Ministry of Diaspora Affairs
Creating a common Jewish future

Antisemitism
Annual Assessment 2021

Antisemitism on social media

Antisemitic surge during operation "Guardian of the Walls"

Anti-vaxxers and the yellow star

Presented to the Government of Israel on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day
Letter from the Minister of Diaspora Affairs

Dear Friends,

While writing these remarks for the annual Antisemitism Report, I was confronted by the scenes at the Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, where four Jews were taken hostage. This attack underlined in the clearest possible terms just how exposed Jews around the world can be to antisemitic incitement, hatred and violence. But in truth we need no reminding, because the massive wave of antisemitic incidents that flooded the world this year, both during and after the conflict with Hamas in May was unprecedented in its scope, range, and size. Jew hatred raised its ugly head on an unprecedented scale across the world’s most popular social media networks as well as on the streets of major international cities.

More than ever, it was made clear that when Israel becomes involved in an armed conflict, even of a defensive nature, such operations generate a fierce global backlash against Jews. This phenomenon requires the State of Israel’s immediate attention and future vigilance.

The time has come for the State of Israel to take a greater role in the global fight against the antisemitism which frequently threatens our Jewish brothers and sisters.

As demonstrated in this report’s data on social media, ‘new antisemitism’ spreads far more easily on mainstream platforms, such as Twitter, than classical forms of antisemitism. This is perhaps due to the way in which it blurs the lines between critique and hate.

For these reasons and others, Israel must stand at the forefront of the fight against antisemitism in solidarity with world Jewry. We must lead by example and demand that other countries make similar efforts.

We must also ensure that our efforts in Israel are properly coordinated among all the different groups working on combating antisemitism so that our role is as effective and constructive as possible.

Most importantly, we must formulate a long-term strategy for fighting this relentless enemy. Last year, the European Union published a lengthy, multi-tiered strategy document to combat antisemitism among its member states, yet the Jewish state has yet to devise a similarly comprehensive approach.

It is surely incumbent on the State of Israel to step up its own efforts in the never-ending campaign against Jew hatred. Although a decisive defeat of this seemingly eternal scourge seems unlikely, Israel must remain unwavering in the campaign to protect its Jewish brethren around the globe from the world’s oldest hatred.

Dr. Nachman Shai
Minister of Diaspora Affairs
Letter from the Director-General of the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs

This past year brought about a new wave of antisemitism around the world, both online and offline. In particular, Israel’s Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in May led to a social media avalanche of antisemitism and transformed Jewish individuals and communities around the world into targets.

As an ongoing concern, the Covid-19 crisis continues to be used by perpetrators seeking to blame the Jewish people for the pandemic.

These realities directly impact the quality of life and security of Jewish communities while putting added strain on world Jewry’s relationship with Israel.

The battle against antisemitism is an integral part of the Ministry of Diaspora Affair’s responsibility and mandate. We work on several of levels to respond appropriately to this challenge, including support in times of crisis and emergency, public awareness campaigns, and monitoring of social media.

In that spirit, this report documents the main developments identified over the past year. This includes increasingly blurred lines between anti-Israel and antisemitic arguments, and the strengthening of anti-Israel political forces. Both trends have the potential to impact U.S.-Israel relations and Israel’s national security moving forward.

As in past years, this report is presented to the government and other relevant decision makers with the goal of engaging Israeli policy makers and civil society on this important topic. We aim to use this insight to drive our work, with the ultimate goal of eliminating threats facing our Jewish brothers and sisters worldwide.

Tziona Koenig-Yair
Director-General
Ministry of Diaspora Affairs
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Antisemitism in 2021 – Key Trends

Distinguished friends,

The report before you summarizes the key antisemitic trends and developments in 2021, according to the latest available data in our possession.

2021 will go down as another record year in the number of antisemitic incidents. The two main factors that affected the antisemitism picture this year were Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ and the Covid-19 pandemic, along with its associated lockdowns, restrictions of movement, and vaccination policies. Ostensibly, one could have expected, in a year in which lockdowns and restrictions on movement reduced the potential for encounters between people, that the number of antisemitic incidents would decline. This was not the case however. Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ led to antisemitic outbursts, both online and in the streets, on a numerical and geographical scale of which we have not seen in years. Covid-19 restrictions prompted anti-vaxxers to accuse the Jews of responsibility for the pandemic, for profiteering from vaccinations and the economic crisis, and of exploiting it to strengthen their grip on governments and on the global economy. This was accompanied by the cynical exploitation and distortion of the Holocaust through comparisons made between freedom of movement restrictions for the unvaccinated and the restrictions imposed by the Nazis on the Jews, as well as the use of the yellow Star, and the revival of antisemitic conspiracy theories.

The encouraging statistic from the past year is the absence of casualties from antisemitic attacks around the world, thanks to the alertness of security forces and citizens.

In the United States, the home of the largest Jewish community outside Israel, 90% of Jews feel that antisemitism is a problem and 80% believe it has worsened in recent years. This mood matches the findings of the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs’ Monitoring Center according to which antisemitic discourse in the United States is becoming normalized and is penetrating mainstream national politics on university campuses and on the street. It is important to note that antisemitism in the United States comes from both ends of the political spectrum. At one end, far-right activists and white supremacists continue to pose a significant security risk to Jewish communities. At the other end, activists on the far-left and supporters of intersectionality theory, as well as coalitions of minorities and Islamists, are working to socially exclude Jews from their midst because they view them as belonging to the privileged and oppressive white majority, and as part of an attempt to delegitimize the connection between Jews and Israel. The Jewish community, for its part, is taking initial steps to formulate a response to this phenomenon, both in terms of security arrangements for communities and in rebuffing the arguments of the coalition of minorities and the supporters of intersectionality theory.

In Europe, against the backdrop of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ and Covid-19 restrictions, the number of antisemitic incidents reached new heights in the UK, Austria, and Germany. A positive exception was France, where the government adopted a preemptive policy to prevent attacks on Jews during the operation. This year, the Council of Europe unveiled an ambitious strategic plan, its first ever, to combat antisemitism and foster Jewish life on the continent. The contents of the plan have special relevance given the reports received from across Europe about an increase in the number of antisemitic incidents in the past year and considering trends distorting and trivializing Holocaust remembrance. However, while the Council strives to guarantee Jewish life, European Union member states are at the same time pressing ahead with legislation prohibiting kosher slaughter, with the backing of the European Court of Justice. It should be noted that while the imposition of these restrictions in Belgium was justified on the
basis of animal cruelty, the same court ruling permitted sports hunting for cultural reasons. The Jewish communities, for their part, are troubled by the ruling and have expressed concerns that this trend will continue and be extended to male circumcision and other issues (in Greece, legislation opposing kosher slaughter was passed last year). Similar legislation, driven by animal-rights issues or attempts to restrict immigration, while not necessarily directed against Jews, may render Jewish religious life on the continent impossible.

In the region of the former Soviet Union, communities enjoy a certain degree of personal security, and this year even saw a slight decline in violent incidents. Nevertheless, antisemitism, both widespread and acceptable, is still wielded as a political tool by governments and political parties. With the region's countries suffering from political and social instability, rival factions accuse each other of being Jewish or of being under the control of the Jews. Jews are also accused of dual loyalty and of acting in a manner that is contrary to the local national interest. The subject of Holocaust remembrance, including denial of the Holocaust's uniqueness and its use to further socio-political aims, is a key theme in the region's prevalent antisemitic trends. A battle is being waged over the historical narrative and the boundaries of research, and nationalistic heroes and collaborators with the Nazis are being whitewashed and glorified. The region's social media networks, particularly 'Vkontakte', continue to be a focal point for the dissemination of antisemitic content and themes, without the local enforcement agencies weighing in on the matter.

In the Arab world, the predominant trend in the antisemitic discourse was the renewed centrality of the Palestinian cause in the wake of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’. This trend is expressed in two forms: first, identification with the Palestinians throughout the Arab and Western worlds, which sometimes escalated into antisemitism. Second, an increase in antisemitic statements by senior Palestinian officials in the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, alongside a widespread Palestinians discourse negating the Jewish-Zionist-Israeli connection to, and history in, the Land of Israel (the PA) and reference to the steps to be taken the day after the “liberation of Palestine” (Hamas). At the same time, the incorporation of antisemitic motifs in the anti-normalization discourse declined, probably because no additional Arab countries signed up to the Abraham Accords. That said, there were also positive signs this year: Morocco ratified the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Charter, while the contents of school textbooks were changed in Qatar, Morocco and Egypt in a manner that will diminish antisemitism. In several countries (Morocco, Bahrain), Jewish sites have been restored, and Jewish communities are being established and realized in the Gulf States.

The working definition of antisemitism established by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Charter and the illustrations contained in it, continue to prove a vital tool in identifying and combating antisemitism. To date, 839 countries, organizations and institutions have adopted the definition. A quarter of them did so in the past year. The illustrations accompanying the definition also include phenomena such as Holocaust trivialization and distortion, denial of the right of the Jewish People to self-determination, for example, by using the argument that Israel’s existence is a racist enterprise, drawing comparisons between Israel’s present policies and those of the Nazis, or the collective view that all Jews are responsible for the actions of the State of Israel. At the same time, the definition emphasizes that criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism directed at any other country, cannot be taken as antisemitic. These clarifications are particularly important against the backdrop of the antisemitic trends observed this year and considering the heated debate about the specific reference to Israel in the definition. Experience shows that while, in theory, a distinction can be made between being anti-Israel and antisemitism, in reality, we see repeatedly how protests defined as anti-Israel protests prove to be antisemitic, and how political parties, movements and organizations that define themselves as being “only” anti-Israel, create a hostile and unwelcome environment for Jews, regardless of their
opinions. In this context, it is noteworthy that 38 countries boycotted this year’s United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban, refusing to take part in this spectacle of hatred.

Social media continued this year to constitute a pivotal platform for dissemination of antisemitic discourse, ideology and ideas, and for antisemites to interact with one another. In 2021, the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs’ Monitoring System documented 3.5 million antisemitic posts written by 422,000 users on the networks it tracks. Of these, 431,000 antisemitic posts were written during Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ and in the days preceding it. This figure constitutes an increase of 230% compared to the month before the operation. The level of violence in the discourse also escalated, alongside an increase in violence towards Jews in the street. In addition, the system identified orchestrated campaigns inciting hatred and division that millions of web surfers were exposed to. All these point to the fact that the actions taken by the social media networks are inadequate and that an international effort is needed to press for industry norms that will diminish the hate speech they host.

In summary, 2021 was another record year for the number of antisemitic incidents. Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ and the outbursts of antisemitism in the days before and during the hostilities, highlighted the vital importance of formulating social media network standards to prevent them constituting a platform for the dissemination and incitement of hate speech. The data pointed to a link between online antisemitism and antisemitism in the street. Demonstrations by anti-vaxxers against mandatory vaccination and Covid-19 restrictions, and the cynical use of Holocaust symbols and conspiracy theories, emphasize the need for Holocaust studies and serve to indicate that the struggle for Holocaust remembrance requires far greater allocation of resources. It is important to emphasize that these efforts are not the exclusive imperative of the Jewish People. These struggles are shared by all those who seek to live in a civilized society free of hatred, and the Council of Europe’s plans are an important step in this direction. In the meantime, a survey conducted by Israel’s Ministry of Diaspora Affairs found a strong sense of solidarity between the Jews in Israel and the Jewish People in the diaspora. 90% of respondents reported that they were troubled by antisemitism in the diaspora, and some 80% of these believe that Israel should allocate more resources to combating antisemitism. This solidarity is based on the sense of a shared Jewish destiny and on the recognition that antisemitism has a substantive impact on the well-being and existence of Jewish communities in the diaspora and on the resilience and standing of Israel in the international arena. It is my fervent hope that we will succeed in drawing on this solidarity during the coming year as Israel, the communities in the diaspora, and the friends of the Jewish People jointly combat antisemitism.

I wish to express my gratitude to all those whose hard work contributed to the preparation of this report: the Sayiqan team, Chairman Dr. Haim Assa, CEO Shir Oz, Avner Druk, Johanna Mamane, Dr. Susanne Cohen-Weisz, Daphna Kaufman, Dr. Ronen Zeidel, Maaty Frenkelzon, Adrian David Gruszniewski, Yossi Barnea and Eli Nahum. The staff of NATIV in the Prime Minister’s Office, the IJL’s Legal Center for Combating Antisemitism, the staff of the Kantor Center, and Prof. Dina Porat, the Combat Antisemitism Movement, and Sacha Roytman-Dratwa. Special thanks to the staff at the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs under the leadership of Minister Dr. Nachman Shai, Director-General Tziona Koenig-Yair, Deputy Director-General Hagay Elitzur, and to Yom Tov Raanan, and Orel Zaken, and to all those who toil night and day to ensure safe and prosperous Jewish life in the diaspora.

Sincerely yours,

Yogev Karasenty
Director for Combating Antisemitism
Ministry of Diaspora Affairs
Significant Events of 2021

General: Two significant cross-border events influenced the general manifestation of antisemitism in 2021: the escalation of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, peaking during Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’, that caused an outburst of antisemitism both on the street and online (see below), and the continued spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, and its accompanying restrictions. Once again, this year, these brought about the widespread use of Holocaust-related terminology by protestors against the vaccination policy and the Covid-19 restrictions on the freedom of movement and gathering. Some, wearing a yellow star and distorting other symbols and imagery taken from the Holocaust (e.g., the concentration camps), compared the restrictions to the policies of the Nazi regime towards the Jews. Others consumed and distributed antisemitic conspiracy theories, blaming the Jews for the crisis and for utilizing it for oppression, to achieve world domination, economic gain, etc.

January

Austria: The Austrian Federal Government presented the National Strategy Against Antisemitism, a comprehensive package that contains 38 measures from the fields of education, security, law enforcement, judiciary, integration, Europe-wide data exchange, and social measures, which aim to recognize, name, and effectively combat antisemitism.

April

France: The French Court of Cassation ruled that the murderer of 64-year-old Jewish physician, Sarah Halimi, could not be tried since he had was delusional because of his use of cannabis. During the murder, committed in 2017, the perpetrator shouted “Allahu Akbar” and recited Quranic verses. However, the court recognized the antisemitic character of the act, a decision that set off an uproar of angry reactions, and demands to change the legislation in this area.

Across the world: a wave of antisemitism swept the world during and immediately after the escalation of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict at the time of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in Gaza in May, and Jewish communities worldwide experienced a wave of antisemitic hate crimes. Demonstrators gathered in large numbers and expressed solidarity with the Palestinians. Jewish institutions were targeted, and Jews were collectively blamed for Israel’s actions. The demonstrations were accompanied by a sharp rise in online antisemitic hate speech.

August

Germany: The government decided to invest EUR 35 million in research and educational projects focused on understanding the causes of antisemitism and effectively combating it.

September

U.N: The first Durban Conference was held in 2001, as a UN-sponsored world event intended to promote the fight against racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia. The fourth Durban Conference, held in September to mark the 20th anniversary of the original conference, was formally boycotted by 38 countries, on the grounds of it having become a stage for New Antisemitism and anti-Zionism.

Gaza: A Hamas-sponsored conference held in September in Gaza addressed the steps to be taken
following “the liberation of Palestine”. The conference was attended by a member of the Hamas Political Bureau and opened with a statement by Yahya Sinwar. Topics discussed at the conference included reference to the treatment of the Jewish population after the “liberation”. It was determined that some of the Jews who served in the army and the security services would be put to death, others would be put on trial, while groups from certain professions, whose contribution to Palestine was deemed necessary, such as engineers and physicians, would be forced to remain, and would be prohibited from leaving the country.

Belgium: The Belgian Constitutional Court decided to uphold two decrees adopted in the regions of Flanders and Wallonia banning Kosher religious slaughter, after receiving and analyzing the response of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) issued in December 2020. These rulings by the Belgian court and the CJEU, have far reaching consequences on European Jews’ ability to maintain full Jewish life, and is expected to result in the introduction of similar bans in other EU member countries, severely harm Jewish life, and contribute to the spread of antisemitic attitudes.

November

France: The French court sentenced the murderer of Mireille Knoll, an elderly Jewish Holocaust survivor, to life imprisonment, with no possibility of parole for 22 years. The court stressed that the attack, which began as a robbery, was fueled by a broader antisemitic context and prejudices about the purported wealth of Jewish people.

U.K.: Keir Starmer, the new leader of the Labour Party, apologized to the Jewish community in Britain for antisemitism within the party ranks and recognized the need to fight “anti-Zionist antisemitism”.
Dramatic Surge in Global Antisemitism in the Wake of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’: A Spotlight on Online Radicalization

INTRODUCTION

A wave of virulent antisemitism swept the world in the wake of the latest escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both during and immediately after Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ conducted by the IDF in the Gaza Strip in May 2021, Jewish communities worldwide experienced an outbreak of antisemitic hate crimes while protesters rallied en-masse in many countries to express solidarity with the Palestinians. The perpetrators of these attacks purposely targeted Jews and Jewish institutions, holding Jewish individuals collectively responsible for the actions of the State of Israel.

Concerning the main propagators’ identity and ideological background, the primary source of antisemitic attitudes linked to the Israel-Gaza fighting emanated predominantly from radical and political Islam, pro-Palestinian groups, Palestinian nationalists, and the radical left.
Main Global Manifestations of Antisemitism during May 2021

- **US** - The ADL recorded 251 antisemitic incidents from May 11–31, a sharp increase of 115% compared to the same period in 2020, when 117 incidents were reported. An ADL survey found that 60% of American Jews “witnessed behavior or comments they deem antisemitic, either online or in-person” following the conflict. Furthermore, according to a recent survey released by the AJC, the proportion of American Jews who thought that “the extreme political left” poses at least a slight antisemitic threat increased sharply, from 61% last year to 71% this year.

- **UK** - According to the Community Security Trust (CST), British Jews experienced an “unprecedented number of antisemitic incidents” during May with a monthly record of 639 antisemitic incidents. Moreover, the CST reported 1,308 antisemitic incidents nationwide between January-June 2021, a 49% increase on the same period in 2020 and the highest recorded in the first half of a year.

- **Canada** - According to B’nai Brith Canada, more than 250 antisemitic incidents were reported in Canada in May alone, including 61 incidents of violent assault, the highest figure on record for such physical violence in a single month since reporting began in 1982.

- **Germany** - Jews were brutally attacked across the country while hundreds protested outside synagogues and desecrated Holocaust memorials.

- **France** - No violent antisemitic incidents were reported in France amid a government ban on pro-Palestinian protests in Paris, demonstrating the effectiveness of anticipatory policymaking in containing antisemitic manifestations offline.

- **The Muslim world** - Crowds chanted fundamentalist antisemitic slogans and slurs at rallies across the Middle East and North Africa.

Furthermore, data shows an explosion of online antisemitic hate speech amid the latest round of violence. Malicious actors used the internet and social media as a propaganda tool to spread disinformation and alternative facts aimed at delegitimizing and demonizing the Jewish state. This reemphasizes the major role of the internet and social media in the dissemination of hate speech and disinformation, as well as a vector and amplifier of radicalization. The following chapter will focus on the online manifestations of antisemitism during the recent escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in May 2021.

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5. Bnai Brith Canada, “SPECIAL REPORT: Last Month’s Surge of Antisemitism Far Worse Than First Thought”, [www.bnaibrith.ca](http://www.bnaibrith.ca)
METHODOLOGY

The following report is based on the outcomes of several different efforts conducted by the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs aimed at countering antisemitic hate speech online. It applies a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative analysis and data science techniques, with the goal of exposing the extent of antisemitic hate speech disseminated on social media and identifying the main trends in May 2021.

The primary source of the data provided, including statistical data and related trends, is the Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS) - a real-time monitoring system based on artificial intelligence and semantic analysis technologies - developed and operated by Sayiqan Cyber Technologies for Israel's Ministry of Diaspora Affairs. Below is a summary of ACMS's main characteristics:

- Using real-time social media data collection and analysis methods, ACMS quantifies, classifies, and geo-localizes antisemitic discourse (open data).

- Antisemitic hate speech is defined according to the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

- The discourse is classified in three main categories: Classic Antisemitism, New Antisemitism, and Holocaust denial & Distortion. Each main category is subdivided into several subcategories of discourse (Ex: "Jewish conspiracy", "Zionist conspiracy", "demonization of the Jews", "demonization of Israel", "radical Islam", "far-right", "glorification of Nazism", "Holocaust denial" etc.)

- Five social media platforms are monitored: Twitter, 4Chan, BitChute, Stormfront, and 8Kun. It should be noted that four of the five platforms monitored are widely described as a haven for right-wing extremists, hence an overrepresentation of far-right related data in the statistics provided in this report.

- Six languages are monitored: English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish, and Russian.

- Monitoring period: May 2021

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4 The concept of ‘New Antisemitism’ refers to some virulent antisemitic forms of anti-Zionism as framed by the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.
KEY FINDINGS

Monitoring Period: May 6–21, 2021

- ACMS recorded **431,000 antisemitic posts** written by 124,000 users between May 6–21, 2021. This represents an increase of 230% compared to the same period in April 2021.

- Data shows a dramatic spike in violent rhetoric against Israel and Jews in online conversations (+1200% in May 2021 versus May 2020.)

- Paris was identified as the city with the highest number of unique users disseminating antisemitic hate speech, followed by New York, Berlin, and Los Angeles. By country, the US is by far the most dominant, followed by France, Germany, and the UK.

- Breakdown per languages: 42.6% of the antisemitic content was posted in English, 19.3% in French, 17.8% in Arabic, 12.6% in Spanish, 6.5% in German, and 1.1% in Russian.

- Classification of antisemitic discourse: New Antisemitism constitutes 84% of all global antisemitic content, Classic Antisemitism makes up 10%, while Holocaust Denial & Distortion comprises 6%. Moreover, analysis by discourse subcategories shows that Demonization of Israel constitutes the most prevalent type of antisemitism, followed by Delegitimization of Israel, Conspiracy Theories, BDS, Nazification of Israel, and Radical Islam.

Data Source: Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS)
This timeline shows the significant upward trend in the quantity of antisemitic content posted on social media during the latest Israeli-Palestinian violence, demonstrating the strong correlation between the conflict itself and online expressions of antisemitism.

Breakdown of antisemitic discourse by subcategory - May 6-21

Virulent anti-Zionist sentiment - as framed by the IHRA working definition of antisemitism - constitutes the most prevalent form of antisemitism spread online during the latest Israeli-Palestinian hostilities. It appears as another exemplification of the pervasiveness of the new forms of antisemitism, which are expressed via the use of "symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism to characterize Israel or Israelis".
ANTISEMITISM FUELED BY A PROPAGANDA WAR

1. An Epidemic of Disinformation Sparked Rise in Antisemitic Sentiment

In the PR war against the Jewish state, the dissemination of deliberately false, misleading, or biased information has proven significant in the shaping and mobilizing of international public opinion, given that pro-Palestinian voices have a much wider reach than those supporting Israel. The latest round of Israeli–Palestinian violence was no exception. A pro-Palestinian disinformation campaign aimed at demonizing and delegitimizing the Jewish state was launched on social media, sparking a wave of antisemitic reactions. The false or misleading claims were amplified as they were shared hundreds of thousands of times, creating an insular bubble of information and online echo chambers. The attempt to draw a moral equivalence between Hamas and Israel, as well as the high prevalence of fallacies in the public discourse about the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, should also arouse awareness.

Among other false or distorted claims, propagandists exploited a legal dispute over property between Jews and Palestinians in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem, claiming that the State of Israel is orchestrating a deliberate plan to “ethnically cleanse” Jerusalem of its Muslim population and take control of Muslim holy sites. Furthermore, fake news alleging that Jews celebrated a fire in the Al-Aqsa compound on Jerusalem Day went viral on social media. Many asserted that the ‘Jewish settlers’ set fire to the mosque and then celebrated the blaze at the Western Wall. [Fact check: A tree caught fire outside Jerusalem’s Al-Aqsa Mosque, but the blaze was quickly put out and no damage was caused to the mosque. The fire was caused accidentally by Palestinians lighting fireworks. At the same time, Jews engaged in a yearly tradition of dancing at the Western Wall to celebrate Jerusalem Day, with no connection to the fire]. Radicals also spread the false claim that Jews were marking Muslim houses with distinctive signs, “like the Nazis did to the Jews” to allow “Zionist gangs” to subsequently identify them and commit anti-Muslim pogroms. Moreover, propagandists accuse the Israeli army of intentionally murdering Palestinian children, portraying the Jewish state as a child killer.
2. Nazification of Israel: Holocaust Inversion

The latest round of hostilities also led to the extensive use of terminology that associates it with Nazism. More than 28,000 posts collected by the ACMS between May 6-21 were classified in the subcategory ‘Nazification of Israel’. On the one hand, Israel is compared to Nazi Germany and is accused of orchestrating a systematic extermination of Palestinians. On the other hand, the narrative equating the treatment of Muslims with that of Jews before or during the Holocaust has become a pattern of discourse in Islamist propaganda. At global pro-Palestinian rallies, protesters held placards and shouted slogans comparing the Jewish state to the Nazis and blaming Israel for committing a “Holocaust” in Gaza.

3. A Significant Rise in Violent Rhetoric

Data shows a clear upward trend in the volume and proportion of antisemitic hate speech containing apology of violence in May 2021. The number of posts calling for violence against Israel, Zionists, and Jews published on the social media platforms monitored by the ACMS increased by 1200% in May 2021 compared to May 2020 (from 516 posts to 7000) with 59% of the content being published in Arabic and 37% in English. Most of the violent rhetoric targeted the Jewish state, Israelis, and “Zionists” (95%). Moreover, some took to social media to glorify Hitler and the Holocaust.

Figure 4. Timeline of Antisemitic Discussions Containing Calls for Violence in 2021

This timeline shows the significant upward trend in the number of social media posts in May 2021 calling for violence against Israel, Zionists, and Jews.
Examples of antisemitic content promoting violence related to the latest conflict

Abdul Ahad Hashmi // zimen stan arc @ahadwinchester - 12 mai
Inshahullah Al-Aqsa and jerusalem will never be yours. you retarded Jews. You will burn in hell fire you all will beg for your life and pay for your sins. Inshahullah. If muslims can unite to support Palestine ALLAH will help them Inshahallah

#IsraelTerrorism

LithuanianEMS @ChatCatholic

#PalestineUnderAttack #Hamas #DeathToIsrael #DeathToJews more of this

Support For Palestine @SupportForPale1

Hey Zionist listen. I will kill 400 Jews in the revenge of my 4 people.
#londonontario

4:38 PM - 8 juin 2021 - Twitter for Android
4. Trending Hashtags Analysis

The following word cloud consists of the most trending hashtags spread on social media in the global campaign of solidarity with Palestinians during the current round of violence. In many cases, these hashtags were associated with antisemitic sentiments.

An Analysis of the Viral Hashtag #SaveSheikhJarrah (Key Metrics)

The hashtag #SaveSheikhJarrah was mentioned 7.1 million times on Twitter between May 8–15. The activity peaked on May 11, which corresponded to ‘Jerusalem Day’. During this period, there were 14.4 million engagements with this hashtag. Most of the conversations originated in the US (43%), followed by Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and the Palestinian territories.

An analysis of the viral hashtag #SaveSheikhJarrah - Twitter Mentions Tracker, May 8-15

Data retrieved from social data analytics software ‘Talkwalker’, www.talkwalker.com

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7 Data retrieved from social data analytics software ‘Talkwalker’, www.talkwalker.com
MAIN PROPAGATORS

1. Intersection of Political and Radical Islam with Radical Left Fringe Elements

Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis indicate that extremist elements - in particular pro-Palestinian groups, the BDS movement, Muslim radicals, and radical left-wing groups - instrumentalized the latest round of Israeli-Palestinian violence to demonize and delegitimize the State of Israel and propagate antisemitic sentiments behind the mask of human rights. Indeed, the common struggle against western imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, and class groups identified as systemically dominant, manifests itself by a convergence of struggles between the radical left fringes and radical Islam, and translates, in some cases, into virulent antisemitic forms of anti-Zionism.

Inflammatory anti-Zionist rhetoric, which goes far beyond legitimate political criticism of Israel, has grown and spread in some progressive circles. However, unlike far-right antisemitism, there is some ideological resistance - especially in the U.S - in the form of unequivocal statements against leftist and Islamic antisemitism which peaked during Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’. “The ADL logged 251 antisemitic incidents from May 11 through the end of that month, an increase of 115 percent compared to the same period in 2020. And none of the perpetrators were wearing MAGA hats,” denounced ADL’s CEO Jonathan A. Greenblatt.⁸

2. Pro-Iranian Networks Spread Antisemitism

In recent years, Facebook has removed several disinformation campaigns by Iran, aimed at harming Israel. In October 2020, the social media giant claimed that a network with "coordinated inauthentic behavior" and which was traced back to the Islamic Republic, tried to sow fears of an attack on the 2019 Eurovision Song Contest in Tel Aviv. The Iranian government denied involvement.

As part of its proxy war against Israel, Iran may have attempted to exploit the latest round of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, using tactics aimed at sowing division and tension. Some elements indicate that either the Iranian government or private Iranian individuals or entities are behind - or promote - an online antisemitic campaign comparing the State of Israel to the Coronavirus. This echoes the antisemitic “Jewish parasite” stereotype which served to legitimize the persecution of Jews by the Nazis. The hashtag #Covid1948 was mentioned 366,500 times on Twitter between May 10-16, 2021. Of these tweets, more than 56% referencing #Covid1948 were written in Persian and 44% were localized in Iran (see images below).

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*Hashtag #Covid1948 is a contraction of Covid-19 and 1948, a reference to the Israeli Declaration of independence (May 14, 1948).*

*Data retrieved from social data analytics software Talkwalker, [www.talkwalker.com](http://www.talkwalker.com)*
A similar campaign was launched during the same period last year to mark the ‘Nakba’ day. Between May 15-17, 2020, the hashtag #Covid1948 was mentioned on Twitter almost 250,000 times, including a tweet by Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Of these tweets, 44% referencing #Covid1948 were written in Persian.

Furthermore, during his traditional Al Quds Day speech on May 7, 2021, Khamenei once again took to Twitter to exploit the latest round of violence between Israel and Hamas and disseminate unequivocal hate speech and incitement against Israel (see screenshots below). Twitter has faced a growing backlash over widespread hate speech on its platform and its inaction concerning Khamenei who took to Twitter on numerous occasions to call for Israel’s destruction, to refer to Israel as a “cancerous tumor”, and to question the Holocaust. Khamenei is considered a leading state sponsor of terror and openly supports terror-classified movements such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah.

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11 Khamenei, Twitter, May 22, 2020, twitter.com
12 Khamenei has several official Twitter accounts in multiple languages. His main Twitter account has nearly 891 thousand followers (twitter.com/khamenei_ir)
13 Khamenei has repeatedly questioned the Holocaust on his main Twitter account. Some examples: Khamenei, Twitter, October 28, 2020, Twitter.com
ANALYSIS BY COUNTRIES & LANGUAGES - HIGHLIGHTS


1. **English:** Online Disinformation Campaigns Against Israel led by Influential Figures Sparked Waves of Antisemitism
   - Between May 6–21, the ACMS collected more than 183,000 English antisemitic posts, a daily average of 11,400. This represents an increase of 155% in comparison with the same period during April 2021.
   - A large number of prominent celebrities and politicians in both the US and the UK posted social media calls for solidarity with Palestinians, promoting a one-sided narrative. Reactions to these campaigns were replete with historical inaccuracies regarding the conflict and contributed to the rapid spread of disinformation which culminated in a wave of antisemitic comments.

2. **French:** Upsurge in Online Antisemitism, Offline Violence Contained by Anticipatory Policymaking
   - The ACMS recorded 83,000 antisemitic posts in French during the monitoring period, a 550% jump from the same period in April 2021.
   - Home to the largest Jewish and Muslim population in Europe, France has become a new front in the Israel-Palestine conflict since the beginning of the Second Intifada. As an example, antisemitic attacks in France soared by 130% in 2014 following Israel’s military operation in Gaza. However, it should be noted that no violent antisemitic attacks were reported at this time, amid a government ban on pro-Palestinian protests in Paris, demonstrating the effectiveness of pro-activity in governance and anticipatory policymaking in containing offline manifestations of antisemitism.

3. **German:** Explosion of Online Antisemitism, Discussions Inflamed by Fake News Campaigns
   - A wave of false accusations against Israel has spread and intensified on social media since ‘Jerusalem Day’, triggering a dramatic wave of antisemitism. German antisemitic discourse soared by over 1000% during the monitoring period compared to the same period in April 2021, with 28,500 posts recorded by the ACMS.
   - False claims and historical distortions concerning the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the legal battle in Sheikh Jarrah, the conflict between Jews and Arabs in Israeli cities, and between Israel and Gaza sparked a wave of antisemitic discourse. Israel was blamed, among other things, for setting the Al-Aqsa Mosque ablaze, triggering a wave of posts and comments comparing the Israelis and the Jews to the Nazis, and the supposed burning of the mosque to the 1938 Kristallnacht, when synagogues were burned down and Jewish businesses were destroyed. In Germany, hate speech against Jews was also fueled by official Muslim organizations, such as the Central Council of Muslims in Germany, which shared a post from its vice-chairman falsely claiming that Jews celebrate the death of Muslims and the destruction of their homes and sanctuaries.
4. **Arabic:** Uptick in Online Antisemitism, Convergence of Nationalistic and Islamic Fundamentalist Discourse

- Between May 6-21, ACMS recorded more than 76,000 antisemitic posts in Arabic, an increase of 200% compared to the same period in April 2021. The overwhelming majority of antisemitic content was classified as ‘New Antisemitism’ (90%), with the subcategories ‘Demonization of Israel’ and ‘Delegitimization of Israel’ featuring prominently.

- On May 7, the most trending Hashtag used in antisemitic conversations recorded in Arabic was #SaveSheikhJarrah. The following days, this hashtag was overtaken by #FreePalestine and #GazaUnderAttack. This reflects a shift from solidarity with a local issue in Jerusalem to overall Palestinian and pan-Arab nationalistic discourse. The prevalence of ‘New Antisemitism’ shows that the discourse is predominantly nationalistic rather than Islamic, although the two converge. The posts collected frequently mention Palestinian idioms such as “Isra’îl Dawla Mughtasiba” (Israel is a rapist state). Interestingly, Shiite and anti-Shiite voices, typically far apart in normal times, converged. In some cases, anti-Shiite voices even wondered why Iran and Hezbollah stayed out of the conflict.

5. **Russian:** Prevalence of Radical Islamist Rhetoric, Antisemitism Amplified by Bots

The ACMS recorded 4,800 antisemitic posts in Russian during the monitoring period. Most of the conversations (approximately 66%) were classified as ‘New Antisemitism’. Moreover, data shows that the subcategories ‘Radical Islam’ and ‘Demonization of Israel’ constituted the most prevalent forms of Russian antisemitic discourse spread online during the latest Israeli-Palestinian confrontations. The prevalence of radical Islamist rhetoric is connected to the increased usage of the Russian language in radical Islamist web portals, such as the “Kavkaz Center”, which started publishing frequent antisemitic content with the beginning of the escalation. Simultaneously, many bots were activated, leaving antisemitic comments under almost every Twitter post in Russian connected to Israel.

6. **Spanish:** Online Discussions Characterized by Rhetoric Demonizing Israel

Data shows a significant increase in Spanish antisemitic discourse spread on social media during the latest conflict, with most of the antisemitic conversations recorded being classified as ‘Demonization of Israel’ and ‘Nazification of Israel’. Hate speech originated mainly from Santiago (Chile is home to the largest Palestinian population outside the Middle East), Buenos Aires (Argentina is home to the largest Jewish population in the whole Spanish-speaking world), and Barcelona (Spain is the social and political center of influence of the entire Latin world).

**Insights**

- The rampant spread of fake news, disinformation, and hate speech surrounding the latest Israeli-Palestinian escalation constitute another unequivocal demonstration of the imperative need to confront online hate speech.

- Recent events demonstrate once again the existence of a strong correlation between trends in online antisemitic hate speech and manifestations of antisemitism in the real world.

- The latest Israeli-Palestinian violence posed significant security threats to Jewish communities worldwide, that experienced a significant surge in antisemitic hate crimes during the last conflict.
EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life

On October 5, 2021, the European Commission presented its first ever EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, ahead of the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The strategy acknowledges that antisemitism is incompatible with EU values and with the European way of life, and the EU states its commitment to fostering the full diversity of Jewish life in Europe. The Commission notes that due to the increasing number of antisemitic attacks, fear among Jewish communities has risen, and further security measures for Jewish premises have been necessary. The Commission is therefore determined to significantly step up the fight against antisemitism and help create an inclusive society, to ensure the future of Jews in Europe.

The strategy recognizes the many forms in which antisemitism occurs, from online hate speech to hate crimes and attacks, emanating from right-wing, left-wing or Islamist extremism, or hiding behind anti-Zionism or Israel-related antisemitism. In that respect, among the Commission’s key recommendations to Member States is the adoption and use of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. The strategy also targets antisemitic conspiracy myths and disinformation that, although not necessarily illegal, perpetuate prejudices and stereotypes and can lead to discrimination, marginalization, radicalization, and hate crime.

The adoption of the strategy was welcomed by Jewish organizations, noting that many of their submitted recommendations found their way into the final document.

Considering the complexity of the problem, the strategy emphasizes the need for a comprehensive response. It focuses primarily on funding and event coordination and sets out measures focusing on three pillars.

Under the first pillar of “Preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism”, the Commission intends to concentrate on these key issues:

- Support for Member States’ efforts to design and implement national strategies to combat antisemitism and mobilize EU funds to that end.
• Establish a Europe-wide network of trusted flaggers and Jewish organizations for the removal of illegal online hate speech and support independent organizations in developing counter-narratives.

• Encourage the development of innovative ways to address antisemitism in the online and digital environment.

**Under the second pillar** of “Protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU”, the Commission will work to ensure that Jews feel safe and can participate fully in European life, and intends to promote these key steps:

• Increase EU funding for projects aiming to better protect public spaces and places of worship, making EUR 24 million available in 2022.

• Act on protecting Jewish cemeteries of Europe, safeguarding Jewish cultural heritage, and raising awareness of Jewish-owned cultural assets plundered by the Nazis.

• Raise awareness and increase knowledge about Jewish life, heritage, and history.

**Under the third pillar**, titled “Education, research and Holocaust remembrance”, the Commission pledges to:

• Support the creation of a network of sites “Where the Holocaust happened” in cooperation with local communities.

• Ensure support for education and research on antisemitism, the Holocaust, and Jewish life.

• Foster the creation of a European research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life and culture.

• Combat Holocaust denial, distortion, and trivialization.

The Strategy is to be implemented over the period between 2021-2030, and comprehensive implementation reports will be published in 2024 and 2029. Following the presentation of the strategy, some steps have already been taken. In December 2021, the Commission held its first Working Group on the implementation of the EU Strategy, focused on the development of the national strategies. In November 2021, the Commission made EUR 12.2 million available for projects combating hate crime, hate speech as well as discrimination and racism.14

The presentation of a comprehensive strategy on the EU level, coupled with the encouragement of Member State governments to act, is an important step in the fight against antisemitism. Its success depends on the implementation of practical steps in the field, leading to a reduction in antisemitic incidents, and a rise in Jewish communities’ sense of security and social inclusion.

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14 European Commission, “Call for Proposals to Promote Equality and to Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination”, 28.11.2021, ec.europa.eu
Kosher slaughter in the EU - recent judicial developments

The issue of religious kosher animal slaughter (hereafter: Shechita) has become one of the symbols of the struggle of animal rights groups, being at the same time accompanied by strong ideological and political inclinations. However, and most importantly, the matter has now reached the level of binding interpretation by the highest EU tribunal (Court of Justice of the European Union - hereafter: CJEU), who confirmed the conformity of particular Shechita bans with the EU law, causing the threat to the very essence of the functioning of the Jewish minorities in Europe.

The judgment of the Grand Chamber of the CJEU issued in December 2020 in case C-336/19\(^1\) came in response to a request for a preliminary ruling under Article 267 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union from the Grondwettelijk Hof (Constitutional Court of Belgium). The initial complaint, challenging the ban, was filed by the Coordinating Committee of Jewish Organizations in Belgium (CCOJB) against laws in Flanders and Wallonia mandating stunning before slaughtering, which is forbidden under Jewish religious law. The ban, which was imposed in both the Flemish and the Walloon Regions, prohibits slaughtering without pre-stunning. In practical terms, the CJEU decision means that not only these two major Belgian regions can implement effective ban of kosher slaughter but that similar bans affecting Jewish minorities can be imposed all over the EU.

Importantly, the opinion of the CJEU’s Advocate General Hogan, which preceded the CJEU judgment (such opinions of the Advocates General are part of the proceedings at the CJEU), went in an opposite direction to the final ruling by the CJEU. In his conclusions Advocate General Hogan proposed that the CJEU “should find that Member States are not permitted to adopt rules which provide, on the one hand, for a prohibition of the slaughter of animals without stunning that also applies to the slaughter carried out in the context of a religious rite and, on the other hand, for an alternative stunning procedure for the slaughter carried out in the context of a religious rite, based on reversible stunning and on condition that the stunning should not result in the death of the animal.”

At the same time, on September 30, 2021, the Constitutional Court of Belgium, after receiving and analyzing the response of the CJEU issued in case C-336/19 referred to above, decided to uphold two decrees adopted in the regions of Flanders and Wallonia banning religious slaughter. The judgment is now final and the only further option for the legal steps challenging these bans is to file an individual complaint to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg and to the UN Human Rights Committee, with a claim of multiple violations of human rights arising from the judgment of the Belgian Constitutional Court, including violation of religious freedom, the principle of non-discrimination and the right to privacy.

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\(^1\) Judgment of the CJEU (Grand Chamber) of 17 December 2020 (request for a preliminary ruling from the Grondwettelijk Hof - Belgium), Centraal Israelitisch Consistorie van Belgie and Others v Vlaamse Regering, eur-lex.europa.eu
The consequences of both the CJEU judgment and the judgment of the Belgian Constitutional Court, as well as of other bans and restrictions similar to those binding in Belgium that are likely to be introduced, will be momentous, multi-faceted and long term. They will result in a number of human rights violations. In an even more significant context, observant Jews may be deprived of the possibility of obeying the basic principles and rules of their religion. In practice it will be impossible for them to function within the societies of EU Member States in accordance with the demands of their religion. The reconstruction of Jewish life and the Jewish presence in post-war Europe may therefore be very seriously undermined. Also, in this regard, the issue of the growing antisemitic attitudes or even political repercussions between Israel and the EU and EU Member States should be raised here.

The ruling of the Belgian Constitutional Court, in conjunction with the CJEU judgment, poses a real risk of the spread of similar bans in all other EU Member States, and beyond, and requires a number of steps, both legal and diplomatic. Thus, some of the suggested actions include:

1. Preparing, for internal use, a full legal report on the scope of protection for religious minorities under the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in the context of the Shechita case;

2. Engaging in dialogue with relevant political and policy making actors at the national and EU institutional level, concerning the risks of introducing similar legislation and bans in EU Member States;

3. Raising the issue of Shechita bans in the context of the latest EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism in EU (2021-2030); 18

4. Practically advancing litigation at the EU Member States national and European levels, including before the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg;

5. Engaging NGOs and other actors involved in the attempts to secure the rights and freedoms of the Jewish minorities in the EU Member States in further attempts to counteract negative implications of the Shechita bans.

18 “EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life (2021-2030)”, 5 October 2021, ec.europa.eu
IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism Achieves Mainstream Consensus

In the half decade since the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted the Working Definition of Antisemitism - written in 2004 and first adopted by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) a year later - it has become a barometer in the global fight against Jew-hatred, serving as a comprehensive and well-known tool to monitor, measure, and ultimately combat contemporary manifestations of this age-old societal scourge.

The non-legally binding definition, along with its 11 explanatory examples, was adopted unanimously by IHRA’s 31 member states in May 2016, following a lengthy formulation process that emerged from the need to address a wave of “new antisemitism” promoted at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa. This trend was characterized by a growing prevalence of Jew-hatred disguised as anti-Zionism, mounting violence, and the normalization of antisemitic ideas across the ideological spectrum - from the extremes on the right and left, as well as radical Islam.

A diverse array of international organizations, national governments, municipalities, NGOs, universities, athletic clubs, corporations, and other groups have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism as the guiding framework for their policies against antisemitism, and the definition’s impact and influence are rooted in the mainstream consensus that has formed around it.

Through December 2021, a total of 839 entities have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism since 2016, according to an updated report compiled by the Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM) and the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University.

In 2021 alone, 200 entities adopted or endorsed the definition worldwide, nearly a quarter (23.8%) of the total since the definition’s inception.

Overall, 36 countries, including most Western democracies, have adopted the definition: 28 IHRA member states, 4 IHRA observer states, and 4 nations unaffiliated with the IHRA. Following nations such as the United States, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, and France, among others, the
latest countries to adopt the definition in 2021 were Australia, Estonia, Guatemala, Poland, South Korea, and Switzerland.

302 non-federal government entities (including regional, provincial, state, county, and municipal bodies) have adopted the definition, with 39 doing so in 2021. In Europe, this included major national capitals, such as London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, and Vienna.

In the United Kingdom, 202 regional, local, and municipal governments have adopted the definition, as have 42 in the United States, 13 in Canada, 9 in Argentina, 8 each in France, Germany, and Italy, 3 in Spain, and 2 in Australia.

At the state level in the U.S., there have been 11 adoptions, either via executive proclamations by governors or bills passed by state legislatures. The latest states to adopt the definition in 2021 were Kentucky, Texas, South Dakota, and Montana. In Canada, the provinces of Ontario and Quebec adopted the definition in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

A key category of entities adopting the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism has been institutions of higher education, the largest number of these being in the UK, where 234 universities (out of a global total of 311) have adopted the definition.

Unlike in the US, where adoptions of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism have primarily occurred at the level of student government resolutions (even though the US Department of Education formally adopted it in 2018), in the UK, university administrations have taken the lead on this issue, incorporating the definition into their codes of conduct policies, and diversity, equity, and inclusion manuals.

The initiative for British schools to adopt the definition has been led by Lord John Mann - the UK government’s independent adviser on antisemitism - and the trend gained momentum during MP Gavin Williamson’s tenure as Secretary of State for Education from 2019-2021.
In total, at least 60 education institutions worldwide adopted the IHRA definition in 2021, from the University of Tirana in Albania to La Universidad Nacional de Rosario in Argentina.

Furthermore, 190 NGOs, corporations, religious organizations, student clubs, political parties, and other groups have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, including 96 in 2021 alone.

An increasing number of athletic governing bodies, leagues, and teams have also done so. In 2021, ten sports teams and seven governing bodies and leagues - from Austria, Argentina, England, Germany, Israel, and Italy - adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

The first, and most prominent, sports team to adopt the definition was Chelsea FC in 2020. The English Premier League, and the Argentine Football Association followed in its footsteps later that year.

At the policy level, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism and its explanatory examples are often used as a benchmark for determining what constitutes antisemitic behavior.

For example, the European Commission, which adopted the definition in 2018, cited it numerous times in the first-ever comprehensive "EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life" that was unveiled this past October.

The document stated that the definition was used by the European Commission as a "practical guidance tool and a basis for its work to combat antisemitism", driven by a "rights-based and victim-centered approach", and it urged all EU member states to "adopt and use the IHRA definition of antisemitism and encourage local authorities, regions, cities, and other institutions and organizations to do the same".

According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, several additional EU member states are formulating strategies to combat antisemitism and will likely incorporate the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism into these plans in the years to come.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism is utilized by the Organization of American States in its efforts to monitor and combat contemporary antisemitism in the Western Hemisphere.

The definition has also been endorsed by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, who in 2018 said: "I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the 31 member countries of the International
Holocaust Remembrance Alliance to agree on a common definition of antisemitism. Such a definition can serve as a basis for law enforcement, as well as preventive policies.

Analysis by the Combat Antisemitism Movement and the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University shows that when a country takes the step of adopting the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism at the national level, local authorities, organizations, and educational institutions follow suit. For example, the United Kingdom was the first country to officially adopt the definition in December 2016, and, as of the end of 2021, most institutions of higher education and local authorities in the country had also endorsed it. Last October, Australia became the latest country to adopt the definition, and since then, numerous Australian towns, states, political parties, and NGOs have done the same.

The IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism is increasingly a key pillar of government strategies in the struggle against all forms of contemporary antisemitism. The growing pace of adoptions across all sectors and layers of society is expected to continue in the years ahead, elevating the definition’s status as the most widely accepted definition of Jew-hatred, with increasingly more entities turning to it as they seek to combat the global resurgence of the world’s “oldest hatred” in a meaningful and effective manner.

The full set of global adoption data is available here.¹⁹

**NOTE:** With gratitude to the Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM) and the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University for their joint research on worldwide adoptions of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.

¹⁹ [combatantisemitism.org/ihra-definition](http://combatantisemitism.org/ihra-definition)
Countries that Adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism

- Bahrain: 25.10.2020
- Australia: 13.10.2021
- South Korea: 4.8.2021
- Guatemala: 27.1.2021
- Uruguay: 27.1.2020
- Argentina: 4.6.2020

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT
Insights into Antisemitic Online Hate Speech: Trends in 2021

METHODOLOGY

The following report is based on the outcomes of several different efforts conducted by the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs aimed at countering antisemitic hate speech online. It applies a mixed methods approach combining qualitative analysis and data science techniques, with the goal of exposing the extent of antisemitic hate speech disseminated on social media and identifying the main trends for 2021.

The main source of the data provided, including statistical data and trends identification, is the Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS) - a real time monitoring system based on artificial intelligence and semantic analysis technologies - developed and operated by Sayiqan Cyber Technologies for Israel’s Ministry of Diaspora Affairs. Below is a summary of ACMS’s main characteristics:

- Using real-time social media data collection and analysis methods, ACMS quantifies, classifies, and geo-localizes antisemitic discourse (open data).

- Antisemitic hate speech is defined according to the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.


- Five social media platforms are monitored: Twitter, 4Chan, BitChute, Stormfront, and 8Kun. It should be noted that four of the five platforms monitored are widely described as a haven for right-wing extremists, hence an overrepresentation of far-right related data in the statistics provided in this report.

- Six languages are monitored: English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish, and Russian.


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The concept of ‘New Antisemitism’ refers to some virulent antisemitic forms of anti-Zionism as framed by the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.
GLOBAL TRENDS IN 2021

1. Key Findings

Monitoring Period: January 1 - December 31, 2021

- ACMS recorded more than 3.5 million antisemitic posts written by 422 thousand users in 2021, a 50% rise compared to 2020.

- 2021 Peak: May’s Gaza conflict. ACMS collected 431 thousand antisemitic posts between May 6 and May 21, 2021. This represents an increase of 230% in comparison with the same period of April 2021. Data also showed a dramatic spike in violent rhetoric against Israel and Jews in online conversations during the military escalation.

- Paris was identified as the city with the highest number of unique users who disseminated antisemitic hate speech, followed by New York, Los Angeles, Washington, and Berlin. By country, the US is by far the most dominant, followed by France, Germany, and the UK.

- Breakdown per language: 58.6% of the antisemitic content was posted in English, 13.4% in both Arabic and Spanish, 10.8% in French, 2.8% in German, and 1% in Russian.

- Breakdown per platform: 94% of the antisemitic content was published on Twitter (around 3.35 million), and 6% on alternative social media platforms (212,000). Within the alternative sites’ ecosystem, 4chan is predominant with 57% of the hate speech recorded, followed by BitChute (28%).

- Classification of antisemitic discourse: ‘New Antisemitism’ constitutes 74.1% of the global antisemitic content, ‘Classic Antisemitism’ makes up 20.5%, while ‘Holocaust Denial & Distortion’ constitutes 5.4%.

- Data analysis by subcategory of discourse shows that ‘Demonization of Israel’ constitutes the most prevalent type of antisemitism in 2021, followed by ‘Delegitimization of Israel’, ‘Conspiracy Theories’, and ‘Far-Right’.

Data Source: Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS)
This timeline shows the number of antisemitic posts published per month on social media in 2021. It also shows the significant upward trend in the volume of antisemitic content posted in May 2021, demonstrating the strong correlation between the latest Israeli-Palestinian escalation and online expressions of antisemitism.
Figure 3. Classification of Antisemitic Discourse

- Demonization of Israel
- Delegitimization of Israel
- Conspiracy Theories
- BDS
- Far-Right
- Demonization of the Jews
- Nazification of Israel
- Radical Islam
- Holocaust Denial
- Glorification Of Nazism
- Calls For Violence

Breakdown of antisemitic online discourse by subcategory for 2021

Figure 4. Geographical Distribution of Antisemitic Discourse

Top cities according to the number of unique users who published antisemitic posts in 2021
2. Positive Trend, Yet Cautious Optimism

Although social media sites can and should do significantly more to address the dissemination of prohibited hateful content, mainstream platforms seem to have managed to expel a considerable part of their most openly extremist users. ACMS shows a marked downward trend in the number of antisemitic posts published on Twitter from 2018 to 2021, with a drop of 20%. Indeed, 4.1 million antisemitic posts were recorded in 2018, 3.7 million in 2019, 2.3 million in 2020, and 3.3 million in 2021 (Spanish and Russian have been added to the monitoring system since 2020).

However, this encouraging data should be interpreted cautiously as we noticed a rebound of online antisemitic hate speech in 2021, with a 50% rise in antisemitic content compared to 2020, following a consistent downward trend over the previous 3 years. The increase recorded in 2021 can be mainly attributed to the military escalation in Gaza. Moreover, statistics signal weaker social media scrutiny of radical anti-Zionism (see ‘New Antisemitism’ trend in graph below), a narrative which peaked during May's Gaza conflict. This rhetoric, as framed by the IHRA working definition of antisemitism, constitutes a highly significant pattern of contemporary manifestations of antisemitism.

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Data from ACMS indicating positive trends in hate speech regulation are corroborated by several authoritative reports, including the six evaluations of the 2016 Code of Conduct by the European Commission and transparency reports published by Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.
This graph shows the evolution of the number of antisemitic posts published per year on social media from 2018 to 2021. Data signals a consistent downward trend over three consecutive years (from 2018 to 2020), though this positive trend was interrupted in 2021 by a new rise in the volume of antisemitic hate speech pushed exclusively by a significant increase in antisemitic discourse classified as ‘New Antisemitism’.

3. Migration to Alternative Social Media Ecosystem
The increased regulation on mainstream social media sites over the years may have pushed many extremists onto “alternative” social media platforms which became a haven for white nationalists and neo-Nazis. ACMS recorded 212,000 antisemitic messages posted in 2021 on 4Chan, 8Kun, BitChute, and Stormfront, a nearly 60% increase compared to 2020.

Furthermore, a closer examination of the typology of antisemitic discourse disseminated on the different social media sites monitored signal a much higher prevalence of classic forms of antisemitism on unregulated platforms than on mainstream platforms, with a predominance of classic far-right and conspiracy rhetoric. ACMS also shows that the proportion of content glorifying Nazi ideology, denying or distorting the Holocaust, and calling for violence against Jews seems significantly higher within this alternative social media ecosystem than within mainstream platforms.
Figure 7. Comparison of Antisemitic Discourse Typology Between Twitter and Alternative Social Media Platforms - 2021

Data Source: ACMS

Figure 8. Breakdown of Antisemitic Discourse by Subcategory and Country Within Alternative Platforms

Breakdown of Subcategory Discourse by Country

Data Source: ACMS
4. Content Analysis

a. Dramatic Surge in Online Antisemitism in the Wake of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’

ACMS data shows an explosion of online antisemitic hate speech in May 2021, in the wake of the latest escalation in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. For a more detailed analysis, see pages 12-25.

b. Antisemitism in Covid-19 Related Hate Speech

Historically, times of crisis have created fertile ground for extremism and radicalization. The Covid-19 outbreak is no exception. The pandemic has been used to disseminate racism, xenophobia, and antisemitism, alongside an epidemic of conspiracy theories blaming 5G antennas, laboratories, big pharma, the Chinese, and the Jews for the spread of the novel coronavirus. According to Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, "the latest report from Europol on the EU terrorism situation illustrates that in the year of the COVID pandemic, the risk of online radicalization has increased." However, ACMS indicates that antisemitic discourse referring specifically to the Covid-19 pandemic seems to be confined to the margins of radical virtual communities.

Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories Disseminated on Social Media

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to the proliferation of antisemitic conspiracy theories within radical milieux, including the revival of medieval blood libels rebranded and recycled into contemporary forms of antisemitism. Jews, Zionists, and Israel are accused of having created, spread, financed, and instrumentalized the virus to expand their global domination, impose a New World Order, and as a means for profit.

Extreme Right-Wing Online Activism Scapegoating Jews

The pandemic appears as another demonstration of the extent of online activism emanating from right-wing extremist circles. Indeed, ACMS shows that far-right extremists are using the pandemic to disseminate classic antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories, such as the myth that “Globalist Jews” created the virus to impose a New World Order. Some extremists assert that Jewish billionaire Georges Soros and the Rothschild family are behind the virus outbreak as a part of their plan to advance the "Great Replacement" of the White European population. Similarly, the “Kalergi Plan” and the “White Genocide” conspiracy theories, which purport a deliberate plot orchestrated by Jews and liberal elites to extinguish the White race through mass immigration and multiculturalism, have been spread.

The Use and Abuse of the Holocaust Analogy

The Coronavirus pandemic led to the extensive use of a terminology that associates it with the Holocaust. Indeed, anti-coronavirus restrictions have been widely compared to policies of the Nazi regime, a phenomenon mostly notable in the US and in Germany.

Demonization and Delegitimization of Israel: The Virus Metaphor

The virus metaphor has been widely used to disseminate radical anti-Zionist sentiments, including the characterization of Israel as Covid-19. Some elements indicate that either the Iranian government or private Iranian actors are behind an online antisemitic campaign comparing the State of Israel to the novel coronavirus. The hashtag #Covid1948 was mentioned 366,500 times on
Twitter between May 10–16, 2021. Of these tweets, more than 56% referencing #Covid1948 were written in Persian and 44% were localized in Iran (see page X for more details). Last year, at the same period, a similar campaign was launched to mark the ‘Nakba’ Day. Indeed, the hashtag #Covid1948 was mentioned on Twitter almost 250,000 times between May 15–May 17, 2020, including a tweet by Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Of these tweets, 44% referencing #Covid1948 were written in Persian. Furthermore, during his traditional Al Quds Day speech on May 7, 2021, Khamenei once again took to Twitter to exploit the latest round of violence between Israel and Hamas, disseminating unequivocal hate speech and incitement against Israel.

ANALYSIS BY COUNTRY & LANGUAGE: 2021 HIGHLIGHTS


ENGLISH

US

- ACMS recorded more than 425 thousand antisemitic messages posted in the US in 2021 by around 50 thousand users.
- 2021 peak: ACMS recorded more than 58 thousand antisemitic posts in May 2021, nearly double those recorded in April 2021.
- Discourse classification: data analysis by categories showed that ‘New Antisemitism’ made up approximately 66% of US-based antisemitic discourse in 2021, ‘Classic Antisemitism’ accounted for 26.5%, and ‘Holocaust Denial and Distortion’ accounted for just over 7%. When breaking down data by discourse sub-categories, ‘Demonization of Israel’ constituted the most prevalent type of online antisemitic discourse, followed by ‘Delegitimization of Israel’, ‘Far-Right Antisemitism’, ‘BDS’, and ‘Jewish Conspiracy’.

UK

- ACMS collected more than 175 thousand antisemitic messages posted in the UK in 2021 by nearly 13 thousand users.
- 2021 peak: ACMS recorded more than 25 thousand antisemitic posts in May 2021, nearly 60% more than the level recorded in April 2021.
- Discourse classification: data analysis by categories showed that ‘New Antisemitism’ made up approximately 84% of UK-based antisemitic discourse in 2021, ‘Classic Antisemitism’ accounted

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23 Khamenei, 2020. Retrieved from Twitter: twitter.com/khamenei_ir Khamenei has several official Twitter accounts in multiple languages. His main Twitter account has nearly 891K thousand followers. twitter.com/khamenei_ir.
for 11%, and ‘Holocaust Denial and Distortion’ accounted for just under 5%. When breaking down data by discourse sub-categories, ‘Delegitimization of Israel’ constituted the most prevalent type of online antisemitic discourse, followed by ‘Demonization of Israel’, ‘BDS’, ‘Zionist Conspiracy’, and ‘Jewish Conspiracy’.

**FRENCH**

- ACMS recorded more than 385 thousand antisemitic messages posted in French by roughly 46 thousand users in 2021.

- 2021 Peak: May’s Gaza conflict. ACMS recorded 83 thousand French antisemitic posts between May 6–May 21, 2021, a 550% jump from the same period of April 2021. The most dramatic increase was recorded in ‘Calls for Violence’ and ‘Radical Islam’.

- Location: ACMS identified Paris as the city with the highest number of individuals in the world who posted antisemitic messages in 2021.

- Discourse classification: data analysis by categories shows that ‘New Antisemitism’ makes up 58.7% of the French antisemitic discourse in 2021, ‘Classic Antisemitism’ accounts for 35.8%, while ‘Holocaust Denial & Distortion’ constitutes 5.5%. When breaking down data by discourse subcategories, ‘Conspiracy Theories’ constitutes the most prevalent type of online antisemitic discourse disseminated in French in 2020, followed by ‘Demonization and Delegitimization of Israel’, and ‘Radical Islam’.

‘New Antisemitism’ is Still the Most Prevalent Form of Contemporary Antisemitism...

Since the 2000s, spikes in antisemitic attitudes in France mostly coincided with Israeli military operations. Data revealed strong evidence of a causal link between the explosion of antisemitic hate speech recorded online in May 2021 and the military escalation in Gaza, which has been instrumentalized by extremist elements to disseminate radical anti-Zionist sentiment and traditional antisemitism, both offline and online.

...But Classic Antisemitism Persists

Manifestations of antisemitism are increasingly impacted by endogenous factors which trigger traditional forms of antisemitism. These include tensions surrounding the place of Islam in French society, the political crackdown on radical Islamism, Holocaust public memory, the Yellow Vests Movement, the Covid-19 pandemic, etc. This phenomenon manifests itself mostly in the significant proliferation of classic antisemitic conspiracy theories recycling centuries-old antisemitic myths, particularly the notion that powerful Jews work behind the scenes to orchestrate plots and establish a Jewish-controlled New World Order.

Cyber-Islamism: A Central Factor in the Dissemination of Antisemitic Hate Speech

Antisemitic conversations using radical Islamist and Muslim Identitarian rhetoric is still overrepresented in radicalized French–speaking online communities compared to other cultures. Indeed, ACMS shows that while only 10.8% of the total antisemitic discourse recorded was in French, nearly 47% of antisemitic posts classified as Islamist rhetoric were posted in the French language.
Holocaust Education and Holocaust Denial Legislation Have a Deterrent Effect

Content denying and minimizing the Holocaust makes up less than 1% of all antisemitic discussion in French, while posts glorifying national socialism constitutes less than 0.1% of the total discourse. At the same time, ACMS indicates a clear underrepresentation of public conversations in French denying the Holocaust compared to other cultures (5% out of all languages combined), while at the same time revealing an overrepresentation of discussions which contain an adversarial competitive victimhood narrative or the mocking of Holocaust victim memory (French makes up 72% out of all languages combined). This data can lead to two different conclusions:

- The marginal proportion of discussion which blatantly denies the Holocaust might indicate that public policies of memory and Holocaust education seem effective in France, while a strong legal framework against blatant Holocaust denial and the glorification of Nazism might have a deterrent effect.

- However, this encouraging data should be interpreted cautiously as the Jewish genocide and the question of antisemitism are being widely trivialized, ridiculed, and challenged within online French-speaking communities.

GERMAN

- A total of 101 thousand German posts written by 18 thousand users, were categorized as antisemitic.

- ‘New Antisemitism’ accounted for 59.7% of antisemitic discourse, ‘Classic Antisemitism’ for 27.3%, and ‘Holocaust Denial and Distortion’ for 13%.

- The main subcategories were ‘Demonization of Israel’, ‘Delegitimization of Israel’, ‘Demonization of the Jews’, ‘Zionist Conspiracy’, and ‘Jewish Conspiracy’.

- The cities with the highest number of antisemitic users are Berlin, Vienna, and Munich.

- Antisemitic discourse peaked during Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ with a daily average of 2,230 posts, compared to the annual daily average of 276 posts.

2021 saw a significant rise in ‘New Antisemitism’. While in 2020, ‘New Antisemitism’ and ‘Classic Antisemitism’ accounted for almost the same share of antisemitic discourse (39.1% and 40.5%, respectively), in 2021 the share of ‘New Antisemitism’ rose at the expense of both ‘Classic Antisemitism’ and ‘Holocaust Denial and Distortion’. The latter decreased by 7.5 percentage points. However, ‘Nazification of Israel’ jumped from tenth place among the antisemitism subcategories in 2020 to fourth place in 2021.

An analysis of online social discourse in Austria and Germany, the countries with the most German-speaking users, shows that the share of ‘New Antisemitism’ among posts written in English is significantly higher than among those written in German. This is especially striking in Austria, where 81% of the English posts contain ‘New Antisemitism’, compared to 47.3% of the German posts, while 14% of the English posts contain ‘Classic Antisemitism’, compared to 40% of the German
ones. In Germany, 72.5% of English posts contain ‘New Antisemitism’, compared to 58.5% of the German ones.

Interestingly, although ‘New Antisemitism’ has the highest share in German posts emanating from Austria, subcategories related to ‘Classic Antisemitism’ top the list, namely ‘Jewish Conspiracy’ and ‘Demonization of the Jews’. This only changed for a short time in May around Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’. Between May 10-12, the top subcategories were replaced by ‘Demonization of Israel’, ‘Zionist Conspiracy’, and ‘Classic Radical Islam’. During May 13-21, ‘Demonization of Israel’, ‘Zionist Conspiracy’, and ‘Delegitimization of Israel’ moved to the top, followed by ‘Demonization of the Jews’ and ‘Nazification of Israel’. This correlates with the findings in the Vienna Jewish community’s Antisemitism Report which recorded a spike in incidents connected to Israel-related antisemitism and Holocaust trivialization and denial in May 2021.24

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ARABIC

- ACMS recorded roughly 480 thousand antisemitic postings in Arabic in 2021.

- 2021 Peak: May’s Gaza conflict. The ACMS recorded more than 76,000 antisemitic posts in Arabic between May 6–21, an increase of 200% in comparison with the same period during April 2021.

- ‘New Antisemitism’ constitutes 73% of the antisemitic discourse in Arabic, a rise of 63% compared to the previous year.

- The common keywords this year were “Zionist Entity” and “Zionist Enemy”, also suggesting a discourse related to New Antisemitism.

- Antisemitism in Arabic emanates mostly from the Palestinian territories, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Algiers. Prominent cities were Amman (including the West Bank), and Cairo (including Gaza). The prominent Western city is Paris, followed by New York.

The Palestinian cause was central in the Arabic discourse recorded by ACMS. The discourse included hateful expressions towards Israel and solidarity with the Palestinian armed struggle. Common hashtags in Arabic were related to the Palestinian struggle and were: #FreePalestine, #FreeThemAll, and #SaveSheikhJarrah. These findings, based on ACMS data, reflect a process of centralization of the Palestinian cause in Arabic antisemitic discourse. Other less prominent issues were references to the normalization process with Israel, and regional conflicts generating antisemitic discourse. On the other hand, antisemitic discourse related to Covid-19 was almost absent this year. It should be noted that in the Arab and Muslim world, discourse related to New Antisemitism is not stigmatized, and there is an attempt to differentiate it from the less prevalent ‘Classic Antisemitism’ discourse (explicit hatred towards Jews).

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• In 2021, ACMS identified more than 35 thousand antisemitic messages posted in Russian by roughly 17 thousand users.

• 2021 Peak: Gaza escalation with a daily average of 348 antisemitic posts in May 2021, compared to the annual daily average of 94 posts. Additionally, during the conflict, the proportion of posts classified as ‘New Antisemitism’ rose to 69.4% of the total with a significant increase of Islamist antisemitic discourse (1,400 posts).

• Discourse classification: data analysis by categories shows that ‘Classic Antisemitism’ made up 42.5% of the Russian antisemitic discourse in 2021, ‘Holocaust Denial & Distortion’ accounts for 30.2%, while ‘New Antisemitism’ constituted 27.3%. When breaking down data by discourse subcategories, the main subcategories were ‘Holocaust Denial and Minimization’, ‘Demonization of the Jews’, ‘Demonization of Israel’, and ‘Jewish Conspiracy Theories’.

• In terms of locations, most of the posts were written by Russian-based accounts, followed by the US (mostly in New York, Florida, and Los Angeles). In Europe, Ukraine and Germany appeared as central.

2021 saw a significant rise in ‘New Antisemitism’ at the expense of ‘Holocaust Denial and Distortion’. The ‘Radical Islam’ subcategory jumped to sixth place in 2021 while this type of rhetoric was almost non-existent in 2020. Most of the hashtags (for example #freepalestine and #gazaunderattack) originating from this category were written in English while the text itself was in Russian. Most of this content type disappeared at the end of the military operation in Gaza, along with many of those accounts. Furthermore, the increase in the number of posts classified as ‘Demonization of Israel’ subcategory was mainly due to criticism against Israel’s Covid-19 restrictions and vaccination policies. The level of ‘Classic Antisemitism’ posts remained stable. The decrease in quantity of ‘Holocaust Denial and Distortion’ subcategory can also be explained by the restrictions of laws and their enforcement, mostly in Russia, against historical attitudes to Second World War memory which also includes Holocaust denial.
• ACMS collected roughly 475 thousand antisemitic messages in Spanish posted by 56 thousand users.

• During May’s conflict, ACMS recorded 54,300 Spanish antisemitic posts between May 6-May 21, 2021, a more than 3-fold increase compared to the same period in April 2021. The most notable increase was recorded in the ‘Demonization of Israel’ sub-category.

• Location: ACMS identified Buenos Aires as the city with the highest number of individuals to post antisemitic messages in Spanish in 2021.

• Discourse classification: ‘New Antisemitism’ makes up 89.8% of the Spanish antisemitic discourse in 2021, ‘Classic Antisemitism’ accounts for 9.7%, while ‘Holocaust Denial & Distortion’ constitutes 0.6%. When breaking down data by discourse subcategories, ‘Demonization of Israel’ constitutes the most prevalent type of online antisemitic discourse disseminated in Spanish in 2021, followed by ‘Nazification of Israel’, and ‘Jewish Conspiracy’.

INVESTIGATING SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION OF HATE SPEECH: SITUATION ASSESSMENT

In recent years, the potential threat posed to democracy by social media has become a significant challenge for public policy makers. The growing awareness of the major role of the internet and social media in the proliferation of all forms of hatred - as well as a vector and amplifier of radicalization - has prompted governments and civil society actors to commit to building a safer internet by encouraging collaborative work with tech giants and by initiating legislation and imposing heavy sanctions. However, the regulation of the virtual domain remains an enormous transnational challenge requiring greater international cooperation that could prove fundamental in providing an effective strategy.

1. Lack of Internet Regulation Fuels Hatred and Violence
   • Over the years, there has been an increase of awareness and recognition regarding the crucial role of the internet and social media in the proliferation of all forms of hatred and as a vector and amplifier of extremism and radicalization.

   • Extremists and terrorists have made great use of the web as a propaganda tool to spread radical ideas, mobilize supporters, outreach beyond their base, and recruit terrorists. Furthermore, they have exploited Covid-19 pandemic crisis to propagate their ideologies and disseminate an epidemic of online disinformation.

   • The lack of regulation of the virtual sphere contributed to the internationalization and transnationalization of White Nationalism and Islamism by connecting extremists from all over the world.

   • Many elements indicate that online hate generates real-world violence. An analysis of the ACMS data shows several strong correlations between the intensity of antisemitic activity online and antisemitic activity in the real-world.
2. EU Code of Conduct and New Digital Service Act: Evaluation and Next Steps

French President Emmanuel Macron announced in December 2021 that the European Union will work towards an unprecedented regulation of social media platforms that will establish liability for hate speech (France takes over the rotating presidency of the 27-nation European Council in January). EU Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager, has proposed two sets of rules known as the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act targeting Amazon, Apple, Alphabet-Google, and Facebook. The European Commission will kick off negotiations with EU countries and EU lawmakers next year, with the new rules likely to be adopted in 2023. The Digital Services Act,\(^{25}\) in particular, would force the tech giants to do more to tackle illegal content on their platforms. It encompasses a single set of new rules applicable across the whole EU and aims at modernizing the current legal framework for digital services.

**Background:** The European Commission has stood firmly against all forms of antisemitism. A comprehensive legislative European framework ensures protection from violence, discrimination, and expressions of hostility motivated by antisemitism, and criminalizes Holocaust denial and distortion across Europe.\(^{26}\) An important legal tool is the 2008 Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.\(^{27}\) In May 2016, the European Commission launched the Code of Conduct,\(^{28}\) together with four major IT companies, in an effort to respond to the proliferation of racist and xenophobic hate speech online. To date, nine companies have adhered to the code, most notably Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Microsoft, Instagram, Dailymotion, Snapchat, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Jeuxvideo.com. In October 2021, the European Commission released the results of its sixth evaluation of the 2016 Code of Conduct.\(^{29}\) The results are considered “positive but progress slows down”.

**EXAMINATION OF THE RESULTS** - The sixth evaluation of the Code of Conduct on Countering Illegal Hate Speech Online shows that while the average number of notifications reviewed within 24 hours remains high (81%), it has decreased compared to 2020 (90.4%). “At 62.5%, the average removal rate was also lower than in 2019 and 2020. However, broken down by IT company, the progress of Instagram (66.2% removals in 2021, 42% in 2020) and Twitter (49.8% versus 35.9%) is noteworthy. TikTok was included in the evaluation for the first time and performed well (80.1% removals)*, according to the report. It also notes that "while some companies have improved, results for others have clearly worsened". It should be noted that antisemitism constituted 9.3% of the reported grounds of hate speech in this monitoring exercise.

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\(^{26}\) European Commission, European legislative framework ensuring protection of Jewish people and countering antisemitism, ec.europa.eu

\(^{27}\) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, eur-lex.europa.eu

\(^{28}\) European Commission, The Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online, 2016, ec.europa.eu

\(^{29}\) European Commission, 6th monitoring round of the Code of Conduct, October 2021, ec.europa.eu
ASSESSMENT
Facebook assessed notifications in less than 24 hours in 81.5% of the cases and an additional 10.6% in less than 48 hours. The corresponding figures for YouTube are 88.8% and 6.7%, and for Twitter 81.8% and 8.9%, respectively. Instagram had 62.4% and 17.6%, TikTok 82.5% and 9.7%. Jeuxvideo.com assessed all notifications in less than 24 hours. Twitter and YouTube improved their performance with respect to 2020 while the other platforms have a slight decrease.

Removal rates, Data Source: European Commission

REMOVAL
Facebook removed 70.2% of the content, YouTube 58.8%, Instagram 66.2% and Twitter 49.8%. Twitter and Instagram made progress compared to 2020, while Facebook and YouTube had higher removal rates during the previous monitoring exercise in 2020. TikTok had a good first test, with 80.1%. Jeuxvideo.com removed all flagged content.

Feedback to users and transparency, Data Source: European Commission

FEEDBACK
Facebook is informing users most systematically (86.9% of notifications received feedback). Twitter gave feedback to 54.1% of the notifications, Instagram to 41.9% and YouTube only to 7.3%. Jeuxvideo.com sent feedback to all the notifications and TikTok to 28.7%. While Facebook is the only company informing consistently both trusted flaggers and general users, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok and Instagram provide feedback more frequently when notifications come from trusted flaggers. Jeuxvideo has increased its performance on feedback to users (it was 22.5% in 2020).

Feedback to users and transparency, Data Source: European Commission
“A novelty in this year’s evaluation is the information provided by IT companies about measures they have taken to counter hate speech, including actions to automatically detect such content”, the report noted.

Ibid.
3. Social Media’s Latest Policies Against Hate Speech

**2019-2021 Highlights**

- **March 2019** - Facebook ban white nationalism and separatism content
- **June 2019** - YouTube bans Holocaust denial and supremacist content
- **September 2019** - Twitter bans ‘dehumanizing’ posts toward religious groups
- **June 2020** - Facebook will prohibit hate speech in its ads
- **July 2020** - Twitter launches crackdown on conspiracy group ‘QAnon’
- **July 2020** - Twitter updates hate speech policy to include links to ‘hateful’ content
- **August 2020** - Facebook and Instagram ban antisemitic conspiracy theories
- **September 2020** - TikTok joins EU code of conduct against hate speech
- **October 2020** - Facebook bans Holocaust denial posts
- **October 2020** - TikTok moves to crack down on antisemitism
- **October 2020** - Twitter CEO says Holocaust denial is still allowed
- **December 2020** - Twitter expands hate speech rules to include race and ethnicity
- **December 2020** - Facebook to change hate speech policy to better protect Jews, Blacks, and other minorities
- **June 2021** - Linkedin joins EU code of conduct against hate speech

**Main Lessons and Conclusions**

- Despite overall positive trends in hate speech regulation on mainstream social media platforms, there is still large room for improvement.

- Efforts at tackling online hate speech resulted in the migration of many extremists to alternative social media platforms. This phenomenon demonstrates the imperative need to adapt policies, regulations, and legislations to this alternative ecosystem.
GENERAL TRENDS: CHALLENGES OF RADICALIZING AND MAINSTREAMING ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism in 2021 closely tracked external events, notably those surrounding conflict in Israel, and internal political polarization. The state of antisemitism reflected high levels of volatility and featured prominently in Jewish and broader discourse.

A heightened threat

Rising threat perception - Antisemitism continued to feature prominently in policy and media arenas and in public discourse. Indeed, 2021 poll data showed that most American Jews and Americans in general viewed antisemitism as a problem in America. More than half of the Jews surveyed reported feeling less safe, and three-quarters said that there was more antisemitism in 2021 than there was five years ago.35

On online platforms, which remained critical in the spread of antisemitism, 2021 saw an explosion of antisemitism. Polling revealed that 22% of American Jews had experienced severe antisemitic harassment online, including stalking, physical threats, swatting, doxing, or sustained harassment.36 Prominent themes focused on Jewish power and the ability to control world events.

According to ACMS data, the majority of antisemitic content evoked ‘New Antisemitism’ rhetoric relating to Israel (66%). Though classical antisemitic expressions comprised a relatively smaller share (26.5%), its Jewish conspiracy theoretical themes dominated unregulated media platforms.

Social media continued to garner broader attention as a powerful vector for mainstreaming antisemitism, while its main platforms faced criticism for failures to address the issue. A study showing that Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok acted on fewer than 1 in 6 reported

examples of antisemitism over a six-week period in 2021, represented one of several efforts that exposed the inadequacies of social media platform policies in to dealing with antisemitism.

U.S. campuses remained central arenas for antisemitism. Nearly one-third of Jewish students reported personally experiencing antisemitism on campus or by a member of the campus community. Identifiably Jewish students in particular reported feeling physically and emotionally unsafe, and increasingly, hiding their identity. Key incidents of overt campus antisemitism included vandalism of a Torah, mezuzahs, and Jewish facilities, as well as antisemitic graffiti and verbal assaults. The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel remained a main campus platform for mainstreaming antisemitic anti-Israel or anti-Zionist discourse: in 2020-2021, student governments considered 17 BDS-related proposals, 11 of which passed.

Compared with 2020, when dramatic external events elevating the Black anti-racist struggle on societal agendas brought its intersections with antisemitism to the fore, antisemitism emerging from Black social justice movements featured less prominently in 2021. It did so mainly in the context of anti-Zionist and anti-Israel Palestinian solidarity campaigns, and most notably, during the May conflict. Significantly, during this period, the Black Lives Matter movement unleashed the full force of its activism in intersectional solidarity with Palestinians, on the basis of a designation - rooted in denial or erasure of historic Jewish connection to Jerusalem and Israel - of Zionism as settler colonialism. Controversy also surrounded alignments of Black celebrities with the Nation of Islam and its leader, Louis Farrakhan. Notably, polling reflected that antisemitic attitudes continued to be more common among Black respondents than white respondents.

THE MAY CONFLICT AS AN ANTISEMITISM SUPER-SPREADER EVENT

Antisemitism appearing in widespread reactions to the May conflict in Israel and Gaza that culminated in Israel’s ‘Operation Guardian of the Walls’ constituted the most significant engine of heightened antisemitism in 2021. Antisemitic incidents stood out in their volume and extremity, precipitating a sharp and extreme upsurge in both antisemitic incidents and discourse. Key indicators included:

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37 “Failure to protect: How tech giants fail to act on user reports of antisemitism”, The Center for Countering Digital Hate, www.counterhate.com, July 30, 2021
39 “Antisemitism @ College”, The Louis D. Brandeis Center, www.brandeiscenter.com, Spring 2021
41 Eitan Hersh and Laura Royden, “Antisemitic Attitudes Across the Ideological Spectrum”, www.eitanhersh.com, April 9, 2021
• **Growth in antisemitic hate crimes**, compared with fall-out from previous periods of conflict.\(^42\) The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) recorded 251 incidents - including assault, vandalism, and harassment - from May 11-31, a 115% jump from the same period in 2020. Overall, 131 incidents were reported in the week preceding the operation, while 193 incidents were reported during the operation itself, 11 of which constituted violent attacks against Jews.\(^43\) Violent incidents during this period included attacks on Jews in Los Angeles and New York, and multiple instances of harassment in Florida. Significant attacks in the months following included the stabbing of a Chabad rabbi in Boston.

• **A growth in non-violent antisemitism** compared to the level before the operation, prominently online and on-campus, as reported by Jewish organizations.\(^44\) ACMS data indicated a more than 40% increase in the number of antisemitic messages over the period of May 6-21, as compared to April 6-21, posted by nearly 60% more people.

ACMS further revealed the proportion of Israel-related ‘new antisemitism’ increasing to 80.2% of the total, from 67.7% over the same period in April 2021. Indicatively, posts relating to the Nazification of Israel rose from 505 over this period in April, to 2.75K over the parallel period in May.

As antisemitism on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok increased, 36% of Jewish respondents said they experienced some form of online harassment during this period.\(^45\)

• **Sharp increase in antisemitic activity on campuses country-wide** in the period surrounding the conflict. Prominent examples included a proliferation of ‘solidarity statements’ delegitimizing or demonizing Israel,\(^46\) such as: a statement characterizing Israel’s conduct as constituting a war crime that more than 100 academic programs signed, and a City University of New York Professors Union resolution condemning Israel as “a settler colonial state” and for its “massacre” of Palestinians. A wave of student statements included condemnations of “Israeli apartheid” and “all forms of racism, colonialism, and injustice” at Princeton University, and a condemnation at Yale for the “injustice, genocide, and ethnic cleansing occurring in Palestine”.

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\(^{43}\) “Preliminary ADL Data Reveals Uptick in Antisemitic Incidents Linked to Recent Mideast Violence”, The Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org, May 20, 2021


The extent to which reactions to the conflict affected American Jewish life revealed deep Jewish communal challenges. Indeed, American Jews reported experiencing increased anxiety about growing antisemitism, with more than half of them reporting antisemitic encounters following the start of the conflict. In a sense, the conflict served as a systemic stress test, challenging the capabilities of existing mechanisms for undermining or containing antisemitism, and exposing significant vulnerability.

**IDEOLOGICAL EXTREMES DRIVING VOLATILITY**

A steady rise in antisemitism from ideological right and left poles reflected a larger context noted for extreme societal polarization, heightened instability, and potential disruption to long-standing norms, including on antisemitic expression and modes of fighting it. A broader social environment noted for rewarding the radical edges of American politics with opportunities for exposure and resources helped antisemitism on the extremes make mainstream inroads.

Antisemitism emerging from the far right was generally overt and explicit, more frequently included violence or violent threats, and elevated fringe conspiracy theories. ACMS data indicated that whereas ‘classic’ antisemitic rhetoric, predominantly associated with the far right, comprised only 26.5% of the total, it accounted for 42.8% of calls for violence. Adherents garnered widespread exposure through a number of high-visibility events, and related discourse surfaced in political and policy spheres. In contrast, antisemitism emerging from the far left often crossed more ‘blurry’ lines, prominently including those between criticism of Israel and antisemitism. At the same time, a common framing of Jewish narratives within progressive discourse in terms of white skin color, privilege, and oppressive power, challenged Jewish inclusion in progressive spheres, and undermined Jewish efforts to address antisemitism on the left.

Polling generally showed that American Jews were concerned about antisemitism from both ends of the ideological spectrum, though more so with antisemitism from the right. For example, an American Jewish Committee poll showed nine in ten American Jews polled (91%) saying the extreme political right constituted an antisemitic threat, while seven in ten (71%) said the same about the extreme political left – a marked ten-points increase compared to the 2020 data. A Jewish Electorate Institute poll meanwhile showed that while Jewish voters were significantly more concerned about antisemitism originating from the right (61%), nearly one-quarter were more concerned about antisemitism from the left (22%).

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48 Eitan Hersh and Laura Royden, “Antisemitic Attitudes Across the Ideological Spectrum”, www.eitanhersh.com, April 9, 2021
ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN COLLECTIVE RESPONSES AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

In 2021, a new Administration and Congressional leadership took significant steps in identifying, condemning, and combating antisemitism. In non-government arenas, new partnerships and new voices emerged from Jewish communities to address antisemitism emerging from the bottom up.

However, impacts did not directly extend to countering antisemitism in key societal arenas, such as on social media, within campuses, and in broader public opinion. Controversy about defining antisemitism, and its increasingly partisan nature, undermined Jewish communities’ capacity to fight antisemitism and Jewish communal credibility on antisemitism in general:

- **Struggles to achieve consensus in growing discourse about antisemitism** posed an obstacle to identifying, assessing the scope of, and responding to antisemitism. These visibly manifested in 2021 in controversy surrounding if and where anti-Israel or anti-Zionist sentiment becomes antisemitic, and in charges of politicization of antisemitism for partisan purposes. Indeed, charges of antisemitism visibly used as strategic political attacks in a highly partisan environment influenced the wider credibility of antisemitism charges and the level of unity in fighting them. Such charges abounded in 2021 surrounding lawmakers and movements affiliated with both parties.

Specifically, a number of campaigns posed broad challenges to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism, by claiming its potential to categorize legitimate criticism of Israel as antisemitic. These campaigns took the main forms of: characterizing IHRA as a tool of oppression for silencing critical voices; supporting alternative definitions; fighting its adoption on campuses; and warning against the conflict with freedom of expression that codifying the definition may cause, including as expressed by the definition’s lead author.

- **Jewish communal disunity on identifying antisemitism and setting priorities in combating it** - Accelerated by ideological polarization within Jewish communities, Jewish communal discourse reflected a lack of consensus in assessing the threat posed by antisemitism and frequent debate regarding whether to prioritize combating the threat of antisemitism from the left or from the right.

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52 For context, the IHRA Working Definition identifies the following as examples of antisemitic anti-Israel or anti-Zionist sentiment: “denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor” and “using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism... to characterize Israel or Israelis”. “About the IHRA non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism”, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, www.holocaustremembrance.com, Accessed December 2021. See also criteria defining antisemitic anti-Israel or anti-Zionism rhetoric in the ADL 2021 Online Antisemitism Report, broadly: when it denies only Jews the right to the same national self-determination, holds Jews responsible for Israel’s actions, or draws upon conspiracy theories and antisemitic tropes. “2021 Online Antisemitism Report Card”, The Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org, July 2021


Indicative of challenges related to coalescing around a unified agenda, while much of the Jewish establishment made federal adoption of the IHRA definition a top priority with the incoming Biden Administration, key progressive Jewish groups urged the Administration not to adopt it.\textsuperscript{54} Significantly, two groups of Jewish thinkers and leaders introduced alternate definitions challenging the role of the IHRA as a Jewish communal consensus.\textsuperscript{59}

Notably, Jewish anti-Zionists gained significant mainstream credibility, and played increasingly prominent roles in left-wing policy and discourse arenas during 2021. This notably included serving as references for political figures seeking guidance from Jewish constituents, including on antisemitism; and platforming voices that delegitimized and demonized Israel.

- **Challenged validity of data on antisemitism** - Methodological challenges included, on the one hand, criticism of the partial picture reflected by state and local law enforcement agencies’ voluntary self-reported data that FBI reports are based on, which claimed that actual numbers were significantly higher. On the other hand, charges of exaggerated or inflated numbers through inclusion of criticism of Israel, implied manipulation of antisemitism monitoring efforts to serve advocacy purposes.

**ANTISEMITISM FROM THE LEFT INCREASINGLY AFFECTING JEWISH COMMUNITIES**

A clear rise in antisemitism from progressive groups in 2021\textsuperscript{58} significantly manifested in anti-Israel or anti-Zionist expressions that crossed lines into antisemitism. At the same time, Jewish communities contended with widespread discourse within the progressive left that imposed a framing of ‘white, privileged, oppressor’ political identities on Jews and Jewish organizations.

- **Mainstreaming of anti-Zionist and anti-Israel antisemitism** in an environment that enabled extreme rhetoric on Israel, which featured:

\textsuperscript{54} Arno Rosenfeld, “Charged Antisemitism Definition Gets Initial Biden Endorsement”, The Forward, www.forward.com, March 2, 2021

\textsuperscript{55} Alternate definitions included: The Jerusalem Declaration, differing from the IHRA significantly by not considering supporting an end to Israel and denying a Jewish right to national self-determination as antisemitic, even if the position is held exclusively in regard to the Jewish state; and the Nexus Document, distinguished from the IHRA definition by not holding the application of double-standards in regards to Israel as innately antisemitic and in focusing on the right of Jews to claim what antisemitism is.

\textsuperscript{58} Jonathan Greenblatt, “Antisemitism on the left is subtler than on the right. But it’s getting worse”. The Washington Post, www.washingtonpost.com, October 27, 2021

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**The Sunrise DC incident and Jewish inclusion on the left**

In October, Sunrise DC - the Washington D.C. affiliate of the national youth-led organization focused on fighting climate change - decided to boycott participation in a voting rights rally. Their explanatory statement cited the participation of the National Council of Jewish Women, the Reform Movement’s Religious Action Center, and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs because of these prominent Jewish communal organizations’ Zionist affiliations. The decision generated widespread reactions due to the centrality of the targeted institutions within the Jewish community, as well as their centrality as Jewish voices in coalitions for common social justice, a long-standing pillar of Jewish communal engagement.

Jewish organizations and leaders widely characterized the Sunrise DC decision as antisemitic. Differing bases for doing so included viewing the decision as antisemitic for only upholding the Zionist affiliation test for Jews, thus singling out Jews and holding Jews responsible for Israel. Other views held the anti-Zionist premise of the decision to be inherently antisemitic; or framed the decision as discriminatory on the basis that Zionism can be considered a component of Jewish identity.

On the broader left, while the national Sunrise Movement distanced itself from the D.C. chapter’s decision, Jewish leaders noted the numerous non-Jewish progressive organizations that failed to condemn Sunrise DC’s move, or even - like the Black Lives Matter movement’s D.C. chapter - weighed in by denying the incident was antisemitic.
Reactions to the May conflict as a significant outbreak of anti-Zionist and anti-Israel antisemitism. Antisemitic strains of anti-Israel and anti-Zionist rhetoric appeared visibly in mass demonstrations, spearheaded on social media, and amplified by celebrity voices. These visibly integrated within a “cohesive, organized, and effective pro-Palestinian camp, which succeeded in recruiting support from growing audiences... in the U.S.”

‘Zionist litmus tests’ threatened the inclusion of Jews in progressive spaces on the basis of presumed or actual association with, defense of, or support for the Jewish state. In 2021, several incidents involved targeting Jews and Jewish institutions and organizations for exclusion, including: a decision by environmental group Sunrise D.C. to pull out of a voting rights rally due to the participation of three mainstream Jewish communal organizations; an ‘Americans for Muslims in Palestine’ report providing guidance on working only with expressly anti-Zionist Jewish group; and a speech by a CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations) official vilifying Zionist American Jewish organizations, including synagogues, and urging supporters to oppose them. The litmus test tactic also targeted non-Jews for engaging in ‘normalization’, notably in the case of Democratic Socialists of America threatening to expel Rep. Jamaal Bowman after he went to Israel with J Street.

Campus dynamics in 2020-2021 similarly featured ‘anti-normalization’-based exclusion of individual Jews and Jewish organizations and institutions failing to renounce Zionism. Related incidents included proposed resolutions, notably from the Pomona College Student Government for defunding Jewish and pro-Israel student clubs, including Hillel and Chabad; and from the City University of New York School of Law Student Government, targeting groups such as Hillel and those who “collaborate” with them. Reflecting the broader responsibility placed on Jews regarding Israel, 12% of students reported having been blamed by others for the actions of the Israeli government, and 24% reported having had their views on Israel or Israeli policy assumed by others, simply for being Jewish.

Rapidly adaptive anti-Israel campus activist movements thrived during the 2020-2021 academic year, even in a Zoom-intensive environment, as prominent student and professor-led campaigns vilified Israel and Zionism. Such campaigns helped generate a broad, visible platform for anti-Israel activity, which included discourse rooted in antisemitism or contributing to antisemitic outcomes.

High-profile roles that American Palestinian and Muslim leaders, organizations, and initiatives increasingly assumed on also contributed to an environment more enabling of anti-Zionist and anti-Israel rhetoric that sometimes included antisemitism. In 2021, there was a marked increase in anti-Zionist or anti-Israel Palestinian and Muslim American activism and influence in Congress, political advocacy spheres, and broader progressive policy discourse.

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This expanded with the amplification of high-profile ‘next generation’ Palestinian-American leaders, activists, and thinkers; notably exemplified by Mohammed El-Kurd being named among Time Magazine’s most influential people of 2021 and becoming the first Palestine correspondent of ‘The Nation’. Significantly, increased cooperation between Palestinian and far-left activists in the US produced highly influential campaigns, including promoting viral videos of far-right Israeli settlers and spreading hashtags, such as #SaveSheikhJarrah.

- **White Jewish privilege in contemporary progressive discourse** - Identity politics in contemporary progressive discourse frequently regarded the Jewish experience in the context of white skin color, social privilege, and oppressive power. Applied to American Jewish communities, this framing was prevalent within mainstream media and progressive politics; on campuses; and significantly, in organizational Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.

Jewish discourse prominently discussed elements of antisemitism present in the external imposition of these designations defining Jewish identity, and in the marginalization of representative Jewish voices seeking to weigh in on matters of defining Jewish identity. It noted parallels between designations of Jewish identity in the context of identity politics, and classical antisemitic depictions of illegitimate Jewish power. It also assessed challenges that these designations posed to Jewish credibility within the left, specifically in combating antisemitism. Notably in this context, framing Jews as powerful oppressors served prominent campaigns advancing a ‘silencing charge’ - accusing Jews calling out antisemitism, in particular as related to anti-Israel or anti-Zionist antisemitism, of seeking to illegitimately wield influence and exert control. These campaigns played out primarily in far-left media outlets, in campus controversies, in pro-Palestinian organizing, and in coverage of anti-BDS legislation.

A parallel framing was prominently deployed in viewing the Israeli–Palestinian conflict through a racial lens. On this basis, Jewish support for Israel was also equated with complicity with racism. Moreover, interpretations of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict through prisms of American racial dynamics enhanced the resonance of charges of Israeli apartheid, which the release of an April 2021 Human Rights Watch report bolstering the apartheid claim helped amplify. Significantly in this context, the percentage of scholars who described the Israeli–Palestinian conflict as “a one-state reality akin to apartheid” increased from 59% in February 2021 to 65% by September.

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66 “New Survey Finds Mideast Scholars View Israel/Palestine as ‘Akin to Apartheid’”, University of Maryland College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, [www.bsos.umd.edu](http://www.bsos.umd.edu), September 2021
Overall, 2021 saw major increases in far-right extremist activity, with a near-doubling of exposed white supremacist propaganda efforts, and a significant broadening of reach and influence. A baseline of comparatively prevalent antisemitic attitudes on the right, in particular among young adults on the far right, provided fertile ground for the spread of this ideology and its discourse within the right.

While agendas of right-wing extremist movements were not generally exclusively antisemitic, antisemitism was an inherent and prominent ideological feature. Moreover, researchers in 2021 predicted the likely growth of antisemitism among ideologically motivated violent extremist players in the U.S. Key far-right extremist actors included QAnon, the Oath Keepers, Boogaloo, the Three Percenters, and neo-Nazi organizations. Additional significant dynamics in 2021 stemmed from:

- An environment supportive of burgeoning conspiracy theories - Consistent with recent years, right-wing extremist antisemitic themes centered on versions of ‘Great Replacement’ theory, and portrayed plots to usurp political and societal power in the U.S. and globally as Jewish. Prominent themes of antisemitic right-wing discourse in 2021 tied in claims of global Jewish domination to Covid-19 and Israel. Prominent discourse on the May conflict framed Israel as a bastion of global Jewish power, frequently utilizing Nazi rhetoric; reflected, for example, in the phrase “Hitler was right” trending on Twitter with the escalation of hostilities. It manifested prominently in online forums, messaging apps, and mainstream social media platforms; in physical demonstrations, particularly targeting Jewish centers of community and worship; and in other forms of harassment, such flyers bearing antisemitic anti-Israel messages distributed. With regard to the coronavirus pandemic, far-right extremists and white supremacists demonstrably gained followers and influence in 2021 by co-opting conspiracy theories about Covid-19 to allude to a Jewish role in creating or spreading the virus, motivated by a desire for world domination.

Researchers also tracked moves within right-wing extremism towards a “big tent” conspiracy that integrated different ‘niche’ conspiracy theories under one overarching narrative and generated a corresponding “big tent” enemy. This ultimate enemy was often seen as the Jew,\textsuperscript{73} in some variations blending anti-Chinese and anti-Jewish tropes with fears of vaccines and a global plot to take over the world.\textsuperscript{74}

- **Emboldened far-right extremist elements’ use of high-visibility, public-facing tactics to broaden their exposure and reach.** Though the most prominent of these events did not center antisemitic agendas, they did work to elevate movements and individuals associated with extreme antisemitism into the mainstream national spotlight, and contributed to radicalization and crossover into extremist groups.

The January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol by elements that included overt white supremacists\textsuperscript{75} was the most significant event in this context. While antisemitism was not a focus, the day's events showcased several prominent examples of explicit antisemitism, including video showing a man wearing a hoodie with the words “Camp Auschwitz”, the antisemitic harassment of an Israeli journalist,\textsuperscript{76} the presence of prominent Holocaust deniers and neo-Nazis, and rhetoric holding Jews responsible for controlling the allegedly illegitimate election.\textsuperscript{77}

Following the events of January 6, white supremacists adopted further publicity-seeking tactics, including a march through Washington, D.C. Paradoxically, white supremacist defendants in the high-profile federal trial charging them for damages for their role in the 2017 ‘Unite the Right’ rally, sought to exploit the surrounding exposure to spread hate that many had been banned from expressing on some social media platforms.\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{73} Marc-André Argentino, Blyth Crawford, Florence Keen, and Hannah Rose, Far From Gone: The Evolution of Extremism in the First 100 Days of the Biden Administration, The International Centre for the Study of Radicalization, www.icr.info, April 30, 2021

\textsuperscript{74} Anita Chabria, “QAnon now pushed alarming conspiracy myths targeting China and Jewish people”, Los Angeles Times, www.latimes.com, March 23, 2021

\textsuperscript{75} “Are We Witnessing the Mainstreaming of White Power in America?”, The Ezra Klein Show, www.nytimes.com, November 14, 2021


Elements of mainstreaming antisemitic discourse surfacing within politics and policy spheres, notably among national political figures alluding to Jewish power over political systems, and to the national supremacy of Christianity. Reflecting further potential for mainstreaming far-right ideologies that include antisemitism, at least 10 individuals who were at the January 6 rally subsequently won elections to office, and more than 40 candidates who had publicly stated some support of QAnon announced they would be running for office in 2022. In right-wing news media, antisemitic rhetoric surfaced prominently in ideas such as The Great Replacement theory, as well as in persistent rhetoric likening coronavirus-related mandates to the Holocaust, despite broad-based Jewish communal objections to the practice as offensive and as harmful to Jewish efforts to fight antisemitism. Such comparisons abounded in state and local officials’ rhetoric, and in state and local forums.

RESPONSE: MAIN INITIATIVES AND DEVELOPMENTS
Main efforts to combat antisemitism took place within key national, state, and local arenas of government and law enforcement; as well as in central societal arenas, including online platforms, campuses, and public awareness spheres.

Key government and policy steps and initiatives addressed rising antisemitism
Significant executive branch steps to combat antisemitism included the Biden Administration’s early embrace of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. Additional steps included:

- **Key appointments**: The Administration appointed a liaison to the American Jewish community, and nominated renowned Jewish history and Holocaust scholar Deborah Lipstadt, whose appointment had yet to receive a confirmation hearing in 2021, as Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism with the Rank of Ambassador. These moves followed a campaign that five major Jewish groups led in reaction to the May 2021 surge in antisemitism. Towards the year’s end, the Administration also appointed a Special Advisor on Holocaust Issues.

- **Consistently supportive rhetoric** included UN envoy Linda Thomas-Greenfield’s commitment to fighting BDS, antisemitism, and unfair targeting of Israel at the UN; forceful condemnation of the surge in antisemitism accompanying the May conflict in Israel and Gaza, notably from President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Secretary of State Blinken; and Vice President Kamala Harris’s articulation of Israel being singled out because of anti-Jewish hatred as antisemitism.

- **International stage**: The Biden Administration boycotted a UN conference marking the 20th anniversary of the World Conference Against Racism in Durban on the basis of antisemitism and anti-Israel bias at the 2001 event, launched an initiative with Germany to combat Holocaust denial around the world, and officially cut all State Department ties with Islamic Relief Worldwide due to allegations of spreading antisemitism.

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80 For context, the ‘Great Replacement’ theory currently found in many key white supremacist movements posits that Jews bring non-white immigrants into historically white countries to undermine them.

81 Grace Hauck, ‘Jewish Groups Sound Alarm on Rise in Antisemitic Hate Crimes Amid Tensions Between Israel, Hamas’, USA Today, [www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), May 22, 2021

82 Shira Hanau, “Kamala Harris condemns singling out of Israel spurred by ‘anti-Jewish hatred’”, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, [www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org), November 7, 2021
Practical and declarative Congressional responses to antisemitism:

- **Congressional action taken to address antisemitism**, such as: The re-launch of the Senate Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Antisemitism with new co-chairs; passage of the No Hate Act, which Jewish organizations prominently advocated for, and that provides law enforcement resources to track and analyze hate crimes; and the establishment of a coalition of Black and Jewish senators to fight antisemitism and racism.

- **Declarative support** centered around condemnations of the surge of antisemitic incidents following the May conflict, significantly in a bipartisan resolution co-sponsored by nearly three-quarters of the Senate,83 leaders of both parties addressing a mass ‘virtual march’ against antisemitism,84 and Jewish Democratic House members calling on President Biden to address mounting antisemitism. Progressive Members of Congress also condemned antisemitism during this period, often alongside condemnations of other forms of hate.85

Law enforcement targeting white supremacists

The landmark trial prosecuting organizers of the 2017 ‘Unite the Right’ rally that left one counter-protester dead and dozens injured in Charlottesville found the defendants - major white supremacist leaders - liable for more than $25 million in damages. The verdict was expected to seriously obstruct functioning of much of the country’s far-right infrastructure. Other notable verdicts against perpetrators of antisemitic hate crimes assigned an almost 20-year sentence to a neo-Nazi who had planned to bomb an historic synagogue in Colorado, and a year-long sentence to a New Jersey member of a white supremacist hate group for vandalism, threats, and intimidation.86

Significantly, towards the year’s end, the ADL announced its participation, as one of only two non-profit organizations, alongside the District of Columbia Attorney-General, in a lawsuit against two extremist groups that allegedly helped organize the January 6 insurrection at the Capitol.

State- and local-level responses to antisemitism:

- **State leadership initiatives focused on**: Adopting the IHRA definition, such as in Kentucky and Texas; **requiring, calling for, or expanding state schools’ curriculum about the Holocaust**, such as in Arizona, Arkansas, Alabama, Nevada, Florida, and Utah; **publicly expressing commitments to fighting antisemitism**, e.g., Democratic and Republican governors from eight states issuing official proclamations during Hanukkah denouncing antisemitism and vowing to do more to fight it;87 and **investing resources in ensuring the physical safety of Jewish communities**, such as in Pennsylvania and California. A number of states sought to address antisemitism by pursuing legislation against the BDS Movement – notably in Utah, West Virginia, and Idaho – and against Ben & Jerry’s and its parent company in response to the company’s announced intention to stop selling its products in the West Bank, for example in Texas, New Jersey, and New York.

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85 Ron Kampeas, “For progressive Democrats, the condemnation of antisemitism is lumped in with other forms of hate”, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, www.jta.org, May 27, 2021
86 “New Jersey Man Sentenced to One Year and One Day in Prison for Conspiring with White Supremacists to Vandalize Synagogues Across the Country”, United States Department of Justice, www.justice.gov, November 16, 2021
Local level political responses to antisemitism emphasized adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism by county councils, boards, and municipalities. Public commitments to fighting antisemitism notably included more than 525 mayors across the United States signing a joint statement against antisemitism.88

NEW PATHS TO IMPACTING ON ANTISEMITISM FLOURISHING IN NON-GOVERNMENT ARENAS

Bolstered by a general consensus regarding the destructive role social media played in spreading antisemitism, main efforts to combat the spread of antisemitism on tech platforms included campaigns aimed at holding platforms to task. Existing steps enacted by major platforms to counter antisemitism’s spread were widely panned as insufficiently effective in combating the spread of antisemitism on social media. Such steps in 2021 included various platforms blocking antisemitic users and content, and Facebook setting up a “special operations center” to respond to content surrounding the May conflict and moving to address Holocaust denial.

Key initiatives to combat antisemitism on campuses included new partnerships between global Jewish institutions and campus organizations. These significantly included a Hillel International and ADL partnership formed to address antisemitism by working together to assess campus climates and develop educational programs, and a World Jewish Congress and Jewish on Campus partnership aimed at empowering and supporting students who identify antisemitism on campus. Major condemnations of campus antisemitism included a Harvard Israel Initiative letter that more than 800 University affiliates signed, and a letter from University of Southern California faculty. Other initiatives included academic leadership engagement campaigns, and the establishment of new campus organizations to help protect Jewish students. Furthermore, more than 10 campuses adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism in 2021.

Main efforts to spread awareness and to inform broad sectors of the public about antisemitism included:

- High-visibility campaigns and rallies against antisemitism, notably the large-scale ‘No Fear’ rally held in July in Washington, D.C., and the ‘Shine a Light’ awareness-raising initiative launched on Hanukkah by eight foundations with the support of more than 60 organizations.
- On social media, a ‘next generation’ of advocacy showcased a number of distinct Jewish voices, many coming from the ideological left, positioning themselves as warriors against contemporary antisemitism by proudly embracing Zionism and their Jewish identities.
- Celebrity-led campaigns included an initiative against the cultural boycott of Israel. Additionally, more than 170 Black and Jewish entertainers joined to combat racism and antisemitism by launching the Black-Jewish Entertainment Alliance. Jewish actor Joshua Malina’s public calls for Hollywood to ‘cancel’ Mel Gibson due to his history of antisemitism was also notable in this context.
- Emerging campaigns increasingly called for corporate and organizational Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts to include antisemitism.

France

GENERAL TRENDS

According to the latest annual report released by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights, France’s Ministry of Interior recorded a 50% decline in antisemitic incidents across the country in 2020: from 687 in 2019 to 339 in 2020. Overall, the total number of racist and antisemitic incidents decreased by 26% in 2020. However, the Jewish Community Security Service (SPCJ) highlights that the number of physical assaults has remained almost unchanged despite COVID-19 lockdowns (44 in 2020 versus 45 in 2019). The sharp drop in the overall number of antisemitic incidents in 2020 should be taken cautiously as it was largely attributed to strict lockdown measures introduced by the government to contain the spread of Covid-19, including severe limitations on freedom of movement alongside the closure of Jewish institutions.

Concerning the situation for 2021, the Minister of Interior Gérald Darmanin says preliminary data (January–October 2021) shows a 15% decrease in antisemitic incidents in comparison with the same period in 2019: 617 in 2019 versus 523 in 2021. During the same period, anti-Christian incidents decreased by 25% (686 incidents) while anti-Muslim incidents increased by 32% (171 incidents).

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90 Ibid.
Although the security situation has deteriorated for French Jews in the last two decades, antisemitism in France mostly emanates from fringe populations and there are no indications of institutional antisemitism. The French government has been consistently outspoken in combating antisemitism in recent years and harbors a high level of awareness of the extent of the phenomenon and its main propagators, given that the country has been contending with these issues for a very long time compared to other countries and has repeatedly been the target of radical Islamic terror attacks. However, the scope and magnitude of violence against French Jews in the last twenty years are a source of anxiety and deep feelings of insecurity for them. The public debate in France has focused on the emergence of a “new antisemitism”, no longer originating from the far right but in radical Islamism and the far left. Prominent historian of ideas Pierre-André Taguieff, who for 30 years warned of this phenomenon and prefers the use of the term “new Judeophobia” instead of “antisemitism”, believes that the cyclical resurgences of traditional antisemitism should not mask the fundamental trend over the past decades: the radicalization and globalization of the “anti-Zionist” demonology and its centrality in contemporary antisemitism.

**MAIN PROPAGATORS: RADICAL ISLAM, RADICAL LEFT, AND THE FAR-RIGHT**

As French society has grown more polarized, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic alongside a wave of shocking Islamist terror attacks have amplified pre-existing divisions within society. However, there was no structural evolution in 2021 of the sources of antisemitic attitudes which still predominantly emanate from radical and political Islam, the radical left, and the extreme right.

**Radical Islam: The Main Source of Domestic Terrorism and Antisemitism**

Home to the largest Jewish and Muslim populations in Europe, France has witnessed an explosion of antisemitic incidents since the 2000s—mostly perpetrated by radical Muslims—alongside a wave of large-scale Islamist terror attacks. Between 2012 and May 2021, 55 Islamist terror attacks were committed on French soil, killing 300 people.92 France’s Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin assessed that the main threat faced by the country was “the risk of terror of Sunni origin”,93 with Jewish communities being very high on the list of targets for radical Islamists. It should be noted that more than 22,000 people are registered in the identification file for preventing Islamist radicalization of a terrorist nature (FSPRT),94 a file created in March 2015 after the Charlie Hebdo and Hyper Cacher terror attacks. Among them, 8,132 cases are actively followed. Moreover, Darmanin revealed that 22% of those involved in the 101 completed, failed, and foiled terrorist attacks since 2014 were foreign nationals, and announced in September 2021 that over 600 illegal immigrants suspected of Islamist radicalization have been expelled since 2018.

Many Islamist extremists who hit France in a series of terror attacks in recent years were isolated and self-radicalized individuals, unknown to the intelligence services. According to Darmanin, the threat posed by lone actors who are not necessarily linked to an established organization is

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92 According to Fondapol, 82 Islamist attacks were committed between 1979 and May 2021 in France, killing at least 330 people (French victims represent 49% of the total European victims of Islamic terrorism). www.fondapol.org
a growing challenge for the intelligence services.\textsuperscript{95} This new configuration differs from the well-planned and synchronized attacks which hit the country during the last decade by the Islamic State and an Al Qaeda affiliate. The latest 2021 EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report suggests that the French case reflects a broader general EU trend. Indeed, the report assesses: "In 2020, the number of completed attacks increased compared with 2019. Ten attacks killed 12 people and injured more than 47. A significant threat for several years, lone actors were behind all of the completed attacks".\textsuperscript{96}

**Antisemitism on the Far Left: When Political Islam Intersects with Progressive Fringes**

Two separate incidents, both involving France’s far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon\textsuperscript{97} who won 19 percent of the votes in France’s last presidential race, should be noted for 2021:

- **June 2021** - Jean-Luc Mélenchon sparked outrage after suggesting that the Toulouse Jewish school Islamist terror attack in 2012 was part of an election conspiracy.

- **October 2021** - Mélenchon sparked a heated debate after having established a causal link between Jewish presidential candidate Eric Zemmour’s set of values and Judaism. The far-left leader issued a rare mea culpa.

**Theoretical Background**

Another primary source of antisemitism in France emanates from extreme left fringes and often disguises itself behind the mask of human rights and egalitarianism. The growing recognition in France of the cardinal role of Islamist antisemitism in the resurgence of Judeophobia is endangered by the "woke" ideology and the intersectional movement, which moved from academic theorizing into left-wing political activism. However, it should be noted that "wokeism" occupies a disproportionate place in some media and academic milieux relative to its real representativeness in French public opinion. Indeed, this ideology—which constitutes a post-modernist corpus of theories emanating from a fusion of the Frankfurt school's neo-Marxist theories and the "French theory" that gained considerable popularity in the US since the 1980's—has met with a negative reception in France since its theorization.

Following the Second World War, new forms of antisemitism have developed at the intersection of post-Marxist, Third-Worldist, and Deconstructionist movements. The common fight against imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, and class groups identified as systemically dominant, have thus manifested itself in a convergence of struggles between the radical left and radical Islam, and have, in some cases been translated into virulent antisemitic forms of anti-Zionism. Indeed, the Jewish state is frequently described as the last bastion of colonialism and as an evil country that should be dismantled. This can also be accompanied by age-old antisemitic tropes, creating a hostile environment for French Jews.

At the same time, Muslims may be perceived by some left-wing circles as the new proletariat that should be protected because of their supposed systemic victim status as opposed to Jews, who

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Mélenchon has made multiple statements widely condemned as antisemitic.
they see as embodying a systemically dominant group and a privileged capitalist bourgeoisie. Furthermore, in the neo-Marxism paradigm, racism is entirely systemic and institutional, and is seen as a function of class struggles and power. Within this conceptual framework, antisemitism may not be considered ‘real racism’ since dominant class groups cannot be victimized or subjected to discrimination.

Extreme-Right Wing: A "Terror Temptation" but a Disorganized Scene
Although individuals who hold extreme right-wing ideology have not murdered Jews in France in recent decades, the potential threat they constitute should not be minimized considering their historical background and their consubstantial radicality and violence. A 2005 memo from intelligence services estimated the number of extreme right-wing activists and sympathizers to be between 2,500 and 3,500.69 Police sources claimed recently that approximately 1,000-2,000 extreme right-wing individuals are currently monitored by the intelligence services, including several hundred white supremacists.70 Moreover, a parliamentary report investigating extreme right-wing groups indicates their “terror temptation” in response to deadly Islamist terror attacks in 2015.100

In fact, ultra-nationalist fringes seek to engage in a civilizational war with Islam and the existential threat posed by the so-called ‘Great Replacement’, a theory claiming that the native white European population is being progressively replaced with African and Middle Eastern populations through mass immigration and multiculturalism. Antisemitic conspiracy theorists believe that this “white genocide” is being orchestrated by the Jews.

However, the extreme right-wing scene in France is described as “heterogeneous”,101 while old structured right-wing extremist and antisemitic movements have significantly lost influence and have been “disorganized” following their dissolution by the government.102 According to France’s DGSI domestic intelligence agency, old historical neo-Nazi organizations have been “in decline for five or ten years”, a positive trend mainly attributed by the DGSI to the series of administrative dissolutions made in 2013 which “have dealt a hard blow to these small groups”.103

Finally, although we noticed a significant rise of extreme-right activism in 2019, including the organization of several conferences and events which brought together ultra-nationalists, white supremacists, and neo-Nazis from all over Europe and France, the strict restrictions on freedom of movement imposed by the French government to combat the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic may have also indirectly resulted in a significant decrease in these physical gatherings in 2020, followed by slightly increased activism in 2021 at the end of major lockdowns and curfews. As an example, extreme-right wing antisemitic ideologue Yvan Benedetti held his annual summer camp from July 18-24, 2021, in the honor of French Nazi-collaborator Maréchal Pétain in la Vienne (central France). The program included training, sport sessions, chants etc.

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70 Margaux d’Adhémar, Le Figaro, October 2020, www.lefigaro.fr Brajols, Action Défense Opérationnelle, OAS, but also dissolved neo-Nazi groups such as ‘Blood & Honor’, ‘Combat 18’, ‘Charlemagne Hammerskin’, and ‘Bastion Social’, are all under intelligence services’ surveillance.
103 Ibid.
GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSES TO ANTISEMITISM AND RADICALIZATION

France Passes Law on Combating Separatism, Including Online Hate Speech

August 2021 - The law on the “respect for the principles of the Republic” - which anticipates certain provisions of the forthcoming Digital Services Act (DSA) at the EU level - was passed on August 24, 2021. The bill reflects a decision by President Emmanuel Macron to tackle what he called “Islamist separatism” and reinforces the principles of French secularism, enjoying broad support from French Jewish community who are high on the list of targets for radical Islamists. The law also contains provisions aimed at combating hate speech and illegal online content and provides for better cooperation between the authorities and social networks in the fight against online hate:

- **Platforms** will be required to “make public the resources they devote to combating illicit activities” and to “implement procedures and proportionate human and technological resources” to this end.

- It obliges operators to designate a single point of contact for cooperation with judicial and administrative authorities, and the conservation of reported and removed content.

- It creates a new offense of endangering others by disseminating information, including online, about people’s private or professional life, with the intention of harming the person or their family. The new crime is punishable by up to three years in prison and a fine of EUR 45,000.

- Most notable is the creation of a procedure for the immediate appearance of individuals who disseminate online hate speech before a criminal court.

France’s Highest Court: Sarah Halimi’s Killer will not Stand Trial; Decision Sparks Massive Outrage

April 2021 - The Court of Cassation (France’s highest jurisdiction) ruled that Kobili Traoré, who murdered 64-year-old Jewish physician Sarah Halimi, could not be tried because he had a “delusional episode” brought on by his use of cannabis. The court recognized the antisemitic dimension of the act. Traore, a devout Muslim and regular visitor to the nearby Salafist Mosque, entered Halimi’s apartment and beat her to death while shouting “Allahu Akbar” and reciting Quranic verses. Traore then threw Halimi out the window. The court decision set off a storm of reactions from different bodies:

- **Civil society & Jewish community** - The verdict sparked outrage among French and international Jewish groups. It led to a large demonstration in Paris, and smaller ones in other cities, in France, in Israel, in the US, and elsewhere. France’s Chief Rabbi Haim Korsia argued that the court decision marks “a grave breach of trust” for the country’s judicial system, claiming that anyone who has taken an illegal substance now has a ‘license to kill Jews’.

- **Executive and legislative bodies** - President Emmanuel Macron expressed his dissent with

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the ruling, saying that he wanted the Justice Minister to present a bill to change the law “as soon as possible”. Shortly after, Justice Minister Eric Dupond-Moretti announced that a bill would be presented in time for a vote by Parliament and would fill the “juridical void” that currently makes it impossible to “take account of the voluntary intake of toxic substances” leading to delirium in the commission of crimes. The law was adopted by the Parliament on December 16th. Additionally, the Union of Democrats and Independents Party announced the establishment a parliamentary commission of inquiry to investigate “possible dysfunctions” in the Sarah Halimi affair.

- **Legal actions** - Sarah Halimi’s sister filed a legal claim in Israel in the hope of getting a trial against Traoré. Israel’s criminal law applies to antisemitic crimes committed abroad that have been denounced by an Israeli citizen, in this case Ms Halimi’s sister Esther Lekover. In parallel, the lawyer representing Halimi’s brother said they intend to refer the case to the European Court of Human Rights.

**Life sentence for murderer of French Holocaust survivor Mireille Knoll**

*November 2021* – A French court sentenced the killer of an elderly Jewish woman to life imprisonment, with no possibility of parole for 22 years. Yacine Mihoub was convicted of the murder of Mireille Knoll, 85, who was stabbed 11 times and whose body was partly burned after her Paris apartment was set alight on March 23, 2018. A second defendant, Alex Carrimbacus, was acquitted of murder by the Paris court, but found guilty of theft with antisemitic motives, for which he was sentenced to 15 years in prison. The court stressed that the attack, which began as a robbery, was fueled by “a broader context of antisemitism” and “prejudices” about the purported wealth of Jewish people, which led Mihoub to believe the victim had “hidden treasures” in her home.

**Adoptions and Rejections of IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism**

- By a large majority vote, the French Senate approved a draft resolution that adopts the definition of antisemitism proposed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The National Assembly passed a similar resolution in 2019.

- In 2021, the cities of Paris, Nice (Southern France), and Neuilly-sur-Seine (West of Paris) adopted the IHRA working definition of antisemitism, joining a growing number of cities around the world.

- However, resistance to the adopting the IHRA definition has surfaced in Strasbourg (Eastern France). The left-wing Europe Ecology Party (EELV) refused to endorse it, arguing that this definition prohibits any criticism of the policy of the State of Israel.

**Other Notable Courts’ Decisions on Cases of Antisemitism**

- **French Court Sentences Antisemitic Polemicist to Five Years in Prison, June 2021**
  Ahmed Moualek was sentenced to five years in prison after he posted videos of himself calling for the murder of prominent French Jews. Moualek founded the Anti-Zionist Party 10 years ago with Dieudonné and Alain Soral, both prominent antisemitic figures.

- **Prison Sentences of 4-12 Years for Attackers of a Jewish Family, July 2021**
  A Paris court sentenced nine individuals to prison sentences ranging from 4-12 years after they
were convicted for the kidnapping and violent assault of a French Jewish family in 2017, in Livry-Gargan (a Paris suburb). The aggravating circumstance of antisemitism were confirmed by the court. The victims were Roger Pinto, 88 years old, an influential figure in the Jewish community, his wife Mireille, 78, and their son David, 52.

- Mohamed Tatai, the rector of the Great Mosque of Toulouse, who in a sermon recited a religious text commanding Muslims to kill Jews, was acquitted of incitement to antisemitic hate charges.

- Far-right essayist Alain Soral was definitively condemned by the highest court of justice for Holocaust denial. The court has validated the Paris Court of Appeal verdict.

**FOCUS 2021: KEY TOPICS**

**France’s 2022 Presidential Elections: Jewish Candidate Eric Zemmour Splits the Jewish Community**

Éric Zemmour has joined the race for the French presidency and surged in opinion polls ahead of France’s April 2022 presidential elections. Zemmour, 63, is a best-selling author, journalist, and a polarizing French Jewish intellectual of Algerian descent. He has been the repeated target of antisemitic campaigns and is systematically being blamed for the rise of Islamophobic sentiments. Zemmour has made several controversial comments on Jewish-related questions which have divided the French Jewish community. Some of Zemmour’s remarks:

- **Nazi-collaborationist Vichy regime** – Eric Zemmour claimed that Philippe Pétain (head of the Vichy regime that collaborated with the Nazis) protected French Jews and sacrificed foreign Jews living in France. A Paris court in February acquitted Zemmour on a charge of contesting crimes against humanity. However, in its verdict, the court said that the deportation of foreign and French Jews “was implemented with the active participation of the Vichy government, its officials, and its police”. Zemmour’s comments negated Petain’s role in the extermination, the court added.

- **Toulouse Jewish school 2012 terror attack** – In his last book, a best-seller published in September 2021, Zemmour wrote that neither the terrorist Mohammed Merah nor his Jewish victims Arié (6 yrs.), Gabriel (3 yrs.), and their father Jonathan Sandler, were really French as they were all buried outside France (Merah in Algeria and the Sandler family in Israel.) “Anthropologists teach us that we come from the country where we are buried”, Zemmour wrote, adding: “They did not belong to France”.

- **Dreyfus Affair** – Zemmour claimed that the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus, the French Jewish army officer falsely accused of treason, “was not evident”.

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105 The wartime government of Philippe Pétain, the pro-Nazi collaborationist Vichy regime, was characterized by its overzealous and pro-active state antisemitism. It should be noted that Zemmour doesn’t deny the virulent antisemitic character of the Vichy regime but argues that Pétain gave up foreign Jews and saved French Jews. According to leading historians’ estimations, around 73% of Jews living in France during the Second World War were not deported (while 16% of French Jews and 40% of foreign Jews were deported.)
• **Memory laws** - Zemmour advocates for the abolition of all memorial laws, including the Gayssot Act which criminalizes Holocaust denial. The polemicist argues that memory laws cultivate the culture of repentance and guilt, which would be at the origin of French "decadence".

• **Iran Nukes** - Zemmour said that if Israel, Pakistan, or India have nuclear weapons, he doesn't "see why Iran should be denied them".

**French Jews split over Zemmour**

• On the one hand, Zemmour's positions have turned the majority of the French Jewish establishment against him. "He's not a useful idiot - he's a useful Jew and the new leader of Holocaust denial in our country", wrote Francis Kalifat, the head of the CRIF umbrella group of French-Jewish communities. The Chief Rabbi of France, Haim Korsia, called Zemmour an "antisemite".

• On the other hand, part of the Jewish community has expressed its support for Zemmour, although they reject many of his positions. Some of them find Mr. Zemmour's uncompromising anti-Islamist message appealing, at a time when radical, political, and identitarian Islam constitute by far the main threat to the Jewish community. "There is a part of the Jewish community that sees in him the man who will resolve problems of security and violent Islamism", said Francis Kalifat. Elizabeth Lévy, the Editor-in-Chief of Causeur, argued that Zemmour represented "the last chance before exile" for many Jews in France who regularly encounter antisemitism. In this light, it was worth "closing one's eyes to a few excesses".

**Operation 'Guardian of the Walls': Importation of the Conflict Contained by Anticipatory Policymaking**

Home to the largest Jewish and Muslim population in Europe, France has become a new front in the Israel-Palestine conflict since the beginning of the Second Intifada. As an example, antisemitic attacks in France soared by 130% in 2014 following Israeli's military operation in Gaza. However, while antisemitic expressions did explode in the cyberspace, no violent antisemitic incidents connected to the latest Israeli-Palestinian confrontations were reported during this time, amid a government ban on pro-Palestinian protests in Paris. Moreover, the National Bureau for Vigilance against Antisemitism (BNVCA) did not record a visible upward trend in antisemitic activity during the Gaza fighting.

In May 2021, Paris police prefecture issued an order banning pro-Palestinian demonstrations planned in the French capital, fearing a repeat of fierce clashes that erupted at a similar Paris rally during the last Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 2014, when protesters aimed at synagogues and other Jewish targets. The move seems to have contained the most radical groups—a confluence of pro-Palestinian, radical Islamist, and radical left fringes.

As "governing means anticipating", proactivity in governance and anticipatory policymaking proves effective in containing manifestations of antisemitism.
Holocaust Symbolism and Antisemitism in Anti-Vax/Anti-Health Pass Movement

Although empirical observation seems to indicate a significant penetration of conspiracy theorists and antisemitic elements into the global anti-vax movement, the use and abuse of Holocaust imagery during the protests shouldn't be characterized systemically as an antisemitic manifestation. While Holocaust deniers and antisemites—whose propaganda is limited by a strong legal framework criminalizing Holocaust denial and hate speech in countries such as France and Germany—tend to abuse Holocaust analogies as a strategy to minimize the scope and extent of the Jewish genocide, the phenomenon commonly defined as ‘Holocaust Trivialization’ is the product of a complex historical, philosophical, and sociological process and dynamic whose analysis requires a pluridisciplinary approach. At a time characterized by the end of ideologies and the progress of post-modernist and deconstructionist theories, the “reductio ad Hitlerium” (Leo Strauss, 1953) alongside the appropriation of Jewish persecution appear as a symptom of structural evolutions of our contemporary societies, the significance of cultural and ethical relativism, and the transition from an era characterized by the “cult of heroes” to a new one marked by the “competition among victims” (Jean-Michel Chaumont, 2000) when the “status of Holocaust victim” has become an object of envy.

1. Misuse of Holocaust Imagery in Anti-Vax Protests: A Cynical Historical Distortion

The Coronavirus pandemic led to the extensive use of a terminology that associates it with the Holocaust. Indeed, anti-coronavirus restrictions have been widely compared to policies of the Nazi regime, a phenomenon mostly notable in the US and Germany but also in France. As hundreds of thousands of people marched around France against government vaccine rules, some demonstrators wore yellow stars while others carried signs evoking the Auschwitz death camp or South Africa’s apartheid regime. “The familiarity of these visuals has also lent them to being misused in ways which distort the historical record, attack the memory of those whom the Germans and their collaborators murdered, and serve as a cover for prejudice and hatred”, according to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

2. The Infiltration of Antisemitic Elements into Covid Protests

Several elements signal the penetration of antisemitism into contemporary populist and “anti-system” movements. Historian of ideas Pierre-André Taguieff points out the recycling of two distinctive century-old antisemitic tropes in the so-called anti-vax movement: the myth of a Jewish conspiracy trying to take over the world by establishing a “health dictatorship”, alongside the myth of the criminal and poisoning Jew who uses the vaccine as a lethal weapon with genocidal motivations. Indeed, French prosecutors have launched investigations into antisemitic banners seen at
several demonstrations against the Covid health pass. The abundance of these placards may indicate that the protests became entwined with a surge of antisemitism across the country, with multiple reports of vandalism and graffiti bearing swastikas and antisemitic symbols on buildings, monuments, churches, and vaccine centers.

Among the hundreds of thousands of people demonstrating against the health pass, some protestors were seen holding up signs with the word “Qui?” (“Who?”), in an apparent reference to a June 2021 interview given by retired general Daniel Delawarde, in which he was asked “who controls the media?” to which he answered: “The community you know well”. Since then, the term "Qui" has become a popular code word in the French extreme-right milieu. In the context of the Covid-19 crisis, it implies that Jews are behind the pandemic and profit from vaccination campaigns. The case of Cassandre Fristot (see picture), a teacher and former far-right National Front official, who received a six-month suspended prison sentence after carrying an antisemitic placard containing the word "Qui" during an anti-pass march in the eastern town of Metz, sparked strong condemnation from the government.

3. Profile of the Protestors

In France, the protest movement is characterized by its heterogeneity, bringing together anti-health pass citizens, health workers, anti-vaxxers, far-right figures, conspiracy theorists, anarchists, as well as former members of the “Yellow Vest” anti-government movement. The resurgence of uninhibited classic antisemitic rhetoric—as well as the prevalence of Holocaust analogies—during the protests may indicate that right-wing extremists have capitalized on the anti-health pass movement to spread anti-elite, anti-system, and antisemitic sentiments.

Holocaust Trivialization and Competitive Victimhood in Islamist Propaganda

Since the institutionalization in the 1990s of Holocaust memory (which included the codification of a strong corpus of laws, public policies of memory, education, etc.) and the recognition in 1995 by then-President Jacques Chirac of the “imprescriptible debt of France” to the victims of the deportation, the phenomenon of "competitive memories" and "competitive victimhood" has progressed and been nourished by Islamist propaganda (this section will focus on the Islamist dimension although this phenomenon is much broader). Jews are regularly accused of holding a monopoly on the ‘victim status’ and of using the Holocaust and antisemitism to blackmail the world. Several events in recent years have illustrated the scope of this narrative. Indeed, the great popularity of Eric Zemmour despite his strong anti-immigration stance and the republication of the prophet Muhammed cartoons by Charlie Hebdo, a French satirical newspaper targeted in a 2015 Islamist terror attack, stirred the ire of Islamist extremists who spread fallacious analogies with the Holocaust and antisemitism.

“The instrumentalization and reversal of victimhood postures are part of what I call the ideological corruption of anti-racism. The figure of the persecuted Jew remains the paradigm of persecuted humanity. All those who, in an ideological and cultural war, categorize themselves as victims are inclined to denounce their enemies as ‘Nazis’ and compare themselves to ‘Jews’.”

Pierre-André Taguieff
On the one hand, some controversial Muslim figures have abused an adversarial competitive victimhood narrative, arguing that the French state’s enforcement of harsh legislative framework criminalizing antisemitism and Holocaust denial, while simultaneously allowing and defending free speech and the right to mock Islam’s Prophet, constitutes more evidence of ‘Jewish privilege’ and of a ‘Jewish monopoly’ over the ‘victim status’. The fallacy occurs when incitement to racial hatred (racism and antisemitism)—which constitutes a criminal offence under French law—is falsely equated with blasphemy (offending religions); an offense definitively abolished by the French Republic in 1881.

On the other hand, a narrative equating the situation of Muslims in today’s Europe with that of Jews before or during the Holocaust, has become a discourse pattern of Islamist propaganda. Many compare France’s policies towards radical Islam to the Nazis’ treatment of the Jews during the Holocaust. Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei took to Twitter to liken Holocaust denial to the publication of Mohammed cartoons while Iran announced it will host its third Holocaust denial cartoon contest in response to Macron’s defense of Charlie Hebdo’s decision to republish Mohammed caricatures.104

MAIN ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN 2021

April 2021

MARSEILLE: Police in the southern city of Marseille detained a man who was wielding a knife outside a Jewish school and kosher market. The children were briefly sequestered inside the school.

SARCELLES: Jewish residents of Sarcelles chased and overpowered a man who witnesses said tried to stab three Jews, then handed him over to police. The suspect, a 35-year-old illegal immigrant from Pakistan, approached the men from behind near a synagogue in Sarcelles.

August 2021

LYON: Police arrested one suspect in connection with the gang beating of a Jewish man in Lyon. Five men ganged up on the victim after calling him a “dirty Jew”.

November 2021

LYON: French police arrested a teenager who brandished a large knife in front of a Jewish high school in Villeurbanne, a suburb of Lyon, while shouting antisemitic slogans. He also hurled marbles at students in the school and called them “dirty Jews” as he waved a knife.

U.K

GENERAL TRENDS

Antisemitism continued to feature prominently in the UK in 2021, both within Jewish and broader discourse, and was driven largely by countervailing trends. This was particularly evident during the May conflict in Israel and Gaza that culminated in Israel’s Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls,’ which ushered in an intense wave of often shocking antisemitic incidents. This spike arose within a context, prior to the conflict and in its aftermath, of notable highly visible acts of physical or antisemitic violence. Around Hannukah, for example, these included multiple incidents of vandalism and an attack on a bus carrying young Jewish passengers.

At the same time, the change in leadership of the Labour Party brought Jewish communities significantly strengthened partnership in contending with antisemitism, even as Jewish communal voices faced challenges in efforts to raise awareness about antisemitism and seek allyship on the left. Indeed, while overt far-right, far-left, and Islamist ideologies continued to fuel antisemitism, indications of the mainstreaming of antisemitism pervaded broader societal arenas, alongside fundamental challenges to identifying and contending with it.

A Baseline Of Persistent Antisemitism

High levels of overt antisemitism characterized 2021 even before the upsurge around the hostilities in May, as reflected in:

- Increasing antisemitic incidents: In the year ending March 2021, Jews were the victims of more than one in five religion-related hate crimes - the highest percentage ever recorded,107 with 1,288 documented offenses. In fact, anti-Jewish hate crime went up at a time when most religious hate crime declined.108 Online, the approximate half-a-million antisemitic tweets posted every year in the UK, and between 100 and 1,350 explicitly antisemitic tweets every day, reflected the limited efficacy of social media platforms’ attempts to mitigate the phenomenon.109

A Very Violent Hanukkah Season

On Dec. 1, a group of young people tried to smash the windows of an open-top bus carrying Jewish teens celebrating Hanukkah. Throughout the holiday, the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 30 antisemitic hate incidents across the UK during, including two menorahs destroyed in London.

Photo source: “Yobs attempt to smash windows on bus carrying teens celebrating Chanukah”, Jewish News, December 1, 2020, www.jewishnews.co.uk

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109 “Twitter: The Extent and Nature of Antisemitism on Twitter in the UK”, Antisemitism Policy Trust and Community Security Trust, 2021 cst.org.uk
• **Mainstreaming antisemitism**: While overt antisemitism was generally contained within extremist circles, Jewish communities expressed concerns surrounding antisemitic sentiment mainstreaming within broader circles, notably in far-left politics, and on campuses, as well as within news and entertainment industries. A Campaign Against Antisemitism poll at the start of the year showed that nearly half the public agreed with one or more antisemitic statements put to them, and that 12% of the general public showed "entrenched antisemitic views".\(^{110}\)

• **Vulnerable Jewish communities**: In the face of rising antisemitism, Jewish communities frequently perceived a lack of support in combating the phenomenon, particularly within progressive left circles. Indicatively, nearly half British Jewish poll respondents reported that they avoided displaying visible signs of their Judaism in public, the largest percentage since 2016, and many felt "scarred" by the Jeremy Corbyn era. Overall, 18% of British Jews reported feeling somewhat or very unwelcome in the UK.\(^{111}\)

• **Covid-19 intersection with antisemitism**: The pandemic introduced an ideal vehicle for antisemitic conspiracy theories and Holocaust misappropriation. In 2021, rising antisemitism intertwined with Covid-19 conspiracy theories, which spiked in 2021. Indeed, Covid-19 conspiracists with huge followings were frequently tracked moving into strongly antisemitic territory.\(^{112}\)

In the first half of 2021, the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 41 incidents containing antisemitic rhetoric alongside reference to the pandemic, compared to 26 such cases reported over the same period in 2020. Main examples of associated rhetoric included: conspiracy theories about Jewish involvement in creating and spreading Covid-19, and wishing and hoping that Jewish people catch the virus and die from it.

Misappropriated Holocaust-era imagery, which may promote antisemitism or weaken actual struggles against antisemitism, surfaced prominently,\(^{113}\) for example, in the ubiquity of people wearing the Star of David in UK demonstrations.\(^{114}\) By far the most antisemitic content in anti-vaccine social media networks centered on comparisons with Nazi Germany, such as characterizing vaccine passports as a ‘Nazi tool’.\(^{115}\)

**THE WAR UNLEASHED AN ANTISEMITISM TSUNAMI**

The period surrounding the May conflict in Israel and Gaza was the most intense in anti-Jewish hatred in the UK in recent years. Prominent antisemitic incidents featured physical violence or vandalism, and anti-Jewish discourse was rife in public demonstrations. Significant Islamist influence - which incitement by local Islamist groups and leaders, as well global jihadist groups, helped spur - could be seen, for example, in a notable Islamist presence at demonstrations during this period, including chants repeated at several protests that effectively called for Jews to be killed.\(^{116}\)

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110 “Antisemitism Barometer 2020”, Campaign Against Antisemitism, antisemitism.org
111 Ibid.
113 “Holocaust Denial and Distortion on Social Media”, Simon Wiesenthal Center, updated November 2021, www.wiesenthal.com
114 Antisemitic Incidents: January to June 2021, The Community Security Trust, cst.org.uk
By the numbers:

- **Heightened Arab and Muslim role driving antisemitism:** Indicatively during this period, of the reported antisemitic incidents in which the appearance of the offender or offenders was recorded, 46% were described as Arab or North African and 22% as South Asian. Parallel data for 2020 shows 63% of antisemitic incident offenders described as white (North European) and 17% as black.\(^{117}\)

- **Record-breaking threat levels to Jewish communities:** The CST recorded 628 antisemitic hate incidents from May 8 to June 7, 2021; the highest ever for a month-long period and more than four times the total number of antisemitic incidents that would normally be expected.\(^{118}\) In just the first 11 days of that period, the CST recorded 116 antisemitic incidents - four of them violent - compared to 19 in the previous 11 days prior; a six-fold increase compared to the previous year. London police recorded approximately four times as many antisemitic incidents (87) during the conflict than at any time in the last three years, 65 more than the previous highest monthly figure since this data was first recorded in May 2018.\(^{119}\) On university campuses and in schools, Jewish students and lecturers suffered a year’s worth of antisemitic incidents in May, reporting 154 antisemitic incidents.\(^{120}\)

Extending to the first half of 2021, thus including the lead-up to and aftermath of the hostilities, the CST recorded 1,308 anti-Jewish hate incidents nationwide – a 49% increase from 2020, and the highest total ever recorded in the first half of any year. Of these, 89 were violent antisemitic incidents; the highest yet recorded in the first six months of a year, and an increase of 68% compared with the first half of 2020.\(^{121}\)

Anti-Jewish hate incidents involving schools, school students, and teachers increased by 491% compared to incidents recorded in the first six months of 2020. Overall, for the 2021 academic year, the conflict, its lead-up, and the aftermath contributed to a 59% increase in the number of reported antisemitic incidents on UK university campuses compared to the previous year’s figures; a record high for antisemitic incidents on university campuses since the CST began tracking this number in 2002.\(^{122}\) The fact that 30% of all antisemitism reports were attributed to the education sector reflects the disproportionate presence of antisemitism in this arena.\(^{123}\)

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\(^{117}\) Ibid.

\(^{118}\) Ibid.

\(^{119}\) “Antisemitism in London soared during Gaza fighting, police say”, Times of Israel, July 29, 2021, [www.timesofisrael.com](http://www.timesofisrael.com)

\(^{120}\) “The Month of Hate: Antisemitism & Extremism During the Israel-Gaza Conflict”, The Community Security Trust, Accessed December 2021, [cst.org.uk](http://cst.org.uk)

\(^{121}\) Antisemitic Incidents: January to June 2021, The Community Security Trust, [cst.org.uk](http://cst.org.uk)

\(^{122}\) “New Survey Shows Antisemitism at All-time High at Universities”, The Jewish Chronicle, November 15, 2021, [www.thejc.com](http://www.thejc.com)

The following graph, derived from ACMS data, shows an online spike in violent antisemitic content in May 2021 (darker colors represent more antisemitic activity; higher lines denote more violence in posts).

ANTI-ISRAEL, ANTI-ZIONIST ANTISEMITISM AS A DRIVING FORCE
Fueled significantly by the May conflict, antisemitic manifestations of anti-Israel sentiment or anti-Zionism contributed strongly to the broader spike in antisemitism that UK Jewish communities experienced in 2021. Alongside the demonization or delegitimization of Israel, these frequently involved hostility, prejudice, or discrimination targeting Jews that was related to their presumed or actual association with, defense of, or support for the Jewish state. Emerging mainly from the far-left, antisemitic anti-Zionist campaigns and movements also significantly comprised Islamist figures and organizations.

These forms of antisemitism presented prominently in antisemitic incidents, discourse, and public opinion. As an indication, the most common type of language or imagery used in antisemitic incidents over the first six months of 2021 referenced the Middle East conflict, reflected anti-Zionist or political motivation, or both. On social media, ACMS findings revealed that 84.1% of antisemitic Twitter content in the UK during 2021 focused on Israel or Zionism. Additional data confirmed that Israel was, by far, the leading topic of Twitter conversations that featured terms associated with antisemitism. Moreover, in 2021, there were about twice as many antisemitic statements in online comment sections of UK coverage of the Middle East conflict than in France and Germany (26.9% compared to 13.6% and 12.6%, respectively).

Discourse frequently featured comparisons of Israel to Nazi Germany, such as in placards prominently seen in pro-Palestinian demonstrations throughout the May conflict. Accordingly, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism in the context of anti-Israel or anti-Zionist expression provides examples of “denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor” and “using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism... to characterize Israel or Israelis”. "About the IHRA non-Legally Binding Working Definition of Antisemitism", International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, Accessed December 2021, www.holocaustremembrance.com.
nearly a quarter of British Jews affirmed the statement that "Israel treats the Palestinians like the Nazis treated the Jews".\textsuperscript{130}

On campuses and in schools, Jewish students reported increasingly being singled out and pressured by peers to pass ‘a litmus test’ regarding support for Israel.\textsuperscript{131} The high-profile firing of Professor David Miller for, among other offenses, regarding Jews as pawns of Israel,\textsuperscript{132} exemplified a parallel dynamic of singling out Jews as proxies for the Israeli government in academia. Elsewhere, Jewish students exposed anti-Israel and Zionist antisemitism that featured in course materials.\textsuperscript{133}

Condemnation of anti-Israel and anti-Zionist forms of antisemitism frequently met ‘silencing charges’, framing UK Jewish communities and leaders as powerful oppressors seeking to wield illegitimate influence to shut down criticism. Such charges surfaced prominently in reactions within the Labour Party to the party leadership’s agendas on fighting antisemitism; for example in red cards distributed by the ‘Labour Against the Witch-hunt’ group and held by hecklers during a speech by Labour Party leader Keir Starmer,\textsuperscript{134} in which he condemned anti-Zionist antisemitism.\textsuperscript{135} They similarly arose in objections to the firing of Professor David Miller, prominently from a coalition of nearly 200 academics, trade union organizations, and others;\textsuperscript{136} as well as in a Sheffield Hallam University and College Union motion. Notably, a University College London Academic Board vote to reject the use of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism based on a UCL Working Group on Racism and Prejudice report that warned of the definition’s potential to suppress legitimate speech and research.\textsuperscript{137}

**JEWISH PRIVILEGE NARRATIVE UNDERMINED FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM**

Beyond insinuations of Jewish deployment of oppressive silencing campaigns, Jewish communities grappled more broadly with a frequently imposed framing of Jews in progressive discourse in terms of white skin color and privilege. Reactions significantly called out as discriminatory the exclusion of Jewish voices in framing Jewish narratives and in defining Jewish identity, including in relation to Jewish experiences of antisemitism. Examples included outrage regarding a BBC program that featured four non-Jews debating whether Jews should be considered a minority group;\textsuperscript{138} and controversy surrounding an invitation extended to “African, Arab, Asian, Caribbean and other black” minority groups, while excluding Jews and white people, from a University of London student meeting that discussed “defending Palestine”.\textsuperscript{139}
Jewish communities also viewed this framing of Jews in progressive discourse as an obstacle to fighting antisemitism, significantly in contributing to failures to recognize and stand against antisemitism on the broader left. Such failures surfaced visibly in the entertainment industry in the presentation of Jewish characters, for example in a Royal Court Theatre play naming a world-conquering billionaire character Hershel Fink, and tolerance for expressions of antisemitism within its ranks, notably with Indie rocker Sam Fender’s song lyrics alluding to illegitimate Jewish power and Jews killing Jesus, and in a new account opened in December 2021 by British rapper Wiley, who had been banned from Twitter after calling Jews “cowards and snakes” who exploited black artists. In the news media, the Metro newspaper published a letter implying that Jews, as part of a ‘privileged majority’, could not be victims of racism. Focally, Jewish communities expressed outrage at BBC coverage of Jewish teenagers targeted with antisemitic abuse on a Hanukkah bus trip to Oxford Street, which framed the Jewish youths as the aggressors. The coverage implied that the attack was provoked and falsely stated that the Jewish “occupants” of the bus had harassed the attackers with racial slurs.

WHITE SUPREMACIST ANTISEMITISM FLOURISHES ONLINE

Key dynamics of extreme right-wing activity associated with antisemitism during 2021 included:

- **Rampant online antisemitic conspiracy theories** - Right-wing antisemitic discourse flourished in alternative internet spaces, such as reflected in reports of the antisemitic British fascist group Patriotic Alternative, that established a significant presence on Telegram. On unregulated online platforms, 84% of antisemitic discourse captured by ACMS involved classic antisemitism, Jewish conspiracy, and demonization of Jews. Such discourse also infiltrated mainstream online platforms; noted in 2021, for example, in Spotify podcasts. Common themes included antisemitic conspiracy theories, frequently featuring the Rothschild family and George Soros; Holocaust denial; and disinformation connecting Jewish people to the pandemic. Hard-line antisemites in online British QAnon groups spread key messages that “Jews are to blame for everything”; and 5.7% of all Britons supported the antisemitic American QAnon conspiracy theory-based movement in 2021, including far-right leaders.

- Relatedly, amplified social media presence contributed to a continuous marked increase in young peoples’ broad participation and leadership roles in antisemitic extreme right
movements, reflected, for example, in the 2021 record set for the number of children arrested for committing terrorism offenses.

- Sections of the British far-right exploited the Israel-Gaza conflict to express violent anti-Jewish sentiment. Common narratives centered on Jewish global domination, framed the far-right and Palestinians as engaged in a single battle against Jews/Zionists, or expressed excitement that Jews and Muslims were fighting each other in Israel and Gaza. During this period, researchers flagged hundreds of antisemitic posts that received up to 7.3 million impressions, including Nazi, neo-Nazi, and white supremacist content.

KEY RESPONSE DIRECTIONS: TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP

Considerable unity of formal leadership confronted extreme antisemitism in 2021, collectively committed to combating antisemitism, acknowledging antisemitism from the left and right, highlighting support for Jewish communities, and promoting adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. In broader societal and cultural arenas, Jewish communities sought to gain acknowledgement of antisemitism they faced and allyship, primarily in contending with manifestations of antisemitism emerging from the ideological left.

POLICY SPHERE ENGAGED IN FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM

Significant developments in the response to antisemitism in political and policy spheres during 2021 included:

- A Labour pivot on fighting antisemitism externally and within, ushered in by the Party’s new leadership and yielding a number of significant changes -- Steps to address internal antisemitism prominently included Labour leader Keir Starmer apologizing to the UK Jewish community for antisemitism within the party, and acknowledging and emphasizing the need to fight “anti-Zionist antisemitism”. Additional Labour Party steps against antisemitism included instilling new processes to address antisemitism in its ranks. This resulted, for example, in the banning of four far-left factions with a history of antisemitism from the Party, potentially leading to

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150 Hannah Rose and AC, “‘We are Generation Terror!’: Youth-on-Youth Radicalisation in Extreme-Right Youth Groups”, Community Security Trust and International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, 2021, cst.org.uk
the expulsion of thousands of party activists, as well as the expulsion of council members and popular figures such as filmmaker Ken Loach on grounds of antisemitism.\textsuperscript{156}

Notably, changes at the top met resistance elsewhere – a March 2021 poll found that 70% of Labour members believed that the party had no antisemitism problem and objected to Jeremy Corbyn’s suspension.\textsuperscript{157}

- A number of notable government initiatives and declarations of support addressed antisemitism in 2021. Government initiatives fighting antisemitism targeted antisemitic organizations; significantly, banning Hamas under the Terrorism Act, based in part on the premise that Hamas is fundamentally anti-Semitic,\textsuperscript{158} as well as banning white supremacist group ‘Atomwaffen Division’.\textsuperscript{159} Prominent expressions of support included Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s commitments to the UK Jewish community following the surge of antisemitism around the May conflict in Israel and Gaza.\textsuperscript{160}

Government action to address antisemitism on campuses included notable encouragement of university adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism that was credited with contributing to at least 95 universities signing up in 2021, a rise from the 28 the Union of Jewish Students identified in 2020.\textsuperscript{161} Further, towards the end of the year, Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi announced plans to convene a summit on campus antisemitism.\textsuperscript{162} Finally, an influential parliamentary committee report, which Labour Shadow Secretary for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport Lucy Powell supported, called on social media companies to design their systems to identify, limit the spread of, and remove antisemitic material shortly after it is reported.\textsuperscript{163}

On local levels, several local councils adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. Meanwhile, the London Assembly announced plans to commission and publish, alongside the Mayor and Metropolitan Police, a tailored local initiative for tackling antisemitism in London.\textsuperscript{164}

- Strategic law enforcement – Notable figures targeted on charges of antisemitism included: white supremacist Richard Hesketh – one of Britain’s most prolific antisemitic video streamers, with an alleged total viewing figure of two million views\textsuperscript{165} – who was sentenced to four years in jail;\textsuperscript{166} Piers Corbyn, who was arrested for distributing leaflets comparing the UK’s Covid-19 vaccine rollout to Auschwitz; and a radio host jailed for 32 months for comparing Jewish people to rats and labelling the Holocaust a hoax.\textsuperscript{167}
PUBLIC SPHERE STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION OF ANTISEMITISM

Led by Jewish influencers, activists, and organizations, processes of generating bottom-up change regarding antisemitism significantly focused on efforts to spread awareness of the phenomenon, and in particular of its more subtle manifestations on the political and ideological left. Significantly, a spate of books about antisemitism on the left - several of which achieved high-profile and broad exposure, and most notably among these, ‘Jews Don't Count’ by British comedian David Baddiel - reflected a vigorous and intensifying internal British-Jewish conversation on the subject.

Campaigns confronting societal manifestations of antisemitism led, in one example, to the Royal Court Theatre changing the name of a Jewishly named character emblematic of Jewish conspiracy theories; and in another, to a community-led reconciliation process between Jewish community institutions and Azeem Rafiq, following exposure of the former cricketer's past antisemitic comments.

Seeking allyship: Amidst Jewish communal challenges in this arena, the charity Muslims Against Antisemitism stood out positively for its consistent support; for example, by running an ad across national press calling for an end to the use of the outbreak of hostilities in Israel and Gaza to vilify Jews.

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Germany

In 2021, Germany celebrated 1,700 years of Jewish life and culture in its territory. Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier assumed patronage of the anniversary year, which included an array of events highlighting the presence and diversity of Jewish life in Germany in the past and the present. Its aim was to render Jewish life tangible and to take a stand against the increasing antisemitism. Jewish life is evolving in Germany. The European Center for Jewish Learning opened at the University of Potsdam, a new synagogue was built in the city, and some more synagogues are being built or planned in other German cities (e.g. Dessau-Roßlau and Magdeburg). However, at the same time, the Jewish community was exposed to rising antisemitism. Jews were violently attacked, synagogues became the target of pro-Palestinian activists, and Jews were blamed for the Covid-19 pandemic and held responsible for alleged crimes by the Israeli government that were fabricated and spread in fake news.

GENERAL TRENDS

German police recorded 2,491 antisemitic incidents in 2020, the highest number nationwide since 2001 and a rise of 22.6% compared to the previous year. An analysis of the data published by the German Interior Ministry shows a steady increase in the number of antisemitic incidents over the last six years, and it's likely that the number in 2021 will surpass that of 2020. In the first three quarters of 2021, there were 1,850 incidents, including 35 violent attacks, compared to 1,393 incidents and 35 violent attacks in the same period in 2020. It's important to emphasize that these numbers represent only the events reported to the police, and it's presumed that the number of incidents is actually much greater. This hypothesis is based on the differences between the official data and the numbers published by non-governmental organizations. For example, the Berlin Research and Information Center on Antisemitism (Recherche- und Informationsstelle Antisemitismus, RIAS) reported 522 antisemitic incidents in Berlin in the first 6 months of 2021, while police listed only 161 such incidents during that same period. Chief Public Prosecutor Andreas Frank stated in the press conference following his appointment in October as Bavaria's Central Antisemitism Commissioner for the Judiciary that many Jews were afraid to file charges for antisemitic incidents because they feared reprisals. Others fear not being taken seriously, or don't bother complaining or reporting an antisemitic incident to the police due to a lack of confidence in law enforcement authorities. The number of antisemitic offenses is rising but...
almost all perpetrators remain unpunished. In the first three quarters of 2021, a total of 930 people suspected of having committed antisemitic crimes were identified by the police, but only five of them were temporarily arrested and just two arrest warrants were issued.179 In 2020, a total of 1,564 suspects were identified but only six were temporarily arrested.180 Berlin law enforcement authorities initiated 417 proceedings with an antisemitic background but only 18 proceedings were finalized and a total of 12 fines were imposed.181

The lack of prosecution of antisemitic crimes leads to a lack of deterrence, giving rise to an increase in the level of violence witnessed in 2021. Last year’s trend of spitting Jews in the face and pushing them, made way for punching Jews, or people thought to be Jews, in the face. Several victims suffered fractured bones (see a list of incidents below).

The perpetrators of antisemitic incidents come from a broad spectrum, ranging from German extremists and anti-Israel organizations to radical Turkish, Arab and Islamist groups. However, this breadth of motivations will not appear in the official police statistics which include only five categories (“right”, “left”, “foreign ideology”, “religious ideology”, and “not assignable”). Moreover, instead of categorizing incidents as “not assignable”, the police continue to assign antisemitic incidents to the “right” when no further specifications are identifiable, and the suspects are unknown. This leads to a distorted picture concerning the motive and the perpetrators’ circle, and thus hampers effective policy making. In 2020, the police attributed 74.6% of the incidents to right-wing motives.182 The police’s system of categorizing might change next year, after the implementation of the decision taken by the federal and state interior ministers at the Conference of Interior Ministers in June 2021 to end this automatic assigning to the “right” and to record the different kinds of antisemitism more precisely.

Furthermore, surveys show that antisemitism is widespread among the German population and is far above average among supporters of the extreme right-wing party ‘Alternative für Deutschland’ (‘Alternative for Germany’, AfD). A survey presented in November revealed that a quarter to a third of the general population openly or implicitly agree with antisemitic clichés. For example, 30% of all participants and 59% of the AfD supporters affirmed the statement that Jews “derive an advantage for themselves from the German guilt for the Holocaust”. 21% of all respondents and 31% of the AfD voters agreed with the statement that “what Jews are doing with the Palestinians today” is “nothing else than what the National Socialists did with Jews”. 24% of all respondents and 50% of the AfD voters said that Jews had “a great influence on politics in Germany”. Moreover, 40% of the Jewish respondents reported having been disadvantaged, marginalized, or threatened in one way or another over the past year. More than half of the incidents took place on the internet, mainly on social networks; in second place came incidents that occurred while looking for an apartment and at work.183

180 Deutscher Bundestag, Antwort der Bundesregierung: Antisemitische Straftaten im Zweiten Quartal 2021, Drucksache 19/31962, 10.08.2021, p.4.
THE EXTREMIST SCENES IN GERMANY

According to the statistics of politically motivated crime published by the German Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), extremist attacks on religious communities are on the rise. In 2020, the authorities reported 2,985 attacks against religious communities — 39% more than in 2019. Attacks on religious representatives have almost quadrupled from 559 in 2019 to 2,217 in 2020. Of these attacks, 70% were directed against representatives of Jewish communities. The total number of antisemitic crimes rose by 15.7% to 2,351 crimes.

At the presentation of the 2020 report of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), Federal Interior Minister Horst Seehofer emphasized that right-wing extremism, racism, and antisemitism still represent the greatest threat to security in Germany, but that the government is also monitoring the ongoing threat from Islamist terrorism and the growing readiness to use violence among left-wing extremists.

The Extreme Right

According to the BfV Report for 2020, the extreme right-wing scene grew to 33,300 individuals in 2020, a rise of 4% compared to 2019. Out of these, 13,300 were classified as violent (compared to 13,000 in 2019). While the number of crimes perpetrated by right-wing extremists increased by approx. 10% to 22,357 over the last year, the number of crimes with an antisemitic background committed by these extremists rose by 17.8% to a total of 2,173 (compared to 1,844 in 2019), including 48 antisemitic acts of violence.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, numerous right-wing extremist large-scale events were canceled or postponed. Nevertheless, right-wing extremists gained more outreach than ever before through the protests against the state’s coronavirus restrictions where they spread their antisemitic views among the mainstream via conspiracy theories. Rallies were used by neo-Nazi and extreme right-wing parties, such as ‘Der Dritte Weg’ (‘The Third Way’) and the ‘Basisdemokratische Partei Deutschland’ (‘Grassroots Democratic Party of Germany’ — ‘DieBasis’), to win supporters for the Bundestag elections. Top members of ‘DieBasis’, which was founded in July 2020 and is considered the partisan arm of the “Querdenker” movement,

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Rise in right-wing extremists and extremism in Eastern Germany

Right-wing extremism is especially on the rise in Eastern Germany, as could be seen in the outcomes of the Bundestag elections this September. While nationwide, the AfD slipped from third to fifth place, gaining only 10.3% of the votes (12.6% in 2017) and 83 seats in the Bundestag (94 in

184 Politisch motivierte Kriminalität im Jahr 2020: Bundesweite Fallzahlen (Bundeskriminalamt, 04.05.21).
185 Verfassungsschutzbericht 2020 (Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat, 2021), p.28
186 The Querdenker (lateral thinkers) movement was established in 2020 to protest the Covid-19 lock-down. It included pandemic skeptics, anti-vaxxers and anti-lockdown protesters and claimed that the pandemic, and the federal and regional laws aimed at halting the spread of the virus, infringe on citizens’ liberties. Although the majority of protesters are not seen as extremists, “Querdenker” demonstrations have drawn support from a variety of groups, including the far-right AfD party, anti-vaxxers, conspiracy theorists, and right-wing extremists. According to the BfV, the protest organizers’ agenda had gone beyond objecting to anti-Covid measures and had been connecting right-wing extremists who reject the authority of the German government and spread antisemitic slurs.
187 For example, the party’s federal chancellor candidate Reiner Füllmich (a lawyer) said that the planned measures of the federal government are worse than the Holocaust. He also claimed that the government was planning “some kind of concentration camp” for the unvaccinated. The party’s candidate for North Rhine-Westphalia, Dirk Sattelmaier (a lawyer), compared the request to wear a mask on buses and trains with the discrimination against Jews during the Nazi era.
it continued to gather strength in Eastern Germany. In Saxony it even became the strongest party. In Eastern Germany, and especially in the rural areas, the AfD is finding fertile ground for antisemitism, racism, nationalism, and hostility to democracy. The 2020 Leipzig Authoritarianism Study shows a higher level of approval in Eastern Germany for antisemitic and Holocaust-trivializing beliefs than in the West. In the East, around 43.5% of those questioned agreed with the statement that “even today the influence of the Jews is too great”, and 30.7% agreed with “the crimes of National Socialism have been greatly exaggerated in historiography”, compared to 32.7% and 22.6%, respectively, in the West. Antisemitic conspiracy theories are also widespread in the East, especially in rural areas, and represent an increasing challenge, not least due to the Corona crisis. Neo-Nazi rallies, in which speakers use antisemitic codes to spread conspiracy theories and demonstrators wearing martial-style uniforms, with tattoos typical of the neo-Nazi scene or clothing with prints glorifying Nazi and other right-wing extremists, are not uncommon.

This tendency in Eastern Germany is likely to increase, as there is an increasing move of right-wing extremists from West Germany to the East to buy real estate in rural areas and set up joint residential projects. In March, the Federal Intelligence Service warned of the new campaign “Moving together Central Germany,” aiming at creating a “white Central Germany” in Saxony. According to the 2020 Saxony Intelligence report, the number of right-wing extremists has risen constantly since 2017, as has the number of antisemitic crimes in East Germany, according to the Bundestag report from August 2021.

The Extreme Left

The number of left-wing extremists rose by 2.4% to a total of 34,300 people and more than 1 in 4 left-wing extremists were classified as violence oriented. Left-wing extremist acts of violence increased by 34.3% to 1,237 offenses. There is clear radicalization in parts of the violence oriented left-wing extremist scene. Thus, calls by left-wing BDS activists for an ‘intifada’ in the streets of Germany are a real threat to Jews in Germany, all the more because a significant part of the Germans perceives them as representatives of the State of Israel. Jews living in Germany often have to experience that they are held responsible for the Israeli policy towards the Palestinians, and that the conceptualization of Israel as the “collective Jew” has become the identification and evaluation basis for all Jews. This can be seen also in the accusatory letters sent to the Central Council of Jews in Germany.


189 “Eastern” and “Central” Germany overlap geographically, as one is defined in the context of geography and history, and the other in the context of economy and sentimentality. Both refer to Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia; the five states, which were dissolved by the GDR government in 1952 and re-established in 1990 in the FRG. The use of the term “Central Germany” was meant to underline its location in Central Europe and to recall the industrial glory of the area in former times. The term is mainly used in business and the media.


The Radical Muslim Scene

Radical Muslim groups stir up hatred of Jews through sermons, social media, or martial rallies, leading to violent antisemitic attacks. According to the findings of the BfV, the overwhelming majority of the Islamist organizations active in Germany harbor antisemitic ideas and disseminate them in various ways. The “Jew as the enemy” is a central pillar in the propaganda of almost all Islamist groups. According to the BfV report for 2020, the Islamist scene grew to 28,715 people (compared to 28,020 in 2019), a rise of 18% within five years. Almost half of the Islamists are Salafists (12,150).\textsuperscript{194}

While jihadist groups such as IS or ‘al-Qaida’ seek a violent overthrow, among others, via terrorist attacks, other Islamist groups in Germany are acting in a legalist way: They pursue their respective goals – the establishment of a Sharia-based social and political system in Germany – with political means within the existing legal system.\textsuperscript{195} They are generally financed, controlled, and massively influenced by authorities abroad, mainly Iran,\textsuperscript{196} and Turkey.\textsuperscript{197} Nevertheless, at the federal and state level many of these so-called legalist Islamist groups are partners of the state, churches, and universities.

Threats to Jews also emanate from some non-Islamist radical Muslim groups, such as the Turkish ultra-nationalist right-wing extremist Grey Wolves, the youth organization and paramilitary arm of the National Movement Party.\textsuperscript{198} They too, are trying to influence the political discourse within the majority of German society by developing close ties to political decision-makers and parties. A report on the Grey Wolves published by the American Jewish Committee shows that with at least 18,500 members, the Grey Wolves form one of the strongest right-wing extremist currents in Germany. Their ideology is characterized by antisemitism and racism. “The acts of murder and violence attributed to the Grey Wolves in Turkey and in Germany, leave no doubt as to the danger that their followers pose for Jews and members of the Kurdish, Alevite, and other communities.”\textsuperscript{199}

\textsuperscript{194} Verfassungsschutzbericht 2020 (Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat, 2021), p.194–197.
\textsuperscript{195} These ‘legalist’ groups include, for example, the organizations related to the ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ (MB), Shiite associations such as the Islamic Center Hamburg (IZH), various groups of the ‘Millî Görüş’ Movement and the ‘Furkan Community’.
\textsuperscript{196} The Hamburg State Office for the Protection of the Constitution (LfV) published a report in June including Iranian documents that prove that the Islamic Center Hamburg (IZH) is the “Tehran outpost bound by instructions”, and that its aim is to “export” the Islamic revolution worldwide. The new findings also reveal connections between the IZH and the terrorist organization Hezbollah. According to LfV Spokesman Marco Haase, “the newly acquired information confirms that the IZH is one of the most important institutions of the Iranian regime in Europe”. The controversial mosque community still receives political backing from Hamburg’s Senate.
\textsuperscript{197} The Turkish-Islamic Union of the Institute for Religion (DITIB) is the largest Islamic association in Germany and is co-financed by the Turkish Ministry of Religions. Critics accuse DITIB of acting as an extension of the Turkish government.
\textsuperscript{198} The aim of the Grey Wolves movement is to defend and strengthen the Turkishness. The ideal is the establishment of “Turan” - an ethnically homogeneous state of all Turkic peoples under the leadership of the Turks. The movement sees the Turkish nation as the highest value politically, territorially, ethnically, and culturally. When its members are abroad, they perceive themselves as the active arm of the current Turkish government. During the Second World War, under Reich Ambassador in Turkey Franz von Papen, the Nazis promoted fascist Turkish movements. They showed great interest in the Turanist circles, which in turn were enthusiastic about the Nazi ideology. At this time, Alparslan Türke, who later became the founder and leader of the Grey Wolves, appeared on the political stage for the first time. He was a Hitler sympathizer and already played a leading role in the Turanist movement.
\textsuperscript{199} Türkischer Rechtsextremismus in Deutschland – Die Grauen Wölfe: Antisemitisch, Rassistisch und Demokratiefeindlich (Berlin: American Jewish Committee Berlin Ramer Institute, 2021)
ANTISEMITISM DURING THE OPERATION ‘GUARDIAN OF THE WALLS’

During Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’, antisemitic incidents, both online and offline, increased significantly. But what shocked the German population and politicians most was the new understanding that the hatred of the pro-Palestinian groups wasn’t directed against Israel and the Israelis alone, but also against the Jews and Jewish institutions in Germany, and thus, that anti-Israelism and antisemitism were intertwined.

Between March 10-21, ACMS documented 26,690 German antisemitic posts; a rise of approx. 633% compared to the 10 days prior to the conflict. The propagation of false accusations against Israel and the ensuing wave of antisemitic discourse on social media was reflected in incidents across Germany. Antisemitic attacks on the streets increased. Between May 9-24, RIAS documented 261 antisemitic incidents related to the Israel-Palestine conflict, an average of more than 16 incidents a day. These included 10 physical attacks and 18 threats. In Berlin, 152 such incidents were recorded between May 9-June 8, including 4 physical attacks and 7 threats. Jews and people thought to be Jews were violently attacked and injured. Jews listening to music in Hebrew or speaking Hebrew were attacked in the streets and on public transportation by Arab looking youths. Houses of people displaying Israeli flags in their windows or on their balconies were attacked and windows were smashed. Several synagogues, most of them in North Rhine-Westphalia, became the target of antisemitic manifestations that were mainly, if not entirely, committed by Muslim pro-Palestinian activists. A synagogue and monuments commemorating synagogues burnt down during Kristallnacht in 1938 were vandalized, and hundreds of people with Palestinian flags gathered outside other synagogues shouting “F**king Jews,” or burning Israeli flags. Thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters spread clear antisemitic messages, trivialized the Holocaust, and called for the destruction of Israel – with signs clearly expressing the aim of destroying the entire Jewish State. “F**king Jews”, “child murderer Israel”, and “khaybar, khaybar ya yahud” were chanted repeatedly. At a rally on May 22, a German left-wing activist even called for a joint intifada, not only in the streets of Palestine, but also in the streets of Germany. Most of the suspects investigated by the police are of Arab origin of them some were born in Germany.

According to the IIBSA Research Institute, there was a broad mobilization of antisemitism, which ranged from the left / anti-imperialist spectrum via the political center, to nationalist, neo-Nazi, and Islamist milieus. Various international players have been involved in inciting antisemitic hatred, violence, or terrorism, such as the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Millî Görüş Movement, the Grey Wolves and the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs, Diyanet. Organizations close or sympathetic to the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood and the terrorist group Hamas, such as the Palestinian Community in Germany (PGD), played a special role ahead of the armed conflict.
The Jewish community expressed great concerns for the security of its members and about the current wave of antisemitism. Politicians from all political parties harshly condemned the manifestations of antisemitism. At the conference of interior ministers, the federal and state interior ministers announced a tougher course against antisemitism. They decided to ban naturalization after antisemitic acts, restrict, and if necessary, prohibit anti-Israeli gatherings in the vicinity of synagogues, and to maintain more precise records of the motives for antisemitic incidents such as Muslim antisemitism. Leading ministers in several states ordered to step up security for Jewish locations and politicians also called for participation in the solidarity demonstration for Israel. At the same time, however, there is significant public criticism against the police for not having intervened at the time of the incidents and against the prosecution in many cities for failing to initiate criminal investigations.

RISE IN ANTISEMITISM DURING AND DUE TO COVID-19

Jews are clearly feeling the consequence of spreading antisemitic conspiracy theories and Holocaust trivialization connected to Covid-19 in everyday life. 25.6% of all antisemitic incidents in 2020 were directly related to the Covid-19 pandemic; in Bavaria, this figure even stood at 45.2%. Between March and December 2020, RIAS documented 284 meetings nationwide at which the Corona measures were equated with the Nazi persecution of Jews or other antisemitic statements were made.\textsuperscript{204} Between March 2020 and June 2021, RIAS recorded 750 antisemitic incidents connected to conspiracy theories, compared to 321 in 2019,\textsuperscript{205} and a total of 561 antisemitic incidents related to the pandemic, including 7 threats and 508 cases of abuse behavior.\textsuperscript{206} Jews reported being insulted by strangers in the supermarket, shops, workplaces, public transportation and the streets, and slandered, among others, for having brought the Coronavirus into the world, wanting to exterminate the German population through the pandemic, and inventing the lie of the Coronavirus to ruin the German economy. Flyers, stickers, and graffiti blaming Jews for the Covid pandemic are almost daily occurrences.

Antisemitism was often common among German anti-vaxxers already as early as the 19th century. In 1881, for example, Eugen Dühring, one of the most important masterminds of upcoming National Socialism and its racial doctrine published the influential pamphlet “The Jewish Question as a Question of Race, Morals and Culture”,\textsuperscript{207} in which he claimed that vaccination was a superstition invented by Jewish doctors for reasons of personal gain. Today, in addition to spreading antisemitic conspiracy theories, anti-vaxxers also use Holocaust trivialization to protest what they call “compulsory vaccinations”. Before the pandemic, Holocaust trivialization was propagated mostly by individuals, however this phenomenon has changed and it’s now clearly widespread. It has become popular for Germans protesting Coronavirus restrictions to compare them to the antisemitic policies of the Nazi regime, and themselves to the Jews during the Holocaust.

\textsuperscript{204} Annual: Antisemitic Incidents in Germany 2020 (Federal Association RIAS, 2021), pp.7, 14.
\textsuperscript{205} Statistics published by RIAS at a conference on antisemitism in Bonn.
\textsuperscript{206} Bundesverband RIAS, Antisemitische Verschwörungsmythen in Zeiten der Coronapandemie: Das Beispiel QAnon (Berlin: American Jewish Committee Berlin Lawrence and Lee Ramer Institute, 2021), p.17.
\textsuperscript{207} Original title: Die Judenfrage als Racen-, Sitten- und Culturfrage
Moreover, anti-vaxxers, who came to perceive Israel as the big enemy, since it was the first country to mass-vaccinate its population, also fuel New Antisemitism. Ironically, Israel is being criticized for its mass-vaccination and at the same time blamed for stealing the vaccine from the Europeans to vaccinate its population. Israel is blamed for vaccinating and thus poisoning the Palestinian population and, at the same time, for "vaccination apartheid", for vaccinating its own population before the Palestinian population, and for not providing the entire Palestinian population with vaccines.

Although the political elite fiercely condemned this pandemic-related antisemitism and Holocaust trivialization, this failed to provide enough deterrence. It took the judiciary until July 2021 to file the first indictment for sedition for comparing the Corona policy with Nazi crimes. Moreover, the use of the yellow Star of David by anti-vaxxers remains controversial. Various district courts throughout Germany have already decided that wearing the Yellow Star with the label "unvaccinated" is not a criminal offense. Bavaria was the first and only state to ban the Yellow Star from rallies and set a fine for transgression. Bavaria was also the first state where parts of the Querdenker movement were placed under surveillance by the Bavarian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution. A month later, in April, the Federal BfV office also placed the movement under surveillance.

ANTISEMITISM IN SOCIAL MEDIA

At the presentation of the 2020 report, BfV head Thomas Haldenwang highlighted the danger inherent in the shift of the extremists’ activities into the virtual world with the beginning of the Corona pandemic and stated that "there they use the entire range of digital communication to network, incite one another and forge plans against our free, democratic basic order … Antisemitism is and will remain a bracket that unites various extremists". The Central Council of Jews in Germany reported that users have increasingly less inhibitions to post antisemitic posts under their real names. Central Council President Josef Schuster reported that the Council receives some 50 hate messages daily, such as "it's a shame that Hitler didn't completely exterminate you!" or "I hope that this Jew-hatred keeps growing".

The German government took several steps during the year to fight this phenomenon. In June, it added paragraph 192a to the Criminal Code, which sets a punishment of up to two years imprisonment or a fine for insulting, maliciously despising, or slandering a group or an individual belonging to a group that is “determined by its national, racial, religious or ethnic origin, its ideology, its disability or its sexual orientation”. This paragraph came to close a loophole which prevented the Council and other Jewish groups from taking legal actions against users posting antisemitic messages since criminal law only criminalized insults against people, not against institutions. For a criminal offense, a direct reference to the person concerned was required; the person had to be specifically addressed and insulted.

The Munich Public Prosecutor’s Office ordered officials to search the apartment of a 45-year-old man from Munich, and charged him with sedition. On his Facebook page he had posted a two-part picture, the lower half of which showed the entrance to the Auschwitz concentration camp with the words “Arbeit macht frei”. Above it is a drawing with “Impfen macht frei” (Vaccination Sets Free) and a row of people in black uniforms with huge syringes in their hands. “Everything has been there before,” was written next to it. He is liable to imprisonment of up to five years or a fine.
The Hate Crime Act, an extension of the Network Enforcement Act (NetzDG), came into effect in April. It states, among others, that social networks such as Facebook and Twitter will not only have to delete posts that contain prohibited content but must also report them immediately to the Federal Criminal Police Office together with the IP address to help authorities find the author. The Act also targets users and recommends prison sentences of up to three years in the case of online hate and agitation and specifies that antisemitism should be given special consideration when assigning punishment. Google and Facebook are currently fighting the Hate Crime Act in courts, arguing that these changes affect the basic rights of users and are contrary to EU law.

The third important step is the decision of the Federal Ministry of Justice to subject the public channels of the messenger service Telegram to the NetzDG and to campaign for Telegram’s regulation at the European level. The ministry argued that the public channels make the messenger a social network, and that the German channels have a total of more than two million users. This makes the NetzDG applicable to Telegram. The German-language Telegram has a large number of right-wing, anti-democratic and ideological conspiracy forums, which refer to one another and promote the radicalization of users. The Federal Office of Justice has already initiated two fine proceedings against the company, which is based in Dubai and London, for alleged violations of § 3 and § 5 of the NetzDG. Because Telegram neither has the option to complain about criminal content nor a contact person with a German address, the company faces fines of up to EUR 5 million.

These legal decisions are important to combating antisemitism, but there must also be practical consequences for breaking the law. Frequently, antisemitic expressions are not acknowledged as such and are not prosecuted by the courts. For example, the Kiel public prosecutor’s office failed to recognize as sedition or Holocaust trivialization the statement by Sucharit Bhakdi, the former Bundestag candidate for the ‘DieBasis’ Party, claiming that “the Jewish people” learned and “implemented” the “arch evil” from the Nazis and that is why Israel is now the living hell. The office argued that the statement was primarily directed against the State of Israel per-se and referred to its Covid-19 measures. Such a judgement is clearly counter-productive in combating antisemitism as it diminishes legal deterrence.

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209 The Act came into effect on January 1st, 2018, and obligates social media companies to delete offensive posts within 24 hours of them being reported or face fines up to €5 million if they fail to comply.
210 The Bundestag and Bundesrat already approved the law in June 2020. However, Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier only signed it on April 3 because a new regulation on access to mobile phone user data had to be passed first.
211 Additionally, posts threatening bodily harm, sexual assault, or property damage now count as a criminal offense, and even “liking” a post detailing an act of hatred that is either hypothetical or has already been committed will also likely result in penalties.
212 Both have (separately) filed an application for urgent legal protection at the Cologne Administrative Court. Google had also filed a declaratory action. In response to Google’s declaratory action, the Federal Ministry of Justice announced that the E-Commerce Directive, which is relevant for information society services, provides that member states can impose reporting and transmission obligations on providers of social networks with regard to suspected illegal activities or information. The challenged provisions of the Act are thus in conformity with European law.
213 In a video spread on social media, Bhakdi stated that: “The people who have fled this land, from this land where the arch-evil was, (...) and have found their land, have their own land transformed into something that is even worse than Germany was. (...) That is the bad thing about the Jews: They learn well. There are no people that learn better than they do. But they have now learned the evil - and implemented it. That is why Israel is now living hell”.
COMBATING ANTISEMITISM - INSIGHTS

Education is key in order to increase deterrence and combat antisemitism. It is important to sensitize judges, the police, and the public in general to antisemitic crimes. Police officers, public prosecutors, and judges must be trained to become more aware of antisemitic incidents, and need to understand that they are not dealing with isolated cases, but with a growing phenomenon. They need to take lessons on antisemitism and the Holocaust, and understand the problem in closing their eyes to minor antisemitic incidents, since it sends a problematic message to potential perpetrators. Furthermore, there is a need for varied educational programs for the general public to promote tolerance, including analyzing and destroying antisemitic stereotypes, and teaching about the Holocaust, Judaism, the history of the Jews in Germany and their contribution to the local culture, economy, and politics. Only a combination of legislation and education will lead to a reduction in online and offline antisemitism.

Several steps have already been taken in this direction (see the partial list below), and they need to be expanded to reach more people in more cities and states. Germany is doing a great deal in its attempt to combat antisemitism, but the rising number of antisemitic incidents shows that more needs to be done to increase deterrence and education.

MEANS TO COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

January

The federal state of Baden-Württemberg appointed two police rabbis, for Württemberg and for Baden, to promote Jewish life and prevent antisemitism. One of their tasks is to sensitize officials, police officers, and prospective police officers to Jewish issues.

Football Premier League Borussia Dortmund, car manufacturers Daimler and Volkswagen, the Deutsche Bahn (German Railways) and Deutsche Bank (German Bank) published a joint manifesto committing themselves to fighting antisemitism and forgetting, and four of them also adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism (Borussia adopted it already last October).

The Football Club Bayern München and the German professional sports club Eintracht Frankfurt adopted the IHRA definition.

February

The Federal Cabinet adopted a Federal Government Ordinance recognizing IHRA as an international institution. As a result, IHRA will be granted immunities and other privileges, such as tax breaks. The ordinance came into force in April.

Berlin’s Senator for the Interior banned the militant Salafist association ‘Jamaatu Berlin’ alias ‘Tauhid Berlin’, that glorified the armed jihad of IS and called for the killing of Jews.
March

The Lower Saxony Memorial Foundation and the World Jewish Congress presented guidelines for dealing with anti-Jewish statements in football.

The city of Cologne set up a reporting office for antisemitism to report, analyze and document antisemitic incidents above and below the criminal liability limit.

The Federal President assumed patronage for the project “Meet a Jew” of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, where Jewish volunteers give personal insights into their everyday life in schools, universities, associations and other forums, and answer questions about Judaism and Jewish life. Its aim is to combat antisemitism via the dissemination of knowledge.

May

Federal Interior Minister banned Salafist association ‘Ansaar International’ and three associations associated with Hezbollah.

June

The police and the public prosecutor’s office in Berlin jointly drew up practical guidelines for the prosecution of antisemitic crimes. The guidelines also help to better recognize antisemitism and promote sensitivity for this important topic.

A Federal Military Rabbi of the Bundeswehr was introduced, enabling Jewish pastoral care in the troops for the first time since the end of the First World War. One of his tasks is combating antisemitism in the army.

The Central Council of Jews in Germany, the Federal-State Commission of Anti-Semitism Commissioners and the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs adopted a joint recommendation on how to deal with antisemitism in schools. It provides information on the various forms of antisemitism and measures for prevention and intervention.

July

The state of Saxony supported 26 projects against antisemitism with EUR 579,000.
August

The government decided to invest EUR 35 million into research and educational projects focused on understanding the causes of antisemitism and effectively fighting it.

The cabinet decided to invest more than EUR 600 million in funding until 2024 for the project “Live Democracy!” to combat extremism.

The state of North Rhine-Westphalia set up a state-wide reporting office for antisemitism to report, analyze and document antisemitic incidents above and below the criminal liability limit.

A new law came into force extending the right to naturalization to descendants of Nazi victims who were disqualified under the current Basic Law, and potentially denying naturalization to people convicted of an antisemitic or otherwise inhumane crime regardless of the sentence.

October

Bavaria became the first federal state to appoint a Central Antisemitism Commissioner for the Judiciary, who will deal full-time and exclusively with the fight against antisemitism, among others by sensitizing public prosecutors and courts to the issue, identifying antisemitic crimes, and encouraging Jewish victims to report them.

MAIN ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN 2021

May

Munich: A 33-year-old man was punched in the face on an outdoor terrace of a restaurant near the cathedral. After he fell on the ground, the attacker sat on him and stuck several fingers into his mouth while calling “Jew pig” and “f**king hipster”. The victim is not a Jew, but the attacker thought his head covering was a kippah.

Berlin: A 41-year-old Jew wearing a kippah was insulted and brutally beaten in the face.

Magdeburg: A 22-year-old Jew wearing a kippah was violently attacked. The perpetrator first tried to steal the kippah by force, and then hit the victim several times in the face and neck.

Bonn: Several young adults threw stones at the synagogue and damaged the window glass above the entrance door. Police officers found three pieces of paper with Arabic characters and a burnt Israeli flag.

Münster: A group of around 15 people of Arab appearance shouted anti-Israeli slogans in front of the synagogue and burned an Israeli flag.
Düsseldorf: An arson attack on a monument commemorating a synagogue burnt down during Kristallnacht in 1938.

Gelsenkirchen: 180 people waving Palestinian, Turkish, Tunisian, and Algerian flags demonstrated in front of a synagogue and chanted anti-Jewish slogans, including “F**king Jews”.

June

Ulm: A man poured a bottle of liquid on a synagogue wall and set it alight. Firefighters were able to extinguish the fire within minutes, and thus prevented structural damage to the building. The alleged perpetrator is a Turkish citizen who was born in Germany. He fled to Turkey after the attack.

July

Cologne: A cyclist wearing an Israeli cycling team shirt was violently attacked. He was hospitalized with three broken ribs and bruises all over his body.

August

Cologne: A group of 10 teens antisemitically insulted and brutally beat an 18-year-old Jew who was sitting with a friend in a park. The victim suffered several wounds including a broken nose and broken cheekbone.

September

Hamburg: A 60-year-old Jewish man, who participated in the “Vigil for Israel - Against Antisemitism” was called a “dirty Jew” and punched in the face. He was hospitalized with several fractures to his face and damage to one eye.

Mannheim: Windows of the synagogue were destroyed for the third time in four months.

Berlin: At the UEFA Europe Conference League group match between 1. FC Union Berlin and Maccabi Haifa FC in the Berlin Olympic Stadium, fans of the Israeli team were physically and verbally harassed by fans of the Berlin team, who also mocked and trivialized the Holocaust and attempted to burn an Israeli flag.

October

Berlin: A 29-year-old Israeli man wearing a pullover with an IDF emblem was antisemitically assaulted, sprayed in the face with gas, and struck to the ground.

Berlin: A 36-year-old man was beaten and kicked in the head after refusing to shout “Free Palestine”. He suffered a serious head injury.
Austria

The president of the Vienna Jewish community\(^{215}\) wrote in the introduction to the community’s 2020 Antisemitism Report that “for decades, the Jewish community was largely left to cope with the problem of antisemitism alone. It’s different today. More and more people in Austria see Judaism as a natural part of Austria and reject antisemitism”. This is also true for the Austrian government that has warm relations with the local Jewish community and the State of Israel and is making a significant effort to combat antisemitism, safeguard the memory of the Shoah, and support Jewish life in Austria. The Jewish community is thriving. At the same time, the number of antisemitic crimes is the highest since the beginning of the systematic recording in 2001, and surveys show that antisemitic attitudes are widespread among the Austrian population. The two main catalysts of antisemitism in 2021 were the protests against the Covid-19 restrictions and the vaccination policy of the government, and the anti-Israel protests in the wake of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’.

GENERAL TRENDS

Antisemitism in Austria is steadily rising. Already in 2020, the Antisemitism Registration Office of the Vienna Jewish community (IKG) reported the highest number of antisemitic incidents since systematic recording started, a figure that will definitely be far surpassed in 2021.

585 antisemitic incidents were recorded in 2020, a rise of 6.4% compared to 2019 and of 26% compared to 2015. Among the incidents were 11 physical attacks, almost double the number of 2019. Out of the 390 incidents that could be attributed to an ideological background, 58.7% were attributed to the Right, 22.3% to the Left, and 19% to Islamist ideology. However, the majority of physical attacks and almost half of the threats were made by “individuals ideologically or religiously connected to Islamism”.\(^{216}\)

In the first half of 2021, the number of antisemitic incidents has already risen to 562, compared to 257 during the same period last year, and is thus already only slightly below the number of incidents that occurred during the whole of last year. The number of physical attacks almost tripled compared to the same period in 2020. In the first half of 2021, the antisemitic incidents included 8 physical attacks, 11 threats, and 331 cases of abusive behavior.\(^{217}\) Out of the 415 incidents that could be attributed to an ideological background in the first half of 2021, 58.8% were attributed to the Right, 24.1% to the Left and 17.1% to Islamists. While this general distribution is similar to that of 2020, a drill-down shows that in 2021 the vast majority of physical attacks and threats were committed by Islamists; four out of the five assignable physical attacks and eight out of the nine assignable cases of threats were committed by Muslims.\(^{218}\) Most damage to property of Jews or Jewish organizations and almost all mass-distribution of antisemitic letters were attributed to the Right.

\(^{215}\) Oscar Deutsch
\(^{218}\) Idem., p.3
When looking at the numbers, it’s important to bear in mind that, as the IKG highlights, its reports don’t constitute a comprehensive representation of antisemitism in Austria, since the only incidents counted were those reported and classified as clearly antisemitic according to the IHRA definition after an examination by the experts of the antisemitism reporting office. The 2021 report also states a low level of willingness to report attacks, threats, and insults, and assumes that there is an “enormous number of unreported antisemitic attacks”.

Several surveys examined antisemitism in Austria. For instance, the Europe-wide survey released in October by Europe’s Action and Protection League (APL) and the European Jewish Association (EJA) shows that a large proportion of Austrians believe that Jews run secret networks (30% compared to the European average of 21%), exploit the Holocaust (40% compared to the European average of 21%), and will never be able to fully integrate into society (28% compared to the European average of 17%). They also claim that “Israelis behave like Nazis towards the Palestinians” (32% compared to the European average of 26%). The ratio of people agreeing with antisemitic statements in Austria is thus significantly higher than the European average. This is true for all categories of antisemitism, as can be seen in the summary of the outcomes aggregated in the table below. Furthermore, the survey found that antisemitism is significantly more intense among the Muslim population in Europe than among the non-Muslim population; 62% of the Muslim population hold traditional antisemitic views and 82% hold views related to New Antisemitism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antisemitism Category</th>
<th>Europe Average</th>
<th>Austria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Prejudices</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility Towards Jews</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary/Classic Antisemitism*</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holocaust Denial and Relativization</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Antisemitism</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manifest and Latent Antisemitism</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Primary Antisemitism includes agreeing with traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes and having hostile emotions toward Jews.

The biennial antisemitism study of the Austrian Parliament published in March, identified a clear connection between trust in social media, conspiracy theories and antisemitism. In addition to the respondents’ age and level of education, the kind of media they consume also plays a significant role. Those who stated that they trust social media have above-average antisemitic attitudes. Moreover, people with a high propensity for conspiracy theories are significantly more antisemitic than the rest of the population. Concerning the age factor, the study found that whereas older

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221 Idem., p.5
224 People with higher formal qualifications agree significantly less with antisemitic statements compared to those with lower or no such qualifications.
225 For example, 24% of those who trust TikTok and 16% of those who trust Facebook and YouTube agree to the Holocaust trivializing statement whereby: “in the reports on concentration camps and the persecution of Jews in World War II, much is exaggerated”, while only 4% of those who trust traditional newspapers and magazines (whether in print or online) or news on television or radio believe that the statement is correct.
226 For example, 28% of all people surveyed consider the statement “A powerful and influential elite (e.g., Soros, Rothschild, Zuckerberg, ...) use the Covid pandemic to further expand their wealth and political influence” as very or rather correct. 59% of
respondents are more likely than younger ones to agree with antisemitic statements in general, antisemitic statements in the context of Covid-19 conspiracy theories are more often rejected by older people than by younger ones.

PROTESTS AGAINST COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS: CATALYSTS OF ANTISEMITISM

The protests against the government’s Coronavirus measures - both online and offline - played a central role in the rise in antisemitic incidents. In 2021, the number of rallies against the government’s restrictions and vaccination policy, the number of their participants, and their level of violence have risen significantly. Antisemitism is being manifested openly: While in the last two decades, antisemites and neo-Nazis kept a low profile in Austria, at the rallies in 2021, they made no effort to shy away from making the Hitler salute, shouting “Heil Hitler”, and trivializing the Holocaust by comparing Covid-19 restrictions to the antisemitic policies of the Nazi regime, and themselves to Jews during the Holocaust, e.g., by wearing the Yellow Star with the inscription “unvaccinated” or, in an Austrian version as seen at a rally in Vienna, a drawing of the virus with the inscription “Austria Jew 2.0 not vaccinated for Covid-19” (see image). Protesters feel comfortable adopting this behavior, although it is a clear violation of the Nazism Prohibition Act, punishable with imprisonment of up to ten years, or, if the perpetrator or activity is particularly dangerous, even up to 20 years. While probably not all protesters wearing this kind of Yellow Star actually support Nazism, they are well aware of the symbolic meaning of their actions and of the fact that it is forbidden by law, if only because of the intensive media discussion of the issue.

In general, the rallies against the Covid-19 restrictions have brought antisemitism back to the surface. Antisemitism was always tangible in Austria, but, since the end of the Holocaust, was generally not manifested openly in public. At the rallies, however, people shouted antisemitic slurs and conspiracy theories and held posters with antisemitic and Holocaust trivializing slogans. Jews reported being harassed by the demonstrators. For example, at the rally on November 20, Jews were threatened with the words “Where are the gas chambers when you need them?” Several times during this year, the Vienna Jewish community felt compelled to issue warnings to community members not to approach the planned rallies. Much criticism was heard about the fact that the police don’t stop the antisemitic manifestations and that Jews are instead recommended to stay home.

From the beginning of the pandemic, well-known right-wing extremists and neo-Nazis played a leading role in the organization of protests. The group around the 62-year-old Holocaust denier Gottfried Küssel is particularly noticeable. He has been a leading figure in neo-Nazism and
Holocaust denial since the 1970s, and had been sentenced to prison twice, once for 11 years and once for 9, for sedition and the violation of the Nazism Prohibition Act. If neo-Nazis have only rarely appeared in public in recent years, they now use the rallies to network, show presence, and influence the mainstream. The Austrian Identitarian Movement and their leader Martin Sellner are also active in the protests. They appear with flyers and banners to increase their visual presence. The presence of these extremists is tolerated by the other demonstrators. Most protesters are not right-wing extremists, but they rally together with them despite the open antisemitism and Holocaust trivialization, rather than standing up against it. This has restored a degree of legitimacy to express antisemitic ideas, not only frightening the Jewish community, but also the authorities.

Manifestations of antisemitism at these rallies included conspiracy theories, such as that the Jews spread the virus to reach economic gains, and that the “elite” or the “financial power” – all of them code words for the Jews – use the virus to establish a new world order (NWO). The newly invented term “Plandemie” (plandemic) expresses the idea that the pandemic had been planned and alludes to the Great Plague of 1679, for which the Jews were scapegoated. In general, most of the antisemitic conspiracy theories use code words for the Jews. Another newly invented term is Covid-Jew (see picture with the inscription “I am a Covid-Jew”). People protesting Coronavirus restrictions compare them to the antisemitic policies of the Nazi regime, and themselves to the Jews during the Holocaust, thereby abusing the memory of Holocaust victims and trivializing Nazi atrocities. Some take it even further and present themselves as the new Jews who are being persecuted by the globalists, another code word for Jews.

**FPÖ - The Leading Force Behind the Protests and Holocaust Trivialization**

Like the right-wing extremists and neo-Nazis, the right-wing ‘Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs’ (Austrian Freedom Party, or FPÖ) also played a central role in the protests against the government’s restrictions from the outset of the pandemic. In March 2020, the FPÖ launched a petition to pool the protest and create an “Alliance against Corona Madness”. In May, it organized a rally at the Heldenzplatz, the square in which Hitler held his speech after the Anschluss in 1938. The FPÖ subsequently took a backseat in the organization of the rallies, but FPÖ functionaries continued to attend them. It returned to the center stage in March 2021 with even harsher rhetoric.

The increased radicalism and open antisemitism seen at the rallies since the beginning of 2021 are likely fueled by the FPÖ moving closer to the far-right. Whereas under the leadership of Heinz-Christian Strache, the FPÖ sought to shed its extreme right-wing image and was active in combating antisemitism, under the chairmanship of Norbert Hofer, politicians such as Herbert Kickl, the leader of the parliamentary group and head of the radical faction within the FPÖ, have increasingly expressed openly antisemitic and racist views. The intensifying and increasing outspokenness of the radical fraction granted right-wing extremists the legitimacy and support to express antisemitic views in public.

In his speech at a Coronavirus restriction protest attended by over 15,000 people in Vienna on March

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226 Presseservice Wien, “Konformistische Rebellen - Verschwörungsideologie und Antisemitismus während der Corona-Pandemie”, 07.11.2021, [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
6, Kickl used antisemitism as a political tool. He lambasted Israel for its vaccination campaign and spoke of Israel’s “health apartheid”. He demonized Israel while being aware that among the protesters were well-known extreme right-wing activists and neo-Nazis. Kickl has links to the extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi scenes and knows how to signal them. Following Kickl’s speech, people shouted antisemitic and Nazi slogans, and some performed the Hitler salute. Hundreds of hooligans and right-wing extremists then marched through the ultra-Orthodox Jewish area of Vienna waving the German Reich flag, wearing the Yellow Star, and chanting “Heil Hitler”. Witnesses described an unprecedented hate-filled atmosphere, a willingness to use violence, and a sense of radicalism. Politicians from all parties represented in Parliament, except for the FPÖ, sharply condemned the rally and the march that followed, and warned that well-known right-wing extremists, hooligans, and Holocaust deniers use the rallies as a platform to spread their hateful messages. They also expressed their concern about the fact that neo-Nazis once again appear confidently in public and online.

In June, Norbert Hofer resigned from the FPÖ chairmanship following a power battle with Herbert Kickl, who was then unanimously elected as the new FPÖ chairman. Kickl has repeatedly trivialized the Holocaust in his battle against the government’s Covid-19 restrictions and vaccination policy. For instance, on October 24, he appeared on television stating that one day unvaccinated people will be picked up in trucks and taken for forced vaccination, an allusion to the Holocaust victims who were taken by trucks to be gassed. On November 9, he abused the commemoration of the 1938 Kristallnacht pogrom and trivialized the Holocaust by indirectly, but clearly, comparing the Covid-19 policy to the Nazi’s persecution of the Jews and to contemporary antisemitism, and equating the unvaccinated to the victims of the Holocaust. In another television appearance on November 30, he blamed the government for imposing on the unvaccinated “a tough and inhuman scapegoat strategy that can by all means withstand a comparison with the darkest chapters of our history in the last century”. He also expressed Holocaust trivialization visually when he uploaded a profile cover on his Facebook page featuring a woman with an outstretched hand in what looks like the Hitler salute as a background to the inscription “No to compulsory vaccination and vaccination experiments on our children – Herbert Kickl – different than the others” (see image).

Kickl is legitimizing Holocaust trivialization and New Antisemitism among FPÖ sympathizers and other protesters, and his rhetoric and the role played by the FPÖ in the protests seems to have a positive effect on his and the party’s popularity. A survey by the Corona Protests Research Workshop showed that 30.2% of the protesters stated that they voted for the FPÖ in the last elections, and 56.7% stated that they will vote for the FPÖ at the next elections. Furthermore, individuals and groups who left the FPÖ, such as Heinz-Christian Strache and the ‘Bündnis Zukunft Österreich’ (Alliance for the Future of Austria, BZÖ) play a significant role in the rallies. In practice,

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228 The Corona Protests Research Workshop is an interdisciplinary cooperation project between the University of Vienna and the Sigmund Freud University that analyzes the movements and protests against the Covid-19 restrictions.
229 Markus Brunner et al., Corona-Protest-Report. Narrative - Motive - Einstellungen, osf.io
Strache also used Holocaust trivialization to promote his fight against the restrictions.

ANTI-ISRAEL PROTESTS DURING OPERATION ‘GUARDIAN OF THE WALLS’: RISE IN NEW ANTISEMITISM AND ANTISEMITIC ATTACKS

Holocaust trivialization and New Antisemitism, together with classic antisemitism and Islamic fundamentalism also characterized the anti-Israel protests in May. During Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’, online and offline antisemitic incidents increased significantly. The IKG report shows a peak in the number of antisemitic incidents in May, with 167 recorded incidents. This number is 62.1% higher than in April and 98.8% higher than in June 2021, and 241% higher than the monthly average of 2020. A drill-down into the categories of antisemitism reveals a spike in incidents connected to Israel-related antisemitism, and Holocaust trivialization and denial in May 2021.230 This development can also be seen online. The Diaspora Ministry’s Antisemitic Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS) reveals a surge in classic antisemitism, New Antisemitism, and Holocaust denial and distortion in May, clearly showing that the anti-Israel protests caused a rise in all forms of antisemitism, including Holocaust trivialization, both offline and online.

Many of the violent antisemitic incidents in 2021 occurred during and after the protests. Their victims were Jews, people thought to be Jews, and people who stood up against antisemitism. Here are some examples:

- A 32-year-old man, traveling by train, was hit in the face three times and called a Jew after he asked two other passengers, one of them wearing a kaffiyeh, to stop denying the Holocaust and using antisemitic slogans during their loud discussion about the Middle East conflict.

- A woman sitting in the Vienna subway reading a book titled “The Jews in the Modern World” was pulled by the hair, harassed, and insulted as a “Jew slut” and “child murderer” by three men.

- A family recognizable as Jews by their clothing was pelted with stones in a park.

- Four girls, identifiable as Jews by their clothing, were antisemitically abused, harassed, and shoved by a group of children of the same age.

- In several cases, Jews, including children, were harassed, and insulted as “f**cking Jews”, or threatened by people calling “Falasteen”, “Free Palestine”, or “Allahu Akbar!”

Politicians expressed shock over the level of antisemitism at the rally organized by BDS-Austria, the anti-Imperialist Coordination (an international association of various anti-imperialist groups), and the Dar-al-Janub Association on May 12.231 Some 2,500 demonstrators marched through Vienna’s Mariahilfer Street chanting antisemitic and terrorism-glorifying slogans, and carrying Hamas flags.

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antisemitic banners featuring messages trivializing the Holocaust and nazifying Israel, and images of the terrorist Leila Chaled. “Child murderer Israel”, calls for an intifada, and “khaybar, khaybar ya yahud” were chanted repeatedly. The organizers openly called for an intifada and for a total boycott of the Jewish state. The speeches at the rally were also filled with antisemitic stereotypes. Israel was blamed for poisoning Palestinian wells - a centuries-old antisemitic conspiracy tale that was the basis for many pogroms - Netanyahu was blamed for provoking wars around the world, Jews were portrayed as vengeful, and Israelis were compared to the Nazis. Holocaust trivializing and the Nazification of Israel were central messages at the rally, expressed also in banners with inscriptions such as “The Nazis are still around, they call themselves Zionists now”, “Well done Israel, Hitler would be proud”, and “One Holocaust does not justify another one”. At the rally on May 15, a protester chanted “Stick the Holocaust in your ass” and the crowd cheered. The rallies were attended by extreme left-wing activists, such as BDS and the communist RKOB members, as well as by almost the entire Islamist spectrum in Vienna, including supporters of Hamas, the Islamic State, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Grey Wolves, and the Turkish AKP party whose Viennese activists openly supported the Hamas rocket attacks on Israel on Facebook.232

Leading politicians harshly condemned the manifestations of antisemitism and expressed solidarity with Israel. Integration Minister Susanne Raab and President of the Austrian National Council Wolfgang Sobotka spoke of zero tolerance for calls of violence against Israel and any form of antisemitism. Interior Minister Karl Nehammer spoke of a “danger to our democracy” if the basic right to assembly is abused by anti-Israeli and antisemitic slogans and announced that security for Jewish institutions will be stepped up. Chancellor Sebastian Kurz insisted during a special session of the National Council following the rally that “under no circumstances is antisemitism acceptable... it disgusts me... there must be no place for that in Austria”. Two days after the rally, as a sign of solidarity with Israel, the Israeli flag was hoisted on the roofs of the Federal Chancellery and the Austrian Foreign Ministry. Chancellor Sebastian Kurz tweeted “The terrorist attacks on Israel are to be condemned in the strongest terms! Together we stand by Israel’s side”. On May 20, representatives of the Austrian government and the Jewish community held a solidarity rally for Israel. The speakers included, among others, six representatives of the Austrian government, among them National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka, Interior Minister Karl Nehammer, and Chairwoman of the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) Pamela Rendi-Wagner.

These manifestations of solidarity with Israel by government and opposition leaders were one of the strongest in Europe and beyond and are especially important since New Antisemitism was already widespread in Austria before it was fueled even more by the pro-Palestinian protests and the anti-vaxxers, who came to perceive Israel as the big enemy, being the first country to mass-vaccinate its population. According to the Europe-wide survey by APL and EJA mentioned above, already in 2020, Austria had the highest proportion of people agreeing with statements that expressed antisemitic hostility against Israel: 76% compared to the European average of 49%. 233

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HOLOCAUST DENIAL AND TRIVIALIZATION VERSUS HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION AND EDUCATION

According to the same study, the level of Holocaust denial and trivialization was also one of the highest in Europe even before the 2021 rise in Holocaust trivialization triggered by the anti-Israel protests and the rallies against the government’s Covid-19 restrictions and vaccination policy. 234 58% of the Austrian responders agreed to statements expressing Holocaust denial and relativization, compared to the European average of 39%. Austria even has the highest ratio of respondents who think that Jews talk too much about the Holocaust (42%) and of respondents demanding that the Holocaust be taken off the public agenda (43%). Moreover, 32% claim that “Israelis behave like Nazis towards the Palestinians”, compared to the European average of 26%. 235

Dealing with the Holocaust has always been a problematic issue in Austria. The Austrian postwar identity, and its national and international politics, were based on the so-called “victim clause” of the 1943 Moscow Declaration which described Austria as “the first free country to fall a victim to Hitlerite aggression”. It was only in the 1990s that the “first victim” myth began to recede, and a new political approach to the past emerged. First steps for compensation were taken in 1995. Nevertheless, even in the 21st century, leading politicians continued to belittle the role of Austrians in the Holocaust. 236 Moreover, studies showed that there is a significant gap in knowledge about the Holocaust among schoolchildren, despite the fact that Holocaust education is compulsory in Austria.

The signals sent by Parliament this year to highlight the importance of commemorating the Holocaust were therefore very significant. On the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Austrian Parliament commemorated the victims of the Shoah by illuminating the provisional parliament building with the words “we remember”. 237 During the Parliament session, all MPs, including those from the FPO, stood for a photo holding up signs with the words “we remember”, and President of the Austrian National Council Wolfgang Sobotka, subsequently took part in an online panel discussion on National Socialism and antisemitism.

Moreover, the Holocaust exhibitions that were opened and the memorials which were inaugurated this year in the presence of high-ranking Austrian politicians are of special importance. They convey the message that Austria not only acknowledges its role in the Shoah but is also taking an active step towards educating its population about it.

Three new exhibitions were opened:

(i) The freely accessible outdoor exhibition “The Vienna Model of Radicalization - Austria and the Shoah” at the Heldenplatz in Vienna, which demonstrates that Vienna was the birthplace and testbed for the deportation system later applied to Jews throughout the German Reich.

234 Only four countries scored worse than Austria: Poland, Greece, Romania, and Hungary.
237 The permanent parliament building is being renovated.
The exhibition at Vienna’s main railway station, which commemorates the deportations of Jews to the ghetto in Riga and shows the role of the Austrian Federal Railways in the Nazi system.

Austria’s new national exhibition at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial titled “Remoteness - Austria and Auschwitz”, which shows how Jews were removed from society, deported, forgotten, and eventually annihilated. It shows the fate of Austrian victims in the concentration camp, as well as the complicity and responsibility of Austrians in the Nazi crimes. This exhibition stands in clear contrast to Austria’s first national exhibition at the memorial in 1978 which portrayed the country as “Hitler’s first victim”.

Two new Holocaust memorials were inaugurated:
1. The “Never Forget” memorial at the Vienna Airport for the victims of the two subcamps of the Mauthausen concentration camp which were located there.
2. The Walls of Names, a memorial listing the names of the 65,000 Austrian Jews who perished during the Holocaust.

COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

The frequent equivalencing of the Covid-19 policies adopted by the Austrian government and the Israeli government’s policies in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the antisemitic policies of the Nazi regime have become customary, and the fact that they are voiced by right-wing politicians, Muslim activists, right-wing and left-wing activists, and increasingly also by the mainstream, indicates that the taboo on Holocaust trivialization has eroded. The massive increase in antisemitic incidents shows that the inhibition threshold for verbal and physical violence against Jews has decreased.

This reality was made possible because, too often, people just stood by when antisemitic incidents occurred and didn’t stand up for the victim or try to stop the crime, and people from the mainstream see no problem in demonstrating alongside well-known Holocaust deniers and people trivializing the Holocaust and expressing antisemitic conspiracy theories and slurs. Often, they do so not out of antisemitic sentiments but out of ignorance. The latter prevents people from recognizing antisemitic incidents and makes them vulnerable to believing in antisemitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories. The solution needed to combat this ignorance is education. It is important to teach children and adults about modern antisemitism, the Holocaust, and how public behavior and the fact that people just stood by and didn’t stand up against the growing wave of antisemitic behavior and policy making made the Holocaust possible. People need to be sensitized to today’s antisemitism. For this purpose, a detailed study on antisemitism and ways to combat it was conducted under the patronage of the President of the Austrian National Council, the City of Vienna, and the European Jewish Congress.

In too many cases, the same ignorance also prevents police officers from recognizing antisemitic incidents, sometimes even despite being made aware of them by the victims. One example is the police officer’s reaction in the case of the woman in the Vienna subway mentioned above. He blamed her for having provoked the situation by reading a book about Jews in public during the Middle East hostilities. He told her that it would be best for her to forget about what happened, and
that there was no issue of antisemitism because she isn’t Jewish. To counter this ignorance and to sensitize police officers to antisemitism and the concerns of the Jewish community, the Interior Ministry has developed a training module for the Austrian police. The training includes explanations of the phenomenon, the legal basis, the effects, victim protection provisions, investigative aids, and the technical recording of antisemitism. Police students in basic training will receive three units in which the history, functioning, and mechanisms of antisemitism will be addressed and demonstrated, and they will attend meetings with Jews. Senior Likrat members are trained for this purpose by the IKG.238

Several additional measures were implemented throughout the year to combat this ignorance and other causes of antisemitism, to improve the security of Jewish institutions, and to strengthen Jewish life in Austria. The main measures include:

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**January**
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The Federal Government presented the National Strategy Against Antisemitism, a comprehensive package that contains 38 measures from the fields of education, security, law enforcement, judiciary, integration, European-wide data exchange, and measures for society as a whole, which aim to recognize, name and effectively combat antisemitism. The strategy packet is part of the three-point plan presented last year which includes an annual contribution of €4 million to promote Jewish life, and set up a new staff unit in the Federal Chancellery (see below).

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**February**
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The Austrian-Jewish Cultural Heritage Office was established in the Federal Chancellery. The office’s tasks are, among others, coordinating and evaluating the measures to implement the National Strategy Against Antisemitism; preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism; strengthening the coordination between the individual players in the spheres of remembrance, antisemitism education and prevention as well as enhancing awareness and strengthening Jewish cultural and community life in Austria.

Parliament approved the Austrian-Jewish Cultural Heritage Law, the government’s bill launched in September 2020 stating that the federal government will pay the Jewish community an annual grant of €4 million to secure a thriving Jewish life by ensuring the following: a) protection of Jewish institutions, b) preservation and care of the Austro-Jewish cultural heritage, c) support of Jewish community life and its structure, d) expansion of the interreligious dialogue, e) promotion of projects with and for the benefit of young Jews, and f) promotion of initiatives of social exchange and cohesion. The new federal law is effective retroactively from January 1, 2020.

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238 Likrat is a dialogue project launched by the IKG, in which young Jews, who have been trained for this purpose, are invited to schools or youth centers in order to introduce themselves and their Judaism. The aim is to create a space for young people in which all kinds of questions can be asked, in order to break down prejudices and to promote better future coexistence.
March

The Ministry of the Interior issued a decree stating that “hate crime” or “prejudice motive” must be recorded electronically as a separate offense when a complaint is filed.

May

The Council of Ministers banned all Hezbollah symbols, including those of the political arm, thus prohibiting the display or distribution of all Hezbollah symbols (including badges, emblems, and gestures) and electronic means of communication.

October

The Austrian Chapter of the Transatlantic Friends of Israel was founded. This is a non-partisan, parliamentary group that seeks to reaffirm the alliance between Europe, the United States of America, Canada, and Israel.

November

The Austrian Football Association, the Bundesliga and, as the first club in Austria, the local football club Austria Wien, adopted the IHRA working definition of antisemitism in a ceremony near the Holocaust memorial. The corresponding document was also signed by government representatives.
Belgium

GENERAL TRENDS

According to the latest annual report published in September 2021 by Antisemitisme.be, the main civil society organization that records data on antisemitism in Belgium, the number of antisemitic incidents in Belgium in 2020 increased by 36%, from 74 in 2019 to 101 in 2020. This includes a 54.5% rise in online antisemitic abuse. Brussels and Antwerp were the most affected cities and accounted for 31% of antisemitic incidents offline in 2020. Two of the three physical assaults recorded in 2020 took place in Antwerp. The socio-economic and psychological impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to the proliferation of antisemitic conspiracy theories, have probably amplified pre-existing anti-Jewish sentiments.

Concerning the situation for 2021, although no official data has been published yet, many elements signal a worsening trend triggered by the import of the latest round of violence in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict to Belgium. Indeed, the month of May 2021 was marked by recurring antisemitic incidents in pro-Palestinian demonstrations, including calls for explicit violence against Jews and apologies for terrorism.

A new study published by the Action and Protection Foundation in October 2021 that was based on a survey of 16,000 people in 16 EU member states, reveals that 19% of Belgians harbor strong or latent primary antisemitic attitudes while 62% expresses either strong or moderate “antisemitic hostility against Israel”.

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239 2020 Annual Report on Antisemitism, September 2021, antisemitisme.be

240 Jews represent a minority of some 40,000 in Belgium, most of whom live in Antwerp and Brussels.

241 Antwerp’s Jewish community has about 100 Jewish institutions serving a predominantly ultra-Orthodox population of 18,000 people.

242 Action & Protection League, New Antisemitism Database, apleu.org
Belgian Jews continue to be subject to increasing antisemitic hatred originating mainly from radical Islam, the Far-Right, and the Far-left. Belgium’s Coordination Unit for Threat Assessment (OCAM) has already warned of extreme strains of Islam in Belgium. At the same time, traditional forms of antisemitism persist and seem to find renewed vigor. Belgium’s far-right party Vlaams Belang (“Flemish Interest”) has more than tripled its electorate, emerging as the country’s second-largest party in the May 2019 federal elections. Recent polls show that Vlaams Belang is currently the most popular political party in Flanders, overtaking the governing party N-VA. The party’s founders included collaborators with Nazi Germany and its lawmakers have a rich history of antisemitism.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO ANTISEMITISM

Concerns Over Government Reactions to Antisemitism
Many Belgian Jews often perceive Belgian authorities as lax on antisemitic hate speech, prompting concern that antisemitism has gained a level of mainstream acceptance that is quite uncommon in other Western European nations. Régine Suchowolski-Sluszny, President of the Forum der Joodse Organisaties, states that public authorities have not done enough to protect Jews, especially those who are more “visible”, like in Antwerp. She also regrets the withdrawal of soldiers who were protecting Jewish institutions and expresses her fears over possible new legislative developments following the ban on ritual slaughter, such as a ban on circumcision, which she would consider as a new attack on her community. Furthermore, Belgium’s Jewish umbrella group (CCOJB), declared that antisemitism was growing among the elites in Belgium. “I do not call our ministers antisemitic. I’m just saying that the rhetoric they are using right now is not careful enough and is tainted with antisemitism”, said Yohan Benizri, President of the CCOJB.

In addition, some members of Belgium’s Jewish community express fears over the new government’s composition – a center-left coalition that emerged on September 30, 2020, after 16 months of political paralysis. Some warned that the new coalition was composed of several ministers who are highly critical of Israel and that the country appointed a Justice Minister who has publicly spoken of a “Jewish lobby”. The case of Rajae Maouane, a Belgian MP who serves as co-President of the French-speaking Ecolo (Green) Party, should also be noted. She has been accused of inciting antisemitism after sharing a picture on Instagram showing a Palestinian militant brandishing a slingshot, accompanied by a song of Lebanese singer Julia Boutros, who is reputed to be close to Hezbollah, and who incites Arabs to armed struggle against the “sons of Zion”. According to the Belgian League Against Antisemitism (LBCA), “this incitement to action endorsed by the co-President of Ecolo is the culmination of an antisemitic shift that has been observed for several

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243 “Anti-Semitic Material Used to Train Imams in Belgium: Report”, Politico, May 9, 2018, [www.politico.eu](http://www.politico.eu)


245 “In Belgium, Jewish leaders worry that antisemitism has become kosher”, The Jerusalem Post, October 3, 2019, [www.jpost.com](http://www.jpost.com)

246 “L'antisémitisme lié à un rejet d’Israël particulièrement marqué en Belgique”, Le Vif, 12 October, 2021, [www.levif.be](http://www.levif.be)


248 February 2020: Amid Aalst carnival controversy, Vincent Van Quickenborne, the new Justice Minister who was then Mayor of the city of Kortrijk, tweeted, “The Jewish lobby is working extra hours”. See: “How can a politician who referred to a ‘Jewish lobby’ become a Justice Minister in Belgium?”, [European Jewish Press](http://ejpress.org), 1 October, 2020,


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ANNUAL ASSESSMENT
years in the leadership of the Green Party", pointing in particular to the election in 2019 of a member of parliament who is the instigator of the BDS movement in Belgium.

Withdrawal of Military Operation Protecting Jewish Institutions, September 2021

September 1, 2021 - Belgium’s government ended a counterterrorism operation called ‘Vigilant Guardian’, which included military protection of Jewish institutions. The move came amidst rising antisemitism across the country, especially following the Covid-19 crisis and Israel’s latest conflict with Gaza. Although the terrorism risk level in Belgium has been downgraded, Jewish organizations insist that ending the security arrangement increases the threat to the Jewish community. In a joint statement published in June 2021, the Coordinating Committee of Jewish Organizations in Belgium (CCOJB) and the Forum of Jewish Organizations (FJO) rejected the plan, stating that “no equivalent solution has yet been proposed to guarantee the safety of citizens who attend Jewish events or institutions in our country”. Additionally, the chairman of the Association of Jewish Organizations in Europe (EJA), Rabbi Menachem Margolin, wrote a letter to Annelies Verlinden, the Belgian Minister of the Interior, urging her to reconsider the decision. “In the Corona year, and especially in light of the security incidents between Israel and Hamas, we are witnessing a significant increase in threats and assaults against Jews in Belgium as well as across Europe. We do not understand the decision and the timing and are particularly concerned about the Belgian precedent”, Rabbi Margolin said.

Background - Operation ‘Vigilant Guardian’ started in 2015 following the Islamist terror attack against ‘Charlie Hebdo’ in Paris and the dismantling of a terrorist cell in Verviers. Military personnel were deployed to secure locations considered sensitive, including embassies (in particular in the US, the UK, and Israel) and religious, particularly Jewish, institutions. Roughly €4 million were allocated to reinforce security at Jewish institutions. The whole operation cost more than €200 million in five years. At the beginning of the operation, only 150 military personnel were mobilized, but the number steadily increased to reach 1,800 soldiers by 2016. Since 2017, a more dynamic approach to patrolling has been adopted, and the number of soldiers deployed on the streets gradually reduced. Finally, the new government, which was sworn into office in October 2020, adopted a plan promoted by the defense establishment to bring an end to Operation ‘Vigilant Guardian’. In November 2020, the Council of Ministers approved a gradual troop withdrawal and the end of the operation by September 2021. It should be noted that the previous redeployment in 2017 coincided with a sharp increase in antisemitic incidents (see graph above).

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251 “Notre mission Vigilant Guardian”, www.mil.be
253 “Soldiers on Belgium’s streets have cost more than €200 million in five years”, The Brussels Times, 19 January, 2020, www.brusselstimes.com
THE BAN ON RITUAL SLAUGHTER

October 2021 - The Belgian Constitutional Court supported the judgment of the European Court of Justice (CJEU) last December on banning animal slaughter without stunning, thereby setting a precedent for the rest of Europe. The ruling follows a request from the Belgian court to CJEU for clarification on the legal issue and the correct interpretation of EU regulation No 1099/2009 pertaining to the protection of animals at the time of the killing. For the Jews, who have been living in Belgium for centuries, the ban comes as a blow and some might now question if there is a Jewish future for them in the country. “We are back to square one: are we to accept that hunting is permitted for cultural reasons in this country while a thousand-year-old presence in this region does not justify a similar exception? What a moral defeat for our institutions. This is not over. Legally and politically, we will continue fighting this”, commented Yoram Yohan Benizri. Some believe the animal welfare argument has been hijacked by far-right politicians to promote a populist and anti-migrant agenda.

Background - The ban on ritual slaughter came into force in 2019 in both Flanders and Wallonia but was then challenged by the Jewish and Muslim communities on the grounds of freedom of religion. In December 2020, the European Court of Justice ruled in favor of the Flemish ban on ritual slaughter, stating that national authorities can order mandatory stunning for animals before slaughter. “The court concludes that the measures contained in the decree allow a fair balance between the importance attached to animal welfare and the freedom of Jewish and Muslim believers to practice their religion”, the ruling said. The ruling came as a surprise as it went contrary to advice issued in September 2020 by the Attorney-General of the European Court of Justice, Gerard Hogan, who said that Flanders’ ban on halal and kosher slaughter should be overturned as it does not comply with EU law.

256 “Belgium tests EU rules on halal and kosher slaughter”, Politico, 19 August, 2019, www.politico.eu
257 Court of Justice of the European Union. PRESS RELEASE No 163/20, December 17, 2020, curia.europa.eu
Main Antisemitic Incidents in 2021

PRO-PALESTINIAN DEMONSTRATIONS, May 2021 - Manifestations of antisemitism and apologies of violence and terrorism were widespread during pro-Palestinian demonstrations held across Belgium in the wake of the latest escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Some examples:

- Dozen shout “Death to the Jews” in a pro-Palestinian demonstration in Brussels. 258

- Several dozen demonstrators were recorded chanting the antisemitic slogan “Khaybar Khaybar Ya Yahoud” during an unauthorized pro-Palestine demonstration in the center of Brussels. The chant is a reference to the historic battle of Khaybar in which Jews were massacred by Muslims in the seventh century. The police did not intervene during the incident. 259

BRUSSELS, May 2021 - Noa Lang, a professional soccer player from Belgium who sang with fans that he’d “rather die than be a Jew” wrote an unapologetic message on Instagram. Ignoring calls to apologize, Lang wrote that he didn’t mean to offend but would not like to discuss the subject further. The Royal Belgian Football Association has started an ethics review of Lang’s conduct. 260

ANTWERP, May 2021 - Two individuals threw stones at a group of people from the Jewish community in Antwerp. The perpetrators of the attack could not be found. 261

ANTWERP, July 2021 - Two Jews returning home after a service at the synagogue, were attacked in Antwerp. The assailant was arrested. 262

258 Emmanuel Nahshon, May 15, 2021, twitter.com
259 “Antisemitic chants at Brussels anti-Israel demonstration”, European Jewish Congress, May 16, 2021, eurojewcong.org
260 “Belgian soccer star unapologetic for chanting he’d ‘rather die than be a Jew’”, The Times of Israel, 25 May 2021, www.timesofisrael.com
261 «LANCÉ DE PIERRES SUR DES PERSONNES DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ JUIVE À ANVERS», May 13, 2021, antisemitisme.be
262 “AGRESSION ANTIÉMITE À ANVERS”, May 18, 2021, antisemitisme.be
Spain

Spain is home to a small Jewish community of about 20,000 people that is concentrated in the two major cities: Madrid, the country's capital, and Barcelona, the capital of the region of Catalonia. The community consists of two groups of similar size: in Madrid the Jews are of traditional Spanish descent and have an affinity for religion and tradition, whereas the Catalonian community is Ashkenazi and secular and is made up mainly of South American immigrants who immigrated for political and economic reasons.

Jewish worship in Spain was legally outlawed until 1966. In the new democratic constitution of 1978, the Catholic religion was separated from the state. The umbrella organization of the Jewish communities (FCJE - Federación de Comunidades Judías de España) received official recognition and signed an agreement with the state in 1992.

Over the last decade, against the background of the deep economic crisis and corruption that has spread in the conservative governments (PP Party) ruling in Madrid, there has been a process of radicalization in Catalonia, the richest region of Spain, and the demand for a separate ethnic state has increased. To some extent, the situation in the Basque Country and the Galicia region is similar. In Madrid and most of Spain, on the other hand, there have been increasing voices calling for a return to a model of a united national-Catholic state such as the one that existed during Franco's dictatorial rule. The neo-Francoist forces (Vox Party) have enjoyed great success at the polls since 2019, and are pulling the center-right parties in their direction. Their platform includes nostalgia for the entire old regime, including the alliance between Spain and the pro-Nazi Axis countries, and participation in the war against the USSR and the Jews.

For this reason alone, and following their new political status, far-right elements have become an active focus of antisemitism in the last two years. This year, the public use of neo-Nazi symbols reemerged during political events and violent threats were made through the media. It should be noted that these public events were also attended by junior clergymen.

On the other side of the divide, in the region of Catalonia, the moderate national movements control the regional government thanks to the support of revolutionary anarchist groups in the autonomous parliament. A similar situation exists in other two regions striving for independence: the Basque Country and Galicia. The radical groups that promote separation and independence largely support anti-Zionist campaigns, BDS and, in some cases, even radical Islam. In the past year, the antisemitism that originated in the conflict in the Middle East in relation to the State of Israel, was especially evident during the hostilities between Israel and Hamas during May 2021 ("Guardian of the Walls").

All sections of the Jewish community strive to avoid becoming involved in conflicts between the parties. In any case, the Jews condemn the side that makes more use of antisemitic motifs, and naturally identify with the majority wing in the region or city where they live.

It is worth mentioning that the Annual Report of the Ministry of Monitoring Hate Crimes (ONOD - Oficina Nacional de Lucha Contra los Delitos de Odio) was published in June 2021. This body was established by the government in accordance with the recommendations of the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union (FRA). This report also includes, for the first time, a reference to the issue of antisemitism, although it presents a picture that greatly minimizes its scope. Due to a
reduced definition of the phenomenon, the report found that antisemitism accounted for a total of 0.69% of all discrimination in Spain and was considered the last factor in terms of importance.

**MAJOR ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS DURING 2021**

**Antisemitic slogans at a neo-Nazi demonstration in Madrid** - antisemitic chants were heard during a demonstration held in mid-February 2021, organized by the ‘Patriotic Youth’ movement, a neo-Nazi group supported by various Nazi and fascist organizations. The demonstration was attended by about 300 people as part of an event in memory of the Spanish volunteers who fought in the ranks of the German army during World War II. After the event, interviews with participants were broadcast on Youtube with the flag of Nazi Germany in the background.

**Neo-Nazi march in the city of Valladolid** - dozens of people participated in a parade organized by the ‘Falange’ movement, to mark National Sovereignty Day, on March 7, 2021. According to the Spanish press, the participants arrived in the city of Valladolid by buses from Madrid. During the event, slogans were read against “corruption” in the current left-wing government and a large part of the crowd made use of the Nazi salute.

**Public events and demonstrations condemning Israel** - public expressions of solidarity with the Palestinians took place in Madrid on May 15, 2021, attended by the Palestinian Ambassador to Spain. In a public statement, they asked the new US President, Joe Biden, “to put an end to the occupation and human rights violations in Palestine and to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine”. The demonstrators shouted the usual slogans: “Israel is terrorist”, “Put an end to the occupation”, and put up a poster that read “Freedom, justice and equality. Human rights in Palestine. An end to Israel’s murderous and criminal regime”.

**Expressing admiration for a Palestinian terrorist group during a political rally in favor of the independence for the Galicia region** - during a political rally of the Galician Nationalist Bloc (BNG - Bloque Nacionalista Galego), held in early August 2021, admiration was expressed for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The meeting took place in the city of Santiago de Compostela and was attended by, among others, representatives of nationalist parties seeking to separate Catalonia and the Basque Country. A statement issued by ACOM, a Spanish social organization that is working to strengthen ties with Israel, declared that “We condemn the fact that a party represented in parliament, which is an ally of the central Spanish government of Pedro Sanchez, contributes to the justification of the violence against Jews that the State of Israel has suffered from since its establishment”.

**A TV program invites a neo-Nazi leader** - Isabel Medina Peralta appeared on Spanish television, as part of a popular investigative program on November 18, 2021. Peralta was among the speakers at a memorial service in honor of the ‘Blue Division (Division Azul)’, the Spanish volunteers who fought for Nazi Germany during World War II, with the encouragement of fascist Spain. She said then that: “Their appearance will change, but the enemies will always be the same enemies: the Jews! Why are we sure of that? Because the Jews are to blame and therefore the Blue Division fought against them. We will not sit idly by while millions of foreigners invade our country”.

**Holocaust memorial was vandalized by rioters in Spain** - in November 2021, rioters vandalized a Holocaust memorial in the city of Oviedo, in the province of Cantabria in northern Spain. The Committee of Jewish Communities in Spain condemned the act. It should be noted that this monument has suffered from vandalism several times since its inauguration in 2017.
The Region of the Former Soviet Union

GENERAL

In 2021, antisemitic propaganda, including denial of the Holocaust’s uniqueness, and the use of such denial for socio-political purposes, became the central motif of antisemitism in the region of the former Soviet Union. A slight decline in violent incidents in the second half of the year was accompanied by a notable increase in the scale of vandalism against Jewish sites.

Sociopolitical instability in the region served as fertile ground for spreading hate speech and propaganda to tarnish opponents of a regime and to channel street anger. The use of antisemitic rhetoric by those with their own agenda, including politicians, is based on the prevailing assumption that anti-Jewish sentiments will easily be taken on board by the general public.

As in previous years, Jews continued to be accused of world domination and the source of negative phenomena throughout history. This was combined with vocal antisemitic accusations at the heart of the public discourse and charges about dual loyalty and various evils perpetrated by the Jews to the surrounding countries.

A range of different issues continued to form the basis for the creation of an alternative historical narrative that downplays the suffering of the Holocaust’s Jewish victims by denying the uniqueness of the ShoahHolocaust and immersing it in the local narrative of the struggle against the Nazi occupier. Among these issues were: Holocaust remembrance, concealment of the role and function of nationalist leaders and other groups in the murder of the Jews, attempts to distort historical facts about the Second World War, the place of the Holocaust, the essence of the Final Solution and its implementation by Nazi Germany and its collaborators, and Soviet antisemitism during and after the war.

This year, after a long time, no one country in the region could be singled out as the leader in antisemitic incidents. In 2021, Belarus in particular, was characterized by a disproportionate amount of antisemitic propaganda. The Jewish issue was drawn into the heart of the political fray, and antisemitic propaganda was wielded extensively by the rival sides that even wantonly attempted to conceal events that took place during the Holocaust. In Ukraine, on the other hand, the antisemitic discourse and numerous acts of vandalism were the product of public engagement (not necessarily negative) with Jewish-related issues (such as events marking the 80 years anniversary of the Babi-Yar massacre, and Hanukkah celebrations). In Russia, where antisemitic incidents are steadily declining, there were those who, as in Belarus, disturbingly returned during 2021 to the Soviet narrative denying the uniqueness of the Holocaust and to the use of antisemitic rhetoric as the basis for criticizing the State of Israel.

In the course of 2021, denigration of Holocaust symbols gained traction in the region of the former Soviet Union, not only among local political elements - particularly in Belarus - but especially
among Covid-19 deniers, anti-vaxxers, and opponents of restrictions in the public domain. In Ukraine, the public discourse around the Covid-19 pandemic was also exploited by several political elements to criticize the existing government, associated with the Jews in public consciousness because of President Zelensky's Jewish origins.

The social networks (specifically 'Vkontakte', the most popular network in the region) continue to be a focal point of uncontrolled dissemination of antisemitic content and themes, both in Russian and in other languages,\(^{264}\) without any attention from the local enforcement agencies.

Despite declarations that were sometimes accompanied by practical steps, such as the passing of a law against antisemitism in Ukraine, much room for improvement still exists in the combating of antisemitism by local enforcement agencies. These agencies continue to only partially address the issue or prefer to categorize the incidents as "the actions of hooligans" without any link whatsoever to the ethno-religious dimension, and while meting out punishment that fails to offer adequate deterrence.

Covid-19 spread significantly in this region, and low trust in the vaccines is leading to relatively low vaccination rates, while the number of sick and the death toll are high. The countries are taking a series of steps to curb the pandemic, including lockdowns, and only permitting entry to public places to vaccinated persons. These steps have led to demonstrations and to a vociferous discourse against the restrictions. Opponents of the restrictions frequently use forms of discourse and symbols from the Holocaust.

**ANTISEMITIC TRENDS IN THE REGION**

**Prominent incidents**

Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in Gaza in May led to an increase in social media discourse characterized as ‘new antisemitism’, largely influenced by radical Islam. This form of discourse is not the norm on Russian-language social networks, a large proportion of which is created by bots and anonymous users. According to the Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS), this discourse largely disappeared after the Gaza operation, as did many of the profiles that created it, indicating a guiding hand attempting to promote this type of discourse.

An event that raised the bar of antisemitism leveled at Israel this year was the Olympic gold medal won by Israeli rhythmic gymnast Linoy Ashram after she beat a Russian gymnast. Rhythmic gymnastics is a popular sport among Russian elites, and enjoys extensive media coverage and public attention in Russia. Given that Russia fully dominated this sport for many years, the Russian gymnasts’ defeat was almost received as a national failure. The wave of reactions on social media was swift, accusing Israel of winning unfairly, and making frequent use of the lexicon of Soviet antisemitism. Expressions such as “Zionist conspiracy” and allusions to an international pro-Israel lobby by several leading public and media persona reverberated through the social networks. Although the storm died down after several days, it nevertheless reflects the potential for Soviet antisemitic discourse in Russia today.

\(^{264}\) vk.com/israelwc.
The ‘new antisemitism’, focusing on disproportionate criticism of Zionism and the State of Israel, and radical Islamic antisemitism, were a marginal phenomenon until this past year. However, 2021 saw a rise in these forms of antisemitism, especially in social networks’ discourse, including in response to Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in Gaza. Israel’s actions in contending with Covid-19, which enjoyed positive international coverage, drew criticism by anti-vaxxers who, using symbols from the Holocaust, compared Covid-19 restrictions to persecution of the Jews.

Unlike other areas of the world, Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ did not lead to exceptional antisemitic incidents in the region, however, the ACMS monitoring system did identify an increase in the level of the antisemitic discourse on social media which, for the most part, included expressions of antisemitism associated with radical Islam.

**Incidents of Violence and Vandalism**

In general, this year saw a continuation in the favorable downward trend in the number of physical violence incidents in the region. The largest number of incidents occurred in Ukraine, in the vicinity of Uman, where several physical assaults on ultra-Orthodox Jews took place. Likewise, the local police arrested several people who issued calls to physically harm Jews in the Uman area and, in one case, even found weapons in the suspect’s home. However, the Jewish New Year events in Uman, typically attended by large numbers of Jewish visitors, passed peacefully without any exceptional incidents of violence. This stands out favorably given the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions which make people wary about an influx of foreigners.

It is worth mentioning that some of the violent incidents in Uman are not necessarily due to antisemitism but rather, are related to personal disputes between local residents and Jews who visit the area and even take up residence there for an extended period. While violent incidents of an antisemitic nature have occurred in Uman over the years, and should not be taken lightly, they should also be seen in the context of the tensions that arise when cultures mix within a very small geographic area, as was the case last year, when fears of Covid-19 led to demonstrations by the local residents against the town’s Jewish visitors.

In Russia, an elderly Jewish scientist was attacked on public transport in August. The assailant was arrested, and the incident itself was publicized and reported in the federal media. That said, the number of incidents of vandalism remained at around the same level of last year. The most prominent incidents included arson against the Shamir Jewish Community building in Moscow, on Hitler’s birthday (April 20). Notably, the building was also attacked in September 2020.

This year, attacks continued against Jewish memorials for victims of the Holocaust, both in Russia and in Ukraine. The attacks generally included both physical damage to the memorial and the spraying of antisemitic graffiti. Of the prominent incidents of this type, one involved the damaging of the memorial for the Holocaust victims in Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad), perpetrated just two days after the memorial’s dedication in a central city park. This year saw a decline in the number of attacks on Jewish cemeteries. In Russia, no such incidents were reported at all, while in Ukraine, several instances of vandalism at cemeteries were reported, mostly perpetrated by local youth.

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During the festival of Hanukkah, several Hanukkah menorahs stationed at city centers in Ukraine were defaced and toppled. Isolated attacks of this kind also took place in previous years but were more widespread this year due to the posting of videos on social media.

**Belarus: An Increase in Antisemitic Discourse Against the Backdrop of the Political Crisis**

In As of the summer of 2020, the Jewish issue in Belarus was drawn into the heart of the country's political-public discourse, both by the existing regime's spokespeople and supporters, and by the opposition protesting against what they viewed as a fraudulent presidential election in August 2020. The trends that emerged in 2020, especially exploitation of the Holocaust and its symbols by the regime's opponents, and the blaming of the Jews for initiating and leading the protests as alleged by the government's proxies, intensified in 2021. The opposition portal “august2020.info” described what happened to the demonstrators who were arrested and defined the torture endured by one of the detainees as a “24-hour holocaust.”

Belarusian and operating Discourse in Belarus around the struggle between the ruling party and opposition elements included explicitly antisemitic messages. This is done while exploiting stigmas and antisemitic hate speech to incite negative feelings which, according to the regime's propagandists, the general Belarusian population allegedly harbor towards the Jews. The use of patronizing hate speech points to the prevalent antisemitic attitudes among certain circles of the regime's propagandists. The most notable examples are the screening of the movie “To Kill the President”, which highlights the alleged connection between Jewish circles in the United States and members of the opposition. Also deserving of mention in this context is the pro-regime Telegram channel “Yellow Plums”, which often uses antisemitic motifs to highlight the alleged involvement of the Jews in the opposition's activities.

Holocaust remembrance continues to be exploited for political purposes by the regime. In practice, Jewish remembrance is being excluded and removed from both internal discourse and state-sponsored commemorations. Senior members of the regime and other public figures deliberately omit the unique fate of the Jewish victims in Belarus, which lost one third of its population as a result of the Nazi occupation. Even a new law about the “Belarus genocide” being advanced by the regime is devoid of any mention of the Nazi's 'Final Solution' to the Jewish Problem in Belarus, despite the fact that Jewish victims made a third of all civilian victims on Belarus soil. particularly who were - nature of.

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266 “Я не видел у них признаков сумасшествия, мы все были врагами. Это был суточный Холокост”, august2020.info


268 This is a play on words where the name can also be taken to mean “Yellow Leaks” (Желтые сливы). t.me/s/zheltye伊利vy
USE OF COVID-19 TO ANTISEMITIC ENDS

During the year, there were several events of a “symbolic” nature that attempted to draw a parallel between the Jews and the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, demonstrators in the Baltic States and in Ukraine wore a “Yellow Star” as a symbol of the Covid-19 restrictions and the persecution of anti-vaxxers. In Russia, during an award ceremony aired on television, an actor came on stage wearing a Yellow Star and delivered a speech comparing the Covid-19 restrictions to the persecution of the Jews. Statements blaming the Jews for the spread of Covid-19 and containing tropes from the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, were issued by Konstantin Malofeev, a Christian Orthodox businessman considered one of the patrons of the Russian Orthodox Church. Also, while a popular television series – “Detective Anna” – alluded to the Jews not only as being behind Covid-19, but also working to deprive the Russian people of their leadership role in battling the pandemic. Furthermore, Russian state-run television not only ridiculed Israel for its vaccination campaign, but also chose to use Soviet rhetoric to label the campaign as fascist and racist.

In Ukraine, local politicians tried to exploit public criticism of the Covid-19 restrictions to attack the existing regime in general, and specifically, its Jews. At almost every public rally against the authorities, slogans such as “the Jews are using Covid-19 to annihilate Ukraine” are heard. This discourse also employed stereotypical imagery of Jews as greedy. For example, the satirical program “Diesel Show” derided the “greedy Jew” who used deceit to try and get back the money he paid the doctor for his vaccination.

Another trend in the wake of Covid-19 is the increased use on social media of expressions associated with ‘new antisemitism’ with respect to Israel and its battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. Although this trend has not assumed significant scale in the region of the former Soviet Union, it is nevertheless new compared to last year when such claims were rare. Israel and Zionism are accused of encouraging the administering of vaccinations and restrictions in the public domain and Israel is charged not only with conducting an aggressive vaccination and restriction campaign, but also with pressing other countries to do the same.
ATTITUDE TO THE HOLOCAUST

Antisemitism in the Russian-speaking region has different origins and is expressed differently to the antisemitism in the rest of Europe. The vast majority of antisemitism in this region is classic antisemitism, associated with the traditional perceptions of Jews, or Soviet antisemitism, at the heart of which lies the question of how the Second World War is remembered, and which developed in the Soviet Union from the late 1940’s.

According to the Soviet view, the Jews were perceived as not actively participating in the war, preferring instead “to hide in the rear” and cannot therefore be trusted. Furthermore, the popular perception is that the murder of the Jews on Soviet soil during the war was no different to the murder of other nationalities, and no special significance should therefore be attributed to it. This perception embodies denial of the Holocaust in the territories of the former Soviet Union. The way the Second World War is remembered is a key issue for the region’s countries and constitutes an important element in the “memory battles” that take place, both within those countries and between them. Most of the “memory battles” boil down to the question of the Soviet Union’s place and role in the region’s history.249

Another ongoing trend this year is the extensive use of Holocaust remembrance for political ends. This trend gained traction in Belarus where, following anti-government demonstrations that swept the country from the summer of 2020 to the spring of 2021, the use of general antisemitic motifs escalated, specifically images borrowed from Soviet antisemitism that were conjoined with Holocaust remembrance.

“Pro-Government” media personalities made numerous allusions on television and in the newspapers to the involvement of international elements in the demonstrations in Belarus, spotlighting Jewish parents’ first or last names. These journalists and public figures also used expressions borrowed from the anti-Jewish discourse developed in the Soviet Union from the late 1940’s.

Moreover, attempts by officials to erase the memory of the Holocaust in Belarus intensified. Reports relating to dates and places where primarily Jews were murdered made no mention of the Jews, but simply stated that “Soviet citizens” were murdered at a specific place on a particular date, as was generally the custom in the former Soviet Union.

A similar discourse also prevails in Ukraine where escalating political battles between the various parties inside the country often lead to mention of the Jewish origins of President Zelensky and other public figures, with allusions to the dual loyalty of the country’s Jews, also drawn from Soviet antisemitism.

COMBATING ANTISEMITISM IN THE REGION

General
Several laws to combat antisemitism were passed in the region, memorials were dedicated (such as the memorial in Volgograd), and remembrance days were marked to remember the victims of the Holocaust (as in Kiev to mark 80th anniversary of the Babi-Yar massacre). While these measures are an undoubtedly positive and important step that aids the combating of antisemitism, they must nonetheless also be seen in the context of the region’s “memory battles”, especially in the context of the Second World War. Remembrance of the war continues to be a dominant factor in political discourse, echoes of which can be seen in the intensifying tensions between Russia and Ukraine, with both sides using the memory of the Second World War and particularly Holocaust remembrance for their own ends. In Belarus, too, the government and the media outlets that support it use images drawn from the antisemitic Soviet discourse in order to describe the actions of the opposition and to resolve domestic problems.

Ukraine: Marking of the Babi-Yar Massacre
At the beginning of October, Ukraine marked 80 years since the murder of the Jews of Kiev at Babi-Yar, a murder scene that has become one of the symbols of the Holocaust on Soviet territory. To mark the occasion, a new memorial center, remembrance installations, and memorials were dedicated at the scene of the murder. The opening ceremony was attended by the Ukrainian President and senior public figures, as well as by Israel’s President Herzog, along with a series of senior public figures from Israel and around the world. The ceremony received extensive media coverage in Ukraine and the subject itself became a hot media item for several days. Following the media publicity, and with the encouragement of the local bureaucracy and the cooperation of the local Jewish communities, additional ceremonies were held across the country in memory of the Jews who perished in those areas.

The marking of the massacre is a Ukrainian attempt to create a new and different narrative of remembrance for the Holocaust of Soviet Jews from that which has been standard practice in the region until now. In reaction to this, a series of acts of vandalism were perpetrated against Holocaust memorials in Ukraine and criticism, antisemitic in part, was leveled by nationalist Ukrainian elements, primarily about the question of the role of the Ukrainians themselves in the extermination of the Jews in these areas.

Legislation Against Antisemitism
In 2021, several countries in the region passed laws defining antisemitism as a criminal offense in itself, as well as laws encouraging Holocaust remembrance. The Ukrainian Parliament passed a law defining antisemitism as a criminal offense, establishing May 14 as the day commemorating the “Ukrainian Righteous Among the Nations” who saved Jews during the war, and recognizing Hamas as a terrorist organization.

Similar legislation was also passed in the Moldovan Parliament, and Moldovan law now enables the imposition of criminal sanctions against Holocaust deniers and people acting on the basis of racist motives.

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170 “Звезду Давида установили в обновленном сквере Волгограда”, 9.11.2021, y101.ru
171 “Herzog at the ceremony to mark 80 years since the Babi-Yar massacre”, 6.10.2021, www.ynet.co.il
173 “Конфликт памятей, а не проектов. Бабий Яр и государство, хроники небыстрого реагирования”, 1.3.2021, nv.ua/ukraine/
The Estonian government set up a working group to combat antisemitism, inviting members of the country's Jewish community to participate.

In Russia, legislation was revised, and punishment increased for "disputing the results of the Second World War" and, consequently, Holocaust denial. Furthermore, the "Mmemorial" organization held a ceremony attended by public figures at which a commemorative plaque was posted on the wall of a building in central Moscow in memory of the members of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee. The murder of the Committee and the persecution of its members in the late 1940's played a key role in shaping antisemitic attitudes towards Jews in the Soviet period. The commemorative plaque is a preliminary, but important, sign of Russian recognition of that antisemitism.

The fact that these events are taking place simultaneously in several countries, each with a different historical memory of the 20th century events in the region, is a positive trend in the battle against antisemitism. It may attest to a change in attitude towards the Jewish history in the area, and to a transition from repressing and unwillingness to address the issue, to one of recognizing the historical complexities and the need for action to address questions of the historical memory of the Jewish presence in the area, and of modern antisemitism in general. It should be noted however that, for now, the legislation is not applied in most places, and that enforcement authorities consistently refrain from applying the relevant legislation to incidents of a distinctly antisemitic nature. Thus, the attack on an ultra-Orthodox Jew in Uman at the beginning of October was initially classified as a case of bullying, and changed to "an attack based on ethno-nationalist grounds" only when publicized by Jewish organizations. A similar state of affairs was also reported with respect to all the incidents of Hannukah menorah desecrations that plagued Ukraine in the first week of December. Contrary to the Jewish community's position, none of these events were defined as "an attack on religious grounds", but simply as "hooliganism", and it was only after the grievances voiced by Jewish organizations that the charge sheet was, in some cases, revised.

**SUMMARY**

The Russian-speaking region of the world was not characterized by physical antisemitic acts or antisemitic acts of vandalism against Jews in 2021. However, there was an increase in the level of antisemitic discourse, mainly due to the linkage by anti-vaxxers and opponents of the Covid-19 restrictions to the actions taken by Israel in combating the pandemic. This trend points to the connection that exists between the media discourse about Israel and instances of ‘new antisemitism’ in social media discourse.

At the same time, "the memory battles" between the countries of the region and within the countries themselves continue to constitute a catalyst for a large proportion of antisemitic discourse. Expressions of this are evident in the attacks on the Holocaust memorials in the various countries. Legislation against antisemitism introduced by several countries in the region, alongside steps by those countries to shape the memory of the Second World War indicate that the region's countries have identified a connection between the “memory battles” and expressions of antisemitism there, and are attempting to combat this through legislation. In effect however, many antisemitic incidents are still not classified as such by the local authorities.
ESIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Russia

March
The Russian legislature ratified several bills that toughen the punishment for “justifications of Nazism” - the bill toughens the punishment for “disputing the results of the Second World War”, for spreading false facts about the activities of the Soviet Union during the Second World War, and for insulting veterans who participated in the war, by increasing the maximum fine that can be imposed on those violating these laws. These bills may also impact the penalization of Holocaust deniers in Russia.

April
Defacing of a memorial near St. Petersburg - the memorial for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust was defaced by unknown perpetrators who sprayed “Death to the Jews” graffiti on the memorial.

Arson and defacing of a Jewish cultural center in Moscow - an arson attack on the “Shamir” Center was carried out by unknown perpetrators on April 20, Hitler’s birthday. The building entrance was damaged by the arson attack, and a swastika and “Death to the Jews” graffiti were sprayed on the building.

June
A film and stage actor appeared wearing a yellow Star - the actor Egor Beroev appeared on stage to deliver a speech during a Russian television award ceremony, wearing a yellow Star on his chest. Beroev spoke against the Covid-19 vaccinations, comparing the vaccination mandate to the persecution of the Jews in the Holocaust. His words ignited a sweeping debate across the media and on social networks which, for the most part, took a negative view of his statements and the way he chose to air them.

August
A wave of antisemitism on social networks following Linoy Ashram’s Olympic gold medal - Linoy Ashram’s gold medal victory on August 7 in a sport traditionally ruled by Russian gymnasts led to a sharp increase in the number of antisemitic statements on Russian social media for several days. At the same time, influential figures and leading media personalities in Russia, who sharply criticized the competition’s judges and even the Israeli gymnast herself, were careful not to spotlight her Jewish origins.

A Jewish scientist was physically and verbally assaulted on a bus in Moscow - Dr. Vladimir Zeitlin, aged 82, was assaulted by a stranger on August 6. The attacker issued antisemitic cries of: “Hitler did not finish you off, so I will do it”, while physically assaulting Zeitlin. Throughout the entire ordeal, no-one intervened to defend Zeitlin.
October
A commemorative plaque for the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee - the commemorative plaque was affixed to the wall of a residential building in central Moscow at the initiative of the “Memorial” organization, which works to preserve the memory of victims of the Soviet regime. The members of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee were executed in 1952, the murders marking a milestone in the negative change in attitude towards the Jews of the Soviet Union and in the emergence of institutional antisemitism that continued until the breakup of the Soviet Union.

November
The Third Moscow International Conference “Protecting the future: Combating xenophobia, antisemitism and racism” - the conference was organized by the Russian Jewish Congress, and attended by public figures, researchers and politicians from Russia, Israel and other countries. For the most part, the conference addressed antisemitic developments on the various digital platforms and ways of combating them.

Antisemitic graffiti sprayed on a Volgograd memorial for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust - the memorial for the city’s Holocaust victims was dedicated in a central city park on November 9. The opening of the memorial was accompanied by debate on social networks about the need for a memorial in the city (formerly called Stalingrad) exclusively for victims of the Holocaust. On November 11, the memorial was defaced and daubed with antisemitic graffiti. Several days later, a 23-year old resident of the city was arrested on suspicion of the act and subsequently linked himself to the incident. A search of his home discovered “radical right” literature, weapons, and Nazi icons.

Ukraine
January
Remembrance Day - the Ukrainian legislature established May 14 as the Remembrance Day for Ukrainians who saved Jews during the Second World War.

March
Yellow Star in a demonstration - several demonstrators wore a yellow Star and uniforms of concentration camp inmates in a march protesting government policy on Covid-19 in Kiev.

May
Gunfire directed at a synagogue - an air gun fired shots at the window of a synagogue in the city of Kremenchug (in central Ukraine).
July
A Jew was violently assaulted in a village near Uman - a resident of the village started harassing a Jewish woman and then physically assaulted her husband. The couple fled to the local post office, but workers there chased them out onto the street, where the attack continued. The family managed to flee by car, but the assailants persisted, engaging them in a lengthy car chase. The assailant and the driver of the car were apprehended.

Imprisonment following threats to murder Jews - a resident of Kazakhstan living in Ukraine (Uman) was sentenced to five years imprisonment after threatening to murder Jews. The man published blatantly antisemitic content on social media, including explicit threats to physically harm Jews. A cache of weapons was found in the suspect’s home. His punishment was subsequently commuted to a three-year suspended sentence.

September
The Ukrainian legislature voted in favor of a bill to treat antisemitism as a criminal offense - under the bill, antisemitism is defined as any harm or discrimination against a person because they are Jewish.

October
International ceremony to mark 80 years since the Babi-Yar massacre - a new memorial was dedicated in a ceremony for the victims of the murders at the site. The ceremony was attended by the President of the Ukraine, the President of Israel, the President of Germany and numerous other public figures. A series of memorial events for the country's Holocaust victims were held across cities in Ukraine, in conjunction with the Jewish community and the local authorities.

A number of physical assaults on Jews in Uman - on October 7, a resident of the town burst into the apartment of an ultra-Orthodox Jew residing in the city and began assaulting the children while shouting antisemitic slogans. On October 23, two youngsters assaulted a Jew in the street, hit him in the face, and fled the scene.

November-December
Defacing of Hanukkah menorahs - at least six Hanukkah menorahs stationed in the public domain in city centers over the Hanukkah festival were attacked and damaged. In some cases, the attacks were accompanied by verbal antisemitic statements.
**Moldova**

**June**

*A bill to combat Holocaust denial and racist propaganda was approved* - on June 16, Moldovan President Maia Sandu ratified changes to the penal law, enabling criminal sanctions against expressions of Holocaust denial and racist, xenophobic, and fascist propaganda. The bill, that was drafted together with the Moldovan Jewish community, was submitted in 2020 by several members of the Moldovan Parliament.

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**Estonia**

**June**

*The Estonian government decided to establish a working group to combat antisemitism* - the working group will include representatives of various government ministries, as well as representatives of the country’s Jewish community, and will deal with issues pertaining to antisemitism in Estonia.

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**Lithuania**

**August**

*A yellow Star at an anti-Covid-19 restrictions demonstration* - demonstrators donned a yellow Star with the words "Not vaccinated" and wore uniforms of concentration camp inmates during demonstrations against the Covid-19 restrictions in Vilna on August 10.

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**Latvia**

**October**

*The Latvian parliament voted in favor of the “Restitution of Property Looted during the Holocaust” Law* - under this law, although the Latvians do not see themselves as guilty of the murder of the country’s Jews or the looting of their property, a payment of ₸46 million will be made to the country’s Jewish community as a “goodwill gesture”.

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**Azerbaijan**

**December**

*National Remembrance Day* - International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which falls on January 27, will become the country’s National Remembrance Day.
Antisemitism in the Arab and Muslim World

GENERAL

The predominant trend in the antisemitic discourse in Arabic this year was a renewed focus on the Palestinian issue in the wake of Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in May. This found expression on two levels:

a. Identification with the Palestinians by the Arab world and the West, which sometimes adopted antisemitic tones.

b. An increase in antisemitic statements by senior Palestinian officials in the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, alongside an extensive discourse on the part of the Palestinians to negate the Jewish-Zionist-Israeli narrative (the PA) and addressing the question of the steps to be taken the day after the “liberation of Palestine” (Hamas).

The scale of this trend eclipses other trends in the Arab speaking world, such as the discourse against normalization of relations with Israel, expression of anti-Israeli positions, and antisemitism in various conflicts. Incorporation of antisemitic themes in the condemnation of normalizing relations with Israel persists, and remains a central theme in the Arab discourse, but not on the scale that accompanied the normalization process starting at the end of last year, in all likelihood, because no other countries joined the normalization process.

On the other hand, the antisemitic discourse pertaining to the Covid-19 pandemic and the antisemitic discourse based on the interfaith conflict ceased this year – the former, due to the Covid-19 pandemic fading as a key topic in the Arab world, and the latter, due to a decline in the discourse that arose in late 2020 following the decapitation of a French teacher.

Iran continues to be a focal point of anti-Israeli and antisemitic statements, though this year these came mainly from Iran’s supporters in other countries such as Iraq and Yemen. In contrast to previous years, no antisemitic comments in the spirit of classic antisemitism were noted this year from senior officials in the Islamic Republic and they appear to be treading cautiously on this subject.

It should be noted that the antisemitic discourse in the Arab world is more widespread and more radical in under-regulated networks, such as Telegram and YouTube. A recent study found that both Facebook and Twitter had problems moderating hate speech content in Arabic, due primarily to a lack of familiarity with the language and a shortage of Arabic speaking staff.²⁷⁶

At the same time, there have also been several positive developments. Morocco, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates opened embassies in Israel, and Israeli embassies were opened in their

respective capitals. In January, Morocco signed up to the IHRA Charter, becoming the second Arab country to do so, after Bahrain. This year, the United Arab Emirates held a public ceremony to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Egypt announced the introduction of content common to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in the school curriculum.

PALESTINIAN ANTISEMITISM: STATEMENTS AND CONFERENCES

The feeling that the regional and global political map (following Biden’s victory in the United States) favored the Palestinians and weakened Israel led to the radicalization of Palestinian attitudes towards Jews and Israel. This occurred both before and after the events in May. Following the round of fighting in Gaza, the sense of victory, at least among Hamas, intensified, leading to more radical statements.

The most notable expression of this radicalization was a conference sponsored by Hamas held in Gaza on September 30, addressing the steps to be taken the day after the “liberation of Palestine”. The conference was attended by a member of the Hamas Political Bureau and opened with a statement by Yahya Sinwar.

Topics raised at the conference included reference to the attitude towards the Jewish population after the “liberation”. It was determined that some of the Jews who served in the army and the security services would be put to death, others put on trial, while groups from certain professions whose contribution to Palestine was deemed necessary, such as engineers and physicians, would be forced to remain and forbidden from leaving the country.

The conference announced the composition of a precedential working paper for the “day after”. The hosting of the conference and addressing of the practical aspects of the “liberation of Palestine” reflect the sense of victory and euphoria in Hamas ranks following the fighting in Gaza. This mood is also reflected in the words of Sinwar at the opening of the event: “We support the conference because, in our estimate, victory is near”.275

The Palestinian Authority, for its part, engaged in negating the Jewish Israeli-Zionist narrative connecting Jews with the Land of Israel. Hamas is not preoccupied with this narrative to the same degree. In this context, an academic conference on the subject of “The Zionist Narrative” was held on June 29. Keynote speaker, PA Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh, claimed that “no connection exists between the Israelis and the Jews”. He explained that the Israelis originated from the Khazars who converted to Judaism in the sixth century CE. Later in the speech, he referred to Israel as an entity with a specific role in the service of imperial entities and presented the claim that this was the sole purpose of its existence, and not as a country.276 Another conference on this subject is expected to be held in Cairo soon.

In addition to this, senior Palestinian officials in Hamas and the PA expressed Palestinian positions that were vitriolic in the extreme:

Fatah Central Committee member Jibril Rajoub claimed (in two interviews, one with a Kuwaiti television channel on January 20 and the other with the ‘Palestine’ Channel on February 2) that "what is happening in Palestine is a second Holocaust". He accused the Jews of exploiting the Holocaust for their own interests. According to him, although the Holocaust in Palestine does not include massacres, "what is the difference?" Rajoub also compared Netanyahu to Hitler and Mussolini.277

On April 10, in an interview with the pro-Iranian television channel ‘Al-Itijah’ (an Iraqi Shiite channel), senior Hamas official Mahmoud Al-Zahar justified the annihilation of the Jews in the Holocaust. According to him: "Every country in Europe evicted the Jews because they spread corruption and collaborated with the enemy in a time of war".278

On August 19, leading Palestinian media personality Abdel Bari Atwan said in an interview with Hezbollah television channel ‘Al-Mayadeen’ that, in contrast to the Afghans fleeing to the airport in fear of the Taliban, "Israelis won’t have an airport to flee to soon and they will be forced to flee by sea when Palestine is liberated".279

Since August, Nazi flags have started to appear at several locations in the West Bank. They have probably been hung up simply to provoke IDF forces.

**FORMER IRAQI PM: THE JEWS ARE THE SLAYERS OF THE PROPHETS**

In a speech to mark the anniversary of the assassination of Qasem Soleimani on January 6, former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki attacked the normalization of relations with Israel. He claimed that the Zionists strive to unravel the social fabric of Arab society and to destroy its values. He said that the Quran promises the faithful that "the slayers of the prophets will be humiliated, and Jerusalem will be liberated". His words were aired on pro-Iranian television channel ‘Al-Itijah’.280

Al-Maliki is still one of the most prominent Shiite politicians in Iraq and leads the ‘State of Law’ (Dawlat al-Qānūn) coalition, which won 34 seats in the parliamentary elections this year. His explicit antisemitic declarations are rare among senior Iraqi politicians.

In fact, this year, Al-Maliki was the only senior politician in the Arab and Muslim world to express antisemitic views.

277 “Fatah Official Jibrail Rajoub: Now That Their Jackass Trump is Gone, Netanyahu Cannot Rule the World; What is Happening in Palestine is a Second Holocaust”, MEMRI, Palestine Dispatch No. 9433, 2.2.2021, www.memri.org
AN IRAQI PARLIAMENT BILL: THE DEATH PENALTY FOR ANYONE WORKING TOWARDS THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

On February 10, Iraqi parliament member Sheikh Sabah al-Saadi, a religious cleric in Muqtada al-Sadr’s Shiite party, proposed a bill indicting anyone working towards or calling for normalization of relations with the “Zionist entity”. The bill applies to state institutions, NGOs, and individuals, and also covers social media.

The bill defines the normalization of relations or working towards it as "betrayal of the first degree" that carries a death sentence. Section 17 of the bill also covers foreign tourism to Jewish sites in Iraq.

The bill is designed to prevent the growing discourse in Iraq in favor of the normalization of relations with Israel. Iraqi Elections were held in October, and al-Saadi was not reelected. It is possible that the bill has been shelved.

On September 30, a conference was held in Irbil, the capital of Iraq’s Kurdish region, attended by many participants, calling for the renewal of the dialogue with Iraq’s Jews who were expelled from the country and for establishment of full relations with Israel. Exposure of the conference led to indignation in Iraq against the key participants (and against other prominent figures suspected of having ties with Israel) and to the issue of arrest warrants. Political figures distanced themselves from the participants and denounced the normalization of relations, sometimes using antisemitic language in the process.

IRAN: ANTISEMITIC CONTENT IN FRIDAY SERMONS

During the year, a number of imams delivered antisemitic Friday sermons in several Iranian cities: Khamenei’s representative in Khorasan Province, Alireza Ebadi, charged on May 7, that the Jews are Islam and humanity’s greatest problem. "They are more evil than Satan".281

In a Friday sermon delivered on July 30 in the Iranian city of Arak, Imam Gholamali Dorri-Najafabadi claimed that the Jews are children-murderers and perform many other transgressions because the Torah barely mentions Judgment Day. That is, there is no factor to deter them from sinning in this world.282

ANTISEMITIC SERMON BY A SENIOR SYRIAN CLERIC

On January 15, Tawfiq Ramadhan Al-Bouti, the imam of the main Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, delivered a blatantly antisemitic sermon. He explained why the Jews are called the “slayers of the prophets”, accusing them of betrayal and inciting wars and instability throughout the world.283

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282 "Friday Sermon in Arak, Iran, by Gholamali Dorri-Najafabadi", MEMRI TV, 30.7.2021, www.memri.org
Al-Bouti is the most senior Sunni cleric serving under the Assad regime. He is the son of Mohammed Al-Bouti, who was killed in the Civil War and was also antisemitic. The sermon was aired on a Syrian television channel. Sermons in the Umayyad Mosque require the advance approval of the Syrian government.

**ALGERIA CUTS DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH MOROCCO BECAUSE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL**

Algeria announced (August 24) that it was severing diplomatic ties with Morocco. This was preceded by accusations that Morocco had used the Israeli “Pegasus” software to spy on Algerian citizens. Algeria also accused Israel and Morocco of supporting terrorist elements that it claims were behind the series of fires in the country in the summer.284

This is the first time that an Arab country has given a reason for severing ties with another Arab country that is based on antisemitic and anti-Israel arguments.

**MOROCCO SIGNS UP TO THE IHRA CHARTER**

On January 15, an agreement was signed whereby Morocco endorsed the international charter to combat antisemitism and Islamophobia.285 The agreement was signed in a Zoom meeting between outgoing President Trump’s special envoy on combating antisemitism, Elan Carr, and the Mimuna Association – a civil society NGO in Morocco that enjoys government support. Moroccan ambassador to the United States, Princess Lalla Journala, expressed her support for the agreement following its signing. The Moroccan French-language media reported the signing of the agreement.

Morocco thereby joined Bahrain, becoming the second Arab country to sign up to the charter. It should be noted that in addition to denouncing antisemitism and Islamophobia, the charter also prohibits delegitimization of Israel, a sensitive issue in the Arab world.

**ARAB COUNTRIES REMOVE ANTISEMITIC CONTENT FROM THEIR TEXTBOOKS**

An investigation by the IMPACTse Institute in Jerusalem found that Qatar has removed several items of antisemitic content from its textbooks, joining the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia who did so last year; Morocco, which has begun to teach about Jews as part of the pluralistic diversity of Moroccan society; and Egypt, which has started to incorporate Jewish and Christian texts in its curricula.

An investigation by the Institute found that antisemitism had been only partially erased from textbooks in Qatar, and that they still feature antisemitic statements (such as: “betrayal is in the nature of the Jew and he is unable to free himself of this”).286

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Latin America

BACKGROUND

The entire Latin American continent has in recent years been in the midst of a decisive political struggle and in the throes of a deep social rift. The struggle does not concern a particular government or party, but is the result of serious questions concerning the very existence and organization of the various countries, since their struggle for independence from Spain, exactly 200 years ago.

In most countries (especially in Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil), this year saw the establishment of social movements based on groups that although positioned on the social and political fringes, sometimes were a crucial part of the population. These groups include mainly “dispossessed” ethnic groups (Indians, people of African descent, and other mixed ethnic groups), who demand recognition of their traditions and advocate the awakening of ethnic identity. They also include groups that felt they were losing out in the previous political order (mostly women, students, landless peasants - tenant farmers, residents of peripheral and impoverished areas). These groups adopt the new consciousness prevalent in the West regarding “Return to Nature” and ecologism, and even accept to their ranks new civil protest movements (especially those protesting the corruption of politicians, the media, and sometimes, also clergy), alongside economic protests against unrestrained market forces, as was customary on the continent in the 1990s.

In most of these countries, these coalitions have organized a continuous social protest, and in many, even led to the fall of the political forces that had ruled them for decades (as is the case since 2010 in Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Honduras, and others). These forces were generally aiming at the creation of a new constitutional order, which tended toward federalism, or at least a significant, decentralization of state power, as well as pluralism (linguistic, religious, and ethnic) and the breaking of cultural conventions. Indeed, in most cases, the new political force established to express these forces and protests is positioned on the left (as in Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Mexico) but, unlike the past, in all these cases it is not part of the left-wing parties that existed in the “previous round”, and which have ruled at least since the second half of the 20th century. Sometimes, the protest movements and the struggle against corruption also led to the formation of new right-wing parties (this is especially noticeable in Brazil, but is also the case in Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Ecuador). There is also an exceptional case in which this protest movement against the existing order merged with an existing party (in Argentina, through the Kirchners’ takeover of the “Justicialista” Party - the movement founded by Perón).
THE SITUATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES

In view of the situation described above, the Jewish communities felt the need to reorganize politically. Indeed, numerically, the size of the Jewish population on the continent is not at its peak (it is estimated that in 2010 there were almost half a million "core" Jews throughout the continent, out of a population of nearly 700 million people). If we add to them the groups that aspire to be part of the Jewish People (in Peru, Argentina, and Brazil for example), and the periphery of “mixed” Jews (not part of the "core" Jewish population), they constitute a tiny percentage (less than 0.1%) of the general Latin American population. Moreover, following immigration, assimilation, and declining Jewish birthrates, the only sizeable Jewish community that shows consistent signs of demographic growth is that in Mexico.

Nevertheless, contrary to what may be expected considering their small number, the preoccupation with the Jews frequently appears on the public and political agenda. The Jewish “presence” is especially noticeable in modern metropolitan cities where most of the media, trade, international economy, culture, teaching, banking, and high-tech activities take place. A similar situation exists in countries with smaller communities, where since it is possible to “identify” the Jewish presence in these domains and areas of activity, it makes Jews an easy target and easy prey for racist attacks.

Racism and discrimination are nothing new in the continent’s history. The Spanish Catholic tradition was based on the desire for monolithic unity in religion, language, and government. This tradition has no place for those who do not belong to the majority and do not share its identity. These elements were eradicated when the South American republics were established, all of which sought to replicate the civil and liberal agenda of the North American model. This is not the case however among the reactionary wing, which opposes separations from the Catholic conservative tradition, according to the Spanish model. Presently, in light of the failure described above to renew the liberal consensus that has ruled for nearly 200 years, the voice of radical opponents to any change is even more pronounced. The aversion to feminism, abortions, gay rights, recognition of indigenous peoples’ traditions, etc. often includes an antisemitic element, because Jews, by their very presence, constitute a “different” minority that wants to maintain a separate identity which disrupts national-religious uniformity.

ANTISEMITIC TRENDS AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THEM

The far-right movements in Latin America have become part of the new political discourse, advocating a return to the old order. The racist element has unique components in each country: in Argentina and Colombia, the Catholic elements that reject the ecumenical direction of the church in the last generation are what stand out; In Brazil and some Central American countries, there is a prominent presence of the Evangelical denomination, which admires the Zionist State of Israel, but is less tolerant of religious pluralism in local society; Chile, Paraguay and Bolivia have a presence of descendants of fascist and Nazi immigrants from Germany, and Europe in general, from World War II. In Chile, Paraguay and Brazil, there is an undoubted Palestinian or at least pan-Arab ethnic component that encourages activity against Israel and the Jewish communities.


It is worth noting here that the Palestinian communities and Arab Middle Easterners living in South America belong, closely for the most part, to the Christian-Orthodox religion, preventing the spread of the radical Islamic message among them, but not the hatred of the Jews.
In Venezuela, the country continues to encourage anti-Zionism and sends pro-Iranian messages as part of its campaign against the United States. However, even there, the tension between the regime and the new Administration in the United States is nonetheless evident, and no new anti-Jewish initiatives have been launched. An exception in this regard is, of course, the month of May, following the round of hostilities in Israel during Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’, which lasted 10 days.

We should add to all this, the continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic which claimed a very large number of victims in the past year and led to harsher living conditions for the majority of the population, regardless of the political nature of the government. This phenomenon caused an increase in the media visibility of the State of Israel, due to its leadership in the field of vaccinations. The preoccupation with the State of Israel was explicit and repeated as a positive example of the struggle against the Covid-19 pandemic on the one hand, while on the other hand, delusional conspiracy theories against the Jews were also heard, especially on social media. This trend continued from the previous year.

At the level of supranational institutions, the appointment in October of Fernando Lottenberg as a special envoy of the Organization of American States (OAS/OEA) to combat antisemitism is noteworthy. So far, his activity has not been reflected in the public arena.

In terms of adopting the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, while this was adopted by Argentina and Uruguay in 2020, only Argentina has been a full member of the organization since 2000. Uruguay and El Salvador serve as observers in the organization. On the other hand, during 2021, CLACSO, the umbrella organization of social research associations, which has the status of an advisory body to UNESCO and many public universities on the continent, adopted the “Jerusalem Declaration” that opposes the IHRA definition.  

**MAIN TRENDS IN ANTISEMITISM IN LATIN AMERICA**

The origins of antisemitism in this region stem from several directions.

A) **Radical “Keepers of the Old Order”:** traditional antisemitism still exists and develops in many Latin American countries. In the past, this group was unequivocally identified with the political right. Presently, it exists in countries in which traditional factions oppose socio-political changes (for example, among the elements within the Catholic Church that reject the new theology shaped since Pope John Paul II - namely, Colombia and Argentina). By the same token, the evangelical movements involved in politics (e.g., in Brazil and most Central American countries) strongly oppose the creation of a culturally-religiously pluralistic society. In addition, there are countries like Chile or Argentina - and in some cases this year, Ecuador and Brazil - where antisemitic elements exist in the security and police forces, often in violation of government policy.

B) **Extreme factors in protest movements:** the worldview of these movements is not clear and uniform, neither within one country nor among the various countries. The main danger to Jews is the hidden elements within the protest movement that are known historically for their hatred

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389 See in this context: Declaracion de Jerusalen sobre el Antisemitismo*, 31.3.2021, [www.clacso.org](http://www.clacso.org)
of Israel (such as several factions in the Peronist movement in Argentina or, though vastly
different, the group of Daniel Jadue, the left-wing candidate of Palestinian origin in the internal
elections in Chile). These elements have not won a majority, even among their own camp, but
they avidly spread a racist worldview, thus abusing the pluralistic political debate and trying to
create a "normalization of antisemitism".

C) Venezuela - Dissemination of anti-Israel propaganda by Iranian elements involved in
the regime: this year was characterized by a decline in the regime's esteem, even among
governments from which it previously gained sympathy. Condemnation of the May 2021 fake
election by the OEA/OAS can be viewed in this context. The lessening of public tension
between the US administration of President Biden and the Maduro regime, was accompanied
by a diminished credibility and public acceptance of the messages from the regime in Caracas.

D) Covid-19 pandemic: anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist conspiracy theories continued to spread,
mainly on social media, in the context of the continued death toll from the pandemic (e.g.,
the claim that pharma companies "benefiting from the pandemic" are Jewish-owned, or that
the Jews supposedly control the supply of vaccines to their allies only). One can identify a
growing appreciation and interest, in the central institutionalized media, the written press, and
on television, regarding the preventive and vaccination activities implemented by the Israeli
government. This trend is expected to continue while the pandemic continues to rage on
the continent.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The proponents of antisemitism mentioned above, with an emphasis on the protest movements
and the reactions against them by opponents of change, are the main factors in Latin American
antisemitism, and are a consequence of the social rift that exists there. These factors vary in
intensity from one country to the next, and are unlikely to disappear in the foreseeable future
without a change in circumstances.

With regard to the primary trends in Jewish communal life in Latin America, it is important to
mention, as far as can be predicted, that the socio-governmental instability does not encourage
the development of the Jewish communities. In the last generation, Jews have to a large degree
integrated in all the areas that characterize an open and progressive society, and there has been
great legal progress towards cultural and political pluralism. For this trend to continue, a balance
must be found in the surrounding societies to ensure the existence of democratic liberties.

The flourishing of Jewish communities does not preclude the creation of some new social agenda,
provided it safeguards democratic civil liberties and eradicates antisemitism.

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390 In this context, see for example: OEA, ‘Comunicado de la Secretaria General de la OEA sobre Venezuela’, 4.5.2021, www.oas.org
391 See for example: “Israel: aplican cuarta dosis anti covid a trabajadores sanitarios para realizar un estudio”, 29.12.2021,
www.pagina12.com.ar
MAJOR ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS DURING 2021

January-February 2021

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**Argentina**

Violent attack against a Jewish ultra-Orthodox family in the Córdoba district - a Jewish family was attacked while traveling by car on vacation in the Villa Giardino area, when a car blocked their way. The father confronted the assailants who cursed and beat him. They broke his glasses and he needed hospital treatment.

The government expressed solidarity following threats to one of the community leaders - Jorge Knoblovits, the President of DAIA, the umbrella organization representing the Jewish community, who also serves as Secretary of the Jewish Congress in Latin America, received a solidarity call from Interior Minister Wado De Pedro and Defense Minister Sabina Frederic.

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**Guatemala**

Parliament adopted the IHRA antisemitism definition - as part of International Holocaust Remembrance Day events, the Guatemalan Parliament approved the adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. 103 MPs voted in favor, 3 abstained, and none opposed the motion.

March-April 2021

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**Argentina**

Two neo-Nazis arrested when planning an attack on the Jewish community in the city of Tucumán - police arrested two neo-Nazi activists who planned to carry out a shooting attack on the Jewish community, apparently targeting a synagogue in the city of Tucumán. A large quantity of weapons were found in their apartment. The suspects had been under surveillance by local police for a year for carrying out attacks and making threats against Jewish people and institutions in the city. The police have increased the security around Jewish institutions.

The DAIA organization filed a formal complaint against a businessman due to his antisemitic remarks - DAIA, the umbrella organization of the Jewish communities in Argentina, filed a complaint against a businessman from the meat industry, Alberto Samid, who published a tweet in which he criticized the Argentinian Jews who chose to immigrate to Israel. He wrote: "When the state needs them most of all, they leave. When they are criticized, they claim we are antisemitic". Samid has made headlines frequently in the past due to his racist comments.

A social media user threatened a Jewish MP - MP Waldo Wolf noted that he received messages from the accused (Christian Garinzen) that included sentences such as: "Hitler made Jews disappear because of people like you. If I see you, I'll shoot you in the head". Following the case and the filing of a complaint by the MP, the accused issued an apology in which he undertook to refrain from such conduct in the future. He was also ordered to attend a workshop at the Holocaust Museum in Buenos Aires.
May 2021

All over Latin America

Events and Public Demonstrations Condemning Israel During Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ - Expressions of public solidarity with the Palestinians were seen in Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Santiago, and Caracas. The demonstrators in Chile were organized around the large local Palestinian community and the “Palestino” football club in Santiago. The demonstrators in Caracas were organized by the United Socialist Party (PSUV - Chavismo), which rules the country, and with the participation of the Palestinian Embassy in Venezuela. In Argentina, an unusual level of graffiti against Israel and the Jews was reported, which also included calls for violence against the community. This led Jewish community leaders to express their public concern.

Argentina

Anti-Semitic graffiti painted on the walls of a Chabad publishing house in Buenos Aires - graffiti was daubed on the walls of a Lubavitch community publishing house, located in one of the main centers for the sale of Jewish religious articles, near the Jewish neighborhood of Once. The graffiti included slogans such as “May Palestine live forever” and “Murderers”.

June 2021

Organization of American States appoints a committee to combat antisemitism - the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS/OEA), Luis Almagro, announced the establishment of a committee to combat antisemitism in Latin America during the discussions of the Virtual Global Forum of the US Jewish Committee. One of the goals of the committee will be to encourage the adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism by the countries of the region.

Argentina

Neo-Nazi propaganda leaflets left in DAIA offices - the leaflets were placed on the office windows of the umbrella organization representing the Jewish communities in the Río Negro district and were scattered at the entrance to the building. The leaflets included a picture of Hitler and a Nazi party symbol with Hitler’s quotes on economic issues.
Anger in Argentina following the inclusion of a picture of Anne Frank in a song and dance competition - Marcelo Tinelli, host of a song and entertainment program, has been accused of trivializing the Holocaust by using a picture of Anne Frank during a song about a woman who does not want to stay home. The Anne Frank Center in Buenos Aires, active in Holocaust remembrance, has issued a statement in which it says that this act humiliates Holocaust victims and survivors. The case generated widespread condemnation from Jewish community organizations in Argentina and by many elected officials. The program host apologized for the incident and said he was not personally aware of the use of the picture.

27 years since the attack on the Jewish community building in Buenos Aires - this month marked the 27th anniversary of the attack on the AMIA building, the home of the Jewish community in Argentina, in which 85 people were murdered. Even today, 27 years after the act, not a single person has been convicted for their involvement in the attack. The event was marked by official ceremonies and statements by the entire spectrum of the political map in Argentina. Alongside the memorial events, a public hearing was held in the federal court on the cancellation of all proceedings in the memorandum case with Iran, in which, among others, the current Vice President of Argentina and former President, Christina Kirchner, were charged. Kirchner was accused by the anti-Peronist opposition of covering up the attack in favor of the normalization of relations with Iran.

Vice President Kirchner’s lawyer accuses the Jewish community of bribery - Gregorio Dalbon, one of Vice President Christina Kirchner’s attorneys, accused the Jewish community of “bribing” the prosecutor at her trial. This provoked a great deal of media coverage and led to condemnation from the Committee of Jewish Communities in Argentina. A member of the Jewish Congress from the right-wing opposition, Waldo Wolf, claimed that the comment was an antisemitic statement made on behalf of the current Vice President and former President of Argentina.

Antisemitic remarks against a Jewish candidate for the national parliament - Myriam Bregman, a Jewish political activist and candidate for parliament on behalf of the radical left, published a message in which she claimed that she lacked any feeling of identification with the Argentinian national anthem. As a result, a lawyer active in right-wing political parties remarked that the statement was made by a “Jewish left-wing activist”. Emphasizing Bregman’s belonging to the Jewish community is considered by many to be an antisemitic remark, emphasizing her (and the Jews’) disloyalty to Argentina. This remark was condemned by the entire political spectrum including President Fernandez.
Brazil

Leaflets against Jews were distributed on the streets of Rio de Janeiro - police launched an investigation into the antisemitic hate crimes associated with the distribution of leaflets humiliating Jews in the Barra da Tijuca area, west of Rio de Janeiro. Thousands of leaflets featuring the message “Jews are compulsive hoarders of gold, diamonds, and dollars” were distributed on the sidewalks and piqued the interest of the residents in this well-established area.

Guatemala

The President of Guatemala opened the Central American Forum for Israel - the leaders of the Central American countries called for unity in contending with the phenomenon of antisemitism at the opening of the Central American Forum for Israel. The event was attended by Guatemalan President Alejandro Giammatei and representatives from Israel, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Nicaragua, and the United States. The forum was established with the support of Bnei Brit International, the World ORT Association, the Israeli Export Institute, and other partners.

Mexico

A hate message at the home of a Jewish leader in the state of Yucatán - the president of the Jewish community in the city of Mérida, Alejandro Rabinovich, became the target of antisemitic threats over the phone and physical assaults at his home in Cholul. As hostility towards him and his family increased, he decided to file a criminal complaint with the district prosecutor, but so far, there has been no progress.

Venezuela

Antisemitic remark on Venezuela’s official news portal – as part of the report on the evolving diplomatic crisis between Israel and Poland, an article was published on Venezuela’s official news portal, “Telesur”. Attached to the publication was a picture of the Holocaust memorial in Berlin. The description of the image reads: “This is the monument to the Holocaust in Berlin. It was built over two dunams in the center of the German capital, at the initiative of the Zionist lobby”. The news portal has often published prominent antisemitic content, hinting at the economic power of the “Zionist lobby”.
October 2021

Chile

The country’s leading conservative newspaper published a tribute to Nazi leader Herman Göring - in early October, the main Chilean newspaper, El Mercurio, published a tribute to Göring which provoked condemnation from some politicians and the Jewish community. The Jewish community in Chile tweeted a response in which it calls the article “Apologetics of Nazism”. It claimed that “In Europe, such an article would have been considered a hate crime”.

November 2021

Brazil

A TV journalist argued that Brazil needs to kill Jews to achieve well-being - journalist José Carlos Bernardi, who works for a popular radio and television station, aired his insights on a program about the visit of former Brazilian left-wing leader Lula da Silva to Germany. He was asked how Brazil could achieve the wealth and welfare that Germany enjoys. His answer was: “Only by attacking the Jews. If we execute a huge number of Jews and take over their economic power, we will become rich. That is what happened to Germany after the war”.

Colombia

Police cadets appear in Nazi uniform - Colombian President Iván Duque issued an apology after police cadets caused a scandal when they appeared in Nazi uniform during a “cultural exchange” event in honor of Germany. Pictures of the ceremony appeared after the incident on an official police Twitter account. In the pictures, the future police officers can be seen in the green uniforms of the German army of that period, while others are wearing the black uniforms of the SS, including the red stripe with a swastika.
Australia

An extensive public opinion poll, conducted in early 2021, reveals that an overwhelming majority of the Australian public rejects or opposes antisemitic positions. It should be noted, however, that close to 20 percent of respondents believe that having a connection to Israel makes Jews less loyal to Australia.292

Antisemitism worsened in Australia in 2021, influenced by two main factors which have also served as a catalyst for exacerbated antisemitism in many other parts of the world. First, the continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic caused an increase in incidents and antisemitic discourse; second, Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in May 2021 led to a sharp rise in antisemitic incidents directed against the Jewish community, predominantly manifested in widespread anti-Israel graffiti.

A survey published by the Queensland Jewish community in July 2021 shows that 60 percent of Jews in Australia have experienced antisemitism, and 15 percent of them reported incidents of hatred related to Israel or Zionism.293

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) monitors antisemitic events in Australia. Its annual report published in 2021 indicated a significant increase of 35 percent in the number of antisemitic incidents in Australia compared to the previous year. A total of 447 incidents were recorded, including 272 assaults of various types (physical assault, abuse, vandalism, graffiti), and 175 threats (by email, mail, phone calls or posters). The main types of antisemitic incidents in which there was a significant increase are insults, abuse, and harassment (an increase of 14 percent), graffiti (152 percent), and the publication of antisemitic posters (157 percent).294

Jewish institutions are the primary focal points for insults and verbal threats, most of which occur at or near synagogues during prayers or holidays.295 An extensive study published this year, which analyzed antisemitic events in Australia between 2013–2017, indicates that most antisemitic events occurred in association with Jewish holidays.

The aggravation of antisemitism in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic has largely focused on two separate incidents of breached Covid-19 regulations in Melbourne, which garnered widespread condemnation and media coverage. In one incident in August, an engagement party was held at a private home in the city of Melbourne, in violation of lockdown regulations. The incident led to extreme antisemitic comments in the media and online websites. An employee at the Royal Hospital in Melbourne posted an extreme antisemitic statement (“Put them in a gas chamber”) on Facebook, which gained widespread coverage and led to her dismissal.296 In September, an ultra-Orthodox community held Rosh Hashanah prayers in a Melbourne synagogue, also in violation of the lockdown provisions. This incident also led to a spate of antisemitic statements.297 In addition,
the Covid-19 pandemic has also been a pretext for right-wing antisemitic elements, anti-vaxxers and opponents of government policy during the past year, accusing the Jews of spreading the disease, as part of a plot to become rich and take control of the world. In this context, the use of the Yellow Star is common in protests against the government’s policy, also contributing to Holocaust trivialization.298

A sharp increase in the number of antisemitic incidents was also identified during Operation ‘Guardian of the Walls’ in Gaza in May 2021, (88 incidents during May compared to an average of about 30 incidents in the other months in 2021).299 Prominent during the May events was the phenomenon of antisemitic graffiti painted on Jewish institutions and Jewish homes, or in their vicinity, near Jewish schools and kosher shops.

Among the main elements that can be identified behind the antisemitic events and sentiments in Australia are various kinds of right-wing extremist groups, combining classical antisemitic positions and “white supremacy”, neo-Nazi ideologies, and opposition to multiculturalism and Muslim immigrants. A large-scale report published in March 2021 comprehensively mapped the far-right groups currently operating in Australia, some of which have been banned from operating in the US and Europe. The report shows that in recent years some groups have expressed their antisemitic views more openly, even starting to act violently.300 A large-scale journalistic investigation published in August revealed much information about the activities of the largest neo-Nazi movement in Australia (National Socialist Network), including its characteristic antisemitic attitudes.301 The head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) has expressed grave concern at the escalating threat from neo-Nazi right-wing elements in Australia, mentioning that about half of the organization’s resources directed at domestic terrorism are targeted at this phenomenon.302 A study published this year also highlights the issue of antisemitism in the online discourse of Australia’s far-right on the GAB social network, showing that more than 11 percent of the activity involved the use of overt antisemitic terms, including explicit calls for violence, the expulsion of Jews from Australia, and Holocaust denial.303

Another source of antisemitism in Australia are pro-Palestinian elements who oppose Israel and Zionism. These include far-left groups and pro-Palestinian and Islamist groups, who sometimes even cooperate with each other.304 For example, an extremist Islamist group called ‘Hizb ut’Tahrir’ - an Australian branch of a global movement that supports the establishment of Islamic caliphate and the application of Sharia law - held a protest in Sydney in May 2021 against Israeli actions in Gaza. During the demonstration, blatant calls were made for violence against Jews, leading to strong condemnation and a move by the Australian government to ban the group’s activities.

298 ibid, p. 112.
299 ibid, p. 24.
304 ibid, p. 133.
During the Covid-19 pandemic, these were joined by opponents of vaccines and government policies who also incorporated distinctly antisemitic motifs in their protests.

The rise of antisemitism in Australia has been condemned by political leaders on both sides of the political map. The Australian government adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism in October 2021, and Prime Minister Scott Morrison declared at the time that antisemitism has no place in Australia or anywhere in the world, and that the global community must work together against this phenomenon. In July 2021, the head of the Labor Party and the Leader of the Opposition, Anthony Albanese, also expressed his concern about the rise of antisemitism on the far-right, and also supported the adoption of the IHRA definition.

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Annex - IHRA - The non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism

In the spirit of the Stockholm Declaration that states: “With humanity still scarred by ...antisemitism and xenophobia the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils” the committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial called the IHRA Plenary in Budapest 2015 to adopt the following working definition of antisemitism.

On 26 May 2016, the Plenary in Bucharest decided to:

Adopt the following non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism:

"Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective - such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
• Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g., gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

• Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

• Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

• Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.

• Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

• Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.

• Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

• Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.