

ANTI-SEMITIC PREJUDICE IN CONTEMPORARY  
HUNGARIAN SOCIETY  
RESEARCH REPORT



BY ENDRE HANN AND DÁNIEL RÓNA  
2015.



ACTION AND PROTECTION FOUNDATION



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# *ANTI-SEMITIC PREJUDICE IN CONTEMPORARY HUNGARIAN SOCIETY RESEARCH REPORT*



## *1. Introduction*

In November and December 2014, Median Opinion and Market Research Institute conducted a comprehensive survey commissioned by Action and Protection Foundation on the Hungarian society's relation to the Jewish population, including an examination of issues such as:

- opinions and ideas related to the Jewish people
- a look at how widespread and intense anti-Semitic prejudice is
- public perceptions of anti-Semitism
- attitudes towards the social engagement of Jewish organizations
- The society's awareness of conflicts between the government and the Jewish community in the recent past

The institute issued a questionnaire to 1,200 individuals. Distortions of the sample were corrected through weighted adjustments based on data provided by the Hungarian Central Statistical Institute (KSH). The pool of respondents, all interviewed face-to-face, were representative of the Hungarian population (over age 18) in terms of sex,

age, residence and level of education. The institute conducted the survey based on methodology developed by András Kovács;<sup>1</sup> the questionnaire has been used in several previous surveys since 1995, allowing the survey commissioners to track changes in the data over time.

Respondents were interviewed for approximately half an hour. Before examining the data, it is important to look at how much useful information can be indicated by the date. For example, it is important to consider how relevant Jewish social issues are to the average Hungarian citizen. After clarifying the methods, we continue with the presentation of the frequency and prevalence of anti-Jewish views and sentiments, as well as an examination of which social groups can be associated with these attitudes. It is followed by analysis of the data relating to perceptions of the Holocaust, the memories of past, and perceptions of anti-Semitism. The last section deals with public opinion regarding conflicts between the government and the Jewish community in the recent past.

<sup>1</sup> András Kovács, *The Stranger at Hand: Anti-Semitic 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 rendszerváltás utáni Magyarországon* (Budapest: POLGART Kiadó, 2005).

## 2. The importance of Jewish social issues

A state or society can be seen as tolerant when religious and ethnic minorities are not regarded as a concern or problem by the majority of society. When asked, survey interviewees often cite issues such as unemployment, poverty, and public safety as the primary problems facing the society. Yet sometimes societies do regard minority issues as a major concern, for example, immigration to Western Europe or attitudes toward the Roma population within Hungary and throughout Europe. Issues regarding Jewish people in Europe are usually not treated with the same concern as issues such as poverty but often incite more concern in the general population than issues regarding other minority groups.

Accordingly, when asked if they knew of the German Occupation Memorial and the incidents surrounding it, the majority (61 percent) of the respondents answered yes. Moreover, a sizeable percentage (37 percent) knew about 2014 being declared Year of Holocaust Remembrance, as well as the new museum in Budapest designed to commemorate children victims (27 percent). However, only a small percentage can be assumed to have paid close attention to these issues to these matters. One-fourth to one-fifth of the respondents did not know the Jewish community's position on these controversial issues. Only roughly one in twenty people knew about the circumstances described in all three questions, and were able to correctly identify the Jewish community's position. It is more revealing to look at how many people mentioned these incidents when answering open questions (that is, without listed options to choose from), as only those who can name at least one specific event by themselves can be considered to have closely followed these events. Only one in fifty people knew of the Holocaust remembrance year

and one in ten people knew of the circumstances surrounding the German Occupation Memorial. In addition to these, the appointment of Gusztav Zoltai was the only issue that drew the attention of public opinion, but it was mentioned only by 2-3 percent of the respondents).

This is not surprising in light of the content analysis of National Media and Infocommunications Authority stating that only the German Occupation Memorial was among the most covered issues by the mainstream news media in 2014, even so only ranked 10-15 for only two months. The other matters did not receive notable coverage in the national press.

Although the data only concern these specific topics, the majority of the general attitudes related to the Jews (social distance, prejudices and attitudes) presented in the study can help illustrate what are the most important issues to average Hungarian citizens. Hungarian voters are very moderately concerned with issues regarding Jewish people. However, interest is still significant considering the question does not affect the vast majority of the population directly. A small, but significant percentage of the respondents consider issues regarding the Jewish people to be relevant and important.

## 3. Measuring anti-Semitism and other prejudices

It also follows that, for example, the question of *'To which extent do you like or dislike Jews?'* can only indicate the direction of the attitudes, not the weight attributed to the question. It is questionable, even in case of extreme sympathy or antipathy, whether there is underlying emotion and motivation of high significance.



Perhaps even more importantly, the survey can reveal opinions, prejudices and attitudes, not behaviors. Since Zimbardo and Milgram's famous experiment, we know that individuals are not aware of what they are capable of in extreme conditions. Therefore, behavior, and discrimination as such, can only be studied through experiments. Conclusions from the survey data in connection with "*aptitude and disposition to discrimination*" can only be drawn very carefully and tentatively. For example, we can ask: "*Do you agree that in certain occupations the number of Jews should be limited?*" But it cannot be inferred that the majority of people who would participate in this are the people who give affirmative answer to this question.<sup>2</sup> The problem derives from the fact that the respondent cannot imagine the given situation, which can only be reached through far-away unrealistic scenarios and extreme circumstances. Agreeing with such a statement cannot be construed as behavior, but is probably more than merely an opinion. It might be designated as attitude, as it indicates a predisposition and willingness to act.

According to the interpretation we consider correct, questions used to gauge anti-Semitism primarily explore attitude, that is, a manifestation that can be characterized with volatility. It is worth comparing over time whether the climate of opinion has become more empathetic or hostile towards the Jewish population. During the examination, following the methodology used by Andras Kovács, two dimensions are distinguished: cognitive anti-Semitism refers to the concurrence with notions, fallacies, and conspiracy theories in connection with the Jews, whereas general emotional rejection, social distancing is designated as affective anti-Semitism. Ratio of respondents characterized by both attitudes, and also to which extent they can be characterized. Can be given by adding the two dimensions. Those agreeing with

very few anti-Semitic statements are categorized as "*not anti-Semitic*". Those agreeing with a few but not insignificant number of statements are "*moderately anti-Semite*". Strongly anti-Semitic are those who agree with the majority of the statements. Again, it has to be emphasized that these categories do not indicate the importance attributed to the issue, neither do they say anything about the actions of the respondent. The "*anti-Semitic*" type cannot be associated with direct discriminatory intentions, only susceptibility manifested in the opinion. Vice versa, "*not anti-Semitic*" does not necessarily denote that the respondent is consistently immune to any anti-Jewish associations, only that such associations cannot be detected in the answers.

#### 4. The extent of anti-Semitism

##### Cognitive anti-Semitism

Firstly, the content of the anti-Semitic prejudice was measured by a series of questions that had been used several times over the last two decades to conduct surveys gauging the concepts and "*knowledge*" about the Jewish people. Respondents were asked to indicate on a five-point scale to which they agree with the eight statements expressing traditional anti-Jewish sentiments—anti-Judaism—rooted in religion, or anti-Jewish stereotypes based on the excessive influence of Jews; or suggesting suppression and discrimination as a solution. Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents agreeing (values 5 and 4) with the statements. For instance, in 2014, 11 percent agreed fully, and 16 percent agreed moderately with the statement that "*Intellectuals of Jewish origin keep media and culture under their influence*".

2 Gábor Erőss, Judit Gárdos. *Az előítélet-kutatások bírálatához*. [For the critique of research on prejudice]. Educatio, 2007, 1: 17-37

Table 1 *The content of anti-Jewish prejudice (percentage of respondents; agreement with the statements)*

	year	fully agree	agree
Intellectuals of Jewish origin keep media and culture under their influence.	2006	12	19
	2011	14	21
	2013	11	18
	<b>2014</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>
There is a secret Jewish conspiracy that determines political and economic processes.	2006	10	17
	2011	14	20
	2013	15	19
	<b>2014</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>
Jewish influence is too great in Hungary today.	2013	12	15
	<b>2014</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>
It would be best if the Jews emigrated from the country.	2006	5	7
	2011	8	12
	2013	6	9
	<b>2014</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>
The number of Jews in certain fields of employment should be restricted.	2006	5	10
	2011	7	12
	2013	5	11
	<b>2014</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>
The crucifixion of Jesus is the unpardonable sin of the Jews.	2006	8	12
	2011	9	12
	2013	7	8
	<b>2014</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>
The suffering of the Jews is God's punishment.	2006	7	7
	2011	5	9
	2013	4	7
	<b>2014</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>
The Jews are more prone to using unethical means to achieve their goals than others.	2006	8	13
	2011	9	17
	2013	7	15
	<b>2014</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>

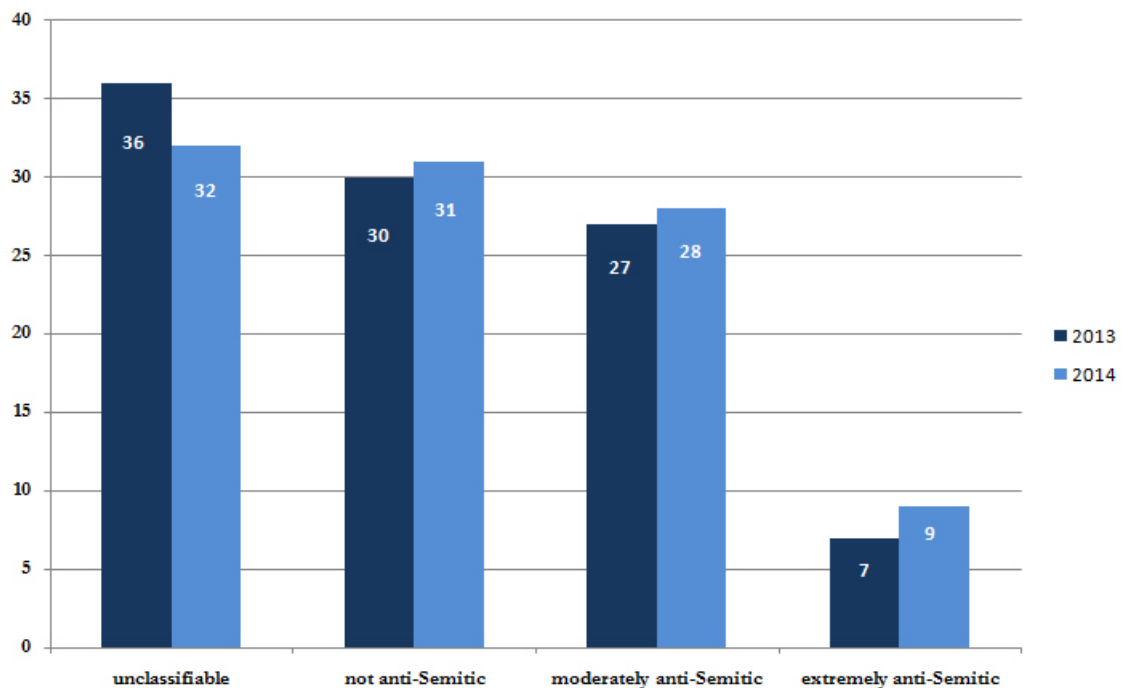
Overall, it can be concluded that in most cases, the percentage of those agreeing fully is below 10 that of agreeing moderately is less than 15 percent. There are subtle differences between the questions. “*Jewish world conspiracy*” proved to be the most accepted, but the statements concerning excessive influence were “*popular*” too. The difference in

temporal trend is not significant: a modest increase can be detected from 2006 to 2011, in almost all the questions, but the overall picture has not changed since then (some answers reflect a slight increase in anti-Semitism while other answers reflected a decrease.)

The aforementioned three categories are established by the following analysis: respondents are 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 measuring prejudiced stereotyping. The lowest grade point was 8, and the highest is 40. Members of the first group may have a few prejudices or belief in particular stereotypes, but, overall, rated relatively lowly on the scale (8–20 points). The

second group includes 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). 31% of the respondents belong in the first group, 28% are moderately anti-Semitic, and 9% are extreme anti-Semites. 32% are difficult to categorize because of answering “*Do not know*” or refusing to answer (see Graph 1). The distribution is almost the same as in 2013, except for the third group which displays a more significant increase.

Graph no. 1 Percentage of cognitive anti-Semites in the Hungarian society in 2013 and 2014



The second table illustrates that in the majority of the cases (but not always) predictions regarding responses can be made based on group classification. Respectively, 8 and 12 percent of the “*not anti-Semitic*” group agreed with the first two statements regarding Jewish influence in media, culture, politics, and economics. The pattern of the two religious anti-Semitic statements does not

fit to the distribution of the other questions: 10 or 20 percent of the extremely anti-Semites rejected the anti-Semitic statements. However, in general, the eight claims show very similar patterns within groups distinguished based on the degree of anti-Semitism.

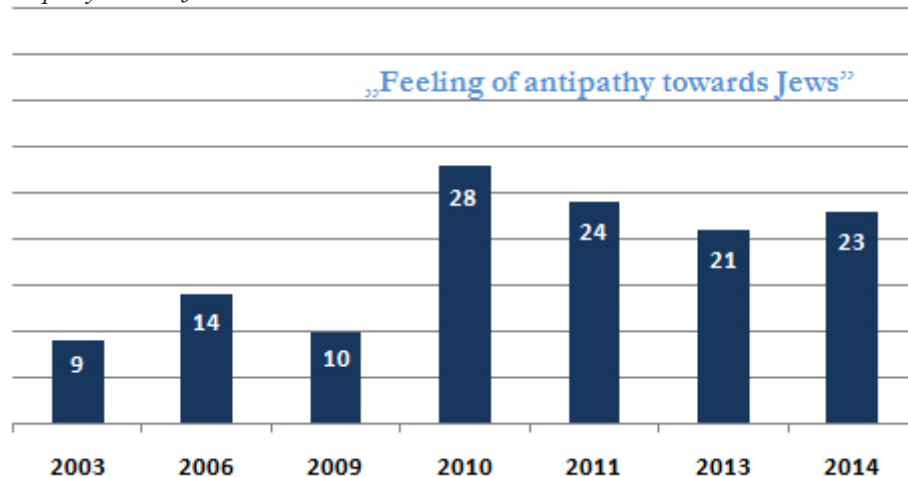
Table 2 *The content of anti-Jewish prejudice (percentage of respondents; agreement with the statements)*

	extremely anti-Semitic	moderately anti-Semitic	not anti-Semitic
Intellectuals of Jewish origin keep media and culture under their influence	94	38	8
There is a secret Jewish conspiracy that determines political and economic processes	96	44	12
Jewish influence is too great in Hungary today	94	30	6
The Jews are more prone to using unclean means to achieve their goals than others	91	28	3
It would be best if the Jews emigrated from the country	96	27	1
The number of Jews in certain fields of employment should be restricted	90	21	0
The Crucifixion of Jesus is the unpardonable sin of the Jews	80	36	6
The sufferings of the Jews were God's punishment	90	25	3

### *Affective anti-Semitism*

In this dimension, the sentiments in connection with the Jewish population are explored through three questions. Firstly respondents were asked if they feel sympathy or antipathy towards Jews.

Graph no. 2 *Emotional rejections of Jews, 2013-2014 (percentage of respondents agreeing)*  
*„Feeling of antipathy towards Jews”*



Last year exhibited a modest growth, a significant and visible increase in the proportion of those who expressed anti-Jewish emotions occurred in 2010, and the change seems to be permanent, holding at roughly 20 percent ever since (as opposed to 10 percent in 2009). The surge cannot be only explained by the fact that 2010 was an election year; election years typically reflecting higher degrees of anti-Semitism. One assumption is to draw a connection between higher levels of anti-Semitism with the rocketing popularity of the Jobbik party and its acceptance by many into the political

mainstream. Jobbik's rise helped legitimize public discourse that included increased criticism of Jews. However, this assumption cannot be approved by the data at our disposal.

The second question is very similar only, instead of two options, the interviewees were requested to indicate their sentiments for Jews and other ethnic groups with the help of a nine-point scale, nine marking the strongest sympathy. The average points of responses are shown in Graph 3.

Table 3 *Sympathy barometer of Jews and other ethnic groups on a scale of 9*

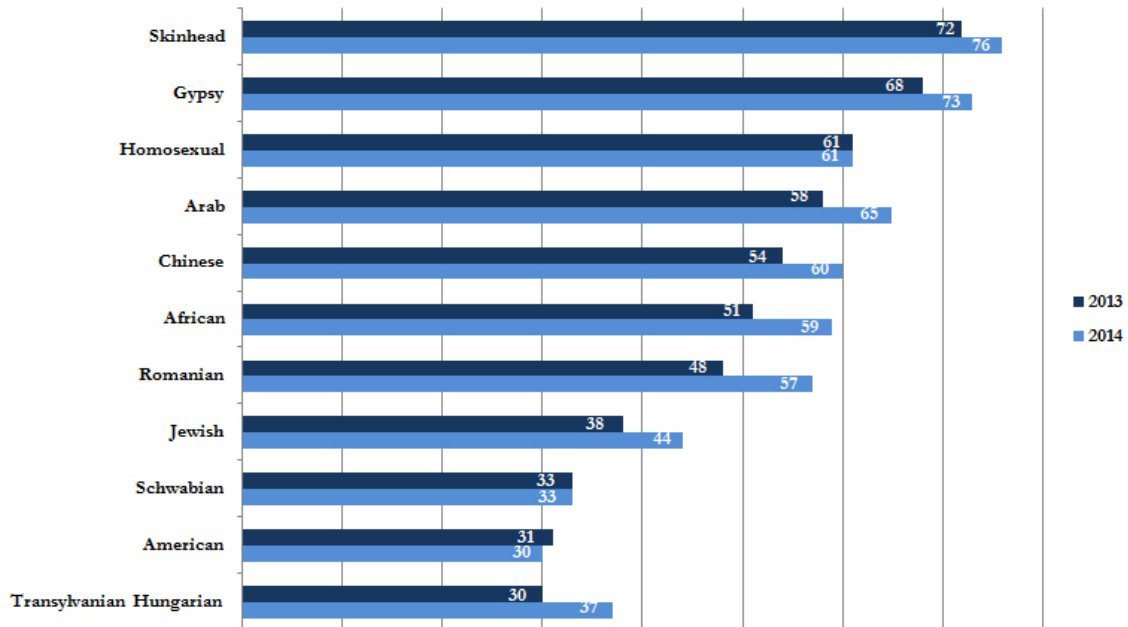
	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	correlation coefficient with sympathy towards Jews
Arab	3,87	3,66	4,37	4,04	3,93	4,06	4,09	0,266**
Gypsy	3,33	3,03	3,39	3,64	3,63	3,69	3,64	0,174**
African	4,55	4,24	4,72	4,26	4,48	4,2	4,28	0,555**
Romanian	4,7	4	4,11	4,23	4,44	4,26	4,45	0,543**
Chinese	3,77	3,8	4,09	4,01	4,11	4,12	4,33	0,388**
Schwabian	5,38	5,48	5,75	4,86	5,14	4,96	5,3	0,625**
Jewish	5,02	5	5,24	4,47	4,61	4,53	4,73	-

*Note:* Correlation coefficient is a statistical indicator that expresses the closeness of the relationship between two variables. The value equals 1 if one of the variables is completely defined by the other variable, 0 if they are completely independent from each other. So, for example, a correlation coefficient of 0.625 between the perception of Jews and the Swabians means that there is a strong relationship between the two sympathy scale: largely the same respondents like (and dislike) the two ethnic groups. The other relationships are weaker, but still significant (at 95 percent level, indicated by the two stars).

In general respondents did not find ethnic groups living in the country likeable: only the Swabians scored higher than (5), the median value of the scale. As a second conclusion, the poor public perception of Gypsies was confirmed. Jews were positioned after the Swabians with a value under the median. As for the change over time, again, the most significant difference was between 2009 and 2010, not only in case of the Jews, but the Swabians, Africans and the Arabs. However, the Swabians and the Arabs reached the initial 2006 level in 2014, while the Jews (and the Africans) became more disapproved.

The last column of Table 3 also indicates that anti-Semitism is likely accompanied by antipathy for all other groups: the correlation is particularly strong between sympathy scale of the Jews and the Romanians, the Swabians, and Africans, but also significant in the case of all the other ethnic groups, too. This means that mostly the same respondents like (and dislike) the two ethnic groups (see the comments below Table 3). Thus, anti-Semitism - not surprisingly - often goes hand-in-hand with xenophobia.

Graph no.3 Social distance from 11 groups  
 Would not consent to a member of the group moving into the neighbourhood.



The results once again demonstrate a high level of rejection of “*otherness*” in the country: one-third of the society is dismissive toward even the most tolerated group. The graph shows an increasing tendency of emotional rejection, not only towards the Jewish people but all ethnic minorities. Antipathy for Jews in Hungarian society is not particularly strong relative to antipathy shown toward all minority groups.

This again confirms that anti-Semitism is often a manifestation of a broader xenophobia: those respondents who are reluctant to live next door to the ethnic minorities in question, are more

dismissive about Jews as well (Table 4). This general xenophobia applies to everyone who is “*different*”. For example, intuitively, it might be assumed that completely different groups reject Jews and the skinheads, but in fact, on the contrary, those who reject the skinheads are more likely to reject the Jews too. For the significant majority of the Hungarian population, “*Jewish*” is merely one of many manifestations of “*different*”. Therefore, the negative sentiments and antipathy towards them are not different from those towards everybody who embodies “*being different*”.

Table 4 *Would consent to Jewish neighbours (percentage)*

	Would consent to ... neighbours	Would NOT consent to ... neighbours
Arab	87	40
American	75	12
Skinhead	73	50
Transylvanian Hungarian	75	21
Chinese	83	38
Homosexual	87	37
African	83	36
Romanian	89	31
Schwabian	76	13

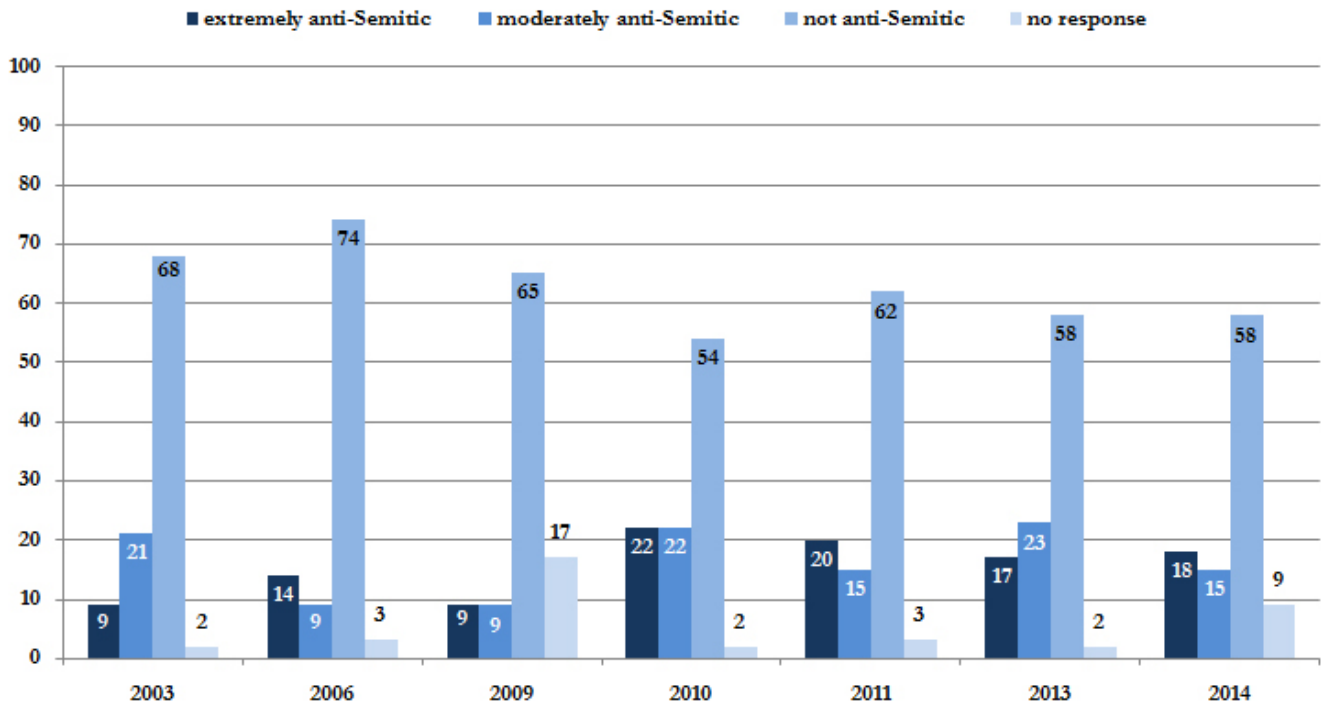
Analysis of responses to the first two questions measuring anti-Semitic emotion (data of Table 1 and 3) gives an overall view of the proportion of those who hold anti-Semitic feelings in the Hungarian population<sup>3</sup>.

Graph 4 again shows that affective anti-Semitism was the strongest in 2010, and has weakened slightly since then. Compared to the previous year,

2014 demonstrates a significant decrease in the ratio of moderate anti-Semites, but the number of strongly anti-Semites increased slightly. It seems that, all in all, over one-third of the population reflect attitudes consistent with affective anti-Semitism.

<sup>3</sup> 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 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.

Graph no. 4 Percentage of affective anti-Semites, 2003-2014



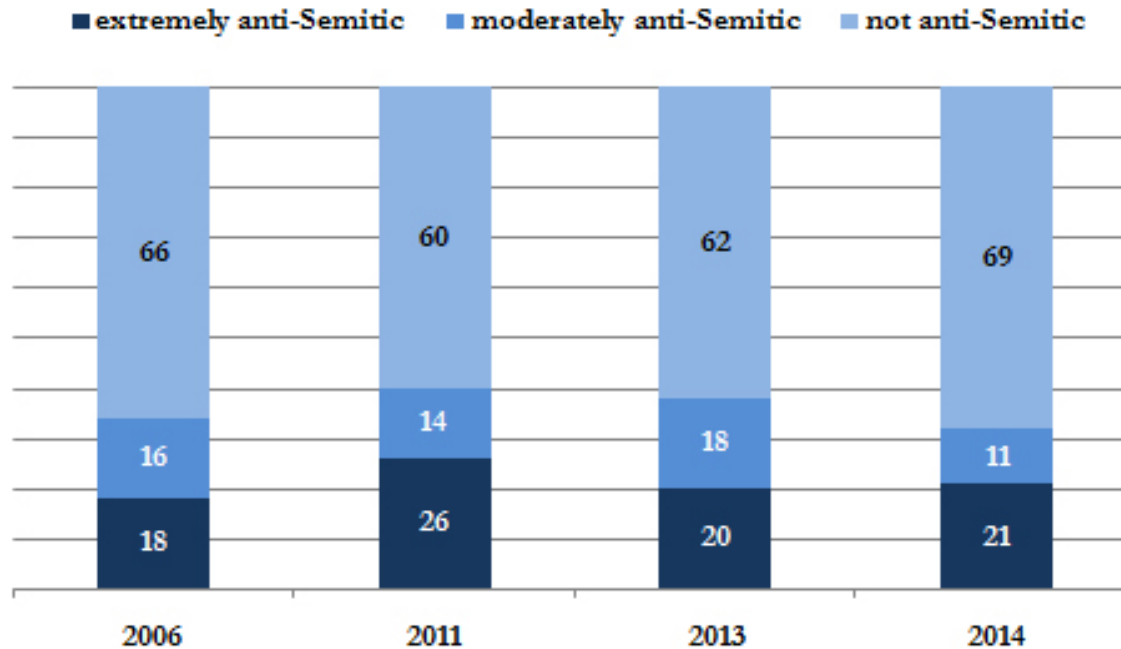
**Ratio of anti-Semites based on the aggregation of the two dimensions**

People with anti-Semitic thinking and those with anti-Semitic feelings—though presumably largely overlapping—are not identical. In the next part of the analysis, the two dimensions are aggregated. The extreme, active, and easily-mobilisable anti-Semitic core is composed of the people who are characterized by vigorous anti-Semitism in both or at least one of the dimensions. Moderate anti-Semites are the ones who are moderate in both

dimensions, or is extreme in one and not anti-Semitic in the other.

Accordingly, we can see that one-third of the society can be characterized as anti-Semitic, one-fifth as strongly anti-Jewish. The temporal trend is similar to that of the sub-components: from 2006 to 2011 there was a significant increase, since then a slow and slight decrease. In this context, Jobbik’s role is plausible, but unproven. This aggregated index will be applied hereinafter in this study.



Graph no. 5 *The proportion of anti-Semites in Hungarian society, 2013-2014 (percentage)*

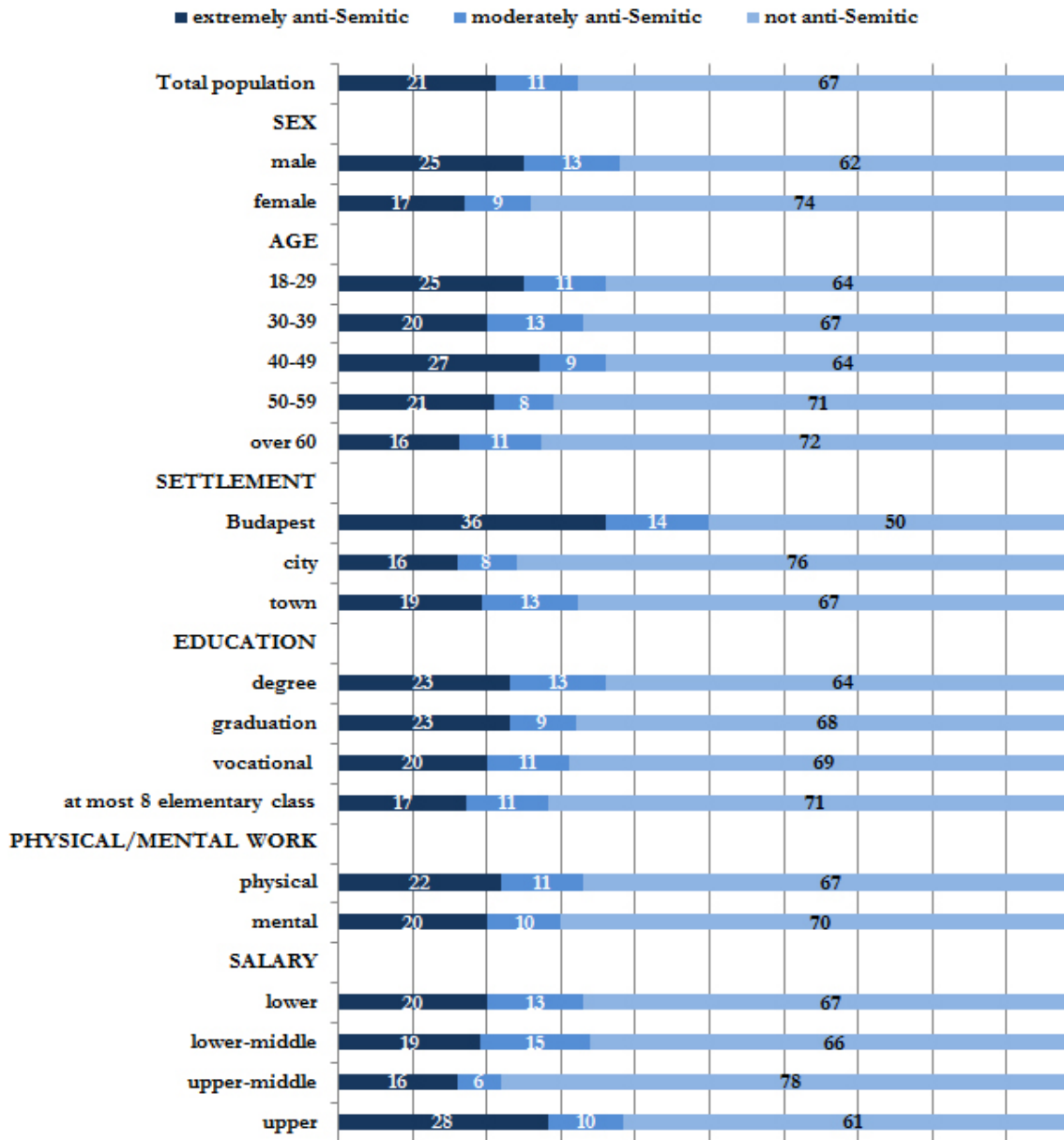
### 5. *Who are the anti-Semites?*

#### **Prejudice in the light of demographic, economic and social status**

It is a popular belief that anti-Semitism is mostly found in unsuccessful, marginalised individuals living under existential threat. International research has demonstrated that older, poorer, undereducated people living in smaller towns and villages are more prone to anti-Jewish prejudice. However, this link is not supported by the Hungarian data of 2014 (neither is it by the data of 2013): this data shows no significant statistical correlation between level of education, social status, type of work (physical or intellectual) and anti-Jewish statements. In fact, if the respondents

were divided into four groups according to family income, it is the richest that would be the most anti-Semitic. But, on the whole, this variable does not explain anti-Semitism. Similarly, age and size of community can explain little about why certain groups are more prone to anti-Semitic prejudices. Although it is surprising - never experienced in previous research - that people living in Budapest have the highest susceptibility to anti-Semitism. Budapest (and usually big cities) is traditionally liberal and multicultural which prompts the opposite assumptions. In case of data contradicting the trend of previous years, it is particularly important whether the change will be persistent. As is often indicated in such surveys, men exhibit higher levels of anti-Semitism

Graph no.6 Anti-Semitism and demographic, economic and social status (percentage)

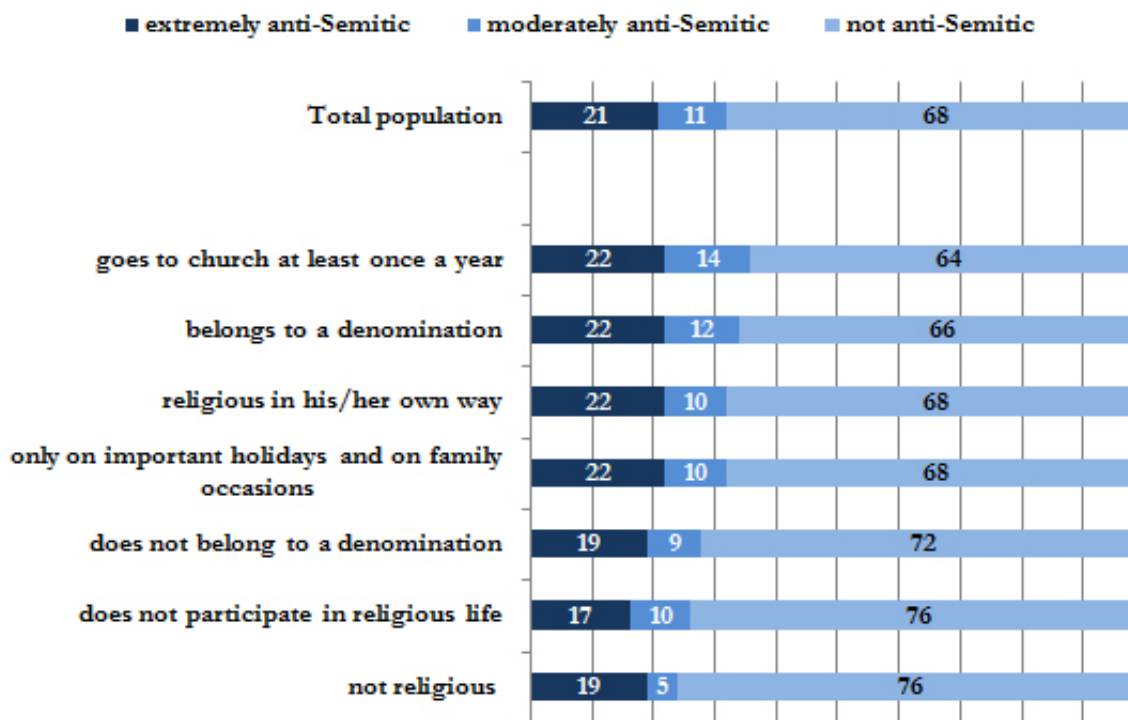


**Anti-Semitism and religiousness**

The questionnaire included a number of questions related to religion and orthodoxy. We examined the extent to which religious belief, the regularity of religious practice, and membership to a congregation are linked to anti-Jewish prejudice. There are no substantive differences regarding religious belief: the degree of anti-Semitism is not related to a particular religious belief or the level of orthodoxy. The differences demonstrated by Graph 7 are so minimal that no conclusions can

be made in connection with any of the groups. Even anti-Semitism rooted in religion showed no significant correlation with religiosity. The graph does not include separate denominations, but there is no significant difference between various denominations either: the only exception are baptised Protestants, among whom there were slightly more anti-Semites, but because of the small sample there is significant statistical uncertainty in this context.

Graph no.7 *Anti-Semitism and orthodoxy (percentage)*

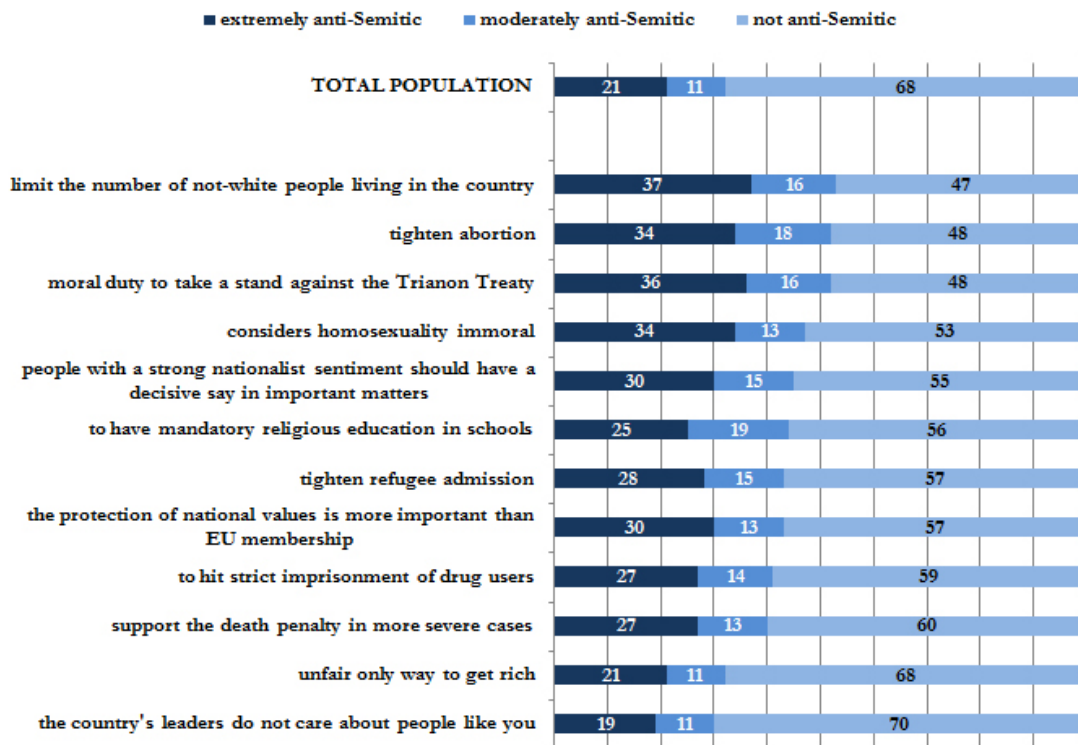


**Anti-Semitism and social attitudes**

Whether a correlation can be established between anti-Semitism and social and political preferences is at least as relevant as whether anti-Semitism is

related to social status. Political preferences were first examined through the analysis of opinions on socio-political issues.

Graph no. 8 *Anti-Semitism and social attitudes (percentage)*



Research conducted in 2013 and previously has shown that anti-Jewish prejudice is closely linked to various world views and social attitudes that are not directly related to Jews, for example nationalism, the rejection of otherness (xenophobia), a conservative world view, faith in certain moral and social norms, rules, as well as a pessimistic view of society. These political stances are also examined in the current survey. Only two of the listed attitudes on Graph 8 are not related to anti-Semitism significantly, namely the statements reflecting a pessimistic vision of society (“*in this country only through dishonest means*” and “*the country’s leaders do not really care about people like you*”). This is

somewhat surprising because previous research has shown that pessimism and the feelings of neglect can be a source of anti-Semitism.

However, there is a significant correlation between anti-Semitism and more draconian attitudes toward criminal punishment, for example, proponents of the death penalty and imprisonment for drug abuse are much more receptive to anti-Semitism. Similarly, anti-Semitic views are more prevalent among people who reject different manifestations of “*otherness*” (e.g., homosexuality, refugees and people of colour).

Nationalism also increases the likelihood of anti-Semitism: those defending national values as opposed to EU membership are ones who believe that “*people with a strong nationalist sentiment should have a decisive say in important matters*”, and that “*it is a moral duty today to openly take a stand against the Treaty of Trianon.*”

In summary, authoritarian-conservative world views, high levels of nationalism, and intolerance toward outsiders are all directly proportional to increased levels of anti-Semitism, however, pessimistic attitudes toward humankind and society are not.

Table 5 *Political self-categorisation and anti-Semitism (averages on a 1-7 scale)*

2014	Total population	extremely anti-Semitic	moderately anti-Semitic	not anti-Semitic
left wing (1) – right wing (7)	4,36	5,3	4,59	4,05
conservative (1) – liberal (7)	3,54	3,45	3,19	3,63
moderate (1) – radical (7)	3,45	4,27	3,48	3,2

#### Anti-Semitism and political choice

This section explores whether political beliefs, interest in politics, and party preference are correlated to levels of anti-Semitism. Responds were based on a 7-point scale (left-right wing, conservative-liberal, moderate-radical dimensions) and were based on three questions. Political attitudes are more closely connected to anti-Semitic attitudes than demographic characteristics but are still only weakly related to anti-Semitism.

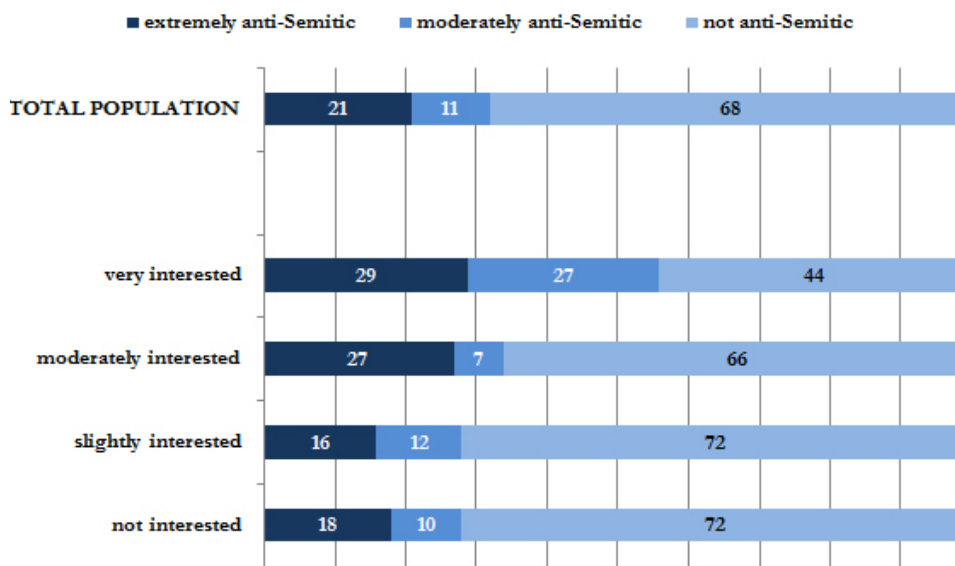
Anti-Semites, on average, categorise themselves

more to the right-wing, radical directions compared to the larger population. Whereas on the conservative-liberal scale, they assume almost exactly the same position (which is somewhat more conservative than 4, the arithmetic mean value, Table 5). At the same time, it was outlined quite clearly that on the basis of the average points, many leftist, liberals, and moderate respondents agreed with anti-Semitic statements.

Interest in politics has a significant, moderately strong correlation with anti-Semitism. Groups with the most intensive interests in politics have much more anti-Jewish respondents, about twice as many as the group of politically indifferent citizens (Graph 9). However, those moderately interested in politics are only slightly more anti-Semitic, and

those with little or no interest show no substantial difference. This relationship perhaps also means that the anti-Jewish voters are more vocal, more prone to public advocacy, thus their number is overestimated by public opinion.

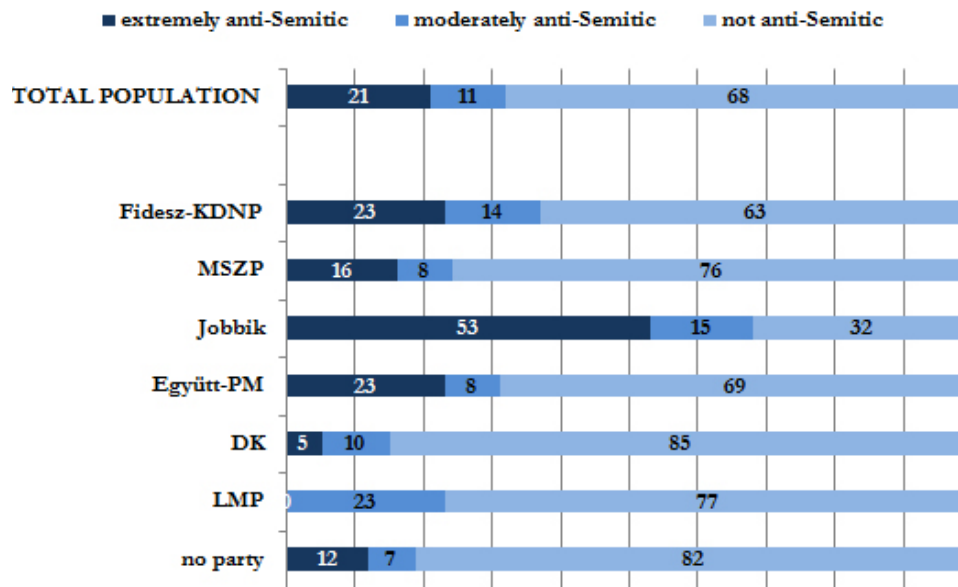
Graph no. 9 *Anti-Semitism and interest in politics (percentage)*



There is a stronger statistical relationship between party preference and anti-Semitism (Graph 10). The majority of the respondents that support the Jobbik party are strongly anti-Semitic and two-thirds are either strongly or moderately anti-Semitic; support for Jobbik had the highest correlation with anti-Semitic attitudes among all variables. The number of uncertain voters, DK and LMP supporters agreeing with anti-Jewish statements is below the average. Supporters of MSZP and the Együtt-PM have a level of anti-

Semitism close to the average, while anti-Semitism was slightly higher among supporters of the current Fidesz-led government. Regardless, the mistake of considering anti-Semitism to be a characteristic of only certain political parties is refuted by the data. One-fifth of the left and one quarter of Fidesz supporters are anti-Semitic, while one-third of Jobbik supporters are not. As 14 percent of the total sample is made up of Jobbik supporters, it cannot be stated that the majority of those with anti-Semitic attitudes support Jobbik.

Graph no 10. *Anti-Semitism and party choices (percentage)*



*6. The Holocaust and remembrance of the past*

In Hungary, Holocaust remembrance is an important issue for both proponents of anti-Semitism and the Jewish people, leading to many conflicts due to different viewpoints. This is why the questionnaire - again allowing the analysis of temporal trend - also contained a series of questions aimed at examining the Hungarian population's

view on the Holocaust, Hungary's complicity in the ill-treatment, persecution and extermination of Hungarian-Jews during World War II, as well as the need to come to terms with this history. Some of the statements deny or relativize the Holocaust, others are related to the issue of liability and suitable remembrance.

Table 6 *Opinions about the Holocaust, responsibility and facing the past, 2009-2014 (percentage, positive statement in connection with the Jews in italic)*

	agree					does not agree			
	2006	2009	2011	2013	2014	2006	2009	2011	2013
1. Non-Jewish Hungarians suffered as much during the War as Jews	56	66	65	65	<b>60</b>	35	21	28	25
2. There weren't gas chambers in the concentration camps	7	6	7	8	<b>12</b>	85	81	85	83
3. The Jews have every right to demand compensation from the Hungarian state for the persecution they suffered during the War	33	-	28	29	<b>27</b>	51	-	61	58
4. The Jews try to exploit and gain an advantage from their persecution	34	29	45	39	<b>36</b>	53	55	45	48
5. Hungary is also responsible for what happened to Hungarian Jews during the War	60	50	50	54	<b>49</b>	30	34	40	35
6. The number of Jewish victims was much lower than what is usually claimed	14	12	18	19	<b>23</b>	61	64	63	62
7. More should be taught about Jewish persecution in schools so it can never happen again	45	54	46	50	<b>42</b>	45	31	47	42
8. A large part of the horrors were invented by the Jews after the event	9	11	13	14	<b>15</b>	80	72	78	74
9. After so many years, the subject of the persecution of the Jews ought to be taken off the agenda	48	40	58	53	<b>54</b>	43	44	35	38

The distribution of responses is mixed, exhibiting a deterioration of attitudes regarding the Holocaust. The popularity of the first statement relativising the suffering of the Jews has declined, or, in some cases, the distribution has not changed significantly. However, responses to the fifth question regarding Hungary's complicity in the Holocaust - of crucial importance when considering the German Occupation Memorial - show a decrease in feelings of Hungary's complicity in the Holocaust than was reflected in similar surveys just one year ago. A tendency that is stronger than the above mentioned changes is the spread of Holocaust denial

(Graph 11). Although "only" 10 to 15 percent deny the Holocaust occurred, 23 percent of respondents relativised the Holocaust; these rates have increased significantly in recent years. It is difficult to determine whether there is a general paranoia and an increasing susceptibility to conspiracy theories behind the numbers, or simply just Holocaust denial. Another important message deriving from the data is that the memory of the Holocaust and the role of Hungarians in World War II polarises opinions, and not only among those with anti-Semitic beliefs (Table 7).



Graph no. 11 Percentage of respondents agreeing with statements denying or relativising Holocaust 2006-2014

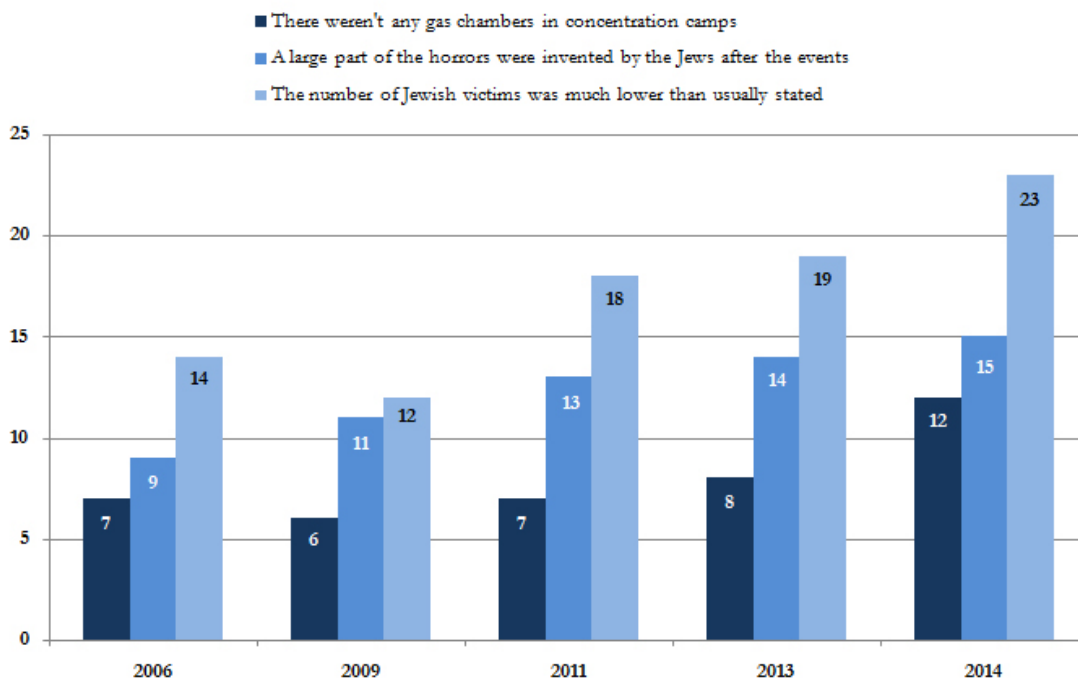


Table 7: Opinions about the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, 2014 (percentage)

	agree					does not agree				
	2006	2009	2011	2013	2014	2006	2009	2011	2013	2014
1. Non-Jewish Hungarians suffered as much during the War as Jews	56	66	65	65	60	35	21	28	25	29
2. There weren't gas chambers in the concentration camps	7	6	7	8	12	85	81	85	83	77
3. The Jews have every right to demand compensation from the Hungarian state for the persecution they suffered during the War	33	-	28	29	27	51	-	61	58	59
4. The Jews try to exploit and gain an advantage from their persecution	34	29	45	39	36	53	55	45	48	51
5. Hungary is also responsible for what happened to Hungarian Jews during the War	60	50	50	54	49	30	34	40	35	38
6. The number of Jewish victims was much lower than what is usually claimed	14	12	18	19	23	61	64	63	62	60
7. More should be taught about Jewish persecution in schools so it can never happen again	45	54	46	50	42	45	31	47	42	46
8. A large part of the horrors were invented by the Jews after the event	9	11	13	14	15	80	72	78	74	73
9. After so many years, the subject of the persecution of the Jews ought to be taken off the agenda	48	40	58	53	54	43	44	35	38	37

Of course, the anti-Semitic respondents, particularly those with strong anti-Jewish sentiments are far less empathetic to the Jews than non-anti-Semites. But obviously there are many exceptions to this rule. Only one-third of anti-Semites agreed with the second statement, that is a complete denial of the Holocaust, half of them agree with partial denial (8th statement), two-thirds of them agree with relativist statements (6th statement). Only the 9th statement had unanimity, which exhibits a very strong intention of “*getting it back to the agenda*“, which is shared by half of the non-anti-Semites. 40 percent denied the complementary statement (no 7). In addition, statements 1 and 5 polarised opinions, and statement 3 concerning compensation is agreed upon only by a minority. There is at least 10% in every cell: it seems almost unbelievable that, for example, 21 percent of the strongly anti-Semites thought that there should be more classes devoted to teaching about the persecution of Jews.

This phenomenon suggests that a lot of the respondents were confused about the issues and have no clear opinions regarding the hidden dilemmas of these issues; some might not sufficiently understand the questions. In any case, the lesson seems to be clear: attitudes which reflect a reluctance to facing the past are only partially related to anti-Semitism. As set out in the report of 2013 by András Kovács, “*is not correct to assume a direct relationship between anti-Semitism and the reluctance to face the history: the former is not necessarily the cause of the latter, and the latter does*

*not necessarily come from aspirations of legitimising anti-Semitism.*”

### 7. Israel and anti-Semitism

Common sense dictates that there need not be a direct correlation between criticisms of Israel and anti-Semitism, that is, criticism of Israeli politics does not necessarily mean that someone has negative attitudes toward Jewish people living in Hungary or elsewhere in the Jewish diaspora. However, commonly anti-Semitism is disguised as criticism of the Jewish state. To explain its anti-Jewish stances (including Gyöngyösi’s infamous “*listing speech*”), Jobbik always goes back to Simon Perez’s statement about Israeli investors intending to buy out Hungary. This speech, delivered with smile and intended as a joke, is often cited during discussions of popular conspiracy theory held by Jobbik and many of its supporters regarding Israeli international machinations. As the topic was a feature of Hungarian public discourse long before the appearance of the far-right Jobbik party, it is reasonable to include this question into the questionnaire and to note responses from Jobbik supporters separately (Table 8).

The questionnaire contains four common topics. “*Does not know*” answers are marked in a separate column where a high percentage (16-22 percent) indicates difficulty understanding the questions and that a significant proportion of the population is not confident in their knowledge of this topic.

Table 8 *Opinions about Israel and anti-Semitism, 2014*  
*The proportion of those in agreement among respondents (percentage; 5 –Agrees fully, 1 –Does not agree at all; Those in agreement = 5- 4)*

	does not know	agree				
	total population	total population	extreme anti-Semites	moderate anti-Semitic	not anti-Semitic	Jobbik voters
Jews living here are more loyal to Israel than to this country.	16	26	62	41	17	41
What Israel is doing to Palestinians is the same as what the Nazis did to the Jews.	17	21	56	34	15	36
Israel is fighting a just defensive battle against attacks launched against it.	18	22	32	18	24	23
The political system of Israel is more progressive than of the Arab countries attacking it.	19	26	42	31	26	29

For respondents, the “*Jews living here are more loyal to Israel than to this country...*” and “*What Israel is doing to the Palestinians is the same as what the Nazis did to the Jews...*” statements might have been the easiest ones to understand, as these had the lowest ratio of “*do not know*” responses, and these showed the most obvious correlation between agreement and anti-Semitism. It is important to emphasise again that about 15 percent of the not anti-Semitic group agreed with the statements; and a similar proportion of strongly anti-Semites disagreed. Overall, respectively 26 and 21 percent of the total sample agreed, which seems significant next to the high number of “*does not know*” responses and responses with middle value and assumable uncertainty. There were more people agreeing than disagreeing with the two statements. Even Jobbik voters followed the views repeatedly propagated by the party: the percentage agreeing with the

first two statements is higher than that of the total population, but the number is closer to moderate anti-Semites and lower than strongly anti-Semites.

Agreement with the legitimacy of Israeli self-defense is not a popular stance. But again this has more to do with the issue being distant and abstract, rather than with consistent anti-Israel sentiments. The pattern of responses is almost completely independent from anti-Semitism. Another positive statement (“*The political system of Israel is more progressive than that of the Arab countries attacking it.*”) shows an even more interesting distribution: the strongly anti-Semites in fact agree with it. Again, it appears likely that a number of respondents, particularly in the latter group, misunderstood the question.

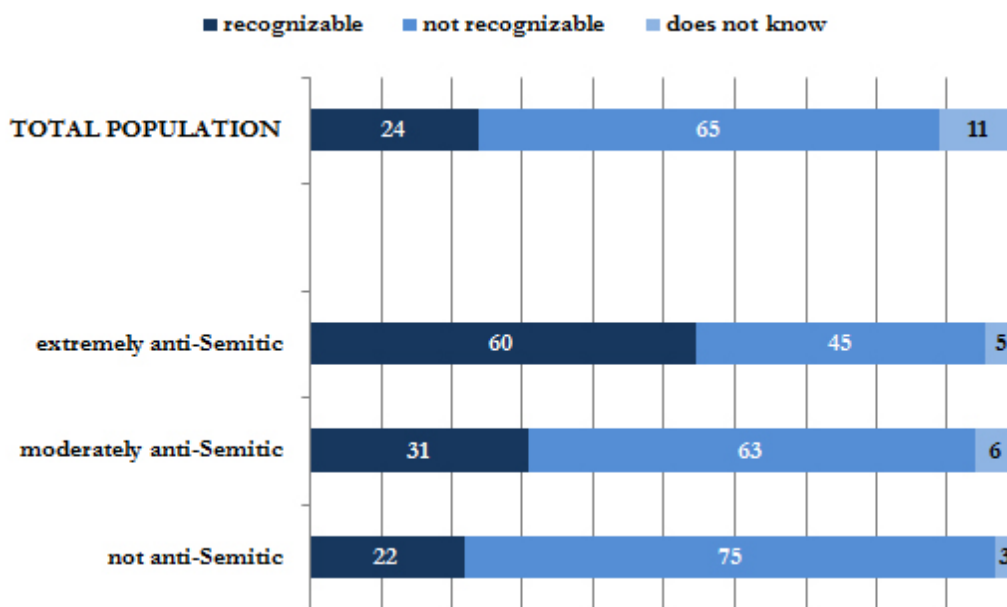
### 8. Can Jews be recognised?

Most people think Jews cannot be recognized, but 24 percent of the population thinks otherwise (Graph 12). When asked specifically: “Do you recognize Jews?”, only 13 percent answered “In general, yes”, and only one in 29 respondents said “Immediately” (Graph 13). 29 percent of respondents who said that “there are typical Jewish traits” were also asked to answer additional open questions: “What are these traits? Which ones would you mention?” The majority mentioned physical features (nose, hair-style, facial hair, dress code), which could merely note a recognition of the tradition dress and appearance of Orthodox Jews. The majority of the traits are predominantly descriptive and neutral, but sometimes reflect negative attitudes toward supposed aesthetic considerations. Few respondents focused on personal traits. Attitudes reflecting a belief in Jewish business acumen and materialism were mentioned most frequently. This aspect, however, came up in a wide variety of

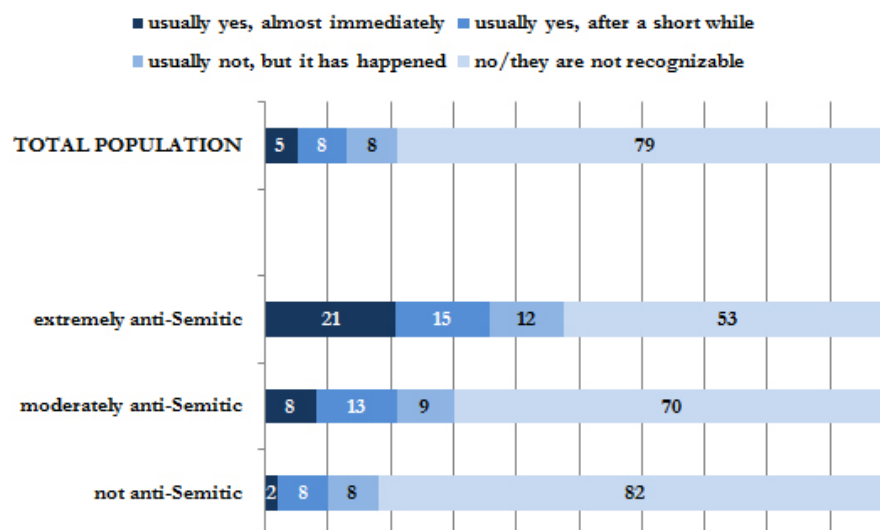
contexts: some mentioned it approvingly (“handle money well”, “hard-working”, “studying well”), while others use neutral terms, for example, “sparing” or “have a lot of money”. In some cases comments were slightly negative (“miserly, cunning”), or even very harsh (“Janus-faced”, “sneaky”, “immoral”, “greedy”). 2-3 percent of respondents made particularly degrading, prejudiced comments.

If the connection between anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic attitudes is not reasonable, it is even more so in case of the “recognisability of the Jews”. Yet, similar to the previous question, this too shows some correlation with anti-Jewish beliefs. Those with more anti-Semitic attitudes have more confidence in their ability to recognise Jews on sight. Half of the strongly anti-Semite belong to this category, but only 21 percent of them remembers recognising Jews “usually almost immediately”, another 15 percent said “after a short while”.

Graph no. 12 *There are many people who say they can recognise Jews. In your opinion, can Jews be distinguished from other people? (in percentage of categories depending on the extent of anti-Semitism)*



Graph no. 13 Can you recognize Jews? (by percentage of groups categorized according to level of anti-Semitic)



9. Perceptions of Jews: How many Jews are there?

It is difficult to determine the Jewish population in Hungary. According to the 2011 census, there were 11,000 members of the Jewish faith, but non-religious Jews were not included. According to World Jewish Population, there are 48,000 Jews in Hungary. The research of László Sebők suggests that there are between 45,000 and 85,000 people of Jewish of matrilineal descent in Hungary<sup>4</sup>. Including those of Jewish patrilineal descent, the Jewish population is estimated at slightly more than 100,000.<sup>5</sup> These estimates are helpful when gauging accuracy of public perceptions of the Jewish population in Hungary.

This question seems to have been the most difficult one. It is notable that 43 percent of respondents did not even wish to make a guess (Graph 14). An additional 41 percent overestimated the size of population, 14 percent said more than 500,000, 5 percent thought the Jewish population was less

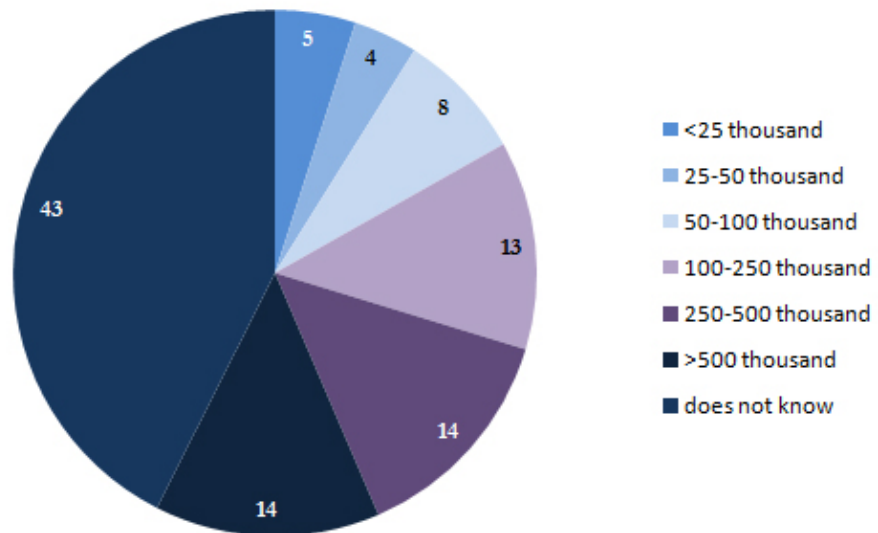
than 25,000. Only 12 percent of respondents guessed between 25 and 100 thousand. However, it must be added that when asked about Hungary’s population, one in ten respondents said they did not know, and another 17 percent answered incorrectly. Overestimation was not only a factor in answers regarding the Jewish population in Hungary but was also a common error in estimates of the population of other ethnic groups and the total population of Hungary.

Overestimation is primarily, but not exclusively, a characteristic of anti-Semitic respondents: 52 percent of the strongly anti-Semitic and 39 percent of the moderately anti-Semitic thought there were more than 250,000 Jews in the country (compared to 28 percent of the total population, Graph 15). It is also a well-known sociological phenomenon that a group hostile to the given ethnic minority overstates the “*threat*”.

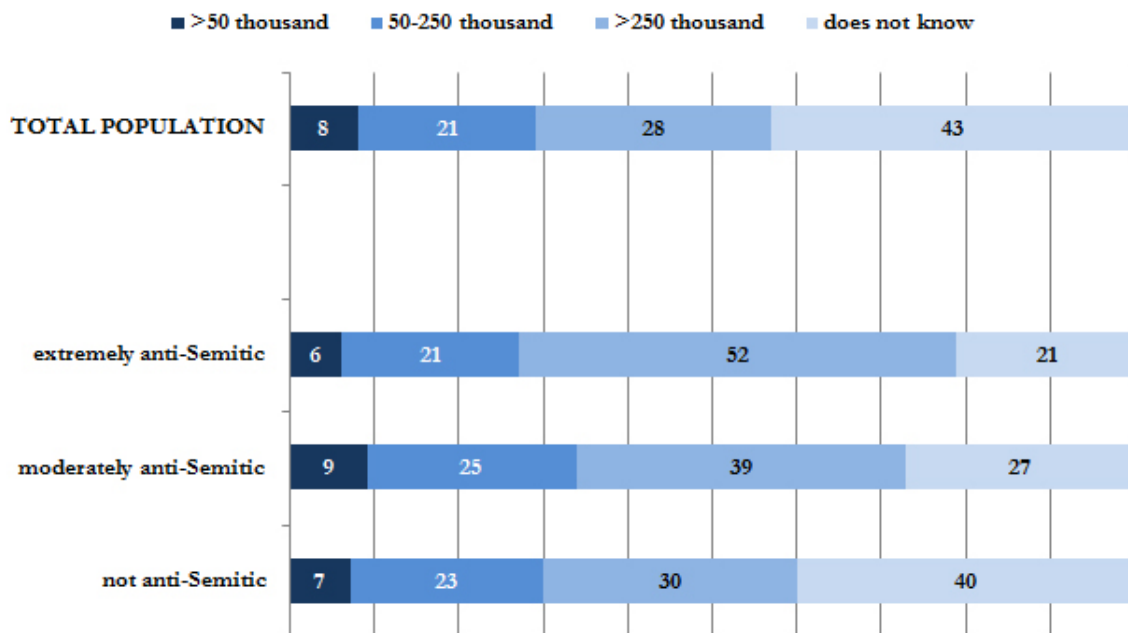
4 <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/jewpop.html>

5 László Sebők, *A magyarországi zsidók a számok tükrében* [Jews in Hungary as reflected in numbers], (Budapest: Rubicon, 2012)

Graph no. 14 *In your opinion, how many Jews live in Hungary? (percentage)*



Graph no 15 *In your opinion, approximately how many Jews live in Hungary? (by percentage of groups categorised by level of anti-Semitism)*



### 10. Perception of anti-Semitism

#### What is anti-Semitism?

Respondents were asked what they think anti-Semitism is, who in contemporary Hungarian society they consider to be anti-Semitic, whether

they had ever encountered 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 9 *What is anti-Semitism?*  
„Is someone anti-Semitic in your opinion if he/she...?”(percentage)

	anti-Semitic	not anti-Semitic	do not know
is of the opinion that Jews cannot become wholly Hungarian under any circumstances	59	32	9
limits number of Jews in the proportion of each occupational group	58	33	9
would not marry a Jew	57	33	10
does not consider Jews living in Hungary to be Hungarians	52	39	9
says that by now it is evident that Jews are unable to fit into Hungarian society	48	42	10
believes that Jews are responsible for communism in Hungary	45	42	13
believes that Jews are enemies of the Christian faith	41	45	14
thinks that the interests of Hungarian Jews are significantly different from those of none Jews	40	48	12

This issue quite understandably polarises public opinion, because there is no consensus about the definition of anti-Semitism. Even discrimination against Jews or advocating that the Jews are not Hungarians are considered anti-Semitic attitudes by only a narrow majority. On the other hand, almost 40 percent have the opinion that it is anti-Semitic to think that Jews have recognisable, particular characteristics or to keep account of who is Jewish in their surroundings. (as illustrated by the incident of the statement of Zoltán Kocsis, internationally renowned conductor) From this data, it is apparent why there is no resolution of such debates in the public discourse, as ordinary voters are far from reaching a consensus about the

definition of anti-Semitism. There is no statement that everyone or noone considers anti-Jewish.

The polarised public opinion does not follow any clear-cut pattern. In most cases, respondents deemed as anti-Semitic are equally divided regarding whether the statement they agreed with is anti-Semitic. For example, half of the respondents who think the number of Jews in different industries should be limited considers this statement anti-Semitic (with which they agree, Table 10). It seems that some of the anti-Semites considers anti-Semitism justified.

Table 10 ratio of people considering the following statement anti-Semitic:  
 „The number of Jews in the proportion of each occupational group should be limited” according to whether the respondents themselves agree with the statement

<i>opinion: number of Jews in the proportion of each occupational group should be limited</i>							
<i>anti-Semitic: limiting the number of Jews in different industries</i>	1 - strongly disagree	2	3	4	5- fully agree	together	
not anti-Semitic	20	37	43	51	48	35	
anti-Semitic	77	60	53	44	52	61	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	



**Who are the anti-Semites?**

Respondents were not only asked about what they consider to be anti-Semitism, but also about which

social groups they considered extremely or more-or-less anti-Semitic.

Table 11 *Who are the anti-Semites?*  
Is anti-Semitism characteristic of the following groups? (percentage)

	characterized by strong anti- Semitism	characterized by some anti- Semitism	not typical	does not know
skinheads	69	13	11	7
supporters of Jobbik	37	30	23	10
right-wing media	14	28	47	10
under-educated	10	29	52	9
supporters of Fidesz	6	28	56	10
young people	5	21	64	10
religious Christians	5	21	64	10
priests	4	21	63	12
senior citizens	3	18	70	9
people from Budapest	2	23	65	10
intellectuals	2	18	70	10
poor people	2	16	72	10
supporters of MSZP	1	14	74	11
left-wing media	1	13	75	11

The vast majority of respondents are of the opinion that anti-Semitism is a characteristic of skinheads. Two-thirds also mentioned the supporters of Jobbik, but only one-third considered them strongly anti-Semitic. Despite Jobbik's softening rhetoric (in its efforts to be regarded as people's party and a "quiet power"), the party's supporters were still thought to be as anti-Jewish in November 2014 as indicated in the 2013 survey. Other groups in question were only considered "characterised by

some anti-Semitism". However, each group was viewed as anti-Semitic by at least 13 percent: even in the case of "innocent" general categories, such as "people from Budapest", "the poor", and "the young people". This most probably denotes that some respondents carelessly assigned the statement "characterised by some anti-Semitism" to different groups.

### The domains of anti-Semitism

Respondents were asked where they had ever encountered anti-Semitism.

Table 12 *Where have you come across anti-Semitism? (percentage)*

	mentioned	not mentioned
on radio or television	26	71
on the internet	21	76
in the parliament, at political events	17	79
the streets, on public transport, or in public spaces	15	83
among friends	10	87
at work	6	90
in state institutions, by authorities	6	90
here in the house, in the neighbourhood	3	93

In this table we can see that the overwhelming majority of people - according to their own admission - has not encountered anti-Semitism in their private life, only in public discourse.

Respondents' perceptions about the strength of modern anti-Semitism is based largely on views relayed in the media and on the political stage rather than everyday experiences.

### Presumable causes of anti-Semitism

We were also curious about what respondents themselves would name as the causes of anti-Semitism.

Table 13 *Assumptions on the causes of anti-Semitism*

(percentage, averages 1–5 scale; 5, has a very significant role—1, has no role at all)

	has a very significant role (5-4)	or has a little or no role at all (2-1)	average
Human stupidity	53	16	3,56
People are looking for a scapegoat to blame their difficulties for	45	17	3,37
The words of anti-Jewish politicians	40	18	3,26
Many are envious of successful Jews	37	23	3,18
economic crisis	37	29	3,04
Israel's political behaviour	33	21	3,14
The Jews have too much influence in the country.	24	33	2,87
Jews' behaviour in general	22	37	2,71
too many Jews in the country	22	41	2,64
The Jews have too much influence in the country	18	46	2,5

The vast majority condemns anti-Semitism as they consider fallible human characteristics as its main causes. However, approximately one-fifth to one-quarter of respondents blamed the Jews for the

spread of anti-Semitism. Opinions differ however as to the extent that Israeli politics or anti-Jewish politicians' statements have contributed to the spread of anti-Semitism.

### 11. Topical issues

In the last part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked about the conflicts between the Hungarian government and the Jewish communities last year.

#### Opinion about the monument on Szabadság square

Hungarians are divided on Hungarian complicity in the persecution, imprisonment, and mass extermination of Jews during World War II. According to 51 percent, Hungary is complicit, 40 percent, however, thinks only the Germans are responsible (very similar ratios in connection with almost the same issue in an earlier Median survey<sup>6</sup>).

Public opinion seems to be consistent, since the attitudes towards the German Occupation Memorial, symbolising the sole responsibility of the Germans for the Holocaust and innocence of the Hungarians, are similar: 52 percent do not support the construction of the monument, 34 percent do. However, 21 percent of respondents do not consider Hungary responsible, but they do not support the memorial. 16 percent approves of the monument despite considering Hungary liable. Therefore, almost four out of ten respondents appear to be inconsistent, and one-fourth of respondents were not able to answer at least one of the questions.

Table 14 Cross distribution of the two questions about the responsibility of the Hungarian Holocaust

		<i>Hungary is responsible for what happened to the Hungarian Jews during the war.</i>			Total
		Agree	Disagree	Does not know	
<i>The government has set up the monument in Budapest to commemorate the victims of the German occupation.</i>	Agree	16	15	3	34
	Disagree	28	21	3	52
	Does not know	7	4	3	14
	Total	51	40	9	100

6 [http://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Medi%C3%A1n\\_eml%C3%A9km%C5%B1\\_201404.pdf](http://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Medi%C3%A1n_eml%C3%A9km%C5%B1_201404.pdf)

The pattern might be attributed to the fact that there is no direct political reference in the first question, while in case of the German Occupation Memorial, it was indicated to have been erected by the government. Accordingly, the distribution of responses varied depending on party preferences (43 percent of Fidesz supporters and 23 percent of non-Jobbik opposition supported erection of the monument, while 42-69 percent opposed its erection). However, in the case of questions with no direct political context, 51 percent of Fidesz and 60 percent of the left-wing opposition agreed with Hungary's responsibility while 41 and 35 percent disagreed. The negative attitude of the Jobbik respondents might stem from their not considering Hungary responsible and a wish to not see a memorial for Jews.

But a more likely explanation for inconsistent answers may be an ignorance of the issue. Presumably, most respondents - although having heard of the event and the scandal - simply are not aware of what the memorial symbolises. Only about one-third of the inconsistent respondents appear to be politically motivated. Most of them are inconsistent even in this regard. For example, despite being a Fidesz voter, they do not support the memorial that denies the Hungarian's responsibility, but they also do not believe that Hungary is responsible for the tragedy of the Jews. This hypothesis is confirmed by the significant proportion of "does not know" responses (9 and 15 percent).

It is not surprising that there is no correlation between anti-Semitism and approval of the

monument. 55 percent of non-Semitic respondents (the majority of the population belongs to this category) disapproved as did half of the moderate anti-Semites and two-thirds of the strongly anti-Semitic (whose majority probably opposes any kind of memorial for Jews). However, the more anti-Semitic somebody is, the less likely they consider Hungary complicit in crimes committed during the Holocaust.

Fewer people knew about 2014 being declared as the Year of Holocaust Remembrance, as well as the new museum in Budapest designed to commemorate child victims. Respondents were less informed about the Year of Holocaust Remembrance than the German Occupation Memorial. The ratios those approving and disapproving: Year of Holocaust 50:36, Children Victims' Museum 47:39 in relation to the whole population. The rejection of these seemingly innocent and much less controversial measures can hardly stem from political motivations, as the ratios with or without the Jobbik respondents are very similar (and even supporters of the radical party themselves are divided on the issue) It is more likely that in the background, there is a kind of attitude that "*Holocaust remembrance should be taken off the agenda*". The pattern of responses are much more defined by the agreement with this statement - and the broader categorisation of anti-Semitism. However, even these do not define it wholly, so again it has to be emphasised that many respondents probably feel the issue very distant so no informed and considered thoughts can be presumed behind the response.

### Opinion about the dialogue between Jewish organisations and the government

The majority of respondents, 64 percent, thinks that the government should seek the advice from Jewish communities regarding issues relevant to Jews in Hungary. According to 22 percent, Jewish leaders should be asked in other matters too.

48 percent, however, thinks that there is no need for any consultation. By an additional ten percent, those with strong anti-Semitic views approve more of consulting with Jewish communities than Jobbik supporters (Table 15).

Table 15 *Opinion about the government's consultation with Jewish communities*

	Opposition parties without Jobbik				Strongly anti-Semitic	Total population
	Fidesz	Jobbik	Unsure	Unsure		
The government should seek the advice of representatives of the Jewish communities only in all issues of high importance.	25	14	31	19	16	22
The government should seek the advice of Jewish communities only in issues affecting Jews.	68	50	71	64	51	64
There is no need for the decision makers of the state to seek the advice of the representatives of Jewish communities.	49	55	42	47	58	48

The public is even more divided in relation to the Jewish community's advocacy (Table 16). Indeed, 26 percent would go so far as to state that Jewish organisations should evaluate every key decision of the government, even if they are not asked. A narrow majority (57 percent) is in favor of Jewish consultation only upon a request of the government. There is slightly fewer (49 percent) who approve of unsolicited resolution but only if it concerns issues affecting the Jews. The division is shown by the fact that 51 percent thinks that Jewish religious organisations should deal with their own religious issues only and not decisions of the government. Opinions are related

to anti-Semitism and party preference: 29 percent of those with strongly anti-Semitic views and Jobbik supporters approved of unsolicited Jewish expression of opinion (compared to the total population's 49 percent), and 68 percent believed that the government's decisions should in no way be commented on by Jewish organisations (as opposed to 51 percent of the total population). Many of those wishing for the Jewish community to remain silent are not anti-Semitic. The public's opinion on consultation and opinion forming is therefore only partially related to anti-Jewish predisposition.

Table 16 "Representatives of the Jewish community should express their opinions..."

	Fidesz	Jobbik	Opposition parties without	Unsure	Strongly anti-Semitic	Total population
in all important decisions of the government, even if not asked	28	11	40	23	23	26
in all decisions of the government related to the Jewish community, even if not asked	54	29	59	47	29	49
only if the decision makers seek their opinions	60	60	58	52	58	57
should not deal with the government's decisions but only with their own religious issues	54	68	44	46	59	51

The answers are even more polarised regarding the impact of Jewish organisations (Table 17). Note that 43 percent considered it positive (contributing to the dialogue and the decrease of anti-Semitism), and 47 percent considered it a negative (increasing anti-Semitism). The ratio of positive opinion is lower in the case of Jobbik and the strongly anti-Semitic (29 and 27 percent

respectively). The opinion that consultation with the Jewish community is a negative is slightly more popular (52 percent and 57 percent). Opinions regarding the impact of Jewish organisations' advocacy are not based only on party preference and anti-Semitism. Supporters of left-wing parties and non anti-Semites are also divided on the issue.

Table 17 "If the representatives of the Jewish community are vocal in more issues..."

	Fidesz	Jobbik	Opposition without Jobbik	Unsure	Strongly anti-Semitic	Total population
it will contribute to the dialogue and the decrease of anti-Semitism	44	29	55	42	27	43
it will increase anti-Semitism	48	52	50	43	57	47

Overall 87 percent, that is, the overwhelming majority of respondents did not change their opinions about the Jewish community as a result of the aforementioned incidents. Only 8 percent said that their opinions worsened while 3 percent noted that it improved. Responses depended strongly on the political views of the respondent. The negative balance primarily stems from the fact that the overall picture of strong anti-Semites and Jobbik

deteriorated. The balance of Fidesz supporters also became slightly more negative, whereas non-anti-Semites and the left-wing voters improved slightly. Besides the political polarisation, another warning sign to the Jewish community is that the balance of uncertain opinions is also negative. But once again, we emphasise that the difference from previous surveys is slight.

Table 18 “Taken into consideration all these, in the past months, your opinion about the Jewish community in Hungary...”

	Fidesz	Jobbik	opposition without Jobbik	unsure	strongly anti- Semitic	total population
worsened	7	24	5	4	28	8
did not change	88	72	85	92	70	87
improved	3	2	7	1	2	3

## 12. Comparison

At the end of the analysis, we turn to the question of how strong the explanations for anti-Semitism offered by the discussed approaches are relative to each other. That is, what is the hierarchical relationship between the separately presented correlations (i.e., which can be considered the strongest; which are only loosely related to anti-Semitism) In different statistical analyses, this is

generally shown by the so-called logistic regression model incorporating a large number of variables (questions, statements) at the same time. It has one result variable: the question we want to explain. This is an already used comprehensive indicator of anti-Semitism: the highly and moderately anti-Semitic groups were merged, so it contained everyone who can be characterised by a significant degree of anti-Jewish opinions.

Based on the different variables inherent in the survey questions, the model examines the ability to predict a persons susceptibility to anti-Semitic beliefs (Table 19). The index measuring the strength of relationship is 1 in the hypothetical case where result variable can be explained by the very model fully, that is, it can be fully inferred from the explanatory factors that someone is anti-Semitic or not. The index's minimum is 0. In that case, the variables in the model are completely independent from anti-Semitism. The explanatory factors in the first model (almost all questions and statements in the questionnaire) together have a 60 percent probability of being able to predict anti-Semitic attitudes (this is very high in political sociology). This leaves 40 percent, whose anti-Semitism depends on factors outside of the framework

of our research.

This comprehensive model was deconstructed to find out how strong explanations (predictions) were presented in each chapter. There are only socio-demographic background variables in the second model, and, in the third, only political self-placement and party preference are variables. The fourth contains the variables associated with xenophobia; the fifth adherence to order, nationalism, the rejection of transgression of norms, and political pessimism (for specific questions, see footnote 11). Finally, the sixth has the perception of current events. The appendix contains all questions and statements used in the analysis.

Table 19 *Comparison of explanatory power of the different models*

model		strength of correlation
1.	full	0,604
2.	demographics (age, gender, type of settlement, financial status, religion)	0,087
3.	party preference and political self-placement (scales of left-right, conservative-liberal, moderate-radical)	0,199
4.	xenophobia	0,335
5.	other political issues (conservatism; nationalism; „norm violation”, rejection of alterity; pessimism)	0,37
6.	opinion on current issues (dialogue and conflict between the government and the Jewish community)	0,06



Perceptions of current events and demographic background variables have a small yet significant influence on anti-Semitism. In comparison, political issues have a much stronger effect. Predications of anti-Semitism can be made with approximately 20 percent probability based on political beliefs and party preference. Only xenophobia and some social attitudes provide a strong predictor of anti-Semitism.

Our research confirms that prejudice is rarely directed toward one group. Xenophobia often takes form of anti-Semitism, for example. Authoritarianism, prosecution of those who

transgress traditional norms, adherence to order, and nationalism lead to a political character structure which makes the citizens more susceptible to anti-Semitism. Overall, the rejection of those who are “different” (for example immigrants, homosexuals, drug addicts, and other ethnic groups and minorities) increases the likelihood of anti-Semitism more than other characteristics. However, the statistical analysis also underscores that agreement or disagreement with anti-Jewish statements depends significantly on factors outside our research. It is impossible to always predict anti-Semitism with a questionnaire.

### 13. Summary

One of the main implications of our research is that the Hungarian public is only very moderately concerned with the issues related to Jews. The high ratio of “Does not know” responses in case of several questions and the frequency of inconsistent answers suggest that many respondents were not able to form an opinion on the subject or to relate to the questions regarding Jews. However, the interest is still considerable given that the issue does not affect the vast majority of the population directly.

Survey research can only measure opinions, prejudices, and attitudes, and cannot measure behaviour such as discrimination. Agreeing with the statements in the questionnaire cannot be construed as behaviour, but is probably more than merely an opinion. It might be designated as attitude, as it indicates a certain degree of

predisposition and a willingness to act. Questions gauging anti-Semitism primarily reflect a climate, therefore volatility is always a consideration.

With this in mind we primarily measured the degree of anti-Semitic prejudice using indicators which can be compared to data from 2013 and earlier years. These are related to the popularity of beliefs and misconceptions concerning Jews (cognitive-Semitism) and the emotional relationship with and social distance from the Jews (affective anti-Semitism). Based on this, anti-Semitism strengthened considerably in 2010 (we believe that it was not independent from Jobbik’s rise to a mainstream political power), and has remained at the same level ever since, with only very small changes between 2013 and 2014. The number of strong anti-Semites slightly increased while the number of those without anti-Semitic views also increased.

The society's affective anti-Semitism is primarily the manifestation of a general xenophobia. Respondents with negative views of other ethnic groups are also more likely to have negative views of Jews. One might think for example that someone who does not accept Jews as neighbours would have a more positive view of skinheads. On the contrary, respondents with anti-Semitic views and other negative views of ethnic minorities are also more likely to hold a negative view of skinheads. Anti-Semitism has specific features, but it should be noted that, for a large part of the Hungarian population, being Jewish is only one case of a people being different and therefore invokes antipathy.

One of the key questions of our research was "*Which social groups are more susceptible to anti-Semitism and what are the underlying motivations?*" Our analysis suggests that social group affiliation and anti-Semitism is almost completely independent from each other. There is no clear correlation between income or education level, employment type, age, religion, and the prevalence of anti-Semitism. Men individuals who are political active, and Jobbik supporters are more likely to have anti-Semitic views, but these characteristics only explain anti-Semitism partially. The likelihood of anti-Semitic views is also proportional to nationalist, order-adhering, authoritarian social attitudes, and the rejection of various forms of being different (homosexuality, drug abuse, immigration). Pessimistic views of humankind are not related to anti-Semitism. These questions - together with xenophobia - are the strongest predictors of anti-Semitism.

The memory of the Holocaust in Hungary divides the society deeply. So does the issue of Hungary's

complicity in the Holocaust and the question of whether it is an important topic for public discourse. For these questions, the shift in temporal trend could not be observed, but the support of open denial or relativisation of Holocaust rose gradually from 6-8 percent in 2006 to about 12-15 percent.

Anti-Israeli views expressed in public are connected to anti-Semitism, primarily in Jobbik's rhetoric. Rhetoric which is only moderately reflected in the attitudes of Jobbik supporters. Regarding these issues, we have found that it is difficult for the respondents to relate to questions which seem to them as abstract problems unrelated to their daily lives. Anti-Semites were more willing to condemn Israel's politics.

Notably, 30 percent of respondents claim that there are recognisable Jewish traits while only every fifth or tenth respondent thought that they were able to identify the Jewish population in general. The "*skills of recognition*" is very strongly linked to anti-Semitism. Among respondents susceptible to anti-Semitism, the ratio is several times greater than the average. It is in fact not surprising that the voters are divided on the question of what is anti-Semitism, as there is no scientific-academic consensus either. This is why assessment and debate of statements considered anti-Semitic - rightfully or not - cannot come to a standstill in the public discourse. There is no statement that everyone or noone considers anti-Jewish. The polarised public opinion does not follow any clear-cut pattern. In most cases, respondents deemed as anti-Semitic are equally divided regarding whether the statement they agreed with is anti-Semitic. It seems that some of the anti-Semites considers anti-Semitism justified.

Finally, respondents were asked about the recent conflicts between the government and Jewish organisations, in particular the German Occupation Memorial. The data shows that those opposing are in a slight majority, but, even with an issue so heavily covered by the media, many respondents were uncertain. Many did not even know that the memorial symbolised the responsibility of the Germans and Hungarians' innocence. The dialogue between the government and the Jewish communities also divided opinions. The questions were related to when the government should seek the opinion of the Jewish organisations (always, only in the issues

that affect them, or never), and to when the Jewish organisations should voice their opinions publicly. In any case, the population's stance on the right direction and extent of consultation and opinion forming seems to be only partially related to anti-Jewish predisposition. The public is almost evenly divided regarding whether the advocacy of Jewish organisations increases or decreases anti-Semitism. The overwhelming majority of respondents did not change their opinions about the Jews due to the conflicts, but there are slightly more of those whose opinions worsened.

## Appendix

Table 1: *The full logistic regression model*

Variable	Model	Beta	Standard error	Level of significance	Exponential Beta (Odds ratio)
<b>Budapest</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>0,415</b>	<b>0,004</b>	<b>3,262</b>
University/college graduate	2	0,693	0,433	0,11	1,999
<b>Group of people with low income</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0,729</b>	<b>0,358</b>	<b>0,042</b>	<b>2,073</b>
Group of people with higher income	2	0,433	0,361	0,23	1,541
Does not go to church regularly	2	-0,54	0,309	0,081	0,583
Aged under 40	2	0,179	0,334	0,593	1,196
Higher educational level: finished 8th grade	2	-0,051	0,382	0,894	0,95
<b>Jobbik voter</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0,978</b>	<b>0,422</b>	<b>0,021</b>	<b>2,66</b>
Interested (or very interested in politics)	3	0,231	0,306	0,451	1,259
On the scale of left-right, right wing (scale of 7 at least 5)	3	0,28	0,321	0,383	1,323
<b>Conservative (scale of 7 at least 5)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0,67</b>	<b>0,297</b>	<b>0,024</b>	<b>1,954</b>
<b>Radical (scale of 7 at least 5)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0,82</b>	<b>0,384</b>	<b>0,033</b>	<b>2,27</b>
Would consent to an Arab neighbour	4	0,406	0,389	0,296	0,666
<b>Would consent to an American neighbour</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,152</b>	<b>0,422</b>	<b>0,006</b>	<b>0,316</b>
<b>Would consent to a Gypsy neighbour</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,171</b>	<b>0,435</b>	<b>0,007</b>	<b>0,31</b>
Would consent to a Chinese neighbour	4	0,594	0,409	0,146	1,812
Would consent to a homosexual neighbour	4	0,68	0,389	0,081	1,974
Would consent to a Transylvanian Hungarian neighbour	4	0,377	0,389	0,333	1,458
Would consent to an skinhead neighbour	4	-0,026	0,487	0,958	0,975
Would consent to an African neighbour	4	-0,746	0,415	0,072	0,474
Would consent to a Romanian neighbour	4	0,063	0,402	0,875	1,065
Would consent to a Swabian neighbour	4	-0,368	0,417	0,377	0,692
<b>Would limit the number of people of colour living in the country</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,42</b>	<b>0,302</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,136</b>
<b>Would tighten the acceptance of refugees</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,328</b>	<b>0,36</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,772</b>
<b>Would constrict abortion</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0,664</b>	<b>0,313</b>	<b>0,034</b>	<b>1,943</b>
Support death penalty	5	0,436	0,304	0,152	1,547
<b>Consider homosexuality immoral</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1,03</b>	<b>0,321</b>	<b>0,001</b>	<b>2,8</b>
Would penalise drug abuse with severe sentence of imprisonment	5	0,325	0,29	0,262	1,384
Despite of often making mistakes, politicians seek to serve the interest of people	5	0,045	0,351	0,897	1,046
In this country, one can become rich only through dishonest means	5	0,36	0,344	0,295	1,434
More firm actions are needed to advocate the interest of the Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries	5	-0,253	0,319	0,428	0,777
People, if they wish, have the opportunity to influence the destiny of the country	5	0,019	0,308	0,95	1,02
Nowadays people often do not get justice even from the courts	5	-0,32	0,324	0,323	0,726
Protection of our national values is more important than EU membership	5	0,302	0,322	0,349	1,352
Not many people can have faith in the future	5	-0,12	0,333	0,719	0,887

Variable	Model	Beta	Standard error	Level of significance	Exponential Beta (Odds ratio)
<b>People with a strong nationalist sentiment should have a decisive say in important matter</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0,655</b>	<b>0,309</b>	<b>0,034</b>	<b>1,924</b>
The country's leaders do not really care about people like you	5	-0,581	0,338	0,086	0,56
Religious education should be compulsory in schools	5	0,237	0,307	0,439	1,268
Nowadays everything and everyone has a price tag	5	0,537	0,337	0,112	1,711
<b>It is a moral duty today to openly take a stand against the Treaty of Trianon</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0,706</b>	<b>0,31</b>	<b>0,023</b>	<b>2,026</b>
Taken into consideration all these, in the past months, did your opinion about the Jewish community in Hungary worsen, improve or stay the same?	6	0,193	0,323	0,55	1,213
CONSTANT		-9,787	1,726	0	0

*Note:*

dependent/outcome variable: a comprehensive anti-Semitism indicator (cognitive and affective anti-Semitism, see Graph 5)  
95 percent significant variables in bold.

The number in the model column indicates which sub-model the variable belongs to. (2 = demographic, 3 = party preference and self-placement, 4 = xenophobia against other ethnic groups a; 5 = adherence to order, nationalism, rejection of transgression of norms and authoritarianism; 6 = assessment of current events)

The odds ratio expresses the extent likelihood of anti-Semitism is increased by the explanatory variable. For example, a Jobbik voter - with all other conditions remaining the same - on average is 2.66 times more likely to belong to the anti-Semitic groups than a non-Jobbik voter. However, the one who would accept American neighbour, is only 0.3 times less likely to be among the anti-

Semites (that is, it is more probably that the person does not belong to the group). According to multivariate analysis, those who agree with the limit of refugees and restrictions on people of colour increase by the highest probability (with 3.8 and 4.1-fold value) the chance of the respondent becoming a member an anti-Semitic group.



מבוא

חברת "מדיין" המכון למחקר וסקרי שוק ערכה סקר מטעם עמותת TEV בין החודשים נובמבר-  
דצמבר 2014 בקרב החברה ההונגרית בהתייחסותם לקהילה היהודית:

-דעותיהם ואמונותיהם על היהודים  
-עוצמתה ותדירותה של האנטישמיות והדעות הקדומות בהונגריה  
-תפיסות לגבי אנטישמיות  
-העמדה כלפי ארגונים יהודים בחברה ההונגרית  
-ההשפעה של הקונפליקט הקיים בין הממשלה לקהילה היהודית על החברה ההונגרית

המחקר נעשה בעזרת שאלונים בקרב קבוצת מחקר מייצג של 1200 איש בגילאי 18 ומעלה. הסטיות במדגם תוקנו בעזרת נתונים מהלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה KSH בהונגריה באמצעות שיטה סטטיסטית שנותנת מדגם מייצג המתייחס למקום מגורים בלבד ללא הבחנה של גיל והשכלה. סטיית התקן 3%. הסוקרים השתמשו בשאלון שהתבסס על הרעיון של החוקר גיל והשכלה. סטיית התקן 3%. הסוקרים השתמשו בשאלון שהתבסס על הרעיון של החוקר Kovács András) שהכין בשנת 1995 שבעזרתו אפשר להתייחס לשינויים בזמן.

הסוקרים במחקר הציגו שאלות למרואיינים, כחצי שעה במוצע כל ראיון, בתחומים שונים שקשורים ביהדות ויהודים. לפני שאנחנו נתחיל להציג את הנתונים הרבים שהצטברו, אנחנו מבקשים להבהיר את התשובה לשאלה מה כן ומה לא משתקף מן הנתונים שעולים מן השאלון? בתחילת המחקר, אנחנו רוצים לברר עד כמה האזרח ההונגרי הממוצע, מתעסק ביום יום בנושאים שהעלנו בשאלון, בעקבות המקרים האנטישמיים בתקופה האחרונה. בהקשר הזה רצינו להבהיר את הקושי במדידת האנטישמיות והדעות הקדומות.

לאחר הבהרת השאלות הטכניות, אנחנו נציג בתחילה את תדירות נקודת המבט האנטי יהודית ולאחר מכן את קבוצות האוכלוסייה שבהן יש עמדות אנטי יהודיות. בהמשך המחקר נעבור על נתונים שקשורים לשואה, זכר ההיסטוריה ותפיסות אנטישמיות. בחלק האחרון, אנחנו מסתכלים על תפיסת הקונפליקט המתהווה בין הממשלה בהונגריה והקהילה היהודית בתקופה האחרונה.

תרגמה מהונגרית: יהודית לונגי שגיב

אנטישמיות ודעות קדומות בחברה ההונגרית נכון להיום

דו"ח מחקר



כתבו: אנדרה האן ודניאל רונה

בודפשט, 2015

