



09/10

COMPASS

Directions in European Jewish Life

Introduction

Compass – (noun) An instrument for determining directions

Welcome to *Compass*, a new and timely guide designed to introduce, inform and enlighten readers about some of Europe's most vital, innovative, effective and sustainable Jewish organisations and programmes.

An initiative of the Westbury Group, a network of more than 20 international foundations with a shared interest in enhancing Jewish life in Europe, *Compass* reflects the breadth and depth of Jewish activity across the cultural, historical and religious spectrums of European Jewish life in 15 countries.

European Jewry's Rebirth

The release of this directory could not be more opportune. Europe and its Jewish communities have been reinventing themselves since the fall of Communism in 1989 and the expansion of the European Union in 2004. Three generations of Jews have come of age in post-war Europe, enabling Judaism across the continent to head into the 21st century no longer frozen by its tragic history.

Today, European governments shoulder responsibility for the Holocaust; new EU members such as Poland and the Czech Republic have strong and friendly relations with Israel; and most European societies are becoming viable civic spaces for the recovery and continuity of Jewish life.

Compass captures and brings to the world's attention these exciting developments in European Jewish culture in order to educate, as well as to encourage donor support while forging new partnerships with the global Jewish community.

The Selection Process

Inspired by *Slingshot*, an annual American guide showcasing Jewish projects that resonate with young philanthropists, *Compass* cast the net far and wide, seeking nominations from any and all Jewish organisations in Europe.

We were truly humbled by the overwhelming response from more than 100 organisations, and are genuinely excited by the incredible initiatives that are operating across the continent.

Navigating some of Europe's most compelling Jewish institutions





While any organisation could nominate itself for inclusion, a committee of more than 40 professionals and experts across Europe conducted rigorous, in-depth evaluations, including qualitative and quantitative research.

That said, Compass is intended as a guide as opposed to definitive research on each organisation. Equally, while we believe the facts as provided by each organisation to be correct at the time they were supplied, we understand how quickly things change, especially in the current economic climate.

The assessors, recognising the importance of sustainability in today's world, prioritised projects that are innovative and can be replicated elsewhere in Europe. In addition, the assessors recognized the importance of institutions such as Jewish museums, because of their critical function in educating the wider public and their role as centres for constructing and reconstructing Jewish narratives.

A Shortlist of 36

The assessors poured over thousands of pages of comprehensive nomination forms that included information about each organisation's history, budget, target audience and vision.

Each of the 109 nominations was evaluated by our committee of 41 assessors; those with prior knowledge or within geographical proximity to the project evaluated the benefits and drawbacks and their candid comments have been included, unattributed, in this guide.

In the end, the assessors singled out 36 organisations that are but a sample of the remarkable rebirth of Jewish life in Europe. These organisations are not an arbitrary choice; rather, they were selected using five key criteria:

Innovation: The extent to which the organisation breaks new ground with its initiative(s), pushes the proverbial envelope and/or responds in a creative manner to the ever-changing environment;

Impact: The extent to which the organisation leaves its mark on a critical mass of participants such that their attitude is altered, thus positively influencing society;



Strength of Leadership: The extent to which the organisation has at its helm a leader or leaders not just with the vision, but also with the ability to execute the organisation's mission;

Organisational Effectiveness: The extent to which the organisation is capable of implementing its aims in a responsible, efficient, economical manner, and the degree to which its strategy is sound - both educationally and economically; and

Sustainability: The extent to which the organisation is capable of surviving the twin perils of assimilation and anti-Semitism, as well as surviving external factors such as the credit crunch and its impact on the environment.

Pan-European Consciousness

What is most revealing within the pages of Compass is the wealth of organisations and programmes in countries with relatively small or dwindling Jewish communities. It is hoped that their inclusion in Compass will help breathe new life into these smaller communities while strengthening the larger ones. Through its recognition of several important region-wide initiatives, Compass also spotlights the new pan-European Jewish consciousness that has blossomed in recent decades. We celebrate that awakening, and hope Compass helps publicise some of these worthy programmes and initiatives.

Ultimately, Compass is exactly that: a guide to help you navigate the complex map of charitable, non-profit Jewish institutions in Europe, and a reflector of points of light that are shining in Jewish Europe. We hope you enjoy the journey - and we are sure you will be inspired by the destinations.

The Jewish organisations and/or programmes listed in Compass have been classified into the following categories:

- Innovative idea with the potential to be replicated elsewhere;
- Essential building block for its community – the key essential and sustainable organisations from which strong communities are formed; and
- Contributing to a sense of European Jewish culture and identity.



Innovative Idea

Centropa – The Library of Rescued Memories
 Dutch Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel
 Galicia Jewish Museum
 Interlink
 Jeled.net
 JMPoint.hu
 Limmud International
 Marom Budapest
 Project Keshet
 Shorashim, Jewish Foundation of Ukraine
 Tranzit Foundation
 Tzedek – Jewish Action for a Just World



Building Block

CEU – Jewish Studies
 The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute
 Haver Foundation
 Jewish Community Centre Alef
 Jewish Family Centre
 Adain Lo
 Jewish Volunteering Network
 Jugend
 Leatid Europe, European Centre for Jewish Leadership
 Mishneh Torah
 RCM
 Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre
 Tikva Children’s Home



Culture and Identity

The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ)
 Akadem-Multimedia
 Beit Warszawa, Jewish Cultural Association
 CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
 JDC Judaism Come Home
 Jewish Community Centre for London (JCC)
 Jewish Culture Festival Society
 Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam
 Maison de la Culture Yiddish
 Paideia
 Shoah Memorial Museum – Sarah’s Attic
 Yiddish Summer Weimar

Contents

The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ)	05
Akadem-Multimedia	06
Beit Warszawa, Jewish Cultural Association	07
CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe	08
Centropa – The Library of Rescued Memories	09
CEU – Jewish Studies	10
Dutch Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI)	11
The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute	12
Galicia Jewish Museum	13
Haver Foundation	14
Interlink	15
JDC Judaism Come Home	16
Jeled.net	17
Jewish Community Centre Alef	18
Jewish Community Centre for London (JCC)	19
Jewish Culture Festival Society	20
Jewish Family Centre Adain Lo	21
Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam	22
Jewish Volunteering Network	23
JMPoint.hu	24
Jugend	25
Leatid Europe, European Centre for Jewish Leadership	26
Limmud International	27
Maison de la Culture Yiddish	28
Marom Budapest	29
Mishneh Torah	30
Paideia	31
Project Keshet	32
RCM	33
Shoah Memorial Museum – Sarah’s Attic	34
Shorashim, Jewish Foundation of Ukraine	35
Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre	36
Tikva Children’s Home	37
Tranzit Foundation	38
Tzedek – Jewish Action for a Just World	39
Yiddish Summer Weimar	40
Index	41
Acknowledgments	43
About the Westbury Group	44



All roads lead to Jewish culture

AEPJ

The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage



The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ) has founded two flagship programmes that the assessors call “wonderfully innovative, trans-national activities:” the European Day of Jewish Culture and the European Route of Jewish Heritage.

The Day of Culture occurs simultaneously across Europe on the first Sunday of every September. Launched in 1996 as an open-door programme by B’nai B’rith in Alsace, France, it has blossomed into a major event. By 2000, Jewish communities in 16 countries had opened their doors to their cultural and religious landmarks. By 2007, more than 300 cities in more than 30 countries had joined the initiative with more than 190,000 people feasting their senses on Jewish culture.

▾ A very important response to the expansion of the European Union ▸

Following the success of the Day of Culture, the Route of Jewish Heritage was launched in Luxembourg in 2004, each route highlighting the buildings (synagogues, cemeteries, ritual baths, memorials, monuments, Jewish quarters, etc.) and other landmarks created by the Jewish communities across Europe. From Dublin to Ankara and Helsinki to Malta, these routes breathe life back into the foundations laid down by Jews of previous centuries. Consequently, the buildings along these routes are being preserved for future generations while tourism is also being developed around them.

The assessors believe that these flagship programmes promote tolerance and dialogue, and help make Europeans more aware of the cultural richness that Jews have brought to the continent over the centuries.

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Area of Operation
PAN-EUROPE

Budget
< €50,000

Inception
1999



Akadem-Multimedia

Akadem-Multimedia has utilised the Internet to generate a depository of Jewish religion and culture. In its short four-year existence, Akadem-Multimedia has built three websites, each aimed at a different aspect of Jewish culture.

Its main website, www.akadem.org, is an interactive e-learning site focusing on Jewish-related topics taught by academics in French, English, Hebrew and Yiddish. To date, there have been 650 conferences online, registering 180,000 log-ons per month, with more than 500 users participating on a regular basis. Its second website, www.sefarim.fr, hosts the first Internet edition of the Tanach, and is available in Hebrew, French and English, each with commentaries. More than 30,000 users have accessed this site. Its third website, www.rachelnet.org, catalogues European Hebraica/Judaica libraries. Some 10,000 users have searched for Jewish books online via this portal.

◀ An extremely innovative project reaching vast numbers of people ▶

By using the Internet to disseminate Jewish religion and culture, Akadem is making Jewish educational material available to anyone, anytime, anywhere – and at no cost. This information is also available worldwide to both Jewish and non-Jewish organisations with an interest in Jewish culture, promoting a broader understanding of Jewish life. Akadem's monitored Internet traffic increases monthly by 10 percent.

The assessors believe Akadem "clearly has an understanding of how to utilise new technologies with the maximum impact for exposure to new ideas." They also note that there is a dearth of Jewish content available on the Internet in French. Akadem-Multimedia is helping to fill that void.

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Area of Operation
FRANCE

Budget
€250,000 – 499,000

Inception
2004

Net gain for Francophiles and bibliophiles

Beit Warszawa, Jewish Cultural Association



Beit Warszawa, Jewish Cultural Association is the Polish capital's only non-Orthodox congregation. Founded in 1999, its mission is to bring back to life the once-thriving Progressive Jewish community that existed in Poland before World War II.

A member of the World Union of Progressive Judaism, Beit Warszawa presents an alternative face of Polish Jewry and aims to educate the broader Polish community about Progressive Judaism.

With two rabbis on staff, the congregation provides a welcoming environment to celebrate and develop Jewish spiritual and cultural life, and appeals especially to a sizeable population of Polish Jews who seek an alternative to Orthodoxy, as well as those who have recently discovered their Jewish ancestry.

Whether it's celebrating Jewish holidays or studying within the framework of non-Orthodox Judaism, Beit Warszawa's doors are open to all Jews, regardless of religiosity.

The congregation also counters racism and anti-Semitism, and aims to further tolerance in Polish society by participating in interfaith dialogue.

◀ Beit Warszawa is a critical part of an increasingly diverse religious life ▶

From humble beginnings in a member's home, the community began to blossom and moved to larger premises to accommodate its growing numbers in 2003. It now also boasts a Sunday school and an array of other religious and educational activities. In 2008, it founded Beit Polska, a state-recognised organisation that aims to support emerging Progressive Jewish communities throughout Poland.

Describing it as "dynamic, modern and non-prescriptive," the assessors believe that Beit Warszawa "displays qualities that make it especially suitable for the situation in Poland at this particular point in time."

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Area of Operation
POLAND

Budget
€100,000 – 249,000

Inception
1999

Progressively Jewish

CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe



CEJI – translated as “a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe” – is a critical voice in a rapidly changing Europe, working with organisations and individuals of all religions, cultures and backgrounds to promote a democratic, diverse, integrated and inclusive continent.

Founded in 1991, CEJI combats prejudice and discrimination, and promotes social cohesion through training, education, dialogue and advocacy. CEJI, which operates in more than a dozen countries across the continent, also facilitates Jewish participation in European affairs, and empowers Jewish organisations to become more internationally and interculturally active.

The organisation is at the forefront of a Jewish-Muslim dialogue, contributing innovative ideas to policy-making processes dealing with anti-discrimination and social inclusion.

◀ CEJI creates important dialogue between the different minority populations in Europe ▶

CEJI’s programmes have reached more than 3,000 teachers, trainers and other educators, who are believed to have passed the lessons learned to a further 25,000 people. The organisation hopes to increase its visibility in the Jewish community, especially in Western Europe, and aims to focus more resources on Jewish schools throughout the continent in a bid to empower Jewish youth with the tools necessary to combat discrimination.

The assessors believe CEJI is “distinctive, contemporary, innovative and appealing.” It is serving “real and changing multicultural identities and needs on a continent undergoing dramatic changes with regard to ethnicity, religion, diversity, pluralism and tolerance.”

The assessors also note that CEJI is “culturally sensitive and multi-generational,” with a focus on youth, and they find praiseworthy the organisation’s willingness to deal with tough subjects such as Muslim-Jewish relations and homophobia.

Building bridges across Europe

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Area of Operation

PAN-EUROPE

Budget

€500,000 – 1,000,000

Inception

1991

Centropa – The Library of Rescued Memories



Centropa is an interactive cyber-museum focusing on how European Jews lived before the Holocaust rather than how they died during it. In the same way that Roman Vishniac's celebrated book of photographs, *A Vanished World*, brought to life pre-war European Jewry, so too, Centropa has breathed life back into the rich stories of thriving pre-Holocaust Jewish communities. But whereas Vishniac relied on black-and-white and sepia-toned photographs, Centropa has created a multi-media archive by digitising more than 25,000 photos and producing dozens of short films using available audio of those filmed to narrate their own stories.

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Area of Operation
PAN-EUROPE

Budget
€500,000 – 1,000,000

Inception
2000

▼ A smart, innovative, timely and needed project ▼

Since 2000, Centropa has interviewed more than 1,400 elderly Jews in 15 countries between the Baltic and the Aegean seas. The treasure-trove of archive material it has gathered enables Centropa to mount travelling exhibitions, publish illustrated books and produce a variety of websites in various languages. It also produces interactive educational projects targeted toward Jewish and non-Jewish high schools in Europe and the US.

Centropa is "a solid, innovative project," according to the assessors, that creates a "trans-generational transmission of historical memory." In addition, the fact the project is being developed in many countries simultaneously is "unique and impressive."

The assessors also lauded the use of the Internet because it enables the information to be "easily adapted to other languages and audiences."

As the number of survivors of pre-war European Jewry dwindles, Centropa's digital archive is preserving in a multi-media format the vanished world that Roman Vishniac captured through the lens of his camera.

Cyber-museum to a vanished world



A study in scholarship

CEU – Jewish Studies



The Jewish Studies programme at the Central European University in Budapest has established itself as the leading centre for the study of Jewish history, culture and society in Central and Eastern Europe.

It attracts students from Europe, Asia and America united by the desire to study Judaism in a region where this was once impossible.

CEU is an internationally acclaimed English-language institute of higher education. Since 1996, the Jewish Studies programme has been operating a public lecture series taught by internationally renowned experts from Europe, Israel and America, and widely attended by students, faculty staff and local Jews. The programme has received glowing accolades from its participants.

▶ No academic Jewish Studies programme of this scope and seriousness exists elsewhere in the region ▶

Since 2001, the Jewish Studies programme has offered post-graduate students a wide range of courses in Jewish history, culture and society.

The programme's long-term aim is to develop the CEU into one of the most important centres for Jewish studies in Europe, and to create a hub for North American, Israeli and European scholars. This, in turn, will offer a forum for the healthy exchange of varying viewpoints.

The assessors believe this is an important project that merits support noting, "Graduates and/or lecturers at the Jewish Studies programme are now the single largest group of scholars in the region specialising in this field."

The programme has become a standard reference point for similar initiatives elsewhere – testament to the fact that the Jewish Studies programme at the CEU is fast becoming the central address for Jewish scholarship in the heart of Europe.

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Area of Operation
PAN-EUROPE

Budget
€250,000 – 499,000

Inception
1996



Dutch defence for Israel, Jews

Dutch Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel



Founded in 1974, the Centre of Documentation and Information on Israel (CIDI), is an independent Dutch foundation that is not only a staunch supporter of Israel but aims to strengthen ties between Israel and the Netherlands.

It organises academic courses and symposia on Israel's foreign policy and is developing courses for Jewish youngsters to train them to lobby more effectively for Israel.

In addition, CIDI fights racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, and compiles an annual list of anti-Semitic incidents in the Netherlands. Together with two Muslim organisations, the National Union of Homosexuals and a Rotterdam anti-racist organisation, CIDI fights prejudice in schools, using the World of Difference programme of the Anti-Defamation League.

▶ Their work is very important to change the opinion about Israel in the Netherlands ▶

Over the decades CIDI has established excellent contacts with leaders in the wider community. As such, CIDI maintains a high profile defending the rights of Dutch Jews and rebuts public criticism laid against the Dutch Jewish community.

It also operates three Internet sites: www.cidi.nl (the organisation's main website); www.minicidi.nl (for children at primary school-level); and www.cijo.nl (the CIDI youth organisation, which has about 200 members), with over 500,000 hits per year.

"CIDI has been running for over 30 years, has cross-communal and representative backing and is constantly looking for new ways to inform the people about Israel," say the assessors. "The work of the organisation is fairly innovative in that it has a broad and quite ambitious agenda relating to Jewish issues, Israel, fighting anti-Semitism and more."

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Area of Operation
THE NETHERLANDS

Budget
€500 000 – 1,000,000

Inception
1974

The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute



Founded in 1947, the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute collects and preserves archival materials, books, works of art, photographs and other records related to the history and culture of Polish Jews.

The Jewish Historical Institute is primarily a repository and research institution, with the oldest piece of parchment dating back to the ninth century. The most precious holdings include the Ringelblum Archives, the underground archives of the Warsaw Ghetto and thousands of personal testimonies of Holocaust survivors, the majority of which were collected immediately after the war.

The Institute is expanding its multi-faceted research in an effort to promote knowledge of the 1,000-year history of Jews in Poland. By enhancing its programmes and digitising its unique collections, the Institute is enabling lay and professional researchers to access valuable information and records. In addition, many of the materials that were originally in Polish and Yiddish have been translated into English, French and German in order to make them available to students, educators and scholars worldwide.

▶ **No other institution in Poland is remotely as important in the field of Jewish studies** ▶

“Internationally, it belongs in the same league as Yad Vashem and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum,” say the assessors. The Institute has survived decades of isolation from kindred institutions abroad as well as very limited support under the Communist regime. In 1989, it began to revive the scholarly and popular use of its archival, bibliographic and art collections free from the constraints of the previous decades.

The Institute has slowly regained its pre-eminent position and is visited by thousands of individuals and hundreds of groups each year seeking to find their own roots or to learn about Poland’s rich Jewish heritage. “As an archive,” according to the assessors, “it has serious impact on research of Polish Jewry and of the Holocaust in Poland. It also has impact at the local, city and national government levels, collaborating with each to produce histories of Jewish life in Warsaw or in Poland for the general public.”

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Area of Operation
POLAND

Budget
> €1 million

Inception
1947

1,000-year-old time capsule



Galicia Jewish Museum



The Galicia Jewish Museum commemorates the victims of the Holocaust while also celebrating the Jewish culture and history of Polish Galicia.

Founded in 2004, the Museum offers a new iconography of the Jewish past to place alongside the much-viewed images of Auschwitz. It also exists as a local Polish forum for intercultural education, dialogue and understanding; commissions and curates exhibitions; offers educational programmes; engages in primary research and publishing; and arranges for the dissemination of museum exhibitions and publications to wider audiences around the world.

◀ The first beautiful, new, very modern Jewish space in Krakow ▶

As an integral part of the Polish-Jewish milieu, the Museum seeks to ensure the preservation of Jewish heritage and the revival of Jewish culture in Poland. In addition to the permanent and temporary exhibitions, this is achieved through the operation of one of the most extensive Jewish cultural programmes in Poland. Activities include regular concerts, Yiddish and Hebrew language classes, film screenings, Jewish dance workshops and international events such as conferences, receptions and book launches.

Education is also a central element of the Museum's activities, which are aimed at both Polish and international visitors. In addition to guided tours of the Museum, there are lectures, workshops and meetings with Holocaust survivors and local Righteous Among the Nations.

"It's become a go-to site very quickly in its short life to date," say the assessors. "It's magnetic, has multiple uses and offerings, and inspires people to return." The Museum offers "innovative and insightful" programmes and exhibits, the assessors add, and is a "particularly impactful and important" cultural institution.

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Area of Operation
POLAND

Budget
€250 000 – 499,000

Inception
2004



Shalom, Haver

Haver Foundation



The founders of the Haver Informal Jewish Educational Public Benefit Foundation are Jews and non-Jews who wish to reach out to young people in the spirit of the name they chose.

Since its establishment in 2002, Haver – which means “friend” in both Hebrew and Hungarian – has promoted tolerance in a society that has a long history of anti-Semitism. This volunteer-driven “young and dynamic” organisation aims to fight prejudice and dispel common myths by educating young people about Jews and contemporary Jewish life in Hungary through informal education, discussions and lectures.

◀ An innovative approach to combating anti-Semitism through informal education ▶

By stimulating students to think and debate, and by encouraging them to ask questions and raise issues connected to Judaism and Jewish people, tolerance and pluralism, cultural dialogue and freedom, Haver is making its mark on Hungarian society. Moreover, a new interactive website is due to be launched in October 2009, which will provide a number of online seminars known as webinars. These live sessions will service a larger number of students using new and innovative technology.

Importantly, Haver believes that Jews share a common responsibility in society, and takes positive steps toward the development of mutual respect and acceptance.

The assessors believe Haver is one of the pioneers of informal education in Hungary. “Judging from the future plans of the organisation,” they say Haver “has the potential of staying relevant and innovative with its programming.” The assessors add that it is “very encouraging” that Haver is developing additional resources that can be used by pupils. “Haver stands out as a locally developed initiative catering to unique needs in Hungary.”

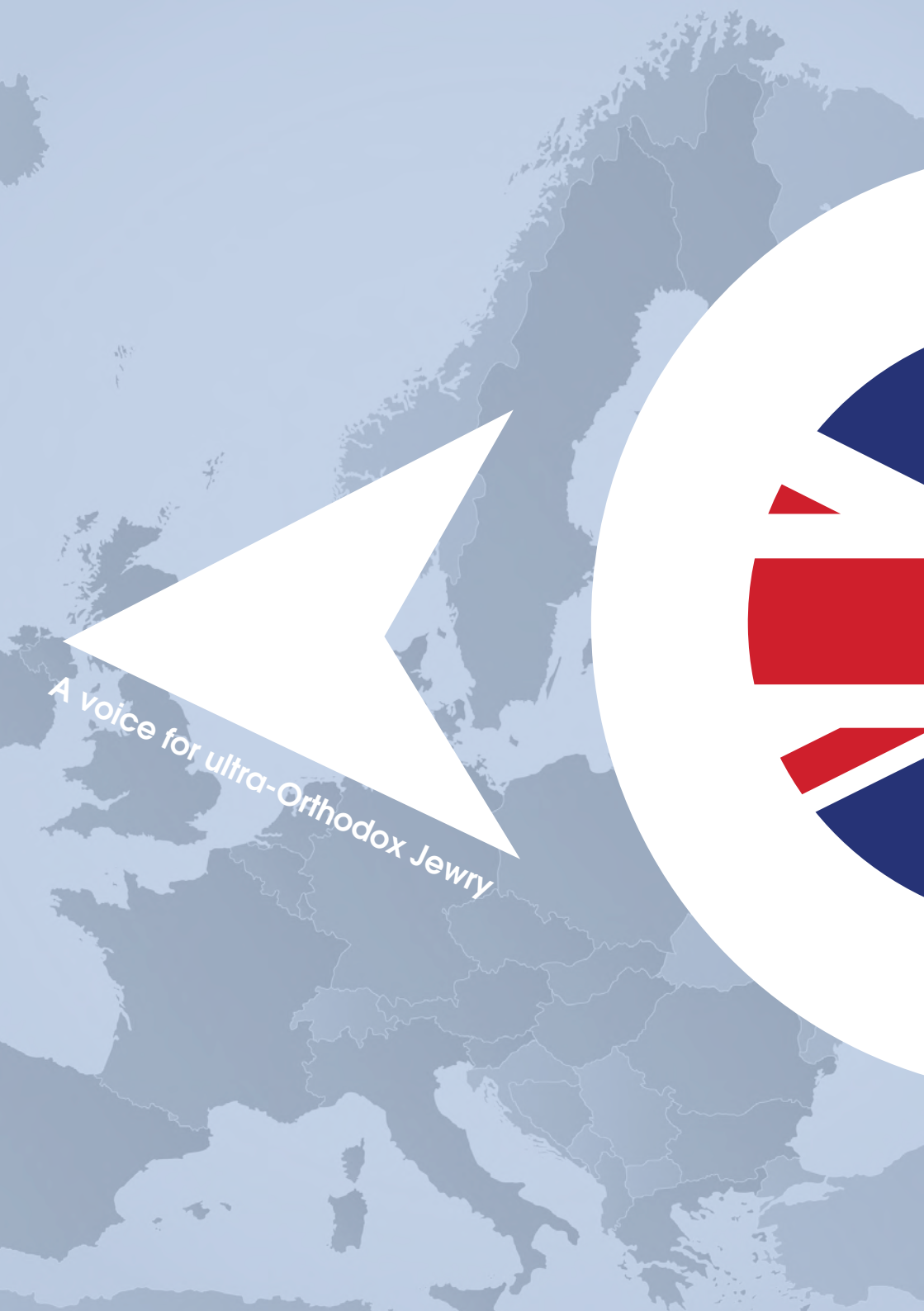
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Area of Operation
HUNGARY

Budget
> €1 million

Inception
2002



A voice for ultra-Orthodox Jewry

Interlink



Interlink, an all-female run organisation in the largely male-dominated ultra-Orthodox community in the UK, enables charitable organisations to maximise their potential to improve the lives of members of its community.

As the ultra-Orthodox community in Britain struggles to adjust to the new millennium, Interlink helps the voluntary sector grow and develop within the community. With more than 350 charities servicing some 50,000 ultra-Orthodox Jews, Interlink is a guiding voice for this voluntary sector, which is often the first and only point of call for people affected by unemployment and poverty.

Interlink provides these charities with information, advice, support and training, enabling them to assist the most vulnerable in their community.

Leading the way in responding to the changing needs of the ultra-Orthodox community

Since its inception in 1991, the organisation has also spearheaded vital advocacy and policy work for the community's statutory and voluntary organisations, representing the collective needs of the sector to local and national policy makers. In addition, it has introduced cultural awareness training programmes for local public agencies. Interlink has helped charities raise more than £2.1m in 2006/7 and has created a fundraisers' network within the Jewish community. Interlink has also launched inter-faith programmes to counter hostility between ultra-Orthodox Jews and Muslims in areas such as London's Stamford Hill.

According to the assessors, Interlink is an "expert organisation," offering assistance where good intentions prevail but no professional skills and knowledge exist. Critically, the assessors believe Interlink has "built more substantial links with social service departments in local authorities after only 20 years than the so-called mainstream community has managed in 350 years."

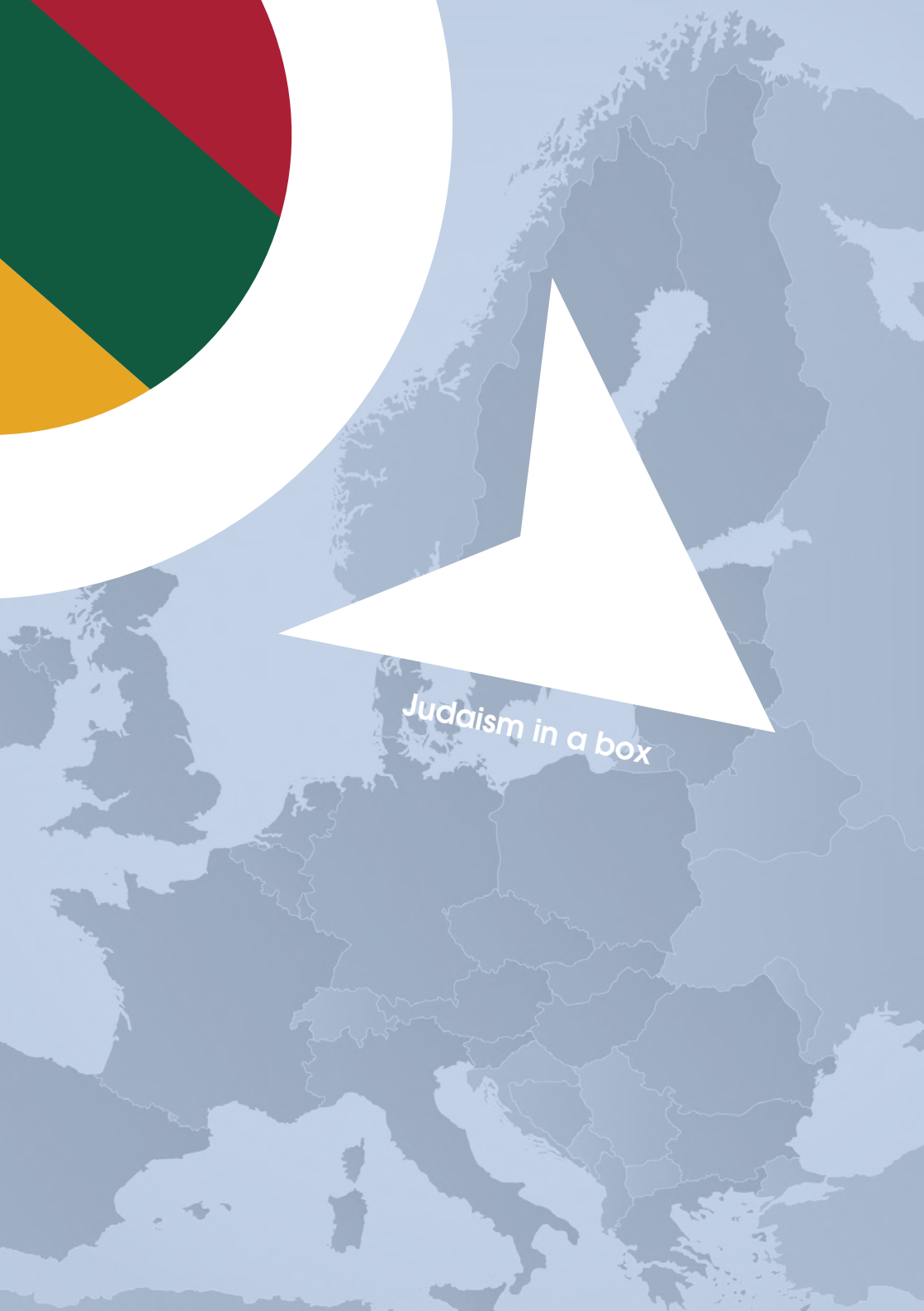
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Area of Operation
UK

Budget
€250,000 – 499,000

Inception
1991



JDC Judaism Come Home



The Holocaust and the ensuing decades of Communism impeded the transmission of Jewish knowledge in Lithuania. Although options for adult Jewish education are still scarce, Judaism Come Home's hands-on approach is slowly resuscitating Jewish life and transforming the abstract into reality.

Founded by the Joint Distribution Committee in 2006, assisted by the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and taught by teams of local educators and rabbis, Judaism Come Home provides 200 Jewish families with year-long sessions in Judaism as well as a kit of essential Judaica items (books, a mezuzah, kiddush cups, Shabbat candles, etc.)

◀ This project promises to have a long-term impact on the identity of Jews in Lithuania ▶

More than 100 Jewish families in Lithuania participated in the first year of the programme, giving young and middle-aged Jewish families the tools needed to rekindle the flame of Judaism in their homes. About 40 families completed the eight-session Judaism Come Home programme in Vilnius and 70 attended the three-session programme held in the provinces of Kaunas, Siaulai and Klaipeda, where participants acquired the means and the know-how to celebrate festivals and reconnect with their roots. Sedarim At Home, an offshoot of the initiative, was launched to teach participants how to hold a traditional Pesach seder.

"The programme is a very effective way to educate and strengthen the Jewish identity of a new generation of Jews who have had little exposure to Jewish education and life," say the assessors. "Judaism in a box is innovative. Everyone should have one."

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Area of Operation
LITHUANIA
ESTONIA

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2006

Jeled.net



Jeled.net is an Internet-based Jewish e-learning website designed for younger children living in remote parts of Europe without access to Jewish schools or Hebrew classes.

Launched in the Netherlands in 2004, Jeled.net (the Dutch spelling for the Hebrew word for child and an acronym for Jewish European Learning Experience Dot Net) is a project of the Jewish umbrella organisations of the Netherlands, Switzerland and Finland, and organisations in Germany and Belgium.

Children can engage in the e-learning curriculum – which is available in Dutch, German or Finnish – by playing games, solving puzzles, colouring in Jewish symbols or engaging in activities based on Jewish-related topics. Parents can glean an overview of Jewish festivals and the Jewish life cycle, and teachers can join a support network with others teaching Jewish studies to help develop their skills.

▶ A great service for more isolated Jewish communities clearly in need of Yiddisheit ▶

In short, Jeled.net provides small, non-English-speaking communities across Europe with a structured and flexible Jewish programme in their own language. The website also creates an interactive network between Jews in different parts of the continent. One immediate advantage of this process is that it enables children to feel at home in a virtual environment quite different to the physical one in which they live.

Based on a modern Orthodox point of view, Jeled.net's audience increased five-fold to more than 35,000 between 2005 and 2007. Parents have responded enthusiastically too, saying it helps them teach their children the basics of Judaism.

The assessors agree, and are especially impressed by the fact Jeled.net is geared toward smaller Jewish communities and "involves both families and educators, mixing formal and informal education."

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Area of Operation
THE NETHERLANDS

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2004

Connecting with kids

Jewish Community Centre Alef



There may only be about 10,000 Jews in Latvia, but Alef, the Jewish community centre in Riga, is a thriving hub of activity.

Established in 2000, Alef aims to preserve and enrich Jewish identity in the former Soviet state's capital, which is home to most of the country's Jews. Many middle-aged and elderly members of the community were brought up under Communism, when religion was shunned. Alef plays a pivotal role in reconnecting many members of that so-called "lost generation" with their Jewish roots. The Centre's activities are primarily aimed at community members between the ages of 18 and 66, although babies and the elderly are also welcome.

At the forefront of Jewish community development in Latvia

More than 1,500 Latvian Jews participate in Alef programmes every year. Activities range from lectures and seminars to entertainment, social and cultural events. Through its wide array of informal educational programmes, the Centre is actively engaged in fighting the twin perils of anti-Semitism and assimilation, as well as in educating non-Jews in Latvia about Judaism.

Alef's major challenge, however, is to foster and educate future leaders in this small Jewish community in order to preserve and ensure the continuity of Jewish life in Latvia.

The assessors understand that Alef is the first organisation of its kind in Latvia, and note that a large proportion of Jews in Riga participate in its activities and events. "It is the centre of Jewish organisational life in Latvia and has tremendous impact on the community." They are also impressed by Alef's "high degree of professionalism and creativity" and believe it "has become a model for other Jewish community centres in the region."

Latvia's Jewish heart and hub

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Area of Operation
LATVIA

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2000

Crossroads of Jewish culture

Jewish Community Centre for London (JCC)



The Jewish Community Centre for London aims to enrich and enliven Jewish life in Britain's capital through its multi-faceted educational, cultural, social and recreational programme.

The JCC encourages talented, creative individuals to develop projects that foster social action and engagement with other faiths. It also aims to work collaboratively with a wide range of leading Jewish and non-Jewish organisations, including UJIA, Limmud, World Jewish Relief, the UK Jewish Film Festival, Jewish Book Week and The Guardian.

Unattached to any religious or political stream of Judaism, the JCC – a vibrant community without walls since its inception in 2004 – is planning to build a centre that will buzz with Jewish life; a heart and a hub for London's Jewish community. Records show that between 2006 and 2008 22,000 people attended JCC events. In 2008, 8,600 came to events of which 2,000 had previously attended. In addition, they are reaching thousands through their podcast, which has been downloaded by more than 20,000 people between January and March 2008.

▶ An innovative programme that can be replicated in other parts of Europe ▶

The organisation has succeeded in touching many people who have either drifted away from organised Jewish life or who have little to no interest and/or involvement in the London Jewish community.

The assessors believe the JCC's action-packed calendar offers a refreshingly diverse selection of events – from an evening with maestro conductor Pinchas Zuckerman to Yiddish cabaret, challah baking to sushi making, and Mitzvah Day to the opportunity to meet and support refugees and asylum seekers at Moishe House London and the New North London Synagogue's drop-in centre.

The assessors also note that the JCC merits praise because of its use of modern methods to reach out and to rekindle engagement in the mosaic of Jewish life and living. "It is trying to connect to the people's needs, to be modern, to have a variety of options."

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Area of Operation
UK

Budget
> €1 million

Inception
2004



Cultural encounter with Jewish culture

Jewish Culture Festival Society



The Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow was founded in 1988 to revive and preserve the memory of Jewish life that once thrived in Poland.

Aiming to promote understanding and intercultural dialogue, as well as to educate the mainstream Polish public, the Festival presents Jewish culture in all its dimensions. With the exception of two years, the Festival has been held annually. It has grown incrementally since its inception, currently reaching about 25,000 people, making it one of the largest Jewish cultural festivals in the world.

While it began as a series of lectures and films, it has blossomed into a nine-day festival that features more than 200 events, including workshops, lectures, seminars, guided tours and meetings with artists and authors, as well as exhibitions, film screenings and concerts. The audience is comprised mainly of non-Jews from Poland and from around the globe, as well as an increasing number of Jews from Poland and abroad.

▶ A high-impact festival, reigniting interest in Jewish culture ▶

The mission of the Festival, in addition to sharing the complexities of Jewish culture and tradition, is to promote knowledge and awareness as a means to counter anti-Semitism, xenophobia and racial and religious prejudice.

In order to enhance and support the Festival, the organisers have started a new ongoing initiative called Cheder. The Cheder programme offers a year-round encounter with Jewish life in which participants can deepen their knowledge about Jewish culture and Judaism.

"This is one of the most innovative programmes," say the assessors, citing the standing-room-only concerts, exhibits, workshop, classes, lectures and theatre. They are also impressed at the way the Festival acts as an "entry point" for "new Jews" to learn about Judaism and their Jewish roots.

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Area of Operation
POLAND

Budget
€500 000 – 1,000,000

Inception
1988

Jewish Family Centre Adain Lo



Rekindling the spark of Jewish life

Adain Lo was founded in St Petersburg in 1989 as a result of Mikhail Gorbachev's introduction of Glasnost and Perestroika, policies that permitted Jews to practise their religion freely for the first time in decades.

Beginning as a grassroots volunteer initiative with 20 founding members, it has grown to its current membership of more than 2,000 people – from all age groups – who share an interest in Jewish education and culture.

The organisation runs 18 programmes, including a Jewish day school, kindergartens and three Sunday schools, as well as informal educational programmes for children, families, youth and young adults. Because Jews are so dispersed in St Petersburg's vast metropolis, Adain Lo runs programmes in nine districts, reaching out to Jewish families of varying backgrounds and diverse social strata.

◀ A real support community for Jews in St Petersburg ▶

The organisation also runs social care programmes, aiming to attract assimilated Jewish newcomers as well as advanced participants. A highlight of the regeneration process is the many children who have graduated through Adain Lo's programmes and today work as volunteers within the organisation – an indication that it is playing a major role in the rebirth of St Petersburg's Jewish community.

The assessors say this "truly democratic and pluralistic" organisation engages the entire family, and has created "a real support community" in St Petersburg, which is still very unusual in the former Soviet Union. They were also "deeply impressed" by Adain Lo's "vision, passion, and the implementation of the programme" as well as its ability to mobilise the younger generation as volunteers.

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Area of Operation
RUSSIA

Budget
€500,000 – 1,000,000

Inception
1989

Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam



The Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam is one of the most innovative and important Jewish institutions or organisations in the Netherlands. Driven by a quote from the Babylonian Talmud – “Seeing leads to remembering; remembering leads to doing” – the Museum aims to preserve and present Dutch Jewish life and heritage to Jews and non-Jews alike.

Established in 1932 in the Amsterdam Historical Museum, the collection was almost destroyed during the Holocaust, with only one-fifth of it recovered after the war. Since 1987, the Museum, often hailed as a “leading Museum in Europe” has relocated to four historic buildings in the former Ashkenazi Synagogue complex in the city’s old Jewish quarter. A complete renovation was undertaken in 2007 and the complex now incorporates a permanent children’s museum, a print room and various exhibitions. In 1993, the Museum also assumed the additional responsibility for the Hollandsche Schouwburg, a memorial and museum commemorating the Dutch Jews murdered in the Shoah.

▾ This project has a very high impact upon Jewish lives in The Netherlands ▸

The Urban Jewish Cultural Campus, which integrates all these institutions, has created an opportunity to develop an exceptional experience, offering a comprehensive picture of Jewish life and culture through the integration of the different institutions: the Jewish Historical Museum, the Hollandsche Schouwburg, the Portuguese Synagogue and other Jewish treasures in the neighbourhood. In addition, the Children’s Museum, which includes an online educational portal, uses the fictional home and lifestyle of the Hollanders to impart a unique Jewish educational encounter.

The Museum offers locals and visitors the opportunity to learn about Jewish life and culture in Holland over the centuries. The assessors believe the Museum “creates a lot of positive attention to the Jews and their culture,” and also believe it is “very important” to continue to support this award-winning Museum.

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Area of Operation
THE NETHERLANDS

Budget
> €1 million

Inception
1932

A Dutch treat

Volunteering to find volunteers

Jewish Volunteering Network



While many Jewish organisations rely on people power, recruiting volunteers is becoming increasingly difficult as demands on people's time grow exponentially. Enter the Jewish Volunteering Network.

JVN was established in 2007 to support, promote and develop Jewish volunteerism in the UK. It aims not only to increase the number of volunteers in the Jewish community but also to ensure that potential volunteers can find the best possible roles suited to their skills and interests.

The JVN's online matching facility and personalised telephone helpline constitute its core service. In addition, JVN has plans to train volunteers as well as to develop best practice standards.

JVN's concept is innovative: developing its central database to provide a search of all available opportunities is a new facility in the UK Jewish community.

▾ A breath of fresh air in a difficult cross-communal environment ▸

By September 2008, JVN had 100 organisations and 300 potential volunteers registered on its website. An e-mail survey four months later revealed that one in five volunteers registered on JVN had started work in positions they had located through the central database – a high matching rate compared to public sector volunteer matching websites.

The assessors are impressed by this innovative idea. "It is scalable and can be duplicated and/or enhanced in other Jewish communities. It takes advantage of technology in a smart way."

In addition, the assessors praised JVN's publicity campaign. "It highlights the value of volunteering – and presents it in a more modern way as an activity for all ages, with a particular focus on the audience of young professionals."

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Area of Operation
UK

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2007

JMPoint.hu



The Jewish Meeting Point (www.JMPoint.hu) was launched in 2002 as the first Internet-based portal for Jewish communities in Hungary and Central Europe.

As a result of its initial success in drawing a vast number of visitors, the website spawned the establishment of the JMPoint Foundation in 2005.

The organisation, which uses its website as its primary vehicle, aims to reach as many Jews as possible, especially those in non-metropolitan areas, in an attempt to preserve Jewish religious and cultural life, promote Jewish education and thereby sustain Jewish continuity in the region.

◀ It is far-reaching, particularly beyond the urban population, which is not easy to achieve ▶

JMPoint also seeks to promote the flow of information among Jewish organisations and between Jewish people, enabling them to keep in touch with each other and the myriad Jewish organisations and associations in the region. Among the plethora of services the website offers are a Jewish job market; a Jewish matchmaking forum; an Internet-based Jewish educational programme; chat rooms and blogs; and an online social networking site best described as a Jewish version of Facebook.

One of the most impressive projects is JMPoint Academy, a two-year training course that includes 20 subjects covering Jewish religion, history and culture. The organisation claims that more than half of the applicants are from the countryside, indicating that it appeals to Jews who are less connected to the organised Jewish community. Lauding the organisation's "creative" use of online media, the assessors describe the educational programme as "unique."

They also note that JMPoint has built a strong user base that is producing volunteers. "The leadership team has showed great initiative in establishing the website, which reaches large numbers of people."

A case in point

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Area of Operation
HUNGARY

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2002



Jugend



Jugend – The Youth and Cultural Department of the Jewish Community Centre in Munich was founded in 1983 with two main aims: to educate members of the Jewish community and to offer interested non-Jews a place to learn more about Jewish culture, tradition and religion.

Since 1990, the influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union has seen the Munich community grow to around 9,500 members – the second-largest in Germany.

✦ This is a community youth centre run as it ought to be – and that is rare ✦

The Centre offers a raft of programmes for children and young adults, from 4 to 27 years old, regardless of nationality and background. Among the programmes on offer are: integration courses for children, youth and young adults who have immigrated from the FSU; summer camps and family weekends; a social and psychological information centre for children, youth, young adults and their families; cultural events to learn more about Jewish history, heritage, tradition and religion; a Jewish university with courses on Hebrew, dance, Jewish cooking, etc.; a forum where non-Jews can learn about Judaism; and an information centre with a library and an archive.

The assessors believe Jugend a “central focus of the Munich community” and agree it has a “high impact for the former Russian population and the non-Jewish community.” They also note as “very impressive” that the community is trying to bridge gaps and engage in a dialogue with non-Jews through cultural events.

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Area of Operation
GERMANY

Budget
€500,000 – 1,000,000

Inception
1983

Leatid Europe, European Centre for Jewish Leadership



Leatid Europe is an intensive training programme for the current crop of established Jewish leaders, both lay and professional, from across Europe. Founded in 1995 as the European Centre for Jewish Leadership by the World Jewish Relief, France's Fonds Social Juif Unifié and the Joint Distribution Committee, Leatid promotes professionalism and excellence in Jewish leadership.

More than 200 leaders from 40 communities in 29 countries across Europe have graduated from Leatid Europe programmes. The programmes are conducted by high-quality professionals and trainers who encourage participants to work and think together, exchange experiences and develop a honed vision for their individual communities.

Held in different cities across Europe, Leatid's courses are aimed toward four categories of Jewish leaders: presidents, lay leaders, executives and rabbis. The seminars focus on three main areas: management and leadership; community development; and contemporary Jewish issues.

► Its impact is evident in the institutions that employ past participants of the programme ►

In addition to making important contributions to their own communities, participants also develop long-standing relationships with other leaders, thereby facilitating the ongoing exchange of ideas and expertise.

The assessors praise Leatid as an innovative organisation because it "strives to raise the bar" of professionalism among Europe's Jewish leaders. "The skills imparted and learned are put to immediate use in strengthening communal-based leadership and management, enhancing programming and ensuring institutional viability and sustainability," say the assessors.

Leatid - Hebrew for "toward the future" - is helping ensure that Jewish communities in Europe are being led by highly trained professionals who will ensure that Jewish foundations and infrastructure are solidly in place for the next generation.

Leadership for leaders

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Area of Operation
PAN-EUROPE

Budget
€100,000 - 249,000

Inception
1995

Grassroots route to Jewish roots

Limmud International



Limmud is one of the most innovative and inspirational initiatives in the Jewish world. Since the first conference in Britain in 1980, Limmud has grown into an international organisation with talkfests in more than 40 Jewish communities spanning across 26 countries worldwide. Its meteoric rise gave birth to Limmud International, an umbrella body that facilitates the establishment and support of Limmud festivals across the globe.

At its core, Limmud is an organisation that promotes the exchange of Jewish ideas in an open, inclusive, non-partisan forum run for the people by the people. The Limmud phenomenon of connecting, or reconnecting, a diverse array of Jews with their roots already has a strong presence in Europe, specifically in The Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland and Turkey.

✦ An international phenomenon that is energising and inspiring Jewish communities ✦

It is working in partnership with the Joint Distribution Committee in Central Europe and conferences have already begun in the Baltic States, Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary.

Planning groups exist in Poland, Romania, Austria and the Czech Republic, and Limmud International is supporting Limmud FSU in planning festivals in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Russian states.

The assessors agree that Limmud is "one of the most impactful programmes in the world" and is now "firmly embedded in Europe." It is also impressed by Limmud's lay leadership, which the committee describes as "a who's who of Jewish learning and scholarship."

Moreover, the assessors see Limmud as a role model for other organisations in two key aspects: attracting unaffiliated Jews and mobilising a vast army of (largely young) volunteers.

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Area of Operation
PAN-EUROPE

Budget
> €1 million

Inception
2006

Maison de la Culture Yiddish



La Maison de la Culture Yiddish is arguably the largest hub of Yiddish culture in Europe, offering a year-round calendar of activities.

Founded in 2002, following a merger between the Medem Library and the Association for the Propagation of Yiddish Education and Culture, the Centre offers classes, lectures, exhibitions, concerts, summer programmes and more.

It also curates the Medem Library, which was created in Paris in 1928, and later absorbed all other Yiddish libraries in Paris to become the largest repository of Yiddish literature in Europe.

Aside from educating children and adults in Yiddish, the Centre propagates the treasures of Yiddish literature by translating them into various languages.

▶ **The only organisation entirely dedicated to the preservation and transmission of Yiddish heritage** ▶

The committee notes that no other European organisation or publishing house edits Yiddish books. Over the past 12 years it has published a Yiddish dictionary, a Yiddish-French dictionary, two manuals for teaching children, two volumes of poetry, several volumes of translated works and more.

The Centre is also developing online Yiddish catalogues, along with three other Jewish libraries in Paris.

More than 25,000 people visit the Centre each year and a further 150,000 visit its website. The Centre holds almost 100 events per year, and hundreds of people have signed up for Yiddish lessons and cultural workshops. As a result, the Centre is moving to newer, bigger premises to accommodate this sustained growth.

The assessors are impressed by the scope of La Maison, and note its course to teach Yiddish and Yiddish culture to young children. "By making their resources available digitally and exploring ways to reach dispersed audiences, its impact will only grow."

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Area of Operation
FRANCE

Budget
€500,000 – 1,000,000

Inception
2002

Bastion of Yiddish culture

Marom Budapest



Marom Budapest is an initiative led by young Jewish adults to find a common language for re-interpreting Jewish culture and tradition.

Founded in 2001 as a student group, by 2005 it had become Budapest's major Jewish cultural organisation for young adults, organising festivals, concerts, lectures, round-table discussions, workshops and more.

Since 2006, Marom has operated an "alternative Jewish Community Centre" in the heart of the Jewish district. Marom works with a myriad of other Jewish and non-Jewish organisations (such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and the Budapest Jewish Theatre) in an attempt to encourage dialogue and embrace diversity within Judaism.

▶ The programme is varied and innovative in order to reach out to unaffiliated young adults ▶

Marom is the only organisation in Hungary that works with Jewish artists to help promote Jewish art. It is the first Jewish organisation to address the issue of homosexuality in Hungary and is committed to representing the rights of women and other minorities. It also fights anti-Semitism and promotes environmental issues.

The focus of the programme is on the intersection of Jewish culture while addressing wider issues in Hungary, such as anti-racism and equal rights.

Today around 2,000 young Jews attend larger events whilst many thousands patronise the community centre. The database holds around 1,000 registered members, with an additional 1,000 registered for the newsletter.

Marom "has a young leadership very committed to the organisation's goals," say the assessors. "As a grassroots organisation reaching out to young unaffiliated Hungarian Jewish adults, it occupies a distinctive place in the Hungarian Jewish community."

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Area of Operation
HUNGARY

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
1999

The 'alternative' JCC



Turkish delight for Jewish kids

Mishneh Torah



For more than a century, Mishneh Torah has been helping needy children in Turkey receive Jewish education, from the beginning of primary to the end of high school. Although largely a philanthropic organisation, Mishneh Torah recognises that some of the children also need psychological assistance, and it helps obtain professional help when necessary.

Remarkably, funding is based on the production and sales of sweets during Jewish festivals, and makes enough money to cover 35 of the neediest children. However, due to the credit crunch it has no longer been possible to support all the applicants, and 150 children have recently been turned down due to lack of funds. In addition, Mishneh Torah has also stopped aid to university students in the past two years. In response to the global financial crisis, Mishneh Torah now plans to sell its products outside of the Jewish community, which the assessors praise as "clearly responding to market conditions" and adapting "to fit changing realities."

Ensures needy children in Turkey are being well educated in Jewish schools

They also note that "very few Jewish communities have an active organisation operating since 1898," and believe this is, in large part, due to its "consistent vision" and "committed supporters."

Mishneh Torah's fundraising efforts help maintain the chain of Jewish continuity in Turkey, which is home to about 25,000 Jews. Without it, the links in the chain would eventually be broken.

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Area of Operation
TURKEY

Budget
€250,000 – 499,000

Inception
1898

Reviving Jewish culture across Europe

Paideia



Paideia is a training ground for the next generation of Jewish leaders in Europe. It is dedicated to the revival of Jewish culture in Europe and educates academics, artists, activists and others.

Although based in Sweden, Paideia, also known as The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden, has a pan-European focus. Among its many educational activities, it runs an intensive one-year Jewish studies programme, which includes the interactive study of Jewish texts.

It also runs the Paideia Project Incubator, a 10-day interactive workshop designed to encourage entrepreneurship, during which 30 activists from across Europe gather to develop projects to promote Jewish culture across the continent.

▶ Paideia's pan-European focus and excellent leadership make it a strong programme ▶

Graduates of Paideia's short- and long-term programmes are equipped to stimulate lasting change when they return to their respective communities. And since its inception in 2001, with the support of the Swedish Government, Paideia's alumni network has blossomed to 150 people, hailing from 30 countries – from Belarus to Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Netherlands to Norway, the UK to the Ukraine and beyond.

The assessors believe Paideia's programmes are "refreshing and innovative" and they are impressed that "this very serious organisation is located in Sweden, perhaps not traditionally considered a hub of Jewish life." The assessors also believe it "very praiseworthy" that the local Jewish and non-Jewish community has taken Paideia "so enthusiastically on board."

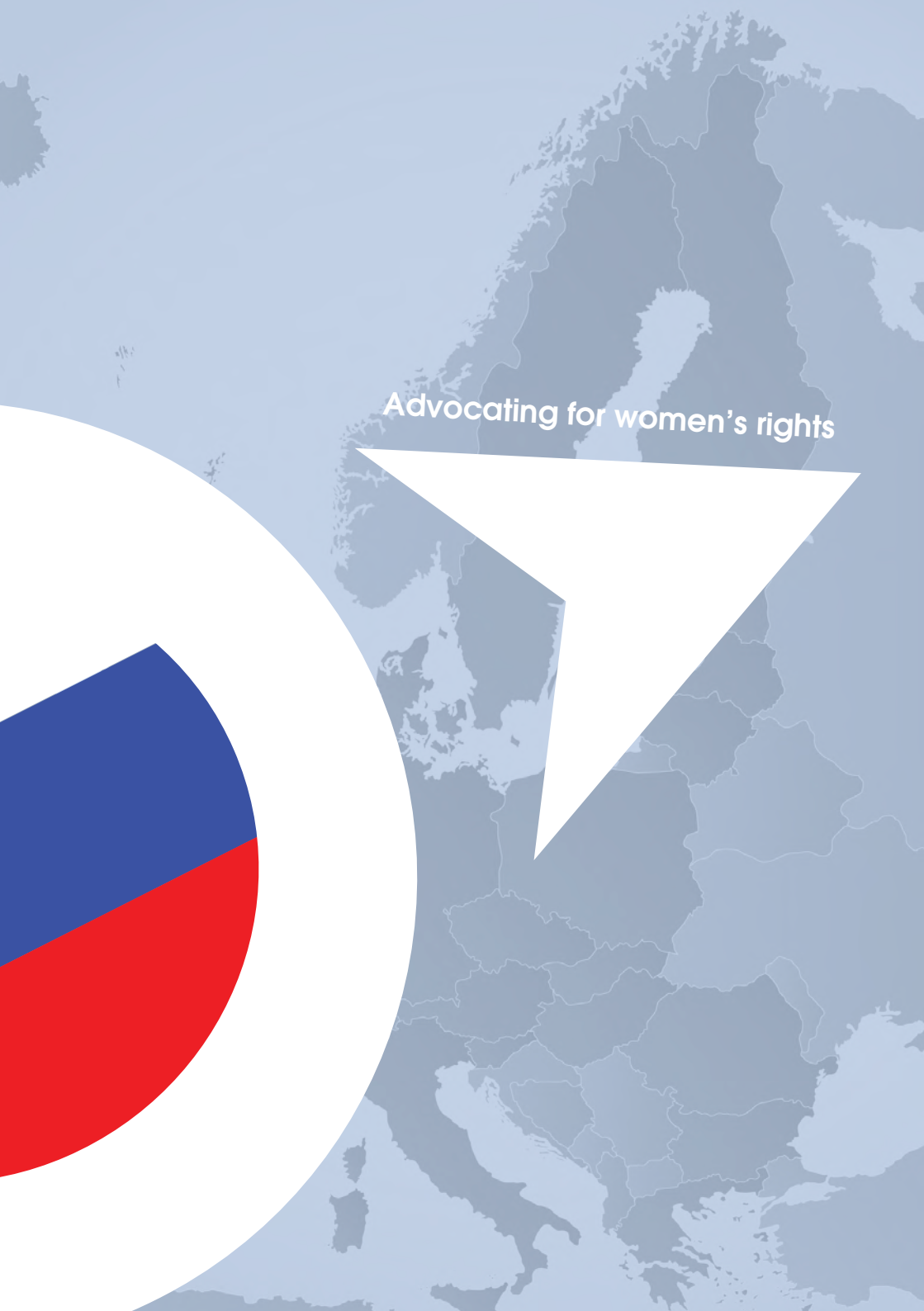
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Area of Operation
PAN-EUROPE

Budget
€500,000 – 1,000,000

Inception
2000



Advocating for women's rights

Project Keshet



Project Keshet is a Jewish women's advocacy and human rights organisation operating in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Georgia. Founded in 1994, it aims to create a network of Jewish women activists to bring about social change that impacts positively on the entire Jewish community.

Inspired by the Jewish commitment to Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), Project Keshet conducts programmes each year to strengthen Jewish life; develop grassroots activism; form coalitions with people of all faiths and backgrounds; eradicate religious and ethnic intolerance; and advance the status of women by addressing issues such as economic inequality, domestic violence, trafficking in women and women's health. With its vast range of well-planned programmes, Project Keshet continues to attract new members.

There is no other organisation like it that empowers Jewish women in the former Soviet Union

The assessors note that it is unusual for an organisation to focus specifically on women's issues in post-Soviet countries, where cultures tend to resist gender differentiations.

"And it is especially challenging in Jewish communities, where facing internal social problems - from domestic violence to female representation on community councils - involves delicate issues, difficult to broach and even harder to educate."

The assessors believe Project Keshet has "an excellent reputation for developing and expanding membership and programmes." Moreover, they believe that by creating a "strong leadership network," the organisation "impacts significantly on the region" and will continue to do so as it expands its activities.

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Area of Operation
RUSSIA
UKRAINE
BELARUS
MOLDOVA
GEORGIA
ISRAEL

Budget
€500,000 - 1,000,000

Inception
1994

RCM



The RCM plays a pivotal role in helping teachers bring Jewish-related curricula into the classroom. Founded by Moscow Jewish schools and the Moscow Institute of Open Education in 2001, the RCM provides theoretical and practical help to teachers delivering ethno-cultural lessons in the history of Jewish people, its culture and traditions, as well as Hebrew.

The RCM (which stands for Regional Centre for Modeling of Activities of Establishments with Jewish Ethno-cultural Component of Education) has reached out to about 430 teachers so far and around 2,000 children have benefited from its work to date. In addition, the RCM has published 10 textbooks for teachers, has held 21 seminars for teachers in Jewish schools and its annual Teacher of the Year award encourages the development of professional skills.

◀ **A new and important activity; educators helping educators in a systematic way** ▶

The RCM is also constructing a virtual community of teachers in Jewish schools from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to enable them to share ideas and exchange experiences and pedagogical tools.

The RCM has assumed a primary role in the regeneration of what were at one time some of the world's most significant Jewish communities. Its efforts are showing positive results as Jewish presence becomes more prevalent in the area.

The assessors believe the "upgrading of pedagogic skills is always admirable and the teachers' evident willingness to participate in their own time and with no remuneration is worthy of note." The assessors also laud the fact that the RCM has enabled 62 disabled children to benefit from long-distance learning programmes. The assessors believe the programme is "an indigenous response to real needs" and is "a new, important and innovative initiative."

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Area of Operation
RUSSIA

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2001

From Russia, with love

Shoah Memorial Museum – Sarah’s Attic



Sarah’s Attic, run by the French-based Shoah Memorial Museum (Memoriale de la Shoah), is a website for children that teaches them about the Holocaust online through five stories geared towards their age group.

The Shoah Memorial Museum, which helps integrate the Holocaust into European history and preserves the memory of the martyrs, launched the first version of Sarah’s Attic in 2005, and it was adopted by the French Ministry of Education as a reference tool for primary schools. The Ministry of Education passed a law in 2002, making the teaching of the Holocaust compulsory to primary school children from the age of 10.

▶ A very good project that speaks with intelligence and tact to small kids ▶

The most recent achievement of the museum, which uses the Internet to provide teachers and educators with up-to-date tools and information about the Holocaust, is the development of Sarah’s Attic. Following the success of the French and English versions of Sarah’s Attic, a number of European countries wanted the museum to adapt its website to their languages as well. This spawned the advent of a European version of Sarah’s Attic, which is aimed at 7-10 year-old Jewish and non-Jewish children. Germany, Poland, Russia, Belgium, Italy, Spain and Latvia have since expressed interest in having their own national versions of Sarah’s Attic.

The assessors believe the programme is praiseworthy, not just for its original impact in France, but also because it is spreading across Europe. “The dimension of the organisation, the notability of its lay leaders, the importance of the archive and the number of programmes run by the Memoire de la Shoah give it a national and international impact.”

Attic full of memories

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Area of Operation
FRANCE

Budget
€100,000 – 249,000

Inception
2005

Shorashim, Jewish Foundation of Ukraine



Founded in 1997, the Jewish Foundation of Ukraine aims to strengthen the local Jewish community through Jewish education, culture and art, social welfare and interfaith dialogue.

Among its flagship projects is Shorashim: Three Generations, derived from the Hebrew word for roots. This annual programme for young leaders brings nearly 60 regional representatives – mostly students – to Kiev to empower them with leadership skills and knowledge and arm them with fundraising methods so they can lead their respective local communities. Because the Ukraine is a vast country whose Jewish communities are dispersed far and wide, the leaders benefit from communicating with their peers whose goals are more or less identical. In addition, the remote Jewish communities are the biggest recipients of the programme, and it has played a major part in the rebirth of regional areas of the Ukraine – where Jewish life had not been cultivated for decades.

◀ Few organisations are able to accomplish what this has in the Ukraine ▶

The assessors believe the project is innovative, filling an important void because “they don’t have many creative and professionally well-balanced courses for leaders in Ukraine.” While the programme has a “definite short-term impact,” it will take longer to understand its long-term benefits – but it is “deepening and strengthening connections between Jewish organisations.”

As a Jewish community trying to become self-sufficient, the activities of the Jewish Foundation of Ukraine, and Shorashim in particular, have “tremendous value.”

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Area of Operation
UKRAINE

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
1997

Cultivating Jewish roots in Ukraine



Treasure-trove of Jewish heritage

Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre



The Bratislava-based Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre aims to document local Jewish heritage sites in a bid to ensure that the rich tapestry of landmarks will be preserved for future generations.

Founded in 2006 to document the 100-plus largely destitute synagogues in the country, it soon became clear that synagogues were not the only Jewish heritage sites that required urgent attention. The project was thus extended to include the countless cemeteries in the country (most of which are in a ruinous state), Holocaust memorials, ritual baths, prayer houses and other communal buildings.

◀ One of the better projects of its kind in the region ▶

Notably, as a result of the Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre's work, several precious synagogues in the country have been preserved. Although many similar initiatives exist in the region, the assessors believe this project "distinguishes itself by a very valid methodology, the serious documentation already collected and by the impact it has had on the monitored sites, both in terms of preservation and exposure." They also laud the fact the material is available online, in book form and through facilitated visitor access to a number of heritage sites.

The aim of the online portal is to promote Slovak Jewish heritage to the academic community as well as to offer a treasure-trove of information, especially to people of Slovak-Jewish descent searching for their roots. With only 3,000 Jews left in Slovakia (from a pre-war high of almost 150,000), this is an organisation devoted to ensuring the landmarks left behind by this once-thriving Jewish community are not also destroyed.

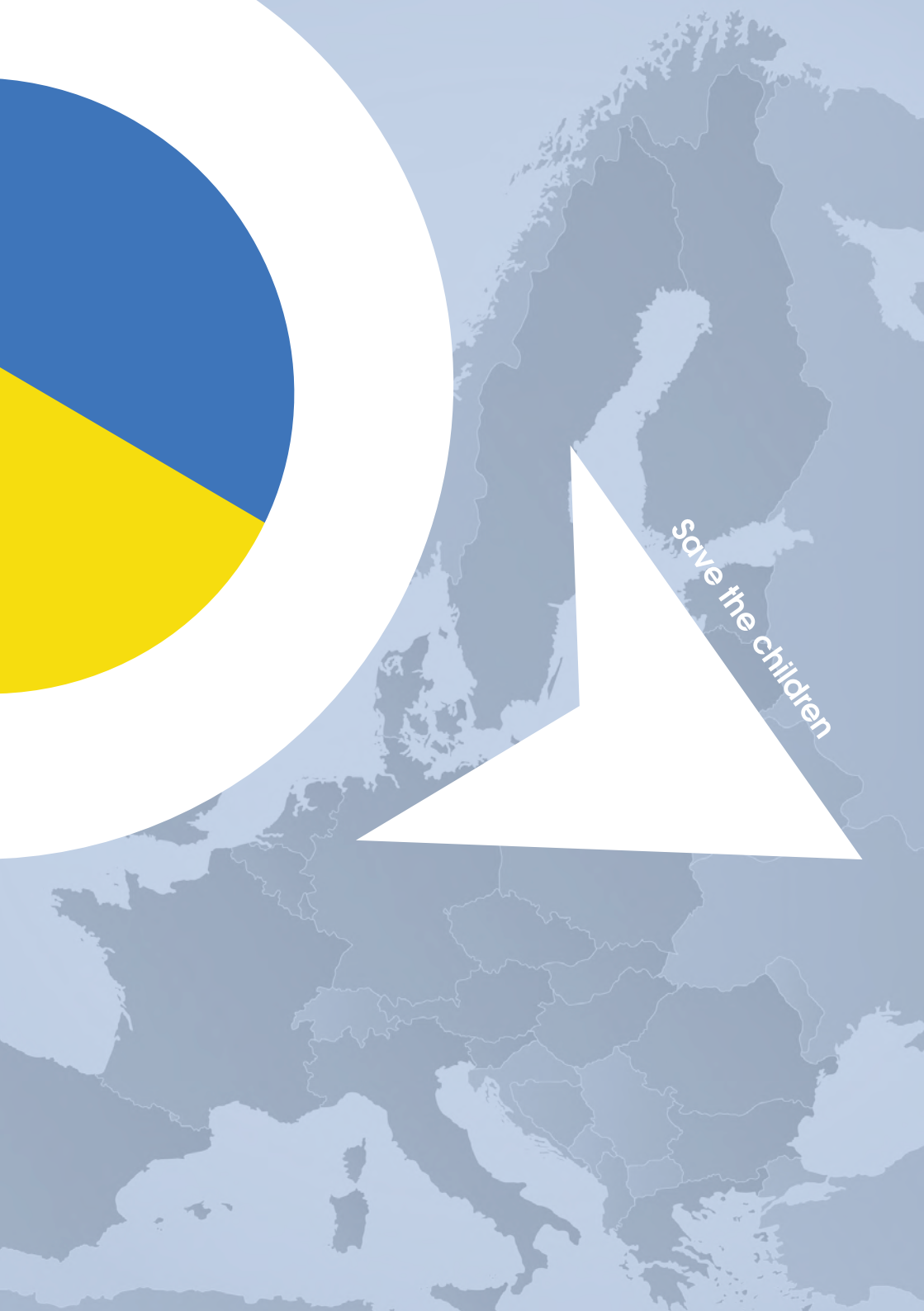
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Area of Operation
SLOVAKIA

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
2006



Tikva Children's Home



Tikva, which is Hebrew for "hope," is a community centre in Odessa caring for homeless, abandoned and abused Jewish children of Ukraine and neighbouring regions of the former Soviet Union. For 15 years, it has provided thousands of Jews with a warm, compassionate refuge in a family-like environment.

The organisation runs the Tikva Boys' and Girls' Homes, caring for almost 175 children between the ages of 4 and 16, as well as an infants' home for more than 35 infants and toddlers, and a day-care centre serving 125 children. Moreover, it operates co-ed elementary and pre-schools, boys' and girls' high schools serving more than 650 Jewish children, plus a university-level study programme for students accredited with diplomas from the Crimea State and Odessa universities. About 300 boys and girls have been sent to Israel to continue their studies.

▶ A high-quality programme that has attracted widespread and worldwide support ▶

Additionally, Tikva has renovated the Great Choral Synagogue, promoting the rebirth of Jewish culture in Odessa. Among its social programmes, Tikva offers meals on wheels for the impoverished and the elderly. In short, it has become a recognised part of Jewish culture in the area, filling a critical role by empowering local Jews to flourish.

"Tikva has undoubtedly achieved significant impact among the Jewish community in Odessa beyond just the school," say the assessors. "Those who have passed through its system remain engaged and committed to the community." The assessors believe this organisation deserves support because "it is providing services to some of the neediest sectors of the Jewish community."

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Area of Operation
UKRAINE

Budget
> €1 million

Inception
1996



The art of renaissance

Tranzit Foundation



A once-desolate synagogue in Romania has been transformed into a thriving centre for contemporary art in the heart of Cluj; this, in essence, defines Tranzit House.

The Poalei Tzedek synagogue, fully functional until 1974, was transformed into a contemporary art centre called Tranzit House in 1997. Since then the building has been continuously restored by the Tranzit Foundation, with the social and cultural memories of the formerly sacred space being filled with a variety of cultural events.

Tranzit engages people from different ethnic groups in order to foster creativity. It also champions social engagement, organising events that impact positively on disadvantaged or minority groups.

Aside from Jewish content, many of its projects address other groups, including the Roma (Gypsy) and gay communities and women's groups.

It has become a major point of reference for Cluj's intellectual and artistic community

Since the synagogue's reopening in 1997, a variety of events have been staged – many of them showcasing Jewish culture in the form of Klezmer concerts, theatre plays, book releases and so on.

In addition, Tranzit has produced a virtual Jewish museum in the form of a guided tour that documents the Jewish presence in Romania. Its main priority, however, is to complete the restoration of the synagogue.

The assessors praise the wide scope of activities at Tranzit House. "These make it stand out not only in Cluj, a city still rife with ethnic tensions, but in the region." In addition, the assessors believe Tranzit was a pioneer of the concept of revitalising a derelict Jewish building to use it as a cultural centre in Romania. "Contemporary arts programming combined with academic and social interest is a new and proper use for an abandoned building."

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Area of Operation
ROMANIA

Budget
< €100,000

Inception
1997

Helping to make poverty history

Tzedek – Jewish Action for a Just World



Less than five years after the Band Aid and Live Aid mega-concerts beamed the poverty of the developing world into the living rooms of millions of people in the West, an organised Jewish response was launched in Britain: Tzedek – Jewish Action for a Just World.

Tzedek, which raises money to allocate grants to sustainable overseas organisations that work to alleviate poverty in the developing world, puts into practice the post-biblical dictum of Tikkun Olam, or repairing the world, in a three-pronged strategy.

Since its inception in 1990, Tzedek has granted more than £500,000 to small-scale sustainable development projects. Additionally, Tzedek sends volunteers to work on its projects in Africa and India. More than 100 young adults have volunteered to date, and many of them continue to be involved with Tzedek upon their return.

Finally, the organisation works to increase understanding of the international development issues within the Jewish community. It runs educational programmes in schools, synagogues, youth movements and the wider community, focusing on issues such as ethical consumerism, global poverty and trade, as well as the Jewish imperative to act.

◀ Tzedek offers a unique opportunity within the Jewish framework ▶

As a leading UK Jewish non-governmental organisation, Tzedek “is a strong, credible partner for organisations engaging younger people,” according to the assessors. They believe Tzedek offers “a unique opportunity within the Jewish framework” for younger Jews to mobilise.

The assessors also note that “Jewish responsibility is now high on the communal agenda, particularly for younger members” and the mix of volunteerism and grant-making is uncommon.

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Area of Operation
UK
AFRICA
INDIA

Budget
€100,000 – 249,000

Inception
1990

Yiddish Summer Weimar



Founded in 2000 by an American Jew and a German non-Jew as a week-long workshop on traditional Yiddish music, Yiddish Summer Weimar has blossomed into a five-week summer academy as well as a one-week winter session.

In 2007, more than 200 students from 16 countries in Europe, North America and Asia participated in its programmes.

The academy aims to showcase Yiddish culture (language, music, song, dance, literature and storytelling) to Jews and non-Jews, professionals and laypeople.

Through concerts, workshops and other cultural events, it also aims to act as a forum for networking among professional artists and scholars in this field, and to promote the inclusion of Yiddish culture in European society.

✦ A landmark project with international recognition ✦

The summer academy is an immersion-like experience in which participants live, study and perform together in an intensive, five-week-long workshop in Yiddish culture. Bringing together a diverse group of teachers, scholars, artists and general audiences promotes difference and diversity, and challenges prejudice and cliché. Many graduates of the programme experience their own intellectual, emotional and interpersonal growth.

The assessors note that this programme is a “world-class event” that engages outstanding musicians, teachers and lecturers. Part academy, part educational workshop and part performance space, Yiddish Summer Weimar is a special experience that is “impossible to overestimate.” “The high number of participants returning repeatedly is testament to the professionalism and wide appeal it has,” say the assessors.

This is “a vital, Jewish event” that will continue to keep alive the embers of a wonderfully colourful culture.

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Area of Operation
GERMANY

Budget
€100,000 – 249,000

Inception
2000

Licensed to 'kvell'

Index

Country of Origin	Name of Organisation or Project
Austria	Centropa – The Library of Rescued Memories
Belgium	CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
France	Akadem-Multimedia
France	JDC Judaism Come Home
France	Leatid Europe, European Centre for Jewish Leadership
France	Maison de la Culture Yiddish
France	Shoah Memorial Museum: Sarah’s Attic
Germany	Jugend
Germany	Yiddish Summer Weimar
Hungary	CEU – Jewish Studies
Hungary	Haver Foundation
Hungary	JMPoint.hu
Hungary	Marom Budapest
Israel	Tikva Children’s Home
Latvia	Jewish Community Centre Alef
Luxembourg	The European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ)
The Netherlands	Dutch Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI)
The Netherlands	Jeled.net
The Netherlands	Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam
Poland	Beit Warszawa, Jewish Cultural Association
Poland	The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute
Poland	Galicia Jewish Museum
Poland	Jewish Culture Festival Society
Romania	Tranzit Foundation
Russia	Jewish Family Centre Adain Lo
Russia	Project Keshet
Russia	RCM
Slovakia	Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre
Sweden	Paideia
Turkey	Mishneh Torah
UK	Interlink
UK	Jewish Community Centre for London (JCC)
UK	Jewish Volunteering Network
UK	Limmud International
UK	Tzedek – Jewish Action for a Just World
Ukraine	Shorashim, Jewish Foundation of Ukraine



Countries of Operation

Name of Organisation or Project

France	Akadem-Multimedia
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Germany	Yiddish Summer Weimar
Hungary	Haver Foundation
Hungary	JMPoint.hu
Hungary	Marom Budapest
Latvia	Jewish Community Centre Alef
Lithuania and Estonia	JDC Judaism Come Home
The Netherlands	Dutch Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI)
The Netherlands	Jeled.net
The Netherlands	Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam
Pan-Europe	CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
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Pan-Europe	Limmud International
Pan-Europe	Paideia
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Poland	The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute
Poland	Galicia Jewish Museum
Poland	Jewish Culture Festival Society
Romania	Tranzit Foundation
Russia	Jewish Family Centre Adain Lo
Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Israel	Project Keshet
Russia	RCM
Slovakia	Slovak Jewish Heritage Centre
Turkey	Mishneh Torah
UK	Interlink
UK	Jewish Community Centre for London (JCC)
UK	Jewish Volunteering Network
UK, Africa and India	Tzedek - Jewish Action for a Just World
Ukraine	Shorashim, Jewish Foundation of Ukraine
Ukraine	Tikva Children's Home



Acknowledgments

Compass is the product of many layers of collaboration, in which every player invested countless hours and efforts into this project. The vision of members of the Westbury Group, Compass came into being through the work of a team of volunteers, along with a vast network of assessors, who laboured to produce this dynamic portrait of today's European Jewish communities.

The Compass Committee expresses its heartfelt admiration and appreciation to current and past members of the Westbury Group, as well as to the volunteers and assessors, for transforming Compass from concept to reality.

Compass is modelled on *Slingshot*, a project of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies. The professional team at ACBP offered invaluable input, insight and guidance to Compass and this project would not be what it is without their assistance.

Most of all, thanks to the 100-plus organisations who applied to participate in this effort. We are continuously inspired by their rich sense of Jewish communal history, their responsibility to their communities and their vision for the future of European Jewry.

The Compass Committee included Westbury Group members Miri Bencheitrit, Sandy Cardin, Kate Goldberg, Rachel Ingram, Gidi Peiper and Shana Penn; as well as the support team of Dan Goldberg, Yonatan Gordis, Justin Korda, Helise Lieberman and Carolyn Rozenberg.

This Guide is intended for information only. Whilst we seek to ensure that the information contained in it is accurate, we do not warrant its accuracy and we do not accept liability for any loss or damage sustained by, or as a result of, reliance on it. Where comments are given about the purposes or activities of any organisation, these comments are given in good faith on the basis of information provided to us by the organisations concerned. Anyone consulting the guide who wishes or intends to contact or support an organisation listed in this Guide should make their own enquiries direct to the organisation concerned.



About the Westbury Group

The Westbury Group is an informal association of Jewish philanthropic organisations and individual funders with a shared concern for European Jewish life. Founded in 2000 for the purpose of increasing the breadth and depth of support for Jewish causes and programmes in Europe, other Diaspora communities and Israel, the Westbury Group is now a diverse group comprising more than twenty foundations and philanthropists with international agendas.

The Westbury Group is committed to enabling and empowering our members to explore issues pertaining to Jewish life in Europe in new, educational and inspiring ways, as well as to seek practical and tangible solutions to challenges.

Members of the Westbury Group include:

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation
Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund
Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation
Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah
Friends of Jewish Renewal in Poland
Genesis Philanthropic Group
Hochberg Family Foundation
Kahanoff Foundation
Koret Foundation
L.A. Pincus Fund for Jewish Education in the Diaspora
Maurice and Vivienne Wohl Philanthropic Foundation
Rashi Foundation
Schusterman Foundation – Israel
Stichting Levi Lassen
Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture
The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies
The Asper Foundation
The Pears Foundation
The Pratt Foundation – Australia
The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation
The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation

European Jewish life has been reinventing itself since the fall of Communism in 1989 and the expansion of the European Union in 2004. Three generations of Jews have come of age in post-war Europe, enabling Judaism across the continent to surge ahead in the 21st century no longer frozen by its tragic history.

This directory – the first of its kind to focus on European Jewry, including the FSU – will introduce, enlighten and inform its readers about some of the exciting Jewish projects taking place in cities and towns all over Europe. The 36 organisations and programmes featured in this first edition of Compass reflect the breadth and depth of a community that is innovative, creative, effective and most importantly, sustainable.

In addition to showcasing these programmes, we hope Compass will encourage those who share a concern for the future of European Jewry to step forward and help these projects generate the resources necessary to continue the important work they have begun. As the great 12th century Spanish-Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides said: "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Philanthropy is a fundamental tenet of Judaism, and is also the essence of Compass. We believe the highlighted projects are among European Jewry's most compelling non-profit programmes, initiatives that can – and will – be sustainable in the long-term with additional assistance and support.

Taken individually, each of these projects is impressive; viewed collectively, they are truly inspiring.

