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# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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# Tom Lantos Institute

## **Learn, educate, change.**

Rights and justice for national or ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities

The Tom Lantos Institute (TLI) is an independent human and minority rights organisation with a particular focus on Jewish and Roma communities, and on Hungarian and other ethnic or national, linguistic and religious minorities. It is a Budapest-based organisation with a multi-party Board of Trustees, an international Executive Committee, and Advisory Board. TLI operates internationally in terms of scope, funding, staff and partners. As a research and education platform, TLI aims to bridge the gaps between research and policy, norms and practice.

TLI focuses on human rights and identity issues in general, and also works on three specific issue areas. These include: Jewish life and antisemitism; Roma rights and citizenship; and Hungarian minorities.

# RESEARCH AND PROJECT AREAS

## Human Rights and Identity

- Regional Forums on Minority Issues
- Assessing the UN Forum on Minority Issues
- Global Minority Rights Summer School
- Minority Forum Info
- Global Minority Rights Newsletter

## Roma Rights and Citizenship

- Roma Holocaust Education
- Capacity Building for Roma Women
- Roma Representation in Public Spaces in Budapest
- Training Course for Roma Pupils: Responding to Prejudice

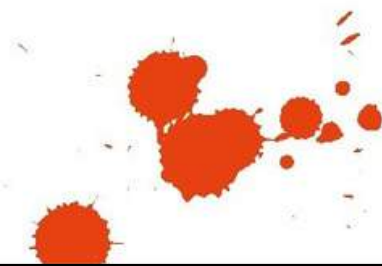
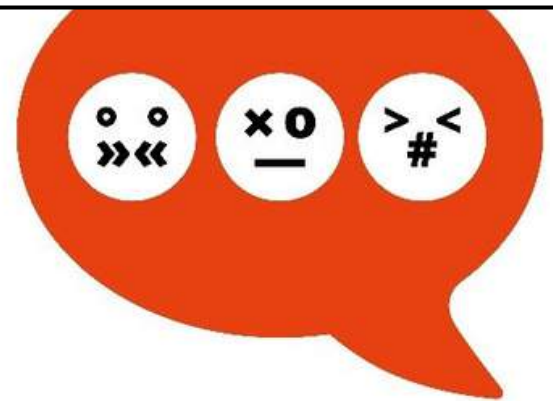
## Jewish Life and Antisemitism

- Research on Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrad Countries
- The Past, Present, and Future of Hungarian Jewry Outside the Capital
- 100th Anniversary of the Numerus Clausus Law

# HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

## Regional Forums on Minority Issues

### Regional Forum on Hate Speech, Social Media and Minorities



At the request of the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, we organised two online regional forums on the topic of “hate speech, social media and minorities,” in partnership with regional and local organisations. The aim of these regional events was to make the UN Forum on Minority Issues more accessible for minorities and to provide region-specific responses to the problems affecting them. The European Regional Forum was held on 20-21 September, and the Asia-Pacific Regional Forum took place on 19-20 October. The online platform presented an exceptional opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to participate, with an average of 140 participants attending each day of the forums. The regional forums produced 127 recommendations, which served as a background document for the 13th session of the UN Forum of Minority Issues.

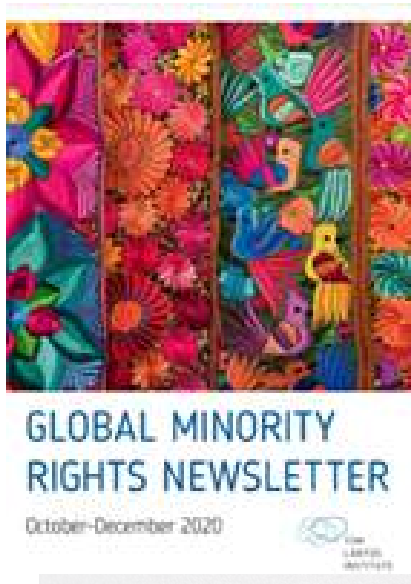
# Minority Forum Info

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The [MinorityForum.Info](https://minorityforum.info) website is a searchable and user-friendly database of documents related to the UN Forum on Minority Issues, including statements made between 2006 and 2019, documents related to the 2019 and 2020 Regional Forums on Minority Issues, and other relevant UN documents that focus on minority issues. This project is implemented in partnership with the Human Rights Consortium of the School of Advanced Study, University of London. Since its launch in 2018, the database has been updated continuously. In 2020, new features were also added, including a video library and a subpage of datasets relevant to minority protection and human rights.

# Global Minority Rights Newsletter

In 2020, we continued to publish our quarterly Global Minority Rights Newsletter, which focuses on normative developments, institutional frameworks and mechanisms related to the human rights of minorities, as well as news about relevant events and participatory opportunities. The four issues published in 2020 - April, July, October, and December, along with previous issues - can be accessed on the [MinorityForum.Info](http://MinorityForum.Info) website.



Newsletter covers 2020

# Global Minority Rights Summer School

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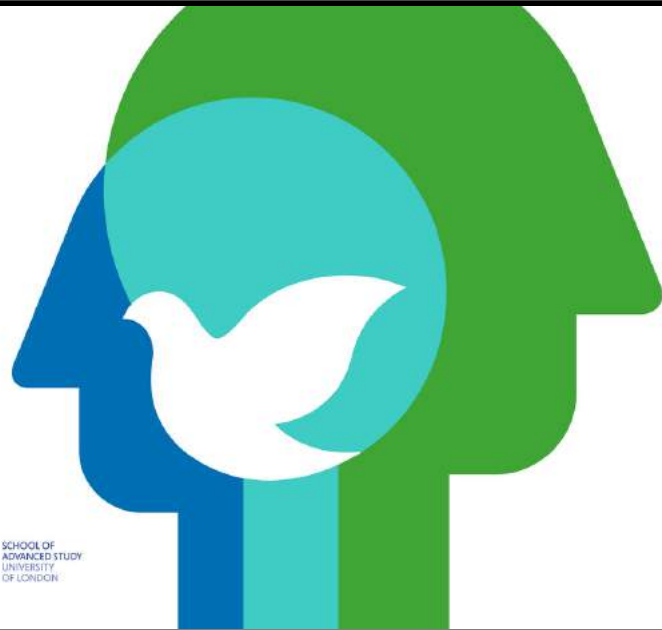
We organised the eighth Global Minority Rights Summer School, in cooperation with the National University of Public Service, Minority Rights Group International and EURAC Research. For the first time since its launch, the course was held online. Renowned experts and prominent academics joined minority and civil society representatives from around the world to examine the relationship between hate speech, social media and minorities. In addition, the participants had the opportunity to meet the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and learn about their work and mandates.

# CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

A WEBINAR SERIES

Debating  
challenges  
for minority  
protection

JUNE 25 · JULY 2 · JULY 9



We organised a webinar series titled “Debating Challenges for Minority Protection” in collaboration with the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the Human Rights Consortium at the School of Advanced Study, University of London. As the Special Rapporteur approached the half-way point of his current term, the webinar series contemplated his thematic priorities, reflecting on past and present issues and looking towards the future. The series addressed the issues of language and the human rights of minorities, critical challenges of tackling hate speech against minorities, and the relationship between conflict, minority rights and inclusiveness.



In November, in partnership with the Central European University, we organised an online conference “Anti-Jewish quotas: Central Europe and Beyond” on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the so-called numerus clausus law. Participants explored the ideologies of quota regimes, the ways they were justified, implemented, challenged and remembered, as well as the consequences of their implementation. Experts discussed the historical origins of quotas, moral, legal and political arguments developed by their supporters and opponents, and domestic and international debates surrounding these quotas



As part of our project “Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrad Region- Countering Distortion” co-funded by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, we organised policy workshops in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Drawing on the findings of this research, policy workshops were organized in each Visegrad country to formulate practice-oriented proposals that would inform policy development aimed at tackling Holocaust denial and distortion in the Visegrad region. The results of the workshops along with the summary of the research findings were published in a report in February 2021.

# RESEARCH

In 2020, TLI continued its research project assessing the UN Forum on Minority Issues. The research is carried out in partnership with the Human Rights Consortium of the School of Advanced Study, University of London and its aim is to better understand identity politics in international relations and the role of global governance in securing the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

We also continued our research that commenced in 2018 focusing on Roma representation in public spaces of Hungary. With the involvement of Roma researchers, we identified over 140 representations from more than 80 locations. In addition to mapping Roma representations, we also investigated success stories from the countryside and explored how Roma were able to participate in creating their self-representations in public space.

We concluded our qualitative study exploring different sub-types of modern antisemitism in the Visegrad region, namely conspiratorial, secondary and new antisemitism. The results of the qualitative research contributed to the formulation of region-specific survey questions on modern antisemitism, which serve as a basis for a region-wide survey research to be carried out in 2021.

# PUBLICATIONS AND LAUNCH EVENTS

As part of our project focusing on rural Hungarian Jewish culture and history, TLI published the Hungarian translation of Tibor Schatteles' book, "The Jews of Timișoara: A Historical Perspective," in cooperation with a Hungarian Jewish publishing house, Múlt és Jövő. The book describes the history of the local Jewish community of Timisoara/Temesvár from the Ottoman rule to post-World War II socialism. The online launch event took place in December with more than 40 participants, including Oszkár Nikowitz, the translator of the book, Getta Neumann, daughter of the last rabbi of the town, and Victor Neumann, director of the local art museum.



# TRAININGS

In 2020, TLI continued its accredited teacher training programme on the Roma Holocaust, focusing our efforts on increasing its effectiveness. We organised three online workshops, paying particular attention to experience-sharing, course development, and practical skills.

As part of the programme, teachers were provided with an opportunity to develop their lesson plans for introducing and discussing the concepts of freedom, fundamental rights, community responsibility and solidarity through the history of the Roma Holocaust. In addition, we organised an expert workshop in December to explore the possibilities of integrating the training programme into the higher education curricula.

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We also continued with our training project that aims to support Roma pupils in responding to prejudice using various verbal communication tools. We held a training event in February for university students at the Evangelical Roma College for Advanced Studies in Nyíregyháza. We also organised a training in August for secondary-school pupils in Tiszaroff.



(Tiszaroff, 11-12 August)



(Nyíregyháza, 22-23 February)

# FELLOWSHIPS, INTERNSHIPS

In 2020, a research fellow, a communications fellow and an intern contributed to the work of TLI by assisting the permanent staff.

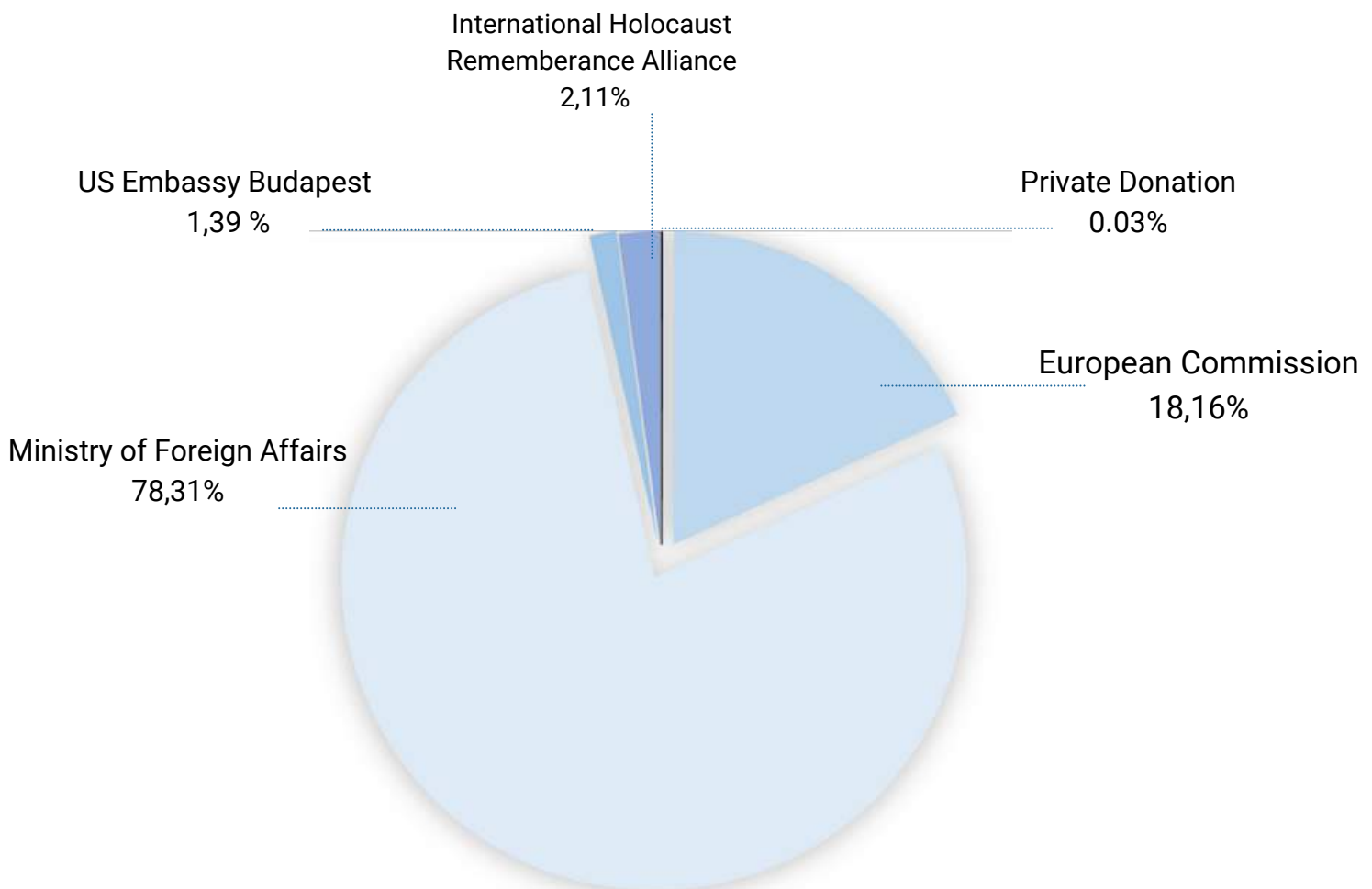
These young professionals joined TLI to gain knowledge, skills and valuable experience in international human and minority rights.

**If you would like to join TLI as an intern or fellow, please send us your CV and letter of motivation (in English).**



# TLI FUNDING

The operational expenses of TLI were covered by the annual grant of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as well as project grants from various sources. The pie chart indicates the extent to which each source contributed to the total of our project expenses in 2020.



# TLI STAFF

**Director**

**Dr. Anna-Mária Bíró**

**Deputy Director**

**Máté Fischer**

**Financial Manager**

**Mária Fischer**

**Head of Programmes**

**Evelin Verhás**

**Programme Manager for  
Human Rights and Identity**

**Marcus Oda**

**International Programme Coordinator**

**Sean Waller**

**Programme Officer for  
Jewish Life and Antisemitism**

**Orsolya Plesz**

**Programme Manager for  
Roma Rights and Citizenship**

**Ildikó Török**

*(on maternity leave from September 2019)*

**Programme Officer for Roma  
Rights and Citizenship**

**László Fejős**

**Programme Assistant for Roma Rights and  
Citizenship, Jewish Life and Antisemitism**

**Áron Balogh**

**Administrative and Financial Assistant**

**Renáta Rontó**

**Program Coordinator**

**Nikoletta Kroó**

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