

ANTI-SEMITIC  
HATE CRIMES AND  
INCIDENTS REPORT

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JANUARY 2017



BRUSSELS INSTITUTE



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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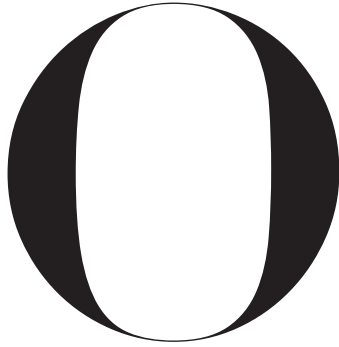
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Action and Protection Foundation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Brussels Institute</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>About the Report</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Anti-Semitic Hate Incidents - January 2017</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Further Anti-Semitic Hate Incidents</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Community News and Responses</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Official and Civil Responses</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Other News</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Action and Protection Foundation Legal Actions</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>The Month's Chronicle</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Contact and Support</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Contributors and Publisher Information</b>	<b>27</b>



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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One of the most important requirements for the struggle against anti-Semitism is an investigation of the actual prevalence of anti-Semitism. One of the aims of Action and Protection Foundation is to eliminate ignorance of this issue. Instrumental in achieving this objective is the continuous professional monitoring of hate crimes that occur public life. The community cannot really be protected unless current information on anti-Semitic acts and other hate crimes are collected and analyzed. Results of the monitoring are published, monthly by the Foundation.

The reports deal with two forms of behavior: anti-Semitic hate crimes, and hate-motivated incidents. The report refers to both types of behavior as “hate incidents”. An anti-Semitic hate crime is distinguished from other hate crime by possessing an anti-Semitic motive. Anti-Semitic hate crime is a violation of criminal law, not all hate-motivated acts are regarded as criminal. Nevertheless, a record of both types of hate incidents is necessary in order to gain a general overview.

For the monitoring to have the widest possible scope, it is required that a variety of sources are used simultaneously. Apart from registering the incidents, it is important to record their particular characteristics. Date recorded includes the incident’s location, perpetrator, victim, consequences. Also the types of the various incidents are differentiated.

Action and Protection Foundation (APF) identified two anti-Semitic hate incidents in the course of its monitoring in January, both in the category of hate speech. Gábor Vona, President

of Jobbik, reiterated his stand, in an interview with Hír TV, that if it would turn out that he was of Jewish origin, he would resign from his position as leader of the party because of conflicting interests.

A discussion was hosted by István Lovas and with Zsolt Bayer, András Bencsik and Gergely Huth in agreement on how Israel was an occupier state in the EchoTV program *Sajtóklub* (Journalist Club), which is once again on air. Lovas used the following example to explain the role of Israel: “imagine Hungary were, let’s say, occupied by Romania...they had been here for decades, and imagine your wife were on her way to give birth, and they kicked her and shot her down at a checkpoint meanwhile in some other country they would say: ‘Oh well, it is the same in Switzerland.’” Needless to say, not all statements critical of Israel count as anti-Semitism. However, the State of Israel was depicted in such an oversimplified, one-sided, misleading and brutal fashion by Lovas that it plainly qualifies as demonization agitation against Israel and Jewry. Action and Protection Foundation holds that this stigmatization counts as a modern-day anti-Semitic trope, and thus as hate speech.

Two incidents were categorized as “Further Anti-Semitic Hate incidents” this month. The regional daily, *Veszprémi Napló* printed a “joke” about Hitler and the concentration camp, with the consequence that a number of people on the editorial board had to resign. In the other case, our hotline was used to report a cashier at the Pensions Payment Directorate who loudly spoke about disliking “people from Jerusalem” and how “they should be gassed”.

Action and Protection Foundation had new developments in one official legal procedure during January 2017. The Dabas County Prosecutor’s Office terminated a case earlier initiated on the basis of a complaint by TEV, for the public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime. They concluded that they could not prove the crime was committed by the suspect. Action and Protection Foundation filed a complaint for a decision not well founded.

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## ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION

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The phenomenon of anti-Semitism is by no means new to Hungary. The hate speech encountered earlier has however become increasingly dominant in public life. The situation is further aggravated by the Jobbik Party, which openly declares anti-Semitic and racist views, having forty-three members of parliament making hate speech far more ever-present in both Parliament and other organized events. These circumstances brought Action and Protection Foundation into being. Among the forms of civil association offered by Hungarian law, Action and Protection Foundation chose the form of foundation; it was registered in November 2012. The Foundation seeks to provide an alternative to the ineffectual legal steps taken against deteriorating standards of public discourse, exclu-

sion, and the ignorance in which anti-Semitism is rooted, as well as atrocities and hate crimes.

### UNITY

Action and Protection Foundation is a registered civil organization. Among those actively participating in the work of the Foundation are status-quo/Chabad EMIH, the reform oriented Sim Shalom Progressive Jewish Congregation, as well as socially recognized emblematic personalities independent of these movements. Trustees of the Foundation represent the most important Jewish religious and cultural movements in Hungary, a symbolic expression of the fact that action on anti-Semitism is a cause shared by all.

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## BRUSSELS INSTITUTE

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The *Brussels Institute*, founded by **Action and Protection Foundation**, carries out monitoring of anti-Semitic hate crime in accordance with methods worked out and proposed by the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (OSCE). In monitoring anti-Semitic phenomena the Institute records and analyzes them on the basis of information delivered by various standardized sources. The monitoring process, which categorizes incidents into seven different groups, relies on the following sources: the sources of the Institute's own Research and Incident Monitoring Group, information available in the press and public media, and relevant data to be found in judicial, criminal and other state administrative records in the framework of an agreement with these branches of government. The institute has set up a now op-

erational **HOTLINE** that can be reached by dialing the number (+36 1) 51 00 000, where incidents of anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish behavior can be reported.

Beyond regular publication of the monthly monitoring reports the *Brussels Institute's* research plan incorporates a comprehensive research project related to Jewry using both quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as a survey on the current situation concerning anti-Semitism that encompasses society as a whole. Furthermore, the program includes development of a differentiated training program that prepares different levels and participants of state administration for action and appropriate procedure on racist and anti-Semitic phenomena, in the form of teaching materials for the educational system and further training.

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## ABOUT THE REPORT

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General opinion on, and treatment of Hungarian anti-Semitism is often unusually extreme. Voices are heard on the one hand, that belittle the importance of such offences and manifestations. On the other hand, on occasion it may be the case that in relation to one-off incidents the image registered is of a public life deluged by such incidents. Knowledge of the actual situation is an indispensable condition for treatment of the real problems, which is why Action and Protection Foundation considers it its duty to provide as comprehensive an overview of the scale of anti-Semitism in Hungary as possible. Monitoring of anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents<sup>1</sup> is one of the tools of achieving this objective. The monitoring results are published by the Foundation on a monthly basis. Apart from the monthly report, an annual summary review including more detailed analyses on the offences committed in the course of the year is also prepared.

The fight against hate crimes bears exceptional importance, because they differ from other forms of criminal conduct. These crimes may be considered messages of a kind, and thus point beyond private actions. This additional import becomes manifest in various social realms: on the level of the individual, the group attacked, and of society as a whole. The victims may suffer a greater psychological and emotional trauma. In the case of these crimes not “only” the property, or physical integrity of victims is endangered, but also their self-respect. These offences question the right of the individual to equality, even of belonging to society itself. It is important that in the course of such crimes the victims are the target of attacks because of some unchangeable characteristic, and for this reason may well feel more defenseless. The victims are often afraid that they may

again become victims of further atrocities. Inappropriate handling of such incidents can easily lead to a secondary victimization of the targeted person. This type of criminal act also has a strong effect on the group to which the victim belongs. The victims of such crimes are often interchangeable, because in countless cases the attack does not target a certain individual, but anyone who, in the given instance, is a member of the group under attack. In the event, members of the group also become involved emotionally, and might live in fear of the future when they themselves may become the target of such prejudice-motivated crimes. This is especially true of groups, which have been exposed to prejudice for a long time. There is no need to justify at length that Jewry belongs among such groups. These crimes violate the norm that holds the members of society equal. Inadequate handling of such incidents can have grave consequences for the whole of society. It may on the one hand, encourage the perpetrators, or even others to commit further crimes in the same mold. On the other, it significantly diminishes the cohesive power of society (Levin and McDevitt 1999, 92–93; OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 19–21; OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 17–18; Perry 2001, 10).

It may be stated in general that fewer hate crimes are reported, and in the event documented, than are committed. Victims often do not report them to the police. A number of reasons may cause this implicitly. Firstly, many do not feel assured that the authorities will treat these incidents adequately, either because they are not sufficiently prepared, or due to prejudice. Certainly there are many victims who are not clear about the applicable legal regulations. Victims may feel shame, or fear that one of their concealed traits will be exposed. Lesser categorizations

<sup>1</sup>See detailed definitions in the Methodology section.

of the crimes are also frequent, where official authorities do not establish the hate-crime motivation. It is civil organizations that can help remedy these problems. Cooperation with state organs such as the police, or the Public Prosecutor's office may be particularly beneficial.<sup>2</sup> Reports prepared by civil organizations can be expedient in alerting the official authorities to hate motivated crimes in the country. Long-term tendencies can be outlined on the basis of the collected data. Civil organizations can help in setting particular cases on track for legal process, may provide legal defense for the victims, and give various other forms of aid. These organizations may also serve as intermediaries between the victims and the police (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 34-36).

<sup>2</sup>A great example of the above can be found in the Community Security Trust (CST) and cooperation between the London and the Manchester police forces. (CST 2013)



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## METHODOLOGY

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The report deals with two types of offence: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by EBESZ as follows<sup>3</sup> (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 15–16):

- hate crime: a crime as defined by the criminal code, which has been motivated by prejudice against a certain group of people<sup>4</sup>
- hate-motivated incident: an offence, also based on prejudice against a certain 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. Hungarian criminal legislation identifies two forms of hate crime: violent offences committed against the member of a group, and incitement to hatred of a community. The recently adopted Criminal Code (Act C of 2012) deals with these in Chapter XXI, Paragraph 216, on crimes against human dignity and certain basic rights, as well as Chapter XXXII, Paragraph 332, on crimes against public peace. The crime of violence against a member of a group may be established if the perpetrator assaults or otherwise coerces the victim, because they belong to a protected group. Additionally, this is also the case if the perpetrator demonstrates provocative behavior against a community that is apt to cause alarm. The crime is only affected if there is a concrete victim. Incitement against a community most often means hate speech, and it can only be defined as such on the condition that it is committed in public. Incitement to hate crimes does not target concrete individuals but a group of people. It is important to add

that other crimes may also be categorized as having been committed on racist motives. In such cases the courts must pass a heavier sentence<sup>5</sup> (TASZ 2012, 3–4). Apart from these, Paragraph 333 of the Criminal Code also describes the crime of denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime. Furthermore, Paragraph 335 bans the distribution and use in wide public, or public display of the symbols of various autocratic regimes (among them the swastika, the SS insignia, arrow-cross).

Detailed descriptions of approaches to, and recent tendencies in the definition of hate incidents can be found in our May Report. The report also cites the findings of literature in this field internationally. The present report presents hate crimes and hate incidents motivated by anti-Semitism, wherever perpetrator, target, means or message of a case suggest it. The target may be a person, a group, an event, a building, a monument or other property. It is important however, that anti-Semitic motivation can only be spoken of if the perpetrator chose the given target expressly because it was assumed to belong to Jewry. In this context it is not finally relevant whether the assumption is correct: the belief of the target's connection to Jewry is sufficient. In the course of monitoring, on one hand, all incidents that fall in the category of hate crime are considered hate incidents. These may be crimes identified as such by the Criminal Code (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), but can also include other acts mentioned in the Criminal Code, if prejudice can be proven as a motivating factor. When identifying hate incidents,

<sup>3</sup>The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see Chakraborti and Garland 2009, 4–7). These definitions can serve as important addenda to an understanding of these crimes, however they are difficult to apply in practice. This is what made the creation of simpler, more practical definitions necessary.

<sup>4</sup>For example, on these grounds the OSCE does not consider hate speech a hate crime, since the given behavior would not count as criminal without the motive of prejudice (OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 24).

For our approach in dealing with this, see below.

<sup>5</sup>The Criminal Code does not include racist motives verbatim, but for example the case of "contemptible motive" is fulfilled, if someone commits a crime out of such a motivation.

various indicators recorded during the monitoring period<sup>6</sup> are used as the basis for examining whether the given action could have been motivated by anti-Semitism.

For the widest possible scope in monitoring anti-Semitic hate incidents the simultaneous use of a variety of sources is required. The victims' filed reports are of especially great importance to this study. If the victim cannot, or does not want to file a report with the Brussels Institute, the involvement of an intermediary may be facilitated to gain information. Such an intermediary may be a family member, acquaintance of the victim, a witness of the incident or another civil organization. The earlier mentioned 24-hours-a-day Hotline operated by the Foundation serves to ease the passage of reports. Additionally there are options for online filing of reports, which allow even greater anonymity for the person placing the report.

It is a declared objective of the Foundation to keep in touch with the authorities, since they are the most likely to be first approached by victims or witnesses.

A variety of media channels also represent important 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, so called, online hatred, which seems currently to have become an ever-increasing threat.

Monitoring of these media channels is covered in part by a paid team of experts within a professional framework, while volunteers are involved additionally in the media watch, sending information gained on to the Brussels Institute for processing. It is an aim to cover an 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 networking pages and extreme, hate inciting websites. The monitoring process is carried through systematically, according to precisely prepared standards.

Among the monitored hate incidents there are some that are considered a part of the statistics, but there are also some that are recorded, though not counted as part of the statistics.<sup>7</sup>

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

- Only hate incidents that occurred in Hungary; no matter whether the victim is a Hungarian citizen or not
- Any action, incident, atrocity that is aimed at Jewish individuals, organizations or property where an anti-Semitic 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, explicit anti-Semitic message was paired with the vandalism [for example, a Jewish synagogue's window is broken with a stone])
- Anti-Semitic comments that have been reported to Action and Protection Foundation appearing on blogs, fora, community pages
- Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material delivered to particular Jewish individuals, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi material deposited at Jewish-owned property, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Criticism related to Israel and Zionism, if they go beyond a political statement and serve to recall traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes
- Events apt to raise fear among Jews.

Hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics:

- Anti-Semitic hate incidents that are related to Hungary and Hungarian Jewry, but for some reason do not belong to the scope of the statistics (e.g., they did not occur in Hungary)

<sup>6</sup>These are described in the Methods section.

<sup>7</sup>The following were used to develop these criteria: ADL 2012, CST 2013

- Expressions of hate that appear regularly on homepages, in comments and online fora, and have not been personally reported to Action and Protection Foundation.

A number of the aspects of the registered incidents are recorded. The indicators that help decide whether a given incident was motivated by prejudice have been mentioned earlier. 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 possibly legal consequences.

Apart from registering incidents, it is also important to capture the qualitative differentials between them. The typification of cases is carried out in two ways. According to one of the systems of categorization the following types are differentiated: incitement against members of a community, violence against members of a community, use of symbols of autocratic regimes, and Holocaust denial.

Based on the Facing Facts! Guidelines, seven types of incidents are differentiated as follows (CEJI 2012, 10–12):

- 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
  - 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 environs in which they occur. The dynamics of these incidents is also of importance: often processes, rather than separately occurring events can be spoken of (Perry 2001, 8). Apart from the static data, short descriptions of each event are also published, which aid understanding of the environment surrounding the incident.<sup>8</sup> In presenting time lines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

<sup>8</sup>These descriptions in particular are held to be a most positive aspect of the Anti-Defamation League reports by Perry (2001, 18).

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## ANTI-SEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS

### JANUARY 2017

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Two anti-Semitic hate incidents were identified in January through the monitoring activity of Action and Protection Foundation, both in the category of hate speech.

#### HATE SPEECH

##### **Gábor Vona will not apologize and would still resign, were it to come to light that he was Jewish**

*Source: hirtv.hu*  
*10 January 2017*

Gábor Vona will not apologize for his earlier statements, as he does not believe they offended anyone for their religious beliefs – the Jobbik president spoke about this live in a talk shown on Hír TV called Magyarország élőben (Hungary live), when interviewed about Slomó Köves’s refusal to accept his Hanukkah greetings. The leader of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation called upon Gábor Vona to first apologize for Jobbik’s earlier manifestations of anti-Semitism. “I sent every Christian and Jewish church and denomination a holiday greeting. I think that this is the sort of gesture that is natural for any political party preparing to take government. It is not however an elegant gesture for someone to reply openly, in the form of an open letter, and moreover with the intent to admonish or lecture the sender”, Gábor Vona claimed.

Of even greater interest was his response to a question regarding whether he upheld statements he had given earlier: “Would you resign if it turned out that you were a Jew?” The president of the party, on a track at present to become a people’s party replied, “I uphold that, for example. I think that’s only natural. I am the president of a Christian-conservative party, and if it turned out I was Jew, it would not be too fortunate to also be leader of Jobbik.” The

reporter tried to press for more information about what would be amiss, if he were Jewish, but the only answer was: “This is how I think of this”.

##### **Sajtóklub (Press Club) on Echo TV**

*Source: youtube.com*  
*16 January 2017*

On 9 January 2017, the political discussion program Sajtóklub (Press Club) reappeared on EchoTV. The regular guests Zsolt Bayer, István Lovas, András Bencsik, and Gergely Huth talk about current, mostly political subjects, in three-quarters of an hour. In the second show, on 16 January 2017, about 28 minutes into the program, István Lovas began to talk about how Jobbik believes that Sweden and Israel are to be judged similarly (the party had a different stance when Márton Gyöngyösi made his infamous speech, as Lovas points out). Lovas expressed his doubts because, in his opinion, “Israel is an occupying nation” and in this area a more radical opinion would be needed. He brings an example: “Imagine Hungary were, let’s say, occupied by Romania...they had been here for decades, and imagine your wife were on her way to give birth, and they kicked her and shot her down at a checkpoint – meanwhile in some other country they would say ‘Oh well, that is the same as in Switzerland’”. The others present endorsed the statement (Bayer: “Inexplicable”).

Needless to say, not all statements critical of Israel are anti-Semitic. In this case however, the State of Israel was depicted in such an oversimplified, one-sided, misleading and brutal fashion by Lovas that it plainly qualifies as demonization – agitation against Israel and Jewry. Action and Protection Foundation holds that this stigmatization counts as a modern-day anti-Semitic trope, and thus as hate speech.

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## FURTHER ANTI-SEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS

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In the course of its monitoring activity during January, Action and Protection Foundation identified two incidents that could not be added to the statistics, because – as explained in the methodology – an anti-Semitic intent was not beyond doubt, the circumstances around the incident are not clear, or the incident simply does not carry enough weight.

### Anti-Semitic comment at the Pensions Payment Directorate

Source: *tev.hu*  
5 January 2017

An anonymous report was filed through the Foundation's Hotline, according to which at around 12:45 a cashier in the 5th floor canteen of the Pensions Payment Directorate spoke loudly about their dislike for "people living in Jerusalem" and that "they ought to be gassed".

With no further information on the incident available to the Foundation, it was not possible to take further steps in the matter.

### Jew-baiting joke in Veszprém journal *Napló*

Sources: *hirtv.hu; veol.hu*  
17 and 24 January 2017

A number of news portals carried the news that the Veszprém Megyei *Napló* (Veszprém County Journal) tried to amuse its readers with a "joke" about Hitler and Jewish prisoners. A photograph of the item was posted publicly on Facebook by the local member of parliament, Zoltán Kész. According to the statement of the acting chief editor of the journal their readers "are accustomed to and await the joke printed on the final page of the newspaper, eliciting only smiles from them", and they were sorry to find that some readers found this "joke" offensive.

KDNP party's István Hollik thinks an investigation by the authorities is required, to establish how such anti-Semitic humor had

landed in the humor section of the paper. The politician declared: "I believe the law also applies to news companies, everyone must adhere to them. The regulating authority, when it is informed, will take action. So far as I have seen this will certainly end in a penalty, that much is clear." The executive rabbi of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation, Slomó Köves expects a remedy from the paper. "Any publication featuring a joke – if one would even wish to call this a joke – with anti-Semitic overtones, moreover poking humor at the death camps, is appalling. I am not an expert in media ethics, but I perhaps do have some sense of general ethics and this is obviously beneath contempt. I am sure that this ought to be corrected by providing readers with some sort of information on this story in general, this sad chapter of our history", Slomó Köves explained.

The incident once again made the news on 24 January. Veszprém Journal fired one of its employees for "the publication of an item wholly incompatible with the spirit, principle, and ethic of the publisher", and the owner, Pannon Lapok withdrew its contract with the acting chief editor. According to their statement, the anti-Semitic "joke" published in the newspaper on 17 January was the individual action of one of its employees. The publishing group Pannon Lapok Társasága apologized to all its readers.



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## COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

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### **Slomó Köves gives interview on Hanukkah greetings received from Gábor Vona**

*Source: hirtv.hu  
2 January 2017*

In an interview he gave Hír TV, Slomó Köves, the Executive Rabbi of Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation, said about Jobbik and the Hanukkah greeting he received from its leader Gábor Vona that even putting as leniently as he could, he would have to see it and react to it as a joke, and simply “smear the puke around a bit thinner”. He brought up a number of statements unquestionably saturated with anti-Semitism – whether voiced by Gergely Kulcsár or Gábor Vona, and said in their regard: “Presently there is only one party in Hungary that has constantly kept this subject on the agenda, and this is Jobbik. And the remedy to having done so all through these years is not to merely act like these acts had been misguided. The solution is to make it clear to fellow party members and the organizations within the party that rather than misguided actions these were fateful mistakes, sins, for which I ask forgiveness from others and state that I will never do such a thing again.” At the end of the interview he explained with regard to a collaboration between the left-wing parties and Jobbik: it is an issue of the most fundamental moral values whether politicians who always spoke about putting Jobbik in a quarantine could now say it is not worth being picky if the aim is to defeat the Orbán government.

As detailed in our Report of December 2016, Jobbik president Gábor Vona had sent Christmas and Hanukkah greetings to the registered churches. Slomó Köves refused to accept this, noting that Vona and Jobbik had never set their anti-Semitic past straight, the greeting is only political profiteering and not in earnest.

### **Slomó Köves gives interview on Hanukkah greetings received Editorial opinion piece on Jobbik’s Hanukkah greetings**

*Sources: Magyar Narancs; valasz.hu  
5 January 2017*

The weekly magazine, Magyar Narancs, also dealt with the reception of the Hanukkah greetings. The article is based on a political analysis of the process of Jobbik and Vona becoming a people’s party, and how a party that holds radical views tries to prune its “wild offshoots” in order to profit politically. Though the editorial acknowledges that Köves’s objections are legitimate, it nevertheless takes the position that the rabbi made a mistake. It claims that “It is perhaps quite immaterial how earnest this turn in the political identity formation of Gábor Vona actually is: so long as it happens in a wide public, that is, the leadership of the, till now, most openly Jew-baiting party in Hungary gives up propagating the worst racist theories [...], and cleans the party of these manifestations, it will already be an improvement for everyone in this country.” The article follows this up by saying: “May it not have been better for the rabbi to show some restraint and patience. [...] Did he really have to kick the Christmas postcard out of Vona’s hand immediately? Surely there could have been words, sentences found that formulated Köves’s – once again: quite justified, well founded – objections in such a way that Vona would not necessarily be humiliated to such a degree in front of his kin, and the possibility of dialogue remains open.”

The article was in the event also noted by valasz.hu, with a title “The day has dawned when Magyar Narancs defends Gábor Vona against Slomó Köves”, and a response by Slomó Köves on the pages of Magyar Narancs discussed separately in this report.

## **Auschwitz as seen by Hungarians**

*Source: 168ora.hu*  
*7 January 2017*

“Life in the labor camps and death camps is largely unknown even today”, states a teacher and historian in his new book, which he believes Hungarian science is among those culpable for, also in this respect responsible for not taking notice of his efforts in this regard. The journal 168 óra interviewed János Pelle, the author of *Auschwitz magyar szemmel* (Auschwitz as seen by Hungarians).

In the interview, Pelle said little can be learned about life inside the camps from either the Páva Street Holocaust Documentation and Remembrance Center, or Hungarian literature on the subject. With regard to films related to the Holocaust, he said: “András Nemes Jeles’s film plays out in the extermination camp. In addition to this, but hermetically sealed off there was the labor camp, where “people were exterminated through labor”, and the transit camp, for the distribution of prisoners. Few people are aware that Auschwitz was the hub of a whole network of concentration camps. Fatelessness is an excellent book, literature of the highest order. But Imre Kertész only remained for three days in Auschwitz.” He pointed out the memoirs of Nicholas Roth, or Roth Miklós in Hungarian, which is actually a sociography of Auschwitz – the internal organization of the camp, how the labor was carried out, the struggles for survival; “Roth noticed more of what went on around, and happened to him. Moreover, he stayed from the beginning of July 1944 until January 1945, the liquidation of the camp. I am certain that the painfully missing chapter in the history of the Hungarian Holocaust could be taught based on this memoir.”

In his opinion, Hungarian society has yet to clarify to what degree responsibility for the murder of Hungarian Jews lies with the Nazis, the Hungarian authorities, and the indifference of contemporary society. “In Hungary it was the establishment of the Center in Páva Street, born a torso and hardly visited, that meant a first attempt to institutionalize Holocaust research. Unfortunately, the building converted from a synagogue is not suitable for use either as a museum, or a conference

venue. These objectives would be served by the House of Fates, which is embroiled in the widely known contentions.”

In conclusion he notes: “My opinion of the science of Holocaust research in Hungary is that it does not really exist even today. Its most renowned scholars copy their works from earlier published books, and what an apathetic public takes away from this is that there are no new sources. Yet – as my book confirms – these do exist, though requiring research, and not just writing and performance on the public stage. I am afraid this is where we now stand.”

## **Chief editor of Szombat on the Hanukkah greetings from Jobbik**

*Source: szombat.org; 444.hu*  
*10 January 2017*

Gábor T. Szántó, chief editor of the Jewish journal Szombat (Shabbat), summarized what Jobbik would need to do in his opinion for Hungarian Jewry to enter into a dialogue with the party. He emphasized: “naturally, the slow change Jobbik has been undergoing did not miss our attention, including the dismissal of some the most extreme figures from the leadership, and the aggressive, anti-Semitic voice having been toned down.” He emphasized that the lowest common denominator that it would require for Jobbik to become a civilized, democratic political force, and for the initiation of a discourse with them has not yet been clarified. For a credible improvement of Jobbik the following expectations would have to be fulfilled in his opinion:

- 1) Clarification of their position with regard to the remembrance of the Holocaust and the state’s acceptance of responsibility and tasks related to it, in accordance with norms accepted in the Euro-Atlantic world;
- 2) Vocal expression of an absolutely clear position taken by the party condemning all openly anti-Semitic, racist groups and fora;
- 3) Formulation of a clear opinion about a right for the State of Israel to exist, and in opposition to the Islamic fundamentalism and terror that threatens Western values.



“If these conditions are met – and the turn is not temporary, but enduring – the conditions for an eventual dialogue could be ensured”, the chief editor added.

### **Slomó Köves: Response to the editorial published in Magyar Narancs**

*Source: [magyarnarancs.hu](http://magyarnarancs.hu)  
12 January 2017*

“The question of sincerity in the case of Gábor Vona is irrelevant. And this is what the editorial article published by Magyar Narancs last week misunderstands”, were the words with which Slomó Köves, the leading rabbi of EMIH, referred to the editorial opinion piece published on 5 January. He explained: “Sincerity is an internal issue, part of the personal sphere. Yet a decent person would not establish a relationship on a personal footing with Gábor Vona, or Jobbik. Sincerity is irrelevant, because it is not the existence or nonexistence of sincerity that is decisive, but an actual turn devoted to real action.” The leading rabbi explained that he was concerned about the statements not having been revoked, because “the hundreds of thousands of hate-mongers earlier roused and gathered into the Jobbik camp are not receiving a guidance of equal weight on a course opposed to the earlier Nazi communication”. He added: “it is simply a fact that they have not withdrawn a single statement and not dismissed a single leading politician, not even the traces of regret can be discovered.”

He also explained that he could understand the frustrations of parties and intellectuals on the left, however “this is not a matter of taste, but rather an issue of basic human, and moral norms.”

### **Video presenting Jobbik anti-Semitism**

*Sources: Action and Protection Foundation;  
[youtube.com](http://youtube.com); [24.hu](http://24.hu)  
12 January 2017*

Among others, the news portal 24.hu wrote about a video prepared under the aegis of Action and Protection Foundation as evidence of Jobbik’s anti-Semitic past, quoting “Jobbik and its ideological allies” read in a homely atmosphere, by a fireplace. Some of those quoted are still members of parliament, or leaders

of the party, says a text at the end of the video – with one politician of the party who has been sentenced for denial of the Holocaust currently a mayor.

The video can be found on YouTube, under the heading “Nem csak hanukai üdvözetekben jeleskedik a Jobbik” (Jobbik excels in far more than Hanukkah greetings).

### **Slomó Köves about racism in Jobbik**

*Sources: M1; [magyarhirlap.hu](http://magyarhirlap.hu)  
13 January 2017*

“In the last fifteen years, Jobbik’s name has become synonymous with racism, and if its president, Gábor Vona would like to achieve different aims, he ought to found a new party”, said Slomó Köves, Executive Rabbi, EMIH. The leading rabbi of the Unified Hungarian Jewish Congregation gave a statement on Channel 1 of Hungarian Television, on Jobbik’s Hanukkah greetings, which he had refused to accept. If someone would love to shoot your family on the banks of the Danube today, you would not wish to receive their greetings or gifts, he continued. The rabbi did not attend the round table discussion on the subject, which was held on Wednesday, 11 January. In this case, he said, such an event has the potential of misleading public opinion by giving the impression that there are Jewish organizations that consider such a “conversion” possible.

### **Opinions on the Jobbik turn**

*Source: [magyaridok.hu](http://magyaridok.hu)  
14 January 2017*

“Some may treat it professionally, but others actually take it as a serious matter.” This conclusion to a Jewish joke kicks off the opinion piece published by Slomó Köves, executive rabbi of EMIH. As he put it, this was the case as “I found myself at the center of a happening that had just begun to emerge”. This was not the first time he had tried to express his view that “it is not possible to make extreme right movements kosher even if there are short term political interests in sight. There are no signs that they are thinking in terms of a real turnaround.” He cannot understand how those who would have earlier condemned Jobbik at the slightest sign of anti-Semitism can now



suggest patience and understanding. He adds that the problem is far more acute, since: “they do not even notice that they are demolishing the already weakened walls of this quarantine irreversibly through their irresponsible statements. They do so not only discrediting their moral foundations that for decades previous had been considered invulnerable, but also making any future protests impossible. [...] For us, anti-Semitism is not the tool of some distant political agenda, but an immediate experience that is imposed on our everyday lives here in Europe. Some may treat it professionally, but others actually take it as a serious matter...”

### Slomó Köves on 888.hu

Source: 888.hu

18 January 2017

The online news portal 888.hu published an extensive discussion with the participants Slomó Köves, Gábor Fűrész, Gábor G. Fodor and Sztavrosz Ketipisz. Touching upon many subjects, even the lead up to the article indicates: “Major discussion with Slomó Köves about the 888, the old and new world orders, the Holocaust and socialism, Trump and the liberals, Gábor Vona and puke, and of course ‘what, in the final count, has Jewish-Christian culture given us’”.

Among other subjects, Gábor Vona’s Hanukkah greetings and Jobbik’s sincere, or politically motivated transformation also came up again. Slomó Köves repeated that a person can change, he believes in this, but a party cannot. “If for some reason it was established, and an ethno-nationalist thought it was, for example, a fundamental part of this formation, but then all of a sudden it says that from now it is no longer like that, then the movement should wind itself up and a new one be started, as the cause upon which it was based and which it supported, that held it together is itself no longer.” He continued: “And if they come to believe that racism is not a foundational pillar, but only a concomitant of Jobbik’s politics [...], it is the least one would expect that they publicly share what the cause of their realization was [...] so others can learn from it.” He also said that personally he is not interested in an apology from them, and rather considers them clowns, reminding readers that Vona still thinks that if he would turn out to be Jewish, he would resign his position. “So, they continue to think in racial terms and speculate on ethnic grounds.” With regard to the political turn he also added, “let us not forget the incredible hate-mongering that has gone on, and continues right now on the level of their local party organizations, members, and party sympathizers. So those who

say that it has changed must attend these local fora and explain why they think about this differently.”

## Köves Slomó: "A probléma nem az iszlámmal van, hanem velünk"

Fűrész Gábor - GFG - Ketipisz Sztavrosz

2017. január 18. 18:58

Rendhagyó beszélgetés Köves Slomóval a 888-ról, a régi és az új világrendről, a holokausztról és a szocializmusról, Trumpról és a liberálisokról, Vona Gáborról és az okádékról, és persze arról, hogy na de "mit is adott nekünk a zsidó-keresztény kultúra."

” Mert ugye valami abszolút erkölcsi értéket azért mégis csak ki kell jelölni”

Köves Slomó: Rendhagyó módon hadd kérdezzek én először, miért éppen 888?

## Remembrance of the 72nd Anniversary of the Liberation of the Budapest Ghetto

Sources: [index.hu](http://index.hu); [magyarhirlap.hu](http://magyarhirlap.hu)  
17–18 January 2017

EMIH and the Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Education Foundation held a remembrance on the 72nd anniversary of the liberation of the Budapest Ghetto.

By the memorial wall raised in Dohány Street in Budapest's 7th District, once a part of the Jewish Ghetto, János Fónagy, Parliamentary State Secretary for National Development, quoted the writer Elie Wiesel by saying: he does not wish anyone's past to be their future.



Slomó Köves, Executive Rabbi of EMIH said, “the duty of remembrance pervades the Jewish religion”. Virtually every Jewish festival has this message, he noted. He alluded to a famous saying that a people for whom the past is not important, will have no future. He suggested that this is at least as true in reverse: a community that does not consider its future, will after a while lose its past.

Director of the Oscar-winning film, *Son of Saul*, László Nemes Jeles, said thanks to those people who still remember and are willing to attend such an event on a cold January day. As he put it, we have a responsibility to keep in mind, continue to feel the suffering of those who were shut inside the ghetto. They either died, or their souls were crippled forever, he said.

A remembrance was also held for the 72nd anniversary of the liberation of the Budapest

Ghetto in the Dohány Street Synagogue, with participants lighting candles in memory of the victims at the end of the event and placing a wreath at the wall of the former ghetto. The remembrance was attended by, among others, Csaba Latorcai, Deputy State Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office for Priority Social Affairs, and István Mikola, the Minister of State for Security Policy and International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as representatives of a number of parties, members of the diplomatic corps, and representatives of fellow churches.

## Rare Auschwitz book available in Hungarian for the first time

Sources: [magyarhirlap.hu](http://magyarhirlap.hu)  
27 January 2017

Writings by an Auschwitz prisoner who had served as a Sonderkommando, Zalmen Gradowski, have appeared on the occasion of Holocaust Memorial Day with the publisher Múlt és Jövő, titles included in the book being *The Scrolls of Auschwitz* and *The Heart of Hell*. The two manuscripts discovered in the ruins of the Auschwitz death camp translated into Hungarian and appended with a study by Zsombor Hunyadi were the documents that served as the basis for last year's Oscar-winning film, *Son of Saul*, by László Nemes Jeles.

The now published Hungarian volume comprises both parts, the original fragment called *Notes*, which was added to the Hungarian publication under the title *The Scrolls of Auschwitz*, and the writing, *The Heart of Hell*. The first tells the story of their arrival in the camp until the selection of the Sonderkommando, which included the author. *The Heart of Hell* has three parts, the first being a speech of accusation, the second gives an account of the liquidation of the so called *Familienlager* and the gassing of all those who had lived there, while the third tells of the “process of selection” within the Sonderkommando, in which two-hundred individuals were murdered and one-hundred and sixty were left alive.

## Heisler opinion piece about Slomó Köves

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

27 January 2017

An article by András Heisler appeared in [magyarnarancs.hu](http://magyarnarancs.hu) on 27 January titled “Az udvari zsidók és a látszat” [The court Jews and appearances], which attempts to layout a curious opinion in a rather peculiar style. The author of the article poses problems that he links to Slomó Köves, the Executive Rabbi of EMIH, and takes the position that these problems mean that Slomó Köves is a “court Jew”. Among these problems he mentions a last minute cancellation by Köves of his attendance at a round table debate on the moderate turn in Jobbik politics, to which he was invited by Heisler – tempering the piece with a sense of offense having been taken. The article follows with an intensive “tour of the media” citing press sources close to the government, where Köves is shown speaking on behalf of the whole of Jewry in a manner convenient for the government. He positioned the fact that Köves attacked Jobbik impulsively after Gábor Vona sent his greetings on the occasion of Hanukkah as a problem, while in Heisler’s opinion, the moderation of the party should be approached openly. With regard to Jobbik, Heisler took the position that “Though wary, Mazsihisz takes a watchful stance, because it does not agree with the statement by Köves that a party cannot change its identity.”

In an article that verges on passing personal remarks, Heisler makes statements such as “confronting anti-Semitism is not a Hasid privilege”, or “[EMIH] may shortsightedly deliver the protection of the interests of the Jewish community into the power of political-tactical interests wholly alien to it.”

## Kálmán Szalai, TEV Executive Director responds to Heisler article

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

The Foundation’s Executive Director, Kálmán Szalai was among those responding to the Heisler opinion piece published on the [magyarnarancs.hu](http://magyarnarancs.hu) website. In the article printed in the journal Magyar Narancs he writes, Heisler made a mistake by channeling this opinion of his into a political statement, be-

cause “the media in service of Jobbik immediately took note of the writings published by Heisler and his circle, and began to advertise that it seems ‘the Jews are of the opinion that Jobbik has now grown to be worthy of attention’. Even in an appearance on Hír TV on 10 January, it legitimizes itself with the “congratulatory, decent tone” struck by Mazsihisz. Kálmán Szalai drove home the point that every individual has the opportunity to convert, and if the conversion is true, with a real turning point, then we can talk of honesty. In the case of Jobbik however, it is not even just the honesty, but the turn itself that is in question, after all it is a party that based its whole politics for nearly a decade and a half on anti-Roma and anti-Semitic propaganda, which a Hanukkah greeting and the message that “we have grown up” will not suffice to balance. At the end Szalai suggests that the Narancs article serves only two purposes: “Jobbik can use it as evidence of its allegedly having put its anti-Semitic period behind it, while it provides ammunition to those numerous Hungarian anti-Semitic circles also clearly manifest in Jobbik’s local organizations who hold that ‘these Jews’ only bicker among themselves continuously, and look at all things, even each other only from a politicized perspective.”

Magyar Narancs  
2017.02.09 - (4. oldal)

Heisler András: Az udvari zsidók és a látszat  
Magyar Narancs, 2017. január 26.

Alapítványunk az azonosítástudatunkban megértett zsidó hordításunk és a zsidó identitás tevékeny védelmével foglalkozik. Közel ötven működésünk alatt jelentős tapasztalatot szereztünk a magyarországi zsidóellenességgel. Még nem szilbottantak is hasznosnak véltük, hogy ismereteinkre támaszkodva hozzájáruljunk Heisler András Mazsihisz-előnk cikkéhez.

Heisler úr a kormány udvari zsidóinak nevezte azt a rabbit és az általa vezetett hitközséget is, aki Vona pártjának hanukai üdvözlőlápjára reagálva fontosnak tartotta kifejezni a fenntartani képtelnyt a párt néppárti fordulatának őszinteségével szemben. A felidőben is kifejezetten politikai – azaz egyedül kormányt és ellenzékét megkülönböztető, e kétösszegnek minden mást alávető – bírálat feljújta, hogy Köves Slomó kormánypartí médiafelületen is hangot adott nézetének, és sejteti, hogy mindezek célja a haszonzerés volna.

Előnk úr a cikkében a zsidóság és az Örökéletű védelmére helyett homályosan meghatározott „liberális” illetve „baloldali” csoportokat vesz számba. Ezeket kénytelenek vagyunk a szerző által előzőleg ellenszenvesnek talált politikai kategóriáknak értelmezni. A témához ugyan szervezen nem kapcsolódóan, de a cikk politikai prioritásait sajátos megvilágításba helyezi, hogy tapasztalataink szerint Magyarországon egy zsidó közösség-képzés vezetőjének bőségesen akad teendője akkor is, ha azok érdekében védelemre és védelemre is vállalkozik, akik a Tóra szerinti életben, a szombat megtartásában, a köser

háztartás vitelében és ósék, családjuk hagyományának követésében látják a zsidó identitás megőrzését.

Heisler úr és környezetének írásaira rögtön felfigyelt a Jobbik-közel sabbó, és hirdetni kezdte, hogy lám, „a zsidók szerint” a párt immár érdemes a figyelemre. Az antiszemita gyökerű európai szélsőjobboldali pártok propagandáját is figyelemmel tartó szervezetként ezzel kapcsolatban jegyezném meg, hogy nemzeti-közvetlen manapság a pártok kommunikációjának látványos főszezema, Izrael-bírálat fordulata. Ugyan körülményben és fejlődéstörténetében teljesen más jelenségül van szó, mégsem jár elvont, aki e megírt valóban politikai szándékot vél felfedezni. Azonban az antiszemita megnyilvánulások, tetkek és üzenetek megbánása és a csak ez úton elérhető katarzisélmény, ahogy a Jobbik esetében is, mindannyiszor elmarad. Nehé ez Heisler úr is észleli, a politikai kategóriák bővítésében megírt bírálat mellett mindez írása hátterébe szorult. A magyarországi realitás pedig az, hogy a kamaszkorból kinőtt pártelnök szerint (Hír TV, 2017. január 10.): a Mazsihisz „nagyon korrekten és üdvözlő hangnemben beszélte arról a gesztusról”. Ez a pártelnök ugyanakkor a minőségben azt is kijelentette, „továbbra is fenntartja, hogy lemondana, ha kiderülne róla hogy zsidó” (11), bár soha „semmi olyat nem mondott, ami bárkit vallásában sértett volna” (11), mégis a saját tisztaságát a Mazsihisz „judeizmus korrektségével” igazolja.

Fontos ismeretlen lezögezni, minden embernek van lehetősége a megtérésre. „Nincs semmi, ami a megtérés útjába állhat...” – talán a Jeruzsálemi Talmud (Pá 11). Amennyiben van megtérés, van fordulat, akkor lehet arról beszélni, hogy az mennyire őszinte vagy éppen mennyire ósós szándékotól vezérel.

Számunkra nyilvánvalónak látszik, hogy az ellenzék párt oldalán a külvilágnak szülői minőségű bizonygatás kizárja a valódi, belső, őt-és-magát őszinte fordulat megtörténését. Mert a Jobbiknál nem az őszinteség a kérdés, hanem maga a fordulat. Egy olyan párt esetében, amelynek egész léte az etnicista gondolatokra épült, és amelyik majd miséfelézőtlen kezessé a cigányellenes és antiszemita rigmusok szöszölgője volt, ott a fordulat egyszerűen nem lehet annyi, hogy „kifőztünk a kamaszkorból”, és küldünk egy hanukai képeslapot. Kell hogy legyen valami, ami a katarzist elhozta, ha pedig nincs ilyen katarzis, a fordulathoz nincs birték, pontosabban csak annyi, hogy „jobb szavazatot szeretnénk”, akkor vélhetően annak beteljesülése után nemcsak Vécsezen és Veszprémben, hanem Pesten is visszatér az a bizonyos kamaszkor.

Bár a Jobbik őszinteségébe vetett remény Heisler előnk úr írása végre elfogynak, s osztani látszik a mások mellett alapítványunk által is fenntartott képtelenséget, mégis így tűnik, jobb belátást feltölthetjük valamiféle, csak a zsidó közösségen belül értelmezhető ellenért. Azonban látnunk kell, hogy így írása mindösszesen két célra marad alkalmas: a Jobbik bizonygatású vele antiszemita korszakának állítólagos lezárását, s tisztáját adhat azon magyarországi számos Jobbik-alapszervezetnél ketszékűl megnyilvánuló antiszemita köröknek, melyek szerint „ezek a zsidók” folyton csak veszekednek és mindent – egyenlőt is – kizárólag politikai szemüvegen át látnak. Meggőzölendő a sokatmondó kedves jiddis mondás: *Mesige mesige aber a bische! sziche! darf men forht haben. Hülsesig, hülsesig, de zefet egy kis jiddis ez soha nem írt.*

Szalai Kálmán,  
a Tett és Védelem Alapítvány titkára

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## OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

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### Remembrances on Holocaust Memorial Day

Sources: *MTI; magyarhirlap.hu*  
2017. január 26-27.

“The world’s responsible states must face up to the ‘world-shaking’ tragedy of the Holocaust”, Szabolcs Takács, the Minister of State for EU Affairs of the Prime Minister’s Office said at the remembrance in Budapest held by the March of the Living on the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. He said: “in the course of the Holocaust the Hungarian nation died 600 thousand times and in addition to the unforgivable crime of murder, every Hungarian who took part in the murders or collaborated with the murderers also committed high treason.” As former President of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) he said: the Holocaust was the fundamental precedent for the formation of the UN and IHRA, and only a stable, institutionalized interstate cooperation can prevent the repetition of a conflict such as the Second World War or the Holocaust. “Racist abuse and discriminatory language could no longer be regarded in the same way following the Holocaust, because before stripping the victims of their lives, the Holocaust began by stripping them of their dignity”, Szabolcs Takács said.

“On the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Prime Minister’s Office remembers the close to six million victims, most of them persecuted and murdered because they were Jewish” the portfolio wrote in its statement. According to the Ministry, the lesson of the Holocaust is that in addition to respect and the bowing of heads it urges Europe and all people of the world to take swift, effective, and compromise-free common action against all the anti-Semitic and racist phenomena that can be experienced these days.

“The Holocaust is an enduring lesson that it is our responsibility to fight preju-

dice each and every day, so that the souls and thoughts of the generations growing up and following us cannot be dominated by misbeliefs and phobias” László Palkovics, Minister of State for Higher Education at the Ministry of Human Resources declared on Friday in the Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest. He added, „the Holocaust means not only the concentration camps, but also the fear, the ignorance that was the hotbed of hatred and anti-Semitism.”

József Amrani, Ambassador of Israel to Budapest said at the remembrance event: the Holocaust was not only the tragedy of Jewry, but “an age in which civilization failed, in which cultural values dwindled to nothing”, and the six million dead are not simply a number, but the victims of the fist experiment in history aimed at eradicating a whole people from the face of the earth. “We cannot allow this to be repeated”, the Ambassador said,

András Heisler, President of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities (Mazsihisz) emphasized that in merely a few years there will no longer be any witnesses of the Holocaust among us, and it will depend wholly upon us whether the younger generations will have any ties to this slice of history.

In opening the memorial exhibition in the gallery of the synagogue section of the Holocaust Memorial Center in Páva Street János Fónagy, Parliamentary State Secretary for National Development stressed that we must raise our voices “against what is in fact an ageless past”, so that it can never be repeated.

In 2005 the UN brought a decision to make 27 January annually the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. On this day the world remembers the liberation of the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Even before the UN decision, Hungary has commemorated the Hungarian victims of the Holocaust every year since 2000.

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## OTHER NEWS

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### **Hanukkah greetings question discussed again at Jobbik press conference in Budapest**

*Source: MTI  
6 January 2017*

The subject of the press conference held for the opposition party on 6 January by Member of Parliament, Lajos Kepli was a critique of the renovation program for the Carmelite convent. The politician was also asked about new criticism of the Hanukkah greetings sent by party president Gábor Vona, following rabbi Slomó Köves's, this time from leaders of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities (Mazsihisz). He responded by saying that they intended this as a gesture, and the reactions qualify those reacting in such a way. He does not believe they ought to apologize, the Jobbik leadership has never made comments that could offend Jews, Lajos Kepli said.

### **Péter Kende called László Majtényi a Jew in ATV television**

*Source: atv.hu  
9 and 13 January 2017*

Péter Kende described László Majtényi, the candidate of the political left for President of Hungary, in ATV Television's program Csatt (Click) as "a person apparently of Jewish origin". The host, Egon Rónai was first taken aback, but then told Kende that he had practically Jew-baited Majtényi by saying this, while Kende defended himself by saying he was himself of Jewish origin. The other participants of the program called on Kende to withdraw his statements, but he stressed that he was not willing to do so. His words caused consternation and the public writer tried to correct his position in the show Egyenes Beszéd (Straight talk), where the show host was highly critical of his action.

"I was hoping that at some point the word Jew could be spoken in this country the same way you say cheese-cake, but this is not the

case", Péter Kende tried to explain himself in Egyenes beszéd. While the public writer holds that this issue is still central in Hungarian society, he did acknowledge that he had made a mistake, when in the given, concrete instance he had "utilized" László Majtényi to address the subject, a mistake for which he apologized to him personally.

According to the other invited guest, Péter György, it cannot be said about anyone that they appear Jewish, as this is simply nonsense. The aesthete declared: it is incomprehensible how someone could muster the courage to make such a statement, but even if it were true that someone's origins were written across their face, or they are, let us say, biologically Jewish, it would still not imply anything, and least of all, what sort of political views they may hold. He opined, "only fervent anti-Semites imagine that outside of a certain context someone, so to speak, looks like a Jew".

The aesthete told the writer to his face that he considers what he had done a childish act, and that all adults had to be aware of their responsibility in this regard, "only Jobbik stoops so low ethically as to publish about anyone that they are Jewish".

Péter Kende pointed out in his own defense that no one seems to have noted, unfortunately that his statement and question referred to Hungarian society rather than László Majtényi, and he had approached Majtényi's nomination as a social experiment in terms of the nominee being a Jew.

### **Toroczkai on Jobbik's Hanukkah greetings**

*Source: youtube.com  
14 January 2017*

László Toroczkai and Viktor Szigetvári fought it out in the boxing ring of n1 television's program K.O. A video recording of the program shows that Toroczkai brought up Gábor Vona's Hanukkah greetings in the 21st minute. Toroczkai remarked that this was a

party political matter, since Slomó Köves was “made by Fidesz”. In his opinion Köves was boosting anti-Semitism by acting this way, and then he called the leading EMIH rabbi “an occupational Jew” (in Hungarian paraphrasing occupational criminal). He went on to put forward his opinion that this “was most harmful to the well-intentioned Jews”. In response, Szigetvári explained that the “classical pattern is when a radical person commits the sin of victim blaming”. He also added that he does not think Slomó Köves wished to whip up anti-Semitic feelings, all he had done was state his opinion.

### Debating about the Talmud with the Hungarian Guard

*Source: 24.hu*  
28 January 2017

Approximately 50–60 disillusioned Guardists had gathered prior to Gábor Vona’s year-opening speech, to strip the Jobbik president of his Guard’s vest. In their opinion, the Jobbik president had become unworthy of wearing it after his leftist turnaround and Hanukkah greetings. They named the day, a Saturday, the Day of the Guard’s Honor, on which: “We will free the honor of the Hungarian Guard Movement from the dirt it has been dragged in by its founder! Our paths will forever part with the traitor Gábor Vona!” The Guardists gathered in in 11th District, the “dress code” was a black jacket, black pants, the Guard’s cap. Two journalists of the online news portal Hír24 tried to talk to the Guardists about the Talmud and Gábor Vona, without much success. One of those interviewed said that he had read some of the Talmud, but after 2–3 refuted claims he said “I now have to set my thoughts in order, I was not prepared to speak about the Talmud.”

### Growing number of local organizations belonging to Jobbik protest against the party leadership

*Sources: origo.hu, pestisracok.hu, magyarhirlap.hu*  
29 January 2017

According to information received by PestiS-rácok.hu, more than fifty local organizations of Jobbik protested against Gábor Vona, the party president’s policies to build a “people’s party”, and their “leftward leanings”. The party organizations mainly based in Eastern Hungary and Pest County handed over a petition to the party president. The exact wording of the petition is not known, and a number of the signatory local organizations have not confirmed their participation, however it is likely that the Hanukkah greetings had elicited these protests, since the stance taken by the organizations in Vecsés and Vámosmikola gave the lead.

Our December 2016 Report described how the Vecsés organization published a sacrilegious protest in a Facebook post on its timeline, which has come under an ethics procedure. The results of the ethics procedure will only be made public in February. We have also reported the protest by Imre Orbán, Jobbik’s municipal representative in Veszprém, on the same subject.

In summary, it seems that within Jobbik there is a strong opposition to gestures of civility towards Jewry.



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## ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION LEGAL ACTIONS

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### **Termination of investigation and complaint filed**

*Source: Action and Protection Foundation  
24 and 31 January 2017*

The Dabas County Prosecutor's Office decided to terminate an investigation in a procedure initiated for the public denial of the crimes of the National Socialist regime in the case of S. István, since in the opinion of the Prosecutor it could not be established beyond doubt, on the basis of their investigation that the crime had been committed by the accused.

On 15 February 2013 a user, S. István, uploaded a song called "Milyen 6 millió?" (What six million?) by the band Turul Nemzetség (Turul Clan) to the video sharing site YouTube. On the basis of information from the net the singer in the extreme right-wing band Turul Nemzetség is S. István. The title of the song refers to the estimated number of victims of the Holocaust, while the song also features the word "holokamu" (Holohoax), along with the following lyrics: "the wellness center was waiting to have you...", and "What six million, what six million, what six million? If it were only true, that would be just great." The quoted text simultaneously draws into question, trivializes and denies the crimes of the National Socialist regime.

The position taken by the Prosecutor however, is that the action of the accused having written the song under investigation and performed it for the members of the band during a rehearsal, is not sufficient in itself to establish the perpetration of the crime. The crime

was committed through the publication of the song on the internet which represents the wide public. No decisive evidence, refuting beyond doubt the accused, S. István's denial of his having uploaded the video could be secured. On the basis of the evidence available along with the basic premise of Criminal Procedure, which is that a fact not proved beyond doubt cannot be held against the accused, the procedure was terminated in lieu of evidence. Action and Protection Foundation filed a complaint against the obviously unfounded decision. The complaint presented the argument that the recording of the song by technological means could obviously have only had one objective, which is to make it public. It can be clearly deduced from the creation of the musical work and its recording as described that without his knowledge, it could not have been removed from the accused's possession. It goes counter to the rules of logic that an unidentified third person made the recording available to the wide public without the knowledge and assent of the accused. If it had so happened, the file would not have been shared through the YouTube channel created by the accused and bearing his name. It is clear therefore that the accused shared the music file. To the complaint we also attached a print screen of S. István's public profile on the online community website Google+ taken on 30 January 2017 as new evidence. This shows that the accused had shared the song that is the subject of the crime, titled "Milyen 6 millió?" with the wide public through this profile as well, and had not removed it till the day of the filing of the complaint.

## THE MONTH'S CHRONICLE

All the incidents to be found in the report – part of the report deals with the given case are presented chronologically in the table – in greater detail. below. The Category column shows which

No.	Date	Incident	Category
1.	2 <sup>nd</sup> of January	Slomó Köves gives interview on Hanukkah greetings received from Gábor Vona	Community news and responses
2.	5 <sup>th</sup> of January	Anti-Semitic comment at the Pensions Payment Directorate	Further Anti-Semitic Hate Incidents
3.	5 <sup>th</sup> of January	Editorial opinion piece on Jobbik's Hanukkah greetings	Community news and responses
4.	6 <sup>th</sup> of January	Hanukkah greetings question discussed again at Jobbik press conference in Budapest	Other news
5.	7 <sup>th</sup> of January	Auschwitz as seen by Hungarians	Community news and responses
6.	9 <sup>th</sup> and 13 <sup>th</sup> of January	Péter Kende called László Majtényi a Jew in ATV television	Other news
7.	10 <sup>th</sup> of January	Gábor Vona will not apologize—and would still resign, were it to come to light that he was Jewish	Anti-Semitic hate incidents – Hate speech
8.	10 <sup>th</sup> of January	Chief editor of Szombat on the Hanukkah greetings from Jobbik	Community news and responses
9.	12 <sup>th</sup> of January	Slomó Köves: Response to the editorial published in Magyar Narancs	Community news and responses
10.	12 <sup>th</sup> of January	Video presenting Jobbik anti-Semitism	Community news and responses
11.	13 <sup>th</sup> of January	Slomó Köves about racism in Jobbik	Community news and responses
12.	14 <sup>th</sup> of January	Opinions on the Jobbik turn	Community news and responses
13.	14 <sup>th</sup> of January	Toroczkai on Jobbik's Hanukkah greetings	Other news
14.	16 <sup>th</sup> of January	Sajtóklub (Press Club) on Echo TV	Anti-Semitic hate incidents – Hate speech
15.	17 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup> of January	Jew-baiting joke in Veszprém journal Napló	Further Anti-Semitic Hate Incidents
16.	17-18 <sup>th</sup> of January	Remembrance of the 72nd Anniversary of the Liberation of the Budapest Ghetto	Community news and responses
17.	18 <sup>th</sup> of January	Slomó Köves on 888.hu	Community news and responses
18.	24 <sup>th</sup> and 31 <sup>st</sup> of January	Termination of investigation and complaint filed	Action and Protection Foundation Legal Actions
19.	26-27 <sup>th</sup> of January	Remembrances on Holocaust Memorial Day	Official and Civil responses
20.	27 <sup>th</sup> of January	Rare Auschwitz book available in Hungarian for the first time	Community news and responses
21.	27 <sup>th</sup> of January	Heisler opinion piece about Slomó Köves	Community news and responses
22.		Kálmán Szalai, TEV Executive Director responds to Heisler article	Community news and responses
23.	28 <sup>th</sup> of January	Debating about the Talmud with the Hungarian Guard	Other news
24.	29 <sup>th</sup> of January	Growing number of local organizations belonging to Jobbik protest against the party leadership	Other news



## CONTACT AND SUPPORT

Action and Protection Foundation is the civil initiative of a number of Jewish organizations that is ready to take resolute steps to curb increasing widespread anti-Semitic manifestations.

In case anyone faces insults or anti-Semitic 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 Foundation: [www.tev.hu/forrodrot](http://www.tev.hu/forrodrot)  
The Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany](https://www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany)

Action and Protection Foundation'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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