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Seminar for young rabbis focuses on aiding victims of abuse

Conference of European Rabbis stages seminar for young rabbis on how to improve community work.

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European rabbis meet to discuss community issues Eli Itkin/Conference of European Rabbis

Almost 50 rabbis from across Europe came together Thursday in London for the Conference of European Rabbis' (CER) Young Rabbis Seminar. The seminar focused on the main issues affecting communities across Europe, including Jewish identity and strategies for supporting victims of abuse within the Jewish community.

Held at Finchley United Synagogue, Rabbi Lebel, the organization's rabbinical director,





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opened the seminar which gathered together young rabbinical talent from across the continent – as far afield as Moldova and Turkey. For the first time, the seminar was scheduled to immediately follow the annual rabbinic conference hosted in London by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis. As such, the participants were able to join their UK-based colleagues for a variety of lectures, including from the Soviet 'refusenik' Rabbi Yosef Mendelevich and Rabbi Dr JJ Schacter of Yeshiva University.

Speaking about the importance of having European colleagues participate, Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, said: "It was a pleasure to welcome young rabbis from across Europe to our annual conference. I very much hope that the insights and inspiration that they have gained here in London will serve them well as they return to their communities for the High Holy Days."

The CER's seminar was split into two parts: the first included a variety of speakers, including Rabbi Reuven Leuchter and Rabbi Shabtai Rappaport, who shared their insights into the relationship between faith and empowerment and the importance of a united Jewish identity and community cohesion. The second half was hosted by the Haruv organization, a leading Israel organization specializing in helping children suffering from abuse and neglect. The session focused on increasing awareness of the key issues that surround abuse, as well as suggesting methods of supporting those who are affected by abuse.

Commenting on the event, Gady Gronich, Executive Director, Conference of European Rabbis, said: "Today's seminar has been a great success. It is a key priority of the CER to provide the next generation of rabbinical leaders with the right guidance and advice on matters that affect Jewish communities across Europe. More than ever before, we must ensure that our communities are properly supported and seminars like this help to ensure that our rabbis are duly equipped."





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Speaking at the seminar Eli Itkin/Conference of European Rabbis



Rabbis attending the seminar Eli Itkin/Conference of European Rabbis

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