Name: Jobbik

Type of Organization:
- Political party

Ideologies and Affiliations:
- Christian extremist/radical Christian
- neo-Nazi
- neo-fascist
- ultra-nationalist

Place of Origin:
Hungary

Year of Origin:
2003

Founder(s):
Dávid Kovács, Gergely Pongrátz

Places of Operation:
Originally, mainly eastern Hungary; now, wherever ethnic Hungarians live

Overview

Executive Summary:
Jobbik is a neo-fascist Hungarian political party that combines militant ethno-nationalism with anti-Semitism and anti-Roma racism. A Hungarian court ruled in January 2014 that Jobbik may be referred to as “neo-Nazi” in Hungary.¹ Jobbik describes itself as a “principled, conservative and radically patriotic Christian party” whose “fundamental purpose” is the protection of “Hungarian values and interests.”²

In 2002, a group of nationalist Catholic and Protestant university students established the precursor to Jobbik, the Right-Wing Youth Association (Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség), as an alternative to the nationalist, far-right Hungarian Justice and Life Party (Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja or MIÉP) after MIÉP failed to win any seats in the 2002 election.³ Jobbik was officially founded in October 2003 as a political party.⁴

Jobbik received 14.7 percent of the votes in the 2014 European Parliament elections, giving it three seats.⁵ However, two of the elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)—Béla Kovács and Krisztina Morvai [1]—eventually left Jobbik, resuming their MEP functions as non-attached members.⁶

In April 2014, Jobbik received 1 million votes (20.54 percent, an increase of 3.8 percent from the previous election) in the Hungarian parliamentary elections, making it Hungary’s third largest party in the National Assembly.⁷ Jobbik began moderating its image shortly before these electoral victories.

In 2013, Jobbik leader Gábor Vona [2] announced that his party would begin moving toward the political center and labeled Jobbik as the “people’s party.” In the spring of 2016, Vona removed several of his party’s more radical members.⁸ While many extremists continue to hold positions of power within the organization, Jobbik’s most radical supporters have balked...
at the party’s new platforms. In a sign of weakening support, Jobbik received only 2 percent of votes during 2016 by-elections.

In Hungary’s April 2018 parliamentary elections, Jobbik came in a distant second to the ruling Fidesz party, earning 19 percent of the vote to receive 26 seats. This marked a 1 percent decrease in votes for Jobbik from the 2014 election but an increase of three additional seats. Although Jobbik became the leading opposition party, Vona resigned as chair because his efforts to moderate the party failed to significantly improve electoral results. Jobbik subsequently changed its organizational structure to a shared presidency with President Tamás Sneider and Executive Vice President Márton Gyöngyösi. The new leadership structure is designed to “further enhance the party’s democratic and grassroots character.”

According to Jobbik’s website, the organization’s 2018 foreign policy platform is pro-European Union but opposes NATO’s expansion in Eastern Europe. Jobbik believes that Hungarian diaspora communities face discrimination in their host countries. The party calls for Hungarian communities in neighboring states to receive territorial autonomy if they form a local majority. Jobbik further believes all other Hungarian diaspora communities should receive “cultural autonomy,” which Jobbik believes would allow them to fully express their cultural heritage without persecution. Domestically, Jobbik’s 2018 platform called for stricter policing of “the Gypsy community,” including by “volunteer organizations,” ending all development funds directed at Romani communities, and ending ethnic-based affirmative action.

**Doctrine:**

Jobbik describes itself as a “principled, conservative and radically patriotic Christian party” whose “fundamental purpose” is the protection of “Hungarian values and interests.” Its ideology is neo-fascist, combining militant ethno-nationalism with anti-Semitism and anti-Roma racism. A Hungarian court ruled in January 2014 that Jobbik may be referred to as “neo-Nazi” in Hungary.

The party also advocates a militant revanchism and seeks the “reunification” of the Hungarian nation and a revision of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, the post-World War I peace treaty between the Allied states and the Kingdom of Hungary. The treaty determined the borders of present-day Hungary, granting the new country only 36 percent of the kingdom’s pre-war population. Jobbik’s Greater Hungarian irredentist claims are also reflected in pleas for cross-border ethnic self-determination. For example, the party demands “territorial autonomy” for parts of Romania with large Hungarian populations, and desires to make Transcarpathian Ukraine an independent Hungarian district. Since a quarter of ethnic Hungarians live outside the country, Jobbik dedicates itself to supporting the cause of significant Hungarian minority populations abroad. In effect, Jobbik stirs up ethnic hatred in neighboring countries. In March 2014, in response to a Hungarian nationalist demonstration in the Romanian town of Târgu Mureș/Marosvásárhely, Romanian President Traian Băsescu publicly asked for an entry ban on Jobbik members to Romania.

Jobbik adores Hungarian fascist and Nazi collaborator Miklós Horthy. In 2011, Jobbik stated on its website’s homepage:

> “Just after the tragedy of Trianon Hungary succeeded in a very fast consolidation. The Horthy-era released positive élan for the nation... Under Horthy Hungary had a strong and impressive elite, which pursued the goal of the appeal of the unfair Trianon peace diktat... But since then, we have no national elite any more. During the fifty years of communism we had an internationalist elite and today we have a globalist elite. Neither of them was able and willing to represent national interests. This had the worst consequences to the mindset of the Hungarian People.”

While Hungary’s ruling party, the conservative Fidesz–Hungarian Civic Union (Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség), shares Jobbik’s willingness to defend Horthy, Jobbik’s blatant use of the Nazi "Arrow Cross" symbolizes Jobbik’s pride in Hungary’s Nazi past.

The Hungarian Guard (Magyar Gárda) is a para-military organization founded and registered by then-Jobbik party leader Gábor Vona. In August 2007, the group inaugurated its first 56 members. The group rapidly increased its popularity, and by the end of 2008, claimed to have 2,000 members and several thousand supporters. The group has been criticized for its...
uniform and use of the Arrow Cross symbol. However, the Hungarian Guard denied being anti-Semitic and claims to be a “civic group which wants to preserve Hungarian culture.”

In 2008, Vona claimed in an interview with a German neo-Nazi journal that “organized Jewry” would try to interfere in the internal affairs of Hungary. He cited “statements of the Jews in Hungary and of international Jewry that the [Hungarian] guard stands in their way and that they want to buy whole Hungary.”

According to Jobbik, besides the purported Jewish threat, the Hungarian people’s largest problem is the “Gypsies” because of “their extremely disproportionate crime rate and indolence,” using the term “Gypsycrime” (cigánybűnözés). It appears as if the Hungarian Guard, in part, serves to combat gypsycrime in rural Hungary, for example, by carrying out intimidating patrols in Roma-populated towns. And due to the primacy of anti-Semitism in Jobbik’s ideology, the Jews are also behind purported Hungarian conflicts with the Roman: “A crumbling of a civil war-inflicted country is the easiest prey for the rich Jews. And besides, you can easily adopt emergency legislation in a war situation. This is the reason for the expected civil war between Hungarian and Romani people, to which the Jews incite in the background, their hands rubbing.” In an April 2008 speech, then-Vice-President József Tibor Biber said, “What then is Gypsycrime? Let’s not deceive ourselves: a biological weapon in the hands of Zionism.” Scholars have warned that Jobbik’s violent anti-“Gypsy” rhetoric “constitutes a ticking time bomb in relations between the Roma and non-Roma in Hungary.”

In 2009, Hungary’s Supreme Court banned the Hungarian Guard, which was considered the biggest hate group in the country. The verdict read: “The ethnicity- and race-based opinions expressed at the demonstrations and events organized by the Hungarian Guard against ‘gypsy crime’, have in fact breached the basic principle of the right to human dignity. The Hungarian Guard has [...] turned discrimination into an agenda. In order to express this, the Hungarian Guard has held intimidating demonstrations on several occasions.” Despite this ruling, the Hungarian Guard has been involved in various social activities, such as charity and humanitarian disaster management. This type of activism contributed to the ongoing populist appeal of the movement, which has resulted in the formation of the New Hungarian Guard Movement and the Hungarian National Guard Movement following the proscription of their predecessor.

**Financing:**

Following Jobbik’s success in the European Parliament election of 2014, the party began receiving funds from official EU sources. The party also receives private donations. Some reports claim that Jobbik is also financed by the Russian and Iranian regimes. However, Jobbik officials have repeatedly denied allegations of financial support from Russia.

In December 2017, Hungary’s State Audit Office fined Jobbik for accepting 331.66 million Hungarian forints (1.29 million euros) in illegal campaign non-monetary support. In mid-2017, Jobbik allegedly paid below-market prices to use billboards owned by billionaire Lajos Simicska, Jobbik supporter and adversary of President Victor Orbán. Jobbik denied any wrongdoing and accused the ruling Fidesz party of trying to cripple Jobbik’s campaign efforts for the upcoming 2018 election. Jobbik refused to pay the fine and filed an appeal at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. Meanwhile, the Hungarian State Treasury reduced Jobbik’s share from the government budget.

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https://freedomhouse.org/blog/hungary-jobbik-and-%E2%80%99enemy-within%E2%80%99 [6].


12 Sean Lambert, "Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)," Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/ [15].


20 "Hungary: Jobbik Party [The Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik Magyarorszagert Mozgalom] and the Our Country Movement (Mi Hazánk Mozgalom), including impact on the government and paramilitary groups; relationship with the Roma community, including incidents of violence and discrimination; state response (2016-July 2018)," Refworld, August 1, 2018, https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b9bd0c84.html [22].


23 "Hungary: Jobbik Party [The Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik Magyarorszagert Mozgalom] and the Our Country Movement (Mi Hazánk Mozgalom), including impact on the government and paramilitary groups; relationship with the Roma community, including incidents of violence and discrimination; state response (2016-July 2018)," Refworld, August 1, 2018, https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b9bd0c84.html [22].

24 "Hungary: Jobbik Party [The Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik Magyarorszagert Mozgalom] and the Our Country Movement (Mi Hazánk Mozgalom), including impact on the government and paramilitary groups; relationship with the Roma community, including incidents of violence and discrimination; state response (2016-July 2018)," Refworld, August 1, 2018, https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b9bd0c84.html [22]."


37 Sean Lambert, "Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)," Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/ [15].
Key Leaders

Gábor Vona
Founding President, resigned in 2006

Tamás Sneider
President, elected by Jobbik’s Congress in May 2018

Márton Gyöngyösi
Executive Vice President, Parliamentary Faction Leader

Krisztina Morvai
Member of European Parliament, resigned from party in December 2017

Béla Kovács
Member of European Parliament, Head of Jobbik’s European Parliament delegation

Zoltán Balczó
Vice President of Jobbik, Member of Parliament, Vice Chair of the Legislative Committee

Tibor RNA
Vice President of Jobbik, Member of Parliament, Vice President of the European Affairs Committee

Dávid Kovács

Lórántné Hegedűs
Vice President of Jobbik, Member of Parliament, Vice Chair of the Legislative Committee
History:


- **June 8, 2018:** After losing the presidential elections, László Toroczkai creates a group within the party called We Ourselves (Mi magunk) with a platform that aims to "return the party to the ideology laid out in its founding deed." Jobbik later expels Toroczkai from the party after a disciplinary committee concludes that he violated the party’s bylaws with his platform. Toroczkai subsequently announces the creation of a new political party called Our Homeland Movement (MiHazink Mozgalom). His party focuses on foreign-currency debt, the Treaty of Trianon, and immigration issues. Sources: "Far-Right Toroczkai Announces New "Platform Within Jobbik, Threatens "Party Split,"" Hungary Today, May 22, 2018, https://hungarytoday.hu/toroczkai-announces-new-platform-within-jobbik-threatens-party-split/ [30]; "Hungary: Jobbik Party (The Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik Magyarorszagent Mozgalom) and the Our Country Movement (Mi Hazink Mozgalom), including impact on the government and paramilitary groups; relationship with the Roma community, including incidents of violence and discrimination; state response (2016-July 2018)," Refworld, August 1, 2018, https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b9bd0c84.html [22]; Sean Lambert, "Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)," Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/ [15]; Marton Dunai, "Hardliners in Hungary’s Jobbik demand return to far-right roots," Reuters, May 22, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-election-jobbik/hardliners-in-hungarys-jobbik-demand-return-to-far-right-roots-idUSKCN1N1M1W [31].

- **May 12, 2018:** Moderate Tamás Sneider defeats radical László Toroczkai in Jobbik’s presidential elections. Source: Sean Lambert, "Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)," Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/ [15].


- **2011:** Right-wing radicals march through the Hungarian village of Gyöngyöspta, provoking violence with the village’s Roma population. The group is supported by Jobbik, who says it is merely improving public and security. Source: “A New Wave of Anti-Roma Violence in Hungary,” Szeszel Online, April 27, 2011, https://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/right-wing-militants-on-patrol-a-new-wave-of-anti-roma-violence-in-hungary-a-759349.html [35].
July 2009: The Metropolitan Court of Appeal disbands the Hungarian Guard, which renames itself the New Hungarian Guard. 


Violent history:

- **October 2006**: Jobbik takes measures—including establishing the Hungarian Guard and holding rallies—to curtail “Gypsycrime.” Anti-Roma sentiments become a central element of the party’s political platform after a Roma murdered a Hungarian schoolteacher in front of his two young children in the village of Olaszliszka.\(^{38}\)

- **August 2013**: Three neo-Nazis are sentenced to life imprisonment and another to 13 years in prison for the murder of six Roma in 2008 and 2009. Two of them were members of Jobbik’s Hungarian Guard who sought to provoke Romani people into violent reactions.\(^{39}\)

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\(^{38}\) Sean Lambert, “Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik),” Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, [https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/](https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/) [15].

Designations:

Designations by the U.S. Government:
None.

Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:
None.

Ties to entities designated by the U.S. or foreign governments:
No information available.
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Associations:

Ties to other entities:

Iran

Ahead of Hungary’s 2010 parliamentary elections, Jobbik party leader Gábor Vona asked then-Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to send members of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as election observers to Hungary. Jobbik-dominated east Hungarian city Tiszavasvári entered into a sister-city arrangement with the Iranian city Ardabil. Finally, Jobbik MP Márton Gyöngyösi has taken a number of steps to establish what he calls a “strategic partnership” with Iran, such as chairing the Parliamentary Committee for Hungarian-Iranian Friendship.” According to Gyöngyösi, Iran is “a very peaceful country that has never started a war, in contrast to Israel, which has declared war for any reasons at any neighboring state.”  

Russia

In 2005, Jobbik adopted its pro-Russian policies under then-Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman of the party and current MEP Béla Kovács, who has maintained relations with Russia. Jobbik has expressly supported the Russo-Georgian War of 2008, Russia’s annexation of the Crimea in 2014, and the Russian secessionist movement in the Donbass region of Ukraine. In 2014, Béla Kovács and Márton Gyöngyösi served as foreign observers in the Crimean status referendum and the two Donbass status referenda, declaring all three plebiscites to be valid.

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41 Sean Lambert, "Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik),” Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/ [15].
Jobbik in Mainstream Media

Jobbik appears to have first entered mainstream Hungarian news in May 2005, when Heti Világgazdaság, the third most widely read newspaper in the country, profiled the new “resistance movement” that intended to run in the upcoming 2006 parliamentary election.42 Prior to 2004, however, the only English-language coverage of Jobbik occurred in academic journals focused on “euro-skepticism” and anti-Semitism in Europe.43 In a 2004 review of Hungary’s political system, Freedom House briefly mentioned Jobbik as a new “controversial” right-wing movement.44

Following the 2006 elections, in which Jobbik received 2.4 percent of the vote, more mainstream English-language news sites began writing about the far-right party. A September 2006 English article by the German website Spiegel Online International discussed the “right-extremist” Jobbik party supporters who participated in anti-government protests that month.45 Following Jobbik’s creation of the paramilitary “Hungarian Guard” in August 2007, Reuters, Spiegel Online International, and the New York Times all ran articles describing the party as either “fascist,” “extremist,” or “far-right” while comparing the organization’s dress and conduct to Nazis and Hungarian fascists during World War II.46 Gabor Vona’s 2014 announcement that Jobbik would begin “moderating” was also widely covered in English media, albeit with heavy skepticism. The German Deutsche Welle ran an April 2015 report on Jobbik’s electoral success, citing analysts’ claims that the party’s “moderating” image helped it secure parliamentary seats. Still, Deutsche Welle referred to Jobbik as “far-right” and “extremists.”47 Reuters ran a similar article in the same month, both discussing Jobbik’s claimed moderation while describing the party as “condemned throughout Europe as anti-Semitic and racist.”48 An August 2015 op-ed in the Washington Post took a much harder line against Jobbik. European political expert Cas Muddle claimed “although Jobbik is campaigning with a more moderate image than Fidesz, there is no doubt that Jobbik would implement some fundamentally different policies in key areas,” including leaving the European Union and undermining the rights of Hungarian minorities.49 In January 2017, Israel’s Haaretz published an article on Jobbik’s attempts to reconcile with Hungary’s Jewish population, referring to the party as “anti-Semitic” and “ultra-nationalist.”50 An April 2018 article in Foreign Policy, on the other hand, acknowledged that Jobbik’s rebranding resulted in changes in the party’s rhetoric and policy. Critics, however, remained skeptical of whether the changes were sincere or just a political calculation to avoid obscurity after Fidesz had co-opted many of Jobbik’s major policies and messages.51

Aside from appearing on Jobbik’s official YouTube channel, “jobbikmedia,” Vona’s speeches also appeared on YouTube under the channel “ultraMedia48” until 2014 when the channel “nemzeti1tv” began hosting the videos.52 Both “ultraMedia48” and “nemzeti1tv” share right-wing political videos, with “nemzeti1tv” serving as the official YouTube channel for the right-wing Hungarian news channel Nemzeti 1.53

Media Coverage:

Jobbik in Mainstream Media

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Jobbik


Rhetoric:

*Jobbik MP Tibor Bana, July 2014* [55]

The EU should not maintain relations with "an aggressor state such as Israel." [54]

*Gábor Vona, Jobbik party chairman, during Jobbik protests against a meeting of the World Jewish Congress in Budapest, May 2013* [56]

“The Israeli conquerors, these investors, should look for another country in the world for themselves because Hungary is not for sale.” [55]

*Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, during Jobbik protests against a meeting of the World Jewish Congress in Budapest, May 2013* [57]

Hungary had “become subjugated to Zionism, it has become a target of colonisation while we, the indigenous people, can play only the role of extras.” [56]

*Jobbik MP Márton Gyöngyösi, March 2013* [58]

“As we can see the Zionist organizations pressure openly not only our government but the jurisdiction as well. Seeing the deeds and hearing the statements from the government we suspect that there has not remained a grain of sovereignty in Hungary but the government continuously acts under the pressure of the Zionist lobby powers.” [57]

*Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, November 2012* [59]

“I know how many people with Hungarian ancestry live in Israel, and how many Israeli Jews live in Hungary. I think such a conflict makes it timely to tally up people of Jewish ancestry who live here, especially in the Hungarian Parliament and the Hungarian government, who, indeed, pose a national security risk to Hungary.” [58]

*Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, interview with London’s Jewish Chronicle, February 2, 2012* [60]

Questioning whether 400,000 Jews really were killed or deported from Hungary during the Second World War: "It has become a fantastic business to jiggle around with the numbers.” [59]

*Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, interview with London’s Jewish Chronicle, February 2, 2012* [61]

Asked whether Hungary should take responsibility and apologize for its role in the Holocaust: “Me, should I say sorry for this when 70 years later, I am still reminded on the hour, every hour about it? Let’s get over it, for Christ’s sake. I find this question outrageous.” [60]
Regarding a lawsuit by Holocaust survivors and descendants of Holocaust victims against Hungary's state railway company for its involvement in transporting Jews to Auschwitz:

“This money-searching is playing with fire in Hungary.”


“[Israel was founded by] terrorists... [and runs a] Nazi system, based on racial hatred. Look at Lieberman, he's no different to Goebbels. He is a pure Nazi.”


“I always support the position of a threatened country [Iran]. Iran is in the centre of a Middle East axis that Israel and the US want to subjugate and keep under their control. Iran is an extremely peaceful country and never started a war, unlike Israel which has declared wars on anything and everybody around it.”

Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, interview with London’s Jewish Chronicle, February 2, 2012

“Jews are looking to build outside of Israel. There is a kind of expansionism in their behaviour. If Peres is supporting colonisation, it is a natural reaction for people to feel that Jews are not welcome here.”


Israel’s policies in the West Bank and Gaza, including a “apartheid wall,” mean “the Jews don’t have the right to talk about what happened in the Second World War.”


“It seems to me that Israel determines the U.S. Middle East policy. The world's most influential lobby, AIPAC regularly vacationing substantial proportion of US Congressmen in Israel, so it is not that hard to see the control of the Zionist lobby over US lawmakers and the American President.”

Jobbik MP Zoltan Blaczo, deputy speaker of Hungary’s parliament, 2011

Accusing Israel of manipulating the United States: “[T]he tail should not wag the dog.”

Krisztina Morvai, 2010

“Liberal-Bolshevik Zionists” should start thinking about “where to flee and where to hide.”
Krisztina Morvai, June 2009

Morvai told a journalist who had asked an “idiotic question” comparing Jobbik and the WWII era to “go to Israel and ask what the difference is between Israel and the Nazis.”

Krisztina Morvai, June 2009

“Hungarian land needs to remain in Hungarian hands as we don’t want to become a second Palestine.”

Krisztina Morvai, June 2009

The EU is “a failed system which needs to be fundamentally changed by people with the right heart.”

Krisztina Morvai, June 2009

The EU is a “completely unjust, neo-liberal, bureaucratic and corrupt system.”

Krisztina Morvai, June 2009

“I would be greatly pleased if those who call themselves proud Hungarian Jews played in their leisure with their tiny circumcised dicks, instead of besmirching me. Your kind of people are used to seeing all of our kind of people stand to attention and adjust to you every time you fart. Would you kindly acknowledge this is now over? We have raised our head up high and we shall no longer tolerate your kind of terror. We shall take back our country.”

Krisztina Morvai, February 2009

Called Israel’s operation in Gaza a “mass murder” and “genocide of the Palestinian people.” Said she “rejoiced” upon hearing of Israel suffering casualties in Gaza. “The only way to talk to people like you is by assuming the style of Hamas. I wish all of you lice-infested, dirty murderers will receive Hamas’ ‘kisses.’”

Jobbik police union’s newsletter, 2009

“Given our current situation, anti-Semitism is not just our right, but it is the duty of every Hungarian homeland lover, and we must prepare for armed battle against the Jews.”

14 MTI, “Jobbik Calls on EU to Suspend Agreement with Israel,” Politics.hu, July 24, 2014,
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http://www.politics.hu/20140724/jobbik-calls-on-eu-to-suspend-agreement-with-israel [77].


