



## CREDITS

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About the cover: opening night of Centropa's Lost Sephardic World exhibition, held in the Marko Cepenkov Cultural Center in the North Macedonian city of Prilep. Photograph by Boris Kaeski.

As with all our exhibitions, students in Prilep researched Centropa stories and images, then prepared their presentations so that on opening night they could guide other students and parents. No Jew has lived in Prilep since 1943, and this exhibition, comprised of stories and images from our Balkan database, is giving students in the western Balkans access to their region's Sephardic Jewish heritage. Thanks to our partner, the Holocaust Fund of the Jews from Macedonia, and our local coordinator, Daniela Sterjova.

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# Highlights in 2018



6 traveling exhibitions  
seen in 42 venues  
in 7 countries



1 new film  
narrated by a  
17-year-old Israeli  
soccer player in  
Germany



18 seminars  
in 9 countries  
for 491 teachers





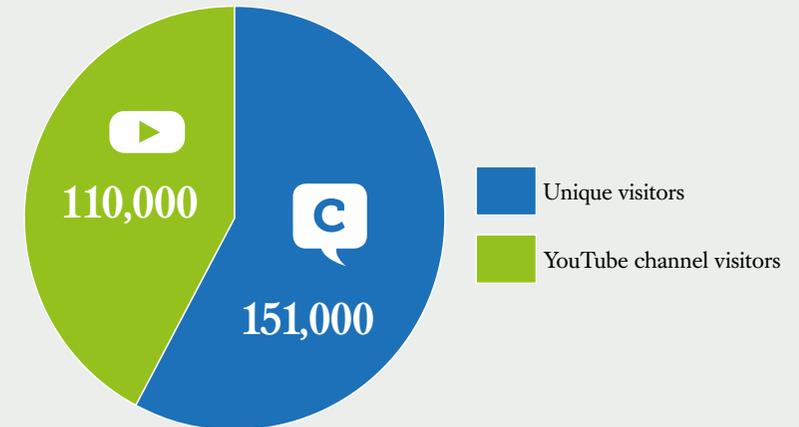
2 new books  
one in German,  
the other in English



1 international  
Summer Academy  
for 82 educators from  
19 countries



18 Café Centropa  
events  
in Vienna and Budapest  
for 110 Holocaust  
survivors



151,000 unique visitors  
came to our Centropa websites with 110,000  
more visiting our YouTube channel

## When cemeteries run out of Jews, communities run out of stories

It was the summer of 1987 and I was spending a month visiting Jewish communities in northern Romania, meeting the few Jews who still lived there, photographing them, their synagogues, and their cemeteries, all while gathering material for what would become my first book, *Out of the Shadows*, which was still four years from completion.

One afternoon in the town of Dorohoi, I stepped into the community's cemetery, most of which was laid out in neat, well-tended rows under enormous shade trees. Like most Jewish graveyards in this part of the world, it had the usual story to tell: the oldest graves, dating back to the seventeenth century, were engraved solely in Hebrew and many were fading into illegibility. Then came the rows of graves from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and those stones were in Hebrew and in Romanian. On the ones from the twentieth century, Romanian was written on the front, Hebrew on the back.

I kept walking until, suddenly, there were no more graves, no more shade trees, and the last row of gravestones lay behind me. Before me stood a long sloping hill where the caretaker of the cemetery—who was doing a commendable job of maintaining it—had planted a field of corn. There were no more Jews for him to bury.

Just at the cemetery's entrance, I had seen the monuments to those who had been murdered in a local pogrom and deported to the concentration camps of Transnistria during the war, and most of those managed to return in December 1943. But they did not stay. The majority soon made their way to Israel, and the week I visited there were but two hundred Jews in Dorohoi. At this writing, in 2019, there are less than thirty.

When a cemetery runs out of Jews, its community runs out of stories. We all know that the overwhelming majority of Jewish communities in

Central and Eastern Europe were wiped out during the Holocaust. When Communism followed, most Jews who had managed to survive chose to leave (except for Jews in Hungary).

That means tens of thousands of Jewish communities have no more stories to tell and all of us—Jews and non-Jews—are now cut off from an entire volume of twentieth century history.

Yet back in 1987, during the two years I had been visiting the lands between the Baltic and the Sea of Marmara, I knew that at least some elderly Jews still lived in every one of these countries because I had knocked on their doors, sipped tea in their kitchens and thumbed through their old family albums with them as they regaled me with stories. These people, these Jews who had been born in interwar Central Europe, the Soviet Union and the Balkans, were truly the last of their kind. No one else would ever be able to tell me about what it meant to pick up a gun and fight the Germans during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, or how it felt to stumble home alone from a concentration camp to your Lithuanian shtetl in 1945, find someone else who had also lost everyone and cling together for another half a century, or about receiving a call from the French consulate in Istanbul in 1943, who then handed you your brother's personal effects after he died fighting the Germans for the Free French at Monte Cassino in Italy, or even what it was like to watch your father, a high Party official, in Kyiv being taken away in 1953 and labeled an enemy of the people. But if I could find a way to preserve stories like these (and we present them in the following pages), then all of us would have just a few more stories to share with each other—and not just endless rows of corn.

It took another thirteen years, until 2000, before I figured out a way to begin conducting interviews in ways that weren't prohibitively expensive and could be carried out on laptops by local community activists. That is because in years previously, there was no technology to carry out such a project



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אברהם יצחק  
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nor software that was easy and cheap enough to use. But twenty years on—today—it would be too late to begin.

In 2000, I met two young Hungarian historians—Eszter Andor and Dora Sardi—who had recently watched their grandfathers’ video interviews and who also had just given birth to their first children. “My grandfather has so much more to tell besides what he went through during the war,” Dora said as she bounced six-month-old Miksha on her lap. “And I want my son to know those stories, too.” I asked if her grandfather had any old pictures. “Tons!” she said. And does he tell stories about them? “He never stops!” Eszter nodded her head in recognition and they both laughed.

A few weeks later, we teamed up with the tech-savvy Dejan Petrovic of Belgrade’s Jewish community, and together we developed a way to marry together the old-fashioned art of storytelling with family pictures in an easy-to-use database. We then took our ideas to Margalit Bejarano, the head of oral histories at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and asked Margalit’s advice about conducting interviews and oral history methodology.

From the outset, we agreed among ourselves that no, we would not use video when we conducted our interviews. Yes, we would scan old photographs and ask our interviewees to tell us about the people in those pictures. No, we would not focus primarily on the Holocaust. Yes, we would ask them all to tell us stories about the entire twentieth century, just as they lived it.

Why did we not use video? As a journalist who had worked in both television and print, I never found working in video to be as effective as audio recording. With audio, I could transcribe the interview word-for-word, and then go back and ask follow-up questions two, three, or more times. A lot more work than simply turning on a video camera, but no one is going to watch a three- to four-hour video interview of anyone. And it was clear from the beginning that many of our interviews would last longer than that.

The very first interviews we conducted were in the Serbian city of Novi Sad, where we visited three close friends over the course of four days. The last stop was at Dejan’s mother’s flat. As we packed up our tape recorders and notes, Doctor Suzana Hacker smiled and said, “You know, you are the

fourth group of people to come to Novi Sad to interview us. But you’re the first who asked how we lived. Not just how we died.”

That was the lightning in a bottle I had wanted all along, and that is why our database of twelve hundred interviews and twenty-five thousand digitized pictures and documents is invaluable. Because even though most of those we interviewed between 2000 and 2009 are no longer with us, their stories are. Along with their pictures. And you can explore them with the click of a mouse, the swipe of a finger. In six different languages.

In the following pages, we highlight five stories from five of the fifteen countries we worked in, and on the very next page, we will take you to Dorohoi to meet Simon Meer, who Eموke Major interviewed for us in 2006, not long before Simon and his wife Ietti passed away. As you will read, Simon Meer is a painter of pictures, a teller of tales. On our website, his interview is nearly forty pages long, filled with details about his prewar life, about the family’s deportation to Transnistria, and about his life in Dorohoi in the decades afterwards.

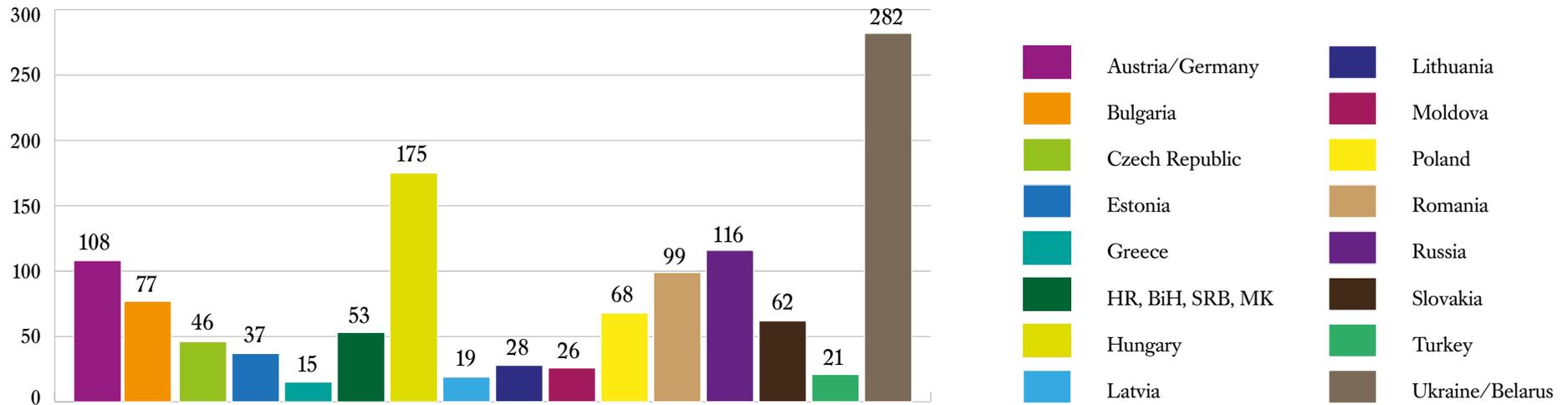
Although I still visit Romania at least twice each year, I haven’t managed to return to Dorohoi. Yet. But I do know that Simon and Ietti Meer, along with another dozen members of the community, have been buried in that same cemetery, which means there is one less row of corn, and one more set of stories for us to share with you.



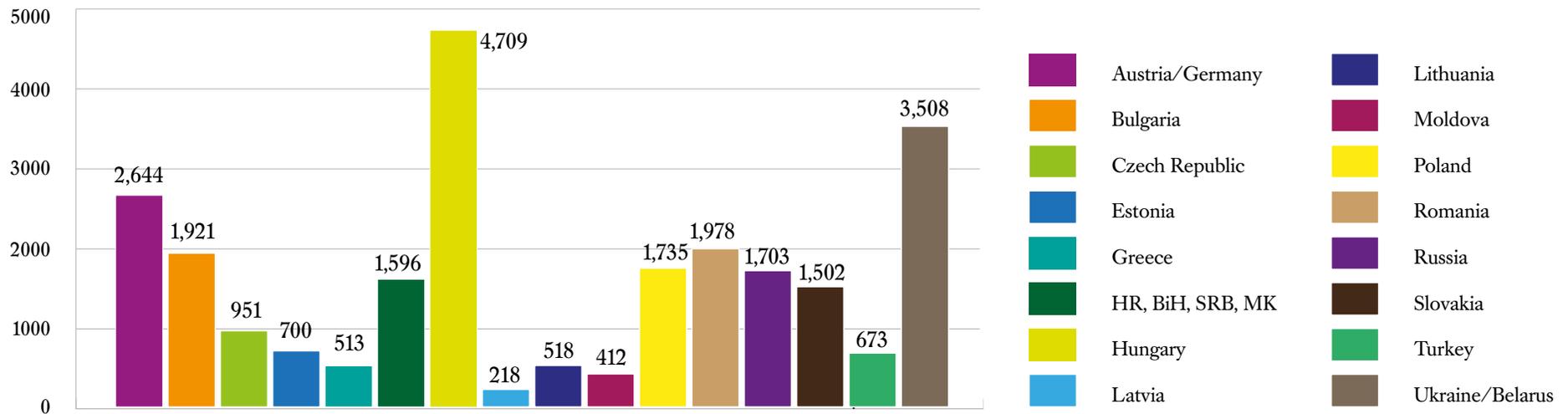
Edward Serotta  
Director of Centropa

# The Centropa archive. Preserving Jewish memory.

We interviewed 1,233 Jews still living in these European countries



We digitized 25,281 of their privately-held photographs and documents



## Romania: Simon Meer, Dorohoi

*Simon Meer, born in 1927, was interviewed in Dorohoi in 2006 by Eموke Major.*

This is a photo of the Jewish School in Dorohoi, where I went to elementary school. I am the fourth from the right, front row. I have this wedding picture of my parents: Froim and Feiga. They were married in 1923. And this is me, in our community, in 2003.

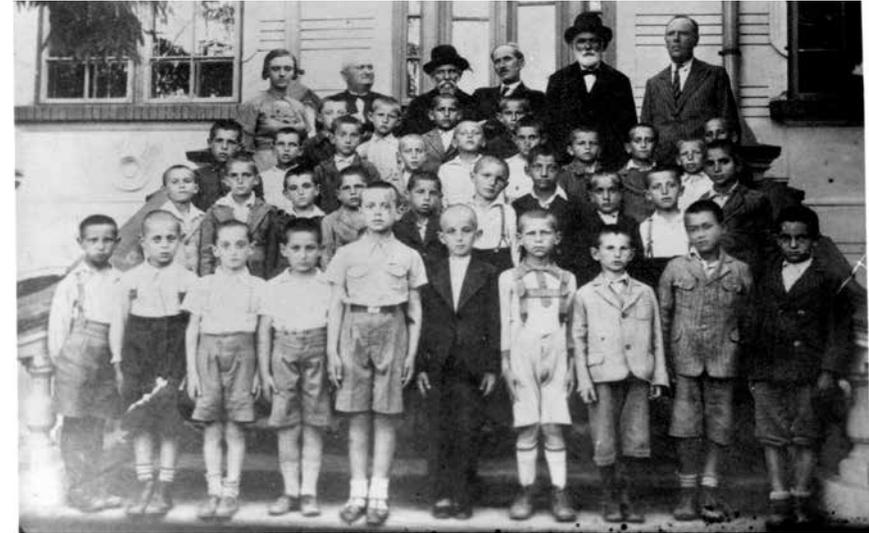
My parents had a store in the village of Dumbraveni, around twenty kilometers from Dorohoi. My father sold almost everything: food, salt, flour, oil, even cloth. He brought the merchandise in from Bucecea on a two-horse freight cart. Mother was a seamstress; she sewed underwear and bed linen, things like pillows, eiderdowns, odds and ends, so they sold fabrics at the store, too. That's how we made a living.

Our parents lived in the countryside, and we, the four brothers, lived with our mother's sister, Ruhela Butnaru. She was a widow and she told our mother, "Listen, Foighe," (my mother's name was Feiga, but they called her Foighe [Foygl] in Yiddish), "you just send those rascals here, bring them to live with me so they can learn in the Talmud Torah, then study in a Jewish school and afterwards they'll learn a trade!" For what could we have learned in the countryside? And that is just what happened.

We spoke Romanian at home. I learned Yiddish at the Talmud Torah during my first two years, and Hebrew in the Jewish school, where I went for four years. Boys and girls studied separately, of course.

After I finished school, I learned a dyer's trade and chemical laundry—that is my profession. After I came back from deportation, I graduated from high school by taking evening courses.

There were twenty-four synagogues in Dorohoi. Mine was the Rendarilor Synagogue, but it no longer exists. Each trade, in fact, each guild, had its own synagogue. For instance, there was the Shoemakers' Synagogue, the



Tailors' Synagogue, the Carpenters' Synagogue; cabmen and cart drivers had their own synagogue, as well.

The parishioners bought their seats, but we boys didn't sit next to our fathers. We children sat on benches with tables before us. A separate balcony for women was upstairs.

On Friday evenings, in each of their own houses, my grandmother and my aunt said all of their prayers, baked their bread, and made a wonderful, traditional dinner. Me and my three brothers would divide up and go to each of them. We pleased everyone that way.

As for buying food in Dorohoi, I can tell you that the chickens had to be slaughtered by a kosher butcher and pork never entered our house, God forbid. During the week, we bought bread at the bakery, and there were so many bakeries in Dorohoi—I am talking about the ones owned by Jews, of

course—you couldn't decide who to buy from! But it was mandatory to bake your own bread for Friday night and Saturday. You just weren't allowed to buy bread from the bakery, no matter how poor you were.

From Friday evening until Sunday morning, my aunt wouldn't light a fire, strike a match, or turn on a light until someone—his name was Gheorgheol, Ghita, Gheorghe—came around to do it for her. He came to all the Jewish homes and lit fires for them on Saturdays, especially on the street where we lived, on Spiru Haret. Every neighborhood in Dorohoi had its shabbas goy who did the things Jews weren't allowed to on shabbas.

At home, in the countryside, my parents observed tradition as well. Oh, my! Mother baked her bread, lit the candles, prepared everything. They even had a tiny synagogue in a room of the local mill. They led the services themselves every Saturday. With twelve Jews, you think they could hire a rabbi. And, whenever she could, my mother would come by wagon to Dorohoi to be with her boys and, as soon as it was light on Sunday morning, she would dash back home with the horse and wagon to the village to help our father.

*During the Second World War, Simon Meer witnessed Romanian soldiers carrying out a pogrom against Jews in his town, and he and his family were deported by the Romanian Army to concentration camps in Transnistria. They returned home in December 1943, then his brothers left for Israel, as did nearly all of the Jews of the region. But Simon remained. In 1950, he married Letti Ciubotaru, they had two sons, and he retired from his work in dye making in 1987. He and his wife were planning to emigrate to Israel in 1991 but Simon had a massive heart attack and decided not to leave. Simon became president of the Dorohoi Jewish community in 1998 and served until 2005. Emeko Major interviewed this remarkable storyteller in 2006. Simon and his wife passed away not long after the interview.*



## Poland: Anna Lanota, Lodz

*Anna Lanota, born in Lodz in 1915, was interviewed by Aleksandra Bankowska in Szymanowek, Warsaw, in 2004.*



This is my false ID, in German 'kennkarte'. This is how I survived, and I was able to go in and out of the Warsaw Ghetto. That's where I found my family, on Leszno Street, in 1942. I knocked on their door, and this tiny, frail woman answered. I didn't know it was my mother until she spoke.

I left the ghetto on 14 August 1942, and, as I was leaving, my brother Mietek said 'When you get out, if you survive, remember to get us out, too.' But I failed. They all perished in that first deportation. Then came the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto in March 1943. From where I was living, I could see it, smell it, and feel the burning in my eyes. It was beyond horrible.

In 1942, I married Edward Lanota, who was Jewish. He had already broken out of a concentration camp and also had false papers. We stayed in Warsaw and at the start of the uprising in August 1944, my husband said, 'There won't be victory here, only defeat.' But it didn't occur to us not to fight. To



fight the Germans was happiness; it was suddenly like freedom after so many years. We knew we would lose, but what did that have to do with our will to fight? Nothing.

*[Anna Lanota is referring to the uprising by the Polish Home Army against the Germans, and they had asked the Soviet Army, just on the other side of the Vistula River, to help them. The Soviets refused, and the Germans destroyed the Polish resistance and leveled most of Warsaw in the process.]*

On 26 August [1944], there was a huge battle. Edward and I were in the same house; he was standing nearer the street and I was standing nearer the courtyard. I was running off copies of our newspaper for the Home Army, and suddenly a bomb with a time delay fell on the house. The last thing I heard was Edward calling my name.

I said, 'I'm here!' and just then some guy standing next to me shoved me out onto the street through a hole in the wall. The bomb exploded, that guy was killed instantly, and I woke up in a hospital in a cellar. Only later did they tell me that Edward was dead. He was buried in a mass grave for the insurrectionists on Krakowskie Przedmiescie Street. Nine months later, I gave birth to our daughter, Malgosia.



## After the war

I first moved to Lublin, then Lodz, and worked as an editor at a publishing house. I was allotted an apartment on Gdanska Street. In this new flat I found this large steel cupboard with a cable to plug in to the electricity. I thought it an oddity, something abnormal, so my cousin and I threw it out into the courtyard. Well, I had never seen a refrigerator before.

In 1946, when the publisher '*Książka i Wiedza*' moved to Warsaw, I went with my baby. We lived in the room where I worked. Malgosia lay on the desk I worked at, and at night we slept on a mattress on the floor. In 1948, we launched a women's weekly, *Przyjaciółka* [it is still in print] and I became editor-in-chief. Starting in 1959, I returned to what I had studied in

university and began teaching a child psychology class at Warsaw University. I also worked in a psychology clinic, and edited another magazine in my spare time, but I carried on working in the clinic until I was eighty years old.

I didn't bring my daughter up religiously, but I brought her up to be aware that she is Jewish, and that Judaism is something to be proud of. I am thrilled to say that my grandsons and some of their friends always celebrate Pesach with me. They all come over to my house, we read the Haggadah, then put the cup on the table and open the door for the prophet to come in. It's a very happy day; it reminds me of times gone by. Of happy times.

## Ukraine: Grigory Stel'makh, Kyiv

*Grigoriy Stel'makh, born in Chernobyl in 1939,  
was interviewed in Kyiv in 2003  
by Zhanna Litinskaya.*

This is a photograph of my father, Isaac Stelmakh, in his office in the military administration in Berlin. In 1945, he reached Berlin with his army unit and, after the victory, he was assigned to the Soviet Military Administration of the city. He had this photo taken to send to the family in Kyiv. We lived very well indeed in Berlin. We had an eight-room flat and a car took me to and from school each day. But father was nervous and always told me to say, "Everything is better in the Soviet Union!" and I wondered why I had to say that because there were marvelous toys in Berlin.

The mug shots are pictures of him in jail. On 20 January 1949, state security officers came to his office in Berlin and asked him to follow them. He had to remove his tie and shoelaces, so he understood. He was arrested under article fifty-eight, item ten: anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.

He was taken to Spandau, a prison in Berlin where they mostly kept Nazis, I believe. For ten months he underwent interrogation, including torture, before being sentenced to ten years in prison. He never had any idea what he had done and confessed to nothing. Then they sent him and other Soviet soldiers by train to Russia. Before they left, they made them put on old German uniforms so no one would think it was our own soldiers.

On 14 August 1956, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR reviewed my father's case and closed it for absence of corpus delicti [proof of crime]. So, my father was released and then rehabilitated. I took this photograph of him during the celebration of Victory Day in Kyiv in 1962. In all that time, he never lost his faith in Communism. But since he had been raised in a very Orthodox home, he went to synagogue sometimes and even bought matzah every year. When I asked if he wasn't tempting fate once again, he just laughed.



## Lithuania: Dobre Rozenbergene, Jurbakas

*Dobre Rozenbergene, born in Jurbakas in 1928,  
was interviewed by Ella Levitskaya in 2005.*

This picture was taken in Jurbarkas, by our house, in 1946. My husband, Sholom, is standing first from the left, then our friends, Leizer and Bobke, both of whom died in the 1980s. That's me sitting first from the left. I don't remember the names of the others, but we were all Jews from Jurbakas and had come back to start life over—even with all that happened.

The picture of my husband Sholom was taken in 1970, and the photo of our two children, Brocha and Motle, date from the 1960s. And that's me, today. I had returned from the Nazi camp of Stutthof with my Aunt Leva in July 1945, and we first came to Kaunas but I was yearning to go back to my home town so, after a while, she took me to Jurbarkas. Our house wasn't destroyed, but it was occupied by Lithuanians, and we had to wait for it to be vacated.

My neighbor, Abu Fales, took me in. During the war, Abu's entire family was wiped out, but he married for a second time. Her name was Miriam, and she, like Abu, and like me, had no one in the world. The two of them offered to adopt me, but at seventeen, I just couldn't do it. I had my memories and I needed to start a new adult life.

Suddenly, my house next door was vacated, and they gave me the entire place; it really was large enough for two families. And just then, the son of a family friend showed up, Sholom Ruvim Rosenbergas. He had been a frontline soldier in the Red Army and, yes, he too was alone in the world.

I knew Sholom as a kid, but he was five years older than me. And when you're ten years old, thinking of some fifteen-year-old was like thinking of some old man. Now, as the two of us were all alone, we began seeing each other. First, we had the recollections of childhood that bound us, then we fell in love. In the middle of 1946, we married. Of course, we wanted to be wed under a chuppah, but there was neither a synagogue nor a rabbi in Jurbarkas.

We had two children, Brocha and Motle, and we raised them Jewish. Their mother tongue is Yiddish, and of course they speak Russian and Lithuanian. We have stayed close our entire lives. In fact, when they went off to Kaunas to work, Sholom and I packed up and moved there, too.

Both Brocha and Motle married Jews and, indeed, Motle married in Kaunas, under the chuppah, with his proud father, a Communist Party official, standing there. Brocha's family now lives in Tel Aviv; Motle and his family are not far from us. And his daughter, Elina, by the way, is a doctor!



## Turkey: Sami Shilton, Istanbul

*Sami Schilten, who was born in Bursa in 1921,  
was interviewed in Istanbul by  
Yusuf Sarhon in 2005.*

This is a photo of my older brother, Alber Schilton [born 1916], and his classmates in the Bene Berit Jewish high school. The man sitting in the center was some French teacher and Alber is standing just behind him.

After he finished school, Alber worked in different places, then got it into his head to leave for Israel. So, he went to work on one kibbutz after another.

Suddenly, we heard he had become a soldier. This was during World War II. In those times, de Gaulle was in England and he was calling for volunteers for the Free French army. So Alber, while in Israel, joined up. Besides, he liked France and the French very much. He went to Africa with de Gaulle's army and they fought there for a long time against the Germans and then they went to Italy.

He used to write us letters saying he was fine or saying that they were having difficult times. But one day we received a letter and he wrote that he hoped to come back alive. Suddenly we understood his life was in really serious danger.

In 1944, there was this big battle at a place called Monte Cassino, near Naples, and the Free French fought alongside the Americans, the British, and the Poles. One day, I don't remember when, I received a letter from the French Consulate in Istanbul and the letter said that they regretted to inform us of the death of my brother.

They said that they wanted to talk to me. So I went to the consulate. The Consul himself received me and told me in a very serious and calm manner what had happened: that Alber had died together with his fellow soldiers who were with him at the time.



Then the Consul gave me a big envelope with Alber's belongings. His wallet, photos, and all of our letters were inside. I was terribly moved, and I thought of how many people had been involved to find his possessions, and send them back from the front line to some military headquarters and all the way to Turkey in the middle of a war.

Then the Consul told me that the French government was going to give my mother a lifelong salary in her son's name and they did until the day she died.

## Estonia: Bluma Lepiku, Tallinn

This is my paternal grandmother, Dora, and the picture was taken in Tallin in 1912 for a Purim party. Back then, she was married to Mendel Shumiacher. My father Yakov was born in 1897, his brother Michail in 1900. Their father died when they were very young and Dora remarried an electrician by the name of Reichmann, a Jewish man, of course. But he electrocuted himself.

Grandmother Dora, twice a widow, then rented a house and opened a kosher restaurant and inn for traders and sales agents. She was a terrific cook. To this day I haven't come across a better one. A number of men who went to eat there proposed to her on the spot, so she would bring out her two sons and introduce them. And that was the end of that. She never remarried.

As for my father, Yakov, well, as a violinist he was superb. I mean, who did not know the name Shumiacher! In fact, one day a young Jewish woman came from Tartu to carry out some family business so she had lunch in Grandmother's restaurant. She heard the violinist in the next room, fell in love before she even saw him, and asked to be introduced. That woman, Luba Gore, became my mother and I was born in 1926.



## Cafe Centropa: our social club for Holocaust survivors

We are proud to stand by our statistics—of having interviewed 1,200 Jews in 15 countries and preserved over 55,000 pages of interviews, not to mention 25,000 photographs and documents.

Just as impressive is the fact we have served over \$100,000 dollars worth of apple strudel to the Holocaust survivors we interviewed—and in the two cities famous for it: Vienna and Budapest.

Do the math. In Vienna alone, we've been meeting at least eleven times each year since 2006 and between 50 to 120 guests show up every time. Three times each year, we hold huge festive dinners—for Rosh Hashannah, for Hanukkah, for Passover (ok, for Passover, it's stewed apples, not strudel) and we rarely have less than 150 guests. In Budapest, our club is smaller and meets between six to ten times each year. But no one ever complained about what came off of a Hungarian dessert trolley.

But it's not just dessert. We bring in musicians, singers, novelists, journalists and politicians to perform for and speak with our club members. We even take road trips, which, granted, isn't terribly easy for ninety-year olds. But they insist. We order the buses.

Tanja Eckstein, who conducted seventy interviews for Centropa, has been running our program in Vienna while Szilvia Czingel, who interviewed thirty Hungarians, oversees our program there. Every month, Tanja sends out a newsletter filled with updates, excerpts from interviews and recipes, then follows up with telephone calls.

On these pages we share with you pictures taken in Vienna by Ouriel Morgensztern and in Budapest by Róbert László Bácsi. You will see our club members at receptions and on walking tours and at performances. But best of all is when we bring students and teachers to meet with our seniors. Clearly, we have very little time left for such encounters, which makes each one that much more memorable.



*Szilvia Czingel, left, Tanja Eckstein, right*



*Cafe Centropa club members, February 2018*



*On our visit to the synagogue in the Austrian town of Eisenstadt. From left: Tanja Eckstein with her back to the camera, then Rachelle Muzicant, 90-years-old, who is reaching out to 98-year-old Ida Beck, being led by the woman who helps Ida. Behind in the blue jacket and sunglasses is Helga Kinski, 89-years old, with Yvonne Reitman, 92-years-old.*



## Vienna

*Pictured here are scenes from the dozen get-togethers we had in Vienna in 2018. Whether it is sharing a laugh, or spellbinding teenagers, our club members almost never miss an event—even when the streets are caked with snow. Bottom left is Ethel Merhaut, an opera singer who regularly performs for our seniors.*



**Budapest**  
*On this page we see scenes from our Budapest Café Centropa. Although dramatically smaller than it was in years past, our members are full of energy and love meeting with school children, teachers, and each other. They also attend every Centropa exhibition opening and have places reserved for them on the front row.*



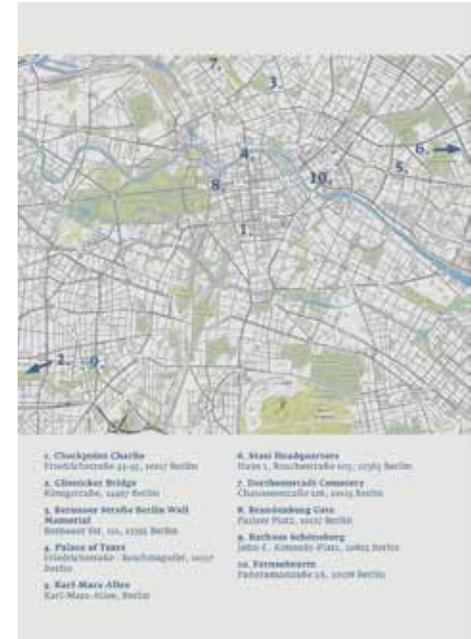
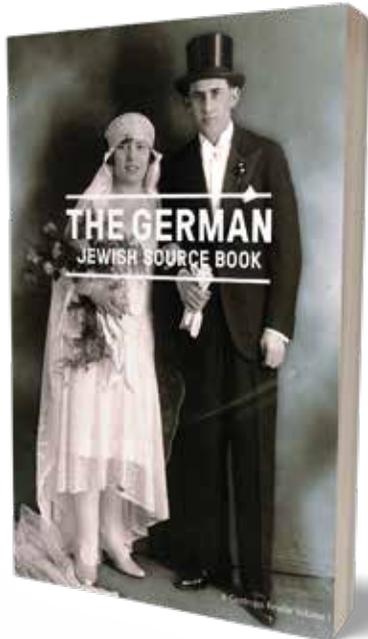
# Centropa as public history: in print, on the web, and on the walls

Public history is often defined as those events and programs that take place outside of formal venues such as museums, universities, concert halls, and auditoriums. And because of the way Centropa preserved Jewish memory—by marrying together the old-fashioned art of storytelling with new technologies—we can produce a plethora of projects you can find in print, in cyberspace, in film festivals, as well as in our exhibitions that are traveling through nine countries.

## In print

Since 2009 we have published six country or city-based Jewish source books, all of which are combinations of Centropa interviews, essays by scholars, journalists, published authors, activists and memoirists, along with important dates and names everyone should know. Teachers love them, but so does the general public. Our Hungarian Jewish Sourcebook, for instance, is now being sold in English language bookstores throughout Budapest.

Our German Jewish Source Book is now in its third edition, and with every new version, we add more essays and stories. In this newest version, we have added walking tours of Jewish Berlin, Third Reich Berlin, and Cold War Berlin, which you can see here.



## On the web

Centropa's web content is now available in English, German, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian, as well as smaller sites in Serbian and Hebrew.

Here is where you'll find access to our interviews in each language, as well as our multimedia films narrated in seven languages and subtitled in eleven. Cooking recipes by Jayne Cohen and travel stories by Ruth Ellen Gruber round out our web content for the general user and, as you can see, in 2018 we had over 150,000 unique visitors to our sites.

**centropa**

NYELV VÁLASZTÁS  
ENGLISH DEUTSCH MAGYAR

KERESÉS

### Zsidó élettörténetek a huszadik században

RÓLUNK - **CENTROPA INTERJÚK** FILMEK REALITÁSOK ORTATÁS ESEMENYEK KIADVÁNYOK SZEMINÁRIUMOK TÁMOGATÁS

**KERESÉS A FÉNYKÉPES ADATBÁZISBAN**  
Magyar nyelvű adatbázisunkban 5000 fénykép és számos egyéb dokumentum található.  
CSALÁDNEV VÁROS ORSZÁG  
KERESÉS  
Keressen a fényképek között családnév, város, vagy ország szerint. A névre kattintva az ahhoz tartozó összes fényképet megtalálja. Vigyéljen a családnévek különböző írásmódjára (pl. Eisenstein, Ajzenstajjn).

**KERESÉS AZ ADATBÁZISBAN INTERJÚINK KÖZÖTT**  
Magyar nyelven 200 interjút készítettünk idős zsidókkal. Keressen történeteink között.  
CSALÁDNEV ORSZÁG  
KERESÉS  
Válasszon egy nevet a listából, hogy a teljes interjút olvashassa. Vigyéljen a nevek egyéb írásmódjára (Eisenstein, Ajzenstajjn).

**BARANGOLJON AZ ORSZÁGOK KÖZÖTT (ANGOL NYELVŰ TARTALOM)**  
A Centropa 15 különböző országban készített életút interjúkat.  
ORSZÁG  
KERESÉS  
Tudjon meg többet más országokban történt.  
KERESÉS  
**Részletes kereső**  
Keresés adatbázisunkban

**centropa** BROWSE THE WEBSITE IN ENGLISH DEUTSCH MAGYAR

Where Jewish history has a name, a face, a story

ABOUT US | CENTROPA INTERVIEWS | FILMS | EXHIBITIONS | EDUCATION | MAGAZINE | NEWS & EVENTS | BOOKS & PODCASTS | DONATE

### CENTROPA CINEMA

- OFFICIAL SELECTION - NEW YORK SEPHARDIC JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL 2014
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - BARCELONA JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL 2014
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - AMSTERDAM DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - WARSAW FILM FESTIVAL
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - SOFIA FILM FESTIVAL
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - UPTOWN FILM FESTIVAL 2013
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - HONG KONG JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL 2014
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - SPECIAL SCREENING GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY BERLIN 2014
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - NEW YORK JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
- OFFICIAL SELECTION - JEWISH EYE FILM FESTIVAL ASHKELOH

SUPPORT OUR HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR'S PROGRAMS

CENTROPA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

CENTROPA IN YOUR LANGUAGE, YOUR COUNTRY

Explore by language:  EXPLORE

Content by country:  EXPLORE

STUDENT PROJECTS AND COMPETITIONS

GJN Student Competition

An international video competition for students of Jewish schools. Create a great video and win valuable prizes!

TEACHING RESOURCES

10 Austrian Jews

ONCE UPON A TIME IN VIENNA

There aren't too many of them left, but less than a century ago - until 1938 - there were nearly 200,000 Jews living in Vienna.

JEWISH CULTURE

Essen around Eastern Europe with Jayne Cohen (and others)

Stories, recipes and tips to the Jewish cuisine from holiday dishes to everyday treatments.

THE LOST SEPHARDIC WORLD OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

## ABOUT THE LOST SEPHARDIC WORLD

TRANS HISTORY

Connecting Ukrainians and Moldovans with their Jewish history - and with their neighbors

SCROLL DOWN TO LEARN MORE...

NOVEMBER 1938.at

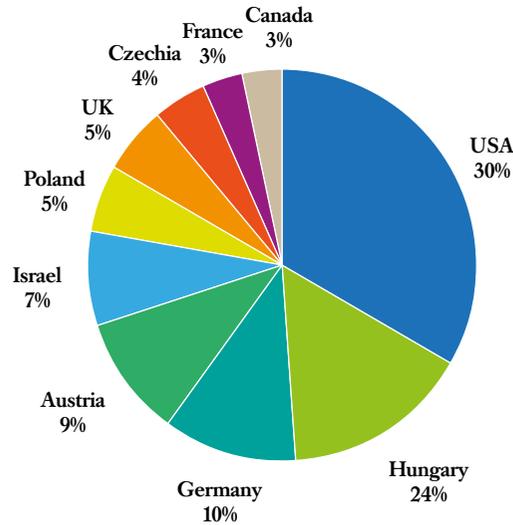
„Sie zerschlugen alle Gläser, alle Spiegel – alles.“

ES WAR EINMAL IN WIEN

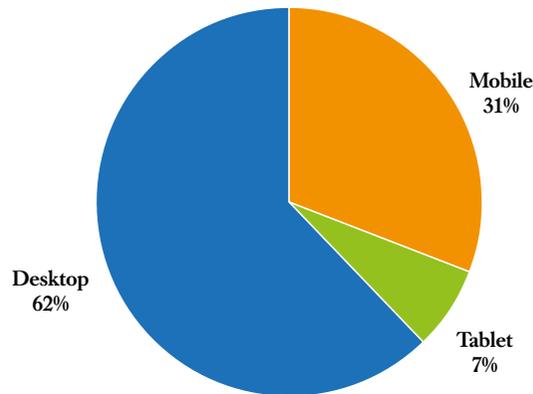
10 ÖSTERREICHISCH-JÜDISCHE LEBENSGESCHICHTEN

In 2018 we saw just over 150,000 visitors to our Centropa.org website and here are two interesting statistics about where Centropa is viewed, and how.

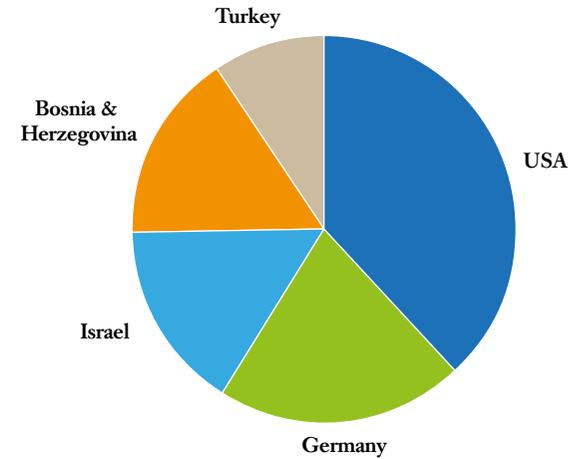
Centropa.org users by country



Devices



Most views by country



Centropa's YouTube channel has seen well over 450,000 visitors over the past five years. In 2018, some 100,000 came to our site. Aside from our viewers in the United States and Germany, our films in Bosnian, Turkish, and Hebrew were our most popular.



In 2018, we had seven exhibitions traveling through Bosnia, Serbia, Germany, Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine and Lithuania. Although they are invariably shown in public venues, they are far more successful with high school students and we'll discuss our exhibitions in the following pages. Pictured on the left is our Ukrainian exhibition being shown in the town cultural center of Priluki, a town of some 50,000 residents. On the right, our Lost Sephardic World exhibition is being shown in Sarajevo.



### DUBOVNIK

1925

After graduating from school, Dubovnik went to work for the...  
...of the...  
...of the...  
...of the...



### DR. TONY MARTIGANO

1942

Dr. Tony Martigano...  
...of the...  
...of the...  
...of the...



### ZACARA

1942

## Centropa in the press in 2018

Since we write the text for Centropa's websites, films, and exhibitions in the languages of the countries where we conducted our interviews—and show them there, as well—we continue to do well in the local press. Included here are articles about us in two Hungarian online publications, a Polish newspaper, one Ukrainian print and online newspaper, and Radio Free Europe's Romanian language website, where they included an online video of our Moldovan exhibition opening in Chisinau.

When we produced our film about a Jewish family from the German state of Baden-Württemberg, the regional press covered the film premiere, which was sponsored by the founder of SAP software. We are also proud to say that one of our family stories received a full page in another German news monthly, *Schach Nachrichten*, *the Chess News*.

[Passwort vergessen?](#) [Registrierung](#)

# RHEIN-NECKAR-ZEITUNG



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**Sinsheim/Berlin**

### Der 18-jährige Ilay Elm Kies ist der Sprecher des Films "Zahor"

Geschichte über Hoffenheimer Brüder wird in der ganzen Welt gezeigt

🔔 Noch 10 Gratis-Artikel diesen Monat.
🔔 RNZonline Angebote
✕

21.08.2018, 06:00 Uhr



Per Videoübertragung war Ilay Elm Kies, Sprecher des Films "Zahor", bei dessen Internationaler Premiere dabei. In Berlin vor Ort waren (von links) Fabian Rühle, Bildungsdirektor Centropa Deutschland, Michael Heltz, Diplompädagoge an der Albert-Schweitzer-Schule sowie Amos Raban, History und Civiv Teacher/Übersetzer aus Tel Aviv. Foto: Ouriel Morgensztern



## Centropa in education



These four pictures go to the heart of what we feel education is all about. See anyone sitting passively at a desk listening to the teacher? That would not be our way.

On the top row, left, residents of the Polish city of Kielce crowd around an exhibition on Polish Jewry. But this exhibition was not created by a museum; these stories and pictures all came from the Centropa website, and one of our Kielce high schools created the entire project themselves. The opening drew more than 2,300 guests in a single weekend and our students were, as you can imagine, immensely proud. But no less proud than the three beaming students and their teacher from Vinnitsa, Ukraine, in the photograph on the right. They created a video walking tour of Jewish Vinnitsa and won first prize out of 20 other entries.



On the bottom row, Kevin from Newark and Alexandra from Chicago are working together on a lesson plan while taking

part in our 2018 Summer Academy in Berlin. They had just toured the Soviet War Memorial in Berlin, and since Alexandra was born in Odessa and her grandparents fled to Central Asia during the Second World War, she and Kevin were brainstorming about how to use the Centropa database of Soviet Jewish soldiers in Holocaust lessons. In other words, when teachers collaborate and share ideas with each other, they develop lesson plans they create themselves—and are far more apt to use them.

And on the right, students in the Rahlgasse school in Vienna read Centropa family stories that took place in Vienna—and these students are collaborating as a team to produce an exhibition. They have just discovered that six of the interviews they are reading came from former students who had gone to their school eighty years ago.

In the following pages, we will take you through the educational programs we conduct on three continents, and we all know that teenagers are going to bring their own worldview into the classroom, filtered through what they learn at home, from other teachers, and the media. Add those together and you come up with a national narrative. That is why a teenager discussing the Holocaust in a former shtetl in Lithuania will not look at history the same way an Israeli student will, just as a Hispanic-American teenager in East Los Angeles will comprehend our stories in ways that make sense to them. But every teenager is looking for true north, ethically and morally. Every teenager, no matter where they come from and where they currently live, will respond positively when they can find the “me” in a story, and someone in that narrative they can look up to. It is why we at Centropa have said over and over again, stories are universal, and stories connect us all.

“If you are worried about antisemitism, nationalism, and intolerance, then as a teacher with 20 years of classroom experience, I can tell you this: help a roomful of teenagers connect their own lives with stories of long ago, let them understand—on their own—the sickness of intolerance and how it turns into a terminal disease, and give them the tools to build understanding and solidarity through their own projects. You will then have the very nature of what civil society is all about.”

*Kirstin Lakeberg, English, Bonn, Germany*

# Centropa in the US

Sometimes you work with a teacher whose ideas are so innovative, their thinking so out-of-the-box, that the only reasonable thing to do is offer them a job. That is what we did with Dr Lauren Granite, who was teaching history in a Jewish day school in suburban Washington, DC, when we first met. As a teacher, Lauren attended three of our summer programs between 2007 and 2009, and during the school year, she was sending in reams of suggestions on how to make our seminars more meaningful and our multimedia films more useful for teachers.

Back then, we had no American educators on staff, and in 2010, Lauren agreed to take on the role of US Education Director. Over the last eight years, she has visited scores of schoolrooms and school districts, attended professional conferences, and conducted workshops and seminars throughout the country, all while adding dozens of teachers to our growing network.

With partners in Holocaust museums, teacher training centers, school districts, and Jewish organizations who see the value Centropa brings to educators, Lauren continues to expand our outreach while regularly working with experts in seven states so we can adapt our content to meet state standards. Centropa's most active partners in the United States are:

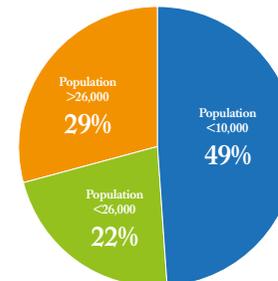
- The Alief Independent School District in Houston
- The South Carolina Council on the Social Studies
- The South Carolina Council on the Holocaust
- Wardlaw College of Education at the University of South Carolina
- The Illinois Holocaust Memorial and Education Center
- The Los Angeles County Office of Education
- The Holocaust Education and Newark Initiatives of the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest
- The NC Council on the Holocaust
- The North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching
- School District of Palm Beach County
- Charleston County School District



*In 2018, we held seminars and workshops in Chicago, Los Angeles, Newark, Columbia, and Houston.*

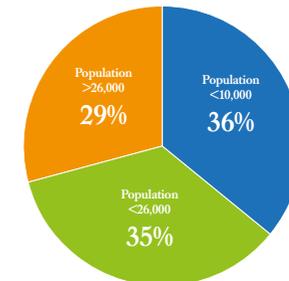
## North Carolina

We have 45 teachers working with Centropa in North Carolina. Here is a chart indicating the size of the towns and cities in which they teach.



## South Carolina

We have 31 teachers working with Centropa in South Carolina. Here is a chart indicating the size of the towns and cities in which they teach.





In the United States, Centropa focuses primarily on Title One schools, where the majority of our students come from low income families that depend on free or reduced cost lunches every day. Some live in big cities such as Newark, Baltimore, West Palm Beach, Houston, and Los Angeles. Others live in rural, poverty-stricken areas. More than a few come from single parent homes or live with grandparents or foster families.

The charts on the previous page show where we work in the Carolinas, and in many towns like these, furniture factories (North Carolina) and textile manufacturers (South Carolina) have upped stakes and moved abroad, which means the towns continue to shrink.

At the same time, the Carolinas have now attracted hundreds of German manufacturers such as Siemens, Bosch, Continental, and BMW, and in turn, scores of American manufacturers have also set up shop. And what do these high-tech factories look for in tomorrow's high school graduate? Students who can problem solve and think critically, who work well on teams and have a solid grasp of technology and the world around them.

Little wonder that social studies classes have become more important than ever, as these are the teachers who can assign projects that employ nearly all those skills. That's why so many social studies teachers turn to Centropa to connect their twenty-first century students with twentieth century history—and with each other.

When teenagers dig into our website to explore a family story, that's one thing. When they turn it into a video that they make themselves it is even better. But when they share their projects with students their age in Serbia, Germany, Ukraine, and other countries, then they broaden their horizons, too.

## US Advisors



*Julie Drake served as an educator in public education for nearly forty years, as a classroom teacher and early adopter of technology; as a professional development leader; as a curriculum writer, workshop developer, and seminar leader; and as head of the media department at the Los Angeles County Office of Education. Julie is our Los Angeles Coordinator.*



*Charles Vaughan is a social studies teacher at AC Flora High School in Columbia, SC. He holds a Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of South Carolina. Involved in social studies advocacy at the local, state, and national levels, his interests include human rights education, civics education, and geography.*



*Carolina Panasiti was born in Mendoza, Argentina, finished her studies at Montclair State and has taught ELA at Science Park High in Newark since 2007. Carolina attended Centropa's 2017 Summer Academy in Budapest and Belgrade, where she built long-lasting relationships with teachers across the world to enhance her students' learning.*



*Brittany Morefield Brown teaches 8th grade English Language Arts at Jamestown Middle School, in Jamestown, NC. She earned her BA from Appalachian State, and an MA from the University of North Carolina. Brittany has traveled to Israel, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Austria, and Bosnia pursuing Holocaust education professional development opportunities, and is Centropa's Coordinator in North Carolina.*

# How American teachers respond to Centropa's seminars

## **At our seminar at the University of South Carolina, in partnership with the School of Education, the Social Studies Administrators' Association and the SC Council on the Holocaust**

"At other seminars about the Holocaust, everything they offer revolves specifically around the horrors, which, granted, is very important, but they don't give us the history of that country before the Second World War or after. Actually, every story I came across showed the survivor moving to America. Centropa is different because it gives us historical context and lets the interviewees, who stayed in Russia, Serbia, Poland and other countries, tell their very complicated stories. That means as a social studies teacher, I can incorporate these stories into my curriculum in so many more areas and in several of my classes!"

*Martha Bohnenberger, Social Studies, Greenville County, SC*

"Like most teenagers, many of my students have never travelled outside of the US and don't even know what goes on outside their community. These Centropa films, which are beautifully made and tell us of an entire life story, give them a perspective that shrinks the world, mostly because they see the people in these films lived just like they do now. Then, the website provides an endless range of ways to help student navigate civic and global awareness as it's all right there for them to find and to use."

*Denise Deveaux, Social Studies, Summerville, SC*

## **At our seminar in Houston, carried out in partnership with the Alief Independent School District**

"The single most important thing I learned from your seminar: that we all have a similar story - and I feel this is shown, time and time again, in those videos you created from your interviews. This is the way to hook students: we all have a story and many times there is a least one thing we have in common." *Jamie Luna, Content Specialist, Houston, TX*

"I can literally embed Centropa materials in any skill I teach. I can and will use Centropa to facilitate skill building, including creativity/innovation and critical thinking/problem solving. What's so great is that I have the films to hook the students on, and then they can do their original document research by clicking on various links to read the entire life story. This is how you set a teenager up for success—by making sure he or she can access the technology."

*Rebecca Ledbetter, English, Texas City, TX*

## **Los Angeles workshop, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Office of Education**

"Centropa has it all on its website, and that will help me teach communication and collaboration with projects I will assign for my students to research, write, edit, and present their findings. I firmly believe that Social Studies classes should be relevant to real life issues and have connections to important matters on a global scale. I am looking forward to testing new lessons that I'd developed at the seminar on Migrations, Deportations, Geopolitics, Globalization, and Human Rights."

*Alice Lee, History & Geography, Los Angeles, CA*

# The Story of a Muslim saving a Jew and a Jew saving a Muslim.

In 1942 Zeyneba Hardaga, a Muslim woman in Sarajevo, risked her life to save Josef Kabilo, her Jewish neighbor. In 1985, thanks to Josef's efforts, Zeyneba became the first Muslim to be given a Righteous Among the Nations award. But in 1992, when the Bosnian Serbs began shelling Sarajevo, it was the hero who needed to be rescued.

The Israeli government did invite Zeyneba to wait out the Bosnian war in Israel, but her family was not invited. And the woman who would not abandon a Jewish friend wasn't about to leave her granddaughter in a war zone.

Enter Milton Wolf, a real estate developer and philanthropist who was president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, one of the organizations that was sending food and medicine into Sarajevo and getting people out. When Milton heard of Zeyneba's plight, he manned the phones, calling everyone he knew. There was a rescue convoy leaving Sarajevo in little more than a week. Milton Wolf was determined that Zeyneba and her family were on it.

When that convoy arrived on the Croatian coast on 5 February 1994, Milton Wolf found Zeyneba, and the two of them embraced. A few days later in Israel, Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin welcomed Zeyneba to Israel.

Zeyneba Hardaga died in 1997 and Milton Wolf in 2005. It was Milton's family, treasuring this remarkable story, that wanted it to mean something. And is there a better way than to challenge high school students to read history, learn a story like this, and then, like Zeyneba did, like Milton did, step out of their comfort zones and help someone else?

That is what the Milton Wolf Prize for Student Diplomacy is all about: Students identify a community problem (homelessness, poverty, racism, environment, food deserts), research the organizations addressing it, create

a video or other visual presentation to teach others about the problem—and then present their work to local groups to educate them about how they can make a difference.

The screenshot shows the Centropa website for "The Milton Wolf Prize in student diplomacy". The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, Overview, Charleston, SC, Baltimore, MD, Newark, NJ, Los Angeles, CA, and More. Below the navigation is a large image of Zeyneba Hardaga, a woman in a headscarf sitting in a chair. To the right of the image, there is text describing her as a scientist, businessman, and diplomat skilled at negotiation, and as a Muslim who saved a Jewish friend during the Second World War and received a Righteous Gentile Award. Below the image, there is a caption about Milton Wolf, who served as America's ambassador to Austria during the height of the Cold War in the 1970s, became President of JDC (the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee) in the 1990s, just as a very hot war in Yugoslavia was taking place. In the bottom right corner, there is a blue box with white text that reads: "The Washington Post article that helped Zeyneba Hardaga get out of Sarajevo".

# This is how we empower students. This is how we teach civic engagement.

“The most meaningful part of the presentation was knowing that our work may be used to help someone out there who is struggling with mental health issues.”

*Julie T., 8th grade Houston, TX*

“I learned how to effectively educate an audience on something that may be seen as controversial, in a way that challenges as well as considers other points of views for the topic of interest. I also discovered that my topic is actually something I am really passionate about and would like to consider further studies with.”

*Sarah C., 11th grade, Charlotte, NC*

“I have learned that even the best of heroes need help, too.”

*Maya P., 8th grade, Charleston, SC*

“To me the most meaningful part was to present [my project] even though I don't like to present. Because it's important to share the information and educate people.”

*Alexandra T., 7th grade, Baltimore, MD*



“From doing the Milton Wolf project, I learned to be grateful for what I have and being alive, as well as healthy. There are so many babies that die, including the mother. I'm glad I am healthy and from now on I will do all I can to tell people about [maternal mortality].”

*Sarasi G., 8th grade, Rockville, MD*

## What their teachers told us

“This worked because it made my students look more locally for solutions and leaders, as well as engaged them with their community. It helped the presentation and public speaking skills, too.”

*Amanda Stockett, English, Charlotte, NC*

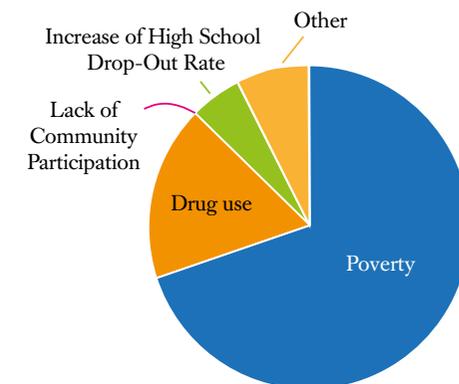
“The students showed the following strengths during the project: - eagerness to complete the project - positivism to overcome challenges - worked hard and met with me after school for extra help.”

*Ana Serro, Social Studies, Newark, NJ*

“This project opportunity opened the eyes of my students. They were able to really connect with global issues.”

*Jerome Price, History, Rockville, MD*

## Community Problem Survey





*Seminars in Columbia, South Carolina and Houston, Texas*



## Centropa's Hamburg office

**B**orn in Communist East Berlin, Fabian Ruehle and his family immigrated to West Berlin shortly before the fall of Communism. Fabian earned a master's degree in history from Rutgers University in New Jersey and Berlin's Free University, then worked in the US Embassy and at American Jewish Committee before coming to us in 2008.

Fabian directs our European public school programs and also acts as our liaison to German government ministries and foundations.

He is ably assisted by Maximilian von Schoeler, who earned a master's degree in Holocaust Communication in Berlin and worked in the online digital archives at the Free University. Magdalena Farnesi, a graduate of Central Europe University in Budapest with a degree in Jewish Studies, arranges all the logistical operations for the seminars we hold in nine European countries.

Centropa's Hamburg office generates websites and content for one of our largest projects, Trans.History, which focuses on schools in Ukraine and Moldova, and brings on board our most innovative teachers from Poland and Germany to work with Ukrainians and Moldovans, side by side.

Fabian also oversees our programs in the western Balkans (Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Macedonia), Greece, Poland, and Lithuania, and all of our German teachers also work with Fabian's team.



*Magdalena Farnesi, Maximilian von Schoeler, and Fabian Ruehle.*

# Trans.History: Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Germany



Since 2016, Fabian's team has received some of our most substantial grants from the German Foreign Office, specifically to bring Holocaust education and nurture civil society projects in Ukraine and Moldova. Centropa is uniquely placed to receive this support because between 2000 and 2007 we conducted more interviews in these countries than any other in our network, and we have created a library of multimedia films, online biographies, and a website in Ukrainian and Russian, as well as English and Romanian (which many Moldovans speak as a first language). Not only that, but Fabian's team recruited some of our most energetic school directors and teachers from Poland and Germany to work alongside our Ukrainian and Moldovan educators, and we are very grateful indeed to them, and to the cities of Mannheim and Bonn, where teachers, schools, and politicians have supported our ongoing programs.

"The Trans.History project is great for boosting our knowledge of 20th century European history, and helps us explore, through personal stories, how Jews lived in Ukraine as well as the horrors that came to them in the Holocaust. Your personal films and the online testimonies of the survivors are invaluable for teachers and students alike. Best of all, it's all right there on a single website. About your seminar: I absolutely loved the atmosphere of creativity, of sharing, and having German, Polish, and Moldovan teachers work with us. Without any doubt, everyone got something meaningful out of working together."

*Inna Lytvyn, English, Kyiv, Ukraine*

## Ukraine and its troubled history



For anyone interested in Eastern Europe, antisemitism, and tolerance issues, Ukraine makes a fascinating study. While there are extreme rightists (especially in the west of the country), there is still more interest in Jewish history and teaching of the Holocaust here than almost anywhere else we work, and our data backs us up: whenever we offer a seminar for up to 50 teachers, nearly 200 Ukrainians apply. When we hold competitions on Jewish history, scores of teachers and their students send in submissions. And when we made our traveling exhibition on Jews in Ukraine, more than

18 schools asked to show it in its first two years (2016 and 2017). We sent it to nine cities in 2018 and we have a waiting list for 2019 and 2020.

All told, from 2015 until 2018, we have held a total of five seminars in Ukraine and they have been attended by 180 teachers, museum educators, and civil society activists. Those teachers work in a total of 64 towns and cities, 40% of which have less than 25,000 residents.



Top row: the Oriyana Lyceum in Kyiv hosted our Ukrainian Jewish Album exhibition and 43 history students acted as guides and docents for other students and a parents' night, as well. Bottom row: our seminar in Lviv/Lwów/Lemberg for more than 40 teachers. We toured the old Jewish quarter and teachers made presentations on lesson plans they have used in class.



## In Moldova



*On this page and the opposite page, students acting as guides and giving interviews during a Centropa exhibition in Chisinau.*

Moldova is another country that suffered immense pain in the 20th century. Most of today's Moldova had been the Russian province of Bessarabia before the collapse of the Romanovs' empire. Then Moldova became part of Romania in 1918, which lasted until the Soviets took the region in 1940. A year later, the Romanians and Germans stormed through the region, slaughtering tens of thousands of Jews while the Romanian government herded Jews into the infamous Transnistria concentration camps. The Soviets returned in 1944 and remained for half a century before Moldova attained its independence in 1991. Since then, Moldova has had a difficult time, indeed, and is now the poorest country in Europe.

Even though our Moldovan teachers earn less than \$10,000 annually, they are among the most engaged in our network, and although there are very few Jews in Moldova today, Jewish NGOs like ICTPD, Irina Shikhova of

the Jewish Museum, and the Jewish Community itself are reliable partners in the region, helping recruit public school teachers, arranging the showing of our Moldovan exhibition, and following up with teachers to help them with their lesson plans.

Our traveling exhibition is based on the interviews we made in Moldova, and we offer two multimedia films based on those interviews. With a website teachers and students can draw on, we now offer everything a classroom teacher needs for Holocaust education, and the photographs taken here—by Alexandra Copitman—tell us much about how students and teachers alike have become engaged, active, and genuinely interested in Moldova's Jewish history.



# Bonn



*As we have established in this section on our Trans.History program, we are bringing Holocaust education to Ukraine and Moldova in unprecedented ways, and that accounts for our success. The fact that we have our best Polish and German teachers work alongside them and share not only lesson plans but also the way a teacher can deal with difficult subjects, gives our Ukrainian and Moldovan teachers the skills to tackle these issues themselves.*

*One of the highlights of our Trans.History year in 2018 was to bring some of our best Ukrainian and Moldovan educators to the German city of Bonn, where they visited classrooms and museums, met with German teachers, historians, NGO representatives, and education specialists, and learned how to create Jewish walking tours of their cities.*

# The experts we rely on in our Trans.History network



*Gottfried Becker is the retired director of one of Mannheim's leading high schools. He now heads the Mannheim Youth Academy.*



*Michael Heitz, an English and history teacher in Sinsheim, is one of our most active teachers. He works closely with Ukrainian and Moldovan teachers on using Centropa materials in the classroom.*



*Kirstin Lakeberg teaches English in a comprehensive school in Bonn and cooperates with our teachers in Greece, Czech Republic, Poland, and Bosnia, as well as in Moldova and Ukraine.*



*Marla and Jay Osborn run the Ukrainian NGO "Rohatyn Jewish Heritage." In the above photo, they are giving a guided tour of the Jewish cemetery of Rohatyn to educators from Germany, Moldova, and Ukraine.*



*Prof. Anatolii Podolskyi, based in Kyiv, heads the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies, and provides lectures and workshops during our seminars in Ukraine.*



*Prof. Maksim Gon teaches Holocaust history at Rivne State University and gives historical lectures during our seminars in Ukraine and Moldova. He founded the NGO Mnemonics in Rivne, our main partner in Ukraine.*



*Christian Herrmann is a noted photographer from Cologne, has documented a great many cemeteries and synagogues in Ukraine and Moldova, and gives workshops on photographing Jewish sites.*



*Natalia Ivchyk and Petro Dolhanov work for our Ukrainian partner, the NGO Mnemonics and act as our regional coordinators and along with Maksim, serve as historical advisors.*



*Based in Chisinau, Moldova, Galina Kargher is Director of the International Center for Training and Professional Development (ICTPD). Galina and her team—Roman Odesschii and Irina Shikhova—are our local partners for our Moldovan programs.*



*Since 2017, Roman Odesschii of ICTPD has been coordinating the logistics for our Moldovan education program.*



*Irina Shikhova, of the Jewish Museum in Chisinau, has contributed to our Moldovan exhibition, and she regularly meets teachers and students for workshops and presentations on Moldova's Jewish history, and uses Centropa tools in class.*

## Germany programs

Chances are, unless you are a football—OK, soccer to most of you—fanatic, you don't know the name of Hoffenheim. But if you do know football then you know one of the best professional teams in Germany: TSG Hoffenheim. Before they join the pro team, many of their youth players study in the local high school in nearby Sinsheim. Michael Heitz, one of Centropa's most enthusiastic history teachers working at that school, told us this story:

Back in the 1930s, there were only 16 Jews in Hoffenheim, and by the end of the war, there were two left alive: Menachem and Fred Meyer, two brothers who survived, although their parents did not. After the war, Fred turned his back on religion, emigrated to the US, and became a leading scientist at NASA. Menachem, on the other hand, went to Israel, received a doctorate in education, and spent his life working with children and practicing his Judaism daily.

Clearly, here was a story worth telling. And who better to tell it than the only Israeli teenager playing for TG Hoffenheim and one of Michael's best students.

Meet 17-year-old Ilay Elmki. When we told Ilay the story of Menachem Meyer, he immediately volunteered to narrate the story in a video that we'd shoot with him. Can you narrate for us in German, we asked. He laughed. "Of course," he said with all the confidence a star player has in abundance, "and I'll do it in Hebrew, so kids my age in Israel can watch it. And I'll narrate it in English for you, too."

Who were we to argue? Not only did Ilay help us make one of our most compelling and deeply moving films, but the entire venture was underwritten by the family foundation of Dietmar Hopp, who had grown up in Hoffenheim and is one of the co-founders of SAP software. All through 2018 and 2019, we have been showing this film throughout Germany and Israel and, whenever he can, Ilay Skypes in to speak with his fellow students. The film has become so successful that it was featured in several large newspapers and even on German television.



onrad-Adenauer-Stiftung



# Austria

During the postwar decades, Austria earned the well-deserved reputation as a country that had forgotten well and remembered badly. Not only was restitution to victims of the Holocaust slow in coming, the subject was rarely mentioned in schools. Then came the election of Kurt Waldheim as president in 1986—a man who, just like his country, had “forgotten” his wartime past.

Although he would turn over in his grave at the thought of it, it was the Waldheim controversy that hemorrhaged up tens of thousands of family secrets as the press began running documentaries and interviews in print, on the radio and on television, while one school teacher after another began devising ways of bringing Holocaust education to the schools throughout the country.

Today there are excellent educational programs at the Mauthausen Concentration Camp; another outgrowth has been the creation of a national Holocaust curriculum, *Erinnern.at*. The National Fund for Victims of National Socialism takes a different approach by offering grants to organizations that bring Holocaust education programs to schools throughout the country.

Centropa does exactly that and we offer two things no one else can: meetings with Austrian Holocaust survivors we interviewed over the years, and an online website filled with their stories and pictures for students to delve into and create projects of their own.

That is what we see in the photographs in this section: Helga Kinsky was born in Vienna and survived Theresienstadt and Auschwitz. Helga settled in England, lived abroad with her husband as she raised two daughters, returned to Vienna in 1957, and has been an active voice for human rights ever since. Gracious with the press and students alike, Helga is seen here

with students in the Vienna International School, where she spent an afternoon.



*The picture on this page was taken in the Rahlgasse school, which before 1938 was an upper middle class girls' school, and more than 20% of the students were Jewish. Today, Rahlgasse is co-ed and maintains its high academic ratings. Thanks to history teacher Maria Finz-Lucchi, her students can be seen here with Centropa staffers exploring our German-language Vienna interviews and preparing presentations they will use in their coursework.*



The Balkans:

# Centropa in North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia, Slovenia, and Croatia

In April 1941, Germany and its allies conquered and dismembered Yugoslavia. Over 67,000 of the country's 82,000 Jews were subsequently murdered—approximately 81% of the Jewish population.

It took Jews in the western Balkans 450 years to build their communities. It took the Germans and their allies less than 40 months to destroy them.

The Holocaust in Yugoslavia was coded as "Final Solution" in Hungary. In January 1942, Hungarian troops carried out a pogrom against Jews and Serbs in Novi Sad. Then, in the spring of 1942, the Hungarians pushed deported most of the Jews of Yugoslavia directly to the factories—Birkenau.

Compared to other, the Balkans who were not as well organized and part of Europe were seen as far more humane, allowed Jews to stay, and did not deport them. The Balkans, however, capitulated in September 1941 and a dark fate came to those Jews who did not flee.

In Germany-occupied Serbia, antisemitism was moderate. Serbian Jewish men were rounded up by the thousands and shot in firing squads. Women and children were gathered in a concentration camp set up in the Belgrade Ghetto of Sremska. Then in April 1942 they were murdered in gas vans.

Bulgaria occupied Macedonia, where Bulgarian occupying forces ambushed persecuted Jews in Skopje, Bitola, Ohrid, and other cities. They were interned in March 1941 and moved over to the Germans for deportation to the Nazi death camp of Treblinka in German-occupied Poland.

## Who we partner with in Southeast Europe

Holocaust Memorial Center of North Macedonia | Foreign Ministry of North Macedonia | Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) in Croatia | Hugo Kon School, Zagreb | Ministry of Education, Serbia | National Education Institute of Slovenia

	Teachers attending Centropa seminars in 2018	Total number of teachers who have attended our workshops and seminars	In 2018, Centropa Balkan exhibitions were seen by	Total number of exhibition visitors since 2015
North Macedonia	38	172	5,000	9,900
Serbia	30	88	1,300	4,200
Croatia	44	60	100	100
Bosnia	5	29	90	1,200
Slovenia	40	55	0	400

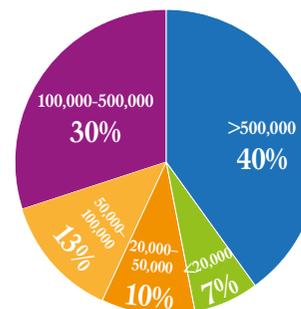
There is not a teenager in high school in the western Balkans today who even went to kindergarten in a country called Yugoslavia. Between 1991 and 1999, that country tore itself apart in a series of wars that locals and historians will argue over for decades, if not centuries. The question is: how can one teach the Holocaust in a region where the wounds of the 1990s are this fresh, this painful? And what in Balkan history can tie these disparate nations together?

The answer will surprise you, because the answer to both questions have to do with the Jewish history of the Balkans. During the Ottoman centuries, and beginning just after 1492, Spanish speaking, caftan-wearing Jews found refuge here after their expulsion from Spain, and they brought with them the trades and skills that made them an integral part of Balkan society: doctors, pharmacists, bookbinders, money lenders, tinsmiths and textile merchants.

The Ottomans and Austrians vacated the region after 1918 and Yugoslavia came into being, but over ninety percent of its Jews were murdered during the Holocaust or fled the region afterwards. Even with so few Jews still in

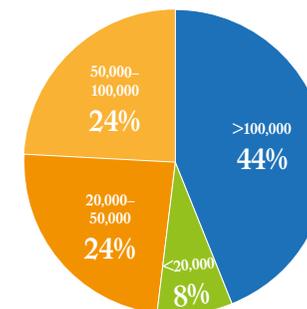
### 88 teachers in Serbia

have gone through our programs. A view of the size of their cities.



### 172 teachers in North Macedonia

who have gone through our programs come from cities with populations of ...



the region, starting in 2000, Centropa conducted well over 120 interviews here (and that includes Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey) and digitized over 3,500 family pictures. Those interviews have given us a treasure chest of stories and images we can use in any of the Balkan states to teach about Jewish history in the region and the Holocaust, and we have now created multimedia films set in each of these countries, films that students love, since they are about their countries, their cities. We also use the story of La Benevolencija, the non-sectarian humanitarian aid society up inside Sarajevo's last standing synagogue during the siege of the city in the 1990s.

In late 2017, we created two versions of our traveling exhibition, *The Lost World of the Balkan Sephardim*, with photographs and stories taken from our archive. One of these exhibitions is in Macedonian, the other is in Serbian/English, and the exhibition has proven an ideal vehicle for teachers to use with their students—and for students to share their own knowledge with others. In 2018, those exhibitions traveled to nine cities in Bosnia, Serbia and North Macedonia.

Two of our favorite images from 2018 were taken in North Macedonia and both say something about how effective our teachers there are. Boris Kaeski took the picture on the top in the Marko Cepenkov Cultural Center of Prilep, a tobacco-growing town of some sixty thousand. We see a student taking his parents through the exhibition on opening night of *The Lost World of the Balkan Sephardim*, and he is explaining Balkan Jewish history to them.

As we can see, mom looks to be dutifully interested. But Dad isn't concentrating on the exhibition. Dad has that look on his face teachers can always spot in a parent. It's called the "my-son-knows-this stuff?" look. He is trying to muffle it, but what still comes through is a mixture of surprise and, yes, pride.

In the other picture, the man in the suit simply cannot suppress his delight. After all, he is one of the US State Department's Balkan specialists, his name is Jess Baily and he is America's ambassador to North Macedonia. A fifteen-year-old student from a high school in Skopje walks Ambassador Baily through the same exhibition that was in Prilep, but here it is displayed in the North Macedonian Foreign Ministry in Skopje, and the ministry's official photographer, Oliver Aceav, sent us this image. And since Ambassador Baily and his team had been sponsoring North Macedonian teachers at Centropa seminars over the previous four years, he was now face-to-face with one of the outcomes of those seminars—a fully engaged, knowledgeable teenager who was speaking to him about the Balkan Sephardim.

As we have shown on several other pages in this annual report, these are the pictures that mean the most to us, and if you are passionate about education, if you are concerned about combatting ignorance, Holocaust denial, and antisemitism, then pictures like this show you what happens when we bring Jewish history to life—and make it relevant. And personal. And real.



Providing thousands of students and their teachers with exactly what they need: films, exhibitions, and websites in their languages—all about the Balkan Sephardim.



*What teachers have told us time and again is, "Help my students find the 'me' in your stories." That is why we took some of the most compelling Centropa interviews from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Turkey, North Macedonia, and Greece, and turned them into multimedia films that teachers and students can easily access.*



# Working with those who make a difference in Southeast Europe



*In the photo left, we see Goran Sadikarijo (center), CEO of the Holocaust Memorial Centre in Skopje, and it is thanks to Goran and his team that we have connected with 172 teachers in 19 cities and towns throughout North Macedonia. In the center stands Loranda Miletic of Croatia's Education and Teacher Training Agency. Loranda is speaking to a gathering of twenty-five Serbian, Croatian, Slovene, Bosnian, and North Macedonian teachers, while, on the right, Biljana Stojanovic of Serbia's Ministry of Education is speaking at the same conference.*

## North Macedonia



*Daniela Sterjova, an English teacher in Skopje, has been coordinating for us since 2014.*

## Slovenia



*Damjan Snoj is Deputy Headmaster at a school outside of Ljubljana. He teaches history and geography, and has been our coordinator since 2016.*

## Croatia



*Tomislav Simic teaches history at the Hugo Kon Jewish school in Zagreb. He has been our Croatian coordinator since 2017.*

## Bosnia and Herzegovina



*Anna Kozemjakin has been our coordinator in Sarajevo since 2017. She also volunteers for the Jewish community and the Inter-religious Council of Bosnia Hercegovina.*

## Serbia



*Jelena Krucicanin, a Serbian language and literature teacher in Belgrade, has been coordinating for us in Serbia since 2018.*

## Seminars where teachers learn from each other



*Pictures left were taken during our seminars in Belgrade and in Skopje. In Skopje, we rely on the Holocaust Memorial Centre, the largest Holocaust Museum in southern Europe, and at all our Balkan seminars we bring together teachers from North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia.*



“I will use your movie, *Survival in Sarajevo*, with my eighth-grade students when teaching about the wars in ex-Yugoslavia in the 1990’s. This topic is very sensitive, and it is not easy to work on such a topic with students. This educational story will contribute to breaking some prejudices about other nations that are deeply embedded among many people of our own nation.”

*Dragana Benic, History, Novi Sad, Serbia*

“Our students must realize that there are other cultures living in their country. Having resources to show them and make them understand that diversity is important is of great value for teachers. I’ve been using the films and photos from the first day I was introduced to Centropa and my students love them. But other teachers and their experiences are what make Centropa’s seminars amazing. We get to learn from each other and, in the end, we have developed lesson plans that we can use when we lack inspiration.”

*Branka Dimevska Koceva, History and Civic education, Skopje, Macedonia*

“By promoting Holocaust education and the culture of remembrance, Centropa offers a treasure of ideas which could be used when working with students on developing critical thinking, tolerance, cooperation, empathy, solidarity, and accepting diversity.”

*Violeta Zivkovic, Serbian language, Belgrade, Serbia*

“Centropa provides plenty of materials that we can use at school with our students. The film *El Otro Camino* is excellent for getting to know the history of Europe, the Balkans, and the history of the Sephardic Jews at the time when Columbus discovered America. The film about Hana Gasic provides an excellent basis for working on the topic of tolerance and multiculturalism, something that is gradually disappearing in our region.”

*Svetlana Novicic, History, Lazarevac, Serbia*

## Семејството Калеф



...и својот отац, а потоа  
...и улица Тополце. Тој ден  
...и ја сагледавме. На н  
...и ја сагледавме. На н  
...и ја сагледавме. На н  
...и ја сагледавме. На н

## Белград

1930-тите

...и ја сагледавме. На н  
...и ја сагледавме. На н  
...и ја сагледавме. На н  
...и ја сагледавме. На н



## Poland and Lithuania

**W**hen Ranana Kleinstein was eight years old in 1941, she and her family lived in the town of Vilkaviskis. By the time she was 11, she and her mother had spent three years taking refuge with strangers, praying no one would turn them in to the Germans and their local collaborators, who had murdered 190,000 Jews, including Ranana's father and brother. Thanks to the Strimatis family, the two women did survive, and managed to put their lives back together in the years and decades that followed. When, in the 1980s, Ranana heard about Yad Vashem and its Righteous Gentile Award, she sent in all the documentation she could muster and, a few months later, the Strimatis family did indeed receive their certificate.

Zhanna Litinskaya interviewed Ranana for us in 2005 and in 2014 we worked closely with Ranana, pictured above, to create a multimedia film that our team in Lithuania could use in schools throughout the country. Then the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry provided the funding to create an exhibition based on all 28 of our Lithuanian interviews, and that exhibition has now been shown in 21 schools, cultural centers, and libraries throughout the country.

This is how we preserve Jewish memory. This is how we bring Jewish history to schools throughout Lithuania.

We held one seminar in 2018 for 30 Lithuanian teachers, and students throughout the country submitted projects based on what they learned from the Centropa website.

### Lithuania

Total number of Centropa interviews conducted in Lithuania: **28**

Total number of annotated photographs and documents: **441**

Educational programs in Lithuania began: **2011**

Total number of active teachers: **186**

Number of Lithuanian teachers who attended our summer academies: **18**





*Pictured left: a teacher viewing our Lithuanian exhibition during a teachers' seminar, and right, teachers in our December 2018 seminar in Vilnius. On the bottom row, left: history teacher from Vilnius, Simonas Jurkstaitis, who attended our 2017 Summer Academy, shares his ideas on how he uses Centropa's exhibition in his school. Bottom right: 96-year-old Fania Brantorskaya, who fought with the partisans and provided us with one of our most gripping interviews, speaking at our Vilnius seminar. Fania has always been willing to speak with classroom teachers about what she went through during the war.*

**W**hen Communism fell in Poland in 1989 its economy was in shambles. State socialism had seen to it that only a tiny percentage of the country's businesses were in private hands, yet most of its agriculture belonged to smallholders who could never compete in a suddenly open market. More relevant to us at Centropa was that in the late 1980s it was hard to find a Holocaust memorial or Jewish cemetery that had not been decimated or desecrated—and this in a country where Jews were not even a statistical anomaly.

How things change. The first democratically elected governments in Poland privatized and liberalized the economy and soon the average family began to feel their standard of living rising. Joining NATO and the European Union gave Poles a sense of belonging, and today we see the most confident generation of young Poles the country has seen in decades, if not centuries.

Jewish life has returned, as well. Families who had shunned their identity have returned to the fold, and lively community centers in Krakow and Warsaw offer programs for children and adults alike. A mammoth Jewish museum, POLIN, now stands in the center of Warsaw, and Centropa cooperates with the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow on programs for high school teachers and their students.

Polish teachers today are a very different breed than they were 30 years ago, and in villages, towns, and cities, Polish educators and their students are keen to learn about their country's—and, more important, their town's—Jewish history. That is why since 2011 more than 400 teachers have applied to come to our seminars and we have been able to accommodate half of them. With 36 Polish teachers having attended our international summer programs, we now have a cadre of powerhouse educators who help turn on the lights for teenagers every year.

Having great and impassioned teachers is one thing; watching Polish teenagers compete in video and civil society projects is something else. Whenever we visit Poland, students are keen to show us the projects and programs they've created where they learned of the Jewish histories that, until now, had been forgotten for half a century.

## **Poland**

Total number of Centropa interviews conducted in Poland: **68**

Total number of annotated photographs and documents: **1,206**

Educational programs in Poland began: **2011**

Total number of active teachers: **204**

Number of Polish teachers who attended our summer academies: **36**





*Top row: Built in the 1700s, a magnificent, hand-painted synagogue stood in the shtetl of Gwozdziec, but it was destroyed when fire swept the mostly wooden town during the First World War. The synagogue roof was lovingly recreated with original tools and it now stands proudly in the POLIN Museum in Warsaw, where we bring our teachers during seminars. On the right, high school students from Krakow work on a civil society project together.*

*Below, left and right, more than 30 Polish teachers gather in Warsaw to make presentations to each other on lesson plans that worked best for them in their classrooms.*



## Our partners in Lithuania and Poland



*Helise Lieberman, Director of the Centrum Taubego in Warsaw, has helped bring Warsaw's Jewish history alive for our seminar participants during our conferences there.*



*Jakub Nowakowski is the director of the Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow and oversees lively cultural program for tens of thousands of visitors each year.*



*Katarzyna Kotula works as Education Assistant at the Galicia Jewish Museum and coordinates all of Centropa's programs in Poland.*



*Dominika Pyszowska works for the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Warsaw. Teaming up with Fabian and Katarzyna, she has been immensely helpful in recruiting speakers and teachers for us in Poland.*



*Gintare Liorancaite has been our coordinator in Lithuania for the past five years, arranging seminars, recruiting teachers to attend them, and sending our exhibition around to 22 venues.*



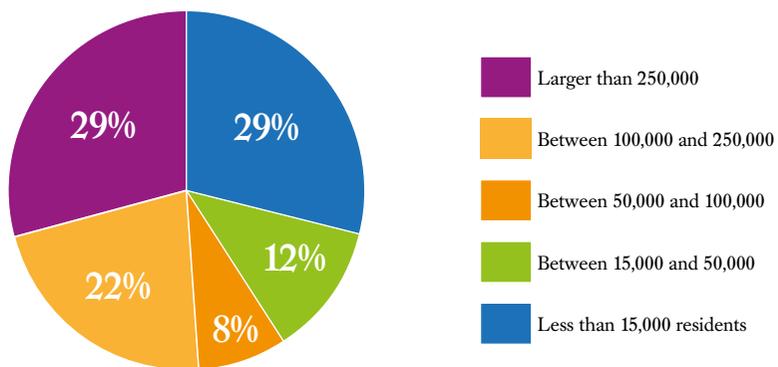
*Ronaldas Racinskas is the director of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. Ronaldas has spoken at several of our seminars in Lithuania.*



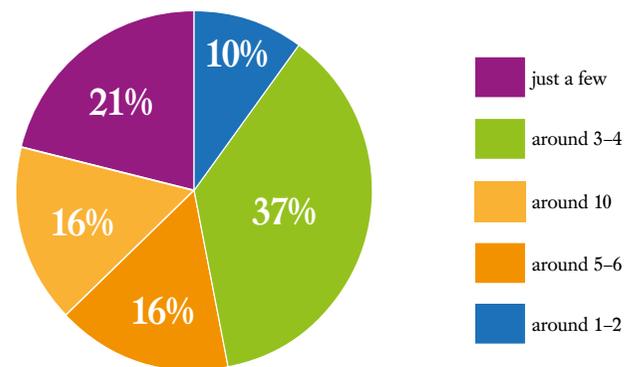
*Faina Kukhiansky is the Chairwoman of the Lithuanian Jewish Community. Here she speaks to 30 Lithuanian teachers during a Centropa training seminar in Vilnius.*

# Data from our Polish teachers

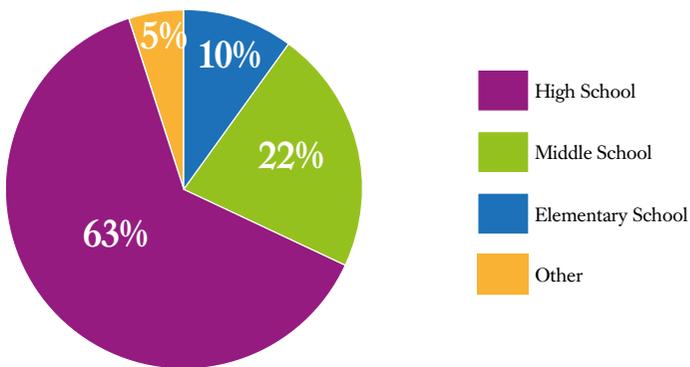
Please tell us about your town and the approximate population



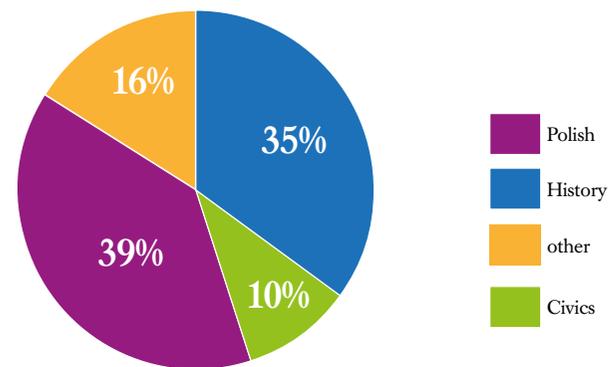
How many class hours do you normally give to Centropa lessons per year?



Do you teach in an elementary, middle or high school?



Which lessons do you use Centropa in?



# Centropa's Budapest Office

**M**arcell Kenesei came to us in 2011 and, aside from being our deputy director, Marcell now heads our Budapest office of four, which operates in the Mozaik Hub, a community workspace for young Jewish organizations.

Centropa's Budapest office is the headquarters for all our public school programs in Hungary, as well as a special ongoing project in Visegrad countries (Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland). Our Budapest office is also the home of CJN—the Centropa Jewish Network of European Schools—as well as our programs for schools throughout Israel.



*Dr. Szilvia Czinger, Director of Café Centropa Budapest and coordinator of Hungarian educational programs, Bence Lukács, Tech Director, Marcell Kenesei, Director of Hungarian, Israeli and European Jewish Networks, Borbala Pal, Assistant Director, Hungary office.*

## Hungary in 2018:

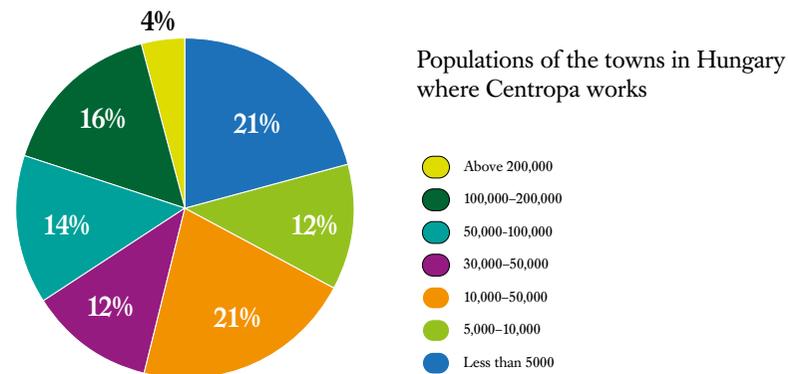
Schools: **125**

Cities and towns: **50**

Teachers: **90** active, **127** less active

## What we accomplished in Hungary in 2018

- we conducted three seminars for **88** teachers
- in our Common Ground program, which brings together students from Roma, Christian, and Jewish students in rural and urban, poor and well-off neighborhoods: **9** cooperative projects by **291** students and **29** teachers in **21** educational institutions in **15** municipalities
- our traveling exhibition, which is based on our Hungarian interviews, traveled to four schools around the country, and our teachers trained **74** student guides in those schools. Approximately **1,750** students and parents came to view it.
- we held **10** Café Centropa events for the Holocaust survivors we interviewed and invited a total of **200** students to meet with and learn from them.



## In Hungary

Centropa was founded in Vienna and Budapest in 2000. Thanks to government support, in 2005 we launched a fully integrated Hungarian language website, which began drawing teachers from all over the country. Between 2005 and 2008, we spent most of our time visiting schools and asking teachers what they needed to teach Holocaust and, just as importantly, to engage their students in Hungary's Jewish history. After all, there is not a town or village in Hungary that does not have a Jewish story, most of which came to murderous ends in 1944. In fact, it was our Hungarian teachers who came up with the idea of holding competitions on Our Town's Jewish History, which has proven to be one of our most successful student programs anywhere.

Proof of our success is that well more than 20,000 unique visitors come to our Hungarian website annually to explore our database and watch our films, and because Centropa is so accessible, 51 teachers use Centropa in class every year. In 2018, we sent our enormous exhibition—all based on the pictures and stories we've collected in Hungary—to four schools around the country. This exhibition has been traveling since 2011, and has been shown in a total of 47 schools, libraries and cultural centers.

In 2018 we held three seminars in Hungary, and in each case, we brought our participants to visit the local synagogue (something most of them have never done), and we encourage them to bring their students in follow up visits, too.

We are perhaps most proud of our Common Ground program, which reaches into impoverished eastern Hungary and into schools with majority Roma student populations, connecting them to their counterparts in Hungary's most elite schools in Budapest. We even bring the Roma students to visit their counterparts in Budapest.



Add to that the fact that we bring in high school classes to meet our Holocaust survivors (we did this ten times in 2018), and it becomes clear Centropa is offering something unique to Hungary: as a content provider online and through our exhibition, as well as a convener for students and teachers.



*Our Hungarian teachers at seminars in Budapest and Győr. Upper right: students creating a video walking tour of Budapest.*





## Common Ground: bringing Roma students into the mainstream

“One thing that meant the most to me: it is possible to introduce this subject to students in a way that genuinely engages them. I would know: I have watched it happen in my own class.”

*Katalin Feketéné Gaál, History, Győr.*

“I left your seminar with a lesson plan that I made myself, including sources, online links, and other material, as well as program ideas, so not only did my soul get an emotional boost by working alongside other teachers, but I could immediately start putting to use all I gained this weekend.”

*Eszter Mimich, English, Budapest*

“Participating in the Common Ground program meant many things for me: new experiences, possibility for the students to meet with students coming from other backgrounds, and also to create projects together. We could meet with a school group which is completely different than ours, something we can’t experience anywhere else. Moreover, this project also contributed to the good name of our school, and it also involved some of the parents, something we have not experienced in such a way before. All these aspects have a good effect on our students, making school life more complex, and also fun.”

*Virág Eszter Majsai, History, Budapest*

# Our Visegrad program in Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland



- **52** teachers in **29** schools took part
- we launched a video making competition on Our Town's Jewish History, which drew **28** groups totaling **105** children and **29** teachers from **24** towns located in 4 countries
- we held a final event in Budapest for nearly **300** Slovak, Czech, Hungarian and Polish students and teachers, all of whom actively participated in our projects

These four countries in the heart of Central Europe share more than just common borders with each other. They share a common heritage, a fluidity of ideas, and a sense of belonging to a greater whole. Once part of the Habsburg Empire, they enjoyed only two decades of interwar independence before the Second World War that were then followed by four decades of Communist rule.

In the Europe that was reborn after 1989, the leaders of these four countries began meeting regularly, and in 1993 they established the Visegrad Group, which met in the ancient Hungarian city of Visegrad overlooking the Danube. Seven years later, they founded the Visegrad Fund, and it has been providing grants, scholarships, and residencies, all with a focus on supporting innovative ideas that bring the citizens of this region together.

Centropa has developed a series of programs we carry out with teachers, civil society activists, and Jewish communities in these countries and, with support from the Visegrad Fund, we have been holding school competitions on matters ranging from civil society in war-torn Bosnia to our most recent program, a video competition on Our Town's Jewish History.





*Children love competitions. And children really, really love to win, as did Monika Rozpondek's class from the only school in Kamińskie Młyny, a Polish village of less than 500 residents. These children researched, wrote about, shot, and edited their own video on the Jewish history of nearby Częstochowa, and they were thrilled that they beat out the school in Lublinec, which they told us was a really big city (it has 23,000 residents).*

# CJN: the Centropa Jewish Network of European Schools

## CJN by the numbers

Schools: **28**

Countries: **23**

Teachers: **50** active teachers and **36** less active

## Highlights of 2018

### Student competition for Jewish schools in Europe

- **52** videos from **11** schools in **10** countries, which were researched, edited and produced by a total of **207** students
- The **4** competition categories were: Virtual Jewish Cookbook, My Community, Family History, Jewish Holidays

### Workshop in Zurich

- In January 2018, we visited the Noam Jewish School in Zurich, and organized a one-day workshop about Centropa for **40** teachers working in Swiss Jewish day schools, youth groups and Hebrew schools

### Centropa Summer Academy 2018

- **9** teachers from the CJN network took part in our annual summer program for teachers, which we held in Berlin

### Close cooperation with the National Library of Israel

- In August we visited the National Library of Israel to discuss our partnership. The NLI already uses Centropa materials in their Resource Kits.



Now that it has been thirty years since Communism fell in Central Europe, we can assess how Jewish communal life has developed since the fall of the Berlin Wall. In the 1980s, there was exactly one Jewish school in the entire region—in Budapest—and it had but 12 students. Today, there are well over 30 Jewish schools in what had been Communist Europe, but just as important, there is no need to divide western, central, and eastern Europe from each other any longer. After all, if our teenagers—who weren't even born in the 20th century—live on social media and pay no attention to borders, why should we?

Despite the rise in antisemitism in Europe, the overwhelming majority of Jews are staying put and those who wanted to emigrate did so in years past. Even if the numbers are quite small, Jewish communities in this region don't act small. And they have certainly thrown off that mantle of "last Jews" and "remnants" like a garment that no longer fits. Jewish youth clubs, summer camps, and university clubs all give young Jews a sense of identity, a sense of belonging.

That is where we come in. CJN—the Centropa Jewish Network of European Jewish Schools, is both a content provider as well as a convener for teachers in these schools. We work closely with The Taube Foundation, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Arachim and the Ronald S Lauder Foundation, and every year we bring teachers together from Stockholm and Madrid, Bucharest and Kyiv, Vilnius and Rome, Amsterdam and Budapest—plus another dozen cities.

Judging by the older Jewish schools in Europe—in Amsterdam, Athens and Istanbul, for instance—we know that the leadership of Europe's Jewish communities is sitting in Jewish schools today, and thanks to our partners, our dedicated teachers and our own powerhouse team, we are working to give teachers the tools they need to connect their students to Jewish history and culture—and with each other.

"Learning about other schools: everyday life, dilemmas, and projects. Meeting enthusiastic people who are looking to share and create something together. Learning about Centropa: the people behind and the material there is. I felt the importance of having this group for schools around the world."

*Irit Levinas, Hebrew, Barcelona, Spain*

"I met a lot of nice people, had the chance to see their backgrounds and how their schools deal with different challenges. For the first time I realized what Centropa actually does...and I am absolutely excited. The Centropa films should be introduced in every Jewish school."

*Stephan Wernli, Principal, Zurich, Switzerland*

"I think the storytelling concept of Centropa is more than helpful to me as a teacher of several concepts. Students love it and are perfect for both individual research and group work."

*Diana Gherasimiu, History, Bucharest, Romania*

"It's not just different, it's unique. There is no other forum for European Jewish school teachers to share ideas and perspectives about European Jewish history, and in that sense also the future aspects of living as a Jew in Europe."

*Sheila Weintraub, Religion, Helsinki, Finland*



*Teachers sharing ideas with each other and in the bottom right photo, we see students in the Istanbul Jewish school preparing a Centropa project*



## With a network of 28 schools in 23 countries, we stay in touch with our teachers through a core team of academic advisors



*Lowell Blackman teaches English language in the Atid High School of Sciences in Lod, Israel. Being one of our most active veteran teachers, Lowell regularly uses Centropa materials, attends our seminars, and gives presentations about our methodologies. In 2018, he was the coordinator of the Family History category of the C.JN video competition.*



*Sami Levi works in the Ulus Jewish School in Istanbul, Turkey, as a Jewish Studies coordinator, where he develops a new, informal Jewish Studies curriculum. In 2018, he was the coordinator of the Jewish Holidays category of our C.JN video competition.*



*Sofija Paviuskaite teaches history and arts in the Sholem Aleichem Jewish School of Vilnius, Lithuania. She regularly attends our seminars and organizes cross-border projects with her students. In 2018, she was the coordinator of the My Community category of the C.JN video competition.*



*Viktoria Kadiuk teaches English language in the Educational Complex 141 „ORT“ in Kiev, Ukraine. She is one of the most active teachers in our network, taking part in Trans.History and European Jewish Network programs regularly. In 2018, she coordinated the Jewish Cookbook category of the C.JN video competition.*

# Centropa in Israel

Centropa began working in Israeli schools in 2011, and since then we have held twelve teacher seminars in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa. A total of 288 teachers have attended our seminars and workshops and, over the years, we have brought 79 Israelis to our summer programs in Europe. We have cooperated closely with the school administration of Tel Aviv in seven of its schools, as well as the Ministry of Education in Jerusalem.

In 2013, we began our most productive relationship: with the National Library of Israel. Together we have conducted four seminars at the NLI, where our teachers have watched our films, explored our databases, and then found relevant online materials in the NLI websites. We are proud to say that a major part of Centropa's digitized archive will make its home in the National Library, and together we will explore ways to bring our archive of stories and images to that many more schools.

Centropa has two goals in Israel: to bring stories of prewar and postwar European Jewish life to Israeli classrooms (and this is something not on offer otherwise) and, just as important, we want to bring Israelis to our summer programs. Here's why:

Around 30 of our Summer Academy participants each year teach in schools in Moldova, Macedonia, Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania—places where most of them have never knowingly met a Jew before, and certainly not an Israeli. And in former Communist countries, where Israel was demonized for decades, it's important to have Israeli teachers work with East Europeans, as the goal is to break stereotypes and forge genuine bonds. In several cases, our Israelis have created partnerships, and their students now create projects they share with each other.

## Israel in 2018

Schools: **44**

Cities and towns: **38**

Teachers: **40** active, **68** less active

## Our accomplishments in Israel in 2018:

- our Polish exhibition traveled to two schools, and attracted nearly **1,000** students and **140** adults (teachers and parents)
- we brought **10** Israelis to the Centropa Summer Academy in Berlin
- we continued to develop a close cooperation with the National Library of Israel and in August we visited NLI to discuss our partnership
- we began working with Ettie Abraham, one of our most innovative teachers, and Ettie now works as our coordinator in Israel.



*Ettie Abraham is a retired English language teacher in Kfar Saba, Israel. Since 2018, she has been coordinating our programs in Israel; she helps to recruit for seminars and summer academies, and organizes events for our exhibition on the Polish Jewry.*



“I often find that I spent a lot of time lecturing without using visual materials. In fact, frontal lecturing is alive and well in the Israeli educational system. The Centropa method has opened the door for teachers to expand these didactic methods to include our own creativity in our lessons, including the excellent videos you make. How refreshing it is to watch a film that isn’t only about destruction. These films really do work with my students.”

*Noa Cooper, English, Raanana*

“Centropa makes history interesting and brings it to life. Mention Holocaust to my students and they are going to say, ‘oh no, not again!’ But your wonderful short films make students watch and listen and they end up showing empathy to the people in them. The films are a trigger to make important discussions with the students and for them to make unique projects afterwards.”

*Victor Gurevich, History, Beer Yaakov*

“Centropa’s approach to the research of Jewish life in the 19th and 20th centuries is novel, different, and very much worth scaling up throughout schools in Israel. The online teacher guides under each film and interviews on the website let us use a rich array of authentic materials to teach history, civics, English, or values education. Centropa’s pedagogical approach is constructivist in that the organization encourages students to produce their own stories and to investigate their families’ history. In Israel, we pride ourselves on our innovation but too much of our educational programming is purely frontal. Here is a way that is far more interactive.”

*Dalia Eliaz, Teacher Trainer, Jerusalem*



*In 2018, Centropa’s Polish exhibition was shown in high schools in Kfar Saba and Tel Aviv, where students studied the stories online, then were able to use these Centropa biographies in their history classes.*

## The Centropa Summer Academy 2018



“It may be a cliché to say this, but it’s true: this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! I got to meet teachers from three different continents all working on the same subjects and it seems our object was to inspire each other to create great things for our students. Even though you return absolutely exhausted, your batteries are charged for the next school year. Stimulating talks and discussions, a week spent with inspiring people. Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge.”

*Karolina Morton, English, Wroclaw, Poland*

In July 2018, we brought a total of 82 teachers from 19 countries to Berlin. As always, our summer programs bring teachers to the very sites where 20th century history happened, offer them lectures and panel discussions by historians and journalists, and just as important, give them plenty of time to share best practices with each other and form partnerships they can activate during the school year.



*We turn the city into a classroom for teachers, and in Berlin we visited sites where history happened: in Jewish Berlin, Third Reich Berlin, Cold War Berlin.*



# Centropa's best friends: 2018 edition

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A huge thank you to all those friends and supporters who have made calls and connections for us in 2018

## The Centropa all-stars

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 Allan Reich, Chicago  
 Steve Lebowitz, Los Angeles  
 Deidre Berger, AJC Berlin  
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 Zsuzsanna Fritz, Bálint Jewish Community House

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## Austria



## Germany



## Other Countries



## Hungary



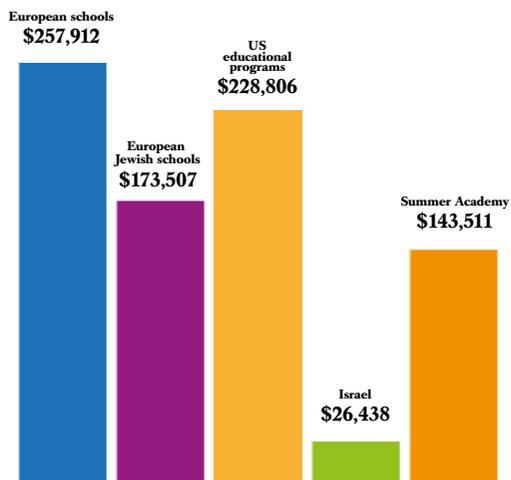
## International Organizations



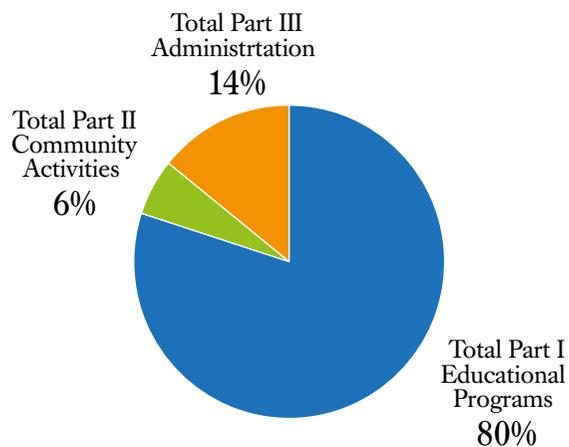
# Expenses 2018

Expenses 2018			Expenses 2018		
<i>Part I Educational programs</i>			<i>Part I Educational programs</i>		
<i>European schools</i>			<i>Israel</i>		
Staff	€92.852	\$109,565	Staff	€14.209	\$16,767
Honoraria for part-time coordinators in LT, PL, UA, MD, SRB, HR, BiH, SI, MK	€21.330	\$25,169	Website development - spent on Hebrew languages programs	€1.979	\$2,335
Website development—spent on all European programs	€7.421	\$8,757	Multimedia films for Israelis schools	€5.037	\$5,944
Multimedia films for European education	€18.890	\$22,290	Seminar costs	€1.180	\$1,392
Travelling exhibitions for EU educational programs	€9.458	\$11,161	Subtotal Israel educational programs	€22.405	\$26,438
Seminar costs, meals, seminar room, travel, hotel	€68.618	\$80,970			
Subtotal EU educational programs	€218.569	\$257,912	<i>Summer Academy 2018</i>		
			Centropa International Summer Academy transport, hotel, meals	€106.141	\$125,032
<i>European Jewish schools</i>			Publications	€13.339	\$15,740
Staff	€29.880	\$35,258	Website / server hosting English and German languages sites	€2.321	\$2,739
Part time assistants	€23.468	\$27,693	Subtotal International educational programs	€121.801	\$143,511
Salary: Vienna team's time devoted to EU Jewish programs	€26.569	\$31,351	<b>Total PART I Educational Program</b>	<b>€703.182</b>	<b>\$830,174</b>
Website development	€3.710	\$4,378			
Multimedia films for EU Jewish schools program	€10.704	\$12,631	<i>Part II: Community activities</i>		
Travelling exhibitions	€1.504	\$1,775	Receptions, lunches, in-house conferences	€2.118	\$2,500
Seminar costs	€51.204	\$60,421	Cafe Centropa: monthly events for Holocaust survivors, Vienna & Budapest	€53.553	\$63,192
Subtotal Jewish schools educational programs	€147.039	\$173,507	<b>Total PART II Community activities</b>	<b>€55.671</b>	<b>\$65,692</b>
<i>US educational programs</i>			<i>Part III: making Centropa work</i>		
Staff	€57.253	\$67,691	<i>Vienna administrative expenses</i>		
Salary: Vienna team's time devoted to our US educational program	€68.165	\$80,435	Rent and operating costs	€62.707	\$63,136
Website development—spent on all US programs	€11.131	\$13,135	Legal and accounting	€6.306	\$7,441
Multimedia films for US Education	€28.335	\$33,435	Administrative salaries	€40.057	\$47,267
Seminar costs, meals, seminar room, travel, hotel, materials, preparation	€28.484	\$34,110	Capital investments	€18.819	\$22,207
Subtotal US educational programs	€193.368	\$228,806	<b>Total PART III Administration</b>	<b>€127.889</b>	<b>\$140,051</b>
			<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>€886.742</b>	<b>\$1.035,917</b>

### 2018 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EXPENSES: \$830,174

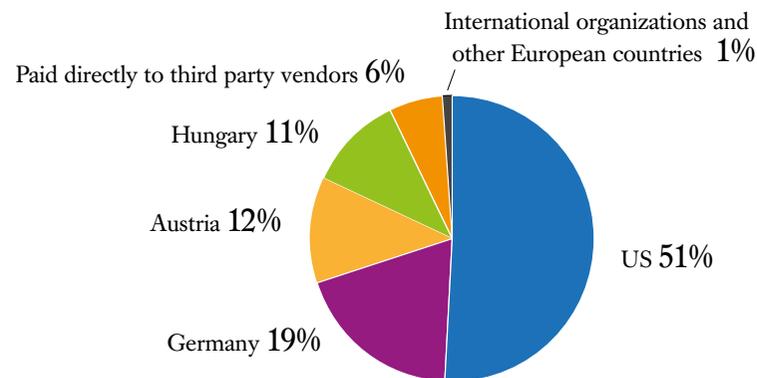


### EXPENSES: HOW WE SPENT IT



### Income 2018

US	€404.679	\$474,347
GERMANY	€147.306	\$173,821
AUSTRIA	€96.020	\$113,304
HUNGARY	€86.862	\$102,497
PAID DIRECTLY TO THIRD PARTY VENDORS	€44.918	\$53,003
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	€12.287	\$14,499
OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES	€1.678	\$1,980
BOOK SALES, SERVICES	€14.666	\$17,191
EXCHANGE RATE PROFIT, INTEREST	€1.430	\$1,688
<b>TOTAL INCOME 2018</b>	<b>€809.846</b>	<b>\$952,330</b>



# Staff



*Edward Serotta*

*Edward is a journalist, photographer, and filmmaker specializing in Jewish life in Central and Eastern Europe. Born in Savannah, Georgia, Edward has worked in Central Europe since 1985. Between 1996 and 1999, he produced three films for ABC News Nightline. Edward has published three books - Out of the Shadows, Survival in Sarajevo, and Jews, Germany, Memory. He has contributed to TIME Magazine, The L.A. Times, The Washington Post, and other outlets. Ed founded Centropa in 2000 with Dóra Sardi and Eszter Andor.*



*Tanja Eckstein*

*Tanja, our chief interviewer, grew up in East Germany and moved to Vienna in 1984. Tanja joined Centropa as an interviewer in 2002, and since then she has conducted more than 70 interviews in Austria, and another three in Israel. In 2006, she started our Vienna Café Centropa social club, which brings together our elderly interviewees monthly to enjoy a lecture, social program, or a festive Jewish holiday meal.*



*Wolfgang Els*

*Wolfgang hails from a small wine village in the Wienerwald, Austria, where for years he played bass in a rock band we could not bear to listen to. Wolfgang studied filmmaking in university, and has now been working for us for more than a decade as our filmmaker, sound designer, and graphic designer.*



*Veronika Doppelreiter*

*Veronika has been Centropa's stalwart bookkeeper since 2002 and we can barely get by a day without her. Veronika was born in Brazil and worked as a bookkeeper for El Al Airlines and other companies before coming to work with us.*



*Anna Domnich*

*Anna hails from a small town in the heart of the Russian Ural mountains. When she was 7 she moved to Ukraine where she finished high school. She holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a master's degree in Management and Leadership from Lauder Business School, Vienna. At Centropa, she is responsible for the administrative tasks and assists the director, Edward Serotta.*



*Jonathan Schwerts*

*Jonathan was born in Germany and received his bachelor's degree in Political Science and Sociology in 2018 at the University of Trier. Jonathan began as an intern at Centropa in 2018 and we asked him to stay on. He has been carrying out research in our archive as well as helping with our teachers' seminars.*



*Denis Karalic*

*Denis Karalic was born in Munich to a Bosnian father and a Polish mother, went to elementary school in Croatia and Bosnia, finished high school in Israel, and has lived in Vienna since 1999. Denis spent more than a decade at the Austrian National Fund for Victims of National Socialism, as well as the Vienna Jewish Museum. Denis joined our team in 2017 and is now our chief archivist.*



*Lauren Granite*

*Lauren holds PhD in the Sociology of Religion from Drew University. She has been directing our US educational programs since 2010. Prior to joining our team she spent more than a dozen years teaching Jewish history in colleges, Jewish day schools, and congregational schools. Lauren runs our US programs, expanding our network of schools, coordinating with public school administrators to bring Centropa to local, state, and national professional development programs, and conducting workshops and seminars.*



*Fabian Ruehle*

*As Centropa's Director of European Education Programs, Fabian develops programs and runs seminars for schools all over Europe. Fabian joined Centropa in 2008, and worked in Vienna until 2014 before opening Centropa's Germany office. Together with Marcell, he is in charge of writing our European grant proposals. Fabian emigrated from East Berlin to West Berlin in 1988. He studied American History at Rutgers and the Free University of Berlin and earned a master's degree. Before joining Centropa in Vienna, Fabian worked for the American Jewish Committee in Berlin.*



*Maximilian von Schoeler*

*Max studied Social Science at Humboldt University of Berlin, and earned his master's degree in Holocaust Communication and Tolerance at Touro College, Berlin. From 2009 until 2015, he worked at the Center for Digital Systems (CeDiS) for the online oral history archives „Forced Labor 1939-1945“ and „Witnesses to the Shoah at Free University of Berlin. Max coordinates Centropa's Trans.History project, and is responsible for social media and website content.*

# Staff



*Magdaléna Farnesi*

*Magda Farnesi studied English and Polish philology and Jewish Studies in Olomouc, Czech Republic and Central European History at the CEU in Budapest. She joined Centropa Germany in 2018 as Logistics Coordinator, and helps organize our Trans.History seminars in Ukraine, Germany, and Moldova, as well as our annual Centropa Summer Academy. Prior to Centropa, Magda organized exhibitions, concerts, and cultural events.*



*Kenesei Marcell*

*Marcell learned he was Jewish when his parents brought him, age 14, to the Lauder Foundation school in Budapest. Since then he's been a camper and counselor at Jewish camp, graduated from Paideia, the prestigious Jewish Studies Institute in Stockholm, and holds a master's degree in political science from the ELTE University. Marcell is Centropa's deputy director, overseeing our Hungarian public school program, our Israel program, and the CJN, our network for European Jewish schools.*



*Szilvia Czingel*

*Szilvia Czingel holds a PhD in Ethnography and has been working for Centropa since 2006. Szilvi conducted many of our interviews in Hungary, and now runs our Hungarian programs, including seminars, the Common Ground Educational Program, and Café Centropa, which brings together our interviewees – often to meet Hungarian high school students.*



*Borbála Pál*

*Borbála Pál studied sociology at ELTE (Hungary) and later received her master's degree in Nationalism Studies at Central European University. Her main research interests are Jewish identification and prejudices. She also volunteers for Haver Foundation, an organization that aims to combat antisemitism among Hungarian secondary school students. At Centropa, she coordinates the Centropa Jewish Network.*



*Bence Lukács*

*Bence Lukács worked as a web developer and programmer before joining our Budapest team. He keeps Centropa's technical equipment and online infrastructure checked, and comes up with solutions where there is space for improvement.*

# Interns



## *Emily Lalande*

*Emily Lalande is an MA candidate at the University of Toronto at the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies. She interned in Centropa's Budapest office between April and July 2018, doing archival research and supporting events such as the Final Event in Budapest and the Centropa Summer Academy.*



## *Olivia Klasios*

*Olivia, an MA candidate at the University of Toronto at the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, helped our Hamburg office from April to July 2018. Olivia helped with the planning of the Centropa Summer Academy in Berlin, and she also wrote a chapter for our German Jewish Source Book on German-Israeli relations.*



## *Tamar Aizenberg*

*Tamar is a graduate of Williams College in Massachusetts, majored in History and minored in Jewish Studies. She received a Fulbright award for Vienna, and as part of the award, did her internship in our Vienna office. Tamar wrote and edited some of our readers, among which are "The Holocaust in the former Yugoslavia" and "Lithuanian Jews in Evacuation" and "12 Czech Jews and their Internment in Terezín."*



## *Miksa Gaspar*

*Miksa comes highly recommended. His mom, Dora Sardi, is one of our co-founders. Miksa recently graduated high school in Budapest and is now enrolled in Jewish studies in Berlin. Miksa helped organize the archive in Vienna office during his internship. He also reviewed and edited scores of Hungarian language interviews.*

## THE TEACHERS WHO DON'T WATCH THE CLOCK.

Centropa has become as successful as it is in several countries primarily because there are just some teachers and school directors who are passionate about what we bring to their students. In turn, they help bring ever more teachers to us, and we are deeply grateful.

*Beata Gendek-Barhoumi, Czestochowa  
Jacek Jaros, Kielce*

*Kirstin Lakeberg, Bonn  
Sabine Kreuzer, Bonn  
Gottfried Becker, Heidelberg  
Andreas Breunig, Mannheim  
Alan Götz, Eppingen*

*Branka Dimevska Kocerva, Skopje*

*Marko Dimtrijevic, Nis  
Valentina Andreji Risti, Nis  
Sinisa Vukadinovic, Belgrade*

*Maria Finz-Lucchi, Vienna*

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