

Second Serbian History Competition

“Living in Towns. Urban life in SFR Yugoslavia (1945-1991)”

2004/2005

Competition Report

The second round of EUSTORY History Competition in Serbia was announced by the Association for Social History-EUROCLIO, at the beginning of November under the official title *MEETING THE PAST 2004/2005*. The topic for this year’s competition was **“Living in Towns. Urban life in SFR Yugoslavia (1945-1991)”**. High school students, aged from 15 to 19, were invited to research the process of urbanization in SFR Yugoslavia and/or different aspects of urban culture. The organizers prepared a special methodological guideline for tutors and students that explained general requirements and rules of the competition and also offered a detailed description of the topic and historical research method. This guideline was published and sent to each high school in Serbia in October 2004.

We received 105 contributions by April 8th, as it was the deadline for submission of the papers. As no group work was allowed, we had 105 participants as well: 76 of them were girls and 29 – boys. They all attend 42 different high schools placed all over Serbia and they were supervised by 48 tutors. In comparison to last year’s statistics, this year we had almost the same number of participants (students and tutors), but less schools took part.

After two eliminatory stages of jury procedure, we announced the winners. All 10 jury members agreed that the level of quality of this year’s papers was much higher than last year, but also that this year we received much more papers that were not dealing with the topic in a proper way. For example, lots of papers were about certain institutions (local

theatre, school, publishing house, factory...) instead of how that institution had influenced the life of people in a certain town and/or during the certain period of time. Such problems occurred due to following reasons:

1. Lack of relevant scientific literature related to the topic and the whole period as well
2. Unskilled supervising by tutors – this becomes even more significant if knowing that the most successful tutors were those who participated in our teacher training seminar “*Guide throughout Historical Research*”. This confirms that the role of a tutor is essential for success in such competition.

Some of the most frequent and also very successfully and mature covered subtopics were:

- Migration from villages to towns and relations between new settlers and natives
- Process of nationalization in early communist era (appropriation)
- Acquiring the habit of urban life-style (changing the way of clothing or hair-styling, learning to live together with others in the same building or even flat, accepting new music trends...).

The award ceremony took place in Belgrade City Hall, on July 18th 2005. Our host was, in behalf of Belgrade mayor, City Secretary for Education, Mr. Valdimir Todoc. Participants were also greeted by the representative of Körber Stiftung and Serbian Ministry of Education and Sport.

As in the previous competition, this year we awarded 6 students:

No	Award	Name (age)	Title
1.	First award	Milan Vukasinovic (1989)	Hairy seventies. Hair-styles and hairdresser in Leskovac 1970-1980
2.	Second award	Jovana Nikolic (1988)	Life of the first after war generation: pupils at secondary school in Krusevac 1945-1948
3.	Second award	Kristina Jovanovic (1987)	Migration from village to town
4.	Third award	Ana Kostic (1987)	Dreaming of their sank village (forced migration)

5.	Third award	Stefan Stefanovic (1989)	Capitalists of Nis and their agony after the end of WWII
6.	Third award	Milica Lilic (1989)	Pedestrian zone in Pirot (and its social role)

After two years of organizing EUSTORY Competition in Serbia we are proud to say that this kind of activity has its future in our country. There is a group of high-skilled tutors that we can rely on; there are also lots of enthusiastic history teachers who are willing to work with their students; above all, there are students who are waiting for new challenges. This year we managed to draw media attention and a much wider audience had a chance to become acquainted with this competition and its ideas.

This year we also experienced some difficulties, especially during jury procedure. Together with all jury members, we agreed to redefine and clarify evaluation criteria for the next competition round. We hope that by doing this we will avoid huge discrepancies in evaluation.

The general conclusion drawn from this competition round is that students should be more involved in all future activities related to the competition. For example, we should find a way to activate them during the award ceremonies. We would also like to stay in contact with all the winners somehow. Nevertheless, we think that working with tutors is also very important for the future. That is why we would like to continue with our teacher training program. During school year of 2004/2005 we had 3 seminars with 52 participants. Excellent evaluation of each seminar is the best indicator of both: success and necessity of such program. We would also like to improve this seminar and we are looking forward to hear some new ideas at Train the Trainer Workshop in Hamburg.

Organizers of the Competition:

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