



“What’s the Point of History... If We Never Learn?” Revisiting the Premises of Public History and Civic Education in view of the Challenges of the XXI Century (Roundtable)

Programme Event

International Committee of Historical Sciences | 26–30 August 2026 | Leipzig, Germany

DATE 27 Aug 2026, 11:00 - 13:30	LOCATION T-1001
THEME B - Teaching History and Public History	CONFERENCE International Committee of Historical Sciences

Overview

The question in the title was put by a young participant of an artist-educational memory project by ENRS, “Sound in the Silence”. It will serve as an inspiration for a critical discussion evaluating the historic and civic education policies and practices that have been developed especially in Europe, but also transcontinentally, after World War Two and then after the Cold War, via institutions of public history, civic initiatives, artistic projects, etc., both at the state and grass roots level. Are the premises of these historical and educational strategies still valid today, with new wars, including the Russian attack on Ukraine, the crises of immigration in Europe, populism, and other challenges of the XXI century? Which premises have failed and need to be rethought? What aspects of historical and civic education have been successful?

These questions will be considered among representatives of various institutions and projects dealing with public history, and including themes of: national and transnational histories, commemoration and remembrance of the victims of wars, nazism, and communism, patriotism and civic education in the XXI century.

The discussion will be associated with a short film screening from the “Sound in the Silence”, or, alternatively an artistic performance related to the project.

Participants

Convenor

- Joanna Wojdon (University of Wrocław)
- Malgorzata Pakier (European Network Remembrance and Solidarity)

Panelists

- Constanze Itzel (House of European History)
- Marek Cichocki (Collegium Civitas)
- Daniel Blatman (Museum of the Warsaw Ghetto, Hebrew University)
- Tanja Vaitulevich (Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center in Berlin)
- Irmgard Zündorf (Leibniz Center for Contemporary History)