



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

**Venice Office**  
Regional Bureau for Science  
and Culture in Europe



## FINAL REPORT

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# *Holocaust education and intercultural understanding in South-East Europe: renewing the “Ex-Yugoslav” Pavilion in Auschwitz-Birkenau*

Auschwitz, 3-4 July 2013

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**A meeting organized within the initiative**



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This report presents the highlights of the discussions held during the meeting on “Holocaust education and intercultural understanding in South-East Europe: renewing the “Ex-Yugoslav” Pavilion in Auschwitz-Birkenau”, organized in Auschwitz State Museum, Poland, on 3-4 July 2013 by the Auschwitz State Museum, with the support of the UNESCO Venice Office, within the framework of UNESCO’s Intersectoral Platform for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence.

This meeting was organized to continue discussions on the renovation and transformation of the former Yugoslav) block nr. 17, situated within the State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland, and to the setting up of a joint exhibit on the Holocaust.



Participating experts were representing Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. International institutions participating were UNESCO and the Mémorial de la Shoah (France). Other members from the steering committee (Topography of Terror, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum) could not attend. Were also present representatives from the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau (Poland).

Piotr M. A. Cywiński, Director of the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

Anthony Krause, Head of Culture Unit of the UNESCO Venice Office, welcomed the participants and gave an update on the state of advancement of the project since the last meeting in Skopje (18-19 April 2013): finalization and submission by the 6 successor States, with the support of UNESCO, of a EU joint project proposal (Action 4 – Active European Remembrance) for an educational web platform around the exhibit; uploading of a first selection of items on a web-dropbox designed by the UNESCO Venice Office. He also reconfirmed the common endeavor to envisage the opening of the exhibit in 2015, together with the Austrian exhibit, in order to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

The discussions focused on the following topics:

### **Structure of the Exhibition**

The discussion on the first selection of exhibition items was structured along the 4 chapters previously decided upon: Time and Space; Victims; Perpetrators and Collaborators; Resistance.



Debates on different items presented allowed for the identification of missing elements and priorities. It also provided an opportunity to define with more precision and accuracy the inner-structure of the different chapters of the exhibitions, thus defining already the main sequences of the display.

Cf. Summaries below.

In addition to the agreed chapters, there are still a few elements that remain to be integrated – or not – in the exhibition:

- Information on “helpers and rescuers”
- Sculptures of Vida Jocić that were part of the previous, “Ex-Yugoslav” exhibition





## Other National Pavilions

The group visited several recently renovated national pavilions, in order to identify good practices. Amongst those visited, the Israeli (“Shoah”), French (“Deportations from France to Auschwitz”) and Dutch (“Persecution and deportation of Jews in the Netherlands 1940-1945”) exhibitions were singled out as particularly outstanding and inspiring.

It was generally agreed that exhibitions using too much multimedia technology (Hungarian pavilion) were not easily manageable, involving too much maintenance work and related-costs, and being quickly outdated, or that those presented too prolific information were not successful in achieving their pedagogical goals.



On the contrary, the following positive elements were noted:

- ✓ Important space given to the life of Jewish communities before the Holocaust (Israel)
- ✓ Impact of news, filmed speeches and programmatic contents (Israel)
- ✓ In terms of the historical information presented, a minimalistic and pragmatic approach is recommended (France, Israel, Netherlands)
- ✓ The intertwining of individual destinies with the general context conveyed a strong impression (France)
- ✓ Importance of maps focusing on Auschwitz but including also other sites of persecution
- ✓ The spaces dedicated to the commemoration of victims was praised in both the French and the Israeli exhibitions



## I - TIME AND SPACE

### Sequence 1: Common Political Chronology

(from 1918 to 1941)

*Note: This chronology should have an average of 10/15 dates maximum.*

*Should also include:*

- *Pre-war antisemitic legislation*
- *Rise of extreme ideologies and movements*

### Sequence 2: Chronology of the Holocaust and Persecutions during World War II

(From 1941)

- This chronology should have an average of 10/15 dates maximum.

### Sequence 3: Social/Political/Cultural Background of the Region

- This sequence could be illustrated by outstanding photo/audiovisual material (cf. first room of the Israeli "Shoah" exhibit)

*Should also Include:*

- *Pre-war Jewish life*
- *Political systems in Yugoslav territories*
- *Partisan movements in Yugoslavia (including Jewish resistance / Jews in the resistance)*

### Sequence 4: Maps

*Should also include:*

- *1918 map of Yugoslavia*
- *1931 religious population census*
- *Map of camps (internment, concentration, transit) and killing sites in Yugoslavia*
- *Map of deportation routes from Yugoslavia to Auschwitz*
- *Map of Yugoslavia and occupational zones (1941-1945)*
- *Elements of context and visual resources to accompany maps*

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ✓ The amount of data per country should be more limited
- ✓ There will be one chronology for the whole region, in the context of Nazi-dominated Europe
- ✓ Partisan actions, especially as they bear special significance with regard to the history of deportations to Auschwitz, will be included in the timeline

## MISSING ELEMENTS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

- ✓ Photos and films of pre-war Jewish life (Péter Forgács, etc.)
- ✓ 2-page background per country to be prepared for the drafting group

## II - VICTIMS

### Sequence 1: Database of Victims

*Note: Researchers must keep using the database and template designed and shared by the Serbian delegation. Ideally, one common database will be available to visitors (cf. touchscreen/database available in the Netherlands Pavilion)*

### Sequence 2: Introductory Panel about Categories of Victims

- *Note: The panel will include information about all groups of victims (Jews, Roma, partisans, etc.)*

### Sequence 3: Destinies of individuals

*Should also Include:*

- *Pre-war life*
- *Persecutions before deportation*
- *Life in Auschwitz camp*
- *Testimonies of survivors*

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Each country will select an average of 4 stories, mostly of people who were killed.
- ✓ The selection of destinies should keep with the proportion of groups persecuted.
- ✓ Clear distinctions should be made between the fate of partisan fighters and civilians deported, such as Jews and Roma.
- ✓ The issue of looting should be mentioned.
- ✓ Destinies of individuals may be presented throughout the whole exhibit (cf. French national pavilion)

## MISSING ELEMENTS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

- ✓ Selection of average of 4 stories per country to be reviewed/completed, with accompanying material (photos, videos)
- ✓ 4 page background per country to be prepared for drafting group
- ✓ Possibility to find drawings from deportees
- ✓ Complete database of victims following Serbian template

### III - PERPETRATORS AND COLLABORATORS

#### **Sequence 1: General Policy of Persecutions and Structure of Authorities involved**

*Includes: Youth movements, collaborationists movements, administration, police, gendarmerie, occupation troops, S.S., media and propaganda apparatus*

#### **Sequence 2: Portraits of Individuals involved in the Process**

*Note: Selection to be presented on a thematic basis (illustration of what is collaboration)*

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ✓ The space dedicated to perpetrators should not be larger than the space for victims
- ✓ Each country will select an average of 4 individuals (locals and representing occupying forces; leaders and lower ranked officials)
- ✓ Materials selected should be “dynamic” resources (i.e. not only portraits)

### MISSING ELEMENTS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

- ✓ Selection of an average of 4 profiles to be revised/completed
- ✓ One-page introductory text per country for drafting group
- ✓ Photos and films of collaborationist groups engaged in criminal actions
- ✓ Video, newsreels or radio recorded speeches and other propaganda materials (cf. films of speeches Göring/Hitler in the Israeli “Shoah” exhibit)
- ✓ Research to be done at the Belgrade Cinémathèque

## IV - RESISTANCE

### Sequence 1: Resistance in Auschwitz

*Should also include:*

- *The “Yugoslavian group” (role of women)*
- *Identify few outstanding profiles (Sonja Vujanović, Miroslav Šalom Freiburger, etc.) and accompanying material*

### Sequence 2: Resistance in internment and transit camps

- *Example: resistance in Sajmište camp*

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Jewish resistance/Jews in the resistance/Yugoslav partisan movements are not to be included in this chapter (but in chapter I “Time and Space”)
- ✓ The clear distinction to be made between groups of inmates (cf. Chapter II “Victims”) is all the more relevant in regard to the contents of chapter IV
- ✓ Partisan actions, especially as they bear significance with regard to the history of deportations to Auschwitz, will be included in the timeline of chapter I

## MISSING ELEMENTS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

- ✓ Selection to be reviewed/completed. Discussion on the chapter’s items will take place when further research has been performed.
- ✓ Find testimonies on resistance
- ✓ Select profiles on helpers and rescuers
- ✓ Further research from chapter “The Yugoslavian Group” (in Auschwitz 1940-1945, vol. IV, The resistance movement, by Henryk Swiebocki, Auschwitz State Museum, 2000)



## SCHEDULE AND DEADLINES

WHEN	WHAT	WHO
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results of the education project proposal submitted to the EU Commission</li> <li>• Results of the cost expertise performed by Austria</li> </ul>	All
<b>30 October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uploading of revised selected items</li> <li>• Uploading of summary texts (Chap. I: 2 pages) (Chap. II: 4 pages) (Chap. III: 1 page)</li> </ul>	All
<b>30 November</b>	Draft Scenario (consolidated texts and selection of items)	Editorial Committee
<b>Mid-December</b>	Next Meeting of the International Steering Committee (Zagreb, Croatia, date TBC)	All
<b>February 2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tender for designer</li> <li>• Submission of consolidated draft scenario</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> <li>• Ed. Com.</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

- Piotr M. A. Cywiński, Director of the State Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau, closed the meeting and reiterated the importance of submitting the draft scenario to the International Auschwitz Council for comments and validation. Multilateral agreements will also need to be foreseen with the Auschwitz State Museum.
- Anthony Krause emphasized the importance of reviewing the selection of items on the dropbox, according to guidelines discussed. Regarding the agreement to be found on the amount of the proportional contribution to the Block 17 renovation (amount of the expenditure incurred for rendering the upper floor useable) and the terms and conditions of its reimbursement to the Foundation, it is also confirmed that Mrs Asja Draca Muntean, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Culture of Serbia ([asja.draca@kultura.gov.rs](mailto:asja.draca@kultura.gov.rs)) will contact other Culture Ministry focal points on future steps to be taken.
- It is announced that the next meeting is foreseen to take place in Zagreb, Croatia, mid-December 2013, pending the confirmation of Croatian authorities.



From left to right: : Elijas Tauber, Milos Vukanovic, Marica Jovanovska, Olivier Lalieu, Milan Koljanin, Goran Blagus, Olga Manojlović Pintar, Anthony Krause, Kaja Širok, Todor Chepreganov, Nada Zoran, Milica Martić, Enes Milak, Nataša Mataušić, Karel Fracapane

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