

EUROPEAN JEWISH DIGEST

SEPTEMBER 2014

1 / DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST ANTISEMITISM ACROSS EUROPE

Antisemitic incidents continued to impact Jewish communities, but September also saw a concerted response from politicians across Europe as well as several counter demonstrations. Significant rallies protesting antisemitism were held in London, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stockholm, Paris and other places, often with the participation of major government leaders calling for a crackdown on perpetrators.

In France, Prime Minister Manuel Valls spoke at a ceremony at the Great Synagogue on rue de la Victoire in Paris where he declared the fight against antisemitism a national cause. He said that “to be a Jew, to be French, French and Jewish identities are inseparable”. Meanwhile, whilst praising the response of leading politicians, the newly elected Chief Rabbi Haim Korsia accused French society of being indifferent to antisemitic attacks on Jews and Jewish owned property, and asked. “in France, have you seen a march of support saying it's unacceptable to attack houses of worship? What struck us was the sense of indifference in the society.” Later in the month, the far-right National Front (FN) party won its first two seats in the upper house of parliament, with party leader Marine Le Pen describing it as a “historic victory,” and Prime Minister Valls warning that the National Front now stands “at the gates of power”. Meanwhile in Marseille, police arrested a man for brandishing a hunting rifle in front of a Jewish school and threatening to commit murder.

In Germany, more 3,000 people rallied outside City Hall in Frankfurt under the banner “Stand up! Never gain antisemitism!” Chancellor Angela Merkel has been especially strident in her speeches on antisemitism. In her weekly podcast, she said she was alarmed that Jewish institutions in Germany still needed police protection and added that “I will personally do everything I can – as will my entire government – to ensure that antisemitism doesn't have a chance in our country”. Merkel, together with her entire cabinet, German President Joachim Gauck, and several Protestant, Catholic and Muslim religious leaders, attended a rally organised by the Jewish community in Berlin, and, in front of thousands at the Brandenburg Gate, she described the Jews living in Germany as “a national treasure” and declared that fighting antisemitism was every German’s duty. She added that idea “that people in Germany are threatened and abused because of their Jewish appearance or their support for Israel is an outrageous scandal that we won’t accept... Anyone who hits someone wearing a skullcap is hitting us all..., anyone who damages a Jewish gravestone is disgracing our culture. Anyone who attacks a synagogue is attacking the foundations of our free society.” In protest at the ongoing antisemitism in Germany, and in response to a spike in expressions of antisemitism, a Jewish couple held their marriage ceremony under a *chuppah* at Potsdamer Platz, one of Berlin’s central squares. One hundred guests were invited to the open-air ceremony as thousands of passers-by watched walking past. Rabbi Yehudah Teichtal, the director of the Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Educational Centre in Berlin who officiated, said “our answer to antisemitism should be elevating Jewish pride, externalising of our Jewish characteristics and deepening our connection to our magnificent tradition.”

In Belgium, the Jewish Museum in Brussels reopened four months after the fatal shootings. Speaking at the reopening, Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo said “all antisemitic or racist acts should be strongly

condemned, prosecuted and punished,” yet many remained deeply sceptical whether the government could provide such security. Indeed, despite the rallies and protests, antisemitic incidents continued throughout the month. A few days after the reopening of the museum, a fire broke out a synagogue in Anderlecht in an arson attack which many suspected was a deliberate act of antisemitism. This followed an antisemitic incident at the National Memorial Site for Jewish Victims of the Holocaust, also in Anderlecht, when several people launched large stones at the monument.

In Greece, the mayor of Thessaloniki, Yiannis Boutaris, wore a yellow Star of David at his swearing-in ceremony as a reminder that ninety percent of the city’s population was murdered by the Nazis during the Shoah, and as a protest against the presence of the Neo-Nazi Golden Dawn's Artemis Matthaopoulos on the city council. The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece wrote in response: “your gesture sends a strong and clear message to those nostalgic for Nazism and fascism that under your leadership your city will continue to fight against any phenomena of racism, intolerance and antisemitism”. Yet other incidents occurred throughout the month. Notably, the police chief of the popular Greek tourist island of Hydra was photographed giving the Nazi salute whilst on a trip to Germany, and a video was released showing a senior Golden Dawn leader teaching two children how to give the Nazi salute and chant “Heil Hitler.” The video was recorded on the cell phone of party deputy leader Christos Pappas. In response to increased racism in the country, the Greek parliament passed a new law toughening punishments for racism, antisemitism and hate speech and outlawing Holocaust denial.

In Sweden, the far-right Sweden Democrats polled 13% in national elections, potentially setting themselves up as king-makers. They are now the third largest party, even after one of their candidates was forced to resign after being photographed wearing a Nazi armband. However, despite the party’s attempts to disassociate themselves from racism over the last couple of years, the other mainstream parties have so far refused to work with them on forming a coalition.

In Austria, two conservative town council members have resigned and left the People’s Party after a documentary showed them singing and toasting one another in a basement room filled with Nazi memorabilia. The scene shows five men in traditional dress singing a drinking song in a room featuring a portrait of Hitler, a swastika flag and mannequins wearing Nazi uniforms and helmets.

In Romania, the Jewish cemetery of Iasi, one of the oldest in the country, was hit by a fire. Reports did not say how many tombstones were damaged. In Serbia, supporters of football club Partizan Belgrade, were filmed holding an antisemitic sign during a recent Europa League clash with British team Tottenham Hotspur. The presence of the sign was known to officials during the game, but no attempts were made to remove it. UEFA is now investigating the incident.

In Slovakia, Catholic priest Emil Floriš said the Jews themselves are to blame for the Holocaust. He postulated that Jews from all over Europe had been transported to the concentration camps because they were hated, for which they themselves were to blame. The Federation of Jewish Communities in Slovakia said in a statement that Floris’ statement “contained untruths and antisemitic clichés, diminishes the suffering of the Jewish people during the time of the First Slovak Republic and insults the memory of victims.”

In Ukraine, the great Choral synagogue in Kiev was attacked with a firebomb on the eve of Rosh Hashanah. No damage was caused. In another incident the Holocaust memorial at Babi Yar was painted with a swastika.

- [Rallies Protesting Anti-Semitism Held Across Europe](#) (The Huffington Post, September 3, 2014)
- [French far-right 'at gates of power' - PM Manuel Valls](#) (BBC News, September 7, 2014)

- [Rifle-toting man making threats arrested outside French Jewish school](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 14, 2014)
- [French society seemingly apathetic to anti-Semitism, says chief rabbi](#) (Jerusalem Post, September 16, 2014)
- [French Prime Minister Valls at Paris synagogue tries to reassure French Jews against growing anti-Semitism](#) (European Jewish Press, September 21, 2014)
- [French far-right National Front wins first Senate seats](#) (BBC News, September 28, 2014)
- [Thousands rally in Frankfurt against anti-Semitism](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 2, 2014)
- [Germany's Angela Merkel calls on public to fight anti-Semitism](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 2, 2014)
- [Jewish couple weds at Berlin square to protest anti-Semitism](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 2, 2014)
- [German newspaper targeted by neo-Nazis](#) (The Local, September 13, 2014)
- [Angela Merkel: Fighting anti-Semitism is German duty](#) (BBC News, September 14, 2014)
- [German cabinet joins demonstration to speak out against anti-Semitism](#) (Deutsche Welle, September 14, 2014)
- [German Politician Dismissed Over Anti-Semitic 'Simpsons' Post](#) (Arutz Sheva, September 30, 2014)
- [Jewish Museum in Brussels reopens - but few feel safe](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 18, 2014)
- [Belgian synagogue hit in suspected arson attack](#) (Times of Israel, September 16, 2014)
- [Thessaloniki mayor sworn in wearing yellow Star of David badge](#) (World Jewish Congress, September 2, 2014)
- [Greek island police chief photographed giving Nazi salute](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 8, 2014)
- [Amid neo-Nazi surge, Jewish groups applaud Greece's Holocaust denial ban](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 8, 2014)
- [Golden Dawn leader filmed teaching children Nazi salute](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 23, 2014)
- [Italy's top Jewish council creates anti-Semitism hotline](#) (Haaretz, September 16, 2014)
- [Sweden Democrat quits over swastika photos](#) (The Local, September 5, 2014)
- [Profile: Far-right Sweden Democrats](#) (BBC News, September 15, 2014)
- [Austrian Officials Quit Over Nazi 'Basement' Party](#) (Jewish Daily Forward, September 19, 2014)
- [Hungarian PM bans extremist-sponsored conference](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 29, 2014)
- [Fire hits 18th century Romanian Jewish cemetery](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, October 2, 2014)
- [Uefa investigating antisemitic banner at Spurs match in Belgrade](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 19, 2014)
- [Slovak priest: Jews are to blame for Holocaust](#) (Prague Post, September 6, 2014)
- [Firebomb thrown at Kiev's oldest synagogue](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 29, 2014)

2 / FOCUS ON ANTISEMITISM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Data consistently show that levels of antisemitism in the UK are lower than elsewhere in Europe, yet the country has still experienced its fair share of incidents this month. Antisemitic graffiti was found scrawled on walls in Hackney, a London neighbourhood with a large strictly-orthodox Jewish population. A security guard at a Sports Direct outlet in Southern Hertfordshire was sacked and is now under police investigation after allegedly refusing to allow a group of Jewish schoolboys enter the

store saying “No Jews, no Jews”. A reporter from the Jewish Chronicle witnessed a man shouting antisemitic abuse on a public bus in Golders Green.

In keeping with other major European cities, a major rally protesting antisemitism was held outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London in September. Over 4,500 demonstrators came together to demand zero tolerance for any forms of antisemitism. Home Secretary Theresa May wrote in the Jewish Chronicle: “let me be very clear: there is absolutely no place in our country for antisemitism. Whatever form it takes — physical attacks, offensive graffiti, or vile comments online — targeting a person or a group based on their race, religion or belief is something against which we must all take a stand”. In a letter to Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, Prime Minister David Cameron wrote “I hope that you may be able to offer some reassurance to any who need it about the incredible pride that Britain has in its Jewish communities and our continued determination to fight discrimination and to keep Jewish people safe.”

Nonetheless, in other incidents, a Labour Party candidate for parliament was suspended by the party after a series of anti-Israel tweets including writing “we invented Israel when saving them from Hitler, who now seems to be their teacher” and “I will never forget and I will make sure my kids teach their children how evil Israel is!” Liverpool Football Club removed a tweet they wrote to their Jewish fans wishing them a happy new year after it was met with a series of antisemitic responses on the club’s official Twitter account. The decision to remove their original new year greeting was criticised by Jewish leaders.

- [Thousands rally in London against rising anti-Semitism](#) (Times of Israel, September 1, 2014)
- [‘Pathetic’ swastika graffiti returns to Hackney](#) (Hackney Gazette, September 4, 2014)
- [Sports Direct security guard allegedly banned Jewish schoolboys and told them: ‘No Jews, no Jews’](#) (The Independent, September 16, 2014)
- [‘Comedy of errors’ response to antisemitic bus abuse](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 23, 2014)
- [British Labour Party Candidate Suspended Over Anti-Semitic Tweets — ‘Hitler Now Seems to be Israel’s Teacher’](#) (The Algemeiner, September 22, 2014)
- [Liverpool wrong to remove new year tweet, say community leaders](#) (Jewish News, September 26, 2014)
- [In Depth: UK anti-Semitism continues unabated after Gaza war](#) (Jerusalem Post, September 30, 2014)
- [Chaim Herzog: Call for plaque to be displayed at Belfast City Hall](#) (BBC News, September 11, 2014)
- [‘Unacceptable hate crimes’: PM condemns shock 400 per cent rise in anti-semitic attacks](#) (Daily Express, September 4, 2014)
- [Home secretary and local MPs vow to tackle anti-Semitism](#) (Jewish News, September 9, 2014)
- [David Cameron pledges to protect Jews from hatred](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 10, 2014)

3 / JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN UKRAINE

As the Jewish High Holidays approached, many articles appeared to discuss the often devastating impact of the conflict on the lives of Jews in eastern Ukraine. However a few positive stories have emerged. In Dnepropetrovsk, ten rabbis conducted nineteen wedding ceremonies in two groups on a terrace in the huge Jewish community centre. Many of the couples were already married under Ukrainian law but had not previously a Jewish wedding. One of the JCC’s two hotels has become the temporary home of many of the Jewish refugees who fled from the fighting further east. Another interesting story that whilst tourists have not exactly been flooding into Ukraine in the last few

months, the conflict has not put off the annual pilgrimage of up to 30,000 Hasidic followers of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov to his grave in Uman.

- [Displaced Jews in Ukraine are once again in harms way](#) (Jerusalem Post , September 1, 2014)
- [Jewish communities decimated in eastern Ukraine](#) (Times of Israel, September 4, 2014)
- [Fearing rebels, Donetsk's Jews flee Mariupol](#) (Jerusalem Post, September 10, 2014)
- [Hundreds of Jewish families remaining in eastern Ukraine for High Holidays](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 10, 2014)
- [Group Jewish wedding held in eastern Ukraine](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 16, 2014)
- [The Scattering of Ukraine's Jews](#) (The Atlantic, September 21, 2014)
- [Rosh Hashanah in Uman: Thousands of Hasidic Jews Brave Ukraine Crisis in Pilgrimage to Tomb of Nachman of Breslov](#) (International Business Times, September 26, 2014)
- [Giant Ukraine JCC provides shelter from the storm — in style](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, October 1, 2014)

4 / REVISITING HOLOCAUST ISSUES

Holocaust issues continue to surface, particularly in central and eastern Europe. In Poland, as part of the Warsaw University's 'Matzeva Project,' two students discovered a hidden ruined Torah scroll which had been entrusted to Polish shepherds by their Orthodox Jewish neighbours before their deportation to Treblinka. The scroll was in very bad condition as half of it had been used by the family over the previous seventy years as rags, including as insoles for shoes.

In Warsaw there will be a new memorial for Poles who saved Jews during the Holocaust, paid for by the children of survivors. According to the Remembrance and Future Foundation, the memorial "will be a gesture of gratitude, not from a government, or a city, but from the Jewish diaspora, from those Jews who were saved and whose descendants now want to show their gratitude." It will be located near the new Jewish museum. There will be an international design competition with the winner to be announced by April 2015, and the memorial to be completed by November next year. Also a new Shoah memorial was dedicated on the edge of the old Jewish cemetery in the small town of Rajgród in the north eastern part of Poland.

At the Nazi death camp of Sobibor in Poland, an archaeological dig has revealed the location of the gas chambers. Senior researcher at Yad Vashem Dr. David Silberklang said, "The discovery of the exact location of the gas chambers at the Sobibor Camp is a discovery of the utmost importance in Holocaust research... there are no remains from any Jews who worked in the area of the gas chambers, and therefore these findings are the only thing left from those who were murdered... Finding the exact size of the gas chambers will enable us to understand what their capacity was and from there we can determine a more precise estimation of the number of people killed at the Sobibor Camp." According to current estimates, some 250,000 Jews were murdered at the camp.

In Hungary, a Jewish memorial sign was inaugurated in Mako to mark the 70th anniversary of the Holocaust and the centenary of the local Neolog synagogue. The Mayor of Mako, Peter Buzas, said that the message of the past for the present is that every member of the nation including the community of Mako, must join forces" and that "we must not allow the tragedy of the Don Bend, the hell of Auschwitz, the fright of exclusion and the horrors of war be repeated."

In Slovakia, on the 73rd year anniversary of the adoption of anti-Jewish laws, Prime Minister Robert Fico apologised for his country's persecution of the Jews during World War II and the mass

deportations to the concentration camps. At a commemoration of these laws, Fico said “I am not able to tell you anything stronger or anything more personal, but that I express a sincere apology for all those who were such a failure. Only the descendants of those who suffered and died may forgive them.” The event was also attended by President Andrej Kiska and Speaker Pavol Paška.

In Ukraine, President Petro Poroshenko attended a ceremony in Kiev which marked the 73rd anniversary of the massacre at Babi Yar, where more than 33,000 Jews were killed by the Nazis in two days. In Kosovo, American conceptual artist Elana Katz performed at a site associated with the pre-war Kosovan Jewish community in Pristina – the boxing club. The performance was attended by Pristina’s artistic and political community, including Kosovo’s president, Atifete Jahjaga.

In Germany, prosecutors have charged a 93-year-old man with 300,000 counts of accessory to murder for his service as a Nazi SS guard at Auschwitz. Oskar Groening of Hannover was a guard at the camp in May and June 1944. He is one of approximately thirty former Auschwitz guards against whom German federal investigators have recommended to state prosecutors to file charges. In Austria, the Vienna Jewish Museum returned a Nazi-looted painting to the artist’s grand-nieces. The 1922 painting “The coffee hour. Fanny, the sister of the artist” by Jewish artist Jehudo Epstein, was handed over to Anne Starkey, one of Epstein’s grand-nieces and the granddaughter of the woman in the painting.

A Spanish diplomat whose actions saved hundreds of Jewish lives was named a Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem. Sebastian de Romero Radigales arranged the repatriation of 510 Jews who had Spanish citizenship from Salonika in 1943, against the advice of Spain’s’ foreign minister, an act which certainly saved their lives. The award was accept by his granddaughter Elena Colitto Castelli in Jerusalem in the presence of Spain’s ambassador to Israel, Fernando Carderera. In Portugal, national airline TAP Portugal named its newest plane after Aristides de Sousa Mendes, a diplomat who saved some 30,000 Jews from the Holocaust. TAP Executive Director Luiz da Gama Mor said that he wanted to pay homage to “his exemplary actions” and the plane “will carry his name to many European cities where we operate.”

- [After 75 years, ruined Torah scroll found under couch in Poland](#) (Times of Israel, September 3, 2014)
- [Warsaw monument to honor heroic Poles from Shoah](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 9, 2014)
- [Gas chambers at Sobibor death camp uncovered in archaeological dig](#) (Jerusalem Post, September 17, 2014)
- [Polish Jews split over plan to exhume massacre victims](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 17, 2014)
- [Poland: New Monument at Rajgrad Jewish Cemetery](#) (Samuel Gruber's Jewish Art & Monuments, September 18, 2014)
- [Jewish memorial sign inaugurated in south-eastern Hungary](#) (politics.hu, September 4, 2014)
- [An artist reclaims Jewish sites in Kosovo](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 12, 2014)
- [Slovak PM apologizes for WWII Jewish persecution](#) (The Time of Israel, September 10, 2014)
- [Anti-Semitic remarks cast shadow over Holocaust Memorial Day](#) (Slovak Spectator, September 15, 2014)
- [Ukraine marks 73rd anniversary of Nazi massacre of Jews at Babi Yar](#) (Haaretz, September 30, 2014)
- [Auschwitz guard charged over 300,000 deaths](#) (The Local, September 16, 2104)
- [Vienna's Jewish Museum returns painting seized by Nazis to heirs](#) (Yahoo News, September 19, 2014)
- [Monument to industrialist Emil Kolben unveiled in Prague](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 12, 2014)

- [Rome Jewish leader insists on change of location of proposed Holocaust memorial](#) (Haaretz, September 30, 2014)
- [Portugal's airline honors WWII diplomat Mendes who saved Jews](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 14, 2014)
- [Spanish diplomat honored posthumously as righteous gentile](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, October 1, 2014)
- [Vatican helps fund preservation of Auschwitz](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 29, 2014)

5 / OTHER NEWS STORIES ABOUT JEWISH LIFE IN EUROPE YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

In Poland, the city of Wroclaw celebrated its first rabbinic ordination since the Shoah. In a ceremony at the White Stork Synagogue, the only one to survive the Holocaust, four rabbis and three cantors were ordained in the presence of Germany's foreign minister and other dignitaries. A few days later in Warsaw, the new Museum of the History of Polish Jews gave the public a preview of the first section of its core exhibition, just seven weeks before the official opening.

Several cities and towns in September hosted Jewish festivals, seminars and exhibitions. In Belarus, the second annual Limmud FSU festival took place in Vitebsk, the birthplace of artist Marc Chagall. Over 600 young Jewish professionals met at the Vitebsk National Museum of Fine Arts for a programme of lectures, workshops, discussions, music and a wide range of cultural events. At the start of the Limmud programme, a ceremony honouring Eliezer ben Yehuda, the father of modern Hebrew, was held in Glubokoe. The town, 100 miles north of Minsk, was where Ben Yehuda learned Jewish studies and where his wife was born. The ceremony, held next to a statue of Ben Yehuda, was attended by Israel's Ambassador to Belarus as well as Ben Yehuda's great-grandson, a celebrity chef and food critic in Israel. The ceremony featured a municipal all-female marching band and choir.

In Hungary, the 17th annual Jewish summer festival took place in which the old Jewish quarter comes to life with events celebrating Jewish culture traditions, food and music. In the Rumbach Street Synagogue there was an exhibition on the deportation of Budapest Jewry during the Shoah, whilst a famous klezmer band performed in the Dohany Street Synagogue. Other events and shows centred on music, literature, theatre, film and fine art. Vera Vadas, the festival's director said that the event has grown massively over the years and that "when the festival first started, it was difficult to advertise it. The word 'Jewish' had a derogatory connotation. But the Jewish Summer Festival has changed all that. Now it's an asset, drawing people to learn more about this wonderful culture."

In Germany, the 27th annual Days of Jewish Culture Festival began in Berlin at the beginning of September. The festival featured a wide range of programmes, including Bible discussions, programmes for children, book readings and public Shabbat services, held at various locations all over the city. The festival began with a concert entitled "Jochen Kowalski Sings Max Kowalski" at the Rykestrasse Synagogue, featuring the work of Jewish composer, Max Kowalski.

Nearly thirty countries celebrated the 15th European Day of Jewish Culture in September with this year's events focusing on women in Judaism. In Spain, more than twenty-five cities ran programmes. In Italy, more than seventy towns and cities held lectures, exhibitions, concerts, guided tours and performance, whilst Rome and Milan held larger Jewish cultural festivals. In Serbia, the Jewish Historical Museum in Belgrade opened an exhibition entitled "Jews of Serbia in World War I." Radmila Petrović, advisor at the Jewish Historical Museum said "with this exhibition, the museum cherishing the history and culture of a small Jewish community would like to join other museums, not only in Serbia, but across the world, in marking 100 years since the beginning of the Great War."

In Hungary, away from the festival and celebrations of Jewish culture, leaders of Jewish communities throughout Hungary met with representatives of the Hungarian government. This was almost a year after the suspension of contacts following the disagreement over the new “German Occupation Memorial”. The meeting, held at the parliament building, centred on eight topics important to the Jewish community, including the rise in antisemitism. There was no discussion of the memorial.

The issue of *shechitah* (the legal Jewish methods used to kill animals for meat) arose again in September. In Lithuania, the parliament passed a law allowing animals to be killed by slitting the throat without prior stunning – a requirement in Jewish law. The vote passed with a majority of 57 lawmakers in favour, four against and 11 abstaining. The Lithuanian Animals Rights Protection Organisation have said they will launch a protest with the European Commission. However in Belgium, the far-right Vlaams Belang party said it will submit a bill to parliament proposing a blanket ban on ritual slaughter.

In France, the first Moishe House opened in the 11th arrondissement of Paris. The new residents have committed to organise five or six programmes a month including celebrating Jewish holidays and holding Shabbat dinner for guests. In the same week a Moishe House was opened in Prague. There are now 7 Moishe Houses in Europe, and 67 throughout the world.

In Spain and Portugal work is done being to highlight their countries’ Jewish history. Nearly two dozen cities and towns across Spain have joined together to form a Network of Jewish Quarters to try to renovate and promote their Jewish history by building monuments, putting up signs identifying historic sites and hosting concerts, lectures and other cultural activities. Last year, the network launched an online project with Google, which offers historical timelines, maps and photographs of ancient landmarks of Jewish life in Spain. In Portugal the range of sites available on the network is increasing and now includes the newly-built Belmonte temple, the Tomar synagogue built in 1430, Hebrew markings in Trancoso, the Jewish quarter in Castelo de Vide, and a recently inaugurated Sephardic museum in the northern Braganca, designed by Souto Moura, Portugal’s leading modern architect.

Finally in the UK, the merger of the London Jewish Cultural Centre and JW3, the new state-of-the-art Jewish Community Centre, was announced in September. The merger has been driven by the need to consolidate resources and to help with fund-raising. The Sephardi community in the UK also celebrated the installation of a new senior rabbi for the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation, Rabbi Joseph Dweck. Religious leaders from across the denominational spectrum attended including Emeritus Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks. In Cardiff, the city’s Reform synagogue held an exhibition highlighting the role played by Muslims saving Jewish lives during the Shoah. It documents the story of Bosnian Muslims safeguarding the 600 year old Sarajevo Haggadah. Stanley Soffa, chair of Jewish Representative Council for South Wales, said ““For us, it is a heroic story of Muslims saving Jewish lives which provides a unique bond between to communities that we can celebrate together and remember together.”

- [Polish city marks first rabbinic ordination since World War II](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 2, 2014)
- [Warsaw's Jewish museum opens doors to Forest Gallery](#) (Polskie Radio, September 6, 2014)
- [Limmud FSU to kick off festival of Jewish learning](#) (Jerusalem Post, September 11, 2014)
- [Belarus town honors Eliezer Ben Yehuda, father of modern Hebrew](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 11, 2014)
- [Summer Jewish Festival in Budapest](#) (Euro News, September 5, 2014)
- [Exhibition "Jews of Serbia in WWI" opens in Belgrade](#) (B92, September 5, 2014)
- [Jewish Culture Festival begins in Berlin](#) (Jerusalem Post, September 8, 2014)

- [As Europe celebrates Jewish culture day, Brussels museum reopens](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 14, 2014)
- [Jewish leaders, Hungarian government meet for first time in a year](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 12, 2014)
- [Budapest Jews boot ex-leader over far-right government post](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 15, 2014)
- [Controversial reactions to legalization of ritual slaughter of animals in Lithuania](#) (Lithuania Tribune, September 23, 2014)
- [Belgian far-right party to push for ritual slaughter ban](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 29, 2014)
- [Even in Siberia, it's never too late for a Jewish awakening](#) (JNS.org, September 8, 2014)
- [Paris Moishe House to open amid uptick in anti-Semitic attacks in France](#) (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, September 15, 2014)
- [Portugal is now heart of a Sephardic revival](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 19, 2014)
- [Spain digging into Jewish past](#) (Times of Israel, September 2, 2014)
- [Inside the historic Manchester synagogue to be demolished in Gary Neville's luxury hotel and shops plan](#) (Manchester Evening News, September 9, 2014)
- [Two cultural institutions with very different stories](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 18, 2014)
- [New Sephardi leader is 'good news'](#) (Jewish Chronicle, September 23, 2014)
- [Muslims' WW2 help for Jews displayed at Cardiff synagogue](#) (BBC News, September 7, 2014)

/ ABOUT JPR

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The **European Jewish Digest** is a new monthly publication that summarises some of the key Jewish-interest stories in Europe, and provides links to articles about various newsworthy items. Its purpose is to provide the reader with an overview of incidents and activities that have occurred across Europe in the previous month.

As this is a new service we are particularly eager to receive feedback about it. If you have any comments, positive or negative, please [email us at JPR](#).