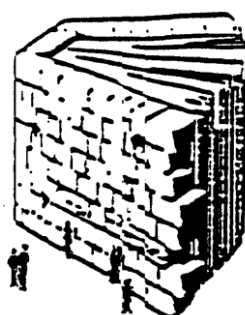


**Congress of National Communities of Ukraine**

**National Minority Rights Monitoring Group**



**Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities  
(VAAD) of Ukraine**



**Antisemitism in Ukraine – 2020**

**Monitoring report**

*By Vyacheslav Likhachev*

**Kyiv  
2021**

## **1. Attacks motivated by antisemitism**

### **• Four cases of antisemitic violence were recorded in 2020, according to monitoring data.**

Since the beginning of the systematic monitoring, in the previous period, as a result of violent hate incidents:

- the number of victims: 8 people in 2004, 13 people in 2005, 8 in 2006, 8 in 2007, 5 in 2008, 1 person in 2009, 1 person in 2010, no antisemitic incidents were recorded in 2011, 4 people and three incidents in 2012, 4 in 2013, 4 in 2014, 1 in 2015, and also 1 person in 2016. No one was affected in 2017-2019.

As evidenced by the factual data collected around 20 years, it was the spike of antisemitic crimes in 2005. Since 2006, there has been a notable decline, and the number of such incidents has remained steadily low since 2009. In addition to the quantitative characteristics, there was the wave of the most violent street attacks with a real threat to the lives of the victims, in 2005-2007.

According to recent years' statistics, after a certain increase in the number of attacks in 2012-2014, the indicators decreased to the minimum in 2015-2016, and no antisemitic violence in Ukraine was recorded in 2017-2019.

In this context, there's a focus of attention on four cases in 2020. How to explain such a relatively sizeable increase, even if it's insignificant in absolute numbers?

From the description of the cases (see below) it can be mentioned that 2 cases of antisemitic violence took place in Uman (Cherkasy region) in September and October. This year, a public campaign was launched on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year religious holiday, when the traditional Hasidic pilgrimage to Uman takes place. This campaign linked the arrival of pilgrims to the city and the spread of COVID-19 (see more details in the respective section of the report). The campaign became known due to the city officials mainly, who were trying to gain popularity in the run-up to the local elections. In other words, the pandemic and its social consequences form a specific context for 50% of antisemitic violence, that happened as a result of a local propaganda campaign in 2020. For the other cases, it is difficult to say for sure, but there are some assumptions why it happened last year.

One case (Mariupol, Donetsk region) related to the actions of an openly unstable person, who probably had a mental disorder. Nothing is known about the motives of the person and the context of the event. This may be speculation, but probably the impact of a pandemic can be important for this case, too. There is ample evidence of the devastating effects of the pandemic and quarantine restrictions on the unbalanced mental state.

In another case (Vinnytsia), the attacker linked his negative attitude toward Jews to the ethnic origin of President Volodymyr Zelensky. Probably, it was not the main reason for his actions. But according to the available information, it can be concluded that the ethnicity of the head of state has become one of the triggers of this aggression towards the Jewish community members. It will be recalled that there were also hints at the president's origins in inscriptions of several acts of vandalism in 2019-2020. Given this, it can be cautiously hypothesized that the associations of the head of state and his activities with Jewry may become a significant factor to affect the level of antisemitism in the country. This is especially likely if the level of disenchantment with the president's actions will increase for a large part of the population.

## Timeline

- On **February 24**, an inebriated 43-year-old man in paramilitary clothing burst into a synagogue at Hrushevskoho street, 8, in Vinnytsia. For several minutes he wandered around the premises, swearing and expressing antisemitic ideas (among other things, the hooligan linked his claims to Jews to the ethnic origin of the President of Ukraine). He manipulated with office equipment, spitted on a portrait of Chafetz Chaim (Jewish religious authority of the early twentieth century), and crumpled it. The head of the community, 59-year-old Igor Braverman, called the police and tried to tame the hellbender, but he became more aggressive. The assailant knocked the skullcap off the Head's head and attacked him, twisting his arms and grabbing him by the throat<sup>1</sup>.

The victim was hospitalized due to high blood pressure. No injuries were found by doctors, so he decided not to report to the police.

The attacker was detained. His actions were pre-qualified under Part 1 of Art. 296 (hooliganism) and Part 2 of Art. 161 (violation of equality of citizens depending on their race, nationality, religious beliefs, disability, and other grounds) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine<sup>2</sup>.

According to the victim, the attacker had acted aggressively towards the synagogue building and the visitors earlier. He was detained by the police, but it didn't bring any proceedings since he apologized.

The victim informed about the lack of investigative measures in the case. In early 2021, it became known that the case was closed in the summer of 2020<sup>3</sup>.

- On **July 28**, an armed attack on the synagogue (Kharlampiivska str., 6) took place in Mariupol.

Around 11 AM, after the morning prayer, a suspicious young man tried to enter the building. He was stopped by the security guard of the synagogue, Richard Golomazov, who tried to bundle him off. Then the visitor took an ax out of the bag and attacked the guard, who managed to disarm the attacker and push him out of the building but was wounded in his arm and head with an ax<sup>4</sup>.

The fight was partially recorded on a video surveillance camera on the porch of the building<sup>5</sup>. The young man first fled the scene without his belongings, then he returned, picked up his bag, and threw two plastic bags filled with sand, feces, and trash towards the synagogue. After that, the perpetrator walked away.

The security guard was hospitalized, a chopped wound on his arm was stitched.

A field investigation was conducted, the police started to search for the perpetrator<sup>6</sup>. Preliminarily, the crime was classified under Art. 15 and Art. 115,

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the victim, February 26, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> <https://vn.npu.gov.ua/news/xuliganstvo/policzejski-vinnichchini-rozpochali-kriminalni-provazhennya-za-faktami-rozpalyuvannya-religijnoji-vorozhnechi-ta-xuliganskix-dij-u-primishhenni-sinagogi/>

<sup>3</sup> Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p.24.

<sup>4</sup> <https://jewishnews.com.ua/society/ya-prosto-vypolnil-svoyu-rabotu-ohrannik-zacshitivshiy-sinagogu-mariupolya>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/791036377608810/videos/1602823546551210/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://jewishnews.com.ua/society/neizvestnyij-vorvalsya-v-sinagogu-mariupolya-s-toporom>

Part 2, item 7 of the Criminal Code (assassination attempt motivated by hooliganism)<sup>7</sup>.

It has been found that the morning before the attack, the perpetrator stabbed a utility services employee in the neck due to personal hostility.

According to information released on **July 30**, Yuliy-Halar'irohaylal'irozr Ilyich Caesar, born in 1991, was suspected of committing the crime<sup>8</sup>. A wanted notice was issued<sup>9</sup>.

On **August 12**, it became known about the detention of the suspect<sup>10</sup>. It turned out that in August, he illegally crossed the Russian-Ukrainian border and tried to hide, using documents for another name he had before (he changed his name and surname in 2015 and 2018). He was detained by Russian law enforcement officers. As of the beginning of September 2020, he was held in a pre-trial detention center in Rostov-on-Don.

- On **September 1**, Moshe Tanner, a 34-year-old Orthodox Jew, a citizen of Israel living in Ukraine, was attacked in Uman, Cherkasy region at around 2 PM. After grocery shopping, he was met by six guys at the ATB supermarket. According to the victim, they stated: "we do not want all you to go to our shops, clear off"<sup>11</sup>. On the street, the Jew was hit in the face by one of the attackers, his nose was broken<sup>12</sup>.

The identities of the attackers were promptly established. On **September 2**, they were informed of the suspicion of committing a criminal offense under Part 2 of Art. 296 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (hooliganism) by the investigators. Besides, the probable initiator of the attack was also handed over a suspicion under Part 3 of Art. 27 of the Criminal Code (organization of a crime)<sup>13</sup>. As of early 2021, the trial has not been completed yet.

To understand the context, it should be noted that concerns were widespread that year on the eve of the annual September pilgrimage of Hasidim to the tomb of Rabbi Nachman in Uman, that a mass pilgrimage could lead to an outbreak of COVID-19. In some cases, there were refusals to provide service to those who looked like foreign pilgrims<sup>14</sup>, attempts to ban those who came to the hotel at the synagogue from entering the building<sup>15</sup>, as well as other incidents that confirmed a high level of intolerance towards visitors. It should be added that the city authorities promoted these sentiments due to prospects of local elections, probably. It is difficult to say to what extent all these cases are in the antisemitic cluster. It is rather a specific context of hysteria caused by fear of the disease. However, it was the orthodox Jews who were stigmatized on a clear (ethno) religious basis. These incidents of discrimination and incitement to hatred were classified under Art. 161 of the Criminal Code.

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[https://mvs.gov.ua/ua/news/32927\\_Policiya\\_Mariupolya\\_rozshuku\\_zlovnisnika\\_yakiy\\_nanis\\_tilesni\\_ushkodz\\_hennya\\_ohoronyu\\_sinagogi.htm](https://mvs.gov.ua/ua/news/32927_Policiya_Mariupolya_rozshuku_zlovnisnika_yakiy_nanis_tilesni_ushkodz_hennya_ohoronyu_sinagogi.htm)

8 [https://glavcom.ua/img/article/6986/21\\_main.jpg](https://glavcom.ua/img/article/6986/21_main.jpg)

9 <http://police.dn.ua/news/view/uvaga-politsiya-rozshukue-pidozryuvanogo-u-zamahu-na-vbivstvo>

10 <https://jewishnews.com.ua/society/pojman-podozrevaemiy-v-napadenii-na-sinagogu-mariupolya>

11 <https://zaborona.com/ru/hasidy-v-umani/>

12 See the video of the attack: <https://www.facebook.com/cherkasypolice/posts/945860499232817>.

13 <https://www.facebook.com/cherkasypolice/posts/946680915817442>

14 <https://zmina.info/news/khasydy-ne-obsluhovuyut%CA%B9sya-mahazyn-v-umani-rozmistyv-dyskryminatsiyne-oholoshennya>

15 <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2020/08/28/7264457/>

- On October 18, an Israeli citizen, born in 2003, who was dressed as an orthodox, was attacked in Uman at around 2 AM. He was met by three young men near Pushkin street, 46, and was punched in the face. The victim's right cheekbone was injured<sup>16</sup>. The attacker and his comrades ran from the scene<sup>17</sup>.

The offense was qualified under Part 1 of Article 296 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (hooliganism).

On **October 21**, it became known that the attacker had been identified<sup>18</sup>.

On **November 6**, the court sentenced the attacker after a simplified procedure. A fine of UAH 17000 was issued to him<sup>19</sup>.

### **Reports of antisemitic attacks that have not been confirmed**

- On **January 11**, it was reported by the Yeshiva World News media portal that a pogrom had taken place in Uman, where the Hasidic pilgrims had lived. "Ukrainian bandits attacked Jews, four people were hospitalized" claimed the headline. The report described a group of thirty Ukrainian bandits beating Jews on the streets with knives and truncheons - according to some versions it was Pushkin Street, located not far from Rabbi Nachman's tomb. It was stated that police officers did not intervene. A dispute between a local Ukrainian and a Jew was mentioned as the reason for the mass beating<sup>20</sup>. The news was quickly spread via international media channels.

The news provoked controversy in the information space. The reports to contradict the news started to appear<sup>21</sup>. Special services officers went to the Cherkasy region to find out the circumstances of the conflict. As early as **January 12**, the official website of the Cherkasy region National Police reported that information about the hospitalization of four people as a result of the mass attack, as well as about the appeals to local police departments, proved unfounded<sup>22</sup>. According to some unofficial sources, some quarrel could take place, a conflict between a group of pilgrims and the guards of the synagogue near the tomb of Rabbi Nachman. There was no antisemitic basis in it. Moreover, according to some unofficial reports, it was the pilgrims who started the fight<sup>23</sup>. Police arrived at the scene, but no formal complaints were filed by the parties to the conflict<sup>24</sup>.

The Uman City Council informed<sup>25</sup> that a meeting of the mayor, representatives of the Jewish community, and human rights bodies was organized to discuss the conflict. In particular, it was decided to involve the State Protection Service to ensure order at the grave of Rabbi Nachman.

A statement to emphasize the common nature of the conflict was made by the local community<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://t.me/UJCUkraine/53>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/jewishnewsua/videos/728418144555182/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/cherkasypolice/posts/985109001974633>

<sup>19</sup> <https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/92693654>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.theyeshivaworld.com/news/featured/1821774/pogrom-in-uman-over-shabbos-ukrainian-thugs-attack-jews-4-evacuated-to-hospitals.html>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/30375093.html>

<sup>22</sup> <https://ch.npu.gov.ua/news/oficijno/v-umani-praczyuje-grupa-z-czentralnogo-aparatu-naczpolicziji/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/UmanUA/permalink/1508685179278635/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/UmanUA/permalink/1508685179278635/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/vykonkomumr/photos/a.552407964918910/1424101481082883/?type=1&theater>

<sup>26</sup> <https://youtu.be/I3HH89vs4Qw>

A retraction was published by some media outlets that disseminated information about the pogrom<sup>27</sup>. The retraction of the news has led some media to believe that the Ukrainian authorities are hiding information to “diminish the statistics of antisemitism”<sup>28</sup>.

- On **February 15**, it was reported by the Israel newspaper “Jerusalem Post” that an antisemitic incident took place in Chernivtsi in January<sup>29</sup>.

An article entitled “B'nai B'rith Condemns “Ongoing Attacks” on Jews in Ukraine” stated that the B'nai B'rith office was attacked in Chernivtsi, and its members were injured. It was also stated that a letter to V. Zelensky was sent by the leadership of the lodge, who asked him to pay attention to this attack and recognize it as a demonstration of hatred.

The incident was scarcely covered by the Ukrainian-language media. Moreover, there is reason to believe that there were no antisemitic connotations<sup>30</sup> in that attack. This is not the first case when Israeli news channels publish unverified provocative information about antisemitism in Ukraine.

B'nai B'rith is an international Jewish organization founded in 1843 in the USA that provides social support to Jewish communities and strengthens ties between Israel and the Jewish diaspora. The organization consists of so-called lodges, which spread the international representation of B'nai B'rith. One of such lodges is in Chernivtsi.

## **2. Vandalism motivated by antisemitism**

Physical damage to Jewish infrastructure buildings (namely, synagogues and community centers) or gravestones in Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust memorials, for example, breaking glass and arsons, as well as graffiti (on the above-mentioned objects) of antisemitic and/or neo-Nazi character that indicate ideological motivation, were classified as vandalism.

### **In 2020, 10 cases of antisemitic vandalism were reported.**

Over the last 15 years, the following dynamics have been recorded, according to our monitoring: in 2004 - 15 cases of antisemitic vandalism, in 2005 - 13, in 2006 - 21, in 2007 - 20, in 2008 - 13, in 2009 - 19, in 2010 - 16, in 2011, 2012 and 2013 - 9 cases, in 2014 - 23, in 2015 - 22, in 2016 - 19, in 2017 - 24 cases, in 2018 - 12 cases and in 2019 - 14 cases.

### **Timeline**

- On **January 18**, in Kryvyi Rih, a plate on a Holocaust memorial located in front of the synagogue building (Pushkinskaya Street, 46) was painted with red paint by a vandal. The incident was recorded by a surveillance camera.

It should be noted that the offender walked down the street and put inscriptions (for example, “Putin khuylo” (“Putin is tosser”), etc.) on the fences and

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/Four-hospitalized-after-antisemitic-mob-rampages-through-Uman-613918>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.7kanal.co.il/News/News.aspx/215899>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Bnai-Brith-condemns-ongoing-attacks-against-Jews-in-Ukraine-617648>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/611424252388503/permalink/1277490272448561/>

walls, too<sup>31</sup>. Therefore, there is a possibility that there was no motive for hatred in his actions. However, he could not help knowing that it was the Holocaust Memorial. According to the investigation, he came to the synagogue building “purposefully”, “understanding and realizing his actions, was categorically disrespectful in a public place to the memory of the Jewish population of Kryvyi Rih who died due to Nazi persecution, and desecrated the memorial deliberately”.

On **January 21**, a suspect was detained<sup>32</sup>. He was accused of violating Part 1 of Art. 194 (intentional destruction or damage to property) of the Criminal Code. Later, the crime was reclassified as a violation of Part 2 of Art. 297 (desecration of a memorial monument of the victims of Nazi persecution)<sup>33</sup>.

During a meeting with the National Police department for the Dnipropetrovsk region, the Jewish community of Dnipro city insisted that the xenophobic motives should be recognized by the investigation<sup>34</sup>.

On **May 26**, a judgment was delivered by the Central District Court of Kryvyi Rih (Dnipropetrovsk Oblast). The offender was sentenced to three years of suspended imprisonment<sup>35</sup>.

- On **January 27**, a stand about the Jewish history of the city was damaged in Ostroh (Rivne region). The stand is located near the oldest building of the city (Nezalezhnosti Avenue, 2). In the early XVII century, Rabbi Shmuel Eliezer Eidels, a prominent religious authority, also known as Maharsha, lived in this house.

The stand briefly describes the history of the Ostroh Jewish community. A swastika and an SS sign were painted with black marker on the stand, and the inscriptions in Hebrew and Yiddish were painted out<sup>36</sup>.

The date for this antisemitic action was not occasional, probably: the international Holocaust Remembrance Day is commemorated on January 27.

The offense was reported to law enforcement by a representative of the Jewish community. The actions of the offender were qualified under Art. 296 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (hooliganism). In February, the criminal case was closed for lack of corpus delicti<sup>37</sup>.

- On **February 15**, the Holocaust memorial was damaged in Lysyanka, Cherkasy region. A sign plate with an inscription and a prayer in Hebrew was broken by an unknown offender. Hatred as a motive can't be directly indicated by the nature of the damage, but the sign plate on the other side of the monument with a similar inscription in Ukrainian and the Ukrainian coat of arms was not damaged<sup>38</sup>.

The incident was reported to the police. The possibility of pre-qualification of an offense under Art. 194 of the Criminal Code (intentional property damage) was

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<sup>31</sup> <https://youtu.be/5ggI3nLVFgk>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.npu.gov.ua/news/rozshuk/policzejski-zatrimali-cholovika-yakij-u-krivomu-rozi-poshkodiv-pamyatnik-zhertvam-golokostu-dopovнено/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://dp.npu.gov.ua/news/podiji/spravu-pro-poshkodzhennya-napisu-na-pam-yatniku-zhertvam-golokostu-v-m-krivij-rig-perekvalifikovanogo-yak-naruga-nad-mogiloyu-volodimir-ogurchenko>

<sup>34</sup> <https://djic.com.ua/news/view/new/?id=22629&lang=ru>

<sup>35</sup> <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/89446974>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/garshinov/posts/2956753004368770>

<sup>37</sup> Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p. 22.

<sup>38</sup> <http://vechirka.net/vandali-znischili-evreyskiy-pamyatnik-u-lisyanci>

considered. Since it became known that the plaque was not the local community's property, it was decided by the police to stop considering the report of the offense<sup>39</sup>.

The monument was installed in 2016 at the memorial site of the 1941 mass killings of nearly 400 local Jewish inhabitants.

- On **March 7**, the old local Jewish cemetery was vandalized in Rivne. Large green letters "ZE" were painted on the memorial plaque at the entrance of the cemetery. The memorial was damaged. A crack was found on the plaque with a list of prominent figures buried in the cemetery that was probably caused by the heavy object<sup>40</sup>.

The offense was pre-qualified under Part 2 of Article 297 of the Criminal Code (abuse of the mass grave)<sup>41</sup>.

- On the night of **April 20**, an arson attempt at the synagogue located on Teatralna street, 27, took place in Kherson. The synagogue belongs to the "Chabad" Jewish religious community of Kherson.

At 2.46 AM, two bottles of flammable liquid, which was later found to be a mixture of car oil, gasoline, and lighter fluid, were thrown by two offenders into the facade of the synagogue. The offenders then disappeared. The fire quickly went out, but the facade was damaged. According to the act, material damage to the extent of UAH 30000 was caused by the fire<sup>42</sup>.

There was at least one witness who reported to the police. The crime was recorded by surveillance cameras<sup>43</sup>. Criminal proceedings under Article 15 and Part 2 of Article 194 (attempt of intentional destruction or damage of property) of the Criminal Code were initiated<sup>44</sup>.

According to the investigation, in the evening of **April 19**, the offenders met near the road bridge over the Koshova river to the Korabel neighborhood and went to the synagogue around 12 AM via unlight backstreets. They hid backpacks with spare clothes there. After an unsuccessful attempt, the suspects returned to the backstreet and changed their clothes. One of them threw his clothes away and the other put his clothes in his backpack. Then the men went through the small house suburbs to Zhytloselyshche. Near the Shumenskyi microdistrict they went separate ways, one to Tavriysky and the other to the Koshova river, where he was recorded by surveillance cameras on Doropheeva street. In total, their route was almost 10 kilometers long.

On **May 9**, two young men were identified by the police and the SBU officers while patrolling in "Slava" city park. One of those persons looked similar to a suspect, he had the same clothes, body build, and height. An inspection revealed that an 18-year-old resident of the Korabel neighborhood was involved in the crime. In the evening he was detained in Pivnichny microdistrict. The investigation found that a 19-year-old man created a special group in one of the messengers, and met a younger guy there. Later they decided to throw lighted bottles of gasoline into the

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<sup>39</sup> Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p. 23.

<sup>40</sup> <https://jewishnews.com.ua/society/v-rovno-oskvernili-evrejskij-pamyatnik-upomyanuv-zelenskogo>

<sup>41</sup> Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p. 27.

<sup>42</sup> <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/89342401>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/100008743323406/videos/2331941207107301/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://hr.npu.gov.ua/news/novini/za-faktom-sprobi-pidpalu-budivli-iudejskoji-religijnoji-obshhiny-policziya-vidkrila-kriminalne-provazhennya/>



synagogue on April 20<sup>45</sup>. According to the SBU, “criminals who shared the Nazi ideology decided to “celebrate” the anniversary of the leader of Nazism together with their allies”<sup>46</sup>. According to the investigation, the arson was committed “for hooligan motives based on national and religious intolerance”. However, the motive of hatred was not taken into account in classifying the crime.

One of the suspects is a third-year cadet of the Kherson Maritime College of Fishing Industry, the other is an employee of the “Mongoose” Kherson Regional Charitable Foundation<sup>47</sup>.

On **May 12**, the suspicion pre-qualified under Art. 178 of the Criminal Code (damage to religious buildings or places of worship) was presented.

On **May 13**, the suspects were placed under night house arrest by the court (the investigation asked for custodial detention)<sup>48</sup>. On **July 7**, the term of pre-trial restriction was extended<sup>49</sup>.

On **June 27**, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky visited the renovated synagogue during his working visit to Kherson. He awarded Kherson Police Chief Oleksandr Prokudin and the head of the regional department of the Security Service of Ukraine Serhiy Kryvoruchko with grateful letters for skillful investigation. “These actions are very important to confirm the low level of antisemitism in Ukraine. We are taking prevention steps for such attempts”, said Volodymyr Zelensky<sup>50</sup>.

On **August 4**, the indictment was referred to court<sup>51</sup>. As of early 2021, the trial has not been finished yet.

- In **May**, the grave of a prominent Jewish cultural figure of the XVII century was vandalized with an antisemitic inscription in one of the cities of Central Ukraine<sup>52</sup>.

- On **October 27**, it became known about an act of vandalism in Melitopol (Zaporizhzhya region). A pack of kefir was thrown to the Holocaust memorial “Crying for the Unborn Children” by an unknown offender<sup>53</sup>.

The memorial was opened on August 12, 2021<sup>54</sup>.

- On **December 4**, a 47-year-old offender smashed a window of the synagogue with a bottle in Kolomyia (Ivano-Frankivsk region). On **December 5**, the offender was identified via a surveillance camera. He stated that he did it due to alcohol intoxication.

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/khersonpolice.official/posts/2660558724200291>

<sup>46</sup> <https://ssu.gov.ua/novyny/7585>

<sup>47</sup> <http://jewseurasia.org/page18/news67106.html>

<sup>48</sup> <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/89342401>

<sup>49</sup> <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/90334831>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/prezident-vidvidav-u-hersoni-sinagogu-habad-yaku-u-kvitni-na-61917>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/pho.gov.ua/photos/a.476679685861432/1340034176192641>

<sup>52</sup> The information is generalized at the request of the source. The author of the report has information on the date and place of events and photos of the desecrated tombstone.

<sup>53</sup> <https://ria->

[m.tv/news/214892/v\\_melitopole\\_v\\_vulgarnoy\\_forme\\_oskvernili\\_pamyatnik\\_jertvam\\_holokosta\\_\(foto\).html](m.tv/news/214892/v_melitopole_v_vulgarnoy_forme_oskvernili_pamyatnik_jertvam_holokosta_(foto).html)

<sup>54</sup> <http://iz.com.ua/zaporoje/v-melitopole-o-zhertvah-holokosta-napominaet-pamyatnik-plach-o-nerozhdennyih>

The actions were qualified under Art. 173 of the Code of Administrative Offenses (petty hooliganism)<sup>55</sup>.

- On **December 10**, the day to light the first Chanukah candle, a Chanukah lamp on Kontraktova Square (near the monument to Hryhoriy Skovoroda) in Kyiv was overturned by an antisemitic offender. He broadcasted his actions on the Facebook page of “Andriy Rachok” via his phone<sup>56</sup>.

In the video, he explained his actions by the reason that Jews have allegedly been involved in the genocide of the Ukrainian people for centuries. In addition, he called for violence against Jews, the expulsion of Jews from Ukraine, and imposing a ban on celebrating Jewish religious holidays.

On the same day, the offender was identified by the police. Criminal proceedings were instituted and pre-qualified under Art. 296 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (hooliganism)<sup>57</sup>.

The next day, the offender tried to overturn the lamp again, but unsuccessfully, since it was properly fixed<sup>58</sup>.

On **December 12**, the suspicion under Part 1 of Art. 161 of the Criminal Code was presented<sup>59</sup>.

- In the evening of **December 13**, a case of abuse of another Chanukah lamp on Kontraktova Square (closer to the beginning of Saksahanskoho street) was identified. A part of the “Happy Hanukkah” lightbox was broken<sup>60</sup>.

### 3. Threats

On the morning of **March 4**, bomb threats toward local synagogues were sent to police of several administrative centers.

The emails were received by the main departments of the National Police in Zhytomyr<sup>61</sup>, Ivano-Frankivsk<sup>62</sup>, Kyiv<sup>63</sup>, Odesa<sup>64</sup>, and Kharkiv<sup>65</sup>. According to some sources, the same message was also received by departments in Mykolaiv, Vinnytsia, and Sumy<sup>66</sup>. In each city, police responded promptly. Visitors were evacuated from the synagogues. No explosives were found<sup>67</sup>. An investigation has

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<sup>55</sup> <https://if.npu.gov.ua/news/zagalna-informacziya/policzei-ski-Ivano-frankivshhini-rozshukali-xuligana-yakii-poshkodiv-vikno-u-religii-nii-sporudi/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/rachok.andryi/videos/2815009175445654/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/rachok.andryi/posts/2815330348746870>

<sup>58</sup> <https://jewishnews.com.ua/society/povalivshego-xanukiyu-v-kieve-zhdut-na-dopros-v-prokurature-ili-otpravyat-pod-domashnij-arest>

<sup>59</sup> <https://kyiv.npu.gov.ua/news/Informacziya/choloviku-yakij-u-kijevi-perekinuv-odin-iz-simvoliv-jevrejskoji-obshhini-vrucheno-pidozru-andrij-krishhenko/>

<sup>60</sup> <https://t.me/UJCUkraine/213>

<sup>61</sup> <https://zt.npu.gov.ua/news/na-varti-bezpeki/u-zhitomiri-policziya-pereviryaje-povidomlennya-pro-zaminuvannya-primishhennya/>

<sup>62</sup> <https://if.npu.gov.ua/news/zagalna-informacziya/povidomlennya-pro-zaminuvannya-budivli-u-czentri-Ivano-frankivska-viyavilos-nepravdivim/>

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/moshe.azman/posts/10218631771239837>

<sup>64</sup> <https://od.npu.gov.ua/news/zvichajni-novini/pravooxoronczi-pereviryayut-informacziyu-pro-zaminuvannya-kultovoji-sporudi-v-czentri-odesi/>

<sup>65</sup> <https://hk.npu.gov.ua/news/Inshi-podiji/policziya-pereviryaje-povidomlennya-pro-minuvannya-budivli-u-czentri-xarkova/>

<sup>66</sup> <https://stmegi.com/posts/78420/v-raznykh-gorodakh-ukrainy-zaminirovali-za-den-8-sinagog/>

<sup>67</sup> <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news66293.html>

been instituted to identify the offender. In particular, criminal proceedings under Part 1 of Art. 259 of the Criminal Code (provision of deliberately fraudulent information about the threats to public safety) were instituted in Ivano-Frankivsk.

#### 4. Public manifestations of antisemitism

Neither the National Minorities Rights Monitoring Group, nor the VAAD of Ukraine, do not perform the monitoring of public manifestations of antisemitism or antisemitic hate speech systematically, therefore, we do not consider it possible to make assumptions about the dynamics of this issue. The cases are just some examples aimed at providing an insight into the nature of modern antisemitism in Ukraine, but they are not intended to indicate the prevalence of the issue by no means.

- On **January 4**, an openly xenophobic post “Jews and Poles, get the f\*ck off” was posted on the Facebook public page of Sofiya Semchyshyn, an employee of the Lviv city administration and the daughter of a public figure and member of the Svoboda party Iryna Farion<sup>68</sup>. In such a way she commented on the news that Poland and Israel ambassadors’ condemned the glorification of S. Bandera and A. Melnyk by Kyiv and Lviv regional councils.

As it was stressed by Yuriy Lukashevsky, head of the “Secretariat of authority” Department, although the opinion was publicly expressed by S. Semchyshyn, an employee of the Lviv City Hall, her statement in no way reflects the position of the City Council<sup>69</sup>. Moreover, her statement violates the Code<sup>70</sup> of Ethics for Officials and Employees of the City Hall that has been adopted recently. However, it is unknown whether S. Semchyshyn was brought to disciplinary and/or legal responsibility. The above-mentioned post on her Facebook page has been deleted.

- On **April 4**, Pavlo Yarosh, head of the NGO “Yarosh Ukraine Above All”, tried to hold a public rally in Odesa. The antisemitic call “Beat the kike - save the country” was used for the title of the rally. The day before, the rally was announced by P. Yarosh on his Facebook page, and a document stating that the city authorities had been notified about it was published<sup>71</sup>.

On the day of the rally, P. Yarosh was detained at the place of the beginning of the route, he was brought to the Primorsky Police Department. Since the detention, P. Yarosh has been conducting the live stream on his Facebook page<sup>72</sup>. According to this video, it was not the first detention of P. Yarosh by law enforcement agencies. It can be assumed that his previous actions were also of xenophobic nature due to his statement “I was sitting here during the “gay parades”.

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<sup>68</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/sofiya.semchyshyn/posts/2749527831940763> [the link is currently inactive as the post was deleted, but the screenshots are available]

<sup>69</sup>

[https://zaxid.net/pratsivnitsya\\_lvivskoyi\\_miskradi\\_oprilyudnila\\_obrazliviy\\_dopis\\_na\\_adresu\\_polyakiv\\_ta\\_yevreyiv\\_n1495633](https://zaxid.net/pratsivnitsya_lvivskoyi_miskradi_oprilyudnila_obrazliviy_dopis_na_adresu_polyakiv_ta_yevreyiv_n1495633)

<sup>70</sup> <https://city-adm.lviv.ua/news/government/270145-u-lvivskii-miskradi-zatverdily-kodeks-etychnoi-povedinky-posadovtsiv>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/PavloYaroshPY/posts/672337053582290>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/PavloYaroshPY/videos/672906350192027>

He had some posters with him, one of them with the text “Beat the kike, save the country!”, and a canister filled with liquid. He was accused of violating the quarantine resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of March 17, 2020, and an administrative offense report was filed. Thus, the police didn’t qualify his actions under Art. 161 of the Criminal Code, but opted for the legally dubious measures to prevent an antisemitic action. In fact, quarantine restrictions should not interfere with public rallies, and the above-mentioned resolution cannot restrict the freedom of peaceful assembly guaranteed by law.

The witnesses accused P. Yarosh of incitement to violence and demanded him to refute the statement about a connection between Jews and the sale of land publicly. However, the detainee did not agree with it, he emphasized that “Jew” and “Kike” had different meanings for him. As the report was executed, P. Yarosh left the police station.

It should be noted that a law that finally allowed the open land market was adopted by Verkhovna Rada on March 31. There was a lot of controversy regarding this decision, and antisemitic rhetoric was used, although in a limited way.

- On **April 6**, a petition on imposing restrictions due to nationalities of some Ukrainian officials was published on the website of the President of Ukraine. The author of the petition, Ivan Usenko, stated that “the Jews are one of the smallest ethnic minorities, but their power is near absolute” and that too many government positions were occupied by Russians. This situation, according to the author, leads to the “usurpation of power”. The petition collected few signatures (less than 30)<sup>73</sup>.

- On **April 20 and 21**, some online broadcasts commemorating the Holocaust victims were disrupted by unknown offenders. One of the cases took place during a broadcast organized by Masorti Ukraine, the community of conservative Judaism based in Kyiv.

A new participant joined the broadcast 20 minutes after the beginning, shouting to prevent the event. He was suspended by the conference administrator, but managed to rejoin, turned on the screen demonstration that could not be blocked to broadcast pornographic content. The online broadcast had to be stopped.

According to participants, the criminal spoke English and had an Arabic name. No openly antisemitic statements were delivered. Given the fact that the Yom HaShoah is a national day of remembrance of Israel (alternatively to January 27, the International Holocaust Remembrance Day), and the probable belonging of criminals to the Arab world, it was an anti-Israel campaign, most likely.

- In **May** the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine accused NewsOne TV channel of failure to comply with legal requirements regarding the inadmissibility of incitement to hostility and hatred.

In particular, the accusations concerned the statements of businessman Andriy Palchevsky about “180000 Jews in the German army” and political scientist Vadym Karasyov about the “Jewish SS-divisions” that were made live during the “Confrontation” TV show on **May 8**, and repeated on May 9 and 10 by the NewsOne TV channel. According to the National Council’s website, those statements have “signs of denial and distortion of the Holocaust” as well as “incitement to hatred

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<sup>73</sup> <https://petition.president.gov.ua/petition/91746>

against the Jewish people". On **May 21**, the Council decided to organize an unscheduled inspection of OOO "24 Hours News" (NewsOne satellite TV channel).

It was later acknowledged by V. Karasev publicly, that his statement about the existence of Jewish SS divisions was not true. A. Palchevsky also made his apology to those offended by his words and explained that it was not an antisemitic remark. Vitaliy Dykyi, the host of the "Confrontation" TV show, offered his apologies on behalf of the TV channel's newsroom for publishing false information<sup>74</sup>.

● On **June 12**, an interview with the infamous activist Petro Maslyak, known for his nationalist views, was published by the Vgolos news agency.

In this interview, P. Maslyak stated that there was a "discrimination against the titular nation" in Ukraine that manifest itself by the lack of "ethnic Ukrainians" among the leadership of Ukraine and the presence of many "national minorities" representatives among the oligarchs (who "cast the Menorah out of gold") and government officials<sup>75</sup>.

It should be mentioned that P. Maslyak holds a degree, he is a university professor in Kyiv, and the interview was published on a popular website, which, however, is also #1 in the rating of fake news spreaders<sup>76</sup>). The interest of journalists regarding P. Maslyak increased since May 2020, when the society noticed the contradictory theories of the origin of some nations he described in a school geography textbook<sup>77</sup>. So, given certain circumstances, his nationalist views and focus on the ethnic composition of Ukraine's leadership were well perceived by some groups of people.

● On **October 14**, a traditional UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) march, also known as a March of Heroes' Glory, was held in Kyiv in honor of the Ukrainian Defender's Day. Two cases of incitement to ethnic hatred were recorded on the day of the march and the day before.

On the eve of the march, the far-right National Resistance organization called to join a special "White lives matter" column of march. The announced aim was to protect "white people" from the "ethnic gangs of migrants from Asia and Africa..."<sup>78</sup>. So far as known, the march has really happened with that slogan<sup>79</sup>.

On the day of the march, another xenophobic statement was recorded. At the Presidential Office building, unknown people gathered with a poster "Ukrainians! We are celebrating the anniversary of the occupation and plunder of the country by the Jewish clan of Vova Zelensky from the Dnipro region!"

The executive director of the United Jewish Community reported the police. Criminal proceedings were instituted under Part 1 of Art. 161 of the Criminal Code

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<sup>74</sup> [https://zik.ua/ru/news/ludyna/karasev\\_i\\_palchevskiy\\_izvinilis\\_za\\_svoyu\\_oshibku\\_v\\_efire\\_969475](https://zik.ua/ru/news/ludyna/karasev_i_palchevskiy_izvinilis_za_svoyu_oshibku_v_efire_969475)

<sup>75</sup> [https://vgolos.com.ua/news/prezydent-etnichnyj-yevrej-golova-vru-etnichnyj-rosiyanyn-ochilnyk-mvs-etnichnyj-virmenyn-a-de-ukrayintsi\\_1254185.html](https://vgolos.com.ua/news/prezydent-etnichnyj-yevrej-golova-vru-etnichnyj-rosiyanyn-ochilnyk-mvs-etnichnyj-virmenyn-a-de-ukrayintsi_1254185.html)

<sup>76</sup> <https://imi.org.ua/blogs/mer-aferyst-ta-inshi-geroyi-yak-manipulyuyut-informatsiyeu-lvivski-onlajn-vydannya-i37447>

<sup>77</sup> <https://stopcor.org/rekomendovann%D1%8Bj-mon-uchebnyk-ustanovyl-cto-francuz%D1%8B-yspacz%D1%8B-y-evrey-v%D1%8Bshly-yz-galychyn%D1%8B/>

<sup>78</sup> [https://t.me/national\\_resistance\\_ua/4](https://t.me/national_resistance_ua/4)

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/zhyttia-bilyh-maye-znachennia-pid-takym-haslom-krokuvala-odna-z-kolonna-marshi-upa/30896210.html>

(violation of equality of citizens depending on the race, nationality, and religious beliefs)<sup>80</sup>.

Some media outlets, namely, Stana online media, accused Ukrainian nationalists of making the poster immediately<sup>81</sup>. Definitely, the National Corps party representatives were standing next to the poster and were not embarrassed but, according to the video, they had their own installation.

It was identified, that Nina Mescheryakova, a speaker for the “Konstantin Chumak” YouTube channel was probably one of the participants of the antisemitic demonstration<sup>82</sup>. This assumption can be confirmed by the fact that an almost identical message was used by her in one of the videos<sup>83</sup>.

## 5. Situation in Uman

Negative public outcry was caused by the developments concerning the quarantine restrictions and the pilgrimage of Breslov Hasidim to Uman. Most of the believers are from Israel and the United States, they make a pilgrimage to Uman to celebrate Rosh Hashanah at the beginning of autumn.

A paper of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated July 10<sup>84</sup>, and a government statement dated August 18<sup>85</sup> imposed a limit on the number of pilgrims due to the world epidemiological situation, but the total ban was not imposed.

Local deputies of the Cherkasy region<sup>86</sup> pushed for the total ban of that year's pilgrimage. In particular, the statements were made by O. Tserbiy<sup>87</sup>, the mayor of Uman, and A. Bondarenko<sup>88</sup>, the mayor of Cherkasy.

The uncertainty about the pilgrimage has fomented the society, especially the opponents of Rosh Hashanah celebrations in Uman. Offensive cartoons were being published by some Ukrainian-speaking social media users<sup>89</sup>, which were supported by adversary comments of antisemitic nature. Often, the main issue was not the quarantine violations, but the annual pilgrimage of the Hasidim.

On August 26, the quarantine was officially extended, since August 28, the foreigners were banned from entering Ukraine. On the night of **August 28**, a clash took place between a group of Uman residents and pilgrims who had just arrived

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<sup>80</sup> <https://kyiv.npu.gov.ua/news/novini/policziya-kijeva-rozpochala-kriminalne-provazhennya-za-antisemistski-napisi-bilya-ofisu-prezidenta-ukrajini/>

<sup>81</sup> <https://strana.ua/news/295047-marsh-upa-v-kieve-14-oktjabrja-natsionalisty-prinesli-k-zdaniju-ofisa-prezidenta-plakat.html>

<sup>82</sup> <https://jewishnews.com.ua/society/avtor-antisemitskogo-plakata-pod-op-byila-ranee-zamechena-v-podobnyix-akcziyax>

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iI2C7dEySVE>

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.unian.ua/society/opublikovaniy-merom-umani-dokument-mzs-ne-oznachaye-skasuvannya-palomnictva-hasidiv-oyeou-novini-ukrajini-11073926.html>

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/spilna-ukrayinsko-izrayilska-uryadova-zayava-shchodo-palomnictva-hasidiv-do-m-uman-z-nagodi-svyatkuvannya-rosh-ga-shana>

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-regions/3080942-palomnictvo-hasidiv-pid-cas-karantinu-i-hocetsa-i-kolets.html>

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.5.ua/suspilstvo/vymahaie-zustrichi-iz-zelenskym-miskyi-holova-umani-rozpoviv-chomu-prykhav-na-bankovu-vkliuchennia-221832.html>

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/100003268733364/posts/3223831081069151/?d=n>

<sup>89</sup> See, for example <https://www.facebook.com/nina.tkachuk.16/posts/771376816991225>;

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=304805760755238&set=a.101338311101985>;

<https://www.facebook.com/irina.svistunenko.9/posts/707371243180934>

in the city. According to some sources<sup>90</sup>, the conflict had a financial background, too. The fight was stopped by the police, criminal proceedings were opened under Part 2 of Art. 161, the circumstances of the incident had not been established yet<sup>91</sup>.

Except for this incident, various insinuations against Hasidim, Israel, and Jews in the context of the pilgrimage were mostly the comments published on social networks. No incorrect or provocative statements by public figures or officials have been identified.

On **September 11**, the report was received by the Uman Police Department that one of the local cafes refused to serve the Hasidim due to prejudice against the religious community.

It was established by the police<sup>92</sup> that a sign in Hebrew with Ukrainian translation banning the entrance for Hasidim ("The Hasidim are not allowed!") was standing at the entrance of the cafe. This restriction was initiated by the cafe's owner, he explained it by his decision to prevent the spread of the COVID-19. A pre-trial investigation was initiated under Part 1 of Art. 161 of the Criminal Code (actions aimed at incitement to national hatred)<sup>93</sup>. The investigation was later closed<sup>94</sup>.

Another case of prejudice against religious Jews was described by Zaborona media report<sup>95</sup>.

Miriam, a hasid living in Uman, was approached by some women while relaxing on the lakeshore who accused her of spreading the disease. They demanded to show her documents and put on a medical mask. One of the women eventually pushed Miriam into the lake that scared her children. The provocation exacerbated as the women filmed the situation, commenting "look, the Hasidim came to Ukraine to spread the virus here"<sup>96</sup>.

It was the background for two cases of antisemitic violence recorded in Uman, which were described in the first part of the report.

On **September 19**, a local resident was arrested for promoting ethnic hatred.

For some time, the discriminatory articles with relevant comments, calls for racial hatred and violence were being published systematically on his Facebook personal page. For example, he commented on the news about the permission to celebrate Rosh Hashanah: "every citizen of Uman should kill as many Hasidim as possible during his life"<sup>97</sup>.

A pre-trial investigation under Part 1 of Art. 161 (actions aimed at the incitement of national hatred) is going on.

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<sup>90</sup> <https://suspilne.media/58609-v-umani-stalasa-suticka-iz-hasidami/>; see also: Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p. 10.

<sup>91</sup> <https://ch.npu.gov.ua/news/Informacziya/policziya-cherkashhini-rozsliduje-kriminalne-provazhennya-za-faktom-viniknennya-konfliktu-v-umani/>

<sup>92</sup> <https://ch.npu.gov.ua/news/zlochiny-proti-voli-chesti-ta-gidnosti-osobi/v-umani-policzejski-vidkrili-kriminalne-provazhennya-za-porushennya-rivnopravnosti-gromadyan-za-religijnimi-perekonanniyami/>

<sup>93</sup> Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p. 42.

<sup>94</sup> <https://ch.npu.gov.ua/news/zlochiny-proti-voli-chesti-ta-gidnosti-osobi/v-umani-policzejski-vidkrili-kriminalne-provazhennya-za-porushennya-rivnopravnosti-gromadyan-za-religijnimi-perekonanniyami/>

<sup>95</sup> <https://zaborona.com/hasydy-v-umani/>

<sup>96</sup> See another example: Antisemitism in Ukraine. Report for 2020. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine. (<https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismUKR2020.pdf>) p. 40.

<sup>97</sup> <http://uman.info.ua/news/kozhen-umanchanyn-povynen-v-umani-vykryly-internet-propagandysta-yakyy-zaklykav---10755.html>



Some antisemitic remarks regarding the pilgrimage to Uman were aired even by the central media.

Thus, on **November 12**, the Commission on Journalist Ethics ruled on a complaint against showman Serhiy Prytula. It was decided that his actions during the live show on September 10 were violating paragraph 15 of the Code of Ethics of the Ukrainian Journalist (“prohibition of discrimination based on religion and national origin”)<sup>98</sup>. The reproach for his actions was expressed publicly.

On **September 10**, a call was received during the live television broadcast of the program “In the Middle of the Week” of the Radio NV station, hosted by Serhiy Prytula<sup>99</sup>. The listener introduced himself as Roman from Kramatorsk and asked “who will be fined in Uman? Now the mayhem is going to start there. Nazi Hasman will be commemorated...” while discussing the quarantine fines. Thus, the dignity of the religious community was publicly infringed. Roman’s position was not condemned by S. Prytula, who was not mentioning the intention to incite hostility. Moreover, he tried to reassure Roman that he shared his strong feelings and was happy to talk with a listener in such a “good” mood.

A complaint stating that S. Prytula's reaction to hate speech looked like encouragement was obtained by the Commission on Journalist Ethics. It was also mentioned that a letter to the Radio NV management was sent, but no reply was obtained.

The Commission concluded that, given S. Prytula's experience of live broadcasts, he should have been aware of a rule requiring media workers to prevent discrimination, and therefore his reaction to the hate speech could not be regarded as completely unconscious.

Later, feedback from the Radio NV newsroom was published on the official Facebook page. In the official statement, the Radio NV station agreed with the decision of the Commission and declared the intention to prevent similar situations in the future<sup>100</sup>.

## 6. Law enforcement activity

In **January**, a criminal suspected of committing several crimes, including incitement of national and racial hatred, was detained. For 18 months the detainee was being fled from prosecution. He has been in custody since **January 23** until the end of pre-trial investigation and the transfer of indictment to court.

He is suspected of blowing up a hand grenade on the grave of Rabbi Nachman in Uman in 2016, blowing up a monument to the Hungarian people on Verevetsky Pass, the border of Lviv and Zakarpattia regions, in 2017, desecrating a synagogue in Lviv in 2017 and other crimes, including attempted murder<sup>101</sup>.

According to the report of Graty media, the perpetrator is 50-year-old Borys Mushchenko, who had been previously detained in 2017 for attempting to blow up on the Verevetsky Pass and was placed under house arrest in 2018. Shortly afterward, he disappeared and was put on the wanted list. The above-mentioned crimes were committed by him together with other criminals. They were arrested,

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<sup>98</sup> <https://www.cje.org.ua/ua/complaint/shchodo-diy-veduchogo-sergiya-prytuly-v-efiri-radio-nv>

<sup>99</sup> <https://youtu.be/tW8aH8Xw6Vg?t=463>

<sup>100</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/radioNV.ua/posts/899860177487604>

<sup>101</sup> [https://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/news?\\_m=publications&\\_c=view&\\_t=rec&id=265320&](https://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/news?_m=publications&_c=view&_t=rec&id=265320&)



too, and the trials are currently going on<sup>102</sup>. The motives for the crimes are still debatable. There was a version of deliberate discredit of Ukraine by the Party of Regions ex-MPs<sup>103</sup>. Obviously, the nature of the crimes has to be determined.

- On **March 11**, the findings of the criminal proceedings against an inhabitant of Kyiv who vandalized the Holocaust memorials in Kirovohrad and Mykolaiv regions in August-September 2019, were being transferred to the Holovanivsky District Court of Kirovohrad region<sup>104</sup>. The offense was qualified under Part 1 of Art. 161 and Part 3 of Art. 297 of the Criminal Code.

As of March 2021, the trial has not been finished yet.

- On **May 10**, a three-month-old letter from the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Department of the Strategic Investigations Office of the National Police to Yakov Zalishchyker, the head of the Jewish community in Kolomyia, was published online. The letter requested a list of members of the Jewish religious community, their contact info, and a list of Jewish students studying in Ivano-Frankivsk. The request was made due to the instruction “on the fighting transnational and ethnic organized groups and criminal organizations”. J. Zalishchyker refused to provide confidential data.

As it became known, similar requests were obtained by other organizations of national communities. In general, the actions of law enforcement agencies were expertly qualified as abuse of power and discrimination without particular focus on the Jewish community<sup>105</sup>. However, as the letter became public and attracted the attention of the Israel embassy in Kyiv<sup>106</sup>, the world media began to emphasize the antisemitic motives of the “census” (see, for example, the articles “I cried and wanted to leave the city”<sup>107</sup>, “The same was in 1941”<sup>108</sup>). Besides, the conflict between the Jewish community and local activists over the territory of the Jewish Memorial Cemetery was mentioned in this context<sup>109</sup>.

Finally, Mykhaylo Bank, the head of the Strategic Investigations Office, was dismissed according to the order of the Department of Strategic Investigations due to his responsibility for discriminatory orders<sup>110</sup>. I. Klymenko, the Head of the National Police, personally apologized to J. Zalishchyker for the illegal actions of his subordinates.

## 8. Public assessments and reports

- On **January 13**, the 2019 report on antisemitism was published by the United Jewish Community of Ukraine<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>102</sup> <https://graty.me/ksenofobiya-na-prodazhu-zachem-banda-iz-cherkass-czelyj-god-oskvernyala-hasidskie-svyatyni-vzryvala-posolstva-i-pamyatniki-po-vsej-ukraine/>

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/columns/2020/01/8/7236821/>

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=819372041909725&set=a.259462667900668>

<sup>105</sup> <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news66642.html>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/AmbassadorJoelLion/posts/833516667051912>

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-52638122>

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.vesty.co.il/article/r1eXJEt5L>

<sup>109</sup> <https://zaborona.com/evreyi-v-kolomyi/>

<sup>110</sup> <https://zmina.info/news/avakov-zvilnyv-nachalnyka-upravlinnya-yake-zbyralo-personalni-dani-yevreyiiv-u-kolomyi/>

<sup>111</sup> <https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/AntisemitismRUS2019.pdf>

According to the report, the number of incidents decreased by around ⅓ in 2019 compared to 2018.

However, it seems that the decrease was based on the fact that the authors of the report began to check the initial reports, and reposed less trust in inaccurate information on social networks<sup>112</sup>.

● On **January 27**, the world report on antisemitism was published by the Israel Ministry of Diaspora Affairs<sup>113</sup>. The report claimed a significant reduction in the number of antisemitic incidents in Ukraine<sup>114</sup>.

A decrease in the level of antisemitism in Ukraine in 2018 compared to 2017 was already mentioned in the report of the Ministry, published in early 2019<sup>115</sup>. Thus, according to Israel's official data, there is a persistent positive trend, which is most noticeable contrasted with negative world dynamics.

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<sup>112</sup> <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news65843.html>

<sup>113</sup> <http://antisemitism.mda.gov.il/media/1810/%D7%93%D7%95%D7%97-%D7%A1%D7%95%D7%A4%D7%99-2019.pdf>

<sup>114</sup> <http://jewseurasia.org/page6/news66025.html>

<sup>115</sup> <http://jewseurasia.org/page18/news62900.html>