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*Standing up for Remembrance:
Testimonies from the Past as Lessons for the Present
- Holocaust and Human Rights Education through Oral History*

STAND UP

Teacher Training Seminar Berlin

Report

January 2026



Executive Summary

From 23 to 25 January 2026, Centropa organized an international teacher seminar within the framework of the STAND UP project (Advocating for Remembrance: Testimonies from the Past as Lessons for the Present – Holocaust and Human Rights Education through Oral History) in Berlin, Germany. The event gathered teachers and educators from six partner countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina (4), Croatia (5), Germany (10), Hungary (3), Serbia (5), and Slovenia (4).

The main goal of the in-person seminar in Berlin was for teachers, who were working in their national groups, to prepare lesson plans based on oral testimonies from the USHMM Oral History Archive and Centropa collection. In total, they prepared seven lesson plans—one from each country, while the German participants, as the largest group, prepared two based on two different testimonies. The teachers will then implement these lesson plans in their respective countries. A third German lesson plan was started during the seminar and will be finished after the training.

Before the seminar, all participants had already attended one of the two webinars held on 27 and 28 May 2025, or had been introduced in a separate online meeting where they were introduced to the project activities and materials. Based on prior discussions and suggestions, they collaborated on the selection of topics connected to testimonies, from which short excerpts of up to 15 minutes were then prepared, etc. This process was guided by partner organizations from the participating countries.

The seminar programme was structured to integrate collaborative learning, historical reflection, critical thinking and engagement with the local historical events. The seminar began with an introductory gathering and a shared dinner on Friday, 23 January 2026. The main part of the seminar took place on Saturday, 24 January 2026, at the Berlin Wall Memorial Center. On Sunday, 25 January 2026, as part of the seminar in Berlin, all participants had the opportunity to visit the Topography of Terror Memorial Center or continue working on their collaborative lesson plans.

According to the post-event survey, participants gave positive feedback, with an overall average rating of 4 out of 5. Many respondents noted personal and professional growth resulting from their participation and highly valued the exchange possibilities with other colleagues and the renewed perspectives on connecting teaching history with personal biographies.

The project team will continue supporting teachers as they refine their lesson plans and begin applying the seminar insights in their classrooms. Some participants also expressed interest in creating additional teaching materials, reflecting the seminar's lasting impact.

Background Information

Objectives of the key activity: live teacher training seminar will take place in Germany, bringing together 25-30 educators, who will together, under HERMES and Centropa trainers' guidance, create lesson plans revolving around the oral history excerpts short videos prepared ahead of the seminar. The teacher training seminar will result in at least 4 new lesson plans based on oral histories and testimonies of Holocaust survivors and World War II witnesses. Following the seminar, participating educators will implement these lesson plans in their classrooms, engaging a minimum of 500 students.

Key Figures

Total participants : **31**

Participants/country breakdown:

- Bosnia-Herzegovina = 4
- Croatia = 5
- Germany = 10
- Hungary = 3
- Serbia = 5
- Slovenia = 4

Statistics:

Men: 9

Women: 22

- *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Banja Luka, Cazin, Travnic → 3 locations*
- *Croatia: Retfala, Koska, Zagreb → 3 locations*
- *Germany: Berlin, Hamburg, Mannheim, Pforzheim, Sinsheim → 5 locations*
- *Hungary: Budapest → 1 location*
- *Slovenia: Maribor, Ribnica → 2 locations*
- *Serbia: Belgrade, Kragujevac, Sabac, Uzice → 4 locations*

Key Activity Agenda & Flow

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Participants presented their lesson plans to each other, discussing in small groups which testimonies they had chosen, main learning activities, main objectives, teaching scenario, reflections etc. In this way, participants were able to exchange examples of good practice from their national educational systems and shared the challenges they encounter in their work when dealing with difficult or sensitive history.

After lunch, the afternoon hours were dedicated to expand on Centropa's principle of using places and personal stories as teaching tools. Participants were given a guided tour of the Barn quarter of Berlin and introduced to Berlin's Jewish history and the impact of World War II and the Holocaust on its population. In the evening, a final exchange group session took place. On Sunday, 25 January 2026, as part of the seminar in Berlin, all participants had the opportunity to visit the Topography of Terror Memorial Center or to finalize their collaborative lesson plans.

Gallery



Evaluation

According to the post-event survey, participants gave highly positive feedback, with an overall average rating of 4 out of 5. Many respondents noted personal and professional growth resulting from their participation and highly valued the exchange possibilities with other colleagues. The key questions and their corresponding ratings are summarized below:

1. The seminar increased my interest in the Holocaust education: 4/5
2. I feel more confident as Holocaust educator: 4/5
3. I feel more prepared to implement lessons in class based on oral history and testimonies: 4.5/5
4. I feel better equipped to handle difficult and sensitive conversations related to Holocaust and contemporary issues: 3.5/5
5. Did the seminar meet your expectations? 5/5
6. Do you think that participation in this seminar was useful for your professional development? 5/5

We also received some additional comments.

A main critique that showed up was weather-related: a lot of the second day of the seminar revolved around discovering the city of Berlin through connecting biographies to places. In January 2026 this was too cold and too much for some participants, and for future seminars we will strive for a better balance regarding inside-outside activities.

Additionally, one participant would have preferred an international working group on lesson plans "I enjoyed meeting new colleagues from so many countries and would have loved to have a specific time to work with them on a common project". As the scope of the seminar was to develop projects for the participant's own national context, at the time this was not possible. However we believe that with an additional seminar day, this could have been integrated within the seminar program.

Overall, the results confirm the seminar's success in fostering both professional growth and a strong sense of shared commitment among educators across the participating countries. They highly valued the possibility for international exchange as well as the opportunity to connect a city and its well known history with personal stories.

"The most interesting was the walking/guided tour of the Berlin Wall Memorial."

"For me the most interesting part was the guided tour of the Berlin Wall and connecting it to Jewish life."

"I found the personal stories and testimonies the most interesting and useful."

"The most valuable part of the program for me was sharing ideas with colleagues."

"The most interesting part of the program for me was the guided tour of the Jewish Quarter, because I indirectly got a reflection on their life and their environment in which their daily life took place."

"I loved sharing ideas with colleagues and exchanging experiences."

Conclusion

It has been a pleasure to collaborate with such an open and well-organized group of partners, led by HERMES. The regular meetings and ongoing support of HERMES was very helpful, particularly in times of recruiting teachers for seminars and preparing the videos chosen by the participants. Through this project, we met new partners and established connections for future collaboration. As an organization with long-standing experience in training teachers in Holocaust and Jewish life education, Centropa particularly values opportunities to collaborate with new partners, bringing together fresh perspectives and new ideas that enrich our shared work.

At the same time, the project challenged us in a very positive way: STAND UP encouraged us to combine Centropa's own archival materials with other collected oral testimonies. This created a collaboration not only between partner organizations, but also between different archives and collections of personal stories. In this way, the project helped expand our portfolio and offered new perspectives on how existing historical resources can be connected with contemporary testimonies and educational approaches.

The opportunity the project created to meet a new group of dedicated teachers from different places and backgrounds was especially meaningful to Centropa. Bringing educators together in person allows us to witness how quickly meaningful connections can form. Despite differences in countries, school systems, and social contexts, in-person trainings show clearly that many of the hopes, concerns, and challenges teachers face are shared across borders. It was inspiring to see participants connect, exchange experiences, and support one another, motivating and encouraging their colleagues in the process.

Moments like these remind us how powerful in-person encounters can be. When people meet face to face, ideas begin to flow naturally, new collaborations emerge, and creative projects start to take shape. Seeing teachers engage with one another in this way was truly motivating, and it is one of the reasons why we sincerely hope the project will continue to grow and create further opportunities for such meaningful exchanges.

In today's world, oral testimonies play a particularly important role. Personal stories make history tangible and human, allowing students and educators to connect emotionally and intellectually with the past. At a time when historical events risk becoming distant or abstract for younger generations, the voices of those who experienced them provide a powerful bridge between past and present. These testimonies not only deepen historical understanding but also inspire young people and educators to reflect on questions of responsibility, empathy, and democratic values. By bringing these voices into classrooms through the lesson plans developed in this project, we believe we are helping to ensure that history remains meaningful and relevant for the generations to come.

Annexes

PARTICIPANTS SIGNATURE LIST



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Standing up for Remembrance: Testimonies from the Past as Lessons for the Present - Holocaust and Human Rights Education through Oral History™

TEACHER TRAINING SEMINAR IN BERLIN, GERMANY

January 23 - 25, 2026

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION/SCHOOL	COUNTRY/TOWN	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
1	LILIANA			OSIJEK HRVATSKA		
2	ZRINKA			KOŠKA HRVATSKA		
3	OLIVERA			SARAJEVO UZICE		
4	AN			SIGET HUNGARY		
5	ANA			ISLANC/SERBIA		
6	NATALIA			HUNGARY		
7	KRISTINA			HUNGARY BUDAPEST		



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January 23 - 25, 2026

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION/SCHOOL	COUNTRY/TOWN	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
8	Dajana			Croatia		
9	MASA			SLOVENIA		
10	Hanka			Germany		
11	JANEZ			Wie Slonja		
12	Hanka			Bosnia and		



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TEACHER TRAINING SEMINAR IN BERLIN, GERMANY

January 23 - 25, 2026

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION/SCHOOL	COUNTRY/TOWN	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
15	SASA			SLOVENIA/ MARIBOR		
16	SARA			SLOVENIA/ MARIBOR		
17	TOHISLAV			PFORZHEIM GERMANY		
18	Choshne			Mannheim Germany		
19	TVRKO			CROATIA DARUVAR		
20	Laina			BERLIN		
21	Junika			Bosnia and Herzegovina		





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January 23 - 25, 2026

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION/SCHOOL	COUNTRY/TOWN	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
15	SASA			SLOVENIA/ MARIBOR		
16	SARA			SLOVENIA/ MARIBOR		
17	TOHISLAV			PFORZHEIM GERMANY		
18	Chashne			Mannheim Germany		
19	TVRKO			CROATIA DARUVAR		
20	-Raina			BERLIN		
21	Ushina			Bosnia and Herzegovina		



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January 23 - 25, 2026

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION/SCHOOL	COUNTRY/TOWN	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
22	LEENA			BOSSIA AND HERZEGOVINA		
23	Sladana			BOSSIA AND HERZEGOVINA		
24	Esther			Germany		
25	Michelle			Berlin, Deutschland		
26	MARILYN			BERLIN, GERMANY		
27	MASA			SERBIA BELGRADE		
28	VERNA			BELGIUM BRUXELLES		



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TEACHER TRAINING SEMINAR IN BERLIN, GERMANY

January 23 - 25, 2026

	NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION/SCHOOL	COUNTRY/TOWN	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
29	NOEMI			Hungary		
30	Andreas			Germany		
31	SCHWARTZ			Germany		
32						
33						
34						
35						



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Stand Up in Berlin (January 2026)

07/12/2026

From January 23-26, 2026 Centropa and HERMES organized an international in-person seminar within the framework of the STAND UP project (Advocating for Remembrance, Testimonies from the Past as Lessons for the Present – Holocaust and Human Rights Education through Oral History) in Berlin, Germany. Our seminar gathered 21 teachers and...

Read more



HERMES

26 January

Na međunarodnom STAND UP seminaru u Berlinu održanom ovog vikenda, okupili su se edukatori iz Slovenije, Njemačke, Mađarske, Hrvatske, Srbije i Bosne i Hercegovine kako bi zajedno razvili nove nastavne materijale temeljene na videointervjuima i svjedočanstvima arhiva USHMM-a.

Tijekom seminara sudionici su radili sa pažljivo odabranim isječima svjedočanstava, koja najbolje prenose osobna iskustva, emocije i moralne dileme iz vremena Holokausta.

Cilj projekta je razviti nastavne pripreme koje potiču kritičko promišljanje, empatiju i otvori dijalog o prošlosti i njezinim odjecima u današnjem društvu. Ovaj seminar predstavlja važan korak prema stvaranju novih, međunarodno razvijenih nastavnih materijala koji će pomoći učenicima da razumiju Holokaust kroz autentična ljudska iskustva – i da kroz ta iskustva nastave "stati u obranu" ljudskog dostojanstva.

Zahvaljujemo se organizatorima Centropa, kao i ostalim partnerima na suradnji i podršci: Muzej novejšje in sodobne zgodovine Slovenije, Genesis Project, Holocaust Center Šabac, We Have a Dream u STAND UP projektu, podržanom od strane i kroz CERV program.

<https://hermes.hr/standup/>

See translation

Genesis Project

29 January

Iz Berlina donosimo nove alate za učenje o ljudskosti! Protekli vikend u Berlinu protekao je radno i inspirativno na međunarodnom STAND UP seminaru. Dok se svijet mijenja, naša misija ostaje ista: kako mlade naučiti da prošlost nije samo slovo na papiru, već lekcija o dostojanstvu?

Zajedno sa kolegama iz Slovenije, Hrvatske, Srbije, Njemačke i Mađarske, edukatori iz BiH radili su na kreiranju novih nastavnih materijala zasnovanih na autentičnim video-intervjuima. Zašto je ovo važno?

Emocija umjesto definicije: Svjedočanstva prenose moralne dileme koje se ne mogu naći u udžbenicima.

Kritičko razmišljanje: Pomažu učenicima da prepoznaju odjeka historije u današnjem društvu. Empatija u praksi: Cilj je naučiti mlade kako da „staju u obranu“ (STAND UP) ljudskih prava i dostojanstva svakog pojedinca.

Ovaj seminar je korak ka stvaranju moderne, digitalne i duboko ljudske nastave o Holokaustu. Ovi materijali uskoro će postati most koji povezuje teške lekcije prošlosti sa hrabrijom i svjetlijom budućnošću.

Hvala organizatorima Centropa, kao i ostalim partnerima na suradnji i podršci – HERMES, Muzej novejšje in sodobne zgodovine Slovenije, Genesis Project, Holocaust Center Šabac, We Have a Dream u STAND UP projektu, podržanom od strane EU kroz CERV program.

See translation



PARTICIPANT NAMETAG, AGENDA AND CERTIFICATE

