

Arrow Cross Party

(in Hungarian, Nyilas), Hungarian fascist party and movement established in 1937 by Ferenc Szalasi. The Arrow Cross ideology included Hungarian nationalism, the elevation of agriculture as a value, anti-capitalism, anti-Communism, and militant antisemitism.

In the 1939 Hungarian national election the Arrow Cross Party won more than 25 percent of the vote. Subsequently it became Hungary's most important opposition party. The party's foreign policy was faithfully pro-Nazi; despite this, it was not included in Hungary's pro-Nazi government, even after Germany occupied Hungary in March 1944. However, in October of that year, government leader Miklos Horthy declared that Hungary would no longer be a partner of Germany. The German authorities promptly dismissed him and set up a new government led by Szalasi.

Under the Arrow Cross, Hungarian Jews were terrorized: deportations were renewed and nearly 80,000 Jews were expelled from Hungary in a death march to the Austrian border. Many died on the way. At the same time, thousands of Jews were murdered in Budapest.

The Arrow Cross government was dissolved when the Soviet army liberated Budapest in January 1945. Many Arrow Cross leaders were put on trial as war criminals, while most of the party's regular members resumed normal civilian life.