

Moldovan History Competition 2017/2018

"Heroes of the 20th Century in Your Neighbourhood"

Sunny weather, smiling faces: More than 120 participants from all over the country attended the award ceremony of the first Moldovan History Competition together with their tutors. The ceremony took place on 26 May, 2018 in the centre of Chisinau. It was the conclusion of a quite successful competition with 135 participants from 30 different schools and universities submitting 101 individual and group entries.



Rodica Trohin and Arne Segelke from DVVI International with one of the participants, his tutor and Viorica Olaru-Cemirtan from ANTIM | Photo: Sergiu Musteata

The topic of the competition was “Local Heroes of the 20th Century in Our Neighbourhood”. Looking for such heroes, participants were often quite surprised to find everyday heroes in their own families and neighbourhoods. The nurse who cared for the health of the villagers for more than half a century, the liquidators at the disaster-site of Chernobyl or the train-driver who, even in difficult times, managed to keep up public transport: All of them could be defined as heroes, as the participants stated.

While working on their projects, participants conducted interviews with witnesses and experts, collected pictures and documents and consulted libraries and archives. Work was not always cheerful and easy, since some of the interviews with family members dealt with traumatising experiences in situations of catastrophe, disaster or war. Still, in most cases these talks fostered intergenerational understanding and strengthened family-ties, as one of the tutors said after the ceremony.

Most participants chose the form of an essay, while others preferred journals or posters to present the results of their research. The age of participants ranged from 14 to 18 years, with the 16 to 17-year olds forming the most active group.



EUSTORY's Managing Director Katja Fausser at the award ceremony in Chisinau

Photo: Körber-Stiftung

The award ceremony itself took place at the »Summit«, a prestigious conference venue in Chisinau. Arriving participants, tutors and family members were greeted with a breakfast buffet in the garden outside the venue. The ceremony itself was opened with words of welcome and encouragement by members of the Ministry of Education, the German Embassy and the organising institutions (DVV International, Moldovan Association of Young Historians 'ANTIM' and EUSTORY). A presentation on the details and numbers of the competition was followed by the distribution of certificates and prizes. During the first phase, all of the participants and tutors received certificates and small presents to honour their effort in the competition. During the second phase, winners in the different categories were announced and honoured. The president of the jury highlighted the remarkable quality of the entries and pointed out that deciding on the first three prizes in each category formed quite a task. The competition organisers further added that all participants could be proud of having carried out a research project from start to finish, which is a success in itself.



After the ceremony the tutors and organisers met for a two-day workshop to discuss their experiences and ideas in order to make a future competition an even greater success.

Photo: Körber-Stiftung