

EU3 seminar in Szombathely, Hungary
May 29-30, 2022
Jewish Cemeteries in Education

Number of participants	Number of schools	Number of new teachers	Number of veteran teachers	Number of towns	Number of teachers from Budapest	Number of teachers from countryside
30	22	15	15	15	7	23

The “Jewish Cemeteries in Education” seminar in Hungary was held in Szombathely, on 29-30 May 2022. 30 teachers from 15 towns and 22 schools took part in the seminar. They came from all over Hungary, 23 teachers from the countryside, and 7 from Budapest. It was the first Centropa seminar for 15 participants, the other 15 teachers have participated in other Centropa seminars or projects before.

The location was chosen because of one of our most active teacher colleagues from the Centropa network, Beáta Várnainé Balogh, who invited us to hold the training in Szombathely where had once been a thriving and sizable Jewish community. With the help of the Jewish Community of Szombathely we could introduce to the teachers not just Centropa resources, but also offered them an insight into the life of Jewish people of the region before the Holocaust by visiting an exhibition, going on a walking tour and visiting the Jewish cemetery. Beáta, our local contact teachers connected us with great local experts: Sándor Márkus, the president of the Jewish Community, László Mayer, archivist, Tibor Spiegler, local historian and Krisztina Kelbert, curator.

Beáta has been doing great educational work with her students in the cemetery which is exemplary and inspiring for others. Her students joined the group in the cemetery and helped the teachers to complete the exercises.

Program activities

May 29 Sunday
<i>Venue: Jewish Community of Szombathely</i>
8:30 Registration
9:30 Welcome (Mirus, Bea (veteran teacher))
9:45 Getting to know each other (Szilvi)
10:00 Presentation of Centropa archive and projects (Vica, Szilvi, Zsolt - Professional Advisory Committee)
10:45 Coffee break

11:15 Lecture by Sándor Márkus, president of the Jewish community in Szombathely, guided tour in the museum
12:00 Survival in Sarajevo film screening and sharing lesson plans (Vica, Szilvi, Zsolt)
12:30 Presenting the EU3 project, experiences of last year's youth competition, screening the winning film (Zsolt, Sári)
13:00 lunch
14:30 Introduction about Jewish cemeteries: do's and don't's in the cemetery, information about symbols and epitaphs (Mirus, Tina)
15:00 Visiting the 'Eye to eye' photo exhibition guided by Krisztina Kelbert, curator of the exhibition
16:00 Coffee break
16:30 Jewish heritage guided tour by László Mayer (archivist) and Tibor Spiegler (local historian)
19:00 Dinner
May 30., Monday
<i>Venue: Jewish Community of Szombathely</i>
9:00 Visit to the Jewish cemetery guided by László Mayer and Tibor Spiegler
10:00 Tasks for teachers in the cemetery
11:00 Coffee break
11:30 Project planning in small groups
12:30 Project presentations
13:00 Evaluation, closing
13:30 Lunch

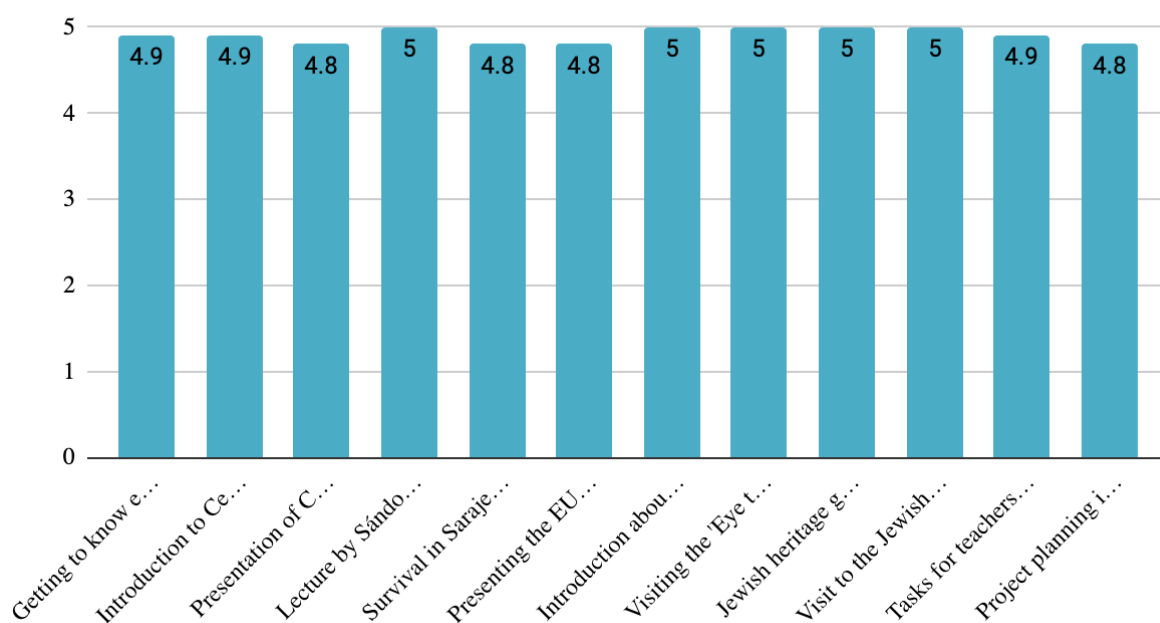
Feedback from participants

After the seminar, participants were asked to rate the program elements on a scale of 1 to 5. The average of the ratings is shown in the table and the graph below. We are proud that the average for each program is above 4.8.

Evaluation of seminar activities	Average
Getting to know each other	4.9
Introduction to Centropa archive	4.9
Presentation of Centropa Hungary	4.8

educational programs	
Lecture by Sándor Márkus, president of the Jewish community in Szombathely, guided tour in the museum	5
Survival in Sarajevo film screening and sharing lesson plans	4.8
Presenting the EU3 project, experiences of last year's youth competition, screening the winning film	4.8
Introduction about Jewish cemeteries: do's and don'ts in the cemetery, information about symbols and epitaphs	5
Visiting the 'Eye to eye' photo exhibition guided by Krisztina Kelbert, curator of the exhibition	5
Jewish heritage guided tour by László Mayer (archivist) and Tibor Spiegler (local historian)	5
Visit to the Jewish cemetery guided by László Mayer and Tibor Spiegler	5
Tasks for teachers in the cemetery	4.9
Project planning in small groups	4.8

Evaluation of seminar activities



Quotes from teachers:

Do you plan to apply for the youth competition about local Jewish cemeteries?

"Yes, we are definitely applying. I applied for the teacher training seminar with the same intention. In our town there is a closed Jewish cemetery in a bad, neglected state. My goal is not only to clean it up, but also to research the Jewish traditions, culture and memories of the town of Csurgó by processing the cemetery's material. Before the Holocaust there were about 153 Jewish families living in Csurgó, playing an important role in the economic and intellectual life of the town. Our high school also had a significant number of Jewish students. They did not return after World War II and there is no religious community in the town. Their fate has never been researched or documented, therefore we would like to do so now." (Szabó Zoltánné, Csurgó)

What is the most important takeaway for you from the training?

"The enthusiasm and helpfulness of the Centropa staff will be the greatest motivating factor in achieving our goals. It is good to know that you have a database behind you, an institution whose support you can count on. Thank you." (Szabó Zoltánné, Csurgó)

"Knowledge of Jewish burial customs.

Knowledge and style of the two guides.

The beauty of Szombathely.

From the conversations I found out that others think the same way, so I am not alone." (Szalay Balázs, Csorna)

"That it is possible to create and sustain a more vibrant Jewish life in the countryside. It was important to see the great role played by the permanent exhibition "Eye to eye", the local community, Bea Várnainé Balogh and other dedicated citizens of Szombathely." (Schütz Edit, Budapest)

"The importance of remembrance. For me, the whole training was about the need to preserve stories (neither to take away nor to add ;)), because through them we connect to ourselves and to the world we live in. The knowledge, the humility, the restraint with which you approached this topic was awe-inspiring." (Farkas Aranka, Budapest)

"Teachers need to find ways to teach the tragedy of the Holocaust in the most effective way. Here I got help and many ideas. I have made contacts and further exchanges are taking place. I have been challenged and have met enthusiastic, creative teachers. Previously we did the Krókusz project in our school and every year we commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day. It is important for ethnic children to learn about this topic. We can start a research project in our village and take care of the Jewish graves." (Benkő Zsigmondné, Aranyosapáti)

What was the best experience for you during the training?

"The common experience that there are many of us who consider it important to introduce Jewish culture and Jewish traditions to the students. There are many of us who share my opinion that we need to talk about the incomprehensibility and horror of the Holocaust. Another

experience was listening to Sándor Márkus, the leader of the Jewish community. It was also moving and upsetting for me to visit the "Eye to eye" exhibition (although I was extremely saddened and disappointed by what I saw and read there)." (dr. Hordásziné Pingitzer Andrea, Pápa)

"Gaining new knowledge, inspiration for further research. I got a basis for a professional application and supporting materials for my work, opportunities to connect with other schools. Unfortunately, very few people dare to talk about minorities, racism, discrimination in Hungary. Both teachers and students have problems with this issue in their lives, yet we are afraid to talk about it. Here was an opportunity to do so." (Benkő Zsigmondné, Aranyosapáti)