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### **CONCLUSION PAPER**

RAN C&N: Antisemitism as a part of almost all extremist ideologies and narratives 29-30 March 2022, Online

# Antisemitism as a part of almost all extremist ideologies and narratives

## **Key outcomes**

Antisemitism is an old phenomenon and seemingly ever present throughout history. Many conspiracy narratives, old and new, are antisemitic. These narratives are often present in extremist ideologies. In previous RAN events it has been observed that conspiracy narratives are flexible and adaptive. The COVID pandemic has seen the rise of new conspiracy narratives, but also the adaptation of old ones, some of which target Jewish communities. But why are Jews the target of these narratives that emerge in times of crisis?

The RAN Communication and Narratives (C&N) Working Group meeting that took place on 29 and 30 March explored why and how antisemitic elements can be found in the narratives of different extremist ideologies. This meeting is part of the broader *EU strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030)*, and preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) practitioners, experts and researchers were joined by several practitioners from Jewish (non-governmental) organisations to discuss this topic.

The key outcomes of the meeting are:

- The meeting was exploratory, having a broad approach and exploring different angles of the topic of
  antisemitism in extremist ideologies. It was broadly recognised amongst the participants that the
  topic needs to be addressed more in depth in the future, because some participants (who were already
  more familiar with the topic) felt there is much more to be discussed on this topic.
- The broad approach meant that the meeting gave a good **overview of the topic** at hand, and also **proved the sensitivity** of the topic. The first discussion on day 1 made clear that terms and definitions are still contested.
- One of the most valuable outcomes of the meeting was connecting Jewish NGOs and P/CVE practitioners. It became apparent that there is a clear need to have this conversation between these different networks.
- The **insights and recommendations** that came out of the meeting are in line with what was also identified in previous RAN meetings, for example, the <u>RAN C&N meeting on conspiracy narratives</u> (November 2021):
  - o Media literacy is key, there is a need for more attention and resources for this.





- Dialogue is important, for example, by bringing Jewish and non-Jewish communities in contact with each other.
- o There is a lack of judiciary ground on which to tackle (antisemitic) hate speech.
- o The role of media and different languages should be considered more.

The remainder of this paper elaborates on the highlights of the discussions during the 2-day meeting, roughly following the structure of the meeting. Subsequently, recommendations and potential follow-ups will be addressed.

## **Highlights of the discussion**

To kick off the meeting, participants were asked to fill in the first word that came to their minds when thinking about the topic of antisemitism. The word cloud below summarises the answers as given by the participants. This gives an overview of the base on which the meeting built.



#### **Definitions and historical overview**

The discussions at the beginning of the meeting proved the sensitivity of this topic and showed the engagement and concerns of the participants. In a 'setting-the-scene' presentation, some premises and historical context were presented, leading into a discussion regarding terminology, definitions and writing conventions.

• First, three different terms and their definitions were discussed: anti-Judaism, which is focused on an aversion towards the Jewish religion; anti-Zionism, which is focused on an aversion towards a Jewish state, i.e. the State of Israel; and antisemitism, which is aversion towards Jews as an ethnic group. Antisemitism is often used as an umbrella term, but it is important to be aware of these three different terms and discuss their definitions.





- Moreover, the way antisemitism is written was also discussed. The current writing consensus is to write it
  without capitals and hyphen: 'antisemitism'. The reasoning behind this is to not give it too much credit as
  a phenomenon writing it as 'Anti-Semitism' implies it to be a broadly, perhaps even academically,
  recognised phenomenon, whereas antisemitism just describes the term.
- While the terms and their definitions keep being a topic of discussion, during the meeting it was also discussed that it is important to have a consensus on a working definition. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition was mentioned in this regard as a good starting point to standardise a working definition that can be used throughout the EU.
- The terms 'Holocaust' and 'Shoah' are also a topic of discussion. While they are often used interchangeably, their original meanings differ.
  - The word Holocaust is derived from the Greek word holókaustos and means 'burnt offering' (in animal sacrifice). The word holocaust is rejected by many Jews because it pushes them into a victim role. It gives the impression that a positive religious meaning (referring to the original meaning of sacrificing an animal) can be given to the persecution of the Jews.
  - The Hebrew word Shoah (disaster, catastrophe, visitation) or also 'downfall' or 'catastrophe' also stands for the extermination of the Jews. The term also appears in Israel's 1948 Declaration of Independence. The term Shoah refers primarily to the Jewish people murdered during World War II. However, the Holocaust did not only affect Jews. Other groups also fell victim to it, such as the Roma and Sinti, and political prisoners. The word Shoah is therefore sometimes rejected by these other victim groups.
  - As this meeting regards the topic of antisemitism, Shoah would be the preferable term in this context. However, the discussion about these terms again shows the sensitivity of this topic.

The historical overview of the 'setting-the-scene' presentation provided important insights as well:

- While the phenomenon is centuries old, the related terms (anti-Judaism, anti-Zionism, antisemitism) have only emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Why have we been addressing and naming this phenomenon only recently? Why was it not a topic of discussion before?
- Building on theories by Hanna Arendt and René Girard, the scapegoat persecution mechanism was
  explained. In times of (the climax of a) social crisis, or under politically legitimised persecution, groups of
  people are turned into scapegoats. Jews have been the target of this scapegoat mechanism throughout
  history. This mechanism can now also be seen in the context of the COVID crisis, where conspiracy
  narratives regarding COVID and vaccines are linked to antisemitic conspiracy narratives.
- In recent times, more and more people have become aware of this mechanism and are able to distinguish who is the victim of being scapegoated. Yet, this is not true for everyone thus, the phenomenon is still persistent to this day and is even being enforced by the internet and meme culture.

This part of the meeting ended on the note that it is important to keep asking the 'why' question (why are Jews the scapegoat?). Several answers to this question were also discussed amongst participants:

- One of the answers to that regards the longevity and pervasiveness of antisemitism. Jews have been scapegoated throughout history, and apparently this 'works' in the sense that they are regarded as easy targets or victims of those who seek to scapegoat others. So one of the answers to why people keep scapegoating Jews can be simply because it 'works'.
- Related to why it 'works' to scapegoat Jews, it was also discussed that for most of history Jews did not have
  an own state of union of sorts to support them, making them easier victims similar to, for example, the
  Roma.



#### Antisemitic narratives in extremist ideologies and narratives

1) Violent Right-Wing Extremism (VRWE)

Antisemitism is particularly pervasive in far-right ideologies, often forming the central element of the belief system and enacting as the common denominator between the groups (¹). Neo-Nazi and white supremacist movements persistently use and adopt the centuries-old tropes of domination and control to vilify Jewish communities and depict them as a threat to white hegemony and European culture (²). In its most popular and widespread form, Jews are blamed for the attempted 'extinction' of the white race. According to this narrative, the 'influx' of non-white populations, racial integration and decreasing fertility rates are deliberately engineered by Jews with the sole purpose of eliminating the white race. These narratives around Jews orchestrating white genocide have inspired numerous counts of violence, including the 2019 Halle synagogue shooting.

During the meeting, the case of antisemitism in VRWE was discussed from the perspective of a practitioner based in the United Kingdom (UK). These were the highlights that were discussed:

- Facts and figures (from the UK):
  - o of 215 sentenced terrorist/extremist prisoners, 44 were characterised as extreme right-wing (2021).
  - o referrals from the British Prevent programme to the more intensive support programme Channel in 2020/21: far-right (25%), Islamist (22%), and mixed, unclear or unstable ideology (51%) (3).
  - o since 2017, 30% of late-stage terror plots thwarted by MI5 were far-right.
- In the UK, the most seen far-right antisemitic conspiracy narratives are: Great Replacement Theory, Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Stab in the Back Myth, and QAnon/Globalisation. Anti-Islamic extremism used to be pro-Israel. Currently, the alt-right differs in tactics from the traditional far-rights.
- Radicalisation processes towards VRWE antisemitism often contain: 1) Grievances personal vs contextual (relative poverty), 2) Stories and narratives, 3) Family influence, 4) Mental health concerns, and 5) the absence of protective factors (like providing people with a purpose, belonging).

#### 2) Violent Left-Wing Extremism (VLWE)

Traditionally, antisemitism is more associated with right-wing extremism and jihadism than left-wing extremism. Unlike the far-right narratives of Jews as a threat to the national and racial identity of the West, antisemitism within the far-left tends to be more intertwined with the struggle against capitalism. Tapping into the conspiracies of the control and domination of the financial markets, Jews are depicted as the ultimate capitalist oppressor. This far-left antisemitic framework posits that "in order to liberate people from capitalism, you need to liberate them from the Jewish hand behind capitalism." (4)

<sup>(</sup>³) Siddique, H. (2021, November 18). More Prevent referrals linked to far-right extremism than Islamist. *The Guardian*. <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/nov/18/more-prevent-referrals-linked-to-far-right-extremism-than-islamist">https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/nov/18/more-prevent-referrals-linked-to-far-right-extremism-than-islamist</a> (4) Rich, D., & Hirsch, D. (n.d.). *Antisemitism in the far-left*. FutureLearn.



https://www.futurelearn.com/info/courses/antisemitism/0/steps/43332

<sup>(</sup>¹) Meleagrou-Hitchens, A., Clifford, B., & Vidino, L. (2020). *Antisemitism as an underlying precursor to violent extremism in American far-right and Islamist contexts*. The George Washington University.

 $<sup>\</sup>frac{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism\%20as\%20an\%20Underlying\%20Precursor\%20to\%20Violentw20Extremism\%20in\%20American\%20Far-Right\%20and\%20Islamist\%20Contexts\%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism\%20as%20an%20Underlying\%20Precursor%20to%20Violentw20Extremism\%20in%20American%20Far-Right%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism%20as%20an%20Underlying%20Precursor%20to%20Violentw20Extremism%20in%20American%20Far-Right%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism%20as%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism%20as%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism%20as%20American%20Far-Right%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism%20as%20American%20Far-Right%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf}{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism.gwu.edu/sites/q/files/gwu$ 

<sup>(2)</sup> Beirich, H. (2021, January 21). Antisemitism rising among American right-wing extremists. The Institute for National Security Studies. <a href="https://www.inss.org.il/publication/antisemitism-rising-among-american-right-wing-extremists/">https://www.inss.org.il/publication/antisemitism-rising-among-american-right-wing-extremists/</a>



During the meeting, the case of antisemitism in VLWE was discussed from the perspective of a researcher from Greece doing research on antisemitism in left-wing political parties in Greece. These were the highlights that were discussed:

- Antisemitism is one of the most common manifestations of social prejudice in Greece. An empirical report of Heinrich Boll in 2020 (5) states that more than 6 out of 10 Greeks hold antisemitic attitudes.
- Political and religious actors and the mass media play a role in perpetuating antisemitic prejudice and behaviour. Several examples of incidents with antisemitic rhetoric by far-left Greek politicians were shared, such as making references to conspiracy narratives about the Bilderberg Group related to the policy of the State of Israel or about Jews leaving France because they knew about the terrorist attacks of November 2015.
- In far-left rhetoric, antisemitism is indirect and manifests itself as anti-imperialism, and anti-Zionism, against the State of Israel, including unfounded and inaccurate characterisations of Israel's power in the world.
- Risk of this indirect antisemitism: anti-Zionism in Greece creates a climate in which antisemitism becomes more acceptable, because:
  - o all Jews are held responsible for the actions of Israel;
  - traditional antisemitic symbols, images or theories are used;
  - there is a grey area between legitimate criticism and transparent antisemitism, where anti-Israeli
    expression and campaigns help create an environment that makes antisemitism more acceptable
    and more probable.

#### 3) Islamist Extremism

Over the last decades, antisemitism has played an important part in Islamist extremist ideologies. Like far-right figures, influential Salafi-jihadist scholars such as Abdullah Azzam and Sayyid Qutb have relied of antisemitic texts (<sup>6</sup>) and conspiracy narratives to portray Jews as the source of the struggles of the ummah (<sup>7</sup>). This has had broad impact on the ideologies and actions of groups such as Al Qaeda, Al Shabaab and ISIS. Arguably, the 9/11 terrorist attacks were motivated, in part, by antisemitism. The attackers considered New York City to be the centre of world finance and a global Jewish conspiracy, making it the quintessential Jewish target (<sup>8</sup>). Antisemitism within Salafi-jihadist ideology is also closely intertwined with anti-Shia sentiment. Groups such as ISIS have widely circulated claims of alliance between Shiites and Jews in a 'war' against Islam. Harkening back to old legends, Shiism has also been presented as a religion created by Jews to corrupt Islam. As noted in ISIS' online magazine Dabiq: "The religion of Rafd ('Shiism') was nothing but a plot by a Jew" (<sup>9</sup>).

During the meeting, the case of antisemitism in Islamist extremism was discussed from the perspective of a practitioner/researcher from the Netherlands. These were the highlights that were discussed:

<sup>(9)</sup> Rickenbacher, D. (2019). The centrality of Anti-Semitism in the Islamic State's ideology and its connection to anti-Shiism. *Religions 10*(8), Article 483. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10080483">https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10080483</a>



<sup>(5)</sup> Georgios, A., Dinas, E., Kosmidis, S., & Saltiel, L. (n.d.). *Anti-Semitism in Greece today (Second Edition)*. Heinrich Böll Foundation. <a href="https://gr.boell.org/en/2020/01/16/anti-semitism-greece-today-second-edition">https://gr.boell.org/en/2020/01/16/anti-semitism-greece-today-second-edition</a>

<sup>(6)</sup> For example, The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion.

 $<sup>(^{7})</sup>$  Meleagrou-Hitchens, A., Clifford, B., & Vidino, L. (2020). *Antisemitism as an underlying precursor to violent extremism in American far-right and Islamist contexts*. The George Washington University.

 $<sup>\</sup>frac{\text{https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism\%20as\%20an\%20Underlying\%20Precursor\%20to\%20Violentw20Extremism\%20in\%20American\%20Far-Right\%20and\%20Islamist\%20Contexts\%20Pdf.pdf.}$ 

<sup>(8)</sup> Anti-Defamation League. (2015). Anti-Semitism: A pillar of Islamic extremist ideology.

https://www.adl.org/resources/news/anti-semitism-pillar-islamic-extremist-ideology



- Within Islamist extremism, Jews are seen as enemies of Islam. General antisemitic characteristics are being linked to Islamist extremist rhetoric:
  - Jews as evil destroying the harmonious, traditional social order (e.g. endangering the moral order envisioned by Islamism);
  - Jews as a global enemy of and above all peoples and religions (e.g. of Islam and Muslims);
  - Jews as powerful, conspiring to dominate the world (e.g. to destroy Islam);
  - o War between Muslims and Jews is often referred to, Muslims who will conquer Jerusalem, etc.
- One specific part of the narrative used by Islamist extremists is 'holocaust inversion': Israel is doing to the Palestinians what the Holocaust did to the Jews.
- These antisemitic narratives are visible: 1) in the slogans, discourses and symbols used, 2) on printed Islamist materials, 3) online on Islamist websites and social media, and 4) during demonstrations and manifestations.
- Also, over the last decades several terrorist Islamist extremism attacks on Jewish targets have taken place in Europe (2012 Jewish school, Toulouse; 2014 Jewish Museum, Brussels; 2015 Kosher supermarket, Paris; 2015 Synagogue, Copenhagen; 2020 Kosher restaurant, Amsterdam).
- During the ensuing discussion with the participants, a participant who used to live in Syria explained that during his upbringing in that country, antisemitism was part of the curricula in schools and in the mosque. The Assad regime uses the antisemitic rhetoric and depicting Jews as the enemy to also influence the general population.

#### Cross-cutting aspects: antisemitism in conspiracy narratives and online

#### 1. Conspiracies

A clear example is the connection between COVID-19 conspiracy narratives and antisemitic narratives. The Institute for Freedom of Faith & Security in Europe recently published a study on COVID-related antisemitism and Islamophobia (10). The study identifies three main ways in which antisemitic narratives are related to COVID: 1) Jews are portrayed as the source of the pandemic, purposely releasing the virus in order to gain global control and power. 2) Jews make profit out of the health crisis surrounding the pandemic. This related back to old antisemitic conspiracy narratives of Jewish financial control. 3) Likening vaccination campaigns and pandemic-related restrictions to the Holocaust.

During the meeting, the case of antisemitic conspiracies was discussed from the perspective of an Italy-based practitioner. These were the highlights that were discussed:

- Antisemitic conspiracy narratives are both responsive (to the emergence of new narratives) and adaptive (the reworking of older conspiracies) to societal changes. This is in line with what was discussed in the RAN C&N meeting on <u>conspiracy narratives</u> (November 2021).
- Social polarisation and erosion of social cohesion, such as the ones many countries experienced during and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, have created a fertile ground for antisemitic conspiracy theories to take hold.

<sup>(10)</sup> Rose, H. (2021). Pandemic hate: COVID-related antisemitism and Islamophobia, and the role of social media. Institute for Freedom of Faith & Security. https://www.iffse.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/IFFSE-report-Entwurf-Doppelseiten-12 13-10-21.pdf





A study conducted in Italy indicated that compared to 2019, there was a decrease in the quantity of
antisemitic tweets published in 2020 and 2021. However, the study also indicated that qualitatively, the
tweets in 2020 and 2021 contained more polarising language and verbal violence compared to 2019.

#### 2. Challenging antisemitism online

The online and offline worlds are deeply intertwined in modern society and cannot be seen separate from each other. All perspectives of antisemitism discussed above are also present online, be it on mainstream (social) media or on fringe platforms. Nevertheless, it is important to address how antisemitism can be challenged online. Where overt hate and calls for violence are placed under more scrutiny, more subtle ways of communicating antisemitic ideas have taken hold online. Extremist actors have developed coded language, often only understood by the insiders, in order to bypass detection (11). However, the antagonistic messages are communicated not only through text but also via symbols and images. Notably, internet memes have become popular vehicles for antisemitic messaging. Passing insidious memes off as crude 'humour' and sharing them under the pretence of doing it ironically has allowed extremist actors to communicate hateful ideas to wider audiences and normalise hate (12).

During the meeting, the case of antisemitism online was discussed from the perspective of an Israel-based practitioner who battles online antisemitism. These were the highlights that were discussed:

- Users who are banned from mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter tend to
  migrate to sites that have less moderation such as the VKontakte (VK), a Russian social networking service
  that is known to host violent content.
- Platforms such as VK present a significant challenge to organisations working to disrupt the spread of antisemitism, as it is near impossible to get content removed from there.
- Big societal changes and events tend to increase the volumes of antisemitic content that are posted online.
  Most recently, there has been an uptick of online antisemitism in response to the Russian invasion of
  Ukraine. As of end of March, the organisation Fighting Online Antisemitism had identified 37.8 antisemitic
  posts linked to the war. These posts had been viewed more than 859 million times, indicating the wide
  spread of antisemitic ideas.
- During the breakout sessions, two practices from Germany were also discussed. These are hotlines or reporting points where online hate speech, including antisemitism, can be reported. These practices then report the hateful content to the platforms in order to have it removed, and, when possible, report the content to authorities (if the content violates the law).
- A major issue that was raised is the question of capacity. Even when using automation, or even machine learning/AI to try and identify instances of antisemitism from big data sets, there will always be a human mind needed in order to decide whether content is seriously harmful or a threat, or whether it is merely a joke. The same goes for the hotlines mentioned above: it takes a lot of time-intensive labour, which makes it impossible to address all antisemitic content online.

## Recommendations

During the meeting, several recommendations came forward. Especially during the second round of breakouts, where existing practices and future possibilities were discussed, multiple recommendations emerged.

First, some general recommendations can be made regarding the approach on antisemitism in the EU:

 Adopt a clear working definition to recognise antisemitism. The IHRA definition for it, used in EU strategy, can be a good starting point to use as a standardised definition. This can help the police, for example, who

<sup>(11)</sup> e.g. by inventing new terms, using innocuous words in place of offensive terms or changing letters to numbers of symbols. (12) Hume, T., Langston, H., Bennett, T. (2021). *How the Far-Right Weaponised Memes*. Vice News. https://www.vice.com/en/article/wx5kdx/how-the-far-right-weaponised-memes.





can register instances of antisemitic content by using this definition, instead of a broader category like 'hate speech'.

- There is a need for a **holistic, multi-agency approach**. To facilitate this, the following aspects are of importance:
  - o cooperation on local, national, EU and international levels;
  - empowering civil society;
  - o promoting opportunities for future collaboration between P/CVE professionals and Jewish NGOs;
  - o facilitating dialogue between different generations and different organisations.
- It is important to **build a culture of not being a bystander**. People who encounter antisemitic content, but are not affected by it themselves, often stand by idly. Ways of reporting antisemitic content should be made visible and accessible. Moreover, users should be encouraged to report antisemitic content.
  - o Social media platforms could play a role in this, for example, in facilitating and encouraging ways to report instances of antisemitism on their platform.
- Promote **media literacy in informal education** (as it is often not yet part of the formal education curriculum).
- Be aware of antisemitism in **different languages and in different types of media**. The moderation and removal of hateful (antisemitic) content on platforms is mostly done in English. Different languages often get less attention and thus less moderation. Platforms that only run in languages other than English can also easily be overlooked. There is a need to overcome these language silos and tackle antisemitism in a broader sense in different types of (social) media across the EU not only the big platforms, and not only in English.
  - o (Social) Media is part of the problem, but can also be part of the solution. Collaboration between media, practitioners and policymakers can be a fruitful approach to tackle antisemitism.

Second, recommendations for first-line practitioners can be distinguished:

- Pay attention to **different target groups and their differences**, for example, different age groups and local communities. All should be reached, but they also require a different approach.
  - Key persons in local communities could play a role in raising awareness, for instance through existing mentoring programmes, where, for example, a visit to a Jewish museum could be part of the programme.
  - Research on extremist search terms has shown that compared to younger audiences, the proportion
    of antisemitic searches is higher amongst users above the age of 50. On the other hand, they are
    less likely to create antisemitic content.
  - o To reach older target groups, make use of existing social structures (for example, on municipal level), combine offline and online campaigning, and focus on the translation from offline to online.
- Dialogue is key, also in raising public awareness.
  - Listen to the affected communities.
  - Facilitate opportunities to meet and exchange in order to **break closed bubbles**: introduce Jewish communities and non-Jewish communities to each other.





- When talking to target groups, ask why people believe what they believe and actually listen to the answers. Have a conversation not about the content of a narrative someone believes in, but the reasons why someone believes them.
- Train professionals from different fields regarding antisemitism: teachers, public officials, law enforcement, justice.
  - Train the teachers in: 1) skills to recognise conspiracy theories and antisemitic content; 2) facing sensitive historical facts, such as the Shoah, and talking about it; and 3) helping them to manage conflicts where one group is feeling superior over another.

Last, some recommendations for the EU-policy level also came forward:

- The EU could have a **more active role** in: offering best practices, setting the agenda and raising awareness around antisemitism.
- Facilitate more attention for **antisemitism in formal public education**. There could be a programme on Holocaust education, but also on Jewish life in the past and present to raise awareness.
  - There is also a need for media literacy training in formal education (not just for antisemitism, but regarding conspiracy narratives, fake news and disinformation in general as well).
- There is a need for a **clear judicial ground** in order to tackle antisemitic content. The possibilities and limits of justice should be clear in order to facilitate possibilities to remove, counter or prosecute. The EU could play an overarching role here.

## **Relevant practices**

- Fighting Online Antisemitism (Israel <a href="https://foantisemitism.org/en/">https://foantisemitism.org/en/</a>) an NGO established in 2020. Their goal is to combat online antisemitism and cyberhate through volunteer training, reporting hateful content on social media, and raising awareness of the phenomenon of cyberhate amongst the general public (through educational workshops and webinars). They offer the <a href="REACH">REACH</a> (Remove and Eradicate Antisemitism & Cyber Hate) training.
- 2. **Jugendschutz.net** (Germany <a href="https://www.jugendschutz.net/">https://www.jugendschutz.net/</a>) a major player when it comes to the protection of minors on the internet. The organisation combines research and action taken in terms of violations of youth protection laws with raising awareness amongst providers, parents and young people and informing them about potential risks. jugendschutz.net also operates a hotline to which internet users can report illegal and harmful content and it regularly searches for potential risks on the internet. One of the topics they address is antisemitism.
- 3. **Meldstelle REspect!** (Germany <a href="https://meldestelle-respect.de/">https://meldestelle-respect.de/</a>) a hotline/reporting point for online hateful content. They battle online hate speech and the spread of fake news and conspiracy narratives. When German law is violated, they report the content to be removed and report the user who posted the content to authorities.
- 4. **Moonshot's Redirect Method** (UK <a href="https://moonshotteam.com/the-redirect-method/">https://moonshotteam.com/the-redirect-method/</a>). The Redirect Method is an open-source methodology that uses targeted advertising to connect people searching online for harmful content with constructive alternative messages. This method can potentially be applied to antisemitic content as well.
- 5. **Muslims Against Antisemitism** (UK <a href="https://muslimsagainstantisemitism.org/">https://muslimsagainstantisemitism.org/</a>) a charity made up of British Muslims who believe it is the duty of everyone to challenge antisemitism in all of its guises. It is an example of how different communities can connect and challenge antisemitism together.



## Follow-up

During and after the meeting, it became clear that there is a strong need to have more conversation on this topic, especially between the different networks of P/CVE and Jewish NGOs. Several ways to follow up on this meeting are:

- As this was an exploratory meeting, covering a broad range of topics but not going in depth, a next meeting should have a more specific focus. Several participants were already very well versed with the topic. They have the potential to be of even more added value in a meeting with a more specific focus.
- A future meeting could be dedicated to sharing knowledge and discussing the various methods, practices
  and tools used amongst practitioners in EU Members State and beyond for countering different forms of
  antisemitism. More specific case studies could be addressed in such a meeting.
- There could be a more regular exchange between different networks, in this case P/CVE practitioners and Jewish NGOs, for example, but also between researchers and practitioners working on this topic.
  - o Specific case studies, work towards more practical examples and tools.

# **Further reading**

Anti-Defamation League. (2021, January 12). *How platforms rate on hate: Measuring antisemitism and adequacy of enforcement across Reddit and Twitter*. <a href="https://www.adl.org/resources/report/how-platforms-rate-hate-measuring-antisemitism-and-adequacy-enforcement-across">https://www.adl.org/resources/report/how-platforms-rate-hate-measuring-antisemitism-and-adequacy-enforcement-across</a>

B'nai B'rith International. (2022, April 7). *Online antisemitism: A toolkit for civil society* <a href="https://www.bnaibrith.org/online-anti-semitism-a-toolkit-for-civil-society.html">https://www.bnaibrith.org/online-anti-semitism-a-toolkit-for-civil-society.html</a>

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (n.d.). *Teaching materials to challenge anti-Semitism*. <a href="https://www.osce.org/odihr/120546">https://www.osce.org/odihr/120546</a>

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington. (n.d.). *Resources and tools for addressing antisemitism, intolerance, & bias.* https://www.shalomdc.org/resources-and-tools-addressing-anti-semitism/

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (n.d.). *Teaching materials on antisemitism and racism*. <a href="https://www.ushmm.org/teach/teaching-materials/antisemitism-racism">https://www.ushmm.org/teach/teaching-materials/antisemitism-racism</a>

Yad Vashem. The World Holocaust Remembrance Center. (n.d.). *Antisemitism* [Holocaust Educator Video Toolbox]. <a href="https://www.yadvashem.org/education/educational-videos/video-toolbox/hevt-antisemitism.html">https://www.yadvashem.org/education/educational-videos/video-toolbox/hevt-antisemitism.html</a>

