

ZWEITZEUGEN e.V.

Activity report for the year 2023

The association pursues exclusively and directly charitable purposes within the meaning of the 'tax-privileged purposes' section 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 aims to actively prevent anti-Semitism and racism and to sensitize young people in particular to this issue.

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

1. documenting the 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.

Brief summary of the most important developments in the association:

- ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. has been able to show the new exhibition for children and young people at two locations in 2023: Düsseldorf and Dorsten.
- Record number of educational units held and children and young people reached.
- Workshops were held at 14 special schools with a focus on hearing, communication and vision with 308 children and young people.
- Four workshops with a new training program for multipliers were held throughout Germany.
- First pilot project on transnational educational dialog in collaboration with the Museum of Jewish Heritage New York City.
- Caesura caused by the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel on October 7, 2023

This was implemented in 2023 as follows

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

In 2023, two interviews with contemporary witnesses of the Holocaust were scientifically prepared and published as magazines: Wolfgang Lauinger and Gregor Somora.

The work of contemporary witnesses prevents the Holocaust from being forgotten - especially with regard 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 antisemitism.

Maintaining contact with contemporary witnesses and their families:

There is a contact person in the association for contemporary witnesses who are still alive or for their surviving families. In this way, these contemporary witnesses receive regular mail. As far as possible, contact with the eyewitnesses and/or their families is maintained regularly by telephone, email and visits.

In addition, a (grief) support service for volunteers was developed and set up in 2019 to support the association's internal contact persons, which has since offered support in the event of the death of the eyewitnesses and coordinated obituaries and memorial moments for the deceased. The stories of the deceased are passed on by association members. Chanoch Mandelbaum and Mary O'Sullivan died in 2023.

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, in the case of deceased witnesses, to their descendants. In 2023, 2,849 letters from pupils were sent by the association.

Especially after October 7, 2023, contact with families and eyewitnesses living in Israel was intensified. Since then, the association has given the voices of these people more visibility in communication and external representation. At the same time, concern for the safety of people in Israel and Gaza remains equally high.

Quality assurance:

Thanks to pilot project funding, the association was able to develop and evaluate methods and offers for new target groups last year. In particular, the workshops at special schools and a detailed qualitative evaluation concluded the three-year project phase with many practical findings. Impact objectives, different training content, evaluation questions and insights into the different needs of this target group were also developed as part of the nationwide training courses for multipliers.

In the new exhibition, which was specially developed for children and young people, it was also possible to gather experience and feedback with the target group through various guided tour and workshop formats in 2023. A mobile roll-up exhibition made it possible to hold specially developed feedback workshops with over 100 pupils. The findings have already been implemented in the exhibition in the form of an audio guide, among other things.

The Science team has started to develop a wiki for historical facts and background information for internal knowledge retention. Employees were also advised by the Competence Center for Education and Research Critical of Anti-Semitism on the topics of dealing with possible anti-Semitic incidents and development needs in the area of educational work critical of anti-Semitism in the context of our multiplier training courses. The protection concept was revised.

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

2. a. The traveling exhibition 'Become a Zweitzeuge/Zweitzeugin'

The interactive and educational exhibition tells the (survival) stories of Holocaust witnesses Chava Wolf, Henny Brenner, Dr. Leon Weintraub and Wolfgang Lauinger. Their biographies are supplemented by (historical) contextual information in several subject areas, for example continuities of anti-Semitism. Again and again, a transfer to the present day is created in the living environment of the (young) visitors. Through multimedia content, audio contributions and numerous interactions, the exhibition also invites visitors to become active as second witnesses. The digital learning platform provides in-depth information on the topic of anti-Semitism and incorporates playful elements that particularly appeal to young people. The exhibition was shown at the Düsseldorf State Parliament and the Jewish Museum of Westphalia in Dorsten in 2023.

2. b. Conversations with eyewitnesses and second witnesses

On 21.09.2023, the second witness Sara Elkmann told the story of Erna de Vries' survival, showed illustrations, pictures and played audio quotes from the interview with the contemporary witness. Afterwards, Erna's daughter, Ruth de Vries, answered questions from the participants about her mother and what it was like to grow up as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor.

The 480 participants, who were on site or connected via Zoom, listened intently to the story and asked Ms. de Vries interesting questions, resulting in a lively conversation.

On October 30, 2023, a talk with Holocaust witness Eva Weyl took place at Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund. The cooperative event between the ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. association and the BVB Learning Center was a complete success: almost 650 people, including many children and young people, listened to Eva's story and became her second witnesses.

As part of the cooperation project 'Never Forget' by ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. and the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, young people from North Rhine-Westphalia entered into a digital exchange with contemporary witnesses from New York. At the end of 2023, two online conversations took place with Holocaust survivors Lisa Baer and Jerry Lindenstrauss - both were persecuted as Jews in Germany during the Nazi era and now live in the USA. During the digital meetings, they told their (survival) stories and answered questions from the young participants. The aim of the project was to empower the participants to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of group-focused misanthropy. They were made more aware of international history and the importance of today's democracies. On this basis, new opportunities for transnational exchange between German and US-American young people and for new educational materials are to be created in the future.

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

In 2023, ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. carried out numerous projects at schools and extracurricular educational institutions. Our educational program offers an answer to the question of how remembrance can succeed in the future, even without contemporary witnesses and especially with young people in the here and now. Our non-profit association ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. is a

recognized provider of independent child and youth welfare services and is primarily active in the areas of historical and political education, Holocaust education and anti-Semitism prevention.

In 2023, a total of 349 workshops were held with 8,509 children and young people. Of these, workshops were held with 308 children and young people at 14 special schools with a focus on hearing and communication as well as vision, thanks to model project funding from the LWL Social Foundation.

From the end of October to the end of November 2023, we worked with 18 children and young people in a blended learning format to remember contemporary witnesses of the Holocaust. The participants explored how to shape the culture of remembrance of tomorrow and discussed what moves them in a safe space. This offered an intensive examination of the topic and aimed to turn the young people into active shapers of our society. The focus was therefore on democratic elements and the development of products: the young people designed 'stickers against forgetting' and wrote letters to political decision-makers in which they emphasized what they want from the culture of remembrance of the future.

We were able to provide ZWEITZEUGEN education to 286 children and young people from socially disadvantaged areas of the Rhineland. In order to get young people interested in our educational work, we cooperated with 6 extracurricular learning venues (Stadionakademie Köln, Jugendtreff Kreuzau, Fanprojekt Düsseldorf, Bildungskick Düsseldorf, Fanprojekt Aachen and Fanprojekt Oberhausen), 1 school (Marienschule Essen Steele) and 3 other initiatives and implemented 18 projects. Other cooperation partners in the project included Initiative ZUSAMMEN1, stands against discrimination of any kind and wants to make soccer strong against anti-Semitism; a project of Makkabi Deutschland e.V.. Makkabi Deutschland e.V. is a youth organization that promotes sport and social cooperation. MeDiF, the reporting office for discrimination in soccer, is a contact point for clubs and their members, fans, professional and amateur organizations or other parties involved in soccer, which documents discriminatory incidents in soccer in North Rhine-Westphalia.

An important need for further training arose after October 7, 2023, as the social escalation in Germany is reflected in our projects. There had already been antisemitic statements and Israel-related antisemitism in our workshops before, but since the start of the war in Gaza, the supposed link between Jews and Israel seems stronger than before. Since October 7, 2023, we have recognized in the stories told by Jewish people how young people directly associate them with the Middle East war and sometimes project hatred towards Jews. This is challenging for

our education team and requires patient listening and explaining, which requires appropriate coaching and knowledge transfer for our education team.

The aim was to strengthen our workshop leaders in their practice through encouragement, knowledge and suitable methods. To this end, we expanded our guidelines on challenging situations, attended training courses (such as the Berlin training course 'Antisemitism, racism and the 'Middle East' - dealing constructively with areas of tension in education and civil society' by BildungsBausteine) and invited the historical and political educator Uriel Kashi as a speaker for digital lectures. Uriel Kashi informed members of the association, cooperation partners and teachers about the history of Israel and the events since October 7. The methods and newly acquired knowledge were directly reflected in the team. We are now trained to adapt our educational work to current social discourse and to react sensitively to what moves children and young people.

Our cooperation schools

In 2023, we had a total of 23 ZWEITZEUGEN schools in our network. We organize workshops with these schools at least once a year in three-year collaborations. In addition, we offer the ZWEITZEUGEN schools an annual digital information event for parents and/or teachers. We are delighted that we were able to conclude new cooperation agreements last year with GGS Ricarda Huch and Heinrich-Böll-Gesamtschule (both in Cologne), KGS Bad Bevensen, Sophie Scholl Gesamtschule Hamm and Realschule Waldbröl! We are also delighted that five more schools have extended their cooperation agreements with us for a further three years in 2023.

Didactic concepts and materials

The existing interviews are continuously 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 continuing the story. In this way, the idea of international understanding can be passed on beyond the boundaries of the project.

The method 'Action strategies from the pitch to the classroom' has been newly developed: After listening to a survival story, we ask the question: What can we do today to stand up against discrimination, anti-Semitism and racism? To make this transfer tangible, a video from the DFB is shown, which is designed as an instructional video for referees. It contains a number of concrete strategies for action on the pitch, such as supporting those affected, reporting to referees, stopping play and punishing discrimination. These options for action are transferred to the classroom, the everyday world of children and young people: the equivalent of reporting to the referee is then reporting to a teacher or school social worker, we consider together how those affected can be helped in concrete terms and what the possible consequences could be. This can be done in a group discussion or in small groups. The possible strategies for action are recorded on a poster or flyers so that they are available long after the workshop.

The thematic deepening of the continuities of anti-Semitism was achieved through the 'Continuities of anti-Semitism' method. This method breaks down various manifestations of anti-Semitism from the Middle Ages to the present day. This is because many motifs have existed for hundreds of years, which are adapted to current social issues depending on the era. Anti-Semitism therefore looks supposedly different, it is coded. During the workshop, the young people looked behind this coding and were able to gain a deeper understanding of the negative stories about Jews that were spread before and after the Nazi era. This showed potential, as the participants' knowledge was limited.

4. the implementation and publication of scientific research projects

The association works together with institutions, chairs and scientists from various universities. This includes presenting the association and the didactic methods that have been explicitly introduced into the current academic 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.

5. other activities

Communication / PR

The Communications team is divided into the areas of social media (Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube), newsletter, website and press relations and is managed and organized by two team leaders. The social media area is managed by volunteers and a part-time employee. 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 the public relations work in a structured and professional manner and to create opportunities for representation.

Communication channels:

Member newsletter

Multiplier newsletter

Quarterly newsletter to all interested parties

Association website

Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube

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 international understanding. This also includes lectures on the association's educational concept, which is gaining increasing recognition.

6. funding partners

Our strong network of funding and cooperation partners, companions and friends, professional structures, determination and commitment are the basis for our effective and constantly growing work.

OUR MAIN PARTNERS FOR THE YEAR 2023 (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

- **Aktion Mensch**

The three-year funding of the educational project 'Second Witnesses in Football' was successfully completed in spring 2023. We are delighted to have been awarded renewed funding, which will start in 2024.

- **Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung**

Together with the BpB, we implemented our first nationwide training series for multipliers. (Prospective) teachers, social workers and trainees from the care sector were trained in the ZWEITZEUGEN concept.

- **Das Paritätische Jugendwerk NRW**

The PJW NRW has been advising, networking and supporting us since 2019. In joint funding projects, we were able to expand our work with non-school partners and implemented a peer-to-peer project with the Cologne Quäker Nachbarschaftsheim e.V. in 2023.

- **Die Antisemitismusbeauftragte des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen**

In 2023, Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, the Commissioner for Anti-Semitism of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, once again supported our ZWEITZEUGEN education at school and extracurricular educational institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia.

- **Klett Stiftung**

The Klett Foundation has been funding our organization since 2023 and supports us in maintaining and expanding our services and making them accessible, especially to places and institutions that are often not reached by extracurricular activities.

- **LVR**

The LVR became a new funding partner and supported two pilot projects in the context of digital education work and cooperation with soccer learning locations in the Rhineland. The association is also providing three years of funding for work at soccer learning centers throughout NRW.

- **LWL-Sozialstiftung**

Our barrier-free educational work was supported in particular by the LWL Social Foundation. In 2023, we carried out educational projects at 14 LWL special schools with 308 visually and hearing impaired young people.

- **Postcode Lotterie**

The Postcode Lottery promoted cooperation with Dortmund partners in order to anchor ZWEITZEUGEN offers for young people from the north of Dortmund in the neighborhood.

- **RheinEnergie Stiftung**

The initial two-year funding from the RheinEnergie Stiftung Jugend, Beruf und Wissenschaft has been extended by one year and will now enable numerous creative and multi-day ZWEITZEUGEN workshop formats in Cologne until fall 2024.

- **Zukunftspaket**

Together with over 100 young people, we evaluated our exhibition and developed it

further in line with their needs. In addition, the young second witnesses created a special exhibition about the story of Sister Johanna.

OTHER FUNDING PARTNERS OF THE YEAR 2023 (in alphabetical order)

- Architekt Christoph Damm
- Ashoka
- Christian und Ulrike Reppekus Stiftung
- Ela Mo
- FESCH – das Forum Eltern und Schule
- GAG Immobilien AG
- GFL Markler- und Beratungsgesellschaft
- Givio gGmbH
- Haniel Stiftung
- Heimat-Scheck
- Ingrid und Reinhard Wederhake Stiftung
- Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
- Kurt und Maria Dohle Stiftung
- Landeszentrale für politische Bildung NRW
- L&T
- Martin Luther Stiftung Ruhr
- Meyer Struckmann Stiftung
- Oll'n Handwarkers ut Worphusen un annere Dörper e.V.
- Prognos AG
- Riccardo Simonetti Initiative e.V.
- Rotary Club Hannover-Leineschloss e.V.
- Signal Iduna Gruppe
- Sparkasse KölnBonn
- Sparkasse Vest Recklinghausen
- Stadtsportbund Bielefeld e.V.

- Strukturlandschaft
- Verena Horstmann

Memberships and seals

- Der Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband NRW
- Equivalency Determination Certification
- phineo Wirkt!-Siegel

7. Prizes and awards

ZWEITZEUGEN e.V. was honored with the Obermayer Award in 2023. The Obermayer Awards recognize individuals and organizations in Germany who have contributed to preserving Jewish history and culture in their communities and counteracting hatred, prejudice and anti-Semitism through creative and selfless commitment. The honored individuals and institutions have built bridges in their communities and around the world, thereby establishing close relationships with former Jewish citizens and their descendants. At the same time, thanks to their work, younger generations are also able to learn the lessons of history.

8. The NGO in figures

- 215 association members support the association's work in 2023
- 101 volunteers
- 21 full-time employees (11.5 FTEs) - (including 1 on parental leave)

Committees & Teams

General Assembly

Board of Directors & Management

Advisory Board

Teams:

Educational work

Interviews (with team second witnesses)

Exhibitions & events

Communication

Us

Technology

Fundraising & Network

Scientific work