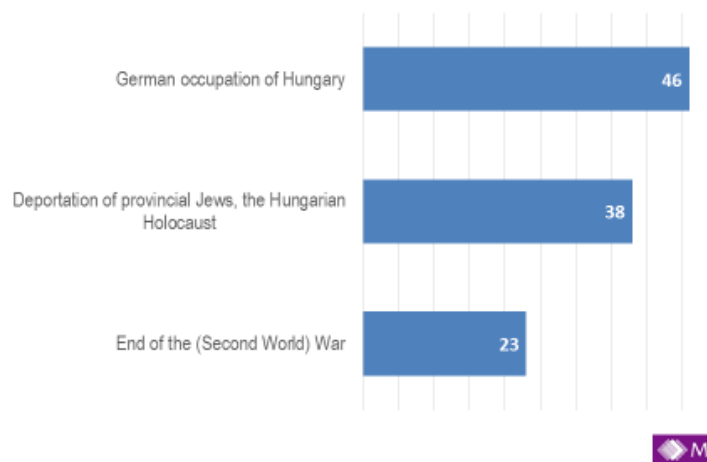


The Divisive Memorial

Whatever the Hungarian government’s objective with the memorial in Szabadság Square may have been, the only result for the moment seems to be the achievement of an extreme social cleavage. According to the Medián survey commissioned by Action and Protection Foundation (TEV) at the end of April, an equal number of people consider the sculpture a fitting memorial, and an instrument for falsification of history.

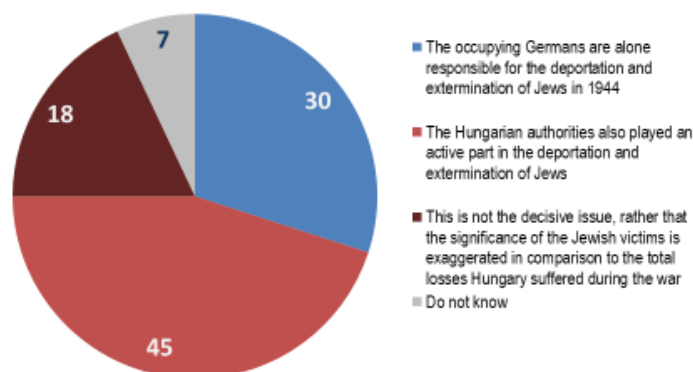
Only a seventh of the Hungarian adult population can give any answer at all to the question: “What happened 70 years ago, in the spring and summer of 1944?” Most of those who were able to respond spontaneously recalled the German occupation of Hungary, yet only one-third of them remembered the deportation of the Jews or the Hungarian Holocaust, and a bare quarter of them mentioned the end of the war. One-third of the respondents (31 percent) could not mentally recall a single incident from 1944.

What happened, as far as you are aware, 70 years ago, in the spring and summer of 1944?
(Proportion of spontaneous replies, percent)

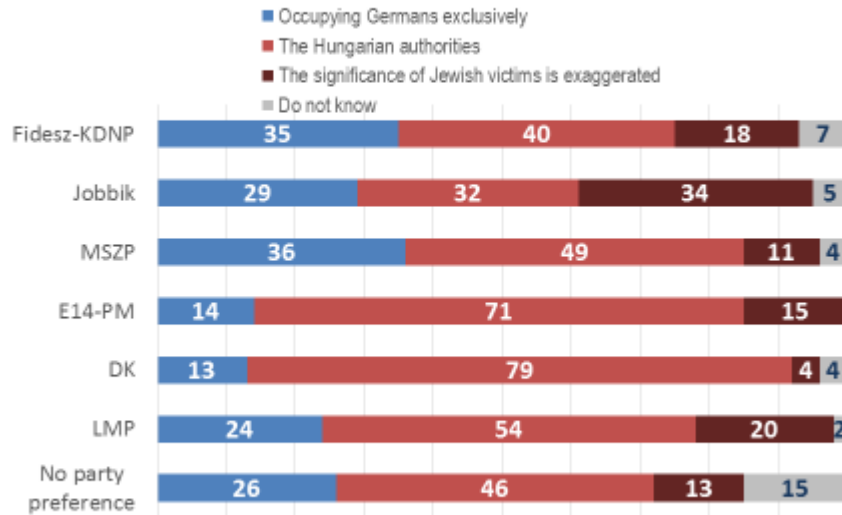


Naturally, when the reply did not depend on memory a significantly greater number of respondents show themselves well informed: on the question being formulated as whether they had heard of “German forces occupying Hungary in the spring of 1944, in the final stage of the Second World War” 92 percent of people could respond in the affirmative, and 96 percent said they were aware that “hundreds of thousands of Hungarian citizens of Jewish origin were deported to Auschwitz and killed in the summer of 1944”. In light of these responses people are more or less aware of the happenings, yet in the matter of responsibility, society shows itself as highly divided, and the cleavage is in significant measure along party political lines.

Opinions about responsibility
(percent)



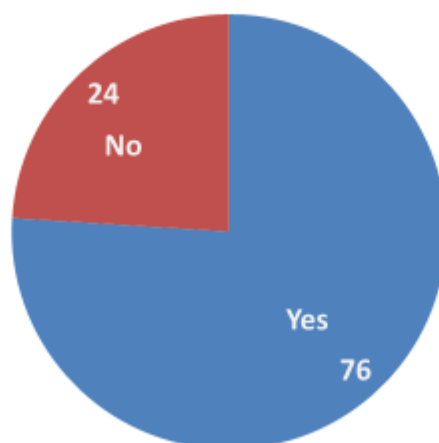
**Appraisal of responsibility by party preference
(percent)**



One of the most surprising results from the survey is the variety of responses from Jobbik voters: contrary to the voter base of all the other parties, over one-third of these respondents leans towards relativizing the holocaust, however another one-third accept the responsibility of the Hungarian authorities. Another matter of interest is that in terms of opinion distribution, MSZP voters are the most similarly disposed to supporters of the government, while supporters of the two smaller left-wing parties have the smallest proportion of their voters considering the occupying Germans exclusively responsible for the Hungarian Holocaust.

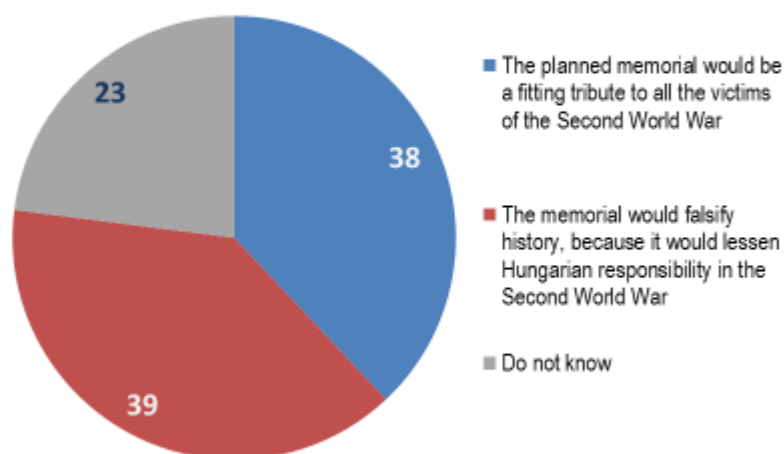
Relatively many people are informed of the plans for the sculpture memorializing the German occupation: three-quarters of respondents state that they have heard of this government resolve. Unsurprisingly the proportion is highest in Budapest (83 percent), and lowest in villages (71 percent).

**Have you heard that the Hungarian government is planning to erect a sculpture in the center of Budapest, a memorial to the German occupation?
(percent)**

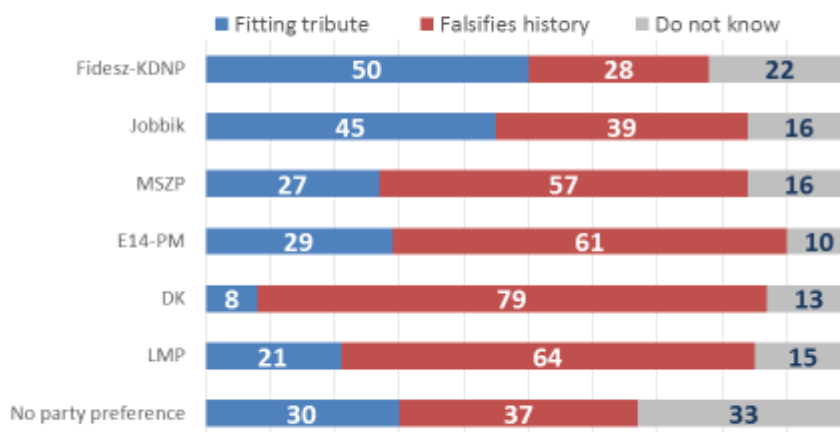


The idea of the memorial reveals very deep divides in Hungarian society: almost the same number approve and oppose it. In this sense the government/opposition, and especially the right-wing/left-wing fault line is very marked, but even 28 percent of Fidesz supporters and 39 percent of Jobbik supporters share the view that the designers of the memorial are guilty of falsifying history.

Which statement would you rather agree with?
(percent)



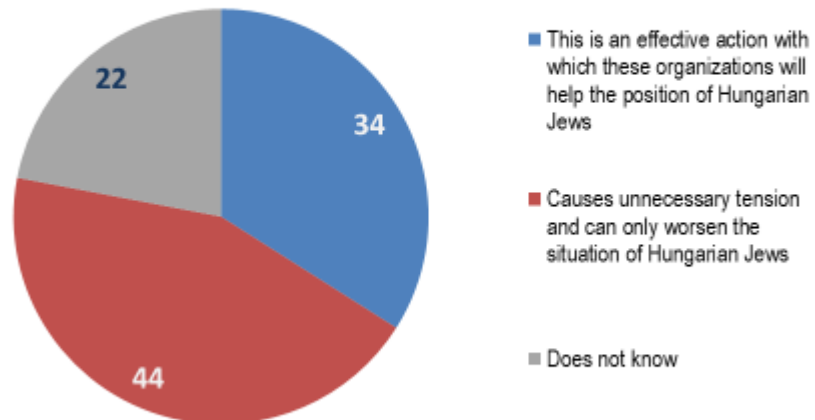
Opinion about the memorial by party preference
(percent)



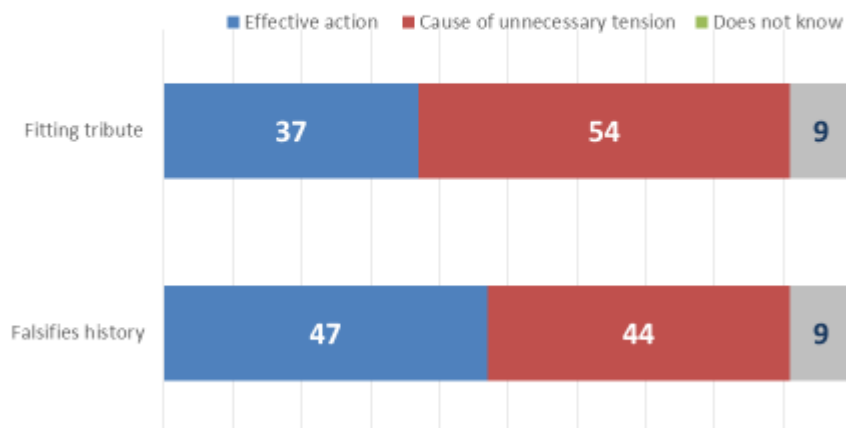
Opinions are similarly divided on the critical stance taken by Mazsihisz and other organizations. One-third of the respondents approve, and consider the steps taken effective, but over four-tenth consider the measures worrying. Positive and negative approaches to these organizations' actions are split nearly equally even among those who are otherwise highly critical of the memorial, though a slight majority of these respondents prefer determined measures.

Hungarian Jewish organizations are highly opposed to the erection of the memorial, because they believe it falsifies history, and they are therefore not planning on attending the memorial events organized by the government. Which of the following opinions on this do you agree with?

(percent)



Opinion on the steps taken by the organizations against the memorial
(percent)



Medián Opinion and Market Research Institute carried out the survey from 25–29 April, with questions personally put to a random selection of 1,200 adult individuals in over 100 towns and settlements in Hungary. Slight distortions shown by the respondent pool were corrected with the use of Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) data and mathematical process, so called weighting, and thereby the sample reflects the of the voting-age population’s composition in terms of urbanization, sex, age and education. The margin of error for the data published within the whole sample and depending on the distribution of the replies is at most ± 3 percent.