

Foundation



Remembrance
Responsibility
Future



EVZ Dossier

EVZ meets Gen Z

Preserving Memory and Shaping the
Future Together with Young People

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1. EVZ meets Gen Z – Guiding Principles for International Youth Educational Work



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Melita Phachulia, Young Expert from Georgia

Being part of the MEET UP! Youth Conference „Power of Youth“ as a young expert, developing ideas for the conference and taking part in interesting activities was an exciting experience (...) Youth plays a critical role when it comes to changing the present and shaping the future. Youth should have space to implement their ideas. The problems we face today in different countries may be diverse, but also the same ones (...)

Melita – Young Expert from Georgia

Since its establishment, the EVZ Foundation has not just set up the Youth Conference in Georgia in 2022 already mentioned, but has also initiated numerous multilateral funding programs, cooperation projects as well as operational projects with young people and for the future bearers of the culture of remembrance with a total funding volume of more than 85 million Euro.

The Law on the Creation of the EVZ Foundation specifies international understanding, the remembrance of the threat posed by totalitarian systems and tyranny as well as youth exchange as the EVZ Foundation's mission which always guides its actions. The "Z" in the name of the Foundation (in German: Zukunft = future) stands for the responsibility to support future generations in becoming diversity-sensitive, historically aware young people who have awareness and stand up for diversity and democracy.

With this ambition in mind, the EVZ Foundation continues to develop its funding approaches for effective, leading-edge and at the same time sustainable projects for and with young people. At the same time, it is essential to constantly reflect on current social challenges and developments (e.g. the rise of antisemitism, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine or shrinking spaces of civil societies in Eastern Europe) and to orient funding approaches accordingly. This also applies to the changing needs of young target groups in the respective target countries.

The term "youth" is broadly defined here. Most EVZ-funded projects and programs are aimed at young people who are between the ages of 14 and 35. The target group we would like them to address includes primarily generation Z, i.e. young people born between 1997 and 2012. But Generation Y, i.e. millennials born in the 1980s and 1990s, are also still an important target group. In the future, however, the programs and projects will increasingly be aimed at Generation Alpha, which means young people born after 2010. For the EVZ Foundation this "generation change" means a constant updating of the existing offers and their adaptation to a new generation as well as their interests and learning habits.

Great Interest of Young People in a Critical Examination of National Socialist Injustice

Keeping an eye on the realities of young people's lives, current youth studies in particular, give us important pointers for our program work. The MEMO Youth Study initiated by the EVZ Foundation and carried out together with the Bielefeld University shows that young people in Germany are very interested in engaging in a critical examination of the National Socialist era. Young people (63%) see, more strongly even than the general population (53%), a need to carry on looking at National Socialist injustice. These and other results, such as how young people wish to learn, which ways of learning they prefer, or which media they use, give us important information for the further development of our young programs and our work for the culture of remembrance for the next generation(s). The concerns and messages of young people have to be incorporated into our work, e.g. in the **YOUNG PEOPLE remember international program** or in the cooperation project **War(s) in Europe. Shared Experiences, Shared Memories? – Germany, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina** with the Franco-German Youth Office.

Motivators: Future Topics & Participation

The priorities and most pressing issues for the future are very clear: For young people in Germany and Europe, environmental protection and climate change are top priorities (see 18th Shell Youth Study 2019¹). Young people are not just asking to have a greater say and bigger opportunities for participation in climate protection; they are also generally expressing this demand in all political and social areas (see MEMO Youth Study², Vodafone Youth Survey³ and the European Parliament Youth Survey⁴).

Guiding Principles & Questions

In order to develop participatory educational offers for generations Z, Y and potentially also for Alpha, which make them bearers of a viable democracy and a living and multi-perspective culture of remembrance, we ask ourselves the following questions: How can we enable greater and maximum participation in our youth projects? How can we motivate and enable young people to engage in their local communities and social contexts?

Activating approaches to this issue existed already in the **EUROPEANS FOR PEACE** program of the EVZ Foundation, whereby the Foundation funded numerous international youth encounters with innovative participation formats from 2005 to 2020. In the **MEET UP! Youth for Partnership** program, the EVZ Foundation is consistently pursuing this approach and is continuously expanding the Foundation's internal opportunities for youth participation. The Foundation's mission is to give young people a voice, to make them ambassadors for a living and multi-perspective culture of remembrance, and also to allow them to stand up for their values, concerns and interests. A special feature here is the participation of young people in the conception of activities, funding formats and even in the further development of the program. Participation of young people at all levels forms a core element of the program. The successfully implemented MEET UP! Youth Conference in Tbilisi 2022 and the micro projects prove the effectiveness of the EVZ Foundation's innovative participation approaches. The innovation moment was created by the EVZ Foundation with a group of Young Experts. We involved these Young Experts in the preparation of the Youth Conference from the start of the planning stage; we gave them space to freely shape the content and formats of the conference, and in this way, we made the conference THEIR conference. The result was a youth conference format which, in a crisis-ridden global political situation with numerous tensions, including some caused by war in the target countries and regions,

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- 1 Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert, Prof. Dr. Klaus Hurrelmann, Prof. Dr. Gudrun Quenzel, Kantar, 2019, 18th Shell Youth Study. Youth 2019. A generation speaks up, Hamburg.
 - 2 Michael Papendick, Jonas Rees, Maren Scholz & Andreas Zick, 2023, MEMO Germany – Youth Study 2023, Berlin, Bielefeld
 - 3 Vodafone Stiftung Deutschland gGmbH, 2022, Listen to us! How young people perceive politics in Germany, as well as the representation of their interests. A survey on behalf of the Vodafone Foundation, Düsseldorf
 - 4 European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication, European Parliament Youth Survey 2021

gave young people self-effectiveness and facilitated real participation. In the case of the micro projects, the Young Experts also formed the youth jury, which designed the call for applications and also selected the micro projects. The EVZ Foundation generates with these formats spaces for young people and provides them with resources so that they can freely design activities, projects and programs. This philosophy specially distinguishes the EVZ Foundation and gives the Foundation a pioneering role in participatory youth educational work.

The current pilot project **Change Makers** in cooperation with the German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation also adopts a highly participatory approach by involving young people as a focus group in the development and implementation of the youth encounters. With these formats, we make young people protagonists of their own learning and experiential biographies.

This Dossier highlights the EVZ Foundation's activities, experiences and approaches in youth exchange, learning at historical sites, transnational and diversity-oriented learning as well as educational memory work since 2005.

Chapters 2 a) and b) illustrate the long-standing effects of the EVZ Foundation, using the example of its **EUROPEANS FOR PEACE** funding program and the support of **Humanity in Action Fellowships**. With **YOUNG PEOPLE remember international** and **MEET UP! Youth for Partnership**, this Dossier also looks at two funding programs co-financed by the Federal Foreign Office which are now having a substantial impact on the **Education drives the future** cluster with their pilot funding lines and high-profile activities. The Foundation also supports young people in its other programs and projects. Examples of this include the projects presented from the **encounter program with historical eyewitnesses**, the program **local.history** and the **Education Agenda NS-Injustice**. Alongside funding programs, the EVZ Foundation has created or funded differentiated scholarships and competitions from its commencement. Examples of this include **Jugend debattiert international** (Youth Debates International) and the Rolf Joseph Award.

A guiding principle for the Foundation is that its youth educational work should be participatory, multi-perspective, highly communicative, self-effective, diversity-sensitive, innovative, questioning, and empathy-building (see **chapter 2c**).



2. Educational Memory Work, Supporting Commitment and Youth Exchange for the future Generation

a) Milestones: 23 Years of Projects for and with Young People

In the Law on the Creation of the EVZ Foundation, youth exchange is anchored as one of its central tasks. In the 23 years since its establishment, the EVZ Foundation has continuously developed this area and it now en-

compasses much more than the classic youth exchange: The EVZ Foundation initiates funding programs, develops operational projects and supports committed young people with the aim of implementing and primarily promoting international projects for educational memory work, commitment and youth exchange.

2004

Humanity in Action Fellowships

Funding of fellowships to strengthen young executives from Germany, Poland, Ukraine, and the U.S. and their civic engagement

2005

START Scholarships

Scholarship program to promote equal opportunities for students with a migration history. Cooperation project with the Hertie Foundation, the Deutsche Bank Foundation and the State of Berlin as cooperation partners

2005

Start of the **EUROPEANS FOR PEACE** program on the 60th anniversary of the end of the war. The first call for applications with the program title "Frieden für Europa – Europa für den Frieden" (eng.: Peace for Europe – Europe for Peace), from 2007 EUROPEANS FOR PEACE

What makes working with young people so special is their curiosity and their desire to experiment and play. Their own questions around identity and what it means to be an outsider.

*Branka Pavlovi, a workshop leader in the project "Who is Andrei?"
Young people from Romania and Germany reflect on their life situation*

2005

Funding program *Junge Freiwillige übernehmen Verantwortung* (eng.: *Young Volunteers Take Responsibility*)

Promotion of social commitment of young people, including for survivors of National Socialist persecution in Central Eastern and Eastern Europe as well as Israel, including a grant to the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste e.V.)

The superpower I bring to my voluntary service is an insatiable curiosity - give me something interesting to read and I'll morph into a real expert on the subject! My motivation for my work is, on the one hand, this same curiosity, which is especially strong when it comes to the subject of National Socialism. On the other hand, I want to contribute to international understanding and I believe it's important to have a change of perspective and learn about the Polish way of dealing with history.

Mai Ly, 18, who is doing her voluntary service in Lublin (Poland) at the Majdanek Memorial in 2022/2023.

2005

Jugend debattiert international (eng.: *Young Debates International*)

A competition for school students in Central Eastern and Eastern Europe who deal with human rights and their historical backgrounds. Cooperation project with the Goethe Institute, the Hertie Foundation and the Central Agency for Schools Abroad.

2005

Model International Criminal Court, Kreisau-Initiative e.V.

Young people simulate historical cases from the Nuremberg trials, the Yugoslavia or Rwanda tribunals in conjunction with workshops and training on rhetoric, historical backgrounds and human rights issues.

2014

MEET UP! German-Ukrainian Youth Encounters program on the occasion of the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Funding program financed by the EVZ Foundation, the Federal Foreign Office and the Robert Bosch Foundation.

It was quite easy to establish dialog between the adolescents from Germany and Ukraine. They were all very receptive and a friendship developed between people in the radio studio very quickly.

*Dimitrij Torizin, Project Manager djo – Deutsche Jugend in Europa Landesverband Sachsen (eng.: *German Youth in Europe State Association Saxony*), about the radio workshop in Dresden*

2018

First youth conference in the **EUROPEANS FOR PEACE** program with the theme “Right here, right now: Human Rights”

2020

YOUNG PEOPLE remember program. International funding program to strengthen culture of remembrance with funds from the EVZ Foundation and from the Federal Foreign Office starts.

2021

Launch: **EVZ Young**
Social media youth channels of the EVZ Foundation on Instagram and TikTok to get young people interested in the EVZ Foundation’s topics and to enter into an exchange with them

2021

Launch of **MEET UP! Youth for Partnership** as a continuation of MEET UP! German-Ukrainian Youth Encounters. A funding program financed by the EVZ Foundation and the Federal Foreign Office with a focus on the countries of the Eastern Partnership.

2022

Co-creative pilot projects in cooperation with the Franco-German Youth Office and the German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation.

b) Experiences & insights: How we Reach Young People

Approaches & Formats

The EVZ Foundation has many years of experience in funding and implementing future-oriented youth educational work: local history projects, international awards or history competitions, bilateral school exchanges, trilateral and multilateral youth encounters, digital formats of history and civic education, operational projects in the sphere of youth participation and even the encounters with historical eyewitnesses. Our topics range from National Socialist history in general to the Shoah and the Porajmos, to topics of contemporary human rights and democracy education. With this variety of formats and topics, the EVZ Foundation has developed over the past two decades to become an

important player in the field of international youth educational work on National Socialist history in Germany, Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Israel.

A Narrated Story: Historical Eyewitnesses in Youth Educational Work

Facilitating encounters with survivors of National Socialism has been an integral component of the EVZ Foundation’s memory work since its establishment, and this still continues. By bringing young people together with historical eyewitnesses, the Foundation promotes a living memory of the history of National Socialism. Personal encounters are a powerful component in history and civic educational work (in schools and in other areas) even though it is becoming increasingly difficult to bring about such encounters because of the advanced age of the historical eyewitnesses. The

direct exchange with historical eyewitnesses allows young people to learn about their life stories and at the same time develop empathy and tolerance. The prerequisite for this is the teaching accompaniment as well as historical contextualization of the discussion. Many of our projects actively involve young people in moderating the conversations, accompanying the historical eyewitnesses and creating videos and exhibitions for the purpose of documentation.



Project: Committed school students and teachers from Rövershagen travel to Israel and conduct interviews with survivors of National Socialist persecution there.

For many years, school students of the Europaschule Rövershagen (eng.: Rövershagen European School) conducted interviews with historical eyewitnesses with survivors and with descendants of perpetrators under the heading “Leben nach der Shoah” (eng.: Life after the Shoah). In this project, students in Israel interviewed three Shoah survivors from the Romanian town of Radautz and documented their experiences, encounters and the interviews in a video.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Förderverein VRG an der Rostocker Heide e.V.
- Countries: Germany
- Period: 2017
- Funding amount: EUR 4,168

Project: Encounters with historical eyewitnesses – school students from the Deutsche Schule Lissabon (German School of Lisbon) meet Esther Bejarano and actively engage in a critical examination of the mechanisms of racism.

The aim of the project was to examine National Socialism by means of the biographies of Esther Bejarano and Irene Bento. The project chose the artistic approach of circus pedagogy for this purpose. The CiNS project group showed excerpts from their piece “Circus. Freedom. Gleichschaltung” (policy of enforced coordination) - an artistic reading recounting the life of the persecuted Jewish artist Irene Bento. Afterward, Microphone Mafia introduced the school students to Ester Bejarano’s biography in the form of a RAP performance. The highlight of the project was a reading by Esther Bejarano.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Zirkusschule Seifenblase e.V.
- Countries: Germany, Portugal
- Period: 2020
- Funding amount: EUR 1,732

“Grabe, wo du stehst!“ (eng.: Dig Where You Stand!) – Local History Projects in Youth Educational Work

Local history projects in history and civic education combine places, biographies, source work as well as exploratory learning. With this approach, the EVZ Foundation pursues historical learning on site and demonstrates that the National Socialists committed crimes in many places, often small ones, in Germany and in Europe, far beyond the well-known sites of National Socialist extermination such as Auschwitz, Dachau or Buchenwald.

Local history approaches allow young people, who in many cases have only little (family) connection to it, to engage in a critical examination of the history of National Socialism and World War II on their doorstep, in their immediate vicinity. By visiting historical sites, researching places, people or historical events, they have the opportunity to deal with different historical narratives and to gain a personal, biographical, or local approach to history.

With its “local.history” program, the EVZ Foundation also pays special attention to local history initiatives and projects in Central Eastern Europe. The program has supported the creation of a living culture of remembrance on site with nearly 50 projects since 2020. Many of these projects integrate local or regional activities with young people and thereby achieve a very empathy-building and sustainable effect.

Project: The virtual representation of the genocide against the Roma in the Transcarpathian region

The project focused on the genocide against the Roma from the Transcarpathian region and discrimination against them, which continues to this day. The project result was the Project Porajmos – Virtual Museum with four thematic focal points and video guides, a virtual interactive map with 5 key sites of Roma persecution and corresponding audio guides. The project was supplemented by a summer school where young people engaged in a critical examination of the history of the Roma and the Porajmos in Transcarpathia.

This summer school took place in the summer 2022. It was attended by 25 young people from Transcarpathia, Ukrainian internally displaced people and young Roma. For four days, also against the background of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, the young people dealt with the situation and living conditions of the Roma in the region in the interwar period, the Porajmos as well as the remembrance of this genocide.



Project Porajmos – Porajmos in Transcarpathia



PROFILE

- Sponsor: KAPL VESTED NGO
- Country: Ukraine
- Period: 2021 to 2022
- Funding amount: EUR 45,000

Project: Research and short film on the Yugoslavian prisoners of war at Stalag III A in Luckenwalde.

Luckenwalde in Brandenburg was the location of one of the largest main camps for prisoners of war during World War II. This project focused on the history of the Yugoslavian prisoners of war at the main camp “Stalag III A” which is now remembered only by the cemetery that still exists. During the project, participants from Germany and Serbia researched on the history of the camp. This was followed by a youth encounter, during which young people from Germany and Serbia engaged in a critical examination of the history of the camp and the Yugoslav prisoners of war in workshops and a work assignment at the POW cemetery. This resulted in a short film, through which relatives and historical eye-witnesses are being sought in today’s successor states of Yugoslavia.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Inwole e.V.
- Country: Germany
- Period: 2021 to 2022
- Funding amount: EUR 11,500



Film (German) on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppT7N6x2QgY

Competitions: Interest Meets Motivation

The EVZ Foundation is supporting various competitions with the aim of motivating school students to engage with historical or social issues beyond the classroom. With the idea of competition, the Foundation encourages school students to discover and develop their interests and talents individually by allowing them to try things out and giving them the opportunity to (re)discover topics. In this way, competitions foster not just training for technical skills but also the personal and social development of young people; they also strengthen their commitment to civil society.

Jugend debattiert international (eng.: Youth Debates International): Argumentative & Multi-perspective History

“Jugend debattiert international” is a German-language competition for young people from Central and Eastern Europe, which the EVZ Foundation funded between 2005 and 2019. The Foundation funds this competition with the aim of encouraging and motivating young people to engage in a critical examination of human rights and their history by the method of debate. The target group consists mainly of school students from high schools.

Gréta Szabó, winner of the 2012 international final, describes her experience in the competition like this: *“It was great for me to meet young people from so many countries. Also, I think that the ability to debate will be very useful to me throughout the rest of my life.”*



PROFILE

- Cooperation project with the Goethe Institute, the Hertie Foundation and the Central Agency for Schools Abroad
- Countries: Central and Eastern Europe
- Period: 2005 to 2019
- Funding amount: EUR 77,935 (2019)



Final Jugend debattiert international 2017 in Tallinn: youtu.be/GjReU-a5Bqo

Rolf Joseph Award: Jewish Life & Project Learning

The Rolf Joseph Award is an annual history competition for 8th through 11th grade school students. The award complements the EVZ Foundation’s support for youth educational projects because it appeals to a younger target group. In the competition, school students are invited to submit their projects on the topic of Judaism in the past and present that contribute to the development of a more open and tolerant society.

In 2022, the jury selected three winners from over 50 submissions. The first place went to the 11th grade of the Landfermann-Gymnasium from Duisburg with their submission “Als ich in meiner Heimat zum Fremden wurde” (eng.: When I became a stranger in my homeland). In this submission, the school class describes the life of Leon Jessel who experienced his youth as a Jew persecuted by the National Socialists in Germany and fled to England as a young man.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Joseph-Gruppe e.V.
- Countries: Germany
- Period: 2021 to 2024
- Funding amount: EUR 45,000

Bilateral Youth Exchange: Culture of Remembrance & Human Rights

The EVZ Foundation funded international project work in school and extracurricular partnerships from Germany, Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, as well as Israel between 2005 and 2020 in the EUROPEANS FOR PEACE funding program. One focus was the promotion of bilateral youth and school student encounters, in particular on topics of the culture of remembrance in connection with human rights. In addition to intensive project work, the nature of the encounters in these bilateral formats is especially noteworthy because they often consisted of reciprocal encounters in both countries.

Project: HOME – Wo liegt mein Zuhause? (eng.: Where is my home?). A German-Israeli youth encounter creates a photo exhibition on the topic of home, origin and identity.

These young people from Germany and Israel first dealt with their origins in a youth encounter in each of the two countries and tried to work out what “home” really means to them. Based on their findings, they created photos in a creative process that clarified and symbolized what home or homeland mean to them. Together, the young people created an exhibition as well as an accompanying catalog. The exhibition was first shown at the Jewish Museum of Franconia in Fürth in 2019 and inspired many people to think about what home and homeland mean and how one’s own identity is influenced by these factors.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Dürer Gymnasium Nuremberg
- Countries: Germany, Israel
- Period: 2018 to 2020
- Funding amount: EUR 22,400

Project: “Wer gehört zu uns?” (eng.: Who belongs to us?). Young people from Germany and Poland engaged in a critical examination of various identity constructions, with a focus on Sinti and Roma.

In this project, the participants looked at the situation of minorities in both countries. In the process, they researched historical examples of the persecution and

exclusion of Sinti and Roma, as well as other marginalized groups, discussed counter strategies and conducted interviews. The result is a film entitled “Ich möchte schon gern Roma bleiben” (eng.: I’d like to stay Roma), which received the School Student Peace Prize of the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture in 2021.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Carl-Friedrich-Gauß-Schule
- Countries: Germany, Poland
- Period: 2019
- Funding amount: EUR 15,360

Trilateral Youth Exchange: Diversity-oriented Learning & Transnational Communities

The EVZ Foundation funds trilateral youth encounters to strengthen transnational and diversity-oriented learning. In view of the sometimes difficult and conflict-ridden political and social situations in the target countries and regions, the Foundation also pursues another goal with trilateral youth exchanges: With young people from three countries and correspondingly small groups, these projects provide a framework for participants to meet in challenging country set ups or to deal with complex historical or political constellations. Moreover, with these projects the EVZ Foundation makes a substantial contribution to enabling civil societies to strengthen, stabilize or reestablish their transnational structures, especially between countries that are in conflict.

In the EUROPEANS FOR PEACE program, the EVZ Foundation has primarily funded trilateral formats between Germany, Israel and Central Eastern Europe.

Project: “Warum wir gingen ...” (eng.: Why we left. ..) Adolescents from Germany, Poland and Israel deal with the topic of flight under National Socialism and today.

Participants in this project examined the various causes of flight in history and in the present time and dealt with experiences of exclusion and persecution as well as various dimensions of discrimination. This was done

on the basis of interviews with historical eyewitnesses in Israel who had to leave their homeland during the National Socialist era. The participants also interviewed refugees from crisis areas who sought refuge in Germany and Europe.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Building Bridges e.V.
- Countries: Germany, Israel, Poland
- Period: 2017 to 2018
- Funding amount: EUR 30,280

Also, the “MEET UP! German-Ukrainian Youth Encounters” program, launched in 2014, took a trilateral approach by supporting German-Ukrainian-Russian youth encounters. In view of the annexation of Crimea by Russia in breach of international law and the associated tensions in Russian-Ukrainian relations, these trilateral encounters needed to overcome special challenges right from the start – beginning with the decision on the location of the encounter, to the planning of the program, to the methods. At the same time, German-Ukrainian-Russian youth encounters provided an opportunity to meet through joint project work at a time when family or professional contacts were breaking up and border crossings were becoming increasingly difficult. The organizations involved in the project also learned to (re)establish a cooperative and trusting relationship with the partners. Successful implementation required integrative conceptual approaches as well as very good preparation and communication between all the project partners.

The EVZ Foundation funded 221 projects in the “MEET UP! German-Ukrainian-Russian Encounters” program, including 27 German-Ukrainian-Russian youth encounters between 2015 and 2020.

Project: Voices – polyphony of youth

Giving a voice to young people from Germany, Ukraine and Russia – this was the purpose of the project “Voices – polyphony of youth” initiated by MitOst Hamburg e.V.

Having a voice and creating a common whole in cooperation with others are just as important experiences in choral work as they are in a vibrant and confident democracy. The encounters in Hamburg and in the Ukrainian Carpathians explored the question of what the participants would speak up for and support. After holding a joint rehearsal process, they gave concerts at the Hamburg Central Station and the Altona Museum.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: MitOst Hamburg – Verein für Sprach-, Kultur- und Jugendaustausch in Europa e.V. (Association for Language, Culture and Youth Exchange in Europe)
- Countries: Germany, Russia, Ukraine
- Period: 2016
- Funding amount: EUR 36,096

Multilateral Youth Exchange: European Space of Remembrance

On account of transnational challenges, multilateral youth exchanges – youth encounters with participants from at least four countries – are playing an increasingly important role in the EVZ Foundation’s funding commitment. The need for this arises from the current political and social situation in our target countries, e.g. with the strengthening of nationalism and populism and the associated need to strengthen youth participation for defensible democracies. Furthermore, a multi-perspective view of history is needed because we live in a space of remembrance. With its commitment to multilateral encounters, the EVZ Foundation creates a space in which participants from a diverse and heterogeneous group engage in a critical examination of a topic across language barriers – from multiple perspectives and taking into account the relevant realities of life. The commitment has proven to be worthwhile: The impact of multinational exchanges and encounters is multiplied when the project consists of several youth encounters in various countries.

Project: “MEET UP! DIY for the Climate – a German-Belarusian-Moldovan-Ukrainian Encounter” was a multilateral project with a focus on youth participation and sustainability. The project addressed climate-change issues through urban space concepts and encouraged young people to establish open spaces and green spaces with participatory approaches such as urban gardening. The project facilitated a transnational exchange of experiences and interaction between 24 young experts and activists from the spheres of urban design and urban planning from Germany, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Belarus.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: NGO Eco Misto Chernigiv
- Countries: Belarus, Germany, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine
- Period: 2022
- Funding amount: EUR 34,100



This video is one of the results of the project:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFPzIzQIW5k&t=2s

You can find the guidebook here:
<https://plato.lviv.ua/publikaciyi/>

Participation – Networking – Qualification: Youth Conferences of the EVZ Foundation

Between 2018 and 2020, we initiated three youth conferences in the EUROPEANS FOR PEACE program. Its goals were to motivate, strengthen and support young people in their participation in society with an awareness of history. The conferences linked the topics of youth participation and human rights in terms of content and practice; 65 young people from all over Europe took part in each conference, exchanged ideas, acquired further skills and discussed with experts from practice and politics. The focus was on questions relating to the life-world references of the young participants, which are decisive for political participation and civic engagement. On their own initiative, the participants discussed the rights of young people in the various European countries, learned about mechanisms and strategies of civil engagement and on this basis they developed project ideas; they were able to win micro grants in a project-pitching session for the implementation of these projects.



PROFILE EUROPEANS FOR PEACE YOUTH CONFERENCE

- Organizers: EVZ Foundation in cooperation with the wannseeFORUM Foundation
- Countries: Germany, Europe, Israel
- Period: 2018 to 2020



[Video EFP Youth Conference 2019](#)



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MEET UP! Youth Conference “Power of Youth” in Tbilisi, Georgian (2022)

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to take part in the “Power of Youth” Conference. I am thrilled with the valuable workshops, the great participants and the excellent organization. I felt that I was in good hands. It was great to meet all these talented people, listen and express my opinion, both during the “official part” and also in small conversations. (...) It was a great opportunity to open minds and to meet like-minded people. I feel the power!

Participant in the MEET UP! Youth Conference 2022

In the “MEET UP! Youth for Partnership” program, the EVZ Foundation consistently continued the participatory approach in the context of the MEET UP! Youth Conference 2022 in Tbilisi (Georgia). The aim was not just to talk about youth participation and the possibilities of participation at the Conference with young people, but also to involve young people directly in the conception, planning and implementation of the Conference. For this purpose, an international group of young people came together in the spring of 2022 – the Young Experts. Together they worked out the theme of the Conference with their own motto: Power of Youth. Furthermore, they were involved in the planning of the program and implementation of individual parts of the program and made a decisive contribution to the success of the Youth Conference. Through this participatory approach, the Young Experts designed the conference to be close to real life and in particular according to the diverse needs of young people in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and Germany.



PROFILE

MEET UP! YOUTH CONFERENCE

- Organizers: EVZ Foundation together with Young Experts
- Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Germany, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine
- Period: 2022

International Youth Exchange: Digital, Interactive & Creative

Innovative, contemporary and lifeworld-related approaches as well as educational and historically sound digital applications are an integral part of the EVZ's funding commitment, including the "YOUNG PEOPLE remember" funding line. For many young people today, learning, remembering and discussing takes place mainly in the digital space. Accordingly, digital approaches, formats and social media channels give young people an opportunity to actively shape the culture of remembrance there as well. The importance of digital approaches for historical-political education and international youth educational work has increased substantially in recent years. The Covid-19 pandemic has been an additional catalyst. Consequently, in the "YOUNG PEOPLE remember" program, the EVZ Foundation has been specifically funding projects since 2020 which facilitate digital learning in the field of historical-political education by the development of innovative digital formats and applications. Examples include blended learning concepts, app prototypes, serious games, or graphic novels. Another focus from 2023 will be on the campaigning approach. Approaches in which creators use traditional PR, social media or online tools to publish content for specific target groups, engage in an exchange with their communities and motivate them to become active themselves.

Project: Digital lines of life and death

The German-Czech project "Digital lines of life and death" worked on a topic which is less present in the European culture of remembrance in a digital, graphically appealing, and target group-oriented manner: the genocide against the European Sinti and Roma. Using the instrument of the hybrid graphic novel, the project traced the fates of Otto Rosenberg and Emilie Danielová, presented multimedia supplementary materials referring to current forms of social exclusion and made them usable for international youth encounters and memorial site visits. The aim of the project was to sensitize young people in particular to the history of Sinti and Roma and to encourage them to confront prejudices and stereotypes relating to Sinti and Roma.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: European Academy Berlin
- Countries: Germany, Czech Republic
- Period: 2020 to 2022
- Funding amount: EUR 89,740

Digital Lines

www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmxNOVtmp3m-0Cdji061q92oPRBFsXilUx

Project: Train to Sachsenhausen

The "Train to Sachsenhausen" project looks at the student protests in 1939 in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as their consequences. The students of the Protectorate protested in November 1939 against the closure of Czech-language universities ordered by the National Socialist regime. The students were arrested en masse during the protests, deported to the German Reich, made to carry out forced labor and interned in concentration camps. One of them was the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin.

In the project, a serious game was developed that traces these events on the basis of historical documents and reports from historical eyewitnesses. For example, players can meet the medical student Antonín Neděla and learn more about the imprisonment of students and their deportation to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. In the digital museum, which is also part of the app, there is also a historical background on the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the Sonderaktion Prag (eng.: Special Action Prague) or even the student Jan Opletal.



PROFILE

- Sponsor: Živá paměť o.p.s.
- Countries: Germany, Czech Republic
- Period: 2021 to 2022
- Funding amount: EUR 58,708

Train To Sachsenhausen

c) Approaches to Future-oriented Educational Work

With its youth educational work, the EVZ Foundation is developing innovative formats and initiates operational projects to meet the challenges in the field effectively and in a way that is appropriate for the respective target group. We not only address the specifics of our partner countries, but act in accordance with the interests, learning habits as well as needs of young people.

The EVZ Foundation's youth educational work is ...

participatory

Creating and implementing projects and activities together *with* young people instead of doing them for young people – that's the approach of the EVZ Foundation's youth participation strategy also in the current multinational "MEET UP! Youth for Partnership" program. Our goal is to empower young people to develop their own ideas, make their voices heard and to advocate for their concerns. At the same time, with its consistent youth participation strategy, the Foundation pursues the goal of setting up projects and further developing programs which are close to young people's lives and that genuinely reflect and address their needs.

In the "MEET UP!" program, the EVZ Foundation implements youth participation at various levels. Young people ...

- acted as Young Experts in the conception, planning and implementation of youth conferences, e.g. the MEET UP! Youth Conference 2022 in Tbilisi (Georgia);
- are jury members in the selection of micro projects;

- are given the opportunity to implement their project ideas with a micro grant;
- form a focus group to further develop the "MEET UP!" program for its continuation from 2024.

I believe that the format of a youth jury for micro projects is an effective and transparent formula to promote young people's ideas and support them to become reality.

Gheorge Chiriac, jury member in 2023 from the Republic of Moldova

multi-perspective

With the "YOUNG PEOPLE remember" program, the EVZ Foundation funds encounters and projects, especially at historical sites, which create an inclusive, multi-perspective, fact-based, and transnational remembrance of World War II and the Holocaust. In this way, the Foundation contributes substantially to the maintenance of a united, value-based Europe with international youth educational work which strengthens exchange and understanding of divergent perspectives of culture of remembrance and narratives from the East and West and fruitfully discusses gaps, ruptures and conflicts as the basis for a common European culture of remembrance.

We are convinced: Innovative history and civic education requires a multi-perspective approach. In this way, interconnections at the temporal, geographical and player levels can be rendered visible – a comprehensive picture of historical events can emerge. In this process, it is important in the educational memory work to differentiate: A undoubted reconstruction and communication of

historical facts is necessary and indispensable. At the same time, the multi-perspective view of historical events allows for different interpretations that should be discussed, juxtaposed and reflected.



© Tobias Bruns

Youth encounter in the project “Keep the memory alive!” in Israel 2022

In view of the massive increase in reinterpretations of historical facts and the misuse of historical narratives, including the context of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, this approach is now more important than ever. For this reason, the EVZ Foundation carries out history and civic educational work that aims to impart factual knowledge whilst including the interconnectedness of European history in a multidimensional and multi-perspective way.



With the aim of directly reaching and interacting with the Generations Y, Z and Alpha directly, i.e. the primary target groups of the EVZ Foundation’s youth programs and projects, and placing content and messages in a

targeted manner, the EVZ Foundation launched the youth channel EVZ Young (@evzyoung) on Instagram and TikTok in 2021. A key feature of the channel is that it reaches young people across Europe, bringing them into contact with each other and encouraging them to exchange ideas about the Foundation’s topics.

Flyers, newsletters, mailings – these formats can no longer reach most young people today. Newspapers are just as unpopular with generations Z and Alpha as other traditional media, even though at the same time newspapers enjoy the same degree of trust, according to the Shell Youth Study⁵. Young people between the ages of 16 and 30 draw most of their information and knowledge from social media such as Instagram or TikTok and use them for their own civic engagement, according to the bitkom study⁶ which was published in February 2023.

Against the backdrop of the findings of this study, the youth channels serve to disseminate project results, calls for applications and reports about the Foundation’s events. EVZ Young also specifically involves young people, focuses on them as well as their concerns, or develops campaigns together with them. This includes, for example, the campaign “#tsuzamen – Young Perspectives on Jewish Life” which ran successfully on Instagram and TikTok in 2021 to mark the theme year “1700 years of Jewish life in Germany”. In addition to project presentations – mostly carried out by young people themselves – facts about the Porajmos or NS “euthanasia”, for example, are presented in short video clips on TikTok in explanatory pieces on the Education Agenda NS-Injustice.



evz young



TikTok

5 Prof. Dr. Mathias Albert, Prof. Dr. Klaus Hurrelmann, Prof. Dr. Gudrun Quenzel, Kantar, 2019, 18. Shell Jugendstudie. Jugend 2019. Eine Generation meldet sich zu Wort, Hamburg

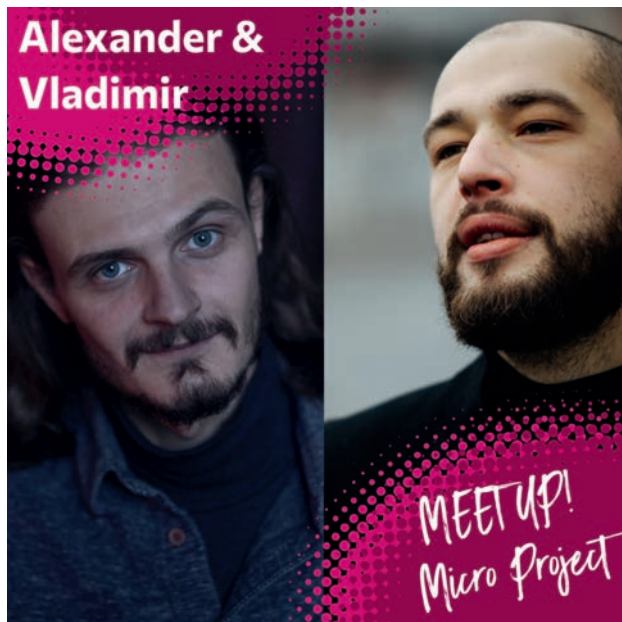
6 Bitkom e.V., 2023, How Germans Use Social Media, Berlin



self-effective

What inspired us was the fact that we could conduct interviews. We haven't worked with this format before. It opened up the possibility for us to tell small, personal and very multifaceted stories. Stories that become history.

Alexander and Vladimir from the micro project "About our Cities – War Edition", in which they interviewed people from Kharkiv during the war in 2022.



©Alexander Kochegura, Viktor Yermolenko

Alexander and Vladimir from the project "About our Cities – War Edition"

"About our Cities – War Edition" was one of 32 MEET UP! micro projects implemented in 2022 by young people from Germany and the countries of the Eastern Partnership. In contrast to the "classic" funding of project sponsors, the EVZ Foundation supports young people directly with micro grants. With these small budgets, they can try their hand at project planning and implementation for the first time, take individual responsibility and design content for their peer group. With this format, the EVZ Foundation specifically focuses on young people, their creativity and their social "entrepreneurship". Through its individual support, the Foundation is thus expanding its importance as a supporter of a young, diverse and committed transnational civil society.

The funding format of the micro projects was developed by young people from the MEET UP! network in a participatory manner and in cooperation with the EVZ Foundation. With the micro projects, the EVZ Foundation empowers young people to implement their own small projects in their local communities or across borders, acquiring qualifications for project management or for dealing with social media.

In 2022, special focus was placed on topics such as the war in Ukraine, social entrepreneurship or projects with a historical connection. The "MEET UP!" program will continue to fund the projects in 2023. The MEET UP! youth jury selected the best projects from nearly 50 applications and proposed them to the EVZ Foundation for funding.

[Link to Video](#)



diversity-sensitive

Inclusive youth educational work is an essential criterion for project funding by the EVZ Foundation. The EUROPEANS FOR PEACE program in particular has supported numerous projects under the theme “Celebrate Diversity.”

“1700 years of Jewish life in Germany”: For the anniversary in 2021, the EVZ Foundation initiated and operationally implemented various projects under the heading #tsuzamen – Young Perspectives on Jewish Life. These projects highlighted the diversity of Jewish life in Germany today. The focus was on a social media campaign on Instagram and TikTok that was developed together with young communicators. It has brought young people closer to Jewish life in Germany from the perspective of Jewish and non-Jewish young people in a diversity-sensitive, real-world and multi-perspective manner. In addition to posts about Jewish recipes or explanatory videos, posts about well-known Jewish characters from movies and television have also achieved a broad reach.



[evz young at Instagram: #tsuzamen](#)

Furthermore, in 2021 the EVZ Foundation offered a special award in the School Newspaper Contest of the German Federal States (German: Schülerzeitungswettbewerb der Länder), which is organized jointly by Jugendpresse Deutschland e.V. and the States of the Federal Republic of Germany. With the award, the EVZ Foundation was able to motivate school students to deal with present-day Judaism in Germany in all its di-

versity and many facets via the medium of journalism. The editorial titled *Hummelnews* created by secondary high school students of the Hummelsteiner Weg Secondary School in Nuremberg won the first prize. With a survey at the school and a contribution on customs and holidays in Judaism, the *Hummelnews* editorial team took a multi-faceted look at the topic of Jewish life in Germany and presented the content in a way that was oriented to young people. Through an interview with Levi Israel Ufferfilge, the editorial team introduced his personal perspective on religiosity and on antisemitism, presenting Jewish life in a realistic way for our young target audience.



innovative

In 2022 the EVZ Foundation initiated two new strategic partnerships in order to shape innovative transnational educational memory work for generations Z and Alpha. To this end, the Foundation set up pilot projects in co-creative processes whilst simultaneously establishing conceptual and operational cooperation with its partner organizations.

The beginning of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine has also led to a turning point in educational memory work. While for years the focus was on peace-education topics, since 2022 it has become necessary to talk about wars, war experiences and memories. This requires methods of diversity-oriented and transnational learning. This is where the latest cooperation project begins. Together with stakeholders and experts, the EVZ Foundation as well as the Franco-German Youth Office have developed a Franco-German-Bosnian pilot project entitled “War(s) in Europe. Shared

Experiences, Shared Memories? – Germany, France, Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The memory of the wars of the 20th and 21st centuries in Europe, on a biographical, collective and also European level, forms a content bracket: How do the memories and experiences of World War II, the Yugoslav wars and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine determine social and political coexistence in Europe? How can a common European memory be shaped that reflects the different perspectives? The participants will seek answers to these questions in an analog and digital methods seminar for disseminators and an international youth encounter that will take place in 2023. In this process, experts will develop, modify and publish innovative methods of international youth educational work for dealing with the topic of war in the past and present in the context of European cultures of remembrance.

The German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation is a partner in the second current co-creative project. In “Change Makers – Im Dialog Veränderung gestalten” (eng.: Making Change with Dialogue), youth participation is central from the start. Together with a focus group of young Israelis and Germans, the two foundations are developing a project on the issues of security, climate change and democracy in the context of German-Israeli relations. This makes it the first project to address these three issues in a transdisciplinary way and in the context of German-Israeli relations, thereby empowering young people from both countries to work for social change. One youth encounter in Germany and one in Israel is planned for 2023 in which the participants will address current challenges in workshops and trips, look at local and international political approaches and get to know civil society initiatives. At the same time, participants will be trained in a “Policy Lab” to develop and implement their own ideas. They can win micro grants in order to implement their micro projects.



The TIME BUSTERS project by the Munich Kammer-spiele, funded within the context of the Education Agenda NS-Injustice, shows in an impressive way for young people to learn to deal with emotions through theater educational approaches and what learning about National Socialist history could look like when young participants’ family biographies are progressively less interwoven with the National Socialist era. The result was a play developed together with young people which then premiered in February 2023.

These examples show how historical-political education can continually evolve in light of current societal challenges to activate young people. Informal education in particular provides an opportunity outside the classroom and beyond the curriculum to inspire young people with creative approaches and methods for history and a culture of remembrance, and to motivate them to engage in a critical examination of history. Interviews with historical eyewitnesses served as a special approach to emotional learning for a long time. The EVZ Foundation is increasingly using approaches involving theater, visual arts, and film combined with methods of biographical and exploratory learning. In this way, young people in particular can approach National Socialist history through their own family history, with visual content or creatively.



© Gabriela Neeb

Projekt TIME BUSTERS

[Link to the interview](#)

„Three Questions for ... Martín Valdés-Stauber“
[TIME BUSTERS | muenchner-kammerspiele.de](https://www.muenchner-kammerspiele.de)



questioning

Visiting memorial sites, interviewing historical eyewitnesses whilst they are still alive, reading books by people from the time, watching films and documentaries about it – essential anything that makes it impossible to forget.

For 83% of the young people surveyed, the National Socialist era and World War II are key historical events. Young adults (63%) deal with the National Socialist era more intensively than respondents from the general population (53%). In addition to school, the internet, documentaries and feature films play an important role as sources and places for learning about history. In this process, young people want to learn about the history of National Socialism by visits to historical places, visual approaches, interactive approaches, references to the present and approaches that are easily accessible.

These are just some of the findings of the MEMO Youth Study, initially published in 2023, carried out by the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence (IKG) at Bielefeld University and funded by the EVZ Foundation. The study, which surveyed 3,485 young people in Germany, shows that 16 to 25-year-olds are very interested in the history of National Socialism, and that young people are motivated to obtain additional information from the media, school or the internet but that their knowledge is somewhat incomplete.

The results of the MEMO studies have generated a great deal of public interest. These results serve the EVZ Foundation in its youth programs and projects as a guide for future program development for history and civic education: target-group-oriented, fact-based and participatory.



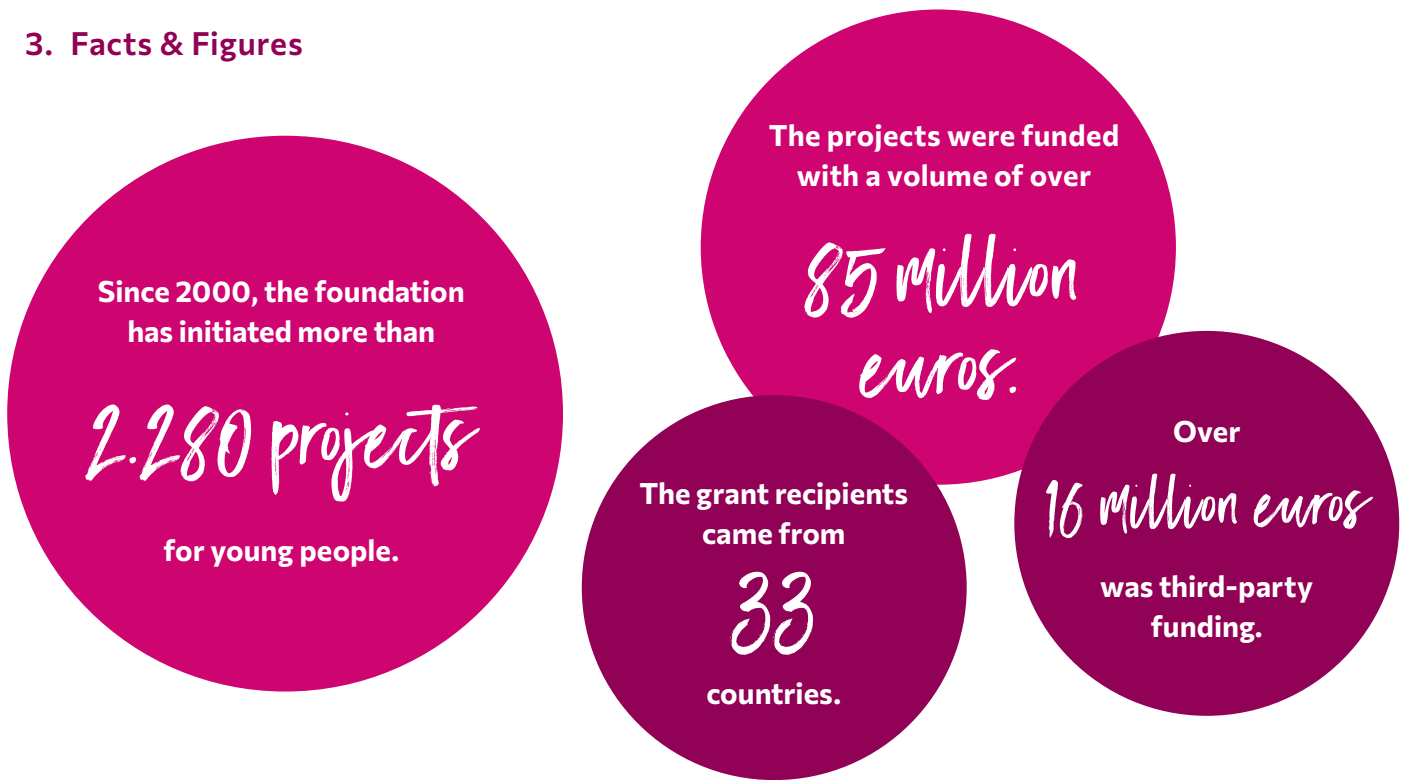
www.stiftung-evz.de/memo-jugend

d) Outlook

The EVZ Foundation's youth programs and projects have become increasingly participatory, multilateral, digital, and diverse in recent years. We have broadened the geographical focus and also diversified the range of topics. For the EVZ Foundation, this means always maintaining a balance between the Foundation's mission and innovation. After three years of the pandemic, social challenges across Europe – the rise of antisemitism and nationalism, the increasingly repressive political situation in Belarus and Russia, and especially the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine – the EVZ Foundation's youth educational work faces major challenges. In terms of its commitment, this means acting with foresight, supporting the sponsors in the redirection and implementation of their work, and accompanying them closely. Because one thing is clear: The demand of young people for international youth encounters, opportunities for participation and for transnational diversity-oriented learning is undiminished – and so are the effects.

Future-oriented EVZ projects are therefore characterized by their multilateral nature and their interwoven historical approaches. They create spaces and give impetus to stem the disintegration of the memory consensus and to stand up for the European idea and a value-based culture of remembrance. The Foundation for this is the direct participation of young people since their historically aware participation and empowerment are the most vital building blocks for a living democracy.

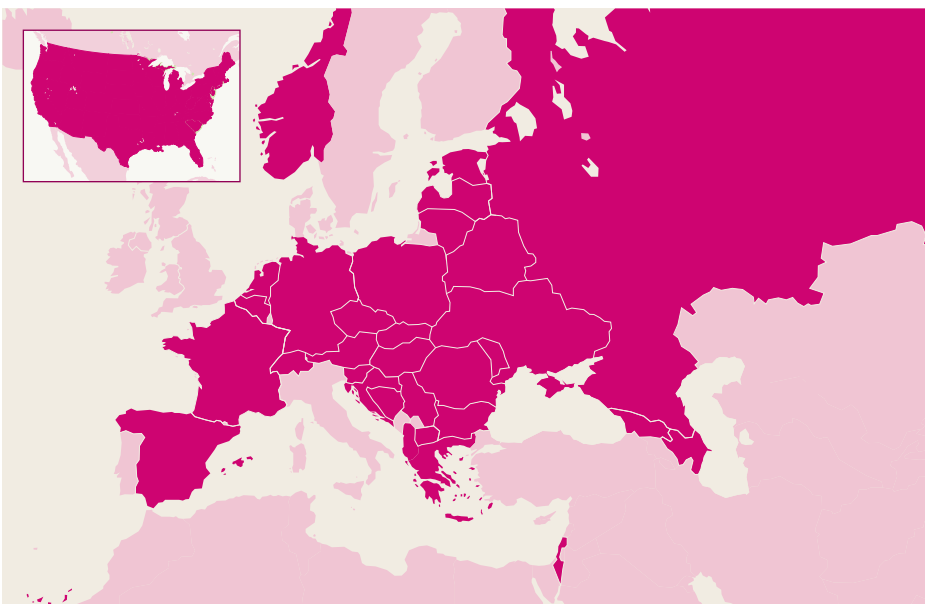
3. Facts & Figures



Since 2000, the EVZ Foundation has initiated and implemented **126 operational projects** amounting to **4.9 million Euros**: Youth conferences, project advisory seminars, expert conferences and days, networking meetings, student and youth competitions, award ceremonies, publications or the development of pedagogical materials.

The number of youth projects funded since 2000 by country – country of grant recipient

Germany	1.483	Netherlands	5
Ukraine	262	North Macedonia	5
Russia	122	Switzerland	4
Belarus	113	USA	4
Poland	99	France	3
Israel	42	Moldova	3
Czech Republic	33	Norway	3
Hungary	14	Belgium	2
Serbia	11	Estonia	2
Romania	11	Greece	2
Austria	11	Latvia	2
Slovakia	10	Spain	2
Bosnia-Herzegovina	7	Albania	1
Georgia	7	Azerbaijan	1
Lithuania	7	Bulgaria	1
Croatia	6	Kyrgyzstan	1
		Slovenia	1



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5. Additional Links

The EVZ Foundation's Info and Media library:

www.stiftung-evz.de/en/service/info-and-media-library/

MEMO Youth Study: www.stiftung-evz.de/en/what-we-support/fields-of-activity-and-cluster/education-for-living-memory/memo-youth-study/

Learning from History Magazine, "Jugend erinnert – Transnationale Erinnerungskulturen gestalten" (Young People remember – shaping transnational cultures of remembrance): Jugend erinnert – Transnationale Erinnerungskulturen gestalten | lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de

Do it yourself for the Climate Guidebook (in Ukrainian language): [Публікації: Plato](#)

Stories that move – Toolbox against Discrimination: [Home – Stories That Move](#)

Uprooted. (Hi)Stories of Stolen Children During World War II: [Uprooted. __Hi_stories_of_stolen_children_Kreisau-Initiative.pdf](#)

Onboarding Memories. Digital memory spaces relating to the issue of NS forced labor: [Onboarding Memories Project Room | Onboarding Memories | Digital Spaces](#)

Untold Stories – Forgotten Places: [Untold Stories | Places of Memory - Humanity in Action](#)

Pädagogische Spaziergänge in der kultur- und diversitätsorientierten Lehrer:innenbildung. Anregungen und Zukunftsvisionen aus dem deutsch-georgischen Dialog (Educational walks in culture- and diversity-focused teacher training. Suggestions and visions for the future from the German-Georgian dialog): epub.ub.uni-muenchen.de/93935/1/93935.pdf

The pictures come from the photo archive of the EVZ Foundation. The EVZ Foundation thanks everyone involved persons as well as the project partners for their commitment!

The cover photo shows the participants of the MEET UP! Youth Conference "Power of Youth", which took place in Tbilisi, Georgia from September 21 to 25, 2022.

If you would like to learn more about the activities of the EVZ Foundation, its commitment to Survivors of National Socialist Persecution and its funded projects, please visit our website or contact us directly: kommunikation@stiftung-evz.de. Our monthly newsletter also keeps you updated about the latest news from the Foundation and our projects.

Would you rather join the discussion? We would like to encourage you to actively take part in social debates and to bring up new topics in our social media channels. Visit us on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok.

www.stiftung-evz.de

   @evzfoundation
  @evzyoung