

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES
AND INCIDENTS REPORT
IN HUNGARY

JUNE 2022



ACTION AND PROTECTION
LEAGUE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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.

This month, our Foundation identified two antisemitic hate crimes, categorised as Damage to Property. In the first case, we received a report of Nazi graffiti in Eger, and in the second case, we were notified of graffiti on a townhouse in Budapest.

In June, we did not identify any Further Hate Incidents.

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

ACTION AND PROTECTION LEAGUE

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)¹ and the ADL Global 100² 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.

¹ EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: ANTISEMITISM - OVERVIEW OF DATA AVAILABLE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION 2008-2018

² <https://global100.adl.org>

ABOUT THE REPORT

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 incidents³ 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 whole⁴.

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

³ See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

⁴ Levin & McDavitt 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.

METHODOLOGY

The report deals with two types of offense: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by OSCE as follows⁵ (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 people⁶
- 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 period⁷ 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.⁸

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 statistics⁹ :

- 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.

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.

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 follows¹⁰:

- 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.¹¹ In presenting timelines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

ANTISEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS JUNE 2022

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Nazi graffiti on the wall of a house in Eger
Source: tev.hu



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Source: tev.hu

12 June 2022 Unknown perpetrators drew swastikas on the supporting pillars of an apartment building in Eger. A local volunteer of APF discovered the damage to the property at 13 Kossuth Lajos Street.

Images from the Google Maps online mapping service show that the banned authoritarian symbols were not there in August 2021.

APF has contacted the municipality of Eger and is also looking for the owner of the building to remove the horrific symbols from the walls as soon as possible.

Inscription insulting Jews appeared on the wall of an apartment building in Budapest
Source: tev.hu

28 June 2022 The Action and Protection Foundation (APF) received a report that an unknown perpetrator had painted antisemitic text on the wall of an apartment building in Budapest. "Traitorous Jews 1918-2022" was written on the building at 152 Fehérvári Street.

APF is looking for the owner of the building and will take all measures to remove the horrific and shameful text as soon as possible.



Source: tev.hu

FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

For the month of June, we did not register any incidents in this category.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

A new Neolog synagogue opened in Sopron
Source: mzsishisz.hu

3 June 2022 The Torah took its rightful place in the renovated building of the centuries-old synagogue, the ceremonial speeches were given, the mezuzahs were placed in their places accompanied by a blessing, and the first Torah reading took place. In this way, the new synagogue and headquarters of the Jewish Community of Sopron in the “city of loyalty” were opened on 3 June, writes Mzsishisz.

The re-dedicated synagogue is located at 22 Új Street, formerly known as Jewish Street, where the local Jewish community built a temple and mikvah in the early 1300s. It is a unique Gothic synagogue in Europe, which in the Middle Ages was the site of a Jewish hospital (old name: ispotály). It is the site of the new headquarters and synagogue of the Jewish Community of Sopron, which the local government funded with HUF 20 million and handed over to the Jewish community for religious and cultural purposes. The city government attaches so much importance to the Jewish roots and memories of Sopron that, at the mayor’s suggestion, HUF 30 million was earmarked from the city budget to also renovate the city’s other synagogue, an Orthodox synagogue.

The inauguration ceremony began with the solemn “moving in” of the Torah, a traditional Jewish custom. The event was attended by András Heisler, President of the Jewish Community of Sopron András Büchler and Rabbi Péter Deutsch. Tibor Fedor, Head of the Department of the Prime Minister’s Office, welcomed the participants on behalf of the government.

Israel’s support in Hungary has grown significantly in five years
Source: Telex.hu, tev.hu

8 June 2022 Závecz Research, commissioned by Telex, repeated a survey conducted five years ago, in which, among other things, they asked about the attitudes of the Hungarian population towards different countries and groups of countries. The survey showed a significant improvement in the perception of Jews: five years ago, 49 per cent, and this year, only 35 per cent believed that Jews would endanger the country’s future.

Asked whether Hungary should move closer to Israel or further away, 31 per cent of respondents said yes to moving closer to Israel, while 40 per cent said yes to moving further away. This is the most considerable positive shift among the countries and groups on the list compared to 2017, when 18 per cent of respondents were only in favour of rapprochement and 63 per cent would have moved away from the Jewish state.

There was also a positive change in attitudes towards Jews: 35 per cent said they were a “threat to Hungary’s future”, compared to 49 per cent five years ago – the most notable positive shift on the list. Telex reports that the proportion of those who feared Muslims, migrants and gypsies also fell.

It is worth noting, however, that two-thirds of those polled see powerful globalists as much of a threat to the country as they were five years ago – something that is hard to separate from the antisemitic topos. (And in the “likability of political figures” table, George Soros remains among the most unpopular, with 36 per cent, the same as five years ago.)

“Previous research has shown that the rise of anti-Muslims and antisemitism typically move together.”

Péter Krekó, director of Political Capital, told the newspaper that the evolution of Hungarian public opinion in this area may be linked to the fact that “loud hate speech against an ethnic group is not now in the mainstream of politics”. At the same time, the number of those who see xenophobia as a threat has increased significantly.

This survey also confirms a study by the Action and Protection League (APL) and the European Jewish Alliance (EJA), that found that Jews in Hungary felt less threatened than seven years earlier. Shlomo Köves, Chief Rabbi of EMIH-Hungarian Jewish Association, said at the time, the problem was recognised in Hungary, and educational and awareness-raising programmes were subsequently developed and implemented in cooperation with state organisations.

European Jewish Federation survey shows that Hungary and Italy offer the best quality of life for Jewish communities

Source: tev.hu

21 June 2022 According to research presented at the European Jewish Alliance (EJA) annual conference in Budapest, Hungary and Italy have the best quality of life for Jewish communities in Europe.

The study, conducted by EJA and the London-based British Institute of Jewish Policy Research, weighted the results of surveys carried out in recent years and ranked the quality of life of Jews in Hungary and Italy as the best, followed by Denmark, the UK, Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Spain, France, Poland and Belgium, MTI reports.

Rabbi Menachem Margolin, president of the European Jewish Federation (EJA), said the survey found that Jews in Denmark felt the most secure, followed by Hungary,

Italy and Austria. In contrast, Jews in Poland, Germany, Belgium and France feel much less secure.

He also said that Germany, Austria, France and the Netherlands topped the ranking regarding the actions taken by European governments to support Jews. At the same time, Poland, Denmark, Spain and Belgium did less for the Jewish community. He added that the aim of the study was not to engage in a debate with one government or another but to create a standard set of tools to compare the quality of life of Jews scientifically and to help governments see what actions they should take.

The report looked at European Jews’ perceptions of security, antisemitic attitudes and the steps European governments took to combat antisemitism, promote the safety of the Jewish community and religious freedom, and how their countries vote on issues concerning Israel in international forums.

According to a summary by EMIH, the study also considers previous surveys on the perception of Jewish security, attacks on Jews and data showing anti-Jewish sentiment.

Of the 12 countries where most Jews live in Europe, Jews feel safest in Denmark and Hungary, and Jews in Hungary have suffered the fewest antisemitic attacks.

France is where Jews feel the least safe; however, it is also where the necessary steps have been taken to preserve the Jewish community, the study found, and where a positive shift is expected. Belgium is the country that takes the fewest measures to support Jewish life, the report says.

According to Shlomo Köves, Chief Rabbi of EMIH – The Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities, the study is a unique integration of data that shows not only the extent of antisemitism but also the extent of violence against Jews. In recent years, Hungarian Jews have felt that the situation of public safety has improved, and he said it is gratifying that the EJA report confirms this.

Holocaust victims remembered across the country

Source: boon.hu, heol.hu, mazsihisz.hu, nyiregyhaza.hu

21 June 2022 The victims of the Holocaust were remembered across the country on the 78th anniversary of the deportation of rural

Jews. Local Jewish communities held commemorations in Gyöngyös, Eger, Nyíregyháza, Székesfehérvár, Békéscsaba, Miskolc and Szeged.

OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

Mazsihisz welcomes the government's support for Israel in all forums

Source: mazsihisz.hu

2 June 2022 The European Union working group set up to implement the EU strategy to combat antisemitism and support Jewish community life has held its second meeting in Brussels. József Horváth, Vice-President of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities (Mazsihisz), represented the Hungarian Jewish community at the meeting, while Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky, Deputy State Secretary of the Hungarian government, represented the Hungarian government. Katharina von Schnurbein chaired the working group set up to support Jewish community life as European Commission Coordinator on combatting Antisemitism, the Mazsihisz website reports.

The first agenda of the meeting was a presentation of the antisemitic narrative and misinformation used by the Russians in the war in Ukraine, backed by data analysis, while the second agenda included a discussion between representatives of EU member states and Jewish communities on strategies and other actions in their countries.

Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky said that in Hungary, hate speech is a criminal offence under the law and that commemorating the Holocaust in Hungarian schools is of particular importance for the education of future

generations. He stressed that the Hungarian government supports Jewish communities in Hungary.

József Horváth welcomed Hungary's support for Israel in all international forums and the presence of Hungarian government representatives at major Jewish celebrations and commemorations. He noted that Hungarian Jews have not suffered physical atrocities in Hungary in recent years, but it is worrying that a recent survey showed that some 36 per cent of Hungarian society is to some extent antisemitic.

József Horváth also said that some open questions require a broader social discourse, including the responsibility of the Hungarian state in the Holocaust. "We are of the firm opinion that the government at the time was responsible for the murder of 600,000 Hungarian Jews, while today's Hungarian government mostly attributes this responsibility to the German occupation", he said.

Among the outstanding issues to be discussed, he said that while Jewish organisations in Hungary used to have the opportunity to comment on aspects of school curricula related to Judaism and the Holocaust, they are currently not allowed to do so. The position of Mazsihisz is that Hungarian Jewish organisations should again be allowed to express their opinion on the school curriculum in advance.

Members of the Hungarian National Front were found guilty

Source: tev.hu

20 June 2022 The court of first instance convicted eight defendants of the Hungarian National Front. Three received a custodial sentence, four received suspended prison sentences, and one received a fine, the Budapest Chief Prosecutor's Office informed MTI. The charges included possessing unauthorised weapons, cooperation with Russian intelligence services, and inciting hatred against Jews and migrants.

According to the indictment, seven of the defendants in the case possessed firearms, ammunition and explosives without a licence at their residence. At the same time, the eighth co-defendant was involved in the illegal purchase of weapons requiring a licence.

The Hungarian National Front, the far-right paramilitary organisation of István Györkös, the police killer from Bőny, had previously carried out airsoft exercises with Russian military intelligence officers working under diplomatic cover.

According to the New York Times, these exercises were so regular that Russian military intelligence, the GRU, used to travel to Bőny five times a year. Joint activities and cooperation were at their most intensive between 2010 and 2012. Györkös and his associates also hoped for money from the Russians and were begging for financial support. All this came to light at a meeting of the parliamentary committee on national security, when the Hungarian secret services informed MPs about it.

According to the Hungarian services, the GRU only intended the joint exercise as a pretext, as their real aim was to seize the Hídfő website, founded by Györkös: after the website was moved to a Russian server, it was turned into a Russian disinformation site.

According to the indictment, the two accused were involved in publishing writings capable of actively inciting hatred against ethnic groups.

“In 2015 and 2016, the Hungarian National Front, an organisation with extremist political views, published several anti-migrant and anti-Jewish articles on its related websites, in which the two defendants participated”, the prosecutor's office wrote.

Three defendants were sentenced to 2 years and 6 months in prison. One defendant was sentenced to 7 months, two to 1 year each, and one was sentenced to 1 year and 3 months of suspended imprisonment. The eighth defendant was fined HUF 360,000.

The prosecutor's office appealed the aggravation of the sentences.

Zsolt Semjén: Hungary is one of the safest countries in Europe for Jews

Source: tev.hu

21 June 2022 Hungary is one of the safest countries in Europe, if not the safest, Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén said at a conference of the European Jewish Alliance (EJA) in Budapest on Monday. He stressed that Hungary would continue to refuse to give in to any antisemitic phenomenon, be it far-right, far-left, jihadist or anti-Israel, MTI reports.

The politician stressed that the relationship between the Jewish congregations and the Hungarian state is “perfectly settled”; all Jewish institutions, kindergartens, schools, hospitals and social institutions are financed by the state, just like other state institutions with similar functions.

He also pointed out that the government had concluded comprehensive agreements with the Jewish religious communities, under which religious properties stolen by the communist regime were either returned to the communities or, if not reclaimed, were paid for via a perpetual annuity.

In Hungary, there is zero tolerance for antisemitism, the Holocaust is taught in schools, there is a day of remembrance for the Holocaust, and the law against hate speech guarantees that the horrors of the Holocaust cannot be denied or relativised.

He said there were also antisemitic phenomena in Hungary, and Nazism had “borne its bitter fruits” in Hungary. He added that the persecution of Jews in Hungary did not end with the fall of Nazi Germany, as the communist regime also persecuted religious Jews, nationalised Jewish religious properties and was anti-Israel.

He also pointed out that, in addition to the antisemitism of the Brown and Red dictatorships, there are two other types of antisemitism to be discussed in the European Union today: political Islam, the antisemitism of Islamic radicalism, which does not exist in Hungary, and the increasingly accepted anti-Israelism in the European Union. Zsolt Semjén added that he also considers anti-Israelism a kind of antisemitism and assured the Jewish community that the government would take action against it in Hungary and the European Union.

Israel can count on Hungary, and within the European Union, „we will veto any action that unfairly attacks Israel”, Semjén said.

Rabbi Menachem Margolin, President of the European Jewish Federation, pointed out: that one of the biggest problems facing Jewish communities in Europe is the restriction of religious freedom. In several countries, kosher slaughter and the circumcision of children, which are essential for Jewish ritual life, have been banned or are about to be banned. He said the conference aimed for Jewish community leaders to share their challenges and for participants to draw up a common plan of action to protect the Jewish community.

Shlomo Köves, Chief Rabbi of EMIH said: “Hungary is one of the safest places for European Jewry today. The Hungarian Jewish community is experiencing a renaissance, but at the same time, its leaders face many challenges. In addition to the fight against antisemitism and for the security of the Jewish community, the most important thing is to raise interest in genuine Jewish life.”

Teenagers vandalised the graves of the Jewish cemetery in Budakeszi

Source: tev.hu

24 June 2022 After two months of investigation, it turned out that two 13-year-old boys had been vandalising the Jewish cemetery in Budakeszi. An online treasure hunt game led the children to the cemetery, where they failed to find the treasure chest. In frustration, one of them started to break the gravestones, which the wet ground had loosened, and his friend then joined him, police.hu reports.

After getting angry, they went home. Later, they saw the publicity on the internet, and one of the boys urged his friend to keep quiet. The latter eventually made a detailed confession. Five graves were vandalised, causing a total of HUF 1 million in damage.

The boys were under 14 at the time of the crime and are not punishable under Hungarian criminal law; therefore, the Budakeszi Police Station has terminated the criminal proceedings.

The man who broke into the synagogue in Óbuda was sentenced to a fine

Source: kekvillogo.hu

29 June 2022 A 39-year-old man who broke into and vandalised the synagogue in Óbuda because he could not call his girlfriend who worked there has been sentenced to a fine for property damage. The Budapest 2nd and 3rd District Court sentenced the man to pay HUF 240,000; if he does not, he will have to go to prison, the Budapest Chief Prosecutor’s Office said.

The accused went to the synagogue in Óbuda at dawn on 14 May because he could not reach his girlfriend, who worked there, by phone. He rang the bell at the staff entrance and, unable to get in, left.

He returned later, tore down the security camera at the staff entrance and left again. After a few minutes, however, he reappeared at the prayer house, kicked in the main entrance door and entered the building, where

he also damaged another door. Later, he also damaged a container building at the side of the synagogue, which served as a kitchen. The man caused damage worth almost HUF 100,000, the statement said.

OTHER NEWS

The “swastika” ethics manual is indeed in use
Source: telex.hu

7 June 2022 In last month’s report, we reported that a picture of the cover of a purported ethics textbook for high school teachers appeared on Twitter and then on Reddit in late May. On Reddit, the post’s author wrote that the picture had been sent to him by a friend and that he wondered if it was real. On the cover, four human figures are arranged in a shape that resembles a swastika. Telex contacted the Education Department, where they said that such a textbook does exist, but it is not one they have approved.

The book cover first appeared on the Complex Basic Programme Facebook page on 11 March 2019. The programme is part of the Teacher Training Centre of the Eszterházy Károly Catholic University. The book was published in 2018 and edited by Eszter Pusztai. The university told Telex that the 26 textbooks and more than 40 other publications produced as part of the programme had not received any negative comments from staff, teachers from partner schools or direct users.

“The cover is not a swastika; it shows four students holding hands. What one thinks one can discover in an illustrative graphic, and what one thinks about a textbook cover on social media, is a matter of individual, subjective opinion”, the university wrote.

Márton Gyöngyösi is also running for Jobbik presidency

Source: magyarnemzet.hu

17 June 2022 Márton Gyöngyösi, MEP of Jobbik, will also run as a presidential candidate at the party’s election on 2 July, the MEP himself confirmed on Spirit FM. According to him, one of the most critical issues at the moment is the consolidation of the party. He noted that as an MEP, he had been left out of the conflict over the resignation of Péter Jakab, and his election would therefore point in the direction of consolidation. Gyöngyösi later announced his decision on Facebook. He wrote, “For Jobbik, there is no other way than to sort out our ranks and go forward representing our national-conservative values”, Magyar Nemzet writes.

In 2012, the Jobbik MP said in Parliament that it is time to assess how many people of Jewish origin there are in Hungary “and especially in the Hungarian Parliament and the Hungarian government (...) who pose a certain national security risk for Hungary. I believe that Hungary is owed such a survey”.

The Jobbik MEP’s statement was also defended by the Mayor of Budapest, Gergely Karácsony, who said that listing members of Parliament of Jewish origin is not Nazism.

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.	2nd of June	Mazsihisz welcomes the government's support for Israel in all forums	Official and Civil Responses
2.	2nd of June	A new Neolog synagogue opened in Sopron	Community News and Responses
3.	7th of June	The "swastika" ethics manual is indeed in use	Other News
4.	8th of June	Israel's support in Hungary has grown significantly in five years	Community News and Responses
5.	12th of June	Nazi graffiti on the wall of a house in Eger	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Damage to Property
6.	17th of June	Márton Gyöngyösi is also running for Jobbik presidency	Other News
7.	20th of June	Members of the Hungarian National Front were found guilty	Official and Civil Responses
8.	21st of June	European Jewish Federation survey shows that Hungary and Italy offer the best quality of life for Jewish communities	Community News and Responses
9.	21st of June	Zsolt Semjén: Hungary is one of the safest countries in Europe for Jews	Official and Civil Responses
10.	24th of June	Teenagers vandalised the graves of the Jewish cemetery in Budakeszi	Official and Civil Responses
11.	26th of June	Holocaust victims remembered across the country	Community News and Responses
12.	28th of June	Inscription insulting Jews appeared on the wall of an apartment building in Budapest	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Damage to Property
13.	29th of June	The man who broke into the synagogue in Óbuda was sentenced to a fine	Official and Civil Responses

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

The Facebook page: 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:

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