



SUMMER UNIVERSITY

Málaga, Spain
2023



Co-funded by
the European Union

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SUMMER U: 40 YEARS CULMINATING IN SPAIN

Summer U is the biggest event of the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) and it has been bringing together young Jewish students and professionals (18-30 years old) from all over Europe and beyond, every year since 1983. This unique and incredible gathering of Jewish students in Europe is providing the best that summer has to offer - networking with Jews of different backgrounds, workshops, panels, Shabbat celebration, sport and pool activities, while also celebrating our diverse Jewish identities.

Summer University 2023 in Málaga, Spain was attended by participants from **29** countries, ranging from Norway to Portugal to Czechia to North Macedonia to France to Türkiye. This year, we celebrated the 40th year of Summer University with **300** participants, making it the perfect opportunity to celebrate the diversity of Jewish Europe, reflecting on the past 40 years and shared hopes for the next.

Summer U is the only European platform where young Jewish leaders and activists gather and exchange during specific skill-building sessions, training, and debates - in times of rising antisemitism across Europe - empowering them to build more resilient communities back home. For Jewish university students, Summer U also gives the opportunity to connect with fellow students based on a shared Jewish identity. Our programming focuses on covering a pluralistic, inclusive, and diverse range of topics from politics, to Judaism, to social media and current events, allowing for contributions from every kind of participant.



Over the last years, young Jews in Spain have been working hard to revive their student Union and add a young spirit with unique perspectives to a community that is historically as well as culturally special. Summer U Málaga was the opportunity for us to highlight the rich and unique Jewish heritage that spans over a thousand years in Spain. Spain's rich Jewish heritage, with a history that spans centuries, offers an ideal backdrop for participants to explore and celebrate the Spanish and Sephardic Jewish culture. We believe that this heritage deserved visibility and should be celebrated, especially in a year as important as the 40th year of Summer U.



Summer U's international character provides a connection between Eastern and Western European youth, and bridges divides that are often felt amongst global Jewry. By embracing the diversity of the European Jewish community, Summer U creates the space for discussion, forming of bonds, and life-long friendships and partnerships. Summer U also gathers our member Unions' leadership, Jewish activists, engaged young professionals, and other students who are active in their communities. Summer U is also the home to the General Assembly, which determines the political direction of EUJS for years to come. This is the epitome of democracy, with Union leaders voting on the issues of importance to young Jews in Europe and this year, selecting the new EUJS leadership for the next 2 years.

To support their learning and allow for a comprehensive awareness of Jewish perspectives, we provide specialised training, discussions, and spaces for cross-cultural interaction. With the help of Summer U, Jewish university students have a place to meet other students and build bonds based on their shared Jewish identity. The capacity to continue an active role in Jewish communal life while balancing a career can be challenging for young Jewish professionals. Summer U's mission is to offer young Jewish professionals educational and recreational opportunities that will help them maintain their leadership in the next generation of Jewish activity. Young Jewish professionals are able to network with others who share their interests thanks to Summer U.





PREPARING THE EVENT: MEET THE MAKERS

As EUJS' flagship and largest event of the year, Summer U is planned across multiple months. The whole Summer U is created and implemented by international volunteers who, in Summer U language, are called the Makers. Our 2023 team was made up of **27** people from **13** countries geographically spread across Europe, with around **70%** being women or gender non-binary individuals.

This gives a group of young Jews from across Europe the opportunity to **develop event management skills, meet with politicians, activists, educators from around Europe and beyond, explore Jewish ways of being and living, meet new Jewish friends, and shape and organise the largest peer-led Jewish youth event in Europe.**



Joining the EUJS 2023 Makers Team means joining a half-year-long adventure. **For 6 months, Makers work with their peers, led by the EUJS Office and Board, to ensure that this is an event that will enrich the lives of young Jews from across the political, national, and religious spectrum.** Following an application and interview procedure, the Makers Team was chosen. Those chosen have a variety of abilities, including project management, graphic design, and political activity. We also chose a variety of Makers who, in addition to tremendously benefiting from the learning environment involved in planning an event like Summer U, were just starting out on their Jewish identity journeys and desired to interact in a European Jewish context. **Both these individuals and EUJS had the chance to interact with the communities and environments they came from.**

Starting with our initial training and preparatory weekend in April, Makers build Summer U learning important skills, become engaged with EUJS and our network, and go through sensitivity awareness training so as to equip them to deal with mental health concerns, medical or security emergencies, incidents of bullying, intimidation, or harassment, among others. During this weekend, **Makers were also divided into subgroups, which included Jewish Education, Local Team, General Logistics, Union and Capacity Building, and Political Engagement from a European Perspective, all focusing on the creation and maintenance of a positive Jewish identity.** These subgroups fit into four overarching areas, namely logistics, including kashrut, day trips, and transport, promotion, including social media, marketing, and graphic design, and programming, which includes designing programming tracks, partnership managements, and speaker outreach.

Following this preparation seminar, the sub-groups met bi-weekly virtually to organise their sessions, and decide on resources that were required. This was followed up with a monthly team meeting with all sub-groups, the EUJS Office, and the EUJS Board, to discuss, provide feedback, and ensure that deadlines were met.

We are so grateful to this wonderful makers team for their tireless dedication, time, and support to ensuring Summer U was a success.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SUMMER U: THE GALA

The Gala evening took place halfway through the event, and was the opportunity to highlight the last 40 years of Summer U, and look towards the future of EUJS and European Jewry as a whole. **This was also a time to learn about, embrace, and engage with Spanish, Sephardic, and Jewish culture through typical Sephardic music and flamenco dancing, as well as hearing about Spanish Jewry from a number of speakers.**

At the event, we hosted a range of dignitaries, high level officials, and partners of EUJS, who both addressed the gala, and interacted with the young Jewish student leaders. **Each speaker addressed the Gala, and many of the speakers also presented Union Awards that recognised the hard work of the Unions over the last year.**

We opened the gala with a speech from **2022–2023 EUJS President Avital Grinberg**. We then heard from **EUJS Executive Director Eitan Bergman**.



Maram Stern, the **Executive Vice President of the World Jewish Congress**, and former President of EUJS as well as the founder of Summer U, was also present at the Gala. He spoke of the past 40 years of EUJS, reflected on key memories, and shared his hopes for the future.



We were also pleased to receive an address from the President of the **Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain, Isaac Benzaquén Pinto**, who shared his joy in celebrating with us and the pride of hosting Summer U in Spain.

Her Excellency Ambassador Rodica Radian Gordon, who started serving as Israel's ambassador to Spain in 2019, addressed the Gala and presented an award.



SPECIAL MESSAGES FROM THE EU INSTITUTIONS

At this year's Summer U Gala we were honoured to receive an address from the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and a video message from the European Parliament President Roberta Metsola.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

"Since 1983, European Union of Jewish Students has been a source of talented leaders for European Jewish communities.

And every summer, you bring together young Jews from all over Europe to learn and celebrate – preparing tomorrow's leaders. In this 40th anniversary of EUJS Summer University, I want to tell you how happy I am to be able to count with such a strong and engaged ally!

Only together can we fight back the old evil of antisemitism and show that Jewish culture is European culture."



European Parliament President Roberta Metsola

*Click the image to watch her
address.*



This year marks the 40th Summer University.



The Summer U Gala 2023 was also the proud host of the prestigious EUJS Awards for 2023. **This event provided a platform to honour and acknowledge the remarkable efforts and commitment displayed by young Jewish leaders who have made exceptional contributions to Jewish life in Europe throughout the previous year.**

The awards and their winners, were:



Union of the Year:

Union des Étudiants Juifs de France
(France)

This award recognises the union that has been the most active and made the most impact this year – whether it's through activism, campaigns, events or anything else.



Developing Union of the Year:

Jødisk ungdomssammenslutning
(Denmark)

This award distinguishes the union that has notably developed over the past year, engaging with more students and becoming a dynamic outlet for Jewish life.

Union Leader of the Year:

Emma Günsberger (Czechia).

This award celebrates the contribution of a EUJS or national union leader who led the way with an innovative action, project or campaign.



Inspiring Activist of the Year:

Victoria Borochoy (Austria)

This award recognises an activist within the EUJS or national union who, through their tireless work, has made a significant difference and inspired others to take part in meaningful actions, campaigns, or projects.



Campaign of the Year:

Jüdische Studierendenunion

Deutschland (Germany)'s

Sponsored by Fascism Campaign

This award honours an outstanding political or social campaign conducted in the past year by a national union or a group of activists.



Community Initiative of the Year:

Federación de Jóvenes Judíos en España, Jewish Youth Portugal, and Unione Giovani Ebrei d'Italia's FEJJETON.

This award honours an outstanding social, cultural or community initiative conducted in the past year by a national union or a group of activists.





Interfaith Initiative of the Year:

Union of Jewish Students of UK and
Ireland's Interfaith Week

This award celebrates the contribution of a EUJS or national union leader who led the way with an innovative action, project or campaign.



Jewish Initiative of the Year:

Česká unie židovské mládeže
(Czechia) and Jüdische
Studierendenunion Württemberg's
- Joint Passover Seder in Prague.

This award honours an outstanding Jewish initiative conducted in the past year by a national union or a group of activists.

Mazaltov to all the winners and thank you for all your hard work!



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 2023 EUJS General Assembly took place on the 16th and 18th of August this year, and gathered delegates from **36 Jewish student Unions to adopt policy motions, discuss the future of EUJS and Jewish student Unions, and elect a new President, Board, and Treasurer for the 2023–2025 term.**



This year, there were **16** policy motions, **11** policy amendments, **1** emergency motion, and elections, showing the power of democracy, and the initiative of the youth in the political sphere.

The motions adopted this year were:

- (1) Promoting visibility and inclusivity for Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews in EUJS spaces**
- (2) Placing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on the European Union's terror list**
- (3) Eastern-European Empowerment**
- (4) Commitment to the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism**
- (5) Solidarity with refugees, end Fortress Europe!**
- (6) Promoting Our Jewish Cultural Heritage**
- (7) Fighting Against Antisemitism and Discrimination in Sports**
- (8) Expanding Presidents Unite+: Strengthening Unions and the Connection Between Them**
- (9) Enhancing Union Accelerators: The Future of Union Development**
- (10) Sexual Harassment within EUJS Structures**
- (11) Gender Equality**
- (12) Combating Far-Right and All its Ideas**
- (13) EUJS and Israel**
- (14) Left-Wing Antisemitism and BDS**
- (15) Fostering Diversity in the Jewish Community**
- (16) EUJS and Europe**

THE NEW EUJS BOARD

At the General Assembly at this year's Summer U a new board, composed of the **President, 7 board members, and a Treasurer** were elected democratically by our Member Unions.



We are so excited to welcome **Emma Hallali, as the EUJS President!**

We are also thrilled to welcome **Hanna Veiler** (Germany), **Joshua Bonfante** (Italy), **Judith Offenberg** (UK), **Máté Zsédely-Holler** (Hungary), **Rafael Ruah Arie** (Portugal), **Ron Stern** (Czechia), and **Victoria Borochoy** (Austria) as the new board of Vice Presidents, and **Caterina Cognini** (Italy) as the new EUJS Treasurer!



We look forward to the next two years!



Presidents Unite+ Panel

Daniel Bobrow (President of JU), Rebeka Kostovska (President of North Macedonia Jewish Youth Club), David Fiorentini (President of UGEI) and Samuel Lejoyeux (President of UEJF) gave insights about Jewish life and youth involvement in their countries and discussed Jewish voices in traditional, communal, and advocacy spaces. Moderated by Yana Naftalieva, WUJS President.



Amidst Russia's war against Ukraine: The forgotten LGBTQIA+ and feminist perspectives

Deborah Kogan

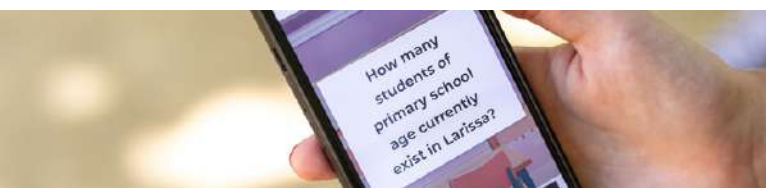
An awareness-raising session which shed light on the unique challenges faced by women and the LGBTQIA+ community by examining their experiences, resilience, and activism, and analysing the impact of gender and sexual orientation in the conflict.



UNION HOURS

During Union Hours, national Unions and their regional representatives get the chance to showcase their work and national profile as well as take pride in their Jewish identity.

This year at Summer U, Union Hours were run by the **Czech Union on Jewish life in Eastern Europe**, by the **Greek Union on Jewish life in the Mediterranean area**, and the **Swedish Union and Danish Union sharing about the Nordic countries**.



DAY TRIPS

This year, our participants had the opportunity to go on 1 of 4 Day Trips organised by our wonderful team of local makers. This gave participants unique experiences and insights into all the features that Spain and its culture has to offer.

Nerja

Participants discovered the hidden wonders of Nerja by exploring the mesmerising Nerja Caves and journeying through their ancient history. They were immersed in the charm of Nerja's old town with its dainty streets and Andalusian culture and enjoyed the crystal-clear sea and white sand beaches.

Málaga

Participants embarked on a captivating city tour with a visit to La Alcazaba fortress. Afterwards, they either unwinded and soaked up the sun at the beautiful Malaga beaches, or explored the Feria de Malaga for a true local experience.

Granada

Participants explored Granada's rich history and culture, diving into the secrets of the city's Jewish past and Sephardic influence in Andalucía with a guided tour. They discovered hidden gems and enjoyed the cultural fusion that makes Granada a must-see, beautiful destination.

Caminito del Rey

These participants went on an incredible hike through the Caminito del Rey, a Málaga landmark, where they discovered the flora and fauna of the region with a guided tour. They then unwinded in the town of Antequera as their last stop.





DIVERSITY WALK AND COLOUR RUN

We held an amazing Diversity Walk this year at Summer U, right before the annual traditional Colour Run. This was an opportunity to recognise the diversity of our Jewish community, recognising the intrinsic importance of celebrating all that unites us, including our differences.



SUMMER U IN NUMBERS



54,55% of participants were from **Western Europe**
25,92% of participants were from **Southern Europe**
12,46% of participants were from **Eastern Europe**
3,71% of participants were from the **Nordics**
3,37% of participants were from **Outside of Europe**

Non-Binary
0.7%

Male
49.5%

Female
49.8%



SUMMER U APP

This year we once again had Summer U App, whereby participants were able to tailor make their apps to present them with notifications for sessions taking place, activities that were undertaken, and allowed for networking between participants and speakers.

THE SPEAKERS OF SUMMER U 2023

We will now highlight some of the speakers who came from all over the world to deliver sessions at Summer U 2023. Not listed here are a range of Union leaders, student activists, and panelists, who shared their experiences and expertise with Summer U attendees. All of the Summer U sessions this year were rich in promoting ideas and dialogue surrounding diversity, identity, climate change, politics, Judaism, Europe, and the world.

Elizaveta Zaidman

Elizaveta Zaidman is a Diplomacy and political science professional working as International Relations Officer and NextGen Manager for Diplomacy at the World Jewish Congress. All things diplomacy, democratic advancement, youth engagement, fight against antisemitism and discrimination, incremental positive change. Elizaveta specializes in comparative research of political antisemitism and has gathered work experience in statement- and speechwriting, political campaigning, and advocacy in Eastern and Western Europe. Coming from the small but proud Republic of Moldova, she speaks 3 UN Languages + 2 more fluently. Elizaveta is currently pursuing a master's degree in Political Science and Governance. **At Summer U, Elizaveta held a session on the secrets of global and personal diplomacy.**



Josephine Ballon

Josephine Ballon, after studying law and completing her legal clerkship, was admitted as a lawyer in 2018 working in the field of consumer rights and legal tech. Since November 2019 she supports HateAid as Head of Legal. Josephine Ballon is advocating to improve the legal framework and access to justice for those affected from online violence, who are left largely unprotected against violations of their rights. Josephine Ballon was invited as an expert several times, e.g. to the Legal Affairs Committee and the Committee of Digital Agenda of the German Federal Parliament and European Parliament to testify about law enforcement of online hate crimes, gender-based online violence and platform regulation. **At Summer U, she delivered a session on the impact of deep fakes on gender based violence online.**



Lievnath Faber

Lievnath Faber is a Jewish educator and activist, birth- and death doula and ritualist. She holds an rMA in the arts from the University of Amsterdam and is a senior Humanity in Action fellow as well as a senior Landecker Democracy fellow who writes and works on the intersection of antiracism and antisemitism in Europe and specialized in the Netherlands. She weaves Jewish activism, life cycle awareness and ritual together to create joyful and empowered Jewish life in Europe. She is a trained mikveh guide and grief ceremony facilitator, (co) founder and program director of Oy Vey, the open, inclusive and unapologetically Jewish community in Amsterdam and part of the faculty staff of Ze Kollel, the immersive pan-European Jewish learning programme. She is a rabbinical student with ALEPH - the Alliance for Jewish Renewal and works towards creating joyful and empowered Jewish life in Europe. **At Summer U, she held a session ranging around the question whether Jews are white.**



Mike Mendoza

Mike Mendoza is the Junction Program Manager. Junction is JDC Europe's young adult arm, supporting 18–35-year-olds to engage and enrich their Jewish lives as it makes sense to them. We enable Jewish programs, to ensure a Jewish future. Mike has worked as a professional Jewish educator for the last 11 years in London, and now with JDC, the world's largest Jewish humanitarian aid organisation. Mike is dedicated to making Jewish life, heritage and ritual accessible for young people, whilst personally viewing his Judaism as an inherited platform to explore spirituality and mindfulness. With a 2:1 BA Hons Degree in Human Geography, Mike takes a keen interest in how people interact with place, space and time. He is also unashamedly a huge Music, Sci-Fi, Comic and Fantasy enthusiast. **At Summer U, Mike delivered a session called "Behind the Jewish Curtain".**



Yoni Hammerman

Yoni Hammerman serves as the Director of WJC NextGen, a program of the World Jewish Congress which identifies, supports, and trains young Jewish leaders, aged 15-26, supporting them in making an impact today and preparing them to be leaders in Jewish communities around the world tomorrow. As a part of his role, Yoni manages the Lauder Fellowship, Start-Up Nation Mentorship, NextGen Inc., Jewish Youth Assembly, and WJC's Internship program. He additionally consults and supports WJC's communications and events teams. Yoni holds a B.S. from Binghamton University, graduating in 2018 with a major in Business Administration and a minor in Israel Studies. He began working at the World Jewish Congress in May 2018 shortly after his undergraduate graduation, initially serving as the Campaign & Global Media Coordinator. In December 2020, Yoni received his Masters in Business Administration, graduating Summa Cum Laude. **At Summer U, Yoni held the first ever roundtable discussion with Union leaders at Summer U, discussing claiming one's spot at the table and impacting one's community.**





CLICK TO WATCH THE
SUMMER U VIDEO



SUMMER U 2023 PARTNERS



Hillel Polska



SHALOM

Organization of the Jews
in Bulgaria





European Union
of Jewish Students



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