

Online Antisemitic Narratives Poland Country Report



Building Tolerance,
Understanding and
Dialogue across
Communities

Key findings

Antisemitism in the material studied was somewhat surprising. It appeared most often in clearly right-wing media or from people who described their views as clearly right-wing. Several phenomena were observed.

- There was a surprising amount of antisemitic content.
- Many commenters did not see the difference between Jews and Israel. In many comments, the use of the word Jew was synonymous with the word Israel. These comments were classified as new anti-Semitism. In the vast majority of them, Jews were collectively accused of the actions of the State of Israel.
- Among antisemitic content, stereotypes proved very popular. Ascribing wealth and greed to Jews turned out to be the most common stereotype. Within the CLASSIC STEREOTYPE category, the dominant comments were those portraying Jews as evil.
- A lot of antisemitic content was related to attacking the state of Israel for its activities in the Middle East, especially in the Gaza Strip.
- There was relatively little content that could be classified as INCITING VIOLENCE.
- It is easy to point out which events were the triggers for the wave of antisemitic comments. A small number of antisemitic content appeared in smaller categories or without context at all. Nevertheless, completely neutral content was also a pretext for antisemitic comments.
- In Polish, it is very easy to create antisemitic words naming Jews and it is easy to edit existing ones so that they are harder to catch by automatic filters. There were many in the analyzed material. These words are usually easy to understand and it is not a problem to guess that it is the Jewish community that is meant.

- The word JEW often appeared in a negative context as an insult. It was often used to offend someone, lower the level of trust in that person or institution, and this is a disturbing phenomenon.
- A large amount of antisemitic content concerned conspiracy theories. The myth of Judea-Communism and the identification of Jews from Russia with the guilt for communism in Poland are still strong in Poland.

It was common to criticize political events (regardless of the party and side of the political dispute) and link them to Jewish control if they were not identical with the views of the person commenting. Polish politics were often blamed for Jewish influence.



Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
1. The extent of antisemitic content in the dataset	5
1.1 The extent of antisemitic content in the datasets	5
1.2 Distribution of the content examined	5
1.3 Antisemitism in the different types of media	6
2. Overview and extent of the different types of antisemitic content.....	7
2.1 Content with antisemitic narratives	7
2.2 Antisemitic content beyond narratives.....	8
3. Types of antisemitic content in the data examined	9
3.1 Content of antisemitic narratives	9
3.1.1 New antisemitism	9
3.1.2 Conspiratorial antisemitism.....	11
3.1.3 Classic stereotypes	12
3.1.4 Holocaust denial and distortion.....	13
3.1.5 Traditional, religion-based antisemitism	14
3.2 Antisemitic content beyond narratives.....	14
3.2.1 Antisemitic hate speech	14
3.2.2 Antisemitic violence.....	14
3.3 Topics provoking antisemitism	15
3.4 Code words used for Jews.....	16
4. Conclusion	17
5. Methodology.....	18
5.1 Data collection	18
5.1.1 Keywords.....	18
5.1.2 Sources monitored	18
5.1.3 Monitoring period	19
5.1.4 The amount of data analysed.....	19
5.2 Coding the data.....	20
5.2.1 Conceptual framework	20
5.2.2 Finalising the methodology and creating a methodology guide.....	28
5.2.3 Training of the coders	20
5.2.4 The coding process	21
6. Bibliography	22
Introduction to the BOND project	24

Introduction

The research aimed to analyse changes in online antisemitic narratives following 7 October 2023– Hamas’s terror attack on Israel and the subsequent war. These events led to a rise in antisemitism across Europe, making it necessary to examine how online antisemitic narratives had evolved. The development of the research methodology and categories were completed in late 2023 and early 2024, and the research began in the spring of 2024.

Recognising and defining antisemitism in relation to Israel, i.e. distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate criticism of Israel, has become particularly challenging since 7 October. Our research is based on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism¹, which is accepted by 43 countries and several international organisations including the EU and most of its member states.

The research was conducted simultaneously in four countries–Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Romania–using the same methodology. It focused on textual content, including articles, comments, and Facebook posts. The content was collected using social listening software from the websites and Facebook pages of the most relevant national media outlets across five media categories: independent (mainstream) media, biased/hyper-partisan media, mainstream tabloids, left-wing sites, far-right pages, and fake news/conspiratorial sites. The scraping process was guided by keywords designed to detect antisemitic content. Four core keywords–Jew, Israel, Holocaust, and Zionism/Zionist–were used in all countries in their respective local languages. Additionally, country-specific keywords were included. In languages where these words could have different endings, their base forms were followed by an asterisk (*), enabling the collection of results for all variations and endings.

The research focused on the period from 1–15 April in both 2023 and 2024, with nearly 7,000 pieces of content analysed in each country. All content was examined by the national research teams and classified as either antisemitic, potentially antisemitic (content that could be interpreted as both antisemitic and not antisemitic), not understandable, or not antisemitic. Drawing on publicly available resources–such as studies, research reports, and scientific articles–

five main categories of antisemitic narratives were defined: classic antisemitic stereotypes, conspiratorial antisemitism, traditional religion-based antisemitism, Holocaust denial and distortion, and new antisemitism (antisemitism based on the criticism of Israel). In addition to these, two supplementary categories were established: hate speech and calls for violence against Jews. Each antisemitic and potentially antisemitic content was thoroughly analysed and assigned to one or more of these categories.

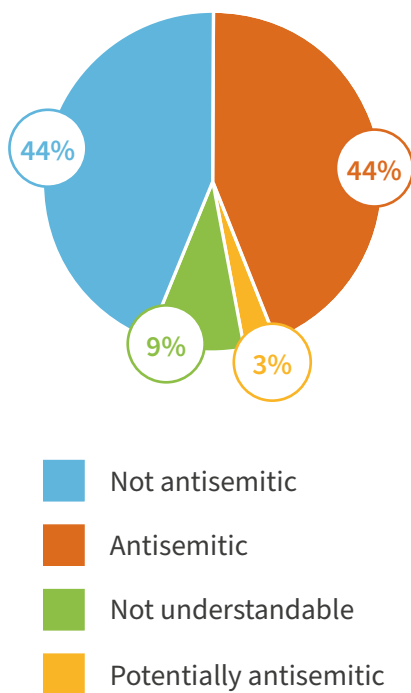
¹ IHRA working definition of antisemitism: <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>

1. The extent of antisemitic content in the dataset

1.1 The extent of antisemitic content in the datasets

Antisemitic and potentially antisemitic content was present in 47% of the Polish dataset. Out of a total of 7054 pieces of content, 3128 were labelled as antisemitic, 191 as potentially antisemitic, 3110 as not antisemitic, and 625 as not understandable.

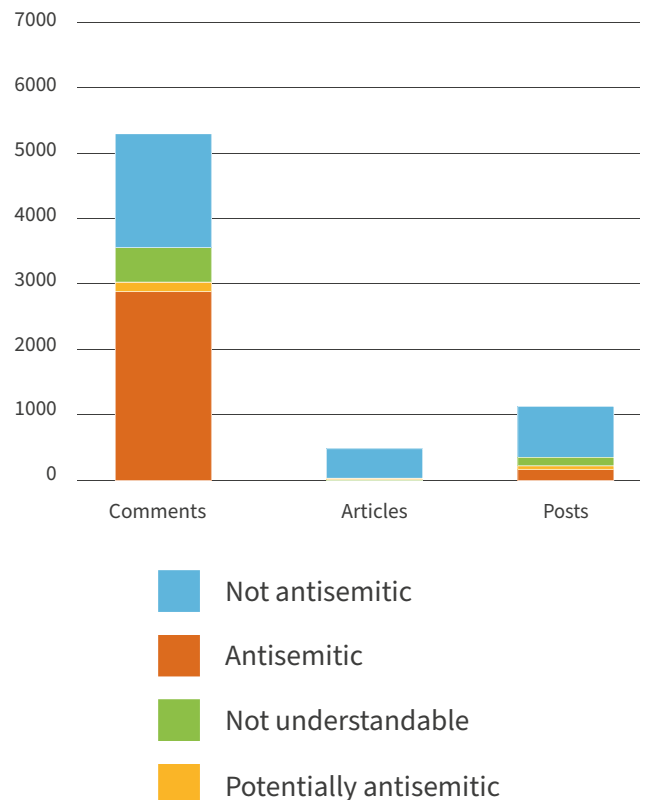
Figure 1: Proportion of antisemitic content in the full dataset



1.2 Distribution of the content examined

The vast majority of antisemitic content appeared in comments. About 78% of the downloaded content were comments (5500), about 16.2% were posts (1143), and 5.8% were articles (411). Antisemitic narratives appeared predominantly in comments, of which over 51.6% (2840) were antisemitic. 2.9% (162) of them were labelled as potentially antisemitic, 36.6% (2014) as not antisemitic, and about 8.8% (484) as not understandable. Regarding articles, 84.4% (347) were labelled as not antisemitic, 5.6% (23) as antisemitic, 0.5% (2) as potentially antisemitic and 2.9% (12) as not understandable. 23.2% (265) of the posts were labelled as antisemitic, 2.4% (27) as potentially antisemitic, 11.3% (129) as not understandable and 63.2% (722) as not antisemitic.

Figure 2: Distribution of the different types of content examined in the full dataset



1.3 Antisemitism in the different types of media

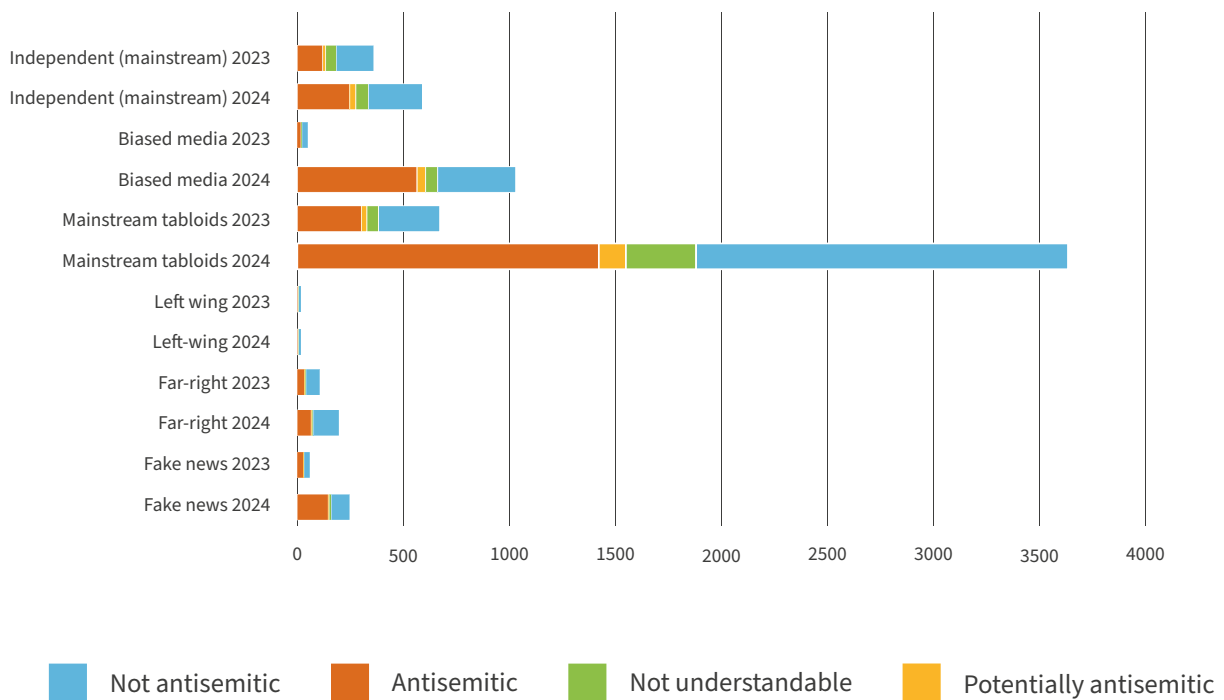
With more data in 2024, both the number and proportion of antisemitic content increased in most media categories, except for left-wing and fake news/conspiratorial sites, where the proportion of antisemitic content remained unchanged, and mainstream media sites, where antisemitic content proportionally decreased slightly.

Antisemitic content (including both antisemitic and potentially antisemitic) was the most prevalent on tabloid sites in terms of quantity (1853 pieces of content in the two years together), but proportionally these content appeared the most on biased/hyper-partisan (59.5%), fake news/conspiratorial (59.4%)

and independent mainstream media sites (54.3%). Quantitatively the amount of antisemitic content in these categories varied (658 pieces on tabloid sites, 495 on mainstream media sites, and only 180 pieces on fake news/conspiratorial sites). The smallest amount of antisemitic and potentially antisemitic content was found on far-right pages (132 pieces, 29.9%). Data from left-wing sites were nearly absent from the Polish dataset.

from the Polish dataset.

Figure 3: Presence of antisemitic content within the different media categories.



2. Overview and extent of the different types of antisemitic content

2.1 Content with antisemitic narratives

The conceptual framework of the research identified the following five main antisemitic narratives. Within each of these main narratives, sub-narratives were also defined.

- **Classic stereotypes:** Narratives historically rooted in antisemitic prejudice. These encompass hatred of Jews based on their existence as human beings, not simply as adherents of the Jewish religion. It does so through contradictory logic that sees Jews as both overly powerful and weak or even subhuman. Classic stereotypes include for example that Jews are evil, greedy, disloyal or liars.²
- **Traditional, religion-based antisemitism (anti-Judaism):** Traditional religion-based Judeophobia, or traditional antisemitism, refers to anti-Jewish sentiments rooted in beliefs associated with either the perceived Christian or Jewish religion and traditions. Traditional, religion-based antisemitic narratives include for example blood libel/child murder, deicide or Jews are Satanic.³
- **Conspiratorial antisemitism:** Conspiracy theories have perpetuated antisemitic beliefs by suggesting that Jews wield undue influence for personal gain and conspire to dominate spheres such as the media, politics, and the economy. Many of these theories are rooted in the antisemitic myth of the “hidden hand,” and blame Jews, or actors perceived to be Jewish, for the world’s worst tragedies, such as instigating wars or even causing COVID-19. Conspiratorial antisemitic narratives include for example Jewish power/control, Judeo-Communism, Great Replacement Theory⁴ or New World Order Theory^{5,6}.
- **Holocaust denial and distortion: Holocaust denial or distortion seeks to deny or misrepresent the historical facts of the Nazi genocide of the Jewish people.** Holocaust denial includes denying the scale or methods used by the Nazis and their allies during the Holocaust. Holocaust denial and distortion promote the false idea that Jews invented or exaggerated the Holocaust and they profited from it. Holocaust denial and distortion narratives include for example blaming Jews for the Holocaust or depicting the Holocaust as a positive event.⁷
- **New antisemitism:** New antisemitism refers to the expression of anti-Jewish sentiment directed at Israel. A key function of new antisemitism is to enable the expression of antisemitic views in a way that appears politically acceptable. We define new antisemitism using Natan Sharansky’s 3D test: demonisation, double standards and delegitimation. New antisemitism includes for example Nazi/Apartheid/Colonialism Analogy, claiming that Israel is a terrorist state or that Israeli bears influence on media.⁸

² Matthias J. Becker et al., „Antisemitic Comments on Facebook Pages of Leading British, French, and German Media Outlets”, *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications* 9, 2022 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9520959/#Fn3>; Matthias J. Becker et al., „Decoding Antisemitism”, Palgrave Macmillan, 2024, p. 11, 13; ADL Antisemitic Myths. <https://antisemitism.adl.org/>

³ Ildikó Barna et al., „Survey of Antisemitic Prejudices in the Visegrád Countries - Research Report”, Tom Lantos Institute, 2022, p. 13. <https://tomlantosinstitute.hu/files/en-205-sapvc-20220420-done-rc-online-new.pdf>

⁴ The Great Replacement Theory is a conspiracy theory rooted in the belief that the white race is under threat of extinction at the hands of Jews and other minorities. This theory also known as white replacement theory or white genocide theory, claims there is an intentional effort, led by Jews, to promote mass non-white immigration, inter-racial marriage, and other efforts that would lead to the “extinction of whites.” <https://www.ajc.org/translatehate/great-replacement>

⁵ The New World Order theory is a conspiracy theory claiming that a small group of powerful individuals working in secret to establish all-powerful control. The conspiracy theory behind the New World Order involving Jewish leaders is based on the idea that Jews have formed a power structure in which they control every aspect of humankind –the economy, media, and political landscape. <https://www.ajc.org/translatehate/New-World-Order>

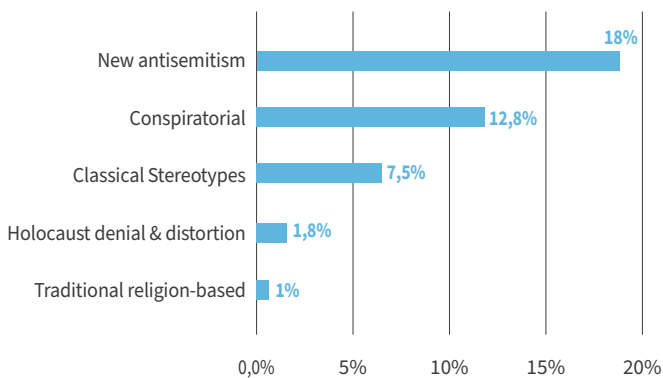
⁶ Ildikó Barna et al., „Survey of Antisemitic Prejudices in the Visegrád Countries - Research Report”, Tom Lantos Institute, 2022, pp. 13-14. <https://tomlantosinstitute.hu/files/en-205-sapvc-20220420-done-rc-online-new.pdf>

⁷ IHRA Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion (2013). <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-holocaust-denial-distortion>

⁸ ADL Antisemitic Myths: Anti-zionism <https://antisemitism.adl.org/anti-zionism/>

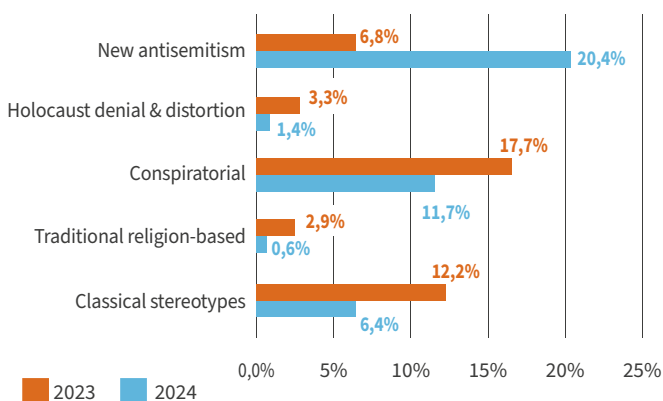
The most prevalent narrative category in the Polish data was new antisemitism, appearing in 18% (1268 pieces) of the examined content. This was followed by conspiratorial antisemitic narratives, present in 12.8% (902 pieces) of the dataset. Classical stereotypes were third with 7.5% (526 pieces), while Holocaust denial and distortion was present in 4.3% (124 pieces) and traditional religion-based appeared in 1.8% (70 pieces) of the content examined.

Figure 4: Proportion of antisemitic narrative categories in the full dataset



Although the proportion of antisemitic content remained roughly the same, most narrative categories declined proportionally. The number of new antisemitic narratives, however, rose fourteenfold, resulting in a proportional increase of over three times. The amount of content with other narratives increased by 2024, but proportionally these slightly decreased, with classical stereotypes showing a more notable decline.

Figure 5: Proportion of antisemitic narrative categories in the dataset for 2023 and 2024 (separately)



2.2 Antisemitic content beyond narratives

Besides narratives, two other types of antisemitic content were examined: hate speech and call for violence.

- **Hate speech:** Hateful content that either explicitly targets Jews or includes the word “Jew” as a negative marker based on antisemitic narratives.
- **Call for violence:** Content that incites violence of any kind against Jews.

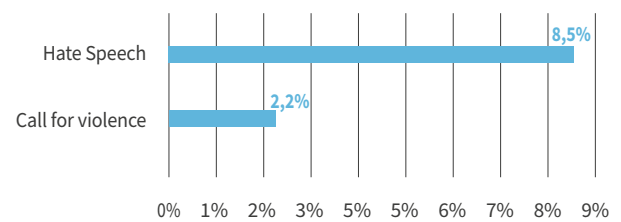


Figure 6: Proportion of antisemitic categories beyond narratives in the full dataset.

Hate speech was relatively common in the Polish dataset, appearing in 8.5% (603 pieces) of content, with a slight decrease in proportions to 2024. Content calling for violence against Jews also appeared in around 2.2% (158 pieces) of the data. Its amount increased by 2024 and proportionally its extent remained unchanged.

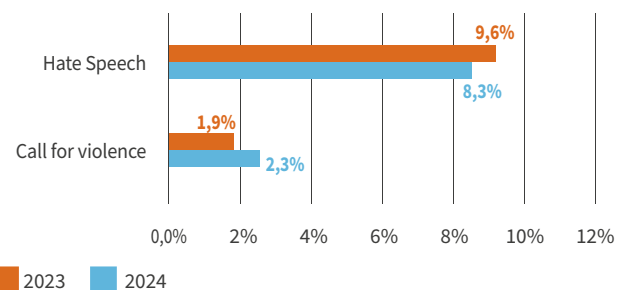


Figure 7: Proportion of antisemitic categories beyond narratives in the dataset for 2023 and 2024 (separately)

3. Types of antisemitic content in the data examined

3.1 Content of antisemitic narratives

3.1.1 New antisemitism

The leading media in this category are WYKOP (posts and comments), TV REPUBLIKA (posts and comments) and DO RZECZY (posts and comments), but it is surprising that as many examples from this category appeared on WYBORCZA.PL (comments only) as on DO RZECZY. As for articles, they appeared in this category in media such as NEON 24 and MAGNA POLONIA.

The most popular category in the material being developed was NEW ANTISEMITISM. The most common subcategory is recognizing Israel as a terrorist country. In that subcategory, there were many comments accusing Israel of committing genocide and war crimes in the Gaza Strip, and eliminating Palestinians. Israelis were often called murderers. There were accusations of torture, attempts to starve Palestinians to death, ethnic cleansing, and starting World War III. Saying that Israel's goal was defined as murdering every last Palestinian. Israelis were often referred to as barbarians, terrorists, bandits, or criminals. Israel's actions in Palestine were also called a massacre of civilians. There were many accusations of Israel murdering women and children, and, in general innocent civilians. Several times, there were calculations, as well as comparisons with the number of victims (women and children) on the Ukrainian side in the war with Russia. Israel was called a violent and aggressive country, and that's way compared to Russia or sometimes even Nazi Germany. The narrative that sometimes appeared indicated Israel's provocations to be attacked and have a pretext to attack other countries. The attack on October 7 was also perceived by some people as a provocation to attack Palestine. What is more, the event in the Polish parliament, where Grzegorz Braun, a far-right politician and antisemite, put out Hanukkah candles with a fire extinguisher during the celebration of Hanukkah was compared to the actions of Israel and different reactions of Polish politicians that to the crimes in the Middle East.

Many antisemitic comments in this category appeared in the context of the death of a Polish humanitarian worker in the Gaza Strip. This event and the comments of the Israeli ambassador on the situation caused a wave of criticism, quite often very aggressive and referring also to the category HATE SPEECH. Israel

was also called a terrorist country in this context. There were many comments that these actions were carried out with premeditation, on purpose, that Israel murdered humanitarian workers in cold blood.

An event that was also widely commented on was the Iranian attack on Israel after the Israeli bombing of the Iranian embassy in Syria. Many comments also referred to Jews and the actions of the state of Israel, but these comments were included in another subcategory described later.

Comments related to this category often included fragments from the category of "taboo criticism" or "double standards", where they were also classified. Many people commented negatively on the passivity of the international community and the lack of clear opposition from other countries. They pointed out the disproportion in the number of Israelis killed by Hamas in October 2023 and the Palestinians killed by Israel. Commentators also wrote that Israel does whatever it wants, is unpunished, and although it violates human rights and international law, it does not face any consequences because of the American support and finances. The European Union, NATO, and the United States were accused of being guardians of genocide and supporting war crimes. Also, Polish government was criticized for that.

The narrative of many comments focused exclusively on civilians suffering and dying during warfare and presented Israel's actions as criminal and murderous. In non-antisemitic comments, there was also a narrative about Israel's fight against terrorism and combating Hamas. However, the antisemitic comments seemed to murdering civilians was Israel's primary goal.

Most comments in the category Collective responsibility of the Jews for Israel also described Israel's actions as terrorist, but instead of Israel, they wrote that Jews are terrorists, murderers and genocidal perpetrators. In this subcategory, the bombing of Palestine, the deaths of women and children were attributed simply to Jews without separating them from the state of Israel. Antisemitism and hatred of Jews were very often justified by Israeli war actions. Jews were attributed with responsibility for the bombing of a humanitarian convoy in Gaza, in which a Pole was killed, and with responsibility for Iran's attack on Israel as a consequence of Jewish actions. These two events also seem to be the most triggering. Jews were often called antisemitic offensive names, which was included in the HATE SPEECH category.

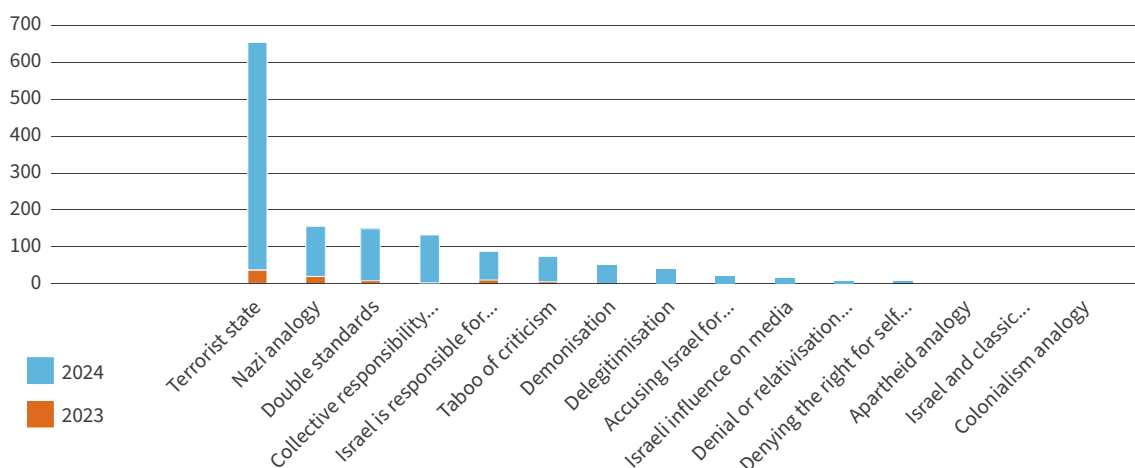
Another popular subcategory was “Israel is responsible for the Arab-Israeli/Hamas-Israeli conflict”. This category included accusing Israel (sometimes also Jews, as mentioned earlier) of financing Hamas and building its power, and the events related to this were later described as consequences of this. Israel’s actions were often described as provocative and as leaving Iran and Hamas no other option than to attack Israel. There were frequent comments that Israel itself had organized the October Hamas attack on Israel, in order to have a pretext to start a war. Israel was then accused of massacring its own citizens. Israel’s policy was also described as aggressive towards other countries, which had to end in conflict. The events that caused the biggest stir were the conflict between Israel and Iran and the Iranian missile attack on Israel after the bombing of the Iranian embassy in Syria, as well as the situation in the Gaza Strip. Israel was accused of being exclusively responsible for the situation in the Gaza Strip, very bad, inhumane living conditions, just to clean that territory. The commentators wrote that since 1948/the beginning, Israelis have murdered people and committed genocide of Palestinians [“Holocaust”], built illegal settlements in their area, and bombed refugee camps. Very often they called them occupants.

In the NEW ANTISEMITISM category, a lot of content also concerned the subcategory “Nazi analogy”. Many comments simply called Israel or Jews Nazis. The situation in the Gaza strip was often compared to World War II and the building of the ghetto and the Gaza Strip was called a concentration camp created by Israel. They wrote about starving Palestinians and murdering “innocent people”, especially children. It was common in this subcategory to compare Israel and Jews to the SS, and even write that Hitler was better and murdered less or that they have learned from him. The methods of warfare were very often compared to those of Nazi Germany.

The categories of “Nazi analogy” and “Accusing Israel of the Holocaust” were difficult to distinguish, but accusing Israel of actions such as the Holocaust against Palestinians in several places was unambiguous. The actions in the Gaza Strip were called Holocaust 2.0, and Israelis – Nazis.

In the category of NEW ANTISEMITISM, several more subcategories appeared, in fewer numbers than the previous subcategories. “Taboo of criticism” and “Double standards” appeared, where the world was accused of passivity in response to Israel’s crimes, the silence of the UN, the lack of reliable information from the world media for fear of criticizing Israel. The subcategory “Israeli influence on the media” also included comments about the deliberate concealment of Israel’s actions in the media and the control that Jews and Israel have over the media in the world. Israel was described as evil, bad intentions were attributed, and people were called barbarians. Delegitimization of Israel occurred as often as demonization. One of the main politicians of the far right, known for his antisemitic comments and the event in the Polish parliament, where he put out Hanukkah candles with a fire extinguisher during the celebration of Hanukkah – Grzegorz Brown – referred to Israel as the “State Located in Palestine”. This narrative was repeated several times as an obvious information that Israel occupies the land of Palestine and should not have been established there. There were chambers that Israel should disappear from the world map and the lands on which it is located should return to Palestine. Also, it was questioned its right to create the state after World War II. “Colonialism analogy” didn’t appear at all, and “Apartheid analogy” appeared only two times.

Figure 8: Sub-narratives of the antisemitic narrative category: New antisemitism



3.1.2 Conspiratorial antisemitism

The leading media in this category are WYKOP, TV REPUBLIKA and DO RZECZY, but also NCZAS (all only comments). As far as articles are concerned, they appeared in this category in such media as NEON 24, W POLITYCE and MAGNA POLONIA.

Another category that turned out to be very popular is “Conspiratorial”. The most content appeared in the subcategory “Jewish control/power”, but many comments classified here also fit into the subcategory “The new world order theory”. It turned out that the most common comment in the entire document examined was an advertisement for a “patriotic” book. The comment was of a recommendatory nature. It was long and summarized the book, which according to the author of the comment is banned by censorship, but available for download online. The comment said that Jews are behind the creation of most political parties in Poland, but also Germans and Americans. All three of these groups allegedly control the Polish political system. The evidence of Jewish control over Polish politics is supposed to be the joint celebration of Hanukkah in the Polish Parliament, the unanimous condemnation of Braun’s act (an extreme right-wing MP who blew out Hanukkah candles with a fire extinguisher during the Hanukkah celebration in the parliament), the unanimous transfer of PLN 100 million for the renovation of the Jewish cemetery in Warsaw. This comment appeared in various contexts, on many websites. Mainly in the Fake news/conspiratorial category and in right-wing media. In addition, there were often comments about GAZETA WYBORCZA (a popular nationwide opinion-forming socio-political daily with a centro-liberal profile) and his editor-in-chief is Adam Michnik (He was born from an informal union of pre-war communist activists of Jewish origin. A former politician, historian journalist). The newspaper was accused of Jewish control in many comments, its name was changed in a vulgar way. GAZETA WYBORCZA was accused of manipulation, using Jewish methods, and was called a Jewish newspaper for Poles. It was also denied the right to comment on some events because it was a Jewish newspaper. TVN (the most popular Polish commercial television station) was also accused of Jewish control. Also, Polish politicians were accused of Jewish influence, especially Andrzej Duda, Donald Tusk, Radosław Sikorski (the latter mainly because of his wife). The commentators suggested that because they are afraid of Jews, they don’t condemn Israel for its crimes and don’t criticize the Ambassador of Israel to Poland. What is more, Jews from America were suspected of steering Polish or Israeli policy, and they finance Israel’s acts.

Jewish control was often mentioned in comments about the European Union, calling it NEUROPE. The entire world, the US, and NATO were also seen as ruled by Jews. Polish politicians were accused of sucking up to Jews, but they were also said to be Jews in order to discredit them (comments using the word Jew as an insult were classified as HATE SPEECH). Politicians who supported Israel were called traitors. The comment that appeared many times was about Polish history, 1944, when Jews from Moscow (leftists) sent to Poland other Jews that were placed in crucial places like media, movie schools, prosecutor’s office, courts to make a new rule and keep the Russian plan working. The comment says that there are still Jews in Polish politics – from Platforma Obywatelska (PO) or Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS).

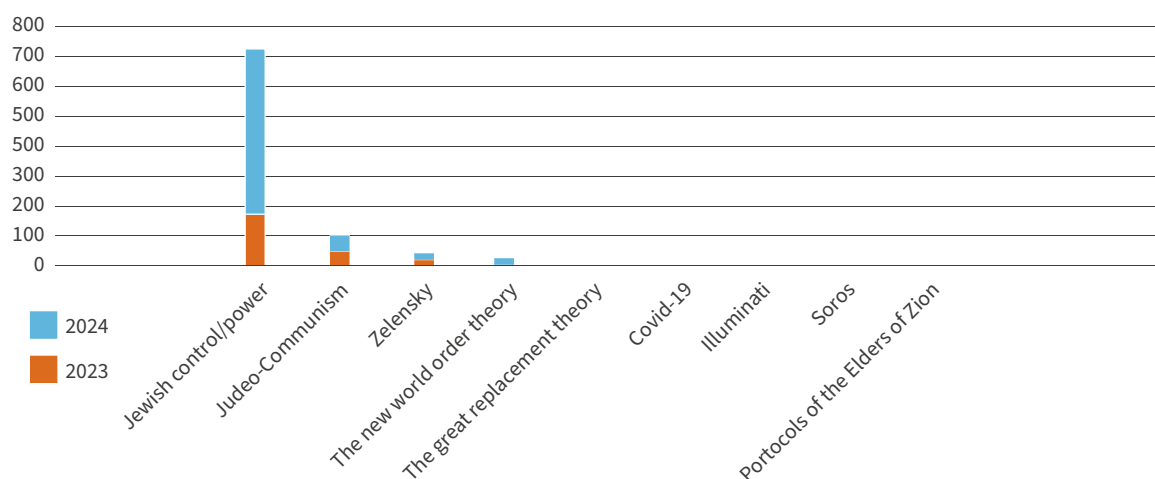
There were many comments about Jewish control. You can read in them that Jews control, for example, banks, media, all kinds of institutions, products of Israeli production are accused of espionage and deception, just like Jews themselves. Many comments came down to the sentence - Jews are everywhere in the world and they decide about everything. Sometimes they involved calls for a boycott of Israel and Israeli products.

There were also many comments in the subcategory “Judeo-communist” as there is still a threat that communism was created by Jews. Sometimes it was used to insult or discredit someone. “Jews are communists” was a very popular comment.

A big stir among commentators was caused by the Ukrainian President’s visit to Poland. Most comments focused on Zelensky’s Jewish background (“mean Ukrainian Jew”, “Russian Jew”), and the fact that Jews caused the war in Ukraine. The writers raised the issue of the lack of apology for the Massacres of Poles in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia. It was often connected with HATE SPEECH and CALL FOR VIOLENCE.

Subcategories that practically did not appear or appeared once, without any major significance, were “Protocols of the Elders of Zion”, “Illuminati”, “The great replacement theory”, “Soros”. The contexts in which comments in this category appeared most often were the Polish elections, and Polish politics in general. Events in the Middle East were of marginal importance, although the death of a Polish humanitarian worker in the Gaza Strip appeared as a context in dozens of cases. There were a few comments concerning ties of Jews to the pandemic “COVID 19”.

Figure 9: Sub-narratives of the antisemitic narrative category Conspiratorial antisemitism



3.1.3 Classic stereotypes

The leading media in this category are WYKOP, WYBORCZA, TV REPUBLIKA and DO RZECZY.

The „Classical stereotype” category was also a large category. The most numerous among them was the portrayal of Jews as EVIL. There were descriptions of individual situations in which people of Jewish origin behaved in a specific way, which was supposed to be proof that all Jews are evil and unlikable (for example bad judge = “Jewish judge”). The classic mechanism of how stereotypes work appeared in this subcategory. All Jews were described through the prism of individual situations. Several comments spoke of spreading diseases, which sounds like a narrative from the thirties. There were also comments that Jews hate Poles, and sometimes there were comments that Jews hate everyone. Many comments that referred to Jews as murderers, criminals and terrorists were included in the category of attributing responsibility to Jews for the actions of the state of Israel, if the context of the statement referred to the conflict in the Middle East, and that they can’t even apologize. There was also a narrative that Jews are fed up everywhere in the world and it is no wonder that other countries are expelling them from each other. Jews were also accused of being the cause of most of the problems in the world. Often it was connected with HATE SPEECH and CALL FOR VIOLENCE.

A large subcategory was also comments referring to the classic stereotype of Jews – “Greed/Wealth”. Among others, calling someone a Jew because they are stingy appeared here, but also the narrative that Jews do everything for money, that they only care about

business, that they believe that the whole world owes them some money and that they value money over human life, or even steal. There were suggestions that they accuse of the Holocaust just to get compensation. In Polish, the word “POŻYDZIĆ” is also very common - means that someone is a bit greedy and doesn’t want to spend money on something. This also appeared in the material being developed.

Referring to Jews as OTHER also appeared in this category. In some cases, Jews of Polish origin were separated from Poles, there was talk of Jewish surnames and that Jews change them to Polish ones in order to blend in with Poles, while Poles never change their surnames to Jewish ones. On the other hand, the commentators searched for Jewish origin to explain someone’s bad behavior. There were also comments bordering on dehumanization. Jews were also referred to as the enemy of Poland, persons who want to destroy Poland. It was also written that no Poles were kidnapped by Hamas, but it was Jews who were born in Poland.

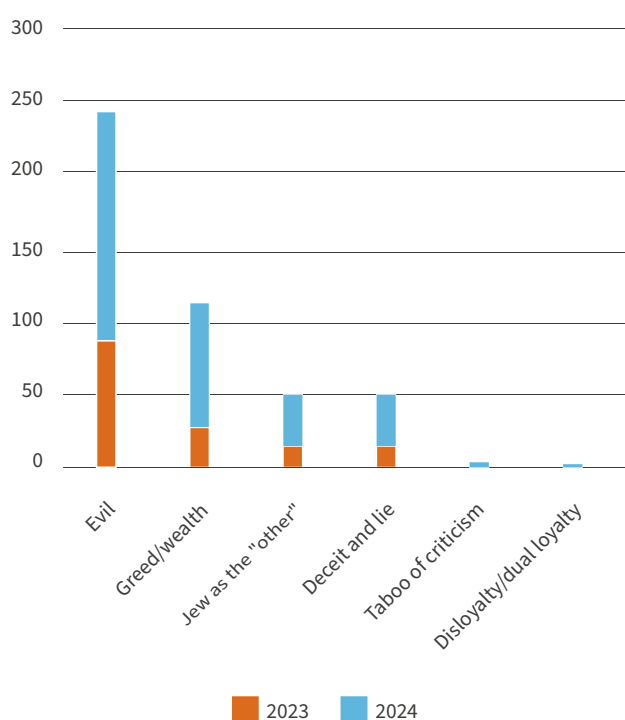
In the subcategory “Deceit and lie” there were comments that Jews cannot be trusted because they lie, cheat, they are traitors, but also portals and newspapers were called Jewish, in order to lower the level of trust in them. It was connected with so-called Jewish propaganda, but it was related also with the category NEW ANTISEMITISM.

Less significant subcategories were “Disloyalty/Dual loyalty” and “Taboo of criticism”. In the subcategory “Taboo of criticism” most of the content concerned the lack of criticism from the international community towards Israel’s actions, which is why these comments

were included in the category NEW ANTI-SEMITISM. According to commentators, Jews are “untouchable.” Only a few appeared in this category.

Among the unclassified content there were comments that Jews are anti-Polish, several about denying the existence of antisemitism in Poland, standing up for an antisemitic MP who blew out the Hanukkah candles in parliament. There were also those related to appearance, mainly concerning the shape of the nose.

Figure 10: Sub-narratives of the antisemitic narrative category: Classic antisemitic stereotypes



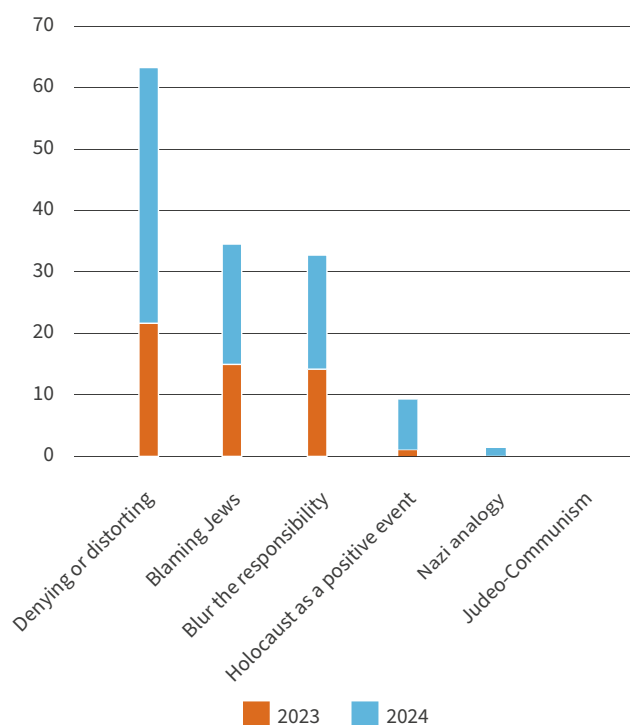
3.1.4 Holocaust denial and distortion

The most content from this category appeared on WYKOP (posts and comments). Next were WYBORCZA (comments), TV REPUBLIKA (comments), MAGNA POLONIA (comments).

The next category in order of content quantity was „Holocaust denial distortion”. It was not a very numerous category (about several dozen of comments). The narratives that appeared here were mainly accusing Jews of complicity in the Holocaust (“Blaming Jews”), their passivity during the war,

examples of how Jews killed other Jews in camps or collaborated with the Nazis, but there were also stories of Jews killing Poles to prove that they did not deserve to be called victims of the Holocaust. A theory appeared that Hitler was financed by wealthy Jews. The Holocaust was presented as a positive event several times. There were also questions about the number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust and accusations against the Jewish community of appropriating the suffering during World War II and leading the narrative that Jews were the only victims. It is difficult to say precisely what events prompted such comments, because there were relatively few of them, but often there were discussion about World War II in general, the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the war in Ukraine – Ukrainians were accused of being the main perpetrators of the Holocaust and Poles were denied killing Jews (“Blur the responsibility”). The argument that Jews use the Holocaust for their own purposes, especially to the financial compensation, was very popular.

11. Figure: Sub-narratives of the antisemitic narrative category: Holocaust denial and distortion.

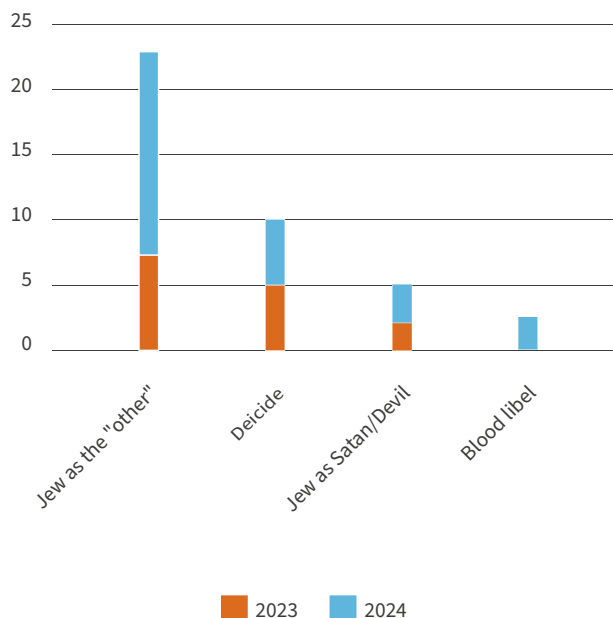


3.1.5 Traditional, religion-based antisemitism

The most content from this category appeared on WYKOP (posts and comments). Next were DO RZECZY (comments), NEON 24 (comments).

„Traditional religion-based” was a small category. A dozen or so comments referred mainly referring to Satanism and Satan or deicide. A similar number of comments were made about making fun of Judaism, and the appearance of the orthodox, and that the Jewish religion is it’s bad or weird. Also, the authors wrote that Jews lie or “tell the lies” with reference to their religion. Sometimes there were related to “Jew as the “other” (in religious sense)”. There was some comments concerned the pedophiles in rabbinical schools. They pointed to the Talmud and the resulting mistreatment of the non-Jews. There were only two examples of “Blood libel/Child murder”. Bigger category turned out “Deicide”. It simply repeated the phrase that the Jews killed Jesus.

12. Figure: Sub-narratives of the antisemitic narrative category: Traditional, religion-based antisemitism



3.2 Antisemitic content beyond narratives

3.2.1 Antisemitic hate speech

The most hate speech appears in the comments. Most often, hate speech came down to calling Jews derogatory names or insulting others by calling them Jews. The most hate speech appears in the media known as tabloids. This is mainly because the sites where antisemitism has appeared most often are created by users. The topics that caused a great deal of commotion and where the most hate speech appeared were the Iranian attack on Israel, the situation when a far-right, antisemitic politician put out the Hanukkah candles with a fire extinguisher in the Polish parliament, the film of Agnieszka Holland about immigrants, the anniversary of Smolensk air disaster, Zelensky’s visit in Poland, and definitely the whole situation around the death of a Polish humanitarian worker in Gaza who was killed by Israeli shelling and connected with this event – words of the Ambassador of Israel to Poland, and also the wrong – in the opinion of the writers – reaction of Polish politicians to Israel’s acts. The comments often had a character of CALL FOR VIOLENCE, too. This category also included antisemitic jokes and sayings.

3.2.2 Antisemitic violence

Calls for violence turned out to be a category in which not so many comments appeared. The context in which most appeared was the Iranian attack on Israel and the interview of Israeli Ambassador to Poland after a Polish volunteer killed in the Gaza Strip. Among others, there appeared that Jews should be dead or that they should be bombed by Iran. Calls to expel Jews from the countries where they live, especially Israeli Ambassador to Poland, calls to exterminate/kill them, break off diplomatic relations or to annihilate the state of Israel were repeated. It was connected with the comments talking about the genocide against Palestinians. Also, calls like “Fuck the Jews” were quite often. Texts like: “Fuck the Jewish scumbags”, “Fuck those Semitic thugs” or “Fuck Israelis’ terrorists” have appeared. What is more, the authors of the comments wanted to exclude Israel from different sport playing. In this category, Israel was often compared to Russia or even Nazi Germany. The comments had a character of HATE SPEECH, too. If it comes to media the largest number of examples of “calls to violence” appeared on TV REPUBLIKA and WYKOP.

3.3 Topics provoking antisemitism

The topics that seem to be the main triggers for antisemitic content are conflicts in the Middle East, which can be broken down into more narrow contexts. One of the most popular is Iran's missile attack on Israel, where the most content appeared in the NEW ANTISEMITISM category and less, although still a lot of HATE SPEECH. An event strongly related to the situation in the Middle East, which was a context for anti-Semitism, is the death of a Polish humanitarian worker in the Gaza Strip, who died after a car belonging to the CENTRAL KITCHEN organization was hit by the Israeli army. This event generated by far the most antisemitic comments. It can be divided into smaller contexts (comments by the Israeli Ambassador to Poland, an interview with him, comments by the Palestinian Ambassador, the funeral of a humanitarian worker, a demand from Polish politicians for an apology and compensation from Israel). This situation also caused many comments about Jews as evil (CLASSIC STEREOTYPE), and accusations of Jewish influence among Polish politicians (CONSPIRATIONAL).

A big stir among commentators was caused by the Ukrainian President's visit to Poland. Most comments focused on Zelensky's Jewish background ("mean Ukrainian Jew", "Russian Jew"), and the fact that Jews caused the war in Ukraine. The writers raised the issue of the lack of apology for the Massacres of Poles in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia. It was often connected with HATE SPEECH and CALL FOR VIOLENCE.

A very inflammatory event also turned out to be when a far right, antisemitic politician - Grzegorz Braun from the Konfederacja party put out the Hanukkah candles with a fire extinguisher in the Polish parliament (when Hanukkah was celebrated in the Parliament). Punishing an antisemitic MP was also a trigger. It should be added that MP Grzegorz Braun is known for his antisemitism and anti-Ukrainian approach. He is perceived as a pro-Russian politician and his behavior had no connection with the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Wherever the word "Israel" appeared, one could expect antisemitic content. Many people strongly and unequivocally accused Jews of Israel's actions and these words were often used interchangeably. In

the comments, sometimes there was not only hatred for Jews, but also for Muslims, often both in one comment. Antisemitic comments also appeared when someone wanted to lower someone's credibility, discredit him by calling them a Jew, but also to lower trust in certain content, especially the WYBORCZA newspaper ("Jewish newspaper"). Ascribing Jewish roots to politicians in Poland, searching for Jewish ancestors or modifying their surnames to sound Jewish had a similar goal, no matter real or not (for example with Radostaw Sikorski's wife). It doesn't matter which side of the political dispute in Poland a specific politician stood on. Also, the film of Agnieszka Holland about the refugee crisis on the border with Belarus and the anniversary of Smolensk air disaster became the pretexts for antisemitic comments.

Many times, the context, i.e. the post or article had no connection with Israel, Jews or the Middle East in general, but antisemitism appeared in the comments. It could refer to internal Polish politics, feasts or motherhood.

A lot of antisemitism also appeared in the context of various events in Poland. Elections, the economic situation, support for Ukraine, fuel prices, abortion law. Less, although not a little, in the context of World War II. The topic of the Holocaust was usually called on occasion NEW ANTISEMITISM category.

3.4 Code words used for Jews⁹

In Polish comments, you can find many recurring words describing Jews. Several of them are clearly popular. The most frequently appearing words include the word PARCHY, which the dictionary translates to SCABS. Very contemptuous, strongly associated with illness. Another very popular word is PEJSY. This word means SIDELOCKS. An equally popular word is ŻYMIANIE or RZYMIANIE. These words were created in order to bypass internet censorship by publicists. These words are a spelling of the word ROMANS in Polish, but using a different, identically sounding letter. Another way to avoid the censorship is writing 7YD.

⁹ Examples: parchy, pasożydy, żydowstwo, żydoszczyny, pejsy, żydki, żydzioszki, żymianie, żydówy, żydajstwo, żydy, żydowizna, rzymianie, żydostwo, garbate nosy, izraelska/żydowska dziwka/kurwa, rzydzi, szabesgoje, syjonistyczny nowotwór, obrzezany quatas, starozakonny, żydło, 7ydowski, 7yzdy, 7ydz, 7ydz, żydojebancy

Many other words are often diminutives used in a contemptuous manner. These words are ŻYDKI, ŻYDZIOSZKI, ŻYDÓWECZKI. There also appeared augmentatives of words and various other forms of the word ŻYDZI-JEWS (ŻYDY, ŻYDOWSTWO, ŻYDOSTWO, ŻYDÓWY, ŻYDŁA, ŻYDOWIZNY, ŻYDAJSTWO). There were also several combinations of the word JEW with other words. Such as the combination of the words ŻYDZI (Jews) and PASOŻYT (parasite)- PASOŻYDZI. Another combination was the combination of the words JEWS and SZCZYNY (vulgarly about urine)- ŻYDOSZCZYNY. There were also several modifications of politicians' names. For example... From the surname of the Polish former Prime Minister Beata Szydło (ŻYDŁO) or Volodymyr Zelensky (JEWLENSKI or ŻYDEŃSKI). There were also cases of using the names of countries described as controlled by Jews. Poland - POLIN, Ukraine - UKROPOLIN, EU-NEUROPA or UNIA JEW-ROPEJSKA. Very often, people were called JEWS to belittle, discredit or simply offend. Many politicians were thus attributed with Jewish roots. Arguments between users also often ended with calling each other JEWS to offend.

4. Conclusion

A surprising amount of antisemitism has appeared on the Polish internet. The platform with the most of it was definitely WYKOP.PL. The amount of antisemitic content made up almost half of all antisemitic content. This site does not seem to control the content posted there by commenters well enough. Nevertheless, it is difficult to automatically control and remove antisemitic content, because in Polish it is easy to create new antisemitic words or modify existing ones in such a way that they are not caught by filters. In order for filters to be more effective, it would be necessary to monitor the media from time to time and find new words used to spread antisemitic content.

A lot of antisemitic content concerned Polish politics, which means that stereotypes related to Jews are still very much alive and popular. The word JEW was often used to insult others, and any dissatisfaction with the opinions or political views of others was often associated with Jewish control. Even completely trivial and neutral topics could be a trigger. There weren't many such situations, but they happened often enough to be noticeable.

Current events in the Middle East generated waves of antisemitic comments. In recent years, a group strongly antagonized by the previous Law and Justice government were Muslims (mainly refugees), which is why the number of antisemitic comments in the context of the conflict in the Middle East is surprising. There were also anti-Muslim comments, and even anti-Muslim and antisemitic comments in one, but it was

still a large number of antisemitic comments and those where the commenters were rooting for Iran during the bombing of Israel, for example.

Analysis of the material also showed how common it is to identify all Jews with Israel. Content often appeared where the word JEW was synonymous with the word ISRAEL.

Stereotypical thinking about the Jewish community also turned out to be common. Perceiving Jews through the prism of individual cases and attributing characteristics of individual people to the entire nation has appeared many times. There is still too little education in Poland about stereotypes and disarming the mechanisms of their creation. Young people and adults are not taught enough about strategies for controlling stereotypes and using them consciously.

The topic of Jews in Poland is still very polarizing. Antisemitic comments are very likely to appear when the topic of an article or post concerns events in the Middle East or Jews directly.



5. Methodology

The research aimed to examine antisemitic narratives in online textual content - such as comments, articles and Facebook posts - before and after 7 October 2023. We analysed content from websites and Facebook pages of previously defined media outlets. The content was collected using social listening software based on pre-defined keywords, covering the same period in both 2023 and 2024. The research was conducted in four countries (Hungary, Italy, Poland and Romania) by national research teams coordinated by Political Capital, using the same methodology.

Definition of antisemitism

The basis of the research was the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism: *“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”* A detailed explanation of the definition, along with illustrative examples, is available on the IHRA website¹⁰.

5.1 Data collection

In our research, we analysed online textual content: articles, posts and comments from websites and Facebook pages. The data was collected using social listening software, SentiOne. SentiOne scrapes data in a given timeframe, from the given media sources based on the given keywords.

5.1.1 Keywords

We defined four keywords that we used to identify potentially relevant content in all countries: 1) Jews, 2) Israel, 3) Holocaust, 4) Zionism/Zionist. In addition, we included specific keywords, in Poland: *zymianie, mycki, pejsy and parchy*. In languages where these words could have different endings, we used the base form of the keywords followed by an asterisk (*). This approach allowed SentiOne to identify results for all variations and endings of the keywords.

5.1.2 Sources monitored

With input from the national research teams, Political Capital identified six categories of online media to monitor content from: 1) independent (mainstream) media, 2) mainstream tabloids, 3) (hyper-)partisan/biased media, 4) right-wing/far-right sites, 5) fake news/conspiratorial sites, 5) left-wing/far-left sites. We collected pages for each category in all countries, including media outlets' websites and Facebook pages. In all countries, we selected the three media outlets per category with the most results for our keywords in the same time period.

- **Independent (mainstream) media:** gazeta.pl; Wyborcza.pl; Oko press. The mainstream media analyzed in the project can be described as pro-democratic. The two most important portals (gazeta.pl and wyborcza.pl) belong to one company, the third was created with the support of this company and has an informational and opinion-forming character. These media are strongly associated with left-wing and centrist politics. They do not publish antisemitic content, but antisemitic comments appear under their articles.
- **Far-right pages:** Fronda.pl; Magna Polonia; Tygodnik Solidarność. These are socio-political media with a conservative profile. They refer to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Some of them are controversial even on the right.
- **Mainstream tabloids:** Fakt; Super Express; Wykop. Two of them are entertainment, gossip, but also provide local and national news about the lives of celebrities, as well as health, culture, business, politics, sports and social issues. These portals are extremely popular and usually rank in the top in Polish readership rankings. One, however, is social news. There is a lot of controversy associated with it. It is created by the community.
- **Fake news/conspiratorial sites:** Najwyższy czas; W Realu 24; neon24. They are of an informational and journalistic nature with socio-political themes. They are right-wing, anti-EU, and people associated with them are also known for antisemitic comments. They are strongly associated with the extreme right. They use specific language. They appear as media that are not silent and speak the truth.

¹⁰ IHRA working definition of antisemitism: <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>

- **(Hyper-)Partisan/biased media:** tv republika; dorzeczy; wpolityce. information and journalistic media. The analyzed portals are conservative in nature with a strong visible support for Christian traditions. The position of the portals on the political spectrum in Poland is clear and they appear as unequivocally right-wing.
- **Left-wing/far-left pages:** Lewicza. There aren't many media outlets that are clearly left-wing. The one that took part in the study isn't very popular either.

5.1.3 Monitoring period

Based on our previous experiences in coding textual content into previously defined categories and the resources available to the project, we set a goal of analysing 7,000 pieces of content per country. Because we wanted to examine changes in antisemitic narratives after 7 October 2023, we chose the same time period in both 2023 and 2024. This was determined by identifying the country with the least data for our keywords and calculating how many days were needed, starting from a chosen date (in this case, 1 April), for the downloaded data in that country to exceed 7,000 pieces of content. As a result, data collection in all countries was standardised to the same timeframe: April 1 and April 15, 13:00.

5.1.4 The amount of data analysed

We filtered each dataset to include more than 7,000 pieces of content, maintaining the original proportions of keywords, sources (websites and Facebook pages),

and years within the dataset. This approach resulted in the following proportions of the total downloaded dataset being analysed in each country: Romania - 100%, Hungary - 73%, Italy - 44%, and Poland - 35%.

In all countries the amount of data collected in 2024 was higher than in 2023. The smallest increase was in Hungary, where the data increased by about one and a half times in 2024. In Romania the data increased by almost three times, in Poland by almost five times and in Italy by almost seven times. In all countries most of the data consisted of comments.

The amount of data also varied between countries by media category:

- **Hungary:** The majority of data came from far-right pages, followed by mainstream media, biased outlets, tabloids, and minimal data from conspiratorial and left-wing sources.
- **Italy:** Most data came from mainstream media, followed by tabloids, biased outlets, left-wing and conspiratorial sources, with very little data from far-right pages.
- **Poland:** Most data came from tabloids, followed by biased outlets, mainstream media, far-right pages, conspiratorial sites and very little from left-wing sources.
- **Romania:** Most of the data came from mainstream media, followed by conspiratorial sites, tabloids, far-right sources, biased outlets and a small amount of data from left-wing sources.

		<i>Examined content in media categories</i>								
		Mainstream	Far-right	Conspiratorial	Biased	Tabloid	Left	Total amount of data/year	Total amount of data	
Hungary	2023	671	1300	38	626	130	22	2787	7008	
	2024	1410	1949	49	646	86	81	4221		
Italy	2023	704	1	9	19	142	15	890	7053	
	2024	4987	38	151	284	518	185	6163		
Poland	2023	310	137	51	63	674	1	1236	7054	
	2024	601	224	253	1041	3697	2	5818		
Romania	2023	809	191	469	85	293	0	1847	7012	
	2024	3332	361	959	127	385	1	5165		

5.2 Coding the data

5.2.1 Conceptual framework

Using publicly available resources, such as studies, research reports, scientific articles, etc., Political Capital developed a conceptual framework to define the theoretical background of the research. In addition to stating that the research was based on the IHRA's working definition of antisemitism, the document thoroughly presented the main categories of antisemitic narratives and sub-narratives on which the research was based. All partners had the opportunity to discuss, comment on, and add to the content of the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework was also discussed with members of the BOND project's Advisory Board and external experts.

5.2.2 Finalising the methodology and creating a methodology guide

Finalising the research methodology involved multiple discussions - including consultations with an expert member of the BOND Advisory Board and several attempts to analyse and code online texts in different ways. From these efforts, the final categories for coding the data were established. Four classifications were defined for the nature of content:

1. Antisemitic – Content that contained at least one antisemitic narrative.
1. Potentially antisemitic – Content that included a narrative that could be either interpreted as both antisemitic and non-antisemitic, or it appeared antisemitic only in light of the context (the article/post it was responding to).
1. Not understandable – Content that was incomprehensible (this category was almost only applicable to comments).
1. Not antisemitic – Content that did not include any antisemitic narratives.

Based on the conceptual framework, five main categories of antisemitic narratives were identified, each containing sub-categories:

- Classic antisemitic stereotypes,

- Traditional, religion-based antisemitism (anti-Judaism),
- Conspiratorial antisemitism,
- Holocaust denial and distortion,
- New antisemitism (antisemitism based on criticism of Israel).

Two additional categories were defined: „hate speech” and „call for violence”.

The coding process was described in detail in a methodology guide.

As part of the coding process, coders were required to document the antisemitic phrases identified in the content. For comments, they also had to record the context - specifically, the subject of the article or post under which the comment was written.

5.2.3 Training of the coders

After sharing the conceptual framework and the methodology guide with the national research teams, Political Capital organised a meeting to explain and discuss these documents and the process and to provide space for questions. Throughout the research process, the research teams met regularly to discuss issues and questions that arose during the research process.

To ensure a common understanding of the theoretical framework and to increase the reliability of the research - within the constraints of resources and team capacities - the research process included a learning phase. During this phase, 350 pieces of content were filtered from the dataset while maintaining the original proportions of results by keyword, media category, and year. A slight overrepresentation of results for the keyword „Israel” was included, based on the assumption that identifying new antisemitism would be the greatest challenge. In each country, two members of the national research teams coded these data independently. Their results were then compared and discrepancies were discussed to reach an agreement. In cases where agreement could not be reached, they were given the opportunity to consult with Political Capital for further clarification.

5.2.4 The coding process

Coding the data followed the same procedure across all countries. The national teams received their content in an Excel file, which included all relevant properties (e.g., comment/article/post, date of publishing, source, context, etc.). During the coding process, coders read the content itself and, for comments, also examined the context.

If antisemitic narratives were identified in the content, coders labelled it as either antisemitic or potentially antisemitic, defined the antisemitic narrative, and categorised it into a main antisemitic narrative category along with one of its sub-categories. A single piece of content could be categorised into multiple (maximum four) narrative categories, as it was possible for more than one antisemitic narrative to appear within the same text. If the content did not contain any antisemitic narratives, or if its meaning was not understandable, it was not assigned to any category.

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Introduction to the BOND project

The BOND (Building tOlerance, uNderstanding, and Dialogue across communities) project¹¹ was implemented from January 2023 to December 2024 in Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Romania. Its primary goal was to address deep-rooted prejudices, hateful attitudes, and behaviors within society, particularly those targeting European Jewry. The project also aimed to foster understanding, tolerance, and dialogue. A significant focus was placed on educating young people about Judaism and antisemitism, as well as promoting intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Its activities included researching antisemitism, monitoring antisemitic narratives, developing educational curricula, training teachers, organising youth education and exchange programs, facilitating inter-faith and inter-community dialogue, and hosting local roundtables on tolerance and social inclusion. The project was guided by the definition of antisemitism established by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).¹²



¹¹ Webpage of the BOND project: <https://www.bond-project.eu/>

¹² IHRA working definition of antisemitism: <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>




Project Facts

Duration
01/2023 to 01/2025

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Citizens, Equality, Rights
and Values (CERV)

Grant Agreement No
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Coordinator
Polylogos Association

 [bond-project.eu](https://www.bond-project.eu)
 bond@polylogos.eu
 [@BOND_EU](https://twitter.com/BOND_EU)



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