

## Summer Seminar for Roma and non-Roma Hungarian Youth

### Objectives

The main objective of this project is to overcome ethnic and social divisions and increase understanding among Hungarian youth. The project will challenge negative stereotypes about the Roma community while addressing difficult social issues that are common to both communities. Participants will learn about youth activism and create a network of young Roma and non-Roma Hungarian youth working together for tolerance in the future. Ultimately, participants will take the lessons of intercultural trust and understanding back to their own homes and their communities.

### Background

Hungarian society is becoming more and more divided along ethnic lines. Prejudice is overwhelming public discourse, while the majority community knows very little of the daily realities and perspective of the Roma minority. Members of the majority community have almost no knowledge of the Roma perspective on prevalent social issues. The situation is especially dire among Hungary's youth, who are the main source of recruits for extremist, racist groups that are active in Hungary. There is a pressing need to integrate Hungarian society and combat the rise of prejudice and hatred among youth.

### Project Description

The Summer Seminar for Roma and non-Roma Hungarian youth in Eger will be a one-week program at the Eszterházy Károly Főiskola in Eger, Heves county. Instead of exploring the issues of social division and prejudice through the lens of ethnicity, the seminar would begin by addressing problems that are common to many segments of Hungarian society, such as gender inequality, the rights of sexual minorities, unemployment and the welfare system, education, the gap between developed and underdeveloped regions, and corruption. Beside lectures, the seminar would also strive for increasing mutual understanding through extracurricular activities such as a debating program, cultural activities, and meetings with the representatives of leading civil society organisations that deal with underrepresented groups, such as the Athena Institute, Amnesty International, Red Cross, Open Society Institute, and European Roma Rights Center. The language of the seminar will be Hungarian in order to ensure a wider basis for selecting the participants. Furthermore, the newly-established Tom Lantos Institute will act as an implementing partner throughout the project.