

## **Education of the Topic of the Holocaust: Local practice and international guidelines**

The present paper aims to provide an overview and analysis of trainings offered for educators in Hungary in the topic of teaching about the Holocaust. The aim and objectives of the overview is to assess the results received and use them as starting points in the development of new training programs and materials.

When considering the context of teaching about the Holocaust, it is worth mentioning that History teachers deal in various degrees with the topic of the Holocaust and related topics in their classes, but it is hard for them to find enough time and space to devote to the subject mostly due to the overregulation in the curriculum. In addition, a number of teachers feel insecure about how to approach the subject, and they would require help and feel the need to change. 'Many teachers seem to be unwilling to teach the history of the Holocaust, since they feel how difficult it is to teach this subject. (...) They don't know how to impact the students emotionally without traumatizing them. They are worried about the possible reactions of their students and have no idea how to respond (...) in case of accidental anti-Semitic or racist statements.'<sup>1</sup> This uncertainty applies even more to non-History teachers who wish to deal with the topic within the frames of their own subject. Thus, letting them feel less disoriented, they would also seek professional support.

We can generally distinguish three levels of modification achievable in the educational context. These three levels define most the quality of education, the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching. On the one hand reforms can appear in the National Core Curriculum of Hungary and the frame curricula that regulate the input requirements and the content elements of the teaching and learning process. On the content level, however, textbook reforms could effect change. These textbook reforms are in line with the curricular changes and fit the curricular requirements. The third factor of the change is teacher education and teacher professional development, which relate to the methodology of the teaching and learning process. These trainings offer new perspectives and integrate the most modern pedagogical innovations and thus are more visible, more directly present in the education process than changes in the curricula and textbooks. At the same time these trainings cannot be as widespread as the curricula and textbooks are.

This statement concludes in the demand to integrate efficient trainings into the list of government funded or government recommended professional development programs and try to reach educators on as wide scale as possible.

Another essential remark is that the role of professional development programs has increased since the introduction of the Holocaust Memorial Day (2001) as it has become almost inevitable for educators to discuss the subject and not only within the frames of the History class. This aspect also calls for the importance of teacher training program development in the field.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/hu/educate-teaching-guidelines-how-teach-about-holocaust-schools/hogyan-tan%C3%ADtsunk-holokausztr%C3%B3l>

Although the goal of these trainings may vary upon their type of program and the profile of the organization itself, we can generally state that the priority objective of the organizers, is to enable the teachers to teach about the Holocaust, both from a theoretical and a methodological aspect. On the one hand, the trainings provide content knowledge which allows educators to understand what to teach, on the other hand, they provide methods and approaches of teaching about the Holocaust. As a result, I intend to analyse the training programs and resources from two aspects: content and methods. My research covered the exploration of the themes, the pedagogical approaches, and the methodology of the trainings. It also explores how these trainings are aligned with the international professional pedagogical recommendations and guidelines.

In the paper the trainings of the organizations below will accordingly be examined accordingly. Naturally this aspect cannot be separated from the other, above mentioned aspects.

- *Lives went up in smoke* – a training by the Holocaust Memorial Center<sup>2</sup>, Budapest

The Holocaust Memorial Center (HMC), Budapest is a state-funded, research, cultural, and educational centre dealing with the subject of the Holocaust. The exhibitions of the institution represent the history of the Holocaust in Hungary as well as associated works of art. The main original goal of the Holocaust Memorial Center on its inception was to open up, present and educate about the history of the Hungarian Holocaust. Through its international relations, the Holocaust Memorial Center became familiar with various international educational projects of the decade after 2000 and strived to establish and make use of professional contacts which could have generally influenced local Holocaust education. In this period the staff of the Memorial Center endeavoured to include high level expertise in its projects, often times involving external experts to complete local professional awareness (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, USC Shoah Foundation, etc.). In this initial period the Memorial Center put emphasis principally on education, which in the following years was significantly pushed back to be replaced by different activities focusing for example on art and exhibitions.

- Teacher training programs of Centropa Foundation<sup>3</sup>

Centropa Foundation deals primarily with the acquisition and the documentation of personal stories and photographs. The database of Centropa Hungary contains several thousand pieces of photos depicting Jewish families from all over Central and Eastern Europe along with related stories, as well as there is a mass portion of family history. Memoirs of 220 families, 5000 digitalized photographs and documents can be accessed via this database, which empowers the understanding of the history of Jews from Hungary and the neighbouring countries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- Training programs of the Tom Lantos Institute<sup>4</sup>

The Tom Lantos Institute is an independent minority rights, research, educational, and advocacy organization focusing on Jewish and Roma minorities, Hungarian communities as well as other ethnic, or national, linguistic and religious minorities. Accordingly, the projects run by the Institute have set various objectives like acting against antisemitism and anti-Roma racism, against political,

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<sup>2</sup> <http://hdke.hu/en/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.centropa.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.tomlantosinstitute.hu/>

social or economic repression, as well as against discrimination. They also aim to strengthen the identity and the social engagement of Jewish and Roma communities, as well as supporting human rights education and minority rights education.

- Training programs of Zachor Foundation<sup>5</sup> and USC Shoah Foundation<sup>6</sup>
  - Multimedia Teaching materials in Education
  - Teaching with Testimony in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
  - Teaching about the Holocaust and Anti-Bias Education

Zachor Foundation for Social Remembrance is an educational non-profit organization active since 2007. Its activity is based on current phenomena in society like antisemitism, racism, prejudices and stereotypes. The main objective is to raise awareness of these phenomena, work towards reducing prejudice, promoting tolerance and providing professional support for teachers. It works in the knowledge transfer in both formal and informal educational contexts, by having very versatile scope of activity and playing a decisive role in the educational field of the given subject. Members of the professional staff of the foundation are qualified educators with several years of teaching practice, thus they have the necessary experience and insight to ensure that teachers benefit from the educational resources and teacher training programs they develop. These programs help educators find suitable tools and methods to use when teaching about the subject in the classroom and share their experiences with their peers. The foundation is thus dedicated to fill the gap in knowledge, to disperse misconceptions and to provide methodological support and new perspectives. The foundation is convinced that education plays a decisive role in how students relate to historical events, to the past and present, to the fellow human beings and to different cultures. It strives to promote mutual understanding, a more sensitive and personal approach to the elaboration of social traumas of the past in order to contribute to a more inclusive society.

The USC Shoah Foundation- the Institute of Visual History and Education is based at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. The mission of the institute is to use the video testimonies from the Institute's Visual History Archive in education to fight against prejudices, intolerance and hatred. The Foundation has a network of international partners including colleagues and partner institutions from Hungary and works in content development and teacher training program development. The Hungarian educational program was launched jointly with the USC Shoah Foundation in 2009 when a call for projects got published to invite educators to develop testimony-based multimedia teaching materials. The program was developed in cooperation with the Holocaust Memorial Center and the Budapest Embassy of the United States, and served as a starting point for all further USC Shoah Foundation training programs in Hungary. The next step was that in 2012 a teacher training course entitled Teaching with Testimony in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was initiated in partnership with Záchor Foundation. Next off in 2014 the *iTeach* program named *Multimedia materials in education* began, which was accomplished via the trilateral cooperation of the USC Shoah Foundation, Zachor Foundation, and the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://zachor.hu/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://sfi.usc.edu/hungarian>

- training programs of Yad Vashem<sup>7</sup> for teachers in Hungary

The Hungarian-Israeli partnership for organizing trainings about the Holocaust dates back to over two decades. The training offered by Yad Vashem for Hungarian teachers is peculiar as they are bilaterally state-founded. Hungary first signed a cooperation agreement with Yad Vashem in 1997 which allowed the annual enrolment of Hungarian educators in a training program in Israel about the topic of the Holocaust. From the school year of 2012-2013 on it is the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities that announces the call for participation for all the teachers at educational institutions in Hungary.

Short description of the courses and trainings in question:

- Distance learning course of the Holocaust Memorial Center (Füstbe szállt életek):

This is a distance learning program of the Holocaust Memorial Center consisting of twelve modules. The accredited program certifies 60 hours and can be accessed and completed at home via Internet. It focuses on the persecution and the genocide, and has been realized in cooperation with the Yad Vashem Institute since 2009.<sup>8</sup>

- Seminars of Centropa Foundation

The seminars use the educational materials and methods built on the Foundation database with an aim to disseminate these materials and to inspire teachers to implement new projects. For years the seminars have been offered in cities outside Budapest.<sup>9</sup>

- Seminars of the Tom Lantos Institute

The Tom Lantos Institute together with its partners the Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Education and Psychology (Budapest), and the CEJI (- A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe) organized the European Summer School on "Prejudice, Genocide, Remembrance" for the second time in 2015 hosting around 25 participants (civil servants, educators, journalists, religious leaders and representatives of religious groups and the civil society) from all over Europe.<sup>10</sup> The primary objective of the training is to help develop an understanding of traumatic past events and collective memory related to these events. The program places prejudices and genocide in the context of human rights and democratic values.

The Tom Lantos Institute also organized teacher trainings in partnership with Zachor Foundation (see below).

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<sup>7</sup> Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Center, International School for Holocaust Studies: <http://www.yadvashem.org/education>

<sup>8</sup> <http://hdke.hu/programkalauz/fustbe-szallt-eletek>

<sup>9</sup> Seminars of the Centropa Foundation: <http://seminars.centropa.org/seminars>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.tomlantosinstitute.hu/hu/node/349>, <http://www.tomlantosinstitute.hu/projects>

– Professional development programs for educators by Zachor Foundation and the USC Shoah Foundation:

- Multimedia materials in education

1-3 day long educational program organized The Zachor Foundation in partnership with the USC Shoah Foundation. The training focuses on the use of video testimonies in education, on pedagogical methodology, on historical and social psychological context with an intensity depending on the length of the training, which can entail different themes (e.g. IWitness, IWalk). In 2014 the foundation implemented eleven, one-day trainings with support from the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development. They took place in and outside Budapest and across the border as well reaching over 300 teachers.

- Teaching with Testimony in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

The accredited professional development and content development program (120 hours) organized by the USC Shoah Foundation requires real engagement from the participants. It includes a one-week long training, the development and the piloting of multimedia materials incorporating video testimonies as well as the presentation of the materials to a professional audience of educators. As a conclusion the participants share with each other the experience and evaluate professionally the prepared resources. In 2016, when the program was held for the fifth time, nearly 100 educators participated.

- Holocaust and anti-bias education

A 2-3 day long professional development program with the goal to support teaching of the holocaust and the topic of prejudices by presenting acertain educational materials to teachers. Participants discover multimedia and digital materials combining personal stories and learn to use online educational platforms in the classroom too. This training was also partly carried out in cooperation with the Tom Lantos Institute.

Throughout the past years approximately 150 educators completed the course.

– The training program of the Yad Vashem Institute for Hungarian educators:

The program includes a one-week long study trip to Israel and the training itself in the Institute. During their stay in Israel teachers get acquainted with the Museum collection and the methodology of the Institute, they meet Hungarian Holocaust survivors while they also gain personal experiences about Jewish culture and religion. The program is complemented by a short training program in Hungary which prepares the participants for the seminar in Israel.<sup>11</sup>

As part of my analysis I examined to what extent the particular trainings reflect the international professional recommendations and guidelines. From these recommendations and guidelines I will focus on the education guidelines of IHRA.<sup>12</sup> These guidelines provide carefully designed and formulated details about Holocaust education.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://hdke.hu/palyazat/jad-Vashem-tanulm%C3%A1ny%C3%BAt-%C3%A9s-tov%C3%A1bbk%C3%A9pz%C3%A9s-2016>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/educate>

The IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) is an intergovernmental body with currently 31 member states 'whose purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance and research both nationally and internationally'<sup>13</sup>. Its guidelines provide help for teachers about what, why, and how to teach about Holocaust. This includes content material, pedagogical goals, and methodology adjusted for the given student group. I would hereby wish to detail the elements relevant from the point of view of teacher trainings, and could also be associated with my aspects of analysis: the training objectives (Why?), the content (What?) and the approach (How?), which are per se closely related and imply the following questions: what teaching and learning aims are expressed in the training program? What topics are included in the educational program? Does it bring focus to knowledge and content elements or rather focuses on certain abilities, skills, and competencies and their development? What is the proportion of theory and practice in the training program? Does the training material contain innovative methods, pedagogical tools? Does it build on active participation, does it consider the learning environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and corresponding teaching methods? Is it based on local relevance? What are the required outcomes? And, following the training, is there a monitoring?

### **Training objectives – Why teach about the Holocaust?**

Teacher trainings can help educators to raise awareness to why it is important to teach about the Holocaust at school. This question generally does not figure in the training materials as a separate subject, but can be indirectly incorporated in the learning process. The trainings of Zachor Foundation could serve as examples: in their educational program, since Hungary's IHRA chairmanship in 2015, they have included a separate workshop dedicated to the discussion about the guidelines and the recommendations, about how these guidelines manifest in practice. All their trainings are developed to follow these guidelines.<sup>14</sup>

The recommendations suggest that the goal of teaching any subject is to raise the interest of students, to encourage critical thinking and personal development. Therefore, it is crucial, especially in this subject, that the teacher reflects first on why they want to teach about the Holocaust, what the objective of their activity is. IHRA guidelines provide detailed recommendations to help educators consider why they should teach about the Holocaust. I would like to highlight a few of these guidelines which are also integrated in the educational programs:

- The Holocaust was a watershed event, not only for the 20th century but also in the entire history of humanity. It was an unprecedented attempt to murder a whole people and to extinguish its culture. The Holocaust should be studied because it fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilization.
- It can heighten awareness of the potential for genocide in the contemporary world.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/about-us>

<sup>14</sup> In the international professional development program organized in partnership with the Shoah Foundation of the University of Southern California called Teaching with Testimony in the 21st Century: Education and Professional Guidelines – Education Guidelines of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA); Using Video-testimony in the Context of the Education Guidelines.

- Study of the Holocaust assists students in developing an understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism, antisemitism, and stereotyping in any society
- Encourages sensitivity to the positions of minorities.
- The Holocaust provides a context for exploring the dangers of remaining silent and indifferent in the face of the oppression of others.
- Students gain awareness of the complexity of the historical process and a perspective on how a convergence of factors can contribute to the disintegration of democratic values.

These objectives and aspects demonstrate that the Holocaust should be interpreted in a wider context, and be taught in all of its interdependencies, using appropriate vocabulary and providing a large-scale overview including questions about the functioning of prejudices and the protection of human rights. We discover within the training curriculum certain elements with the above-mentioned leanings, yet approaches diverge.

The trainings rarely have clearly stated learning outcomes: as a result, they are not focusing on their accomplishment either, but on other concepts. A learning outcome proves to be set and formulated clearly when it appears in the training program as to what knowledge (both practical and theoretical knowledge) and skills will the participants gain upon completion. Based on the study of the different trainings, we do consider that the Záchor Foundation states the most clearly the following formulations: participants learn, understand, develop and apply, etc.<sup>15</sup>

In many cases, unlike the ones described above, non-real learning outcomes are formulated. The target group might also be large-scale. These issues are particularly present in trainings targeting multipliers, that is teachers who following the course, pass that acquired knowledge on to colleagues and students in the largest measure possible (and maybe in the most productive way). This in some cases (mostly at trainings organized earlier by the HMC or the Tom Lantos Institute its seminars) means that organizers of the programs aim to train, not only teachers, but journalists, university professors and decision-makers too. Pre-school teachers and museum educators have been included in this larger circle, as well as education experts, curriculum developers, educational consultants, researchers in pedagogy, heads of professional working groups, or employees of public collections.

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<sup>15</sup> *Multimedia materials in education* - further educational seminars organized by the Zachor Foundation and the USC Shoah Foundation, supported by the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development. As part of the program, participants:

- acknowledge the methodology of the educational use of video interviews, especially what the adaptation to the education of Holocaust and unprejudicedness concerns, and respectively to the Visual Historical Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation,
- deal with the social psychological and pedagogical circumstances: the theoretical background,
- understand the complex way testimonies can be used during special subjects and home room sessions,
- discover multimedia materials including video interviews which enable the development of students' critical thinking,
- based on the materials they can later on promote, via an assertive attitude to racism and hatred, by means of introducing unprejudiced thinking, the students to become responsible citizens. While by training their critical thinking, students will be encouraged to recognize the nature and the role of stereotypes and prejudices.

Such a wide range and diversity of participants has an impact on the efficiency of the program. The multiplier perspective appears not only through defining the target audience, but also through the evaluation criteria of the submitted applications (for example the capacity to share the training experiences in the broadest possible range) of certain educational programs.

Likewise, certain source materials or ideas to develop educational materials and methods based on these sources cannot be considered as learning outcomes. Centropa Foundation, not being an educational organization, does not base their seminars on a methodological foundation: learning outcomes are missing. The Foundation discloses excellent source materials, but teachers participating in their courses do not receive methodological guidance, and they can only share best practices with each other. Content knowledge building is clear, unlike the learning outcomes.

If trainings have a clear and articulate learning outcome, it supports teachers to identify their own learning objectives and outcomes when dealing with the topic, and why it is important to teach about the Holocaust at schools. This question does not necessarily appear as a separate topic in training documents, but can be included in an indirect way. All this implies that when teaching this subject it is crucial that teachers give consideration to why they wish to teach about the Holocaust and what the goal and the meaning of the activity is.

The trainings also vary depending on whether, besides the participation, any kind of implementation, project development, report about it, and monitoring or follow-up also become part of the training. The majority of trainings require the submission of some kind of product as a condition of completion (e.g. developing a lesson plan, or a curriculum), but the follow-up on student use is mostly missing. Monitoring also entails that teachers become part of a professional network which provides several opportunities for them regarding their teaching and their professional development too. Follow-up of the teachers' further work as well as the possibility to get professional support is also neglected in some cases. The trainings organized for example by Yad Vashem offered very little follow-up, or professional assistance. Through the cooperation of the Ministry of Human Capacities with Zachor Foundation, since 2016 teachers who had participated in the program have been able to continue discussions on the adaptability of what they had learned and on how they can move forward. Programs of Centropa and Zachor Foundation both set as a goal the need for the establishment and the maintenance of a community of experts, which, in the case of the latter organization, is highlighted by the follow-up trainings providing a chance for teachers to join in the various ongoing projects even after the completion of the training. The training entitled *Teaching with Testimony in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* of the USC Shoah Foundation represents this effort too. Educators in the frame of a one-year long program work on the development of their own educational materials. Education experts support them in this work: participants can consult them throughout the development and provide constructive feedback during the process. After the product is ready participant get peer-reviews as part of horizontal professional cooperation built in the program. Training organizers and leaders monitor that process too, and they provide support upon the completion of the program as well.

Professional cooperation – may it involve teachers of different disciplines – are extremely efficient when they can be accomplished within one single institution. This effort is reinforced by the fact that there are more and more trainings where being qualified in History is not an application condition. On the contrary, training organizers strive to approach the Holocaust through other subjects than history, like Literature, Ethics, Foreign languages, Media, but even Science subjects, and this is echoed

in the diversity of participants. All that allows inderdisciplinarity and cross-curricular integration and the cooperation of educators teaching different subjects.

In the case of the training of Yad Vashem for Hungarian teachers, educators of History still have an advantage over teachers of other subjects, which suggests that the program neglects the interdisciplinary approach, or at least considers that teaching of the Holocaust is a task primarily for History educators, or it emphasizes the importance of historical knowledge.

The presence of an interdisciplinary approach in the trainings might therefore suggest that this is a topic every teacher could, and should deal with. These courses possibly make teachers aware that the topic can be discussed apart from History classes, in other subjects or as part of different educational activities at school. This can be reinforced if the integration of the topic into different subjects is realized in accordance with the developmental areas and focal points of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum. Specific examples for this can be found in the training programs of Zachor Foundation. The inclusion of more school subjects generates a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, 'Through an interdisciplinary approach and cooperation between teachers we can include other expertise into teaching about the subject, we can share work and deepen students' understanding of the Holocaust'.<sup>16</sup> However, the wider the target group is, the more complicated it becomes to remain consistent in effectiveness.

Likewise, national and local commemorations are crucial, which could be linked with educational activities independent of any subject. Even though a Holocaust Memorial Day was introduced back in 2001, and the majority of schools keep some kind of commemoration event, teachers don't receive separate methodological guidance on how to organize these events during trainings. It would be necessary to include methodological sessions on how to organize and implement these days into the curriculum of teacher trainings, especially as it is a challenge for schools and teachers.

An even more important gap can be observed around study tours to memorial sites: there are basically no curricular elements in trainings that would prepare teachers for such tours. There are existing related educational and professional guidelines about study tours to Holocaust memorial sites and killing sites. These guidelines are represented in the non-formal educational program of Zachor Foundation led to various memorial sites in the Jewish Quarter of Budapest<sup>17</sup>. The pedagogical concept is introduced at the teacher trainings, but a more specific guidance would be needed in case of for example the visit to Auschwitz. Preparations for a study visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau and the follow up discussions require several weeks both from the teacher and the students. In trainings of the Zachor Foundation about local history education projects the methodology of visits to memorial sites appears: how constructed environment, the city and other local spaces can be used in education. That is to say how personal stories and local connections become adaptable, and thus reinforcing local attachments, making the events of the past relevant for students. The related program elements describe possible ways to prepare and implement study visits to authentic memorial sites or to local memorials, in accordance with the international guidelines. A huge step in local history education is that, similarly to the walk organized in the Jewish Quarter of Budapest, local history programs – walks and tours – have been developed

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/educate/teaching-guidelines/how-to-teach-about-holocaust-in-schools>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/hu/educate-teaching-guidelines-guidelines-study-trips/seg%C3%A9dpontok-holokauszt-esem%C3%A9nyek-helyszineire>

in several cities outside Budapest like in Szeged, Miskolc, Zalaegerszeg, Pécs, Békéscsaba; where Zachor Foundation, in cooperation with local educators, developed programs similar to the Budapest walks. Since then trainings have been organized about planning, organizing, and implementing local history walks (IWalks) that contain video-testimonies focusing on the uniqueness and methodology of local history education, teaching at memorial sites and education about constructed environment. Presentation of non-formal educational practices functions as fieldwork implying participation in already existing educational programs: visiting memorials, monuments in a pedagogical context.<sup>18</sup>

## **The content of the trainings – What to teach about the Holocaust?**

When considering the topics of the trainings it is also important to note the requirement that training content should be aligned with the international guidelines, i.e. what actually should be taught about the Holocaust. According to the IHRA Education Guidelines, 'In general, teaching about the Holocaust should: 1., Advance knowledge about this unprecedented destruction; 2., Preserve the memory of those who suffered, 3., Encourage educators and students to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust and the way they apply in today's world.'<sup>19</sup>

Without exception all the teacher trainings aim to advance content knowledge, which is generally realized within the frame of different types of lectures (mostly historical ones), exhibitions, study tours and visits to memorials. These lectures include topics like antisemitism, life of the European Jews before the Holocaust, processes leading to the Holocaust and the process and characteristics of the Holocaust itself. Within the topic of the Holocaust various perspectives can appear analysing the events from different angles: victims, perpetrators, collaborators, bystanders, rescuers and aid providers.

On a positive note, most of the trainings study the Holocaust in the context of European history and at the same time they also urge teachers to consider locally relevant events. This is more or less realized in the trainings organized in Hungary. The training program of Yad Vashem for educators in Hungary mostly uses their own resources rather than local, Hungarian materials. The Institute provides a course focusing on the history of the Holocaust and offers their own methodological resources and instruction about their classroom use. They represent high standard of expertise, but the materials are less localisable. Educators are not inspired to adapt resources and methods on their own, instead they are encouraged to use specific materials with specific methodology. An essential difference in approach between trainings is how localisation: the use of local materials, as well as adaptation: the local application of various materials according to local needs is represented in the training programs. This aspect is present in case of the trainings of Centropa Foundation and Zachor Foundation (as well as that of the USC Shoah Foundation).

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<sup>18</sup> Using video testimonies at historical sites –Trainings are relatively shorter (1-2 days) and include programs organized to support the planning, organization and development of testimony-based local history walks (IWalks) which focuses on local history education, education at memorial sites, education in constructed environment as well as the possibility and methodology of integrating video-testimonies..

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/educate/teaching-guidelines/what-teach-about-holocaust>

The other two quoted recommendations in the IHRA guidelines, however, are not clearly in view during the trainings, as it is clear from the programs of the trainings discussed in the present paper. Preserving the memory of the victims using various resources (video-testimonies, photos, written sources) appears sporadically, but the trainings, with some exceptions mentioned beforehand, do not prioritize remembrance, memory culture, and politics of memory.<sup>20</sup>

Some efforts are being made to realize the third principle, the will to connect past and present and to make the subject relevant for students turns up among program objectives. These objectives are aimed to be realized through student-centred 21<sup>st</sup> century pedagogical methods (e.g. digital education – IWitness, online education platform of the USC Shoah Foundation. There are trainings organized on the use of the platform in partnership with Zachor Foundation).<sup>21</sup> Alternatively, organizers of certain trainings strive to accomplish that principle by creating a bridge between the personal situations, attitudes and dilemmas appearing in witness testimonies or memoirs (see the resources of the Centropa Foundation for instance), and the students themselves. That allows teachers to start educating about the Holocaust with tools which do not alienate students, but instead captivate and involve them, raise their interest, stimulate their thinking and active participation, thus transforming the topic into something relevant for students. With the use of multimedia materials, organizers of the program emphasize the integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century pedagogical methods and tools as well as the development of participants' digital and media literacy.

The training curricula can be varied and have different focus depending on the profile and the mission of the organization responsible for it. Some content elements are permanent (like the history of the Holocaust, the main events, the history of the antisemitism, prejudices, etc.) but the profile of the training organization is defining. The HMC provides a training about the history of the Holocaust, Centropa Foundation, in addition to its collection of archival photographs, organizes seminars based on its source materials about teaching materials and methodology using these resources, while colleagues from the Tom Lantos Institute (as a human and minority rights, research, educational and advocacy organization) approach their projects primarily from the perspective of human rights. The Summer University organized by the Institute combines sessions about collective memory and discussion about relevant issues of infringements of human rights, as well as sessions developing pedagogical skills and competences on the prevention of and the fight against these grievances. The starting point of the program is that antisemitism and anti-Roma racism is rooted in the fact that respect and protection of democratic values and human rights plays a less important role in some segments of civil society. The Summer University ran by the Tom Lantos Institute corresponds to most of the international guidelines and it got supported by the IHRA. Workshops and presentations deal with the subject of identity, scapegoating, the Holocaust, the genocide against the Roma, Holocaust education and human rights, youth and extreme right as well. As the human rights-based approach is extremely peculiar to the Tom Lantos Institute (especially in comparison with other organizations), their sessions serve as a suitable supplement for other training curricula and for the same reason

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<sup>20</sup> *Remembrance and education* within the teacher training program *Teaching with Testimony in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* of the USC Shoah Foundation and the Zachor Foundation.

<sup>21</sup> Anti-bias Education and Teaching about the Holocaust – 21<sup>st</sup> century methods (Blended learning), as well as a training program on the pedagogical opportunities and use of the IWitness platform (digital education) including activity development within the platform. The program contain practical guidance and theory as well – the intensity depending on the length of the program.

they also co-organize several programs jointly with other organizations. An example for this is the training implemented in cooperation with Zachor Foundation, in which participants could learn about already existing and newly developed teaching materials and receive pedagogical tools for using these materials in their work and get background knowledge on phenomena of prejudices, stereotypization, antisemitism and scapegoating. Participants also get acquainted with the professional and methodological recommendations related to the teaching about prejudices and antisemitism, can join workshops where they discuss classroom implementation of these topics, while they can also engage in a professional discussion about the teaching materials.

Regarding content, there are trainings centring around the topic of the Holocaust and dealing with persecution and genocide. These trainings frequently neglect a methodological instruction and a practical coaching, they are strictly theoretical (and can be completed from home, like in the case of the online course *Lives went up in smoke* by HMC). In response to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Holocaust Memorial Centre launched a non-subsidized distance learning program consisting of twelve modules.<sup>22</sup> This is an international teacher professional program where internet supports building educators' content knowledge. The slightly ambiguous title (*Lives went up in smoke*), indicates that the focus is on the Holocaust, the topics are persecution and genocides, and it is mostly not localized. From the program it is clear that the training completely lacks methodological instruction and practical coaching, and is overwhelmed by theory ("it increases teachers' content knowledge and enriches their preparedness"). which can be completed at home.<sup>23</sup> The distance learning program is divided into various sections based on learning units and deliverables. Accreditation and the possibility to continue learning at programs organized by the Yad Vashem Institute makes this training attractive for educators.

The Hannah Arendt Association was among the first to recognize that besides content knowledge, teachers need best practices and good materials in order to keep up their motivation.<sup>24</sup> The Association also realized that teachers need access to existing and piloted materials that they can use effectively, adapted to their own teaching environment. These materials help them include topics of Holocaust into their own teaching processes. As a result, Hannah Arendt Association stepped out of the traditional training framework characterized mostly by lectures and guided discussions, and approached the subject of the Holocaust outside that framework. The Hannah Arendt Association's activity was suspended in the past years: no trainings were carried out, its experts, (for instance Mónika Kovács), cooperated to participate in their training courses (like Zachor Foundation). As a result, there are trainings organized by Zachor Foundation that build on specific existing materials. These trainings introduce best practices, materials to be used outside the History, Social Sciences or Home Room classes, and be included, through proper pedagogical cooperation, in e.g. Foreign language classes, projects, and modules and all along various different educational situations: the topics can initiate

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<sup>22</sup> For the call and the program see: <http://hdke.hu/programkalauz/fustbe-szallt-eletek>.

<sup>23</sup> <http://hdke.hu/palyazat/fustbe-szallt-eletek-akkreditalt-nemzetkozi-tavoktato-tanari-tovabbk>

<sup>24</sup> The Hannah Arendt Association is a non-governmental organization founded by teachers, psychologists and educational experts with the primary goal to introduce teaching materials in schools that encourage students to speak up against racism, prejudices, and inter-group violence, and promote respect of human rights, the awareness of citizenship responsibility and multicultural attitude.

conversation at extra-curricular activities, or at special study groups.<sup>25</sup> The focal point hence became the methodology, which is backed up by the fact that participants themselves pilot the teaching methods suggested and accessible also in the teachers' guide. A fundamental difference between this training and other teacher trainings is that the primary objective is not the transmission of content knowledge, but to discuss pedagogical contexts in which these resources and contents can be processed in order to effect impact (e.g. attitudinal change, development of critical thinking, etc.).

To sum up we can state that content-knowledge centred trainings do not help teachers develop student skills and competences to recognize discriminative and prejudiced behaviour around them and to be able to stand up against them. A tendency similar to classroom education appears for instance in the trainings of the HMC, where, in place of developing skills and competencies, the core idea is to transmit knowledge even about the education of the Holocaust. Several arguments can justify the situation at schools (e.g. lack of time and teachers' knowledge of content and methodology, aversion to the topic), but in respect to teacher trainings it is a mistake to think that extending their knowledge suffices educators to teach more easily and effectively about the Holocaust. Though a deep understanding of the history of the events is indispensable when studying the history of the Holocaust, an approach based exclusively on the extension of content knowledge will not be efficient for students.

## **How to teach about the Holocaust?**

According to the recommendations in the guidelines it is important to consider to what extent a training can affirm that there is no single 'right' way, nor one single ideal method equally appropriate for all the teachers and students for the teaching of any subject. Hence the credibility of a training increases when its organisers and presenters provide guidance in the form of recommendations and advice as oppose to rigorous rules when discussing what needs to be considered when teaching about the topic – clearly in line with the pedagogical needs of their students. This tendency can be reinforced if the educational program uses recent research results and includes successful best practices to support teachers when approaching the topic and when elaborating the next steps.

Experience shows that teachers are reluctant to explore the topic of the Holocaust. This appears to be so typical that the IHRA guidelines devote a separate section to that question. This being considered, any training about the topic of the Holocaust must reinforce consciousness about the fact that education about the Holocaust can be successful and can bring positive results, so teachers should not be afraid of approaching the topic. Clearly, it is a huge help if trainers and experts at the trainings introduce

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<sup>25</sup> The teaching materials supporting anti-bias education were published in sixteen countries on the initiative of the Anne Frank House. Different versions of the same material were developed in various languages in various countries and more and more countries joined the project. The original materials were adapted to local students and published in the native language and all of the published versions were developed as a result of the cooperation between the Anne Frank House and local experts. Some of the countries translated the original Dutch material, others prepared a modified version in partnership with OSCE, Anne Frank House, and native experts. The Hungarian adaptation was developed in 2011 by national experts (András Kovács, Mónika Kovács, György Mészáros, Andrea Szőnyi). The educational materials developed to help anti-bias education were published in the cooperation of the Anne Frank House and Zachor Foundation. The three booklets were entitled: 1. *Antisemitism in Europe until 1945*. 2. *Antisemitism in current Europe*. 3. *Everyone has prejudices?* and are Retrieved from: <http://zachor.hu/cikkek/elotelet-mentesseg-oktatasi-segito-munkafuzetek>.

active, student-centered teaching methods enabling them to create a positive and safe classroom learning environment – which is also the condition of open and effective classroom communication. The trainings are also obliged to demonstrate this approach: there should always be sufficient space and time for reflection, for asking questions, for expressing thoughts, opinions and concerns. This has been incorporated in an earlier training program description of the Hannah Arendt Association too. For instance, when working with the resource book *Facing history and Ourselves. Holocaust and Human behaviour*, a less traditional school setting is required as only an informal learning environment allowing an atmosphere of trust can encourage the formulation of relevant questions and answers: our teacher trainings introduce methods that help form these environments..<sup>26</sup>

It is essential, when talking about the methodology of teaching of that topic, to stress the effort to personalize history so that students won't be confronted with pure statistical data, but with stories of personal human experiences. Trainings of the Centropa Foundation, the Zachor Foundation and the USC Shoah Foundation are good examples for this. Teachers are expected to find the methods that help them teach about the Holocaust in a most effective way. This does not require statistical data or faceless crowd, but case studies, survivor testimonies, contemporary letters, diaries, photos, and personal stories. Whenever stories of personal experiences are in the centre, the story of the Holocaust gets closer to students, it becomes more personal and more interesting for them and thus it will be easier for them to relate it to their own lives. Strengthening the personal approach by using video testimonies of survivors, witnesses and rescuers and aid providers (see programs of the USC Shoah Foundation in partnership with Zachor Foundation) allows teachers to discuss the subject in a more authentic way, to make the learning process more efficient, and to prepare students to recognise the personal – that is their own – responsibility in shaping history. This could be backed up by the raising awareness of the focus on local history connections. Sessions based on video testimonies and personal stories, acknowledging and discussing best practices, facilitates the improvement of methodological expertise and stimulates the reflection on the teaching about the Holocaust. Deconstructing meanings of video testimonies and working with testimony-based multimedia teaching materials allow participants develop their debate skills and to test new methods, which they can later on adapt to the own learning environments. The effort to develop methodological expertise is extended to the introduction of formal and non-formal (outside-of-school) learning methods, and by means of the presentation of best practices it raises awareness on the cooperation with national and international cultural institutions. At the same time the trainings emphasize the importance of mapping participants' own teaching environments, the exploration of challenges and missing areas as well as the importance of constant dialog and communication in order to formulate recommendations and possible next steps.

Regarding trainings methods, it is important to make teachers aware that not all written or visual materials are appropriate for students and it should be avoided to try to raise students' interest using horrifying pictures. Shocking and traumatising cannot become a pedagogical objective because it invokes defensive behaviour: it can elicit negative emotions and students can get alienated. When sorting out the most suitable teaching methods, it is vital to avoid situations which aim at students' identification either with the victims, or the perpetrators. It needs to be stressed how important role the teachers have in managing students' emotional reactions. It is indispensable for the teacher to be sensitive for students' reactions and make them aware that there are no expected reactions to what

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.hae.hu/bszamolo3.htm> – translation of the original Hungarian text.

they have studied in the lessons. Teachers can get support for this if trainings include sessions on psychological and social psychological questions. Examples for this can only be found in trainings organized by the Zachor Foundation and the USC Shoah Foundation.<sup>27</sup>

The teacher trainings also reflect another important aspect of teaching about the Holocaust: it is not only the content that matters, but equally important is the approach, the perspective, and the methodology. Only a handful of training organizers realize this. Most of them get stuck with providing content knowledge and factual information without making educators familiar with appropriate teaching materials that they can effectively promote in their own teaching environment. Teachers certainly expect to receive both theoretical and methodological support at the trainings, so full potential of the trainings can only be assured if focus is on the practical usability of the methods besides the important content elements.

Most of the programs emphasizes the importance of remembrance and compassion with the victims besides the presentation of the events. Some programs also offer an overview of the social and psychological processes leading to the Holocaust. Several organizations responsible for trainings realized that the topic requires an interdisciplinary approach as opposed to fact and event-based history-teaching and that Holocaust can neither be interpreted separately from the European history and ideology, nor from the social history of the Jewry. Therefore, certain trainings also strive to support teachers in helping their students deepen their understanding about the consequences of racism and antisemitism, as well as the importance of human rights and democratic values.

## Summary

The role (and the popularity) of teacher trainings have increased after the introduction of the Holocaust memorial day in 2001 as it became nearly inexorable for teachers to deal with and discuss the topic. Some of the trainings mentioned above are accredited and supported by the ministry. The accreditation helps include more educators: trainings of the Holocaust Memorial Center and Zachor Foundation, as well as the program of the Yad Vashem Institute are accredited programs.

All in all, it must be stated that teachers play a key role in educating young members of the society toward active citizenship and any program and curriculum development must be rooted in this conviction. It is expected to implement training programs that support teachers working in diverse educational contexts to be able to achieve that goal both in theory and practice. The training programs should provide pedagogical support for educators beyond the scope of the actual training. It is then desired, that the trainings offer approaches and perspectives as well as pedagogical methods in line with the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital educational environment. Trainings should place proper stress on methodological diversity of trainers, on the practical adaptability of the methods, on applying modern pedagogical theories and on active and participatory learning to complement content knowledge. Shaping attitudes on the one hand means the inclusion of a variety of approaches. On the other hand, it means the inclusion of different pedagogical methodological tools and their application procedures in relation to the various approaches: e.g. the use of personal stories, local history walks, a local and international collaborative learning using digital learning platform based on a common story or activity.

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<sup>27</sup> *Psychological considerations in teaching with video-testimonies* session in all the three training programs

The effectiveness of certain training programs is in close relationship with the background of the trainers and training organizers: it is very important for them to be educators themselves and have extensive everyday teaching experience. This being the case there is sufficient experience and overview on educational processes and activities to provide useful trainings and educational materials. This supports educators to find tools and methods suitable for classroom use.

Success criteria of teacher trainings can be the ratio of participants getting involved in joint work about the subject after the completion of the program through individual projects or consultations. Ideally, a training program contains monitoring of the given trainings and follow-up is built in as a core program element to allow educators to stay engaged through additional projects. As a result, a professional network, a community of educators is formed under the leadership of the professional development program organizers that can later become the centre of professional work, thus ensuring sustainability. The long-term follow-up and network-development is key to ensure sustainability both for the given training program and for its results.