



The School of Transitional Justice

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Short Description



In the period of March 26 – 28, 2021, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights Croatia and the Youth Initiative for Human Rights Serbia with the support of the Government of the United Kingdom and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) organized **the School of Transitional Justice** via Zoom for participants from Serbia and Croatia. The school was conducted in the B/C/S languages.

Aware of the responsibility we hold as a civil society organization, we created this school to offer the young people from Croatia and Serbia the knowledge and open space to discuss the topics that divide our societies. The generations born after the war deserve a chance to build solidarity and a better-quality life in countries once at war. The conditions for such development include a critical approach to the past and an honest desire for tolerance and reconciliation. This school is one way to contribute to the construction of better, more honest, and more stable neighborly relations.



Thematic Units



Criminal Justice

Ivan Jovanović
UNDP

A lecture about the work and the legacy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the current work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT). The lecture focused on explaining the importance of achieving criminal justice as part of transitional justice mechanisms.

The Foundations of Transitional Justice

Marijana Toma
UNDP consultant

A lecture about the origins of transitional justice as a concept, its goals, and mechanisms, such as criminal justice, truth commissions, reparations, and institutional reform based on the examples of Latin American countries, Rwanda, Spain, and Canada.



Memorialization

Jelena Đureinović

historian and coordinator
of the research platform
"Transformations
and Eastern Europe" at the
University of Vienna

A lecture about memorialization highlighting its role in preventing the repetition of crimes and discussing the ways in which memory activism opposes historical revisionism and denial.



The Politics of Memory

Nevena Škrbić Alempijević

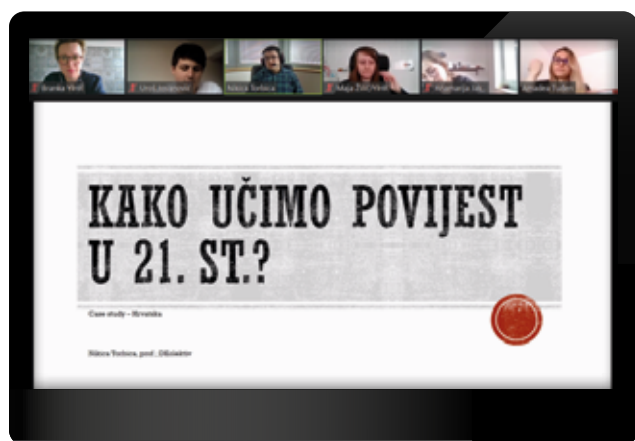
professor at the Faculty of
humanities and social sciences,
University of Zagreb

Can memory be societal? How is it transferred? What is the relationship between the politics of memory and the culture of memory? Why do societies forget? What is the relationship between individual and collective memory? The lecture about the politics of memory touched upon these and many other questions.

The school of transitional justice proved to be a successful platform for the development of critical thinking, the culture of dialogue, and democratic values, such as sensibility for difference, tolerance, and solidarity. Relying upon different disciplines and professions, the organizers of the school pointed out the importance of dealing with the past as a mechanism for social conflict resolution in a very applied and well-argued way. The great turnout of interested participants and their active participation in constructive discussions pointed out the social relevance and need for such programs.

*dr.sc. **Nevena Škrbić Alempijević***

Lecturer's Impression



Narratives in History Textbooks

Nikica Torbica

DKolektiv – organization for social development

This lecture focused on official history and how it is taught in schools. We talked about the methods and approaches for resisting the nationalist interpretation of historical events.

Reparations

Lejla Gačanica

legal advisor and independent researcher

A lecture about the material and symbolic reparations as well as the concept of civil war victims studied through examples of reparations in Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Sexual Violence in Conflict

Mina Damjanović
*feminist researcher
and political scientist*

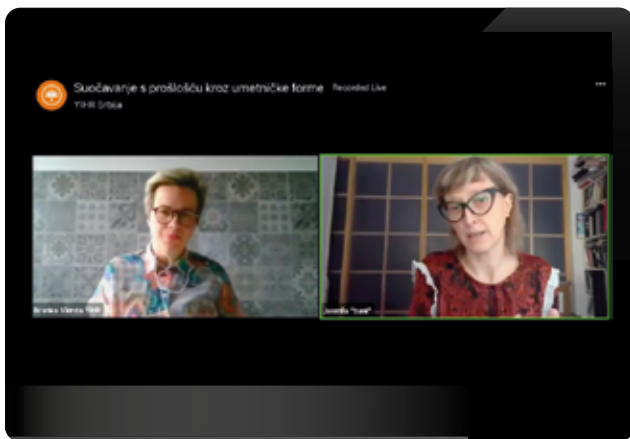
A lecture about the feminist definition of sexual violence in conflict and its recognition in international conventions and laws as a crime against humanity in the ICTY judgments, and the relationship between war rape and crimes against humanity. We also focused on the establishment and the work of the Women's Courts.



Dealing with the Past through Art Forms

Jasmila Žbanić
director

A conversation about the motivation and the process of creating the movie *"Quo vadis, Aida?"*, a movie nominated for an Oscar for the best foreign feature film in 2020 and the first feature film about the genocide in Srebrenica. During the conversation which was open to the public, we spoke about the approach of individuals, societies, and institutions towards the consequences of the wars of the 1990s, the burden of the past for the present and future generations in the post-Yugoslav space, as well as the opportunities and the impact of artistic expressions in the fight against historical revisionism and the exercise of the right to truth.



*I am a feminist and that is apparent in my movies.
I believe that war is not a solution for anything.
War is merely a moment when everything human falls apart
and there are no possibilities to maintain oneself
as a human being.*

Jasmila Žbanić

March 28, 2021

From the Conversation

*I wanted to support your work
because I greatly respect it and I truly think
that young people who collaborate with you are phenomenal.
(about the work of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights)*

Jasmila Žbanić

March 28, 2021

From the Conversation



Methodology and Applications

Methodology

The methodological approach of the school included familiarizing the participants with the theoretical frameworks related to transitional justice as well as interactive participation in discussions on this topic. The participants commented on this methodological approach:



We actively participated in the reflections with the lecturer, which further helped us better understand the topic.



An excellent lecturer who helped us approach the topic through clear examples and enabled us to discuss the material in small groups.



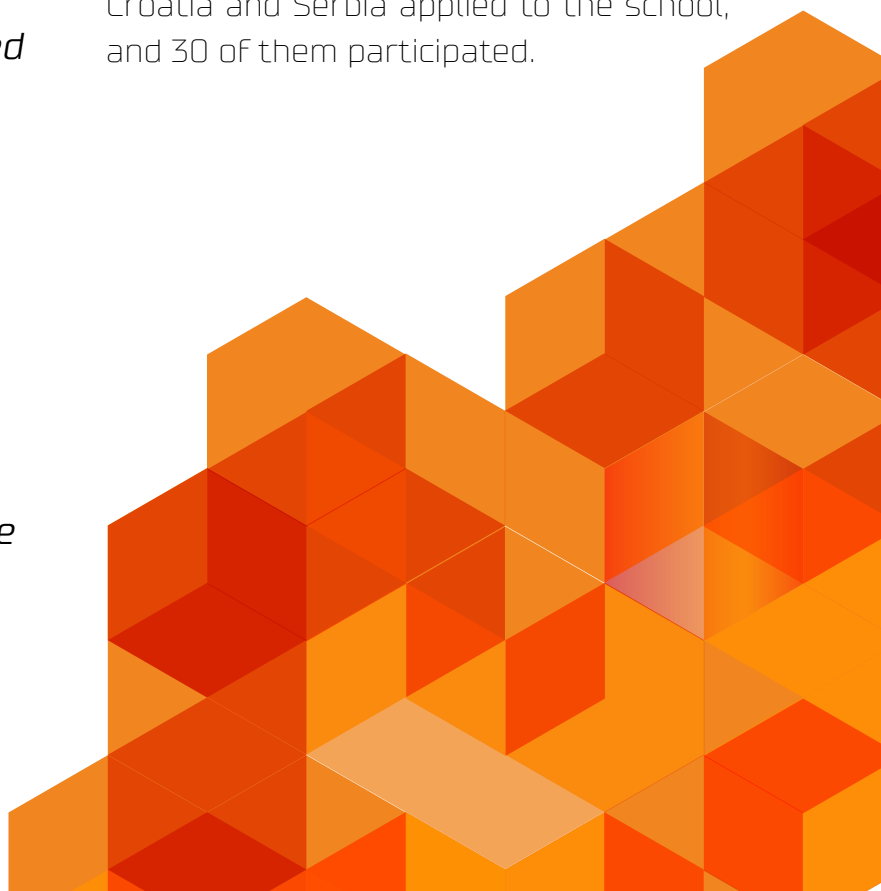
The introductory part was particularly interesting when we participated through the online application.



The discussions were very substantial, and I would particularly highlight how everyone who wanted to say something could do so at every moment, and everyone's points of view were considered and respected.

Applications

55 young people (18 – 30 years old) from Croatia and Serbia applied to the school, and 30 of them participated.





Participants'

Impressions



An excellent selection of topics. While the lectures were long, I never lost focus which shows how *well-designed* everything was. The lecturers were professional and open.



The school exceeded my expectations, it was a *wonderful experience*! The organizers were excellent, as well as all the participants. I learned so much. *Attending the school enriched me immensely.*



I was a bit scared of this *topic* and how I will be able to follow it because of its complexity, but it was *presented in an excellent way* and we learned a lot.



So far, this was the *best school* I ever participated in, despite taking place online... It met all my expectations!



While the themes of the school were difficult, this was *one of the best experiences of supplemental education*. From the moderators and lecturers to the participants, everyone contributed to a positive atmosphere and we all encouraged each other and learned from each other by reflecting on the topics we studied. The school was extremely important because, at least for me, it *created a sense of optimism that it is possible to create dialogue and collectively envision and create a shared future.*



A well organized school which professionally deals with important topics with the help of experts from different parts of the region. *I would recommend the school to everyone of all ages.*

The School of Transitional Justice

