

### SPAIN - Barcelona

#### Teaching the Holocaust in schools



Left to right : Yessica Sanroman, Department Holocaust & anti-Semitism Sefarad-Israel Centre in Madrid, Marlemy Colmenares, Director Education Promotion at the Municipal Institute for Education, Manuel Medeiros, Manager of the Municipal Institute for Education, Dr. Simon Emergui, President of the Nahmanides Lodge of Barcelona

The lack of knowledge about Jews and the ignorance of the Holocaust in Spain (that is not included in the official school curriculums) is a cause for concern of the Nahmanides Lodge of Barcelona. Spain was a “Judenfrei” country from the 15th to the 20th centuries, first because of the expulsion of the Jews and later because of the Inquisition.

During the Second World War the Fasciste regime in power for 40 years, pronounced itself “neutral” while maintaining a State Religion that presented a negative image of anything that concerned Judaism and the State of Israel.

The Nahmanides Lodge has co-financed a project that has the approval of the authorities for the training of teachers in primary and secondary schools by organising a seminar from May 7th to July 2nd 2013. This is the date when the seminar is due to close and during which certificates will be awarded in the presence of the country’s authorities.

## NEWS FROM THE LODGES

Written by B'nai B'rith Europe

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The title of the seminar is “Holocaust and Education”, and is organised by our Lodge in partnership with the Educational Council and Universities of Barcelona and the Sefarad- Israel Centre. It will be followed by another seminar from July 9th to July 18th, 2013 organised by the Yad Vashem Memorial, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem to enlarge their study on the Holocaust.

Different communiqués were published on May 6th 2013 on the website of the City Hall of Barcelona :

[http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/Educacio/menuitem.d808deccf00d3992a8b7a8b76e424ea0/?vgnnextoid=6b222776bc97e310VgnVCM1000001947900aRCRD& ;vgnnextfmt=formatDetall&lang=ca\\_ES](http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/Educacio/menuitem.d808deccf00d3992a8b7a8b76e424ea0/?vgnnextoid=6b222776bc97e310VgnVCM1000001947900aRCRD& ;vgnnextfmt=formatDetall&lang=ca_ES)

This initiative was promoted jointly by the Council for Education and Universities, B'nai Brith Barcelona and the Sefarad-Israel Centre.

Tuesday May 7th at 6.00 p.m. a presentation of the seminar “Holocaust and Education” took place at the ‘Institut Municipal d’Educaciò” (Plaça Espanya, 5) aimed at teachers of primary and secondary schools as well as at other people involved in education. This was jointly organised by the Council of Education and Universities (Institut Municipal de l’Educaciò de Barcelona), B'nai B'rith Barcelona and the Centre Sefarad-Israel.

Workshops will be organised during this seminar aimed at increasing knowledge of the Holocaust on a historical point of view, the preliminary context of its origins and the consequences for humanity.

Study of the Holocaust to acquire better understanding of the ramifications of prejudice, racism and stereotypes of society, and to awake consciousness of the “values of pluralism and of respect.../... of human rights and the fight against racism, neo-Nazism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

During the inauguration of the seminar, the General Director of the “Institut Municipal d’Educaciò”, Mr. Manel Medeiros and Mrs Jessica San Roman in charge of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism department at the Centro Sefarad-Israel in Madrid took the floor and the President of our Lodge, Dr. Simon Emergui, thanked the Education authorities for having accepted our project while expressing hope that this experience would continue in the future.

In 2011 our Lodge produced and achieved a 16 panel exhibition “the 13 Pillars of Education on the Holocaust” that was presented in different cities throughout Catalonia including Barcelona, Tarragona, Reus, Valldoreix...

Our main goal: definite incorporation of a programme teaching the Holocaust in primary and secondary schools in the near future.