



BRUSSELS INSTITUTE

ANTI-SEMITIC  
HATE CRIMES AND  
INCIDENTS REPORT

DECEMBER 2013  
HUNGARY

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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One of the most important requirements for the struggle against anti-Semitism is an exact awareness of the situation, that is, an investigation of the actual prevalence of anti-Semitism. It is one of the aims of Action and Protection Foundation to eliminate the lack of awareness surrounding this issue. Instrumental in achieving this objective is the continuous professional monitoring of public life. The community cannot really be protected unless current information on this is collected and analyzed. Results of the monitoring are published at regular, monthly intervals by the Foundation.

The reports deal with two forms of behavior: anti-Semitic hate crimes, and hate-motivated incidents. The report uses the term hate incidents to cover both. The decisive criterion for identifying either to be the case is anti-Semitic motive. Note however that the first type of behavior counts as criminal according to the penal law, while the latter does not make that category. Nevertheless, a documentation of both types of hate incidents is necessary in order to gain a general overview.

For the monitoring to have the widest possible scope it is required that a variety of sources are used simultaneously. Apart from registering the incidents, it is important that their particular characteristics are also accounted for. Therefore, in the course of documentation, data detailing the incident's location, perpetrator, victim and consequences are recorded on the one hand, and on the other, different types of incidents are differentiated.

One anti-Semitic hate incident was identified by Action and Protection Foundation in the course of its monitoring activity in December 2013, categorized as vandalism. Nonetheless, further developments in numerous cases presented in the November *Report* are included in the following account.

In December, Action and protection Foundation received two rulings, one of an investigation terminated, and one of an investigation suspended. In the latter case the Police Headquarters established the criminal violation, but the offender could not be traced. In the event, however, of the identity of the offender becoming known within the period of limitation, the investigation is to be continued. In a further case of a complaint filed with the Public Prosecutor's Office, while dismissing the complaint—as filed by a party not qualified to do so—the authority overturned the ruling terminating the investigation and ordered that it is continued.

# ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION

The phenomenon of anti-Semitism is by no means new to Hungary. The hate speech encountered earlier has however become increasingly dominant in public life. The situation is further aggravated by the Jobbik Party, which openly declares anti-Semitic and racist views, having forty-three members of parliament making hate speech far more ever-present in both Parliament and other organized events. These circumstances brought Action and Protection Foundation into being. Among the forms of civil association offered by Hungarian law, Action and Protection Foundation chose the form of foundation; it was registered in November 2012. The Foundation seeks to provide an alternative to the ineffectual legal steps taken against deteriorating standards of public discourse, exclusion, and the ignorance in which anti-Semitism is rooted, as well as atrocities and hate crimes.

## UNITY

Action and Protection Foundation is a registered civil organization. Participating in the work of the Foundation are leading figures from Mazsihisz, which represents the Neology and Orthodoxy, the status-quo/Chabad EMIH, the reform oriented Sim Shalom Progressive Jewish Congregation, as well as socially recognized emblematic personalities independent of these movements. Trustees of the Foundation represent the most important Jewish religious and cultural movements in Hungary, a symbolic expression of the fact that action on anti-Semitism is a cause shared by all.

## BRUSSELS INSTITUTE

The *Brussels Institute*, founded by **Action and Protection Foundation**, carries out monitoring of anti-Semitic hate crime in accordance with methods worked out and proposed by the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe** (OSCE). In monitoring anti-Semitic phenomena the Institute records and analyzes them on the basis of information delivered by various standardized sources. The monitoring process, which categorizes incidents into seven different groups, relies on the following sources: the sources of the Institute's own Research and Incident Monitoring Group, information available in the press and public media, and relevant data to be found in judicial, criminal and other state administrative records in the framework of an agreement with these branches of government. The institute has set up a now operational **HOTLINE** that can be reached by dialing the number **(+36 1) 51 00 000**, where incidents of anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish behavior can be reported.

Beyond regular publication of the monthly monitoring reports the *Brussels Institute's* research plan incorporates a comprehensive research project related to Jewry – using both quantitative and qualitative methods –, as well as a survey on the current situation concerning anti-Semitism that encompasses society as a whole. Furthermore, the program includes development of a differentiated training program that prepares different levels and participants of state administration for action and appropriate procedure on racist and anti-Semitic phenomena, in the form of teaching materials for the educational system and further training.

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## ABOUT THE REPORT

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General opinion on, and treatment of Hungarian anti-Semitism is often unusually extreme. Voices are heard on the one hand, that belittle the importance of such offences and manifestations. On the other hand, on occasion it may be the case that in relation to one-off incidents the image registered is of a public life deluged by such incidents. Knowledge of the actual situation is an indispensable condition for treatment of the real problems, which is why Action and Protection Foundation considers it its duty to provide as comprehensive an overview of the scale of anti-Semitism in Hungary as possible. Monitoring of anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents<sup>1</sup> is one of the tools of achieving this objective. The monitoring results are published by the Foundation on a monthly basis. Apart from the monthly report, an annual summary review including more detailed analyses on the offences committed in the course of the year is also prepared.

The fight against hate crimes bears exceptional importance, because they differ from other forms of criminal conduct. These crimes may be considered messages of a kind, and thus point beyond private actions. This additional import becomes manifest in various social realms: on the level of the individual, the group attacked, and of society as a whole. The victims may suffer a greater psychological and emotional trauma. In the case of these crimes not “only” the property, or physical integrity of victims is endangered, but also their self-respect. These offences question the right of the individual to equality, even of belonging to society itself. It is important that in the course of such crimes the victims are the target of attacks because of some unchangeable characteristic, and for this reason may well feel more defenseless. The victims are often afraid that they may again become victims of further atrocities. Inappropriate handling of such incidents can easily lead to a secondary victimization of the targeted person. This type of criminal act also has a strong affect on the group to which the victim belongs. The victims of such crimes are often interchangeable, because in countless cases the attack does not target a certain individual, but anyone who, in the given instance, is a member of the group under attack. In the event, members of the group also become involved emotionally, and might live in fear of the future when they themselves may become the target of such prejudice-motivated crimes. This is especially true of groups, which have been exposed to prejudice for a long time. There is no need to justify at length that Jewry belongs among such groups. These crimes violate the norm that holds the members of society equal. Inadequate handling of such incidents can have grave consequences for the whole of society. It may on the one hand, encourage the perpetrators, or even others to commit further crimes in the same mold. On the other, it significantly diminishes the cohesive power of society (Levin and McDevitt 1999, 92–93; OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 19–21; OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 17–18; Perry 2001, 10).

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<sup>1</sup> See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

It may be stated in general that fewer hate crimes are reported, and in the event documented, than are committed. Victims often do not report them to the police. A number of reasons may cause this implicitly. Firstly, many do not feel assured that the authorities will treat these incidents adequately, either because they are not sufficiently prepared, or due to prejudice. Certainly there are many victims who are not clear about the applicable legal regulations. Victims may feel shame, or fear that one of their concealed traits will be exposed. Lesser categorizations of the crimes are also frequent, where official authorities do not establish the hate-crime motivation. It is civil organizations that can help remedy these problems. Cooperation with state organs—such as the police, or the Public Prosecutor's office—may be particularly beneficial.<sup>2</sup> Reports prepared by civil organizations can be expedient in alerting the official authorities to hate motivated crimes in the country. Long-term tendencies can be outlined on the basis of the collected data. Civil organizations can help in setting particular cases on track for legal process, may provide legal defense for the victims, and give various other forms of aid. These organizations may also serve as intermediaries between the victims and the police (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 34–36).

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<sup>2</sup> A great example of the above can be found in the Community Security Trust (CST) and cooperation between the London and the Manchester police forces. (CST 2013)

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## METHODOLOGY

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The report deals with two types of offence: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by EBESZ as follows<sup>3</sup> (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 15–16):

- hate crime: a crime as defined by the criminal code, which has been motivated by prejudice against a certain group of people<sup>4</sup>
- hate motivated incident: an offence, also based on prejudice against a certain group of people, but not reaching the level of criminal conduct.

The heightened importance of individual hate crimes is indicated by the fact that the criminal code of numerous countries deals with these cases separately. Hungarian criminal legislation identifies two forms of hate crime: violent offences committed against the member of a group, and incitement to hatred of a community. The recently adopted Criminal Code (Act C of 2012) deals with these in Chapter XXI, Paragraph 216, on crimes against human dignity and certain basic rights, as well as Chapter XXXII, Paragraph 332, on crimes against public peace. The crime of violence against a member of a group may be established if the perpetrator assaults or otherwise coerces the victim, because they belong to a protected group. Additionally, this is also the case if the perpetrator demonstrates provocative behavior against a community that is apt to cause alarm. The crime is only affected if there is a concrete victim. Incitement against a community most often means hate speech, and it can only be defined as such on the condition that it is committed in public. Incitement to hate crimes does not target concrete individuals but a group of people. It is important to add that other crimes may also be categorized as having been committed on racist motives. In such cases the courts must pass a heavier sentence<sup>5</sup> (TASZ 2012, 3–4). Apart from these, Paragraph 333 of the Criminal Code also describes the crime of denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime. Furthermore, Paragraph 335 bans the distribution and use in wide public, or public display of the symbols of various autocratic regimes (among them the swastika, the SS insignia, arrow-cross).

Detailed descriptions of approaches to, and recent tendencies in the definition of hate incidents can be found in our May Report. The report also cites the findings of literature in this field internationally. The present report presents hate crimes and hate incidents motivated by anti-Semitism, wherever perpetrator, target, means or message of a case suggest it. The

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<sup>3</sup> The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see Chakraborti and Garland 2009, 4–7). These definitions can serve as important addenda to an understanding of these crimes, however they are difficult to apply in practice. This is what made the creation of simpler, more practical definitions necessary.

<sup>4</sup> For example, on these grounds the OSCE does not consider hate speech a hate crime, since the given behavior would not count as criminal without the motive of prejudice (OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 24). For our approach in dealing with this, see below.

<sup>5</sup> The Criminal Code does not include racist motives verbatim, but for example the case of “contemptible motive” is fulfilled, if someone commits a crime out of such a motivation.



target may be a person, a group, an event, a building, a monument or other property. It is important however, that anti-Semitic motivation can only be spoken of if the perpetrator chose the given target expressly because it was assumed to belong to Jewry. In this context it is not finally relevant whether the assumption is correct: the belief of the target's connection to Jewry is sufficient. In the course of monitoring, on one hand, all incidents that fall in the category of hate crime are considered hate incidents. These may be crimes identified as such by the Criminal Code (violent assault of a member of a community, incitement to hatred of a community, denial of the crimes of the national socialist regime, use of symbols of autocratic regimes), but can also include other acts mentioned in the Criminal Code, if prejudice can be proven as a motivating factor. When identifying hate incidents, various indicators recorded during the monitoring period<sup>6</sup> are used as the basis for examining whether the given action could have been motivated by anti-Semitism.

For the widest possible scope in monitoring anti-Semitic hate incidents the simultaneous use of a variety of sources is required. The victims' filed reports are of especially great importance to this study. If the victim cannot, or does not want to file a report with the Brussels Institute, the involvement of an intermediary may be facilitated to gain information. Such an intermediary may be a family member, acquaintance of the victim, a witness of the incident or another civil organization. The earlier mentioned 24-hours-a-day Hotline operated by the Foundation serves to ease the passage of reports. Additionally there are options for online filing of reports, which allow even greater anonymity for the person placing the report.

It is a declared objective of the Foundation to keep in touch with the authorities, since they are the most likely to be first approached by victims or witnesses.

A variety of media channels also represent important sources: television, radio, as well as the printed and online versions of the press. An essential segment of the report is composed of monitoring the expressions of, so called, online hatred, which seems currently to have become an ever-increasing threat.

Monitoring of these media channels is covered in part by a paid team of experts within a professional framework, and additionally volunteers are involved in a media watch, sending information gained on to the Brussels Institute for processing. It is an aim to cover an increasingly large segment of the media with continuous monitoring. Monitoring extends to roughly all receivable TV and radio stations, all the printed press with high print-runs, as well as online material not only on news portals, but the social networking pages and extreme, hate inciting websites. The monitoring process is carried through systematically, according to precisely prepared standards.

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<sup>6</sup> These are described in the *Methods* section.

Among the monitored hate incidents there are some that are considered a part of the statistics, but there are also some that are recorded, though not counted as part of the statistics.<sup>7</sup>

The criteria for hate incidents that are included in the statistics follow:

- Only hate incidents that occurred in Hungary; no matter whether the victim is a Hungarian citizen or not
- Any action, incident, atrocity that is aimed at Jewish individuals, organizations or property where an anti-Semitic intent or content can be proven, or if the victim was attacked for being Jewish or due to an assumed Jewish identity
- Deliberate and wanton impairment of any Jewish institution or building (even if no further, explicit anti-Semitic message was paired with the vandalism [for example, a Jewish synagogue's window is broken with a stone])
- Anti-Semitic comments that have been reported to Action and Protection Foundation appearing on blogs, fora, community pages
- Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material delivered to particular Jewish individuals, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material deposited at Jewish-owned property, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Criticism related to Israel and Zionism, if they go beyond a political statement and serve to recall traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes
- Events apt to raise fear among Jews.

Hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics:

- Anti-Semitic hate incidents that are related to Hungary and Hungarian Jewry, but for some reason do not belong to the scope of the statistics (e.g., they did not occur in Hungary)
- Expressions of hate that appear regularly on homepages, in comments and online fora, and have not been personally reported to Action and Protection Foundation.

A number of the aspects of the registered incidents are recorded. The indicators that help decide whether a given incident was motivated by prejudice have been mentioned earlier. These indicators pertain to various characteristics of the perpetrator, data concerning the victim, the time and location of the incident. These are recorded in the course of collection of data. Tabs are kept on whether incidents had any, and if so, what sort of—possibly legal—consequences.

Apart from registering incidents, it is also important to capture the qualitative differentials between them. The typification of cases is carried out in two ways. According to one of the systems of categorization the following types are differentiated: incitement against

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<sup>7</sup> The following were used to develop these criteria: ADL 2012, CST 2013

members of a community, violence against members of a community, use of symbols of autocratic regimes, and Holocaust denial.

Based on the *Facing Facts! Guidelines*, seven types of incidents are differentiated as follows (CEJI 2012, 10–12):

- Homicide: any attack on a person that causes loss of life
- Extreme physical violence
  - Any attack on a person that potentially causes serious bodily harm
  - Any attack involving weapons, or other tools that can cause bodily harm
  - Any attack on property, where there is a potential for the people occupying the property to be killed
  - Bombs and letter bombs
  - Kidnapping
- Assault
  - Any physical attack against a person or people, which does not pose a threat to their life and is not serious
  - Attempted assault, which fails due to self-defense, or if the victim runs away
  - Throwing objects at a person or people, including where the object misses its target
- Damage to property
  - Any physical attack directed against property, which is not life-threatening
  - Desecration of property
  - Arson attacks on property where there is not threat to life, failed attempts at arson
- Threats
  - Any clear and specific threat, whether verbal or written
  - Any “bomb” which is assessed to be a hoax
  - Stalking
  - Defamation
- Hate speech
  - Public hate speech
  - Hate speech channeled via the internet and social media
  - Abusive behavior
  - Abusive literature sent to more than one person
  - In literature and music
- Discriminatory incidents

Placing hate incidents in context is also a priority. These actions do not exist in empty space and are by no means independent of the social and cultural environs in which they occur. The dynamics of these incidents is also of importance: often processes, rather than separately occurring events can be spoken of (Perry 2001, 8). Apart from the static data, short descriptions of each event are also published, which aid understanding of the environment surrounding the incident.<sup>8</sup> In presenting time lines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

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<sup>8</sup> These descriptions in particular are held to be a most positive aspect of the Anti-Defamation League reports by Perry (2001, 18).

# ANTI-SEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS

## – DECEMBER 2013

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In the course of monitoring in December 2013, Action and Protection Foundation identified one anti-Semitic hate incident.

### VANDALISM

#### **A hanukkiah on Blaha Lujza Square vandalized**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

At early dawn on December 5 a man struck the information board on the Hanukkiah raised in Blaha Lujza square, which was torn out of its place as a result. The District Police arrested the man at the scene, and initiated accelerated court proceedings in the case. The man admitted the crime in a confession. He said he was drunk, and would not have done such a thing when sober. The Budapest Police (BRFK) took the 22-year-old man into custody, and initiated proceedings against him for “vandalism damaging objects of religious respect”.

Action and Protection Foundation sent a statement to the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) at the time, pointing out that criminal offences committed against devotional objects out of, presumably, anti-Semitic motives, should have grave consequences by law. On 7 December, news on the incident conveyed that the Budapest Central District Court sentenced the offender to one year on probation for the offence of vandalism. The sentence is not final, the Prosecutor’s appeal is pending.

# COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

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## House of Fates

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI, Népszabadság, Népszava, Index*

Mária Schmidt has turned to some of the most important representatives of the intellectual world for support in developing content for the House of Fates. András Heisler, President of Mazsihisz, a member of the international body of councilors established earlier, expressed concern, that due to the tight deadlines, quick decisions need to be taken, and under the pressure of this rapid pace the council is in effect not able to take part in the “operative work”. He also regretted the absence in drawing up the concept, of renowned Hungarian scholars of the subject and the period.

Mária Schmidt approached a number of Hungarian intellectuals, writers, historians, filmmakers, philosophers, who are open about their Jewish ties or roots through letters requesting that they join a debate on the concept for the House of Fates. The request was rejected by many, among others, György Konrád. In his public letter, published on 13 December he said: “I find it difficult to free myself of the suspicion that this hurried organization of an exhibit is not so much about the 100,000 murdered Jewish children but rather about the current Hungarian government.”

The last family living in the staff residences at the Railway Station of Józsefváros moved out on 17 December, and construction work has begun. About four months are available for the conversion. János Lázár, Minister of State for the Prime Minister’s Office invited Mária Schmidt, Director of the House of Terror Museum, to develop a detailed concept.

On December 18, Mária Schmidt announced the following about the House of Fates: The House of Fates—European Educational Center, to be constructed in the coming year within the environs of the Railway station of Józsefváros, aims to make all young people, and Hungarian society at large aware that the greatest value must be set by our holding on to our moral positions in changing historical situations. The history of the Holocaust exemplifies that no act that goes against ethical values, against the respect for human dignity can be justified, because “no perceived or real political perspective can allow us to overreach” the principle of showing respect for the human dignity of our fellow human beings. In her words: the cause of the House of Fates “is a shared cause, a cause we have common interest in, a national cause”, because one of the issues raised by the twentieth century has been that moral codes can be overstepped. She called attention to the fact that “the preparation of another history book” was not the motivation for the creation of this exhibition, but rather to present the already established and researched data in a way allowing younger generations to assess and internalize them. She pointed out: it is important that the House of Fates addresses this target group, because they will be the next adult generation

to pass on these values to the following generations. She noted: the House of Fates was not realized in contraposition to the Páva Street Holocaust Memorial Center, but specifically to complement it, because the target group of each institution is different.

Meanwhile András Heisler expressed in a letter the misgivings felt in Mazsihisz about the exhibition under preparation. It says they believe it would be important that the exhibition present not only the situation following German occupation with a focus on the deportations, but also the road that lead there. In the opinion represented by Mazsihisz, preparations of the exhibition should be placed under a broad, public, and active social control. András Heisler did not receive a reply to his letter.

On 20 December, Balázs Fürjes, Government Commissioner for Major Investments in Budapest, denied claims that the construction of the House of Fates was timed for the elections. The main concern in executing the plans is not speed, but thorough, well-founded work. He was hopeful “that in the course of the memorial year, the year 2014, the new Holocaust memorial site will open its gates”. The government commissioner went on to say: an open discussion has been carried on about preparations for the Holocaust Memorial Year within the Holocaust Memorial Committee, and this is to continue. It would be outright offensive towards Jewish organizations and others as well, if they had to evaluate concepts that had not been thought through or worked out properly.

József Schweitzer, retired Chief Rabbi of Hungary does not support the museum. According to his letter, published on 23 December: “The choice of location is not appropriate, since the Railway station of Józsefváros cannot be tied to the mass deportations of Hungarian Jews, or that of the children. If the idea of establishing a new Holocaust memorial site goes forward, the building of the one-time ghetto on Rumbach Street would be suitable.” Beyond the symbolism and sacred character of the site, this solution would also be more cost-efficient in his opinion.

### **Herzl Center in Budapest opens**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI, Magyar Nemzet, ATV*

The Herzl Center cordially opened its doors within the Israeli Cultural Center in Budapest on 1 December. Zoltán Balog, Minister for Human Resources suggested learning about one-an-other, as the only possible means for peoples and cultures to live together. András Heisler, the president of the Association of Hungarian Jewish Congregations emphasized: action must be taken against those who propagate anti-Semitism. “It is our responsibility to put a break on this,” he said.

On the same day, Action and Protection foundation and the Jewish Agency (Sochnut) opened a shared anti-Semitism monitoring office in the Israeli Cultural Center. With regard to the inauguration of the new office Natan Sharansky, Chairman of the Jewish Agency had the following to say: “The phenomenon called new anti-Semitism is still com-

mon today, and this must change. [...] Primarily young people must be empowered to change this.” The Jewish Agency and Action and Protection Foundation staff will track, for example, the anti-Semitic comments left on community pages. Also, anyone who experiences manifestations of anti-Semitism can turn to this office.

**Police apprehended hooligans responsible for vandalism committed  
on the Hanukkah candelabras**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

As reported in our November issue: three men damaged the Hanukkiah and the attached memorial plaques erected in Blaha Lujza Square, Nyugati Square, and Városház Park on 30 November.

On 2 December the media spokesperson for Budapest Police Headquarters (BRFK) announced that of the three offenders, two had voluntarily presented themselves at the 1<sup>st</sup> District Police Station, and the third person had been apprehended in his flat in the 18<sup>th</sup> District. A procedure was set in motion against all three, suspected on strong grounds of vandalism. The spokesperson reported that each of the suspects—all of them men resident in Budapest and in their twenties—had confessed to their guilt. The spokesperson was not however able to provide information on the motives for the actions of the suspects. The BRFK is still searching for the person who vandalized the Hanukkiah in Örs vezér Square on 30 November.

**Holocaust Memorial Year: Funds of close to two billion HUF for the  
remembrances in 2014**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

At its meeting on 10 December, in the framework of the funding program called the Hungarian Civil Fund for the Holocaust Memorial Year—2014 the Committee on Culture and Media of the Hungarian National Assembly voted to provide support totaling 1.8 billion HUF for 377 projects. The objective of the program is to really involve civil society in the remembrances, and to allow future generations to draw the important lessons from this national tragedy—László L. Simon, the chairman of the committee said.

István Hiller, socialist Member of Parliament spoke of how Hungary was not anti-Semitic, though anti-Semitism is ever present in everyday public speech, and rears its head even in Parliament. Nonetheless—he said—the current funding program connects governing parties with parties of the democratic opposition. Its purpose, on the one hand, is to remember the horrors that took place seventy years ago, and on the other, to call this to the attention of future generations.



**Jobbik: Ban Mazsök President from the buildings  
of the Hungarian National Assembly**

*Budapest*

*Source: MTI*

The Jobbik party demands that György Szabó, President of the Jewish Heritage in Hungary Public Foundation (Mazsök) be banned from the buildings of the Hungarian National Assembly. The opposition party justified its demand with György Szabó's words at the meeting of the Committee for Culture and Media where "he simply threatened to hit Előd Novák in the face", while calling him "a dirty Arrow-Cross party supporter and other obscene names" in a statement sent to the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) on 20 December.

MTI called György Szabó by phone to inquire about the matter, and heard him confirm that he still holds, and would always hold the opinion he voiced, "down to every letter, sound and sentence of its expression". According to the president of Mazsök, Előd Novák and his friends create the impression worldwide that being Hungarian is equivalent to being Nazi, which is of course untrue. "It is due to these persons that a bad international opinion of Hungary has taken root, these people are the shame of the Hungarian nation, [...] they are the successors of Ferenc Szálasi and the Arrow Cross Party"—he explained.

**The New York Times seeks answers from Hungarian Jews**

*New York, United States of America*

*Source: Index.hu, Magyar Nemzet*

*The New York Times* has called for a reappraisal of Hungarian anti-Semitism. The liberal American daily published a questionnaire on its homepage on the evening of 24 December 2014, to which it expects responses from Hungarian Jews especially. In its call, published in both Hungarian and English, the *NYT* asked Hungarian Jews living in Hungary or abroad to share their opinions about the state of affairs in Hungary, such as, whether they had experienced or learned of anti-Semitic attacks in the past two years, and whether they were considering emigrating from Hungary in light of the antagonistic atmosphere. The daily was also seeking answers to: what those effected would consider to be the causes of the phenomenon, what authorities are doing to combat it, or if that be the case, to encourage it. The commentary by *The New York Times* categorized Jobbik as an openly anti-Semitic party, from which the Fidesz government, in the opinion of the daily, was only willing to distance itself as a result of international pressure. The survey is open for the period of one year.

In a statement on 31 December, Action and Protection Foundation Chairman, Dániel Bodnár called the survey questionnaire on Hungarian anti-Semitism in *The New York Times* easy to manipulate, without an aim, and unsuitable for the objective it was set out to accomplish.

### Calvinist diocese's lawyer resigns

*Budapest*

*Source: Index.hu, Magyar Hírlap, Református.hu*

We reported in November that on 3 November a Horthy bust was inaugurated in the church “Hazatérés Temploma” (church of returning home) lead by Lóránt Hegedűs Jr., a Calvinist pastor widely known to be an anti-Semite. István Bogárdi Szabó, Bishop of the Dunamellék Calvinist Diocese asked the parish concerned for a process of investigation to establish misconduct, its legal advisor having collected all available information about the incident and interviewed witnesses.

In the course of the procedure the legal advisor proposed a motion for loss of office, however the competent court of the diocese did not table the motion, claiming partiality. In his letter published on the website Református.hu, and dated 27 December, György Horváth wrote the following: “The Hungarian Calvinist Church has been shamed in front of the whole country. Since this is the third motion I have put forward for the removal of the mantle of priesthood from Lóránt Hegedűs Jr. for similar reasons, and the court has not been willing to proceed for similar reasons, claiming partiality, I am resigning the office I have held for twenty-three years, and in which I have been affirmed by six elections over this period.” The legal advisor pointed out with regard to the incident: exposition of the bible was not central to this church service, praise for Miklós Horthy characterized the event. “Infamous for his demand for members of parliament of Jewish origin to be listed, Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik Member of Parliament was among the speakers. Two men stood next to the pulpit in gendarmerie uniforms, the gendarmerie [dissolved after World War II] that helped to deport hundreds of thousands of Jews in 1944”—the legal counsel wrote. In his opinion the court of the diocese acts, or rather does not take action out of fear: “out of fear of Jobbik, and that their names will appear on the extreme right portal, Kuruc.info”.

# OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

## **Bar Association misconduct proceedings against Tamás Gaudi-Nagy**

*Budapest*

*Source: Népszabadság Online, Népszava, ATV*

László Réti, President of the Budapest Bar Association announced on the evening of 2 December that he had ordered misconduct proceedings against Tamás Gaudi-Nagy, since he believes the attorney had committed a serious offence.

As presented in our November *Report*, the Jobbik MP, in his role as an attorney asked a court judge, on 28 November, to state whether she is of Jewish origin. According to Gaudi-Nagy this was necessary, because “a Hungarian of Jewish origin” is also involved as offender in the case of assault in process, and he asked the court judge, Mária Rózsa about her origins only in order to verify impartiality. Partiality may indeed be a reason for exclusion from the process, however to look for an excuse to do so with such a question, according to Réti, is impermissible.

Only after the procedure for misconduct is concluded will the Bar decide on whether a misconduct investigation will be initiated against Tamás Gaudi-Nagy or not. If required, the President of the Bar, László Réti will order the Disciplinary Board to carry out the investigation. The Disciplinary Board is not identical with the Presidency of the Bar Association. According to the statutes in force, the attorney—depending upon the seriousness of the offence—may be given a warning or reprimand, a financial penalty, or even be disbarred.

At the presidential meeting of the Bar Association, the Presidency came to a decision not to bring a resolution in the matter, but to denounce in a statement all attorney behavior that abuses the legal process and draw attention to the fact that on the eve of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Holocaust it finds any manifestations of anti-Semitism, or manifestations that may be interpreted as such, highly alarming.

## **Panel discussion on Jewry held**

*Berlin, Germany*

*Source: MTI*

A panel discussion entitled “The Future of Jewry in Europe” was held on 3 December at the Hungarian Embassy in Berlin, young Hungarians and Germans participating. Ambassador József Czukor emphasized that the responsibility that the Hungarian state and its authorities had in the Holocaust are fully accepted by the Hungarian government. He pointed to the fact that 2014 will be a Holocaust Memorial Year in Hungary.

The Hungarian Embassy, in partnership with the German movement called Initiative Schalom has hosted public forums on European Jewry. Another reason behind the series of

events has been they belief that there is a great deal left to be done, but not only in Hungary: after all anti-Semitism is not only a Hungarian phenomenon, and it must be combated together by everyone in Europe—József Czukor said.

With regard to the criticism the Hungarian Government has been at receiving end of, a Hungarian participant noted that confrontation with the past is a “labor of remembrance” that involves great hardships, and is “about opening old wounds”, which cannot be undertaken under external pressure, rendering the critical voices “that accelerate the situation to extreme hysterics” detrimental. Among the points emphasized on part of the German participants: it is “contradictory” that while a number of positive processes have been launched, “a Horthy statue is erected in the middle of the Budapest city center”, and “the works of Fascist authors (Albert Wass, József Nyírő) are recommended” to students in the national curriculum. One of the German participants stressed that “concrete, determined and unconditional distancing from Fascist and anti-Semitic views is needed”.

### **Strasbourg Judges dismiss Gábor Vona’s appeal**

*Brussels, Belgium*

*Source: MTI*

On 9 December the Strasbourg European Court of Human Rights dismissed Gábor Vona’s appeal, thereby validating a ruling the Court passed last summer, according to which Hungary had not violated the right to free assembly and association by banning the Magyar Gárda Egyesület (Hungarian Guard Association).

The human rights court established that the Hungarian Guard Movement had operated as a part of the Hungarian Guard Association, was not independent of the other, and that the actions of the movement very likely to strike fear, and that the threatening marches could be considered first steps towards the realization of an “essentially racist” legal regime. According to the court, the dissolution of the Hungarian Guard Association was the only effective means for the authorities to end the threat they meant to others by the Hungarian Guard Movement.

# NEWS AND OPINION ABOUT ANTI-SEMITISM IN HUNGARY

## **Polemical exchange of articles by Tamás Fricz and Radonic Ljiljana**

*Vienna, Austria*

*Source: Magyar Nemzet, 168 Óra*

Our November *Report* discussed an article in the Austrian conservative daily, *Die Presse*, by Tamás Fricz in which he wrote about how one of the main factors in foreign perceptions of anti-Semitism in Hungary is that the international press does not differentiate between the two political parties, Fidesz and Jobbik.

On 28 November, Ljiljana Radonic, a professor at University of Vienna's Department of Political Sciences published an article in the same newspaper entitled: "Hungary as victim? No, the situation of Jews is becoming more exposed!" Here she refuted that the critiques that have appeared with regard to Hungary's anti-Semitism are unfounded. She pointed out additionally that there are also developments in the perception of the Holocaust in Hungary, with the issue of how deeply Hungary is implicated in the crimes coming increasingly to the forefront. According to Radonic, Fricz does not wish to face up to the methodical extermination of Hungarian Jews, and that under the Orbán government, though responsible for the events, Miklós Horthy has cultural backing. The arguments advanced by Fricz are only suitable to refute the reality of the worsening situation of Hungarian Jewry.

On 3 December, Tamás Fricz denounced Ljiljana Radonic's statement: "Hungary is not an anti-Semitic country, Jews suffer less atrocities in Hungary than those they are subjected to in the rest of the countries of the European Union." He went on to support his earlier statements with further arguments, such as how reports about the anti-Semitism situation in Hungary show great similarities; do not differentiate between Fidesz and Jobbik; and that the facts and data on Hungarian atrocities are misleading.

## **Gergely Pröhle at meetings in Washington to discuss course of action for Hungarian presidency of the IHRA**

*Washington, United States of America*

*Source: MTI*

Hungarian Deputy State Secretary Gergely Pröhle had meetings at the US Department of State in Washington about matters that need to be attended to with regard to Hungary's role as president of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) on 9 December. The leading Hungarian diplomat told the Hungarian News Agency (MTI) that in his meeting on the Hungarian presidency of IHRA in 2015, with special envoys Ira Forman, responsible for monitoring and combatting anti-Semitism, and Douglas Davidson, responsible for Holocaust issues, he briefed them of the results of the most recent discus-

sions with Hungarian Jewish organizations. The Deputy Secretary of State said of his meetings: “I requested that at times some appreciation, and not only criticism is shown for the measures that have been taken recently by the Hungarian government to combat anti-Semitism, and that it be expressed publicly as well as behind closed doors, at our meetings.”

### **John Cunningham has returned his Pro Cultura Hungarica award**

*London, United Kingdom*

*Source: MTI*

On December 15, John Cunningham, Professor of Hungarian and Central European film history at Sheffield University announced in a letter to left-wing British newspaper *The Guardian*, that he will return his Pro Cultura Hungarica award. Cunningham, who taught film and media sciences at Hungarian universities between 1991 and 2000, and wrote books about Hungarian film history, received the Hungarian award in 2009. Cunningham made it clear that he was returning the award “in protest at the increasingly reactionary and retrograde developments in Hungary, in particular the policies of the present government led by Viktor Orbán.” The Professor urged other recipients who had been honored with the Pro Cultura Hungarica to consider doing likewise.

### **US senator Cardin’s statement on the Hungarian political situation**

*Washington, United States of America*

*Source: MTI, Hungarian Spectrum*

Benjamin Cardin, U.S. Democratic Party senator, co-chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, spoke once again about his fears regarding the political situation in Hungary to the United States Senate on 13 December. In his report, Cardin was concerned about the democratic rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, the freedom of the press and of religion, but also expressed his dismay at the growth of revisionist and extreme ideologies. In his speech he described how respect still surrounds Regent Horthy Miklós, and other anti-Semites, such as the writer József Nyíró.

The senator was of the opinion that though there are those, who think that the real problem is caused by the extreme opposition party Jobbik, and not the party in government, it seems that some members of Fidesz are contributing to the growth of intolerance. Cardin said he was particularly troubled about the fact that the Media Council “has threatened ATV—an independent television station—with punitive fines” if it again characterizes Jobbik as extremist. “If you can’t even talk about what is extremist or anti-Semitic in Hungary without facing legal sanctions, how can you combat extremism and anti-Semitism?” was the question he raised.

**Jobbik used as negative example by EU***Vienna, Austria**Source: Népszabadság Online*

The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) of the European Union, based in Vienna, has urged, in its report of 20 December, based on the examples of the Greek Golden Dawn and Hungarian Jobbik parties, that the member states of the Union ensure by legal means that hate crimes cannot be propagated through the formation of political parties. The way to fight them would be to ratify nation specific strategies. “We were not interested in the way these parties work, but how they relate to hate crimes. The framework decision of the EU Council establishes that these are unacceptable, and calls upon member states of the Union, to take measure [to combat this]” Dimitrakopoulos, Head of Department Equality and Citizens’ Rights at the Fundamental Rights Agency said.

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## OTHER NEWS

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### **Remembrance of forced laborers held**

*Sopron-Balf, Győr-Moson-Sopron County*

*Source: Kisalföld*

The 6<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day of Fortifications Forced Laborers was held on 5 December, organized by the Holocaust Memorial Center, the National Association of Former Labour Battalion Conscripts, and the Committee for the Victims of Nazi Persecution at the National Literary and Historical Memorial Site. The largest labor camp for building redoubts in the region was established in Balf in 1944. Close to eight thousand forced laborers and labor service men died there, and in the villages surrounding, of the brutal pace set and of hunger in the winter months. “We turn close attention to not allowing young people to forget this shameful period in history. In order that this can never be repeated,” dr. Szabolcs Szita, the executive director of the Holocaust Memorial Center said.

### **The Horthy cult and proposed decree to ban it**

*Gyömrő, Pest County*

*Source: [www.gyomroi-hirhatar.hu](http://www.gyomroi-hirhatar.hu)*

Representing the Environmental, Youth and Child Protection Association of Gyömrő, János Hallama and Beáta Eszes, proposed an independent civil activist meeting between the political party that filed the proposal for a decree banning Horthy memorials, and historians of the period. The meeting of experts took place on 19 December. The historians present—László Karsai and Mária M. Kovács—explained that there is an existing consensus among historians about the responsibility of the state, and of Regent Miklós Horthy, in the Holocaust.

Civilians have been protesting against the renaming of Horthy Square in Gyömrő, and the attached park since May 2012. The Association requests the government and the National Assembly to legislate and ratify a law banning the glorification of representatives of the Hungarian state and government at the time of the genocide, among them Miklós Horthy.



# IMPORTANT STEPS TAKEN BY ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION

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## **Police closes investigation into a case of suspected firearms abuse and criminal incitement against a community based on the complaint by Action and Protection Foundation**

*Budapest*

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation*

On 26 August a user of the community portal Facebook called Krisztina Sikolya posted a profile picture on her public account in which she can be seen with what looks like an AMD-65 type assault rifle. A private individual from Debrecen and Action and Protection Foundation filed a police complaint for suspected firearms abuse and criminal incitement against a community, based on the contents of the comments entered next to the photo.

On 20 November, Budapest Police Headquarters brought a decision to close the investigation, Action and Protection Foundation receiving notice of this on 9 December. According to the position held by the authorities, the comments on the website do not meet the legal provisions for the criminal act of inciting against a community, so no investigation need be conducted into the matter. The authorities only investigated the suspected abuse of firearms. According to the evidence secured in the course of the investigation the authority found that in all probability, the suspect was photographed with the deactivated theatrical prop weapon kept legally, with a permit, by the Rongyosok Kulturális és Hagyományőrző Egyesület (Downtrodden's Association for Culture and Protection of Heritage). Therefore, since the offence of firearms abuse could not be established either, the authorities resolved to close the investigation.

## **The police has suspended investigation of the news portal [www.kuruc.info](http://www.kuruc.info) in a case of denial of the Holocaust based on an Action and Protection Foundation complaint**

*Budapest*

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation*

We reported in August that Action and Protection Foundation lodged a complaint against the extreme right news portal operating under the domain <http://www.kuruc.info> for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regimes. The editor contributed various commentaries to an article that appeared on the website on 27 July, stating among others that “the Austrian leaders are also well aware of the fact that the gas-chambers are just a cheap lie”.

On 20 November, the Budapest Police Headquarters brought a decision—of which Action and Protection Foundation received notification on 2 December—to suspend the investiga-

tion. The decision states that though the act was suitable to establish well founded suspicion of the criminal offence named above, since the server of the website is located in the United States of America, the authorities are unable to take recourse of seizure or request legal assistance, and so the identity of the offender cannot be established. However, if the identity of the offender comes to light within the period of limitation, the process will be reinstated.

**Police dismissal of appeal against decision to close investigation in the case of the “Holokamu” (Holofoax) sign**

*Budapest*

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation*

We reported in our issue for August that Action and Protection Foundation had filed a complaint for public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist and communist regimes against individual unknown, because a sticker bearing the text “Holokamu” (Holofoax) was applied to the back of a van, and driven around the city. The November *Report* followed up with the news that the BRFK closed the investigation in lieu of a criminal offence. In response, Dániel Bodnár, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Action and Protection Foundation filed a complaint with the Prosecutor’s Office.

The Prosecutor’s Office dismissed the appeal—on account of the appellant not being qualified to appeal—but at the same overturned the decision to close the investigation and ordered the continuation of the investigation. In the justification for the ruling it is stated that since the criminal offence of public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime has been regulated in the section on violations of public peace, the target of the criminal act is public peace itself. On these grounds, Action and Protection Foundation does not qualify as victim of the offence under consideration, and therefore cannot avail itself of the option of appealing the decision to close the investigation. Nonetheless, in the opinion of the Prosecutor’s Office the position held in the complaint is sound, the expression “Holokamu” unequivocally bearing a meaning that brings the fact of the Holocaust into doubt, and meets the definition of the provisions for the criminal offence when used in wide public.

## THE MONTH'S CHRONICLE

All the incidents to be found in the report are presented chronologically in the table below. The *Category* column shows which part of the report deals with the given case in greater detail.

No.	Date	Incident	Category
1.	1 December	Herzl center opened in Budapest	Community News and Responses
2.	2 December	Police apprehend Hanukkah candelabra vandals	Community News and Responses
3.	2 December	Legal Bar misconduct proceedings against Tamás Gaudi-Nagy	Official and Civil Responses
4.	3 December	Panel discussion on Jewry	Official and Civil Responses
5.	4 December	Police dismissal of appeal against decision to close investigation of „Holokamu” sign	Action and Protection Foundation steps taken
6.	5 December	Remembrance of forced laborers	Other News
7.	5 and 7 December	Hannukkah vandalized on Blaha Lujza Square	Hate incident: vandalism
8.	9 December	Strasbourg court dismisses Gábor Vona's appeal	Official and Civil Responses
9.	10 December	Holocaust Memorial Year—Support worth close to 2 billion HUF for the remembrances in 2014	Community News and Responses
10.	13 December	U.S. Senator Cardin's statement on the Hungarian political situation	On anti-Semitism in Hungary
11.	15 December	John Cunningham returns Pro Cultura Hungarica award	On anti-Semitism in Hungary
12.	19 December	The Horthy cult and the proposal for a decree to ban it	Other news
13.	20 December	Jobbik: Ban Mazsók president from buildings of the National Assembly	Community News and Responses
14.	20 December	EU raises Jobbik as negative example	On anti-Semitism in Hungary
15.	24 December	<i>The New York Times</i> expecting answers from Hungarian Jews	Community News and Responses
16.	27 December	Lawyer of the Hungarian Calvinist Church resigns	Community News and Responses
17.	–	Polemical articles by Tamás Fricz and Ljiljana Radonic	On anti-Semitism in Hungary
18.	–	House of Fates	Community News and Responses
19.	–	Police suspends investigation of news portal www.kuruc.info based on complaint by TEV for denial of the Holocaust	Action and Protection Foundation steps taken
20.	–	Police closes investigation into suspected firearms misuse and criminal incitement against a community based on a complaint by TEV	Action and Protection Foundation steps taken

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## CONTACT AND SUPPORT

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Action and Protection Foundation is the civil initiative of a number of Jewish organizations, that is ready to take resolute steps to curb increasing widespread anti-Semitic manifestations.

In case anyone faces insults or anti-Semitic abuse due to a supposed or real Jewish background, do not remain silent, let us know, so that we can forward the case through the appropriate channels to the official organs required to take measures!

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NOTIFICATIONS OF SUCH INCIDENTS ARE RECEIVED BY THE FOUNDATION THROUGH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MEANS:

### HOTLINE

(+36 1) **51 00 000**

**The website of Action and Protection Foundation: [www.tev.hu/forrodrot](http://www.tev.hu/forrodrot)**

**The Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany](http://www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany)**

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Action and Protection Foundation's undertaking can only be successful if great numbers share in our commitment to prepare the grounds for the right to fair process for all those who have suffered offences. In aid of this cause please support the work of the Foundation with your contribution!

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE TO THE FOUNDATION ON THE FOLLOWING BANK ACCOUNT:

**13597539-12302010-00057157**

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