

# PROJECT PAPER

Once upon a time ... there was a Great War

Findings, results and conclusions of a project about World War One

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## 1. Introduction (Jan-Philipp Wagner)

When World War One broke out in summer 1914, the enthusiasm of the soldiers marching to the front and of their families at home was incredibly large. However, this feeling about the war changed soon as the fighting took much longer than expected, the soldiers were caught in trenches at the front and their families faced severe food shortages and poverty at the home-front. At the end the war went on for four long years and World War One was the most destructive, traumatising and damaging armed conflict mankind had experienced so far. It destroyed the livelihood of a whole European generation.

Today, 100 years after the outbreak of World War One, Europe looks very different. The relations among European peoples are much more characterised by friendship and faith in one another than by hostility and violence. However, this process of making friends with other European nations was not self-evident. The rise of Nazi Germany in the early 1930s, the Anschluss of Austria in 1938 and finally the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 showed that peace is not sustainable by itself but that it needs to be looked after in order to endure. After the Second World War, the process of making friends within Europe largely benefitted from the idea of European integration and the evolution of the European Union and its predecessors. The end of the cold war in 1990 facilitated a profound friendship amongst all parts of Europe. However, nowadays we experience new tensions within Europe which only shows that the persistence of peace still requires care. This reasons the importance of commemorating the destructive war experiences of the past, such as World War One, because remembering the horror of the past helps explain why efforts are needed to prevent violence and secure peace in present and in future times.

The project whose conclusions and outcomes are presented in this paper was part of the conference Europe 14|14 set up by the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Federal Agency for Civic Education), the Robert-Bosch-Stiftung (Robert Bosch Foundation) and the Körber-Stiftung (Körber Foundation) in order to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of World War One. The so-called HistoryCampus which took place from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2014 brought about 500 young Europeans to Berlin where they learned about and discussed the World War in one of 22 workshops. The conference programme was accomplished by a wide range of additional events and activities such as the opening speech of the German chancellor Angela Merkel, a panel discussion with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and the closing party with the presentation of conference results.

The project “Once upon a time ... there was a Great War” formed one of the 22 workshops of Europe 14|14 and was set up on behalf of the Gemeinsam Europa Gestalten e.V. (Shaping Europe Together Association). The workshop was different from others as some of its participants already did some work before the actual conference. It differed also because of the internationality of its work and because the project leader, workshop speakers and participants all were students and no professionals.

This paper gives the reader an overview about the results and findings of the project. The project is explained in detail in chapter 2. Chapter 3 contains detailed evaluations of the German, English, French and Polish version of the survey that was conceptualised, conducted and evaluated before the HistoryCampus. Chapter 4 consists of summaries of the research findings from Dundee, Freiburg and Warsaw. The surveys developed by the project participants during the HistoryCampus and their findings are presented in chapter 5. An appendix of informative and useful documents is composed in chapter 6, whereas chapter 7 consists of a list of the project participants and also of information on who to contact in relation to questions or comments about this paper.

## 2. About the concept of the project (Jan-Philipp Wagner)

The student project “Once upon a time ... there was a Great War” can be divided into two different phases: the first phase contained the research done before the Europe 14|14 conference, whereas the second phase represents the work done during the conference.

The research done during the first phase was mainly done on the impact of war. However, a survey was created and carried out, too, in order to find out what people nowadays still know about World War One. The project always pursued the idea of international collaboration and thus the research and the survey were done in different countries and cities. Research groups were founded in Dundee, Scotland, and Freiburg, Germany and a project speaker researched the impact of the war on Warsaw. Moreover, versions of the survey in English, German, French and Polish were created in order to reach a wider and more international target group. These two project activities – research and survey – started in January 2014 and formed the first phase of the project.

During the Europe 14|14 conference in May 2014, the project work was expanded by three further activities. The presentation of the research result from Dundee, Freiburg and Warsaw formed the first activity. The second activity contained the presentations of the findings of the survey. The participants were then asked to be more active as they designed, carried out and evaluated their own surveys. These group surveys formed the third activity of the project during the Europe 14|14 conference. A detailed schedule of the workshop can be found in chapter 6.

The project “Once upon a time ... there was a Great War” pursued from the beginning two main targets: the provision of the possibility for the participants to gain extensive knowledge on the specific ways in which World War One affected Europe and on the awareness of the war in today’s society on the one hand; and the gathering of a wide range of information on World War One which creates the possibility for people not involved in the project to extend their knowledge about Europe’s history on the other.

In addition to these two main targets, the project was conceptualised to promote numerous personal skills and abilities: time management, group work, research, designing and evaluating surveys, presentation skills and project management. The participants were given the opportunity to personally improve in the area of these skills and abilities.

Moreover, the compilation of this paper was ab initio the planned way to secure the project findings and to render them accessible for both the project participants and the wider public.

### 3. The survey

The next paragraphs present the findings of the four versions of the survey. Although the survey was translated into English, German, French and Polish, it was guaranteed that the initial meaning of each question remains the same in order to facilitate the comparison of results. The survey consisted of six parts: *personal details*, *general knowledge*, *local knowledge*, *personal opinion*, *personal experience*, and *source of knowledge* (see chapter 6 for details). It therefore covered a wide range of different aspects of World War One. Carrying out the survey was mainly online-based with the questions distributed via email or on Facebook.

#### 3.1. The results of the German version (Erin Hughes)

The German survey was carried out over the course of two weeks and it was answered by 154 people, with roughly an even split between female and male respondents. The majority of which, were between the ages of 18 and 25, and represented over 50 cities in Germany, although 11% of respondents were from non-German countries. As we used social media as the main platform for launching our survey, this might explain why the predominant age group was so young, and why only 5 people over the age of 35 participated.

The survey results were indicative of a general lack of knowledge on the subject. Although most of those who filled out the survey could provide the correct dates for the war, any questions that required more specific information were generally not well answer. What was surprising was that the German respondents knew more about the Triple Entente and ‘winners’ of the war, than about their own alliance. Only 45% correctly named the countries involved in the Triple Alliance, whereas 60% could correctly identify all the countries involved in the Triple Entente. It might be suggested that this is due to the influence of the winning countries upon how the war is perceived and, in particular, Germany’s forced acceptance of the war guilt clause. This defeatist attitude was subtly visible when asked about the Treaty of Versailles and how the war affected Germany. 89% of those who took the survey knew that it was the Treaty of Versailles that ended the war with Germany; lost land, reparations and war guilt were the most common answers as to how their country was affected. Although the overall trends were well identified, very few people had any knowledge of how their own city was affected, what their local regiments were called or how their city commemorates the war nowadays.

Although the participants were practically unanimous that Germany lost the war, they also agreed that every country was in part responsible for the war. Likewise, there was the common agreement that no country really won, and that every country is a loser when it comes to war. This shows an interesting progression in the German mindset towards the war; distancing themselves from the burden of carrying all the guilt and blame, and, rightfully, spreading the weight. It also shows a refreshing outlook that war is unnecessary and benefits no one.

Finally, what was most evident is that the German survey respondents felt that they did not know enough about the war. Many listed school and the media as their main sources of information on the war, however, it was implied that this information was inadequate, and 78% stated that they would like to know more.

### 3.2. The results of the English version (Jan-Philipp Wagner)

The English version of the survey was not only carried out online but also offline with print-outs to ask people on the street. Altogether 133 people answered the questions, 119 online and 14 offline.

The vast majority of respondents were British citizens, however there were also other nationalities represented such as Bulgarian and Croatian. 55% of the respondents were female, 45% male, and about two-thirds of the interviewees were between 18 and 25 years old. The remaining one third equally spread across other age groups. This uneven distribution might be reasoned by the usage of social media for publishing and distributing the link to the online survey.

The respondents did well in the section of General Knowledge. Almost 90% of them knew that World War One broke out in 1914 and about 80% that it ended in 1918. Most interviewees correctly listed the countries that were actively involved in World War One; however some respondents forgot key parties such as Austria-Hungary, Russia and France or reduced the war to a conflict only between Britain and Germany. The knowledge about the two alliances of World War One was less extensive. About 50% of the respondents knew the members of the Triple Entente, about 30% knew the members of the Triple Alliances. A remarkable portion of 10% mixed them up. The name of the treaty that was signed to restore peace after World War One was known by two-thirds of the interviewees, yet only about one fifth got the year of ratification right.



The interviewees did not know as much about the local impacts of World War One. Two-thirds of the respondents stated that they knew how their country of residence was affected by the war. Food shortages, bombings, food rationing, poverty, diseases and women at work were the most frequently mentioned affects. Only about 25% of the interviewees indicated that they knew about the war impact on their home town. They mainly cited the same impacts as above. Again only about 25% of the respondents stated that they knew the name of their local regiment that fought in World War One. About half of them know how their home towns try to commemorate World War One nowadays. They mostly listed memorials, remembrance days (11th November) and minute's silences.

The personal opinions of the interviewed people significantly differed from one another. One third of the respondents perceived Germany as responsible for the outbreak of World War One and one fifth stated that Austria-Hungary was responsible, whereas another one fifth said that no country was responsible referring to the tense constellation of the alliances and the general tensions of international relations. Two-thirds of the interviewees thought that the member states of the Triple Entente won World War One; however a remarkable share of 15% stated that no country won. One respondent cited that "nobody ever wins a war". The Triple Alliance was seen as the loser of the war by about 65% of the asked population. Russia was also mentioned as a loser because of their extraordinarily high loss of life. About 15% stated that all countries lost.

The survey shows that personal experiences in relation to World War One are seldom. Only one third of the respondents stated that they knew someone or heard about someone who was personally affected by the war. Most of them referred to their ancestors who fought in the war. Only 8% of the interviewees indicated that they were aware of any other personal story related to World War One.

School education was the most often ticked source of knowledge about World War One, followed by the family, the media and university education. About two-thirds of the respondents would like to know more about the war.

The survey pointed out that most people know the key facts of World War One. However, their knowledge about more detailed aspects of the war or its local impact is rather thin. Germany is widely seen as the main aggressor of the war, the Triple Entente as its winner, and the Triple Alliance as its loser. However, the opinion that no one wins and everyone loses a war exists, too. Only a very small portion of the interviewed people has some sort of personal

linkage to the war. The school is the main source of knowledge about World War One and the majority of the respondents would like to know more about what happened in Europe 100 years ago.

### 3.3. The results of the French version (Odile Boubakeur)

The French version of the survey has been carried out online for two weeks in April 2014. The target group predominantly consisted of people interested in Franco-German relations. The survey's results were very interesting and of a high value. After being proposed for two weeks on different Facebook groups and websites, the survey has been filled by more than one hundred people (108 exactly), mostly between the ages of 18 and 35 years. The answers showed that the general knowledge concerning the dates (break out and end) and the countries involved in the war such as Austria, Germany, France, England, Italia, Poland, United States and Russia, was excellent. The "Triple Alliance" and the "Triple Entente" are very well known too. Many details were given: from the trenches to the destructions. Many respondents referred to famous battles, such as "la bataille de la Marne", "la bataille de la Somme" and "la bataille de Verdun". These battles were so huge that they could never have been forgotten, and the numerous human losses were as unforgettable.

Another part of the survey dealt with the local knowledge. The answers showed, if the general knowledge was very good if not excellent (97% know in what extent their country was affected by the WWI), it was not the same for the local knowledge. Only 11% of the people answering the survey knew which regiment acted in their neighbourhood. Answers reflected how much the symbols could be important. To the eyes of people from the East of France, German soldiers became worse than barbarians because "they dared to damage the cathédrale de Reims!" The national commemorations seem to be much more known than the local commemorations. Many answers quoted the Arc de triomphe in Paris with the tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the eternal flame, and the date of the November 11th, which is a famous bank holiday, commemorating the end of the WWI. Only three answers gave precise examples of local commemorations (ex: Montagne en Gironde's high school, an exhibition in Evian about refugees, and a partnership between Morlaix and Reims).

The answers concerning the general opinion revealed that although people considered that Germany and Austria lost the war, they were not responsible for the outbreak of WWI. According to the answers, the general opinion considers the numerous alliances existent all

across Europe as responsible for the political tensions of the beginning of the twentieth century. The answers about winners and losers were much more precise: France, England and USA were considered as the winners, and Germany and Austria as the losers.

The respondents' personal experience is divided into two equal parts. Half of the interviewees stated that they already met someone or something personally affected by the WWI. Is it due to the participants' age? Indeed, even if grand-parents appeared to be witnesses of a high value, 44% answered "school" was their most important source of knowledge. And 58% would have been interested in learning more about the WWI. The many stories explained here were various, depending on the speaker's gender. Men were focused on the trenches and battles, obviously the fear of dying, whereas women explained personal and familial experiences, such as crossing the country from the North to the South by foot with babies in a pram.

These various testimonies reveal that the WWI is a very important – and still living! – heritage but one that always needs to be promoted, especially by young people involved in the construction of a better world.

#### 3.4. The results of the Polish version (Katarzyna Lorenc)

65 people filled in the Polish version of the survey. Most responses came from women (61%) and from the following cities: Warsaw, Krakow, and Poznan. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 26 and 35 years.

The question of the year of the beginning and the end of the war was answered mostly correctly (only with 4 incorrect answers for each question).

The question on the countries that were actively involved in the outbreak of the war was generally answered with a list of main European countries. Besides the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, Austro-Hungary and Italy, also USA, Turkey and Japan were mentioned.

The respondents were predominantly correct relating to the countries of Triple Entente and Triple Alliance.

Half of the responses on the question about the Treaty of Versailles as the official treaty that restore peace in Europe were correct; the remaining 50% of respondents have either not responded or mentioned another agreement.

The majority of the respondents answered the questions about the biggest effects of World War One with regard to the great importance of the war for Poland. In this respect, the following statements were mentioned:

“Poland regained its independence; Poland appeared on the map of Europe, after 123 years of non-existence; the establishment of borders. (52 answers)”

When asked about the local influence only half of the respondents chose to share the answers. Most frequently they mentioned the return of independent cities to the Polish territory, followed by the Greater Poland Uprising or Wielkopolska Uprising of 1918-1919.

Moreover the following answers were stated: “Warsaw became the front line between Germany and Russia; Warsaw became again the capital of the Polish Government; Silesia was divided between Germany and Poland which caused a polarization of the population; women gained the right to vote.”

In the section of commemoration of World War One at local and national level only few responses were given: the most common statements were about war memorials and about the celebration of 11th of November as a national holiday (Independence Day). Only one interviewee mentioned an extensive exhibition on the occasion of the anniversary of the outbreak of World War One.

Similar to the answers given on the Triple Alliance and Entente most of the responds on the loss and win of the World War One were correct.

Most of the people do not have a personal connection to someone personally affected by the World War One.

If so, the feelings shared to the persons – mostly soldiers or prisoners-of-war – were associated with compassion, admiration, and respect.

The most knowledge was gained in the School (68 %) and undefined Others (19%). University, Media and Family were each only mentioned by 3 % of the respondents.

The survey ended with the positive result that over 80% of the respondents stating to wish to know more about the World War One.

#### 4. The research

Within the framework of the Europe 14|14 conference and the project “Once upon a time ... there was a Great War”, research was done on the impact of World War One on the cities of Dundee in Scotland, Freiburg in Germany and Warsaw in Poland. This research focused mainly but not entirely on the changes and developments caused by the war within the three cities, thus on the home front. A wide range of different aspects and dimensions of the war-time influence was covered and many useful findings were discovered. The next few paragraphs present the findings of the research done in each city.

##### 4.1. The results of the research on Dundee, Scotland (Jan-Philipp Wagner)

The research on the impact of the Great War on Dundee in Scotland was done by a group of students, so that a range of different research aspects could be successfully examined. However, the research was mainly concentrated on the home front in Dundee as the students wanted to know how their home town far away from the actual battlefields and front lines contributed to the war effort and in turn how it was affected by the distant war.

A main focus of the research was the role charities within Dundee during war time. Charity work covered services and provisions for both the soldiers at the front and the people that suffered in Dundee because of the influences of the war. For the purpose of supporting British soldiers, Dundee women organised for example knitting guilds producing socks for the soldiers at the front. The Serbian Boys Home which was founded in 1916 is a good example for what the city did in order to help those suffering in Dundee. It was created especially for Serbian refugee children that came to Scotland after their evacuation from Serbia.

The importance of charities for the wellbeing of Dundee’s population further grew after the end of the war in 1918 when returning soldiers that could not continue working due to injuries or disability were in need of provisions. Governmental provisions existed but were insufficient. The eligibility for war pension depended on the level of injury but even a fully paid pension was not really enough to comfortably replace a salary. Moreover, soldiers suffering from psychological disorders, such as shell shock, were not eligible for any war pension. All this motivated the churches and charities to replace the state in terms of social welfare for returning soldiers.

Another key part of Dundee's contribution to the war effort was the collection of extensive donations from its citizens, churches and charities. Within the first year of the war, about £100,000 was donated by the population to support the British military. The sum given rose and had its outstanding peak during the so-called Tank Week in February 1918 when £3,679,582 was collected from Dundee.

On top of the financial contribution, Dundee city sent comfort packages to British and allied soldiers at the front. These packages contained tobacco and other things of use or value to the soldiers.

The essential role nurses played during World War One was also extensively covered by the research although this part is not limited to the city of Dundee. When World War One broke out in 1914, the demand for nurses surmounted the number of professional nurses. In Britain, multiple organisations stepped forward in order to minimize the effects of this shortage. One of these organisations is called FANY (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) that focused on the education of women in camping, Morse code signalling and cavalry work in order to prepare them to work on the battlefield. Although the volunteers were well-educated and willing to serve at the front, the British government refused to allow overseas placements. However, Belgium was more than happy to organise the transport of FANY nurses to the continent as they then set up hospitals and cared for wounded and ill soldiers.

Another such organisation was VAD (Voluntary Aid Dispatchment) which was mainly funded by the Red Cross. Despite initial doubt whether the young VAD nurses could cope with the war experiences many were sent to France where they worked in canteens and emergency hospitals.

One very different approach to this research project was to analyse Dundonian literature, especially poetry, in order to understand how the war changed Dundee. Writing has a long history in Dundee and at the beginning of the 20th century professional and amateur writers had good chances to publish their work, often anonymously, in newspapers. There were two different types of wartime poetry in Dundee: firstly, poems written by people who stayed in Dundee; and secondly, poems written by soldiers in action. The first type of poems was often written by women to honour the fallen soldiers or to encourage the living Dundonians. These poems also functioned as appeals to the public strengthening solidarity and generating support for the war effort. However, some poems expressed critical opinions about the war, the cruelty and the senselessness which facilitated a vivid public discussion.

The second group mainly consists of poems written by the “Fighter Writers”, a group of 18 editorial staff members of a local publisher and press agency who served at the front. Besides poems, they sent reports and sketches back to the newspapers in Dundee telling about their war experiences. Because of their writing, some of them became well known not only in Dundee but also in other parts of Scotland.

Dundonian wartime poems had three functions: they were firstly used as instruments of propaganda, appeals and criticism. Secondly, they served as means of communication within Dundee and between Dundee and its soldiers. Thirdly, the collective identity of the city was strengthened by these poems.

The war furthermore had a significant impact on the industry in Dundee which was another part of the research. Two key industries in Dundee were highly stimulated by the war: the production in the jute mills rapidly increased as the demand for sacking cloth for all sorts of bags was growing; and also the shipbuilding industry benefited from the war as vessels needed to be armoured or repaired for the war. Despite this stimulation of Dundee’s key industries, World War One also caused difficulties as men were mobilised and sent to the front on the continent.

An estimated share of more than 60% of Dundee’s men left the city to fight in the war. This brought about an enormous change in gender roles. Women were introduced to predominantly male dominated work, such as painting ships, for two reasons: firstly, this introduction was needed to maintain the demanded production of goods. During the war, two-thirds of workers in jute mills were female and as female workers earned only 45% of the wages for men, the companies did not only manage to maintain their production but also to gain profit. Secondly, women had to go work in order to feed their families as their previous breadwinners were far away. Hence, the traditional gender roles of the man as the main source of income and the woman as mother and carer was broken up. Women had to earn money and to care for the family which enhanced the perceived importance of their role.

Men who did not serve at the front for whatever reason were publicly blamed for this and given a white feather as a symbol questioning the masculine identity and apparent cowardice as all men were expected to fight.

After World War One, production returned to pre-war levels and women were forced to leave their working places to make way for the soldiers coming home. However, many returning

soldiers had to face injuries, disability or psychological disorders rendering them inappropriate for the job market and weakening the predominant male role.

Dundee's losses were numerous. The 4th Black Watch Battalion which was mainly formed by Dundonian soldiers was highly involved in the Battle of Loos from the 25th of September 1915 to the 14th of October 1915. Already during the very first morning of the battle, out of the 20 officers and 420 men from Dundee, 19 officers and 230 men were either killed or wounded. In order to commemorate this battle and the losses, a beacon is lit every year on the 25th of September on top of the Dundee Law Monument. There are many more war memorials in Dundee showing the importance World War One and its impact had and still have for Dundee.

The research showed that Dundee and its people were significantly affected by World War One. It changed the social structure, brought about charities as key agents of solidarity, shaped literature and marked a whole generation.

#### 4.2. The results of the research on Freiburg, Germany (Erin Hughes)

Thanks to the research of Roger Chickering, presented in his book 'The Great War and Urban Life in Germany: Freiburg 1914-1918', we were able to take a look back at the city of Freiburg during the Great War, The specific focus of the research done in Freiburg was on the social impact of the war rather than the political impact; taking an in-depth look at how civilians on the home front were affected by the fighting, which was happening less than 70km away.

The city's demographics were significantly affected by the war. Freiburg went from being "the pensionopolis for all of Germany", a permanent retreat for wealthy retirees, to being an intersection for soldiers and their relatives on their way to other locations. Most notable was a drastic reduction in the number of adult males as they were sent off to the front. This was reflected in the sudden decline of students matriculated at the Albert-Ludwigs Universität. Between the summer and winter semester of 1914, the number of matriculated students dropped from 3,200 to around 600, making Freiburg the smallest university in Germany. In addition to this, many of the affluent pensioner households fled the city, and its previously flourishing tourist trade diminished due to Freiburg's proximity to the front. However, the progressively abating reserve of cultural tourists was soon replenished by the presence of military tourists,



the number of which was more than double the number of peacetime tourists, and in any given year, more than ten times the population of Freiburg itself. With over 550 visitors staying each night, the most prevalent proportion of the town's tourist population was visiting relatives of injured soldiers.

With the exception of the Social Democrats, the overall response to the announcement of the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia was generally positive. Growing crowds paraded along the Kaiserstrasse, from the Freiburger Zeitung, the source of the news bulletins, to Karlsplatz, where the central barracks lay near to the Siegesdenkmal, the monument to the German victory of 1870. During the last week of July 1914, the patriotic cries and chants could still be heard up until the early hours of the morning almost a kilometre away. The Social Democrats, however, were critical of the war, and on July 28th, staged an indoor rally, demonstrating their ambition to resolve the crisis peacefully. In one particularly violent occasion, protestors showed their opposition to the Social Democrats apparent patriotic distain, by throwing rocks and beer bottles at the offices of the Volkswacht, the socialist newspaper.

What was most impressive was the support the city and its residents provided to the soldiers and the general war effort. All levels of society contributed in some way or form to the warfare, such as by donating whatever gold they might have. Women, for example, showed their support by exchanging their gold wedding rings for ones made of iron. Although these contributions might have seemed minor, during the first year of the war, a staggering 70,000 Marks worth of gold was collected and sent to Berlin. Citizens also provided more immediate support by providing food and lodging for soldiers in their homes, although this was not always voluntary. Some sympathetic people were even generous enough to put aside their differences and offer cigarettes and other gifts to the trainloads of French prisoners of war passing through the city.

As the war began, the city was immediately faced with the problem of unemployment and the closure of dozens of firms, as owners and essential workers were called up for military service. At that time there were close to 11,000 women in employment, mostly within domestic service. Although less dramatic than in the male labour force, joblessness resulted immediately. It was not until late 1915 that feminization of the industrial workforce occurred due to the demand for industrial labour. By the end of the war women represented more than two-thirds of the industrial workforce, although their employment remained largely concentrated in traditional areas such as textiles, the pay for which was particularly low, at an average of 2 Marks per day.

The provision of instruments to improve the financial and legal standing of families which had been negatively affected by the war was a top priority of the local government. With their main breadwinner gone, many families in Freiburg struggled to make ends meet, and were often faced with the possibility of eviction. Laws were created which both provided financial remuneration to the families of soldiers who had been called to the front, and protected those facing eviction.

The municipal Committee for War Relief (Ausschuss für Kriegsfürsorge) was established in August 1914 in order to manage and distribute aid to the families of enlisted soldiers. The Red Cross in particular was instrumental in its campaigns to gather donations. Within three days of launching their first appeal, they collected 60,000 Marks.

Liebesgaben were one of the most popular ways of showing support to soldiers on the front. Gifts of food, drink, tobacco and clothing were regularly sent to local troops in order to help maintain a link to home and encourage moral. At times, the numbers of packages sent to the front were so great that they overwhelmed the postal service. During Christmastime in 1915, the municipal government sent 100 bottles of red wine, 200 bottles of rum and schnapps, and 29,000 cigarettes to local units in the field.

The city's proximity to active battlefields in Alsace played a crucial factor in Freiburg's experience of the war, and meant that they were often at risk from air raids. Although the overall tonnage of bombs dropped may have been less than in other cities in Germany, Freiburg was victim to the most bombing attacks; French and British planes attacked on 25 occasions, dropping 289 bombs. Surprisingly, major landmarks such as the Münster avoided damage, though this was most likely because it was useful to the pilots for orientation. On at least another 40 instances, Allied planes flew over the city without attacking, perhaps in order to gather information or simply to create panic and damage moral. Between December 1914, and October 1918, thirty-one people died in the raids and about a hundred more were injured. On April 14, 1917, Freiburg's „darkest day“ of the Great War, British planes dropped sixty-four bombs, during two raids which lasted a total of twenty-seven minutes, in retaliation for the sinking of a British hospital ship. One of the main issues the city faced in relation to air raids was their inability to devise a practical warning system which could be seen or heard all over town. As Freiburg did not have any significant war industries, air defence was not seen to be a priority.

During the air raids, curiosity drove large numbers of people to the Schlossberg, near the anti-aircraft battery, or onto roofs where they could watch - though the police eventually forbade this practice in the spring of 1915. In addition, despite the risks, after raids crowds of people would venture to the bomb sites to collect 'souvenirs' such as bomb fragments. From the vantage point of the Schlossberg, at night it was also possible to see the artillery exchanges across the border in France.

During the war, bread was a principle source of calories, however daily rations of flour were continuously falling. In order to try and stretch the local grain supply they started to use potato flour as an additive to make *Kriegsbrot*; war bread. Unfortunately, the local supply was not sufficient enough to cope with this extra demand. November 1914 saw the first of many "potato wars" at the Kornhaus, where huge crowds of shoppers gathered in lengthy queues amid confusion, frustration and panic to try and purchase what little quantities of potatoes there were left.

Due to extensive food shortages the municipal government decided to make large plots of unused land available to families who were willing to grow potatoes and other vegetables. These war gardens were an astounding success. Already in 1915, 1,700 families had signed up to farm the plots. Two years later, this number had risen to 5,750 – a quarter of which were the families of soldiers, and by 1918, over 7,000 families were cultivating these plots. With 120 hectares of war gardens, Freiburg boasted the most urban space devoted to farming, per capita, than any other city in Germany.

Often labelled as one of the first "total" wars, the First World War affected all levels of life and society. Even the city's animal population could not escape the effects of war. In January 1915, nine million pigs were slaughtered throughout Germany, on the grounds that they were "Mitfresser" - competitive consumers of important foodstuffs such as potatoes and grains, which the country was trying to conserve. Although there was a brief period of elation in Freiburg as 20,000kg of bacon and other pork products suddenly became available, the slaughter of a quarter of the city's pig population, unsurprisingly, only exasperated the problem of the meat supply shortage. The far-reaching reach of war also had a grip on domestic animals. Dogs were used in the important task of search and rescue missions for the medical corps at the front, and occasionally for the slightly less heroic, but nevertheless useful job, of hunting rats in the trenches. Those dogs that remained in the city soon lost favour with some, who accused them of competing with humans for the already limited supply of foodstuffs, and

even of avoiding military service. In 1916, the Humane Society put 320 dogs, and 788 cats to death.

Freiburg was affected on all levels by the First World War. As in the rest of the world, daily life faced unforeseen challenges, which were difficult, if not impossible to overcome. The phrase “Durchhalten!”, or “hold out”, drew people together in the common goal of making it through the war, regardless of whether or not they would be victorious.

#### 4.3. The results of the research on Warsaw, Poland (Maria Czaputowicz)

How has the World War I influenced the local community in Warsaw?

The aim of this paper is to highlight the main issues of the changes that the Great War has caused in Warsaw's social life. Because of its end effect – the reappearance of Poland on the European map – the First World War is regarded as a milestone in Polish history. The political achievements can serve as a framework for more precise issues that give an insight into Warsaw's everyday life during the war.

One of the first problems that have come to light after the outbreak of war was the increasing mass unemployment. Numerous factories have closed down, as early as 1914, after experiencing problems with coal supply. Almost half of the workers united in trade unions, whose archives have survived until today, have been dismissed during the first months of the war, whereas in 1915 the factory's production has decreased to 25% of its pre-war level. When Russian authorities have felt the pressure of being forced to leave the city because of the approaching front in 1915, they have started sending away all valuable objects and machinery. To deprive their enemies of any useful infrastructure, they have also blown up the last remaining industries on the day of their departure from Warsaw. As a result, people have been left with scarce work places and limited possibilities. Some of them have found employment in public works organised by the Work Section of Warsaw's Citizens Committee, but numerous people have been forced to emigrate.

An obvious problem of Varsovians, as of probably all Europeans, was poverty and hunger. They were the results of both the unemployment and occupation policy. Just after the seizure of Warsaw, Germans have started requisitions and have introduced ration stamps. The rations were decreasing every month, so that in spring of 1918 they only constituted to an equivalent of 891 calories per person per day. Besides receiving help from well-functioning charity insti-

tutions, people have found alternative ways of making their living e.g. by cultivating vegetables on lawns or by turning to the black market economy.

Another common problem that Varsovians had to face were the quickly spreading diseases. People's emaciation, lack of hygiene and the very limited access to medical services have been some of the reasons for their expansion. The rate of deaths caused by illnesses has risen from 18.4 per 1000 people in 1914, to 41.4 per 1000 people in 1917. Additionally, in the hardest year of 1917, 8 % off all patients have died simply because of starvation or emaciation. There have been some attempts made to change this state of affairs, but they proved to be insufficient.

Things that have changed during the war as well, have been the people's living conditions and the city itself. Already in the pre-war period Warsaw has dealt with numerous problems - it's been a small city with no possibility of extension because of the fortification line that it was surrounded by. The General Governor's decree from April 1916 about the city's extension has therefore been of enormous significance. The decision itself in a long term has had a very good influence on Warsaw's development, but at that moment Warsaw was unprepared for such a drastic change. Damages were another issue. Although many houses survived the war, most public buildings, bridges and transport network have been damaged by Russians. As a result also people's living conditions got worse. A lot of houses have been cut off from electricity and water supplies and people had no possibility to get to the city centre. Municipal authorities have tried to respond to peoples' need, but in most cases it has taken a long time to fix the damages.

As the Chancellor of Germany described it, the freedom in cultural and educational sectors given to Varsovians has been Germanys' way of winning Poles' minds and drawing their hate to Russia. Therefore, a noticeable development has occurred in that area during the war period. Soon after overtaking the city by German powers, an act about compulsory schooling organised by Polish Institutions has been announced. Moreover the decision to restitute the independent Warsaw University which was the first to be opened to female students was another revolutionary step. Although the rector was chosen by the governor-general, the institution has played an important role in building the national consciousness. Another step of the occupant to win people's sympathy was the permission to run the provisional municipal administration, established still under Russian rule. Its frameworks played a crucial role by forming the authorities of a new independent state.

As the First World War has swept over Warsaw it has influenced its residents in each sphere of everyday-life. The population has been suffering from hunger and poverty, as Russians as well as Germans treated Warsaw like a typical behind-the-front-city: they wanted to make the best possible profit of Warsaw's economic, natural and labour resources. However, war had also a significant long-term impact on Warsaw's society.

Warsaw's community has been subject to demographic changes. Not only has the population shrunk by more than 160,000 people during the five years of war, but also its religious and national structures have changed considerably (e.g. the percentage of Jewish population has been bigger than in the pre-war period whereas the Russian minority almost vanished). The changes have become apparent on every level of the society, even changing the structure of the family as the whole war generation has been characterised by lower marriage and birth rates which in 1918 has been twice as small as its pre-war level.

The Warsaw urban space can also be seen as a symbol of the changes that the local community experienced as a result of the First World War. Just after the seizure of city by Central Power troops, catholic churches that had served orthodox communities have been restored, hated street names of Tsarist family have been changed and Russians monuments glorifying the bloody suppressors of Polish national uprisings have been overthrown. Unsurprisingly, after the 11 of November 1918 the streets have started to fill up with places commemorating the First World War. Many monuments have been built and commemorative plaque uncovered. Unfortunately, it has not protected the memory of the war which has been a turning point in Warsaw's history from being forgotten.

## 5. The group surveys developed during the HistoryCampus (Jan-Philipp Wagner)

As mentioned in chapter 2, research was also done during the Europe 14|14 conference itself. This work done in five small groups of four to seven participants during the second and third day of the HistoryCampus focused on the present-day time. The target was to assess how much people nowadays know about what happened in Europe between 1914 and 1918 and how they feel about this part of Europe's history. For this purpose, each group prepared, carried out and evaluated their distinct surveys with independently predefined target groups and questions. Although this process was highly based on the participants' interests and ideas, orientation and guidance were given by the surveys conducted previously to the conference and by the workshop speakers who assisted with hints and comments. The following paragraphs give an overview about what the five surveys were about and what the groups found out. A list of participants indicating the groups they worked in can be found in chapter 7.

### Group 1

This group created a questionnaire asking for the interviewees' personal opinions rather than general facts. Other participants of the HistoryCampus formed the target group and the group tried to make the survey as representative as possible. One of the questions of this survey asked the respondents what they perceive as the reason for their home country to join the war. The liability of alliances was the most frequently given answer, followed by self-defence and reasons related to territory. The group furthermore asked their target group to list words that describe World War One. The respondents most commonly mentioned terror/terrible, casualties/death and bloody. Being asked whether they think World War One was worth it or not, three-fourths of the respondents said no. The questionnaire also wanted to find out if people think that more awareness of World War One is needed in their countries. Although overall about 75% of the interviewees stated that more awareness of the war and information on it were needed, the responses significantly differed between the interviewees' home countries. For example, whereas most German respondents want more awareness, most French respondents think their people are aware enough of World War One which could indicate that there is more information on the war existent and accessible in France than in Germany. Another interesting question of this survey was about the likeliness of the outbreak of a third war. The responses were almost evenly split between yes and no with some respondents answering maybe.

## Group 2

The target group of the second survey that was developed during the HistoryCampus were tourists whereat the group tried to ask people with various nationalities in order to make the questionnaire more representative. The group began their survey with asking the tourists what started 100 years ago. About 90% of the interviewees know that it was World War One. The group suggests that the remaining 10% most likely came from non-European countries which could explain the ignorance. The survey also asked the respondents to state their first association with World War One. Most respondents referred to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife by Gavrilo Princip in 1914 with associations such as Sarajevo or assassination. The group moreover wanted to find out if people know personal stories related to World War One. Most of the interviewed tourists stated that they did not know any such story. One respondent expressed his very interesting opinion regarding the connection of World War One and World War Two. He said that the expansion of Nazi-Germany and therefore the outbreak of the Second World War could have been prevented if the treaty of Versailles ending World War One in 1919 had contained more restrictive clauses concerning Germany and its military power.

## Group 3

This survey focused on people aged between 18 and 25 years. The questions were asked among other HistoryCampus participants. The target this group set was to get the respondents' opinion on why World War One broke out and what it changed. Thus, the first question asked for the cause of the outbreak of the war. The group put the responses into two categories: indirect causes such as imperialism or nationalism; and direct causes such as the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife. Overall, the respondents have the opinion that the causes of the outbreak of World War One were rather indirect than direct. Being asked what changes the war brought about, the interviewees mainly referred to changes in borders, mind-sets and power, but other aspects such as gender role changes were mentioned, too. The interviewees generally agreed that there was no winner of World War One with only a few responses speaking of the USA, the UK or France. This project group also wanted to find out whether people perceive World War One as a direct reason of World War Two. Most interviewed people answered yes, World War One directly caused World War Two referring to the harsh restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles which boosted German na-



tionalism. However, respondents who do not see a strong causal linkage between the two wars perceive the two wartimes as generally two different and disconnected eras. Except for interviewees from Armenia, Hungary and the UK, all respondents think that the Second World War was more disastrous for their home country than World War One.

#### Group 4

This group wanted to assess the interviewees' general knowledge, opinions and personal connections in relation to World War One. The target group was very heterogeneous with respondents from 22 different countries. About 90% of the respondents indicated that they knew what happened 100 years ago which shows that general history-related knowledge exists. The group asked the interviewees whether they think there is a connection between the two world wars. More than four-fifth of the respondents answered yes. The interviewed people also perceive the Second World War as more important than World War One. Moreover, this survey aimed at finding out how people feel about war, conflict and violence in general. Being asked whether a war similar to World War One could break out again, more than half of the respondents stated yes. However, two-thirds of the interviewed persons believe that it is possible to learn from World War One which maybe indicates that a future war could be prevented if positive lessons were deduced from the history. The group furthermore asked if violence could be a solution to political problems. 27% of the interviewees said yes, 59% said no with 14% stating that this depends on the context. The final question of this survey was about personal stories related to World War One. Half of the respondents stated that they have had relatives that were affected by the war. However, about two-thirds of the interviewed persons do not know any personal story.

#### Group 5

The fifth group designed a questionnaire that is looking for people's personal experiences and stories related to World War One. The group found out that people do generally not know any personal stories of the wartime. However, there is a strong correlation with the age of the interviewed person: whereas older people know more such stories, the younger generations are hardly aware of any story related to World War One. With regard to this, some respondents mentioned that the legacy of the Second World War overshadowed the experiences and

knowledge of World War One which effects education, the media and public commemoration. Another question asked the respondents whether they are aware of commemorations of World War One in their countries. Most interviewed people do not know how their country publicly commemorates World War One. While carrying out the survey, the group made an interesting observation: when asking questions about World War One they got the feeling that the topic was quite delicate and awkward. Comparing this observation to the experiences of asking people in Britain about the war led the group to draw the conclusion that World War One is perceived as a rather sensitive topic in Germany, whereas people in Britain are rather happy to openly speak about this time.

As shown above, the five groups approached the task to design their own survey about World War One quite differently which led to a broad range of different findings and conclusions. World War One is a historic event that still influences today's society at a variety of levels which creates different opinions on the war that depend on the origin, sense of belonging and knowledge of the beholder.

## 6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Schedule of the workshop “Once upon a time ... there was a Great War” taking place during the HistoryCampus

*Thursday, 8 May*

9.30 – 10.00	<i>Introduction</i>
10.00 – 12.30	<i>1st WS phase → RESEARCH</i>
10.00 – 11.00	<i>Presentation of Research Results</i>
11.00 – 11.15	<i>Break</i>
11.15 – 12.15	<i>Comparison of Results</i>

*Explanation of Differences and Similarities*

12.15 – 12.30	<i>Conclusion</i>
3.30 – 6.00	<i>2nd WS phase → SURVEY</i>
3.30 – 4.30	<i>Presentation of Survey Results</i>
4.30 – 4.45	<i>Break</i>
4.45 – 5.45	<i>Comparison of Results</i>

*Explanation of Differences and Similarities*

5.45 – 6.00	<i>Conclusion</i>
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*Friday, 9 May*

9.30 – 12.30	<i>3rd WS phase → BERLIN SURVEYS</i>
9.30 – 9.45	<i>Introduction</i>
9.45 – 10.00	<i>Brainstorming “Surveys” (Target group, Questions, Format)</i>
10.00 – 11.00	<i>Conceptualizing the surveys (group work)</i>
11.00 – 11.15	<i>Break</i>

<i>11.15 – 12.30</i>	<i>Conceptualizing the surveys (cont.)</i>
<i>12.30 – 4.00</i>	<i>Lunch, CampusSpots and Steinmeier-visit: conducting the surveys</i>
<i>4.15 – 6.45</i>	<i>4th WS phase → BERLIN SURVEYS (cont.)</i>
<i>4.15 – 5.15</i>	<i>Conducting the surveys (cont.)</i>
<i>5.15 – 6.15</i>	<i>Evaluating the surveys</i>
	<i>Preparing presentations</i>
<i>Saturday, 10 May</i>	
<i>9.30 – 12.00</i>	<i>5th WS phase → BERLIN SURVEYS (cont.)</i>
<i>9.30 – 10.00</i>	<i>Finalizing the presentations</i>
<i>10.00 – 11.15</i>	<i>Presenting the survey results</i>
<i>11.15 – 11.30</i>	<i>Break</i>
<i>11.30 – 12.00</i>	<i>Coordinating the public exhibition</i>
<i>12.00 – 12.30</i>	<i>WS Evaluation &amp; Feedback</i>
<i>4.00 – 6.00</i>	<i>Public Exhibition I</i>
<i>9.30 – 11.30</i>	<i>Public Exhibition II</i>

Appendix 2: English version of the survey developed during the first phase of the project

### Survey about World War One

*This is a survey about World War One. The gathered information will be evaluated and interpreted for the HistoryCampus, a conference which takes place in Berlin in May 2014 in order to commemorate the outbreak of World War One. Please visit the following website to find further information on the conference.*

*<http://www.bpb.de/veranstaltungen/format/festival/175835/historycampus-berlin>*

*Please follow the instructions and answer the questions. Thank you.*

*PART ONE: Personal Details*

*Please provide the information requested for evaluating the survey answers in detail. Thank you.*

*Gender*

- o Male*
- o Female*

*Age*

- o Younger than 18 years*
- o 18 to 25 years*
- o 26 to 35 years*
- o 36 to 45 years*
- o 46 to 55 years*
- o 56 to 65 years*
- o 66 to 75 years*
- o Older than 75 years*

*Country of Residence*

*City or Town of Residence*

*Nationality*

*First Language*

*PART TWO: General Knowledge*

*Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. Thank you.*

*Q1: What year did World War One break out?*

*Q2: What year did World War One end?*

*Q3: Please list the countries that were actively involved in World War One.*

*Q4: What countries were in the Triple Entente (military alliance during World War One)?*

*Q5: What countries were in the Triple Alliance (military alliance during World War One)?*

*Q6: What is the name of the treaty that was signed to restore peace in Europe after the end of World War One and when was it ratified?*

### *PART THREE: Local Knowledge*

*Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. Thank you.*

*Q7: Do you know how your country of residence was affected by World War One?*

*o Yes*

*o No*

*Q8: If yes, please tell how your country of residence was affected by World War One.*

*Q9: Do you know how your city or town of residence was affected by World War One?*

*o Yes*

*o No*

*Q10: If yes, please tell how your city or town of residence was affected by World War One.*

*Q11: Do you know your local regiment that fought in World War One?*

*o Yes*

*o No*

*Q12: If yes, what is its name?*

*Q13: Do you know how your city or town of residence tries to commemorate World War One nowadays?*

*o Yes*

*o No*

*Q14: If yes, please tell how your city or town of residence tries to commemorate World War One.*

*PART FOUR: Personal Opinion*

*Please express your personal opinion on the following questions. Thank you.*

*Q15: What country was responsible for the outbreak of World War One?*

*Q16: What countries won World War One?*

*Q17: What countries lost World War One?*

*PART FIVE: Personal Experience*

*Please write below about your personal experience in relation to World War One. Thank you.*

*Q18: Do you know or did you know anyone or about anyone who was personally affected by World War One?*

*o Yes*

*o No*

*Q19: If yes, what is his/her or their relationship to you?*

*Q20: If yes, what was his/her or their experience?*

*Q21: Do you know any other personal story in relation to World War One?*

*o Yes*

*o No*

*Q22: If yes, please tell the story.*

*PART SIX: Source of Knowledge*

*Please indicate below where you learnt about World War One and whether you would like to know more about it. Thank you.*

*Q23: Where did you learn about World War One?*

- School*
- University*
- Media*
- Family*
- Other:*

*Q24: Would you like to know more about World War One?*

- Yes*
- No*

*Thank you very much for answering the questions. Our research will benefit from your responses which contributes to the success of the project.*

*This survey was developed and carried out by Joanna Bochanska, Felicity Clifford, Hannah Hillgardt, Amy McCoull, Dorottya Milan, Thara Packiahrajah, Laura Rodger, Natasha Smith and Jan-Philipp Wagner. They are students at the University of Dundee and members of a project group preparing the HistoryCampus 2014.*

Appendix 3: Survey of group 4 created during the third part of the workshop at the Europe 14|14 conference

*1. Personal details:*

*Gender:*

*Age:*



*Residence:*

*Nationality:*

*2. General knowledge:*

- a). Do you know what event affected this country 100 years ago?*
- b). When did the First World War end?*
- c). Which country/countries caused the outbreak of the First World War?*

*3. Personal opinion:*

- a). Do you think there is a connection between the end of the First World War and the outbreak of the Second World War?*
- b). Could a similar war break out again?*
- c). Can we learn from the First World War?*

*If yes, what?*

- d). Historically speaking, which World War was more important?*
- e). Can violence be a solution to political problems?*

*4. Personal memories:*

- a). Did the First World War affect any of your relatives?*
- b). Do you know any personal stories about the war?*

## 7. Participants and Contact

### *Workshop Leader:*

**Jan-Philipp Wagner** responsible for the concept, coordination and organisation of the project and its components, coordinator of the Dundee research group and responsible for the English version of the survey

### *Workshop Speakers:*

**Odile Boubakeur**, responsible for the French version of the survey

**Maria Czaputowicz**, responsible for the research in Warsaw

**Erin Hughes**, coordinator for the Freiburg research group and responsible the German version of the survey

**Katarzyna Lorenc**, responsible for the Polish version of the survey

### *Participants:*

**Atak Ayaz**, survey group 2

**Elisabet Benson**, Freiburg research group and survey group 2

**Jessica Burmester**, survey group 5

**Diana Chobanyan**, survey group 3

**Felicity Clifford**, Dundee research group and survey group 5

**Marcel Vincent Decker**, survey group 1

**Tobias El Atma**, Freiburg research group and survey group 2

**Hannah Hilligardt**, Dundee research group and survey group 4

**Tim Jentzen**, survey group 5

**Robert Kilduff**, Freiburg research group and survey group 1

**Benjamin Kohler**, survey group 4

**Jacob Kröger**, survey group 1

**Lex Marsé**, survey group 3

**Dorottya Milan**, Dundee research group and survey group 3

**Felicitas Mügge**, survey group 4

**Thara Packiahrajah**, Dundee research group and survey group 5

**Jani Patrakka**, survey group 4

**Vojtech Pojar**, survey group 4

**Stevan Popovic**, survey group 2

**Laura Rodger**, Dundee research group and survey group 4

**Roman Roobroeck**, survey group 4

**Nedim Suljovic**, survey group 3

**Mileslava Bogdanova**, survey group 1

**Ahmet Tuna**, survey group 2

**Andreea Vlasie**, survey group 3

**Martin Wähler**, survey group 5

**Jacqueline Warth**, survey group 2

In addition to these participants, **Joanna Bochanska**, **Amy McCoull** and **Natasha Smith** were members of the Dundee research group but could not attend the conference.

*Contact:*

If you wish to get in contact with someone responsible for the project or this paper, please email Jan-Philipp Wagner ([janphilippw@gmail.com](mailto:janphilippw@gmail.com)).