

The Kantor Center Annual Report on Antisemitism Worldwide 2019

Country Reports Summary

Arab Countries

The regional turmoil marginalized the Palestinian question, resulting in a general decrease in antisemitic discourse. Antisemitic tropes of Holocaust abuse were mainly expressed in connection to Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other antisemitic tropes, rooted in Islamist anti-Jewish views, were more prevalent among religious literature and sermons, including conspiracy theories and the blood-libel.

Argentina

The approximately 1000 incidents recorded in 2019 constitute an increase of 10% compared to 2018. 90% of them took place on social networks. Among the major incidents, were a physical assault on a rabbi in Rosario and a Nazi parody in a school.

Australia

16 violent incidents of the total 225 incidents were recorded, a significant increase compared to 2018. Harassment and verbal assaults were the largest category of incidents, whereas the number of threats decreased. A large number of antisemitic incidents were perpetrated by far-right and neo-Nazis, while Israel-related antisemitism is prevalent on social media among anti-Israel activists. Other online antisemitic incidents included Islamist anti-Jewish tropes.

Austria

The 172 recorded incidents constitute a decrease of almost 26% compared to 2018, among which 87 were online hate speech incidents and 96 of them were in violation of the anti-Nazi legislation. Holocaust abuse and Israel-related antisemitism are the main antisemitic tropes. Additionally, surveys conducted in 2019 show the broad dissemination of traditional antisemitic tropes and the spreading of ignorance on the Holocaust. The intensification of extreme right activism has also caused an increase in antisemitic and xenophobic speech.

Brazil

Of the 123 recorded incidents, more than half took place on social media, mainly involving Nazi glorification and other far-right discourse. Israel-related antisemitism emerged in a number of occasions in anti-Israel demonstrations.

Bulgaria

While the government undertook major efforts to combat antisemitism, a number of incidents took place during football matches.

Canada

The increase in incidents during 2019 confirms and continues the trend of the ongoing increase in antisemitism over the last 4 years, including in violent incidents. Moreover, Israel-related antisemitism is increasingly accepted in the mainstream news media and classic antisemitic tropes such as Jewish conspiracy theories are becoming increasingly prominent in the public discourse.

Chile

Recorded antisemitic episodes are mainly characterized by anti-Israeli sentiment, including online antisemitic expressions which transpired after a deadly incident involving Israeli tourists and anti-Zionist demonstrations.

Czech Republic

The low rate of violent antisemitism has not changed. However, a significant increase in online antisemitism was recorded, spreading mainly conspiracy theories, but also far-right and Catholic traditional antisemitic tropes.

France

The 687 antisemitic acts recorded in 2019 represent an increase of 27% compared to 2018. Remarkably, 60% of the overall 1142 racist hate crimes were antisemitic incidents. Incidents involving physical violence increased by 17%, and threats increased by 50%. Moreover, two major cases involved desecration of Jewish cemeteries. In the context of the social unrest sparked by the “Yellow Vests” movement, a number of antisemitic incidents were recorded, including Israel-related antisemitism.

Germany

The police recorded 1839 antisemitic incidents nationwide compared to 1799 incidents in 2018, an average of 5 incidents a day. The intensified online antisemitic activities of extreme-right networks led to the first deadly attack in years, which took place in Halle in October 2019. Despite the major efforts in combating antisemitism, the alarming trend of growing anti-Jewish hatred and xenophobia continues, with a considerable increase in far-right activism and terrorism. In schools, antisemitic incidents among pupils are a common occurrence, including Israel-related antisemitism among Muslim communities – a phenomenon that teachers are unprepared to handle.

Greece

While the number of vandalism incidents targeting Jewish properties and cemeteries decreased, Holocaust memorial sites were increasingly targeted. Out of a total of nine cases prosecuted against hate crimes, 2 concerned antisemitic hate speech.

Hungary

Although the government distances itself from antisemitism, the growing far-right discourse on public platforms also includes antisemitic tropes. Antisemitic incidents also included vandalism and verbal attacks.

India

Historically, antisemitism in India has been a largely marginal phenomenon, but has recently increased as part of the discourse developed by certain Hindu nationalists, including Holocaust trivialization and Nazi glorification. Often mistaken for Muslims, which are primary targets of hate crimes, Jews have become by-victims. Additionally, Islamist antisemitism has emerged among certain groups of Indian Muslims, with consequences on Muslim Asian communities in the West.

Iran

In 2019, the Iranian regime has promoted antisemitic discourse and imagery to a larger extent compared to previous years. A number of high-ranking clerics promote Holocaust denial and trivialization. The political developments in the region were the opportunity to promote conspiracy theories against Israel and the US, while using traditional antisemitic imagery to portray Israelis and Jews. Moreover, traditional antisemitic narratives portray Jews as enemies of Islam and of Iran in particular. Furthermore, neo-Nazi websites promote Nazi glorification.

Italy

In the context of the profound social crisis, old antisemitic tropes of Jewish financial power have emerged. The 251 recorded incidents show a clear increase compared to the 197 of the previous year. Besides 5 violent incidents, 2 of which were physical assaults and 3 cases of vandalism, the great majority of cases are online incidents. A growing trend among the younger generation is Holocaust trivialization and Nazi glorification.

Lithuania

The nationalistic narrative that includes the glorification of Nazi figures negatively affects Holocaust memory and, consequently, Jewish persons.

Mexico

The overall number of antisemitic incidents has decreased, especially in the traditional newspaper and television media; however, antisemitic expressions have increased in the new and social media, including Holocaust trivialization, glorification of Nazism, and Israel-related antisemitism.

The Netherlands

The 182 recorded incidents recorded in the country constitute the highest number of antisemitic episodes over the last 30 years, and an increase of 35% compared to 2018. Additionally, 127 online incidents took place on social media, confirming the growing prevalence of online anti-Jewish hate speech. An increase of 126% in physical and verbal assaults, and public manifestations of antisemitism have more than doubled, while cases of vandalism decreased by a third.

Poland

Antisemitic hate-speech by public figures and vandalism incidents were prevalent among the recorded antisemitic episodes. A number of these incidents related to the controversy about Polish antisemitism in history.

Portugal

Antisemitic tropes of conspiracy theories and Jewish domination emerged following the acquisition of Portuguese citizenship by Jews of Sephardic origin, at times smeared as an "invasive wave." Antisemitic hate-speech is particularly spread in the Internet. Israel-related antisemitism is diffused in the political discourse of the extreme left, which also advances numerous anti-Israel boycott initiatives.

Russia

Despite the low number of recorded antisemitic incidents, the local Jewish community, especially from smaller cities has experienced various forms of antisemitism. Authorities have increasingly acted against cases of antisemitism, vandalism and hate speech in particular. As part of the political discourse involving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, each state accuses the other of antisemitism.

Slovakia

A number of people engaged in antisemitic discourse in connection to Nazi glorification and Holocaust denial.

South Africa

Recorded antisemitic incidents decreased by 40% compared to 2019, with 1 case of physical assault and 7 cases of verbal assault. Israel-related antisemitism was relatively low, although expressed in a number of political platforms. Other cases were inspired by Nazi glorification and Islamist ideology.

Switzerland

Violent incidents more than doubled in 2019 (including vandalism and physical assaults), amounting to 14 compared to 6 of 2018. The 114 recorded incidents also show a decrease in online antisemitic activities.

Spain

In at least 10 cases, tribunals have confirmed that local authorities do not have the power to adopt BDS policies, in part because it generates discrimination. Israel-related antisemitism, also involving BDS activists, is the subject of a number of lawsuits related to incitement to hatred.

Turkey

Antisemitism spreads mainly in the traditional and social media, where anti-Jewish tropes such as world domination conspiracy theories, blame for disasters, and falsification of the Torah go hand in hand with Israel-related antisemitism. Regarding hate speech in the press, it appears that Jews are among the five groups that are majorly targeted, along with Syrians, Cyprus Greeks, Greeks, and Armenians.

The UK

The 1,805 recorded cases constitute an increase of 7% compared to 2018 and continue the trend of an ongoing increased in antisemitism over the past four years. Online incidents constitute 39% of the total cases, and increased in 82% compared to the previous year. Physical assaults increased by 27%. The Labour Party controversy was among the major triggers of antisemitic incidents, and antisemitic expressions many times involved conspiracy theories.

Ukraine

Antisemitic incidents included mainly vandalism against Jewish properties and verbal attacks against Jewish persons. The glorification of Nazism is a growing concern, as a part of the anti-Soviet, nationalistic historical memory.

BDS – developments

Although BDS activities were largely unsuccessful, anti-Israel activities gained prominence in the public discourse, especially in the US, and through online campaigns. Academic institutions have rejected BDS initiatives, triggering attacks against their governorship. The legal debate on the alleged infringement of freedom of speech by anti-BDS laws is still ongoing in the US, while in Spain tribunals have confirmed the unconstitutionality of BDS policies adopted by local authorities. Anti-BDS initiatives have increased among student organization, local authorities, and cultural institutions in Germany.

The E.U.

The survey on the perception of antisemitism among young Jewish Europeans (16-25) shows that 50% have experienced antisemitism. The European Commission created in January 2019 a working group to support Member States in drafting and adopting national strategies against antisemitism, which has so far met three times to discuss security, education, and data collection. The internet remains the number one place where Jews experience antisemitic incidents.

U.S. Campuses

Approximately **300** antisemitic incidents were registered in 2019, constituting a decrease of 49% of classic antisemitism and an increase of 60% of Israel-related antisemitism as compared to 2018. The efforts to challenge the legitimacy of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism reflect the growing trend of questioning whether the phenomenon of antisemitic anti-Zionism actually exists.