

Jobbik

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 Pongrácz

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 antisemitism and anti-Roma racism. A Hungarian court ruled in January 2014 that Jobbik may be referred to as “neo-Nazi” in Hungary.¹ Jobbik previously described itself as a “principled, conservative and radically patriotic Christian party” whose “fundamental purpose” is the protection of “Hungarian values and interests.”² Jobbik believes that Hungarian diaspora communities face discrimination in their host countries. The party has called for Hungarian communities in neighboring states to receive territorial autonomy if they form a local majority. Jobbik has stated all other Hungarian diaspora communities should receive “cultural autonomy,” which would allow them to fully express their cultural heritage without persecution.³ 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.⁴

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.⁵ Jobbik was officially founded in October 2003 as a political party.⁶

Jobbik received 14.7 percent of the votes in the 2014 European Parliament elections, giving it three seats.⁷ However, two of the elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)—Béla Kovács and [Krisztina Morvai](#)—eventually left Jobbik, resuming their MEP functions as non-attached members.⁸

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.⁹ Jobbik began moderating its image shortly before these electoral victories.

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In 2013, Jobbik leader [Gábor Vona](#) 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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ In a sign of weakening support, Jobbik received only 2 percent of votes during 2016 by-elections.¹²

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.¹³ Although Jobbik became the leading opposition party, Vona resigned as chair because his efforts to moderate the party failed to significantly improve electoral results.¹⁴ Jobbik subsequently changed its organizational structure to a shared presidency with President Tamás Sneider and Executive Vice President Márton Gyöngyösi to “further enhance the party’s democratic and grassroots character.”¹⁵ In January 2020, Jobbik elected Péter Jakab as its new president, while Gyöngyösi continued as executive vice president and a member of the European Parliament.¹⁶ After Jobbik won only nine seats in Hungary’s April 2022 elections, Jakab won re-election as Jobbik’s president but resigned that June.¹⁷ Jobbik elected Gyöngyösi as its president in July 2022. He promised to develop Jobbik as a pro-Europe party.¹⁸ Jobbik continues to present itself as a mainstream rightwing party and attempt to shed its far-right and antisemitic image. Nonetheless, Hungarian critics, particularly in the Jewish community, remain suspicious of Jobbik’s intentions.¹⁹

Doctrine:

Jobbik has described itself as a “principled, conservative and radically patriotic Christian party” whose “fundamental purpose” is the protection of “Hungarian values and interests.”²⁰ Its ideology is neo-fascist, combining militant ethno-nationalism with antisemitism and anti-Roma racism. A Hungarian court ruled in January 2014 that Jobbik may be referred to as “neo-Nazi” in Hungary.²¹

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 Mureş/Marosvásárhely, Romanian President Traian Băsescu publicly asked for an entry ban on Jobbik members to Romania.²²

Jobbik has previously glorified 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 impressing 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.”²³

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.²⁴ The group rapidly increased its popularity, and by the end of 2008, claimed to have 2,000 members and several thousand supporters.²⁵ The group has been criticized for its uniform and use of the Arrow Cross symbol. However, the Hungarian Guard denied being antisemitic and claimed to be a “civic group which wants to preserve Hungarian culture.”²⁶

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.”²⁷

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 “Gypsy-crime” (*cigánybűnözés*).²⁸ It appears as if the Hungarian Guard, in part, serves to combat gypsy-crime in rural Hungary,²⁹ for example, by carrying out intimidating patrols in Roma-populated towns.³⁰ And due to

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the primacy of antisemitism in Jobbik's ideology, the Jews are also behind purported Hungarian conflicts with the Romani: "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."³¹ In an April 2008 speech, then-Vice-President József Tibor Bíber said, "What then is Gypsycrime? Let's not deceive ourselves: a biological weapon in the hands of Zionism."³² 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."³³

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."³⁴ 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.³⁵

Since 2016, Jobbik has attempted to soften its antisemitic and racist image. Then-former chairman Gabor Vona sought to shift the party to the mainstream rightwing and shed Jobbik's far-right image.³⁶ In 2013, Jobbik senior leader Csanad Szegedi discovered he was in fact Jewish and his grandmother had survived the Holocaust. He soon after left the party. At the time, Vona said he would have immediately resigned if he had found out he had Jewish lineage.³⁷ But Vona began Jobbik's ideological shift shortly after. In December 2016, Jobbik released Chanukah greetings to Hungary's Jewish population. Vona called the greetings an effort to reconcile Hungary's Jews and Christians. Nonetheless, representatives of Hungary's Jewish community rejected the outreach and called on Jobbik to instead make gestures like these at the political forums where Jobbik has spread its antisemitic rhetoric. A Jobbik chapter in the Budapest suburb of Vecses also rejected the outreach in a Facebook post claiming the organization would not support anybody who made such moves. Vona threatened disciplinary action against any Jobbik members who denounced the holiday greetings.³⁸ The outreach was part of a strategy under Vona to move Jobbik closer to the mainstream and present a viable challenge in the 2018 elections. Vona called Jobbik's ideological rebranding a shift to "modern conservatism" that would reach out "both to former leftist and former rightist voters."³⁹ Vona compared Jobbik's former antisemitic and racist language to a rebellious teenage who matures and realizes the world is not as black and white as once thought.⁴⁰

Jobbik received 20 percent of the vote in Hungary's 2018 parliamentary elections. Despite Vona's overtures, some party members continued to rally around the party's traditional racist ideology. After the elections, former Jobbik vice-president László Toroczkai accused Jobbik of betraying the national cause. He and some other members broke away to form a new far-right party called *Mi Hazánk Mozgalom* ("Our Homeland Movement"). In 2019, *Our Homeland* formed a uniformed "self-defense" group called *National Legion*, which leaders said was modeled on the Hungarian Guard.⁴¹

In January 2020, Jobbik elected Péter Jakab as its new president. Jakab has openly spoken of his family's Jewish roots and how his great-grandfather died in the Auschwitz concentration camp. Under Jakab's leadership, Jobbik claims to no longer be a far-right party. Jakab expelled Gergely Kulcsár, a former Jobbik parliamentarian who spit on a Holocaust memorial in Budapest in 2011 and called the Holocaust a lie. Jakab himself has a history of making antisemitic comments. Since assuming the leadership of Jobbik, he has claimed the group's ideological shift is irreversible.⁴² Some far-right members of Jobbik have since resigned, calling Jakab's policies "morally unacceptable and fatal."⁴³ As he announced his candidacy for Hungary's premiership in January 2021, Jakab called for unity and inclusion in Hungary while deny that Jobbik had become a leftwing party.⁴⁴

Financing:

Following Jobbik's success in the European Parliament election of 2014, the party began receiving funds from official EU sources.⁴⁵ The party also receives private donations. Some reports claim that Jobbik is also financed by the Russian and Iranian regimes.⁴⁶ However, Jobbik officials have repeatedly denied allegations of financial support from Russia.⁴⁷

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.⁴⁸ 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.⁴⁹ Jobbik denied any wrongdoing and accused the ruling Fidesz party of trying to cripple Jobbik's campaign efforts for the upcoming 2018 election.⁵⁰ Jobbik refused to pay the fine and filed an appeal at the European

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Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. Meanwhile, the Hungarian State Treasury reduced Jobbik's share from the government budget.⁵¹

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- 11 "The Far-Right Hungarian Party Jobbik Is Moderating. Is That a Good Thing?," Freedom House, October 4, 2016, <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/far-right-hungarian-party-jobbik-moderating-good-thing>.
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Key Leaders



Márton Gyöngyösi

Party president



Anita Potocskané Kőrösi

Vice chair



Péter Jakab

Former president, former
parliamentary faction leader



Gábor Vona

Former Party President, resigned
April 8, 2018



Dávid Kovács

Founding President, resigned in
2006



Tamás Sneider

Past President



Krisztina Morvai

Member of European Parliament,
Jobbik's 2018 Presidential
Candidate, resigned from party in
April 2018



Béla Kovács

Member of European Parliament,
resigned from party in December
2017



Zoltán Balczó

Member of European Parliament,
Head of Jobbik's European
Parliament delegation



Lórántné Hegedűs

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



Tibor Bana

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

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History:

- **January 25, 2021:** Jakab announces he will be Jobbik’s candidate to be Hungary’s next prime minister in 2022. Jakab calls for unity and inclusion in Hungary, accusing the ruling Fidesz party of being exclusionary and hateful. Jakab denies Jobbik has become a leftwing party. Source: Péter Cseresnyés, “Jobbik Leader Jakab to Run in Pre-selection Vote for Opposition PM Candidate,” Hungary Today, January 28, 2021, <https://hungarytoday.hu/jobbik-jakab-preselection-vote-opposition-pm-candidate/>.
- Jobbik member of parliament and Budapest president János Bencsik quits the party, citing the “morally unacceptable and fatal” policies of Jakab. That December, Bencsik creates a new rightwing political party called Polgári Válasz (“Civic Answer”). Sources: Ábrahám Vass, “Jobbik MP Bencsik Quits Party after Disagreement with New President,” Hungary Today, February 20, 2020, <https://hungarytoday.hu/jobbik-mp-bencsik-quits-party-disagreement-jakab/>; “Former Jobbik MP Bencsik Starts New Political Movement,” Hungary Today, December 4, 2020, <https://hungarytoday.hu/former-jobbik-mp-bencsik-new-party/>.
- Jobbik revises its leadership structure, dividing the president’s responsibilities between two people. Parliamentary faction leader Péter Jakab assumes the presidency of Jobbik, while Gyöngyösi continues to serve as executive vice president and a member of the European Parliament. Source: “Party leadership - Jakab Péter and Márton Gyöngyösi,” Jobbik, February 7, 2020, https://www.jobbik.com/party_leadership_party_chairman.
- **May 26, 2019:** Hungary holds elections for representation to the European Parliament. Jobbik receives 6.44 percent of the vote and receives one seat in the European Parliament. Sources: “2019 European election results – Hungary,” European Parliament, accessed May 7, 2021, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/election-results-2019/en/national-results/hungary/2014-2019/constitutive-session/>; Krisztina Than and Marton Dunai, “Hungary’s Fidesz wins 52% of vote; Orban vows to halt immigration,” Reuters, May 26, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-election-hungary-orban/hungarys-fidesz-wins-52-of-vote-orban-vows-to-halt-immigration-idUSKCN1SW062>; “The Latest: Salvini says populists will control 150 EU seats,” Associated Press, May 26, 2019, <https://apnews.com/article/ap-top-news-elections-france-international-news-marine-le-pen-d09a7028c0f04c60bd604b4bd8056a0f>.
- Márton Gyöngyösi tells Válasz Magazine Jobbik was never antisemitic. Source: *Válasz Magazine*, “Jobbik was never anti-Semitic,” Jobbik, February 21, 2019, https://www.jobbik.com/jobbik_was_never_anti_semitic.
- **November 29, 2018:** Istvan Szavay resigns his positions as Jobbik’s deputy group leader and parliamentary notary, following the release of an audio recording admitting to verbally and physically assaulting a Jewish woman. Szavay remains a Member of Parliament. Source: “Jobbik party member resigns leadership positions after recording surfaces of anti-Semitic act,” Jewish Telegraphic Agency, December 2, 2018, <https://www.jta.org/2018/12/02/news-opinion/jobbik-party-member-resigns-leadership-positions-recording-surfaces-anti-semitic-act>.
- **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 (*Mi Hazánk 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/>; “Hungary: Jobbik Party [The Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik Magyarországot 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>; Sean Lambert, “Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik),” Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, <https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/>; Marton Dunai, “Hardliners in Hungary’s Jobbik demand return to far-right roots,” Reuters, May 22, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-jobbik/hardliners-in-hungarys-jobbik-demand-return-to-far-right-roots-idUSKCN11N1MW>.
- **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/>.
- **April 12, 2018:** Jobbik recalls MEP Krisztina Morvai, accusing her of campaigning against the party. Morvai terminates her affiliation with Jobbik and continues her position as a non-attached member. Sources: “Jobbik Recalls MEP Krisztina Morvai,” Jobbik, accessed December 5, 2018, https://www.jobbik.com/jobbik_recalls_mep_krisztina_morvai/; Sean Lambert, “Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik),” Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, <https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/>.
- **April 8, 2018:** Jobbik receives 19 percent of the vote and 26 seats in Hungary’s parliamentary elections, coming in a distant second to the ruling Fidesz party. This marks a 1 percent decrease in votes from the 2014 election but an addition of three seats. Vona resigns as party chair after Jobbik fails to win the 2018 Hungarian parliamentary elections. Jobbik subsequently changes its organizational structure to a shared presidency. Sources: “Tájékoztató adatok a választáson megjelentek számáról és arányáról,” National Election Office, April 8, 2018, <http://valasztas.hu/dyn/pv18/szavossz/hu/napind.html>; “Hungary Jobbik leader Vona tenders resignation after election defeat,” Reuters, April 8, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-election-jobbik/hungary-jobbik-leader-vona-tenders-resignation-after-election-defeat-idUSKBN1HF0Z4>.
- **December 6, 2017:** Hungary charges Jobbik MEP Béla Kovács with spying on the European Union for Russia following a two-year investigation. He subsequently withdraws from Jobbik and resumes his MEP role as a non-attached member. Source: Marton Dunai, “Hungary charges Jobbik MEP with spying on EU for Russia,” Reuters, December 6, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-jobbik-prosecution/hungary-charges-jobbik-mep-with-spying-on-eu-for-russia-idUSKBN1E01CH>.
- Jobbik leader Gábor Vona expels four of his deputies from the party in an attempt to bring in “fresh faces” and members with experience in local politics. Source: “The Far-Right Hungarian Party Jobbik Is Moderating. Is That a Good Thing?” Freedom House, October 4, 2016, <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/far-right-hungarian-party-jobbik-moderating-good-thing>.

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- Jobbik candidate Lajos Rig wins the parliamentary election in Tapolca, securing Jobbik's first individual constituency seat in Hungary's parliament.
Source: "The Far-Right Hungarian Party Jobbik Is Moderating. Is That a Good Thing?" Freedom House, October 4, 2016, <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/far-right-hungarian-party-jobbik-moderating-good-thing>.
 - Extreme right takes hold in other countries.
Jobbik receives 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. Source: Cas Mudde, "The 2014 Hungarian parliamentary elections, or how to craft a constitutional majority," *Washington Post*, April 14, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/04/14/the-2014-hungarian-parliamentary-elections-or-how-to-craft-a-constitutional-majority/>.
 - Jobbik receives 14.7 percent of the votes in European Parliament elections, giving it three seats.
Source: "Hungary's right-wing dominates EU polls," *EUbusiness*, May 25, 2014, <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/vote-hungary.w8q>.
 - Right-wing populist ruling party Fidesz adopts several Jobbik claims as part of the government's policy.
Source: Keno Versek, "Hungarian Leader Adopts Policies of Far-Right," *Spiegel Online*, January 30, 2013, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/ruling-hungarian-fidesz-party-adopts-policies-of-far-right-jobbik-party-a-880590.html>.
 - Right-wing radicals march through the Hungarian village of Gyöngyöspata, provoking violence with the village's Roma population.
The group is supported by Jobbik, who says it is merely improving public order and security. Source: "A New Wave of Anti-Roma Violence in Hungary," *Spiegel Online*, April 27, 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/right-wing-militants-on-patrol-a-new-wave-of-anti-roma-violence-in-hungary-a-759349.html>.
 - The Metropolitan Court of Appeal disbands the Hungarian Guard, which renames itself the New Hungarian Guard.
Source: Gregg Morgan, "Hungary's Jobbik party hold anti-semitic rally in Budapest after ban attempts fail," *Telegraph* (UK), May 4, 2013, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/hungary/10037377/Hungarys-Jobbik-party-hold-anti-semitic-rally-in-Budapest-after-ban-attempts-fail.html>.
 - Paramilitary organization Hungarian Guard holds its inaugural ceremony in Budapest.
The goals of the organization, founded and registered by party leader Gábor Vona, are to "carry out the real change of regime and to rescue Hungarians." Source: Siobhán Dowling, "Neo-Fascist Magyar Garda Is 'Hungary's Shame'," *Spiegel Online*, August 27, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-world-from-berlin-neo-fascist-magyar-garda-is-hungary-s-shame-a-502184.html>.
 - Jobbik aligns with the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP) for the national elections.
The coalition wins only 2.2 percent of the votes. Jobbik terms the alliance a failure, disbanding the partnership. Source: Zselyke Csaky, "Hungary: Jobbik and the 'Enemy Within'," *Freedom House*, October 9, 2012, <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/hungary-jobbik-and-%E2%80%98enemy-within%E2%80%99>.
 - Jobbik is eventually founded as a political party.
The new party elects Dávid Kovács as its president. Source: Zselyke Csaky, "Hungary: Jobbik and the 'Enemy Within'," *Freedom House*, October 9, 2012, <https://freedomhouse.org/blog/hungary-jobbik-and-%E2%80%98enemy-within%E2%80%99>.
 - A group of nationalist Catholic and Protestant university students establish the Right-Wing Youth Association, a precursor to Jobbik.
Source: András Kovács, "The Post-Communist Extreme Right: The Jobbik Party in Hungary," *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse*, eds. Ruth Wodak, Brigitte Mral, Majid KhosraviNik (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 224, https://books.google.com/books?id=Wrw8gC8vCnUC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_atb#v=onepage&q&f=false.

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Violent history:

- **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.⁵²
- **October 2006:** Jobbik takes measures—including establishing the Hungarian Guard and holding rallies—to curtail “Gypsy-crime.” 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.⁵³

⁵² Anton Maegerle, “Braunes Killerkommando,” Blick nach Rechts, August 7, 2013, <http://www.bnr.de/artikel/hintergrund/braunes-killerkommando>.

⁵³ Sean Lambert, “Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik),” Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, <https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/>.

Jobbik

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.

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."⁵⁴

- **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.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Antje Lehmann, "Vorbild Iran: Rechtsextreme in Ungarn suchen Heil im Nahen Osten," Pester Lloyd, February 7, 2012, http://www.pesterlloyd.net/2012_06/06gyongyosi/06gyongyosi.html.

⁵⁵ Sean Lambert, "Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)," Orange Files, last modified October 29, 2018, <https://theorangefiles.hu/movement-for-a-better-hungary-jobbik/>.

Jobbik

Media Coverage:

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.⁵⁶ Prior to 2004, however, the only English-language coverage of Jobbik occurred in academic journals focused on “euro-skepticism” and antisemitism in Europe.

⁵⁷ In a 2004 review of Hungary’s political system, Freedom House briefly mentioned Jobbik as a new “controversial” right-wing movement.
⁵⁸

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.⁵⁹ 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.⁶⁰ 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.”⁶¹ 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.”⁶² 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.⁶³ 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.”⁶⁴ 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.⁶⁵

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.⁶⁶ 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 1.⁶⁷

⁵⁶ Szabolcs Dudás, “A Jobbik ellenállási mozgalma,” *Heti Világgazdaság* (Budapest), November 9, 2005, <http://hvg.hu/velemen/20051109mohai2>.

⁵⁷ *Euro-scepticism in Hungary*, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, April 12, 2003, https://www.policysolutions.hu/userfiles/elemzes/178/euro-scepticism_in_hungary_summary.pdf; *Journal for the Study of Antisemitism* 3, no. 2 (2012): 361-584, <http://web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/jsa.pdf>.

⁵⁸ “Nations in Transit – Hungary,” Freedom House, 2004, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2004/hungary>.

⁵⁹ László Perczel, “Hungary Prepares for Renewed Unrest,” Spiegel Online International, September 19, 2006, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/riots-in-hungary-hungary-prepares-for-renewed-unrest-a-437991.html>.

⁶⁰ “Neo-Fascist Magyar Garda Is ‘Hungary’s Shame!’,” Spiegel Online International, August 27, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-world-from-berlin-neo-fascist-magyar-garda-is-hungary-s-shame-a-502184.html>; David Chance, “Hundreds join Hungary far-right ‘guard’,” Reuters, October 21, 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hungary-farright/hundreds-join-hungary-far-right-guard-idUSL2141447820071021>; David Chance and Krisztine Than, “Hungary far right forms ‘guard’ amid Jewish protest,” Reuters, August 25, 2007, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-hungary-farright/hungary-far-right-forms-guard-amid-jewish-protest-idUKL2550064920070825>; Nicholas Kulish, “Hungarian Extremists Reflect Discontent, and Add to It,” *New York Times*, October 24, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/24/world/europe/24hungary.html>.

⁶¹ Csaba Tibor Toth, “Hungarian far right pushes moderate image - and wins,” Deutsche Welle, April 13, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/hungarian-far-right-pushes-moderate-image-and-wins/a-18378981>.

⁶² Marton Dunai, “Hungary’s Jobbik drops some hardline policies in push for power,” Reuters, April 14, 2015, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-hungary-farright/hungarys-jobbik-drops-some-hardline-policies-in-push-for-power-idUKKBN0N520V20150414>.

⁶³ Cas Muddle, “Is Hungary run by the radical right?,” *Washington Post*, August 10, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/08/10/is-hungary-run-by-the-radical-right/?utm_term=.23f6eb93c53e.

⁶⁴ “Anti-Semitic Hungarian Party Embraces Israel and Jews,” *Haaretz* (Tel Aviv), January 12, 2017, <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/anti-semitic-hungarian-party-embraces-israel-and-jews-1.5485311>.

⁶⁵ Emily Schultheis, “How Hungary’s Far-Right Extremists Became Warm and Fuzzy,” *Foreign Policy*, April 6, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/04/06/how-hungarys-far-right-extremists-became-warm-and-fuzzy/>.

⁶⁶ “nemzeti1tv,” YouTube page, accessed January 24, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/user/nemzeti1tv/videos>; “ultramedia48,” YouTube page, accessed January 24, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/user/ultramedia48/videos>.

⁶⁷ “Video,” Jobbik, accessed February 28, 2018, <https://www.jobbik.com/video>.

Jobbik

Rhetoric:

Jobbik MP Tibor Bana, July 2014

The EU should not maintain relations with “an aggressor state such as Israel.”⁶⁸

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

“The Israeli conquerors, these investors, should look for another country in the world for themselves because Hungary is not for sale.”⁶⁹

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

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.”⁷⁰

Jobbik MP Márton Gyöngyösi, March 2013

“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.”⁷¹

Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik MP, November 2012

“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.”⁷²

⁶⁸ MTI, “Jobbik Calls on EU to Suspend Agreement with Israel,” Politics.hu, July 24, 2014, <http://www.politics.hu/20140724/jobbik-calls-on-eu-to-suspend-agreement-with-israel>.

⁶⁹ “Anti-Jewish Rally in Hungary Capital,” BBC News, May 4, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-22413301>.

⁷⁰ “Anti-Jewish Rally in Hungary Capital,” BBC News, May 4, 2013, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-22413301>.

⁷¹ “Hungarian Politician: Government Controlled by Zionists,” *Algemeiner*, March 12, 2013, <http://www.algemeiner.com/2013/03/12/hungarian-politician-government-controlled-by-zionists>.

⁷² Marton Dunai, “Anger as Hungary Far-Right Leader Demands Lists of Jews,” *Reuters*, November 27, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/27/us-hungary-antisemitism-idUSBRE8AQ0L920121127>.