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RELATION PROJECT – Research, knowledge & education against antisemitism
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EDUCATING AGAINST ANTISEMITISM IS EDUCATING IN HUMAN RIGHTS

Two years, four countries, a single purpose: to innovate in teaching methodologies to train new European generations where diversity and respect prevail.

Last month, on May 30 and 31, the final RELATION conference was held in Brussels. The European capital was chosen to host this closing event to make visible the efforts that the entire team of researchers, educators and creatives have dedicated to this initiative co-funded by the European Union.

CEJI, a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe, was the host organisation of this two-day event, which included the participation of representatives from all the countries linked to the project: Italy, Spain, Romania and Belgium. Dr. Pascale Falek also took part in the event as representative of the European Commission and Policy Officer in the team of Katharina Von Schnurbein, European Coordinator for the fight against antisemitism and the promotion of Jewish life. Spokespeople of related initiatives also joined this dialogue, including Alexandre Liebhaberg (GOLEM - JCA), Oana Bajka (TOLI Institute), Estelle Cincinatis (CEJI) and Nehama Uzan (EJCC).

On the second day, the participants reflected together with Camille Chiavetta (Unia - Equality Body in Belgium), Francine Bracho (Jewish Museum of Belgium) and Stéphanie Lecesne (CEJI) on the role of education in mitigating antisemitic biases.

Some important conclusions emerged from this meeting about the challenges of educational innovation in the fight against antisemitism, one of them referred to the need to address the specific requirements of the different national educational systems, since even within the European framework, the experience demonstrated that a standard methodology cannot be created. It is essential to adapt the strategies to the multiplicity and complexity of each national cultural expression. In this matter, Gadi Luzzatto Voghera, Director of the Centro di Documentazione Ebraica di Milano (CDEC), commented: “You cannot use the same tools and you cannot work in the same way in different countries.”

Natalia Acuña, representing Bet Shalom, the Jewish Reform community of Barcelona, put on the table a topic that was echoed among those attending: “We believe that it is not possible to tackle antisemitism working only with teachers that voluntarily take on this subject. This



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moment requires compulsory training for all teachers in the European Union. It is urgent to make this topic part of the school curriculum for students between 14 and 18 years old.”

The conference was also an opportunity to present the game book “It wasn't them”, published within the framework of the project. This pedagogical resource was designed to stimulate reflections through a detective narrative that demands the emotional participation of the reader, inviting the student to relate to the experience of a Jewish boy in the Florence of 1464 while becoming aware of the already existing antisemitic prejudices.

One cannot talk about the fight against hate speech, discrimination, antisemitism, islamophobia, Queerphobia, and other forms of hatred, among others, without talking about human rights. With increased polarisation in society, addressing antisemitism is not only combating hatred towards the Jewish people, but also training in coexistence and democratic values. In the words of Robin Sclafani, executive director of CEJI, “if we do not have a minimum understanding of human rights and what it means to be European, we will not stand a chance against extremists.” This is not a time to be silent or indifferent.

The partners in this project financed by the European Union are:

Spain – Bet Shalom Barcelona

Italy – Fondazione Centro Di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea (CDEC)

Italy – Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca (FCSVM)

Italy – Università Degli Studi Di Milano (UMIL)

Italy – Università Cattolica Del Sacro Cuore (UCSC)

Romania – Institutul Intercultural Timișoara (IIT)

Belgium – CEJI - a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe

You can access the public resources for educational and observatory activities by visiting www.relationproject.eu

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