

Fourth All-Ukrainian History Competition

“Roads of Life. Migration in the History of Ukraine” 2003/2004

Report

In 2003-2004 the All-Ukrainian association of Teachers of History and Civic Education “Nova Doba” carried out the Fourth All-Ukrainian Competition of Student Research papers “On the Tracks of History”. As in the previous years this competition round was supported by Körber Foundation (Germany) and the Ukrainian Ministry of Education. The topic of this competition was “Roads of Life. Migration in the History of Ukraine”. 1215 students from different regions of the Ukraine handed in 527 research papers.

A Round Table and the Award Ceremony for the winners of the Competition took place in September, 24-25, 2004, in Lviv.

The analysis of the students’ research papers showed which topics are of special interest for the participants:

I. Migration processes as a consequence of social and political processes in the XX c.

- Political migrations as the result of political repressions in 1917-1920;
- Migration processes during the famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933 and repressions at the head of Stalin;
- Migration processes as the result of the industrialization and the settling of virgin lands;
- Evacuation as military migration;
- Migration of the population as a consequence of forced labor in Germany during the Second World War;
- Expulsion and resettlement as a consequence of new borders after the Second World War (“Exchange of Population”);
- Immigration to Western Europe and America after the Second World War out of political reasons;
- Migration processes as a consequence of flooded territory in the basin of the Dnipro river;
- Migration processes during the construction of the Baikal – Amour railroad;
- Migration processes after the collapse of Chernobyl in 1996;
- Modern labor migration to Western Europe, the USA, Canada;

II. Migration of ethnic groups within the territory of Ukraine

- Migration processes among Jewish population in the XX c.;
- Greeks in the Eastern and Southern parts of Ukraine;
- Deportation of the Crimean Tatars and today’s problems of their repatriation;
- Polish Diaspora in Ukraine;
- Germans as colonists in Volyn;
- Fate of the Korean immigrants;
- Ossets in Ukraine;
- Serbian colonists in the central part of Ukraine;
- Azerbaijanis in Ukraine;
- Armenians in Ukraine;
- Assyrians in Ukraine;

III. Migration processes as a consequence of the discrimination of religious beliefs during the Soviet period

- Greek-Catholics

- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Mennonites

IV. Migration processes shown at the example of different generations in one family (*various subject-matters mostly connected with social and political events of the XX c.*)

Brief description of the students' historic research papers

In this competition round the students used a great variety of different sources. They interviewed old residents, studied archive material and other written documents, collected pictures, wrote letters, made audio and video records, used the Internet etc. In most cases family archives formed the basis of the research papers. Interviews with contemporary witnesses were the main source of information for the young researchers. Especially in small villages it was a great prestige to be a young researcher.

The most important but at the same time the most difficult task for the participants was to critically assess the information and to compare different sources. Not all participants were able to reach this higher stage of historical research but those who did achieved interesting and useful results for the competition.

It is remarkable that the young people are free of stereotypes and are therefore ready to accept various approaches to historical events and facts.

Nearly all participants tried to conceive the gathered material and to explain the reasons and essences of historic events. They analyzed individual life stories on the background of historic processes. Obviously everyday life history with its ways of life, habits, cultural sphere is very interesting for the younger generation. Analyzing such "minor" facts as a workers' living conditions in a barrack, clothing in prewar and after war times, amount of wages of an ordinary farmer in socialist time, school students understand better the reality of different historic periods.

Round table and Award Ceremony, Lviv, 24-25 September 2004

The two days program was provided for the winners of the All-Ukrainian History Competition. On the first day the young historians could share their experiences and impressions of the research work and to become familiar with the research topics of the other participants.

It has already become a tradition to arrange a small historic "blitz-research" for the winners. This year's blitz research was dedicated to the topic "We are different – we are united". The students investigated the history of different streets in Lviv. By doing this they investigated the history of Polish, Jewish, Armenian and Ukrainian communities. The main task for the students was to find out about the participation of these different communities in the common social life in Lviv. Representatives of the different national groups helped the students with their research.

The next day the award ceremony was opened with the presentations of the results of this small research. The historians from the National Academy of Science, representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science and from EUSTORY, the History Network for Young Europeans, welcomed the winners of the competition.

The First National Radio Company broadcasted three reports on the competition and its award ceremony.