



This newsletter sums up what the teachers at the four partner schools have worked on this year which has been overshadowed by Covid19 with lockdowns and phases of distance teaching at all schools. However the teachers have managed to stay in contact and work on the first topic of the project in videoconferences. We hope that we can hold our first event in October 2021 which is a teacher training at Kaufmannsschule II in Hagen (D).

Our first topic of the project is relating to how National Socialism and the times between 1933 and 1945 are being taught at the partner schools. We are planning to create a blueprint of a schoolbook that includes the points of views of all countries and the needs of the pupils taking part in the project.

This newsletter takes a look at the curricula in the participating countries and provides a worksheet for pupils for analysing their history books which we will use with our project groups.

Germany

When studying the curricula for the different types of schools and age groups in North Rhine-Westphalia, we found that **from grade 7 to 10** the contents to be taught are mainly the ideology and domination of National Socialism and its system of governance. Furthermore the aspects of deprivation, persecution and



homicide of the Jews, Sinti and Roma between 1933 and 1945 and everyday life under the Nazi dictatorship between consent and resistance are central topics for these study groups, too. Apart from this, the theme of alignment and displacement of certain population groups in the European context as well as causes of and defence against political extremism and xenophobia are anchored in the curriculum. The unit concludes with the pupils discussing the historical responsibility arising from the National Socialist past.

In comparison, the contents of the syllabus for **grades 11 to 13** particularly deal with the political and ideological prerequisites of National Socialism in Germany and Europe before 1933. Students are also dealing with the origin and the fundamental elements of the NS-ideology such as specific use of language and the most important steps of the Nazi takeover. In addition, the issue of enforcement and conformity on the way to totalitarian dictatorship, the motives and forms of support and adjustments, forms of opposition and the emergence of two German states are basic elements the study groups learn about. Finally the genocide of the Jews and dealing with the impact of the occupying powers are major topics, too.

At **Kaufmannsschule II** the topic is taught in the following courses: In **the second year of grammar school** the primary focus in Politics/Social Studies is on the global economic crisis and mass unemployment. Subsequently the focus turns to National Socialism under the heading “Democracy and Dictatorship in Germany” as a principal theme. The unit starts with the decline of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the NS-dictatorship. The topics of solidification of the NS ideology as well as ethnic cleansing and the spread of the Aryan race ideology provide a deeper level of knowledge in this subject matter. Finally, the dark ex-

perience of the “Third Reich” is reviewed while discussing the division of the country into West and East Germany and its economic and social consequences.

In politics lessons of our **two-year full-time courses**, we teach remembrance culture as part of the topic “Developing and securing democracy” in the curriculum. The focus is on four questions: Why do we remember? What do we remember? How do we remember? Where do we remember?

Project work on the topic of discrimination in cooperation with Hagen’s European office and East West East Germany e.V. has taken place once, including a visit to Bruxelles and Mechelen.

Poland

In the **fourth grade** history books there is a mention of mass executions and persecution of the Polish nation under the Nazi rule during World War II.



The **seventh grade** textbooks highlight the situation that took place before the outbreak of the war and in particular the following issues are raised: emergence and development of German National Socialism (ideology, activities of the National Socialist party), repression and crimes of the Nazis in the first years of ruling in Germany, German claims against Poland and other countries in Europe and the stand of the Polish authorities concerning Hitler's claims.

The **eighth grade** textbooks mainly illustrate the course of World War II in the world and in Poland. The most important information focuses on: Germany's preparations for the war, the outbreak of World War II and its development, resistance in occupied Europe, German politics towards

the Jews and the holocaust and the Poles and the holocaust.

In **secondary school** Polish students can learn about the creation of the NSDAP and Hitler's rise to power. The most important assumptions and features of Nazism are discussed. The examples of the totalitarian nature of the Nazi regime and the cult of personality are presented. The secondary school textbooks also highlight the anti-Semitic nature of the Nazi activities, and the importance of propaganda in Hitler's maintenance of power. The issues of the organization of society in the Third Reich, Austrian Anschluss and the Munich Agreement are discussed. At the secondary school level, the most important topics are: the genesis and the outbreak of World War II and the course of the war in Eastern and Western Europe, the establishment of German concentration camps in Poland (Auschwitz) and the struggles of the Polish nation with the Nazi occupiers.

Italy

The development of Holocaust education has undergone various transformations across time. Though schools are not required to teach about the Holocaust there are many ongoing projects, programmes and initiatives that schools can participate in.



In 1996 a decree has made substantial changes to the annual division of the History programme extended to the twentieth century, that has to be proposed during the final years of each cycle of studies from primary school up to secondary school.

The teaching of the Shoah has been compulsory since 2000 (Law no. 211). This opens a new chapter on didactics of the Shoah in Italian schools at all levels, allows

more orienting initiatives to be activated to safeguard the memory of what has been and the attentive and participatory listening to the testimonies of those who survived and were saved from deportation, internment and extermination.

Since 2000 the Ministry of Education has organized the national contest “Young people remember the Shoah” in collaboration with the Union of Italian Jewish Communities addressed to students at all levels of school education in order to promote studies and analyses of the tragic event which marked European history in the 20th century.

The National Guidelines "For teaching the Shoah at school" allow adaptation to the age and sensitivity of the students and follow the “why”, “how” and “what” approach to teaching. The implicit assumption is that knowing the past is enough to prevent contemporary racism and anti-semitism.

Modern pedagogy and international teaching experience have identified gradual and non-traumatic approaches for **primary school children**, which favour events in which the protagonists are saved – witnessing positive values of hope and trust in others and in life. For **first and second grade secondary school pupils** "spiral" teaching avoids the risk of repetitiveness and tiredness, stimulating new curiosities and fields of investigation. If the discussion of topics such as the history of anti-Semitism and persecutions falls within the curriculum of history and the humanistic-literary disciplines, the complexity of the issues and dramas concerning the Shoah requires interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary methods of investigation and teaching. Educational opportunities such as the theater, music, painting as well as participation in direct and/or indirect listening to the testimonies of survivors, the cons-

truction of teaching materials, the solicitation to identify new research directions, help to lighten the emotional load and to respect the different sensitivities and ages of the students.

The chapter on "Righteous among the Nations" allows students to examine and make visible how important it is to commit oneself to justice, peace and respect for human rights. In December 2017 the Italian state passed the law establishing the Day in Memory of the Righteous of Humanity. Since 2011 the Italian and Israeli governments have organized a 120-hour training seminar for Italian teachers at the International School of Higher Education in Yad Vashem which is held every year.

In the IIS “Majorana” Institute there are History and Philosophy departments that plan the activities for the teaching of the Shoah, which is a multidisciplinary theme. Seminars, pieces at the theatre, readings and meetings with survivors are organised for students of the school while teachers attend training courses focused on the topic. In 2020 the school organised an educational visit to Auschwitz in order to make young people reflect on how each person is responsible for their actions and that each human being with their own choices and behaviour, can make a difference. The IIS Majorana has been the first school in Italy to realise the Garden of the Righteous inside the school garden in 2014 and won an award by the Giorgio Perlasca Foundation.

Portugal

In Portugal the training offered in Secondary Education includes two types of courses: the scientific-humanistic courses and the professional courses. The



scientific-humanistic courses constitute an educational offer aimed essentially at the pursuit of higher-level studies. Professional courses are another education path with double certification, which means that social, scientific and professional skills involved in professional activities or trades are developed and simultaneously guarantee a secondary level of education. These courses prepare young people for an easier and more qualified insertion in the labour market and allow them at the same time to carry out studies at a post-secondary level and obtain a higher education.

In both types of courses, the period between 1933 and 1945 is covered, although in different school subjects. In the scientific-humanistic courses, these years are specifically addressed in the 12th year in the subjects of History A and Geography C. In the Professional Courses, they are addressed in the subject of Integration Area.

In the subjects of **History A and Geography C of the 12th year** the sharpening of international political and social tensions is taught from the 1930s onwards, and students must be able to: **characterize the fascist, Nazi and Stalinist regimes**, distinguish their particularities and highlight the role played by propaganda in all of them, **analyse the persecutions** carried out against Jews, Gypsies, Slavs, homosexuals, political opponents and other groups, in the context of Nazi totalitarianism, **characterized by the attempt to achieve complete racial, political, social and cultural control of individuals**, identify/apply the concepts: stock market crisis; deflation; inflation; totalitarianism; fascism; Nazism; anti-Semitism; holocaust; genocide, **understand examples of factors that enhance tensions and conflicts at different scales**: fundamentalism, nationalism, availability and access to natural resources, geostrategic location, among others.

The **Integration Area Discipline** is included in the sociocultural training component of the core curriculum of professional courses. This course aims to provide the development of a set of knowledge from different scientific areas and to contribute to a better understanding of the contemporary world in different aspects and an enlightened preparation for insertion in social life and the labour market.

Thus in the subject of Integration Area, transversality and the convergence of knowledge from different subject areas combine to develop the ability to acquire skills that allow pupils to understand contemporary societies with the ultimate goal of creating informed, aware and intervening citizens.

The Integration Area is structured into 3 major areas designated by: “The Individual”, “Society” and “The World”. Thus there is not exactly a reference to the years 1933 to 1945, but rather an approach to issues that are directly linked to the events concerning this period.

In our school we only teach professional courses which have in the general component the subject of Integration Area. The issues addressed that make some reference to the period from 1933 to 1945 are: the construction of democracy and the role of international organizations. In these topics, students should be able to: **promote respect of difference**, recognise and value the existent ethnic, ideological, cultural and sexual diversity in our societies, understand that **human societies are constituted by politically organised groups** and models, problematize the concept of democracy, relating it to the historical context under analysis, relate the political models implemented in Portugal and their repercussions in the context of the construction of democracy in Western societies from the First Por-

tuguese Republic to the Revolution of 25 April 1974 and decolonization, recognize the **importance of the values of democracy and citizenship** for the development of civic awareness and responsible participation in a democratic society, promote **respect for multiculturalism**, recognition and appreciation of ethnic, ideological and cultural diversity, contextualize the intervention of international organisations, recognise the pressures to which they are subjected and discuss the role and future role of international organisations in the face of global problems, exploring different points of view.

Introduction of worksheet analysis of school books

To start work on the project we would like to put a focus on how the years 1933 to 1945 are taught at schools in the participating countries. To do so, we developed and pre-tested a worksheet with a guideline to analyse history textbooks. After talking about teaching the topic in the participating countries in an international teachers' video conference, we think that it will be interesting to find out more about similarities and differences, perspectives and views of the topic in the different countries. We hope to start working on this with pupils after our summer break.

How we will use the worksheet

We will ask our groups of students to look at various history textbooks filling in the worksheet. After that, we will analyse the results with the students, comparing differences and similarities. Then pupils will develop their own blueprint of a school book that they would like to use in class.

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RESPONSIBLE

This newsletter was written by the **TRACES** project team and compiled by Sandra Hansen. If you have any questions or would like to receive our next newsletter, please send an email to [hansen\(at\)k2-hagen.de](mailto:hansen(at)k2-hagen.de)



Analysing history textbooks – a guideline

1. Information on the book

Title: _____

Class: _____

Country: _____

2. Overview

Which topics does the chapter on National Socialism deal with?

Topic	Yes	No
How Hitler came to power		
Ideology of National Socialism		
Propaganda		
Dealing with young people / youth organizations		
Exclusion from the people's community (<i>Volksgemeinschaft</i>): racism, anti-Semitism		
Foreign policy, German preparation of war, 2 nd World War German policies in occupied territories, end of the war, effects of WW II		
Genocide / holocaust		
Resistance		
Places of remembrance		
Dealing with the time of National Socialism after 1945, Nuremberg Trials		
Further topics:		

3. Sources: example anti-Semitism – Which sources does the book use?

Source	NS government	Others (such as victims, opposition, other countries) N.B: Specify who made them.
posters		
photos		
newspaper articles		
report on individual experiences		
laws, records, rulings		
speeches		
diary entries		
letters		

4. Sources: example 2nd World War – From which countries can you find sources in the book? Tick if applicable.

country	
Germany	
Italy	
Poland	
Portugal	
USA	
Great Britain	
France	
Russia	
Other countries:	

5. Which types of tasks and which methods does the book suggest? Count the tasks in the chapter/s on National Socialism and provide a number.

- (1) Reproduction: Formal analysis/ structured outline of content (e.g. verbs such as state, describe, report, sum up) _____
- (2) Reorganization and transfer: analysis of historical background (e.g. verbs such as compare, explain, analyse, falsify) _____
- (3) Evaluation/ comment and problem solving (e.g. verbs such as evaluate, give an opinion, discuss) _____
- (4) Creative/ action-based tasks (e.g. verbs such as write a diary entry/ a letter / a newspaper article, create a flyer or poster) _____

6. Authors’ texts: structure and language. Colour as many stars as you give.

The texts are easy to understand.	☆☆☆☆☆
The texts are well-structured (breaks, headlines).	☆☆☆☆☆
Technical terms are explained (in the margin or in a glossary).	☆☆☆☆☆
Terms taken from the National Socialist ideology (e.g. “Aryan”, “final solution”) are clearly marked e.g. by using quotation marks.	☆☆☆☆☆

7. Relevance of the topic for today. Colour as many stars as you give and explain why. How well does the book show why the topic is important today?



Give reasons for your answer:

8. Overall impression. Colour as many stars as you give.

The book makes history interesting and motivates me to deal with the topic.

