

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES  
AND INCIDENTS REPORT  
IN HUNGARY

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SEPTEMBER 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 found one antisemitic hate incident throughout its monitoring activities in September. This has been filed as Damage to Property.

A few months ago, Nazi symbols appeared on the streets of Kispeth, which can be linked to an openly neo-Nazi supporters' group called Kispeth Youth. The authorities learned about the graffiti from the press and ordered an investigation against an unknown perpetrator.

This month, we have identified no incidents of hatred of another nature.

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

<sup>5</sup> The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see Chakraborti and Garland 2009, 4–7).

These definitions can serve as important addenda to an understanding of these crimes; however, they are difficult to apply in practice. This is what made the creation of simpler, more practical definitions necessary.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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> CEJL 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, 18).

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## ANTISEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS – AUGUST 2021

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Action and Protection Foundation identified one Antisemitic hate Incidents over the course of its monitoring activities in the month of September. It was classified as Damage to property.

### DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

*Swastikas painted on buildings in Kispest by a group of openly neo-Nazi supporters*

Source: [magyarnarancs.hu](http://magyarnarancs.hu)

9 September 2021 Swastikas, neo-Nazi Celtic crosses, and 88 inscriptions appeared a few months ago on several streets of Kispest, including Vak Bottyán, Üllői and Mórícz Zsigmond. The coded or clearly fascist symbols were painted by a hard-core group of football fans called “Kispesti Youth”. The group's skull-and-crossbones, gothic H-letter stickers have been found on Kispest's billboards and walls for years, but they also appear elsewhere in Budapest. The members refer to themselves as a determined and powerful group of neo-Nazi supporters in Kispest, [magyarnarancs.hu](http://magyarnarancs.hu) reports.

Photos on the Hools (football hooligan) portal show a group of martial arts enthusiasts proudly wearing a red, white and black swastika shirt. The other name of the organisation – Militant Jugend Kispest – also refers to their extremist views, with a recurring element of swastika, white pride and Hitler-glorifying posts on their Telegram channel.

Several well-known fan organisations and the press department of Budapest Honvéd FC were contacted about the group but did not respond to journalist questions. The municipality of Kispest was informed of the presence of the swastikas by Magyar Narancs and said they would remove the totalitarian symbols, at least where they had the authority to do so. In addition, the Police Department of the 19th District has ordered an investigation of its own against an unknown perpetrator on suspicion of the use of a totalitarian symbol and vandalism.



Source: Telegram / Militant Jugend Kispest

According to the newspaper, this indicates that the residents of Kispest have for some time been indifferently walking past swastikas. The author stresses that the swastikas are not visible on the busiest streets and squares, but the passive attitude of civilians may encourage the spread of extremist views.



Source: Konez Tamás/Magyar Narancs

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## COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

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*Holocaust victims commemorated in Jászapáti and Szécsény*

Source: [szoljon.hu](http://szoljon.hu), [nool.hu](http://nool.hu)

**2 September 2021** The Hungarian Jewish Freedom Fighters Memorial Committee (MAZSISZEM) and the Hungarian National Ethnic Minorities Interest Association (ÉKE) commemorated the 77th anniversary of the Holocaust in the Jászapáti Jewish cemetery. According to Cantor Dániel Imre Rosenfeld, it is a historic moment that after 77 years, the Jewish and Gypsy martyrs who were deported during the Holocaust were remembered together for the first time in the Jászapát cemetery, reports [szoljon.hu](http://szoljon.hu).

Education and culture are the most important tools against incitement to hatred, antisemitism, racism, attacks on Christianity, persecution and terrorism, said Rosenfeld.

At the commemoration ceremony in the Szécsény Israelite cemetery, it was heard that 301 people were deported to Auschwitz and Gunskirchen during the Second World War. Chief Rabbi Zoltán Radnóti said: "People who wanted to build a country, to create and live, died. Innocent children died just because they were born Jewish." He stressed that it is the duty of posterity to remember and to strengthen the consciousness of everyone that there will never be another Holocaust.

Andrea Csukáné Szerémy, deputy mayor of Szécsény, recalled how much Szécsény owes to its former Jewish population. Their loss is not only a personal tragedy for those directly impacted but also a loss and tragedy for Szécsény. The un-lived lives, unborn children and grandchildren, unrealised dreams and unfinished works of society are all missing from the past, present and future of Szécsény.

Like the Hungarian government, the municipality at the time was not strong enough to protect its citizens, she added. "As the deputy mayor of Szécsény, I apologise for the 77 years of failure of the former town leaders, decision-makers and executive bodies for helping to deport the Jews," he said.

*The cradle of Hungarian Jewry is 200 years old*

Source: [168.hu](http://168.hu)

**3 September 2021** In addition to the traditional scholet (stew) festival, concerts and cultural programmes, the inauguration of new synagogues and places of worship in Budapest is at the centre of the Synagogues Week programme. The event also pays tribute to the 200-year-old Lajos Street building, functioning as a synagogue for a decade now, [168.hu](http://168.hu) reports.

The oldest synagogue in Budapest is still functioning today. The neoclassical building is even older than Budapest, having been consecrated in 1821. Shlomo Köves, rabbi of the synagogue belonging to the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities (EMIH), recalled: "Óbuda could have become the centre of Jewish life in the later capital because Jews were expelled from Buda in 1746, and no Israelites were allowed to settle in Pest until 1840."

In Óbuda, a flourishing Jewish community was established in the Zichy estate, making a significant contribution to the industrialisation of the district and its development as a centre of the textile industry. In this way, the history of the Óbuda Synagogue is also the history of modern Hungarian Jewry, including the 21st-century rebirth of Jewish life in Hungary. "Today, this place is a new cradle, an important centre of Hungarian Jewry", emphasised Köves.

*Budapest's newest Jewish cultural centre has opened*

Source: neokohn.hu

**9 September 2021** The expanded and rebuilt synagogue of Újlipótváros, Zsilip, is open to the public again. EMIH wants to address its new audience as the most prominent Jewish meeting place in Budapest, neokohn.hu reports. In addition to the splendidly renovated and expanded place of worship, study rooms, lecture halls, a kosher bagel place, a coffee house and a children's playhouse were inaugurated on Sunday.

The organisation is determined to build a new community of young families in Újlipótváros, where large numbers of people with a Jewish background are distanced from the religion. This idea was reflected in the speeches of almost all the speakers.

"We are at the heart of Budapest's Jewish community", said Shlomo Köves. The Chief Rabbi of the EMIH cited two studies by sociologist András Kovács. In 1998, 70 per cent of those surveyed said they were less religious than their parents, while in 2017, the reverse was true. According to the rabbi, Hungarian Jewry has undergone such a positive change in recent decades that while 20 years ago, we were "last in terms of our Judaism, today we are the front-runners in Europe." Köves dreamt that there will be 50 new synagogues in Hungary in 10 years and that every Jew will be able to live his life as a Jew with pride and without wincing.

János Fónagy, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs in relation to National Assets, said he hoped that in the future, no member of Hungarian Jewry would have to face the same fears that his mother experienced during the Holocaust.

József Tóth, Mayor of the 13th District, stressed that the leadership of the district is a proud partner of the Jewish communities in the spirit of "value preservation and renewal", noting that the fact all movements of Judaism have been given a place in the district shows their inclusive spirit.

Rabbi Baruch Oberlander and Rabbi Samuel Glitzenstein concluded the series of welcoming speeches. Both encouraged the audience with biblical quotes and other Talmudic wisdom to take advantage of the opportunity to fill the synagogues with life. "Our doors will be open to all", said Rabbi Glitzenstein, who pointed out that Zsilip is perhaps the only place in Budapest that has become a synagogue from scratch.

*Gusztáv Zoltai died*

Source: index.hu

**19 September 2021** Gusztáv Zoltai died on the morning of 19 September. The former executive director of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities and the former Jewish Community of Budapest was 86 years old, according to a statement on Mazsihisz's website.

Gusztáv Zoltai was born on 28 July 1935. He lost his parents in the Holocaust and became a labourer after the 1956 revolution. He joined the MSZMP, became the artistic director of the Pest Vigadó from 1976, and then became the artistic secretary of the Játékszín Theater. He has been the cultural (later executive) director of the Budapest Jewish Community since 1987, and in 1991 he was elected managing director of Mazsihisz. According to the president of Mazsihisz, András Heisler, Zoltai left his post in 2014, a decision that was closely related to the monument to the victims of the German occupation erected in Szabadság Square in Budapest. Nevertheless, Zoltai later became an adviser to János Lázár, the minister in charge of the Prime Minister's Office, which was criticised by many.

His quarter-century of actions will undoubtedly be a long chapter in the history of Hungarian Jewish institutions; he was an emblematic figure in the life of Hungary around and after the change of regime in general, the statement reads. András Heisler, the president of Mazsihisz, told the index.hu that Gusztáv Zoltai was a defining

figure of an era and the number one Jewish community leader in the years after the regime change.

On Monday, 20 September 2021, his final farewell will be at the Jewish Cemetery on Kozma Street. Rabbi Báruch Oberlander will give a farewell speech at the funeral.

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## OFFICIAL NEWS AND CIVIL RESPONSES

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*On the occasion of the Jewish New Year, Viktor Orbán hopes that a more joyful period will begin*

Source: ma.hu

**6 September 2021** Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has wished a “happy and sweet” new year to Hungary’s Jewish community, the PM’s press chief said on Monday.

“Darkness is replaced by light, rain is followed by sunshine and sweet days will come after bitter ones. We are saying goodbye to a year of many ominous clouds and bitterness, but I trust that the sound of the shofar will mark the beginning of times with more happiness” Orbán said in, his letter marking Rosh Hashanah.

*Pope Francis calls for unity between Jews and Christians against antisemitism*

Source: 168.hu, webradio.hu

**12 September 2021** Pope Francis meets with representatives of the Ecumenical Council of Churches and some Jewish communities in Budapest and tells them to be vigilant of the past, to become roots of unity, and to enable the world to blossom. "Having you here, side by side," opened the Pope, is a "sign of great unity". "As I look out at you, my brothers and fellow Christians, I bless your continuing journey towards full communion", he continued.

Pope Francis expressed “appreciation for your efforts to break down the walls that separated us in the past”. He noted that Jews and Christians alike, “strive to view one another no longer as strangers but as friends, no longer as foes but as brothers and sisters”. This is a change that is blessed by God, said the Pope, “a conversion that makes possible new beginnings, a purification that brings new life”.

Pope Francis asked all those present to reflect on “the evocative image of the Chain Bridge connecting the two halves of this city”. He noted that the bridge does not fuse those

two parts together, but rather holds them together. “That is how it should be with us too”, said the Pope. He explained that “when ever we were tempted to absorb the other, we were tearing down instead of building up”. This, he noted, has happened often throughout history. “We must be vigilant and pray that it never happens again”, he said, “and commit ourselves to foster together an education in fraternity, so that the outbursts of hatred that would destroy that fraternity will never prevail”. Thinking of the threat of antisemitism, the Pope stressed, “this is a fuse that must not be allowed to burn”.

The Pope went on to note that the bridge has yet another lesson to teach us. “It is supported by great chains made up of many rings. We are those rings, and each of us is essential to the chain. We can no longer live apart, without making an effort to know one another and not fall prey to suspicion and conflict”, said the Pope, adding “a bridge unites”.

The Pope stressed that in Hungary, “you who represent the majority religions are responsible for promoting the conditions that enable religious freedom to be respected by and encouraged for all”. In our world, he continued, “torn by so many conflicts, this is the best possible witness on the part of those who have been graced to know the God of the covenant and of peace”.

Chief Rabbi Zoltán Radnóti relayed the message of Chief Rabbi Róbert Frölich, who was hospitalised a few days prior. The Chief Rabbi wrote that the common religious heritage and sacred traditions of Judaism and Christianity, despite a past fraught with contradictions, illuminates the present and serves as a beacon for the expected future of humanity. This historic gathering gives hope that "Jews and Christians will continue to live together in mutual respect, understanding and true brotherly love," added Chief Rabbi Róbert Frölich. Pope Francis received a silver Torah pointer from the Jewish organisations.

*The OEVB acquitted the right-wing candidate who posted antisemitic content*

Source: telex.hu, magyarhirlap.hu

**22 September 2021** The MSZP would have excluded Zsolt Süle, Jobbik's candidate in Pápa, from the opposition primaries, but the Civil Electoral Committee (OEVB) dropped the ethical complaint filed against him, telex.hu reports. Süle denied the accusations and said he had never made any statements that could offend Roma or Jews.

A Hírcentrum reporter asked Zsolt Süle at a public forum in September whether he would retract his earlier statements. However, the politician pretended not to understand the questions, spoke in a shaky voice, and only mentioned an eye operation of a friend. Jobbik chairman Péter Jakab was also unable to give a straight answer.

Zsolt Süle, like many of his Jobbik colleagues, has regularly made statements denigrating Jews and Gypsies in the past. We have reported these incidents in detail in our previous reports.

*Péter Szijjártó: Hungary remains committed to the fight against antisemitism*

Source: demokrata.hu

**23 September 2021** Péter Szijjártó met with representatives of American Jewish organisations on the occasion of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. Hungary's government will do everything in its power to ensure that the international community applies a fair and balanced political approach to Israel. The foreign minister said Hungary remains committed to the fight against antisemitism.

The minister said Europe needed to take the strongest possible stand against the antisemitism that, he insisted, had re-emerged in certain parts of the continent due to migration.

Minister Szijjártó said issues that had been put on the back burner by the pandemic, such as migration, were becoming increasingly serious, with illegal migration leading to a re-emergence of antisemitism in Western Europe. The minister noted Hungary's zero-tolerance approach to antisemitism, saying the government had made it clear that Hungary's Jewish community "has nothing to fear as long as we are in power". The minister said that whereas some Western European countries have often expressed anti-Israel positions to satisfy certain electoral bases transformed by illegal migration, Hungary has pursued a particularly Israel-friendly foreign policy.

*The FTC president would also avoid the appearance of extremist manifestations in the stands*

Source: nso.hu

**16 September 2021** The president of the Ferencváros Torna Club, Gábor Kubatov, published a video on his social media page. He asked fans to pay special attention to how they cheered during the team's European League appearance and, among other things, to avoid possible UEFA penalties.

Kubatov has long been trying to convince ultras to avoid racist and sexist manifestations in the stands, but the arm-waving resembling a Nazi salute is still often seen at matches. Kubatov also spoke to the author of the gesture, a guy called Tóni, who is "a benevolent, generous Hungarian man who had no exclusionary ideas".

The Fidesz party leader said that although they could explain to UEFA that this is not the Nazi salute, they would not understand, so he asked fans to make sure they swing their arms correctly during the game. "Swing both of your arms, from your heart to the sky! Not with one hand!" the Fradi president said before the Bayer Leverkusen - Ferencváros EL match.

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## OTHER NEWS

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*Fidesz Debrecen uses a well-known Holocaust denier to promote the anti-Gyurcsány petition*

Source: debrecenier.hu

**16 September 2021** Fidesz Debrecen has published on its Facebook page Tibor Ágoston's campaign video, in which the former Jobbik politician urges people to sign the petition against Gyurcsány and Karácsony. Ágoston was the first person in Hungary convicted by a court of law for public Holocaust denial in the spring of 2016, writes debrecenier.hu.

On 12 January 2014, Jobbik Debrecen commemorated the soldiers who died at Don Canyon. According to the court, Ágoston, a Jobbik representative on the Debrecen City Council, also spoke at the event and called the Holocaust a "holokamu" ("Holoscam").

*The deputy mayor of Ózd was photographed making an arm gesture that looks like a Nazi salute*

Source: atv.hu, hang.hu, szombat.org

**22 September 2021** A photo depicting the deputy mayor of Ózd has recently surfaced, in which the politician of opposition Jobbik is making what appears to be a Nazi salute. The photo taken in 2018 was sent to the ATV editorial office. Péter Barnabás Farkas claims that the picture is a simple misunderstanding, and the photo has simply been captured at an unfortunate moment.

Farkas visited Chorzów, the Polish twin town of Ózd in 2018. As part of his trip, he also visited the Silesian Museum in Katowice, which displays the past of the historic region. As part of the exhibition, the museum has a section of walls with antisemitic graffiti. Farkas was photographed in front of this building, making a very ambiguous and questionable arm gesture. The deputy mayor claimed he was just waving to bring the other group members closer for a group photo. He denied the arm-waving, which he called a vile slander.

The pose evokes bad memories in the Jewish community and all non-Jewish people of good conscience, the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities (Mazsihisz) said. The organisation released a statement calling on the deputy mayor to visit the Holocaust Documentation Center and take a stand against extremism. Mazsihisz called on representatives of political parties to distance themselves from politicians who poison Hungarian public life with extremist, inflammatory statements and actions.

Farkas promised to visit the Holocaust Documentation Center on Páva Street and called the Mazsihisz statement exemplary. He said that he would have no difficulty in saying what the organisation asked him to say. In this spirit, he stated that he does not count on the votes of those who hold extremist ideas and rejects any form of exclusion against any racial, religious, ethnic or social group.

LMP, Momentum and Gergely Karácsony also distanced themselves from Péter Farkas Barnabás.



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## NEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT ANTISEMITISM IN HUNGARY

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*Mathias Rüb: Jewish life flourishes in Budapest*

Source: mandiner.hu

**20 September 2021** “The Jews of Budapest feel safe, wearing yarmulkes and kaftans. Much safer than they would be in Paris or Berlin. Israeli Ambassador Yakov Hadas-Handelsman praises Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's national-conservative government for the redevelopment of Jewish institutions. Relations between the government and the Jewish community are good”, Mathias Rüb, former FAZ correspondent in Budapest, quotes the diplomat. In an article in *Die Weltwoche*, the journalist notes that two synagogues have reopened in Budapest after lengthy renovations, and hundreds of Orthodox Jews danced joyously at the opening on Vörösmarty Street.

Mandiner quotes the key findings of the article: Orbán and his people are waging a brutal propaganda war against the Hungarian-born billionaire George Soros and his

followers in the mainstream media. The battle is about the soul of Hungary and the future of Europe. Orbán, a right-wing conservative politician, wants strong nation-states in the European Union. Soros, the left-liberal philanthropist, wants an increasingly integrated European Union with weak nation-states.

Orbán opposes migration, mainly Muslim, to Hungary and Europe. Soros is for a multi-religious and multicultural community.

The Jews of Budapest are safe as long as the country is formed according to the world view and will of the Hungarian Calvinist Orbán, especially without mass Muslim immigration. If Hungary is rebuilt according to the vision of the Hungarian-American Jew Soros, Jewish public life in Budapest, which is now flourishing freely, could soon end. What do Orbán and Soros have in common? Neither of them is antisemitic. Yet one of them is regularly accused of it, writes Rüb.

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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.	2nd of September	Holocaust victims commemorated in Jászapáti and Szécsény	Community News and Responses
2.	3rd of September	The cradle of Hungarian Jewry is 200 years old	Community News and Responses
3.	6th of September	On the occasion of the Jewish New Year, Viktor Orbán hopes that a more joyful period will begin	Official News and Civil Responses
4.	9th of September	Swastikas painted on buildings in Kispest by a group of openly neo-Nazi supporters	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Damage to Property
5.	9th of September	Budapest's newest Jewish cultural centre has opened	Community News and Responses
6.	12th of September	Pope Francis calls for unity between Jews and Christians against antisemitism	Official News and Civil Responses
7.	16th of September	Fidesz Debrecen uses a well-known Holocaust denier to promote the anti-Gyurcsány petition	Other News
8.	16th of September	The FTC president would also avoid the appearance of extremist manifestations in the stands	Official News and Civil Responses
9.	19th of September	Gusztáv Zoltai died	Community News and Responses
10.	20th of September	Mathias Rüb: Jewish life flourishes in Budapest	News and Opinions about Antisemitism in Hungary
11.	22nd of September	The deputy mayor of Ózd was photographed making an arm gesture that looks like a Nazi salute	Other News
12.	22nd of September	The OEVB acquitted the right-wing candidate who posted antisemitic content	Official News and Civil Responses
13.	23rd of September	Péter Szijjártó: Hungary remains committed to the fight against antisemitism	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**

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2021 Budapest

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