



RETHINK

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION FOR THINKING CRITICALLY (**RE**THINK)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION
- II. REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION
- III. REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION PRACTICES
- IV. MEDIA LITERACY
- V. TEACHER TRAINING THROUGH THE E-LEARNING PLATFORM
- VI. IMPLEMENTATION AND THE FUTURE
- VII. THE RETHINK PROJECT

I. INTRODUCTION

This document is one of the outputs of the REthink project. The project, Remembrance Education for Thinking critically - REthink was a 36-month effort to shed light on the educational programmes that have been developed in the field of remembrance education.

The project REthink has been approved by the European Commission in the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme - KA3 - Support for policy reform - Social inclusion through education, training and youth. The REthink partnership intends to demonstrate that the approach of remembrance education is beneficial to the enhancement of pupils' critical thinking skills and the ability to challenge prejudices.

These policy recommendations aim to:

- **Support and help teachers and educators** in their education efforts to **enhance media literacy and critical thinking skills** of their students in close collaboration with other partners such as museums and memorials
- Overcome the challenge of **dealing with controversial issues** in their classrooms.

II. REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION

With a core focus on memorial institutions, REthink examined programmes and tools that employ a historical perspective to address the prevention of radicalisation. We settled for a definition of remembrance education that includes programmes that reflect on the past to address contemporary issues of antisemitism, racism, xenophobia, intolerance, radicalisation, polarization, collective violence, and genocide.

This historical component is methodological as well as thematic: it describes a practice that promotes dialogue and engagement by relating considerations of past events to current affairs and debates – in other words, it has contemporary relevance by providing tools for analysing and understanding the present.

Therefore, we recommend:

- 1 Education providers to take up a commitment to provide all secondary school pupils with a **sustainable understanding of the mechanisms** of genocide(s) and crimes against humanity in the 20th and 21st century through targeted actions;
- 2 A **targeted communication** of this commitment of the education providers to the school boards;
- 3 An **explicit place within the curriculum** as a whole for all pupils in regular secondary education to gain insight into the mechanisms of ‘genocide(s) and crimes against humanity in the XX and XXI century’ by paying attention to this when revising the relevant curricula;

Consult the [Handbook for the Practical Use of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism](#).

- 4** **Initiatives to support schools**, departments and teachers on the theme of ‘genocide(s) and crimes against humanity during World War II’ and its updating and historiography; especially in dealing with strong emotions of students and bringing controversial subjects to a diverse class group;

See the practices:

- [“How to bring about justice after genocide?”](#)
- [“The conspiracy factory yesterday and today”](#)

See the [Modules](#) on the E-learning platform:

- Making the past relevant for today
- Dealing with hate speech
- Deconstructing prejudices and stereotypes and fighting racism

Read the [REthink Teachers’ Guide](#) on ‘Remembrance and controversial issues’.

- 5** **Collaborate with partners** (such as, teacher training institutes, representative institutions working on the theme, publishers, teachers’ associations, pupils, museums & memorials etc.) with the aim of efficiently sharing of expertise so that the theme continues to receive attention in ordinary secondary education in a sustainable manner;

See the [partners](#) of the REthink-project.

Consult the [practices](#) of the organisations, institutions, museums& memorials in the database.

Read the [REthink Teachers' Guide](#) on 'Involving professionals who are not teachers'.

- 6** Look at local level for remembrance and commemoration locations. This can be sites, statues, traces of historical events such as in street names, ...

See the [Modules](#) on the E-learning platform: How to handle Remembrance site visits.



III. REMEMBRANCE EDUCATION PRACTICES

Based on the [collection of good practices](#) in the database and on the piloting activities described in the [Teachers' Guide](#), in order to respond to different needs across contexts and countries, between different individual teachers or facilitators, and in order to develop a practice, we recommend:

WHEN RUNNING AND DEVELOPING A PROGRAMME

- Consult with teachers before designing a programme:
- A programme tailored to the needs of the students is crucial
- Find sufficient funding
- Clarify the aim
- Provide and/or obtain support for teachers
- Encourage multiperspectivity
- Use a theoretical basis in line with current academic research
- Find the right partners in order to use their expertise in the developing process

WHEN TRAINING TEACHERS TO DELIVER A PRACTICE

- Clearly define objectives
- Clearly define inclusion and exclusion criteria the training
- Provide ethical guidelines
- Create a safe learning environment
- Hold regular team meetings
- Maintain supervision

WHEN CLASSIFYING PARTICIPANTS THAT WILL FOLLOW THE PRACTICE

- Clearly define the target group
- Know the context in which the participants are learning
- Remain flexible
- Be aware of your own attitude and role

To check if the used methodologies are effective in engaging participants, organise a quality assurance and quality control

Policy makers	Teachers/educators
Install a steering committee	Make participant feedback possible
Measure impact	Create a safe environment
Check the usability in the working field	Make trainer feedback possible
Organise a follow-up on the received feedback	Recognise and document negative experiences
	Organise a follow-up on the received feedback
Set an external quality assurance in place	Set in place an internal quality assurance



IV. MEDIA LITERACY

Rather than the standard notion of engagement with different media platforms, ranging from print to video and digital to social media, partners defined the term as encompassing information literacy writ large: that is, the ability to analyse, evaluate, and engage with techniques that produce knowledge in society, whether written, oral, visual, primary or secondary sources, along with the ability and understanding to produce such content.

Media literacy is the set of knowledge, skills and attitudes with which teachers, educators and students consciously and critically live in a world permeated by media. It is the ability to use media actively and creatively in function of stronger social participation. Media literacy lies at the intersection of various policy areas, including Media and Education. From these policy areas a powerful impulse should be given to teachers and educators.

Increasing the media literacy skills of teachers, educators and students should be seen as an interplay of knowledge, skills and attitudes and as a key to prevent radicalisation.

We suggest to invest in:

AWARENESS OF THE MAJOR ROLE MEDIA PLAYS IN SOCIETY TODAY, BUT ALSO IN THE PAST: the knowledge to be able to interpret media content, the insight into the (historical) media framework, the ability to reflect, to draw conclusions and to use the media strategically to strengthen one's own position.

See the modules on the E-learning platform on:

- Addressing Propaganda today
- Applying multiperspectivity in Remembrance Education

Consult the following practices:

- “Whose truth operation storm and the battle for Vukovar- discerning fact opinion and point of view”
- “Stories that move -toolbox gegen diskriminierung”

THE KNOBS, READING SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE of audio and video production techniques, being able to find, process and edit information, determining its reliability and the ability to produce media content yourself or use it creatively.

See the modules on the E-learning platform on:

- Teaching with Video testimonies of Victims of National Socialism
- Making the most out of Digital Archives in Class

Read the Rethink Teachers' Guide on 'Using primary and secondary sources'

AWARENESS OF OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN MEDIA BEHAVIOUR (e.g. respect for privacy, not illegal downloading, ...), dealing with social and ethical aspects (e.g. cyberbullying), awareness of the impact that media can have (e.g. manipulation and leaving digital traces) and being familiar with and applying copyright, data protection and privacy.

By investing in collaborations with organisations, institutions to have a joint action plan, awareness of media literacy among the various target groups can be raised and the media-wise approach can be better tailored to the needs and interests of children, young people and adults (whether or not in their role as supervisors).

Consult the practices in the [REthink database](#)

A POSITIVE PEDAGOGY OR APPROACH, which does not start from fear and prohibition, but from an emancipating vision in which you use those media to express yourself.

Read the [Rethink Teachers' Guide](#) on 'Deep Learning'

V. TEACHER TRAINING THROUGH E-LEARNING PLATFORMS

Support for schools and teachers in order to enable young people to assume democratic political civic ownership remains fundamental. Schools should develop a long-term vision on these issues, adapted to their context, in order to determine their needs for support.

Schools should carry out an analysis of their citizenship education policies in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in terms of integrating citizenship education. Schools can mainly learn from other schools: their successes and failures, the challenges they have overcome and the bottlenecks that still exist.

Promoting active citizenship should be explicitly included in the objectives. Through the complementary lines of communication, we therefore continue all our efforts to achieve an interactive dialogue with young people and their teachers, to permanently encourage them and to participate in our society in an active way; based on the search for one's own identity. This can ultimately lead to a stronger connection in active citizenship through cultural education and a broad cultural experience.

The REthink project tried to provide an answer by creating an online learning platform.

In order to create this REthink online learning platform, **a needs analysis** was conducted among teachers. This enabled us to address their needs in the best possible way. The recommendations below are based on the answers we received.

Although the modules are often using the Holocaust as

an example, we want to emphasise that the E-learning Modules go broader than the Holocaust and touches other issues of mass atrocity. The modules can enable educators and teachers to address topics that contribute to the understanding of human rights and peace stakes. If the project has only marginally addressed these themes, it can contribute to future, more specific reflections.

We also want to overcome the gap between knowing and acting. It is a challenge to act against dangerous developments in society. By training teachers in remembrance education, we want to strengthen their resilience and pass this message onto their students.



- 1 Include **active and interactive teaching approaches** in lesson plans.
- 2 Invest in **E-learning or blended learning**.
- 3 **Stimulate inquiring** into types and sources of information.
- 4 Foster a **critical attitude** towards knowledge, beliefs and values in analysing the roots of controversies.
- 5 Provide **more time** for teachers **to experiment** with new approaches.
- 6 Invest in **access to new ICT tools and equipment** in schools.
- 7 Invest in **online access in schools** for teachers and students.
- 8 Provide more time and money in the curriculum to organise **visits to memorial sites**.
- 9 Invest in the **accessibility of video-testimonies of survivors**.
- 10 **Support teachers** in making discussions about mass atrocities less distressful and appropriate for the age of the students.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION AND THE FUTURE

To ensure the sustainability of the REthink project, the website and database will stay active after this project has finished. Museums, memorials, organisations, institutes, etc. will continue to have the possibility to upload new good practices.

Alongside that, a network has been set up.

The REthink Network aims to facilitate transnational collaboration between memorial institutions, relevant NGOs and other institutions and stakeholders in the field of remembrance education in Europe. This unique international forum will foster the development of new training programmes that link past and present, enhance critical thinking and improve media literacy.

Remembrance education organisations and stakeholders who wish to join this initiative will add value to their activities by:

- Sharing information, expertise and ideas;
- Comparing their organisation's programmes and processes with those of another organisation, to promote efficiency and quality;
- Lending on one another for mutual support;
- Forming partnerships for action.

This forum has already led to a new collaboration between 2 consortium members, EuroClio and Kazerne Dossin, and the Cypriot organisation 'Association for Historical Dialogue and Research' (AHDR) on the topic 'Beyond History: Applied History Education Laboratory on Thinking Historically and the Digital Age: Encounters with History in and beyond the Classroom' during a webinar. It brought educators, teachers, teacher trainers and academics from across the island to work on history education with a multi-perspective and multi-disciplinary approach in and beyond the classroom. The focus of their webinar was fostering critical thinking and how to generate discussions in the classroom when addressing online propaganda and hate speech on controversial issues.

www.ahdr.info/news/137-beyond-history-applied-history-education-laboratory



VII. THE RETHINK PROJECT

WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

Recent events and terrorist attacks in Europe have exposed divisions within our societies and in particular a growing tendency to think in terms of “us” and “them”. Disagreement and rejection of identities that are perceived as different, can lead to polarisation and radicalisation. Yet, there is nothing new about identities being pitched against each other. Memorials and NGOs working in the field of remembrance education and democracy building as well as other memory initiatives not only contribute to the transmission of memory, but also play a role in the response to current challenges such as the rise in antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and radicalisation. Indeed, they have designed a wide range of educational programmes and workshops which refers to the Holocaust, other mass atrocities and conflicts and enables students to reflect on 21st century issues, while providing educators with tools to develop media literacy, enhance critical thinking skills and our ability to challenge prejudices.

The aim of REthink was to collect the various programmes and approaches which have been developed as part of remembrance education within these institutions and to facilitate their dissemination with a view to help educators to deal with current sensitive and controversial issues and enhance the students’ critical thinking skills. REthink made programmes developed as part of non-formal education more widely available through the creation of an online platform, which will also serve as the starting point for the creation of a new network for memorials, relevant NGOs and other memory initiatives. This network will continue to facilitate transnational collaboration between like-minded institutions and enable the development of new

programmes focused on linking past and present challenges while enhancing critical thinking skills among learners.

In the light of growing prejudices, antisemitism, racism and xenophobia currently being felt throughout Europe, improving mutual cooperation and greater engagement for the promotion and protection of fundamental rights is crucial. This project sought to collect a wide range of educational programmes and approaches which have been developed as a part of remembrance education and to facilitate their dissemination in order to help educators to deal with sensitive and controversial issues and enhance students' critical thinking. Taking the Holocaust or other mass atrocities or conflicts as a starting point, students reflect on the construction and consequences of prejudices, conspiracy theories, etc., both throughout history and today. They also reflect on the role of images and discourses and are encouraged to question sources and their reliability.

As a result, REthink addressed the identified challenge of mobilizing our society against intolerance and hatred by enriching the EU's approach to memory education and to the development of critical thinking skills and media literacy through the upscaling and wide dissemination of recognised good practices in the field.

These policy recommendations aim to support and help teachers and educators in their education efforts to enhance media literacy and critical thinking skills of their students in close collaboration with other partners such as museums and memorials and to overcome the challenge of dealing with controversial issues in their classrooms.

WHO ARE WE?

The REthink consortium is composed of eight partner institutions:

FRANCE ÉDUCATION INTERNATIONALE (FORMER CIEP)

Created in 1945, France Education International (former CIEP) is an institution of the French Ministry of National Education. Its missions, which are part of the government's international cooperation priorities, centre on three areas of activity:

- cooperation in the areas of education, professional training and the quality of higher education;
- support for the promotion of the French language around the world by training teachers and education managers and by issuing certifications in French;
- international mobility for people through language assistant and teacher exchange programmes, as well as the issuing of foreign qualification comparability certificates.

To carry out its projects, FEI relies on the know-how of a team of 250 staff as well as on a network of over 1000 experts and national and international partners.

MÉMORIAL DE LA SHOAH

The Memorial de la Shoah is an institution deeply rooted in the history of the Holocaust and WWII; it dates back to 1943 when the “Contemporary Centre of Jewish Documentation” was founded to collect documents and evidence on the persecutions of European Jews. Archives and documents collected served as a basis for the Nuremberg trials and trials of famous Nazis such as Klaus Barbie.

The Memorial as we know it today was renovated in 2005. It is now many things at once: a museum hosting a permanent exhibition on the Holocaust in France and in Europe, two temporary exhibitions a year and many cultural events (panel discussions, film screenings, testimonies, etc.); an archival center open to researchers that holds over 40 million archive pieces; and a place of remembrance and the transmission of memory.

The Memorial's missions include promoting the memory and study of the Holocaust and 20th century genocides, deriving the necessary lessons from the past and reflecting on contemporary challenges. More generally, the Memorial is very active in the area of peace education, intercultural dialogue and education against antisemitism, racism, intolerance, hatred and xenophobia.

Among its activities, the Memorial is widely known for its pedagogical work with school children – an average 80.000 of whom are welcomed per year – as well as its trainings for teachers, educators, civil servants, policy makers and members of civil society.

EUROCLIO – EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF HISTORY EDUCATORS

EuroClio - was established in 1992, with the support of the Council of Europe, to support the development of responsible and innovative history, citizenship, and heritage education as a way to promote critical thinking, mutual respect, peace, stability, and democracy. It implements projects and activities with over 25.000 history educators from over 50 countries in the fields of cultural heritage, digital learning, inclusion and diversity, peace and reconciliation and remembrance.

KAZERNE DOSSIN – MEMORIAL, MUSEUM AND DOCUMENTATION CENTRE ON HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Between 1942 and 1944, 25,484 Jews and 352 gypsies were deported from the 18th century Dossin barracks. Just over 5% returned from Auschwitz-Birkenau. Kazerne Dossin is an intense and unique place of commemoration. The museum deals with the persecution of Jews and gypsies in Belgium. Until mid-1942, the occupier was able to count everywhere on the often supportive cooperation of the authorities. How was that possible? Why this persecution? What did it mean for the victims and how did they react? Was there no resistance? These are core questions in the museum.

Kazerne Dossin does not only deal with the ‘Belgian case’ but it is also a museum about massive violence. Taking the Holocaust as basis, Kazerne Dossin searches for timeless mechanisms of group pressure and collective violence that can result under certain conditions in mass murder and genocide. This question touches the core of modern human rights with emphasis on freedom and non-discrimination. The behaviour of the perpetrators and opportunists serves as basis for alerting the visitor to collective violent mechanisms among us and to the possibility to say ‘no’. Such an approach demands a special method. For this purpose, the visitor starts the visit by viewing an introduction movie in which the museum and its disturbing questions are presented.

CESIE

CESIE is a European Centre for Studies and Initiatives based in Sicily. It is a non-profit, apolitical, and non-governmental organisation. It was established in 2001, inspired by the work and theories of the pacifist Danilo Dolci (1924-1997).

CESIE links local, national and international contexts and is committed to stimulating development and change in educational, cultural and economic spheres through the creation and use of innovative tools and methods. The organisation is divided into six Units which work together and manage activities in their specific fields: Higher Education and Research, Rights and Justice, Adult, Migration, School, Youth.

Our objectives:

- To improve lifelong education in Europe through transnational projects involving local communities
- To promote sustainable development of neighbouring regions and beyond through training and education
- To foster progress and innovation in Higher Education and Research
- To support learning mobility for people at all ages, across borders and sectors
- To stimulate local growth by adapting international good practices and methods

The head office can be found in the city centre of Palermo with other offices in India, Nepal and Senegal. CESIE coordinates the CESIE Network which is composed of more than 200 organizations throughout the world who share our mission and collaborate with us.

The Jewish Historical Institute is a repository of documentary materials relating to the Jewish historical presence in Poland. It is also a centre for academic research, study and the dissemination of knowledge about the history and culture of Polish Jewry.

The archival collections of the Institute consist of seven million pages of varied documents. The main part of the archival collection of the JHI consists of materials collected immediately after the World War II by the Central Jewish Historical Commission. The most valuable and significant part of the collection is the Underground Warsaw Ghetto Archive, also known as the Ringelblum Archive, which has been included in the UNESCO register Memory of the World. The Ringelblum-Archive contains a huge variety of documents, among others diaries, accounts from approximately 300 Jewish communities from all the territory of occupied Poland, school essays, research works – and also official German documents such as posters, identification cards and food ration cards. There are also some 90 photographs and over 300 drawings and paintings.

JHI functions both as a depository of the memory of the past as well as distinguishes itself as a living cultural center – a place that actively participates in the process of creating historical awareness and forming civic attitudes.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION TRUST IRELAND (HETI)

Holocaust Education Trust Ireland is an independent not-for-profit national charity which was established in 2005. The main purpose of the organisation is to educate and inform the Irish people about the Holocaust in order to raise awareness about antisemitism and all forms of racism and intolerance in Ireland. It does this through designing and delivering carefully structured educational programmes and cultural projects. In facilitating these programmes, HETI works in partnership with schools, third level colleges, and other centres of education, community groups, intercultural bodies and artists.

HETI has a board of voluntary Trustees who are responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the trust. The Board is supported in its work by subcommittees that oversee finance, succession planning and governance. The work of the organisation is managed by a small team led by the Director and supported by Board members, partner organisations and volunteers.

In order to prevent the recurrence of atrocities similar to the Holocaust, it is essential to focus on education and advocacy. The relevance and consequences of the Holocaust in our world today is highlighted by HETI's positive approach to education that respects diversity and inclusion.

HETI's international networking includes the leadership of and participation in a number of European programmes. HETI is a member of the Irish delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

_erinnern.at is the Holocaust Education Institute of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education. _erinnern.at develops with European and international partner organisations educational materials in the field of Holocaust Education and prevention of Antisemitism and Racism. Such Materials include educational websites, learning apps, teaching materials, youth books, exhibitions for schools and educational programs at memorial sites. Some of these educational materials have been recognized as international best practice and had been mentioned as “best practice” in UNESCO publications. In 2018 two educational materials developed by _erinnern.at received the Comenius-EduMedia-Medaille and the Worlddidac Award. _erinnern.at is also involved in teacher training and conducts trainings in all Austrian federal states throughout the year and organizes annually two seminar that last several days with more than hundred participants and teacher trainings in Israel. We manage a network of educators that offers consultation and services to educators in all Austrian federal states. Since several years _erinnern.at organizes on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education school discussions with survivors of the Holocaust. _erinnern.at is engaged in international research projects, such as a project to evaluate the use of tablets in history education or a publication project on video testimonies of victims of National Socialism.

RESULTS

The REthink project has 5 main results called “outputs”. They are available online on the project website www.rethink-education.eu.

OUTPUT 1

REthink Database:

www.rethink-education.eu/practices/

The database enables you to search practices and select the most relevant for your purposes in order to:

- Draw parallels between past and present manifestations of prejudice and mass violence.
- Reflect on the role and power of the media (from social media to images and the press) in shaping and circulating radicalised ideas.
- Rethink current phenomena such as polarisation and radicalisation in historical context.
- Adopt a critical approach to reading, understanding, and analysing information.
- To a wider extent, question the world around them.

OUTPUT 2

A Teacher’s Guide to Remembrance Education:

www.rethink-education.eu/teachers-guide/

Our Teachers’ Guide to Remembrance Education aims to present the results of our piloting activities, which took place across Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland and Poland between September 2018 and July 2019.

It is neither a quantitative analysis of all or even most remembrance education practices that exist across Europe, nor a comprehensive guide to remembrance education. Rather, it aims to provide (practical) support and tips to improve educators' practice. In this sense, the guide should be seen as a handbook, containing tools educators can use to address challenges they encounter when teaching about remembrance.

This handbook is meant as a tool to support educators from both the formal and informal educational sectors. It is specifically dedicated to open minded teachers who want to implement informal education practices in their classrooms.

OUTPUT 3

REthink E-learning platform:

www.rethink-education.eu/elearning-platform/

The REthink project is bringing good practices to your classroom through an e-learning experience in English, which will enable you to upgrade your teaching, access new pedagogical material and deliver innovative lessons.

You are currently reading the **OUTPUT 4**

This output aims at elaborating recommendations, based on the result of the previous outputs. Within these documents, you find excerpts from all the project's outputs.

OUTPUT 5

REthink network:

www.rethink-education.eu/rethink-network/

The REthink Network aims to facilitate transnational collaboration between memorial institutions, NGO's and other institutions and stakeholders in the field of remembrance education in Europe.



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NATIONALSOZIALISMUS UND HOLOCAUST:
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