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 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 the Holocaust period, but lost them again in 1945.

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: Apanagyalu, Dravanagyalu, Havasagyalu, Ipolyagyalu, Losoncnagyalu, Nyitranagyalu, and Tiszanagyalu. The following resources are extremely helpful for locating towns:

- Magyarorszag Helysegnevtraka ket Kotetben, 1877. LDS microfiche #6000340-1, microfilm #599564 (v.1) and 973041 (v.2). Gazetteer provides each town’s Jewish population and synagogue location.
- A magyar korona orszagainak helysegnevtraka, 1882. List of counties with links to towns (by district) available at Radix web site: www.bogardi.com/gen/g104.shtml.

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, before 1848 the rule was often ignored. 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.
- 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 microfilms of pre-1895 birth, marriage, and death records, usually starting between 1830 and 1850. Parts of the 1848 Census of the Jews and the 1869 national census are available, as well as earlier taxation and property lists. The FHL also has an extensive collection of Austro-Hungarian military records. To identify the relevant films, do a “Place Search” at www.familysearch.org/Eng/Library/FHLC/frameset_fhlc.asp, first using the town name, and then using the county name. For a list of microfilms on long-term loan at the Ackman & Ziff Family Genealogy Institute, see www.jgsny.org/microfiche.htm. Additional films are available through our short-term loan program, or at any LDS Family History Center (FHC).

Records in Austria and Hungary
- Austro-Hungarian military records may be obtained by visiting or writing to the Military Archive in Vienna: Kriegsarchiv, Nottendorfergasse 2-4, A-1030 Wien, telephone 43-1-79540-0, fax 43-1-79540-109. See www.genealogy.net/gene/reg/AUT/krainf-e.htm.
- Pre-1895 birth, marriage and death registers, Census Returns of Jews (Acta Judaeorum) 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, main telephone 36-1-356-5811, information 36-1-356-5811/116, fax 36-1-212-1619.
- 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/Consul/ENG/classical_cases/get_certificates/Certificates.htm or contact the Hungarian Consulate (local address: 223 East 52nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10022, telephone 212-752-0661).
- 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 (below) Haraszti, Gyorgy, Magyar zsido leveltartorium, or the National Archives of Hungary web site, www.mol.gov.hu.

Resources at the Center for Jewish History
CJH’s online catalog may be accessed at http://catalog.cjh.org.

General Books and Articles
- Fenyvesi, Charles. *When the World Was Whole: Three Centuries of Memories.* (Viking, 1990) YIVO /83219
- Schonfeld, Louis. “Hungarian Jewish History.” *Magyar Zsido* 2:1, 3-6. CGI
- Suleiman, Susan. *Budapest Diary: In Search of the Motherbook.* (U. Nebraska Pr., 1996) YIVO /92375

. Ackman and 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
Genealogical Research

- McCagg, William O. *Jewish Nobles and Geniuses in Modern Hungary.* (Columbia U. Press, 1972) YIVO 9/76006

Landsmanshaft Collections

- Central Hungarian Sick Benevolent and Literary Society. Records, 1938-1950s. Minutes, financial records, burial and monument permits. YIVO RG 1153
- Pannonia Lodge No. 185, Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Records, 1920-1972. Minutes, financial and membership records, correspondence, and other items. YIVO RG 869

Territorial and Photographic Collections

- Territorial Collection. Assorted materials relating 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 relating 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. Country files and photos of vocational programs, including Hungary. YIVO RG 380
- Institut der NSDAP zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (Frankfurt Am Main). Nazi institute that collected materials on the Jewish question, including photographs from Hungary. YIVO RG 222

Holocaust – Books

- Bar-Shaked, Gavriel. Nevek Munkaszázadok Veszteségei a Keleti Magyar Hadmuveleti = Shemot anshe pelugot ha-’avodah she-nispa ba-hazitot ha-mizrah Területeken = Names of Jewish Victims of Hungarian Labour Battalions. (Beate and Serge Klarsfeld Foundation, 1992) YIVO
- Bar-Shaked, Gavriel Nevek a Hajdú megyéből küzött zsidók nevei = Shemot ha-yehudim she-gurshu mi-mehoz Haydu be-Hungariyah = Names of the deported Jews from Hajdu County, Hungary. (Beate and Serge Klarsfeld Foundation, 1992) YIVO
Bar-Shaked, Gavriel. Nevek magyar zsidó nök a Stutthof-i koncentrációs táborn = Shemot : shemot nashim yehudim be-mahane Shtuthof = Names of Hungarian Jewish women in the Stutthof concentration camp. (Beate and Serge Klarsfeld Foundation, 1992) YIVO

Braham, Randolph L. Eichmann and the Destruction of Hungarian Jewry. (Twayne, 1961) YIVO 3/63076


Counted Remnant. Register of Survivors in Budapest 1946. 4 volumes. YIVO 3/22766


The Destruction of Hungarian Jewry: A Documentary Account. (Pro Arte, 1963) YIVO 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, Satoraljaujhely, Szekesfehervar, Ujpest (Budapest), Vas Megye, Zemplen Megye.

Holocaust – Archives

Eyewitness Accounts of the Holocaust Period. Accounts relating 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 relating 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

Web Sites

- Hungarian SIG (H-SIG) Includes all areas within "Greater Hungary": www.jewishgen.org/Hungary
- Hungarian National Archives: www.mol.gov.hu
- Hungarian Jewish Homepage: www.interdnet.hu/zsido/english
- HungaryGenWeb: www.rootsweb.com/~wghungar/
- Interactive Hungarian Road Map: http://lazarus.elte.hu/moterkep/indul.htm
- Jewish Cemeteries in Hungary: (photos) www.geocities.com/winter_peter_4/cemeteries.html
- Memorial Museum of Hungarian-Speaking Jewry (Safed, Israel): [www.hjm.org.il](http://www.hjm.org.il/)