

MEMO / 8 November 2013

FRA's survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States

This is a brief overview of some of the findings. The key findings with relevant graphs and opinions are contained in the survey report.

1. Why and how was the survey carried out?

Antisemitism stems from old and deep-rooted prejudices against Jews, which have persisted to the present day and which may lead to incidents of antisemitic violence, harassment and hate speech. Many of these incidents remain unreported. Only 13 of the 28 EU Member States collect official data on antisemitic incidents reported to the police or processed through the criminal justice system.

FRA designed this survey to collect, for the first time, comparable data on antisemitic violence, harassment and hate speech to help tackle antisemitism today. The findings in the survey report compile the results from eight survey countries, which account for some 90% of the estimated Jewish population in the European Union. The results are based on the responses from 5,847 self-identified Jewish respondents (aged 16 or over) living in one of eight EU Member States – Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Due to the sample size, the country results for Romania, one of the countries where the survey was carried out, are not included in the analysis of the survey results. However, the results from Romania are summarised in the report's annex.

FRA designed the survey. The survey was carried out online from September to October 2012 - under contract to FRA following an open call for tender – by Ipsos MORI in partnership with the Institute for Jewish Policy Research in the UK. It was available in the languages of the survey countries, as well as Hebrew and Russian.

The online survey mode was selected in consultation with experts in surveying Jewish people in Europe because of the sensitivity of the topic. The online method also allowed all interested self-identified Jewish people in the survey countries to potentially take part and share their experiences. In addition, it was the method which could be easily used to cover all selected countries equally.

2. What questions did the survey ask?

The survey asked respondents for their opinions and perceptions on antisemitic trends and antisemitism as a problem in everyday life. The respondents were also asked to describe their personal experiences of antisemitic incidents, witnessing antisemitic incidents and worrying about being a victim of an antisemitic attack (affecting their personal safety, safety of children, or other family members and friends). The survey also provides data on whether the occurrence of antisemitic acts against the Jewish community, such as vandalism of Jewish sites or antisemitic messages in the broadcast media or in the internet, is considered to be a problem in their countries by the Jewish respondents.

In addition, the survey collected socio-demographic data, such as respondents' gender and age, educational background, employment status, and income.

3. How common do respondents consider antisemitism to be?

A majority of respondents (66%) consider antisemitism to be a problem across the EU Member States surveyed. On average three out of four respondents (76%) also believe that the situation has become more acute and that antisemitism has increased in their country over the past five years. Overall, 75% of respondents consider antisemitism online to be a problem.

4. How common is antisemitic hate crime in the EU?

One in five respondents (21%) had personally experienced at least one incident of antisemitic verbal insult or harassment, and/or a physical attack in the year before the survey. The respondents were also asked about incidents that affected them indirectly – through witnessing other Jews being verbally insulted, harassed or physically attacked, for example. The highest levels of antisemitic incidents that affected respondents indirectly, were found in Hungary (43%), Belgium (35%) and France (30%). Respondents were also asked about the forms of harassment that they encountered. Offensive comments – either in person or on the internet – were the most widespread form of harassment.

Perpetrators of the most serious incidents of antisemitic harassment were described by respondents as being perceived as someone with Muslim extremist views (27%), left-wing political views (22%), or with right-wing views (19%).

Overall, 4% of respondents experienced physical attack or threats of violence in the year before the survey because they were Jewish.

According to the findings, 76% of respondents who in the past five years experienced harassment, 64% of those who experienced physical attacks or threats of violence and 53% of those who experienced vandalism of personal property did not report these incidents to the police or any other organisation – including in those countries that do officially collect such figures. Similar patterns emerge from FRA's [work with other groups](#) (such as [LGBT people](#), [minorities and migrants](#)).

FRA data collection work on antisemitism over recent years also shows that only 13 EU Member States have official data and statistics on antisemitic incidents. Where data exist, they are not comparable, since they are collected using different definitions and methodologies. Furthermore, in many EU Member States Jewish organisations or other civil society organisations do not systematically collect data on antisemitic incidents.

Facing facts!, a joint project whose main objective is to improve monitoring and recording of hate crimes and incidents throughout the EU, has published hate crime monitoring guidelines that can be found here: [Guidelines-for-monitoring-of-hate-crimes-and-hate-motivated-incidents](#)

5. How safe do Jewish people feel?

Close to half of all respondents (46%) worry about being verbally insulted or harassed in a public place while one third (33%) worry about being physically attacked because of being Jewish. Worry that these attacks may happen to family members or people close to them is somewhat higher than the worry about personal victimisation. 66% of parents or grandparents of school-aged children worry that their children could be subjected to antisemitic verbal insults or harassment at school or on the way there, and 52% worry that their children will suffer a physical antisemitic attack.

6. How common is antisemitic discrimination in the EU?

23% of all respondents reported having experienced some form of discrimination on the ground of their religion or ethnic background in the past 12 months. In all countries, antisemitic discrimination most often happened at work (11%), when looking for work (10%), or at school or in training (8%).

Most of those who felt discriminated against because they were Jewish did not report their most serious incident of discrimination to any authority or organisation (82%). When asked why not, 57% said that nothing would have changed by reporting; a finding similar to [other FRA studies](#).

7. How do Jewish people feel treated by society?

Around a fifth (23%) said that they occasionally avoid visiting Jewish events or sites because they do not feel safe there or on the way there because they are Jewish. Just over a quarter (27%) occasionally avoid local places because they do not feel safe there because they are Jewish, with the highest proportions found in Belgium (42%), Hungary (41%) and France (35%).

One in ten respondents (11%) has either moved or considered moving out of their neighbourhood in the past five years due to concerns for their safety as Jews. Such concern led close to one third (29%) to consider at some point emigrating. This particularly applied to respondents in Hungary, France, and Belgium (48%, 46%, and 40% respectively).

The prohibition of traditional Jewish practices would be a big problem for a majority of all respondents (76% saw prohibition of circumcision as a problem, 58% said the same about traditional slaughter).

8. What can be done to tackle antisemitism?

- To ensure that antisemitic discrimination and hate crime are addressed in a systematic and coordinated way, the EU and its Member States should make sure that measures to combat antisemitism are integrated in national strategies and action plans across relevant areas.
- Member States should ensure that intentionally publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes are punishable.
- Politicians and opinion makers should refrain from antisemitic statements, and they should clearly denounce and condemn such statements when made by others.
- Member States are encouraged to support trade unions and employers' associations in their efforts to adopt diversity and non-discrimination policies, including accommodating Jewish people's needs in the workplace – for example through flexible holiday arrangements, where possible.
- In addition, Member States should facilitate cooperation between Equality Bodies and Jewish community organisations to ensure that Jewish people who face discrimination are informed about their rights and available redress mechanisms.
- The EU and its Member States should identify effective ways and good practices to address the growing concern on online antisemitism. Member States should explore the option of establishing specialised police units that monitor and investigate hate crime on the internet, as well as measures to encourage users to report to the police whenever they detect antisemitic content.
- To tackle underreporting there is a need to encourage and help victims make reports to the police. EU, Member States, and local authorities, should set up or increase concrete awareness-raising activities to support victims of hate-motivated crime and discrimination to report them.
- When crimes have an antisemitic motive, Member States should ensure that this motive is recorded appropriately and taken into account in sentencing, including enhanced penalties. In addition, training needs to be set up in Member States to ensure systematic recording of incidents. Practices such as 'third party reporting' where civil society organisations, for example, report on the behalf of victims, could also be considered.

9. Other related FRA work

FRA has been working on antisemitism since 2007:

- Yearly updates on [Antisemitism - Summary overview of the situation in the EU 2002-2012](#) (November 2013) (*latest version*)
- [Educators' Toolkit on the Holocaust and Human Rights](#) (November 2011)

- [Human rights education at Holocaust memorial sites across the European Union: An overview of practices](#) (October 2011)
- [Excursion to the past - teaching for the future, Handbook for teachers](#) (November 2010)
- [Discover the Past for the Future: The role of historical sites and museums in Holocaust education and human rights education in the EU](#) (January 2010)

The results are visualised online and contained in reports, all available from the [FRA website](#):

- **Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States: experiences and perceptions of antisemitism**
- **Survey methodology, sample and questionnaire – Technical report – Antisemitism - Summary overview of the situation in the European Union 2002-2012**

FRA's work on racism and related intolerances, and relevant publications can be found at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/theme/racism-related-intolerances>

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