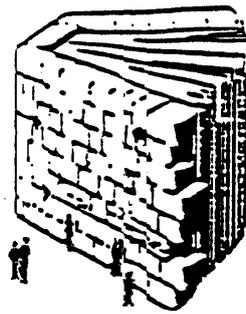


Congress of Ethnic Communities of Ukraine

National Minority Rights Monitoring Group



Vaad of Ukraine



Antisemitism in Ukraine, 2018

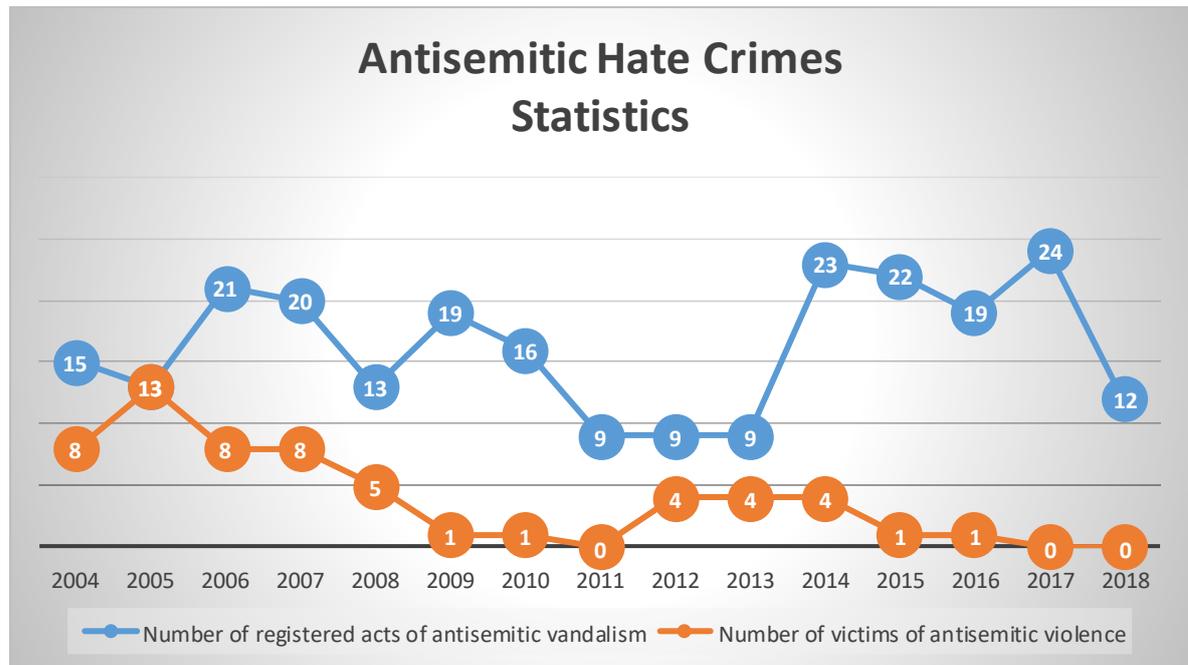
Monitoring Report

Vyacheslav Lykhachev

**Kyiv
2019**

Antisemitic Hate Crimes

Statistics



1. Attacks on the grounds of antisemitism

According to my monitoring, no cases of antisemitic violence were registered in 2018.

However, I am aware of one case when a conflict grew into a physical fight, in which the attacker yelled antisemitic swear words against the victim. However antisemitism was neither the cause nor the significant part of this conflict. Therefore, this incident cannot be described as antisemitic, so I am not including it into statistics.

In previous years, since the beginning of systematic monitoring, the following number of victims were registered in acts of violence on the grounds of antisemitism:

- in 2004 – 8 persons, in 2005 – 13 persons, in 2006 – 8 persons, in 2007 – 8 persons, in 2008 – 5 persons, in 2009 – 1 person, in 2010 – 1 person, in 2011 none, in 2012 – 4 persons (as a result of 3 incidents), in 2013 – 4 persons, in 2014 – 4 persons, in 2015 – 1 person, in 2016 – also 1 person. No victims were registered in 2017 or in 2018.

Please note that, according to the materials assembled in the past 15 years, the peak of crimes on the grounds of antisemitism fell on 2005. Following 2007, a noticeable decline is seen, and in the past ten years, the number of such incidents remains at a stable low level. Apart from numbers, it is important to note that years 2005 – 2007 were marked with the wave of most violent street attacks that really threatened the lives of their victims. But statistics over the recent years shows that after some decline in the number of attacks in 2012 – 2014, their indicators declined to minimal in 2015 – 2016 again, and in 2017–2018, no antisemitic violence was registered in Ukraine at all.

2. Vandalism on the grounds of antisemitism

I describe vandalism as doing physical harm to the buildings of Jewish infrastructure (synagogues, community centers), tombs in Jewish cemeteries and memorials to Holocaust victims, for instance, the breaking of glass or arson, as well as graffiti of antisemitic and/or neo-Nazi nature on such objects that demonstrates ideological motivation.

In 2018, a total of 12 cases of antisemitic vandalism were registered.

Over the past 15 years, according to our monitoring, the following dynamics has been registered: in 2004 – 15 cases of antisemitic vandalism, in 2005 – 13 cases, in 2006 – 21, in 2007 – 20, in 2008 – 13, in 2009 – 19, in 2010 – 16 cases, in 2011, 2012 and 2013 – 9 cases each, in 2014 – 23 cases, in 2015 – 22, in 2016 – 19 cases, in 2017 – 24 cases.

Newsreel

• **January 29**, in Lviv, during the lecture of chairwoman of the *Hilel* Lviv City Public Organization, historian Olena Andronatyi on the subject “Terrible History: Holocaust. Memory. Pain. Lessons” at the *Knyharnia E* bookstore, an unknown person threw a smoke bomb into the store. The person was described as a 15-16-year-old teenager with his face covered. None of the people attending the lecture were harmed¹.

While we understand the conditions and the vulnerability of such typology, in the ultimate statistics we view this case as an act of vandalism because the antisemitic aggression was directed at an institution where an event was held, rather than the people.

• **February 2**, in Odessa, unknown people wrote antisemitic insults and threats (“kike* scum, f*** you”) on the sign of the public receptionist of the *Solidarity – Petro Poroshenko Bloc* party².

Criminal proceedings were launched under article 161 of the Criminal Code³.

• **February 3**, the Holocaust memorial in the village of Petrikov, on the outskirts of Ternopil, was desecrated. Nazi symbols – a swastika and a sign of the SS – were painted on the stela⁴.

• **March 7**, in Chernihiv, according to the United Jewish Community of Ukraine, quoting the Chernihiv City Jewish Community, inscriptions were made “F**k the kikes!” and “Away with kikes!”⁵.

• **In early April**, approximately on Easter, **April 9**, an act of vandalism took place in the village of Oratov, Vinnitsa region. Unknown people destroyed the memorial plate devoted to Levi Eshkol, an outstanding Israeli military, public and political figure, third prime minister of

* Kike (*zhyd*) – “Yid”, “dirty Jew” – an ethnic slur for a Jew.

¹

https://zaxid.net/pid_chas_lektsiyi_pro_golokost_u_lvivskiy_knigarni_nevidomiy_kinuv_dimovu_shashku_n1447841

²

https://24tv.ua/ru/v_odesse_vandaly_oskvernili_antisemitskimi_nadpisjami_priemnuju_bloka_petra_poroshenko_foto_n921878

³ <https://vesti-ukr.com/strana/286624-ihra-na-tajnykh-strunakh-obshchestva-kak-i-kem-v-ukraine-vbrasyvajutsjatemy-ksenofobii-i-antisemitizma>

⁴ <https://rada.te.ua/news/10165.html>

⁵ <https://jewishnews.com.ua/community/otchet-po-antisemitizmu-obedinennoj-evrejskoj-obshhinyi-ukrainyi-za-2018-god>

the State of Israel, who had been born in the village⁶.

By May, the plate had been restored. The law enforcement bodies refused to view the incident as an act of vandalism, insisting that it had been an accident.

The plate has been erected on the initiative and with the funds of a private sponsor and then transferred to the balance of the city council. Also, last year, Oratov authorities renovated the old Jewish cemetery and erected a memorial plate in honor of the community destroyed in the Holocaust.

- **April 20**, in Poltava, vandals desecrated a memorial sign to Jewish victims of Nazism and the Mourning Mother Monument.

The vandals painted a swastika and words “Heil Hitler!” and “Death to kikes!” with black paint⁷.

- In the early hours of **April 26**, the Holocaust memorial was desecrated in the village of Petrikov, on the outskirts of Ternopil. CCTV showed three persons involved in the crime. One poured something on the memorial, probably a flammable liquid, then another threw a Molotov cocktail at the stela⁸.

Criminal proceedings have been launched⁹.

- In the early hours of **April 27**, in Ostroh (Rivne region) unknown people desecrated an *ochel* (a prayer house over a tomb) of famous rabbi Samuel Eliezer Halevi Edeles (also known as MaHaRSHA), who lived in late XVI – early XVII centuries. The vandals broke through the glass doors inside, damaged windows and furniture, scattered books and prayer paraphernalia.

The national police launched criminal proceedings under article 194 part 1 of the Criminal Code (“deliberate damage to property”). According to chief of the Ostroh police department Eduard Kholod, “examination of the incident site showed no trace or indications that the crime had been committed on religious grounds”¹⁰.

- **August 20**, director of the Lviv *Territory of Terror* Museum Olga Gonchar disclosed that information stands erected by the Museum in 12 city locations connected to the history of the Holocaust within the framework of the *Lviv’43: a City of (non)Memory* project had been vandalized several times in the course of July¹¹. The street exposition was timed to the 75th anniversary of elimination of the Yanovsky concentration camp and ghetto.

Some information stands were damaged, some got insulting words painted on them¹², and one was dismantled and stolen by unknown people¹³.

- **September 19**, in Poltava, vandals again desecrated the Mourning Mother Monument.

⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/KnguUa/photos/a.586852125026330/595887980789411/>

⁷ <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news60278.html>; <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/3963968-v-poltave-oskvernyly-pamiatnyk-zhertvam-natsyzma>

⁸ <https://youtu.be/WbAJndOgWcM>; <https://www.tenews.org.ua/post/view/1524757421-u-ternopoli-vandali-vkotre-poznuschalisy-nad-pam-yatnikom-zhertvam-golokostu-video>

⁹

https://zik.ua/news/2018/04/27/u_ternopoli_znovu_poznuschalys_nad_pamyatnykom_zhertvam_golokostu_hotily_1313761

¹⁰ <https://rv.npu.gov.ua/news/majnovi-zlochyni/za-faktom-umisnogo-poshkodzhennya-kaplichki-v-ostrozi-rozpochato-dosudove-rozsliduvannya/>

¹¹ <http://territoryterror.org.ua/uk/resources/calendar/details/?newsid=813>

¹² <https://www.032.ua/news/2132275/u-lvovi-huligani-poskodili-vistavkovi-corni-kubi-pamati>

¹³

https://zaxid.net/nevidomi_vkrali_element_vulichnoyi_vistavki_z_ploshhi_pered_lvivskim_universitetom_n146288

1

Unknown vandals poured green paint over it and wrote a call to kill the Jews¹⁴.

- In the early hours of **October 14**, the Holocaust memorial of the Oktyabrsky district of Kamenets-Podilsky (Khmelnitsky region, Ukraine) was desecrated.

Vandals painted swastika and covered the information on the number of victims of the Holocaust in Kamenets-Podilsky on several monuments and information boards around the edges of the memorial¹⁵.

The Holocaust memorial was unveiled in Kamenets-Podilsky in 2015.

According to our data, 87,125 Jewish people were killed during the occupation in the course of WWII in Kamenets-Podilsky. Aside from the Podilsky Jews, Jewish people deported by the Nazis from Hungary, Slovakia and Poland were killed here.

- In the morning of **October 22**, the building of the Israeli *Gastromania* café was burned down in Odessa. At around 6:30 in the morning, unknown people broke the windows of the café, poured a flammable liquid and set the building on fire. A café worker was inside the building at the time but she managed to escape through the window without any damage¹⁶.

Even though the motif behind these actions remains unknown and may not be of antisemitic nature, this possibility cannot be excluded. The café had a large sign “Israeli Cuisine in Hebrew and the “Jewish” nature of the place was obvious.

3. Public manifestations of antisemitism

- **January 9**, deputy chief of the tourist department of the Chernovtsy regional state administration, Sergey Krupko, posted a poem on his Facebook wall, which included the following words: “May the Muscovites howl like wolves / And the kikes squeal like pigs / It is a holiday in my land now / Kolyada is coming to Ukraine”.

The post of the official caused a wide public resonance and was soon deleted by the author. The Chernovtsy regional state administration reprimanded Sergey Krupko¹⁷.

- **February 4**, antisemitic leaflets were distributed at a rally of the Miheil Saakashvili *New Forces* Movement¹⁸.

- **February 2**, the *Chortkovsky Vestnik* newspaper published an article titled “Kikes or Jews?”, signed by the newspaper editor, Maryana Polyanska. The article contained numerous antisemitic insults¹⁹. The material caused a wide resonance and public outrage. In an attempt to justify herself, the author wrote that her publication was caused by Israel’s denial of Holodomor²⁰.

Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada Human Rights Ombudsman declared that the article violates the rights and freedoms of representatives of the Jewish ethnic minority and shows signs of kindling ethnic enmity²¹. The Independent Media Union of Ukraine excluded Maryana

¹⁴ <https://youtu.be/1RUykaJzWzk>

¹⁵ <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news61694.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/georgiylogvinskiy/posts/2063617053951092>

¹⁷ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2091701547718374&id=100006356473220

¹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/611424252388503/permalink/761400820724178/>

¹⁹ <http://jewseurasia.org/page18/news59681.html>

²⁰ <https://gordonua.com/ukr/news/politics/glavred-chortkivskogo-visnika-nikoli-ne-dumala-shcho-stanu-vidomim-ksenofobom-230958.html>

²¹ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/all-news/pr/upovnovazhenij-nagoloshuye-na-nepripustivosti-poshirennyamovi-vorozhnechi-u-zmi/>

Polyanska from its ranks²².

Head of the Chortkov State City Administration Vladimir Shmatko publicly distanced himself from the article²³. This step was caused by erroneous statements that the *Chortkovsky Vestnik* paper belonged to the city authorities (the paper had indeed been financed by the city council until 2016).

Criminal proceedings were launched into the publication under Article 161 part 2 (“kindling of ethnic enmity by an official”)²⁴. By the beginning of 2019, the case had not moved forward.

- **February 9**, Dnipro City Council member of the Opposition Bloc, Sergey Sukhanov, published a series of antisemitic posts on Facebook. They contained calls to the Dnipro residents to unite for illegal actions against the Jews.

Head of the Dnipro City State Administration Boris Filatov and members of the city council demanded that Sukhanov be prosecuted. The antisemite has been excluded from the Opposition Bloc.

Sukhanov published “sort of” an apology, admitting he was “too emotional” and deleted the posts²⁵.

On the same day, proceedings were launched under Article 161 part 2 of the Criminal Code.

February 12, Sukhanov left the Ukrainian government-controlled territory into Russia-occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea²⁶.

When six months later, 19 September, Sukhanov returned to Dnipro to attend a city council session, he was not allowed in by the National Corps radical right-wing party²⁷.

- In **February**, colored antisemitic leaflets of the same type were distributed in Kyiv²⁸ and Konotop²⁹.

- At the **end of March**, workers of the Krivy Rih *ArselorMittal* plant received a “Moshiach” paper edition printed allegedly by their trade union. The paper consisted practically only of mocking materials such as “The whole trade union should study Kabbalah” or “Arseny [Yatsenyuk] is our Messiah”³⁰.

As far as we could judge, the paper was printed to discredit trade union leader Sergey Gapon on the eve of the conference of the workers of the plant. We have been unable to establish whether the management of the plant had been involved in its printing.

- **April 11**, the *Rush Hour* weekly of Kanev, Cherkassy region, printed the following poem in the headlines of page one: “May the Muscovites howl like wolves / And the kikes squeal like pigs / It is a holiday in my land now / Easter is coming to Ukraine”.

Leaders of the Cherkassy regional Jewish community turned to the law-enforcement

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https://humanrights.org.ua/ru/material/mediaprofspilka_anuljiuvala_preskartku_avtorki_antisimitskoji_kolonki_v_c_hortkivskomu_visniku

²³ <https://ukranews.com/news/545973-mehr-chortkova-otkrestylsya-ot-skandalnoy-gazety-kotoraya-opublykovala-antysemytskuyu-statyu>

²⁴ <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/29032538.html>

²⁵ <https://www.obozrevatel.com/society/v-dnepre-voznik-skandal-iz-za-deputata-kotoryij-prizyival-k-evrejskim-pogromam.htm>

²⁶ <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/29037249.html>

²⁷ <https://dp.informator.ua/2018/09/19/v-dnepre-deputata-opobloka-suhanova-kotoryj-obidel-evreev-ne-pustili-v-gorsovet/>

²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=205282976883983>

²⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/ilyaaiz/posts/10215341030982684>

³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/social.ruh/posts/2473049462920468>

bodies. The Security Service of Ukraine sent the paper for examination in order to find out whether the text of the poem could be viewed as kindling ethnic enmity³¹.

- **April 18**, at a rally against raised utilities tariffs outside the Cabinet of Ministers in Kyiv, permanent antisemitic posters were installed with the following text: “Kikes get fatter while people go into debts!” Antisemitism could probably be seen in the context of other posters nearby with the text “Groisman, stop!”³²

- **May 2**, leader of the Right-Wing Sector in Odessa region Tatiana Soikina made antisemitic statements at the *Ukrainian Order March* rally devoted to the anniversary of the 2014 events. In particular, she said, “We believe, we are sure that we will bring true Ukrainian order to Odessa and to Ukraine. Ukraine will belong to Ukrainians rather than to kikes or oligarchs”³³.

The next day, Soikina apologized on Facebook before “everyone this phrase had offended”. According to her, she did not mean the real Jews but those who “belong to oligarchic clans and, by following their own selfish interests, are robbing and ruining Ukraine”³⁴. According to her, this is what the word “kike” in her statement meant.

The official website of the Right-Wing Sector repeated her apology on behalf of their movement³⁵.

- **May 3**, the national police of Odessa launched criminal proceedings into the statements made at the rally under Article 161, part 1, of the Criminal Code.

Minister of the Interior of Ukraine, Arsen Avakov, declared on this occasion that no public antisemitic calls were acceptable in Ukraine³⁶.

- **May 21**, the Primorsky district court of Odessa appointed a linguistic expert examination of Soikina’s statement at the Kyiv Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Expertise³⁷.

By February 2019, court hearings had not yet started.

- **May 14**, it became known that head of the city administration of the town of Skoleh, Lviv region, Vladimir Moskal, had made public antisemitic statements. A video was made public in which Vladimir Moskal claimed that power in Ukraine belongs to “Muscovite kikes” and that following the Bolsheviks’ coming into power, it contained 70-95% Jews who destroyed “nations and peoples”. In the mayor’s opinion, if 50 richest Jews get isolated, there will be no more wars, and that Stalin won WWII only due to the “international kikery”.

In his online video, Vladimir Moskal tells his viewers, “I analyzed a fragment from Pavel Shtepa’s book “Mafia and Ukraine” where he talks about Kabbalah and the Torah – these are the books that young Jews from the age of 10 are taught by... They are clearly instructed to read them, they hear these books read to them, they get it installed, they don’t even need to get it installed in their minds because they are already brought up this way, that he must learn, he must know, because whatever we have in our heads makes us make certain moves, take up arms, point them against the enemy because you know who your enemy is. So from 10 to 18 years of age these kids are clearly instructed, they know who their enemy is and how to destroy him. By the way, these books speak a lot about death to goyim. Goyim are everyone who is not a Jew. Everyone – Christians, Arabs, Buddhists. They are not considered humans by them. After they come into worldwide power, because they are clearly moving towards it, forming the policy of cosmopolitanism and liberalism in order to destroy all nations, to leave a political nation, to mix all of them together, migrations, blacks...”, etc.

³¹ <http://www.isrageo.com/2018/05/27/ipusk257/>

³² <http://hadashot.kiev.ua/ckfinder/userfiles/images/02-2019/antisemitism/Antisemitism%201.jpg>

³³ <https://youtu.be/7jcVdMqWAYU>

³⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/611424252388503/permalink/797234873807439/>

³⁵ <https://pravyysektor.info/novyny-poglyad/vidpovid-pravogo-sektoru-skeptykam-ta-fantazeram>

³⁶ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2018/05/3/7179396/>

³⁷ <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/74261633>; <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/76256700>

The mayor is speaking against the background of the banner of the *Dmitry Dontsov Scientific Ideological Center* public organization, while the t-shirt of Vladimir Moskal carries symbols of the Right-Wing Sector³⁸.

Soon we learned that the national police of the Lviv region has launched criminal proceedings into Vladimir Moskal's statements under Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine³⁹.

• **In May**, a scandal broke out around antisemitic statements that regularly appeared in the Facebook account of staff worker of Ukraine's General Consulate in Hamburg, Vasyl Maruschinets. Numerous samples of his publications were spread around social networks and mass media through blogger Anatoly Sharia⁴⁰.

May 13, news came that the Foreign Affairs Ministry suspended the consul from his duties and initiated an internal check into the facts made public by mass media⁴¹.

May 30, news came that Vasyl Maruschinets was dismissed from the Foreign Affairs Ministry⁴². Results of the internal check were transferred to the law-enforcement bodies.

• **June 25**, Chief Military Prosecutor, Deputy Attorney General of Ukraine, Anatoly Matios made some antisemitic statements in his interview to the online publication *Insider*.

Commenting on an attempt on the life of journalist Arkady Babchenko, the military prosecutor said, "The center for payment and funding of various groups was one of the suspects [speaking of suspect Boris German – editor]. Each war always has its own Parvus who brought money to Lenin for revolution that covered the Slavs with flows of blood for dozens of years. He was also Jewish in origin. In this case with Ukraine, they want to do the same", said Chief Military Prosecutor⁴³.

Matios' statements caused sharp public criticism.

July 26, leaders of a number of Jewish organizations turned to President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine and Prosecutor General Yury Lutsenko with an appeal that Matios ill fits his position.

August 29, General Prosecutor's Office replied to the leaders of Jewish organizations that there are no grounds for an official investigation⁴⁴.

• **At the end of July**, aggressive antisemitic inscriptions appeared on many buildings of the Primorsky district of Odessa. The Jewish community lodged complaints to the Security Service of Ukraine and to the prosecutor's office⁴⁵.

The police examined the question of launching proceedings under Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine⁴⁶.

Around the same time, anti-Caucasian and anti-Roma graffiti also appeared in Odessa⁴⁷.

• **September 9**, the *Informator* online edition spread the news that a group of drunk Chassids on pilgrimage had allegedly raped an underage girl during their celebration of New

³⁸ <https://youtu.be/-B27UWFRsaQ>

³⁹ <https://gordonua.com/ukr/news/society/politsija-vidkrila-kriminalne-provadhennja-cherez-antisemitskih-vislovljuvan-mera-skole-zmi-248090.html>

⁴⁰ <https://zaborona.com/ua-consul-germany-accused-in-antisemithism/>

⁴¹ <https://112.ua/glavnye-novosti/mid-otstranil-konsula-v-gamburge-za-vozmozhnye-antisemitskie-vyskazyvaniya-445538.html>

⁴² <https://112.ua/politika/mid-uvolil-marushhinca-s-dolzhnosti-konsula-v-gamburge-447867.html>

⁴³ <http://www.theinsider.ua/politics/5b30c2a286a28/>

⁴⁴ Letter from the General Prosecutor's Office

⁴⁵ <https://www.unian.net/society/10207035-v-centre-odessy-snova-poyavilis-antisemitskie-graffiti-foto.html>

⁴⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/gunp.odessa/posts/652354248455318>

⁴⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=2027605737263824&set=p.2027605737263824>

Year in Uman⁴⁸. According to *Informator* journalists, they learned of this from police sources. Numerous comments to the news article contained aggressive antisemitic statements.

September 11, the *StopFake* website specializing in verifying and disproving of false news refuted this information⁴⁹. The police of the Cherkassy region described this information as false⁵⁰. There were no rape reports in Uman on September 9–10.

- **October 10**, leader of the Fastov department of the *Svoboda* political party Yury Gorbinko posted an antisemitic caricature on Facebook. The caricature showed a stereotypical Cossack who is using a metal chain to hit three men writhing on the ground before him, one of them wearing a kippah. The signature under the caricature said, “We threshed not grain with beaters but kike tenants and landlords”⁵¹.

Yury Gorbinko has made antisemitic statements on Facebook before. At the time, Ministry of the Interior found no crime in his actions under Article 161 of the Criminal Code⁵².

- **October 29**, in Vinnitsa, a rally took place against raised tariffs, in the course of which antisemitic slogans sounded. In particular, one speaker, Yury Kisel, said, “There is no more Ukraine – there is just Khazar Khaganate established by these Judases. Nothing more! If we want to save the Cossack Ukraine, we must resist this Judeo gang. And here’s proof that they have captured Vinnitsa as their capital of this Khazar Khaganate – a Jewish symbol they installed on the central square instead of our prophet Taras”⁵³.

Another speaker, Mikhail Siranchuk, added to the above: “Please name another city where the central square is occupied by a Jewish temple, that is, a synagogue? Here it is in Vinnitsa! Does a Christian Orthodox temple stand in the central square here in a Christian Orthodox country? No, throughout the whole Vinnitsa we see Jewish symbols. We speak out against scoundrels and parasites who captured the power of Ukraine and who are not Ukrainians... They call us antisemites and claim we fight against the Jews. But I consider myself a fighter against snots who have captured the power in Ukraine: groisshmans, valtzmans, etc!”⁵⁴.

- **September 30**, drunk chief of the Engine Aircraft Certification Division of the State Air Service, Dmitry Ustiushin, decided to express his dissatisfaction with the paid food service on board Boeing 737-8HX of flight PS-373 Kyiv (“Borispol”) – Dubai and yelled that it was “f***ing kikes and mangy Jews” to blame for this discomfort. On top of that, Ustiushin made some other boorish statements and hooligan actions.

Cabin crew filed a report on the incident⁵⁵.

October 23, with assistance of Vladimir Omelyan’s infrastructure, Dmitry Ustiushin was dismissed from his position. The cause behind his dismissal were his antisemitic statements⁵⁶.

- **November 16**, in a residential area of Kyiv leaflets were spread around with antisemitic pictures. The leaflets contained a call to take part in a “people’s vecheh” (popular assembly) in order to “express distrust and impeachment to the president, disband Verkhovna Rada and the government”. The leaflets carried crossed-out symbols: an occult five-point star

⁴⁸ <https://informator.news/v-umani-hasydy-zgvaltuvaly-nepovnoitnyu-divchynku/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.stopfake.org/fejk-hasidy-iznasilovali-nesovershennoletnyuyu-devushku-v-umani/>

⁵⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/271691193316421/photos/a.271697209982486/484930025325869/>

⁵¹ <https://strana.ua/news/165496-jurij-horbinko-snova-vylozhil-antisemitskij-post-v-facebook.html>

⁵² <https://strana.ua/news/83263-mvd-ne-nashlo-priznakov-pravonarusheniya-v-antisemitskih-kartinkah-svobodovca-gorbinko.html>

⁵³ https://youtu.be/K1M_VtW8Jzg

⁵⁴ <https://ukraina.ru/opinion/20181030/1021601194.html>

⁵⁵ <https://from-ua.com/news/463299-gosaviasluzhba-ukraini-popala-v-antisemitskii-skandal.html>

⁵⁶ <https://tsn.ua/ukrayina/z-derzhaviasluzhbi-zvilnili-chinovnika-yakiy-p-yanim-na-bortu-litaka-gorlaniv-antisemitsku-layku-1238016.html>

and a menorah seven-branched candlestick with the word “Chabad” as well as a crossed portrait of President Petro Poroshenko⁵⁷.

The “people’s vecheh” did take place. According to a video, about a dozen people attended it. Its speakers made antisemitic statements⁵⁸.

4. Actions of the law-enforcement bodies

- **March 22**, Security Service of Ukraine informed about the arrest of a group of provocateurs in Chernihiv suspected of a number of acts of vandalism on the grounds of xenophobia.

According to preliminary information of the investigation, members of the group committed a number of acts of vandalism against objects of the Polish and Jewish cultural and religious heritage in the territory of the Sumy and Volyn regions.

Investigators believe that in the early hours of December 26, 2017, they painted and destroyed the crosses of the mass grave of the Polish border guards who died in September 1939 in battles with the Red Army in the village of Melniki Shatsky district of Volyn.

In the early hours of December 30, 2017, the vandals painted an antisemitic inscription on the building of the *Jewish House* in Sumy. During searches in the houses of the suspects, Security Service officers found eight trotyl blocks, five RGD-5 grenades, steel arms, and anti-Ukrainian symbols.

According to information collected, the criminals were acting on orders of the Russian special services with the purpose of kindling ethnic enmity in Ukraine and damaging her image on the international arena.

Criminal proceedings have been launched under Article 110, part 3 (“encroachment on territorial integrity”), Article 111, part 1 (“state treason”) and Article 255, part 1 (“creation of a criminal organization”) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine⁵⁹.

June 15, information came that the court found the participants of the group guilty of the crime under Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine⁶⁰.

- **April 16**, Security Service of Ukraine spread information on the detention of the suspect of writing an antisemitic inscription on the building of the Chernihiv synagogue in late 2017. According to reports, the criminal acted on orders of the Russian special services⁶¹.

- **May 4**, Foreign Ministry of Ukraine spread a commentary in connection with insinuations and accusations of an alleged rise of antisemitism in the country. The commentary states that “Ukraine consistently condemns any demonstration of intolerance or public antisemitic calls, while the law-enforcement bodies investigate and prosecute every culprit of such crimes”⁶².

On the same day, President Petro Poroshenko declared that he resolutely condemns all manifestations of intolerance and xenophobia, quoting specifically the incidents in Odessa and Lviv⁶³.

- **July 1**, commenting on the recent cruel attack on the spontaneous Roma settlement,

⁵⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10156703870852410&set=a.10150373425752410&type=3>

⁵⁸ <https://youtu.be/IQygzT2j5zo>

⁵⁹ <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news60016.html>

⁶⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/mykola.klochko/posts/1758398627578706>

⁶¹ <https://ssu.gov.ua/ua/news/1/category/2/view/4640#.EQc6cGn7.dpbs>

⁶² <http://mfa.gov.ua/ua/press-center/news/64696-komentar-mzs-ukrajini-u-zvjazku-z-insinuacijami-ta-zvinuvachennyami-u-nibito-zrostanti-projaviv-antisemitizmu-na-teritoriji-nashoji-derzhavi>

⁶³ <https://www.facebook.com/петропоросенко/posts/1264975260303530>

Advisor to the Minister of the Interior Anton Geraschenko told TV Channel 112, “The tragedy that took place in Lviv is not a spontaneous situation. It is a well planned action involving the Russian special services. We understand today that two leaders of this youth organization had been recruited online, and a thought was planted into their minds that they had to organize attacks not just on the Roma but they also had plans to attack Jewish organizations in Lviv [...] Their task was to show that a xenophobic organization is acting in Lviv that, on the basis of racist views, demonstrates its hatred to representatives of certain ethnic groups”⁶⁴.

As far as we can judge, Geraschenko’s allegations that the pogrom in Lviv had been organized by the Russian special services as well as that Moscow had ordered attacks on the Jewish organizations of Lviv are ungrounded.

• **August 2**, National Police filed a closing indictment to the Pechersk District Court of Kyiv regarding an organized criminal group suspected of a number of provocations aimed at kindling ethnic enmity⁶⁵. The suspected mastermind of the crime and one of its hands will stand trial. Two other suspects were detained in fall 2017 but absconded from house arrest and have been declared wanted.

Investigators believe the criminals had desecrated a synagogue in Chernivtsi (November 19, 2016); desecrated the tomb of Rabbi Nachman in Uman (December 21, 2016); desecrated the memorial to victims of mass destruction of ethnic Poles and Jews in Guta Penyatska, Brody district of Lviv region (January 9 and March 12, 2017); desecrated the “Polish” part of the memorial to victims of totalitarianism in the *Bykovnianski Mohily* preserve (January 25, 2017); desecrated the Polish cemetery in the village of Podkamen, Brody district of Lviv region (March 12, 2017); threw an explosive near the Lithuanian Embassy in Kyiv (April 24, 2017); blew up a grenade under the office of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (May 20, 2017); blew up an explosive near the office of the National Corps party in the Obolon district of Kyiv in Zoya Gaiday Street (May 22, 2017); threw a grenade at the US Embassy (June 8, 2017); painted antisemitic graffiti on several Jewish objects and tried to set a synagogue in Lviv on fire (June 30, 2017); threw an explosive at the Polish Consulate in Lutsk (July 10, 2017); threw a grenade in Grushevsky Street in Kyiv (August 24, 2017); desecrated and tried to blow up a monument to a combatant in Les Kurbas Street in Kyiv (August 24, 2017); threw a grenade in Uman, wounding pilgrims (September 21, 2017); tried to blow up a memorial sign in Veretsky Pereval erected in honor of the 1100th anniversary of the passing of Hungarian tribes over the Carpathians; and other things.⁶⁶ Members of the group are charged with 27 episodes.

The court heard Dmitry Chernodubravsky and Sergey Bakhchevan – the suspected mastermind and one of his hands – an executor of the provocations. Two other suspects who were detained in fall 2017, Boris Muschenko and Bogdan Shevchenko, absconded from house arrest and have been declared wanted⁶⁷.

As of February 2019, no court hearings had begun.

• **December 6**, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine registered a draft Resolution for Strengthening Fight against Xenophobia and Antisemitism⁶⁸.

The draft was authored by mp Georgy Gogvinsky, leader of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine Boris Lozhkin and president of the Ukrainian Union of Jewish Students Anna Vishnyakova.

An explanatory note to the draft states: “Having taken course to adhere to democratic

⁶⁴ <https://112.ua/glavnye-novosti/krome-romov-specsluzhby-rf-planirovali-napadeniya-na-evreyskie-organizacii-vo-lvove-gerashhenko-451970.html>

⁶⁵ <https://www.npu.gov.ua/news/Informacziya/policziya-napravila-do-sudu-obvinuvalnij-akt-vidnosno-chleniv-ozg-pidozryuvanix-u-vchineni-shesti-teraktiv/>

⁶⁶ <https://strana.ua/articles/special/162933-torpedam-iz-cherkass-podlozhili-svinju.html>

⁶⁷ <http://www.reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/77209543>

⁶⁸ http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?id=&pf3511=65080

principles, Ukraine confirmed once again that fight against antisemitism is a task and a responsibility of both our state and our society”. The Resolution is to emphasize the political will of the state to overcome negative phenomena inadmissible in a democratic country.

The address proposes to condemn all manifestations of xenophobia and antisemitism in Ukraine and to emphasize that the government should take all measures possible to protect the rights of its citizens, to prevent hate crimes and to increase fight against manifestations of xenophobia and antisemitism. Control should be strengthened over explanation to state officials of nuances of crimes on the grounds of xenophobia, antisemitism or hatred because of real or alleged national or ethnic background of the victim.

The Resolution envisages that Verkhovna Rada should coordinate counteraction to and prevention of xenophobia and hate crimes with the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Prosecutor’s General Office of Ukraine, the National Police of Ukraine, and other law-enforcement bodies, judicial bodies and bodies of local self-administration.

An important element of the Resolution is a call to bodies of state power and the law-enforcement bodies to use the operational definition of antisemitism in their work – the one developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. This definition has been accepted as an official definition of antisemitism in a number of European countries. Authors of the Resolution believe that this definition clearly explains what antisemitism is.

The Human Rights and Ethnic Minorities Profile Parliamentary Committee has already examined the text submitted by mp Georgy Logvinsky and decided to recommend that Verkhovna Rada should adopt the draft Resolution as the basis and on the whole⁶⁹.

It must be noted that Verkhovna Rada may examine a special resolution against antisemitism and xenophobia for the first time.

5. Activities of civil society

• **February 13**, a press conference took place in Kharkiv on *Counteraction to Antisemitism and Xenophobia: Recommendations*. Leader of the National Minority Rights Monitoring Group Vyacheslav Lykhachev, director of the *Public Alternative* Foundation Maria Yasenovska and representative of the Congress of Ethnic Communities of Ukraine Ludmila Bondarenko reported on findings of the research into effective mechanisms of counteracting intolerance of the Roma and the Jews. The research proved that the Roma are currently the least protected social group and suffer attacks and discrimination more often than others do.

The project was implemented by the Congress of Ethnic Communities of Ukraine jointly with the *Public Alternative* (Kharkiv) and the Regional *Resonance* Charity Foundation (Lviv) in the course of 2017 with financial support of the EVZ Foundation – “*Memory, Responsibility, Future*” (Germany) simultaneously in five countries – Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Lithuania.

February 26, the findings of the project were presented in Lviv. Due to the threats that participants in the event received the day before, the premises were guarded by the police. Representatives of the Romaphobic LOVTSI group came to attend the press conference but they were not allowed into the building.

February 28, Vyacheslav Lykhachev and executive vice president of the Congress of Ethnic Communities of Ukraine Joseph Zisels presented the findings of the research in Kyiv⁷⁰.

The report on the findings of the research was published in two parts and is available at

⁶⁹ <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news62273.html>

⁷⁰ <http://uacrisis.org/ua/64804-attitude-to-ethnic-minorities-annual-report>

the website of the Congress of Ethnic Communities⁷¹.

• **September 14–15**, an international scientific conference took place in Kyiv and Uman on the subject “Healing the Wounds of the Past: 1768 in the History of Ukraine (Christian Orthodox, Roman-Catholic, Uniate and Jewish Ethno-Denominational Communities under the Terms of the Bar Confederation, Koliyivschyna and Russian Occupation)” and a round table on the “History, Memory and a Search for Consensus in the Past and Present Ukraine”.

Among organizers of the conference were the Ukrainian Catholic University, the Uman *Pavlo Tychyna* State Pedagogical University, the *Kyiv-Mohyla Academy* national university, the Ukrainian province of the Holy Savior of the Basilian Order of St. Josaphat, the Kyiv Archdiocese of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities (Vaad) of Ukraine, and others.

The organizing committee also included representatives of scientific, religious and public organizations, in particular, Joseph Zisels, co-president of the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities (Vaad) of Ukraine.

The purpose of the conference was to create a platform for wide public discourse on the complicated pages of the past in search of a consensus on the historical and cultural memory in Ukraine for reconciliation and inclusive inter-denominational inter-ethnic dialogue, beginning with the critical academic study of the tragic events in Right-Bank Ukraine in 1768.

Following the conference, an inter-denominational commemoration service for the victims of Koliyivschyna – Ukrainians, Poles, and Jews – took place in the yard of the former Basilian monastery in Uman.

Chief Rabbi of the Jewish communities of Progressive Judaism Alexander Dukhovny took part in the commemoration service⁷².

6. Assessments and statements

• **January 27**, just as in previous years, on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Israeli Ministry for Diaspora Affairs published a report on worldwide antisemitism in 2017⁷³

Its section on Ukraine claims that in 2017, compared to 2016, the number of incidents doubled. “2017 was the second consecutive year that Ukraine had the largest number of antisemitic incidents of any other country from the former Soviet Union. We should also note the use of antisemitic propaganda in the public discourse, vandalism against Jewish sites such as cemeteries, Holocaust commemoration sites and communal institutions”⁷⁴.

The report was criticized by experts who insisted that it was inadequate in its assessment of Ukraine⁷⁵.

• **April 25**, American Congressman Ro Khanna published a letter on his website⁷⁶ concerning antisemitism in Ukraine and Poland. 57 members of Congress signed the letter.

⁷¹ Ч.1: http://www.kngu-recommendations.org/data/pdf/evz_report_2017_print_re.pdf; http://www.kngu-recommendations.org/data/pdf/evz_report_2017_part2_print.pdf

⁷² <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news61523.html>

⁷³ <http://antisemitism.mda.gov.il/media/1440/%D7%93%D7%95%D7%97-%D7%94%D7%90%D7%A0%D7%98%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA-2017-%D7%9E%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%93-%D7%94%D7%AA%D7%A4%D7%95%D7%A6%D7%95%D7%AA-2.pdf>

⁷⁴ <http://detaly.co.il/stalo-li-v-ukraine-bolshe-antisemitizma/>

⁷⁵ <http://www.hadashot.kiev.ua/content/politolog-vyacheslav-lihachev-za-poslednie-gody-v-ukraine-nikto-ne-osuzhden-za-antisemitskie>

⁷⁶ <https://khanna.house.gov/sites/khanna.house.gov/files/Combat%20Anti-Semitism%20Letter.pdf>

The letter expresses concern over “state-sponsored Holocaust distortion and denial” and “the honoring of Nazi collaborators”. After briefly mentioning that Poland had passed a law making it a criminal offense to state that Poland as a state or Poles as a nation participated in the Holocaust, the congressmen claim: “Ukraine’s 2015 memory laws went even further by glorifying Nazi collaborators and making it a criminal offense to deny their ‘heroism’”. Further text of the letter shows that its authors believe the Ukrainian Insurgent Army to be “Nazi collaborators”.

Insisting that Ukraine has “state-sponsored Holocaust revisionism”, the authors of the letter follow it with conviction that it “is accompanied by other forms of antisemitism”. Quoting a report of the Israeli Department of Diaspora Affairs, the congressmen insist that “the whitewashing of these Ukrainian “heroes” has coincided with the increasing incidence of antisemitism across Ukraine”.

The letter has caused a sharply negative response from the Vaad of Ukraine⁷⁷, as well as from a number of historians and public figures⁷⁸.

The statement of the Presidium of the Vaad of Ukraine said, “The letter contains a whole number of statements that do not correspond to reality as well as incorrect formulations of phrases”⁷⁹.

- **May 4**, the US Embassy in Ukraine tweeted its disappointment about hate and antisemitic manifestations in Lviv and Odessa⁸⁰.

- **May 14**, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum published a statement expressing “deep concern regarding recent manifestations of intolerance and antisemitism in Ukraine including violence directed against the Romani communities in Kyiv and L’viv”⁸¹.

- **May 17**, a meeting took place in Kyiv of representatives of a number of marginal Jewish groups who, among other things, expressed “deep concern over the rise in antisemitic incidents” and called the “law-enforcement bodies, including the police, the Security Service of Ukraine and prosecutor’s office to take a serious stance for finding out and bringing to justice those who are to blame for antisemitic crimes, vandalism of Holocaust sites, and hate crimes”⁸².

- **December 13**, the ambassador of Israel to Ukraine published a letter stating he was “shocked” by the decision of Lviv Region to name 2019 the year of Bandera who “was directly involved in horrible antisemitic crimes”⁸³.

⁷⁷ <http://vaadua.org/news/zayavlenie-prezidiuma-vaada-ukrainy-v-svyazi-s-pismom-kongressmenov-ssha-o-situacii-s>

⁷⁸ <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/29194569.html>

⁷⁹ <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news60440.html>

⁸⁰ <https://twitter.com/USEmbassyKyiv/status/992341122361036800>

⁸¹ <https://www.ushmm.org/information/press/press-releases/museum-expresses-deep-concern-about-anti-romani-violence-and-antisemitism-i>

⁸² <http://jewish.kiev.ua/news/10574/>

⁸³ <https://www.facebook.com/IsraelinUkraine/photos/a.149962261718224/1938361709544928/>