



The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities



Moshe Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary  
Antisemitism and Racism

# Antisemitism Worldwide 2015

General Analysis  
Draft



European Jewish Congress

Ze'ev Vered Desk for the Study of Tolerance and Intolerance in the Middle  
East, Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism  
and Racism



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<http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/>.

## Overview of Main Trends

### **Executive Summary**

The feeling with which the year 2015 ended was one of fear and concern, among Jews and non-Jews alike, especially in Europe. Waves of immigrants shook the continent, and terror took a terrible toll in human lives and brought up heavy questions and doubts regarding the ability of democracies to defend themselves and their citizens. The Jewish communities and Jews as individuals feel threatened by the influx of refugees on the one hand, and the increase in the right wing parties' electoral power as a result, on the other. On the one hand, recent developments brought down the number of violent anti-Semitic cases perpetrated against Jews and Jewish sites, and on the other the nature of the violent cases have become more cruel, and the growing variety of verbal and visual anti-Semitic expressions, mainly on social media, became more brutal and insulting. An attempt to explain these seemingly contradicting tendencies is therefore required.

The number of **violent antisemitic incidents worldwide decreased** quite dramatically during 2015, especially after the first months of the year, in comparison to 2014: The Kantor Center team monitored 410 violent cases during 2015, compared to 766 in 2014, a decrease of approximately 46%. While this is the lowest number in the recent decade, it should be taken in consideration that 2014 was a very difficult year, especially due to the Protective Edge operation during the summer, and that the number of violent cases in 2015 is more or less equal to that of 2011, and that, compared to 2013, the decrease in 2015 is about 26%.

The decrease is most notable in the *modus operandi* in all its variations, especially the use of weapons (a decrease of over 60%) and arson (decrease of over 50%), and in weaponless cases, threats and vandalism as well. Regarding targets, the most notable decrease is in cases perpetrated against synagogues (by about 70%!) and individuals by close to 50%), as well as against schools and community centers, and the highest numbers of registered incidents was perpetrated against cemeteries and memorials.

It should be noted that these numbers are the result of the specific monitoring and analysis system developed by the Kantor Center team, which has been working together on these issues for more than twenty years now, and are based on the various reports sent to us by our contact persons in the world at large. The specific criteria (anti-Semitic motivation, and no exaggeration or diminishing of the severity of the situation, counting a multi-event as one case) are the basic reason for the differences that might occur between these numbers and those released by other monitoring communities and institutes.

### **Reasons for the Decrease in Violent Cases**

Three main reasons for the aforementioned decrease might be the following ones: First, the **increase in special security measures** taken since the January 2015 events in Paris (in the Charlie Hebdo offices and the Hypercacher supermarket 17 were killed) and the February attack on the great synagogue of Copenhagen (the Danish-Israeli guard was killed). These measures were intensified following the bloody events in Paris in November, in which 138 people were murdered and hundreds were wounded, in a number of coordinated attacks. Both army and police were enlisted, in France and Belgium (especially after the finding the links to the Paris events and certainly after the January 2016 attacks in Brussels), as well as in Germany and other countries. Jewish and

non-Jewish facilities and institutions, which may be considered potential targets, are being better and more closely safeguarded, and intelligence agencies have reinforced their level of surveillance and of international coordination. Hence the steady decrease in violent cases, parallel to the increase in security, and hence the lesser use of weapons and arson, and the higher numbers of attacks on cemeteries and memorials, which are less protected than communal and private property.

Second, **the wave of more than a million immigrants** flowing into Europe (mainly Muslims from the Middle East, Africa and Afghanistan), has attracted the attention of the extreme right, on the ground and in social media, all along 2015. The main concern of right wingers is the demographic/social/cultural threat this wave may constitute, as they view the situation, to their respective countries. The fear among the local societies of such consequences is the source of the growing power of the right wing parties, and of their achievements in electoral campaigns: voters in a number of countries have switched their ballot from the neo-Nazis to right wing parties, in order to re-enforce their presence in the political area.

Moreover, the Muslim population that has already immigrated to Europe in former years together with the veteran Muslim communities, numbers, with their families, between 40 to 52 million (estimations vary) by now, feels under attack since the 2015 wave started: local societies pinpoint the newcomers and the former ones as a combined potential source of terror, certainly those trained by ISIS and sent back to Europe, and as a constant potential threat for the future. The result is that attention has been diverted from the Jewish communities to the Muslim-Christian relations. In a growing number of cases Christians have attacked Muslim individuals, set immigrants centers on fire and violated cemeteries and even mosques.

An ISIS publication has recently explained why Jews and Israel are not their immediate target, at least for the time being: Because the Protocols of the Elders of Zion have no basis in reality, the Jews do not control the world and whoever believes they do is a fool. Also, the Jews are no more heathens and infidels than any other infidels, Shiites included, and the main target should be the Arab regimes that defend Israel, not the Jews in Israel. Hence the Hamas and Hezbollah are wrong - the Palestinian issue is not the major problem of the Muslim world. Finally, Israel and Jews are, according to ISIS, a religious problem, and therefore, according to their reading of the laws of Islam, attacking them is a deed against religion. All in all, it is the West and its values and way of life that is the main target.

Third, the growing fear in Europe of the terror that originates in Muslim radical circles already residing in Europe and the one imported by ISIS has opened the door for identifying with, or at least expressing sympathy for the Jewish communities and for Israel, and for a different analysis of the violence Jews and Israelis have undergone in recent decades. As a result, the possibility of closer ties and alliances with Jews and Christians, facing together the Muslim threat, has been recently raised, in a number of manners: Leaders and major politicians emphasized the role of the Jews in European culture and history, expressed solidarity – France without Jews is not France, said prime minister Manuel Valls - and advocated the need to take proper measures to defend them and the public order. Pope Francis published on December 10, 2015 a surprisingly pro-Jewish long statement, in which he advocated cooperation, sensitivity and mutual understanding between Jews and Catholics: A Christian cannot be an anti-Semite, he

said. And the Polish Church followed by labeling antisemitism a sin. Even some of the right wing parties, such as the French and the Austrian ones, try to shy away from antisemitism and to attract Jews to their ranks and to assure them of their positive stance towards Israel.

Finally, it is important to note that there was no military confrontation between Israel and its neighbors during 2015.

### **Antisemitic Atmosphere and Manifestations**

The aforementioned developments most probably contributed to the decrease in the number of violent cases perpetrated against Jews, yet violence, and numbers as such are just one part of the picture: The number of cases indeed went down, but the cruel and severe nature of each case escalated. In former years murderous incidents were rare, while the attacks on Jewish installations since January 2015 (and the Toulouse case in March 2012) and a few cases of attacks on individuals, all took the lives of more Jews than had been known for decades. Moreover, the nature of the cases became more brutal, not only against Jews: the level of cruelty introduced by some Muslim extreme movements, and the religious fanaticism that accompanies some of the struggles worldwide, have soared.

Cruelty and brutality have a certain attractive power, and offer a certain taste of risk and of anti-establishment behavior, which are heavily fostered by social media: the nets are a virtual reality, and a tool, not a reason, yet they have become today's reality, first and foremost for youngsters. The net's discourse is turning more and more threatening, brutal and violent. Thus social media platforms aggravate an existing real situation, and make it more visible: Visibility is the name of today's game. There is no way social media platforms could be fully and closely monitored, and due to anonymity Jewish organizations and communities have almost no legal measures to cope with the insults and stereotypes freely flowing in the cyberspace.

Jews are part of the general society, and share the recently increasing feelings of uncertainty, and the estimation that more terrorist attacks are a matter of time only, just around the corner. Many do not leave home wearing identifying signs, such a *kippa*. The intensive presence of army and police around Jewish installations defends them, but is at the same time a constant reminder that the threat is immanent. The influx of newcomers, mostly from countries with an antisemitic tradition, and with political and cultural anti-Israeli ideologies, adds to the re-consideration of Jewish life on the continent, yet on the other hand, as descendants to a nation that knew what it is to be a refugee, they are bound to extend a helping hand. The use of antisemitic language against Israel as a Jewish state, and the BDS movements that had turned to be a political anti-Israeli tool par excellence, challenging its very existence, put the Jews between the anvil and the hammer: Harassing Jews has become a tool in the struggle against Israel.

Thus, since the decrease in the violent cases does not compensate for the constant increase in insulting anti-Semitic verbal and visual manifestations and hostile atmosphere, Jews reconsider their future and their sense of belonging in their respective countries.

## **Antisemitic Manifestations – General Analysis**

As previously mentioned in the Overview, the year 2015 ended with feelings of concern and fear, among Jews as individuals and as members of communities, and non-Jews alike, especially in Europe. This tendency has its roots in the events of the summer of 2014, when, during and following the Protective Edge military operation in the Gaza Strip, Jewish communities - and Israeli citizens - faced an almost unprecedented wave of antisemitic manifestations and hostility, verging on the hateful. The local administrations and enforcement bodies in Western and Central Europe had their hands full trying to safeguard the security of Jewish citizens and at the same time to maintain public order. It seemed that the military operation provided an opportunity to publicly air anti-Jewish hostility and classical antisemitic grudges that lurked and still lurk behind anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist opinions and to express them in antisemitic terms. The main reasons for the fear and concern along 2015 were the terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen, and later in Brussels, attacks that evoked concrete physical fear, the waves of immigrants streaming to Europe, mainly from countries with deeply harbored antisemitic and anti-Israeli political and cultural traditions and the potential threat that radical Muslims continue to constitute for the very near future.

### **Antisemitic Atmosphere and Manifestations**

As in former years, it is the atmosphere, imbued with threats and insults, and the growing number of everyday manifestations of antisemitism, that determine the feeling of Jews as Individuals and as members of communities, even more than violence and terror. Their feeling is that they are facing an explosion of hatred towards them as individuals, towards their communities, and Israel as a Jewish state. Comparisons to the 1930s are rampant, because Jews realized , especially in Europe that there are no more taboos and restrictions when it comes to antisemitic rhetoric and manifestations, and certainly no proportion between the unfolding events and the actual number of Jews in their respective communities and their real impact on the societies they live in; or between the intensive debate on Israel's role in the Middle East and the lack of such a debate when it comes to other Middle Eastern or international conflicts. Jewish community leaders and heads of organizations feel that they are put to the test, when facing the question, what future is there for communities and individuals, especially in Europe, and what are the prospects to continue leading full Jewish communal life.

A number of components create this atmosphere, first and foremost social media and the BDS movements. The social nets, which are initially a tool and not a reason, and a virtual reality, have become today's reality, especially for youngsters. The nets discourse is becoming more and more threatening, brutal and aggressive. The social nets aggravate the existing real situations, and make them more visible. In Australia and Austria, for instance, there is a sharp rise in antisemitic use on social media that reflects hostility towards the Jewish community. And yet there is no way social media platforms could be fully and closely monitored, and due to the anonymity of users, Jewish organizations and communities have almost no legal measures to cope with the insults and stereotypes freely flowing in cyberspace.



The BDS movements should be labeled antisemitic when they forget all the evils in the world and single out Israel as the only state its followers are striving to abolish, and the Zionist movement as the only self –defined national movement that has no right to exist. Yet they are not only a political anti-Israeli tool, challenging its very existence. They represent the wish to ban Jewish activity worldwide, whether on campuses, where Jewish students, especially in the USA and the UK, face harassments, insults, and limitation of their freedom of expression; or when they try to stop Jewish cultural and social activities, in an attempt to put Jews out of society. Thus Jews are put between the anvil and the hammer: they are defamed as Jews, and at the same time harassing them has become a tool in the struggle against Israel.

### **Monitoring Antisemitic Manifestations**

The atmosphere and its consequences are indeed the underlying reasons for the ways Jews feel and react. Yet there might be a difference between the reaction and the outside reality, which compels us to carefully analyze more factors, such as the violent antisemitic incidents. The decrease in the number of violent antisemitic cases after the first months of 2015, as well as its reasons, have been spelled out in the Overview: the increased measures of security; the escalated work of intelligence agencies; the attention of the extreme right that was diverted towards the newcomers and their potential impact on the local societies; the Muslim population on the continent feeling attacked and suspected and the chances for a Christian-Jewish rapprochement; and finally the absence of a military confrontation between Israel and its neighbors. Let us now take a look at the numbers of violent, as well as verbal and visual manifestations of antisemitism in a number of countries during 2015, bearing in mind that there is no common agreement between monitoring agencies and communities, as to what constitutes an antisemitic violent event, and how to count the other events – if at all possible. Sometimes all events of all kinds are counted together, and sometimes one multi-event is counted as many events. For instance, is the attack on the Hypercacher in Paris considered one case, or 31 cases, since four people were killed and 27 wounded? Is a desecration of 15 tombstones in a cemetery on the same night, one case or 15? Does swastika graffiti always necessarily reflect antisemitic motivations, or is it by now an international symbol of the worst of any issue? Should we count all anti-Jewish drawings anywhere, or just those drawn on Jewish sites?

Let us first present some countries with a significant decrease: in Australia the number of violent cases went down from 30 in 2014 (and 53 in 2012), to four in 2015; in Belgium from 30 to 6, and in Sweden from 17 to two; in Italy from 23 to four, in South Africa from 14 to four, in Germany from 76 to 37, that is by half and in Hungary from 15 to 8 – by half again. The countries where the situation was more or less the same as in 2014 are Austria, Denmark, Greece, Argentina, Uruguay and the Ukraine. In Canada the numbers have risen by a third, from 20 to 32 and in the USA they are almost the same – around 80.

A more complex picture emerges when taking additional factors, and the general context, into consideration: in Germany, the number of all antisemitic manifestations, including insults, threats, harassment and defamation, has gone down by a third, yet the number of racial incitement cases, especially online, those sent to the Central Council of German Jews and to the Israeli embassy and otherwise, is quite high. It is

important to note that only 17 antisemitic manifestations were perpetrated by newcomers, mainly of Turkish or Arab origin, against Jews in Germany, while the overall number of hate crimes in general is much higher, and is counted by the thousands. Also, the number of hate crimes against refugees rose significantly in 2015, by 40%, to more than 3000 (counted only until October), and the number must be much higher since most of the refugees do not know yet how to file a complaint. The number of attacks on immigrant centers doubled in 2015. (In Sweden more than 12 centers were set on fire after the government published their addresses, in order to urge people to come and extend their help!). Thus, the situation of the German Jews is part of this general context.

In France, monitoring of the first months of the year showed a sharp escalation in antisemitic events of all kinds – 84% compared to the same months in 2014, which were relatively quiet. A disturbing phenomenon repeated itself: following the murders in Toulouse, France in March 2012 (of French soldiers and of a headmaster and three Jewish children), antisemitism and incitement soared, as the murderer's admirers wished to continue in his footsteps. The same development was evident in France following the January 2015 three attacks and the Copenhagen one in February, and it accounts for the rise in antisemitic and racist events. But , after the first months, a steady decrease was noted, parallel to the one manifested in other countries, so much so that the minister of the interior, Bernard Cazeneuve, stated that the number of antisemitic events had gone down significantly in comparison to the previous year, 2014. Indeed, the French government has allocated a substantial sum for the struggle against antisemitism, security measures were intensified, prime minister Manuel Valls publicly and emphatically stated that anti-Zionism is actually antisemitism and that France without Jews is not France, and a French court ruled against the BDS movement – yet the concern of French Jews regarding their future has not been abated.

A similar picture emerges in the UK: a rise during the first months - January was one of the worst months in years, and then a steady decrease, accompanied by statements made by prime minister David Cameron regarding the de-legitimation of Israel as having antisemitic characteristics, and the urgent necessity to stop incitement and violence, and to improve security measures and police coordination. It should be noted that in the UK, for a number of years now, about half of the antisemitic manifestations are perpetrated by immigrants, first and second generation, mainly from Pakistan and Indonesia, and the other half by others.

In Venezuela, on the other side of the globe, the local scene is government-controlled and orchestrated: many of the antisemitic manifestations were published in government media channels, as well as in semi-governmental agencies. As in the past, this antisemitism, coming from above, was disguised as anti-Zionism, while national and international events served as triggers: for instance, according to a number of journalists, Israel and the Zionism had been responsible for the terror attack in the Charlie Hebdo offices, and Israel actually established ISIS. Comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany, and the claim that Zionism collaborated with the Nazis during WWII and the Holocaust, were voiced time and again. Still, it should be noted that during the Maduro regime, the level of hateful propaganda went down, and continued to be upheld mainly by elements in the local Arab community. The question is whether the stances published in the Venezuelan state-controlled media are

a reflection of Iranian lines of propaganda, given the close relations between the leaderships of these two countries.

### **The Waves of Immigrants and the Far-Right**

More than a million immigrants and refugees reached Europe during 2015 and caused inner crises in the countries they crossed or reached, as well as a heated debate within the European Union regarding the best ways to resettle them, or not. A large part of the German society welcomed the newcomers with open arms, yet at the same time an opposite trend started and strengthened, fostered especially by extreme right incitement. A major reason for the popularity of this opposite trend is that large democratic parties advocated, one way or another, the absorption of an unlimited number of immigrants, and those who oppose this open borders policy find the agenda they are looking for mainly in the extreme right movements. In Scandinavia a similar trend has developed: extreme right sympathizers flock to the ranks of the larger center and right parties, where they might have a better chance to impact the national policies. At the same time, the influx of refugees strengthened the extreme right parties, such as the Progressive Party in Norway, the People's Party in Denmark, the Democrats in Sweden and the True Finns. From a Jewish point of view, the rise of the extreme right is a disturbing development, because on the one hand, these parties generally support Israel as a potential partner in the struggle against Islam, but on the other hand, they include members with antisemitic views, place the limitation of religious and minority rights of the Scandinavian Jewish communities high on their agenda, and initiate or at least support legislation against kosher *schechita* and circumcision.

Indeed, not only are extreme right groups encouraging anti-migrant and anti-foreigner hate crimes, but their influence and ideology continue to corrode respect for the underlying values of the European Union: respect for democracy, human rights and the protection of minority rights. Therefore, and because the safety and well-being of the Jewish communities serves as a litmus test for the well-being of society in general, the EU appointed a special coordinator of the struggle against antisemitism (a "Czar") Katarina von Schnurbein, and budgets are being allocated in Central and Western Europe in order to promote and support legislation, appropriate organizations, conferences, definitions, control of demonstrations, and the like.

Major European leaders tried to face the double reality introduced by the many immigrants: they flee war and terror in their countries of origin, and most of them are seeking peaceful existence in free and prosperous countries, but they come from cultures in which intolerance and Jew-hatred are rampant. Angela Merkel, aware of this double-edged sword, requested that the refugees flocking into Germany adopt the values of the host country, which are based on the rejection of discrimination and antisemitism. "It is not about forgetting one's roots", she said, "but about the necessity to live with your roots in our values and social order, part of which is an ongoing struggle against any form of antisemitism". The French prime minister added to former utterances by stating that France suffers from a new form of antisemitism brought in by "immigrants from the Middle East and North Africa, who turned their anger about Gaza into a very dangerous trend...Israel and Palestine are just an excuse" for antisemitism.

## **Accusing the Jews for the Wave of Immigrants**

Jews have been accused time and again during 2015, of responsibility for the refugee crisis: for instance, the mayor of Jena, Germany, Albrecht Schroeter was criticized for having accused the Jewish state of at least partial responsibility for the Syrian refugee crisis overtaking Europe. But he was not alone: This idea has been repeatedly disseminated by neo-Nazi sites, claiming that "the so-called refugee crisis is a multi-leveled Jewish Zionist plan". In the Czech Republic too, the wave is explained as an "organized import" planned by the Almighty New World Order, referring either an American or Jewish conspiracy. The Jews are depicted as directly responsible for the migration wave, either by causing the war in Syria and Iraq and by creating ISIS – videos showing their brutal decapitations must have been, according to the accusers, filmed somewhere in the Californian deserts – because of the wish to achieve the following goals: to destroy European racial identity, to incite Christians and Muslims against each other, to create a Middle East devoid of Arabs and Muslims and even to destroy western democracies in order to control them – an accusation which is a derivative of conspiracy theories. Jews are guilty of the Islamization of Europe by bringing in the refugees, and of the opposite as well, of Islamophobia, by allegedly misusing the anti-Muslim rhetoric in order to invoke support for Israel.

These accusations were voiced in Arab and Muslim countries and in Muslim circles abroad, from Latin America to Central Europe. Still, despite these conspiracy theories, no new tendencies were monitored in the Arab and Muslim world, and antisemitism is not the central theme in the thinking and writing of its intellectuals. There are even a few voices, such as that of the Saudi ambassador to the UN, who denounced antisemitism (and Islamophobia) during the general plenary. But the incitement against Israel continues, with the use of antisemitic religious expressions, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion are being quoted, Jews are being accused of every evil under the sun, are compared to the Nazis and to ISIS for being as cruel, social media, especially Facebook, are replete with bloody caricatures, and political rivals call each other "Jew", a term that became a swearword and a metaphor of evil.

**The immigrants/right wing connection** and its impact are less prevalent in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, and economic problems are still in the political center stage:

In Russia antisemitic propaganda is on the rise, and in March 2015 representatives of extreme right organizations in 10 countries held an international conference in St. Petersburg.

In Poland the conservative right and the Catholic Church gained power as a result of economic difficulties due to the transition from the socialist pre-planned system to open market capitalism. Martin Schulz, president of the European Parliament, openly expressed concern that the rise of the conservative right would bring about changes regarding the commemoration of the Holocaust and its teaching in schools.

In the Ukraine the desecration of cemeteries continued – the desecration of the Babi Yar monument for the sixth time during 2015 met with no response from the authorities. Moreover, the Parliament confirmed a law comparing the period of the Nazi regime to that of the Soviet one; the debate on Ukrainian participation in the

murder of the Jews during WWII is at center stage, and resulted in defining as a criminal offence those who claim they did. The Russian-Ukrainian war exacerbated antisemitism, each side blaming the other for using it as a political tool.

In Romania a few violent cases occurred, and sporadic vandalism was directed at cemeteries and synagogues, yet the trend characterized by justifying Romania's war time regime of Antonescu, and the pro-Nazi Iron Guard continued, with nationalist and xenophobic expressions, accompanied by antisemitic undertones. Formally, government circles admit responsibility during the Holocaust and declare commitment to fight antisemitism, especially now that Romania assumed chairmanship of the IHRA, the international Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

In Hungary the deep divisions between the center right , the Fidesz party the extreme –right Jobbic, and the liberal left, continue, and the refugee crisis fuels them. Bitter debates between the Jewish community and the government during 2014, regarding the politics of memory and the commemoration of the Holocaust in Hungary on its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, were resolved in 2015: Hungary was the IHRA's chair that year, prime minister Orbán spoke about Hungary's shameful past, and his ambassador in Israel assumed responsibility for the Holocaust and promised to combat antisemitism.

### **The Struggle against Antisemitism**

Jewish leaders, communities and individuals have not sat idly by while antisemitism is on the rise in the public arena, in schools and universities and first and foremost in social media.

Let us spell out a number of recent achievements, in certain areas:

The regents of the University of California, the largest state university, decided to forbid antisemitic activity in all its forms within its campuses. So did the president of Indianan University, who announced his decision in an open letter.

The State Department adopted a working definition of antisemitism, based on the former WDA elaborated by the EUMC, and the list of bodies and even governmental agencies that are either using the former one or considering doing so, is growing.

Public campaigns against the spread of antisemitic expressions in social media, mainly Facebook, Google and Twitter, have proved successful, and the new antisemitism EU "Czar", Katarina von Schnurbein, announced that a systematic plan and legislation to limit these servers and others are being prepared.

The BDS movement has recently faced some setbacks: the Lellouche law in France actually prohibits bans; in the UK and Germany as well as in Scotland, voices and decisions against BDS were heard and taken. Six US states (New York, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Florida and California adopted decisions denouncing antisemitism and the BDS. Canada and Israel signed a memorandum concerning combatting the BDS. The struggle against the BDS movements is particularly important: while the right wingers appeal to the emotions of the general public, lower

classes included, the BDS is connected to the left, especially in academic and political circles.

As noted above, a number of European major leaders spoke out emphatically against antisemitism and promised to take steps against it. Budgets were allocated, security measures were intensified, Jewish leaders and heads of communities find an open door to their offices.

Rober Faurisson, the French known Holocaust denier was fined (10,000 Euros) and received a six-month suspended sentence.

Dr. Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress, visited a long line of statesmen and heads of states, organized and supported relevant conferences, raised his voice in public whenever needed and enhanced appropriate legislation.

Finally, these and others are signs that engaging in monitoring, analyzing and struggling against antisemitism entails indeed hard and dedicated work, but if carries out constantly, with united efforts within the Jewish people together with Israel, and with alliances and coalitions worldwide, it may bear fruit.

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

2015, much like the previous year, was a tense year in the post-Soviet region. The ongoing tension between Russia and Ukraine continued to influence all aspects of life, not only in those two countries, but in the rest of the region as well. The tension between Russia and the West was another central issue there.

In the antisemitic aspect, the region continued to be characterized by a relatively low number of physical attacks against Jews. However, Jewish facilities continue to be the most central victim of violent antisemitic incidents. In addition, in 2015 we observed the beginning of the formation of different types of antisemitism in the two central countries in the region – Russia and Ukraine. While in Russia, antisemitism is mainly expressed in what can be called "propagandist antisemitism", in Ukraine, antisemitism is expressed mainly by desecration of Jewish facilities and using antisemitism in politics.

#### **Russia**

In Russia, antisemitic propaganda is the most common type of antisemitism. Even though several cases of violence against Jewish facilities were recorded during 2015, most of the antisemitic manifestations come from the media and public figures. On one hand, the "old" antisemitic propaganda is very frequent, i.e. blaming the Jews for all the country's problems, the Communist Revolution and overthrowing the Tsar in 1917; on the other hand, the Jews are also blamed for the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The activity of the pro-Western opposition was discussed at length, as it was presented as alien to the Russian spirit, highlighting the alleged Jewish origin of its leaders. At the same time, the opposition itself also used antisemitic rhetoric. For example, one of its leaders, Aleksei Navalny, published on his Facebook page on 22 February 2015 a post condemning Russia's Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev for visiting a synagogue. The post was erased as a result of negative talkbacks.

Another issue that was discussed at length in the Russian media with an antisemitic odor is Ukraine in general and the military clash between the two countries in particular. The Russian media has dealt extensively with the characteristics of the new Ukrainian leaders, picturing them on one hand as Jews and on the other hand – a Nazi antisemitic Junta that is an immediate threat to the local Jewish community. Similarly to 2014, in 2015 the *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper and the RT News Network continued to be a main stage for virulent antisemitic and anti-Israeli propaganda.

Since the beginning of the conflict with the West following Russia's military conflict in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea, Russia has become significantly closer to extreme right-wing organizations abroad. On 22 March 2015 the International Russian Conservative Forum took place at the Holiday Inn Hotel in St. Petersburg, initiated by the nationalist party Motherland and the ruling party United Russia, with the aim of showing wide international support to the policy of president Vladimir Putin. The Forum was attended, among others, by Holocaust deniers and right-wing extremists from abroad: Udo Voigt (NPD, Germany), Roberto Fiore (New Force party, Italy), Viktoria Shilova (Dnepropetrovsk regional council, Ukraine), Eleftherios Sinodinos and Georgios Epitideios (Golden Dawn, Greece), Stefan Jacobsson (Party of the Swedes, Sweden), Daniel Karlsen (Party of the Danish, Denmark), Gonzalo Martin Garcia (National-Democratic Party, Spain), Nicholas Griffin (British National Party, UK), Horatio Maria Guerre (European Communist Party Millennium). According to the organizers, about 400 people from 15 countries attended the conference. The police detained 8 people who participated at a counter-demonstration outside the hotel. The Federation of Jewish Communities in Russia and the Simon Wiesenthal Center condemned the conference.

Nothing new was observed in the field of the struggle against antisemitism. While the judicial system continued to give suspended sentences or fines to distributors of antisemitic materials on the Internet (especially Russian social networks), in other kinds of media antisemitism continued without any reaction or punishment.

The tension between Israel and the Palestinians triggered several antisemitic statements and articles in the Russian media, mostly by the Russian journalist Maxim Shevchenko, author and publicist Alexander Prokhanov, founder and chairman of the Islamic Committee of Russia Geydar Dzhemal and Israel Shamir, Israeli journalist with Swedish citizenship.

## **Ukraine**

2015 can be characterized in Ukraine with two main antisemitic trends: continuing desecration of Jewish facilities and extensive use of antisemitism for political needs both in the struggle against the current regime and in order to win support during the local elections that took place in the autumn.

The memorial site at Babi Yar, for example, was desecrated 6 times in 2015. In September there was even an attempt to set the place on fire which caused heavy damage to the memorial. Similar incidents were recorded in other places as well; however, there was no real reaction on the part of the law enforcement agencies.

Another phenomenon was the use of antisemitism for political needs. The pro-Russian separatists in the eastern part of the country continued to attack the country's authorities for allegedly being Jewish. Such statements appeared on any possible stage. However, not only the separatists used antisemitic rhetoric, but also Ukrainian nationalists such as the Svoboda Party. The President, the PM, the speaker of the parliament (who really is Jewish and does not hide this fact), heads of parties – all were accused of being undercover Jews. The local elections in the autumn of 2015 also had an antisemitic flavor, though to a lesser extent than in previous years.

It should be noted, that like in 2014, due to the general political situation in Ukraine, it is sometimes impossible to know for sure whether an incident is purely antisemitic, or a provocative act aiming to achieve different goals through the use of antisemitism.

Another important issue in the Ukrainian context is the fact that as part of the struggle against the Soviet legacy and the attempt to expel Russian influence from the country, the Ukrainian parliament accepted on 9 April 2015 several laws equating the Soviet and Nazi regimes. These laws also explicitly define the Ukrainian nationalist undergrounds as fighters for the freedom of Ukraine. The intentional disregard by Ukrainian lawmakers of the role of the local population and members of the underground in the murder of Jews during the Holocaust in Ukraine and in other places, can lead to the conclusion that a person who claims that the local population took part in the Final Solution can be considered as a criminal. Shortly afterwards, several municipalities refused to establish Holocaust memorials, claiming that they are twisting "the historical truth" by describing the locals as collaborators in the murder of Jews.

A small number of antisemitic incidents were recorded in the other countries of the post-Soviet region: a few cases of violent incidents, a few antisemitic statements, and an ongoing discussion about the Holocaust and the role of the local population in it, especially in Moldova and the Baltic States.



## **Argentina**

The year 2015 in Argentina was mostly overshadowed by the mysterious death of Alberto Nisman, the special federal prosecutor who investigated the bombing of the Jewish community building (AMIA) in Buenos Aires in 1994. Nisman was found dead in his home on 19th January, 2015, several days after he accused Argentine President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner and Foreign Minister Héctor Timerman of obstruction of justice in the investigation of the attack, and several hours before he was supposed to appear before the Argentine Congress to present his accusations. The death of Nisman, initially determined a suicide, sparked a wave of conspiracy theories.

Among the general public, Nisman's death generated a kind of empathy towards the Jewish community, as was visible in commentary forums in the media. Tens of thousands of Argentineans marched on 18th February from the Argentine Congress to the Plaza de Mayo, in pouring rain, in honor of Nisman and in protest against what they described as the government's failure to protect a prosecutor. However, the affair had a negative impact on relations between the Jewish community and the administration, led by President Kirchner, which were already stressed due to the community's opposition to the agreement signed between Argentina and Iran to establish a joint committee to investigate the AMIA attack.

Kirchner initially claimed that the death of Nisman was a suicide, but later stated that he was killed, apparently by rogue elements in the Secret Service plotting against her. In response to criticism, Kirchner counterattacked, claiming she was the target of a conspiracy against her by the US, the "vulture funds" (alluding to a decade-long financial battle to collect \$1.5bn from Argentina on defaulted foreign bonds held by a US hedge fund owned by the American Jewish financier Paul Singer), Jewish community groups and Nisman. In order to understand the economic situation in Argentina and "the vulture funds", Cristina recommended that young people in the neighborhood of Villa Lugano in Buenos Aires read "The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare.

The situation was utilized by antisemitic elements in Argentina in order to repeat arguments against the Jewish community and accusations of dual loyalty. Juan Gabriel Labaké, defense attorney for some of the accused in connection with the AMIA bombing, filed before the court a criminal complaint demanding the investigation of alleged financial links between the US "vulture funds" and Alberto Nisman, and accused Nisman, Jewish leaders, members of the opposition and newspapermen of committing "treason" and constituting a serious danger to the Argentine nation. The complaint was dismissed by the court in September 2015. Posters appeared in Villa Crespo, a Jewish neighborhood of Buenos Aires, reading "A good Jew is a dead Jew. The good Jew is Nisman".

There were approximately 500 complaints of antisemitism lodged in 2015. The majority took the form of commentaries in forums corresponding to the major national press and social networks. Nisman's death led to an increase in news

connected to the Jewish community, which in turn led to an increase in antisemitic manifestations.

As in every year, antisemitic graffiti was found at different locations, such as the walls of the Argentinean Zionist Union in the city of Rosario (9th March); on a monument in the Río Gallegos Cultural Center in Santa Cruz (12th February); on the walls of a new promenade in the New Port of Parana, (25th June). There were also cases of vandalism in the local Jewish cemetery of Rosario, and in the Jewish cemetery “La Histórica” in Concepcion de Uruguay, province of Entre Rios (17-18 October). In August, a poster attacking the then mayor of Buenos Aires and presidential candidate, Mauricio Macri, was placed in one of the subway stations in Buenos Aires, calling him a "Jew and Mafioso".

There were also several cases of right-wing, neo-Nazi manifestations:

- On 29 May, a former policeman and his son were arrested in Buenos Aires, for publishing Nazi content in Facebook, inciting to kill blacks and Jews. Weapons and SS uniforms were seized in their house.
- In July, a swastika made with the desks of a first-grade classroom was discovered in a school in the district of Vicente Lopez, Buenos Aires.
- At the beginning of August, Nazi graffiti such as "Hitler lives"; "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for Aryan children" and "white power", were painted on a wall in Colonia Avellaneda in the Province of Entre Rios.
- The IL Peretz Jewish Cultural Association in Santa Fe expressed its concern over the designation of Commissar Juan Garro as head of the Regional Unit I of the Santa Fe police. In 2006 Garro was relieved of his earlier post as chief of Special Operations, following accusations of antisemitism and discrimination against a policeman because of his dark skin and his marriage to a Jewish woman. Nazi paraphernalia was also found in Garro's office. Following the public outcry, he took a leave of absence on 6th January, but denied being a Nazi.
- Adolf Eichmann's daughter-in-law, Carmen Bretín Lindemann, was forced to resign as mayoral candidate for the Misiones provincial town of Garupá, following comments she made on national TV, alleging that the Holocaust was “history written by the Jews.”
- A young Jewish man leaving the San Andrés University in Punta Chica, Buenos Aires was physically attacked by a neo-Nazi attending the same university, who shouted "long live the Holocaust" (October, 2015).
- A neo-Nazi group calling itself Black Flag or Los Pampillones, has been operating in the city of Mar del Plata for several years. Their activities have intensified during the last year and in the month of October, the group carried out five attacks on victims from minority groups, including homosexuals, Bolivians, punks, transvestites and prostitutes.

In a radio interview which took place on 1 April, Luis Barrionuevo, head of the Blue and White CGT labor union, called the Minister of the Economy, Axel Kicillof, “el Rusito,” (“the little Russian”) - a popular slang term used to refer to Jews. Alerted by the show's host that the language was offensive, Barrionuevo justified it by saying, “That's how his Cabinet colleagues refer to him.”

As in the past, there were calls to boycott Israeli tourism in Patagonia (southern Argentina) and the allegation of a Jewish plan to conquer the Patagonia (the so called “Andinia Plan”) was repeated. The most serious incident took place on 19th January at a hostel in the small village of Lago Puelo, where ten Israeli tourists were burned, robbed and beaten by three assailants who shouted antisemitic insults and accused them of “robbing” them of the Patagonia.

## **Brazil<sup>1</sup>**

Antisemitism in Brazil is not a major problem but there are cases of antisemitism, both from the left and the right. It is often expressed in the guise of anti-Zionism, especially from left wing and Muslim elements.

Antisemitism is widespread on the network, both on the part of right-wing and neo-Nazi elements and of left-wing and pro-Palestinians groups. The "Anti-Sionismo Brasil" website, for instance, posted antisemitic posts such as the claim that ISIS was created by Israel, compared Israel to a dog that expelled his owner (the Palestinians) from his bed, posted pictures of Netanyahu as Hitler, etc. Groups exchanged antisemitic jokes on Facebook, making dirty jokes about the Holocaust, the “big cock of the Black People” and the “huge nose of the Jews”, as well as praises to Hezbollah and wishes for the "extermination of Zionists".

The BDS movement gained momentum in Brazil, as elsewhere. The most serious incident in 2015 was a memorandum published in May by Jose Fernando Schlosser, Vice Dean of the Federal University of Santa Maria in southern Brazil, urgently requesting a list of Israeli students and lecturers in graduate programs. According to the dean, the request came from several groups, including the student union, the Association of Lecturers and the Association for Solidarity with the Palestinian people of southern Brazil. The Attorney General opened an investigation into suspected discrimination against the dean, according to the law that prohibits discrimination based on race, color, ethnicity, religion or national affiliation.

Pressure was exerted by the BDS on musicians Gilberto Gil and Caetano Veloso to boycott Israel and cancel their show. The musicians carried out their performance, though Caetano later declared he will not return to Israel due to the “oppression” of the Palestinians.

The appointment of Danny Dayan, former chairman of the Yesha (West Bank) Council, as Israel's ambassador to Brazil sparked a wave of protests, some of them antisemitic. MP Carlos Marun compared Dayan's appointment as ambassador of Israel to the appointment of the commander of a concentration camp by Germany.

Other notable incidents were anti-racist rap songs by the Muslim convert rapper Malik, blaming the “Zionists” for racism and murder of “young black men”, and an antisemitic poster which appeared at the central station of the city of Brasilia in February, reading: "All Jews are murderers, criminals and thugs. All Jews profess a false religion. All Jews are terrorists. All Jews are swindlers. Moses is a false prophet. The Jews are an aberration of the earth. Destroy the State of Israel ".

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<sup>1</sup> Partly based on report by Luiz Nazario, Brazil

The existence of a terror support network in the tri-border area (Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay), where 20,000 Arabs live, gives rise to concern of a potential risk of terrorist attacks during the 2016 Olympics which are due to take place in Rio.

## **Chile**

There were two notable incidents in Chile during 2015:

- During a lecture at the Faculty of Law of the University of Chile, the Israeli ambassador to Chile was verbally attacked and insulted by a student, spokesman of a radical antisemitic group. The students had earlier tried to prevent the appearance of Israeli officials in the University.

In August 2015, the facade of a building in Barrio Brasil in Santiago de Chile was defaced with Nazi symbols placed by a group called Padechi (Supporters for the Defense of Chile). The group's website, which promotes nationalistic and antisemitic ideology, identifies enemies of the country, including ethnic and sexual minorities, immigrants and supporters of human rights, and divides society between "Jews and non-Jews". Among those "guilty of the destruction of Chile", are "The Sect People", whose goal is "to take over the world, eliminating the Gentiles (non-Jews), promoting world government called neo-liberalism and globalization, establishing a Zionist and sectarian synarchic system, created by the deicide people."

## **Mexico / Renee Dayan Shabott**

The Jewish community numbers about 43,000 out of a total population of more than 121 million. Most Jews live in the capital Mexico City and its suburbs, while the rest are located in the cities of Guadalajara, Monterrey, Tijuana and Cancun.

Although Antisemitism it is not a constant trend in Mexico, as a result of national and international dynamics, and influences, it has always been present in Mexican society. There are no overtly Antisemitic radio stations, newspapers or television broadcasters; however, the dynamic of the Israeli-Arab conflict, has had a major impact on the mass media. Anti-Israel positions in the media are frequently mixed with common Antisemitic stereotypes. Moreover, left-wing demonization of Israel is often linked to traditional anti-Americanism.

## **Tendencies**

As in other years, the Palestinian –Israeli conflict triggered an amount of international news space in the Mexican media as well as in the social networks. Nevertheless the impact on the written media wasn't as negative as in previous years: 313 articles during 2015 (12%).

Since October, as a result of the wave of terror or "Knife Intifada" part of the coverage of the situation was biased against Israel. Many articles, justified the Palestinians attacks stating that it is a "desperate attempt against the occupation, a fight to defend their country and to achieve their human rights...The only solution is the establishment of a Palestinian State".

Many headlines emphasized the Israeli response against the terrorists, minimizing the victims, arguing the lack of proportion in strength between Israel and Palestinians, and rejecting the defense argument.



**CISJORDANIA**  
**MATAN A DOS PALESTINOS**  
Tropas israelíes mataron ayer en Hebrón a dos palestinos, uno de los cuales apuñaló a un soldado, en un nuevo episodio de violencia en Cisjordania. El otro hecho violento ocurrió cerca de la Tumba de los Patriarcas.

Two Palestinians killed  
Excelsior Newspaper  
October, 2015

## Responde Israel con “castigo colectivo” a ataques palestinos

Israel responds with “collective punishment  
to Palestinian attacks.  
El Financiero newspaper  
October, 2015

Once again, analogies between Nazis and Israelis were expressed in some articles and cartoons.



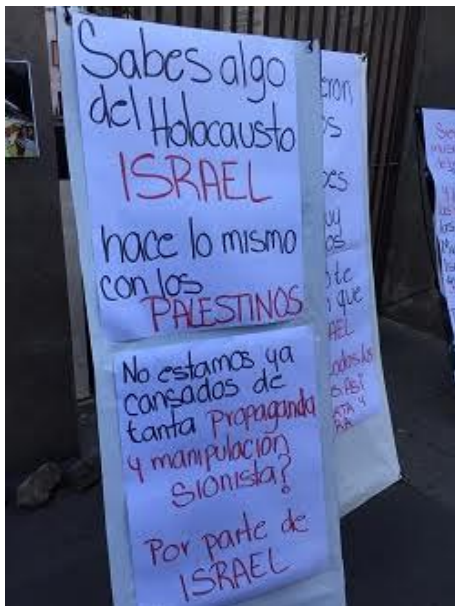
“Kill the Arabs. I don’t know why they call us “the new Nazis”, we don’t have gas chambers”  
Jans, Milenio newspaper  
October, 2015

In the electronic editions of Mexican newspapers, the readers justified terrorism and regretted that Hitler “didn’t finish his job”.

Anti-Zionist pro-Palestinian activities (conferences and demonstrations) were sponsored by organizations like the Coordinadora de Solidaridad Palestina. (Solidarity Palestinian Coordinator).



October 17



“Do you know anything about the Holocaust, Israel does the same to the Palestinians. We are tired of all the propaganda and Zionist manipulation”.  
November 29

## Social Media

During this year, one Antisemitic Facebook page under the name of “Comunidad Judia de Mexico” (Mexican Jewish Community) were published with negative remarks against Mexican Jews.



Some anti-Semitic messages were sent thru the web pages of Jewish institutions or by e-mail:

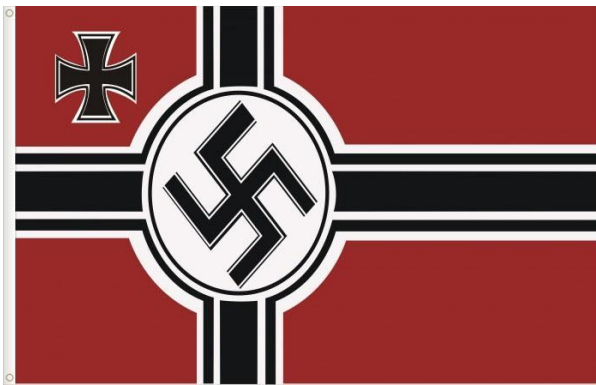
- Tribuna Israelita's webpage:  
Luigi Corlione: [sullivanrobin33@yahoo.com](mailto:sullivanrobin33@yahoo.com)

Subject: Fuck your mother

Message: Fucking Zionist Jews, piece of shit! Let the Palestinians live in peace. Go to the hell and the North Pole. You are curse for this world!"

- Enlace Judio's webpage:  
"robb\_max22@hotmail.com. Jews are the worst enemy. They control the world through poverty, sickness and war. They are the worst racist, they think non-Jews were born to serve them. One of the worst lies is the Holocaust, which they use to destroy other people. Rot in hell!"

The Justo Sierra Synagogue received the following e-mail:



Heil Hitler, fucking Jews. I am going to your fucking synagogue to do a second Crystal Night. juden raus. HEIL HITLERR

messages:

Twitter was used to spread Antisemitic

RT- Anonymous @notimexreal · 21 de feb. @luismar1t1 #Ayotzinapa @AlfredoJalifeR\_ @Omarel44 #VoteSelenaGomez: Zionist Jews use the power of money to kill non-Jews)

RT-Anonymous @notimexreal · 21 de feb. @ActualidadRT #Ayotzinapa @AlfredoJalifeR\_ @Omarel44 #AyotziVive Jews in Mexico control the finances and economy

In March, due to an internal labor problem in the MVS news radio station, Ezra Shabot, a recognized Jewish journalist, -who had nothing to do with the issue- was attacked with Antisemitic messages in the social media:

RT- Alex Jacquot 🇬🇧 BDS @onetripp ·

@ezshabot @CharlottesSpot @RUYMARTAN @drabetch Zionism= Nazism . Who are you fooling?



RT- Cuauhtemoc [@Cuauhtemoc\\_1](#) · 25 de mar.

[@ezshabot](#) As a good Jew, always being a victim and the “suffering” and inventing hoaxes such as the slander of the Holocaust.

RT- Führer Dog [@PerroPolicia\\_](#) · 26 de mar.

-Look mom, ¡a walking soap! – No son, it isn’t a soap, is [@ezshabot](#)

In November: Alfredo Jalife Rahme [@AlfredoJalifeR](#) stated that: “Mossad perpetró los atentados de París y Beirut”. (The Mossad perpetrated the attacks in Paris and Beirut)

On December 14, #IfyouareJewyouareshit became a Trending Topic in Twitter:





## Statistics

	Total
<b>Incidents</b>	
Graffiti	6
Messages on Jewish webpages	3
Offensive e-mails	4
Others	2
<b>Total</b>	15
<b>Incidents in mass media</b>	
Internet	13
Articles in electronic media with significative negative responses	10
Radio	3
TV	4
<b>Total</b>	35
<b>Antisemitic Propaganda</b>	
Events, demonstrations, conferences	12
Books, flyers	4
<b>Total</b>	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	65

## Uruguay

According to a study published in February 2015 by the Radar Group (Uruguayan marketing and public opinion research group), the Jewish minority is the most discriminated against amongst a group of minorities which include Chinese, Peruvian, blacks, Armenians and Spanish. 8% of those asked declared that it would "bother them a lot" to have a Jew in their family and 11% responded that it would "bother them a bit". Following the report by Radar, Carlos Kierszenbaum, joint director of Bnei Brith in Uruguay, carried out a study of antisemitism in the social media. According to Kierszenbaum, the findings are scary because of the level of ignorance and confusion demonstrated. "What remains is the hatred of Jews". However, according to the president of the Jewish Central Committee of Uruguay, Sergio Gorzy, Uruguay is not an antisemitic country. There are antisemitic people in the country, as all over the world, but his impression is that there are fewer than in other countries".

It should be noted that the Uruguayan government ordered special protection for the Jewish community, following several incidents in which explosive devises were found near the Israeli Embassy. The hypothesis was that it was an attempt to test the readiness of the embassy security.

## Venezuela<sup>2</sup>

In 2015 there was a decrease in the number of antisemitic incidents in Venezuela compared to 2014 (during which it increased especially after "Operation Protective

<sup>2</sup> Based on a report by Beatriz Rittigstein, CAIV

Edge"), but there were still many antisemitic manifestations, particularly in the media, both the governmental and semi-governmental and the private. As in the past, in many cases antisemitism disguised itself as anti-Zionism. National and international events served as opportunities for these manifestations. For example, according to various Venezuelan writers, Israel and Zionism are responsible for the terrorist attack at the French weekly "Charlie Hebdo", and Israel is responsible for the creation of ISIS.

Particularly notable were comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany and the claim that Zionism collaborated with the Nazis during World War II.

Antisemitic writers were very active in the media controlled by the government, and blamed not only Israel, but the Jewish world and the Venezuelan Jewish community for all problems in the country and the region.

Government officials expressed antisemitic attitudes in TV programs and the web. A prominent example is Diosdado Cabello, President of the Venezuelan Parliament, who on several occasions accused David Smolansky, mayor of the Caracas El Hatillo district, son of a Jewish father and a Christian mother, of being the "Zionist representative" in Venezuela. Diosdado also accused former Venezuelan minister Ricardo Hausmann, who lives in Boston, of conspiring against the "Bolivarian Revolution" and against the state, and called him also "a representative of Zionism". In addition, Diosdado posted a virulent antisemitic video on his website, comparing Benjamin Netanyahu to Adolf Hitler. Another example: Adel El Zabayar, a member of parliament from the ruling party, who in his twitter account accused "International Zionism" of the bombing of the Argentine Jewish community building, creating ISIS, trafficking in organs of Muslim children, etc.

Prior to the parliamentary elections held on 6 December (in which the ruling party suffered a defeat), there was concern among the leadership of the Jewish community that the community would serve as scapegoat, but at the end, it seems that the Venezuelan people, engaged in the problems of daily existence, were not interested in antisemitic propaganda.

## **Spain**

According to sociologists Alejandro Baer and Paula López, most Spanish Jews feel integrated and have not personally experienced discrimination because of their ancestry or Jewishness, but at the same time feel that prejudices, clichés and stereotypes about Jews are part of their daily life. Only about 0.1% of the Spanish population is Jewish, but there is a prolonged anti-Jewish cultural tradition. The left and the right in Spain share the same stereotype regarding Jews - powerful, influential, and smart - and the same distorted perception of the state of Israel, which is seen as an ethnically and religiously homogeneous state that "knows how to keep Islam at bay" ("Antisemitism without Antisemites", El Pais, 13 September, 2015).

In June, 2015, the Council of Europe called on Spain to pass "new and comprehensive anti-discrimination laws" to combat prejudices against Jews, Roma and other minority groups. In its report on Spain, the committee said "prejudice and intolerance against Roma, as well as islamophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance against migrants,

continue to be expressed, notably in the print and audiovisual media and on the Internet, as well as in political life.”

During 2015, the BDS intensified its campaign not only against Israel, but also against Jewish representatives and events. In August it exerted pressure on the organizers of the annual reggae music festival Rototom Sunsplash in Benicassim to cancel the scheduled appearance of the well-known American Jewish rapper Matisyahu. The artist was accused of being a "Zionist" who supports the practice of "apartheid and ethnic cleansing." After Matisyahu refused to sign a statement supporting a Palestinian state, the organizers at first cancelled his performance, but afterwards, following criticism at home and abroad reversed their decision, apologized and the performance ultimately took place. In November, the BDS called for the boycott of the inter-active show 'Sama-Sama', founded by an Israeli, at the Madrid Arena pavilion for "having organized events with the support and cooperation of the Government of Israel and its institutions”.

Another serious incident was the motion presented to the Cordoba City Council by the political party Izquierda Unida (United Left) to join the international BDS campaign by excluding from the cultural program of Cordoba anything that is related to Judaism and its Cordoba heritage, including the Sephardic Music Festival and the anniversary of the Synagogue. On 20 December, a group of students from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) passed a boycott resolution against Israel at the University Senate.

There were also violent incidents: A Jihadist cell, calling itself "Islamic Brotherhood", headed by Antonio Sáez and planning to bomb a synagogue or public buildings such as the Catalanian Parliament, was dismantled in April and eleven members were arrested. The group was accused of planning to kidnap a random member of the public, dress their victim in an orange jump suit, and then film him or her being beheaded. In May, a resident of Ribaforada was arrested on suspicion of spreading audiovisual material inciting hatred and violence through social networks, among them a video encouraging violent action against Jews and the State of Israel. On 28 August, three neo-Nazis violently attacked a young boy in Bilbao, Basque country, and marked a swastika and the number ""88" (code for "Heil Hitler") on his arm with a knife.

On 13 June 2015, Guillermo Zapata, a politician appointed as councillor for culture by the new government of the city of Madrid headed by the Ahora Madrid left-wing coalition, was forced to apologize for posting a joke about the Holocaust on Twitter in 2011: “How would you fit five million Jews in a (SEAT) 600? In the ashtray”. Zapata issued a statement in which he apologized and strongly condemned antisemitism, claiming the joke had been part of a debate on the limits of humor and was taken out of context. However, on 15 June, he announced his resignation from the post. Following his resignation, the left-wing "Compromís per Crevillent" coalition demanded the resignation of Cesar Augusto Asencio, the right-wing mayor of the town of Crevillent, Alicante, because of an article published in 1979 in which he denied the Holocaust and defended Nazism. According to the article: "The Jew, during all his life has been dedicated to living off others through usury and finance". In the past, Asencio apologized for the article, calling it "an error of adolescence".

On 17 June, sports commentator Xavier Bosch wrote a column in the sports newspaper "Mundo Deportivo" claiming the "Jewish lobby" and the Mossad were influencing the FC Barcelona soccer club. In July, the state-owned RTVE transmitted a radio program titled "From the Inferno — The Jewish People: Propagator of the Satan Cult", accusing Jews of promoting Satanism.

There were also positive developments during the year. On 31 March, Spain published a reform of its penal code, modifying Articles 510 and 607 and facilitating the pursuit of antisemitic and other discriminatory hate discourse and discrimination. On 11 June, the Spanish Congress passed the Sephardic ancestry law, granting citizenship to Sephardic Jews, descendants of the Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. On 22 June, Castrillo Matajudíos, a Spanish town whose name means "Kill the Jews", decided to revert to its original name of Mota de Judíos ("Jews Hill"). The original name was changed in 1623, following the persecution and expulsion of Jews from Spain.

## **Scandinavia / Mikael Shainkman**

### **Antisemitic Incidents**

The number of antisemitic incidents went down compared to 2014 (when a relatively large number of incidents occurred due to the military conflict in Gaza). There was, however, one incident with a deadly outcome, which is extremely rare in Scandinavia. Saturday evening February 14 2014, an armed Islamist attacked the synagogue in central Copenhagen, where a Bat Mitzvah celebration was taking place. The attacker shot dead a guard called Dan Uzan and injured two policemen outside the synagogue, but he didn't manage to enter the premises. Earlier that day, the same man had opened fire at a meeting arranged on the anniversary of the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. At the meeting, the topic of discussion was freedom of speech and artistic freedom in the face of religious repression and violence. The apparent target of the attack was the Swedish artist Lars Vilks, who also has a fatwa declaring that he must die hanging over him since 2007, when he drew a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammad. Vilks was unharmed, as was the French ambassador who also spoke at the meeting. One other person (Finn Norrgaard, Danish film director) was shot dead at the event and several were injured. In the early morning the day after (Feb 15), police located the shooter who was killed in an exchange of fire with the police.

Commentators widely associated the incident with the terror attacks in France, where attacks on the magazine Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket resulted in several murdered. Already before the attack, the concern for copy-cat attacks was heightened. On January 14, Lena Posner Körösi, chairwoman of the Central Council of Jewish Communities in Sweden, said that Sweden's Jewish communities had received numerous threats from Islamic groups in the days following the terror attacks in Paris. Also in the extreme rightwing milieu the Paris attacks were used in antisemitic

propaganda. For instance, on January 8 2015, Nordfront, a website with close links to the neo-Nazi Swedish Resistance Movement, published an article blaming the Jews for the problem with Islamist terror, because the Jews brought the Muslims to Europe in order to create the multi-cultural society which is a part of the Jewish conspiracy in order to weaken the Aryan peoples.

As a consequence of the attack at the Copenhagen synagogue, as well as the previous attacks in Paris, synagogues all over Scandinavia kept closed the following Shabbat. The Danish Jewish local radio station, Radio Shalom, also temporarily suspended its broadcasts. There was, however, also an outpouring of sympathy from non-Jews. Manifestations in support of the local Jewish communities were arranged following the February 14 attack in Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm. In the two latter cities, non-Jews formed symbolic protective "Peace Rings" surrounding the local synagogues.

22 February, 2015, Jan Guillou, famous Swedish author, publicist and long-standing pro-Palestinian activist and advocate, wrote about antisemitism in one of his regular columns in Labor Union-owned tabloid Aftonbladet. He criticized the heightened security arrangements at Jewish schools, synagogues and community buildings in Sweden following the Copenhagen attack February 14. Guillou claimed that antisemitism is a marginal problem in Sweden today, and that Islamophobia is a much worse problem. He then claimed that the reason anti-Semitism gets so much attention is that if anyone questions its existence he is immediately silenced by "abysmal roars" and "aggressive debate" from the "Liberal" press. He accused the Swedish Committee against Antisemitism and conservative Jewish publicist Paulina Neuding of both exaggerating antisemitism and inciting against Muslims. Guillou also said Jewish claims to feel so threatened that they consider leaving Sweden was "hysteria" and "an insult" to Sweden. Guillou's article was criticized already the same day. For instance by journalist Niclas Sennerteg, who pointed out that Guillou's insistence that one has to choose to fight either antisemitism or Islamophobia is a false dichotomy, and that Guillou should know better than to conflate Jews and Israel, as he does in his column. February 23, Sweden's leading liberal daily Dagens Nyheter slammed what it called Guillou's "conspiracy theories" and stated that he had crossed the line of decency. February 25, the Swedish Committee against Antisemitism (SKMA) published a detailed refutation of Guillou's claims on the Committee's blog. On March 5, the author Elisabeth Åsbrink wrote a comment in Sweden's largest daily, Dagens Nyheter, that future generations would be stunned by Guillou's response that trivializes a situation where someone's identity can be a death sentence.

February 23, publicist Lisa Bjurwald wrote in the media branch paper Medievärlden, that this isn't the first time Aftonbladet has published "troubling" texts about Jews. Her conclusion is that Guillou and Aftonbladet are so against Israel that they are blind to antisemitism. The same day, Harry Amster wrote a column in the national daily Svenska Dagbladet taking its starting-point in Guillou's words that Jewish claims to want to leave Sweden out of fear is "a hair-raising insult". Amster retorted that it's Guillou's column that's insulting.

## **Additional Examples of Antisemitism**

Also in 2015, the Swedish city of Malmö – with its comparatively large population with roots in the Middle East – was associated with antisemitism. On January 21 2015, Swedish television aired a show about antisemitism in Malmö, the country's third largest city. Petter Ljunggren, reporter for the show Uppdrag Granskning, wore a *kippa* and a Star of David necklace and moved around in Malmö for a week. He was repeatedly stared at, insulted, shouted at, threatened and in one instance people threw eggs at him. The show made it clear that the perpetrators were people with a Middle Eastern background, and when interviewed, they blamed Israeli actions against the Palestinians for their hostility to Jews in Malmö. In a comment on January 21 2015, Per Svensson – senior publicist and culture editor – published an assessment in *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, the leading newspaper in Malmö. Svensson laments that the dominating opinion in Swedish public discourse equates antisemitism and neo-Nazism. He wrote that thanks to this non sequitur, antisemitism among other groups, such as the minority in Malmö with roots in the Middle East, had been ignored or even denied for too long, by journalists, academics and politicians.

On January 26, on the night before International Holocaust Memorial Day, the neo-Nazi group the Swedish Resistance Movement carried out coordinated operations in several Swedish towns in Sweden such as Falun, Umeå, Borlänge and Ludvika. The entrance to local media outlets were cordoned off and a note was attached reading: "Attention! This place has been blocked as a preventive measure. The Swedish people are no longer interested in listening to any whining about dead Jews. Instead of writing about the banal post-war propaganda, why not write about real tragedies such as the occupation of Sweden as a result of mass immigration or the genocide of the Boer in South Africa. With unfriendly regards, The Resistance Movement."

In the evening March 10 2015, the Jewish funeral chapel in Malmö, Sweden, was attacked. Inside, a Jewish family was sitting vigil with a dead family member waiting for the funeral the day after. Unknown attackers tried to break into the chapel on two occasions. Police was called to the site. The police deemed the situation dangerous and stayed to protect the vigil.

On 9 April, 2015, a kosher delicatessen store in Copenhagen, Denmark, was targeted for antisemitic vandalism. Someone smashed a window and wrote "Jødesvin" (Jewish pigs) on the wall of the store. The vandalism was detected by a police patrol – a part of the stepped-up security arrangements surrounding Jewish institutions in Denmark following the February deadly attack against the synagogue.

## **The Refugee Crisis and its Consequences**

The most important development in 2015 is undoubtedly the wave of refugees that has reached Scandinavia. The vast majority of the refugees who have made it to Scandinavia have tried to stay in Sweden, the country with the most generous asylum laws – until 2015 at least. In August and September, when the wave peaked, some 2,000 refugees – mostly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria – crossed the border into Sweden every day. Danish authorities didn't let them stay in Denmark, and instead had Danish police escort the masses of people on to Sweden. Some refugees continued on to Norway and Finland, but the lion's share stayed. This caused

enormous strain on the government bodies trying to house, feed and investigate the asylum claims of the refugees. In December, after local councils and various national authorities charged with dealing with the refugee absorption had sounded the alarm, the government suddenly acted to effectively close to Swedish borders for refugees. Sweden went from the most open to one of the most closed countries in the EU overnight.

This move, though called for by facts on the ground, caused great confusion in the Swedish political discourse. Suddenly, the government implemented policies it had labeled as racist and even fascist only days before. Most politicians, except those belonging to the small socialist Left Party and the government coalition partner The Greens, welcomed the change in policy.

The great influx of refugees has strengthened the populist extreme right in Scandinavia, represented by the Progress Party in Norway, the Danish People's Party, the Sweden Democrats and the True Finns. The latter are now even represented in the Finnish government. (The True Finns have, however, taken a beating in the polls – supposedly due to its participation in the government.) These parties have been on the rise for the past decade or so, but the refugee crisis has given them an extra boost. The populist extreme right is rising in all polls, and their growing strength has a destabilizing effect.

The Sweden Democrats, for instance, published addresses of absorption centers all over Sweden. Soon after the publication of the addresses, arson attacks against asylum centers started. In one week in October 2015, three such centers burned to the ground in Southern Sweden, an area where various extreme rightwing parties such as the Sweden Democrats are strong. Veronica Palm, senior Social Democrat and member of the Party's Executive Committee, condemned the publications, calling them a veiled invitation to further arson attacks. November 7 another refugee absorption center was burned down, in Floda. November 10 it happened again in Forshaga. Both Forshaga and Floda are located in western Sweden. In total, 43 centers for asylum seekers burned down in Sweden during 2015, all of them in the second half of the year. (It should be noted, however, that not all instances of arson can be connected to the extreme right: on December 9 2015, the Swedish Police issued a statement showing that as many as a third of these arson attacks were carried out by people living at the asylum centers themselves.)

Other extreme rightwing organizations, such as Pegida, have also established themselves in Scandinavia in 2015. The anti-Muslim Pegida movement that originated in Germany has held demonstrations in Oslo and Malmo (twice). In Finland, neo-Nazis have banded together and formed a vigilante group called Soldiers of Odin, named after the warrior king of the Old Norse gods. The Soldiers of Odin claim to protect the local inhabitants against violence, theft, robberies and rape from Muslim immigrants. The organization spread quickly, and in December 2015 it had established branches in Norway and Sweden as well. These branches are as of yet still controlled by the mother organization in Finland.

At the same time as the populist extreme right rose dramatically, the ideological extreme right, i.e. the neo-Nazi movement, lost strength in the polls – despite intensified political activities like the ones mentioned above. It seems that the extreme

rightwing sympathizers flock to the bigger, populist parties when they have an increasing chance to affect actual influence on policy. A case in point is the fact that one of the leading neo-Nazi parties in Sweden, the Swedes' Party (Svenskarnas Parti) announced in 2015 that they would disband. This was due to the party being almost completely wiped out in the elections held in 2014, despite high-profile campaigning.

In short, the great numbers of refugees coming to Scandinavia may have a destabilizing effect in coming years. On the one hand, the populist extreme right is strengthened, bringing with it politically motivated violence (e.g. the arson attacks on refugee absorption centers) as well as anti-minority legislation (hitting both Muslims and Jews equally). On the other hand, the authorities don't have full control over who crosses the borders, and it might very well turn out that ISIS members, or other radicalized elements infiltrate Scandinavia. The Swedish and Danish secret services (SAPO and PST) already warn that Gothenburg in Sweden especially is a hotbed for ISIS recruitment and dozens, maybe even hundreds, of inhabitants from that city have traveled to Syria to fight for ISIS. The Scandinavian governments, and especially Sweden's, have been slow in reacting to this development.

From a Jewish perspective, the rise of the populist extreme right is also worrying. These parties usually support Israel, but are quick to restrict the religious and minority rights of local Scandinavian Jewish communities by supporting legislation banning kosher butchering, *brit milah* etc. Their support of Israel is also based on their understanding of Israel as an enemy of Islam and their ally against the rising tide of Islam. In addition, historically, intolerant extremist parties have rarely kept away from attacking Jews in the long run.

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

Four major events during 2015 led to a significant increase in the antisemitic manifestations in the Arab media and social networks: The attacks on the offices of the satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris and on the Jewish "Hyper Cacher" supermarket on January 7-9; The arson attack on the Dawabsha family home in the Palestinian village of Duma on July 31, causing the death of a one and a half year old baby, 'Ali Sa'ad Dawabsha and his two parents; The increasing tension over the Temple Mount and al-Aqsa mosque, invoking a burst of Palestinian attacks - stabbing, shooting and running over, as well as the intensification of PA official incitement; The 13 November Paris attacks perpetrated by Muslims affiliated with the Islamic State organization (ISIS). This review deals with the Arab reactions to those events and focuses on the major themes reoccurring in the antisemitic discourse: Defaming Jews and the Jewish religion along with accusing Israel and the Jews for all disasters in the Arab world, while invoking in many cases *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*; The usage of Nazi metaphors, Holocaust denial, equating Jews with the Nazis and accusing them of collaborating with them; The accusation of internal rivals of being Jews – a trend conspicuous since 2011 with the eruption of the "Arab Spring", thus turning the term "Jew" as a swearword, and a metaphor for evil. During this period, the incitement in the social networks, Facebook in particular, has intensified and numerous antisemitic posts were published, including caricatures, equating Jews with ISIS.



## **The Paris Attacks of January and November**

The attacks on the "Charlie Hebdo" newspaper offices and the "Hyper Cacher" Supermarket, which claimed the lives of ten journalists, two police officers and four people from the local Jewish community, invoked accusations of Israel and the Jews as standing behind them, just as it happened after other notable terror attacks perpetrated by Muslim extremists such as the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US. On February 9, for example, *Tunisian Times* wrote that ISIS' leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi paid the Israeli Mossad to carry out these attacks. Similarly, the Lebanese *Middle East Panorama* news agency published on January 9, an article written by the Egyptian Ahmad al-Sharqawi, claiming that "the Jewish Zionists suggested to the newspaper to fabricate a barbaric attack against the freedom of speech in order to increase its profits".

Another set of responses to the attacks was the criticism of the Western alleged emphasis on freedom of speech on the one hand, allowing the publications of anti-Islamic caricatures mocking Prophet Muhammad, while banning, on the other hand, the publication of material related to the Jews or the Holocaust which is considered "antisemitic". In the same vein, Mahir Abu Tir wrote on January 15, in the Jordanian daily *al-Dustur* an article titled "If we were Jews", in which he requested the West to treat Muslims in the same way they treat Jews. Similarly, Jabir al-Karmuti, a presenter of the Egyptian *On-TV* channel claimed on the same day that touching the Holocaust is considered a "Taboo", while there is no problem to draw and publish offensive caricatures against Prophet Muhammad. Al-Karmuti also accused the Jews for this and added that Jews are using the Holocaust as a means "to suck the blood of the Germans."

Moreover, the November 13 attacks in the French capital, claiming the lives of over 130 people, gave way to numerous conspiracy theories on the alleged involvement of Israel and the Jews in those attacks. For example As'ad al-'Azuni, a Palestinian writer based in Jordan, in his *al-Hiwar al-Mutamaddin* column on November 15, claimed that only Jews have the interest of executing such attacks in order to cause dissent between the Christian world in the west and the Muslim world in the east. Al-'Azuni also accused the Jews of the 9/11 attacks, adding that ISIS leader, is a Jew trained by the Israeli Mossad. Similar claims were made in the Palestinian daily *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, also on November 15, holding the Mossad responsible for these attacks. On November 16, Fatah official Facebook page published a set of caricatures comparing between Israel and the Jews with ISIS. One of these caricatures depicted a stereotypical Orthodox Jew with a Star of David, alongside an ISIS figure, emerging from a match box, sparking up a fire; another caricature drew Netanyahu with a Star of David badge on his arm standing near an ISIS militant, while both of them are aiming at the Eiffel Tower with a long-barreled weapon.

## **The Arson Attack on the Dawabsha Family House in the Palestinian Village of Duma**

The arson attack of the Dawabsha family house on July 31, sparked a tremendous unrest within the Palestinian society and provoked harsh responses, ranging from its equation to the Holocaust and to the Nazi crimes on one hand, and to ISIS' modus

operandi on the other. Two days after the incident, Yusuf Razqa, a consultant for the Hamas-government's Prime Minister in Gaza, defined the arsonists in the Hamas-affiliated *Palestine.info* portal as "Jewish Nazis". On August 13, Jihad al-Khazin defined Benjamin Netanyahu and his government in his *al-Hayat* column as "war criminals". On the same day, Hamada Fara 'na accused the Israeli society as a whole in *al-Dustur* as acting in accordance with the Nazi ideology, which reflects the inherent racist nature of Judaism, adding: "The extremism, racism, settlements and terror.. are the expression of the Zionist ideology and policy". On August 1, The Palestinian Cultural and Media Institute published in its website a caricature titled "The New Nazis", showing a figure of a stereotypical bearded-Jew burning with a Jewish Menorah a baby wrapped in the Palestinian flag. Another caricature released on the same site and on the same day, depicted a young child burning under a Jewish Menorah, titled "The Jewish State", along with the Hashtag *#DontBurnOurBoys*, pointing to its similarity to "The Islamic State". On August 1, yet another caricature was published in the Palestinian Daily, *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, presenting a picture of a masked ISIS militant setting a baby on fire inside his cradle, together with the English title of: "Israel is ISIS". This caricature alluded to the horrific scene of ISIS burning to death the downed Jordanian fighter pilot, Mu'az al-Kasasba inside a cage in January 2015. ISIS horrific acts against non-Muslims and Muslims in Iraq and Syria became a fertile ground for numerous writers, philosophers and social networks activists for the comparison between ISIS and Judaism, and the accusation of the so-called racist nature of Judaism. Jordanian *al-Ghad*, for example, published an article on May 17, on a conference held by the Jordanian writers' association dealing with the Takfiri groups such as ISIS, during which the Jordanian writer, Sa'ud Qabilat was quoted as accusing ISIS of using "well-known Zionist terms", such as "Believers versus Gentiles" in order to achieve its goals. Similarly, As'ad al-'Azuni, in an *al-Hiwar al-Mutamaddin* on March 10, used the Islamic traditions to illustrate the so-called extremism embedded in Judaism. He claimed that their inability to accept other religions led them to kill numerous prophets such as Jesus, and to attempt to poison Prophet Muhammad and his companions.

### **The Temple Mount Tension and the Irruption of a Wave of Terror Attacks**

Since July 2015, tension emerged between Israel and the Palestinians in the grounds of the Temple Mount and the al-Aqsa mosque, which intensified during the Jewish and Muslim holidays in September and October. The Palestinian concerns of a possible Israeli change in the status quo on the Temple Mount sparked a wave of incitement in Palestinian social network pages, religious sermons and TV broadcasts. Israel was accused of systematically Judaizing the Temple Mount, and of aiming to destroy the al-Aqsa mosque and build in its stead a new Jewish Temple. The intensification of incitement was followed by the irruption of violent clashes with young Palestinians, which escalated into terror attacks against Jews, first in Jerusalem, then throughout Israel. Lone attackers, most of whom youngsters, went out to target Israeli civilians, by hurling stones, throwing makeshift Molotov cocktails, shooting, and mainly stabbing, thus leading to the identification of this wave of attacks as "the Intifada of knives". The clashes with Israeli security forces, followed by Israeli deterrence measures only increased the antisemitic discourse among the Palestinians and the Arab world, which mostly emphasized the Jewish destructive nature as conveyed in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. For example, Hamas's Palestine

Information Center published on September 14, an article claiming that the Jewish violence experienced towards al-Aqsa is rooted in early Jewish scriptures, which consider non-Jews as "animals" and therefore can be killed. This alleged belief was said to have been further-developed by Zionist leaders, who based on the protocols, used violence against the Palestinians in al-Aqsa to destroy the mosque and build on its ruins their alleged Temple. Similar allegations were raised on September 23, by the Jordanian Palestinian writer and lawyer, Sufyan Shawa in *al-Dustur*, who said that the Jewish aspirations in the al-Aqsa mosque reveal the destructive nature embedded in Judaism since the Talmudic era till the time of the writing of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

PA president, Mahmud ‘Abbas also referred to this issue, retorting during a PLO meeting broadcast on the Palestinian Television on September 16, that the "Jews defile the al-Aqsa mosque with their dirty feet". Palestinian religious figures even called for the annihilation of the Jews. Hamas-affiliated cleric, Wa’il al-Zard called on Hamas Television on October 9, to "teach the Jews all sorts of tortures", and Shaykh Khalid al-Maghribi, a frequent preacher in al-Aqsa mosque said during a YouTube broadcasted sermon on October 16, that the "Jews worship Satan, and they will be annihilated by Muslims".

### **The Holocaust in the Public Discourse**

References to the Holocaust continued unabated in various contexts as in previous years, invoking the traditional motifs of equating between Israel and the Nazi state allegedly due to its attitudes toward the Palestinians; the accusation of Zionist-Nazi collaboration; and Holocaust denial. As‘ad al-‘Azuni, for example, wrote in his *al-Hiwar al-Mutamaddin* column on May 11, that the Zionist movement reached an agreement with the Nazi movement and its leader, Adolf Hitler, according to which Palestine would be given to the Jews in order to fulfill its imperialistic dream. He also contended in the same article, that the Jews are driven by a blood thirsty Talmudic ideology. Similar accusations were raised by Fayiz Rashid, a Palestinian author and writer, on September 3, in the Qatari daily *al-Sharq*, adding that the Zionist movement kept close contact with the German Gestapo to hunt the anti-Zionist Jews in Europe.

Munir Jamal al-Din Salim, a researcher of religions, accused the Jews of inventing the "Myth of the Holocaust" in his July 27 article in *al-Hiwar al-Mutamaddin*. Quoting the works of Holocaust deniers, such as Ernst Zündel, Fred A. Leuchter, and Arthur Butz, Salim concurred that there were no German documents explicitly ordering the extermination of the Jews. In addition, Salim argued that the Jewish claim that six million Jews perished in the Holocaust is extremely exaggerated. This claim was also discussed by other writers, such as the Syrian lecturer ‘Abd al-Salam Rajih on Lebanese al-Mayadin TV channel on May 18. He claimed that the total number of Jews in all of Europe on the eve of World War II did not exceed 450,000; therefore the narrative of the six million Jewish victims is false.

Another event which prompted a discussion on the Holocaust and the role of Hajj Amin al-Husayni during World War II was the speech given by the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu at the 37<sup>th</sup> Zionist congress in Jerusalem on October

20. Netanyahu accused the Mufti of Jerusalem of masterminding "The Final Solution" and inciting Hitler to execute it. Most of the writers saw Netanyahu's statement as an incitement to hatred, motivated by his urge to portray the Palestinians as the "new Nazis". While denouncing Netanyahu the writers raised motifs from the traditional Holocaust discourse, such as the accusation of Jewish-Nazi collaboration, and Holocaust denial. Most of the writers ignored the Mufti's role in WWII on the Nazi side, but several of them discussed the historical events that led to his escape to Germany to show that the annihilation of the Jews started long before his arrival to Berlin. Moreover, few of them even quoted Israeli historians as proof. , Hamada Fara'na in *al-Dustur* on October 27, referred to Yad Vashem's chief historian, and Jihad al-Khazin in *al-Hayat* on October 23, referred to Prof. Litvak from Tel Aviv University. Lebanese author Elias Khouri wrote in *al-Quds al-'Arabi* on October 26 claimed that he had no intention to defend Husayni, but "The Nazi Netanyahu exonerated the Germans from responsibility for the Jewish genocide, for granting the Israeli Jews an excuse for perpetrating the genocide of the Palestinians." Similarly London-based historian and writer, Bashir Musa Nafi'in *al-Quds al-'Arabi* on October 28, and al-Khazin in his column in *al-Hayat* on October 22, asserted that the Mufti was not a Nazi nor Fascist, and did not call even once for the killing of the Jews. Nafi' also pointed out that "the Zionist federation in Germany never hesitated to sign an agreement with the Nazis regarding the facilitation of the immigration of 60,000 German Jews to Palestine", adding that the Haganah actually arranged Adolf Eichmann's visit to Palestine in 1937. Similarly, Palestinian writer 'Awni Farsakh in U.A.E daily *al-Khalij* on October 30, accused Jews of collaborating with the Nazis, asserting that the "Zionist newspapers continued operating in Berlin even in 1939," and that the Gestapo was aware of the Mossad's activity in facilitating the illegal Jewish emigration from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia to Palestine, and even Eichmann took an active part in organizing and funding it.

Several writers, such Salim Qawatin in *al-Quds al-'Arabi* on November 1, addressed the unsuccessful attempts after the war to bring Husayni to trial for genocide in the Nuremberg. Other writers denied the Holocaust, blaming the Jews and the Zionist movement for inventing it for their own purposes. Talal Salih Bunan, for example, argued in the Saudi daily *'Ukaz* on October 27, that the Holocaust is an unproven crime. Bunan also accused the Jews of exploiting it by arousing guilt feelings in the nations worldwide for extorting them.

In conclusion, it should be noted that despite the numerous antisemitic manifestations, there exist voices denouncing antisemitism and calling for an inter-religious solidarity and dialogue. Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the U.N, 'Abdullah al-Mu'alimmi spoke at the General Assembly on January 22, after the Paris terrorist attacks on the *Charlie Hebdo* offices and the "Hyper Cacher, calling to fight antisemitism as well as Islamophobia, and to initiate an inter-religious dialogue. However, the Saudi ambassador still linked the rising antisemitism in Europe with Israel's deeds against the Palestinians. Few months later, on May 5, Mina Thabit, a Coptic Egyptian writer published an article in the Egyptian *Mada Masr* Portal, apologizing on behalf of the Egyptian people for the treatment of the Jews in Egypt, and their expulsion from the country during the 1940s through the 1970s. Thabit also called for the preservation of the Jewish heritage in Egypt as an integral part of the Egyptian cultural heritage of Egypt.

## **Germany / Sarah Rembiszewski**

The events of summer 2014, many of them violent, during and in the aftermath of the Operation Protective Edge, were followed by an unprecedented wave of antisemitic hatred in the streets of Europe; this aroused serious concerns, not only for the Jewish citizens, but also for the authorities who seemed surprised by the reappearance of murderous hatred of Jews, which many had thought had been buried for good. The war in Gaza seemed to have been a pretext for all those who were waiting for the right moment to release anti-Jewish resentments and hatred, mostly masked as anti-Israel sentiments.

The situation in 2015 as to the level of hatred against Jews (*unsere juedischen Mitbuergern*) did not change, although statistics seem to point to a decrease in actual reported manifestations of antisemitic incidents.

Again, countless antisemitic diatribes, speeches, press articles and especially electronic posts in almost every possible form on the internet were recorded in 2015 in Germany. The phenomenon of harassment and attacks, desecration of cemeteries, memorial sites and arson attacks continued in 2015. According to the official figures, the numbers of antisemitic crimes have on the whole dropped from 864 (including 25 violent acts) in 2014 to 740 (including 18 violent acts) in 2015.

As for Berlin however, the hate crime monitoring groups ReachOut and Berliner Register reported for 2015 a 34% rise compared to the number of incidents reported in 2014, and more than twice the number of antisemitic crimes reported by Berlin police in 2014 (193). Part of the reason for the higher number of reported incidents is to be found in a new monitoring system

Figures for 2015 differ greatly from and are far from representing the perceived reality of fear, or at least concern, of the majority of the Jewish population. It is not always possible to compare polls, as the criteria might differ and the results are often misleading. According to an early ADL survey, antisemitic attitudes dropped significantly in France, Germany and Belgium during 2015, even as high profile attacks in Europe raised fears of a resurgence of anti-Jewish sentiment. According to the ADL, the “the results [of the survey] indicate that heightened awareness of violence against Jews fosters a sense of solidarity with the Jewish community and that strong condemnation by political and civic leaders makes expressing anti-Semitism less acceptable”.

The Jewish population, however, has been living in ever increasing fear, mainly of the unknown, related to the possible demographic changes due to the influx of a population with high antisemitic and anti-Israel potential. Notwithstanding this fact, the inner-community debate concerning this potential also highlights the fact that any generalization of this issue is highly problematic: there are no research results yet on the extent to which refugees may be bringing antisemitism with them to Germany, as stated by Dervis Hizarci the head of KIGA, an initiative against antisemitism based in the Berlin neighborhood of Kreuzberg.

The Jewish population seems to be somehow caught between the potential threat of radical Islamists and the home-grown extremists of the radical right. But it must be

mentioned that the fear is not caused only by extremists of all colors. Many Jewish teachers at German schools, for example, experience daily antisemitic prejudices and expressions by their pupils, beginning at early ages, mostly coming from children with migration background. Some of the teachers hide being Jewish, fearing insults and defamation.

As early as the beginning of the year in February 2015, the Jewish community of Berlin decided to distribute its monthly magazine, "Jewish Berlin", without the community logo, in neutral envelopes. The community spokesman Ilan Kiesling stated that they did this "in order to reduce the hostility toward our more than 10.000 members" and because "many community members were thinking about canceling their subscription". The decision is part of a new security protocol which was drawn up by the police and the security department of the Jewish community.

The wave of refugees, mainly from countries with strong anti-Israel and antisemitic agendas, has become a real source of concern, not only for the individual but also for the representatives of the Jewish community, caught between the very real fear of Islamist terror and the rise of the extremist right. The call of the chairman of the Zentralrat, Josef Schuster, to avoid Jewish signs (*kippa*, etc) in public was not only received as a concern for the security of the community, but was sharply criticized as bowing to threats and has resulted in fervent debates. (Seen as controversial was also the statement by Schuster, concerning the numbers of refugees to be admitted.) Schuster warned that although "many of the refugees are fleeing the terror of the 'Islamic State' and want to live in peace and freedom...but at the same time they come from cultures where the hatred of Jews, and intolerance is an integral part."

These feelings have been shared not only by members of the community, but also by leading politicians. Chancellor Merkel, aware of the potential of antisemitic hatred, urged refugees arriving in Germany to embrace the country's values, which include the rejection of discrimination and antisemitism. "This is not about forgetting your own roots but living with your roots within our values and social order, and part of this is the unrelenting fight against any form of antisemitism," Merkel declared. Not only are extremist groups encouraging anti-migrant hate crimes, their influence continues to corrode respect for democracy, human rights, and protection of minorities - the very principles on which the European Union was founded. Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, on a state visit to Germany to mark the jubilee of diplomatic relations between the two countries, also stressed the importance of Holocaust remembrance as well as continued close Israel-Germany cooperation, and presenting a common front against racism, extremism and antisemitism .

In order to understand and fight the phenomenon of antisemitism throughout Europe, the European Commission has appointed Katharina von Schnurbein as Coordinator on combatting antisemitism.

In February 2015 the NEBA - Web to Study and Fight Antisemitism NEBA ("Netzwerk zur Erforschung und Bekämpfung von Antisemitismus) - was founded in an attempt by Jewish experts on antisemitism, to analyse and fight the phenomenon.. Founding members are: Deidre Berger, director of the American Jewish Committee (AJC), Berlin, Annetta Kahane of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Berlin and Prof. Julius Schoeps of the Moses Mendelssohn Center, Potsdam. The initiative to create

NEBA came in protest against the commission to study antisemitism in Germany appointed by the German government in December 2014, that did not include any Jewish experts.

Notwithstanding the fact, that the refugees were welcomed with open arms by huge parts of the German population, anti-refugees feelings, caused by fear etc., also became stronger, more widespread and mainstream, a fact mainly due to extreme right-wing populist incitement. One reason for the popularity of the anti-refugee populist and - extreme right, was to be found in the fact that the main democratic parties were all in favor of welcoming a more or less (un)limited number of refugees, and those who were against it and were looking for an anti-refugee agenda, found it only with the extreme right-wingers like the AFD (which registered sharp electoral gains in the beginning of 2016). (In the meantime, mainstream parties are seeking to prevent the rise of a populist party by adopting populist rhetoric themselves...).

For the time being, popular support for the anti-migrant Pegida movement soars. In order to more effectively combat racist crimes, new laws, effective on 2 August 2015, were passed, calling for heavier penalties for race-motivated crime acts. These amendments come after a recommendation by the parliamentary investigation group that deals with mistakes that have been made in the case of the NSU (National Socialist Underground), a German Neo-Nazi terror group, that has committed over 10 murders from 2000 to 2007.

The position of refugees and other minorities, including the well assimilated Jewish citizens, is difficult. Xenophobia, racism, islamophobia and antisemitism are on the rise. As the refugee crisis mounts, so too does violence against marginalized groups. In Germany, there have been more than twice as many attacks on refugee hostels during the first nine months of 2015 than in the whole of 2014.

## **Examples of antisemitic violent incidents**

### *Desecrations of Cemeteries*

Two Jewish cemeteries in the northern German town of Oldenburg and in Sarre-Union in the French Alsac region, were been desecrated over the weekend of the 14th and 15th of February 2015. In Oldenburg, swastikas were sprayed on tombstones and on two nearby parked cars. In Sarre-Union, over 300 tombstones were uprooted. Five French teenagers are suspected as the perpetrators in Sarre-Union, while the police is still investigating in the Oldenburg cause.

Unknown perpetrators desecrated the Jewish cemetery in Hannover on November 4, 2015. Gravestones were defaced with swastikas and several windows were smashed. The incident is linked to the national commemoration of the Pogrom Night of 1938.

### *Attacks*

A 25-year old man was beaten up at the underground station Hallesches Tor in Berlin on October 25, 2015. The man was asked by an unknown person whether he was Jewish. When he said yes (despite the fact, the victim is not actually Jewish), the

perpetrator punched him in the face and fled into an underground train. The man suffered from light bruises in the face.

Holocaust memorials desecrated:

On November 8th, 2015, the memorial dedicated to the synagogue of Eisenach, Germany, which was destroyed in 1938, was vandalised with Nazi symbols and antisemitic statements. The desecration took place one day before the national commemoration of the anniversary Night of Broken Glass (Reichsprognomnacht) in 1938.

### **Controversial Sentences**

The American Jewish Committee (AJC) has criticized the ruling of a Wupperrtal court which, on 6 February, sentenced two men of Palestinian origin, to a suspended prison term of one year and three months after they confessed to having tossed Molotov cocktails at the synagogue in Wuppertal on 28-29 July 2014. According to the court, there was no evidence of antisemitic motivation, but that the perpetrators were trying to bring "attention to the Gaza conflict." German MP Volker Beck (The Greens), protested against the decision of the trial: "This sentence is a wrong sentence [...] If you set a synagogue in Germany on fire because of the Middle-East-conflict, your motivation can only be antisemitic."

### **Legal Issues Regarding the Holocaust**

Former SS-guard Oskar Groening (94), who was responsible for collecting money and personal belongings of deported Jews on the ramps of the Auschwitz death camp, was found guilty as an accessory to the murder of 300.000 people, mostly Hungarian Jews, in 1944 and sentenced to 4 years in jail on 15 July 2015 by the court in the northern German city of Lueneburg. Karen Pollock, chief executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, said: "The conviction of Oskar Groening for his actions sends an unequivocal message that although he may not have led or directly participated in the atrocities at Auschwitz, he was clearly an accessory to the crimes perpetrated by the Nazis". Groening's attorneys announced that they will appeal against the verdict, because of Groening's age and health situation.

Germany's Minister of Justice Heiko Maas, has begun calling for a change in the German legal code, to remove the last remaining parts of it which were constitutional under the Nazi regime, including paragraphs about murder and manslaughter. "Germany needs modern laws that are free of the language of the Nazis" Maas said. Several laws were enacted by the "People's court" chairman Roland Freisler, the highest judge in Nazi Germany, who is responsible for around 2600 death penalties, including many for treason or desertion.

### **Education debate**

Education of German pupils, especially from Muslim families, has spurred a heated discussion in the German federal state of Bavaria. After Josef Schuster, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, suggested that a visit to a former concentration camp should be obligatory for all 9th-graders in Bavaria (as up to now, only high school students are bound to do so), he was criticized by Klaus Steiner, MP who noted that "There are a lot of children from Muslim families who do not have a



connection to our past” and those families “will need time, until they can identify with our past” however Ludwig Spaenle, Bavaria’s minister for education countered that visits to former concentration camps should be obligatory for all pupils, to “develop a clear position in favor of ‘never again’”.

### **Greece / Michal Navoth**

Throughout 2015, antisemitism in Greece was expressed in the form of vandalism (although compared to 2014, there were fewer cases of desecration of Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust memorial monuments), graffiti, social media posts and use of the internet and mainstream press

On 6 June 2015 anonymous persons desecrated a memorial plaque to 13,000 Jewish-Greek children who were killed in the Holocaust, with swastika graffiti. The plaque is located at a children’s playground at Pafou square, a central square of Athens.<sup>3</sup>

On the same day, a graffiti which read “Jews murderers of the People” was scrawled on the wall of the Jewish cemetery of Kavala, a port city in northern Greece. On 7 June 2015 a memorial service was held in the cemetery, before the inauguration of the Holocaust Memorial dedicated to the 1,484 Jews of the town who died in Treblinka.<sup>4</sup>

The unveiling ceremony, previously scheduled for 17 May 2015, followed a controversy caused by the decision of the Mayor of Kavala to postpone it, because members of the city council objected to the monument’s “Star of David” engraving. By doing so, Kavala risked being the first Greek city to turn down a monument erected for its own citizens.<sup>5</sup> Following pressure by the Greek government, the political parties and international Jewish organizations, the monument was eventually placed at the site with the façade originally planned. In his address, Panagiotis Sgouridis, by then Deputy Minister of Rural Development, member of the junior coalition party Independent Greeks<sup>6</sup>, who represented the government at the ceremony, compared the “atrocities of WWII” with the “blockade of Gaza”, arguing that victims could become perpetrators.<sup>7</sup> Although on 27 January 2015, only two days after the elections, the Foreign Ministry of the newly elected government issued a statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day stating that the Greek state

<sup>3</sup> *Memorial to Jewish children desecrated*, 9 June 2015, <http://antisemitism.org.il/article/97337/memorial-jewish-children-desecrated>; The Central Board of the Jewish Communities in Greece, *2015 Anti-Semitism in Greece*, December 2015 (hereinafter: 2015 Anti-Semitism in Greece), 3.

<sup>4</sup> *2015 Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 3; *Antisemitic graffiti on the wall of the Jewish Cemetery of Kavala*, 11 June 2015, <https://enantiastonantisemitismo.wordpress.com/2015/06/11/antisemitic-graffiti-on-the-wall-of-the-jewish-cemetery-of-kavala/>; *Breaking: Desecration of the Holocaust Memorial of Kavala*, 21 June 2016, <https://enantiastonantisemitismo.wordpress.com/2015/06/21/breaking-desecration-of-the-Holocaust-memorial-of-kavala/>

<sup>5</sup> *Greek town slammed after it nixes Holocaust memorial for displaying Star of David*, 6 May 2015, <http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Greek-town-slammed-after-it-nixes-Holocaust-memorial-for-displaying-Star-of-David-403241>

<sup>6</sup> *See infra*.

<sup>7</sup> *Antisemitic graffiti*, *supra* note 2.

attributed the greatest importance to the categorical condemnation of antisemitism and Nazi activities<sup>8</sup>, the fact that in a memorial ceremony, a Greek official tarnished the memory of the Holocaust is doubly worrisome. Such behavior is not uncommon for some MPs of the rightist Independent Greeks.<sup>9</sup>

The same graffiti appeared the following day on the wall of Alpha Bank in Kavala city center.<sup>10</sup>

The Holocaust Memorial was vandalized with blue paint on 21 June 2015, two weeks after its inauguration. The municipality of Kavala intervened immediately by cleaning the monument. However, the mayor of Kavala, Dimitra Tsanaka, in condemning the incident, stressed that this was not a sign of antisemitism.<sup>11</sup> Given that antisemitism can be expressed in the form of property damage, the Mayor's response is utterly wrong. Such an attitude, coupled with the dispute of the city's authorities over the monument, implies the opposite. As the Jewish community rightly pointed out, [t]he Holocaust monument is not only a symbol of remembrance and a tribute to the 1,484 Jewish victims of Kavala, it is an emblem against intolerance, racism and anti-Semitism."<sup>12</sup>

On 20 October 2015 the entrance gate and the surrounding walls of the Jewish cemetery of Athens were desecrated with neo-Nazi symbols and antisemitic threats. C18, a neo-Nazi group, openly claimed responsibility through its blog: "for the beautiful artistic contribution at the Jewish Cemetery..."<sup>13</sup> Another neo-Nazi organization known as the Unaligned Meander Nationalists (Greek abbreviation: AME) welcomed in its blog "C 18 Claim of responsibility" for the desecration of the Jewish cemetery.<sup>14</sup>

Social media is very useful in responding to current events and spreading conspiracy theories, such as the slanderous tweets that "French Jews were warned to flee the country before Paris terrorist attacks".<sup>15</sup> This is a reiteration of the widely spread slander of September 11, that Jews, who had been warned in advance, were absent during the attacks at the World Trade Center.

The rumors that "Jews do not pay taxes" are also reiterated by the internet. This falsity, which has been very popular during the recent years of the financial crisis, continues in 2015. It exploits the growing levels of despair of the population of the debt-stricken country, and especially targets the Jews for Greece's economic woes. A clarifying press release issued on 12 January 2015 by Georgios Kalantzis, General Secretary for Religious Affairs, Department of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, explaining at length "[t]he legal status and the taxation of the

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<sup>8</sup> A. Markis, *Greek Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Holocaust Remembrance Day*, 27 January 2015, <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2015/01/27/greek-foreign-ministry-issues-statement-on-holocaust-remembrance-day/>

<sup>9</sup> For further example of trivialization of the Holocaust, *see infra*.

<sup>10</sup> 2015 *Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 3.

<sup>11</sup> *Breaking: Desecration of the Holocaust Memorial*, *supra* note 2.

<sup>12</sup> JTA, Disputed Holocaust memorial dedicated in Greece, 8 June, 2015, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/disputed-holocaust-memorial-dedicated-in-greece/>

<sup>13</sup> 2015 *Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.* 10.

Greek Jewish Communities and Institutions”, did not stop the misleading antisemitic posts and their incitement.<sup>16</sup>

The internet is also used for posting caricatures with stereotypes of hook-nosed and greedy-looking Jews (with hump and *kippah*) implying their alleged rule of the world.<sup>17</sup>

Antisemitic references in the mainstream press often take the form of trivialization of the Holocaust in relation to the debt crisis. For example, on 2 February 2015 the leftist daily newspaper, AVGI, published a cartoon showing the German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble saying “I will extract fat from your bodies and fertilizer from your ashes ...”.<sup>18</sup> The Auschwitz sign “*Arbeit Macht Frei*” is frequently used in cartoons and web posts to compare the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis with the “economic extermination” of the Greeks by the Germans.<sup>19</sup>

However, in analyzing the current trends of antisemitism, those manifestations should be considered against the Greek political system which has gone through two general elections in the recent year.

Syriza is a left-wing party whose leader, Alexis Tsipras, was sworn in twice, in 2015 (January and September), as prime minister. Syriza’s junior coalition partner, in both governments, is the right wing party, Independent Greeks (known by its Greek acronym ANEL).

Despite the fact that the two parties share, at least in the first half of 2015, a common agenda to reject the imposed austerity measures, they are standing well apart on most other issues. They have various views concerning Israel and antisemitism. In December 2014, Independent Greeks’ leader, Panos Kammenos, singled out the Jews for not paying taxes (although as defense minister and in his previous capacities he had positive attitude towards Israel, with whom he has been favoring close military cooperation). However, due to his party’s position in the coalition governments both of January and September 2015, he promotes a solidarity profile with the Jewish world. This position differs from that of other Independent Greeks MPs, who have repeatedly made antisemitic comments. For one of them, MP Dimitris Kammenos, (the two are not related), antisemitic tweets, including the trivialization of the Holocaust, cost him his ministerial office. On June 2015 Kammenos mocked pro-EU demonstrators by posting on his Facebook page and on Twitter an image of the sign over the gate to Auschwitz, which had been altered to replace the German words “*Arbeit Macht Frei*” with the Greek for “We’re Staying in Europe.”<sup>20</sup> By the end of

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<sup>16</sup> *Id.* 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* 10.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.* 12-13. It should be noted that provocative antisemitic references are made also in the front page headlines of marginal newspapers of low circulating. However, their recent online editions contribute to the spike of the online antisemitism, *id.* 11-12.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* 13. See also *infra* notes 18-19 and accompanying text.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Mackey, *Greek Lawmaker Compares Debt Crisis to Holocaust*, N.Y. TIMES, 24 June, 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/25/world/europe/greek-lawmaker-compares-debt-crisis-to-holocaust.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/25/world/europe/greek-lawmaker-compares-debt-crisis-to-holocaust.html?_r=0); *Greek rightist MP trivializes (once again) the Holocaust*, 24 June 2015, <https://enantiastonianisimismio.wordpress.com/tag/independent-greeks-party/>; *Greek Prime Minister Commended for Removing Government Minister, Author of Anti-Semitic Social Media Posts*, ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE (ADL) PRESS RELEASE, 25 September 2015,

June 2015 Kammenos deleted the picture and replaced it with an update in which he apologized for “a misunderstanding”, but doubled down on his comparison: “[m]aybe the comparison was unfortunate,” he wrote, “but my country is experiencing an economic holocaust.”<sup>21</sup> A few hours after the new cabinet was sworn into office on 23 September 2015, Twitter users began protesting the appointment of Dimitri Kamenos, who had published antisemitic, racist and homophobic social media posts, as Deputy Minister of Infrastructure, Transportation and Network.<sup>22</sup> Less than 24 hours after being appointed, he was asked to stand down. Panagiotis Sgouridis took over as Deputy Infrastructure, Transportation and Network Minister. Tsipras' prompt response demonstrated that antisemitism and bigotry will not be tolerated from public officials. Nevertheless, the question to be asked is whether, under such circumstances, the nomination of Sgouridis, who had drawn a parallel between the Holocaust and the blockade of Gaza in at the inauguration of a Holocaust Memorial just three months earlier,<sup>23</sup> is an appropriate replacement?

Syriza is not of one piece. Its 25 hardline rebels left it on August 2015 after opposing Tsipras' new third bailout. Consequently, Tsipras lost his majority in the parliament, resigned from his post as prime minister and called for elections within a month. Tsipras, who won the snap election, quickly announced he would resume co-operating with Independent Greeks and formed a narrowly based coalition, like that of his first term.<sup>24</sup> Although Syriza has been traditionally pro-Palestinians, it has claimed that it has not been antisemitic, just “anti-Zionist”.<sup>25</sup> The party has stressed that while it has been critical of Israel, it has not been antisemitic.<sup>26</sup> However, after the September election, Syriza leadership is determined to strengthen its military and economic ties with Israel. This is all the more evident from the number of official political meetings in Israel, the latest being Tsipras' visit at the end of November 2015.<sup>27</sup>

One of the biggest winners of the September election is the Golden Dawn. The party came in third (after the conservative New Democracy, in second place), The far right neo-Nazi party continues to establish itself as a political force. It is not merely a

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[http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/anti-semitism-international/greek-prime-minister.html#.Vm\\_XunmJgxc](http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/anti-semitism-international/greek-prime-minister.html#.Vm_XunmJgxc); *New Greek minister Kammenos quits in tweets row*, BBC NEWS, 24 September 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34346590>; *2015 Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 6-7.

<sup>21</sup> Mackey, *supra* note 18.

<sup>22</sup> Matthaios Tsimitakis, *Greece's Fascists Are Gaining*, N.Y.TIMES, 4 October 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/05/opinion/greeces-fascists-are-gaining.html>

<sup>23</sup> *See supra*.

<sup>24</sup> Arye Mekel, *The election in Greece: Between the Refugees crisis and the Economic crisis*, HAARETZ, 20 September 2015 [Hebrew], Helena Smith, *Greek centre-right neck and neck with Syriza as snap election nears*, THE GUARDIAN, 6 September 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/06/centre-right-level-with-syriza-in-greek-polls>; *Syriza defies the polls with comfortable re-election win*, ECONOMIST, 20 September 2015, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21665370-despite-u-turn-accepting-austerity-alexis-tsipras-remains-charge-syriza-defies-polls>

<sup>25</sup> European Jewish Press, *Analysis: The victory of Syriza in Greece is bad news for Israel*, THE JERUSALEM POST, 26 January, 2015, [HTTP://WWW.JPOST.COM/INTERNATIONAL/ANALYSIS-THE-VICTORY-OF-SYRIZA-IN-GREECE-IS-BAD-NEWS-FOR-ISRAEL-388960](http://www.jpost.com/INTERNATIONAL/ANALYSIS-THE-VICTORY-OF-SYRIZA-IN-GREECE-IS-BAD-NEWS-FOR-ISRAEL-388960)

<sup>26</sup> Arye Mekel, *The New Greek Government: Israel has Reason for Concern*, BESA CENTER PERSPECTIVES PAPER No. 283 (2015).

<sup>27</sup> *2015 Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 5.

protest movement or a symptom of a crisis.<sup>28</sup> Despite the crackdown and the unprecedented parliamentary actions taken against it, Golden Dawn steadily remains the third largest party. Moreover, even jail fails to deter. In the election of 25 January 2015 it came in third, with 6.3 percent of the vote. That translated into 17 parliamentary seats. Thirteen of the lawmakers were re-elected, including party leader, Nikolaos Michaloliakos and other seniors. The latter were in pretrial detention, and ran the election campaign while imprisoned.<sup>29</sup> In February 2015 an indictment was issued, according to which 69 individuals, among them Golden Dawn's leader and all its MPs, would be tried.<sup>30</sup> The trial commenced on 20 April 2015, continued into the second half of the year, and is expected to go on for over a year, given the nature of the charges, the number of the accused and the number of witnesses.

This is the first time an entire party and its leadership has faced trial in Greece.<sup>31</sup> All the Golden Dawn MPs were charged with belonging to a criminal organization. Golden Dawn rejects the charges, claiming they are politically motivated. The political prosecution is attributed, among other things, to the Jewish lobby.<sup>32</sup> This type of attribution is an exception to the new rhetoric the party has adopted since its prosecution and the preparation of the trial. Unlike the past, when its leadership openly espoused antisemitism, Golden Dawn has transformed its rhetoric by referring to "Zionism" and "Zionist interests".<sup>33</sup> The party weekly newspaper, *CHRYSSI AVGHI*, constantly publishes antisemitic comments covered under "Anti-Zionist" scheme, such as in its issue of 29 April 2015: "[o]ne more time the EU –manipulated by the Zionist lobby- decided the legal circulation of 19 genetically modified food products ...".<sup>34</sup> The reason for this camouflage stems from the fact that antisemitism is a form of racism and as such can be prosecuted under the anti-racism law, Law 4285/2014. Anti-Zionism is not considered to be within the bounds of the law and cannot be considered a criminal offence.<sup>35</sup>

In comparison to the January election, in September 2015 Golden Dawn slightly increased its electoral power from 6.3% to 7% and gained another seat in Parliament, growing from 17 to 18, which makes it the only party with an increase in its percentage.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Helena Smith, *Neo-fascist Greek party takes third place in wave of voter fury*, THE GUARDIAN, 21 September, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/21/neo-fascist-greek-party-election-golden-dawn-third-place>.

<sup>29</sup> Laurence Peter, *Greek elections: Jail fails to deter far-right Golden Dawn*, BBC News, 26 January, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-eu-30980002>; Rueters, *Golden Dawn leader and MPs to stand trial, Greek court officials say*, THE GUARDIAN, 4 February, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/04/golden-dawn-leader-mps-trial-greek-court>; "Judges' report on Golden Dawn case expected next week", EKATHIMERINI.COM., 30 January, 2015, <http://www.ekathimerini.com/166776/article/ekathimerini/news/judges-report-on-golden-dawn-case-expected-next-week>. 2015 *Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Dimitris Psarras, *GOLDEN DAWN ON TRIAL 8* (2015), Niki Kitsantonis, *Trial Postponed for Greek Neo-Fascist Golden Dawn Party Members*, N.Y. TIMES, 20 April, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> Trial of far-right Golden Dawn leaders starts in Greece, THE GUARDIAN, 20 April 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/20/greece-far-right-golden-dawn-nikos-michaloliakos-trial-start>

<sup>32</sup> 2015 *Anti-Semitism in Greece*, *supra* note 1, 1-2.

<sup>33</sup> *Id.* 5.

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.* 3.

<sup>36</sup> Smith, *supra* note 26.

Golden Dawn is known as one of Europe's most anti-immigrant parties. It soared in the islands of Kos and Lesbos, the epicenters of the migrant crisis in Greece. In Lesbos, Golden Dawn nearly doubled its share of the vote, obtaining 7.8% in comparison with 4.7% received last January. In Kos the party exceeded ten percent of the vote.<sup>37</sup> As the local authorities were waiting for the central government to react, and while the Greek government waited for the European Union to determine its policy regarding the growing waves of immigration that flooded the islands, the Golden Dawn exploited the situation to spread their ideas and to gain ground. Tapping into public anger over the growing population of immigrants in the crisis ridden country, Golden Dawn pursued its anti-immigrant stance by invoking its appealing nationalist notions;<sup>38</sup> in the past, the party even used Nazi rhetoric to enhance its anti-immigrant platform.<sup>39</sup>

Syriza emphasizes that it is a staunch critic of the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn.<sup>40</sup> If so, the future will tell how this position is followed and implemented; in general, it remains to be seen whether Syriza will continue to maintain its sensitivity in responding to antisemitic attacks, since Tsipras' main concerns are to deliver his electoral promises of a new economic deal and to maintain the stability of his unlikely coalition.

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

### **Hungary**

The most complex and contradictory developments in Europe during 2015 took place in Hungary which continued to reflect the deep divisions in Hungarian political life between the center-right FIDESZ, the extremist right-wing Jobbik and the liberal-left, concerning Hungary facing its past on the fate of its almost 600,000 Jews who perished in the Holocaust, the evaluation of the inter-war and war time Horthy regime. 2015 saw the intensification of debates and differences of opinion with the events commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary during 2014.

In fact in 2015 like 2014, these events became a test case for the delicate balance and relationship between various parts of Hungarian society, the media and the political spectrum. As the year 2014 was designated by the Hungarian government and the Jewish community for a series of events and activities in Hungary and abroad which became the focal point of strong differences of opinion not only concerning the politics of memory in today's Hungary but also focusing on the rise of anti-Semitism, and the government's handling those issues. In the context of widening gulf in the public and political discourse, yet another front was opened with the deep differences

<sup>37</sup> A. Makris, *Number of Refugees Waiting at Lesbos' Port Increases Again, Food Stops in Reception Center*, GREEKREPORTER.COM, 23 September, 2015, <http://greece.greekreporter.com/2015/09/23/number-of-refugees-waiting-at-lesvos-port-increases-again-food-stops-in-reception-center/>

<sup>38</sup> Tsimitakisoc, *supra* note 20.

<sup>39</sup> Michal Navoth, *The Worrisome Defiance of the Golden Dawn*, KANTOR CENTER POSITION PAPERS, August 2014, 3 n. 7 and accompanying text. <http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/sites/default/files/PP1408%20Greece%20140810%20Final.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> Mekel, *supra* note 24.

between the Jewish community leadership and the government. Several forums of high level dialogues took place and their format continued in 2015 in order to remove the boycott of the Jewish community in their participation in some major projects and plans during 2015, including refusal to accept approved grants for various activities planned for 2014. The trend in 2015 was one of working out and reaching a more suitable cooperation between the Jewish community and the government.

Physical attacks on Jews are rare. Acts of vandalism against Jewish targets continued, the most notable one in March 2015 when 20 graves were vandalized in the town of Gyongyos, including the scattering of human remains, which was described by the head of the small local Jewish community as "unprecedented", and by Prime Minister Orban, as a "barbaric deed". (See: The Times of Israel, March 23, 2015).

Public opinion surveys on the level of anti-Semitism are usually disputed and debated, on the methods of research, the samples and the questions – in Hungary and elsewhere. Perhaps as a characteristic attitude to the various approaches and often the need in the media to generalize, one Hungarian newspaper referred in its headline to one such sample of 1200 persons, as "Last year the Hungarian was as anti-Semite as he was in 2013" (See Nepszava, March, 26, 2015) – describing the results which indicated a certain trend towards more extremist anti-Semitic attitudes.

While the number of incidents is not on the rise, the main danger in Hungary is the attempt to "whitewash" the anti-Semitic past, rehabilitate aspects of the Horthy era, emphasize Hungary's alleged loss of sovereignty in March 1944, with the German occupation, thus as attempt to relativize Hungary's role in the destruction of its Jewry.

The nationalist wave riding high on the effects of the economic crisis, criticism leveled by factors in the US, EU against the Fidesz government, and at the same time a feeling by the Hungarian government that Hungary is unjustly being criticized, has also affected and strained relations between the Hungarian government and the major Jewish organization in Hungary, MAZSIHISZ, and between world Jewish organizations abroad, which as noted has been somewhat toned down in 2015.

The political polarization in Hungary is being reflected in the major issues related to the past and present of Hungarian anti-Semitism and Hungary's role in the destruction of its Jewry. There is no doubt that the Hungarian government is and should be sensitive to the rise of anti-Semitism, noted by factors inside and outside Hungary.

It must be emphasized that the Hungarian government through its representatives and diplomats abroad, such as in Israel, have actively participated in all events commemorating the tragedy of Hungarian Jewry, and have spoken of Hungary's role, responsibility and "shameful" role in the Holocaust, as Prime Minister Orban expressed it in January 2015 on the occasion of the International Holocaust Day. ( see AFP, January, 2015) Hungary's popular ambassador to Israel, Nagy Andor who represented Hungary in numerous public and academic events in Israel, during 2015 expressed in clear terms that Hungary is assuming responsibility for its role in the Holocaust, and in opposing any forms of anti-Semitism. In the past few years criticism has been leveled against Hungary that often the government speaks in two voices – one at home, not blocking, even promoting historical revisionism, while

acting abroad with a continuing commitment to take responsibility for Hungary's role in the Holocaust of its Jewry.

Between March 2015 and March 2016, Hungary served as the chair for the next year of IHRA – the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, in several activities and initiatives Hungary showed its commitments to the memory of the Holocaust and in combating all forms of racism and anti-Semitism. It should be noted that in numerous public events in Hungary, commemorating the Jewish past in the country and the Holocaust – leading representatives of the government are usually present.

The extreme right, represented by Jobbik, continues to be very active. However, an interesting trend could be observed by the end of 2014, which continued in 2015. Namely, a slow process of internal divisions and new voices within Jobbik, as the Party leader, Gabor Vona, struck up a more moderate tone, even of showing understanding towards the pain of all victims of suffering. This change of tone, too early to evaluate whether it's tactical or of a more strategic nature, reflects Vona's view that by reducing the anti-Semitic and anti-Roma racist attitudes, Jobbik can penetrate deeper into further segments of Hungarian society. (See Hungarian Spectrum, March 2015) Jobbik's site, Jobbik.hu mentions less Jewish subjects, and focuses more on the movement's internal affairs, and the migrants' crisis, leaving the anti-Semitic propaganda to the more extremist and known net sites as Kuruc.info. This site for example is busy analyzing the "gaining of cultural ground by the Jewish cesspit ", about which already Richard Wagner has warned in 1850 ( See Kurucinfo, April 22, 2016)

In fact, Hungary was very much preoccupied in 2015 by the erupting migrants' crisis, as Hungary became in the autumn of the year the major point of crisis with dozens of thousands stranded inside Hungary and on its borders. The rift with the EU over the country's policies, and the grave humanitarian crisis, brought about expressions of nationalism and xenophobia, as some sites and social networks found a good opportunity to blame the Jews for supporting the migrants, as yet another way to "destabilize" Hungary. Members of the civil groups aiding the refugees at the Budapest railway station, among whom there were Jewish activists, were accused of sabotaging Hungarian national interests. It is not known how many nationalist Hungarians bought the argument that the Jews are helping Muslims invade Hungary.

No doubt that Hungary remains high on the map of anti-Semitic alerts among European countries. Much of the present trends in anti-Semitism are directly related to the on-going process of trying to establish a national narrative on Hungary's past in the inter-War and during the Second World War and its role in the Hungarian Holocaust.

The major case which became a very strong bone of contention in 2015, was the saga around the erection of a statue to Balint Homan, a leading historian and right-wing politician, minister of Religion and Education twice in the 30's and part of the war time, had a leading role in the drafting of the anti-Jewish legislation in Horthy's regime, in 1944 called for the expulsion of the Jews, sentenced to jail after World War II as a war criminal. His rehabilitation process was almost completed by a decision of a Budapest court in 2014, which paved the way for the planned statue.



Homan's case was yet another chapter in the attempts to rehabilitate inter-War and war-time public figures who played a role in right-wing, pro-fascist, fascist and anti-Semitic politics that culminated in the Holocaust of Hungarian Jewry. Ultimately the plan to erect a life-size bronze statue in the city of Szekesfehervar was abandoned by the foundation that planned it. It was a convenient solution, as officially neither the government nor the local authorities – aside from accepting to offer by an organization to set up a statue, were behind the project, although those opposed to the project claimed, that is spite of the Orban government's objection, they were in fact behind it. (See, Viktor Orban, The man responsible for honoring the anti-Semitic Balint Homan, Hungarian Spectrum, December 16, 2015)

There were numerous impressive expressions of opposition, such as a major rally in Szekesfehervar, with the participation of the Israeli Ambassador, Ilan Mor, who became a target of criticism by Hungarian extremists for his prominent role and participation in numerous events commemorating the Holocaust, the Hungarian Jewish past and in forums against anti-Semitism, US and other diplomats. European Jewish Congress President, Moshe Kantor declared that the project "displays complete insensitivity towards the Jewish people". (BBC News , December 14, 2015), and Andras Heisler , the head of the Federation of Jewish Hungarian Communities, told the rally in Szekesfehervar, that "an openly anti-Semitic, fascist politician should never get a statue anywhere in this country". (The Guardian, December 13, 2015) Similar protests were addressed to the Hungarian Prime Minister by the US Congress TaskForce of anti-Semitism, the World Jewish Congress.

The "Homan affair", like similar cases in the past years is a clear indication that the debates around the past and Hungary's dark record have in fact intensified and divided Hungarian society. The powerful nationalist camp, from the conservative center to the right is attempting to slow down and sabotage the very process to which the Hungarian FIDESZ led government is committed – not only to recognize Hungary's responsibility but to combat historical revisionism and anti-Semitism.

It seems clear that just as 2014, was a year of major tests – with the events commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary, 2015 will be judged by the government's record in combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, and in halting the continuing process of rehabilitation of fascist and extremist ideas from the dark past.

## **Romania**

The main features of anti-Semitism in Romania are characterized by relatively few violent incidents, sporadic cases of vandalism against Jewish targets as cemeteries, synagogues, but a continuing trend of justifying Romania's war time regime of Antonescu, revival of groups, movements spreading the ideas of the pro-Nazi Iron Guard, and various forms of Holocaust denial. "Neo-legionnaire" expressions seem to enter into the mainstream discourse, stressing nationalist, xenophobic attitudes with anti-Semitic undertones. Official Romanian attitudes, such as expressed during the visit of President Klaus Werner Iohannis in Israel in early March 2016 ( see JTA reports 7-11 March 2016), and in numerous public appearances by Romania's Ambassador to Israel, Andrea Pastarnac, recognize Romania's responsibility for the

Holocaust and the country's determination to combat anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, all forms of xenophobia and racism. Romania emphasizes the need for Holocaust education and remembrance, a major topic that is being pursued as Romania took over the chair of the IHRA – the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance for 2016.

The visit of Romania's President in Israel, his declarations, visit to Yad Vashem, was strongly attacked by extremist internet sites, such as [nationalisti.ro](http://nationalisti.ro), which on April 17, 2016 under the headline "Why Iohannis wants to push the Holocaust into us", which not only denies that there was a Holocaust in Romania, but if the Germans did at all of what they have been accused of, it was done by Iohannis' Germans (the Romanian President is an ethnic German).

On the commemoration of Holocaust Day in Romania in October 2015, leaders of the Jewish community and Romania's leadership stressed Romania's recognition of the Holocaust and the need to educate the legacy of Holocaust and to combat anti-Semitism. Such expressions are characteristic of the public statements on the national and local level, during numerous events of commemorating the Holocaust. Likewise, numerous local events linked to the past of Jewish communities are well covered by the local and national media outlets.

The effectiveness of rapid and strong responses to anti-Semitic events was proved by the protests of MCA Romania, (The Center for Monitoring and Combating Antisemitism) a major monitoring and activist organization, the leadership of the Federation of the Jewish Communities led by Dr. Aurel Vainer who frequently raises issues on anti-Semitism and historical revisionism in the Romanian Parliament where he is a member, and by the Elie Wiesel Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania which is also very active in responding and acting against any forms of racism, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. The contribution of elements of civil society is very essential in mobilizing public opinion.

Two major cases in early 2016 indicated the continuing revisionist presence in the Romanian public sphere, including the spirit of the Iron Guard in various forms and Holocaust denial.

One was the appointment of a journalist, Oana Stanciulescu to the Board of the Romanian Public TV, who has expressed reverence for pro-Nazi and Iron Guard Romanian intellectuals. (see JTA, April 1, 2016) While she has rejected any anti-Semitic views, she stood by defense of war time pro-fascist intellectuals. Public reaction was very strong, it included a letter of protest signed by numerous leading academics, intellectuals, and protests by the Elie Wiesel Institute, which in turn was criticized by the pro-appointment groups. (See for example, *Adevarul*, March 27, 2016) In what was described as an "unusual move", Israel's Embassy in Bucharest protested the appointment, and it as it "views with concern her appointment" in the light of "her expressions of anti-Semitic sympathies for the Legionary Movement". (See, *Israel slams Romanian journalist's appointment to state television board*, JTA, April 1, 2016)

The second widely publicized case was in April 2016, debated in Romanian society, the media and political factors, of the mayoral candidacy of Bucharest of Marian Munteanu of the National Liberal Party, Romania's second. Munteanu signed a

petition in 1994 in which it was claimed that Jews were lying about their losses in the Holocaust to "obtain illicit money from Romanian people through disinformation and manipulation of public opinion..." Through rapid intervention of numerous influential factors, of civil society, leading members of the academic community and the Elie Wiesel Institute, the candidacy of Munteanu was withdrawn. The Institute warned that "Munteanu presents a concern not only because of is "nationalist rhetoric" and "statements minimizing or denying the Holocaust" but also for "misrepresenting" reality today. (See JTA, April 18, 2016, The Romania Journal, April 14, 2016) The public reaction, in the media, social networks, the political storm that the case generated also in political circles, indicated the severity of the case – not a unique one in the last years, in which active political and public figures are implicated in anti-Semitic and Holocaust denial attitudes. Munteanu's defense on major and quite popular sites as [ziaristonline.ro](http://ziaristonline.ro) clearly show the cleavages in Romanian society and the prevalence of right-wing, xenophobic attitudes.

These two major developments – the public and media debates, indicate that historical revisionism, Anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and Romania's role in the destruction of large parts of its Jewry under the Antonescu regime are still very evident in today's Romania, just as reactions of civil society are well heard and taken into account.

It has to be seen how much the keen efforts of the Romanian government, especially as Romania plans a set of events, commemorations and conferences in 2016, when Romania serves as chair of IHRA, will have a lasting impact.

## **Slovakia**

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

As it was noted in Anti-Semitism Worldwide 2013, the most significant development in 2013 in Slovakia was the election in November of Marian Kotleba, the former head of a banned neo-Nazi Party, Slovak Togetherness, currently the leader of the People's Party – Our Slovakia, as Governor of the Banska Bystrica region, ( see, Martin Ehl, The Triumph of Extremism in Slovakia, Transitions Online, November 26, 2013) Extremist sites celebrated the event, hailing it as a "monumental victory for the European people as a whole, and Slovakia in particular...the hardcore nationalist Marian Kotleba won 55.5% of the votes".(Daily Stormer, November 24, 2013) This electoral victory was significant as in the last two parliamentary elections the Peoples' Party-Our Slovakia gained only marginal number of votes, while the increase in regional support raised the alarm among civil society in Slovakia. While direct anti-Semitic remarks were few, Kotleba's movement openly praises the war-time regime of Tiso, and challenges the idea that Tiso's regime bore responsibility for the country's crimes against Jews during the Holocaust. Observers have noted the increased influence in the movement of some elements from the Catholic Church. (Transitions Online, November 25, 2013).

The movement is openly racist against the Roma- a major social and political issue in Slovakia, as in Hungary. The party platform refers to the "need to ensure safety in the surroundings of Roma settlements and to fight "unfair favoritism of Gypsy

parasites".( Open Society Foundations, December 4, 2013) The major significance of the regional victory in the Banska Bystrica region was the possibility of a growing impact of right-wing extremism in Slovak mainstream politics, by electing an extremist politician as regional governor, impact on regional politics, that along the Hungarian Jobbik, there are signs of growing extremism among Slovak voters, and on the EU level – yet another indication for the strengthening of extremist parties and movements, not on the fringes of political life, but enjoying wider support from frustrated elements in society.

Indeed, the apprehensions voiced in late 2013, became a reality in the general elections of March 2016, when Kotleba's party received some 8% of the votes, and entered Parliament for the first time becoming a significant player in national politics, although outside the newly formed coalition – similar to the position of Jobbik in Hungary. The BBC correctly noted ( March 6, 2016) that "The term 'neo-Nazi' is often bandied about, at times, foolishly, to describe anyone with views slightly to the right of Marine Le-Pen. But Marian Kotleba is different – he was once, literally a neo-Nazi". Tom Nicholson, a veteran British-Canadian journalist living for years in Slovakia, summed up for the BBC, that "this is a moment of great shame for Slovakia. Mr Kotleba's party is not like the French National Front, which is far-right. These are Nazis."

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

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

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

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

The attempts to rehabilitate Tiso and his war-time regime are a constant feature of Slovak anti-Semitism and historical revisionism as noted in the past researches of Pavol Mestan, the Director of the Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava (see Anti-

Semitism Worldwide of the past two decades). Kotleba's People Party- Our Slovakia is the main torch bearer of Tiso's fascist and clerical legacy, now representing those ideas in the Slovak National Assembly.

A yearly test for the impact of revisionist ideas is the yearly march in Bratislava commemorating the March 1939 foundation of the war-time Nazi allied puppet state led by Jozef Tiso. A march by neo-Nazis took place in March 2015 commemorating the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "independent" Slovak State was, as usual countered by a demonstration organized by the "Bratislava without Nazis Initiative". The 2016 events were of low key, due to the protest demonstrations held a week earlier in the wake of the general elections.

Among the protest activities, two MP's wore yellow Stars of David in the National Assembly. ( AFP, March 23, 2016)

### **Australia / Jeremy Jones (AIJAC)**

#### **Introduction**

In Australia in 2015, there was a marked decrease in reports of incidents of antisemitism over 2014, and levels which were amongst the lowest in the past 15 years. Similarly, there were very few serious incidents of antisemitism in the media, politics or other areas of public life.

The traditional media (television, radio, newspapers) also broadcast or published very little of serious concern.

Although there are numerous small extra parliamentary and fringe political organisations which either are antisemitic or will use antisemitism to further their political agendas, the amount of effort and resources they directed towards Jews was amongst the lowest levels since records have been maintained by the Jewish community.

Individuals operating with a Christian religious context also caused concern at levels below most other years.

However, there were a number of reasons for concern, and these to some degree outweighed the positive factors above.

On social media and in on-line forums and publications, there was an unprecedented volume of overt anti-Jewish commentary originating from, or published by, Australians. There was also an enormous volume of commentary which was arguably, if not incontrovertibly, anti-Jewish. Facebook pages were the source of the vast majority of concerns regarding antisemitic commentary.

The online pages associated with some mainstream traditional media, particularly the government-owned ABC, provided platforms for anti-Jewish vilification, abuse and harassment.

There were many documented examples of antisemitism in the on-line discussions and advocacy conducted by anti-Israel groups, of the far-left and Islamist varieties. Within the large and diverse Muslim community in Australia, there are a number of activist pockets which promote contempt for, or enmity towards, Jews and Judaism. Although Israel's existence or perceived actions are sometimes the pretext for antisemitic commentary, on many occasions it was argued that it was the particular nature of Jews which was the core of the matter.

The final reason for concern was the failure for a number of key individuals in public life to treat antisemitism as if it was as wrong as other forms of bigotry and prejudice, which was reflected in a morally unacceptable tolerance of antisemitism on social media and in public discourse.

### **Antisemitic Violent, Vandalism, Intimidation and Harassment**

Figures compiled by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry revealed that there were fewer reports than the average over the previous 25 years in all categories other than verbal harassment, and in even this category reports were received at a rate lower than in a number of preceding years. (This year, for the first time, emails were excluded from the total - and from the totals with which the statistics were being prepared - as it appeared they were not collated in a comparable manner to previous years.

Incidents of violence and property vandalism were reported at 40% of the previous average, telephone threats and abuse at 35% the average rate and graffiti at 36%. Abuse and threats through the post and via miscellaneous means such as fax, leaflets and posters were both reported at the second lowest rates in 26 years and well under 25% of the previous averages. Incidents of face-to-face and harassment, not involving assault, however, were reported at nearly twice the previous average, but this reflected an increase over the past decade rather than a sudden spike. (In five of the previous eight years, the total had been higher).

Separating incidents into attacks and threats, there were eighteen percent more attacks reported than average, but this was still the second lowest total in fifteen years, while the threats reported (other than on-line) were at the second lowest level in the twenty six years the national database has been maintained.

### **Public Discourse**

The most obvious source for documentation of antisemitism in Australia is Facebook, with other on-line sources also serving as useful resources for anyone interested in documenting the phenomenon. The on-line environment has provided inexpensive platforms for individuals and groups whose views would be marginalised in other environments. Additionally, a number of mainstream media outlets, particularly the government-owned ABC and SBS networks, now provide possibilities for many more individuals, including racists and other extremists, to participate in debates which they host on-line.

In public discussion of a vast range of issues in some of which there would have been no logical reason to include references - positive, negative, or neutral - to Jews, anti-Jewish commentary (as distinct from simply vigorous expression of contentious viewpoints) was published on platforms associated with mainstream (most often government funded) media.

Some examples from the year in review are:

- After the Paris attacks, on Charlie Hebdo and also Jewish targets, in early 2015, postings alleging Jewish complicity in the attacks, or that the nature of Jews meant they deserved to be murdered.
- In debates on antisemitism on campus, including a notorious affairs in which a lecturer waved money in the face of an elderly Jewish person who objected to the way the academic was preventing a speaker (known to not be an opponent of Israel) from being heard, allegations as to Jewish control of media and government, and other stereotypes, were common.
- In the course of a number of discussions, matters relating to the Middle East, Holocaust denials, defamations of the Talmud, allegations of Jewish groups and individuals playing a notorious role in Australian affairs, and other slurs, were given space on ABC and SBS platforms.
- After a Jewish person who voices extreme, fundamentalist anti-Israel views was given a platform in mainstream traditional media (due to her celebrity in a field unrelated to politics or history), supporters on-line voiced comparisons of Israel to Nazi Germany, said her critics were "zionazis", attacked the alleged malevolent influences of the Talmud and promoted Holocaust denial, amongst other abusive comments.
- After a prominent sports person tweeted a reference to Jews as Christ-killers, he received backing from a number of self-described Christian supporters. When the sports person apologised and expressed thanks that he had received better advice as to contemporary Church views and on the immoral nature of antisemitism, he was depicted as the victim of Jewish power.
- When Jewish individuals were identified as perpetrators of child-sexual abuse, in the course of a widespread investigation which identified a range of Australian individuals and institutions as compliant in such crises, on-line discussions included claims Judaism promotes such behaviour.
- In an incident when an apparently mentally unstable individual not only verbally racially abused and harassed a fellow commuter but claimed to be a Jew from Israel and therefore too powerful to be made to have consequences for her action, antisemitic claims were made in discussions which purported to deal with the evil of racism.
- The anti-Israel crusade conducted by a former Foreign Minister of Australia, which has generally been analysed in terms of a belief by the retired politician that in doing so he is securing votes of Muslim voters in a number of electorates for his Labor Party and/or he wants to be accepted into the company of anti-Israel polemicists and politicians, attracted support from, and energised, overt antisemitic commentary, at some events he has attended and on-line. Towards the latter part of the year, he was recorded attacking the alleged "Judaism of Jerusalem", which was seen by antisemites as further validation for their bigotry.

It is significant that there is very little antisemitism associated with mainstream political parties, although the Greens, which has a parliamentary presence but also maintains an extra-parliamentary activist base, have had anti-Jewish postings in their on-line platforms.

Some specific on-line media outlets, including that of Amnesty International Australia, have had ongoing discussion with anti-racist organisations due to the failure of moderators to prevent, or remove efficiently, antisemitic postings.

### **Muslim and Arab Sources**

There is abundant evidence of antisemitic views being present within Australia's large and diverse Muslim population. While by no means all segments of these communities are antisemitic or even pay regard to Jews in any way, there are active and vocal proponents of anti-Jewish myths who will act both openly and covertly. In the first category, the most visible and vocal is the Hizb-ut-Tahrir movement, which hosts lectures and posts them on-line. There are also a number of very active antisemitic contributors to (purportedly moderated) on-line forums. It should be noted that the volume and intensity was far lower than in the previous year (which did include war with Gaza).

During the year in review, there has been a deal of public discussion of the role and operation of a variety of Islamic institutions and individuals. Much attention has been focused on the current holder of the office of Mufti of Australia, whose past verbal support for Hamas and contempt for non-Muslims was revisited in the media. A number of Muslim organisations hosted visitors who also had links to organisations with track records of negativity or hostility towards Jews, but there was no evidence of this being a feature of activity in Australia.

The availability in, and occasional promotion of, books which were overtly antisemitic or included anti-Jewish passages as the most important distributors of Islamic religious books remained a matter of serious concern.

### **Universities**

Overt antisemitism has been documented on Australian campuses in the year in review, with both extreme-left students and Middle East academia causing concern. At the December 2015 meeting of the National Union of Students, in Melbourne, "socialist" delegates used "Jew" and "Ashkenazi Jew" as terms of abuse, with targets including any person, including at least one Palestinian Australian, who didn't accept their political agenda. There was also anecdotal reporting during the year of other occasions when the extreme left and some of their associates crossed the line from political critiques of Israel to antisemitism. Also in December, an academic employed at an Australian university, posted a short piece on the Human Rights Blog of the London School of Economics. The item made a number of serious misrepresentations of Judaism and included a link to a Holocaust Denial web-site, in the course of an attack on Israel. It was removed by the moderators of the LSE site and resulted in an immediate,



unconditional apology by the university which employed her and the initiation of an investigatory process.

### **Extremist political organisations and individuals**

It is an unfortunate reality that there are a number of individuals (some of whom collaborate in small organisations) who actively disseminate antisemitism, on their own websites, in discussion forums and, rarely, in public spaces. There is no evidence to suggest that any of these persons or groups are expanding their influence, and the successful prosecution of a number of them under Federal or State anti-racism legislation has helped have them be perceived as outside the limits of serious debate.

However, the issue of alleged growing influence of Muslims and Islam has been used by a number of figures in the Australian far-right fringe to develop followings, under the banner of depicting Australia from the building of new mosques and Hallal food certification. With a genuine policy challenge of protecting Australia from terrorism and with regular media coverage of the terror inflicted by Da'esh (ISIS) and the support of a handful of Muslim Australians for one or other "Caliphate", some far right figures have perceived Islam and Muslims as more popular tempered targets than Jews and Judaism.

A number of extreme right wing individuals and organisations promote the view that the real enemy is the Jews and that there is a malevolent Jewish hand behind Muslim immigration and the promotion of cultural diversity.

### **Summary Conclusion**

1. The year in review saw a lowering of the number of reports of incidents of antisemitism, violence, vandalism and harassment than the previous year, to levels which were at the lower end of the scale for the years since 2001.
2. There was an overall lowering in the intensity of antisemitism in public discourse, after a high was reached in the previous year (with war in Gaza).
3. There has been an unacceptable tolerance of anti-Jewish submissions to debate on, platforms hosted by mainstream media organisations, with the government-funded ABC and SBS worst offenders.
4. The internet has provided platforms increasingly utilised by individuals who propagate overt antisemitism.
5. In much of the "anti-Israel" advocacy by extremist far left and Islamist groups, there is either or both of antisemitism being used to rationalise anti-Israel arguments, or anti-Israel arguments used to rationalise antisemitism.
6. The anti-Israel campaign by former Foreign Minister Bob Carr has energised antisemitic individuals and groups.
7. The focus of much of the visible far right is on Islam and Muslims, but there remains an enormous reservoir of antisemitism from this quarter.

## **Canada / Amanda Hohman (Bnei Brith)**

For the past 34 years, B'nai Brith Canada and the League for Human Rights have been tracking antisemitism trends in Canada. Though the final numbers will not be ready for some time, there are some particular issues of note that can be explored in the interim.

The most prominent issue is the seeming rise of neo-Nazi and white nationalist groups in Canada. These groups have had an ongoing presence across the country, but were limited in terms of membership and remained isolated from one another. While pockets of ideologically distinct individuals were the norm for many years, and little overlap or cooperation occurred between the various organizations, the latter half of 2015 has shown an increase in interaction between groups whose only commonality seems to be antisemitic sentiment. For example, the trial of antisemitic writer and blogger Arthur Topham in British Columbia saw several groups previously unaffiliated with Topham rise to his defense, and come together to raise financial support for his legal appeal. Some of the major racist and Neo-Nazi activists from as far away as Ontario have since become vocal supporters of Topham and his writings. The fact that there seems to be a coordinated movement taking shape is concerning, and will be a major focus of monitoring efforts in the coming year.

The second issue of note is the rise in Boycott and Sanctions activities, particularly on campuses across the country. The Anti-Israel boycott movement is concerning, in that it targets young people, while pretending to be a human rights issue. This antisemitic movement has gained such traction on some Canadian campuses, that Jewish students feel unwelcome and unsafe studying there (and in fact, there have been several documented accounts of antisemitic vandalism occurring immediately after BDS has been accepted on campus). That the movement pretends not to target Jews, but rather Israeli policies, makes it even more troubling, given the resulting difficulty in countering it. While many universities have anti-discrimination policies which should prevent the movement from operating on campus, that it is disguised as a political movement means that they are allowed to hold university sanctioned events, often harassing or threatening representatives from pro-Israel or Jewish campus groups with impunity.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is the continuation of a trend which began some years ago - the increasing shift of antisemitic activity to online outlets. Although final numbers have not been tallied, it would appear that vandalism has continued to decrease, while online incidents continue to skyrocket. The shift in medium should not be surprising if one analyzes the motivation behind traditional antisemitic graffiti. In spray painting a swastika or Nazi slogans, the goal is to make a public declaration, to spread hateful ideas to a large audience, and to send a message to all who walk past: 'Jews are not welcome'. But in an increasingly digital world, why risk getting arrested for vandalism, when one can access an even larger audience on social media or in a blog, all within a perfectly legal framework?

This new frontier for antisemitic harassment must not be dismissed as inconsequential, as the impact that digital antisemitism has on its victims can be even more profound than traditional forms. If a garage or building is defaced with graffiti, it can be washed away and removed, allowing the victims to move on and begin

healing. Removing something from the internet is far more difficult, and very often the source of the original trauma remains, re-victimizing its target. Further, if the victim is successful in removing the original offending image or message, it may just as easily pop up somewhere else moments later, starting the whole process of censorship over again.

### **France / Jean Yves Camus (Paris Municipality)**

The year 2015 was marked by several major terrorist attacks in Paris, one of which specifically targeted Jews. On 7 January, an attack against the office of the satirical weekly *Charlie Hebdo*, killed 12, including two journalists and cartoonists who were Jewish (Georges Wolinski and Elsa Cayat). It was claimed by Al Qaeda in the Yemen. The perpetrators were identified as the Kouachi brothers, of Algerian descent. They died after a stand-off with the police two days later. On 9 January, four Jews were killed at the Hypercacher Kosher supermarket during a siege that ended with the terrorist being shot down by the Police. Amedy Coulibaly, whose family hailed from Mali but held French citizenship, said he carried out the attack on behalf of ISIS. The previous day, he had killed a police woman officer, while he was apparently trying to carry out an attack against a Jewish school in Montrouge, a suburb of Paris. On 13 November, a Jihadi cell carried out 6 almost simultaneous and coordinated attacks (including suicide bombings) in Paris, targeting the National Stadium, bars and restaurants and killing 130 people. Although no Jewish place or people were targeted as such, the Chabad Rabbi of the 11<sup>th</sup> district of Paris said there were two Jews among the victims. Following those attacks, President François Hollande declared the State of Emergency, which is still in force.

As usual, in the aftermath of a terrorist attack targeting the Jewish Community, Antisemitic actions and threats had sharply increased (by 84%) between January and May 2015. This was followed by a decrease, so that at the end of September, the number of Antisemitic actions and threats had declined by 1,5%, when compared to the same period in 2014. It should be noted that the number of such incidents remains very high: 851 were recorded in 2014, against 423 in 2013. According to CRIF, the umbrella organization of French Jewry, this unprecedented wave of Antisemitism is caused by Islamic-inspired propaganda on the internet and the Anti-Israeli boycott campaigns which are supported by the Radical Pro-Palestine NGOs and the French Far-Left. Prime Minister Manuel Valls has however repeatedly criticized the BDS campaign, and has outspokenly condemned hatred of Israel as a form of Anti-Semitism.

The number of Anti-Semitic incidents is often compared with that of anti-Muslim violence and threats. Such acts have undoubtedly increased, especially in the wake of the January attacks. The most reliable statistics, coming from Délégation interministérielle à la Lutte contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme (Dilcra), an official body under the Prime Minister's supervision, show there were 400 incidents in 2015 against 1114 in 2014. While this is an unacceptable trend, it should be noted that the overwhelming majority of those incidents are threats or daubings on mosques. On the opposite, anti-Semitic attacks, apart from Terrorist attacks, have also included a number of assassination attempts, for exemple in Créteil (4 Décembre 2014: a case of burglary with an Antisemitic intent, followed by rape and abduction); in Marseille on 17 November 2015 (a religious Jew teaching at a Jewish school stabbed by youth wearing a Daesh T-shirt) and against in Marseille on 11 January 2016, when another religious

teacher was attacked with a butcher's knife by a 15-years old of Turkish-Kurdish origin, who had claimed allegiance to ISIS.

For the first time, after the 2016 Marseille incident, the President of the Jewish Community asked religious Jews not to wear their *kippa* while walking on the streets. The Orthodox Chief Rabbi of Marseille and the Chareidi rabbanim in the city also advised to opt for another way of covering one's head, at least until the situation becomes safer. The representative body of French Jewry, CRIF, and the Chief Rabbi of France took an opposite stand, but the issue has become the matter for a national debate, with the President, Prime Minister and leaders of all the mainstream political parties declaring that no Jew should be in the situation of fearing to abide by his religion. This shows that the awareness of Anti-Semitism seems to be more acute than in the previous years, but it also proves that there are now life-threatening situations for those who can be identified as Jews.

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

924 antisemitic incidents across the UK were recorded by the CST during 2015, a 22 percent fall from the total 1179 incidents recorded in 2014. This was however, the third highest total ever recorded.

An increase was most pronounced during the first three months of the year and is deemed to have reflected an increase in reporting due to raised communal concern over antisemitism following the terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen rather than any significant increase in incidents.

In addition to the recorded 924 incidents, a further 686 potential incidents were reported to CST which, after investigation, appeared not to show evidence of antisemitic motivation or targeting. These potential incidents therefore were not classified as antisemitic and are not included in the published data. Most of the rejected incidents involved possible hostile reconnaissance or suspicious behaviour near to Jewish communal locations, non-antisemitic crime affecting Jewish property or people, or anti-Israel activity that did not involve antisemitic language, imagery or targeting.

CST recorded 86 violent incidents in this period, an increase of 6 percent from the 81 antisemitic assaults recorded in 2014. Four of these violent incidents were serious enough to be classified as life threatening extreme violence.

There were 65 incidents of damage and desecration to Jewish property recorded in this period, a decrease of 20 per cent from the 81 incidents recorded in the first half of 2014. CST recorded 76 direct antisemitic threats, a decrease of 16 per cent from the 91 incidents recorded in 2014. The category of abusive behaviour accounted for 685 incidents, a fall of 24 percent from the 896 incidents recorded in 2014, but is the second highest total ever recorded by CST. This category includes a wide range including antisemitic graffiti on non-Jewish property, one-off hate mail, antisemitic verbal abuse and those social media incidents that did not involve direct threats.

159 of the 896 incidents of abusive behaviour took place on social media, comprising 17 per cent of the total of 924 recorded incidents. This was a fall of 20 per cent of the overall incident figure in 2014 but nevertheless reflects the role of social media as a place where Jews encounter antisemitism, and the ease with which it can be reported.

Twelve incidents of mass-produced or mass-emailed antisemitic literature (as opposed to one-off cases of hate mail which are classified as Abusive Behaviour) were recorded, a fall of 60 per cent from the 30 incidents recorded in this category in 2014.

85 of the recorded incidents involved Jewish schools, schoolchildren or teachers wearing the clothing of Orthodoxy or wearing Jewish religious symbols, or Jewish school uniforms. Three characteristics, often found in combination, reflect the most common single type of antisemitic incident: random, spontaneous verbal abuse, directed at people who look Jewish, while they go about their business in public places.

In 21 separate incidents, the victims were Jewish students or academics, compared with 19 such incidents in 2014.

CST received a physical description of the incident offender in 360 or 39 percent of the 924 incidents recorded during 2015. Of these 193 offenders (53 percent) were described as 'White – Northern European'; 15 offenders (4 per cent) were described as 'White – Southern European'; 46 offenders (13 percent) were described as 'Black'; 77 offenders (21 percent) were described as 'South Asian'; 3 offenders (1 percent) were described as 'East or South Asian'; and 27 offenders (8 per cent) were described as 'Arab or North African'.

Of the 924 incidents, 472 were recorded in Greater London, a fall of 20 percent from the 592 incidents recorded during the same period in 2014. 226 antisemitic incidents were recorded in Greater Manchester, a fall of 27 percent over the 309 incidents recorded during the same period in 2014.

In a civil case, a Manchester tribunal awarded a Jewish woman £16, 000 after her job application was rejected by a local travel agent because she refused to work on the Sabbath.

In March, CST signed an agreement with the Association of Chief Police Officers, the national 'umbrella body' for the police in England and Wales, to share antisemitic incident data with police forces across the country, and 305 of the 924 antisemitic incidents recorded by CST came via this incident data exchange programme with the Police.

Antisemitic crimes were successfully prosecuted in a number of cases during 2015. In January, four teenagers were convicted of assaulting a Gateshead rabbi. One of the assailants, Balawal Sultan, had texted a message saying he was going to "smash some Jews up" All four were committed to young offenders institutions after admitting racially aggravated common assault. In February, Mahmudul Choudhury, a 35 year old married teacher, was fined at Bromley Magistrates Court and ordered to pay the court's costs, after posting Hitler images on Facebook together with the message "Yes

man, you were right. I could have killed all the Jews, but I left some of them to let you know why I was killing them. Share this picture to tell the truth a whole world (sic)".

In June, John Churchod was fined at Hastings Magistrates Court and ordered to pay court costs after sending antisemitic and homophobic messages on Twitter. Among the messages he tweeted were "The world will exterminate you. As Hitler failed to do in entirety" and "Jewish and gay, probably the worst combination ever." In July, Jakub Kawczynsk was fined and ordered to pay compensation to his victims at Thames Magistrates Court after calling members of the Shomrim neighbourhood watch group "f.....g Jewish f.....s". In August, Nicholas Goodwin was jailed for six months at Kilmanock Sheriff Court Scotland after sending a photo of himself with a Nazi flag to a Jewish woman. And in September, Nicholas Sweeney was jailed for a month and a half by Thames Stratford Magistrates Court after pleading guilty to shouting antisemitic abuse to two Jewish men.

The focus on prosecuting online antisemitic hatred is in part a consequence of a sustained initiative by the criminal justice agencies to tackle online incitement, and comes about after CST and others have participated in consultations with police, the Crown Prosecution Service and representatives of the social networks in Europe and in the USA.

One online antisemitic campaign was that conducted against Luciana Berger MP, who was sent thousands of anti-Jewish and abusive tweets following the conviction and imprisonment of Garron Helm, a member of the neo Nazi National Action, for sending Ms Berger an antisemitic tweet. Another was based around a campaign against 'the Jewification of Great Britain' started in January by far right activist Joshua Bonehill. In April, a demonstration organised by veteran neo Nazi Eddy Stampton began a campaign against the Haredi community in Stamford Hill, and against the Shomrim. The demonstration in April attracted 20 to 30 people. Shortly thereafter Bonehill was arrested and charged with racially aggravated harassment and malicious communication in connection with the campaign against Ms Berger. Stampton then organised another demonstration, against Jews in the north London suburb of Golders Green, but the demonstration was moved to central London on police orders. Bonehill was re-arrested shortly before the second demonstration accused of inciting racial hatred with online antisemitic messages and remains in police custody awaiting his trial in mid-December.

Government strategy against radicalisation and the threat of terrorism incorporates action against antisemitism, and the Prime Minister's counter extremism strategy announced in July identified antisemitism and belief in Jewish conspiracy theories as part of the same extremism that threatens British society in general.

In January, the National Policing Lead for Counter-Terrorism had announced that the police were raising the threat level for the Jewish community in the light of the international situation, and in March the Prime Minister announced that the Government were committing over £7 million of new money to fund man-guarding for private Jewish schools and a further £3 million for the provision of security equipment for synagogues and other vulnerable communal buildings.

In January, the Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission reported after a year-long inquiry, which heard nearly 2500 responses. Among its recommendations were the creation of a new national memorial, a world class learning centre at the heart of a major university campus to drive national educational activity, an endowment fund to secure the long-term future of Holocaust education and a programme to record the testimony of survivors and witnesses.

### **United States / Oren Segal and Jason Turetsky (ADL)**

Since 1979, ADL has kept track of reported anti-Semitic incidents, including assaults, vandalism, and harassment, in the "Annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents," which provides a snapshot of anti-Semitism in the U.S. While ADL is still compiling its 2015 data, it appears the number of anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S. in 2015 will be lower than the 921 incidents recorded by ADL in 2014.

This is partially because 2015 was a relatively quiet year for anti-Israel activity in the public sphere compared to the previous years when military conflicts involving Israel, such as the 2014 military campaign in Gaza to thwart Hamas rocket attacks, spurred demonstrations in major cities across the U.S. that sometimes featured blatantly anti-Semitic slogans, signs and rhetoric. While the Audit does not include incidents where Israel was criticized, such incidents are included when they cross the line from criticism to anti-Semitism by invoking anti-Jewish stereotypes and imagery.

Anti-Semitic incidents reported to ADL in 2015 include: in Dallas, Texas, a rabbi returned to his car in the synagogue parking lot to find a swastika drawn on the back of the vehicle; in Union County, Pennsylvania swastikas and crosses were drawn on a synagogue; and in San Diego, California, three Chabad institutions received letters threatening Jews with death, telling Jews to get out of "our white country" and to "take the Muslims with you."

Continuing a consistent trend for many years, the states with the highest totals of anti-Semitic incidents in 2015 are those with large Jewish populations. New York, once again will likely top the list. New York City alone experienced nearly a dozen incidents targeting Jewish individuals and the community in the last few months of the year. One particularly violent event took place on December 28. An Orthodox Jewish teen walking home from his yeshiva in Brooklyn, was punched in the face and thrown into the street.

2015 also brought a heightened focus to anti-Semitism on college campuses. During a UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC) meeting, council members questioned a UCLA Judicial Board candidate's ability to represent students' interests impartially in light of her Jewish identity. While council members ultimately unanimously approved her appointment, this line of questioning highlighted the existence of anti-Semitism on campuses. The condemnation by the larger UCLA community was swift.

While such incidents are certainly disturbing, it is important to note that these incidents are relatively rare at U.S. colleges, and the vast majority of Jewish students report feeling safe on their campuses. When such incidents do occur, they are

generally condemned by administrators and the wider campus communities at their respective colleges.

Additionally, much of the anti-Semitism in America today is difficult to quantify. In 2015, age-old stereotypes and conspiracy theories continued to re-emerge online. For example, in early 2015, in the aftermath of the terror attack in Paris at the Charlie Hebdo office and a kosher supermarket, anti-Semitic conspiracy theories immediately surfaced in the U.S. and abroad. While in the U.S., such theories did not enter mainstream discourse, some conspiracy theorists exploited this tragedy to promote anti-Jewish hatred, blaming Jews or Israel for the attacks.

While extremist movements exist on the fringe of American society, some extreme voices are more welcome by mainstream institutions and public figures. For example, Louis Farrakhan, the longtime leader of the Nation of Islam, continued in 2015 to publicly express anti-Semitism under the guise of instilling African-Americans with a sense of empowerment. In March, for example, during Part 2 of the Nation of Islam's "Saviours' Day" sermon, Farrakhan alleged that Jews committed the 9/11 attacks and control the U.S. government. Yet despite Farrakhan's extreme positions on Jews, whites, and LGBT individuals, a U.S. Congressman, the Mayor of Washington, D.C., and other elected officials as well as religious and civil rights leaders spoke at Farrakhan's October 2015 event commemorating the anniversary of the Million Man March.



## WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

The purpose of this document is to provide a practical guide for identifying incidents, collecting data, and supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism.

Working definition: *“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.”*

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

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

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

Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

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

However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

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

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

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

## Appendix B– Largest Core Jewish Populations, 2015 / Prof. Sergio DellaPergola<sup>41</sup>

**Table 7.6** Countries with largest core Jewish populations, 1/1/2015

Rank	Country	Jewish population	% of total Jewish Population			
			In the world		In the diaspora	
			%	Cumulative %	%	Cumulative %
1	Israel <sup>a</sup>	6,217,400	43.4	43.4	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>b</sup>
2	United States	5,700,000	39.8	83.3	70.4	70.4
3	France	467,500	3.3	86.5	5.8	76.2
4	Canada	386,000	2.7	89.2	4.8	81.0
5	United Kingdom	290,000	2.0	91.3	3.6	84.6
6	Russian Federation	183,000	1.3	92.6	2.3	86.8
7	Argentina	181,000	1.3	93.8	2.2	89.1
8	Germany	117,500	0.8	94.6	1.5	90.5
9	Australia	112,800	0.8	95.4	1.4	91.9
10	Brazil	94,500	0.7	96.1	1.2	93.1
11	South Africa	69,800	0.5	96.6	0.9	93.9
12	Ukraine	60,000	0.4	97.0	0.7	94.7
13	Hungary	47,700	0.3	97.3	0.6	95.3
14	Mexico	40,000	0.3	97.6	0.5	95.8
15	Netherlands	29,900	0.2	97.8	0.4	96.1
16	Belgium	29,800	0.2	98.0	0.4	96.5
17	Italy	27,600	0.2	98.2	0.3	96.8
18	Switzerland	18,900	0.1	98.3	0.2	97.1
19	Chile	18,400	0.1	98.5	0.2	97.3

<sup>a</sup> Includes Jewish residents in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

<sup>b</sup> Not applicable

<sup>41</sup> DellaPergola, S. (2015), World Jewish Population, 2015

## **Appendix C - Estimated Core Jewish Population, by Continents and Major Geographic Regions, 2014 and 2015 / Prof. Sergio DellaPergola<sup>a</sup>**

**Table 7.1** Estimated core Jewish population, by continents and major geographic regions, 2014 and 2015<sup>a</sup>

Region	2014			2015		Percentage change 2014-2015	Jews per 1,000 total population in 2015
	Original <sup>b</sup>	Revised <sup>c</sup>	Percent <sup>d</sup>	Estimate	Percent <sup>d</sup>		
	Estimate	Estimate					
World total	14,212,800	14,215,400	100.0	14,310,500	100.0	0.67	1.98
Diaspora	8,109,600	8,110,900	57.1	8,093,100	56.6	-0.22	1.14
Israel <sup>e</sup>	6,103,200	6,104,500	42.9	6,217,400	43.4	1.85	749.36
America, total	6,468,800	6,468,800	45.5	6,468,200	45.2	-0.01	6.66
North <sup>f</sup>	6,085,300	6,085,300	42.8	6,086,000	42.5	0.01	17.22
Central, Caribbean	56,900	56,900	0.4	56,900	0.4	0.00	0.27
South	326,600	326,600	2.3	325,300	2.3	-0.40	0.79
Europe, total	1,407,200	1,407,700	9.9	1,391,100	9.7	-1.18	1.70
European Union <sup>g</sup>	1,103,300	1,103,300	7.8	1,093,900	7.6	-0.85	2.16
FSU <sup>h</sup>	263,700	264,200	1.9	257,200	1.8	-2.65	1.28
Other West	20,900	20,900	0.1	20,800	0.1	-0.48	1.50
Balkans <sup>h</sup>	19,300	19,300	0.1	19,200	0.1	-0.52	0.20
Asia, total	6,142,000	6,143,900	43.2	6,256,100	43.7	1.83	1.46
Israel <sup>e</sup>	6,103,200	6,104,500	42.9	6,217,400	43.4	1.85	749.36
FSU	19,100	19,100	0.1	18,600	0.1	-2.62	0.22
Other	19,700	20,300	0.1	20,100	0.1	-0.99	0.00
Africa, total	74,700	74,900	0.5	74,700	0.5	-0.27	0.07
Northern <sup>i</sup>	3,500	3,700	0.0	3,700	0.0	0.00	0.01
Sub-Saharan <sup>j</sup>	71,200	71,200	0.5	71,000	0.5	-0.28	0.09
Oceania <sup>k</sup>	120,100	120,100	0.8	120,400	0.8	0.25	3.09

a Jewish population: January 1. Total population: mid-year estimates, 2014. Source: Population Reference Bureau (2014)

b See DellaPergola (2014)

c Based on updated or corrected information

d Minor discrepancies due to rounding

e Includes Jewish residents in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights

f US and Canada

g Including the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania)

h Asian regions of Russian Federation and Turkey included in Europe. Excluding the Baltic countries

i Including Ethiopia

j Including South Africa and Zimbabwe

k Including Australia and New Zealand

**Appendix D: World Core Jewish Population Estimates: Original and Revised, 1945-2015 / Prof. Sergio DellaPergola**

**Table 7.2** World core Jewish population estimates: original and revised, 1945-2015

Year	World Jewish Population			World Population		Jews per 1,000 total population
	Original estimate <sup>a</sup>	Revised estimate <sup>b</sup>	Annual % change <sup>c</sup>	Total (millions) <sup>d</sup>	Annual % change	
1945, May 1	11,000,000	11,000,000		2,315		4.75
1950, Jan. 1	11,303,400	11,297,000	0.57	2,526	1.76	4.47
1960, Jan. 1	12,792,800	12,079,000	0.67	3,026	1.82	3.99
1970, Jan. 1	13,950,900	12,585,000	0.41	3,691	2.01	3.41
1980, Jan. 1	14,527,100	12,819,000	0.18	4,449	1.81	2.88
1990, Jan. 1	12,810,300	12,868,000	0.04	5,321	1.74	2.42
2000, Jan. 1	13,191,500	13,150,000	0.22	6,127	1.42	2.15
2005, Jan. 1	13,034,100	13,460,000	0.47	6,514	1.23	2.07
2010, Jan. 1	13,428,300	13,854,000	0.58	6,916	1.20	2.00
2015, Jan. 1	14,310,500		0.65	7,236	0.91	1.98

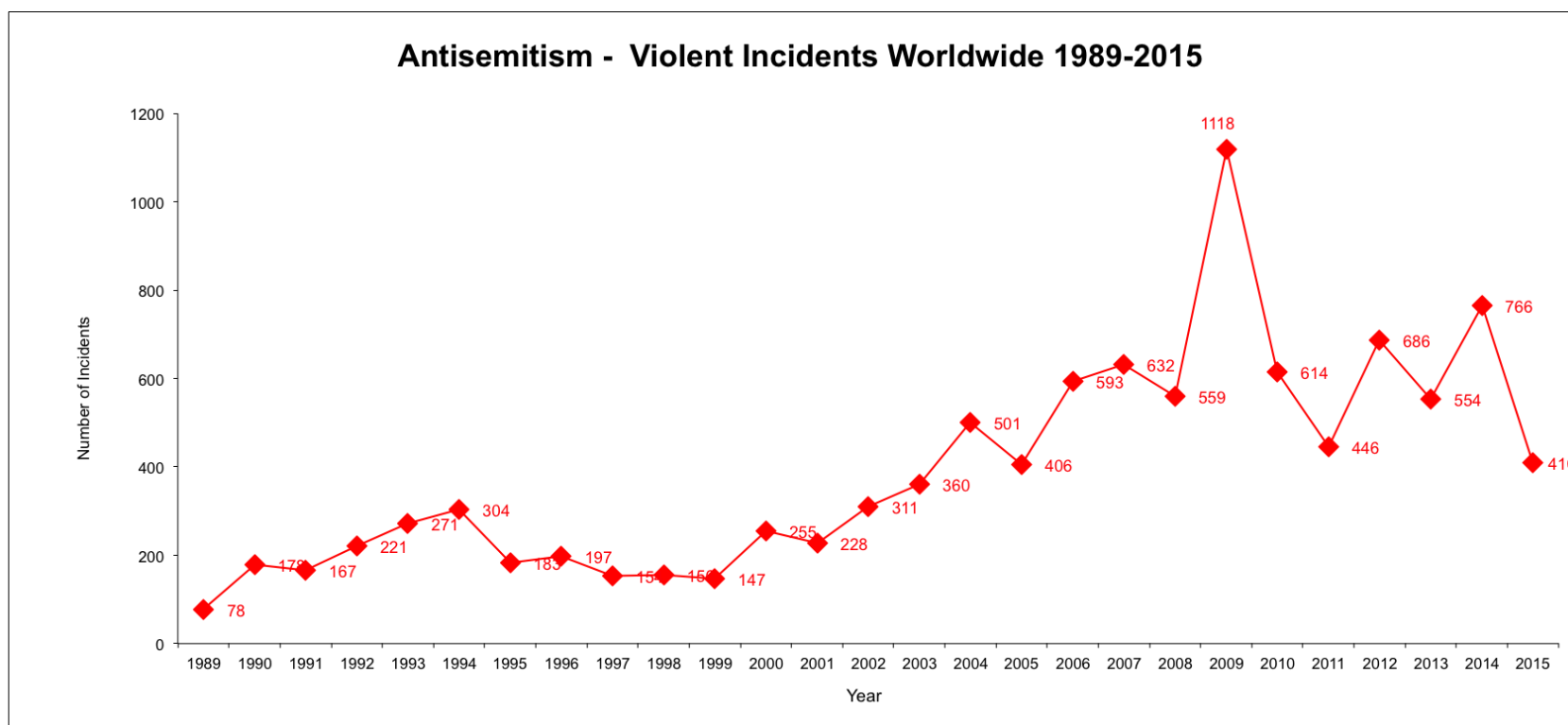
<sup>a</sup> As published in *American Jewish Year Book*, various years. Some estimates reported here as of Jan. 1 were originally published as of Dec. 31 of previous year

<sup>b</sup> Based on updated or corrected information. Original estimates for 1990 and after, and all revised estimates: The A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

<sup>c</sup> Based on revised estimates, besides latest year

<sup>d</sup> Mid-year estimates. Source: United Nations (2013) and Population Reference Bureau (2014)

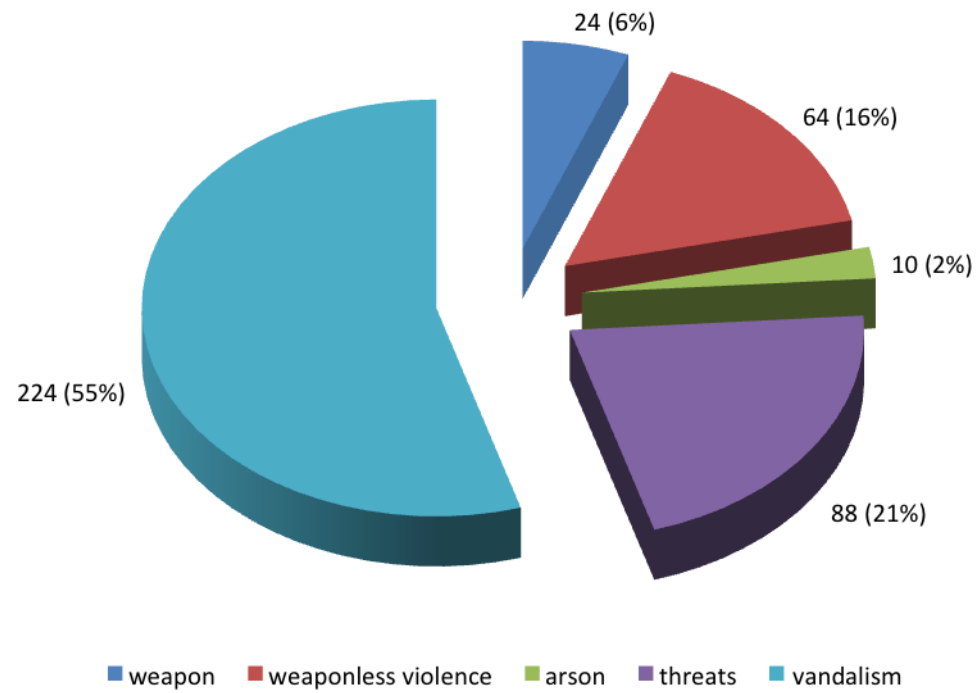




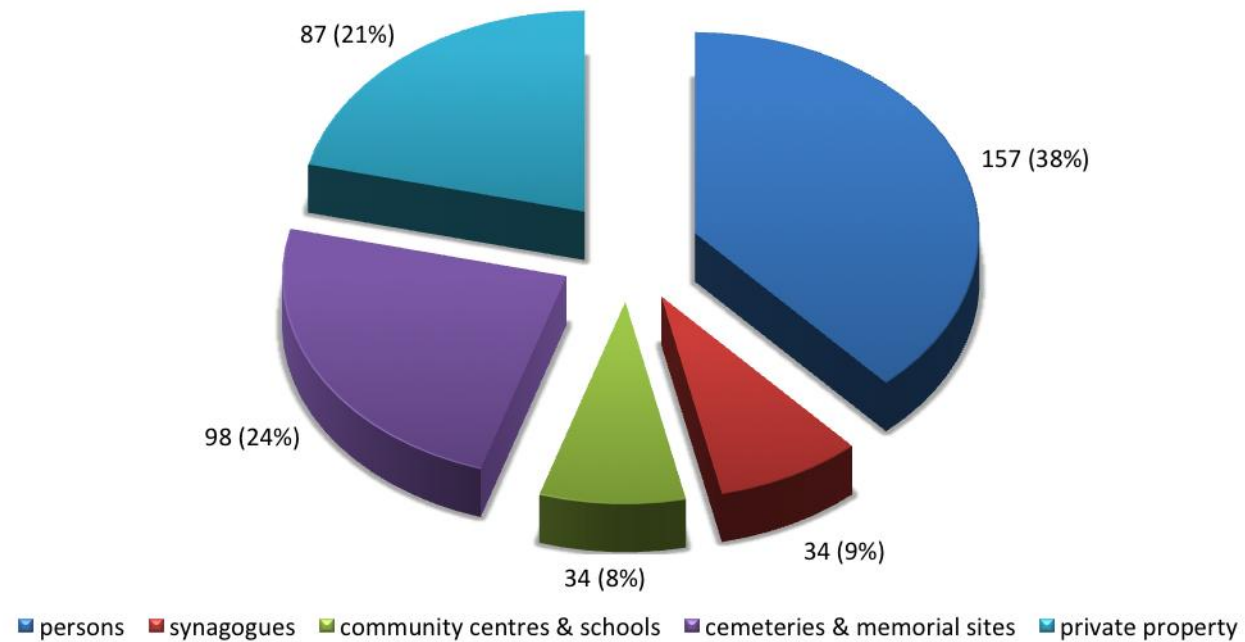
42

Statistics – **Dr. Haim Fireberg (2015)**. The graphs in this section refer to acts of violence and vandalism perpetrated against Jewish individuals and Jewish private and community property worldwide during 2014. The figures are based on the Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism and reports of the Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism. It should be stressed that the graphs reflect only major violent incidents (such as arson, weapon attacks, weaponless attacks, serious harassment, and vandalism or desecration).

### Violent Incidents Worldwide in 2015 Breakdown by Modus Operandi

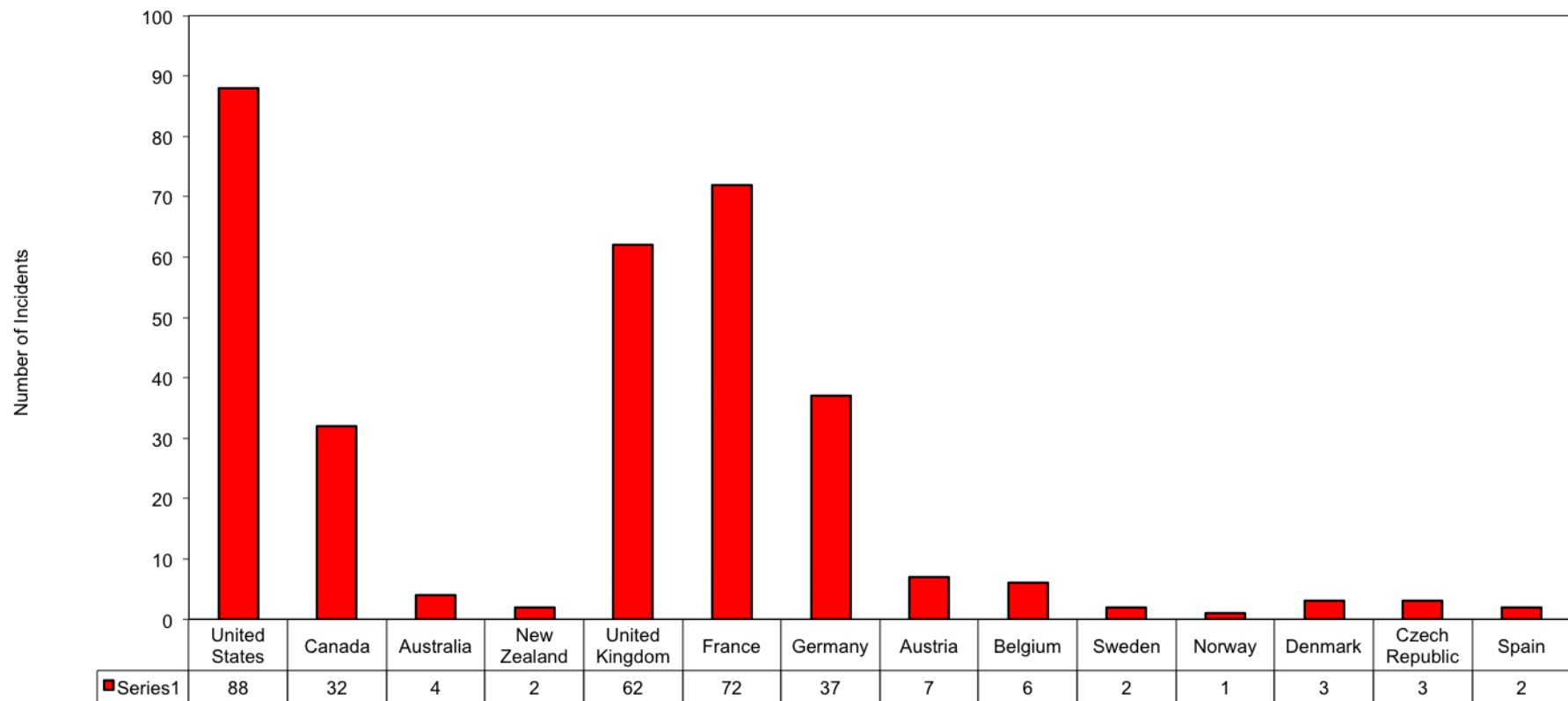


### Violent Incidents Worldwide in 2015 Breakdown by Target

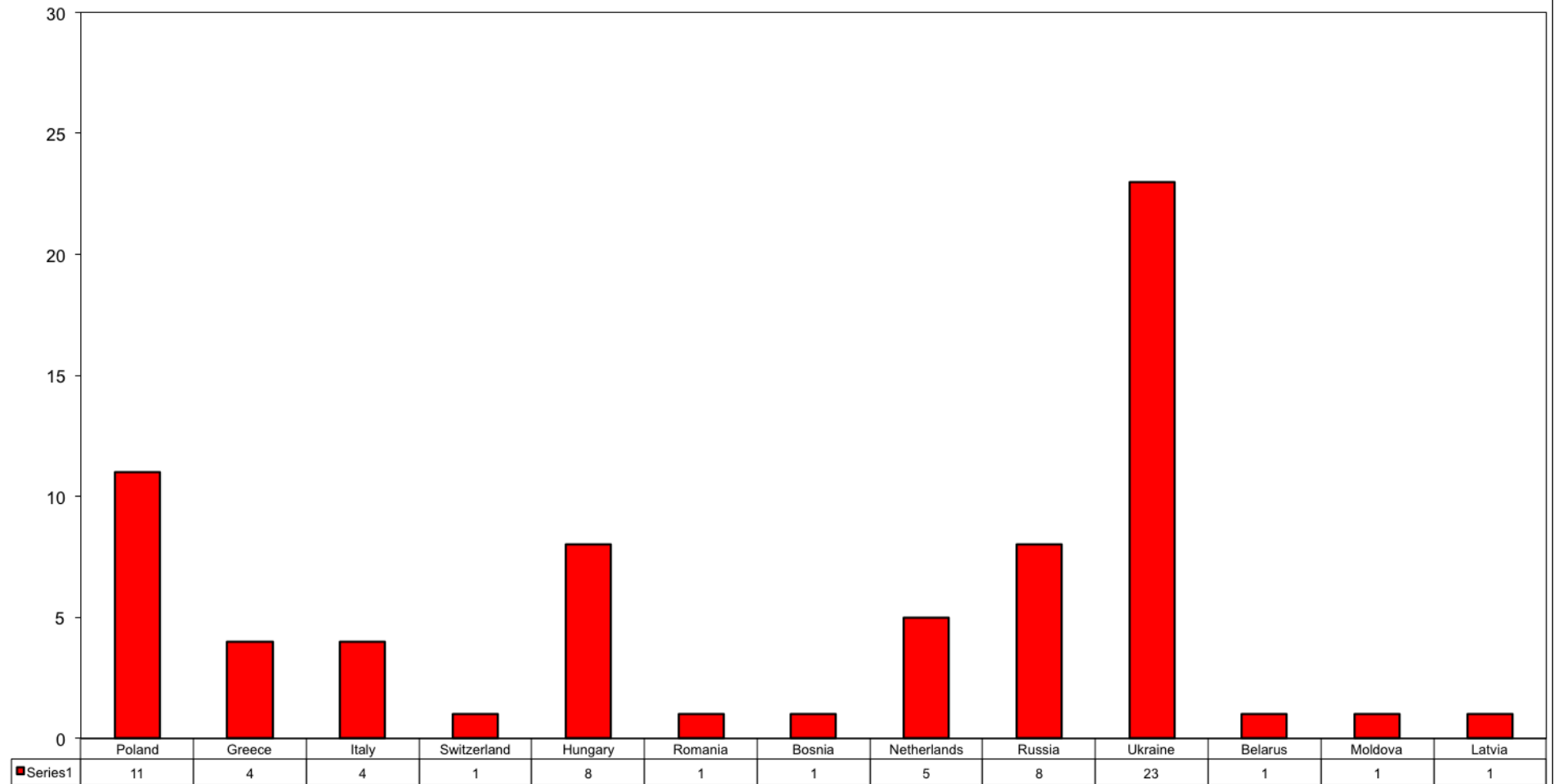




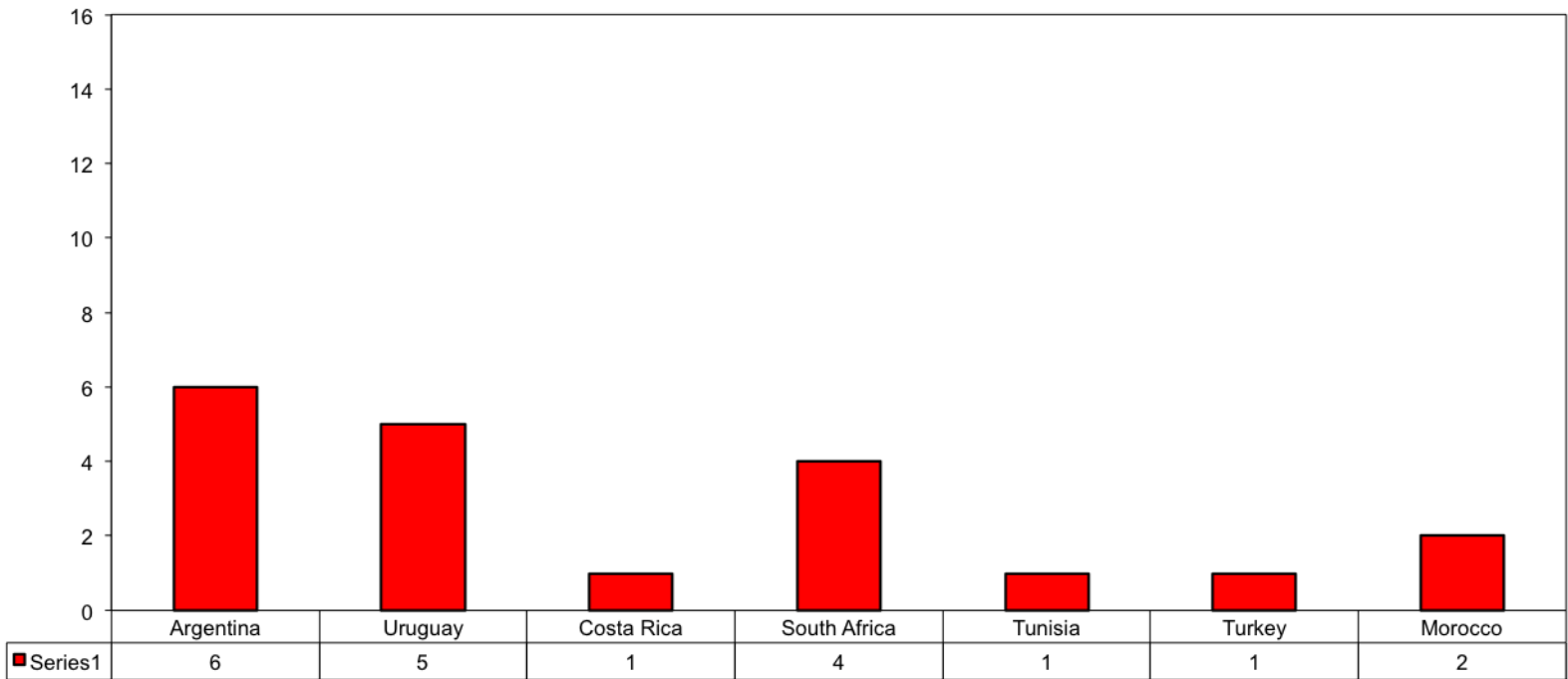
**Violent Incidents in 2015 - Breakdown by Country (1)**



**Violent Incidents in 2015 - Breakdown by Country (2)**



Violent Incidents in 2015 - Breakdown by Country (3)



## *Compilation of Visual Materials*





"Palestinians are deviated to secondary roads, which are seeded with checkpoints where Israeli soldiers exercise an iron-like control over the moves of the non-Jews. There is no real protocol on their actions and soldiers may do what they like with Palestinians. They may impede them to pass, detain them, take away their goods or worse things. It has been calculated that every Palestinian spends an average of 4 hours per day standing in those controls. This is outrageous! You don't know who I am. If you keep talking, I will hit you again with my rifle."



During the decade of the '90s, 400 kms. of roads were built for exclusive use of Jews. They were not only used as an excuse for land expropriation as wish, but also were designed in such a way as to isolate Palestinian villages among them. If a Palestinian is discovered using these Jewish roads, he is condemned to six months in prison.

-Circumcision control. Please take out your penis through the window.





Of course, as it could be expected from this Apartheid 2.0, no Israeli person can marry to a Palestinian. If such a union takes place, the Israeli loses his citizenship and is obliged to emigrate.  
 -Hard to believe! The souls are very heated.  
 -I laugh at the story of Romeo and Juliet.



The same happens with water. A Cisjordanian person only counts with 50 m3 of water per year to cover all his needs. Notwithstanding, a person who is not Palestinian is entitled to 2400 m3. Besides, once more, the price of a liter water is more than double for a Palestinian than for a Israeli.  
 -Is it really so hard to find water here?  
 -Well, do you see that skeleton over there? He is Bear Grylls, from "The Last Survivor". He didn't last even two days, the poor one!



OK, yes: the Holocaust was horrible and it produced the creation of a State of Israel for Jews to be able to live in peace, but that doesn't allow you to fuck the non-Jewish people living there. Israel is like the child who saw, horrified, how his father beats his mother and then, when he is an adult, he also beats his woman. According to Israeli law, Jews are treated with preference in education, health, housing and work. If you are not a Jew in Israel, you are fucked.

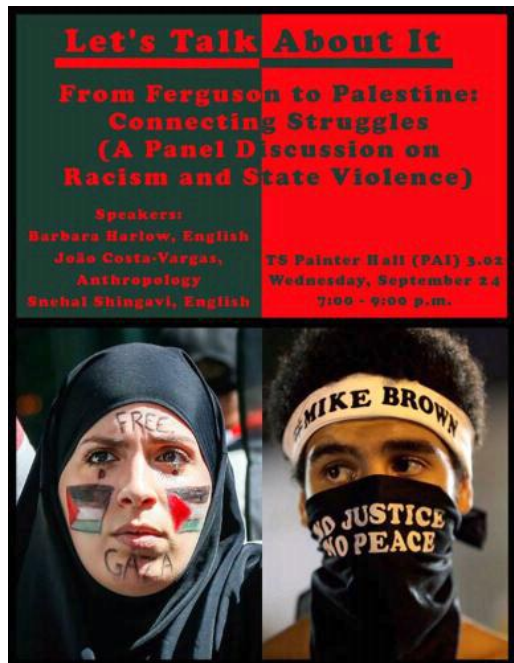
-You don't understand , Palestinian! My grand-parents were taken to a concentration camp!!





"The poorest Jew in Panama"





SOURCES for the photos and caricatures will be posted on the Kantor Center website.

## תקציר

### **סקירה – דו"ח אודות האנטישמיות בשנת 2015 מרכז קנטור, אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, 2016**

**תקציר:** האווירה בה הסתיימה שנת 2015 הייתה אווירה של פחד וחשש, בקרב יהודים ולא-יהודים כאחד, במיוחד באירופה. גלי המהגרים גרמו לטלטלה ביבשת, הטרור גבה מחיר כבד בחיי אדם והעלה על פני השטח שאלות כבדות משקל וספקות לגבי אפשרותן של מדינות דמוקרטיות להגן על עצמן ועל אזרחיהן. הקהילות היהודיות, והיהודים כפרטים, חשים מאוימים מחד גיסא על-ידי זרם הפליטים, ומאידך גיסא על-ידי התחזקותן של מפלגות הימין הקיצוני כתוצאה משאל היחס לפליטים. מחד גיסא, ההתפתחויות האחרונות גרמו לירידה במספר האירועים

האנטישמיים האלימים נגד יהודים ומוסדות יהודיים, ומאידך גיסא, האירועים האלימים הפכו לאכזריים יותר, והמגוון ההולך וגדל של אנטישמיות מילולית וחזותית הפך לאכזרי ומעליב יותר. לפנינו ניסיון להציע הסבר לתופעות סותרות לכאורה אלו.

מספרם של **האירועים האנטישמיים האלימים ברחבי העולם ירד** באופן ניכר מאד במהלך שנת 2015, במיוחד לאחר החודשים הראשונים של השנה, בהשוואה לשנת 2014: צוות מרכז קנטור ניטר 410 אירועים אנטישמיים אלימים במהלך שנת 2015 בהשוואה ל-766 אירועים כאלה בשנת 2014, ירידה של כ-46 אחוזים. זהו המספר הנמוך ביותר בעשור האחרון, אולם יש לקחת בחשבון ששנת 2014 הייתה שנה קשה מאוד, במיוחד עקב מבצע צוק איתן בקיץ, שמספר האירועים האלימים בשנת 2015 זהה פחות או יותר לזה של שנת 2011, ושבהשוואה לשנת 2013 הירידה בשנת 2015 היא של כ-26 אחוזים.

הירידה מורגשת במיוחד בשיטות הפעולה השונות, בראש ובראשונה – שימוש בנשק (בלמעלה מ-60 אחוזים) והצתה (בלמעלה מ-50 אחוזים), וגם במקרים בהם לא נעשה שימוש בנשק, איומים וונדליזם. בכל הנוגע למטרות, הירידה המשמעותית ביותר היא בפגיעה בבתי כנסת (בכ-70 אחוזים!), רכוש פרטי ואנשים (בכ-50 אחוזים), כמו גם בבתי ספר ומרכזים קהילתיים, והמספר הגבוה ביותר הנו של פגיעות בבתי עלמין ואנדרטאות.

יש לציין, כי הנתונים הללו הנם תוצאה של שיטת הניטור והניתוח, אשר פותחה על-ידי צוות מרכז קנטור, העובד יחדיו על הנושאים הללו כבר במשך למעלה מ-20 שנים, בהתבסס על דיווחים שונים המגיעים אלינו מאנשי הקשר שלנו בעולם כולו. הקריטריונים הייחודיים (מניע אנטישמי, ספירת אירוע רחב ממדים כאירוע אחד, והימנעות מהגזמה או פחות בחומרתו של האירוע) הנם הסיבה העיקרית לשוני, אשר עלול להתגלות בין הנתונים הללו לבין אלו המתפרסמים על-ידי קהילות וגופי ניטור אחרים.

**הסיבות לירידה במספר האירועים האלימים:** ניתן למנות שלוש סיבות עיקריות לירידה זו: ראשית, **הגברת אמצעי הביטחון** שנקטו מאז אירועי ינואר 2015 בפריז (במשרדי ה"שרלי הבדוי" וה"היפרכשר" נרצחו 17 אנשים) והמתקפה בחודש פברואר על בית הכנסת הגדול בקופנהגן (השומר הדני-ישראלי נרצח). האמצעים הללו תוגברו עוד יותר בעקבות אירועי הדמים בפריז בנובמבר, במהלכם נרצחו 138 אנשים ומאות נוספים נפצעו במספר התקפות מתואמות. הן הצבא והן המשטרה גויסו בצרפת ובבלגיה (במיוחד לאחר מציאת הקשר לאירועים בפריז ועוד יותר לאחר ההתקפות בבריסל בינואר 2016), וגם בגרמניה ובמדינות אחרות. מתקנים ומוסדות יהודים ולא-יהודיים נשמרים בצורה טובה יותר ושירותי המודיעין הגבירו את מידת המעקב שלהם במעברי הגבול ואת שיתוף הפעולה הבינלאומי ביניהם. מכאן הירידה העקבית באירועים אלימים לאורך השנה, במקביל להגברת השמירה, הירידה בשימוש בנשק ובהצתה, והמספר הגבוה של פגיעות בבתי עלמין ובאנדרטאות, המוגנים פחות מרכוש קהילתי ופרטי.

שנית, **הגל של למעלה ממיליון מהגרים** שזרם לאירופה (רובם מוסלמים מן המזרח התיכון, אפריקה ואפגניסטן) הסיט את תשומת הלב של הימין הקיצוני, הן בשטח והן ברשתות החברתיות, לאורך שנת 2015. הנושא שהעסיק ביותר את אנשי הימין היה האיום הדמוגרפי/החברתי/התרבותי אשר גל זה עלול להביא עמו, לדעתם, למדינותיהם. החשש בקרב הקהילות המקומיות מתוצאה כזו הנו המקור לעלייה בכוחן של מפלגות הימין הקיצוני ולהישגיהן בבחירות: מצביעים במספר מדינות העבירו את קולם מן הנאו-נאצים אל מפלגות הימין על מנת להגדיל את נוכחותן בזירה הפוליטית.

זאת ועוד, האוכלוסייה המוסלמית, אשר כבר היגרה אל אירופה בשנים קודמות יחד עם הקהילות המוסלמיות הוותיקות, מונה, עם משפחותיהם, 40-52 מיליון (קיימות הערכות שונות), והם חשים תחת מתקפה מאז שהחל הגל של שנת 2015: קהילות מקומיות מצביעות על אלה שזה מכבר באו ועל הוותיקים יותר כעל מקור אפשרי לטרור, כמו אלו שאומנו על-ידי דעא"ש ונשלחו חזרה לאירופה, וכמקור תמידי לאיום על העתיד. התוצאה הינה העברתה של תשומת הלב מן הקהילות היהודיות אל היחסים בין המוסלמים לבין הנוצרים. במספר מקרים נוצרים תקפו מוסלמים, העלו באש מרכזי מהגרים וחיללו בתי קברות ואף מסגדים.

פרסום של דעא"ש הסביר לאחרונה מדוע היהודים וישראל אינם מהווים את מטרתם המידית, לכל הפחות בינתיים: היות ול"פרוטוקולים של זקני ציון" אין בסיס מציאותי, היהודים אינם שולטים בעולם וכל מי שמאמין שהם כאכן שולטים בו הוא שוטה. היהודים אינם יותר כופרים ואפיקורסים מאשר אפיקורסים אחרים, בכללם גם השיעים, והמטרה העיקרית צריכה להיות המשטרים הערביים אשר מגנים על ישראל, ולא היהודים בישראל. לפיכך, החמאס וחיזבאללה טוענים – הסוגיה הפלשתינאית אינה בעייתו המרכזית של העולם המוסלמי. לבסוף, ישראל והיהודים הינם, לפי דעא"ש, בעיה דתית, ולכן בהתאם לפרשנותם את חוקי האסלם, תקיפתם הינה מעשה המנוגד לדת. בסופו של יום, המערב, ערכיו ודרך חייו הם הם המטרה העיקרית.

שלישית, החשש ההולך ומתגבר באירופה מפני הטרור שמקורו בחוגים מוסלמיים קיצוניים, אשר כבר נמצאים באירופה, וטרור המיובא על-ידי דעא"ש, פתחו פתח להזדהות, או לכל הפחות הבעת אהדה, לקהילות היהודיות ולישראל, ולניתוח שונה של האלימות אותה חווים היהודים והישראלים בעשורים האחרונים. כתוצאה מכך, האפשרות לקיומם של קשרים הדוקים יותר ושותפויות בין יהודים לבין נוצרים, העומדים יחדיו בפני האיום המוסלמי, הועלתה לאחרונה במספר אופנים: מנהיגים ופוליטיקאים בכירים הדגישו את מקומם של היהודים בתרבות ובהיסטוריה האירופאית, הביעו אהדה - צרפת ללא יהודים איננה צרפת, אמר ראש הממשלה ואלס – ותמכו בצורך לנקוט באמצעים מתאימים על מנת להגן עליהם ועל הסדר הציבורי. האפיפיור פרנציסקוס פרסם ב-10 בדצמבר 2016 הצהרה פרו-יהודית ארוכה ומפתיעה, בה תמך בשיתוף פעולה, רגישות והבנה הדדית בין היהודים לבין הקתולים: "נוצרי אינו יכול להיות אנטישמי", הוא אמר. והכנסייה הפולנית הלכה באותה דרך והכריזה על האנטישמיות כעל חטא. אפילו חלק ממפלגות הימין הקיצוני, כגון זו הצרפתית וזו האוסטרית, מנסות להימנע מביטויים של אנטישמיות, למשוך יהודים אל שורותיהן ולהבטיח להם שגישתן כלפי ישראל היא חיובית.

ולבסוף, חשוב לציין שבמהלך שנת 2015 לא היה עימות צבאי בין ישראל לשכנותיה.

**אווירה אנטישמית וגילויים פומביים.** ההתפתחויות לעיל תרמו ללא ספק לירידה במספר האירועים האלימים נגד יהודים, אולם האלימות והמספרים כשלעצמם הינם רק חלק מן התמונה. אכן מספר האירועים ירד, אולם האופי האכזרי והאלים של כל אירוע התחזק. בשנים קודמות אירועי רצח היו נדירים, בעוד ההתקפות על מתקנים יהודיים מאז ינואר 2015 (ואירוע טולוז במרץ 2012) ומספר מקרים של התקפות על יהודים כיחידים – כולם נטלו את חייהם של יותר יהודים מאשר בעשורים הקודמים. זאת ועוד, אופי האירועים הפך לאכזרי יותר לא נגד יהודים בלבד: רמת האכזריות אשר החדירו חלק מן התנועות המוסלמיות הקיצוניות, והקיצוניות הדתית שמלווה חלק מן המאבקים ברחבי העולם, הרקיעה שחקים. לאכזריות ולאלימות יש כוח משיכה מסוים והן מציעות טעם של סכנה ושל התנהגות אנטי-ממסדית, שהרשתות החברתיות מטפחות ומפיצות: הרשתות הן מציאות מדומה ומשמשות כאמצעי ולא כסיבה, אולם הן הפכו למציאות של היום, בראש ובראשונה עבור הצעירים. השיח ברשת הופך ליותר ויותר מאיים, אכזרי ואלים. הרשתות החברתיות מחמירות את המצב הקיים במציאות והופכות אותו לגלוי יותר; נראות היא שם המשחק כיום. אין דרך לנטר באופן מלא וקרוב את האנטישמיות ברשתות החברתיות, ובשל האנונימיות לקהילות ולארגונים היהודיים אין כמעט אמצעים משפטיים על מנת להתמודד עם עלבונות וסטראוטיפים שמשייטים באופן חופשי במרחב הווירטואלי.

יהודים הם חלק מן החברה הכללית, וחולקים עמה את התחושות של חוסר ודאות שהתגברו לאחרונה, ואת ההערכה, כי התקפות טרור נוספות הן עניין של זמן בלבד, ממש מעבר לפינה. רבים יוצאים מבתיים כשהם אינם נושאים כל סממן מזהה שהוא, כגון כיפה. הנוכחות המוגברת של הצבא והמשטרה בסביבת מתקנים יהודיים מגנה עליהם, אולם בו בזמן היא גם מהווה תזכורת תמידית לנוכחותו של האיום. גל המהגרים, רובם ממדינות בעלות מסורת אנטישמית ואידיאולוגיה פוליטית ותרבותית אנטי-ישראלית, גורם לחשיבה מחודשת של הקיום היהודי ביבשת, אם כי מאידך גיסא, כצאצאיו של לאום שידע מה פרוש להיות פליט, הם חשים מחויבים להושיט יד. השימוש בלשון אנטישמית נגד ישראל כמדינה יהודית ותנועת החרם, אשר הפכה לכלי פוליטי אנטי-ישראלי המטיל

ספק בעצם קיומה של ישראל, מעמידים את היהודים בין הפטיש לסדן : פגיעה ביהודים הפכה לכלי במאבק נגד ישראל.

כך, היות והירידה במספר האירועים האלימים אינה מפצה על העלייה המתמדת באנטישמיות המילולית והחזותית ובאווירה העוינת, יהודים שוקלים מחדש את עתידם ואת שייכותם למדינות בהן הם מתגוררים.

הפקולטה למדעי הרוח ע"ש לסטר וסאלי אנטין



מאגר המידע לחקר האנטישמיות והגזענות בימינו ע"ש משה קנטור

## אנטישמיות בעולם

2015

טיוטה



היחידה לחקר סובלנות ואי סובלנות במזרח התיכון ע"ש זאב ורד, המכון לחקר האנטישמיות והגזענות בימינו ע"ש סטפן רוט