

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES
AND INCIDENTS REPORT
IN HUNGARY

APRIL 2020



ACTION AND PROTECTION
LEAGUE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



A significant part of combating antisemitism is monitoring of the prevalence of antisemitic incidents. One of the aims of the Action and Protection League (APL) is to heighten the awareness of antisemitism in the society. The primary tool in achieving this is continuous professional monitoring of hate crimes in public life. Neither Jewish communities nor individual Jews can be protected unless there is data on antisemitic incidents and other hate crimes and that these are collected and analysed. The data collected by the Action and Protection League, cooperated with Action and Protection Foundation (APF), are published in monthly reports, and a summary of the findings is published for the individual countries/regions in a yearly report. The monitoring report is carried out by the APF.

The reports deal with two forms of behaviour: antisemitic hate crimes and hate-motivated incidents. Both types of

behaviour are referred to as "*hate incidents*" in the reports. The main difference between an antisemitic hate crime and other hate crimes is that the former possesses an antisemitic motive. Due to differences in legislation and application of legislation in various countries, there are different interpretations of which antisemitic incidents that are violations of criminal law. In addition are some hate-motivated acts, albeit troubling for Jews, not considered criminal if they, e.g., are considered belonging to the realm of freedom of speech. The APL considers it essential to record both types of hate incidents in order to gain a general overview and to make it possible to analyse changes over time.

In order to have the most extensive scope possible, the APL uses a variety of sources simultaneously. The incidents are not only recorded, but the characteristics of the individual incident is also analysed. The data recorded includes the incident's location, the perpetrator (if known), victim, and consequences (if any). In addition, are the various types of incidents differentiated in the reports.

Action and Protection Foundation (APF) did not identify any incidents of antisemitic hate incidents in April 2020. Therefore, the section titled Antisemitic Hate Incidents presents no cases this month.

During the course of our monitoring activities, we identified no incidents which are classified as hate crimes but we would not include them in our most recent statistics due to their insignificant nature, the lack of clear antisemitic motive or because

the time of the incident is unknown. As a result, the section titled Further Hate Incidents presents no cases this month.

APF did not initiate any legal proceedings this month and we were not notified concerning ongoing cases either.

ACTION AND PROTECTION LEAGUE

In the last decade there has been a rise in antisemitism in Europe. Surveys by e.g. the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)¹ and the ADL Global 100² show a broad spectrum of antisemitism and how it fluctuates over time.

The character of antisemitic incidents is quite different in the monitored countries concerning content, expressions, and perpetrators. Current antisemitism is mainly connected to Islamism, Far-right groups, and Far-left groups. Islamist expressions are most frequent in countries with large Muslim populations in Western Europe and uncommon in Eastern and Central Europe. Far-left expressions of antisemitism can often be found disguised as Anti-Zionism in Western Europe and is often connected to the conflict in the Middle

East. In East and Central Europe, right-wing expressions of prejudice against Jews frequently have old roots, not only among groups related to Fascism and Nazism, but at times also in populist-nationalist settings. In several countries Jews have found themselves under more threat during the last decade. This does not only include physical attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions but is also visible in the growth of conspiracy theories, online hatred, and political campaigns favouring banning of, e.g., brit milah and kashrut.

Countering antisemitism becomes an increasingly urgent issue for Europe. Action and Protection League of Europe (APL) has been established to explore the causes of modern-day antisemitism and to implement effective defense.

¹ EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: ANTISEMITISM - OVERVIEW OF DATA AVAILABLE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION 2008-2018
² <https://global100.adl.org>

ABOUT THE REPORT

The general opinion on, and treatment of, antisemitism often takes extreme forms. On the one hand, some voices try to belittle the importance of such offenses and manifestations. On the other hand, on occasion, one-off incidents are exaggerated in the public arena to such an extent that they give the impression that they are frequent or a regular part of daily life. Knowledge of the actual situation(s) is an indispensable condition for the treatment of real problems. Monitoring of antisemitic hate crimes and incidents³ is one of the tools used in achieving this objective.

From 2019 the Action and Protection League has decided to monitor seven European countries. In the first stage, data is collected from seven countries: Austria, Czechia, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Sweden, and more countries will be added later. All countries have their own particularities and vast differences when it comes to the monitoring of antisemitism – in some cases, there are several organisations with similar goals as the APL and in other countries, few or no similar activities. In no case will APL try to replace existing organisations, but rather seek cooperation and exchange of data.

Apart from the monthly reports, an annual summary review, including more detailed analyses on the incidents, is published. All reports are published in English, and almost all are published in the local language.

The fight against hate crimes is of utmost importance since it differs from many other forms of criminal conduct. On one level can these crimes and incidents can be considered as messages. They are not only about the victim in question but points to a larger group. Antisemitism and other hate crimes are thus not only attacks against individuals, but the social fabric of the society as a whole. This does not, of course, diminish the distress and psychological trauma which individual victims might

suffer. These crimes are often not “only” against property or lead to physical threat of individuals, but it also concerns self-dignity. The offenses indicate that the victim is not an equal member or a member at all of the society. Since hate crimes, in general, target victims due to some unchangeable characteristics (real or imagined), the victim becomes almost defenseless. Victims often fear that they may again be targets of similar incidents or worse atrocities if they identify perpetrators to relevant authorities. Inappropriate handling of such incidents may easily lead to secondary victimization where the victim can be led to believe that it was their fault, e.g., by not being careful enough, etc. This type of criminal act also, as mentioned, has an effect on the group as a whole. The victims of these crimes are often interchangeable, since they are not targeted at individuals and any other member could just as well have been targeted. This means that all members of the targeted group become potential victims and might live in fear of a future when they themselves may be the target of a prejudice-motivated crime. This situation is particularly poignant for groups that have been exposed to prejudice for a long time. There is no need to justify at length why Jews belong among such groups. These crimes undermine the fundamental value that all members of a society are of equal value. Inadequate handling of such incidents can have grave consequences for the society as a whole. Not only may it encourage the perpetrators to commit further crimes, but it significantly diminishes the cohesive power of society as a whole⁴.

It is not an exaggeration to state that fewer hate crimes are reported and documented than are committed. The discrepancy between committed crimes and reported crimes vary significantly between different countries is not necessarily connected to the number of Jews. A contributing factor

³ See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

⁴ Levin & McDevitt 1999, 92-93; OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 19-21; OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 17-18; Perry 2001, 10).

to the under-reporting is that victims rarely report them to the police or relevant authority. There are several causes for this: many victims are not convinced that the authorities will handle the matter adequately, either because they lack the competence or that they are prejudiced. In addition, many victims are unaware of applicable laws or where to turn for help. Furthermore, some victims are worried that their concealed traits will be exposed and that they might suffer more by reporting incidents. Victims might also fear that authorities will not be able to prove a hate-crime motivation

and that reporting is thus useless.

It is civic organizations that can help remedy these problems. These organizations can cooperate with police and relevant authorities, but also an intermediary between victim and authority. Reports by civic organizations can be expedient in alerting official authorities on hate-motivated crimes, and long-term tendencies can be outlined through the use of collected data. Civil organizations can prepare cases for legal process, may provide legal defense for victims, and give other forms of aid and support.

METHODOLOGY

The report deals with two types of offense: hate crimes and hate motivated incidents. These are defined by OSCE as follows⁵ (OSCE/ODIHR 2009b, 15–16):

- hate crime: a crime as defined by the criminal code, which has been motivated by prejudice against a certain group of people⁶
- hate-motivated incident: an offense, also based on prejudice against a specific group of people, but not reaching the level of criminal conduct.

The heightened importance of individual hate crimes is indicated by the fact that the criminal code of numerous countries deals with these cases separately. Although there is a widely accepted definition of antisemitism (see IHRA 2017), there is currently no consistent definition of hate crimes in the countries monitored by the APL.

In addition are the legal consequences different in the monitored countries. This means that an incident which a crime in one country could be legal in another. The obvious example concerns the so-called Holocaust denial, which, e.g., is outlawed in Hungary, but legal in several countries monitored by APL. Since the Action and Protection League has a broad scope when it comes to data collection, everything is covered in the reports, but in some instances, similar acts are filed as a crime in one country and "only" an incident in another. In every case, we follow the definitions in the criminal code of the individual countries. We estimate that this problem will diminish over time due to the adaptation of the same definitions and legislation in the European Union.

Our reports contain detailed descriptions of the definition of hate incidents and our approach to solving the problems. The reports are based on sources taken from international, independent monitoring services, local informants as well as data collected by other organizations working with same or similar issues.

The monthly report presents hate crimes and hate incidents motivated by antisemitism in the broadest possible sense: perpetrator, target, means, or message. The target may be a person, a group, an event, a building, a monument, or other property. It is essential, however, that an antisemitic motivation can be established. This means that the perpetrator chose the given target on the basis that he/she was Jewish or perceived as being Jewish. It is thus not relevant whether the assumption is correct or not: the belief of the target's connection to Jewry is sufficient.

In the course of monitoring, all incidents that fall in the category of hate crime are also considered hate incidents. These may be crimes identified as such by the Criminal Code in the individual country (e.g. violent assault of a member of a community, incitement to hatred of a community, denial of the crimes of the national socialist regime, use of symbols of autocratic regimes etc.), but can also include other acts mentioned in the Criminal Code, if prejudice can be proven as a motivating factor.

When identifying hate incidents, various indicators are recorded during the monitoring period⁷ and are used as the basis for examining whether the given action could have been motivated by antisemitism.

For the broadest possible scope in monitoring antisemitic hate incidents, the simultaneous use of a variety of sources is required. In addition to media monitoring, reports from local informants the Action and Protection League also rely on reports filed by victims. In Hungary, the Action and Protection League has a 24-hours-a-day Hotline that serves to ease the passage of reports. The goal is to supply a similar service for the other countries so reports can be filed in the local languages. It is also possible to file reports anonymously online. Such reports will be of especially great importance to this study. If a victim cannot or does not want to file a report, the APL can use an intermediary to help the victim in the process. Such an intermediary may be a family member, an acquaintance of

⁵ The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see 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.

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.

¹⁰ CEJL 2012, 10–12

¹¹ These descriptions, in particular, are held to be the most positive aspect of the Anti-Defamation League reports by Perry (2001, 18).

ANTISEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS – APRIL 2020

Action and Protection Foundation identified no antisemitic hate crimes over the course of its monitoring activities in the month of April 2020.

FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

During the course of our monitoring activities in April 2020, we identified no incidents which are classified as hate incidents but we would not include them in our most recent statistics due to their insignificant nature, the lack of clear antisemitic motive or because the time of the incident is unknown.

OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

NMHH does not initiate proceedings for Hír TV's report on Neo-Nazi commemoration

Source: media1.hu, merce.hu

8 April 2020 As presented in our February report, Hír TV's news program gave an outrageous account of the Neo-Nazi Day of Honor commemoration held on 8 February. On 11 February, APF addressed an open letter to the editorial of Hír TV and complained about the chaotic report entitled Anti-fascist protesters disrupting Day of Honor commemorations. APF requested the editorial dismisses from work the employee who covered the event. The news report implied as if the memorial walk with people using banned totalitarian symbols was in line with social norms. The German imperial eagle and a swastika underneath it are clearly visible on the uniform of a participant on Hír TV's footage. APF filed a complaint for use of totalitarian symbols.

"A belief is fostered by events organized by extremists that German and Hungarian soldiers heroically protecting Budapest and Europe were courageous and it needs to be commemorated year by year. Hír TV's report presented as if it was acceptable to use extremist symbols and have such extremist views as represented by organizers of the commemoration. This willingly or unwillingly contributes to the spread and increase of far-right views linked to extremist symbols and thereby breaches the 1947 Paris Peace Treaties." – said APF's open letter.

MP Tímea Szabó submitted a petition to the National Media and Communications Authority (NMHH) because of Hír TV's news footage. The politician wrote in her petition she believed Hír TV's program violated human dignity and it was not in line with the rules of information obligations.

Média1.hu reported that the Médiatanács (Media Council) examined the petition and decided to refuse to initiate proceedings. Their justification said there was no opinion violating human dignity or constitutional order presented in the news program. With regards to supervising information obliga-

tions, the Media Council has no relevant competence provided by media management rules.

NMHH could not register the politician's petition as a complaint reporting media imbalance either because a prerequisite of such a complaint is the petitioner first contacts the media service provider with their problem, and it did not happen.

Commemorations on Memorial Day of the Hungarian victims of the Holocaust

Source: facebook.com, szombat.org, varosikurir.hu

16 and 17 April 2020 Since 2001, 16 April has marked the Memorial Day of the Hungarian victims of the Holocaust. The day is observed to commemorate that on 16 April 1944 Jews in Hungary started to be locked in ghettos.

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán posted a picture on his Facebook page about the recently laid Stolperstein for writer Jenő Rejtő, who died in the Holocaust during forced labor on the Eastern front. On behalf of the Hungarian government, Minister of Justice Judit Varga placed some flowers, a stone and a candle at the Shoes on the Danube Bank memorial on Thursday. The Minister said to M1 at the location that the loss was tremendous and it was not only a loss for the Jews but a loss for the whole of Europe,



source: szombat.org

and not only a loss for Hungarian Jewry, but a loss for the Hungarian nation. Therefore, she said, it is very important to warn future generations what tragic consequences it may have if a nation loses its freedom. By remembering, we shall constantly



Varga Judit (Source: MTI, Tamás Kovács)

warn future generations that never again shall the world allow such thing to happen. The Hungarian government is proud our Jewish compatriots live a thriving cultural and religious life and are safe in Hungary.

MEP for Jobbik Márton Gyöngyösi also posted on his Facebook page on the Memorial Day of the Hungarian victims of the Holocaust. Gyöngyösi said in his post that the Shoah was ruthless horror incomprehensible by the human mind and heart. As is known, a few years ago Márton Gyöngyösi tried to protect the National Assembly and Hungary by suggesting people of Jewish origin living in Hungary and working in the National Assembly and pose a certain threat to national security in Hungary shall be enlisted.

MSZP also issued a statement on the Me-

morial Day. They wrote that the day commemorated Hungarian victims of the Holocaust, all of the Hungarian victims who were betrayed by the leaders of Hungary at the time when the leaders exposed them to the politics of hatred and participated in their pillage, organized collection, deportation and massacre.

The following day, philosopher György Gábor wrote about the official commemorations in a Facebook post, which was later published on *VárosiKurír.hu*, too. The philosopher said that before 19 March 1944, Hungary acted and did what they did with the Hungarian Jewry as a free country, Hungary enacted and passed laws that gradually deprived Jews from their rights as a free country.

OTHER NEWS

Number of antisemitic incidents in the world grew by 18% in 2019

Source: neokohn.hu, jpost.com

20 April 2020 *Neokohn.hu* presented an article published by *Jerusalem Post*. The Israeli daily newspaper referred to the study of Tel Aviv's University Kantor Center. The study shows manifestations of antisemitism against people and property around the globe rose with 18% in 2019 compared to the year before.

According to Kantor Center's report, there were 456 incidents registered, including 169 physical assaults against Jews, which is a 22% rise compared with 2018. There were 129 attacks against personal property, 77 against cemeteries and memorial sites, 53 against synagogues and 28 against community centers and schools. Seven Jews were killed in antisemitic incident in 2019.

Moshe Kantor, who established the center in 2010 and is current president of the European Jewish Congress, warned about the dangers of antisemitism. Kantor said the tendencies were concerning, too, as there had been a growing number of conspiracy theories about the coronavirus.

"Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant rise in accusations that Jews, as individuals and as a collective, are behind the spread of the virus or are directly profiting from it" – said Kantor, who also expressed concerns about the rise of extremism.

Commemoration during pandemic

Source: MTI, zsidó.com, atv.hu

22 April 2020 Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed on 21 April in Israel. Events

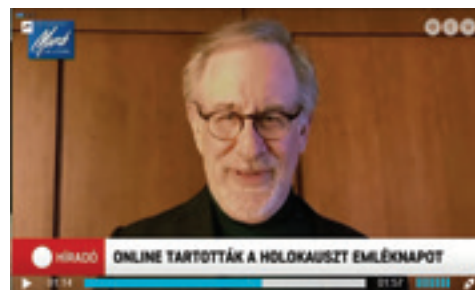
were held online this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, survivors were not personally present at the commemorations held in Israel.

As every year, life stopped for a minute in the morning when sirens went off all around the country to commemorate the six million victims of the persecution of Jews in the second world war.

The March of the Living in Auschwitz was cancelled because events were banned in Poland. The Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center is closed because of the pandemic but it broadcasted presentations and prepared a virtual exhibition for Yom HaShoah entitled *Rescue by Jews: One for all*.

At the commemoration held in the Knesset, Benjamin Netanyahu read a poem by his father-in-law, who survived the Holocaust, and Benny Gantz remembered his mother, who was from Mezőkovácsháza and was liberated in Bergen-Belsen.

"We have never had a Remembrance Day quite like this. But today (...) we gather for our first ever virtual March of the Living. (...) this virtual gathering not only gives us a chance to remember the horrors we faced in the past, but it also shines a light on the struggles that (...) we face as a community this very day." – Steven Spielberg said in his message prepared for the virtual event.



Source: ATV, Steven Spielberg

**ACTION AND PROTECTION
FOUNDATION
LEGAL ACTIONS**

APF did not initiate any legal proceedings this month and we were not notified concerning ongoing cases either.

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. | 8th of April | NMHH does not initiate proceedings for Hír TV's report on Neo-Nazi commemoration | Official And Civil Responses |
| 2. | 16-17th of April | Commemorations on Memorial Day of the Hungarian victims of the Holocaust | Official And Civil Responses |
| 3. | 20th of April | Number of antisemitic incidents in the world grew by 18% in 2019 | Other News |
| 4. | 22th of April | Commemoration during pandemic | Other News |

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:

The Facebook page:

Action and Protection League's undertaking can only be successful if great numbers share in our commitment to prepare the grounds for the right to fair process for all those who have suffered offenses. In aid of this cause please support the work of the Foundation with your contribution! Donations can be made to the Foundation on the following bank account:

13597539-12302010-00057157

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Use of the Report or any part thereof requires written permission from the publisher and such use must properly cite this report as a reference.

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