

STRATEGY ON

# Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION



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For Jewish Europeans, antisemitism is present in everyday life, undermining their safety and sense of belonging in the European Union.

85% of Jewish Europeans perceive antisemitism to be a serious problem<sup>1</sup>, as Jews are the target of verbal and physical attacks, threats, harassment, property damage and hate speech on- and off-line. Antisemitism is found across society, manifesting itself in the most pernicious forms on the far-right, the far-left, and among Islamist extremists. Age-old antisemitic tropes, conspiracy ideologies, Nazi symbols and modern-day Israel-related antisemitism often intersect, forming new and vile depictions of Jews that lead to real world physical manifestations.

Despite all this, Jewish Europeans hold strong attachments to the EU and their respective countries. The rich Jewish cultural footprint of Europe is not just a matter of heritage, but a living contribution to the EU's diversity today.

We, major international Jewish organizations actively working with the European institutions and representing the large majority of Europe's Jewish communities and European Jewish civil society, recognize and applaud sustained efforts in recent years to curb this age-old scourge and expect the upcoming EU strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life to widen and deepen this work in a comprehensive way.

The extreme spike in antisemitic attacks across Europe in the recent period must serve as additional momentum for the European Commission in this field. Along with a holistic approach to the fight against antisemitism, a positive agenda to foster Jewish life is an equally crucial component to secure a Jewish future in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> [Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism/Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU](#), EU Fundamental Rights Agency, 10 December 2018.

## A. TACKLING ANTISEMITISM

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### 1. Define, recognise and monitor antisemitism

- » Encourage the adoption and implementation of the *IHRA working definition of antisemitism* as a useful guidance tool by governments, parliaments, law enforcement, the judiciary, educational stakeholders, civil society and others.
- » Encourage the appointment of national coordinators or special envoys on combating antisemitism in countries that have not yet done so.
- » Incentivize and support EU member states to put in place pending national strategies on tackling all forms of antisemitism, as agreed upon by member states in the *European Council Declaration of 6 December 2018 on the fight against antisemitism*.
- » Establish an EU-wide Observatory on the implementation of measures in the fight against antisemitism, as an extension of the efforts already undertaken by the *EU Fundamental Rights Agency*.
- » Cooperate with the *EU Fundamental Rights Agency*, *Equinet* and civil society organisations to create a uniform framework for member states to record antisemitic incidents, in order to reduce disparities in reporting methodologies.
- » Ensure that member states fully transpose and enforce EU law criminalizing hate speech and hate crimes, particularly the *Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law*.
- » Promote the *Handbook on the Practical Use of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism*.

### 2. Invest in security and victim support

- » Ensure that member states implement the measures agreed in the *European Council declaration of 6 December 2018* to ensure security for Jewish communities, institutions and citizens.
- » Encourage member states to make use of existing EU and national financial instruments for the protection of public spaces.
- » Facilitate trainings to enable law enforcement and the judiciary to identify and effectively prosecute antisemitic crimes.
- » Integrate the upcoming *Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life with the EU Strategy on victims' rights 2020-2025* and ensure that the latter recognizes victims of antisemitic hate crime.
- » Ensure that member states fully transpose and enforce the *Victims' Rights Directive*, including with regard to the Jewish community.
- » Reinforce cooperation between EU agencies such as *Europol and CEPOL*, law enforcement in the member states, and Jewish communities and their security experts.

- » Encourage initiatives focused on victim support and building trust between Jewish communities, civil society and law enforcement.
- » Ensure systematic training of law enforcement, police and prosecutors and promote materials on basic concepts of Judaism and Jewish life and tradition.
- » Produce through *DG Home* a comprehensive overview of member states' existing frameworks for the financing of security measures for Jewish communities and institutions.
- » Facilitate exchanges of best practices to lead to a more uniform EU-wide approach for the financing of security measures and increase funding where necessary.
- » Ensure that police is sufficiently equipped to anticipate escalations in anti-Jewish hate, particularly those recurring at times of escalations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### **3. Highlight the fight against antisemitism as part of the “European Way of Life” agenda**

- » Mainstream the fight against antisemitism as part of the implementation of the *Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027*. Promote an integrated approach to inclusion that fosters social cohesion.
- » Encourage Member States to include the fight against antisemitism as part of wider integration measures to assist newcomers. Emphasize that Jewish life and the memory of the Holocaust are integral to the European Way of Life.
- » Create a working group on antisemitism within the *Radicalisation Awareness Network* to supplement and inform the current 10 thematic working groups.
- » Include clear guidelines against antisemitic discourse and stereotypes in the new rules on financing of European political parties promised in the Commission's 2021 Work Programme. Encourage the use of the *IHRA working definition of antisemitism* as a useful tool for these guidelines.
- » In the framework of the European Union's *Dialogue with churches, religious associations or communities and philosophical and non-confessional organisations* (Art. 17 TFEU), encourage religious leaders of all faiths to tackle antisemitism within their communities, as well as within religious teachings and texts.

### **4. Highlight the fight against antisemitism in the EU's external action**

- » Promote the fight against antisemitism in international partnerships, political and human rights dialogues with third countries, and in the EU's neighborhood and enlargement policies, including in the context of Stabilisation and Association Processes.
- » Ensure that funded programs do not enable antisemitism. Integrate an antisemitism clause into grant application processes.
- » Conduct a review of current allocated EU funding to make sure it does not enable antisemitism and incitement, especially in education.
- » Recognize that terrorism poses a heightened threat to Jewish communities.

- » Add Hezbollah in its entirety to the *List of persons, groups and entities subject to specific measures to combat terrorism*.
- » Mainstream the fight against antisemitism into measures to combat intolerance in the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 and in the *EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief*.
- » Encourage the adoption of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism by the European External Action Service and provide training opportunities for staff.
- » Combat the proliferation of antisemitic conspiracy myths originating in third countries. Extend the mandate of *STRATCOM* to include the monitoring of antisemitic disinformation.
- » Promote cooperation with local Jewish communities in third countries, and increase awareness of EU delegations with regard to antisemitic incidents.
- » Mainstream the protection of Jewish cultural heritage through existing EU mechanisms.

## **5. Highlight the fight against antisemitism as part of the “Education, Youth, Sport and Culture” agenda**

- » Ensure the implementation of *Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching*.
- » Encourage member states to put in place mechanisms for reporting antisemitic incidents in schools and on campus.
- » Integrate the fight against antisemitism into measures to combat racism, hatred and violence in sports.
- » Encourage sport clubs, national leagues and federations to adopt and implement the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and promote a positive fan culture free from antisemitism in sports.
- » Ensure that funding opportunities for the audiovisual, cultural and creative sector through the *Creative Europe* programme systematically include the prevention of antisemitism and the promotion of Jewish heritage.
- » Promote the positive effects of inter-religious dialogue in the fight against antisemitism.

## **6. Address antisemitism online**

- » Integrate the fight against antisemitism in the upcoming *Digital Services Act*.
- » Provide guidance and encouragement for digital platforms to adopt and use the *IHRA working definition of antisemitism* to identify and counter antisemitic content.
- » Conduct comprehensive and recurring data analysis to better understand the spread of antisemitism online, including through conspiracy ideologies. Catalogues of symbols and tropes, and mapping of the flow of conspiracies online can be useful starting points.

- » Encourage interaction between national antisemitism coordinators with national digital services coordinators envisioned by the *Digital Services Act* on combating online antisemitism.
- » Ensure full enforcement of the *Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law* in online spaces.
- » Harness the potential of AI in a human-centered way. Aligned with the “European approach to excellence in AI”, ensure that AI does not reinforce biases and is effectively used to detect among others, antisemitic content, both in text and images.
- » Support NGOs in their efforts to act effectively against hate online, through positive content, counter narratives and educational materials.
- » Ensure that accountability mechanisms for online platforms include enhanced algorithmic transparency.
- » Extend a voluntary Code of Conduct to E-Commerce platforms to curb the sale of Nazi memorabilia and other products inciting to hate and antisemitism, on the model of the Code of Conduct on illegal hate speech.

**7. Highlight the fight against antisemitism as part of the agenda to combat racism and xenophobia**

- » Mainstream the IHRA working definition of antisemitism in the implementation of the *EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025*. Ensure that the definition is explicitly referenced in future anti-racism action plans.
- » Facilitate concerted action amongst coordinators of EU Action Plans and Strategies, to ensure an intersectional approach as well as a mutually reinforcing effect on policy and practice.
- » Ensure that any relevant intersectional approach takes into account Jewish perspectives.

## B. FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE

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- 1. Ensure that Jewish Europeans enjoy their fundamental right to freedom of religion or belief**
  - » Protect religious slaughter and circumcision through appropriate enforcement of the existing legal framework.
  - » Encourage member states to make use of the provisions in European legislation that ensure freedom of religion.
  - » Ensure equal treatment and access for religiously-observant students in the education system.
  - » Ensure that Jewish Europeans that adhere to representative denominations that enjoy a historic past and legitimacy do not suffer discriminatory effects in terms of recognition, security or funding.
  - » Promote mechanisms for the exchange of information on legislation on freedom of religion.
- 2. Teach about Jewish life, culture, diversity and history and create an inclusive space for students**
  - » Integrate the fight against antisemitism in the initiatives of the *European Education Area*.
  - » Provide targeted support for teachers to develop competences for dealing with cultural and religious diversity in classrooms under the *Erasmus Teacher Academies*.
  - » Offer funding and expertise to promote revised educational curricula that highlight Jewish contributions in diverse fields as well as Jewish diversity in religious and secular life.
- 3. Celebrate Jewish life and create greater visibility and inclusion for Jewish communities**
  - » Create an EU European-Jewish heritage and culture month, modeled on the *American Jewish Heritage Month* and the celebration of *1.700 years of Jewish life in Germany*, aimed at encouraging EU institutions, member states and civil society to celebrate the Jewish contribution to the European Union.
  - » Support institutions organizing activities for the annual European Days of Jewish Culture and encourage the participation of public bodies.
  - » Create a “Cities Fostering Jewish Life” prize similar to the *European Cultural Capital of the Year Prize* and the *Youth Capital of the Year Prize*.
  - » Cooperate with the Council of Europe to support and enhance its *European Cultural Routes Programme*.
  - » Develop guidance and financial incentives for the protection and preservation of Jewish heritage sites supporting the implementation of the *Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*.

## C. PRESERVING HOLOCAUST MEMORY

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### 1. Enhance Education about the Holocaust

- » Offer funding and expertise to promote revised educational curricula about the history of WWII and the Holocaust and ensure historical figures and events are depicted in an accurate way.
- » Reaffirm the fundamental role of the memory of the Holocaust in the promotion of European values and citizenship and ensure that this is reflected in the conclusions of the Conference of the future of Europe.
- » Integrate Holocaust education into the *European Education Area* priorities.
- » Support Holocaust memorials and museums, as well as cutting edge civil society initiatives that promote innovation in the field.
- » Encourage member states to support and participate actively in the *European Holocaust Research Infrastructure*, including providing financial support.
- » Ensure that researchers are free to study the Holocaust, without political interference.
- » Establish an EU-wide platform to provide funding for small projects on Holocaust remembrance.

### 2. Stand up against Holocaust denial and distortion

- » Promote the *IHRA Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion*.
- » Encourage member states to ban annual marches glorifying the Nazi regime and its collaborators.
- » Encourage member states and online platforms to ban all Nazi symbols in public outside the contexts of art, science, research or teaching.
- » Commission a study of annual marches glorifying Nazis and Nazi collaborators in Europe in order to assess potential EU-wide remedies.



## SIGNATORIES:

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European Jewish Congress (EJC)



World Jewish Congress (WJC)



B'nai B'rith International (BBI)



American Jewish Committee (AJC)



European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS)



European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ)



European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ)



B'nai B'rith Europe

B'nai B'rith Europe (BBE)



CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe

