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Innovative Program: Reserve Rabbis of Europe

Program's aim is to give newly ordained rabbis to successfully fulfil their roles with the gift of an ability to consult more senior rabbis

Contact Editor Arutz Sheva Staff, 19/02/20 11:46

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סמינר רבנים בריגה

צילום: אלי איטקין

The Conference of European Rabbis has initiated a program "Reserve Rabbis of Europe" to empower community rabbis and to train them as reserve rabbis in halacha (Jewish law) and outreach in Europe.





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The conference's rabbinical training division started with running a three-year program to provide insights and tools for a community rabbi to deal with both big and routine challenges within a community.



The program will be led by the European Beth Din under the presidency of Dayan Chanoch HaCohen Ehrentreu, members of the standing committee headed by Dayan Menachem Gelly, and a council of permanent rabbis with extensive rabbinical and outreach experience, at its head; leader of the council and Moscow's Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt and Rabbi Moshe Lebel, head of the Torah of Life yeshiva in Moscow and the conference's rabbinical director.

Rabbi Goldschmidt said, "The challenges that community rabbis face today in the world in general, and Europe in particular, are many, and coping with them must be through the use of the appropriate tools for today's environment. The assimilation rates are very high and community rabbis are at the forefront and the main axis that stands as a barrier to defend, strengthen and widen the Jewish community, in which the majority, to our great pain, does not keep the Torah or mitzvot."

Rabbi Lebel, who is coordinating the rabbinical committee to accompany the program said, "We are bound and made to give the rabbis the tools and skills they need to work with spiritual courage to pass on authentic Jewish roots without compromise and at the same time to encourage young people to connect to Torah values and attach them to the active life of the community. This is the only way that we will be able to fight the assimilation, which is the primary and most serious problem. Today more than ever, one of a rabbi's most critical tasks."

The conference's chief of staff, Gadi Gronich, who conceived and instigated the program under the generous sponsorship of the Patrick and Lina Darhi Fund, said, "The program's purpose on the one hand - is to give rabbis at the beginning of their careers, the most appropriate tools to fulfill their jobs and to face both the biggest and most routine challenges. On the other hand, to give him the ability to regularly consult with rabbis with considerable experience and proven success in leading a community."





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The conference's secretary-general Rabbi Aharon Shmuel Baskin, who is coordinating the program said, "The program consists of three units, including Completion of Halachic Torah education, based on the plan for Halachic study that currently exists at the Conference of European Rabbis, plus practical halachic content such as practical halachic training: checking mikvaot (ritual baths), overseeing kosher supervisors in factories and restaurants, family purity, security issues and Shabbat, marriage licences and marriage arrangement, get (religious divorce) conveyance, clarifying names and clarifying issues of Judaism. And more. Vocational training in different media, presentations in front of an audience, rhetoric, fundraising and more."

"The third and most important aspect of the program consists of a halachic mentor and general counsel from members of the standing committee. For this purpose, a list of appropriate rabbis and experts in certain halachic areas will be compiled so that the rabbi can refer them to relevant questions in a concentrated manner. During the program, each participant will set a weekly havruta (one-on-one learning) with a personal development mentor, who is a member of the council of rabbis or with a different rabbi with extensive experience where the goal is for the 'mentor' to direct the rabbi with the appropriate tools for his work in the community and in his personal and spiritual progress," Baskin added.

The three-year program will run online at convenient times for the participants. In addition, a number of joint enrichment sessions will be held across Europe. In the next two weeks, applicants who are enrolled will undergo a screening and acceptance process and will be informed of their acceptance to the program.

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