



EU-RUSSIA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM  
ГРАЖДАНСКИЙ ФОРУМ ЕС-РОССИЯ



European Committee  
of the Regions

## “Different Wars”: The Exhibition at Its Culmination in Brussels

**On 6 September 2017, the opening the Touring Exhibition “Different Wars: National School Textbooks on World War II” took place at the European Committee of the Regions (5th Floor, 101, Rue Belliard / Belliardstraat, 1040 Bruxelles / Brussel).**

The “Different Wars” Exhibition reveals the differences in the narration and perception of the history of the Second World War (WWII) in modern high school textbooks of the **Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia.**

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*This exhibition demonstrates that World War II is still presented and interpreted strikingly differently, based on differing sources, aims, and cultural and political factors, told **Karl-Heinz Lambertz**, President of the European Committee of the Regions and Senator of the German-Speaking Community of Belgium, who gave a speech at the opening. It is vital for us to continue to talk about the war and improve debate within our countries and across borders – and, as pillars of democracy, civil society and cities and regions must lead that debate. As the EU's assembly of local and regional leaders, our Committee is therefore pleased to host this important exhibition.*

The English version of “Different Wars” has been successfully shown in **Prague, Strasbourg, Milan, Vilnius, Wojnowice, and Münster** already. The Russian version has been displayed in **Moscow, Yekaterinburg, Perm, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, St. Petersburg, and Syktyvkar** so far. Photos and media items from previous openings may be found at <http://eu-russia-csf.org/home/projects/different-wars/exhibition-on-tour>.

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*We are thankful to the European Committee of the Regions for this opportunity to show the exhibition and are eager to know, which reactions and reflections it is going to generate in Brussels, says **Nikita Lomakin** of Memorial International, one of the authors of the exhibition. Throughout these 1.5 years of displaying “Different Wars” in Europe, we have faced both in-depth discussions and well-thought articles and simultaneously difficulties with some openings or even calls to shut down the exhibition – in Russia but also in several EU member states. All in all, this is for the best: We need to reflect on our past to be able to move forward into the future.*

The research and coordination work was fulfilled by Antikomplex (Prague), DRA / German-Russian Exchange (Berlin), Gulag.Cz (Prague), the KARTA Centre (Warsaw), Memorial International (Moscow), Memorial Italia (Milan), the Society of German-Russian Relationship (Münster/Münsterland), and the Youth Memorial (Perm).

The exhibition will stay at the European Committee of the Regions **till 29 September 2017.**

The English version of the project was supported by the European Commission, the Georg Eckert Institute, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, and the Oak Foundation.

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**The EU-Russia Civil Society Forum** was established in 2011 by non-governmental organisations as a permanent common platform. At the moment, 156 NGOs from Russia and the European Union are members of the Forum. It aims at development of cooperation of civil society organisations from Russia and EU and greater participation of NGOs in the EU-Russia dialogue. The Forum has been actively involved, inter alia, in the questions of facilitation of visa regime, development of civic participation, protection of the environment and human rights, dealing with history, and civic education. The Forum's Secretariat is based at DRA / German-Russian Exchange (Berlin).