

## Weekly Top 10

**WASHINGTON, D.C. November 8, 2019**

**TO: NCSEJ Leadership and Interested Parties**

**FROM: Daniel Rubin, Chairman;  
Aleksander Smukler, President;  
Mark B. Levin, Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO**

Dear Friend,

Please see below for the links to this week's news updates.  
We wish you a happy upcoming Shabbat.

Sincerely,



Mark B. Levin  
NCSEJ Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO

### **NCSEJ WEEKLY TOP 10** **Washington, D.C. November 8, 2019**

#### **ANTISEMITISM IN UKRAINE?** **PAUL ROBERT MAGOCSI** **The Jerusalem Post | November 7, 2019**

The recent elections in Ukraine have prompted some political commentators to note with a degree of surprise - even astonishment - that alongside Israel, Ukraine is the only country in the world that has a president and a prime minister, both of whom are Jewish. Why the surprise and astonishment? Because Ukraine historically has a reputation of being rife with antisemitism. Whether or not such a reputation is justified, the antisemitic stereotype of Ukraine exists to this day, in particular among Diaspora Jews and their sympathizers in various parts of the Western world.

Despite some proto-state structures and efforts to gain independence in the past, Ukraine as a sovereign state only came into being in 1991, a mere 28 years ago. In other words, Ukraine was, until then, ruled by other states.

[Read the full article here.](#)

#### **Hundreds gather in Kyiv for JDC's Active Jewish Teens sixth annual conference** **Jewish News Syndicate | November 7, 2019**

More than 400 Jewish teens from around the world are gathering for American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's (JDC) sixth annual Active Jewish Teens (AJT) Conference in Kiev this weekend to celebrate their growing role in fostering local Jewish identity and community. A bar and bat mitzvah ceremony for five teens (a conference first) will serve as a model of commitment to Judaism, leadership and taking action in regional communities.

[Read the full article here.](#)

#### **What the fall of the Berlin Wall meant for Eastern European Jews** **LIAM HOARE** **JTA | November 6, 2019**

"Neither ox nor donkey can block the path to socialism," the East German leader Erich Honecker

boldly declared on Aug. 14, 1989. Less than three months later, on Nov. 9, the Berlin Wall would fall. Newsweek's then-Berlin bureau chief Michael Meyer called 1989 the year that changed the world. In "We the People," British historian Timothy Garton Ash described the opening of the Berlin Wall as "a moment of emancipation and liberation." Ron Zuriel, a Jewish photography enthusiast, went to the wall frequently in the days following Nov. 9 to capture the moment. He told Mark Kurlansky for his 1995 book "A Chosen Few" that East Germans "came into a different world."

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **For Ukrainian Jews, having a Jewish president is a source of pride — and fear**

**Cnaan Lipshiz**

**JTA | November 6, 2019**

Arkady Kesselman, a 20-year-old Jewish student, was set on leaving his native Ukraine for the West last winter.

In a war-torn nation losing about 1.2 million citizens each year, where the average monthly salary is about \$300, it's not an unusual decision.

But Kesselman has since changed his mind. The reason? Volodymyr Zelensky's landslide victory in May's presidential election.

Zelensky, a 41-year-old Jewish actor with no prior experience in politics — he became famous starring on a TV show as a teacher who unexpectedly becomes president — ran on a campaign based on fighting corruption and ending the territorial feud with Russia.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **New Holocaust Museum to Expose Horrors of WWII Romania**

**Marcel Gascón Barberá**

**Balkan Insight | November 5, 2019**

One Saturday in October during the Bucharest Jewish Film Festival, Romanian-born French film maker Nellu Cohn launched his documentary about the pogrom in Iasi, a series of massacres that continued for about a week in the north-eastern Romanian town in June 1941.

Close to 15,000 Jews, or a third of the city's Jewish population, were shot dead or suffocated inside cattle trains after being rounded up by the Romanian authorities in collaboration with Nazi German officers and part of the civil population.

When the 52-minute documentary ended, the public at the Romanian capital's National Peasant Museum voiced their horror at the facts that Cohn had presented through the testimonies of the survivors combined with official documents and pictures from the time.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **Polish PM marks 76th anniversary of mass execution of Jews at Majdanek**

**The First News | November 4, 2019**

Polish PM Mateusz Morawiecki on Monday commemorated Nazi Germany's World War II Aktion Erntefest, which saw the mass shooting of over 18,000 Jews at the Majdanek concentration camp in Lublin, eastern Poland.

"Aktion Erntefest shows that the scale of German barbarity and cruelty is unimaginable for us today," PM Morawiecki wrote on Twitter.

On November 3, 1943, German forces shot dead more than 18,000 Jews at the Majdanek camp as part of Aktion Erntefest (German for Operation Harvest Festival) in the biggest mass extermination at German concentration camps and one of the biggest committed during the war. A further 24,000 Jews were killed by the Germans in the Trawniki and Poniatowa camps near Lublin as part of the operation. The mass killings completed the extermination of the Jewish population of the Lublin district.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **PLACING SECURITY FOR JEWISH CEMETERIES ON THE GLOBAL AGENDA**

**Isaak Shapira**

**The Jerusalem Post | November 2, 2019**

It is now clear that antisemitism is rising around the world at a dizzying pace.

Many taboos have been broken in recent years, including the denial, minimization and trivialization of the Holocaust; the murderous attacks on synagogues; establishment political leaders justifying hate against Jews; the threats and beating of little Jewish children; and the chasing of Jews from the public space in many countries. Online hate is growing and becoming more mainstream.

Understandably, these types of attacks receive a lot of attention, budgets for security and strong condemnation.

However, there is another type of antisemitic attack which is growing faster than any other and is arguably the Jewish community's most vulnerable target.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **Ukrainian Israeli Innovation Summit Held in Kyiv UNIAN | November 4, 2019**

On 30 October, the second international technological conference Ukrainian Israeli Innovation Summit 2019: The Industries of the Future was held at UNIT.City Innovation Park. The event was held within the framework of the first Israeli Innovation Week in Ukraine and attended by more than 600 representatives of the tech companies, top managers of the corporations, investors and start-ups from Ukraine and Israel. "The mission of the Israeli Innovation Week in Ukraine is to unite the leaders of the tech industry of two countries, to demonstrate the business potential of Ukraine to the Israeli investors and companies, and to accelerate implementation of the advanced Israeli technologies and innovations in Ukraine," said Alyona Novgorodskaya, the Founder & Executive Producer at the Israeli Innovation Week and the Ukrainian Israeli Innovation Summit and CEO & Founder at the Global Israeli Initiative.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **Hungary & Russia to protect persecuted Christians in Middle East Stefan J. Bos Vatican News | November 1, 2019**

Speaking in Budapest, Russian President Putin expressed concern about a "massive exodus" of Christian communities from the Middle East. He said Christians face persecution and being killed, raped, and robbed.

Putin, whose military faces criticism over conduct in areas such as Syria, stressed that supporting Christians in conflict areas is now "a top priority" for Russia.

"We also cooperate with every stakeholder in the Middle East and North Africa. We see it as inadmissible that some of the Christian community members may be persecuted for their religious belief."

And he claimed that Russian forces are already assisting Jewish groups and that they have restored mosques in the troubled region.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **US, Ukraine alone oppose Russian UN vote condemning honors to Nazis Cnaan Lipshiz JTA | November 8, 2019**

The United States and Ukraine were the only countries that voted at the United Nations against a resolution submitted by Russia in favor of "combating the glorification of Nazism."

All European Union members as well as Canada and Australia abstained during Thursday's vote on the resolution, which passed thanks to a majority of 121 countries in favor, including Israel.

The resolution is widely seen as devised by Russia to isolate Ukraine and several other East European countries where anti-Russian sentiment has contributed to the government-led honoring of collaborators with Nazi Germany, including perpetrators of Holocaust atrocities, because they also fought against the Soviet Union.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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### **About NCSEJ**

Founded in 1971, the National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry represents the organized American Jewish community in monitoring and advocating on behalf of the estimated 1.5 million Jews in Eastern Europe and

Eurasia, including the 15 successor states of the former Soviet Union.

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