

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES  
AND INCIDENTS REPORT  
IN HUNGARY

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DECEMBER 2021



ACTION AND PROTECTION  
LEAGUE

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A significant part of combating antisemitism is monitoring of the prevalence of antisemitic incidents. One of the aims of the Action and Protection League (APL) is to heighten the awareness of antisemitism in the society. The primary tool in achieving this is continuous professional monitoring of hate crimes in public life. Neither Jewish communities nor individual Jews can be protected unless there is data on antisemitic incidents and other hate crimes and that these are collected and analysed. The data collected by the Action and Protection League, cooperated with Action and Protection Foundation (APF), are published in monthly reports, and a summary of the findings is published for the individual countries/regions in a yearly report. The monitoring report is carried out by the APF.

The reports deal with two forms of behaviour: antisemitic hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents. Both types of behaviour are referred to as "hate incidents" in the reports. The main difference between an antisemitic hate crime and other hate crimes is that the former possesses an antisemitic motive. Due to differences in legislation and application of legislation in various countries, there are different interpretations of which antisemitic incidents that are violations of criminal law. In addition are some hate-motivated acts, albeit troubling for Jews, not considered criminal if they, e.g., are considered belonging to the realm of freedom of speech. The APL considers it essential to record both types of hate incidents in order to gain a general overview and to make it possible to analyse changes over time.

In order to have the most extensive scope possible, the APL uses a variety of sources simultaneously. The incidents are not only recorded, but the characteristics of the individual incident are also analysed. The data recorded includes the incident's location, the perpetrator (if known), victim, and consequences (if any). In addition, are the various types of incidents differentiated in the reports.

Based on its sources, our Foundation did not find Antisemitic Hate Incidents throughout its monitoring activities in December. We have identified one Further Hate Incident:

The opposition candidate for prime minister made antisemitic and homophobic remarks.

APF did not initiate any legal proceedings this month, nor did we receive any notifications regarding our previous proceedings.

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## ACTION AND PROTECTION LEAGUE

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In the last decade there has been a rise in antisemitism in Europe. Surveys by e.g. the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)<sup>1</sup> and the ADL Global 100<sup>2</sup> show a broad spectrum of antisemitism and how it fluctuates over time.

The character of antisemitic incidents is quite different in the monitored countries concerning content, expressions, and perpetrators. Current antisemitism is mainly connected to Islamism, Far-right groups, and Far-left groups. Islamist expressions are most frequent in countries with large Muslim populations in Western Europe and uncommon in Eastern and Central Europe. Far-left expressions of antisemitism can often be found disguised as Anti-Zionism in Western Europe and is often connected to the conflict in the Middle

East. In East and Central Europe, right-wing expressions of prejudice against Jews frequently have old roots, not only among groups related to Fascism and Nazism, but at times also in populist-nationalist settings. In several countries Jews have found themselves under more threat during the last decade. This does not only include physical attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions but is also visible in the growth of conspiracy theories, online hatred, and political campaigns favouring banning of, e.g., *brit milah* and *kashrut*.

Countering antisemitism becomes an increasingly urgent issue for Europe. Action and Protection League of Europe (APL) has been established to explore the causes of modern-day antisemitism and to implement effective defense.

<sup>1</sup> EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: ANTISEMITISM - OVERVIEW OF DATA AVAILABLE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION 2008-2018  
<sup>2</sup> <https://global100.adl.org>

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## ABOUT THE REPORT

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The general opinion on, and treatment of, antisemitism often takes extreme forms. On the one hand, some voices try to belittle the importance of such offenses and manifestations. On the other hand, on occasion, one-off incidents are exaggerated in the public arena to such an extent that they give the impression that they are frequent or a regular part of daily life. Knowledge of the actual situation(s) is an indispensable condition for the treatment of real problems. Monitoring of antisemitic hate crimes and incidents<sup>3</sup> is one of the tools used in achieving this objective.

From 2019 the Action and Protection League has decided to monitor seven European countries. In the first stage, data is collected from seven countries: Austria, Czechia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Sweden, and more countries will be added later. All countries have their own particularities and vast differences when it comes to the monitoring of antisemitism – in some cases, there are several organisations with similar goals as the APL and in other countries, few or no similar activities. In no case will APL try to replace existing organisations, but rather seek cooperation and exchange of data.

Apart from the monthly reports, an annual summary review, including more detailed analyses on the incidents, is published. All reports are published in English, and almost all are published in the local language.

The fight against hate crimes is of utmost importance since it differs from many other forms of criminal conduct. On one level can these crimes and incidents can be considered as messages. They are not only about the victim in question but points to a larger group. Antisemitism and other hate crimes are thus not only attacks against individuals, but the social fabric of the society as a whole. This does not, of course, diminish the distress and psychological trauma which individual victims might

suffer. These crimes are often not “only” against property or lead to physical threat of individuals, but it also concerns self-dignity. The offenses indicate that the victim is not an equal member or a member at all of the society. Since hate crimes, in general, target victims due to some unchangeable characteristics (real or imagined), the victim becomes almost defenseless. Victims often fear that they may again be targets of similar incidents or worse atrocities if they identify perpetrators to relevant authorities. Inappropriate handling of such incidents may easily lead to secondary victimization where the victim can be led to believe that it was their fault, e.g., by not being careful enough, etc. This type of criminal act also, as mentioned, has an effect on the group as a whole. The victims of these crimes are often interchangeable, since they are not targeted at individuals and any other member could just as well have been targeted. This means that all members of the targeted group become potential victims and might live in fear of a future when they themselves may be the target of a prejudice-motivated crime. This situation is particularly poignant for groups that have been exposed to prejudice for a long time. There is no need to justify at length why Jews belong among such groups. These crimes undermine the fundamental value that all members of a society are of equal value. Inadequate handling of such incidents can have grave consequences for the society as a whole. Not only may it encourage the perpetrators to commit further crimes, but it significantly diminishes the cohesive power of society as a whole<sup>4</sup>.

It is not an exaggeration to state that fewer hate crimes are reported and documented than are committed. The discrepancy between committed crimes and reported crimes vary significantly between different countries is not necessarily connected to the number of Jews. A contributing factor

<sup>3</sup> See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

<sup>4</sup> Levin & McDevitt 1999, 92-93; OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 19-21; OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 17-18; Perry 2001, 10).

to the under-reporting is that victims rarely report them to the police or relevant authority. There are several causes for this: many victims are not convinced that the authorities will handle the matter adequately, either because they lack the competence or that they are prejudiced. In addition, many victims are unaware of applicable laws or where to turn for help. Furthermore, some victims are worried that their concealed traits will be exposed and that they might suffer more by reporting incidents. Victims might also fear that authorities will not be able to prove a hate-crime motivation and that reporting is thus useless.

It is civic organizations that can help remedy these problems. These organizations can cooperate with police and relevant authorities, but also an intermediary between victim and authority. Reports by civic organizations can be expedient in alerting official authorities on hate-motivated crimes, and long-term tendencies can be outlined through the use of collected data. Civil organizations can prepare cases for legal process, may provide legal defense for victims, and give other forms of aid and support.

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## METHODOLOGY

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The report deals with two types of offense: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by OSCE as follows<sup>5</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>6</sup>
- hate-motivated incident: an offense, also based on prejudice against a specific 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. Although there is a widely accepted definition of antisemitism (see IHRA 2017), there is currently no consistent definition of hate crimes in the countries monitored by the APL.

In addition are the legal consequences different in the monitored countries. This means that an incident which a crime in one country could be legal in another. The obvious example concerns the so-called Holocaust denial, which, e.g., is outlawed in Hungary, but legal in several countries monitored by APL. Since the Action and Protection League has a broad scope when it comes to data collection, everything is covered in the reports, but in some instances, similar acts are filed as a crime in one country and "only" an incident in another. In every case, we follow the definitions in the criminal code of the individual countries. We estimate that this problem will diminish over time due to the adaptation of the same definitions and legislation in the European Union.

Our reports contain detailed descriptions of the definition of hate incidents and our approach to solving the problems. The reports are based on sources taken from international, independent monitoring services, local informants as well as data collected by other organizations working with same or similar issues.

The monthly report presents hate crimes and hate incidents motivated by antisemitism in the broadest possible sense: perpetrator, target, means, or message. The target may be a person, a group, an event, a building, a monument, or other property. It is essential, however, that an antisemitic motivation can be established. This means that the perpetrator chose the given target on the basis that he/she was Jewish or perceived as being Jewish. It is thus not relevant whether the assumption is correct or not: the belief of the target's connection to Jewry is sufficient.

In the course of monitoring, all incidents that fall in the category of hate crime are also considered hate incidents. These may be crimes identified as such by the Criminal Code in the individual country (e.g. 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 etc.), 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 are recorded during the monitoring period<sup>7</sup> and are used as the basis for examining whether the given action could have been motivated by antisemitism.

For the broadest possible scope in monitoring antisemitic hate incidents, the simultaneous use of a variety of sources is required. In addition to media monitoring, reports from local informants the Action and Protection League also rely on reports filed by victims. In Hungary, the Action and Protection League has a 24-hours-a-day Hotline that serves to ease the passage of reports. The goal is to supply a similar service for the other countries so reports can be filed in the local languages. It is also possible to file reports anonymously online. Such reports will be of especially great importance to this study. If a victim cannot or does not want to file a report, the APL can use an intermediary to help the victim in the process. Such an intermediary may be a family member, an acquaintance of

5 The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see Chakrabarti 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.

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

7 These indicators are described in the Methodology section

the victim, a witness of the incident, or another civil organization.

It is a declared objective of the League to be in close contact with the authorities, since in some countries, they are the first to be approached by victims or witnesses.

A variety of media channels also represent relevant 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 online hatred as a phenomenon that is continually growing.

The public discourses are monitored by a team of experts. One of our aims is to cover the 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 comment arenas and extreme, hate inciting websites. The monitoring process is carried out systematically, according to precisely prepared standards.

Among the monitored hate incidents, some are considered a part of the statistics, but some are recorded, though not counted as part of the statistics.<sup>8</sup>

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

- The hate incidents have to have occurred in the countries monitored; no matter whether the victim is a citizen of the country or not
- Any action, incident, atrocity that is aimed at Jewish individuals, organizations or property where an antisemitic 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, antisemitic message was paired with the vandalism [for example, a Jewish synagogue's window is broken with a stone])

- Antisemitic comments that have been reported to Action and Protection League appearing on blogs, forums, community pages and similar.
- Antisemitic and neo-Nazi material delivered to particular Jewish individuals, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Antisemitic and neo-Nazi material deposited at Jewish-owned property, Jewish organizations, institutions or similar
- Criticism related to Israel and Zionism, if they go beyond a political statement and serve to recall traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes
- Moreover, events apt to raise fear among Jews.

Hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics<sup>9</sup> :

- Antisemitic hate incidents that are related to the countries monitored and Jewry in these countries, but for some reason do not belong to the scope of the statistics (e.g., they did not occur in the country in question, antisemitic intent cannot be proven, or the circumstances are unclear)
- Expressions of hate that appear regularly on homepages, in comments and online forums, but have not been reported to Action and Protection League.
- Other news that only indirectly are linked to antisemitism

A number of the aspects of the registered incidents are recorded. The indicators that help decide whether a given incident was motivated by prejudice are mentioned above.

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 — possible legal — consequences.

<sup>8</sup> The following were used to develop these criteria: ADL 2012, CST 2013

<sup>9</sup> 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.



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<sup>10</sup>:

- 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
  - Hate speech 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 environment in which they occur. The dynamics of these incidents is also of importance: often the processes, rather than separately occurring events (Perry 2001, 8). Apart from the static data, short descriptions of each event are also published, which leads to a better understanding of the environment surrounding the incidents.<sup>11</sup> In presenting timelines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

<sup>10</sup> CEJI 2012, 10–12

<sup>11</sup> These descriptions, in particular, are held to be the most positive aspect of the Anti-Defamation League reports by Perry (2001, 16).

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## ANTISEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS – DECEMBER 2021

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During the monitoring in December 2021, the Action and Protection League identified no incident of this category.

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## FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

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*Péter Márki-Zay made antisemitic and homophobic remarks about Arthur J. Finkelstein, who passed away several years ago*

Source: mandiner.hu

**9 December 2021** Dániel Bohár, journalist of Pesti Srácok, interviewed the opposition's candidate for the prime minister as a reporter from Pesti TV. He was asked about the utility cost reduction and his remarks about

Fidesz voters. Bohár did not get any answers to his questions, but Péter Márki-Zay mentioned Arthur J. Finkelstein, who died several years ago. Referring to Dániel Bohár's employer, the politician described Finkelstein as "a homophobic Jewish adviser to Viktor Orbán in a gay marriage." Márki-Zay repeated his statement twice in the twenty seconds, writes Mandiner.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

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*New Jewish community centre opens in Debrecen*

Source: dehir.hu

**5 December 2021** The EMIH lit the hanukiah in public squares in the countryside and the locations in the capital. On the eighth day of Hanukkah, a public candle-lighting ceremony was held in Debrecen on the corner of Bajcsy-Zsilinszky and Piac streets. Deputy Mayor István Puskás stressed that Debrecen is the largest Jewish community in the country, reports dehir.hu.

"We are pleased that the community is an active part of our city. This was also shown by today's celebration, as people of other denominations from Debrecen also stopped in front of the Hanukkah candle. It is a celebration of hope for Jews, just as Advent is for Christians," he said. The mayor announced that a new Jewish community centre will soon open, including a kosher restaurant.

Slomó Köves, Chief Rabbi of the EMIH, said: we all have nearly two years behind us that have changed the whole world and our lives. "It's a fantastic feeling to be back and to be able to celebrate Hanukkah freely," the Chief Rabbi pointed out. He added that for 24 years, the Jewish community in Hungary had had the opportunity to live its traditions outdoors, freely and in public. "Even a small flame burns for a long time, it expresses that good deeds have great power. Even a small light can dispel great darkness," said Slomó Köves, who said that Jewish community life in Debrecen has gained dynamic in recent years.

*Exhibition about prominent figures in Hungarian-Israeli sports relations*

Source: nemzetisport.hu

**8 December 2021** An exhibition on the history of Hungarian-Israeli sports relations entitled Game Changers opened on Wednesday at the New Hidegkuti Nándor Stadium. The opening ceremony of the exhibition, which presents the most important figures of the common sporting history of the two nations, was attended by six football players who used to play in Israel, László Czéh, Gábor Halmai, István Hamar, Gábor Márton, István Pisont and István Sallói - National Sport wrote.

Márton Schberl, Deputy State Secretary for Cultural Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stressed the active role played by Jews who emigrated from Hungary in the creation of the State of Israel, and the important place of Hungarian Jewry in cultural life, especially in the sports relations that are the subject of the exhibition.

Yacov Hadas-Handelsman, Ambassador of the State of Israel in Budapest, stressed the influence of Jewish athletes on the development of modern sports in Hungary, mentioning such epoch-making sports personalities as Alfréd Hajós, who won the first two Hungarian Olympic titles as a swimmer, fencer Attila Petschauer, football coach Gyula Mándi and gymnast Ágnes Keleti.

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## OFFICIAL NEWS AND CIVIL RESPONSES

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*Hungary votes again for Israel at the UN*

Source: neokohn.hu

**3 December 2021** Hungary has voted no to a resolution that calls the Temple Mount an exclusively Muslim holy site and ignores its significance in Judaism. The United States, which opposed the text, said that the omission of inclusive terminology for the site sacred to three faiths was of "real and serious concern," neokohn.hu reports, citing the Jerusalem Post.

The United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution 129-11 on Wednesday that disavowed Jewish ties to the Temple Mount and called it solely by its Muslim name of al-Haram al-Sharif. The text referred to as the "Jerusalem resolution," is part of a push by the Palestinian Authority and the Arab states across the UN system to rebrand Judaism's most holy site as an exclusively Islamic one.

"It is morally, historically and politically wrong for members of this body to support language that denies" both the Jewish and Christian connections to the Temple Mount and al-Haram al-Sharif, the US envoy told the UNGA. Three years ago, all the European countries supported the text; this year, many of them changed their votes. Hungary and the Czech Republic opposed the resolution, while Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia abstained.

"The EU reiterates that whenever referring to the Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif in the Jerusalem resolution, both terms, i.e., Temple Mount and al-Haram al-Sharif, should be used," an EU representative said. "The EU calls on all sides not to deny the historical ties of other religions to the city of Jerusalem and its holy places, thus trying to delegitimise their history," the envoy said. Many EU member states approved the text despite his words, including Belgium, France, Spain, and Italy.

*Ágnes Heller's grave was the first to be visited by Emmanuel Macron in Budapest*

Source: mazsihisz.hu

**13 December 2021** Emmanuel Macron, the President of the French Republic, paid a private visit to the Jewish cemetery in Kozma Street before his official program in Budapest and paid his tribute at the grave of philosopher Heller Ágnes. The head of state also met with the family of Ágnes Heller. András Heisler, President of the Mazsihisz gave a French translation of one of Ágnes Heller's works as a gift to Macron and suggested visiting the synagogue on Dohány Street next time and meeting representatives of Hungarian Jewry.

The French president was a great admirer of Heller, whom he met in Paris in 2019, shortly before the philosopher's death. Macron had previously mentioned Heller by name when ELLE Magazine asked him who he considered the most important and inspiring women in his life.

At the Holocaust Memorial Center on Kozma Street, Emmanuel Macron paid tribute to the victims of the Holocaust in Hungary by laying a remembrance stone.

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## THE MONTH'S CHRONICLE

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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.	3rd of December	Hungary votes again for Israel at the UN	Official News and Civil Responses
2.	5th of December	New Jewish community centre opens in Debrecen	Community News and Responses
3.	8th of December	Exhibition about prominent figures in Hungarian-Israeli sports relations	Community News and Responses
4.	9th of December	Péter Márki-Zay made antisemitic and homophobic remarks about Arthur J. Finkelstein, who passed away several years ago	Further Hate Incidents
5.	13th of December	Ágnes Heller's grave was the first to be visited by Emmanuel Macron in Budapest	Official News and Civil Responses

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## CONTACT AND SUPPORT

Action and Protection League is the civil initiative of a number of Jewish organizations that is ready to take resolute steps to curb increasing widespread antisemitic manifestations.

The Action and Protection Foundation is the partner of the Action and Protection League in Hungary.

In case anyone faces insults or antisemitic 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 1 00 000**

The website of Action and Protection League: [www.apleu.org](http://www.apleu.org)

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

Action and Protection League'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 League  
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The publisher wishes to thank **Dr. András Kovács**, sociologist, Professor at **CEU**, for all the encouragement and helpful advice.

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The publishers expresses their gratitude for the self-sacrificing work of the volunteers who, under expert guidance, have put their continuous efforts into the preparation of this report over the past months.

Use of the Report or any part thereof requires written permission from the publisher and such use must properly cite this report as a reference.

2021 Budapest

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