

**TEL AVIV** אוניברסיטת  
**UNIVERSITY** תל אביב

The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities



For the Study of Contemporary European Jewry | לחקר יהדות אירופה בימינו

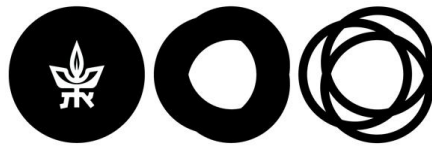
Moshe Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary  
Antisemitism and Racism

Antisemitism Worldwide  
2017

General Analysis  
Draft



The Program for the Study of Jews in Arab Lands  
Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism



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**Editor** - Dina Porat, Head of the Kantor Center

**Kantor Center Researchers**

Irena Cantorovich – Post Soviet Region

Lidia Lerner – Latin America

Sarah Rembiszewski – Western Europe and Germany

Mikael Shainkman – Scandinavia

Raphael Vago – Hungary, Romania and Slovakia

**Contributors**

Esther Webman – Arab and Muslim Countries

Michal Navoth and Benjamin Albals (KIS) – Greece

Jean Yves Camus – (Observatoire des Radicalités Politiques, Fondation Jean Jaurès) - France

Renee Dayan Shabot (Tribuna Israelita) - Mexico

Julia Edthofer & Carina Klammer (FGA) - Austria

Simon Erlanger (University of Lucerne) and Stephan Moser (SIG – Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities) - Switzerland

Stefano Gatti and Betti Guetta (CDEC, Osservatorio Antisemitismo) - Italy

Amanda Hohman and Aidan Fishman (B'nai Brith) – Canada

Jeremy Jones (AIJAC) and Julie Nathan (ECAJ) – Australia

Joël Kotek (Sciences Po Paris) – Belgium

Hana Ludin (CIDI) – Netherlands

Kenneth Marcus (LBD) – USA

Luiz Nazario - Brazil

Rafal Pankowski (Never Again) - Poland

Beatriz Rittigstein (CAIV) – Venezuela

David Sacks (Board of Deputies) - South Africa

Natalia Sineaeva - Moldova

Oren Segal and Aryeh Tuchman (ADL) - USA

Zbyněk Tarant (University of West Bohemia) - Czech Republic

Mike Whine (CST) – United Kingdom

**Statistics and Data Analysis**

Haim Fireberg

**Webmaster**

Adrian Gruszniewski

**Language Editor**

Zelda Katz

**Managing Editor**

Talia Naamat

**Website** - <http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/>

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*These country reports and other reports will be available in full on the Kantor Center's website: <http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/>. Any references to citations and sources that appeared in the text may be found on our website.*

## **Worldwide Tendencies and Developments in Antisemitism, 2017**

"En 2017, on a dû déménager parce qu'on est juif" <sup>1</sup>

Several tens of thousands of Jews have relocated, inside France, during recent years, thus performing an "internal Exodus". Their words – "we had to relocate because we are Jews" - open our 2017 report.

***A.** The report is based on the ongoing Kantor Center for the study of Contemporary European Jewry and the Moshe Kantor Database team's work, and on the various reports and data sent to us by organizations and contact persons in about 40 countries – a network we established during more than 25 years of activity. It should be noted that The Kantor Center and database is the only center, in Israel and abroad, that monitors and analyzes antisemitic manifestations worldwide, according to the same criteria, over such a long period of time that make a multi-year comparison possible. Nevertheless, we are aware of the possibility that not all the relevant data on antisemitic manifestations has reached us, because in many countries monitoring is not consistent or systematic, or because their databases are restricted to free public study because of States' rules, and because – as all monitoring agencies agree – not all manifestations are reported. Still, we do believe that information about the major manifestations has reached us.*

*The data and numbers presented herein on violent antisemitic cases are the result of a specific monitoring and analysis system developed by the Kantor Center team, using specific criteria: proven antisemitic motivation; counting a multi-event as one case; no exaggeration or diminishing the severity of the situation; distinguishing between violent, verbal and visual manifestations. Differences might occur between our published data on the number of violent incidents and those released by other monitoring communities and institutes. Monitoring communities and agencies present numbers of all types of antisemitic manifestations put together, violent, verbal and visual.*

*We are aware of the necessity to analyze antisemitism in a broad context. Therefore there can be no understanding of antisemitism without a solid background knowledge of the political, economic and social developments in any given country and in the international arena.*

### **B. Abstract of Main Developments in 2017**

The most disturbing finding, as in 2016, is the prevalent ominous feeling of insecurity among Jews in Europe, recently intensified by the murder of two women in their homes in Paris. The antisemitism atmosphere has become a public arena issue, intensively dealt with vi-a-vis a triangle made of the constant rise of the extreme right, a heated anti- Zionist discourse in the left, accompanied by harsh antisemitic expressions, and radical Islamism. In 2017, there was a moderate worldwide average decrease in antisemitic violent incidents of about 9% (327 cases compared to 361 in 2016, according to the Kantor Center criteria). It does not include yet the numbers of violent cases in France, that the Jewish security body is still elaborating.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.20minutes.fr/paris/2184191-20171213-antisemitisme-2017-demenager-parce-juif>.

During the years 2006 to 2014, the violent cases worldwide numbered between 600 to 700 per year, while during recent year they number between 300 to 400. But it should be emphasized that some of the recent violent cases have been perpetrated more brutally, causing more harm. And most important - this decrease is overshadowed by what is seen by the Jewish communities as a dramatic increase in all other manifestations, many of which are not even reported, most notably harassment in schools (some Jewish pupils moved to Catholic schools) and in the social media. There are no common worldwide criteria to measure antisemitic events, and the communities' data differs from ours, despite very close cooperation. A certain corrosion of Jewish communal life has been noticed, and Jews suspect that antisemitism has entered a new phase: expressions of classic traditional antisemitism are back, and for example, the term "Jew" has become a swear word; there is still no clear cut answer to the questions, whether the rise of rightist anti-EU and anti-immigrant parties is causing more antisemitism, and whether the 2016 newcomers to Europe have raised the level of crime and antisemitism in 2017. Nevertheless, there were achievements in the struggle against Antisemitism, and we suggest adding three measures which we define as 3Cs – Cooperation, Coalitions and Combatting.

**C. Main trends:** **The last weeks of the year 2017** (and the first months of 2018) were characterized by a large number of antisemitic incidents worldwide. President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, issued in the beginning of December 2017, was often used as a pretext for stormy demonstrations accompanied by attacks on Jews, by antisemitic slogans including calls for murder, and by the burning of the Israeli flag. These incidents do not necessarily originate in Muslim and Arab circles and countries but rather come from a variety of groups and circles, from most of the political spectrum, left wing groups included; and that manifestations of antisemitism are connected to a host of additional developments.

In most of the countries we have monitored the number of reported violent incidents was lower than 10 in each country, especially where small Jewish communities reside, for the same reasons we noted in 2016: Better security and intelligence, allocation of government budgets, less Jews with identifying signs on the street, the immigrants diverting right wingers' attention. But – and this is a major point – **this situation is not necessarily perceived in Jewish communities as a sufficient positive development**, because the presence of security measures means that they are a necessity, and mainly because it is overshadowed by the many verbal and visual expressions, some on the verge of violence, such as direct threats, harassments, hateful expressions and insults. These take place in working places, schools, universities, playgrounds, near Jewish homes and institutes, on football/soccer fields, during demonstrations in the streets, and all the more so in the social networks.

**Atmosphere:** The recent strengthening of the extreme right in a number of European countries was accompanied by **slogans and symbols which remind, not only the Jewish population, of the 1930s**, despite the significant differences between the two periods. The electoral and political achievements of the extreme right should not distract attention from the fact that they are coupled with the rise in leftist antisemitism, that supports radical Muslim anti-Israeli attitudes expressed in antisemitic terms such as in the BDS and Antifa movements, and certainly in the UK Labor party led by Jeremy Corbin. The more time passes by, and World War Two and the Holocaust turn to be a distant past, the more the **commitment towards Israel and Jewish security** weakens, especially among the post-war generations.

**The main damage that antisemitism has recently caused is a certain corrosion of Jewish life:** once there are Jews who do not participate in Jewish traditional gatherings, or do not appear in the public sphere identified as Jews - the ability to live a full Jewish communal and individual life is jeopardized, and so is Jewish identity. A feeling of not belonging is also connected to the trust – or its absence - in the state's authorities, especially the police – which is of utmost importance. This corrosion is especially apparent in **schools:** Jewish schools limit youth activities, close or face severe security and budgetary problems. As a result, some Jewish pupils moved to Catholic schools, where the fees are lower and there are no Muslims.

**The gradual return of classic traditional antisemitism,** which has been mentioned in our former reports, is noticeable in the use of expressions and symbols, and contradicts the Catholic Church's efforts to abate antisemitism. It is noticeable as well in Muslim radical and theologically based antisemitism that adopted traditional and even Christian classic religious anti-Jewish themes. For example, **abusive language,** as used in insults, threats and open calls to harm Jews, has turned the term "Jew" in many languages and forms, into a negative adjective, in ways typical of former periods in history. "Jew" has become a swearword. The pejorative use of the words "Jew", "Jude", "Juif", "Feuj" and "Yahudi" is inseparable from antisemitic perceptions of Jews".<sup>2</sup>

**The Rise of the Extreme Right:** The Charlottesville, Virginia, events of August 2017 were followed by the elections in Germany in September and in Austria in October. Extreme right parties in Europe have declared their intention to distance themselves from their past and their former public image, and their **leaders publicly emphasize their positive attitude towards Israel, and their commitment to fight antisemitism.** But such public declarations do not yet correlate with reality. The rightist parties that declare pro-Israel and pro-Jewish stances hope for an alliance with Israel and the Jews against the immigrants, most of whom are Muslims, suspected of raising the level of antisemitism, violence and even terrorism. However, most of the Muslim immigrants are moderates, who are considered as potential allies by Israel and the Jewish communities in the fight against Islamism and the attempts to limit religious ritual rights.

**Achievements:** An increasing number of governmental agencies and others have adopted **the Working Definition of Antisemitism** in 2017, following its adoption by the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) that called upon its 31 member states to adopt it, each by its national institutes. To date, it has been adopted by Romania, Germany, Austria, the UK, Bulgaria, Israel, and most recently Macedonia as well as by the European Parliament.

The international movement to boycott Israel, **the BDS,** is increasingly encountering legal and financial limitations, on the ground that it violates laws of commercial equality and laws against discrimination. Decision makers of the major European countries are aware of the delegitimization trends and their implications, as can be seen from their statements that reflect a rejection of the movement to boycott Israel.

And finally, **a suggestion for a mode of operation** that might enhance achievements: **Cooperation** among Jewish bodies and organizations that deal each in its own way with antisemitism; **Coalitions** with groups and circles that suffer and struggle against

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cco.regener-online.de/2010\\_1/pdf/jikeli.pdf](http://www.cco.regener-online.de/2010_1/pdf/jikeli.pdf).

discrimination and lack of civil protection; and **Combatting** antisemitism, once the first two Cs are achieved.

#### **D. General Analysis of the Main Trends**

**The last weeks of the year 2017** (and the first months of 2018) were characterized by a large number of antisemitic incidents worldwide, the majority of which were verbal and visual expressions. The general feeling shared by Jews, as individuals and as members of their respective communities, is that antisemitism has entered a new phase, and is rampant in most parts of the world, in many forms that are a cause for concern. The impression this accumulation of incidents left on the public at large and on Jewish communities in particular is, as reflected in many media channels, that president Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, issued in the beginning of December 2017, was used as a pretext for stormy demonstrations accompanied by attacks on Jews, by antisemitic slogans including calls to kill them off and by the burning of the Israeli flag. It should be noted, however, that these incidents do not necessarily originate in Muslim and Arab circles and countries that are concerned about this recognition, but rather come from a variety of groups and circles, from most of the political spectrum; and that manifestations of antisemitism are connected to a host of additional developments.

**The course of 2017** was more complicated and it would be worthwhile to distinguish between the first 10 months of the year and the two last ones, and evaluate them separately: A decrease in violent incidents, already registered in 2015-2016, continued along the year, though in a lower percentage. In most of the countries we have monitored the number of violent incidents was lower than 10 in each country, for the same reasons we noted in 2016: Better security and intelligence, more protective measures, allocation of government budgets, less Jews with identifying signs on the street, the immigrants diverting right wingers' attention. But – and this is a major point – **this situation is not perceived in Jewish communities as a sufficient development per se**, because it is overshadowed by the many verbal and visual expressions, some on the verge of violence, such as direct threats, harassments, insults, calls to attack Jews and even kill them en masse. These take place in working places, schools, universities, playgrounds, near Jewish homes and institutes, on football fields, demonstrations in the streets, and all the more so in the social networks. For instance: following a year (2009) with nine violent cases in Hungary, 90% of its Jews said antisemitism is a very grave problem, an answer which indicates that the so-called non-violent manifestations of antisemitism determine their feeling of insecurity.

#### **Numbers and their tendencies**

According to the Kantor Center findings, based on our criteria, a worldwide average 9% decrease in violent antisemitic cases was registered, from 361 in 2016 to 327 in 2017. (For their detailed breakdown please see the appendices).

The following are numbers and tendencies as monitored and published by Jewish communities and official governmental agencies. Most of them register all types of cases put together (including expressions on mail, social media, verbal insults, harassment, and violent incidents.)

- **Australia:** During the twelve month period, from 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017 (the Jewish year), there were 230 antisemitic incidents logged by volunteer



Community Security Groups (CSGs), official Jewish state roof bodies, and the ECAJ (Executive Council of Australian Jewry). There was thus a 9.5% increase in the overall number of antisemitic incidents over the previous year. Of note, from 2016 to 2017, assault, harassment, and vandalism decreased, but there were large increases in the number of incidents of graffiti and of posters and stickers.

- In the **U.K.**, 1382 antisemitic incidents of all types were recorded by the CST in 2017, a 3% increase on the 1346 incidents recorded in 2016.
- According to a report of the National Public Prosecutor's Office in **Poland**, which is available online, in the first half of 2017, and its data is not on antisemitism per se, there were 947 legal proceedings, related to racist, antisemitic or xenophobic incidents (for comparison: in the first half of 2016 – 863 proceedings, in the first half of 2015 – 848). The data indicate an overall increase of the number of all hate crimes.<sup>3</sup>
- Increase in the **Ukraine**, both in violence and all other types: our estimation is that the actual number of cases is higher, because Jews refrain from reporting. In the other post-soviet areas, the situation is equal to that of last year: a low average of cases, yet the attempts to exonerate and glorify nationalist leaders who actively cooperated with the German anti-Jewish policies of persecutions and murder during WWII, intensify due to the renewed nationalist aspirations in Eastern Europe.
- In **France**, according to a summary published by the Interior Ministry, antisemitic manifestations on the whole decreased by 7.2% from 355 in 2016 to 311 in 2017, but there was a rise in violent incidents in antisemitic manifestations (97 in 2017 against 77 in 2016) while violence against persons decreased from 42 in 2016 to 30 in 2017). We couldn't verify this information according to our criteria. According to Jewish community estimates, several tens of thousands, have changed their location inside France - an "internal Exodus" – In France and in Belgium it is hard to find a Jewish child in a public school, despite the heavy budgets that the governments in both countries have invested in security and educational programs.
- There was a decrease in violent incidents in **Norway**, (the Jewish community estimates there was an increase in overall types of events but they haven't published data), and in **Sweden**, where the level of violent antisemitism is generally low. A few severe cases, such as a call to slaughter Jews in Malmo, or a Molotov cocktail thrown at a synagogue in Hanukkah, lowered drastically the number of Jews carrying identifying signs.
- In **Italy**, reported antisemitic incidents in 2017 numbered 109 which includes 17 acts of Graffiti and visual material, a decrease from 130-140 in 2016. Antisemitic manifestations were displayed once again in Italian stadiums and streets by football fans, mainly supporters of Lazio team in Rome and Juventus team in Turin. In September a bill to ban fascist propaganda proposed by Jewish MP Emanuelle Fiano of the Democratic Party (PD) was introduced in the Italian Senate and a wave of antisemitic remarks and threats against Fiano consequently appeared on Italian social networks.

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<sup>3</sup>The data concern all hate crimes including antisemitic incidents.

- According to official information released by the **German** government, an increase of all types of violent antisemitic events was registered from 644 antisemitic incidents in 2016 to 707 in 2017. Among them, 24 violent cases in 2017 compared to 15 in 2016. These numbers do not include incitement cases which bring the total number to 1435. Out of 1200 cases regarded as terror, 1000 were attributed to Muslim perpetrators.
- In the **U.S.**, according to the ADL report there was an overall increase in antisemitic manifestations from 1267 in 2016 to 1986 in 2017 although a sharp decrease was recorded in violent assaults on persons, from 36 in 2016 to 19 in 2017. According to the FBI, incidents on a religious basis rose most notably. The ADL audit reveals a 57% rise with 1,986 antisemitic incidents (compared to 1,267 incidents in 2016). The total included 1,015 incidents of harassment (41% increase compared to 721 in 2016), 952 incidents of vandalism (86% increase compared to 510 in 2016), and 19 physical assaults (a decline of 47% compared to 36 in 2016). The incidents of harassment included 163 bomb threats against Jewish centers (JCC's) which came mainly from an American Jewish teenager living in Israel who was later arrested. Discounting the JCC bomb threats, reported incidents still increased by 43 % over 2016. Antisemitic incidents on schools and college campuses, mostly verbal incidents, doubled in 2017 for the second year in a row with 457 incidents, (compared to 235 in 2016 and 114 in 2015).
- Increase in **Canada**, for the fifth year now, of all types put together. The official final audit is still to be released.

**The public discourse** is increasingly found on social media, which magnifies and distributes every utterance and event in a matter of seconds. An ever-growing number of people actually run their lives according to them, and may become the recipients of hateful messages, even if a group on the social network consists of a small number of initiators: social media may create a violent atmosphere without being actually and physically violent. Extremist groups are activated by ever-changing manners of recruitment, **offered by cellular** communication: immediate gatherings in the streets, easily accessible information on getting weapons and ammunition, and about the groups' members and their plans. Yet the social networks are a source of radical stances, such as xenophobia and terrorism, spread through the cellular as if individually, directly to each person, not necessarily the extremists.

**The atmosphere** created by all these factors brings about a feeling of distress that prevails among Jewish communities and individuals, especially in Central and Western Europe, and recently in the US as well. However Jews consider violence as a part of the variety of antisemitic incidents in general, and they are seen to them all as one threatening reality. The security measures taken by police and army agencies do not lower the anxiety level among Jews, because their very presence signifies their necessity, and because they are further evidence that Jews are different than the rest of the population. Considering the special security measures for them as a kind of "positive legitimate discrimination" offers no consolation.

A major factor that raises this level of anxiety is the recent strengthening of the extreme right in a number of European countries, accompanied by **slogans and symbols reminiscent of the 1930s** that may signal a new rise of Fascism and of history repeating itself. It is the possibility

of this continuity that frightens, as well as the intensity of the anti-Jewish sentiments expressed in a variety of ways, and especially on street demonstrations. This situation poses a question for the researcher, whether it is worthwhile – and possible - to check if there is a discrepancy between the feelings and reactions of Jews, and the actual amount of incidents. Benjamin Steinitz, Head of the Research and Information Center Antisemitism (RIAS) in Berlin said that there was a "discrepancy between the perception of the victims of antisemitic attacks, insults and the police statistics," citing the report of the "Independent Experts Antisemitism", which had been submitted by renowned scientists at the suggestion of the Federal Government in April.<sup>4</sup> The political achievements of the extreme right should not distract attention from the fact that they are coupled by the rise in leftist antisemitism, that supports the Muslim anti-Israeli attitudes expressed in antisemitic terms.

The question, how many Jews who did not attend synagogues on the High Holidays points to a wider problem: Once some Jews do not participate in Jewish traditional gatherings, do not appear in the public sphere identified as Jews, avoid mentioning their real name on the internet, do not openly support Israel, if communities run out of the financial resources given heavy security costs and not much is left for culture and education activities – the ability to live a full Jewish communal and individual life is jeopardized, and so is Jewish identity. Many Jews in the UK, for instance, are losing their traditional political home, because of the change the Labor party has undergone, to which they feel they cannot be partners. As researcher David Rich has assessed, Jews regard the present stances of the labor party as no less than betrayal. Whether or not Jewish reaction to recent antisemitism is more intense than it could have been, given the circumstances – **the main damage that antisemitism has recently caused is a certain corrosion of Jewish life**, and the awareness of still not belonging to the local population.

This corrosion is especially apparent in **schools**: Jewish schools limit youth activity or close. "In the Paris region, there are virtually no more Jewish pupils attending public schools,"[because] "a bad atmosphere of harassment, insults and assaults" has become a daily routine. In Belgium too, the Belgian League Against Antisemitism has documented multiple incidents that it said were rapidly making Belgian public schools "Jew-free."<sup>5</sup> Antisemitic stereotypes, many of which are related to the Israeli-Arab conflict, are also heard in Netherlands' schools. Teachers report difficulties in teaching the Holocaust in some schools, being confronted with comparisons with the situation of the Palestinians, particularly in the Gaza strip. So it is in Sweden, where Jewish parents hesitate whether to leave their children in kindergartens.<sup>6</sup> Still, it should be mentioned that lack of sufficient budgets is also a reason for closing down Jewish schools, and that non-Jewish, and even Jewish middle-class parents send their children to Catholic schools, because of the number of Muslims in the public schools

In Germany antisemitic harassment of a 14 years old Jewish student in Germany forced his parents to pull him son from the Friedenauer Community School in March 2017 after four months of verbal and physical harassment, culminating in a brutal attack. The parents had chosen the school because of its multicultural student body, and the harassment came from students of Arab and Turkish background.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dw.com/en/anti-semitism-in-germany-jewish-life-under-threat-says-charlotte-knobloch/a-41967491>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jta.org/2016/08/23/news-opinion/world/how-paris-public-schools-became-no-go-zones-for-jews>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.timesofisrael.com/jewish-parents-pull-son-from-berlin-school-over-anti-semitic-harassment/>.

**The gradual return of** traditional classic expressions of antisemitism, which has been noticed in recent years (and mentioned in our former reports), is one more source for concern. It is noticeable in Muslim radical antisemitism, where Christian traditional religious anti-Jewish elements are being adopted. A survey conducted by the AJC in Germany, for instance, showed that the religious dimension is on the rise even in schools, while another research found that 43% of abusive letters sent to the Israeli embassy in Berlin in the wake of the 2014 Gaza War contained classic antisemitic elements. It is of utmost importance to monitor and understand this return, first and foremost because religious beliefs are intertwined with **the cultural memory of antisemitism**. Such memory, deeply rooted since early centuries and the formation of Christianity in Western culture, is transferred from one generation to another, as part of local and universal traditions, and is therefore an underlying basic factor. Also, **abusive language**, used in insults, threats and open calls to harm Jews, has turned the term "Jew" in many languages and forms, into a pejorative one, in ways typical of former periods in history. "Jew" has become a swearword. "The pejorative use of the words for "Jew", "Jude" "Juif" or "Feuj", trivializes open antisemitism, and "leads to negative and therefore antisemitic connotations in the terms for "Jews" which are inseparable of antisemitic perceptions of Jews".<sup>8</sup>

**The increase in antisemitism disguised as anti-Zionism** and anti-Israelism is reflected in the media and in political utterances. The more time passes by, and World War Two and the Holocaust turn into a distant past, the more the **commitment towards Israel and Jewish security** weakens: former generations, who shared such a commitment on the grounds of their political and national convictions and of feeling indebted following WWII and the Holocaust, are aging or already off the public stage, not only in Germany and Austria. New generations are less committed and more critical and even hostile towards the Jewish communities and Israel, and are more open to listen to ideas, theories and ideologies, that accompanied the War period, being less aware of its consequences and lessons.

### **The Rise of the Extreme Right**

It still remains to be seen, whether the extreme right has gained strength in the USA, that will be manifested in the long run. **The Charlottesville events of August 2017** were characterized by the Heil Hitler salute, the swastikas on flags and badges, torches at night, slogans such as "Jews are Satan's children", "Blood and Soil" (reminding of Blut und Boden), "Jews will not replace us" (another Third Reich slogan), ugly caricatures in journals tellingly titled The Daily Stormer and the like, and so on. The new phenomenon in the American right, the Alt-Right, rightists who wish to be an alternative, added more anxiety. The Alt-Right members are not made of one cloth, and this is the underlying reason for their slogan "Unite the Right", yet the fanatics among them depict the US government as ZOG – Zionist Occupied Government; they dream of a pure race, and see the Jews as the ultimate other. But their threat that there would soon be many more Charlottesville has not materialized and no similar events took place in their wake. The demonstrations and marches did not carry anti-Israel signs, but rather had outright classical and religious antisemitic contents, as mentioned before, coming from circles within American society at large and not only from Muslim circles that joined groups in the radical left, Antifa and the Black Churches.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.cco.regener-online.de/2010\\_1/pdf/jikeli.pdf](http://www.cco.regener-online.de/2010_1/pdf/jikeli.pdf).

The extreme right in Europe has recently gained political power: following Charlottesville in August came the **elections in Germany in September and in Austria in October**, and raised still more reasons for concern. In Germany, Angela Merkel's coalition parties weakened, and the *Alternative fuer Deutschland*, again rightists who wish to be an alternative to the existing order, won a substantial number of the votes – 13% - and its representatives entered the Bundestag. In October the right-center party reached a smashing victory in Austria, and towards the end of the year managed to form a government together with the *Freiheitliche Partei Oesterreich*, the Freedom Party, formerly led by Joerg Haider – founded in 1956 by former SS members - a party with evident neo-Nazi roots, especially within its student fraternities. The election campaigns provide these parties with opportunities to present their ideological platform to the public, and the debates between their leaders and their opponents placed the racist and antisemitic discourse in center stage - and antisemitic cases multiplied since the forming of the coalition in Austria.

These two parties, and other extreme right parties in Europe, have declared **their efforts to distance themselves from their past** and their former public image, and their leaders publicly emphasize their positive attitude towards Israel, and their commitment to fight antisemitism. But such public declarations do not correlate with reality: antisemitism is still a central factor on the popular level, under the level of the leadership, among students' fraternities and workers unions, in home gatherings and country side activists, who are these parties' voters. The director of the Mauthausen memorial site, where tens of thousands of high school students visit annually, concluded that today's youngsters would rather follow an authoritative leader and his principles, and not democratic ideas and personal freedom. Yet antisemitic sentiments are not restricted to popular strata: a large scope research conducted in Germany by Prof. Monika Schwartz- Friesel, showed how such feelings are deeply embedded in intelligentsia, media and even among decision makers. It should be noted that while left and center leaders in Europe have sharply denounced the Charlottesville events, right wing leaders did not, a fact that speaks for itself.

The anti-immigration agenda **coupled by national anti-European Union stances** were the key factors in the electoral success of extreme right and populist right parties. The immigrants that reached Europe during 2014-2015 in large numbers, coming mainly from the Middle East and Afghanistan via Greece and Turkey, come now, in lesser numbers, from central and northern Africa, via Italy and Spain. Therefore the questions now at the forefront are how to best absorb those who have already arrived, and how to check whether their arrival may have caused an increase in antisemitism and in escalating the tensions between immigrants and the local population, accusations made that they have raised the level of violence and crime. This question was answered negatively during 2016, since it seemed that the newcomers were busy being absorbed in their new surroundings, yet new surveys and research, such as the one recently conducted by the German government, pointed at rising levels of antisemitism, violence and even terrorism, among the newcomers, and the term "immigration resistance" is still in use. The public discourse concerning the presence of immigrants brings to the forefront expressions connected to xenophobia and racism, voiced especially by the opponents of immigration, most notably on the political right, not necessarily by the immigrants themselves. The rightist parties that declare pro-Israel and pro-Jewish stances, hope for an alliance with the Jewish communities and Israel against the immigrants, most of whom are Muslims, but such an alliance cannot materialize: most of the Muslims are moderates, against whom no ill wish is being harbored: on the contrary, they are considered by Israel and the Jewish communities as potential allies.

Antisemitic activity is generally perceived as originating in groups with an ideological agenda, that directs their members and dictates their way. Yet recently an increasing number of perpetrators can be described as **young hooligans**, bored and devoid of any ideology, frustrated because of unemployment, living at the margins of society despite the welfare policies of democratic states. Within the ranks of the elder generation of these groups, especially on the right side of the political map, ideologies seem to be less deep seated than in former decades, and more characterized by shallow and repetitive slogans. Also, members of radical groups are not necessarily focused solely on antisemitism; they are rather against any "other", anyone who does not belong in their ranks ethnically, religiously or politically: their underlying principle is "**Group-based Hostility**", a term used by sociologists.

The recent strengthening of the Right cannot distract us from the antisemitism spread by the Islamists, the radical Muslims, an antisemitism mired in acute anti-Zionism and anti-Israel expressions, but with a distinction between the reality in Europe and that existing in the Arab and Muslim countries. In the Arab and Muslim world the situation is similar to that of last year, with upwards peaks whenever a Zionist/Israeli issue comes to center stage such as the Temple Mount, the Balfour declaration, UNESCO decisions, and President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. There are new and surprising voices in the Arab and Muslim world, who publicly oppose antisemitism, conspiracy theories and libels against Jews and Israel, especially in the anti-Iran countries. Those who voice them are convinced that such antisemitic opinions are not only wrong, but that they are detrimental to the Arab/Muslim cause.

## **Achievements and their Limits**

### **The Working Definition of Antisemitism 2017**

An increasing number of governmental agencies and others have adopted the Working Definition of Antisemitism in 2017, following its adoption by the IHRA, the international Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, that called upon its 31 member states to adopt it each by its national institutes. To date, it has been adopted by Romania, Germany, Austria, the UK, Bulgaria, Israel, and most recently Macedonia as well as by the European Parliament.

The adoption was accompanied by acts or statements underlining its importance: A Downing Street statement explained, at the end of December 2016, that the intention of such a definition was to “ensure that culprits will not be able to get away with being antisemitic because the term is ill-defined, or because different organizations or bodies have different interpretations of it”.<sup>9</sup>

On 20 September 2017, the German Government unanimously adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism (WDA) during its last cabinet meeting before the general elections. The cabinet recommended that law-enforcement and other public officials use the official definition, in line with the recommendations of an independent group of experts. The directive states inter alia that "the state of Israel, which is understood as a Jewish collective, can also be the target of such attacks. "We Germans are

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<sup>9</sup> [http://uk.businessinsider.com/britain-new-anti-semitism-definition-2016-12?utm\\_source=feedburner&%3Butm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+businessinsider+\(Business+Insider\)&r=US&IR=T](http://uk.businessinsider.com/britain-new-anti-semitism-definition-2016-12?utm_source=feedburner&%3Butm_medium=referral&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+businessinsider+(Business+Insider)&r=US&IR=T).

particularly vigilant when our country is threatened by an increase in antisemitism," said Minister of the Interior, Thomas de Maizière, "History made clear to us, in the most terrible way, the horrors to which antisemitism can lead."

The Bulgarian government has appointed, following the adoption, a national coordinator on combatting antisemitism.

### **The Struggle against the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) Movement**

The BDS movement is still leaving its traces by fuelling an anti-Israel rhetoric, which dominates many media outlets, thus finding their way into the minds of the uncritically consumer of news outlets. The weakening of the "old" politics and the rise of new parties that lack any historic commitment to Israel help spread the BDS ideas.<sup>10</sup>

However, the international protest movement to boycott Israel is increasingly encountering legal and financial limitations, on the ground that it violates laws of commercial equality and laws against discrimination. Decision makers of the major European countries – Germany, the UK, France, the Netherlands and Spain, are aware of the delegitimization trends and their implications, as can be seen from their statements that reflect a rejection of the movement to boycott Israel.

In a number of Germany's major cities, such as Frankfurt, Berlin and Munich, it has been said that BDS uses language from the Nazi era: The deputy mayor of Frankfurt, Uwe Becker (CDU), submitted a bill that would ban municipal funds and space from being used for activities that aim to boycott Israel or to finance terror. Becker, a leading German political voice against antisemitism, said on August 9th, 2017, "The BDS campaign with its messages uses the same language as the National Socialists once used to express: 'Don't buy from Jews!' The boycott movement targeting Israel is "deeply antisemitic and should have no place in Frankfurt," he said.

European Parliament lawmaker from Italy, Fulvio Martusciello, included a stance opposing boycotts in the European Report on Competition Policy for 2016. This new anti- boycott stance could help fight against 'unfair collective boycotts' and according to Martusciello mark a clear opposition in European commercial policy to boycotts such as the BDS Campaign.

The congress of Norway's largest trade union, LO, voted in May to boycott Israel in order to bring about a Palestinian state. The vote was criticized by the newly elected chairman of LO, Hans-Christian Gabrielsen, as well as the chairman of the Norwegian Labor Party, Jonas Gahr Støre, and Norway's Foreign Minister Børge Brende.

As in previous years, the BDS movement was very active in Spain during 2017 and was supported by various local authorities. According to ACOM, a Spanish organization fighting antisemitism and xenophobia, more than 65 municipalities and public authorities have joined the boycott campaign so far. Spanish funding has been transferred to non-governmental organizations active in political campaigns against Israel, some of which are linked to terrorist organizations, promote antisemitism, incite to violence, and are involved in BDS. At the same time, however, the movement suffered defeats in Spanish courts which this year ruled against BDS decisions in more than a dozen municipalities, approved a criminal investigation into

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.inss.org.il/publication/bds-movement-european-leaders-mixed-trends-questions-future/>.

possible discrimination by organisers of a music festival who sought to bar the Jewish American singer, Matisyahu, and opposed “imposed unconstitutional restrictions on the freedom to hold personal beliefs and opinions.”

In Canada, the Judicial Board of McGill University also declared BDS to be a discriminatory and unconstitutional political program.

“We are opposed to BDS and strongly opposed to antisemitism, we will fight them,” said Dutch Foreign Minister Halbe Zijlstra during a meeting in January 2018 in Jerusalem with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin.<sup>11</sup>

### **Leaders' and Governments' Responses to Antisemitism**

Responses of national and international leaders, that send a strong and clear cut worded message to their audiences, are, needless to say, of utmost importance in the struggle against antisemitism. Some such messages had been issued by the present Pope, by Angela Merkel and Manuel Valls, and 2017 provided more such important examples:

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven declared that “there is no place for antisemitism in our society,” days after pro-Palestinian demonstrators in the city of Malmo chanted “Slaughter the Jews,” and a Hanukkah celebration at a synagogue in Gothenburg was attacked by a gang throwing Molotov cocktails. Similar condemnation has been heard from political leaders in Germany, after demonstrators burned Israeli flags at a number of rallies: “The conflict is imported directly into the apartments via the internet or television,” Franziska Giffey — the Social Democrat mayor of the Neukölln district — said. “It’s a subject even in schoolyards.” “Germany is responsible for the murder of at least 6 million Jews during the Holocaust,” Ines Pohl — editor-in-chief of the country’s *DW* broadcaster — wrote. “And no matter how much time has passed since, Germany will always have a unique obligation to fight antisemitism.” Pohl continued: “This is why burning the Israeli flag in Germany is utterly unacceptable. Those who have come to Germany seeking safety and a new place to call home must abide by this fact. There are fundamental values in German society that are non-negotiable.”

“In our country, antisemitism is alive. It is not new, it is ancient. It is not superficial, it is well-rooted. And it hides always behind new masks, attempts to justify itself through diverse reasons. This ideology of hate is pushing some French Jews to make Aliyah,” said Eduard Philippe, France's prime minister, using the Hebrew word for immigration by Jews to Israel. “It should be a spiritual choice but it pains all citizens of the republic when it’s a form of self-exile, made out of insecurity and fear.”

The responses of governments are not restricted to declarations: Budgets are allocated, legislation is encouraged, educational programs are introduced in schools, conferences and seminars where important decisions are being reached take place. Yet there is an ongoing discrepancy between the well-intended efforts of western governments to contain antisemitism, and their implementation on the ground. An important 2008 framework decision issued to the 28 EU member states was answered by 14 only, to this very day. It seems that these efforts do not reach the perpetrators of antisemitism on the extreme left and right, certainly not on the radical Muslims circles. The way to bridging this gap has not been found yet, and is so far an unanswered challenge.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://ejpress.org/dutch-fm-zijlstra-israel-opposed-bds-strongly-opposed-anti-semitism-will-fight/>.



Therefore, more efforts are being made in new directions, and they began to bear fruits in 2017: the Israeli Ministry of the Diaspora developed an advanced tool to monitor antisemitism on the social media in a number of languages. Moreover, an internet site was launched, where the incitement on the web can be read in real time, updates and information are being provided as well as a possibility to report on antisemitic incidents. There is an attempt to create "a unitary and standardized tool" titled the Anitsemittism Measurement Project, aiming at reaching a unified categorization of antisemitic manifestations that will be widely accepted. The Israeli Minister of Justice, Ayelet Shaked and the EU coordinator, Katharina von Schnurbein, continued efforts to control the incitement on the web, by obliging the major servers to take off offensive materials immediately after being identified by the new tools, or else be subject to heavy fines, as a German law now under discussion threatens. Now, at the beginning of 2018, it seems that Facebook is ready to abide by these new laws, says Shaked, while Twitter is not – thereby attracting inciters to leave Facebook and join Twitter.

**Two major conferences** on antisemitism and the proper ways to contain it took place in the beginning of 2018: One in Vienna University, in cooperation with the Tel Aviv and New York universities, and one in Jerusalem sponsored and organized by the Israeli Foreign Ministry. They will be reported on in detail in our next 2018 report, so let us end by quoting the concluding statement of the Vienna “An End to Antisemitism” conference:

"We, the 150 participating scholars of antisemitism from over a dozen countries who have gathered in Vienna in the February 2018 for the conference “An End to Antisemitism”, call upon government and civil society leaders to recognize the urgent need to confront the rise of antisemitism that threatens security and future of the Jews of Europe and the safety of Jews elsewhere. Not only is antisemitism a violation of the basic human rights of Jews, but it poses an acute danger to democracy and the very fabric of society.

Therefore we are offering a series of policy recommendations based on our deliberations and experiences in the hope that they will be used as a strategic guide and road map to confront and combat antisemitism.

We recognize that antisemitism did not begin or end with the Holocaust; but we pledge to continue the effort which began here and to devote ourselves to working together to create a society where “An End to Antisemitism” can finally be envisioned".

### **The Post-Soviet Region / Irena Cantorovich**

Compared to previous years, 2017 was a very difficult year for antisemitism-monitoring in the post-Soviet region. Different trends were observed: more verbal antisemitism in Russia, more violence in Ukraine. In general, we can state that the same types of incidents continued this year too: vandalism, antisemitic propaganda (blaming Jews in all the problems, etc.) and use of antisemitic content for political purposes.

#### **Russia**

The situation in Russia in the Jewish context is two-sided. On one hand, it seems that Russia was able to shake off the anti-Jewish image that has characterized it for centuries: Jewish organizations are freely active, Jews can study in any academic institute they wish, Jews occupy senior positions in public and state systems, and there is no restriction on immigration

to other countries. On the other hand, the antisemitic trends that began to emerge in recent years, and generally characterized the public and political margins, gradually entered more central circles and became more prominent in 2017: the Jews are presented repeatedly as the main and even exclusive components of the opposition to the present regime, their spirit and values are alien and are to blame for all the problems of Russia.

2017 was the 100th anniversary of the October 1917 revolution, and the Jews were accused on several occasions of being responsible for it and for the "ritual murder" of the Tsarist family. At the beginning of the year, the Jews were described as the enemies of the Orthodox Church. For example, in January, Piotr Tolstói, State-Duma (lower house of the Russian Parliament) vice-speaker, and in February, MP Vitalii Milonov, both from the United Russia Party, accused the Jews of carrying out the revolution and of damaging the Church and Russian culture. The involvement of the Jews in the revolution was a central topic in public discourse. Two TV series were dedicated to central figures in the Communist Party: Alexander Parvus (Israel Gelfand) and Lev Trotskii (Lev Bronshtein). Both series presented the events of that time as a Jewish conspiracy that caused the overthrow of the old Russian regime.

On 27 November 2017 Marina Molodtseva, senior investigator for particularly important cases of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, said, during a conference dedicated to the murder of the Tsar and his family, that the murder will be investigated again, including the possibility that it was a ritual murder. Jewish organizations condemned this statement, among them the president of the CHABAD affiliated Federation of Russian Jewish Communities (FEOR), Alexander Boroda, who said that "the accusation of Jews in the ritual murder is one of the most ancient antisemitic slanders, and it has repeatedly served as the cause of the persecution, the victims of which were hundreds and thousands of people. But every time these charges were considered by people who were not infected with antisemitic prejudices, it turned out that this is a lie". Bishop Tikhon (Shevkunov), chairman of Russian Orthodox Church commission investigating the execution of the Romanov family, who is said to be the personal priest of President Vladimir Putin, said at the conference that he does not rule out the ritual nature of the murder. Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill, speaking at the opening of the conference, called for not rushing to investigate the death of the royal family. The idea that the murder of the Romanov family was part of a ritual murder by Jews was already researched in the past but was not confirmed. On 30 November Bishop Tikhon said during a briefing that "the wish to determine whether the killing of Russia's last tsar Nikolaii II was a ritual one should not be regarded as an antisemitic gesture ... No one has mentioned the ethnic origin or religious affiliation of the people who fired the shots". Alexander Boroda said in response that it is "important that Bishop Tikhon has found it necessary to comment on this situation and deny antisemitic motives in the theories of the killing of the imperial family ... it is totally unacceptable to use in these processes the historically and ideologically charged words 'ritual killing,' which have obvious connotations".

Another debate in connection with Tsar Nikolaii II was caused by the movie "Mathilde", (producer and director: Aleksei Uchitel) which was dedicated to the love story between Nikolaii and ballerina Matylda Krzesińska when he was still only a Royal heir. On 5 October Natalia Poklonskaya, member of the Russian parliament and prosecutor at the Crimea Republic, uploaded a post on her Facebook page about the movie. Poklonskaya mentioned Uchitel's Jewish origin, that the movie distorts the Tsar's sacred image and ignores a Kabbalistic inscription that was allegedly found at the house where the Tsarist family was

murdered in 1918 reading "here, on the order of the forces of darkness, the Tsar was sacrificed for the destruction of the State. Let all the peoples know". The idea about the existence of such an inscription and that it is connected to ritual murder by Jews is popular among nationalists in Russia. In September 2017 well-known actor Vasilii Livanov said during an interview to the Christian-Orthodox Internet site Slovo as a response to a question about the movie that there is a version according to which the Tsar was murdered as part of a Jewish ritual murder and after seeing the movie ,this version looks even more real.

The mass media had a leading role in circulating the idea of the Jews as a foreign, provocative and problematic element. Two films were broadcast about the domination of the Jews in the world and U.S. President, Donald Trump's Jewish connections were discussed at length. A comparison between Russia's past and current enemies was made as well. The Jews crucified Jesus and destroyed the Tsarist Empire just as today the liberals are destroying modern Russia.

As in previous years, the discussion about the 2014 revolution in Ukraine continued, although there was a small decrease. The alleged Jewish character of the new rulers was mentioned on many occasions in the Russian mass media as well as by politicians and public figures.

In contrast to the extensive antisemitic rhetoric in the country, only two incidents of vandalism were reported in Russia in 2017: on the night between 11 and 12 July persons unknown threw a stone at a synagogue in Kostroma; on the night between 11 and 12 September three Molotov Cocktails were thrown at the offices of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Russia (FEOR) at the Mar'ina Roshcha neighborhood in Moscow. In both cases only minor damage was caused to the buildings.

The Holocaust is still being referred to as a part of a much wider genocide and not as a unique phenomenon. On 13 July TV channel NTV broadcast a report claiming the Holocaust was not a Jewish event. In addition, the Jews hurried to demand compensations from the Germans, while Germany had to compensate first and foremost Russia. In August 2017, Maria Zakharova, spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, referring to Poland's decision to exclude Russia from a commemoration project for the victims of the Nazi extermination camp in Sobibór, said that "Israel's position - to allow Russia's exclusion of the project - is bordering on historical betrayal" because the Jews have a moral debt to the Russians for saving them during the Holocaust.

The Russian Internet is full of antisemitic content which is being published almost without any interference by the law enforcement agencies. Authorities rarely intervene, usually only when a private individual uploads antisemitic content on his personal page on one of the social networks. However, even then, for the most part, the punishment is mild (small fine) and is not deterrent, and the issue is not being dealt with on the national level at all.

## **Ukraine**

There are three main types of antisemitism in Ukraine: violence against Jewish facilities, using the Jewish card in the public political discourse, and dealing with the historical memory and the role of the Ukrainians in the murder of Jews.

During 2017 only a few cases of violence against Jews were recorded. However, when we talk about vandalism of Jewish facilities, we can say that the trends of previous years continued during 2017, including repeated attacks on the same place, in the face of the total incompetence of the authorities. Frequently the authorities claim that the damage was not caused by people, but is a result of the poor state of infrastructure and natural wear. Even if this could be true in a few cases of damage to ancient tombstones, in most cases the human hand is evident: repeated damaging of the Hannukah Menorah in Kiev in December, repeated damaging of tombstones at Jewish cemeteries in Kolomyia, Ternopol and Chernovits, etc.

In the political realm, the "Jewish card" continued to be widely used in power struggles between political groups, when all sides chose to blame their opponents for being "hidden Jews." In 2017 the most prominent figure in this context was parliament member and former fighter pilot, Nadezhda Savchenko, who claimed on several occasions that the current regime and its leaders are Jewish. Other politicians also accused their political enemies of being Jews, although it is interesting to note that these accusations were directed not only at Prime Minister Groisman and the mayor of Kiev, Klichko, whose Jewish origin is known, but also by President Poroshenko, heads of other parties and senior government officials.

The well-publicized battle between former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, who was appointed governor of Odessa by President Poroshenko and then dismissed, and Poroshenko's team, is also not free of antisemitic content, starting with Saakashvili's spokesperson who mentioned Poroshenko's "Jewish" nickname Valtsman, and ending with some of his supporters shouting on the streets "to remove Jewish rule from the Ukraine". It should be noted that Saakashvili himself publicly condemned these calls and fired his spokesperson.

As part of the process of strengthening national feelings, the Ukrainian nation seeks national heroes who can be glorified, even if the hands of some of them are stained with Jewish blood. Ukrainian authorities choose to ignore this last fact and sometimes even present them as people who helped and rescued Jews. This distortion of history is not connected only to the Holocaust. The "heroes" of the independent Ukrainian state that arose immediately after the 1917 revolution are also glorified, such as Semion Petliura, the leader of the Independent Ukrainian State, whose people committed severe riots against the Jews and led to the deaths of tens of thousands of Jews in 1918-1920. The Ukrainian authorities glorify Petliura as a national hero while completely ignoring the Jewish aspect of his and his supporters' activities.

The same applies to a series of measures taken to commemorate Roman Shukhevich, the commander of the Ukrainian battalion Nachtigel, who was active in the ranks of the German army. The objection of Jewish organization to calling a boulevard in Kiev in his memory was extensively condemned by nationalist organizations, which implied that if the Jews will not agree to the new Ukrainian order they will be deported from the country in which they are only "temporary guests". On 25 February 2017, a monument to the Ukrainian poet and member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), Olena Teliha, was unveiled at the Babi Yar memorial complex in Kiev. According to Bohdan Chervak, head of OUN and the Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting, Teliha was killed in Babi Yar. In addition, he said that Babi Yar is an Ukrainian soil on which Ukrainian heroes were killed and they must be commemorated there and not only the Jews. It should be noted that before she was arrested and executed by the Germans, Teliha published antisemitic poems and articles calling to murder Jews, the enemies of Ukraine. In addition, there is evidence that she was executed near the prison where she was held and not at Babi Yar.

Unfortunately, there is no change in the struggle against antisemitism: the various authorities continue to ignore the phenomenon of antisemitism and do not define antisemitic incidents as such, but as "hooliganism."

### **Other countries**

In other countries, isolated incidents were recorded, mainly desecration of Jewish sites, or discussion of the role of local residents in the murder of Jews during the Holocaust. Ruta Vanagaite's controversial book "Our People" (2015) continued to be discussed in Lithuania and the author was even blamed of being a Russian agent. She chose to mute the role of the Germans in the extermination of Lithuanian Jews during the Holocaust while placing full responsibility on the locals.

### **MOLDOVA / Natalia Sineaeva-Pankowska**

#### **The Jewish Community in Moldova**

According to the last census of the population from 2014, the Moldovan population is estimated to be approximately three million. According to the results of the census, there are 1,600 Jews living in Moldova (placed in the category "others" with 0,5 percent of population). However, according to the Jewish Community of Moldova, the number is higher, and the results of the latest census do not reflect the actual situation. According to some critical opinions, the census did not adequately cover the entire population. Unofficially, the Jewish community is estimated to be 15,000 people. There is a Jewish library in Kishinev/Chisinau, two Jewish schools and three synagogues. There is only one Jewish monthly newspaper, "Our Voice", which has a circulation of 2,000 copies in Russian. It is distributed among Jewish communities across the country as well as among Moldovan MPs and governmental offices. Moldova is divided into two parts – Moldova itself and the unrecognized and self-proclaimed Transnistrian Republic. The Jewish community is unique as it is represented as a single entity in both regions.

#### **Antisemitism in Moldova**

In Moldova, there is a low number of hate crimes, including antisemitic crimes, registered by governmental institutions. The Information Center of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova is responsible for collecting all hate crime data, and the prosecutor's office is required to collect information about the cases they investigate. According to their information, there were only five cases of hate crime in 2016 and none was antisemitic. No hate crimes were reported in 2015. It can be assumed that antisemitic incidents (and other hate crimes) are somewhat underreported by the above-mentioned institutions. According to some, due to the denial of the problem (in the past cases of vandalism at Jewish cemeteries were reported as 'hooliganism') and lack of knowledge.

The number of antisemitic incidents registered by non-governmental organizations is higher. Most of the antisemitic cases reported by the Jewish Community of Moldova concerned

"attacks against property" (cemetery vandalism and synagogue desecration). All ten cases registered and reported by the Jewish Community of Moldova and the OSCE Mission to Moldova in 2016 concerned "attacks against property." Antisemitic incidents registered in 2017 also dealt with "attacks against property". For example, on 27 March 2017, unknown persons committed arson on the Jewish cemetery in Chisinau. The prosecutor's office started an investigation upon a complaint submitted by the Jewish Community of Moldova. Violent attacks against Jews/or alleged Jews, and antisemitic threats are rare and have not been registered in recent years by the Jewish community of Moldova or any other organization. However, it can also be assumed that the population has very little knowledge of identifying and reporting antisemitism, and has little, if any faith in local authorities and its ability to protect .

The Jewish community of Moldova has been concerned about antisemitic hate speech on the Internet, including reader's fora of the mainstream media such as "Moldavskie vedomosti" and TNT channel. Marina Shuster, the director of the Jewish Community of Moldova, states that many more such cases that have been registered in recent months. In her opinion, there is a need to establish a special organization to deal with antisemitism on the Internet in Moldova, and monitor and report hate speech. There have been remarks promoting the myth of Jewish conspiracy and anti-Zionism on readers' fora. For example, on 26 October 2017, the popular newspaper, "Moldavskie vedomosti" published an interview with the president of the Council for Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality, Yan Feldman, about language issues in Moldova. On the Internet forum following the article there were several antisemitic comments attacking him personally. After some complaints, comments which personally attack Yan Feldman were deleted, but the general antisemitic comments remain visible online.

### **Holocaust Denial and Distortion**

Historically, Jews constituted a large percentage of the population in Moldova. For example, 40 percent of inhabitants of the Moldovan capital Kishinev/Chisinau were Jews before the Second World War, and there were 77 synagogues and prayer houses. Many Moldovan Jews were closed in ghettos and then transported to camps in Transnistria; many died on their way to Transnistria; many were robbed and beaten by Romanian soldiers or local peasants. During the Soviet era and in the years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the topic was mostly silenced. Moreover, there was a tendency to deny Romanian responsibility for the Holocaust (even though it was well researched and accepted in Romania thanks to the work of the Elie Wiesel Commission at the turn of the century). The topic of the local (Moldovan) population's participation in the Holocaust was not researched either. Most Moldovans have little or no knowledge about prewar Jewish life or the Holocaust.

The situation has changed slightly in recent years. According to some, the willingness of the Moldovan authorities today to address and acknowledge the Holocaust is not a home-grown phenomenon, but is due to the influence of international organizations. In 2015 the Moldovan government established the Holocaust Remembrance Day to be commemorated on 27 January. In 2016, after the representatives of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum Radu Ioanid and Paul A. Shapiro visited the Moldovan Parliament and had talks with Moldovan MPs, did the Moldovan Parliament approve the Elie Wiesel Commission report. It might be considered as a starting point for Moldova to deal with various aspects of Holocaust history.

On 22 May 2017, the Moldovan Government approved an Action Plan for 2017-2019 on the implementation of the Declaration of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova on the acceptance of the final report of the Elie Wiesel Commission. A range of activities has been planned with the involvement of various actors from state institutions to teachers to international organizations, such as the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Center and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. In 2017, a special commission was established to assess history curriculum and textbooks in the context of Holocaust study. The commission includes, among others, IHRA experts from Romania.

On 9 February 2017, a Romanian language edition of Paul A. Shapiro's book "The Ghetto of Chisinau. 1941-1942." was launched. The event took place at the National Museum of History of Moldova. It was attended by the Minister of Culture, Monica Babuc; the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lilian Darii; and the U.S. Ambassador to Moldova, James Pettit. The event was organized by the Ministry of Culture and the U.S. Embassy to Moldova in partnership with the Elie Wiesel Institute in Romania. The book was published in Bucharest by Curtea Veche Publishing House in 2016. The book is available at several bookstores in Chisinau. According to interviews with experts and representatives of the Jewish community in Moldova conducted in Chisinau in December 2017, Shapiro's book was a breakthrough in Moldova. It provoked an interest in this tragic chapter of the Jewish history of Chisinau as well as Jewish history in general among local inhabitants. A discussion was raised in the Moldovan media on how to commemorate the Chisinau ghetto and to mark its borders and how to raise awareness of inhabitants about this part of the history of their city. The participants in the discussion were not only historians and publicists, but also local activists from such organizations as 'Oberlhit' Association, which deals with urban spaces.

In July 2017, the Jewish Community of Moldova signed a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Education in Moldova, also in the field of Holocaust commemoration.

In September 2017, the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association (Poland) in cooperation with the Jewish community of Moldova, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Oral History Institute in Moldova co-organized a series of lectures and discussions with the distinguished historian and War and Society professor at Princeton University, Jan Tomasz Gross. The events were widely covered by the media.

A range of activities has been planned for the Holocaust Remembrance in January by the Jewish Community of Moldova, in Chisinau and in Transnistrian region (Tiraspol and Bendery) with the participation of the authorities.

On the other hand, under the surface, the issue is a double-aged sword. The issue of the Holocaust in Moldova remains sensitive.

On 22 September 2017, the Council of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova awarded 'Doctor Honoris Causa' to notorious writer, Paul Goma, the author of the book "The Red Week. 28 June–3 July 1940. Bessarabia and the Jews". The book of Paul Goma is an attempt to blame the Jews themselves for the Holocaust, claiming that their mass murder was only a "reaction to the Jews' support of the Soviet regime and anti-fascist partisan actions during the war." The book argues that Jews were also anti-Romanian, and local Jews perpetrated numerous crimes against retreating Romanian troops and civil servants. Despite the apparent antisemitic and negationist nature of this publication, this book was published in three editions and was available at bookstores in Chisinau. The Jewish Community wrote a complaint to the

President of Moldova asking to investigate the case and recommended to strip Goma of his award.

Two other Holocaust deniers from Romania, Ion Coja and Radu Theodoru, have influence on some nationalist-oriented Moldovan historians and publicists. Both of them visited Moldova, gave interviews to Moldovan media and participated in scientific conferences in the past. Among the recent examples - both deniers contributed to the 'scientific' conference “75 years after liberation of Bessarabia, Northern Bucovina and Tinutul Herta – 22 June 1941” which took place in Chisinau in June 2016. The conference was attended by mainstream Moldovan historians, writers and journalists such as Vasile Soimaru, Nina Negru, Nicolae Dabija and was covered by Ion Coja in his blog. It is possible to buy their books in Chisinau.

A respected scholar in Moldova who wrote her habilitation research thesis on the local population and the Holocaust in Moldova, was rejected by the local academic commission which awards degrees, apparently due to the sensitivity of the topic.

### **Latin America / Lidia Lerner**

#### **Argentina<sup>12</sup>**

During the year 2017, the DAIA, the umbrella organization of Argentina's Jewish community, registered through its complaints center approximately 400 antisemitic events.

About two thirds of the complaints relate to incidents that occurred in the virtual ambit, mainly in online forums and comments. A campaign against antisemitism carried out by the DAIA in social networks, has paradoxically led to an outbreak of antisemitism expressed by the manifestation of derogatory comments towards the Jewish community in general.

Among the complaints that have caused the most concern:

- An increase in threats to individuals of the Jewish community, including those recently received on 15 November by a renowned journalist, Federico Andahazi who received an email saying: "Zionist Jew, piece of rubbish, you're no good even for poor quality soap".
- Aggressions against adolescents from community schools during their school excursions.
- Several cases of dissemination of Nazi publications. There were also several cases where police raids on private properties and businesses revealed objects with Nazi symbology, both original and replicas, which were intended for smuggling and commercial distribution (in February in the neighborhood of Empalme Graneros in Santa Fe; in June - at a bookstore in Beccar; in July in San Isidro, the Caballito neighborhood in Buenos Aires and in Cordova; in October in Moron).
- A security guard at a dance club was denounced for displaying, during work, tattoos with the inscription of the "SS".

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<sup>12</sup> Partly based on report by DAIA, Center of Social Studies.



Other noteworthy incidents:

- In May Congresswoman Laura Marrone of the Socialist Left Party compared Israel to Nazism and Isis.
- The visit of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Argentina in September 2017 led to a series of protests and demonstrations by left wing and pro-Palestinian groups in which antisemitic expressions and comparisons to Nazis were voiced. Particularly serious was the publication of WhatsApp messages between a congressman from Corrientes and a Palestinian embassy employee concerning Netanyahu's visit, where they said that they were "developing ... a new strategy for demonizing the Zionist Jewish occupation" and "it is also important to strengthen the hypothesis that Jews are loyal to Israel and not to Argentina."
- During a television interview on 2 November, Rep. Leopoldo Moro (Kirchnerist), speaking on the issue of the AMIA attack, accused Congressman Waldo Wolf of being a "Mossad agent."
- A case that aroused a lot of media attention were the words of television hostess Úrsula Vargues, who was fired from the "We in the Morning" program after she published a series of problematic tweets about the "Jewish control of the media".

## **Brazil**<sup>13</sup>

Antisemitism in Brazil, though not widespread, emanates both from the right and the left. It is often expressed in the guise of anti-Zionism, especially from left wing and Muslim elements.

2017 saw a continuation of the trend of strengthening of the Brazilian extreme right. The number of Nazi sympathizers in Brazil passed the 200 thousand mark. Of these, at least 10% were members of neo-Nazi cells. Prominent among them were supporters of MP Jair Messias Bolsonaro, former military officer, elected to the Chamber of Deputies by the Progressive Party (PP), current member of the Social Liberal Party (PSL) and preliminary candidate for the 2018 Brazilian presidential election, with a large following on social media. A follower of right-wing political ideologue Olavo de Carvalho, Bolsonaro relies on his parliamentary immunity to increase neo-Nazi activity in the country, especially on the Internet. Officers from the Delegacia de Repressão aos Crimes Raciais e Delitos de Intolerância da Polícia Civil – DECRADI (Police Crackdown on Hate Crimes and Crimes of Intolerance of the Civil Guard – DECRADI) of São Paulo found a higher-than-normal movement of neo-Nazi groups between July 2016 and December 2017.

There are about 300 neo-Nazi cells in Brazil, predominantly in the south of the country. The internet serves as a communication channel between these groups. Neo-Nazis began using Twitter as the battlefield to expose their own ideas, practice hatred and gain supporters. From 2011-2017, the number of neo-Nazi web sites has increased from 8,000 to 32,000. The activity in online discussion forums grew by 400%.

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<sup>13</sup> Partly based on a report by Luiz Nazario, Brazil.

Examples of right-wing antisemitism:

- In January 2017, the police searched the homes of four members of an extremist group suspected of distributing antisemitic posters in the center of Sao Paulo.
- A swastika was found on the weekend of 9-10 June at the facade of the Brazilian Jewish Club (CIB), in Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro.
- In July 2017, antisemitic flyers were posted at a bus station in Esplanada dos Ministérios, Brasilia, where many government buildings are located. One poster reads: "All the Jews are murderers, thugs and criminals. All the Jews worship a false religion, all the Jews are terrorists, Jews are crooks. Destroy Israel."
- One of the victims of neo-Nazi sites and conspiracy theories was a 13-year-old boy, João Pedro Calembó, who in October 2017 shot his classmates, killing two of his friends and wounding four. The boy had a Skype account under the name Adolf in which he disseminated his views, including Holocaust denial.

There were some cases where Nazi symbols were utilized as "learning tools": a private school in Recife had a third-grade classroom decorated with Nazi flags during a lesson on totalitarian regimes; students at Milecimo da Silva high school in Rio De Janeiro were assigned to re-create a Nazi laboratory for a science fair. The purpose of the exhibition was to highlight the supposed scientific progress made by Nazi doctors working in concentration camps

On the left, antisemitism appears under the guise of anti-Zionism. A recurring argument - the alleged intervention of the State of Israel in the overthrow of former president Dilma Roussef. In December 2017, political analyst Tarsila Shahadeh wrote an article about a coup against Dilma Roussef and the rise of Zionism in Brazil." President Michael Temer is described as a "Zionist in the Presidency of Brazil".

After President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, an article by the President of the Palestinian Arab Federation in Brazil, with the headline "Green Light for the Final Solution" In Palestine " appeared on the front page of the newspaper "Diário do Nordeste".

## **Uruguay**

Although violent antisemitic incidents are rare in Uruguay, some view with concern a certain rise in public manifestations, expressed both as traditional right-wing antisemitism and left-wing anti-Zionism. According to an article by Dr. Hebert Gatto, Uruguay, in the twenty first century, continues to persist in a collective siblylline antisemitism, ready to express itself as soon as the occasion permits, however small it may be. In the last few months, public demonstrations took place in the country, which repeatedly expressed a deep contempt for the Jewish community, reproducing patterns of traditional antisemitism. Certain left wing groups, some because of extreme anti-Zionism and others who reject the current Israeli government's policy towards the Palestinians, also implicitly cultivate a shameful antisemitism.

Two major antisemitic incidents took place in Uruguay during 2017:

- After the victory of Aguada basketball team over Hebraica Macabi in the second final of the Uruguayan Basketball League which took place in May 2017, Uruguayan social networks became platforms for antisemitic and Nazi remarks such as: "Come on, Aguada, turn these madmen into soap". The writers included the physical education teacher and trainer of Marne Athletics Club and Urunday Sports club, who posted on Twitter: "How nice, Aguada making soap with the Hebraica."
- In October, the Jewish Holocaust Memorial of Uruguay was vandalized twice in one week with messages calling the Holocaust a "myth" which allowed some to earn billions of dollars in reparation, claiming the gas chambers were fake and "Only 300,000 Jews died of typhus".

## **Chile**

In Chile, there is a very active Palestinian federation that serves as one of the main sources of antisemitism in Chile in particular, and in Latin America in general. It regularly publishes in its official site antisemitic articles by Pablo Jofré Leal, a Chilean employed by the Iranian News Agency in Spanish. Following President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the Palestinian Federation led a demonstration in front of the US Embassy in Santiago under the banner of "Death to Zionist."

A series of events in Chile since the beginning of 2017 has caused growing tensions between the Jewish and Palestinian communities in the country and the head of the Jewish community has warned against importing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into the country.

The incidents included:

- Antisemitism in a soccer match between the "Maccabi Jewish Stadium" and the "Palestino" club, during which a group of about 200 people tried to attack Maccabi players with racist songs and insults, threats and violent attacks.
- A massive advertisement by the Palestinian community of Chile in a large Chilean newspaper condemning "the 50 years of occupation and apartheid in Palestine";
- The denial of entry of Chilean BDS activists to Israel, which sparked protests and led to the freezing of joint projects with Israel by Chilean parliamentarians.
- Intensive BDS activities such as the cancellation of a conference on Israeli archeology, and the decision of students at the Faculty of Health of the University of Chile to avoid any connection to Israel.

Also noteworthy is the activity of Eduardo Artes, leader of the left-wing Patriotic Union Party, which declared that the agreements between Chile and the "Israeli Zionist entity" which endangers the independence of Chile should be re-examined.

While walking in a park in Santiago de Chile in January, a young Jewish activist wearing a shirt stamped with the Israeli flag was attacked by a group of neo-Nazis who called him "murderer", struck him in the chest and cut his arms and legs with a razor more than 40 times. The victim is a member of "Hod Jews for Diversity", a Jewish group that fights for the rights of the LGBT community.

## Mexico / Renée Dayán-Shabot – Tribuna Israelita

As in previous years, the dynamic of the Israeli-Arab conflict, as well as incidents in Israeli-Mexican relations and issues regarding the Jewish community had a major impact on the mass media and social networks.

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Incidents</b>	
Graffiti (swastikas, flags, flyers, etc.)	10
Verbal aggressions or threats	3
Other	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Incidents on Radio and TV</b>	
Radio	3
TV	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Incidents on Internet and Social Networks</b>	
Facebook	
Negative posts	3
Posts that generated negative comments	6
Profiles and groups	6
Twitter	
Cases that generated antisemitic tweets	5
Tweets that generated antisemitic comments	17
Offensive tweets	25
Trending topics	1
Blogs, web pages	
Blogs	1
Web pages	2
Articles regarding specific cases that generated more than 5 negative comments	2
Articles that generated negative comments	20
Videos	
YouTube	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>

Regardless of the subject, newspapers, Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, blogs and web pages use the same antisemitic and anti-Zionist stereotypes and prejudices: “Jewish power”, the “Israeli racist politics”, “victims have turned into killers”, and the “Jewish conspiracy”, among others. During 2017, besides the users that post negative information about the Jews, four incidents detonated an important amount of antisemitic and anti-Zionist messages in Mexico both in the written media as well as in social media and Internet.

### **Netanyahu’s Tweet**

On 28 January 2017, the Israeli Prime Minister, expressed through Twitter his support for Donald Trump’s proposal of building a wall between Mexico and the USA, triggering immediate reactions. For example: “I love and hate Hitler. I love him for what he did, I hate him because he didn’t finish his job”, wrote Jose Ramon. “We should have built a wall to

prevent Jews from coming!!”, wrote as if Adolfo Hitler, are only some examples. 514 articles were written about Netanyahu’s tweet. 9.4% of them (47) were negative.

### **Netanyahu’s Visit**

On 14 September 2017 Netanyahu visited Mexico, the first visit of an Israeli Prime Minister since the establishment of the State of Israel. In Twitter, messages were published: “Assassin! Out of my country. We don’t accept your culture of racism and hate against humanity!”, wrote Arellano Eduardo Ivan. “He is a genocide, nobody remembers that he totally supports Trump’s Wall, comparing us with the Palestinian they kill and torture, including children, babies and women”, wrote Marcia Bell

On 14 September, the Parliamentarian group of MORENA (a left-wing political party) presented a point of agreement to ask Mexican Foreign Secretary to declare Israel’s Prime Minister, Benjamín Netanyahu as a “persona non-grata” because of his remarks against Mexico at the beginning of the year and begged for the Secretary to express his opposition to the irregular settlements in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank”.

### **Israeli mission to help Mexico after the earthquake, September 19, 2017**

After the earthquake, Israel sent a mission of 70 rescuers to help Mexico. Written media, radio and television praised the important work, nevertheless, in the social media some negative messages were found. For example, “Thanks, we don’t want assassins “helping”. They should stay anywhere, except Palestine and Mexico”, wrote Quetxalcoatl@Quetxalcoatl1, and “We need rescuers, constructors and doctors, not Palestinian killers”, PerlitaSol@LudotonicaPerlitaSol.

473 articles about Netanyahu’s visit to Mexico and the Israeli rescue team were published, between 12-27 September). 4.2% (20) were negative.

### **Venezuela / Beatriz Rittigstein**

We highlight some peculiarities that prevailed in antisemitism in Venezuela in 2017, although these are characteristics that have been taking place ever since the government of Hugo Chávez and even more so in that of Nicolás Maduro.

The first of these: a large percentage of the events are directed against Israel and Zionism. This is a clear alibi used by the government and "Chavism" sympathizers to attack Judaism in a "politically correct" manner. They simply change the Jewish word for Zionist and thus can slander with any distortion, manipulation and farce; thus, they think that they are not at risk of being accused of Judeophobia. Moreover, authorities of the Chavez government challenged the community to demonstrate that they promote antisemitism and point out that their criticisms are valid in order to reveal the hostile policies of the State of Israel. In several of the events analyzed, the line is very diffuse, because the same antisemites interchange Judaism with Israel and disguise it as Zionism in order to be able to utilize it as they will, always with the objective of delegitimizing the Jewish State.

One of the "theories" most deployed blames the West, mainly the US and the CIA, for promoting rebel movements in several Arab countries, including Libya, Iraq and Syria, in

order to dominate such countries or to divide them with the purpose of seizing their wealth. In many cases, along with blaming the US, they also blame Israel and the Mossad. Many take as an example the civil war that took place in Syria and affirm that this is also brewing in Venezuela and that behind the opposition and its representative body: the Democratic Unity Roundtable, better known as MUD, are the US, Colombia and Israel. In many cases, they attribute the creation of ISIS to the USA and Israel with the purpose of destroying countries of the Middle East (Libya, Iraq, Syria); they even claim that Israel finances this terrorist group.

In this sense, during this period, there was a frequent repetition of the statements about the foreign threat; the possibility of a foreign infiltration in Venezuela, to support the opposition. The state media and people linked to the government emphasized certain graffiti with words in Hebrew, Kabbalist codes, which appeared in sectors of Caracas, assuring that the same thing occurred in Middle Eastern countries which faced uprisings against their dictatorships, such as Tunisia, Libya and Syria.

However, no one presented evidence in this regard. This issue is used in an attempt to show that in Venezuela an analogous situation can occur and that it is not a rebellion that has arisen within the population, but rather one provoked by countries such as the USA and Israel. This campaign was mainly in the hands of TeleSur (left-wing Latin America-wide television network based in Caracas).

In the same way, the ruling circles pointed out that Sebin (Venezuelan intelligence agency) discovered a route marked with stars of David, which supposedly led to the Miraflores Palace.

On the other hand, the government of Nicolás Maduro continues with the task of ensuring that the Palestinian cause is kept prominent in all international forums. Similarly, the Palestinian ambassador in Venezuela, Linda Sobeh Ali, is involved in government activities and she is very active in publicizing the fallacies with which the Palestinians justify themselves.

Additionally, several state and pro-government media use as sources Hispan TV, the Iranian-language channel in Spanish, created to promote antisemitism in the Spanish-speaking world, and Al Manar, the Hezbollah channel in Spanish. They publish word for word, without any changes, the texts put together and published by said Iranian and Lebanese media, full of slanders, distortions and falsehoods, at their convenience.

Among the media that most repeat the materials of Hispan TV are Correo del Orinoco, Ciudad Caracas, Aporrea, Con El MazoDando and, deserving of special mention for the frequency that also demonstrates that this is their editorial policy, TeleSur. It is striking that TeleSur regularly reproduces the articles of the Chilean Pablo Jofré Leal, who seems to be an employee of Hispan TV and whose articles are published at the same time in the bulletin of the Chilean Palestine Federation, an organization that manifests a radicalization closer to Hamas (that is, to Iran), than to the Palestinian Authority and Fatah.

Last but not least, this year we have become aware of a form of direct Judeophobia, utilizing the theme of the Holocaust. Maduro and the most notorious protagonists of his government have claimed that the hatred and resentment against the "Chavistas" is similar to that which the Jews faced when they were discriminated against and persecuted by the Nazis, before the

Second World War and then during the Holocaust, thereby banalizing that tragic chapter in the history of humanity. In fact, using such an infamous comparison, Maduro coined the phrase: "we are the Jews of the 21st century".

### **Scandinavia / Mikael Shainkman**

Overall, Jews in Scandinavia (Denmark, Finland, Iceland Norway and Sweden) are well integrated in the general society and face no institutionalized discrimination. The relatively small communities (all together probably no more than 35,000 people) are generally secular and open to the general population, viewing their Jewishness as a cultural or ethnical aspect of their identity rather than a religious one. This is partly due to the fact that the highly secularized Scandinavian societies tend to view Jews as an ethnic minority, and grant the Jewish communities rights and privileges as an ethnic—rather than a religious—minority.

Antisemitism in Scandinavia is still relatively low: only about five to eight percent of the general population in the Scandinavian countries display consistently antisemitic views and opinions. There are, however, pockets of significant antisemitism within the extreme right and within the immigrant population with roots in the Middle East—and both these groups have continued to grow in 2017.

#### **The Extreme Right**

Ever since the establishment of democracy about a century ago, Scandinavia has historically been dominated by the Labor Movement, and since the end of the Second World War there has been no significant extreme right political force in these countries. But in the wake of the shifting demographic situation following the significant immigration—especially from the Middle East—people dissatisfied with the generous immigration policies have increasingly voted for extreme right parties.

The populist extreme right is now represented in the national parliaments of Denmark (Danish People's Party), Finland (True Finns), Norway (Progress Party) and Sweden (Sweden Democrats. Especially the latter party has grown rapidly, doubling its share of the voters in three consecutive elections so far. These parties have aggressively anti-immigrant and anti-Islam positions, but tend to claim that they're free of antisemitism. In fact, they are frequently quick to single out Muslim immigrants as the dominant source of contemporary antisemitism in Scandinavia. Despite this claim, representatives—especially on the local or regional level—are frequently caught making antisemitic statements. After every such incident, party leadership tends to condemn and exclude the errant member, reaffirming that their parties are not antisemitic and don't harbor antisemites. Nonetheless, these incidents keep occurring.

The ideological extreme-right, i.e. neo-Nazi groups, don't hide or excuse their antisemitism. They thrive on the idea of a Jewish world conspiracy, and they devote significant amounts of time trying to explain why and how "the Jews" are behind all manner of ills in the world. The (neo)-Nazi groups tend to be less focused on Muslim immigrants, and when they attack them—verbally or physically—they tend to claim that these immigrants have been brought to Scandinavia by the Jews, as a part of a Jewish plan to weaken the Nordic Aryan race.

Even though the ideological extreme right isn't represented in any national parliament in Scandinavia, they represent a growing threat. Various neo-Nazi groups have stepped up their activities in 2017, and even consolidated as a pan-Scandinavian movement called the Nordic Resistance Movement—joining together parties from Norway, Sweden and Finland. The NRM has staged several high-profile demonstrations in 2017, perhaps most notably in Gothenburg (Sweden) in September, where they tried to interrupt the annual book fair and demonstrate outside the local synagogue on Yom Kippur. Other events organized by the NRM include cordoning off newspaper offices and radio stations on international Holocaust Memorial Day (January 27), putting up warning signs about these media outlets spreading the "myth about the Holocaust". Members of the NRM have also been involved in several violent attacks on political opponents in 2017. In light of this, the Finnish branch was declared illegal by a Finnish court on November 30.

### **Immigrant Antisemitism**

Antisemitic attitudes among immigrants with roots in the Middle East have been a growing problem in Scandinavia—as well as the rest of Europe—for well over a decade. But internal political dynamics have prevented open debate about the issue: most representatives of the left (socialists and environmentalists), either in politics or the media, have avoided or downplayed the problem for fear of fanning anti-immigrant sentiments. Nonetheless, research shows that immigrants from the Middle East are markedly more antisemitic than other Scandinavians. In Sweden, several earlier studies show that antisemitism is roughly four times more common among Middle Eastern immigrants than among the general population. A study published in late 2017, shows a similar pattern in Norway (three to four times as common as in the general population).

Usually, these antisemitic sentiments lead to antisemitic incidents during times of heightened conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. 2017 didn't see any significant conflict of that kind. However, US President Trump's official recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on December 6 2017, led to a number of antisemitic incidents, especially in Sweden. Within the space of a few days, calls to "shoot the Jews" were heard during an illegal demonstration in Malmo, later the funeral chapel at the old Jewish cemetery in that city was the target of attempted arson. The synagogue in Gothenburg was also targeted by a mob on Saturday night December 9, and several individuals threw fire bombs at the building. No major damage was done, either to the synagogue or the community center next door, where a local Jewish youth organization was having a function. Three people were arrested for that attack. All three had come to Sweden from the Middle East in 2017 claiming refugee status, thus highlighting the increased threat facing the Jewish communities in the wake of this increased immigration from the Middle East.

This string of attacks on Jews in early December led to a breakdown of the previously dominant silence surrounding antisemitism among immigrants. The leading leftist paper in Sweden, the tabloid *Aftonbladet* (which previously has published numerous articles denying the problem), published a series of articles focusing on the threat facing Swedish Jews—especially from immigrants. Even the Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other prominent members of the Social-Democratic Party condemned antisemitism, specifically mentioning antisemitism among immigrants. This is a unique occurrence, since condemnations of antisemitism up until December 2017 either focused on extreme rightwing antisemitism or talked about antisemitism as a part of a larger, bigger, problem of racism in general.



Whether this new attitude will survive into 2018—and lead to any practical measures to improve safety for Jewish communities—remains to be seen.

### **The Arab and Muslim World / Esther Webman**

Despite the diminishing interest in Arab countries in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, especially since 2011 with the outburst of the so-called "Arab Spring," antisemitic motifs continued to appear in Arab reactions to international and regional developments in the Arab media and social networks during 2017. Those proved that conspiratorial thinking still typifies Arab perception of reality. However, the lingering wars and conflicts in the Middle East, the disintegration of states such as Libya and Yemen, the threat of Islamist-Jihadist movements, and strategic changes in the wake of the Sunni-Shi'i rift, there are increasing voices, criticizing the Pavlovian tendency to accuse Israel and the Jews for all the ills befalling the Arab world while praising Israel for its achievements.

This survey of Arab antisemitic manifestations focuses on Arab reactions to three complexes of issues:

- A. Decisions of International organizations on the Palestinian Authority;
- B. The events in July on the Temple Mount and US president, Donald Trump, recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on December 6;
- C. 100 years to the Balfour Declaration.

In all those issues, there is a persistent Arab effort not only to de-legitimize Israel and Zionism by portraying them as racist, but to challenge and deny Jewish history and Jewish historical roots in the land of Israel/Palestine – an effort which reached its peak in the wake of Trump's declaration.

#### A. Decisions of International organizations on the Palestinian Authority

On 15 March 2017, the UN's Beirut-based Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) posted a report on its meeting in Doha in mid-December 2016, which denounced the idea of a "Jewish State" that legitimizes apartheid policies against the Palestinians. It also called for the reconvening of the two UN committees for combating racial discrimination, dissolved in 1994 after the termination of the apartheid regime in South Africa to deal with the situation in Israel. But the report was soon removed from the site of the Commission, whose task is to monitor the situation of various human rights aspects in Arab states. The removal of the report sparked harsh criticism of the UN by Arab journalists. The report's removal which was the result of international pressure brought about the resignation of ESCWA's Executive Director Rima Khalaf. Khalaf was introduced as the real hero in this affair and "the only man in the UN," by Tal'at Shina'a in the Jordanian *al-Dustur* on March 20, whereas Hasan al-'Attar in the liberal Pan-Arab *Ilaf* on March 25, compared her to Helen Thomas, the former Head of White House Corps, who resigned her post in 2010 after suggesting to expel the Jews of Palestine to their countries of origin in Europe. Israel was presented as a racist entity which committed hundreds of massacres against the Palestinians and conducts a deliberate policy of racial discrimination against them. Under the pretext of Freedom of Speech, al-'Attar claims, one can criticize everything in the US and in Europe, including the "Semite and non-Semite religions", deny the existence of God

and reject the messages of the Prophets, "but one cannot deny what the Zionists tell about their false history, their being the Chosen People...and their exaggeration of what happened to them during the Second World War by the Nazis, because then your fate is prison, political dismissal and social alienation." The innovation of the report claimed Muhammad al-Bahili on March 24 in the UAE daily *al-Ittihad*, was that for the first time an international organization clearly points to "the ugliest existing kinds of racism," and labeled Israel as a "racist, colonialist entity" that committed over 250 massacres against the Palestinians.

Similarly, UNESCO's declaration on July 7, classifying the holy sites in Hebron, including the Tomb of the Patriarchs, as Palestinian heritage sites without mentioning their significance and ties to the Jews, was perceived as an approval to the Arab claims. Several writers, such as Fayiz Rashid in the UAE daily *al-Khalij* on July 10, and Jihad al-Khazin in the London-based *al-Hayat* on July 18, connected the resolution to previous resolutions denying the Jewish connection to Jerusalem, and emphasized that there are no archeological findings in Palestine that prove the Jewish association to the place or the existence of a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.

B. The events in July on the Temple Mount and US president Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital on December 6

The Temple Mount and Jerusalem, which are considered by the Palestinians and most of the Muslims in the world as Muslim holy sites, were the cause for the explosion of disturbances and clashes between Israeli security forces and the Palestinians. The first clash in 2017 occurred in the wake of a shooting attack on July 14, during which three Israeli Arabs from Umm al-Fahm assassinated two Israeli police border guards at the exit from the Temple Mount. In response, the Israeli authorities closed the compound for worshipers to enable the investigation of the incident, and decided to place metal detectors at the entrance of the premise. These measures sparked protests and incitement in the Arab and Muslim worlds against what was interpreted as an Israeli attempt to change the status quo in the Temple Mount and as a further step in Israel's efforts to cleanse Palestine of its Palestinian inhabitants, take control of the Mount according to its "grand plan" to destroy al-Aqsa Mosque and build the Third Temple.

Shaykh Kamal Khatib, the deputy head of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel, for example, accused the Israeli government in a televised interview to al-Jazira TV on July 16, of injecting chemical substances with a long-term effect in al-Aqsa mosque to bring about its destruction. Egyptian al-Azhar Professor, Ahmad Karima, called upon the Muslim world to wage an armed Jihad against the Jews, whom she described as aggressors, thieves, slayers of prophets during an interview to the Palestinian Authority's official TV channel on July 20. Imams in Friday sermons, such as Egyptian-born 'Amr Shahin at the Islamic Center of Davis in California called on July 14 and 21, to "liberate al-Aqsa Mosque from the filth of the Jews," and "turn Jerusalem into a graveyard for the Jews." On July 21, Shaykh Mahmud Harmush of the California-based Islamic Center of Riverside as well called for the annihilation of the Jews, and accused them of plotting not only to capture and destroy al-Aqsa, but also to capture Mecca and Medina. Following negotiations with King Abdallah of Jordan, who is still the guardian of the holy sites in Jerusalem, and al-Aqsa leaders the metal detectors were removed, the previous entrance regulations were reinstated. After three weeks of clashes around the Mount and across the West Bank, especially on Fridays, defined as "days of rage", the protests and demonstrations subsided. During this event as well Arab commentators, such as Jihad al-Khazin in *al-Hayat* on July 22 and 28, denied any Jewish

connection to Jerusalem despite Israel's efforts to find archeological proofs to support its lies throughout its 70 years of history. On July 26, 'Ali Muhsin Hamid posted an article in the Egyptian daily *al-Ahram* titled "Jerusalem was never and will never be Jewish." If the Israeli claims of Jewish connection were to be true, he claimed, the true Jewish inhabitants needed to be from Palestinian origin and not Russians, Indians, Americans, Ethiopians and so on.

Trump's declaration recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, which also foresaw the remaining of the Wailing Wall in Israeli hands in any future agreement with the Palestinians, triggered a second outburst of clashes and a harsher reaction by Muslim leaders and religious institutions. Turkey's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who aspires to represent the whole Muslim world, convened in mid-December an extraordinary summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Istanbul, in which the participants reiterated the significance of Jerusalem in Islam, their support for the Palestinian struggle, and decided to cooperate and take action against Trump's decision. On December 12, Shaykh al-Azhar, the highest religious authority in the Sunni world, convened the council of al-Azhar scholars, which according to London-based *al-Quds al-'Arabi* from December 13, rejected Trump's declaration and defined it as "an injustice with no historical or legal foundations." The public protests encompassed most Arab and Muslim capitals, and calls encouraging a third intifada and jihad against Israel were voiced by Muslim preachers in Arab countries and in mosques of Muslim communities worldwide.

Again, it was Jewish history and the so-called Israel's and Zionism's "invented myths" that preoccupied Arab writers and commentators, denying any Jewish ties to Palestine in general and to Jerusalem in particular. Few of them relied on the controversies among Israeli and non-Israeli historians and archeologists on their findings. "There is no such thing as Israel or Tel Aviv," announced Muhammad al-Mula in an interview to the Kuwaiti TV on December 12, adding that "Jerusalem is Arab and Islamic. Jerusalem is the city of Islam...It will return to the Arab and Islamic nation." Trump adopted "the Zionist narrative", claimed 'Umar Hilmi al-Ghul in the Palestinian *al-Hayat al-Jadida* on December 9. "It is not our goal to examine the falsification of history and Trump's ignorance," he wrote. If he wants to learn the truth he should read what Israeli archeologists wrote after "searching for the past 70 years one archeological remnant related to the [presence] of a third temple [there were only two], or connecting the Jews to Palestine in general." Similarly, Muhammad Nazzal accused the Zionists of falsifying Biblical remnants in Lebanese *al-Akhbar* on December 13, claiming as well that Israeli archeological scholars, such as Israel Finkelstein and David Ussishkin, "failed to provide important proof that the city [Jerusalem] was inhabited [by Jews] in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century BC."

In this debate there was a tacit agreement between Hamas, the Muslim Brothers in Jordan and PA's representatives on the perception of Trump's declaration as a new and worse Balfour Declaration. Isma'il Haniyya described on December 14, at a rally marking thirty years to the founding of Hamas, that Trump's statement is even more dangerous than the Balfour Declaration. Fatah leaders and the PA considered it as a "second Balfour Declaration", whereas journalist 'Abdelilah Belqaziz in *al-Khalij* of December 18 described it as "the first bitter fruit" of the so-called "Arab Spring" and a severe crime, exceeding "Balfour's crime which is exactly one century old."

Trump was even compared to Adolf Hitler. Ahmad Qadidi, a Tunisian politician and former ambassador to Qatar published an article in the Qatari daily *al-Sharq* on December 14, describing the American move as "a final solution to the Palestinian problem," likening it to

Hitler's final solution for the Jewish problem – a move in which he "did not succeed." On the same day, the Palestinian Fatah movement's social media posted in its hashtag "Hands Off Alquds" Trump's picture on top of Hitler's picture, with an English title: "I can't see the difference. Can you?" (Memri, special dispatch No. 7239, December 19, 2017)

*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were also invoked in an article by Yasir 'Abdullah on December 19, in the Palestinian Ma'an News Agency. After describing them and their goals, he claimed that Jerusalem is in danger, and that the U.S. is "a tool for the execution of the Zionist plots throughout the Arab world." Therefore, he suggested to counteract them by drafting the "Protocols of the Elders of Palestine/Arabs" for dealing with Arab weaknesses and inter-Palestinian rifts, and enabling them in the next 100 years "to retrieve the lands and restore Arab pride."

However, there were few voices, such as former PA minister Ziyad Abu Ziyad, the Saudi prince Turki al-Faysal in an open letter to Trump, who called to leverage his declaration for the recognition of East Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian state. (Memri, special dispatch No. 7225, December 13, 2017) The head of the Middle East Research Institute in Jeddah, 'Abd al-Hamid Hakim, in a televised interview at the al-Hurra TV on December 16, also expressed his support for Trump's declaration and recognized Jewish history and links to the city. "We must recognize and understand that Jerusalem is a religious symbol for the Jews. It is sacred [to them] as are Mecca and al-Madina to the Muslims." Hamid added that "The Arab mind must clear itself from the legacies of Nasserism and political Islam, both Sunni and Shi'i, which instilled a culture of hatred [towards] the Jews and denied their historical right to the region."

Those outbursts of anger proved, like during the first days of the second intifada in 2000, the centrality of the religious aspect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its explosive potential. But "where are the millions?" wondered Egyptian senior journalist Muhammad Amin in *al-Misri al-Yawm* on December 9. Indeed, alongside the activity in the international arena and calls to terminate the peace process, to support resistance and personal sacrifice, and launch jihad for the destruction of Israel, the Palestinians remained alone. Even the Islamist movements – al-Qa'ida and the Islamic State, which also considered Trump's declaration as an opportunity for a global Muslim mass uprising, doubted the motives of those who voiced a sound of alarm without undertaking any substantial deed, except caring for their interests. (Memri, December 8, 2017)

### C. 100 years to the Balfour Declaration

The 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, which is perceived by the Arabs as the vantage point of the loss of Palestine, provided another opportunity for the debate of Jewish history in the Arab media. Particularly typical of the attitude toward this declaration was Rashad Abu Dawud's article in UAE's daily *al-Bayan* on November 3. When we reexamine history, he claimed, we find that "the greatest victims of the Nazis and World War II are the Palestinians and not the Jews. Those – the Jews – lost few thousands in the Holocaust and achieved a "national home" which the British Foreign Minister Lord Balfour promised them in 1917. And those – the Palestinians – "lost thousands in massacres carried out by Zionist gangs, and about a million immigrants, and most important of all they lost a homeland by the name of Palestine." The Holocaust was also invoked by Yasir 'Abidu in an article in *al-Ahram* on November 5, in which he

interviewed several people about the Balfour Declaration. Fatah representative in Cairo, Yasir Abu Sidu, said that it was a crime that led to a "real holocaust" of the Palestinian people, and an attempt to exterminate a people in its land and the land of its forefathers, and to eliminate its history by falsification and by a media financed by Jewish tycoons who control American economy. Other interviewees considered the Declaration as a "conspiracy that planted a cancerous entity in the heart of Arabism." Egyptian historian Rif'at Sid Ahmad asserted that the real goals of Israel exceed the borders of Palestine. "Israel is a well-planned barbaric occupation scheme," he added, whereas historian Jamal Shukra assessed that "we are stepping toward a new Balfour declaration," likening the conditions that led to the division of the region after the First World War to the conditions today which paved the way for the redrawing of the Middle East map.

Defining the Palestinian fate since the Balfour Declaration as "one Hundred years of holocaust and massacres", the Zionist movement as adhering to a "murderous racist-fascist ideology" which strives to uproot a people and Judaize the history of Palestine, were recurring themes in other various articles. Another aspect which frequently appeared in this public debate was the issue of the motive behind the Declaration. Munira al-Jamal emphasized in her article posted in the Egyptian online portal Vetogate on November 1, that Arthur James Balfour was known for his hatred towards Jews, and his true intention in the Declaration was to get rid of the Jews. Relying on the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, she clarified that the Jews' "inability to coexist with others," and their belief that non-Jews "were created to serve them," cause the hatred toward them. Sudanese journalist Mada al-Fatih also raised a similar argument in an article in *al-Quds al-'Arabi* on November 29, which discussed antisemitism. On the one-hundred-year anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, he contended, many praised it for enabling the Jews to settle in Palestine, but they ignore the historical evidence. "The British and other Europeans did not mean to support the Zionist Project out of their love to the Jews or belief in their cause, as they claimed, but to the contrary, this support basically emanated from antisemitism and a strong will to get rid of them."

One of the most interesting responses to the Declaration's anniversary was an article by Lebanese journalist Karam al-Hilu in *al-Hayat* on November 25. In contrast to all those who criticized Israel through instrumentalizing the Holocaust, the Protocols and other antisemitic themes, he used the event to compare the Arab and the Israeli achievements in the course of the one hundred years. In his severe criticism of Arab societies' meager accomplishments, al-Hilu pointed out that a century after the Balfour Declaration "the Arabs have not managed to build a single state that possesses knowledge, justice, and the economic, social, and human capability for confronting Zionism. One hundred years have been squandered, in all aspects." Israel's supremacy in the areas of science, economy, society, and politics is the source of its strength as well as the source of the Arabs' failure in confronting it. (Memri, special dispatch No. 7344, February 20, 2018)

In addition to these three complexes, the various Arab media channels, particularly those identified with Islamist movements, continued to publish articles and broadcast sermons and interviews containing antisemitic expressions. They did not expose new themes but repeatedly and in different contexts invoked the Holocaust, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and the accusation of Israel for all the disasters that befell the Arab world. On the occasion of International Holocaust Memorial Day, for example, on February 1, Jihad al-Khazin's regular column in *al-Hayat*, reiterated that no one doubts the occurrence of the Holocaust, but the number of victims is exaggerated, especially since the number of

survivors keeps growing every year. Israel was accused of committing "a holocaust" against the Palestinian people by 'Abir 'Abd al-Rahman Thabit, a Professor of political science and international relations, in an article published in the Islamist daily *al-Sabil* on April 29. Reacting to Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorated in Israel, Thabit equated the Zionism to Nazism, and blamed it for exploiting the Holocaust for its own interests.

The Protocols as well figured dominantly not only in reference to Israel and the Jews, but as a metaphor for describing adversaries. Such was an article published by Jerry Mahir in the Saudi *al-Watan* on January 10, which accused Iran of acting according to them to instigate civil wars in the region in its continuous attempts to take control of it. On July 4 and 7, the Saudi Arabia-based Al-Muslim Online portal posted a two-part article by Mundhir al-As'ad, discussing the Protocols. Despite al-As'ad's awareness that the document is a forgery, he maintained that worldwide events prove its validity – a claim raised in most discussions on the Protocols' authenticity. In April, the Jordanian television broadcasted a three-part series on the Protocols, directed and narrated by film director and actor, 'Ayid 'Alqam, which described the Jews as an "ostracized and abhorred people" for being treacherous, liars, fraudulent, who dream to expand their rule between the Euphrates and the Nile. (Memri, clip no. 6002, April 2-16, 2017). The referendums for independence held in Kurdistan on September 25, and in Catalonia at the beginning of October, were also perceived by Wisam Abu al-'Ata in an article in *al-Ahram* on October 6, as part of a Zionist plot to spread rebellion to "dismantle the world" and control it, according to the Protocols' instructions. Even the terrorist attack in a mosque in north Sinai by an ISIS group on November 24, causing 235 Egyptian casualties was attributed to Israel's long hand by 'Abd al-Nasir Salama in *al-Misri al-Yawm* on November 26.

Yet, it should be emphasized that there were courageous voices which condemned those antisemitic perceptions, expressed nostalgia to Jewish presence in Arab countries, sought ties with Jewish organizations and even visited Israel. These voices increased recently in the framework of the increasing criticism of Islamic extremism and Arab intellectual stagnation that inhibit any progress in the solution of Arab predicaments. For example, Prince Nasir bin Hamad al-Khalifa headed a Bahraini delegation to an interfaith event hosted by the Simon Wiesenthal Center at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles on 14 September 2017. He approved and signed a declaration of tolerance on behalf of his father and king, Hamad bin 'Issa al-Khalifa, denouncing the boycott movement against Israel, calling for religious tolerance, and glorifying Bahrain's positive stance towards religious minorities in general and Jews in particular. In the same vein, a member of the Bahraini Shura Council, Mansur Sirhan, published in the Bahraini daily *Akhbar al-Khalij* on September 17, an article praising the role of the Bahraini Jewish community in the development of modern Bahrain. In the mid of the protests on Trump's declaration on Jerusalem, on December 9, an inter-religious delegation of 23 Bahrainis, headed by the Foreign Minister Khalid bin Ahmad Al Khalifa, visited Israel for four days. Although he declared that the declaration hurt the chances to reach a lasting solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the delegation completed its planned trip.

## Germany / Sarah Rembiszewski

In his address during the Jewish Hanukkah Holidays, German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier referred to demonstrations in Berlin against the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, admitting "I am horrified and ashamed that "antisemitism has not been overcome, also not in our country, and it raises its evil head in many different guises: in extreme actions such as the burning of the Israeli flag and ignorant slogans of hatred and violence; but also in habits which are less obvious and the spreading of prejudices against 'all things Jewish.' "There are things which are part of Germany. And one of these is our responsibility for our past: the lessons of two World Wars, the lessons from the Holocaust, the responsibility for Israel's security, the rejection of any form of racism and antisemitism," "For this responsibility, no line can be drawn under the past for later generations – and no exceptions be made for immigrants. It is non-negotiable – for all who live in Germany and want to live here!" he added.<sup>14</sup>

Official statistics of 2017 point to a rise in reported incidents of antisemitic manifestations in Germany, overall 707 (not included are crimes of incitements Volksverhetzung) compared to 644 in 2016. As to violent incidents, the same trend could be observed, 24 in 2017 compared to 15 in 2016. As published on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2018, 1435 antisemitic crimes were registered in 2017.

In Berlin, however a decrease in numbers has been established by RIAS (Research and Information Center Antisemitism in Berlin) compared to the previous year.

But pure numbers massively distort the picture of the rising antisemitic atmosphere - on the ground as well as in cyberspace (antisemitic posts on social media and in letters to the editor have almost tripled during the last decade - Friesel), in the streets, on playgrounds, soccer fields, schools and synagogues - limiting tremendously the daily routine of many - as they do not take into account the perceived feelings of insecurity, often fear felt by the Jewish population.

According to the findings of Prof. Monika Schwarz-Friesel, anti-Israeli antisemitism - the Israelization of Antisemitism - is "the most dominant manifestation of Jew hatred, founded on the emotion of age old hatred , disseminated not only by fringe groups but by "the educated mainstream".<sup>15</sup> On 26 March 2017, Prof. Anders Zick, director of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Conflict and Violence Research of the University of Bielefeld, presented his new research on xenophobia and antisemitism and reported, amongst others, that 20-25% of the German populations hold antisemitic views when it comes to criticizing Israeli politics.

In schools - according to the result of a non-representative survey ("more a sentiment than an investigation". AJC) among 27 teachers at 21 schools in eight Berlin districts - antisemitic and Islamist attitudes are gaining influence. The most publicized event in this context was the case of a 14- year old boy, a pupil at the Friedenauer Gemeinschaftsschule in Berlin, who was insulted and threatened after revealing his Jewish identity to his classmates. Fellow pupils told the boy 'Jews are all murderers', he was then physically attacked and threatened with a realistic toy gun. The boy left the school. On 3 February

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<sup>14</sup> [https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2017/12/171215-Chanukka-Englisch.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2017/12/171215-Chanukka-Englisch.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/The-Israelization-of-antisemitism-481835>

2017 the withdrawal of a schoolbook that included an antisemitic illustration, published by the Klett publishing house, was announced. The image shows a computer-game based figure by American artist David Dees, entitled 'Rothschild Bank' eating up Europe. In April 2017 the independent expert group for studying antisemitism of the German Ministry of Interior released a study in cooperation with Andreas Hövermann, Silke Jensen, Andreas Zick from the University Bielefeld and Julia Bernstein.<sup>16</sup> The study called "Jüdische Perspektiven auf Antisemitismus in Deutschland" (Jewish perspectives on antisemitism in Germany) describes the fear of Jewish citizens living in Germany as almost one-third of German Jews experienced verbal or physical antisemitic attacks and were facing increasing antisemitism in their everyday lives, which led them to fear for their safety.

However those heavy security measures taken by the government and the Jewish community to safeguard Jewish sites reinforce the feeling of alarm, of being different. One of the consequences of this kind of "singling out" Jewish targets for protection, can be seen in the fact that even the youngest children grow up with a sense of fear and a consciousness of their vulnerability. It is not surprising that these circumstances result in a decrease of attendance of religious services, even during the high Holidays. The former president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Charlotte Knobloch, voiced grave concern and said that public Jewish life is under threat and can only be lived out "in public with police protection and under the most serious security precautions."

Raising the problem of security, Petra Pau of the Die Linke, warned that "while antisemitic crimes continue to be committed by right-wing extremists, it is by no means a marginal phenomenon, solely by Nazis or Islamists," Pau said that if "security and well-being are not self-evident for everyone, it will also affect the social climate as a whole." Antisemitism offers a simplistic explanation for societal problems and thus counteracts education and democratic awareness." Pau also called for permanent financing of civil society prevention and education projects.<sup>17</sup>

A further problem, as to the statistics of official numbers of antisemitic manifestations, exists in the "discrepancy between the perception of the victims of antisemitic attacks and insults and the police statistics, as xenophobic and antisemitic offenses are generally associated with the phenomenon of "politically motivated crime law and "if no further specifics are identifiable" and "no suspects have become known. Consequently an insult such as "Jews out" appears in the police statistics as "right-wing extremist", although it is also used in Islamist circles, a fact that may create a picture distorted to the right.

The findings of the expert report point to three main facets of antisemitic attitudes<sup>18</sup>:

- Classical antisemitism: less than 5% think that "Jews still have too much power...".
- the so-called secondary antisemitism – 25% of those asked imply that the Jews are benefiting from their persecution or are even guilty of crime through their behavior.
- Israel-linked antisemitism, 40%, think that because of Israel's politics, they understand well that people have something against Jews in general. Related to the

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<sup>16</sup> <https://idw-online.de/de/attachmentdata58243.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.contra-magazin.com/2017/06/petra-pau-antisemitismus-ist-ein-massives-gesellschaftliches-problem/>.

<sup>18</sup> ". [http://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/deutschland/gesellschaft/id\\_82944870/antisemitismus-forscher-die-radikalsten-wird-man-nicht-ueberzeugen-koennen-.html](http://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/deutschland/gesellschaft/id_82944870/antisemitismus-forscher-die-radikalsten-wird-man-nicht-ueberzeugen-koennen-.html).



latter is a relativization and belittlement of National Socialism or the idea "that is typically Jewish".

A survey of Jews in Germany showed that 8% said that relatives or acquaintances had been the target of physical attacks over the past year. Another 36 percent were abused or insulted. 81 percent of the attacks and 62 percent of the insults came allegedly from Muslims. On 2 April 2017, the Hanns Seidel foundation published a survey commissioned by the German Christian Democratic Union Party (CDU) about asylum seekers in Bavaria, which states that about 50% of Muslim refugees hold antisemitic views. Accordingly, 52% of Syrians and nearly 60% of Afghans, but only 5.4% of Eritrean refugees agreed with the statement that 'Jews have too much influence in the world'.<sup>19</sup>

On 18 January 2018, the German parliament, the Bundestag, voted in favor of creating a commission to deal with antisemitism, i.e. the communication with Jewish groups, the fight against antisemitism/discrimination and the coordination of government actions. Furthermore, the parliament asked the government to take measures against antisemitism among immigrants. The Central Council of Jews in Germany welcomed the decision while Prof. Michael Wolffsohn criticized the decision as: "well-intentioned, but naive bureaucrat's idea."<sup>20</sup>

### **Examples of responses to BDS**

BDS activists continued to disseminate their antisemitic anti-Israel messages on campuses, in the streets and in cyberspace but were countered by steps taken for example by the city of Munich that passed a historic bill in December 2017 (which had been submitted in July 2017) to ban boycotts of Israel, becoming the first city in Germany to outlaw the use of public funds and space for the BDS campaign. The joint Christian Social Union and Social Democratic Party's anti-BDS bill passed with a solid majority. Frankfurt and Berlin have also enacted executive initiatives to stop BDS activity in city-funded facilities. In August 2017, the deputy mayor of Frankfurt, Uwe Becker (CDU), submitted a bill that would ban municipal funds and space being used for activities that aim to boycott Israel. Becker explained "the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) campaign with its messages uses the same language as the National Socialists once used to express: 'Don't buy from Jews!'" The boycott movement targeting Israel is "deeply antisemitic and should have no place in Frankfurt," He also stated that "there should not be any European tax-money funding terrorism. And as long as it is not possible to track where our tax money meant for the humanitarian aid in Gaza goes, we should freeze our financial support." On 11 August 2017, the city of Frankfurt, passed a bill outlawing municipal funding for and the use of public spaces for activities that aim to boycott Israel.

### **AfD. End of the era of political correctness?**

German federal elections on 24 September 2017, marked a significant break in Germany's post-war history. For the first time since the immediate post-war period, a far-right party

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<sup>19</sup> <http://m.westfalen-blatt.de/Ueberregional/Nachrichten/Politik/3145066-Offizielle-Kriminalitaetszahlen-stehen-im-Widerspruch-zu-Erfahrungen-von-Juden-Antisemitismus-Zweifel-an-Statistik>.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article172590709/Historiker-Wolffsohn-Gut-gemeinte-jedoch-voellig-naive-Buerokratenidee.html>.

entered the Bundestag. With 13% of the seats, the populist anti-immigration party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), has become the third largest party in the German parliament. Their election campaign concentrated on those discontent voices in Germany that opposed the number of asylum-seekers allowed into the country in the past two years. The AfD also attacked what they called "political correctness", proclaiming the end of the era of political correctness. Some members have espoused the values of the extreme right, and one of its co-leaders, Alexander Gauland said publically that Germany should be proud of the achievements of its soldiers in two world wars. Reacting to its critics, AfD has been successful in casting themselves as victims of the political establishment and the mainstream media. According to the German broadcaster ARD, 60 percent of AfD voters say their vote has been triggered by disappointment with the established parties, while 31 percent cast their ballot for the AfD based on political conviction.<sup>21</sup>

### **Reactions to the electoral success of the AfD by Jewish organizations and personalities**

MK Nachman Shai, who chairs the Israel-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group, said in September that Germany's democratic elections must be respected, but at the same time called them "a great warning sign" for Israel and the Jewish people. "The rise of the extreme right in Germany is indicative of dangerous moods that are growing stronger," he said. "Xenophobia, racism, and extremism have conquered a significant portion of the German public and prove that the democratic stratum is fragile and vulnerable."

German Central Council of Jews President Josef Schuster said the AfD "tolerates far-right thoughts and agitates against minorities."

Charlotte Knobloch, chairwoman of the Munich Jewish community and a former president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, described the strong AfD showing as a "nightmare come true." "I am greatly concerned about democracy in our country," she said. "This result is a nightmare come true, a historical change. For the first time [since the end of the Second World War], an extreme-right party will be strongly represented in parliament."

The head of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald Lauder, congratulated Merkel on securing a fourth term, calling her a "true friend of Israel and the Jewish people." But he denounced the AfD as "a disgraceful reactionary movement which recalls the worst of Germany's past."<sup>22</sup>

### **Examples from our database about activities of AfD members**

On 17 January 2017, right-wing populist AfD (Alternative für Deutschland, = alternative for Germany) party member Björn Höcke delivered a speech in Dresden (Thuringia, east Germany) calling the Berlin Holocaust memorial a 'monument of shame'. The speech caused an uproar drawing criticism amongst others from the head of the Central Council of the Jews in Germany, Josef Shuster, calling the speech antisemitic. On 23 January 2017, the party executive ruled that Höcke doesn't have to leave the AfD.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/09/24/553345614/germanys-political-earthquake-making-sense-of-the-right-shift-in-elections>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/jews-alarmed-by-far-right-afd-s-breakthrough-in-german-election-1.5453080>.

On 22 January 2017, Jörg Meuthen, the chairmen of the right-wing populist AfD in the parliament of Baden-Württemberg, made the request to cut the funds for a Holocaust memorial in Gurs, France, a reminder of the deportation of 6500 Jews in 1940, sponsored with 120 000 Euro per year. Furthermore, the AfD no longer wants school classes to visit Holocaust memorials, but suggests visiting meaningful sites of German history” instead. Just recently the chairmen of AfD in Thüringen Björn Höcke caused furors with a speech, in which he said “We Germans, are the only folk in the world, that puts a memorial of disrepute in the heart of its capital “.

On 26 January 2017, right-wing populist AFD (Alternative für Deutschland, = alternative for Germany) party member Björn Höcke was barred by both the state parliament of Thuringia and the memorial foundation of former inmates of concentration camp Buchenwald and Mittelbau- Dora from attending their Holocaust memorial ceremonies. Later he was also barred from entering the Buchenwald memorial site. Following the ban Höcke announced his intend to attend the ceremony anyway, inciting a discussion. The uproar came after Höcke’s speech on 17 January 2017 in Thuringia demanding an end of the ‘Nazi guilt’ and calling the Berlin Holocaust memorial a ‘Memorial of shame’.

### **The ARTE controversy**

As reported on 2 May 2017 by Berliner Zeitung, <sup>23</sup>the program director of the French-German Tv channel Arte, Alain Le Diberder and German TV channel WDR declined to broadcast a documentary about antisemitism in Europe today, claiming the movie was not ‘well-balanced’(meaning too pro-Israel). Many intellectuals including Götz Aly and Ahmad Mansour, who was supposed to be co-producer of the movie but ended up advising it, have praised the movie and criticized Arte’s move, arguing that reporting hate cannot have two sides.

The 90-minute film, “Chosen and Excluded — Jew Hatred in Europe” by German producers Joachim Schröder and Sophie Hafner, was commissioned by German public tv broadcaster WDR on behalf of its French-German partner channel Arte. However, once the documentary was submitted — and approved by the editor — the program directors of ARTE and WDR declined to broadcast it because it allegedly “fails to meet formal requirements.” The controversy, some called it censorship, diverted the special attention allegedly given to the most prevalent temporary form of antisemitic manifestation, antisemitic Israel bashing. Le Diberder, Arte, claimed that the producers failed to deliver a documentary about antisemitism in Europe, because they included too much footage from Israel and too little from European countries. Volker Beck, an MP for Germany’s Green Party and president of the German-Israeli Parliamentary Friendship Group of the German Bundestag, says that the decision not to show the documentary “is even more disturbing when considering that Arte and WDR have shown programs which could be seen as criticizing Israel one-sidedly.”<sup>24</sup> Prof. Schwarz-Friesel, who also appears in the documentary, explained that, “from a scientific point of view, the facts presented an accurate image of the reality on the ground.” Historian Michael Wolffsohn has been quoted in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/politik/meinung/goetz-aly-arte-verhindert-doku-zu-antisemitismus-26824492>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.timesofisrael.com/european-tv-stations-shun-the-anti-semitism-documentary-they-commissioned/5/9>.

describing the documentary as “the by far best, smartest and historically deepest documentary on this topic, while at the same time being very much up to date and true.”<sup>25</sup>

The Israeli-born, Berlin-based Islamism expert and author Ahmad Mansour also calls the film “great and overdue”.<sup>26</sup> On 13 June Germany's largest tabloid "Bild" put the documentary online for 24 hours. According to the publication's own data, it received around 200,000 clicks. Finally on 21 June the film was shown on public TV.

*For more examples of antisemitic manifestations in Germany (and elsewhere), please search the database of the Kantor Center here: <http://www.kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/moshe-kantor-database-antisemitism-and-racism>.*

### **Greece / Michal Navoth**

Throughout 2017, antisemitic manifestations were mainly not violent in Greece.<sup>27</sup> As in 2016 there were no incidents targeting Jews, and vandal attacks of Jewish sites were few (although in comparison to 2016 there were more cases perpetrated against Jewish sites where severe property damage was also caused). Events that were more frequent included desecration of Jewish sites with graffiti (with more incidents in comparison to 2016), dissemination of stereotypes and conspiracy theories through the internet and social networks as well as in the mass media, the press and TV. The Jews are featured as ruling the world politics and finance.

### **The internet and social networks**

The internet facilitates the distribution of hate and bigotry in an abusive language and unleashed manner. The web magazine KOUTIPANDORAS posted online antisemitic comments under an article, with no Jewish content, by a reader with the user name “dirty Jew” who uses Hitler’s emoticon as his profile picture. The web page allowed the comments to be published, though at the end of each article there is an announcement warning readers that comments containing inappropriate language would be deleted. In response to the protest of KIS, Kostas Vaxevanis, a known journalist who administrates the web magazine, replied that the site deleted daily hundreds of defamatory comments (not only antisemitic) but they kept coming back under various names and accounts.<sup>28</sup>

The internet is also used for posting antisemitic blogs and articles reiterating claims that Jews do not pay taxes. This falsity, which has been popular in the recent years of the economic crisis and targets the Jews for Greece's economic woes, continues in 2017 too.<sup>29</sup>

The internet is a platform for promoting online books sale. The renowned “Politeia” bookshop in Athens promoted the online sale of Plevris’ books, some of them with blatant

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/medien/arte-und-wdr-zeigen-eine-dokumentation-ueber-antisemitismus-nicht-15044790.html>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.timesofisrael.com/european-tv-stations-shun-the-anti-semitism-documentary-they-commissioned/>

<sup>27</sup> Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017.

<sup>28</sup> Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017.

expressions of antisemitism. GHM protested the sale and KIS criticized its promotion. Following KIS announcement, ELEFTHERI ORA on its issue of 1 November 2017 accused KIS of imposing “Zionist censorship on bookshops.”<sup>30</sup>

THE PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION are also among the books disseminated on the internet. “Public”, a chain of one of the biggest department stores for electronic appliances in Greece, sells the PROTOCOLS in its online book store.<sup>31</sup>

An example for the usage of the internet by the church, is the long antisemitic announcement made by the Metropolitan Bishop of Piraeus Seraphim on 28 April 2017 and uploaded on the official website of the Archdiocese of Piraeus. This reaction was triggered after the Greek Orthodox Church had refused to send him as its representative to the Easter Festival of the Holy Fire at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Following the Synad’s decision to replace Bishop Seraphim, the latter accused Israel of preventing his visit and interfering in an internal Church matter. While specifying that his views are not antisemitic but anti-Zionist, Seraphim said that Orthodox Christians stood against Zionism and especially against the wing of Zionism that seeks world domination. Similarly, he quoted the PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION and referred to the masonry as the arms used by Zionism to secure infiltration and state manipulation.<sup>32</sup> In response, KIS slammed the announcement and expressed its belief that the antisemitic remarks are not compatible with the status of an official of the Greek Orthodox Church.<sup>33</sup> GHM has filed several criminal complaints against Seraphim for all sorts of racist texts, almost all of them at the stage of preliminary investigations by local prosecutors.<sup>34</sup>

#### The mass media: press and TV.

In an article published on 10 May 2017 on the news site enikos.gr, entitled *In bloody ink*, journalist and cartoonist Stathis (Stavropoulos) denounced attempts to incriminate criticism against Israel that present it as antisemitism in order to annul such political criticism. It was written in response to the publication of a survey on antisemitism in Greece, which showed high rates of antisemitic feelings in the country. On 11 May 2017 KIS made the following announcement:

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<sup>30</sup>Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017. For more information about Konstantinos Plevris, see Michal Navoth, *Antisemitism in Greece: The Trial of Konstantinos Plevris*, Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism Tel Aviv University, Topical Brief No. 8, 2011 (Roni Stauber & Beryl Belsky eds.), [http://humanities1.tau.ac.il/roth/images/ANTISEMITISM\\_IN\\_GREECE\\_-\\_THE\\_TRIAL\\_OF\\_KONSTANTINOS\\_PLEVRIS.pdf](http://humanities1.tau.ac.il/roth/images/ANTISEMITISM_IN_GREECE_-_THE_TRIAL_OF_KONSTANTINOS_PLEVRIS.pdf).

<sup>31</sup>Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017.

<sup>32</sup>Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017; European Jewish Congress (IJC), *Greek Jews slam antisemitic remarks by Orthodox bishop*, 5 May 2017, <https://eurojewcong.org/news/communities-news/greece/greek-jews-slam-antisemitic-remarks-by-orthodox-bishop/>

<sup>33</sup>The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), *KIS Announcement for the Statement of the Metropolitan of Piraeus*, 3 May 2017, [https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=710:kis-announcement-for-the-statement-of-the-metropolitan-of-piraeus&catid=49:2009-05-11-09-28-23](https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=710:kis-announcement-for-the-statement-of-the-metropolitan-of-piraeus&catid=49:2009-05-11-09-28-23)

<sup>34</sup>Information provided to the author by Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM).

"Certain anti[s]emitic articles and cartoons in the press and on the internet contribute to the building up of a stereotype based on drawing parallels among "Jews", "Zionists" and "Nazis", equalizing the first with the latter, within a context of a frenetic trend to demonize the State of Israel and its people...

Journalists, cartoonists and media use deliberately the term "agents" of Israel, to avoid being accused of anti[s]emitism, giving as a pretext that they do not aim against the Jews but against the Zionists ...

And it is obvious for us that even the sharpest criticism against the policy of the Israeli Government has nothing to do with [a]nti[s]emitism. **However, when according to a recent research, 65% of the Greeks agree with the opinion that 'Israel treats the Palestinian exactly as the Nazis treated the Jews', then all - politicians and journalists alike - need to take responsibility for reproducing the industrialized propaganda of delegitimization of the State of Israel...**" (emphasis in the original – M.N.).<sup>35</sup>

A new trend of the discourse can be observed in recent years. The rhetoric has transformed the usage of "antisemitism" into reference to "Zionism". The reason for this camouflage stems from the fact that antisemitism is a form of racism and as such can be prosecuted under the anti-racism law, Law 4285/2014. Anti-Zionism is not considered to be within the bounds of the law and cannot be considered a criminal offence.<sup>36</sup> That new rhetoric serves both the extreme right as well as many groups of the left who wish to delegitimize the existence of the State of Israel.<sup>37</sup>

In view of the comparison with the Nazism, the following quotation of Greek Foreign Minister, Nikos Kotzias, on 19 September 2017 is of relevance: "when I hear them equate Israel with the Nazi crimes, I do not hear 'normal' criticism. What I hear is an ex post attempt to acquit those who committed the crime of the Holocaust."<sup>38</sup>

## Golden Dawn

The trial of the Golden Dawn, which commenced on 20 April 2015 has gone into its third year. 69 individuals, among them Golden Dawn's leader and all its MPs from the 2012 elections, has been charged with participation in a criminal organization.<sup>39</sup> During 2017 the

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<sup>35</sup> The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), *KIS Condemns 'New Antisemitism'*, 16 May 2018, [https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=714:kis-condemns-new-anti-semitism&catid=49:2009-05-11-09-28-23](https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=714:kis-condemns-new-anti-semitism&catid=49:2009-05-11-09-28-23). On 25 May 2017 Stathis replied to KIS's announcement with a comment published on his column on enikos.gr stating that he would continue criticizing the "genocidal policy of Israel against the Palestinians". Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017.

<sup>36</sup> See Michal Navoth, *Greece, in* Kantor Center for the Study of Cotemporary European Jewry, Antisemitism Worldwide 2016 General Analysis Draft, 42, [http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/sites/default/files/Doch\\_full\\_2016\\_170717.pdf](http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/sites/default/files/Doch_full_2016_170717.pdf);

<sup>37</sup> The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), *KIS Condemns 'New Antisemitism'*.

<sup>38</sup> World Jewish Congress (WJC), *At WJC reception, Greek FM Kotzias decries 'hypocrisy and double-speak' of criticism of Israel*, 19 September, 2017, [http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/at-wjc-reception-greek-fm-kotzias-decries-comparison-of-israel-to-nazis-and-defends-right-of-israel-to-exist-9-2-2017?utm\\_source=World+Jewish+Congress+Daily+News&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=2ec4efc911-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2017\\_09\\_19&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a1de7e9b27-2ec4efc911-318793389](http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/at-wjc-reception-greek-fm-kotzias-decries-comparison-of-israel-to-nazis-and-defends-right-of-israel-to-exist-9-2-2017?utm_source=World+Jewish+Congress+Daily+News&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2ec4efc911-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_09_19&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1de7e9b27-2ec4efc911-318793389)

<sup>39</sup> Michal Navoth, *Between the Far Right and the Far Left: Current Issues of Racism and Nationalism in Greece*, KANTOR CENTER POSITION PAPERS (Mikael Shainkman ed., March 2017), 3, <http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/sites/default/files/PP%20Greece%20170320.pdf>,

court held close to 100 sessions in which the testimony of the witnesses for the prosecution, including of few protected witnesses, was heard.<sup>40</sup> The evidence provides insight into the party operation and its aims. Golden Dawn operates according to a strict hierarchic structure and is inspired by Nazi ideology.<sup>41</sup> Golden Dawn continues to profess its hatred for Israel and Jews.

A survey conducted by the University of Macedonia in February 2017 showed that Golden Dawn received 7.5%,<sup>42</sup> slightly higher of the support of 7% of the electorate in the elections of September 2015.<sup>43</sup> The party is not slipping in the opinion polls.<sup>44</sup> Despite the legal crackdown against it, Golden Dawn is still popular on Greek political arena and is not wishing to fade.

### **Initiatives undertaken to combat antisemitism**

In addition to denunciations of Jewish bodies, relevant authorities expressed zero tolerance against antisemitism, including their swift response to rectify damages caused by vandalism. Proceedings are taken by the police and the prosecution to bring the perpetrators to justice. The Cyber Crime Police Department is also addressed to tackle the online hate speech.

The main challenges for the Greek Jewish Community to face in 2018 are enhancement and expansion of the existing educational programs.<sup>45</sup> This is not an easy task, given the continued dissemination of educational material conveying antisemitic message or objections by educators and non-Jewish parents in Greece to Jewish contents,<sup>46</sup> but it was always the firm belief of the Jewish community that the best way to confront antisemitism is to start uprooting it in the classroom.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Golden Dawn Watch, *The Trial Documentation and Monitoring*, [http://goldendawnwatch.org/?page\\_id=420&lang=en](http://goldendawnwatch.org/?page_id=420&lang=en).

<sup>41</sup> Golden Dawn Watch, *The Trial Documentation and Monitoring*, [http://goldendawnwatch.org/?page\\_id=420&lang=en](http://goldendawnwatch.org/?page_id=420&lang=en); *Ex-Golden Dawn cadre dishes dirt on party's political goals*, 15 September 2017, <http://www.ekathimerini.com/221716/article/ekathimerini/news/ex-golden-dawn-cadre-dishes-dirt-on-partys-political-goals>.

<sup>42</sup> Philip Chrysopoulos, *Poll: 8 in 10 Greeks Think Government Has Failed*, 14 February 2017, <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2017/02/14/poll-8-in-10-greeks-think-government-has-failed/>

<sup>43</sup> Navoth, *Between the Far Right*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> Panayote Dimitras, *Greek Nazi Golden Dawn in Turmoil*, 11 November 2017, <http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2017/11/11/greek-nazi-golden-dawn-turmoil/> On 4 March 2017

Golden Dawn lost an MP after Dimitris Koukoutsis declared himself an independent, reducing the party's members in the 300-seat Parliament to 17 from 18. As a result, it slipped to fourth place in terms of representation. *See Golden Dawn loses a seat in Parliament*, 4 March 2017, <http://www.ekathimerini.com/216631/article/ekathimerini/news/golden-dawn-loses-a-seat-in-parliament>

<sup>45</sup> Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS). The information is part of KIS forthcoming report on antisemitism in Greece in 2017.

<sup>46</sup> *School visits to the Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki are not welcomed by all educators and parents*, 5 September 2017, <https://enantiastonantisemitismo.wordpress.com/2017/09/05/school-visits-to-the-jewish-museum-are-not-welcomed-by-all-parents/>

<sup>47</sup> Based on information the author has obtained from The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS); Harry Van Versendaal, *Uprooting anti-Semitism in Greece, starting in the classroom*, 31 May 2017, <http://www.ekathimerini.com/218850/article/ekathimerini/comment/uprooting-anti-semitism-in-greece-starting-in-the-classroom>

## **Hungary, Romania and Slovakia / Raphael Vago**

### **Romania**

The most prominent antisemitic incident in 2017 was the desecration of the Jewish cemetery Giurgiului in Bucharest, where victims of the Holocaust and Jewish soldiers are buried, where dozens of graves were desecrated on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day on April 24. The Jewish cemetery in Bucharest, where victims of the Holocaust and Jewish soldiers are buried, has already seen similar attacks. According to the police, the perpetrators were young. The Jewish community and others responded harshly, and there were even hints that the police tried to minimize the incident by claiming that it was an act of vandalism by a small group youngsters.

It is not possible to discern new trends. The attempts of extreme right-wing groups and Holocaust deniers to glorify Antonesky's wartime reign and the fascist iron guard of the war, continued in 2017.

Antisemitic - and Holocaust deniers' sites continued to operate, and it has often been argued that the judicial level does not adequately implement existing legislation against incitement and racism.

A public debate developed around an attempt to inaugurate a sculptor for one of the Antonesky government ministers who was involved in cooperating relations with Nazi Germany during the war. In Romania, Holocaust education projects continue in schools, including the visit of educators to Yad Vashem, but there is widespread belief that many Romanians are aware of the dimensions of the Holocaust, but refuse to believe that Romanians participated in them.

It should be noted that the media and public opinion express clear pro-Israel positions.

### **Hungary**

Issues related to the responsibility of Hungary during the Holocaust, the evaluation of the rule of Edimarl Horthy between the two world wars and antisemitism in Hungarian society continued to engage the public and political discourse during 2017.

The position of the Hungarian government on refugees, asylum seekers and the threat of terrorism in the face of the position of the European Union and the major Western countries has been linked by the campaign of the Orban government against George Soros and his alleged plan "to flood Europe with a million immigrants and destroy the nation-states."

The campaign took a sharp turn with the publication of posters against Soros, which were interpreted by large segments of the public, including the Jewish community, Antisemitic graffiti and anti-Jewish slogans. The ongoing crisis has led to differences of opinion with the Jewish community and has sparked widespread public protests against the publicized campaign. The Jewish community also expressed its expectations that the State of Israel would condemn the antisemitic tone of the campaign

The extreme right-wing party "Jobbik" continued its slow journey, accompanied by internal struggles, in order to shake off its antisemitic and racist past, and even discussed the



possibility of tactical cooperation between it and left-wing parties against the Urban government. Opponents of these rapprochement steps emphasized every antisemitic feature among the Jobbik activists, which again brought to public attention.

On the other hand, a large number of right-wing websites and blogs continue to preach Holocaust denial and disseminate antisemitic messages, although websites affiliated with Jobbik recently show some restraint in the new line.

The Government of Hungary continued to support the preservation of the Jewish heritage in Hungary and its representatives regularly participate in their commemoration of the Holocaust, and relate to Hungary's responsibility for the protection of the Jewish heritage in Hungary. The murder of hundreds of thousands of Jewish citizens of the state.

## **Slovakia**

The activities and impact of extremist groups or persons often must be seen on a larger perspective which would enable to evaluate on-going trends on a longer time framework. Such an approach should be applied in evaluating the fluctuations in the influence and presence of extremism in Slovakia.

As it was noted in Antisemitism Worldwide 2013, the most significant development in 2013 in Slovakia was the election in November of Marian Kotleba, the former head of a banned neo-Nazi Party, Slovak Togetherness, currently the leader of the People's Party – Our Slovakia, as Governor of the Banska Bystrica region, ( see, Martin Ehl, The Triumph of Extremism in Slovakia, Transitions Online, November 26,2013) Extremist sites celebrated the event, hailing it as a "monumental victory for the European people as a whole, and Slovakia in particular...the hardcore nationalist Marian Kotleba won 55.5% of the votes".(Daily Stormer, November 24, 2013) This electoral victory was significant as in the last two parliamentary elections the Peoples' Party-Our Slovakia gained only marginal number of votes, while the increase in regional support raised the alarm among civil society in Slovakia. While direct antisemitic remarks were few, Kotleba's movement openly praises the war-time regime of Tiso, and challenges the idea that Tiso's regime bore responsibility for the country's crimes against Jews during the Holocaust. Observers have noted the increased influence in the movement of some elements form the Catholic Church. (Transitions Online, November 25, 2013) The movement is openly racist against the Roma- a major social and political issue in Slovakia, as in Hungary. The party platform refers to the "need to ensure safety in the surroundings of Roma settlements and to fight "unfair favoritism of Gypsy parasites".( Open Society Foundations, December 4, 2013) The major significance of the regional victory in the Banska Bystrica region was the possibility of a growing impact of right-wing extremism in Slovak mainstream politics, by electing an extremist politician as regional governor, impact on regional politics, that along the Hungarian Jobbik, there are signs of growing extremism among Slovak voters, and on the EU level – yet another indication for the strengthening of extremist parties and movements, not on the fringes of political life, but enjoying wider support from frustrated elements in society.

Indeed, the apprehensions voiced in late 2013, became a reality in the general elections of March 2016, when Kotleba's party, The People's Party-Our Slovakia received some 8% of the votes, and entered Parliament for the first time becoming a significant player in national politics, although outside the newly formed coalition – similar to the position of Jobbik in

Hungary. The BBC correctly noted ( March 6, 2016) that "The term 'neo-Nazi' is often bandied about, at times, foolishly, to describe anyone with views slightly to the right of Marine Le-Pen. But Marian Kotleba is different – he was once, literally a neo-Nazi". Tom Nicholson, a veteran British-Canadian journalist living for years in Slovakia, summed up for the BBC, that "this is a moment of great shame for Slovakia. Mr Kotleba's party is not like the French National Front, which is far-right. These are Nazis."

The Western media characterized Kotleba's party as "neo-Nazi" (see for example "neo-Nazi party makes an electoral breakthrough in Slovakia" (The Guardian, March 7, 2016)

The messages of the People's Party-Our Slovakia are clear : more than "flirting" in the past with Holocaust denial, using rhetoric, uniforms – as Kotleba has done in the past, symbols of the fascist Tiso era, the party rides high on the wave of the immigration crisis, calls for the banning of the entry of Muslims in the country, thus competing with more moderate elements of the Slovak political scene, including those forming the ruling coalition, clearly anti-Roma, referred to as "Gypsy parasites". Kotleba's party is strongly anti EU – thus fits well into the post-communist countries' anti-immigration attitudes of Hungary, Czechia, Poland, and Slovakia.

The fact that some 23% of the first-time young voters gave their vote for a party that it is seen as Neo-Nazi should worry Slovak society, as the simple explanations of "social discontent" may not provide a comprehensive answer. The continuing reviving of war time living ghosts of the fascist past is a continuing threat to the future of Slovak society. While Kotleba was elected in 2013 as the governor of a region seen as under-developed, and its voters fed up with mainstream parties, the success in the general elections, bringing in 14 members, and 8% of the votes is indeed a breakthrough. (see, Financial Times, March 7, 2016).

Slovak sources have reported an increased number of extremist criminal acts during 2016, (see, Slovak Spectator. 12 May 2016), and one may wonder if such an increase was already a reflection of the electoral victory of Kotleba's party. As the Times of Israel noted, 18 November 2016, "Slovakia comes to terms with proudly neo-Nazi part". Party members celebrated the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tiso's birth. Thus automatically the party assumes the legacy of the antisemitic war-time fascist regime.

Recent surveys indicate that up to 25% of respondents would support a dictatorship, and some 35% would support leaving the EU – and the numbers seemed to grow during 2016. (see, The Slovak Spectator, 21 December 2016)

The response of Slovak civil society was displayed in rallies held in Bratislava and Banska Bystrica in protest against Kotleba. (see, The Slovak Spectator, March 8, 2016) Marching with crossed swastikas, lit candles and anti-Fascist slogans the demonstrators expressed their dismay at the rise of Kotleba's party.

As, Peter Weisenbacher from Bratislava's Human Rights Institute expressed it, "Racism, xenophobia, Holocaust denials and other such things have no place in democracy." (The Times of Israel, 16 November 2016).

The attempts to rehabilitate Tiso and his war-time regime are a constant feature of Slovak antisemitism and historical revisionism as noted in the past researches of Pavol Mestan, the

Director of the Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava (see Antisemitism Worldwide of the past two decades). Kotleba's People Party- Our Slovakia is the main torch bearer of Tiso's fascist and clerical legacy, now representing those ideas in the Slovak National Assembly.

A yearly test for the impact of revisionist ideas is the yearly march in Bratislava commemorating the March 1939 foundation of the war-time Nazi allied puppet state led by Jozef Tiso. A march by neo-Nazis took place in March 2015 commemorating the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "independent" Slovak State was, as usual countered by a demonstration organized by the "Bratislava without Nazis Initiative". The 2016 events were of low key, due to the protest demonstrations held a week earlier in the wake of the general elections. However, it seems that Slovak extremists have new opportunities to express their revisionist views , now that since the 2016 elections . On the other hand, it is the right time to the defenders of human rights and the memory of the Holocaust to express their opposition to the expansion of the extreme right, as two Slovak MPs have shown by wearing yellow stars of David in the National Assembly. (AFP, March 23, 2016)

It should be emphasized that relations between Slovakia and Israel are very good, and Ambassador Peter Hulenyi sees great potential in expanding relations.( see The Jerusalem Post, 10 September 2016) Slovakia commemorates every year Holocaust Day on September 9<sup>th</sup> , and there are numerous projects of renewal of Jewish sites in Slovakia, as synagogues and cemeteries. The ruling SMER party, almost ten years in power often expresses its determination to fight against racism, xenophobia and antisemitism.

### **Australia / Julie Nathan**

#### **Incidents Recorded**

Antisemitic incidents are manifested through many different kinds of acts. As in the ECAJ's previous annual Antisemitism Reports, incidents have been categorized as set out in Table 1 below. Incidents are divided into eight categories. Four categories relate to physical attacks against persons or property, and four categories relate to threats of physical harm to persons or property. The manner of collection of the data, and the criteria for inclusion in or exclusion from the tally, are set out in the sections of this chapter following the tables and charts.

During the twelve month period, from 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017, there were **230** antisemitic incidents logged by volunteer Community Security Groups (CSGs), official Jewish state roof bodies, and the ECAJ.

In the previous 12 month period, ending 30 September 2016, these same bodies logged 210 incidents. There was thus a **9.5% increase** in the overall number of antisemitic incidents over the previous year. Of note, from 2016 to 2017, assault, harassment, and vandalism decreased, but there were large increases in the number of incidents of graffiti and of posters and stickers.

### **Under-Reporting of Antisemitic Incidents**

It is known anecdotally that many incidents of antisemitism in Australia occur but are not formally reported either to appropriate Jewish authorities or to the police. Thus, official statistics in this Report of incidents is only a proportion of incidents actually occurring in Australia.

### **Trends in Incidents**

As has been the pattern in previous years, intimidation and harassment of Jews occurs regularly around synagogues on the Jewish Sabbath on Friday evenings and on Saturday mornings when Jews are walking to and from synagogue, and attending religious services.

There is often a correlation between spikes in violence in any of the various conflicts in the Middle East (and a concomitant increase in media coverage), whether or not the conflict involves Israel, and an upturn in antisemitic incidents. In addition, when issues involving Jews or Israel receive prominent coverage in the mainstream media, this often leads to a rise in antisemitic commentary and incidents.

### **Effect of Antisemitic Incidents**

As stated in previous reports: “The effect of incidents of antisemitism on the quality of life of individual members of the Australian Jewish community should never be minimised. The psychological impact on members of communities affected directly by harassment and intimidation can be serious, particularly as many of the threats have been directed against individual Jewish Australians in their homes, including survivors of the Nazi Holocaust.”

### **Canada / Amanda Hohman and Aidan Fishman**

Following up on 2016’s record-breaking number of antisemitic incidents, 2017 proved to be no better. Indeed, in 2017, Canadian Jews saw many examples of how antisemitism is becoming mainstream, even receiving institutional support from major societal actors in certain cases. All levels of government need to do better in order to stem the tide of antisemitism, which remains one of the most pervasive forms of hatred and discrimination in Canada.

**While final numbers for 2017 have not yet been compiled**, there is no doubt that the five-year trend of elevated levels of antisemitism is continuing. Antisemitic incidents and attacks spanned the political spectrum, ranging from the far-right to the far-left, with significant contributions from radical Islamists and Arab nationalists as well.

### **Brazen Antisemitic Assaults**

The past year began on an ominous note, as a Jewish family in Winnipeg, a city not historically known for antisemitic incidents, awoke late on New Year’s Eve to find a stone with chilling anti-Jewish and pro-Nazi slurs left on their front porch. This brazen attack set the tone for a host of similar occurrences throughout the year.

In July, B'nai Brith worked with police to investigate “Madd Cold,” a Montreal-based rapper whose publicly-available tunes described Jews as “demons,” “parasites” and “servants of *Shaytan*,” the Arabic term for Satan. Major music providers such as Soundcloud and BandCamp removed his music, but Madd Cold managed to flee to the United States before he could be arrested in Canada.

Throughout the months of August, September, October and November, antisemitic graffiti targeted a number of schools in York Region, an area north of Toronto with Canada’s highest concentration of Jews. During the same period, graffiti proclaiming that “Hitler was right” was found on highways in the area, contributing to a deteriorating sense of security for the local Jewish population.

In the aftermath of U.S. President Donald Trump’s Jerusalem announcement, anti-Israel protests took place across Canada, with antisemitic slogans deployed on certain occasions. The most brazen incident occurred in Vancouver, where demonstrators twice stole Israeli flags from local Jews and then burned a replica of the Israeli flag, a highly inflammatory action which garnered attention worldwide.

Finally, in mid-December, a frightening image that reads, “Jewry Must Perish!” was mailed to at least 13 synagogues across Canada in a coordinated assault during Hanukkah.

### **Institutional Antisemitism**

The year 2017 was marked by a worrying number of high-profile cases of antisemitism receiving support, or at least no condemnation, from key actors in Canadian society, including levels of government.

Arthur Topham, a man whose conviction for spreading antisemitic hate propaganda was upheld in 2016, was sentenced in March of 2017 to a mere six-month curfew and a ban from public posting on the Internet. Topham could have faced up to two years in prison, but the judge refused to even impose house arrest as advocated by prosecutors. This slap-on-the-wrist sentence will do nothing to deter others from spreading antisemitic hatred online, and may even encourage them to do so.

In mid-September, a speaker at an Edmonton “human rights” forum promoted the anti-Israel boycott movement, justified Palestinian terrorism and argued that Arabs cannot possibly be antisemitic. What made the incident truly disturbing is that the event was funded by the Government of Alberta and the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the very body dedicated to protecting Canadians Jews and Israelis from discrimination. Amazingly, the two bodies refused to apologize in any way for their role in promoting these blatant falsehoods about Israel and antisemitism.

Just a few days later, Quebec prosecutors announced that they would not be pursuing hate speech charges against Sayed al-Ghitawi, a Montreal imam who twice prayed to Allah to “destroy the accursed Jews.” Prosecutors hid behind technical excuses, claiming that too much time had elapsed since the incidents in question. In fact, there is no statute of limitations in Canada for the promotion of genocide or hate propaganda.

Finally, the Alberta Government's actions led directly to the shocking reinstatement in November of University of Lethbridge Professor Anthony Hall, who was exposed by B'nai Brith after he taught students that Israel was responsible for 9/11 and produced Holocaust denial videos with a neo-Nazi now facing charges in Germany. Despite warnings from B'nai Brith, the Alberta Government launched a rare legal intervention in Hall's battle against the University, after already amending provincial labour law in a way that benefitted Hall. While he has formally regained his academic title, Hall remains barred from the classroom, and B'nai Brith will fight tooth and nail to keep it that way.

### **Campus Antisemitism**

In 2017, Canadian university campuses continued to serve as an important breeding ground for local antisemitism. Paradoxically, these developments came even as anti-Israel BDS resolutions were defeated by students at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, the University of Winnipeg (twice) and the University of Ottawa.

In February, B'nai Brith revealed that a student politician at Montreal's prestigious McGill University had advised his Twitter followers to "punch a Zionist today," provoking a storm of Jewish community outrage which eventually led to his resignation. However, problems continued at McGill, with a Jewish student and two non-Jewish allies being stripped of their own student government positions in October in an unlawful move that was later reversed by the Judicial Board. This latest round of turmoil erupted a month after the same Judicial Board had declared BDS to be a discriminatory and unconstitutional political program, a key victory for the pro-Israel cause on campuses across Canada.

In March, a teaching assistant was fired by Toronto's Ryerson University after video emerged of prayers which he led at a local mosque, in which he called on Allah to "liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque from the filth of the Jews." Ryerson administrators demonstrated leadership by dismissing the employee, especially in the aftermath of a highly-publicized 2016 incident in which pro-Palestinian students foiled an attempt to promote Holocaust Education Week via the local student union.

In June, B'nai Brith lodged complaints with McMaster University in Hamilton about antisemitic and pro-terrorist messages being disseminated by the local anti-Israel club and its leadership, but administrators chose to ignore these concerns. The issue resurfaced in the public eye in December, which finally prompted officials to investigate. This particular incident is in many ways emblematic of the pervasiveness of antisemitic ideology on some campuses, and the double-standard which universities often apply to antisemitic hate speech, as compared to hatred targeted at other groups.

### **France / Jean Yves Camus**

On 31 January 2018, the French Interior Ministry released its latest figures on racist, antisemitic and anti-Muslim incidents in France in 2017, indicating an overall decrease of 16% with 950 total of incidents. Antisemitic acts dropped by 7,2% with 311 incidents in 2017 (335 in 2016), among them, a decrease was especially marked in antisemitic threats with a 17,1% drop (214 threats in 2017 compared to 258 in 2016). An increase was marked however in violent incidents targeting Muslims and Jews with 72 violent incidents against

Muslims (67 in 2016) and 97 violent incidents against Jews (77 in 2016). Among violent incidents against Jews, a decrease was marked in attacks against persons with 30 incidents (compared to 42 in 2016). Attacks on religious sites painted a mixed picture, with 7.5% decrease in attacks on Christian sites (878 incidents), a 15% drop in attacks on Muslim sites (72 incidents) but a 22% rise in attacks against Jewish sites (28 incidents).

### **United Kingdom / Mike Whine (CST)**

CST recorded 1,382 antisemitic incidents in 2017, a 3% increase from the 1,346 incidents recorded in 2016. The relatively small size of the increase, and the nature and spread of the incidents, suggests that the high incident total was a continuation of the 2016 pattern (post Brexit racism and publicity surrounding Labour Party antisemitism controversies), rather than being due to any specifically new factor in 2017. CST recorded over 100 antisemitic incidents per month in every month until October (continuing a run of monthly totals over 100 incidents since April 2016), but November and December 2017 saw monthly totals fall below this mark. The number of antisemitic assaults reported to CST rose by 34% in 2017; in contrast, the number of incidents taking place on social media fell by 15%. It should be noted that most of these assaults were not especially violent, but did constitute assault in a legal sense.

In addition to the 1,382 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2017, a further 872 reports of potential incidents were received by CST, but were not deemed to be antisemitic and are not included in this total of 1,382 antisemitic incidents. Many of these 872 potential incidents involved suspicious activity or possible hostile reconnaissance at Jewish locations; criminal activity affecting Jewish people and buildings; and anti-Israel activity that did not include antisemitic language, motivation or targeting. In total, CST staff and volunteers recorded, processed and analysed 2,254 incidents and potential incidents in 2017, most of which required some element of victim support or security response.

The factors that influenced the general, sustained high level of antisemitic incidents in 2017 appear to be a continuation of those that similarly affected the level of incidents during 2016. In general terms, there was a rise in all forms of hate crime following the referendum to leave the European Union in June 2016. Regarding Jews specifically, there was unprecedented publicity regarding controversies about alleged and actual antisemitism in the Labour Party. As would be the case for any form of hate crime, both issues are likely to have emboldened offenders, whilst also causing victims to be more aware of the need to report incidents.

The terrorist attacks at Westminster, Manchester, London Bridge and Finsbury Park, and the failed bomb attack on a tube train at Parsons Green in 2017 did not directly cause spikes in antisemitic incidents reported to CST (which would have been revealed in the timings and content of incidents and conversation with victims). However, these terrorist attacks may have contributed in a more indirect way. 2017 was a year in which the UK faced its most severe threat of terrorism for many years. Twice in 2017, after the Manchester Arena bombing and the Parsons Green bombing, the threat level was raised to its maximum level 'Critical,' meaning an attack was imminent. This understandably caused concern within the Jewish community, which may have encouraged victims and witnesses to be more aware of hate crime and report antisemitic incidents to CST. Following the terror attacks, there was

also an increased police and CST presence in Jewish community areas, which may have made people more likely to report incidents.

There have been some improvements in the reporting of antisemitic incidents which may have contributed to the continued increase in incident numbers. These improvements include a higher percentage of incidents being reported from victims and witnesses of incidents as a result of growing communal concern about antisemitism; an increase in the number of security guards at Jewish buildings in recent years (many of these commercial guards are funded by a government grant to provide security at Jewish locations that is administered by CST); and ongoing improvements to CST's information sharing with Police forces around the UK. The number of antisemitic incidents reported to CST by security guards or security officers at Jewish locations has increased in comparison to 2016 and 2015.

Three-quarters of the 1,382 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2017 took place in Greater London and Greater Manchester, the two largest Jewish communities in the UK. CST recorded 773 antisemitic incidents in Greater London in 2017 compared to 835 during 2016, a decrease of seven per cent. In Greater Manchester, CST recorded 261 incidents in 2017 compared to 206 in 2016, an increase of 27 per cent. This is the opposite pattern to that seen in 2016, when the number of recorded antisemitic incidents rose in London but fell in Manchester. It is not clear why the two cities have displayed different trends during these two years, other than natural variation over time. Beyond these two centres, CST recorded 348 antisemitic incidents in 80 locations around the UK in 2017, compared to 305 incidents from 96 different locations in 2016 (an increase of 14 per cent in the number of incidents). The 2017 total included 40 antisemitic incidents in Hertfordshire (of which 18 were in Borehamwood), 32 in Gateshead, 22 in Leeds, 15 in Brighton & Hove, 14 in Cambridge and 12 in Liverpool.

It is likely that there is significant under-reporting of antisemitic incidents to both CST and the Police, and that the number of antisemitic incidents that took place is significantly higher than the number recorded in this report. A 2013 survey of Jewish experiences and perceptions of antisemitism in the EU found that 72 per cent of British Jews who had experienced antisemitic harassment over the previous five years had not reported it to the Police or to any other organisation; 57 per cent of British Jews who had experienced antisemitic violence or the threat of violence had not reported it; and 46 per cent of British Jews who had suffered antisemitic vandalism to their home or car had not reported it (despite this, UK reporting rates were the highest of the eight countries polled). The same survey also found that, over the previous 12 months, 21 per cent of British Jews had suffered antisemitic harassment, three per cent had suffered antisemitic violence or the threat of violence and two per cent had

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or car.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates that around 40 per cent of all hate crimes come to the attention of the Police.

There were 145 violent antisemitic assaults reported to CST in 2017, an increase of 34 per cent from the 108 violent incidents recorded in 2016 and the highest number CST has ever recorded in this category. The previous record high was 121 antisemitic assaults in 2009. A wide spectrum of incidents falls within the category of Assault, from minor acts to more violent ones. None of the violent incidents recorded in 2017 were classified as Extreme Violence, which would mean incidents that involved grievous bodily harm (GBH) or a threat to life. CST did not record any Extreme Violence incidents in 2016, and recorded four incidents of Extreme Violence in 2015 and one in 2014.

Incidents of Damage and Desecration to Jewish property increased by 14 per cent, from 81 incidents in 2016 to 92 incidents in 2017. There were 65 incidents in this category in 2015 and 81 in 2014.

There were 95 incidents reported to CST in the category of Threats in 2017, which includes direct threats to people or property, rather than more general abuse. This is a decrease of six per cent from the 101 incidents of this type recorded in 2016, which was the highest total CST had ever recorded in this category. CST recorded 79 incidents in 2015 and 91 in 2014.

There were 1,038 incidents of Abusive Behaviour recorded by CST in 2017, just one fewer than the 1,039 incidents recorded in this category in 2016 and the second highest total CST has ever recorded in this category. Incidents of Abusive Behaviour include verbal abuse, hate mail, antisemitic graffiti on non-Jewish property and antisemitic content on social media. CST recorded 717 incidents in this category in 2015 and 899 in 2014.

There were 12 incidents recorded in the category of Literature in 2017, which comprises mass-produced antisemitic mailings and emails, rather than individual hate mail. This is a decrease of 29 per cent from the 17 incidents recorded in this category in 2016. CST recorded 12 incidents in this category in 2015 and 30 in 2014.

The most common single type of incident in 2017 involved verbal abuse directed at random Jewish people in public, a form of antisemitism that is more commonly associated with anti-social behaviour or local patterns of street crime than with political activism or ideologies. In 356 incidents, the victims were Jewish people, male or female, attacked or abused while going about their daily business in public places. In at least 283 of these incidents, the victims were visibly Jewish, usually due to their religious or traditional clothing, school uniform or jewellery bearing Jewish symbols. A total of 670 antisemitic incidents out of the 1,382 incidents in 2017 involved verbal antisemitic abuse.

CST recorded 247 antisemitic incidents that involved the use of social media in 2017, which represents 18 per cent of the overall total of 1,382 antisemitic incidents. For comparison, CST recorded 289 incidents in 2016 that involved the use of social media, which was 21 per cent of the overall incident total that year. This shows that the number of social media incidents recorded by CST declined in 2017. However, this figure should not be taken as an absolute measure of the amount of antisemitism on social media platforms. CST does not proactively 'trawl' social media platforms to look for incidents of this type and will only record social media incidents that have been reported to CST by a member of the public, where the offender is based in the UK or the incident involves the direct antisemitic

targeting of a UK based victim. The decline in the number of antisemitic incidents on social media in 2017 may be a positive consequence of social media companies trying to improve the way they tackle hate speech online, which, combined with arrests and prosecutions, have removed some antisemitic users from social media platforms and restricted the activities of others. It could also be a result of CST's ongoing efforts to identify where offenders are based in order to determine whether antisemitic content should be included in CST's statistics: if neither offender nor victim is based in the UK, CST will not include antisemitic social media content in its figures.

## **United States / Aryeh Tuchman and Oren Segal**

### **ADL 2017 Audit**

In its annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, ADL found that the number of anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S. rose 57 percent in 2017 – the largest single-year increase on record and the second highest number reported since ADL started tracking such data in 1979. The sharp rise was in part due to a significant increase in incidents in schools and on college campuses, which nearly doubled for the second year in a row.

ADL identified 1,986 anti-Semitic incidents perpetrated throughout the United States in 2017. This is an increase of 57% over the 1,267 incidents reported in 2016. For the first time since at least 2010, an incident occurred in every US state. The states with the highest numbers of incidents were New York (380 incidents), California (268 incidents), New Jersey (208 incidents), Massachusetts (177), Florida (98), and Pennsylvania (96). These states combined made up more than half (62%) of the total number of incidents. The number of incidents tends to correlate with large Jewish populations.

The 1,986 total incidents can be subdivided into three major categories: (1) of harassment (where a Jewish person or group of people feel harassed by the perceived anti-Semitic words, spoken or written, or actions of someone else); (2) vandalism (where property is damaged in a manner that indicates the presence of anti-Semitic animus or in a manner that victimizes Jews for their religious affiliation), and (3) assault (where people's bodies are targeted with violence accompanied by expressions of anti-Semitic animus).

The number of assaults with perceived anti-Semitic animus decreased to 19 in 2017; a decrease of 47% compared to the 36 assaults in 2016.

Anti-Semitic incidents took place in a wide variety of locations, including places of business, private homes, public areas such as parks and streets, Jewish institutions, schools, and colleges/universities. Although the largest number of incidents typically occur in public areas, in 2017 K-12 schools surpassed public areas as the locations with the most anti-Semitic incidents, at 457 incidents being reported in K-12 schools and 455 in public areas. For public areas, this amounted to an increase of 56% over the 294 incidents in that location type in 2016. For K-12 schools, this is a dramatic increase of 94% over the 235 incidents in 2016. Anti-Semitic incidents on college and university campuses also increased in 2017 to a total of 204, an 89% increase over the 108 incidents in 2016.

Jewish institutions, including Jewish schools, community centers, and museums as well as synagogues, were the targets of 342 anti-Semitic incidents in 2017. This is an increase of 101% over the 170 incidents recorded in 2016. However, this number includes 163 bomb threats made in the first quarter of the year; the vast majority of which were alleged to have been perpetrated by a troubled Jewish teenager located in Israel. Excluding those bomb threats, the total number of incidents targeting Jewish institutions is 179, an increase of 5% over the 170 incidents targeting those places in 2016.

### **Schoolyard Incidents**

Anti-Semitic incidents in K-12 schools increased by approximately 100% each year for the past two years. Instances of vandalism with anti-Semitic messages and symbols, as well as harassment and assaults against Jewish children, increased 94% in 2017 over the previous year (from 235 to 457), and increased 106% in 2016 (from 114 to 235). Elementary, middle and high schools have exceeded public spaces (such as parks and streets) as the locations with the most anti-Semitic incidents, surpassing homes, businesses, Jewish institutions, and college campuses. In 2017, 455 incidents were recorded as having taken place in public spaces, and 457 incidents were reported in schools.

Enhanced reporting and heightened sensitivity to bullying has certainly contributed to the increase in reported incidents, but the nature of schoolyard bullying makes it likely that these reported incidents are actually an underrepresentation of the total amount of anti-Semitic harassment against Jewish students.

Two hundred twenty-one instances of vandalism were reported in K-12 schools. The vast majority of them (186) included swastikas and were either drawn or scratched into school facilities or drawn on Jewish students' notebooks. This is more than double the 90 vandalism incidents involving swastikas in 2016. In many cases, the swastikas in 2017 were accompanied by phrases like "Hitler was not wrong," "Heil Hitler," "Kill all Jews," and "No Jews." In a few cases the swastikas were accompanied by the phrase "white power" or neo-Nazi codes, like the numbers 14/88.

### **Bomb Threats**

An Israeli-American teen was arrested in March 2017 and charged with making more than 150 bomb threats to Jewish Community Centers, schools, ADL offices, and other Jewish community institutions. A second man, Juan Thompson, 31, of St. Louis, Missouri, was arrested and charged with making copy-cat threats against Jewish centers and ADL offices. Thompson is alleged to have made at least eight of the threats against JCCs in January and February as part of a sustained campaign to harass and intimidate a former girlfriend. He was charged with one count of cyberstalking, and other charges may be pending.

In total, ADL identified 163 bomb threats against JCCs and other Jewish institutions during the first quarter of 2017.

### **Cemetery Vandalism**

Jewish graves and/or cemeteries were desecrated seven times in 2017. The desecration of Jewish headstones is a classic form of anti-Semitism employed for hundreds of years by anti-Semites looking to scare, victimize, and offend Jews. It is a cowardly act and especially disturbing, seeing as those buried have no means of defending themselves from such baseless hatred.

## **Policy Recommendations**

In response to the historic rise in anti-Semitic incidents, ADL is sharing the following policy recommendations with members of Congress and other government leaders:

- Congress should pass legislation to expand federal protections against bomb threats to religious institutions. The House of Representatives approved this legislation, HR 1730, in December. The Senate must now act and send the measure to the President to sign.
- Public officials and law enforcement authorities must use their bully pulpit to speak out against anti-Semitic incidents – and all acts of hate. These officials must support efforts to punish this conduct to the fullest extent of the law, while providing comfort and assistance to individual victims and community members.
- Victims and bystanders should report all anti-Semitic incidents and vandalism to the Anti-Defamation League and to local police. If we expect law enforcement officials and community members to take these incidents seriously, we must take them seriously – and report them, both to ADL and to the police.
- College and university administrators, faculty, and staff must receive the necessary training to effectively respond to anti-Semitic incidents, hate crimes, hate speech, and extremism on campus. Campus officials have a moral obligation to speak out against hate. Colleges and universities must build an institution for learning that works toward inclusion and equity while also ensuring open expression and a marketplace for ideas.

## **Austria / Julia Edthofer & Carina Klammer \***

### **1. Antisemitism in Austria in the Wake of the Austrian General Election**

This year's report on antisemitism is written in the wake of the general election in October 2017, following which the conservative *Austrian People's Party* (Österreichische Volkspartei, ÖVP) formed a coalition with the far-right *Freedom Party of Austria* (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, FPÖ). As opposed to the last ÖVP/FPÖ coalition in the year 2000, the government participation of the FPÖ did not lead to a more moderate demeanor of the party. On the contrary, prior to and after the election, several scandals related to FPÖ's extreme right-wing ties, have stirred up the Austrian political landscape. Hence, the role of the FPÖ and its supporters has to be considered as particularly important with respect to the rise of antisemitism in the year 2017 and is thus briefly illustrated in the following paragraphs. However, this does not mean that antisemitic articulations within other political parties and in society should be ignored.

#### *Political Background and Election Results*

The ongoing growth of the far-right in Austria is neither a new phenomenon nor is it a by-product of the so-called "protest voters". Shortly prior to the elections, Oskar Deutsch, President of the *Austrian/Viennese Jewish Community* (Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien, IKG), spoke out against any form of coalition with the FPÖ. He immediately received

dozens of antisemitic comments on his Facebook page.<sup>48</sup>

The first opinion polls showed an increased support for the FPÖ; some analyses even suggested that the FPÖ might become the strongest party. But with the rise of the new leader of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), Sebastian Kurz, in May 2017 the polls started to shift. While trying to appear more modern on the outside – especially with a leading candidate rather young in age – the ÖVP shifted further to a populist approach. They addressed mainly two populist issues: First, the “exploitation” of the welfare system by “immigrants” and those supposedly “unwilling to work”. The focus of Austrian politics on issues of immigration had already developed prior to the so-called “refugee crisis”. But the refugee movements of 2015 intensified racism within Austrian political discourse and served as further legitimization of the social and political exclusion of migrants. The second populist dimension regards the call for a so-called “change” or “renewal”. Sebastian Kurz represents a relatively new political fraction within ÖVP that worked towards an end of the coalition with the *Social Democratic Party of Austria* (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs - SPÖ) during the election campaign. In doing so, the ÖVP took political stances, which are *typically* emphasized by the FPÖ, but presented them in a more moderate way. With a highly personalized election campaign, Kurz has been able to increase the popularity of his party immensely within a rather short time.

After the elections the ÖVP emerged as the largest party in the National Council by receiving 31,5 % of the votes. The SPÖ achieved similar results to those in 2013 and finished second with 26,9 %. Directly behind them came the FPÖ, which received 26 % of the votes. The New Austria and Liberal Forum (NEOS) finished fourth with 5,3 %. For the first time in 30 years the *Austrian Green Party* failed to cross the 4 % threshold. Instead, the “*Peter Pilz-List*” (a new party which had split from the Green Party) entered the parliament with 4.4 %.<sup>49</sup>

Opinion polls for 2017<sup>50</sup> show, that the election was accompanied by a general feeling of dissatisfaction, pessimism regarding the future and the desire for change. 42 % of the ÖVP voters named the leading candidate Kurz as the main reason for choosing the ÖVP this election, while FPÖ voters are characterized as having an above average pessimistic attitude. As an example: 86 % of the FPÖ voters see the development of the past five years negative and 81 % say the next generation will have a worse future than today. Voters especially choose the FPÖ because of their political contents (34 %). In contrast to Kurz, the personal figure of FPÖ-leader Heinz-Christian Strache did not play a significant role for the voters. In general men voted more for the ÖVP and the FPÖ and women more for SPÖ and the Green Party. Older people especially voted for ÖVP or SPÖ while the younger ones preferred the FPÖ or the Green Party. Another particular trend is that the Social Democrats continue to lose votes from the working class spectra to the FPÖ. Especially young working class men became attracted by their rather aggressive rhetoric. In order to understand the specific post-Nazi dimension of the current political events and the worrying extent of the ongoing swing to the right, a short history of the Freedom Party and its political background is outlined in the following.

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<sup>48</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/OskarDeutschIKG/posts/1671806162838547> (22.10.2017).

<sup>49</sup> Bundesministerium für Inneres (BMI) 2017.

<sup>50</sup> SORA 2017.

### *The Austrian post-Nazi Political Context: A Short History of the Austrian Freedom Party*

After the end of the Second World War the German Nationalist movement was discredited because of its links to the former National Socialist regime. The major parties of the new republic were the Christian conservative *Austrian People's Party* (ÖVP) and the *Austrian Socialist Party* (SPÖ). Both parties promoted the independence of Austria and tried to awaken a new national consciousness for the from now on small nation state (whose viability lots of Austrians doubted).

The pan-Germanist "Third Camp" was revived in 1949 in the form of the party *Federation of Independents* (Verband der Unabhängigen, VdU). It was a gathering point for former National Socialists, German Nationalists as well as a smaller fraction of liberals. The party collapsed after an internal strife between the liberal and the German Nationalist fraction.

The FPÖ was founded in 1955/56 as a successor party of the VdU and as the new representative of the "third Camp" very closely linked to former National Socialists and the milieu German National fraternities. The first party chairman, Anton Reinthaller, was a former member of the NSDAP (who had joined the Nazis even before the official "Anschluss" to the German Reich) as well as of the SS. The FPÖ remained a rather unsuccessful political phenomenon, especially in the context of the Austrian "victim myth" (that Austria was the first victim of Hitler Germany) and the Austrian repression of the Nazi past.

From the 1960s, the FPÖ tried to overcome its political isolation and to open the party for the political center by forcing a liberalization of the party. As a consequence, the most extreme party members split off in 1966 and founded the *National Democratic Party* (Nationaldemokratische Partei, NDP) following the *National Democratic Party of Germany* (Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands, NPD).

In the 1970s the party became closer to the establishment, among other things because the SPÖ under Bruno Kreisky started to cooperate with the FPÖ for tactical reasons. At the same time the liberal wing of the FPÖ, who wanted to get rid of the old Nazis within the party, had managed to climb further to the leadership of the party. But the liberal shift did not reflect itself among the opinions of the party base and the dissatisfaction of the fraternity members began to grow. The coalition with the SPÖ in 1983 was the biggest and last success of the liberal wing.

When Jörg Haider became the new leader of the party he reestablished a course towards positions of the extreme right and replaced the liberal wing with those loyal to him. At the same time he enforced a populist approach and shifted from an openly outspoken German Nationalism to chauvinist form of Austrian nationalism. Therefore, he tried to keep fraternities, and especially members with a linkage to neo-Nazism, in the background of the party.

With the mobilization of nationalist xenophobic attitudes, Haider managed to lead the FPÖ out of its political isolation. In 1992 the FPÖ initiated a national referendum named "Austria first" ("Österreich zuerst"). 400.000 people signed the racist outcry the FPÖ had initiated. From then on the FPÖ grew stronger with almost every election. One major breakthrough of the FPÖ, the participation in government in the year 2000, also led to a split in the party in 2005. The more pragmatic and/or Haider loyal party members left the party and joined the

new party *Bündnis Zukunft Österreich* (BZÖ) and the FPÖ had to reform itself under the leadership of Heinz Christian Strache.

The period after the split in 2005 was the first time in years the FPÖ had to face a significant loss in elections. Since discussions about Islam and Islamism had become an important issue within European politics, the FPÖ under the leadership of Strache started to modernize their xenophobic agenda by focusing on Muslims. Despite the fact that the FPÖ had presented itself as not being capable to govern the country without collapsing they achieved the third place and 17,5 % of the votes in the national elections in 2008. The BZÖ only reached 10,7% and lost its significance completely after the death of Haider.

The FPÖ under the strengthened influence of fraternity members shifted back and enforced their commitment to German Nationalist views. Furthermore they did not try to hide their ideological views in particular. Since the national election 2017, 18 of the party's 51 MPs are members of right-wing fraternities, including five of its six chairmen. This includes openly pan-German fraternities like the Olympia as well as FPÖ members with entanglements to the neo-Nazi movement.

### **Antisemitism as a Core Element of the FPÖ's Ideology**

Since 2010 the FPÖ shifted to a rather Israel-friendly course and started to adopt a somewhat patronizing stance towards the local Jewish community. For example, in November 2016 swastikas had been smeared on the walls of the Jewish part of Vienna's Central Cemetery. The FPÖ used the incident to present itself as an import force in the fight against antisemitism and called for a special surveillance of the Jewish Cemetery.

Events like these raised the question of whether antisemitism might have become ideologically less defining for the party (and maybe even the extreme right in general). But the FPÖ never has broken with its antisemitic tradition. At the same time, it is not simply a neo-Nazi party, but an extreme-right party with a populist approach. Therefore, it tries to conceal its antisemitism in order to be able to present itself as a legitimate party of the center. The party developed different strategies, such as condemning antisemitism only when it comes from Muslims, the "lying with the truth" strategy, so to speak. Furthermore, the denial of its antisemitic attitudes is a precondition for the cooperation with other right-populist parties like the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands within the European Parliament.

The fact that the first visit of Israel by Strache and other leading figures in 2010 did not get much approval from the party's base showed that antisemitism is rooted within the whole structure of the party. Strache later wrote a public letter to justify his visit to his own party members. Thereby he also tried to educate them why this step would be (statistically) relevant at the present moment.

In April 2016 Strache and other members of the FPÖ visited Israel and claimed that they had been officially invited by the Likud party. Upon request, leading figures of the Likud clarify that there was no such official invitation. In addition to the view of Israel as a "bastion against Islam", the FPÖ tried to improve its relationship with Israel as part of a strategy to increase its acceptance by other member states of the European Union. Furthermore it was part of a strategy to pave the way for Strache as the next Austrian Chancellor.

From an ideological perspective, the FPÖ is still clearly attached to antisemitism on several levels. Particularly noteworthy is a "völkisch" German Nationalism as one of the ideological core elements of the party. The frame of "the Christian Occident" the FPÖ has adapted is not only directed against Muslims, but functions as a code against Jews at the same time. Less specific but still important is a secondary antisemitism as a mechanism of defense from guilt and remembrance. Also crucial is a structural antisemitism as a personalization and naturalization of social conditions of modernity and its economic structures<sup>51</sup> ("the little people" against "the establishment").

The strengthening of the FPÖ enhanced certain changes of the political landscape on the national level as well. This includes the growing acceptance of the FPÖ as yet another party representing the center of society rather than an extremist party. As a consequence of the current social climate, outspoken relativization and trivialization of the National Socialist past became further normalized within the public discourse. In light of these developments, it is not a coincidence that the strengthening of the FPÖ fueled various incidents of antisemitism and racism before and after the national elections 2017. Furthermore it is noteworthy that the FPÖ was not the only party that was responsible for antisemitic statements and that antisemitic incidents have increased in general once again.

## 2. Reporting on Antisemitism in Austria

Data collection on antisemitism in Austria is scarce. Annual reporting mainly consists of "service-based data", i.e. the documentation and statistics provided either by victim protection organizations, NGOs or the police. A small number of NGOs and political organizations affiliated either with SPÖ or the Green Party collect data on incidents and also monitor antisemitism in the media. Police reports and statistics are compiled for the annual report of the *Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution* ("Verfassungsschutzbericht").

Currently, three institutions collect and publish data on antisemitic and/or racist incidents systematically: the NGOs Forum against Antisemitism (FGA) and Civil Courage and Anti-Racism (ZARA), which monitors antisemitism as a sub-category of racist or (extreme) right-wing incidents. The third institution is the foundation Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance (DÖW), which monitors current activities of the extreme right as well as antisemitism in all its manifestations, including Islamized and left-wing Israel-related antisemitism. The annual reports for 2017 of DÖW and ZARA, as well as the data of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution have not been published yet.

The recent political developments have disturbingly proven to further diminish the scarce resources regarding the documentation of antisemitism in Austria. A prominent example in this respect is the monitoring- and documentation-center *Stoppt die Rechten* ("Stop the Right"), an online project which was funded by the Green Party. After the party failed to pass the 4% threshold necessary to enter the Austrian National Assembly in October 2017 (and subsequently was barred from access to funding), the center had to close down directly after the election. Such rapid political developments are even more worrying when considering the fact that "Stop the Right" has been one of the most important sources regarding the documentation of hate crimes as well as the monitoring of right wing activities.

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<sup>51</sup> For the conceptualization of "structural antisemitism" as abridged and false pseudo-explanation for the capitalist system, see Postone 1986.



As the *Forum against Antisemitism* currently provides the most comprehensive data, our contribution is mainly based on the FGA's annual report. Before going into detail, though, it has to be reminded that all of the mentioned data is "service-based". This means that it is mainly based on the documentation of antisemitic incidents and, as a consequence, is determined by the *access* of victims to respective institutions (NGOs, police, etc.) and by the social *incentives or restraints* to report—a fact, which constitutes a general bias-problem regarding service-based data collection. The actual extent or *prevalence* of antisemitism, as well as the underlying *social-psychological reasons* for antisemitic resentments, could only be analyzed via integrated qualitative-quantitative studies, which are lacking in Austria. Service-based data, however, definitely allows for an estimation of trends; the outcomes for the year 2017 are illustrated in the following.

### 3. Antisemitism in the Year 2017 – Figures and Trends

In the year 2017 the FGA documented 503 antisemitic incidents, which marks an increase when compared to the number of 477 reported cases in the previous year. This trend is not new: As highlighted in last years' contribution (Edthofer / Klammer 2017), the number of reported antisemitic incidents has been constantly rising during the last decade. One major peak could be observed in the wake of the Gaza conflict in summer 2014, when Islamized antisemitism articulated sharply during anti-Israel protests, which were mainly organized by the AKP-affiliated *Union of European Turkish Democrats* (UETD). The current upswing, on the other hand, should be analyzed as quite an "autochthonous" re-articulation of antisemitism and thus as direct socio-political effect of a post-Nazi party (FPÖ) entering the hegemonic political system. This troubling political development is also reflected in the data on antisemitism.

The FGA points to a general trend of increasing antisemitism, with the number of reported incidents doubling within the past three years. The report points out in detail 28 cases of verbal abuse and threat, 171 cases of hate speech in the internet and social media, 203 antisemitic letters and calls, 51 acts of vandalism, 5 physical assaults and 45 cases categorized as "other" forms of antisemitism. In comparison to the year 2016, the categories "vandalism" and physical assaults decreased moderately, while all other categories increased. As the police statistics compiled by the *Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution* are still pending, the FGA's report for the year 2017 does not differentiate between antisemitic incidents connected to different political-ideological spectra or articulated within certain socio-politically defined groups, such as people of Muslim background. This points to a second problem regarding service-based data collection: the lack of documentation tools granting a minimum of theoretical understanding regarding the *varying articulations* of modern antisemitism. As an example: in the year 2016 almost two thirds (59%) of the reported incidents were documented as not politically or ideologically labeled, which is to be doubted. Regarding the approximately 40% of the cases that could be labeled as such, about 68% were associated with the right and extreme right, 22% occurred within the context of Islamic beliefs, and 10% were classified as Israel-related, Left-wing antisemitism (Edthofer / Klammer 2017: 65). In this respect, the FGA positively highlights the fact that since the year 2016 the annual report of the *Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution* differentiates more accurately between right- and extreme right-wing antisemitism, antisemitism within the radical anti-Zionist left and Islamized antisemitism.

Lastly, the report points out that the form of antisemitic incidents has changed in an alarming manner, which is also to be seen against the backdrop of the current political

changes. Already in 2016, the FGA noted a sharp increase of “direct” antisemitic incidents, such as harassment and physical assaults at the work place, in schools and in public space. Compared to “indirect” violence, f.i. via anonymous postings e-mails or letters, such incidents became more frequent in the last years. This trend has to be understood as an indicator that the level of inhibition regarding the open articulation of antisemitism has decreased quite dramatically. The major incidents pointing to such a normalization of antisemitic stereotyping and hate speech are illustrated in the following.

#### *Normalisation of Hate Speech and “Elite-Antisemitism” as Political Tools in the Wake of the General Elections*

In the year 2017 the most significant rise of antisemitic incidents occurred within the wake of the general elections. This is not surprising, as antisemitic statements formed an integral part of the political discourse during the pre-election phase. The conservative candidate Sebastian Kurz publicly announced that a clear stance against antisemitism would be a *precondition* for a coalition with any party; at the same time the ÖVP prepared for a coalition with FPÖ and indeed did not meet the self-defined political standards.

In this respect it is noteworthy that the FPÖ was not the only political party linked to antisemitic incidents during the election campaign and that the articulated antisemitism either showed a new and worryingly blatant level of *open anti-Jewish hate speech*, or referenced to classical *conspiracy-theoretical antisemitic tropes* such as bringing forward a hidden and disintegrating political agenda, and being given too much power and political influence.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Data collected in the year 2017 indicates that the struggle against antisemitism faces new challenges. The ongoing normalization of right-wing and extreme right-wing political circles leads to a more hostile climate towards social and racial minorities. Despite a certain taboo status regarding antisemitic statements, especially in the public sphere, this hostility increasingly affects Jewish communities.

The most worrying development is the grade of disinhibition (“Enthemmung”) regarding *open anti-Jewish hate speech*, and the increasing references to *conspiracy-theoretical antisemitic tropes* in public and political discourse. The use of antisemitic code words and open stereotypes as “discursive tools” in political debates is indeed an accelerating phenomenon, as openly antisemitic hate speech has been partly covered up via “communication latency” for two decades. However, linguist Ruth Wodak points to the historic continuities of narratives regarding a sinister “Jewish Other” secretly supporting the political establishment that actually works *against* the Austrian people. In this respect, new discursive entanglements of antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism can be observed: In light of the growing threat of Islamist terror in Europe, the structurally antisemitic “Anti-Establishment-Frame” increasingly intermingles with an anti-Muslim “Islamization-Frame” by strengthening the narrative that Europe would face an existential threat by Muslim immigrants. With regard to post-factual “Politics of Fear” (Wodak 2015), this rather new discursive intersection can be described as follows: “Traacherous elites are not protecting ‘us’ from the Muslim (terror-) threat”. As such, it constitutes an important ideological underpinning regarding the rise of right-wing populism and the extreme right, not only in Austria, but all over Europe. A stronger analytical focus on such discursive intersections would allow for a more comprehensive analysis and challenge such political developments.

With regard to antisemitism, however, it would be misleading to analyze the current political developments solely as “discursive effects” of the normalization of antisemitic hate speech and violence within public discourse. On the contrary, they should be analyzed as an outburst of a psycho-social “desire”, which is deeply ingrained in Austrian society as a cultural code and is now articulated more openly, as there seems to be “no more need to hide”. Consequently, the logics of antisemitism as “negative leitmotif of modernity” (Salzborn 2010) by ascribing hyper-power to a group of sinister “puppet masters” controlling the political and economic developments, is to be tackled. As such analytical perspectives are currently lacking in Austria, in-depth studies that integrate an analysis of the *prevalence* and the *socio-psychological dimension* of antisemitism are needed.

*The major incidents in Austria during 2017 compiled by the FGA, as well as citations of the quoted literature in this report, will appear in full on the Kantor Center website.*

### **Belgium / Joël Kotek**

Antisemitic attitudes dropped significantly during 2017. In 2017, 34 antisemitic reports were registered in Belgium. These figures are far below average (66 incidents) for the last 12 years, which does not take into account the particular data of the "record" years (2009 and 2014). Since 2012, we also note a correlation between antisemitic incidents in Belgium and events directly involving Jews in Europe (especially in France), such as the Toulouse bombings (2012) and the controversies around the "Soral Dieudonné galaxy".

	201	201	201
	5	6	7
Extreme violence	0	0	0
Violence with physical assault	3	7	1
Threats (verbal insults, letters, etc.)	11	2	10
Vandalism of Jewish property, including cocktail molotov	3	7	2
Abusive behavior in public sphere, including articles, cartoon in press or web side, graffiti	24	48	13
Abusive behavior in private sphere, including reader mails, email or comments in website	29		8
Total	70	64	

According to the figures provided, the number of antisemitic acts recorded in Belgium has decreased in 2017. They went from 64 in 2016 to 35 in 2017. Already in 2016, a decrease in the number of acts antisemitism has been observed. With 35 incidents, the year 2017 is well below the average (64 incidents) of the twelve past years (which does not take into account the particular data of the "record" years (2009 and 2014)). We count in 2017, 16 acts that directly targeted individuals (12) or private property (4). These figures confirm the decrease observed in 2016 (20 incidents). In 2017, the majority (57%) of antisemitic incidents (20) were directly motivated by anti-Jewish racism or discrimination against Jews. 29 incidents (83%) were motivated by Nazi ideology like "Hitler did not finish his work." In 2017, 1 in 10 cases are directly linked / motivated by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (in 2016, 1 case out of 3). Other antisemitic manifestations are related to an alleged political and media dominance (1 case) of Jews or the clichés of Jews and money (1 case). 1 case was of

Islamist inspiration. This decrease is due in particular to the firm position of the Government in the fight against antisemitism, its policy of zero tolerance, not to mention of course the enhanced protection Jewish sites by the police and the army. We welcome and hope that the devices current will be well maintained. This positive development should certainly reassure us, but should not lead us to decrease our vigilance.

The Jewish community of Belgium must continue its path with serenity and continue to flourish fully in its diversity. Our community must remain open because it is fully part of the social fabric of Belgium. It is therefore necessary to further strengthen the relations that the Jewish community has with all components of Belgian society.

## **Czech Republic / Zbynek Tarant**

### **About This Report**

This report is an overview, written originally at the request of the Kantor Center, Tel Aviv University. The author represents a secular, non-Jewish, state-funded academic institution (Department of Middle-Eastern Studies, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Czech Republic). The report is based on author's own observation and research as well as on secondary sources, with references listed in the footnotes. The core of this report was written before the Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as an Israeli capital in November 2017.

While there have been certain antisemitic incidents in 2017, the Czech Republic can be still regarded a very safe country for the Jews. Rates of antisemitism in the general society seem much lower than elsewhere in the region and are better than in most Western European countries as well. There are some unfortunate phenomena that could pose a threat for the future, such as affinity of a small group of political and cultural elites to a conspiracist way of thinking. The affinity of certain political and cultural elites to "alternative facts" lends a significant leverage to the otherwise fringe ideas, making them louder and more visible than they would have deserved. While the society usually reacts with strong rejection to an antisemitic incident, the conspiracists and antisemites manage to slowly push limits of what is considered acceptable.

Islamophobic sentiments, supported by the news coverage of the refugee crisis, allowed far-right, conspiracist, pro-Russian party, SPD (see below), to get hold of important security-related posts in the Czech parliament. Local pockets of latent antisemitism became visible during the Prostějov cemetery dispute. Hate-speech online remains an issue especially due to the growing contribution of pro-Kremlin websites, which have replaced the neo-Nazi websites as the main source of antisemitism online.

There are no accurate data on the size of the domestic Czech Jewish community, but estimates range between 3 and 4 thousands, with only couple of hundreds forming the active core of the community.<sup>52</sup> Czech Jewish communities can be usually found only in larger cities, with Prague being possibly the only Czech city, where the Jewish community might be having somewhat sustainable demographic profile.

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52 Sergio Della Pergola estimated the Czech Jewish community to about 3900. DellaPergola, Sergio: World Jewish Population. *Berman Jewish DataBank* 2013. Appendix A. Accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.jewishdatabank.org/studies/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=3113> [cit. 27-1-2018].

Despite several verbal incidents and increased activity of the extremist movements within the electronic domain, the Czech Republic remains a safe country for the Jews.

The parliamentary elections in October 2017 have shuffled the cards on the Czech political scene in a significant way. The movement Association of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO) led by the “Czech Berlusconi” Andrej Babiš, received almost 30 % of valid votes and in a situation, in which other democratic parties refuse to form coalition with it, it attempts to build its parliament majority by using the support from the far-left Communist party and the far-right Direct Democracy Party (Strana přímé demokracie, SPD). As government negotiations are under way at the time of writing this report, it is difficult to predict, how will the new political situation influence the discourse on Jews or antisemitism.

For the first time in the post-communist history, a right-wing populist party, Strana přímé demokracie (SPD) has gained more than 10 percent in the elections. While the party is not openly antisemitic, some of its members are heavily influenced by conspiracy theories, such as „Chemtrails“, „Illuminati“, „New World Order“ or “vaccination conspiracy“.<sup>53</sup> According to multiple testimonies, on November 10, 2017, SPD member, MP Jaroslav Staník, voiced a desire to „*gas the gays, Jews and Romanies right after birth*“. The party never apologized for these remarks, which the MP himself has denied.<sup>54</sup> The fact that representatives of such a party, which openly promotes pro-Kremlin ideas and might be having contacts to Russian secret services, have been elected to oversee the Security Department of the Czech parliament (a body that oversees the national secret services) is observed with serious concerns in the intelligence community. What elevated the party into the Parliament was its islamophobia, not antisemitism. The leader of the party, Tomio Okamura may not be antisemite himself, but as the abovementioned incident shows, some of the party’s MPs may well be. In the end, it was islamophobia that led to election of antisemites into the Parliament. This boomerang effect is yet another reason for the Jewish organizations not take the threats of islamophobia lightly. It is also a warning for some of the more radical Jewish activists who might be tempted to toy with islamophobia themselves.

### **Antisemitic Literature**

There have been about half a dozen book titles published by the neo-Nazi and far-right publishers in the Czech Republic in 2017, thus confirming the certain decrease after the record-breaking year of 2015, when 15 such books were published.<sup>55</sup> This decrease is possibly caused by the 2015 police crackdown on one of the most active publishers at the time, Adam Benjamin Bartoš, also known as a leader of the National Democracy political

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53 Zelenka, Jakub: Podívali jsme se pod ruce Okamurových poslanců. Jejich stopa je dlouhá. A Rusko je opravdový Přítel. *Aktualne.cz* 30.10.2017, available at: <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/chteji-z-eu-i-nato-a-fandi-putinovi-seznamte-se-s-okamurovym/r~e979ebb8bb2111e7811f002590604f2e/> [cit. 27-1-2018].

54 'Střílet po narození.' Tajemník SPD urážel ve sněmovně gaye, Židy a Romy, tvrdí Marksová a Černocho. *iRozhlas*. 10 November 2017, available at: [https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/strilet-po-narozeni-tajemnik-spd-urazel-ve-snemovne-gaye-zidy-a-romy-tvrdi\\_1711101320\\_kro](https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/strilet-po-narozeni-tajemnik-spd-urazel-ve-snemovne-gaye-zidy-a-romy-tvrdi_1711101320_kro) [cit. 27-1-2018].

55 Based on author’s own bibliographic survey.

party. Bartoš is currently facing trial in multiple charges, including incitement to violence, genocide denial and manifestation of support of movements aimed to curb human rights.<sup>56</sup>

However, it should be noted that in the recent years some mainstream publishers, notably *Naše Vojsko* (Our Military) have been publishing books of the convicted Holocaust denier David Irving. When the copyright of *Mein Kampf* has expired in 2016, *Naše vojsko* published the book including the swastikas on its cover and promoted it actively on its websites. These incidents are to be considered a significant editorial failures on the part of the publishers, especially of *Naše Vojsko*, which was originally established in the late 1940s by the former Czechoslovak anti-Fascist resistance fighters and should thus, with respect to such heritage, promote certain national and moral values. It should be noted, though, that with more than 17 thousand book titles published in the Czech language every year,<sup>57</sup> this one dozen of antisemitic books actually represents a tiny drop in the ocean of the Czech book market.

### Antisemitism Online

According to my analysis, there were about 112 antisemitic websites in the Czech language in 2017, ranging from large web-portals to small blogs. This number would mean a certain increase in comparison to 2016, when about 107 such websites were found. These numbers should be regarded as estimates due to the subjective nature of evaluation and the possibility of some smaller, less visible websites having escaped our attention. The year 2017 has confirmed the continuing transformation of the Czech antisemitic scene. While most of the antisemitic content was being published by neo-Nazi and far-right websites ten years ago, the most active source of antisemitism today are the so-called conspiracist or “fake-news” websites.

Unlike the neo-Nazi and far-right antisemitic websites of the past, the conspiracist and fake-news websites are capable to target much wider audience of eurosceptics and anti-Globalists, including those, who would reject political extremism or antisemitism under normal circumstances. These websites usually acquire a role of fake opposition by portraying themselves as sources of “alternative” information. With names like “Czech Free Press”,<sup>58</sup> “Outsidermedia”,<sup>59</sup> “Free Press”,<sup>60</sup> “Curious Fellow”,<sup>61</sup> “New World Order Opposition”,<sup>62</sup> or “Against The Current”,<sup>63</sup> they claim to provide “different” information for those, who seek “alternate” life style. Many of them combine the antisemitic conspiracy theories with the mainstream commercial esoterica – alternative medicine, mysteries, U.F.O.s, perpetum mobile, parapsychology, talismans, amulets, oriental medicine etc.

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56 Horák, Jan: Antisemita Bartoš popíral holocaust. Je to nejrozsáhlejší kauza, říká žalobkyně. *Lidové noviny*. 10 April 2017, available at: [https://www.lidovky.cz/bartos-jde-k-soudu-za-popirani-holocaustu-fga-zpravy-domov.aspx?c=A170406\\_120709\\_ln\\_domov\\_jho](https://www.lidovky.cz/bartos-jde-k-soudu-za-popirani-holocaustu-fga-zpravy-domov.aspx?c=A170406_120709_ln_domov_jho) [cit. 27-1-2018].

57 V Česku loni vyšlo 17.815 knih, z toho 5559 titulů beletrie. *Czech Press Agency* 5 May 2017, available at: <http://www.ceskenoviny.cz/zpravy/v-cesku-loni-vyslo-17-815-knih-z-toho-5559-titulů-beletrie/1481530> [cit. 27-1-2018].

58 <http://www.czechfreepress.cz> [verified on 3 December 2015].

59 <http://outsidermedia.cz> [verified on 3 December 2015].

60 <http://svobodnenoviny.eu> [verified on 3 December 2015].

61 <http://www.zvedavec.org> [verified on 3 December 2015].

62 <http://www.nwoo.org> [verified on 3 December 2015].

63 <http://protiproud.parlamentnilisty.cz> [verified on 3 December 2015].

While the fake-news phenomenon is usually being linked with the Russian-Ukrainian war, many of these websites are actually far older. For example, *The Curious Fellow*<sup>64</sup> or the conspiracist esoterica website *Fate*<sup>65</sup> have existed at least since 1999 – years before Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. Similarly, websites like *Czech Free Press*<sup>66</sup> or *New World Order Opposition*<sup>67</sup> have a history reaching years before the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014. It is true, however, that the activity of conspiracist and “fake-news” scene has grown significantly since 2014. New websites popped up, such as *Aeronet*,<sup>68</sup> *AC24*,<sup>69</sup> *OutsiderMedia*,<sup>70</sup> *Orgo-net*,<sup>71</sup> *Svobodné Noviny*,<sup>72</sup> *Leva-Net*,<sup>73</sup> *Free Transmitter*<sup>74</sup> etc.

The degree of antisemitism on these websites is somewhat diverse. It is true that not all of the conspiracist, fake-news and pro-Kremlin websites must be antisemitic, but almost all antisemitic websites are also pro-Kremlin. Some, such as AC24 seems to be carefully avoiding Jewish issues and antisemitic hate-speech appears there only in the discussion boards below the articles. On the other hand, websites, such as *Aeronet*, *LevaNet*, *New World Order Opposition*, *Czech Free Press*, *OutsiderMedia* or *Free Transmitter* have manifested their antisemitism openly.

The certain decline of the neo-Nazi activities online brought another phenomenon and that is the fact that almost two-thirds of the Czech antisemitic websites today are being run (hosted) from within the Czech Republic and thus within reach of the Czech jurisdiction. In the past, the neo-Nazis tended to use American hosting services in order to avoid the Czech jurisdiction, but the newly established conspiracist websites use different methods. They either manifest their confidence by operating freely with names and addresses visible in the public databases (Who.is, CZ.NIC), or use fake names of persons and organizations as well as hiding their true locations via multiple proxies to conceal their true identity.

Large hub of antisemitic websites in 2016 and 2017 was the website *Parliamentary papers*.<sup>75</sup> This website, which has currently more readers than some of the large mainstream medial houses,<sup>76</sup> creates a link between the conspiracist scene and the wider public discourse. Not only that it acts as an echo chamber for the more explicit and radical fake-news websites, it also lent its sub-domains to some of these websites, like the Counter Current (<http://protiproud.parlamentnilisty.cz>) or Freeglobe (<http://freeglobe.parlamentnilisty.cz>). The Parliamentary papers also use their “officially” sounding name to speak to the Russian audience as if they were “official” mouthpiece of the Czech parliament, thus providing content for the purposes of Russian propaganda. The

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64 *Zvědavec*, available at: <http://www.zvedavec.org/index.htm> [cit. 27-1-2018].

65 *Osud.cz*, available at: <http://www.osud.cz/> [cit. 27-1-2018].

66 *Czech Free Press*, available at: <http://www.czechfreepress.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

67 *New World Order Opposition*, available at: [www.nwoo.org](http://www.nwoo.org) [cit. 27-1-2018].

68 *Aeronet*, available at: <http://aeronet.cz/news/> [cit. 27-1-2018].

69 *AC24.cz*, available at: <http://ac24.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

70 *OutsiderMedia*, available at: <http://outsidermedia.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

71 *OrgoNet*, available at: <http://orgo-net.blogspot.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

72 *Svobodné noviny*, available at: <http://svobodnenoviny.eu> [cit. 27-1-2018].

73 *Levanet*, available at: <http://leva-net.webnode.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

74 *Svobodný vysílač*, available at: <http://www.svobodny-vysilac.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

75 *Parlamentní listy*, available at: <http://parlamentnilisty.cz> [cit. 27-1-2018].

76 According to NetMonitor statistics, *Parlamentní listy*, have almost the same amount of visitors as some of the large news sites, such as *Lidovky.cz* or *iHned.cz*. Source: Statistika NetMonitor – Přehled českého internetu: Podrobná statistika, Den 16.7.2017. *Kurzy.cz*, available at: <http://www.kurzy.cz/~nr/tema/netmonitor/?sf=ru>

website is owned by the Our Media company, majority owner of which is the Senator Ivo and gambling tycoon Ivo Valenta.

It is not the only case of important public personality actively providing stage for promotion of antisemitism. Another case would be Petr Hájek, the former political advisor of the Czech President Václav Klaus. Hájek openly manifested his beliefs in 9/11 conspiracy theories and who currently runs the antisemitic website *Counter Current* (Protiproud). Another antisemitic website, *The New Republic* (Nová Republika), is run by a former social democratic health minister Ivan David. Antisemitic content on Facebook is being commonly shared by the Senator Jaroslav Doubrava. Pro-Kremlin antisemitic conspiracy theories were promoted by the Senator, former MP and former Highest Court judge, Jaroslav Vyvadil. After the 2017 elections, additional about one dozen MPs influenced by conspiracist thought were elected to the Parliament for the Direct Democracy Party. Such affinity of certain political elites to conspiracism and antisemitism could become a dangerous trend for the future.

### **2016/2017 – Series of antisemitic manifestations, harassment and vandalism in response to a Jewish cemetery renewal project.**

Since about 2013, there was an initiative to rehabilitate physically and morally the site of a destroyed Jewish cemetery in the Moravian city of Prostějov. The initiative was originally loosely coordinated with the Jewish Community in Prague, but later taken over by the Jewish foundation Kolel Damesek Eliezer, founded by rabbi Louis Kestenbaum and represented in Czechia by Tomáš Jelínek. A replica of the destroyed tombstone of Rabbi Tzvi Yehoshua Horowitz, former Chief Rabbi of Prostějov, was ceremonially dedicated at the site in 2013 with participation of orthodox rabbis from the United States and Prostějov Mayor.

Despite the positive beginning of the whole project, with the locals actively cooperating in search for the stolen tombstones (having often found that previous house owner used them as paving), a petition was started in 2016, asking the City Hall to stop the entire project. Authors of the petition spread manipulative information about the nature of the project, threatening that “the Jews” plan to wall off an entire square. The real background and possible motives of the petitioners remains unknown, although one of them expressed beliefs that are in line with the Christian replacement theology in an e-mail correspondence with the Municipality. The Municipality in Prostějov also received few antisemitic letters and leaflets accusing the municipality staff of “*allowing a Zionist conspiracy to take place*”. Local newspaper Prostějovský večerník controlled by a member of municipal coalition launched a campaign in which they depicted the case – originally a normal civic dispute on how should be a public space used – as a conflict between the Czech nation and the global Jewry. The Municipality itself handled the case in a somewhat insensitive way as if it was a sort of annoyance, accusing the Kolel Damesek Eliezer foundation of harming the good image of Prostějov. The whole case culminated in In April 2017, the memorial tombstone of Rabbi Tzvi Yehoshua Horowitz was damaged. Vandalism with antisemitic motives is suspected, but there is not enough evidence to identify the exact cause of the damage.

There could be legitimate discussion, whether the Kolel Damesek Eliezer foundation could have approached and handled the issue more sensitively. However, not even a significant PR mistake would have justified some the hostile responses, we have observed. Despite the



generally low levels of antisemitism in the country, one has to be careful about local cultural context as there are local niches of communities where antisemitic beliefs persist.

### **Suggestions to the Jewish Communities:**

- Maintain the current strategy of “low media profile”. Czechs tend to demand homogeneity. Even positive reports in which Jews “stick-out” or can be identifiable as “Others” could still turn into negative reactions in some areas.
- Do not underestimate the local cultural context. Note that especially some areas of Moravia could be culturally closer to Poland or Slovakia, rather than Bohemia, when it comes to religious values etc. Other regions, like North Bohemia, are struck by social issues and concentration of low-educated work-force. In a country that is generally not considered antisemitic, there still could be local, isolated “pockets” of communities that hold antisemitic convictions.
- Take additional care when reacting to reports of antisemitic incidents. Verify the veracity of the reports from independent sources and use your right to ask the media to give you time for thorough investigation. Certain foreign propaganda outlets, namely in Russia and Ukraine, have been recently utilizing false reports of antisemitism for justification of aggressive policies, using Jews as “scapegoats” or “collateral victims”. The Czech police is currently investigating at least one attempt to perpetrate a false-flag terrorist attack<sup>77</sup> and there is another similar case from Poland.<sup>78</sup> It is possible that such attacks or provocations could target the Jews at some point.
- Avoid being connected with Islamophobic movements and their rhetoric, even if it these movements manifest their support to the State of Israel. Avoid contacts with these movements, which might be abusing such contacts with the Jewish community for legitimization of their agenda.
- Avoid using Islamophobic rhetoric yourself. Remember that Israel is not in a war with Islam as such. The State of Israel has signed peace agreements, built strategic alliances or at least pragmatic relations with multiple Muslim and Arab countries. Islamophobic rhetoric opens door for movements and ideologies that could be also antisemitic and thus dangerous for security of the Jewish communities in the long term. Even if such movement or its leaders themselves are not explicitly antisemitic, its middle-rank members and possible MPs could well be.
- Keep existing safety precautions, but improve security’s behavior. While the Czech Republic ranks among the top most secure and peaceful countries in the world, possible attackers might attempt to attack the local community as a “substitute target”. This in itself is a reason to keep the current precautions in place. In the same time, make sure that the security officers behave in a friendly and welcoming manner to legitimate visitors and tourists.

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77 The Czech police has charged the 70-years old perpetrator, who cut down trees to railway track with intent to cause a train accident. The man, who is a supporter of the right-wing populist Freedom and Democracy Party, left notes written in poor Arabic at the crime-scene in order to create a notion that the attack was committed by the ISIS. See: Muž způsobil srážku vlaku se stromy, aby se Češi báli muslimů. *Aktuálně.cz* 28.2.2018, available at: <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/muz-zpusobil-srazku-vlak-u-se-stromy-aby-se-cesi-bali-muslimu/r~b1d2b6601c5e11e8bacfac1f6b220ee8/>

78 Members of the Polish pro-Kremlin far-right movement Falanga have thrown fire-bombs at the Hungarian cultural center in Uzhorod, Subcarpathia, with the intent to instigate ethnic tensions between Ukrainians and Hungarians. Poles suspected of arson attack on Hungarian centre in Ukraine, *Radio Poland* 27.2.2018, available at: <http://thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/351494,Poles-suspected-of-arson-attack-on-Hungarian-centre-in-Ukraine>.

## **The Netherlands / Hana Ludin**

### **Rise in Antisemitism on Internet & Social Media and in Politics**

The number of incidents involving antisemitic vandalism recorded last year in The Netherlands increased by 40 percent, to a 10-year high of 28 cases. The increase in vandalism was part of a small overall rise in antisemitic incidents in 2017 over 2016. CIDI recorded 113 incidents in 2017 compared to 109 in 2016. Important are the many incidents in the political arena and the growing role of websites and social media.

As of 1983 CIDI, the Centre Information and Documentation Israel, has been publishing the yearly report on antisemitic incidents in the Netherlands.

The growing role and importance of internet and social media as a source of information and opinions is still underestimated. Holocaust denial, antisemitic complot theories and the like thrive on these platforms with constantly growing audiences, causing an increase in antisemitic verbal and physical assaults in the "real world". The Dutch Internet-discrimination Watchdog MiND cooperates with CIDI to eliminate antisemitism on internet and social media. In 2017 CIDI addressed - for the first time - internet incidents in this monitor. In the domain "public space" incidents related to politics were grouped, showing a growing trend.

In 2017 CIDI filed 8 charges against websites and actors for publishing antisemitic content on social media platforms. The international, borderless character of the Internet and the big differences in legislation among countries complicate the ability to act against offenders. Websites hosted in the US, for example, cannot be removed, falling under the "freedom of speech" right.

### **Methodology**

In order to determine whether an incident is antisemitic we use the Working Definition of antisemitism.<sup>3</sup> In short, antisemitism is defined as "Treating Jews -individually or as a group - differently than other individuals or groups, and especially in a way which is hostile or violent and is founded in prejudice."

Antisemitic incidents are acts that are motivated by negative emotions toward Jews and committed with the intent of targeting the (assumed) Jewish identity of the victim.

Incidents concerning criticism about Israel are not registered as antisemitic, unless something offensive is said about Jews or about the Israelis as a population.

CIDI considers a related series of crimes against one individual as a single incident; equally, a series of incidents perpetrated against various individuals by a single perpetrator is, again, counted as one single incident.

### **The Findings**

CIDI registered 24 Internet incidents in 2017; In the category "Politics", another 6 Internet incidents are noteworthy. As CIDI counts each incident once and because we see a rapid growth in incidents in local and central politics, we have categorized those incidents under

"Politics". They form 6/8 of all incidents in this category, another illustration of the growing importance of websites and social media in the public debate. As explained, this is the first year we include Internet Incidents in the monitor. Only reported incidents which were validated against our criteria and the work definition (see methodology) are included here. The real volume of antisemitic abuse in websites and on social media is much bigger. The Dutch Internet anti-discrimination watchdog MiND registered 236 reports on antisemitism in 2017, 17% of the total reports on discrimination. A very high percentage, considering that only 0.3% of the Dutch population is Jewish. Again, this is the top of the iceberg, and an important point of concern.

In 2017 CIDI registered a total of 113 antisemitic incidents other than on the Internet. In 2016 we registered 109 incidents.

Real life incidents occurring between people who do not know each other: physical and verbal assault, vandalism fall in this domain<sup>4</sup>. 4 physical assault incidents were registered in 2017. The incidents were severe, for example the attack on two Israeli orthodox tourists. They were recognizable by their clothes, and witnesses testified about the antisemitic character of the attack. (in 2016 we counted 3 such incidents). 28 incidents of vandalism were reported this year, the highest number since 2007. 25% percent of the instances were aimed specifically against a Jewish target (example, a kosher restaurant, a religious center), the other incidents concern anti-Jewish content in public spaces. In 2016 we registered 21 vandalism incidents. CIDI recorded 18 scolding incidents, a decline compared to 25 incidents in 2016.

In the domain "Real life" we registered in 2017 a total of 57 incidents, the same number as in 2016.

In the direct sphere (neighbors, friends, colleagues, schoolmates, et cetera. - people who know each other) we recorded 24 incidents, an increase compared to the 21 reported incidents in 2016. Additionally, 14 direct addressed written antisemitic assaults. An increase in comparison to the 11 incidents reported in

## **Poland / Rafal Pankowski**

### **Political background**

The current Polish government was formed solely by the nationalist populist party 'Law and Justice', which got 40 percent of the vote during the last parliamentary elections in 2015. The other parties that entered the Parliament in 2015 are the previously ruling central right party Citizens' Platform (24 percent of the vote), a party led by the former rock musician Pawel Kukiz (9 percent), centrist liberal party 'Nowoczesna' (Modern; 7 percent) and PSL (Polish Peasant Party; 5 percent). The post-communist Democratic Left collapsed and did not make it into the Parliament, though it was in rule in 1993-97 and 2001-2005. The 'Law and Justice' has been usually called a Catholic and Eurosceptic party. It is not an ideologically antisemitic party. However there are several individuals who have made antisemitic statements and there was no strong and clear condemnation of antisemitism from the party leadership in 2017. The Kukiz movement which also entered the Parliament can be defined as strongly xenophobic and anti-migrant, it is composed of several groups, including

the far right nationalist Endecja (a radical right group seeking inspiration in the far right and antisemitic movement of interwar years). The Kukiz movement tried to establish itself as a main opposition to the current government but supported 'Law and Justice' on many key issues.

### **Antisemitism in 2017 (An Overview)**

Statistical data of hate crimes is collected by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the General Police Headquarters and the Prosecutor's Office.

According to a report of the National Public Prosecutor's Office, which is available online, in the first half of 2017<sup>79</sup> there were 947 legal proceedings<sup>80</sup>, related to racist, antisemitic or xenophobic incidents (for comparison: in the first half of 2016 – 863 proceedings, in the first half of 2015 – 848). The data indicate an overall increase of the number of all hate crimes.<sup>81</sup> There was a critical article in one of Poland's leading newspapers, 'Gazeta Wyborcza' which argued that the authorities had overlooked hate crime cases<sup>82</sup> and charges had been filed in only 208 cases in the first half of 2017.<sup>83</sup>

The aforementioned report states that the largest number of all proceedings dealt with 'hate speech on the internet' (39.5 percent, 374 cases) followed by 'newspaper and book publications' (16 percent, 76 cases), 'violence against another person' (13.7%, 130 cases), 'threatening another person' (13.4 percent 137 cases), 'graffiti, inscriptions' (8.2 percent, 78 cases), 'street manifestations, gatherings' (3 percent, 28 cases), 'football violence' (4 cases) and 'others' (190 cases).

Although the highest number of proceedings in 2017 were concerned with hatred on the internet, there was both a slight decrease of hate speech on the internet in relation to other crimes and an increase of 'violence against another person' and 'threatening another person'.

In the first half of 2017, there were 74 legal proceedings of antisemitic cases, which constituted 7.8 percent of all proceedings (in the first half of 2016 there were 102 proceedings, or 11.8 percent; in the first half of 2015 – 142 proceedings, or 16.7 percent).<sup>84</sup> The report indicates a slight decrease in proceedings of antisemitic (and anti-Roma) cases in the context of cases concerning other groups. Thus the report points to a substantial increase in hate crimes against Ukrainians since 2016 (according to some estimates there are one million Ukrainians in Poland).<sup>85</sup> The attitude towards Ukrainians reflects a broader hostile attitude towards migrants and refugees, and a climate of a social acceptance of xenophobia.

The above-mentioned data might show a trend. On the other hand, it should also be taken

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<sup>79</sup>The data for the second half of 2017 are not available online yet.

<sup>80</sup>This number includes the legal proceedings initiated in 2017 and in previous years, which were still ongoing in 2017.

<sup>81</sup>The data concern all hate crimes including antisemitic incidents.

<sup>82</sup><http://wyborcza.pl/7,75398,22861475,coraz-wiecej-przestepstw-z-nienawisci-prokuratura-krajowa-opublikowala.html> (retrieved on 3 January 2018).

<sup>83</sup><https://pk.gov.pl/sprawozdania-i-statystyki/> (retrieved on 3 January 2018);

<http://wyborcza.pl/7,75398,22861475,coraz-wiecej-przestepstw-z-nienawisci-prokuratura-krajowa-opublikowala.html> (retrieved on 3 January 2018).

<sup>84</sup>Ibidem.

<sup>85</sup>Ibidem; The number of Ukrainians in Poland is growing, as many have decided to move to Poland, escaping economic and political instability in their country and armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine.

into account that it is difficult to assess antisemitism statistically and rely on the statistical data, since not all antisemitic offences are reported to the police or prosecutor's office or become public.

Non-governmental organisations such as the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association also regularly collect and report hate crime data, including antisemitic incidents, among others, to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The compiled data is available online (<http://hatecrime.osce.org>).<sup>86</sup>

The Association has regularly collected and described antisemitic incidents in its 'Brown Book' project since the mid-1990s. The project is based on media monitoring and local correspondents' information. The aim of the project is to raise awareness of the authorities, society and the media.

There has been recently an increase in incidents motivated by hatred, including antisemitism to be included into the 'Brown Book'.<sup>87</sup> The most illustrative antisemitic incidents collected and described in the 'Brown Book' by the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association in 2017 can be grouped as follows (22 cases):

- Antisemitism on the Internet (six cases)
- Public statements by public figures (e.g. politicians, journalists, clergymen) (five cases)
- Street demonstrations with xenophobic and antisemitic messages, e.g. by NOP (National Rebirth of Poland), ONR (National Radical Camp) and other radical nationalist organisations (four cases)
- Racist and antisemitic graffiti (three cases)
- Desecrations of Jewish monuments (cemeteries, Holocaust memorials, former synagogues) (three cases)
- Incidents in stadia/football (one case)

As regards the form/nature of the antisemitism, the incidents collected and described by the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association in 2017 can be grouped as follows:

- Traditional antisemitism/racist hatred/xenophobic (Jews are considered as something strange/foreign/non-Polish/non-Slavic) (eight cases)
- Myth of Jewish conspiracy including the myth of „Judeo-communism” (six cases)
- Anti-Zionism (five cases)
- Holocaust trivialization, distortion (five cases)

As the data collected in the 'Brown Book' shows, one case can often represent more than one form of antisemitism. Sometimes it is also accompanied by other forms of hatred, towards other minorities and refugees. The situation has deteriorated in the current political climate.

In 2017, there were several public statements containing antisemitic messages, by well-known mainstream personalities, including MPs.

Public statements in the majority of reported cases concerned the allegedly Jewish origin of

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<sup>86</sup> The data for 2017 is not available online yet (retrieved on 3 January 2018). The ODIHR's annual reports largely consist of the data submitted by the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association.

<sup>87</sup> The 'Brown Book' 2017 is still under preparation.

political opponents and promoted the myth of Jewish conspiracy.

Thus, in June 2017, 'Law and Justice' MP from Kalisz Jan Mosiński referred to the allegedly Jewish origin of political opponents. Mosiński had been already known for xenophobic and antisemitic statements in the past. In July 2017, the former Democratic Left presidential candidate and current supporter of the 'Law and Justice' government Magdalena Ogórek referred to the Jewish origin of her former boss from the Democratic Left Marek Borowski by emphasizing the alleged family name of his ancestors in her hostile Twitter post.

On 2 August 2017, another 'Law and Justice' MP Bohdan Rzońca wrote in his Twitter account: "I am on my vacation reading books. I am thinking why, despite the Holocaust, there are so many Jews among those abortionists."

On 26 December, the director of pro-governmental TVP2 Marcin Wolski implied that anti-government protests were inspired by Jews and that protesters are former security officers.

The notorious former priest and political activist Jacek Międlar continued to disseminate radical antisemitism through social media (e.g. personal blog, youtube, facebook). He continued to attack verbally the MP from the 'Nowoczesna' (Modern Party) Joanna Scheuring-Wielgus, since she had filed a complaint against his xenophobic and racist public statements.

The Catholic-nationalist Radio Maryja continued to broadcast antisemitic utterances of its regular columnist Stanislaw Michalkiewicz.

On the whole, the current political climate became favorable to the appearance of all kinds of conspiracy theories from the "Smolensk air crash case" to the "anti-Soros campaign". Also, the presence of extreme right nationalists in the Parliament legitimised Polish extreme right groups/and individuals, who feel comfortable in the current climate of a social acceptance of xenophobia and antisemitism.

On 26 July 2017, the extreme right groups such as the ONR (National Radical Camp), MW (All-Polish Youth) and RN (Nationalist Movement) demonstrated in front of the European Commission in Warsaw against alleged "foreign interference" of the NGOs sponsored from abroad, namely by George Soros. The campaign was directed against the Batory Foundation, the journal 'Krytyka Polityczna' and the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association. The leader of RN and MP Robert Winnicki (elected on the Kukiz' 15 list) even proposed legislation to prohibit the activity of the above mentioned organisations.

**We note that in 2017 the extreme right from different countries demonstrated a high level of solidarity and support. Polish extreme nationalists were supported by extremists from other countries.**

The march held on the Independence Day holiday (11<sup>th</sup> November) was Europe's largest gathering of fascists and far-right groups this year. Extremists from Sweden, Hungary, Germany, Greece and other countries joined the Polish far right. In total, approximately 60 thousand people came to Warsaw to participate in the march. For the first time the event was organised on a much smaller scale in 2009. Each year it gathered more and more supporters. The organizers are the far right groups, National-Radical Camp (ONR), and the All-Polish Youth (MW). The groups are successors of the inter-war antisemitic nationalist groups. Before the event, Ruch Narodowy, the Polish Nationalist Movement along with the All-Polish Youth organized an international right-wing conference that took place at the Polish parliament. Around 100 people from Hungary, Italy, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia, Belgium,

Holland and Spain attended the conference. American white nationalist Richard Spencer was due to attend the event, but cancelled after the Polish government made it clear that he would not be welcome in the country, a result of protests by the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association and other groups.<sup>88</sup>

The Polish extreme right groups such as NOP (National Rebirth of Poland) are also strongly anti-Zionist. Thus, for example, on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017, the NOP organised a demonstration with antisemitic anti-Israeli posters: "Go back to Israel", "Bombs on Israel", "Hezbollah = NOP", "End to Jewish occupants".

The football pseudo fans were active in promotion of antisemitism and xenophobia too. On August 2, 2017, the players from the Hapoel Petah Tikva soccer team were attacked by the local football hooligans in Sochocin. According to the official football club page, "After most of the players returned to the hotel, a number of masked fascists who are fans of Legia Warsaw burst onto the field and tried to beat a number of crew members who were left behind, two of whom were slightly injured."<sup>89</sup> This was the most extreme football incident in 2017 and the perpetrators were not persecuted. The Polish club Legia Warsaw denied any responsibility for the alleged behaviour of their fans.

In November 2017, an antisemitic banner appeared on a guesthouse in Cesarzowice near Wroclaw, which belonged to Polish far-right activist Piotr Rybak. The banner said: "Entry forbidden to Jews, commies, and all thieves and traitors of Poland". The World Jewish Congress issued a statement criticizing Polish authorities for the lack of immediate reaction. Rybak was already convicted of inciting racial hatred after burning a Jewish effigy at a far-right demonstration last year. He is known for travel to participate in the rally organised by British First.<sup>90</sup>

### **Holocaust distortions**

Outright Holocaust denial is a rather rare phenomenon in Poland. However, it is sometimes prompted by representatives of extreme nationalist groups such as the NOP (National Rebirth of Poland) in its regular publication 'Szczerbiec'. The 'Szczerbiec' magazine became a platform for Holocaust deniers such as David Irving. Thus, for example, in the June issue there was an article by David Irving about „the mysterious death of Himmler”, specially written by Irving for this publication (as it was stressed by the editors). It is possible to buy the magazine at the online e-commerce platform *allegro*, the most popular trade platform in Poland.

The incidents of Holocaust distortion, trivialisation, banalisation and desecration of Holocaust memorials take place more often.

In general, several forms of the Holocaust distortion can be defined in the Polish context:

- Transferring the guilt to Jews themselves and blaming Jews for involvement with the Jewish police and Judenrat, accompanied by radical antisemitism (the main protagonists: lecturers Jerzy Nowak and Ewa Kurek, priest Jacek Międlar)

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/richard-bertrand-spencer-0> (retrieved on 07/01.2017).

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/233362> (retrieved on 07 January, 2018).

<sup>90</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/27/polish-authorities-urged-act-far-right-activist-bans-jews-guesthouse/> (retrieved on 7 January, 2018).

- Instrumentalisation of the Righteous among the Nations (the main protagonists: ultra-Catholic 'Radio Maryja' and also some employees of mainstream institutions such as contemporary IPN (Institute for National Remembrance)
- Denial of Polish involvement in anti-Jewish pogroms such as Jedwabne and Kielce (main protagonists: historian and activist Leszek Żebrowski, Polish-American historian Marek Chodakiewicz; similar remarks were made by education minister Anna Zalewska in 2016 )
- „Genocide of Poles by Jews in 1937” - a new trend. According to this claim, *the first genocide* was committed by the NKVD, the Interior Ministry of the Soviet Union, and there were many Jews in the NKVD
- Claim promoted by some publicists that Poland should have been on the German side during World war II and against the Soviet Union/communists (the main protagonists: magazine 'Do Rzeczy' and publicist Rafal Ziemkiewicz)
- Whitewashing the antisemitism of anticommunist soldiers (*żołnierzy wyklęci*) who were active against Soviet Union between 1944 and 1947 (Museum of Żołnierzy Wyklęci, more mainstream phenomenon)
- Desecration of Holocaust monuments and memorials

All kinds of Holocaust distortion and trivialisation mentioned above were present in the Polish public discourse in 2017. These are some of the most characteristic examples.

On 7 June 2017, Fundacja Reduta Dobrego Imienia - Polska Liga Przeciw Zniesławieniom (the Polish League Against Defamation) sent an official statement to the University of Ottawa and other institutions in the United States and Europe in order to discredit the work and reputation of the Holocaust historian Dr. Jan Grabowski. Grabowski who is the author of numerous books and publications, including "Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland" (2013) where he wrote about violence perpetrated by Poles against Jews, was accused of "defaming of Polish nation". The letter was signed by scholars, mostly representing engineering and science university departments, but not Holocaust history. Jan Grabowski along with Jan Tomasz Gross is the most hated in the right-wing circles Holocaust scholar who writes about inconvenient subjects.

The IPN (the Institute of National Remembrance) is the major Polish institution to promote the Polish 'history policy'. It repeatedly avoids serious discussion of historical and contemporary antisemitism and manipulates the issue of the Righteous among the Nations.

In the fall of 2017 it announced the launch of a new academic English language publication the „Polish-Jewish Studies”.<sup>91</sup> The scientific board of the new publication includes another nationalist historian, Marek Chodakiewicz, who is known for his denial of Polish responsibility for the Jedwabne and other pogroms.

In September 2017, a historian and chief of the Education Department at the Lublin branch of the IPN Tomasz Panfil wrote in „Gazeta Polska” (Polish right-wing newspaper) that the situation of Jews in German-occupied Poland was not so bad: they were given a chance to create their own self-government (Judenrates). In October, he was awarded a special prize for his achievements in education, by Minister Anna Zalewska.

The July visit to Warsaw by American president Donald Trump with his wife and daughter,

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<sup>91</sup><https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/publikacje/polish-jewish-studies> (retrieved on 07.01.2018).



provoked a discussion in the media and social networks of his refusal to visit the Monument to the Ghetto Uprising Fighters. Trump was the first US president in decades who did not visit the monument.

### **Responses to antisemitism and Holocaust distortion**

The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association is the leading Polish organisation which systematically monitors and collects data on hate offences and antisemitism, and is a reliable source of information for journalists and other interested actors.

There are also other organisations which file complaints to the police and prosecutor's offices.

In 2017, there were several cases initiated by Warsaw Jewish community, B'nai B'irth, and other organisations. In January 2017, Warsaw Jewish Community filed a complaint to the Council of Radio and TV broadcasting for Marcin Wolski's TV statement about allegedly Jewish inspiration of anti-government demonstrations. In January 2017, the publicist of ultra-conservative website 'Fronda' Tadeusz Grzesik was charged for his article titled as „Sieg heil, Panie Grabowski, trzykrotnie sieg heil” published in June 2015. In his article Grzesik attacked Holocaust historian Jan Grabowski for his book 'Judenjagd. Hunting the Jews' by claiming the book allegedly was sponsored by one of the German foundations, as Germans sponsor everyone who help them to transfer the guilt to others and whitewash German crimes. The article was illustrated by the portrait of Joseph Goebbels. Grzesik had to apologize to Grabowski, who had taken him to the court to defend his reputation as a serious historian.

In February 2017, two residents of Tarnow, a city in the southeastern Poland, were charged for antisemitic inscriptions and Nazi graffiti in front of the former synagogue (the inscriptions appeared in 2015). Importantly, it is the first such case in the region.

In April 2017 the court announced that Piotr Rybak, who had burned a Jewish effigy during a nationalist anti-refugee demonstration in 2015 in Wroclaw, was sentenced to 10 months in prison for the crime of incitement on the basis of nationality, ethnicity or religion. The accused did not admit his guilt, claiming that he only defended Christianity and Christian Poland and he is not an antisemite. The sentence was subsequently reduced to three months and Rybak served it between November 2017 and January 2018.

In the early autumn B'nai B'irth following investigation filed a complaint on priest Jacek Międlar's incitement to hatred and antisemitism to the persecution office in Warsaw. Until today the case has not been investigated yet.

### **Educational activities**

Numerous organisations including the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association, the Auschwitz Jewish Center "Galicja" Jewish Museum in Krakow, Polin Museum, Jewish community in Warsaw also run education activities including training for police officers and teachers.

### **Public actions/interventions**

The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association reacts publicly to antisemitic and xenophobic incidents and offers its expertise and support to the media. In 2017, it was the most cited organisation

on the topic. It prevented the continued sale of antisemitic figurines which depicted Jews as wealthy moneylenders and financiers at the gift shop located in the building of the Polish Parliament. The Association raised the issue with the city authorities of Warsaw as well as Polish Ombudsman Adam Bodnar. Following the intervention of the speaker of the Polish Parliament, the figurines were removed from sale in October 2017.

The scholars connected with the Polish Center for Holocaust Research issued several statements in 2017, including a letter of support for Jan Grabowski and a letter condemning Tomasz Panfil's Holocaust distortional statement. Moreover, in 2016 the Center initiated a special award named after Israel Gutman to be given for the best published Holocaust article. In the beginning of December the award was given to Karolina Panz for her research article. During the award ceremony, Barbara Engelking who handed the award on behalf of the Center said:

*Karolina Panz focuses on victims in her research. In the literature published before victims were mass and anonymous. Their death was and is justified by the stereotype of „Judeo-communism”[...] And the worst is that the restoring the glory and memory of the anti-communist soldiers (żołnierzy wyklęci) often happens at the expense of the memory of their victims and consequences of the evil. [...] Everything indicates that the tendency will be deepen in the next years.<sup>92</sup>*

The press-release distributed by the Center mentioned that the award has special meaning in the current political climate.

Historians Jan Grabowski and Dariusz Libionka publicly condemned the issue of instrumentalisation of the Righteous among the Nations in their articles in 'Gazeta Wyborcza'<sup>93</sup> Their publications criticised not only the notoriously antisemitic „Radio Maryja” but also the IPN and other educational institutions including museums which are more focused on teaching about the Righteous (as symbols of Polish patriotism) but less on the complexity of the Holocaust in Poland. Among the institutions criticized were the Museum of the History of Poland and the Polin Museum.

There was an important contribution from the international community as well. A group of international scholars issued a public statement in support of Jan Grabowski, who was attacked by nationalists in 2017 for his Holocaust research in Poland. The Simon Wiesenthal Center, the World Jewish Congress and other organisations continue to react to cases of antisemitism and Holocaust denial in Poland.

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<sup>92</sup> <https://www.holocaustresearch.pl/index.php?mod=news&show=333> (retrieved on 07.01.2018).

<sup>93</sup> <http://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/7,124059,21097043,markowa-zydowska-smierc-polska-wina-wspolny-strach.html> (retrieved on 7 January, 2018).

## South Africa / David Sacks

### Summary and overview

Levels of antisemitism in South Africa, as measured by hostile incidents targeting members of the Jewish community or Jewish institutions, were virtually unchanged in 2017 in comparison to the previous year. A total of 44 incidents regarded as antisemitic were logged by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) and Community Security Organisation in 2017, the Jewish community's two main civil rights and security bodies. This was just one more than the previous year. Since the beginning of the century, annual antisemitic incidents in the country have averaged between 40 and 60, exceeding a hundred only in 2009 and 2014 as a result of the conflicts in Gaza that took place in those years.

Antisemitism in South Africa almost always takes the form of face-to-face verbal or written abuse, with serious acts of violence or vandalism being fortunately rare. Incidents recorded can be broken down into verbal threats and intimidation (7), non-threatening verbal abuse (15), hate mail – all mediums (16) and graffiti/offensive slogans (6). No incidents involving violence or vandalism were recorded in 2017. Nearly all of the incidents were recorded as taking place in Johannesburg and Cape Town, where about 90% of the country's estimated 70,000 Jews are today concentrated. More rare instances of antisemitic behaviour were recorded in the smaller Jewish population centres of Durban and Pretoria.

### Court cases

#### a) *Bongani Masuku*

A significant advance in the fight against antisemitism was made when the Johannesburg High Court, acting as an Equality Court, upheld an earlier ruling by the SA Human Rights Commission finding Bongani Masuku, International Relations spokesperson for the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), guilty of antisemitic hate speech. The case had its origins in a complaint lodged with the SAHRC by the SAJBD in April 2009. The complaint related to various statements made by Masuku against Jews who supported Israel. In his judgment, Justice Moshidi declared the impugned statements by Masuku to be 'hurtful; harmful; incite harm and propagate hatred; and amount to hate speech as envisaged in section 10 of the Equality Act 4 of 2000".

Masuku and Cosatu were ordered to tender an unconditional apology to the Jewish community within 30 days of the order. Cosatu has since appealed against the decision. The matter will be heard in the first half of 2018.

Offending statements by Masuku included:

- “As we struggle to liberate Palestine from the racists, fascists and Zionists who belong to the era of their friend Hitler, we must not apologize. Every Zionist must be made to drink the bitter medicine they are feeding our brethren and sisters in Palestine. We must target them, expose them and do all that is needed to subject them to perpetual suffering until they withdraw from the land of others and stop their savage attacks on human dignity”
- “The following things are going to apply: any South African family, i want to repeat it so it is clear for anyone, any South African family who sends his son or daughter to be

part of the IDF must not blame us when something happens to them with immediate effect” (5.3.2009 PSC rally at Wits University)

- “Cosatu is with you, we will do everything to make sure [that] ..... anyone who does not support equality and dignity, who does not support the rights of other people must face the consequences even if it means that we will do something that may necessarily cause what is regarded as harm”

b) *Andile Mngxitama*

When former Leader of the opposition Democratic Alliance Helen Zille controversially tweeted that colonialism yielded many practical benefits as well, leader of the radical Black First Land First faction Andile Mngxitama tweeted in response, “For those claiming the legacy of the holocaust is ONLY negative think about the lampshades and Jewish soap” and “I concur with @helenzille that the aroma of the burning flesh from the furnaces of the holocaust may wet [sic] the appetite of the S.A. cannibals”. The SAJBD responded by laying charges of hate speech against Mngxitama in the Johannesburg Equality Court. It is still not certain when and where the matter will be heard.

### **Noteworthy incidents**

4/9: The Deputy Principal of Vista high school in Cape Town, on the arrival of pupils from the Jewish day school Herzlia who were involved in an outreach project with Vista, displayed anti-Zionist posters on the window of his classroom, a gesture clearly aimed at the visitors. They were later taken down and an apology received from the school, which stressed that the staff member (who is Muslim), with one another, had acted at their own behest. The Department of Education instituted disciplinary proceedings, and found the perpetrator guilty on two out of three charges of misconduct (namely insubordination and inappropriately making the school a platform for his political views, but not for inciting hatred on the basis of religion and/or ethnicity). Prior to the hearing, he had been portrayed within the local Muslim community as a hero who was being victimised for speaking out on behalf of Palestine.

18/5: During an inter-school play competition in Johannesburg, where King David Victory Park School were performing ‘The Boy with the Striped Pyjamas’, Edenvale High learners reportedly made antisemitic remarks and ‘Heil Hitler’ salutes. The perpetrator sincerely apologised and the Board went on to work with the school in running a tolerance education programme through the JHB Holocaust & Genocide Centre.

6-9/2: During “Israel Apartheid Week” (IAW) at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, members of the Palestine Solidarity Committee threatened SA Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS) members with violence, pushed and jostled them, attempted to remove the SAUJS board, tore up posters, cut the power cord to the PA system used for its speakers, tore down the SAUJS banner and invaded the space on the Great Hall piazza allocated for SAUJS displays. One PSC member caught on camera impersonating a Nazi imitating the Hitler moustache, goose-stepping and making stiff-arm salutes. Another told SAUJS students that people wanted to kill Jews because “they don’t behave when they are in other people’s countries”.

IAW events at the University of Cape Town included SAUJS posters being destroyed and a non-Jewish student wearing a Magen David verbally abused by BDS activists, who repeatedly shouted, "You are a Jew. You are with those Zionists because you are a Jew."

Examples of verbal abuse included: Community member accosted by a Muslim male who said, "Leave the Palestine" and similar anti-Israel comments. He responded "Leave the Israel", and soon after the Muslim male called out "death to all Jews" (Sandton); community member leaving the Outside La Lucia Virgin Active Gym when a black male verbally attacked him, directing such comments as that Jews were "bad news", Christ killers and "oppressors of innocent people" (Umhlanga) and "You f\*\*\*ing Jewish bastards" shouted from passing vehicle at community members walking home after shul, dressed as obvious shul-goers (Cape Town).

### **Social media and online antisemitism**

While antisemitism as measured by direct acts targeting Jews remains low in South Africa, a strong undercurrent of anti-Jewish sentiment is evident in the social media and online comments platforms.

Mounting opposition to the nine-year rule of President Jacob Zuma from both within and without the ruling African National Congress contributed to an unstable political climate and created fertile ground for conspiracy theories. It was, for example, commonly alleged that South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa (who replaced Jacob Zuma as President at the beginning of 2018) was the tool of Jewish business interests. Edward Zuma, a son of the then President, made references to "Jewish-based entities" allegedly working in the interests of rival political factions working against the ruling establishment.

While antisemitism emanating from extreme right white supremacist sources is no longer a major source of antisemitic activity, numerous websites and social media platforms regularly attribute the demise of white minority rule in South Africa to the secret machinations of Jewish capitalists and/or communist, intent on gaining control of the country and destroying the white race through promoting race-mixing. Much of the antisemitic material disseminated is sourced from like-minded groups in the United States and elsewhere.

In the Western Cape, the only province controlled by the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA), it is regularly asserted on online platforms that the party is "Zionist-controlled" and secretly acts in the interests of the Jewish community. In 2018, such allegations began to openly surface in the National and Cape Provincial Parliament.

## Switzerland / Simon Erlanger<sup>94</sup>

2017 has been a year, when antisemitism again gained momentum, as is shown by the annual Swiss antisemitism reports. As usual they come in pairs: Incidents in the French-speaking part of the country are collected by the Geneva-based NGO “Coordination Intercommunautaire Contre l’Antisemitisme et la Diffamation” (CICAD).<sup>95</sup> In the German-speaking the annual report is compiled and published in Zurich by the “Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities”, the “Schweizerischer Israelitischer Gemeindebund” (SIG)<sup>96</sup> together with the NGO “Stiftung gegen Rassismus und Antisemitismus” (GRA)<sup>97</sup>. Both reports are published independently from each other and made public on different dates.

### Sharp Rise

In the German-speaking part of Switzerland the number of registered antisemitic acts has risen by some 52% from 25 in 2016 to 39 in 2017. There were three physical attacks.<sup>98</sup> This constitutes a change for the worse: Ever since the record year of 2014 with 66 reported antisemitic incidents, numbers have been sinking.<sup>99</sup> Now they are on the rise again. However, postings on social media and talkbacks on the Internet have not even been included in the 2017 numbers,<sup>100</sup> but were counted separately by the SIG and the GRA. The latter comments, that a systematic search of the Internet is difficult and would not even be representative from a statistical point of view.<sup>101</sup>

All in all SIG and GRA count 90 antisemitic postings on the Internet,<sup>102</sup> a number, which seems to be much too low for a yearly count, as a short internet search on Swiss news sites on an given day or week will prove, as the GRA admits. As elsewhere the internet has become the main arena for antisemitic and racist activity and hate speech.<sup>103</sup> However this fact does not seem to be adequately presented by the number presented. No wonder, that the methodology employed for measuring antisemitic activity on the internet has come under scrutiny, such as in the Jewish media outlet “tachles”, which calls for more comprehensive data and also refers to antisemitic incidents which allegedly have been reported to Jewish communities without having being registered and counted in the official 2007 report.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Dr. Simon Erlanger is a historian and a journalist. He was born in Switzerland in 1965 and educated in Basel and Jerusalem. A former employee of the Yad Vashem Archives in Jerusalem, he presently teaches Jewish history at the University of Lucerne.

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.cicad.ch>.

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.swissjews.ch/>

<sup>97</sup> <https://gra.ch>

<sup>98</sup> See: <http://www.antisemitismus.ch/content/analyse-antisemitismusbericht-2017> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> See: Antisemitismusbericht 2017: Physische Gewalt und Hetze im Netz; Media Release, by SIG and GRA, Zürich, March 21 2018. <http://www.swissjews.ch/de/medien/pressemitteilungen/antisemitismusbericht-2017/> (last seen on March 25 2018)

<sup>101</sup> GRA: Einschätzung. Rassismus in der Schweiz; [https://chronologie.gra.ch/einschaetzungen/?fwp\\_date=2017](https://chronologie.gra.ch/einschaetzungen/?fwp_date=2017) (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>102</sup> See: <http://www.antisemitismus.ch/content/analyse-antisemitismusbericht-2017> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>103</sup> GRA- Medienmitteilung: Rassismus in der Schweiz 2017, March 21 2018; <https://gra.ch/medienmitteilung-rassismus-in-der-schweiz-2017/> (last viewed on March 26 2018)

<sup>104</sup> See: Valérie Wendenburg: Intransparenz auf höchstem Niveau, tachles, March 23 2018; <https://www.tachles.ch/artikel/schweiz/intransparenz-auf-hoechstem-niveau> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

In the French part of Switzerland – the Romandie – the situation seems stable: CICAD counts 150 antisemitic incidents in 2017 including two physical attacks and dozens of postings on the internet.<sup>105</sup> In 2016 the organization counted 150 incidents. However, CICAD sees rise in antisemitic activities by the extreme right. Classic issues seem to dominate antisemitic discourse in the Romandie: 30% of all incidents are said to relate to revisionism of the Shoah, 23% to allegations of a world Jewish conspiracy.

### **Not the full picture**

The numbers mentioned above can merely be an indicator for the prevalent trend, which – seen for the country as a whole – has been negative. But as in years past, the picture is again incomplete for 2017. Most of the available data is not collected for lack of resources, logistics, finances and commonly agreed methodologies. Reports for the German and for the French-speaking parts of Switzerland are still compiled separately, with very few coordination and widely differing mode of operations.

Furthermore, for a variety of reasons victims of antisemitic attacks and abuse in Switzerland are still reluctant to report antisemitic incidents to the authorities and/or to SIG, CICAD and GRA. It must therefore be assumed with a very high probability, that most antisemitic incidents go unreported and that real numbers are much higher.

The situation is even worse for social media and the Internet where only a fraction of antisemitic postings is collected and reported. The same seems to be true concerning the traditional media: While CICAD does cover the francophone media quite thoroughly there is no professional media watch for the german-speaking part of Switzerland. Antiisrael stereotyping has remained a problem, although the situation has somewhat improved because in the last couple of years the emphasis of reports and comments has shifted to the Syrian war, the subsequent refugee crisis and the security threat in Europe.

Still, antisemitism remains rampant all over the media, especially in social media and talkbacks. Screening mechanism and self-regulation by providers, media outlets and publishing houses<sup>106</sup> have largely proved to be insufficient.

### **Prohibition of Kosher Meat Import avoided**

While the affair surrounding the discriminatory treatment of Jewish guests in a hotel in Arosa made headlines worldwide,<sup>107</sup> it proved to be a minor incident.<sup>108</sup> Much more serious and threatening to the continued wellbeing and existence of organized Jewish life in Switzerland, but much less noticed, were the two parliamentary initiatives by important

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<sup>105</sup> CICAD: Antisémitisme en Suisse Romande en 2017. : Banalisation de la Shoah, complotisme et extrême droite; Communiqué; February 22 2018; <http://www.cicad.ch/fr/antisemitism/news.html> (Last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>106</sup> GRA: Einschätzung. Rassismus in der Schweiz; [https://chronologie.gra.ch/einschaetzungen/?fwp\\_date=2017](https://chronologie.gra.ch/einschaetzungen/?fwp_date=2017) (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>107</sup> For the affair and its aftermath see: <https://www.nzz.ch/schweiz/antisemitismus-vorwurf-aroser-hotel-schickt-juden-zum-duschen-ld.1310828> (last viewed on March 25 2018)

<https://www.srf.ch/news/schweiz/ich-schrieb-das-plakat-im-stress> (last seen on March 25 2018).

and: <https://www.blick.ch/news/schweiz/booking-com-sperret-aroser-hotel-wegen-antisemitismus-jetzt-setzt-sich-juedische-vereinigung-fuer-ruth-t-ein-id7963093.html> (last viewed on March 25 2018)

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/sonntagszeitung/standard/Im-Paradies-ist-wieder-alles-koscher/story/23917610> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

politicians of the Swiss Social-Democratic Party (SP)<sup>109</sup> aiming at limiting or even prohibiting the import of Kosher meat to Switzerland.<sup>110</sup> Since Shechita - kosher slaughtering – is prohibited in Switzerland since 1893, a ban on kosher imports would have had serious consequences for Jewish life in the country. Both parliamentary initiatives were refused or rescinded respectively by both chambers in September and in November 2017.

### **Still no new study on Swiss antisemitism**

While the annual antisemitism reports paint only a partial picture, there is also not much knowledge concerning general trends in the country. As in past years there still is no current and updated study on contemporary Swiss antisemitism using adequate samples and methods. In a general study on coexistence, integration and prejudice the Federal Bureau of Statistics (Bundesamt für Statistik) found 12% of Swiss to be antisemitic.<sup>111</sup> This is below the European average. However the “ADL Global 100” study into worldwide antisemitism by the American Anti-Defamation League ADL found in 2014 the very high number of 1,7 Million Swiss or 26% of the Swiss harboring antisemitic attitudes.<sup>112</sup> This would be much above average for Western Europe and would make Switzerland one of the most antijewish countries on the continent. However, due to methodological questions both the Federal and the ADL study have not received much coverage and attention in Switzerland, not even within the Jewish community. In order to prove or to disprove the high number of Swiss antisemites the ADL survey has found and in order to get a realistic picture of the present situation, a more localized study with a larger sample of people involved should be conducted. This has not yet happened.

In 2014 a poll undertaken by the institute “Demoscope” on Swiss attitudes to Jews and Judaism was stopped after the endeavor was made public.

The only reliable sources on Swiss attitudes toward the Jews are older studies: In 2000 the “gfs” Research Institute in Berne found that 16 percent of the Swiss harbored intense antisemitic feelings.<sup>113</sup> Although this also was about European average at the time, the number constituted double the percentage older polls had found. The 2000 findings were topped by a 2006 study by the University of Geneva's Department of Sociology, which found 20 percent of the Swiss being "affected by antisemitism"<sup>114</sup> The gfs Research Institute responded with a new study in 2007.<sup>115</sup> While it found only 10% of respondents to be openly antisemitic, some 53% of respondents were highly critical of Israel. 50% were

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<sup>109</sup> <https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefte?AffairId=20153832> and <https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/suche-curia-vista/geschaefte?AffairId=20153832> (both last viewed on March 25).

<sup>110</sup> Markus Häfliger: Koscheres Fleisch soll in der Schweiz verboten werden. Ein Entscheid des Nationalrats stellt den Import von Fleisch infrage, das von geschächteten Tieren stammt. <https://www.tagesanzeiger.ch/schweiz/standard/Koscheres-Fleisch-soll-in-der-Schweiz-verboten-werden/story/30224134> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>111</sup> BFS: Zusammenleben in der Schweiz. Einstellungen gegenüber bestimmten Personengruppen, <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bevoelkerung/migration-integration/zusammenleben-schweiz/einstellungen-zielgruppen.html> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>112</sup> See: <http://global100.adl.org/#country/switzerland/2014> (last viewed on March 25).

<sup>113</sup> [www.gfs.ch/antsemkurz.html](http://www.gfs.ch/antsemkurz.html) (Last viewed on March 20 2014).

<sup>114</sup> Sandro Cattacin, Brigitta Gerber, Massimo Sardi, and Robert Wegener, Monitoring Misanthropy and Rightwing Extremist Attitudes in Switzerland: An Explorative Study, Department of Sociology, University of Geneva, 2006, 70.

<sup>115</sup> <http://www.gfsbern.ch/de-ch/Detail/kritik-an-israel-nicht-deckungsgleich-mit-antisemitischen-haltungen> (Last viewed on March 29 2016).



thinking at the time that Israel was leading a “war of annihilation” against the Palestinians. 13% of respondents stated that Israel has no right to exist.

The older studies do not take into account recent developments, such as the Swiss variety of the Europe-wide rise of the nationalistic, conservative and populist right and at the same time the rapid rise of fundamentalist Islam and the spread of Islamist jihadist groups amongst Switzerland’s fast growing Muslim population. Authorities in 2017 counted 88 Swiss Jihadist fighting in Syria.<sup>116</sup> Experts think that around a 1000 persons are radicalized enough to leave Switzerland for Syria.<sup>117</sup>

The country also has undergone rapid demographic change since the last profound survey in 2000. The Swiss population has grown by 1,3 million to 8.4 million. An updated study on Swiss antisemitism, taking into account today’s changed social environment and being based on a sound methodological deliberations is long overdue. For the time being we are left with old studies based on outdated assumptions, methodologies and demographics and therefore have little actual scientific data.

Even without a new survey it can be stated with certainty: Anti-Jewish currents still run deep within Swiss society. Antisemitism of the Right and of the Left is alive and has been growing, as has the newly introduced Islamist variant. As elsewhere in Europe Islamist groups and jihadist fighters returning from Syria present a growing danger to the country and the Swiss Jewish communities. The terror threat level has remained high throughout 2017.

### **Little support for Jewish security**

Due to the threat level in Europe, Jewish communities Switzerland have been increasing their security massively. The annual security cost for Swiss Jewry nationwide is now estimated at several million francs. Exact numbers are not made public. As already became clear by late 2015 growing security costs do threaten the financial viability and therefore the very institutional survival of many if not most Swiss Jewish Communities. While the federal Swiss government has acknowledged this fact and by the end of 2015 and again in late summer 2017 has declared Jewish security a national priority, not much is happening on the ground.

In Zurich the two Jewish communities recognized by the state, the ICZ and Or Chadasch, will in 2018/19 be getting more money by the city and the canton “in recognition of their contribution to society”. While being a sign of goodwill, it does not seem clear, if the money can be used for security and what will happen to the other major Jewish communities in Zurich, which comprise more than half of organized Jewry in Zurich. Nevertheless this contribution alleviates the situation. In Basel the government and the state parliament have in autumn 2017 finally refused to contribute to the ongoing security of the main and state-recognized Jewish community, the Israelitische Gemeinde Basel (IGB) founded in 1805. The Basel government and parliament are even opposed to increase police patrols and guards as this seemingly would create a precedent for other groups. However the Basel

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<sup>116</sup> See: <https://www.nzz.ch/schweiz/erfassung-von-risikopersonen-rund-90-potenzielle-jihadisten-im-visier-ld.1289943> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>117</sup> Experte warnt vor Schweizer Jihadisten; in „20 Minuten“ June 28 2017; <http://www.20min.ch/schweiz/news/story/Experte-warnt-vor-Schweizer-Jihadisten-25727879> (last viewed on March 26 2018)

government declared to at least pay a onetime and limited sum to construction made necessary by security measures. Nevertheless, the 960 member strong and rapidly shrinking Basel community still finds itself with 800'000 Francs security cost for 2017 and an estimated 300'000 Francs annual security cost thereafter, this in additions to its running annual deficit of up to half a million. It is not sure for how long the ageing community will be able to shoulder this burden. The community now faces the impossible choice of either relinquishing or downgrading security on one hand or on the other hand of downcutting services massively. 212 years after its founding, one of the oldest continually existing Jewish communities of Europe might therefore be coming to an end.

### **The security of Jewish communities**

While the overall security Switzerland threat remains high, public gatherings, train stations, Christmas markets, concerts and soccer games are constantly secured. Security is provided by and paid for by the state. Jewish security need have so far been the exception to the rule. Jewish communities are left alone and have to provide their own security. Contrary to Germany of France there are no policemen, soldiers or other security personnel sent by the state to protect community centers, kindergartens, schools and synagogues. The outright refusal to accommodate Jewish security needs by the central government and by most of the cantons, despite the fact that most Jewish communities enjoy an officially recognized legal status has been a major issue in 2017, being considered by the Jewish communities as a violation of the duty of the state to defend its citizens and its inhabitants as stated in Switzerland's constitution, as confirmed in several legal opinions.<sup>118</sup> This policy also seems to be in violation of the "Convention of the Council of Europe on the Protection of National Minorities", which Switzerland has signed and ratified. By doing so Switzerland has officially recognized its Jewish community as a national minority. The Swiss authorities are therefore legally obliged to create safe conditions, which enable Swiss Jews to thrive, to exercise their religion and preserve their traditions. Yet the Swiss federal government has tried to shift responsibility to the cantons and vice versa. While this evading of responsibilities and the ensuing arguing between the central state and the cantons is typical for Swiss politics affecting many subjects from education, to taxes, the penal law and even foreign policy, usually solutions are found more or less satisfying all parties involved. Only in the case of Jewish security both the Federal state and the cantons now have been dragging their feet for close to three years now. Finally at the beginning of March 2018 the Swiss government acknowledged the threat and the dire situation of the Jewish communities.<sup>119</sup> The federal government sees the need of the cantons and the federal government to coordinate their efforts. The government can support measures, which fall into the definition of crime prevention. However no support for security measures, guards and the like will be forthcoming anytime soon from the Federal government. This still is the sole task of the cantons. In the case of Basel, the canton already has – as mentioned – refused several times to support the Jewish community. Despite the positive signs from Berne not much has changed. Jewish communities still have to deal with the present security threat mostly on their own.

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<sup>118</sup> See several legal opinions on: <http://www.swissjews.ch/de/politik/themen/sicherheit/> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.parlament.ch/de/ratsbetrieb/amtliches-bulletin/amtliches-bulletin-die-verhandlungen?SubjectId=42669> (last viewed on March 25 2018).

## Working Definition of Antisemitism

As adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance on 26 May 2016

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

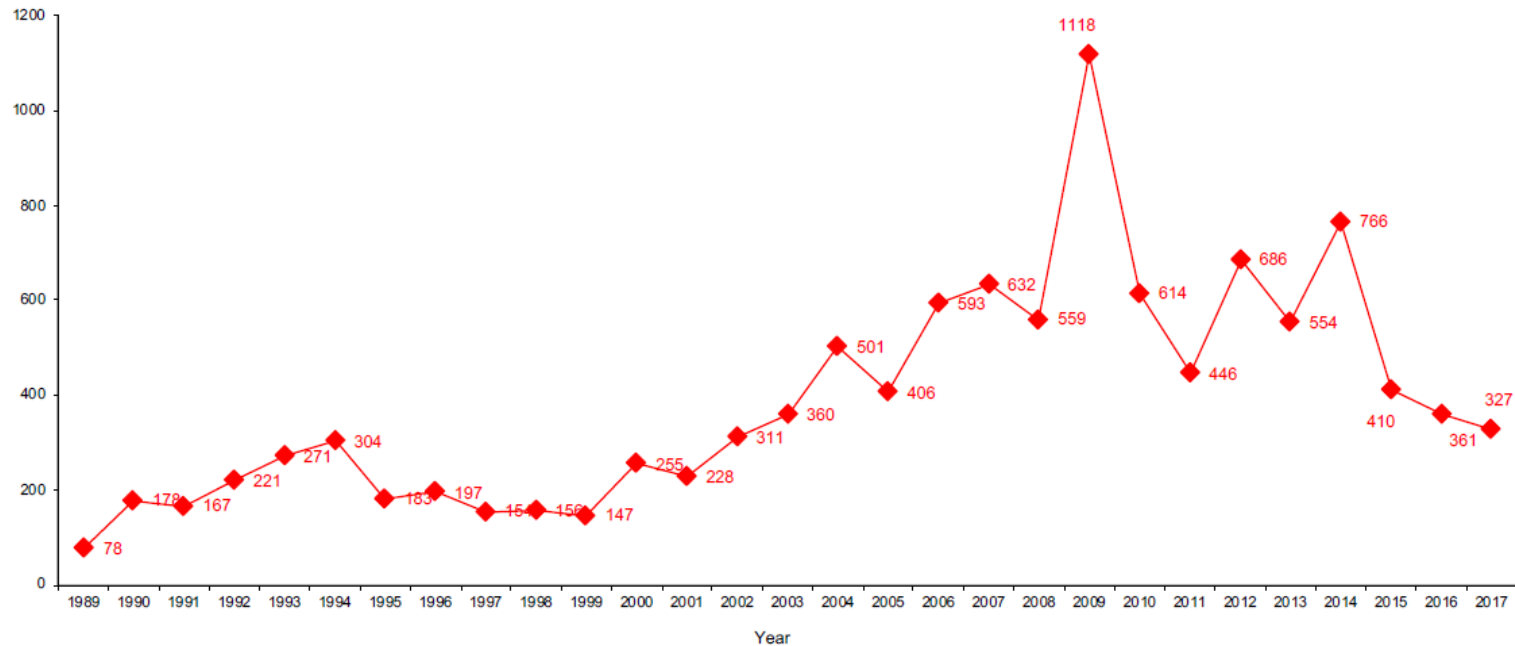
**Antisemitic acts are criminal** when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

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

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

Appendix B – Major Violent Incidents Worldwide, 1989-2017<sup>120</sup>

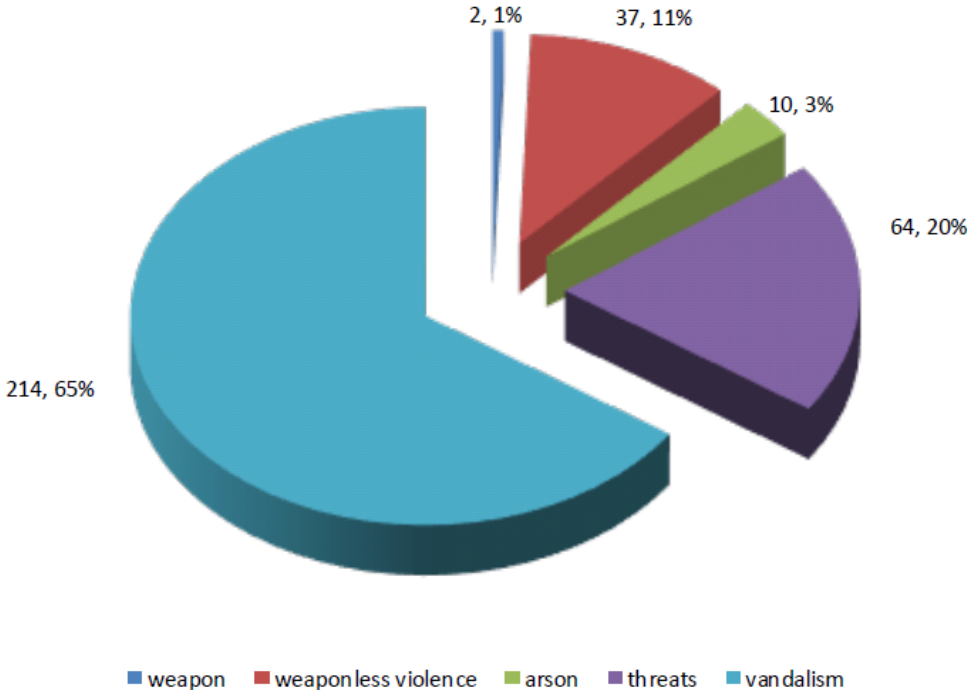
**Antisemitism - Violent Incidents Worldwide 1989-2017**



<sup>120</sup> Statistics – **Dr. Haim Fireberg (2017)**. The graphs in this section refer to acts of violence and vandalism and desecration acts perpetrated directly against Jewish individuals, synagogues and community centers and against Jewish private property worldwide during 2017. The figures are based on the Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism (usually accumulated from open sources and contributor special reports) and reports of the Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism. It should be stressed that the graphs reflect only **major violent incidents** (such as arson, weapon attacks, weaponless attacks, serious threats, and vandalism or desecration).

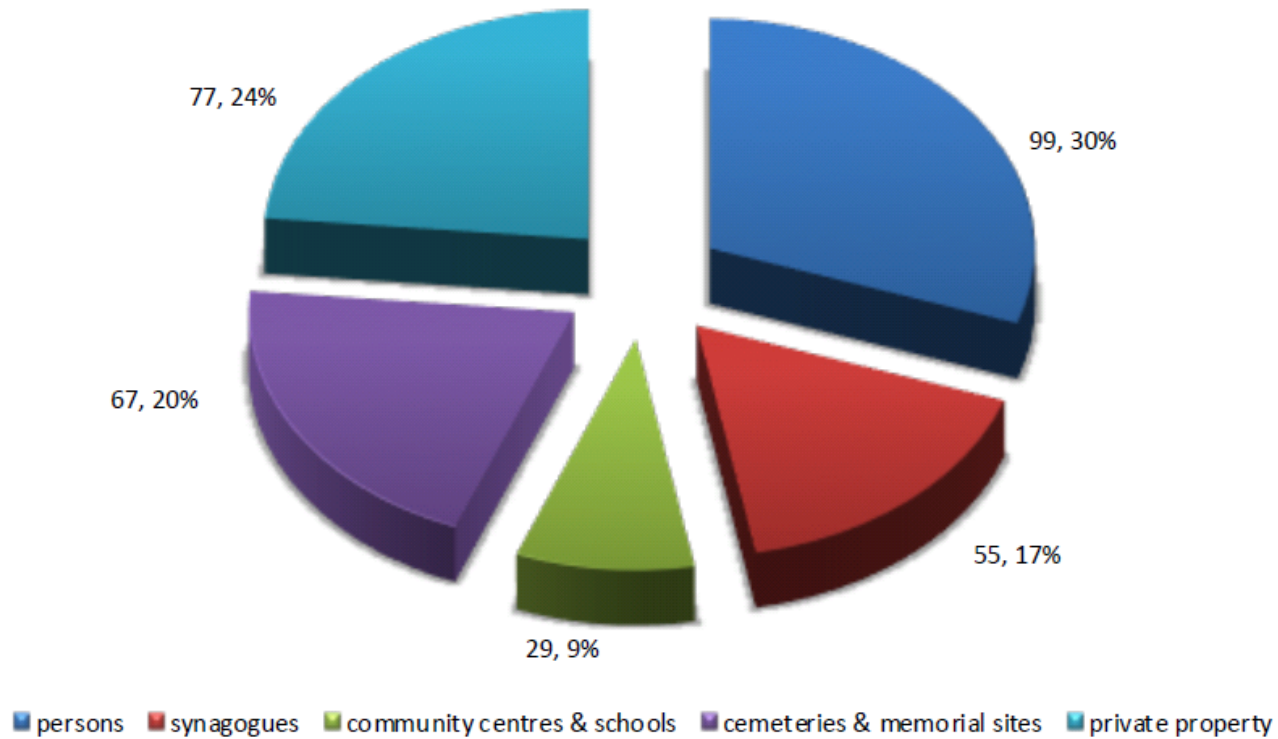
Appendix C – Major violent incidents worldwide in 2017 – breakdown by modus operandi

**Violent Incidents Worldwide in 2017  
Breakdown by Modus Operandi**

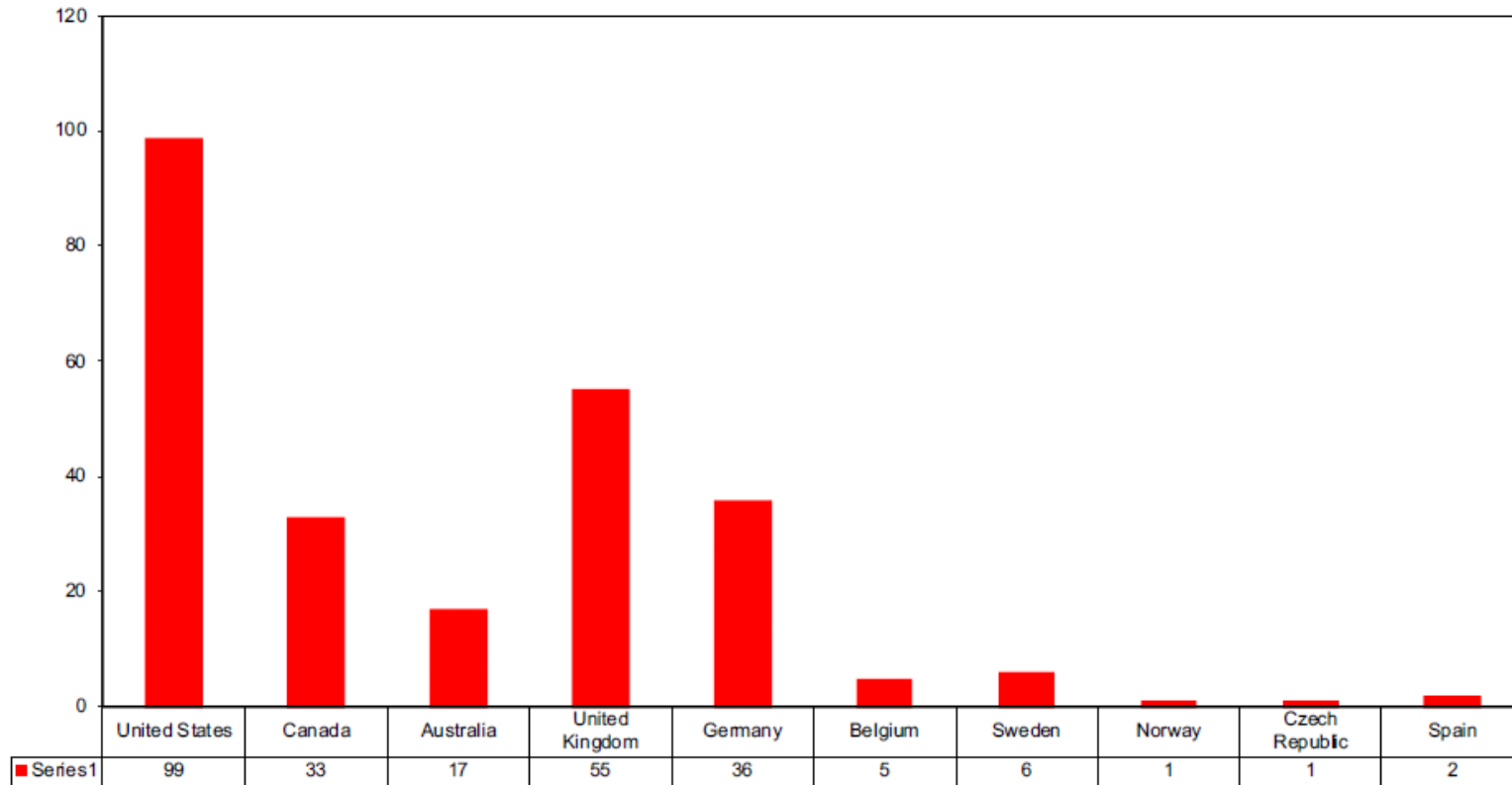


Appendix D – Major Violent Incidents Worldwide In 2017 Breakdown by Target

**Violent Incidents Worldwide in 2017  
Breakdown by Target**



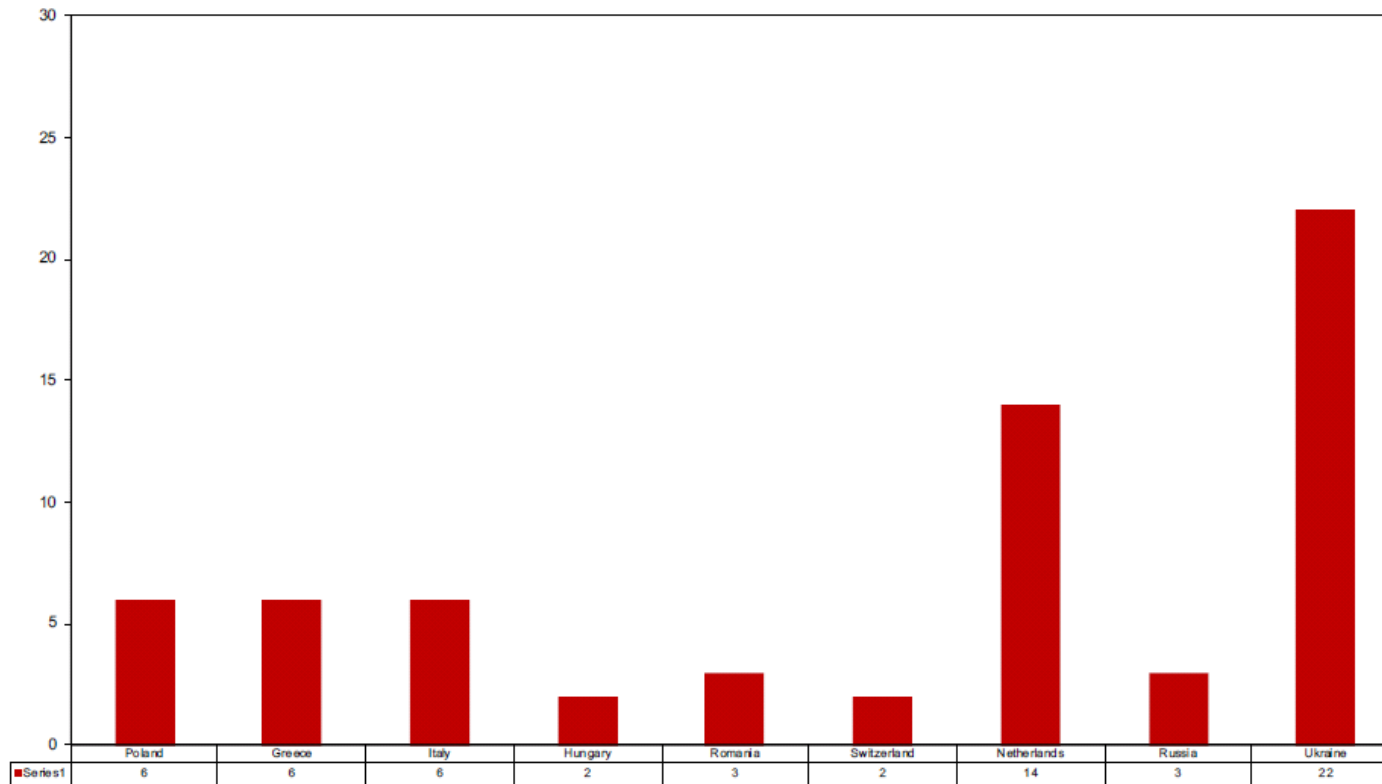
Appendix E – VIOLENT INCIDENTS IN 2017 – BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY (1)



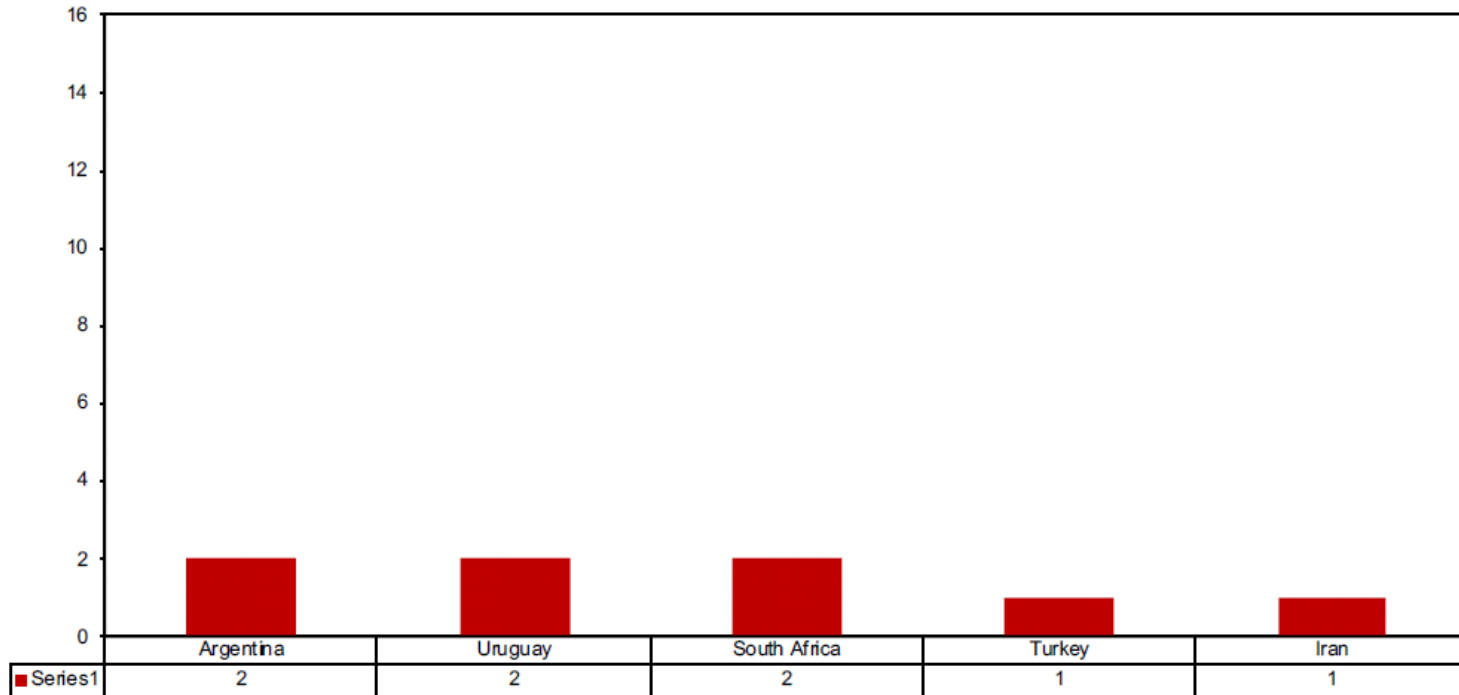


APPENDIX F – VIOLENT INCIDENTS IN 2017 – BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY (2)

**Violent Incidents in 2017 - Breakdown by Country (2)**



Appendix J – Violent Incidents in 2017 – Breakdown by Country (3)



## סקירה – דו"ח אודות האנטישמיות בשנת 2017

מרכז קנטור, אוניברסיטת תל-אביב,  
כ"ז בניסן, תשע"ח, 11 באפריל 2018

### הקדמה

מסמך זה מתבסס על עבודתו השוטפת של צוות מרכז קנטור לחקר יהדות אירופה בימינו, ועל דו"חות ונתונים ששלחו לנו אנשי הקשר שלנו, מכמה עשרות ארצות. הם מהווים מעין רשת שהוקמה והתבססה במשך כ-25 שנות פעילותו של הצוות באוניברסיטת תל אביב. מרכז קנטור, ומאגר המידע על שם משה קנטור, הם הגוף היחיד, בארץ ובעולם, שעוקב ברציפות במשך שנים כה רבות אחרי האירועים האנטישמיים בעולם כולו; מנתח אותם לאורך הזמן על בסיס קריטריונים קבועים, המאפשרים השוואה רב שנתית; ומעמיד את הממצאים לרשות הרבים. למרות כול זאת אין אנו יכולים לומר כי בידנו כול הנתונים על ביטויי האנטישמיות בעולם, מפני שבארצות רבות המעקב אינו רצוף או שיטתי, ומפני שסקרים מצאו שרוב המקרים, בין אנטישמיים ובין גזעניים בכלל, אינם מדווחים לרשויות.

הנתונים והמידע שאנו מציגים כאן על האירועים האנטישמיים האלימים הם תוצאה של שיטת מעקב וניתוח שפותחה במרכז קנטור, לפי אמות מידה מסוימות: אירוע ייחשב לאנטישמי אם עמד מאחוריו מניע אנטישמי; אירוע שבו נפגעו מפעולתו של אדם אחד או קבוצה אחת כמה אנשים או מצבות, אנדרטות ורכוש פרטי וקהילתי, ייחשב לאירוע אחד; אין להגזים בחומרתם של אירועים, ומצד שני אין להקל בהם ראש. כתוצאה, ייתכנו הבדלים בין הנתונים שלנו לבין הנתונים שמוסרים גופי מעקב אחרים, וקהילות יהודיות בכללם. כאן המקום לציין שרוב גופי המעקב והקהילות מפרסמים מדי שנה נתונים הכוללים את כול סוגי האנטישמיות וביטוייה גם יחד, האלימים, המילוליים והחזותיים.

אנו ערים לצורך בהעמדת תמונה רחבה ומאוזנת, שכן אין להפריד את מצב האנטישמיות מן המצב הכללי במדינה או בחברה זו או אחרת. בבריטניה למשל, נמנו השנה כמה עשרות אלפים של פשעי שנאה, במעשה ובמלל, לעומת כמה מאות שבוצעו כלפי הקהילה היהודית, אך יש לזכור שקבוצות קיצוניות מתנגדות לנוכחותן של כול קבוצות המיעוטים שהן הגדירו כזרים ופועלות נגד כולן יחד: הביטוי למצב זה במחקר הוא GROUP BASED HOSTILITY. לפיכך אין אפשרות להבין מהי אנטישמיות ללא ידיעה מעמיקה של המצב הפוליטי, הכלכלי והחברתי בכול ארץ נתונה ובזירה הבינלאומית בכללה.

### **מגמות והתפתחויות בשנת 2017:**

**תמצית:** הממצא המטריד ביותר בתופעת האנטישמיות בשנת 2017, שניכר כבר ב-2016, היה התחושה מבשרת הרעות והעדר הביטחון, שחשים יותר ויותר יהודים באירופה. תחושה שהתחזקה לאחרונה עקב רצח שתי נשים בתוך ביתן בפריז. האווירה האנטישמית נעשתה נושא לדיון ציבורי, מול המשולש המורכב מעליית הימין הקיצוני, התחזקות שיח אנטי ציוני בשמאל המלווה בביטויים

אנטישמיים והאיסלם הרדיקלי.ב-2017 נרשמה ירידה מתונה של כ-9% במספר מקרי האלימות כלפי יהודים, 327 לעומת 361 בשנת 2016), שאינה כוללת את נתוני האלימות בצרפת, שם שרות הביטחון של הקהילה טרם פרסם את נתוניו. המספר נקבע לפי אמות המידה של מרכז קנטור, העוקב אחרי גילויי האנטישמיות בשיתוף פעולה הדוק עם עשרות קהילות יהודיות בעולם. יש לציין, כי למרבה הצער, אין קריטריונים מוסכמים על כלל העוקבים אחר האנטישמיות, ועל כן הנתונים ממקורות שונים אינם תמיד זהים. בכל זאת ניתן לומר שבין השנים 2006 ל-2014 מספר המקרים האלימים נע בין 600 ל-700 בשנה בעולם, ובשנים האחרונות הוא נע בין 300 ל-400. אך יש להדגיש שחלק ממקרי הלימות הם ברוטליים יותר, ובייחוד יש להדגיש שלעומת הירידה המתונה באלימות, נרשמה עלייה בכול יתר צורות הביטוי האנטישמיות, בייחוד בהצקות בבתי ספר (מספר לא ידוע של תלמידים עבר לבתי ספר קתוליים) וברשתות החברתיות, עלייה שנציגי קהילות וארגונים יהודיים תיארו כדרמטית. ייתכן שחל כרסום מסוים בחיים הקהילתיים היהודיים, כיוון שלא כול היהודים המשתייכים לקהילה משתתפים בהם, ונציגים אלה הביעו חשש שהאנטישמיות נכנסה לשלב חדש. למשל, ביטויים של אנטישמיות קלאסית מסורתית נשמעים מחדש, ואפילו המונח "יהודי" שב והופיע כמילת גנאי. אין עדיין תשובה חד משמעית לשאלות, האם עלייתן של מפלגות ותנועות ימין היא בהכרח מתכון בדוק לאנטישמיות, והאם הפליטים שהגיעו ב-2015-2016 העלו בשנה החולפת את רף הפשיעה בכלל ואת רמת האנטישמיות בפרט. התחזקותו של שיח אנטי-ציוני חריף בשמאל, ובייחוד במערב אירופה, לוותה השנה בביטויים אנטישמיים קשים. למרות כל זאת נרשמו הישגים במאבק נגד האנטישמיות, ואנו מוסיפים למאבק זה הצעה לאמץ במאבק זה שלושה צעדים: שיתוף פעולה, קואליציות ומאבק, שכינינו 3C - Cooperation, Coalitions and Combatting.

**מגמות עיקריות:** השבועות האחרונים של 2017 (והחודשים הראשונים של 2018) התאפיינו במספר רב של אירועים אנטישמיים ברחבי העולם, שייתכן ומקורם, או התירוץ לקיומם, הוא בהכרתו של הנשיא טראמפ בירושלים כבירת ישראל, בדצמבר 2017. עם זאת יש לציין, שמקורם של האירועים, שכללו הפגנות סוערות מלוות בסיסמאות אנטי-יהודיות ואפילו קריאות להרג ובשריפת דגל ישראל, אינו רק בחוגים או ארגונים מוסלמיים וערביים. הפגנות אירעו בארצות שונות בהשתתפותן של תנועות מכול הקשת הפוליטית והן ביטאו מורת רוח מהתפתחויות פוליטיות רבות נוספות שאינן קשורות לנושא ירושלים או לסכסוך הפלסטיני-ישראלי.

ברוב הארצות שאנו עוקבים אחריהן מספר האירועים האלימים היה נמוך מעשרה בכול אחת, וזה מאותן סיבות שמנינו ב-2016: יותר תקציבים ממשלתיים באבטחה ובמודיעין; פחות יהודים עם סימנים מזהים במרחב הציבורי; קיומן של קהילות קטנות בארצות אלה; והסתת תשומת לב של הימין אל הפליטים המוסלמים. אך הגברת אמצעי האבטחה אינה נתפסת על ידי הקהילות היהודיות כהתפתחות חיובית מפני שפרושה הוא שיש בהם צורך, ובעיקר משום שמאפילות עליו התקריות המילוליות הרבות הגובלות באלימות. יהודים היו חשופים לאיומים ישירים, הצקות, התנכלויות, עלבונות וקריאות לפגיעה ביהודים במקומות עבודה, בבתי ספר, באוניברסיטאות, במוסדות יהודיים בסביבת המגורים, במגרשי הכדורגל, בהפגנות ברחובות ובייחוד ברשתות החברתיות.

התחזקות הימין הקיצוני במספר ארצות באירופה, ובארצות הברית, הביאה לעלייה בהופעתם של סיסמאות וסמלים, המזכירים ליהודים את שנות השלושים של המאה הקודמת, וזה למרות ההבדלים הגדולים בין התקופות. הישגיו של הימין הקיצוני אינם יכולים להסיח את הדעת מהעלייה באנטישמיות בשמאל, התומך בגישות מוסלמיות רדיקליות ואנטי-ציוניות המתבטאות בגילויים אנטישמיים, כמו ה-BDS, ה-ANTIFA, ובקרב מפלגת הלייבור בבריטניה בהנהגתו של ג'רמי קורבין. ככול שחולף הזמן, ומלחמת העולם השנייה והשואה, הופכות לעבר רחוק, כן נחלשת המחויבות כלפי ביטחונם של יהודים ושל ישראל, בייחוד בקרב הדורות הצעירים.

הנזק העיקרי שגרמה האנטישמיות לאחרונה הוא כרסום מסוים בחיים היהודיים הקהילתיים מאחר שיש יהודים הנמנעים מהשתתפות בהתכנסויות המסורתיות, ואינם מזוהים כיהודים במרחב הציבורי, וכך נפגעים חיי הקהילה והזהות היהודית. תחושה של העדר שייכות מלאה לסביבה קשורה באמון הניתן - או שאינו ניתן - ברשויות, ובייחוד במשטרה. חשיבותו של אמון זה מכרעת. הכרסום ניכר בעיקר בבתי הספר היהודיים, שחלקם מגביל פעילויות או נסגר, ורובם מתמודדים עם בעיות של תקציב וביטחון. כתוצאה מכך, מתהווה תופעה חדשה - מעבר לבתי ספר קתוליים, ששכר הלימוד בהם נמוך יותר, ואין בהם תלמידים מוסלמים.

ביטויים וגילויים של אנטישמיות קלאסית מופיעים בהדרגה מחדש, כפי שכבר ציינו בדוחות קודמים, והם סותרים את מאמצי הכנסייה הקתולית לגנות את האנטישמיות. המגמה ניכרת גם באסלאם הרדיקלי המתבסס על יסודות תיאולוגיים משלו, וגם מאמץ יסודות נוצריים דתיים קלאסיים. לדוגמה, לשון פוגענית, המופיעה באיומים, עלבונות וקריאות לפגוע ביהודים, הפכה שוב את המונח "יהודי", בשפות שונות, למילת גנאי, המאפיינת תקופות היסטוריות קודמות. השימוש לרעה ב-JUDE, JUIF, FEUJ, ז'יד ויהודי (בערבית), הוא חלק בלתי נפרד מתפיסת האנטישמי את היהודי.

אחרי אירועי שרלוטסוויל, וירגיניה, באוגוסט הגיעו הבחירות בגרמניה בספטמבר ובאוסטריה בנובמבר, והן הוסיפו דאגה, למרות שתנועות ומפלגות ימין קיצוני באירופה משתדלות להתנער מעברן ומתדמיתן הימנית ובוודאי הניאו-נאצית, ומדגישות את יחסן החיובי לישראל ואת מחויבותן להיאבק באנטישמיות. מנהיגיהן אף מפרסמים הצהרות ברוח זו, ואולם לפי שעה נראה שהצהרות לחוד ומציאות בשטח לחוד, ואנטישמיות היא עדיין מרכיב מרכזי אצל בוחריהן. חלק מן היחס החיובי לישראל וליהודים מקורו ברצון ליצור אתם קואליציה נגד הפליטים, שרובם מוסלמים החשודים בהעלאת רף הפשיעה. ואולם רוב המוסלמים באירופה הם מתונים, שיכולים אולי להיות דווקא שותפים של הקהילות היהודיות וישראל נגד האיסלאמיסטים שבקרבתם.

הישגים שהושגו למרות הנאמר לעיל הם: פיתוח כלים המזהים אנטישמיות ברשת והקמת מערך ניטור במספר שפות; חיזוק החקיקה המגבילה במרחב האינטרנטי והטלת קנסות כבדים; המשך אימוצה של הגדרת העבודה של האנטישמיות; הצהרות אוהדות של מנהיגים; עלייה במספר ההגבלות החוקיות והפיננסיות על תנועת ה-BDS ובראייתה כנוגדת את שוויון ההזדמנויות המסחרי ואת החקיקה נגד אפליה.

נוסיף לסיום הצעה שלנו להמשך המאבק באנטישמיות, והיא שלושת ה-C, הנראים לנו חיוניים להמשך מאבק יעיל: Cooperation, Coalitions and Combatting. הראשון, נוגע לשיתוף פעולה הדוק, ואפילו הקמת ארגון גג, בין הקהילות והארגונים היהודיים הרבים שמנהלים מעקב אחרי אנטישמיות. השני, נוגע להקמת קואליציות עם מיעוטים וקבוצות אחרות המופלות לרעה, והשלישי, תורו של המאבק באנטישמיות, יגיע כאשר יושגו שני הראשונים.

פרופ' דינה פורת וצוות מרכז קנטור



TEL AVIV אוניברסיטת  
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הפקולטה למדעי הרוח ע"ש לסטר וסאלי אנטין

מאגר המידע לחקר האנטישמיות והגזענות בימינו ע"ש משה קנטור

אנטישמיות בעולם

2017

טיוטה



הקונגרס היהודי האירופי

התכנית לחקר היהודים בארצות ערב

המכון לחקר האנטישמיות והגזענות בימינו ע"ש סטפן רוט