

NEWSLETTER



The International Commission

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

Students marked National Holocaust Victims Remembrance Day going along the Memory Road

September 22 was the day when students from Vilnius and other Lithuanian towns gathered in Paneriai memorial to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust. "Ąžuolas" Gymnasium students from Varėna read touching and heart-rending poetry by the Holocaust survivor Stanislav Rubinov. Students had pebbles decorated with the names of people and communities killed during that dark period and carried them all the way from Paneriai train station to the Memorial of the Holocaust Victims. While students from "Saulėtekis" School – Multifunctional Centre were performing a song in Yiddish, students from Varėna placed the pebbles on the monument in the shape of the map of Lithuania which was the symbol of the Lithuanian Jewish communities eradicated during the genocide.

Special guests - Emanuelis Zingeris, head of the International Commission, Ronaldas Račinskas, Executive director and a historian Saulius Sužiedėlis, head of the International Commission Nazi Subcommittee – made their speeches on the manslaughter that took place in Paneriai.

The civic initiative "Memory Road" is an open invitation for teachers and their students to remember the Jewish communities massacred during the Holocaust, and follow the paths which victims had to go along on their way to their death places. Lithuania has more than 200 of these tragic locations.

In memory of Lithuanian Jewish Genocide victims.

We are grateful to the pupils and teachers of Vilnius Palaimintasis Teofilijus Matulionis Gymnasium, Vilnius Karalius Mindaugas Progymnasium, Vilnius Naujamiestis Secondary School, Vilnius Simonas Daukantas Gymnasium, Vilnius Žvėrynas Gymnasium, Vilnius Adult Education Centre, Vilnius "Saulėtekis" School-Multifunctional Centre, Kaunas Veršvų Gymnasium, Varėna "Ąžuolas" Gymnasium, who participated in remembrance event of the victims of Lithuanian Jewish Genocide in Paneriai memorial.





Moments from the event in Paneriai memorial



The International Commission in cooperation with Tolerance Education Centres has been initiating commemorative events for more than ten years.

By doing this, they seek to educate students about the tragedy of the Holocaust, want to make the young generation aware of the abundant pre-holocaust Jewish community that used to live in Vilnius, the city even called the Northern Jerusalem at that time.

The remembrance initiative „Memory Road“ took place around Lithuania

This year 194 educational institutions in Lithuania willingly joined the civic initiative „Memory Road“. Educators and their students commemorated the victims of the Holocaust by visiting the places of the massacres, writing the people's names and the place names on pebbles, organising meetings with those who still remember life of their neighbouring Jewish communities. Students had lessons and were taken on excursions to get to know the Jewish lifestyle, customs and traditions, others produced films or posters, wrote essays, made performances, took care of the Jewish cemeteries or read memoirs.

A few examples of different commemoration events:

➤ **Kėdainiai district Akademija Gymnasium** students made a film about the local Jewish community “The History of Dotnuva Jews” and showed it to the public in the event called “Jewish Life in Dotnuva in XVIII – XX centuries”.

➤ **Jieznas Gymnasium** students presented a film they made about an artist Jose Gurvich who was born in Jieznas. The film was shown to the town community. A group of students visited a mass grave close to Jieznas lake.

➤ Commemoration events in **Šėta Gymnasium** took several days as it took a few of them to collect and decorate pebbles with inscriptions of Kėdainiai and other Lithuanian place names in Lithuanian and Yiddish. Later on, students set up an installation „Memory Road“ in the school foyer.



Alytus A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas Gymnasium



Alytus Likiškėliai Basic School



Kėdainiai Rytas Progymnasium



Subačius Gymnasium



Jonava District Bukoniai School-Multifunctional
centre

➤ In Garliava three schools had their teachers and students unite for a procession through the town to the old Jewish cemetery where they called out the names of Jewish kids killed during the Holocaust. Those three school communities are **Garliava Adomas Mitkus Basic School**, **Jonučiai Progymnasium** and **Juozas Lukša Gymnasium**.

➤ **Panevėžys Rožynas Progymnasium** students decided to commemorate the Holocaust victims by drawing posters and having an exhibition hosted by the city municipality.

➤ **Kalvarija Gymnasium** students and their educators went on a hiking trip.

➤ **Vilkaviškis “Aušra” Gymnasium** community read 203 names of Jewish children and students who were killed and buried in Vilkaviškis Holocaust cemetery. A display translated into three languages “The Extermination of Vilkaviškis Jews” was placed there. Nearby, people planted a young forest to honour the local saviours and erected a stand to boast the names of Righteous Among the Nations.

➤ **In Panevėžys the Jewish Community** initiated a quiz - discussion for students from different schools on the topic of the Holocaust.

➤ **Šiaulėnai Marcelinas Šikšnis Gymnasium** in Šiaulėnai and **Radviliškis Lizdeika Gymnasium** in Radviliškis were the first to read the names of the Jews killed locally. The names of people killed there had not been known up till that day. Local teachers collected the names and made their lists using the information found in Yad Vashem – the International Institute for Holocaust Research.



Jonučiai Progymnasium and Gymnasium, Juozas Lukša Gymnasium



Panevėžys Rožynas Progymnasium



Kalvarija Gymnasium



Nemenčinė Gediminas Gymnasium



Vilnius „Laisvė“ Gymnasium „Remembrance Way“ to Veliučionys