Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe
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Change carries with it uncertainty and a tendency for societies to react by turning inwards. However, for those able to recognise the potential of people to adapt, create and come together, change is a source of opportunity for progress. The CDRSEE has consistently possessed the ability to identify key trends, understand the direction of flux in the region and to predict how events will influence societies and thus prepare to meet the challenges of an ever shifting situation with optimism, creativity and pragmatism. Never wavering from our core values, the CDRSEE is rising to meet the needs of the current and future societies and citizens in Southeast Europe with ideas and programmes that aim to harness the energies of civil society to support the region on a cooperative and democratic path towards stability, inclusivity and equitable development. The CDRSEE’s commitment has, and always will be, to pursue this goal, seizing the opportunities thrown up from even the most difficult of circumstances, with the understanding that citizens can and do have the potential to transform societies and countries.
Ms. Zvezdana Kovac
Executive Director

For years I was a journalist in the very areas where we at the CDRSEE work and direct our attention. I was an outsider peering in, and with a vast amount of respect. It was this up-close look as an outsider that showed me the power of civil society in conflict and peace.

Today, years later, I consider myself privileged to lead one of the most prominent civil society organisations in the Balkans. I do not take the label lightly; I know what it takes to earn and maintain that respect. The CDRSEE, as you will see in this report, works beyond its means to provide education, media and social inclusion programmes that touch millions of people a year across the Balkans. Now, as an insider looking out, I know what this takes, and I can assure you that our dedication to our mission, vision and cause will never falter.
The Board of Directors

The CDRSEE’s Board of Directors is comprised of members from Southeast Europe, North America and Western Europe who support the Center’s goals by providing mission oversight, academic guidance, project visibility and assistance with fundraising.

MEMBERS OF OUR BOARD

Hannes Swoboda .................................. CHAIRMAN
Former M.E.P. - AUSTRIA

Nikos Efthymiadis ............................... VICE CHAIRMAN
Businessman - GREECE

Rigas Tzelepgoglou ...................... TREASURER
Economist - GREECE

Costa Carras ................................. RAPPORTEUR TO THE BOARD FOR JHP
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Selcuk Erez .................................. SECRETARY
Physician - TURKEY

Erhard Busek
Politician - AUSTRIA

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Diplomat - U.S.A.

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Piro Misha
Author - ALBANIA

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Political Scientist - GREECE

Nenad Sebek
Journalist - SERBIA

Elene Bruggisser
Tax Lawyer and C.E.O. - BRAZIL/GREECE

HONORARY MEMBERS

Richard Schifter
Retired Diplomat - U.S.A.
Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe
Profile and Scope

A non-governmental and non-profit organisation, the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) was founded in 1998 as a response to the debilitating effects of conflicts in the region. The CDRSEE started as an offshoot of the Association for Democracy in the Balkans (ADB), an organisation that was founded in 1996 and still remains active in Greece. The two 'sister' organisations were formed as a grassroots way to effect real change in a region of conflict and mistrust.

The CDRSEE’s goals are to promote democratic and pluralist societies, universal human values, active citizenship and responsibility and to support social inclusion for disadvantaged populations. Through its activities, the CDRSEE has developed into an influential international organisation aimed at fostering reconciliation and peace among peoples of the region of Southeast Europe.

Working closely with a wide range of beneficiaries, partners and international donor organisations to best promote its objectives, the CDRSEE possesses a significant track record of projects and initiatives that tackle various socioeconomic and political challenges in the region. The CDRSEE’s activities can be broadly categorised into the following areas of strategic focus: Education; Media and Communication; Social Inclusion.

From its Board of Directors to staff, interns and partners, the CDRSEE works to advance the notion that acceptance, diversity and cooperation are not only essential to the growth of civil society, but also joyful expressions of shared cultures and vibrant, functioning communities.

Impact

Throughout the years, the CDRSEE has implemented numerous projects across Southeast Europe, and the footprint of beneficiaries of its activities is vast and diverse.

Under the flagship Joint History Project (JHP), some 2,000 teachers have received training to help them teach history from multiple perspectives, using the JHP workbooks, and to encourage critical-thinking skills. An estimated 500,000 students have benefited from this programme alone. During the regular seasons of the weekly TV current affairs talk show ‘Okruženje’ (‘Vicinities’ in English), approximately a million viewers are reached each week, with a peak viewership of 5 million recorded for the special episode in which the Prime Ministers of Serbia and Albania were guests on the show. Through the ‘Employed, Empowered’ project, 224,000 Internally Displaced People (IDPs), 150,000 refugees and 23,000 asylum seekers have received assistance. Our reach and impact expand each year and with each new project.
Recognition

The long-lasting and significant impact of the CDRSEE’s work has been recognised by some of the most important agencies and third parties, often culminating in awards and distinctions. The Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung presented the CDRSEE with its 2013 Human Rights Award due to its dedication and commitment to strengthening pluralistic societies and including disadvantaged groups. That followed a European Parliament resolution declaring its support for the CDRSEE’s flagship ‘Joint History Project’, for its impact and effectiveness, as well as the 2012 EU Results-Oriented Monitoring Report, which called the JHP a “strong tool for reconciliation in Southeast Europe”. USAID, for its part, presented a very favorable assessment of the Center and its projects. Finally, just this year, ‘Okruženje’ (‘Vicinities’), the TV talk show, was awarded the Jury Award in the Media Initiative Category of the European Citizenship Awards, and was invited to London to receive the honour and participate in a dialogue on civil society issues. Additionally, the CDRSEE has been featured prominently in the media of the Western Balkans and beyond. The Economist, for example, praised the CDRSEE for “working to help teachers gain a broader perspective”.

promote and embody the universal
human values and principles of democracy
and pluralist societies

Nikos Efthymiadis
Vice Chairman

“Following the fall of the USSR, our neighbouring Balkan economies will need every support we can give them to restore democratic values and free market regulations.

The Greek business community has a serious interest in contributing towards these institutional reforms, as a means of social and economic development of the Balkan people and the creation of a strong regional market”.

(Thessaloniki, 1994)
Partnerships

The CDRSEE has developed and nurtured long-lasting partnerships with a range of organisations. Prominent institutions from across all of the countries of the region, in a wide range of fields such as Education, Human Rights, Media and Communication, Peace and Reconciliation, have repeatedly partnered with the CDRSEE to cooperate on projects and initiatives. For example, six Ministries of Education have joined as partners in the second phase of the Joint History Project, along with scores of teachers and their associations. Equally, the CDRSEE nurtures long-lasting cooperation with numerous national and international, public and private donors and funding organisations. Significant sponsorships have been secured by the Center from the Greek business community. More than 50 organisations have recognised the impact of the CDRSEE through their donations, acknowledging the capacity and efficiency of the organisation to deliver sustainable results for the region.

History

When war tore through neighbouring Yugoslavia, a group of diplomats, historians and businessmen in Greece and abroad vowed they would do everything in their power to make sure such tragedy could not happen again. This is not an easy task, as they knew, but the CDRSEE and its founding fathers have never veered from their mission to start at the grassroots level and promote reconciliation and genuine democracy - lived and nurtured by civil society, as a path to peace.

The CDRSEE started in 1998 as an offshoot of the ADB, an organisation that was founded in 1996 and still remains active in Greece. The beginnings were humble, and though the CDRSEE continues to function on the most conservative budget, it has developed into a premiere international organisation.

Leadership and Vision

The CDRSEE’s international Board of Directors features, among others, prominent figures such as Erhard Busek, Nikos Efthymiadis, Matt Nimetz, Hannes Swoboda, and Costa Carras. This very active board ensures that the CDRSEE’s operations have strategic weight and impact, political relevance, credibility and transparency, academic consistency, and high visibility.

Principles

The CDRSEE’s operation is founded on well-established organisational core values and principles to ensure maximum impact for beneficiaries and minimum risk for public and private donor organisations. Such principles are safeguarded by the CDRSEE’s structure, rigorous systems and auditing procedures as well as internal capacity and knowledge.
Establishment of the CDRSEE
The CDRSEE kicks off its flagship project, the 'Joint History Project', at the international conference 'National Memory in Southeast Europe'. The CDRSEE History Education Committee is established.

Establishment of ADB

First history teacher training workshops start in Serbia with the JHP books, despite a lack of support from the government.

'Disclosing Hidden History: Lustration in the Western Balkans' is published and widely acknowledged, as a unique study touching upon the sensitive issue of discontinuities in leadership in the region and lack of accountability for human rights abuses.

First EU grant for the CDRSEE

'Milestones'

- 1996: Establishment of ADB
- 1998: Establishment of the CDRSEE
- 2002: First EU grant for the CDRSEE
- 2005: 'Clio in the Balkans' is published.
- 2006: 'Disclosing Hidden History: Lustration in the Western Balkans' is published and widely acknowledged, as a unique study touching upon the sensitive issue of discontinuities in leadership in the region and lack of accountability for human rights abuses.
Most of the original founders continue to serve on the board, along with a diverse range of influential academics, sociologists and educators.

In its nearly two decades, the CDRSEE has touched the lives of millions, by creating and implementing a variety of civil society projects that help achieve what our founders knew were key: reconciliation, democracy and economic development.

The first project, our flagship 'Joint History Project', put the CDRSEE on the map. It is now in its second phase and brings history education workbooks, including perspectives from scores of sources, to students in their native languages across South-east Europe. This project grew from a few historian partners to the current History Education Committee and numerous regional Ministries of Education as partners.

Other projects have taken off as well. The first-ever regional TV current affairs talk show 'Okruženje', which connects citizens of the region through TV debate, has become the go-to show for international perspectives. This success has led to the creation of an EU-wide talk show, in a similar vein: 'Vicinities Europe'.

These are just two examples of how the CDRSEE has developed over time to be the gold-standard civil society organisation in the Western Balkans and Southeast Europe.

Foundations and private entities have recognised the value of our work over the years.

The 'Employed, Empowered' report sets out challenges and opportunities in Serbia for integrating refugees and IDPs into a society already struggling with economic hardship.

The European Parliament recommends the JHP for its impact and effectiveness, and in 2011 the EU supports a major new rollout of the JHP.

The CDRSEE receives the '2013 Human Rights Award' from the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

The workbooks 'Teaching Modern Southeast European History - Alternative Educational Materials' are published in 11 languages. 70 JHP workshops are held for 1,950 teachers, including multi-ethnic events in deeply divided societies and in areas of conflict such as North Mitrovica, in which the workshop took place even though barricades were up in the streets.

Six Ministries of Education from the region apply together with the CDRSEE for funding for the JHP II, history workbooks which cover the period 1944 - 2008.

European Citizenship Award.

The two new JHP II volumes are published and later presented at the EU Parliamen
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Matthew Nimetz
Founding Chair and Board Member

“…As one of the founders, and the founding chairman of the CDRSEE, I recall vividly our origins and original conception and am very proud that we have remained true to it (...) In thinking back on our early days, I want to make special note of the inspirational leadership provided by my longtime friend and mentor, (the late) U.S. Congressman John Bradamas, who provided us vision and guidance, as well as practical help with policy makers in Washington and Europe, and also the important roles of Nikos Efthymiadis as a trusted business leader and forward-looking thinker in Thessaloniki, and Costas Carras as a person of principle, a deep thinker and an active doer”.

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Key Beneficiaries and Target Groups

- Students
- Educators
- Teachers
- History Teacher Associations
- National Educational Authorities or Ministries of Education
- Decision and Policy Makers
- Legislators, Legal Experts, Public Administration Officials
- Municipal Authorities
- Conflict-Affected Communities
- Migrants, Refugees, Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and Returnees
- Civil and Human Rights Activists, Youth Groups
- Marginalised Groups
- Media (national channels and public forums, TV and radio broadcasters, print and online media)

Costa Carras
Rapporteur to the Board for the Joint History Project

“The JHP has been radical in challenging the hegemony of nation state-based and often nationalist history-teaching elites. It has created a regional network of historians, both in universities and at schools, which draws material from all countries of the region, which subjects this material to critical analysis and which shares a moral outlook that emphasises first the ethical responsibility of every citizen, second dialogue and debate as creative alternatives to violence and third, solidarity both within and beyond national boundaries, although always remembering and recalling the many achievements of the nation state”.
Awards and Distinctions

2016 THE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AWARD

Jury Award in the category 'Media Initiative of the Year'. The European Citizenship Awards celebrate the democratic and civic engagement of individuals and groups, recognising innovative initiatives and contributions that give substance to European values, create ownership of public space and improve the lives of our communities in terms of democracy, social justice and universal access to rights. The CDRSEE was honoured by the jury for its contribution to citizenship values through the TV talk show 'Okruženje' ('Vicinities').

2013 HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD – PRESENTED BY THE FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG

For commitment to strengthening democratic and pluralistic societies, inclusion of disadvantaged groups in society and the mission to foster reconciliation in Southeast Europe.

2012 EUROPEAN UNION RESULT ORIENTED MONITORING REPORT

The influential report called the CDRSEE’s Joint History Project a "strong tool for reconciliation in Southeast Europe".

“I am very proud of the CDRSEE and its presence in Thessaloniki. The aim of the Center is the creation of a peaceful atmosphere among the Balkan nations that have suffered from wars, populism and rivalries over the past 15 to 20 years that have traumatised all of us (...) The Municipality of Thessaloniki will support the CDRSEE’s role in this direction and will reinforce its attempt to put aside any difference and promote and focus on the things that unite the Balkan area”.

Yiannis Boutaris
Mayor of Thessaloniki
2009 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION
On the role of education in peace-making in the Western Balkans. The JHP was recognised by the European Parliament for its role in educational programmes in the Western Balkans. The European Parliament “fully supports initiatives, such as the Joint History Project of the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, aimed at writing and disseminating joint history-teaching materials that provide a multi-perspective account of Balkan history,” the resolution read.

2009 USAID EVALUATION REPORT ON THE JOINT HISTORY PROJECT
The USAID, an important donor to the CDRSEE, evaluated the Joint History Project in 2010, praising it for leading the way in teaching history with multiple perspectives as a means of encouraging reconciliation. “Internationally, the History Workbooks have become effective advocacy tools for further raising awareness and putting on the EU policy agenda the importance of multi-perspective history teaching in promoting reconciliation,” the report stated.

Martin Schulz
President of the European Parliament

“For bad things to happen, all it takes is for good people to do nothing. The CDRSEE belongs to those who work every single day for democracy, the rule of law and human rights”.

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The Team

Recognising that an organisation is only as good as its people, each member of our team is committed to delivering his or her best performance to ensure the activities and projects of the CDRSEE are top-notch, results-oriented and effective.
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www.cdrsee.org
Action as an Alternative to Fear
In many parts of the world, where civil society has been hurt by violent conflicts and war, education can play a crucial role in creating a culture of peace, promoting democracy, embracing cultural diversity and combatting social injustice. The CDRSEE has implemented a number of educational and training projects that are aligned with, and in some cases, leading, national education reforms taking place throughout the Western Balkan countries. These projects serve as a means for regional reconciliation efforts and are aimed at informed change in historical research and education in all of the countries of Southeast Europe. A notable achievement of such efforts has been the resulting cooperation between civil society and states, a relationship of paramount importance to building and strengthening democracies.

Education also provides an effective channel for the rapid integration of refugees entering the region as a result of ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. It plays a crucial role in fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual acceptance whilst at the same time preparing refugees for life in Europe and a potential subsequent return to their home countries. The CDRSEE’s extensive experience in improving and expanding education so that it promotes and allows for reconciliation, will be channelled towards efforts of social integration of refugees and mutual acceptance of refugees and the communities that host them.
Media and Communication

A pluralistic, accurate and balanced media is necessary for both peace-building and the processes of democratic development. In an environment of division and conflict, a reliable media outlet can allow for a range of views and voices to be publicly expressed, thereby creating a channel for peaceful public dialogue. Dialogue and the resulting checks and balances are important aspects of a free, democratic society.

The objective of the CDRSEE’s media-related work has been to carry out projects of the highest journalistic standards, in turn strengthening the general media and engaging it in the promotion of peace-building. Via its successful ‘Okruženje’ (‘Vicinities’) and ‘Vicinities Europe’ television shows and the implementation of public forums the CDRSEE has embarked on a ground-breaking journey to expand cross-border communication and cooperation, and to enhance mutual understanding in the Western Balkans.

The CDRSEE has successfully brought together guests from diverse backgrounds and from countries previously in conflict, to express their ideas and listen to the others’ opinions; discovering their differences and their similarities. This is the foundation of reconciliation, democracy and ultimately, peace.

A reliable media also plays an important role in issues relating to the increasing number of refugees who have found their way to European countries. Using its existing expertise, the CDRSEE can work towards creating a more unifying approach for dialogue on matters pertaining to refugees and immigration. Such approaches should work to dispel some of the unhelpful misconceptions and attitudes that persist and to build a discourse divorced from politics and fear, with the ultimate goal of creating an environment in which both host communities and refugees can feel safe, respected and included.

Scope of implemented projects and their impact

- Implementing projects across Southeast European countries including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey
- 30,000 employment-related services provided to thousands of displaced families across the Balkans
- 224,000 IDPs, 150,000 refugees and 23,000 asylum seekers benefited from ongoing projects
- 2,000 teachers trained
- 500,000 students benefited from history education training projects
- Estimate of the size of the regional audience of ‘Okruženje’/ ‘Vicinities’ stands at 1 million per episode.
- 85% of TV viewership in Albania and 2 million viewers in Serbia alone watched the special ‘Okruženje’ show with the Prime Ministers of both countries as guests.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence
Social Inclusion

Social inclusion is a catalyst for community-building and long-term peace, as through positive efforts to live together, communities develop mutual respect and acceptance. On the contrary, social exclusion is a catalyst for polarisation and conflict. Through projects targeting vulnerable groups and populations, such as the Roma in the Western Balkans, or the thousands of refugees who have entered Europe in search of safety, the CDRSEE has developed solutions that foster social inclusion, via education, the media, and other avenues. Through its many educational programmes, in particular those based on providing multiple perspectives of history or others that focus on teaching methodologies, some specifically for diverse classrooms, the CDRSEE has significant experience helping to facilitate the integration of excluded groups into mainstream society.

Through its media project, ‘Okruženje’, the CDRSEE demonstrates with each show, the power of inclusion of different people, from different countries and backgrounds, and the meaningful results of that.

The CDRSEE, as well as its network of local and international actors, advocates for past or future migrants, in particular. This network focuses on ‘the day after’ with a goal of social integration and ultimately mutual acceptance. The CDRSEE provides information and consultation to these vulnerable groups, supporting local communities with expert advice and training activities, providing tools for education that help integrate the new children, and providing a safe space for open discussion.
“Let me first say, how much I am in favour of the joint initiative and how much I admire the efforts to put it into practice. After the success of the 4 existing volumes - the Ottoman Empire, Nations and States, the Balkan Wars, and the Second World War comes the period after the Second World War, usually defined as the Cold War, as well as the contemporary period, that the Germans call ‘Zeitgeschichte’. In many ways, these are the more difficult volumes because of the enormity of material that has to be sifted and because of the closeness of the period and the strong memories or opinions bolstered by lived experience. I have been particularly impressed by the pedagogical side: the aptness of the QUESTIONS and TASKS which beautifully integrate the sources offered for interpretation.”

The following books form the foundation of the CDRSEE’s projects. These books serve as a basis for progress, as a key for understanding current and past issues, and as a record of the impact of our programmes. All of these books can be downloaded free of charge from the CDRSEE’s website. This is in keeping with the CDRSEE’s mission to first and foremost promote democracy and reconciliation, as we recognise the potential these books carry in reaching that goal.

Maria Todorova
Gutgesell Professor of History
University of Illinois
'Teaching Modern Southeast European History: Alternative Educational Materials' - Series

The Joint History Project aims not only to revise ethnocentric school history lessons, but also to encourage critical thinking and debate, celebrate diversity and recognise shared suffering and achievements. “Internationally, the History Workbooks have become effective advocacy tools for further raising awareness and putting on the EU policy agenda the importance of multi-perspective history teaching in promoting reconciliation,” the USAID report stated. “It is critical that the JHP work continue in order to sustain achievements and impacts, especially in the current context of nationalism that still exists in the region”.

Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

“This project will, I am sure, recognise both the shared suffering and the achievements of the region. In this way, I believe it can provide a valuable contribution to overcoming the painful legacies of the past, and to helping newer generations understand the importance of moving forward together towards the EU”.
"The Joint History Project” is one of the best invested money in terms of supporting future Member States to move closer towards the EU".
Disclosing hidden history: Lustration in the Western Balkans
EDITORS
Magarditsch Hatschikjan
Dušan Reljić
Nenad Šebek

Effecting Change and Good Governance in Local Administration in BiH
EDITORS
Nenad Šebek
Corinna Noack-Aetopulos
Džedvet Tuzlić

'Okruženje' ('Vicinities'): The First Regional News Talk Show
1st - 2nd - 3rd and 5th Season Volumes
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Labour Market Research Report
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Dr. Goran Opacic

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Joint History Project Phase I (Ottoman Empire – WWII)

The CDRSEE’s flagship project, the Joint History Project (JHP), is a social, political and educational initiative, established by the CDRSEE in 1999, in response to the critical need for reconciliation in a region reeling from war.

The project seeks to inspire change in the way that history is studied and taught throughout the region by reversing ethnocentric and singular historical narratives and by promoting a multi-perspective alternative, which encourages debate, esteem for diversity and a shared vision.

**Objective**

The overall objective is to reform the education system in Southeast Europe by promoting new history teaching methods, which enable reconciliation and encourage democratic values, fostering a peaceful diverse society and the emergence of citizens who are empowered to defend and promote such values.

**Implemented Activities**

The JHP, in its first phase, published four workbooks covering historical events spanning from the Ottoman Empire through to the end of World War II. These publications are widely used in classrooms across the region by teachers who have been trained in how to use the workbooks and the JHP methodology during the 70-plus workshops led by JHP teacher-trainers.

**Beneficiaries**

The JHP, through direct training workshops, has reached 2,000 educators, who have benefited from the project, have been using the workbooks in their classrooms and have passed their knowledge and JHP materials on to colleagues. Thus, 500,000 students (and counting) have received access to the material and new learning methodologies.

"The objectives of these projects should be realised as they will provide significant benefits not only for our society but also towards our goal of European integration".

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Lindita Nikolla
Minister of Education and Sports of Albania (2016)

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**DURATION**
January 1999 - April 2014
Impact

Internationally, the JHP Workbooks have become effective advocacy tools for further awareness-raising and for placing the importance of conveying multiple perspectives in history teaching, as a tool for promoting reconciliation, on the EU policy agenda.

The Joint History Project has gained substantial local support for multi-perspective history teaching. The JHP has provided training to around 2,000 teachers in seven countries. Teachers who have used the workbooks in their classrooms report increased interest from students in discovering new and varied ways of reflecting on historical events and in taking part in new interactive forms of class work.

“The teaching of history should not be a means of propaganda and manipulation through mounted images and nationalist versions of the past, denial and neglect of historical facts and the abuse of historical sources. It is important to emphasize that these books contribute to the breakdown of stereotypes and prejudices that are rooted among people in the region”.

Mladen Šarčević
Minister of Education of Serbia (2016)
Joint History Project Phase II  
(1945 - 2008)

Given the success of the first phase, the CDRSEE has embarked on a second phase of the Joint History Project, creating workbooks that cover the more recent and sensitive history, including the Cold War and the wars of the 1990s. Encouraging people to think critically about the contentious recent past is challenging, yet deeply meaningful and necessary, both in process and results.

**Objective**

The purpose of the project is to trigger reform of certain aspects of educational systems in place throughout Southeast Europe. More specifically, the goal is to challenge, and ultimately change the way history is taught in schools across the Balkans by promoting the inclusion of multiple perspectives in historical analysis, making it constructive and useful for achieving a more holistic understanding of recent history.

**Implemented Activities**

Three Regional Teacher Training Workshops and one Regional Teachers’ Conference were carried out, all hosted in areas of past conflict, as real-life examples of the JHP’s core principles. Additionally, several meetings of the History Education Committee (HEC) took place. The project has entailed advocacy activities with ministries, universities and schools.

Six Ministries of Education in the region have joined as partners in the project. The books, with 696 sources from 15 countries that include newspaper articles, photos, legal texts, laws, cartoons and letters, will be published in Autumn 2016 and officially launched with an event in Brussels including diplomats, politicians, media, academics and historians.

**Beneficiaries**

This phase of the JHP will have a direct effect on the teachers undergoing training, their colleagues whom they share the materials with, and all of their students who benefit in the classrooms. But the impact of the project will reach the general population as well, as the new workbooks will be a source of for much discussion and thought among the general population, as noted already by the attention the programme has received in the media and the feedback from readers.

**DURATION**

April 2014 - Ongoing
Impact

Because of the sensitivity of the project, The Joint History Project has received widespread support and recognition throughout the region and is predicted to continue doing so with the successful launch of two new volumes of history workbooks in the European Parliament and in 6 regional capitals. The JHP II project was developed in conjunction with educators from throughout the region and has already had an impact on the education community through Regional Teacher Training Workshops and a Regional Teacher’s Conference, as well as on the general public through widespread media coverage. The impact of these workbooks is a means for teachers, students and the general population to access materials and methods with which to critically assess, debate, and address shared suffering from the recent past.
The project aimed to enhance lustration legislation and practices and to extend citizen participation in the public debate concerning the history of the Western Balkans. The project, funded by the EU and USAID, created a regional network of NGOs and specialised work groups for the purpose of strengthening good governance, the rule of law, and the participation of civil society in the democratic process, by expanding and upgrading the legal and political base and practices of coping with the authoritarian past in the region.

Objective

The overall objective of ‘Disclosing Hidden History’ was to strengthen good governance, the rule of law, and the participation of civil society in the democratic processes.

Implemented Activities

Activities included a series of thematic workshops and seminars, the initiating of an NGO network on ‘Lustration and the Public Debates on the Past’, the creation of a website with a manual on lustration legislation and practices, and the publication of recommendations on best practices. More than 30 press articles were published about the initiative.
Impact
The project resulted in a clearly measurable enhanced awareness of the absence of lustration procedures in the Western Balkans and the subsequent negative impact that such deficiencies can have on the democratisation process. The success of the project resulted in raising further support from the Balkan Trust for Democracy to produce a print version of the web publications and to disseminate it to a wide range of possible actors in the Balkans and the international community.

funded by
EU European commission
CARDS democratic and stabilisation programme
US government via USAID
Integrating democratic values in the learning process helps young people learn about themselves, engage with the world around them and become positive and contributing members of society.

The CDRSEE is partnering with EUROCLIO (European Association of History Educators) for a project on education reform in Southeast Europe, called 'ePACT'. With this project, both organisations want to contribute to sustaining the democratisation process and enhancing conflict sensitivity in the Western Balkans, by intensifying democratic education in the formal schooling system.

**Objective**

The main objective of the ePACT initiative is to promote reform of the educational system in the region by fostering partnerships and synergy between educational authorities and civil society. More specifically, the project focuses on reforming the manner in which democratic education is taught at schools and by doing so, aims to encourage changes in the formal schooling system, and to further encourage critical thinking and active citizenship of young people.

**Beneficiaries**

The ePACT initiative, in the short term, will benefit an estimated 20% of all primary and secondary school teachers in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and through the skills acquired by these teachers, approximately 2.7 million students and their parents. The benefits will continue to grow and ultimately reach the whole population of the Western Balkans.

**Implemented Activities**

An empirical needs assessment was developed and tested in 6 national peer-training seminars. The needs assessment - in the form of a survey - received responses from more than 800 teachers, providing a substantial research pool from which to draw effective feedback. The final report was disseminated to all the relevant stakeholders and the findings of the survey were publicised, analysed and discussed on an episode of the CDRSEE’s regional television talk show ‘Okruzenje’, dedicated specifically to the e-PACT project. Furthermore the relevant ministries of education in the region have given their approval to an outline for upcoming seminars for teachers, and 7 workshops have taken place, at which 160 teachers, educators, school directors and school inspectors participated.

**Duration**

November 2015 - Ongoing
Impact

The findings of the survey have sparked discussion and opened dialogues for changes in the curriculum and educational policies. Furthermore it has introduced teachers to new methodologies and improved their competencies. It has allowed for a network to be formed between ministries of education, civil society and educators.

6 civil society partners
6 Peer-Training Seminars for 300 Educators
7 supporting ministries and international organisations
800 History Educators responded to our Need Assessment Survey
7 Seminars with 154 Participants
Uniting Differences

Uniting Differences was a pilot project aimed at providing equal access to education for Roma children in Croatia, and reducing the high dropout rates at the elementary level. The project helped train preschool staff members and created plans to bring the Roma children into mainstream schools, by starting with preschool children.

The project helped build capacities in Croatia that supported equal opportunities for Roma children to successfully participate in education systems in Croatian schools. This was achieved by building the capacities of the staff of preschool educational institutions in the implementation and diffusion of multicultural teaching methods as a means to support the social inclusion of Roma children.

Objective

The project sought to improve the broader school environment by enhancing the local administrative and educational capacities with new methodologies, by helping local authorities become more aware of the problems and needs related to the social integration of Roma children in education, and by communicating and showcasing their practices and successes to decision-makers, educational authorities and civil society as a whole.

Implemented Activities

Two meetings with all the relevant stakeholders were held at the beginning and the end of the project. Additionally, a reference guide for preschool teachers in diverse classrooms was created in both Croatian and English and was disseminated through two Training of Trainers Workshops and three Teacher Training Workshops.

Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of the project are the Pre-school Teachers’ Association of the Međimurje County-Krijesnice, a local CSO to which the project results were handed over and additionally 73 pre-school teachers who attended our workshops. Indirectly, the beneficiaries are the Roma children who will be taught with new methodologies - and will thus be better equipped to stay in school - as well as both the Roma community and Croatian society as a whole.

.. DURATION
August 2013 - May 2015
Impact

Uniting Differences impacted the lives of the children who were reached by the project, and in the long run, Roma communities and society as a whole will benefit from the action. Roma children attending school from a young age are now more likely to remain within the educational system so that they can eventually enter the labour market with a marketable set of skills, as well as social and educational qualifications to the benefit of society as a whole. Roma communities will benefit from a more equal and fair society, as well as from better representation in political and social life, at all levels.

- 5 workshops
- 73 pre-school teachers trained
- 56 Roma pre-school children participated in the baseline study
- 1,000 copies of reference guide were printed
Teaching for Learning

The Teaching for Learning programme takes the CDRSEE’s long-standing experience, knowledge and skills in the history education sector and broadens its reach; creating a tool for results-oriented teachers, and bringing up-to-date teaching methods to the classroom. The foundation of the project is a needs assessment that was conducted in Southeast Europe, in which the missing link between education policies and real-life requirements was often highlighted.

Together with the renowned cognitive psychologist Prof. Lorin Anderson, the CDRSEE embarked on creating a tool kit for teachers, who are the key agents for preparing the younger generation to become self-sufficient learners in a knowledge-based society. The book, entitled ‘Teaching for Learning’, was an international project, bringing together experts in pedagogy and psychology from across Southeast Europe and beyond. The manual provides the latest teaching methodologies, as well as the evidence and reasoning behind them. It also presents practical ideas for in-class application.

---------- DURATION
January 2013 - Ongoing

**Objective**

This initiative was a further example of the CDRSEE’s tireless efforts to promote a sharing of resources across borders and disciplines, fostering regional co-operation, not only as a tool for reconciliation, but also as an efficient way of solving common problems.

**Implemented Activities**

With the book as its basis, the ‘Teaching for Learning’ project provides training sessions for teachers, curriculum developers and inspectors in Southeast Europe.
EDUCATION

34 Joint History Project Phase I
   (Ottoman Empire – WWII)

36 Joint History Project Phase II
   (1945 – 2008)

38 Disclosing Hidden History:
   Lustration in the Western Balkans

40 ePACT-Education Partnership for Advocacy,
   Capacity-Building and Transformation

42 Uniting Differences

44 Teaching for Learning

MEDIA and COMMUNICATION

46 Okruženje (Vicinities)

50 Vicinities Europe

52 Albanian-Serb Exchange Forum

SOCIAL INCLUSION

54 Employed, Empowered
Okruženje (Vicinities)

'Okruženje', or 'Vicinities' in English, blossomed from the Center’s recognition of the need for dialogue and discussion at different levels in society as a crucial factor for reconciliation in a region still struggling to overcome major divisions and the painful effects of recent wars. Now in its 5th season, the CDRSEE’s cutting-edge TV current affairs talk show brings together influential guests from all walks of life and from various Western Balkan countries to present, discuss, and discover solutions to issues that deeply affect everyday life in the region.

Objective

The objective of the programme is to play a catalytic role in reconciliatory processes by providing a safe platform for engaging in a genuine dialogue. Nothing is taboo - 'Okruženje' has addressed the issue of language, loss of hope among young people and even war crimes. The talk show has not shied away from discussion of controversial issues, but rather has taken on the issues in a manner that enhances mutual understanding and acceptance.

Implemented Activities

The concept of the first series followed the logic of sharing different opinions, analysing problems and offering solutions through dialogue. The panelists taking part are experts in their respective fields, offering informed opinions to viewers.

Each show was introduced by a well-known satirical columnist from a different country of the region. Using satire, they kicked off the debates in a provocative and upbeat way that was different from the commonly used techniques in this genre of television programming. The live audiences registered their opinions of some of the issues under discussion, and young people offered occasional commentary on the questions.

Beneficiaries

Southeast European citizens (aged 18 – 65) are the target viewing demographic. The live audience includes young people who are alumni of programmes organised by the European Fund for the Balkans, a partner in the project.

DURATION

March 2012 - Ongoing
**Impact**

Recognition of ‘Okruzenje’s’ relevance as a forum for open discussion about the transition, reconciliation and accession processes of the region goes from strength to strength, offering an environment where open-minded debate and discussion can occur and shared solutions can be proposed. A better understanding of the challenges faced by the region, of how the ‘other’ thinks, through a participative and transparent initiative, promotes awareness, all the while working efficiently towards European integration.

The programme has not only attained record viewership levels in the region but has also achieved two historic firsts in bringing regional leaders together in the same studio to engage in dialogue on shared issues. On 12 July 2017, a special episode of ‘Okruzenje’ was filmed at the 4th Western Balkans Summit in Trieste, in which the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, the Prime Minister of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Zoran Zaev, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Ivica Dacic, and the Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council Goran Svilanovic shared a panel to discuss regional cooperation and EU accession.
In August 2015, at the 2nd Western Balkans Summit in Vienna, the 'Okruzenje' team recorded an episode with the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama and the Prime Minister of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, who discussed regional cooperation and opportunities for youth. The show made history by becoming the first television programme to bring together these two Prime Ministers at the same table for an open discussion.
‘Vicinities Europe’ is a pan-European TV current affairs talk show that takes on issues of importance to European citizens. ‘Vicinities Europe’ is a concept rooted in the successes of ‘Okruženje’, the Balkan version of the show. The idea for ‘Vicinities Europe’ came directly from a presentation of ‘Okruženje’ to Members of European Parliament.

**Objective**

The goal of the series is to discover new perspectives, fresh ideas and real solutions to contemporary social and political issues - which will challenge and engage viewers across the continent.

**Implemented Activities**

The ERSTE Foundation funded two Vicinities Europe pilots, which were produced in Autumn 2015 - the first addressed the refugee and migrant crisis in an especially timely edition, and the second looked at the concept of Europe as a whole, in ‘Quo Vadis, Europe?’.

‘This show has healing powers. After everything, Vicinities is a kind of ancient forum that we keep on returning to, to talk to each other and hear each other out (...) Plus one detail which is not insignificant: the personal attitudes and professionalism of the people making this show prove how simple and natural talking actually is. And we will know more about each other after every conversation we have. Which is not little, in this region...”.

Balsa Brkovic
Author

-------- DURATION
October 2015 - Ongoing
Impact

The pilots were broadcast on national channels in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The show gained the explicit support of CIRCOM, the European Association of Regional Television, which offered the show to all of its member stations.

11 national TV channels broadcasting in Europe
8 guests from 8 countries in Europe
100s of features on websites
Albanian-Serb Exchange Forum

Three NGO project partners - the CDRSEE, BETA News Agency/Beta Media Centre in Belgrade and KosovaLive agency in Pristina - took action to foster dialogue between the Albanian and Serb communities in Southeast Europe by contributing to the re-establishment of direct information channels between Albanians and Serbs, so that a shared public sphere was created.

Objective
The over-arching and long-term objective of this project was to broaden and strengthen the common ground between Serb and Albanian media and journalists as well as the respective societies at large. The idea was to help enhance a robust peace process between the two communities affected by historical tensions and conflict.

Implemented Activities
The actions of the project consisted of creating an Internet Forum, providing a news service in three languages (Serbian, Albanian and English), conducting opinion polls, and convening two conferences for journalists.

DURATION
January 2005 - July 2006
EDUCATION

34 Joint History Project Phase I
(Ottoman Empire – WWII)

36 Joint History Project Phase II
(1945 – 2008)

38 Disclosing Hidden History:
Lustration in the Western Balkans

40 ePACT-Education Partnership for Advocacy,
Capacity-Building and Transformation

42 Uniting Differences

44 Teaching for Learning

MEDIA and COMMUNICATION

46 Okruženje (Vicinities)

50 Vicinities Europe

52 Albanian-Serb Exchange Forum

SOCIAL INCLUSION

54 Employed, Empowered
Employed, Empowered

Carried out in Serbia, ‘Employed, Empowered’ was born of an innovative idea that combined labour market research with a practical project to tackle reintegration issues, such as unemployment, among vulnerable members of society in Serbia, namely Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), refugees, and returnees.

Objective

The specific objective of the project was to support the durable reintegration of refugees, IDPs and returnees into society by devising solutions grounded in socio-scientific research, enabling them to build up sustainable livelihoods and self-sufficiency.

Implemented Activities

Research was conducted regarding both the target group and the labour market of the region. Following the research, a series of roundtables was organised, bringing together experts seeking realistic solutions to the issues that surfaced in the research. A network of helpdesks was set up in nine cities in order to educate, inform, and train the target groups on strategic ways of reintegrating into society. Additionally, three brochures were produced in order to provide information, raise awareness and report research results.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries included 224,000 IDPs from Kosovo, 150,000 refugees, and approximately 23,000 asylum seekers in EU countries per year as well as especially vulnerable persons in Serbia. The indirect beneficiaries include governmental bodies of Serbia (five ministries involved), the Republican Commissioner for Refugees, the National Employment Service, the Republican Agency for SMEs, the six NGOs that make up the Serbian Refugee Council and the international organisations involved in the issue.

Duration

November 2006 – April 2009
Impact

The helpdesks provided nearly 30,000 services to thousands of families across the Balkans, making the total impact of the project far reaching. The project helped refugees, IDPs and returnees build up sustainable livelihoods for themselves, and, thus, supported the national strategy of the government of Serbia. The network of 10 helpdesks provided 29,147 services to 8,292 individuals in 2008 and to 7,155 individuals in 2009. About 26% of the beneficiaries were refugees, 40% were IDPs, and 34% were former refugees with Serbian citizenship.
IN HONOUR OF FOUNDING DIRECTOR
AND HONORARY BOARD MEMBER DR. JOHN BRADEMAS

Founding Director and Honorary Board Member, Dr. John Brademas; a leading light in the struggle for democracy and a key figure in the creation of the CDRSEE, passed away on July 11th 2016. His ideas, vision and values together with the undersigned co-founders, gave rise to the concept of the CDRSEE and his effective action helped to found it. His contributions to the CDRSEE through nearly 2 decades of work are immeasurable, but he will be particularly remembered for being the central driver in internationalising the Center and building bridges between countries and institutions— attracting Board Members and staff from all over the world and enabling the Center to attain international recognition.

His life and career are both characterised by a steadfast and positive commitment to public service and belief in the capacity of human beings to develop better societies for all, through education, the arts and the humanities. Serving in numerous positions in education, government and on foundations and committees, Dr. Brademas was a tireless innovator and supporter of inclusive education and cultural development; working ceaselessly for equal access to learning and the arts.

A dauntless champion of democratic principles, John Brademas was a consistent opponent of the Junta that ruled Greece between April 1967 and July 1974 and an equally staunch supporter of rule of law in Cyprus after the Junta’s coup resulted in the Turkish invasion.

Focusing on inclusivity and culture, he held the post of President of New York University for 11 years from 1981, transforming the institution into an internationally recognised centre for research and academic excellence.

The CDRSEE is honoured to have been able to count him among our Board Members. We recognise our debt of gratitude for all his work and continue to appreciate his commitment not only to the CDRSEE, but to all of his efforts in the fields of education and culture which have impacted the lives of so many. His legacy will not only be felt for years to come by all of us at the CDRSEE, but also by countless others who will continue to benefit from his foresight, action and commitment.

He will be remembered with great respect and gratitude as a man of unwavering principles, never afraid to oppose injustice and a prominent voice in the struggle for equality, freedom and democracy.

Costa Carras and Nikos Efthymiadis
Co-Founding Directors of CDRSEE, 1996 - 1998

Photograph
Prominent Partners

**Education**
Albanian History Teachers Association, ALBNA
American College of Thessaloniki (ACT)
Association of Social History UDI, Serbia
Centre for Democratic Education, Albania
Centre for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies of the University of Sarajevo
Croatian Association of History Teachers, HUNP
EUROCLIO (European Association of History Educators), The Netherlands
Kosova Education Centre (KEC)
NGO HIPMONT, Montenegro

**Human Rights**
Albanian Human Rights Group, Tirana
Association Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution, Skopje
Citizen’s Association Pravo Ljudski, Sarajevo
Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Zagreb
Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre (NSHC)

**Media and Communication**
ALSAT- M TV
BBC World Service Trust
Beta Media Centre
Croatian Radiotelevision
Dani, weekly news magazine
Debating Society of Greece
KosovaLive news agency
Monitor, weekly news magazine
Radio Television Albania
Radio Television Bijeljina
Radio Television Bosnia and Herzegovina
Radio Television Kosovo
Vijesti television
Radio Television Serbia
Radio Television Slovenia
SEETV
Slobodna Dalmacija, news magazine
Vreme, weekly news magazines

**Peace and Reconciliation**
Centre for Antiwar Action, Belgrade
Centre for Peace and Democracy Development
Centre for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance in Vukovar
European Fund for the Balkans
Donors and Funding Organisations