Controversial Pasts, Challenging Futures. Teaching History in a Rapidly Changing World

International Society of History Didactics (ISHD)

Annual Conference

20-22 May, 2027

Kavala, Greece

Co-organizers:

Laboratory of Technology, Research and Applications in Education, Department of Humanities, Democritus University of Thrace

Municipality of Kavala

Call for Papers

This conference explores how history education confronts contested, sensitive, and plural pasts amid accelerating social, political, economic, technological, and demographic change. We invite critical reflection on how teachers, curricula, policy makers, museums, and community partners navigate competing narratives, silences, and claims to memory while preparing students and learners for uncertain, interconnected futures. The theme foregrounds the pedagogical, ethical and institutional challenges of doing history in multicultural, migration-affected, post-conflict, and digitally mediated societies, and asks how history teaching can balance truth-seeking, empathy, civic competence, and social justice without reproducing racial, ethnic, social, gender and cultural domination or exclusion.

Key aims, without being exhaustive, of the conference are to:

- Map contemporary dilemmas and innovations in teaching contested histories across diverse educational contexts.
- Surface approaches that center marginalized voices and material experiences while engaging plural perspectives on the past.
- Examine the role of history education in processes of integration, reconciliation, democratic citizenship, and social cohesion.
- Interrogate the impacts of rapid change — including digital media, political polarization, migration, climate disruption, and shifting national narratives — on curricular choices, classroom practice, and teacher development.
- Foster intercultural, interdisciplinary, and practice-oriented exchange among researchers, teachers, policymakers, museum educators, and community stakeholders.

Therefore, participants are invited to deal with the following questions:

- How can curricula and classroom pedagogies responsibly address challenging, contested, traumatic, or exclusionary pasts without traumatizing or retraumatizing learners or simplifying complexity?
- What methods and materials effectively foreground marginalized communities' histories while promoting critical historical thinking and democratic awareness?
- How do teachers negotiate top-down national narratives, local memories, and transnational perspectives in multicultural classrooms?
- In what ways do digital platforms, social media, and new forms of public history shape young people's historical knowledge, identities, as well as political viewpoints and attitudes?
- How can assessment, teacher education, and professional support be designed to equip educators for ethically sensitive and inclusive history teaching?
- What institutional or policy reforms in national or international levels facilitate integrative practices that connect schools, museums, community groups, and archives?

We welcome conceptual work, empirical studies, pedagogical innovation, curriculum and materials analyses, comparative and historical perspectives, and community-engaged research that address these issues. Contributions that offer practical classroom resources, evidence of impact, or pathways for collaboration between education systems and public history institutions are especially encouraged.

Abstract proposals should **not exceed 1500 characters** (including spaces) and should be sent **by November 15, 2026** via email to ishdyearbook@gmail.com Please indicate **ISHD Conference 2027** and your **abstract title** in the Subject Line of your email. Be sure to include your **name, title, institution, address**, and **email** contact information. The results of the peer review process will be announced **until December 15, 2026**.

There will be limited opportunities for hybrid participation, with the conference fee (the same for both on-line and on-site participants) of **70 EUR for ISHD members**, and **100 EUR for all other participants**. Conference expenses, including bags, printed materials, and coffee breaks will be covered by the organizers. Details about transportation, accommodation, meals, special events and other practicalities will be announced later.