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Narrative
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2013-2015

European Shoah Legacy Institute

I. Activities 2013

WELFARE FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION

THE CURRENT STATE OF CARE PROVIDED TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION IN ITALY

The European Shoah Legacy Institute has mapped the experiences of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution not only in the Czech Republic but also in other countries, including Italy. This study; “The Current State of Care Provided to Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution in Italy” was completed in 2013 and was a follow-up to ESLI’s 2012 study “The Current State of Care Provided to Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution in the Czech Republic.” For this publication, ESLI worked with Miroslava Ludvíková, who specializes in this issue in Italy and whose research included cooperation with experts from non-profit and governmental organizations throughout Italy.

SOCIAL WELFARE WORKSHOP

Date: 11st December – 12nd December 2013



The European Shoah Legacy Institute held a Social Welfare Workshop which provided an opportunity for experts, especially from Central and Eastern Europe, to share their experiences, best practices, and views into the future in the field of everyday and/or specialized care for survivors of the Holocaust and other victims of Nazi persecution. The workshop was held at the Hagibor Social Care Facility in Prague on December 11-12, 2013, and was attended by representatives from Czech

organizations (Living Memory, Foundation for Holocaust Victims, Czech Union of Freedom Fighters and Terezin Initiative) as well as those from Belgian, Swiss, Israeli, American, Polish, Russian, Romanian, and Ukrainian organizations and government departments. International organizations including the European Commission, the International Organization for Migration,

and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe were also represented. Participants covered issues regarding the current state of care for Holocaust survivors and best practices, financing of future adequate care, and the role of multilateral organizations in securing adequate care for this highly specific group of seniors. Organizers of the workshop offered lectures by speakers from several Eastern European countries which gave participants the extraordinary opportunity to become familiar with the current situation in Romania, the Russian Federation, Poland, and Ukraine, and to gain valuable contacts for potential future cooperation. The participants agreed that the responsibility to care for Holocaust survivors falls to national governments, but the role of the private and non-profit sectors is also important. It was agreed that each government should especially bear in mind the physical and mental suffering to which the survivors were exposed and the far-reaching consequences of such trauma, which has significantly affected the quality of the survivors' personal and often professional lives. A systemic approach to care for Holocaust survivors was agreed to be necessary, especially with respect to the current social state of many survivors and their advanced age and worsening health.

RECOVERY OF LOOTED ART

PROVENANCE RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM WORKSHOP: ZAGREB, CROATIA

Date: 10th – 15th March 2013

The workshop of the Provenance Research Training Program was held March 10-15, 2013, in Zagreb, Croatia under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia and co-hosted by the Croatian Museum Documentation Center and the Croatian State Archives, along with the Jasenovac Memorial Area and Documenta-Center for Dealing with the Past.

The Provenance Research Training Program (P RTP) is a project of the European Shoah Legacy Institute. The program focuses on provenance research and related issues concerning Nazi-looted art, Judaica, and other cultural property. It provides advanced training to serve the international community of current and future experts engaged in dealing with issues concerning cultural plunder during the Third Reich, the Holocaust, and World War II. Each year the program offers week-long workshops that provide an intensive historical overview of cultural plunder—its evolution and implementation; methodological training, including specialized research in public and private archives; a presentation and discussion of legal concepts and instrumentalities at national and international levels, including political, moral and ethical issues and restitution policies and principles. In addition to facilitating research and providing access to a vast array of information,



the program promotes the establishment of international networks of provenance researchers that bring together experts in all relevant fields and countries.

The design of the PRTP program in Zagreb incorporated a number of suggestions made at the end of the inaugural workshop in Magdeburg, Germany, in June 2012. In particular, the Magdeburg participants had desired the following changes in the content offered by the PRTP:

- case studies involving objects that were the subject of restitution claims;
- emphasis on Judaica;
- some discussion of due diligence practices in museums;
- more practical information;
- more structure.

The PRTP's partners in Zagreb asked that the program offer practical information on collections management in American museums as it relates to provenance research.

In the end, the PRTP program experimented with a four-track approach articulated around:

- history of cultural plunder and its postwar consequences;
- case studies and archival research;
- due diligence and provenance research in American museums;
- a primer on Judaica.

Each track consisted of 8 hours of combined lectures and discussions taught by the PRTP's instructors. Specialists were recruited to provide targeted content to the participants in the form of case studies about individuals or events in specific localities or regions.

As part of the Zagreb PRTP workshop, the PRTP director and the newly-appointed director of the Croatian State Archives, Vlatka Lemić, worked together to organize a mini-roundtable of archivists that brought together archival specialists from the Balkan region and Eastern Europe to discuss their respective holdings pertaining to cultural thefts during the Holocaust and WWII, as well as the challenges that they face in making such documents available to the public. The roundtable brought together archivists from Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, and Bosnia, as well as international specialists such as Patricia Kennedy Grimsted.

The last hours of the program on March 15 were devoted to feedback and critique of the week's activities in part to lay the foundation for the next workshops and learn from past and current mistakes.

PROVENANCE RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM, VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

Date: 1st – 6th December 2013

All sessions of the workshop were held at the Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum, except for the general introduction to the workshop that took place at the Ramada Hotel on Sunday 1 December 2013. This was the first time that the PRTP had organized a workshop so far north and east on the European continent. The complex and rich history of Lithuania and the region that it inhabits in the northeastern confines of Europe provided a new and challenging context within which to hold an international workshop devoted to the exploration of provenance research as a methodology that allows its practitioners to delve into the history of ownership of artistic and cultural objects found in private and public collections and study their evolution through the tortured history of the 20th century and, in particular, that of the Third Reich, the Holocaust, and the Second World War. This historical framework, which had dominated the first and second PRTP workshops, needed to encompass as well as the particular geopolitical developments and upheavals specific to Lithuania and its region. The fact that the Final Solution had cost the lives of close to 95 per cent of the Jewish community in Lithuania between 1941 and 1945 served as a stark reminder that whatever discussions would take place in Vilnius, the near-total disappearance of its Jewish population would weigh heavily in the consideration of our deliberations and discussions. Hence, the core curriculum which had prevailed in Magdeburg and in Zagreb had to be modified to make room for other discussions and debates that took into account the fate of Lithuanian Jewry and the ultimate disposition of its cultural and artistic treasures during and after World War II.

The Vilnius workshop program revolved around:

- the core curriculum;
- the Cornelius Gurlitt affair;
- theme-based discussion groups

In addition, the teaching staff was available to individual student's Q&A sessions in the evenings to demonstrate specific research methods.

While there was an attempt at greater structure in the March 2013 workshop in Zagreb, the structure of the Vilnius workshop depended largely on the management of discussion groups, the incorporation of a running thread of analysis and discussion surrounding the Gurlitt matter, and how these two elements would coexist within the framework of a "core curriculum" emphasizing historical overviews of cultural plunder during the Third Reich, the fate of Jewish-owned collections during and after the Holocaust, and postwar attempts to recover lost objects within the varying contexts of national cultural policies East, Center, South, and West across continental Europe.

Ultimately, the time was spent with alternating lectures, group discussions, guest presentations and group presentations. As with all hybrid programs, results were uneven, still the vast majority of participants declared themselves satisfied with how the Vilnius workshop operated. Lessons will be drawn from this experience in preparation for the fourth PRTP workshop scheduled to take place in Athens, Greece, during the first week of June, 2014.

The workshop was attended by over 20 participants from different countries including United States, Israel and different parts of Europe.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND REMEMBRANCE

“LEST WE FORGET. A HISTORY OF TOTALITARIANISM IN EUROPE”



The European Shoah Legacy Institute co-financed the publication of “Lest We Forget. A History of Totalitarianism in Europe” which was published by the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes based in Prague. This reader is an illustrated collection of the remarkable life stories of 30 people affected by totalitarianism from 16 European countries. The purpose of the reader is to educate today’s young generation about Europe’s tragic totalitarian past and about the importance of upholding fundamental human rights, freedoms, and democratic values in society. The goal is to promote better understanding and better integration among European

citizens and to help prevent the recurrence of any form of totalitarian rule.

POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION

In 2013 a Poster Project focused on Holocaust remembrance under the title “Keeping the Memory Alive – Journeys through the Holocaust” started. The poster design competition was a joint project supported by International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in cooperation with Yad Vashem, London Jewish Culture Museum and UN Educational Program Holocaust.

II. Activities 2014

WELFARE FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WELFARE FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION – PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

Since September 2014 ESLI participated on the creation of the Initiative Group for the organization of the International Conference on Welfare for Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution. The conference aims at the governments that endorsed the Terezin Declaration, NGOs and independent experts working in the field of social welfare for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazism. The Initiative Group consisted of governmental representatives from the Czech Republic, Germany, Israel, Austria, France, Poland, USA, Romania and representatives of NGOs, i.e. Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, EVZ Stiftung, International Auschwitz Committee and Federation of Jewish Communities. The group had over 30 members from eight countries, who participated in the preparatory activities personally or were informed about the current state on regular basis.

At the meetings the members discussed the goals, format, participants and organization of the conference. One of the main aims of the conference is optimisation of existing funding by national governments and evaluation of progress made in the field of social welfare for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution, including those living outside their country of origin, extension of cooperation among governmental and nongovernmental social care providers and exchange of best practices in this field.

SOCIAL WELFARE DATABASE

The Social Welfare Database project was launched in September 2014. The database catalogues national social policies, legislation, and sources of financial support as they pertain to social welfare available to victims of Nazi persecution. This includes social welfare programs that are available to the national population generally, as well as programs targeted specifically to Holocaust survivors. The database aimed to collect relevant data from all 47 Terezin Declaration countries through direct collaboration with governments.

The project director Prof. Lyle Scruggs (University of Connecticut) with his team prepared a schedule of activities and gathered all the information and materials necessary for the survey which is the basis for the database. The team worked on the creation of the questionnaire and

consulted the progress with Jewish Claims Conference and ESLI team in Prague on regular basis. The final questionnaire was also translated to Russian, Spanish and Portuguese. The questionnaire together with cover letter with detailed information on the survey was distributed both in electronic and printed version to all 47 Terezin Declaration countries. On-going communication with relevant ministries and institutions took place. The returned questionnaires were analyzed and coded.

SEMINAR ACCREDITATION “IMPROVING QUALITY OF SOCIAL SERVICE PROVISION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING THE PAST”

In May 2014, the Accreditation Committee of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs awarded accreditation to the European Shoah Legacy Institute for its “Improving Quality of Social Service Provision” seminar series. The series was prepared by experts from non-profit organizations, governmental organizations and institutes who focus on work with seniors in general and specifically Holocaust survivors, including representatives of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, Rafael Institut, o.p.s., Živá Paměť, o.p.s., Charita ČR a Diakonie ČCE.

RESTITUTIONS AND COMPENSATIONS OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

IMMOVABLE PROPERTY DATABASE

The Immovable Property Restitution project was launched at the end of 2014. The aim of the database is to document legislation related to restitution and compensation of immovable (real) property confiscated or otherwise wrongly seized by the Nazis during the period 1933 to 1945. The analysis will be the first and only compilation of this type of information. It will also be a dynamic tool, meaning that it can be updated and modified to reflect legal changes relating to ongoing restitution and compensation efforts.



The database will document restitutions across three main categories:

- community property
- private property
- unclaimed property

The project is headed by Professor Michael J. Bazyler (1939 Scholar in Holocaust and Human Rights Studies, Chapman University Fowler School of Law) and Lee Crawford Boyd (Shareholder, Brownstein Hyatt Farber & Schreck, LLP). These two co-directors together with their research team took preparatory steps for creation of country specific questionnaires for all 47 Terezin Declaration countries. The team prepared schedule of activities, gathered and studied relevant documents and revised primary and secondary resources. In 2014 the methodology for the creation of questionnaire has been prepared.

RECOVERY OF LOOTED ART

PROVENANCE RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM WORKSHOP: ATHENS, GREECE

The fourth workshop of the Provenance Research Training Program was held June 2-5, 2014, in Athens, Greece, in conjunction with the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union of 2014. In cooperation with the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports and the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the workshop was hosted by the Acropolis Museum.



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research and related issues concerning Nazi-looted art, Judaica, and other cultural property. It provides advanced training to serve the international community of current and future experts engaged in dealing with issues concerning cultural plunder during the Third Reich, the Holocaust, and World War II. Each year the program offers week-long workshops that provide an intensive historical overview of cultural plunder—its evolution and implementation; methodological training, including specialized research in public and private archives; a presentation and discussion of legal concepts and instrumentalities at national and international levels, including political, moral and ethical issues and restitution policies and principles. In addition to facilitating research and providing access to a vast array of information, the program promotes the establishment of international networks of provenance researchers that bring together experts in all relevant fields and countries.

PROVENANCE RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM: ROME, ITALY

From 8-12 December 2014, the fifth Provenance Research Training Program (PRTP) was conducted in Rome, Italy by the European Shoah Legacy Institute in partnership with the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism and in cooperation with the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and the Commission for Art Recovery (Europe). Forty participants from fourteen countries across three continents took part in the comprehensive workshop, which was jointly hosted by the Jewish Community of Rome and the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism.

The workshop was jointly conducted by distinguished provenance researcher and co-founder of the Holocaust Art Restitution Project, Mr Marc Masurovsky, and noted jurist, Ms Irina Tarsis, of the Center for Art Law in New York. The workshop also played host to a number of eminent guest speakers, including Agnes Peresztegi – Executive Director of the Commission for Art Recovery (Europe); Evelien Campfens – Director of the Dutch Restitution Committee; Monica Dugot – Senior Vice President and International Director of Restitution at Christie’s Auction House in London; Thierry Bajou – representative of the French Ministry of Culture and author; and Konstantin Akinsha – art scholar and author.

The PRTP Rome workshop was developed around the complimentary themes of research, history, and ethics, and was conducted with particular focus on:

- Analytical and methodological tools that can serve to comprehend the complexity of the topics under study, to visualize patterns and to compare these processes and their international impact;
- The impact of cultural plunder on collection management practices in museums and other cultural institutions;
- Providing a core understanding of the displacement of cultural objects throughout pre-war Europe, wartime plunder and its impact on collecting practices and the international art market and post-war efforts to recover looted cultural assets;
- The ethical implications of cultural plunder during the Nazi era, current international policies and art trade practices.

The workshop was attended by representatives from national ministries of a number of European countries, curators and senior collection managers from some of the leading public and private museums in Europe and North America, academics from universities in Canada and

the United States, independent researchers, doctoral candidates, and both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION

The “Keeping The Memory Alive – Journeys through the Holocaust” Poster Design Competition was a joint project supported by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and coordinated by Yad Vashem with the London Jewish Cultural Centre, United Kingdom, the European Shoah Legacy Institute, the Czech Republic, the 2014 Canadian IHRA Chairmanship, and the Holocaust and United Nations Outreach Program.



Hundreds of entries were submitted after students of art and design (vast majority of whom bear no personal connection to the Holocaust) were invited to create original posters on the subject “Keeping the Memory Alive-Journeys through the Holocaust,” the theme of the United Nations Holocaust and Outreach Program in 2014. National juries from the UK, the Czech Republic, Canada, Israel, and from the United Nations Information Offices in Vienna, Moscow, and Jakarta selected 94 finalists from their respective regions to be considered for the exhibit. An international jury, comprised of experts in both design and in Holocaust Education from all partner countries, selected the best 16 designs for the exhibition.

The “Keeping the Memory Alive” posters were displayed to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, 2014, in high-profile governmental, civic, and educational settings including parliaments and UN offices worldwide. Additionally, a lesson plan was created by pedagogical experts and will be used for Holocaust education extensively by IHRA-affiliated organizations the world over. The 2014 competition, built on IHRA’s successful launch of the competition in 2012, guarantees outreach on the subject of Holocaust Remembrance in an accessible and meaningful form across the world.

On November 5, 2014 a vernissage of 16 selected posters took place in the premises of the Faculty of Multimedial Communications, Tomas Bata University in Zlín.

OTHER

MEETING OF SPECIAL ENVOYS ON HOLOCAUST ISSUES – “FIVE YEARS ON”

On October 2, 2014 the Meeting of Special Envoys for Holocaust Issues took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic – Czerninsky Palace. After the official meeting and discussions, the Special Envoys had a chance to talk with CZ media and UK Special Envoy Sir Andrew Burns, Chair of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, had the interview at Czech TV.

Five years ago the Czech government initiated the Prague Holocaust Era Assets Conference, which resulted in the endorsement of the Terezin Declaration by 47 governments. The Terezin Declaration calls on the countries to find systematic solutions leading to restitution of immovable property, recovery of looted art and Judaica objects, and provision of adequate social welfare to Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazism. The European Shoah Legacy Institute invited the Special Envoys to discuss the progress made in the five years since the endorsement of this Declaration.



Results:

Although a number of important points were discussed, the major themes to emerge from the meeting may be summarized as follows:

- Internationalization of the European Shoah Legacy Institute and its Board/s (through invitations for nominations of foreign government representatives);
- Strengthening political influence, particularly as it relates to the European Union; and
- Increasing the number and scope of financial supporters of the European Shoah Legacy Institute; and
- It was agreed that the European Shoah Legacy Institute will prepare and disseminate a strategic plan for action; the content of which will be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting was attended by Special Envoys and the Deputy Director of the Special Envoy from the following countries:

Germany
Greece
Israel
United Kingdom
USA

Ambassadors or their Deputies from the following countries:

Canada
Israel
France
Netherlands
Norway
Sweden
Austria
United Kingdom
USA

and

Head of the Mission of the Czech Republic to the European Commission
Press Attaché of the Czech Information Office of the European Parliament

III. Activities in 2015

WELFARE FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WELFARE FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI PERSECUTION

Date: 26 - 27th May 2015, Prague, Czech Republic

Under the Patronage: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, European Parliament, European Commission

With Support of: U.S State Department, Ministry of Senior Citizens of the State of Israel, Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future” and Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

Two-day conference, “Living with Dignity” concluded, raising awareness of the urgent welfare



needs of the estimated 500,000 Holocaust survivors and 4 million other victims of Nazi persecution. The conference was attended by roughly 200 representatives of 39 governments, the European Union, over 50 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), independent experts and Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi

persecution. The conference was divided into 6 panels and ESLI assured a varied composition of panellists. Experts from NGOs as well as from governmental sector from various countries participated in panels. Therefore participants could familiarize with situation in Czech Republic, Israel, Germany, France, Malta, Romania, Poland, USA, Great Britain, Ukraine and Russia. This variety enabled to address and identify most urgent needs and problems and to share country best practices.

Conference tackled following topics:

- The Role and Responsibility of States Towards Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution;
- Analysis of Existing Welfare Mechanisms Across the Forty-Seven Terezin Declaration Countries;
- The Situation of Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution: Current Needs and Future Challenges;
- Enhancing Cooperation Between State and Non-State Providers of Welfare Services ;
- Optimisation of Available Welfare Funding;
- Innovative Approaches.

Conference was co - chaired by US Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Holocaust Issues, and Jiri Sitler, Special Enjoy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for Holocaust Issue and Combating Anti-Semitism, in a joint declaration released at the conference's conclusion, noted that the attending participants:

- Affirmed the acute and urgent need for the existence of comprehensive medical and social programs/mechanisms and other benefits to enable Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution to live in dignity in the years to come.”
- Recommended the identification of an EU official/special coordinator to combat anti-Semitism and to address Holocaust era issues, including the implementation of the Terezin Declaration.
- Urged states to appoint an official with the responsibility to coordinate mechanisms/programs to assist Holocaust survivors or other victims of Nazi persecution and recommend identification of national focal points to increase awareness of available services and benefits.

The conference also launched a new database compiled by Prof. Lyle Scruggs, University of Connecticut, which for the first time provides a comprehensive analysis of national social welfare policies for survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution. The database, launched with an accompanying report, is based on extensive country surveys detailing specific provisions of policies of particular relevance for the current population of survivors and other victims across the 47 countries who endorsed the 2009 Terezin Declaration.

Conference was also accompanied by NGO Market where organizations had opportunity to represent themselves and also by exhibition of Holocaust survivors from the Europe.

SEMINAR ON WELFARE FOR VICTIMS OF NAZISM AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Date: 23rd June 2015, Brussels, Belgium

In cooperation with: MEP Bastiaan Belder and MEP Olga Sehnalová (Vice – Chairs of the Delegation for Relations with Israel)

Following the International Welfare Conference and fulfilling provisions of Co-Chair's Statement ESLI organized the Seminar on welfare for victims of Nazism at the European Parliament to highlight and publicize the achievements of the International Conference on Welfare for Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution, held in Prague, Czech Republic on 26th and 27th May 2015. The seminar was attended by Members of the European Parliament, officials from the European Commission, the Israeli Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, diplomats and ministerial delegates, civil society representatives, and members of the Jewish communities of Belgium and the Netherlands. The purpose of the seminar was twofold: firstly, to inform EU institutions of ESLI's recent achievements - including the International Conference on Welfare for Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution and the progress made towards improving welfare availability and accessibility for victims of Nazism – and secondly, to help garner support for the creation of a Special Coordinator for post-Holocaust issues within the European Commission, who would coordinate with EU institutions currently monitoring, advocating for, and providing technical guidance on, the implementation of the Terezin Declaration. Prof. Lyle Scruggs introduced the Social Welfare Database and presented his most important findings regarding welfare of Victims of Nazism in Terezin Declaration Countries. The central theme of the meeting was the importance of appointing a European Special Coordinator for Post-Holocaust Issues at the European Commission.



The seminar was followed by the Opening of Exhibition: “Living with Dignity!”, which was devoted to Holocaust Survivors from the countries of the Terezin Declaration. The exhibition enabled visitors to become better acquainted with issues facing holocaust survivors. The event attended approx. 30 people from the European Parliament and the European Commission, Belgian and Dutch Jewish community, journalists, holocaust survivors and Israeli Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues.

SEMINAR ON WELFARE FOR VICTIMS OF NAZISM AND ARTICLE 25 OF THE EU CHARTER

Date: 13th October 2015, Brussels, Belgium

In cooperation with: MEP Bastiaan Belder and MEP Olga Sehnalová (Vice – Chairs of the Delegation for Relations with Israel)

On 13th October 2015, the second seminar on welfare for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution was held at the European Parliament in Brussels. The seminar was organized by the European Shoah Legacy Institute, hosted by Mr. Bastiaan Belder MEP (ECR), Ms. Olga Sehnalová MEP (S&D) and the European Jewish Community Centre and was attended by over fifty representatives from the European Parliament, European Commission, Special Envoys for Holocaust Issues, diplomatic missions, ministries of social affairs, and civil society organisations.



This seminar aimed at sharing the best practices of national governments and civil society organisations involved in the provision of care services to victims of Nazism, and stressed upon the need to secure European Commission assistance in supporting these organisations in their important work. Discussion enabled to acquaint information about best practices in field of welfare in the Czech Republic, Israel and Macedonia, cooperation between civil society

organisations and governments, importance of supporting of non-governmental organisations providing care to victims of Nazism and impact of NGOs and their efforts on the lives of victims of Nazism.

The participants emphasized the following determinations:

- There is a need to include Holocaust issues in the mandate of the newly appointed coordinator for anti-Semitism within the European Commission;
- There is a need to pursue funding from both the European Commission and the European Parliament to assist civil society organisations to continue providing care services for victims of Nazism;
- Reporting mechanisms should be put in place to enable the European Parliament to be kept up-to-date on the best practices of both governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in the provision of care services; and
- That social isolation and long-term in-home care are two major issues upon which significant focus should be placed to help improve the lives of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazism.

Following the seminar, participants had the opportunity to meet with a representative from the European Commission in order to express their views and ideas, and also to ask questions regarding the possibility of receiving funding from the European Social Fund or other sources. European Commission representative – Katharina von Schnurbein, the coordinator for the dialogue between European institutions and churches, religious associations or communities as

well as philosophical and non-confessional organisations, has committed to keeping dialogue between the European Commission and civil society organisations open and productive. ESLI has been working hard to fulfil its commitments arising from the International Welfare Conference held in Prague in May 2015 which objectives are:

- Appointing the focal point within the European Commission to deal with Holocaust issues;
- Encouraging national governments to improve the welfare of Victims of Nazism;
- Seeking funding from the European Commission for non-governmental organisations providing care to victims of Nazism.



ESLI has addressed civil society organisations and Special Envoys on Holocaust issues to support appeal to the European Commission to appoint Special Coordinator on anti-Semitism. We received support from three Special Envoys and 38 organisations and individuals from 18 different countries.

ESLI is very delighted that the First Vice-President of the European Commission – Mr. Frans Timmermans – announced on October 1st at the First Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights the appointment of two coordinators to address the main challenges currently faced by the Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe: one coordinator will be responsible for addressing anti-Semitism and the other for addressing Islamophobia. Following on from this remarkable announcement, the European Shoah Legacy Institute, Members of the European Parliament, and Special Envoys for Holocaust Issues along with numerous civil society organizations all agree that it is important to focus now on ensuring that the principles contained within the Terezin Declaration are included in the mandate of the European Commission's coordinator on anti-Semitism.

SOCIAL WELFARE DATABASE

The database catalogues national social policies, legislation, and sources of financial support as they pertain to social welfare available to victims of Nazi persecution. This includes social welfare programs that are available to the national population generally, as well as programs targeted specifically to Holocaust survivors. The database aimed to collect relevant data from all 47 Terezin Declaration countries through direct collaboration with governments. The survey was

led by Prof. Lyle Scruggs of the University of Connecticut in the United States, who was working with a team of international experts.

The database is based on survey detailing specific provisions of policies particularly relevant to the current population of survivors and other victims across Terezin Declaration countries.

The survey was focused on:

- social insurance pensions and social assistance for those of advanced age;
- the cost, access and coverage provisions surrounding health care benefits
- long--term care at home and in institutions
- national programs granting targeted benefits for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution

The purpose of this project is to compile a searchable, publicly accessible dataset detailing national social policy provisions applicable to Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution. This includes social protections available to residents in the country (such as public old age pensions), as well as policies that may be targeted specifically at victims of Nazi persecution. The information contained in the dataset will assist governments and other organizations in identifying best practices and creating policies to help survivors of Nazi persecution live lives in dignity.



Out of 47 Terezin Declaration countries 30 governments submitted formal responses. Governmental surveys were supplemented with information from a variety of national and international sources. The combined surveys will be circulated to national governments for comment before the final database is made public. Much of the information will be presented in an on-line visualization tool that will allow individual users to create their own maps and reports from the database. Future plans include adding data for future years in order to compare progress over time in securing the social welfare of survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution in all Terezin Declaration countries.

The database has been officially launched at the International Conference on Social Welfare for Victims of Nazism, which was held in Prague on May 26-27, 2015.

RECOVERY OF LOOTED ART

“...recognizing that restitution cannot be accomplished without knowledge of potentially looted art and cultural property, we stress the importance for all stakeholders to continue and support intensified systematic provenance research...”

PROVENANCE RESEARCH INITIATIVE



Project Provenance Research Initiative aims to address the key issue to ensure repatriation, recovery and restitution/compensation of immovable and movable property, Judaica, and other cultural artefacts looted or otherwise unlawfully acquired by the Nazis and their

fascist allies during the Second World War. The European Shoah Legacy Institute has been working with the EP Committee on Legal Affairs to introduce a legislative initiative with the aim of promoting provenance research and combatting the trafficking of plundered cultural heritage. It also has been engaging with senior representatives of the international art market to discuss possible mechanisms that may be included as part of the PRI legislative initiative to increase accountability and transparency and prevent the trade of plundered cultural heritage. The Provenance Research Initiative continues to pursue strategic long-term partnerships with national and international organisations, meeting with representatives from national governments, national restitution committees, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO), UNESCO, the International Council on Archives, and numerous international non-governmental organisations.

European Shoah Legacy Institute launched its new Provenance Research Initiative (PRI) website, which is packed full of information, resources, news, upcoming events and conferences, blogs, and articles from some of the industry's leading experts. It also boasts a comprehensive list of publicly-searchable databases on looted art and museum collections from around the world. The website is available at <http://provenanceresearch.org> and is updated regularly.

CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION ON CONFLICT LOOTING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVENANCE RESEARCH TO CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION AT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Date: 15 – 16th September 2015, Brussels, Belgium

In cooperation with: Committee on Legal Affairs, Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union

The conference consisted of two parts: the first one was organized for the members of the Working Group on Culture at the Council of the European Union and the European Commission, and the second one for members of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Committee on Culture and Education at the European Parliament. The conference commenced with a discussion on conflict looting and cultural heritage protection, hosted at the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union by Ambassador Jakub Dürr. Representatives of over a dozen permanent representations, along with delegates from the European Commission and the Council of the European Union, listened intently as experts from both Europe and the United States discussed the challenges of cultural heritage protection, particularly in the context of modern conflict looting. This seminar brought together experts and senior representatives of the world's leading museum (Smithsonian Institution), auction houses (Sotheby's and Christie's), provenance and restitution organisations (Dutch Restitution Committee, Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Commission for Art Recovery (Europe)) and cultural heritage protection organisations (European Shoah Legacy Institute, Walk of Truth, Heritage for Peace) to discuss the issues surrounding conflict looting and restorative justice, and the role that the European Parliament can play in combatting the trafficking of plundered cultural heritage. The conference was attended by numerous MEPs and representatives of various parliamentary committees and delegations. The conference and exhibition on conflict looting and the importance of provenance research to cultural heritage protection concluded with the decision of the Committee on Legal Affairs to commission a study into the viability and suitability of introducing legislation to the European Parliament to mandate provenance research as an indispensable mechanism to combat the trade in illicit antiquities and plundered cultural heritage.



The official opening of an exhibition gallery at the European Parliament took place on the evening of Tuesday 15th September, and was hosted and inaugurated by Mr. Pavel Svoboda MEP. This exhibition on provenance research and cultural heritage protection aimed to address

the inextricably linked themes of history, ownership, and possession that define our understanding of the nature and value of art and cultural property. It is hoped that the exhibition will encourage audiences to explore their perceptions on the importance of inheriting, maintaining, and bestowing our shared cultural, intangible, and natural world heritage. As cultural property belongs to all of us collectively, we all share the responsibility of preserving and protecting it for the benefit of future generations.

RESTITUTIONS AND COMPENSATIONS OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

“... the protection of property rights is an essential component of a democratic society and the rule of law...”

IMMOVABLE PROPERTY DATABASE

In 2015, as part of its international monitoring and advocacy mandate, ESLI commissioned the creation of a comparative study relating to immovable property confiscated or otherwise misappropriated during the Holocaust era, 1939-1945. The study initiative is headed by Professor Michael J. Bazyler (1939 Scholar in Holocaust and Human Rights Studies, Chapman University Fowler School of Law) and Lee Crawford Boyd (Shareholder, Brownstein Hyatt Farber & Schreck, LLP). Separately the project has been supported by, over 50 pro bono attorneys from major global law firms including White & Case, O’Melveny & Myers, Morgan Lewis, Fried Frank, and Brownstein Hyatt Farber & Schreck. These pro bono attorneys, under the guidance of the directors and their associates, completed research reports addressing the status of restitution legislation in a particular Terezin Declaration country.

The next step in preparing the study is collecting Questionnaires completed by Terezin governments and verifying them with local attorneys. Research and Questionnaire responses are then converted into a comprehensive country report, which will appear on the online database. The final step is for independent scholars, local and international organizations, and domestic lawyers with restitution practices, to review and check the reports for accuracy.

When completed, the study will be turned into online user-friendly database, public-access comparative repository of legislation and international and domestic case law (both past and present) from every country that has endorsed the Terezin Declaration. The database will be the first and only compilation of this type of information. It will also be dynamic, meaning that it can be updated and modified to reflect legal changes relating to the ongoing restitution and compensation efforts in each of the 47 Terezin Declaration countries.

Core components of a country’s entry in the database will include restitution and/or compensation-related information falling into four broad categories: commitments made in post-

war armistices and agreements, private property restitution, communal property restitution, and heirless property restitution.

For each country's restitution regime (historical and current), the goal is to: catalogue the scope of restitution and/or compensation legislation and its associated regulations; identify the time period covered by the legislation and what kind of property (private, communal, heirless) is covered; ascertain whether eligibility is contingent upon citizenship in the legislating country; clearly list claim filing deadlines; describe how the claims process works (including who decides the claims, standard of proof, necessary documentation, associated costs, appeals procedures); and describe notable judicial decisions interpreting the legislation (including national court decisions and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights). Where available, statistical information concerning the status of claims, value of restituted property, length of claims process, etc. will be included.

Another important component to the database will be to place a country's legislation and restitution regime into its proper historical context. A casual user of the database may, for example, have limited awareness that property confiscated from Jews and other targeted groups during World War II in central and eastern Europe was confiscated for a second time during widespread nationalization efforts by emerging post-war Communist regimes (confiscations which this time affected the entire population). Including information about these so-called double confiscations helps to explain why restitution efforts faltered or failed to come to fruition for decades following the end of World War II. In addition, such context explains why restitution in these countries is often not merely a question of returning property confiscated during the Holocaust but is also a matter of unwinding subsequent Communist nationalizations of that same property.