

'Anne Frank – a History for Today'

CrossingBorders

Austria - Slovenia

Project description

Brief description

The travelling exhibition "Anne Frank – a history for today" is being presented in a bilingual (Slovenian – German) version. Students have the possibility to add local topics to the Anne Frank exhibition: additional panels allow a focus on their livelihoods, be it a historic reflection on national-socialism or a critical examination of the students' present.

The Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the Austrian Anne Frank Association and local partner organizations organize a wide range of seminars and workshops. Amongst others, students are trained to become peer guides in the traveling exhibition about Anne Frank. This traveling exhibition allows different points of views on various topics. Students as peer guides are enabled to connect historic topics with events nowadays in order to communicate the message to their peer group.

The workshop 'Out of Line' was developed by the Anne Frank House. 'Out of Line' invites the participants to reflect on the importance of Human Rights in situations of conflicting fundamental rights. It is the student's decision whether freedom of speech or the right to be protected against discrimination is more important, for instance.

The efforts of the Anne Frank House are backed up by pedagogues, historians and NGOs from the Austro-Slovenian border region. These local NGO's and individuals organize excursions to memorial sites. The participants are encouraged to reflect on their region's history during the reign of national-socialism. This reflection should lead to an exchange of common points and differences on both sides of the border.

A small bilingual additional exhibition complements the Anne Frank exhibition during the duration of the school tour. This exhibition consists of 6 panels explaining the history of the co-existence of German speaking, Slovenian speaking and bilinguals from 1918 until nowadays. The content was developed by leading local historians.

This package of activities is being offered in several close-to-border towns.

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Students from 8 different schools are in permanent contact during 2 school terms, 1 term referring to a semester. 2 schools from Carinthia, 2 schools from Styria and 4 Slovenian schools are taking part in the project.

Each term, 4 schools are networked. Students from those schools meet each other by taking part in the proposed activities and feedback seminars at the end of term.

Some students of the first term will play an important role during the second term (autumn/winter 2006). They will be asked to conceive and organize the training of peer guides.

Joint seminar and closing ceremony:

At the end of the project a two day event of educational and festive character will be organised. One and a half days will be dedicated to a seminar for adolescents, half a day to the closing ceremony - a public festival.

Students from both sides of the border will participate in the one and a half days seminar. For the festival, all students who have been involved in the project come together and invite friends and acquaintances. The festival will be open to the public.

The program will feature traditional folk music and dance groups as well as modern interpretations of respective regional and national folklore. A collectively prepared performance by artists from both countries, Austria and Slovenia, will complete the festival.

The seminar and the public festival represent the transition from the first project phase to the second and enables experienced students to get in touch with those still to deal with the topic.

The concept: Peer education - Pupils for pupils

Students should actively take part in the preparations. They will set up the exhibition, guide groups in the exhibition, organize the transport of the exhibition.

We believe that an active participation of the students is the best way to gain knowledge. They are introduced to the organization of the project and they have to make use of what they have been taught (peer guides, design of support program etc.). Students that play an active role thus show willingness to cooperate; they even involve friends and family in discussions or invite them to visit the exhibition.

We try to further a group-dynamical process, which would be neglected by merely presenting the exhibition in schools. The visitors of the exhibition learn from other students of the same age and they are encouraged to reflect on the range of the aforementioned topics.

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Target group

Secondary schools (students and teachers), general public

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Aim of the project

The aim of the project is to bring young people (aged 14 to 17), residents of the Austro-Slovenian border region, together. They are trained in order to establish relationships based on understanding for the other, i.e. for their interests, their history and their ideas.

Our main tool to reach this aim is to create a network of schools which have students of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds; thus presenting several different views on their region's history and their co-existence. Working on the project pushes the students into situations in which they automatically challenge the other's point of view, and vice versa. Workshops and feedback seminars form the framework of getting to know each other better, of reflecting on unknown cultural groups and on social levels. Participants deal with the other's world and ideas; they learn how the other groups were and are confronted with discrimination. And, last but not least, they are encouraged to establish relationships beyond the traditionally delivered prejudices.

In short: students from both countries are meeting, learning, debating and exchanging experiences throughout one full year.