

*Once upon
today*



PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

What if it all was just a very good story? Half true, half made up, reflecting our memories, experiences, and those of the communities we live in. Like in a fairy tale. With the project “Once upon today...”, we would like to invite you to think about history, memory, and identity in this different way. Not as something fixed or stable, but as stories.... good stories though.

“Once upon a time...” – these words sound so familiar to most people as fairy tales have been passed on from generation to generation, told and retold, with each storyteller adding his or her personal flavour to the story. When people think and talk about history, memory and identity, something very similar happens. They constantly tell a story about themselves, the communities and states they live in. These so called narratives help people make sense of reality and they are made up of diverse facts, myths, official commemoration and personal memories. Like any other story, they are constantly shaped and reshaped through communication and reflect the values, interpretations and political objectives of the communities and people who share it. Thus, any narrative could start like a tale in present: „Once upon today...”

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I. ABOUT THE PROJECT

We all live with images constructed on the basis of our experiences, of cultures we come into touch with and of stories we have been told. All these elements play an important role in the formation and evolution of the way we perceive ourselves, describe our identity and think about the world we live in. Thus, in order to be able to peacefully live together in societies that are increasingly shaped by diversity, we need to comprehend these mechanisms. Because this kind of understanding is crucial for developing empathy towards different perceptions and different narratives of other nations, religious communities, subcultures or individuals.

During ONCE UPON TODAY 40 young participants from Ukraine, Poland, Israel and Germany met from 21st till 30th September 2012 in Berlin (D), Wrocław and Krzyżowa (PL) in order to analyse and reflect upon the official national narratives of their countries in the context of individual biographies, experiences and memories. The term narrative stood for national myths, official history outlines and images as well as culturally conditioned perception of political and social events in the past and at present.

Project participants came from German, Polish, Ukrainian, Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Israeli communities. During the encounter



Group work

they all got confronted with the narratives of the “others” and thus became more aware of the gaps in their own national, cultural and religious stories. The main objective was to make participants curious about meeting other people, discussing with them and trying to understand their perspectives and experiences. On the second and more analytical level, young people were encouraged to enter an intense exchange about different narratives on the past, presence and future and at the same time to reflect on their own culture, history and society. In this way, they had the opportunity to practically see how this kind of personal and open-minded contact can foster understanding and tolerance among people stemming from different national, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

With this experience in mind, participants developed their own micro-projects in sometimes local, but mostly bi- or multinational groups at the end of the seminar. These projects were implemented after the international seminar, with participants discovering untold stories or neglected perspectives in their home towns and presenting the results of ONCE UPON TODAY in their communities.



Discovering stories

ONCE UPON TODAY had the following structure:

1. Advance Planning Visit in Frankfurt, 15.-17.03.2012

During the preparatory meeting the representatives of partner organisations met in order to develop together the detailed content and the methodological guideline of the project. The introductory lecture on “Narratives, Communities and Memory” by Rainer Ohliger of the “Network Migration in Europe” inspired all the partners to get into intense discussions about how those issues could be best approached in the framework of the seminar. It was quickly agreed upon that methods should be participatory and process-oriented, allowing participants to actively bring in their wishes and expectations throughout the project.

Following this, project partners decided on further steps of the project, shared their respective resources and agreed upon responsibilities to be assumed by each organisation.

2. Youth meeting in Germany and Poland, 21.-30.09.2012.

2.1 Study visit in Berlin (D) and Wrocław (PL)

Through guided tours, input lectures, visits to memory sites and discussions with experts, participants were searching for



Blog team at work

examples of transnational mutual denominators for all four countries in the official narratives and individual biographies.

2.2 Seminar on national and individual narratives in Krzyżowa (PL)

In the International Youth Meeting Centre in Krzyżowa participants moved to the reflexion part of the project. Having collected a lot of impressions, they went on with analysing, discussing, rethinking and expressing their own feelings about and thoughts on collective and individual stories by means of creative methods. After individual work they shared the results of the creative process and entered a very intense personal exchange with other participants.

2.3 Micro-projects (D, PL, UA, IL)

As an output of the project participants were working on concepts of micro-projects with a focus on gaps in the dominant narratives of their communities. In an open space session they were working on the content and form of their own projects. The project has been accompanied by a blog, so for videos, pictures and further reports visit: www.once-upon-today.org.



Discussions in groups

II. THEMES

The contents of the international youth meeting were clustered around several key terms: history, memory, community, nation and narrative. Between each of the concepts there are multiple relations. In order to progressively investigate this complex, the structure of the project was to approach it from different perspectives.

The city as a story: Berlin and Wrocław

In order not get to lost in abstract discussions, the starting point was to discover traces of the past and the vibrant life of different communities today in Berlin and Wrocław.

Discovering a city is always an act of selective perception of certain places, memorials, information, encounters with people and their stories, food and atmosphere. Depending on your choices and – of course – fluke and mischance the story of a city and its people can thus look very different. Big cities have policies to shape these narratives in a certain way, constructing memorial sites, selecting names of places and streets, giving certain aspects of their history more prominence while neglecting others. At the same time, communities shape the look of the city, such as the Turkish or Arab communities in Berlin-Neukölln, and they bring along their respective stories and memory. Traces of forgotten or untold stories can be found in the topography of the city, such as traces of colonialism in the African quarter of Berlin-Wedding or marks of particular incidents of World War II in Wrocław. Religious or other such as the LGBT communities, have specific places and stories. Thus, the project took this diversity of different communities, their memory, and narratives as a starting point to make participants aware of the multi-perspectivity surrounding them. Both official and non-official narratives were presented. Participants followed tourist routes and made their own discoveries off the beaten track with individual scouts representing different communities.

My story: Identity in times of diversity

The second step was to work with biographical and creative me-

thods to make participants reflect upon their own identity and personal stories.

Here, the important questions are: Who are you? What is important to you? What experiences, influences, stories have had an impact on your personal development and identity? Starting from this perspective, the issues of history, memory, communities, and narratives are no longer something outside our personal experiences, but can be told through the origins of our family, specific events and stories passed on from generation to generation or religious and other traditions. By telling these stories to others, one becomes aware of how unique each personal experiences in life have been, but also what larger events and stories somewhat bind them together sometimes in conflict and pain, but sometimes also in positive ways. However, these external influences are far from determining who we are. So telling your own story also involves a substantial degree of differentiating yourself from your community, putting forward your personal character, your interests, beliefs – the things that make you unique. In doing so, participants can discover what other characteristics except for the markers given by society, such as nationality or religious belonging, can bring them truly together as individuals. All in all, this individual perspective therefore allows participants on the one hand to reposition themselves in their own communities and nations, but also to realise what makes them individually different. On the other hand, this approach broadens the perspective to transnational communities and an unbiased personal exchange.

National narratives: Comparing and rewriting the stories

The third way of putting narratives into perspective was to compare different stories of the same event. In the framework of ONCE UPON TODAY this step was only taken towards the end of the project, after participants had already got closer with one another. Official narratives - or as it would be more precise to say dominant narratives - in particular those linked to national

historiography, are selective in highlighting some historical events, while neglecting others, putting forward a certain interpretation of how a nation state came about or developed in the course of time. They typically tend to privilege the perspectives of one group over those of others, while also blending contradictory and ambivalent paths of development into a coherent narrative. These official narratives are permanently reshaped and debated. This discourse is distributed to a broader public through the educational system, media, political debates, and specific politics of commemoration. Being aware of it or not, each of us therefore puts historical events

in a perspective that is shaped by these dominant narratives. Participants told and retold each other different stories about the same event, discovering differences and similarities. The process of questioning and rewriting the story took place: If two people give different accounts and can both claim a certain credibility for their perspective, ambivalence is introduced. The solution here is to let those two stories coexist and to respect the fact that different historical experiences can lead to different narratives, without trying to convince the partner of the absolute truth of one's own version.



Deborah and Hanan in Wrocław



Discussions in Wrocław



Preparations



Walking through Berlin

III. MISSION

Building on these project themes, ONCE UPON TODAY enabled multicultural dialogue on the past, presence and future and facilitated reflection on one's own culture, history and society and thus fostered mutual understanding and tolerance between people from different national, ethnic and religious backgrounds. During the project, participants from Germany, Poland, Arab and Jewish Israel, and Ukraine made an experience together. Understanding one's own story and discovering that all communities and nations had their respective and legitimate stories allowed looking at one's own national narrative in a more critical way. It also allowed for seeing that behind nations there were individuals with their own private stories – these revealed how diverse nations were.

In detail the project fostered a number of skills:

Intercultural sensitivity

Forty people from 4 nations, different ethnic communities, different religions, diverse family and educational backgrounds met for 9 days and were discussing their national stories with focus on gaps in national history and culture narratives. The selection of themes implied a deep and critical examination of cultural stereotypes and fixed national and mainstream concepts. The participants went through an intellectual and emotional excursion during which they not only analysed different cultures of the others but also questioned their own socialisation and deconstructed their national identities in order to construct a new set of perspectives allowing for intercultural dialogue based on equality, respect and tolerance.

Seeing and understanding diversity

Participants were discussing different national stories and myths, analysing them in an intercultural context. The multiperspectivity of the debates during the meeting revealed the mechanisms of how cultural and social standards are being con-

structed. Apart from looking at the narratives from national, European and global perspective, individual biographies were analysed. That allowed for looking at individuals rather than at groups with assigned characteristics. Through an insight into individual perspectives it was possible to see what groups, nations and communities were made of – namely individuals with different values, opinions and identities. It helped to see and understand diversity and prepared for more tolerant attitudes towards the “others”.

Awareness of discrimination and acting against it

A series of transcultural and anti-bias activities strengthened participants' awareness of what prejudice, discrimination and exclusion mean. The participants discovered how deeply rooted stereotypical images are in their societies. The mutual experience during the encounter allowed for seeing diversity and the necessity to spread the ideas of tolerance and understanding in opposition to policies of discrimination and exclusion. All participating countries are facing in their social and political structure discrimination based on different grounds: race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability to name only the most common.

Active citizenship on the local, national and global level

Participants came from both EU-member countries and from neighbouring countries.

During the project they were being empowered in their role as active citizens in their local communities as well as on the national and international level. They were being encouraged to take on the role of leaders, experts and moderators. This way they discovered that they all had something to share with the others, that their voice could be heard and that as individuals they could influence the life of local, national and international communities.

Apprehension of democratic principles

The spirit of the project was based on the founding principles of the EU: liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Participants discovered that though those principles seemed obvious there was still a widespread necessity of permanent action for promotion and facilitating of those rules. They realized that they as individuals could also contribute to spreading attitudes strengthening these principles. Debates and exchange on difficult past opened the gate towards mutual plans for a peaceful future.



Team building activity in Krzyżowa



Wrocław impressions



Tour through Berlin Neukölln



Kateryna watching photos in the House on the Hill, Krzyżowa



Guided tour around Krzyżowa

IV. AGENDA

Fri, 21.09.2012: GETTING STARTED

Till 17:00	Arrival in Berlin
17:00	Welcome and introduction <i>Moderation: Ole Jantschek, Protestant Academy in Hessen and Nassau & Joanna Szaftik, Kreisau-Initiative, Berlin</i>
20:00	Welcome dinner and cultural programme

Sat, 22.09.2012: INTRODUCTION / BERLIN AS A STORY

08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	History – Memory – Communities – Narratives <i>Speaker: Rainer Ohliger, Network Migration in Europe, Berlin</i>
13:00	Lunch break
15:00	Berlin – the official story of a capital <i>Guided tour: Berlin Trails</i> Berlin – city of diversity <i>Individual visit to the outdoor exhibition on 800 years of migration history in Berlin</i>
18:30	Daily evaluation round
19:30	Dinner

Sun, 23.09.2012: BERLIN AS A STORY / COMMUNITIES

08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	Communities <i>Introduction: Anna Maciag, History Meeting House, Warsaw</i>
10:30	Discovering other stories in Berlin <i>Informal guided tours with individual lunch break:</i> <i>Jewish community in Mitte and Gay Community in Kreuzberg, Roland Schmidt, education officer</i> <i>Subcultures and diversity in Kreuzkölln, Dr. Chaði Bahouth, political scientist, moderator, author, journalist</i> <i>Traces of Colonialism in Wedding, Mnyaka Sururu Mboro, Berlin Postkolonial e.V.</i> <i>On Ukrainian trails in Berlin, Oleksandra Bienert, public historian and activist</i>
17:30	Daily evaluation round
19:30	Dinner

Mon, 24.09.2012: WROCLAW AS A STORY

08:00	Breakfast
08:30	Shuttle to Wrocław
14:00	Lunch break
15:00	Wrocław as an official story <i>Guided tour: Paweł Mączka, Institute of Political Science, University of Wrocław; Tadeusz Mincer, Institute of Cultural Studies, University of Wrocław</i>
18:30	Daily evaluation round
19:30	Dinner

Tue, 25.09.2012: WROCLAW AS A STORY / MEMORY

08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	Memory <i>Introduction: Anna Maciąg, History Meeting House, Warsaw</i>
11:00	Sharing impressions and parking lot for issues to be discussed <i>Moderation: Ole Jantschek, Protestant Academy in Hessen and Nassau</i>
13:00	Lunch break
14:00	Wrocław – discovering layers of history <i>Moderation: Dominik Kretschmann, Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe</i>
18:00	Daily evaluation round
19:00	Dinner
20:00	Shuttle to Krzyżowa

Wed, 26.09.2012: TIME OUT/ KRZYŻOWA AS A STORY

08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	Chill-out
10:30	Lunch break
17:30	Krzyżowa estate – a place and its stories <i>Introduction and guided tour: Dominik Kretschmann, Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe</i>
19:30	Dinner

Thu, 27.09.2012: IMAGES UNDER CONSTRUCTION

08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	Workshop: Identity <i>Moderation: Ole Jantschek, Protestant Academy in Hessen und Nassau & Deborah Krieg, Anne Frank Educational Centre, Frankfurt</i>
13:00	Lunch break
15:00	Workshop: Identity (continued) <i>Creative workshops</i>
18:00	Gallery Walk
18:30	Daily evaluation round
19:00	Dinner
21:00	Camp fire

Fr, 28.09.2012: ONCE UPON TODAY IN MY COUNTRY / NARRATIVES

08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	Rethinking Narratives in a Pluralist World <i>Speaker: Dr. Annamaria Orla-Bukowska, Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University, Kraków</i>
13:00	Lunch break
15:00	Workshop: The same event - different stories? Comparing official narratives <i>Moderation: Oren Hoffman, Ramat Negev Regional Council; Ole Jantschek, Protestant Academy in Hessen und Nassau; Joanna Szaftik, Kreisau-Initiative</i>
18:30	Daily evaluation round
19:30	Dinner
20:00	Open room for further discussions

Sat, 29.09.2012: ONCE UPON TODAY IN MY COUNTRY / MY STORY

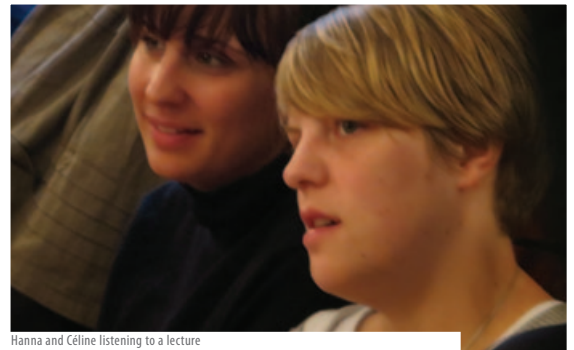
08:00	Breakfast
09:00	Organisational issues
09:30	Once upon today... Retelling the stories: Open space round for developing micro-projects <i>Moderation: Deborah Krieg, Anne Frank Educational Centre & Joanna Szaflik, Kreisau-Initiative</i>
13:00	Lunch break
15:00	Once upon today...Retelling the stories Open space round for developing micro-projects
17:00	Feedback and official farewell <i>Moderation: Ole Jantschek, Protestant Academy in Hessen and Nassau & Joanna Szaflik, Kreisau-Initiative</i>
19:00	Dinner
20:30	Farewell party

Sun, 30.09.2012: FINAL EVALUATION & DEPARTURE

09:00	Departure from Krzyżowa
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Chat on the stairs of the Krzyżowa Palace



Hanna and Céline listening to a lecture



Kerstin, Pavlo and Olha at lunch

V. METHODOLOGICAL TOOLBOX: HOW TO TALK ABOUT DIFFERENT NARRATIVES IN AN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT?

The methodology of ONCE UPON TODAY was based on non-formal education. The participatory methods served as an eye and mind opener. Participants were discovering that they all had something to share and that others could learn from them. This experience had a motivating and empowering effect.

The project was based on methods used and tested by other trainers and educators. Most of them belong to the canon of didactical tools in the extracurricular transcultural education. We are grateful to every author, trainer and educator who inspired us and thus indirectly has had his or her part in the implementation of this project.

In this booklet we present a selection of tools that set the framework for the project. During the implementation process the planned agenda was accompanied by spontaneous inputs of the team and participants, yet not all these elements are mentioned here in detail.

The mixture of themes and methods have proved successful and can be reused in similar contexts. We would be happy, if this outline was helpful and inspiring for other educators.

From the methodological point of view ONCE UPON TODAY was based on five steps:

- 1. Getting started**
- 2. Knowledge and Experience**
- 3. Empowerment, Reflection and Debate**
- 4. Action**
- 5. Summary and evaluation**

In the getting started session participants had a chance to get the first impression of one another. The activities implemented had

an ice-breaking character. They gave the first orientation and prepared the ground for entering the content-wise part of the project. In the knowledge and experience phase participants took part in guided tours, city walks as well as input lectures and workshops.

This part aimed at introducing participants to the main concepts tackled during the whole project as well as at confronting them with various possibilities of seeing and presenting historical events and cultural phenomena. This stage also contributed to the group building process, which was crucial for further work on challenging topics and controversial issues concerning shared and divided narratives of communities represented by participants.

That step was followed by a number of activities on identity and individual perception of history, memory and narratives in the empowerment, debate and reflection phase. At that point the atmosphere in the group became very trustworthy, nearly intimate. Participants felt secure enough to enter controversial discussions and participate in them in a very open manner. Thanks to methods used until then and gradual immersion in the issues discussed, participants were able to work in a constructive and respectful way.

The action phase which followed concentrated on the project output: actions for presenting the project idea to a wider audience and going deeper in the analysis of gaps in memories of all the participating communities.

Apart from that, a number of team-building and language animation activities took place. Many of them were introduced and moderated by the participants themselves.

Every day there was also an evaluation round in small groups, which enabled a constant exchange between the participants and the project team. In the final summary and evaluation session participants reflected upon the whole project and defined their personal lessons and discoveries.

Throughout the project, a blog was created and maintained, giving participants a means to share their thoughts with others, documenting results of the workshop, and sharing photos, thoughts, and outcomes of creative workshops. In that way, participants curated an online exhibition about the whole project. The project blog – combined with a facebook group – was an important platform for keeping in touch after the project and informing each other about the micro-projects.

1. Getting started

Introductory round

- Description: At the very beginning all participants sit in a circle and are asked to say their:
 - Name
 - Where they come from
 - Why they are here

This is the very first introductory round. No further questions or comments follow. The round is kept short and should only break ice. No debriefing needed.

Group geography

Description: Participants stand up. They should imagine that they are standing on a big map. A huge “N” standing for north written on a piece of paper is placed on the ground so that participants have a point of reference. Now they are asked to position themselves in a place...

- where they were born

- where they have arrived from
- where their parents/ grandparents were born
- they would like to visit in the nearest future

Debriefing: After answering every of the questions above some participants are asked to explain where they are. Those who have chosen places located the furthest from the centre comment on their choice.

Positioning

Description: Participants communicate non-verbally. They are asked to build a line according to the criteria named below. They are not allowed to talk to each other. They communicate through gestures and body language.

- According to the first letter of their name – from A to Z.
- According to the first historical event they can remember.
- According to number of international projects they have participated in.

Debriefing: Volunteers are asked to comment on their answers. The activity allows for group building according to criteria different than nationality and gender.

Schedule and Appointment

Description: Participants are first asked to schedule an appointment with one person at each hour (see annex 1). Then, they are asked to pair at each hour that is called (“it’s now 9 o’clock!”) with their peer and at each round answer to questions asked by the moderator. They have 2 minutes for an exchange on each question.

Questions:

- I’d like you to know my family because...
- You should visit my city because...
- I’d like my country to be known for...

- For the first time in my life I felt a citizen of my country when...
- I felt-feel discriminated when...
- What is history?
- What do you like about the culture of your country?

Debriefing: Volunteers share their impressions with the others. They tell whether they found some information they got from the interviews particularly interesting, surprising or irritating.

Rules and expectations

Description: Participants are divided in groups (A, B, C, D). They discuss 3 questions:

1. What do we expect from this seminar/ training?
2. What can I contribute to this seminar/ training?
3. What are the things that should be respected during the seminar and what can we do in order to make everyone respect them?

They write down their answers on the flip-chart.

Debriefing: In plenary everybody presents their Rules and Expectations poster. The group looks for similarities and decides which rules and expectations are most important to the majority. The poster is then presented throughout the project to remind people of their own expectations and to eventually come back to them if necessary.

2. Knowledge and Experience

Introductory sessions combine lectures and workshops on the key concepts: history, communities, memory, and narratives. These theoretical introductions to the main issues discussed during the project are necessary to give all participants common ground for discussion. In addition to defining terms, they help to start discussions among participants about examples derived from their own experiences and experiences of all groups participating in the project.

In the particular case of ONCE UPON TODAY a general introductory lecture was given by Rainer Ohliger from the association Network Migration in Europe. Further short input sessions to every single term by Anna Maciag from the History Meeting House in Warsaw followed as an introduction to city tours, discussions and biographical work.

Workshop European Museum

In this workshop, participants learn to practically work with the key concepts of history, memory, narratives and communities. They split up in small groups with participants from different countries and communities. In the first step, they are asked to put themselves in the shoes of the director of a European history museum. Each group is asked to select three historical events or periods to narrate European history. In the second step, the same groups are asked to select one object, image or document for each of the events or periods. Results are presented and discussed in the plenary session.

Guided tours

Official history: Guided tours through Berlin and Wrocław

In Berlin and Wrocław participants are getting to know both cities from the perspective of their official histories, as well as narratives of different communities. The aim is to raise awareness, that there are many ways of seeing cities: the story of the majority and the stories of different minorities, the history of political events and their individual interpretations, the big national history and small individual histories happening at the same time. All these aspects are being shown in a number of various city tours. The tours are planned in a way that enables the participants to see how parallel narratives may exist at the same time.

Different communities – different stories

In Berlin a classical touristic city tour with focus on Berlin's political history gives the first, rather superficial introduction to the city. By following the tourist route, participants get an idea of what the dominant narratives are and how they are distributed to visitors of the city. This tour is followed by informal guided walks with different scouts who present their communities in Berlin off the beaten track. The following tours take place: Jewish community in Mitte and gay community in Kreuzberg; Subcultures and diversity in Kreuzkölln; Traces of Colonialism; On Ukrainian trails in Berlin. During the informal tours participants have a chance to enter a dialogue with the scouts: they spend the whole day together, visit museums and galleries, see monuments and have lunch that rounds up their experience of the given community.

A similar pattern follows in Wrocław. After guided tours showing the official history of the city, participants go on thematic walks in small groups. This scavenger hunt allows them to see parallel narratives that partly comply and partly compete with the official story and show the complexity of showing a one true history of a city.

Scavenger hunt in Wrocław

Participants are asked to split into smaller groups, keeping up the national mix. Each of the groups is given a city map of Wrocław and a folded piece of paper with instructions. The task is to go to certain points in the city and look for obvious and less obvious signs of persons or stories, related to the city's history as well as to the seminar's topic of diverse narratives.

The groups follow three different routes. Each route has five or six stops, all referring to the Polish, German or Jewish history of the town. The places to be found and visited offer more than one historical layer, more than one story. Participants are asked to partly research (giving them hints where that could be done)

and partly to guess answers and solutions. In the latter case the answer would be given with further unfolding of the instruction paper. Sometimes the participants are asked to discuss a question related to a certain spot.

Stops include: the Edith Stein House, the University of Technology, the Stork Synagogue, the square where the new synagogue of the city stood until the 1938 pogrom and the Fredro monument.

The aim of this activity was to let the participants get to know aspects of Wrocław in a more active way than via a guided tour. The often hidden but visible for a knowing eye layers of history were put in focus. It was shown that not only it is sometimes difficult to tell whether the decision for a certain inscription on a monument or renovation of something destroyed was right or wrong, but also how fascinating it can be to have a look behind the surface of a city's presented history.

A place and its narratives - Guided tour around Krzyżowa

In the International Youth Meeting Centre in Krzyżowa participants take part in the last guided tour. Here in the session "3 x Helmut(h) plus x" they learn about the history of the place. Also here the tour is focused on different ways of telling the story of a particular place.

Here a report written by Michał Wojnarowicz, one of the participants:

After a descent amount of free time we gathered in the Palace – the heart of the Krzyżowa estate. Here we began a next stage of our project. Our guide was Dominik Kretschman – a trainer and a teacher at the Krzyżowa Foundation. He is a man who knows everything (really everything) about history of Krzyżowa. We started with a small introduction about the origins of the foundation and the place we were staying in. After that the main part began.

Basically, Krzyżowa can be described with an equation – 3 x Helmut(h) + X. Why so? In the history of Krzyżowa there were three people named Helmut(h). The first one was the field marshal Helmut Carl Bernard von Moltke – one of the greatest Prussian-German strategists, named one of the “fathers” of Germany’s unification. As a sign of gratitude for his service in the Austrian-Prussian war he received a large sum of money. That money allowed him to buy the Krzyżowa estate in 1867. Although he was constantly needed by the Prussian army, he was able to create a peaceful and special place here in Silesia. It was the place he could call home.

The field marshal died in 1891, which leaves us with an interesting story about narratives. His nephews, who inherited Krzyżowa, started building the myth around his uncle. To create the myth they needed to change the narrative of their uncle’s life. They ordered two enormous wall paintings, called “Shame” and “Revenge”. The first shows the capture of Lübeck in 1806. The title refers to the defeat of the Prussian army. The other painting shows the Prussian revenge – the triumphal parade in Paris in 1871. On both paintings there is Helmut von Moltke – as a scared six year old child in Lübeck and as a victorious general in Paris. To tell the truth, there never was a small Helmut present during the events in Lübeck nor the adult one in Paris. It’s just a story, made up and painted on the wall for the glory of von Moltke’s legacy.

Then we tracked down another Helmut. We went for a short trip to the House on the Hill – the place not far away from the main mansion, where the von Moltke family moved due to the economic crisis in 1927. The House on the Hill was a place where the Kreisau Circle met several times on invitation of Helmut James von Moltke and his wife Freya.

Helmut James opposed the Nazi regime from the very beginning. In 1939 he met Peter Yorck. Soon they became close friends. They both agreed that they wanted to resist Hitler’s regime. But they

chose a unique way to express that resistance. Soon a group of similarly thinking people joined Peter and Helmut. The group was not formalized. Even the name came up from the Gestapo investigation. Inside the House we were shown the photos of the “Circle’s” members: different backgrounds and different professional occupations, priests and leftists, men and women, aristocrats and intellectuals. They did not want to kill Hitler, they didn’t plan the coup d’etat or used any kind of force. They were just talking. Talking about future. Talking about how to deal with the evil that was woken up? How to prosecute the war criminals? How to rebuild the democracy?

They were meeting in the small groups or just in pairs. But the three biggest meetings took place right there, in Krzyżowa. That was why the Gestapo, that arrested most of the members in early 1944, called the group “Kreisau Circle”. After the attempt to assassinate Hitler in July 1944, the Nazi government decided on the fate of the group. Many of them were sentenced to death and executed. Helmut James Moltke died in January 1945. Those members of the Circle who survived the war did not manage to put the ideas they had discussed during the war into action. The history seemed to forsake the “Kreisau Circle.”

Then the X factor came up. We discussed this back in the Palace. The Catholic Intelligence Club (KIK, one of the few NGOs that was allowed to operate in communist Poland) took interest in the place and its stories in the late 80’s. In the 1989 KIK organized a conference for everyone who was interested in the story behind Krzyżowa. Academics and ordinary people from both from East and from West Germany, Poland, the USA and the Netherlands visited Krzyżowa.

It was not a pleasant view. The palace had been treated like many other former German properties. It was devastated and partially ruined. The buildings of the state-owned farm, which was situated here, were also in a very bad shape.

But the participants of the conference did not feel discouragement or sorrow. They were inspired. This is the Place – they said - for meetings, for communication, for stories, for discussion, for the future – just like in the past. It sounded utopian, but somehow the fate decided to help the Krzyżowa supporters. It was because of the third Helmut: Helmut Kohl. He met Tadeusz Mazowiecki in Krzyżowa in late 1989. They decided to support the initiative. Both countries provided funds for the Meeting Place.

And that is how three Helmuths + X shaped Krzyżowa as we know it today. But that is just one narrative...

3. Empowerment, Reflection and Debate

Following the first approach to history, memory, communities and narratives in the knowledge and experience phase, the next step is to give time to reflect upon all these impressions, develop one's own thoughts, discuss them with others and draw conclusions for oneself. The empowerment, reflection and debate phase gives participants the space and means for intellectual and creative expression of their ideas. It is important, that at this point an atmosphere of trust and belonging together has been established in the group.

Parking lot

The time in Berlin and Wrocław was very intense: many places, many stories, many impressions, many thoughts. This first reflection period of the agenda was not planned, but we realised that it was necessary to give participants a chance to sum up everything that had happened until that point and note down ideas and topics that should be discussed later in the empowerment, reflection and debate phase. This happened in a morning sessions where participants worked in small groups, shared their experiences and defined topics they felt they wanted to discuss about later. As a matter of fact, this way of reacting to the needs of the group gives additional ideas for setting the agenda for the next days. At the same time, the questions that had been set up in the agenda beforehand now also developed a personal concern of the group.

Biography work: My story

In Krzyżowa, participants spent a full day working on their own story. This was done in a three-step-approach: flowers of identity, creative workshops, exhibition.

Flowers of identity

Description: Participants are asked to draw a flower with petals and leaves and to put into each segment a word that is important for their identity. It is possible to give an example of how the flower could look like or even to indicate some things that might be written into the petals and leaves, e.g. gender, hobbies, nationality etc. It is also possible to go for a more open version and give participants full liberty in the design of own flowers and not to name any examples whatsoever but only to explain that it could be any characteristic that one considers important for him- or herself. In any case it is extremely important to make sure that participants reflect upon their identity in different terms than those assigned to them by society.

In the first round, participants work individually and design a “private flower” that is not meant to be presented to others.

In the second step they are asked to create a “public flower” to be shared with one other person from the group. It is important to make sure that every participant finds a person that he/she wants to work with on this personal issue.

In the third step participants form groups of four people from different communities and again according to participants' own wishes. They are now asked to put their flowers into a landscape by adding the concepts of history, memory, communities, and narratives.

Debriefing: The flowers can be presented to the whole group allowing it also to discuss questions such as: What does identity mean to you? Who are you and what matters to you? How do history, memory, communities and narratives influence you personally?

Creative workshops: Telling our stories

Description: Participants continue to work on their own story or select one story that they have heard in the previous days. Then they work creatively in whatever way: in groups or individually, with different methods, like writing, drawing, handicraft, videos and pictures or blogging. The only objective here is to create an object, a text or an image that would tell the story important to the them.

Debriefing: All results are presented in the main seminar room and are visited during a gallery walk. There is also space for asking questions and exchanging comments on the presented exhibits.

In the flowers of identity workshop participants came up with very different results not only for their own flowers, but also in the way they contextualized them in the landscape with the four key concepts. They created beautiful, original and authentic flowers. Then we put these flowers into context of how we are influenced by history, communities, and narratives. Working with creative methods made it possible to come up with very different images. For instance, one group saw the narratives as a kind of seeds carrying stories from communities in the past to the communities we live in, while from the flowers of ourselves new seeds are leaving to the future. Another group portrayed history as a gardener, the narratives as bees, and communities as the rain – all these factors influence the growth and development of the flower of identity. Interestingly, history in this picture has a kind of an unnatural, mechanical core.



Flower of identity



Wind of time

National narratives: Comparing and rewriting the stories

As a final method to approach history, memory, community and narratives, we decided to compare different stories of the same event and to compare the dominant narratives existing in different communities and countries.

Using the free space offered during the creative workshops, participants spontaneously came up with many different ideas and bursts of creativity. Some decided to continue working on their own story, turning the flower of identity into a piece of art, writing a poem about one's identity or starting a big painting combining objects of past and present, experiences and images from a dream. Others wanted to retell one of the stories that had impressed them in previous days, so e.g. a map of Berlin was created carrying at its heart the outline of the African continent and thus representing the untold stories of Colonialism in German history.



Flower in a glass by Hanna



Africa in Berlin by Julia

Same event – different stories

Description: Participants first split up into working groups of 4-6 people, consisting of an equal number of people from two different communities or countries, e.g. 2 from Germany and 2 from Poland. They then select one historic event that they consider important either for both countries, on a global level or from their personal point of view. First, every group splits into national sub-groups; every sub-group has to agree on a dominant narrative about this particular event in one's own country. In the second stage both sub-groups come together, share their narratives and compare them.

Debriefing: In plenum participants report on differences and similarities as well as on aspects that struck or surprised them most. Finally, the group as a whole can try to identify characteristics of how narratives are constructed in each of the countries, pointing to concepts such as power, hierarchy or the creation of boundaries.

Telling each other different narratives of the same event was an intense experience. A Jewish-Israeli / Arab-Israeli group decided to tell each the different perceptions of the year "1948" which is the birth of Israel for one group and 'Nakhba'- the catastrophe for the other side. A Polish-Ukrainian group worked on the "Orange Revolution" which spurred hot debates among Ukrainian participants. In both cases, discussions were very intense as the conflicts are still not resolved and therefore the different narratives are also linked to political issues today. However, diverging perceptions can also be told by less controversial events, which was shown by a German-Ukrainian group working on the nuclear catastrophes in "Chernobyl and Fukushima".

As a result, a number of ideas and questions sum up those intense discussions: Which facts are highlighted in one narrative, but neglected in the other? Where are blind spots? How present is the past? All participants said it was a hard task, especially to listen, when things seemed to be wrong. Still, they all described it as an impressive experience which made them understand and feel the perspective of the other side. As a result one of the micro-projects was a short film about the Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Israeli identities which can be found on the project blog.



Flowers of identity in process

4. Action: Retelling the stories... Open space round.

In this part of the project, participants are encouraged to take the thoughts and experiences to their home towns and to work with them.

Description: Open space session for developing micro-projects is based on two questions:

Which other stories should be heard in my community?

How can they be told in a way that brings people together?

1. Individually participants write down their ideas for micro-projects on moderation cards: They stick their cards to a flip-chart.
2. The moderator with the help of participants groups the project ideas according to topics and issues touched upon. In this way small groups are formed. During the whole day the participants are working on the concepts and planning the implementation of their projects. If someone feels that he/she does not like the way the project is developing and they cannot have their part in working out the concept, they try to find another group that suits them better. The team members are all the time available for questions and support.
3. Participants are given hand-outs with a template for describing their micro-projects. (*see annex 2*)

Debriefing: At the end all groups present the results of their work in a plenary session.

This is a space for comments and questions from other participants. In case of criticism the group searches for arguments to defend their project idea.

5. Summary and Evaluation

You have it in your hand

Description: In daily evaluation sessions every evening participants comment on the activities of the day using the verbal way of the “You have it in your hand” method.

In this method every finger stands for something:

Thumb: it was really good...

Forefinger: it was important...

Middle finger: it was really bad...

Ring finger: I felt emotionally moved by...

Little finger: it was missing...

The whole group is sitting down in a circle and according to the schemata described above comment on the whole day. Further discussions are allowed only after everybody has expressed their opinion on the day.

Looking back: Slide show and looking back on the whole project

Description: Participants gather together. A slide show with pictures on the whole project is being shown.

Participants talk and comment on the situations and images presented.

After that they sit down in a circle and close their eyes. Each of them is given a sweetie which they can eat during the following stage of the activity. They are not allowed to open their eyes. While they are sitting with their eyes closed and eating their sweeties, the moderator is retelling the whole project agenda, reminding participants of all activities that took place.

The aim of this round is to make participants travel again through their memories of the last days and all the events that might have slipped out of their mind, to help them concentrate and make them go through the whole project themselves.

It is a preparation for the final evaluation, in which every participant individually expresses his/her opinion on the project.

Spiderweb: Oral feedback round

Description: Participants are standing in a circle. The moderator has a ball of wool. Every participant is asked to wind up the wool around his/her wrist, say one thought on the project he/she would like to share with the others and throw the ball of wool to the next person. After everyone has said their feedback and the ball has been in everyone's hands, all the participants are connected by a symbolic "spiderweb". The wool connecting one person to another is cut and everyone has a woolen bracelet as a reminder of the project.

Written evaluation form

Description: Participants fill out the evaluation form. They answer a set of closed and open questions on the content, organisation, logistics, atmosphere, moderation and results of the project.



Evaluation

Participants' voices from the evaluation:

There are many perspectives which I never even thought about. Moreover my perspective is pretty Eurocentric. I feel challenged to think about my own identity and about ways how to effectively convince more people to be open to other people's narratives.

During the project I realised, that in a way, we all are different and the same at once.

Inspirations for me? I will try to think in a different way and not to be cynical, to believe in the power of a dialogue.

The seminar gave me completely new knowledge and a different vision. It showed me different stories about Europe, stories that I would otherwise not hear of.

It surprised me that the project was breaking stigmas and that I was able to discover real people behind national identities.

I started missing the seminar two days before it ended:-)

VI. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The participants of the project were confronted with different opinions, cultures and social backgrounds. What was most important – they were confronted with the dominant, mostly national narratives they had grown up with. The project was an eye opener which enabled a new attitude towards other countries and people stemming from them. Through diversity approach the participants discovered the individual behind every group. This experience had a sustainable effect on their opinions, decisions and actions in the future.

Through contact with other people in their local communities, the participants spread the word on their experience. Many of them felt the necessity to act and get involved in actions for trans-cultural and transnational understanding, e.g. the Jewish Israeli participants who visited the Palestinian group in Nazareth. By becoming active they took on the role of multipliers and facilitators of intercultural dialogue.

The encounter was followed by micro-projects: local actions on national narratives in all participating countries. These were focused either on sharing the experience of the ONCE UPON TODAY youth exchange with peers from their local communities or researching the gaps in dominant narratives among their community members and sharing it with other project participants.

The following micro-projects were planned and implemented:

SQUAT – Someone should ask Questions about Us Acting Together by Hanna, Pavlo, Céline, Julia, Jan

Arab and Jewish communities in Israel by Olha, Svyatoslav, Ivanna, Anastasia, Kateryna

Ukrainian identity of young Jewish Ukrainians by Liliya and Vladyslava

Pictures of Nazareth by Naama, Lotem, Hagit, Avishay, Asya, Hanan

The humus holiday by Hanan, Nusaima, Hagit, Avishay, Ranin

Arab narrative by Nusaima, Oday, Ranin, Rewa, Fadi

Euro 2012. Afterwords by Olga and Kateryna

By fire and by stone. Jewish cementaries Blonie and Warszawa by Michał

Once upon today in Tarnowskie Góry / Warszawa by Michał and Tomasz

Polish-Jewish identity as a part of identity in Poland and Israel by Elżbieta and Naama

Here is a report from one of the micro-projects titled: Pictures of Nazareth. The project was implemented by the Jewish-Israeli and Arab-Israeli groups. The report of the Jewish-Israeli group was written by Avishay Edri and Oren Hoffman.

As a follow up to our seminar and the friendship we established we had decided to dedicate our micro-project to another meeting with the Israeli-Arab group members.

When we all met at the beginning of the programme in Germany, it came clear to us how much we do not know about each other's life and culture. In spite of living within reach of each other, Arab and Jewish communities in Israel rarely interact. That is why we chose this specific project. The main idea of the meeting was a photographed tour we had taken with our Arab friends as guides telling the story of the city, and introducing us to their lives and environments.

The conversation that accompanied the tour was mainly about the events that had shaped the face of the city in the 20th century. Ideas and terms like "Nakba", "the Balfur Declaration", "the 1967 borderlines" and "Right of Return" had filled the air while walking among the cafés and pomegranate juice stands, mosques and churches. Equipped with the notions and ideas we had acquired during our ten day seminar, we managed to conduct an intensive discussion in a civilized, tolerant and productive way. And most importantly, we all tried to listen as much as to speak. The interesting

thing was that, as soon as the heavy issues were put aside, we all shared the same issues and everyday worries, trying to acquire a profession, start a family, and be happy being who we are where we are.

The pictures that were taken during our tour reflect the variety of faces to the city, in terms of different religions, cultures, generations, opinions and more. We learned about the issues facing a city with Christians, Muslims, and Jews, and how some protests are quietly ongoing in a non-violent manner, trying to maintain the fabric that is Nazareth (and in some ways, the whole country).

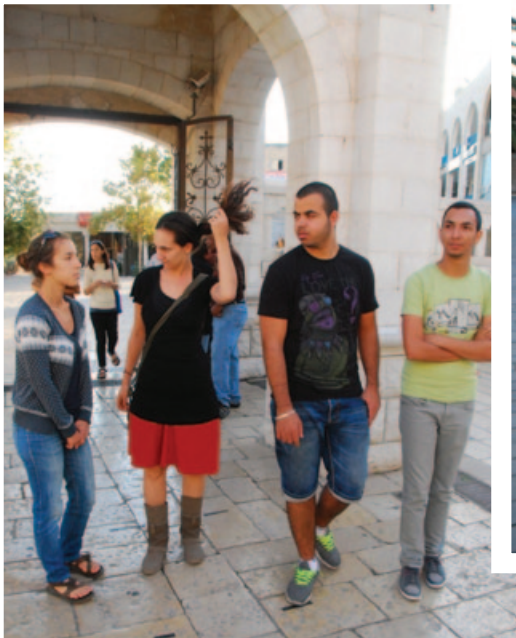
For the grand finale we headed to the Waked family residence, Oday's home, and had a delicious dinner thanks to courtesy of his mother, which also had clarified that in spite of the disagreements we can all still agree on some things. We were extremely happy for the wonderful hospitality and great food.

Our project made the local news and was published in the Ramat Negev newspaper.

P.S.

In the weeks after our trip to Nazareth a round of violence had irrupted in the area, we had still communicated but the atmosphere became tense. It was clear that everyone is very emotional about the events and has their own version to the matter. It is easy in times of struggle to be swept by the overriding atmosphere of hate, fear, and violence, but it is most important to remember that on both sides of the fence, the physical one and the political one, there are human beings who just want to live.

For further reports, pictures and videos from the micro-projects visit the project blog: **www.once-upon-today.org**



Pictures of Nazareth: impressions



VII. PROJECT PARTNERS

Kreisau-Initiative e.V. (Berlin, Germany) was created in 1989 by an international action group, in order to support the set-up and maintenance of an international youth meeting centre in Krzyżowa. In 1942/43 a German resistance group Kreisau Circle worked here on peace plans for the future of Europe after WWII. In 1989 the place and its history were rediscovered by transnational initiatives with members of the anti-communist opposition in Poland and Eastern Germany, as well people from Western Germany, the US and the Netherlands. The KI aims at initiating activities based on the heritage of the Kreisau Circle and the opposition movements in Central and Eastern Europe during communist times, that facilitate peaceful coexistence of nations and social groups in Europe. The KI has been organising international exchanges, trainings and conferences for various target groups for over 20 years. The aim of every meeting is to foster sustainable participation of young people and provide them with the competence needed to become active citizens. Moral courage, social and political engagement, tolerance, understanding between nations, commitment to democracy and human rights, and support of the European integration are the main foci of the KI's work.

Evangelische Akademie in Hessen and Nassau (Frankfurt, Germany) is a registered association and a part of the renowned network of Protestant Academies in Germany which provide an open, interdisciplinary discussion platform for the questions and issues of our time. The Akademie contributes to religious, cultural and socio-political discussions in order to enable people to enhance their social-ethical power of judgement, professional decision-making and cultural perception. The Akademie is a platform of exchange, a laboratory for political concepts, and a promoter of social innovations.

One of its main objectives is the education of young people as active citizens in a fair, sustainable and democratic society. Fostering dialogue on questions of historical remembrance among different religious communities (Christianity, Islam, Judaism) has been a specialisation of the Akademie for many years now, often bringing together participants from

European countries and Israel. More recently, the Akademie has developed its profile with a focus on issues of European integration.

Anne Frank Educational Centre (Frankfurt, Germany) is a place where both young people and adults can learn about the history of National Socialism and discuss its relevance for today. In its work the Centre uses the diary and the biography of Anne Frank as a unique tool to promote tolerance and educate people about the consequences of discrimination and racism. In a permanent multimedia exhibition "Anne Frank: A girl from Germany" young people and adults have a chance to explore the history of National Socialism in an interactive way, guided by their own interest. They have an opportunity to unravel the individual stories within the broader history.

A further focal point of the work is human rights education and the dialogue between people from different backgrounds, social status and lifestyles. Additionally, the Anne Frank Educational Centre offers seminars, training courses and projects on these topics.

Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe (Krzyżowa, Poland) is a politically independent, non-profit organisation. The aim of the Krzyżowa Foundation is to support peaceful and tolerant existence of nations, social groups and individuals in Europe. It builds bridges between the past and the present, between Western and Eastern Europe, and promotes dialogue between generations.

Working for young people and with young people in the International Youth Meeting Centre (IYMC) in Krzyżowa is the most important project implemented by the Foundation. Educational activities have been carried out since early 1990s, in accordance with the Foundation's educational goals and beliefs.

The Polish-German team of educators carries out about one hundred projects for between ten and twenty thousand of young people from

Poland, Germany and other European countries every year. Work in the IYMC is supported by volunteers from Germany and the Ukraine, and temporarily by apprentices.

History Meeting House (Warsaw, Poland) created by the milieu of the KARTA Centre Foundation, is a place of contact with individual testimonies of the 20th century history of Poland and Eastern Europe. The HMH offers different temporary exhibitions which serve as a basis for intensive educational work. Furthermore it organises documentary film presentations, meetings with eyewitnesses of history, historical debates, and workshops. An important area of the HMH activities is to gather eyewitness interviews, photographs, archival films and to make them available to a wider public.

Centre of Educational Initiatives (Lviv, Ukraine) was founded in 1996. It was set up on the initiative of Lviv's pedagogues who wished to establish an organization which could implement and promote innovative ideas in the field of education, especially in high schools. The main mission of the EIC is to promote active citizenship. In order to reach this aim the Centre initiates various actions in the field of education, science and culture. Actually the EIC provides support for European School Clubs in Lviv city and region, supports local groups in preparing follow-up activities after youth exchange projects and prepares a pilot programme on collective memory and tolerance in secondary schools. Its main target groups are: young people (incl. European School Clubs members), teachers, youth workers, civil servants responsible for youth, sport and education, local community leaders.

Ivano Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine) as an institution of higher education was founded in the 17th century. The Philological faculty as a subsidiary of the Lviv University has partner relations with 76 universities and institutions around the world, 15 of them in Poland. The University is a member of international educational organisations. It participates in international programmes and funds. Its staff, researchers

and graduate students receive University Grants INTAS, DAAD, individual grants and scholarships.

Masar Institute for Education (Nazareth, Israel) was founded in 1998 for the purpose of: helping people learn how to deal with difference and to regard uncertainty as a stimulus for learning and growth; contributing to the development of the Arab community and society as a whole by shaping a diverse culture where difference is respected and appreciated; promoting systematic change in Israeli government policies in order to create an educational environment that meets the needs of the Arab minority. The Institute is led by Ibrahim Abu Elheiga, a founding member who specialises in alternative management. The staff consists of over 40 educators who specialise in a wide variety of fields ranging from mathematics, science and languages to the Arts, philosophy and non-formal education.

Ramat Negev Regional Council (Israel) is the largest regional municipality in Israel, encompassing 25% of the country's entire land mass. Within the Council's jurisdiction there are 12 settlements, consisting of kibbutzim, moshavim and community villages, with approximately 4,000 residents.

The Youth Department of the Ramat Negev Community Centre works in the following fields: activities within settlements; regional activities with participants from all settlements; intercultural and international youth projects and actions.

Its main aims are:

- forming a meaningful identity of the local youth;
- development of local leadership among young people;
- strengthening the educational systems in local settlements;
- strengthening local patriotism of the Ramat-Negev population;
- exchange with other nationalities and cultures;
- empowerment of young people on the local and global level.

VIII. PARTICIPANTS

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Annex 1

Appointments schedule	Appointments schedule	Appointments schedule	Appointments schedule
9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00
10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00
12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00
15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00
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13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00
14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00
15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00

Annex 2

Project title	
Project aim	
Target group(s)	
Project date	
Project team	
Implementation timeline	
Project description	

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INSTITUTIONS NAMED BELOW:

YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME OF THE EU
IMDIALOG – EVANGELISCHER ARBEITSKREIS FÜR DAS CHRISTLICH-JÜDISCHE
GESPRÄCH IN HESSEN UND NASSAU
POLISH-GERMAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION
ALEXANDER FOUNDATION

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