

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	[Multidirectional Memory: Remembering for Social Justice] – [MultiMemo]
Participant:	Stowarzyszenie FestivALT (FestivALT)
PIC number:	895375767

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP21
Event name:	ZBLIŻENIA FESTIVAL GDAŃSK
Type:	festival
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	Poland, Gdańsk
Date(s):	26.03-15.09.2024
Website(s) (if any):	https://multimemo.difficultheritage.eu/blog/event/festiwal-zblizenia-2024/ https://multimemo.difficultheritage.eu/en/blog/event/zblizenia-festival-2024/
Participants	
Female:	321
Male:	104
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Poland]:	408
From country 2 [Austria]:	2
From country 3 [Germany]:	2
From country 4 [Sweden]:	11
From country 5 (Norway):	2
Total number of participants:	425
	5
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	

As a lead-up to the XII edition of the Jewish Culture Festival, a process of preparation for the green commemoration of the Wrzeszcz cemetery, for the first time since the war, was undertaken with the collaboration of several partners: **Zapomniane Foundation**, **Formy Wspólne**, **FestivALT**, and **Fundacja Kultury Zbliżenia** in Gdańsk. The initiative focused on commemorative and environmental work at this historic Jewish cemetery, emphasizing the role of local partnerships in preserving Jewish heritage.

The **Fundacja Kultury Zbliżenia** launched several initiatives related to the XII edition of the Jewish Culture Festival, which took place from September 11-15, 2024. The festival aimed to present Jewish culture and restore the memory of the local Jewish community. The program featured concerts, workshops, book discussions, and events that highlighted Polish-Jewish-German relations, with a special focus on women's roles in contemporary Judaism. The overarching goals were cultural exchange, education, and fostering tolerance across various spheres of social and cultural life.

Key Events and Commemorative Initiatives

1. **March 26, 2024 – Jewish Law and Cemetery Significance (New Synagogue, Gdańsk)**
 - **Event:** A discussion on Jewish law and the importance of cemeteries in Judaism, followed by a screening of the documentary *Ścieżki Życia* ("Paths of Life") by Krzysztof Gajewski.
 - **Speaker:** Aleksander Schwarz, an expert from the Rabbinical Commission and Zapomniane Foundation.
 - **Purpose:** To raise awareness of the forgotten Jewish cemetery in Wrzeszcz, where only fragments of tombstones (matzevot) and historical maps delineating its borders remain.
 - **Outcome:** The event attracted 61 participants aged 16-70, sparking interest in future efforts to clean and commemorate the cemetery. It also fostered intergenerational dialogue and gave many participants their first encounter with Jewish history and tradition.
2. **May 21, 2024 – Clean-Up and Symbolic Boundary Marking at the Wrzeszcz Cemetery**
 - **Event:** Volunteers came together for a clean-up and symbolic marking of the cemetery's boundaries.
 - **Participants:** 25 people, including high school and university students and members of Gdańsk's Jewish community.
 - **Activities:**
 - A lecture by Andrzej Jankowski on Jewish burial customs and tombstone symbolism, followed by a hands-on session where participants helped clean the cemetery.
 - Installation of wooden markers to outline the cemetery's historical boundaries, helping ensure the protection of this sacred site.
 - **Impact:** Participants gained a deeper understanding of Jewish burial traditions and committed to regular cemetery maintenance, ensuring that it remains accessible for future cultural and historical tours.
3. **June 11, 2024 – Lectures on Jewish Culture and History (New Synagogue, Gdańsk)**
 - **Event:** Two lectures, *Jewish Culture, Art, and Tradition* and *The History of Gdańsk's Jews*, aimed at educating young artists about Jewish history in Gdańsk.
 - **Objective:** To inspire art students with Jewish traditions and foster tolerance and mutual understanding through artistic expression.
 - **Outcome:** Students from Gdańsk's Art School and University gained insights into the Jewish life of Gdańsk before World War II. The event culminated in an art project titled *The Future Grows from the Past*, to be displayed during the festival.
4. **September 11, 2024 – Book Discussion with Miriam Synger (New Synagogue, Gdańsk)**
 - **Event:** A discussion with Miriam Synger, author of *Jestem Żydówką* ("I Am a Jewish Woman"), exploring the role of women in contemporary Judaism.
 - **Audience:** 60 attendees, including students, seniors, and members of Gdańsk's Jewish community.
 - **Purpose:** To showcase the diverse identities of Jewish women today and promote dialogue on tolerance, mutual trust, and the coexistence of varied worldviews.
 - **Impact:** The event emphasized how religious life can interact with broader, often secular, communities, creating a space for inclusive conversation.
5. **September 13, 2024 – Premier Concert: *Czerwona Mysz* by Klezmo.Riot (Festiwal Kultury Żydowskiej Zbliżenia)**

Event: A premier concert titled *Czerwona Mysz* by Klezmo.Riot, the first all-female klezmer band in Poland.

Details: Klezmo.Riot reinterprets traditional Jewish music with electronic elements and unconventional instruments, inspired by the klezmer bands of 200 years ago. The urban-folk sound breaks the unwritten tradition of male-dominated klezmer performances.

Band Members: Maja Miro (flutes, electronics), Katarzyna Podpora (amplified objects, zither, theremin), Weronika Kulpa (cello, looper), Barbara Dowgiałło (harpichord).

Audience: Approximately 220 attendees, including participants aged 16 and above.

Outcome: The concert not only showcased innovative interpretations of klezmer music but also challenged gender norms within Jewish musical traditions. The number of attendees was based on photographic evidence and security reports.

6. September 14, 2024 – Historical Walk: Jewish Traces in Wrzeszcz

- **Event:** A guided walk through Wrzeszcz, exploring Jewish historical landmarks.
- **Goal:** To immerse participants in the rich Jewish history of one of Gdańsk's oldest districts, underscoring the importance of commemorating these neglected spaces.

The commemorative activities around the Wrzeszcz cemetery successfully revitalized the memory of this vital Jewish heritage site. By engaging in clean-up efforts, educational events, and intergenerational dialogue, the initiative not only honored the past but also fostered a sense of shared responsibility for preserving this legacy. Participants, ranging from students to members of Gdańsk's Jewish community, demonstrated a continued commitment to Jewish cultural memory, tolerance, and historical awareness.

This collaboration has laid the foundation for further educational and commemorative actions around Jewish heritage in Gdańsk, ensuring ongoing cultural exchange and preservation efforts.

Information about the events was published on the websites and social media of the Zbliżenia Festival:

www.zblizeniafestiwal.org

www.fkz.org.pl

<https://www.facebook.com/events/435297615585886/?ref=newsfeed>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=865120785647302&set=pcb.865121428980571>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1047855214007925&set=a.757888173004632>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1072843291509117&set=a.757888179671298>

<https://www.facebook.com/festiwalzblizenia/posts/pfbid03VUeKbJr4M9qrjMjSXi1OKMroQqdY157vUV8LTC9BxJjy9vTB1JZo9XEbwPxFKNI>

The deliverable was achieved as planned.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).