Hungary: Jewish Family History Research Guide

Hungary (Magyarorszag)

Like most European countries, Hungary’s borders have changed considerably over time. In 1690 the Austrian Hapsburgs completed the reconquest of Hungary and Transylvania from the Ottoman Turks. From 1867 to 1918, Hungary achieved autonomy within the “Dual Monarchy,” or Austro-Hungarian Empire, as well as full control over Transylvania. After World War I, the territory of “Greater Hungary” was much reduced so that areas that were formerly under Hungarian jurisdiction are today located within the borders of Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, and Yugoslavia (Serbia). Hungary regained control over some of these areas during World War II, but lost them again in 1945. Regions that belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary before the Treaty of Trianon (1920): Burgenland (Austria), Carpathian Ruthenia (from 1920 to 1938 part of Czechoslovakia, now Ukraine), Medimurje/Murakoz (Croatia), Prekmuje/Muravidek (Slovenia), Transylvania/Erdely-inc. Banat (Romania), Crisana/Partium (Romania), Maramures/Maramaros (Romania), Szeklerland/Szekelyfold (Romania); Upper Hungary/Felvidek (Slovakia); Vojvodina/Vajdasag (Serbia, Croatia); Croatia (Croatia), Slavonia (Croatia); Separate division- Fiume (nowadays Rijeka, Croatia).

How to Begin

Follow the general guidelines in our fact sheets on starting your family history research, immigration records, naturalization records, and finding your ancestral town. Determine whether your town is still within modern-day Hungary and in which county (megye) and district (jaras) it is located. If the town is not in modern Hungary, see our fact sheet for the country where it is currently located. A word of caution: Many towns in Hungary have the same name, and to distinguish among them, a prefix is usually added based upon the county or a nearby city or river. For example, some of the 15 variations on "Nagyfalú" (literally, "Big Village") are: Apanagyfalú, Dravanagyfalú, Havasnagyfalú, Ipolynagyfalú, Losoncnagyfalú, Nyitranagyfalú, and Tiszanaagyal. The following resources are extremely helpful for locating towns: Magyarorszag Helysegnevtara ket Kotetben, 1877. LDS microfiche #6000340-1, microfilm #s 599564 (v.1) and 973041 (v.2). This gazetteer provides each town’s Jewish population and synagogue location.

Available at the Genealogy Center

CGI DB 904 .G387 2004

A magyar korona orszagainak helysegnevvtara, 1882. List of counties with links to towns (by district, based mainly on the national census, 1882) available at Radix web site: www.bogardi.com/gen/g104.shtml.

**Vital and Other Records**

Depending on the time period, records may be in several languages: Hungarian, German, Hebrew, or Latin. By decree of the Austrian Emperor, in 1787 all Jews within the Empire were required to adopt German surnames. From 1848 onward, especially after 1867, Hungarian Jews increasingly adopted Magyar names. Although the Emperor also required the rabbi in each Jewish community to maintain registers of births, marriages, and deaths, the rule was often ignored before 1848. Events for smaller outlying towns and villages were recorded in a centralized district register. Civil (government) registration of vital events began throughout Hungary in 1895. A census of the Jews was conducted in 1848, and the first national Hungarian census was taken in 1869, but surviving records are incomplete. Other partial census returns also exist for other years, as well as various taxation and property lists dating back to the 1700s. From 1880, a census was taken every ten years. The last census of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was taken in 1910.

Hungarian Jews were quite patriotic and served as officers as well as enlisted soldiers. The Austro-Hungarian army in Vienna kept muster rolls and various other military records. The two main sources for Hungarian records are the Family History Library (FHL) of the Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) and archives in Austria and Hungary.

**Family History Library (FHL) of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS)**

The FHL has both pre-1895 vital records maintained by government appointed rabbis and post-1895 civil registration records. The early records start from about 1830 to 1850 but are spotty in the early years. The civil registration records include births from 1895 to 1920, marriages from 1895 to 1950 and deaths from 1895 to 1980. Check the FHL catalog for coverage; it is not complete. Digital images are available for many of the post 1895 records. Parts of the 1848 Census of the Jews, the 1869 national census (for the former Zemplen County in Northeastern Hungary, now in Slovakia), 1841 listing of Jews with their physical description from Eger, as well as earlier Hungarian governmental records of taxation and property lists (1768-1848) are available. The FHL also has an extensive collection of Austro-Hungarian military records. To identify the relevant films, go to the FHL website at [https://familysearch.org](https://familysearch.org), click on “Catalog”, and search under “Place-names” in the dropdown list. Supply the country, town name, and county, if known.

LDS microfilms can be ordered online for viewing at any LDS Family History Center including the Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute. The ordering website is [http://www.familysearch.org/films](http://www.familysearch.org/films). Further information and instructions on ordering microfilms for viewing at the Genealogy Institute can be found at [http://www.cjh.org/p/34#microloans](http://www.cjh.org/p/34#microloans). Many LDS microfilms of Jewish interest are available at
the Genealogy Institute on long-term loan. A list of these microfilms can be found at http://www.jgsny.org/microfilms-at-cjh.

The Hungary SIG of jewishgen (www.jewishgen.org/Hungary) has indexed several hundred thousand Jewish census records and pre-1895 vital records through the efforts of volunteers. The source for most of these records is the LDS FHL, but also includes some records not found in the FHL. These indexed records are included in the All Hungary Database.

A partial index to post-1895 Budapest vital records (mostly marriages) can be found on the website of the Hungarian Society of Family History Researchers (in Hungarian), www.macse.org/matriculae.

Records in Austria and Hungary

Austro-Hungarian military records may be obtained by visiting or writing to the Military Archive in Vienna: Kriegsarchiv, Nottendorfer Gasse 2, A-1030 Wien, telephone +43-1-79540-452, fax 43-1-79540-109. email:kapost@oesta.gv.at See www.genealogy.net/gene/reg/AUT/krainf-e.htm. Some of the military records may also be found at the county archives. Recent records after ca. 1870 are likely to be at the National Archives of Hungary (Orszagos Levetalat) in Budapest.

Pre-1895 birth, marriage, and death registers, Census Returns of Jews (Acta Judaeeorum) of 1725-1728-1755, the 1848 Census of the Jews (23 counties and 15 cities), and pre-1918 military conscription lists are available at the National Archives of Hungary, 1014 Budapest, Becsi kapu ter 2-4 (mailing address 1250 Budapest, P.O. Box 3), www.mol.gov.hu/angol/bal_menuar/about_us.html.

http://www.e-archivum.hu (only in Hungarian) you can find an inventory of the collections of the National Archives of Hungary and some of its finding aids as well. A description of the archival holdings preserved in the National Archives of Hungary can be found at http://www.natarch.hu/english/menu_31.htm. Census returns of Jews 1827-1853 are available at MAZSIHISZ Association of Jewish Communities of Hungary: The Jewish Museum and Archives of Hungary/Magyar-Zsido Okleveltar, H-1077 Budapest, Dohany u. 2, website: http://www.fsz.bme.hu/hungary/budapest/bpmuz/bpmuz19.htm. E-mail: pjewmus@visio.c3.hu phone: (+36-1) 3428-949.

To order post-1895 records (access limited to current year minus 90 years for births, minus 60 years for marriages, and minus 30 years for deaths), see: http://www.huembwas.org/consular/INFO/14-22/Genealogia.htm or contact the Hungarian Consulate (local address: 223 East 52nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10022, phone: 212-752-0661, fax: 212-755-5986). Under the same access limitations, vital records registers and record extracts are available in Hungary at local government offices and regional archives. For addresses, see...

### Resources at the Center for Jewish History

CJH’s online catalog may be accessed at [http://catalog.cjh.org](http://catalog.cjh.org).

#### General Books and Articles

- Fenyvesi, Charles. *When the World Was Whole: Three Centuries of Memories.* (Viking, 1990) YIVO 0008319


- Perlman, Robert, 1919-. *Bridging Three Worlds: Hungarian-Jewish Americans, 1848-1914.* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1991) AJHS DS135.H9 P47. 1991


- Suleiman, Susan. *Budapest Diary: In Search of the Motherbook.* (University of Nebraska Press, 1996) YIVO 00092375

#### Genealogical Research


· McCagg, William O. *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses in Modern Hungary*. (Columbia University Press, 1972) YIVO 00076006


**Landsmanshaftn Collections**

· Central Hungarian Sick Benevolent and Literary Society. Records, 1941-1975. Minutes, financial records, burial and monument permits. YIVO RG 989


· Pannonia Lodge No. 185, Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Records, 1920-1963. Minutes, financial and membership records, correspondence, and other items. YIVO RG 869

**Territorial and Photographic Collections**

· Territorial Collection. Assorted materials related to Jewish history and life, 1900s-1930s. Press clippings, original documents of the Jewish community of Tata-Tovaros, bound publication by Jewish prisoners of war (1916), anti-Semitic postcards. YIVO RG 116 – Hungary

Raphael Abramovitch Collection. 1920s-1930s. Photographs related to Jewish life in Europe and Israel, including Hungary. YIVO RG 390

American Joint Distribution Committee (AJDC) Photographs. Photographs depicting AJDC activities worldwide, including Hungary (DP period). YIVO RG 335.9

American ORT Federation (1922-1960). Country files and photos of vocational programs, including Hungary. YIVO RG 380

Institut der NSDAP zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (Frankfurt Am Main, 1930-1945). Nazi institute that collected materials on the Jewish question, including photographs from Hungary. YIVO RG 222

Holocaust – Books


Bar-Shaked, Gavriel, editor. Nevek : Magyar zsidók a Mauthausen-i koncentrációs táborban = Shemot ha-megorashim mi-Hungaryah ha-gedolah le-Mahane hahashmadah Ma’utha’uzen = Names of the Jews deported from greater Hungary to the Mauthausen Concentration camp.(Beate and Serge Klarsfeld Foundation, 2005) YIVO Hungary 2005 (Mezzanine)

Bar-Shaked, Gavriel, editor. Nevek : A Bihar megyéből kiűzött zsidók nevei (1. rész) = Shemot : shemot ha-megorashim mi-mehoz Bihar (helek1) = Names of the Jews deported from Bihar county (part 1). (Beate and Serge Klarsfeld Foundation, 2005) YIVO Hungary (Bihar Megye) (Mezzanine)
· Braham, Randolph L. *Eichmann and the Destruction of Hungarian Jewry*. (Twayne, 1961) YIVO 000063076


· Cesarani, David, ed. *Genocide and Rescue: the Holocaust in Hungary 1944*. (Berg, 1997) YIVO 00090686


· Counted Remnant: *Register of Survivors in Budapest 1946*. 4 volumes. YIVO Budapest 1946 05/08/02 N (Mezzanine) (3/22766)


· The Destruction of *Hungarian Jewry: A Documentary Account*. (Pro Arte, 1963) YIVO 0066170 (3/66170)


YIVO Library also has Yizkor (memorial) books for many places in Hungary: Abauj-Torna Megye, Bonyhad, Budapest, Debrecen, Derecske, Eger, Fehergyarmat, Hajdu-Bihar Megye, Hungary, Kisvarda, Mad, Nagykallo, Paks, Papa, Sataljaughely, Szkesfehervar, Ujpest (Budapest), Vas Megye, Zemplen Megye.

**Holocaust – Archives**

Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute • Center for Jewish History
15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011 • (212) 294-8318 •
http://www.cjh.org/collections/genealogy/factsheets.php
Eyewitness Accounts of the Holocaust Period (1939-1945). Accounts related to ghettos and death, labor, and internment camps; testimonies of Jews on the Aryan side and in hiding; and memoirs of Jewish partisans and underground fighters. A significant group of materials pertains to Hungary. **YIVO RG 104**

Territorial Collection. 180 microfilm reels of documents selected from state and municipal archives in Hungary related to the Jewish experience during the World War II period; memoirs, poems, other documents. **YIVO RG 116 – Hungary**

Berlin Collection. Records, 1931-1945. Fragmentary records of agencies of the Nazi government, including materials on occupied countries like Hungary. **YIVO RG 215**

**Websites**

- Hungarian SIG (H-SIG) includes all areas within “Greater Hungary”,
  [www.jewishgen.org/Hungary](http://www.jewishgen.org/Hungary)

- Hungarian genealogical terms and phrases translated into English:
  [www.bmi.net/jjaso/Hungarian_Terms_and_Phrases.html](http://www.bmi.net/jjaso/Hungarian_Terms_and_Phrases.html)

- Hungarian Society of Family History Researchers (in Hungarian): [www.macse.org](http://www.macse.org)

- Hungarian Jewish Homepage: [http://zsido.hu/guide/english.htm](http://zsido.hu/guide/english.htm)


- Interactive Hungarian Road Map: [http://lazarus.elte.hu/moterkep/indul.htm](http://lazarus.elte.hu/moterkep/indul.htm)


- Settlements detached from Hungary by the Treaty of Trianon 1920 (partial list A-K):
  [http://parizs.tripod.com/trianon/tria0200.html](http://parizs.tripod.com/trianon/tria0200.html)

- Jewish history of Hungary (contains some historical maps):
  [http://www.porges.net/JewishHistoryOfHungary.html](http://www.porges.net/JewishHistoryOfHungary.html)

- Maps of Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1882 and 1908: [www.feehls.org/maplibrary.html](http://www.feehls.org/maplibrary.html)

- Website for genealogists who are looking for Hungarian ancestry see (fee based):
  Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute • Center for Jewish History
  15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011 • (212) 294-8318 •
www.progenealogists.com/hungary/index.htm