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ORSZÁGOS RABBIKÉPZŐ ZSIDÓ EGYETEM
JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
UNIVERSITY OF JEWISH STUDIES
בית־מדרש לרבנים
האוניברסיטה ללימודי היהדות בהונגריה

Call for Papers

Abstract deadline: March 31, 2026



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Hungarian Jews and the 1956 Revolution

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Budapest, October 13–14, 2026

Organized by the
Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies
(OR-ZSE), Hungary

The year 2026 marks the seventieth anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, one of the turning points in Hungarian and specifically Hungarian-Jewish history. For Jewish individuals and communities, the Revolution and its aftermath shaped everyday choices about decisions on staying, leaving, silence, adaptation, and survival.

This international conference examines Jewish experiences of 1956 and its aftermath from personal, communal, institutional, and transnational angles. We invite contributions that analyse how Jews navigated political power during and immediately after the revolution in Hungary, and in exile, and how these experiences were later remembered, documented, or forgotten.

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Possible themes include (but are not limited to):

- **Jews who remained in Hungary after 1956:** forms of adaptation, withdrawal, or accommodation; participation in communal, cultural, and religious life; changing meanings of Jewish identity under socialist rule.
- **Jews who left the country:** routes (of flight), refugee experiences, and the role of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), and other organisations in relief, resettlement, short and long-term support.
- **Jews in relation to state power:** employment in, or proximity to state institutions, including the State Protection Authority (Államvédelmi Hatóság, ÁVH); moral, professional, and political dilemmas of conformity, loyalty, and dissent.
- **Antisemitic attacks on Jews in wake of the revolution:** verbal and physical assaults against Jewish individuals and communities; their social and political contexts; and the manifestations of antisemitism during the revolution and in its immediate aftermath.
- **Rabbis, rabbinical training, and Jewish leadership after 1956:** disrupted careers, emigration, surveillance, and the reorganisation of religious authority.
- **Archival and documentary perspectives:** new readings of sources from the JDC Archives, Hungarian and international archives, and oral-history collections.
- **Cultural memory and commemoration:** representations of 1956 in Jewish literature, visual culture, and family narratives; the transmission of the memories across generations.

We particularly welcome proposals based on unpublished archival material, contemporary press coverage, oral testimony, or institutional collections, including those held by the JDC Archives, YIVO, USHMM, and Hungarian repositories.

The conference aims to deepen scholarly exchange and to encourage cooperation between academic institutions, archives, and other Jewish historical and documentation projects. Selected papers will be considered for inclusion in a peer-reviewed edited volume, with special attention to sources from the JDC Archives and related collections.

We are currently seeking funding to contribute to the accommodation and travel (airfare) costs of international speakers, covering up to two nights of accommodation.

Practical information

- Date: October 13–14, 2026
- Location: Budapest
- Languages: English and Hungarian
- Abstract deadline: March 31, 2026
- Notification of acceptance: April 30, 2026
- Submission:
Please send a 250–300-word abstract and a short bio (max. 150 words) to conference1956@or-zse.hu
- Contact information: Dr. Dóra Patariczа
Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies (OR-ZSE), Budapest. Email: patariczad@or-zse.hu