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**Report on Xenophobia, Discrimination, Religious Hatred  
and Aggressive Nationalism in Hungary in 2015**

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## 1. Laws, regulations, and practices adopted in 2015 affecting minorities

The legislation concerning the ethnic minorities in Hungary did not change in 2015. However, it should be mentioned, that since Fidesz<sup>1</sup> (Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance, *Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség*) won more than two-third of seats in Parliament in April 2010, it constantly has been using its supermajority to adopt far-reaching legal and constitutional changes, also touching upon serious human rights issues. Human Rights Watch underlined also that the EU did not do anything about Hungary's problematic laws and practices.<sup>2</sup>

Discriminatory practices in Hungary affect mainly the Roma, the biggest minority group living in Hungary<sup>3</sup>, however one should keep in mind that in these cases latency is very high, meaning that many cases remain unseen. Most Roma lag behind the society in many respects: they suffer from extreme disadvantages in education, employment, and living conditions.<sup>4</sup>

### School segregation

In January 2015 the Jobbik<sup>5</sup>, Hungary's far-right party, proposed the segregation of Roma children in public schools. They insisted that kids with behavioural and learning disabilities should be put into special separated classes, in extreme cases to boarding schools. Jobbik MP, Dóra Duró, who also serves as a Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Culture said that instead of "spontaneous segregation", when parents transfer their children to schools with a low ratio of Roma pupils, "disruptive children" should be the ones to leave, adding that Jobbik recommended the solution of boarding schools, since many children have fallen way behind, inter alia, because of the "culture" surrounding their families. While she said that no child should be discriminated against, and educational problems should not be handled on fundamentally ethnic lines, she added that the majority of disadvantaged kids "are of Gypsy origin", and the resulting social and cultural differences should not be overlooked. Ms Dúró said that changes in the education system are needed because as current demographic processes<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the course of the whole essay, the name of the party Fidesz stands for the party alliance Fidesz-KDNP. Since there is no real difference between Fidesz and KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party, *Keresztény Demokrata Néppárt*), and the latter does not have an electoral base independent from Fidesz, there is no reason to make a distinction between Fidesz and KDNP, even though if they have separate groups in the parliament officially.

<sup>2</sup> 'Hungary: Outstanding Human Rights Concerns', *Human Rights Watch*, 18 February 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/18/hungary-outstanding-human-rights-concerns>

'Hungary: Little EU Action on Rights Concerns', *Human Rights Watch*, 18 February 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/18/hungary-little-eu-action-rights-concerns>

<sup>3</sup> Their estimated number is between 550-700 thousand.

<sup>4</sup> FRA, UNDP (2012). *The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States. Survey results at a glance*. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union. [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance\\_EN.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance_EN.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Jobbik, the Movement for a Better Hungary (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*) was founded in 2003. In the parliamentary elections of 2006, in alliance with MIÉP, the Movement for a Better Hungary won only 2.2 percent of the votes. After this failure, Jobbik broke up the alliance and it started to find its own voice. The growing impact of the party became clear in the 2009 European Parliamentary Elections, where Jobbik won almost 15 percent of the votes and could send three members to the European Parliament. In the 2010 National Parliamentary Election the party got 17 percent of the votes. These results unequivocally indicated the enormous growth of the acceptance of radical right-wing thoughts in the Hungarian society. By 2014, the support of Jobbik grew further and the party secured 20 percent of the votes in the recent national elections.

<sup>6</sup> Ms. Dúró referred to the higher fertility rate of the Roma population.

and educational standards stand, it will be necessary one day “to integrate Hungarian children into Gypsy classes.”<sup>7</sup>

Hungarian Government was quick to react. Zoltán Balog, Minister of Human Capacities<sup>8</sup> said, that the government “rejects and condemns illegal school segregation and is committed to quality education that develops the conditions for equal opportunity. He also said that there can be schools having only Roma students, »but they should be afforded a proper level of education«”.<sup>9</sup>

However, reality seems to be somewhat different. The most important case is the so-called Huszár-telep<sup>10</sup> school in Nyíregyháza. This is a local council-run elementary school, with exclusively Roma pupils. In April 2015, the Supreme Court of Hungary (Curia) decided in a final ruling that the complaint about the segregation of Roma children was unfounded. The Curia said that the principal of free choice was not violated, and the free choice of religion and school supersedes the prohibition of segregation.<sup>11</sup>

The story of the school is even more interesting if we look back in time. In 2007 the local government with socialist majority, surrendering to the pressure of a Hungarian NGO fighting for the education rights of the Roma (*Esélyt a Hátrányos Helyzetű Gyerekekért Alapítvány*, Chance for Children Foundation, CFCF), closed the school, and the children were taken by bus across the city to the other school.<sup>12</sup> In 2011, after the right-wing Fidesz won the municipal elections in the city also, the school was reopened and transferred to the Greek Catholic Church. The Chance for Children Foundation sued both the Church and the Hungarian state for segregation in 2011. In February 2014 local court decided for the NGO, saying that the current functioning of the school violates not only the Hungarian laws on equal opportunity, but also the recommendations of the Council of Europe. The minister was so committed, that he even testified in the trial. The Church appealed, but in the beginning of November the appellate court reaffirmed the decision. After the court’s decision Balog said, that “this verdict only increases my fighting spirit. We will continue to fight for a good, decent verdict which is good for the children”. Just two weeks after the decision, Zoltan Balog filed a bill to amend Hungary’s Public Education Act of 2011. The Amendment, which was accepted by the

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Jobbik: Nem kell mindenáron erőltetni az iskolai integrációt’ [‘Jobbik: integration in schools should not be forced at any price’], *Mandiner.hu*, 24 January 2015,

[http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150124\\_jobbik\\_nem\\_kell\\_mindenaron\\_eroltetni\\_az\\_iskolai\\_integraciot](http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150124_jobbik_nem_kell_mindenaron_eroltetni_az_iskolai_integraciot)

‘Government rejects Jobbik’s Proposal on School Segregation’, *Hungary Today*, 26 January 2015,

<http://hungarytoday.hu/news/government-rejects-jobbiks-proposal-school-segregation-49521>

<sup>8</sup> The official title of the minister. Source: <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-human-resources/the-minister>

<sup>9</sup> ‘Government rejects Jobbik’s Proposal on School Segregation’, *Hungary Today*, 26 January 2015,

<http://hungarytoday.hu/news/government-rejects-jobbiks-proposal-school-segregation-49521>

<sup>10</sup> Huszár-telep is located close to downtown of Nyíregyháza, a city in North-East Hungary with approximately 112,000 residents. The estimated number of Roma living in Nyíregyháza is around 10,000 people. Huszár-telep has a population of around 2,000 people, 85 percent of them are Roma. This is the largest socially and territorially segregated slum in the city, where people live in extreme poverty. All the key indicators (educational level, employment, housing etc.) are significantly worse than the city average. ([http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/lap\\_abstract\\_nyiregyhaza\\_hu\\_en.pdf](http://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/lap_abstract_nyiregyhaza_hu_en.pdf))

<sup>11</sup> ‘Hungarian Supreme Court Decided: Segregation is Lawful in Parochial Schools’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 28 April 2015, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/04/28/hungarian-supreme-court-decided-segregation-is-lawful-in-parochial-schools/>

‘Nyíregyháza school did not segregate according to supreme court’, *Politics.hu*, 23 April 2015, <http://www.politics.hu/20150423/nyiregyhaza-school-did-not-segregate-according-to-supreme-court/>

<sup>12</sup> This was modelled after anti-segregation projects in the United States.

Hungarian Parliament in December 2014, eventually exempts some schools operated by the Church or other religious organization, from the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Act. CFCF representatives, other NGOs and scientific experts said that this not only the legalization of segregation, but also “open violation of EU equal opportunities standards to be observed by member states”. After both the local court and then the appellate court had decided that the functioning of the school had violated not only Hungarian laws on equal opportunity, but also the recommendations of the Council of Europe, in April 2015 the Curia decided in a binding ruling that the complaint about the segregation of Roma children was unfounded. The ruling came after the amendment to the education law mentioned above. It seems now that the case will end up in the European Court of Human Rights.<sup>13</sup>

The European Commissioner for Justice, Vera Jourová was also aware of the case of the segregated school in Huszár-telep. Moreover, in the Commission’s opinion the municipality’s actions were not in line with the EU directive forbidding any discrimination against ethnic groups in Education. Moreover, the Commission contacted the Hungarian government concerning the issue. In this way, the Hungarian government got a chance to voluntarily comply with the Commission’s position, otherwise the EC may launch an infringement proceeding against Hungary.<sup>14</sup>

It turned out in June 2015 that the opening of a new elementary school has been planned in Komádi, a small town in Eastern Hungary. 65 percent of the pupils of the elementary school currently functioning in the town, are coming from very poor and disadvantaged environment, most of them are Roma. Many non-Roma families therefore brought their children to neighbouring settlements. According to the mayor, parents of school-aged children initiated the opening of the new school, and it would be run by the Hungarian Reformed Church. Although it was clear for both the Ministry of Human Capacities and the central school administration office called KLIK<sup>15</sup>, as well as for residents in the town, that the main goal is to set up a school exclusively for non-Roma children, not even the authorities could impede its establishment, because of the right to religious freedom, as it was said. Although the Ministry would have had

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<sup>13</sup> ‘Hungary court orders school closure over Roma segregation’, *BBC*, 28 February 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26390357>

‘Hungarian Supreme Court Decided: Segregation is Lawful in Parochial Schools’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 28 April 2015, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/04/28/hungarian-supreme-court-decided-segregation-is-lawful-in-parochial-schools/>

‘Some Hungarian schools to remain segregated’, *Budapest Beacon*, 25 November 2014, <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/hungarian-schools-remain-segregated/15511>

‘Zoltán Balog, who is in Charge of Roma Integration, Fights for Segregation’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 26 November 2014, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2014/11/26/zoltan-balog-who-is-in-charge-of-roma-integration-fights-for-segregation/>

<sup>14</sup> ‘EC Has Bone to Pick with Hungary’s Segregated Schools’, *The Budapest Beacon*, 22 July 2015, <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/ec-has-bone-to-pick-with-hungarys-segregated-schools/25524>.

<sup>15</sup> The Public Education Act, coming into force on 1 January 2013, centralized the Hungarian Education System in all sense, and a new central office was established, named Klebersberg Institution Maintenance Centre (KLIK, Klebersberg Intézményfenntartó Központ), which “administers more than 4,000 schools, 1.2 million pupils and 120,000 teachers, making it the largest employer in Hungary”. (<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/articles/government-plans-to-shake-up-education-system>)

every right to impede the establishment of the school, on 31 August (a day before the start of the new school year) it got “green light” from government agencies (*Kormányhivatalok*).<sup>16</sup>

In Piliscsaba, a small town near Budapest, authorities did not intend to close down a school attended by Roma pupils only. Instead, KLIK wanted to create a centre for “problematic children” out of it.

The potential for actions of the Ministry and the KLIK is clearly reflected in the decision of the local court in Kaposvár<sup>17</sup>. In 2010, the Supreme Court ruled in its final judgement that in one of the schools in the town the children “were collected and unlawfully segregated based on their specified characteristics”<sup>18</sup> Since the school has been operating ever since, the Chance for Children Foundation initiated a lawsuit and according to the verdict of first instance in November 2015, all central and local educational authorities are responsible for maintaining the unlawful situation.<sup>19</sup>

### **Discrimination based on the social welfare system**

In 2015 the social welfare system underwent fundamental changes in Hungary. The most important change was that local governments’ responsibility has become bigger in terms of setting the conditions for the distribution of social benefits and public work. The eligibility criteria and the amount of subsidies became determined solely by local governments and many of the benefits, previously based on subjective rights, were abolished. According to the government, “[l]ocal governments may primarily fund benefits from their own tax revenues, besides, the central budget still provides support for financing the social responsibilities of settlements with low tax revenues. The funding system particularly supports settlements suffering from lack of resources so that the central fund is divided into ranges according to tax revenues thus providing more support for local governments with low tax revenues.”<sup>20</sup>

Although by these new regulations, according to officials, the local governments’ “role increases in strengthening social protection of local communities and in the adequate provision of social benefits”<sup>21</sup>, the main outcome was not that. The new system introduced by the government does not protect, but exposes those who are in need – including Roma people – to

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<sup>16</sup> ‘Kevesebb a gyerek: új iskolát nyitnak’ [‘Less children: new school to be opened’], *Hvg.hu*, 16 June 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150615\\_Kevesebb\\_a\\_gyerek\\_uj\\_iskolat\\_nyitnak](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150615_Kevesebb_a_gyerek_uj_iskolat_nyitnak)

‘Az Emmi sem tudja megakadályozni a szegregált iskola megnyitását’ [‘Not even the Ministry of Human Capacities can hinder the opening of the new segregated school’], *Index.hu*, 16 June 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/06/16/az\\_emmi\\_sem\\_tudja\\_megakadalyozni\\_a\\_szegregalt\\_iskola\\_megnyitast/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/06/16/az_emmi_sem_tudja_megakadalyozni_a_szegregalt_iskola_megnyitast/)

‘A KLIK Szándéka Ellenére Beindult a Szegregált Iskola’ [‘Segregated school starts up despite the intention of KLIK’], *Hvg.hu*, 2 September 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150902\\_A\\_KLIK\\_szandeka\\_ellenere\\_beindult\\_a\\_szeqr](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150902_A_KLIK_szandeka_ellenere_beindult_a_szeqr).

<sup>17</sup> Kaposvár is a city of approximately 68,000 residents situated in the southwestern part of Hungary. It is also the chief town of Somogy county.

<sup>18</sup> Chance for Children Foundation v. City of Kaposvár, Pfv.IV.21.568/2010/5., Supreme Court Final Judgment, November, 24, 2010, p. 9 In: *Strategic Litigation Impacts. Roma School Desegregation*. Open Society Justice Initiative, Open Society Foundations, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> ‘A Bíróság Szerint a Minisztérium is Felelős a Szegregáció Fenntartásáért’ [‘The Ministry is also responsible for maintaining segregation’], *Roma Sajtóközpont*, 11 November 2015, <http://romasajtokozpont.hu/a-birosag-szerint-a-miniszterium-is-felelos-a-szegregacio-fenntartasaert/>.

<sup>20</sup> Government of Hungary: National Reform Programme 2015 of Hungary. (Government of Hungary, n.a.), [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/nrp2015\\_hungary\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/nrp2015_hungary_en.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> Government of Hungary: National Reform Programme 2015 of Hungary. (Government of Hungary, n.a.), [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/nrp2015\\_hungary\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/nrp2015_hungary_en.pdf).

the mayor's decisions, even more than ever. The new system gives more power to local governments and mayors and, therefore, it allows for arbitrary decisions and discriminative practices. The new system is completely in accordance with the government's long time inclination to differentiate between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor. Since many Roma people fall into the latter category, they are severely affected. These local regulations are, however, in the grey zone, since they are not discriminatory *per se*. Nevertheless, in many cases, their intentions are more than dubious.

Some local governments apply discriminatory measures concerning housing. One of the most severe one is the forced displacement of families from the so-called "Numbered Streets" neighbourhood in Miskolc, a city in North-Eastern Hungary with approximately 164,000 residents. The planned evictions affect around 450, mainly Roma families. In May 2014 an amendment accepted by local authorities of Miskolc, led by City Mayor Ákos Kriza, a member of Fidesz, made possible to terminate its lease contracts with residents in "low comfort" social houses. However, it offered monetary compensation for only those purchasing a property outside of Miskolc and not selling it for at least five years. In this way, it served as a mean for the ethnic cleansing of Hungary's third largest city. In May 2015, the Supreme Court of Hungary (Curia) ruled, that these regulations are highly discriminatory, and they violate the right to privacy and freedom of movement. The Court's decision, however, only addressed the issue of monetary compensation, and not the evictions as a whole, and national-level authorities have so far avoided to force the local government of Miskolc to comply with these rules, therefore the unlawful practices continued even after the Supreme Court's decision. After the ruling, local authorities conducted raids in these areas, where most of the residents are Roma. Not only NGOs, but Hungary's Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, László Székely, claimed in his report that evictions and inspections would be illegal.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, the Equal Treatment Authority ruled that the local government has discriminated against the residents of the "Numbered Streets" neighbourhood. The ruling was confirmed by a court decision in October calling upon the local government to suspend the evictions.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Michael Georg Link criticised the authorities' practice and expressed his support for the findings of Mr Székely's report after a visit to Miskolc.<sup>24</sup> The U.S. Secretary of State also called on the local government to follow the instructions of OSCE via his "personal representative", Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Berschinski, who visited Miskolc.<sup>25</sup> The Miskolc case creates a new and very dangerous precedent with a tacit support of the government of Hungary.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> 'Forced Displacement in Hungary Sets Dangerous Precedent', *New Eastern Europe*, 28 July 2015, <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1669-forced-displacement-in-hungary-sets-dangerous-precedent>.

<sup>23</sup> 'Miskolc Nem Tiszteli a Törvényeinket?' ['Does Not Miskolc Respect Our Laws?'], *Roma Sajtóközpont*, 13 October 2015, <http://romasajtokozpont.hu/miskolc-nem-tiszteli-a-torvenyeinket/>.

<sup>24</sup> 'Authorities Need to Promote Sustainable, Non-Discriminatory Housing Solutions for Roma, ODIHR Director Link Says during Visit to Hungary', *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*, 1 July 2015, <http://www.osce.org/odihhr/167966>.

<sup>25</sup> 'Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Rob Berschinski Travels to Hungary', *HumanRights.gov*, 6 October 2015, <http://www.humanrights.gov/dyn/2015/10/deputy-assistant-secretary-of-state-for-democracy-human-rights-and-labor-rob-berchinski-travels-to-hungary/>.

<sup>26</sup> 'A Kúria törvénytörőnek találta a miskolci önkormányzat egy határozatát' ['Supreme Court (Curia) found the regulation of the local government in Miskolc unlawful'], *Sajómente.hu*, 14 May 2015, <http://www.sajomente.hu/reszletek/hirek/12224>

In Tapolca, led by a Jobbik mayor, the local social welfare system was modified in 2015. The new system reflects Jobbik's general discriminative approach and radical ideology, and consists of two key factors: on the one hand it is based on the restrictive principle of 'Clean garden, tidy house'<sup>27</sup>, and, on the other hand, it gives scope for arbitrary decisions by introducing subjective 'soft' requirements and giving much room for consideration to the mayor. Humiliation of and exerting total control over the vulnerable (including the poor and Roma) is reflected also in the announcement of Ózd's mayor<sup>28</sup> to keep the public workers under surveillance in order to increase the efficiency of their work and filter out idlers for pedagogic reasons.<sup>29</sup> However, the most restrictive and arbitrary social welfare system is in place in the village of Érpatak, governed by Mayor Mihály Zoltán Orosz since 2009. His 'Érpatak-model' has become famous across the country among far-right politicians. According to the watchdog NGO and online newspaper for investigative journalism Átlátszó, "the 'model of Érpatak' is based on 'changing blood-criminals' behaviour' by strict laws, constant control and denying social benefits in case of not 'standing in the line'".<sup>30</sup> The system can be described by the terms order, discipline and control. The mayor divides the residents into "builders" and "destroyers"; supporters and opponents of his model.

### **Legislation changes concerning asylum-seekers**

The legislation concerning asylum-seekers changed profoundly in 2015.<sup>31</sup> In July and in September, the National Assembly adopted new legislation amending and affecting various existing Acts and the Government issued related decrees.

The Government Decree on the National Designation of Safe Countries of Origin and Safe Third Countries entered into force on 22 July 2015. When the concept of safe third countries was introduced into the Hungarian asylum procedure in 2010, the concept was that it should be applied on a case-by-case basis and not as a list of countries. In spite of this, the decree established a list of safe third countries including all states along the Western Balkans route to Hungary, such as Greece, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and most importantly Serbia. The Hungarian Government included these countries in spite of the fact that United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had urged states not to return asylum-seekers to these countries, and other EU-countries did not treat these countries

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'Forced Displacement in Hungary Sets Dangerous Precedent', *New Eastern Europe*, 28 July 2015, <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1669-forced-displacement-in-hungary-sets-dangerous-precedent>

<sup>27</sup> The principle 'Clean garden, tidy house' makes the transfer of social benefits granted by the municipality dependent on the state of the inhabitant's house and garden, and aims at excluding those from public social benefits who do not care for their living environment. This is supposed to be a sign of accepting and respecting the rules of coexistence. This principle is one of Jobbik's top priorities and policy proposals also on the national level, as far as the social system and the coexistence of the Roma and non-Roma are concerned.

<sup>28</sup> Ózd is a former industry town in Northeast Hungary with approximately 37,000 residents in Northern Hungary. The town has a large Roma population.

<sup>29</sup> 'Érpatak után itt az ózdi modell' [After Érpatak, here comes the model of Ózd], *Hvg.hu*, 14 May 2015 [http://hvg.hu/velemenynyuzsog/20150514\\_Erpatak\\_utun\\_itt\\_az\\_ozdi\\_model](http://hvg.hu/velemenynyuzsog/20150514_Erpatak_utun_itt_az_ozdi_model)

<sup>30</sup> 'Érpatak: Radical mayor tries to set an iconic public security model', *Átlátszó*, 12 May 2012, <http://atlatszo.hu/2012/05/12/erpatak-radical-mayor-tries-to-set-an-iconic-public-security-model/>

<sup>31</sup> The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has prepared an extensive report on the legal measures and subsequent practice concerning asylum-seekers implemented by Hungary. (UNHCR, 2016. Hungary as a Country of Asylum) The following text is based on this report.



in the same sense as real safe third countries. According to the new regulation, the Office of Immigration and Nationality is obliged to reject all asylum applications filed by applicants who came through a safe third country, because the applicant “could have applied for effective protection there”. Since almost all asylum-seekers have entered Hungary via Serbia, the change means that almost all applications can be rejected almost automatically. At the same time, accelerated asylum application procedures became the norm after the new regulation came into force on 1 August, and the possibility of a judicial review of decisions was significantly limited. Moreover, the amendment extended the legal possibility of ordering the detention of asylum-seekers under Dublin procedures and increased the time they have to spend in detention to up to 36 hours.<sup>32</sup>

On 15 September the Government issued a decree Announcing a Crisis Situation Caused by Mass Immigration and Establishing the Rules related to the Declaration, Maintenance and Termination of the Crisis Situation. On the same day the “crisis situation” was declared in two counties and three day later it was extended to other three.

Also on 15 September, the Act on the Amendment of Certain Acts relating to the Management of Mass Immigration entered into force. It came along with the physical closure of the Hungarian-Serbian border by a fence. The new border procedure, introduced by the Act, meant that individuals arriving at the border of Hungary who wish to submit an asylum application must do so in special ‘transit zones’. According to the Act, such zones may be established at any of Hungary’s border that is an external Schengen border, however the decision lays in the Government’s hand completely.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, although prior to the establishment of this zones, thousands of people arrived at the border of Hungary, the entry to these were limited to only 100 asylum-seekers a day. It is also important to note, that in these zones, asylum procedure and reception conditions are not in accordance with European Union and other international standards, in particular concerning procedural safeguards, judicial review and freedom of movement.

The above-mentioned Act included an amendment to the Criminal Code which prohibited crossing and damaging the border closure, which became a criminal act, meaning that perpetrators can be detained and expelled from Hungary.<sup>34</sup> Between 15 September and 31 October 2015, the Police initiated criminal investigations in 865 cases in relation to criminal offences connected to the border fence. In the same period, 673 cases were brought to trial before the Court, all on charges of unauthorized crossing of the border fence. Nobody had been acquitted.

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<sup>32</sup> ‘Building a Legal Fence – Changes to Hungarian Asylum Law Jeopardise Access to Protection in Hungary’, *Hungarian Helsinki Committee*, 7 August 2015, <http://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC-HU-asylum-law-amendment-2015-August-info-note.pdf>.

<sup>33</sup> As of 31 October 2015, only four transit zones were established. Two at the Hungarian-Serbian border (Röszke and Tompa), and two at the Hungarian-Croatian border (Beremend and Letenye).

<sup>34</sup> ‘The Hungarian Helsinki Committee’s Opinion on the Governments Amendments to Criminal Law Related to the Sealed Border’, *Hungarian Helsinki Committee*, 16 September 2015, <http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/modification-of-criminal-laws-16092015.pdf>.

## 2. Law enforcement practice regarding minorities in Hungary in 2015

### Discriminatory practices against asylum-seekers

The harsh anti-refugee rhetoric of the Hungarian government, the amendments to asylum laws and the criminal code, and the practice employed by law enforcement agencies has served the same goals: on the one hand, keeping migrants out of the country by discouraging them from choosing Hungary as a transit route, and, on the other hand, demonstrating to the Hungarian public that asylum-seekers (and migration) pose a threat to Hungary, and that the government is determined to fight against them. The unprecedented number of asylum-seekers arriving to Hungary in 2015 overburdened the Hungarian refugee system and authorities. Although 177.000 asylum-seekers were registered in Hungary altogether in 2015, almost all of them had arrived by October. The closure of the Serbian border on 15 September and then the Croatian border on 16 October closed the route through Hungary. From then on, the number of asylum-seekers entering Hungary decreased to almost zero.

Law enforcement agencies' practice about asylum-seekers changed fundamentally in the course of 2015 due to changes in asylum regulations that took effect from July to September, as described in Chapter 1 above. The European Commission first communicated its concerns in October to the government about the new immigration laws and then launched an infringement procedure against Hungary for the violation of asylum-related EU law in December 2015.<sup>35</sup> The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights also criticised the regulations and law enforcement practice in November 2015 with the conclusion that Hungary violates its human rights obligations.<sup>36</sup> In an extremely critical statement on 17 September, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights came to the conclusion that legal amendments together with the practices applied since 15 September 2015 constitute a massive, multilevel violation of Hungary's international human rights obligations.<sup>37</sup>

Due to the new regulations and the border closure, receiving international protection in Hungary is almost impossible. Fast-track asylum procedures end with one of the two following outcomes: either the refoulement of the person to the country from which he or she entered Hungary (mainly Serbia) or asylum seekers are encouraged to leave Hungary towards Austria.

By mid-2015 reception, centres have become clearly overcrowded (with two or three times more people than their capacity).<sup>38</sup> The Council of Europe's anti-racism commission, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) severely criticised the situation at reception centres in a report published on 9 June.<sup>39</sup> The report writes about subpar

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<sup>35</sup> European Commission, 'Commission Opens Infringement Procedure against Hungary Concerning Its Asylum Law', 10 December 2015, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6228\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6228_en.htm).

<sup>36</sup> Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Hungary's Response to Refugee Challenge Falls Short on Human Rights', *Commissioner for Human Rights*, 27 November 2015, [http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/view/-/asset\\_publisher/ugj3i6qSEkhZ/content/hungary-s-response-to-refugee-challenge-falls-short-on-human-rights](http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/view/-/asset_publisher/ugj3i6qSEkhZ/content/hungary-s-response-to-refugee-challenge-falls-short-on-human-rights).

<sup>37</sup> 'Hungary Violating International Law in Response to Migration Crisis: Zeid', 17 September 2015, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16449&LangID=E>.

<sup>38</sup> 'A Befogadóállomás Rosszabb, Mint a Legtöbb Börtön' ['Detention Centers Are Worse than Most Prisons'], *Vs.hu*, 30 June 2015, <http://vs.hu/kozelet/osszes/a-befogadoallomas-rosszabb-mint-a-legtobb-borton-0630>.

<sup>39</sup> *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance Report on Hungary (Fifth Monitoring Cycle)*. Council of Europe, 9 June 2015, <https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Hungary/HUN-CbC-V-2015-19-ENG.pdf>. Even though the report was prepared following ECRI's visit to Hungary in June 2014 and takes

circumstances, hygienic problems, coarse treatment and insufficient legal assistance in the detention centres. The report also claimed that 22 percent of asylum seekers are limited in their personal freedom by being accommodated at closed-door reception facilities, in which physical and verbal abuse often happens. According to the report, the decision on which facility a person will be accommodated at is arbitrary. The same problems were reported in August 2015 by the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC) as well.<sup>40</sup> Since the closure of the southern borders, asylum-seekers who are allowed to enter the country are accommodated at transit zones right at the border until their application is processed. HHC criticised the following practices in the transit zone at the Hungarian-Serbian border at Röszke<sup>41</sup>: unlawful detention practice lacking any guarantees, no permanent access to professional legal advice, lack of cooperation with NGOs, denied entry to transit zones for NGOs, unsatisfactory quality of food provided to the detainees, long detention times instead of transfer to open asylum centres, lack of professional psychological support, limited availability of interpreters.<sup>42</sup> Inhuman conditions and degrading treatment were reported by Human Rights Watch and Médecins Sans Frontières too.<sup>43</sup> After an investigation of the situation in one of the closed detention centres in January 2015, Commissioner for Fundamental Rights László Székely reported serious breaches of law and fundamental personal rights of the detainees (e.g., constant surveillance and escort by armed guards, overcrowded rooms despite of the availability of enough free space, medical mistreatment, full body search of female detainees by male guards etc.).<sup>44</sup>

While overcrowding was one of the key points of criticism at the peak of the refugee influx, the situation changed after the closure of the borders. No new facilities have been erected, and a long-existing camp in Debrecen was closed in December. The move aimed at demonstrating the government's non-welcoming policy.

The government's efforts to prepare the ground for tougher legislation and the border closure and, additionally, to demonstrate how dangerous asylum-seekers are to society led to two major incidents. One occurred between the end of August and the beginning of September when thousands of migrants got stuck in Budapest because they were not permitted to board trains heading either to asylum centres or Austria. After a few days of chaos at Keleti railway station, many started to walk towards Vienna on the motorway. The other major incident

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account of developments up to 2014, it is very unlikely that the situation would have been improved due to the increased number of asylum seekers.

<sup>40</sup> Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 'Building a Legal Fence – Changes to Hungarian Asylum Law Jeopardise Access to Protection in Hungary', 7 August 2015, <http://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC-HU-asylum-law-amendment-2015-August-info-note.pdf>.

<sup>41</sup> Röszke is a village of approximately 3200 residents.

<sup>42</sup> Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 'Jelentés a Magyar Helsinki Bizottság 2015. Október 2-I Látogatásáról a Bevándorlási És Állampolgársági Hivatal Röszkei Tranzitzónájában' ['Report on Hungarian Helsinki Committee's Visit in the Transit Zone of the Office of Immigration and Nationality at Röszke on 2 October 2015'], 2 November 2015, <http://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/Roszkei-tranzitzona-jelentes-20151002-final.pdf>; Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 'No Country for Refugees - New Asylum Rules Deny Protection to Refugees and Lead to Unprecedented Human Rights Violations in Hungary', 18 September 2015, [http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC\\_Hungary\\_Info\\_Note\\_Sept-2015\\_No\\_country\\_for\\_refugees.pdf](http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC_Hungary_Info_Note_Sept-2015_No_country_for_refugees.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> "Szemenszedett Hazugság", Hogy Röszkén Sínylődnek' ['It's a Barefaced Lie' That People Languish in Röszke'], *NÉPSZAVA Online*, 10 September 2015, <http://nepszava.hu/cikk/1069316-szemenszedett-hazugsag-hogy-roszken-sinylodnek>.

<sup>44</sup> 'Vetkőztetés, Fegyveres Őrök a Játsszóházban, Szívbjaj Ellen Tetűirtás' ['Undressing, Armed Guards in the Playing Room, Lice Extermination to Prevent Heart Problems'], *Index.hu*, 22 May 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/22/debrecen\\_menekulttabor\\_alapveto\\_jogok\\_biztosa\\_jelentes\\_bevandorlok/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/22/debrecen_menekulttabor_alapveto_jogok_biztosa_jelentes_bevandorlok/).

occurred in Röszke on 16 September, just one day after the closure of the Hungarian-Serbian border, when a crowd gathered on the Serbian side, tore down the gate closing the border, and then proceeded to fight Hungarian Police. According to the government, aggressive migrants provoked conflict and attacked the police, while some media and news sources presenting on the spot reported that Hungarian authorities deliberately provoked conflict. Because the incident was never investigated, neither of the stories can be verified. What can be known for sure is that police reacted aggressively to the desperate actions of refugees, and overreacted the situation.<sup>45</sup> There have been reports on how police treated asylum-seekers, including ones on both humane and inhumane behaviour. While verbal offences often occurred and there have been cases when police officers abused their power and mistreated refugees (e.g., distributing food among refugees by throwing it<sup>46</sup>), there have also been many reports on humane treatment and generosity by police officers.<sup>47</sup>

**1. Image Police are distributing food among refugees by throwing it. Source: youtube.com<sup>48</sup>**



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<sup>45</sup> Attila Juhász, Bulcsú Hunyadi, and Edit Zgut (2015): *Focus on Hungary: Refugees, Asylum and Migration*. Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, Political Capital. ([http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/pc\\_boll\\_hungary\\_refugees\\_asylum\\_and\\_migration\\_web.pdf](http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/pc_boll_hungary_refugees_asylum_and_migration_web.pdf)).

<sup>46</sup> 'Video Shows Refugees Fed "like Animals in Pen" in Hungary Camp', *The Telegraph*, 11 September 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/hungary/11857695/Video-shows-refugees-fed-like-animals-in-pen-in-Hungary-camp.html>.

<sup>47</sup> 'Elfogattam Magamat Az Ásotthalmi Úton' ['I Made Myself Caught on the Road to Ásotthalmom'], *Index.hu*, 17 August 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/08/17/menekult\\_tabor\\_bentrol/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/08/17/menekult_tabor_bentrol/).

<sup>48</sup> 'Étetés a Röszkei Menekülttáborban' ['Feeding in the Refugee Camp at Röszke'], 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fu9hVyORhdc>.

## Discriminatory practices against the Roma<sup>49</sup>

Discriminatory law enforcement practices in connection to minorities affect mainly the Roma, the biggest minority group living in Hungary<sup>50</sup>. However, latency is very high in these cases. In 2014, six Hungarian NGOs urged the chief commissioner of Hungary's National Police in a letter to start investigations into such cases. These practices include not only the stopping of citizens based on their ethnic origin but also disproportionate and extreme fines.<sup>51</sup> A clear example of the former occurred in January 2015, when Béla Lakatos, the mayor of Ács, a small town in North-Western Hungary, a member of Fidesz, was stopped by the police for a roadside check only because he was Roma. He was convinced of that since he overheard one of the policemen saying on the radio to the headquarters that an "identity check of a minority person is under way"<sup>52</sup>. In a ruling in September, a court of the first instance acknowledged discrimination by the police against Roma citizens in the town of Gyöngyöspata<sup>53</sup>. According to the judgement, police violated the right to equal treatment of Roma citizens by not protecting them from extremists in 2011.<sup>54</sup> However, a few days later, in a similar case, the Curia approved the inaction of the police during an anti-Roma demonstration organised by far-right organisations in Devecser<sup>55</sup> in 2012. While demonstrators verbally threatened and insulted the local Roma population in the town and threw various objects at them and their houses, the police remained inactive. According to the ruling, the demonstration, in general, went without incident. Therefore the violent and angry mass did not need to be dissolved. Earlier, the National Police Headquarters stated in a decision that police intervention would have led to a confrontation between demonstrators and the police which would have posed an imminent threat to the local population.<sup>56</sup> According to a decision of the Ministry of Interior published in February 2015, however, the deputy minister had reprimanded five senior police officers of the Budapest Metropolitan Police Headquarters for discriminative measures against the Roma. Moreover, he ordered the local police chiefs to implement the necessary measures to avoid future discrimination and include anti-discrimination contents in the education programme for police officers. The decision came after senior local police officers in Budapest prevented a Roma family from moving into a flat, which they had rightfully bought by undertaking unlawful and discriminative measures. Moreover, not even the complaint of the victims had been

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<sup>49</sup> This chapter is partly based on: Ildikó Barna and Bulcsú Hunyadi (2015): *Report on Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Hungary (January–June 2015)*. European Center for Democracy Development, [http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/Xenophobia%20and%20Radical%20Nationalism%20Report\\_Hungary.pdf](http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/Xenophobia%20and%20Radical%20Nationalism%20Report_Hungary.pdf).

<sup>50</sup> Their estimated number is between 550-700 thousand.

<sup>51</sup> 'Absurd Fines Imposed against Hungary's Roma', *TASZ*, 5 September 2014, <http://tasz.hu/en/romaprogram/absurd-fines-imposed-against-hungarys-roma>.

<sup>52</sup> 'Roma Mayor Accuses Hungarian Police of Racial Profiling', *Budapest Beacon*, 23 January 2015, <https://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/roma-mayor-accuses-hungarian-police-of-racial-profiling/18480>.

<sup>53</sup> Gyöngyöspata is a small town of approximately 2,500 residents situated in the western part of Hungary.

<sup>54</sup> 'Roma Discriminated Against By Hungarian Police', *TASZ*, 29 September 2015, <http://tasz.hu/en/romaprogram/roma-discriminated-against-hungarian-police>.

<sup>55</sup> Devecser is a town of approximately 4,300 residents situated in the northeast part of Hungary. The town is infamous for ethnic tensions between the Roma and non-Roma residents.

<sup>56</sup> 'A Bíróság Szerint Nem Mulasztott a Rendőrség Devecserben' ['According to the Court, Police Have Not Failed to Act in Devecser'], *Roma Sajtóközpont*, 23 September 2015, <http://romasajtokozpont.hu/a-birosag-szerint-nem-mulasztott-a-rendorseg-devecserben/>.

investigated by the competent department of the police headquarters.<sup>57</sup> The arbitrary measures by the police forced the family to leave and sell their flat.

It often happens that the police, prosecutors and courts are reluctant to recognise violent and non-violent crimes committed against minorities as hate crimes. Criminal acts with clear hate motivation are often registered only as minor offences. NGOs have constantly raised their voice and urged the authorities to change their practice<sup>58</sup>. In its ruling in October 2015, the European Court of Human Rights condemned the Hungarian authorities for not having investigated the case properly to explore racist motivation behind an attack against a Roma man back in 2011.<sup>59</sup> In the case against the perpetrators of the serial murder of Roma in 2008 and 2009, the Curia in its verbal statement during the second-degree ruling in January 2016 did not stress the racist motive, and the terms ‘Roma’, ‘anti-gypsy’ or ‘racist’ were not even mentioned. The Curia failed to make a stand against racism while announcing the judgement, which was covered by a wide range of media outlets.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> ‘Megrovás a Romákat Diszkrimináló Rendőröknek’ [‘Reprimand to Police Officers Who Discriminated against Roma’], *Roma Sajtóközpont*, 10 February 2015, [http://romasajtokozpont.hu/megrovvas-a-romakat-diszkriminalo-rendoroknek\\_v2/](http://romasajtokozpont.hu/megrovvas-a-romakat-diszkriminalo-rendoroknek_v2/).

<sup>58</sup> For example: ‘Hogyan Keni El a Rendőrség a Gyűlölet-Bűncselekményeket?’ [‘How Does Police Cover Hate Crimes Up?’], *TASZ*, 5 October 2011, <http://tasz.hu/romaprogram/hogyan-keni-el-rendorseg-gyulolet-buncselekményeket>; ‘Előítélet (Nem) Számít!?’ [‘Does (Not) Prejudice Matter?’], *TASZ*, 30 April 2013, <http://tasz.hu/romaprogram/elotelet-nem-szamit>.

<sup>59</sup> ‘3 Millió Forintot Ítétek Meg Egy Megvert Magyar Romának Strasbourban’ [‘Strasbourg Court Ruled Compensation of 3 Million Forints for Beaten Hungarian Roma’], *Index.hu*, 20 October 2015, [http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/10/20/rasszista\\_tamadas\\_strasbourg\\_itelet\\_szeged/](http://index.hu/kulfold/2015/10/20/rasszista_tamadas_strasbourg_itelet_szeged/).

<sup>60</sup> ‘The Sentencing of the Defendants in the Attacks against Roma Victims Is Binding’, *TASZ*, 24 February 2016, <http://tasz.hu/en/romaprogram/sentencing-defendants-attacks-against-roma-victims-binding>.

### 3. The government's rhetoric regarding migrants and minorities

#### The government's rhetoric concerning migrants<sup>61</sup>

Migration became the number one political issue in Hungary in 2015, fuelled and directed by the government and the governing parties mainly for political purposes. In its rhetoric, the government framed the topic of migration mainly in the context of terrorism, economic, cultural, religious and social fears, and anti-EU sentiments. The opposition and civil society groups could not offer any resistance to the government's overwhelming advantage in spreading such messages. Thus, the government's viewpoint became the predominant one in both privately-owned and publicly broadcasted media<sup>62</sup>. The government achieved its goal to keep the issue on top of the political agenda by various methods. Regarding communication, the government launched three wide-reaching campaigns in 2015: the "national consultation on immigration and terrorism" in the spring, during which a letter was sent to every household including a manipulative questionnaire, a billboard campaign during the summer, and a campaign against the EU quota system at year end. As long as the influx of asylum-seekers lasted, the government's rhetoric mainly focused on the potential threats related to migration (terrorism, health concerns, economic consequences, loss of jobs, cultural differences, public security problems, etc.), and presented migrants as aggressive and dangerous people. However, after the number of asylum-seekers entering Hungary decreased to close to zero as a result of the closure of the Hungary-Serbia border, the focus of the government's rhetoric shifted, and the European Commission's quota plan has become the key target against which the country has to be defended. This topic has become the new vehicle for the story, and that is why the government initiated a national referendum on the quota system in October, which will not have any legal consequences.

When referring to asylum-seekers coming to Hungary, government officials and Fidesz politicians deliberately and consistently avoided the term refugees and asylum-seekers, and, instead, used the terms 'subsistence immigrants', 'economic immigrants', 'illegal immigrants' and termed the phenomenon the 'modern era migration of the peoples'<sup>63</sup>, suggesting that all these people had left their homelands for economic reasons and were only pretending to be refugees.<sup>64</sup> In general, the government's anti-immigration campaign has been using a populist,

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<sup>61</sup> This chapter is partly based on Barna and Hunyadi: *Report on Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Hungary (January–June 2015)*.

<sup>62</sup> Vera Messing and Gábor Bernáth, 'Bedarálva – A Menekültekkel Kapcsolatos Kormányzati Kampány És a Tőle Független Megszólalás Terepei' ['Mincsed – The Government's Campaign Concerning the Refugees and Other Opportunities to Speak'], *Médiakutató*, no. Winter (2015), [http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2015\\_04\\_tel/01\\_menekultek\\_moralis\\_panik.pdf](http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2015_04_tel/01_menekultek_moralis_panik.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> During his visit to Hungary's second-largest city, Debrecen, where there is a refugee camp, PM Orbán corrected the terminology used by the mayor, who referred to the camp as a refugee camp. Orbán said he would rather use the term 'immigrant camp'. According to him, the distinction is important because refugees are accepted in Hungary, while immigrants are asked to leave: "We want them not to come. And we want those who are already here to go home."

'Orbán Eltökélte, Bezárítja a Debreceni Menekülttábor' ['Orbán Is Determined to Close the Refugee Camp in Debrecen'], *Index.hu*, 18 May 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/18/orban\\_eltokelte\\_bezarítja\\_a\\_debreceni\\_menekulttabort](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/18/orban_eltokelte_bezarítja_a_debreceni_menekulttabort).

<sup>64</sup> Lajos Kósa, deputy chair of Fidesz, said in a video interview in June 2015 that 99 per cent of migrants entering Hungary are not refugees, but illegal immigrants. 'Akik Itt élősködnek, Azok a Plakátokat Is Megértik' ['Parasites

xenophobic rhetoric that resembles far-right messages elsewhere in Europe. Government and Fidesz party officials have linked migration to terrorism, crime and unemployment, and accused migrants of spreading diseases, committing crimes, and stealing jobs from Hungarians. The government's approach was based on political motives: the stabilization of its electoral support and regaining momentum in domestic politics by setting the tone, stealing the topic from Jobbik, and presenting the Hungarian population with a 'common enemy' against which the government is taking a determined stance in order to 'defend the nation'. The government aimed at splitting the political spectrum into two conflicting camps to dominate the public discourse: those who serve the 'national interest' and therefore oppose immigration and reject accepting any refugees in Hungary, and those who support immigration and therefore 'betray Hungarian interests'. Moreover, Fidesz intended to monopolise completely the anti-immigration position to exclude other political actors.<sup>65</sup>

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his right-wing populist party, Fidesz, set off on the radicalising course in January 2015, just a few days after the attack against the French magazine Charlie Hebdo. The starting point was the solidarity march in Paris where Mr Orbán claimed that immigration is a bad thing because it only brings trouble and danger to the European people. Furthermore, he announced the following: "We [Hungarians] do not want to see minorities of significant size with different cultural characteristics and backgrounds among us. We want to keep Hungary as Hungary."<sup>66</sup>

**2. Image Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán at the solidarity march in Paris on January 11, 2015. Source: vagy.hu<sup>67</sup>**



Who Are in Hungary Surely Understand the Billboards, Too'], *Index.hu*, 8 June 2015, [http://index.hu/video/2015/06/08/plakat\\_korkerdes\\_parlament/](http://index.hu/video/2015/06/08/plakat_korkerdes_parlament/).

<sup>65</sup> For further information on the political motives of the Government's anti-immigration stance, see: Péter Krekó and Attila Juhász (2015): *Desperate Search for the Lost Popularity Governmental Campaign against Refugees and Migrants in Hungary*. Budapest: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

<sup>66</sup> 'Orban demonises immigrants at Paris march', *EU Observer*, 12 January 2015, <https://euobserver.com/justice/127172>

<sup>67</sup> 'Jesu(i)s!', *Vagy.hu*, 15 January 2015, [http://www.vagy.hu/tartalom/cikk/8306\\_jesuis](http://www.vagy.hu/tartalom/cikk/8306_jesuis)



The very next day, Antal Rogán, leader of Fidesz's parliamentary group, made anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant statements saying that the presence of Muslim communities demolishes the internal order of Christian countries in Western Europe and that it is not in Hungary's interest to accept economic migrants with traditions completely different from Hungarian ones.<sup>68</sup>

In April 2015, the government launched the so-called 'National Consultation on Immigration and Terrorism' comprising of a questionnaire with 12 questions sent by post to every citizen over 18, more than eight million questionnaires in total. The letter accompanying the questionnaire, signed by PM Orbán, labels asylum seekers "economic migrants" and said that "economic migrants cross the border illegally pretending to be refugees, while in reality, they seek social allowances and jobs". He assured the citizens that although Brussels has failed in handling immigration, the government "will not let economic migrants endanger Hungarian people's jobs and livelihoods".<sup>69</sup> While the consultation pretended to be a survey, in reality, most questions were preceded by a statement echoing the Government's anti-immigration rhetoric and PM Orbán's statements in the letter. The consultation, therefore, earned much criticism both domestically (e.g., from opposition parties and NGOs<sup>70</sup>) and internationally (e.g., from the European Commission, various MEPs, the Council of Europe, and the UNHCR).<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> 'Ki mondta? Rogán Antal vagy Vona Gábor?' ['Who said that, Antal Rogán or Gábor Vona?'], *Index.hu*, 12 January 2015, [http://index.hu/mindekozben/poszt/2015/01/12/ki\\_mondta\\_rogan\\_antal\\_vagy\\_vona\\_gabor/](http://index.hu/mindekozben/poszt/2015/01/12/ki_mondta_rogan_antal_vagy_vona_gabor/)

<sup>69</sup> Government of Hungary, 'National Consultation on Immigration and Terrorism', 2015, [http://www.kormany.hu/download/7/e2/50000/nemzeti\\_konzultacio\\_beveandorlas\\_2015.pdf](http://www.kormany.hu/download/7/e2/50000/nemzeti_konzultacio_beveandorlas_2015.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> For instance, six NGOs that were members of the Working Group Against Hate Crimes called on the government to stop inciting hatred against migrants. 'A Kormány Hagyja Abba a Gyűlöletkeltést a Migránsok Ellen' ['The Government Must Stop Inciting Hatred against Migrants'], *A Magyar Helsinki Bizottság*, 23 July 2015, <http://www.helsinki.hu/a-kormany-hagyja-abba-gyuloletkeltest-a-migransok-ellen/>.

<sup>71</sup> 'CoE Ombudsman Chides Orban for Hungary's "populist Trends", *Daily News Hungary*, 2 May 2015, <http://dailynewshungary.com/coe-ombudsmanchides-orban-for-hungarys-populist-trends/>; 'UNHCR Calls on Hungary to Protect, Not Persecute, Refugees', 8 May 2015, <http://www.unhcr-centraleurope.org/en/news/2015/>

3. Image Foreword and questionnaire of the National Consultation on Immigration and Terrorism. Source: [vastagbor.atlatszo.hu](http://vastagbor.atlatszo.hu)<sup>72</sup>



**Tisztelt Magyar Polgár!**

Mi, magyarok 2010-ben egy határozottan, hogy minden forrás közből megfoghatunk egyaránt, minden dologokat hozunk. Eseti indítottak a nemzeti konzultációt többek között az ország új alapértékeiről, mindannyiunk a családok biztonságáról, a nyugdíjakok helytartásáról juttatásról. Ez azért indultak most is a nemzeti konzultációt a megfigyelési bevándorlási kérdésekről.

Miért létezik ezekben, Európát az év eleji példátlan terrorizmusok miatt még. Pénteken ártatlan emberek életét elveszték és legyetlen kórházzal és újabb katasztrófával. Mindannyiunkat megfoghatják a szörnyű, ami történik. És az emberek által felgyújtatlan országokhoz az is tartozhat, hogy Brüsszel és az Európai Unió nem lépés megfigyelő módon kezeli a bevándorlási kérdést.

A megfigyelési bevándorlók törvénytelenül lépik át a határt, és sokszor nemcsak állítják be magukat, valójában a nemzeti juttatásokra és a munkahelyeiket jövelek. Csak az ország többnyire kétségbe nem hozható biztonsága miatt a megfigyelési bevándorlók miatt Magyarországon, és egy új típusú fenyegetés: jövelek, amit még leE állítanak.

Mivel Brüsszel kudarcot vallott a bevándorlási kérdésben, Magyarországnak a saját útját kell járnia. Nem fogjuk hagyni, hogy a megfigyelési bevándorlók veszélyeztessék a magyar emberek munkahelyeit és megfigyelését.

Döntés kell hoznunk arról, hogyan kell védekezni Magyarországnak a törvénytelen határátjárókkal szemben. Döntésünk kell, hogyan kerüljenek a szociális rendszerünk növekvő megfigyelési bevándorlók.

Tisztelettel arra kérem, lépjen velünk kapcsolatba, mondja el nekünk is, hogy mit gondol a fentebb leírtakról, illetve ki, és hozzájáruljon a kérdőívhez. Szívesen látjuk a véleményét.

Üdvözléssel:  
  
**Orbán Viktor**

## NEMZETI KONZULTÁCIÓ

### a bevándorlásról és a terrorizmusról

HÍRLELTÁRSÁG / HÍRKEZELŐKÖZPONT

**Töltse ki a kérdőívet!**

**1]** Ismétlődő véleményét lehet hallani az esetleges terrorizmusok kapcsán? Ön nemcsak a terrorizmus törvényeiről és a terrorizmusról beszél, az EU-ról is beszél a terrorizmusról a saját élete során?

Nagyon fontos  Fontos  Nem fontos

**7]** Tízmagyar-e Ön a magyar kormányt, hogy Brüsszel megfigyelési példájával szemben megfigyelési bevándorlók szabályozását tervezze?

Igen, teljes mértékben támogatom  Nem támogatom

**2]** Ön szerint az elővetterítésekben lehet-e terrorizmusok elkerülése Magyarországon?

Egyáltalán nem  Kétséges  Teljesen igen

**8]** Támogatja-e Ön a magyar kormányt, hogy a magyar kormány a terrorizmus elleni küzdelem érdekében a magyar határ törvénytelenül átlépő bevándorlók?

Igen, teljes mértékben támogatom  Nem támogatom

**3]** Van-e, akik szerint a Brüsszel által vezetett bevándorlási megfigyelésben van a terrorizmus törvényeiről. Ön egyetért-e velük a véleményükkel?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

**9]** Egyetért-e Ön azokkal a véleményekkel, hogy a magyar határ törvénytelenül átlépő bevándorlók a lehető leggyorsabban el kell távolítani a saját hazájukból?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

**4]** Úgy-e Ön, hogy a megfigyelési bevándorlók törvénytelenül lépik át a magyar határt és az ország többnyire biztonságát veszélyezteti?

Igen  Talán nem  Nem tudom

**10]** Egyetért-e Ön azokkal, hogy a megfigyelési bevándorlók, azaz Magyarországon tartózkodnak, saját maguk biztonságát veszélyeztetik?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

**5]** Ismétlődő véleményét hallani a bevándorlási kérdésről kapcsolatban. Van-e, akik szerint a megfigyelési bevándorlók veszélyeztetik a magyar emberek munkahelyeit és megfigyelését? Ön egyetért-e velük a véleményükkel?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

**11]** Egyetért-e Ön azokkal, hogy a bevándorlási elleni küzdelem érdekében az Európai Unió tagországai megfigyelési szabályozást hoznak, ahogyan a terrorizmus elleni küzdelem?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

**6]** Van-e, akik szerint a Brüsszel politikája a terrorizmus és a terrorizmus elleni küzdelem érdekében megfigyelési és új megfigyelési törvény hozásával szemben a terrorizmus. Ön egyetért-e velük a véleményükkel?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

**12]** Egyetért-e Ön a magyar kormányval abban, hogy a bevándorlási törvények között a magyar családok és a szociális rendszerük támogatása van a cél?

Teljesen egyetértek  Kétséges  Nem értek egyet

The Government’s next anti-immigration campaign involved a billboard campaign launched in June. The billboards appeared across the whole country and ran three messages: 1) “If you come to Hungary, you have to respect our culture.” 2) “If you come to Hungary, you have to respect our laws.” 3) “If you come to Hungary, you cannot take away Hungarians’ jobs.”<sup>73</sup> While Government officials insisted that the campaign targeted immigrants and human traffickers alike, the billboards only appeared in Hungarian and Hungary. This fact leads to the evident conclusion that the campaign, in fact, targeted the domestic audience and served solely domestic political goals.

<sup>72</sup> ‘Aggódsz, hogy a szélsőségesek hatalomra kerülnek? Nyugi, már ott vannak’ [‘Are you worried that radicals might come into power? Take it easy, they have been already there’], *Vastagbőr*, 24 April 2015, <http://vastagbor.atlatszo.hu/2015/04/24/aggodsz-hogy-mi-lesz-ha/>

<sup>73</sup> ‘Hungary’s Anti-Immigration Campaign Sparks Controversy’, *Yahoo News*, 8 June 2015, <http://news.yahoo.com/hungarys-anti-immigration-campaign-sparks-controversy-174317745.html>

4. Image Two billboards of the government's first billboard campaign. Source: *nemhiszemhogy.blog.hu*<sup>74</sup>



A new billboard campaign, which, according to the government, promoted the results of the national consultation, started in the middle of September, just a few days after the violent incidents at Röszke border crossing. The billboard displayed the following text: “The people have decided: The country needs to be protected”.<sup>75</sup> The campaign fit into the government’s rhetoric that presented Hungary as a fortress that needs to be defended, and the refugees as conquerors.<sup>76</sup> The government’s spokesperson, Zoltán Kovács said for instance that the incident at Röszke was a premeditated, conscious attack against Hungary and the Hungarian police. In a speech in the Hungarian Parliament in September, PM Orbán claimed that several million people are attacking the borders of Europe, and our lifestyle based on the respect for law is in danger. According to his assumption, “who is under attack, cannot admit foreigners”.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> ‘Ha Magyarországra jössz, nem veheted el a magyarok munkáját’ [‘If you come to Hungary, you should not take the jobs of Hungarians’], *Nemhiszemhogy Blog*, 11 June 2015, [http://nemhiszemhogy.blog.hu/2015/06/11/ha\\_magyarorszagra\\_jossz\\_nem\\_veheded\\_el\\_a\\_magyarok\\_munkajat](http://nemhiszemhogy.blog.hu/2015/06/11/ha_magyarorszagra_jossz_nem_veheded_el_a_magyarok_munkajat)

<sup>75</sup> ‘Government Plans New Anti-Immigrant Billboard Campaign’, *Budapest Business Journal*, 17 September 2015, [http://bbj.hu/politics/government-plans-new-anti-immigrant-billboard-campaign\\_104225](http://bbj.hu/politics/government-plans-new-anti-immigrant-billboard-campaign_104225).

<sup>76</sup> This image goes back to historic events when the Ottoman Empire conquered a part of Hungary but not succeeded to move further to Western Europe.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Teljesen Belefeledkezett a Kormány a Menekültek Elleni Uszításba’ [‘The Government Is Completely Locked into Inciting Hatred against Refugees’], *Abcúg*, 16 August 2016, <http://abcug.hu/teljesen-belefeledkezett-kormany-menekultek-elleni-uszitasba/>.

5. Image Billboard campaign in September. Source: nol.hu<sup>78</sup>



The third main wave of the government's campaign came after the closure of the southern borders when there were practically no more refugees present in Hungary anymore. In early November, Fidesz announced to launch a petition against the mandatory quota system or the "forced settlement quota" as they put it.<sup>79</sup> The campaign received fresh impetus due to the terrorist attacks in Paris in November, and since then the terror threat has become the central element of the government's rhetoric. In an interview with Politico in November, PM Orbán said that the connection between terrorism and the movement of Muslims into Europe is "an obvious fact," and that all the terrorists are migrants," the only question is "when they migrated to the European Union."<sup>80</sup>

Besides security, economic and social threats, the cultural threat posed by the refugees was also an important element of the government's rhetoric. Leading Fidesz politicians many times referred to insurmountable cultural differences between Christian Europe and Muslim refugees, which makes the integration of refugees impossible.<sup>81</sup> This form of reasoning leads to the idea of a war of cultures/religions. In an interview with the German daily Bild, PM Orbán expressed his concern that "through immigration, Muslims will be in the majority in Europe in the foreseeable future. If Europe allows a contest of cultures, then the Christians will lose". According to him, the only way out for those who want to preserve Europe as a Christian culture is not to let in more and more Muslims!<sup>82</sup>

Additionally, conspiracy theories have also played an important role in the government's rhetoric. Government officials often referred to migration as a phenomenon

<sup>78</sup> 'Belföld: Itt Az Új Menekültellenes Kormányplakát' ['Domestic News: Here Is the Government's New Anti-Refugee Billboard'], *Nol.hu*, 16 September 2015, <http://nol.hu/belfold/itt-az-uj-menekultellenes-plakat-1563539>.

<sup>79</sup> 'Kosa: Fidesz Launches Signature Drive against EU's Mandatory Migrant Quota', *Daily News Hungary*, 4 November 2015, <http://dailynewshungary.com/kosa-fidesz-launches-signature-drive-against-eus-mandatory-migrant-quota/>.

<sup>80</sup> "All the Terrorists Are Migrants", *Politico*, 23 November 2015, <http://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-interview-terrorists-migrants-eu-russia-putin-borders-schengen/>.

<sup>81</sup> 'We Will Not Be Able to Integrate Migrants in a Cultural Sense', *Kormany.hu*, 5 November 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/we-will-not-be-able-to-integrate-migrants-in-a-cultural-sense>.

<sup>82</sup> 'Darum Baut Ungarn Einen Zaun Gegen Flüchtlinge' ['That's Why Hungary Is Building a Fence against Refugees'], *Bild*, 12 September 2015, <http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/viktor-orban/darum-baut-ungarn-einen-zaun-gegen-fluechtlinge-42544402.bild.html>.

actively encouraged or organised by some with the aim to conquer Europe. One of the main targets of such rhetoric has been György Soros, the billionaire U.S. businessman with Jewish-Hungarian origins. According to senior government politicians including the PM, Soros is one of the masterminds behind the refugee flow, who is funding it via human rights NGOs that help refugees because of economic interests on the one hand, and to weaken nation-states on the other.<sup>83</sup> Another conspiracy theory was proclaimed by the Mayor of Szentgotthárd, a town in Western Hungary, Gábor Huszár, a member of Fidesz. According to his opinion outlined at the city's Resource Committee meeting, the terrorist attacks in Paris in November "is clear proof that certain business circles want Christian Europe to turn against Islam". And he continued: „the Jewish state may also be behind all this”.<sup>84</sup>

### **The government's rhetoric concerning the Roma**

Government officials often used Roma integration as an excuse for why Hungary is unable to accept asylum-seekers. The most significant case was PM Orbán's speech given to Hungarian diplomats, in which he said the following: "Likewise, it is a historical feature of Hungary and a given – regardless of what anyone may think about it, whether one likes it or not – that we live together with hundreds of thousands of Roma. Someone, somewhere, at some point in time, decided on this. This is a situation which we have inherited. This is our situation. This is a given which no one can object to or call into question in any way. We have to live with it. At the same time, however, we cannot require others – in particular, others to the west of us – to follow suit, and demand that they should also live with a substantial Roma minority. What is more, when members of this Roma minority decide to leave for Canada, we want to make it very clear that we would like them to stay, and that we want to solve the formidable problems involved in our co-existence so that they can stay."<sup>85</sup> The speech triggered criticism among some Roma rights activists, who claimed that the PM labelled the Roma as newcomers.

Another time, Hungarian Justice Minister László Trócsányi, who, while attacking the European Union's proposed refugee redistribution quota system, said in May that Hungary was not able to accept any more 'economic migrants' because integrating 800,000 Roma already posed a huge burden on the country.<sup>86</sup> Mayor Béla Lakatos (Fidesz) of Ács settlement, who is Romani, called Mr Trócsányi's comment unacceptable; in his view, Mr Trócsányi's statement did not express the Government's commitment towards Roma integration and it was inciting

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<sup>83</sup> 'Billionaire Soros Comes under Fire in Homeland', *CNBC*, 14 October 2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/10/14/billionaire-george-soros-comes-under-fire-in-hungary.html>; 'Fidesz Says Soros Is the Man behind the Plan to Undermine Europe and Christendom', *Budapest Beacon*, 3 November 2015, <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/fidesz-says-soros-is-the-man-behind-the-plan-to-undermine-europe-and-christendom/28827>.

<sup>84</sup> 'Izrael Állhat a Párizsi Merénylet Mögött a Fideszes Polgármester Szerint' ['Israel Might Be behind the Paris Terror Act, according to a Fidesz-Mayor'], *Index.hu*, 29 November 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/29/izrael\\_allhat\\_a\\_parizsi\\_merenylet\\_mogott\\_a\\_szentgotthardi\\_polgarmester\\_szerint/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/29/izrael_allhat_a_parizsi_merenylet_mogott_a_szentgotthardi_polgarmester_szerint/).

<sup>85</sup> 'Orbán Viktor Beszéde a Külképviselet-Vezetők Értekezletén' ['Viktor Orbán's Speech at a Meeting of the Heads of Hungary's Diplomatic Missions Abroad'], *Kormany.hu*, 7 September 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/a-miniszterelnok/beszedekek-publikaciok-interjuk/orban-viktor-beszede-a-kulkepviselet-vezetok-ertekezleten-2015>.

<sup>86</sup> 'Hungarian Justice Minister Says No to Immigrants Because Gypsies Already Pose Huge Burden', *Hungarian Free Press*, 22 May 2015, <http://hungarianfreepress.com/2015/05/22/hungarian-justice-ministersays-no-to-immigrants-because-gypsies-already-pose-huge-burden/>

anti-Roma sentiments instead by suggesting that due to funds spent on Roma integration the country was unable to cope with other challenges and finance other aims. Mr Lakatos said that Romani mayors had been concerned that the government would somehow link the refugee issue to the Roma community.<sup>87</sup>

Justice Minister, László Trócsányi went even further than that when speaking at a conference in Brussels in October. He said that the integration of the Roma is especially important since they could be a target of radicalization. Many concluded – based on the topic of the conference – that Mr Trócsányi linked Islamic extremism to the Roma community, however after realizing the adverse reactions both in Hungary and abroad, the Minister denied it.<sup>88</sup>

János Lázár, Minister of the Prime Minister’s Office, also compared the Roma and asylum-seekers, saying that Hungary has been struggling for many long years with the integration of the Roma population living with us for some 600 years. “How could we integrate anyone who is not one of us?” – he asked.<sup>89</sup>

### **The government’s rhetoric concerning the Jews**

PM Viktor Orbán has proclaimed many times since 2010 that his government applies zero tolerance towards anti-Semitism. The government has a generally good relationship with Jewish organisations, there are, however, disputes from time to time as well. The last major conflict occurred in 2014 in relation to the German occupation memorial and the plans for a new Holocaust museum, the House of Fates. The latter topic is still on the agenda, but the government has given in to the demand and criticism of the Jewish community and promised to involve it in the preparation of the museum.<sup>90</sup>

A major issue between the government and the Jewish community in 2015 was the erection of a statue of Bálint Hóman, a historian, MP and minister from the interwar period with anti-Semitic views. He played an active role in the anti-Semitic politics of the period. A local NGO initiated the erection of the statue in Székesfehérvár, a town in central Hungary, which was his constituency. Although the Ministry of Justice and the municipality of Székesfehérvár financially supported the project earlier, due to vehement criticism both domestically and internationally, PM Orbán abandoned the idea just a few weeks before the planned date of erection. While in May 2015 he commemorated Bálint Hóman in his speech when he visited Székesfehérvár and urged Hóman’s rehabilitation, in December he said that according to the Fundamental Law no one who collaborated with occupying powers shall be commemorated

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<sup>87</sup> ‘A Roma Polgármesterek Számítottak Rá, Hogy Cigányozás Lesz a Bevándorlózásból’ [‘Roma Mayors Were Prepared That Anti-Migrant Rhetoric Would Turn into Anti-Roma Messages’], *Index.hu*, 22 May 2015, <http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/22/lakatos/>

<sup>88</sup> ‘Hungarian Fantasies about a Radical Roma Community Allied to Islamic Extremists’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 21 October 2015, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/10/21/hungarian-fantasies-about-a-radical-roma-community-allied-to-islamic-extremists/>.

<sup>89</sup> ‘Illegal Migration and Terrorism Go Hand in Hand’, *Kormany.hu*, 27 November 2015, <http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/illegal-migration-and-terrorism-go-hand-in-hand>.

<sup>90</sup> ‘Lázár És a Mazsihisz Hómanban És Schmidt Máriában Nem Ért Egyet’ [‘Lázár and Mazsihisz Don’t Agree about Hóman and Maria Schmidt’], 11 August 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/08/11/megujulhatnak\\_a\\_zsidotemetok\\_tovabb\\_huzodik\\_a\\_sorsok\\_haza\\_ugye/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/08/11/megujulhatnak_a_zsidotemetok_tovabb_huzodik_a_sorsok_haza_ugye/).



with a statue.<sup>91</sup> Earlier, various senior government officials condemned the political views and legacy of Bálint Hóman and declared that no statue shall be erected for him.<sup>92</sup>

In August, the Hungarian government erected a Holocaust memorial in Kamenets-Podolsk, a city in the western Ukraine, where 23,600 Jews were massacred by the SS in 1941. 18,000 of the victims had been deported by the Hungarian authorities from Hungary and handed over to German occupying troops. In his inauguration speech, Deputy State Secretary for Priority Social Affairs Csaba Latorcai expressed Hungary's condolences, and said that the memorial is supposed to be a warning to all, showing to what tragedy the decision of certain then-public officers led, although they did not foresee it.<sup>93</sup>

### **The government's rhetoric concerning the LGBTQ community**

The most significant incident in terms of the government's rhetoric concerning the LGBTQ community in 2015 was PM Orbán's comment in May. A day after the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, a reporter from the internet new site, *Index* asked a provocative question of Hungarian PM, Viktor Orbán since the Hungarian government, unlike others in international politics, did not make any statement on the previous day. In his reply, Orbán, clearly surprised by the question, said "Hungary is a serious country. It is fundamentally based on traditional values. Hungary is a tolerant nation. Tolerance, however, does not mean that we would apply the same legislation for people whose lifestyle is different from our own. We differentiate between them and us. Furthermore, he expressed his gratitude to the Hungarian LGBTQ community by saying: I am grateful to the Hungarian homosexual community for not exhibiting the provocative behaviour against which numerous European nations are struggling and which results in an outcome that is the exact opposite of what they want to achieve." According to his evaluation, LGBTQ people are safe in Hungary and their human dignity, as they are entitled to it, is respected. He then added: "If we make more stringent regulations or the community of homosexuals starts being more provocative, I think that the current peaceful, calm equilibrium will be no more. No one would benefit from this."<sup>94</sup>

Another major incident occurred in relation to the annual gay parade called Budapest Pride. A month before the event, István Tarlós, Lord-Mayor of Budapest and Máté Kocsis, Mayor of the 8th district of Budapest and communications director of Fidesz both made negative comments about the Pride. According to Mr Kocsis, the Pride should not be held in a World Heritage area (on the Andrásy Avenue), instead it should take place in the parking lot

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<sup>91</sup> 'Orbán Viktor Nem Támogatja a Hóman-Szobor Felállítását' ['Viktor Orbán Does Not Support the Erection of the Statue of Hóman'], *Origo*, 16 December 2015, <http://www.origo.hu/itthon/20151216-orban-viktor-megcfolta-majusi-szavait.html>.

<sup>92</sup> 'Trócsányi: Hóman Politikai Tevékenysége Vállalhatatlan' ['Trócsányi: Hóman's Political Legacy Is Unacceptable'], *MNO.hu*, 13 August 2015, <http://mno.hu/belfold/trocsanyi-homan-politikai-tevenysege-vallalhatatlan-1299949>.

<sup>93</sup> 'Holokauszt-Emlékművet Állított a Magyar Kormány Kamjanec-Pogyilskijben' ['The Hungarian Government Erected a Holocaust Memorial in Kamenets-Podolsk'], *Index.hu*, 27 August 2015, <http://index.hu/belfold/2015/08/27/holokauszt-emlekmuvet-allitott-a-magyar-kormany-kamjanec-pogyilskijben/>.

<sup>94</sup> 'Orbán: Hálás Vagyok a Magyar Homoszexuálisoknak' ['Orbán: I'm Grateful to Hungarian LGBTQ People'], *Index.hu*, 18 May 2015, <http://index.hu/video/2015/05/18/orban-halas-vagyok-a-magyar-homoszexualisoknak/>. 'Viktor Orbán: "Hungary Is a Serious Country" Where Gays Are Patiently Tolerated', *Hungarian Spectrum*, 22 May 2015, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/05/22/viktor-orban-hungary-is-a-serious-country-where-gays-are-patiently-tolerated/>.

of a wholesale market, for example. A week later, Mr Tarlós said that "he does not really understand" why the parade is good and "he is afraid that this thing is not worthy of the historic environment of Andrassy Avenue". And, by the way, he personally thinks that the whole phenomenon is "unnatural and disgusting".<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> 'Mayor Tarlos: Pride Is Unnatural and Disgusting', *Daily News Hungary*, 5 June 2015, <http://dailynewshungary.com/mayor-tarlos-pride-is-unnatural-and-disgusting/>.



## 4. Public opinion toward minorities

The Hungarian society can be described by an overall high level of the rejection of “otherness”. The majority of the Hungarian public have traditionally negative attitudes towards certain ethnic groups and foreigners. In this chapter, we discuss Hungarian public opinion concerning different minorities based on nationally representative surveys. According to a survey carried out at the end of 2015, 78 percent of respondents would not give consent for a migrant to move into their neighbourhood. The rejection of Arabs (71%) and Africans (60%), who are associated with migrants, are also high. 68 percent of the Hungarian population oppose a Roma, 57 percent a homosexual, and 31 a Jew to move to their neighbourhood.<sup>96</sup>

### Prejudice against the Roma

Prejudice was always the strongest against the Roma, however, anti-immigrant sentiment has increased to a similarly high level. The prevalence of anti-Roma prejudice has been remarkably stable over the past two decades. According to the latest extensive poll conducted in 2011, 82 percent of the Hungarian population thought that “the problems of the Roma would be solved if they started to work at last”, 60 percent agreed with the statement that “the inclination to criminality is in the blood of Gypsies”, and 42 percent considered that “it is only right that there are still pubs, clubs and discos where Gypsies are not let in”<sup>97</sup>.

1. Figure Trends in attitudes towards the Roma in Hungary (% of those agreeing with the statements).  
Source: TÁRKI

	1994	2002	2008	2011
<b>POSITIVE ITEMS</b>				
<b>More social benefits should be given to the Gypsies than the non-Gypsies.</b>	15	12	8	11
<b>All Gypsy children have the right to attend the same classes as non-gypsies.</b>	–	89	86	82
<b>Respect for traditional values is stronger among Gypsies than among non-gypsies.</b>	–	66	66	63
<b>NEGATIVE ITEMS</b>				
<b>The problems of the Gypsies would be solved if they finally started working.</b>	89	88	78	82
<b>The inclination to criminality is in the blood of Gypsies.</b>	64	53	60	60
<b>It is only right that there are still pubs, clubs and discos where Gypsies are not let in.</b>	46	33	36	42
<i>N</i>	988	1,022	4,040	3,040

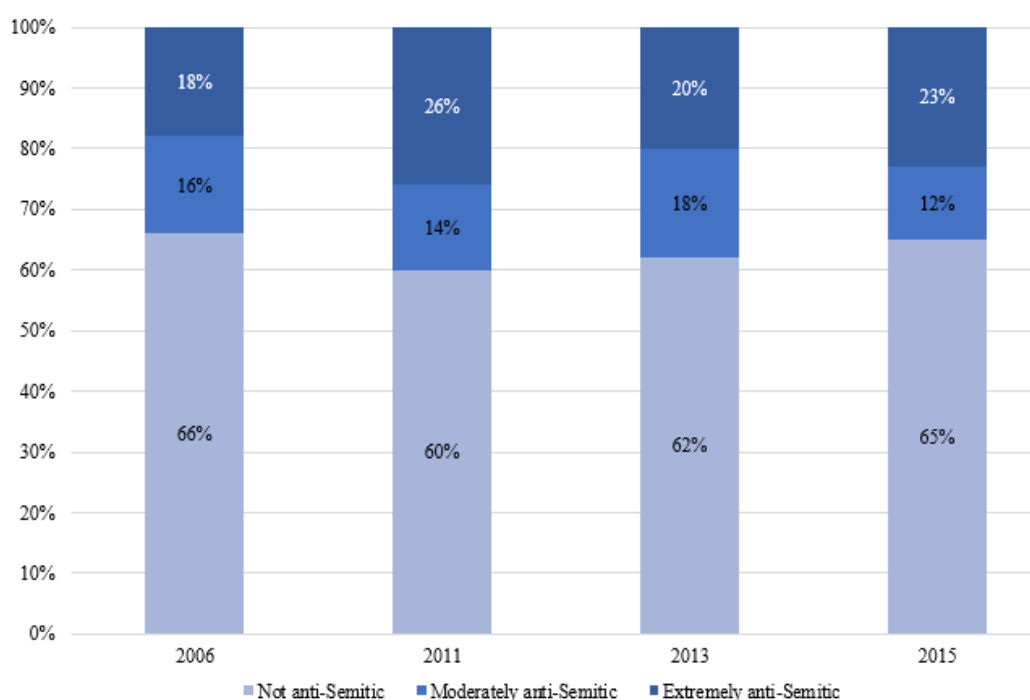
<sup>96</sup> Hann, Endre and Róna, Dániel (2016): *Anti-Semitic Prejudice in Contemporary Hungarian Society Research Report*. Budapest: Medián, Action and Protection Foundation. p. 14. ([http://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Median\\_TEV\\_2014\\_eng.pdf](http://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Median_TEV_2014_eng.pdf))

<sup>97</sup> Bernát, Anikó, Juhász, Attila, Krekó Péter, and Molnár, Csaba (2012): A radikalizmus és a cigányellenesség gyökerei a szélsőjobboldal szimpatizánsai körben. [The Roots of Radicalism and Anti-Roma Attitudes on the Far Right] In Tamás Kolosi and István György Tóth (eds.): *Társadalmi Ríport 2012 [Social Report 2012]*, Budapest: TÁRKI, pp. 355–376.

## Anti-Semitism

Hungarian polling institute Medián conducted a public-opinion survey commissioned by the Action and Protection Foundation at the end of 2015.<sup>98</sup> According to their findings, 65 percent of the society was not anti-Semitic, 12 percent moderately and 23 percent extremely anti-Semitic. Between 2006 and 2011 anti-Semitism grew significantly in Hungary and since then it seems to have been decreasing again, however, among the anti-Semites, there are more people with extreme and less with moderate anti-Semitic prejudices.

2. Figure Proportion of anti-Semites in Hungarian society, 2006–2015 (%).  
Source: Action and Protection Foundation, Medián



When analysing the content of anti-Semitism, it can be clearly seen that the agreement with statements about the excessive influence of Jews<sup>99</sup> or even about secret Jewish conspiracy<sup>100</sup> is higher than with those about traditional Christian anti-Jewish sentiments.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, the agreement with the former has increased over the years.

Anti-Jewish attitudes are closely related to party preferences.<sup>102</sup> Among Fidesz-KDNP sympathisers the ratio of anti-Semites is somewhat above average, while it is below average

<sup>98</sup> Hann, Endre and Róna, Dániel (2016): *Anti-Semitic Prejudice in Contemporary Hungarian Society Research Report*. Budapest: Medián, Action and Protection Foundation.

<sup>99</sup> Such statements in the survey were the following: „Intellectuals of Jewish origin keep media and culture under their influence.” (acceptance rate in 2015: 14%); „Jewish influence is too great in Hungary today.” (15%)

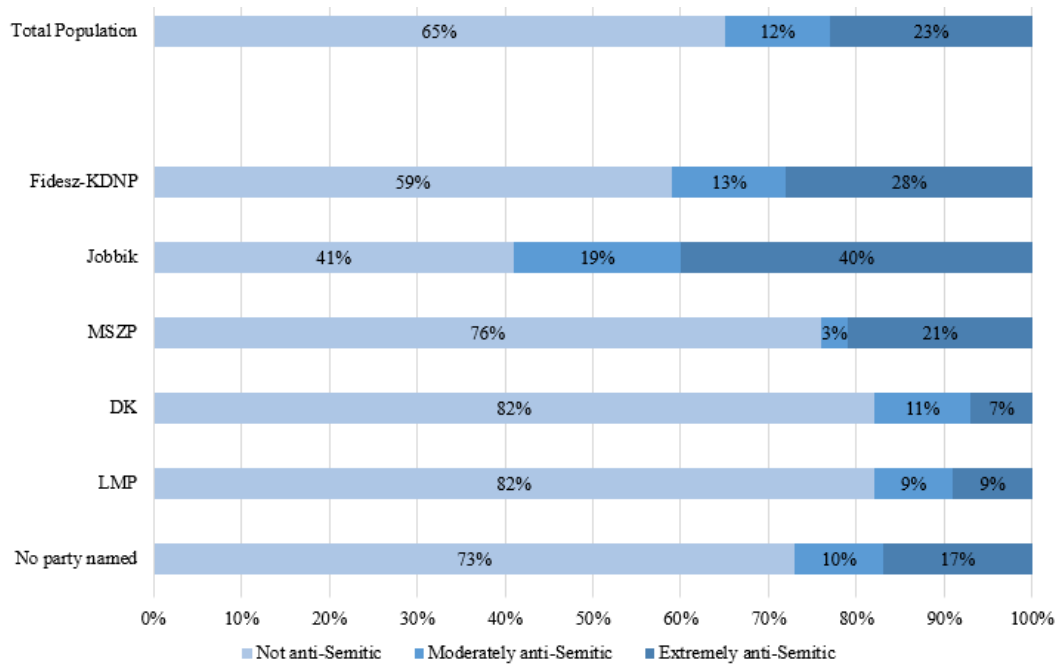
<sup>100</sup> „There is a secret Jewish conspiracy that determines political and economic processes.” (15%)

<sup>101</sup> „The crucifixion of Jesus is the unpardonable sin of the Jews” (10%); „The sufferings of the Jews were God’s punishment.” (7%)

<sup>102</sup> Fidesz (*Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség*, Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance) and its partner (rather satellite), the KDNP (*Keresztény Demokrata Néppárt*, Christian Democratic People’s Party) form a national conservative alliance currently in power in Hungary. The support of the alliance dropped down to around 24 percent in the first half of 2015. This was when Fidesz, after testing several other topics as well, finally choose the migrants as the one which can solve its problems. By the end of 2015, the support of the alliance went up to 34 percent. Jobbik

among those supporting leftist opposition parties. Typically, anti-Semitism is exceptionally high among Jobbik supporters. 40 percent of them are strongly and 19 percent moderately anti-Semitic. At the same time, 41 percent of Jobbik supporter are not anti-Semitic, i.e., it cannot be claimed that all followers of the radical party subscribe to anti-Semitic theories.

**3. Figure Anti-Semitism and party choices, 2015 (%).**  
*Source: Action and Protection Foundation, Medián*



### Xenophobia and prejudice against migrants

Despite the low levels of immigration (especially from culturally distant countries), xenophobia and anti-immigration sentiments are extremely strong in the Hungarian society. In the absence of relevant political discourse and concrete experience with migrant populations, social attitudes about immigration are mainly shaped by three factors: the fear of the Unknown, the abstract image of the immigrants presented by the media, and the extremely strong anti-immigrant political rhetoric.

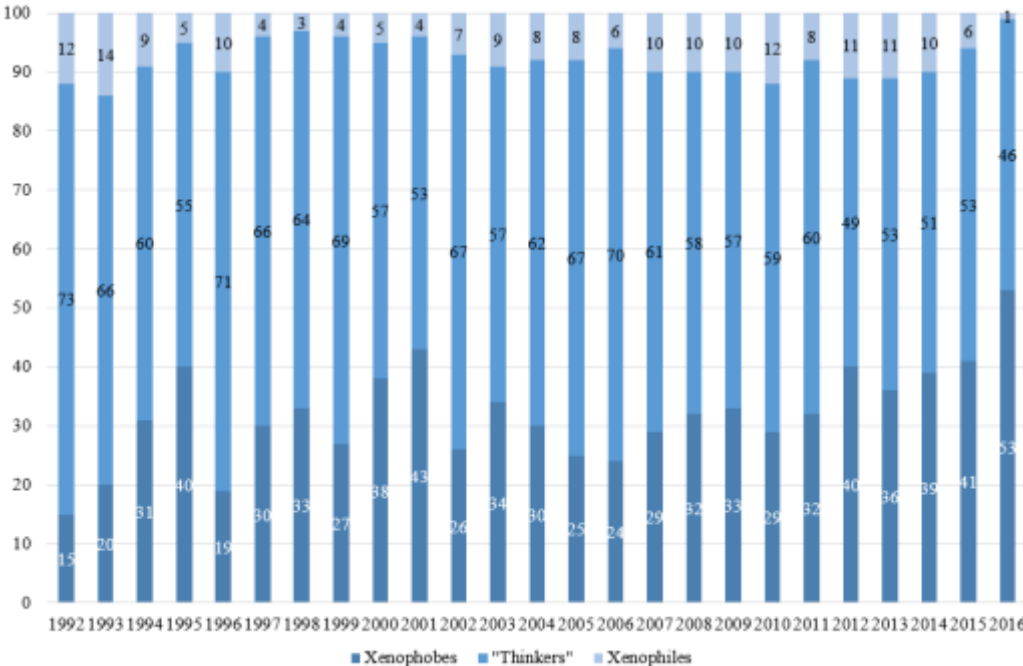
According to research conducted by Hungarian polling institute TÁRKI every year since 1992, openly-admitted xenophobia reached a record high in 2015.<sup>103</sup> At that time 41 percent of the adult population said that asylum seekers should not be allowed to enter Hungary. The rate of those who think that asylum seekers should be admitted or rejected depending on the merits of the case was 53 percent. Only 6 percent of the respondents said that all asylum seekers should be admitted unconditionally. The highest level so far was reported back in 2001 when 43

*(Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom, Jobbik, the Movement for a Better Hungary) is a far-right, radical party. Support in 2015: 13–16 percent. MSZP (Magyar Szocialista Párt, Hungarian Socialist Party) is a social-democratic party. Support in 2015: 7–12 percent. DK (Demokratikus Koalíció, Democratic Coalition) is a centre-left political party. Support in 2015: 4–6 percent. LMP (Lehet Más a Politika, Politics Can Be Different) is a green-liberal political party. Support in 2015: 2–4 percent.*

<sup>103</sup> Sik, Endre (2016) “The Socio-Demographic Bases of Xenophobia in Contemporary Hungary.” In Simonovits, Bori and Bernát, Anikó (eds.): *The Social Aspects of the 2015 Migration Crisis in Hungary*. Budapest: TÁRKI.

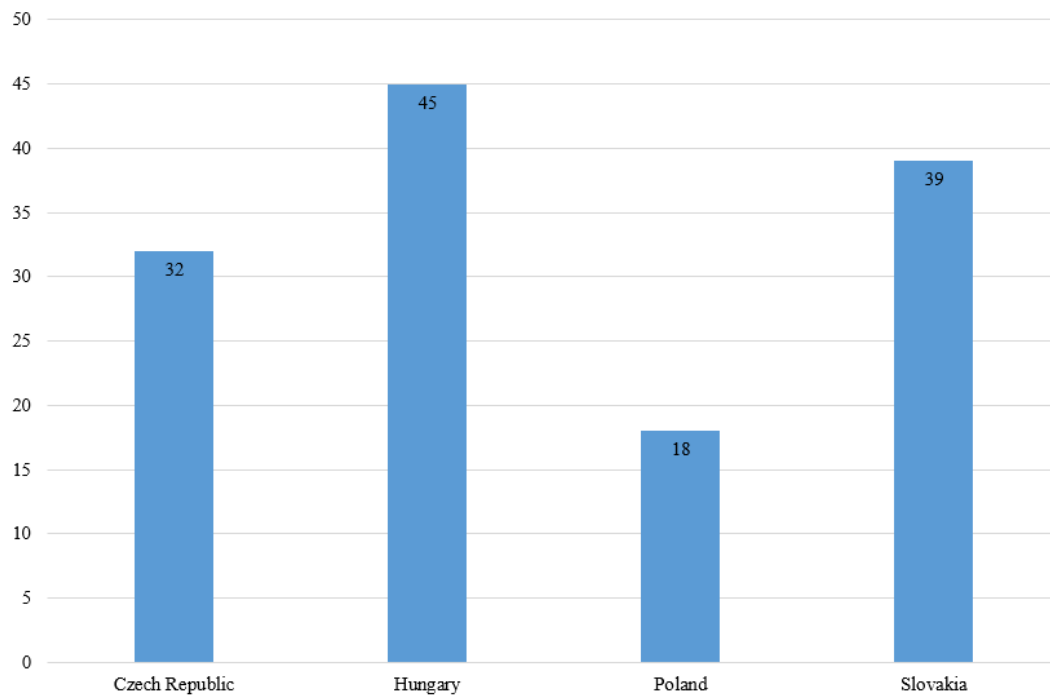
percent of the respondents were considered xenophobic. In 2012 the ratio of xenophobes started to rise, and in 2013 and 2014 the ratio was higher than the average of the 2000s. The highest rejection rate was recorded against Arabs, at 94 percent, followed closely by the Roma minority, the Chinese, Africans and Romanians. The lowest rate of rejection measured was against Hungarians from the neighbouring countries, only 7 percent of the sample rejected them. The survey also measured the negative sentiments against Pirezians, a fictional ethnic group invented by TÁRKI. The high rejection rate of Pirezians (around 60 percent) shows the general negative attitude of Hungarians towards foreigners.

4. Figure Ratio of xenophobes, xenophiles and ‘thinkers’, 1992–2005 (%). Source: TÁRKI



According to Political Capital Institute’s Demand for Right-Wing Extremism (DEREX) Index, the ratio of xenophobic voters in Hungary is remarkably high even in regional comparison.

**5. Figure Ratio of openly xenophobic voters in V4 countries according to Political Capital's DEREX Index (figures from 2012). Source: *derexindex.eu***

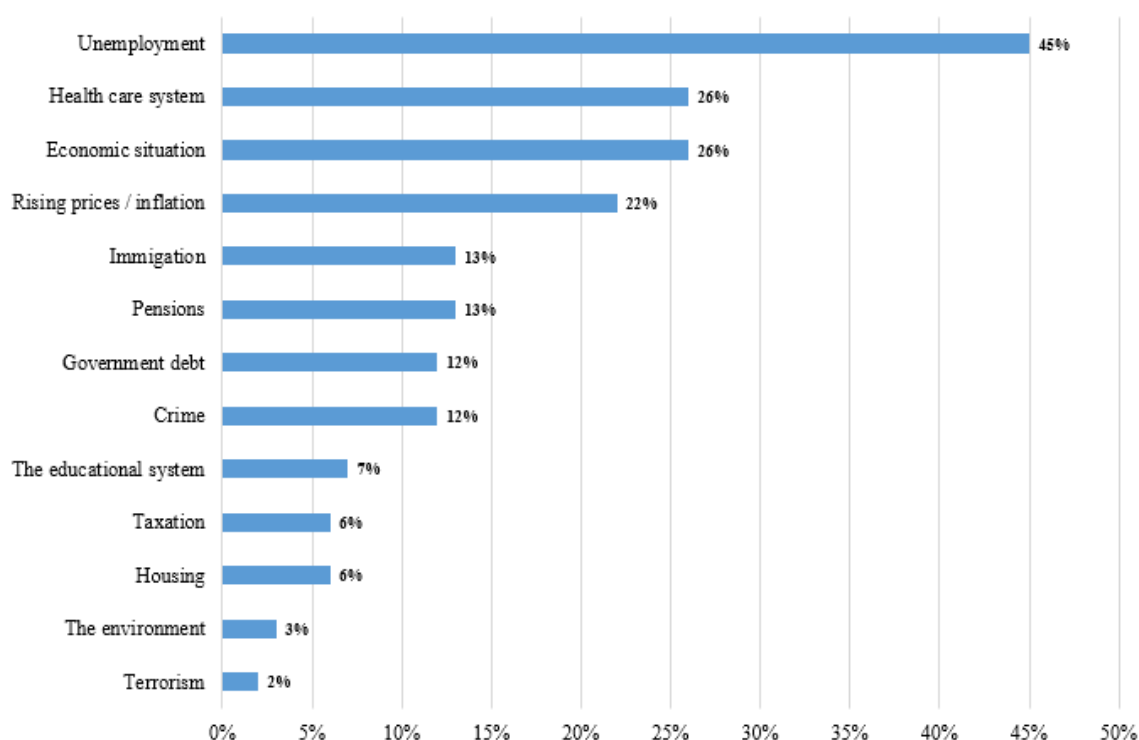


According to research conducted by Ipsos and Republicon Institute in June and July 2015, 56 percent of the Hungarian population think that immigrants pose a real threat to Hungary and only 16 percent oppose such a statement. Almost two-thirds of the respondents would not allow any immigrants to enter Hungary, while only one-fifth of them think that Hungary should admit immigrants into the country under the current circumstances. Over 20 percent of the respondents claim that the increasing number of refugees causes problems for their or their families' personal life. The data shows that the government's anti-immigrant rhetoric seems to work, at least as far as Fidesz voters are concerned: they have the most negative attitudes towards refugees among the supporters of all parties, and they even beat the sympathisers of Jobbik in this regard.<sup>104</sup>

According to Eurobarometer's surveys, the number of those believing that migration to Hungary is an important issue quadrupled between November 2014 and May 2015. While only 3 percent of the population listed immigration as one of the two most important domestic problems in November 2014, in the Eurobarometer survey conducted in the second half of May 2015 their number already increased to 13 percent. Thus, the importance of immigration has come to equal that of pension benefits, public debt and crime. At the same time, there was no change in respect to the four issues of most concern (unemployment, the state of the economy, health care and welfare security, and rising prices and inflation).

<sup>104</sup> A pártok helyzete 2015 ['State of the parties, 2015']. Budapest: Republikon Intézet. 27 August 2015. [http://republikon.hu/media/20993/partok2015\\_v4.pdf](http://republikon.hu/media/20993/partok2015_v4.pdf)

6. Figure What do you think are the two most important issues facing Hungary at the moment? (max. 2 answers possible, %). Source: *Standard Eurobarometer 83, May 2015*<sup>105</sup>



However, looking at other member states, a 13 percent rate of mentions falls short of a 23 percent average measured in the EU. Moreover, in 12 member states at the national level immigration was deemed to be a greater problem than in Hungary. In other words, the Hungarian data was squarely in the middle of the field. However, Hungarians considered the issue of immigration to be a much larger problem at the European Union level than at the national level. 43 percent believed that migration is one of the two most urgent issues the EU is facing. Even though there is a general tendency among EU member states that immigration is considered to be a more serious problem at the EU level than at the national level, the 30 percentage point difference between opinions regarding the importance of immigration at the national and the EU level in Hungary is significantly high within the EU (it is the second largest gap after Slovakia where the discrepancy is 31 percentage point). In other words, in May 2015 Hungarians believed that immigration was truly urgent and had to be resolved within the EU, while in Hungary other burning issues should have been on the top of the agenda. According to the survey, 7 out of 10 people expressed negative feelings towards migrants coming from outside the EU. Essentially, this is the same number which had been measured six months earlier.

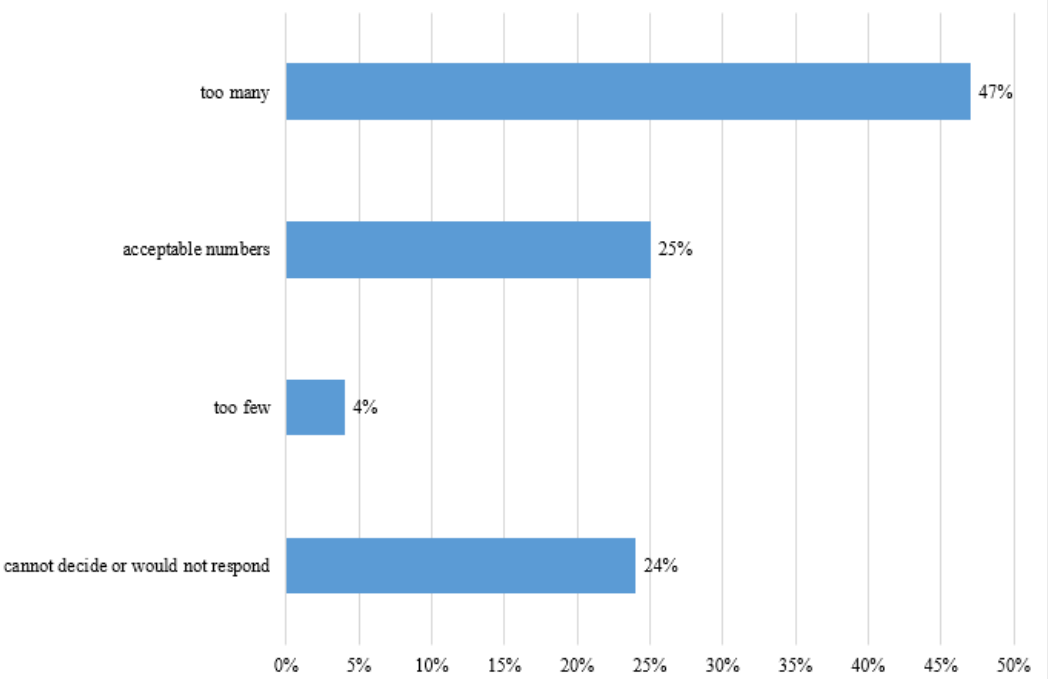
Research shows that the negative attitudes towards immigrants (and foreigners) are independent of the actual number of refugees entering Hungary or foreigners living in the country. Already in June 2014, well before the huge influx of refugees to Hungary started, 47 percent of the adult population thought that too many migrants arrive from countries outside

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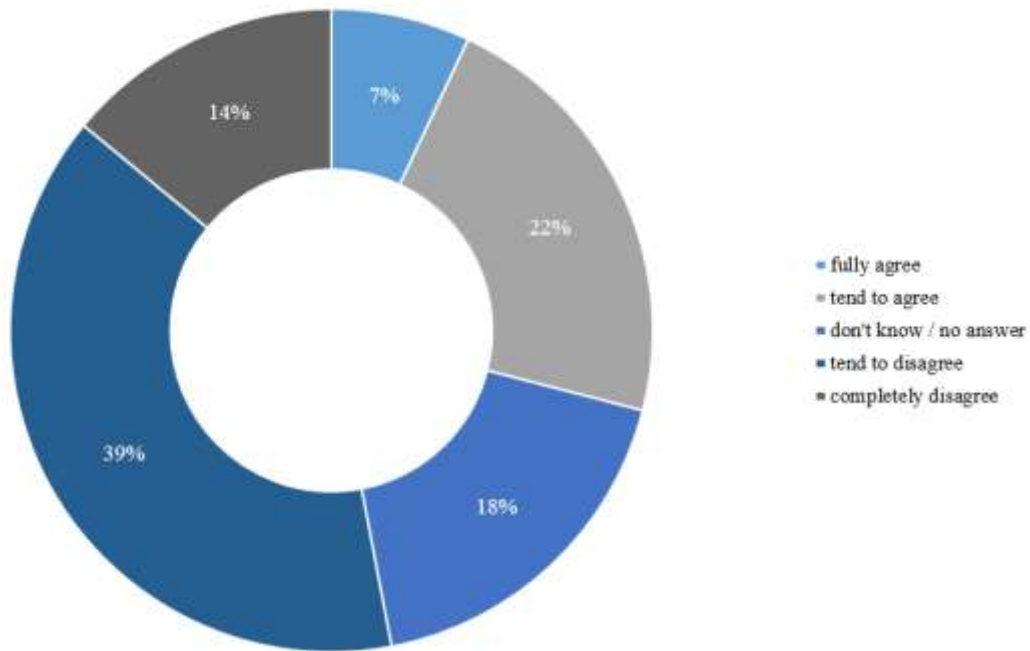
[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/cf/showtable.cfm?keyID=2212&nationID=22.&startdate=2015.05&enddate=2015.05](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/cf/showtable.cfm?keyID=2212&nationID=22.&startdate=2015.05&enddate=2015.05)

the European Union, according to Political Capital’s research conducted by Ipsos. However, the significant ratio of non-respondents (24 percent) suggests that a large number of people have never had any personal experience with migrants. At that time (well before the government’s anti-immigration campaign), Jobbik sympathisers were the most likely to express intolerant attitudes, with 58 percent saying there were too many migrants. While the absolute majority did not agree with the statement that “the majority of migrants are criminals”, a significant minority, three out of ten respondents, agreed to it, at least to some extent.

**7. Figure In your opinion, how many migrants have entered Hungary from countries outside the European Union? (%).**  
*Source: Ipsos*



8. Figure According to some, the majority of migrants are criminals. To what extent do you agree with that statement? (%).  
 Source: Ipsos



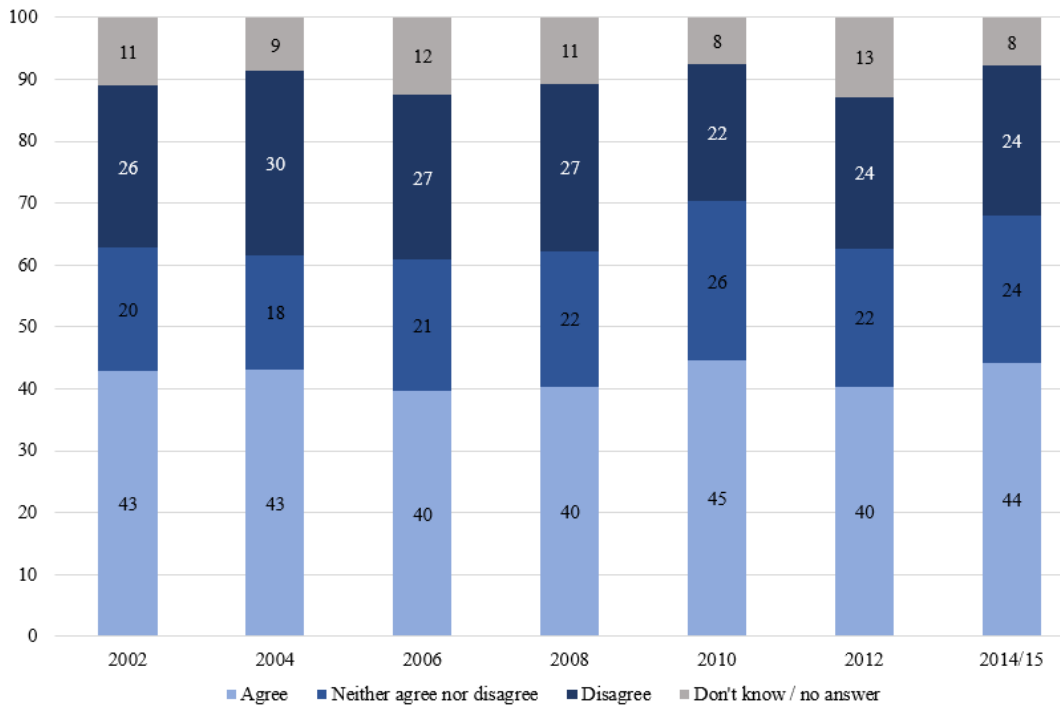
## Homophobia

Unfortunately, there is no detailed survey about homophobia in Hungary. The European Social Survey (ESS)<sup>106</sup> uses one question to assess homophobia. Respondents use a five-point scale to show the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the following statement: “Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish.” In the 2014/2015 wave, 24 percent of the Hungarian population expressed disagreement, while 44 percent agreement with it. These proportions have stayed more or less stable throughout the different ESS waves since 2002.

<sup>106</sup> „The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically driven cross-national survey that has been conducted across Europe since 2001. Every two years, face-to-face interviews are conducted with newly selected, cross-sectional samples.” <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/>



**9. Figure The extent of agreement with the statement: “Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish.” (%)**  
*Source: ESS*



## 5. How radical parties and groups use the new realities to incite hatred

Traditionally, the Roma, members of the LGBTQ community and Jews are the main targets of radical rhetoric and actions in Hungary. What made the year 2015 unique was that the issue of migration overshadowed all other topics, and refugees and migrants came into the crosshairs of radical forces primarily.

The most significant member of the radical scene is the far-right party Jobbik, which, according to opinion polls, was the second strongest party after Fidesz during most of the year. While earlier the party was known for its harsh anti-Roma and anti-Semitic statements, since 2013 Jobbik has undergone an image change. The party positions itself in the middle of the political spectrum and strikes a moderate tone. Instead of hate inciting comments, the party's leading politicians focus more on pragmatic issues and corruption. The aim of the new strategy is to attract more moderate voters, turn Jobbik into a people's party, and become Fidesz's main challenger in the 2018 general election. Despite the efforts to apply a new style to the party's mainstream communication and restrain from openly racist and anti-Semitic statements, members – particularly on the local level – still have the same beliefs, and could not do anything but act “naturally”, by their conviction. During 2015, a lot of cases came to light when national or local politicians of Jobbik were involved in online hate speech and incited hatred, and, thus, proved that Jobbik is still a radical party. For instance, the media revealed that János Kötél, a Jobbik candidate for the council of a town in Southeast Hungary, Mezőtúr posted about the execution of Roma people back in 2013.<sup>107</sup> A Jobbik member of a local council in Budapest refused to pay tribute to the then recently-deceased Chief Rabbi of Hungary, József Schweitzer during a session of the local council.<sup>108</sup> The candidate of Jobbik in the parliamentary by-elections in the constituency around Tapolca, a town near Lake Balaton, posted anti-Roma content earlier on Facebook (one of the posts, for instance, praised an article which described the Roma as a “biological weapon of the Jews”<sup>109</sup>). An audio tape was released on which Tamás Sneider, the Jobbik Deputy Speaker of the Parliament can be heard telling his audience that consisted of members of the extremist paramilitary group *Betyársereg* (The Army of Outlaws)<sup>110</sup> that the efforts to present Jobbik as a moderate party do not represent a substantial

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<sup>107</sup> ‘Cigányok megöléséről posztoltat a Jobbik mezőtúri jelöltje’ [‘Jobbik candidate in Mezőtúr posts about the execution of Roma’], *Index.hu*, February 7 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/07/ciganyok\\_megoleserol\\_posztolgat\\_a\\_jobbik\\_mezoturi\\_jeloltje/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/07/ciganyok_megoleserol_posztolgat_a_jobbik_mezoturi_jeloltje/).

<sup>108</sup> ‘Lemondásra szólították fel a jobbikos Benke Lászlót’ [‘Jobbik’s member László Benke was called upon to step down’], *Index.hu*, 12 February 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/12/lemondasra\\_szolitottak\\_fel\\_a\\_jobbikos\\_benke\\_laszlot/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/12/lemondasra_szolitottak_fel_a_jobbikos_benke_laszlot/)

<sup>109</sup> ‘Vona Gábor tapolcai jelöltje: a cigányság a zsidók biológiai fegyvere’ [‘The candidate of Gábor Vona in Tapolca: Roma are the biological weapon of the Jews’], *Kettős Mércé*, 14 February 2015, [http://kettosmerce.blog.hu/2015/02/14/vona\\_gabornak\\_igaza\\_van\\_beszeljunk\\_rig\\_lajosrol](http://kettosmerce.blog.hu/2015/02/14/vona_gabornak_igaza_van_beszeljunk_rig_lajosrol)

<sup>110</sup> The Outlaws’ Army (*Betyársereg*) was founded in 2008. The hate group emerged from the periphery of the more influential extremist groups (Guards Movement, Sixty-four Counties Youth Movement). The founders’ explicit goal with the group is to establish an “elite unit” that only those can join who have absolute ideological commitment and are in great form physically. The group’s ideology is based on racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, chauvinism and Hungarianism. The members of the group explicitly define themselves as outlaws and they romanticise violence.” (<http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/map/olvas/33#read>) According to the leader of *Betyársereg* Zsolt Tyirityán, the group has about 200 members, including former officers of the security forces (e.g., police, army, intelligence services and mercenaries). Many members of the organisation have close ties to the underworld as well.

change; the party has remained the same. Jobbik politicians only tempered their message not to scare away moderate voters.

6. Image János Kötél's post on Facebook from 2013. Source: *Index.hu*<sup>111</sup>



Besides Jobbik, there are two radical organisations of major importance in Hungary, both linked to the party. One is the *Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom* (Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement, HVIM)<sup>112</sup>, which was founded by László Toroczkai, Jobbik mayor of Ásotthalom, a village on the Hungarian-Serbian border, in 2011. Another paramilitary organisation that is even more radical and extreme than HVIM is the Army of Outlaws (Betyársereg). It is an openly racist organisation, which does not accept Roma as members and whose members believe in white supremacy<sup>113</sup>. Betyársereg was founded in 2008 also by László Toroczkai.

<sup>111</sup> 'Cigányok megöléséről posztolt a Jobbik mezőtúri jelöltje' ['Jobbik candidate in Mezőtúr posts about the execution of Roma'], *Index.hu*, February 7 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/07/ciganyok\\_megoleserol\\_posztolga\\_a\\_jobbik\\_mezoturi\\_jeloltje/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/07/ciganyok_megoleserol_posztolga_a_jobbik_mezoturi_jeloltje/).

<sup>112</sup> The Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement (*Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom*) was founded in 2001. It is a racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Roma extremist group which "regularly organises propaganda actions and participates in other extremist groups' actions." They follow extreme racist, anti-Semitic, chauvinist ideology, however they "mostly spreads hostile propaganda and initiates intimidation campaigns against the Hungarian Roma community." (<http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/map/olvas/55#read>) For more on the organization see chapter "Radical nationalist groups and parties".

While there is no official data on the number of HVIM's members, according to László Toroczkai, HVIM has almost 1000 members. 'Ajánlja fel adója 1%-át, és mi akár robbantunk is Ön helyett' ['Offer 1% of your income tax and we even explode a bomb instead of you'], *Vigyázó Blog*, 9 March 2015, [http://vigyazo.blog.hu/2015/03/09/ajanlja\\_fel\\_adoja\\_1-at\\_es\\_mi\\_akar\\_robbantunk\\_is\\_on\\_helyett](http://vigyazo.blog.hu/2015/03/09/ajanlja_fel_adoja_1-at_es_mi_akar_robbantunk_is_on_helyett). As of 13 September 2015, the movement's Facebook page had 11,248 followers. HVIM's Facebook page: <https://hu-hu.facebook.com/HVIM.64>. According to a list on HVIM's website, the organization has 53 local branches in Hungary and the neighbouring countries (plus one in France). 'Our branches', *Hvim.hu*, <http://www.hvim.hu/szervezeteink>

<sup>113</sup> According to the principles of David Lane, an American neo-Nazi, who advocates the survival of the white race, Betyársereg supported a "radical nationalist" conference on demographics in February. Among the speakers of the conference was Előd Novák, then deputy chairman of Jobbik and László Toroczkai. "Biztosítanunk kell fajunk fennmaradását, és fehér gyermekek jövőjét" ["We have to ensure the survival of our race and the future of white children"], *Betyársereg*, 25 February 2015, <http://betyarsereg.hu/biztositanunk-kell-fajunk-fennmaradasat-es-feher-gyermekek-jovojet/>

## Offences against refugees

Regarding migration, the position of radical parties and groups have been similar to Fidesz's line: they have also condemned migration, been opposed to the refugees, and about asylum-seekers they have used the same wording as the government (e.g., economic immigrants, illegal immigrants). Radical groups have also framed the topic of migration in the same pattern as the government, presenting refugees as parasites, criminals and terrorists, and threatening with the perishing of Christian Europe.<sup>114</sup> Therefore, it did not come by surprise that Jobbik insisted on a harsh stance against refugees, and made demands on closing the borders, deploying the army, creating an independent border guard, turning the open refugee camps into closed facilities and speeding up asylum procedures.<sup>115</sup> A month before the government's consultation on immigration and terrorism, Jobbik launched a petition for the re-establishment of the border guard and to abolish the practice that the state defrays the cost of taking care of the refugees.<sup>116</sup>

Despite Jobbik's genuine stance and policy proposals on the issue, the fruits have been harvested by Fidesz, whose anti-immigration rhetoric and policy measures were very similar to the far-right party's argumentation and policy solutions (e.g., referring to refugees as 'economic immigrants', linking refugees with terrorism and disease, closing refugee camps, etc.). Even the idea of erecting a border fence came from László Toroczkai, who was the key figure of Jobbik's anti-immigration communications. As mayor of Ásotthalom, a village at the Hungarian-Serbian border, Toroczkai was directly confronted with the phenomenon of migration. He regularly reported on the situation in the "frontline", called on the government to secure the border, and organised border patrols around his village.

While in terms of rhetoric and ability to implement policies, the far-right could not compete with the government, which has not left much space to Jobbik, the key area, where far-right actors could make a difference, was undertaking physical actions and activities in relation to the topic of migration, such as the organisation of demonstrations against refugee camps and various activities to scare refugees and "defend" the native population.

Despite policy proposals and harsh rhetoric, radical organisations turned towards the topic of migration more actively from June on, when the number of asylum-seekers started to rise sharply. From that time on, Jobbik and HVIM regularly organised demonstrations against asylum-seekers and the existence of refugee camps. As Jobbik could not overtrump Fidesz either regarding rhetoric or policy proposals, organising physical actions (e.g., demonstrations) seemed to be the only option for the party to get public attention and present the party's image. At a demonstration jointly organized by Jobbik, HVIM and *Betyársereg* at Keleti railway station in Budapest in early July, speakers from the organizers called for a "Hungarian

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<sup>114</sup> Jobbik MP Dániel Z. Kárpát admitted during the debate on the refugee situation in the Parliament that it is a real challenge to overtake Fidesz from the right. 'Gyűlöletheadjáratot indított a Fidesz a menekültek ellen' [Fidesz launched a hatred campaign against refugees], *Index.hu*, 20 February 2015, <http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/20/gyuloletheadjaratot-inditott-a-fidesz-a-menekultek-ellen/>

<sup>115</sup> 'Ezt is megértük: a Fidesz radikálisabb, mint a Jobbik' [Finally we have seen: Fidesz is more radical than Jobbik], *24.hu*, 12 January 2015, <http://24.hu/belfold/2015/01/12/ezt-is-megertuk-a-fidesz-radikalisabb-mint-a-jobbik/>; 'A Jobbik a menekültcunami megállítását követeli' [Jobbik demands to stop the tsunami of refugees], *MNO.hu*, 31 January 2015, <http://mno.hu/ahirtvhirei/a-jobbik-a-menekultcunami-megallitast-koveteli-1270586>

<sup>116</sup> 'Önálló határőrséget, és az állam ne vállalja magára a gazdasági menekültek eltartását!' [We demand an independent border guard and that the state does not defray the costs of taking care of the refugees'], *Jobbik.hu*, 11 March 2015, <https://jobbik.hu/hireink/egyeteret-e-azzal-hogy-magyarorszagot-veszelyeztetoo-bevadorlas-visszaszoritasa-erdekeben>

Hungary” and stated that they will keep on fighting until “Hungary becomes white and Hungarian”<sup>117</sup> According to some news sources, refugees were physically insulted by members of HVIM during the event. Demonstrations against existing or planned refugee camps took place, among others, in Hungary’s second largest city, Debrecen, and Martonfa<sup>118</sup>, Sormás<sup>119</sup> and Bicske<sup>120</sup>. Additionally, demonstrations against the Islamisation of Europe have also taken place; HVIM’s Slovakian local organisation even participated in a demonstration organized by Marian Kotleba’s far-right party Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko (People's Party Our Slovakia) in Bős, a town in Slovakia, close to the Hungarian border with a significant ratio of ethnic Hungarian inhabitants. In August, senior Jobbik politicians occupied and blocked the territory in Budapest which was supposed to turn into a preliminary refugee camp for refugees who, until then, were staying in transit zones at various train stations in Budapest.

While Jobbik mainly demonstrated against refugee camps, the extremist *Betyársereg*, besides participating in demonstrations, also organised physical actions against refugees and urged others to join them. At the beginning of July, a group of *Betyársereg* members visited Ásotthalom and the surrounding territories at the border with the aim to hunt and beat up refugees. Because their plan failed, they finally gathered at the train station in Szeged, the fourth biggest city in Hungary close to the Serbian border, to intimidate and verbally insult both refugees and activists providing aid to the refugees.<sup>121</sup> Later in July, *Betyársereg* called on their sympathisers to do workouts in parks and public spaces to deliberately frighten refugees. At *Betyársereg*’s teambuilding weekend event also taking place in July, members of the organisation posed for a picture in a T-shirt resembling the layout of the government’s billboards but with the following text: “Remuneration of immigrants can only be death”.<sup>122</sup> HVIM announced it would organise buses that would bring volunteers to the border to “persuade refugees that it’s not worth coming to Hungary”.

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<sup>117</sup> ‘Zagyva: Ha Kell, Naponta Tüntetünk, Hogy a Migránsok Tudják, Nem Érdemes Idejönniük’ [‘Zagyva: If Needed, We Will Demonstrate Every Day so That Migrants Know It’s Not Worth Coming Here’], *Mandiner.hu*, 10 July 2015, [http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150710\\_tuntettek\\_a\\_menekultek\\_ellen\\_tunteto\\_szelsojobbhosok\\_ellen](http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150710_tuntettek_a_menekultek_ellen_tunteto_szelsojobbhosok_ellen).

<sup>118</sup> Martonfa is a very small village of approximately 200 residents in south-western part of Hungary, approximately 70 km away from the Hungarian-Serbian border.

<sup>119</sup> Sormás is a small village of approximately 850 residents in southern part of Hungary, approximately 20 km away from the Hungarian-Croatian border.

<sup>120</sup> Bicske is a town of approximately 12,000 residents in central Hungary, approximately 40 km away from Budapest.

<sup>121</sup> ‘Berágott Toroczkaira a Betyársereg a menekültvádaszat miatt’ [‘Betyársereg was offended by Toroczkai at hunting refugees’], 13 July 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/13/beragott\\_a\\_betyarsereg\\_toroczkaira/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/13/beragott_a_betyarsereg_toroczkaira/)

<sup>122</sup> ‘„A Bevándorlók Bére Csak Halál Lehet”: Jobbikos Politikus Is Venne a Pólóból’ [‘“Remuneration of Immigrants Can Only Be Death”: Jobbik Politician Would Also Buy the T-Shirt’], *ATV.hu*, 14 July 2015, <http://www.atv.hu/belfold/20150713-a-bevandorlok-bere-csak-halal-lehet-jobbikos-politikus-is-venne-a-polobol/hirkereso>.

7. Image Members of *Betyársereg* in T-shirt displaying: “Remuneration of immigrants can only be death”. Source: *atv.hu*



Besides the organisations mentioned above, other groups of minor significance also became active against refugees. In late June, for instance, an organisation of football ultras called Ultras Liberi visited the area around Szeged and Mórahalom (a city and a town near the Serbian border) to “stumble upon refugees”, or as they later claimed, “to assess the situation concerning immigration”. According to comments on an image posted on the group’s Facebook page, the group intended to commit violent actions.<sup>123</sup> Another organisation that became active was *Magyar Önvédelmi Mozgalom* [Hungarian Self-Defence Movement] that cooperated with Jobbik, *Betyársereg* and HVIM in organising demonstrations, visited the border areas to show presence, and used the topic to recruit members.<sup>124</sup>

Besides physical actions of far-right organisations, the far-right media also exploited the topic and fuelled hatred against asylum-seekers. The methods used were similar to how the public broadcaster reported on migration and refugees. Far-right news portals and Facebook pages spread conspiracy theories, rumours and false or manipulated news about alleged crimes committed by asylum-seekers, and portrayed asylum-seekers as dangerous criminals, conquerors and terrorists, who pose a threat to Hungary and the security of the people.

After the number of asylum-seekers had decreased almost to zero due to the closure of the border, the attention of far-right organisations shifted to other topics, and the level of their activities lowered. While migration has remained the key topic of the Hungarian public (mainly due to the communications efforts of the government), it has become a rather symbolic issue with a focus on the quota system and the settlement of refugees. In November, Jobbik organised a demonstration at the representation of the European Commission with the title “No to

<sup>123</sup> ‘Fociultrák a Szerb Határon: „Mi Örülnénk a Legjobban, Ha Nem Kellene Kimennünk’ [‘Football Ultras at the Serbian border: “We Would Be the Happiest If We Didn’t Have to Go There”], *Átlátszó Blog*, 9 July 2015, <http://blog.atlatszo.hu/2015/07/fociultrak-a-szerb-hataron-mi-orulnenk-a-legjobban-ha-nem-kellene-kimennunk/>.

<sup>124</sup> ‘Utcai Tisztogatásba Kezd a Szélsőjobb’ [‘The Far-Right Starts Clean-up Operations in the Streets’], *NOL.hu*, 10 July 2015, <http://nol.hu/belfold/a-betyarsereg-tuntet-a-keletinel-1550879>.

immigration, no to terrorism”<sup>125</sup>, and launched a petition, which consisted of four questions, one of which related to the quota system and three to the topic of corruption.<sup>126</sup> This shows how Jobbik tried to shift the attention from immigration (which Fidesz benefited from the most) to corruption.

### Offences against the Roma

Even though the main topic of the far-right in 2015 was migration, the traditional anti-Roma, anti-Semitic<sup>127</sup> and homophobic rhetoric and actions occurred during the year, too. These incidents shed light on that the efforts to soften Jobbik’s rhetoric are only aimed at reshaping the party’s image and not at a genuine and substantial change of Jobbik’s policies.

Even though Jobbik has been trying to apply a more moderate rhetoric, the party struggled to maintain the image of people’s party and to refrain from anti-Roma messages in 2015. Right on the first day of 2015, then-Deputy Chair of Jobbik Előd Novák made a harsh anti-Roma statement on Facebook in response to the first baby born in the country in 2015, apparently because the name of the baby (Péter Rikárdó Rác) struck him as suspiciously Gypsy-sounding. Mr Novák posted a picture of his family along with a short rant pointing out that Hungarians “also reproduce”.<sup>128</sup> In connection with the case, Zoltán Balczó, deputy chairman of Jobbik repeated one of the party’s key anti-Roma messages saying that Roma families have children because of social benefits linked to pregnancy and raising children.<sup>129</sup> In April, László Mohácsi, a Jobbik delegate in the local government of Hajdú-Bihar county said that “if the Prime Minister thinks that the Roma are the hidden resources of Europe then they could be deported to unfold”<sup>130</sup>. In November in a plenary speech in the Parliament, Jobbik’s spokesperson Ádám Mirkóczki talked about specific types of crimes that are committed almost solely by Roma, suggesting that “Gypsy crime”, which used to be the party’s key topic before the image change, exists.<sup>131</sup>

The activity of *Betyársereg* (Outlaws’ Army) in the first half of 2015 clearly proved that the interest of radical organisations shifted to the issue of migration only from late June. According to the organisation’s website, within this timeframe the group took part in seven deployments across Hungary, all targeting the Roma. The action, which generated the biggest echo, was a deployment in Szúcs, a village in North Hungary. According to the human rights dogwatch organisation TASZ (Hungarian Civil Liberties Union), 30 members of *Betyársereg*

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<sup>125</sup> ‘„Magyarország a magyaroké marad az utolsó lélegzetünkig”’ [‘Hungary remains Hungarian until our last breath’], *Jobbik.hu*, 19 November 2015, <https://jobbik.hu/hireink/magyarorszag-magyaroke-marad-az-utolso-lelegzetunkig>.

<sup>126</sup> ‘Aláírásgyűjtés a bevándorlás és korrupció ellen’ [‘Petition against immigration and corruption’], *Jobbik.hu*, 23 November 2015, <https://jobbik.hu/hireink/alairasgyujtes-bevandorlas-es-korrupcio-ellen>.

<sup>127</sup> Anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents are discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

<sup>128</sup> ‘Kis családom, nagy családom’ [‘My little family, my big family’], *Novák Előd’s Facebook post*, 1 January 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/novakelod/photos/a.159541990795117.40105.112879632128020/762687637147213/>

<sup>129</sup> ‘Néhány gondolat a Rikárdó-hisztéria kapcsán’ [‘A few thoughts related to hysteria about Rikardo’], *Jobbik.hu*, 12 January 2015, <https://jobbik.hu/hireink/nehany-gondolat-rikardo-hisztéria-kapcsán>

<sup>130</sup> ‘Deportálni a Cigányokat?’ [‘Deport the Roma’], *Haon.hu*, 24 April 2016, <http://www.haon.hu/deportalni-a-ciganyokat/2818119>.

<sup>131</sup> ‘Cigányozott Egy Kővéret a Jobbik Szóvivője’ [‘Jobbik’s Spokesperson Talked about “Gypsies Committing Crime”’], *Index.hu*, 30 November 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/30/szep\\_nagyot\\_ciganyozott\\_a\\_jobbik\\_szovivoje\\_parlamenti\\_hetfo/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/30/szep_nagyot_ciganyozott_a_jobbik_szovivoje_parlamenti_hetfo/).



went to the village upon the request of a local landowner who accused one resident of stealing wood from his forest. Although, an investigative report revealed that *Betyársereg* was involved in a conflict between two local families. Besides living in the settlement for three months and showing general presence, they also regularly patrolled the village, took photos of Roma inhabitants, and threatened and insulted them.<sup>132</sup> It is also important to note, that police did not do anything, claiming that the presence of the Army cannot be proved. The victims also reported, that sometimes when they called the Police, the officer told them “call us back when there is blood”. Therefore, the victims are represented by the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union who pressed charge.<sup>133</sup>

**8. Image Group picture of Betyársereg members in Szúcs. Source: *betyarsereg.hu***



When it comes to policy proposals, as we discussed it in detail in Chapter 1, Jobbik and personally Jobbik MP, Dóra Dúró, who also serves as a Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Culture insisted in January that disruptive kids should be put into special classes and in extreme cases into a boarding school.<sup>134</sup>

In his state of the union speech in February, Gábor Vona listed a few topics that are of importance to Jobbik and for which the party will stand up. Although he did not mention the Roma, some of the issues are clearly attached to prejudices against them (e.g. limiting the right of suffrage for those who terminated their elementary school studies; limiting the number of children in certain families; making social benefits available only via a „social card” that is only

<sup>132</sup> ‘Majd akkor szóljanak, ha már folyik a vér’ [‘Inform us only when blood has spilled’], *Index.hu*, 14 May 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/14/betyarsereg\\_szucson/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/05/14/betyarsereg_szucson/)

<sup>133</sup> ‘„Meghaltok, cigányok!” – 3 hónapja zaklat egy családot a Betyársereg.’ [‘„Gypsies, you will die!” – family harassed by the Outlaws’ Army for three months’], *Hvg.hu*, 13 May, 2015. [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150513\\_Meghaltok\\_ciganyok\\_Raszallt\\_a\\_betyarser](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150513_Meghaltok_ciganyok_Raszallt_a_betyarser)

<sup>134</sup> ‘Jobbik: Nem kell mindenáron erőltetni az iskolai integrációt’ [‘Jobbik: integration in schools should not be forced at any price’], *Maninder.hu*, 24 January 2015, [http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150124\\_jobbik\\_nem\\_kell\\_mindenaron\\_eroltetni\\_az\\_iskolai\\_integraciot](http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150124_jobbik_nem_kell_mindenaron_eroltetni_az_iskolai_integraciot)



accepted in a chain of „social stores”; duty of the minority to stick to the norms of the majority; possible curfew against repeated infringers).<sup>135</sup>

The Roma are in the crosshairs of Jobbik’s local policies as well, which are based on stricter rules, administrative burdens and the intimidation of residents who do not fit to the standards, and are not “useful” for the community (mainly members of minority and disadvantaged groups, mainly the Roma are meant by that). In the rhetoric of the far-right, minorities and socially disadvantaged people are presented as scapegoats who are responsible for the problems of the settlement due to their criminal actions and untidy way of life. Discriminative local policies can be understood the most by looking at the examples of Ózd, a former industry town in Northeast Hungary led by a young Jobbik mayor, Gábor Janiczak, and Érpatak, a village in East Hungary led by the independent far-right affiliated Mayor Mihály Zoltán Orosz. According to the election programme of Gábor Janiczak from 2014, he intends to do anything to make people who cannot integrate want to leave the city voluntarily. To help people not to miss the point, he added that it was the solution to the “Gypsy question” in his view.<sup>136</sup> Mr Janiczak often makes racist statements: in a debate on local television, he talked about the over-reproduction of the Roma.<sup>137</sup>

Based on the welfare chauvinism and prejudices of the majority of society, Jobbik proposes amendments to universal social services to base such assistance on “merit”. In Ózd, stricter rules for social housing were introduced<sup>138</sup>, and the system of community contribution to housing costs became stricter, too. According to the mayor, the main goal of the amendments is to discourage those who might consider applying for allowance and make them leave the city.

Jobbik is generally against measures that aim to foster social inclusion of Roma either through education or cultural means. In February 2015, the local Jobbik branch of the town Heves launched a petition against a Multifunctional Methodology, Education and Cultural Centre for Roma for which the town received funding from the EU. Jobbik opposed the building of the centre that they called a “Gypsy tent” and demanded that the money was spent on creating new jobs and tackling unemployment instead.

## Offences against the LGBTQ community

Despite efforts to change the party’s image, and dampen homophobic sentiments of party supporters, offences against the LGBTQ community by radical groups also occurred in 2015 about the annual gay parade called Budapest Pride. Before the march, Jobbik chair Gábor Vona described the event as a provocation, which aims at generating tensions, eventually physical

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<sup>135</sup> ‘Itt elolvashatja Vona Gábor teljes beszédét’ [‘Here you can read the entire speech of Gábor Vona’], *Alfahír*, February 1, 2015, [http://alfahir.hu/itt\\_elolvashatja\\_vona\\_gabor\\_teljes\\_beszedet](http://alfahir.hu/itt_elolvashatja_vona_gabor_teljes_beszedet)

<sup>136</sup> ‘Lovasrendőrök rohamától félnek az ózdi cigányok’ [‘Roma in Ózd are scared of the seizure of mounted police’], *Abcúg*, 17 November 2014, <http://abcug.hu/vagy-szint-valasztjuk-vagy-kenyeret/>

<sup>137</sup> ‘Szerződésben engedélyezték a közmunkások megalázását’ [‘Degradation of public workers was allowed due to an agreement’], *NOL.hu*, 13 May 2015, <http://nol.hu/belfold/ozd-meglesi-kozmunkasait-1533725>; “‘A magyar kultúrkörbe az ő társadalmuk életvitele nem tud beleilleni’ – Janiczak Dávid cigányügyi vitája a helyi tévében” [‘The way of life in their society does not fit to the Hungarian culture’ – The debate of Gábor Janiczak on Roma on the local television’], *Nemzeti.net*, 3 June 2015, <http://nemzeti.net/a-magyar-kulturkorbe-az-o-tarsadalmuk-életvitele-nem-tud-beleilleni-janiczak-david-ciganyugyi-vitaja-a-helyi-teveben-3139413.html>

<sup>138</sup> ‘Ózdon nincs kisebbségi kérdés: lakás csak erkölcsi bizonyítvánnyal’ [‘There is no minority question in Ózd: flat only with an extract from a judicial record’], *Alfahír*, May 6 2015, [http://alfahir.hu/ozdon\\_nincs\\_kisebbségi\\_kerdes\\_lakas\\_csak\\_erkolcsi\\_bizonyitvannyal](http://alfahir.hu/ozdon_nincs_kisebbségi_kerdes_lakas_csak_erkolcsi_bizonyitvannyal)

confrontations. In his opinion, the aim of the organisers is to portray Jobbik as a bunch of aggressive, homophobic people who cannot govern the country. That's why Mr Vona asked their supporters for self-restraint and promised, once in power, Jobbik will not let such events take place anymore.<sup>139</sup>

Jobbik's representatives (e.g., Dóra Dúró) and the local party organisation in Budapest condemned the march calling it extreme, repugnant and anti-family, and labelled the participants as perverse, ill and deviant people who disgrace religion and commit criminal offences.<sup>140</sup> According to Előd Novák, then-Deputy Chair of Jobbik, "homosexual lobby is the mightiest lobby group in the world". He condemns "homosexual propaganda" because, in his opinion, many youngsters become homosexual because it's trendy. While he does not support physical violence against the march, he would not let such an event take place.<sup>141</sup>

Despite the statements above, some far-right groups tried to disturb the march in 2015, too. A few hours before the march someone put a significant amount of pig manure around trees along the route of the march. Even though the stench was disturbing, it did not cause any major problem.<sup>142</sup>

#### 9. Image Manure at the venue of Budapest Pride Source: *Index.hu*



György Budaházy, a central figure in the right-wing extremist scene, who organised violent protests in 2006 and was involved in attacks on socialist and liberal politicians in 2007 and 2008, demonstrated together with a small group of people with a mattress with the following text on it: "Your otherness is sickening".<sup>143</sup>

<sup>139</sup> The background of Mr Vona's reasoning, which goes into the direction of conspiracy theory, is that pride marches were regularly attacked by far-right people since 2007. However, because of Vona's strategy to transform Jobbik into a people's party, attract moderate voters and present the party as one which is able to govern the country, with this argumentation Vona wanted to prevent any scandals and give a plausible reason to the party's supporter why they should refrain from radical actions that were celebrated earlier.

<sup>140</sup> 'A Jobbik Szerint Társadalmilag Káros a Budapest Pride' ['According to Jobbik, Budapest Pride Is Socially Harmful'], *Mandiner.hu*, 10 July 2015, [http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150710\\_a\\_jobbik\\_szerint\\_tarsadalmilag\\_karos\\_a\\_budapest\\_pride](http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150710_a_jobbik_szerint_tarsadalmilag_karos_a_budapest_pride).

<sup>141</sup> 'Új Szinten a Homofóbia' ['Homophobia on a New Level'], *NOL.hu*, 10 July 2015, <http://nol.hu/belfold/uj-szinten-a-homofobia-1550739>.

<sup>142</sup> 'Nem Sikerült Megzavarni a 20. Budapesti Pride-Ot' ['Budapest Pride Went Undisturbed'], *Index.hu*, 11 July 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/11/indul\\_a\\_20\\_budapesti\\_pride/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/11/indul_a_20_budapesti_pride/).

<sup>143</sup> 'Két Embert Állított Elő a Rendőrség a Pride-On' ['Two Detained by Police at Budapest Pride'], *444*, 11 July 2015, <http://444.hu/2015/07/11/ket-embert-allitott-elo-a-rendorseg-a-pride-on>.

10. Image György Budaházy with a small group of anti-gay protesters during the Budapest Pride in 2015. Source: *444.hu*



After the Pride, a major physical violent attack against a famous gay rights activist occurred. Andrea Giuliani, an Italian citizen living in Hungary was attacked at night after the march and his nose was heavily broken. He was well-known to right-wing extremists and received death threats via phone and email. In 2014, György Gyula Zagyva, former Jobbik MP and Co-leader of HVIM visited him, together with some ‘comrades’ from HVIM, and his contact data were published on a far-right site.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> ‘Összeverték Egy Melegjogi Aktivistát Budapesten’ [‘A Gay Rights Activist Was Beaten up in Budapest’], *Hvg.hu*, 20 July 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150720\\_osszeverték\\_egy\\_melegjogi\\_aktivistat](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150720_osszeverték_egy_melegjogi_aktivistat).

## 6. Hate crimes and incidents

Hungarian criminal law identifies two forms of hate crimes: violent offences committed against a member of a group and incitement to hatred against a community. In case of other types of crime, it is considered an aggravating circumstance if they were committed with a racist motivation. In that case, the court has to deliver a more serious sentence.<sup>145</sup> In addition, the Civil Code details the crime of the public denial of the crimes of National Socialism (and also that of Communism), and also the distribution, use before the public at large and public exhibition of symbols of totalitarianism (such as the swastika, the insignia of the SS the arrow cross, but also the five-pointed red star, or the hammer and sickle) in a way to offend the dignity of victims of totalitarian regimes and their right to sanctity or when it is capable of breaching public peace in any way.<sup>146</sup>

In addition, in March 2014 a new Civil Code came into effect penalizing hate speech, stating that “any member of a community shall be entitled to enforce his personality rights in the event of any false and malicious statement made in public at large for being part of the Hungarian nation or of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, which is recognized as an essential part of his personality, manifested in a conduct constituting a serious violation in an attempt to damage that community’s reputation, by bringing action within a thirty-day preclusive period” including the obligation to pay restitution.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, the Fourth Amendment of the Hungarian Constitution declares that the right to free speech is restrained by the dignity of communities and created the possibility for members of the violated communities to turn to the legal system to enforce their claims.<sup>148</sup>

In general, the number of hate actions reported or documented is much smaller than the number of those committed. Victims often fail to report these incidents to the police. Firstly, they might not trust the authorities to handle these incidents properly either because of their unpreparedness or their prejudice. Secondly many victims might not be familiar with the applicable legislation. Moreover, victims might also be ashamed or afraid of the exposure of their identity. Does not help the situation that under-classification is common too, that is, the authorities do not ascertain the motivation as hate.<sup>149</sup>

It is impossible to give full account of all the hate speech and incitement to religious and ethnic hatred. Firstly, governmental statistics are not available about these crimes<sup>150</sup>. Secondly, as it was mentioned above, these hate crimes and incidents are largely unreported.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Hungarian 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.

<sup>146</sup> Barna, Ildikó (2015): *Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Incidents in Hungary 2014. Annual Report*. Budapest: Brussels Institution. pp. 41–42. ([http://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/TEV\\_%C3%A9ves\\_jelent%C3%A9s\\_2014.pdf](http://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/TEV_%C3%A9ves_jelent%C3%A9s_2014.pdf))

<sup>147</sup> Ibid. p. 42.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. p. 15.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. p. 46.

<sup>150</sup> The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) classified EU countries according to their official data collection mechanisms pertaining hate crime. Hungary was described as a country where few and a narrow range of bias motivations are recorded, and data are usually not published. (FRA (2012): *Making Hate Crime Visible in the European Union: acknowledging victims’ rights*. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union. pp. 7–9.) [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2012\\_hate-crime.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2012_hate-crime.pdf)

<sup>151</sup> FRA (2009): *European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS)*. Data in Focus Report 01: Roma. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union. pp. 4–6.

And thirdly, internet – including social media – is used extensively to spread prejudiced views, and the comprehensive monitoring of the internet is impossible. It is need to be emphasized that due to all reasons mentioned above exact numbers for hate crimes and incidents are only partly available for Hungary.

### **Hate crimes and incidents against the Roma**

In the case of anti-Romani hate crimes and incidents the lack of comprehensive monitoring is striking. Although it is well known that Roma people are severely discriminated, but latency is very high. Just to give an example: based on the report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) while 62 percent of the Roma in Hungary perceived discrimination in the past 12 months prior to the survey, 82 percent of them did not report it to any organization or office. Hate speech against the Roma is also widespread.

Four cases of anti-Roma violent attacks became public during 2015. In April a Roma man was shot dead by police officer in Örkény, a village near to Budapest. Four policemen went to the house of the victim on an evening, and some minutes after the man was shot 500 meters away from his house. The police claimed that the officer fired in self-defense. However, the Roma residents in Örkény said, that the police officer who killed the man, “doesn’t like the Roma”. During the autopsy of the victim turned out the he had other injuries than that from the shooting, and they did not support the story of neither the police, not the eye-witnesses.<sup>152</sup>

In April 2015 two men attacked a Roma family, a grandmother and her granddaughter, in Eger, a city in East-Central Hungary. First the perpetrators shouted anti-Gypsy slogans to them over the fence, then broke into their house, and brutally beat them up. The victims are represented by Legal Defence Bureau for National and Ethnic Minorities, since it cannot be excluded that the crime was motivated by prejudice.

In May it was made public that a Roma family in Szúcs had been harassed by members of the *Betyársereg* (Outlaws’ Army) for three months, as we have already discussed in Chapter 5.<sup>153</sup>

The home of a Roma family in Gyöngyöspata was set ablaze on Christmas Eve. The family had purchased the house weeks earlier which is situated in the predominantly non-Roma part of the town. It was set afire by a Molotov cocktail and the unknown individual also vandalized their front gate with graffiti reading “You will die!”<sup>154</sup>

Anti-Roma hate speech was largely present in the political arena in 2015. We have already discussed in Chapter 5 the cases of then-Deputy Chair of Jobbik Előd Novák, Jobbik delegate to the local government of Hajdú-Bihar county László Mohácsi, and Jobbik spokesperson and MP, Ádám Mirkóczki.

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<sup>152</sup> ‘Csak az biztos, hogy Tatit lelőtték.’ [‘Only one thing is certain: Tati was shot’], *Index.hu*, 18 March, 2015. [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/03/18/egy\\_eletszerutlen\\_gyilkosság\\_orkenyben/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/03/18/egy_eletszerutlen_gyilkosság_orkenyben/)

‘Sötétben tapogatózva.’ [‘Groping in the dark’], *MNO.hu*, 25 April, 2015. [http://mno.hu/magyar\\_nemzet\\_magazin/sotetben-tapogatozva-1283351](http://mno.hu/magyar_nemzet_magazin/sotetben-tapogatozva-1283351)

<sup>153</sup> ‘„Meghaltok, cigányok!” – 3 hónapja zaklat egy családot a Betyársereg.’ [‘„Gypsies, you will die!” – family harassed by the Outlaws’ Army for three months’], *Hvg.hu*, 13 May, 2015. [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150513\\_Meghaltok\\_ciganyok\\_Raszallt\\_a\\_betyarser](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150513_Meghaltok_ciganyok_Raszallt_a_betyarser)

<sup>154</sup> ‘Roma Family’s Home Set Ablaze on Christmas Eve in Gyöngyöspata’, *The Budapest Beacon*, 30 December 2015, <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/roma-familys-home-set-ablaze-on-christmas-eve/30373>.

Moreover, we have already discussed in Chapter 3, how government officials were using the parallel between the Roma and migrants extensively in 2015. However, not only government officials but other politicians used the same argument. In August, Former Hungarian PM, Péter Boros said, in an interview to the Hungarian daily, *Magyar Hírlap* that if integration is “unfortunately not successful in the case of the Roma who have been living with us for more than hundred years, then there is not much chance that this will be the case with Muslims arriving through the green border.”<sup>155</sup> Also in August, Gábor Janiczák, the Jobbik mayor of Ózd wrote in a Facebook post after visiting Keleti train station that Hungary has “its migrants” referring to the Roma.<sup>156</sup>

As mentioned before, it is well known that Roma people are heavily discriminated. However, there are very few examples that became widely known. Here are some examples. According to the decision of the Equal Treatment Authority (*Egyenlő Bánásmód Hatóság, EBH*), two Roma men were discriminated in January 2015 in Mór<sup>157</sup>. They applied for a job as switchboard operators. After a successful written exam, they were called in for a job interview, but they were turned down and felt that it was because of their Roma ethnicity. They asked the person in charge in the HR department if that was the reason when the person replied “Unfortunately, that’s how it goes. But I’m not the one who decides but the bosses.” The Authority imposed a 1.5 million HUF (approximately 4,700 EUR) fine on the company for discrimination.

According to the decision of the EBH, two Roma men were discriminated in Nyíregyháza when the owner of a gym warned them off saying they scare the “Hungarian lads”.

### **Anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents**

Anti-Semitic cases are discussed based on different sources. Primarily, the monitoring activity of Action and Protection Foundation (*Tett és Védelem Alapítvány, TEV*)<sup>158, 159</sup> Their monitoring system is primarily based on press monitoring. Therefore, their figures chiefly reflect hate crimes and incidents that became public and had media attention. Secondly, the Facebook profile of the Forum against anti-Semitism (*Fórum az antiszemitizmus ellen*)<sup>160</sup>. Thirdly, we also used the International Religious Freedom Report by Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour.<sup>161</sup>

According to the sources, 83 anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents were registered in 2015. Among them, three attacks, one threat and seven cases of vandalism. We deal with these crimes in order of their types starting with the attacks.

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<sup>155</sup> ‘Boross Péter: Nem Kulturális, Hanem Etnikai Konfliktus a Bevándorlás’ [‘Péter Boros: Migration is not a cultural but an ethnical conflict’], 19 August 2015,

[http://magyarhirnap.hu/cikk/33272/Boross\\_Peter\\_Nem\\_kulturalis\\_hanem\\_etnikai\\_konfliktus\\_a\\_bevandorlas](http://magyarhirnap.hu/cikk/33272/Boross_Peter_Nem_kulturalis_hanem_etnikai_konfliktus_a_bevandorlas).

<sup>156</sup> ‘„Vannak Saját Migránsaink” – Az Ózdi Jobbikos Polgármester És a Menekültek’ [‘We have our own migrants – The Jobbik Mayor of Ózd and the migrants’], *Hvg.hu*, 31 August 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150831\\_Vannak\\_sajat\\_migransaink\\_ozdi\\_polgarmeste](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150831_Vannak_sajat_migransaink_ozdi_polgarmeste).

<sup>157</sup> Mór is a town of approximately 14,000 residents situated in north-western Hungary.

<sup>158</sup> The Action and Protection Foundation (TEV) is a registered civil organization founded in 2012. The three main pillars of its activity: legal aid, monitoring and research, as well as education and training.

<sup>159</sup> The descriptions of the cases are based on their monthly reports. (<http://tev.hu/en/publikaciok-2/>)

<sup>160</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/antiszemitizmus/?hc\\_ref=SEARCH&fref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/antiszemitizmus/?hc_ref=SEARCH&fref=nf)

<sup>161</sup> <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper>

In July, a ticket inspector called a passenger a “homeless Jewish whore” on a public transport bus after revealing that the person was travelling without a valid ticket. In August, a Hassidic rabbi was spat on his head, while he was relaxing in a public park with his wife and children. In September, a man had a verbal conflict with the security guard in a public building. The guard used words such as “get lost”, “you, filth”, “I’ll beat you to death”, and “Jew”. After the man had left the building, the guard went after him where he finally hit him with his fist, once in the head and once in the mouth.

In January, Kibic a popular site with Jewish-related content received a threatening phone call. The anonymous caller insulted Jews, saying that they had gone too far, and they always play the Holocaust card whenever they are mentioned, while making jokes about Muslims and Christians, instead of playing with their “circumcised dicks”. “Bunch of rotten Nazis!” the caller exclaimed.

The cases of vandalism included the desecration of 30 graves in the cemetery of Gyöngyös<sup>162</sup> in March.

**1. Picture: Desecrated graves in the Jewish cemetery of Gyöngyös**  
Source: MTI<sup>163</sup>



In April, an open-air exhibition commemorating the Holocaust was vandalised. In October, a shop window in Harkány<sup>164</sup> was broken which displayed a poster of a yellow Star of David with *Jude* inscription, as a sign of protest of the Deputy Mayor of the town. The Deputy Mayor previously posted a picture on Facebook making fun of Hitler and refugees. In the other four cases of vandalism, Holocaust memorials in different places were damaged.

Forty-three of all anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents fell into the category of hate speech, eight of them committed by political party representatives (six by politicians of Jobbik, two by that of Fidesz). Jobbik anti-Semitic hate speech activity has considerably decreased since Jobbik decided to show a much softer image and therefore limited their previous practice of overt anti-Semitic acts and hate propaganda as we have already discussed in Chapter 5.

Nevertheless, in February 2015, Tibor Ágoston, a Jobbik representative of the Municipality of Debrecen shared a post saying that before the attack, the Charlie Hebdo magazine was in possession of the Rothschilds. He wrote the following comment: “Strange

<sup>162</sup> Gyöngyös is a town of approximately 30,000 residents situated in north-east Hungary.

<sup>163</sup> Hungarian News Agency.

<sup>164</sup> Harkány is a small town of approximately 4,200 residents situated in south-west Hungary.



coincidences – you can speculate...” The post reads: “The Charlie Hebdo by mere coincidence got into the hands of the Rothschilds some days before the attack. What a coincidence! A Rothschild-owner behind the Charlie Hebdo; interesting parallels between the Paris attack and the explosion of the World Trade Center.” In another post he shared a photo representing Jewish men in arms, with the caption: “This is how they prepare for peace.”

Also, in February Jobbik local government representative, László Benke and Jobbik MP, Előd Novák failed to stand up for a minute of silence in honour of József Schweitzer, chief rabbi of Hungary who died a few days before. Also, connected Schweitzer’s death, József Pista a Jobbik local government representative of Komló<sup>165</sup>, shared an internet post in which he wrote that the chief rabbi “was tolerated in our country, nobody slapped him in the face, or knocked him on his head, but he definitely fulfilled his promise, he harmed us every way he could”.

In April Jobbik MP, Előd Novák called the “Living Memorial”, an improvised Holocaust collection, trash. The memorial was created by demonstrators against the government’s controversial memorial to the victims of the German invasion which they think falsifies Hungary’s history during the Horthy era and the Holocaust

In November, about the Paris terror attacks, Jobbik demonstrated against immigration and terrorism at the representation of the European Commission. Jobbik’s President Gábor Vona and Jobbik’s Vice President Dániel Z. Kárpát gave speeches at the event. Jobbik spokesperson and MP Ádám Mirkóczki was in charge of announcing the speakers and connecting their speeches. He said that the US and “its certain allies in the Middle East” (audience shouted Israel at this point) are responsible for immigration and terrorism. Mirkóczki continued by saying that it was possible and important to talk about the crimes of ISIS but one should never forget who established the organisation. “It did not just arise from nothing; we did not just receive it from somewhere.”

In 2015, twenty-nine anti-Semitic graffiti and stickers were registered by different NGOs which is surely the minimum estimations for such anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents. These mostly included swastikas, Star of David signs hanged or drawn into a rubbish bin. There were also scribbled benches, public transport vehicles, and other public places.

**2. Picture: Swastika and the runic insignia of the Schutzstaffel in Debrecen and Hanged Star of David at Budapest’s most central underground station.**

**Source: Action and Protection Foundation, Forum against anti-Semitism.**



<sup>165</sup> Komló is a town of approximately 26,000 residents situated in Southwest Hungary.



In June, some stickers appeared in Budapest saying: “Hungarian thought. Are they at the end of their thread?” Next to the caption, the stickers depict a drawing that shows a Star of David bloodily stitched on the mouth of Francis II. Rákóczi, Hungarian nobleman and leader of the Hungarian uprising against the Habsburgs in 1703–11. The sticker aims to advertise kuruc.info, a far-right news portal, allegedly close to Előd Novák.

11. Image Sticker advertising kuruc.info. Source: Action and Protection Foundation and kuruc.info



There is another phenomenon that needs to be mentioned what we have partly discussed in Chapter 3. From July, Fidesz politicians, government officials and all kind of pro-Fidesz organisations have started to present György Soros as a financial figure who infiltrates civil society to overthrow governments. In May the press release of Fidesz read “The pseudo-civic Helsinki Commission, which fulfils the political orders of the international financial speculators, brazenly tries to falsify black-and-white facts. [...] We call on the Helsinki Commission to stop lying and at least in such an important and serious question not be preoccupied with stuffing their pockets with the money of György Soros.” In October Viktor Orbán himself said to an audience of Fidesz supporters that “Europe has been betrayed” and claimed that “some well-organized unelected activist leadership presiding over huge flows of capital, thinking in terms over and beyond the framework of nation states; and if the Soros Foundation comes into your mind now, that is not entirely unjustified.” Although these kind of statements are not overtly anti-Semitic, it is based on the language, the expressions they use and also on the long-lasting history of this usage they have anti-Semitic connotations. This code language is also consonant with the inner-structure of anti-Semitism in Hungary. As we mentioned in Chapter 4, the agreement with statements about the excessive Jewish influence and the supposed Jewish conspiracy has increased. Moreover, when people were asked in a nationally representative survey in 2015 about the causes of mass migration, many blamed György Soros, Jews or Israel.<sup>166</sup>

There were also others who linked the refugee crisis with Zionist “background powers”. In August, an article titled »The refugee-invasion is the preparation of Greater Israel« was published on *Nemzeti InternetFigyelő* (National Internet Observer). The named author is linked

<sup>166</sup> Hann, Endre and Róna, Dániel (2016): *Anti-Semitic Prejudice in Contemporary Hungarian Society Research Report*. Budapest: Medián, Action and Protection Foundation. p. 43.

with *Nemzeti Arcvonal* (Hungarian National Front)<sup>167</sup>, a neo-Nazi paramilitary organisation, founded in 1989. The author of the article states at the beginning that “the stream of refugees is led from the background by Zionist powers. It is enough to look at human rights organisations being padded with Jewish experts who are providing invaders with money, food and clothing. They quote human rights, but in the background, there are much darker plans to be achieved by a group of Jews and Freemasons.”

### **Hate crimes and incidents against the members of the LGBTQ community**

In May and June, as the time of the Budapest Pride was approaching, many politicians from the right and the far-right expressed their disapproval and disgust concerning the event. As we have already discussed in Chapter 3, Máté Kocsis Mayor of the 8th district of Budapest said that there was a possibility that the Budapest city council would move the Pride Parade from Andrassy Avenue to the parking lot of a wholesale marketplace almost 15 km away from Andrassy Avenue.<sup>168</sup> In June Budapest Mayor, István Tarlós confirmed the information arguing that the parade is “unworthy of the historic district of Andrassy Avenue”. Also, he shared his “private opinion” that he finds the idea “unnatural” and gays “repulsive.”<sup>169</sup>

One day after the Budapest Pride had started, on 5 July a rainbow coloured paper doll was hanged in the largest public park in Budapest. Also, a pink triangle, the well-known Nazi concentration camp badge, was painted on it.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> The Hungarian National Front (*Magyar Nemzeti Arcvonal*) was founded in 1989. “This is one of the largest and most organized paramilitary hate groups in Hungary. The group is organised in a very strict hierarchy. The HNF has been in the forefront of Hungarian extremism in the past 20 years and played a crucial role in the paramilitary preparation of other Hungarian hate groups.” (<http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/map/olvas/20#read>)

<sup>168</sup> ‘Kocsis Máté: Felmerült, Hogy Legyen a Pride a Nagybani Piac Parkolójában’ [‘Máté Kocsis: It has emerged to hold Budapest Pride at the parking lot of the Nagybani Market’], *444*, 30 May 2015, <http://444.hu/2015/05/30/kocsi-mate-felmerult-hogy-legyen-a-pride-a-nagybani-piac-parkolojaban>.

<sup>169</sup> ‘A Week of Events Organized by the Budapest Pride Began Last Night’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 4 July 2015, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/07/04/a-week-of-events-organized-by-the-budapest-pride-began-last-night/>.

<sup>170</sup> ‘Akasztott Szivárványos Bábu Az Első Atrocitás Az Idei Pride Ellen’ [‘Hanged rainbow colored doll is the first atrocity against the Pride this year’], *Index.hu*, 5 July 2015, <http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/05/akasztott-szivarvanyos-babu/>.

**3. Picture: A hanged rainbow coloured paper doll in the time of the Budapest Pride.  
Source: Index.hu.**



During the Pride, many hate speech statements occurred. On 5 July, local government representative of the left-winged Democratic Coalition (*Demokratikus Koalíció, DK*) party, László Sütő shared his views in a comment on Facebook. He argued that “Sexuality is based on the instinct of preservation of species. Therefore it is natural only between men and women. In a normal country, a relationship incapable of procreation cannot be the family model. Otherwise, I don’t care if someone is hot for a hairy, anus with faeces, but he/she should keep it private. My tolerance is that I treat it as an illness.” Mr Sütő was expelled from the party a few day later.<sup>171</sup>

On 6 July the new site, *Index* reported about a fake homophobic picture that went viral on Facebook. The image, shared by more than a thousand users, is about two stereotypical gay men dressed in bottomless leather pants walking with two little boys. The text under the picture reads: “The family model of Kulka and Alföldi<sup>172</sup>! We don’t need it!”<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> ‘Erősen Homofób Gondolatokat Oszt a DK-S Képviselő’ [‘Representative of Democratic Coalition shares strongly homophobic views’], *Hvg.hu*, 5 July 2015,

[http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150705\\_Erosen\\_homofob\\_gondolatokat\\_oszt\\_a\\_DKs\\_k](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150705_Erosen_homofob_gondolatokat_oszt_a_DKs_k).

‘DK És Homofóbia: Hát, Ez Nem Akar Összejönni?’ [‘Democratic Coalition and homophobia - this doesn't seem to work’], *Hvg.hu*, 13 July 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150713\\_DK\\_es\\_homofobia\\_hat\\_ez\\_nem\\_akar\\_osszejonn](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150713_DK_es_homofobia_hat_ez_nem_akar_osszejonn).

<sup>172</sup> János Kulka and Róbert Alföldi are openly gay actors.

<sup>173</sup> ‘Így Uszítanak Hamisított Fotóval a Melegek Ellen a Budapest Pride Előtt’ [‘This is how they incite against gay people with a fake photo before Budapest Pride’], *Index.hu*, 6 July 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/06/hamisított\\_fotoval\\_hergelnek\\_a\\_melegek\\_ellen\\_a\\_pride\\_elott/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/07/06/hamisított_fotoval_hergelnek_a_melegek_ellen_a_pride_elott/).

4. Picture: Fake homophobic picture appearing on Facebook.  
Source: Index.hu.



On 8 July, Fidesz publicist Zsolt Bayer wrote an overtly homophobic article in the right-wing Hungarian daily *Magyar Hírlap* titled the ‘The origin of species’ claiming among others that he feels provoked by the Pride. He also accused *Index* that they might put the rainbow coloured doll on the lamppost to have some sensation.<sup>174</sup>

On 10 July, Jobbik MPs Marcell Tokody and Dóra Duró, who is also the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Culture, issued a statement calling the parade a “deviant event” which is “socially harmful”.<sup>175</sup>

On 11 July, during the parade of the Budapest Pride pig manure was found on Andrásy Avenue where the parade took place. Budapest Police started an investigation.

In November, the Jobbik youth wing organised an exhibition of children drawings in the Hungarian Parliament. One of the exhibited drawings titles ‘Puzzles for kids of homosexual parents’ was selected as one of the best ones. Jobbik MP, Dóra Duró commented the picture on her Facebook page. The comment reads: “As a member of the selection committee of the art competition announced by Jobbik youth wing, I’m proud of this original, sexy and trendy work that outraged several extremist liberal groups. The young artist used brilliant logic to make it clear the only way finding a partner who is compatible with the goal to save the nation. Liberals can accuse us with ultraconservative, sexist propaganda, but what is normal remains normal.”

<sup>174</sup> ‘A Fajok Eredete’ [‘The origin of species’], *Magyar Hírlap*, 9 July 2016, [http://magyarhirlap.hu/cikk/29868/A\\_fajok\\_eredete](http://magyarhirlap.hu/cikk/29868/A_fajok_eredete).

<sup>175</sup> ‘Budapest Pride – Jobbik: társadalmilag káros’ [‘Budapest Pride – Jobbik: socially harmful’], *MTI*, 10 July 2015.



The exhibition was permitted by László Kövér, Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary.<sup>176</sup>

5. Picture: Dóra Dúró with the drawing titled “Puzzle for kids of homosexual parents”.  
Source: narancs.hu.



## Islamophobia

In 2016 the first national report on Islamophobia in Hungary was published, as part of the European Islamophobia Report. The editors pointed out in their foreword that although “Islamophobia and anti-Muslim racism become a growing threat in European societies” in many countries “there is no official information available” on such hate crimes and incidents.<sup>177</sup> Hungary is one of these countries. The report on Hungary “is based on a survey of relevant discourses taking place in Hungarian media outlets and the country’s political arena as well as on some expert interviews from the fields of journalism, NGOs and the country’s Islamic community conducted in November 2015 in Budapest.”<sup>178</sup>

In 2015, the Muslim community in Hungary experienced a sharp increase in Islamophobia. This tendency was influenced greatly by the refugee crisis and the overt anti-migrant, anti-Muslim rhetoric of the government. Government officials, and also the Prime Minister himself frequently equated migrants with Islam and terrorism, and deemed Muslims “impossible to integrate”.<sup>179</sup> PM Viktor Orbán has also been claiming to be the saviour of Christian Europe from the Muslim hordes. Similar Islamophobic rhetoric has been

<sup>176</sup> ‘Kövérnék Beleférnek a Homofób Tréfák?’ [‘For Kövér, homophobic jokes are okay’], 9 November 2016, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/09/kovernek\\_belefernek\\_a\\_homofob\\_trefak/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/11/09/kovernek_belefernek_a_homofob_trefak/).

‘Dúró Dóra Mindent Megtesz a Nemzeti Népszaporulatért’ [‘Dóra Dúró does everything for the National Population Growth’], *Magyar Narancs*, 11 November 2015, <http://magyarnarancs.hu/villamnarancs/duro-dora-mindent-megtesz-a-nemzeti-nepszaporulatert-97190>;

<sup>177</sup> Enes Bayrakli and Farid Hafez (2015): *European Islamophobia Report 2015*, Istanbul: SETA. p. 5.

<sup>178</sup> Sereghy, Zsolt (2016): “Islamophobia in Hungary: National Report 2015.” In: Enes Bayrakli and Farid Hafez: *European Islamophobia Report 2015*, Istanbul: SETA. p. 226.

<sup>179</sup> For more see Chapter 3 titled The Government’s Rhetoric in Terms of Migrants and Minorities.

characteristic of others in Hungarian conservative and far-right circles. This was coupled with comments from Christian church officials and some media outlets.

According to the Muslim communities<sup>180</sup> in Hungary, threats in e-mails to them are frequently received.<sup>181</sup> Although there is no systematic monitoring of Islamophobic hate crimes and incidents, “[a]ccording to the Hungarian Islamic Community 10 to 15 women wearing headscarves were attacked during 2015. Attacks included a threat with a knife, a face slap, and the tearing off of a headscarf. The Hungarian Islamic Community said none of the attacks was reported to police, as the women were afraid to do so.”<sup>182</sup>

“[B]oth Muslim communities and NGOs sensed a deterioration of formerly good and cooperative relations with state authorities.”<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> There are two officially recognized Islamic religious organizations in Hungary: the Hungarian Islamic Community (*Magyar Iszlám Közösség, MIK*) and the Church of Muslims in Hungary (*Magyarországi Muszlimok Egyháza, MME*).

<sup>181</sup> ‘Magasra Csaptak Az Iszlámgyűlölet Hullámai’ [‘The waves of Islam hatred struck high’], *Hvg.hu*, 23 November 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20151123\\_iszlamgyulolet\\_magyar\\_iszlam\\_kozosseg\\_usz](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20151123_iszlamgyulolet_magyar_iszlam_kozosseg_usz).

<sup>182</sup> Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour (2016) *International Religious Freedom Report, Hungary 2015*. p. 18.

<sup>183</sup> Sereghy, Zsolt (2016): *Islamophobia in Hungary: National Report 2015*. In: Enes Bayrakli and Farid Hafez: *European Islamophobia Report 2015*, Istanbul: SETA. p. 233.

## 7. Interethnic or religious clashes

There were no interethnic or religious clashes in Hungary in 2015. Although many asylum-seekers passed through the country, no major conflict occurred between them and the native population. Even though there was news on extremist organisations that organised ‘patrols’ in the border area to beat up refugees, and organised demonstrations at refugee camps and at Keleti railway station in Budapest, where thousands of refugees were stranded for days, no physical conflict between xenophobes and asylum-seekers was reported. Hatred against refugees fuelled by government propaganda and far-right sites and organisations did not turn into physical violence.

A significant incident, however, occurred in the refugee camp in Debrecen in late June, when around 100 enraged refugees broke out of the refugee camp, and attacked cars and busses with sticks and set waste bins on fire, according to the national news agency. This case, however, cannot be qualified as an interethnic clash because the aim of the refugees was not to attack the native population. The conflict originated from a fight between two Turkish asylum-seekers. According to some, the quarrel had religious reasons, as one took the Qur’an from the other and stepped on it. According to others, the real reason was financial in nature instead, as there were 200 Euros hidden in the Qur’an. A third factor that might have contributed to the conflict is the conditions in the camp. Although the camp was supposed to accommodate 800 persons, at that time 1600 persons were staying there. Overcrowding and uncertainty probably paved the way for conflicts among the refugees.<sup>184</sup>

No interethnic clash occurred between the Roma and non-Roma population in 2015, even though far-right and extremist organisations such as Jobbik, HVIM, *Betyársereg* and others like to speak about such a conflict and do their best to provoke one. During their deployment in Szúcs, for instance, but also in other cases (e.g., in Tereske<sup>185</sup>, Vajta<sup>186</sup>), they visit a settlement when they receive information on a crime committed by someone who they categorise as Roma, or when they are requested to visit the place by an inhabitant. Their main method is to threaten the Roma in the particular settlement by their presence.

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<sup>184</sup> ‘Kitörték a Menekültek a Debreceni Táborból’ [‘The Refugees Broke out of the Camp in Debrecen’], *Vs.hu*, 29 June 2015, <http://vs.hu/kozelet/osszes/kitortek-a-menekultek-a-debreceni-taborbol-0629>.

<sup>185</sup> Tereske is a small village of approximately 700 residents, situated in the northern Hungary.

<sup>186</sup> Vajta is a village of approximately 1,000 residents, situated in the central Hungary.

12. Image Betyársereg's deployment in Tereske. Source: *betyarsereg.hu*<sup>187</sup>



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<sup>187</sup> 'Újabb Fejlemények a Tereskei Ügyben, a Betyársereg Közreműködésének Hatására!' ['New Developments in the Case of Tereske due to Betyársereg's Involvement'], *Betyársereg*, 30 April 2015, <http://betyarsereg.hu/a-betyarsereg-ismet-szembeszall-a-ciganybunozokkal-most-teresken-kell-segiteni/>.



## 8. Sport related xenophobia

In recent years, great attention has been paid to cease racism and violence in the stadiums. The FARE (Football against Racism in Europe) group, set up in 1989 became especially active in the Eastern European Region in recent year. The “Eastern European Development Project” of FARE, launched in 2009, has been focused exclusively on the growing racism, anti-Semitism in football stadiums. The Programme, therefore, aimed at fighting racism with educational programmes, lobbying and cooperation with local authorities. In Hungary, the Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Association facilitated their activities. Owing to the cooperation between FARE and UEFA, there was a conference titled “Unite against Racism” with the participation of 52 European football-playing countries. A ten-item list was developed as the basis of the combat against racism. As a part of the programme “Unite against Racism”, a campaign with the title “No to racism” was started in the autumn of 2013 with well-known football players standing up and saying no to racism in a video message.

These programmes had visible effects, and the number of such incidents decreased. For example, while between the period of May 2013–April 2014 Action and Protection Foundation registered several anti-Semitic manifestations during football games, in 2015 only one such case was recorded. (In October, during the Békéscsaba–MTK<sup>188</sup> match, supporters of the former were shouting “Filthy Jews, filthy Jews!”). Neither the organisers of the match nor the police intervened.<sup>189</sup>) Unfortunately, there is a good reason to think that the attitudes of the supporters most probably did not change, only the envisaged fines had an effect.<sup>190</sup>

This thought is reinforced by the fact that ultras played a role in hate crimes and incidents against migrants. In June many groups of football hooligans expressed through social media their eagerness to assist police efforts at rounding up refugees along the Serbian border and protect the homeland from the Muslim hordes.<sup>191</sup> Among others on the Facebook page of the Hungarian far-right football fan group, Ultras Liberi<sup>192</sup> some posts appeared about groups of extremist football fans chasing migrants along the Hungarian-Serbian border. In July, Facebook, after receiving a large number of complaints about a post that said members had given food and drink containing laxatives to refugees forced to delete the page which had 76,000 members.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Due to historical reasons MTK has a reputation of being a „Jewish team”.

<sup>189</sup> Tett és Védelem Alapítvány (2015): *Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Incidents Report. October 2015*. Budapest: Brussels Institute. p. 14.

<sup>190</sup> Barna, Ildikó (2014): Anti-Semitism in Football. In: Barna, Ildikó: *Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Incidents in Hungary During the May 2013– April 2014 Period. Annual Report*. Budapest: Brussels Institute. pp. 66–70.

<sup>191</sup> ‘Menekültválság: Több Ezer Harcedzett Szurkoló várja “Áder Parancsát”’ [‘Migration crisis: several thousands of hardened ultras waiting for “Áder’s order”’, *Hvg.hu*, 18 September 2015, [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150918\\_Menekultvalsag\\_tobb\\_ezer\\_harcedzett\\_szurk](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150918_Menekultvalsag_tobb_ezer_harcedzett_szurk).

‘Unprepared Hungarian Government Facing a Refugee Crisis’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 28 June 2015, <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2015/06/28/unprepared-hungarian-government-facing-a-refugee-crisis/>.

<sup>192</sup> We also mentioned Ultras Liberi in Chapter 5 as they also incited hatred against migrants.

<sup>193</sup> ‘Hungary: A Grim Way Station for Asylum Seekers’, *IRIN*, 8 July 2015, <http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2015/07/08>.

‘Eltűnt a Facebookról a Legnagyobb Szélsőjobboldali Ultracsoport’ [‘The largest right-wing ultra group has disappeared from Facebook’], *444*, 6 July 2015, <http://444.hu/2015/07/06/eltunt-a-facebookrol-a-legnagyobb-szelsjobboldali-ultracsoport>.

On September 4, the Hungarian and the Romanian national team played a European Championship qualifying match in Budapest. Even before the match, football hooligans clashed on the streets of Budapest, but the Hungarian police finally stopped them. During the match there were racist chanting in both sectors, for which UEFA fined the Hungarian Football Federation (*Magyar Labdarúgó Szövetsége*, MLSZ) for 70,000 Euro and a match behind closed doors. Groups of ultras (Carpathian Brigade, Ultras Liberi), expelled from the stadium organized a common match watch in a nearby public park (*Népliget*). So-called “national rock” bands famous for their racist, ultra-nationalistic lyrics, were also invited to the event. After the match, Hungarian hooligans and ultras were rioting in the streets of downtown Budapest and at night attacked migrants severely at Keleti train station. The hooligans were throwing firecrackers and smoke bombs on asylum-seekers and injured several of them. Police arrested a few dozen people for vandalism and possession of pyrotechnics. According to the statement of the Budapest Police several people, policepersons among them, were wounded, and the expenses were estimated to be more than 166 million forints (approximately 550,000 euros).

The managements of Hungarian clubs also made steps to restrain the ultras. In January President of the club, said that he would have the fines paid by the supporters. Kubatov openly stated that his aim is to cease racism and violence at the stadium.<sup>194</sup>

UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) fined FTC (*Ferencvárosi Torna Club*)<sup>195</sup> for 50,000 Euro and some matches behind closed doors for the incidents before and after a match between NK Rijeka and Ferencváros, held in July 2014. Among other things FTC supporters used racist slogans, while supporting their team. The FTC appealed but in January 2015 the UEFA refused it.<sup>196</sup> Due to this, FTC played behind closed doors against Go Ahead Eagles in July 2015.

In April, the Disciplinary Committee of MLSZ fined Győri ETO FC<sup>197</sup> for 300,000 forints (approximately 970 euros) because some of its supporters used racist slogans.<sup>198</sup> Due to the same reason, the committee fined PMFC<sup>199</sup> for 500,000 forints (approximately 1,600 euros)<sup>200</sup> in June, and Vasas<sup>201</sup> for 300,000 forints (approximately 970 euros) in September.

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194 ‘FTC: Ha jön az MLSZ-büntetés, a szurkolók fizetnek – Kubatov’ [‘If fines from the Hungarian Football Federation received, supports will pay – Kubatov’], 27 January 2015,

[http://www.nemzetisport.hu/labdarugo\\_nb\\_i/ftc-ha-jon-az-mlsz-buntetes-a-szurkolok-fizetnek-kubatov-2390853](http://www.nemzetisport.hu/labdarugo_nb_i/ftc-ha-jon-az-mlsz-buntetes-a-szurkolok-fizetnek-kubatov-2390853)

<sup>195</sup> The FTC was founded in 1899 and the most known part of the club is its football team. The club colours are green and white, and the club mascot is a green eagle. The supporters of the FTC football club are considered as the most violent ones in Hungary.

<sup>196</sup> ‘Egy hét múlva tárgyalja az UEFA a Ferencváros fellebezését’ [‘UEFA discusses the appeal of Ferencváros in one week’], *MTI*, 27 January 2015, <http://archiv1988tol.mti.hu/Pages/HirSearch.aspx>

‘Marad a bírság’ [‘Fine remains’], *Észak Online*, 9 February 2015, <http://eszon.hu/sport/71-orszag/21154-marad-a-birsag>

<sup>197</sup> Győri ETO, or just Győr is a football-club from Győr, a city in Western Hungary.

<sup>198</sup> ‘MLSZ – Pénzbüntetés a Győrnek és a Ferencvárosnak’ [‘MLSZ – Fine for the Győr and the Ferencváros’], *MTI*, 8 April 2015, <http://archiv1988tol.mti.hu/Pages/HirSearch.aspx>

<sup>199</sup> PMFC is a football-club from Pécs, a city in South-West Hungary.

<sup>200</sup> ‘MLSZ: 500 ezret fizet a PMFC’, [‘MLSZ: PMFC pays 500 thousand’], *Bama.hu*, 2 June 2015, <http://www.bama.hu/baranya/sport/mlsz-500-ezret-fizet-a-pmfc-613997>

<sup>201</sup> Vasas SC is a football club situated in Budapest.

## 9. Popularity of radical political parties and groups

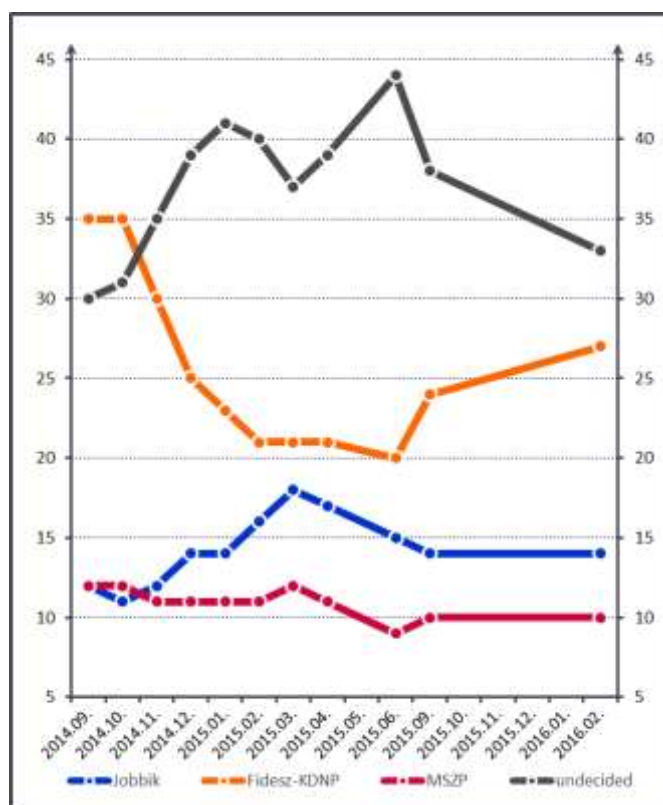
In the general elections in April 2014, the far-right Jobbik party gained 20 percent of the votes, which was the third best result among the party lists. As indicated in the graph below, until October 2014, support for the party stagnated according to the polls done by the polling institute Ipsos (and later by Závecz Research Institute, ZRI). From October 2014 until March 2015, however, the party attracted new voters and expanded its voter base. The reason for this is twofold: first, Fidesz lost one-third of its voter base and, second, a by-election took place in the beginning of April, in which Jobbik won the party's first direct seat in parliament. The campaign ahead of this election contributed to Jobbik's gain. However, from March until September 2015, Jobbik's popularity shrank again. Even though Ipsos/ZRI did not conduct any poll between September 2015 and February 2016, support for Jobbik did not change in this period. It is apparent from the graph that Jobbik could benefit from the sharp decrease of Fidesz's voter base between October 2014 and February 2015. The main reasons for Fidesz's significant setback were nagging corruption cases, governance failures, and conflicts within the governing party. For the first time since 2010, Fidesz was forced on the defensive. The topic of migration was consciously chosen by the party's strategists as a new "story" to regain the political upper hand, to recapture the political initiative, and to eliminate all other issues from public discourse that may hurt the party's interests. On the one hand, the government has taken a radical stance on the migration issue in order to prevent Jobbik from capitalising on the topic. On the other hand, however, the government had a broader objective as well. As Political Capital wrote in an analysis, "Fidesz has a well-tested strategy of dividing the political arena into the 'pro-national' and 'anti-national' fields and insist on treating all issues along this fault line. Anyone questioning a position taken by Fidesz is automatically and without argument relegated to the 'anti-national' camp and considered a 'foreign agent'. By the end of 2014, domestic party politics had turned its back on this fault line that had been so convenient for Fidesz; it became less and less credible that the Orbán cabinet was indeed the sole representative of the 'national interest'."<sup>202</sup> In relation to the refugee crisis, the government could occupy the "pro-national" position, while the entire opposition on the left as well as civil society and right-wing activists criticizing the government could be defined as 'pro-foreigner'. Beside Fidesz's radical and xenophobic messages, and the power to implement policy measures and introduce legislative changes, there was no space left for Jobbik to be visible. That is the reason why the increase of Jobbik's popularity stopped in March when the public discourse had already been completely dominated by the topic of refugees and immigration. Although from October 2015, when the southern borders were completely sealed and almost no asylum-seekers came to Hungary anymore, Jobbik tried to divert public attention to other issues described above (corruption, problems with health care and education system), the party did not succeed and Jobbik's popularity remained stable in the last quarter of 2015.

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<sup>202</sup> Attila Juhász, Bulesú Hunyadi, and Edit Zgut: *Focus on Hungary: Refugees, Asylum and Migration*.

10. Figure Support for the governing party Fidesz-KDNP, the far-right Jobbik and the socialist party MSZP (% , among all adults).

Source: Ipsos/ZRI



While there is no available data on the support for radical groups, with the help of Political Capital’s Demand for Right-Wing Extremism (DEREX) index, we can have a basic idea on to what extent Hungarian society is open to far-right ideology.<sup>203</sup> We can see that the overall level of “attitude radicals”, those who are receptive to anti-democratic, anti-Western, xenophobic, chauvinistic, authoritarian and scapegoating messages, decreased a little from 2012–2013 to 2014–2015<sup>204</sup>, from 12 to 10 percent. Among the four categories, the prejudices and welfare chauvinism sub-index, which measures anti-immigration attitudes and homophobia, is the highest in Hungary. While the ratio of those who have an extremely exclusionary stance is traditionally high in the country, in 2015 Hungary had the highest scores in this category among all EU states (54%). The increase of the sub-index from 2012–2013 is probably a consequence of the government’s rhetoric.

Anti-establishment attitudes, indicated by the extreme distrust of institutions, are very volatile in Hungary. Compared to the data in round 6, the level of anti-establishment sentiments decreased to 22 percent. It is probably the result of the government’s strategy: anti-immigration and anti-refugee stance combined with the war-time rhetoric suggesting that the country is in

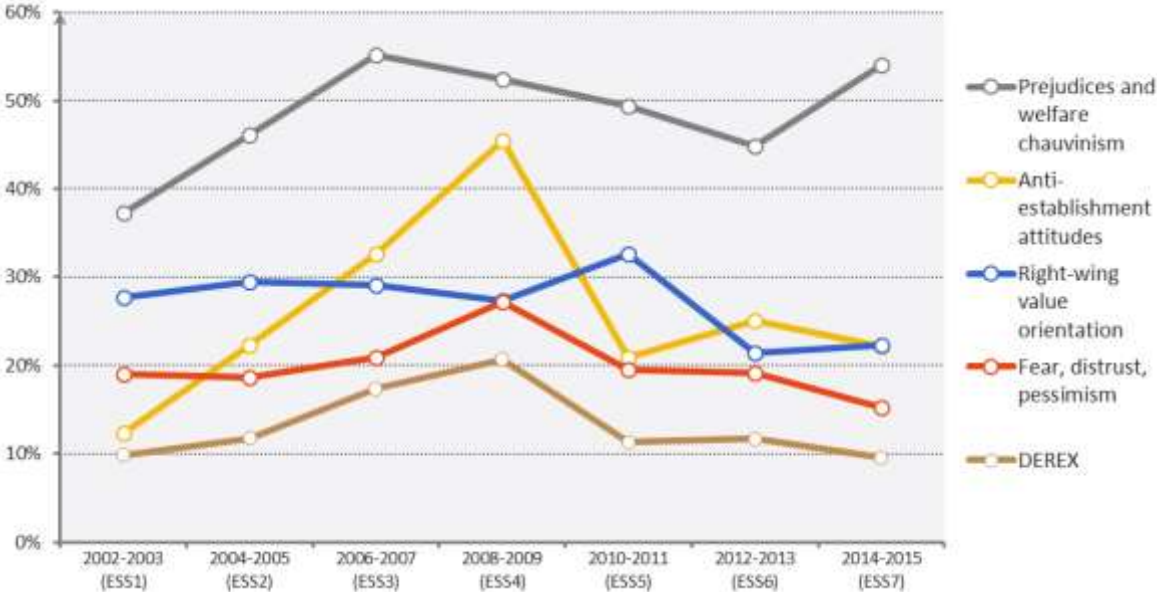
<sup>203</sup> DEREX Index is a comprehensive theoretical model elaborated by Political Capital to measure the „social demand” for far-right ideology. The index is an aggregate number that shows the proportion of „attitude radicals” – those who belong to at least three of the four categories, called sub-indices, which the index is composed of: 1) Prejudice and welfare chauvinism; 2) Right-wing value orientation; 3) Anti-establishment attitudes; 4) Fear, distrust and pessimism. The DEREX index is based on data from the European Social Survey, a biannual examination of values and attitudes in 32 countries in Europe and the Middle East. For more information visit [drexindex.eu](http://drexindex.eu).

<sup>204</sup> Data for Round 7 (ESS7) were collected in Hungary between April and June 2015.

danger swept other issues under the carpet and shifted the interest to the topic of asylum-seekers and migration, where the government acted determined and delivered. Interestingly, despite the government’s efforts to blame the EU for the refugee crisis, at the time of data collection, the increase in anti-immigrant sentiments in the country did not lead to stronger anti-EU feelings.

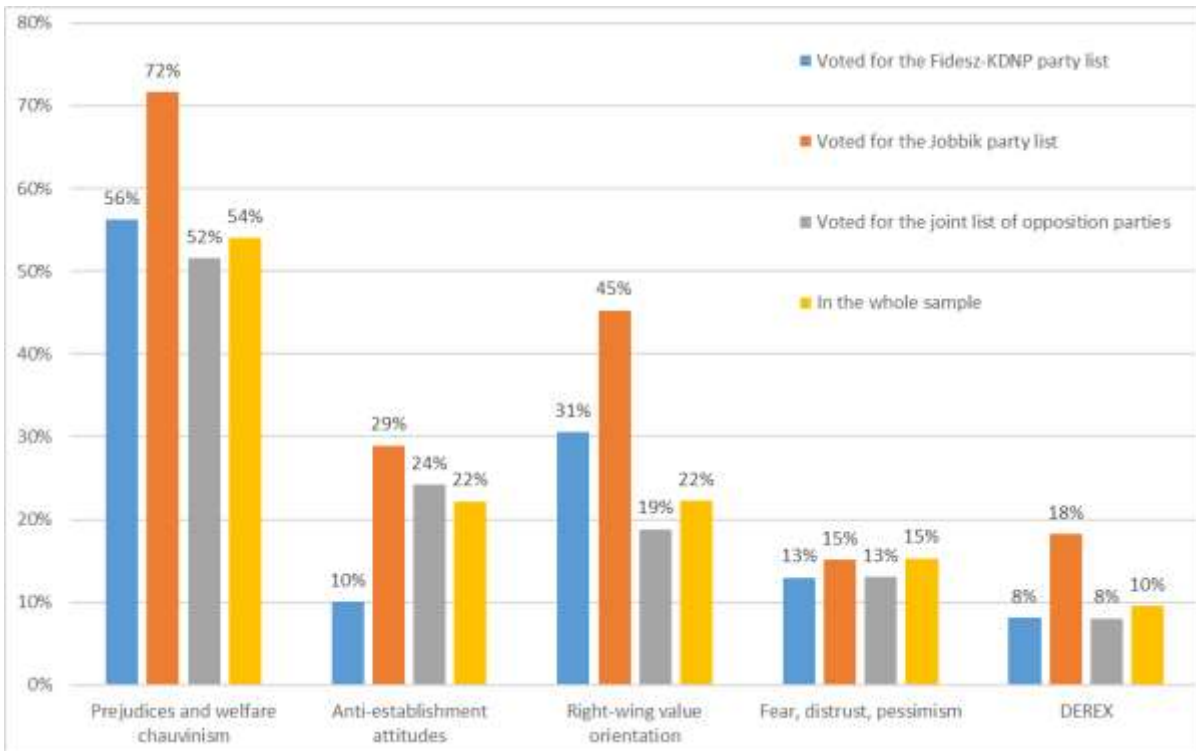
The right-wing value orientation sub-index, which shows the ratio of those who share a far-right self-definition, have a traditionalist worldview, and affection for obedience and order, increased slightly to 22 percent. At the same time, the fear, distrust, pessimism sub-index, which includes emotional factors such as dissatisfaction with personal life, the feeling of physical insecurity, suspicion toward others, and economic worries, decreased significantly to 15 percent.

13. Image DEREK index scores for Hungary. Source: DEEX



Combining DEREK data with voting preferences and electorate groups shows that the voter base of Jobbik tends to be more “attitude radical” than that of other parties. Among all the parties Jobbik has the most xenophobic and homophobic electorate, while Fidesz supporters hardly differ from other electorate groups in this regard. Unsurprisingly, Fidesz supporters have the lowest ratio of those with anti-establishment attitudes, while the voter base of Jobbik is the least satisfied with the establishment (both national and international). Additionally, the electorate of Jobbik consists of the most people who have a right-wing value orientation, while the supporters of Fidesz lag behind significantly in this regard.

14. Image Scores of DEREK and sub-indices within the electorate of certain parties. *Source: DEREK*



## 10. Glorification of German national-socialism and Nazi Germany collaborators, Holocaust denial

The glorification of German National Socialism and its collaborators in the mainstream media, and the glorification of German National Socialism and/or its collaborators in the decisions made by the authorities are practically absent in Hungary. However, extreme hate groups following neo-Nazi ideology exist in Hungary. The most influential ones are Hungarian National Front<sup>205</sup> and Pax Hungarica<sup>206</sup>.

In the morning hours of January 10, several people noticed in downtown Szolnok that a portrait of Ferenc Szálasi<sup>207</sup> was placed next to the World War II memorial on Tiszai hajósok tere. Two candles and a wreath were also placed by Szálasi's portrait. The editorial board of szoljon.hu asked the Szolnok local council for clarification about the portrait, to which they replied that they had not received any complaints, but that they would remove the portrait from the war memorial. The police said that no crime or offence was committed, nor was any other authority required to report the incident. On the afternoon of 10 January, public space supervisors removed the portrait, the candles and the wreath.

The most important event of the abovementioned hate groups and their followers is the so-called "Day of Honour" on 11 February. On this day in 1945 "some 28,000 German armies, Waffen SS, and Hungarian troops accompanied by a large number of civilians attempted to break through Soviet lines encircling the city and escape to the wooded hills to the north-west. Most were captured, killed, or wounded by the Soviet army. Two days later the city surrendered."<sup>208</sup> Two small neo-Nazi groups the Skins4Skins<sup>209</sup> and the Hungarian Hammerskins<sup>210</sup> organised a silent and secret commemoration in the Buda Castle. According to the video<sup>211</sup> about the event 40–50 people put candles on the sculpture of János Kapisztrán<sup>212</sup>.

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<sup>205</sup> The Hungarian National Front (*Magyar Nemzeti Arcvonal*) was founded in 1989. "This is one of the largest and most organized paramilitary hate groups in Hungary. The group is organised in a very strict hierarchy. The HNF has been in the forefront of Hungarian extremism in the past 20 years and played a crucial role in the paramilitary preparation of other Hungarian hate groups." (<http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/map/olvas/20#read>)

<sup>206</sup> "Although the racist Blood and Honour Cultural Association was disbanded in 2005 by the force of law it continues to operate under the name Pax Hungarica. The group pursues an active extreme right ideology and considers racism and the ideology of Hungarism the only remedies to the ills of the society. It has developed a coherent concept of the enemy and regularly calls for the necessity of using violence to counteract it." ([http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/hate\\_groups/](http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/hate_groups/))

<sup>207</sup> Ferenc Szálasi was the leader of the fascist Arrow Cross Party – Hungarist Movement. He became both Head of State and Prime Minister of Hungary on 15 October 1944.

<sup>208</sup> Neo-Nazis commemorate German attempt to "break out" of Budapest in 1945. 8 February, 2014. <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/neo-nazis-commemorate-german-attempt-to-break-out-of-budapest-in-1945/4750>

<sup>209</sup> The Skins4Skins is a small neo-Nazi group, drawing on an Italian skinhead group, was established during the riots in 2006. [...] Their explicit goal is to give help to those extremists who have been arrested or gaoled. They provide money and any other means of help to members of the far-right or skinhead subculture." ([http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/hate\\_groups/](http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/hate_groups/))

<sup>210</sup> The Hammerskins is a white supremacist group founded in 1988 in the US, and one of the most prominent and organized one. It has chapters in many countries in the world, among others in Hungary. The Hungarian Hammerskins was founded in 2002, but became member of the "Hammerskin Nation" in 2006.

<sup>211</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRbES3N\\_bK0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRbES3N_bK0)

<sup>212</sup> János Kapisztrán (originally San Giovanni da Capestrano) was a Franciscan Catholic priest who in 1456 led a crusade against the invading Ottoman Empire at the siege of Nándorfehérvár with military commander János Hunyadi.

On the weekend after 11 February a series of events: Remembrance Hiking, commemoration, worship for the “memory of the heroes”, and concerts. These events were organised by a group of neo-Nazi groups, with active co-operation of the Outlaws’ Army and the Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement.<sup>213</sup> There has been not a single article in the mainstream media about it, therefore only from contents uploaded by these hate-groups can inform us about what happened. According to the homepage of the Outlaws’ Army: “This year the usurpers of power did everything to wreck the efforts of the organisers and to hinder the commemoration about our ancestors and heroes.”

It is important to mention, that although government officials and politicians of the Fidesz use every opportunity to condemn anti-Semitism and Nazism, it does not mean condemning all those who took part in the Holocaust or contributed to the elimination of approximately 600,000 Hungarian Jews. The most important example in 2015 was the case of Hóman with what we have already dealt with in detail in Chapter 3.

Holocaust denial is present Hungarian society. A survey, carried out at the end of 2015 revealed that 10 to 20 percent of the Hungarian population deny the Holocaust<sup>214</sup>, while 23 percent of the respondents relativize it<sup>215</sup>. These rates have increased significantly in the recent years.<sup>216</sup>

In February 2015 scholars gathered for a roundtable discussion held at Central-European University focusing on the book titled “Don’t harm the Gypsy” by József Debreczeni, published in 2014, deemed by many scholars as racist. The event was co-organized by the Hungarian Sociological Association and the CEU’s Nationalism Studies Program. “Economist-sociologist György Németh, in sharp contrast to the rest of the panel, expressed admiration for author Debreczeni, calling him »a very brave man« and »intellectually courageous« for writing the book. [...] Németh admitted that the Roma were victims of persecution and the Holocaust in many countries, but asserted that this was not the case in Hungary. These statements were vehemently refuted by the rest of the panel and the audience.”<sup>217</sup> The Legal Defence Bureau for National and Ethnic Minorities, together with the Roma Press Centre, the Romaversitas<sup>218</sup>, the Chance for Children Foundation, and the Partners Hungary Foundation<sup>219</sup> pressed charges against Németh for Holocaust denial. In March 2015 the Prosecutor’s Office found the charge

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<sup>213</sup> <http://betyarsereg.hu/becsulet-napja-2015-iden-is-megemlekezunk-a-hosokre/>

<sup>214</sup> Based on the agreement rates to the following statements: “There weren’t any gas chambers in the concentration camps.” and “A large part of the horrors was invented by the Jews after the events.” It is also important that 5, and 11 percent of the respondents could not decide what to answer to these questions.

<sup>215</sup> Based on the agreement rate to the following statement: “The number of Jewish victims was much lower than usually stated.” Here 15 percent of the respondents couldn’t answer.

<sup>216</sup> Hann, Endre and Róna, Dániel (2016): *Anti-Semitic Prejudice in Contemporary Hungarian Society Research Report*. Budapest: Medián, Action and Protection Foundation. pp. 24–26.

<sup>217</sup> Scholars Discuss Prejudices Against Roma. 13 February, 2015. <https://www.ceu.edu/article/2015-02-13/scholars-discuss-prejudices-against-roma-0>

<sup>218</sup> Romaversitas is a development and scholarship programme for Roma students in higher education, established in 1997. (<http://www.romaversitas.hu/?q=en/node/40>)

<sup>219</sup> “Partners-Hungary, established in Budapest in 1994, provides cooperative planning, problem solving and dispute resolution skills and services essential to the success of a democratic society. The Centre specializes in managing conflict and building consensus between Roma and majority groups, promoting equal representation and participation for women, and strengthening civil society in Hungary as well as abroad.” (<http://www.partnersglobal.org/network/hungary>)



unfounded, claiming Németh's statement meant "that the crimes committed against those belonging to the Roma ethnicity are not the same as those committed against Jews", therefore Németh does not deny the Holocaust.<sup>220</sup>

Action and Protection Foundation took legal actions in many cases concerning Holocaust denial or relativisation. Some of them were presented earlier in the chapter about the "Countermeasures against hate crimes: criminal cases against organisers and participants". On far-right portals, Holocaust denial and relativization are constantly present. Enough to say that until May 2015 when the *Holokamu* (Holofoax) subpage of Kuruc.info was made permanently inaccessible, the title by itself was Holocaust-denial.

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<sup>220</sup> Az ügyészség szerint nem holokausztagadó Németh György. [According to the Prosecutor's Office György Németh is not a Holocaust-denier]. 23 March, 2015. [http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150323\\_Az\\_ugyeszseg\\_szerint\\_nem\\_holokausztagado](http://hvg.hu/itthon/20150323_Az_ugyeszseg_szerint_nem_holokausztagado)

## 11. Persecution of human rights activists

Human rights NGOs are constant targets of the government's rhetoric. According to the statement of the Special Rapporteur of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in Hungary "human rights defenders who criticise the Government or raise human rights concerns are quickly intimidated and portrayed as "political" or "foreign agents". They face enormous pressure through public criticism, stigmatisation in the media, unwarranted inspections and reduction of state funding." The statement also mentions that authorities try „to de-legitimize defenders and civil society representatives and, at the same time, undermine their work through excessive administrative and financial hurdles, as well as criminal defamation”.<sup>221</sup>

In 2014, the government started a broad scale campaign against NGOs, who were either coordinators or beneficiaries of the 'Norwegian NGO Fund'. The government accused them of being politically biased and serving foreign interests.<sup>222</sup> As a consequence, various state authorities (e.g., Government Control Office, National Tax Authority) launched investigations into the financial, and legal situation of the institutions and police raided the offices of two organisations.<sup>223</sup> Investigations ended and found no violations of the law, charges against the organisations were dropped, and in January 2015 a court ruled that the raid by the riot police was unlawful. In its statement following the ruling *Ökotárs* welcomed the decision but expressed its concern over "political pressure under which the police carry out unlawful searches", and called on the government not to use the authorities to exert such pressure.<sup>224</sup> An example of pressure by the authorities on NGOs was tax investigations launched during January and February 2015 against a total of seven organisations. One of the organisations in the crosshairs, *Kréta Kör* stated that the investigation was not launched by the competent local office of the tax authority but by the office that was in charge of priority cases. Even though *Kréta Kör* had been investigated already about a year earlier and no irregularities had been found, again data for the past three years were requested during the new investigation.<sup>225</sup> The dispute over the 'Norwegian NGO Fund' was settled in December 2015 with an agreement between the

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<sup>221</sup> 'End of Mission Statement by Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Visit to Hungary 8-16 February 2016', 16 February 2016,

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17048&LangID=E>.

<sup>222</sup> The campaign was clearly motivated by political interests. The government had three objectives with the campaign. Firstly, the government wanted to discredit Human Rights organisations and their criticism of the government in the eye of the public, since in the absence of strong opposition parties these NGOs and social movements were the only actors that were capable of harming Fidesz politically by uncovering corruption cases, criticising illiberal steps etc. Secondly, the government wanted to scare off NGOs and make them stop criticising the government. Thirdly, the government aimed at "seizing" the Norway Grant and "appoint" a pro-Fidesz think tank *Századvég*, owned by Árpád Habony, a close ally and main communications consultant to PM Orbán as coordinator of the Grant to decide upon the allocation of funds.

<sup>223</sup> For more information on the campaign against NGOs launched in 2014 see: Barna and Hunyadi: *Report on Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Hungary (January–June 2015)*; 'End of Mission Statement by Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Visit to Hungary 8-16 February 2016'; 'Timeline of Governmental Attacks against Hungarian NGO Sphere'. Eötvös Károly Policy Institute, Amnesty International Hungary, Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 12 August 2015, [http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/Timeline\\_of\\_gov\\_attacks\\_against\\_HU\\_NGOs\\_12082015.pdf](http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/Timeline_of_gov_attacks_against_HU_NGOs_12082015.pdf).

<sup>224</sup> 'Court condemns police crackdown on Okotars headquarters', *Daily News Hungary*, 29 January 2015, <http://dailynewshungary.com/court-condemns-police-crackdown-on-okotars-headquarters/>

<sup>225</sup> 'Már hat norvégok által támogatott szervezet ellen indult NAV-vizsgálat' ['NAV investigation has been launched already against 6 organisations funded by the Norway Grant'], 444, 27 January 2015, <http://444.hu/2015/01/27/nav-ellenorzes-indul-a-kretakor-ellen/>

Hungarian and the Norwegian government. According to the arrangement, the Hungarian government accepted that it is not authorised to investigate how the grant is administered and spent.<sup>226</sup> However, the Hungarian government is determined to gain more control over the grant in the next financial cycle.

One of the lessons of investigations was that the government can hamper the operation of NGOs using existing administrative tools (launching investigations, requesting documents, involving them in judicial processes, etc.). However, from time to time the government announced new ideas to control better the sector. In December 2014, PM Orbán stated in an interview given to Bloomberg that he would back legislation to force NGOs funded from abroad to be specially registered because it is important to know “who’s in the background” of such groups.<sup>227</sup> In January 2015, the head of Fidesz parliamentary caucus Antal Rogán announced in an interview that investigations into the finances of anti-government protests would be launched.<sup>228</sup> However, no steps followed the announcement. In February, the head of the Prime Minister’s Office urged civil society actors for more transparency and proposed that NGOs should not only account for where their money comes from, but also for their leaders’ personal assets.<sup>229</sup> In May 2015, the government published its National Anti-Corruption Program for the period between 2015 and 2018. While regarding political corruption, the program has been weakened on several points, it foresees tougher rules on NGOs’ transparency (e.g., widening the scope of civil society leaders obliged to submit a declaration of property).<sup>230</sup> However, none of those measures mentioned above was implemented in 2015.

The focus of government’s rhetoric shifted in January 2015 due to the start of an excessive anti-immigration campaign. This opened a new battleground and offered the government new possibilities to attack human rights organisations. Since Fidesz took a radical stance on the refugee issue, the conflict was predictable. The heated anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric of the government, the national consultation, the billboard campaign, tougher asylum laws and procedures breaching international law, and the complete lack of interest of the government in the humanitarian situation of asylum-seekers mobilised the civil society: many civil groups were formed spontaneously to help refugees, and civil organisations, which have traditionally dealt with refugees and human rights came more to the fore. While NGOs did not face legal procedures and investigations in 2015, they were the target of a smear

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<sup>226</sup> ‘Lifting of Suspension of Payments from EEA and Norway Grants to Hungary’, *Norvégia.hu*, 10 December 2015, <http://www.norvegia.hu/Norsk/EEA-and-Norway-Grants/EEA-and-Norway-Grants/Lifting-of-suspension-of-payments-from-EEA-and-Norway-Grants-to-Hungary/#top>.

<sup>227</sup> ‘Hungary Premier Orban Sticks to Maverick Path as U.S. Ties Sour’, *Bloomberg*, 15 December 2014, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-12-15/hungary-premier-orban-sticks-to-maverick-path-as-u-s-ties-sour>.

<sup>228</sup> Anti-government protests against wide-spread corruption within the government and unpopular policy measures (e.g., internet tax) took place regularly from Autumn 2014 until early 2015. ‘Antal Rogán: Who is funding the protests and why?’, *Budapest Beacon*, 12 January 2015, <http://budapestbeacon.com/politics/antal-rogan-who-is-funding-the-protests-and-why/17842>

<sup>229</sup> ‘Lázár: A Civil Szervezetek Vezetőinek a Személyes Vagyonukkal Is El Kell Számolniuk’ [‘Lázár: Leaders of NGOs Have to Account for Their Personal Assets’], *Index.hu*, 20 February 2015, [http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/20/lazar\\_a\\_civil\\_szervezetek\\_vezetoinek\\_a\\_szemelyes\\_vagyonukkal\\_is\\_el\\_kell\\_szamolniuk/](http://index.hu/belfold/2015/02/20/lazar_a_civil_szervezetek_vezetoinek_a_szemelyes_vagyonukkal_is_el_kell_szamolniuk/).

<sup>230</sup> ‘A Civileket Veszi Célba a Nemzeti Korrupcióellenes Program’ [‘NGOs Are in the Crosshairs of the National Anti-Corruption Programme’], *Vs.hu*, 28 May 2015, <http://vs.hu/kozelet/osszes/a-civileket-veszi-celba-a-nemzeti-korrupcioellenes-program-0528>.

campaign by the government, public media and those media outlets that are owned or controlled by business people close to Fidesz. Government communication portrayed “pro-refugee” organisations as one of the main opponents (besides the EU), against whose views, according to the government’s argumentation, the country has to be protected.

Mainly the organisations that have received support from Open Society Foundations, founded by György Soros, have come into the crosshairs of the government. The reason for this was that Mr Soros’ vision about the solution of refugee situation has clearly been different from that of the Hungarian government. Thus, in the government’s story, Mr Soros has become the antagonist, the key representative and the face of the “liberal”, “transnational” and “multicultural” world order that the Hungarian government is fighting against. The government also often refers to the conspiracy theory according to which the refugee flow is organised by background powers, including György Soros, among others. In the government’s view, Mr Soros finances human rights organisations that provide aid to refugees, and, at this moment, encourage more and more asylum-seekers to come to Europe. According to the government’s explanation, Mr Soros wants to flood Europe with immigrants because of economic interests and to weaken national identities to break the hegemony of nation states to create a transnational world government. The government uses Mr Soros to discredit and intimidate NGOs and portray them as agents and mercenaries of foreign powers (Mr Soros) and traitors of national interests. Mainly the following organisations came into the crosshairs of the government’s rhetoric: Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty International Hungary, *Átlátszó* [Transparency], *Eötvös Károly Intézet* [Károly Eötvös Policy Institute], Migration Aid, *Menedék Migránsokat Segítő Egyesület* [Menedék – Hungarian Association for Migrants], *MigSzol Migráns Szolidaritás Csoport* [Migszol Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary], and Open Society Institute. In May, for instance, Fidesz’s spokesperson criticised the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC) in a harsh statement recalling the rhetoric of the Stalinist era. The statement called HHC a pseudo-NGO that executes the orders of international speculative capital.<sup>231</sup> In response, HHC filed a lawsuit against the governing party and its spokesperson for violating the organisation’s right to a good reputation.<sup>232</sup>

Besides continuous intimidation and accusation of NGOs, individual activists also came into the crosshairs of the authorities. In early June, after the first anti-immigration billboards had appeared on the streets, both non-partisan anti-government activists and activists of opposition parties started damaging the billboards across the country. The government took a harsh stance and ordered the police (partly via undercover officers) to guard individual billboards, chase the activists, and take them into custody.<sup>233</sup> Activists were later acquitted of offence by the court saying that defacing billboards were an act of freedom of expression.<sup>234</sup> At the time of high tensions at Röszke border crossing in September, the Committee to Protect

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<sup>231</sup> ‘Fejezze be a Helsinki Bizottság a hazudozást a bevándorlókról!’ [‘HHC must stop lying about immigrants!’], *Mandiner.hu*, May 22 2015,

[http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150522\\_fidesz\\_fejezze\\_be\\_a\\_helsinki\\_bizottsag\\_a\\_hazudozast\\_a\\_bevandorlokrol](http://mandiner.hu/cikk/20150522_fidesz_fejezze_be_a_helsinki_bizottsag_a_hazudozast_a_bevandorlokrol)

<sup>232</sup> ‘A Magyar Helsinki Bizottság Keresete a Fidesszel Szemben’ [‘Lawsuit of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee Against Fidesz’], *Hungarian Helsinki Committee*, 15 June 2015, [http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/MHB\\_keresete\\_fidesszel\\_szemben\\_20150616.pdf](http://helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/MHB_keresete_fidesszel_szemben_20150616.pdf).

<sup>233</sup> ‘One example: Hungarian activists arrested for defacing anti-immigration billboard’, *The Guardian*, 8 June 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/08/hungarian-activists-anti-immigration-billboard-budapest>

<sup>234</sup> ‘Felmentették a plakátrongálókat’ [‘Activists defacing billboards have been acquitted of offence’], *24.hu*, 17 July 2015, <http://24.hu/belfold/2015/07/17/felmentettek-a-plakatrongalokat/>

Journalists reported that police ill-treated journalists while covering the events. According to the organisation, the police attacked them, and at least seven international journalists were beaten, and one was ordered to delete footage.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> 'In Hungary, Police Beat Journalists Covering Refugee Crisis at Border - Committee to Protect Journalists', *Committee to Protect Journalists*, 17 September 2015, <https://www.cpj.org/2015/09/in-hungary-police-beat-journalists-covering-refugee.php>.

## 12. Conclusion

The legislation concerning minorities did not change in 2015. Discriminatory practices concerned people of mostly Roma origin, and the main areas of discrimination were segregation in education, discriminatory measures concerning housing, discriminatory practices of the police. In the case of school segregation the government played a double-game. On the one hand, Zoltán Balog Minister responsible for Education said that the government “rejects and condemns illegal school segregation and is committed to quality education that develops the conditions for equal opportunity.” On the other hand, the government implemented such changes in legislation what makes segregation possible in some schools, operated by the Church or other religious organisations, and exempted them from the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Act. It seems that this new regulation already has had severe consequences since local governments have been using it as a camouflage for segregation and the establishment of “non-Roma” schools.

Some local governments apply discriminatory measures concerning housing. The most severe example was the forced displacement of families, mostly Roma in Miskolc, coupled with the offering of monetary compensation to only those purchasing a property outside of Miskolc and not selling it for at least five years. Although courts, even the Supreme Court of Hungary ruled the regulations of the Fidesz-led local government discriminatory, the government has done nothing to enforce the court’s decision and to stop this ongoing practice. There are also other discriminatory features of local welfare systems, such as introducing ‘soft’ requirements for subsidies which give much room for consideration to the mayors. These rulings are mostly based on the principle that there are worthy and unworthy poor, or as one of the most far-right mayors in Hungary state it: the “builders” and the “destroyers”.

The legislation concerning asylum-seekers changed profoundly in 2015. In July and in September, the National Assembly adopted new legislation amending and affecting various existing Acts, and the Government issued related decrees. The Government set a list of safe third countries, including Serbia, from where almost all the asylum-seekers approached Hungary. The change meant that almost all applications could be rejected almost automatically. At the same time, accelerated asylum application procedures became the norm after the new regulation came into force on 1 August, and the possibility of a judicial review of decisions was significantly limited. In September, a new border procedure came into force meaning that individuals arriving at the border of Hungary who wish to submit an asylum application must do so in special ‘transit zones’. There are only two such zones are operating on the Serbian-Hungarian border, and the entry to there was limited to only 100 asylum-seekers a day. Moreover, due to an amendment to the Criminal Code the prohibited crossing and damaging the border closure became a criminal act.

In 2015 the social welfare system underwent fundamental changes in Hungary. The most important change was that local governments’ responsibility has become bigger regarding setting the conditions for the distribution of social benefits and public work. The eligibility criteria and a number of subsidies became determined solely by local governments and many of the benefits, previously based on subjective rights, were abolished. The new system introduced by the government does not protect but exposes those who are in need – including

Roma people – to the mayor’s decisions, even more than ever. The new system gives more power to local governments and mayors and, therefore, it allows for arbitrary decisions and discriminative practices. These local regulations are, however, in the grey zone, since they are not discriminatory *per se*. Nevertheless, in many cases, their intentions are more than dubious.

Law enforcement practices regarding asylum-seekers in 2015 fit in the general framework of the government’s harsh anti-immigration and anti-refugee stance. The public discourse was dominated by the government’s radical rhetoric, and asylum regulations were toughened. As a consequence of the huge influx of asylum-seekers, reception centres became clearly overcrowded by mid-2015: reports talked about inhuman conditions, degrading treatment, hygienic problems, coarse treatment and insufficient legal assistance. The government’s inaction and reluctance to treat asylum-seekers in a human way and provide them with basic infrastructure, aid and information resulted in the chaotic scenes at the end of August in Budapest, when thousands of asylum-seekers became stranded at train stations. Another major incident, a conflict between the police and asylum-seekers occurred one day after the closure of the Serbian border in September when asylum-seekers and journalists were injured by police action.

Discriminatory practices of police against the Roma (e.g., targeted fining) are widespread, although latency is very high. A clear example happened in January 2015, when the mayor of a small town in North-Western Hungary, a member of Fidesz, was stopped by the police for a roadside check only because he was a Roma. It also happens often that police, prosecutors and courts downgrade hate crimes to basic criminal offences and do not recognise the racist, xenophobic or homophobic motive behind them.

The government’s rhetoric concerning migrants aimed at fear mongering and fuelling aversion to asylum-seekers. The government’s campaign against asylum-seekers, which consisted of a “national consultation on immigration and terrorism”, billboard campaigns and a campaign opposing the EU quota system, used a populist and xenophobic rhetoric that resembles far-right messages elsewhere in Europe. Government and Fidesz officials linked migration to terrorism, crime and unemployment, and accused migrants of spreading diseases, committing crimes, and stealing jobs from Hungarians. The government’s approach was based on political motives: stabilising its electoral support and regaining momentum in domestic politics by setting the tone, stealing the topic from Jobbik, and presenting the Hungarian population with a ‘common enemy’ against which the government was taking a determined stance to ‘defend the nation’. Part of the rhetoric is aimed at fuelling fears of cultural and religious differences. A powerful element of the government’s reasoning is the mobilisation of people against the conquest of Europe by Muslims. Another part of the rhetoric is related to conspiracy theories, such as the allegation that György Soros finances and organises the arrival of refugees or that Israel is the phenomenon.

The government’s rhetoric concerning the Roma was also affected by the issue of migration. Many government officials, including PM Orbán, used Roma integration as an excuse for why Hungary is unable to accept asylum seekers. Rhetoric concerning the Jews was conciliatory after the severe dispute between the government and the Jewish community over the German occupation Memorial in 2014. A major issue, however, was the erection of a statue of Bálint Hóman, a historian, MP and minister from the interwar period with anti-Semitic views. Even though the government originally supported the idea, PM Orbán later abandoned and

condemned the plan. The government's rhetoric concerning the LGBTQ community was marked by homophobic statements by some leading Fidesz officials, who condemned the annual Pride march calling it disgusting. PM Orbán expressed his view that equal rights for LGBTQ people will not be provided and thanked the LGBTQ community for not being provocative.

The Hungarian society can be described by an overall high level of the rejection of "otherness". Prejudice was always the strongest against the Roma. However, anti-immigrant sentiment has increased to a similarly high level. The prevalence of anti-Roma prejudice has been remarkably stable in the past two decades. According to the latest extensive poll conducted in 2011, 82 percent of the Hungarian population thought that "the problems of the Roma would be solved if they started to work at last", 60 percent agreed with the statement that "the inclination to criminality is in the blood of Gypsies", and 42 percent considered that "it is only right that there are still pubs, clubs and discos where Gypsies are not let in".

According to a survey carried out at the end of 2015, 65 percent of the society was not anti-Semitic, 12 percent hold moderate and 23 percent extreme anti-Semitic views. When analysing the content of anti-Semitism, it can be clearly seen that the agreement with statements about the excessive influence of Jews or even about secret Jewish conspiracy is higher than with those about traditional Christian anti-Jewish sentiments.

Despite the low levels of immigration (especially from culturally distant countries), xenophobia and anti-immigration sentiments are extremely strong in the Hungarian society. However, openly admitted xenophobia reached a record high in 2015. At that time 41 percent of the adult population said that asylum seekers should not be allowed to enter Hungary. The rate of those who think that asylum seekers should be admitted or rejected depending on the merits of the case was 53 percent. Only 6 percent of the respondents said that all asylum seekers should be admitted unconditionally. According to research conducted by Ipsos and Republicon Institute in June and July 2015, 56 percent of the Hungarian population think that immigrants pose a real threat to Hungary and only 16 percent oppose such a statement. Over 20 percent of the respondents claim that the increasing number of refugees causes problems for their or their families' personal life. Data shows that the government's anti-immigrant rhetoric seems to work, at least as far as Fidesz voters are concerned: they have the most negative attitudes towards refugees among the supporters of all parties, and they even beat the sympathisers of Jobbik in this regard.

Unfortunately, there is no detailed survey about homophobia in Hungary. In the 2014/2015 wave of the European Social Survey (ESS), 24 percent of the Hungarian population expressed disagreement with the statement saying that "Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their life as they wish.", While 44 percent agreement with it. These proportions have stayed more or less stable throughout the different ESS waves since 2002.

Traditionally, the Roma, members of the LGBTQ community and Jews are in the crosshairs of radical parties and groups in Hungary. In 2015, refugees became the main target of such groups. Even though the key organisation of the Hungarian far-right, the party Jobbik, which was known earlier for its harsh anti-Roma and anti-Semitic statements, has undergone an image change since 2013, which aims at moderating the party's messages and turning Jobbik into a people's party in order to attract moderate voters and become Fidesz's main challenger in the 2018 general election, many cases came to light in 2015 proving that Jobbik is still a



radical party. Anti-Gypsy and anti-Semitic statements were made and posted on Facebook by local politicians of Jobbik.

Regarding refugees, Jobbik and other far-right organisations took a radical stance similar to that of Fidesz. They have also condemned migration, been opposed to the refugees, and about asylum-seekers they have used the same wording and argumentation as the government (e.g., illegal immigrants, parasites, criminals and terrorists, etc.). Radical organisations [e.g., Jobbik, Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement (*Hatvannégy Vármegye Mozgalom*, HVIM), Army of Outlaws (*Betyársereg*), Hungarian Self-Defence Movement (*Magyar Önvédelmi Mozgalom*, MÖM)] organised a series of demonstrations against asylum-seekers, the existence of refugee camps and the Islamisation of Europe in 2015, starting from June. Extreme organisations, such as *Betyársereg*, HVIM, MÖM and organisations of football ultras even took actions against refugees themselves: they visited border areas to hunt and beat up refugees to “persuade” them not to come to Hungary.

Despite Jobbik’s efforts to change its image, the party’s politicians made harsh anti-Roma statements as well, starting with a Facebook post of then-deputy chair of the party, Előd Novák on 1 January 2015. Extreme organisations, mainly *Betyársereg*, which *de facto* functions as a private security gang, visited small settlements and threatened the local Roma community.

Despite the efforts of Jobbik’s leader Gábor Vona to restrain the party’s supporters from actions against the LGBTQ community and the Pride March, there were minor incidents organised by the far-right against the Pride in 2015, too. Pig manure was spread along the route to annoy the participants, and a minor anti-LGBTQ demonstration took place. The most significant incident happened after the event during the night: a famous gay rights activist was attacked and his nose heavily broken.

In the case of anti-Romani hate crimes and incidents, the lack of comprehensive monitoring is striking. Although it is well known that Roma people are severely discriminated, latency is very high. Four cases of anti-Roma violent attacks became public during 2015. In April a Roma man was shot dead by a police officer in Örkény, a village near to Budapest. In April 2015 two men attacked a Roma family, a grandmother and her granddaughter, in Eger, a city in East-Central Hungary. First, the perpetrators shouted anti-Gypsy slogans to them over the fence, then broke into their house, and brutally beat them up. In May it was made public that a Roma family in Szúcs had been harassed by members of the *Betyársereg*<sup>236</sup> (Outlaws’ Army) for three months. The home of a Roma family in Gyöngyöspata was set ablaze on Christmas Eve. The family had purchased the house weeks earlier which is situated in the predominantly non-Roma part of the town. Anti-Roma hate speech was largely present in the political arena in 2015. Besides several clearly anti-Roma statements by Jobbik politicians, government officials and politicians close to Fidesz were using the parallel between the Roma and migrants extensively in 2015.

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<sup>236</sup> The Outlaws’ Army (*Betyársereg*) was founded in 2008. The hate group emerged from the periphery of the more influential extremist groups (Guards Movement, Sixty-four Counties Youth Movement). The founders’ explicit goal with the group is to establish an “elite unit” that only those can join who have absolute ideological commitment and are in great form physically. The group’s ideology is based on racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, chauvinism and Hungarism. The members of the group explicitly define themselves as outlaws and they romanticise violence.” (<http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/map/olvas/33#read>)

According to different sources, 83 anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents were registered in 2015. Among them, three attacks, one threat and seven cases of vandalism. Besides that, forty-three of all anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents fell into the category of hate speech, eight of them committed by political party representatives (six by politicians of Jobbik, two by that of Fidesz). In 2015, various NGOs registered twenty-nine anti-Semitic graffiti and stickers which are surely the minimum estimations for such anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents. These mostly included swastikas, Star of David signs hanged or drawn into a rubbish bin. There were also scribbled benches, public transport vehicles, and other public places.

There is another phenomenon that needs to be mentioned: from July, Fidesz politicians, government officials and all kind of pro-Fidesz organisations have started to present György Soros as a financial figure who infiltrates civil society to overthrow governments. Although these kind of statements are not overtly anti-Semitic, it is based on the language, the expressions they use and also on the long-lasting history of this usage they have anti-Semitic connotations. This code language is also consonant with the inner-structure of anti-Semitism in Hungary, namely that the acceptance of statements about the excessive Jewish influence and the supposed Jewish conspiracy has increased. Moreover, when people were asked in a nationally representative survey in 2015 about the causes of mass migration, many blamed György Soros, Jews or Israel.

In May and June, as the time of the Budapest Pride was approaching, many politicians from the right and the far-right expressed their disapproval and disgust concerning the event. One day after the Budapest Pride had started, on 5 July a rainbow coloured paper doll was hanged in the largest public park in Budapest. Also, a pink triangle, the well-known Nazi concentration camp badge, was painted on it. During the Pride, many hate speech statements occurred.

In 2015, the Muslim community in Hungary experienced a sharp increase in Islamophobia. This tendency was influenced greatly by the refugee crisis and the overt anti-migrant, anti-Muslim rhetoric of the government. According to the Muslim communities in Hungary, threats in e-mails to them are frequently received. Although there is no systematic monitoring of Islamophobic hate crimes and incidents, according to the Hungarian Islamic Community 10 to 15 women wearing headscarves were attacked during 2015. Attacks included a threat with a knife, a face slap, and the tearing off of a headscarf.

No interethnic or religious clashes occurred in Hungary in 2015. Although many asylum-seekers passed through the country, no major conflict occurred between them and the native population. Hatred against refugees fuelled by the government propaganda and far-right sites and organisations did not turn into physical violence. A significant incident occurred in the refugee camp in Debrecen, where following a quarrel between two Turkish asylum-seekers, around 100 enraged refugees broke out of the refugee camp, and attacked cars and buses with sticks and set waste bins on fire. The event, however, cannot be considered as interethnic clash because the aim of the refugees was not to attack the native population. The quarrel broke out because one of the asylum-seekers took the Qur'an from the other and stepped on it. According to some news, 200 Euros were hidden in the Qur'an, and the conditions in the camp, in which twice as many asylum-seekers were accommodated as the camp was supposed to suit, have surely contributed to high tensions among asylum-seekers. Despite extremist organisations'

actions aiming at threatening the local Roma population in some settlements, no conflict between the Roma and non-Roma population occurred in 2015.

In recent years, great attention has been paid to cease racism and violence in the stadiums. The FARE (Football against Racism in Europe) group, set up in 1989 became especially active in the Eastern European Region in recent year. The “Eastern European Development Project” of FARE, launched in 2009, has been focused exclusively on the growing racism, anti-Semitism in football stadiums. These programmes had visible effects and the number of such incidents decreased. For example, while between the period of May 2013–April 2014 Action and Protection Foundation registered several anti-Semitic manifestations during football games, in 2015 only one such case was recorded. Unfortunately, there is good reason to think that the attitudes of the supporters most probably did not change, only the envisaged fines had an effect. This thought is reinforced by the fact that ultras played a role in hate crimes and incidents against migrants.

The popularity of the far-right party Jobbik underwent significant changes in 2015. While the party benefited from the losses of the governing party Fidesz between October 2014 and March 2015, the increase of Jobbik’s popularity stopped in March, when the party’s electorate started to decrease slowly but steadily. In the last quarter of the year, Jobbik’s voter base remained stable. The changes of Jobbik’s popularity have their roots in Fidesz’ performance. When Fidesz was forced to go on the defensive for the first time since 2010 at the end of 2014, and lost one-third of its voter base due to corruption cases, governance failures, and conflicts within the governing party, Jobbik could flourish and channel anti-establishment sentiments as the only potent party that has not been in power before. The government, however, managed to stop the decline of their voter base through the radical anti-refugee campaign in the first quarter of 2015, which weakened Jobbik’s electorate. While the far-right party tried to divert public attention away from the topic of migration to other issues (e.g., corruption, health care, education etc.), the party has not succeeded yet in competing with the government’s communications machine.

While there is no available data on the support for radical groups, with the help of Political Capital’s Demand for Right-Wing Extremism (DEREX) index, we can have a basic idea on to what extent Hungarian society is open to far-right ideology. The level of attitude radicals, who are receptive to anti-democratic, anti-Western, xenophobic, chauvinistic, authoritarian and scapegoating messages, was 10 percent in 2015, which is a two percentage points decrease compared to 2012–2013. Among the individual factors determining openness to radical right-wing ideas, anti-immigration attitudes are the most significant in Hungary. While the ratio of those who have an extremely exclusionary stance is traditionally high in the country, in 2014-2015 Hungary had the highest scores in this category among all EU states (54%). Combining DEREX data with voting preferences and electorate groups shows that the voter base of Jobbik tends to be more “attitude radical” than that of other parties. Among all the parties Jobbik has the most xenophobic and homophobic electorate, while Fidesz supporters hardly differ from other electorate groups in this regard.

The glorification of German National Socialism and its collaborators in the mainstream media, and the glorification of German National Socialism and its collaborators in the decisions made by the authorities are practically absent in Hungary. However, extreme hate groups following neo-Nazi ideology exist in Hungary. Holocaust denial is also present, and it has

increased in the recent years. In a survey carried out in 2014 on a nationally representative sample revealed that 10 to 20 percent of the Hungarian population deny the Holocaust, while 23 percent of the respondents relativize it. Action and Protection Foundation detected cases of Holocaust denial and relativization and also pressed charges in many cases.

Human rights NGOs are constant targets of smear campaigns and intimidation measures of the government. While the broad-scale attack, which the government started in 2014 against organisations related to the ‘Norwegian NGO Fund’, ended in December 2015 with an agreement between the Hungarian and Norwegian government, a new campaign against NGOs was launched by the government. While besides communication measures the campaign against ‘Norwegian NGOs’ included a series of serious investigations and legal steps by state authorities, the new efforts consist “only” of a smear campaign with rhetorical elements. The campaign focuses on organisations which are critical of the government and receive support from Open Society Foundations founded by György Soros. In the crosshairs are organisations that represent an alternative approach to the refugee question, different from that of the government. The government uses Mr Soros to discredit and intimidate NGOs and portray them as agents and mercenaries of foreign powers (Mr Soros) and traitors of national interests.

Even though senior government officials, including PM Orbán, have many times announced new legislation to have more control over NGOs, no measures were implemented in 2015.

## 12. Recommendations

Although it is hard to make general recommendations, especially in a situation when political actors in power are clearly not ready to change the situation, we collected some:

- Media (and especially the public media) shall refrain from reporting in a way that might incite hatred and increase the level of fear among the population
- Politically less biased reporting in the Hungarian public media, balanced representation of political and social groups in the media authority and controlling bodies of the public media.
- More initiatives by schools and NGOs to develop critical thinking, the level of participation in public life and cooperation skills both of the Young and the general population.
- More active role of the law enforcement bodies and the judiciary in combating and convicting hate crimes.
- Introduction of effective measures by law enforcement bodies to combat officers' discriminative practices (e.g., stronger education measures, ethical code, scrutiny of actions, recommendations for actions).
- Empowerment of disadvantaged groups (mainly Roma) so that they are aware of their rights, possibilities to act and can represent their interest in the public.
- Introduction of anti-discrimination measures in the education agenda and the agenda of teacher-training.
- Abolishment of all administrative and legislative provisions that limit the rights and scope of action of human rights defenders. Provide more financial support for NGOs fighting discrimination and hate crimes, and promoting human rights.
- The government shall refrain from any communications, administrative and legal actions that might criminalise, intimidate and stigmatise human rights defenders.
- Strengthen the role, powers, independence and capacity of independent state institutions (e.g., Ombudsman, Prosecution) to defend human rights, and combat discrimination and hate crimes.
- "Establish an independent body to safeguard the independence of the judiciary and to supervise the appointment, promotion and regulation of the profession in accordance with international human rights standards. Judges should be ensured tenure in order to exercise their functions in an independent manner."<sup>237</sup>
- "Establishing a national mechanism on protecting human rights defenders, in consultation with civil society organisations."<sup>238</sup>
- "Mainstream human rights into the institutional and policy framework, including by adopting a national action plan on human rights with clear and specific goals and indicators, taking into account recommendations by International and European human rights mechanisms."<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17048&LangID=E>

<sup>238</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17048&LangID=E>

<sup>239</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17048&LangID=E>

- Human rights defenders shall be supported and empowered to develop and strengthen cooperation on the national and local level.
- Human rights defenders shall strengthen their direct connection to citizens and non-state organisations to be stronger anchored in the society, and strengthen financial independence from public actors.
- The international community shall “intensify efforts to empower and support human rights defenders and civil society organisations” in Hungary.<sup>240</sup>
- The “EU should review its policy on funding civil society organizations exclusively only through the state budget and develop additional and alternative sources of funding ensure free and non-politicized access to funding for all civil society organizations.”<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17048&LangID=E>

<sup>241</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17048&LangID=E>