


INSTITUT TEREZÍNSKÉ INICIATIVY

# News from Prague

Zprávy z Prahy



 Expats.cz


## The ITI team wishes you a pleasant summer; news concerning our team

At the end of June, Dana and Dorota Gabařová left our team. Danael had been with us since 2014, Dorot for the last two years. We would like to thank you both for your cooperation and wish you all the best in your personal and professional lives. Thank you for everything you have taught us. We are glad we had the opportunity to meet you. And who knows, maybe we will cross paths again in the future :-)



## We have new books

Thanks to the generous support of various donors, we have been able to add new books to our library collection. Among them is a wide range of specialist literature in German, English and Czech that complements our existing collection. You can find the complete list of new additions on our [website](#).

 Canva

ISSUE 02/2025

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## Civil Society Forum on COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE

01-02 April 2025



**Evropská komise**

need to defend Jews and Judaism in contemporary society, the rise of anti-Semitism online and in personal and professional relationships, the open, if not denial, distortion of the Holocaust, and the safety of Jewish communities in contemporary Europe were discussed. Of the workshops offered, I attended the first day, Holocaust Distortion and Remembrance, and the second day, Empowering Teachers and Students in Educational Settings.

The message I take away from the second day of the conference are a few thoughts that I would like to express in a few sentences that were heard during the panel discussion: *Remember what you are fighting for and what you are fighting against. Recognise the needs of victims and realise that victims have a hard time trusting. It is difficult to recognise someone else's pain when we are focused on our own. Our goal is not to fight anti-Semitism, but to overcome it.*

Dana Gabařová (project manager, methodologist)

## Civil Society Forum on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (Boj proti antisemitismu a podpora židovského života)

**BRUSSELS, 1/2 April** - Memorials are not a panacea for hatred. Those who come to us are not those who spread hatred and distort the Holocaust. We need to step out of our comfort zone as educators and spread awareness about why working with history makes sense and about the impact of history on the present - these are the main ideas I took away from the first day of the international conference Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life, organised by the Civil Society Forum in Brussels.

The main topics were the changes in the life of Jewish communities in Europe after 7 October 2023 and how to deal with these changes. In different contexts, the





## Reception at the British Embassy - Anniversary of the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen

**PRAGUE, 16. April-** Together with the participants of the seminar and excursion Bergen-Belsen on the Threshold of Freedom, we attended a reception at the British Embassy in Prague on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp by the British Army on 15 April 1945.

A welcome by Ambassador Matt Field and a group photo in the garden of the residence was followed by refreshments and a moderated discussion led by Kate Davenport, Deputy Ambassador. Teachers shared their experiences of teaching about Bergen-Belsen and how they have put the insights from the seminar into practice in their schools.

Libuše Sakalová from the grammar school in Kralupy nad Vltavou presented a lesson in which students worked with a timeline, illustrations and developed understanding through creative activities.

Martina Tučková from the Business Academy in Děčín involved less motivated students in the work - they researched not only the stories of the prisoners, but also the perpetrators and bystanders, and prepared presentations themselves.

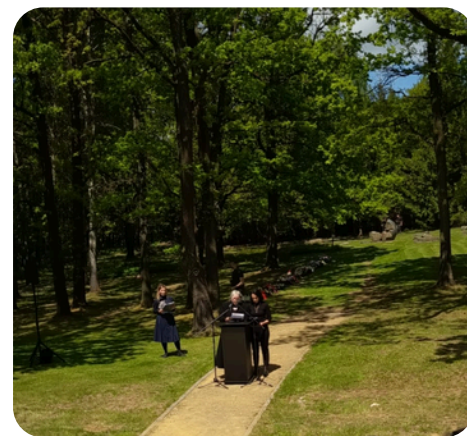
Andrea Kramářová from the primary school in Orava sees prejudices and conspiracies around her. She used the story of Anne Frank as a starting point for empathy and reflection - the children wrote messages to Anne as part of the processing of the topic.

We also discussed the conditions in which educators work - the support of the state, schools and society.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to share the results of our work and thank Ambassador Matt Field and the entire Embassy team for their support, interest and welcome.



ITI/Zdena Dorota Gabařová



ITI/Dana Gabařová

## Commemorative act in Lety u Písku

**LETY U PÍSKU, 11. May** - We attended a commemorative act in Lety u Písku to honor the Roma and Sinti victims from Bohemia and Moravia. 1300 people passed through the camp. Of those 335, mainly children, have died due to the inhumane conditions. After the mass transport in 1943 to the extermination camp in Auschwitz - Birkenau, the buildings of the Lety camp were torn down and burnt. A memorial to the Roma and Sinti victims of the holocaust has opened a year ago. The commemorative act has been organized by organized by the Committee for the Reparation of the Romani Holocaust in the Czech Republic, with the contribution of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, and with the support of the Holocaust Victims Foundation. The memorial is administered by the Museum of Romani Culture.

Dana and Dorota Gabařova have attended on behalf of the Terezín Initiative Institute.

## Exhibition (Non)Returns, Mladá Boleslav

**MLADÁ BOLESLAV, 7. May** - The Museum of Mladá Boleslav and the State District Archives in Mladá Boleslav have prepared an exhibition entitled (Non)Returns, which traces the stories of people who had to leave Boleslav during the war, those who did not return after the war, and those who were lucky enough to survive – we can follow their post-war fates. We collaborated with the State District Archives in Mladá Boleslav on the digitization of selected collections, and the materials will be published on [holocaust.cz](http://holocaust.cz).

The opening ceremony took place on May 7, 2025, at the museum in Mladá Boleslav Castle. You can visit the exhibition at the Museum of Mladá Boleslav until October 5 this year.

(ne)NÁVRATY

příběhy lidí, kteří museli Boleslav za války opustit  
příběhy lidí, kteří se po válce nevrátili  
příběhy lidí, kteří se vrátili  
příběhy jejich pozůstatků



MUZEUM MLADOBOLSLAVSKA

7.5.-5.10. 2025

Slavnostní vernisáž výstavy se koná 7.5. 2025 v 17 hodin  
v prostorách muzea na mladoboleslavském hrade.

## Opening of the Museum of Survivors in Brněnec

**BRNĚNEC, 12. May-** Thanks to Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*, the whole world knows the story of the rescue of 1,200 Jewish prisoners at the end of the Second World War. The whole world knows who Oskar Schindler was and why he became a symbol of good in a time of evil. But that same world has no idea where this heartbreaking story actually took place. That could change now.

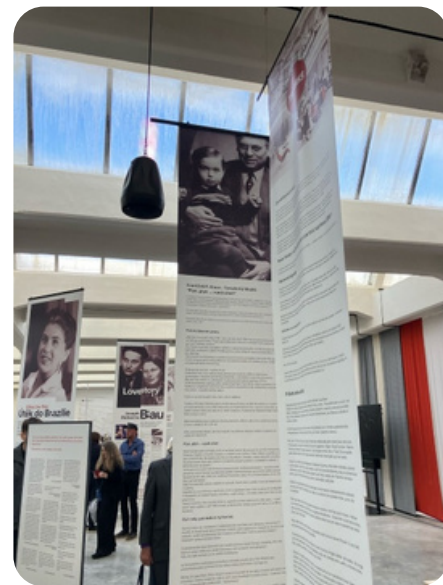
Following many intense preparations, the first part of the exhibition was inaugurated on 10 May. The Czech public probably already knows that this was the textile factory of the Jewish Löw-Beer family, confiscated after the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Nazis, and that the site is Brněnec near Svitavy. And it was here that the new museum was opened.



📷 Daniel Löw-Beer

It is a paradox that the family of the original owners had to purchase their original property to to make the Arks project in this place even possible. Now it's time to fill the former spinning mill up with new life, exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, school outings.

All of that is ahead now, and we are happy that the Terezín Initiative Institute is one of the main partner on this project from the very beginning.



📷 Daniel Löw-Beer

## Commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust in the Treblinka labour camp



📷 ITI/Tomáš Kraus

**TREBLINKA, 14. May** - On the occasion of the meeting of the International Auschwitz Museum Council, its members paid tribute to the Jewish and Roma victims of the Treblinka labor camp at the site of their mass graves. Pictured are T. Kraus, Colette Avital and Roman Kwiatkowski.

## International Archives Day

**PRAGUE, 9. June** - On this day, special attention is paid to archives and various events such as exhibitions, guided tours and other interactive programmes are often organised.

In conjunction with International Archives Day, archival institutions open their doors to the general public so that people can learn about archives, repositories and other aspects of archival work. We definitely recommend you take a look. You will learn what the archives look like and how to work with them, and then you will have a better idea of how our historians work with them, so that they can put faces and stories back on Holocaust victims and help their descendants find out what happened to them.

You can see the results of their diligence at [holocaust.cz](http://holocaust.cz), which has an extensive educational section and a database of Holocaust victims that is constantly being added to and updated.



📷 ITI/Hana Čadová



# INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

## Alpine Peace Crossing

### Visit by the APC-Team

**PRAHA, 7. June** - Our GEDENKDIENTST volunteer Laurenz welcomed the team of the Alpine Peace Crossing to Jachymka to show them our work.

„Verein für aktive Gedenk- und Erinnerungskultur – Alpine Peace Crossing“ (APC) is an Austrian memorial association which focuses on Jewish escapes after 1945 and adjacent topics. The central event of their work is the escape of thousands of Jews in 1947. On their way to present-day Israel, they had to cross the Krimmler Tauern. They fled from antisemitism which was still rampant in Europe. For some, Austria was the starting point of their escapes, others crossed the country in transit. They commemorate these escapes with a yearly hike in Salzburg's Krimml.

We want to thank the team of the Alpine Peace Crossing for their keen interest in our work and look forward to cooperating with them in the future!



Alpine Peace Crossing



ITI/Laurenz Neureiter

### Visit to Austria

**KRIMML, 28./29. June-** Our GEDENKDIENTST-Volunteer Laurenz joined the Alpine Peace Crossing (APC) in Krimml to cross the Austrian Alps in remembrance of the thousands of Jews who fled the antisemitism that was still rampant in Europe after 1945. Laurenz welcomed the team to Jachymka a few weeks ago. Verein für aktive Gedenk- und Erinnerungskultur – Alpine Peace Crossing“ (APC) is an Austrian memorial association which focuses on Jewish escapes after 1945 and adjacent topics. The central event of their work is the escape of thousands of Jews in 1947. On their way to present-day Israel, they had to cross the Krimmler Tauern. They fled from antisemitism which was still rampant in Europe. For some, Austria was the starting point of their escapes, others crossed the country in transit. They commemorate these escapes with a yearly hike in Salzburg's Krimml.

The Event was held over 2 days this weekend. The first day introduces the yearly focus of the APC which was "Denied - Silent - Forgotten. Unheard nazi victims in the collective memory" in the form of a dialogue forum.

Elke Rajal, who currently works at the University of Passau, researching and publishing in the intersections of politics, contemporary history and education held a fascinating talk on the history of persecution of people as "asocials" and explained how this terminology was constructed.

Andreas Brunner, head of the queer research centre QWien, delved into the persecution of people due to their sexual orientation, or so-called "Pink triangle prisoners".

Their captivating lectures were completed by music by Sanna van Elst and Bobby Rootveld (Duo Nizh) who are specialized in music mixed with theatre and comedy, Klezmer, Yiddish songs, and the restauration of music composed during the Shoah.

These four people then finished the dialogue forum with a panel discussion, providing their unique insights and approaches to remembrance and adjacent topics.



ITI/Laurenz Neureiter

On day two of the event, we started the commemoration hike before sunrise, leaving picturesque Krimml to arrive at the Tauernhaus at half past 6, located at 1631 meters above sea level. This would have been one of the stops along the treacherous route that the refugees took in 1947.

The hike was also accompanied by an interesting program as we stopped at the remembrance pyramids that the APC has placed along the historic route before crossing the Alps at the Krimmler Tauern Pass at 2634 meters.

It was a very interesting way to learn about the history and a novel way of communicating history. Laurenz would like to thank the team at APC for their hospitality and we look forward to further cooperation.

Read more about their work on their [Website](#) (English/German only)



📷 ITI/Laurenz Neureiter

## GEDENKDIENTST

**SALZBURG, 29. May-** Our Volunteer Laurenz was in Austria last week to promote the GEDENKDIENTST program at his former school, the HAK 1 in Salzburg. Speaking to about 60 people from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade he talked about his experiences and encouraged the students to also use the opportunity to do a Gap-Year with a positive impact. Besides the remembrance work and the work and history of our institute, Laurenz told the students about the challenges and the many wonderful things that come with moving abroad and starting a new job fresh out of school. We want to thank the HAK 1 business school in Salzburg for giving Laurenz the opportunity to promote the program and the students for their keen interest.



📷 HAK 1 Salzburg/Graham Crewe

## Anne Frank Day

**PRAGUE, 12. June** - Yesterday we celebrated Anne Frank's legacy in a creative way by showcasing the artworks submitted by talented contributors at Žižčafé Therapy. We were ecstatic to welcome some of the contributing artists as well as many interested people who came to witness the Vernissage.

Thomas Elmecker and Marie Smutna held a speech in English and Czech highlighting the importance of Anne Frank Day and explaining how and why Anne came to be remembered and revered around the world:

*„Dear guests,*

*Together with Thomas Elmecker, we would like to welcome you to the opening of the exhibition dedicated to the memory of Anne Frank. Why today, why Anne and why here?*

*On 12 June 1929, 96 years ago here in the ancient German city of Frankfurt am Main, she was born into the family of Otto and Edith Frank, a Jewish family that had lived here for many generations, as the second daughter named Annelies Marie Frank, who decades later would be known literally to the whole world.*

*As we work with the story of Anne and her family, this is what we learn about Anne from her pupils and students: she was a happy, versatile, restless, friendly girl who loved to skate, meet her friends and attract attention. She was lively and uninhibited. Sometimes insufferable. Very often at the center of the action and organizer of memorable events.*

*History was in the making. And so from 1941 onwards, this is what today's students would say about her: she was always being herself, or trying to be. But she was also Jewish. So she had to leave her school. And many of her friends. She wasn't allowed to skate anymore. She wasn't allowed to have a bicycle, in Amsterdam – can you understand? She had to wear a star visibly sewn on her clothes, and with that star her world shrank.*





*By June 1942, one would say of her that she became the enthusiastic owner of a diary. A month later, she became an outlaw - hiding with her family and other family friends in a secret hideout in central Amsterdam. But she was also the one who, along with others in hiding, enjoyed the care of brave helpers. At the time, Anne wrote in her diary, among other things, the following: Believe me, when a person is locked up for a year and a half, there are days when it is too much.*

*Regardless of justice or gratitude, feelings cannot be warded off. To ride my bike, to dance, to whistle, to look at the world, to feel young, to know that I am free, I long for that, and yet I must not let it show, for what would it look like if all eight of us here began to wail or put on disgruntled faces, where would it lead?*

*December 24, 1943*

*By the spring of 1944, one would certainly have said she was becoming an aspiring writer, rewriting her diary and preparing her book *The Back House*. From August 1944 she was captured and imprisoned, deported, exposed to the terrible conditions of Westerbork, Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.*

*From the winter of 1945 onwards, devoid of hope, exhausted, sick and finally dying.*

*But history moved on. And here we are today, holding a brand new Czech edition of *The Secret Annex* in our hands and admiring collages on the walls created by students from a secondary school in Krnov, who were guided through the exhibition *Let Me Be Who I Am – The Life Story of Anne Frank* by their classmates. The exhibition was loaned to the Czech Republic by the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam.*

*And why do young people still have the need and desire to remember Anne, 96 years after her birth? It is because Anne was able to give hope even in the environment into which she was involuntarily thrown. She was 15 years old when she wrote in her diary:*

*That's the trouble nowadays: ideals, dreams, beautiful expectations barely have time to grow up before the most horrible reality strikes and destroys them completely. It is a great miracle that I have not given up all my expectations, for they seem absurd and unworkable. Yet I cling to them, in spite of everything, because I still believe that people are good at their core. It is absolutely impossible for me to base everything on death, horror and confusion.*

*And we would like to carry on her message, which she expressed in the spring of 1944 as follows:*

*One day this terrible war will pass, one day we will be human beings again, and not just Jews! Tuesday 11 April 1944*

*May we be able to learn from these words of a 15-year-old girl and be able to see each other first and foremost as human beings, wherever and whenever we were born.*

*We thank Žižkostel and Café Therapy for their extraordinary helpfulness in preparing the exhibition. We are very happy to be able to spread this message here, in a place associated with humanity and support for the weak and vulnerable.,,*

Afterwards we held our raffle to reward three participants for their work. Congratulations to all the winners. And thanks for everyone's contribution.

You can visit the exhibition throughout the next couple of months. Here is the address:

Žižcafé Therapy - Žerotínova 1520/33, 130 00 Praha 3-Žižkov.

Thank you for your participation, everyone coming and a big thanks to Žižcafé Therapy for letting us use their space to exhibit the artworks.



AFYN/Laurenz Neureiter



AFYN/Laurenz Neureiter

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**Thank you for your support!**

