



МИНИСТЕРСТВО НАУКИ
И ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ



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International Youth Seminar on Historical Memory in Europe "REMEMBRANCE AND LEARNING FROM WORLD WAR II"

*A Seminar to explore the past together
in order to create a peaceful future*

Saint-Petersburg, the Russian Federation

14-18 December 2021

Call for participants

Deadline for applications:
26 November 2021

*"Memory is what shapes us. Memory is what teaches us.
We must understand that's where our redemption is"*

Estelle Laughlin, Holocaust Survivor

*"Memory stands against the destructive power of time.
This property of memory is extremely important.
It is customary to divide time into past, present and future.
But thanks to memory, the past enters the present, and
the future is as if predicted by the present, connected to the past"*

Dmitry Likhachev, Russian philologist, cultural anthropologist,
and PhD in philological sciences

CONTEXT

The Second World War was the most destructive armed conflict and the greatest disaster in history. World War II overcame all previous wars in its scope and intensity, according to the number of participants, the quantity and quality of military equipment, casualties and material destruction.

The total military dead of all causes was approximately 20,280,000 but the war took an even greater toll on civilian population. Overall, civilian deaths directly ascribable to the war (including victims of bombing, murder, and genocide, as well as the starvation and diseases directly caused by the war) are estimated at from 30 million to 55 million, including around 11 million victims murdered on racial or ethnic grounds.

The history of the Second World War provides a wealth of stories of human bravery and selflessness, compassion and patriotism, firmness and courage, along with human inaction in face of genocide, slave labor, famine and disease.

In the aftermath of the Second World War and the Holocaust, several organisations were established to promote international cooperation, peace and security. The largest was the [United Nations](#), created on 24 October 1945 as an international peacekeeping organisation and a forum for resolving conflicts between nations. In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), which was adopted as a response to the terrifying events of the Second World War. The preamble states that

disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people...

The creation of the [Council of Europe](#), the leading human rights organisation on the European continent, was a result of the founding members commitment to ensure that the tragedies of the Second World War would not be repeated and that the commitment to the common values of human rights, democracy and rule of law would ensure Europe's ability to overcome the horrors of Nazism, racism and aggressive nationalism and to preserve peace on the continent.

The Council of Europe was founded in May 1949 with the aim:

to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress.

The foundation of the Organisation was based on the belief of the founding states that the “the pursuit of peace based upon justice and international cooperation is vital for the preservation of human society and civilization”.

On 4 November 1950, in Rome, the [Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms](#) (better known as the European Convention on Human Rights) was signed by the member states of the Council of Europe. The Convention was the first instrument to give effect and binding force to many of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The Convention laid the foundation for the human rights protection mechanism used in the member states of the Council of Europe nowadays.

The Convention is still one of the strongest mechanisms for the protection of human rights at the European continent. The protection of human rights is a basis for not repeating the horrors of the Second World War, including crimes against humanity.

REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION

Gross human rights violations, atrocities such as the Holocaust, slave trade, genocide, wars and ethnic cleansing, are not easily forgotten or forgiven by those who were affected. However, remembrance is more than merely just remembering. Remembrance can be described as the commitment of a society to keep alive the memory of the past atrocities, to support the community to face the past and accept responsibility over it in order to learn and live in a present that allows a different course of action.

Remembrance concerns both society and individual people. There is no human right directly connected to the act of remembrance, but the type of events which society feels the need to remember are almost always those where the human rights of certain groups of individuals have been comprehensively ignored.

Since 1954, the [European Cultural Convention](#) has highlighted the importance of teaching the history of all the member states in its European dimension, in order to foster mutual understanding and to prevent the crimes against humanity happening again. It was in the framework of the Learning and Teaching about the History of Europe in the 20th Century project in schools that the Holocaust theme found its place.

The Council of Europe and the Russian Federation, as a member state, are aware of the importance of history teaching and the memory of the Second World War. In this respect, the [Recommendation Rec\(2001\)15 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on History Teaching in the twenty-first-century Europe](#) states that:

everything possible should be done in the educational sphere to prevent recurrence or denial of the devastating events that have marked this century, namely the Holocaust, genocides and other crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and the massive violations of human rights and of the fundamental values to which the Council of Europe is particularly committed.

The Recommendation underlines that that history teaching is a “decisive factor in reconciliation, recognition, understanding and mutual trust between peoples” and makes it possible for young people “to analyse and interpret information critically and responsibly, through dialogue, through the search

of historical evidence and the open debate based on multiperspectivity, especially on controversial and sensitive issues”.

Education is indispensable to help foster a sense of belonging to a common humanity, to empower learners to become active citizens in crafting a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure world.

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/7 (2005) and UNESCO General Conference Resolution 34C/61 (2007) on Holocaust Remembrance emphasise the historical significance of the Holocaust and outline the importance of teaching this event as a contribution to the prevention of genocide and atrocity crimes. Other resolutions of the United Nations, such as United Nations Security Council Resolution 2150 (2014) on “Recommitment to fight against genocide” or Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/28/L.25 (2015) on the prevention of genocide, highlight the importance of education as a means to raise awareness about the causes, dynamics and consequences of atrocity crimes.

Remembrance education and initiatives with, for and by young people play an important role in preserving the memory of the tragic events, in drawing lessons from the past and preventing the seeds of hatred from being sown for the future, and in developing a culture of human rights and dialogue.

Remembrance is obviously relevant for young people also, and probably especially, outside the classroom, not the least because non-formal and informal education play an important role in strengthening remembrance. Young people are the primary target audience of remembrance activities and projects because it is through them that reconciliation and dialogue should be exerted. It is therefore crucial that remembrance activities are carried out according to human rights values, dignity and historical correctness. Conversely, manipulation and distortion of historical facts, double standards and selective memories are likely to fuel further nationalism, xenophobia, racism and hatred.

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe has been working with remembrance in the framework of human rights education with young people, integrating this theme in its handbook on human rights education with young people [Compass](#), and in the [“Right to Remember”](#) handbook focusing on the Roma holocaust.

[The Observatory on History Teaching in Europe](#), new Enlarged Partial Agreement, provides an opportunity to share good practices and experiences between the member States of the enlarged partial agreement and reinforce co-operation in the field of history education at the European level.

The Russian Federation state authorities and non-governmental organisations have been carrying out systematic work on remembrance with young people for many years now, such as the projects “Immortal regiment”, “Memory Watch”, “Candle of Memory”, “Faces of Victory”, “Day of the Unknown Soldier”, “The Tree of Victory”, “In memory of the Heroes” and many others.

TO LEARN, TO UNDERSTAND AND TO CREATE: SEMINAR IN 2021

In the current context of resurgence of racialised ideologies and rising antisemitism learning from the past in a human rights framework is fundamental to preserve human dignity and to prevent further human rights violations.

Youth work and human rights education play an important role in this respect by allowing young people to discuss and address sensitive topics together. Remembrance and learning from the past are important when organizing intercultural learning activities, especially in respect to such topics as human rights, promoting peace and counteracting discrimination and violence among young people.

Discussing these topics with young people can give context and meaning, can empower them become critical thinkers, responsible and active global citizens who value human dignity and respect for all, reject antisemitism, racism and other forms of prejudice that can lead to violence and genocide.

The seminar in 2021 is built on the experience and learning accumulated during previous editions of the seminar since 2014 and the [Guidelines on Remembrance activities for and with young people](#), prepared after the Consultative meeting "Remembrance activities with young people based on human rights education" held 9-12 December 2019 at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

The training seminar is a part of the 2021 Action plan of the Framework Programme on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation in the field of youth policy.

CO-ORGANISERS

- Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation
- National Youth Council of Russia
- Youth Department of the Council of Europe

The training seminar is organised with the support of MIREA – Russian Technological University.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING SEMINAR

Aim: to discuss the meaning and relevance of remembrance activities, starting with but also going beyond issues related to the remembrance of World War II, and strengthen participants' confidence and abilities to act as multipliers and advocates for remembrance education among young people in international, national or local activities.

The **objectives of the training seminar in 2021:**

- to strengthen participants' understanding of such concepts as remembrance, human rights, and intercultural dialogue;
- to provide space for opinion exchange and critical reflection on participants' experience with remembrance activities, with a focus on youth activities;
- to discuss and reflect on the connections between youth policy, youth work and remembrance and human rights education;
- to develop participants' competences in human rights education with a focus on remembrance;
- to discuss challenges related to remembrance and remembrance education (including historical revisionism, falsification and manipulation of the facts about historical events, rising populism and nationalism) and how to respond to them;
- to enhance the role of the Council of Europe, the Russian Federation as its member state and partner youth organisations in the protection of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY

The programme of the training seminar is based on the methodological approaches and principles of human rights education used by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. The activity will

provide space to explore the wider pictures and look at many other areas connected to the theme of remembrance such as democracy, citizenship, discrimination, dignity and equality.

The programme will focus on building a trustful, open, safe and reflective atmosphere that promotes fostering a deep relationship between the participants and the theme.

The programme will provide the participants with space and time to reflect on how remembrance can be integrated and practiced in their work and how the quality of such endeavors can be improved. A specific focus will be given to building capacities to organise high quality youth activities on the theme of remembrance.

The programme will take into account participants' experiences, complemented with materials and information from experts and survivors of the Second World War.

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The seminar will bring together 40 participants from state parties to the European Cultural Convention and the Commonwealth of Independent States, together with a selected number of participants from other countries directly concerned by the objectives of the training seminar.

All interested candidates should:

- be active in a youth organisation, network or initiative groups working on the topic of remembrance;
- be able to multiply the ideas of the seminar in the youth field, i.e. be a youth worker, relate to youth policy work, youth leader, trainer involved in activities with young people on Remembrance of the Second World War;
- be involved in the remembrance education projects, including areas such as historical and political sciences, research, search movements, memorial sites and museums;
- have relevant experience in working with human rights education / remembrance education / intercultural dialogue, peacebuilding and reconciliation;
- be motivated to participate in the seminar and engage in the learning process;
- be open and focused on the development and improvement of dialogue between youth organisations from different countries;
- have the motivation and capacity to initiate activities, projects and programmes as a follow-up to the seminar in their organisations and/or in cooperation with other participants of the seminar;
- be aged between 18-35;
- be able to work independently in Russian and/or English;
- be able to attend the whole seminar and all its programme elements.

By virtue of the agreement between the co-organisers, , participants from the Russian Federation may be overrepresented in relation to other member states of the Council of Europe.

FINANCIAL CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Dates: the training seminar will begin on December 14, 2021, at 09:30 and end on December 18, 2021, at 19:00. Arrival day for all participants is December 13, 2021.

Place: St. Petersburg, the Russian Federation.

Working languages: English and Russian, with simultaneous translation.

Financial conditions of participation: the organisers from the Russian side will provide accommodation and meals during the seminar programme for all participants, as well as travel to and from St. Petersburg and visa expenses for 20 foreign participants. Russian participants will cover their travel to St. Petersburg and back themselves or at the expense of the sending organization.

The organizers will provide visa and entry permits support for foreign participants who may need them.

The event will be organised in compliance with the sanitary and epidemiological requirements of Rospotrebnadzor.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

All interested candidates **from the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States countries, which are not parties to the European Cultural Convention**, should complete the application form available at <https://forms.gle/XidcuGR4kiVKVUoz9> by 26 November 2021, **15h (Moscow time)**.

All interested candidates from **other state parties to the European Cultural Convention** should apply via the Youth Department of the Council of Europe platform <https://youthapplications.coe.int/Application-forms> by **15h CET 26 November 2021**.

All participants will be selected by the co-organisers on the basis of a completed application and taking into account the participants' unique experience, motivation and balanced diversity in the whole group. Selected applicants will receive additional information and instruction for their preparation.

The organisers welcome applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile for the seminar, , irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation. .

FURTHER INQUIRIES

- Olga Popova, Deputy Chairwoman of the National Youth Council of Russia, popova@youthrussia.ru
- Natalia Chardymova, Educational Advisor for the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, natalia.chardymova@coe.int

For technical assistance with the application form uploaded at the Council of Europe Youth Department platform, please address: youthapplications@coe.int

Other activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the National Youth Council of Russia:

If you are interested in participating in the activities related to international youth work, human rights education and intercultural dialogue, but your profile does not fully meet the requirements of this seminar, please note that the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the National Youth Council of Russia organise other activities and training courses.

For more details please consult the following webpages:

www.coe.int/youth

<http://www.youthrussia.ru>