

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	Fundacja Ośrodka KARTA (KARTA)
PIC number:	938295842
Project name and acronym:	Education against antisemitism. Learning from the past to understand contemporary challenges. A Multimedia Educational Toolkit — (Educational Toolkit)

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	6		
Event name:	Work Package 6: „Contemporary Challenges in Holocaust and Anti-Semitism Education—Presentation of a Multimedia Toolkit”		
Type:	Training		
In situ/online:	in-situ		
Location:	Warsaw, Poland		
Date(s):	24.08.2026		
Website(s) (if any):	https://uczyciesiezhistorii.pl/projekt/edukacja-przeciwko-antysemityzmowi-multimedialny-zestaw/ https://uczyciesiezhistorii.pl/en/projekt/multimediakit/		
Participants			
Female:	20		
Male:	7		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Poland]:	27		
From country 2 [Lithuania]:	0		
Total number of participants:	27	From total number of countries:	1

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

We share the summary of the training event of the project "Education Against Anti-Semitism. Learning from the Past to Understand Contemporary Challenges. Multimedia Educational Toolkit" ("Educational Toolkit") with the objectives of WP6 in mind.

We developed all components of the multimedia toolkit using content from two memoir books "The Girl from the Closed City" of Larissa Cain and "Questions I am Asked About the Holocaust" of Hedi Fried (testimonies and eye-witnesses interviews), archival sources and podcast serie through methodological consultations with experts specializing in testimonies and eye-witness interviews, and we facilitated knowledge acquisition and transfer, after the consultation with experts on working with testimonies and eye-witness interviews to develop lesson plans and other educational materials. We facilitated knowledge acquisition and transfer related to memory work. We

conducted a workshop meeting to discuss and refine lesson plans and other educational materials based on the books of Larissa Cain and Hedi Fried.

Our tasks were within this event:

- Piloting the whole Multimedia Toolkit together among interested teachers and educators.
- Implementing the educational toolkit and providing practical guidance to educators.
- Training Workshop for educators on the whole Multimedia Toolkit: Interested teachers invited to a Training Workshop on the whole Multimedia Toolkit: 1. tools connected to Website LearningFromHistory (dedicated to maps, presentations, thematic materials & lesson plans, presentations), 2. tools dedicated to podcasts, 3. tools connected with personal testimonies; in collaboration with Consortium Partners with streaming for teachers.

The training event took place on August 24, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Educational Center of Gabriel Narutowicz Institute of Political Thought in Warsaw. The meeting, organized by the KARTA Center (consortium leader) in cooperation with the Gabriel Narutowicz Institute of Political Thought, was the next substantive event of the two-year international project.

We presented a multi-perspective set of multimedia educational tools for teachers, history and human rights educators, and students aged 14–19 from Poland and Lithuania. The aim was to raise awareness of the dangers of anti-Semitism and other forms of stigmatization and exclusion, and to prevent anti-Semitic attitudes, Holocaust denial, and the distortion of historical truths.

The event involved representatives of the consortium partners, including the Foundation Center for Citizenship Education, the Open Education Foundation, the Brama Grodzka-Theater NN and the Pogranicze Foundation. The only missing partner was the Lithuanian organisation. They excused absence.

Our programme consisted of following topics and elements:

1. Project presentation, made by project coordinator, incl. representatives of project partners
2. Introduction of 4 workshop leaders about 4 workshop topics:
 - Memoir literature in schools – a presentation of lesson plans based on the books **Was I Afraid of Death?** by Hedi Fried (identity, the rise of discrimination) and **The Girl from the Closed City** by Larissa Cain (Life before the war, In hiding, In the ghetto, After the war) (Mariusz Sokołowski)
 - Sources: the ghetto experience, difficult questions, moral dilemmas (Robert Szuchta)
 - Historical empathy, psychological challenges (Alicja Kotowska)
 - Multimedia and new technologies – presentation of the podcast 'Voices of Memory' and the 'Learning from History' portal (Agnieszka Kudelka)
3. 8 workshops (4 workshops x 2 rounds of 1 hour) - every participant could choose 2 workshops out of 8 all together

The scheme of our educational materials (core of our methode):

- a. We start with an individual and describe their experience

We present an individual's story. We discuss what that person might have gone through. We start with a photograph, a letter, a biography, an excerpt from a diary, or the memoirs of a Holocaust survivor. We describe the individual's difficult experiences.

- b. We present the individual's context

We explain the circumstances that person faced. The ghetto, the occupation, prohibitions, coercion, lack of safety.

- c. We connect the individual's story with the group's story

We show that many people of that ethnicity had similar experiences. The individual's fate as a starting point for a discussion about the Jewish community.

- d. We analyze the mechanisms

We move on to the more complex mechanisms that shaped the lives of entire groups. Dehumanization, propaganda, contempt, exclusion, violence, collaboration.

4. Panel discussion - 'How can Holocaust education be integrated with citizenship and anti-discrimination education?' – guests: Bartosz Duszyński (Forum for Dialogue), Wiesława Młynarczyk (Warsaw Ghetto Museum), Nathalia Tkaczhenko (Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum), Robert Szuchta (co-author of a textbook "Holocaust. A history lesson (not) learnt")

5. Summary and evaluation part.

Outputs:

The sixth event within the project focuses on the public presentation of the whole Multimedia Toolkit, available at www.uczycsiezhistorii.pl. The main goal of the meeting was to gather feedback from practitioners—teachers and

educators—to ensure the functionality and suitability of the materials for classroom and workshop use. The whole multimedia toolkit (final version of the lesson plan and worksheet package, which was published on the uczyszehistorii.pl portal as an integral part of the Multimedia Toolkit) were presented in details within workshops and commented by the experts of panel discussion.

The new material was presented during Workshop No. 3, authored by psychologist Alicja Kotowska (UNESCO Chair in Research on Antisemitism and Other Forms of Intergroup Hatred), are titled “Tools for Addressing Resistance, Dehumanization, and Emotional Overload in Holocaust Education. A Step-by-Step Guide for Teachers and Educators”.

These tools were developed as a direct response to gaps in teachers’ preparation—research has shown that 84.6% of teachers feel they lack the tools to work with students’ difficult emotions, and 70% report a shortage of materials explaining the mechanisms of manipulation and disinformation.

The main element of the publication is a five-step model for addressing difficult historical topics:

1. Establishing and implementing a classroom contract (Steps 1 and 2)

The role of the contract: During lessons on the Holocaust, students may consciously or unconsciously violate the rules through inappropriate jokes, hate speech, or provocations. The contract is a set of clear communication rules that makes it easier for the teacher to respond in moments of tension and reduces students’ uncertainty, opening them up to sharing their emotions honestly.

Characteristics of a good contract: It should be brief, specific, phrased positively (describing desired behaviors rather than prohibitions), age-appropriate, and jointly discussed and accepted by the class.

Implementation: The contract is introduced at the beginning of class, ensuring that students understand it (e.g., by asking, “Which rule do you think should be the most important?”). In the event of a violation of the agreement, the teacher refers directly to the specific point in the contract. The materials include ready-made contract templates tailored separately for elementary and secondary schools.

2. Gradual Introduction of Difficult Content (Step 3)

To protect students from cognitive and emotional overload, the author proposes a four-step model for introducing knowledge: The individual and their experience—the starting point is always an individual, personal story (e.g., a photograph, a letter, a survivor’s recollection). Individual context—presenting the realities of that specific person’s life (e.g., imprisonment in the ghetto, lack of safety, occupation-imposed prohibitions).

Group context—a transition from the individual’s biography to a discussion of the fate of the entire community. General mechanism—an analysis of the most complex processes and concepts (such as dehumanization, propaganda, exclusion, or collaboration). In the publication, this model is presented using a specific case study based on the biography of Hédi Fried.

3. The Role of Factual Knowledge in Protecting Mental Well-Being (Step 4)

Cognitive-emotional balance: Reliable factual knowledge is essential for the development of empathy and protects against so-called “historicism,” that is, judging the past through the lens of contemporary norms. Excessive emphasis on the victims’ suffering may cause discomfort among students, which will hinder their learning, while excessive protection from emotions will limit their social development.

Supporting Tool: The author proposes a set of factual questions to ask on an ongoing basis during class, such as: “What do we know for sure about this person?” (separating facts from speculation), “Where does this information come from?” (working with sources) or “What is worth remembering as a fact, and what was our emotional reaction?” (separating the cognitive from the emotional).

4. Recognizing and Responding to Dehumanization (Step 5)

Dehumanization involves stripping people of their humanity (by portraying them as a mass, animals, or objects), with the aim of facilitating their exclusion or justifying violence. This phenomenon also appears today in student jokes, memes, and comments. The guide defines four key forms of dehumanization from the Holocaust period and suggests ways to address them in the classroom:

- Deindividuation (referring to people as numbers, a crowd, or a transport)—we respond by restoring an individual perspective (names, specific biographies, photos).
- Animalization (comparing people to vermin or parasites)—we respond by exposing the reductionism of such thinking and discussing the role of these metaphors.

- Mechanization (treating people as "material," cargo, or a soulless labor force) – we highlight the reductionist nature of such terminology.
- Biologization (describing groups as biological threats or diseases) – we respond by explaining the pseudoscientific roots of racism and eugenics.

Presentation entitled [‘Tools for dealing with resistance, dehumanisation and emotional overload in Holocaust education: A step-by-step guide for teachers and educators’](#), by Alicja Kotowska, UNESCO Chair in Research on Antisemitism and Other Forms of Intergroup Hatred (EN)

Polish version: [Narzędzia reagowania na opór, dehumanizację i przeciążenie emocjonalne w nauczaniu o Holokauście. Przewodnik krok po kroku dla nauczycieli i edukatorów, Alicja Kotowska, Katedra UNESCO ds. Badań and Antysemityzmem oraz Innymi Formami Nienawiści Międzygrupowe](#)

Evaluation and summary:

While the workshops and panel discussion participants were able to share their own suggestions and insights, contributing their input and perspective to the development of the educational materials. The participants hope that it will also translate into improving the quality of their teaching and contribute to more effective shaping of young people's attitudes. Participation in its presentation and training was an opportunity to get new skills, inspiration for further activities and deepen reflection on the challenges of historical education and human rights and to establish valuable contacts among educators from Poland and Lithuania, co-creating a network of cooperation in the field of Holocaust and human rights education.

Teachers and educators learned about opportunities to participate in future workshops and training sessions organized as part of the project. We continued to work together within a network of representatives of our target group via a Facebook group called: Cyfrowa pamięć - edukacja historyczna/digital memory - history education (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/346823212967062>).

Participants received free copies of two KARTA publications used in the project, a book by Larissa Cain entitled The Girl from the Closed City: Memories from the Warsaw Ghetto, and a book of Hedi Fried entitled The questions I was afraid to ask.

Participants were asked by a form to take part on WP7, WP8 and WP9:

<https://karta.org.pl/aktualnosci/zapraszamy-do-udzialu-fazie-testowania-materialow-edukacyjnych>

They also received the whole Multimedia Toolkit together with e-books of both books to make their workshops and lessons based on these materials. All beside the ebooks is to download on the project Website:

<https://uczycieszhistorii.pl/projekt/edukacja-przeciwko-antysemityzmowi-multimedialny-zestaw/> and

<https://uczycieszhistorii.pl/en/projekt/multimediaikit/>

We also conducted a European survey. We introduced it and "trained" participants how to complete it. We will report the results at the end of the project.

The results of the meeting - the recording is presented on the YouTube Channel of KARTA:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY1dLcyZdUM>

Photos from the event can be viewed here: <https://uczycieszhistorii.pl/2026/08/27/relacja-fotograficzna-prezentacja-multimedialnego-zestawu-narzedzi>

HISTORY OF CHANGES

VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).

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