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Prevalence of Anti-Semitic Prejudice in Contemporary Hungarian Society Research Report

In November 2013, Médian Opinion and Market Research Institute conducted an Action and Protection Foundation-commissioned survey on how widespread and intense anti-Semitic prejudice is and on groups that are stoking anti-Jewish prejudice in Hungarian society. The survey was conducted through a questionnaire, and the sample numbered 1,200 individuals. The pool of respondents, personally approached by the interviewers, were representative of the Hungarian population (over 18-years-old) in terms of sex, age, residence and level of education. The survey was conducted based on methodology developed by András Kovács;¹ the questionnaire has been used in several previous surveys since 1995, allowing the survey commissioners to track changes in the data over time.

Graph no. 1. Measuring anti-Semitic prejudice

According to theories that deal with prejudice, prejudice is layered, it has multiple dimensions. Some of these dimensions of prejudice are: its content, called cognitive anti-Semitism; its emotional intensity, affective anti-Semitism; and prejudice-motivated readiness to discriminate. Based on these theories, empirical research on prejudice normally seeks to measure prejudice in these three dimensions, with the sum of the results then reflecting the proportion of prejudiced people within a society. The same method was used in this survey. Respondents were asked a separate set of questions to measure content of prejudice, that is, the types of negative stereotypes about Jews respondents are willing to admit to, and their feelings about them—the level of antipathy and aversion to contact they feel. The questions measuring aptitude for discrimination were inserted among questions measuring the content of the prejudice. The results of this part of the survey are presented in this introduction.

1.1 Cognitive anti-Semitism

Over the last two decades a series of questions has been used several times to conduct surveys measuring the content of prevailing anti-Semitic prejudice. Respondents were asked to indicate on a five-point scale the degree to which they agree with eight statements. Table no. 1 shows the percentage of those who agreed fully or who were more in agreement than not (values 5 and 4).

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András Kovács, *The Stranger at Hand: Antisemitic Prejudices in Post-Communist Hungary* Vol. 15 of series *Jewish Identities in a Changing World* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011); and in Hungarian, *A kéznél lévő Idegen. Antiszemita előítéletek a rendszerváltozás utáni Magyarországon* (Budapest: POLGART Kiadó, 2005).

Table no. 1

*The content of anti-Jewish prejudice**(percentage of respondents; agreement on a 5–1 scale; 5 – agree fully; 4 – in agreement)*

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Agree fully</i>	<i>I agree</i>
<i>Intellectuals of Jewish origin keep media and culture under their influence</i>	2006	12	19
	2011	14	21
	2013	11	18
<i>There is a secret Jewish conspiracy that determines political and economic processes</i>	2006	10	17
	2011	14	20
	2013	15	19
<i>Jewish influence is too great in Hungary today</i>	2013	12	15
<i>It would be best if the Jews emigrated from the country</i>	2006	5	7
	2011	8	12
	2013	6	9
<i>The number of Jews in certain fields of employment should be restricted</i>	2006	5	10
	2011	7	12
	2013	5	11
<i>The Crucifixion of Jesus is the unpardonable sin of the Jews</i>	2006	8	12
	2011	9	12
	2013	7	8

<i>The sufferings of the Jews were God's punishment</i>	2006	7	7
	2011	5	9
	2013	4	7
<i>The Jews are more prone to using unclean means to achieve their goals than others</i>	2006	8	13
	2011	9	17
	2013	7	15

Two statements in this series indicate traditional anti-Jewish sentiments—anti-Judaism—with roots in religion (*The Crucifixion of Jesus is the unpardonable sin of the Jews; The sufferings of the Jews were God's punishment*); four statements that express rather frequent anti-Jewish stereotypes (*Intellectuals of Jewish origins keep media and culture under their influence; There is a secret Jewish conspiracy that determines political and economic processes; The Jews are more prone to using unclean means to achieve their goals than others; Jewish influence is too great in Hungary today*); and two statements that can be interpreted as a manifestation of readiness to discriminate against Jews (*It would be best if the Jews emigrated from the country; The number of Jews in certain fields of employment should be restricted*).

As data in this table shows, 11%–34% of respondents agree with the anti-Jewish statements in 2013. The “Jewish world conspiracy” stereotype is the most believed stereotype, and the statements indicating anti-Judaism stemming from religion are least widely accepted. 15–16% would support discrimination against Jews. If we consider the change in the examined prejudices over time, we find that agreement with these statements grew significantly—with the exception of one statement—between 2006 and 2011, while the number of those accepting anti-Jewish stereotypes has somewhat decreased since 2011.

Respondents were given an overall score based on their responses to each of the eight questions, and divided into three groups based on the degree to which their answers reflected agreement or rejection of statements that measure prejudiced stereotyping. The lowest grade point achievable was 8, and the highest was 40. The first group included those who may have a few prejudices or belief in particular stereotypes, but, overall, rated relatively lowly on the scale (8–20 points). The second group included those described as semi-prejudiced (21–30 points). Individuals in the third group are viewed as extreme anti-Semites on the basis of their score (31–40 points).² 47% of the respondents belong in the first group, 42% are moderately anti-Semitic, and 11% are extreme anti-Semites. 36% are difficult to categorize because of their refusal to answer or answers of “I don't know” (see Table no. 2).

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Only respondents who answered all of the eight questions were included in the count for these groups (N = 764). Forty-four respondents (4%) of the sample pool did not answer a single question.

Table no. 2

Acceptance rate of anti-Semitic stereotypes
(percentage; N = 764)

		N	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1,00	361	30,1	47,3
	2,00	318	26,5	88,8
	3,00	86	7,1	100,0
	Total	764	63,7	100,0
Missing System	436	36,3		
Total	1200	100,0		

Table no. 3 proves that the above categorization into groups reflects accurately the differences of intensity of anti-Semitism between the groups.

Table no. 3

The acceptance of specific anti-Semitic statements in the groups categorized according to level of anti-Semitism

(percentage)

	Extremely anti-Semitic	Moderately anti-Semitic	Not anti-Semites, stereotypers
<i>Intellectuals of Jewish origin keep media and culture under their influence</i>	94	33	11
<i>There is a secret Jewish conspiracy that determines political and economic processes</i>	98	54	16
<i>Jewish influence is too great in Hungary today</i>	91	45	6
<i>The Jews are more prone to using unclean means to achieve their goals than others</i>	91	40	4
<i>It would be best if the Jews emigrated from the country</i>	83	24	1
<i>The number of Jews in certain fields of employment should be restricted</i>	45	22	2
<i>The Crucifixion of Jesus is the unpardonable sin of the Jews</i>	81	22	3
<i>The sufferings of the Jews were God's punishment</i>	53	20	4

However, Table no. 3 also shows that even in the group that received low points on the scale, app. 15%, accept the two most widespread anti-Semitic stereotypes, so they would rather fit into the categories of moderate anti-Semites. *Therefore we can draw the conclusion that 35–40% of the sample definitely accept some anti-Semitic stereotypes, and 7% can be considered*

extremely anti-Semitic—within this dimension. On the other front, about a quarter of the sample seems to be devoid of any form of anti-Semitic prejudice, and the remaining one-third cannot be categorized into any of the groups based on their responses.

1.2 Affective anti-Semitism

Researchers of prejudice usually agree that emotions—hatred, antipathy, rejection, remoteness—harbored against a group are better indicators of prejudice than the acceptance of negative stereotypes, which may have learned aspects from “social norms” that are not tied to any emotion whatsoever. For this reason, the survey measured the grade of antipathy felt against Jews in Hungary and how strong anti-Semitic sentiment is in the population under investigation through three questions.

Initially we asked respondents if they feel antipathy towards Jews or not. The results are shown in Graph no. 1. Since the question was asked in several previous surveys, the changes over time are also presented in the graph.

Graph no. 1.
Emotional rejection of Jews, 2003–2013
(percentage)

	2003	2006	2009	2010	2011	2013
Feeling of antipathy towards Jews	9	14	10	28	24	21

As apparent from the Graph, the proportion of those who expressed anti-Jewish emotions spiked extraordinarily in 2010. From the 1990s right up until 2010 the percentage of such reactions remained steady at around 10%—rising in election years, and lowering between them—but rising in 2010 to 28%, twice as high as the previous high in 2006. This proportion then began to gradually decrease and came to 21% in 2011—never returning however to the levels recorded before 2010.

The second question, with which anti-Semitic sentiments were examined, was the so-called “sympathy barometer”: the interviewees were requested to show how much sympathy or antipathy they felt for the listed ethnic groups with the help of a 9-point scale. The replies related to the seven ethnic groups listed are shown in Graph no. 2.

Graph no. 2.
Sympathy barometer, 2006–2013
(9 – strong sympathy; 1- strong antipathy)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013
Arabs	3,87	3,66	4,37	4,04	3,93	4,06
Gypsies	3,33	3,03	3,39	3,64	3,63	3,69
Africans	4,55	4,24	4,72	4,26	4,48	4,20
Romanians	4,70	4,00	4,11	4,23	4,44	4,26
Chinese	3,77	3,80	4,09	4,01	4,11	4,12

Schwabians	5,38	5,48	5,75	4,86	5,14	4,96
Jews	5,02	5,00	5,24	4,47	4,61	4,53

Apparently, respondents do not in general sympathize with ethnic groups living in the country: of the seven ethnic groups, five scored under the median (5) value of the scale in the course of each survey, which means that antipathy, rather than sympathetic feelings were shown by the respondents. In contrast, the Schwabians and Jews were positioned more often than not in the sympathetic half of the scale until 2009, but a great decline followed, and by 2013 all the ethnic groups were regarded with more antipathy than sympathy in the members of the sample pool. Gypsies were the target of the greatest antipathy in every survey, though antipathy towards them has declined since 2009. The sense of antipathy against Jews was strongest in 2011, since then—as with the question number one—it has moderated somewhat.

The third question, which measured the sense of alienation, “social remoteness” from Jews—and other ethnic or life-style minorities—is a frequent component of sociological surveys. Interviewees were asked whether they would consent to a member of the listed groups moving into their neighborhood or not.

Table no. 4

*Social remoteness from 11 groups
Would not consent to a member of the group moving into the neighborhood
(percentage)*

Arab	58
American	31
Gypsy	68
Chinese	54
Homosexual	61
Transylvanian Hungarian emigrant	30
Skinhead	72
African	51
Romanian	48
Schwabian	33
Jewish	38

The results once again demonstrate a high level of rejection of “otherness”: app. one-third of the respondents would not like to see a member of any of the groups moving into the neighborhood. The most rejected groups are the skinheads, the Gypsies, and homosexuals. Though Jews belong among the less rejected groups—trailing the Transylvanian Hungarians, Americans and the Schwabians—nevertheless, a Jewish neighbor would not be welcomed by one-third of the respondents.

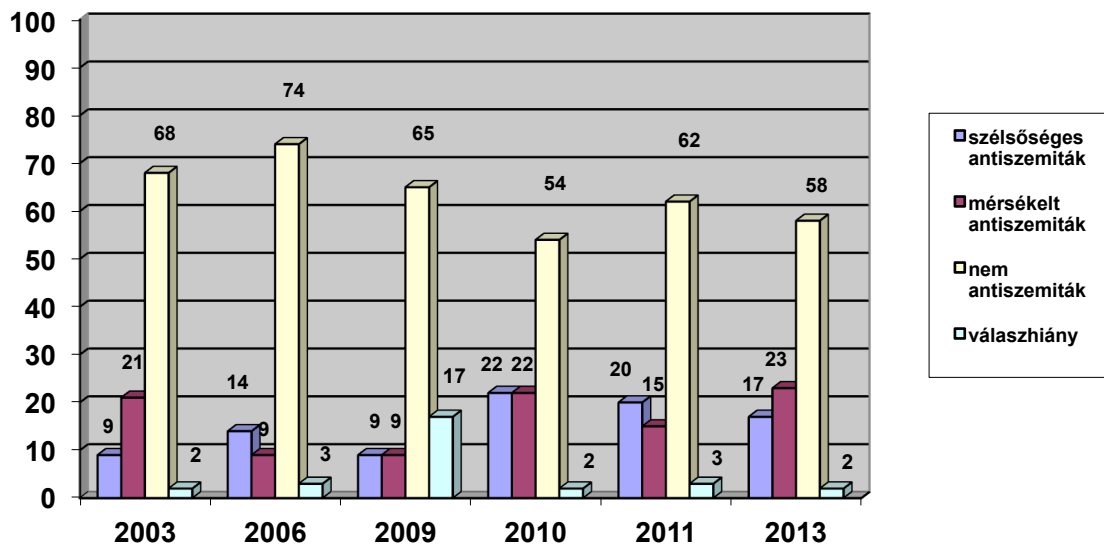
The sum of responses to the first two questions measuring anti-Semitic emotion gives an overall view of the proportion of those who hold anti-Semitic feelings in the Hungarian population.³ As Graph no. 3 shows, this percentage was highest in 2010. At this point 22% of

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Those respondents who feel antipathy towards Jews and marked a score between 1 and 6 on the sympathy barometer were listed among the extreme anti-Semites; other members of the group feeling antipathy

the sample population appeared in the extreme, and another 22% in the moderately anti-Semitic group. Though the percentage of those not anti-Semitic was only 54%. By 2013 the weight of extreme anti-Semites declined significantly, however the proportion of moderate anti-Semites did not change. Since 2010, over one-third of the population harbors strong or moderate anti-Semitic sentiments.

Graph no. 3.
The proportion of emotive anti-Semites in Hungarian society, 2003–2013
 (percentage)



1.3 The current proportion of anti-Semites in Hungarian society

/Extremely anti-Semitic, Moderately anti-Semitic, Not anti-Semitic, No answer/

Groups that think as anti-Semites and groups that have anti-Semitic feelings—though presumably largely overlapping—are not identical, their members are not necessarily the same. The extreme, active, and easily-mobilized anti-Semitic core is composed of the people who are characterized by trenchant anti-Semitism in both dimensions. Therefore, in the next step of the investigation, the size of the anti-Semitic core within the adult Hungarian population is measured.⁴

and those who did not feel antipathy for the Jews, but marked a value between 1 and 3 on the “sympathy barometer”, were categorized as moderate anti-Semites, and finally all the rest were categorized as not anti-Semitic.

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Those individuals were categorized among the extreme anti-Semites who were included in this group for both dimensions, as well as those who were extreme anti-Semites in one dimension and moderate in the other. Those respondents are considered moderate who were found to have made the moderate group in both dimensions, as well as those who were included in the extreme anti-Semitic group in one of the dimensions and in the not anti-Semitic group in the other.

Table no. 5

*The proportion of anti-Semites in Hungarian society**(percentage)*

	Among those who responded to all questions N=751	Total sample N=1143
Extreme anti-Semite	20	14
Moderate anti-Semite	18	15
Not anti-Semitic	62	71

After aggregating the results of the measurements taken in these two dimensions, it becomes apparent that the percentage of extreme anti-Semites within the current adult Hungarian population should be 15–20 percent, while that of moderate anti-Semites app. 15–18 percent, while about two-thirds of the Hungarian population is free of anti-Jewish prejudice. As Table no. 6 demonstrates, by 2013 the proportion of anti-Semites had decreased in comparison to the data measured in 2011, and had grown somewhat in relation to the level in 2006.

Table no. 6

*Change in the proportion of anti-Semites, 2006–2013**(percentage)*

	Extreme anti-Semites		Moderate anti-Semites		Not anti-Semitic	
	Total sample	Among those who responded to all questions	Total sample	Among those who responded to all questions	Total sample	Among those who responded to all questions
2006	13	18	12	16	75	66
2011	17	26	9	14	74	60
2013	14	20	15	18	71	62

Graph no. 2. Who are the anti-Semites?

2.1 Prejudice in the light of demographic, economic and social status

Theories on prejudice often assume that prejudice can be linked to easily measured demographic, economic and social indicators. Many investigations conducted abroad in the last couple of decades have indeed demonstrated that older, undereducated persons living in smaller settlements and in humble material circumstances are more prone to anti-Jewish prejudice than others. However, this link has not—or only partially—been corroborated by Hungarian research. The current investigation has also shown that the demographic, economic and social indicators can explain little about why certain groups are more prone to anti-Semitic prejudice, and other groups less. The above hypothesis is only valid in the case of those accepting the anti-Judaist statements stemming from religious roots: a proportionally greater number of over sixty-year-olds with under eight years of school education living in smaller settlements are statistically present among them. Incidentally, there is a significantly greater number of men than women among both the affective and cognitive anti-Semites, those of upper-middle status are more often in the anti-Semitic, and those of higher social status appear more among the not anti-Semitic group, while there are a significantly smaller number of residents of country townships than others among those who accept anti-Semitic stereotypes—cognitive anti-Semites—and less people from Budapest than villagers. The significant deviations between the composition of groups built from the two types of anti-Semitism indicators (affective and cognitive) in terms of demographic, economic and social indicators is shown by table no. 7. (Only statistically significant deviations from the average were included in this table.) Nonetheless, these factors only explain a small part of the propensity for anti-Semitic prejudice.

Table no. 7

*Anti-Semitism and demographic, economic and social status
(percentage)*

	<i>Extreme anti-Semite</i>	<i>Moderate anti-Semite</i>	<i>Not anti-Semitic</i>
<i>Among respondents</i>	20	18	62
<i>Men</i>	26	18	56
<i>Women</i>	15	17	68
<i>18–29 years-old</i>	23	8	69
<i>30–39 years-old</i>	25	20	55
<i>Over 60</i>	14	20	66
<i>Rural town</i>	18	15	67
<i>Village</i>	25	19	56
<i>High social status</i>	17	11	72
<i>Upper-middle status</i>	22	24	54

2.2 Anti-Semitism and religiousness

We also examined the extent to which religious belief, the regularity of religious practice, and membership in a congregation are linked to anti-Jewish prejudice. As mentioned earlier, the

connection between religion and prejudice can be established unequivocally in the case of those supporting anti-Judaist views. However this group only represents a clearly delineable segment of society: its members are mostly old villagers. In relation to anti-Jewry, that is not based in religion, no connection could be found. As Table no. 8 shows, anti-Semitism is significantly greater in those circles that were not registered in any congregation at birth, do not participate in religious life, do not belong to any religious denomination, are not religious, or cannot say whether they are. In contrast, less prejudice is exhibited among those who belong to a religious denomination, participate in religious life even if on rather symbolic grounds and are religious “in their own way”. (Only statistically significant deviations from the average were included in this table.) There is no significant difference in the proportion of people with prejudices between various denominations either, and the proportion of anti-Semites among “people who religiously adhere to the strictures of the Church”, the strictly devout, and conscious atheists does not deviate from the average proportion measured in the whole population.

Table no. 8
Anti-Semitism and religiousness
(percentage)

	<i>Extreme anti-Semite</i>	<i>Moderate anti-Semite</i>	<i>Not anti-Semitic</i>
<i>Among respondents</i>	20	18	62
<i>Was not christened or registered in a denomination</i>	31	15	54
<i>Does not participate in religious life</i>	26	19	55
<i>Only on important holidays and on family occasions</i>	16	16	68
<i>Belongs to a denomination</i>	17	14	69
<i>Does not belong to a denomination</i>	22	20	58
<i>Religious in his/her own way</i>	16	18	66
<i>Does not know if religious</i>	36	9	55
<i>Not religious</i>	24	17	59

2.3 Anti-Semitism and social attitudes

Earlier research showed that anti-Jewish prejudice is closely linked to various worldviews and social attitudes that do not stand directly in relation to Jewry. These are nationalism, the rejection of otherness (xenophobia), a conservative perspective on the world, anomie—that is, breakdown of faith in moral and social norms, rules, institutions and political leaders—and, in art, religion. These connections were also examined in this survey. As previously discussed, this survey did not show a strong correlation between religious belief and anti-Jewish prejudice—apart from anti-Judaism. The other attitudes mentioned, however, do correspond strongly with anti-Jewish prejudice. Affective anti-Semitism correlates significantly and strongly with overall xenophobia and law-and-order attitudes, and weakly with nationalism and anomie. Cognitive anti-Semitism stands in significant correlation to all the other attitudes: it correlates strongly with nationalism and law-and-order party leanings, but weakly with xenophobia and religiousness. Finally anti-Judaism stands in correlation to anomie, religiousness and nationalism on a medium strength and xenophobia in a weaker, but still significant measure. Anti-Jewish sentiment and the marked social distance felt towards Jews is in great part the result of an overall rejection of otherness, while the acceptance of anti-Jewish stereotypes stands in relation to more articulated political-ideological stances—such as those opinions from which the nationalism indicators were composed.⁵

2.4 Anti-Semitism and political choice

Questions were posed in the course of the research regarding the political self-categorization of respondents, party preferences and readiness to participate in the elections. By these means, it was possible to gain insight into whether anti-Semites are present in different numbers on the various political sides, and among supporters of the various parties.

Table no. 9 indicates that the sample population under investigation here, placed itself on the left wing-right wing political scale somewhat right (4,42) of the middle; slightly on the conservative side (3,71) on the conservative-liberal scale; and then a bit more to the moderate side (3,40) on the moderate-radical scale. Only the self-categorization of anti-Semitic extremists diverges from this in a statistically significant way—towards the right wing and radical end.

Table no. 9

*Political self-categorization and anti-Semitism
(averages on a 1–7 scale)*

	Total population	<i>Extreme anti-Semite</i>	<i>Moderate anti-Semite</i>	<i>Not anti-Semitic</i>
<i>Left wing (1) – right wing (7)</i>	4,42	5,12	4,34	4,27
<i>Conservative (1) – liberal (7)</i>	3,71	3,52	3,44	3,77
<i>Moderate (1) – radical (7)</i>	3,40	4,20	3,62	3,25

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The nationalism indicator was composed of acceptance or rejection of the following statements:
Hungary should take a more strident stand in support of Hungarian minorities living in neighboring countries; protection of our national values is more important than EU membership; people with a strong nationalist sentiment should have a decisive say in important matters.

Table no. 10 shows the proportion of anti-Semites according to party preference. The table shows a significantly a higher proportion of extreme anti-Semites, and lower proportion of non-anti-Semitic voters among the electoral base of Jobbik, as compared with that of other parties. Approximately one-half of Jobbik voters belong in the not anti-Semitic category. There are approximately the same proportions of anti-Semites and not anti-Semitic voters in the camps of the two large parties—Fidesz-KDNP and MSZP—, but the number of extreme anti-Semites is lower, and moderate anti-Semites is higher in the case of MSZP—the latter being the highest measured in the whole sample. **The proportion of not anti-Semitic voters is lowest among LMP voters**, but it is still significantly lower than the average, who do not know which party they will be voting for, or know for certain that they will not be participating in the elections.

Table no. 10

Party choice and anti-Semitism

The proportion of anti-Semites among the voters of each political party (percentage)

	<i>Extreme anti-Semite</i>	<i>Moderate anti-Semite</i>	<i>Not anti-Semitic</i>
<i>Among respondents</i>	20	18	62
<i>Party choice</i>			
<i>Fidesz-KDNP</i>	20	19	61
<i>MSZP</i>	13	25	62
<i>JOBBIK</i>	30	19	51
<i>Együtt14-PM</i>	16	13	71
<i>Demokratikus Koalíció</i>	8	24	68
<i>LMP</i>	6	6	88
<i>Does not know</i>	14	9	77
<i>Will not say</i>	18	16	66
<i>Not going to vote</i>	15	11	74

Table no. 11 makes it clear that anti-Semites are more interested in politics than those who are not anti-Semitic. The proportion of anti-Semites is greater among those highly, or semi interested in politics than the sample as a whole. From the opposite angle, the proportion of those (highly or semi) interested in politics is the highest among anti-Semites. This proportion comes to 55% (of which 11 percent is highly interested) in this group, while among the not anti-Semitic population the proportion of those interested in politics is only 40% (9% of which is highly interested).

This piece of data may help to explain why, in spite of the observed decrease in people harboring anti-Jewish prejudice over the last two years, many people still sense that anti-Semitism has recently risen: the heightened interest in politics among anti-Semites can also be

an indicator of the fact that anti-Semites are more often ready to share their anti-Jewish views publicly than others.

Table no. 11
Interest in politics and anti-Semitism
(percentage)

	<i>Extreme anti-Semite</i>	<i>Moderate anti-Semite</i>	<i>Not anti-Semitic</i>
<i>Among respondents</i>	20	18	62
<i>Not at all interested in politics</i>	14	21	65
<i>Slightly interested</i>	17	21	63
<i>Semi interested</i>	28	12	60
<i>Very interested</i>	24	13	63

Graph no. 3. The Holocaust and remembrance of the past

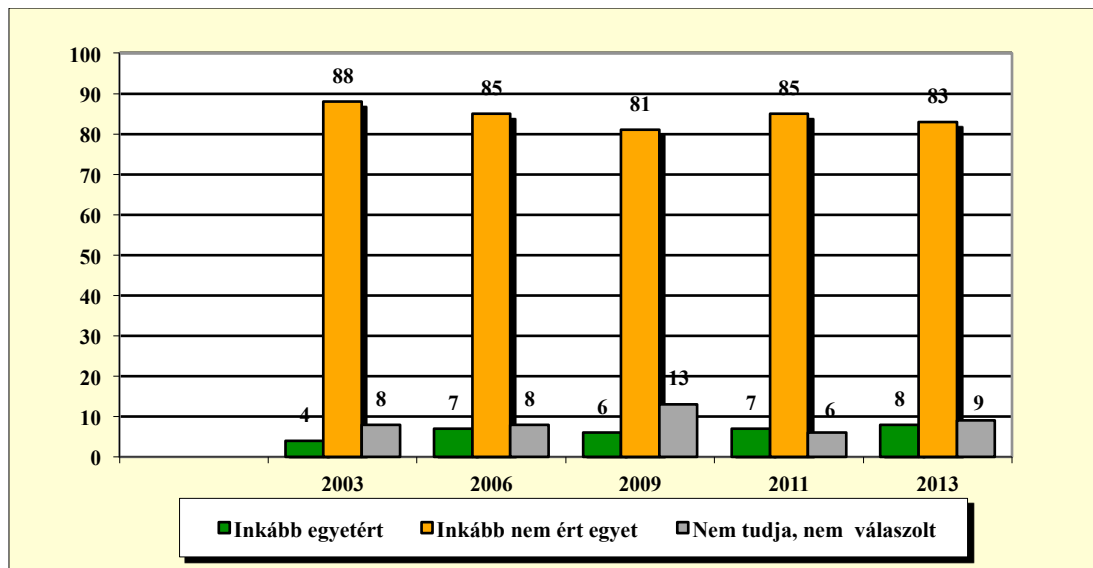
The survey questionnaire also comprised a series of questions that were intended to help measure the views of the Hungarian populace about the Holocaust, and responsibility for the persecution of Jews during the Second World War, as well as the need to confront the past. The sequence of questions was composed of propositions that had been used in earlier surveys. Therefore, we can track changes of opinions over time.

The distribution of replies is shown in Table no. 12. 8–19% of the respondents agreed with the three statements signifying denial or relativization of the Holocaust (*There weren't even any gas chambers in the concentration camps; The number of Jewish victims was far lower than is generally claimed; Many of the horrors were only invented by Jews post fact*). Earlier surveys let us know that the proportion of Holocaust deniers grew to the level measured in 2006 between the years 2003 and 2006. The proportion of those openly denying the Holocaust—according to whom there were no gas chambers in the concentration camps—has not grown since 2006, but the proportion of those disputing the magnitude of victims has (Graphs 4 and 5).

Graph no. 4.

Holocaust denial 1, 2003–2013

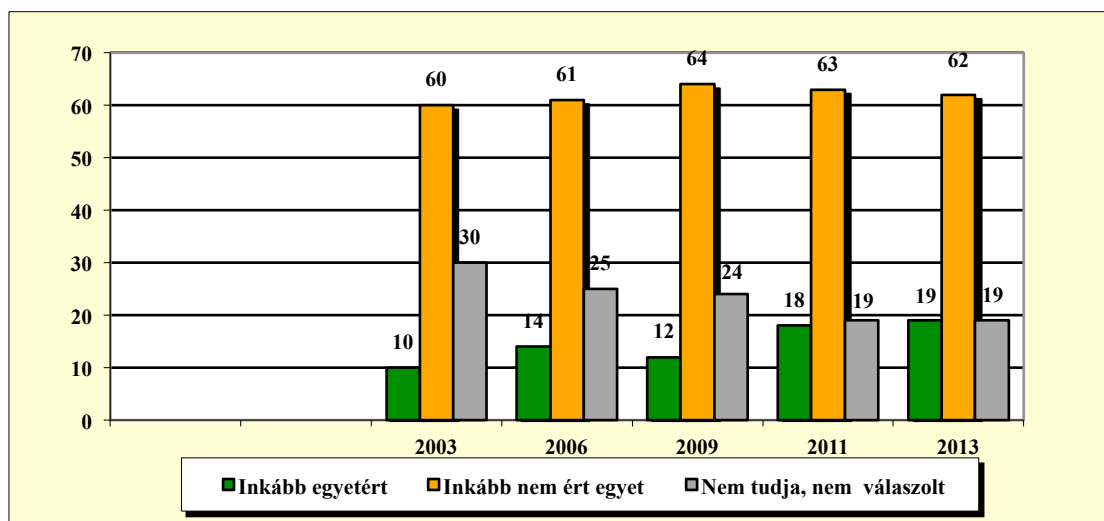
Would rather agree, or rather not agree with the statement that there weren't even any gas chambers in the concentration camps (percentage)



Graph no. 5

Holocaust denial 2, 2003–2013

Would rather agree, or rather not agree with the statement that the number of Jewish victims was far smaller than usually claimed (percentage)



The proportion of those accusing Jews of misappropriating the memory of the Holocaust—though decreasing since 2011 – is still high compared with values recorded in previous surveys. About half of the respondents acknowledge Hungarian responsibility for the persecution of Jews and the need to confront that fact, while the other half believes it is time to take this question off the agenda. Between 2006 and 2011 the proportion of those considering confrontation with the past necessary has decreased, and the proportion of those wanting to close the issue has grown, but this tendency did not continue in 2013—it has, in fact, slightly reversed. Two-thirds of the respondents believe that non-Jewish Hungarians also suffered as much as Jews during the war years.

Table no. 12

Opinions about the Holocaust, responsibility and confrontation with the past, 2009–2013 (percentage)

	Would rather in agree	Would rather not agree	Does not know, no answer									
	2006	2009	2011	2013	2006	2009	2011	2013	2006	2009	2011	2013
Non-Jewish Hungarians suffered as much during the War as Jews	56	66	65	65	35	21	28	25	9	13	7	10
There weren't even any gas chambers in the concentration camps	7	6	7	8	85	81	85	83	8	13	6	9
The Jews have every right to demand compensation from the Hungarian state for the persecutions they suffered during the War	33	-	28	29	51	-	61	58	16	-	11	13
The Jews even try to draw advantages from their persecutions	34	29	45	39	53	55	45	48	13	16	10	13
Hungary is also responsible for what happened to Hungarian Jews during the War	60	50	50	54	30	34	40	35	10	16	10	13
The number of Jewish victims was much lower than what is usually claimed	14	12	18	19	61	64	63	62	25	24	19	19
More should be taught about Jewish persecution in schools, so it can never happen again	45	54	46	50	45	31	47	42	10	14	7	8
A large part of the horrors were invented by the Jews after the event	9	11	13	14	80	72	78	74	11	17	9	12
So many years after the persecution of the Jews the subject ought to be taken off the agenda	48	40	58	53	43	44	35	38	9	16	7	9

Table no. 13 shows how many agreed with the statements about the Holocaust and the need to work out and process the past among members of the groups created on the basis of the strength of prejudice.

Table no. 13

Opinions about the Holocaust and anti-Semitism
(percentage)

	The proportion of those agreeing with the statement among those answering every question on the anti-Semitism scale		
	Extreme anti-Semites	Moderately anti-Semitic	Not anti-Semitic
<i>There weren't even any gas chambers in the concentration camps.</i>	15	18	9
<i>The number of Jewish victims was much lower than what is usually claimed.</i>	53	37	10
<i>A large part of the horrors were invented by the Jews after the event.</i>	40	26	10
<i>The Jews even try to draw advantages from their persecutions.</i>	76	57	30
<i>Non-Jewish Hungarians suffered as much during the War as Jews.</i>	82	79	69
<i>The crimes of the communists were at least as great as those of the Fascists.</i>	69	53	47
<i>So many years after the persecution of the Jews the subject ought to be taken off the agenda.</i>	78	64	45
<i>The Jews are still talking too much about the Holocaust.</i>	82	65	47
<i>From a Hungarian standpoint the losses at the Don are a greater catastrophe than the extermination of Hungarian Jews.</i>	81	60	46
<i>We must keep the memory of the persecution of Jews alive even today.</i>	41	47	76
<i>Hungary is also responsible for what happened to Hungarian Jews during the War.</i>	42	46	60
<i>The extermination of masses of Hungarian Jews was at least as great a tragedy for the Hungarian people as Trianon.</i>	54	56	73
<i>The Jews have every right to demand compensation from the Hungarian state for the persecutions they suffered during the War.</i>	17	28	37
<i>More should be taught about Jewish persecution in schools, so it can never happen again.</i>	37	53	61

The general tendency corresponds to prior expectations: there are more deniers and relativizers of the Holocaust among anti-Semites, a greater proportion of anti-Semites deny Hungarian responsibility in the persecution of the Jews than among the non anti-Semitic population or the more moderate anti-Semites, and most believe confrontation with the past is unnecessary. Nevertheless, other interesting links can also be established on the basis of the data. Firstly the proportion of Holocaust deniers is rather small even among extreme anti-Semites, and secondly 10% of even the not anti-Semitic respondents do not repudiate such statements. A majority of the extreme anti-Semites agreed with the statement that “*The extermination of masses of Hungarian Jews was at least as great a tragedy for the Hungarian*

people as Trianon”. Over 40% agreed that Hungary was also responsible for what happened to the Hungarian Jews during the War and that the memory must be kept alive even today. Close to 40% agreed even with the statement that more ought to be taught about the persecution of Jews in schools. On the other hand, close to half of the not anti-Semitic respondents think that the subject of the persecution of Jews ought to be taken off the agenda, and that Jews are still talking too much about the holocaust. Furthermore, a vast majority of both anti-Semites and not anti-Semites agree with the proposition that non-Jewish Hungarians suffered as much during the War as Jews (82–69%). All of this signifies that it is not right to presume a direct correspondence between anti-Jewish feeling and a refusal to confront the past: the earlier is not necessarily the cause of the latter, and the latter does not necessarily stem from the effort to legitimize an anti-Jewish stance.

4. *Israel and anti-Semitism*

A form of anti-Semitism often called “new anti-Semitism” is the manifestation of anti-Jewish prejudice under the cloak of criticism of the Jewish state. The questionnaire contained four questions related to the State of Israel: four statements were listed, and the interviewees were asked if they agreed with these statements. One of these questions (“*What Israel is doing to Palestinians is the same as what the Nazis did to the Jews*”) is regularly used to measure “new anti-Semitism”. The distribution of replies is shown in Table no. 14. It is important to keep in mind during their analysis: 20–25% of respondents felt that they could not answer the questions. This high proportion indicates that the Hungarian populace is much less ready with decided opinions on this issue than in the case of others.

Where the question used to indicate “new anti-Semitism” is concerned: 20% of all respondents agreed that Israeli policy towards Palestinians is similar to the Nazi persecution of Jews, and if the average reply is considered (2,85) then the respondent pool as a whole was more against the statement than in agreement. Agreement with this statement was of course higher among anti-Semites than among not anti-Semites, though it is notable that 19% of not anti-Semitic respondents also expressed acquiescence. Respondents consider the Israeli political system more progressive than that of its Arab neighbors—this opinion is even shared by most extreme anti-Semites. Only extreme anti-Semites believe that Israel’s wars are not in rightful self-defense, and most respondents are divided on the issue. The respondents of the whole sample pool and the non anti-Semitic respondents believe that it is better if Hungary supports Israel in the Near-Eastern conflict, while anti-Semites do not agree with this.

Table no. 14

Opinions about Israel and anti-Semitism

The proportion of those in agreement among respondents (N=1200), the average of replies given on a 1–5 scale (N = 879–921) and among those who answered every question on the anti-Semitism scale (N = 750) (percentage; 5 – Agrees fully, 1 – Does not agree at all; Those in agreement = 5–4)

	<i>Total population</i>	<i>Extreme anti-Semites</i>	<i>Moderately anti-Semitic</i>	<i>Not anti-Semitic</i>
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	%	average	%	average	%	average	%	average
<i>Israel is fighting a rightful battle of defense in the face of attacks launched at it.</i>	25	2,99	29	2,62	29	3,03	28	3,06
<i>What Israel is doing to Palestinians is the same as what the Nazis did to the Jews.</i>	20	2,85	45	3,49	27	3,09	19	2,65
<i>The political system of Israel is more progressive than of the Arab countries attacking it.</i>	29	3,29	40	3,35	26	3,11	35	3,32
<i>It is better if Hungary supports Israel in the Middle-East conflicts, than if it supports the Arab countries.</i>	18	3,14	20	2,56	13	2,70	24	3,02

5. Perception of anti-Semitism

5.1 What is anti-Semitism?

We asked respondents what they think anti-Semitism is, who they consider to be anti-Semites within current Hungarian society, and whether they had personally come across manifestations of anti-Semitism—and if so, where? The aim was to get an insight into how respondents view the current state of anti-Semitism in Hungary.

Table no. 15

What is anti-Semitism?

“Is someone anti-Semitic in your opinion if he/she ...?”

(percentage)

	Anti-Semitic	Not anti-Semitic	Does not know
<i>keeps account of who is Jewish in their environs</i>	36	55	9
<i>does not consider Jews living in Hungary Hungarians</i>	58	33	9
<i>would not marry a Jew</i>	48	43	9
<i>is of the opinion that Jews cannot become wholly Hungarian under any circumstances</i>	65	26	9
<i>is of the opinion that Jews have recognizable, particular characteristics</i>	60	31	9
<i>thinks that the interests of Hungarian Jews are significantly different from those of none Jews</i>	29	62	9
<i>says that by now it is evident that the Jews are unable to fit into Hungarian society</i>	39	50	11
<i>says that no greater crimes were committed against the Jews, than were committed against those persecuted by the communists</i>	49	42	9
<i>believes that the Jews are responsible for the rule of Communism over Hungary</i>	39	50	11
<i>believes that the Jews are enemies to the Christian faith</i>	44	44	12
<i>keeps account of who is Jewish in their environs</i>	43	45	12

According to the absolute majority of respondents, only the following three cases are manifestations of anti-Semitism: if someone does not consider Jews to be true Hungarians, if they consider it impossible for Jews to become completely Hungarian, and if someone is also ready to discriminate against them. This majority simply does not consider someone anti-Semitic for thinking that Jews have visible traits, for keeping track of who is and who is not a Jew, for believing that Jews form a separate interest group, and that the crimes of the communist regime were as bad as the Holocaust. Almost half of the respondents think that a person who thinks Jews are responsible for communist rule in Hungary is not anti-Semitic. It follows that a large segment of the adult population of Hungary does not consider many manifestations of anti-Semitism as anti-Semitic though normally they would—at least in an overwhelming majority of cases—be rightly considered to be anti-Semitic. This explains—among other things—why public criticism of cases that can be considered manifestations of anti-Semitism are often met with incomprehension from the masses, for in the eyes of a large segment of society they are not (e.g. the Csoóri debate in the early nineties).

Differences between people who consider many cases as anti-Semitic and those who count few as such were also examined. The results showed that it is not age, or education, and not even social status that has a role in this connection, it is rather the views held about Jews that play out in these opinions: a significantly greater proportion of extreme anti-Semites did not qualify any of the cases (or at most three cases) as anti-Semitic, while a similar proportion among those who are not anti-Semitic considered 8–10 cases as anti-Semitic. This incidentally also implies anti-Semitism is not considered legitimate by the anti-Semites themselves—which is why they deny the anti-Semitism of anti-Semitic phenomena.

5.2 Who are the anti-Semites?

Interviewees were not only asked about what they consider to be anti-Semitism, but also which social groups they consider extremely, or more-or-less anti-Semitic. The distribution of replies is shown in Table no. 16.

Table no. 16

Who are the anti-Semites?

Is anti-Semitism characteristic of the following groups?

(percentage)

	<i>Characterized by strong anti-Semitism</i>	<i>Characterized by some anti-Semitism</i>	<i>Not typical</i>	<i>Does not know</i>
<i>Skinheads</i>	69	13	10	8
<i>Supporters of Jobbik</i>	36	31	24	9
<i>Supporters of Fidesz</i>	5	22	64	9
<i>Supporters of MSZP</i>	2	8	81	9
<i>Right-wing media</i>	14	27	50	9
<i>Priests</i>	4	14	70	12
<i>Left-wing media</i>	1	6	83	10
<i>Religious Christians</i>	5	13	71	11
<i>The intelligentsia</i>	3	14	73	10
<i>The poor</i>	2	10	80	8
<i>The young</i>	4	18	69	9
<i>The old</i>	2	11	79	8
<i>The unschooled</i>	7	21	63	9
<i>People from Budapest</i>	4	16	69	11

As apparent from the table a vast majority of respondents are of the opinion that overt, or some degree of anti-Semitism is characteristic of skinheads and the supporters of Jobbik, and a slight majority also lists right-wing media as carriers of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is not characteristic however of the rest of the groups according to app. two-thirds–three-quarters of respondents.

Since interviewees were asked about 14 groups altogether, how many groups they considered anti-Semitic was also examined in order to deduce how many feel that a strong atmosphere of anti-Semitism predominates in Hungary. Well, 12% of the respondents did not consider any of the groups anti-Semitic, 5% thought one–three groups, 2% thought four–seven groups were more-or-less anti-Semitic. 38% of the respondents named one

group as markedly anti-Semitic, 34% thought trenchant anti-Semitism was typical of two or three groups, and 9% of respondents thought that even more groups were heavily anti-Semitic. Those who thought that at least six groups were anti-Semitic (to lesser or greater degree) made up 24% of the respondents. This then would be approximately the number of people in the country who think that an atmosphere of anti-Semitism predominates.

5.3 The domains of anti-Semitism

In the next phase respondents were asked where they had come across manifestations of anti-Semitism. The distribution of replies is shown in Table no. 17.

Table no. 17

*Where have you come across anti-Semitism?
(percentage)*

	<i>Mentioned</i>	<i>Not mentioned</i>
<i>the streets, on public transport, or in public spaces</i>	11	89
<i>here in the house, in the neighborhood</i>	3	97
<i>at your workplace</i>	5	95
<i>in a state institution, the authorities</i>	3	97
<i>in the radio or television</i>	26	74
<i>on the internet</i>	16	82
<i>in your circle of friends</i>	7	92
<i>in the parliament, at political events</i>	18	82

As the data shown in the table indicates, respondents experienced anti-Semitism mainly in the media, in political life, and in public spaces, but hardly came across such phenomena in the private sphere. Summarizing the replies, 14% of the members of the sample group reported having come across anti-Semitism in both private and public spheres, while 58% have not experienced any sort of anti-Semitic phenomena. Of the respondents, 23% only sensed anti-Semitism in public, and not in the private sphere, though 5% only experiences anti-Semitism in the private sphere. This data reaffirms conclusions drawn from other surveys that the perception of the force of anti-Semitism in Hungary is determined mainly by events in the media and political sphere, and less by everyday experiences.

5.4 Causes of anti-Semitism

Among the respondents, when asked about the causes of anti-Semitism, two representative groups have formed. (The distribution of replies received is shown in Table no 18.) The first group (approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of respondents) blamed the Jews for the spread of anti-Semitism. The size of this group corresponds roughly to the size of the group of anti-Semites in the sample. Another group—in which app. half the respondents belong—pointed at prejudice, avarice and human stupidity as the main causes for anti-Semitism. Opinions differ

however on how big the role of the economic crisis, or policies in Israel are in eliciting anti-Jewish prejudice. It is notable that only a minority ascribed an important role to the latter.

Table no. 18

Speculations on the causes of anti-Semitism
(percentage, averages 1–5 scale; 5, has a very large role—1, has no role at all)

	<i>Has a very large or large role (5–4)</i>	<i>Has a little, or no role at all (2-1)</i>	<i>average</i>
<i>the economic crisis</i>	42	28	3,12
<i>too many Jews in the country</i>	22	45	2,56
<i>People are looking for a scapegoat to blame their difficulties on</i>	52	17	3,55
<i>Israeli politics</i>	29	24	3,05
<i>The words of anti-Jewish politicians</i>	28	34	3,40
<i>The Jews have too much influence in the country</i>	28	34	2,87
<i>Many are envious of the successful Jews</i>	52	15	3,53
<i>The Jews are incapable of fitting into Hungarian society</i>	16	52	2,36
<i>Human stupidity</i>	52	15	3,59
<i>The behavior of Jews in general</i>	21	41	2,60

Conclusions

One of the main objectives of this research was to gain an idea of the proportion of current Hungarian society that harbors anti-Jewish prejudices. As a result of the investigation carried through in a number of dimensions, it can be established that approximately one-third of the Hungarian adult population has prejudices against Jews, and approximately half of this group—i.e. 15–20 percent of the total population—may be considered extreme anti-Semites. Comparison with earlier surveys shows that the proportion of anti-Semites within the total populace was highest in 2010, and has somewhat tempered since then, but has not returned to the lower levels measured in the period before 2010.

The anti-Semitic group is composed of more men than their proportional numbers in society, members typically belong to the generation now in their thirties, living in villages and of an upper-middle social status. The composition of the group supporting anti-Judaist views is at variance to the above: this group is typified by little schooling, village residence and old age. Nonetheless it can be said that demographic traits do not draw a strong line between anti-Semites and those who are not anti-Semitic. The main difference between the two groups rests on such social attitudes as the general rejection of otherness, nationalism, conservative

worldview and anomie. Religiousness and denominational differences do not influence the intensity of anti-Jewish sentiment (except for leanings towards religion-based anti-Judaism).

Looking at the political factors, the extreme anti-Semites—by their own definition—are much more right wing and radical than the others, and accordingly, their proportion within the Jobbik Party electoral base is significantly higher than among supporters of the other parties. There is no great difference between supporters of the two large parties—Fidesz and MSZP—in this dimension.

Measurements taken in relation to the Holocaust and remembrance of the past show that the proportion of those denying the Holocaust has grown by app. 6–8% since 2006, and of those who relativize the Holocaust increased after 2009 and stands around 19% today. These points of view are of course represented by far the most among the anti-Semites, rather than the non anti-Semitic populace, but it is also worthy of attention that significant numbers among the latter are also not well disposed towards confronting the question of responsibility for the persecution of Jews. The results of the survey show that there is not necessarily a correlation between anti-Jewishness and refusal to confront the past.

Analysis of the opinions on Israel signal that the phenomenon called “new anti-Semitism” is also to be found in Hungary: one-fifth of the not anti-Semitic segment of society also accepts a statement that reflects hidden anti-Jewish sentiment. The evaluation of this data however does require some caution, because the replies—or the lack of replies to be exact—also indicate that the Hungarian populace is rather uninformed in matters relating to Israel.

Where the perception of anti-Semitism is concerned, it has turned out that the proportion of those within Hungarian society who do not consider statements and behavior that could rightfully be considered anti-Semitic as such, is rather large. This is doubly true of anti-Semites, which indicates that a majority of anti-Semites still consider it illegitimate to be anti-Jewish.

Among a variety of social groups, respondents are only unequivocal about skinheads and Jobbik supporters being anti-Semitic, and the large majority does not apprehend most anti-Semitic groups present in society. Approximately a quarter of the populace senses that an atmosphere of anti-Semitism is predominant in the country. Half of the respondents stated that they had not yet come across anti-Semitic phenomena, and those who had, had perceived anti-Jewish behavior in the public space—the media, politics, the street— and hardly any in the private sphere.

The greater part of society sees the causes of anti-Semitism as being a prejudiced mentality that is always looking for a scapegoat, though meanwhile 20–25% find the main root of anti-Jewish feeling in the role and behavior of the Jews.