

ZWEITZEUGEN e.V.

(formerly HEIMATSUCHER e.V. - Shoah survivors today)

Activity report 2020

The association pursues exclusively and directly charitable purposes within the meaning of the section "Tax-privileged purposes" of the German Tax Code. The purpose of the association is to promote international sentiment, tolerance in all areas of culture and international understanding. In particular, the association pursues the purpose of actively preventing anti-Semitism and racism and sensitizing young people in particular to the topic.

The purpose of the statutes is realized in particular by (cf. in detail § 3 of the statutes)

1. the documentation of life stories of contemporary witnesses of the Holocaust,
2. the promotion of a lively culture of remembrance of the National Socialist era, for example in the form of exhibitions, didactic concepts and publications,
3. Educational measures, especially in schools, with school classes (from the fourth grade) and youth groups,
4. the implementation and publication of academic research projects.

This was implemented in 2020 as follows

1. renaming of the association

The name of the association HEIMATSUCHER e.V. was changed to ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. by resolution of the general meeting on 01.02.2020. The new name reflects the further development of the association from a student project to an educational and remembrance project with a unique concept and represents the purpose of the association in a suitable form: Everyone should be able to become a witness, remember and find the opportunity to actively work for a democratic society.

The concept, the purpose of the association and the statutes remain unchanged. The renaming was entered in the register of associations at the Essen district court on 27.02.2020 under register number VR 5989.

Association life in numbers

- 212 association members supported the association's work in 2020
- 130 volunteers (50 of whom were new in 2020)
- 9 full-time employees (4.75 FTE)
- 10 years of expertise & experience
- Material and financial resources € 250,000

Committees & Teams

General Assembly

Board of Directors & Management

Advisory Board

Teams:

Educational work

Interviews

Exhibitions & Events

Communication

Internal development

Fundraising & Network

Scientific work

Contemporary witnesses

2. documentation of the life stories of contemporary witnesses of the Holocaust and their publications

In 2020, a new interview was conducted with Hermine Liska, a Jehovah's Witness, near Graz: This valuable addition makes the passing on of the (survival) life stories of our contemporary witnesses more diverse. The interview included establishing and maintaining contact as well as the conversation between the association members and the eyewitness. The conversation was recorded for later transcription and editing.

The work of contemporary witnesses prevents the Holocaust from being forgotten - especially in relation to personal fates. Documenting the life stories of an ageing generation is an essential basis for the sustainable promotion of a living culture of remembrance. The documented interviews are then processed and made available in the form of publications. This directly promotes mutual tolerance and prevents racism and anti-Semitism.

Maintaining contact with contemporary witnesses:

All 21 living contemporary witnesses have a contact person in the association. In this way, these eyewitnesses receive regular mail. As far as possible, contact with the contemporary witnesses is maintained regularly by telephone, e-mail and visits.

As part of the school projects, pupils can also write letters to the eyewitnesses. These are regularly handed over to the survivors, some of whom live in Israel, or to the descendants of deceased eyewitnesses. In 2020, 1,045 letters were sent by schoolchildren through the association. This also helped to promote international understanding and good relations between people.

No annual review cards were sent in 2020; instead, the eyewitnesses received birthday cards designed by schoolchildren.

Quality assurance:

The focus was on internal quality management in all teams and areas of the association. In addition to team-specific milestones, e.g. the creation and revision of guidelines, the description of work processes or the renewal of the training system for new workshop leaders, the association-wide infrastructure was expanded under the leadership of the Internal Development team: Introduction of Slack (May 2020) as a central system for daily communication; several thousand messages per month; has contributed significantly to collaboration that works across teams, e.g. in the organization of online lectures and spontaneous requests for help. The basic principles of the "Internal Development" team (description of areas of responsibility, guidelines, annual targets set, etc.) were summarized in a manual and made available to everyone. This was adopted by several other teams.

Processing and publishing interviews with contemporary witnesses:

In 2020, the association continued to work on processing the interviews for publications: four transcripts were completed; four interview texts were edited and 17 short texts supplementing the interviews were written. A new didactic booklet was published in 2020.

Support and maintaining contact in the event of death

In 2020, four of the eyewitnesses (Henny Brenner, Leslie Schwartz, Juraj Szües and Gerhard Baader) with whom association members had maintained regular contact passed away. To support the association's internal contact persons, a (mourning) support service for volunteers was developed and set up in 2019 for these cases and continued in 2020. The stories of the deceased are passed on by association members.

3. promoting a lively culture of remembrance of the National Socialist era, for example in the form of exhibitions and events

No exhibition could take place in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, the concept was expanded with many new ideas, including a multimedia concept, interactive elements and perspectives from young second witnesses.

In addition, the concept for image sponsorship was implemented; four sponsorships were awarded.

Instead of real events, the association held four digital second-witness evenings with a total of 250 visitors. At each evening, a second witness told a contemporary story, presented the work of the association and invited participants to engage in dialog. For the first time, one of these evenings combined the story of a survivor and the story of a young refugee in cooperation with the organization "Life back home".

4. educational measures, particularly in schools, with school classes (from the fourth grade) and extracurricular youth groups, as well as the development of didactic concepts and materials:

In 2020, ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. carried out numerous projects in schools. In the projects, the personal life stories of contemporary witnesses are presented in their historical context and young people are sensitized to the current topic of racism and anti-Semitism. To this end, the

association has developed its own educational concept, in which volunteers are increasingly being trained, including in 2020. This year, with the support of the Paritätisches Jugendwerk, contacts were established with extracurricular educational institutions and other independent child and youth welfare organizations and the first workshops were held.

The association continues to be pleased with the sharp rise in popularity in the school landscape and the increasing number of inquiries from educational institutions. With the 2020 educational projects, the number of people and institutions reached in the target groups was lower than in previous years due to the situation heavily impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. 92 planned educational projects and 15 events could not take place. Nevertheless, the association reached 2,000 children and young people in 2020 through 93 analog and 7 digital workshops. 18 second witness cards were issued to younger children.

Four new workshop leaders were trained in 2020.

The educational projects carried out by the association support educators in teaching children and young people democratic values. By accompanying children and young people, teachers, social workers and educators in historical and political education make an important contribution to a democratic society.

The aim of making this offer accessible to educators outside the school system was pursued further in 2020.

A total of seven events (in both analog and digital form) were held in 2020 to inform educators, other multipliers and interested adults about the ZWEITZEUGEN concept.

School cooperations

In 2020, the number of our cooperation schools rose to a total of 16 schools, each with at least three-year cooperation agreements that secure and define our annual collaboration. We are delighted to have signed new cooperation agreements with the Robert-Koch-Realschule in Dortmund and the Janusz-Korczak-Grundschule in Hagen.

Didactic concepts and materials

The existing interviews are constantly being adapted to suit the age group. They are shortened and arranged chronologically, as the eyewitnesses often switch between narrative threads in the interviews. Illustrations are created for each booklet and footnotes and explanatory texts are written especially for children and young people. There is also a work section with tasks for

the children and young people. They answer in-depth questions about the interview, explain the meanings of quotes and can sometimes write their answers creatively, for example by drawing. The children and young people then take the booklets home with the task of retelling the story. In this way, the idea of international understanding can be passed on beyond the boundaries of the project.

In 2020, six more survival stories were developed and printed in the form of didactic materials. In addition, life stages were developed for 19 life stories, 49 anti-Jewish laws and decrees were historically researched and formulated for the target group and 42 illustrations were produced to provide visual support for 12 different (survival) life stories.

5. the implementation and publication of academic research projects

The association works together with institutions, chairs and academics at various universities. This includes the presentation of the association and the didactic methods that have been explicitly introduced into the current scientific discourse and discussed there. In addition to joint publication projects, these collaborations result in impulses for new methods or formats that are integrated into the association's work, or the joint organization of project seminars for students.

In 2020, the association received invitations from two important chairs of history didactics in Bochum and Munich to give lectures at their research colloquia.

6. other activities

Communication / PR

The "Communication" team is divided into the areas of social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), newsletter, website and press relations and is supervised and organized by a team leader. The entire team works on a voluntary basis. The volunteers exchange information on relevant topics through regular meetings and telephone calls. The association tries to staff each area of responsibility with at least two people in order to implement public relations work in a structured and professional manner and to create opportunities for representation.

In 2020, the Communications team analyzed the existing work processes in the team and took a joint look at the interfaces with other teams in the association. Processes were adapted where necessary and appropriate. Over the course of the year, the association developed processes to inform all volunteers and full-time employees about topics that were relevant to internal and external communication.

We recorded 2,000 new followers on the association's Instagram channel.

Communication channels:

Member newsletter

Multiplier newsletter

Association website

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn

Second witnesses in soccer

Since August 2020, we have been working with the learning centers of Bundesliga soccer clubs Borussia Dortmund (BVB Learning Center) and Borussia Mönchengladbach (Bildungspark MG) to offer regular "Second Witness" workshops for children and young people at the stadium as a place of learning. In 2020 mainly as virtual workshops. Our common goal is to sensitize children and young people to the effects of anti-Semitism and racism in the context of soccer with the help of Holocaust survival stories and to work with them on how they can stand up for a democratic society and humanitarian values. Together, we develop formats to shape remembrance as second witnesses.

216 children and young people (including many with different support needs) were reached by this project in workshops in 2020.

Special formats were created, such as "Watching a Borussia Dortmund away match in a pack" and "Developing strategies for an appreciative, open and diverse society". As part of the TalentTageRuhr, the association organized a public information event for interested parties.

Other year-round activities

The association was represented at various events throughout the year, in particular commemorative events and networking events in the field of education and remembrance work.

Throughout the year, members gave lectures in a non-academic context on the need for a living culture of remembrance and the promotion of mutual tolerance and the idea of international understanding. This also includes lectures on the association's educational concept, which is gaining increasing recognition.

7. cooperation

In 2020, important cooperation partners were gained for the most effective and sustainable implementation of the association's purpose.

Cooperation partners

- Borussia Dortmund
- BVB-Lernzentrum
- Borussia Mönchengladbach
- Bildungspark MG
- Courage Netzwerk Kreis Unna
- Friedensdorf International Oberhausen
- Life Back Home
- Teach First Deutschland
- Stadtteilzentrum Bockelweg Hamm
- Stiftung Talentmetropole Ruhr
- Talentzentrum NRW
- Werkstatt für Demokratie und Toleranz in Hamm
- Jugendzentrum Oppum Casablanca
- Die Wolfsburg - Katholische Akademie des Bistums Essen

Partnerships established in 2020

- COACH e.V.
- RE/init e.V.
- Junge Muslime in Auschwitz

Memberships and seals

- Der Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband NRW
- PHINEO Wirkt!-Siegel

Funding partners

- Aktion Mensch
- Ashoka
- Antisemitismusbeauftragte des Landes NRW
- DER PARITÄTISCHE
-
- Amadeu Antonio Stiftung
- Architekt Christoph Damm
- Berns Gruppe
- Christian und Ulrike Reppekus Stiftung
- Dortmund Stiftung
- Stadt Dortmund
- Düsseldorfer Jonges
- FESCH - das Forum Eltern und Schule
- GAG Immobilien AG
- Haniel Stiftung
- Ingrid und Reinhard Wederhake Stiftungsfond
- Irmgard und Heinrich Grünewald Stiftung
- Martin Luther Stiftung Ruhr
- Meyer-Struckmann-Stiftung
- Rotary Club Hannover Leineschloss e.V.
- Signal Iduna Gruppe
- Sparkasse Recklinghausen Vest
- Verena Horstmann
- West Lotto

8. prizes and awards

At the award ceremony for the Engagement Award NRW 2020, we received the special prize from the North Rhine-Westphalia Foundation and were thus nominated for the German Engagement Award 2021. In addition, our project for the digital processing of personal memories of Holocaust survivors was awarded #dortMUT in the area of culture by DSW21.