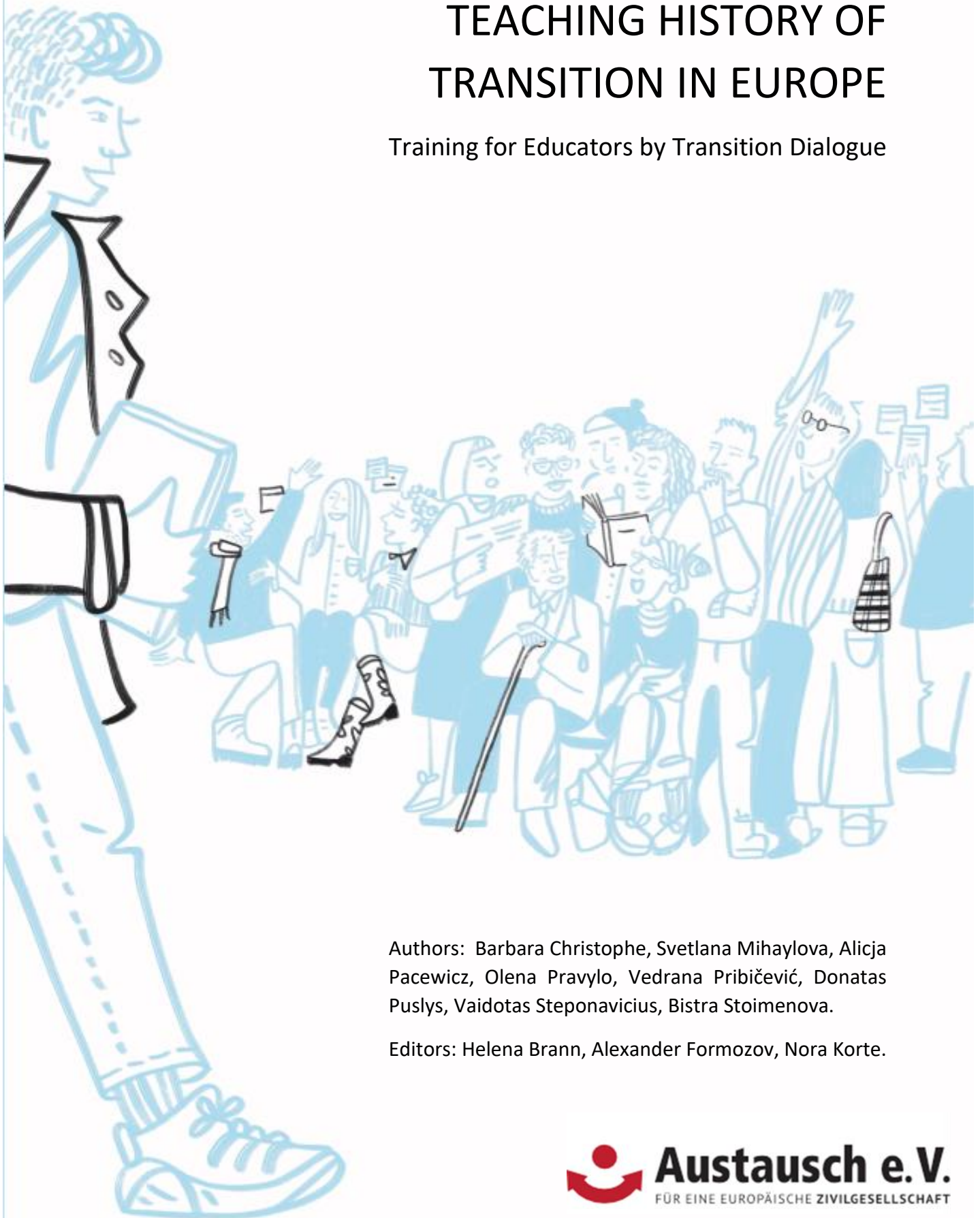


TEACHING HISTORY OF TRANSITION IN EUROPE

Training for Educators by Transition Dialogue



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Topic:

The training curriculum "Teaching History of Transition in Europe" is devised to cater to education professionals, chiefly teachers, professional institutions, and educational multipliers keen on exploring the topic of post-socialist transformations in Europe. This curriculum is based on the handbook "Teaching History of Transition in Europe." Alongside the lesson plans, this training will offer a step-by-step guide to discussing various topics with students, along with interactive activities.

The training framework is aligned with both European Union standards and national curricula standards of various countries involved. The goal is to equip teachers with a better understanding and comprehensive approaches to teaching history and civic education related to the topic of post-socialist transition.

This training is flexible, allowing trainers to adapt the material based on their needs and preferences, similar to the flexibility provided in the lesson plans. Additional resources for this training are available at www.transition-dialogue.org, if participants wish to dive deeper into the topics.

Who are we?

The group of authors of the training "Teaching History of Transition in Europe" prepared by Transition Dialogue includes international education experts, researchers and practitioners from the fields of formal and non-formal education, history and civics. The group includes partners from the following organisations: Sofia Platform Foundation, Stowarzyszenie 61, Congress of Cultural Activists, Znanje na Delu/Wissen am Werk, and Open Lithuania Foundation. More information about our partner organisations and their work can be found on page 72.

Why do we think that teaching history of transition is important?

The post-socialist transition period is a significant historical event that continues to shape the economic, political, and social landscapes of Central and Eastern Europe. It offers lessons on how historical legacies influence current-day policies and attitudes.

By teaching this period, we ensure that the experiences, struggles, and achievements of the people who lived through post-socialist transition are preserved in collective memory. This period marks a critical point in the democratisation of many Eastern European states. Examining the political transition helps us understand how new democratic institutions were built, how power was transferred, and the role of civil society in shaping political change.

Background:

The training uses modern pedagogical methods and a range of specially developed teaching materials. Special attention is paid to the aspects of multiperspectivity, historical thinking and working with contemporary witnesses.

The training offers a multi-perspective and critical approach to education on transition after 1989. It aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of teaching post-socialist transformation and thus support the development of comprehensive and informed educational strategies.

Feedback:

Thank you for your interest in this teaching material. In order to be able to continuously improve the quality of our offer, we also depend on your feedback. You are welcome to write to us if you have any positive or negative criticism. We would also be grateful for any hints and suggestions for new topics and ideas.

Contact us: transition-dialogue@austausch.org

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Session 1. The challenges of teaching contested history and histories of transition.

Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes (105 minutes)

OBJECTIVES:

- Define and problematize transition in historical and civic education
- Reflect upon the necessity of teaching transition and didactic approaches
- Identify dominant narratives and their impact on teaching transition

Abbreviations:

IW = Individual work

GW = Group work

TP = Trainer presentation

PP = Participant presentation

CD = Class discussion

PREPARATION:

- Communicate to participants ahead of time to bring objects or photos from their own lives that are related to the period of post-Socialist transition. There will be additional pictures provided in case participants forget to bring their own. Print these in advance of the session.
- Familiarise yourself with additional explanations for trainers:
 - Explanation for trainers 1: Transition as a contested term
- Handouts:
 - Handout 1: Quotes on transition from Nietzsche and a research group on history didactics in Karlsruhe
 - Handout 2: Peter Seixas on teaching contested histories
- Provide paper, pens, and a board or flipchart.

Phase (duration)	Content	Form at	Materials
Introduction (30 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before the session, communicate to participants to bring objects or photos from their own lives that relate to the period of post-Socialist transition. Ensure to have the provided additional pictures printed in advance to accommodate those who may forget to bring their own. ● Distribute the additional pictures to those who need them, allowing each participant to select one picture that resonates with their experiences. ● Once everyone has a picture, ask them to pair up and discuss their chosen objects or pictures, exploring the relevance to their individual experiences during the post-Socialist transition period. ● Encourage participants to delve into why they chose those specific items and how they relate to their personal journeys during the transition. ● Once the pair discussions are done, facilitate a group discussion where each pair presents their reflections on their chosen pictures. Encourage them to highlight commonalities and diversity in their experiences and memories of transition. ● Explain the purpose of the seminar and outline the agenda. 	GW	<p>Printed pictures or participants' own items</p> <p>Paper, pens, and a board or flipchart.</p>

<p>The challenges of teaching the history (of transition) (30 Min)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants are invited to form three groups. Each group deals with one of three quotations that address challenges in reconstructing history and memory. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In the first quote, the German philosopher Nietzsche makes clear that historiography is based on choices that could always have been made differently. ● The second quote is also from Nietzsche and works out in the form of an aphorism: people usually only remember those aspects of their past that fit into the positive self-image they want to show of themselves in the present. ● The third quotation comes from history didacticians from the University of Education in Karlsruhe and argues that historiography, like memory, cannot help but be selective and shaped by the author's perspective. ● Each group has two tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First, they are to prepare to present and explain to the plenary their respective quote on the challenges facing history in general. ● Second, looking at the history of transition in their respective countries, they reflect on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. which people, events and processes they themselves would mark as relevant ii. whether there is controversy in their society around the question of which people, events and processes are relevant iii. whether there are aspects that some would like to forget or fade out. ● The results of the group-work are presented in the plenary. ● The plenary shortly discusses whether there is a fundamental difference between history and memory 	<p style="text-align: center;">GW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CD</p>	<p>Explanation for trainers 1</p> <p>Handout 1: Quotes on transition from Nietzsche and a research group on history didactics in Karlsruhe</p>
<p>Strategies of teaching contested contemporary history (of transition) (45 Min)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite participants to build three groups and discuss a short text on teaching contested histories which is based on an article written by the Canadian history educator Peter Seixas. Seixas distinguishes between three approaches on pluralistic teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The first approach aims at presenting students with a complex and nuanced story which gives voice to many different experiences and perspectives. ● The second approach equips students with the disciplinary knowledge they need in order to assess the plausibility of competing historical accounts. ● The third approach, in turn, seeks to enable students to deconstruct conflicting historical narratives and examine them for the current interests that inform them. The discussion will take place in two steps. ● The participants pinpoint the three strategies as outlined by Seixas and weigh their pros and cons. The results of the groups are presented and discussed in the plenum. ● Then, all three groups deal more intensively with one of the three strategies. They think about whether their own lessons on transition 	<p style="text-align: center;">GW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CD</p>	<p>Handout 2: Peter Seixas on teaching contested histories, including a biographical note</p>

- could be described in the categories of this approach and outline how an ideal-typical implementation could look like
 - The group results are presented and discussed in the plenum
-

Materials:

- Accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides to this session

Description of any instructions for the trainers (separate from handouts)

- Explanation for trainers 1: Transition as a contested term

Reading Materials, Worksheets, Handouts

- Handout 1: Quotes on transition
- Handout 2: Peter Seixas on teaching contested histories

All other materials listed underneath, categorised by type (information sheet, video, story, graph, etc).

- Printed pictures on personal experiences of transition

Explanation for trainers 1: Transition as a contested term

The selected quotes on history and memory highlight two things. First, they emphasise that all stories about history are always selective, because in all pasts an infinite number of events and processes have taken place, which no narrative can capture all equally. They emphasise, second, that all those who tell stories about history always make their choices about what to select as worth telling and what not to select under the influence of the present. Nietzsche, in particular, claims that these selection choices are also about creating the best possible image of oneself and blocking out anything that might cast a shadow on that self-image.

For two reasons, these challenges intensify as soon as one deals with contemporary history in general and with socially controversial contemporary history such as transition in particular. First, we have access to far more sources and documents for contemporary history than, say, for the history of the Middle Ages or the Ancient World - not only because modern societies produce more records, but also because there are still living contemporaries who can intervene in the debate about the interpretation of contemporary history by recourse to their own memories and experiences. Second, contemporary history is usually of greater relevance to the present. To illustrate this with an example: The question of how one assesses the role of communist parties in the socialist past will also determine the importance and career opportunities one attaches to their members in the present. Because of this immediate relevance, many people participate in the debate about this contemporary history by recourse to their perhaps different experiences and under the influence of their perhaps opposing political convictions. The production of consensus thus becomes more difficult. Differences relate not only to the evaluation of selected events in the past, but also to the question of which aspects of the past are (more) important today.

Handout 1: Quotes on transition from Nietzsche and a research group on history didactics

Group 1: Nietzsche on the inescapable selectivity, partiality, and perspectivity of all historiography

"Let us assume that someone is dealing with Democritus, the question is always on my lips: Why just Democritus? Why not Heraclitus? Or Philo? Or Bacon? Or Descartes and so on. And then: Why just a philosopher? Why not a poet, an orator? And why a Greek at all, why not an Englishman, a Turk?"¹

Questions for group discussion

1. Who are the people Nietzsche is writing about here?
2. What is the main argument he is making and what does this mean for history in general?
3. How would you rephrase his argument if you applied it to the history of transition?

Group 2: Nietzsche on the conflict between memory and pride

"'I did that,' says my memory. 'I couldn't have done that,' says my pride and remains adamant. Finally - the memory gives in."²

Questions for group discussion

1. What is the main argument here? What does this mean for the functioning of memory?
2. When you think about the transition in your country, what facts would it be preferable for (perhaps national) pride to suppress?

Group 3: Research group in history didactics on the characteristics of historical narratives

"Perspectivity: Perspectivity is the viewpoint of the viewer. This is coined by their origin, status, culture [...] simply the personality of the viewer/author. The narration is shaped by the viewpoint of its author and is therefore subjective.

Selectivity: Every historian selects at the beginning [...] which persons and events he will [...] describe, because one cannot mention all of them due to the abundance. He selects them according to his own relevance and his own rationality criteria. [...] By selecting the [...] events and also the persons, the narrative is fictional, but nevertheless claims totality."³

Questions for group discussion

1. Summarise the main arguments, explaining in particular why historians must inevitably make selection decisions.
2. Consider the different perspectives from which the history of transition can be viewed in your country. From each of these perspectives, which events would be selected as worth telling?

¹ Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1874) *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben: mit einem Nachwort*.

² Nietzsche, Friedrich. (1886) *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*.

³ Ost, S., Reck, R. et al. (2014) *Narration Grundlagen* [Narration basics] https://geoges.ph-karlsruhe.de/wiki/index.php/Narration_Grundlagen (Institute of Transdisciplinary Social Science, University of Education Karlsruhe)

Handout 2: Peter Seixas on teaching contested histories

Who was Peter Seixas?

Peter Seixas (1947-2022) was a Canadian historian who published and researched on issues of history education, historical consciousness, and historical thinking. In 2001 he founded the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, which he directed for many years. He has been particularly interested in how to teach history in a way that encourages critical thinking in the pluralistic and heterogeneous societies of our time, in which, among many other things, the interpretation of the past is the subject of controversy between competing groups.

In late 1998, the Canadian government signed a treaty with the indigenous Nisga that granted them land rights and guaranteed political autonomy under the Canadian constitution. This treaty not only led to bitter political controversies in Canadian society, but also made visible massive differences in the assessment of Canadian settlement history. In this situation, Peter Seixas has raised the question of how school history teachers can teach this controversial history and has outlined three different strategies.

The first strategy aims to tell as inclusive a story as possible, taking into account the divergent experiences and perspectives of as many different people as possible.

The second strategy is based on presenting students with opposing positions and then enabling them to judge from documents which version is more plausible. Seixas puts it this way "attention[...] is devoted to learning how to question a historical account, understand the evidentiary basis upon which it rests, and to assessing it in relation to competing accounts."⁴ This approach assumes that students in popular culture are confronted with competing positions anyway and therefore need methods to assess their strengths and weaknesses.

The third strategy is more about students analysing what (political) functions different versions of history serve in the present. The focus is on the relationship between historical knowledge and power. Starting point is the assumption of a fundamental difference between historical accounts and the past: "Historical accounts are organised as narratives, with a beginning, middle, and end, and with a meaning expressed through language [...] the past on the other hand, is not organised at all; it has no beginning, middle, or end (except as chosen by the historian), nor does it have meaning (except as imposed by the historian)."⁵ As a result, this approach concludes, historians' claim to objectivity is called into question. Instead, it emphasises that all stories about history are told from a particular point of view and are political. The task of history education then is to enable students to recognize and deconstruct this positionality behind historical narratives.

Questions for two rounds of group discussion:

- Pinpoint the three strategies outlined by Seixas. Reflect on your own teaching experiences in these categories. Which strategy do you use most often?
- Consider how these three approaches might be applied to teaching history about transition, which is also controversial in society. What might specific scenarios look like?

⁴ Stearns, P. N., Seixas, P., & Wineburg, S. (2000). Knowing, teaching, and learning history: National and international perspectives. New York University Press, p.24.

⁵ *ibid*, p.27.

<p>The challenge of teaching transition in polarised societies (60 Min)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching transition in polarised societies inevitably gives rise to challenges and to different “coping” strategies. It may lead both to ambiguity in presenting transition or to unreflective repeating the one sided narrative of those in power. Firstly, the participants deconstruct a quotation from German textbooks on the consequences of reunification and transition in a plenary session and, guided by the questions in the handouts, discover that authors do not take clear positions but offer ambivalent and open-ended formulations that can be read differently by supporters of opposing political orientations. Secondly, they participate in working groups using contextual materials. These materials help them understand that both the biased representation of transitions and the openness to interpretation and ambivalence are responses to polarised social debates. The Polish excerpts illustrate an opposite and even more doubtful approach, where the textbook narrative matches the interpretation of one side of the polarised public debate - in this case of the party in power. The key question here is how to avoid partisan narratives whilst not falling into a total ambivalence trap. Results and insights from the group discussions are presented and discussed in plenary. 	<p>CD</p>	<p>Explanation for trainers 3: The challenge of teaching transition in polarised societies</p>
<p>Strategies for teaching transition (30 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite the participants to share their personal experiences related to teaching transition. They should share both their success stories and the challenges they faced in the classroom. Begin by having participants share their experiences in pairs. This should take about 10 minutes total (5 minutes per person). Afterward, the trainer will gather these experiences. Along with the attendees, the trainer will work to compile a list of broad strategies, approaches, and methods used in their classes. There's a brief list provided in the supplementary material. This list can serve two purposes: it can inspire new ideas or it can provide a summary of the discussion. If it's being used as a summary, make sure to add the strategies suggested by the teachers that aren't already on the list. 	<p>IW</p>	<p>Explanation for trainers 4: Best practices in teaching transition</p>
<p>Opposing political views on transition (40 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the participants to think about the different political and ideological views on the benefits and drawbacks of transition in their country. To kickstart the next group activity, ask them to state the main points made by various actors in public debates. Next, divide them into three groups and assign each group the tasks outlined in the instructions. Each group will have a different yet connected task. At the end of the activity, the groups will share what they've discussed about the varying and sometimes conflicting political viewpoints. Each team will then have a representative who will present their group's results to everyone. If there's enough time, other participants can add their thoughts and further suggestions. 	<p>CD</p>	<p>Explanation for trainers 5: Watching, understanding and evaluating media on transition</p>

Summary of Sessions 1 and 2 using outputs (15 minutes)

- At the end of the session, everyone should write one sentence that sums up what they learned or found most fascinating during the first two sessions. This could also be a question they still have after the sessions. Everyone should stick their note with this sentence on a large sheet of paper and read what others have written

Post-its, pens, and a flipchart or board

Materials:

- Accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides to this session

Description of any instructions for the trainer(separate from handouts)

- Explanation for trainers 2: The difficulties of teaching (contemporary) history
- Explanation for trainers 3: The challenge of teaching transition in polarised societies
- Explanation for trainers 4: Best practices in teaching transition
- Explanation for trainers 5: Watching, understanding and evaluating media on transition

Reading Materials, Worksheets, Handouts

- Handout 3: Quotes from social scientists
- Handout 4: Quotes from textbooks for plenary discussion
- Handout 5: Quotes from German discourses for group discussion

All other materials listed underneath, categorised by type (information sheet, video, story, graph, etc):

Explanation for trainers 2: The challenge of teaching transition, i.e., a period, even the labelling of which is contested among researchers

In the 1990s, two concepts, "transition" and "transformation," competed in academia to describe social, political, economic, and cultural systemic change in post-socialist societies.

The concept of transition was developed by political scientists in the 1970s in response to processes of democratisation in southern Europe (Greece, Portugal, Spain) and Latin America. Adherents of this approach assume that the transition from an authoritarian to a democratic system in Eastern Europe follows similar logic. From their perspective, the success of the democratisation project depends on two factors: First, there must be a split among the authoritarian elites between hardliners and reformers, in which the latter prevail and initiate a phase of liberalisation. Second, reform-oriented elites of the old system must form a pact with moderate oppositionists to make democratic elections possible.

Proponents of the concept of transformation criticise the transition paradigm on two levels: First, they point out that the initial conditions in Eastern Europe differ radically from those in Latin America and Southern Europe. The socialist regimes, they emphasise, were not only authoritarian, but totalitarian. They not only dominated political institutions but also controlled the economy and civil society. System change, they conclude, thus faces very different challenges. It involves not only the transition from authoritarianism to democracy, but also the transition from a planned to a market economy and the painstaking reconstruction of an independent civil society. In dealing with this dilemma of simultaneity, they argue, more radical forms of change are needed than in southern Europe, for example. Second, they also reject the concept of transition because it suggests an orderly transition to a certain end point, whereas in fact one can observe in all post-socialist societies the emergence of new forms that arise from the amalgamation of old and new structures.

Handout 3: Quotes from social scientists

Group 1: Core assumptions of the transition paradigm

Who is Schmitter?

Philip C. Schmitter (born 1936) is an American political scientist who has taught at Chicago and Stanford Universities. His research has focused on the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes in Latin America and Southern Europe with a comparative perspective. He is one of the founders of the transition paradigm.

Schmitter on the strategies and outcomes of transition:

“Regime change [...] was defined as a process of liberalisation sufficient to trigger the resurrection of civil society [...] liberalisation brought about by the well-known division between hardliners and softliners in the regime [...] the prime movers in the crucial early stage of the transition came from groups *within* [...] transition & consolidation stressed the positive value of including political forces from the ancien régime within the emerging *nouveau régime* [...]. In most respects, autocrats did not lose as much as they feared, either in the political and economic realm, and this explains why they had much less incentive to try to bring about the status quo ante.”⁶

Questions for group discussion:

1. Summarise Schmitt's concept of transition. What does he consider to be the decisive prerequisite for liberalisation? How does he justify his thesis?
2. Compare the course of the transition process in your country/countries with this concept. What is similar? What is different?

⁶ Schmitter, P. and Karl T. (2002). “Concepts, Assumptions & Hypotheses About Democratisation: Reflections on ‘stretching’ From South to East,” unpublished paper, p.30ff. Available: <https://www.eui.eu/documents/departmentscentres/sps/profiles/schmitter/democratization.pdf>

Handout 3: Quotes from social scientists

Group 2: Structural differences between transition and transformation

Who is Miriam Egger?

In her dissertation on the international work of political foundations, Miriam Egger delves into the challenges and shifts that German international institutions faced in Eastern Europe post-1989. Egger's research specifically explores how the Friedrich Ebert Foundation adapted its strategies from the developing South to the evolving contexts of Eastern Europe.

Egger on the difference between transition in Latin America and Southern Europe, and transformation in post-socialist societies:

“The transformation of socioeconomic social structures [...] in the former socialist societies [...] posed entirely different challenges than the democratisation processes in Latin America and southern Europe [...] Unlike communist party dictatorships, authoritarian military regimes never sought to systematically destroy the sphere of society dominated by private interests, but rather limited themselves to its control [...] Unlike in Latin America, the former Eastern bloc countries were concerned with a complete rebuilding of a capitalist economic system as well as democratic political institutions [...] Organisations such as trade unions, parties and interest groups, which already existed in Latin America in pre-authoritarian times and in many cases survived the phase of authoritarian regimes, also had to be completely rebuilt and re-established in the transformation countries of the East.”⁷

Questions for group discussion:

- What are, according to Egger, the main differences?
- How does this apply to your country?

⁷ Egger, M. (2007). *Die Auslandsarbeit der politischen Stiftungen zwischen Entwicklungs- und Transformationskontext* [The international work of political foundations between development and transformation context]. Berlin (Dissertation). [Online]. Available: <https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/handle/fub188/11702?show=full>.

Handout 3: Quotes from social scientists

Group 3: Conceptual differences between transition and transformation

Who is Douglas Saltmarshe?

Douglas Saltmarshe is a social scientist from the University of Bath. In 1999 he defended his PhD with a thesis on "Identity in a post-communist Balkan state: A study in North Albania" in which he mapped continuities and changes in social, political, economic and cultural structures of selected Albanian villages in the 1990s

Saltmarshe on the definitions between transition and transformation in post-communism:

"Transition in a literal sense means the passing from one location to another. Within the context of post-communism, the meaning of transition is concerned with the movement from central economic planning to the market. Transition is thus prescriptive in nature and has been challenged as a term which accurately captures what is taking place in former communist states. Some commentators suggest [...] the notion of transformation is a more appropriate term. Transformation is concerned with fundamental change, a change in the nature of structures. Unlike transition, it is less concerned with an end state. It is an open-ended analytical concept which allows for the substantial differences which exist between former communist countries. While transition is concerned with moving between two known points, transformation can be characterised as a negotiated approach to the unknown, the emphasis being on means rather than ends."⁸

Questions for group discussion

1. What is the crucial difference between "transition" and "transformation" from Saltmarshe's perspective?
2. Which term does he consider more appropriate with regard to the processes of change in post-socialist societies?"

⁸ Saltmarshe, D. (2017). Identity in a Post-Communist Balkan State. p.7.

Explanation for trainers 3: The challenge of teaching transition in polarised societies

Explanation about the quotes from the German textbooks

The close reading and deconstruction of quotations from German textbooks on transition and reunification aims to make visible how ambivalent and open to interpretation the positions represented here actually are.

In politically polarised societies, too, textbooks have to address students from politically and socially diverse families. At a time when political and cultural divisions in societies are deepening, this is an enormous challenge, especially when dealing with controversial topics such as transition. There are different strategies for dealing with this challenge. One is the production of ambivalence, which avoids clear positions on controversial issues and thus tries to make controversies invisible.

In Germany, there are currently many controversial debates about how successful and socially just the transition has been. Some, such as Arnulf, a political scientist from the West, justify existing inequalities by pointing to the lower efficiency and productivity of the labour force in the East and also argue that the collapse of industry in the former East Germany, which led to a rapid increase in unemployment, was inevitable because of the uncompetitiveness of the old GDR firms. Others, such as German studies professor Oschmann, who comes from the East, are sharply critical of the way the transition unfolded. On the one hand, they point to the colonisation of the East by Western elites, which led to the complete ousting of East Germans from leadership positions and thus to understandable feelings of humiliation and frustration. On the other hand, they point to rapid differences in pay and wealth accumulation between East and West, which also lead to well-founded frustration.

Against the backdrop of this controversy, the questions on the two textbook quotations aim to work out their ambivalence and openness to interpretation. Adherents of different positions can read different meanings into the quotations and answer the questions differently in each case.

Explanation about the quotes from the Polish textbook

Below, we quote three excerpts from the textbook “History and The Present” by Wojciech Roszkowski. This work has been criticised by many historians for ideological deformations, which align strictly with the interpretation of Poland's recent history as promoted by the ruling Law and Justice party. The quotes concern the figure of Lech Walesa, one of the leaders of the 1970 workers' strike and, later, leader of Poland's August 1980 strike. He became chairman of the Solidarity trade union and movement and was elected in 1990 as Poland's first post-transition president. Historians have established that after the 1970 shipyard strikes, the communist secret services tried to recruit him as a collaborator. He signed a declaration of cooperation and even received money, there is however no known testimony that his denunciations harmed anyone.

In the right-wing narrative of Poland's recent history, Walesa is reduced to a secret collaborator (known by the alias “Bolek”) and becomes a symbol of the post-communist and pro-Russian elites. According to this narrative, the end of the communist era only truly came in recent years, after the Law and Justice party won elections in 2015. The provided excerpts illustrate how one-sided official discourse can easily trickle down to textbooks and how teaching and learning on transition in a polarised society is vulnerable to manipulation.

Handout 4: Quotes from textbooks for plenary discussion

Quote from a German textbook on the consequences of transition and re-unification:

Klett: "Since July 1, 1990, the D-Mark has been the legal currency in the territory of the GDR. The transition to a market economy quickly revealed the unequal consequences of reunification. While the domestic market and profit opportunities increased for the West German economy, the ailing industrial plants and factories in East Germany could not survive in free competition. As a result, there were massive plant closures, accompanied by growing unemployment. For the people in the former GDR, this was a new experience, since in the planned economy everyone had the right to a job. The great enthusiasm and sense of togetherness was now increasingly replaced by disillusionment and distance between East and West Germans. The image of the wall in people's minds made the rounds."⁹

Questions on the policy of positioning enacted in the quote:

1. Is it according to the quote unfair that the consequences of reunification are unequal in East and West? Or does not being able to survive in a positively connoted "free" competition justify the closure of the eastern companies?
2. Is it bad to have new experiences? Is it good that in the planned economy everyone had the right to a job? What is the position taken by the quote?
3. Is the wall only an image in people's minds according to the author of the text?

Quotes from a German textbook on "Ostalgie" in post-reunification East Germany:

Klett: "On a personal level, many people in East Germany experienced the years after reunification not as a liberation but as a humiliation. Older people in particular saw their life's work called into question. Some of them experienced long periods of unemployment. While well-educated young people found new jobs in the old federal states, cities and regions in eastern Germany shrank and aged. A glorified view of the GDR as a haven of social security, justice and solidarity set in. This was reflected in the 1990s in the revival of GDR brand products, Ostalgie parties and the election results of the PDS, the successor party to the SED."¹⁰

Questions for discussion:

1. How does the text assess the experience of humiliation? Is it relativized by the sentence that well-educated people find jobs in the new federal states?
2. Is the ageing of cities proof that something is going wrong? Or is the assessment that something is going wrong only the result of a retrospective glorification of the GDR?
3. From the perspective of the text, is it an expression of the same attitude, based on the transfiguration of the past, to celebrate Ostalgie parties and to vote for the PDS?

⁹ Klett. (2018). *Geschichte und Geschehen, 9/10* [History and Events, 9/10th grade]. Berlin. p. 164.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Handout 4: Quotes from textbooks for plenary discussion

Quote from a Polish textbook on Lech Walesa's role and controversies in transition:

“On September 17, 1980, the Gdansk Strike Committee and representatives of the new union's founding committees met in Gdansk to determine the organisational structure of the movement. Two opposing concepts emerged: one proposed that decentralising the movement would prevent bureaucratization and provide a more robust defence against government actions. The other concept argued that a centralised union leadership would be more effective in countering the centralised power of the party. The latter concept prevailed. Thus, a single Independent Self-Governing Trade Union (NSZZ) "Solidarity" was formed. Its National Covenant Commission (NC) was led by Lech Walesa, who was not yet publicly known to have collaborated with the Communist Security Service in the early 1970s. [...]

The new Sejm (Polish parliament) elected a right-wing government in 1991, led by Jan Olszewski, which sought to expedite the changes. However, Olszewski's government encountered unexpected resistance from President Walesa and the liberal Democratic Union. Walesa increasingly defended the old communist arrangements and proposed vague projects to create alternatives to Comecon and NATO in Central and Eastern Europe. He also consented to transform Soviet bases in Poland into joint Polish-Russian enterprises, which could have left Poland reliant on Russia for decades. Prime Minister Olszewski blocked this decision during President Walesa's visit to Russia.[...]

Years later, in September 2021, Lech Walesa lost his lawsuit against Sławomir Cenckiewicz, the head of the Military Historical Bureau, whom Walesa accused of participating in falsifying General Kiszczak's secret files (Kiszczak was responsible for secret service operations in the 80s). Walesa also lost a second trial to Cenckiewicz in March 2023, who has consistently claimed that Walesa collaborated (under the alias "Bolek") with the Security Service in the 1970s.”¹¹

Questions for discussion

1. How does the textbook's author construct the figure of Lech Walesa? What does he put emphasis on? Does it look like an objective account of Lech Walesa's role in transition?
2. Can similar examples of one sided narrative be found in the textbooks in our country? What purpose do they serve? How do teachers react to them?

¹¹Roszkowski, W. (2022). *Historia i Teraźniejszość. Podręcznik dla liceów i techników. Klasa 2. 1980-2015 [History and The Present.]* Biały Kruk, pp. 56, 243–244.

Handout 5: Quotes from German discourses for group discussion

Group 1: Arnulf Baring on the detrimental effects of the regime on individual skills and knowledge

“Das Regime hat fast ein halbes Jahrhundert die Menschen verzwert, ihre Erziehung, ihre Ausbildung verhunzt. Jeder sollte nur noch ein hirnloses Rädchen im Getriebe sein, ein willenloser Gehilfe. Ob sich heute einer dort Jurist nennt oder Ökonom, Pädagoge, Psychologe, Soziologe, selbst Arzt oder Ingenieur, das ist völlig egal. Sein Wissen ist auf weite Strecken völlig unbrauchbar. [...] Viele Menschen sind auf Grund ihrer fehlenden Fachkenntnisse nicht weiter verwendbar. Sie haben nichts gelernt, was sie in eine freie Marktwirtschaft einbringen können.”

English:

“For almost half a century, the regime dwarfed people, ruined their upbringing, their education. Everybody was supposed to be just a brainless cog in the wheel, a will-less helper. Whether someone there today calls himself a lawyer or an economist, an educator, a psychologist, a sociologist, even a doctor or an engineer, it doesn't matter at all. His knowledge is completely useless over long distances. [...] Many people are useless because of their lack of specialised knowledge. They have learned nothing that they can bring into a free market economy.”¹²

Questions for discussion:

1. Summarise the arguments of Baring.
2. How would someone like Baring read the two Klett textbook quotes and answer the questions addressed to them?

Group 2 and Group 3: Dirk Oschmann on the socio-economic disparities in post-reunification Germany

“Der Bevölkerungsanteil der Ostdeutschen wird mit 19% veranschlagt [...] Im Militär liegt der Anteil (der Ostdeutschen an Führungspositionen) beim Idealwert von 0,0%, in der Wissenschaft bei 1,5%, in der Justiz zwischen 2 und 4%. [...] Lohnunterschiede [...] liegen [...] bei durchschnittlich 22,5% für die gleiche Arbeit. [...] Die Bescheidwiser vom Dienst werden natürlich die gravierenden Lohnunterschiede wegzureden versuchen, indem sie auf die geringeren Lebenshaltungskosten im Osten verweisen. [...] Im Mai 2022 lagen [...] die Energiepreise in Thüringen und Sachsen weit über denen in Hamburg und Bayern. Und dass es auch im Osten über Berlin hinaus teure Pflaster gibt, Dresden, Leipzig, Rostock, Erfurt, Potsdam oder Jena als das München des Ostens, [...] sollte sich mittlerweile herumgesprochen haben. [...] Langzeitfolgen dieser Differenzen liegen bekanntlich in geringeren Renten, geringem oder gar keinem Vermögen. [...] Wenn aber ein großer Teil der Bevölkerung das als Realität erlebt, untergräbt das auf Dauer die Legitimität der Demokratie.

Die großen Firmen sind auch im Osten in westdeutscher Hand, die Zahl der im Osten sozialisierten Firmenvorstände [...] liegt 2022 bei unter einem Prozent. Große Teile des Wohnungseigentums im Osten gehören Westdeutschen, weil sie das Kapital zum Eigentumserwerb hatten und haben. [...]

¹² Baring, A. (1991). *Deutschland, was nun?* München, p.59.

Ingo Schulze hat darauf hingewiesen, dass nirgendwo in ganz Europa den Leuten vor Ort so wenig gehört, wie im Osten.”

English:

“The share of East Germans in the population is estimated at 19%. [...] In the military, the share (of East Germans in leadership positions) is at the ideal value of 0.0%, in science at 1.5%, in the judiciary between 2 and 4%. [...] Wage differences [...] Average 22.5% for the same work. [...] The knowledgeable people on duty will of course try to explain away the serious wage differences by pointing to the lower cost of living in the East. [...] In May 2022 [...] the energy prices in Thuringia and Saxony were far above those in Hamburg and Bavaria. And that there are also expensive places in the east beyond Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Rostock, Erfurt, Potsdam or Jena as the Munich of the east, [...] should have gotten around by now. [...] Long-term consequences of these differences are known to be lower pensions, low or no wealth [...] But if a large part of the population experiences this as reality, it undermines the legitimacy of democracy in the long run [...]

The large companies are also in West German hands in the East, the number of company directors socialised in the East [...] is less than one percent in 2022. Large parts of the residential property in the East belong to West Germans because they had and have the capital to acquire the property. [...] Ingo Schulze has pointed out that nowhere in all of Europe do the local people own so little as in the East.”¹³

Questions for discussion:

1. What follows from the facts cited by Oschmann for the evaluation of transition in Germany?
2. How can the textbook quotes above be understood in light of the facts cited by Oschmann?

¹³ Oschmann, D. (2023). *Der Osten – eine westdeutsche Erfindung*, Berlin, pp.112-118.

Explanation for trainers 4: Best practices in teaching transition

Ask the trainees to name their best practices in teaching transition and then try to collect them naming the strategy/approach/method they used. The list serves as an inspiration or an overview and can be supplemented and modified during the plenary discussion.

What approaches, strategies and methods do we use when teaching transition?

- Oral history: collecting and/or analysing accounts of witnesses
- Comparing and contrasting: different countries, different social groups
- Multiperspectivity: presenting and evaluating events/processes from different perspectives
- Identifying controversies and digging into the conflicting narratives
- Looking for relatability: how does this relate to our lives today
- Deconstructing the mainstream images: looking for blindspots and red flags in the narratives (even in the textbooks)
- Zooming out and zooming in: discovering the broader context (e.g. international) and digging deeper (e.g. case studies)

Explanation for trainers 5: Watching, understanding and evaluating media on transition

Explain to participants that the film they are about to view illustrates the varying viewpoints of public debate participants on transition. Five young columnists from digital media outlets, each representing a different ideological circle, were asked the same questions: What succeeded and what failed during the transition period, and why should young people be interested in the political transformation and its outcomes?

Link to film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONimgdAQ_7c

Show the film and once it's over, point out that it has two main sections. The first part, entitled "Without understanding the transformation, we won't understand the world", features all the interviewees taking turns to answer why young people should be interested in and informed about the transformation.

Begin by focusing on this opening section - ask participants which statements they found most compelling and why. What arguments and what "tone" would they themselves choose for a similar video about the transformation in their country?

The second section of the video comprises five standalone statements, with each interviewee addressing a topic of personal and professional significance. The themes of these sections, along with quotes chosen from each, are as follows:

Civil Rights and Freedoms: "No one can restrict rights and freedoms because the authorities have such a whim," and "Unfortunately, since 2015 there has been a constitutional crisis."

Society and Economy: "Thanks to open borders, we can fulfil our dreams," and "The big problem is the bad situation of public transportation and health care."

The State and the Church: "Today the Church and other religions can freely proclaim their beliefs," and "The Church has focused too much on its own benefits."

National Identity: "After 1989, we finally gained the opportunity to form our identity within the framework of an independent state," and "Insurgents are still set as role models, although today we no longer have to fight for independence."

Women's Rights and Sexual Minorities: "In the 1990s, the first feminist and non-heterosexual organisations were established, thanks to them these topics appeared in the public space," and "Women's voice in politics was not heard - the new Poland was built by men."

Ask the participants to share what surprised or interested them most in this video and to provide a brief explanation for their reactions. This task can be done as a group, in pairs, or in teams (see below). Highlight that each speaker discusses a topic that continues to challenge Polish society, the

state, local communities, and individuals. Ask them to identify such connections between the transformation's trajectory and current conflicts and challenges.

Invite participants to split into three groups to undertake three different tasks related to the video:

1. "What would you say about the transformation?" Ask participants to imagine that they're the ones being interviewed for a similar short film. What topic related to the transformation in their own country would they want to talk about to their students (3-minute max statements)? Emphasise that, like in the "Understanding the transformation" film, these statements don't have to be in agreement – everyone is entitled to their own opinion and reasoning.
2. Quiz "Who is saying this?" Participants should match 5 quotes with their respective media outlets. This can be a team task or done in pairs. Provide the following links to the 5 media outlets and remind participants to use a translator app to understand the ideological background of each outlet:
Kultura Liberalna: <https://kulturaliberalna.pl/>
Krytyka Polityczną: <https://krytykapolityczna.pl/>
Klub Jagielloński: <https://klubjagiellonski.pl/>
Nowa Konfederacja: <https://nowakonfederacja.pl/>
Magazyn Kontakt: <https://magazynkontakt.pl/>
3. "Our choice would be...". Participants should imagine they are planning to make a similar film about the political climate in their country. What viewpoints should be included? What kind of people or media outlets would they invite to speak? Should extreme nationalist or other discriminatory perspectives also be represented? Why or why not?"

Session 3. Transnational Lesson Plans

Duration: 3 hours 15 minutes (195 minutes)

OBJECTIVES:

- To facilitate teachers' understanding of different methodologies related to teaching the post-socialist transition and how they can be implemented in teaching practice.
- To introduce participants to the learning materials - transnational lesson plans (TLPs) and discuss possible uses in the classroom.

Abbreviations:

IW = Individual work

GW = Group work

TP = Trainer presentation

PP = Participant presentation

CD = Class discussion

PREPARATION:

- Familiarise yourself with additional explanations for trainers:
 - Explanation for trainers 6: Instructions for the Accident of Birth game
 - Explanation for trainers 7: Background on transnational lesson plans
 - Explanations for trainers 8: Methodologies of transnational lesson plans
 - Explanation for trainers 9: Potential discussion questions on methodologies
- Prepare the "Accidents of Birth" game that will be uploaded to the seminar's webpage as the starter for the session.
 - Link to game: <https://mkern.eu.pythonanywhere.com/>
- Handouts:
 - Handouts 6: Transnational lesson plans - Abstracts on approaches, activities and objectives.
 - Four Transnational Lesson Plans (in the national language)
- Provide paper, pens, markers, and a board or flipchart, arrange tables and chairs for World Cafe format.

Phase (duration)	Content	Format	Materials
Introduction Game "Accidents of Birth" (30 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiation of the seminar with the "Accidents of Birth" game. Participants to experience random and choice scenarios related to different social classes in various countries. ● Instruct participants on the game and its mechanisms. Ask them to write down their expectations of outcomes for their chosen role in the game. ● After playing through the game, show participants the outcomes when the game is repeated 1000 times. ● Possible discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 	CD	Online game: "Accidents of Birth" Explanation for trainers 6: Instructions for the Accident of Birth game

- What were your expectations for your chosen role? How far did your expectations differ from the actual outcome?
- What differences do you notice between individual playthroughs and when the game is played 1000 times? What surprises you? What doesn't?

Short presentation of TLPs (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Familiarise yourself in advance with methodologies from accompanying explanations for trainers. ● Present background, approaches, activities and outcomes of transnational lesson plans (TLPs) from presentation slides. ● The slides and accompanying explanations summarise the key approaches, activities, sources, and objectives for each of the four TLPs - on Civil Society, Transitional Justice, Public Memory, and Economy. ● The explanations on the background and methodologies of the TLPs are intended in this section to be used to provide trainers with additional input and context, should they require it. ● Additionally, they will be passed out to participants in the following section to provide background knowledge on the TLPs. 	TP	<p>Presentation slides 18-25</p> <p>Explanation for trainers 7: Background on TLPs</p> <p>Explanations for trainers 8: TLP Methodologies</p>
World Café - First Round (50 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before World Cafe, hand out the following to participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explanation for trainers 7: Background on TLPs (each group receives a copy). ○ Explanation for trainers 8: TLP Methodologies (1 TLP per group). ○ Handout 7: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives (1 TLP per group). ● Group work on Transnational Lesson Plans (TLPs) using the World Café method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 Tables. Groups are of 4-5 participants. According to the number of participants there are four or more groups. Each group should be seated around a table. ○ Assignment to the groups: participants are dealing with approaches and methodologies from TLPs. Each group has one TLP (If there are more participants it is possible for more than one group to use the same TLP, or add a national lesson plan from the handbook). ○ Main question: <i>How will you use these materials in your classroom?</i> Make a list of suggestions on paper for flipchart. ● Participants are discussing teaching materials, they are sharing their experience in teaching the topic of transition and making a list of activities (also sources, materials etc.) In each group they choose one person as a speaker who will stay at the table and explain to the other participants their suggestions. 	GW	<p>Explanation for trainers 7: Background on TLPs</p> <p>Explanations for trainers 8: TLP Methodologies</p> <p>Handout 6: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives.</p>
World Café - Next Rounds: 3 rounds x 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants switch groups and discuss, suggest modifications or improvements in peer-review style. 	GW	<p>Handout 6: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives.</p>

World Café - Closing Round: 10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaker from each group explains to the newcomers the list of activities. • The participants from the other group can ask, add, make new suggestions and write on the paper (with different colours) with the list of activities. Each rotation should last approx. 15 minutes. • The last step is when the speaker is rejoined by their own group's members. They discuss the new propositions of activities / questions and finalise the list of activities. They can accept or reject some of the suggestions on the paper. 	Paper, pens, markers, board or flipchart
World Café - Final round: Presentation (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of ideas on how to use these TLPs in the classroom. Each group presents their list (final version), shortly, for 5 min. • During the discussions and presentation participants have the opportunity to give some adaptation of TLPs for specific students' age group, educational environment, etc. 	PP Flipchart, board, post-it notes, etc for presentation
Final discussion of session (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing from the insights shared during the 5-minute presentations in the previous activity, this is an open space for trainers and participants to delve deeper into pedagogical strategies and methodologies. • Reflect on the presentations and methodologies discussed earlier, such as multiperspectivity, oral history, historical thinking, research-based learning, and beyond. • While the previous discussions touched on methodologies primarily presented in the TLPs, feel free to venture beyond these examples, using the explanation provided as inspiration or a starting place. • Encourage an exchange of ideas. Participants should feel empowered to share, give feedback, and provide additional input. • The trainer should make sure to fully document the suggestions made in the World Café and the following discussion (by notes, photo, flipchart-notes etc.) and send them to Transition Dialogue. 	CD Explanation for trainers 9: Potential discussion questions on methodologies.

Materials:

- Accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides to this session: slides 15-29

Instructions for the trainers

- Explanation for trainers 6: Instructions for the Accident of Birth game
- Explanation for trainers 7: Background on transnational lesson plans
- Explanation for trainers 8: Methodologies of transnational lesson plans
- Explanation for trainers 9: Potential discussion questions on methodologies

Reading Materials, Worksheets, Handouts

- Handout 6: Transnational lesson plans - Abstracts on approaches, activities and objectives.
- Four Transnational Lesson Plans (in the national language)

All other materials listed underneath, categorised by type (information sheet, video, story, graph, etc

- Materials for World Cafe method:
 - Pens, paper, post-it notes, whiteboards, markers, flipcharts, etc. Ensure enough space for groups to be seated together and able to move around.
- Accidents of Birth Game: <https://mkern.eu.pythonanywhere.com/>

Explanation for trainers 6: Instructions for the Accident of Birth game.

The Accident of Birth game is a roleplaying activity that aims to illustrate how a person's economic outcomes are heavily influenced by the circumstances of their birth. With the help of economic data, it presents the trajectories of workers, entrepreneurs, peasants and landowners from Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland and East Germany who were all born in 1971 and experienced a communist regime, and both transition and post-transition economies during their working life.

Players start by choosing one of four countries and one of four classes (worker, peasant, landowner, entrepreneur) to roleplay. They then proceed through a series of rounds representing different stages of the transition from communism to capitalism in these countries. In each round, players roll dice to randomly determine outcomes related to factors like life expectancy, education, property rights, unemployment, inequality, and corruption. After each round, players see how their cumulative scores compare to the average outcomes for others in their class and country. This allows them to see the effects of the "accidents of birth" - the luck of where and into which class someone is born.

The game aims to highlight several key concepts. First, that a person's economic mobility is largely predetermined based on initial conditions outside their control. Second, small initial advantages, like being born into a certain class or country, can compound over time. And third, that success or failure isn't solely due to individual effort and merit.

The different classes and countries are intended to represent the diversity of starting positions across the Eastern Bloc. The randomised mechanics make clear the role of chance in determining outcomes. The final discussion allows reflection on how the transition affected different groups and the relative importance of country versus class.

This game provides an engaging way for teachers to introduce concepts around inequality, privilege, and the impacts of large-scale systemic change. The roleplaying format promotes perspective-taking as players experience life from different viewpoints. Overall, the game enables critical thinking about how accidents of birth shape economic mobility, both in transitional contexts and more broadly.

Explanation for trainers 7: Background on transnational lesson plans.

The experts from the Transition Dialogue network have designed a total of 11 lesson plans - 7 of them suitable for the requirements of the respective national curriculum and 4 for the international context. The topics and methods of the lessons were selected based on a mapping of the textbooks (conducted in 2020-2021) to fill the gaps at the level of topics and methodologies of teaching history of post-socialist transformation in Bulgaria, Germany, Croatia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine.

The Transnational Lesson Plans (TLPs) provided are created to help understand the shift towards democracy in Eastern Europe after 1989/91. The unique aspect of these lesson units is that they bring together examples and sources from various national contexts on a topic. Each one of them was created by an international expert team.

They are crafted for teachers who teach history and civic education, in both formal and non-formal settings. They cover 4 topics not often discussed but crucial to grasp the societal changes during transitional times: *Civil Society, Economic Transformation, Transitional Justice, and Public Memory*.

Each lesson plan is well-organised with step-by-step instructions, divided into smaller sections and filled with interactive activities, mainly using historical sources which can be found in the appendices of each plan. Teachers have the flexibility to adjust them according to what suits them and their students best - and we would like to work on this together in the following workshops.

The lesson plans are also in line with the larger educational goals set by the European Council's guidelines and the specific national curriculum standards. The TLPs are a rich resource for engaging students in grades 8 through 12 in meaningful discussions and historical thinking.

Explanation for trainers 8.1: Methodologies of transnational lesson plans.

Transnational lesson plan: “The role of civil society in transition to democracy”¹⁴

This comprehensive lesson plan explores the world of civil society and its significant impact on the health of democracy. The learning journey is structured into three crucial chapters, each shedding light on civil society's role across various historical and modern contexts.

We utilise a range of methods and tools to captivate and educate students. They'll have the chance to delve into comparative analysis, studying various civil society movements from the oppressive era of totalitarian regimes to transformative times during democratic transitions, up to the present day. In the process, students will familiarise themselves with concepts like civil society, civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), active citizenship, totalitarianism, and pluralism. These foundational ideas will guide their learning experience.

By the lesson's conclusion, students will have a deep understanding of what civil society entails and its diverse functions. This understanding will empower them to become informed and active participants in shaping their communities and governments. Through comparing civil society movements from different eras and regions, students gain a unique viewpoint, understanding that civil society can persist even under oppressive rule and observing its evolution during democratic transitions. As they explore today's challenges and opportunities for civil society, students will hone their critical assessment skills. They'll learn to pinpoint issues and prospects for civil society engagement on local, national, and global scales. This lesson aims to furnish students with the skills, knowledge, values, and drive necessary to effect positive societal change through both political and non-political avenues. They'll come to see their potential as change-makers. Furthermore, the knowledge gained here will have real-world applications, helping students grasp the historical role of civil society in post-communist nations and its ongoing importance in upholding democratic values.

This lesson isn't just about recounting historical events—it's about cultivating knowledgeable, involved, and empowered citizens. It prepares students to navigate the intricate terrains of society and politics, thereby bolstering democracies around the world. Embarking on this lesson plan will surely foster critical thinking, spark insightful conversations, and inspire students to actively engage in the democratic processes that mould our global landscape.

¹⁴ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov, A., Sichterman, L. Berlin 2023, p. 205ff.

Explanation for trainers 8.2: Methodologies of transnational lesson plans.

Transnational lesson plan: “The economic aspects of transition taught through the Accidents of Birth game.”¹⁵

The lesson delves into the economic facets of transitional periods, employing storytelling and role-playing to illustrate diverse economic experiences from pre-transition to post-transition in Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, and Germany. Through gamification techniques, students take on roles of different social classes in the aforementioned countries and engage in the "Accidents of Birth" game, where economic outcomes are influenced by the privatisation, stabilisation, and liberalisation policies enacted during the transition. These policies directly impact the welfare of their characters within the game.

This topic was chosen as a review of curricula indicated that there's often insufficient time and content dedicated to the economic aspects of transition. This is possibly due to the high school students' limited understanding of economics, and the ongoing debates regarding the economic winners and losers of transition. The game employs statistical data to elucidate key variables such as life expectancy, unemployment, trade openness, and inflation, which significantly affect the characters' daily lives in the game.

The game aims to portray the diverse economic experiences during the periods of communism, transition, and post-transition across Eastern bloc countries. It also highlights how experiences vary based on the social class the student-character belongs to. Through this lens, students achieve a multi-perspective understanding regarding both countries and social classes, enabling them to compare game results with their peers and across multiple random iterations of the game. The game educates students on how an individual's economic outcomes are shaped by their country of birth, social class, and an element of luck. Additionally, the game provides opportunities for students to explore alternative scenarios. At certain junctures within the game, students can opt to switch countries or social classes, subsequently comparing how such decisions influence the final outcomes.

The game's design is inspired by the "Accident of Birth" concept, which presents an alternative approach to studying economic inequality. This approach posits that much of today's global inequality stems from inherent differences among individuals, pertaining to factors beyond their control like race, gender, nationality, or parental background. This lens is particularly relevant for studying transitional periods, especially given the varying experiences of communism and transition across different countries and social classes within those countries.

¹⁵ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov, A., Sichterman, L., Berlin 2023, p. 222ff.

Explanation for trainers 8.3: Methodologies of transnational lesson plans.

Transnational lesson plan: “Public memory, dealing with the past, competing memories.”¹⁶

The lesson delves into issues surrounding public memory, addressing the communist past, and exploring the differing memories across three countries: Bulgaria, Poland, and Lithuania. Throughout the lesson, students will engage with various types of sources, each offering diverse perspectives. Active learning methods will be employed to enhance understanding.

This topic was selected following a mapping of the curricula and textbooks conducted in the earlier phase of the project. The primary findings lean towards the understanding that while issues of public memory are somewhat represented in the curriculum, they are notably absent from textbooks.

The authors have employed a compare-and-contrast methodology in this Transnational Lesson Plan (TLP), presenting three distinct examples from Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Poland. These examples explore the varied approaches—ranging from destruction to rebranding—employed by these countries in addressing monuments and buildings from the communist era.

The selection of sources is grounded in multiperspectivity, showcasing different viewpoints on the topic at hand. The learning activities are oriented towards competence-building, providing students with the opportunity to work in small groups and engage in active learning.

The learning outcomes have been structured in alignment with the Council of Europe's model of Competences for Democratic Culture, which distinctly outlines four areas: knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes.

¹⁶ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov, A., Sichterman, L., Berlin 2023, p. 240ff.

Explanation for trainers 8.4: Methodologies of transnational lesson plans.

Transnational lesson plan: “Crime and punishment? Transitional Justice in Post-communist Countries.”¹⁷

This lesson was devised to address a prominent gap identified during the process of mapping missing topics in national curricula and educational materials, particularly the challenges associated with transitional justice in post-communist countries. This issue has been a vivid and divisive topic for many years, sometimes detrimentally impacting public discourse in our nations. Often, young individuals—alongside their parents and teachers—either avoid this topic or fall into the trap of oversimplified and one-sided judgments.

"Crime and Punishment" is the endeavour by Transition Dialogue experts to utilise historical facts and figures from the political transformation in Poland, Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Germany to explain and illustrate various approaches to justice during these transitions. It's worth noting that this issue holds universal significance; transitions from totalitarian or authoritarian dictatorships to democracies have occurred globally, allowing educators from numerous countries like Portugal, Tunisia, the Republic of South Africa, and several South American nations to join this discussion.

The lesson's focus is on different models of addressing the totalitarian past and bringing to justice the politicians and officials of the communist party and state. Initially, it provides a general overview to students regarding the legal and ethical challenges reflected across the broad spectrum of transitional justice models. These range from the "conditional resignation from criminal prosecution" (adopted, for example, in South Africa), to the widely embraced "limited prosecution" model followed by countries like Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Argentina, Greece, and Portugal, and finally, to the most stringent, all-encompassing criminal prosecution introduced only in Germany post-1990.

In the subsequent phase, students delve into an analysis of four national cases (Poland, Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Germany) that exemplify diverse strategies of bringing perpetrators to justice. This analysis extends to the varying methods of decommunization and lustration adopted in these countries.

The lesson encourages students to identify common issues and differences in tackling communist crimes, and to engage in discussions evaluating the merits and drawbacks of these approaches. Discussions, both in small groups and plenary sessions, are structured around pivotal questions like: How are the crimes committed by dictatorship officials treated and judged? Are politicians from the former communist parties allowed to participate in the political life of the new, democratic nations? How was this process executed in our country compared to other post-communist states? With a deeper understanding of transitional justice's intricacies, students are then positioned to form and articulate their own opinions, assuming the roles of advisors to a fictitious state currently transitioning from a totalitarian to a democratic system.

¹⁷ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov, A., Sichterman, L., Berlin 2023, p. 258ff.

Handout 6.1: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives.

Transnational lesson plan: “The role of civil society in transition to democracy”¹⁸

Approach:

- Comparative approach, analysing the role of civil society in Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine during different transitional periods.
- Utilises multimedia, including quotes, images, videos, and texts to offer diverse perspectives on the role and challenges of civil society.

This lesson plan takes a comparative approach to examining the role of civil society in Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine during different historical periods. It utilises diverse sources including quotes, images, videos, and texts to provide students with varied perspectives on civil society before, during and after the transition from communism to democracy.

Activities - Sources:

- Analyse quotes from historical figures to glean insights into the nature of civil society under communist rule.
- Examine historical images to differentiate between authentic and state-sponsored civil society groups.
- Discuss quotes that illuminate the difficulties faced by civil society under repressive regimes.

The introductory activities have students analyse quotes and images to understand the differences between state-sponsored and genuine civil society groups under communist rule. Students learn how totalitarian regimes aim to control all aspects of life, leaving little space for independent civic initiatives. However, they also discover that underground protest movements inevitably emerge, despite repression. Comparing across contexts, students grasp how the more oppressive the regime, the harder it is for civil society to organise and gain influence.

Activities - Engagement:

- Engage in discussions about the significance of civic participation and the implications of living without civil society rights.
- Explore case studies detailing civil society movements in various countries, fostering a deeper understanding through analysis.
- Develop a set of interview questions for activists to gain firsthand perspectives.
- Brainstorm and conceptualise personal civic engagement projects, encouraging proactive participation in civil society initiatives.

¹⁸ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov & Sichterman, Berlin 2023, p. 205ff.

Following activities focus on the role of civil society during the transition period in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Students watch video overviews and read varying viewpoints on whether civil society actively drove change. By debating different interpretations, they appreciate the complex relationship between civic mobilisation and systemic transformation. The activities aim to build historical knowledge while encouraging reflection on civil society's evolving functions in times of flux. The final unit has students imagine living without civil society rights, highlighting its importance for democracy. They analyse case studies of recent social movements in their countries, developing interview questions for activists. This fosters empathy while encouraging youth civic engagement. Students brainstorm and plan their own activism projects, connecting historical lessons to present realities.

Objectives and Outcomes:

The activities aim to build historical knowledge while encouraging reflection, debate, and youth activism. By comparing across countries and time periods, students gain a nuanced understanding of civil society's evolving role in democratic transitions. Students gain a nuanced understanding of how civil society waxes and wanes under different regimes. From communist repression to democratic transition to contemporary challenges, they appreciate civil society as an indispensable agent of social and political progress.

Handout 6.2: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives.

Transnational lesson plan: “Crime and punishment? Transitional Justice in Post-communist Countries.”¹⁹

Approach:

- Adopts a comparative approach to study transitional justice in Bulgaria, Germany, Lithuania, and Poland post the fall of communism.
- Explores complex legal and moral dilemmas involved in addressing past crimes and human rights violations.
- Makes use of diverse primary resources such as case studies, images, and quotes to illustrate differing national strategies to transitional justice.

This lesson examines the complex legal and ethical challenges of transitional justice through a comparative lens, looking at four post-communist countries - Bulgaria, Germany, Lithuania, and Poland. It focuses on how new democratic governments addressed past state crimes and human rights abuses after the fall of totalitarian regimes.

Activities - Sources:

- Analyse real court cases to understand and compare various models of criminal prosecution.
- Discuss the Radbruch formula to deepen understanding of the debates surrounding the prosecution of state injustices.
- Learn about the function and outcomes of truth commissions through the examination of lustration process case studies.

The introductory activities provide historical context on transitional justice dilemmas like prosecuting former officials and uncovering truth. Students then analyse real court cases from the four countries to compare national approaches to criminal prosecution. By debating use of the Radbruch formula, they grasp the complexities of delivering justice for unjust laws. Additional activities have students examine lustration processes through case studies and create presentations explaining the purpose and controversies surrounding truth commissions.

Activities - Engagement:

- Participate in a role-play of a parliamentary debate on decommunization, considering both political and ethical dimensions.

¹⁹ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov & Sichterman, Berlin 2023, p. 258ff.

- Develop presentations elucidating the purposes and controversies surrounding lustration in different countries.
- Compile and present key takeaways and questions through exit cards at the end of the lesson, promoting reflection and retention of the material covered.

Roleplaying activities allow students to consider political and moral arguments around banning communist officials from public office. Creating exit cards, they summarise key lessons and questions.

Objectives and Outcomes:

By analysing transitional justice from multiple national lenses, students gain critical perspective on the challenges of confronting difficult histories. The comparative approach encourages reflection on issues of state violence, historical memory, and the boundaries of justice. By cycling between diverse primary sources and country contexts, students gain critical perspective on the multifaceted challenges of transitional justice. Analysis of different national approaches encourages reflection on issues of historical memory, state violence, and the boundaries of justice. Students develop a nuanced understanding of confronting difficult histories through rule of law.

Handout 6.3: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives.

Transnational lesson plan: “The economic aspects of transition taught through the Accidents of Birth game.”²⁰

Approach:

- Uses storytelling and role-playing to explain economic transition in Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, and Germany
- Focuses on how privatisation, liberalisation and stabilisation impacted different groups.
- Utilises statistics, graphs, dice games to simulate country contexts.

This lesson explains the complex economic transition from communism to capitalism through experiential storytelling and gamification. Students take on roles of workers, entrepreneurs, peasants and landowners in Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, and Germany before, during and after the fall of communism. By simulating how privatisation, liberalisation and stabilisation policies impacted different groups, they gain perspective on the human dimensions of transition.

Activities - Sources:

- Students analyse data and graphs on pre-transition conditions like life expectancy and education.
- Students examine graphs showing economic indicators during transition like inflation, exports, unemployment.
- Dice rolls determine the impact of policies like privatisation on their character.

Introductory data analysis activities have students examine graphs on pre-transition conditions like life expectancy and education levels. Dice rolls determine their character’s socioeconomic status based on historical realities in each country. Students then analyse graphs on economic indicators during transition, like inflation, exports, and unemployment. Dice rolls again determine how policies like privatisation impact their personal economic outcomes.

Activities - Student Engagement:

- Students take on roles of workers, entrepreneurs, peasants in different countries.
- They compare outcomes at various stages of transition.
- They discuss who transition benefited and hurt within and across countries.

Throughout the lesson, students periodically compare their scores and rankings, discussing who is benefitting and being left behind. Roleplaying brings to life abstract economic concepts, as students debate transition's varied national and personal impacts. Analysis of quantitative data is blended with perspective-taking, humanising the complex policy shifts.

Objectives and Outcomes:

²⁰ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov & Sichterman, Berlin 2023, p. 222ff.

By experiencing economic upheaval through different characters' eyes, students gain empathy while critically evaluating transition outcomes. The blended methodology encourages reflection on winners and losers, driving home the idea that policy impacts depend heavily on the “accident of birth.” The activities aim to inspire nuanced thinking on the rights and wrongs of radical economic change.

Handout 6.4: TLP Abstracts on Approaches, Activities and Objectives.

Transnational lesson plan: “Public memory, dealing with the past, competing memories.”²¹

Approach:

- Focuses on public memory and competing perspectives on communist heritage in Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Poland
- Utilises diverse sources like images, texts, videos exploring fate of buildings and monuments.

This lesson examines public memory and competing perspectives on the communist past's contested heritage in Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Poland. It focuses on the politically and morally fraught question of what should happen to buildings and monuments emblematic of the former regimes.

Activities - Sources:

- Students analyse social media comments about a communist monument.
- They examine texts describing demolition and debates around historical sites.
- Articles present arguments for and against preserving contested heritage.

Introductory activities have students analyse social media comments about a communist monument and examine texts describing fiercely debated demolition projects. By studying real cases of destruction, preservation, and compromise, they grasp the complexity of transitional justice. Additional sources present arguments for and against effacing the physical legacy of difficult histories.

Activities - Student Engagement:

- Students discuss if they would preserve or remove communist monuments.
- They debate the complexity of public memory and the past's legacy.
- Pairs develop reasoned views on the importance of engaging with difficult history.

In pairs, students discuss whether they would preserve or remove remnants of the past, then share their views with the class. A simulated parliamentary debate allows them to voice more nuanced opinions, attentive to political context and ethical subtleties. Case studies from different countries encourage comparative thinking about the duties of remembrance.

Objectives and Outcomes:

The comparative case studies encourage critical thinking on transitional justice and collective memory. Activities blend historical analysis with moral reflection. Activities aim to build historical knowledge while fostering moral reasoning skills. Analysing multifaceted primary sources blending images, videos and texts, students confront the dilemmas of judging the recent past. They develop sensitivity to diverse perspectives and the value of engaging critically with contested heritage. The

²¹ *Teaching history of transition in Europe - a handbook for history and civic education*, ed. by Formozov & Sichterman, Berlin 2023, p. 240ff.

lesson exemplifies how reflective classroom dialogue can advance transitional justice and collective memory.

Explanation for trainers 9: Potential discussion questions on methodologies.

Questions:

- What interactive activities could help students deeply engage with the role of civil society during periods of transition?
- How can diverse source materials be used to foster balanced understanding of complex transitional justice issues?
- What key local monuments or sites could be incorporated when teaching about contested historical memory?
- When discussing economic reforms, how can we ensure students consider impacts on different socioeconomic groups?
- What documentaries or books could complement historical knowledge when teaching about democratic transitions?
- How can lessons learned from different countries' transitional justice approaches inform constructive class debates on this sensitive topic?
- What current civil society/human rights issues could serve as real-world connections when teaching about democratic transitions?
- How could insights about winners/losers of radical economic reforms be applied to contemporary policy issues?

Session 4. Disinformation and Mythbusting regarding Transition.

Duration: 1 hour 35 minutes (95 minutes).

OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the concept of disinformation vs. other types of narratives and the analytical framework to discern it.
- Understand disinformation's operation and audience targeting in relation to post-socialist transition.

Abbreviations:

IW = Individual work

GW = Group work

TP = Trainer presentation

PP = Participant presentation

CD = Class discussion

PREPARATION:

- Handouts:
 - Handout 7: How to Speak About Disinformation?
 - Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's theory
- Provide paper and pens for participants to use during the brainstorming and meme creation phases, and a board or flipchart.

Phase (duration)	Content	For mat	Materials
Introduction activity (20 mins)	Start by participants to note down misconceptions about post-socialist transition from personal experience on cards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of these could include disinformation and false stories, incomplete or simplified stories, or misleading narratives. The idea is to collect participants' first impressions of what they believe disinformation to be - in contrast to under-complex or contested (but legitimate) narratives. • Put the cards on the board, cluster them and discuss briefly. 	IW	Paper and pens, cards
Introduction to disinformation and myths (30 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a discussion by asking participants how they perceive the term "disinformation." Can they provide examples from the exercise they have just done? • Present cases from the presentation and ask participants to try to distinguish between contested narratives and disinformation <i>without</i> providing criteria. • Introduce the <i>definition</i> of disinformation and the framework on how to analyse it. 	GW	Handout 7: How to speak about disinformation Powerpoint slides 32-40
Group work (45 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to use the criteria to explain how they might now categorise some of their choices and examples from the previous phases. • Ask the participants to share further examples that align with these different categories, based on the criteria provided. 	GW	Powerpoint: Raoul Girardet's mythical structures; Jonathan Haidt's moral

- Ask them why, in their view, some individuals might readily accept disinformation on the transition period. What kind of societal problems and weaknesses does disinformation exploit to fulfil its purpose?
- Present Raoul Girardet's *mythical structures theory* briefly, then split participants into groups, each analysing a distinct structure. Ask the groups to think if they can identify examples of how their assigned structure is present in narratives about transition. How might those who spread disinformation exploit this mythical thinking?
- Introduce Jonathan Haidt's *moral foundations theory* to the participants. This interactive exercise should help participants better understand and engage with Haidt's moral foundations theory.
 - Participants will be grouped in circles, preferably with three persons in each circle. They will be given approximately 5 to 10 minutes to discuss and understand the concepts presented on the cards.
 - Participants should be encouraged to draw upon their own experiences and discuss their varied perspectives on the concepts.
- After the small group discussions, there will be a collective discussion to share insights on moral foundations from each group and clarify any misconceptions.
 - Participants can also offer examples of how moral foundations could incite reactions during the transitional period. Can they provide any examples of how these moral foundations could have been leveraged for the purposes of disinformation?
- A final task may be: Ask participants to apply the analytical frameworks they explored to the examples collected (on cards) during the session. Have their attitudes about those changed and how?

Handout 7:
How to speak about disinformation ?

Handout 8:
Cards on Haidt's theory

Recap key takeaways from the session.

Materials:

- Accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides to this session: slides 30-42

Reading Materials, Worksheets

- Handout 7: How to Speak About Disinformation
- Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's theory

All other materials listed underneath, categorised by type

Useful links:

<https://hi-storylessons.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/PORADNIK-NIE-DLA-DEZINFORMACJI-1.pdf>
<https://hi-storylessons.eu/no-to-disinformation/> e.g. https://hi-storylessons.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/10_M.Wilkowski_Information-Filter-Bubbles_EN-1.pdf
[The Misinformation Age: How False Beliefs Spread by Cailin O'Connor](#)

Suggested readings:

Thomas Rid "Active Measures. The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare". London: Profile Books, 2020.

Jonathan Haidt "Righteous Mind. Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion". New York: Vintage Books, 2013.

Handout 7: How to speak about disinformation?

Discussions regarding transitional periods might still be a source of division in our societies. This division sometimes results from malicious disinformation orchestrated by internal or external actors aiming to polarise society and undermine social and institutional trust, among other things. However, not every unsettling narrative about a transition should be labelled as disinformation. Many conflicting viewpoints stem from diverse experiences individuals had during such times.

People might regard themselves as the losers of transformation, mourning lost social statuses and economic securities, which leads them to reminisce with nostalgia. It is crucial to understand why narratives glorifying the communist past and portraying the transition as turbulent appeal to them before labelling them as disinformation spreaders or victims.

To substantiate claims of disinformation, proof is essential, lest the claim itself becomes a tool to suppress varying perspectives and marginalise the groups holding those views. Hence, a clear **definition of disinformation** is vital.

In his book, “Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare,” Thomas Rid, a professor of strategic studies at John Hopkins University, provides a definition for the phenomenon of disinformation. According to Rid, disinformation is not a result of spontaneous lies from politicians. Instead, it is carefully produced by certain actors to influence targeted groups. He writes, “Disinformation was, and in many ways continues to be, the domain of intelligence agencies – professionally run, continually improved, and usually employed against foreign adversaries.”²²

Here, one can understand the difference between disinformation and misinformation. The latter is false information which is spread unintentionally for various reasons: perhaps you misheard something but wanted to share this information because you thought it was important, or you did not understand information correctly and therefore explained it in the wrong way. The most important distinguishing factor here is intentionality. Therefore, when we speak about disinformation, we speak about the intentional goal to deceive. As Rid writes, content may be forged, sourcing doctored, the method of acquisition covert; influence agents may pretend to be something they are not²³. Disinformation usually is employed to weaken a chosen target²⁴.

Furthermore, Rid explains that disinformation isn't necessarily just fake news²⁵. Sometimes, it may involve the delivery of accurate information through a fabricated source. For instance, false journalists might disseminate intelligence-gathered information, or it may be published via deceptive social network accounts. Misinterpreted commentary by fraudulent experts might also be utilised to favour the disinformation spreader.

²² Thomas Rid “Active Measures. The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare”. London: Profile Books, 2020, p.9.

²³ Ibid, 9.

²⁴ Ibid: “Active measures are purpose-designed temptations, designed to exaggerate, designed to give in to prejudice, to pre-formed notions – and to erode the capacity of an open society for fact-based, sober debate, and thus wear down the norms and institutions that resolve internal conflict peacefully.”

²⁵ Ibid, 10.

Rid's book is essential as it provides an **analytical framework** to dissect disinformation. Analysing disinformation involves focusing on three variables:²⁶

1. The *perpetrator* and how they design divisive material. What are their aims and what do they try to achieve while spreading disinformation?
2. The *means and rhetoric* which are used to spread disinformation. Which channels are exploited, why, and how does the choice of channels help the perpetrator to reach specific groups in our society? It might be social media networks, online or print media platforms, etc.
3. The *targeted group*. Disinformation usually attempts to exploit existing social, economic, political problems in a targeted society. The higher the divisions in a targeted society, the more efficient disinformation might become. Conversely, the less divided the targeted society, the fewer are the opportunities for disinformation to be successful in further increasing social polarisation.

In summary, disinformation analysis should address the following questions:

- Who is the perpetrator?
- Who is being targeted?
- What means and rhetoric strategies are employed to reach the intended audience?

Only when these criteria are satisfied can a narrative be classified as disinformation: there is an identified source of fake information, there is a specific targeted audience and problems which disinformation attempts to exploit. It's pivotal not to hastily label contentious narratives as disinformation, and instead, to assess different viewpoints while acknowledging the real issues being exploited.

Disinformation also capitalises on transitional periods. For instance, a prevalent narrative asserts that life under state socialism was superior due to guaranteed employment and social security, thus presenting the shift to liberal democracy and market economy as a failure. While it could be a legitimate point of view to express nostalgic longing for a higher degree of social security, disinformation exploits various grievances that different groups of society might have today.

The work of Raoul Girardet, a French historian who studied nationalism and colonialism, provides insight into why certain narratives about transition might appeal to different groups. In his book, "Political Myths and Mythologies,"²⁷ he explains that we employ specific **mythical structures** to comprehend our present circumstances. Girardet discussed the *myth of return*, which capitalises on nostalgia for a bygone era or even a Golden Age, portraying the present as a failed state or, at the very least, a period of decline. Additionally, Girardet analysed *conspiracy* theories that assert a culpable entity lurks behind all the intricate problems (such as NATO and the EU encircling Russia, the EU eroding Christian values, and the EU funding the Belarusian opposition, among others). The third mythical framework revolves around a *saviour* and an impending redemption that will deliver us from the ongoing chaos (this myth can be manipulated to target liberal democracy and incite sentiments favourable to authoritarian practices and strong-handed politics). Finally, Girardet defines the *myth of unity*, which contrasts community - in a social and a spiritual sense - with the values of plurality and individual freedoms in modern society. This myth is also a response to the fear of a rupture in the social fabric, of a clash of values that were once supposed to be united.

²⁶ Ibid, 240.

²⁷ Raoul Girardet "Politiniai mitai ir mitologijos". Vilnius: Apostrofa, 2007.

Another key reference is social psychologist Jonathan Haidt's book, "The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion."²⁸ Here, Haidt expounds on the **moral foundations**

theory, stating that our moral judgments are guided by certain foundations developed during our evolutionary process. *According to Haidt, each culture then constructs virtues, narratives, and institutions on top of these foundations, thereby creating the unique moralities we see around the world.*

- The *Care/harm* foundation evolved from the necessity of caring for vulnerable offspring. It heightens our sensitivity to suffering and need, causes us to abhor cruelty, and compels us to aid those in distress.
- The *Fairness/cheating* foundation originated from the need to benefit from cooperation without being exploited. This foundation sensitises us to cues that reveal whether someone is likely to be a reliable or untrustworthy collaborator. It also fuels our desire to ostracise or penalise those who cheat.
- The *Loyalty/betrayal* foundation evolved to meet the adaptive challenge of building and preserving alliances. This makes us keen to discern whether someone is a team player. We are inclined to trust and reward those who are, while feeling the urge to harm or exclude those who betray us or our group.
- The *Authority/subversion* foundation emerged in response to the challenge of developing advantageous relationships within social hierarchies. This foundation makes us attentive to indicators of rank or status and whether individuals are acting appropriately according to their position.
- The *Sanctity/degradation* foundation initially developed due to the omnivore's dilemma, and later, the broader challenge of living amidst pathogens and parasites. This includes a behavioural immune system that makes us cautious of various symbolic objects and threats. It enables us to attribute extreme and irrational values, both positive and negative, to objects, serving as a crucial tool for group cohesion.²⁹
- Finally, the *Liberty/oppression* foundation, according to Haidt, provokes our awareness and resentment towards any hint of domination, triggering a collective impulse to resist or overthrow oppressors. This foundation underpins the egalitarian and anti-authoritarian stance of the left, as well as the libertarian and some conservative's sentiment of 'don't-tread-on-me' and 'give-me-liberty'.³⁰

Why is Haidt's theory crucial in understanding disinformation? Disinformation seeks to exploit these moral foundations to elicit reactions. For instance, narratives claiming that transition only benefited a select elite tap into the fairness/cheating foundation, while narratives of politicians favouring foreign powers over common people exploit the loyalty/betrayal foundation. Similarly, narratives about migrants bringing diseases trigger the sanctity/degradation foundation, and claims about permissive societies post-transition evoke the authority/subversion foundation. In short, the moral foundations theory helps us understand why certain narratives might appeal to specific target groups while others view them as false.

²⁸ Jonathan Haidt "Righteous Mind. Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion". New York: Vintage Books, 2013.

²⁹ Ibid, 178-179.

³⁰ Ibid, 215.

Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's moral foundations theory.

Card 1: Care/Harm

Definition: This foundation is centred around concerns for the well-being and suffering of others. It emphasises empathy, compassion, and a desire to protect and care for those in need. This foundation is related to our long evolution as mammals with attachment systems and an ability to feel (and dislike) the pain of others. It underlies virtues of kindness, gentleness, and nurturance.

Discussion:

- Share instances from your life where you prioritised the well-being of others. How do you feel when you witness harm or suffering?
- How does the culture of post-socialist countries promote or hinder the values of care and harm?
- In what ways can societies transition to more caring and less harmful environments?

Example:

Access to healthcare in the state socialist countries was a fundamental concern. People had to navigate the limitations of the healthcare system and make difficult decisions about their loved ones' well-being. Choices had to be made about whether to seek alternative medical care or rely on the state-provided healthcare, knowing that inadequate care could harm loved ones.

Country focus:

Ukraine: During the initial transition phase, many families had to rely on their home gardens for food due to economic instability. Neighbours often shared produce to ensure everyone had enough to eat.

Poland: Amidst the economic reforms, many Poles experienced job losses. Communities banded together, with more affluent families providing financial assistance or goods to those in need. The widespread support for charitable organisations assisting children with disabilities or terminal illnesses.

Baltic States: As these countries moved towards independence, there was a cultural revival. Schools and communities emphasised the importance of taking care of their cultural heritage, often organising events or workshops to share traditional crafts and arts.

Bulgaria: Civil society groups have been working on campaigns to provide better healthcare facilities and care for the elderly population.

Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's moral foundations theory.

Card 2: Fairness/Cheating

Definition: This foundation is related to notions of justice, reciprocity, and fairness. It involves a sense of proportionality and a desire for equitable treatment. This foundation is related to the evolutionary process of reciprocal altruism. It generates ideas of justice, rights, and autonomy.

Discussion:

- Can you recall situations where you felt a strong sense of fairness or unfairness?
- How do you react when you perceive someone as cheating or being treated unfairly?
- How does the historical context of post-socialist countries affect their perception of fairness?
- What are the primary challenges these countries face in establishing a fair democratic system?

Example:

In the tightly controlled state socialist economy, obtaining goods and services often involved dealing with long lines and shortages. People had to decide whether to wait in line fairly or engage in informal networks to secure goods through unofficial channels, which could be viewed as cheating the system. The concept of "blat" (connections) became essential for navigating this fairness dilemma. The transition to democracy in post-socialist countries included issues of fairness and cheating, especially in the context of privatisation and distribution of resources. Decisions on how to allocate formerly state-owned assets raised questions about fairness and equitable treatment.

Country focus:

Germany: After reunification, East Germans often expressed the feeling that they were treated as second-class citizens compared to West Germans. This led to discussions and debates on ensuring equal opportunities for all. The German government worked hard on equalising the living standards of East and West Germany.

Bulgaria: In the early transition years, many Bulgarians viewed the rapid privatisation process as unfair, believing that only a select few benefited from it. Government made efforts to reduce the wealth gap and provide equal opportunities for all citizens.

Poland: The introduction of the free market led to a surge in new businesses. However, many entrepreneurs faced challenges with unfair competition and had to navigate a system with potential corruption.

Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's moral foundations theory.

Card 3: Loyalty/Betrayal

Definition: This foundation relates to group loyalty and the value placed on being loyal to one's group, tribe, or community. It includes feelings of patriotism and a sense of belonging. This foundation is related to our long history as tribal creatures able to form shifting coalitions. It underlies virtues of patriotism and self-sacrifice for the group.

Discussion:

- Share experiences where you felt a strong sense of loyalty or witnessed betrayal within a group. How important is loyalty in your life?
- How do post-socialist countries grapple with issues of national loyalty amidst geopolitical pressures?
- In what ways can loyalty be both a strength and a vulnerability for these nations?

Example:

During the transition from state socialism to democratic governance, many individuals faced moral dilemmas related to loyalty and betrayal. Some felt a strong loyalty to the principles of communism and the socialist state, while others believed in the need to embrace democratic values. For some, switching allegiances or supporting the new democratic regime felt like a betrayal of their previous beliefs and loyalty to the old system.

Country focus:

Baltic States: The singing revolution, where people from these states came together in a massive display of national unity, singing national songs and hymns as a form of peaceful protest against Soviet rule. Their collective memory of striving for independence fostered a strong sense of national loyalty.

Ukraine: Many families had members who identified either with Ukrainian nationalism or Russian alignment. This often led to heated debates during family gatherings. The societal split between western and eastern parts exhibited varying loyalties and identities.

Poland: The rise of Solidarity, a labour and political movement, showcased the power of collective action and loyalty to a cause. The strong sense of national pride and unity rallied, especially when facing external threats or challenges.

Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's moral foundations theory.

Card 4: Authority/Subversion

Definition: This foundation involves respect for authority figures and a desire for social order and structure. It includes respect for traditions and hierarchies. This foundation was shaped by our long primate history of hierarchical social interactions. It underlies virtues of leadership and followership, including deference to legitimate authority and respect for traditions.

Discussion:

- Discuss the role of authority in your life. Are there times when you've challenged authority or valued it highly? Share examples.
- How have post-socialist countries redefined authority after their transition to democracy?
- Are there remnants of old authority structures that still influence these nations?

Daily life:

In post-socialist countries, the transition from authoritarian rule to democratic governance often involved a shift in attitudes toward authority. People had to navigate the balance between respecting the old socialist authorities and embracing new, democratic leadership. Some were hesitant to challenge the established authority, while others actively advocated for a change in leadership.

Germany: Many East Germans struggled with accepting the authority of the newly integrated government, especially given the stark differences between the two states. The careful balance of federal and state powers required navigation post-reunification.

Bulgaria: There was public scepticism towards politicians who were part of the old communist regime and their role in the new democratic setup. The continuous efforts aimed to restructure and depoliticize its judicial system.

Baltic States: People who had been oppressed by the Soviet system had to learn to trust and participate in their new democratic institutions, leading to a period of adjustment and scepticism. Their emphasis focused on establishing robust democratic institutions that respect the rule of law.

Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's moral foundations theory.

Card 5: Sanctity/Degradation

Definition: This foundation is linked to ideas of purity, cleanliness, and sanctity. It can include religious or moral beliefs related to what is considered sacred and holy. This foundation is about the psychology of religious feelings and the idea that the body is a temple which can be desecrated by immoral activities and contaminants.

Discussion:

- How do you perceive notions of purity and sanctity in your culture or personal beliefs? Are there rituals or practices that signify sanctity to you?
- How do religious and traditional beliefs influence the moral foundation of sanctity/degradation in post-socialist countries?
- How can these beliefs be harmonised with democratic values?

Country focus:

Poland: Religious symbols and practices, which had been suppressed during communist rule, started reappearing in daily life. Many Poles returned to practising their faith openly. The strong influence of the Catholic Church shaped public morals and values

Baltic States: Old monuments representing Soviet authority were taken down, and there was a move to restore historical sites and symbols that represented national identity. The revival of religious practices and traditions emphasised the sanctity of cultural heritage.

Ukraine: There was a revival in celebrating traditional festivals and rituals, emphasising the sanctity of religious, cultural and national identity. Efforts aimed to separate the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Russian Orthodox Church, signifying a move towards religious and national autonomy.

Handout 8: Cards on Haidt's moral foundations theory.

Card 6: Liberty/Oppression

Definition: This foundation emphasises the desire for freedom, autonomy, and protection from oppression or tyranny. This foundation is about the feelings of reactance and resentment people feel toward those who dominate them and restrict their liberty.

Discussion:

- Discuss instances where you've valued your freedom or fought against oppression. How do you balance the need for liberty with the need for social order and structure?
- How have post-socialist countries balanced the values of liberty and security?
- What are the major challenges these countries face in ensuring personal freedoms for their citizens?

Example:

In state socialism, citizens often faced restrictions on their personal freedoms and liberties. For example, censorship of literature and media limited the freedom of expression. People had to decide whether to conform to these restrictions, which some viewed as oppressive, or find subtle ways to express themselves and seek greater liberty without running afoul of the authorities.

Country focus:

Baltic States: The freedom to travel abroad was a significant change for many. Families often took trips to nearby countries, something that had been heavily restricted before. Their commitment to EU values, emphasising individual freedoms and rights.

Germany: East Germans explored the western part of the country, experiencing cultural and economic differences firsthand. The Stasi Records Agency, allowing citizens to access their own surveillance files, emphasising transparency and liberty.

Bulgaria: The media began to enjoy more freedom, leading to a surge in independent newspapers and broadcasts that hadn't been possible during communist rule. Protests and movements against government actions perceived as oppressive or corrupt, showcasing the public's desire for greater liberty.

Additional to Session 4: Learning Material on Humour in Relation to Post-socialist Transition.

Duration: 1 hour

OBJECTIVES:

- Examine the role of humour in relation to post-socialist transition.
- Emphasise the role of creative approaches in education and practice creating and using memes/cartoons to promote critical thinking and engagement in the classroom.

Abbreviations:

IW = Individual work

GW = Group work

TP = Trainer presentation

PP = Participant presentation

CD = Class discussion

PREPARATION:

- Handouts:
 - Additional material 1: Laughter and Freedom
 - Additional material 2: Creating memes/materials
- Provide paper and pens for participants to use during the brainstorming and meme creation phases, and a board or flipchart.

Phase (duration)	Content	For mat	Materials
Humour in relation to myths and disinformation (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Begin with a prevalent anecdote from the communist or transitional period, or display a 'Hammer and Tickle' cartoon. Discuss its interpretive value regarding communist times and transformation challenges. How did humour help people survive under the communist dictatorship? ● Debate how humour's role evolved during transition. Did democratisation diminish the number of political anecdotes in the public sphere? Do we only need political jokes under autocracy? Are there good examples of anecdotes from the transition period? ● Present Srdja Popovic, a leader from the <i>Otpor</i> student movement, highlighting stories from his book "Blueprint for Revolution" about protests in Belgrade and Swidnik, Poland (refer to ppt slide and the text "Laughter and Freedom"). ● Facilitate a short discussion on how humour could be used to draw attention to current issues. 	CD	Powerpoint: Slides 43-45 Additional material 1: Laughter and Freedom
Create memes/ material or similar (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Divide the participants into small groups of 3-4 people. Show them a few collages created by the poet Wislawa Szymborska, Nobel Prize winner in literature. ● Allocate 10 minutes for brainstorming and coming up with their idea of a topic and what to create a meme on. ● Group work and presentation of the group materials. 	GW	Additional material 2: "Creating memes/materials"

- Summarise and conclusions.

Present memes (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a discussion around the presented memes/caricatures. Prompt participants to share their interpretations and insights. • Guide conversation around the social, cultural, or political aspects highlighted by the memes/caricatures and their potential influence on public opinion. • Recap key takeaways from the session, emphasising the role of creative approaches in education and public discourse. • Urge participants to keep creating and using memes/caricatures to foster critical thinking and engagement in their classrooms. 	CD
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Materials:

- Accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides to this session: slides 43-45

Reading Materials, Worksheets

- Additional material 1: Laughter and Freedom
- Additional material 2: Creating memes/materials

All other materials listed underneath, categorised by type

Tools for meme creation (either online tools like Canva, Imgflip, Meme Generator or offline tools such as pen, paper, traditional art supplies, photography and mixed media)

Useful links:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/andreamorris/2021/03/04/comedy-helps-spread-political-information-but-theres-a-catch-new-study/>
 (613) [A free world needs satire | Patrick Chappatte - YouTube](#)
[Delivering the News with Humour Makes Young Adults More Likely to Remember and Share | Annenberg \(upenn.edu\)](#)

Additional readings:

- Srdja Popovic & Matthew Miller, *Blueprint for Revolution: How to Use Rice Pudding, Lego Men, and Other Nonviolent Techniques to Galvanize Communities, Overthrow Dictators, or Simply Change the World*, 2015.
- Alexei Yurchak, "Dead Irony: Necroaesthetics, "Stiob," and the Anekdot." In: *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*, 238–81. Princeton, 2005.

Additional material 1: Laughter and Freedom.

Who constructed the White-Sea-Baltic-Sea Canal? The tongue-in-cheek answer is this: it was built by those telling anecdotes on one side, and by those listening to them on the other. This anecdote aptly illustrates how totalitarian regimes strive to control every facet of a person's life, right down to the conversations held in communal kitchens.

This story underscores the crucial role humour played in times of state socialism. As Christie Davies, a sociologist, pointed out in an article on Folklore.ee, political jokes circulated across the former Soviet Empire. These offered those who told and heard them a sliver of freedom and respite from socialist hegemony³¹. To quote Vaclav Havel, these anecdotes about social, economic, and political conditions during the Soviet era allowed individuals to 'live in truth'.

Some of the most famous anecdotes were even immortalised as a video cartoons:

- A comparison of various Soviet leaders from Stalin to Gorbachev: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbwEsu7z6Jw&t=3s>;
- An anecdote about Hungarian communist leader Rakosi and his attempt to gauge his popularity by purchasing a stamp featuring his own face: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3eloFOiO_U&t=100s
- Observations on the state of the Soviet economy and its factories: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InpTO_zFjBU&list=PL7jT9tvMch2ceyPB7k7_4zxZgg2FvsMAf
- Commentary on the scarcity of goods in shops: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4X9hPYGp1Bs>
- Accounts of Stalinist persecutions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZs8l6fWVUQ>
- An insight into the phenomenon of queuing for food: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKbEjoVe4o4>
- A contrast between the West and the Soviet Union: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-ZAaKmBqSs>
- A warning about the dangers of telling jokes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CPUDDmTiJo>
- An exposé of Soviet ideology's false pretences: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk5gF7LRRNI>

Srdja Popovic, a leader of the Serbian student movement 'Otpor' that overthrew the dictatorial regime of Slobodan Milosevic, underscores the importance of humor and laughter in challenging tyranny. In his book 'Blueprint for Revolution', he provides several examples of how the 'Otpor' movement used humour to defy Milosevic's regime.

One story describes how students took a battered old barrel, affixed a picture of Milosevic to it, and placed it on one of Belgrade's busiest pedestrian boulevards, along with a baseball bat. At first, pedestrians were confused, but soon began to enjoy hitting the barrel. As Popovic writes, "Before long, some parents were encouraging their children, who were too small for the bat, to kick the barrel instead with their tiny legs." When the police arrived, they were unsure whether to arrest the parents and children or the barrel; they chose the latter. The students captured the scene,

³¹ Christie Davies "Jokes as the Truth About Soviet Socialism," in: <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol46/davies.pdf>

disseminating images of Milosevic's feared police as comical figures battling barrels.³² This recalls Mark Twain's words, suggesting laughter is an effective weapon against which nothing can stand.

Popovic also cites a 1982 protest in Swindik, a town in eastern Poland. Tired of the propagandistic news, people stopped watching it. But they didn't stop there. Instead, during the news broadcast, they would go outside and paraded around with their TVs in wheelbarrows. The intent was to protest without providing the police any grounds for arrest.

Furthermore, when opposition activists in the Russian city of Barnaul were denied the right to protest against the falsified presidential election of 2012, they staged unique protests. In these, toys and Lego figurines held place with messages like, "Thieves should be sitting in prison, not in Kremlin."³³ Popovic terms this tactic '*laughtivism*,' asserting that it empowers citizens to speak the truth to power, and offers them innovative ways to voice their dissatisfaction and desire for change.

³² Srdja Popovic "Blueprint for Revolution". Random House, 2015. Accessed via: <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2015/02/srdja-popovic-on-using-laughter-to-topple-slobodan-milosevic-the-power-of-laughtivism.html>

³³ Ibid.

Additional material 2: Creating memes/materials

Part of the session on brainstorming ideas and creating memes/caricatures related to post-socialist transformation. In this session, we will explore various online and offline tools that can be utilised to generate creative content:

1. Summarise the notes from the first part (2 minutes)
 - Provide a brief overview of what post-socialist transformation entails.
 - Highlight key aspects, challenges, and implications of this transformation.
2. Summarise the importance of humour (3 minutes)
 - As a powerful tool for communication and engagement.
 - How humour and visual representation can enhance understanding and make complex topics more accessible.
3. Divide in groups of 3-4 people. Brainstorming ideas (5 minutes)
 - Encourage participants to share their notes and think creatively and generate one idea related to post-socialist transformation.
 - Emphasise the importance of considering both serious and lighthearted angles.
4. Free online tools for meme creation:
 - Canva (www.canva.com): Offers templates and a user-friendly interface for designing memes.
 - Imgflip (www.imgflip.com): Provides a wide range of meme templates and allows customization.
 - Meme Generator (www.memegenerator.net): Offers an extensive library of pre-existing memes and enables customization.
5. Offline ideas and materials
 - Pen and paper: Participants can draw their ideas by hand and scan or photograph them for digital use.
 - Traditional art supplies: sketching, painting, or collage.
 - Photography and mixed media: using photographs, newspaper clippings, and other materials.
6. Presentation, discussion and reflection
 - Facilitate a discussion by asking thought-provoking questions related to the presented memes/caricatures and the overall topic of post-socialist transformation.
 - Encourage participants to share their interpretations, observations, and insights.
 - What social, cultural, or political aspects do the memes/caricatures highlight?
 - In what ways can memes/caricatures influence public opinion and generate discussions around post-socialist transformation?

Takeaways

- Summarise the key takeaways from the session, highlighting the importance of creative approaches in education and public discourse.
- Encourage participants to continue exploring and creating memes/caricatures on various topics to promote critical thinking and engagement with their students.

Session 5. Student Projects on Transition - What are they about, and why and how do we use them?

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes (90 minutes)

OBJECTIVES:

- Examine the concept of a project as both a method and a format.
- Analyse and apply real-world project examples, fostering the transformation of traditional lesson plans into interactive student projects.
- Brainstorm, develop, and discuss project ideas relevant to various subjects and contexts, including potential challenges and assessment strategies.

Abbreviations:

IW = Individual work

GW = Group work

TP = Trainer presentation

PP = Participant presentation

CD = Class discussion

PREPARATION:

- Provide paper and pens for participants to use during the brainstorming phases, and a board or flipchart.
- Handouts:
 - Handout 9: What is and what is not a project method?
 - Handout 10: Checklist - What is a student project?
 - Handout 11: Project example “Traces of transition all around us.”

Phase (duration)	Content	Format	Materials
Introduction (20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pair-Group-Share activity: Begin by pairing up and discussing your understanding of 'what is a project'. ● Following this, transition to a class discussion (or groups of four depending on class size), exchanging experiences about the advantages and challenges associated with the project method/format. 	GW/CD	Paper and pens
Presenting definitions and discussing checklist for projects (10 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain that the concept of a project encompasses both a method and a format. ● Distinguish between what constitutes a project method and what does not. Provide examples to help participants understand the characteristics and criteria of a project method. ● Present a list of different project formats, showcasing diverse approaches and structures that can be employed in project-based learning. ● Introduce a checklist of essential steps involved in a project. 	TP	Handout 9: What is and what is not a project method
Project ideas and examples from lesson plans (15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “What happens” at each project step? ● The example of the project “the Singing Revolution” or project example “Traces of transition all around us” and sharing either the handout or digital copies of a lesson plan (see resources). 	TP	Handout 10: Checklist: What is a student project?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some examples of the project approaches of the Transition Period. 		Handout 11: Project example “Traces of transition all around us”
Workshop: Brainstorm on project ideas (30 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In groups: Brainstorm session for project ideas relevant nationally and/or regionally. Examples include the case of the Singing Revolution and Polish Solidarność In groups: read and brainstorm how the lesson plans (from the handbook) could be transformed into student projects. E.g. by using the project steps introduced above. 	GW	Powerpoint slides - will update
Conclusion (15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are some potential solutions or approaches you've identified in integrating the project method/format in your teaching strategies? How might these be implemented in your respective contexts? What are the opportunities and challenges when integrating project method/format across subjects and with the syllabus of the national curriculum? General suggestions for assessment of project-based lessons Personal takeaways from the session Q/A 	CD	

Materials:

- Accompanying PowerPoint presentation slides to this session: slides 46-63

Instructions for the trainers

Reading Materials, Worksheets

- Handout 9: What is and what is not a project method?
 - Handout 10: Checklist - What is a student project?
 - Handout 11: Project example “Traces of transition all around us.”
- Optional:
 - Additional material 3: Handout and worksheets on dealing with monuments.

Handout 9: What is and what is not a project method?

Project method, usually, is not:	Project method, usually, is:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher-centred. The teacher leads the learning, with students expected to absorb information. ● Predetermined content. The curriculum is often predetermined by an external source like a textbook or standardised test, and every student covers the same material. ● Subject specific. Learning usually happens within subject-specific silos, e.g., maths class, English class, etc. ● Competitive. Students work individually, with success often measured against peers. ● Knowledge recall. Assessment often focuses on memorization and recall of facts, rather than deeper understanding or application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inquiry-based. Students start with questions, then research the answers. ● Student-centred. Students take ownership of their learning, choosing their topics/themes of interest, and directing the project. ● Real-world relevance. Projects often solve real-world problems or answer real-world questions. ● Cross-disciplinary. Projects often require knowledge and skills from multiple subject areas. ● Collaborative. Students often work in pairs or groups, fostering teamwork and cooperation. ● Product-oriented

Commonly used project formats:

- Exhibition (Students might curate a physical or virtual exhibition showcasing their findings, artistic creations, or any tangible product of the project).
- Presentation (Students can prepare a presentation, either live or recorded, that details their project and its outcomes).
- Report or Paper (A written document that outlines the project, the process, the findings, and any conclusions drawn).
- Website or Blog (Students might create a website or blog that showcases their project and allows them to share their findings with a wider audience).
- Film or Video (Students could make a documentary, a how-to video, an animated short film, or any other video format to display their project).
- Performance (If the project is in the realm of theatre, music, or dance, a live performance could be the final product).
- Poster or Infographic (These can summarise the project and its results in a visually appealing and concise manner).
- Portfolio (A collection of work or artefacts related to the project).
- Community Event (The project might culminate in a community service event, a fundraising activity, or any other event that involves the local community).
- Podcast or Radio Show (For projects related to media, students could record a podcast or a radio show).
- *Students choose the format or a combination of a few that they feel most comfortable/engaged with.

Handout 10: Checklist - What is a student project?

It is a planned team activity of pupils/students working under the supervision of the teacher, in which the team members themselves choose or specify the topic and define the purpose of joint work, plan the stages of implementation, and take responsibility for the result.

Features of a good project:

- It has clearly defined and achievable goals;
- It gives students the opportunity to learn something new in practice, often combining issues from different fields;
- It is well timed: deadlines are set for the implementation of the various stages and the project as a whole;
- Its tasks are clearly divided among students according to their interests, aptitudes and abilities;
- The project team works independently, using only the support and consultation of the teacher - project supervisor;
- Students are aware of the evaluation criteria, if possible, they participate in setting them;
- The results of work are presented in public (in the forum of the class, school or community).

Handout 11: Project example "Traces of transition all around us."

Material culture of the end of the People's Republic of Poland and the beginning of the Third Republic of Poland.

They've always been here and that's probably why we didn't pay attention to them. Look carefully around. A crystal vase in a display case, strange skis in the basement, a bicycle in the attic, some newspaper, a metalwork candle holder or a teacup. Every artefact, every place has a story.

The transformation that began in our country in 1989 changed the appearance and use of a myriad of devices that we use on a daily basis. Also, many places in your neighbourhood have changed beyond recognition - for example, the famous Pewex shops (where one could buy luxurious goods only with Western currencies) have disappeared, i.e. stores where for dollars and other foreign currencies you could buy luxury goods "from the West," jeans, chewing gum, scented "Fa" soap or branded spirits.

The goal of this mini-project is to find items and places in the family home, relatives, school or the immediate area, objects and places that date back several decades and represent traces of the recent history of your locality - and Poland at the same time. After completing the photo documentation, students will conduct an investigation, a historical search, the results of which they will be able to present to their class, school, and perhaps even more broadly as a virtual photo gallery. This could be a suggestion for a class project, a class field trip, or even their own student exploration during the vacations (for those willing). It can take a few hours or a few weeks - tailor the instructions for students to your situation and ambition!

Note: as a warm-up, it's a good idea to show students a short film about searching for historical traces

Step by step guide:

1. Find a place or building in your immediate vicinity that dates back to the communist and transformation, i.e. the 1990s (the cut-off date can be taken as Poland's entry into the EU European Union, i.e. 2004). This is especially true of such objects whose functions or appearances - according to adult accounts and written sources- have changed. You can also choose an object whose purpose you do not know, which has already gone out of use and has been lying for years dusty somewhere in a basement or attic.... The more surprising the object, the better.

The third possibility - find in your family album a photo from the communist era or the 1990s that shows what life was like then family life, public life or your locality looked like.

2. Prepare a photo documentation. Take several shots so that you can see the object or building from different angles, from far away and up close. If your project involves old photographs, take a good photo of it - you will use it for the virtual exhibition ""Traces of transition around us".

3. Design a plan for a historical investigation:

- Write a list of research questions that you will seek answers to. Remember that in the the course of your search, new questions and ideas may arise (e.g., why Pewexy lost its *raison d'être* in the 1990s? whose ownership of the building was in the 1980s, and whose in the 90s? what was it like to print the newspaper then, and how is it done now?)
- Think about who can help you discover the purpose of the building before 1989. How do you look for the people associated with the object under investigation, owners of artefacts and/or

users of public buildings/spaces? A handful of tips on conducting interviews can be found here:

https://ceo.org.pl/sites/default/files/opowiem_publicacja_20_x.pdf

<https://nck.pl/projekty-kulturalne/projekty/swiadcowie-historii/historia-mowionaelementarz>

- Search the Internet for information about the selected place or object (or category of objects (e.g., radios or cars from the 1980s). Find out how to correctly enter questions into the search engine and import your images (e.g., image search in Google Graphics). If you are concerned with a building or a selected site (such as a park or square) in your area, search the Internet for old maps - you may find something interesting about them.

4. Write a note/report/report on your research or make a presentation about it (e.g. a multimedia presentation). Describe your findings, the questions you didn't find answers to, as well as the problems you encountered during your work. Don't forget to include a bibliography, links, list of interviewees. Photos with a brief description (see below for a sample set of questions for description) are worth a post in a virtual gallery - on the school's website, padlet, Fb profile or Instagram or maybe even a short movie on TikTok.

5. Take care to respect copyright in the case of photos taken by someone else. In turn, it is necessary to sign and mark your photo with an appropriate licence, preferably open with attribution, i.e. CC BY (read more on the web about so-called Creative Commons licences <https://creativecommons.pl/poznaj-licencjcreative-commons/> and see if you want to somehow restrict the use of your work). An open licence will allow other people, including students and teachers, to use them freely (but keeping the information on the author). (For example, this script also made available under a Creative Commons licence: CC-BY-SA, or Creative Commons Attribution Copyright - Under the Same Conditions)

When searching in the field, also remember to follow safety rules, if in doubt always ask an adult!

Questions to describe the object

- What kind of object is it? Give it a name (e.g., "gramophone record from the 1970s").
- Where was it or is it located? How did you find it?
- What period and place did it come from? Who manufactured or built it? Who owned it in the past and whose is it now? What functions did it serve in the past? What does it serve now (if it serves)?
- How do you know this - how did you figure it out? What do you not know about it, but are curious about?
- What impressions does it evoke in you and your peers? And what does it associate with for your parents, grandparents and other elders? What surprises or interests you about them?
- What does this object or building say about the times it came from?

Prepared by Kamil Paździor, teacher of history and social studies at the High School in Siemianowice Śląskie, and Alicja Pacewicz, a CEO education expert and co-author of the KOSS and "Citizen's Guide" textbooks.

Handout 12 (additional): Handout and worksheets on dealing with monuments.

Adapted extracts from "Wars and Conflicts"³⁴ and "A Handbook of History Teaching Methodology."³⁵

Monuments help to shape collective memory and identity. The past is remembered above all in order to search for and make sense of a common future. The purpose of monuments is to commemorate historical events and figures, expressing the ideological attitudes of a particular society. Their erection, dismantling and subsequent fate depends largely on political power, and on perceptions of the past in a society, or by different groups.

Project-based learning is particularly suited to this topic, in which the subject of monuments can be dealt with in both primary and secondary schools.

Symbolism of monuments

The symbols found on monuments help clarify various aspects such as the monument's aims, the mandates of political authorities of the time, the aesthetic preferences prevalent during its creation, and the forms of expression that resonated with the people, etc. The symbols are also used to identify the monument itself.

The most common monument symbols of the 19th and 20th centuries are:

- Iron cross for military valour
- Cross for Christian mourning
- Laurel for honour and glory
- Oak leaves for victory
- Eagle for power and vigilance
- Flag for power, fight, or victory
- Sword for strength and justice
- Female figures like St. Barbara and Nike for mourning.

Analysis of monuments also includes:

- Classification by type, such as: monument of mourning, freedom monument, victory monument, heroes' pillar, statue of honour, etc.
- Location and surroundings: park, city centre, cemetery etc.
- Appearance: relief, wall, obelisk, pillar, etc.
- Letters and inscriptions: information, remembrance, appeal, etc. What do the inscriptions on the monuments express?

The impact, function, and reception of these monuments also need to be considered. For example:

- What could have been the intended purpose at the time the memorial was erected?
- What was the political and social context at the time of the memorial's creation? Have socio-political changes had an impact on the memorial?
- What different social functions can be observed in memorials? How were and are they used or appropriated by the public (both past and today)?
- What stands out when comparing memorials? Which ones seem more expressive?

³⁴ Raudsepp, Anu et al. (2008). Sõjad ja konfliktid [Wars and Conflicts]. Tartu: Raudpats. pp.20-23

³⁵ Raudsepp, A. (2006). Ajaloo õpetamise meetodika käsiraamat [A Handbook of History Teaching Methodology]. Tartu: Raudpats. pp.42-45

Methodology for dealing with monuments:

The best way to learn about monuments is to start with those from your own place of origin. Familiar monuments have much to offer in terms of discovery and reflection, thanks to their easy accessibility and the personal connections you may already have with them.

Understanding the history of monuments from different countries is valuable. Including monuments in history lessons is an enriching practice, and such discussion is not limited to finding the simplest solutions to understanding their significance. Current issues can facilitate engaging discussions about monuments, allowing you to view these matters from various viewpoints.

Complementary Worksheets:

Worksheet 1

The worksheet is intended primarily for individual work on a single monument.

- To whom is this monument dedicated?
- When was the unveiling ceremony held?
- Who initiated the erection of the monument?
- Who designed or created this monument?
- Location and surroundings
- Symbols and description of the monument
- How can the monument be identified?
- To whom does the monument address itself?
- How is the public addressed?
- Are death and war depicted and how?

Questions:

1. Summarise your findings of the meaning of the monument.
2. What is the impact of this monument on you? Justify your answer.

Worksheet 2

The worksheet is designed for work with several monuments, and can be used as a group project or as an individual project, for discussion or presentation.

Explore:

- a monument that has a special impact on you.
- a monument that has been forgotten.
- a monument that seems to be questionable.
- a monument that was moved or removed.
- a monument which is not recognised as a monument.
- a monument that has been planned but not carried out.

Investigate:

- the appearance of the monument (symbols, signs, form, location, material, possible features, etc.).
- the impact of the monument on the viewer.
- the event or period with which the monument is associated.
- the significance in history of the person to whom the monument is dedicated.
- whether the monument was erected at the time it was created, or whether it was added later.

Find out:

- who was involved in the erection of the monument, who provided the money, what were the aims, interests, hopes and fears of the people who erected the monument?
- what the monument looked like at the time of its erection, was it a monument of its own or unusual, and what attention did it attract?
- what people's attitudes were towards the monument?
- what ceremonies or demonstrations are/were held at the monument?
- whether the monument has been altered, removed, restored, reinstated?

Check:

- what does the monument look like today?
- what are the views on the possible future of the monument (removal, restoration, etc.)?
- what are local attitudes towards the monument today?

Discuss:

- whether the monument can and should be politically prescribed?
- do monuments help to better understand history?
- whether monuments can also distort and falsify history?
- whether or not monuments that appear to us to be politically incorrect should be removed?
- should the past be remembered through monuments, or can it be remembered in other ways?

Partners



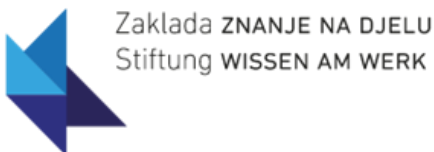
Germany: Austausch e.V. is an international non-governmental organisation that has been committed to promoting peaceful coexistence among citizens in democratic Europe since 1992. The focus of their international project work includes education, youth exchange, civil rights, history, environment, media and social affairs.



The Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb) is a government institution in Germany focused on promoting democratic awareness and political education. It provides educational resources, organises events, and supports various initiatives, including the *Transition Dialogue* project. Their goal is to encourage active political participation and understanding of political and social issues.



Bulgaria: Sofia Platform (www.sofiaplatform.org) founded in 2013, conducts mobile historical and political education across Bulgaria focused on promoting democratic culture and addressing the communist past. In 2018 they reached over 500 students, 120 teachers, and 300 citizens in 21 cities.



Croatia: Knowledge at Work Foundation (www.znanjenadjelu.hr) partners with Croatian education institutions on vocational training programs for students and teachers to promote experiential learning.



Lithuania: Open Lithuania Foundation (www.olf.lt) is the leading nonprofit for professional development in Lithuania. They work in areas like political education, intercultural education, inclusive education, critical thinking, diversity training, and marginalised groups.



Poland: Association 61 runs the MamPrawoWiedziec.pl website focused on realising the constitutional right to full government transparency. They build the largest database on Polish politicians, analyse and write about the data, and survey politicians about their views. Their mission is politics based on transparency and accountability.



Ukraine: Congress of Cultural Activists (www.culturalactivism.org) works to develop the cultural and creative industries in Ukraine and promote civil society growth. They build networks and implement interdisciplinary projects related to societal issues.

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