



Memory in Presence: Memorial Sites for Empowering Peacebuilding

The Global Diplomacy Lab presents Memory in Presence, a project on the theme of dealing with the past.

Societies can be traumatised by social conflict, war, dictatorship, colonialism, slavery, racism, even pandemics, as we know all too well. Acknowledging that this bitter cocktail is a breeding ground for extremist attitudes, it is crucial to focus on how to build a resilient society. We must not practice a socially silent “future-only” orientation but should keep a working agenda concerning traumatic experiences from the past. Many civilian crises stem from unresolved post-conflict situations. These must be addressed and, if possible, resolved in the long term to boost recovery. Conflicts that happened years or even decades ago must still be considered to be “actors” in the present. For diplomats and civil servants, the capacity to deal with such trauma is an essential feature.

Together with the ESMA Museo Sitio de Memoria, and the International Holocaust Remembrance Association, GDL members Julie August and Banu Pekol are developing a training course for specialist audiences. Building on ideas from [GDL's 2017 Curriculum "Memory, Truth and Justice"](#) on mass atrocity prevention at the local level and a training course given by GDL members at the [21st European Diplomatic Programme](#) hosted by the Federal Foreign Office, the project begins with a preparatory phase starting in April 2022, followed by an online Incubator phase from June on-wards. During a series of online workshops, participants will examine the scope of the topic and explore tools to analyse different practices and sites, and a training to be delivered in Argentina. All participants and stakeholders are expected to bring their own reflections and project ideas to the debate and to help shape the formats with innovative and experimental approaches.

The Impact phase, an in-person meeting in Argentina including key diplomats, museum staff, civil society workers and GDL members, will take place from 6 to 11 November 2022. It will consist of two training sessions drawing on material from the online workshops. The first training session will address Argentine and international diplomats based in Buenos Aires, empowering them to engage in more inclusive and innovative diplomacy. The second training session will be designed for staff members working in memorial sites and museums. Participants will learn methods and tools to approach challenging stakeholder groups (such as police officers or state employees) and to positively transform any potential conflict. The trainings will also include Site Visits to the Museo Sitio de Memoria ESMA and Rosario's Museum of Memory, two institutions where participants can learn about local contexts and approaches.

Both the project journey itself and the training design will be included in a final publication. This will function as a toolbox for further training sessions on the topic.



Global Diplomacy Lab

Project schedule (all 2022)

Late April/ May:

- welcome email with information about the project.

Phase I: June – August (online):

- on-boarding
- getting familiar with the topic
- connect to each other.

Phase II: September - October (online)

- Incubator Phase: working on the specific challenge and content for the seminars.

Phase III: 6 – 11 November (in-person):

- Impact phase: meeting and training sessions in Argentina.

Phase IV: November/ December

- harvesting
- documenting
- preparing a publication.

GDL members will have 3-4 additional working group meetings.

Early 2023: Launch of a trilingual publication (Spanish, English, German) to be distributed amongst Memorial Sites worldwide.