BOND

Building Tolerance, Understanding and Dialogue across Communities

Antisemitism Reports

Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania

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Introduction to the BOND project

The project

The BOND (Building tOlerance, uNderstanding and Dialogue across communities) project[1] is being implemented between January 2023 and December 2024 in Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Romania. It aims to address the deep-rooted prejudices, hate attitudes and behaviours of society, particularly towards European Jewry. The project also aims to promote understanding, tolerance and dialogue. Special emphasis is put on raising young people's awareness of Judaism and antisemitism and on fostering intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. The activities of the project include research on antisemitism, monitoring antisemitic narratives, developing educational curriculum, training for teachers, youth education and exchange, interfaith and inter-community dialogue and local roundtables on tolerance and social inclusion. The project uses the definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).[2]

The research and methodology

The research was carried out as one of the first steps of the BOND project. All phases of the research were completed until September 2023, so events after October 7, 2023, and their impact are not included.

The research aimed to provide a comprehensive picture of antisemitism in Hungary, Italy, Romania, and Poland as a basis for further project activities. The research had limitations: it was conducted within the timeframe and scope defined in the project and along with topics relevant to the further activities of the project. The research results are published in four national and one compiled research report.

The research consisted of two parts in terms of methodology: desk research and field research. Within the desk research, all partners collected, processed, and summarised the available literature and data on antisemitism in their respective countries over the last ten years. The field research aimed to supplement the information gathered within the desk research by interviewing representatives of previously defined target groups about their expertise and experiences related to the topic. The field research consisted of 8-10 individual and 4-6 focus group interviews in each country. The 60-120-minute interviews were conducted with representatives of the following groups in all countries: 1) key experts, 2) first-line practitioners (FLPs), 3) Jewish community leaders and members, 4) non-Jewish religious and minority community leaders, and 5) Jewish and non-Jewish youth.

The following interviews were conducted in the project countries:

- **Hungary:** The field research included nine individual and five focus group interviews. The individual interviewees included two first-line practitioners, five experts on antisemitism and/or minority issues, one NGO representative working on LGBTQ+ issues and one Christian religious leader. Focus group interviews were conducted with the following groups: young people with a Jewish identity, young people with a non-Jewish identity, first-line practitioners, leaders and staff of Jewish NGOs

1 Webpage of the BOND project: https://www.bond-project.eu/

2 IHRA: Working definition of antisemitism. https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism

and Jewish religious leaders.[3] Participants were selected within the defined target groups using both a targeted approach and a snowball method.[4]

- **Italy:** The research involved eight individual interviews and four focus group interviews. The individual interviews were conducted with two key experts (specialising in antisemitism and international relations), two FLPs (a sociologist and a Catholic priest), and four community leaders (Islamic community, Orthodox Church, LGBTQ+ community, community of asylum seekers). Focus group interviews were conducted with the following groups: Jewish youth, including four women and six men from Rome; Italian university students, consisting of three women and three men from various Italian cities; members of the Italian Islamic community, comprising eight men from various cities; and upper secondary school teachers, encompassing eight teachers (four women, four men).

- **Poland:** In June 2023, five focus groups were conducted with the following groups: Jewish leaders, including five women and one representative from various organisations; Jewish secondary school-aged youth, consisting of two women and two men; national and ethnic minority leaders, comprising five women from minority groups and one representative from various organisations; educators, encompassing five teachers – four women, one man – from small towns in Lubelskie Voivodeship; non-Jewish secondary school-aged youth from small towns in Lubelskie Voivodeship, comprising three women and two men. In total, 20 women and five men participated in the focus groups. In July 2023, four individual interviews were conducted with key experts with specialized knowledge in antisemitism and other forms of intolerance, including one woman and three men. These interviewees ranged from academics and practitioners to a participant in the Future Leaders Program, a religious leader from a non-Jewish community, and a minority community leader. On average, these individual interviews lasted 87 minutes.

- **Romania:** The research involved eight individual and four focus group interviews. The interviews included three experts, three first-line practitioners (teachers and educators), and two community leaders (Roma and Hungarian minorities). The four focus groups (FGs) were conducted with the following stakeholders: FG1. first-line practitioners (teachers and educators); FG2: leaders of religious minorities; FG3: youth from majority and minority communities, and FG4: leaders and members of the Jewish communities. Thematic analysis, guided by the literature review, was used to structure and analyse the data from the field research.

3 The main characteristics of the focus groups were: 1) young people with Jewish identity in the capital: aged 18-25, 8 persons - 5 boys, 3 girls; 2) young people with non-Jewish identity in the capital and in the countryside: 18 to 25 years old, 6 persons - 3 girls, 3 boys; 3) professionals working with young people in the capital and the countryside: 9 persons - 6 men, 3 women; 4) leaders and staff of Jewish NGOs in the capital: 7 persons - 4 men, 3 women; 5) Jewish religious leaders in the capital and the countryside: 4 persons - 3 men, 1 woman. The interviews were conducted between 30 May and 4 July 2023 and the focus groups between 31 May and 14 June 2023.

4 A limitation of the research was that several of the people we wanted to interview individually or in focus groups could not be reached or appointments could not be made.

Antisemitism in Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Romania

Introduction to the compiled report

This comparative summary is based on the national reports the BOND project's consortium member organisations prepared. This part summarises the results of each report to give a comprehensive picture of the situation of antisemitism in Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Romania, highlighting the similarities and differences. A detailed description of the situation in each country can be found in the country chapters of the document. Concerning the brevity of the summary, references to the information and data included in this part can be found in the detailed descriptions.

The situation of the Jewish population

Telling the exact number of the Jewish population in the countries examined is problematic for multiple reasons. Even though census data is available in each country, the number of Jews estimated by researchers is usually higher than the census results. As all censuses are based on self-declaration, people don't have to reveal whether they consider themselves Jewish. Also, in some countries, Jews are considered an ethnic minority, while in others, a religious minority, which also makes it difficult to determine their exact number.

Census data from 2021/2022 is available from almost all the four countries. According to these, in 2021/2022, the number of Jews was 7,635 in Hungary (about 0.08% of the Hungarian population), 17000 in Poland (about 0,045% of the Polish population), and 2,700 in Romania (about 0.015% of the Romanian population). The Italian census does not collect data on religion, but according to different estimates[5], the Jewish population in Italy is between 24,000 and 34,000 (about 0.05% of the Italian population).

In all four countries, the Jewish population is primarily urban, living in bigger cities and mainly in the capital. Jewish minorities in these countries are highly integrated or assimilated into the majority population both socially and culturally. While in Italy and Poland, Jews do not stand out from the majority population in terms of social status or level of education, in Hungary and Romania, the social status of the Jewish population is higher than the average, and they pursue intellectual professions to a greater extent. Also, in Romania, the Jewish population is ageing, with most Romanian Jews being over the age of 70.

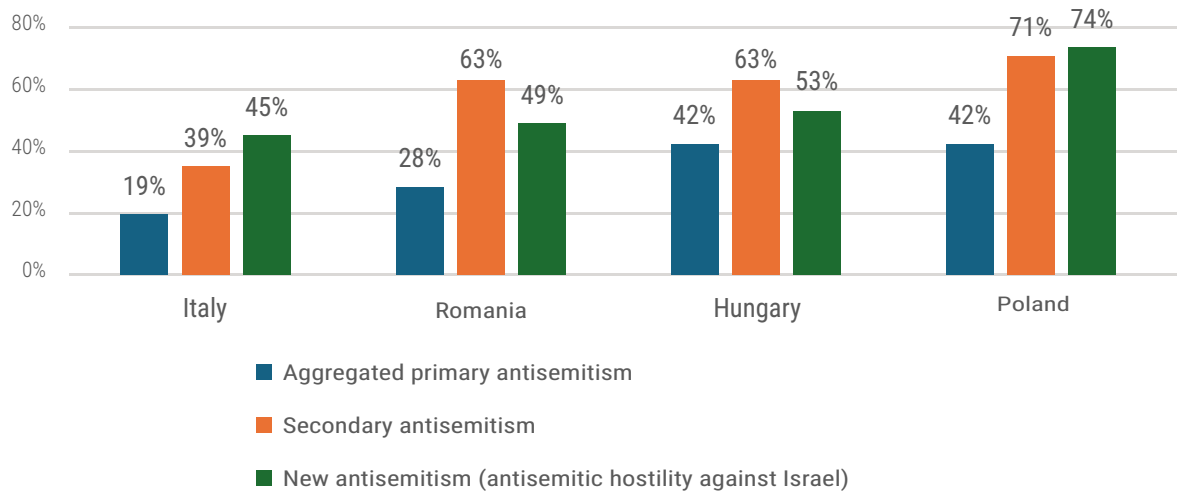
While for many Hungarian Jews, Jewish and Hungarian identity is equally second after their European identity, for many Italian Jews, Jewish identity comes before their Italian identity. In Romania, many of the younger generations, particularly those who have returned from Israel, do not identify themselves as part of the Jewish community. It is common in all four countries for Jews to hide their Jewish identity in public to avoid antisemitic incidents. Among many Italian Jews, a desire to preserve ethnic, religious, and cultural Jewish identity is present. At the same time, in Italy, the estrangement of Jewish individuals from the Jewish community and their lack of participation in community life is considered a problem. The majority of the Hungarian and Polish Jews are not religious.

5 NOA. National Report Card on Government Measures to Counter Antisemitism and Foster Jewish Life. Brussels: NOA and CEJI, 2023. https://www.noa-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023-10-31-NOA_NationalReportCard_Italy_Final.pdf

Internal conflicts are present within the Hungarian and Italian Jewish communities. In Hungary, Jews are politically divided, and Jewish religious communities are politically and economically dependent on the state. In Italy, Jewish communities are in an internal conflictual situation originating from the lack of organisational renewal, effective leadership, and cooperation.

Level and trend of antisemitism

A study[6] on antisemitic prejudices in 16 European countries[7] gave an overview of the level of antisemitism in the four countries. The survey examined the presence of antisemitism in three categories: primary[8], secondary[9] and new antisemitism[10]. According to the results, in all three categories, the level of antisemitism is the highest in Poland, followed by Hungary and Romania, and with the lowest level in each category, Italy.



6 Kovács, András; Fischer, Gyorgy, "Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries". Action and Protection League. 2021. https://archive.jpr.org.uk/object-2408

7 Austria, Belgium, Czech Republik, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

8 According to the research, primary antisemitism/traditional antisemitism includes three dimensions: 1) cognitive – the content of prejudicial statements, 2) affective – the emotions felt towards the object of prejudice, 3) conative – the willingness to act in accordance with prejudice, to accept discrimination.

9 According to the research, secondary antisemitism is Holocaust relativisation, denial, and distortion.

10 According to the research, new antisemitism is anti Jewish sentiments projected onto Israel as a focal point.

The level of antisemitism has not been stable in any of the four countries over the last ten years. In Italy, while according to experts, antisemitism is on the rise, research showed that the perception of the prevalence of antisemitism declined between 2021 and 2023. In Poland, researchers observed a general decrease in antisemitism in 2021, yet its extent varied across different types of antisemitic attitudes. In Hungary, the level of antisemitism increased significantly around 2010; it was quite steady between 2015 and 2019 and has increased slightly since then. In Romania, the number of antisemitic incidents increased significantly, with a peak in 2017.

Considering the size of the Jewish population in all four countries, the phenomenon called antisemitism without Jews can be observed – antisemitism is present even though many citizens supposedly haven't met a Jew in their lives. In addition, in Italy, a general unawareness of antisemitism can be observed. Even though antisemitism is considered to appear in a low intensity, it is probably a result of the phenomenon that antisemitism in Italy tends to be perceived as usual and harmless. This phenomenon, besides normalising the presence of antisemitism to an extent, also supports its spreading.

Antisemitic stereotypes, prejudices, and conspiracy theories

In all four countries, a variety of antisemitic stereotypes, prejudices, and conspiracy theories are present. The following categories are present in all or at least three countries.

- In almost all countries, conspiratorial antisemitism is the most widespread, particularly online. The most common forms of such narratives are centered around the assumption that Jews have too much – mainly economic and/or political – power and influence.
- Traditional religion-based antisemitism is present in all countries except Romania. The most common narrative is that "Jews killed Jesus".
- Narratives relativising or distorting the Holocaust are present in all four countries. These mainly state in some form that the Holocaust did not happen or that Jews talk too much about it.
- Antisemitic narratives related to Israel are present in all countries.
- Narratives suggesting that Jews are "alien to the nation" are present in all four countries, mainly by stating that Jews cannot be loyal to the respective nation as they serve other interests.
- Stereotypes that the Jews are intelligent or wealthy are also widespread in all countries. The latter is so common in Poland that many don't even consider it antisemitic, and some people in Romania consider it a compliment rather than a stereotype.

Some stereotypes are not present in all four countries but in at least two of them. The stereotype that Jews exclusively prioritise their own community is present in Romania and Hungary. Also, antisemitic narratives connected to George Soros appear in these countries. Antisemitic narratives rooted in history are present in Hungary and Poland, in both countries accusing the Jews of collaborating with the communist authorities against the citizens of these nations. The stereotype that Jews think they are superior to others is present in Italy and Hungary. In addition to all of this, in Romania, antisemitism is present in connection to the current Russian aggression against Ukraine, stating that Jews are profiting from the war.

Antisemitic hate speech and hate crimes

Antisemitism is present in similar forms in the four countries. Its most common form is hate speech; hate crimes appear in negligible numbers, according to the data available. Everyday casual antisemitism, such as antisemitic jokes, is present in most of the examined countries. In Poland, the presence of antisemitism is also common in the public discourse.

In all four countries, antisemitic hate speech is widespread, particularly in the online space. According to the available data, the majority of antisemitic incidents in the countries were online antisemitic hate speech, and their appearance showed an increasing trend over recent years. In Hungary, state authorities do not publish official data on hate speech and hate crimes differentiated for minority groups. Hence, the data available on these incidents is not exhaustive and does not fully reflect reality.

The number of physical atrocities against Jews is low in all four countries. This is in line with the phenomenon present in Europe that in many countries where the level of antisemitism is high, anti-Jewish violence is rare. In contrast, acts of violence occur more often in countries where antisemitism is low. In the examined countries, antisemitic incidents besides hate speech mainly involve vandalism and very rarely physical violence.

COVID-19 related antisemitism

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the level of antisemitism and led to the emergence of new antisemitic narratives in the examined countries. COVID-19-related antisemitism, in most cases, appeared in the form of conspiracy theories and hate speech, predominantly online, but also in protests related to the pandemic. The emerged conspiracy theories were similar in most cases, built on the idea that the virus was created and spread by Jews based on economic or political interests, and in Hungary, as an act of revenge against their historical oppressors. In Romania, antisemitism related to COVID-19 was particularly significant, with protests using the narrative that Jews and the fight against antisemitism are more dangerous for Romania than the COVID-19 virus. Antisemitic narratives trivialising the Holocaust were also present in anti-vaccine protests in the country.

Perception of antisemitism in the Jewish community

Most of the Jewish respondents have experienced antisemitic bias-motivated attacks or incidents, mostly verbally and many times online. This is why Jewish people in all four countries tend to hide their Jewish identity in public, as mentioned earlier. According to our interviewees with Jewish identity, common forms of antisemitism are Holocaust distortion and denial, anti-Israel attitudes, and antisemitic vocabulary and stereotypes, also appearing in everyday conversations. There are some differences in the perception of the level of antisemitism in the examined countries. The fear of antisemitic attacks was high among Polish Jewish respondents. According to Romanian Jews, antisemitism is widespread and pervasive in their country, and they have noticed an increase in violent acts of antisemitism recently. Hungarian Jews, despite also experiencing antisemitism personally, perceive the level of antisemitism in the country as low.

Antisemitism in politics

Antisemitism in politics in all four countries is mainly expressed by the far right. In some cases, it is also expressed by right-wing and left-wing parties, except for Hungary. The antisemitic narratives mostly appear in a historical context and remembrance politics, e.g. by the denial of historical responsibilities or glorifying known antisemites. In addition, antisemitic tropes often appear for political gain.

In Hungary, antisemitism after 2010 was mainly present in the far-right Jobbik party and currently in the far-right Mi Hazánk (Our Homeland). Even though the governing populist radical right Fidesz party proclaimed zero-tolerance against antisemitism in 2013, it has strategically taken over topics from the far right, many of which have antisemitic connotations. In Italy, there are two openly neofascist groups, CasaPound and Forza Nouve. Antisemitism, mainly in the form of criticising Israel, has also been present in the extreme left-wing parties, particularly among some members of the Democratic party. In Poland, antisemitism in politics has been dominated by the populist radical right Law and Justice (PiS) party and other radical right and far-right actors. Nevertheless, it has also appeared on the right and left sides, aiming to discredit the political opponent. In Romania, antisemitic remarks mainly have emerged by the right-wing National Liberal Party (PNL) and the far-right nationalist party, Alliance for the Unity of Romanians (AUR). Romanian political actors have mainly used antisemitism to promote a nationalist and anti-communist historical narrative. The Romanian Government adopted the first National Strategy for the Prevention and Fight against Antisemitism, Xenophobia, Radicalization and Hate Speech in 2021. Still, it has not yet been widely implemented on the local level.

Antisemitism in the sporting sphere

In all four countries, antisemitism in the sporting sphere is the most prevalent in football. In each country, there are examples of antisemitic incidents during football games. Thus, antisemitic narratives, chants, and gestures are mostly in stadiums by fans and supporters' clubs. Even though there were attempts in more cases to eliminate this phenomenon, these efforts do not seem effective so far.

Enmity against other minorities

In all four countries, other, mainly ethnic minority groups are more rejected than Jews. These groups mainly include the Roma, the LGBTQ community, and refugees/immigrants. Hate speech is prevalent in all countries against all or some of these minorities.

In all countries, the Roma and the LGBTQ community are among the most rejected minorities. In addition, high rejection is present in Italy and Hungary against migrants and the Muslim minority, in Poland against refugees, and in Romania against the Hungarian minority.

Antisemitism and education

Little data is available on the extent to which antisemitism is present in schools. The presence of antisemitism has increased significantly in Italian schools over the past ten years. In Hungary, the presence of antisemitism in the education sector is highly school-specific. When it is present, it mainly appears among students many times without the teachers being aware of it. According to Hungarian

and Romanian first-line practitioners, antisemitic attitudes among students originate mainly from increased online content consumption. Hungarian teachers also mentioned family patterns as the roots of antisemitic attitudes. According to them, in most cases, these antisemitic statements are not motivated by genuine antisemitic feelings but rather by rebellion against prohibitions, ignorance, or the use of the word „Jew" as a slur.

In all four countries, Holocaust education has been part of the official curriculum – in Italy and Romania only for the past few years. However, in all countries, Holocaust education has been criticised over the years. In Romania, clear guidelines for the curriculum are missing, while in Poland, concerns were raised regarding the quality and accuracy of Holocaust education. In Hungary, antisemitic historical figures have become part of the national curriculum since its 2020 modification. The lack of involvement of the Jewish community in creating the latest version of the national curriculum was underlined by Hungarian interviewees as a problem. In Hungary and Romania, first-line practitioners mentioned that systemic barriers in the educational environment – such as lack of teachers, time for such topics in the classes, support from the school leadership, etc. – hinder efforts in combating antisemitism and teaching about the Holocaust in schools.

Educational materials alongside the official state curriculum are available in all four countries, often online in digital format. However, Italian and Polish first-line practitioners have emphasised the need for more available materials. The available educational materials provide teachers with resources on teaching the Holocaust, applying various approaches to the topic. More teachers interviewed also highlighted possible difficulties in using such materials. For instance, in Romania, many of them are only available in English. Hence, having these materials available in the local language could multiply their application. It was also highlighted in Hungary, that it would be important to provide teachers with courses to obtain a broader knowledge of issues connected to antisemitism.

First-line practitioners in all four countries proposed possible actions to help them better address antisemitism through education and help the students better understand the topic. These included the following:

- having a sufficient number and quality of updated materials that were pilot-tested and appropriate to young people and that thoroughly highlighted the issues connected to antisemitism and the Holocaust,
- presenting an overview of the social context and mentioning local examples, connecting young people with the history of the local community while discussing related topics,
- using positive images in connection to Jewry, respecting the rights of the victims of the Holocaust when using pictures in pedagogical settings,
- providing background information on Jewish history and religion,
- including information about Jewry in a contemporary context,
- showing the diversity of Jewish people,
- using personal narratives and building on empathy and emotional connection rather than dry facts or prohibition,

- helping the students to identify hate speech and prejudice, deconstruct antisemitic narratives, and combat prejudices,
- organising events where students can talk to members of minority groups, and possibilities to participate in various project works, including extracurricular activities such as cooperation with NGOs.

BOND

Antisemitism in HUNGARY

Executive Summary

In general, the Jewish population in Hungary has a high level of education and is in a good position socially and financially, according to the available literature and our interviewees. Those who identify as Jews are mostly non-religious and consider themselves predominantly European citizens or equally Jewish and Hungarian.

According to research, the level of antisemitism in Hungary increased significantly around 2010, presumably due to the rise in popularity of the far-right Jobbik party. Since 2015, the available data show that the level of antisemitism has not changed significantly. At the same time, most interviewees reported a general increase in antisemitism in the country, citing the internet as the primary cause, as well as the family background, deficiencies of the education system, the polarisation of society, and the government's Soros campaign.

In Hungary, antisemitism is most often manifested in the form of conspiracy theories, but other forms are also present (e.g. emotional antisemitism, new antisemitism). According to the available data, the most common form of antisemitism is hate speech. The number of hate crimes is negligible.

At the political level, antisemitism emerged from the second half of the 2000s in connection with Jobbik and has been one of the tools of far-right parties (currently Mi Hazánk – Our Homeland) ever since, albeit in a less direct form than before, disguised by coded speech and appearing mainly as conspiracy theories. Although the Fidesz government announced zero tolerance towards antisemitism in 2013, it has focused its communication on several issues related to antisemitism in recent years. These include the campaign against George Soros, the glorification of antisemitic politicians (e.g. Miklós Horthy) and artists (e.g. Albert Wass) between the two world wars, the distortion of the memory of the Holocaust, and the fight against the global external enemy. Antisemitism is also present in the sports fan milieu, primarily in the football fan scene and especially in the ultra scene.

According to a 2017 survey, half of Hungarian Jews have experienced antisemitism in their lifetime, and all of our Jewish interviewees mentioned such experiences. Many of them highlighted the government's antisemitism-related double-talk's negative effects on their sense of security.

While antisemitism is undoubtedly present in Hungary, research and interviewees also suggest that society is much more prejudiced towards other minorities, especially the Roma, the LGBTQ+, and migrants.

According to first-line practitioners, the extent to which antisemitism is present among students depends on the school. When it appears among students, it is primarily present in verbal forms, and often, there are no real antisemitic sentiments in the background. Several interviewees identified education as one of the most important tools to reduce antisemitism.

The situation of the Jewish population in Hungary

The estimated number of Jews in Hungary in 2015 was between 58 936 and 110 679, according to a 2017 survey.[11] In addition to available databases on the Jewish population, the research was conducted by interviewing subjects who identified themselves as Jewish and had at least one Jewish grandparent. The results showed that roughly 85% of Jews lived in Budapest, with an ongoing movement from smaller settlements to cities. Their educational level was higher, and their social and financial situation was better than the average in Budapest. While 78% of the Jewish population had a degree, the proportion was 32% for the population aged 18 and over in the capital. 52% of the Jewish population had an intellectual job, and 17% worked in a managerial position, while for the total Budapest population, the former rate was 20% and the latter 6%. Regarding identity, most Jews identified themselves as European citizens (30%) or as equally Jewish and Hungarian (29%).[12] According to the census, 10 965 people declared themselves Israelites in 2011 and 7 635 in 2022.[13]

These data were also confirmed by the interviewees. Most of them agreed that Jews are in a privileged position in Hungary compared to other minority groups. They highlighted that this was particularly true in Budapest. In the countryside, mainly because of the Holocaust, the Jewish presence is much smaller, and the circumstances are difficult. According to some, this presence is increasingly active, but some Jewish leaders believe that the Jewish population in the countryside is disappearing.

According to the 2017 survey, most of the Hungarian Jewish population is not religious. Although 70% of the respondents did not want Jews to assimilate fully, the majority supported mixed marriages. The vast majority (75%) felt a sense of belonging to Israel but were not seriously considering moving there. Hungarian Jews were more likely than the general population to be opposition voters and consumers of left-liberal-oriented media. In terms of worldview and political attitudes, they were also more accepting and open-minded compared to the rest of society.[14]

There are three recognised Jewish churches in Hungary: 1) the Association of Jewish Communities of Hungary (Mazsihisz) – the best known in 2017 among the population identifying themselves as Jews[15] – which represents the neologic faction[16]) the second best known, the Unified Hungarian Israelite Congregation (EMIH), which represents the status quo ante, i.e. the middle way faction[17]; and 3) the Hungarian Autonomous Orthodox Israelite Congregation (MAOIH), which represents the orthodox

11 Kovács András and Barna Ildikó, Zsidók és zsidóság Magyarországon 2017-ben: Egy szociológiai kutatás eredményei (Budapest: Szombat, 2017), 12-15.
"In the estimation, the researchers projected the demographic characteristics of the Budapest population as a whole - the live birth and death rates of the age-grouped Budapest population - onto the Jewish population of the country, because two-thirds of the surviving Jews were Budapest residents, and the majority of rural Jews gradually moved to the capital. Estimates of population growth (in our case, decline) were based on female population figures, in accordance with the rules of demographic calculation. Available data on emigration were taken into account in the estimation."

12 Kovács and Barna, Zsidók és zsidóság Magyarországon 2017-ben, 64.

13 Census data available on the website of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (www.ksh.hu).

14 Kovács and Barna, Zsidók és zsidóság Magyarországon 2017-ben, 156.

15 Kovács and Barna, Zsidók és zsidóság Magyarországon 2017-ben, 177.

16 Mazsihisz, "Magyar zsidó történelem az ókortól napjainkig," accessed December 19, 2023. https://mazsihisz.hu/a-zsidosagrol/tortenelem/magyar-zsido-tortenelem/magyar-zsido-tortenelem-az-okortol-napjainkig.

17 EMIH, "Bemutatkozás: Az Egységes Magyarországi Izraelita Hitközség," accessed December 19, 2023. https://zsido.com/emih/bemutatkozas/.

faction[18]. In addition, there are two smaller Jewish religious communities, the reform Beit Orim[19] and Sim Shalom[20].

The state supports several Jewish organisations but in an ideologically selective way that creates divisions among Jewish organisations.[21] According to interviewees with a Jewish identity, even large subsidies can increase antisemitism in society.

According to several interviewees, Jewry is present in Hungarian society primarily culturally but also religiously. Interviewees active in Jewish civil life emphasised that the Jewish civil and religious spheres in Hungary today are separated. Almost all interviewees mentioned that Jews are politically divided in Hungary and that Jewish churches are politically and economically dependent on the current political situation.

18 MAOIH, "Bemutatkozás: Az orthodoxia rövid története," accessed December 19, 2023. https://maoih.hu/bemutatkozas/orthodoxia-tortenete/.

19 Bét Orim, "A Bét Orim története," accessed December 19, 2023. https://betorim.hu/kozosseg/dokumentumok/a-bet-orim-tortenete/.

20 Szim Salom, "Kik vagyunk?," accessed December 19, 2023. https://www.szimsalom.hu/bemutatkozunk/kik-vagyunk/.

21 NOA, Nemzeti jelentés az antiszemitizmus elleni és a zsidó élet támogatását célzó kormányzati intézkedésekről (Brüsszel: NOA és CEJI, 2022), 10.

Level and types of antisemitism

In Hungary, after the fall of communism, antisemitism, which had been suppressed until then, resurfaced immediately. Nevertheless, its level did not increase significantly in the two decades that followed – around a quarter of the adult population of the country could be considered antisemitic.[22] The level of antisemitism increased significantly around 2010, which, by several studies, was linked to the rise in popularity of the far-right Jobbik party.[23] According to surveys conducted over several years using András Kovács' methodology – which can be called traditional in Hungary – the level of antisemitism did not change significantly between 2015 and 2019. In 2019, 36% of society was considered moderately or strongly antisemitic[24]; in 2021, according to research by the Action and Protection League covering 16 countries, 42%.[25] In Hungary, as in the Visegrad countries, antisemitism mostly appears in the form of conspiracy theories.[26]

Available research distinguishes the following forms of antisemitism:

- ***Primary antisemitism***, or traditional antisemitism, covers three categories. ***Cognitive antisemitism*** – referring to negative misconceptions about Jews – was strongly present in 17% of Hungarians and moderately present in 42% of Hungarians in 2021. ***Affective antisemitism*** – referring to negative feelings about Jews – was strongly held by 25% of Hungarians and moderately held by 23% in 2021. Conative antisemitism – measuring the willingness to act or discriminate based on anti-Jewish prejudice – was strongly present in 15% and moderately present in 34% of respondents in 2021. Combining all categories, Action and Protection League's 16-country survey found that 24% were strongly and 18% moderately considered to be primarily antisemitic in 2021, for a total of 42% of the Hungarian population.[27]
- ***Secondary antisemitism*** refers to statements that deny, distort or relativise the Holocaust. According to the Action and Protection League's 2021 research, 17% of Hungarians were considered strongly and 46% moderately antisemitic.[28]
- The ***new antisemitism***, in simple terms, refers to antisemitic criticism of Israel or anti-Israel sentiment, which is projected onto Israel, putting Israel at the centre of the antisemitic sentiment and allowing antisemitic statements to be made in a politically correct way.[29] This includes expressions that see the State of Israel as inherently evil - demonising it, applying double standards

22 Kovács, András, Stranger at hand. Antisemitic prejudices in post-communist Hungary (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

23 Hann Endre and Róna Dániel, Antiszemita előítéletesség a mai magyar társadalomban (Budapest: TEV, Medián, 2015), 13; Barna, Ildikó and Félix Anikó, ed., Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrád Countries (Budapest: Tom Lantos Institute, 2017), 14; Félix Anikó, Antiszemita incidensek jelentés 2019-2020 (Budapest: Mazsihisz, 2020), 47.

24 Félix, Antiszemita incidensek jelentés 2019-2020.

25 Kovács, András and Fischer György, Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries (Budapest: Action and Protection League, 2021), 58.

26 Barna, Ildikó et al., Survey on antisemitic prejudice in the Visegrad countries (Budapest: Tom Lantos Institute, 2022).

27 Kovács and Fischer, Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries, 19-36.

28 Kovács and Fischer, Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries, 47-49.

29 Barna et al., Survey on antisemitic prejudice in the Visegrad countries, 15.

against it and denying Israel's right to exist.[30] In Hungary, according to the Action and Protection League's 2021 survey, 13% strongly and 40% moderately held antisemitic views against Israel.[31]

- ***Latent antisemitism:*** we call those who try to avoid giving antisemitic answers in surveys measuring antisemitism latent antisemites. In general, they succeed with it at questions measuring traditional antisemitism but not for questions measuring secondary and new antisemitism, which is not necessarily perceived as antisemitic by them.[32]

In addition, one of the interviewees in the field of antisemitism research distinguished three levels of antisemitism in society: 1) prejudice, negative stereotypes about Jews, 2) the presence of antisemitic language in social discourse and media, and 3) antisemitism for political purposes. These three levels are pyramidally related: a large proportion of those who use antisemitic language presumably are also prejudiced, while not all those who are prejudiced use antisemitic language.

The majority of interviewees defined antisemitism as a feeling of aversion, opposition, or negative expressions towards Jewry. Besides, a first-line practitioner described it as a worldview. As possible manifestations, emotional, verbal, non-verbal and physical antisemitism were mentioned. A distinction was also made between religion-based and ‚race-based' antisemitism, and more interviewees highlighted that, in their experience, antisemitism often mixes interpretations of Jewishness as religion, people/ethnicity, and culture or tradition. Conspiracy theories were considered by many to be the most typical form of antisemitism in Hungary, and some highlighted that antisemitism most often appears in an economic context. Several interviewees referred to new antisemitism (antisemitic criticism of and opposition to Israel) as a complex area of antisemitism, where it is difficult to determine whether a particular statement is antisemitic and which is more prevalent in Western Europe, but also on the rise in Hungary, especially on the (radical) left. Researchers and members of the Jewish community have also emphasised antisemitism connected to the issue of the Hungarian responsibility in the Second World War and the Holocaust in Hungary.

Most interviewees agreed that antisemitism has increased to some extent over the past 10-15 years. The main reason given for this was the internet, which they said supports the rapid spread of antisemitic content and normalises its presence. Secondly, they mentioned family patterns brought from home, but several also mentioned the deficiencies of the Hungarian education system. According to several interviewees, Hungarian society is fundamentally receptive to prejudice, including antisemitism. Interviewees agreed that crises – including the COVID-19 pandemic – always have an impact on prejudice, as these subvert the current social order and often result in widespread financial insecurity. In such cases, many people look for scapegoats, which are usually found in minority groups by political actors. In many cases, the COVID-19 epidemic has led to loneliness among young people, which has also made them more open to conspiracy theories against minorities.

According to the experts in the field of antisemitism interviewed and a 2022 study[33], gender is also fundamentally irrelevant to antisemitism. According to the latter research, the effect of gender is only significant in most

30 Natan Sharansky, "3D Test of Anti-Semitism: Demonization, Double Standards, Delegitimization," Jewish Political Studies Review 16, no. 3-4 (2004).

31 Kovács and Fischer, Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries, 54.

32 Kovács and Fischer, Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries, 56.

33 Barna et al., Survey on antisemitic prejudice in the Visegrad countries, 90.

cases when other attitudinal factors (e.g. prejudice against other groups, populism, nationalism) are not mediated. The study has also shown that gender may still have an effect on different types of antisemitism – for example, in the case of secondary antisemitism, men are more antisemitic.

Antisemitic stereotypes, prejudices, conspiracy theories

Antisemitic stereotypes and prejudices in Hungarian society can be sorted into several categories. A 2022 cross-national research[34] surveyed beliefs in different types of antisemitic prejudice. One category studied was traditional, religious-based anti-Judaism. This includes, for example, the claim that the crucifixion of Jesus is an unforgivable sin of the Jews (16% agreed). Another category is conspiratorial antisemitic stereotypes and prejudices. These include, for example, that Jews have too much influence in Hungary (25% agreed), Jews aim to dominate the world (23% agreed) and seek to extend their influence on the global economy (40% agreed), that they are more inclined than others to use shady practices to achieve their goals (18% agreed), and that they often operate in secret behind the scenes (17% agreed).[35] Antisemitic narratives about the Holocaust also appear in Hungary. Examples include that Jews try to take advantage of their persecution during the war and the Holocaust (28% agreed), Jews are to be blamed for their persecution (17% agreed), and they talk too much about the Holocaust (31% agreed).[36]

In addition to these categories, other antisemitic theories are also present. For example, Jews cannot be equal members of a country because they will always remain more loyal to Judaism or Israel than to the nation, with which 35% of the total population in Hungary agreed in 2019.[37] There are also antisemitic theories regarding the COVID-19 pandemic: the COVID-19 virus was created and/or spread by Jews for political or economic gain or to take revenge on their enemies and avenge their historical oppressors.[38] Among antisemitic topos on the far right, there is also a narrative that conflates communism and Jewry, blaming Jews for the crimes of the communist regimes against the Hungarian people.[39]

In the intersection of different prejudicial narratives, Jews are often presented as the „secret power" responsible for the activities of other minority groups in Hungary. According to these narratives, they aim to undermine the Hungarian nation. Narratives from the far right, for example, suggest that Jews (e.g. George Soros) are organising Muslim immigration to weaken Christian Europe and nation-states.[40] Besides, Jews use the Roma as a „biological weapon" against Hungarians[41], and as „homopropagandists", they work to spread homosexuality and deviance in opposition to Christianity and white people[42].

Interviewees also mentioned that common stereotypes against Jews include the crooked nose, sideburns, and wearing a hat. Additional stereotypes are also present: Jews are left-wing, smart, influential, insatiable, consider

34 Barna et al., Survey on antisemitic prejudice in the Visegrad countries.

35 Barna et al., Survey on antisemitic prejudice in the Visegrad countries, 27-32.

36 Barna et al., Survey on antisemitic prejudice in the Visegrad countries, 54-63

37 Félix, Antiszemita incidensek jelentés 2019-2020, 84.

38 Barna, Ildikó and Knap Árpád, "An exploration of coronavirus-related online antisemitism in Hungary using quantitative topic model and qualitative discourse analysis," East European Journal of Society and Politics 7, no. 3 (2021): 80-100.

39 Barna, Ildikó and Knap Árpád, "Antisemitism in Contemporary Hungary: Exploring Topics of Antisemitism in the Far-Right Media Using Natural Language Processing," Theo Web Academic Journal of Religious Education 18, no. 1 (2019): 75-92.

40 Barna and Knap, "Antisemitism in Contemporary Hungary", 75-92.

41 Barna and Félix, ed. Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrád Countries, 67.

42 Barna and Knap, "Antisemitism in Contemporary Hungary", 75-92.

themselves culturally superior, communist, and wealthy, occupy leadership positions, and help each other to get into these positions at the expense of Hungarians. In line with the above-presented research results, more interviewees mentioned the stereotypes that Jews talk too much about the Holocaust and that they always portray themselves as victims for financial gain. In the context of conspiratorial antisemitism, several people mentioned the blood libel of the 19th century, the stab-in-the-back myth of the 20th century holding Jews responsible for Trianon, the belief that they caused the Great Depression, and the post-COVID New World Order Theory, which holds that Jews aimed to use the pandemic and the following economic problems to expand their influence and power over people and countries.[43] Linked to new antisemitism, a common view is that Jews are killing Palestinians.

43 Blood libels dating back to the Middle Ages claim that Jews killed Christian children for religious rituals and used their blood to make Passover unleavened bread. According to the 20th-century stab-in-the-back myth, one of the reasons for Germany's defeat in World War I was the Jews, who, as internal enemies, stabbed German troops in the back with their destructive behaviour. The theory also took root in Hungary, and it was part of the narrative between the two world wars that the loss of the war was not the fault of the troops but of the press. According to the 21st century New World Order theory, the global political and economic elite are planning to create a world government through shadow governments, whereby sovereign governments will be abolished and authoritarian world governance will emerge.

Antisemitic hate speech and hate crimes

In Hungary, state authorities do not publish official data on hate speech and hate crimes differentiated for minority groups. The available official statistics treat all cases of violence against members of minority groups as one and do not necessarily reflect reality.[44] Based on these, the number of hate crimes is negligible.[45] In Hungary, there is no systematic and comprehensive monitoring. Still, according to NGOs working on the issue, there are roughly 30-60 antisemitic incidents per year in the country – the most common being hate speech. At the same time, physical violence against persons or property is negligible.[46]

All interviewees agreed that antisemitism in Hungary is mainly verbal, but some also mentioned the vandalism of cemeteries and synagogues. According to the interviewees, antisemitism primarily appears in the form of conspiracy theories, but several emphasised that covert, hidden antisemitism appearing as allusions and antisemitic humour are also widespread.

44 Uszkiewicz, Erik, "Anomalies in the application of law related to hate crimes," Hungarian Journal of Legal Studies 61, no. 3 (2021): 325-41; FRA, Antisemitism: Overview of antisemitic incidents in the European Union 2011-2021 (Bécs: FRA, 2022).

45 Ministry of Interior, „Crime Statistics System," accessed December 19, 2023. https://bsr.bm.hu/Document.

46 Félix, Antiszemita incidensek jelentés 2019-2020, 10-16; TEV, Antiszemita gyűlölet-bűncselekmények és incidensek Magyarországon: 2020. éves rövid jelentés (Budapest: TEV, 2020); FRA, Antisemitism.

The Jewish community's experiences and perceptions of antisemitism

According to a 2017 survey[47], 48% of Hungarian Jews have experienced antisemitism during their lives, which is a significant decrease compared to the 1999 survey[48], where this rate was 75%. In contrast, according to Hungarian Jews' perceptions, antisemitism in Hungary has increased since 1999: in the 2017 survey, respondents were more likely to perceive Hungarian society as antisemitic and considered more likely the persecution of Jews to happen than in 1999.[49] Although Jewish organisations believe that the government adequately guarantees the safety and physical integrity of the community, they think it does not do enough to combat prejudice in areas such as education, media and intercultural dialogue.[50]

All interviewees with Jewish identity had encountered antisemitic comments about them, either in verbal or written (online) form. Many of them mentioned that they hid their Jewish identity to avoid antisemitic incidents. Despite this, several interviewees with a Jewish identity considered the level of antisemitism in Hungary to be low and did not perceive it to have increased in the last 10-15 years. Besides believing that the country is safe for Jews, several of them also experience – due to the double-talk in politics – a constant sense of uncertainty that the current situation could change at any time. A Jewish religious leader highlighted that there are several antisemitic narratives among Christians rooted in religion, which churches could reduce by providing adequate information. According to several young interviewees with Jewish identity, Jewish communities and churches also tend to build their Jewish identity on the trauma of the Holocaust, which, in their opinion, does not help to reduce antisemitism in the country.

47 Kovács and Barna, Zsidók és zsidóság Magyarországon 2017-ben, 111.

48 Kovács András, ed., Zsidók a mai Magyarországon. Az 1999-ben végzett szociológiai felmérés eredményei (Budapest: Múlt és Jövő Kiadó, 2002).

49 Kovács and Barna, Zsidók és zsidóság Magyarországon 2017-ben, 121.

50 NOA, Nemzeti jelentés az antiszemitizmus elleni és a zsidó élet támogatását célzó kormányzati intézkedésekről, 24.

Antisemitism in politics

The presence of antisemitism in Hungarian politics in the years after 2010 is mainly related to the far-right Jobbik party (before its mainstreaming[51]). However, the increasing public appearances and growing popularity of the extremist party in the years before 2010 had already noticeably increased the presence and acceptance of antisemitism in public discourse and then had also demonstrably strengthened antisemitic attitudes.[52] Although in 2013, the Fidesz government proclaimed zero tolerance of antisemitism[53], an integral part of the party's electoral and communication strategy is to borrow topics of the far right, which are then disseminated to the whole society through the government-controlled media[54]. Such antisemitism-linked topics include conspiracy theories about George Soros, glorification of Horthy, distortion of the memory of the Holocaust, and the constant rhetoric that Fidesz is protecting the nation from an external, global enemy.[55] In addition, since 2015, several public figures known for their extremist, antisemitic statements have received high state awards (e.g. Zsolt Bayer, Ernő Raffay).[56] Among political actors, the far-right Our Homeland (Mi Hazánk), which split from Jobbik in 2018, is the most prominent to use antisemitic elements, although instead of the previously typical for Jobbik, sometimes openly antisemitic statements, Our Homeland coded, covert, largely conspiratorial antisemitic language (e.g. attacking the Rothschilds, promoting the New World Order theory). The political presence of antisemitism is strongly connected to the kuruc.info portal linked to Előd Novák, formerly a prominent politician of Jobbik and now a prominent politician of Our Homeland.[57]

According to several interviewees, antisemitism in Hungary is a politicised topic. Many highlighted the Fidesz government's campaign against George Soros as having had an impact on antisemitism. Although the government did not consider the campaign to be antisemitic[58], most interviewees perceived it as such, as the campaign portrayed George Soros with traditional antisemitic stereotypes. The impact of the campaign also reinforces the antisemitic interpretation: as many times antisemitic slogans and symbols (e.g. „stinking Jews", Star of David) were drawn on the anti-Soros posters,[59] the campaign undoubtedly mobilised antisemitic sentiments. According

51 Bíró-Nagy, András and Boros, Tamás, "Jobbik going mainstream: Strategy shift of the far-right in Hungary," in Extreme right in Europe, ed. Jamin Jerome (Brussels: Bruylant, 2016): 243–63; Héjj, Dominik, "The rebranding of Jobbik," New Eastern Europe 29, no. 6 (2017): 83–90.

52 Hann and Róna, Antiszemita előítéletesség a mai magyar társadalomban, 2015, 13; Barna and Félix, Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrád Countries, 14; Félix, Antiszemita incidensek jelentés 2019-2020, 47.

53 Webpage of the Prime Minister, "Zéró tolerancia van az antiszemitizmussal szemben," accessed December 19, 2023. https://2015-2022.miniszterelnok.hu/zero-tolerancia-van-az-antiszemitizmussal-szemben/.

54 Bálint Kata et al., „Minél jobbra, minél jobban" – A magyar (szélső)jobb 100 évvel Trianon után (Budapest: Political Capital, 2020), 14.

55 Berend, Nóra, "Renationalized History and Antisemitism in Hungary," Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs 16, no. 2 (2022): 216-28.

56 NOA, Nemzeti jelentés az antiszemitizmus elleni és a zsidó élet támogatását célzó kormányzati intézkedésekről, 10.

57 Barna and Knap, "Antisemitism in Contemporary Hungary," 75-92.

58 HVG, "Így válaszolt Orbán a Mazsihisz-elnöknek, aki a Soros-kampány leállítására kérte," HVG, July 7, 2017. https://hvg.hu/itthon/20170707_orban_mazsihisz_valasz; HVG, "Szijjártó a Jerusalem Postnak: Nem azért utáljuk Sorost, mert zsidó," HVG, February 21, 2019. https://hvg.hu/vilag/20190221_Szijjarto_a_Jerusalem_Postnak_Nem_azert_utaljuk_Sorost_mert_zsido; ATV, "Szijjártó Péter: azok az antiszemiták, akik azt állítják, Soros Györggyel a vallása miatt vitatkozik a kormány, " ATV, July 23, 2020. https://www.atv.hu/belfold/20200723/szijjarto-peter-azok-az-antiszemitak-akik-azt-allitjak-soros-gyorggyel-a-vallasa-miatt-vitatkozik-a-kormany.

59 The then president of MAZSIHISZ, András Heisler, wrote an open letter to Prime Minister Viktor Orbán about the antisemitic messages on Soros posters. 444, "A Mazsihisz elnöke Orbánnak: Vonják vissza utcáinkról és tereinkről a plakátokat!," 444, July 6, 2017. https://444.hu/2017/07/06/a-mazsihisz-elnoke-orbannak-vonjak-vissza-utcainkrol-es-tereinkrol-a-plakatokat.

to several experts, those who have antisemitic feelings decoded the campaign as antisemitic, while for those who don't have such feelings, it did not carry antisemitic connotations. In addition, several mentioned that the Hungarian government's inadequate remembrance policy could also have an impact on antisemitism.

More interviewees with a Jewish identity highlighted that the government does a double-talk on antisemitism: while proclaiming zero tolerance for antisemitism and supporting Jewish organisations and causes with large amounts of money, albeit selectively, it also supports antisemitic individuals and collaborates with actors who promote antisemitic ideas.[60]

60 24.hu, "Állami támogatásból vett dobogókői telket a Kitörés túra szervezője, de senki sem árulja el, hol épül fel a turistaház," 24.hu, 2023. október 31. https://24.hu/kozelet/2023/10/31/hazajaro-honismereti-es-turista-egylet-egyesulet-kitores-tura-allami-tamogatas-bethlen-gabor-alapkezelo-moys-zoltan-dobogoko-turistahaz/; Bálint et al, „Minél jobbra, minél jobban.

Antisemitism in the sporting sphere

In the Hungarian sporting sphere, antisemitism is most prevalent in football. The discriminatory and racist behaviour of Hungarian football fans has caused problems several times: during the 2020 European Football Championship, it caused international repercussions, and in 2021, UEFA, among other things, fined the Hungarian Football Association (MLSZ) €100 000.[61] According to a survey, 57% of respondents found fine right, and only 38% thought it was too harsh.[62] In 2022, UEFA classified depicting Greater Hungary as a political symbol and banned banners and accessories picturing it at UEFA-organised competitions.[63]

According to the expert interviewed, there are three types of antisemitism appearing on the football stands: 1) open antisemitism (e.g. against Israeli athletes); 2) conspiratorial antisemitism (e.g. alleged Jewish interests behind punishments); 3) the use of the word „Jew" as a negative adjective without ideological or political content. In sporting games, the most common manifestation of racism is anti-Gypsyism; antisemitism is less frequent, but the content of racism is always heavily influenced by the current political discourse.

61 Magyar Labdarúgó Szövetség, "Közlemény az Euro 2020 három magyar mérkőzése kapcsán hozott fegyelmi döntés hátteréről," accessed Decmber 19, 2023. https://szovetseg.mlsz.hu/hir/kozlemeny-az-euro-2020-harom-magyar-merkozese-kapcsan-hozott-fegyelmi-dontes-hattererol.

62 Félix, Antiszemita incidensek jelentés 2019-2020, 21;

63 Telex, "UEFA: We have not permitted the use of Greater Hungary symbols at football matches, " Telex, March 22, 2022. https://telex.hu/english/2023/03/22/uefa-we-have-not-permitted-the-use-of-greater-hungary-symbols-at-football-matches.

Prejudice against other minorities

Hungarian society is quite exclusionary towards minority groups; prejudices and stereotypes are widespread against many of these. According to surveys, Jews are one of the least rejected groups. While until 2014, the highest level of rejection was the highest against Roma, later immigrants/migrants have become the most rejected group.[64]

According to several interviewees, prejudices generally have the same roots, such as insecurity (social, economic, existential), lack of information, education problems, political attitudes, bad experiences, and envy or lack of solidarity. All interviewees perceived rejection against minority groups in Hungary as the strongest towards Roma, migrants and the LGBTQ+ community. Many of them felt that anti-Gypsyism is a part of everyday conversations, and anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-migrant sentiments are also considered acceptable by society, which is not the case for antisemitism. A leader of an LGBTQ+ community emphasised that while the Hungarian government considers Jews and Roma as equal in political terms, it is not the case for the LGBTQ+ community and migrants.

Anti-Gypsyism sees Roma as a grassroots economic, cultural and physical threat; it appears primarily in dehumanisation and agreement with negative stereotypes.[65] A first-line practitioner explained that antisemitism and anti-Gypsyism position these groups both economically and socially: while antisemitism is motivated by envy of the perceived or real better position of Jews, anti-Gypsyism is motivated more by fear of being placed in the perceived or real worse position of the Roma.

Government communications on the 2015 refugee crisis portrayed refugees and migrants as a physical, security, health, social, labour market, and cultural/civilisational threat.[66] Since the mid-2010s, social attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community have also been heavily influenced by government policies and communications that have framed LGBTQ+ and gender as a cultural, value system, and demographic threat.[67]

Hate speech and hate crimes against other minority groups

Hungary's official number of hate crimes is negligible[68], although the actual number certainly and probably significantly exceeds the statistics[69]. The Ministry of Interior does not allow these data to be differentiated by minority groups, but according to data and research sent to the OSCE, the vast majority of these are crimes against Roma, followed by homophobic

64 Hann Endre and Róna Dániel, Antiszemita előítéletesség a mai magyar társadalomban (Budapest: TEV, 2019); Kende Anna et al., Romaellenesség és antiszemitizmus Magyarországon: Projektzáró tanulmány (Budapest: Political Capital, 2018); Republikon, Előítéletesség, antiszemitizmus: A ComAnCE projekt kutatási eredményei II (Budapest: Republikon Intézet, 2019).

65 Kende et al., Romaellenesség és antiszemitizmus Magyarországon; Vanja Ljujic et al., "Romaphobia: A unique phenomenon?," Romani Studies 22, no. 2 (2012): 141-52.

66 Barna, Ildikó and Hunyadi Bulcsú, Report on Xenophobia, Discrimination, Religious Hatred and Aggressive Nationalism in Hungary in 2015 (Budapest: Political Capital, 2016); Sik Endre et al., "Az idegenellenesség alakulása és a bevándorlással kapcsolatos félelmek Magyarországon és a visegrádi országokban," Régió 24, no. 2, (2016): 81-108.

67 The Háttér Society's website provides a chronological list of government statements and actions: https://hatter.hu/hirek/a-magyar-allam-nem-hogy-nem-vedi-aktivan-alaassa-az-lmbtqi-emberek-szabadsagat-esjogait; Political Capital, A comparison of the anti-gender and anti-LGBTQI mobilisation in Hungary and Poland (Budapest: Political Capital, 2022).

68 Ministry of Interior, „Crime Statistics System,".

69 FRA, Antisemitism.

incidents.[70] While there is no data on hate speech against Roma[71], members of the LGBTQ+ community experience a large amount of hate speech[72].

Discrimination against Roma is everyday and institutional: they face discrimination in everyday life in the labour market, housing, health, education, guardianship, and law enforcement. The lack of access to legal protection and representation compounds these.[73]

70 Information available on the website of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR): https://hatecrime.osce.org/hungary.

71 Kende et al., Romaellenesség és antiszemitizmus Magyarországon;

72 Luke Hubbard, Speak Out: A Survey of Online Anti-LGBT+ Hate Speech and Hate Crime (online, 2019). Letöltés dátuma: 2023. december 19. https://en.hatter.hu/publications/speak-out-a-survey-of-online-anti-lgbt-hate-speech-and-hate-crime.

73 Király Júlia et al., Romák Magyarországon: A diszkrimináció kihívásai (Budapest: MRGE, 2021).

Antisemitism and education

Antisemitism and other prejudices in schools

First-line practitioners and young people agree that the extent to which antisemitism is present in the educational environment is very school-specific. They also agreed that if antisemitism is present among students, teachers rarely become aware of it. In schools, antisemitism is most often verbal. According to many of the first-line practitioner interviewees, the root of this is superficial online content consumption and family patterns. In their opinion, behind most of the antisemitic statements of the students, there are no real antisemitic sentiments, but rather a rebellion against prohibitions, ignorance, or the use of „Jew" as a slur (the same applies to the words „gipsy" and „faggot"). Many have questioned the extent to which such statements can be considered antisemitic. Rarely, classical antisemitic narratives are also used by students who are more interested in and knowledgeable about Jewish history and traditions. Non-antisemitic students also often have misgivings about the Holocaust, not understanding what it has to do with them and why they should learn about it. Young people highlighted that it is often unclear to them how to talk correctly about socially sensitive issues.

According to the interviewees, anti-Gypsyism is more prevalent in schools than antisemitism. Several first-line practitioners highlighted that politically motivated social polarization and government campaigns spreading hateful messages also have an impact on young people, as exemplified by the rise of anti-migrant sentiment among students in the wake of the 2015 anti-refugee campaign.

Topics related to Judaism, antisemitism and the Holocaust in the official curriculum

In 2012, the government created a new National Core Curriculum and a unified textbook system.[74] In the process, it consulted the Jewish Community Roundtable[75], which includes Jewish NGOs and congregations, on relevant curriculum changes. The curriculum was amended again in 2020, but the Roundtable was not involved. Although parts of Jewish history were not removed, antisemitic historical figures (e.g. Albert Wass or Joseph Nyírő)[76] were included in the curriculum. Teaching topics necessary to counter antisemitism, such as human rights, critical thinking, acceptance and intercultural dialogue, is inadequate, not only because of the deficiencies of the curriculum but also because of the lack of adequate support and guidance for teachers.[77]

Several interviewees criticised the National Core Curriculum for omitting authors who could be used to talk to students about the Holocaust and antisemitism effectively.

The role and possibilities of education in combatting antisemitism and other forms of prejudices

Research has shown that in secondary school, students' prejudice is strongly influenced by whether they perceive prejudice or acceptance as the norm in their community. While, in general, the majority tends to be unprejudiced,

74 Krausz Viktória, "Tájkép tankkönyvviták közben," Szombat folyóirat, 2015. március 24. https://www.szombat.org/politika/tajkep-tankonyvvitak-kozben.

75 Szunyogh Szabolcs, Áttekintés a Nemzeti alaptantervvel, a kerettantervekkel és a tankönyvekkel kapcsolatban (Budapest: TEV, 2015).

76 NOA, Nemzeti jelentés az antiszemitizmus elleni és a zsidó élet támogatását célzó kormányzati intézkedésekről, 14.

77 NOA, Nemzeti jelentés az antiszemitizmus elleni és a zsidó élet támogatását célzó kormányzati intézkedésekről, 24.

if the community is perceived as prejudiced, it makes prejudice the norm.[78] Establishing intergroup and extra-group relations also helps to ensure that prejudice does not become the community norm in school.[79] Teachers and schools, therefore, have a crucial role in reducing prejudices. It can be assumed that if a teacher is able to support the development of inclusive community norms among students that reject prejudices, for example, by giving space to unprejudiced voices already existing in the community, it is likely to reduce prejudices among students.[80]

Several interviewees identified education as one of the most important tools to reduce prejudices, as it is a way to reach many young people in a targeted way. Foreign language teaching and human rights education were seen as important subjects in this regard, and young people highlighted critical thinking, the ability to recognise fake news, and self-awareness. They also emphasised the importance of training teachers to react appropriately to prejudice among students. According to several interviewees, NGO project days and cultural, artistic, and encounter-based programmes work well in sensitisation. Many interviewees stressed that reducing prejudice is a slow process, takes time and energy, is essentially achieved through face-to-face discussions, and it is important to involve the whole school staff.

According to several interviewees, experience has shown that antisemitism cannot be curbed by prohibition, as this way, prejudice is only eliminated, not suppressed, and leads to rebellion against prohibition. At the same time, direct sensitisation can be easily counterproductive if the wrong tool is chosen. Methods based on emotional empathy and personal contact are much more effective than fact-based information. According to many interviewees' experiences, sensitisation about the Holocaust works better with personal stories to which the student can relate than with dry facts and figures. A trauma-based narrative is very strong in Hungary, which is often ineffective for young people.

According to a first-line practitioner, the majority in a student community is usually not prejudiced or accepting but thinks nothing of these issues. Therefore, one of the aims of education should be to educate them to be people of feeling and solidarity.

According to several interviewees, the possibilities of education to reduce prejudice in Hungary are limited. The education system is in crisis with a shortage of teachers, large class sizes, centralised management, changes in the National Core Curriculum, and a general lack of time. Although some schools consider it important to tackle prejudice, these efforts are also hindered by a lack of appropriate knowledge and methods.

In addition to emphasising the importance of education, interviewees identified several possible ways to reduce prejudice, including antisemitism. Examples include community building, self-awareness and experiencing diversity. Giving people the chance to learn about Jewish religion and culture and to interact with Jewish people can also help to reduce antisemitism. Among young people, but also at the societal level, it is of utmost importance to counteract offensive and hateful narratives against minorities and ensure their proper representation in the media.

78 Váradi, Luca, "Youths Trapped in Prejudice: Hungarian Adolescents' Attitudes Towards the Roma," Politische Psychologie, 2014: 61-83; Váradi, Luca et al., "Whose Norms, Whose Prejudice? The Dynamics of Perceived Group Norms and Prejudice in New Secondary School Classes," Frontiers in Psychology 11, (2021): 1-17.

79 Váradi et al., Whose Norms, Whose Prejudice?.

80 Váradi et al., Whose Norms, Whose Prejudice?.

Educational materials and programmes

Several NGOs have created educational materials to help reduce prejudice or have held regular school sessions for professionals working with young people. Regarding antisemitism, the examples include but are not limited to, the Zachor Foundation, the Haver Foundation, the Centropa Foundation, and the Action and Protection League. Regarding reducing prejudices against other minorities, some of the organisations are the UCCU Foundation, the Menedék Association, the Labrisz Association, the Symposium Association, the Foundation for Democratic Youth, the Network of Human Rights Educators, the Down Foundation, the Menhely Foundation, the Independent Theatre, and Amnesty International Hungary.[81]

In addition to textbooks, a range of digital teaching materials on Jewry and the Holocaust are available for teachers. However, teachers need to be provided with methodological training and familiarisation with digital teaching materials to use these materials properly. It is also necessary to provide schools with the appropriate technical background for using such teaching materials, to develop relevant curricula, teaching, and materials, and to provide enough time.[82] Creating an environment in education and public life that does not urge teachers and school administrators to self-censor, fearing the reaction of educational authorities, politicians or parents, but encourages and supports them to be active in reducing prejudice and raising awareness of minority groups.

81 Euroguide, Hogyan beszélgessünk fiatalokkal érzékeny társadalmi kérdésekről? - Ötletgyűjtemény és módszertani segédanyag fiatalokkal foglalkozó szakemberek számára kiadvány (online, 2021). accessed December 19, 2023. https://euroguide-toolkit.eu/language-select/hu/hu-kezikonyv-bevezeto/.

82 Mezei Mónika, "Holokausztoktatás online. Közművelődési intézmények, közgyűjtemények és civil szervezetek online oktatási anyagai, " in A Holokauszt, az iskola és a tanár, szerk. Forrás-Bíró Aletta (Budapest: OKFI, 2016).

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BOND

Antisemitism in ITALY

Executive summary

This document was prepared based on the analysis of materials found through documentary research, in particular, based on materials and sources made available by CDEC and the UCEI portal, and based on the analysis of data acquired through the responses of the interviewees provided structured and documented information on the phenomenon of antisemitism in Italy today. In particular, the report focuses on the situation of Italian Jewish communities and Jewish life in its social, political, economic, cultural and religious dimensions.

The most substantial part of the report concerns the level of antisemitism in Italian society, its prevalent forms and the areas in which it manifests itself. With reference to the different manifestations of antisemitism, it's pointed out which stereotypes are present in society and which are the most prevalent. From this analysis, it's clear that the forms and areas in which antisemitism manifests itself differ according to the degree of schooling, cultural formation and socio-economic background of the perpetrators of antisemitic acts, so it is difficult to rigidly identify the profile of the antisemite.

The areas where acts of hatred and hate crimes are most prevalent are social media and sports, particularly football. Still, even in the political debate, it's evident that more or less latent forms of antisemitism related to Nazi-fascist ideology are present for far-right movements and anti-Zionism for the extreme left wing.

The report also aims to highlight which other minorities are most discriminated against in Italy and what the stereotypes and prejudices associated with them, as well as what are the intersections between antisemitism and other forms of racism and intolerance. Considerable space is, finally, devoted to the educational strategies implemented in schools to counter and prevent antisemitism as the direction of the Italian Ministry of Education and Merit (IMPE) points to the dissemination and implementation of the *Guidelines for Countering Antisemitism* (2019) in public schools and the promotion of a culture of dialogue and peace.

The situation of the Jewish population in Italy

Today, the Italian Jews registered in the country's 21 Jewish communities in 2018 were less than 30,000 out of a population of 57 million, half of whom live in Rome and less than 10,000 in Milan. The others are scattered in communities, defined as ‚medium' – such as those in Turin, Florence, Trieste, Livorno, and Venice– or ‚small'. The various communities are united in the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, which has its headquarters in Rome and represents Jews in relations with the government and public institutions. The Union coordinates the cultural needs of the Jewish Communities and supports the smaller communities. Despite its many problems, Italian Judaism remains alive and vibrant and represents an element of stimulation, reflection and confrontation within the surrounding society.

For a more in-depth overview, it is interesting to note that the focus group conducted with the Union of Young Italian Jews revealed the presence of a strong ethnic, religious, and cultural identity and the desire to preserve it within Italian society; the Italian identity is perceived as second to Jewish identity. Despite this, there is a tendency among these young people to conceal their identity for various reasons, such as the shame of their Jewish affiliation and the avoidance of the attention and curiosity of others about their origins and their religious and cultural customs.

Another peculiarity of the Italian situation, as highlighted also by community leaders, as evident in the dossier "Ebrei d'Europa"[83] published on the Italian Jewish portal MOKED in May 2022, is the weakness of educational bodies and the complexity and conflictuality of community bodies. Nine out of ten respondents in the dossier mentioned above put at first place the problem of estrangement from community life, which in concrete terms means lack of participation, non-attendance at synagogues, community centers, community schools, and less interest in the role played by Jewish communities in national politics. This explains why, for the Jewish Italians, more than for other Jewish Europeans, it seems very relevant to improve dialogue and cooperation both at the Jewish community level and between the Jewish community and the Jews who are not inside the Jewish community. It is also important for them to create partnerships with other Jewish institutions, improve communication, and develop awareness-raising strategies for non-members.[84]

Even though the Union of Italian Jews and the local community do a lot to combat antisemitism – as the field research revealed – according to a recent survey[85], Jewish leaders prioritise finding solutions internal to the community. The primary concern of Jewish communities is the loss of the sense of belonging of the affiliates (but not the sense of Jewish identity), i.e. the distance and alienation from community life – as shown by the declining number of members of the Jewish community –, the lack of commitment to community activities, the declining knowledge about Judaism, the lack of renewal on the organisational level, and the lack of effective leadership.[86]

In the interviews, academic and professional experts in the field of antisemitism highlighted

83 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Ebrei d'Europa."

84 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Ebrei d'Europa."

85 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Ebrei d'Europa."

86 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Ebrei d'Europa."

the high level of professional, cultural and social integration of the Jewish community into the Italian socio-economic system. They also emphasised that the strong ethnic-religious identity prevents a fertile and constructive exchange. The cultural initiatives of Jewish communities are, in fact, scarcely publicised, and they receive just modest attention from a small number of non-Jews.

Level of antisemitism in society

Research from 2021[87] found that 19% of Italians can be considered antisemitic in terms of primary antisemitism[88], 35% in terms of secondary antisemitism[89], and 45% in terms of new antisemitism[90]. A specific trait of the country seems to be "Italian unawareness", which brings a lack of public debate and collective historical reflection on the issue of racism and antisemitism. Not being aware of its own racism (indeed wanting to build a collective image on the idea of openness and tolerance), Italy tends to legitimise and downplay the seriousness of forms of antisemitism and racism, thus contributing to their spread.[91] The average Italian suffers from a chronic form of ignorance due to the reductions[92] regarding their responsibility in spreading antisemitic sentiment in Italy and Europe.

The antisemitism that characterises Italy could be defined as "low-intensity", which, even if it does not give rise to urgent problems, means dealing with a pervasive and creeping phenomenon. For this very reason, it is more dangerous because it easily ends up de-rubricated acts of antisemitism and racism for "normal" and harmless "things". [93] Exponents of Italian politics, especially on the right side, think antisemitism is less widespread in Italy than in other European countries"[94].

According to research commissioned by Solomon Observatory on Discrimination and conducted by Alessandra Ghisleri's Euromedia Research in 2019[95]53.5% of Italians believe that antisemitism is not widespread in Italy, and 52.7% believe that anti-Zionism, i.e. the opposition to the State of Israel is little or not widespread. However, the opinion of the experts in this field is that antisemitism is on the rise, even though the semantic space of the term is very wide and ranges from the expression of prejudices, stereotypes, and opinions to more or less serious concrete actions.[96] The research results also showed that both Holocaust distortion/denial and conspiratorial antisemitism are present: 1.3% of Italians believe that the Holocaust is a legend, 10.5% think that the final figure of the victims (6 million Jews) is actually much less and 49% say Jews are a financial powerhouse. The Annual Report on Antisemitism in Italy ,also shows an important decline concerning the perception of the prevalence of antisemitism in Italy: whereas in 2021, 55% considered it fairly widespread, by January 2023, the percentage had dropped to 42%. It can be assumed that priorities such as COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine have decreased sensitivity to antisemitism'.[97]

87 Kovàcs. e Fischer,"Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries."

88 Primary antisemitism/traditional antisemitism includes three dimensions: 1) cognitive – the content of prejudicial statements, 2) affective – the emotions felt towards the object of prejudice, 3) conative – the willingness to act in accordance with prejudice, to accept discrimination.

89 Secondary antisemitism is Holocaust relativisation, denial, and distortion.

90 New antisemitism is anti-Jewish sentiments projected onto Israel as a focal point.

91 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

92 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

93 Rete nazionale per il contrasto ai discorsi e ai fenomeni d'odio, "Antisemitismo italiano a bassa intensità."

94 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

95 Solomon Osservatorio sulle discriminazioni. "Antisemitismo. Le percezioni degli italiani". Euromedia Research. 2019.

96 Pagine ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo".

97 CDEC, "Relazione annuale sull'antisemitismo in Italia 2022".

Mainly due to their visibility in terms of identifiable clothing, Jewish men are more likely to experience physical attacks, be subject to offensive or threatening comments, and experience offensive gestures and staring. Also, they are more likely to experience antisemitism online. Conspiracy theories usually place Jews in male-dominated sectors (political and economic), and antisemitic drawings and cartoons also depict Jews as men.[98]

The interviews with academic experts showed that antisemitism is different from other forms of discrimination, as it's also evident from the data collected through desk research, because the Jewish minority, unlike other minorities, is not excluded because it is considered weak, but based on its presumed superiority as politically and economically powerful. Interviews with leaders of ethnic and religious minorities and leaders of minority communities such as LGBTQ+ and political refugees revealed the absence of their direct experience of antisemitic acts; these people have never witnessed any episodes of antisemitism.

The Union of Young Italian Jews highlighted the need to distinguish contemporary antisemitism, as a feeling of aversion towards the Jewish people, from antisemitism of Nazi-fascist origin. The former appears more insidious and dangerous today as it includes antisemites who despise Jews because of their alleged socio-economic power and because they are critical of Israel.

The field research showed that young Italians know how to define antisemitism by identifying its historical reasons; they are able to recognise the main stereotypes linked to the Jewish people (e.g. deicide, usury, economic power). They have the awareness that in many people, there are latent antisemitic feelings and attitudes that act at a subconscious level as a cultural heritage and that, in most cases, are not explicitly connoted at an ideological-political level. These attitudes leak out mainly in the language of football supporters, in the language of young people with lower-middle-class culture, in the presence of peers or more on social networks because they can do it anonymously.

Today's antisemitism is related to economic, sociocultural, psychological, political and religious variables, i.e. the profile of antisemitism is not unique and, therefore, not easy to trace. The elements often combined in antisemitic statements are social frustration due to economic hardship that leads to feelings of anger and resentment, information and media bewilderment, ignorance, aversion to Israel, racism, populism, conspiracy, and religious hatred. Moreover, while one agrees with the idea of antisemitism linked to right-wing populism, it's equally evident that there is antisemitism also linked to the fringes of the extreme left.[99]

The obvious fact that emerged from both the individual interviews and the focus groups is the idea that the profile of the antisemites, in any case, is generally associated with the male gender and adulthood, as well as with political connotations of two different types, that are linked to extreme right-wing parties, which have inherited the antisemitic and racist prejudice of totalitarian regimes, and that related to extreme left-wing parties, which connotes itself as antisemitic based on criticism of the policy adopted by the state of Israel with regard to the Palestinian question.

The most widespread form of antisemitism is conspiracy theories spread on social media channels, as conspiracy theories are all reducible to antisemitism to some extent.[100]

98 Cambruzzi, "Discussions about antisemitism need to include gender and sexuality".

99 Pagine Ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

100 Pagine Ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo.", 15.

The most archaic form of antisemitism is linked to Nazi-fascist ideology in which ethnic, religious, and conspiratorial elements are mixed. This type of antisemitism persists in some fanatical individuals who profess to belong to extreme right-wing political movements that expressly refer to fascism, such as Lega, Fratelli d'Italia, Ordine Nuovo and CasaPound (CP).[101] The form of antisemitism centered on Israel, on the other hand, is anti-Israel bias, i.e. the aversion to the Jewish state, regarded as the root of all evil, or a country that, as a historical ally of the USA, is held responsible for the devastating geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East. Some people in Italy think that antisemitism as anti-Israel bias is a left-wing identity trait and that this can be significantly fuelled by the presence of the Muslim minority in Italian cities and sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.[102] Another form of antisemitism, less mentioned, is Holocaust denialism and distortion. This issue is at the heart of the efforts of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).[103] According to the IHRA, the goals of denialism are often the rehabilitation of overt antisemitism.

101 Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Technical Working Group for the recognition of the definition of antisemitism approved by the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, "Final report. National strategy for combating antisemitism."

102 Pagine Ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

103 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

Antisemitic stereotypes, prejudices, and conspiracy theories

Antisemitism is an ancient, heterogeneous and persistent phenomenon as it's underpinned by a series of stereotypes and prejudices that are present in society across the board. Antisemitism is nurtured on a psychological level by the reduction of the real Jew to the imaginary one in which the Jew subsumes certain characteristics and alleged goals. The emotional dimension of experiencing the economic crisis, uncertainty, the fragility of the systems of representation, and globalisation as a threat to identity all of which contribute to antisemitic urges. The most important factors are those historically and socially rooted prejudices and stereotypes that produce distrust of diversity and widespread conspiracy thinking. Studies show that both Christianity and Islam have embedded antisemitic prejudice in their cultural and religious memories and have been important in the dissemination of antisemitism around the world. According to the most accepted historical perspective, the roots of antisemitism can be traced back to the ancient anti-Judaism of the Catholic matrix, which persists in certain stereotypes and prejudices, such as that of deicide (Jews killed Jesus), Jews are conspirators, or Jews are the carriers of evil.[104]

The DOSSIER/Antisemitism[105] published on Pagine Ebraiche in January 2022 shows that among the most shared prejudices in the Italian population that contribute to resentment and hatred are the wealth and economic power of Jews, membership of financial and cultural lobbies and strong social cohesion. The figure of the Jew is classified as a figure of power, and this does not happen to any other discriminated race or minority in Italy. The adjectives associated with the Jew are ‚different' and ‚dangerous' because they are morally perverse: greedy, individualistic, selfish, ready to exploit the weakest, scheming and treacherous. In addition, Jews are often seen as a distinct and separate group from the rest of society, very cohesive and inaccessible, almost a sect convinced it possesses the truth, and this arouses mistrust and antipathy.

According to research conducted by Euromedia Research[106], the most common clichés are in percentage order:

1. Jews have too much power in the international financial-economic world
2. Jews think they are superior to others
3. Jews do not care what happens to others but only what happens to themselves
4. Jews are much more loyal to Israel than to Italy
5. Palestinians are victims of genocide by Jews
6. Jews still talk too much about what happened during the Holocaust.

Current antisemitism mainly appears in the form of conspiracy theories, which have been reinvigorated by the economic and other crises of the last decade. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online hate speech increased by 40 per cent compared to the previous year in Italy.[107] In such a phase, the stylistic features of historical anti-Jewish propaganda may come to the fore again. Indeed, it seems that antisemitism is

104 Osservatorio antisemitismo, "L'antisemitismo."

105 Pagine Ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

106 Solomon Osservatorio sulle discriminazioni, "Antisemitismo. Le percezioni degli italiani".

107 Cambruzzi, "Hate speech in online social platforms: An intersectional case of antisemitism and homolesbobitransphobia in the Italian context".

always ready to re-emerge in certain crucial periods, such as the economic crisis or the recent pandemic. The old narratives have been joined by new ones blaming Jews for the pandemic, and antisemitic incidents in EU states, including Italy, increased in 2020.[108] Italy registered 101 incidents of antisemitism, the highest number recorded in the last ten years.[109]

108 Osservatorio antisemitismo, "Nuovo rapporto sull'antisemitismo dell'Agenzia dell'Unione Europea per i Diritti Fondamentali (FRA): pandemia e antisemitismo cresce l'allarme".

109 Moked. Il portale dell'ebraismo italiano, "Pandemia e antisemitismo in Europa. Pericoloso aumento degli incidenti".

Antisemitic hate speech and hate crimes

The Annual Report on Antisemitism in Italy for the year 2022[110] shows that the Antisemitism Observatory of the CDEC Foundation received 327 reports on different cases, 241 of which were classified as acts against Jews: "The data for 2022 show an increase compared to 2021 (226 episodes). 164 relate to antisemitism on the Internet, while 77 concern incidents that occurred physically, including two assaults, ten cases of threats and a serious act of vandalism against the synagogue in Trieste".[111] The danger of the web as a place for disseminating hatred and antisemitism is now well established because the speed with contents appearing online leaves no space for ethical reflection. With the web, the area for the expression of antisemitism and the visibility of antisemitic feelings have grown enormously because people with the same ideology can easily contact on social media, which can make a dangerous impact outside the virtual world. The internet provides a means for antisemites to spread their narrative either through explicit hate speech or coded manifestations in implicit or indirect speech.[112] According to the dossier "When the Poison is Social", the net favours antisemitism because of three phenomena: anonymity, the speed of the tool with which one can spread one's thoughts, and the consensus one receives that one is right. Therefore, there is a clear need for legal and criminal measures to discourage hate speech, antisemitic speech and actions.[113] The Italian penal code does not specifically regulate incitement to hatred. Still, the Mancino law of 1993 (Article 604bis of the penal code), later amended in 2006, establishes penalties of up to one year and six months imprisonment for persons found guilty of incitement or racist propaganda on ethnic, national or religious grounds.[114]

110 CDEC, "Relazione annuale sull'antisemitismo in Italia 2022", 10.

111 CDEC, "Relazione annuale sull'antisemitismo in Italia 2022", 10.

112 Pagine Ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

113 Pagine Ebraiche, "Dossier/Antisemitismo."

114 Cambruzzi, "Hate speech in online social platforms: An intersectional case of antisemitism and homolesbobitransphobia in the Italian context".

Antisemitism in politics

Research has shown that there are two types of political narratives: that of the xenophobic extreme right-wing parties in Europe, which to a marginal extent is also present in Italy (the two main openly neo-fascist groups still present in Italy are Casapound and Forza Nuova), and that of the extreme left-wing parties (in particular some members of the Democratic Party), which are critical of the policy of the state of Israel with regard to the handling of the conflict with Palestine.[115]

115 Osservatorio antisemitismo,"Forza nuova e casa pound le maggiori organizzazioni del radicalismo di destra in italia."

BOND

Antisemitism in the sporting sphere

Antisemitism in sports, especially football, is a phenomenon not only in Italy but in many countries worldwide, especially in Europe, particularly in Belgium, England, and Germany. During 2022, numerous antisemitic incidents occurred in these countries. The phenomenon is widespread in some supporters' clubs, even in Italian football. [116] One example is the Lazio-Roma derby, held in the Italian capital on 19 March 2023, where a Lazio[117] ultras of German origin entered the stand of the Olympic Stadium wearing a shirt glorifying and praising Adolf Hitler. Antisemitic chants are a 30-year problem of the Lazio supporters, according to the team itself, but this time, the ethical code against antisemitic discrimination has been applied, which is a turning point in the history of Italian football. Even though fines and revocations do not have the intended effect of removing antisemitism from the stadiums, many countries have realised that to eradicate this behaviour, a re-education of the perpetrators is needed to make them understand the seriousness of these acts. The publication „Combating Antisemitism in Sport" is based on these values of re-education and cooperation, creating an international network that brings these activities together with the view that sport can be a useful means of promoting peace, tolerance and respect for human rights.[118]

116 Il portale dell'ebraismo italiano, "Un calcio all'antisemitismo".

117 Il fatto quotidiano, "La lotta all'antisemitismo nel calcio fra i provvedimenti anche il divieto della maglia numero 88."

118 Osservatorio antisemitismo, "Combattere l'antisemitismo nello sport la nuova'iniziativa'del wjc per rieducare fan e atleti."

Enmity against other minority groups in the country

While antisemitism is present in Italy, other minority groups are also targets of discriminatory practices to a bigger extent. While antisemitism is considered to be marginal, many times not an intentional attitude, other forms of discrimination are more evident.[119] The most affected groups include the African and Middle Eastern Immigrants, Muslims, Roma and Sinti, as well as the LGBTQ+ community.[120] For example, the 2017 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) survey revealed that minorities experience discrimination in various areas of their life. Among African and Asian ethnicities, one of the most targeted attributes is the colour of their skin and religion. The FRA survey demonstrated that even second-generation immigrants experience discrimination to a similar extent as their parents. Discrimination can even impact their job environment and opportunities.[121] The COVID-19 pandemic boosted online hate speech against many minorities, targeting mainly the LGBTQ+ community (98,2%), Roma (47,6%), Muslims (46%), and NGOs and human rights workers (25,9%).[122]

Different stereotypes are present linked to minorities, such as delinquents, drug dealers, taking jobs away from Italians, in reference to African immigrants; terrorists, untrustworthy, restricting women's freedom, not respecting their rights, imposing their faith on others, in reference to Arab and Muslim; thieves who steal, in reference to Roma; they are sick, not respecting Catholic morals and social norms in reference to LGBTQ+. These stereotypes, which originate mainly from nationalist and anti-European-oriented media and partly political narratives, are present mainly online in the form of insults or accusations and, only in rare cases, reach levels of extreme violence.[123] Discourses that are potentially very dangerous are those that are inherently fascist but in which the nationalist ideology is not overtly recognisable. These construct enemies out of minorities in two steps: 1) naming the enemies using generic categories like "immigrants" or "Muslims", 2) dehumanising the enemy by conveying that they are not respectable. For example, in the Italian media, Muslims are often portrayed as terrorists, and Roma are labeled thieves. These narratives are present in an "ostensibly democratic" manner, using the supposed democratic principle of giving everyone a voice. Still, it is more the systematic repetition of simple slogans implanting prejudices in people's heads and thus giving rise to stereotypes that fuel the leadership of potentially dangerous political figures.[124]

As the interviews revealed, a judgment shared especially by young students and university students is that the state should take charge of minorities by guaranteeing the application of the rights enshrined in the Italian constitution as well as launching new measures to combat discrimination because the existing ones have not proved effective.

Many of the interviewees have been subject to acts of discrimination linked, on the one hand, to traditionalism and cultural conservatism of a Catholic matrix, for example, concerning

119 Liberties-Monitoraggio UE, "La discriminazione su base etnica continua in Italia e in tutta Europa."

120 Post.Quotidiano online, "Minoranze in Italia".

121 Liberties-Monitoraggio UE, "La discriminazione su base etnica continua in Italia e in tutta Europa," 1.

122 Amnesty International, "Barometro dell'odio: intolleranza pandemica".

123 Osservatorio di politica internazionale, "Nuove forme di antisemitismo e mezzi di contrasto".

124 Murgia, Istruzioni per diventare fascisti.

different sexual orientations. On the other hand, it is linked to the racism of some Italian citizens, hostile to the reception of migrants and refugees, for reasons related to identity nationalism and the Italian socio-economic situation, which only constitutionally but not de facto, guarantees all citizens the same rights relating to work and dignified life.

Narratives connecting Jews with 'perverted' sexual habits, paedophilia, homosexuality, and wanting to subvert or disrupt 'normalcy' have been long present in Italy. Besides, narratives about Jews imposing LGBTQ+ rights and activities on Europe/West, even though they don't want to have it in Israel, are also prevalent in the country. Minorities can also be subjected to prejudices from other minority communities, e.g. Jews are subjected to antisemitism within the LGBTQ+ community or vice versa. As homophobic, transphobic, antigypsyism, racist, etc., hatred is often spread online by the same profiles. To combat these, a holistic and intersectional-framed approach is needed.[125]

125 Cambruzzi, "Hate speech in online social platforms: An intersectional case of antisemitism and homolesbobitransphobia in the Italian context".

Prevention of antisemitism in education

The field research showed that young students in Italian schools and universities have little knowledge of Judaism due to a lack of experience and direct contact, or possibility for dialogue with the Italian Jewish community, weak historical and religious knowledge because of the lack of accurate education on the subject, and also due to the lack of involvement of the population in Jewish cultural initiatives and events. As shown by the important collection of articles concerning incidents of antisemitism in schools from 2013 to the present, produced by the Observatory of Antisemitism[126], the phenomena of antisemitism in schools have increased significantly in recent years[127].

To contain and prevent these phenomena, there are some important educational actions:

- Extend the public debate on antisemitism and racism in general and be strong in condemning all acts of intolerance and hatred;
- Foster dialogue between cultures;
- Get to know the Jewish world as a whole;
- Put antisemitism in relation to other forms of intolerance;
- Create alliances and opportunities to meet in the world of sport, especially football, where episodes of antisemitism and/or Holocaust trivialisation are often encountered;
- Prosecuting hate speech and actions;
- Responding, i.e. on the web and social media;
- Bringing the Jewish story to date by placing it in a contemporary context.

In November 2021, ***The Guidelines on Countering Antisemitism in Schools***[128] were published in Italy containing important tools for institutions, schools, universities, and the world of communication. Through this instrument, Italy has shown that it aims to develop the work of educating and training youth in schools to enhance the history of the Jewish people, to try to decouple the work on antisemitism from the Shoah, taking into account that online new media education and digital literacy are also decisive. The Ministry of Education promotes the preservation of the memory of the Shoah and the education to respect differences against all forms of violence and discrimination. With this objective, it has established a series of collaborations with the Union of Italian Jewish Communities (UCEI), the National Museum of Italian Judaism and the Shoah (MEIS) and the Shoah Memorial.[129]

Since 2001, the Ministry, in cooperation with the UCEI, has annually launched the national competition *Young people remember the Shoah*, dedicated to all school students of all levels and organises several remembrance trips for students, teachers and institutions each year.[130] To provide Italian teachers and students with a training tool on the themes of the Shoah, antisemitism and indifference to discrimination, the Ministry, in cooperation with the UCEI, has

126 Osservatorio antisemitismo, "L'antisemitismo nella scuola."

127 Osservatorio antisemitismo, "Episodi di antisemitismo a scuola".

128 Ministero dell'Istruzione e del Merito. "Linee guida di constrasto all'antisemitismo nella scuola".

129 https://www.miur.gov.it/scuola-e-shoah

130 https://www.miur.gov.it/-/-i-giovani-ricordano-la-shoah-xxii-edizione-del-concorso-per-l-anno-scolastico-2023-24

launched the portal School and Remembrance[131], which offers a platform for the exchange of best practices in the teaching of the Shoah among schools throughout the country.

Museums and Holocaust Memorials in Italy created the ‚The Italian Network of Remembrance'.[132] With law no. 211 of 20 July 2000, the Italian Parliament recognised 27 January, when the gates of Auschwitz were torn down, as the ‚Day of Remembrance in remembrance of the extermination and persecution of the Jewish people and Italian military and political deportees to Nazi camps', specifying in art. 2, that on the occasion of that day ‚ceremonies, initiatives, meetings and common moments of narration of the facts and reflection shall be organised, particularly in schools of all levels, on what happened to the Jewish people and the Italian military and political deportees to the Nazi camps to preserve in the future of Italy the memory of a tragic and dark period of history in Italy and Europe, and so that similar events may never happen again.[133]

According to the survey reported in the CDEC Foundation's Annual Report on Antisemitism in Italy 2022, 90% of students think remembering the Shoah is important, of which 70% think it is very important. This result is highly positive, proving the efficiency of the work of governments, institutions and schools in remembering the Shoah.[134] Despite these results, there is a need for more knowledge about Jews and Jewish identity in schools.

In 2017, to coincide with the Holocaust Memorial Day celebrations, the Ministry sent a letter to schools of all levels containing the „National Guidelines for Holocaust Education at School"[135].

It is also worth mentioning that educational materials and activities dealing with the themes of Judaism and antisemitism are available on many sites, reported in the research, including the website of the Antisemitism Observatory, which makes brochures, films, documentaries and lessons available to teachers and trainers.[136]

The field research revealed a number of critical issues in terms of school and education and antisemitism, such as:

1. The lack of Jewish experts in schools;
2. The need to programmatically include the history of the Jewish people, culture and religion in the three years of high school also through specific projects;
3. Partial use of available digital resources;
4. Lack of activities and projects related to knowledge, dialogue and social inclusion of discriminated minorities;
5. There is a need to increase the number of materials, experiences, and human resources available to the school, such as expert trainers, scholars, and researchers.

The topics on which we propose to work and reflect in terms of education and antisemitism are:

- improving knowledge of Jewry and Judaism concerning history, culture and religion, explaining, for example, the due differences between Orthodox Judaism and Reform Judaism, also referred to as liberal and progressive;

131 Materiali e fonti consultate su www.scuolaememoria.it

132 https://www.miur.gov.it/scuola-e-shoah

133 www.scuolaememoria.it

134 CDEC, "Relazione annuale dell'antisemitismo in Italia, 2022".

135 Ministero dell'Istruzione e del Merito, "Linee guida nazionali per una didattica della Shoah a scuola".

136 Osservatorio antisemitismo, "Materiale per il contrasto all'antisemitismo".

- disassociate the discussion of Judaism from antisemitism;
- identify unconscious prejudices that underlie individual and collective thinking and acting;
- uncover conspiracy theories and deconstruct the stereotypes and prejudices that support them concerning antisemitism and other forms of discrimination present in Italian society;
- address the negation, distortion and trivialisation of the Shoah;
- dealing with antisemitism online;
- improving knowledge of the situation in the Middle East to make young people aware of the differences between Jews and the state of Israel.

Trainers' strategies for educating young people about diversity should include analysing topics or conducting research and activities that aim to develop feelings of solidarity, inclusion and support for discriminated minorities through:

- The use of personal narratives to emphasise the diversity within the Jewish world to show that Jews, like people of other traditions, have many different religious beliefs and practices or none at all; the commonalities between Jews and others, such as cultural, socio-economic, geographical, linguistic and other characteristics; the positive impact that Jews, or other people from different religious or cultural communities, have on local, national and/or international contexts.
- The use of history lessons - at school, teach the history of Jews as part of local, national or international history, including the history of the State of Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian situation and using a multi-viewpoint approach; personalise history and tell the personal stories of Jews (common and well-known people who have contributed to the development of science, the arts, philosophy, etc.); consider how Jews, or other people from different religious or cultural communities, have contributed to the development of science, the arts, philosophy, etc.; considering how they have contributed to the development of the world. Take into account how various socially accepted stereotypes have had and have negative consequences regarding the rights enjoyed by men, women and members of certain groups or communities, including Jews, at various times in history and in the present; teach the origins and causes of antisemitism before and after the Holocaust, reaching out to the world today and taking care not to replace these lessons with specific lessons on the Holocaust.
- The use of personal narrative to emphasise the diversity within the Jewish world to show that Jews, like people of other traditions, have many different religious beliefs and practices or none at all; the commonalities between Jews and others, such as in terms of cultural, socio-economic, geographical, linguistic and other characteristics; the positive impact that Jews, or other people from different religious or cultural communities, have on local, national and/or international contexts.
- The use of students' various identities to create their own self-portrait (in written, graphic or poetic form); working on individual ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural diversity, sexual orientation, hobbies, interests, and ideals; guide the students towards identifying certain aspects of their own self-portrait that may reveal or generate a stereotype based on factors, such as inner choices and external pressures, that influence thoughts and actions, to demonstrate how social narratives are constructed, analyse the relationship between a student's perception of some particular traits of themselves and others perceive these.

The work of educators must aim to achieve better results than in recent years with regard to combating ignorance, raising the cultural level of young people, including those who do not go to university studies, and refining critical thinking. In this perspective, it will also be possible to counter young people's precocious tendency to stereotyping and prejudice categorisation caused by media overexposure, leading to pseudo-learning of a vast amount of information adolescents cannot handle. It would be necessary as well as desirable that, among the skills that a young person must develop at the end of secondary and university schooling, there be inclusive social-relational skills to build a peaceful and supportive multi-ethnic European society capable of breaking down physical and mental walls and barriers between its citizens.

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Antisemitism in POLAND

Executive summary

Antisemitism is still a significant problem in Polish society. This is the conclusion that emerges from the quantitative data from previous years and the statements of our interviewees.

Within the Jewish community, members often report encountering antisemitism in the form of unsavoury jokes and stereotypes rather than overt discrimination. However, conversations around the Holocaust and Polish-Jewish history frequently led to antisemitic stereotypes and hate speech. Interestingly, the Holocaust is often the subject of jokes. This may be attributable to the perception of Jews as a historical minority who once lived in Poland.

In educational settings, courses on the Jewish community are overwhelmingly historical, primarily focusing on World War II. Almost all respondents, except non-Jewish youth, agree that contemporary Jewish topics are seldom covered in schools. This gap in multicultural education has led to a lack of understanding about non-discrimination and minority-related issues across various age groups in Polish society.

While younger generations appear to be more tolerant toward minorities and more open to learning about them, the term „Jew" is still reportedly used as an insult among them. Discrimination is not limited to the Jewish community; focus group respondents also identified Ukrainians, Roma, people of colour, and the LGBTQ+ community as other discriminated groups. Despite the majority of focus group participants being women, only one person in each group cited women as a discriminated-against minority.

The situation of the Jewish communities in Poland

Historically, Poland had a significant Jewish population dating back to the tenth century, contributing to the country's cultural, economic, and political life. Jewish autonomy was established in the thirteenth century. However, their emancipation varied under different occupying powers after 1795. In the interwar period, Polish Jews were officially citizens but often faced discrimination. Before World War II, Polish Jews comprised around 10% of the population, but the Holocaust tragically reduced their numbers by around three million. Post-WWII emigration further decreased the size of the community.[137] According to the 2011 census[138], about 8,000 people identified as Jewish in Poland, a small fraction of the total population of 38.5 million. According to the 2021 census[139], this number has significantly increased, with 17,000 people identifying as Jewish. This increase may be attributed to the option of selecting more than one national identification in the latest census.

Data on the socio-economic status of Polish Jews is limited, but they are primarily urban, secular, and assimilated into mainstream Polish culture.[140] According to the interviewees, the Jewish community does not stand out from Polish society in terms of social, political, and economic status. During the interviews, an expert specialising in the study of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance mentioned, based on his observations, that there is a notable presence of Jews in the IT department. In terms of education level, Jews were said to be no different from the Polish society in general. The results of the field research showed that Jews do not stand out from society in appearance either. Sometimes, they even hide signs suggesting they belong to the Jewish community. Consequently, their belonging to the community is only revealed in conversation if someone asks.

137 Barna Ildikó. "Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrád Countries, historical/discourse analysis. Accessed September 28, 2023. https://www.academia.edu/82257051/Modern_Antisemitism_in_the_Visegr%C3%A1d_Countries

138 Nowak, L., & Adach-Stankiewicz, E. (2012). Raport z wyników Narodowy Spis Powszechny Ludności i Mieszkań 2011. Zakład Wydawnictw Statystycznych, Warszawa.

139 Gus (2023) Tablice Z Ostatecznymi Danymi W Zakresie Przynależności Narodowo-etnicznej, Języka używanego W Domu Oraz Przynależności do Wyznania Religijnego, stat.gov.pl. Accessed: 04 December 2023: https://stat.gov.pl/spisy-powszechne/nsp-2021/nsp-2021-wyniki-ostateczne/tablice-z-ostatecznymi-danymi-w-zakresie-przynaleznosci-narodowo-etnicznej-jezyka-uzywanego-w-domu-oraz-przynaleznosci-do-wyznania-religijnego,10,1.html.

140 Barna Ildikó. "Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrád Countries, historical/discourse analysis. Accessed September 28, 2023. https://www.academia.edu/82257051/Modern_Antisemitism_in_the_Visegr%C3%A1d_Countries

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Level and trend of antisemitism in Poland

Antisemitism is still a significant problem in Polish society. This is the conclusion that emerges from the quantitative data from previous years and the statements of our interviewees. According to a study from 2012[141], antisemitism is a complex issue consisting of three elements: traditional prejudice, secondary prejudice, and belief in a Jewish conspiracy. Traditional prejudice, rooted in historical religious motives, involves beliefs such as Jews using Christian blood ritually or bearing responsibility for Christ's death. Secondary antisemitism is subtler, it includes denying one's anti-Jewish biases, downplaying the Holocaust, and sometimes holding Jews accountable for it while viewing the Holocaust as a tool for Jewish advantage. Holocaust denial and distortion play a significant role in this form of antisemitism, justifying antisemitic beliefs by accusing Jews of fabricating history. This denial can be both „hard" (rejecting the historical truth of the Holocaust) and „soft" (covertly questioning aspects of it). Essentially, the legacy of the Holocaust, which includes those forms of denial and distortion, is used to perpetuate antisemitism.[142] Belief in a Jewish conspiracy is associated with the view that Jews secretly try to control the world order.[143] It is a form of modern antisemitism centering around the idea that Jews seek power. It attributes unity and secrecy to them.[144] In Poland, secondary antisemitism and conspiracy antisemitism were relatively widespread in 2021. This is evidenced by high averages on scales measuring these attitudes, while traditional antisemitism was less present. On a scale where the maximum value was seven, the average score for secondary antisemitism was 3.39, suggesting a moderate level of secondary antisemitic beliefs among the study participants. Similarly, the average score for conspiracy antisemitism was also 3.39, indicating a moderate level of belief in antisemitic conspiracy theories. In contrast, the mean score for traditional antisemitic beliefs was lower at 1.96. This suggests that participants showed, on average, a lower level of belief in traditional antisemitic ideas compared to secondary and conspiracy antisemitism.[145] Antisemitic attitudes in Poland are, to some extent, also linked to criticism of Israel. Anti-Israel attitudes are most correlated with conspiracy antisemitism. However, survey results indicate that even a traditional form of prejudice can reinforce resentment toward Israel.[146]

In 2021, researchers observed a general decrease in the level of antisemitism in Poland, but this change varied across different types of antisemitic attitudes. While acceptance of traditional antisemitic views increased

141 Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., Radzik, Z. (2012). Antisemitism in current Poland: economic, religious and historical aspects . Journal for the Study of Antisemitism, 4 (2), 423-442; Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., Kofta, M., Wójcik, A. (2013). Harmful ideas. The structure and consequences of anti-Semitic beliefs in Poland. Political Psychology, 34, 821-839.

142 Barna, Ildikó, Tamás Kohut, Michał Bilewicz, Oľga Gyarfášová, Jiří Kocián, Grigorij Mesežnikov, and Maria Babińska. "Survey on Antisemitic Prejudice in the Visegrád Countries: Research Report." Tom Lantos Institute, 2022. Accessed September 28, 2023..

143 Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., Radzik, Z. (2012). Antisemitism in current Poland: economic, religious and historical aspects . Journal for the Study of Antisemitism, 4 (2), 423-442; Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., Kofta, M., Wójcik, A. (2013). Harmful ideas. The structure and consequences of anti-Semitic beliefs in Poland. Political Psychology, 34, 821-839.

144 Bulska, Dominika., Winiewski, Mikołaj. "Diagnosis and consequences of antisemitism in Poland" in Polish Prejudices Survey 2017- Faces of intergroup violence edited by Anna Stefaniak, Mikołaj Winiewski, 221-252. Warsaw: LiberiLibri, 2018.

145 Mirucka, Maria., Zochniak, Kamila., Bulska, Dominika. "Poles' attitudes toward minorities: report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 2021" in Polish Prejudice Survey 2021- attitudes vs. political ideology edited by Dominika Bulska, Mikołaj Winiewski, Michał Bilewicz. Warsaw: Liberi Libri, in press.

146 Bulska Dominika., Winiewski Mikołaj. "Anti-Israel attitudes and anti-Semitism in Poland. A report based on the 2013 Polish Prejudice Survey." Prejudice Research Center. Accessed October 8, 2023

significantly in 2017 compared to 2014, there was a substantial decline in these attitudes by 2021. The changes in antisemitic sentiment appear to be primarily linked to the socio-political climate within the nation. Secondary antisemitism, on the other hand, remained relatively stable from 2009 to 2021, indicating that modern forms of antisemitism appear to be resistant to socio-political changes. As for the belief in a Jewish conspiracy, the trend declined until 2014 but experienced an uptick in 2017 before declining again in 2021.[147] It seems interesting that most respondents (80%) of the Polish Prejudice Survey from 2021 declared that they did not personally know any Jews. Over the period 2009-2021, the level of declared contact did not change much. This context is noteworthy because it highlights the presence of strongly negative attitudes toward a group whose members Poles rarely experience personally.[148] This phenomenon is referred to in research on antisemitism as 'antisemitism without Jews.[149]

Limited data exists on the correlation between the COVID-19 pandemic and antisemitism in Poland. The topic of the significance of the pandemic for antisemitic attitudes practically did not appear in the interviews. However, a report on social trends among Poles during

the pandemic revealed heightened emotions toward minority groups and increased levels of disgust directed at these groups. According to a study published in 2021, in terms of positive sentiments towards outgroups, Jews did not receive high rankings among Polish individuals. They were situated in the middle of the scale regarding being associated with feelings of disgust. Hence, the survey implies a need for improvement in expressing positive emotions towards Jews.[150] On a global scale, antisemitic incidents during the COVID-19 pandemic have been notably prevalent in Europe – and thus presumably also in Poland –accounting for nearly 50% of incidents against minority groups in 2021. Since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, conspiracy theories have emerged linking Jews or the State of Israel to COVID-19, suggesting they benefit from global suffering. Antisemitism and hate speech have notably surged on social media platforms. There has been an alarming increase in the trivialisation of the Holocaust, with Holocaust symbols used in protests against COVID-19 measures, accompanied by inappropriate comparisons of pandemic restrictions to the persecution of Jews.[151]

In reports listing which demographic characteristics are relevant to the expression of antisemitism, gender is one of the significant factors.[152] The results show that men express antisemitic attitudes more often than women. Factors such as age, level of education, and income also, to some degree, contribute to holding antisemitic beliefs. Antisemitism is more often expressed by older people, those with lower levels of education, and people with lower incomes.

In our field research, participants expressed concern about overtly problematic actions, such as cemetery vandalism and the appearance

147 Mirucka, Maria., Zochniak, Kamila., Bulska, Dominika. "Poles' attitudes toward minorities: report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 2021" in Polish Prejudice Survey 2021- attitudes vs. political ideology edited by Dominika Bulska, Mikołaj Winiewski, Michał Bilewicz. Warsaw: Liberi Libri, in press.

148 Mirucka, Maria., Zochniak, Kamila., Bulska, Dominika. "Poles' attitudes toward minorities: report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 2021" in Polish Prejudice Survey 2021- attitudes vs. political ideology edited by Dominika Bulska, Mikołaj Winiewski, Michał Bilewicz. Warsaw: Liberi Libri, in press.

149 Cooper, Leo. „Anti-Semitism without Jews." In the Shadow of the Polish Eagle, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2000.

150 Molenda Zuzanna., Marchlewska Marta., Górska Paulina., Michalski Piotr, Szczepańska Dagmara., Furman Aleksandra., Malinowska Katarzyna. "Coronavirus in Poland: A social psychology perspective. Results of the first wave of longitudinal study conducted on a representative sample of Poles." Accessed September 28, 2023. http://cbu.psychologia.pl/2021/02/20/koronawirus-w-polsce-perspektywa-psychologii-spolecznej/

151 Raheli Baratz-Rix. "The State of Antisemitism in 2021." Department for Combatting Antisemitism & Enhancing Resilience. Accessed September 28, 2023. https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/news/wzo24012022/en/file_2021%20report-final.pdf

152 Mirucka, Maria., Zochniak, Kamila., Bulska, Dominika. "Poles' attitudes toward minorities: report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 2021" in Polish Prejudice Survey 2021- attitudes vs. political ideology edited by Dominika Bulska, Mikołaj Winiewski, Michał Bilewicz. Warsaw: Liberi Libri, in press.

of swastikas. They underscored the absolute inappropriateness of such acts and the necessity to confront them. Nevertheless, the interviewees highlighted a deeper unease stemming from ambiguous remarks, often beginning with ‚I don't have anything against Jews, but...' and expressions of nostalgia for the pre-war Jewish community that do not translate into active support for today's Jewish population. The participants cited statements where Poles professed acceptance of Jews only if they remained inconspicuous in public spaces. To summarise, there seems to be an affection for Jews as long as they are out of sight, not encountered face-to-face. This reveals a stark lack of interaction with the Jewish community. Antisemitic attitudes, it appears, are rooted in fantasy, myths, and perhaps a fear of real-life contact.

Antisemitic stereotypes, prejudices, conspiracy theories

A study conducted by The POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews revealed dominant narratives and language used to discuss Jews in contemporary Poland.[153] The research involved the analysis of a wide range of materials, including newspaper articles, tweets, books, films, television series, covers and graphics from 1950 to 2022. The study identified ten main themes in these narratives. One major theme was the belief in the existence of a ‚Jewish lobby', closely linked to the actions of the State of Israel and the global Jewish diaspora, particularly in relation to their claims to pre-war property. Other common narratives included the belief that Jews contributed to a negative image of Poland, a belief that Jews refused to acknowledge the hospitality of Poles and their shared victimhood during the war. Additionally, conspiracy narratives that portrayed Jews as secret agents linked to Freemasonry, global conspiracies, and the global leftist movement. Finally, some narratives blamed Jews for all negative world events, associating them with concepts such as disease, corruption, and danger.

The findings from the field research confirmed the existence of the prejudices mentioned above and stereotypes about Jews that are prevalent in Poland. The respondents' examples were consistent with the desk research outcomes, illustrating several prevalent misconceptions. Firstly, according to the interviewees, there is a persistent stereotype associating modern Jews with the death of Jesus Christ. Additionally, there are beliefs attributing exceptional intelligence and an ability to navigate life successfully to Jews, which can be a veiled form of conspiratorial antisemitism. Common stereotypes also encapsulate the notion that Jews are somehow not genuine Poles and the idea that they are inherently smarter and wealthier. A common erroneous assumption is that all Jews adhere to Orthodox traditions, which leads to the misconception of the Jewish community as a strictly Orthodox sect.

The interviewees suggested that there is a form of cultural antisemitism in Poland, particularly related to stereotypes associating Jews with wealth (e.g. the belief that Jews always have money, unjustly but cunningly earned). These stereotypes have been deeply rooted in Polish culture for many years. Some people may not even recognise these cultural codes as antisemitic, further illustrating the normalisation of these beliefs in society. The stereotype of Jews having money is so vivid in Poland that some people do not consider it antisemitic.

The most common conspiratorial antisemitic narratives center around claims that Jews pursue domination over financial institutions, the global economy, and even the entire world and that they act secretly.[154] Jewish interviewees faced similar conspiracy theories in our field research. The belief they most commonly mentioned is that influential global corporations and economic dynamics are invariably under the control of Jews or other mystical forces, with the presumption of a Jewish presence coordinating these movements extending into political and economic spheres since 1989. It was also an interesting observation that some conspiracy theories contradict perceptions of Jews in other countries, such as the US. Interviewees explained

153 Damaszko, Joanna., Napiórkowski, Marcin., Polak, Krzysztof., Żurawicka, Marzena., Bierca, Marta., Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, Dorota. "Kogo widzą Polacy, kiedy widzą Żyda. Raport z badań realizowanych przez Muzeum Żydów Polskich POLIN" edited by Marcin Napiórkowski. Warsaw, 2023

154 Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., Radzik, Z. (2012). Antisemitism in current Poland: economic, religious and historical aspects . Journal for the Study of Antisemitism, 4 (2), 423-442; Bilewicz, M., Winiewski, M., Kofta, M., Wójcik, A. (2013). Harmful ideas. The structure and consequences of anti-Semitic beliefs in Poland. Political Psychology, 34, 821-839.

that in Poland, the stereotype of Jews secretly ruling the country has been combined with the same content regarding Freemasonry, while the two groups in the USA are their opposites. These findings align with the results of the POLIN's research. Their analyses also repeated narratives showing Jews as members of influential groups such as Freemasonry or simply as the elite of society.[155]

Beliefs based on historical context were also mentioned during the field research. One of these is the belief that Jews, as police officers, collaborated with the communist authorities and arrested Poles. It was clarified that the majority of police officers were Poles, and a small percentage were Jews. Nonetheless, there is an association of Jews with the security forces. Another conspiracy theory holds that the Holocaust either did not occur or that it was the responsibility of Jews. The last example brought up during the interviews stems from a myth propagated within the Catholic community, which is the baseless narrative that Jews abduct Christian girls to use their blood for ritual purposes.

155 Damaszko, Joanna., Napiórkowski, Marcin., Polak, Krzysztof., Żurawicka, Marzena., Bierca, Marta., Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, Dorota. "Kogo widzą Polacy, kiedy widzą Żyda. Raport z badań realizowanych przez Muzeum Żydów Polskich POLIN" edited by Marcin Napiórkowski. Warsaw, 2023

Antisemitic hate speech and hate crime

According to a survey from 2016[156], Jews are one of the most disliked groups in Poland. In 2017, a survey on hate speech[157] found that approximately two-thirds of respondents had experienced hate speech directed towards Jews. Surprisingly, comments directed at Jews were considered the least insulting compared to hate speech against Ukrainians and refugees.

The research from 2021[158] indicates a slight correlation between all forms of antisemitism and respondents' education level, age, and political preferences. Specifically, individuals with lower education levels, older respondents, and those identifying as 'right-wing' politically tend to exhibit a higher propensity for expressing antisemitic views. People who are more educated and from large cities have more contact with hate speech and are more sensitive to it and perceive it as more offensive.

156 Center for Public Opinion Research. "Attitudes toward other nations. Research announcement." Accessed Sptember 28,2023. http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2016/K_053_16.PDF

157 Hansen Karolina. "Hate speech: Report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 3." Prejudice Research Center. Accessed September 28, 2023. . http://cbu.psychologia.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/410/2021/02/PPS3_MowaNienawisci_Hansen_fin.pdf

158 Mirucka, Maria., Zochniak, Kamila., Bulska, Dominika. "Poles' attitudes toward minorities: report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 2021" in Polish Prejudice Survey 2021- attitudes vs. political ideology edited by Dominika Bulska, Mikołaj Winiewski, Michał Bilewicz. Warsaw: Liberi Libri, in press.

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Perception of antisemitism in the Jewish community

When answering the questions on personal experiences with antisemitism and other forms of intolerance against minority groups, Jewish participants in our field research recalled their first experiences. They stated that when experiencing antisemitism, they were unaware of what they faced and only felt internal objections without knowing why or how to react. Those encounters took place in school or at the university. Presently, the respondents are mostly faced with antisemitism online. Holocaust distortion was the most common example of antisemitism among respondents' non-Jewish friends. A widespread form of antisemitism was anti-Israeli attitudes expressed both by the right and the left side of the Political sphere and predominantly by younger people prone to misinformation and fake news. However, the fear of antisemitic attacks was not very high among all the Jewish respondents, even though only 20% have experienced it in recent years. All the attacks they have experienced in recent years were verbal and carried out by random strangers and as a result of "going public". The experiences described include an instance where a respondent's Jewish identity was revealed online, leading to an online hate attack. Another respondent encountered a passerby who bumped into her and expressed frustration by hostile shouting. Additionally, an intoxicated man yelled while passing by a synagogue on a Saturday night. These incidents illustrate various forms of discrimination and hostility faced by individuals due to their Jewish identity.

Interestingly, respondents indicated that Poles react to someone being Jewish with surprise and confusion, highlighting a significant lack of awareness about interacting with members of minority groups in Poland. Verbal forms of antisemitic attacks resulted in feelings of surprise, fear, and anger in the victims. To cope, they sometimes resort to humour as a defence mechanism to lessen the sting of such encounters, paradoxically giving their aggressors an opportunity for self-reflection and potentially a path to redemption. However, this leaves the victims burdened with feelings of distress and desolation. Moreover, respondents noted an increased sense of alertness following such incidents, which is further intensified by media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Antisemitic slurs, slogans, and tropes about Jews are popular and firmly embedded in the Polish language. As a result, many antisemitic sayings and expressions are present. According to the interviews, the most common are: "Jews have money and influence.", "Jews all know each other.", "They are always behind political events.", and the accusations of Israel being a terrorist country and occupier.

According to respondents participating in the field research, talking about the Holocaust in Poland and the Polish-Jewish history always results in mentioning antisemitic stereotypes and hate speech. The interviewees also spoke about the handling of antisemitism by the Jewish community and its leaders. Interviewees noted that some Jews do not read certain attitudes as discrimination (e.g. football chants or everyday catchphrases with antisemitic content). The reason may be that they have experienced such attitudes too often and are used to them. This process of getting used to antisemitism can sometimes also play the role of managing the fear of being harassed. That is, when experiencing hate speech or antisemitic behaviour, members of the Jewish community explain it to themselves as being common. To cope with antisemitic harassment, some members of the Jewish community attempt to normalise these encounters and emotionally distance themselves from the attacks. Additionally, there are efforts within the Jewish community to mitigate future harassment by engaging with local residents. They are establishing inclusive environments aimed at

fostering familiarity and positive interactions. Some synagogues have opened their spaces to the neighbourhood, organising social and cultural events and various activities to promote community and understanding.

Antisemitism on the political level

For the last eight years, right-wing parties, particularly Law and Justice (PiS), have dominated Polish politics in terms of antisemitic narratives, with a focus on maintaining Poland's and the Polish people's reputation. These narratives tend to be protective, centered around the Holocaust, World War II, and relations between Poles and Jews. Right-wing politicians highlight the mutual victimisation of Poles and Jews during the Second World War and blame the Germans for this victimisation. While acknowledging Polish involvement in the Holocaust, some politicians of Law and Justice view instances of Poles killing Jews as the actions of a demoralised social minority. In addition, certain narratives allege that Jews were complicit in their tragic fate by collaborating with the perpetrators.[159] The last debate on this topic in Poland in 2018 came with a proposed amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance. In this debate, besides the arguments mentioned above, appeared a narrative that Jews were responsible for crimes committed against Poles in the period after World War II. [160]

Right-wing parties are particularly characterised by expressions of prejudice and the use of hate speech. However, our interviewees pointed out that all political parties, to a comparable degree, insinuate the Jewish origin of their opponents to deprive them of the trust of voters. One expert explained that the significant aspect of this narrative is that both the political right and left employ the term "Jew" as an insulting epithet. This suggests that individuals engaged in politics, when faced with disagreement, are derogatorily labelled as Jewish. This is an example of antisemitism that relies on creating a connotation between a sense of untrustworthiness, Jewish origin, and a particular politician.

Results of the field research showed that politicians use prejudice and hate speech against minority groups in political discourse as a strategy to gain the support of citizens. Therefore, hateful narratives by politicians are particularly common during election periods. These statements align with the findings of a study conducted in August and September 2023, which monitored the prevalence of hateful content on public television during the pre-election period. The study revealed that content relating to Jews ranked fourth in terms of frequency amongst hateful content relating to all the examined minorities.[161] Some politicians exploit these prejudices to gauge public reactions and gain attention from citizens. Antisemitism frequently ranks among the top three or four issues in public discussions, often coinciding with anti-LGBTQ+, anti-refugee, or anti-immigrant narratives. Notably, there is an overlap between antisemitism and anti-Muslim sentiments. Often, multiple biases against different groups, most commonly antisemitism, anti-LGBTQ+, and anti-refugee sentiments, are publicly highlighted simultaneously.

159 Babińska Maria. "Individual and intergroup determinants of social representations of attitudes towards Jews during World War II", 48-50, Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2023. https://uwedupl.bip.gov.pl/doktoraty-udostepnione-na-stronie-bip-zgodnie-z-art-188-ust-1-i-2-ustawy-z-dnia-3-lipca-2018-r-prawo-o-szkolnictwie-wyzszym/maria-babinska.html

160 Babińska Maria, Bilewicz Michał, Bulska Dominika, Haska Agnieszka, Winiewski Mikołaj. "Attitudes towards Jews and their history after the introduction of the IPN law" Prejudice Research Center. Accessed October 8, 2023. http://cbu.psychologia.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/410/2021/02/Analiza_Skutki_ustawy_o_IPN.pdf

161 "Monitoring Treści Nienawistnych W TVP: 05.09 – 24.09.2023 „ Otwarta Rzeczpospolita." Otwarta Rzeczpospolita RSS, September 25, 2023. https://www.otwarta.org/monitoring-tresci-nienawistnych-w-tvp-05-09-24-09-2023/.

Antisemitism in the sporting sphere

Despite the small size of the Jewish minority in Poland, a significant portion of the population still displays antisemitic attitudes, which is particularly evident in football stadiums where the term ‚Jew' is frequently used in a derogatory sense. Research on antisemitism in Polish football culture classifies and analyses information related to this problem, revealing that it often occurs in cities with a history of Polish-Jewish coexistence and lingering tensions. Various forms of antisemitism are identified within football, with a notable focus on the intense relationship between fans and the figure of the „Jew" as a means of expressing contempt and hatred. This phenomenon stands as a striking example of antisemitism in an environment devoid of Jewish individuals.[162]

The interviewees also mentioned so-called soccer fan antisemitism. In Poland, a distinction is made between soccer fans who are interested in sports and those who exhibit aggressive behaviour and treat the context of a match as a battlefield or an excuse to lash out. In these fan communities, popular chants and shouts often include antisemitic hate speech. The popularity of these antisemitic phrases, particularly evident on the internet, was also pointed out during our interviews.

162 Kucia, Marek, and Bogna Wilczyńska. „Antysemityzm stadionowy: analiza i interpretacja zjawiska." Kultura i Społeczeństwo 58.4 (2014): 171-200.

Enmity against other minority groups in the country

Poles' attitudes toward various minority groups have fluctuated over time. Until 2013, they were becoming more open toward Jews, Romas, and Ukrainians, but from 2014 to 2017, there was a decrease in acceptance. In 2021, positive attitudes toward these minority groups increased again. Meanwhile, from 2016 to 2021, acceptance of refugees and homosexuals also changed, with the largest increase in acceptance in 2021. Still, the most rejected in 2021 were refugees, Roma, and homosexuals.[163]

Field research identified Ukrainians as the minority group most frequently affected by discrimination, with Russians, Belarusians, and ethnic and religious minorities such as Roma and Muslims also significantly impacted. LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and people of colour were mentioned with comparable frequency. Additionally, several responses highlighted discrimination faced by people with disabilities and those who are non-neurotypical. The respondents attributed the decline in minority conditions after 2015 to a political crisis and the use of propaganda characterised by hateful and divisive rhetoric. The situation deteriorated with the arrival of Syrian refugees at the Belarusian border and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, leading to increased hostility towards the Russian minority in Poland. This hostility has expanded to include prejudices against other groups, with narratives falsely accusing Chechens and Belarusians of supporting Russia, contributing to civilian attacks on these communities and escalating discrimination against refugees, Ukrainian Roma, and Russian-speaking Ukrainians.

Summarising the field research findings, the most prevalent prejudices and stereotypes depict minorities as a nuisance and as entitled to special treatment. This results in feelings ranging from annoyance to outright hostility. Ukrainian men are often told to go home and fight in war. Ukrainian women are accused of taking social benefits from Poles and destroying Polish marriages. Roma are called Gypsies and portrayed as thieves who dishonestly make money. Representatives of the LGBTQ+ community are dehumanised; for example, gay men are accused of harming children. Similar accusations are directed at people of colour. The last group, women, are considered unstable, hysterical, unprofessional, and assigned to the role of mother.

Field research has led to the conclusion that the most prevalent form of prejudice manifestation is the use of hate speech on social media. The frequency of different types of prejudice reported was fairly uniform across the focus groups, with each group identifying a distinct type of prejudice as most prevalent. This variance could be attributed to the groups' more frequent exposure to certain types of prejudice. The most frequently observed form of prejudice was identified as everyday, casual antisemitism, characterised by telling antisemitic jokes and using offensive language. Respondents noted that while any minority could be subjected to attack, the absence of discourse about a minority is also perceived as discriminatory. This neglect is rooted in a tendency among the Polish majority to perceive society as homogenous, with a mindset that ‚others' are viewed negatively and ‚their problems are not ours to solve'. This marginalisation extends beyond religious or ethnic minorities to include individuals with disabilities, who face exclusion at educational, social, and political levels. Respondents also reported that hate speech is widely accepted in society and that prejudices

163 Mirucka, Maria., Zochniak, Kamila., Bulska, Dominika. "Poles' attitudes toward minorities: report from the Polish Prejudice Survey 2021" in Polish Prejudice Survey 2021- attitudes vs. political ideology edited by Dominika Bulska, Mikołaj Winiewski, Michał Bilewicz. Warsaw: Liberi Libri, in press.

exist throughout the population. According to them, biases and a lack of anti-discrimination sensibility are prevalent among teachers, who are unwilling to open up and learn.

Antisemitism and education

Topics related to Jewry, antisemitism, and the Holocaust in the official educational curricula

Before the collapse of Communism, Polish students lacked awareness of Jews' prevalence in various Polish towns; however, the existence of death camps for Jews on Polish land was largely present in school curricula. Since 1989, Holocaust education has been mandatory in Poland but not as a standalone subject. Recently, there has been a trend towards historical denial and revisionism, attempting to diminish the historical involvement of Polish citizens in antisemitic pogroms. Legal restrictions and international criticism have prompted concerns regarding the quality and accuracy of Holocaust education in Poland, particularly under the Law and Justice government which is perceived as conservative and nationalist.[164]

Drawing from our field research, in Polish schools, the topics of Jews, antisemitism, and the Holocaust are introduced, primarily within history and Polish language classes. Mandatory readings cover subjects like pogroms in Poland and the Holocaust. However, the depth of discussion and explanation of these topics to students largely depends on individual teachers. Personal experiences with compulsory readings in school, such as „Mendel Gdański" by Maria Konopnicka and „Medaliony" by Nałkowska, provided the first exposure to the concept of pogroms during education and were recalled in the field research as quite shocking.

Educational materials and activities addressing antisemitism

According to the interviewees' experience, numerous academics, researchers, educators, and leaders within the Jewish community are actively engaged in combating antisemitism. They create and utilise various resources, including reports on antisemitism in Poland as well as educational materials about Israel.

The interviewees emphasised the importance of countering antisemitism through improved education that offers accurate information about Jews and their history. They also recommended organising events that facilitate interactions between Poles and members of minority groups. Another effective approach would be to invite Israeli experts to participate in university conferences to foster closer connections and dispel hostility. Additionally, creating materials to help identify hate speech and prejudice is essential. Notably, there is a need for specific Polish examples of Holocaust denialism tailored to the linguistic and social context and aligned with the statements of public figures. This localised approach would address the unique aspects of the issue within the Polish context.

164 Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, Jolanta. 2019. "The Uses and the Abuses of Education about the Holocaust in Poland after 1989." Holocaust Studies 25 (3): 329–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2019.1567668.

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BOND

Antisemitism in ROMANIA

Executive summary

This research report presents the findings of an extensive study conducted in Romania between March and September 2023, focusing on the multifaceted issue of antisemitism in the country. The study provides an analysis of the contemporary situation of Jewish communities in Romania, the prevalence and perceptions of antisemitism, and its intersection with other forms of intolerance. Additionally, the report examines efforts to prevent antisemitism through educational initiatives. The research reveals that antisemitism in Romania has deep historical roots, and it is still pervasive and widespread. It typically takes the form of latent stereotypes and prejudices, manifested in narratives that are deeply intertwined with complex conspiracy theories and nationalist interpretations of Romanian history. Many individuals are unaware of the current-day expressions and manifestations of antisemitism, and this lack of awareness further exacerbates the problem. Although Romania has introduced legislation in recent years to combat antisemitism and other forms of discrimination and intolerance, the enforcement and implementation of these laws are inconsistent and sporadic. A positive development is the introduction of Holocaust education as a mandatory subject in high schools, starting in 2023. However, there are challenges in the effective implementation of this curriculum. Teachers call for clearer guidelines, training, and updated educational materials to ensure the new curriculum fulfils its goals.

The research underscores the pressing need for efforts to acknowledge and address antisemitism in Romania. These efforts should include increasing awareness about contemporary manifestations of antisemitism, consistent enforcement of existing legislation, and working collaboratively across sectors to strengthen Holocaust education initiatives. These steps are essential in combating the deeply entrenched antisemitism in the country and promoting a more inclusive and tolerant society for all.

The situation of the Jewish communities in Romania

Before WWII, Romania was the home of around 800,000 Jews[165]. Currently, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) estimates a core Jewish population of about 8,700[166], but the latest census from 2021 reveals a much lower number: 2378[167]. According to the 2021 census, the majority of Romania's core Jewish population (906) reside in Bucharest. Smaller groups reside in Timis (144), Cluj (139), Bihor (135), and Iasi (133), and are spread across the country.[168] Most of the Jewish population are over the age of 70, and very few youth (under the age of twenty-five) currently live in Romania.[169]

Despite the Communist regime prohibiting all Zionist activity, organised Jewish life, including religion, culture and education, was active after WWII.[170] After 1989, the Jewish communal property was returned to the Federation of Jewish Communities. Remnants of 'shtetl' (Jewish village) life still remain present in some parts of Romania.[171] Synagogues and religious infrastructure are maintained, although less and less are operational. In Bucharest, three Synagogues[172] still hold weekly services. There are kosher cafeterias in some cities, and all Jewish children receive basic Jewish education[173]. Following the transition to democracy, a Jewish publishing house called *Hasefer* was established, and the *Center of Jewish History in Romania*, founded in 1976, gained legal status. In Bucharest, a department dedicated to Jewish studies was established. The Jewish community in Bucharest also operates an elderly retirement facility, a Jewish hospital, a clinic, and a pharmacy.[174]

The interviews confirmed that the Jewish community is small and inconspicuous compared to other minority groups (IR1). According to an interviewee, the Federation of Jewish Communities (JCC) in Romania reports 7,000 to 8,000 members, which is much higher than the 2021 census records (IR2). Some expatriates have returned from Israel but are not actively participating in the Jewish community (IR2). The lack of visible identification, such as wearing a *yarmulke*, makes it difficult for others to discern their Jewish background (FG4). The shrinking of the Jewish community is accompanied by challenges related to assimilation and an ageing population (IR3). According to the interviews, Jewish community members are perceived as being well-integrated and well-adjusted, with high social status and respectable professions (IR1). There are religious Jews within the Jewish

165 "Back to communities: Romania," EJC European Jewish Congress, 2022, accessed 13 September 2023, https://eurojewcong.org/communities/romania/

166 "Romania," JPR Institute for Jewish Policy Research, accessed 10 July 2023, https://www.jpr.org.uk/countries/how-many-jews-in-romania

167 "Rezultate definitive: Caracteristici etno-culturale demografice". Populația după etnie la recensămintele din perioada 1930-2021 (Etnii, Județe). Recensământul populației și locuințelor 2021, accessed 1 December 2023: https://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-rpl-2021/rezultate-definitive/

168 "Rezultate definitive: Caracteristici etno-culturale demografice". Populația după etnie la recensămintele din perioada 1930-2021 (Etnii, Județe). Recensământul populației și locuințelor 2021, accessed 1 December 2023: https://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-rpl-2021/rezultate-definitive/

169 "Back to communities: Romania," EJC, 2022, accessed 13 September 2023, https://eurojewcong.org/communities/romania/

170 "Back to communities: Romania," EJC, 2022, accessed 10 July 2023, https://eurojewcong.org/communities/romania/

171 "Back to communities: Romania," EJC, 2022, accessed 10 July 2023, https://eurojewcong.org/communities/romania/

172 The Yivo Encyclopedia for Jews in Eastern Europe: Bucharest. https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Bucharest

173 "Back to communities: Romania," EJC, 2022, accessed 10 July 2023, https://eurojewcong.org/communities/romania/

174 "Back to communities: Romania," EJC, 2022, accessed 10 July 2023, https://eurojewcong.org/communities/romania/

community, and despite the general perception of Jewish affluence, many lead humble lifestyles (IR3). Interview respondents confirmed that the Jewish community in Romania is ageing; many of the younger generation, particularly those who have returned from Israel, no longer identify themselves as part of the Jewish community (IR3). Efforts are made by organisations like the JCC to preserve traditions, language and other aspects of the Jewish heritage. There are still significant places of remembrance, such as graveyards and synagogues, although the latter often serve multiple functions unrelated to their original purpose (IR3). Many Romanians have had little or no interaction with Jewish people (IR6, FG3), contributing to the overall perception that there are very few Jews in Romania today (IR7).

Level and trend of antisemitism in Romania

The results of research by the Action and Protection League from 2021[175] found that Romania's combined proportion of latent and manifest antisemitism was above average (53%), and 16% of respondents in Romania answered that they "rather have negative feelings" about Jews. According to the same research, 28% of Romanians can be considered antisemitic in terms of primary antisemitism[176], 63% in terms of secondary antisemitism[177], and 49% in terms of new antisemitism[178]. Religious antisemitic beliefs were particularly high (second only to Greece in the same study of 16 European countries), with 30% agreeing with the statement: "Even now, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is an unforgivable sin of the Jews".[179] Interestingly, while the proportion of antisemites in Romania was high, the report also found a high proportion of Israel sympathisers (44%).[180] Like in most other post-communist countries, when measuring both indicators for "philosemitism", the report shows that support for Israel is much higher than support for Jews in Romania.[181]

Likely because of the small size of the Jewish population in Romania, antisemitism expresses itself mainly as historical revisionism, Holocaust denial and/or trivialisation, and global antisemitic conspiracy narratives.[182] It is mainly oriented around issues of memory and history – on a nationalist interpretation of Romanian history, especially the discussions of communism vs fascism, rather than immediate current events.[183] The lack of education about the Holocaust is illustrated by the fact that only 32% of respondents in Romania believed that the Holocaust happened in Romania, according to the results of research from 2021.[184] It mainly involves acts of vandalism, sabotage or harmful incidents, extremism in public institutions, trade-in fascist literature and objects, ceremonies and commemorations of militant neo-nazi groups, antisemitism and trivialisation of the Holocaust in the parliament, and antisemitism and Holocaust denial online.[185]

The field research indicated that most people are unaware or unable to identify manifestations of antisemitism. When asked directly, many respondents could not come up with examples of antisemitism; however, through conversations, they often present unconscious biases, prejudices or historical interpretations that place Jews in a negative light. Confirming what has been mentioned in the literature, antisemitism in Romania is expressed through history revisionism, nationalist rhetoric, failure to mention the Holocaust, or making it seem like

175 Kovács, András, Fischer, Gyorgy, "Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe: Survey in 16 European Countries". Action and Protection League. 2021, p. 33, accessed 3 November 2023, https://archive.jpr.org.uk/object-2408

176 Primary antisemitism/traditional antisemitism includes three dimensions: 1) cognitive – the content of prejudicial statements, 2) affective – the emotions felt towards the object of prejudice, 3) conative – the willingness to act in accordance with prejudice, to accept discrimination.

177 Secondary antisemitism is Holocaust relativisation, denial, and distortion.

178 New antisemitism is anti-Jewish sentiments projected onto Israel as a focal point.

179 Kovács and Fischer, "Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe". 2021, p. 27.

180 Kovács and Fischer, "Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe". 2021, p. 68.

181 Kovács and Fischer, "Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe". 2021, p. 68.

182 Carstocea, "Between Europeanisation and Local Legacies," p. 318.

183 INSHR-EW and Studio12, "Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania", p.12.

184 Studio12, "Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania", p.15.

185 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023".

what happened at that time was not Romania's responsibility (FG3).

The COVID-19 pandemic had affected antisemitism in Romania: anti-restriction protests during the pandemic brought antisemitic rhetoric onto the streets.[186] In May 2020, a group of protesters put a protective mask on the statue of Elie Wiesel in Bucharest, explaining that „this personality transmitted a virus which is much more dangerous than the Wuhan virus [...]".[187] The protesters were promoting a narrative presenting the fight against antisemitism and the ideas that accompany it as a virus more dangerous than COVID-19.[188] In March 2021, protesters continued promoting Holocaust-trivialising messages, comparing Romania with a Nazi camp and likening mandatory vaccinations to the medical experiments that were performed on victims of the Holocaust.[189]

In May 2021, the Romanian Government adopted the first National Strategy for the Prevention and Fight against Antisemitism, Xenophobia, Radicalization and Hate speech and appointed a special representative for the promotion of memorial policies and the fight against antisemitism and xenophobia.[190] Nonetheless, at the local level, there is poor understanding and a lack of awareness and responsibility, which hinders the practical implementation of the legislation.[191] Despite improved legislation, however, streets, statutes and other institutions are still named after known antisemitic war criminals.[192] The sporadic enforcement and lack of response from the authorities have emboldened a segment of society with extremist attitudes and behaviours.[193]

Expressions of antisemitism appear to be somewhat more prevalent among people who identify as politically conservative or right-wing.[194][195] A survey from 2021 found that 22% of Romanians believe that Jews act to destabilise the society.[196] The minority holding this view is over-represented by youth (18-29) without higher education, people who adhere to populist political views, who rarely, if ever, watch news on the TV, and who often comment on online articles (daily or several times per week).[197]

Gender does not appear to play a significant role in antisemitism in Romania. Research by ADL in 2014-2015 found that 47% of Romanians hold antisemitic attitudes, with a higher prevalence

186 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p. 51.

187 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.20.

188 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.20.

189 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.21.

190 Guvernul Romaniei, "Fresh news: The Romanian government officially starts the implementation of the 2021-2023 National Strategy for preventing and combating anti-Semitism, xenophobia, radicalisation and hate speech, Press Release," Tuesday 22 March 2022, accessed 7 August 2023, https://gov.ro/en/news/the-romanian-government-oficially-starts-the-implementation-of-the-2021-2023-national-strategy-for-preventing-and-combating-anti-semitism-xenophobia-radicalization-and-hate-speech

191 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania", accessed 16 Sep 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/romania/

192 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021", p. 2-3.

193 INSHR-EW, "Antisemitismul în vremuri de pandemie: RAPORT 2021-2022," July 2022, accessed 16 August 2023, https://www.inshr-ew.ro/en/monitorizarea-antisemitismului-in-romania-raport-2022/

194 INSHR-EW, "Antisemitismul în vremuri de pandemie: RAPORT 2021-2022," July 2022, p. 3.

195 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021, The Antisemitism in The Street," 2021, p.22, accessed 7 August 2023, https://www.inshr-ew.ro/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EN-Raport-monitorizare-2021.pdf

196 Studio12, "Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania," 2021, p.12.

197 Studio12, "Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania," 2021, p.12.

among males (54%) compared to females (40%).[198] However, experts suggest that, while men might be more loud or visible in expressing antisemitism, gender is not a determining factor in antisemitic behaviour and attitudes (IR2). Rather, experts argue that antisemitic stereotypes and prejudices are pervasive in society, with no noticeable gender differences (IR2).

Practitioners (FG1) express concerns about young people's growing fascination with nationalist historical narratives, such as the Legionary Movement. Such content is circulating on social media (TikTok) and could lead to the adoption of corresponding ideologies, including antisemitism (FG1). Jewish respondents (FG4) and experts (IR5) argue that antisemitic stereotypes and prejudices are deeply ingrained in people's subconscious and not recognised as antisemitic by those who hold them. Some might even interpret certain stereotypes, like the notion that Jews are financially savvy, as compliments rather than harmful stereotypes (FG4).

198 ADL, "ADL Global 100: Romania: 2014-2015," 2015, Accessed 7 August 2023, https://global100.adl.org/country/romania/2014

Antisemitic stereotypes, prejudices, conspiracy theories

ADL's report from 2015[199] identified that the most commonly held antisemitic stereotypes in Romania include "Jews talk too much about what happened to them during the Holocaust" (63%), "Jews have too much power in the business world… in international financial markets" (61% and 59%, respectively), and "Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the country in which they live" (58%)[200]. INSHR-EW's monitoring report (2021)[201] categorised the online manifestations of antisemitism into the following categories:

1. "Jews run the world or Romania" (increased from 70% to 73% in the sources monitored from 2020 to 2021),

2. "Judeo-Bolshevism", equating Jewishness with communism (decreased from 25% in 2020 to 11% in 2021),

3. Holocaust-denial or trivialisation/ relativising,

4. Economic and religious antisemitism (to a lesser extent).

Antisemitic discourse on social media is often context-driven and can, therefore, be difficult to identify by artificial intelligence or people not specifically trained for it.[202] Usually, links to news stories about the Israel-Palestine conflict or current events involving Jews are antisemitic because of how they are connected to a narrative that incites hatred.[203] Most commonly, these messages target the entire Jewish population (rather than particular individuals). About 65-70% of antisemitic messages on Facebook promote the narrative that "Jews rule the world or Romania". Many other messages don't fit the typical antisemitic rhetoric but are generally insulting, disapproving or resisting anything related to Judaism or the Jewish identity.[204]

The most prevalent stereotypes that emerged in the field research include Jews being affluent and possessing business acumen, Jews wielding significant power and influence, and Jews being highly intelligent and remarkably capable and productive. Members of the Jewish community in Romania report being perceived as exclusively prioritising their own community or being frugal and self-centred (FG4). The field research brought up occurrences of the use of the derogatory Romanian term „jidan", which has Slavic origins (IR1). Jews are often associated with power and negative symbols, such as George Soros being a symbol of evil and attributing societal problems to him (IR5). Others described passive antisemitism, where Jews are portrayed as culprits responsible for conspiracies and legends (IR2).

Conspiratorial antisemitism is also present in Romania. A majority of antisemitism on social media revolves around conspiracy theories[205], most of which circulate the themes of Judeo-Bolshevism, Holocaust denial, and narratives about Jewish intervention in politics or the

199 ADL, "ADL Global 100: Romania: 2014-2015," 2015.

200 ADL, "ADL Global 100: Romania: 2014-2015," 2015.

201 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021, The Antisemitism in The Street," 2021, p.35.

202 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021, The Antisemitism in The Street," 2021, p.35.

203 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021, The Antisemitism in The Street," 2021, p.35.

204 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021, The Antisemitism in The Street," 2021, p. 36-37

205 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania".

economy[206]. INSHR-EW's report from 2021 showed a slight increase (3%) between 2020-2021 of antisemitic conspiracy-type content online, specifically on the topic of "Jews rule the world or Romania"[207]. In recent years, many of the articles published systematically use the war in Ukraine as a starting point to validate the antisemitic theories about how Jews rule the world.[208] Throughout 2021, there was a resurfacing of online content endorsing antisemitic ideologies and celebrating the Legionary Movement[209][210]. Presently, the discourse is intricately connected to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. In various conspiracy narratives, Jews are portrayed as individuals who profit from or have vested interests in the war[211].

The COVID-19 pandemic brought up new conspiratorial antisemitic narratives. Much of the antisemitic content that was found online at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020 blamed Jews for the medical crisis. Some of the related messages developed and shared between 2020-2021 include: "Jews fund companies that produce the serum and encourage vaccination to gain control, as well as for economic gain; Jews encourage vaccination, but the serum administered to them and that given to non-Jews is different, the latter having harmful effects; Jews encourage discrimination and segregation of the ones who refuse vaccination". 13% of the articles monitored in relation to the COVID-19 vaccines were linked to this topic, supporting the idea that the global systems are controlled by Jews.[212] There was a surge in popularity around the QAnon movement on social media, particularly on Facebook, throughout 2020. Due to interventions from Facebook, these groups are now much more difficult to find, and their audience is smaller than it was in 2020[213].

206 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023" p. 51

207 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.28.

208 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.28.

209 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.36

210 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania", accessed 16 Sep 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/romania/

211 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p. 45., https://www.inshr-ew.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Raport-monitorizare-20-IULIE-2023.pdf

212 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.28.

213 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.33.

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Antisemitic hate speech and hate crime

Hate speech continues to manifest in the online environment on websites, blogs, and social media. Topics on the public agenda (vaccination campaigns, studying the history of Jews and the Holocaust in schools, the outbreak of war in Ukraine) are used to promote antisemitic narratives.[214] Facebook remains the most popular social network, serving as a primary source of information and a major channel for public expression. In recent years, the platform's improved mechanisms for removing content that violates the law or community standards have led to a migration of content to more permissive channels, such as Telegram or VK[215].

The most common forms of hate speech witnessed by people in Romania are based on ethnicity (47%), followed by political orientation (40%), religion (33%), sexual orientation (31%), race (30%) and disabilities (30%)[216]. The incidents were most commonly witnessed on the street (53%), at work (24%), and among friends (19%).[217] 65% of respondents believe that hate speech has intensified in recent years.[218] Most antisemitic hate speech monitored online during the period 2020-2021 was collectively directed at Jews as a whole. Some individual targets appear recurrently (George Soros, Liviu Beris, etc.), but also newly falsely identified targets (Dominic Fritz), who are referred to precisely because they symbolise Jewishness.[219] The articles that were monitored for antisemitic content during 2020-2021 do not overtly incite hatred against Jews but could potentially be associated with a "call for resistance". There is often the use of aggressive language and personal attacks.[220]

It appears that the high levels of antisemitic attitudes rarely translate to antisemitic violence. In Romania, as well as in other countries, there is essentially no relationship between the number of violent acts and the degree of anti-Jewish prejudice.[221] There was an increase in the reported number of antisemitic incidents in Romania between 2009 and 2019, from four incidents in 2009, peaking with 22 incidents in 2017 and dropping to 16 in 2019.[222] From 2020 to 2023, the rate of antisemitic content online also increased.[223] At important events or dates (e.g. the election campaign, Jewish holidays), antisemitism shows up more frequently online and in speeches from public representatives.[224] The rhetoric of antisemitic messages has remained fairly consistent in

214 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania".

215 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania".

216 CNCD and IRES, "Sondaj de opinie 2018," 2018, p. 28, accessed 13 September 2023, https://www.cncd.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Sondaj_de_opinie_NoIntoHate_2018.pdf

217 CNCD and IRES, "Sondaj de opinie 2018," 2018, p.30

218 CNCD and IRES, "Sondaj de opinie 2018," 2018, p.31

219 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.31, https://www.inshr-ew.ro/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EN-Raport-monitorizare-2021.pdf

220 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.31.

221 Kovács and Fischer, "Antisemitic Prejudices in Europe". 2021, p. 81.

222 Statista, "Number of incidents pertaining to antisemitism in Romania from 2009 to 2019," 2023, accessed 17 September 2023, https://www.statista.com/statistics/1173749/romania-incidents-pertaining-to-antisemitism/

223 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023", 2023, accessed 4 August 2023, , https://www.inshr-ew.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Raport-monitorizare-20-IULIE-2023.pdf

224 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021, 2021, p. 3.

the media but appears at an increased pace.[225] Messages circulating the themes of Judeo-Bolshevism, Holocaust denial, and conspiracy narratives about Jewish intervention in politics or the economy are widespread. Recently, many articles systematically use the war in Ukraine as a starting point to validate theories about how Jews rule the world.[226]

There have also been acts of hate crime, particularly in the form of vandalism, in recent years. On 12 September 2021, a memorial in the northern city of Bistrita was subjected to vandalism[227], and at the beginning of 2023, there was an incident in a park in Deva, with Nazi symbols and slogans being left on the park's pathways.[228] In Iasi, newly installed panels remembering the events of the Iasi pogrom have been vandalised several times.[229] In March 2021, a social media statement by the Director of the Jewish State Theatre, Maia Morgenstern, about an encounter with antisemitic language was followed by death threats against her family and threats to set fire to the Jewish theatre.[230] The event instigated a criminal investigation and condemnation from the parliament, noting the rise of antisemitic incidents.[231]

Experts and practitioners interviewed expressed their own experiences of having been targets of hate speech due to their proximity to the topic. It was mentioned that people in Romania who work in the field of addressing these topics (Holocaust education, intercultural education, democracy and human rights) often become targets of hate speech and even death threats (IR5).

225 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023".

226 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p. 51.

227 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania", accessed 16 Sep 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/romania/

228 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p. 6.

229 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.7.

230 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania".

231 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania".

Perception of antisemitism in the Jewish community

According to surveys conducted by INSHR-EW in 2023, 71% of Jews in Romania agree that antisemitism exists in society today; only 6% consider that it does not exist at all.[232] 41% of Jewish respondents believe that antisemitism has increased over the last five years, while 38% think that it has remained the same.[233] The main expressions of antisemitism as perceived by the Jewish community is the desecration of cemeteries, with 68% reporting it as a very big or big problem, followed by antisemitism on social media (53%), vandalism of Jewish institutions and monuments (52%), antisemitism on the political arena (51%), in mass-media (42%), and on the street or in public places (38%).[234] 24% of Jewish respondents report having been the targets of antisemitic remarks, and 14% had been targets of antisemitic actions in the last five years.[235] 27% of respondents report that they often or sometimes avoid wearing objects that could identify them as Jewish when they are in public, and 21% avoid posting content online that might reveal their Jewish identity.[236]

Jewish focus group respondents supported the findings, which indicate widespread and pervasive antisemitism in Romania (FG4). Experiences include overt opposition to interfaith marriage, negative vocabulary about Jewish people, reluctance to self-identify as Jewish due to fear of bias and prejudices, Holocaust denial, and more covert stereotypes that are expressed in trivial conversations and behaviour (FG4). One respondent gave the example of a situation where they had disclosed their Jewish heritage to an elderly Hungarian lady, who had responded with "flattering" comments about Jews being "smart" and „tricky", not realising that her words were reflecting common and harmful stereotypes about Jewish people (FG4). Jewish respondents (FG4) also claimed to have noticed an increase in violent acts of antisemitism in recent years, some attributing it to a surge in nationalism and growing divisions between various groups within society. It was suggested that antisemitic sentiments have been exacerbated by the prevailing divisive and nationalist ideologies (FG4).

Jewish respondents characterised the belief that there is no antisemitism in Romania as „ideal thinking," arising from innocence, ignorance, or a lack of awareness about what constitutes antisemitism. Some people may hold antisemitic beliefs without realising it, as these beliefs have been passed down through generations as „normal." (FG4).

232 INSHR-EW and Avangarde, "Raport de cercetare: Percepții ale minoratitații evreiești asupră societății Românești", 2023, p.3, accessed 4 Dec 2023, https://www.inshr-ew.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Raport-de-cercetare-minoritatea-evreiasca.pdf

233 INSHR-EW and Avangarde, "Raport de cercetare: Percepții ale minoratitații evreiești asupră societății Românești"2023, p. 4

234 INSHR-EW and Avangarde,"Raport de cercetare: Percepții ale minoratitații evreiești asupră societății Românești"2023, p. 5.

235 INSHR-EW and Avangarde,"Raport de cercetare: Percepții ale minoratitații evreiești asupră societății Românești", 2023, p. 7-14

236 INSHR-EW and Avangarde,"Raport de cercetare: Percepții ale minoratitații evreiești asupră societății Românești", 2023, p. 18-19

Antisemitism on the political level

On the political level, antisemitism has been expressed mainly in the form of glorifying known antisemitic fascist leaders from the interwar period and war criminals from WWII, making them out to be patriots and Romanian heroes.[237] Political figures typically use antisemitic rhetoric to promote a nationalist, anti-communist historical narrative.[238] Expressions of economic or religious antisemitism are less commonly observed.[239]

Antisemitic remarks have been made by political leaders from the right-wing liberal party, National Liberal Party (PNL), and the far-right nationalist party, Alliance for the Unity of Romanians (AUR). Typically, the Judeo-Bolshevism narrative (associating Judaism with communism) is promoted as part of a right-wing nationalist narrative associating the Romanian national identity with anti-communism and aligning communism with Judaism, thereby painting Jews as "other" and not part of the Romanian national identity.[240] On 3 March 2021, Daniel Gheorghe, a parliamentarian from the PNL, delivered a speech in which he praised Mircea Vulcanescu, a convicted war criminal who endorsed antisemitic policies while serving under Antonescu's WWII government.[241] A few days later, during a Senate session on 8 March 2021, Senator Lavric, a member of the AUR, spoke about Jewish involvement in initiating and promoting communism. Lavric's comments were made in response to criticism from Silviu Vexler, a Jewish member of parliament, who had raised concerns about the antisemitic nature of statements made by some parliament members, including Lavric. It's noteworthy that AUR shared Lavric's speech on its official Facebook page, making it part of a broader effort to shape the country's historical narrative.[242]

Increasingly, organisations that promote nationalist and extremist ideologies try to gain legitimacy by using public buildings as venues for their events.[243] For example, in October 2022, the „Reduta" Cultural Center, an institution under the Brasov City Council, partnered with the neo-Legionary Ogoranu Foundation to organise an event dedicated to Nicolae Purcărea, presenting him as an anti-communist fighter. Nicolae Purcărea was a member of the Legionary Movement who was arrested during the Antonescu regime and, after 1990, was among those who tried to re-establish the Legionary Movement through the "All for the Country" (Totul pentru Țară) party.[244] Similar incidents have occurred all across the country over the last year, lending legitimacy to organisations that glorify and attempt to rejuvenate the identity of the Legionary Movement.

237 INSHR-EW and Avangarde, "Responsabil de Holocaustul din România: Hitler Sau Antonescu," 2021, p.3.

238 INSHR-EW and Avangarde, "Responsabil de Holocaustul din România: Hitler Sau Antonescu," 2021, p.3.

239 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.30.

240 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," 2023, p. 14.

241 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania", accessed 16 Sep 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/romania/

242 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania".

243 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," 2023, p. 14.

244 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," 2023, p. 14.

Antisemitism in the sporting sphere

INSHR-EW's most recent monitoring report highlights antisemitic incidents within the realm of sports in Romania during the period of May 2022-April 2023[245]. These incidents primarily occurred in football stadiums. In Cluj in October 2022, at the football match between CFR Cluj and Slavia Prague, some Cluj-Napoca supporters displayed, in the Czech language, signs with the antisemitic message: "You are just some Jews, Slavia". A few days later, the CFR supporters showed up at a meeting, showing a racist message targeting the Roma community.[246] In January 2023, the Sepsi Sfântu-Gheorghe-FC U Craiova football match was suspended due to xenophobic chants from the Craiova supporters. Similar chants have been used in recent years at several matches in which one of the teams is associated with the Hungarian community. At a football match in April 2023, the CSA Steaua team displayed a flag with the face of the leader of the Legionary Movement, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. At the Romania-Ukraine match on 24 June 2023, one of the messages in the stands praised the Legionary Movement.[247] These antisemitic and xenophobic incidents in recent years highlight the prevalence of hate speech, including antisemitism, in the sporting sphere.

245 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.11

246 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.11

247 INSHR-EW, "Raport de Monitorizare: Mai 2022-Aprilie 2023," p.12.

Enmity against other minority groups in the country

Besides the Jewish community, the minority groups that are most affected by group-focused hatred are the Roma, the LGBTQ+, and the Hungarian minority[248]. The main forms of expression of enmity against these groups, particularly the Roma, include discrimination, hate speech and prejudices. A survey from 2021 found that a majority of people are neutral in their attitudes towards ethnic minorities, the strongest negative perception being towards the Roma, a group which is considered a problem by a staggering 38% of the population.[249] Opinion polls from 2018[250] showed that the most distrusted groups in Romania are the Roma (72%), followed by religious minority groups (56%), and the Hungarian (53%) and Jewish (46%) minorities. The only group more distrusted than Roma are people who identify as homosexuals (74%), followed by immigrants (69%) and Muslims (68%). Although discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited under Romanian law, discrimination against LGBTQ+ is common. A 2020 survey by the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency found that 15% of LGBTQ+ individuals had suffered physical or sexual attacks linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity in the past five years; only 4% reported them to authorities due to fear of discrimination.[251] Hate speech targeting any kind of minority, especially sexual and ethnic, is typically combined with Euroscepticism and anti-globalism.[252]

The field research indicated widespread agreement about the Roma being the main target of group-focused hatred and discrimination in Romania. The expert interviews (IR2) highlighted that anti-Roma and anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments are both more prevalent and dangerous than antisemitism in their manifestations. A Jewish respondent (from FG4) pointed out that the groups most affected are the ones you can most clearly identify as "different" from the majority group, those who are easily identifiable by their look as "different". In line with this, Hungarian (IR8) and Roma (IR1, IR4, IR7, FG3) respondents also emphasised that they attempt to hide their ethnic identity, citing fear of discrimination, hatred or loss of opportunity.

The field research found that Roma are commonly displayed as thieves, dirty, dangerous, and stupid (FG3). Jewish respondents (FG4) grew up hearing the use of derogatory language when mentioning the Roma ("gipsies"), ingraining in them from a young age the assumption that Roma are dangerous because they are different. The Roma youth (FG3) shared stories that exemplify discrimination, where their ethnicity led to unjust treatment. For example, a teacher refused to give a passing grade to a competent Roma student despite good results overall, preventing them from graduating high school (FG3). Another illustrative example was when an administrator made prejudiced assumptions about a Roma student, which led to them being denied access to a course. The assumption was that the young girl had children, which was not the case. Roma youth believe that the corrective measures introduced by the Romanian state, such as special spots in schools, exacerbate divisions and tensions,

248 Studio12, "Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania," 2021, p.12.

249 Studio12, "Perceptions of interethnic relations and the Holocaust in Romania," 2021, p.3-6.

250 CNCD and IRES, "Sondaj de opinie 2018," p. 12.

251 US Department of State, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Romania", accessed 16 Sep 2023, https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/romania/

252 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021," p.26.

further isolating and marginalising Roma youth (FG3). A Romanian youth mentioned an incident where a Roma individual was unjustly pulled off a bus. The respondent perceived it as an act of ethnic hatred and emphasised the unfairness in treatment based on ethnicity (FG3). A Roma community leader pointed to intersections with gender, highlighting that gender-based violence is a pervasive cross-cutting issue (IR4). These stories underscore the pervasive discrimination and hatred that the Roma face, both openly and through institutional biases. The stereotypes about the Hungarian minority typically focus on nationalist ideas, fears and questions about "why they are still here" (FG1). Jewish and Hungarian minorities have sometimes been perceived as intellectual threats or as having more societal power in Romania, whereas the Roma minority have a lower status and fewer rights (IR7).

Antisemitism and education

Jewry, antisemitism and the Holocaust in the official educational curricula

Until recently, the teaching of the Holocaust in schools has been optional and often lacking.[253] In 2021, the Romanian government passed legislation making Holocaust education, „History of Jews and the Holocaust in Romania" mandatory in schools.[254] In the updated curriculum from 2021, 9th-grade history students learn about the history of the Jews, among other groups.[255] From 2022, 10th-grade history students learn about political regimes in the interwar period and interwar international relations, including the Holocaust and Romania in the two world wars.[256] 10th-grade students in religion also learn about Judaism, Jewish culture and the Old Testament.[257] From 2023, 11th-grade history students learn about political ideas and regimes[258]; 11th-grade students of religion might study Judaism[259], and the general term "discrimination" will be covered in the subject Sociology and Economy[260]. However, no clear guidelines regarding discussions on antisemitism are included in the curriculum.

Teachers often use lessons from Holocaust education and antisemitism to address other contemporary issues related to discrimination, xenophobia, and chauvinism (FG1). For example, while mandatory Holocaust education now exists for high school students, there's no equivalent for Roma history.

The first-line practitioners (FG1) reported that there is a divide among teachers, some considering the study of the Holocaust unnecessary and receiving too much attention. While respondents think that Holocaust education is improving, concerns are raised about the quality of textbooks and other educational materials on Jewish history and antisemitism. Some teachers are concerned about the violent imagery often used in classroom presentations, leading to a negative association between Jews and death, sadness, and victimhood (IR3). Teachers have a wide range of materials available to them for educating students about the Holocaust; however, there is a need for more and improved materials focusing on the historical local situation in Romania and connecting it to antisemitism and other current manifestations of intolerance (IR3). Teachers believe these materials should be better adapted to suit the needs of youth and argue that they should have been piloted before being introduced in classes (FG1).

253 INSHR-EW, "Monitoring Report: May 2020-April 2021", p. 2-3.

254 INSHR-EW, "Antisemitismul în vremuri de pandemie," 2022.

255 Ministerul Educației, "REPERE METODOLOGICE PENTRU APLICAREA CURRICULUMULUI la CLASA A IX-A în anul școlar 2021-2022 LIMBA ȘI LITERATURA ROMÂNĂ, învățământ liceal și profesional," 2021, Centrul Național De Politici Și Evaluare În Educație, accessed 15 September 2023, https://edu.ro/

256 Ministerul Educației, "REPERE METODOLOGICE PENTRU APLICAREA CURRICULUMULUI LA CLASA a X-a ÎN ANUL ȘCOLAR 2022-2023, Disciplina ISTORIE," 2022, Centrul Național De Politici Și Evaluare În Educație, accessed 15 September 2023, https://edu.ro/

257 Ministerul Educației, "REPERE METODOLOGICE PENTRU APLICAREA CURRICULUMULUI LA CLASA a X-a ÎN ANUL ȘCOLAR 2022-2023, Disciplina RELIGIE," 2022, Centrul Național De Politici Și Evaluare În Educație, accessed 15 September 2023, https://edu.ro/

258 Ministerul Educației, "REPERE METODOLOGICE PENTRU APLICAREA CURRICULUMULUI LA CLASA a XI-a ÎN ANUL ȘCOLAR 2023-2024, Disciplina ISTORIE," 2023, Centrul Național De Politici Și Evaluare În Educație, accessed 15 September 2023, https://edu.ro/

259 Ministerul Educației, "REPERE METODOLOGICE PENTRU APLICAREA CURRICULUMULUI LA CLASA a XI-a ÎN ANUL ȘCOLAR 2023-2024, Disciplina RELIGIE," 2023, Centrul Național De Politici Și Evaluare În Educație, accessed 15 September 2023, https://edu.ro/

260 Ministerul Educației, "REPERE METODOLOGICE PENTRU APLICAREA CURRICULUMULUI LA CLASA a XI-a ÎN ANUL ȘCOLAR 2023-2024, Disciplina SOCIO-UMANE," 2023, Centrul Național De Politici Și Evaluare În Educație, accessed 15 September 2023, https://edu.ro/

Educational materials and activities addressing antisemitism

The materials and activities provided in the official curriculum focus primarily on the Holocaust in historical terms, specifically the Holocaust, as it happened in other European countries (not in Romania). The resources primarily consist of documentaries, with learning mainly through storytelling and testimonies of survivors, but also on analysis of the movements in society which led to the rise of the nazi regime and the Holocaust. In the updated 10th-grade history curriculum, there are links to TedEd resources, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum[261], and the online Anne Frank House Museum[262]. These materials and activities are easily available to teachers. However, most of them are in English, and language barriers might hinder many teachers from using and/or understanding the content.

Teachers often seek supplementary materials beyond the official curriculum to enhance learning experiences. For instance, INSHR-EW developed region-specific notebooks in Romania focusing on the Holocaust to help teachers connect historical events with local geography and adapted victim memoirs (IR2). While approved by the Ministry of Education, its utility in classrooms remains uncertain (IR2). Additionally, INSHR-EW introduced an outdoor comic book exhibition in 2023 to commemorate local Holocaust victims (IR1). Other resources include videos by the National Roma Culture Center, online information about the Roma community (IR7), interactive lessons at the Synagogue History Museum in Oradea, and initiatives by dedicated teachers to organise projects, activities, and excursions related to Holocaust education. However, concerns were raised that making Holocaust history mandatory without proper teacher training may compromise the quality of education on this subject (FG1). Despite the availability of numerous NGO-developed resources, teachers frequently lack awareness of their freedom to incorporate these materials to meet curriculum demands (IR5). Many teachers mistakenly believe they are restricted to official school textbooks, leading valuable resources to be underutilised in extracurricular activities despite their perfect alignment with the curriculum. While some educators grasp the potential and are open to using these resources to fulfil curriculum needs, resistance often arises from middle management roles within educational hierarchies (IR5).

Needs of FLPs in addressing antisemitism through education

The field research highlighted several needs of FLPs in addressing antisemitism through education. Respondents highlighted the importance of connecting students with the history of the local community, offering glimpses into the surroundings and lifestyle of the Jewish community before the Holocaust (IR3). Experts emphasised the importance of using positive images and respecting the rights of victims when using pictures in pedagogical settings (IR3). Experts and first-line practitioners argued that many schools are not doing enough to tackle discrimination, hatred, and intolerance. Resistance or systemic barriers often hinder good efforts (IR1, IR5). For this reason, there is a need to adopt a whole-school approach, targeting not only teachers and students but also involving parents and other stakeholders (IR5). Teachers and educators (FG1) argued that there is a need for updated materials, textbooks and manuals that are pilot-tested, relevant and resonate with youth today (FG1). There is a need for resources that help deconstruct narratives and combat internalised prejudices (FG1). Extracurricular activities and collaborations with NGOs are valuable in creating spaces for addressing these issues outside the constraints of traditional school settings (IR5 & IR6).

261 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Online lectures: Studying Primary Sources from the Holocaust," accessed 13 September 2023, https://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/online

262 Anne Frank House, "The Anne Frank House online," accessed 13 September 2023, https://www.annefrank.org/en/museum/web-and-digital/

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