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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030)**

*‘Because antisemitism strikes at the heart of our values: humanity, religious freedom, equality. Antisemitism is a poison for our society. It is up to all of us to fight it. To prevent it. And to eradicate it.’*

— Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission  
Brussels, 3 February 2021

*‘The hate that begins with Jews never ends with Jews. We make a great mistake if we think antisemitism is a threat only to Jews. It is a threat, first and foremost, to Europe and to the freedoms it took centuries to achieve.’*

— Rabbi Jonathan Sacks  
European Parliament, 27 September 2016

## TOWARDS AN EU FREE FROM ANTISEMITISM

European Jews and Jewish communities have been contributing to the social, political, economic, scientific and cultural development of Europe for over two millennia and are an inextricable part of Europe’s identity. From Gustav Mahler to Sigmund Freud, Hannah Arendt and Simone Veil, Jewish people have enriched Europe’s cultural, intellectual and religious heritage.

At the same time, antisemitism has been present in Europe for centuries, manifesting in the form of expulsions, persecutions and pogroms, which culminated in the Holocaust, an indelible stain on European history and erased Jewish life and heritage in many parts of the continent. The European Union has its historical roots in the Second World War and the unequivocal commitment of Europeans to ensure that such atrocities never happen again.

However, antisemitism did not end with the Holocaust. Generations after the end of the Shoah<sup>1</sup>, antisemitism is worryingly on the rise, in Europe and beyond.

The European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. It stands unequivocally against all forms of hatred and discrimination on any ground, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.

Antisemitism is incompatible with Europe’s core values. It represents a threat not only to Jewish communities and to Jewish life, but to an open and diverse society, to democracy and the European way of life. The European Union is determined to put an end to it.



**Every second European considers antisemitism as a problem.**

**Nine out of ten Jews consider that antisemitism has increased in their country.**

**85% Jews consider antisemitism to be a serious problem<sup>2</sup>.**

<sup>1</sup> Shoah is the Hebrew word for ‘catastrophe’, while Holocaust derives from the Greek word for ‘completely burnt offering’. This Strategy will use both terms. <https://aboutholocaust.org/en/facts/what-is-the-difference-between-holocaust-and-shoah>.

<sup>2</sup> [Eurobarometer 484: Perceptions of antisemitism, January 2019](#) and Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, 2018 ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#)).

Contemporary antisemitism occurs in many forms, old and new: from online hate speech to hate crimes and attacks on Jewish people, their properties and institutions, to desecration of synagogues, cemeteries and memorials. It occurs in the daily lives of Jewish people in the form of casual remarks or actions at work, private conversations, in public places, in the media, sports and culture or when Jewish people are practicing their religion. Antisemitism manifests itself as racial, ethnic or religious discrimination, stereotyping and hatred of Jews and people perceived as Jewish. It can lead to violent and lethal attacks such as those on the Ozar Hatorah school in Toulouse in 2012, the Jewish Museum in Brussels in 2014, the Hypercashier in Paris in 2015, or on the Synagogue in Halle in 2019.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown how old antisemitic prejudices can resurge and fuel new conspiracy myths and hatred online and offline. Jewish people have been one of the most attacked communities during the pandemic; they have been unjustifiably blamed for creating the virus and for developing vaccines to make a profit<sup>3</sup>. This is compounded by comparisons of pandemic measures with policies that led to the genocide of the Jewish people<sup>4</sup> that minimise and trivialise the experiences of Holocaust victims and survivors<sup>5</sup>.

While hate speech and violence are easily identifiable, widespread ignorance and indifference in our society allows antisemitism to flourish and even grow, if left unaddressed. We all have a responsibility to continuously inform and educate the young and the old. This is especially true as the generations who experienced the Holocaust are almost gone, making it even more difficult to pass on the first-hand experience and the essential lessons to the next generations.

### **Jewish life in the EU in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Before the Second World War, an estimated 9.5 million Jewish people lived in Europe. Six million Jews were systematically murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators in the Holocaust. Nowadays, the Jewish population in the EU is estimated to be up to 1.5 million people<sup>6</sup>.

Today, Jewish life across Europe is vibrant again. Over the past decades, many European countries have witnessed a revival of Jewish life and culture. Jewish identity has been strengthened and is an integral part of European society. However, due to the increasing number of antisemitic attacks<sup>7</sup>, fear among Jewish communities<sup>8</sup> has also increased and further security measures for Jewish premises have been necessary.

In recent years, the Jewish population in the EU has been declining, due in large part to migration to outside of the EU<sup>9</sup>. This is linked to several factors<sup>10</sup>, in particular to security

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<sup>3</sup> [Coronavirus and the plague of antisemitism](#), Community Security Trust, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> For example by wearing a yellow Star of David stating 'unvaccinated' in letters resembling the Hebrew alphabet.

<sup>5</sup> [The rise of antisemitism online during the pandemic - A study of French and German content](#), June 2021.

<sup>6</sup> The size of Jewish communities in the Member States varies widely. Around half a million Jews live in France, while the smallest communities only count a few thousand or sometimes even a few hundred members, often still as a consequence of the Holocaust.

[Jews in Europe at the turn of the Millennium. Population trends and estimates](#) by Sergio DellaPergola and Daniel Staetsky, JPR European Jewish Demography Unit, October 2020.

<sup>7</sup> [Antisemitism: Overview of antisemitic incidents recorded in the European Union 2009-2019](#), by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

<sup>8</sup> In 2013, 33% of respondents said they worry about being physically attacked. In 2018, this increased to 40%. 'Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States: experiences and perceptions of antisemitism', 2013 ([First FRA Survey 2013](#)); ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#)).

<sup>9</sup> [Are Jews leaving Europe?](#), by Daniel Staetsky, JPR Report, January 2017.

<sup>10</sup> [International Migration of Jews](#) by Sergio DellaPergola, 2007.

concerns, as well as to the perceived lack of determination of some governments to address antisemitism<sup>11</sup> and the politicisation of public debates around Jewish customs and traditions.

### Stepping up the fight against antisemitism

For the past 20 years, antisemitism has been addressed as part of the European Union's work tackling racism<sup>12</sup>. Given the significant rise of antisemitism, the efforts in addressing it have accelerated in recent years and the fight against antisemitism has been brought to the forefront of the EU political agenda. In 2015, the European Commission appointed the first-ever Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. In June 2017, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on combating antisemitism<sup>13</sup> and in December 2018, the Council adopted a Declaration on the fight against antisemitism<sup>14</sup>. To support the implementation of the Declaration the Commission set up an ad-hoc Working Group on combating antisemitism<sup>15</sup>, bringing together Member States and Jewish communities. In December 2019, the fight against antisemitism became part of the portfolio of the Commission Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, signalling the intention to address it as a cross-cutting priority. In December 2020, the Council adopted a further Declaration centred on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy areas<sup>16</sup>. This has been strengthened by the adoption of a series of strategies fostering a Union of Equality package through an intersectional lens<sup>17</sup>.

The persistence and increase of antisemitism requires a stronger response at EU level. With this strategy, the first of its kind, the Commission is determined to significantly step up the fight against antisemitism and help create an inclusive society based on equality and respect, to ensure a good perspective for the future of Jews in Europe.

This strategy is based on a wide consultation<sup>18</sup> of relevant stakeholders. The Commission invites EU institutions, Member States, international organisations and all civil society actors and citizens to **commit to a future free from antisemitism in the EU and beyond**. The Commission will engage in a regular dialogue with the European Parliament and with Member States' national parliaments to encourage renewed action on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. In full respect of national competences, this strategy sets out the policy framework for the Commission for the period 2021-2030 and aims to support and encourage cooperation between Member States and all stakeholders.

Crucially, this strategy seeks to go beyond responding to antisemitism alone and step up action to actively prevent and combat it in all its forms and to ensure that Jewish life continues to thrive in an inclusive and diverse EU. The strategy comprises three pillars:

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<sup>11</sup> 70% of respondents in the [Second FRA Survey 2018](#) believe that the government in their country does not combat antisemitism effectively.

<sup>12</sup> Following the adoption of Racial Equality and Employment Equality Directives in 2000, Commission President Prodi called a dedicated high-level conference in 2004 "Europe, against antisemitism for a Union of diversity". In the same year, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) developed a working definition of antisemitism that later on formed the basis for the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.

<sup>13</sup> [European Parliament resolution of 1 June 2017 on combating antisemitism](#).

<sup>14</sup> [Council Declaration on the fight against antisemitism](#), 6 December 2018.

<sup>15</sup> [European Commission's work on combating antisemitism](#).

<sup>16</sup> [Council Declaration on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across](#), 2 December 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Since 2020: the Gender equality strategy (2020-2025), the Anti-Racism action plan (2020-2025), the Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation (2020-2030), the LGBTIQ equality strategy (2020-2025), the Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities (2021-2030). In addition, the European Commission established a Task Force on Equality and appointed an anti-racism coordinator.

<sup>18</sup> This strategy is based on a [wide consultation](#) including national and regional authorities, Jewish communities and organisations, independent experts and researchers, FRA, international organisations, and other stakeholders (See Summary Report [here](#)).

## 1 – Preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism

## 2 – Protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU

## 3 – Education, research and Holocaust remembrance

This strategy also seeks to place the EU firmly in the lead of the **global fight against antisemitism**, complementing measures within the EU with international efforts along all the three pillars.

All forms of hatred undermine the value of a person and are incompatible with what the EU stands for. This strategy is part of the Commission's efforts on combating all forms of hatred, discrimination and racism. It complements the EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025, as racism can also be combined with discrimination and hatred on other grounds, including religion or belief. This needs to be taken into account through an intersectional approach<sup>19</sup> to truly pave the way towards an EU free from antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in all of its diversity and achieve concrete improvements for the Jewish people and their future in Europe. In specific instances, this strategy will also take note of the commonalities between the experience of discrimination of Jewish people and other ethnic or religious minorities.

### I. PREVENTING AND COMBATING ALL FORMS OF ANTISEMITISM

*'Let us remember: what hurts the victim most is not the cruelty of the oppressor but the silence of the bystander.'*

— Elie Wiesel

Contemporary antisemitism can be found in radical and fringe groups espousing right-wing, left-wing or Islamist extremism, it can hide behind anti-Zionism, but it can also be found in the centre of society<sup>20</sup>. Antisemitic speech and behaviour can be open or veiled, conscious or unconscious. Antisemitism can take the form of illegal acts, which are punishable under EU and national law. Manifestations of antisemitism might include Israel-related antisemitism<sup>21</sup>, the most common form of antisemitism encountered online by Jews in Europe today<sup>22</sup>. Long-standing antisemitic conspiracy myths and disinformation, while not necessarily illegal, are harmful. They perpetuate prejudices and stereotypes and can lead to discrimination, marginalisation, radicalisation and hate crime.

Since 2017, the Commission has been using the non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA definition)<sup>23</sup> as a practical guidance tool and a basis for its work to combat antisemitism<sup>24</sup>. The IHRA

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<sup>19</sup> See, for instance, Graham, D. and Boyd, J., "[Understanding more about antisemitic hate crime: Do the experiences, perceptions and behaviours of European Jews vary by gender, age and religiosity?](#)" - Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> For more information on perpetrators of antisemitism, see [Second FRA Survey 2018](#).

<sup>21</sup> Terminology used by many stakeholders, in line with the IHRA definition, e.g. 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; claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour; holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

<sup>22</sup> 79% of European Jews feel blamed for something done by the State of Israel. 69% say the Arab-Israeli conflict impacts on feeling of safety ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#)).

<sup>23</sup> The definition states: *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.* The [IHRA definition](#) includes a number of illustrative examples.

<sup>24</sup>The IHRA definition was endorsed by the [2018](#) and [2020](#) Council Declarations and the European Parliament [Resolution](#) of 1 June 2017. It is used for education, training and unmasking antisemitism and has no bearing on

definition is the benchmark for promoting a rights-based and victim-centred approach<sup>25</sup>. In January 2021, the Commission in cooperation with the IHRA published the *Handbook for the practical use of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism*<sup>26</sup>, which provides an overview of good practices from across Europe on the use of the definition by international organisations, national administrations, civil society and Jewish communities<sup>27</sup>.

### 1.1. Fighting antisemitism across policy areas and mobilising EU funds

Addressing antisemitism is a complex challenge. Its multi-faceted manifestations and its prevalence across the social and political spectrum call for a comprehensive response, ranging from a solid legal framework that is properly enforced, to security aspects, to education and inclusion policies, to name a few.

The Commission will therefore take the fight against antisemitism systematically into consideration when developing policies, legislation and funding programmes, and invites other EU institutions to cooperate on strengthening mainstreaming tools and practices. In addition, Member States have already committed to prevent and fight all forms of antisemitism through new national strategies, or measures under existing national strategies and/or action plans on preventing racism, xenophobia, radicalisation and violent extremism<sup>28</sup>. To have an impact, these strategies need to include targeted actions and be supported with the appropriate funding. The adoption of the IHRA definition<sup>29</sup> and the appointment of special envoys or coordinators by all Member States are also necessary steps for effective action at national level.

A reinforced involvement of civil society organisations and Jewish communities is key for the strategy to be successful. The Commission aims to enhance active cooperation with them and provide financial support for initiatives in all areas covered by the strategy.

Targeted actions will be pursued through a wide variety of EU funding programmes<sup>30</sup>, in particular, the **citizens, equality, rights and values (CERV) programme**<sup>31</sup>, which with a budget of **EUR 1.55 billion is the largest funding EU programme ever to promote fundamental rights**. In addition, relevant actions will be supported through EU programmes such as the Justice programme, Horizon Europe, Creative Europe, Erasmus+, the Internal Security Fund, the cohesion policy funds, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Furthermore, through the Technical Support Instrument, the Commission can fund structural reforms in Member States, including on a multi-country basis, to enhance cooperation and build on best practices in the fight against discrimination and antisemitism.

All Member States' actions undertaken for the implementation of EU funds need to fully respect the principle of non-discrimination. In particular, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, which prohibits any discrimination based, among others, on racial or ethnic origin,

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EU or national legal definitions determining to what extent a behaviour or speech would constitute illegal discrimination, hate speech, biased motivation for a hate crime or illegal manifestations of antisemitism.

<sup>25</sup> Other definitions of antisemitism have been developed recently, such as the Nexus Document (2020) and the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (2021).

<sup>26</sup> [Handbook for the practical use of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism](#).

<sup>27</sup> The [General Policy Recommendations on preventing and combating Antisemitism](#) published by the Council of Europe's Commission against Racism (ECRI) on 14 September 2021 can also serve as useful reference.

<sup>28</sup> [Council Declaration on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across](#), 2 December 2020.

<sup>29</sup> [EU Member States that have already adopted or endorsed the IHRA definition](#): Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Hungary Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, Slovakia and Slovenia.

<sup>30</sup> Under the current multi-annual financial framework for 2021-2027.

<sup>31</sup> [C\(2021\) 2699 final; CERV Programme](#).

religion or belief, must be respected throughout the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the programmes. In case of violation of EU anti-discrimination rules, including discrimination of Jewish people on the grounds of their religion or ethnicity, funding may be suspended. The Commission and the Member States monitor the respect of these rules for all EU-funded programmes.

To support the implementation of this strategy and help coordinate Member States' efforts the Commission will formalise the ad hoc **Working Group on combating antisemitism** as a permanent structure that brings together Member States, Jewish communities' representatives and other stakeholders.

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) will also support the EU and Member States with evidence, assistance and expertise when monitoring the implementation of this strategy and national strategies or action plans on combating antisemitism.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Organise an annual **civil society forum on combating antisemitism**, bringing together representatives from the Commission and Jewish communities, civil society and other stakeholders to create links and maximise the effect of joint actions and EU funding.
- Support Member States' efforts in **designing and implementing national strategies** on combating antisemitism or discrimination, through the Technical Support Instrument<sup>32</sup> and assess them by end 2023.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- **Develop national strategies** by end 2022 on combating antisemitism, or include measures in their national action plans against racism, and provide **sufficient funding** to implement them.
- **Adopt and use the IHRA definition of antisemitism** and encourage local authorities, regions, cities, and other institutions and organisations to do the same.
- **Appoint special envoys/coordinators** on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life.

## 1.2. Combating antisemitic hate speech and hate crime

Jewish people are the main target of crimes committed on an antisemitic bias<sup>33</sup>. However, rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism can be directed towards non-Jewish individuals as well<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/240](#).

<sup>33</sup> The [Antisemitism: Overview of antisemitic incidents recorded in the European Union 2009-2019](#) shows that Member States record thousands of officially recorded incidents every year, as do civil society organisations working in the area.

<sup>34</sup> In line with the [IHRA definition of antisemitism](#).



**71% of Jewish people** who sometimes carry or display items that could identify them as Jewish avoid doing so at least occasionally<sup>35</sup>.

**44% of young Jewish Europeans** have experienced antisemitic harassment<sup>36</sup>.



The **EU Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law**<sup>37</sup> provides a strong legal framework to combat antisemitic hate crimes and hate speech, including public condoning, denial or gross trivialisation of the Holocaust in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred. Its full and correct transposition is a priority for the Commission<sup>38</sup>. Law enforcement and the judiciary play a crucial role in effectively implementing legislation on hate speech and hate crime (including the Framework Decision) and safeguarding the rights of victims. To further strengthen the legal framework, in 2021 the Commission will introduce an initiative to extend the list of ‘EU crimes’ to cover hate crime and hate speech<sup>39</sup>.

The Commission supports Member States through the **High Level Group on combating racism and xenophobia and other forms of intolerance**<sup>40</sup> and cooperates with the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), FRA<sup>41</sup>, the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), Member States and civil society organisations to **develop training and capacity-building** for law enforcement and the judiciary, improve hate crime recording and data collection, as well as to encourage victims to report hate crime and strengthen cooperation between law enforcement and Jewish communities.

The **EU strategy on victims’ rights (2020-2025)**<sup>42</sup> aims to ensure that victims of crime, including of antisemitic hate crimes, can fully rely on their rights and be protected against secondary victimisation<sup>43</sup>. **Support structures for victims of antisemitic incidents across Europe are often inadequate**. Member States are encouraged to set up integrated and targeted specialist support services for the most vulnerable victims, including for victims of antisemitic hate crime. They should also ensure specific training on non-discrimination for police and others coming into contact with victims of antisemitic hate crime.

<sup>35</sup> [Second FRA Survey 2018](#).

<sup>36</sup> [Young Jewish Europeans: perceptions and experiences of antisemitism](#), FRA, 2019.

<sup>37</sup> [Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008](#)

<sup>38</sup> Since October 2020, the Commission has launched several infringements proceedings to ensure the full and correct transposition of the Framework Decision by Member States.

<sup>39</sup> In Article 83 TFEU.

<sup>40</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/items/51025/en>

<sup>41</sup> [Encouraging hate crime reporting - The role of law enforcement and other authorities](#), FRA, 2021.

<sup>42</sup> [COM\(2020\) 258 final](#).

<sup>43</sup> Secondary victimisation can be defined as negative consequences for victims that may result from their participation in criminal proceedings, including victims’ exposure to contacts with their perpetrators, judicial authorities and/or the general public.



The Commission will continue to monitor the implementation of the **Victims' Rights Directive**<sup>44</sup>, which ensures that all victims of crime have rights, including access to specialist support services and protection measures that correspond to their individual needs and vulnerability. With the **European judicial training strategy for 2021-2024**<sup>45</sup>, the Commission supports the training of justice professionals to ensure that EU legislation is correctly applied and that professionals are equipped with the relevant skills. The Commission will also support the **development of trainings as well as materials on antisemitism** and make them available on the 'European Training Platform'<sup>46</sup> of the European e-Justice Portal. With the **EU Strategy on the rights of the child**<sup>47</sup>, the Commission aims to mainstream children's rights across EU policies, to better protect children who are victims of discrimination, including based on religion or belief.

**Reliable and comparable data on antisemitic incidents** are crucial to assess the spread of antisemitism in Europe and to tackle it effectively<sup>48</sup>. Recording of reported incidents is often inconsistent as Member States use different methodologies and data can therefore not be compared. Within the High Level Group on combating racism and xenophobia, **the FRA will help Member States improve and align their methodologies** for recording and collecting data on hate crime, including on antisemitism.

Underreporting is a challenge: 79% of Jewish people surveyed did not report their most serious antisemitic incident to any organisation<sup>49</sup>. In this regard, Member States should make it easier for victims of antisemitic hate crime and hates speech to report incidents, offering a variety of channels, so as to increase the level of reporting and improve the recording of such incidents.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Support organisations and projects to combat and **record antisemitic hate speech and hate crime** through the CERV programme.
- Assist Member States in ensuring that **integrated and targeted support services** are available and accessible to victims of antisemitic hate crime, including through EU funding.
- Enhance support to **training programmes and capacity-building activities on tackling antisemitism for justice and law enforcement professionals**, including through the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) and the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL).

**Members States are encouraged to:**

- Swiftly complete the **transposition and implementation of the Framework Decision** on combating racism and xenophobia and prosecute antisemitic hate speech and hate crime in line with EU and national legislation.
- Closely coordinate with the EJTN and CEPOL and cooperate with civil society organisations on **training activities** to tackle antisemitism.

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<sup>44</sup> [Directive 2012/29/EU](#).

<sup>45</sup> [COM\(2020\) 713 final](#).

<sup>46</sup> [The European Training Platform \(ETP\)](#).

<sup>47</sup> [COM\(2021\) 142 final](#).

<sup>48</sup> [Germany](#) and the [UK](#) fund NGOs that record antisemitic incidents using methodology agreed with the police. These NGOs are linked with the Jewish community structures and contribute to official police statistics.

<sup>49</sup> [Second FRA Survey 2018](#).

### 1.3. Tackling antisemitism online

Antisemitism is widespread online<sup>50</sup> and can lead to radicalisation and physical attacks. Antisemitic speech – both online and offline – that incites violence and hatred is criminalised under the Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia. Antisemitic stereotypes, conspiracy myths and disinformation, although not necessarily illegal, are harmful. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, antisemitism on the internet has risen sharply<sup>51</sup>. To tackle this problem effectively, more information is needed on how antisemitic content travels online and on the backgrounds and motivations of those sharing such content. New and innovative methods to address discrimination and antisemitic cyberhate also need to be found.

**Nazi-related symbols, memorabilia and literature** as well as contemporary permutations of them are easily accessible online. Displaying and selling such products may constitute hate speech under national laws implementing the Framework Decision when publicly inciting hatred and violence. However, even if this is not the case, such online availability may perpetuate Nazi ideology and stimulate an antisemitic subcultures. Dialogue with industry and IT companies needs to be strengthened, building on the experience of the Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online, to ensure their cooperation in avoiding the display and/or sale of such items.

The **Audiovisual Media Services Directive**<sup>52</sup> stipulates that Member States ensure that video-sharing platform providers take appropriate measures to protect the general public from audiovisual content and from commercial communications containing incitement to violence or hatred, including antisemitic content. The proposal for a **Digital Services Act**<sup>53</sup> sets out clear, harmonised due-diligence obligations for online platforms, including notice-and-action procedures for illegal content and products, empowering users to report hate speech in an easy and effective way. In addition, with regard to very large online platforms, the proposal focuses on addressing remaining gaps that allow for illegal and harmful behaviours online, in particular against vulnerable groups.

The **Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online**<sup>54</sup> is a voluntary collaboration between the Commission and IT companies to prevent the spread of illegal - including antisemitic hate speech. To facilitate integrated action by EU Member States targeting groups and individuals spreading hate and terrorist content online, Europol coordinates European-wide action days targeting online racist and xenophobic hate speech<sup>55</sup> and online terrorist and violent extremist content, including antisemitic content.

Under the **action plan on disinformation**<sup>56</sup> and the **European democracy action plan**<sup>57</sup> the Commission and the EEAS will continue to pay specific attention to analysing and responding to campaigns of disinformation, hate speech, incitement to violence and extremist rhetoric, including through the EEAS East StratCom Task Force. In addition, the **Code of**

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<sup>50</sup> 89% of European Jews surveyed consider antisemitism to be the biggest problem online, with 80% saying that antisemitic statements were the most common toxic language they encountered. ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#)), Jews are a major target of toxic language online (ranging from 6.3% to 27.9% of the cases depending on the platform). Study: [Heroes and scapegoats](#), 2021.

<sup>51</sup> [The rise of antisemitism online during the pandemic](#) study found a seven-fold increase in antisemitic postings on French language accounts, and over a 13-fold increase on German ones during the pandemic.

<sup>52</sup> [Directive 2010/13/EU](#).

<sup>53</sup> [COM\(2020\) 825 final](#).

<sup>54</sup> [The Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online](#).

<sup>55</sup> [Stopping Hate Speech Online: Europol Coordinates First Europe-Wide Action Day](#), 5 November 2020.

<sup>56</sup> [JOIN\(2018\) 36 final](#).

<sup>57</sup> [COM\(2020\) 790 final](#).

**Practice on Disinformation**<sup>58</sup> is being strengthened<sup>59</sup>, also contributing to better fighting antisemitism online. Civil society organisations work closely with the Commission and online platforms to apply the Code of conduct and the Code of Practice.

New technologies bring new opportunities to improve people’s lives, but can also exacerbate discrimination and amplify harmful content online, including antisemitic content. The **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act**<sup>60</sup> aims to prevent high-risk AI systems from propagating discrimination and bias, including antisemitic hatred. AI algorithms can also be used to reinforce positive messages and counter-narratives by bringing experts together to address antisemitism, conspiracy myths and Holocaust denial or distortion online.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Strengthen the fight against online antisemitism by supporting the establishment of a **Europe-wide network of trusted flaggers and Jewish organisations**, in line with the Code of conduct. It will also support the European Digital Media Observatory and its national hubs to **increase the capacity of their fact-checkers** on disinformation and will work with independent organisations to develop **counter-narratives**, including in non-EU languages.
- Organise a **Hackathon** to facilitate exchanges between experts to develop new innovative ways to address antisemitism in the online and digital environment.
- Cooperate with industry and IT companies to **prevent the illegal display and sale of Nazi-related symbols, memorabilia and literature** online.
- Conduct a **comprehensive data analysis** to better understand the spread of antisemitism online, how it travels and expands.
- Address antisemitic hate speech in the upcoming updated **Better internet for kids strategy**.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- **Support, including financially, civil society organisations** in combating antisemitic hate speech, disinformation and conspiracy myths online, in relevant languages.
- **Strengthen the capacity** of national law enforcement and judicial authorities to prosecute online hate speech.

#### 1.4. Combating antisemitic discrimination

Jewish people risk experiencing discrimination, in particular when they can be identified as being Jewish, i.e. by wearing a *kippah* or a Star of David necklace or when speaking openly about their Jewish identity. They may be at risk of discrimination when applying for a job or at work and in other areas such as education, health or housing. EU law prohibits discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, including antisemitism. In particular, the **Racial Equality Directive**<sup>61</sup> offers protection for Jewish people against discrimination (including harassment) based on ‘racial or ethnic origin’ in certain areas of

<sup>58</sup> [The Code of Practice on Disinformation.](#)

<sup>59</sup> [COM\(2021\) 262 final.](#)

<sup>60</sup> [COM\(2021\) 206 final.](#)

<sup>61</sup> [Directive 2000/43/EC.](#)

life<sup>62</sup> and the **Employment Equality Directive**<sup>63</sup> offers protection for Jewish people against discrimination or harassment on the grounds of religion or belief in the area of employment.

**National equality bodies** promote, analyse, monitor and support equal treatment. By 2022, the Commission will propose new legislation to strengthen their role. Diversity Charters encourage organisations to develop and implement diversity and inclusion policies at the workplace. The EU Platform of Diversity Charters has been set up to allow existing charters to exchange and share experience and good practices<sup>64</sup>. They should also systematically address the specific challenges of identifying and combating antisemitism at the workplace.

**Equality data** relating to Jewish people are relatively scarce due to the sensitivity of collecting data based on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, and because European Jews are a rather small group which leads to less available aggregated data from larger surveys. The EU High Level Group on Non-discrimination, Equality and Diversity, through a dedicated subgroup, supports Member States in gathering data to help analyse the state of equality, in full respect of fundamental rights<sup>65</sup>. Furthermore, the Commission will carry out a series of actions to address racial and ethnic stereotypes with the media, civil society and representatives of people with a minority racial or ethnic background and will launch an action to ensure a consistent approach to equality data collection, in particular as regards data disaggregated by racial or ethnic origin<sup>66</sup>.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Propose **binding standards for national equality bodies** by 2022 and cooperate with **Equinet**<sup>67</sup> and **equality bodies** to increase their knowledge about antisemitism.
- Support Member States in **designing and implementing reforms** aimed at tackling discrimination in schools in general – and antisemitism in particular – within the Technical Support Instrument, including on a multi-country basis in order to facilitate stronger cooperation and build on best practices.
- Include data related to antisemitism and Jewish people in the EU into the **collection and use of equality data** on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin and religion or belief.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- Ensure that **national equality bodies are adequately equipped** to ensure that incidents of antisemitic discrimination are properly addressed and reported.
- **Address antisemitic discrimination** in all areas, including, education and training, employment, health and housing through targeted actions such as training and awareness raising.

### 1.5. The European Commission leading by example

As part of its own human resources strategy, the Commission will continue to strive for an **inclusive and diverse working environment**<sup>68</sup> free from antisemitism, through diversity

<sup>62</sup> Employment and vocational training, social protection, including social security, social advantages, education, and access to and supply of goods and services, including housing.

<sup>63</sup> [Directive 2000/78/EC](#).

<sup>64</sup> [EU Platform of Diversity Charters](#)

<sup>65</sup> [Subgroup on Equality Data, FRA, 2019](#).

<sup>66</sup> [Anti-racism action plan, COM\(565\) final](#).

<sup>67</sup> European Network of Equality Bodies.

and equality policies that prevent harassment, discrimination and any form of racism. In particular, it will continue to raise awareness among its staff on antisemitism and how to combat it, and increase understanding of Jewish life and culture, including as part of a general focus on core European values such as respect for minority groups. Training will also cover unconscious biases including those based on perceptions of religion or belief. The Commission will continue to mark the Holocaust with internal staff events and awareness raising initiatives and continue to host the annual Euro-Chanukah<sup>69</sup> to recognise diversity among staff. The Commission invites the other EU institutions to also take steps to foster diversity and inclusion in their respective workplaces.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Continue to pursue a **zero tolerance approach to incidents of antisemitism** within the institution, using the IHRA definition as reference.
- Provide **training for targeted staff** such as human resources professionals to recognise antisemitism based on the IHRA definition and organise study visits when relevant, for instance to Israel.
- Encourage the use of flexible **working arrangements** to accommodate a religious holiday observance for all its staff.
- Invite the European schools to ensure that all pupils learn about Jewish life in Europe, the Holocaust and antisemitism, and **mark the annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day**, including by potential visits to memorial sites.

## II. PROTECTING AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE IN THE EU

*'I'm afraid I've lived long enough to see things that I thought History would have finally discarded, but they were only dormant.'*

— **Liliana Segre (Shoah survivor)**

For Jews to participate fully in European life, it is essential that they feel safe and secure. Yet, security is the key concern for the Jewish community<sup>70</sup>. 38% of Jews have considered emigrating because they do not feel safe as Jews in the EU<sup>71</sup>.



**One-third (34%) of Jews** avoid visiting Jewish events or sites at least occasionally because **they would not feel safe there** or on the way there<sup>72</sup>.

Several lethal terrorist attacks across Europe have shown that Jewish premises are not always adequately protected. Although it is the national authorities that are responsible for protecting all citizens, most Jewish communities and civil society organisations have had to invest significant funding in their own security measures.

<sup>68</sup> The European Commission set up its own Diversity and Inclusion Office in November 2020.

<sup>69</sup> [The Jewish celebration of light.](#)

<sup>70</sup> 47% of European Jews worry about becoming a victim of an antisemitic verbal insult or harassment and 40% about being physically attacked in the next 12 months. ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#))

<sup>71</sup> [Second FRA Survey 2018.](#)

<sup>72</sup> [Second FRA Survey 2018.](#)

## 2.1. Combating violent extremism and terrorism targeted against Jews

The 2020-2025 **Security Union strategy**<sup>73</sup> aims to ensure security for everyone in the EU, in line with EU values and principles. The 2020 Counter-Terrorism Agenda<sup>74</sup> steps up the fight against terrorism and violent extremism and boosts the EU's resilience to terrorist threats.

Under the 2017 action plan to support the protection of public spaces including places of worship<sup>75</sup>, various guidance materials<sup>76</sup>, tools and training<sup>77</sup> were developed by the Commission to support the work of Member States and faith communities in this area. The June 2021 Council Conclusions on the protection of public spaces<sup>78</sup> underlined that places of worship demand specific protection measures.

Cooperation needs to be further strengthened between public authorities and faith-based leaders and congregations, including Jewish ones, to improve the level of security awareness and increase community engagement and resilience through trust-building activities. This will promote good practices and training in the protection of places of worship, which have increasingly been targeted by terrorist attacks. The Commission will also **organise a high-level conference** on the protection of Jewish communities in the EU.

The Commission will continue to support Member States and Jewish communities in **strengthening the protection of places of worship** as part of its support for the protection of public spaces. The next call for proposals will be published in 2022 and will increase the total amount to EUR 24 million. The Commission, together with the European Union Intelligence and Situation Centre, will explore the possibility of **regular EU assessments of the specific threats to Jewish people, communities and places of worship**, in order to better understand, prevent, protect and respond to specific security risks.

To combat violent extremism, it is essential to strengthen our democratic societies and increase societal resilience to extremist ideologies. Antisemitism is encountered across the spectrum of extremist ideologies, from jihadism to violent right-wing extremism. Radicalisation, recruitment and preparation of terrorist attacks often take place online. The **Regulation on addressing the dissemination of terrorist content online**<sup>79</sup> tackles this by requiring online platforms to play a more active role in detecting such content and removing it within at most 1 hour.

### *Key actions:*

#### **The Commission will:**

- Provide EU funding in support of projects focused on the **protection of public spaces and places of worship** and map, in cooperation with Member States, the existing national security and protection measures.
- Continue to finance **research and innovation activities**, primarily via the Horizon Europe programme, aiming at understanding the contemporary radicalisation trends, as well as the means and patterns to effectively prevent and respond to them.
- Step up its **operational support** for Member States and Jewish communities by providing training on security measures. This will include EU protective security

<sup>73</sup> [COM\(2020\) 605 final.](#)

<sup>74</sup> [COM\(2020\) 795 final.](#)

<sup>75</sup> [COM\(2017\) 612 final.](#)

<sup>76</sup> [Guideline - Building Perimeter Protection](#), JRC, 2020.

<sup>77</sup> The Commission offers a yearly autumn school on the protection of public spaces for participants of religious communities.

<sup>78</sup> [Council Conclusions on the Protection of Public Spaces](#), 7 June 2021.

<sup>79</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/784.](#)

advisors' visits to Member States to set up a **network of trainers** on the protection of places of worship.

- Identify through the **Radicalisation Awareness Network** the specific relevance and implications of antisemitism in its work on preventing and countering violent extremism.
- Closely **cooperate with Europol**, including its EU Internet Referral Unit, to combat online antisemitic terrorism and violent extremism, by taking action against groups and individuals spreading terrorist content online and to ensure **swift implementation of the terrorist content online Regulation**.
- Support the commemoration of **victims of terrorist attacks, including through digital victims' wall**.

#### **Member States are encouraged to:**

- Adopt the necessary measures to **ensure the security of Jewish premises** and provide sufficient financial or other support, including with the support of the **EU Internal Security Fund-Police** national annual programmes.
- Integrate and implement EU tools and guidance<sup>80</sup> **on protection of places of worship** as part of their national strategies on antisemitism.
- Make **use of Europol's support regarding counter-terrorism activities**, both online and offline, and related investigations, including those linked to racism, xenophobia and antisemitism.

## **2.2. Fostering Jewish life and freedom of religion or belief**

Jewish life is part of the EU's diversity. Jews can be secular, liberal, reform, agnostic, orthodox or ultra-orthodox; they may be Ashkenazi or Sephardi; they may have roots in the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and elsewhere. Many Jews are part of mixed families, further increasing their diversity of origins and beliefs<sup>81</sup>. However, despite the long-standing presence of Jews in Europe, people have scant **knowledge of Jewish life and Judaism**. Only 3% of Europeans feel 'very well informed' about Jewish history, customs and practices, while 68% say they are 'not informed'<sup>82</sup>. To dismantle prejudices and to achieve full recognition of **Jewish life as part of Europe's society**, awareness and knowledge of Jewish history and culture need to be increased among the general public<sup>83</sup>.

Jewish people express their Jewishness through specific cultural, traditional and religious practices, recalling their history and teaching lessons for future generations. One of these practices is the spring festival *TuBishvat* (New Year of Trees), a Jewish holiday dedicated to the preservation of nature on which trees are planted in celebration.

*Shechita*, the kosher slaughtering<sup>84</sup> of animals, is another example. In its judgment on ritual slaughtering of December 2020, the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU)<sup>85</sup>, acknowledged that

<sup>80</sup> E.g. the vulnerability assessment tool and the [EU Quick Guide to support the protection of places of worship](#).

<sup>81</sup> [Jews in Europe at the turn of the millennium: population trends and estimates](#) by Sergio DellaPergola and Daniel Staetsky, European Jewish Demography Unit/JPR, 2020.

<sup>82</sup> [Eurobarometer 484: Perceptions of antisemitism, January 2019](#)

<sup>83</sup> For 82% of Jewish people in the EU a prohibition of circumcision would be a problem and for 69% a prohibition of traditional slaughter would be a problem ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#)).

<sup>84</sup> Traditional slaughter (*Shechita*) is the practice of kosher slaughtering of animals in the context of a prescribed practice for food-production purposes. For 69% of Jews prohibition of traditional slaughter would be a problem ([Second FRA Survey 2018](#)).

<sup>85</sup> [Case C-336/19; Centraal Israëlitisch Consistorie van België and Others](#), 17 December 2020.

Member States may adopt different rules based on the domestic context, while ensuring respect of Article 10(1) of the Charter<sup>86</sup>, by striking a fair balance between respect for the freedom to manifest religion and the protection of animal welfare<sup>87</sup>.

**Jewish life can flourish only within an inclusive society**, building on strong and trustful relations with other communities, including newcomers, in particular at local level. Culture can play an important role in developing an inclusive society. From music to cinema and the performing art, the cultural sector is a powerful force for promoting inclusion and fighting all forms of discrimination. The **Commission supports Jewish culture and art** through EU funding programmes, such as the Creative Europe programme, seeking to combat stereotypes - including about Jewish people - in European society.

**Sports and the media also have an important role to play** in fostering inclusion. In football, some national federations and clubs are already addressing antisemitic behaviours and incidents. The Commission will liaise closely with civil society initiatives and other relevant actors to strengthen the fight against antisemitism and racism in football in the upcoming cooperation arrangement with UEFA (2022-2024) and to address antisemitism in sports in general in cooperation with other partner organisations, including via social media campaigns. Stereotypes also occur in the media. While respecting the freedom of the press, the Commission will support **training for journalists** on recognising all forms of antisemitism and uncovering antisemitic biases in reporting.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Increase knowledge and understanding about Jewish life among the general public through an **awareness-raising campaign** in close cooperation with Jewish communities, including through **intercultural and interreligious dialogue** and activities.
- Foster links between the **Jewish tradition of planting trees** on the holiday of *TuBishvat*, including by school children, and the **EU pledge to plant 3 billion additional trees** under the biodiversity and forest strategy for 2030, thereby raising mutual awareness and visibility<sup>88</sup>.
- Facilitate the **exchange of practices** between public authorities and Jewish and Muslim communities regarding slaughter based on religious traditions, drawing on the experience of international organisations such as the UN, OSCE-ODIHR and the Council of Europe.
- Take action to combat antisemitism and foster Jewish life at **regional and local level**, including by mapping and developing a **guide of good practices and training** for organisations that operate at regional and local levels.
- Support the exchange through the **European Integration Network** of good practices on informing migrants on EU values, including on combating antisemitism, for example by working with migrants as ambassadors for EU values.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

<sup>86</sup> Art. 10 (1): ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.’

<sup>87</sup> Paragraph 71 of the judgment. Under Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, traditional slaughter is allowed to the extent required for the needs of the concerned religious communities, and stricter rules by the Member States need to be properly justified.

<sup>88</sup> [COM\(2020\)380 final](#).



- Ensure through **policy and legal measures** that religious groups or communities, including Jews, can live their lives in accordance with their religious and cultural traditions.
- **Raise awareness** among the general public **about Jewish life and traditions**, including by publicly marking days relevant for Jewish people, and by funding projects and conducting campaigns.

### 2.3. Safeguarding Jewish heritage

Jewish cultural heritage is an integral part of European culture. The extermination of Jewish communities during the Holocaust changed the face of Europe and left many buildings, cemeteries and other Jewish heritage sites unattended or unused. This ‘orphaned heritage’ is now often in poor condition or in danger of deterioration.

The **European framework for action on cultural heritage**<sup>89</sup> includes a specific measure on Jewish cemeteries in Europe. Europe’s cultural heritage, including Jewish heritage, is supported by a range of EU policies, programmes and funding, notably Creative Europe, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, CERV and cohesion policy funds. The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention)<sup>90</sup> emphasises the important aspects of heritage as they relate to human rights and democracy, and promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society<sup>91</sup>. The Terezín Declaration on Holocaust Era Assets and Related Issues<sup>92</sup>, signed by all Member States in 2009<sup>93</sup>, outlines several measures towards restorative justice for the victims of Nazi persecution and their descendants. In the context of DiscoverEU<sup>94</sup>, young travellers are encouraged to visit cultural heritage sites to strengthen their awareness of the Europe’s cultural heritage.

#### *Key actions:*

##### **The Commission will:**

- Invite cities to address the history of their minorities, including Jewish community history, when applying for the title of **European Capital of Culture**.
- Use the **European Heritage Days**, a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the Commission, to draw attention to Jewish heritage across Europe.
- Pursue the **Jewish digital cultural recovery project**<sup>95</sup>, which aims at developing a comprehensive database of information on Jewish-owned cultural assets that were plundered by the Nazis, collecting good practices and proposing awareness-raising activities.
- Launch a preparatory action on **protecting the Jewish cemeteries of Europe**, capitalising on the results of two previous European Parliament pilot projects<sup>96</sup> on this topic and fostering links between groups interested in the preservation of Jewish

<sup>89</sup> [European framework for action on cultural heritage](#).

<sup>90</sup> [The Faro Convention](#) was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 13 October 2005, opened for signature to Member States on 27 October 2005, and entered into force on 1 June 2011.

<sup>91</sup> [Resolution 2309 \(2019\)](#).

<sup>92</sup> [Terezín Declaration 2009](#).

<sup>93</sup> See also: [A Joint Declaration of the European Commission and the Czech EU Presidency](#), signed on 29 June 2009.

<sup>94</sup> [https://europa.eu/youth/discovereu\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/discovereu_en)

<sup>95</sup> The database produced during the phase I of the project is available here: <https://pilot-demo.jdcrp.org>

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.esjf-surveys.org/>.

burial sites.

- Promote **visits of young people** travelling around Europe to Jewish heritage sites in the context of **DiscoverEU**.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- Encourage and support European Heritage Days, by highlighting **Jewish heritage in the national context**, including inside national museums, state-sponsored festivals and the arts.
- Support the **maintenance and safeguarding of Jewish heritage** under the Faro Convention.
- Use EU funding opportunities, including the **cohesion policy fund**, to safeguard Jewish heritage.
- **Implement the Terezín Declaration** of 2009.

### III. EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND REMEMBRANCE

*‘How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.’*

— Anne Frank

To shape Europe’s future, people need to understand its past. Knowledge about Jewish life and antisemitism in Europe over the centuries and the impact of the Holocaust on the Jewish people and the European continent are essential to understand antisemitism today and prevent such atrocities from ever happening again. **Education and research on Jewish life, antisemitism and the Holocaust** are crucial in this regard and should not only focus on the Holocaust, but also on the Jewish contribution to European society.

The **European Education Area**<sup>97</sup> and the new **European Research Area**<sup>98</sup> communications address issues of inclusion, equality and non-discrimination. The Commission also proposed that equal opportunities be a value shared by Member States in research and innovation, in the context of the upcoming **Pact for Research and Innovation**.

The **Digital education action plan** (2021-2027) focuses on the importance of tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy in education and training through the development of guidelines for teacher and educators with a view to fostering critical thinking, tolerance and promoting online empowerment. Furthermore, the UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR have repeatedly called for the promotion of educational programmes in the participating States, including EU Member States, to raise awareness among young people of the value of mutual respect and understanding. UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR commitments encourage education on antisemitism that ensures a systematic approach, including the development and use of curricula to address contemporary forms of antisemitism<sup>99</sup>.

#### 3.1. Education and research on antisemitism and Jewish life

Every child should learn about Jewish life and antisemitism as an integral part of Europe’s history. Education can **strengthen young people’s resilience to antisemitic ideas** and ideologies and to all forms of intolerance and discrimination. Opportunities to engage with

<sup>97</sup> [COM\(2020\) 625 final](#).

<sup>98</sup> [COM\(2020\) 628 final](#).

<sup>99</sup> ODIHR has developed a collection of resources and programmes to raise awareness about discrimination, hate crimes, antisemitism and other forms of intolerance, including against Muslims, Christians and members of other religions or beliefs. More information on the [OSCE/ODIHR’s website](#).

Jewish communities and their members as well as with other minorities and religious groups can also foster mutual understanding. The **European Year of Youth 2022** will offer new opportunities in this regard. Schools and campuses must be safe places for all. Teachers should be empowered to address antisemitism, the Holocaust, Jewish life and history, also in multicultural classrooms.

The Commission has been supporting research on antisemitism, Jewish life and the Holocaust through Horizon 2020 and the Europe for Citizens programme, and it will continue to do so under their successors, Horizon Europe<sup>100</sup> and the CERV programmes. However, university chairs on antisemitism and Jewish studies in the EU are only loosely connected. There is no **overarching research hub**. Research efforts on all aspects of antisemitism and Jewish life in Europe should be increased to complement Holocaust research.

The EU has taken the lead in ensuring comparable data on antisemitic experiences and perceptions. The **FRA survey on Jewish people's experiences of antisemitism** will be repeated in 2023 and at regular intervals thereafter. The **Eurobarometer on perceptions of antisemitism** among the general public will be conducted for the second time in 2024 and then every 5 years. To further facilitate evidence based policymaking, more research into antisemitic prejudices among the general population is needed.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Foster, in cooperation with the Member States and the research community, the creation of a **European research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life and culture** fostering multidisciplinary research across Europe and fund **research** through Horizon Europe, on various structural forms of racism and xenophobia, taking into account national specificities and intersectionality.
- Support the development of a network of **Young European Ambassadors to promote Holocaust remembrance** in schools, universities and vocational and education training institutions.
- Fund an **EU-wide survey on antisemitic prejudices** in the general population of all Member States, including among young people.
- Support Member States in stepping up their efforts to promote common values and inclusive education and implement the Council Recommendation on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching<sup>101</sup> through the new **Working Group on equality and values in education and training**, including on Jewish life and traditions.
- Support activities, through Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, aimed at promoting European values and combating all forms of discrimination and intolerance, **including antisemitism**, by fostering civic education and youth participation in democratic life.
- Support **educational professionals' training** in cooperation with UNESCO and OSCE-ODIHR, based on their guidance on 'Addressing antisemitism through education', respectively for policymakers and teacher-training institutions.
- Support Member States, through the Technical Support Instrument, in designing and **implementing reforms in schools** aimed at tackling discrimination in general, and antisemitism in particular.

<sup>100</sup> For instance, the first calls of Horizon Europe will fund research on various structural forms of racism and xenophobia, taking into account national specificities and intersectionality.

<sup>101</sup> [Council Recommendation \(2018/C 195/01\)](#), 22 May 2018.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- Promote **knowledge of Jewish life, antisemitism and the Holocaust** through education and research, and encourage exchanges with local communities, where possible.
- Report and record incidents of **antisemitic discrimination in schools** and support school directors and teachers in addressing them.

### **3.2. Holocaust education, research and remembrance**

The Holocaust is a defining legacy of European history, during which six million Jewish children, women and men were murdered. While Jews were the priority target of the Nazi regime, other groups were also persecuted, including Roma, persons with disabilities, Slavs, Jehovah's witnesses, LGBTIQ people and political dissidents.

For decades, Holocaust survivors have shared their stories as part of the **remembrance** tradition. Today however, all of the survivors have grown old or passed away. Those who were adults during World War II and had the clearest memories of the Holocaust, are no longer with us. Preserving and honouring their legacy, making sure their stories are not forgotten and are retold accurately, and finding new forms of remembrance are challenges and duties for this generation and future generations of Europeans.

Currently, one European in 20 has never heard of the Holocaust, and less than half of Europeans think it is sufficiently taught in schools<sup>102</sup>. **Education and research** play a key role in raising awareness of the Holocaust.

Free, open and independent research is a core value of democracies. Research on all aspects of the Holocaust is also important to increase understanding of how the Holocaust was possible in Europe. With EUR 25 million (2010-2024)<sup>103</sup>, **the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI)**<sup>104</sup> - the largest EU-funded research initiative on the Holocaust globally - connects the research community by making available, across Europe and beyond, dispersed sources related to the Holocaust. In this regard, EHRI will expand its research focus on manifestations of antisemitism that led to the Holocaust.

New ways of raising awareness must also be developed, in particular in a local context, where places 'where the Holocaust happened' – from synagogues to Jewish cultural sites, from hiding places to shooting grounds – are often not visible. This can include **a network enabling school students, practitioners and the general public to trace the continuity of Jewish presence in Europe** over the centuries and facilitate local initiatives to visit and restore cultural and memorial sites.

The Commission will also foster **public debate** (online or town hall) on the significance of the Holocaust in a diverse EU and support the creation of a participatory **European Holocaust Monument** in Brussels, linked with pieces of arts in EU capitals.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Support, also financially, the **creation of a network of sites 'where the Holocaust**

<sup>102</sup> Two-thirds of Europeans are convinced that commemorating the Holocaust helps ensure that such atrocities will never happen again. ([CNN Poll: Anti-Semitism in Europe – A shadow over Europe, 2018.](#))

<sup>103</sup> EHRI, funded from EU Research & Innovation Framework Programmes, is currently in the process of becoming a long-term European Infrastructure based on joint funding from Member States.

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.ehri-project.eu/>.

**happened**', in cooperation with local communities.

- Make project **funding available through the Remembrance strand** of the CERV programme to commemorate the Holocaust also through the **digitalisations of archives and testimonies** of Holocaust survivors.
- Continue its presence in and support for **Holocaust commemoration days and events**, at both EU level and national level, in cooperation with the Commission Representations in Member States and EU delegations.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- **Commemorate the Holocaust publicly** in close cooperation with the Jewish community, including with the involvement of the national parliaments.
- Ensure that the **universality of the Holocaust is reflected in education** and assess the effectiveness of how it is taught, including in a multi-ethnic and diverse classroom.
- **Become active partners in the implementation of the EHRI infrastructure**, including through financial contributions.

### 3.3. Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation

Manifestations of Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation are unfortunately increasing. 53% of Europeans perceive Holocaust denial as being a problem in their country<sup>105</sup>. 62% of Jews have seen or heard non-Jewish people suggest that the Holocaust is a myth or has been exaggerated, at least occasionally<sup>106</sup>. Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation are often used to feed hatred against Jewish people and in an attempt to rewrite European and Jewish history. Their corrosive effects for collective historic memory and for the resilience and cohesion of our democratic societies should not be underestimated and need to be specifically addressed. Hate speech relating to the condoning, denial or gross trivialisation of the Holocaust is prohibited under the Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia<sup>107</sup>.

To educate and raise awareness, the Commission cooperates with the IHRA through its Permanent International Partnership using the IHRA definition of Holocaust denial and distortion<sup>108</sup>, to combat this phenomenon. An example is the awareness-raising campaign #ProtectTheFacts<sup>109</sup>, which focuses on countering Holocaust distortion. **In partnership with the IHRA and UNESCO**, the Commission will further develop other initiatives based on the 'IHRA recommendation on recognising and Countering Holocaust distortion'<sup>110</sup>.

**Key actions:**

**The Commission will:**

- Promote the use of the **IHRA definition of Holocaust denial and distortion** for education and for awareness-raising purposes.
- Develop a **handbook on best practices in fighting Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation**.
- Support and strengthen social **media campaigns** together with UNESCO, the IHRA

<sup>105</sup> [Eurobarometer 484: Perceptions of antisemitism, January 2019.](#)

<sup>106</sup> [Second FRA Survey 2018.](#)

<sup>107</sup> [Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008.](#)

<sup>108</sup> [IHRA working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion.](#)

<sup>109</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/items/700272/default>; [www.againstholocaustdistortion.org](http://www.againstholocaustdistortion.org).

<sup>110</sup> IHRA '[Recommendation on Recognising and Countering Holocaust Distortion](#)'.

and other international partners and civil society groups to raise awareness of Holocaust denial and distortion and actively combat it.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- Actively engage in **awareness campaigns against Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation.**

#### **IV. LEADING THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM**

*'The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.'*

— Albert Einstein

The Jewish population worldwide is estimated to be 15.2 million<sup>111</sup>. Of this, 45% or 6.9 million live in Israel. With about 6 million, the United States is home to the second-largest community of Jewish people. In addition to the 1.5 million Jews in the EU, the remaining Jewish populations live scattered around the globe on all inhabited continents<sup>112</sup>.

Antisemitic prejudices are widespread across the world. According to the Anti-Defamation League research<sup>113</sup> on attitudes and opinions towards Jews, 74% of people in the Middle East/North Africa region harbour antisemitic attitudes, notwithstanding that some positive signals are also to register, such as the recent normalisation of relations between Israel and a number of countries in the region<sup>114 115</sup>. In Western Europe<sup>116</sup> the figure stands at 24% and in Eastern Europe at 34%, while in the Americas it is 19%, in Asia 22% and in Sub-Saharan Africa 23%. The situation and size of Jewish communities vary considerably between countries. Jews are at risk and experience antisemitic attacks and incidents around the globe. Antisemitic prejudices can also be found in countries without Jewish communities.

In this context, the European Commission reaffirms its firm and unequivocal commitment to the global fight antisemitism. Any form of antisemitism, incitement to hatred or violence is unacceptable and incompatible with the values and aims of the European Union and its Member States. It must be addressed through firm action, both at European and national level. These principles are non-negotiable for the European Commission. In light of the above, mainstreaming the prevention and countering of antisemitism in all its forms and across all policy areas is essential.

##### **4.1. Use all instruments to address antisemitism through the EU's external action**

The EU is founded on a strong commitment to promote and protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law worldwide. This commitment underpins the EU's enlargement and neighbourhood policies and its policies towards other non-EU countries, as well as its work in international organisations. All countries should protect the right of everyone, including Jewish people, to have, not have or change their religion or belief, to manifest publicly their

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.jewishagency.org/jewish-population-5782/>.

<sup>112</sup> [World Jewish Population 2019](#), by Sergio DellaPergola, in Arnold Dashefsky and Ira M. Sheskin (eds.), American Jewish Year Book 2019, The Annual Record of the North American Jewish Communities since 1899; [World Jewish Population on Eve of New Year – 14.7 Million, Haaretz](#).

<sup>113</sup> <https://global100.adl.org/map>.

<sup>114</sup> The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan respectively (2020), followed by Morocco (January 2021).

<sup>115</sup> The start of the construction of a synagogue in the United Arab Emirates is another good example.

<sup>116</sup> It should be noted that in the Anti-Defamation League research, no average data on the EU is included; also, the category 'Western Europe' does not include all EU countries. For data per Member State, see the [website](#).

religion or belief, and to be free from discrimination, persecution or violence on grounds of religion or belief, or based on their racial or ethnic origin. The 2020-2024 **EU action plan on human rights and democracy** sets the level of ambition and establishes the priorities of the EU and its Member States in this field, in relations with non-EU countries. The **2013 Guidelines on freedom of religion or belief outside the EU**<sup>117</sup> and the **2019 Guidelines on non-discrimination in external action**<sup>118</sup> spell out tools to be used by the EU's external arm to address violations of freedom of religion or belief and combat discrimination, including against Jewish people<sup>119</sup>.

The EU will use **all available tools** to call on partner countries to actively combat antisemitism, taking into account the IHRA definition of antisemitism<sup>120</sup>, in political and human rights dialogues and in its broader cooperation with partner countries. This is supported through thematic and geographic programmes and EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, including in the stabilisation and association processes.

The EU will actively cooperate with international organisations, in particular the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OSCE, as well as with regional organisations<sup>121</sup> in **joint actions to fight discrimination and antisemitism**. The EU will step up actions in the education sector and continue to promote **full compliance of education material with UNESCO standards** of peace, tolerance, coexistence and non-violence, in its cooperation on education with partner countries. Any material that goes against them risks undermining peace and co-existence and has no place in textbooks or classrooms.

The EU Special Representative for Human Rights and the Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief outside the EU will continue to systematically address antisemitism in their work. In addition, the EU will **strengthen the global cooperation of special envoys and coordinators** on combating antisemitism.

**Israel** is a key partner for the European Union, including in the global fight against antisemitism. The EU will seek to further reinforce the **EU-Israel High-Level Seminar** on combating racism, xenophobia and antisemitism, co-organised annually, with a focus on operational follow-up.

Actions aiming to combat antisemitism can be supported through the **NDICI**<sup>122</sup> **Global Europe** thematic programme on human rights and democracy initiatives addressing non-discrimination. The EU will include as part of its training on human rights for staff at delegations and headquarters specific sessions on freedom of religion or belief, including on combating antisemitism.

#### **Key actions:**

##### **The Commission and the High Representative will:**

- Promote the **fight against** religious and ethnic discrimination, including **antisemitism in political and human rights dialogues** and in broader cooperation

<sup>117</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/06\\_hr\\_guidelines\\_religion\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/06_hr_guidelines_religion_en.pdf).

<sup>118</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/11\\_hr\\_guidelines\\_external\\_action\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/11_hr_guidelines_external_action_en.pdf).

<sup>119</sup> In addition, the Commission staff working document on [A Human Rights-Based Approach to Development](#) guides EU staff on integrating non-discrimination on all grounds in the projects cycle. Adopted on 30.6.2021.

<sup>120</sup> [The IHRA definition was also endorsed or adopted](#) by non-EU countries: Albania, Australia, Argentina, Bahrain, Canada, Guatemala, Israel, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia, South Korea, United Kingdom, United States, and Uruguay.

<sup>121</sup> Including the Organisation of American States, which in June 2021 created the position of a Special Envoy to combat antisemitism) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

<sup>122</sup> Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.

with partner countries outside the EU.

- Ensure **training on fundamental rights** and undertaking of intercultural dialogue for relevant actors, including teachers from outside the EU.
- Ensure that **EU external funds**, in compliance with existing measures, **may not be misallocated** to activities that incite hatred and violence, including against Jewish people<sup>123</sup>.
- **Step up engagement in the education sector** to promote full compliance of education material with UNESCO standards of peace, tolerance, coexistence and non-violence, as appropriate.
- Strengthen **engagement with Jewish civil society** and religious organisations to address antisemitic acts and limitations on freedom of religion or belief, through the network of EU delegations and headquarters.
- Consider **new EU-funded projects** in the EU's neighbourhood and beyond to prevent and counter antisemitism and foster Jewish life.
- Encourage the EU delegations to **include reporting of antisemitic incidents in non-EU countries**, in their regular political reporting.
- Reinforce the EU-Israel seminar to further **strengthen EU-Israel cooperation in the fight against antisemitism**.

**Member States are encouraged to:**

- Closely cooperate at EU level to **jointly address antisemitism** through international organisations.
- Incorporate the **fight against antisemitism into all their human rights strategies** and policies, taking into account the IHRA definition of antisemitism.
- Support **projects and organisations** combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life worldwide.

#### **4.2. Safeguarding Jewish cultural heritage and commemorating the Holocaust**

Jewish cultural heritage is visible in many places in the Middle East, Asia and other places around the world, bearing witness to the historical presence of Jewish communities in those regions. Large parts of this heritage are orphaned as Jewish communities no longer live there. Jewish cultural heritage, like all heritage, is a shared and important expression of cultural diversity and deserves dedicated protection worldwide. The EU together with the Member States has a key role to play in helping local, regional and international partners to **safeguard cultural heritage** through training, skills development and knowledge transfer activities as well as reinforced cooperation<sup>124</sup>. **Intercultural and interfaith dialogue** will be supported by the EU to reinforce cultural heritage protections through work on shared history and memory, building the basis for communities to live together peacefully in a multicultural context. The EU will continue to promote Holocaust remembrance at international level and to **publicly call out Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation** in non-EU countries, including in international fora.

**Key actions:**

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<sup>123</sup> In line with Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, Article 136 of the Financial Regulation, complemented in 2018 by additional operational 'guidelines to prevent incitement to hatred and violence'.

<sup>124</sup> The communication [Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations](#) and the [Council Conclusions on EU strategic approach to cultural heritage in conflicts and crises](#), and its dedicated Concept, form the basis of the EU's work.



#### **The Commission and the High Representative will:**

- Promote and support the **safeguarding, rehabilitation, and revitalisation of all heritage**, tangible and intangible, including Jewish heritage, in line with its policies for international cultural relations and cultural heritage.
- Integrate **intercultural and interfaith dialogue in cultural heritage interventions**.
- Seek opportunities to include **maintenance of Jewish heritage** in programming in the neighbourhood and beyond.
- Continue to organise and participate in **high-level events** around the remembrance of Shoah victims (commemorations, Holocaust Remembrance Day).

#### **Member States are encouraged to:**

- Contribute, together with the EU in the UN context, to the worldwide **safeguarding of cultural heritage, including Jewish heritage**, in line with the Council Conclusions on EU strategic approach to cultural heritage in conflicts and crises.
- Mark **International Holocaust Remembrance Day** in cooperation with EU delegations, through their embassies in third countries and in international organisations.

## **V. DELIVERING ON THE STRATEGY**

Combating antisemitism in the EU is a shared responsibility; it requires joint efforts and action at every level. EU institutions and agencies, Member States, international organisations, Jewish organisations and communities, and human rights and civil society actors all have a role to play in achieving the strategy's objectives. The Commission invites the European Parliament, the Council and the Member States to work together in implementing this strategy. The Commission calls on the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee to promote dialogue with local and regional authorities and civil society, including social partners, on how to advance towards a European society free of antisemitism.

The Commission will actively support the implementation of the proposed policy measures through various funding opportunities and invites Member States, Jewish organisations and communities, as well the civil society actors, to make use of EU programmes.

The strategy will be implemented over the period 2021-2030. Comprehensive implementation reports will be published in 2024 and 2029. These will be based on the input from Member States, also with regard to the implementation of their national strategies and policies. With the support of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, these reports will include monitoring of progress at national level, taking into account the commitments made in the Council Declarations on antisemitism of 2018 and 2020.

## **CONCLUSION**

This strategy is our commitment to a future for Jewish life in Europe and beyond. It marks a step change in the Commission's political engagement for a European Union free from antisemitism and any form of discrimination; for an open, inclusive and equal society in the EU. It reflects Europe's commitment to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive, even after the last Holocaust survivors have passed away.

Curbing the age-old scourge of antisemitism must be an enduring effort. As Shoah survivor Primo Levi said *'It happened, therefore it can happen again'*. The dangerous spike in antisemitic attacks is all the reminder needed to show that there can be no let-up in our

relentless collective efforts to combat antisemitism. Beyond this, Jewish life deserves not only to be protected but to be allowed to flourish in all its diversity.

Europe can only prosper when its Jewish communities prosper too.