JEWISH CEMETERIES AS AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE IN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION:

EXPLORING CURRENT PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN TEACHING ABOUT JEWISH HERITAGE AND THE HOLOCAUST IN SEVEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

A REPORT BY PROF JOANNA BEATA MICHLIC OF THE FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH HERITAGE

Foundation for Jewish Heritage
ESJF EUROPEAN JEWISH CEMETERIES INITIATIVE
centropa
Co-funded by the European Union

THE FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH HERITAGE works internationally to ensure that important Jewish architectural sites, monuments and places of cultural significance in danger are preserved and re-imagined for a sustainable future.

THE EUROPEAN JEWISH CEMETERIES INITIATIVE (ESJF) provides practical solutions on how to physically protect the Jewish cemeteries of Europe. The initiative's preservation work aims to construct walls with locking gates around vulnerable cemeteries and look after the cemeteries' general upkeep. By doing this, the ESJF Project hopes to preserve Jewish memory, especially in so-called 'priority areas' such as the former Soviet-bloc and South-Eastern Europe.

CENTROPA is a non-profit, Jewish historical institute dedicated to preserving 20th century Jewish family stories and photos from Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, and disseminating these stories and photos through films, books and exhibitions. Centropa's main office is in Vienna, but it also has offices in Budapest, Hamburg and Washington DC.

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FOREWORD

This report by Prof Joanna Michlic is part of an unprecedented initiative by the European Union to preserve and promote awareness of 1,700 Jewish cemeteries from seven countries in Eastern Europe, which is being implemented by three consortium partners – the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, the European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative, and Centropa.

These Jewish sites primarily represent 'orphaned' heritage. The communities that the cemeteries once served were mostly extinguished during the Holocaust. In many places, the Jewish cemetery remains as the last physical evidence of once thriving Jewish life. The vast majority are today in a parlous state, having suffered years of neglect and in instances complete destruction.

Indeed, the very existence of these Jewish communities has become largely marginalised and forgotten, which is why this EU project is of such critical importance. Not only does it address the preservation of cemeteries but it is preservation with a special purpose, to ensure that the Jewish life in towns and cities across Eastern Europe is recalled, understood, commemorated and celebrated.

Joanna's brief was to address the specific educational potential of Jewish cemeteries – how Jewish cemeteries can serve as 'outdoor classrooms'; a profound tool for teachers to use in educating their pupils on the local Jewish narrative. Her approach involved listening carefully to the voices from the region, and those with a particular interest and expertise in the subject. The result is a document that represents a significant statement on the current possibilities, while also addressing the challenges and the sensitivities at this time.

The Jewish experience inevitably touches upon what is now considered fundamental European values – of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Finding ways to engage with the Jewish legacy in Europe has a special importance for today.

Dame Helen Hyde DBE
Chair, Foundation for Jewish Heritage

Michael Mail
Chief Executive, Foundation for Jewish Heritage

March 2023


LITHUANIA
POLAND
SLOVAKIA
UKRAINE
HUNGARY
MOLDOVA
GEORGIA

PART 1

OVERVIEW

"Cemeteries offer a great opportunity. There is so much to be learned from them."
Prof. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett [1]

"The Cemetery in Okopowa is no mere graveyard, but a living, liminal space, a bridge across time, open to any and all who wish to speak with the dead." Rokhl Kafrissen [2]

1.1 INTRODUCTION

I am a historian of East European Jewry and the Holocaust specialising in the memorialisation of the Holocaust in post-communist Europe, the history of the rescue of East European Jews, and of Jewish childhood during and after the Second World War. As a high school and university student, I had the privilege of witnessing and participating in a "history revolution" that took place in East Central and Eastern Europe thanks to the opening up of national and regional archives, and the development of new salient approaches towards Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the aftermath of the political transformation of 1989 and the early 1990s. Being engaged in different research projects and scholarly discussions with colleagues from post-communist Europe, I have been acutely aware of the importance of incorporating the latest historical research and previously neglected primary sources into history curricula at high school and university levels. I believe that, as a member of a scholarly community, I have a responsibility to assist in reducing glaring gaps between the latest impartial scholarship and historical high school curricula on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the post-communist region. In 2019, my proposal to establish an international workshop on the history and memory of the rescue of Jews in Poland from a comparative perspective won an award from the Global Education Outreach Programme (GEOP) of the Polin Museum, Warsaw. Due to the global Covid pandemic, the workshop did not take place until 2021. The participants were scholars, educators and curators from the non-formal education sector representing different non-governmental organisations in Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, Israel and the USA. During the workshop, it became clear that the non-formal educational sector empowers the formal educational sector in teaching about democracy, non-partisan national histories, Jewish history and the Holocaust, and the values of pluralism and openness towards others.

1.2 THE AIMS OF THE REPORT

This report is part of the contribution of the Foundation for Jewish Heritage to the EU-funded pilot project set up with the aim of preserving Jewish cemeteries in Europe as a joint effort of three leading Jewish heritage NGOs, with the Foundation collaborating with ESJF (European Jewish Cemeteries Initiative) and Centropa.

Jewish cemeteries, of which there are more than 9,000 across Europe – often in places where Jews no longer reside – offer a uniquely compelling educational sphere for students of all ages to encounter Jewish heritage on a local, regional and national level. The Foundation for Jewish Heritage, ESJF and Centropa have been engaged in the recording and preservation of Jewish heritage for a number of years. These NGOs have been providing vital resources to educators engaged in both formal and informal education in post-communist Europe.

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1 Prof. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett in an email communication with the author of this report, 21 July 2022.

2 Rokhl Kafrissen, "Buried History. Rokhl's Golden City: Tracing two stories of wartime heroism in Warsaw", *Tablet*, 7 July 2022, https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/community/articles/buried-history-warsaw, (accessed 12 September 2022).

This report examines the state of high school education in addressing Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in seven countries of the post-communist region: Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. Its focus is on the current state of high school curricula and the achievements, challenges, limitations and needs of high school teachers engaged in teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. The report examines the extent to which teachers have already incorporated Jewish cemeteries in lessons, and how they can make better use of Jewish cemeteries in their teaching. Therefore, the views of high school teachers play a central role in this report. The report also offers recommendations on the development of systematic and rich educational curricula incorporating Jewish cemeteries.

There are two key aims of this report. The first is to provide a general overview of the current level of engagement with the extensive pre-1939 Jewish cultural heritage, and the topic of the Holocaust, in high school education in seven post-communist countries. The second is to highlight specific educational projects that incorporate sites of Jewish cemeteries within high school curricula. The latter will help empower local actors to preserve Jewish cemeteries by engaging young people at both intellectual and empathic levels in a lasting way. This, in turn, will strengthen civil, pluralist and democratic societies throughout the region.

The report summarises the scope of preservation, and educational projects in educational settings. It also reveals how the various programmes conducted by the ESJF, Centropa and the Foundation for Jewish Heritage have impacted formal high school education. To meet the key goals of this report, I designed a questionnaire (see the appendix) for interviewees from the seven countries.

The central position of this report is that the space of Jewish cemeteries offers a rich and effective educational resource for teaching about Jewish history, society, culture and Judaism. Jewish cemeteries represent sacred spaces in Jewish tradition and can enable students to make meaningful connections between Jewish religious and social and cultural life. It can also offer powerful empathic lessons about the functional and spiritual significance of the Jewish cemetery, and about individual members of the Jewish community who were buried there, about local Jewish history, and about connections with non-Jewish members of the local community.

With regards to the history of the Holocaust and lessons to be taught from this watershed event in twentieth century Europe, the space of the Jewish cemetery can constitute a powerful educational resource in teaching about Jewish life and survival strategies in Nazi-occupied Europe, and about human and material losses caused by the physical destruction of European Jewry during the Holocaust. In incorporating the Jewish cemetery into teaching about the social history of the Holocaust, students can learn about rarely addressed historical topics such as the Jewish cemetery as a site of escape from persecution; as a place of smuggling goods; and as a place of concealment, hiding Jewish fugitives including children. The Jewish cemetery also serves as a powerful educational tool in teaching about the perpetration of genocide, empathic memorialisation of Jewish victims, as well as in raising awareness of the devastating impact of antisemitism and violence on Jewish communities, and relationships between Jews and non-Jews in the past and present. Therefore, contact with the Jewish cemetery can contribute to critical thinking, ethical citizenship and openness towards 'the other' among young people.

I investigate the scope, achievements and limitations of the current history curricula concerning the levels of incorporation of Jewish cemeteries into high school education by collating responses from the following groups of stakeholders:

1. **high school teachers**
2. **informal educators representing major NGOs**
3. **grassroot activists engaged in the preservation of Jewish cemeteries**
4. **scholars and experts from post-communist Europe, as well as from the West**
5. **members of Teachers' Associations and national training bodies and, to a lesser degree, government representatives.**

Representatives of the pilot project in the seven countries have collected responses from all five groups, and these are cited in the report anonymously: only with initials and in some cases with a location of the school. In addition, I have conducted interviews with individuals representing the first four groups of stakeholders. They have given me permission to cite them by their full names. However, in some cases I only cite with initials given the political situation in their country.

For the report, I also analyse secondary literature and various local and regional initiatives that have incorporated Jewish cemeteries into school educational programmes. I briefly discuss the beneficial value of peer-to-peer learning models involving high school and undergraduate and graduate university students. In each country, I situate the issue of educational opportunities and challenges within a broader political and cultural context. Therefore, I provide brief information on the history of the Jewish community, the Holocaust and post-war developments, and post-communist education on Jewish history, cultural heritage and the Holocaust.

1.3 THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT FOR THE EMERGENCE OF JEWISH HERITAGE IN PUBLIC MEMORY, HISTORY AND EDUCATION

On the eve of the Second World War, over 9 million Jews lived in Europe. Jewish communities of pre-1939 Europe were characterised by social and linguistic diversity and religious heterogeneity, and an immensely rich cultural and material heritage going back hundreds of years. European Jews exhibited different degrees of acculturation and assimilation into non-Jewish societies, and have contributed enormously to every aspect of the political, economic and cultural life of modern European societies. During the Second World War, 6 million European Jews were murdered.

Today, the Holocaust is recognised as a "European project"[3] in which the Germans were indisputably the initiators, architects and executioners, but they found local helpers, facilitators and partners across Western and Eastern Europe. In the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, Jewish survivors were either displaced from their homes or forced to seek refuge beyond Europe's borders. The annihilation of many European Jewish communities, the dislocation of the East European Jewish refugees, and the enormous plunder and devastation of pre-1939 material and cultural heritage of European Jews wreaked irrevocable change in post-1945 continental Europe and its social, cultural, and geographic landscapes. As a consequence of the Holocaust and a post-1945 upsurge of antisemitism in various countries, Jews, Jewish cultural heritage and Jewish history are today largely unknown to large segments of European societies, especially those of the post-war generations. In communist Eastern Europe, Jewish heritage and the Holocaust have been virtually erased from public memory, history and education for ideological reasons.[4]

However, in the 1990s, interest in Jewish cultural heritage, pre-1939 Jewish society and history, and the Holocaust has revived across Europe and beyond. In the post-1989 era that saw the collapse of communism and the ascendance of liberal democracies in Eastern Europe, a new trend of rediscovering Jewish cultural and material heritage has emerged, and has been enthusiastically endorsed by liberal non-Jewish milieus in the region.[5]

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3 Mary Fulbrook, "The Holocaust as a European Project", Keynote lecture during the conference Holocaust and the Cold War, the Fritz Bauer Institute, Germany, 26 May 2021.

4 On the issue of the treatment of Jews and the Holocaust during the communist era, John-Paul Himka, and Joanna Beata Michlic (eds) *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2013). Hereafter Himka and Michlic, *Bringing the Dark Past to Light in Postcommunist Europe*, in Klas-Göran Karlsson and Ulf Zander, eds. *Echoes of the Holocaust: Historical Cultures in Contemporary Europe*, (Lund, Nordic Academic Press, 2003).

5 For a summary of all the developments, see Brian Graham, Peter Howard eds., *The Routledge Research Companion to Heritage and Identity* (London, Routledge, 2016), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315613031

Chişinău, Moldova

Tarnów, Poland

Under the new political climate of the 1990s and 2000s, grassroot activists, educators and historians have begun to delineate and evaluate the remaining Jewish heritage and have embarked on its preservation, restoration and memorialisation. This process continues today and has already borne impressive fruit in the preservation and restoration of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues throughout the region. However, many cemeteries are still in need of urgent repair and those that had been entirely destroyed are only partially discovered and commemorated.

The early 1990s also saw the emergence of important non-governmental organisations and movements representing civil society in post-communist Europe, such as the Polish Lublin-based Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN and Sejny-based Pogranicze or the Russian Memorial.[6] The latter was one of three laureates of the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize, despite the fact that it was closed down in Russia in April that same year.[7] These organisations have addressed the need for dialogue with local ethnic, cultural and religious minorities and neighbouring states, and have emphasised the importance of education about the multicultural past and human rights crimes committed in the past. From their inception, these non-governmental institutions have regarded education about the pre-1939 Jewish cultural heritage and the Holocaust as crucial to building democratic, forward-looking and pluralistic societies in the region. Thus, in their mission they have been committed to strengthening civil society and combating antisemitism, racism and xenophobia.

For example, in Poland, the Forum for Dialogue, the oldest non-profit organisation dedicated to the Jewish-Polish encounter, has brought Holocaust survivors and educators to nearly 10,000 students in 400 schools across Poland since it was created in 1998. Like some other non-governmental organisations in the post-communist region, the Forum for Dialogue has focused on running educational programmes in small towns and villages that once had vibrant Jewish communities. These locations contain precious material and cultural remains of the rich pre-1939 Jewish heritage, though their inhabitants are often unaware. A core programme of the Forum for Dialogue is known as the School of Dialogue whereby students at partner schools conduct independent research on their local Jewish community's history. The research culminates in a student-led walking tour for local residents. This is an example of good educational practice, empowering high school students to teach members of their local communities about the Jewish past. The high school student – the learner – becomes the teacher.

For more than twenty years, non-governmental organisations have played a critical role in providing in-service training for cohorts of high school teachers who have been vital in introducing the history of the Holocaust and pre and post-1945 Jewish heritage to their students. Throughout the 1990s and the first decade of the third millennium, thanks to the then thriving liberal phase of democracy in post-communist Europe, NGOs were able to run a variety of extra-curricular workshops for school students in and outside of the classroom: in museums, synagogues and Jewish cemeteries.

Christine Beresniova, an expert on education about the Holocaust in Lithuania, differentiates three major factors influencing positive engagement with the Holocaust (and Jewish heritage) among high school teachers in post-1990 Lithuania: 1. supportive management and peer networks in schools 2. a personal commitment to teaching values linked to tolerance because of political, religious or familial predispositions or commitment to LGBTQ rights (considered closely related to other minorities' rights) and 3. pragmatic careerist reasons linked to opportunities for training, career development or connections to Western elites.[8] These factors are true for other post-communist countries under analysis during the same period.

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6 On memory activism in the area of Polish-Jewish relations and the memorialisation of the Holocaust by Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN and Pogranicze, see Janine Holc, *The Politics of Trauma and Memory Activism. Polish-Jewish Relations Today* (Cham, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

7 See, *"Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian Rights Defenders Awarded Nobel Peace Prize". The Moscow Times*. 7 October 2022. https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/10/07/russian-ukrainian-belarusian-rights-defenders-awarded-nobel-peace-prize-a79022

8 Christine Beresniova, *Holocaust Education in Lithuania: Community, Conflict and the Making of Civil Society* (New York, London, Lexington Books, 2017), Chapter 4.

However, with the rise of illiberal governments in the region in the post-2010 era, most teachers who remain engaged in impartial teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust are chiefly motivated by a personal commitment to teaching values linked to democracy and standing up against racism, xenophobia and antisemitism. Thus, their work can be viewed as, what Christine Beresniova calls, "social resistance" that requires the teachers to deconstruct popular nationalist narratives about the past, especially about attitudes and practices towards Jewish communities during the Second World War.[9] With the intensification of such narratives in mainstream political life and the public sphere in the post-2010 era, the work of high school teachers committed to the values of democracy is increasingly challenging. Some teachers are forced to defy the official curriculum and, in some cases, they have to disregard their own headteachers' views in order to teach about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust.

This report confirms that high school teachers in all seven countries consistently view education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust as undertaken by individual effort rather than by national mandate issued through the Ministry of Education. Most of the interviewed high school teachers criticise the lack of teacher training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. The need for systematic teacher training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust at both BA and MA levels at colleges and universities is a major issue that this report highlights.

During the liberal democratic phase of memorialisation of the Holocaust between the late 1980s and the early 2000s, the destruction of European Jews was becoming recognised by the West as a pivotal event in twentieth century Europe. Liberal democratic political and cultural elites of post-communist Europe accepted the Western interpretation of the Holocaust for a variety of pragmatic, social and moral reasons. However, despite the presence of the Holocaust in multiple areas of social, cultural and political life in Europe, public awareness of the event is neither widespread nor secure. Important research in recent years by institutions such as UNESCO, the Georg Eckert Institute and University College London has repeatedly revealed a complex global map of Holocaust education and the prevalence of myths and misconceptions in historical knowledge and understanding.[10] One of the outcomes of this research is the realisation that the prevalent models of education are not necessarily effective nor appealing to young people, and that there is a need for new models that would engage the students on both intellectual and empathic levels, and demonstrate relevance to their own lives. This finding supports the idea that more emphasis should be placed on the investigation of local history with high school students as active learners engaged in research in local archives, museums, Jewish cemeteries and synagogues, and in interviewing local inhabitants including any remaining Holocaust survivors.

In 2014, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) carried out a poll of worldwide antisemitism including popular attitudes.[11] Among the findings, 35 per cent of people in the countries polled had never heard of the Holocaust. Of the 26 per cent of people who hold antisemitic views, 70 per cent had never actually met a Jewish person. In a December 2018 EU survey, 80 per cent

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9 Christine Beresniova, "Resistance and Resilience within Lithuania Holocaust education," *Holocaust Remembered. Resistance and Resilience*, A Special Supplement, Columbia Education Commission, 26 April 2019, vol.6, 4.

10 See for example the reports of 2014, *The International status of education about the Holocaust: a global mapping of textbooks and curricula*, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000228776 and *What do students know and understand about the Holocaust? Evidence from English secondary schools*, https://holocausteducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/What-do-students-know-and-understand-about-the-Holocaust2.pdf

11 https://global100.adl.org/public/ADL-Global-100-Executive-Summary.pdf

of European Jews felt that antisemitism in their country had increased over the past five years, and 40 per cent lived in daily fear of being physically attacked.[12]

Global political and cultural developments of the early 2010s can be viewed as one of the key factors contributing to the increase of antisemitism and gradual weakening of knowledge about pre-1939 European Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. This, in turn, is conducive to the weakening of high school education on the subjects. The early 2010s witnessed the rise of radical left-wing antisemitic ideologies in mainstream political and cultural milieus in the West equating Israel with Nazism, and also the rise of right-wing, illiberal and authoritarian regimes in post-communist Europe. The best illustration of the latter process is two countries, Hungary and Poland. The current Polish government PiS (Law and Justice), that began to govern in 2015, draws on the collectivist ethnic, national, political and cultural traditions in order to rewrite the future based on an authoritarian model of democracy. In that vision, the PiS government has followed in the footsteps of the similarly authoritarian government of Victor Orbán in Hungary which, after taking power in 2010, has embarked on an illiberal "occupation" and "colonization" of the state, replacing the year 1989 – the year of peaceful transformation from communism,[13] with the year 2010 as "the year zero" in the history of post-communist Hungary.[14] In both cases, the bright future of the nation relies on the "full and final" implementation of the ethnic, collectivist model of nationalism that does not permit freedom of thought, the proliferation of heterodox ideas nor pluralistic education[15] but, instead, is driven by exclusionary and "purifying" policies directed at both the national past and today's society. Under such conditions, high school education could easily lose its autonomy and become highly centralised as is indeed the case in Hungary.

Current Hungarian and Polish governments and respective right-wing illiberal political and cultural elites in other post-communist countries reject the Western model of reckoning with the difficult past and the memorialisation of the Holocaust as a fundamental event in the European history of the twentieth century[16], and instead produce their own meta-narratives on the destruction of Jewish communities. As a consequence, the memorialisation of the Holocaust based on the Western model is now being gradually substituted by a new home-based memorialisation,

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12 https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-experiences-and-perceptions-of-anti-semitism-survey_en.pdf. See also a similar survey of 18 June 2019: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-experiences-and-perceptions-of-antisemitism-technical-report_en.pdf Another important document released by the EU was the survey of perceptions of antisemitism among young people in EU states of 28 June 2019, https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism-second-survey-discrimination-and-hate

13 On "colonization" or "occupation" of the state, see, for example, Jan Werner Müller, *What Is Populism?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 44.

14 On the efforts of FIDESZ's authoritarian government to replace the liberal democracy of 1989 with the illiberal vision of 2010, see Holly Case "Now who's living truth?" *Eurozine*, (13 June 2017), https://www.eurozine.com/now-whos-living-in-truth/ (accessed 15 September 2019).

15 Greenfeld, *Nationalism*, p. 87; and Joanna Beata Michlic, "The return of the image of the Jew as Poland's threatening other: Polish national identity and antisemitism in the third decade after the end of communism in 1989," chapter 30 in *Research Handbook on Nationalism*, eds. by Liah Greenfeld and Zeying Wu, (Oxford, Elgar Edward of Oxford, 2020) 406-427. Hereafter Michlic, "The return of the image of the Jew as Poland's threatening other".

16 On the Holocaust as a fundamental event in European political cultures, see, for example, Diner (2003), pp. 36-44; and Klas-Göran Karlsson, "The Holocaust as a problem of historical culture: theoretical and analytical challenges." In Klas-Göran Karlsson and Ulf Zander (eds), *Echoes of the Holocaust: Historical Cultures in Contemporary Europe*. (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2003), p. 18. On the importance of memory as a leading cultural term in history, see Alon Confino, "Remembering the Second World War, 1945-1965: Narratives of Victimhood and Genocide," *Cultural Analysis* 5 (2005): 1-23, with the response by Robert G. Moeller, http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~caforum/volume4/vol4_article3.html (accessed 20 November, 2007).

that I call (anti)-memorialisation of the Holocaust[17], that shifts its focus to (ethnic) national suffering and heroism and to the non-Jewish rescuers of Jews whose history is weaponised for political goals. In the more radical right-wing version, it is frequently peppered with new-old covert and overt antisemitic narratives. This has a damaging impact on education for democracy since high school teachers who advocate a liberal, inclusive model find it increasingly difficult to teach the Holocaust, Jewish history and Jewish heritage. In contrast to Hungary, the Polish government has not yet succeeded in introducing fully centralised control over schools proposed by the current Minister of Education and Science Przemysław Czarnek.[18] However, high school headmasters and teachers in Poland are increasingly worried about the potential future implementation of such laws that would make it difficult, if not impossible, to bring in outside speakers such as local Holocaust survivors and representatives of local NGOs. They are also concerned about future possibilities of conducting on-site lessons in Jewish cemeteries, synagogues and museums, and about opportunities to participate in extra-curricular programmes run by non-governmental NGOs such as the School of Dialogue. NGOs today have increasingly limited access to schools, and school administrations are sometimes reluctant to give permission for their activities due to fear of repercussions.[19]

The potential for conflict with colleagues, both fellow teachers and headmasters, who oppose a liberal inclusive curricula, makes some teachers hesitant to teach about the Holocaust and Jewish heritage. For example, teachers and school headmasters in Lithuania avoid the topic: As one teacher explained, "teachers and school directors do not talk about the subject 'unless they have to.' The frequently spoken comment 'unless they have to' highlights how unpopular the topic has become in Lithuanian society. It also demonstrates that the educational system in Lithuania is a vertical hierarchy rather than a horizontal structure."[20]

Overall, this is an alarming development in the post-communist region, revealing that illiberal nationalists have embarked on strategies of reworking their national histories of World War II and the Holocaust in order to emphasise their own (ethnic) victimhood and "collective innocence" with regard to the treatment of their respective Jewish populations and other minorities such as Roma.[21] This development constitutes a real danger to the memorialisation of the Holocaust and the recognition and preservation of European Jewish cultural heritage in the future.

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17 According to the historian Timothy Snyder, the current PiS vision of World War II is in "an implicit alliance with Russian memory politics." See Timothy Snyder, "Poland vs. history," *The New York Review of Books*, 3 May 2016, https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/05/03/poland-vs-history-museum-gdansk/ (accessed 15 September 2019).

18 See report, "Polish president vetoes government's law to centralise control over schools", https://notesfrompoland.com/2022/03/02/polish-president-vetoes-governments-law-to-centralise-control-over-schools/

19 I would like to thank Paula Sawicka, the chairman of the academic board of the Association against Antisemitism and Xenophobia, Open Republic for sharing with me her thoughts on the subject, email correspondence of 5 November 2022. On Open Republic, see https://www.otwarta.org/en/

20 Christine Beresniova, "'Unless They Have to': Power, Politics and Institutional Hierarchy in Lithuanian Holocaust Education," in Zehavit Gross and E. Doyle Stevick, eds. *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice* (New York, London, Springer, 2015) 391-407.

21 On the problem of whitewashing the Holocaust in post-communist Europe in the post-2015 period, Jelena Subotić, *Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance After Communism* (Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 2019); Robert Rozett, "Distorting the Holocaust and Whitewashing History: Toward a Typology," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, 13(1), 2019, 23-36; and Michlic, "The return of the image of the Jew as Poland's threatening other."

1.4 THE JEWISH CEMETERY AS AN IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCE

In such a challenging political and cultural climate, the role of Jewish cemeteries in education can be viewed as indispensable in counteracting antisemitism and the current weaponisation of Jewish history and the Holocaust. Jewish cemeteries offer educators an opportunity to introduce students to pre-war Jewish life and culture, as well as to the rupture created by the Holocaust in an engaging and experiential manner. The study of these sites could bring home the fact that the destruction of European Jewry is not a subject that is alien and remote to these students but, on the contrary, is part of their local community's history and geography. Instead of encountering facts in textbooks, students can walk through hallowed Jewish spaces and come face-to-face with evidence of the diversity of Jewish life, examples of Jewish practices, stories of individual Jewish lives and the after-effects of genocide. By learning in Jewish cemeteries, students can not only gain intellectual knowledge, but also develop empathy towards those buried; the famous and the unknown, adults and children.

Thus, the integration of Jewish cemeteries into high school education can make studying pre-1939 Jewish heritage and the Holocaust a meaningful intellectual and spiritual experience, relevant to young students' lives. In cultures where there is respect for the dead (annual All Souls' Day commemorated on 1 November by Catholics), incorporating Jewish cemeteries should be seen as part of a long-term innovative educational programme, shaped with the participation of non-governmental organisations, grassroots activists, headmasters, teachers and students.

According to Antony Polonsky, Emeritus Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University and chief historian of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, "Jewish cemeteries constitute an immense historical resource in formal and informal education about the Jewish past and present in the post-communist region. One of the first acts which accompanied the establishment of a Jewish community was the creation of a cemetery."[22] Jewish culture required the separation of the dead from places of human habitation but, at the same time, Jewish culture greatly honoured and respected the dead who were buried with ceremony in accordance with the regulations of Jewish law. Families who could afford it provided impressive tombstones (matzevot). Religious figures, whether rabbis or tsaddikim, were often buried in a separate enclosure called an ohel. This is a part of Jewish heritage through which high school students can encounter individual Jews, and gain understanding and respect for Jewish traditions.

The Jewish cemetery performed several other important functions. It was customary to visit the graves of one's parents and other relatives on the Jewish New Year. In addition, people came to the cemetery to seek the intervention of the dead, whether relatives or holy individuals, in the case of illness or plague, or to bless a bride and groom before a wedding. Specific prayers, such as those found in *Ma'aneh Lashon* (*The Response of the Tongue*, Prague, 1615, with more than 20 editions before 1800) were recited, while women who visited the cemetery on the anniversary of a relative's death or on the High Holidays, recited appropriate *tkhines* (prayers in Yiddish). These visits often had a ritual character, such as processions on the Ninth of Av commemorating the destruction of the first and second Temples, and those on the eve of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. In some places, on Yom Kippur eve, women enclosed the cemetery (or some of the graves) with a string while reciting prayers. Pieces of this were later used for candlewicks. Communal ceremonies with prayers to end plague were sometimes accompanied by the marriage of poor orphans, called *shvartse khupes* or *shvartse khasenes* ('black weddings'). High school students are usually curious to learn about such traditions.

22 Prof. Antony Polonsky's Statement on Incorporating Jewish Cemeteries into High School Education, 12 July 2022.

Ryglice, Poland

Radomyšl Wielki, Poland

As acculturation and assimilation made its inroads in Jewish communities, those who favoured the reform of Jewish life began to make use of tombstones using vernacular language rather than Hebrew, and were sometimes buried in special sections of the cemetery. Jewish industrialists and bankers, like the Poznański family in Łódź, built imposing mausoleums for their families towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

Before the Second World War, there were approximately 1,200 Jewish cemeteries in Poland and around 800 have been identified. Large numbers of Jewish cemeteries can also be found in other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, including Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine. Only a few have been restored and how the remainder can be properly preserved remains a serious problem. Most of the preservation projects were initiated in the 1990s and carried out by NGOs and enthusiastic activists with the assistance of religious and local governmental authorities, and school students. These efforts have been supported by the EU, international Jewish heritage NGOs such as ESJF, the Foundation for Jewish Heritage and Centropa, and individual Jewish descendants of East European Jews living in the West. But there are still many Jewish cemeteries in various states of disrepair. All cemeteries face the ravages of time and weather, and most were desecrated in the past. However, Jewish cemeteries continue to be vandalised in the present. This too is part of what educators can teach in these spaces since vandalisation of cemeteries illustrates that antisemitism still exists, even though Jewish communal life has been reduced to near extinction. Viewing, discussing and helping to remedy antisemitic graffiti, garbage and general disregard is a powerful experiential tool teaching young people empathy and respect for the dead as well as for living members of religious and ethnic minorities.

Many educators recognise the value and importance of the space of the Jewish cemetery as a rich educational resource and are enthusiastically supportive of developing new models incorporating Jewish cemeteries into the educational system. They agree that Jewish cemeteries are meaningful sites for engaging with various aspects of the pre-1939 Jewish past, the Holocaust, as well as contemporary issues of memory, commemoration and antisemitism.

According to Dr Robert Williams, Executive Director of USC Shoah Archives and Chief Advisor to IHRA, incorporating the space of the Jewish cemetery into education has the potential "to frame new thinking on how to build awareness around, teach, and preserve Jewish life and culture. Importantly, this is not limited to countries within the European Union, but also relates to other European countries with less developed infrastructure for the preservation of important cultural sites. This activity therefore has the potential to enhance cooperation between countries across continental Europe around sets of issues that relate to the preservation of Jewish life, thereby opening the door to a more normative approach to this imperative challenge."[23]

Williams also recognises that utilising the Jewish cemetery in education could enhance learning outcomes as they relate to cultural pluralism and inter-ethnic respect, and demonstrate that the legacy of Jewish life in Eastern Europe is intertwined with the history and culture of non-Jewish Europeans.

Prof. Steven T. Katz, Slater Professor of Jewish Holocaust Studies at Boston University and Chairman of the Academic Committee of the Claims Conference, views using Jewish cemeteries in education as a poignant tool for drawing "attention to the immediacy of the subject by showing how Jewish communities existed throughout Europe, in both large and small cities and villages."[24] In his view, "the study of gravestones will show and humanise various aspects of Jewish life,

23 Robert J. Williams's Statement on Protecting the Jewish Cemeteries of Europe, of 6 September 2022.

24 Steven T. Katz, Statement on Incorporating Jewish Cemeteries in Education, of 3 July 2022, given to the author of this report.

Chişinău, Moldova

Tarnów, Poland

i.e. presenting husbands, wives, parents, children, teachers, rabbis, workers etc. That is, it will familiarise students with the presence of local Jews and also de-mystify the subject. Jews and their identities will become more than myth and hearsay."[25]

Prof. Polonsky states that Jewish cemeteries are "a remarkable tool for conveying information about the nature of the Jewish communities in the towns where they are to be found. Thus, the large cemetery in Warsaw on Okopowa Street can be used, in conjunction with other Jewish sites in the city, to present a history of what was the largest Jewish community in Europe. The smaller cemetery in Bródno in Praga illustrates the problems the community faced in establishing itself in the Polish capital. One of the features which characterised both Jewish and Catholic religious culture in Poland-Lithuania was the veneration of the dead. Educational trips would be valuable both for Jews outside the area and for people living in these countries. It is important that educators can read the inscriptions on the tombstones, which are often strikingly eloquent and illustrate Jewish and Catholic religious values."[26]

Szombathely, Hungary

25 Ibid.

26 Prof. Antony Polonsky's Statement on Incorporating Jewish Cemeteries into High School Education, 12 July 2022.

Based on her experience of taking college students every summer to the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street, Prof. Eliyana R. Adler, Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Pennsylvania State University, states that the cemetery offers students a site for powerful reflection on the past Warsaw Jewish community as well as physical evidence of its ruin. Adler's educational tours for American college students are an excellent example of good practice that can be easily adapted:

"I begin outside the gates by talking with the students about different cultural understandings of death and cemeteries, allowing them to express any anxiety they feel about entering a burial site, and letting them know that visiting the dead is considered a sign of respect in Jewish culture.

As we enter the cemetery, I inform them about the Jewish custom of placing rocks on gravestones and we begin to visit some of the fascinating people buried there. Each trip is different. Often, we begin by viewing a beautiful sarcophagus and discussing the symbolism of the marble reliefs depicting both ancient and modern Jewish scenes. As we wind through the rows to visit famous historians, writers, actors, rabbis, and other leaders, students often ask about the iconography on the tombstones, the languages represented, and the meaning of certain phrases or images.

After our tour, I give the students time to wander. They are each tasked with returning with a photograph, comment, or question. We then share our findings. Some students are struck by the artistry of the carvings. Others want to discuss the iconography. Many are upset by the general sense of disarray and abandonment. Others want to know more about specific individuals.

Only after we have encountered the welter of pre-war Jewish life do we move into discussing Holocaust sites within the cemetery. We visit the graves of resistance fighters, and Jews who were buried while passing as non-Jews, only to be reinterred later in the Jewish cemetery. Recent scholarly and commemorative efforts around both hiding spots and mass graves offer new opportunities for discussion and encounter. On our way out of the cemetery, we wash our hands, following the Jewish custom.

After ten days of intense visits to Holocaust-related sites and meetings with experts, in their evaluations many of the students comment on the cemetery tour as an experiential and educational highlight. Quite a few Penn State students have never had the opportunity to interact with Jews, Jewish sites, or Jewish culture. Visiting the cemetery is a hands-on, multi-sensual exploration of the richness of Jewish life in Poland. Each student takes away different lessons and memories, but all seem to grasp a sense of the Jewish civilization that once thrived there."[27]

Dr. Katarzyna Suszkiewicz, educator and co-founder of a Polish NGO titled AntySchematy Foundation 2, echoes Adler's position on the importance of Jewish cemeteries in teaching Jewish history and the Holocaust to young people. Since 2008, Suszkiewicz has been engaged in Jewish cemetery preservation, and running educational projects in two provinces, Małopolskie and Podkarpackie, in southern Poland. The Foundation's activities are an example of the best preservation and education practices in the region. Like Adler, Suszkiewicz is eager to create educational projects incorporating Jewish cemeteries and recognises that this is also a vehicle for strengthening democratic values:

"The role of Jewish cemeteries in education about the Holocaust cannot be overestimated. First of all, cemeteries are part of the everyday landscape of the youth participating in the project. Often, during a volunteer camp, it turns out that this is the first time that these young people have the opportunity to actually enter a Jewish cemetery and reflect on the former Jewish community in their town. Working on cleaning and recording the matzevot, they have the opportunity to discover local Jewish people, sometimes famous, sometimes just ordinary inhabitants. Working in a cemetery broadens the minds of these young people and gives them a completely different, more multicultural perspective."[28]

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27 The Statement of Eliyana Adler on Utilizing Jewish Cemeteries, 4 July 2022.

28 Katarzyna Suszkiewicz, "Report about the AntySchematy Foundation 2" of 2 September 2022. The author of the report interviewed Katarzyna Suszkiewicz on 26 July 2022 and 4 September 2022.

Suszkiewicz and Tomasz Malec, the Foundation President, have conducted Jewish cemetery inventory projects in Tarnów, Ryglice and Radomyśl Wielki with the assistance of high school students and students of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Suszkiewicz believes that teamwork between high school and university students has been an important aspect of the Foundation's approach based on peer-to-peer learning and teaching. During the first stage of these projects, school students clean the matzevot in the cemeteries, and then, with the assistance of university students and academic experts, decipher the inscriptions. In the second stage, high school and university students work together on preparing inventories of the matzevots.

In the case of the Tarnów project, the Foundation created an inventory of half of the Jewish cemetery. It also published a book on the research and created three catalogues of matzevot that can be used by researchers and descendants of former Jewish residents. All activities were carried out in consultation with the Provincial Office for the Protection of Monuments and the Orthodox Jewish Community in Kraków (the owner of the cemetery).[29]

In the case of the project in Ryglice, entitled 'Save from Oblivion', the Foundation succeeded in cleaning the whole cemetery; creating an inventory of about 300 tombstones; preparing a list of people buried in the cemetery; and producing a publication with inscriptions from the tombstones.

Students from the High School of Economics and Horticulture in Tarnów took part in the cleaning and creation of the inventory, while the workshops were attended by participants from the Primary School in Ryglice. Students and graduates of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University compiled the collected material and Dr hab. Leszek Hońdo from the University supervised the preparation of the publication. Project partners included the City Hall in Ryglice, and it was funded by the National Heritage Board of Poland as part of the Together for Heritage programme.

In the case of the Radomyśl Wielki project called 'In search of traces of the Jewish past', the Foundation ran a 5-day volunteer camp. Students from Tarnów cleaned up part of the local Jewish cemetery and prepared an inventory of 50 matzevot. They also created a database and map of the cemetery, and photographic documentation of the tombstones. The Foundation also carried out two educational workshops on matzevot symbolism and genealogy at the Primary School of John Paul II.

According to Suszkiewicz: "The project will increase knowledge about the Jewish community in Radomyśl Wielki and constitutes a base for further scientific and genealogical research. The dissemination of this information relating to local heritage among the inhabitants of Radomyśl Wielki – especially local school students – is of immeasurable importance."[30]

Suszkiewicz acknowledged the importance of establishing a good partnership with the headmasters of the schools in Radomyśl Wielki and the enthusiasm and dedication of one of the teachers in particular, Maria Przybyszewska. The interest and passion of individual teachers are key factors behind educational activities in the space of Jewish cemeteries in all seven countries under this analysis.

A rich sample of examples of educational activities by teachers and their students in Jewish cemeteries across the seven pilot countries can be found in the Catalogue of Best Practice for Jewish Cemetery Preservation published by ESJF in 2021.[31]

29 For the outcomes see: Photos: http://tarnowskiemacewy.antyschematy2.com/galeria/
2016 video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLWhTrw1itg
2017 video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjKMVS0IIwk

30 Ibid., See also https://antyschematy2.com/category/miejsca/radomysl-wielki/

31 Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations* 26 (1989), 8.

1.5 COMMON THEMES

The cemeteries (and synagogues) in their various states of ruination, restoration or reutilisation in the seven countries have become what Pierre Nora termed *lieux de mémoire*, places where memory crystallises and expresses itself.[32] *Lieux de mémoire* are symbolic as well as functional.[33] They link communities to seminal moments in the local, regional, national and international past, and provide occasions for celebrating and commemorating them. They serve to stimulate reflection on a past in many instances publicly forgotten, neglected, misused and misappropriated for generations. They also serve to stimulate reflection on current acts of vandalism and antisemitism violating these cemeteries. Therefore, Jewish cemeteries could serve as an essential resource in global citizenship education, multicultural education, peace education and education against antisemitism and racism.

This report confirms that there is a growing consensus among an enthusiastic group of educators that Jewish cemeteries can and should be used in teaching about the pre-1939 rich Jewish social and cultural history, and Jewish spiritual and material heritage. Throughout the region, the Jewish cemeteries (and the restored or neglected synagogues) are often the only remaining physical proof that Jews were once an integral part of the social, cultural, political and economic fabric of society.

Šiauliai, Lithuania

32 Ibid., See also https://antyschematy2.com/category/miejsca/radomysl-wielki/

33 Nora, "Between Memory and History," 19.

Cemeteries are a crucial source of local history. "What is important in education about Jewish heritage is its integrity with the other elements of teaching, and integrity with local culture. Teaching about Jewish history and heritage as the history and heritage of co-citizens, co-inhabitants, and not 'the other' – incorporating Jewish history into general history classes, teaching Jewish literature within national/general literature.

Education about Jewish heritage should be taught based on local examples which will be more relevant and inspiring for the youth. It also creates an emotional relationship between the students and their local history; it is less abstract and more approachable. It also enables teaching not of anonymous facts but more of individual stories; personal accounts of local inhabitants of Jewish origin."[34]

At present, teachers lack pedagogical and methodological resources in their native languages to develop programmes on the Jewish past. The incorporation of Jewish cemeteries into local history needs to be backed up by regular training and educational exchanges in the form of regional and international workshops, and the provision of pedagogical and methodological resources.

Most educators agree that Jewish cemeteries can play an important role specifically in Holocaust education, especially in countries such as Ukraine, Moldova and Lithuania where the 'Holocaust by Bullets' took place – where mass killings were conducted often in or near Jewish cemeteries. Only a few teachers and scholars expressed reservations:

"This would reduce these cemeteries and their meaning to the Holocaust which is misguided. We cannot and should not reduce Judaism in Moldova and elsewhere to the Holocaust."[35]

"In my opinion, the Jewish cemetery shouldn't be the only place that high school students learn about the history of the Jewish community. It could potentially limit students' perceptions of the Jewish community to the Holocaust and the destruction of the community."[36]

Other scholars and teachers recognise a great potential in incorporating Jewish cemeteries into teaching about the Holocaust, especially in relation to the social history of the Holocaust, namely topics such as Jewish agency in rescue, strategies of survival, and different forms of help and self-help. Some teachers in Poland and Ukraine already teach about Jewish cemeteries as being sites of perpetration, as well as being sites of rescue and the hiding of Jewish fugitives.

However, in Georgia, teachers hardly have any educational resources in the native language to teach about East European Jewish refugees who fled to Georgia during the Holocaust. Such resources would enrich the curriculum of the History of the Second World War and Georgian History courses, as the students could relate to and research the Jewish escape routes and local assistance to Jewish refugees, and their temporary life in Georgia.

In Hungary, because most Hungarian Jews were murdered outside their country, Jewish cemeteries would not be considered appropriate places for teaching about the Holocaust.

Most teachers of History, Literature, Civic Studies/Ethics and Geography stress the urgent need for teacher training. They recognise that textbooks and pedagogical methods are bound together and define the outcome of learning. Participation in training is currently based on the individual initiative of those interested, and not on a structural effort of state institutions offering such training for all. This results in the development of a relatively small group of highly motivated, well-trained and enthusiastic teachers who, unfortunately, do not represent the wider population of teachers.

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34 Prof. Edyta Gawron, Institute of Jewish Studies, Jagiellonian University, Interview with the author of the report on 9 November 2022.

35 I am grateful to the Swiss historian and diplomat, Simon Geissbühler for sharing his thoughts on the subject, email correspondence of 17 November 2022.

36 Interview of 5 November of 2022 with Dr Marta Duch-Dyngosz, a Memory Studies scholar based at the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin.

Warsaw, Poland

Rîșcova, Moldova

Some historians teaching at university level have expressed the wish to include Jewish cemeteries as part of Local History and Jewish History courses for their students who are all prospective history teachers. International Jewish NGOs and local NGOs have played a groundbreaking role in empowering teachers with knowledge and a variety of pedagogical and methodological skills and resources to deliver lessons about Jewish history, heritage and the Holocaust both in and outside the classroom.

The following reflection by Prof. Edyta Gawron about the salient role of NGOs in high school education in Poland also applies to Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Slovakia and Ukraine. Poland seems to have the highest number of experienced NGOs and grassroots projects engaged in education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, with some NGOs providing training for teachers in Ukraine.

"Since the late 1990s, the most significant teacher training has been done by the NGOs – organizations and institutions that have continually improved and widened their educational offer. Foreign institutions have shared their knowledge on how to teach, and also on what kind of materials can be used to educate about Jewish history, Jewish heritage and Holocaust." [37]

Galicja Jewish Museum, Kraków, Poland

37 Interview with Prof. Edyta Gawron of Jewish Studies Department at Jagiellonian University, on 9 November 2022.

With regards specifically to Holocaust education, some local NGOs and grassroots activists in Poland have succeeded in forging close partnerships with international Holocaust educational organisations and have adopted creative global commemorative projects with the participation of local primary and high schools. For example, Inga Marczyńska from the Forum for Dialogue has introduced the Crocus Project /*Krokus projekt* commemorating one and a half million Jewish children and all child victims of the Holocaust in Primary School no. 12 and the Municipal School Complex No. 3. in Jasło in southern Poland. This educational activity is possible thanks to a partnership with the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków and the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland.

"As part of this project, we talk with kids about the fate of Jewish neighbors during the Shoah. I take pupils for Jewish heritage walks, and also conduct educational classes at the Jewish cemetery in Jasło. This year, we want to direct our remembrance activities to the Jewish community in Ukraine so that, in a country engulfed by war and aggression by Russia, the Jewish community knows that we are with them; we remember them and care. I would like to thank the students and my friend, teacher, Ms Ilona Dranka, for another year of joint efforts to restore the memory of Jewish neighbours and victims of the Holocaust." [38]

Marczyńska's project can have a long-lasting impact on the students at both intellectual and empathic levels, although no studies have as yet been conducted to establish this. But what is evident is that other countries, especially Lithuania, Moldova and Ukraine, could also benefit from such international educational initiatives.

In all seven countries, Jewish cemeteries have the potential to serve various educational aims. They can be a place to teach about and witness Jewish heritage. They can also be used as a location where students can get actively involved in preserving historic heritage; by cleaning the cemetery, creating documentation, and conducting research on the people buried there. However, as one of the leading educators from Hungary argues, not all educational programmes are effective and pedagogically sound. "A Hungarian government sponsored programme about cleaning cemeteries is not built on strong methodologies, but rather on simplistic ideas that if students are forced to go and clean the Jewish cemetery, they would become less antisemitic."[39]

On the other hand, specialised educational programmes led by experienced NGOs are generally pedagogically effective and of great benefit to both teachers and students.

Regarding educational outcomes, this report confirms the findings of the comprehensive IHRA study "Research in Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust",[40] which highlighted the lack of a set of precisely formulated educational goals and, subsequently, no evaluation as to whether the goals had been achieved.

The use of a Jewish cemetery in education often begins at the time of its renovation. Cemeteries that are renovated and properly maintained attract attention. Thus, there is a direct correlation between the level of preservation of a Jewish cemetery and the development of educational programmes. Many cemeteries in disrepair cannot be used in education because of their poor physical condition and related safety issues. At the same time, totally destroyed cemeteries can serve to stimulate reflection on the void left behind by the murdered Jewish communities. The space of a non-existent Jewish cemetery can be incorporated into education as a commemorative place – an educational practice that has been reported by teachers from Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine.

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38 Inga M Marczyńska, Statement from facebook: https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/crocusproject
I would also like to thank Inga M. Marczyńska for granting me an interview on 5 August 2022 and sharing with me her experiences in non-formal education.

39 Interview with Z.Z on 29 November 2022.

40 Monique Eckmann, Doyle Stevick and Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs eds., *Research in Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust. A Dialogue Beyond Borders* (Berlin, Metropol, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, 2017) http://holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/research_in_teaching_and_learning_about_the_holocaust_web.pdf.

1.6 SPECIFIC ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

1. Access to cemeteries

Interviewees in all seven countries have agreed that utilising Jewish cemeteries in education is not always possible and depends on a variety of factors. Teachers in Hungary have reported that Jewish cemeteries in the care of Jewish communities are regularly closed because the caretakers are afraid of antisemitic acts by supporters of the radical Jobbik political party.[41] Therefore, access is an issue. Similar situations of fear of vandalism and antisemitic acts have been reported in Lithuania, Moldova and Ukraine, and to a lesser degree in Slovakia and Poland.

In Poland and Slovakia, some municipalities or NGOs assist with the financial cost of school trips to a Jewish cemetery (or synagogue or museum of Jewish interest). In Lithuania, the cost of travel to a Jewish cemetery can be high. Municipalities provide a special Free Pass for educational activities outside of schools, but the Free Pass can be used only once a year. Therefore teachers sometimes have to ask their students' parents to contribute financially to such trips. In Georgia, depending on the location, it can be difficult to reach a remote Jewish cemetery.

In Slovakian and Polish towns where the renovated Jewish cemetery is in the vicinity of a school, the school sometimes "adopts" it. What that means is that students in different year groups have regular opportunities to learn specific topics at the cemetery. This is one of the best educational practices encouraging active peer-to-peer learning.

2. Curriculum and textbook content and incorporation of Jewish cemeteries in high school education

In all seven countries, History textbooks and other educational resources issued by government institutions contain rather limited information on pre-1939 Jewish history and heritage, and the Holocaust.[42] For example, in the case of the Holocaust in Polish textbooks, the subject takes up only 0.8 to 2.8 per cent of the content of 20th century History textbooks.[43] However, History teachers do not only face the lack of textbooks and other educational resources in native languages, they also have to struggle to make time for lessons on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust given the extensive History curriculum. What this means in practice is that teachers are required to cover a multitude of topics starting with Ancient Greek History and ending on aspects of global and national histories of the twentieth century. Pre-1939 Jewish heritage and the Holocaust are just one of many topics to cover, with a glaringly insufficient number of hours allocated within the curriculum. Many teachers from Ukraine report that most lessons on Jewish-related topics are taught as optional subjects and extra-curricular activities. Without these two options, they would not be able to address the topics at all in their teaching. A similar situation with delivering a demanding curriculum applies to other subjects such as Literature and Native Languages, Civic Studies/Ethics and Geography. Under such circumstances, it is challenging to design lessons at

41 On the radical right-wing movement in Hungary, see Péter Balogh, "Spatial Identity Politics and the right in Hungary," in *The Many Faces of the Far Right in the Post-communist Space. A Comparative Study of Far-right movements and Identity in the Region*, (Stockholm, CBEES State of the Region Report, 2021), 100-105.

42 For example, on the problems in Romanian textbooks, see, Ana Bărbulescu, "Discovering the Holocaust in our past: competing memories in post-communist Romanian textbooks," *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2015, 139-156.

43 This estimate is made by Robert Szuchta, a secondary History teacher and independent scholar, in Robert Szuchta, "*Zagłada Żydów jako temat nauczania w systemie formalnej edukacji historycznej*", in Katarzyna Liszka ed., *Wiedza (nie)umiejscowiona. Jak uczyć o Zagładzie w Polsce w XXI wieku?*, (Kraków, Wydawnictwo Universitas, Kraków 2020), 17-54. Hereafter, Szuchta, "*Zagłada Żydów jako temat nauczania w systemie formalnej edukacji historycznej*".

Jewish cemeteries with specific educational goals in mind. Instead, such visits are rare, limited to one a year or less.

Interestingly, except for Georgia where educational materials are comparatively rare, in the six other countries, educators and scholars have raised reservations about the lack of Holocaust content in the curriculum and the government's approved textbooks, especially in relation to the national history of the Second World War.

Scholars and pedagogues have recognised that the spread of Holocaust education around the world "entails a re-examination of curriculum, of the social and political processes that inform it, and the policies, teacher training, and general instruction that support and give expression to it."[44] The Holocaust's complexities in the national context in post-communist Europe are deeply connected to the difficult, painful histories of the respective nations. Therefore, they require to be implemented within the curriculum in a nuanced way, while addressing national and local collaboration. The Holocaust's complexities also include the topic of the rescue of Jewish fugitives. The moral vision of Holocaust survivors and the impartial expertise of leading critical scholars should play a central role in the preparation of the curriculum, and the textbooks and other resources used in the classroom.[45] Lessons about the difficult past in the space of a Jewish cemetery, or a mass grave, especially in countries with a record of political collaboration with the Nazi state such as Romania (Moldova), Ukraine and Lithuania, should provide an important educational opportunity to break down schematic and skewed versions of the Holocaust past. They should dispel false narratives of victimhood and heroism in national histories. Similar lessons could also be conducted in cemeteries in Poland where individual and group killings of Jewish fugitives have been revealed to have taken place in Jewish cemeteries.

In addition, lessons in a cemetery vandalised during and after the Holocaust could offer a great opportunity to address the difficult topics of the suppression and erasement of the Jewish past in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Addressing these topics at a Jewish cemetery from a local history perspective would sharpen the tangibility of the Jewish past. It might stimulate and increase the empathic side of the learning process. Further research is needed on this.

However, across the seven countries, educational resources to address these points are not incorporated into textbooks nor curricula. Yet these difficult historical topics are central to the fundamental expectation that teaching about the Holocaust can transform attitudes and impact the future behaviour of young people. This challenging history is recognised as pivotal to democratic citizenship education and education to combat antisemitism.[46] Most of the interviewed educators are committed to addressing these topics. Moreover, teachers find it morally and intellectually disturbing that these aspects are absent from the curriculum.

To address this difficult history, teachers use nuanced extra-curricular resources provided by foreign Jewish and local NGOs, as well as the latest scholarly literature. However, some teachers are concerned that they are not competent enough to teach about these challenging subjects

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44 Mmantsetsa Marope, Director, UNESCO International Bureau of Education, "Preface," in Zehavit Gross and E. Doyle Stevick, eds., *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*, (New York, London, Springer, UNESCO and International Bureau of Education, 2015), VIII. Hereafter, Gross and Stevick, *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*.

45 E. Doyle Stevick and Zehavit Gross, "Holocaust Education in the 21st Century: Curriculum, Policy and Practice," in: Gross and Stevick, eds., *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice* 7–8; see also in Polish a collection of essays on teaching about the Holocaust and addressing difficult history in Poland, Katarzyna Liszka (ed.), *Wiedza (nie)umiejscowiona*, (Cracow, Universitas, 2021).

46 On this subject, see Thomas Misco, "Holocaust History, Memory and Citizenship Education: the Case of Latvia," in Gross and Stevick, eds., *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*, 337–357.

without prior training. Some teachers reflect that they only know the topics at a superficial level, or have no familiarity with them despite going through formal teacher training.

Characteristically, most interviewed teachers have acquired competence through their own efforts; through being passionately interested in the subject and being proactive in applying for special training in Holocaust and Jewish heritage education. In all seven countries, educators stress that they have benefited greatly from teacher training organised by Centropa, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Memorial de la Shoah in Paris, the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, and the Wannsee Museum in Berlin, as well as local NGOs in their respective countries. A cohort of teachers who have attended training abroad on a frequent basis feel the most empowered – they are familiar with the latest resources and teaching methods. It seems that teachers from Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine have more opportunities to attend overseas training than teachers from Moldova and Georgia, but this needs to be investigated further.

Of course, more extensive training in Jewish heritage and the Holocaust requires additional financial support from state educational institutions and local municipalities. At present, in many cases the teachers have to pay for such training from their own pockets, or through a third party such as a NGO or through a grant from an international training organisation. Schools do not financially support in-service teacher training. Teachers can usually apply for short course training once a year, although in some reported cases this is less frequent – between 2 to 5 years. However, some teachers choose to enrol in online short courses throughout the academic year.

3. The impact of political climate on education

Ethno-nationalist government policies and practices in countries such Poland and Hungary that tend to view Jews as neither co-citizens nor co-inhabitants but as "others", constitute an interrelated issue undermining teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. One of the leading educators in Hungary summarises the post-2010 changes in the following way:

"There has been very little taught about that period [pre-1939 and the Holocaust]. Up until 2010, teaching was conducted in a more and more restricted way, but schools enjoyed autonomy in teaching about this period. Since it was not covered in teacher training colleges, there was greater flexibility. The education system became more centralized after 2010. The 2012 national curriculum was prepared and a group representing the Jewish community along with education experts held regular meetings with the Education Research and Development Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – then responsible for the curriculum. (The institute has been closed down since then). As a result, some content got into the curriculum on the pre-1939 period. Of course, as pre-1939 Jewish heritage and the Holocaust do not constitute part of pre-service teacher training, teachers are unprepared, so very little has changed. The 2020 change in the national curriculum (history) did not touch these subjects and the whole approach is anyway very nationalistic. Also, the curriculum is so packed that it is impossible to cover everything, so Jewish-related topics are easy victims."[47]

4. Attitudes of school administration and school heads

In countries with a highly centralised educational system, such as Hungary, Lithuania and Moldova, teachers point out that school directors are also a significant factor in developing, or not developing, Jewish heritage and Holocaust education. What is being reported is the fact that, in a specific political climate, some headteachers are not favourably disposed to teaching these subjects. Ideological reasons or fear of political pressure may be the cause, and this requires further research.

47 Interview with Z.Z. of 29 November 2022.

Some headteachers also object to participation in external training courses because they view them as purely an opportunity for the teacher to "have fun and rest". One such case was reported by a teacher from Moldova.

No doubt, the attitude of school directors has a direct impact on mission, curricula and teacher training opportunities that schools adopt.

1.7 CONCLUSIONS: "EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON AN INDIVIDUAL TEACHER"

The key conclusion of this report is that, regardless of the educational structures and broader political and cultural forces, education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust chiefly depends on a cohort of enthusiastic individual teachers in each of the seven countries. At present, these teachers could be called activists engaged in "social change" promoting democracy, pluralism and tolerance towards ethnic and cultural minorities. They are engaged in education that strengthens civil society. By choosing Jewish heritage and the Holocaust as subjects from the "over-filled with subjects" curricula, they are addressing topics that are not necessarily popular among school administrations and their colleagues. These teachers are aware that they constitute a small minority within their profession.

Looking at the availability of in-service teacher training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in all seven countries, this report reaches the conclusion that international Jewish NGOs such as Centropa and ESJF, along with local NGOs, are the only bodies promoting the implementation of teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust within the framework of learning about democracy, opposing antisemitism, racism and xenophobia and strengthening civil society. It is thanks to their training workshops and seminars that teachers have emerged capable of presenting Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the classroom. Teachers want more regular programmes run by these NGOs.

Most teachers agree that existing curricular frameworks provide very little space for Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, and therefore they "struggle" to introduce the topics. They unanimously agree that there should be more hours allocated. Most teachers also support the idea of teaching Jewish heritage and the Holocaust across different subject areas such as History, Literature, Geography, Civics/Philosophy, Arts, Sociology and Ethics. However, at present, the topics are usually taught in History, Literature and Civic Studies, and less frequently in Arts, Geography and Sociology.

Most teachers are also enthusiastic about the incorporation of Jewish cemeteries into their teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. They recognise that the space of the Jewish cemetery constitutes a rich and effective educational resource for teaching about Jewish history, Jewish society, Jewish culture and Judaism, as well as about the Holocaust, memorialisation of Holocaust victims, and antisemitism. Some teachers have conducted lessons in the local Jewish cemetery that enable students to make meaningful connections between Jewish religious and cultural life, and between different burial traditions (Christian and Jewish).

Teachers also agree that educating at Jewish cemeteries can offer students powerful empathic lessons about individual members of the Jewish community, local Jewish history, and connections with non-Jewish members of the local community. They generally engage their students in cleaning the tombstones, reading Hebrew inscriptions, and learning about individuals buried in the cemetery. However, overall, only a small minority of teachers use the Jewish cemetery in this way as expressed by A. B. (Literature teacher from Lithuania):

"There are some individuals at a few schools who constantly do that and find various ways to connect Jewish heritage, culture and the local Jewish cemetery. In most cases, the answer is none."

Most teachers agree that a Jewish cemetery is a powerful educational resource, but so far only a few have incorporated the local Jewish cemetery into Holocaust lessons, chiefly about perpetration, namely the mass killings of Jews in or close to the Jewish cemetery. Teachers do not possess appropriate pedagogical and methodological resources to teach about the social history of the Holocaust; topics such as the Jewish cemetery as a site of escape from persecution; a place of smuggling goods; and a place of concealment and hiding of Jewish fugitives including children. Only some teachers incorporate the Jewish cemetery as a tool in teaching about empathic memorialisation of Jewish victims, as well as in raising awareness about the devastating impact of antisemitism and violence on Jewish communities, and relationships between Jews and non-Jews in the past and present. Some teachers, on their own initiative, do introduce their students to national and international commemorative Holocaust events.

Overall, in all seven countries, the incorporation of Jewish cemeteries in teaching about the pre-1939 Jewish heritage seems slightly more advanced than the utilisation of Jewish cemeteries in teaching about the Holocaust. One of the key factors behind this situation is that teaching about the social aspects of the Holocaust represents a difficult and painful past, especially in Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. Hence in the 2010s, there has been growing resistance in these countries on the part of right-wing governments towards addressing the Holocaust in the history curriculum, and indeed in public debates and consciousness. The governments of Poland and Hungary actively oppose education on the difficult past in relation to the treatment of Jewish communities, and define such education as the "pedagogy of shame".[48] As a consequence, it is almost completely absent from current textbooks. In the case of Hungary, teaching about the Holocaust in Jewish cemeteries might anyway not be historically appropriate given the nature of the physical destruction of the Hungarian Jews with most murdered outside the country. In the case of post-Soviet Georgia, teachers have almost no resources in the native language to teach about Holocaust history concerning East European Jewish refugees buried in the local cemeteries.

Teachers from all seven countries have expressed the need for more financial and methodological resources in native languages to support their teaching on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. They also need more support in terms of pre-service and in-service training. Teachers do not receive financial support from the Ministries of Education, teacher Associations nor school administrations. They have to be proactive in terms of finding information about training opportunities and applying for grants. They value greatly in-service training provided by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel embassies in their own countries, international Jewish and local NGOs.

1.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

1 High school education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust should be properly integrated with other subjects of the school curriculum, such as History, Languages and Literature, Civic Studies, Geography and the Arts. Teaching about Jewish history, Jewish heritage and the Holocaust should be conducted as the history and heritage of co-inhabitants according to the framework of global democratic citizenship education and education against antisemitism. The persistent assumption in textbooks and curricula that Jewish history and Jewish heritage and the Holocaust concerns histories of "the other" and are not connected to national histories, is prejudicial and stands against the norms of global democratic citizenship education.

48 On pedagogy of shame see, for example, Jakub Majmurek, *Pedagogika wstydu, której nigdy nie było [Pedagogy of shame that never existed]*. Oko.press, 6 August 2016 (https://oko.press/pedagogika-wstydu-ktorej-nigdy-bylo/); and Joanna Beata Michlic, "Poland. History "Wars" and the Battle for Truth and National Memory"in Ninna Mörner, ed., *CBEES 2020 State of the Region Report Constructions and Instrumentalizations of the Past. A Comparative Study on Memory Management in the Region*, (Stockholm, CBEES/Elanders, January 2021), 115-138.

2 Education on Jewish heritage should be taught based within the framework of local history, which is more important and inspiring for students. Approaching Jewish heritage in the space of a local Jewish cemetery should create an empathic emotional relationship between the students and their local history. A local history approach means the teaching is not about abstract and anonymous facts, but more about individual moving stories and personal accounts.

3 The incorporation of the Jewish cemetery into education about Jewish heritage should be rooted in an educational concept defining the Jewish cemetery as offering active learning that includes involvement in preservation. The Jewish cemetery should not only be a space to witness and teach Jewish heritage, but where students get involved in cleaning the cemetery, making documentation about it, and conducting research on tombstones and the people buried in the cemetery.

4 The incorporation of Jewish cemeteries into high school curricula on a broader level requires continuous training, and regular exchanges among teachers and educators from the informal educational sector. Teachers and educators from the seven countries should be regularly meeting in regional, national and international seminars, workshops and conferences under the auspices of international Jewish NGOs and the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO), among others. The key aim of these meetings should be to train the participants in the latest pedagogical and methodological approaches. Teachers should be provided with resources in native languages on teaching about Jewish material heritage, Jewish history and the Holocaust which also contain detailed guidance materials adapted to the specific age of students. Such training events should also address how to handle the "difficult history" i.e. attitudes and practices towards the Jewish minority on the part of the majority ethnic nation which is one of the most neglected, and most necessary, aspects of the history of Jewish heritage and the Holocaust across the region. This will also directly relate to issues of human rights, democratic values, citizenship and pluralism.

5 Specific pedagogical resources should be developed to assist teachers in implementing Jewish heritage and Holocaust education in Jewish cemeteries. Students should have the opportunity to investigate the history, symbolism and social and cultural significance of the Jewish cemetery through different learning methods such archival research, oral history interviews with local inhabitants and members of existing Jewish communities. Peer-to-peer educational activities is another important tool with high school students learning with primary school students, as well as with undergraduate and graduate university students. Students learn by creating mobile exhibitions, short film documentaries, history booklets and artistic representations.[49] Teachers should be equipped in pedagogical and methodological material supporting such innovative learning, as well as provided with the financial resources to achieve specific learning outcomes.

6 At present, participation in in-service teacher training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust is based on the individual initiative of those interested, and not as part of a structural effort by state institutions offering such training for all. Therefore, it is recommended to expand the

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49 Memory Walks is one of the most successful innovative educational methods introduced to study contested histories in the twentieth century through monuments. The method teaches critical reflection on remembrance and was developed by Laura Borhout, Barry van Driel and Aaron Peterer from the Anne Frank House. This method could be adopted to be implemented on Jewish cemeteries. On Memory Walks, see Borbála Klacsmann, "Memory Walk: History Through Monuments," in Andrea Petö and Helga Thorson, eds., *The Future of Holocaust Memorialization: Confronting Racism, Antisemitism, and Homophobia through Memory Work*, (Budapest, Tom Lantos Institute, 2015), 100-103.

pool of highly motivated and well-trained teachers by the state offering a routine of in-service training programmes on the Jewish narrative in their countries across all relevant subjects in the curricula ranging from History, Literature, Civic Studies/Civics, to the Arts, Geography, and Philosophy.

7 In all seven countries, trainee teachers should have the opportunity to study Jewish heritage and the Holocaust during their university years in their disciplines e.g. History, Literature, the Arts or Civics. A widely available pre-service training would lead to the expansion of the pool of interested and committed teachers.

8 Since the late 1990s, in-service training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust has been largely carried out by foreign Jewish NGOs and local NGOs committed to improving and widening their educational offer. High school teachers should be morally and financially supported by their school administrations in applying for in-service training offered by these NGOs. Such training should be offered on a regular basis, at least once a year.

9 Jewish organisations and governmental institutions responsible for maintaining Jewish cemeteries should cooperate with schools and teachers interested in conducting lessons in Jewish cemeteries. A good working relationship between those working on the preservation of Jewish cemeteries and individual schools is pivotal to successful Jewish heritage education and indeed future preservation.

PART 2

INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY REPORTS

2.1 GEORGIA

2.1 GEORGIA

Georgia has a unique Jewish history reflected in the relations between its non-Jewish and Jewish communities in the pre-modern period. The Georgian Jewish community is known as one of the oldest and most distinguished Jewish communities in the world with a history going back 2,600 years. According to some sources, the first Georgian Jews, known as Gurijm or Kartveli Ebraelebi, arrived in the southern part of Georgia after fleeing the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 586 BCE.[50] According to others, the first Jews arrived in Western Georgia from the Byzantine Empire in the 6th century CE. Georgian Jews settled in the ancient city and former capital, Mtskheta, one of the three Georgian cultural sites listed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. Georgian Jews also settled in the ancient city of Kutaisi that, like Mtskheta, was a former capital. Kutaisi served as the capital of the United Kingdom of Georgia from 1008 CE to 1122 CE and as the capital of the Imeretian Kingdom from the 15th century until 1810 CE. Mtskheta is most widely known as the capital of the early Georgian Kingdom of Iberia and the place where Georgia adopted Christianity in 326 CE. Georgian Jews developed a unique culture and traditions, including their own language known as Judaeo-Georgian. During the medieval period, Georgia was conquered by the Arabs and divided into three different kingdoms and five feudal territories by the end of the 15th century CE.

Ashkenazi Jews began to emigrate to Georgia in the 19th century in the aftermath of Tsarist Russia's annexation of the Eastern territories of Georgia in 1801 and Tsarist Russia's participation in the three partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1772, 1792, 1795). The latter was then home to the largest Jewish community in the world and, by conquering the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Tsarist Russia acquired its Jews. Until Russia's annexation of Georgia, antisemitic traditions were absent in the native Georgian population. However, in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Georgian Jews were exposed to latent antisemitism and waves of violent antisemitic riots that had its roots in Russian/Soviet ideological, cultural and economic anti-Jewish traditions.

The first Ashkenazi Jews mostly settled in Tbilisi around 1810. In the second part of the nineteenth century, links between Georgian Jews and East European Ashkenazi Jews developed thanks to transnational travel and political, cultural and economic influence. Zionism was a major political project that brought the Georgian Jewish and Ashkenazi communities together. In 2019, the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw launched an educational project to examine real and "mythical connections between Georgian and Polish Jews."[51] According to a Georgian legend, a rabbi from the Georgian town of Oni studied in Warsaw in the second half of the nineteenth century and was inspired by the beauty and architectural style of the Great Synagogue at Tłomackie Street, designed by an Italian architect Leandro Marconi and built between 1875 and 1878. The Great Synagogue at Tłomackie Street was known as the most spectacular architectural project of a wealthy and acculturated Warsaw Jewish community. Upon completion of his studies, the Georgian rabbi went back to his country and created an eclectic synagogue in the style of Warsaw's Great Synagogue. The synagogue was built in Oni city in the spectacular Georgian mountains. Today, it is known as the third largest Georgian synagogue after the Tbilisi and Kutaisi synagogues.

On 26 May 1918, Georgia proclaimed independence, but the Soviets quashed Georgian freedom in 1921. Like in other parts of the Soviet Union, Jews in Georgia suffered from political repression and limited cultural freedoms in the 1920s and 1930s.

During the Second World War, many Georgian Jews fought in the Soviet Army and Georgia became a temporary home for many East Central European Jewish refugees, especially from

50 On the origins of Georgian Jews, see for example, Constantine B. Lerner, *The Wellspring of Georgian Historiography: The Early Medieval Historical Chronicle, The Conversion of K'art'li and The Life of St. Nino*, (England: Bennett and Bloom, London, 2004), p. 60.

51 See a short report, "The project, Synagogue in Oni (Georgia) – traces of Polish and Georgian heritage in Israel", ZIH, December 2019, https://www.jhi.pl/en/articles/the-project-synagogue-in-oni-georgia-traces-of-polish-and-georgian-heritage-in-israel, 546

Poland, who fled Nazi persecution to the Soviet Union or found themselves under Soviet occupation (September 1939 – June 1941) and were evacuated to Georgia by the Soviet authorities. Some of the East European Jewish refugees and evacuees who were sick or elderly were buried in various Jewish cemeteries in Georgia, so their tombs tell the history of their origins and trajectories during WWII. They can serve as a rich educational resource to teach about social and cultural aspects of the transnational history of Jewish refugees in the depths of the Soviet Union during the Holocaust.[52]

After the end of the Second World War, Georgian Jews like other Jews in the Soviet Union experienced persecution, suppression of cultural traditions, and mass arrests during Stalin's rule. Mass emigration of Georgian Jews began in the 1970s when 30,000 Jews left for Israel and Western countries. As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia regained its independence in 1991. However, since regaining its independence, the country has been marred by internal ethnic conflicts and ongoing military and political conflicts with neighbouring Russia. In the Georgian Civil War of 1991–1993, Georgia lost the territories of Ossetia and Abkhazia that proclaimed themselves as independent Republics backed by Russia. Several Jewish heritage sites, including synagogues and cemeteries, were destroyed and vandalised during the 1990s. Given the political instability, mass emigration of Georgian Jews to Israel, Russia, Belgium and the United States continued in the 1990s.

On 31 January 2001, the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Jewish community of Georgia signed an agreement aimed at mutual respect and partnership for democracy, peace and stability. During the early 2000s, local Georgian Jewish communities also began to embark on the preservation of old Jewish cemeteries in Tbilisi and a Jewish cemetery in Navtlugi. However, only a small minority of local non-Jewish Georgians have been involved in the preservation of Jewish synagogues and cemeteries, and the vandalisation of Jewish cemeteries continued, especially during the outbreak of military and political conflict with Russia in the late 2000s. Unlike the other countries in this analysis, Georgia is not a member nor an observer of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

Today, the country takes pride in the approximately 23 Jewish heritage sites based in the capital Tbilisi and cities such as Kutaisi, Mtskheta and Oni. However, the Jewish community is now very small. In 2018, the estimated Jewish population in Georgia was 1,600 individuals in a total population of approximately 3,700,000.[53] Consequently, synagogues and Jewish cemeteries have suffered greatly from severe neglect. Today, young Jewish heritage activists and enthusiasts such as Arianne Swieca and students representing the Hillel Georgia group are the key actors engaged in the preservation, cleaning and maintenance of the Jewish cemeteries scattered in different parts of the country.[54] Their work is possible thanks to financial and moral support from the Israel embassy in Tbilisi.

High school and university teachers, and members of Jewish organisations such as Hillel and the tiny local Jewish communities, emphasise that high school education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in Georgia is in its inception and therefore undeveloped. International Jewish tourism to Georgia is also undeveloped in all its aspects including infrastructure and promotion. Y.O. (Historian teaching the Holocaust at undergraduate university level) observes that under-

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52 On the Jewish survival in the Soviet Union during the Holocaust, see Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick, Atina Grossmann, eds. *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2017) and Eliyana R. Adler, *Survival on the Margins Polish Jewish Refugees in the Wartime Soviet Union* (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 2020)

53 On the history of Georgian Jews from the premodern period to the end of the communist era, see the article by Gershon Ben-Oren, "The History of the Jews of Georgia until the Communist Regime", available online at https://dbs.anumuseum.org.il/skn/en/c6/e162313/Place/Georgia

54 For the activities of such individuals, see the report on Georgia by Teona Dalakishvili in the *Catalogue of Good Practice*, 76, 77.

graduate students taking her Holocaust course possess little to no knowledge about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. As a result, at the beginning of the course, she introduces basic facts from modern Jewish history prior to teaching different aspects of the Holocaust in a broad socio-cultural context. As an individual who feels passionate about Jewish heritage and history, she believes that:

"Georgian high schools have not enough hours in their curriculum to teach about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. Therefore, I am happy that at least at my university we can fill this gap. I do not think that high schools receive ANY [stressed by the author of the statement] financial support from the Ministry of Education or local governments. Only special university programmes allow teachers to have proper teacher training... I co-operate with local NGOs, the Israel Embassy, Jewish visitors from abroad and the local Jewish community."

Y.O. recognises the importance of incorporating the material Jewish heritage into teaching about Jewish heritage at high school and university levels and lists various learning possibilities utilising Jewish cemeteries. This includes the special feature in the wartime history of East European/ Polish Jewish refugees and evacuees arriving in Georgia.

"It is always important to utilize as much physical heritage as possible. [At the Jewish cemeteries] the students can analyze the matzevot, read the inscriptions and study their meanings. They can analyze the social structure of the Jewish community, its origins and significant figures. The space of the Jewish cemetery can help in Holocaust education, however in Georgia the historical context is different from the one in Central-Eastern Europe. While in certain places, like the North Caucasus and Crimea, the analysis of the cemetery can give us information on the population losses during the Holocaust, in Georgia we will find another subject – information about refugees and evacuees whom Georgia hosted during World War II. The analysis of the style of gravestone inscriptions, as well as of the names, will assist students to understand some life trajectories of the Jewish refugees who are buried in those cemeteries. However, schools need financial support to develop the teaching of the Holocaust and Jewish history and heritage. At least 20 hours per academic year is necessary at high school level to teach about these subjects."

The need for financial support, pre-service and in-service teacher training, educational resources and more hours in high school curricula is echoed in all the responses from high school teachers and educators involved in informal educational programmes on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. Although the Georgian Ministry of Education is responsible for the implementation of high school curricula about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, there is a wide variation among high schools as regards to when they start Jewish heritage educational programmes, the scope of teaching, and available textbooks and other learning resources.

According to M.M. (high school teacher), students can start to learn about Jewish heritage when they are 12 years old, but in her school no hours are formally dedicated to the subject in the curriculum. However, thanks to her own passion for the topic, she introduces it on her own accord. She would like to have one hour a week dedicated to teaching about Jewish history and heritage. The subjects are taught in History and Geography lessons. Only between 4 to 5 hours per academic year are dedicated to the study of the Holocaust "which is not enough". The school does not utilise Jewish cemeteries for any commemorative practices.

Likewise, E.K. (Civic Education teacher) recognises the value of a local Jewish cemetery as a potential educational resource to teach about Jewish heritage and the history of Georgian Jews. E.K. is critical of current high school curricula with regards to the scope and allocated hours of teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, and views it as "superficial." E.K. teaches the topics of Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the classroom only, using traditional methods of lecture followed by discussion and interactive maps. E.K. chooses 27 January – The International Holocaust Day – to carry out one of the allocated 2-3 hours of lessons per academic year given over to teach about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust.

Similarly, N.S. (History teacher) explains that teaching about Jewish history in high school starts from the age of 9–10 years old and is of limited scope as it is taught in the context of the study of various ethnic minorities in Georgia:

"Each academic year the curriculum devotes only 2 hours of teaching on Jewish heritage and history, with the possibility of an additional 2 hours. The Holocaust is taught as part of other subjects, such as the general history of the Second World War. The allocation of teaching hours in the existing curriculum is not enough to study Jewish heritage and culture. Teaching Jewish history and culture is highly effective when it is taught at Jewish cemeteries and during tours of local synagogues, museums of Jewish interest and so on."

According to T.T. (high school History teacher), the teaching of Jewish history at high school starts from the 9th grade and between 10 to 15 hours are allocated per academic year to teaching Jewish history, religion, and culture. Jewish heritage is taught in History, the Arts, Geography and Literature. Given Georgia's specific history in WWII, only between 2 to 5 hours per academic year are dedicated to the study of the Holocaust, which is not sufficient to teach the subject properly.

E.K. (History teacher) states that the teaching of Jewish heritage starts from the age of 10 in the 5th grade as a part of the subject of "Our Georgia". The topic of Georgian–Jewish relations is studied for 2 hours per academic year in the context of Jewish heritage in Georgia, and during lessons about the history of WWII. Jewish history and heritage are taught throughout high school in the subjects of History, Geography, Philosophy, the Arts and Sociology, and the school organises visits of Jewish interest to local and national museums. While varying teaching methods are deployed– both in and out the classroom, the actual teaching hours are not enough. E.K recognises that the Jewish cemetery can be used in educating about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust and would like to participate with students in commemorative Holocaust events at a local Jewish cemetery. At present no such commemorative events have taken place.

Similar to E.K. (History teacher), M.M. (school teacher, non-specified subject) states that teaching about Jewish heritage begins in the lessons about "Our Georgia". Like many other teachers, M.M. stresses that teaching about Jewish heritage and history chiefly depends on the individual teacher's background and knowledge, and he is highly critical about available teaching resources.

"There are no certain hours in the school curriculum devoted to teaching about Jewish heritage and history. This all depends on the teacher, how she/he divides the school curriculum hours. The Holocaust is taught as part of the history of the Second World War. I personally provide more information than is available in school textbooks and the school library: I plan lessons with the students using certain books and films to watch in class from my private library. I think that it is possible to add more hours into the school curriculum to study Jewish heritage and history. But the school programme is already full of topics, and therefore everything depends on the individual teacher. Students touch upon Jewish history in general History lessons. The classroom is our main space. But I also take students to Old Tbilisi where there is a synagogue. I also use the Jewish-Georgian Museum as an educational space. In the classroom, we use different teaching methodologies such as lectures, discussions and interactive maps. But we do not have sufficient teaching materials. There are very limited opportunities to participate in in-service teacher training programmes, but it also depends on an individual teacher; his/her own resources. Schools have no resources for teacher training, and we do not get any support."

All teacher-respondents stress that they do not have opportunities for in-service teacher training abroad and there is no allocated funding from the Ministry of Education nor other governmental institutions for such training. They all value teacher training organised by NGOs and museums that specialise in Jewish heritage and culture, such as the Georgian National Museum and the Jewish-Georgian Museum in Tbilisi.[55] They all emphasise the learning benefits of participating in

55 On the project "Jewish Cultural Heritage in the collections of the Georgian National Museum" see: https://museum.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=160

in-service teacher training organised by Centropa. They regard Centropa and local NGOs as the only organisations that offer training that teaches about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the context of developing among students empathy, tolerance, democratic values and the importance of combating antisemitism, prejudice and racism. The teachers themselves identify with those values. All interviewed teachers appreciate the financial support and educational activities offered by the Israel embassy and Jewish NGOs.

Overall, Georgia needs to strengthen the local NGOs and build strong links between foreign and local NGOs in terms of providing teachers with in-service training and educational resources about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. The topics urgently need to be incorporated into the pre-service teacher training which can serve as part of an overall education for democracy.

Tbilisi, Georgia

2.2 HUNGARY


דוב בער ווינבער גער
רחל

2.2 HUNGARY

The first Jewish communities arrived in Hungary in the third century C.E. By the medieval era, there were 38 Hungarian Jewish communities settled in different parts of the country with the most important and biggest settlements in Buda and Sopron.[56] The Jewish communities thrived under Ottoman Rule between 1526–1686, but their social and economic position worsened under the rule of the Habsburg Empire. However, similar to "the marriage of convenience" of Polish Jews with Polish noblemen in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Hungarian Jews forged strong economic bonds with Hungarian nobles such as Counts Esterhazy and Palffy, who protected them and benefited from their economic expertise. At the end of the eighteenth century, the community began to thrive again and by 1840 Jews numbered more than 300,000 in the Austro-Hungarian empire. In 1867, because of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, Hungary became a quasi-independent state and the new Hungarian Parliament enacted Jewish emancipation allowing Jews to engage in all professions and to settle in all localities of the country. During the last three decades of the long nineteenth century, the Hungarian Jewish community increased its number to 500,000 individuals. During the Emancipation period (1867–1914), Hungarian Jews strongly identified with the Hungarian cause in the sphere of politics, culture and economy. Their political position was strengthened in 1895 with the official recognition of Judaism as an equally accepted religion. By 1910 Jews constituted 5 per cent of the population (numbering over 900,000). Except for Hasidic communities in northeast Hungary in the Szatmar, Bereg (including Munkacs), and Marmaros districts, the majority were well integrated into Hungarian society. However, despite the strong patriotism of Hungarian Jews shown in WWI, the Hungarian Jews suffered greatly in the antisemitic riots of 1918, when the Austro-Hungarian monarchy disintegrated. A short-lived Bolshevik regime took over Hungary between 1918 and 1919 and local Jews were accused of Judeo-bolshevism – a powerful antisemitic myth that also erupted at that time in Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine.[57] The young Hungarian nation-state, shocked by its partition by neighbouring countries ratified in 1920 in the Treaty of Trianon, turned to (ethnic and exclusivist) Christian nationalism and began to question the ideals of Jewish assimilation into the Hungarian nation-state. The ambition to win back the territories lost in the Treaty of Trianon drove Hungary into an alliance with Nazi Germany in the 1930s. From 1938, the Hungarian parliament passed several anti-Jewish laws (1938, 1939 and 1941). In March 1944, Germans marched into the country and forced M. Horthy, the conservative head of state, to establish a pro-German Hungarian government. The situation of the 750,000 Hungarian Jews changed overnight. By 16 April that same year, Hungarian Jews were forced into ghettos and their properties were seized by non-Jewish Hungarians. On 15 May, the first trains began to transport Hungarian Jews to the Auschwitz extermination centre. The deportations were halted only in early July 1944. But, in October 1944 the Hungarian fascists, known as the Arrow Cross party, took over the government and "home-made" persecution against the remaining Jews intensified. It is estimated that over 564,507 Hungarian Jews perished in the Holocaust.[58]

Today, in post-communist Hungary, approximately 80,000 Jews live in Budapest and 20,000 more live in a few of the other larger cities. Jewish cultural life has recovered to some extent, with Budapest as the main centre. In addition to the grand Neolog Synagogue and the Orthodox Kazinczy Synagogue, 20 smaller synagogues have been renovated and function in a variety of

56 On the history and culture of Hungarian Jews, see Raphael Patai, *The Jews of Hungary. History, Culture, Psychology* (Detroit, Michigan, Wayne State University Press, 1996) and online https://www.jewishvirtual-library.org/hungary-virtual-jewish-history-tour

57 On the myth of Judeo-Bolshevism, see the salient study by Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe. The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2018).

58 Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary*. Vol. 2. (New York, Columbia University Press, 2016).

ways in Budapest. Supplemented by Hungarian municipal funds, former Hungarian Jews or their descendants living abroad have been financing the restoration of some of the magnificent synagogues in Szeged, Pecs, Budapest and other smaller towns. Some of these buildings are open to the public as museums, and serve for prayer on the Jewish high holidays. Today, there are 1,300 Jewish cemeteries in different parts of the country and most of them are still neglected and in urgent need of preservation.

After 1989, Hungary's democratically elected leaders openly acknowledged the Holocaust and unveiled the first monument dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust in the courtyard of the Great Synagogue in Budapest on 8 July 1990. In 2001, the Hungarian Parliament commemorated the Hungarian Holocaust Remembrance Day for the first time on 16 April, the infamous day in 1944 when the ghettoisation of Hungarian Jews began.[59] In October 2002, Hungary became a member of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, and took a turn as the head of the task force from March 2006 to March 2007.

Between 1990 and 2010, the pre-1939 history and culture of Hungarian Jews and the Holocaust gradually received a place in the high school curriculum and universities. For the first time in the post-communist era, historians had to write new textbooks that would not only address the Holocaust in European history, but also the Holocaust in a national context including the thorny subject of the measure of Hungarian responsibility for the death of more than half a million Hungarian Jews.

The inauguration of the Memorial Day of the Hungarian Victims of the Holocaust in 2001 was accompanied by a critical event in the sphere of education – the inclusion of the history of the Holocaust in A level examinations as an (optional) independent topic. Next, in 2004, the national state-funded Holocaust Memorial Center (HDKE) opened in Budapest. From its inception, it offered exhibition guiding, workshops and other educational programmes for high school teachers and student groups. HDKE also offered special travelling exhibitions for high schools. Moreover, local governments and municipalities offered reimbursement to schools from poor rural areas for organising student trips to the HDKE.

For this report, I interviewed teachers from three types of high schools, gymnasia – technical and vocational, as well as informal educators and academicians. Members of the latter group have been involved in educational projects and high school teacher training. They all confirm that, during the first decade of the third millennium, teachers had many new opportunities to bring a variety of educational programmes connected to Jewish studies, Jewish heritage and Holocaust studies to their schools. During that decade, Hungarian NGOs had been established to strengthen Jewish cultural life and Jewish identity, introduce Holocaust remembrance and education on Jewish heritage, and combat antisemitism and intolerance. Among the most well-known are Centropa Hungary, USC Shoah Foundation Hungary, Zachor Foundation for Social Remembrance, Haver Foundation, Kurt Lewin Foundation, Carl Lutz Foundation, Raoul Wallenberg Association, and the Tom Lantos Institute. These NGOs began to provide high schools with pedagogical and methodological materials as well as professional development programmes for teachers. They have operated independently or in a partnership with international NGOs such as the Anne Frank House Amsterdam, USC Shoah Foundation, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Yad Vashem and the Mémoire de la Shoah. Thanks to these international connections, the local NGOs were empowered with knowledge and skills to introduce special classes, exhibits and workshops for high schools.

From the early 2000s, some attempts were made to introduce Holocaust education into both pre- and in-service teacher training. For example, the Eötvös Loránd University, the largest university in Hungary, founded a special research group, "Holocaust and human rights education" to promote Holocaust education and research for pre-service teachers, and the internationally

59 On the memorialisation of the Holocaust in the postcommunist period between 1989 and 2010, see Paul Hanebrink, "The Memory of the Holocaust in postcommunist Hungary: The Politics of Holocaust Memory," in Himka and Michlic, *Bringing the Dark Past to Light*. 261–291.

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renowned Central European University (CEU) began to offer Holocaust studies and Jewish history for in-service high school teachers from Hungary and Poland, and for faculty from other universities in the country. The CEU is considered a pioneer in teaching the Holocaust in a global context by utilising the Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive. The CEU Center for Teaching and Learning introduced digital initiatives as a new way of teaching traumatic histories, and teaching about the Holocaust from a gendered perspective, in collaboration with Smith College in Massachusetts, USA. In 2014, on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary, CEU and the Tom Lantos Institute organised an international conference on "The Future of the Holocaust Memorialization: Confronting Racism, Antisemitism, and Homophobia through Memory Work", during which participants explored various teaching methodologies in higher education and assessed existing practices of Holocaust education.[60]

In addition, major Hungarian Jewish organisations such as MAZSÖK (the Hungarian Jewish Heritage Public Foundation)[61] started to become involved in education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust by launching special student competitions, and providing funding for educational projects. The MAZSIHISZ (Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities) itself began to regularly organise cultural and educational events with various partner organisations.

New local museums, with sections dedicated to Jewish heritage and the history of a local Jewish population, have also provided teachers with fully digitalised exhibitions that could be explored with students in classroom lessons. For example, in Balatonfüred, a small museum called the House of Jewish Excellence produced an online exhibition on the life and artistic achievements of 150 Jewish artists and scientists from the region.[62]

Most of the teachers interviewed indicate that they benefited greatly from teacher training with local and foreign Jewish NGOs, and they would like such forms of teacher training to take place more regularly, at least once a year. Like in other countries in this analysis, teachers need to be proactive to find out information on training opportunities on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust and to apply for funding through the NGOs. The schools do not provide financial support for teacher training.

Some teachers had the opportunity to attend teacher training abroad offered by Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies. As in other countries, Yad Vashem's teacher training has been highly valued by Hungarian participants because of its innovative methods of active experimental learning and its emphasis on individual histories. Teachers report that they were inspired by the approach and, upon returning home, they embarked on creative educational lessons and activities both in and out of the classroom, including visits to Jewish cemeteries and other sites of Jewish interest, as well as organising meetings with Holocaust survivors. In her blog of 12 June 2011, the Hungarian-born educator Szilvia Peto-Dittel gives a powerful detailed account of how Yad Vashem had inspired Péter Heindl, a history teacher and youth educator from Magyarmecske, a remote and poverty-stricken Hungarian village near the Croatian border. Thanks to the teacher's year-long educational project with his students, they and indeed the wider inhabitants of the village discovered the history of their murdered Jewish neighbours and a few still living survivors.

"In order to raise his students' interest and curiosity, Heindl hung on the school notice board an old photo of a young, school-age girl with the following lines underneath: "Lili Ney: a girl from

60 For the fruits of this conference, see Andrea Petö and Helga Thorson, eds., *The Future of Holocaust Memorialization: Confronting Racism, Antisemitism, and Homophobia through Memory Work*, (Budapest, Tom Lantos Institute, 2015).

61 MAZSÖK, (the Hungarian Jewish Heritage Public Foundation) is funded by the state. The Foundation deals with the preservation of Jewish cultural heritage including cemeteries, synagogues and other communal buildings, as well as with the pensions and caretaking of Hungarian Holocaust survivors. https://mazsok.hu/eng/index.html

62 See the official website of the Museum: https://www.zsidokivalosagok.hu/en/fooldal-en/

Magyarmecske disappeared from our village. A few weeks later she was killed. Who was she? Why did she die? She was not the only person from Magyarmecske to suffer this fate. Let's find out together the history of Lili Ney and the others!" The poster had an enormous effect on the students; dozens wanted to take part in the investigation sessions Heindl scheduled one afternoon a week for the entire school year. "The crime story opening solved one of the biggest challenges of Holocaust education," explains Heindl, "how to involve young learners in dealing with a gloomy topic that only adults feel is important enough to remember?"

During the series of "detective workshops," Heindl and the students gradually found out the truth about the events of WWII. Heindl, the "chief detective," carefully chose and planned the programme from week to week, making sure that each phase revealed more details, and the students did not lose interest over the year-long process.

With the help of a local historian (István Vörös, also a Yad Vashem graduate) they learned about the various religious communities in the village at the time of the war, and discovered that there were once 17 Jewish and two Roma families living there. "Aunt Cinka" (Bence Kálmánné), an elderly lady from the village who still remembered the events from 64 years earlier, took the group on a guided tour of the village, pointing out former Jewish houses and describing each family that lived there, as well as their deportations and the plunder of their possessions. Students were shocked to find out that a mass murder had taken place in their small village. Based on Aunt Cinka's account, a Jewish survivor from the village, László Szántó (Steiner), was traced to Budapest. Szántó visited the students in Magyarmecske, bringing with him some old photos, including one of himself with the two children from the Ney family outside their house. Further lessons for this group of investigators included a visit to the closest living Jewish community in the city of Pécs and a meeting with their chief rabbi, András Schönberger; a conversation about questions of responsibility with the Catholic priest of Alsószentmárton who actively ministers to Roma groups in Magyarmecske; a visit to the Jewish cemetery in Kacsóta where most of the Jews from Magyarmecske are buried; and a two-day excursion to the Holocaust Memorial Centre and Jewish quarter and museum in Budapest.

The school year ended with the discovery of the house belonging to a Righteous Among the Nations Erzsébet Tóth (née Juhász). Inside the house, the current owners were surprised to be shown an original hiding place. "The topic was a perfect one to close the detective story," Heindl says. "It drew my students' attention to positive examples of human behaviour in times when inhumanity prevailed. The end of the school year, however, did not mean the termination of the project, which had already surpassed the expectations of its creator. On 8 August 2008, the whole village actively joined in the group's initiative, and a memorial plaque to commemorate the 11 Jewish victims from Magyarmecske was dedicated on the wall of the local school (once home to the Jewish Ledrer family). An exhibition was also organised from the findings of the student group. The national media took great interest in the project, and coverage of the work was broadcast and reported in several different forms."[63]

Péter Heindl belongs to a small group of high school teachers who, thanks to teacher training offered by NGOs, took their students to local cemeteries for lessons on the pre-1939 Jewish religious and cultural life, the functional and spiritual significance of Jewish cemeteries, and to learn about individuals buried there. One of the interviewed high school teachers, B.K. states that she regularly visits Jewish cemeteries in the capital and participates with her students in caring for a local cemetery. However, due to the Covid pandemic, she is still awaiting the opportunity to clean up a local cemetery in cooperation with the Diósjenő Council.

Most of the interviewed teachers recognised the great benefit of incorporating Jewish cemeteries into lesson plans on local pre-war Jewish history and culture. According to Dr Borbala Klacsmann,

63 An educational blog posted by Szilvia Peto-Dittel on Yad Vashem website of 12 June 2011, https://www.yadvashem.org/author/szilvia-peto-dittel.html

an experienced informal educator in Hungary and post-doctoral researcher at the Centre for War Studies, University College Dublin: "the cemeteries are often the only territories where one can learn about the history of the local Jewish community (many of the synagogues did not survive the war). Visiting cemeteries is a good way to teach about Jewish history, culture and religion and, in a broader context, the history of minorities in Hungary, co-existence, Jewish-non-Jewish relations, the social, economic, religious history of the town and so forth."[64]

However, within the group of teachers conducting learning in Jewish cemeteries, many regret the fact that their work is not part of a wider educational programme, but limited to individual efforts. "I am the only teacher who uses the Jewish cemetery for teaching" (A.A. History high school teacher). In some small towns, teachers do not always have access to the local Jewish cemetery as they are often closed due to fear of vandalism by individuals belonging to extreme right-wing organisations such as the Jobbik party.

"In several towns, the Jewish cemeteries are locked up because of fear of antisemitic vandalism, therefore visiting them is not easy: it requires prior co-ordination. However, just recently I visited Sered (Slovakia) where the Jewish cemetery is taken care of by a local private school. I think similar activity is conducted in certain places in Hungary too, but it is definitely not common."[65]

Many teachers indicate that they would like to forge closer links with the local Jewish communities that are the guardians of the Jewish cemeteries. They would like to involve their students in regular cleaning of Jewish cemeteries, and conduct on-site learning. Some are aware of the Slovak and Polish initiatives of "adopting" a Jewish cemetery by a local high school and would like to follow that model in their own communities. At the same time, teachers and informal educators indicate that Jewish cemeteries in Hungary cannot be used for education about the Holocaust given the specific nature of the Hungarian Holocaust – most of the Hungarian Jews were murdered outside Hungary. Therefore, no commemorative events are being organised in the space of the Jewish cemetery.

Teachers recognise some challenging issues pertaining to working within the national curriculum, including the structure, methods, and textbooks on Jewish history and the Holocaust. The subject of Jewish heritage as such does not constitute a part of the national curriculum, though some of its elements are taught in the History of the Ancient World and Literature where this relates to the Bible.

Approximately 2-3 hours in the national curriculum are dedicated to the study of Jewish history and culture in the academic year, and 3 hours to the Holocaust. But some teachers allocate up to 10 hours to cover both topics. Most teachers interviewed indicate that between 10 to 15 hours per academic year would be ideal. However, they all stress that they require more pre- and in-service training, as well as more funding, and more educational materials in the Hungarian language.

The Holocaust begins to be taught in the 8th grade elementary school and 11th and 12th grade secondary school as part of the History curriculum. The general history of the Holocaust and its national context are covered separately. Some educators like Dr Borbala Klacsmann see this approach as problematic. On the one hand, in the general context of the Holocaust, students learn about the modern history of Hungarian Jews starting from the 18th century and including topics such as Jewish immigration, the social-political status of Hungarian Jews and assimilation.

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64 Interview conducted with Dr Borbala Klacsmann by the author of this report on 18 November 2022.

65 Interview conducted with Dr Borbala Klacsmann by the author of this report on 18 November 2022.

On the other hand, in the national context, certain narratives would be presented in a simplistic manner and in passive language:

"In some cases, there is no actor in the sentences – 'the Jews were deported', 'the Jews lost their possessions' – by whom? To whom? Also, some of the photo captions are incorrect and Hungarian collaboration with Nazi Germany is rarely mentioned."[66]

For P.R. (an education policymaker, historian, and university Professor), the subjects of Jewish history and culture and the Holocaust have been artificially treated in the national curriculum, without a basic introduction at a primary school level. Moreover, in encountering Jewish history and culture, high school students do not learn that Jews have been an integral part of Hungarian society. Also, in studying the subjects in a traditional manner instead of via active learning, the students do not learn to be independent critical thinkers:

"The things that are part of the Hungarian (ethnic) national canon are already present in kindergarten, however, the things that are part of a different canon only appear at the middle school level, which is problematic as there's a decision behind it that says that Judaism and Jewish traditions don't belong to the Hungarian national canon. It's a problem which has always been. The fact that Jews are left out of primary school is due to the somewhat distorted curriculum-subject fetishism that prevails in the country. It creates a situation where there is competition for a finite amount of teaching space among different topics. Teachers teach according to the old-fashioned pattern: that they are the ones who pass on knowledge and help the students to understand and digest the knowledge…..If we were to start from the premise that knowledge is the raw material of learning and not its goal, then we would let go of the canon of knowledge, and questions would arise as to what raw material the learner and the teacher use autonomously to develop certain skills and competences…..Knowledge alone cannot change attitudes. If we want to do that, we need to create a learning environment where students can do their own research, where the teacher doesn't guide, only assist. There should be room for dialogue and reflection."

But the situation in Hungarian education at all levels has worsened since 2010 after the newly appointed FIDESZ government dissolved the Ministry of Education and subordinated education into the affairs of a Ministry of Human Resources. According to the well-known Hungarian scholar Andrea Petö: "from 2010, the state increasingly reached into all spheres of public life: legal, economic, cultural and educational, requiring unquestioning loyalty from its citizens."[67]

The FIDESZ government took control of institutions of higher education by nationalising and centralising the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, sending CEU into political exile from Budapest to Vienna; and abolishing the autonomy of universities. From early April 2022, a further centralisation of the educational system took place: the Office for Education had been transferred to the Ministry of Interior. On 14 October this year, many teachers and parents in different parts of Hungary went on strike protesting against the politicisation of the Hungarian education system.[68]

The post-2010 changes within the education system have had a profoundly negative impact on high school education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust as the latter has been de-judaized in the official state narratives. One teacher called them a "disaster on all levels". A striking example of the politicisation of education is the difficulty teachers face when applying for teacher training

66 Interview conducted with Dr Borbala Klacsmann by the author of this report on 18 November 2022.

67 Andrea Petö, "The Illiberal Memory Politics in Hungary," Forum: "Patriotic History and the (Re) nationalization of Memory", *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol. 24, no. 2, September 2021, 2. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2021.1968150

68 For the report about the protests in English see, https://telex.hu/english/2022/10/14/teachers-and-parents-united-to-demand-changes-in-education

abroad because the FIDESZ government opposes the model of Holocaust education provided by Yad Vashem and other foreign Jewish NGOs. As a consequence, high school heads do not allow or are forced not to allow individual teachers to apply for such teacher training.

"I have teachers saying that they want to apply for a Yad Vashem course and their headteachers don't want to sign the application because they don't want to speak about the Holocaust, especially not in [Yad Vashem's] way," Peto Dittel said. Some headteachers, she said, will even intimidate teachers if they are interested in going to Yad Vashem, accusing them of being closet Jews."[69]

In Hungary today, the educational system is totally under the control of the FIDESZ government, and education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust is under threat due to the weaponisation of Hungarian history to serve the political and ideological goals of the state. Therefore, teacher access to pre- and in-service training by foreign NGOs in a variety of forms, including online short courses, is vital to maintain the profile of Jewish heritage and the Holocaust within the educational system.

Given the current climate in the country, financial and moral support for those educators championing the Jewish narrative is critical, especially recognising the wider potential here of promoting the European values of pluralism and democracy, and helping to combat antisemitism.

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69 Citation from an interview with Szilvia/Silvia Peto-Dittel, published by Nathan Jeffay in his article, "Holocaust Memory Under Siege In Worlds Of Politics, Art," *NY Jewish Week* on April 20, 2017; https://www.jta.org/2017/04/20/ny/holocaust-memory-under-siege-in-worlds-of-politics-art

2.3 LITHUANIA


MESTOVICIENE I.B.
КВЕТНИЙ
СКОРБЯЩАЯ ЖЕНА
FIŠMAN
ZUSMAN

2.3 LITHUANIA

On the eve of the WWII, Jews had lived in Lithuania for more than 600 years and had created a unique spiritual and material culture. Like other East European Jewish communities, the Lithuanian Jews, known as Litvaks, were generally an urban population. They lived in the capital, Vilnius, known as the "Jerusalem of Lithuania" and in cities such as Kovno and Grodno, as well as in small towns and villages. Between 90–94 per cent of the 200,000 Lithuanian Jewish population were murdered during the Holocaust, 80 per cent of whom were killed in the first six months of the Nazi occupation of 1941 with the help of local Lithuanian collaborators, including fascist military units.[70] In the aftermath of the Second World War, under Soviet oppression, Lithuanian Jewish cultural heritage was neglected, and the history and memory of the Holocaust was suppressed. As in other post-communist countries, Lithuania was for the first time confronted with challenging and painful task of introducing education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust when the country regained its independence in 1991. Seeking membership in NATO and the EU, Lithuania followed a pattern of reforms implemented in other post-communist countries. Out of political, economic, social, cultural and ethical necessities, the Lithuanian government joined the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and signed the Stockholm Declaration (IHRA) in 2000. It enacted political mandates for Holocaust commemorations and education and accepted a requirement to pay reparations to its Jewish community for the Holocaust.

The government also introduced academic exchanges with the West and embarked on building new relations between non-Jewish Lithuanians and the small Jewish minority in the country, as well as the Litvak diaspora abroad and the State of Israel. It also permitted critical research into the difficult Holocaust past, examining the scope of collaboration and perpetration by non-Jewish Lithuanians on the one hand and, on the other, the rescue of Jews. However, integrating the painful history of relations between Jewish and non-Jewish Lithuanians into public memory and schools' history curricula has proven challenging and marred by scandal. For example, in 1998 the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Regimes in Lithuania was established but, by the middle of the 2000s, it was discredited after Lithuanian state prosecutors accused several Holocaust survivors of war crimes against non-Jewish Lithuanians.[71]

Despite the ongoing challenges, Lithuanian Holocaust education gradually developed thanks to the activities of teachers working outside of, rather than within, the formal educational system. According to Christine Beresniova, it took over a decade of policy reform and new teacher training initiatives for Lithuanian educators to acquire the pedagogical skills and non-partisan historical knowledge to address the Soviet and Nazi occupations without comparing the suffering of the Jews to the suffering of ethnic Lithuanians. Thanks to training offered by foreign NGOs, teachers were empowered to confront and reject the equation between the Soviet terror and the Nazi crimes – an equation utilised as an excuse for Lithuanians volunteering in the mass killings of their Jewish neighbours.[72] The strategy of rationalising and minimising crimes committed against Lithuanian Jews by ethnic Lithuanians is a part of an exclusivist and antisemitic nationalist discourse which crystallised in the immediate post-1945 period. This discourse produced the Judeo-bolshevism stereotype and the double genocide theory that equates the Holocaust to the crimes committed by the Soviet Union. The theory was openly disseminated

70 On the history and memory of the Holocaust in Lithuania, see Saulius Suziedelis and Sarunas Liekis, "Conflicting memories: The Reception of the Holocaust in Lithuania," in Himka and Michlic, *Bringing the Dark Past to Light*, 319–351.

71 Idem., 339–341.

72 Christine Beresniova, "Resistance and Resilience within Lithuania Holocaust education", *Holocaust Remembered. Resistance and Resilience*, A Special Supplement, Columbia Education Commission, 26 April 2019, vol. 6, 4.

by right-wing nationalist circles in post-communist Lithuania to justify and rationalise the crimes committed by ethnic Lithuanians against Lithuanian Jews in the Second World War. High school teachers had to acquire various skills and non-partisan knowledge to confront these troubling discourses as well as other ingrained negative cultural stereotyping of Jews (and the Roma) as the "other" who are considered not a part of the fabric of Lithuanian society. In the important study of 2019, entitled "Children Who Speak in Their Parents' Cliches": Exploring the Broader Social Relationship Between Cultural Practices and Teacher Identity in Lithuanian Holocaust Education", Beresniova analyses how community "stories" about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust intersect with formal education. Drawing on interviews with teachers and educators conducted over two years, 2011-2013 – a decade after the official introduction of Holocaust education into Lithuania, Beresniova reports that teachers sometimes still faced confrontations with parents who expressed varying anti-Jewish and anti-Roma prejudices. They also knew very little about the topics of the Holocaust and Jewish heritage and did not necessarily wish their children to learn about them. Given such challenging circumstances, teachers sometimes are not sure how to proceed in building a new "normal" educational sphere that includes parental involvement when it comes to education about the Holocaust and Jewish heritage.

"It could be interesting to know [parental] opinions. Maybe after children come back from school and start talking about tolerance umbrellas or anything like this, or when we talk about the Holocaust, [parents] say 'Oh, shut up. What are you doing?" And our work is vanishing."[73]

Teachers sometimes have to rely on financial support provided by their students' parents to organise outside classroom activities such as educational trips to a local Jewish cemetery or a museum to learn about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. (However, teachers can also seek financial support offered local Jewish communities for specific educational activities.)

One cannot ignore a fact that in Lithuania (and also in Poland), the potential for conflict with colleagues or members of a local community, especially in small towns and villages, sometimes makes teachers hesitant to teach about the Holocaust and Jewish heritage. In some cases, as one teacher explained, teachers and school directors do not even talk about the subject "unless they have to." This demonstrates the extent to which education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust is still being politicised.[74]

High school teachers interviewed for this report are experienced teachers of History, Lithuanian Literature, Civics and Ethics. Most of them work in comprehensive secondary schools, encompassing grades 9 to 12, but some also work in primary and middle schools, and one of them works in the network of the international Jewish Chassidic Chabad schools. For many, being a teacher involved in education about the Holocaust and Jewish heritage is a task that they feel passionate about and reflects a convergence of personal interest and professional life. They all agree that education about Jewish heritage in History lessons begins in grade 5 and continues with a more developed focus on the Holocaust in the context of the Second World War in grades 10, 11 and 12. The focus in grades 5-8 is on Jewish religion, traditions and culture. However, the school curriculum allocates only 1 to 3 hours per year to teach about these topics, though some teachers indicate

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73 A teacher cited in Christine Beresniova's "Children Who Speak in Their Parents' Cliches": Exploring the Broader Social Relationship Between Cultural Practices and Teacher Identity in Lithuanian Holocaust Education", *European Education*, no. 51, 2019, 119.

74 On the politicisation of education of the Holocaust and Jewish heritage in Lithuania, see Christine Beresniova, "Unless They Have To": Power, Politics and Institutional Hierarchy in Lithuanian Holocaust Education", in Zehavit Gross and E. Doyle Stevick, eds., *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice* (New York, London, Springer International Publishers, 2015). 391-406, Hereafter, Gross and Stevick, *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*.

that they devote 4 hours a year to discuss Jewish heritage in grades 5–8. In the high school curriculum, 4 hours per year are allocated to teach about the Holocaust in grades 9–12.

"In grades 5 and 6, students get acquainted with the Jews as a national minority. We speak about their religion – Judaism – and Jewish traditions. In grades 9 to 12, the topics of Jewish history and religion appear as a subject in classes on History and Literature. Mostly, we speak about Jews in the context of the Second World War. The focus is on the Holocaust. We speak about the Holocaust in a broader European context, as well as the local Lithuanian context..... In grades 5 to 8, three lessons are dedicated to Jewish traditions and religion. In grades 9 to 12, four lessons are dedicated to the topic of World War II and the Holocaust. In grades 9 to 12, we mostly learn about the Holocaust. The choice of topics and the depth of learning depends on the individual teacher. The teacher selects which aspects to present to his/her students. The Holocaust is already mentioned in grade 6 History classes. One lesson is dedicated to that. Mostly, students learn about the Holocaust in grades 10 to 12 (four lessons are dedicated to the subject). Students learn about the beginning of the Holocaust and concentration camps. Some time is dedicated to studying the Holocaust in Lithuania." (I.P. Jewish history educator, the Lost Shtetl Museum)

"Only a few hours are dedicated to learning about Jewish culture within the Lithuanian curriculum: students might be introduced to Jewish culture as early as in primary school (especially during religious education classes when learning Biblical stories). Later, in middle school (grade 7) students learn about ancient history and religions, including Judaism. They do return to Jewish history in grades 8 and 10, although the topics mostly concern the Holocaust. Largely, the depth and variety of Jewish topics depend on the individual teacher.

In high school (grades 9–12), the students study mostly topics connected with the Holocaust and World War II. Different aspects of Jewish heritage might be taught by more knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers, but there is no official requirement to teach it explicitly and extensively. Needless to say, the vast majority of teachers stick to the educational programme, the textbook materials and focus on the examination topics.

Judaism is taught in grade 7 in History lessons (under the topics of ancient civilizations and religions). In lessons of Religious Education (an elective subject in Lithuania) students are reintroduced to Judaism in grade 11.

The Holocaust is taught mostly in grade 10 (some information about it is also taught in grade 8), and the students return to the topic again in grade 12. Approximately several hours are devoted to the study of the Holocaust, in the context of learning about World War II. However, teachers tend to lean more towards teaching about the Soviet occupation and dedicate much more time to talking about the Communist regime in Lithuania. There is no Holocaust education programme in Lithuania. Overall, we could say about 5 hours per year are dedicated to learning about the Holocaust." (S.S. teacher of Jewish History and Traditions)

"According to the education programme, we start teaching about it in grade 5: we acquaint children with the Jewish nation, its history and religion. More focus is placed on the Holocaust. Depending on the teacher, students may be taught about the basics in primary school too. Children become acquainted with their Lithuanian neighbours, the Jews. In some cases, teachers take students to the synagogue and tell them about Jewish traditions and celebrations. However, the primary school curriculum does not include the topic of Jews, Jewish culture and Judaism. Jewish history and traditions are taught within different age groups. With older students, the focus is placed on the Holocaust in Lithuania and in Europe. In grades 5–8, students are acquainted with Jewish history through different time periods: Ancient Times and then the Middle Ages. Some information is provided on Judaism and Jewish traditions. In grades 9–12, students focus more on 19th and 20th century Jewish history. Students learn about the Litvaks and their accomplishments, however

the biggest focus is on the Holocaust. In grades 5–8, about 3 hours are allocated, in grades 9–12 from 4 to 6 hours in total. Additional time may be allocated for special projects. The Holocaust is given the most attention when students start learning about the beginnings of the Second World War. Sometimes teachers organise trips or implement projects about World War II. According to the school curriculum, 6 hours must be allocated to teach the Holocaust." (M.T. History teacher)

Most teachers stress that there are not enough hours allocated to teaching Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the high school curriculum and ideally would like an increase of hours to between 10 to 15 hours per year. For I.P. (Jewish History teacher), the optimal number of hours in the high school curriculum to teach about Jewish heritage is 1 hour per month), whereas M.P. (teacher of Ethics) insists on "dedicating at least 37 hours per year (1 hour a week) in different subjects to teach Jewish heritage across the curriculum." Teachers also emphasise the need to develop "special projects and activities during project implementation weeks" in the high school curriculum. (M.T. History teacher). Some insist that Jewish heritage and the Holocaust should be taught within a broader range of subjects including Sociology, Philosophy, Arts and Geography, and that there should be more emphasis on teaching pre-1939 Jewish heritage and history:

"In my opinion, there are too few lessons assigned for students to learn about Judaism and Jewish traditions, culture, and leading Jewish personalities. Mostly we focus on the Holocaust, but students lack basic knowledge of who the Jews were. We should dedicate more lessons to study Jewish history before the Holocaust, looking into different time periods." (I.P. Jewish History Teacher, Lost Shtetl Museum)

Many also stress that there should be more emphasis in the high school curriculum on the achievements and contribution of Lithuanian Jews to Lithuanian society:

"Jewish heritage and culture are an inseparable part of Lithuania, so it is important to emphasise that a large Jewish population lived in Lithuania. It is important to recognise and emphasise to students the contribution of this nation to our country. Another important thing is that many events are organised in the public space, both at the local and national level, with the aim of introducing the public to Jewish culture. Schools should participate in these events." (M.R. History teacher)

The teaching of Jewish heritage and the Holocaust is delivered in the traditional form of a lecture by a teacher along with the use of some innovative methods including online seminars, interviews, images and interactive maps. The lessons are usually conducted in class, but some lessons take place outside the classroom, such as in a local synagogue or museum. Many teachers stress that they take every opportunity to take their students on visits to museums of Jewish interest such as the Vilna Gaon State Museum in Vilnius or the Ninth Fort Museum in Kaunus. Teachers highly value these museums as non-governmental institutions that offer rich educational programmes on the history of Lithuanian Jews. The Lithuanian government and local municipalities generally sponsor the educational programmes on offer within the museums.

Only some teachers visit Jewish cemeteries with their students. Such visits take place with greater frequency when the cemetery is in the vicinity of the school. The purpose of the outside classroom in a space of a local cemetery is usually "to teach about individuals buried there." Nevertheless, most teachers are eager to incorporate Jewish cemeteries into educational practice for high school students and recognise the value for their students. According to various estimates, in pre-war Lithuania there were between 200–240 Jewish cemeteries. "Today, most of them are forgotten and neglected. New buildings were built on top of, or next to, some old cemetery sites, and gravestones have often been used as construction material. Time ruthlessly ravages old graves. These sites often become the target of attack by vandals. Because of lack of funds and initiative, old Jewish cemeteries are quickly disappearing and the memories of the Litvaks buried there will disappear as well."

Vilnius, Lithuania

Individual teachers have been involved on their own initiative in restoration and educational projects at Jewish cemeteries in different parts of the country. Most of the educational projects have developed gradually throughout the second decade of the third millennium. Thanks to the educational activities of international Jewish NGOs such as Centropa, teachers are given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the history and culture of Lithuanian Jews and develop a personal interest in the preservation of the physical Jewish heritage. Teachers also actively seek financial support for their projects within local Jewish cemeteries from local municipalities, the Lithuanian Culture Council, Jewish communities, and NGOs such as Maceva. The latter is the main non-profit organisation in the country which aims to preserve Jewish cemeteries, "for future generations in Lithuania and the diaspora", and its credo is: "a Jewish cemetery in Lithuania is not simply a burial place. It is part of Lithuanian history and culture."[75]

Many teachers support the incorporation of Jewish cemeteries as an educational resource in their own teaching practice. They indicate that the administration in their schools should support such activities, which includes running competitions for students, and offering cross-cultural projects on the burial sites and burial customs in different cultures (ie., Jewish, Christian and others). They also recognise that educational activities at Jewish cemeteries are also dependent on permits from local municipalities:

"We can use Jewish cemeteries for educational purposes, as a topic for the preparation of projects, understanding their history and working on preservation for future generations. In the spring/autumn, if the city municipality gives permission for the cleaning and maintenance of the cemetery by local schools, classes on Jewish culture and traditions can be held within the Jewish cemetery. Students can learn about the burial traditions of different religions at Jewish cemeteries." (M.R. History teacher)

Many teachers also indicate that they would like to be involved in more clean ups of Jewish cemeteries, special events and educational activities:

"… to organise projects to clean up cemeteries. Students (during project weeks) may analyse the epitaphs and do some historical research with the help of a supervisor." (M.T. History teacher)

Some teachers participate with students in Holocaust memorial events such as the Lithuanian Jewish Genocide Memorial Day on 23 September and in the International Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January. For these occasions, teachers and students organise special cultural performances, marches and walks around towns and cities along the "Jewish Heritage Trails" showing the past vibrant presence of the pre-1939 Jewish communities, as well as the sites of their destruction. But this is done on a small scale and with limited use of Jewish cemeteries as sites of destruction. Most teachers do not have the opportunity to participate with their students in specific memorialisations of Jewish communities at the local Jewish cemetery.

"My school does not participate in these types of events. Although I had organised to participate in the procession to commemorate the Genocide Day of the Lithuanian Jews, I had to cancel it for unclear reasons due to the order of the administration." (M.R. History teacher)

Some expressed the desire to incorporate the Jewish cemetery in their teaching about the Holocaust, but recognise that much more effort has to be applied to provide teachers with the necessary tools to educate effectively on the subject:

75 According to Maceva's website, the organisation collects, catalogues and publicises information about all the pre-WWII Jewish cemeteries in Lithuania and documents through photographs all remaining tombstones in all Jewish cemeteries throughout Lithuania. It also translates all legible inscriptions from the gravestones and posts this information on its website. Whenever possible it aims to restore or reconstruct, or at least clean cemeteries, with the assistance of and in cooperation with local municipalities. See http://www.litvak-cemetery.info/about-us

"If Lithuania had a formal Holocaust education programme, a part of it could potentially be a visit to the local Jewish cemetery. Methods would need to be developed as to how to teach the history of the Holocaust using the Jewish cemetery, but it could be effective." (S.S. Jewish History teacher)

To successfully organise student trips to Jewish cemeteries, museums of Jewish interest and/or other educational activities on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust outside the classroom, teachers have to be proactive and find the financial resources themselves to support such activities. Teachers stress that funding to run outside classroom lessons in Jewish cemeteries, museums and Holocaust memorialisation sites are generally limited.

"A lot of attention in society is paid to Jewish culture. It was unheard of for schools to receive direct funding for learning about Jewish culture. I think it depends on the competence of the teacher and his/her desire to contribute to the preservation of Jewish heritage. Of course, there could be more seminars, or accessible literature for teachers on the history of Jewish culture, lesson plans, assignments for students." (M.R. History teacher)

Teachers generally take advantage of the so-called governmental issued "Culture Pass" ("Kultūros pasas") that allows them to select a specific educational programme from a wider list of topics. They also ask for financial contributions from students' parents to carry out planned trips to different sites of Jewish heritage:

"The 'Culture Pass' allows us to visit museums and take part in educational activities for free, but the amount that is allocated is small since the 'Culture Pass' can only be used once." (I.P. Jewish History teacher)

Although teachers can access online resources prepared by local and international NGOs such as Centropa and ESJF, most do not have their own educational resources such as a collection of documentary films, books and other published materials in their school libraries. Many indicate that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no official governmental funding allocated specifically for the delivery of Jewish heritage and the Holocaust curriculum. They are not aware of any specific educational resources either published or online prepared by the Ministry of Education or other governmental institutions that they could use. Teachers also emphasise that they generally do not receive sufficient funding from local state authorities.

Most teachers agree that their educational activities on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust can be enriched through cooperation with different outside stakeholders such as Centropa and ESJF, the Israel embassy, local Jewish communities and NGOs such as the Vilna Gaon Museum of Jewish Culture, and the Holocaust Museum (the Green House) in Vilnius.

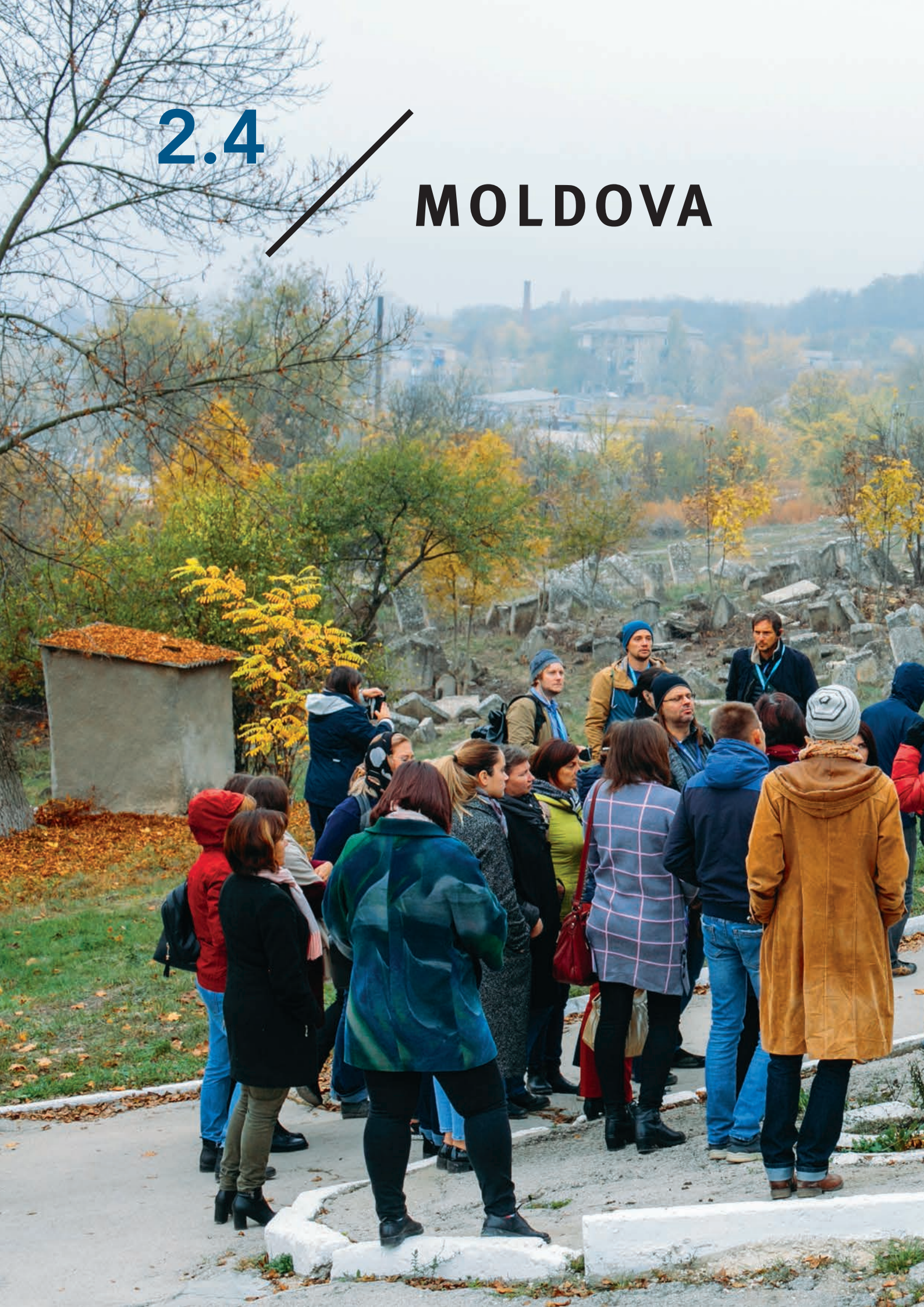
Teachers stress that they need more educational training about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. They agree that they benefit most from educational training offered by the stakeholders mentioned above. The International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania is the only governmental institution that provides teachers with further training.

However, the process of applying for the highly valued educational training abroad can be challenging and, in the process, teachers do not receive much support from the school administration. In cases where the schools do support in-service training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, it is usually offered once a year and the teacher needs to make a request and receive permission to participate in it. This means that teachers have to be proactive in finding out the information on the training opportunities, as well as finding the necessary funding to apply to attend.

Overall, most teachers emphasise that to strengthen education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, they need more hours in the school curriculum and better access to teacher training both pre- and in-service, in the country and abroad.

For the future of education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in Lithuania, it is important that the educational system maintains its autonomy and that the European values of democracy and pluralism are taught as a part of formal education, and are thus integrated into general national culture. This will help to strengthen civil society and assist in the fight against anti-semitism and racism.

2.4 MOLDOVA



2.4 MOLDOVA

The territory of today's Republic of Moldova consists of two main parts: the historical province of Bessarabia between the Dniester and Prut Rivers, and Transnistria on the left bank of the Dniester River. In 1812, the Tsarist Russian empire annexed Bessarabia from the Sublime Porte, which at that time had sovereignty over the principality of Moldova. In 1859, the rest of Moldova united with Walachia, another nation speaking the same language, to form the first modern Romanian state. After the collapse of the Russian Empire at the end of the WWI, Bessarabia joined Romania. However, during the interwar period, the newly established Soviet Union refused to recognise Bessarabia as a part of Romania and claimed ownership over the region.

On the eve of the Second World War, Jews had lived in Bessarabia for hundreds of years. In fact, they had a distinguished history going back to the 15th century when Sephardic merchants using Bessarabia as a trade route between the Black Sea and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth settled in northern and central Bessarabia. By 1812, the community numbered about 2,000 Jews.[76]

Under the Tsarist Russian rule, over the Easter holiday of 19-21 April 1903 (9-10 April according to the Julian calendar), anti-Jewish riots erupted in the capital city that then was called Kishinev (today Chișinău). The riots started due to a blood libel accusation disseminated in a national newspaper. As a result of this false antisemitic propaganda, 49 Jews were killed, 500 wounded, and 1,500 Jewish homes and businesses were severely damaged.[77] A second pogrom erupted in the capital and other parts of Moldova during the October 1905 Revolution. News about the Kishinev pogroms of 1903 and 1905 shocked the Jewish and non-Jewish communities in Western Europe and the United States. In the aftermath of the pogroms, thousands of Moldovan Jews were permitted to emigrate to the United States. Nevertheless, in 1920 the Jewish population of Moldova numbered approximately 267,000 and constituted a vibrant community with more than 70 synagogues and prayer houses in Kishinev (Chişinău).

In June 1940, the Soviet Union entered Bessarabia and occupied it along with the northern part of Bukovina. It was in the wake of this Soviet occupation that the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, a direct predecessor of today's post-communist Republic of Moldova, was established.[78] In June 1941, Romania, ruled by an extreme right-wing military leader General/Marshal Ion Antonescu, joined Nazi Germany in attacking the Soviet Union. The aim of Marshal Antonescu was to rid the country of all national minorities, starting with the Jews. Between 1941 and 1944, the Romanian authorities imposed broad antisemitic legislation which led to the total exclusion of the Jewish minority from Romanian society. The total Jewish population under Romanian rule then numbered 575,000 individuals. The Jews from the Old Kingdom of Romania were subjected to two major outbreaks of violence: the pogroms in Bucharest (January 1941) and Iaşi (June 1941). The pogrom in Bucharest led to the killing of 125 Jews, while the one in Iași resulted in as many as 14,850 Jewish victims. In the late summer of 1941, Transnistria was transferred to Romanian authority and Marshal Antonescu ordered the deportation of the Jews from Bessarabia and Bukovina to these newly acquired territories which were supposed to be a temporary destination for the transferred Jews. However, prior to the deportations, between 45,000 and 60,000 Jews from

76 For the online history of the Jews of Moldova, see https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/moldova-virtual-jewish-history-tour

77 On the Kishinev and other pogroms in Moldova and other parts of the Russian Empire, see John Doyle Klier and Shlomo Lambroza, *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History* (Cambridge University Press, 1992).

78 On the history of the Holocaust and memorialisation of the Holocaust in post-1945 Moldova, see Vladimir Solonari, "Public Discourses on the Holocaust in Moldova," in Himka and Michlic, eds. *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: the Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, 377-402. Hereafter Solonari, "Public Discourses on the Holocaust in Moldova."

Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina were shot by the Romanian army and the German Einsatzgruppe D troops. From those deported to Transnistria, between 105,000 and 120,000 Romanian Jews died of starvation, cold and disease. In addition, between 115,000 and 180,000 Jews were killed, mainly in Odessa and the Golta and Berezovka districts. Of the 25,000 Roma minority sent to Transnistria, 11,000 perished before repatriation.

In the summer of 1942, the Romanian and German fascist authorities reached an agreement regarding the deportation of the Jews from the Old Kingdom to Bełżec extermination camp in Nazi occupied Poland. The first transport was scheduled for October, but it never took place, as Marshal Antonescu decided not to implement the plan. The reasons for this decision remain unclear. In April and May 1944, around 132,000 Jews from Northern Transylvania were deported to Auschwitz extermination camp by the Hungarian authorities. Most of those deported never returned. Overall, between 380,000 and 400,000 Jews, including the Jews of Transnistria, were murdered in Romanian-controlled areas under the dictatorship of Antonescu.

After WWII, Bessarabia (the Republic of Moldova of today) was not returned to Romanian authority but became a part of the Soviet Union until 1990-91. According to the census of 2004, 31.9 per cent of its 555,000 inhabitants constitute ethnic Moldovans with the largest minorities being Russians and Ukrainians. The Moldovan Jews represent a small minority, numbering approximately 20,000 individuals and mainly living in Chișinău, Beltsy, Tiraspol (capital of Transnistria), Bender, Orgei, Rybnitsa, and Soroky towns. Almost half of the Jewish community is elderly and many of them are Holocaust survivors.

In 2010, according to the report by Samuel Gruber, one of the key authorities on Jewish heritage: "there were only a few surviving pre-Second World War synagogue buildings, and the most impressive, the Baroque-style synagogue at Rashkov, is in ruins… Vandalism of Jewish cemeteries has continued to be a problem in Moldova, although it appears that there are fewer incidences now than in the 1990s. The worst recorded vandalism was in Tiraspol, capital of the Transnistria breakaway region. In April 2001, the synagogue was attacked with a pipe bomb, and then again with a Molotov cocktail in 2004. Also, in 2004, the cemetery was the target of vandals who painted 70 gravestones with antisemitic graffiti. Local authorities were not helpful in the aftermath. Most cemeteries were founded in the 19th century, though there are a few older ones, including the important sites of Dubosari, Lipcani, Markuleşti, Nisporeni, Orhei, Otachi, Rashkov, Rezina, Teleneşty, and Zguritsa. The cemeteries of Chişinău and Bălţi are very large – approximately 100 hectares each – and each probably has more than 20,000 graves. These are the largest Jewish sites in Moldova.

Some Jewish cemeteries, such as in Ungheni, are adjacent to, or part of, municipal cemeteries. Some cemeteries, such as in Markuleşti, are in very bad condition. Many older cemeteries still preserve scores – and even hundreds – of beautifully carved gravestones. All have epitaphs and many include distinctive decorative reliefs, including favourite motifs of paired rampant lions, the blessing hands of the kohanim, menorahs and rosettes."[79]

The Jewish cemeteries in Moldova are among the approximately 1,500 Jewish cemeteries in five countries that also include Lithuania, Greece, Slovakia and Ukraine that are being surveyed by ESJF under a project funded by an €800,000 EU Grant.[80]

Despite the immense levels of devastation of the Jewish cemeteries in Moldova, the process of their restoration was launched in the early 2000s and continues to the present. Cemeteries in Moldova are public property, and therefore it is the responsibility of governmental institutions to

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79 Samuel D. Gruber, *Jewish Heritage Sites and Monuments in Moldova*, Paper no. 96, 2010 College of Arts and Sciences, Syracuse University, 6-7. https://surface.syr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=rel

80 Moldova: First-stage of restoration of Jewish cemetery in Chisinau lays bare vast space; reveals – but also causes – damage, 2 April 2019, https://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/2019/04/02/moldova-restoration-of-vast-jewish-cemetery/

protect, secure and maintain the tombstones and graves. Local municipalities, with cooperation from the Moldovan Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, oversee the preservation projects of the Jewish cemeteries in the country. For example, the large Jewish cemetery on Miodova Street in Chişinău entered the first stage of restoration in December 2018 under the care of the local municipality. The Moldovan Jewish community has enthusiastically supported the restoration of this important site of national cultural heritage in spite of some legitimate criticism over the manner the trees were removed from the cemetery and the damage caused to tombstones.[81] However, as noted by Dr Ana Bărbulescu, a senior researcher and head of the research department at the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust based in Bucharest, Romania, and an Associate Professor in the Department of Jewish Studies at the University of Bucharest, not all the cemeteries in the country are properly maintained and protected.[82]

During the Holocaust, many Jewish cemeteries in Moldova were "killings fields" wherein the Romanian Jews were shot in mass graves. For that reason, the Jewish cemeteries in Moldova represent the key sites of commemoration of the Holocaust not only for Moldova, but also for Romania. Many high school teachers from Moldova interviewed for this report are aware of the special status of the Jewish cemeteries in Moldova in the memorialisation of the Holocaust. They expressed interest in conducting lessons in local Jewish cemeteries and support the idea that local schools should take part in regular cleaning and preservation work as a first step to learning in depth about the Holocaust; the victims and the places where they were murdered. However, as the teachers admit, this type of educational programme is still rare in Moldovan high schools:

"Most Jewish cemeteries involve connections to the Holocaust, being places where victims of pogroms and antisemitic actions after the outbreak of World War II were buried. Unfortunately, in many cases, those tombs or mass graves, which are a memory wound, were intentionally left in ruins, not to stir people's conscience and thus enable the forgetting of the Holocaust. I believe that schools should engage in Holocaust research from a memorial perspective; they should first engage with a true representation of the number of victims and the places where the murdered Jews were buried (many of them were buried within the locality, but not necessarily in the Jewish cemetery) and about the sacred functions of cemeteries and other burial places bearing historical memory. The first step would be, and should in fact be, the proper care of cemeteries as heritage sites, for better preservation and for future research. Unfortunately, the actual current practice looks completely different." (A.S. high school teacher of History)

The history of the Holocaust in Moldova stands out in terms of both the number of people killed and the intention of the Romanian regime to murder on mass its own citizens.[83] Today, the killings perpetrated by the Romanian Army against the Jews of Bessarabia and the mass deportations to Transnistria are still mostly unknown among the broader Romanian public. According to the last national survey held in 2021 by the Elie Wiesel Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania, only 25 per cent of the respondents knew about the mass massacres of Jews, and only 38 per cent had heard about the deportations of Romanian Jews to Transnistria when asked to describe the Holocaust in Romania.[84]

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81 Idem.,

82 The first interview with Ana Bărbulescu on 25 October 2022 was by the author of this report. I would like to thank Ana Bărbulescu for her important reflections on the state of education about the Holocaust in Moldova and Romania. She is a co-author of an important book on the history and memorialisation of the Holocaust, Adina Babeș-Fruchter, Ana Bărbulescu eds., *The Holocaust in South-Eastern Europe: Historiography, Archives Resources and Remembrance*, (Wilmington DE, Vernon Press, 2021).

83 Solonari, "Public Discourses on the Holocaust in Moldova," 381.

84 See the report on the Perceptions of inter-ethnic relations and the Holocaust in today's Romania, November-December 2021:
https://www.inshr-ew.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Sondaj-INSHR_2021_engleza.pdf

On 22 July 2016, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova issued a statement endorsing the Report of the International Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania.[85] In the aftermath of endorsing the Report, the government of Moldova approved the 2017–2019 Action Plan to implement the Declaration of the Parliament on Acceptance of the Elie Wiesel Commission's Report on the Holocaust. At that time, the Moldovan government also approved the introduction of teaching about the history of the Jews and the Holocaust in the high school curriculum. It also approved teacher training for high school teachers on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, in cooperation with foreign NGOs and scholars of Jewish history and the Holocaust in Romanian and Moldovan universities.

As a result of these important state initiatives, between 2018 and 2021, the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania, in cooperation with the Oral History Institute of Moldova[86] and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova Office[87] in Moldova, organised a series of workshops dedicated to Holocaust education. More than 300 history teachers from Moldova attended the workshops that covered topics not only relating to Holocaust history and Holocaust historical resources to be used in the classroom, but also about civic education, combating anti-semitism and innovative pedagogical methods. The workshops were organised in 29 counties: Chișinău, Soroca, Drochia, Hîncești, Leova, Cimișlia, Florești, Orhei, Telenești, Șoldănești, Rezina, Ungheni, Fălești, Nisporeni, Călărași, Căușeni, Ocnița, Briceni, Cahul, Criuleni, Ialoveni, Sîngerei, Dondușeni, Cantemir, Edineți, Râșcani, Dubăsari, Basarabeanca and Bălți.

At present, pupils in Moldova begin to learn about the Holocaust at the age of 16 in grade 9, and history teachers have only one or two hours to introduce the topic during the entire academic year. Lessons about the Holocaust continue in the History curriculum in grades 10 to 12 of high school with an emphasis in the 12th grade on contemporary Twentieth Century History. In grade 12, teachers can choose to teach about the Holocaust when they deal with some key topics in the History curriculum such as Ethnic Minorities in the Republic of Moldova, or Genocide and Extermination. Teachers also mention that they can teach the Holocaust as an extra-curricular subject in the framework of the 35-hour Optional Course (one hour a week), on offer between 9th and 12th grade. However, many recognise that there are fundamental problems with the Optional Course. S.K. (Teacher from a gymnasium in Chișinău) argues that: "The problem is in the word 'optional', as a result it is often not being selected to be taught to students."

S.M. (Researcher and Professor at the Pedagogical State University in Chișinău) elaborates that there are major problems with the subject of the Holocaust in the high school curriculum. Firstly, the 35-hour Optional Course has to be selected and approved by both students and the school administration; secondly, students do not learn about the pre-1939 Jewish history, culture and heritage before studying the Holocaust; thirdly, given the multi-ethnic past of the region, there is a lack of guidance and vision as to how to study the Jewish minority in a broader historical context; fourthly, there are not many teachers with adequate training on Jewish history and the Holocaust who could teach the subjects; and fifthly, the hours available are totally insufficient in the History curriculum:

"It is optional. It has to be selected and accepted by both students and the school administration. Then, usually 1 hour a week per school year is devoted to learning about Holocaust history. In the introductory part of the course, there is something mentioned about Jewish culture and heritage. Often, you will not find any reference to the Jewish community during Antiquity and the Middle Ages. In modern times, there is usually one photo of the ethnic structure of Bessarabia and

85 Tuvia Friling, Radu Ioanid and Mihail E. Ionescu, eds., *International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania. Final Report*, 2004 (Conducted under the chairmanship of Elie Wiesel and known as the Elie Wiesel Report, http://www.inshr-ew.ro/ro/files/Raport%20Final/Final_Report.pdf

86 https://oralhistory.md/

87 https://moldova.fes.de/ro/

Rîșcova, Moldova

Romania from the 19th century on display, and that is all…. Probably we have to revise our school curriculum; we also have to pay more attention to the ways the hours are distributed to study different ethnic groups in society in the History curriculum: Jewish, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Bulgarian, Gagauz minorities – we have to learn more about different ethnic groups throughout history…. It is currently not enough. The optional course is like you have it – but you do not touch it. It is complicated to get the students to choose the course. And we do not have enough teachers with the proper training to prepare for the course. With regards to Holocaust education, officially there is a legal framework to learn about it. The subject features in the curriculum as an Optional Course. In the 12th grade, there is a sub-topic about the Holocaust within the Second World War in general History class. This would be taught for about 1 hour during an entire semester in the 12th grade."

Other teachers interviewed are also highly critical of the present national curriculum and lack of inclusion of pre-Holocaust Jewish history and heritage within it: "the studying of Holocaust events is conducted within the framework of learning about crimes against humanity and discriminatory laws applied to ethnic minorities including Jews, Roma, etc. in the first part of the Twentieth Century. Other aspects of Jewish history – heritage, culture, daily life, traditions, etc. are "out of sight." (S.K. from Gymnasium in Chișinău).

Most teachers state that they lack proper textbooks and other educational resources to teach about Jewish history, Jewish cultural heritage and the Holocaust, and that the current textbooks treat the topic in a "laconic manner." They also require more innovative teaching and pedagogical resources "in Romanian and Russian, as many in their profession do not speak other foreign languages." (S.M.)

Some mention the influence of the past pre-communist and communist legacies on the current national curriculum, and in particular on the treatment of the Holocaust and Jewish history in education:

"Jews were and are an important part of our national history and more hours should be allocated to "different aspects of Jewish heritage". Bessarabia (currently, the Republic of Moldova) was the country where the 'Holocaust by bullets' took place. The topic was forbidden during Soviet times and avoided (up until recently) in Moldova after the collapse of the USSR. After the proclamation of independence, history teaching was still dominated by the interpretation of the past that was similar to the inter-war interpretations in Romania – antisemitic, in fact. Moreover, students were taught the history of one ethnic group solely – the Romanians. Other ethnic groups that also formed the nation were being ignored. A multi-cultural approach in history teaching could change the situation for the better." (A.T. History teacher)

Characteristically, teachers stress a great need for pre-service teacher training and regular, ongoing in-service training in Holocaust studies and Jewish history, culture and heritage. They highly value teacher training conducted by local, regional and national NGOs such as the Institute of Jewish History and Culture and the Elie Wiesel Institute in Bucharest, as well as by Western European NGOs. They benefit greatly from short educational courses organised abroad by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem or other foreign institutes. However, some teachers indicate that their head teachers/school administrations do not always support them in their efforts to undergo teacher training in the fields of Jewish history, the Holocaust and European memory of WWII. Though the teachers do not voice the reasons for their headmasters refusing permission or payment for the training, one can assume a combination of financial, social and cultural factors behind this troubling situation. There is a need for the development of greater appreciation of the importance of the fields of the Holocaust and Jewish heritage for civic education among high school headteachers and administrations:

"Participating in a training course on Culture of Memory and European Understanding (Moldova Institute Leipzig, August 2021), held in Chișinău and Odessa, and receiving the certificate, my high school principal refused to acknowledge my participation and to pay me for my study week on the grounds that I went "to Odessa to rest, not to study", and "the certificate with the signature of Mr. Ș **** is taken from the Internet". All this, although the seminar was intensely promoted by the government Education Department and the documents were in order. So, the moral is that you must be the right person to be selected for training, or promotion." (S.A. History teacher)

Given the specific nature of the Holocaust in Moldova, teachers are eager to develop learning in Jewish cemeteries as sites of perpetration. However, they do not limit the learning experience to the space of the Jewish cemetery to study the machinery of the Holocaust. Teachers would also like to use the Jewish cemetery to study local Jewish cultural heritage, and they see this topic as central not only to teaching history but also for teaching Languages and Literature, the Arts and Civic Education. Though only a very few had the experience to teach in a Jewish cemetery and some admit that, at this stage, they do not have the right pedagogical and methodological training to do so, they recognise that teaching about local Jewish heritage and past local Jewish communities in a cemetery setting can be of great benefit in instilling democratic values of tolerance and sensitivity to cultural diversity among students.

"The local Jewish cemetery can become 'visible' and a real starting point to study Jewish heritage, to undertake research and to design curricular and extra-curricular projects of social significance. Also, the cemetery can be seen as an open-air museum that can provide a huge amount of information and data." (S.M. high school teacher)

Teachers are aware that they need special training on how to teach about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in a Jewish cemetery and that they require special learning trips to cemeteries prior to taking students there:

"Here we need a viable partnership with specialist centres – historians, culturologists, and linguists specialising in Jewish civilization, because of the lack of proper historiography and other resources, and also because of the general gaps in knowledge about the Jewish population and their culture. Study at the Jewish cemetery can no longer be achieved through legends…. Biographies of the deceased, their genealogy, their relationships, and their impact on the local community need to be addressed. Schools in general are not prepared enough to deal with such an approach."
(A.T. History teacher)

Overall, many high school teachers see education on the Holocaust and Jewish heritage as a fundamental part of civic and democratic education. They stress that neither the Ministry of Education nor local municipalities offer them financial support to develop this type of education. In fact, many recognise that the Ministry of Education and other governmental institutions themselves lack expertise in the fields of Jewish history and culture, and the Holocaust.

Teachers are also eager to cooperate with Jewish organisations in the country and abroad and with Israeli and other foreign embassies to develop formal and extra-curricular educational projects to be conducted in the classroom or on site at a Jewish cemetery. They view Jewish heritage as a part of the multicultural heritage of Moldova and wish to teach it holistically with an emphasis on democratic values of pluralism and inclusiveness and combating xenophobia, inter-ethnic prejudice and antisemitism.

For the future of education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in Moldova, it is important that greater financial resources are put in place to build an educational system embedded in the values of democracy and pluralism. Like Lithuania and Hungary, the role of foreign Jewish and non-Jewish NGOs is critical in strengthening education for democracy and against antisemitism and racism in Moldova. Given the special place of Moldova in the Holocaust of Romanian Jews, a deeper collaboration between Romanian and Moldovan initiatives should be encouraged. There is an urgent need for teachers in both Romania and Moldova to have access to solid educational resources including on the difficult past pertaining to the mass murder of Romanian Jews by non-Jewish populations during the Holocaust.

2.5 POLAND

2.5 POLAND

The earliest permanent Jewish settlements in the pre-modern Polish Kingdom go back to the twelfth century. The Polish Jewish community grew fast during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and, by the sixteenth century, 50,000 Jews lived in Jagiellonian Poland which was experiencing economic growth and prosperity. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth created by the Jagiellonian dynasty was the second largest state in pre-modern Europe. The Jagiellonian rule came to be considered a Golden Age in Polish history, and a Golden Age in Polish Jewish history. It was during this era that Polish Jews were granted unique communal autonomy in religious and legal matters and the National Council of Jews of the Four Lands was established.

When Poland regained its independence in 1918 after almost two hundred years of non-existence on the political map of Europe due to three partitions in the eighteenth century, Polish Jewry numbered 3 million people and constituted the second largest ethnic minority in the state, with a unique tri-lingual culture of Yiddish, Hebrew and Polish. Between 1918 and 1939, there were 1,415 Jewish communities with populations of at least 100 people living in different parts of the country, and nearly all had at least one cemetery, ranging from large cities like Warsaw and Łódź to small graveyards in villages.[88]

In September 1939 the Polish state was invaded by two powers: the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. Germany took control over 48.4 per cent of the territory (188,000 square kilometers) with 62.9 per cent of the total population, including just under nineteen million ethnic Poles, just over two million Polish Jews, just over half a million Germans and half a million Ukrainians. The Soviet Union took control over the Eastern Polish territories amounting to 200,000 square kilometers with a thirteen million population, including approximately five million ethnic Poles, five million Ukrainians, two million Belorussians and one million Jews.[89] The German occupation lasted almost five years, whereas the Soviet occupation ended in June 1941 when the Soviet Union was invaded by Nazi Germany in Operation Barbarossa. By the end of 1939, the Germans had promulgated laws forcing Polish Jews to wear a yellow star and conscripting all Jewish males between the ages of 14 and 60 for compulsory labour. In 1940, the German occupiers implemented the ghetto-isation of Polish Jewry, establishing four hundred ghettos within Polish territory. During this process, the Germans relocated many Jewish communities from small villages and towns to larger towns and cities. By the end of 1940, the Nazis had sealed off many ghettos from the rest of the Nazi occupied population, including the Warsaw Ghetto with the largest Jewish population in Europe.[90] Slave labour, hunger, re-occurring epidemics of typhus, and death caused by starvation and diseases were the main features of daily existence behind the ghetto walls during 1941.

In 1942, the Nazis launched the Reinhard Action operation, designed to exterminate the entire Jewish population. The ghettos were liquidated under the disguise of "resettlement in the East" and its inhabitants were transferred to the major extermination centres in Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, and Auschwitz II-Birkenau. At the end of 1942, it became clear that most of the Polish Jews had perished and that only small numbers still lived in the remaining ghettos and on the Aryan side. The Germans continued to clear these ghettos throughout 1943 and 1944; the Litzmannstadt Ghetto on the territory incorporated to the Reich was the last to be destroyed in

88 Samuel Gruber and Phyllis Myers, *Survey of Historic Jewish Monuments in Poland*, Rev. 2nd edition, A Report to the United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad (Jewish Heritage Council, World Monuments Fund, 1995), 31. Hereafter Gruber and Myers, *Survey*.

89 See Ludwik Landau, *Kronika wojny i okupacji*, (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962-1963).

90 On the history of the Warsaw Ghetto see Samuel Kassow, *Who will write our history?: Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2007) and Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *Getto warszawskie: Przewodnik po nieistniejącym mieście* (Warsaw, Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2001).

August 1944.[91] In all, approximately 2.9 million Polish Jews perished representing 90 per cent of the entire pre-1939 community. The Germans were also determined to destroy Polish Jewish material heritage: they relished invading synagogues and Jewish cemeteries. They smashed tombstones or used them for construction.

In the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, when Polish Jewish survivors returned to their homes, they found gravestones shattered and graves desecrated. However, the most traumatic experience for the survivors was to find in many cemeteries the exposed corpses and mass graves of those whom the Germans had executed. Instantly, the survivors engaged in exhuming and gathering remains, reburying the dead, creating new memorial stones, and erecting monuments to those who had been massacred in Jewish cemeteries.[92]

Given the increasingly anti-Jewish atmosphere of the late 1940s, many survivors decided to leave communist Poland. By 1951, the Polish Jewish community was reduced to 57,000 individuals. In 1968, due to a new wave of anti-Jewish purges orchestrated by the communist regime, another 30,000 Polish Jews were forced to emigrate from the country.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Jewish cemeteries were left to nature's ravages and to human depredation. In 2012, Łukasz Baksik, a young Polish photographer, published a collection of powerful black and white photographs, Matzevot for Everyday Use, revealing the lasting effect on the Polish landscape of acts of plunder of Jewish cemeteries during the communist era.[93] Baksik took the photographs between 2008 and 2012 in his hometown Pszczyna and other surrounding towns and villages, and his work aimed to re-humanise Polish Jews whose matzevot had been stolen and misappropriated. In 2016, Baksik's photographs of matzevot were exhibited at the Florida Holocaust Museum in the USA. The Museum's Director of Research, Urszula Szczepinska, wrote a guide for educators of middle and high schools in the USA to accompany the exhibition. In the guide she raised questions of an ethical nature to be addressed in the classroom: "What is a community? Are we responsible for one another? What is the scope of that responsibility? How do we perceive our neighbours? What do we know about our local history? What is memory?"[94] Szczepinska's guide could serve as a model to discuss misuses and antisemitic acts leading to the devastation and profanation of cemeteries in all our seven countries. Such guides in native languages could be applied in lessons about antisemitism held in the very space of vandalised and desecrated Jewish cemeteries.

In 2020, in the book, *Zagłada cmentarzy żydowskich* (Annihilation of Jewish Cemeteries), Dr Krzysztof Bielawski, a young non-Jewish Polish historian, painstakingly documented the wartime and post-1945 destruction of the Jewish cemeteries in Poland. The book examines the destruction of Jewish cemeteries, both within the contemporary Polish borders and those areas of the country that were part of Germany until 1945. Similar to Baksik's album of photographs, Bielawski's monograph reveals that not only the Germans, but also the local Polish population (during and after the war) and the post-1945 communist Polish state were involved in the immense devastation of the Jewish cemeteries. For example, Bielawski discusses how local Poles depleted many of the remaining cemeteries of their stones for the construction of walkways, roads, and cellar foundations or for whetstones to sharpen knives.[95] Cemetery walls were torn

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91 On the history of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, see Gordon J. Horwitz, *Ghettostadt: Łódź and the Making of a Nazi City*, (Cambridge MA, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008); Andrea Löw, *Juden im Getto Litzmannstadt: Lebensbedingungen, Selbstwahrnehmung, Verhalten* (Göttingen, Wallstein, 2006).

92 Gabriel N. Finder and Judith R. Cohen, "*Memento Mori*: Photographs from the Grave," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* Vol. 20, 2008, 55-73.

93 Łukasz Baksik, *Matzevot for Everyday Use*, (Wołowiec, Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2012).

94 Urszula Szczepinska, "Guide for middle and high school educators" (Florida, Florida Holocaust Museum, 2016), 17. https://www.thefhm.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Matzevor-Study-Guide-FINAL4.pdf

95 Krzysztof Bielawski, *Zagłada cmentarzy żydowskich* (Annihilation of Jewish Cemeteries), (Warsaw, Wydawnictwo Więź, 2020); Bielawski's book is only available in Polish, but the author has given interviews in English, see https://www.timesofisrael.com/annihilation-of-polands-jewish-cemeteries-documented-in-provocative-book/ and https://hamodia.com/prime/last-remnants-poland-jewish-cemeteries/

down and their bricks used for construction, and graves were plundered in search of "Jewish gold." Some cemeteries became grazing areas for cattle, others were transformed into playgrounds for children, housing developments, hospitals and schools. Bielawski also shows that, during the communist period, shortcuts to schools, markets and factories passed through Jewish graveyards in many towns and villages.[96]

The situation finally began to change in the 1990s in the aftermath of the fall of communism when the process of democratisation and pluralisation of national memory about the past developed. Thanks to this process, Polish society was for the first time confronted with its multi-ethnic and multi-religious past, including the rich pre-war Jewish history and culture and its visible and non-visible material remnants.[97] As a result, the legitimacy of the former important presence of Polish Jews has been slowly re-established and the marginalised and neglected Polish Jewish cultural record has been gradually acknowledged.[98]

In the early 1990s, the World Monuments Fund surveyed 1,008 Jewish cemeteries in present day Poland and reported that 400 of them have gravestones, 140 of them with more than 100 gravestones. Large cemeteries such as those in Warsaw, Kraków, Łódź and Wrocław have tens of thousands. "Offices, schools, stadiums, bus stations, and warehouses have been built on 130 Jewish cemeteries."[99] Today, given the miniscule size of the Polish Jewish community numbering approximately 20,000 people, no more than fifteen cemeteries are in use.

The number of NGOs specialising in the preservation of the Jewish cemeteries in contemporary Poland has been growing since the beginning of the twenty first century. Many local preservation projects are carried out by enthusiastic non-Jewish Poles – the new guardians of Jewish memory and Jewish material heritage.[100] They often cooperate with the most important Jewish institution for the preservation of Jewish cemeteries in Poland, titled the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland, (FODŻ). The Foundation was established in 2002 by the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland and the World Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO). The Foundation's chief mission is to protect and commemorate the surviving sites and monuments of Jewish cultural heritage in Poland.[101] The Foundation is the only institution in Poland officially dedicated to the task of recovering, preserving, and commemorating physical sites of Jewish significance such as synagogues and the 1,200 cemeteries. According to the Foundation's website, many of the sites of Jewish significance "still exist in an advanced state of deterioration and neglect and, even though all of them are listed as protected landmarks, Polish authorities have shown little independent initiative and commitment toward protecting these precious survivors of pre-war Jewish culture."[102] The Foundation specialises in cleaning, fencing and renovating Jewish cemeteries under the supervision of the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich. To date, the Foundation has completed work in over 100 Jewish cemeteries in Poland, including those in Mszczonow, Dubienka, Kolno, Ilza, Wysokie Mazowieckie, Siedleczka-Kańczuga, Zuromin, Myślenice, Szczebrzeszyn, Radoszyce and Głogow Małopolski.

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96 See also personal reflections in Agata Tuszyńska, *Lost Landscapes: In Search of Isaac Bashevis Singer and the Jews of Poland*, trans. Madeline G. Levine (New York, William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1998), 60-91.

97 On the remnants of material Jewish culture as the main vehicle through which Polish society has been confronted with the memory of the Jews and their annihilation, see Yechiel Weizman, *Unsettled Heritage: Living Next to Poland's Material Jewish Traces after the Holocaust* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2022).

98 Regarding the marginalised Jewish cultural heritage in Poland, see Brian Graham, G. J. Ashworth, and J. E. Tunbridge, *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy* (London, Arnold, 2000), 69.

99 Gruber and Myers, *Survey*, 31.

100 See for example the activities of K'amila Klauzinska, a guardian of a Jewish cemetery in Zduńska Wola in central Poland, Inga M Marczyńska, a guardian of a Jewish cemetery in Jasło in southern Poland, and Urszula and Marek Reduccy, the guardians of a local Jewish cemetery in Mszana Dolna; see a short film about the activities of Urszula and Marek Reduccy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxadMOdz45c

101 See the Foundation's official website, https://fodz.pl/?d=3&l=en

102 Idem., Statement on the opening first page, https://fodz.pl/?d=3&l=en

Along with the preservation of Jewish cemeteries, the Foundation is also engaged in educational projects for primary and high school students. One of the major achievements of the Foundation is the establishment of the educational programmme "To Bring Memory Back". As part of this programme, pupils in 300 junior and secondary schools collect information and historical records connected with the Jewish presence in their towns and villages. They also carry out interviews with older inhabitants, take photographs, and document preserved historical monuments representing the Jewish past. A second educational project carried out by the Foundation is called "Haverim" – Friends. It aims at creating a culture of encounters, tolerance and acceptance – building bridges – between non-Jewish Polish youth and Jewish youth from abroad by stimulating open and frank discussions about cross-cultural negative stereotypes, antisemitism and other forms of prejudice. Haverim – Friends and To Bring Memory Back projects could utilise Jewish cemeteries, with particular objectives such as teaching respect for Jewish culture and traditions and the past local Jewish inhabitants, and learning about burial traditions and rites in Jewish and Christian cultures.

In 2015, the Foundation established a unique initiative to reach out to descendants, Jewish organisations abroad, and family foundations to "adopt" a Jewish cemetery in Poland and therefore rescue them from future physical destruction.[103] In 2016, the Friends of Jewish Heritage in Poland, an American non-profit charity was established to assist the work of the Foundation. In 2021, the Foundation co-organised and co-sponsored with other partners in Poland and abroad the second international internet conference to promote the protection and restoration of Jewish cemeteries in Poland.[104] Education about Jewish cemeteries remains a core part of the Foundation's mission.

In post-communist Poland, the subject of the Holocaust and to a lesser degree Jewish history and culture has entered the high school history curriculum only at the beginning of the 21st century. In 1999, the Ministry of Education approved the curriculum for teaching about the Holocaust and history of the Jews in secondary schools[105] and, three years later, recommended the first textbook for teaching about the extermination of the Jews entitled "Holocaust – Understanding Why".[106] In 2012, the textbook needed to be re-published with a new methodological guide because of the two major reforms of the History curriculum of 2002 and 2008.[107]

Before 1989, teaching about the Holocaust in Polish schools was marginalised and instrumentalised by the communist authorities who distorted and weaponised it almost exclusively as

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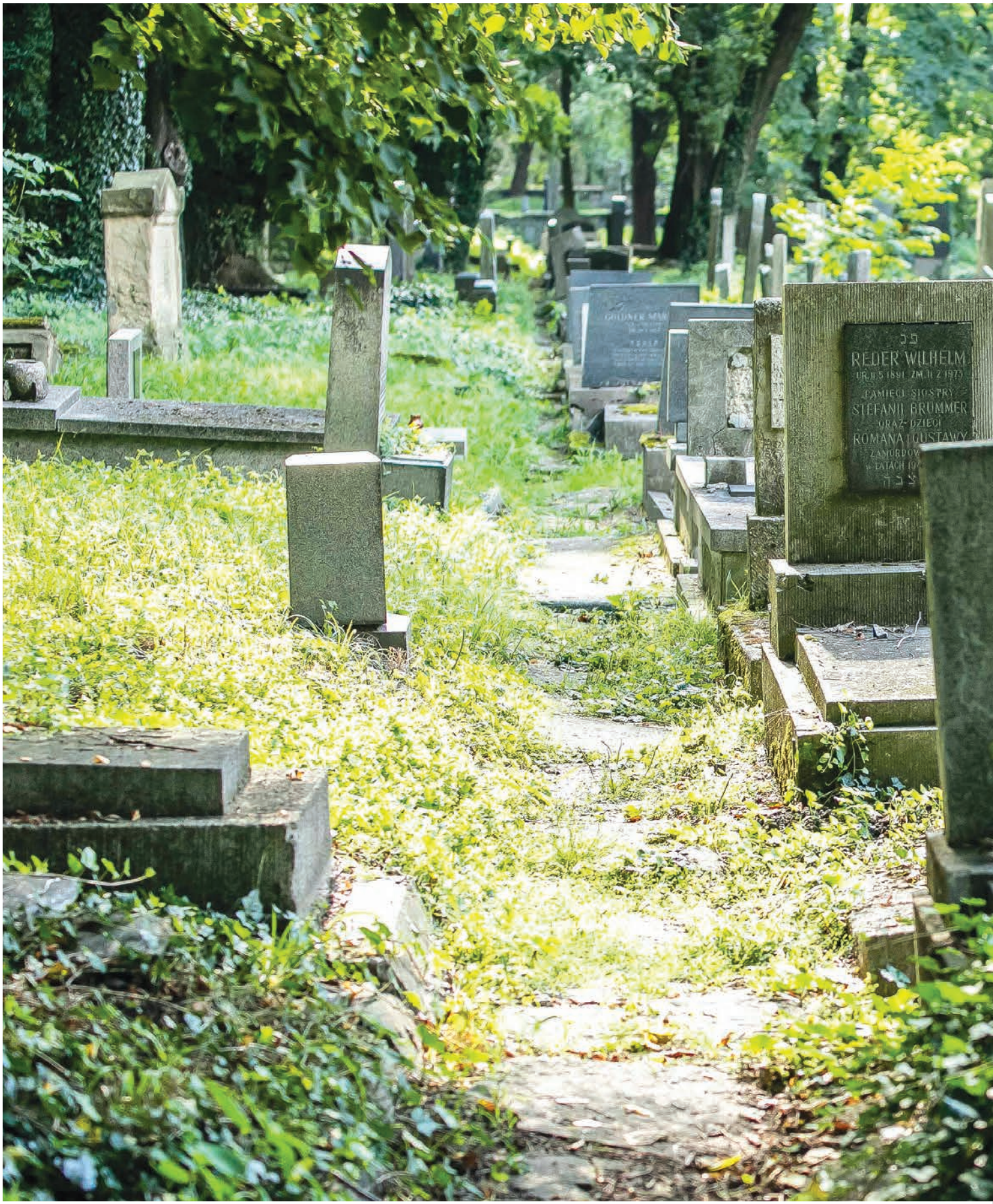
103 See "The Project: Adopt the Jewish cemetery in Poland" on the official website of the Foundation, https://fodz.pl/?d=5&id=101&l=en

104 See the programme of the Second 2021 International Conference, Restoring the Jewish Cemeteries in Poland, The Task Ahead: https://jewishheritagepoland.org/conference.html
One of the new partners of the Foundation is the organisation, *Koalicji Opiekunów Cmentarzy Żydowskich w Polsce* (the Coalition of Protectors of Jewish Cemeteries in Poland) under the chairmanship of Michał Laszczkowski. The Coalition was created in 2020 by the Cultural Heritage Foundation. However, some of its members are sceptical about its effectiveness. On the activities of Michał Laszczkowski with regards to the preservation of the Okopowa Cemetery in Warsaw see, https://combatantisemitism.org/personal_stories/michael-laszczkowski-the-non-jewish-man-who-restores-polands-forgotten-jewish-cemeteries/

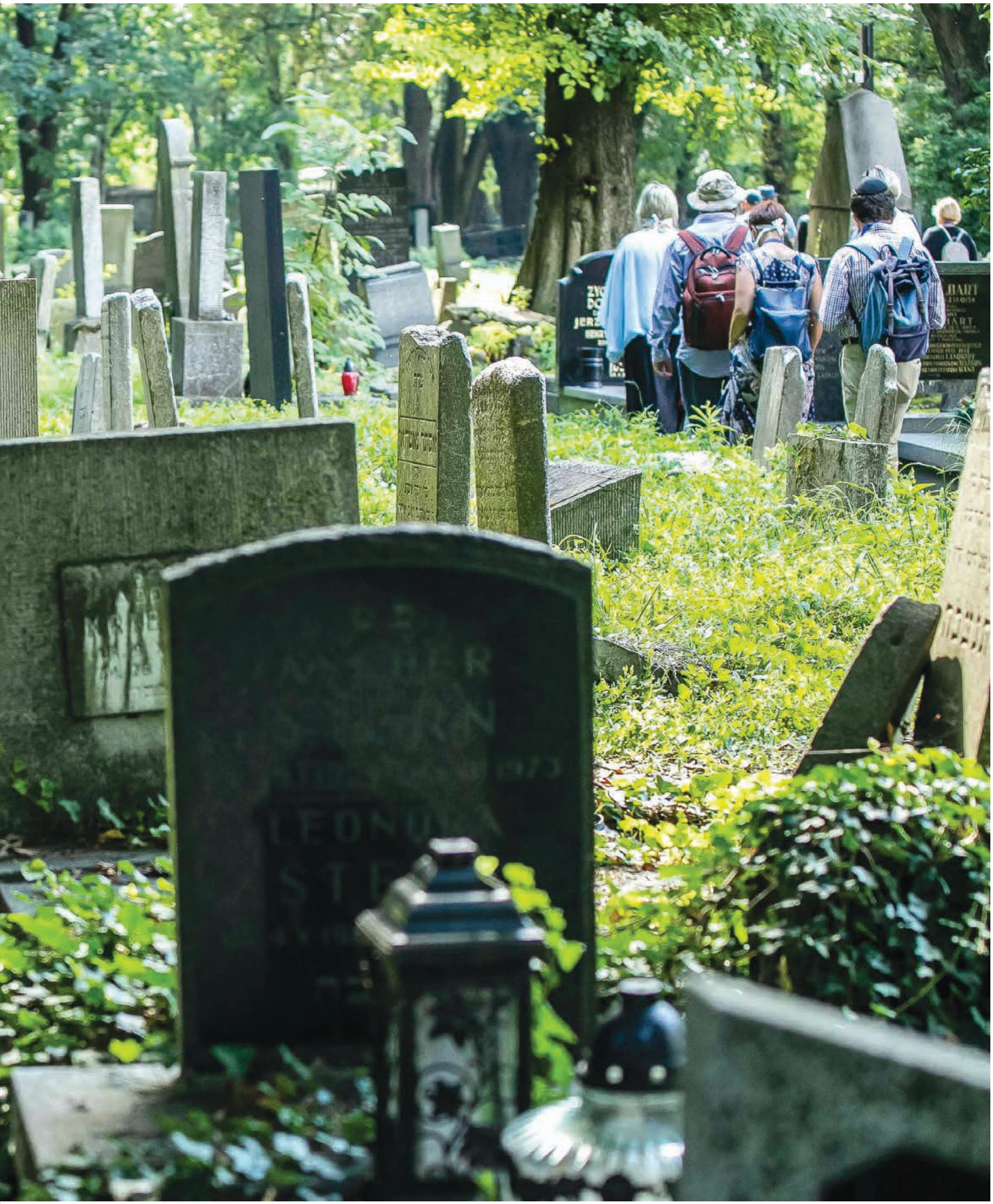
105 Robert Szuchta and Piotr Trojański, *Holocaust. Program nauczania o historii i zagładzie Żydów na lekcjach przedmiotów humanistycznych w szkołach ponadpodstawowych*, (Warsaw, Wydawnictwo Szkolne, first edition 2000, second edition 2001).

106 Robert Szuchta, Piotr Trojański, *Holokaust. Zrozumieć dlaczego*, (Warsaw, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Mówią Wieki", 2003, second ed., 2006).

107 Robert Szuchta and Piotr Trojański, *Jak uczyć o Holokauście. Poradnik metodyczny do nauczania o Holokauście w ramach przedmiotów humanistycznych w zreformowanej szkole*, (Warsaw, Centre for Educational Development, 2012). The online version of the guide can be found at: https://www.ore.edu.pl/wp-content/plugins/download-attachments/includes/download.php?id=4307



Kraków, Poland



a propaganda tool.[108] As a result, more than two post-war generations of Poles went through the educational system without learning that 3.5 million Polish citizens – Jews – were murdered by Germans in Nazi-occupied Poland, often in front of the eyes of the local people, or with local participation.

But the establishment of a liberal democratic government in the post-1989 era has led to the development of a multi-perspective approach to education about the Holocaust and Jewish history.[109] Poland's accession to the International Task Force for Holocaust Education Remembrance and Research (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) in 1999 played a decisive role in this process. The subsequent post-communist liberal democratic governments had begun to promote and financially support Jewish history and Holocaust educational programmes and activities in Polish schools and universities. Foreign NGOs and emerging local NGOs began to develop sophisticated educational programmes to teach democratic values and combating anti-semitism, such as the Internet project, "Jews in Poland: To preserve for posterity – teach for the future" designed for both teachers and students.[110] The Polish-based NGO, The Open Republic, an association against antisemitism and xenophobia, developed a similar educational programme promoting values of tolerance and respect for minorities and opposing antisemitism.

Thus, according to Piotr Trojański, a leading scholar of Holocaust education in Poland, by the middle of the first decade of the twentieth first century, "the institutional involvement of the liberal government along with educational activities undertaken by foreign and local NGOs and individual high school teachers and activists, made Poland one of the leading countries in Europe promoting Holocaust education."[111]

In the post-communist era, the entire Polish education system has changed, due to two reforms of the school system of 2000 and 2018, and three reforms of the History curriculum (2002, 2008, 2018). The developments in high school education have been complex and filled with major challenges for teachers, students and parents. Today, the educational system is still largely centralised and dependent on the Ministry of Education, which has an overwhelming influence on the shape of core curricula and textbooks alike. This particularly applies to teaching History, which is closely linked to the historical policy of the state. Therefore, one can see differences between the curricula and textbooks and formal educational practices in high schools between the late 1990s and in the post-2015 era to the present.

Between the late 1990s and 2015, regardless of the type of school and the levels of education, the Holocaust had been compulsorily taught in History lessons. There has also been specific teaching content relating to the Holocaust and Jewish history and culture in other main subjects such as Polish Language and Literature, Social Studies, History and Society and the Arts. With regards to the Holocaust-related content, the core curriculum did not directly emphasise the topic of non-Jewish Polish rescuers of Jews. This topic was one within broader topics concerning the national context of the Holocaust and attitudes of Polish society towards the Holocaust.

Fundamental changes took place in 2015 after PiS became the ruling party in the government. As one of its first policies directly impacting the content of high school education about the Holocaust and Jewish heritage, the PiS government introduced a new historical policy, the so-called "pedagogy of national pride" referring to the heroic (and martyrological) history of Poland.

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108 See Piotr Trojański, "The legacy of the Holocaust in Poland and its educational dimension," in L.W. Zimmerman (ed.), *Jewish Studies and the Holocaust in Poland*, (Jefferson, North Carolina McFarland & Company, Inc, Publishers, 2014), 93–116.

109 See Joanna B. Michlic, "The Path of Bringing the Dark to Light: Memory of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe," in Małgorzata Pakier and Joanna Wawrzyniak, eds. *Memory and Change in Europe. Eastern Perspectives*, (New York, London, Berghahn Books), 2015, 115–130.

110 http://www.zydziwpolsce.edu.pl/ The educational programme was developed in cooperation with Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Warsaw and the Association of the Polish-German Centre.

111 Interview of 17 November 2022 with Prof. Piotr Trojański by the author of this report.

This new development went hand in hand with the reform of the education system in 2017: within the new system, the three-year junior high school was replaced with the eight-year primary school and three/four/five-year secondary school.

As a consequence, since 2018, in the new core curriculum for teaching History in primary school, there is a provision drawing students' attention to the need to discuss the "heroism of Poles saving Jews."[112] Consequently, the obligation to discuss the topic of rescuing Jews (with an emphasis only on positive attitudes) is also reflected in the core curriculum for secondary schools.[113] In the latter, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum appears to be the only memorial site discussed in some detail, though visiting local memorial sites, including Jewish cemeteries, had been recommended to high school students prior to 2015.

Overall, in the current high school History curriculum, there is only limited content dealing with Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. One reason for this is the anachronistic, old-fashioned way of structuring the curriculum content by overfilling it with facts and developments from different historical periods rather than selected key events that the student can approach in a critical manner as an active learner. Similar to Georgian, Lithuanian and Slovak high school History curricula, Polish History education prefers teaching about political history rather than social and cultural history that also encompasses local history.

According to Adam Musiał, a high school education expert and an experienced former high school teacher, another key problem with high school humanistic education is the fact the Polish history education still uses obsolete tools to describe national identity: rather than focusing on civic national identity, it uses ethnic identity to describe nationality. "Thus, consequently, Jewish Poles (and other ethnicities inhabiting Poland) are viewed not as Poles, or 'true' Poles, and their histories are not regarded as 'our' Polish story. Of course, the civic paradigm did not apply until the late 20th century in Poland, yet history is, or should be, taught for today, and thus it should be taught critically through the prism of today's inclusive social categories. Jewish Polish history and the Holocaust are not given much space as the History curriculum almost exclusively focuses on ethnic Poles, perceiving all other ethnicities living in the Polish lands and contributing to Poland's development as guests at most…..Jews appear mostly in chapters dealing with the Middle Ages or early modernity to describe Poland's tolerance in accepting many 'others' in pre-modern Polish lands. In other words, Jews are instrumental in presenting ethnic Poles' positive image of themselves….."[114]

Musiał also stresses that, by and large, the History and Polish Literature high school curricula (especially the former) hardly reflect the findings of the numerous publications by critical scholars which have been published in Poland since the 2000s, dispelling the (ethno-) national myths propagated under communism about the great many righteous Poles rescuing their Polish Jewish compatriots. These findings hardly impact the content of the History curriculum and History course-books. In general, the limited Holocaust content in the History curriculum results from trends that reflect many Poles' and teachers' inability to face history critically and discuss the dark past in their nation's history, and the ethno-centric definition of national identity. As a consequence, some teachers cover the subject of the Holocaust (and Jewish heritage) sketchily and perfunctorily.[115]

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112 Instructions of the Ministry of National Education of 26 July 2018.

113 Instructions of the Ministry of National Education of 30 January 2018.

114 Interview of 8 November 2022 with Adam Musiał by the author of this report. Musiał is a senior independent researcher in a project 'Sites of Tensions – Shifts in Holocaust Memory, Antisemitism, and Political Contestation in Europe' run by MA Programme in Holocaust Studies, University of Haifa, https://holocauststudies.haifa.ac.il/index.php/program-features/weiss-livnat-center-projects

115 A similar evaluation of the high school curricula is presented by Robert Szuchta, "*Zagłada Żydów jako temat nauczania w systemie formalnej edukacji historycznej*", in: Katarzyna Liszka ed., *Wiedza (nie)umiejscowiona. Jak uczyć o Zagładzie w Polsce w XXI wieku?*, (Kraków, Wydawnictwo Universitas, Kraków 2020), 17-54.

Dr Marta Duch-Dyngosz, a scholar of Memories Studies, confirms Musiał's conclusions. She argues that in the last three decades, the school curricula have acknowledged the centuries-long presence of ethnic and national minorities in Polish history, including Jewish communities. Additionally, the narrative about WWII has gradually shed light on the particularity of the Holocaust and Jewish experience in wartime Poland. However, in the high school History and Literature curricula, information about Jewish heritage has only been introduced in a superficial way. The rudimentary representation of Jewish communities within the image of the multi-cultural Polish Commonwealth also suggests the emphasis on the dominant Polish ethnic culture. This has served a particular social function, mainly creating a positive image of the "we-group", namely as tolerant, expressing hospitality and openness towards "other ethnic and religious groups". Regarding the history of the Holocaust, the official curriculum has focused mainly on the developments of the tragic events in the context of international events such as the German occupation of Western Europe with Auschwitz-Birkenau as a symbol of the annihilation of European Jewry. It pays less attention to the experience of Polish Jewry and the extermination camps in Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka. Regarding the experience of Polish Jews, the Uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto of 19 April 1943 has become a central reference, as the event fits easily into the dominant heroic-martyrological narrative in Polish memory politics. Unfortunately, the numerous recent findings of both Polish and non-Polish scholars and researchers regarding the Holocaust and the "dark past" on Polish soil have not yet been incorporated into school curricula. What is lacking is the history of collaboration and complicity of local populations in the persecution of local Jewish communities – these aspects remain absent in school curricula.[116]

Based on her sociological studies of public memories of the Jewish past in southern Poland, Duch-Dyngosz also notes that general high school curricula are centered on the national history and the history of ethnic Poles, and the key narratives in the textbooks ignore the local past and remembrance. Therefore, teaching about local history depends on the individual teacher, whether he/she decides to teach about local Jewish heritage, including Jewish cemeteries.[117]

The individual teachers interviewed for this report confirm the above-mentioned problems and challenges in high school curricula and formal educational practices. Many of them are experienced History and Polish Literature teachers who have taught throughout the last twenty or thirty years during the different stages of the post-communist development of high school education. Others are teachers starting their careers only now. They teach in a variety of high schools including gymnasia, grammar, technical and vocational schools.

The interviews with teachers suggest that high school History (and also Literature) curricula are implemented in a variety of ways at the different types of school. In general, students in high schools get introduced to some rudimentary aspects of Jewish history and culture including Ancient Israel and the Bible in the context of learning about Ancient Civilizations at the age of 14-15 in Year One of high school. Some teachers emphasise that they teach about the Holocaust in a variety of forms, including trips to Jewish cemeteries, during additional lessons because they only have between 1 to 2 hours in the entire four-year basic History curriculum to teach about the subject. (T. J. History teacher). Some teachers from technical high schools point out that the Holocaust and Jewish heritage are absent in the general curriculum and that they teach about these subjects on their own accord, out of civic duty and their own personal interest (I.G-B. Polish Literature teacher). Literature teachers introduce Jewish history and Jewish heritage topics in Polish Literature lessons about the Nineteenth Century in Year 2 for which they have between 2 to 3 hours.

116 Interview of 8 November 2022 with Dr Marta Duch-Dyngosz by the author of this report.

117 Interview of 8 November 2022 with Dr Marta Duch-Dyngosz by the author of this report.

They again introduce Jewish history and the Holocaust in lessons about Polish Literature during the Second World War in Year 4 for which they have between 5 to 10 hours.

History teachers uniformly stress that 1 to 2 hours dedicated to the Holocaust in Year 4 is totally insufficient to introduce the subject properly. The History Core/Basic Curriculum ("podstawa programowa") in Year 4 includes the following learning tasks for students with regards to the discussion of the German extermination policy:

1. To present the ideological foundations of the extermination of the Jews and other ethnic and social groups by Nazi Germany;
2. To characterise the stages of the extermination of the Jews (discrimination, stigmatisation, isolation, extermination);
3. To recognise the main extermination sites of the Polish and European Jews and other ethnic and social groups on the territory of Poland and Central & Eastern Europe (including Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibór, Babi Yar);
4. To describe the attitudes of the Jewish people towards the Holocaust, taking into account the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising;
5. To characterise the attitudes of Polish society and the international community towards the Holocaust, taking into account the Righteous, on the basis of Irena Sendler, Antonina and Jan Żabiński and the Ulma family.

Many History teachers also indicate that only students in classes with the extended History curriculum programme can learn more about the Holocaust in the context of the study of the Second World War in Year 4. Therefore, some teachers teaching the Basic History Curriculum devote more time to the Holocaust than prescribed in the curriculum at the expense of other subjects (T. J. History teacher). They also use additional lessons such as study tours or visits to historical or remembrance sites, such as museums, former ghettos, concentration camps or extermination sites. They do this on their own initiative.

In planning additional learning activities about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, many teachers rely on educational programmes offered by local NGOs such as the Galicia Jewish Museum, the Centre for Dialogue in Łódź, Borussia in Olsztyn, the Bente Kahan Foundation in Wrocław, the virtual Museum of the Jews of Białystok and the Region, and the The Cukerman Gate Foundation in Będzin. Teachers also cooperate with local museums and cultural institutions that offer educational programmes to schools such as the Museum of the History of Polish Jews (POLIN), the Grodzka Gate in Lublin, the Upper Silesian Jews House of Remembrance in Gliwice, the Schindler Factory, and the Eagle Pharmacy branch of the Museum of the City of Kraków.

Many teachers concede that that they themselves have learnt a lot about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust from local non-formal educational and grassroots organisations such as Forum for Dialogue, *Zapomniane, Pamięć, która Trwa* and *Ludzie, nie liczby, Fundacja 4 Piętra* among others. These grassroots organisations have become a hub and point of reference for teachers and headteachers and other local leaders who are willing to include Jewish heritage into local remembrance and school curricula.

Prof. Edyta Gawron, a historian of modern Jewish history at the Jagiellonian University, confirms the importance of close collaboration between teachers and the local NGOs in designing lessons and extra-curricular activities on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust:

"In most of the cases I know, the decision on how to teach about Jewish heritage and Holocaust is made by the individual teacher (less so headteachers, who however may want or need to approve the teacher's decision). The teachers are inspired by international or local NGOs, or they are actively involved in the NGOs themselves. In several regions, museums play the role of being the hub for teacher training."[118]

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118 Interview of 9 November 2022 with Prof. Edyta Gawron by the author of this report.

Most teachers develop their expertise in the subjects of Jewish history and culture and the Holocaust either from self-education or in-service training offered by various institutions, museums and NGOs such as State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Jewish Historical Institute, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków and Auschwitz Jewish Center in Oświęcim.

Some have greatly benefited from short-term teacher training abroad at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Memorial de la Shoah in Paris and the Wansee Museum in Berlin, and from training offered by foreign Jewish NGOs such as Centropa. Those who attended teacher training stress that they had to apply for it on their own initiative without financial support from their schools. In the process, many have learnt to search for grants from third parties including local municipalities. However, some teachers stress that, after the change of government in 2015, "they have started to meet with opposition from headteachers." Moreover, "some municipalities are not as open to cooperation with schools in the development of educational programmes on local Jewish history and the Holocaust as before." (T. J. History teacher)

Most interviewed teachers emphasise the need for the establishment of pre-service training on Jewish history, culture, heritage and the Holocaust. At present, teachers do not generally study these subjects either during BA or MA pedagogical studies. The teachers also would like to participate more frequently – once a year or more – in short-term training on the Jewish narrative.

Many teachers organise trips to Jewish cemeteries on a voluntary basis as part of informal education on Jewish culture and religion. In some towns, teachers participate with their students in commemorative ceremonies on the deportation and extermination of local Jewish communities. Such ceremonies are sometimes held in Jewish cemeteries which were the killing sites where Jews were executed.

In some cases, primary schools are involved in taking care of a Jewish cemetery and learning about local Jewish heritage. For example, a local elementary school in Izbica in the Lublin region is cooperating with the German organisation Bildungswerk Stanisław Hanz to develop educational activities on the topic of the Jewish history of Izbica, including the tragic history of the transit ghetto. In addition, the school has been taking care of the local Jewish necropolis.[119]

However, some teachers have experienced challenging situations by incorporating a Jewish cemetery into local history lessons because the cemeteries themselves constitute part of the difficult past that the local communities are unable yet to come to terms with. For example, in Biłgoraj in the Lublin region, the high school building itself stands atop of an "old Jewish cemetery." In 2014, the high school students took part in an educational programme exploring local Jewish history, and the educators suggested a debate about the fact that the school was standing on the grounds of a Jewish cemetery. However, the idea was abandoned as potentially too distressing for the local community.[120]

Overall, most high school teachers would like to incorporate visits to Jewish cemeteries within the framework of high school curricula, as they view them as relevant to various aspects of teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. They recognise that lessons at Jewish cemeteries enable "putting an emphasis on the fate of individuals and concrete local Jewish communities before and during the war." (W.A. History teacher)

In addition, teachers would like to incorporate a local Jewish necropolis in teaching about the differences between Judaism and Christianity, and about the preservation of different religious sacred sites. However, they stress that they would like to undergo further specialist training and obtain more specific pedagogical and methodological skills and resources to be better informed and prepared. Some indicate that they have limited training and experience of teaching in Jewish cemeteries:

119 I am grateful to Dr Marta Duch-Dyngosz for sharing with me this information.

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"I only know of training organised for teachers and informal educators by the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow which focused on reading matzevot, and using Jewish cemeteries for educational purposes.

I know that training organised by museums and NGOs also include visits to cemeteries to teach about the diversity of pre-war Polish Jewish life.

As for myself, I have taken high school students, and also university students, only a few times due to lack of curriculum space and time to the New Jewish Cemetery in Miodowa Street in Kraków, where I presented the diversity and richness of the pre-war Jewish life of Jewish Kraków through the graves of various people buried there.

I have more often taken students to the Krakow Old Jewish Cemetery (Remuh/Ramah), which was part of a visit to the adjoining synagogue, followed by a visit to the Tempel or Progressive Synagogue, to deliver a talk on the diversity of Jewish identities. I used the Remuh Cemetery to talk about the traditional Jewish identity and a few famous rabbis, as well as introduce certain symbols used on Jewish tombstones."[121]

Many teachers are concerned about the future of education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the formal educational setting because of the fear of a potential end to the educational activities offered by grassroots NGOs and museums – the leaders in best practice. For the future of this education, greater financial and moral resources must be put in place to strengthen the support provided by local NGOs, and the educational system must remain autonomous and independent from the weaponisation for ideological and political goals by the state.

It is also essential that the difficult past pertaining to the treatment of Polish Jews by non-Jewish Polish co-citizens is integrated into the available educational resources, and that teachers in pre- and in-service training are offered guidance on how to teach about it in a sensitive way, and to teach about Jewish history in general as part of a wider education for democracy and pluralism.

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121 Interview of 8 November 2022 with Adam Musiał by the author of this report.

2.6 SLOVAKIA

2.6 SLOVAKIA

Less than a tenth of the pre-war number of Czechoslovak Jews, between fifteen and eighteen thousand, managed to survive the Holocaust.[122] The immediate post-1945 period of retributions and trials was characterised by a general animosity towards the Slovak Jewish survivors who demanded the restitution of their property and businesses. In various Slovak towns and cities including Bratislava – today the capital of the independent, post-communist Slovakia – brutal anti-Jewish violence took place between 1945 and 1948. But the victory of communism in 1948 brought about the emergence of new myths about the wartime past, especially about the Red Army's sacrifices in fighting fascism for the sake of a peaceful Czechoslovakia. Subsequently, during the communist era, public knowledge and education about the fate of Slovak Jews in the Holocaust and the vibrant pre-1939 Jewish history and culture of Jews in Czech and Slovak lands was suppressed. The material Jewish heritage was neglected and left to fade into oblivion as in other post-1945 communist countries.

During the entire communist period, the official narrative ascribed the responsibility for the Holocaust in Slovakia solely to Nazi Germany. Nevertheless, in the mid-1980s, under the political impact of Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika in the Soviet Union, Slovak liberal intellectuals began to discover the neglected Slovak Jewish heritage as well as the painful, devastating past in Slovak-Jewish relations during WWII. In 1987, a group of liberal intellectuals under the leadership of Dominik Tatarka issued a proclamation condemning the 1944 deportations of Slovak Jews to concentration and death camps by the wartime Slovak fascist state led by Jozef Tiso.

In the 1990s, during the emergence of a Holocaust memorial culture in Slovakia, two hundred Holocaust survivors among the community of three thousand Jews in Slovakia became, for the first time, publicly acknowledged and interviewed for oral history projects such as "Fates of Those Who Survived the Holocaust."[123] Thanks to participating in the first teacher training in Holocaust education, some high school teachers began to invite Holocaust survivors to speak to their students in the classroom, an educational practice that still continues and is popular with students.

According to Prof. Nina Paulovicova, a Slovak-Canadian scholar of the Holocaust and Contemporary History at Athabasca University in Canada: "After the fall of communism, a primary goal was to provide more education on the Jewish community in Slovakia and the Holocaust to high school teachers, in particular high school teachers of History and Civic Education. One of the first initiatives focused on the training of educators in the area of Holocaust studies. Some high school teachers had an opportunity to attend an educational programme organised by the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem. This was an intense programme of lectures, workshops and field trips which equipped the participants with knowledge and pedagogical approaches to disseminate the acquired knowledge among other high school teachers in Slovakia via workshops. I was one of the participants of this first wave of educators whose task was to organise workshops for other high school teachers."[124]

New commemorative sites emerged such as a National Holocaust Memorial in Bratislava (1997) and local memorial sites in Huncovce, Nitra, Poprad and Trnava among others. On 9 September 2001, the Slovak Parliament established the annual commemoration of the Memorial Day for

122 On the history and memorialisation of the Holocaust, Nina Paulovicova, ""The Unmasterable Past"? The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Slovakia," in Himka and Michlic, *Bringing the Dark Past to Light*, 549–590.

123 The project 'Fates of Those Who survived the Holocaust' was a part of an oral history programme at a non-governmental Slovakian Milan Simecka Foundation. On its activities and resources, see https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/members/milan-simecka-foundation-nadacia-milana-simecku

124 An interview with Prof. Nina Paulovicova on 3 November 2022 with the author of this report. I would like to thank Prof. Paulovicova for her reflections and comments.

Victims of the Holocaust and of Racial Violence, a day that marks the infamous date, 9 September 1941, when the fascist Slovak government issued a decree on the legal status of Jews, the so-called the Jewish Codex. The Codex led to deportations and the murder of approximately 70,000 Slovak Jews in extermination centres and concentration camps. The establishment of the national Day of the Commemoration of the Holocaust on 9 September 1941, and the Slovak government's efforts to invest into Jewish heritage and Holocaust commemoration, led to the improvement of relations between Israel and Slovakia. Second and third generations of Slovak Jews in the Diaspora and in Israel, and the Israeli government, expressed a keen interest in the preservation of memories of Slovak Jews who perished in Slovakia during the Holocaust. Descendants of Slovak Jews living abroad and the Israel embassy in Bratislava became involved in Jewish heritage preservation projects, and high school educational activities for young Slovak youth on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust.

In 2007, the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) launched a project called 'Wagon' to mark 25th March as the sixty-fifth anniversary of the first deportation of one thousand young Jewish females from Poprad in 1942. The first wagon carried a small exhibit about the Jewish and Roma Holocaust. During the same time, the SNP Museum also embarked on educational projects about the Holocaust and human rights directed at high school teachers and students. Today, the educators at the SNP Museum are experts in teaching topics such as extremism, antisemitism, and racism. They produce pedagogical and methodological material for use in high schools and act as consultants in the preparation of materials by the Ministry of Education and the State Pedagogical Institute.[125] Every May they run a seminar for teachers that is under the auspices of the Slovak Minister of Education.

During the first decade of the third millennium, high schools began to organise school trips to the newly established memorial sites such as the SNP Museum. As commemorative culture around the Holocaust became more established, high school teachers and students had more opportunities to learn about these events. In 2005, Slovakia became a full member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.[126]

Jewish communities and local historians began to preserve the remaining material Jewish heritage in Slovakia. Therefore, Jewish cemeteries and synagogues became accessible to the public and high schools started to organise field trips to those sites. Today, there are approximately 693 identified Jewish cemeteries that have been preserved.[127] They are located in different regions of Slovakia, even in remote locations in small mountain villages where some Slovak Jewish communities resided before 1939. However, many of the cemeteries have been desecrated and vandalised and, as a result, it is difficult to create a comprehensive list of their tombstones. According to the Slovak Jewish Heritage Center, a and non-for-profit organisation set up in the spring of 2006, there are still under-researched cemeteries spread across north-eastern Slovakia, an area that was dominated by a Hasidic culture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with many unique folkloric decorative elements. The Slovak Jewish Heritage Center constitutes a joint project of the Bratislava Jewish Community and the Jewish Heritage Foundation called Menorah, also based in Bratislava. The project aims to fulfil broad goals in areas of research, documentation and education about Jewish heritage. The Slovak Jewish Heritage Center offers educational activities including Jewish heritage tours for high school teachers and students.

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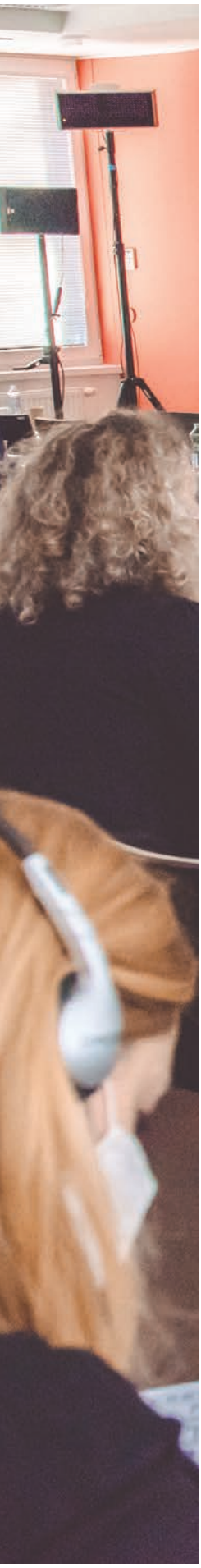
125 For various methodological and educational materials of the SNP Museum available online, see the following websites: http://snp.ucebna.org/course-cat/odborna-verejnost/ https://www.nadaciamilanasimecku.sk/publikacie/metodicke-prirucky and https://drive.google.com/file/d/14_YnocpMrOLkEKctxlypVHaJbWxyq0hi/view

126 https://2015.holocaustremembrance.com/member-countries/holocaust-education-remembrance-and-research-slovakia

127 See, for example, Leszek Hońdo, *Cmentarze na Słowacji – od Popradu do Presowa* / Leszek Hońdo, Prešov, Vydavateľstvo Prešovskej univerzity 2013, *Židia pred a za Karpatmi v priebehu stáročí* / Prešov, Vydavateľstvo Prešovskej univerzity 2013, s. 230-237, obr., map. ISBN:978-80-555-1043-9.



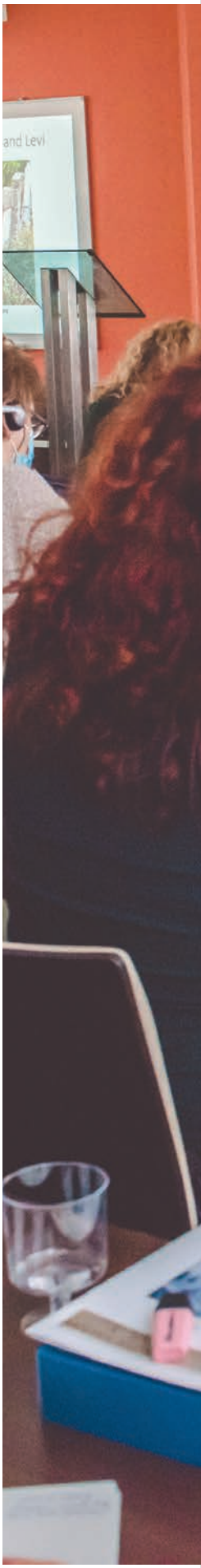
The high school teachers who were interviewed for this report, are experienced teachers representing several different types of high schools including state and private gymnasia and secondary vocational schools. Like in Poland and Lithuania, the quantity and quality of education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust depends in Slovakia chiefly on the commitment and approach of individual teachers. It also depends on the individual school management, as well as on local conditions such as the presence of a local Jewish cemetery, its physical state and accessibility, and the availability of museums of Jewish interest such as the Jewish Community Museum in Bratislava located in the former synagogue.[128]

According to Dr Monika Vrzgulova,[129] a key expert on Slovak education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Ethnology, Slovak Academy of Sciences in the Slovak Republic, the quality and quantity of high school education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust depends on the presence within the vicinity of schools of local NGOs such as Suburbium in Bardejov[130]; Nova Synagoga in Žilina[131]; Milan Simecka Foundation[132]; Holocaust Documentation Center[133]; or Post Bellum[134].

In addition to these local NGOs, Vrzgulova points out that innovative educational programmes for high school students are also on offer in what she calls, "authentic places connected with the history and presence of the Jewish community"[135] such as the restored synagogues in Prešov[136] and Lučenec[137]. The State Holocaust Museum in Sered[138], located at the site of the former labour and concentration camp for Slovak Jews, as well as the State Museum of the Jewish Culture in Bratislava[139], and the abovementioned State Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica[140], also offer printed and online educational programmes for high school teachers and students.

In towns such as Topoľčany, Spišská Nová Ves, or Banská Štiavnica, high school teachers and students engage regularly in the cleaning of the local Jewish cemetery. They also conduct historical research into the pre-1939 Jewish community and its contribution to local society. The fruits of the students' research can be found on display in school exhibitions, booklets and books, and in low budget documentary films produced by the schools.

As a member of the cohort of enthusiastic high school teachers, Dr M.K. (High school teacher at the Secondary Professional School in Tisovec) stresses that she teaches about local Jewish heritage in order for her students to "develop well rounded personalities, acquire knowledge about the Gemer-Malohont region, deepen their emotional relationship to the region, and also to the homeland. This focus enables students to understand and evaluate important events that have



128 For the educational programmes offered by the Jewish Community Museum in Bratislava see, http://www.synagogue.sk/en/education

129 I would like to thank Dr Monika Vrzgulova for her interview on 29 July 2022 and 20 November 2022, and for offering me her reflections on Slovak education. She is an author of an important monograph on the memories of the Holocaust in Slovakia, Monika Vrzgulova, *Nevyrozprávané susedské histórie. Holokaust na Slovensku z dvoch perspektív.* [Untold neighbors history. Holocaust in Slovakia from two perspectives]. (Bratislava, VEDA 2016)

130 http://suburbiumbardejov.sk/en/

131 https://www.novasynagoga.sk/en

132 https://www.nadaciamilanasimecku.sk/programy/vzdelavanie

133 http://www.holokaust.sk/projects-and-lectures-good-examples

134 https://www.postbellum.sk/vzdelavame/

135 An interview with Monika Vrzgulova of 29 July 2022.

136 http://www.synagoga-presov.sk/en/

137 https://dev.lukus.sk/synagoga/)

138 https://www.snm.sk/muzea-snm/muzeum-zidovskej-kultury/muzeum-holokaustu-v-seredi/o-muzeu

139 https://www.snm.sk/muzea-snm/muzeum-zidovskej-kultury/muzeum-zidovskej-kultury/o-muzeu

140 http://www.muzeumsnp.sk/vzdelavanie/zakladne-informacie/

Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

taken place in the region, and to learn about its traditions, customs and crafts. It is also very important to get to know the important people born in the region, their lives, work, activities, to learn lessons to help shape actions for each of us. The region should be a kind of 'family' we respect, protect, care for, and a refuge that offers us security."

Dr. M.K. has created a sophisticated educational programme about Jewish heritage in her school, wherein the Jewish cemetery in Tisovec is incorporated in different ways. However, some of her educational projects have not yet been fully implemented because of the global Covid pandemic, 2020–2021.

"During visits to the Jewish cemetery, students get to know its nature and landscape, get acquainted with the signs and character of the Jewish cemetery, with the inscriptions on the tombstones, and the arrangement of graves. They get to know the material from which the tombstones are made (mostly black and gray marble, and sandstone), they examine and 'read' the inscriptions on the tombstones. They study historical materials from a particular period, especially concerning the life and destinies of members of the Jewish community in Tisovec and the Gemer–Malohont region in general.

The Secondary Professional School is also a member of the local branch of Matica Slovenská in Tisovec. Together, in 2020, they prepared a new project called 'What Cemeteries Talk About', the aim of which is to acquaint the public with the Jewish cemetery and the history of the Jewish community in Tisovec. The project also compares the Jewish and Christian religions through visits to Christian (Evangelical and Catholic) cemeteries and the Jewish cemetery to show the differences and common features. There had been a great interest in the planned visits to the cemeteries from the general public and local organisations, but the pandemic situation prevented us from implementing this part of project. We therefore postponed it…."

In general, high school students in Slovakia start learning about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in the first year of high school at the age of 15–16. Although as observed by M.B. (Researcher of the State Pedagogical Institute in Bratislava), some elements of Jewish history and culture are learnt already in primary schools:

"Jewish cultural heritage is not presented as a separate subject in the Slovak state curriculum. The topic of Jews and Judaism is taught within the history curriculum of primary and secondary schools (mainly grammar schools). The thematic unit Paintings of the Ancient World (primary school – 6th grade, aged 12 years) introduces the terms: Judaism and Christianity. In the thematic unit entitled, Images of the Second World War (9th grade, 15 years) , the teachers are required to introduce the Holocaust by using a specific concrete story." M.B., Researcher

High school students learn about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust mainly in the subjects of History and Regional History, Slovak Languages and Literature, Social Sciences and Civics (within the study of religion – Judaism), and less in Philosophy, Geography and the Arts. Teachers in gymnasia cover some of the following topics on Jewish history and culture:

- Persecution of Jews during the Middle Ages
- Tolerance patent for Jews from Emperor Joseph II
- Basic information about Judaism
- Information about Jewish cemeteries and synagogues in the city where the school is located within the subject of Regional History
- Language of a national minority
- The Bible as a Part of Ancient Hebrew Literature
- Writers of Jewish origin e.g. Gejza Vámoš, Leopold Lahola
- Shoah
- Occasional excursions to Jewish community museum
- Life stories of people from local Jewish communities including video testimonies, archival documents etc.

To realise this curriculum, teachers in gymnasia and grammar schools have only between 10 to 12 hours within the entire 4 years of high school. Most teachers view the allocation of hours as "definitely not sufficient." Most teachers would like to have at least between 15 to 25 hours in the annual curriculum to teach about Jewish heritage. Many would like to teach a specific topic as a project-based educational activity in the classroom 3 days in a row covering approximately 20 hours which would allow for student presentations, activities and feedback. A project-based learning method is attractive to students. For example, the project "Neighbours" organised by the Milan Simecka Foundation prompted high school students to investigate the lives and fates of Jewish communities in the wartime Slovak state. It meaningfully engaged students with research and writing about Jewish communities before and during WWII.

Many teachers would like to expand their teaching to outside the classroom, taking their students to a Jewish historical site or cemetery to spend at least 10 hours working on specific project-based activities at the sites. Many teachers indicate that their students would be interested in cleaning a local Jewish cemetery and helping a local Jewish community. At present, these opportunities are not available.

Teachers working in high school vocational schools have fewer hours to implement education about Jewish heritage than the official 10-12 hours allocated in gymnasia and grammar schools. Dr. J.O., a leading educator at the State Museum of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP), believes that high school vocational schools should have the same number of hours allocated in the curriculum to teach about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust as grammar schools. Dr. J.O. is also in favour of increasing the hourly allowance in grammar schools to teach about Jewish heritage by at least 2 hours per month in each subject.

When it comes to high school education about the Holocaust, the number of allocated hours to this and related topics over the entire 4 academic years varies between 3 to 17 hours.[141] Vocational schools have the lowest number of hours to teach about the Holocaust. Most teachers regard the allocated hours to teach about the Holocaust as "totally insufficient." The decision on incorporating Jewish Heritage and the Holocaust in high school curricula lies with the Ministry of Education, local state authorities and individual teachers. However, the latter plays the critical role in the "everyday" implementation of the approach.

The Ministry of Education and local state authorities do not provide schools with sufficient financial support to develop educational activities on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. However, there are governmental educational institutions, local and foreign NGOs, universities and museums and Jewish cultural institutes that do provide teachers with special training on the subjects. However, as many teachers noted, the training is offered rarely, once a year or less.

Like in the other 6 countries under analysis, high schools in Slovakia do not financially sponsor individual teachers attending training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. But some teachers report that their headteachers/school administrations offer moral support and encourage them to apply for training offered by a third party. Training offered by foreign and local NGOs including museums, Yad Vashem and the USHMM are viewed as being of the greatest benefit to teachers. Teachers highly value training abroad during which they meet up with key experts and scholars in the field. Sometimes they invite scholars back to their high schools.

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141 On the problems related to teaching Holocaust in high schools in Slovakia, see for example Michaels, Deborah L. "Holocaust Education in the 'Black Hole of Europe': Slovakia's Identity Politics and History Textbooks Pre- and Post-1989." *Intercultural Education*, vol. 24 no.1-2, 2013, 19-40 and Monika Vrzgulová, Vzdelávanie o holokauste. Slovensko v európskom kontexte / Vrzgulová, Monika. 11, *Etnologické rozpravy / Bratislava : Etnografické múzeum SNM - Ústav etnológie SAV - Národopisná spoločnosť slovenská*, 2004, 11, č. 1, s. 70-75. ISSN:1335-5074
(HOLOCAUST EDUCATION: SLOVAKIA WITHIN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT)
http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.39441ee4-a941-3ceb-9f16-ddd8c802dc67

Jewish heritage is usually taught both in and outside the classroom. This includes visits to a local synagogue or cemetery, a Holocaust commemorative site and to local, regional and national museums. Such out of school visits play a special role in the high school curriculum in Slovakia and therefore they can incorporate the Jewish cemetery as an important educational space.

"For secondary schools, there is an addendum to the State Educational Programme which aims to prevent extremism through the following activities: excursions to concentration camps and Holocaust memorial sites; visits to towns and villages affected by fascist repression; implementation of projects and competitions focused on activities that express student attitudes to a topic or historical event entitled – He who does not know his history, does not learn from it and repeats it." M.B. (Researcher at the State Pedagogical Institute).

According to Nina Paulovicova, there is a greater focus on child wellbeing, self-esteem and self-awareness and the philosophy of "stastne dieta (happy child)" among educators in Slovakia, which supports a debate culture and critical thinking – essential for education, and education about Jewish communities and the Holocaust.[142]

Some schools have the financial resources to invite historians and experts from local universities and museums, as well as Holocaust survivors. Some teachers hold special lessons with Holocaust survivors at the local Jewish cemetery. High school teachers usually take the opportunity to visit the Jewish cemetery if possible. They point out that gaining access to a Jewish cemetery sometimes depends on good communications with the owner (a local Jewish community or a representative of the Central Union of the Jewish Communities in the Slovak Republic).

The Jewish cemetery in Hlohovec is an example of one regularly used in high school education. The director of the local Vlastivedne Museum usually guides students through the site, offering insights into the lives of the Jewish families buried there. Students thus receive information on the pre-war life of the Jewish community (religious, cultural, social and economic aspects) and also about their struggles and suffering during the Holocaust. Some high school teachers visit Jewish cemeteries (and other memorialisation sites) with their students as part of commemorative Holocaust events.

"Yes, every year as part of Holocaust and Racial Remembrance Day, I visit a Jewish cemetery with my students, where they learn about Jewish history, culture and Judaism, but also about important personalities who are buried here and who are connected with regional history and culture… With some classes, we participate in the Holocaust memorial ceremony on September 9 organised by the city of Žilina." (A.V. high school teacher in a gymnasium in Žilina).

Most teachers are enthusiastic about developing special methodological and pedagogical tools and lesson plans to teach about Jewish heritage in the space of a Jewish cemetery. They would like to have online educational resources such as videos to prepare the students for such a visit, and detailed route plans.

With regards to improvements in teaching about the Holocaust, teachers would like to have more personal, local stories of the past Jewish communities as an educational resource. M.K. (high school teacher in Topoľová and member of the Subject Commission for History which prepares teaching standards within the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports) would like to improve education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust at Jewish cemeteries by "establishing more intensive cooperation with local Jewish communities, implementing projects aimed at getting to know the Jewish community in the local environment, organising school presentation activities, working with online resources, a video library of survivors, organising peer-learning and more intensive use of interdisciplinary programmes and civic education".

142 The interview with Prof. Nina Paulovicova of 3 November 2022 with the author of the report.

High school teachers in Slovakia generally view the space of a Jewish cemetery as an important educational resource to strengthen democratic values and fight against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia: "raising tolerance and love among all humankind and….raising awareness of the importance of others rather than only your own culture."[143]

The recent international seminar entitled 'Teaching Jewish Heritage in Your Class – Using Jewish Cemeteries in Education', organised in Bratislava in October 2022 by the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, Centropa and EuroClio confirms an increasing interest among educators in teaching Jewish heritage by utilising Jewish cemeteries as outdoor classrooms. Forty teachers from Slovakia and nine other European countries took part in this successful event. Participants went on a Jewish heritage tour of the historic city centre, and after visited the main Jewish cemetery to provide a crucial experiential element. One participant spoke about how she had never known that there had been a Jewish community in her town and was astonished when she discovered that 80 per cent of the town was Jewish in 1939.[144]

To strengthen education in Slovakia on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, greater financial and moral resources must be put in place, and the system must remain autonomous. It is also essential that the difficult past pertaining to the treatment of Slovak Jews by non-Jewish Slovak co-citizens is integrated into the available educational resources, and that the teachers in pre- and in-service training are offered guidance on how to teach about it, as well as about Jewish heritage as part of wider education for democracy and pluralism and against antisemitism and xenophobia.

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143 This citation comes from an interview with a high school teacher conducted by Dr Monika Vrzgulová. I would like to thank Dr M. Vrzgulová for the interview and sharing her expertise.

144 This was reported by Michael Mail, Executive Director of the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, in email correspondence of 4 November 2022.

2.7 UKRAINE

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The first permanent Jewish settlements in pre-modern Ukraine are dated to the tenth century CE, though Jews had lived along the Black Sea already by the first century CE.[145] By the end of the 1500s, approximately 45,000 Jews lived in Ukraine, which at that time was an integral part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In fact, Jews played an important role in the colonisation of Ukraine by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Because of the conquest of the Ukrainian lands, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth became regarded as the granary of Europe. The Khmelnytsky Uprising of 1648-1657, known as the Cossack-Polish War, was the first major insurrection against Polish-Lithuanian rule. The Cossack rebellion was accompanied by brutal violence directed against the civilian population, especially Roman Catholic clergy and Jews whom the Cossacks saw as the chief agents of the Polish-Lithuanian state.[146] During the rebellion, a part of Ukraine fell under Russian rule as a result of the Pereiaslav Agreement of 1654 between the Cossacks and the Russian Tsar.

Despite the mass killings of the Jewish population in the Khmelnytsky insurrection, the Jewish community recovered. By the middle of the nineteenth century, when the Tsarist Russian Empire ruled over vast parts of the Ukrainian lands, the community grew to 600,000 and was characterised by a distinctive Yiddish culture. But the brutal pogroms of 1881-82 and 1905-06 caused a mass migration of Jews to the West, mainly to the United States. The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War of 1918-21 were also accompanied by intense violence against Jews in which 35,000 individuals were killed and many more were made homeless.

On the eve of the Second World War, Ukraine, then known as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, was a "polity with little control over its own affairs, especially after the intensification of centralisation under Stalin".[147] Its total population is estimated at 41.2 million with the majority made up of ethnic Ukrainians. The Jews made up approximately 10 per cent of the population and were concentrated mostly in western Ukrainian cities, towns and villages. In some towns, they accounted for a third to a half of the population with many synagogues and cemeteries. One million Jews were evacuated east when the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, but about 1.5 million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust.[148] Most of them were shot and buried in ravines, the most infamous of which is Babyn Yar where over two days in September 1941, 33,771 Jews were murdered[149], and there are mass graves in forests, villages and Jewish cemeteries. The special German units of Einsatzgruppen C and D, Romanian troops, and German and Ukrainian police were the chief perpetrators of the "Holocaust by bullets" in Ukraine. The first wave of killings in which ethnic Ukrainians participated was the pogroms of the summer of 1941.[150] During

145 On the history of Ukrainian Jews and Ukrainian-Jewish relations, see Paul Robert Magocsi and Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *Jews and Ukrainians: A Millennium of Co-Existence*, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2018). The book was published as part of a series of books on Ukrainian Jewish history initiated by the Canadian based NGO, Ukrainian Jewish Encounter, https://ukrainianjewishencounter.org/en/two-thousand-years-ukrainian-jewish-relations-explored-exciting-series-new-books/

146 Jakub, Batista, "Chmielnicki Massacres (1648-1649)". In Alexander Mikaberidze, (ed.). *Atrocities, Massacres, and War Crimes: An Encyclopedia*. vol. 1. (California, ABC-CLIO, 2014), 100-101.

147 John Paul Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine", in Himka and Michlic eds., *Bringing the Dark Past to Light*, 626, hereafter Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine".

148 On the history and memory of the Shoah in Ukraine see also Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower eds., *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization*, (Bloomington, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2008).

149 On the history and memorialisation of Babyn Yar, see the website of the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center, initiated in 2016: https://babynyar.org/en/about

150 Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine", 629.

that time, Ukrainian militia and the Bandera section of the OUN (the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) spearheaded many pogroms in cities such as Lviv in which many thousands of Jews were murdered. The terror orchestrated by the military sections of the OUN against Jews and also the ethnic Polish population in Volhynia continued lasted 1942 to 1944. In western Ukraine, Jews were also deported to the concentration and extermination camps in Nazi-occupied Poland.

Like in other countries of East central Europe, the German invaders and their local collaborators not only murdered entire Jewish communities of cities such as Lviv and towns such as Rivne, but they also destroyed synagogues and Jewish cemeteries – the chief symbols of Jewish spiritual and communal life. In the early post-war period, similar to Poland, Jewish survivors faced a pogrom-like atmosphere caused by antisemitic allegations of ritual murder of Ukrainian children, and pogroms broke out in Dnipropetrovsk in the summer of 1944, and in Kyiv in September 1945. In the Soviet era, (1945–1991) the Holocaust was not publicly acknowledged and the word itself did not appear in Soviet historiography. To avoid international embarrassment, the Soviet authorities were unwilling to publicise the extent to which Soviet populations, including Ukrainians and Moldovans, had been enticed into collaboration with the German occupiers. Thus, the Holocaust was conveniently dissolved into the collective memory of an anti-fascist war. The devastation of the remaining Jewish material heritage continued during the Soviet era, especially in western Ukraine – the heartland of Jewish life in the pre-1941 period. In urban areas, destroyed Jewish cemeteries were typically built over with housing, warehouses, factories, marketplaces and even a cinema.

In the Gorbachev era of perestroika, attitudes began to change thanks to the emergence of a Ukrainian democratic political elite and liberal intellectuals. The latter group, including journalists and historians, started a painful but necessary public discourse about the difficult wartime past and the post-war devastation of Jewish cultural heritage, including the need to revise history education. After Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union on 24 August 1991, the history of the Holocaust became public for the first time since the Second World War. However, as John-Paul Himka, a leading historian of the Holocaust in Ukraine, argues, Ukrainian society has not yet been educated regarding the enormity of the Holocaust and the destruction of Ukrainian Jewish heritage.[151]

Nevertheless, in 1991, a distinct Ukrainian Jewish identity emerged within the culturally and religiously diverse Jewish population of Ukraine that mainly lived in cities such as Kyiv (110,000), Dnipropetrovsk (60,000), Kharkiv (45,000) and Odesa (45,000), and with much smaller communities in western Ukraine. They constituted the third largest Jewish community in Europe. Between 1991 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, one of the key efforts of the re-established Jewish community in Ukraine, and foreign Jewish organisations, has been the preservation of Jewish sites throughout the country, and the independent Ukrainian State has also pledged its help in restoring certain important Jewish sites.

The first preservation works started in the early 1990s when the Ukrainian Landmarks Preservation Society and the St. Petersburg Jewish University of Russia, through its Center for Research and Presentation of the Eastern European Diaspora, initiated a survey of Jewish sites in Ukraine, under the leadership of Ilya Dworkin, Benjamin Lukin, and Boris Khaimovich. Lukin and Khaimovich have since moved to Israel, but they have continued their work with the assistance of the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Thanks to their research, rare Jewish tombstones from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were found.

However, the process of recovery, restoration and preservation of Jewish cemeteries in Ukraine has been much slower throughout the 2000s in comparison to Poland for a variety of political, economic and cultural reasons. According to the 2005 Jewish heritage sites report for Ukraine published by the US Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad (USCPAHA), there are more than 1,300 Jewish burial sites: 731 cemeteries and 495 mass graves across

151 Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine", 634.

Rohatyn, Ukraine

Ukraine.[152] The most neglected cemeteries are based in the rural areas of western Ukraine where only a few Jewish communities survive.

Some important Jewish cemetery restoration projects have been assisted by the Polish NGO, the Matzevah Foundation,[153] and others have been established through cooperation between individual non-Jewish Ukrainian enthusiasts – "Jewish memory keepers" – and Western descendants of Ukrainian Jews who made visits to Ukraine in the 2000s. As an example of the latter, Marla Raucher Osborn created in 2011 the Rohatyn Jewish Preservation Project, a successful conservation and education NGO.[154]

"Our Ukrainian NGO arose from an encounter with retired teacher, local historian and activist Mykhailo Vorobets in spring of 2011. During our first meeting with Mr. Vorobets, when we explained our interest in the Jewish past of Rohatyn, he led us a short distance from the city library to a private garden, and informed us that there were Jewish headstones from the city's cemeteries buried underneath the flowers and vegetables. He asked us simply, what did we want to do. We learned from Mr. Vorobets that since the 1990s he had assisted a handful of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust in Rohatyn to make arrangements to move unearthed headstone fragments back to the Jewish cemeteries, but in recent years he had no longer heard from any of the survivors, and presumed they were no longer living. When we resolved to take on the project, we guessed from the details Mr. Vorobets had provided that around a dozen headstone fragments would be recovered; in fact, in the years since then, many hundreds have been recovered and returned to the Jewish cemeteries. Other projects grew out of this first one, as we spent more time in Rohatyn and learned more about its centuries-long multi-cultural past, the harsh years of German and Soviet occupation, and the new openness of the city in independent Ukraine".[155]

But today, in late 2022 during the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, there is a new urgency to preserve Jewish cemeteries – the markers of the once thriving Jewish life. Jewish cemeteries and mass graves (and synagogues) have become far more vulnerable in the current military conflict and many have been abandoned in the last nine months by fleeing local Jewish communities. In October 2022, a workshop took place in Kyiv to discuss the role drones can play in the surveying and preservation of cemeteries. The workshop was co-organised by ESJF and drone experts, Germandrones and DroneUA, along with the Faculty of Land Management at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine.

"It is phenomenal that we are holding this event in Ukraine at the current time, a country that once hosted the largest number of Jewish communities in the world before the Shoah… Drones have done so much damage in the country recently. Hopefully, they can also be used in the future for positive benefit to all."[156]

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152 Jewish Cemeteries, Synagogues and Mass Grave Sites in Ukraine, (Washington DC., United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, 2005), 5. http://heritageabroad.gov/Portals/0/Reports%20and%20Surveys/survey_ukraine_2005.pdf

153 See the statement of the Matzevah Foundation on the current situation in war-torn Ukraine, https://www.matzevah.org/news1/invasion-of-ukraine

154 https://rohatynjewishheritage.org/en/

155 Statement by Marla Raucher Osborn, Rohatyn Jewish Heritage Projects – An Overview, https://rohatynjewishheritage.org/en/projects/

156 Report on Drones to help survey thousands of Jewish cemeteries across Europe, 14 November 2022: https://www.jewishnews.co.uk/drones-jewish-cemeteries-survey/

There has also been a strong sense of urgency about developing and strengthening high school education about the Holocaust and Jewish heritage in present-day Ukraine.

In the first years of independent Ukraine, high school students were only occasionally taught about the Holocaust. The Ministry of Education formally introduced the Holocaust into the high school curriculum in grade 10 in the academic year 1993–1994. In 1996, in the subject "the History of Ukraine", lessons about the German occupation were mandated, and in the subject "World History", a recommendation was made to include lessons about the "Jewish Holocaust in Europe". However, textbooks that incorporated the Holocaust into history curricula only appeared in 2000. The detailed analysis of these first new textbooks by Johann Dietsch revealed a tendency to evade the subject of the Holocaust in the course on the History of Ukraine and to treat the Holocaust as an event that took place in Germany and Poland and had nothing to do with Ukraine.[157] The tendency of treating the topic superficially, evading difficult aspects of the Holocaust in national Ukrainian history, and perceiving it as an event that happened to Jews outside of Ukraine continues in public memories and school textbooks. Some teachers interviewed for this report indicated that they have to challenge these tendencies in the classroom.[158]

In 2019, five years after the Revolution of Dignity of 2013–2014, Ukraine, struggling with challenging social problems and massive economic corruption, applied for membership in the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research.[159] The Ukrainian parliament was also preparing legislation to adopt the IHRA definition of anti-semitism, but both processes have not been completed due to political disagreements.[160] However, the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Kyiv[161] and the Tkuma All-Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Dnipropetrovsk,[162] have been working on improving Jewish history and Holocaust education since the middle of the 2000s. Both centres have offered frequent online and in-person teacher training in Holocaust education and, since 2006, have organised special pedagogical-methodological seminars for Ukrainian teachers in Yad Vashem. This training has been highly praised by teachers interviewed for this report. The scholars employed by the Centres also conduct history and memory studies, and pedagogical research. The latter includes studies of the content of teaching resources about the Holocaust in post-communist Ukraine. Every year, the Centres announce different competitions on the history and memory of the Holocaust for high school students. The Centres also cooperate with local and international Jewish NGOs and Museums such as the Anne Frank Museum in the Netherlands and the Shoah Memorial Foundation in France. Most recently, in November 2022, the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Kyiv, the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War and the Shoah Memorial in Paris, co-organised in Kyiv a seminar entitled "History of Genocides in Ukraine: Studies of Experience and Contemporary Challenges". One of the themes was a discussion on the challenges of incorporating the difficult past of the Holocaust in history textbooks in Ukraine and France.

157 The report by J. Dietsch on textbooks in Ukraine is cited by Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine," 640–641.

158 On the weaknesses of the Ukrainian textbooks, see Simone, Attilo Belezza, "An Attempt to Teach Multi-culturalism: Introducing the Holocaust into History Classes in post-Soviet Ukraine", *Snodi*, no. 15 –16, 2017, 81–101. Herafter Belezza, "An Attempt to Teach Multiculturalism: Introducing the Holocaust into History Classes in post-Soviet Ukraine".

159 On the support of IHRA in the current Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, see https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/russian-antisemitism-and-war-ukraine

160 https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/ukraine-may-adopt-ihra-definition-of-antisemitism-589046

161 http://holocaust.kiev.ua/en/home

162 https://www.tkuma.dp.ua/en/

"During the discussions, there were sharp disputes due to different attitudes towards the interpretation of the events of World War II. But the most important result was establishing cooperation and opening a dialogue between Ukrainian and French colleagues".[163]

The teachers interviewed for this project come from different parts of war-torn Ukraine. Most of them are highly experienced teachers of History, Literature, Geography and Civic Education working in different types of high schools including gymnasia, comprehensive state schools and technical schools. They represent a group of teachers who are professionally and personally invested in both learning and teaching about Ukrainian Jewish history and cultural heritage, and the Holocaust. They view teaching of these subjects as their civic duty – as a responsibility for educating young citizens about a rich Ukrainian Jewish past that in their eyes constitutes an integral part of the collective Ukrainian identity and common multi-cultural heritage. The teachers are aware that the Ukrainian Ministry of Education recommends teaching about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in high schools, but they also recognise that it is up to each individual educational institution how and to what extent it implements the recommendation. Therefore, like many of their counterparts in the other six countries, they state that "everything depends on the individual teacher's enthusiasm" (M.M. History teacher from Dryzkivka, Donetsk region).

"Thanks to the personal work of teachers in classroom and extracurricular activities, students learn about different aspects of Jewish heritage throughout high school". (L.P. History teacher from Domanivka, Mykolaiv region)

P.D., an assistant professor at Rivne State Humanitarian University which specialises in advanced training for primary and high school teachers in the Rivne region, confirms that individual high school teachers are almost solely responsible for the implementation of education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in class. For example, in many cases, teachers, with the approval of the headteacher, are responsible for initiating school trips to museums of Jewish interest, synagogues and Jewish cemeteries. They are also responsible for the acquisition of different types of educational resources on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust such as documentary and feature films, books and journals for the school library. Teachers are also responsible for creating an online library of resources including interactive maps, online images and lectures to be used in the classroom.

Importantly, P.D. states that most schools and state universities do not run any special educational programmes about Jewish history and Jewish cultural heritage. Instead, most of the inspiring educational programmes are initiated by public associations in the non-formal education sector. In pre-service training of teachers, P.D. and his colleagues use approaches of multi-perspectivity that the non-formal education sector had taught them about. Thus, it is not only the teachers, but "the teachers of the teachers" who benefit from using informal educational approaches usually provided by foreign and local NGOs. Through this, they acquire up-to-date information and the latest cutting-edge skills in pedagogy and methodology.

Some teachers stress that not all school administrations nor colleagues share the same enthusiasm for learning about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust. The enthusiastic Ukrainian teachers, like their counterparts in the six other countries, see themselves as agents of social change determined to teach about democracy, openness towards others, and about religious and cultural pluralism. They believe that these goals should be accepted by every school in Ukraine and some of them express strong critical opinions on the current state of education in general:

"First of all, teachers and school administrations should be interested in the development of these issues. In our region (Donetsk) it was done as a tick box exercise for dozens of years. Teachers, by their own example, do not show sincere interest because they themselves are not sufficiently motivated, knowledgeable, nor have the desire to do it. This is my subjective opinion". (M.M. History teacher from Donetsk region).

163 See the statement about the seminar by the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust studies in Kyiv, http://holocaust.kiev.ua/en/News/details/nayk_seminar_ist2022_en

Students usually start learning about Jewish heritage in 5th grade as part of the subject, "Introduction to the History of Ukraine," but "the 5th grade school curriculum does not allocate a separate lesson on Jewish history." (S.S. History teacher in Popasna, Donetsk region). But, L.G., the Head of the Creative Youth Association in Zaporizhzhia, commented that "if primary school teachers are motivated to preserve Jewish heritage, then their pupils might learn about Jewish history, religion and culture almost from the 1st grade". However, this view has not been confirmed in interviews with other teachers.

From 5th to 11th grade – the last grade of high school, students typically can learn various aspects of Jewish history and cultural heritage in the subjects of History, Literature, Civic Education, as well as in the Arts and Geography albeit to a lesser degree. However, as reported by many teachers: "There are very few lessons specifically on the history and culture of the Jews. The teacher has the opportunity at his/her discretion to add materials to a particular lesson plan but is limited by the requirements of the curriculum, mainly by the volume of educational material that must be learnt. If the teacher is motivated, Jewish themes can be introduced through group tasks and educational projects". (S.S. History teacher in Popasna, Donetsk region).

In 6th grade – 11 and 12 year olds – there is a separate lesson devoted to the Ancient History of the Jews (the Kingdom of Israel and Judah) in the World History subject, and students can also learn about the situation of the Jewish people at the beginning of the Christian era in discussion of the topic, "Emergence and spread of Christianity." In the 7th, 8th, 9th and 11th grades, there are no separate lessons devoted to the study of Jewish history and culture. However, in the 8th grade, Jewish history and culture can be discussed in lessons in World History (for example, the Reconquista in medieval Spain). In the 9th grade, in the subject of the History of Ukraine, students can learn about the imperial Russian antisemitism through discussion of the Beillis trial, Zionism and anti-Jewish pogroms. In the 10th grade, students are introduced to the history of the Holocaust in the subjects of Ukrainian History and World History in two one-hour lessons in both courses. With respect to the subject of the History of Ukraine in the 10th grade, students can also learn about the role of Jewish organisations in revolutionary movements in discussion of the topic, "The Ukrainian National Revolution of 1917–1921."

In addition, in the 10th grade in the subject Civic Education, students can learn about antisemitism while studying the topic of Human Rights, Tolerance and Stereotypes in Mass Media (about manipulation, fake news and hate speech), though the course does not directly engage with the Holocaust. In the 11th grade, students can learn about the establishment of the Israeli state in the subject of World History (in topics on the Middle East). With regards to the study of the Holocaust, S. S. (History teacher in Popasna, Donetsk region) states that he devotes one lesson to the Holocaust during extracurricular activities from 5th to 11th grade.

An expanded model of teaching about Jewish history and the Holocaust throughout high school implemented in a Music Lyceum in Lviv includes these topics in two history subjects – World History and Ukrainian History. However, many high schools do not follow this expanded model. Moreover, those working with this model view it as not wholly satisfactory in terms of teaching hours and the coverage of the subjects, especially with regards to learning the Holocaust in the national context.

An overwhelming majority of the interviewed teachers emphasise huge gaps in high school education about Ukrainian Jewish history and heritage. They also point out the glaring lack of important discussions, along with teaching resources, on the difficult past pertaining to the ways non-Jewish Ukrainians related to and treated Ukrainian Jews during the Holocaust. The issue of the complete detachment of the Holocaust from the local Ukrainian context in high school textbooks and other state issued educational resources has been raised repeatedly by scholars and educators of the Holocaust in Ukraine for more than two decades.[164] However, despite many

164 On the difficulty of the incorporation of the difficult past in Ukrainian public memory and textbooks, see Anna Wylegala, "Managing the difficult past: Ukrainian collective memory and public debates on history," *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 45, no. 5, 2017, 785.

efforts to change the situation, educational materials issued by governmental educational institutions still avoid discussing this painful thorny topic, and instead tend to repeat the Soviet narrative on the Shoah. For teachers who have been attending training courses on this topic organised by foreign and local NGOs and Jewish community organisations, this omission is intellectually and morally disturbing.

"In my opinion, not enough attention is paid to the study of Jewish heritage and culture. Our students know little about the role of Ukrainian Jews in the development of science and culture. While children may know about the Holocaust, they do not know enough about the life of the Jewish community in Ukraine and Europe. Jewish culture, its influence on Ukraine and Ukrainians, the history of the interaction between the two peoples – these important topics remain unknown to students. Also, the phenomenon of antisemitism is hardly studied. Children condemn the Holocaust, but they do not understand its background. And we actually do not address the role of Ukrainians in the anti-Jewish actions during the Second World War". (S.S. History teacher in Popasna, Donetsk).

Some teachers would like to teach Jewish history and heritage within the framework of the study of multi-ethnic and multi-religious Ukraine.

One History teacher O.Z. (History teacher from Cherkasy) states that the Holocaust has been studied superficially in the context of both the current history subjects – the Second World War, and Ukrainian history. Many teachers would like to have an opportunity to teach students an elective or optional course on the Holocaust throughout grades 10 and 11. L.P. (History teacher from Domanivka, Mykolaiv region) has already been teaching an elective course, "History of the Holocaust," in grades 10 and 11 for one hour per week (35 hours per academic year). According to her, thanks to that elective course, students acquire solid knowledge of the Holocaust and Jewish history and culture: "If it weren't for the extracurricular work that I constantly do with the students, they would know very little about Jewish culture and the Holocaust". (L.P. History teacher from Domanivka, Mykolaiv region).

Other teachers speak of success by integrating Jewish heritage and the Holocaust into teaching about local history. For example, O.D. (Geography teacher from Husakiv, Lviv region) created an elective course on local Jewish culture that she teaches over 12 hours in one academic year. But ideally she would like to have 30 hours to teach about the social and cultural history of the local Jewish communities of the Lviv region. In 8th grade, she devotes two hours to the study of the Jewish community in Husakov in an out of class activity with her students interviewing local non-Jewish and Jewish inhabitants, and collecting from the latter recipes of local Jewish cuisine. What O.D. discovered from that two-hour learning experience is that her students were enthusiastic about conducting this type of research. She attributes their enthusiasm to the fact that they consider studying local Jewish history as part of their own history. Therefore, she has introduced two other research-based studies for her students, "Jews who lived in Husakiv," and "Outstanding Jewish personalities from Husakiv." With regard to these two topics, O.D. recognises that incorporating a local Jewish cemetery could offer great potential for students to learn about the structure of the Jewish community and its individual members, both well-known and ordinary, adults and children. However, at present, the Jewish cemetery in Husakiv is in a ruinous state and requires urgent repairs, so it cannot be used as an outdoor classroom yet. "Our Jewish cemetery needs to be put in order. We need to collect the matzevot that are scattered around Husakiv. Students can learn about each person by reading inscriptions and epitaphs." (O.D. Geography teacher from Husakiv, Lviv region).

Like O.D., many teachers from different parts of Ukraine report that the high school students are interested in studying local Jewish history and heritage through personal stories and tours of a variety of former local "Jewish spaces". Through such lessons, students not only acquire know-

ledge of Jewish history and culture, but also feel an emotional connection to the local Jewish past – and present, and thus develop empathy. Incorporating a Jewish cemetery into educating about local history could provide a powerful intellectual and empathic experience for the learner. In that process, students could learn about the past contribution of local Jews to the fabric of their local societies – who they and their families were, how they lived etc. – as well as about the profound rupture and void caused by the mass murder of the local Jewish community in the Holocaust: "It was they (local Jews) who developed and created its (Zaporizhzhia's) cultural and industrial potential. Many Jewish homes and businesses have survived until today, including the building of former synagogues. Students should learn about it". (L.G. Head of the Creative Youth Association in Zaporizhzhia)

"In the past, we taught the subject 'History of Our Region', wherein we studied the contribution of local Jews to the social, cultural and economic life of the Zhytomyr region in general, and our city of Korostyshiv in particular. Last summer (2021), our school's history club ran a pre-school camp and we organised an excursion to the local Jewish cemetery. A 9th-grader conducted research for the Young Student Academy of Sciences (Mala Academia Nauk in Ukrainian) about the history of his hometown in the nineteenth century, and he wrote a section about the impact of Jews on the economic and social life of Korostyshiv". (A.S. History teacher at a State High School, Zytomyr region).

Many teachers consider their students creative and curious learners who wish to explore Jewish history and culture through excursions to places of Jewish interest. The students are eager to participate in research projects involving interviewing Holocaust survivors that can result in short documentary movies and travelling exhibitions. The latter can be submitted for local, regional and national competitions such as 'Lessons of War and the Holocaust'. To deepen their knowledge about Jewish history and the Holocaust as well as about antisemitism and the values of democracy and tolerance, Ukrainian high school students can participate in youth camps such as Olive Tree and the international youth exchange Ark.

However, most teachers remark that their schools do not receive sufficient financial support to educate about Jewish heritage from the Ministry of Education and local state authorities. Many also indicate that their schools do not necessarily support teacher training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust, though some succeed in attending training once a year or regularly throughout a school year, including online courses that they pay for from their own pockets. Like their counterparts in the other six countries, individual teachers need to be proactive in applying for teacher training offered by foreign or local NGOs. Most teachers emphasise that they have benefited greatly from teacher training and a variety of online courses and lectures provided by Centropa, Jewish Museum Galicia in Kraków, the local NGO "Nova Doba", the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Kiev, the Ukrainian Institute for the Study of the Holocaust "Tkuma", and the Center for the Urban History of Central and Eastern Europe in Lviv.

Despite the ongoing war, some teachers stress that they continue to apply the skills and knowledge that they had acquired during their teacher training with foreign Jewish NGOs. One teacher wrote a moving testimony in which she expresses her gratitude to Centropa. She appreciates not only the training itself, but Centropa's professionalism and mission, especially the organisation's commitment to democracy, openness and pluralism.

"More than two years have passed since my training at the Centropa seminar, and I still very vividly remember the mentors, the practical exercises, the stories we were introduced to, and the exhibition and documentary films. I actively use the literature from Centropa (even when I was evacuated from the war zone, I took it with me). It was learning from the HEART!!!" (M.M. Teacher from Dryzkivka Donetsk region)

L.G. (Head of the Association of Creative Youth in Zaporizhzhia) also praises the training with Centropa. Thanks to it, she conducted educational projects with students from local high schools within the framework of its Youth Educational Project. One of the fruits of that research is a documentary film about "The Forgotten Jewish Cemetery in Verkhnia Khortytsia," prepared by a group of students. L.G. airs the film to high school students who participate in another educational youth project, "the Lessons from the Holocaust". This is an excellent example of an indirect peer-to-peer learning activity on Jewish cemeteries using a non-formal educational approach.

Many teachers praise the teacher training provided by the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies and the Tkuma Center. Teachers also frequently establish close professional links with local state museums. Thanks to museum visits, students garner knowledge about artefacts and images of the pre-1939 Jewish cultural heritage and learn about local Jewish communities and their synagogues and cemeteries. "I am from the Donetsk region. I always communicate with scientific staff of the historical museum in Kostyantynivka, Kramatorsk. Thanks to their guidance, I visited monuments with students. This took place before 24.02.2022". (M.M. Teacher from Dryzkivka, Donetsk region).

Overall, like in the other six countries, the training offered by the non-formal education sector empowers Ukrainian teachers in the formal education sector. Teachers trained by local and foreign NGOs show confidence in designing innovative extracurricula activities both inside and outside the classroom. To prepare for trips to synagogues and Jewish cemeteries, teachers explore with students online resources provided by different NGOs. Among the most mentioned are the following websites:

1 https://trans-history.centropa.org/uk/pro-proekt-trans-history/institut-centropa/
2 https://judaicacenter.kiev.ua/archive/
3 http://ukrzurnal.eu/ukr.archive.html/732/
4 https://www.holocaust.kiev.ua

However, many teachers indicate that they require more systematic in-service training on Jewish history and heritage. To conduct lessons on a variety of possible topics in the space of a Jewish cemetery, teachers need more educational resources to achieve specific learning experiences and outcomes.

In Ukraine, like in Moldova, many Jewish cemeteries were mass killing sites, or are located near mass graves where the "Holocaust by bullets" took place, so students sometimes learn about the site of an atrocity in the space of a Jewish cemetery. Schools also participate in annual commemorative events such as on 27 January, International Holocaust Day, and the commemorations of the Babyn Yar atrocity in September, or on a specific Memorial Day commemorating the mass murder of a local Jewish community. In the city of Mykolaiv, the local Jewish community invites high school students from the area to "honour the victims of the Holocaust in the city's Jewish cemetery". (E.M. Teacher). But this is not a standard educational practice conducted in all schools throughout Ukraine.

In some cases, teachers would like to utilise the local Jewish cemetery to learn about hiding spaces and the rescue of Jewish fugitives during the Holocaust. (L.M. Teacher, Domanivka, Mykolaiv region). Only a few teachers express reservations about teaching Holocaust history in the space of a Jewish cemetery.

However, the key problem with utilising Jewish cemeteries in Ukraine in education is their physical state. As reported by many teachers, a significant number of Jewish cemeteries are still in a state of disarray, so schools cannot use them for educational purposes and cannot clean them without professional assistance. L.P., a teacher from a comprehensive school in Domanivka, Mykolaiv, would like to participate with her students in the major clean-up of a neglected local

cemetery, but indicates that the cemetery requires a professional clean-up first. Once the cemetery is tidy and safe, she would like to work with students on making an index of names of those buried in the cemetery and create a database of relatives of the buried individuals, interview them and "write the stories of these families."

Many Jewish cemeteries were misused and even demolished during the Soviet era. V.P., a teacher from Ivano-Frankivsk where the Soviet authorities built a cinema on the site of a demolished Jewish cemetery, suggests that special commemoratives events should take place in that space with the active participation of students. Some cemeteries have also been damaged during the current war in Ukraine, so no educational projects could take place. "Unfortunately, today the local cemetery is abandoned and needs protection and cleaning". (A.S. Teacher from Korostyshiv, Zytomir region).

In towns and villages with well preserved pre-war Jewish cemeteries, more educational activities should be conducted because, as some teachers note, cemeteries are not being used enough in education to learn about the rich political, cultural and social Jewish history and Jewish/non-Jewish relations. Many teachers regard the 2020 ESJF Jewish cemetery classroom guide as the best available educational resource to learn about Jewish tomb ornaments and their meanings. From fieldwork with students using the ESJF Guide, teachers learn that students find it meaningful being engaged in reading the ancient Hebrew inscriptions and thus touch the history of a person's life who had lived nearby a long time ago.

One teacher powerfully summarises the need for further exploration of the incorporation of cemeteries in high school education:

"Jewish cemeteries are evidence of the Jewish presence. They remain an important part of the cultural space and are witnesses of the common Ukrainian-Jewish history. Attention to them as an educational resource is currently not at the proper level. Behind every stone lies a story that needs to be revealed and highlighted…..With the help of a Jewish cemetery, it is possible to collect, write and publish local Jewish and Ukrainian stories, including war testimonies, as well as provide a historical chronology of the local Jewish community, including current descendants living around the world. It is also possible to create an exhibition on the Jewish community in cooperation with a museum of local history." (M.M. teacher from Dryzkivka, Donetsk region).

Overall, for the future of education on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust in Ukraine, it is important that the foreign NGOs support local NGOs in the development of pre- and in-service teacher training, and the production of a variety of educational resources. Such resources should engage with Ukraine's difficult past pertaining to the mass murder of Ukrainian Jews by non-Jewish Ukrainian citizens. Education on the difficult past as well as other aspects of Jewish-Ukrainian heritage should be taught as part of a wider programme of education on democracy and pluralism – values that post-communist Ukraine has been striving for and that are so central to its survival in the current war with Russia.

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Her major publications include *Neighbors Respond: The Controversy about Jedwabne* (2004; co-edited with Antony Polonsky), *Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present*, (translated into Polish in 2015 and nominated for the Best History Book of Kazimierz Moczarski Award 2016 in Poland; Hebrew translation, with new epilogue, published by Yad Vashem Studies, 2021), *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Post-communist Europe*, co-edited with John-Paul Himka (Lincoln, NUP, 2012), and *Jewish Family 1939-Present: History, Representation, and Memory*, Brandeis University Press/NEUP, January 2017) that made it to the Ethical Inquiry list of the best books published in 2017 at Brandeis University: http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/ethicalinquiry/2017/December.html Her latest book is a collection of essays about child Holocaust survivors, *Piętno Zagłady*, (Warsaw, ZIH, December 2020).

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

High school education about Jewish heritage with a particular emphasis on using the space of a Jewish cemetery – a Jewish sacred site – as an educational resource.

Please answer all the questions and provide detailed and concrete answers.

1 At what age do students at high school start learning about Jewish heritage – Jewish history, religion and culture, including material culture?

2 Do students learn about the different aspects of Jewish heritage throughout high school?

3 How many hours of the school curriculum per year are devoted to teaching about Judaism, and Jewish social and cultural history?

4 How many hours of the school curriculum per year are devoted to teaching about the Holocaust?

5 In your opinion is the allocation of hours sufficient to educate about different aspects of Jewish heritage and the Holocaust?

6 Is Jewish heritage part of teaching?
   a. History
   b. Literature
   c. Philosophy
   d. Geography
   e. Sociology
   f. Arts
   g. All the above
   h. None

7 How is the teaching of Jewish heritage conducted?
   a. In the classroom only
   b. Outside of the classroom in a Jewish site, for example, Jewish cemetery or synagogue
   c. Both in and outside the classroom (a & b)
   d. Organised visits to local, regional and national museums

8 What teaching methods are used in the classroom to teach about Jewish heritage?
   a. Traditional lecture/talk by the teacher with use of published material assigned in the curriculum
   b. Innovative methods including online seminars, lectures, interviews, images, and interactive maps
   c. Both methods

9 What resources does the school have to teach about Jewish heritage in the classroom? Choose all relevant options and provide concrete examples.
   a. Financial resources to invite local historians and other guests from local universities and museums
   b. Access to relevant websites, online resources of images and interactive maps, online lectures, workshops, interviews, and seminars
   c. Library of documentary and feature films, books, and other published material
   d. Access to special educational resources, both published and online, about Jewish heritage prepared by non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
   e. Access to special educational resources, both published and online, about Jewish heritage prepared by Ministry of Education/governmental institutions

10 Who makes the decision on implementation of education about Jewish heritage in your schools?
Choose all the relevant options and provide details.
   a. Ministry of Education
   b. Local state authorities
   c. Individual head teacher
   d. Individual teacher
   e. Local NGOs
   f. Other

11 In your view, do your schools receive sufficient financial support to educate about Jewish heritage from the Ministry of Education?

12 In your view, do your schools receive sufficient financial support to educate about Jewish heritage from local state authorities?

13 What are the key institutions that provide teacher training for education about Jewish heritage and the Holocaust?
   a. Ministry of Education
   b. Other governmental Institutions
   c. NGOs such as Museums and Institutes of Jewish History and Culture
   d. Special educational training at local universities

14 Do your schools support teacher training on Jewish heritage and the Holocaust at universities, institutions of higher education and museums abroad?
Please provide concrete examples of such support.
   a. Regularly once a year
   b. Occasionally, depending on available funding
   c. Rarely
   d. Never

15 How often can teachers apply for funding for specific teacher training/attend teacher training for education about Jewish heritage?
   a. Once a year
   b. Regularly throughout a school year
   c. Once in 2–5 years
   d. Rarely
   e. Never

16 Which teacher training institutions are viewed to be of the greatest benefit to teachers to educate about Jewish heritage?
   a. Ministry of Education
   b. Other governmental Institutions
   c. NGOs such as Museums and Institutes of Jewish History and Culture
   d. Special educational training at local universities
   e. Special educational training abroad

17 In your view, the best teacher training about Jewish past and present, promoting empathy, tolerance and respect and combating antisemitism, prejudice and racism, are organised by: (provide detailed answer and explain why)
   a. Ministry of Education
   b. Other Governmental Institutions
   c. NGOs such as Museums and Institutes of Jewish History and Culture
   d. Special educational training at local universities
   e. Special educational training abroad

18 Do your schools use the space of a local Jewish cemetery as an educational resource for teaching about Jewish history, Jewish society, Jewish culture, and Judaism?
Choose all relevant options and provide concrete examples.
   a. About the connections between Jewish religious and social life
   b. About the connections between Jewish religious and cultural life
   c. About the functional and spiritual significance of the Jewish cemetery as a sacred Jewish space
   d. About individual members of the Jewish community who were buried in the cemetery, local Jewish history, and connections with non-Jewish members of the local community
   e. None

19 Do your schools use the Jewish cemetery as an educational resource for teaching about the Holocaust?
Choose all relevant options and provide concrete examples.
   a. About the Jewish cemetery as a site of escape
   b. About the Jewish cemetery as a place of smuggling goods
   c. About the Jewish cemetery as a place of concealment/short and long-term hiding of Jewish fugitives
   d. About the Jewish cemetery as a site of the perpetration of genocide
   e. All the above.
   f. None

20 Do your schools participate in commemorative events held in a local Jewish cemetery as a part of education aimed at promoting empathy, tolerance, and respect for Jewish communities past and present?
Please provide concrete examples.

21 Do your schools cooperate with outside partners/different stakeholders in promoting knowledge about Jewish heritage and Europe's multi-cultural and multi-religious past?
Provide concrete examples.
   a. Local NGOs, such as Museums of Jewish History and Culture, Museums of the Holocaust
   b. Local Jewish survivors
   c. Jewish visitors from abroad, Israel and Diaspora
   d. Israel Embassy
   e. Other foreign embassies
   f. Ministry of Education

22 In your opinion, how could your schools improve education about Jewish heritage by utilising the local Jewish cemetery as an educational resource?

23 In your opinion, how could your schools improve education about the Holocaust by utilising the local Jewish cemetery as an educational resource?

24 What recommendation would you/your schools suggest for strengthening education about Jewish heritage?
   a. More funding
   b. More hours in the curriculum
   c. More educational resources, both published and online
   d. Better access to teacher training
   e. All of the above
   f. Other, please explain

25 In your opinion, what would be the optimal number of hours in the high school curriculum per year to teach about Jewish heritage?

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