

ANTISEMITIC HATE CRIMES
AND INCIDENTS REPORT
IN HUNGARY

JANUARY 2021

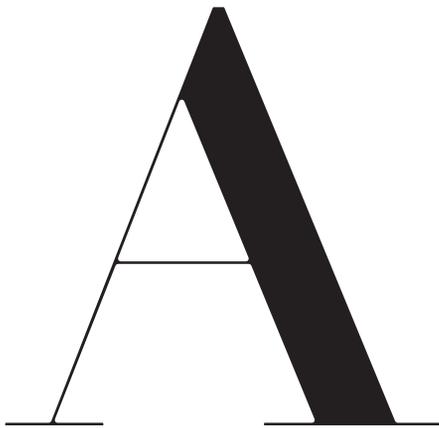


ACTION AND PROTECTION
LEAGUE

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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 are also analysed. The data recorded includes the incident's location, the perpetrator (if known), victim, and consequences (if any). In addition, are the various types of incidents differentiated in the reports.

Action and Protection Foundation (APF) identified four incidents of antisemitic hate crime this month. One is classified as a Threat, while the other three are categorized as Hate Speech. The first case was an antisemitic threat on Instagram. As to the hate speech, an antisemitic picture was shared on Facebook, an MP from Békés and member of the Our Homeland Movement used the term "Judapest"

on Facebook, and the president of the same movement László Toroczkaï incited hatred against a Jewish (kosher) slaughterhouse in Hungary.

The section titled Further Hate Incidents presents no cases this month. This section includes incidents that are classified as hate crimes but are not included

in our most recent statistics due to their insignificant nature or lack of clear antisemitic motive or because the time of the incident is unknown.

APF did not initiate any legal proceedings this month, nor were we notified of any ongoing cases.

ACTION AND PROTECTION LEAGUE

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

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

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

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

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

ABOUT THE REPORT

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

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

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

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

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

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

³ See detailed definitions in the *Methodology* section.

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

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

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

METHODOLOGY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5 The scientific definition of hate crimes is extremely contradictory and divergent (for more on this, see Chakrabarti and Garland 2009, 4–7).

These definitions can serve as important addenda to an understanding of these crimes; however, they are difficult to apply in practice. This is what made the creation of simpler, more practical definitions necessary.

6 For example, on these grounds the OSCE does not consider hate speech a hate crime, since the given behaviour would not count as criminal without the motive of prejudice (OSCE/ODIHR 2009a, 24). For our approach in dealing with this, see below.

7 These indicators are described in the Methodology section

the victim, a witness of the incident, or another civil organization.

It is a declared objective of the League to be in close contact with the authorities, since in some countries, they are the first to be approached by victims or witnesses.

A variety of media channels also represent relevant sources: television, radio, as well as the printed and online versions of the press. An essential segment of the report is composed of monitoring the expressions of online hatred as a phenomenon that is continually growing.

The public discourses are monitored by a team of experts. One of our aims is to cover the increasingly large segment of the media with continuous monitoring. Monitoring extends to roughly all receivable TV and radio stations, all the printed press with high print-runs, as well as online material not only on news portals, but the social comment arenas and extreme, hate inciting websites. The monitoring process is carried out systematically, according to precisely prepared standards.

Among the monitored hate incidents, some are considered a part of the statistics, but some are recorded, though not counted as part of the statistics.⁸

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

- The hate incidents have to have occurred in the countries monitored; no matter whether the victim is a citizen of the country or not
- Any action, incident, atrocity that is aimed at Jewish individuals, organizations or property where an antisemitic intent or content can be proven, or if the victim was attacked for being Jewish or due to an assumed Jewish identity
- Deliberate and wanton impairment of any Jewish institution or building (even if no further, antisemitic message was paired with the vandalism [for example, a Jewish synagogue's window is broken with a stone])

- Antisemitic comments that have been reported to Action and Protection League appearing on blogs, forums, community pages and similar.
- Antisemitic and neo-Nazi material delivered to particular Jewish individuals, Jewish organizations, institutions
- Antisemitic and neo-Nazi material deposited at Jewish-owned property, Jewish organizations, institutions or similar
- Criticism related to Israel and Zionism, if they go beyond a political statement and serve to recall traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes
- Moreover, events apt to raise fear among Jews.

Hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics⁹ :

- Antisemitic hate incidents that are related to the countries monitored and Jewry in these countries, but for some reason do not belong to the scope of the statistics (e.g., they did not occur in the country in question, antisemitic intent cannot be proven, or the circumstances are unclear)
- Expressions of hate that appear regularly on homepages, in comments and online forums, but have not been reported to Action and Protection League.
- Other news that only indirectly are linked to antisemitism

A number of the aspects of the registered incidents are recorded. The indicators that help decide whether a given incident was motivated by prejudice are mentioned above.

These indicators pertain to various characteristics of the perpetrator, data concerning the victim, the time and location of the incident. These are recorded in the course of collection of data. Tabs are kept on whether incidents had any, and if so, what sort of — possible legal — consequences.

⁸ The following were used to develop these criteria: ADL 2012, CST 2013

⁹ The criteria for hate incidents that are not accounted for in the statistics were modified, therefore the present description is different from the one we used in 2013.

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

Based on the *Facing Facts! Guidelines*, seven types of incidents are differentiated as follows¹⁰:

- Homicide: any attack on a person that causes loss of life
- Extreme physical violence
 - Any attack on a person that potentially causes serious bodily harm
 - Any attack involving weapons, or other tools that can cause bodily harm
 - Any attack on property, where there is a potential for the people occupying the property to be killed
 - Bombs and letter bombs
 - Kidnapping
- Assault
 - Any physical attack against a person or people, which does not pose a threat to their life and is not serious
 - Attempted assault, which fails due to self-defense, or if the victim runs away
 - Throwing objects at a person or people, including where the object misses its target
- Damage to property
 - Any physical attack directed against property, which is not life-threatening
 - Desecration of property
 - Arson attacks on property where there is not threat to life, failed attempts at arson

- Threats
 - Any clear and specific threat, whether verbal or written
 - Any “bomb” which is assessed to be a hoax
 - Stalking
 - Defamation
- Hate speech
 - Public hate speech
 - Hate speech channeled via the internet and social media
 - Abusive behavior
 - Abusive literature sent to more than one person
 - Hate speech in literature and music
- Discriminatory incidents

Placing hate incidents in context is also a priority. These actions do not exist in empty space and are by no means independent of the social and cultural environment in which they occur. The dynamics of these incidents is also of importance: often the processes, rather than separately occurring events (Perry 2001, 8). Apart from the static data, short descriptions of each event are also published, which leads to a better understanding of the environment surrounding the incidents.¹¹ In presenting timelines, attention will always be given to showing the dynamics of the events.

¹⁰ CEJI 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, 16).

ANTISEMITIC HATE INCIDENTS

– JANUARY 2021

Action and Protection Foundation identified four antisemitic hate crimes over the course of its monitoring activities in the month of January. One incident is classified as a Threat, while the other three cases fall into the category of Hate Speech.

THREAT

Antisemitic threat on Instagram
Source: instagram.com

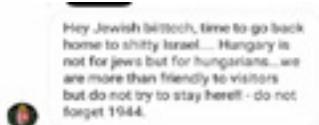
7 January 2021 At the beginning of January, APF received a notification that a young Israeli man studying in Hungary as part of an exchange program was threatened because of his nationality.

The Israeli student posted a picture of his sleeping dog in an Instagram story. A (fake?) user named Yovanna Schmidt, whose profile picture depicts the Hungarian coat of arms, submitted a comment (see picture) to the story.

The commenter baited and defamed the Israeli student, telling him to go back to Israel and threatening him with “1944”. (As is known, the deportation of Hungarian Jews started in 1944, which is when Nazi Germany occupied Hungary and helped bring the Arrow Cross party to power.

“Hey Jewish biittch, time to go back home to shitty Israel... Hungary is not for jews but for hungarians...we are more than friendly to visitors but do not try to stay here!! - do not forget 1944.”

After receiving the notification, APF immediately started to investigate the case.



HATE SPEECH

Antisemitic picture shared on Facebook
Source: facebook.com

8 January 2021 APF received a notification that Facebook user J.T. posted an antisemitic picture on the social media site.

The picture showed Mark Zuckerberg as a Nazi, having a Hitler moustache and wearing an SS uniform, and instead of the swastika, there was the Facebook logo on his red armband. The picture probably referred to the fact that Facebook banned Donald Trump’s page for the remaining time of his presidency.



Source: facebook.com

One of J.T.’s Facebook friends, I.D. shared the post.

The picture is capable of inciting hatred and many of us, including APF, reported it to Facebook (multiple times), but they have not deleted it or taken any action against those who shared it. According to their justification:

“We have again examined the post and we are convinced it does not violate our community standards, or our policies regarding hate speech.”

The picture is still available for viewing on Facebook.

MP from Békés for Our Homeland Movement used term “Judapest” on Facebook
Source: beol.hu, tev.hu

26-29 January 2021 MP from Békés for Our Homeland Movement Mihály Földesi baited Jews in a public post on Facebook, wrote Beol.hu. (It is not uncommon for Our Homeland Movement to use hate speech, and APF has been paying specific attention to the activities of the political party.)



Source: beol.hu/Facebook

Mihály Földesi shared a public post with antisemitic content just before International Holocaust Remembrance Day. He criticized the appointment of certain heads of institutions. His post included terms like “Zsidesz” (coined from *zsidó*, the Hungarian word for Jewish, and *Fidesz*) and “Judapest”.

The Fidesz-KDNP group, the local organisations of Fidelitas, Békési Kisgazdakör (a group of smallholders in Békés), Keresztény Értelmiségiek Szövetsége (Alliance of Christian Intellectuals) and Jobboldali Összefogás Békésért Polgári Kör (Right-wing Unity for Békés Civil Circle) issued a joint statement expressing their shock over Földesi’s public post shared before International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The right-wing organisations called on politicians who wish to earn political capital by racial discrimination and inciting hatred against different ethnic groups to leave their office and called on Mihály Földesi to resign as MP.

The politician later edited his post and removed the terms “Judapest” and “Zsidesz” from it. Földesi told Beol news portal that he was not Jew-baiting and his words were interpreted as readers wanted to interpret them, while he was only asking for transparency. He said he later edited his post because one of the commenters made him realize that some misunderstood what he had meant.

Yet another antisemitic incitement from Toroczkai

Source: youtube.com, hetek.hu, akibic.hu, tev.hu

31 January, 3 February 2021 In Europe, it is mainly far-right, and many times antisemitic, organisations that most strongly support bans on kosher slaughter. This seems

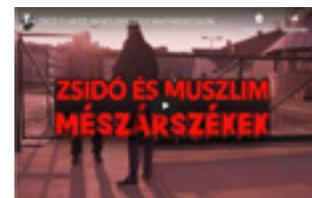
to be confirmed by a 16-minute video entitled “Zsidó és muszlim mészárszékek Magyarországon” (Jewish and Muslim slaughterhouses in Hungary) uploaded to YouTube on the last day of January. In this so-called investigative report, the president of Our Homeland Movement László Toroczkai attempts to find out how much animals suffer during kosher and halal slaughters. Hetek.hu was the first to present this video, later followed by Kibic.hu.

The politician contacted a slaughterhouse in Hungary where kosher and halal slaughters are performed, but he received no response. Toroczkai still visited the premises without an access pass or permission to film anything. According to Hetek, he was surprised when the security guards asked him to leave the private property.

For some background on the case, the European Court of Justice has recently approved a ban on kosher and halal slaughter of animals. The decision allows authorities to impose non-lethal stunning before the killing of animals to protect animal welfare. This, however, prevents Jews and Muslims from draining the animals of blood and abiding by religious rules that forbid the consumption of blood.

Hungarian and international Jewish organizations have spoken up against the decision and called it discriminatory, as not being able to follow kosher rules means the Jewish religion cannot be practised.

The Hungarian government stood up for Jewish organisations. On the grounds of protecting animal welfare, however, Toroczkai still visited a slaughterhouse that belongs to EMIH (the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities) and is located in Csengele, and a Muslim slaughterhouse, too. At both premises, Toroczkai wanted to speak with managers of the



Source: youtube.com

slaughterhouses, but since he had not previously arranged appointments and due to the pandemic, he was unable to do so. In his video, he said he received a hostile reception and criticised the government for standing up for Jewish organisations.

Toroczkai believes that Prime Minister Viktor Orbán does not protect religious freedom but condemned the EU decision because EMIH's slaughterhouse in Csengele, one of the biggest kosher slaughterhouses in Europe, had received government funding. Even during the pandemic, the slaughterhouse provided subsistence for 200 people and about 40 per cent of the kosher meat supply in Europe – wrote Hetek.

APF issued a statement in relation to the case:

It is slightly amusing that an emblematic figure of the Hungarian far-right advocates for the proposition of the European Union, but it is not agreeable at all that by referring to animal rights, he incites hatred against Jewish and Muslim communities. (...)

Toroczkai, who quit Jobbik in 2018, is mayor of Ásotthalom, and this is not his first antisemitic move. (...) Last March, APF filed charges against him for incitement against a community (Section 332 of the Hungarian Criminal Code) because the politician spoke at an event commemorating Miklós Horthy and asked his audience in neo-Nazi rhetoric why almost every single destroyer of Hungary and leader of the Hungarian Soviet Republic were of Jewish origin.

With his action, Toroczkai has now joined those Western European political powers and their main trend towards disregarding the values that provide the foundation of European culture. They try to protect animal rights with disingenuous arguments (they also create mixed metaphors when trying to protect human rights by arguing against male circumcision), and they contrast them to religious traditions dating back several thousands of years. This offers a pathway to the never-ending process of hatred politics with no meaningful content.

FURTHER HATE INCIDENTS

The section titled Further Hate Incidents presents no cases this month. This section includes incidents classified as hate crimes but not included in our most recent statistics due to their insignificant nature and lack of clear antisemitic motive or because the time of the incident is unknown.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND RESPONSES

Shlomo Köves: Cooperating with Jobbik could be especially dangerous

Source: neokohn.hu, magyarnemzet.hu, origo.hu

1 January 2021 As we presented in our December report last year, Neokohn.hu wrote about the demonstration held eight years ago following Márton Gyöngyösi's notorious scandal about making a list of Jews.

As is known, in his parliamentary speech Gyöngyösi requested the government to check how many people of Jewish origin live in Hungary and work in the National Assembly and the government who may present some national security risk to Hungary. He said he believed the government owed such an assessment to Hungary.

On the 8th anniversary of the mass demonstration provoked by Gyöngyösi's speech, Neokohn.hu contacted the chairman of MSZP Attila Mesterházy, who gave a speech at the demonstration at the time, and Márton Gyöngyösi himself. Mesterházy explained that Jobbik was not "quarantined" any longer and was accepted by the left-wing community because the political party has changed a lot. Márton Gyöngyösi continued to defend himself by saying his words were taken out of context.

After these interviews, Magyar Nemzet contacted Executive Rabbi of the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities (EMIH) and founder of APF, Shlomo Köves, and asked him whether he thought the Socialist and Jobbik politicians' explanations were acceptable.

Shlomo Köves responded the following:

The communication of the party has changed considerably, but we must not forget that Jobbik is originally a political platform based on the grounds of racism, anti-Roma hatred and antisemitism. For many, the Jobbik

brand is still associated with such attitudes, and this would probably be the case even if the party openly distanced themselves from their own history. Yet, this distancing has never been expressed, neither by words nor by actions. The possibility that political parties that enjoy significant public support and otherwise condemn racism, cooperate and take joint actions with Jobbik is especially dangerous because it may legitimise racism for many voters and may convey that even antisemitism is excusable in order to gain power.



Source: magyarnemzet.hu

Politician Katalin Lukácsi's Holocaust commemoration sparked heated debate
Source: facebook.com, vasarnap.hu

27-28 January 2021 The historian, religious teacher and activist posted a writing about the tragedy of the Holocaust along with a naked picture of herself on her social media site – wrote Vasárnap.hu.



Source: facebook.com



Source: Katalin Lukácsi's Facebook page

Based on the comments submitted under the post, written by co-founder of the Mindenki Magyarországa Mozgalom (Everybody's Hungary Movement) Katalin Lukácsi, and the black and white naked picture of herself, both were deemed disagreeable and arbitrary.

The writing under the picture said this was how Lukácsi wanted to highlight that men were considered just kilograms of

flesh and bones to be ground.

Vasárnap.hu asked editor-in-chief of Neokohn.hu and rabbi A. Jonatán Megyeri about the incident:

Katalin Lukácsi surely knew people would be outraged by this very strong "artistic tool", so this had to be her very aim. However, I do not think the picture is appropriate. I know Katalin, I know she is a good friend to the Jewish religion and Jewish people. But this was a rather unfortunate way of approaching the topic. Two elements in particular were surprising to me. The first one was the sentence saying that the Holocaust was not about the Jewish community, but as a religious person, she still thought it was not accidental that it happened to the Jewry. This could be interpreted as if the Holocaust was a punishment to the Jews for killing God, for killing the Christian Saviour. This is a two-thousand-year-old antisemitic topos.

Megyeri added he had no doubt this was not what Lukácsi meant, but the wording was still unfortunate.

What is more, the suffering of six million people, including one and a half million children, has no rational explanation and makes no rational sense! If someone tries to explain it rationally, they become a Nazi, as Nobel Prize-winning author Elie Wiesel said, stressed the rabbi.

Katalin is a practising Christian, I am an orthodox Jew. I cannot and, it is unnecessary for me, to identify with what she writes about the suffering of the Christian Saviour. Yet to me, this idea is rather strange. No parallel can be drawn between the death of the Christian Saviour and the deaths of six million people! Megyeri stated.

OFFICIAL AND CIVIL RESPONSES

Surprising turn of events: Investigations relaunched in case of SS flag on Leányfalu

Source: 444.hu

27-28 January 2021 444.hu learned that the Szentendre Public Prosecutor's Office informed everyone concerned that an investigation was relaunched after they reviewed the decision of the Szentendre Police Office, which had terminated the investigation due to an absence of any criminal offence.



Source: 444.hu

As we presented in our July and September 2020 reports, a group of people holding a celebration in Leányfalu hoisted a flag with an SS badge on the facade of a weekend house. A man passing by, also a Holocaust survivor, noticed the flag and began

to take pictures of the house, then ended up having a brief argument with the owners. According to his account, the owners admitted they were Nazis and reminded him that his train was about to leave. After he reported the incident to the police, the owners of the house told officers arriving at the scene they were electricians and were celebrating the 44th birthday of one of their colleagues; the lightning bolt-like number 44 was used in honour of this birthday. Police officers thought this was not arguable, so they reported there was no suspicion of a crime, and criminal proceedings were not initiated.

Later, however, a police investigation was launched in the matter, and the verbally insulted witness testified. After that, a police decision was made last September, the essence of which was that the investigation was terminated in the absence of a criminal offence. The police explained: "The people there were calm, giving no indication that they were members of an extremist group." The authority examined the flag and found

that the badge stylistically doesn't fully comply with the SS symbol but instead used lightning bolts to represent the number 44, which supports the narration of the person involved in the seizure.

APF reacted to this decision in a statement:

The decision and justification of the police regarding the case of the flag with an SS badge hoisted in Leányfalu is outrageous and cynical. Is it possible that the representative of the local police does not have the knowledge to differentiate the SS letters in the badge of Schutzstaffel from two stylized numbers of 4? We prefer to assume a lack of professionalism and experience than the disregard of facts in fear of a disagreeable procedure. The police explanation that the people at the gathering were calm, "giving no indication that they were members of an extremist group" is not only extremely cynical but also uniquely unprofessional.

The decision of the Szentendre Public Prosecutor's Office is that the incident was not properly investigated by the police and the supervising public prosecutor's department, so the decision to terminate the investigation was unsound. One element of the investigation was highlighted in particular: The man filing the report to the police took pictures at the scene, and although these were seized by the police, they were not examined.

It is also unclear whether the police officers who arrived at the scene checked if there was anyone aged 44 among the participants of the gathering, wrote 444.hu.

The portal also stated that the letter from the Public Prosecutor's Office stated that the symbol on the flag [...] corresponds to the flag of the Schutzstaffel established in 1925.



Source: 444.hu

NEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT ANTISEMITISM IN HUNGARY

Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky: The issue of antisemitism has diminished into a tactical-political question for the left wing

Source: neokohn.hu

7 January 2021 Deputy State Secretary responsible for civil society relations at the Prime Minister's Office Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky assessed the year 2020 at the request of Neokohn. (We only present parts of the interview that concern antisemitism.)



Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky - MTI

Editor-in-chief A. Jonatán Megyeri first asked the politician about the Demeter case:

With regards to Szilárd Demeter's publication, many considered it or wanted it to be considered antisemitic. However, it is important to note that the left wing has double standards; a few months ago, they all stood by László Bíró after he used the term "Judapest". I would like to emphasize that Szilárd Demeter is not an antisemite. Yet, one shall avoid making such historical comparisons. [...] Szilárd Demeter has revoked his op-ed. He himself stated that his writing might insult the memory of victims.

In relation to the situation of the Hungarian Jewish community and the relationship between Israel and Hungary, Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky said:

The Jewish community in Hungary can live their lives safely, we are making sure this is the case, this is our obligation. There is a renaissance of Jewish life in Hungary, and we provide all the necessary help and support for this. I would also like to mention that Hungary consistently stands by Israel on every international platform, e.g., in the UN and also in the EU by imposing our veto. Israel appreciates this. The relationship

between the two countries has never been so good.

What would you highlight from 2020 that was not accomplished? asked the editor-in-chief.

Many plans concerning architectural heritage were attained, yet there are many other ones that could not be carried out due to the pandemic and financial burdens. We will certainly try to achieve these in the future. We are making good progress in renovating Jewish cemeteries in Hungary. [...] In addition, there are civil matters: supporting civil society organisations associated with the Jewish community, like Action and Protection Foundation, which monitors antisemitic incidents in Europe.

As regards political bias:

There is the candidacy of László Bíró. Our criticism is that we find the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities' (Mazsihisz) reaction too soft and reserved. It would be intolerable if an openly antisemitic candidate received a seat in parliament; this would never happen in our party alliance.

Szilárd Demeter's op-ed is hardly comparable to László Bíró's statements; the publication had consequences, and Demeter revoked his writing. The Israeli Ambassador also confirmed they considered the issue as closed after Demeter deleted his op-ed. In Bíró's case, however, nothing happened apart from the fact that he did not receive a mandate, thank God.

My question is, how is it possible that no one has criticized Bíró since? A possible answer is that the issue of antisemitism has diminished into a tactical-political question for the left wing. If representatives of the left wing experience something from politicians sitting at the other end of our horseshoe arrangement of seats in parliament, they become brutally loud, but when it is someone among them who does something that

crosses the line or says something harsh, they accept it or even stand up for the MP.

In relation to Krisztina Baranyi's case:

The reactions from Jewish organisations were calm and focused on reducing tension, and I would agree with them. Mazsihisz, which had previously been criticised for the proportionality of its reactions, also sensed the gravity of the mayor's words, and its statement corresponded to mine: Political figures shall not use such words and express such harshness against any religious or ethnic group.

Don't you think that anti-Soros politics incites latent antisemitism?

Look, the number of antisemitic incidents, and this is shown in APF's reports, is very low in Hungary and even those stay on a verbal level. Of course, none of these incidents are acceptable, but the number of antisemitic hate crimes in Hungary is a fraction of that in Western Europe. I do not like comparisons, but it is important to note that while synagogues are broken into and rabbis and Jews are violently attacked in the West, no such things happen in Hungary. This is one of the reasons why we believe negative criticism against Hungary is unfair.

OTHER NEWS

European Commission published handbook for fighting antisemitism

Source: liner.hu, szombat.org, ec.europa.eu

11-12 January 2021 The handbook for the practical use of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism commissioned by the European Commission was published on 8 January.



Source: szombat.org

The handbook was published jointly with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The 45-page handbook provides good practises in the application of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism through presenting incidents of antisemitism registered in European countries. It analyses antisemitic manifestations and crimes in detail and enlists a number of examples on how to use the working definition in different fields, including law enforcement, justice, sports and civil society.

There are 35 good practises presented in the hope of supporting an effective fight against antisemitism. These include more comprehensive training for law enforcement and the facilitation of incident recording and reporting. Furthermore, the handbook includes 22 sourced incidents that highlight the existence of antisemitism in Europe.

It is hoped that the handbook will provide support for police officers, prosecutors and judges to identify antisemitism and antisemitic hate crimes. It also offers a very detailed explanation for making a distinction between an established criticism of Israel and a stereotype-based mockery of Israel.

The Commission plans to adopt a comprehensive EU Strategy against antisemitism this year.

European Jewish Congress (EJC) President Moshe Kantor welcomed the publication of the handbook: “This document finally takes the IHRA definition into the realm of practical application. Each of the examples of the definition is illustrated through real documented antisemitic incidents in Europe, so it is substantially more than mere theory.”

Memorial plaque to commemorate victims of Arrow Cross massacre on Maros Street

Source: pestbuda.hu, akibic.hu

13-15 January 2021 A memorial plaque was unveiled in the courtyard of the public health clinic on Maros Street, Budapest District 12, on the anniversary of the massacre carried out by members of the Arrow Cross Party on 12 January 1945.

Eighty-four people, including patients, doctors and nurses were killed in the former Buda Chevra Kadisha Jewish hospital at 16 Maros Street on that day. Another four nurses were tortured and shot the next day. Even though Red Cross provided protection for the hospital, it did not save any victims.

The plaque with the names of the victims massacred in the former Jewish hospital in Buda was made by the local government and the health service of the Buda Castle neighbourhood.

“When hatred is embodied, human dignity comes to an end. The 20-22-man strong group of Arrow Cross members and common criminals embodied such hatred, when they massacred 84 people in the Jewish hospital on Maros Street on 12 January 1945”, said professional advisor of the Hegyvidék Local History Collection Gergely Földváry at the ceremony.



Source: hegyvidek.hu

Mayor Zoltán Pokorni of Budapest District 12 and Mayor Márta Váradiné of Budapest District 1 unveiled the plaque together. “The murderers were

Hungarian members of the Arrow Cross party, their victims were Hungarian citizens”, says the text on the memorial plaque.

Mayor Zoltán Pokorni of Budapest District 12 gave a speech at a commemoration held at the clinic a year ago, where he choked up while mentioning that his grandfather was a member of the Arrow Cross party and had a significant and active role in several massacres in Városmajor, including the one on Maros Street. The name of Pokorni’s grandfather, along with the names of other mass murderers, had for long been visible on a turul statue not far away from the clinic on Maros Street. (APF dealt with this case in several reports.)

Péter Jakab commemorated the liberation of Budapest Ghetto by warning against the dangers of hatred

Source: mandiner.hu

17 January 2021 Mandiner noticed that President of Jobbik Péter Jakab posted a picture on Facebook, depicting him lighting a candle with Vice-Mayor Dr Zsuzsanna Kerék-Beleznaý at the memorial wall of the Budapest Ghetto observing the 76th anniversary of its liberation.



Source: mandiner.hu

Péter Jakab’s writing in the post included the following:

This day 76 years ago marked the end of the sufferings of those

tens of thousands of people who were crowded in the ghetto under terrible circumstances by members of the Arrow Cross and the Nazi parties. At the liberation of the ghetto, 68,000 of our compatriots were saved from death. Beyond their sufferings, the dead bodies of 3,000 other people showed the ruthless destruction that hatred and incitement may cause. We note that Jakab did not include the phrases “Jewish” or “Jewish victims” in the text a single time!

It is interesting, wrote Mandiner, that there has been a turnaround in the party’s attitude towards the Holocaust and the Jewish community. In 2012, Jobbik’s current MEP Márton Gyöngyösi wanted to make a list of MPs of Jewish origin. In his parliamentary speech, Gyöngyösi requested that the government check how many people of Jewish origin work in the National Assembly and the government who may present some national security risk to Hungary. He said he believed the government owed such an assessment to Hungary.

In 2013, Ádám Mirkóczki, who was then a member of Jobbik but who quit the party last year, said that the Holocaust was like the card that takes all. Another scandalous Jobbik politician, Gergely Kulcsár, who was expelled from the party in 2020, spat on the Shoes on the Danube Bank monument in 2015 and called the Holocaust a “holohoax”.

UN Secretary-General said the pandemic created a spike in antisemitism

Source: neokohn.hu, jpost.com

26 January 2021 Neokohn reviewed an article from the Jerusalem Post.

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a wave of antisemitism while neo-Nazism and White supremacy are already on the rise, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Monday night.

“Antisemitism continues to blight our world. It is sad, but not surprising, that the

COVID-19 pandemic has triggered yet another eruption of this poisonous ideology”, said Guterres at New York’s Park East Synagogue during a ceremony to mark Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Guterres presented a dire picture in his speech about the rise of antisemitism, xenophobia, hate speech, white supremacy, neo-Nazism and Holocaust denial.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in 2019 recorded the highest level of antisemitic incidents since it began tracking them in 1979, Guterres said.

The more time people spend online, the more vulnerable they are to propaganda, fear and hatred disseminated by White supremacists and neo-Nazis, he said.

In some countries, neo-Nazis have entered the mainstream debate; in others, neo-Nazis “infiltrated police and state security services”, he said. The Secretary-General added that “when truth dies, it is far easier to exploit real and imagined differences between groups to scapegoat communities and groups of people”.

“There is no vaccine for antisemitism and xenophobia. But our best weapon remains the truth”, Guterres said. He believes global action is needed to build “an alliance against the growth and spread of neo-Nazism and White supremacy and to fight propaganda and disinformation”.

EU to set out strategy to combat antisemitism

Source: demokrata.hu, ec.europa.eu

26 January 2021 “The Commission will put forward a strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in 2021 to support EU countries and civil society in their fight against antisemitism”, said President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen in her speech given at the ceremony commemorating the 76th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.

The president expressed her concerns over the rise of antisemitism. She said that the times of the pandemic have fueled a spread of conspiracy theories, disinformation and Holocaust denial on social media.

She highlighted that authorities, social platforms and users need to work together to ensure that historic facts are not distorted and stressed the importance of educational programs about Holocaust history.

“Europe thrives when its Jewish community and other minorities can live in peace and harmony”, President von der Leyen said.

Shlomo Köves thinks it makes no sense to remember darkness on its own

Source: pestihirlap.hu

27 January 2021 President of Hungary János Áder lit candles in the synagogue at Buda Castle on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Executive Rabbi of the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities (EMIH) Shlomo Köves said at the commemoration that it makes no sense to remember darkness on its own. The aim



Source: pestihirlap.hu

of remembering in Jewish tradition is to receive hope and strength from it, the Executive Rabbi said. Köves recalled the story of senior rabbi Meizles from Vác, who could have received help to hide from people who respected him, but he insisted to stay with his community. This is how he ended up in the concentration camp in Auschwitz, where he realized that most of the people he wanted to support were no longer alive.

Minister of the Prime Minister’s Office Gergely Gulyás shared a video on his social media site. Gulyás said in the video that today, Hungary is able to protect the

Hungarian Jewish community. He also mentioned that the government protects human dignity, provides religious freedom and supports the Hungarian Jewish community in preserving and strengthening its identity.

Israeli Ambassador to Hungary Yacov Hadas-Handelsman said in a video: “76 years after the end of the war, one of the main concerns is that remembrance is becoming a mere cliché. More of a form of political correctness and less of an effort to really feel the pain, the suffering, the burden of memories and honouring the victims.”

In 2005, the UN designated 27 January as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. It was on 27 January that the largest concentration camp of the Second World War was liberated in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Nazis murdered millions of people in concentration camps; most of their victims were Jewish, and some were Roma, gay, dissident or people with disabilities.

Can Facebook counter Holocaust denial?

Source: neokohn.hu, jta.org, tev.hu, eu.usatoday.com

27-29 January 2021 Facebook introduced a new function against Holocaust denial. “People who search for information about the Holocaust on Facebook will now be prompted to visit a website on the genocide curated by the World Jewish Congress and UNESCO” (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), wrote the JTA.



Source: jta.org

Starting Wednesday, which is International Holocaust Remembrance Day, users will see a box labelled “Learning About the Holocaust” when they search Holocaust terms.

“The Holocaust was the organized persecution and killing of 6 million Jewish people, alongside other

targeted groups, by the Nazis and their collaborators during World War II”, the box reads. “Learning about the Holocaust can help prevent future genocides and other acts of hatred based on religion, ethnicity or other differences.”

There is also a link to aboutholocaust.org, a joint WJC and UNESCO site.

WJC President Ronald Lauder said the new tool could help counter Holocaust ignorance among the young. A study last fall on Gen Z views on the genocide found a widespread lack of knowledge on the subject – 11 per cent of respondents thought that Jews caused the Holocaust.

This new tool was supposed to be active since Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. However, in our experience, nothing happens when we search for information about the Holocaust, and there is no box labelled “Learning About the Holocaust”.

A recent article on USA Today states that Holocaust denial content remains on Facebook three months after Zuckerberg’s pledge to ban all content that denies or distorts the Holocaust. The article refers to a new report from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an American Jewish organisation monitoring antisemitism, which examined how the top ten social media sites counter the problems of Holocaust denial and antisemitism. The report shows that Facebook and Instagram struggle the most.

Only after USA Today contacted Facebook did they remove a post promoting an antisemitic video that claims to expose “lies” about the Holocaust, and a private Facebook group dedicated to “Holocaust Revisionism”. On the other hand, Facebook confirmed they would continue to work on keeping Holocaust denial off of their platform with increased efforts and would enforce their new policy against these hateful lies in every country around the world.

**ACTION AND PROTECTION
FOUNDATION
LEGAL ACTIONS**

APF did not initiate any legal proceedings this month, nor were we notified of any ongoing cases.

THE MONTH'S CHRONICLE

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

No.	Date	Incident	Category
1.	1st of January	Shlomo Köves: Cooperating with Jobbik could be especially dangerous	Community News and Responses
2.	2nd of January	Antisemitic threat on Instagram	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Threat
3.	7th of January	Vince Szalay-Bobrovniczky: The issue of antisemitism has diminished into a tactical-political question for the left wing	News and Opinions about Antisemitism in Hungary
4.	8th of January	Antisemitic picture shared on Facebook	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech
5.	11-12th of January	European Commission published handbook for fighting antisemitism	Other News
6.	13-15th of January	Memorial plaque to commemorate victims of Arrow Cross massacre on Maros Street	Other News
7.	17th of January	Péter Jakab commemorated the liberation of Budapest Ghetto by warning against the dangers of hatred	Other News
8.	26-29th of January	MP from Békés for Our Homeland Movement used term “Judapest” on Facebook	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech
9.	26th of January	UN Secretary-General said the pandemic created a spike in antisemitism	Other News
10.	26th of January	EU to set out strategy to combat antisemitism	Other News
11.	27-28th of January	Politician Katalin Lukácsi’s Holocaust commemoration sparked heated debate	Community News and Responses
12.	27th of January	Shlomo Köves thinks it makes no sense to remember darkness on its own	Other News
13.	27-29th of January	Can Facebook counter Holocaust denial?	Other News
14.	28th of January	Surprising turn of events: Investigations relaunched in case of SS flag on Leányfalu	Official and Civil Responses
15.	31st of January	Yet another antisemitic incitement from Toroczkai	Antisemitic Hate Incidents – Hate Speech

CONTACT AND SUPPORT

Action and Protection League is the civil initiative of a number of Jewish organizations that is ready to take resolute steps to curb increasing widespread antisemitic manifestations.

The Action and Protection Foundation is the partner of the Action and Protection League in Hungary.

In case anyone faces insults or antisemitic abuse due to a supposed or real Jewish background, do not remain silent, let us know, so that we can forward the case through the appropriate channels to the official organs required to take measures!

Notifications of such incidents are received by the Foundation through any of the following means:

HOTLINE (+36 1) 5 1 00 000

The website of Action and Protection League: www.apleeu.org

The Facebook page: www.facebook.com/tev-tett-es-vedelem-alapitvany

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

13597539-12302010-00057157

Contact details for Action and Protection League

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