

NEWSLETTER



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

NR. 5 | 2024

SEMINAR FOR TEACHERS IN KAUNAS ON THE HOLOCAUST AND REMEMBRANCE

On 10 July, a seminar, "The 80th Anniversary of the Destruction of the Kaunas ghetto: History and Remembrance," was held in Kaunas. It was attended by teachers who participated in the 2022 International seminar internship at Yad Vashem, the International School for Holocaust Studies in Jerusalem. One of the aims of the seminar was to discuss the experiences and knowledge gained during the internship two years ago and how they had been passed on to the students and the school community. Another aim of the seminar was to participate in an event commemorating the 80th anniversary of the destruction of the Kaunas ghetto.

The seminar participants discussed the activities and projects implemented by the Secretariat of the International Commission. A film with Lithuanian subtitles about the former head of the Yad Vashem Institution and former member of the International Commission, historian Yitzhak Arad, was presented.

Later, the teachers visited the Kaunas Choral Synagogue, where they learnt about the synagogue's construction in the late 19th century and about the Jewish community in Kaunas before World War II. A group of teachers also took part in an event organised by the Kaunas Jewish Community commemorating the 80th anniversary of the destruction of the Kaunas ghetto. [More](#)



TEACHERS FROM TOLERANCE EDUCATION CENTRES PARTICIPATED IN THE EVENTS COMMEMORATING THE LIQUIDATION OF THE ŠIAULIAI GHETTO

On 15 July, events commemorating the liquidation of the Šiauliai ghetto 80 years ago took place in Šiauliai. The commemoration began at the intersection of Ežero and Trakų streets, at the monument commemorating the gates of the Šiauliai ghetto. The participants laid commemorative stones and candles at the memorial stone. Later, the commemoration moved to the square dedicated to the Righteous Among the Nations and then to the Chaim Frenkel Villa, where the main commemoration event was held. The audience was addressed by the Speaker of



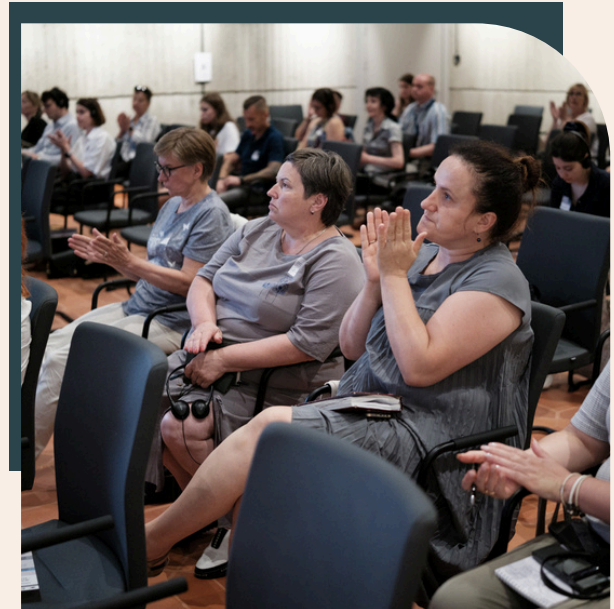
the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Ms. Čmilytė-Nielsen, who is originally from Šiauliai. Diplomats from Israel, Germany, the Netherlands, and France attended the commemoration. Teachers from the Tolerance Education Centres in Radviliškis, Marijampolė, and Kalvarija, as well as representatives from the Secretariat of the International Commission, came to commemorate the liquidation of the Šiauliai ghetto and to pay tribute to the victims. [More](#)



IN MEMORY OF THE DESTROYED KAUNAS GHETTO - AT THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE IN KAUNAS

On 17-18 July, the Kaunas IX Fort Museum hosted a two-day international scientific conference "80 years after the destruction of the Kaunas ghetto - what do we remember, what did we learn?" The two-day conference featured presentations by historians and lecturers from Lithuania, Israel, the United States of America, Poland, Germany, and Ukraine. Participants of the conference took part in a guided tour of the former ghetto area in Vilijampolė and visited the exhibition "Kaunas Ghetto: Reality and Memory" at the Kaunas historical presidency. The Kaunas IX Fort

Museum organised the conference in cooperation with the Secretariat of the International Commission, the Embassies of Israel and Germany in Lithuania, and the Jewish Community of Kaunas. [More](#)



SEMINAR ON HISTORICAL EXPLORATIONS - FOR TEACHERS OF TOLERANCE EDUCATION CENTRES

On 30-31 July, a group of Lithuanian teachers took part in the seminar "History of 20th Century Lithuania in Western and Central Lithuania". The first day was devoted to learning about the history of the Jewish community of Palanga. The group of educators visited sites related to the Jews of Palanga: the amber workshop, the lemonade factory, the Palanga power plant, the site of the former synagogues, the old Jewish cemetery, and the Holocaust site on the Baltic Sea coast.

The second day of the seminar was devoted to the Raseiniai district: an excursion to Lyduvėnai, a visit to the Book Museum, and an educational programme on the Raseiniai Magdė. ->



The historical exploration event is organised annually for the communities of the Tolerance Education Centres to discover interesting and historically important places in Lithuania. Thirty-two teachers and education staff from all over Lithuania took part in the seminar. [More](#)



THE DAY OF THE ROMA GENOCIDE WAS COMMEMORATED AT THE PANERIAI MEMORIAL

This year, the Paneriai Memorial held a commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the extermination of the Roma imprisoned in the Auschwitz concentration camp on 2 August 1944. Around 500 Roma were killed in Lithuania during the Second World War. Of these, around 200 were killed in Paneriai. The Minister of Education, Science and Sport Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė, the Director of the Department of National Minorities Dainius Babilas, the Vice-Mayor of Vilnius town Simona Bieliūnė, the Chairwoman of the Jewish

Community of Lithuania Faina Kukliansky, and a representative of the US Embassy in Lithuania spoke at the commemoration.

The Roma anthem was a very moving moment at the event. A Roma flag made of painted pebbles (red, green, and blue) was displayed in front of a small memorial to the murdered Roma. Each participant was able to place a commemorative pebble.

The community of the Tolerance Education Centre of the Vilnius Naujamiesčio school attended the commemoration event. The students visited the Paneriai Memorial and learned about the history of Paneriai.

The commemoration event was organised by the Roma Communities in Lithuania in cooperation with the Department of National Minorities, Vilnius City Municipality, Vilnius University Faculty of Communication and the Secretariat of the International Commission. [More](#)





LITHUANIAN REPRESENTATIVES AT THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR IN AUSCHWITZ

On 11-16 August, an international seminar was held in Auschwitz (Poland) to discuss crimes against humanity during World War II.

The date of the event is linked to the story of Father Maximilian Kolbe, who sacrificed himself to die for another human being. Participants visited the Auschwitz museum, explored the town of Auschwitz and the history of the Jewish community, visited an exhibition of drawings by Marian Kolodziej, a former concentration camp inmate, listened to a vivid account by former Auschwitz concentration camp inmates, Zdzislaw and Grzegorz, and heard presentations on how the Second World War is remembered in Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Ireland, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina. A participant from Ukraine talked about the war in Ukraine through sketches. The international seminar had 34 participants from 14 countries.



The International Seminar was organised by the Maximilian Kolbe Foundation.

The Maximilian Kolbe Foundation cooperates with the Secretariat of the International Commission, and since 2012, two Lithuanian representatives have participated in this international event every year. [More](#)

ON 26 AUGUST, A TRIBUTE WAS PAID IN PRIENAI TO THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST WHO WERE MASSACRED 83 YEARS AGO

The event was held in Prienai at the end of August. It is an annual commemoration to remember the Jews who were killed in Prienai and the surrounding towns of Balbieriškis, Birštonas, Jieznas, Stakliškės, and Veiveriai. [More](#)





SEMINAR FOR A GROUP OF EDUCATORS IN KAUNAS: AT THE SUGIHARA HOUSE - MUSEUM

On 27 August, a seminar was held for a group of educators invited to participate in a seminar internship in Israel at Yad Vashem, the international school for Holocaust studies in Jerusalem.

Hadas Wittenberg Silverstein, Ambassador of the State of Israel in Lithuania, attended the seminar. She told the story of her grandparents and discussed current issues related to the State of Israel.

The teachers were introduced to the book "From the Valley of Death to Mount Zion" by the historian Yitzhak Arad, long-time head of the Yad Vashem Institution, and to the Yad Vashem Institution's film about him "Tolka." Information was also shared on the long-standing cooperation between the International Commission and Yad Vashem.

Participants were introduced to the Sugihara House exhibitions. They had the opportunity to attend a lecture on anti-Semitism in Lithuania before World War II. [More](#)

