



STUDY VISIT AND ACTION DAY

STARA GRADIŠKA, CROATIA

07 - 10 JULY 2025

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STARA GRADIŠKA

The study visit and action day aims to involve 25 young people in actively engaging with the remembrance of the memorial site in Stara Gradiška, Croatia.

- **Why Stara Gradiška? A difficult heritage**

Stara Gradiška is of great interest from the point of view of cultural heritage, as a location that changed its meaning through history, and deserve to be remembered as an act of compassion towards its victims.

Historically, in the 18th and 19th centuries, Stara Gradiška has been a fort and a prison, built in 1765. After the end of the First World War, it was used to house the first political prisoners of the newly-formed Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

With the beginning of WWII, the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), a puppet state of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, started the implementation of a system of Camps: places of isolation, confinement, forced labor, and liquidation based on the racial laws and legal decrees that discriminated Serbs, Jews and Roma, as well as political opponents, primarily Communists and anti-Fascists, and their families.

In WWII, because of its vicinity to Jasenovac, the largest Ustasha concentration camp, both in terms of area it occupied and in the number of killed persons, Stara Gradiška was firstly used by the Ustasha authorities as penitentiary and as collection place for internment. In February 1942, however, the Penitentiary was transformed in Camp. The people interned in the Stara Gradiška Camp were mostly anti-Fascists, communists and members of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia (SKOJ), members and associates of People's Liberation Movement from all over Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, women (Croats, Jews and Serbs and from June 1942 also children, mostly Serbs.

According to the List of Individual Names of the Jasenovac Victims, which includes all the research completed up to 31 August 2008, the names and details of 12,790 persons killed in the Ustasha camp in Stara Gradiška have been confirmed.

After the breakout of inmates in April 1945, most of buildings in Jasenovac camp were destroyed by Ustashe. Later new Yugoslav authorities turned Stara Gradiška into a prisoner-of-war camp for Ustashas, Nazis and Fascists. From 1948, the location became known as "the Penitentiary Rehabilitation Centre", in which were imprisoned many political prisoners of various ideologies and personal convictions in opposition to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, alongside those convicted of the most heinous crimes. Following the "Croatian Spring" uprising in 1971, the prison cells were crammed with Croatian intellectuals, students and citizens convicted on the grounds of "Croatian nationalism". The Penitentiary Rehabilitation Centre was disbanded and closed in 1990.

In 1991, with the beginning of the war in Croatia, Stara Gradiška once again became a prisoner-of-war camp, in the hands of the Yugoslav National Army and Serbian paramilitary units. Many Croats from western Slavonia and the non-Serbian population of northwest Bosnia and Herzegovina were imprisoned and abused there, as were Serbian army deserters.

Today, Stara Gradiška and the remaining parts of the fort are listed as a protected cultural monument. The Tower which forms part of the ramparts is a symbol of the suffering of women and children in the Ustasha camps, and survivors erected a monument to the victims of the Ustasha camp in the camp cemetery. However, the remaining buildings are endangered and in a state of demise. The surrounding areas, including the monuments and cemetery, are as well mostly neglected and overgrown nature is reclaiming the site.

- **The study visit and Action Day**

To combat the state of abandonment of Stara Gradiška, the Study visit and Action Day aims to directly engage young people in the remembrance of this complex site. The participants will discover more about the local history of this area, meet other young people from all over Europe, and be directly involved in a cleaning action, aimed at upkeep and rising the visibility of the memorial site and its victims.

The activity is organized as part of the project "Power of Personal Stories in Confronting Oblivion (PPSCO)", funded by the European Union through the programme CERV - European Remembrance.

Sources:

<https://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6751>

Exhibition "*If I forget you*" by Nataša Mataušić, author of concept and text, organised by Croatian History Museum and Croatian State Archive (2020)

PROGRAM OF THE STUDY VISIT AND ACTION DAY

Monday July 7	Tuesday July 8	Wednesday July 9	Thursday July 10
Traveling of participants to Zagreb	07:00 - 08:00 Breakfast	07:00 Early start of the day and leaving for Stara Gradiška - Breakfast on the bus	Traveling together to Zagreb (early morning) Breakfast on the bus departure of participants from Zagreb
	9:00 – 11:30 Traveling to Jasenovac by bus and guided visit to the Jasenovac Memorial Site	08:30 - 10:30 Action day Stara Gradiška	
15:00 Meeting in Zagreb Train Station (Glavni Kolodvor) and traveling together to Planinarski Dom Omanovac	12:00 Lunch & Traveling back to Pakrac	11:00 - 12:00 Commemoration and Evaluation	
	15:00 - 17:00 Meeting with organizations leading the event – Documenta, Delfin and VSNM	12:00 - 14:00 Lunch	
17:30 - 19:00 Presentation of the program & brief historical introduction Getting to know each other	17:30 - 18:30 Guided walk in Pakrac	14:00 - 16:00 Free time (possible to swim in the river Sava) & Driving back to Pakrac by bus	
19:00 Dinner	19:00 Dinner	19:00 Dinner	

- **HOW TO APPLY**

The event is open to young people and activists, with residence in the European Union member states, or from the eligible countries of the CERV programme (https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/cerv/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_cerv_en.pdf)

To apply, please complete this form:

<https://forms.gle/V2rvR6hk9oZThjH7>

UNTIL JUNE 8TH, 2025

- **COSTS**

All costs connected to accommodation and meals, for the dates indicated in the program, are covered by the organizers.

Travel costs are reimbursed after the end of the activity, following these indications:

- **TRAVEL COSTS**

The travel costs will be reimbursed based on the cheapest and closest to the venue possibilities (second class railway tickets, bus tickets, low-cost flights), accompanied by the receipt of complete and original tickets, invoices, bills, receipts, or boarding cards. The travel expenses will be reimbursed after the end of the activity.

The project team will reimburse the tickets to the participants after the conclusion of the event. Before booking your travel, please check with the organizers (alice.straniero@documenta.hr).

The contribution for the reimbursement covers the traveling of 1 person, from hometown to Zagreb and back - up to 230 euro per person.

The traveling from Zagreb to the accommodation, and from the accommodation to the memorial sites on the days of the program will be organized and covered by the organizers.

CHECK LIST FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT:

1. Regular plane tickets must be accompanied:

- by the **original invoice** (signed and stamped)/receipt/pay order/proof of payment
- the **boarding pass** (the small ticket with QR code you receive before boarding the plane)
- the **prices** stated in the invoices, receipts etc. must **coincide** with the price on the ticket

2. Electronic air tickets must be:

- **printed out** and include your **name, the exact fare you paid, details of your flight on the same page**
- provided along with **the credit card receipt for the payment or a copy of your bank statement** (clearly showing the payment has been made)
- given in with the **boarding pass** (ticket with QR code)

NOTES:

- Some airlines print "passenger receipt" at the top of the cardboard ticket. It is not accepted as a receipt of proof of payment. Therefore, if you book your tickets online, please, make sure to print out the email you receive from the airline company upon the payment, stating how much and how you paid.
- If you use an App for booking your plane, be sure to save or screenshot the boarding passes, as they disappear from the application after you have used them.

3. Train/Bus tickets

- It is important that that arrival and departure time as well as the price are visible (+ invoices if available)

Other important details:

- Missing or lost tickets are not reimbursed
- Booking paper alone is not enough
- Any costs for taxi are not reimbursed
- Return tickets must be bought in advance before the journey

- **Organizing your travel:**

Please plan your travel with arrival and departure to / from Zagreb. The organizers will manage the traveling during the program directly.

On July 7th, we would meet at 15:00 at Zagreb Train Station (Glavni Kolodvor), A bus will wait for us to bring the group to the accommodation. Please be on time! 😊 We would start early in the morning on July 10th, and be in Zagreb Train Station around 9:00 in the morning.

How to reach Zagreb:

If you're coming by plane, you can check the connections to **Zagreb Airport "Franjo Tuđman"**. The Airport is connected to different cities through low cost flights ([RyanAir](#)), so you could also check on the site of the company for connections. Or you could have a look at [Skyscanner](#). From the airport, take the bus outside of the main entrance to get to the city center. The bus is white and with the writing "[Pleso Prijevoz](#)", it costs 8 euro and can also be reimbursed if you keep the ticket. It takes around 30/40 minutes and will drive you to Zagreb Bus Station.

If you're coming by bus, you will arrive at **Zagreb Bus Station**. You can check the connections on [Flixbus](#) or [Zagreb bus station website](#). From the bus station, you should take the tram number 2 or 6 (with direction Črnomerec) and exit at the stop Glavni Kolodvor (Train station). You can buy a tram ticket at a kiosk for around 60 cents, or on the bus for around 80 cents.

If you're coming by train, our meeting point is exactly outside of the **Zagreb Train Station (Glavni Kolodvor)**. You can check connections on the [website of the Train Station](#).

- **Meeting point:**

Our meeting point on July 7th will be at Zagreb Train Station (Glavni Kolodvor). At this location: [Bus stop meeting point](#). We will be back at the same location on July 10th.



ACCOMMODATION

Participants will be staying at Planinarski Dom Omanovac, in multiple bed rooms. The costs of accommodation and meals are covered by the organizers for the days of the program

OTHER IMPORTANT INFO

The program involves an Action Day, with cleaning in nature 😊 The temperature might be really hot, so bring with you:

- sun-protection cream;
- comfortable clothes;
- water bottle;
- hat or something to cover your head;
- and, for safety, your European Health Insurance Card



if you have allergies or other special needs, please also consider to bring antistaminics and medicines, as it is an area with overgrown grass and hay, and we might not have always access to pharmacies.

There might be the possibility to swim and sunbathe, so also bring a swimming suit if you like!

Everyone is welcome to join our Action Day — no matter your level of physical ability or experience. There are tasks for all, and every helping hand makes a difference!

CONTACTS

If you have other questions connected to the project and program please contact:
alice.straniero@documenta.hr.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Documenta, Center for dealing with the past - Croatia

Center for Holocaust and Genocide Research
in Southeast Europe (Croatia)

The Max Mannheimer Study
Center (Germany)

Topografia per la storia (Italy)

Intercultural Institute Timisoara (Romania)

Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage
Synagogue Maribor (Slovenia)

EUROM - European Observatory on
Memories (Spain)