

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES
AND INCIDENTS REPORT
IN HUNGARY

MARCH 2023



ACTION AND PROTECTION
LEAGUE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Action and Protection League	4
About the Report	5
Methodology	7
Antisemitic Hate Incidents – March 2023	10
Threat	10
Hate speech	10
Further Hate Incidents	11
Community News and Responses	11
Official and Civil Responses	16
Other News	18
News and Opinions on Antisemitism in Hungary	19
The Month's Chronicle	20
Contact and Support	21
References	21
Contributors and Publisher Information	22

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.

In March, the Action and Protection Foundation's monitoring activity identified three hate incidents of antisemitic nature. Two were categorised as Hate Speech, and one was a Threat.

This month, we have not identified any Further Hate Incidents.

Our Foundation did not initiate any new proceedings this month, nor did we receive any notifications of 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 & 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.

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

MARCH 2023

In March, the Action and Protection Foundation's monitoring activity identified three hate incidents of antisemitic nature, categorised as Threat and Hate Speech.

THREAT

DK activist threatened with execution and mutilation

Source: hang.hu

14 March 2023 A member of the Democratic Coalition (DK) youth organisation has been threatened with death for spray-painting the Szálasi monument, and the party is filing a police report over the dozens of neo-Nazi threats, reports Magyar Hang. According to the party's statement, the activist was threatened with execution and mutilation on Facebook after he "spray-painted the monument to the Arrow Cross mass murderer Ferenc Szálasi in the Farkasréti cemetery with black paint". The party will report the dozens of neo-Nazi threats to the police.

They stressed that they would not be intimidated by cowardly threats, as they have zero tolerance for violence and fear-mongering. They will continue to use all legal means to oppose the public denunciation, excuses, silence and relativisation of the crimes of Nazi and Arrow Cross mass murderers.

HATE SPEECH

"Sparrow-nosed liberal worms", wrote one commenter on Facebook

Source: tev.hu

14 March 2023 The Action and Protection Foundation has received a report that a user wrote a comment insulting Judaism on a Facebook post of the Democratic Coalition (DK) youth organisation. In the post, they noted that they had not stood idly by while for a month, the Orbán government authorities assisted with the Szálasi memorial in the Farkasréti cemetery, which was created on the grave of Gizella Lutz.

Therefore, the organisation has done with the image of Ferenc Szálasi and the Arrow Cross what any person of good conscience would do, "we have sprayed black paint on the symbols of the darkest crimes of 20th century Hungarian history. As long as we are here, there will be neither fascism nor fascist memorials in Hungary!"

The commenter wrote the following under the post in incorrect Hungarian:

"The patriots have cleaned the grave of Gizerlla Lucz, desecrated by the communist, snub-nosed, liberal worms!"

The president of Mi Hazánk alluded to Anne Applebaum's Jewish origin at the March 15 commemoration

Source: tev.hu

17 March 2023 At the commemoration of Mi Hazánk on 15 March, party leader László Toroczkai said, among other things, that he believed the Americans were involved in the bombing of the Nord Stream gas pipeline. He also mentioned Polish politician Radosław Sikorski, about whom he said that his wife Anne Applebaum is Jewish, Telex reports.

"Anne Applebaum, who in America... Applebaum... is a survivor, isn't she? To the audience's great amusement, she and her family survived everything", the party leader declared.

According to Telex, antisemitic incitement on 15 March is particularly distasteful, if only because a wave of antisemitic violence swept the country after 15 March 1848. The temporary breakdown of law and order in several towns and villages in the country brought out the anti-Jewish sentiments of the population and led to pogroms with deaths.

FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

The section titled Further Hate Incidents contains no cases this month. This section includes incidents classified as hate-motivated but not included in our most recent statistics due to their insignificant nature and lack of clear antisemitic motive or because the time of the incident is unknown. It also includes acts that may have an antisemitic intent and were committed by people connected to Hungary, but they did not take place in Hungary.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

Hungary and Italy are the safest places for Jews in Europe

Source: neokohn.hu

1 March 2023 Several leaders of the Hungarian Jewish community and academics discussed the situation of Jews in Hungary at a conference organised by the Danube Institute on 28 February 2023. The occasion was the launch of a two-volume English-language book "Antisemitism in Hungary: Appearance and Reality", edited by Danube Institute researchers, which presents the life of Hungarian Jewry through in-depth interviews with leaders of several Jewish NGOs and religious communities, according to a Danube Institute press release.

The event was opened by Yacov Hadas-Handelsman, Israel's Ambassador to Hungary, who pointed out that according to a survey, Hungary and Italy are the safest places for Jews in Europe. He also warned that modern-day antisemitism often manifests itself as anti-Israelism.

István Kiss, Executive Director of the Danube Institute, said we must constantly combat antisemitism. Still, the book's lessons show that despite negative Western trends, the situation in Hungary has improved over the last decade.

Jeffrey Kaplan, the Danube Institute's visiting scholar from the US who edited the book, said: "The Western mainstream media often paints a distorted picture of Hungary, which is contradicted by field research and interviews.

András Kovács, a professor at CEU, says that antisemitism is not only manifested in anti-Israel sentiment and violence and that we must combat all forms of antisemitism.

Rabbi Báruch Oberlander, the founder and leader of the Chabad Lubavitch movement in Hungary, described how the Hasidic community helps to preserve Hungarian culture and traditions in Jewish communities abroad.

Speakers also included Jehuda Hartman, Professor at Bar Ilan University; Menachem Karen-Kratz, independent Israeli scholar; György Szabó, President of MAZSÖK; Mordechai Inbari, Professor at the University of North Carolina; Ádám Schönberger, President of the MAROM Club Association; and Tibor Pécsi, historian and educational expert at the March of the Living.

In addition to the issue of antisemitism, the speakers discussed the demographic situation and historical experiences of Hungarian Jewry, the memory of the Holocaust, and the characteristics of Jewish cultural life. Topics included the current challenges facing Jewry, with speakers presenting their views on preserving Jewish identity, culture and traditions in the 21st century.

The General Assembly of the European Jewish Congress was held in Brussels

Source: mazsihisz.hu

6 March 2023 The EU and national strategies against antisemitism in the European Union and its Member States, as well as the European authorisation of kosher slaughter and circumcision, were among the topics discussed at the European Jewish Congress (EJC) General Assembly in Brussels. The event was attended by András Heisler, President of Mazsihisz and Vice-President of the EJC, who held talks with Hungary's Ambassador to Brussels, Iván Tamás Kovács.

During the General Assembly, the participants reviewed the current issues of the EJC's operation, the EU and its Member States, and national strategies against antisemitism.

One of the main topics of the assembly was the issue of kosher slaughter and circumcision, which is not allowed in many EU countries, to make progress in legalising the ancient elements essential for Jewish worship.

András Heisler added that the Hungarian government led by Viktor Orbán had taken a very consistent and exemplary position on this issue, as the Hungarian cabinet supports the ancient institutions of both kosher slaughter and circumcision from the point of view of and concerning the free exercise of religion.

The last Holocaust survivor from Kiskunhalas dies

Source: baon.hu

6 March 2023 Mrs Dezső Krausz Reichnitzer Rozália-Laura, the third oldest and last Holocaust survivor of Kiskunhalas, has passed away in her 99th year. Nándorné Ritter, president of the Jewish Community of Kiskunhalas, wrote on her social networking site that with the death of Mrs Dezső Krausz, an era in the lives of all of us has come to an end.

Mrs Dezső Krausz was born on 28 September 1924, in Hahót, Zala County, and after school, she trained as a seamstress. At the beginning of May 1944, she and her family were locked up in a ghetto near Pacsa, Zala County. From there, they were taken to the Auschwitz concentration camp, where she was separated from her parents and brother, never to see them again. She spent three weeks in the camp and was then transported to an underground munitions factory near Buchenwald, where she worked until the end of February 1945.

The Germans made her and others walk for four weeks before handing them over to the Americans. German guards shot those who could not endure the forced march. As well as the physical strain, the mental terror included having to sing improvised songs to the tune of Hungarian songs, which became their camp songs.

She arrived home in Hungary on 9 July 1945 and moved in May 1946 to live with her aunt in Kiskunhalas. On 9 June 1949, she married Dezső Krausz, a master carpenter and Holocaust survivor. They had two children.

Mrs Dezső Krausz was the third oldest survivor in the country. But for us, she remains the first in everything: perseverance, strength, patience, leading by example, and sticking to tradition. Her frail stature exuded love, dignity and respect. These qualities make her even more significant in her hours of grief and pain! May she be an example for us all to follow! May her dear memory be a blessing! Baruch Dayan Ha'emet! - the writer concluded her thoughts.

EMIH and the Jewish Learning Institute offer a Jewish recipe for fighting antisemitism
Source: tev.hu

8 March 2023 The Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), a renowned international educational organisation, and EMIH, the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities are launching a course on effectively combating antisemitism.

"We cannot allow our Jewishness to be defined by antisemitism, even if we cannot ignore it. As the immediate memory of the Holocaust recedes, millions of Jews wonder why this recurring wave of hate in history is hitting Jews far harder than any other group. Is this what Judaism is condemned to? Is there a way out of this endless cycle?" - says the course website.

According to the organisers, even the darkest of topics must be approached with faith and optimism – a kind of "Jewishness" – as the only way to overcome the antisemitic mindset and neutralise the hatred that fuels it.

The first module in the series of four lectures in March, entitled "The Eternal People", will look at the history of Judaism over thousands of years. The second will analyse the most frequently repeated accusations against Jews. The third will focus on modern-day manifestations of antisemitism and the anti-Israel movement, and the fourth will examine the impact of antisemitism on Judaism.

The courses will be given by Shlomo Köves, Chief Rabbi of EMIH.

Two Neolog rabbis awarded the Knight's Cross
Source: neokohn.hu

14 March 2023 15 March is a universal celebration of Hungarian freedom, said Minister of the Prime Minister's Office Gergely Gulyás at the ceremonial awarding of state honours and ministerial awards on the occasion of the national holiday in Budapest on Tuesday.

Dr Tamás Róna, the founder of the Magyarhoni Zsidó Imaegylet Egyesület (ZSIMA) and professor emeritus at the Hungarian University of Agricultural and Life Sciences, was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary for his outstanding activities.

Dr Tamás Verő, Chief Rabbi of the Frankel Leó Street Synagogue of the Jewish Community of Budapest and Associate Professor of the Department of Sacred Scripture and Talmudic Studies at the National Rabbinical-Jewish University, was also awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary.

László Kovács, President of the National Association of Hungarian-Israeli Friendship Societies and Circles, was awarded the Hungarian Gold Cross of Merit.

The Knight's Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit is a class of the highest decoration conferred by the Hungarian state, the Hungarian Order of Merit.

Radnóti Prize for the National Chief Rabbi
Source: neokohn.hu

14 March 2023 For the 23rd time, the Miklós Radnóti Anti-Racist Prize was awarded to personalities active in various fields of social life who, through their work, their opinion-forming stance and their example, have taken a stand against racism, antisemitism and all forms of exclusion.

The Association of Hungarian Resistance and Anti-Fascist Organizations (MEASZ) would like to draw attention to the fact that there are still processes in the world and our country that can have harmful consequences regarding the marginalisation of certain groups of people. The occasion for the awards was again World Antiracist Day on 21 March.

Among others, Dr Róbert Frölich, National Chief Rabbi and Chief Rabbi of the Dohány Street Synagogue, received the Radnóti Prize, as well as community member and philosopher György Gábor.

OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

Police are investigating because of the Arrow Cross symbol found on the grave of Szálasi's wife

Source: 444.hu, mandiner.hu, ugytudjuk.hu

8 March 2023 Tibor Károly Papp, leader of the Magyarelvű Mozgalom, altered the grave in Farkasréti cemetery. The police are investigating the use of a forbidden totalitarian symbol, rtl.hu reported. The inscription "In memory of Ferenc Szálasi", a photo of the Arrow Cross politician and a symbol resembling that of the Arrow Cross were placed on the grave of Ferenc Szálasi's widow, Gizella Lutz, in January at the Farkasréti cemetery.

According to his own admission, the changes were carried out by the new owner of the grave, Tibor Papp, head of a group that glorifies Szálasi. He told RTL that he did nothing objectionable. According to him, there is no symbol of the Arrow Cross on the tomb in any form. The religious symbol on it is taken from the official coat of arms of Táplánszentkereszt.



Source: Mércse / Fazekas Lázár Benjámín

In the case, Budapest Mayor Gergely Karácsony said that the tomb's inscription "In memory of Ferenc Szálasi" was inappropriate and offensive to public taste.

According to 444.hu, the tombstone bears a marble obelisk topped with a symbol resembling that of the Arrow Cross. Furthermore, a photo of Ferenc Szálasi himself in civilian clothes next to Gizella Lutz has been placed on the gravestone. Next to the image are the words: In memory of Ferenc Szálasi.

The symbol used for the Arrow Cross is a cross that does not have the lower stem extended, but in this context, there is no question that it is the group's symbol, an authoritarian symbol under the Criminal Code. The dissemination, public use or display of a totalitarian symbol is a misdemeanour, punishable by a fine unless a more serious offence is committed.

The Budapest Public Works Department has ordered Papp to remove the inscription, the deadline for which is the end of March.

Csaba Latorcai: Sending Hungarian Jews to their death was treason

Source: magyarnemzet.hu

23 March 2023 It was treason to send our Hungarian Jewish brothers and sisters to their deaths, whose blood cries out to heaven, said Csaba Latorcai, Parliamentary State Secretary for Regional Development at the Prime Minister's Office, in his speech at the memorial to the martyrs of the Hungarian forced labour camps during the Second World War in Kőszeg.

The commemoration is significant today because the world again shows its unpeaceful face. We are witnessing and suffering a new era of migration of people on an increasingly severe scale, in addition to the terrible war raging in our immediate neighbourhood", he said.

He added: "Along with all this, we are also witnessing religious intolerance in Western Europe, in the name of a new communist culture of eradication, which is taking on increasingly alarming proportions and which does not spare but threatens those who profess either Jewish or Christian denominations.

In his speech, Csaba Latorcai recalled that, under the Second Jewish Law, Hungarian citizens classified as Jews could only fulfil their national defence obligations by performing auxiliary labour service. In 1944, after the Arrow Cross takeover, thousands of labourers and Jewish civilians – both men and women – were deported to Kőszeg to build the so-called "Reichswehr" (Reich defensive post).

Some were crammed into freight wagons at Budapest's Józsefváros railway station, but others were driven to the area on foot over several days. Many of them lost their lives on the way, while others died from hard physical labour, hunger, cold, lack of sanitation, or the cruelty of the guards", he said.

The Holocaust is one of the greatest tragedies in the history of Hungarian Jewry and society. We must keep its memory alive so that future generations, knowing the past, cannot commit the same atrocities that have already happened", the State Secretary said.

Between November 1944 and March 1945, 2,500 Jewish labourers died in the labour camp established on the outskirts of Kőszeg. Every year, the residents of the small town in Vas County — political parties, NGOs, churches and representatives of local Jewry — commemorate the victims. This year, they paid their respects by laying wreaths and flowers at the memorial.

OTHER NEWS

Shlomo Köves: "It is extremely repugnant to compare the greatest modern genocide of human civilisation to the abolition of the Hungarian medical chamber"

Source: neokohn.hu

1 March 2023 It has happened before, but it has recently become almost commonplace to compare various political and social events to the horrors of the Second World War and the Holocaust. This practice is unacceptable, even if done in connection with horrific events such as the war in Ukraine, but especially concerning domestic political phenomena such as the recent events concerning the Hungarian Medical Association, writes Neokohn.

The paper says Putin's invasion of Ukraine has given reason for many to compare Russia's leader to Hitler and the atrocities committed against the people of Ukraine to the horrors of World War II. The danger of such comparisons, however, is that you are equating a country's aggression with a war claiming an estimated 70 million victims. This is a considerable exaggeration, even if the Russian attack on Ukraine has claimed human lives on an unimaginable scale in modern times on both sides.

Neokohn finds it particularly regrettable that Anna Szalai in *Népszava* found this comparison to be apt. The title of her article is "The damage caused by the Orbán government's attack on the Hungarian Medical Chamber cannot be measured".

According to Szalai: "It is extremely rare in the history of professional chambers that compulsory membership is abolished and restricted to a single organisation or profession. Pre-World War II restrictions on office-holding for a particular religious denomination, the Jewish Laws, also applied to several professions."

Neokohn interviewed Shlomo Köves, chief rabbi of EMIH, about the proliferation of Holocaust comparisons in public discourse. Rabbi Köves said:

"The trend is deplorable, which unfortunately was foreseeable. It is a fact that it is very much to be expected."

According to Rabbi Köves, "to compare the greatest genocide of human civilisation in modern times with the situation of the medical chamber is extremely repugnant".

Asked if there was any hypersensitivity to the Shoah among Jews, the Chief Rabbi said:

"Comparisons to the Jewish Holocaust or the Holocaust are not unacceptable because it happened historically and overwhelmingly to Jews; that is not the reason for the uniqueness of the Holocaust. It is because it was the first and the most deadly, industrial, systematic genocide ever committed, and, thank G-d, it hasn't happened since."

The inscription on the gravestone of Szálasi's widow commemorating the Arrow Cross leader was covered

Source: merce.hu

28 March 2023 The inscription commemorating the leader of the Arrow Cross terror was covered on the gravestone of Ferenc Szálasi's widow, writes *Énbudapestem*, the newspaper of the Municipality of Budapest. According to the newspaper's unconfirmed information, the owner of the gravesite in Farkasréti cemetery may have changed the appearance of the gravestone, *Mérce* writes.

The stone used to read "In memory of Ferenc Szálasi", but now - just one day before the Budapest City Assembly passed a resolution on the grave site, which has become an Arrow Cross memorial, it reads:

"...of course, I believed that if you love someone, you believe that person."

The quote is from a 1988 interview with Gizella Lutz, Szálasi's widow. However, Szálasi's portrait and the symbol of the Arrow Cross can still be seen on the grave.

Attila Vidnyánszky accuses János Szász of lying to the Washington Post

Source: 24.hu

28 March 2023 The chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for Theatre and Film Arts and a member of the Board of Trustees say director János Szász lied in an interview with the Washington Post. In a joint statement sent to MTI on Tuesday, Attila Vidnyánszky and Tamás Lajos wrote that they believe Szász is lying, 24.hu reports.

I will not talk about politics, but I can talk about cultural politics. They attacked me because I am not Hungarian, because I am Jewish. No one can tell me that I am not Hungarian", Szász said in the interview. Vidnyánszky and Lajos reacted to this statement.

According to the statement, in August and September 2020, Lajos had three meetings with Szász. In these talks, he tried to convince the director to continue teaching; he tried to argue how important his teaching was and gave him personal guarantees.

"Szász kept stalling and delaying his answer, and then he cancelled his class with a short, curt phone call", they wrote, adding that during all this time, at Vidnyánszky's request, he had directed János Székely's *Caligula's Governor* and István Örkény's *Cat Play* at the National Theatre. They both "obviously tried to persuade the director to stay, using all the arguments and means at their disposal", but to no avail, the statement said.

In their statement, Vidnyánszky and Lajos wrote: "If antisemitism is a great crime because it is, then the unfounded accusation of antisemitism is an equal crime and should be subject to the same judgment."

NEWS AND OPINIONS ON ANTISEMITISM IN HUNGARY

Jewish News Syndicate: Unlike in the rest of Europe, Jews are safe in Hungary

Source: neokohn.hu

28 March 2023 Unlike in the rest of Europe, Jews are safe and Jewish life is thriving in Hungary, writes Michael O'Shea in the Jewish News Syndicate.

The author recalls that about a month ago, at a UN event to combat antisemitism, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the US ambassador to the UN, expressed her belief that "a Holocaust memorial has been vandalised in Hungary" while listing a recent list of antisemitic incidents.

In contrast, this incident occurred not in Hungary but in Sweden. The author believes that Americans living in their ivory tower, informed only by the New York Times or the Washington Post, will likely find antisemitism consistent with their impressions of the country.

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.	1st of March	Shlomo Köves: "It is extremely repugnant to compare the greatest modern genocide of human civilisation to the Holocaust"	Other News
2.	1st of March	Hungary and Italy are the safest places for Jews in Europe	Community News and Responses
3.	6th of March	The General Assembly of the European Jewish Congress was held in Brussels	Community News and Responses
4.	6th of March	The last Holocaust survivor from Kiskunhalas dies	Community News and Responses
5.	8th of March	EMIH and the Jewish Learning Institute offer a Jewish recipe for fighting antisemitism	Community News and Responses
6.	8th of March	Police are investigating because of the Arrow Cross symbol found on the grave of Szálasi's wife	Official and Civil Responses
7.	14th of March	DK activist threatened with execution and mutilation	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Threat
8.	14th of March	"Sparrow-nosed liberal worms", wrote one commenter on Facebook	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech
9.	14th of March	Two Neolog rabbis awarded the Knight's Cross	Community News and Responses
10.	17th of March	The president of Mi Hazánk alluded to Anne Applebaum's Jewish origin at the March 15 commemoration	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech
11.	23rd of March	Jewish News Syndicate: Unlike in the rest of Europe, Jews are safe in Hungary	News and Opinions on Antisemitism in Hungary
12.	23rd of March	Csaba Latorcai: Sending Hungarian Jews to their death was treason	Official and Civil Responses
13.	28th of March	The inscription on the gravestone of Szálasi's widow commemorating the Arrow Cross leader was covered	Other News
14.	28th of March	Attila Vidnyánszky accuses János Szász of lying to the Washington Post	Other News
15.	31st of March	Radnóti Prize for the National Chief Rabbi	Community News and 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:

13597539-12302010-00057157

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