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INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE, BRANCH IN
RZESZÓW: SEVENTEENTH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS DEVOTED
TO THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION
IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST IN
THE PODKARPACIE REGION (20–30 JANUARY 2025). REPORT

Every year on 27 January, we commemorate the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, established on 1 November 2005 by the UN General Assembly to honour the memory of Jews murdered by the Germans during World War II. The date is not accidental – on that day in 1945, Red Army troops entered KL Auschwitz, the largest German concentration and extermination camp. During the four years of the camp’s operation, the Germans killed at least 1.1 million people there, including about 1 million Jews, over 70,000 Poles, 21,000 Roma and Sinti, and over 25,000 prisoners of other nationalities, 15,000 of whom were Soviet prisoners of war.¹ Today, it remains one

¹ See the total number of people killed in Auschwitz by nationality or category of deportees at <https://www.auschwitz.org/historia/liczba-ofiar/liczba-zamordowanych/> (accessed 3 February 2025).

of the most important Holocaust memorial sites. Commemorations of this day are held around the world.

As every year, the central national commemorative events for the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust were held at the site of the former Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp. The ceremony began in a tent set up in front of the main gate, where approximately 3,000 people gathered. It was attended by former prisoners who survived the ordeal of this place of torment, as well as by over 60 delegations from various countries and institutions, led by the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, and his spouse, Agata Kornhauser-Duda. Among the guests were kings, presidents, prime ministers, ministers, and diplomats from other countries, representatives of numerous international institutions and organisations, clergy, and employees of museums and memorial sites related to the Holocaust. Thanks to media coverage and the online broadcast, those who wished to commemorate the victims but could not attend in person were still able to take part in the ceremony. The Institute of National Remembrance was represented by its Deputy President, Dr. Mateusz Szpytma.

The main speeches were given by survivors Marian Turcki, Janina Iwańska, Tova Friedman, and Leon Weintraub. Roman Lauder spoke on behalf of the donors supporting the activity of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau. He was followed by the museum's director, Dr. Piotr Cywiński, who thanked those gathered for their attendance and devoted his solemn speech to the importance of remembrance. The ceremony concluded with prayers recited by rabbis and clergy of various Christian denominations, and the lighting of candles by the heads of state delegations in front of a historic freight car placed at the main gate of the former Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp.²

On 27 January, the principal anniversary events marking the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in the Podkarpacie were held. At the New Jewish Cemetery on Dołowa Street in Rzeszów, Rabbi Shalom

² See "My, Ocalali, wiemy, że konsekwencją bycia obcym jest czynne prześladowanie. 80. rocznica wyzwolenia Auschwitz. Relacja z obchodów upamiętniających 80. rocznicę wyzwolenia KL Auschwitz-Birkenau, 27 I 2025 r.," <https://www.auschwitz.org/muzeum/aktualnosci/my-ocalali-wiemy-ze-konsekwencja-bycia-obcym-jest-czynne-przesladowanie-80-rocznica-wyzwolenia-auschwitz-,2574.html> (accessed 3 February 2025).

Dow Ber Stambler and Rev. Dr. Paweł Batory, Director of the Diocesan Museum in Rzeszów, led prayers in remembrance of Holocaust victims. Beneath the obelisk honouring those who perished, candles were lit, and wreaths, mourning bouquets, and stones were laid – the latter symbolising, in Jewish tradition, the enduring memory of the deceased. The Rzeszów Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance was represented by the Branch Director, Dr. hab. Dariusz Iwaneczko and Dr. hab. Elżbieta Rączy. Later that afternoon, as in years past, a prayer for world peace and for the victims of the Holocaust was held at the parish church in Rzeszów. The ceremony included the reading of the names of Poles from Podkarpacie who were murdered for aiding Jews, as well as the names of the Jews who died alongside them.³

In Podkarpacie, the tradition of holding days of remembrance for Holocaust victims dates back to 2008. Since then, they have become a regular event, lasting from several to over a dozen days each year. Their originator, main organiser, and coordinator is Dr. hab. Waław Wierzbieniec, Professor at the University of Rzeszów and head of the Jewish History and Culture Unit, Institute of History, University of Rzeszów. Rzeszów was the first city in the region to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust on that day. In 2010, Jarosław joined the initiative, followed a year later by neighbouring Lubaczów. Over the years, more and more towns and villages have become involved in organising the commemorations.⁴ In 2017, anniversary events were held across 38 towns and at the Museum and Memorial in Bełżec, commemorating the deportation of the vast majority of Jews from what is now the Podkarpackie Voivodeship to the German extermination camp situated there.⁵

In 2021–2022, the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in Podkarpacie was observed in a limited format due to the global and national epidemiological situation. In 2023, the commemorative events returned to their traditional form, continuing the practices established in previous years.

³ “XVII Obchody Dni Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu – Rzeszów, 27 stycznia 2025,” Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance), <https://rzeszow.ipn.gov.pl/pl8/aktualnosci/212876,XVII-Obchody-Dni-Pamieci-o-Ofiarach-Holokaustu-Rzeszow-27-stycznia-2025.html> (accessed 8 February 2025).

⁴ E. Rączy, “Obchody Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu na Podkarpaciu,” *UR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 1 (2017), p. 167.

⁵ R. Kuwałek, *Obóz zagłady w Bełżcu*, Lublin, 2010, pp. 235–251; E. Rączy, *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim w latach 1939–1945*, Rzeszów, 2014, pp. 270–345.

It is worth noting that numerous organisations and institutions contributed to the days of remembrance in Podkarpacie between 2008 and 2025, including local authorities of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship at various levels, the Institute of History of the University of Rzeszów, the diocesan curias in Przemyśl and Rzeszów, the Podkarpacie Board of Education, educational institutions, rural and urban cultural centres, museums, libraries, various foundations and private individuals. Since 2012, the IPN Rzeszów Branch has been a co-organiser of the anniversary events in Podkarpacie, and since 2016, they have been held under the patronage of the Marshal of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship.⁶

In recent years, commemorative events have taken place in numerous towns and cities throughout the voivodeship. These have featured prayers for Holocaust victims, talks, lectures, and both academic and popular history sessions focused on Polish-Jewish relations, culture, and the Holocaust. Key elements of the remembrance days also include film screenings,⁷ concerts,⁸ choir performances,⁹ exhibitions,¹⁰

⁶ E. Rączy, "Obchody Dnia Pamięci," p. 168.

⁷ As part of this year's programme, a series of film screenings were held in several towns: Jasło featured *Hugo z Jasła* (Hugo of Jasło, dir. Paulina Ibek, 2018); Głogów Małopolski presented *Miłość w czasach Zagłady* (Love in the Time of the Holocaust, dir. Maya Sarfaty, 2020); Lubaczów showcased *Partyzant z aparatem Leica* (The Partisan with the Leica Camera, dir. Ruth Walk, 2022); and Sanok hosted *Przekraczając rzekę: z Polski do raju* (Crossing the River: From Poland to Paradise, dir. Allan Novak, 2022). See "Program XVII Obchodów Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu na Podkarpaciu," 20–30 January 2025, <https://rzeszow.ipn.gov.pl/pl8/aktualnosci/211185,XVII-Obchody-Dnia-Pamieci-o-Ofiarach-Holokaustu-na-Podkarpaciu-20-30-stycznia-2022.html> (accessed 6 February 2025).

⁸ Part of this year's commemoration was a concert of Jewish songs entitled *Lechaim*, performed by Małgorzata Pruchnik-Chołka (vocals and narration), Dariusz Kot (accordion), and Wojciech Front (double bass). The concert took place on 28 January at the Art Exhibition Office (*Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych*, BWA) in Rzeszów. See "28.01.2025 Koncert pieśni żydowskich Lechaim," BWA Rzeszów, <https://www.bwa.rzeszow.pl/aktualnosci/28-01-2025-koncert-piesni-zydowskich-lechaim,art513/> (accessed 6 February 2025).

⁹ The young people's performances took place on 24 January in Gać, 28 January in Jarosław, and 29 January in Leżajsk.

¹⁰ As part of this year's anniversary, numerous exhibitions were presented: in Krosno, it was *Śmierć za człowieczeństwo. Rodzina Ulmów* (Death for Humanity. The Ulma Family), prepared by the Rzeszów Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance; in Leżajsk – *Spoleczność żydowska w dziejach Leżajska* (The Jewish Community in the History of Leżajsk); in Lubaczów – *Sprawiedliwi ziemi lubaczowskiej* (The Righteous of the Lubaczów Region); in Narol – *Opowieści z ul. Górnej* (Tales from Górna Street) by Błażej Mysiak (a photography exhibition); in Rzeszów – *Miejsca w Galicji* (Places in Galicia) by Nina Talbot; in Tarnobrzeg – *Pamięć jest naszym domem* (Memory is Our Home); in Uherce Mineralne – *Dzielnica Argentyna* (The Argentina District) by Ewa Michałowicz-Smarzewska; in Wielopole Skrzyńskie – *Samarytanie z Markowej* (Samaritans from Markowa) by Arkadiusz Andrejkow (an exhibition of painted wood wall art), and *Śladami społeczności żydowskiej Wielopola Skrzyńskiego* (In the Footsteps of the Jewish Community of Wielopole Skrzyńskie) prepared by the Centre for Documentation and History of the Region of the Tadeusz Kantor Museum (see "Program XVII Obchodów").

meetings with book authors,¹¹ performances,¹² workshops, museum lessons,¹³ and meetings with survivors who witnessed the harrowing events of the war and the German occupation. For several years, historical walks following the paths of Jewish residents in towns and cities across the region have been held, involving both schoolchildren and adults. The organisers noted on their websites that “all these initiatives were an expression of respect for the other man that is deeply rooted in our culture,” and attracted “great interest both domestically and internationally, as shown by the number of visitors, including descendants of Holocaust survivors and their families, who came to Podkarpacie to participate in the commemorations.”¹⁴

The International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in Podkarpacie, held between 20 and 30 January 2025, was the seventeenth edition of this anniversary event. Twenty-six towns and villages across the region participated in the wide-ranging programme, which was organised by the University of Rzeszów and the IPN Rzeszów Branch. The commemorations were held under the honorary patronage of Władysław Ortyl, Marshal of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship, and Konrad Fijołek, Mayor of Rzeszów. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Jeffrey Cymbler (USA), Aron Halberstam (Israel), Tamar and Szmuel Halpern (Israel), Sally Mizroch (USA), Ora Regev-Heumann (Israel), Paul Shapiro (USA), and Nina and Mark Talbot (USA).

¹¹ As part of this year's programme, the following meetings with book authors took place: in Gać – with Janusz Słysz, author of the book *Spoleczność żydowska na terenie gminy Gać* (The Jewish Community in the Gać Municipality); in Lubaczów – with Ora Regev-Heumann, author of the book *A rzeka nadal płynie* (And the River Still Flows); in Sanok – with Katarzyna Twardak, author of the book *Świat Żydów Sanoka* (The World of Sanok's Jews); in Strzyżów – with Dariusz Pado, poet, lawyer and contributor to literary magazines covering Jewish topics. See “Program XVII Obchodów.”

¹² On 29 January, the play *Dzieci bez dzieciństwa* (Children Without Childhood) was presented in Przemyśl (by the Teatr bez Granic theatre group from the Cultural Centre, written and directed by Magdalena Nuckowska); in Sanok, on 23 January, there was a staging of *Ostatnia zima w kryjówce milczenia* (The Last Winter in the Hideout of Silence) and a musical performance by young people from the School Complex No. 1 (Zespół Szkół nr 1); in Narol, there was a performative reading of Robert Gmiterek's short story from the volume *Epifania pana Eliasza* (The Epiphany of Mr. Eliaz) performed by Piotr Piela and Magda Chrabąszcz. See “Program XVII Obchodów.”

¹³ Workshops and museum lessons for children and young people were held in Błażowa, Lubaczów, and Sanok.

¹⁴ See “XIII Obchody Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu na Podkarpaciu,” <https://rzeszow.ipn.gov.pl/pl8/aktualnosci/136235,XIII-Obchody-Miedzynarodowego-Dnia-Pamieci-o-Ofiarach-Holokaustu-na-Podkarpaciu.html> (accessed 3 February 2025).

In the Podkarpacie region, it is customary to honour Holocaust victims at execution sites and Jewish cemeteries. These ceremonies are attended by rabbis and Christian clergy from various denominations, who offer prayers for the deceased, alongside representatives of local authorities, residents, and international guests. Mourning bouquets are placed at monuments and obelisks, candles are lit, and stones are laid in remembrance. This year, commemorations held in Gać, Głogów Małopolski, Haczów and Jagiełła-Niechciałki,¹⁵ Jarosław,¹⁶ Jasło,¹⁷ Korczyn, Krosno, Lubaczów, Nowosielce, Przemyśl,¹⁸ Rzeszów, Sanok,¹⁹ Stalowa Wola, Tyczyn, Wielopole Skrzyńskie and Zarszyn all followed this tradition.

¹⁵ On 28 January, the memory of Jews murdered during the war and the German occupation was honoured at the War Cemetery of Victims of Hitlerism in Jagiełła-Niechciałki, Przeworsk County. The ceremony was attended by members of the Jewish community and Polish clergy, led by Metropolitan Archbishop of Przemyśl Adam Szal, along with local residents and government officials. Among those buried in the cemetery are members of the Goldman, Didner, and Grünfeld families, who were sheltered by the blessed Ulma family. The Metropolitan read Psalm 130 and offered a prayer written by St John Paul II. Participants laid flowers and stones at the conclusion of the ceremony. See “Jagięłła-Niechciałki: Uczczono pamięć Żydów zamordowanych podczas II wojny światowej,” Archidiecezja przemyska obrządku łacińskiego (The Latin Rite Archdiocese of Przemyśl), <https://przemyska.pl/jagiella-niechcialki-uczczono-pamiec-zydow-zamordowanych-podczas-ii-wojny-swiatowej/> (accessed 7 February 2025).

¹⁶ In Jarosław, Holocaust victims were commemorated on 28 January in two separate locations – at the Jewish Cemetery on Kruhel Pawłowski Street and at the execution wall in the Abbey of Benedictine Sisters in Jarosław. See Dzień Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu, Miasto Jarosław (Town of Jarosław), <https://miastojaroslaw.pl/szczegoly-aktualnosci/dzien-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu-iPK5oCrdACw8S-d4LMzB> (accessed 7 February 2025); “Program XVII Obchodów.”

¹⁷ In Jasło, the anniversary events began on 20 January at the Jewish Cemetery on Floriańska Street, where prayers were recited, and candles were lit in memory of the murdered Jewish residents of the town. See “Obchody Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu w Jasle,” Jasło Town Hall, <https://um.jaslo.pl/pl/obchody-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu-w-jasle/> (accessed 7 February 2025).

¹⁸ In Przemyśl, a special prayer was offered, flowers were placed, and candles were lit at the monument on Kopernika Street commemorating the Jews murdered in the local ghetto. During his address, Bishop Stanisław Jamrozek called for a heartfelt prayer for the victims of the Przemyśl ghetto and for all who endured suffering during World War II. Attendees recited Psalm 120 in both Polish and Hebrew, after which they proceeded to the Jewish Cemetery on Słowackiego Street, where a brief ecumenical prayer took place. See “Przemyśl: Obchody Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu,” Archidiecezja przemyska obrządku łacińskiego, <https://przemyska.pl/przemy-sl-obchody-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu/> (accessed 7 February 2025).

¹⁹ On 23 January, Holocaust victims were commemorated in Sanok at the Jewish Cemetery, located at the corner of Kiczury and Głogowa Streets. Dr. Joanna Potaczek delivered a brief lecture on the history of the extermination of Sanok’s Jewish community and their murder. Following the introduction, representatives of the Jewish community and clergy from the Roman Catholic, Polish Catholic, Old Catholic, Orthodox, and Greek Catholic rites offered a prayer. During the ceremony, candles were lit, flowers were laid, and memorial stones – crafted by inmates of the correctional facility in Uherce Mineralne and inscribed with the names of Jews murdered at the local Jewish cemetery – were placed. See “Międzynarodowy Dzień Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu,” Powiat sanocki (Sanok county), https://powiat-sanok.pl/aktualnosc-1473-miedzynarodowy_dzien_pamieci_o_ofiarach.html (accessed 8 February 2025).

In addition to commemorating Jewish victims at sites of execution and Jewish cemeteries, the main form of commemoration is the organisation of numerous sessions, conferences, and lectures²⁰ with the participation of guests, descendants of Holocaust survivors, and employees of various institutions and organisations, including the Institute of National Remembrance. Between 20 and 30 January, a total of eleven conferences and popular history sessions were held in Błażowa, Gać, Jarosław, Lubaczów, Łupków, Przemyśl, Rzeszów, Sanok, Uherce Mineralne, and Wielopole Skrzyńskie.²¹

²⁰ A total of 17 lectures and open talks were delivered by employees of the IPN Branch in Rzeszów and other representatives of various institutions and organisations, including: Dr. Anna Stróż-Pawłowska – “Miejsca pamięci o Holokauście w dyskursie artystycznym” (Holocaust Memorial Sites in Artistic Discourse); Sister Katarzyna Kowalska NDS – “Czy dialog chrześcijańsko-żydowski jest potrzebny?” (Is Christian-Jewish Dialogue Necessary?); Marta Wójcik – “Przedwojenne sklepy i firmy żydowskie w Rzeszowie” (Pre-War Jewish Shops and Businesses in Rzeszów); Elżbieta Skromak – “Żydzi w Rozwadowie” (Jews in Rozwadów); Paul Shapiro (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, USA) – “Rozwadowian Roots of Paul Shapiro’s Family and Their Fate During the Holocaust”; Dr. Roman Niwierski – “O potrzebie wspomnień nieznanych. Niemieckie obozy pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w Rozwadowie i Stalowej Woli” (On the Need of Unknown Memories: German Forced Labour Camps for Jews in Rozwadów and Stalowa Wola); and Aron Halberstam, an enthusiast of Jewish history and heritage, Hasidic dynasties in Galicia and religious life. See “Program XVII Obchodów.”

²¹ On 21 January, at the Municipal Culture and Recreation Centre in Wielopole Skrzyńskie, Waclaw Wierzbieniec gave a lecture entitled “Kultura żydowska i zwyczaje galicyjskich Żydów – czy takie same jak w Wielopolu Skrzyńskim?” (Jewish Culture and Customs of Galician Jews – Are They the Same as in Wielopole Skrzyńskie?). The guests – Sally Mizroch, Tamar and Szmuel Halpern, and Jeffrey Cymbler, all descendants of the Holocaust survivors – recounted the harrowing experiences of their families during the war and the German occupation. The session concluded with a lecture by Mariola Świętoń entitled “Wielopole Skrzyńskie we wspomnieniach byłych mieszkańców” (Wielopole Skrzyńskie in the Memories of its Former Residents).

On 22 January, a session took place at the local school complex in Błażowa on Ks. Adolfa Kowala Square, with attendees including Dr. Małgorzata Kutrzeba, President of the Friends of Błazowa Land Society (a local heritage group), Tamar and Szmuel Halpern, Jeffrey Cymbler, and Sally Mizroch. That same day, the Błażowa Urban-Rural Public Library hosted an evening dedicated to Jewish history and culture. During the event, a second popular history session was held, featuring speakers such as Marta Wójcik (a guide and enthusiast of Rzeszów) and the aforementioned guests from the USA and Israel. Traditional Jewish dishes were served as part of the gathering (see “Międzynarodowy Dzień Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu 2025,” Miejsko-Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna w Błażowej [Błażowa Urban-Rural Municipal Library], <https://biblioteka.blazowa.net/miedzynarodowy-dzien-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu-2025/> [accessed 8 February 2025]).

On January 23, the Jan Grodek State University in Sanok hosted a session titled “Ocaleni i ratujący. Holocaust Żydów na terenie Podkarpacia” (The Survivors and the Rescuers: The Holocaust of Jews in the Podkarpacie Region) in its auditorium on Mickiewiczza Street. The first part featured a lecture by Dr. Anita Wolanin from the School Complex No. 1 in Sanok, who introduced attendees to Jewish narratives in the works of writer and poet Jerzy Wojtowicz. Students from the same school followed with recitations of Wojtowicz’s poetry, bringing his voice to life. Next, Dr. Joanna Potaczek – representing the Centre for Dialogue Among Religions and Nations and the Folk Architecture Museum in Sanok – pre-

As part of this year's International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, employees of the IPN Rzeszów Branch participated in events organised in nine towns in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship, namely Czudec, Jedlicze, Krosno, Leżajsk, Lubaczów, Rzeszów, Tarnobrzeg, Tyczyn, and Wiśniowa.

sented a lecture titled "Ocaleni i ratujący. Holocaust Żydów na terenie Podkarpacia – zarys problematyki" (Survivors and Rescuers: The Holocaust of Jews in the Podkarpacie Region – A Thematic Outline), offering a broader historical and thematic perspective. In the second part of the event, guests – Sally Mizroch, Tamar and Szmuel Halpern, Nina and Mark Talbot, and Jeffrey Cymbler – shared personal reflections on their Galician heritage and their families' experiences during the Holocaust. The session ended with Romuald Zwonarz sharing the powerful testimony of his parents' bravery in risking their lives to rescue Jews during one of history's darkest periods (see "Program XVII Obchodów").

On 24 January, sessions were also held in Lubaczów, Gać, and Łupków. During the meeting at the Firefighters' House in Gać, Waclaw Wierzbieniec presented the culture and customs of Galician Jews, and the guests – Tamar and Szmuel Halpern, Sally Mizroch, and Nina and Mark Talbot – as before, discussed the fate of their families. On the same day, most participants in the session also attended an afternoon seminar in Łupków (See "Program XVII Obchodów").

On 27 January, the Stanisław Zając Hall at the University of Rzeszów hosted the 2nd International Conference entitled "Holocaust i po Holokaście z lokalnej perspektywy" (The Holocaust and the Post-Holocaust Times from a Local Perspective). The speakers included Mariola Świętoń, Wojciech Dyrkacz, Gabriela Zagraniczna, Karolina Łętowska, Sally Mizroch, Paul Shapiro, Nina and Mark Talbot, as well as Tamar and Szmuel Halpern. The meeting was moderated by Waclaw Wierzbieniec.

On 28 January, a popular history session was held at the Nicolaus Copernicus High School No. 1 in Jarosław, featuring Waclaw Wierzbieniec, Jeffrey Cymbler, Paul Shapiro, Lili Haber, and Sally Mizroch. The following day, a similar session took place at the Juliusz Słowacki High School No. 1 in Przemyśl, with Waclaw Wierzbieniec, Lili Haber, Tamar and Szmuel Halpern, Sally Mizroch, and Jeffrey Cymbler participating (see "XVII Obchody Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holocaustu na Podkarpaciu," Uniwersytet Rzeszowski [University of Rzeszów], <https://www.ur.edu.pl/pl/uniwersytet/aktualnosci/xvii-obchody-miedzynarodowego-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu-na-podkarpaciu-ii-miedzynarodowa-konferencja-na-uniwersytecie-rzeszowskim> [accessed 8 February 2025]; "Program XVII Obchodów").

On the final day of the commemorations, sessions were held at the correctional facility in Uherce Mineralne and at the Stanisław Barańczak Bilingual University High School in Rzeszów. In Uherce, the event opened with a lecture by Dr. Joanna Potaczek titled "Ocaleni i ratujący. Holocaust Żydów na ziemi sanockiej. Zarys problematyki" (Survivors and Rescuers: The Holocaust of Jews in the Sanok Region – A Thematic Outline). Following the lecture, Romuald Zwonarz shared with the prisoners the story of his parents, who courageously risked their lives during the war and the German occupation to save a Jewish family – an act for which they were later recognised by the Yad Vashem Institute as Righteous Among the Nations. Artur Górecki then presented the figures of other individuals who rescued Jews in the Sanok region and the Bieszczady Mountains. The final session, held at the university high school, was attended by Rev. Paweł Batory, Paul Shapiro, Jeffrey Cymbler, and Sally Mizroch (see "XVII Obchody Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holocaustu na Podkarpaciu," Uniwersytet Rzeszowski, <https://www.ur.edu.pl/pl/uniwersytet/aktualnosci/xvii-obchody-miedzynarodowego-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu-na-podkarpaciu-ii-miedzynarodowa-konferencja-na-uniwersytecie-rzeszowskim> [accessed 8 February 2025]; "Międzynarodowy Dzień Pamięci o Ofiarach Holocaustu," Służba Więzienna [The Prison Service], <https://www.sw.gov.pl/aktualnosc/zaklad-karny-w-lupkowie-miedzynarodowy-dzien-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu> [accessed 8 February 2025]).

In Krosno, the days of remembrance, attended by Dr. Wojciech Hanus from the IPN Historical Research Office in Rzeszów, commenced on 20 January 2025 at the Jewish Cemetery. A prayer was said, and candles were lit in tribute to the Holocaust victims. The participants then proceeded to Franciszkańska Street, where flowers were laid, and speeches were delivered in front of a plaque honouring the residents of the former ghetto in Krosno.²² The following item on the agenda was the opening of the outdoor exhibition “Śmierć za człowieczeństwo. Rodzina Ulmów” (Death for Humanity. The Ulma Family), prepared by the Rzeszów Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance.²³ The exhibition was on display in the Krosno market square until 16 February 2025. Dr. Wojciech Hanus introduced the guests to the theme of the exhibition and gave an open lecture titled “Losy żandarmów niemieckich z posterunku w Łąncucie uczestniczących w zbrodni na rodzinie Ulmów i ukrywanych Żydach” (The Fate of German Military Police from the Łącut Police Station Who Participated in the Crime Against the Ulma Family and the Sheltered Jews) at the “Piwnica pod Cieniami” Gallery, which belongs to the Museum of Crafts in Krosno.²⁴

On the same day, anniversary events attended by a representative of the Rzeszów branch of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) were held in Wiśniowa. Three lectures were held at the Maria Konopnicka Primary School. Dr. Robert Witalec (deputy head of the IPN Rzeszów Branch Archives) familiarised the attendees with the documentation programme *Straty osobowe i ofiary represji pod okupacją niemiecką w latach 1939–1945 – realizacja i wyzwania* (Human Losses and Victims of Repression under the German Occupation in 1939–1945 – Implementation

²² “XVII Obchody Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu,” Muzeum Rzemiosła w Krośnie (The Museum of Crafts in Krosno), <https://muzeumrzemiosla.pl/xvii-obchody-miedzynarodowego-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu/> (accessed 5 February 2025).

²³ The script for the exhibition was prepared by Wojciech Hanus (IPN Rzeszów), Maciej Korcuć (IPN Cracow), and Mateusz Szytma (IPN Deputy President), with Katarzyna Hudzicka-Chochorowska (IPN Rzeszów) responsible for the graphic design, illustrations, and layout. The exhibition was first unveiled on 21 August 2023 in front of the Presidential Palace in Warsaw, and subsequently toured various locations in Poland and abroad, including the European Parliament in Strasbourg (opened on 16 January 2024), the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York (23 August 2023), the Cathedral of Saints Justus and Pastor in Alcalá de Henares near Madrid (23 August 2023), and St John’s Basilica in Berlin (9 September 2023).

²⁴ “XVII Obchody Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu,” Muzeum Rzemiosła w Krośnie, <https://muzeumrzemiosla.pl/xvii-obchody-miedzynarodowego-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu/> (accessed 5 February 2025).

and Challenges). Marian Irzyk spoke about local Poles murdered in Kozłówek for helping Jews, while Dr. Waław Wierzbieniec focused on the Jewish community living in the municipality of Wiśniowa and its extermination during the German occupation. The event concluded with a musical and verbal performance and an exhibition of materials related to the history of the Holocaust.²⁵

Zenon Fajger from the IPN Rzeszów Branch National Education Office took part in a remembrance day event in Tarnobrzeg, where he delivered two lectures to secondary school students at the Dr. Michał Marczak Municipal Public Library on the extermination of Polish Jews during World War II. Similar commemorative events were organised in Tyczyn on 22 January and in Czudec on 23 January. In Tyczyn, Dr. Elżbieta Rączy, coordinator of the commemoration from the University of Rzeszów and the IPN Rzeszów Branch Historical Research Office, met with young people to discuss the unfolding of the extermination of Jews in the German-occupied Rzeszów Starosty. In Czudec, Dr. Wojciech Hanus spoke to students from the local school complex about the tragic story of Józef and Wiktoria Ulma's efforts to hide Jews.²⁶

The events marking the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in Lubaczów were also of significance. The main gathering, attended by Hubert Bury (head of the IPN Rzeszów Branch Office for the Commemoration of Polish Struggle and Martyrdom) and Dr. Wojciech Hanus, took place on Friday 24 January. Its focal point was a seminar titled "Pamięć. Świadećtwo. Sprawiedliwość" (Memory. Testimony. Justice), held by the municipality at the Aleksander Sas-Bandrowski Municipal Cultural Centre in Lubaczów.²⁷ It was opened by Wiesław Kapel, the Mayor of the Municipality of Lubaczów. The lectures given during the seminar addressed various aspects of the Holocaust. Dariusz Sałek (Museum of the Eastern Borderlands in Lubaczów) spoke about the fate of the Jewish commu-

²⁵ "Program XVII Obchodów."

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ The anniversary events were organised by the Starost of Lubaczów, the Mayor of the Town of Lubaczów, the Mayor of the Municipality of Lubaczów, the Mayor of the Town and Municipality of Narol, the Museum of the Eastern Borderlands in Lubaczów, the Władysław Broniewski Municipal Public Library in Lubaczów, the Municipal Cultural Centre in Lubaczów, the Rural Municipal Public Library in Lubaczów based in Basznia Dolna, the Municipal Cultural Centre in Narol, the Lubaczów Branch of the Society of Friends of Lwów and the South-Eastern Borderlands, the Museum and Memorial in Bełżec, the IPN Rzeszów Branch, and the Institute of History at the University of Rzeszów.

nity of Lubaczów and the surrounding area, and about ways of commemorating the victims; Ewelina Szumilak from the Museum and Memorial in Bełżec discussed the implementation of the German criminal Operation “Reinhardt” in the extermination camps in Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka; Dr. Wojciech Hanus focused on the extermination of Jews in the Kreis Rawa Ruska area; Zenon Swatek, the Deputy Starost of Lubaczów, presented the Holocaust of the Jewish population in Lubaczów and the surrounding area, while Maria Magoń, the President of the Society of Friends of Lwów (now Lviv) and the South-Eastern Borderlands, shared the stories of the Polish Righteous Among the Nations from the Lubaczów region. The session was concluded by Ora Regev-Heumann, who shared the dramatic story of her family, which lived in Lubaczów during the war and German occupation.²⁸

Following the seminar, participants visited the site known as Plebańskie Pole, situated between Mokrzyca and Dachnów near Lubaczów. There, delegations from various institutions and organisations laid flowers at the monument commemorating Jews murdered during the German occupation, while students from local schools laid stones. The commemoration in Lubaczów also served as an occasion to present the results of the memorial site’s revitalisation. As part of the site’s redevelopment, an avenue leading to the monument was constructed, along which three information boards were installed on brick pedestals. These boards provide details about the Jewish residents of Lubaczów and its surroundings, the local ghetto, and the extermination of the Jewish population. The content was prepared by the Rzeszów Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance.²⁹

That same day, Dr. Wojciech Hanus participated in the events held in Jedlicze, where he delivered a lecture at the local community centre on the post-war accountability of those responsible for crimes against the Ulma family and the Jews they had sheltered.³⁰

²⁸ “Obchody XVII Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci o Ofiarach Holokaustu. Seminarium i złożenie kwiatów,” Urząd Gminy w Lubaczowie (The Town Hall in Lubaczów), <https://www.gminalubaczow.pl/2025/01/24/obchody-xvii-miedzynarodowego-dnia-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holokaustu-seminarium-i-zlozenie-kwiatow/> (accessed 6 February 2025).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ “Prelekcja z okazji zbliżającego się Międzynarodowego Dnia Pamięci Ofiar Holokaustu,” Gminny Ośrodek Kultury w Jedliczu (The Municipal Cultural Centre in Jedlicze), https://gok.jedlicze.pl/aktualnosc-9194-prelekcja_z_okazji_zblizajacego_sie.html (accessed 8 February 2025).

The final town in the Podkarpacie region visited by employees of the Rzeszów branch of the Institute of National Remembrance was Leżajsk. The events held there to mark the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust took place in the Leżajsk County Museum. The ceremony began with a musical performance by the “Cantiamo” choir conducted by Barbara Kuczek. This was followed by an open lecture titled “Zbrodnia (nie)osądzona. Udział żandarmerii niemieckiej z posterunku w Łańcucie w mordzie na rodzinie Ulmów i ukrywanych Żydach i powojenna odpowiedzialność sprawców” (An (Un)judged Crime. The Participation of the German Military Police from the Łańcut Police Station in the Murder of the Ulma Family and the Jews They Sheltered. The Post-War Accountability of the Perpetrators), delivered by Dr. Wojciech Hanus. The attendees and guests also had an opportunity to visit a special exhibition dedicated to the Jewish community of Leżajsk.³¹

The 17th edition of the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in the Podkarpacie Region provided an occasion to reflect on these tragic chapters in the region’s history, foster awareness, and highlight the role of historical education and intercultural dialogue in shaping a collective remembrance of the Holocaust victims.

³¹ “Dzień Pamięci o Ofiarach Holocaustu – relacja,” Muzeum Ziemi Leżajskiej (Leżajsk County Museum), <https://muzeum-lezajsk.pl/news/dzien-pamieci-o-ofiarach-holocaustu-relacja/> (accessed 10 February 2025).