

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES
AND INCIDENTS REPORT
IN HUNGARY

JUNE 2023



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 June, the Action and Protection Foundation's monitoring activity identified one hate incident of antisemitic nature. This was categorised as Hate Speech.

This month, we have identified one further hate incident.

Our Foundation did not initiate any new proceedings this month, 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.

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 to the under-reporting is that victims rarely report them to the police or relevant

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).

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 2023

This month, the Action and Protection Foundation's monitoring activity identified one hate incident of antisemitic nature. This was categorised as Hate Speech.

HATE SPEECH

Momentum politician called a "dirty Jew"
Source: neokohn.hu

5 June 2023 Dániel Berg, Deputy Mayor of District II, reported about the antisemitic incident on his social media page.

"A good start to the week: on my way to work, a young man approaches me on the street and whispers "You are dirty Jews".

Of course, this is not the first time this has happened, and sadly, it certainly won't be the last. The other day, for example, my colleague and friend David Bedř received death threats accompanied by antisemitic remarks. We must never accept this. Here in Buda, we will continue to promote zero tolerance against all forms of incitement to hatred and exclusion and take every possible step against the perpetrators. As private citizens, it is also important to stand up for our fellow human beings in our everyday lives when we witness such behaviour", Berg said.

FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

The section titled Further Hate Incidents contains one case 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 did not take place in Hungary but may have an antisemitic intent and the perpetrator is connected to the country.

Ákos Hadházy made a parallel between the Nazi regime and the current Hungarian political system

Source: mandiner.hu

14 June 2023 Ákos Hadházy published a post on Facebook that relativises the Holocaust. The independent MP indirectly compared the Hungarian prime minister to Adolf Hitler while comparing the political effects of the Orbán administration to the Holocaust. The short post is a clear domestic political message, drawing a clear parallel between the Nazi regime and the current Hungarian political establishment.

"Memorial to the murdered European Jews in Berlin. This led to an evil politician using his propaganda machine to incite and agitate an entire nation in the name of defending Christianity and fighting against some background power conspiracy and racial mixing. And the fact that the masses who saw what was going on in the country did not stop him in time led to this. When they could have," wrote Ákos Hadházy, who also posted a photo of himself with the German capital's Holocaust memorial in the background.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

Tova Meir, the wildcat of Széna Square, received Hungarian citizenship in Israel

Source: hirado.hu.org

7 June 2023 The "wildcat of Széna tér", the Holocaust survivor and 1956 fighter Tova Meir, has been granted Hungarian citizenship in Israel. The 96-year-old Holocaust survivor, who fought with the Széna Square rebel group in 1956 and then left Hungary, was granted Hungarian citizenship by Miklós Panyi, State Secretary for Parliament and Strategy.

"I am pleased to receive citizenship. I'm Hungarian anyway, so I should have citizenship", Tova Meir told MTI's correspondent after the event, during which the entire kibbutz community greeted the elderly woman and the local choir sang between speeches. Ron Lusztig, director of the Memorial Museum of the Hungarian Speaking Jewry in Safed, praised her work and Miklós Panyi.

It is a fantastic life story, a story of resistance, the will to live, and a new beginning", said Miklós Panyi. "Her life was marked by a series of ordeals and tragedies for the peoples of Central Europe, including the Hungarians and Jews of the Carpathian Basin. We can learn and draw a lot from her fate: despite all the tragedies and hardships during the Second World War, she did not leave her homeland, and in the 1956 Revolution, she became a freedom fighter, risking her life to fight for freedom against Soviet occupation and oppression."

"It is unprecedented that she left Hungary more than 60 years ago and found a new home in Israel, but to this day, she preserves her Hungarian heritage, cherishes the Hungarian language, speaks and sings in it, and keeps her memories alive. Her life is a living link between Israel and Hungary", said Miklós Panyi in praise of the celebrated Hungarian.

Tova Meir was born Gizella Einhorn in Gánya, Transcarpathia, and was marched to the western border from Budapest during the Second World War. She later hid under a pseudonym and worked as an interpreter for Soviet troops. Even after liberation, she kept her wartime pseudonym and never returned to her original identity.

In 1956 she joined the rebels, and in the Széna Square group, János Szabó ("Uncle Szabó") named her "Wildcat" when, with her excellent eyesight, she recognised from a distance that an ambulance was carrying ÁVH soldiers, who, as it turned out, were carrying weapons wrapped in bloody gauze.

After the uprising was suppressed, she fled across the open border to Austria and Belgium, where she lived for three years. Then, with the help of the Red Cross, she found her brother in Israel and travelled to him. In 1959, she returned to her original name and settled in a kibbutz in northern Israel called Ajelet Hasahar.

Kálmán Szalai: Ákos Hadházy's words precisely constitute the concept of Holocaust relativisation

Source: mandiner.hu

17 June 2023 This is the definition of Holocaust relativisation, which is unacceptable, Kálmán Szalai, secretary of the Action and Protection Foundation (APL), told Mandiner in connection with Ákos Hadházy's scandalous Facebook post.

"Memorial to the murdered European Jews in Berlin. This led to an evil politician using his propaganda machine to incite and agitate an entire nation in the name of defending Christianity and fighting against some background power conspiracy and racial mixing.

And the fact that the masses who saw what was going on in the country did not stop him in time led to this. When they could have," wrote the independent MEP, who also posted a photo of himself with the German capital's Holocaust memorial in the background.

Szalai said that with this message, the MP was fulfilling the daily rant, comparing the prime minister, spoken and unspoken, to Adolf Hitler while comparing the political effects of the Orbán administration to the Holocaust. The short post is a clear domestic policy message in which parallels between the Nazi regime and the current Hungarian political establishment are clearly made.

Furthermore, it precisely constitutes the notion of Holocaust relativisation, which the APF strongly condemns in the case of all public figures.

"Unfortunately, statements like this have increased dramatically in recent times so that it cannot be pointed out enough that the greatest tragedy of Jewry, the greatest genocide of civilisation, can never, under any circumstances, be used for selfish political interests."

According to Kálmán Szalai, it is at most a good faith assumption that Hadrász is an educated, historically informed public figure. Therefore the distorted historical analogy he draws, the deliberately twisted narrative that serves a single purpose — to strike a blow at any cost against a political opponent — is even more severe.

"The question is why Jews are brought into this, why is the Hungarian Jewish community being used as a bludgeon, when, contrary to the politician's claim, it is enjoying a renaissance today? It receives unprecedented financial and other resources from the Hungarian state, and Hungary is the safest European state for Jews, next to Italy. Ákos Hadrász is accusing the government of racial incitement and antisemitism, while it is renovating

synagogues of Hungarian-speaking Jewish communities inside and outside Hungary's borders; he is making absurd accusations at a time when Hungary is Israel's closest ally on the international political stage.

According to the APF secretary, the politician's words fit perfectly into a rhetorical line that, fuelled by the fever of political grandstanding, uses the Holocaust as a disingenuous justification for its message. This immensely damaging approach and use of words undermine the memory of the Holocaust, devaluing its tragic uniqueness with utter callousness. The use of the Holocaust as a tool in daily political debates has no relevance whatsoever, and no current political event can justify a public figure turning the Holocaust into a mere trifle. It is possible and necessary to criticise the political authorities of the day, but what does this have to do with the Holocaust and the Jewish communities in Hungary?"

He also pointed out that András Hadrász, if he had been in Berlin and was concerned about the living conditions of Jews, could have found a more adequate government for his criticisms than the Hungarian cabinet.

The number of antisemitic incidents recorded in Germany in recent years is incomparably higher than in Hungary, the APF secretary said, and the Jewish community in Hungary can feel much safer than the approximately 80,000 German Jews, most of whom are Russian-speaking. One consequence of German immigration policy has been a significant increase in atrocities against Jews. As the German Education Minister said at the end of May, "antisemitism is rising in our society and our schools". Felix Klein, the Berlin government's commissioner for combating antisemitism, also confirmed that antisemitism is spreading in schools, not only among students but also among teachers.

The Jewish cemetery in Tiszafüred was cleaned up by the March of Life foundation and its friends

Source: akibic.hu

19 June 2023 "It was a fantastic day!!! In Tiszafüred, we held a volunteer day for our friends at the Jewish cemetery, where many good people from Budapest and Tiszafüred came together to do good! We worked, talked and planned with people from all walks of life. Holocaust survivors, historians, genealogists, archaeologists, rabbis, pastors, city leaders and civilians, together! It was great (...)," reads the Facebook page of the March of Life.

Holocaust victims remembered across the country

Source: beol.hu, sonline.hu, szeged.hu, kaposvarmost.hu

25 June 2023 The 79th anniversary of the deportation of rural Jews was commemorated in Kaposvár, Békéscsaba and Szeged.

At the commemoration in Kaposvár, there were no survivors to be seen; most of the commemorators were of the second generation, who carry the unforgettable experience in their genes and souls, as it is our right to remember and our duty to recall, said Anna Csernai, member of the Jewish Community of Kaposvár.

László Róna, President of the Jewish Community of Kaposvár, spoke about the role of the Jews in the life of the city. He stressed that the Jews had done a lot to develop the place where they lived and had made a lasting contribution in almost every area of life. "The most important thing on this day is for young people to realise where hatred leads; if they hear "stinky Jew" or "stinky gypsy", this is what leads to the gas chamber. They must be told how destructive this is and how it can happen at any time", concluded László Róna.

Károly Szita, Mayor of Kaposvár, commemorated Tamás Suchman, who died a month ago and whose mother, Júlia Bauer, had been in a death camp. "Sometimes we had different views on politics, but we always agreed on one thing: never again should someone's right to life be questioned based on their origin, faith or opinion", said Károly Szita. He added that our fellow citizens of Jewish origin are equal and valuable citizens of the city and our national community, which must continue to be the case in the future. When we meet annually, we pledge to live together peacefully and respect each other's freedom. The Mayor stressed that the right to life of any person should never be questioned based on their origin, faith, ideology or opinion.

Tamara Lukácsné Moskovitz, a member of the Jewish community of Békéscsaba, quoted from a letter written by her uncle to his parents at the end of 1943 and how they looked to the future with hope. On 26 June 1944, the worst tragedy of the Békéscsaba Jews occurred: more than 2,000 terrified Békéscsaba Jews were wagoned in, and a large number of them were transported to Auschwitz, where on 29 June, the vast majority were immediately put in a gas chamber. In other words, almost the entire Jewish population of Békéscsaba was annihilated within a few hours.

He stressed that these people were not just numbers; they all had names, histories, dignity and dreams. This genocide defies common sense; the lesson is to stand up to those who incite hatred. The granite blocks of the memorial wall at the synagogue in Liget have been carved with the names of the 5,000 victims of Békéscsaba County, one by one so that they can be remembered in a dignified way.

Tamás Varga, deputy mayor of Békéscsaba, stressed that local Jews played an outstanding role in the village's transformation into a town.

The President of Mazsihisz, Dr Andor Grósz, said that even at the beginning of the ghettoisation, the people of Békéscsaba believed that what happened to their fellow Jews in the Nazi-occupied territories could not happen to them. He said the Jews were the development promoters, building society by integrating into it. He noted that it was essential to teach young people about the history of the Holocaust. It was important to teach young people about the period's history because extremist ideas had not disappeared, and fighting to prevent them from gaining ground was necessary. He mentioned that antisemitism is still present in a stealthy form; although the Holocaust cannot be denied, some people try to relativise it.

Chief Rabbi Zsolt Markovics conducted the service for the martyrs. As he said, generation after generation is asked the question, to which the answer is unknown: Where was God in Auschwitz? However, he asked: Where was man in Auschwitz? Man showed then what he has always shown in past millennia, that there is us and there is them, and that others must be isolated, destroyed. This failed. Even if man was not there at Auschwitz, God was there with some, creating a community, generation after generation. He stressed the need for a society where peace is not an empty word.

On the occasion of the 79th anniversary of the Shoah, Gábor Iványi Jr, pastor of the Hungarian Evangelical Brotherhood, spoke and remembered those Jews who were exterminated during the Holocaust in Hungary, including in Szeged and its surroundings, by inhuman propaganda and hatred born of socio-political exclusion.

"We pray for the healing of our wounds and that our common commitment to remembrance will encourage a social dialogue and coexistence that resists hatred, division, stigmatisation and intimidation

on the one hand and opens spaces for appreciation, solidarity, encounter, exchange of ideas, and intercultural and interreligious dialogue on the other", the pastor said.

Attila Kendrusz, the religious leader of the Jewish Community of Szeged, said that people have always been a scapegoat in history.

"We Jews engrave the names of our dead in stone, just as the Ten Commandments were engraved in stone by the Eternal One, and we say their names because they are important to us, and we know that the one whose name is engraved and read is eternal. Remembering is an active commandment for the Jewish people; we must remember and remind generations of the atrocities and consequences of the Holocaust because remembering the past's sins helps to avoid repeating those sins in the future. We cannot bring the dead back to life, but we can do something in the present to ensure that their deaths are not in vain."

Károly Tóth, MP, said that when the death trains set off on their fateful journey in Szeged 79 years ago, few people would have spoken out against this outrage. The shameful propaganda, which made only the Hungarian Jews the cause of all the troubles, was successful. And the vast majority of the Hungarian population at the time either believed the false accusations about the Jews or tolerated in silence the anti-Jewish laws and the increasingly open and brutal violence against the Hungarian Jews. Unfortunately, most Hungarians were weighed and found wanting in the summer of 1944. Today, we are witnessing a somewhat similar but fortunately not so threatening phenomenon: a painfully large number of people have become indifferent, almost insensitive, and often hostile towards the poor, the needy, the marginalised", warned Károly Tóth.

Finally, Gábor Iványi, President of the Hungarian Evangelical Brotherhood, spoke about the importance of remembrance.

"Every year, we need to gather to remember, firstly because we miss irreplaceably those who went to their deaths eight decades ago, and secondly because the Hungarian society has not yet reached the point where it can truly say that we have sinned. Auschwitz was not a one-off, accidental derailment in the turmoil of history at the time, but the culmination of 20 centuries of anti-Judaism, hatred and misdeeds."

Jewish leaders reject the reassessment of Miklós Horthy's role

Source: index.hu, szombat.org

30 June 2023 The time has come for a fair assessment of Miklós Horthy, writes Attila Bánó, a writer and journalist, in *Magyar Nemzet*, who says that whenever the name of Miklós Horthy comes to the fore in Hungary, "the hysterical chorus that is making sure the name of the former governor is discredited by mentioning antisemitism and fascism immediately starts to sing". According to him, this practice dates back to the communist-socialist era, when objective opinions and analyses were out of the question. Leaders of the Jewish community in Hungary have also reacted to the article on reassessing the governor's historical role.

"I agree that it is high time for a fair assessment of Miklós Horthy. (...) Objectivity requires facing up to historical facts, even if they are uncomfortable in certain cases", wrote Shlomo Köves in his opinion piece published on *Index*. According to the leading rabbi of the EMIH Association of United Hungarian Jewish Congregatio, Horthy did indeed contribute to stopping

the deportation of the Jews of Budapest. He bears, however, unquestionable moral and political responsibility for his antisemitic public policy of 24 years before the German occupation and for the passive spectatorship of the "workforce" of the administration that was active in the execution of the mass murder after the German occupation, and for sending the entire rural Jewry to the death camps.

Köves considers the claim that the governor was not an unconditional supporter of the deportation of Hungarian Jews to be well-founded (his first letter of reply to Hitler in the spring of 1943 is evidence of this), and even tried, albeit somewhat hesitantly and belatedly, to prevent tremendous destruction. First, at the Council of the Crown of 26 June 1944, which he chaired, and then on 6 July 1944, he stopped the deportation of the Jews of Budapest. "My family owes its survival to this," he writes.

"We will hardly know what dilemmas the 76-year-old Horthy faced and how much his vulnerable situation influenced his decisions. However, it is also certain that it is difficult to imagine a fair assessment of this historical figure, however complex, without forgetting his collaboration with the Nazi occupiers and thus his involvement in the deaths of 430,000 Hungarian citizens", the rabbi noted.

The government has not declared that it wants to restore the Horthy era. There are such aspirations from specific segments of society and politics. Still, in his reading, the issue has not been prominently raised, Dr Andor Grósz said in an interview with *Szombat* magazine. According to the president of *Mazsihisz*, the mass murder of Jews in 1944, during the reign of Miklós Horthy, is inexplicable and unforgivable. That is why they oppose any attempt to reassess the actions of the "supreme warlord".

Mazsihisz has also issued a statement on the matter, in which they write that the author of Magyar Nemzet "apparently expects an objective assessment of Miklós Horthy's historical role. In reality, however, he only wants one thing: for him to be acquitted of his guilty role in the Hungarian Holocaust - thus distorting reality". According to Mazsihisz, there is a place for academic debate on the former governor's judgement, "but stirring up such issues and keeping them on the agenda in the current political climate creates unnecessary emotions and endangers social peace".

Mazsihisz believes that the memory and perception of Miklós Horthy are evident not only among the survivors but also in the broader historical perspective: "he abandoned the Jews who were part of the Hungarian nation and handed them over to the Nazi executioners, even though he knew that they would be killed with savage cruelty".

According to the statement, "this fact is not changed by the fact that there is a debate about the extent to which he was responsible for the escape of a significant part of the Jewish population of Budapest in the summer of 1944". But even if the opinions that support his positive role in this are accurate, this does not absolve him of his involvement in the earlier mass murder", Mazsihisz statement stresses, concluding as follows:

"The denial of reality and the events that took place is not some historical debate, but a lie, the spread of which must be prevented. The denial or relativisation of the Holocaust and the intention to whitewash those who played an active or passive role in the genocide must not be the aim of any honest Hungarian", the document stresses.

OTHER NEWS

Attila Bánó calls for a fair judgement of Miklós Horthy

Source: magyarnemzet.hu

18 June 2023 The time has come for a fair judgement of Miklós Horthy, writes Attila Bánó, a writer and journalist, in Magyar Nemzet. He believes that whenever the name of Miklós Horthy comes to the fore in Hungary, "the hysterical chorus immediately starts to sing to make sure that the name of the former governor is discredited by mentioning antisemitism and fascism." According to him, this practice dates back to the communist-socialist era, when objective opinions and analyses were out of the question.

In Bánó's view, there are countless arguments and compelling historical evidence that Horthy was a decent Christian statesman, ready to make serious sacrifices for his country and his people, who took on the hardships of governing even in the most challenging times.

As for Horthy's relationship with the Jews, he says that the governor was not hostile, as some people maniacally repeat. On the contrary, he maintained cordial relations with many Jewish families. In Klessheim, he made no deals that were to the disadvantage of the Jews, and he took over the governorship - with limited powers - even after the German occupation because he feared that a pro-Nazi governor would replace him after his resignation.

"The earlier Jewish laws had justified resentment among the Jews against Miklós Horthy, but it was precisely based on these laws that the governor rejected Hitler's demand for deportations. Miklós Horthy was not a war criminal, nor was he accused of such crimes even when the victors were looking for the guilty with a magnifying glass. During his emigration to Portugal, he was supported by wealthy Jewish families in the West. The honourable Hungarian governor did not increase his wealth during

his long term of office, nor did he set up foreign bank accounts - unlike many other leading politicians", writes Bánó, who contacted Tamás Stark, historian and senior research fellow at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Institute of History, for a comment on the assumptions surrounding the second meeting between Adolf Hitler and Miklós Horthy in Klessheim.

There is no reason to believe that there were any secret, verbal agreements that have not since come to light", the historian said. In these negotiations, the German-style solution to the "Jewish question" in Hungary was not the primary issue but the unreliability of the Kállay government from the German point of view.

According to the historian, the total deportation of the Jews was not an issue; it was not raised in the negotiations. Asked whether the assumption that Horthy pushed for the deportations was correct, Tamás Stark replied that Horthy had given the Jewish question a passive attitude. Horthy had previously enacted several Jewish laws in Hungary. Still, when the whole reality of the Holocaust unfolded after the German occupation, no more extended laws but decrees were issued. Horthy did not sign the decrees either. Later, however, he gave up his passivity.

Horthy became active again during the so-called gendarme coup. According to the historian, there are many reasons for this. We know that the Auschwitz protocol was sent to him by a roundabout route before the gendarmerie coup. (...) At the meeting of the Council of State on 26 June, Horthy took the initiative to stop the deportations and to dismiss the State Secretaries of the Interior, László Endre and László Bakó. The so-called gendarme coup of 7 July pushed him even further in this direction. With the help of some units of the Estergom armoured division, it removed the gendarmes and prevented the deportation of Jews from the capital.

Asked how the situation would have turned out for the country and the Jews if Horthy had resigned after Klessheim, Tamás Stark replied: Horthy hinted at the idea of resigning, but then he gave it up because Hitler had promised him, by clever tactics, that if the internal political situation in Hungary and the front were stabilised, the German troops would leave the country. Horthy thought that once the Germans had withdrawn, he could regain his freedom of action and lead the country out of the war, which was not a reality. The situation would presumably have been worse for the Jews because, in that case, the deportation, which had been proceeding at record speed, would have been carried out in total, and the Jews of Budapest would have been the victims of it.

"The time has come for Miklós Horthy to be judged fairly and objectively, for his merits to be recognised. We have heard enough about his 'crimes', but we should not tolerate forever the Marxist-inspired slanders that a narrow group of radical noisemakers repeat whenever the historical role of Horthy is discussed", Bánó stresses.

The President of the Hungarian Parliament fined Előd Novák HUF 5 million

Source: 444.hu

19 June 2023 The President of the Hungarian Parliament, László Kövér, has fined Novák Előd, a member of the Mi Hazánk Party (Our Homeland), 5 million forints for using the word "gypsy crime". The question posed in Előd Novák's interpellation on 22 May was: Why doesn't the government take action against the arbitrariness of Facebook? The moderator was Sándor Lezsák.

According to a 444.hu summary, the speaker said that "the new language of the Orwellian world of Facebook, in the name of sick political correctness, does not allow us to mention many of our agenda items, from segregation to the fight against gypsy crime to the ban on LGBTQP marches".

Novák called the approach that the privately owned Facebook bans whoever it wants from its platform a mistake "because a restaurant or disco owner could just as easily post, say, 'Gypsies not allowed!'"

Sándor Lezsák thanked the speaker for his speech, not objecting to a single word about gypsies, and Róbert Répássy, the state secretary, did not challenge him either, although he did not understand why Novák compared gypsies to Mi Hazánk.

"The President also blocked Mi Hazánk's bill to tighten the Penal Code with similar justification, so instead of solving a problem plaguing society, the government is pursuing a politically correct sand policy," Mi Hazánk wrote in a statement.

In 2016, in a procedure initiated by the Action and Protection Foundation, the court finally convicted a news portal for the news summaries published under the category of "Gypsy crime" and ordered the National Media and Infocommunications Authority to make the content inaccessible.

The photo of Szálasi and the cross reminiscent of the symbol of the Arrow Cross on the grave of the national leader's widow can remain in place

Source: 444.hu

19 June 2023 The grave of Ferenc Szálasi's wife, Gizella Lutz, is in the Farkasréti cemetery. In February, it was revealed that the grave monument had been altered thanks to the far-right Magyarrevű Mozgalom's (Hungarian National Movement) leader, Hírklikk reports. The tomb looks like a marble obelisk topped by a symbol similar to that of the Arrow Cross, and on the tombstone, there is a photo of Ferenc Szálasi in civilian clothes next to Gizella Lutz. The photo is accompanied by a phrase: In memory of Ferenc Szálasi.

In response to the situation, the Municipality of Budapest amended the law. As a result, the person in charge of the tomb has changed only one thing: instead of the pre-

vious inscription, there is only a quote by Gizella Lutz: "...of course, I believed that if you love someone, you believe that person!" The sentence is from Tamás Almási's 1991 documentary on the Kistarcsa internments.

The scandal erupted almost half a year ago, but the tomb still looks strange. The irregular Arrow Cross symbol is still a symbol of the Arrow Cross because it is Mrs Szálasi's tomb with Szálasi's photo on it, notes Hírklikk.

"If the tomb owner uses an illegal inscription again, we will call for its removal", Ambrus Kiss, deputy mayor general, told 444. "If nothing happens after that, we have the right to cover up, change and remove the inscription."

He said it would be difficult to prove that the cross was indeed of the Arrow Cross. "It would be an ideological-legal battle if the court were to rule that there is an illegal totalitarian symbol on the grave; we would be happy to initiate its removal", says Ambrus Kiss, referring to the fact that the XII District Police Station opened an investigation against an unknown perpetrator for the use of a totalitarian symbol.

The Budapest Police Headquarters also responded to 444.hu's inquiry, saying the case had been closed.

The deputy mayor said that, as in the case of the cross, the photo was presumed to be a controversy that led nowhere, so they preferred not to contest it. "If you go into a cemetery, there are many graves with photos of people, for example, family members, who are not necessarily buried in that grave. Nine out of ten people would not even recognise Szálasi in the photo."

Kiss says the situation would be different if Gizella Lutz's grave were to become a cultic far-right site, but he hopes that this is not a threat.

Szálasi was Hungary's national leader between 16 October 1944 and 28 March 1945. Under his rule, the Arrow Cross launched death marches and executed many Jews on the banks of the Danube.

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.	5th of June	Momentum politician called a "dirty Jew"	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech
2.	7th of June	Tova Meir, the wild cat of Széna Square, received Hungarian citizenship in Israel	Community News and Responses
3.	14th of June	Ákos Hadházy made a parallel between the Nazi regime and the current Hungarian political system	Further Hate Incidents
4.	17th of June	Kálmán Szalai: Ákos Hadházy's words precisely constitute the concept of Holocaust relativisation	Community News and Responses
5.	18th of June	Attila Bánó calls for a fair judgement of Miklós Horthy	Other News
6.	19th of June	The President of the Hungarian Parliament fined Előd Novák HUF 5 million	Other News
7.	19th of June	The Jewish cemetery in Tiszafüred was cleaned up by the March of Life foundation and its friends	Community News and Responses
8.	23rd of June	The photo of Szálasi and the cross reminiscent of the symbol of the Arrow Cross on the grave of the national leader's widow can remain in place	Other News
9.	25th of June	Holocaust victims remembered across the country	Community News and Responses
10.	30th of June	Jewish leaders reject the reassessment of Miklós Horthy's role	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

Contact details for Action and Protection League
Address: 1040 Brussels, Rue de Froissart 109, Belgium
Phone: + 32 2 245 61 05
web: <http://www.apleu.org>
e-mail: office@apleu.org

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CONTRIBUTORS AND PUBLISHER INFORMATION

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Kálmán Szalai, Executive Director

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Editors: **Krisztián Nádasi**, research scholar, head of the Incident Monitoring Group of the Brussels Institute
Dr. Kristóf Bodó, legal advocate,
Gábor Bodó, research scholar, member of the the Incident Monitoring Group of the Brussels Institute
Julianna Görög, translator

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

ACTION AND PROTECTION LEAGUE

1040 Brussels, Rue de Froissart 109, Belgium
<http://www.apleu.org>

