

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.

 Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	MEMORIAL DE LA SHOAH OFFICE NATIONAL DES ANCIENS COMBATTANTS ET VICTIMES DE GUERRE PANSTWOWE MUZEUM AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU W OSWIECIMIU YPOURGEIO PAIDEIAS, THRSKEVMATON KAI ATHLITISMOU THE JEWISH MUSEUM OF GREECE Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen-Anhalt MINISTARSTVO ZNANOSTI, OBRAZOVANJA I MLADIH
PIC number:	989737464 887996492 931969890 952374616 937685324 874012390 999825949
Project name and acronym:	Network of European Youth for Holocaust Remembrance — NESHAMA

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP4
Event name:	3rd online joint-training session – Jewish life
Type:	Training
In situ/online:	Online
Location:	Online
Date(s):	11 March 2026
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.memorialdelashoah.org/neshama.html
Participants	
Female:	127
Male:	79

Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [POLAND]:	49		
From country 2 [CROATIA]:	38		
From country 3 [GERMANY]:	15		
From country 4 [FRANCE]:	52		
From country 5 [GREECE]:	51		
From country 6 [BELGIUM]:	1		
Total number of participants:	206	From total number of countries:	6

Description
Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

Objectives and organization of the session

The third session was dedicated to Jewish life. The aim was to focus on pre-war Jewish life in order to shift the perspective on the genocide and not only addressing Jews in the context of death and destruction but also bringing Jewish culture and European history back to life.

Dr. Joël Kotek led this lecture, using case studies to deepen the understanding of Jewish presence, culture and life in Europe.

Programme of the session: European Jewry just before the Holocaust

- 1. A presence throughout Europe**
 Jews lived in almost every country in Europe, particularly in Eastern Europe. Germany, by contrast, was home to only a small Jewish minority.
- 2. A great diversity of lifestyles**
 Between the shtetls of Eastern Europe and the assimilated urban environments of Western Europe, there was no single way of being Jewish.
- 3. A contrasting social reality**
 Jews worked in all types of professions. Some were well-off, but many were poor. The myth of the "rich Jew" is a false stereotype.
- 4. Deep political divisions**
 Jews were deeply divided politically, between communists, Bundists, religious traditionalists, assimilationists and Zionists.
- 5. A very rich cultural life**
 Yiddish language, theatre, press, music, literature and the arts. Jewish culture was alive, creative and profoundly European.
- 6. Multiple identities**
 Jews were often deeply attached to their Jewishness while also being patriotic citizens. They participated fully in the civic life of their respective countries.
- 7. Real yet fragile integration**
 Despite emancipation and the acquisition of citizenship rights, antisemitism persisted, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe.
- 8. The lasting impact of the holocaust**
 The Holocaust fundamentally transformed the way Jews relate to religion and nationhood. Exile, widespread imposed silence and resilience followed. After the collapse of communist and Bundist utopias, Jewish identity was rebuilt around the centrality of Israel. Jewish life in Europe had been destroyed.

Zionism ultimately imposed itself as the dominant framework for Jewish identity in the aftermath of the Holocaust.

Brief biography of the lecturer: Dr. Joël KOTEK

Dr. Joël Kotek is a Professor at the Free University of Brussels (ULB) and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris. Dr. Kotek is a member of several scientific committees including Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah de Paris, the Jewish Museum of Warsaw, Mechelen Holocaust Museum, Foundation Aladdin (Paris), Evens Foundation (Antwerpen) and Yahad in Unum (Paris). He was the head of the Formation Department at the Mémorial de la Shoah/Centre de Documentation juive contemporaine in Paris (2003-2006) and has been, since 2003, the Belgian correspondent of the Moshe Cantor Center on Antisemitism and Racism. He is also an ISGAP research fellow. Dr. Kotek has authored a number of important publications, including: *La Shoah dans la Bande dessinée* (2017), *1939, le quatrième partage de la Pologne (sld)* (2015), *Israël et les médias belges francophones au miroir du conflit gazaoui de l'été 2014* (2015).

Moderated by the Coordinator of the project, all training sessions took place on Zoom and were followed by a Q&A session between the Ambassadors and the speaker. The sessions were only accessible to members of the NESHAMA network (ambassadors, teachers and partners). Each partner and/or teacher ensured locally that ambassadors were present at the session and signed the attendance lists.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).