

ANTI-SEMITIC HATE CRIMES
AND INCIDENTS REPORT

DECEMBER 2017

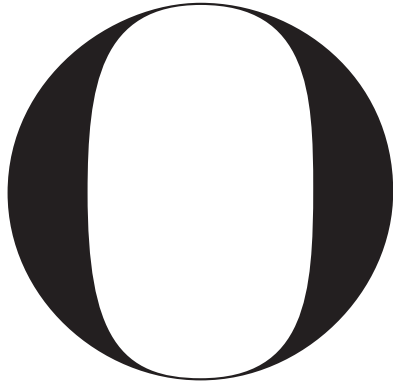


BRUSSELS INSTITUTE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



One of the most important requirements for the struggle against anti-Semitism is an investigation of the actual prevalence of anti-Semitism. One of the aims of Action and Protection Foundation is to eliminate ignorance of this issue. Instrumental in achieving this objective is the continuous professional monitoring of hate crimes that occur public life. The community cannot really be protected unless current information on anti-Semitic acts and other hate crimes are collected and analyzed. Results of the monitoring are published, monthly by the Foundation.

The reports deal with two forms of behavior: anti-Semitic hate crimes, and hate-motivated incidents. The report refers to both types of behavior as “*hate incidents*”. An anti-Semitic hate crime is distinguished from other hate crime by possessing an anti-Semitic motive. Anti-Semitic hate crime is a violation of criminal law, yet not all hate-motivated acts are regarded as criminal. Nevertheless, a record 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 to record their particular characteristics. Data recorded includes the incident’s location, perpetrator, victim, consequences. Also the types of the various incidents are differentiated.

Our Foundation identified two anti-Semitic hate-incidents this month, categorized as vandalism and hate speech. In the first case, an anti-Semitic message written across a street sign in Budapest was reported—and cleaned off by employees of the Foundation. In the other case, a sticker with the swastika was reported—and found to belong to an extreme right-wing band.

Three items can be found in the Further Hate Incidents section of the report this month. In the first case, János Pócs, Member of Parliament for Fidesz, posted a photograph of a slaughtered pig with an inscription scorched onto it: “*ő volt a soros*” (he was *next* in line, a pun on the name of George Soros). An account of the second case appeared on a blog, describing how in December, some members of a large company at a bar disturbed and harassed other guests at the facility with Hitler salutes and cries of “Heil Hitler!”, along with other exclusionary statements. In the third case István Vágó, the well-known TV personality posted an exclusionary comment on his social networking page.

The Foundation did not take on new official cases this month, and no notable developments occurred in our cases currently under process either.

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 discour-

se, 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. Among those actively participating in the work of the Foundation are 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.

ABOUT THE REPORT

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 offenses 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 incidents¹ 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 offenses 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 offenses 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 effect 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).

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—

¹ See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

such as the police, or the Public Prosecutor's office—may be particularly beneficial.² 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 organ-

izations 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).

² 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)

METHODOLOGY³

The report deals with two types of offence: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by EBESZ as follows⁴ (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 people⁵
- 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 sentence⁶ (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 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

³ Our methodology remains the same since we started our monitoring in May 2013. The methodology was elaborated by Ildikó Barna, her text was integrated in this chapter. Small modifications are marked separately.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

period⁷ 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, while volunteers are involved additionally in the 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.

⁷ These are described in the *Methodology* section.

⁸ The following were used to develop these criteria: ADL 2012, CST 2013

⁹ The criteria for hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics were modified, therefore the present description is different from the one we used in 2013.

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.⁸

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 statistics⁹:

- 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 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.¹⁰ In presenting time lines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

¹⁰ 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 2017

Action and Protection Foundation identified two incidents of anti-Semitic hate crime during its December monitoring. One categorized as vandalism, and the other as hate speech.

VANDALISM

TEV cleans anti-Semitic inscriptions off Budapest street signs

Source: Action and Protection Foundation

13 December 2017 A report was filed with the Foundation stating that abusive inscriptions had been painted across the street signs in the neighborhood of Hegyalja Street and Meredek Street. This is not the first time this had occurred. Similar distasteful inscriptions had been cleaned off by locals a number of times before, but the signs have been repeatedly defaced. Locals asked for assistance from TEV.

It took us 10 minutes to completely clean the surfaces, along with years of dirt, using a little paint thinner. We noticed again that many locals spoke against the incitement of hatred and mental pollution spread in their neighborhoods, and promptly reported it.

In the other case, a citizen report from the inner city indicated that a hate inciting inscription had appeared in the Nádor Street



Source: Action and Protection Foundation

bus stop of bus no. 15 (near the Central European University Campus, tied to George Soros). Unknown individuals had written on the lighted advertisement board in the bus stop: “GÁZKAMRÁBA SOROS GYÖR-GYÖT ÉS MIGRÁNS MOHAMEDET” (Into the gas chambers with George Soros and migrant Mohammed). On the day following the reports we found, upon arriving in the bus stop, that the inscription had already been removed, cleaned quite thoroughly by someone.



Source: Action and Protection Foundation



Source: Action and Protection Foundation

HATE SPEECH

TEV removes a sticker with a swastika

Source: Action and Protection Foundation

18 December 2017 A report was filed with the foundation that a sticker with a swastika had been found in District 1 of Budapest, stuck on a drainpipe next to the wall of CEU's Raoul Wallenberg guesthouse.

According to the writing on the sticker it belongs to the "Wotan Jugend", a Russian death metal band from St. Petersburg, and a neo-Nazi group organizing around them. The latter is active in Ukraine (fighting on the side of the separatists). A Czech newspaper reports that they organized in the Czech Republic as well, where five young persons were arrested for their efforts to build the organization.

The sticker was removed by the Foundation.



Source: Action and Protection Foundation

FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

In the course of its monitoring during December 2017, Action and Protection Foundation identified two incidents that cannot be included in the statistic, because—as explained in the chapter on methodology—the circumstances of the case and its anti-Semitic nature are not clear and beyond doubt, and the identity of the perpetrator is unknown.

The posting of a photograph of a “Soros pig” by Fidesz MP János Pócs makes international news
Source: 24.hu; 444.hu; 168ora.hu; nyugat.hu; Action and Protection Foundation

8–14 December 2017 János Pócs, member of the National Assembly for Fidesz, shared on his social network page a photograph of a dead pig at a traditional pig slaughter in Transylvania, its skin emblazoned with the visible inscription: “Ő volt a Soros” (He was next in line). Pócs shared this picture with the comment, “now there’s one less pig there (in Transylvania)”.

Pócs told 444 that the inscription sheared onto the side of the pig has absolutely nothing to do with George Soros. The inscription points out, in his opinion, that on the occasion of the pig slaughter the owner usually goes into the pig sty and chooses the pig for slaughter (so it is next, the next in line: soros). He is shocked by the presumption that this would allude to George Soros.

The Open Society Institute, which handles the funding activity of George Soros stated: the post by Pócs is an appalling attack against the businessman. They also added that the photo fits right into the dark traditions of anti-Semitic depiction reaching back to the Middle Ages.

After the post published by Pócs a number of artists, scholars, lawyers and journalists initiated a petition to force a resignation of the member of Parliament, and many politicians and political parties reacted. The reactions—along with the Foundation’s reaction and position on the matter—are documented in the Community News and Responses section of this report.

A “strange” statement by István Vágó on Facebook
Sources: facebook.com; Action and Protection Foundation

16 December 2018 István Vágó, a widely known television personality and currently politician for the Democratic Coalition Party (DK) posted a rather strange comment on his Facebook page. On his social networking page, he wrote he is unable to feel any sort of community with the Jews.

In a comment he posted on 16 December 2017 under an article he shared about the name-change of Zsigmond Király University, Vágó struck out at EMIH for its alleged close ties to Fidesz. In



Source: facebook.com

János Pócs told the online news portal 444: “I did not take the photograph, my friends sent it from a high-spirited pig slaughter”.

the comments following the post, there was one that contained the following lines: “As an atheist I am not interested in the relationship of the Jews and G.d (written fully, or dotted out, beginning with a capital letter or not, it’s all the same to me), I find the sight of kaftan-, hat- and payot-wearing Jews repellent, their ceremonies do not touch me, and I feel no community with them. And would not want to either”.

TEV has taken the position that though this statement does not pose a violation of the pertaining law in the criminal code, it does offend good taste and the unwritten rules of civilized conversation.

Tibi atya blog calls out anti-Semitic atrocity

Source: Action and Protection Foundation

22 December 2017 The Tibi atya (Pater Tibor) blog reported the anti-Semitic manifestations of a company at a bar. The author of the article met a group of people numbering 30–40 who preserve Hungarian traditions—he was already acquainted with them. Upon the chance meeting, it turned out the group was out to visit the

bar affiliated to the blogger, and so he joined them. According to the description, emotions ran high at the bar, and unacceptable behavior overtook some of those in the group. A smaller group within the company “began to sing Nazi songs loudly; started Jew baiting, gave the Hitler salute, threw off their upper clothing, showing off t-shirts with Nazi swastikas.” Additionally, they harassed guests of the establishment who were behaving properly. The author of the blog post apologized in the article, and expressed distaste for the people participating and the event as a whole. He added that he did not agree with the ideologies of Nazism and anti-Semitism. He also explained that in his opinion it is not enough to denounce these, but it must be noticed that they are integral parts of Hungarian root reality, and will remain that way until our relationship to them changes. “Aside from apologizing once more to those affected, all I can effectively do with retrospect is to help with more writing and events in the future that confronts these extreme right people in the intellectual space that they inhabit, and eliminates them.”

COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

Kálmán Szalai:
“*Jobbik anti-Semitism still the same*”
Sources: Action and Protection
Foundation; MTI;

6 December 2017 Kálmán Szalai, Secretary of the Foundation was invited to the morning program of public TV1. “*In the countryside and on a basic organizational level, anti-Semitism and racism has a heavy presence in the communications of Jobbik, it had in fact earlier pushed hard to introduced these to public discourse in Hungary*”, he emphasized. The situation has changed little since the announcement of Jobbik’s turn into a people’s party, and there are no signs that the party would want to rectify the “crimes it had committed” with its exclusionist politics. He said no similar western European party had succeeded in making this switch. Kálmán Szalai thinks it is a “dead-end idea” in the long term to maximize votes through such statements. As a solution, he emphasized the importance of education in combatting anti-Semitism and racism, indicating that the Jewish community must also participate actively in this.

*Csaba Latorcai: Hungary is safe
for Jewish communities today*
Sources: MTI; kormany.hu

12; 14 December 2017 On the invitation of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation, the Deputy Secretary of State for the Prime Minister’s Office, Csaba Latorcai, gave a speech at an event to light the Hanukkah candles in Budapest. He drew attention to the fact that in contrast to growing anti-Semitic manifestations across Europe, Hungary is one of the safest countries of the world and of Europe, where members of the Jewish community find their members, their children, and their values in peace and safety.

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán greeted the Jewish community of Hungary on the occasion of Hanukkah—Bertalan Havasi, Deputy Secretary of State for the Press Office of the Prime Minister’s Office announced.

*Slomó Köves: Hanukkah greetings
from Jobbik are cynical*
Sources: MTI; hv.g.hu; 168ora.hu

12 December 2017 Gábor Vona sent a letter of Hanukkah greetings again this year. Jobbik did so for the first time last year, after a turn to become a people’s party, but the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation lead by Slomó Köves rejected the greeting from Jobbik in an open letter. The journal *HVG* approached Jobbik, whether they had sent Hanukkah greetings this year as well. The press office of the party said all Jewish denominations receive a Hanukkah greeting card, and Christian Churches receive Christmas greeting cards.

The executive rabbi of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation considers the gesture cynical. Slomó Köves spoke on the news on Hungarian Television 1 in these terms: a cynical gesture coming from politicians who have spread racist hatred for years and continue to sit with members of parliament in their ranks who, for example, considered “*shooting Jews into the Danube a task still to be completed*”. He added: this was extensively discussed a year ago, and neither the situation, nor his opinion has changed since then.

The rabbi also explained: if somebody feels they have spread darkness, they can heal that by spreading light. This would mean that Jobbik should apply the same vehemence with which it spread racist hatred in Hungarian villages to spreading understanding and acceptance of each other, not by proclamations, but on the level of actions.

Slomó Köves: Indifference is the greatest sin

Source: klubradio.hu

20 December 2017 Balázs Böcskei at Klubradio interviewed Rabbi Slomó Köves, the leader of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation. The conversation was broadcast in the program called “Konkrét” (Concrete) on 27 November 2017.

The Holocaust and the relativization of the Holocaust were subjects addressed in the program. Slomó Köves said that a black and white approach to this matter would be problematic. It was not only about inherently guilty perpetrators, or guiltless victims. *“Indifference was the greatest sin.”* While *“we are further and further from the Holocaust, and the personal trauma of the holocaust seems virtually at an unreachable distance.”* So recognition is different even within the Jewish community now.

The “crisis of the West” was also discussed. According to the executive rabbi there is always a turning point. *“There is a turning point, whose peak and symbol is the Holocaust, which is a crisis of absolute faith in the humanism that had begun with the French Revolution and the Enlightenment, which though perhaps not eliminating God, nevertheless greatly reduced*

His role. Human morals lacking transcendent foundations can end up in horrifically dangerous places.” God still has to be discovered now, and thought has to be placed on transcendent foundations with a skepticism in the omnipotence of rationality. The issue of refugees and Islam was also brought up linked to this. A sentence from a previous interview came up as a question here, this being: *“the problem is not with Islam, but with us.”* He noted that it was difficult to face up to what great faith and determination people in extreme poverty live with, without any form of comfort. The usual *“comfort, and that well-being of the conscience, which somehow seems to proliferate on the laziness brought about by this comfort, is suddenly brought into question.”* This is why Islam can hold a mirror to Europe’s conscience. The question that remains is *“will it fall apart completely, or get its act together.”*

Finally the rabbi was asked whether if he had got an invitation to Gábor Vona’s appearance at the Spinoza House, how would he have responded? *“I would want someone who had spread the poison of racist hatred year upon year [...] to go from village to village, and tell people, we were wrong, we made mistakes, why we were mistaken, and what the right way forward would be.”*

OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

*Reactions to János Pócs,
Fidesz MP's "Soros-pig" post*
Sources: 24.hu; 444.hu; 168ora.hu;
Action and Protection Foundation

8–14 December 2017 Gergely Gulyás, the leader of the Fidesz Parliamentary faction spoke at a press conference: János Pócs had made it unequivocally clear that he had no intention of offending anyone when posting the photo. Viktor Orbán was also questioned by journalists in the corridors of the Parliament, as President of Fidesz, with his response: “*Affairs surrounding pig-slaughters are not within the government’s scope*”. János Lázár, the Minister of the Prime Minister’s Office said, the post was beneath the level of a Fidesz MP. He called Pócs a very successful and very good fighter, comrade in arms, but he said this was not the kind of behavior exhibiting good taste, and was unworthy of a Fidesz politician.

The American **Bloomberg News Agency** published an article entitled “*Hungarian Ruling Party Lawmaker Mocks Soros with Image of Dead Pig*”. In the article they give a detailed explanation for their English-language readers what the double meaning of the words sheared into the sides of the pig is—that he was next, or that this had been George Soros. Bloomberg also mentions that Pócs had told the online news portal 444 that the inscription had nothing to do with the billionaire; it only signified that this pig had been chosen for slaughter. The American **AP News Agency** also gave an account of the incident, quoting the Open Society Foundation on how the photo was the latest example of officially accepted anti-Semitism in Viktor Orbán’s Hungary. The agency’s account was picked up by many other American media channels, among them *The New York Times* and Fox.

Numerous civil and public figures protested in Hungary as well, with a performance from Árpád Schilling and his wife Lilla Sárosdi alluding to the express Nazi symbolism in János Pócs’s post.

Kálmán Szalai, Secretary of our Foundation put forward the position TEV takes on the case in the columns of the journal 168 óra. He explained that it was easy to consider an incident anti-Semitic, or see a declaration as having anti-Semitic overtones. It is difficult to take a secure stance, “*It is virtually impossible to make crystallized statements about inner motivations, whether an action has an anti-Semitic motivation, as for example if someone scorches a sentence with double meaning into the carcass of an animal, or considers it witty, and shares it as a photo.*” He added that the issue of “*tastelessness, insensitivity, rudeness, indecency and intellectual ignobility that reaches the unacceptability threshold of society*” need not only be taken up when it is motivated by hatred, and more specifically anti-Semitism. “*János Pócs is not to be considered an embarrassment because he committed an act of anti-Semitic provocation, for we do not have conclusive knowledge whether his action was motivated by it, but more so because what he did was extremely vulgar.*”

*Constitutional Court decision:
Tamás Krausz did not offend
Sándor Szakály’s human dignity*
Sources: hvj.hu; 168ora.hu

22 December 2017 Historian Tamás Krausz did not offend the human dignity of Sándor Szakály, Director of the Veritas Historical Research Institute, even if his judgment had elements of exaggeration, and so the court rulings stating this as the case have not contravened the Fundamental Law—the Constitutional Court said in its decision published on Friday.

The debate flared after a statement in 2014, in which Sándor Szakály, as Director of the Veritas Research Institute said, among others, with regard to the 1941 deportation to Kamenets-Podolsk that a number of historians are of the opinion that this was the first deportation, but in

his opinion “*this could rather be considered a police action against aliens, because this was where those without Hungarian citizenship were expelled to*”.

This statement elicited a reaction from another historian, Tamás Krausz a few days later, he spoke in a TV program: “*There is no position established in Hungarian historiography describing the Holocaust as a police case, or action against aliens. This [...] relativizes the Holocaust, it verges on Holocaust denial.*” Sándor Szakály sued his colleague, saying that Krausz had committed character assassination against him: he had offended his good standing and human dignity by attributing

to him a statement that he had not made. The courts handled Krausz’s statement as an opinion; this is why the case came to be judged by the Constitutional Court.

The Constitutional Court ruled that the courts had been correct. They took the position that “*The freedom of expression covers on the one hand statements expressing a person’s value judgments, declaring an individual’s personal conviction, independently of whether the opinion is of value, or not, right or wrong, respectable, or dispensable*”. The Constitutional Court was divided on the issue, and the judges were in favor of Krausz by a proportion of 8–7.

**NEWS AND OPINIONS
ABOUT ANTI-SEMITISM
IN HUNGARY**

This month, the Foundation detected no news or event to be discussed in this section.

OTHER NEWS

Double Standards in Jobbik

Sources: magyarhirlap.hu;
pestisracok.hu; hirado.hu

1 December 2017 An article with the above title appeared in the national daily *Magyar Hírlap*, in response to the announcement by Dániel Z. Kárpát: the party would expel Erzsébet Erős for her anti-Semitic and racist statements on Facebook.

We reported in November that Erős was the President of the Retired Section of the party and made a statement on her Facebook page that a ban should be introduced on the participation of Jews in politics.

“Jobbik is not a party where actions do not have consequences, we have responded within 24 hours to the unacceptable statements, our paths have separated with the person concerned”, Dániel Z. Kárpát said in the program in Hír TV called Egyenesen (Plain speech).

However, it came to be known about Z. Kárpát that he had made exclusionist statements at an Óbuda event in 2012, yet he is still a member of the party’s leading committee, its most important decision-making organ. At the event, he said that Israel wants to buy up Hungary, something he interpreted as an attack, which must be countered with all means. Z. Kárpát called the news a political smear campaign and added that he does not consider his words of five years earlier an anti-Semitic manifestation. In his opinion it was not Jew baiting, simply a criticism of Israel’s politics.

Investigation against the extremist Hungarian National Front completed

Sources: MTI; 24.hu

8 December 2017 Police have closed an investigation into the case of the Hungarian National Front (Magyar Nemzeti Arcvonal–MNA). The investigation against 17 individuals was carried out for reasonable suspicion of preparation for violence against

members of a community, abuse of ammunition, guns and explosives. At a press conference, the National Police Headquarters (ORFK) detailed: the criminal procedure was ordered by the Prosecutor of Győr County on 6 August 2015. The investigation authorities identified the structure, operation and members of the organization called Hungarian National Front. A huge store of guns and explosives were also found. The National Bureau of Investigation of the Intervention Police completed the investigation recently, the files of the case are already with the competent prosecution office.

So the investigation began over a year before the police killing in Bóny—previously reported by the Foundation. The tragic attack took place on the morning of 26 October, the personnel of the National Bureau of Investigation wanted to hold a house search in the attacker’s home, but 76-year-old István Györkös, leader of the extremist organization opened fire even before they had entered the building. He delivered five-six shots from a machinegun and shot the 46-year-old investigator, who died on the spot, in the head.

Tibor Ágoston makes a veiled racist statement in the municipal assembly

Sources: dehir.hu; 24.hu; 444.hu;
mno.hu; Action and Protection Foundation

14; 17; 21 December 2017 The Debrecen municipal assembly discussed applicants to the János Arany Talent Care Program. The aim of the program is to give talented children of parents with a disadvantaged background in social, cultural, and economic terms equal opportunities to continue their studies, and acquire competitive knowledge.

Tibor Ágoston, Jobbik member of the local government said during the debate in the assembly that one of the two applicants should not be supported, because, in his opinion, the applicant is not talented

enough. In his formulation, the program is about care for talent, and not “about giving someone a chance to show whether they are talented or not. Or let us make a program that will be called, let us say, *Rostás Winnetou*, a remedial program.”

Gyula Szabó, the Fidesz chair of the Education Committee denounced the statement by the Jobbik politician. László Papp, the Mayor considered the comment by Tibor Ágoston shocking, and categorically rejected all forms of ethnic discrimination. He announced: “Debrecen gives everyone assistance, irrespective of their ethnic belonging. It is never examined what ethnic background someone comes from.”

The Jobbik press department first released a statement saying their representative “was obviously mistaken, since no information could be found on an institution called ‘*Rostás Winnetou talent development*’.” Finally, perhaps on account of the great media response, Debrecen Jobbik began an inquiry into the matter. Ábel Kőszeghy, faction leader for Jobbik in Debrecen, approached the matter by saying that of the four members of the faction only Tibor Ágoston voted with a no to the talent development program. He added in the press release, “*Tibor Ágoston—by his own admission—had no knowledge of the origins of the two children to be supported. The comment—heard at the assembly meeting—with which he put forward his decision is unacceptable to us, and the other representatives in Debrecen are not able, or willing to identify with it. Jobbik in Debrecen has initiated an internal inquiry about the statements Tibor Ágoston made at the general assembly. The action will not be let off without consequences.*”

Tibor Ágoston was given an effective sentence in 2016, fined 750 thousand for sharing his Holocaust-denying thoughts with the wide public at an event—he spoke about a “Holohoax”.

The Foundation also published a statement on the matter. “*Responding to a case of the most vulgar, crude, and blatantly indefensible racism Jobbik, in search of the path to becoming a people’s party issued an official statement announcing that the party knows of no Rostás Winnetou Program, and so they do not*

know what their municipal representative in Debrecen may have been thinking of. TEV categorically protests against every racist manifestation by Tibor Ágoston and the dissemination of its poisonous effect, in all instances, whether effecting Jewry or the Roma people. TEV holds the position that a politician who has confronted serious legal and monetary sanctions for his exclusionist, racist, and history-denying statements, but apparently cannot be thwarted from making such racist statements if only to keep in line with social norms, is not worthy of the position of representative, which he holds.”

“*In the opinion of TEV the main question is how Ágoston’s earlier Holocaust-denying statements could have been left without consequences within Jobbik. If in spite of the court sentence convicting him the extremist politician could be a member and representative of Jobbik, it is safe to assume that behind the veneer of ‘acceptability’ and the shift to a ‘people’s party’ image, still the same racist party the country had got to know before snarls, and cannot be forgotten even for a moment, because of cynically sent Hanukkah greetings.*”

Tibor Ágoston’s speech was denounced by the Liberals; MSZP and DK as well, who called on Jobbik to distance itself from the politician and what he had said.

On 28 December, close to two weeks after the event, Ágoston resigned from all offices he held in Jobbik with immediate effect, and asked for the termination of his membership in the party. He also announced that he is leaving the Jobbik faction in Debrecen and will be participating in the work of the municipal assembly as an independent. All of this took place one day before Ágoston would have appeared for a hearing in front of the Jobbik committee, so the step he took may be interpreted as his preempting an exclusion from the party. The Debrecen leadership of Jobbik noted Tibor Ágoston’s decision, and called on him to return his mandate.

A few days prior to the case becoming public, the daily Magyar Idők did bring three new recordings to public attention. On these recordings István Apáti, National Assembly member for Jobbik and László Toroczka, deputy leader of the party spoke about Roma people almost like animals. In

a program broadcast by the Szent Korona Radio they spoke with György Gyula Zagya (employed by the Jobbik-led local government of Tiszavasvár) about violence against Roma, the rutting season of Roma, and the sterilization of Roma mothers.

Holy mass held for László Bárdossy in Szombathely

Source: nyugat.hu

14 December 2017 A holy mass of atonement and wreath laying ceremony was held on the second Sunday of advent, at the St. Elizabeth Franciscan parish church in Szombathely, for László Bárdossy—Nyugat.hu, the online news portal wrote after a reader’s remark. The ceremony was also advertised by the county daily, *Vas Népe*.

Nyugat.hu wanted to find out why the Catholic parish church held a mass for the extreme-right politician, but dr. János Székely, diocesan bishop directed the news



Source: nyugat.hu

portal to the church, though parish priest of the Franciscan church, Achilles Horváth, has not responded to requests.

Bárdossy is an honorary citizen of Szombathely to this day, Nyugat.hu goes on to add. He was awarded the title in 1942, and no trace of its withdrawal can be found. Though there have been attempts to rehabilitate him, Bárdossy is legally a war criminal. He functioned as a Prime Minister

for hardly a year, and in this period among other actions, he gave permission for twenty-thousand Hungarians of German ethnicity to be conscripted into the SS, the third anti-Jewish law was ratified, he declared war on the Soviet Union and the United States, and contributed to the sending of the Hungarian Second Army to the Don River.

Gábor Vona gives interview to the AP News Agency

Source: valasz.hu

18 December 2017 The president of Jobbik gave an interview to the American news agency AP. The party president stated that there would be no return to the anti-Semitic beginnings, admitting that their politicians had previously made anti-Semitic and racist statements. He confirmed in the interview given to the news agency that they are making the shift to the political center-ground,

because he aims to turn the party into a people’s party. As he described it, he had decided upon the change of direction four years before, with the stipulation that if he did not succeed, he would prefer not to be president any longer. He added, this was not a matter of tactics, but an internal process, after which they will not return to their original selves. Consequently, if anyone makes the sort of anti-Semitic comments they had made then, they would now have to count on the strictest possible penalty.

The interview was transmitted by numerous international newspapers, among them *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. But the Israel media also quoted it: it was carried by the liberal *Haaretz*, and *Israel Hayom*, which is on Netanyahu’s side, not omitting to note that “Jobbik has a great deal to put right” (towards the Jewish communities) after such Vona sentences as “*I will never be Israel’s dog*”, or Márton Gyöngyösi’s parliamentary interpellation asking for the listing of MPs of Jewish origin.

**ACTION AND PROTECTION
FOUNDATION
LEGAL ACTIONS**

Action and Protection Foundation did not initiate any legal actions this month. There was no progress reached in previous cases either.

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 st of December	Double Standards in Jobbik	Other News
2.	6 th of December	Kálmán Szalai: "Jobbik anti-Semitism still the same"	Community News and Responses
3.	8 th of December	Investigation against the extremist Hungarian National Front completed	Other News
4.	12; 14 th of December	Csaba Latorcai: Hungary is safe for Jewish communities today	Community News and Responses
5.	12 th of December	Slomó Köves: Hanukkah greetings from Jobbik are cynical	Community News and Responses
6.	8-14 th of December	The posting of a photograph of a "Soros pig" by Fidesz MP János Pócs makes international news	Further Hate Incidents
7.	8-14 th of December	Reactions to János Pócs, Fidesz MP's "Soros-pig" post	Official and Civil Responses
8.	14; 17; 21 st of December	Tibor Ágoston makes a veiled racist statement in the municipal assembly	Other News
9.	13 th of December	TEV cleans anti-Semitic inscriptions off Budapest street signs	Anti-Semitic Hate Incidents – Vandalism
10.	14 th of December	Holy mass held for László Bárdossy in Szombathely	Other News
11.	16 th of December	A "strange" statement by István Vágó on Facebook	Further Hate Incidents
12.	18 th of December	TEV removes a sticker with a swastika	Anti-Semitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech
13.	18 th of December	Gábor Vona gives interview to the AP News Agency	Other News
14.	20 th of December	Slomó Köves: Indifference is the greatest sin	Community News and Responses
15.	22 nd of December	Constitutional Court decision: Tamás Krausz did not offend Sándor Szakály's human dignity	Official and Civil Responses
16.	22 nd of December	Tibi atya blog calls out anti-Semitic atrocity	Further Hate Incidents

CONTACT AND SUPPORT

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!

Notifications of such incidents are received by the Foundation through any of the following means:

HOTLINE (+36 1) 5 10 00 00

The website of Action and Protection Foundation: www.tev.hu/forrodrot
The Facebook page: www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany

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 offenses. 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

Contact details for Action and Protection Foundation

Address: Baross utca 61, 1082 Budapest, HUNGARY

Phone: +36 1 267 57 54

+36 30 207 5130

<http://www.tev.hu>

info@tev.hu

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CONTRIBUTORS AND PUBLISHER INFORMATION

Publisher: Brussels Institute Nonprofit Ltd.
Kálmán Szalai, Executive Director

Author: Dr. Dániel Róna, political scientist,
professor of Corvinus University

Editors: Krisztián Nádasi, research scholar, head of the Incident
Monitoring Group of the Brussels Institute
Dr. Kristóf Bodó, legal advocate, legal representative
of Action and Protection Foundation and the Brussels Institute
Tibor Pásztor, research scholar, monitoring leader
of Action and Protection Foundation
Zoltán Tatai, research scholar, member of the
Incident Monitoring Group of the Brussels Institute
Dr. Krisztina Szegő, lawyer
Julianna Görög, translator

Contributors: Dániel Bodnár, philosopher, Chairman of the
Action and Protection Foundation Board of Trustees
Andrew Srulewitch, Director, Anti Defamation League

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TETT ÉS VÉDELEM ALAPÍTVÁNY

1052 Budapest, Baross utca 61.
+36 1 267 57 54, +36 30 207 5130
<http://www.tev.hu>
info@tev.hu

