

## Union of Romanian Jews

(*Uniunea Evreilor Romani*, UER), Romania's oldest and most important Jewish organization. In 1938 Romania's King Carol II dissolved all of his country's political organizations, including the UER. Until that time, the UER worked at defending Jewish interests; achieved the institution of and maintained civil rights for Jews; fought official and unofficial antisemitism; and encouraged the incorporation of Jews into Romanian life.

The union was headed by Wilhelm Filderman, considered by many to be the leading Jew in Romania. During the war, Filderman managed to convince his contacts in the Romanian government not to deport the Jews living within pre-World War I Romania and in Southern Transylvania to the extermination camps in Poland.

After Romania's liberation, the UER concentrated on defending the human rights of Romanian Jews. Union members worked very hard to reintroduce Holocaust survivors into Romania's economic life and restore Jewish property that had been confiscated during the war. However, the Jewish Communists considered the union to be a threat, and union leaders an impediment to their Communist programs among the Jews. They managed to divide the union and form a breakaway organization with the help of some of Filderman's closest assistants. The UER's activities were cancelled in late 1947.