims of the Holocaust together with official people from the Republic of Lithuania, representatives from various institutions, members of Lithuanian Jewish community, foreign ambassadors residing in Lithuania.





Marking the Day of Victims of Lithuanian Jewish Genocide in Lithuania

On September 23, one hundred and thirty Lithuanian educational institutions, Tolerance Development Centres, museums and other educational institutions joined a civic initiative “Memory Road” which has been held for four years.

School communities visited the sights of Jewish massacre, read names of killed Jews, teachers shared stories on Jews before WWII as well as appalling massacre of their communities.

The Secretariat of the International Commission has been initiating the civic initiative “Memory Road” since 2013. This commemoration has become a tradition- teachers and students give live History lessons, hold events in commemoration as well as they visit sights of Jews mass massacre in different places of Lithuania, on September 23.





International Conference on the Holocaust in Kaunas



The international conference “Local Analysis of the Holocaust in Nazi-Occupied Eastern and Western European Countries” was held on October 27-28th. The aim of the conference was to mark the Holocaust in Lithuania which broke out 75 years ago when a mass massacre of Lithuanian Jews started.

This conference also aimed at defining one the most notorious killing campaign against Jews in Nazi Lithuania when on October 29th, in 1941, just in one day close to the Ninth fort of Kaunas fortress, approximately 9200 Kaunas Ghetto residents were shot. This massive massacre of Jewish people in Lithuanian historiography is defined as “The Big Campaign”.

The process of the Holocaust is one the most problematic period not only in Lithuania, but also in the history of many other countries. Scholars from Lithuania and other countries were invited to present new outlooks on the massive massacre of Jews in Nazi-occupied countries. Historians doing research on the Holocaust from Lithuania, Estonia, the USA, Latvia, Poland and Ukraine took part in the conference. Moreover, historians and members, to be more precise, prof. Saulius Sužiedėlis, doc. dr. Joachim Tauber, dr. Arūnas Bubnys, from the International Commission not only took part in the conference, but also presented their reports. The conference was held by the Ninth fort of Kaunas Museum in line with the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania.

Seminar in Kalvarija for Teachers from Tolerance Development Centres

Teachers working in Tolerance Development Centres gathered together in the south west of Lithuania, in Kalvarija on November 4-5th. A two- day seminar “History in the Eyes of Witnesses” dealt with several topics: one aspect was how to approach witnesses’ reports in history lessons. Another point was the presentation of a teaching tool for teachers “Stories from the Past” this material embodies stories of rescuing Jews in Lithuania during WWII.

There was the Holocaust survivor Meiske Segal in the event, as well. He shared his life story with all participants and answered teachers’ questions.

Teachers were not only listening, but they also participated in the workshop “Teaching the Holocaust Through the Photos” introduced by the Holocaust Museum in Washington.

On the second day, teachers were introduced with Jews’ history in Kalvarija. A numerous Jewish community used to live in the main streets of the town, they owned shops and small trade enterprises.

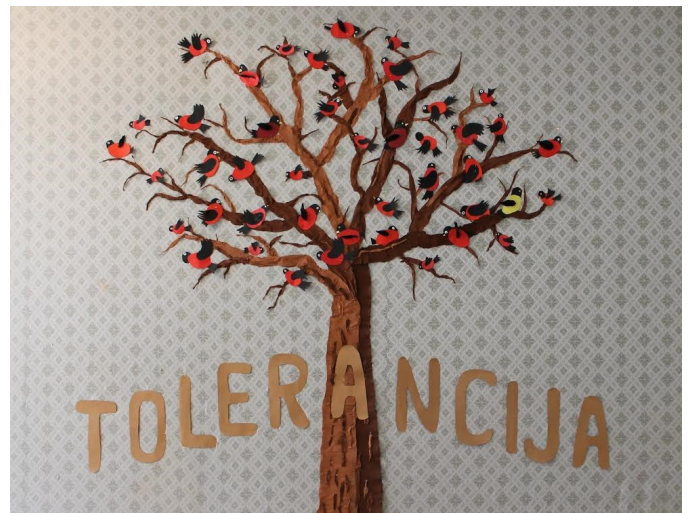
There used to be a two synagogues’ complex, unfortunately, as the participants of the seminar remarked that the unique cultural monument was abandoned and almost ruined. Teachers also visited the old Jewish cemetery as well as the killing sight next to lake Orija. After that all participants went to Marijampole where they were introduced with the history Jewish life and massacre during the Holocaust.



School Communities, Educational Institutions Marked International Tolerance Day on November 16th

This year an International Tolerance Day was by marked by more than 900 schools, kindergartens and institutions of non-formal education. This year's symbol is a Tolerance Bird. Participants of this civic initiative were offered to use a bird symbol so that they could develop the theme looking at the parallels of nature, people's life and history.

The Secretariat of the International Commission has been initiating the marking of this day for 14years, and every year a number of educational institutions and school communities join the initiative.





Information on the Events at Tolerance Development Centres

The Remembrance March in Kalvarija



Marking the day of the victims of Lithuanian Jewish genocide took place in Lithuania, yet one example of civic initiative "The Remembrance Road" is Tolerance Development Centre in Kalvarija gymnasium.

Teachers of this tolerance development centre gathered together about 80 participants from neighbouring schools in Jungenai, Sangruda, Marijampole youth school, children and youth club "Arka" and child's day centre "Ziniukas" as

well as representatives of administrative board at Kalvarija municipality.

The started at a synagogues complex and Talmud school. The history of local Jews community, Both names and surnames of former residents were remembered as well as historic posters and photographs were presented there. Participants of this Remembrance March visited the old Jewish cemetery, left memory and legacy pebbles. After having walked five kilometres, participants of Memory Road reached the killing sight next to Orija lake. Live marching to honour the victims, was escorted by Kalvarija police officers who ensured the safety.

Events of Honouring the Remembrance Day of the Victims of Lithuanian Jewish Genocide and Conferences at Krakiai M.Katkus and Mazeikiai M. Rackauskas gymnasiums

September month marks a number of events held by Tolerance Development Centres in various parts of Lithuania to honour the massacres of local Jewish communities. There are more than 200 sights in Lithuania. Shattered local Jewish communities were honoured in many events in various parts of Lithuania, the events were held by active teachers and museum educators in Birzai, Kėdainiai, Alytus, Garliava, Jieznas, Ariogala, Krakės, Merkinė, Varėna and many other towns.

There were national conferences held on local Jewish communities, their life before WWII and the Holocaust that rode local Jewish communities to death.



Tolerance Development Centre Named after Jews' Rescuer

Obelyno basic school in Silale, regarding the suggestion proposed by a chairman Emanuelis Zingeris of the International Commission, named their Tolerance Development Centre after Algirdas Ukrinas. He was a doctor residing in Laukuva, he is known as the rescuer of Jews during WWII. He was arrested and imprisoned by Nazis for hiding Jews.



Audition of the Film “Visas for Life“ in Tolerance Development Centres

Tolerance development centres at Ausra basic school, Saules school in Birzai, Vabalninko gymnasium Birzai region, Jonas Graiciunas gymnasium in Kelme, Multicultural Centre in Kedainiai, Saules gymnasium in Plunge, the Ninth fort Museum in Kaunas, Lazdijai Regional Museum and at Sugihara House-Museum held the audition of the film “Visas for Life“ about Chiune Sugihara and other diplomats who rescued the fleeing Jews during World War II, the auditions were organised in September in the aforementioned centres.

National Partisans’ Song Contest “The Road of Freedom“



On October 14th, the eighth national song contest “The Road of Freedom“ was organised at Atgimimo school in Druskininkai. Not only did participants take part from fifteen Lithuanian schools, but also participants from Pusk (Poland) liceum joined. In addition, Ukrainian fighters healing in Lithuania also sang there.

The festival was held by the Tolerance Development Centre at Atgimimo school in Druskininkai together with the Resistance and Deportations’ Museum in Druskininkai.

Students Cleaned and Tidied the Old Jewish Cemetery

In October, students of Vilnius Jonas Ivaskevicius youth school cleaned and tidied Jewish cemetery in Suderve. They picked up tree branches and twigs, raked leaves. While cleaning the cemetery, they were directly introduced with the history of Lithuanian Jews their culture and burial customs.

New Tolerance Development Centres are established at Merkelis Rackauskas gymnasium in Mazeikiai, Leipalingis basic school, in a closed joint stock company the Santarve Newspaper (Santarves laikrastis) in Mazeikiai.



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