

Global Minority Rights Summer School **(GMRSS) 2025:** **Cultural Diversity and Minority Rights**

July 6-11, 2025

The *Tom Lantos Institute* (TLI), the *Ludovika University of Public Service* (Budapest), and the *Human Rights Consortium* (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London) invite applications for the thirteenth **Global Minority Rights Summer School**. The theme of the 2025 Summer School is “Cultural Diversity and Minority Rights”.

Background

The unique and diverse cultures of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities are a key characteristic that set them apart from majority groups and constitute an important part of their identities. Cultural rights are therefore particularly important to minorities, and the protection and enjoyment of their culture is central to respect for their minority rights. The individual right to culture is protected in a number of international human rights instruments, which mention “cultural rights”, “the right to culture”, as well as the “right to take part in cultural life”. In addition, the particular right of minorities to enjoy and develop their own cultures in community with other members of their group is enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities.

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has elaborated that “culture” itself is a broad concept, which includes “ways of life, language, oral and written literature, music and song, non-verbal communication, religion or belief systems, rites and ceremonies, sport and games, methods of production or technology, natural and man-made environments, food, clothing and shelter, and the arts, customs and traditions through which individuals, groups of individuals and communities express their humanity and the meaning they give to their existence, and build their world view representing their encounter with the external forces affecting their lives.”¹ The Committee has also named minorities as a community requiring special protection in relation to upholding the right to culture, which requires the obligation of states to recognize, respect, and protect minority cultures.

The right to culture is central to the protection of the human rights of minorities, and is closely linked to a number of other areas of particular concern for persons belonging to minorities, such as language, religion, education, land, and health. Effective realization of the rights to education, health, housing, food, and others requires that their implementation be culturally appropriate and take into account traditional knowledge and ways of life. The Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights has also emphasized that the right to take part in cultural life is interdependent on the right to self-determination.²

¹ United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 21, 2009, E/C.12/GC.21.

² *Id.*, para. 2.

In addition to the human rights concerns raised by the issue of culture, culture has widespread political implications and ramifications for global governance. In the post-WWII era, global governance institutions have both recognized and controlled expressions of cultural diversity for minorities, uncoupling cultural rights claims from self-determination by minorities. The increased cultural diversity and globalization of the past decades and mobilization around various ethnic, religious, and cultural identities have seen new challenges to the global political and institutional order and various forms of cultural hegemony. The scholar Christian Reus-Smit argues that culture can neither provide the framework for the organization of political authority, nor is it neutralized by global governance institutions. Rather, these institutions organize culture and “create political and cultural hierarchies and patterns of inclusion and exclusion.”³ This may have significant consequences for minorities, who are often denied the right to effective participation and lack the political representation and power needed to ensure they are not left behind in the hierarchy of global governance. Resurgence of cultural rights norms previously excluded from global governance, such as the prohibition of cultural genocide, is one indicator of the agency of minority groups in resisting hierarchies of exclusion.

The 2025 Global Minority Rights Summer School therefore seeks to explore these complex issues related to cultural rights and cultural diversity and their implication for persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. The foundation of the curriculum of the Summer School will focus on the international normative framework for the protection of persons belonging to minorities. Sessions will also cover diversity regimes, international jurisprudence related to cultural rights and minorities, as well as regional approaches to the right to culture of persons belonging to minorities. By critically engaging with these issues, the Summer School is designed to offer participants new perspectives on the protection of the human rights of minorities.

Invited Speakers

The summer school will bring together other internationally-known experts, activists, policy makers, civil society representatives, academics, and other key stakeholders in a one-week interactive program. Preliminarily confirmed lecturers include the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Professor Nicolas Levrat, the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Professor Alexandra Xanthaki, Professor Christian Reus-Smit (University of Queensland-remote participation), and Professor David Keane (Dublin City University). The full agenda for the summer school will be released in the spring of 2025.

The Summer School will host approximately 20 participants from around the world, providing them with the opportunity to gain theoretical knowledge and practical skills from leading experts and practitioners in international human rights law, political science, international relations, and other fields. Participants will be given an opportunity to make presentations on relevant subjects of interest to them, including existing research and/or advocacy work.

Information about previous Global Minority Rights Summer Schools [is available here](#). In addition, videos from previous years are [available at this link](#).

³ Reus-Smit, Christian, *International Relations: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020.

Outcomes

Learning aims of the summer school will include:

- Gaining a critical overview of the normative framework governing the rights of minorities at the international and regional levels;
- Learning about recent developments in the international minority protection regime and opportunities to engage with it;
- Discussing current norms, issues, and challenges related to minority rights and culture;
- Exploring the roles that various international and regional mechanisms, civil society, and other actors play in addressing minority rights and issues related to culture;
- Examining case studies related to specific minority groups and to the issue of culture and minority rights;
- Developing participants' own research and academic interests through opportunities to present on relevant topics of their choice.

Who should participate?

- MA and PhD students who wish to acquire knowledge and skills beneficial for their future careers in academia or in practice-oriented professions;
- Public servants, decision-makers, teachers in higher education institutions and journalists with an interest in minority rights, diversity, equality, and relevant international law;
- Members of civil society organizations, minority rights organizations, and other practitioners;
- Everyone who is interested in recent developments, current theories and advanced training in the field of minority rights protection.

A strong command of English is required.

Tuition Fee and Financial Support

The tuition fee is 200 Euros. The fee partially covers the cost of the course tuition, meals, and accommodation. The remainder is generously funded by the Ludovika University of Public Service.

Financial support is available in the form of full and partial scholarships offered by TLI. Full scholarships cover the tuition fee and travel to Budapest, while partial scholarships cover the tuition fee only.

Applicants for scholarships must have:

- A proven current interest or work in the field of minority rights;
- A strong motivation to improve their understanding and skills;
- Demonstrated plans for future activities or a career that would utilize the knowledge, contacts, and skills acquired.

The number of full and partial scholarships is extremely limited, particularly given the high number of applicants. Preference is given to persons belonging to national or ethnic, linguistic, religious or racialized minorities, as well as Indigenous people to apply for the Summer School. **Only those participants with demonstrated financial need and the inability to self-fund their participation should apply for scholarships.**

Location and Institutions

The Summer School is organized by the *Tom Lantos Institute* (TLI), the *Ludovika University of Public Service* (Budapest), and the *Human Rights Consortium* (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London). The summer school will be held in-person at the Ludovika University of Public Service (Budapest). Preparatory information and learning materials will be available via the RESHAPED University of London online learning platform. Some guest lectures may be delivered in a hybrid format.

As part of the summer school program, the Ludovika University of Public Service provides accommodation to all participants in shared dormitories on campus. All meals are provided in the University's canteen.

Application Procedure

To apply, fill in the application form, save it with the following name: 2025GMRSS_lastname_firstname, and submit it to gmrss@tomlantosinstitute.hu. Please do not send any other documents. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

The deadline for applying is Monday, March 10, 2025, 17:00 CET. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible following the deadline.