

ICMEMOHRI CONFERENCE 2026

FROM MEMORY TO MEMORIALIZATION

Conference Program
Vienna, Austria / 25 - 29 May 2026

FROM MEMORY TO MEMORIALIZATION

The ICMEMOHRI 25th Anniversary Conference marks a milestone for ICOM's International Committee for Memorial and Human Rights Museums. It will bring together museum professionals, scholars, human rights advocates, and memory workers to explore how sites of memory transform personal and collective remembrance into sustainable public memorialization. As first-hand witnesses fade, ethical and meaningful representation becomes ever more urgent, especially in times of shrinking civic space and rising authoritarianism.

In Vienna, reflections will include the city's anti-fascist struggles, Jewish exile, Roma and Sinti persecution, forced displacement, concentration camps, and Austria's complicity in Nazi crimes. The conference will also engage with sites and institutions addressing contemporary human rights issues, including places dedicated to the documentation of state violence, alongside global examples such as the Spanish Civil War and the International Brigades. These histories remind us that memorial museums must preserve memory while actively defending human dignity and human rights today.

Lectures / Workshops Location:

Vienna Wiesenthal Institute (VWI), Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna

Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek, Chair ICMEMOHRI, Conference Chair

Barbara Thimm, Jill Vexler, Jane E Klinger, Lea Fink, Ophelia León, Program Committee

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.fr/e/icmemohri-25th-anniversary-conference-2026-tickets-1982443071593?aff=oddtcreator>

in collaboration with:

WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)



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Widerstandes

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ICMEMOHRI PRE-CONFERENCE

25 May 2026

JEWISH VIENNA
CITY WALK (FULL DAY)

9:00 –
17:00

**Route: Walking tour through historic Jewish neighborhoods
and key sites in Vienna**

17:00

Freud Museum

Address: Berggasse 19, 1090 Vienna

A guided tour of the Freud Museum’s permanent exhibition, with a special focus on the curatorial and design strategies used to visualize the transformation of Freud’s former private apartment and medical practice into a museum space. The program will conclude with a small reception in the foyer (white wine, water, and grissini).



FROM MEMORY TO MEMORIALIZATION - ICMEMOHRI CONFERENCE, DAY 1

26 May 2026, Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance & Morzinplatz / Vienna Wiesenthal Institute

SITE VISITS	9:00 – 11:00	Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW) Address: Wipplingerstrasse 6–8, 1010 Vienna Documentation of resistance movements, Austrian fighters in International Brigades, exile, Nazi justice, postwar trials of Nazi perpetrators, contemporary right wing extremism in Austria.
	11:15 – 12:15	Memorial to the Victims of State Terror (Former Gestapo Headquarters/Hotel Metropol) Address: Salztorgasse 6, 1010 Vienna Discussion on Gestapo, repression, and machinery of persecution.
	11:15 – 12:15	Memorial “Never Forget” for the victims of the Gestapo Address: Morzinplatz Vienna’s first and originally illegally erected memorial for victims of Nazi crimes.
	12:30 – 13:00	Transfer to VWI
	13:00 – 13:45	Lunch
	13:45 – 14:00	Welcome by Éva Kovács, Deputy Director (Academic Affairs) VWI
	14:00 – 15:00	Debriefing
	15:00 – 15:15	Founding of ICMEMOHRI – Origins, Intentions and Challenges Kirsten John-Stucke
PANEL 1 MUSEUMS, EXHIBITIONS AND THE REPRESENTATION OF VIOLENCE	15:15 – 15:45	A) Museums and Cultural Trauma: Representing War and Violence Moderator: Kirsten John-Stucke The Representation of World War II Cultural Trauma in Vernacular Museums in Latvia Maija Meiere-Oša Representations of Roma in Post-Socialist Memorial Museums Ljiljana Radonić Topics for discussion: museum narratives and silences; representation of minority victims; national vs. transnational memory frameworks.



	15:45 – 16:15	Coffee Break
	16:15 – 17:00	B) CURATING ABSENCE: SILENCES, OBJECTS AND THE POLITICS OF EXHIBITION Moderator: Markus Moors Distant Atrocities, Local Meanings: Holocaust Commemoration in Post-Apartheid South Africa Jakub Nowakowski Two Photographs, One Medal, and Changing History Jane E Klinger Zámeček Memorial – execution site. Commemoration in tension between narratives, politics and stakeholders Viktor Janák Topics for discussion: curatorial strategies and interpretive choices; absence and invisibility in exhibitions; objects, evidence and narrative construction.
PANEL 2 REMEMBERING THE SAMUDARIPEN AND MARGINALIZED VICTIMS	17:00 – 17:45	Moderator: Éva Kovács Uštica – A Site of Remembrance for Roma Genocide / Samudaripen Danijel Vojak & Kristina Lukec Samudaripen, Romani Memory, and the Ethics of Representation Zlatomir Jovanović Thinking (Dis-)Continuity in Antigypsyism-Critical Education Lukas Engelmeier Topics for discussion: Roma genocide remembrance; ethics of representation; educational approaches to antigypsyism.
	18:30	Jewish Museum Vienna Address: Dorotheergasse 11, 1010 Vienna Reception by director of the Jewish Museum Dr. Barbara Staudinger.



FROM MEMORY TO MEMORIALIZATION - ICMEMOHRI CONFERENCE, DAY 2

27 May 2026, Vienna Museum & Memorials / Vienna Wiesenthal Institute

SITE VISITS	9:00 – 11:00	Vienna Museum – Permanent Exhibition. Address: Karlsplatz 8, 1010 Vienna Guided tour through segments of contemporary history: Sinti & Roma persecution, Spiegelgrund children – Euthanasia, Persecution of homosexuals under National Socialism, Integration into broader narrative of Jewish Vienna. Hrdlicka-Memorial (Albertina). Address: Albertinaplatz 1, 1010 Vienna Memorial against war and fascism by Austrian sculptor Alfred Hrdlicka. Michaela Feurstein-Prasser, input: Conflicting memories.
	12:00 – 12:30	Judenplatz – Rachel Whiteread Memorial. Address: Judenplatz 1, 1010 Vienna Whiteread’s Holocaust Memorial in Vienna commemorates the thousands of Austrian Jews murdered during the Holocaust through an abstract cast of a library shelving unit, evoking absence and memory.
	12:30 – 13:00	Transfer to VWI
	13:00 – 13:45	Lunch
	13:45 – 14:45	Debriefing
PANEL 3 THREATS TO MEMORY	14:45 – 15:30	A) FAR-RIGHT MOBILIZATION, POLITICAL REPRESSION AND MEMORY CONFLICTS Moderator: Ophelia Leon Far-right attacks on the culture of remembrance Philipp Neumann-Thein Repressive Policies in Kyrgyzstan Abdrakhmanov B.D. Vernacular Memorialization of Genocidal Violence: Negotiating Collective Trauma in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq Bareez Majid Topics for discussion: political instrumentalization of history, state repression and memory politics; far-right mobilization against remembrance cultures.



	15:30 – 15:55	Coffee Break
	15:55 – 16:30	B) CONTESTED NARRATIVES IN SITES OF VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT Moderator: Jill Vexler Navigating the Challenges of Memorializing Drobitsky Yar, Kharkiv Galyna Fesenko Marginalized Memories and Disputed Temporalities of Colombia’s Internal Armed Conflict María Gaitán Valencia Topics for discussion: contested memory at sites of violence; memory under pressure in contemporary conflicts; plural and marginalized narratives of violence.
PANEL 4 NEW FORMS OF MEMORY: DIGITAL, ECOLOGICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL	16:30 – 17:15	Moderator: Zahava Doering Green Commemorations Aleksandra Janus & Witold Wrzosiński Rejuvenation of an Early Feminist Utopian Text as Memory of the World Mofidul Hoque Topics for discussion: digital memory practices; ecological remembrance; experimental approaches to memory.
	18:30	Naturhistorisches Museum, Department of Anthropology Address: Burgring 7, 1010 Vienna A guided tour will explore the history of racial science and the practice of collecting human remains and ethnographic objects within the museum. Participants will have the opportunity to examine how these collections were assembled, contextualized, and interpreted over time, reflecting broader scientific, cultural, and ethical perspectives.



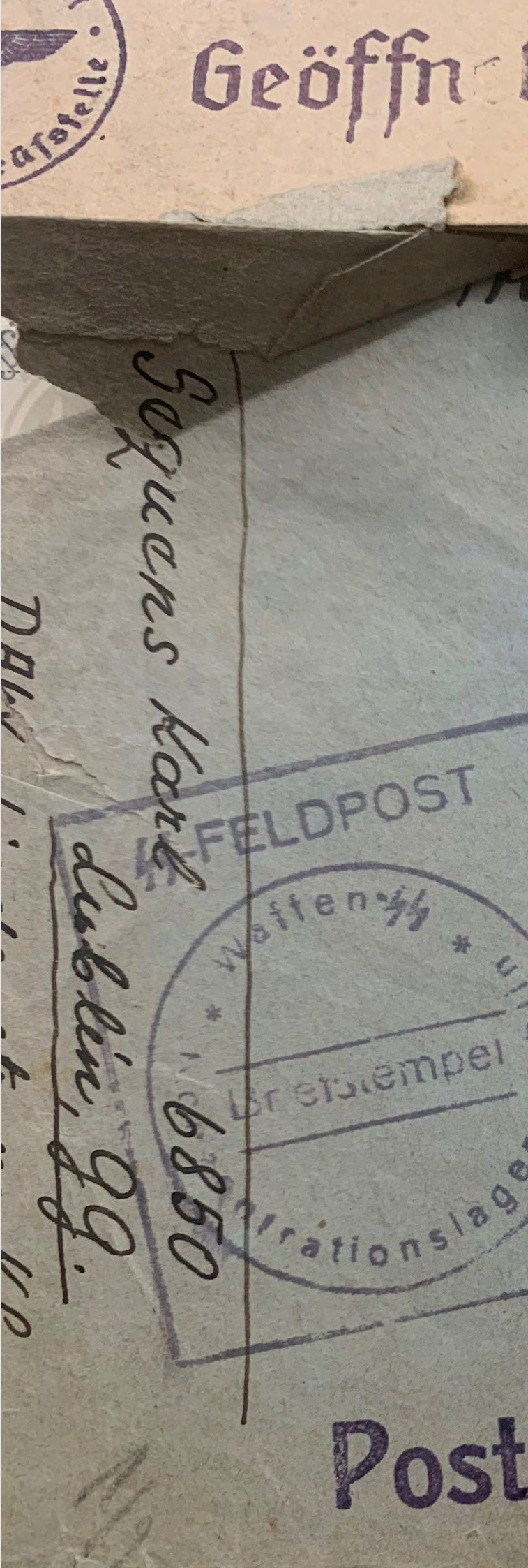
FROM MEMORY TO MEMORIALIZATION - ICMEMOHRI CONFERENCE, DAY 3

28 May 2026, Human Rights Square / Heldenplatz / House of Austrian History / Vienna Wiesenthal Institute

SITE VISITS	9:00 – 9:30	Platz der Menschenrechte - Human Rights Square / Marcus Omofuma Memorial Address: Museumsplatz / MuseumsQuartier, 1070 Vienna Public reminder against racism, state violence, and for the protection of human rights, commemorating Nigerian Marcus Omofuma, who died during a forced deportation in 1999. Mirjam Karoly, input: The missing Roma memorial.
	9:40 – 10:10	Heldenplatz – Outdoor / Heldentor. Address: Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna The Heldentor exposes tensions between heroism, victimhood, and historical responsibility in Austria's memory culture. Lea Fink, input: The story of Mela Ernst.
	10:15 – 11:15	House of Austrian History (HdGÖ) Address: Heldenplatz, 1010 Vienna Focus tour "Fundamental and human rights" explores key moments and debates in Austria's human rights history within the broader context of contemporary history since 1918.
	12:30 – 13:00	Transfer to VWI
	13:00 – 13:45	Lunch
	13:45 – 14:45	Debriefing
PANEL 5 MEMORY INSTITUTIONS: ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND ETHICAL PRACTICES	14:45 – 15:15	A) THE ARCHIVE AS LIVING MEMORY LBI and the VWI Archive/Museum Karen Franklin, Sandra Weiss, Sandro Fasching Topic for discussion: Archival networks.



	15:15 – 15:40	Coffee Break
	15:40 – 16:40	B) BETWEEN GLOBAL AND LOCAL MEMORY NETWORKS Moderator: Nils Roemer Ethics of Care in NGO-University Collaboration on Human Remains Agata Strząda & Agnieszka Jabłońska Jewish Cemetery Education and Digital Memorialization in Moldova Irina Şihova A Living Monument: Memory Practices at Casa do Povo Ernesto Mifano Honigsberg Memorial Museums as Civic Spaces of Hope: Ethical Remembrance and Human Rights Practice in the Global South Arafat Ali Topics for discussion: institutional memory work; ethics of heritage and remembrance.
	16:40 – 17:30	Membership Meeting
	18:30	Kulturankerzentrum Schlingerhof, exhibition opening “When there will be peace again ...” Life, Love and Death of the Floridsdorf Spanish Civil War Fighter Karl Sequens Address: Brünner Straße 34–38, 1210 Vienna This exhibition is dedicated to a resistance fighter from the district who joined the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War. The exhibition explores individual biography within the broader history of antifascist resistance, transnational solidarity, and the struggle for democratic values in Austria and Europe.



ICMEMOHRI POST CONFERENCE

29 May 2026

EXCURSION –
MAUTHAUSEN &
GUSEN (FULL DAY)

Guided visit to the
formerly largest
and most lethal
concentration camp
complexes in Austria,
Mauthausen and Gusen
in Upper Austria

8:30	Departure from Vienna to Mauthausen
10:45	Two-hour guided tour of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial
13:00	Lunch break at the memorial’s bistro
14:00	Departure for Gusen
14:15	Redesign of the Gusen Concentration Camp Memorial. Presentation by Dr. Barbara Glück, Director of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial.
16:15	Farewell / conclusion of the visit
18:15	Arrival in Vienna

