

Part 2

Anti-Semitism: a never-ending struggle?

Teaching materials on the history of Jews and anti-Semitism in Europe after 1945
Anne Frank House, OSCE/ODIHR



Polish Sample



1 After Auschwitz. To stay or leave?

World War II ended in 1945. It took around 55 million human lives. Many people died as a result of warfare, violence, hunger, or disease. The German Nazis murdered millions more in concentration and extermination camps, including Roma and Sinti, Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, homosexuals, the disabled, and people in the resistance. The Nazis had planned to kill all European Jews. About six million of them perished, most of them in the camps. A quarter of them were children.

Return to life

After the war, some Jewish survivors did not want to stay in Europe any longer and left for the United States, Palestine, and other places. The Dutch journalist Frieda Menco and Marek Edelman, the last Warsaw Ghetto Uprising commander still alive, made different choices. They decided to stay in their own countries. Menco survived the concentration camp in Auschwitz and returned to the Netherlands, aged 19. She became committed to work to ensure the rights of minorities. After the war, Edelman settled in Łódź, where he still lives today. He decided to become a doctor to save other people's lives, and he became a highly regarded cardiologist. In the 1970s, he became involved in anticommunist opposition activities, co-founding the Workers' Defence Committee. Then he became an activist in Solidarity and, in 1981, during Martial Law, he was put in prison. He later took part in the Round Table Talks and was a member of the first democratic Polish parliament (1989-1993).

'Other people in our house'

Frieda Menco: "When we were liberated in Auschwitz on 27 January 1945, I was with my mother. I was very weak. I remember that I had to be carried because I was no longer able to walk. On the way, I was looked after very well by Russians, Poles, the English, and Americans. In Holland, it was very different. We met with a chilly reception. When we thought we'd finally arrived home, we had to ring at the door of our own house. Other people were living there. They refused to let us in. The police had to intervene. We also had to queue up everywhere. It was an enormous letdown. There was absolutely no understanding of what we Jews had suffered. We found out that my father, my four grandparents, and many other members of my family had been murdered.



Marek Edelman, 2006

'Never let this happen again'

Marek Edelman has actively spoken out on many of the essential issues of today's world. During the war in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, he went to Sarajevo with a convoy to offer humanitarian assistance.

Recently, Edelman supported a teacher from Białystok who was teaching about the Holocaust. She was being threatened by young neo-Nazis. He wrote:

"Thank you for educating new generations of enlightened citizens. I am proud that we have educators like you in Poland, who teach sensitivity and tolerance and oppose hate speech. This is the duty of every decent human being. If we forget about it, as we know from our experiences, fascism can become popular in all sorts of different guises. I can assure you that you have the support of most of Polish society. No one should stop protesting against these fascist ideas and acts."



The funeral of about forty Jews murdered by Poles during the Kielce pogrom in 1946. Jews were often targeted during the political turmoil and outbursts of violence that followed the war.



Frieda Menco, 2006

"I think it is my duty to talk about my experiences and to fight against intolerance. But you don't always have to do something big. Simply by helping your parents or neighbours, you can change something in their lives. It's a matter of being open to others and not judging what you do not know."

'We don't want you here'

Victor Breitburg, a survivor from the Łódź ghetto, immigrated to England after the war: "I arrived in Krakow around noon. There were a lot of people at the railway station hoping to return home. The majority were not Jewish. (...) I saw a man who was wearing a striped camp uniform. Two Poles started to question him: 'Hey Jew! Where are you going? Why aren't you going to Palestine? We don't want you here!' I was speechless. I noticed tears in the man's eyes. Nobody stood up for him. I was terrified and furious. How dare they? Yes, I am a Jew, but at the same time I am a Pole. (...) I can choose, I am going back to Terezin. From there I will go to Palestine or to England. I swear, I'll never go back to Poland."

Assignments

1. About being Jewish, Frieda says: "You could say that I only became Jewish when the Nazis came into power. Before that, I didn't think about it much."
 - A. In your own words, write down what you think Frieda means by this.
 - B. Give a few reasons why Jewish survivors decided to stay or leave their own countries after the war.
 - C. Write down what it means to be given a chilly reception.

2. Why did the Kielce pogrom take place? You can find information at: www.historiazydow.edu.pl/panel19.html and www.forum-znak.org.pl.

3. Frieda Menco and Marek Edelman fight against racism and indifference. Give an example of people in your own area or whom you've read about who dedicate themselves to a similar goal. Write down what they do.

Anti-Semitism is prejudice and hatred against Jews.

2 'Never again'

Immediately after the war, some Nazis were arrested and tried. Even more Nazis escaped or were not prosecuted. Countries started to co-operate in the hope that genocide would never take place again.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

After World War II, the leaders of different countries met. They wanted to work together to ensure that such a dreadful war would never happen again. Almost all the countries in the world became members of a new organization called the United Nations. In 1948, the members of the United Nations agreed on the most important human rights, which are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A few human rights

1. All human beings are born free and with equal rights
2. The right to life, liberty, and safety
3. The right to equality before the law
4. The right to protection against discrimination and hatred based on race, sex, religion, national origin, or language
5. Freedom of opinion and expression
6. Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion



Eichmann in court in Jerusalem, 1961.

Eichmann

It was only in 1961, as a result of the trial of Adolf Eichmann, that many people really became aware of the enormous scale of the Holocaust and all the things that had happened during World War II. During the war, Eichmann had been responsible for the transportation of Jews from all the occupied countries to the concentration and extermination camps. Eichmann's trial was special. The images of the trial could be seen in people's living rooms — television had not existed for very long. Jewish victims testified. Everyone could see how emotional the public was, and they all witnessed Eichmann's explanation: he had simply followed orders. This was a shocking declaration, particularly because it became clear how much help the Nazis had had with the persecution of the Jews from people who had simply done "their duty".



Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General until the end of 2006, at the World Children's Festival, 2000, in Basel, Switzerland.

"If you fight against anti-Semitism, you are fighting for the future of all mankind." — UN Secretary General Kofi Annan

3 How far does freedom of speech go?

Following the war, European Jews started to build their lives anew. Jewish culture was slowly revived, and synagogues and Jewish schools reopened. But anti-Semitism had not disappeared. It also took on new forms, with some people saying that the Holocaust was a lie.

Old myths

The Nazis did not invent anti-Semitism. Jews have faced discrimination and persecution for a long time throughout the world. They have regularly been blamed for disasters. For example, in about 1350, thousands of Jews were killed in the wake of rumours that they were spreading the Plague. Six centuries later, in 1929, many suspected Jews of being behind the stock-market crash in New York. The myth also spread, particularly in Europe, that Jews had a secret plan to conquer the world, and they were believed to be extremely rich. In many European countries, however, they belonged to the poorest group, and most Jews strived for acceptance by society.

New myths

The few Jews who survived the war and did not emigrate tried to build a new life in Europe. Due to the Holocaust, hardly anything remained of the thousands of Jewish neighbourhoods in villages and towns across the continent. Over the years, some aspects of Jewish culture returned; special bakeries and restaurants were opened, and synagogues were inaugurated here and there. At the same time, Europeans were confronted with new expressions of anti-Semitism. The denial of the Holocaust is one example. Others do not deny that the Holocaust took place but minimize its importance.



Demonstration of the PWN, an extreme nationalist organization, Krakow, 1992. One of the banners reads: "Poland is for Poles".



The return of the Torah, Krakow, 1996. The ceremony of passing the Torah, which was discovered after many years, to the Remuh synagogue.

Curious comparisons

The Holocaust was neither the first nor the last genocide in history, and Jews were not the only victims of Nazi persecutions. All genocides are terrible, and they are all different. But nothing like the Holocaust had ever happened before. The Nazis wanted to murder all Jews. These murders were organized entirely according to a plan, drawn up by a world power. Nevertheless, some people try to belittle the Holocaust by comparing it to other terrible events. One example is the comparison of the Holocaust with the bombing of the German city of Dresden by the Allies. Though the bombing was indeed a horrifying event, neo-Nazis make the comparison particularly to spread the idea that it was not Jews, but Germans, who were victims of World War II.

A Jewish bakery in Berlin.



Assignments



Graffiti about Auschwitz (Oświęcim) in Krakow.

Denial of the Holocaust

The ideas of the Nazis did not disappear altogether after the liberation. Even now, there are groups of neo-Nazis throughout Europe and the United States. Like Hitler, they also consider "the white race" to be the best. They are against minorities and therefore also against Jews. According to neo-Nazis, the Jews invented the Holocaust themselves. They claim that Jews invented Auschwitz in order to gain support for the establishment of their own state. They also claim that Anne Frank's diary is not authentic but that it was written after the war.

Punishable offence

Neo-Nazis spread their ideas particularly through the Internet, and they also gain support from other extreme right-wing groups. People who deny the Holocaust are spreading lies and clearly intend to hurt Jews. For this reason, denial of the Holocaust is a punishable offence in many European countries, including Poland.

The Holocaust was the murder of European Jews during World War II.

Ingo Hasselbach



1. Explain why you cannot say that the Nazis invented anti-Semitism. Give two examples in your explanation.

2. The law does not prohibit Holocaust denial in every country. For example, in the United States, freedom of speech is considered more important.

What is your opinion about this? Explain.

3. Ingo Hasselbach
Ingo was a notorious neo-Nazi in Germany. Later, he explained that this had been a way of letting off steam. He became a leader because he felt more hatred than other people. When he heard, in 1992, that an attack on a house where Turkish people lived had led to the death of some of these people, he changed his mind. He had had his doubts before, but now he was sure that he had to stop. He announced this on television and testified in court against his former friends. He later told his story at schools and wrote a book about his life as a neo-Nazi.

A. Why do you think young people sometimes become members of neo-Nazi groups? Check all those that apply and also complete the final sentence:

Because they feel superior to others.

Because they don't know enough about World War II.

Because they want a better world.

Because they prefer to be in a group than alone.

Because they _____

B. Why do you think it is difficult to stop being a neo-Nazi? Write down a number of reasons.

4 The hope for a Jewish state

Since the late 19th century, increasing numbers of Jews have moved to what is today Israel, where their ancestors lived for centuries. In the wake of the Holocaust, even more Jews left Europe. The State of Israel was proclaimed in 1948. Many Jews had long hoped for their own Jewish national state that would protect them against anti-Semitism.

Zionism is the movement for the establishment of a Jewish state in the land of Israel. The yearning to return to Zion, the biblical term for both Israel and Jerusalem, is embedded in Jewish prayer and culture. It has been the cornerstone of Jewish religious life since the Jewish exile two thousand years ago. Zionism emerged in the late 19th century in response both to pogroms in Eastern Europe and to anti-Semitism in Western Europe. It was not only Jews who wanted their own state at that time. It was a time of nationalism.

The first European Zionists settled in Palestine at the beginning of the last century, when it was ruled by Great Britain. Initially, the Jews lived peacefully together with their Palestinian-Arab neighbours and bought land from Arab landlords.

On the way to a Jewish state

Jews started to emigrate from Europe to Palestine in the 19th century to escape from anti-Semitism. They enlarged existing Jewish communities living on land purchased from Arab landowners. The British rulers gave hope to both Jews and Palestinians that they would be able to create their own states. The desire of both groups to have their own national state within the same area was the starting point of the conflict about land that continues until today. In early 1947, Great Britain announced its withdrawal from the area and in November the United Nations adopted a resolution to divide the former British Mandate. A number of Arab countries, however, voted against the resolution.

Jewish children after their arrival in Israel, 1948.



Young Israelis at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, 2004.



Migration

The war between the Arab states and Israel also had immediate consequences for Jews in other parts of the world. In many Arab countries, Jews were threatened and attacked, prompting more than half a million Jews to flee from Arab countries to Israel. Originally, a million Jews lived in North Africa and the Middle East. By the 1970s, this number had diminished to about 30,000. Those who came to Israel were given citizenship and were integrated. Since 1989, more than a million Russian-speaking Jews have moved to Israel. Most of the inhabitants of Israel are the children of immigrants. Today, Jews from more than 100 countries live in Israel.

Palestine was the name given by the Romans to a province of the Roman Empire in the area that is now Israel and the Palestinian Territories. In later centuries, this area was part of the Ottoman Empire. From 1914 until 1947, Palestine was under British rule as the Palestine Mandate.



An anti-Israeli cartoon published in the Polish state-controlled press during the Six Day War in 1967.

On 14 May 1948, the Jewish National Council proclaimed the State of Israel on the basis of the UN resolution. Some neighbouring countries immediately attacked Israel. This was the first Arab-Israeli war, which Israel won. Encouraged by their leaders, many Palestinian Arabs left their land. They were promised a speedy return based on the expectation that Israel would be defeated. Although some Israelis wanted the Arabs to stay, many were expelled from Israel. The majority of the the Arab Palestinians who left Israel in this period had to live in refugee camps. Many of those camps became permanent cities and are still under the administration of the United Nations. Those who remained in Israel were granted Israeli citizenship. Another war broke out in 1967, and there have been tensions ever since. Wars and conflict have caused many victims.

Anti-Zionism

Jews living under communist regimes were often afraid to live Jewish lives. After the founding of Israel in 1948, the Soviet Union initially hoped for good relations with Israel to enhance its influence in the Middle East. This changed after Israel showed its Western orientation, including strong relations with the United States. The Soviet Union and its allies sided increasingly with Israel's Arab enemies and targeted the Jewish population as "Zionists". Prominent Jews were accused of

being "agents of Western imperialism". Many Jews were no longer allowed to work in their professions. Some were arrested and waves of government-sponsored anti-Semitic agitation forced many to emigrate. Even today, in an attempt to conceal anti-Semitic views, some people talk about Israel instead of expressing their views about Jews.

Poland

During the Six Day War in 1967, the Soviet Union and other communist countries took the Arab side. Israel was declared the aggressor and diplomatic relations were broken off. This was a pretext for the communist authorities in Poland to carry out political purges. The government accused Polish Jews of sympathizing with Israel, and those who were in power were blamed for the economic and political crisis. In March 1968, anti-communist student protests broke out all over Poland. There were some students with Jewish origins among the organizers who were accused of causing the unrest. An anti-Zionist witch-hunt in the media was directed against all Polish people with Jewish origins. As a result of this anti-Semitic purge, thousands of Jews lost their jobs and were forced to emigrate.

Zionism is the name of the Jewish movement that sought an independent Jewish state in Palestine.

Assignments

- A.** How many years after the end of World War II was the State of Israel proclaimed?

B. Explain in your own words why Zionism was important for many Jews at that time.
- Is Israel a multicultural society? Explain why.**
- Explain why the Soviet Union and its satellite countries changed their position towards Israel in the 1950s?**

5 Just criticism or anti-Semitism?

The Middle East conflict makes international headlines more than any other conflict in the world. Some politicians and international forums regularly criticize the Israeli response to the security threats the country faces. The criticism sometimes doesn't deal with the real situation but is a pretext for anti-Semitic accusations.

Criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic in and of itself. If, however, the criticism is based on prejudices concerning "how Jews are" or if it leads to conspiracy theories or is directed at all Jews, then it is an expression of anti-Semitism. Jews live in all parts of the world and they are all different people. Nevertheless, Jews are often collectively blamed for what is going on in Israel. People say "Israel" but in fact all Jews are defined as the enemy. And this attitude leads to anti-Semitic attacks. For example, a Jewish school in Paris was attacked in November 2003 and in the same month a car bomb attack on synagogues in Istanbul killed more than 20 people. In February 2007, a Jewish kindergarten in Berlin was smeared with Nazi symbols.

Some people tend to equate Israeli politics with the politics of the Nazi regime. "What the Germans did to the Jews back then is now inflicted on the Palestinians by Israel." A comparison of the Jewish state and the perpetrators of the Holocaust is fundamentally flawed. Nazi Germany, a dictatorship, pursued an anti-Semitic and racist ideology, targeting entire groups for extinction. Israel, a democratic state, does not pursue policies of annihilation.

Jews are regularly attacked outside Israel. In 2003, there was an attack on several buildings in Casablanca in which Jews were also targeted. Fifty-four people were killed. Immediately afterwards, Moroccans took to the streets to protest against this.



Criticism of Israel, anti-Semitism, or both?



'Nazi!'

Comparisons of Israel with the German Nazi government aim to both diminish the significance of the Holocaust and to undermine the legitimacy of the Jewish state. Statements making comparisons between Jews and Nazis are not just an opinion but incite actions against Israel and Jews. Such comparisons also stand in the way of meaningful discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Even in their own country, Israeli politicians are sometimes compared to Nazis. It has become a term of abuse for anyone who has a different opinion. The comparison with Nazis is obviously hurtful, and it makes any discussion very difficult.



Arab edition of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, 1976.

At the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2005, the Iranian bookstall displayed classical anti-Semitic texts such as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and Henry Ford's book *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem*, dating from 1920. These books spread anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.

The Protocols

The conflict in Israel is often used as a pretext to stir up hatred against Jews, reviving old stereotypes and prejudices. Particularly in the Middle East, the belief in a secret Jewish plan for world domination is widespread. Jewish conspiracy theories were widespread in Europe and the United States following the publication, about 1900, of the fictional account of the alleged "Protocols of the Elders of Zion". Anti-Semites invented the story of

a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world, giving elaborate details. Despite the fact that the book is a falsification, the "Protocols" continue to be circulated in far right-wing circles, as well as in many Arab and African countries. In 2006, the denial of the Holocaust and the call for the total destruction of Israel by the president of Iran shocked the world. Such outspoken anti-Semitism by a head of state is a new occurrence that has led to worldwide protests.

A classic anti-Semitic theme: depicting Jews as worms or snakes. Cartoon of Sharon, prime minister of Israel, Saudi Arabia (2001).



Assignments

- A.** Why is it wrong to hold all Jews responsible for what is happening in Israel?

B. Do you think that this sort of thing also happens with other groups? Give examples.
- A.** Look at the photo of the demonstration in Amsterdam in 2002. The mayor of Amsterdam prohibited some placards. Choose two of them and explain what objections there could be to these placards.

B. Compare the photo of the demonstration in Amsterdam with the Polish cartoon (p. 9). What similarities and differences do you see in the two illustrations?
- This is a cartoon of Ariel Sharon, who was prime minister of Israel until 2006.

A. What symbols can you see?

B. Write a request to someone running a website because you want him to remove this cartoon. Provide arguments for your request.

C. Write a reply to this request. Explain your reply.

6 Amal and Odelia

Are you friends with someone from a completely different background or with completely different beliefs? This does not have to be a problem at all. Perhaps these differences do not play a role between you, or perhaps you actually enjoy them.

However, sometimes you have to make an extra effort, for example, when you find that you both have prejudices and do not know enough about each other. Amal and Odelia say that they come from very different worlds. Nevertheless, they have tried to build a friendship.

Because of the political situation, their friendship is not easy. Amal writes: "If you want to be friends, you have to leave politics out of it, particularly at the beginning, because it is so unbelievably difficult to accept a different view in such emotional matters."

Odelia explains: "Often it is simply too complicated to spend time with someone who comes from a completely different culture. Anyway, in your own world you already have friends, so it's not so important to find new ones."

Nevertheless, they think that you should be friends above all because of your ideas, and not because of your background. They do write about politics in their letters. They both want the war in their country to end, but they have different views about the causes of the violence. Amal says: "The misery for the Palestin-

Odelia (left) and Amal in Jerusalem. Amal is not her real name. She and her family did not want to be identified by their real names in the book. This is why Amal is not recognizable on the photograph.



Friendship under fire

Amal and Odelia were just 18 years old when they first met during a school exchange in Switzerland. Amal is a Muslim and a Palestinian; Odelia is Jewish and Israeli. They were both born in Jerusalem and love their city. When they went back home, they stayed in contact. They wrote to each other about their lives, their future plans, and about the differences between Palestinians and Israelis, but they also told each other how they thought about each other. Twice, they arranged to meet in Jerusalem. Their letters and discussions have been published in a book called *We Just Want to Live Here: A Palestinian Teenager, an Israeli Teenager — An Unlikely Friendship*, by Sylke Tempel.

ians started in 1948. From then on, our Arab history no longer counted." Odelia says: "Yes, and my grandparents had to leave Morocco. Because of the war which broke out in 1948, things became difficult for Jews everywhere."

Through their friendship, they have gradually found out more about one another and about their backgrounds and ancestors. Odelia's grandparents come from Morocco and Argentina. All the people in Amal's family are Palestinians, but because of the occupation they largely live separated

from each other, and it is difficult to visit one another. What Amal and Odelia thought they knew about each other from television and the stories of other people often turned out to be incorrect. Odelia realizes how difficult it must be for a Palestinian to have to live under a foreign flag. In turn, Amal knows that not every Israeli is her enemy.

We Just Want to Live Here: A Palestinian Teenager, an Israeli Teenager — An Unlikely Friendship, by Sylke Tempel.



Assignments

1. **A.** In your own words, describe the consequences of the events in 1948 for Amal's (grand-) parents.

1. **B.** In your own words, describe the consequences of the events in 1948 for Odelia's (grand-) parents.

2. Odelia thinks it is complicated to be friends with someone who comes from a completely different culture.

2. **A.** Explain why this could be a problem.

2. **B.** How can you solve this problem?

3. Explain why you think that the title of the book *We Just Want to Live Here: A Palestinian Teenager, an Israeli Teenager – An Unlikely Friendship* is good or bad?

4. Do you think that Amal and Odelia will remain friends? Explain your answer.

Assignments

1. *Anti-Semitism: a never-ending struggle?*
This is the title of this booklet. Look through the booklet once again and find an illustration that goes with this title.

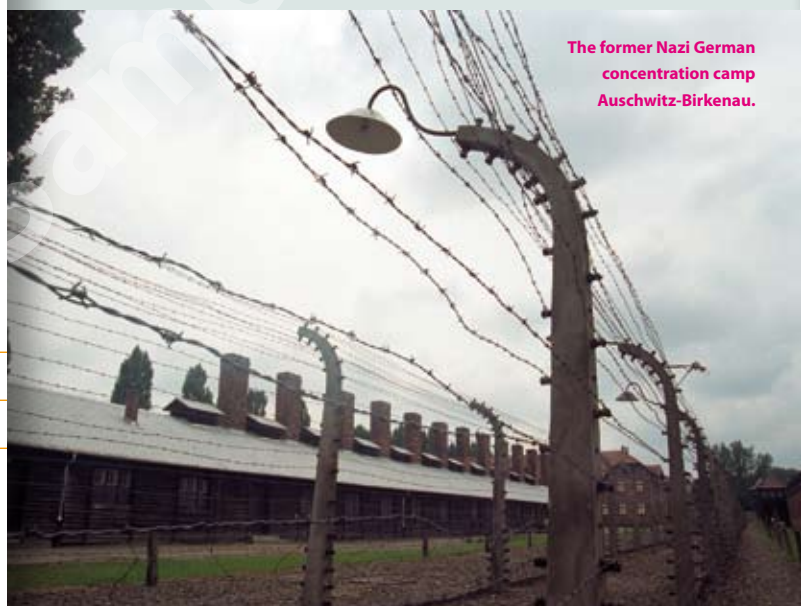
A. Explain your choice.

B. Copy the illustration

C. Make your own caption.

2. In 2005, the Polish Ministry of Education announced that the Holocaust would be commemorated in Poland on 19 April, the day the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising broke out. In the same year, the United Nations agreed that 27 January, the day Auschwitz was liberated by the Soviet Army, would henceforth be commemorated in every country.

A. Why did the Polish Ministry of Education choose 19 April and the United Nations 27 January? Explain the special significance of these dates.



The former Nazi German concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

B. What do you think of these days of commemoration?



Children attending a Jewish class in Haarlem, the Netherlands, 2005.

Football match between young Jews and Moroccans in Amsterdam, 2004.



3. Action

Misunderstandings between people or groups of people occur everywhere. You can probably think of a few examples of this yourself.

A. With the person sitting next to you, think of an example from anywhere in the world, from your class, or from your neighbourhood. If you can't think of anything, take an example you know from the news or television. Think of something you can do to create more understanding between these groups of people.

B. Draw up a plan. Write down what you're going to do. Also write down how you are going to ensure that people join you. Therefore, you must make sure that they are enthusiastic. Don't forget to write down which people or organizations you should involve and why.

C. Design a poster to encourage people to join in.

Teaching Materials

This booklet is part of a package of teaching materials covering three main themes:

1. The history of Jews in Europe and anti-Semitism until 1945;
2. Contemporary anti-Semitism in Europe today;
3. Prejudices, discrimination, racism, and anti-Semitism.

The materials have been adapted for use in schools in several countries and are available in the official language of each partner state. In each case, the materials were prepared by the OSCE/ODIHR and the Anne Frank House in co-operation with experts from the countries concerned.

OSCE/ODIHR

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe is a security organization with 56 participating States from Europe, North America, and Central Asia. Its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights supports the implementation of initiatives in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination, human rights, and democracy. For more information, please visit www.osce.org/odihr.

Anne Frank House

The Anne Frank House preserves Anne Frank's hiding place as a museum. It also promotes Anne Frank's ideals, not only in relation to the times in which she lived, but also in terms of their contemporary significance. Educational projects are developed to combat present-day forms of anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia and to encourage tolerance and respect for others. For more information, please visit www.annefrank.org.

Polish-German Centre

The Polish-German Centre is an NGO based in Krakow that encourages mutual understanding between nations. Its activities focus mainly on study and youth exchange programmes. The Centre also develops educational projects to promote tolerance and to combat anti-Semitism, prejudices, and other forms of discrimination. For more information, please visit www.historiazydow.edu.pl/centrum.html.

Text: Ineke Mok, Willem-Pieter van Ledden, Karen Polak (Anne Frank House)

Polish adaptations: Piotr Trojanski and Katarzyna Tymczak (Polish-German Centre)

Production: Anne Frank House

Design: Karel Oosting **Country adaptations:** Matthias Kail

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7 Colourful Tolerance

On the first day of spring, hundreds of young people go out into the streets of Łódź. They want to express their disapproval of the offensive and insulting slogans that can be found in public places, on walls and fences. Anti-Racism Day was launched by UNESCO on 21 March, and now both young and old take to the streets with paint and brushes on an annual basis.



A group of young people on one of the main streets of Łódź.

Joanna Podolska, the initiator of the project, says: "Every year we cover the racist slogans with paint. Unfortunately, they come back, but I still believe that our action matters. You have to fight intolerance. It is our theme. The young people that participate say: 'I am ashamed that you can see these slogans in my city. I want to do something to stop it.' Marek Edelman, a survivor of the Warsaw ghetto and the Holocaust, lives in Łódź and supports this project. His encouragement means a lot to us."

meet students from other countries. Pupils from one school organized an exhibition in their local cemetery with old photos from Łódź, thus showing the colourful multicultural life in their town before World War II.

Joanna Podolska



Colourful Tolerance organizes concerts and other cultural activities. For example, students visit different churches and synagogues and

Assignments

1. Give another example of an action against intolerance. You can look on the Internet, for example, at: www.nigdywiecej.prh.pl, <http://or.org.pl/>, or www.tolerancja.pl.

2. Do you agree with Joanna Podolska that these kinds of actions are important? Explain your answer.



A group of young people painting over slogans.