

**EUROPEAN SHOAH LEGACY INSTITUTE
SOCIAL WELFARE WORKSHOP
Prague, December 11-12, 2013**

EXPERT OUTCOMES

Who Are Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution?

This workshop highlighted some important facts and figures from Central and Eastern Europe for the first time and brought together experts in this field especially from the region.

As we could see and hear, there are various countries with different practices and legislative norms which deal with Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution differently. Beside these distinctions, we should always bear in mind that the problem of social welfare is incorporated in our society and history.

Best Practices of Care

Local civil society plays a significant role in overcoming social isolation that many survivors continue to face. In addition, it serves as a tool for promoting intergenerational dialogue and solidarity. Home care is becoming more important for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution than ever and that is why many organizations which were presented during the workshop put special focus on this type of service.

Current Situation in Caring for Holocaust Survivors and Other Victims of Nazi Persecution and Outlook for Upcoming Years

This poses a challenge not only for governments, but also for the public and private sector. We should not forget that apart from these subjects, many individuals and volunteers are dealing with the Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution.

Financial Prospects for Upcoming Years

The states in which Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution reside need to pay attention to the question of providing financial support. Physical and mental suffering they experienced under the National Socialism should be taken into consideration, as well as the burden on their health and the handicap that these experiences have brought into their personal and working life; their income should thus not be lower than average wages in the country.

We encourage the use of financial resources from the European funds, the international community, as well as national resources to support local civil society initiatives, government social inclusion

programmes, and European and international programmes aimed at providing necessary social care for Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution.

The programmes of financial support need to be long-term and receive solid funding from governmental, public, and private institutions. Without these prerequisites, the existence of any institution or programme dealing with Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution is not possible.

We should follow in the steps of NGOs, such as the German Holocaust Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility, Future“ (EVZ), and others.

Role of Multilateral Organizations

The only chance of effectively providing for the needs of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution lies in coordinated effort and in the creation of an international partnership among European, international, national, and local agencies and civil societies in the countries where these persons come from and where they currently reside.

We consider it equally important to work together with the international community in order to draw sufficient financial resources. This can be achieved for example through settling currently unresolved property issues. For instance, best practice has shown that Jewish property without heirs can be effectively used to provide for the social needs of survivors.

The situation of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution is primarily the responsibility of the national governments. Yet, with respect to the special role and responsibility of the European Union and the international community, the workshop recommends the following:

1. Long-term attention should be focused on a systematic approach to the issue of the Holocaust, in particular as concerns the social condition of the survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution. This should be done on the level of the existing EU bodies as well as on the national level.
2. Increased financial support to Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution should be provided. This should be achieved through existing EU programmes for local non-governmental organizations that offer medical and social care to these persons, provided that their activities also include promotion of intergenerational dialogue, preservation of the legacy for the next generations and through financial support to the organizations of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution.
3. The European Shoah Legacy Institute (ESLI) should continue to establish and strengthen a platform for ongoing exchange and international cooperation and for monitoring the results achieved in this area, as well as for lobbying for the interests of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution.
4. It is necessary to cooperate actively on different levels, and to strengthen cooperation with international organizations as the United Nations, Council of Europe, OSCE, EVZ, AJDC,

JCC and others. Building strong partnerships will increase the potential to move forward in providing social welfare to Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution.

Other Possible Steps Forward

There is an acute need for the emergence and further development of medical and social programmes that would include Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution. The prospective participants of these programmes are of an advanced age and have special needs owing to their personal history. The need for such programmes is particularly urgent in countries where they do not exist at present.

We recommend the adoption of legislative measures on the national level which would define the social and legal status of Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution, provide for their social recognition and entitle them to adequate medical care, social welfare and other benefits, for example in areas of housing and transport. For instance, Holocaust survivors and veterans of war in the Russian Federation are considered one group and are entitled to receive special care within the social system.

We encourage volunteers to help and work with Holocaust survivors and other victims of Nazi persecution and build a network of organizations which integrate them.

Important resources:

Holocaust Era Assets Conference, [Conference Proceedings](#), June 26 – 30, 2009
[Joint Declaration](#), June 29, 2009
[Terezin Declaration](#), June 30, 2009