

From Old and New Directions

Perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in Italy

Sergio DellaPergola and L. D. Staetsky



The **Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)** is a London-based independent research organisation, consultancy and think-tank. It aims to advance the prospects of Jewish communities in Britain and across Europe by conducting research and developing policy in partnership with those best placed to influence Jewish life.

Authors

Professor Sergio DellaPergola is the Shlomo Argov Professor Emeritus of Israel-Diaspora Relations and a former Chair of the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and an Associate Fellow at the Institute for Jewish Policy Research. Born in Italy, he has lived in Israel since 1966, and holds a PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. An internationally known specialist on the demography of world Jewry, he has published numerous books including *Jewish Demographic Policies: Population Trends and Options, Jerusalem* (2011) and over two hundred papers on historical demography, the family, international migration, Jewish identification, and projections in the Diaspora and in Israel. He is Chief Editor of *Hagira – Israel Journal of Migration* and a member of the Yad Vashem Committee for the Righteous of the Nations. He has lectured at over seventy universities and research centres worldwide and has served as senior policy consultant to the President of Israel, the Israeli Government, the Jerusalem Municipality, and many major national and international organisations. He is a winner of the Marshall Sklare Award for distinguished achievement by the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry (1999), and the Michael Landau prize by the Israel Mifa'al HaPayis for demography and migration (2013).

Dr L. Daniel Staetsky is a Senior Research Fellow at JPR and Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Sociology at the University of Cambridge. With expertise spanning the disciplines of demography, applied statistics and economics, his work has focused on the demography of the developed world, with a particular interest in mortality and migration, and on Jewish and Israeli demography. He holds an MA in demography from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a PhD in social statistics from the University of Southampton. A former researcher and analyst at the Central Bureau for Statistics in Israel and at RAND Europe, his recent publications include *The Exceptional Case? Perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in the United Kingdom* (JPR, 2014, with Jonathan Boyd); *Jews in the United Kingdom in 2013: Preliminary findings from the National Jewish Community Survey* (JPR, 2014, with David Graham and Jonathan Boyd); "Jewish mortality reconsidered" *Journal of Biosocial Science*, Vol. 46; and *Immigration from the United Kingdom to Israel* (JPR, 2013, with Marina Sheps and Jonathan Boyd)

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1 Introduction

Background

The issue of antisemitism has long constituted a central concern of much scientific research and public discourse in European countries. This report, like others in this series, stems from a decision of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) to undertake a systematic documentation effort on the topic. The very fact that an official branch of the European Union considered the issue of antisemitism sufficiently disquieting to be worthy of public attention and serious investigation is in itself an event of interest.

In summer 2011, the FRA issued a call to academic institutions and research institutes to tender for an EU-sponsored study of Jewish perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Europe. The FRA is one of the EU's specialist agencies, established to provide empirical data and expert advice to the EU and Member States on how to safeguard the fundamental rights of people living in Europe. Its work has looked at racism and xenophobia against multiple ethnic and religious minorities, and although the FRA (and its predecessor organisation, the European Union Monitoring Centre – EUMC) had previously surveyed European Jewish leaders and been involved in work to gather data on antisemitic incidents, this initiative was the first attempt to survey attitudes and behaviours among the general Jewish population. Nine countries were selected for the study: France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Hungary, Belgium, Italy, Sweden, Romania and Latvia. These countries comprised over 90% of the total Jewish population estimated to live in Europe (DellaPergola, 2013), and were fairly distributed among North, South, West and East Europe.

Surveying Jews in Europe is exceedingly complex. The Jewish population is small: of the 503.5 million people living in the EU's 28 Member States, only 1.1 million are Jewish, which makes them extremely rare on national population panels used for random probability sampling (DellaPergola, 2011). Moreover, Jews are not dispersed equally across the EU, but are rather concentrated in a few key countries (an estimated 85% live in just four countries – France, UK, Germany and Hungary), and close to half live in

just two extended urban areas – Paris and London. On the other hand, Jews live throughout the EU – the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy are home to about 30,000 each; 15,000 live in Sweden and 12,000 in Spain. After that, every other country in the EU has small Jewish populations, ranging from about one hundred to several thousand. Other countries in Europe have significant Jewish populations, such as Russia and Ukraine, but they are not EU members. To generate equally valid data in all these countries in which Jewish population sizes are small and constitute tiny fractions of the total population renders the task even more complicated.

Furthermore, only a few EU countries currently include information on religion or ethnic groups in their national censuses. The main such case is the UK. However, no data on religion are gathered in French government statistics for example, because of the strong value placed there in the separation between Church and State. Moreover, with the partial exceptions of Germany and Italy, no Jewish community holds a comprehensive list of Jews living in the country from which to randomly sample the Jewish population. As a result, convenience sampling typically needs to be used, the representativeness of which can never be fully established. In a few countries, central Jewish community organisations have sponsored nationwide sample surveys, including France and Italy (DellaPergola and Sabatello, 1975; Campelli, 2013). Therefore, in some countries the sample from the present survey on antisemitic perceptions can be weighted using credible baseline data (e.g. from a national census, or a comprehensive national survey, or robust community statistics), but this is by no means a consistent international norm.

These challenges can be handled more easily if research is limited to a study of the Jewish population in a single country. However, in this instance, the FRA was eager to generate comparative data across different European Jewish populations – to differentiate, for example, between the perceptions and experiences of Jews living in France and those living in Hungary. This comparative approach inherently reflects the transnational nature of the EU and its monitoring

and policy mandate. Thus a method needed to be developed that would maximise the chances of both generating cross-national representative data and enabling us to compare countries against each other.

After the FRA conducted a series of consultations with researchers from JPR and elsewhere, it became clear that two methodological options existed. The preferred method, Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS), required researchers to accurately and proportionally segment each national Jewish population into its main component parts (according to available variables – e.g. geography, denominational affiliation, etc.), identify a proportionate number of ‘seed’ respondents in each segment, and ask them both to complete the questionnaire and pass it on to a specified and deliberately limited number of Jews they knew. The literature on RDS demonstrates that after several referral waves, the sample begins to resemble the target population as a whole. Nevertheless, RDS had only been attempted once before when surveying Jews in Europe, and in that instance, interviews were conducted face-to-face and the data gathering process took more than a year. The budget for the FRA survey was simply too small – and the timeline too short – to consider this, so the FRA team elected to adopt the method online. Because they were fully aware that this would be highly experimental, the tender requirements included a second back-up approach – an open, online survey. The FRA knew that, from a social science perspective, this constituted the least methodologically robust method, but they were also conscious that it was almost certainly the most viable way to generate any data at all. Their cautiousness turned out to be correct – online RDS did not work in this instance (it might have, had the timeline been much more extended, but that was not feasible due to budget allocation constraints), and thus the findings contained within both the FRA’s comparative report and this one are based on data gathered from the open online survey.

In tendering for the project, JPR partnered with the international research agency Ipsos MORI, and built a multi-national team comprised of social scientists with expertise in surveying Jews in Europe, and experts in contemporary European antisemitism, notably from the Community Security Trust (CST) and the Pears Institute for

the study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck University London. The fact that JPR won the tender demonstrates the organisation’s standing in the field of European Jewish social research; no other university or research institute in the world was able to compete with our bid. The additional fact that we completed the survey on budget and within the twelve months allocated further proves the expertise of our research and administrative team. In addition to questionnaire development, survey dissemination, data monitoring, analysis, and report-writing, the project involved nine separate studies in eleven different languages, liaison with hundreds of individuals, Jewish organisations, agencies and media outlets, and four months of constant media monitoring and reporting with our partners at CST. This study undoubtedly constitutes the largest research project JPR has ever undertaken, and ultimately, it has generated one of the most extraordinary datasets ever gathered on Jews in Europe.

Our formal paid work on the project ended in December 2012 when we submitted our final report to the FRA. Since that time, the FRA team prepared the report for publication, and launched it in advance of a major EU seminar in Vilnius in November 2013 (FRA, 2013). Their report complies with their mandate to publish comparable data across each of the countries surveyed. However, we remained deeply conscious that it was important to examine the data for each country individually, assess the extent to which the European findings are representative of the Jewish population in each place, and, where possible, apply weights to generate more robust results. Indeed, we considered this to be a critical task – whilst the broad comparisons drawn between countries are undoubtedly valid (e.g. that perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in France are unquestionably worse than in the UK), the percentages quoted needed to be tested and possibly adjusted for accuracy.

This report on the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in Italy is the second in a series of individual country reports that present the data after a full assessment for representativeness, and, if necessary, appropriate adjustment. An explanation of the procedures followed in the case of the Italian data is outlined in the Appendix of this report. Data for Italy were weighted for age, sex, and community (region) of

residence. In actual fact, the implementation of weights has relatively small impact on the patterns of response to the questions on the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism. Nevertheless, we decided to weight the sample assuming that weighted findings more reliably reflect the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Italian Jews. The section of this report presenting the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample contains both weighted and unweighted data. The rest of the data in the report (on perceptions and experiences of antisemitism) is based on weighted data, unless otherwise stated.

Jews in Italy

Jews lived in Rome well before the establishment of the Roman Empire and the inception of Christianity. Therefore, there has been an uninterrupted presence of Jews in the country for over 2,000 years – a unique feature among Jewish communities in Europe (Della Pergola, 1976). The Jewish population in the territory of what today is Italy never was very large, occasionally rising above 50,000 for short periods. Three major demographic waves affected the history of the Italian Jewish population – during the ancient Roman period; from the Middle Age to the *Renaissance*; and from the modern emancipation through the national *Risorgimento*, Italy's political independence and unity, and the post-unity liberal era. Each period of population growth was followed by major population decline, the latter occurring with Christianity becoming the official faith of the Roman Empire and the Empire's demise; with the Counter-Reformation, expulsion of Jews from the South, the Islands, and some Northern regions, and the confinement of most remaining Jews to urban ghettos; and with the rise to power of Fascism, the anti-Jewish racial laws, and the Shoah.

The ancient Jewish presence in Italy caused direct and prolonged exposure to Greco-Roman and Christian cultures – including prejudice – that imbued Italian society in the past and present. The rootedness of Jews in local customs affected their own identity, habits and perceptions of friendly and unfriendly forces around them. Italian Jews belonged and sometimes were a needed element in the local town, spoke Italian idioms, and could not be easily distinguished from their non-Jewish surroundings when they were not obliged to carry special distinctive signs. They had the opportunity

to develop a unique cultural synthesis, combining adherence to Jewish traditional values with an Italian humanistic perspective. Continuing immigration since antiquity, through the Middle Ages and modernity, from Western, Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, enriched the cultural experience of Jewish communities and was preserved in some of their rituals.

In 1938, when the Fascist racial laws were promulgated and enacted, 46,000 Jews lived in Italy. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, 6,000 converted to Catholicism, about 6,500 permanently emigrated, and about 7,500 perished in the Shoah – a total decrease of 20,000. Shortly after the end of the Second World War, there were 26,000 Jews left in Italy. A national Jewish population survey in 1965 uncovered 32,000 Jews, mostly reflecting return migration and immigration from Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries. The number officially recorded at the end of 2011 through membership in local Jewish communities was less than 25,000, with Rome holding over one half of all Jews. Factoring for Jews who are not members of Jewish communities, the current estimate can be raised to 29,000. In addition there is a large periphery of people of recent Jewish origin who do not identify themselves as Jews. Furthermore, there are many thousands who claim older Jewish origins, many of them descendants of converts from the time of the Inquisition, especially in Italy's southern regions.

The Jewish communities in Italy have been operating under a peculiar legal arrangement which holds special significance for the present study. In 1930-1931, a state law was passed regulating Jewish communities and their umbrella body, the *Unione delle Comunità Israelitiche* (later *Ebraiche*) Italiane (UCEI). The law subdivided Italian territory in several Jewish community circumscriptions, establishing compulsory membership for all Jews interested in receiving Jewish community services in a given territorial area, with compulsory membership fees proportional to income. In the early 1980s, the law decayed following a Constitutional Court ruling, and membership of Jewish communities became voluntary. At that time, following a membership drive, 80% or more of former members chose to freely re-associate with it. Italian Jewry continues

to hold a very high membership share – which is quite unusual worldwide.

The demographic trends and composition of Italian Jewry have long been characterised by low fertility, ageing, and quite high rates of intermarriage. UCEI community records from 2011 showed more Jews aged 66 years and over than those aged 18 years and under. With such an age composition, the death rate surpassed the Jewish birth rate, causing population decline over the last twenty years. Immigration usually compensated for these negative trends by bringing to Italy a significant share of Jews from Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries and, to a lesser extent, from Eastern Europe and other regions. However, the impact of these arrivals was reduced by significant emigration – namely to Israel and to North America.

In terms of socioeconomic status, today's Italian Jewish community belongs largely to the better educated and middle or higher class of urban society, although there remain pockets of poverty and downward social mobility. The 1965 Italian Jewish population study (DellaPergola and Sabatello, 1975) is now extremely dated, but, at the time it was published, was able to capture the cultural fundamentals of Italian Jewry. It showed that the majority of Italian Jews did maintain some attachment to tradition, a minority consistently observed and practised, and a further minority stood at the very margins of Jewish identity. In more recent decades, assimilation continued its course with growing rates of intermarriage, and perhaps even more inter-cohabitation. In the course of the last fifty years, two main forces have strengthened Jewish identity in Italy, as documented in a new Jewish national survey (Campelli, 2013). The first is greater access to better Jewish educational facilities, as well as scholarly and popular publications and an independent Jewish press, facilitated by new digital tools. The result is that Italian Jewry's general level of acquaintance with Jewish culture is greater today than it was in the past two or three generations. The second major process at work has been the development of Israel as a central pole of reference and component of Jewish identity. In both internal and external perceptions, it is impossible today to separate the Jewish community from discourse about Middle East processes and events, with significant

consequences both for Jewish identity and for how Jews are perceived by non-Jews. At the same time, assimilation with the general cultural and social context has been high, going back to the early twentieth century, and this has considerably reduced the capacity for Jewish continuity among the community.

Antisemitism in Italy

As noted, the ancient Jewish presence in what is today's Italy created the opportunity for frequent interactions between Jews and non-Jews. More importantly, even if many or most Italians never actually met or saw a single Jew, a rich array of prejudices toward Jews developed, rooted in different theological, philosophical and political premises. By far, the most dominant negative influence emanated historically from the Catholic Church which, in Italy, had an enormous following and political power. Between the late ancient Roman times until the mid-twentieth century, anti-Jewish discrimination was long predicated under the form of economic sanctions, expulsion, ghettoisation, theological delegitimation and forced conversion. The Roman Church intensively preached the myth and stigma of Jewish deicide, and its lower ranks and the populace regularly made blood libel accusations against Jews. Change only really came with the Vatican II Council led by Pope John XXIII. A highly publicised moment of public reconciliation followed in 1986 with the encounter at the Rome Great Synagogue between Pope John Paul II and Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff.

However, Catholic thought was not the only source of anti-Jewish hostility in the Italian context. The other main challenge came from nationalist circles that eventually would dominate the scene during the twenty years of the Fascist regime and the final period of collaboration between Fascism and the Nazis in Italy. Anti-Jewish attitudes also came from socialist-revolutionary and from secular-liberal circles. The broader ideological articulation of attitudes to Jews is exemplified by a few significant quotes selectively drawn from different central moments of Italian cultural and political history. Toward the end of the first century, the Roman historian Tacitus, a leading figure of the pagan pre-Christian intellectual elite, wrote of the Jews:

“Their different customs, which are at once perverse and disgusting, owe their strength to their very meanness. This augmented the wealth of the Jews ... Among themselves they are inflexibly honest and ever ready to show compassion, though they regard the rest of mankind with all the hatred of enemies ... They sit apart at meals, they sleep apart; among themselves nothing is unlawful.” (Stern, 1980)

At the turning of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, Italy’s laureate poet, Dante Alighieri, himself a fervent Catholic and a ferocious critic of the Catholic Church, wrote thus in his *Divina Commedia’s Paradise*:

“If evil appetite cry aught else to you,
Be ye as men, and not as silly sheep,
So that the Jew among you may not mock you.”
(Dante Alighieri, ca. 1300)

In the first half of the nineteenth century, one of the most enlightened supporters of Jewish emancipation, Carlo Cattaneo, in his rhetorical quest for social change and promotion, argued thus:

“I am asking: is it true or not that the peoples’ opinion attributes to the Jews excessive avidity of gain combined with fraud, baseness, and even lack of sensitivity? ... It was therefore upon the legislator to remove the causes; because he who tolerates the causes approves the consequences. To destroy Judaism neither is in our power nor is of our competence. ... Since ... humankind ... will belong to different beliefs, let us ... behave in a way that such cleavage will perturb the least possible that peace that we can enjoy.” (Cattaneo, 1837)

Finally, in 1946, just after the tragic consequences of the Second World War and the Shoah had been finally assessed, the liberal philosopher Benedetto Croce who had been one of the few staunch and brave opponents of the Fascist regime, expressed his vision for the future of the Jews:

“Much damage and iniquity caused by the Fascist regime cannot now be repaired for the [Jews] as for other Italians who suffered, nor should they ask for privileges or preferences, rather, their effort should be toward merging to a better extent with other Italians; striving

to delete that division and distinction in which they have persisted over the centuries and which – as it offered occasion and pretext to persecutions in the past – we fear will procure more of the same in the future ... The Jews ... deny the historical premises (Greece, Rome, Christianity) of the civilization of which they should become a part” (Finzi, 2006).

Pulling together these different fragments, one finds several common and recurring threads. Among these: the reliance of Jews on primitive and cruel religious rituals, their excessive wealth, their separateness from the general public and scornful togetherness, their lack of morality and fraudulent double standards, their pertinacious refusal to merge into the mainstream of that very society and cultural norm that cultivated such negative stereotypes about them, in synthesis, their otherness. These leading themes clearly do not depend on time and on the underlying beliefs of those who expressed them. None of the four paradigmatic authors mentioned here can be defined as antisemites by formation or intention. Nonetheless, their negative judgmental conclusions sharply stand out, unequivocally, and quite coherently. These ideas likely generated huge impact upon a public that viewed the authors of such statements as ideal role models. What is intriguing is the relative rigidity of anti-Jewish stereotypes all across pre-Christian, Christian, modernising, and contemporary society.

The dark years of Fascist and Nazi persecution (Wistrich and DellaPergola, 1995) unveiled an Italian society that was not so uniformly against the Jews as in some other European realities, but was nonetheless split between anti-Jewish law-enforcers and their collaborators, and numerous brave people who provided decisive help to save Jewish lives. While the myth of “the good Italian” should be dismissed, precisely, as a myth, it is interesting to note that those who helped the Jews came from all avenues of society: the rich and educated, and the poor and uneducated; Catholic believers, including many priests and nuns, and declared anticlerical atheists; fighters in the Italian Resistenza, and standard members of the Fascist party. Incidentally, the 1938 anti-Jewish laws were not repealed automatically at the end of the war, and it took years for Jews to recover their lost properties, civil rights, or professional status (Finzi, 1997; Pavan and Schwartz, 2001).

Some of these legal cases still stand unresolved in court today.

In the post-war and contemporary period a new stage began in Italian history, which was characterised by a constitutional republican democratic regime. Jews enjoyed all civil liberties and legal defences against possible antisemitic attacks and discrimination. However, the memory of the Shoah was long suppressed until – mostly after the 1980s – Jews and Judaism gradually became more part of the mainstream cultural discourse and artistic creation (Consonni, 2010). At the same time, since the 1967 Six-Day War, social reality became more complex, with occasional expressions of anti-Israeli hostility often veiled with antisemitism arising from all possible ideological backgrounds: from Catholic fundamentalists to – many years later – Islamic activists, and from right-wing nationalists and neo-Fascists, to left-wing extremists and even liberal moderates. Periodical outbursts of violence in the Middle East have instantly generated episodes of aggression against Jews in Italy. The peak was during the 1982 Lebanon War when a terrorist attack at the centrally located Great Synagogue in Rome caused the death of a Jewish child and injuries to forty people at the end of the festival of Shemini Atzeret. But what made the event more traumatic and unforgettable for Italian Jewry was the virulent press campaign over several weeks by the left and the trade unions that openly incited the Jews in Italy to sever their connection with Israel (Goldstaub and Wofsi Rocca, 1983).

It is also these concerns that Italy's President, Giorgio Napolitano, addressed on January 25, 2007, on the occasion of International Holocaust Memorial Day with these lofty words:

“We must fight every backlash of antisemitism, even when it disguises itself as anti-Zionism, because anti-Zionism means denial of the inspiring source of the Jewish State, of the reasons behind its birth and of its current security, beyond the governments that alternate at Israel's helm.”

In recent major surveys in 2008 (ISPO, 2008; IARD, 2010) a clear majority of two-thirds of Italians asserted that antisemitism remained a dangerous phenomenon, while only 22% felt it was now irrelevant. The proportion of Italians

who believed antisemitism had increased (40%) exceeded the proportion of those who believed it had diminished (15%). About one half believed there had been no change, or did not know. About 45% of the Italian population displayed strong prejudice or hostile attitudes towards Jews. These can be sub-divided into four sub-groups. The first (10%) shared the classic anti-Jewish prejudice: “Jews are not Italians”, “Jews have always lived exploiting others”, but refused the contingent stereotypes about the Shoah and Israel. A second group (11%) shared the modern stereotypes, such as “Jews are rich and powerful”, “Jews control politics and finance” and “Jews are more loyal to Israel than to their country”. A third group (12%) shared contingent beliefs, such as “Jews exploit the Shoah to justify Israeli policies”, “Jews in Israel behave like Nazis with the Palestinians”, but did not accept the classic prejudices. Finally a fourth group (12% of Italians) included the integral antisemites who shared all types of prejudice: the classic, the modern, and the contingent. These conclusions were confirmed in a comprehensive report presented at the Italian Parliament in 2011 (Repubblica Italiana, Camera dei Deputati, 2011), which testified to the level of worry among the general public facing mounting displays of antisemitism in Italy.

The proportion of this last hard-core group does not seem to have changed much over the last decades. Importantly, no big changes emerge when comparing the most recent data with earlier studies of antisemitism in Italy (Campelli and Cipollini, 1984; Goldstaub and Mannheimer, 1990). The main features are still that the vast majority of the Italian population has never had any actual personal contact with Jews, with the consequence that images of Jews among the general public often reflect a lack of direct knowledge (Guetta, 2013); antisemitism cuts across the whole range and gamut of political ideologies and parties, with different degrees of intensity according to the specific idiosyncrasies of each. Overall, there is a stable hard core of 10-15% of visceral antisemites, surrounded by much broader circles of people (45-50% of the total) who express anti-Jewish prejudice visibly, explicitly or implicitly. Approximately 40% of Italian society is unaffected by it.

Over the past several years, Italy has undergone significant transformations, including

transitioning from a country of emigration into a country of immigration. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of foreign workers and refugees, mostly from outside Europe, has boosted ethnic and racial prejudice and has contributed to outbursts of xenophobic violence. This, in turn, has unavoidably percolated into a broader hostility towards the “other”, a concept that, ultimately,

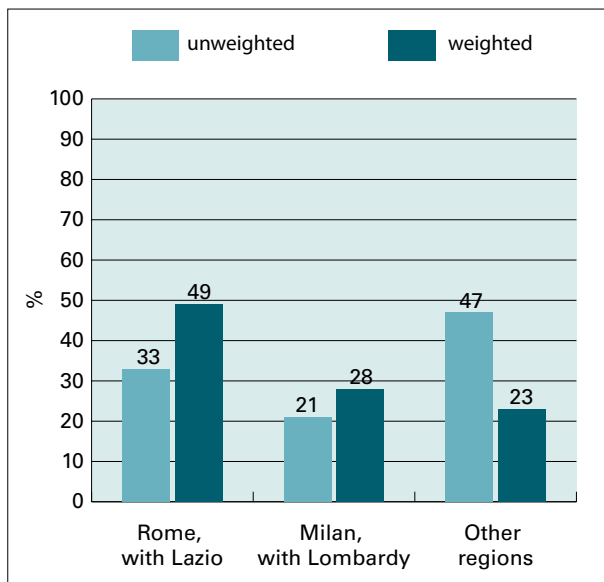
can extend to Jews too – despite their long history in the country. It is possible that the more recent increase in emigration of Jews from Italy not only reflects negative economic contingencies, but also signals a diffused malaise in the face of perceptions of anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli bias, if not incitement, among Italy’s public opinion and media (Della Pergola, 2010).

2 Socio-demographic findings

The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Our survey, besides its main focus on the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in Italy, collected plenty of

Figure 1. Respondents by Jewish community of residence in Italy, %



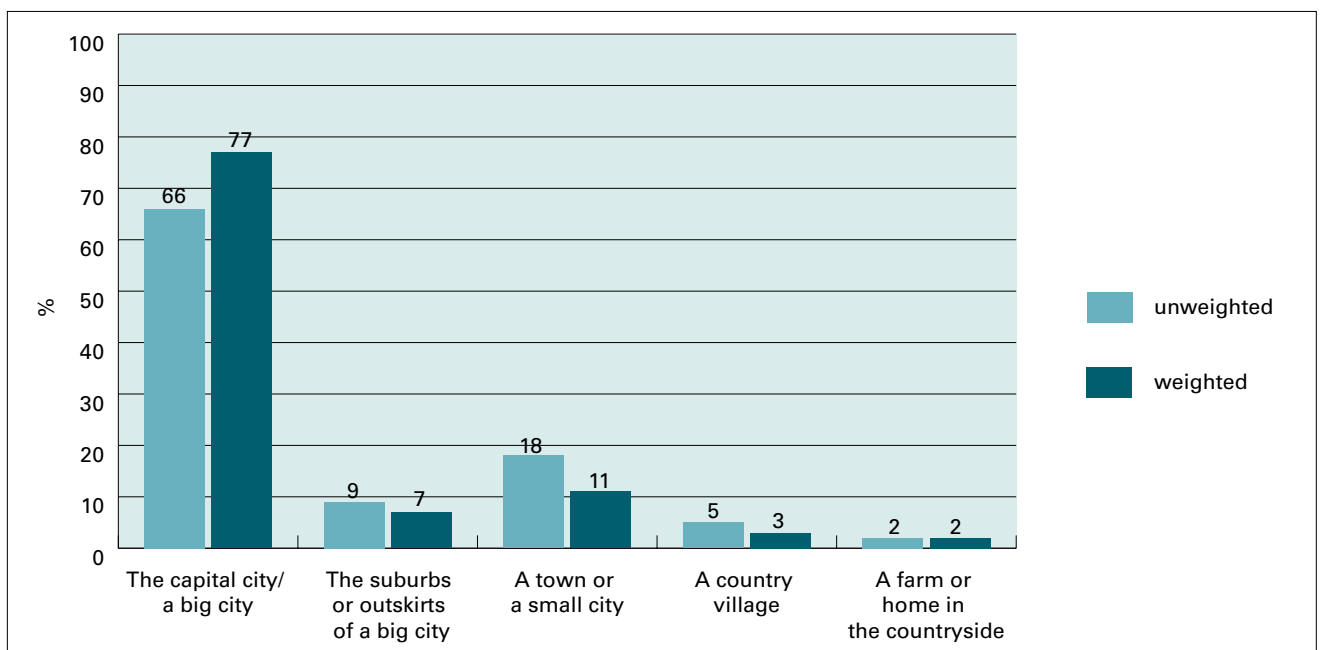
N=650.

information on the demographic, socio-economic, and cultural characteristics of Italian Jews, namely their patterns of identification with Jewish community life and with Israel. This section presents selected characteristics of the respondents, giving an idea of the socio-demographic profile of the survey respondents. Both original (unweighted) and weighted results are presented. All in all, 650 people responded to the survey from Italy.

Whereas about half of the total Jewish population in Italy lives in Rome, followed by Milan with over a quarter, the larger (unweighted) number of respondents came from Jews living in other medium and small size Jewish communities (Figure 1, where the expected (weighted) distribution is also shown). Underreporting from Rome was particularly noticeable, despite intensive advertising of the survey, and can possibly be associated with a somewhat lower socioeconomic status among the Jews in that community.

An absolute majority of the respondents characterised themselves as living in the capital city, Rome, or in another of the major large cities, or in one of their suburbs (84% together according

Figure 2. Respondents by location of residence in Italy, %



N=650, with 6 respondents (0.9%) answering 'Other'. These cases are included in the category 'A farm or home in the countryside'.

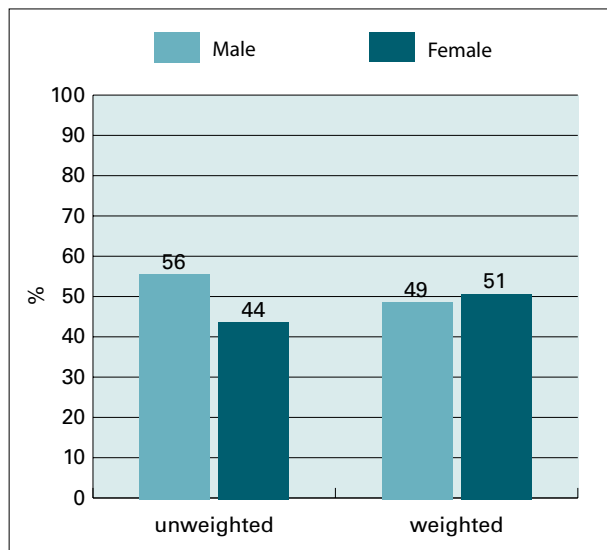
to the weighted data). Another 11% lived in other relatively large towns, and the remaining 5% lived in smaller towns or in the countryside (Figure 2).

The gender composition of the respondents, set out in Figure 3, shows a visible gender bias, as against the real distributions among the Jewish population registered with Jewish communities. In accordance with established survey practice, one would expect to find a slight majority of female respondents in a social survey, and even more so in a survey of European Jews and Italian Jews in particular, as aged populations always have a

surplus of women (see age distributions below). However, this is not the case in the original Italian sample (and, in fact, in the majority of other country samples collected in this survey): males constitute a clear majority of 56% of the sample. Weighting redresses the sample in line with the expectation from a survey of this kind.

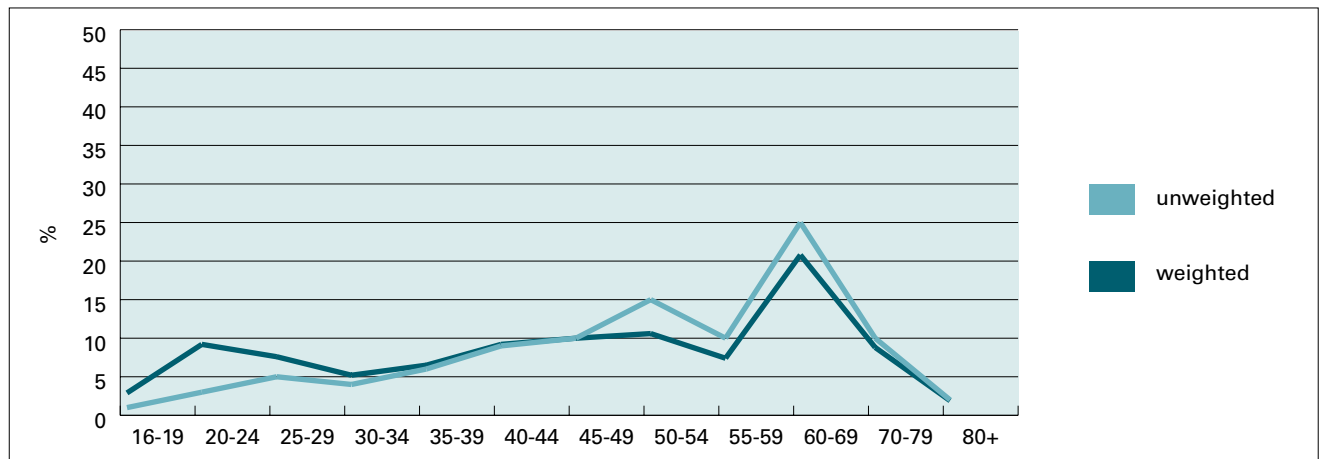
The age distribution of survey respondents is shown in Figure 4. Because of low birth rates and frequent intermarriage, Italian Jewry has undergone a steady trend of ageing over the years, manifested in relatively low percentages of younger adults and much higher proportions of older people. However, the unweighted sample is disproportionately dominated by mature adults, as is evident from the ‘hump’ formed, approximately, by ages 50-69. The youngest and the oldest ages have relatively small proportions (although it should be noted that the 16-19 age group is smaller than the others). Weighting removes some of this bias, increasing the proportion of the young and decreasing the proportion of mature adults. The under-representation of younger adults among the respondents may be surprising in view of their probable greater familiarity with the Internet. If the younger felt comparatively less interested in the topic of antisemitism, one possible interpretation is that they felt its incidence less than older people. Another possible interpretation is a general weaker interest in Judaism and in Jewish issues among younger people.

Figure 3. Respondents by gender composition, %



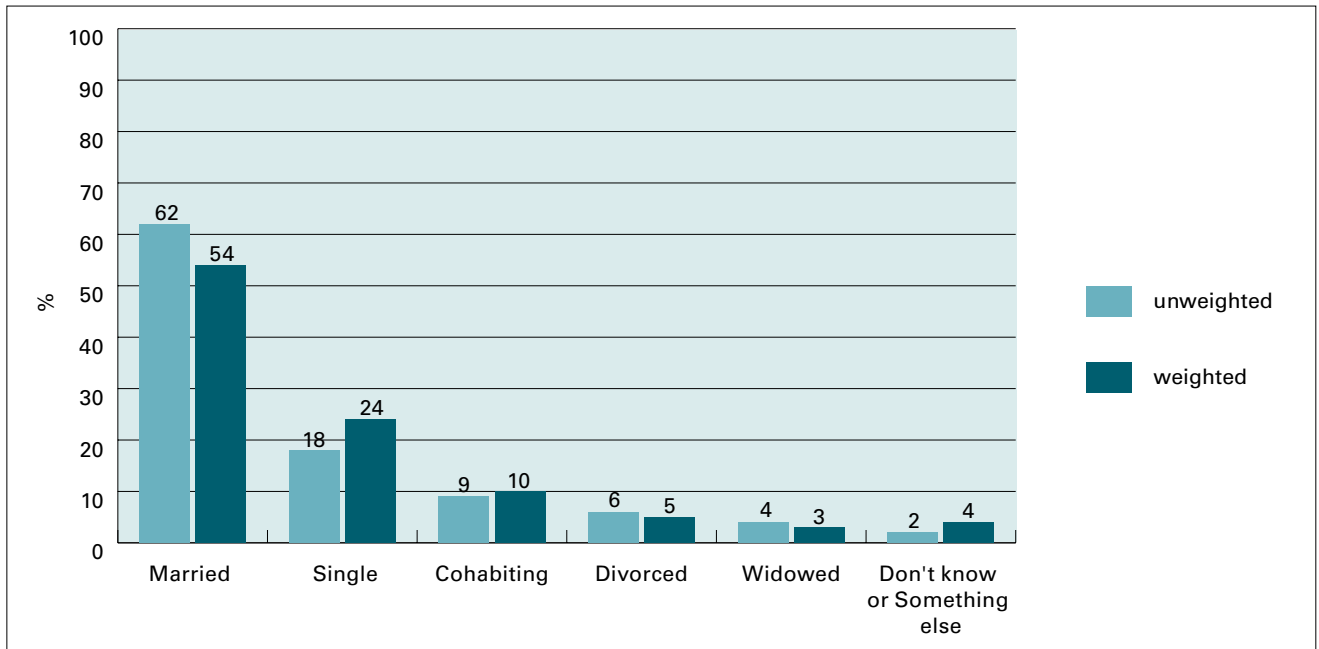
N=650.

Figure 4. Respondents by age composition, %



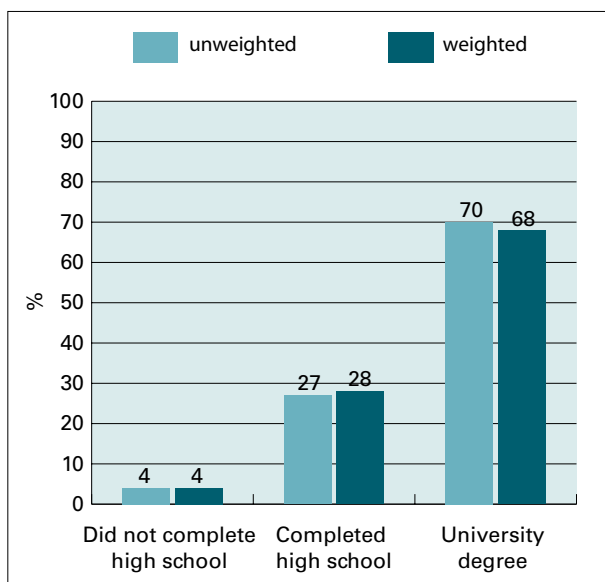
N=650.

Figure 5. Respondents by marital status, %



N=650. Category 'Married' includes persons separated from their spouse, but still in legal marriage (30 persons, 4.6% of the sample) and 4 persons in civil partnership (0.6% of the sample).

Figure 6. Respondents by highest educational achievement, %



N=650, with 6 respondents (1%) answering 'Not applicable' or refusing to respond. These cases are excluded from calculation of percentages.

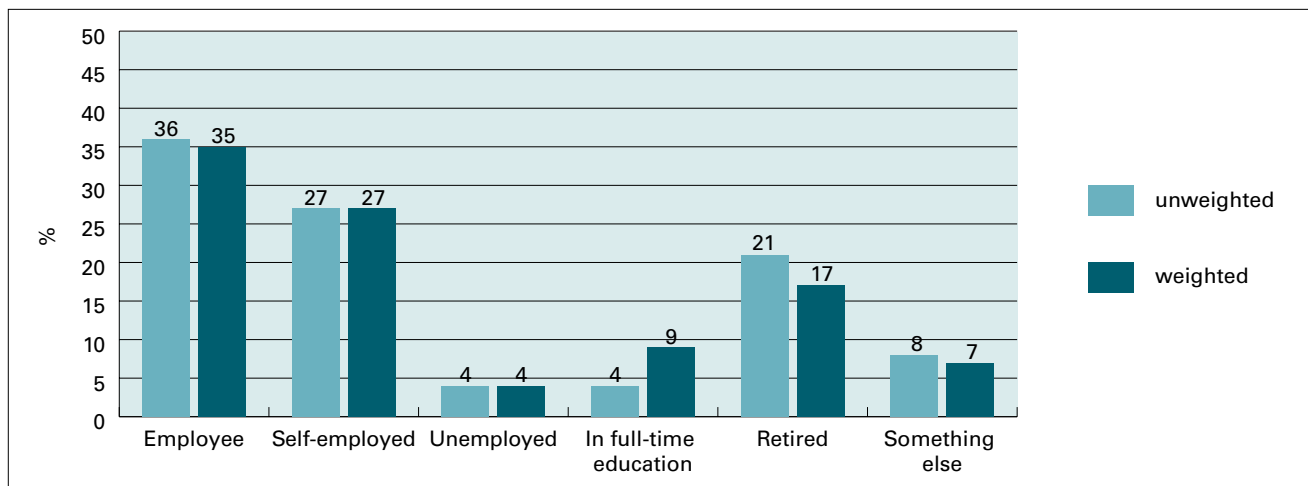
As one would expect on the basis of the observed age composition, a majority of respondents in the sample is married (Figure 5). Single (never married) individuals

constitute one quarter of the sample. One in ten respondents cohabit with their partner. The currently divorced constitute no more than 5%, although previous divorcees may have remarried or may be cohabiting.

An absolute majority of respondents holds at least one university degree (Figure 6), illustrating a highly educated population.

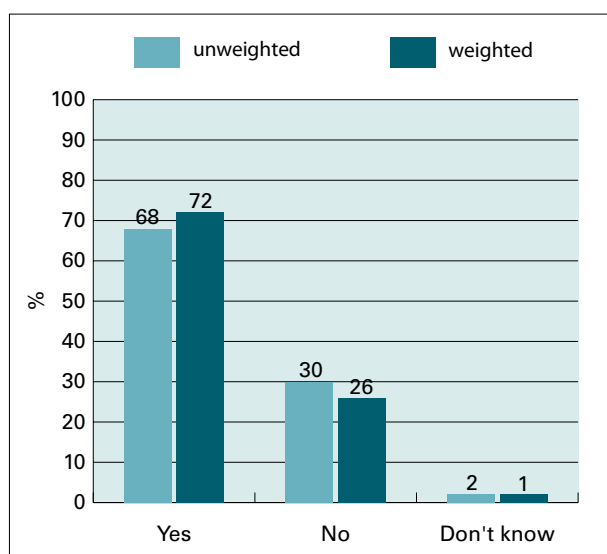
The employment status of survey respondents is outlined in Figure 7. A sizeable minority of the respondents (35%) are employees, and 27% are self-employed. When recalculating these percentages (weighted) only out of those who are currently employed, the proportion that is self-employed is 44%. The retired population forms about one-fifth of the sample, again a finding which is consistent with the age profile of Italy's Jewish population. Note that proportions of people in full-time education and people in retirement undergo the most significant change as a result of weighting, as can be expected in view of the fact that weighting increases the proportion of the young and decreases the proportion of mature adults in the sample. The level of unemployment reported among Jews is low, certainly lower than among Italy's total population.

Figure 7. Respondents by employment status, %



N=650. 'Something else' includes the following categories: 'permanently sick or disabled', 'looking after home', and 'doing something else'.

Figure 8. Respondents by affiliation to Jewish community, %



N=650.

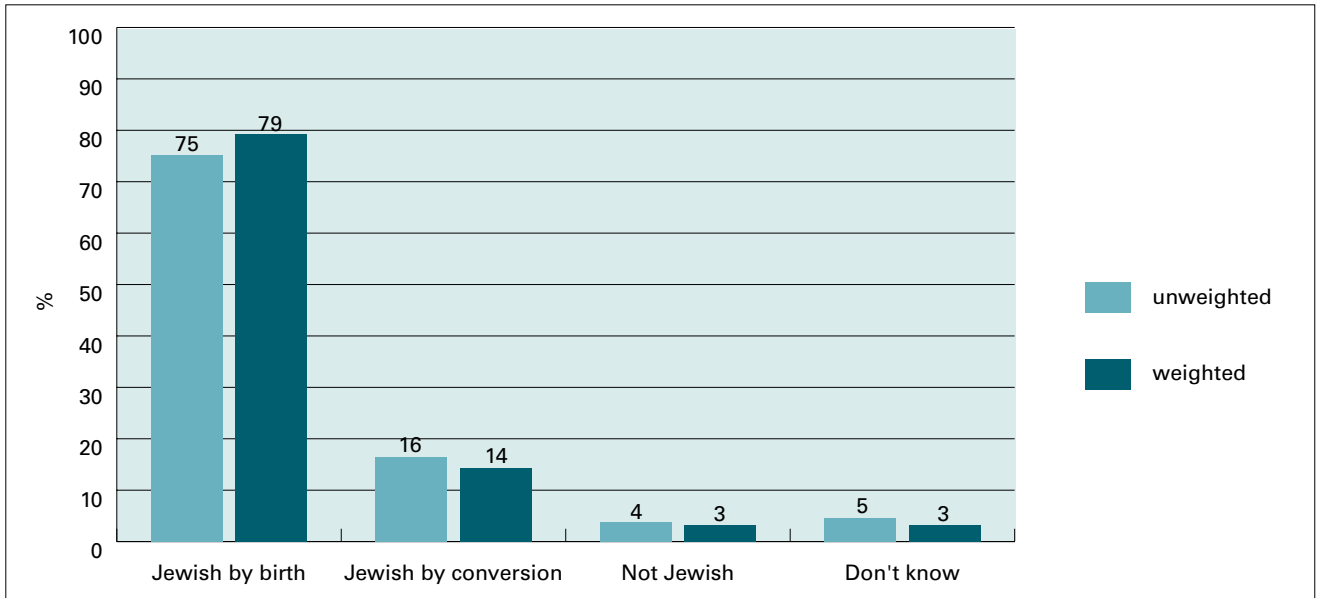
The Jewish characteristics of respondents

About 70% of respondents are registered members of the Jewish community of their city (Figure 8). This is quite a surprising finding in view of the expectation that the overwhelming majority of Jews in Italy continue to be registered members in their communities, and in view of the fact that the web link to join the survey was circulated largely using Jewish community connections. This might point to a much larger than commonly thought proportion of potential members who live outside the reach of the organised communities.

An absolute majority of the respondents in the sample is identified as Jewish by birth (about 80%) and an additional 14% is comprised of Jews by conversion (Figure 9). These figures, too, are quite intriguing. In view of the known patterns of conversion in Italy, one would expect a lower share of converts. A small proportion included in these data (3%) stated that they are not Jewish despite identifying as Jews in the screening question of the survey, and a similar proportion stated 'Don't know' in response to this question. This could represent a transitional status (people on the verge of a conversion procedure), or a degree of self-perceived ambiguity as to their precise status under Jewish law. More likely, it indicates the presence of a few non-Jews in the sample. However, because the percentages are so low, removing them from the sample would have no impact on the overall findings, and they were left in.

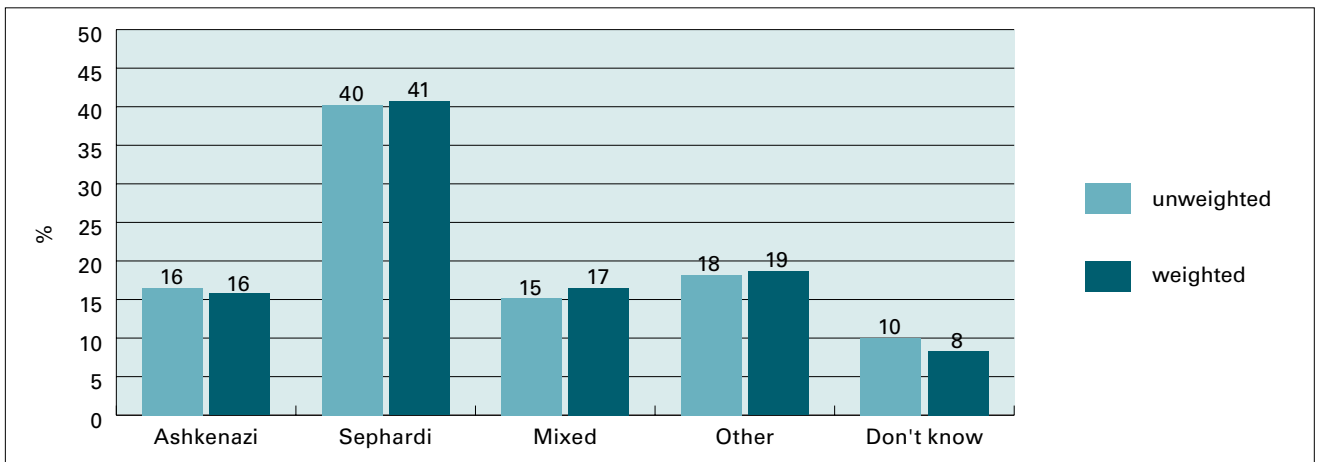
Regarding the question on Jewish cultural groups, or sub-ethnicity (i.e. the traditional regional origins of the Diaspora's Jewish population), the survey questionnaire may have generated some confusion in Italy (Figure 10). A large share of Italian Jewry derives from communities established in the Italian peninsula long before the arrival or even the original rise of Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities around the Mediterranean and in Central or Eastern Europe. These older communities are known as Italian (Italiani or Italkim), descendants of the early Jewish settlers of the Italian peninsula and

Figure 9. Respondents by Jewish by birth and/or conversion status, %



N=650.

Figure 10. Respondents by Jewish cultural origin group, %

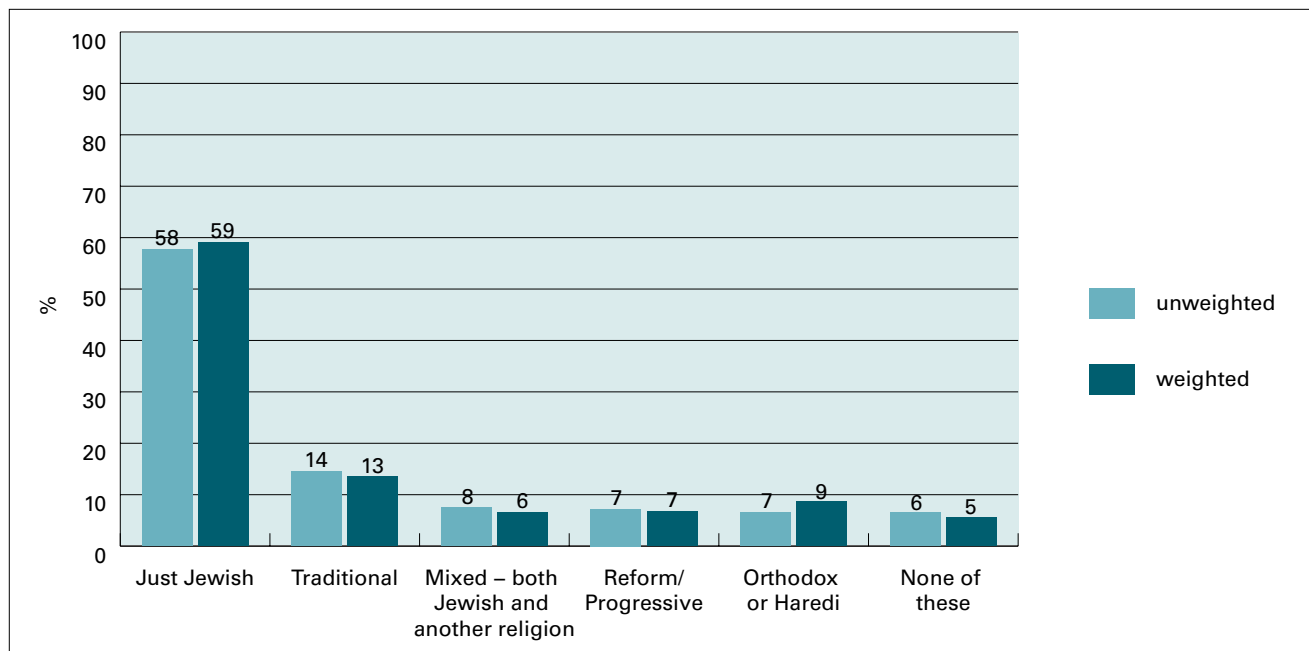


N=650.

Islands. They maintain a set of specific customs and rituals that on some accounts are different from, and actually predate the distinct Sephardi and Ashkenazi traditions. The standard European survey questionnaire did not include the specific “Italian” option, and therefore many respondents may have chosen the closer of the two main alternatives – in this case Sephardi. This is one reason why “Sephardi” is the most frequent answer given to this question, with about 40% of the respondents. Another reason is the more recent immigration of thousands of Jews from several Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries. Ashkenazi Jews constitute

16% of the sample. Of about one fifth of the sample who consider themselves to be “Other” – i.e. different from both Ashkenazi and Sephardi – it is probable that most are Italians. Another 17% consider themselves to be “Mixed”, which can be interpreted in various ways: as another way to express the older Italian origin, or an indication that they are the children of marriages between one Italian and one Sephardi/Ashkenazi parent, or between a Sephardi and an Ashkenazi, or else between one Jewish and one non-Jewish parent. The latter can also be the underlying reason for the about 10% of unknown.

Figure 11. Respondents by Jewish religious identification, %



N=650.

Religious orientation

How do the respondents identify in terms of Jewish identity (Figure 11)? It should be noted that in Italy Jewish communities have always formally existed as traditional religious bodies. The recognised rabbinat only operates within the framework of the Orthodox rabbinat in Israel and in the world. Only very recently have a few Liberal/Progressive/Reform congregations begun to appear, but they are not formally recognised by the existing official community organisation. The largest category of respondents to the question of Jewish religious identity in the survey is “Just Jewish” (about 60%). This has to be interpreted as standard, not particularly religious members of a community which is at least formally Orthodox. The 13% of Traditional respondents actually report a higher level of personal religious involvement. The 9% of Orthodox/Haredi refer to sub-groups within the major community, mostly Chabad, who also organise separate synagogues and other religious services for themselves. Those who report Reform/Progressive constitute a rather small proportion of the sample (8%), but some of them, if not the majority, may also be members of the mainstream “Orthodox” community.

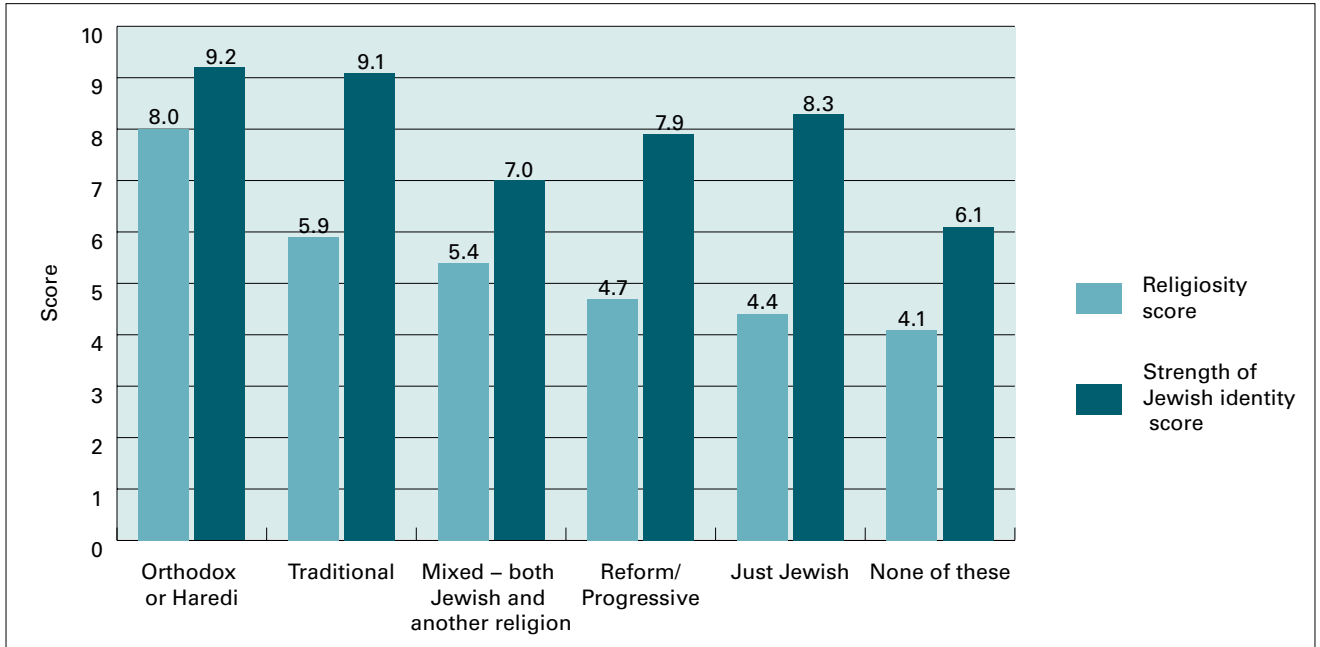
Among other things, these findings provide an important insight into the probable physical

appearance of the survey respondents – a factor which can have consequences as to the likelihood of experiencing an antisemitic attack. An absolute majority of survey respondents is not very religious and, therefore, not visibly Jewish.

But, what do these categories mean in terms of religiosity? In addition to the questions on being Jewish or not, the respondents were asked how religious they were on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 meant “not at all religious” and 10 meant “very religious”. Another question was asked about the strength of their Jewish identity, where 1 meant very low strength and 10 meant very high strength. The respective average scores of religiosity and strength of Jewish identity are presented in Figure 12 for each Jewish religious identity category.

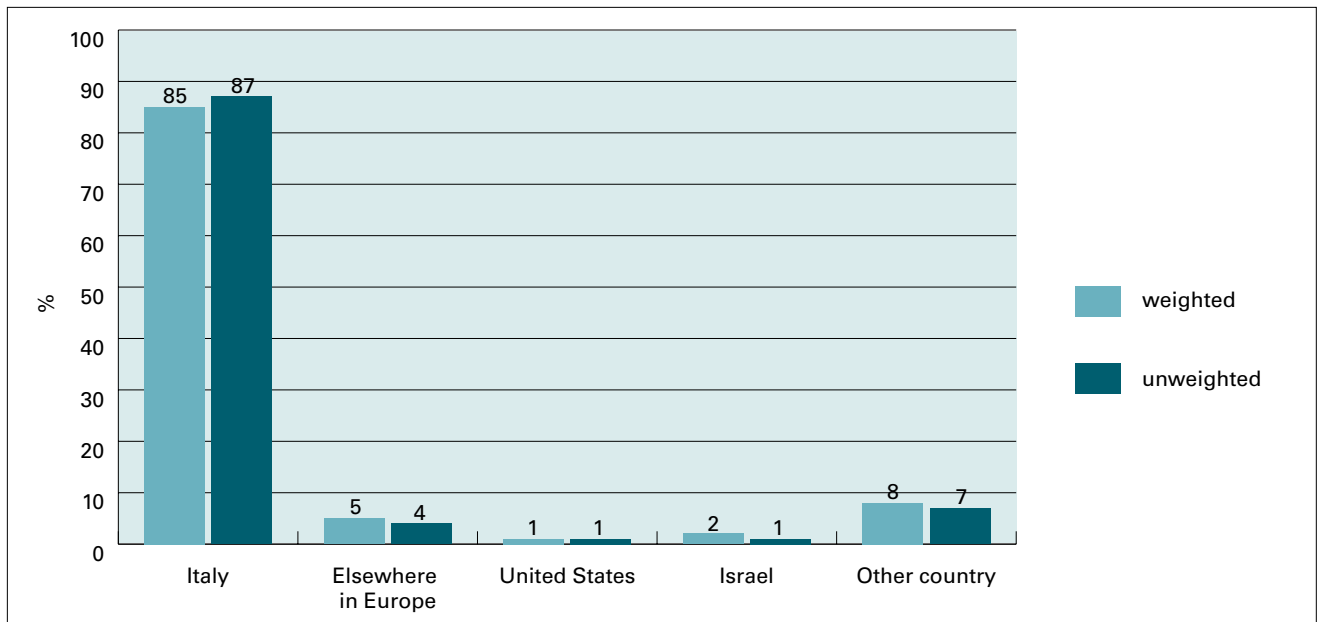
As one might expect, those identifying as Orthodox or Haredi have the highest religiosity score (about 8) while the “Traditional” score about 6. “Traditional” are followed by “Mixed” and “Reform/Progressive” with a score of about 5. “Just Jewish”, the majority category in the Italian sample, and “None of these”, in this order, have the lowest religiosity scores, about 2.6 – 4.0. These findings can be treated as an indication that there is a reasonably clear meaning to the categories of Jewish

Figure 12. Average scores of religiosity and strength of Jewish identity by Jewish religious identification



N=650. Calculations based on unweighted data.

Figure 13. Respondents by place of birth, %



N=650, 3 people who indicated that they did not know their country of birth are included in the category 'Other country'.

identification in terms of religiosity. “Orthodox or Haredi”, “Traditional”, and “Reform/ Progressive” would probably be intuitively arranged by many observers in that order by their religiosity. “Mixed” is somewhat a surprise, as its religiosity score is higher than that of “Reform/Progressive” and “Just Jewish”.

Regarding the strength of Jewish identity, scores result systematically higher than religiosity scores. “Orthodox/Haredi” and “Traditional” have approximate scores of 9, and “Just Jewish” and “Reform/Progressive” have scores of 8. They are followed by “Mixed” and “None of these”, which have the lowest Jewish identity

scores (in the range of 6–7). Overall, the ranking of identification groups is quite consistent by religiosity and Jewish identity, with a few exceptions: “Just Jewish” is higher than “Reform/Progressive”, and “Mixed”.

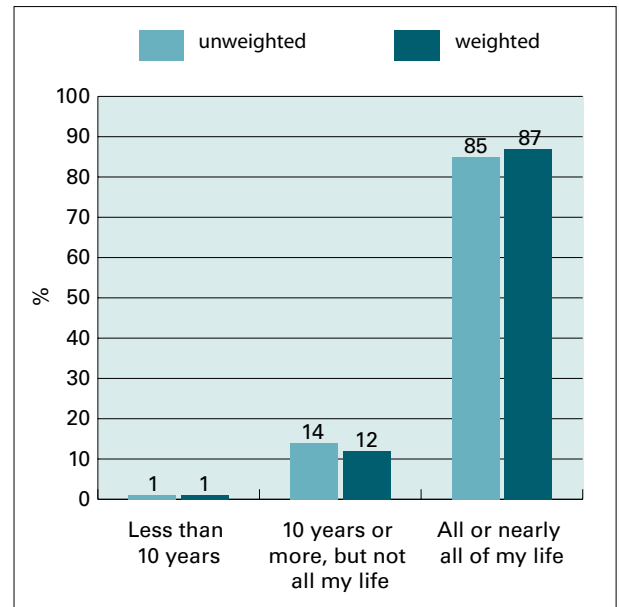
Links with Italy and Israel

About 85% of respondents were born in Italy, about 8% were born in “other countries” (which here means North Africa and the Middle East), 4% were born somewhere else in Europe, 1% in the United States and 1% in Israel (Figure 13). This reflects the significant substitution of a native generation for many of those who, in a previous generation, immigrated to Italy.

An absolute majority of respondents in the sample (over 85%) is comprised of long-term residents in Italy. In addition, 93% of survey respondents hold Italian citizenship, 4% hold citizenship of another country in the European Union and 6% hold Israeli citizenship (not shown graphically). Citizenship of another country in the European Union and/or Israel could either be the only type of citizenship that the respondents hold, or it could be their second citizenship.

About 75% of respondents in the Italian sample reported a very strong (over 30%) or fairly strong (over 40%) sense of belonging to their country (see Figure 15). There is a strong relationship between their country of birth and the respondents’ feelings of belonging: about 80% of the Italian-born respondents reported a very strong or fairly strong sense of belonging to their country, in

Figure 14. Respondents by length of residence in Italy, %

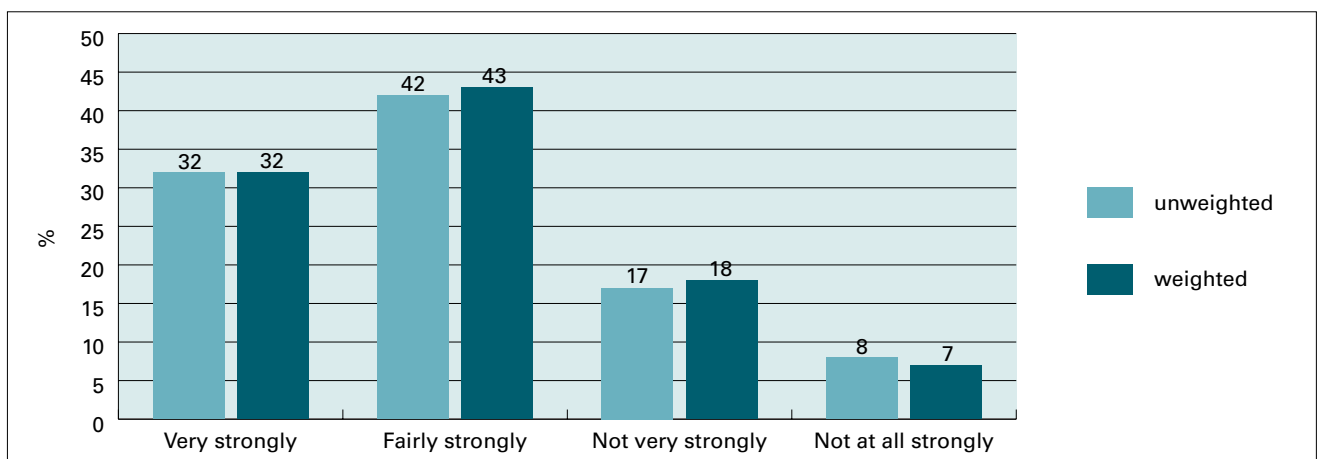


N=650.

contrast to 60% of the respondents who were born outside Italy (not shown graphically).

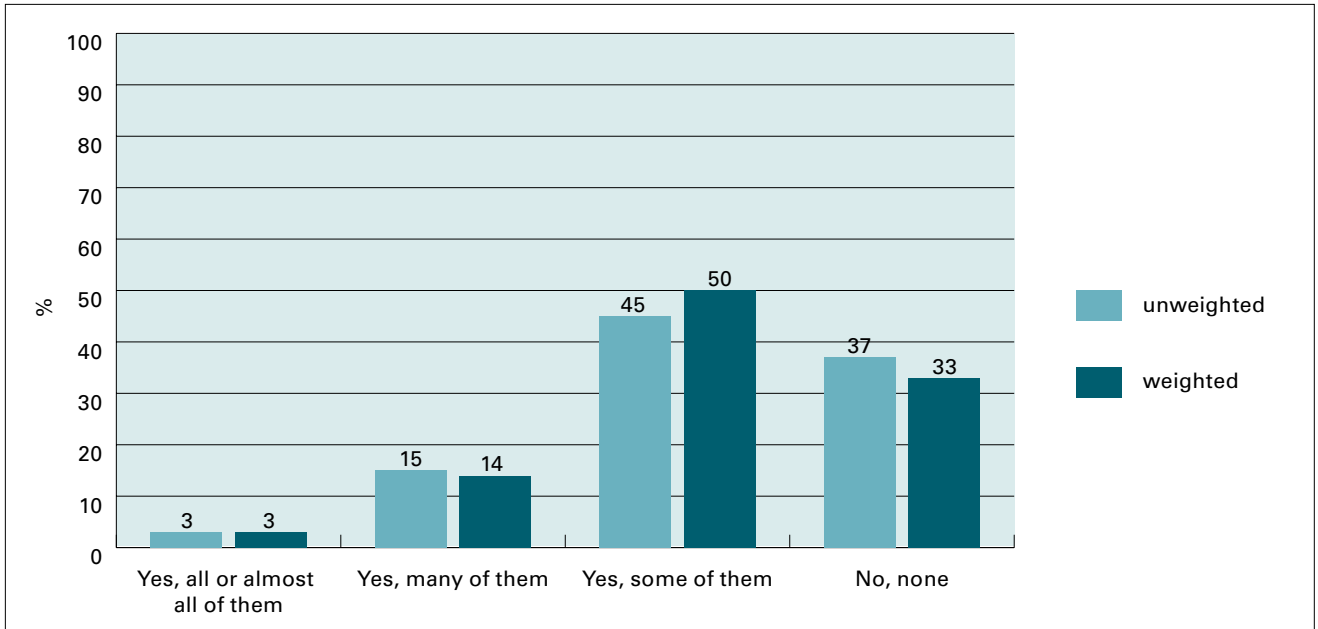
Concerning their links with Israel, about 80% of the respondents in the sample have been to Israel, the majority on a holiday, and a significant minority of about 15% of all respondents have lived there for more than a year (not shown graphically). About 70% have family and relatives in Israel (see Figure 16). This may generate a high amount of sensitivity vis-à-vis events or reports involving Israel’s current reality.

Figure 15. Respondents by strength of feeling of belonging to Italy, %



N=650, 8 persons who answered ‘Don’t Know’ to this question were excluded from the calculation of percentages.

Figure 16. Respondents by whether they have family and relatives living in Israel, %



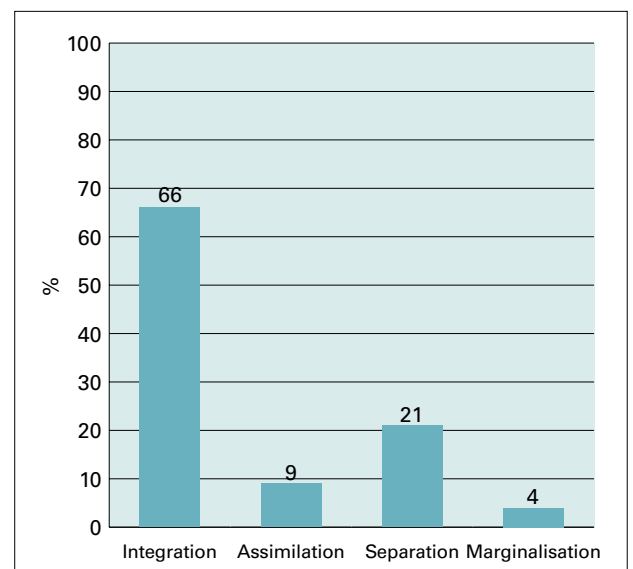
N=650, 11 persons (1.7%) who answered 'Don't Know' to this question were excluded from the calculation of percentages.

In order to explore further the extent to which respondents' Jewish identities and national identities interact, we examined acculturation levels of the Jews in this sample into their resident countries by analysing the data through a cross-classification of the two indicators (Berry 1997; Cohen 2011). The Berry typology of acculturation defines four strategies that may be implemented to negotiate the relationship between an ethno-cultural group and the larger society. Berry's categories of acculturation are based on positive or negative attitudes that the ethno-cultural group holds regarding its own group and the larger society. A group with positive attitudes regarding maintenance of their own culture and identity alongside positive attitudes regarding larger society is said to manifest the strategy of integration. Assimilation refers to positive attitudes regarding larger society and negative attitudes about the group's identity. The strategy of separation refers to negative attitudes towards larger society and positive attitudes about the group. The state of having negative attitudes towards both the group and society at large is termed marginalisation. This typology may be applied to any ethno-cultural group.

In order to build the typology, we interpreted the results to two of the questions included in the

survey: (i) where respondents were asked to rate the strength of their Jewish identity, on a scale of 1 to 10; and (ii) where they were asked to rate how strongly they feel attached to the country in which they live. The results were then grouped into general categories: strong or weak Jewish identity and strong or weak attachment to the resident country. As Figure 17 demonstrates,

Figure 17. Respondents by Berry's category of acculturation, %



N=650. Calculations based on unweighted data.

the vast majority of Jews in Italy (66%) state they are “integrated”, demonstrating strong Jewish identities alongside a strong attachment to the country in which they live. The second largest group is the “separated” (21%), with two smaller groups of “assimilated” (9%), and “marginal” (4%). Of course, it can be argued that the more assimilated and marginalised fringes of the Jewish community have fewer channels of communication with the organised community, and therefore had fewer chances to access the current survey.

Summary of the characteristics of the sample

To summarise the characterisation of the survey respondents in Italy, one would conclude the following. The majority of respondents are registered members of the Jewish community of their city, although it might have been assumed that that proportion would be even higher. The vast majority of respondents are Jewish by birth. Survey respondents are mostly urban residents. They include a majority of males and a significant proportion of mature adults. A majority is highly educated and economically secure. Many have longstanding roots in the country and identify themselves as “Italian Jews” rather than either Sephardim or Ashkenazim, although there are sizeable minorities who do identify themselves in

these ways. Most of the respondents were born in Italy and/or spent all or most of their lives there. Therefore, they are well integrated in the language and culture of the country and are not particularly visible or recognisable. Orthodox/Haredi Jews by self-identification constitute 7% of the sample, while the vast majority define themselves as “Just Jewish”. The majority of Jews in Italy (75%) express a strong sense of belonging to their country, and an even higher majority (87%) express a strong sense of Jewish identity. The vast majority of respondents have been to Israel and/or have family or relatives living there.

All in all, the survey data provide a faithful portrait of the Italian Jewish population. Respondents come from all geographical regions and from cities of different sizes, from all age, sex and marital status groups, from all strata of the socioeconomic ladder, and – most significantly – from very different types and intensities of Jewish identity and allegiance. The present data compare well with other available community sources, with the caveat that some adjustment had to be made to better balance the sample. The following analysis of perceptions of antisemitism in Italy therefore very credibly reflects the real situation on the ground. In the remainder of this report only weighted results are presented, unless otherwise indicated.

3 Perceptions of antisemitism

The survey explored the question of whether respondents feel antisemitism is a problem in Italy. Over one half of survey respondents (63%) thought that antisemitism is a problem, and about one in five (18%) thought that it is a very big problem. 36% thought that antisemitism is not a big problem, and only a very small minority (1%) thought it is not a problem in Italy at all (Figure 18).

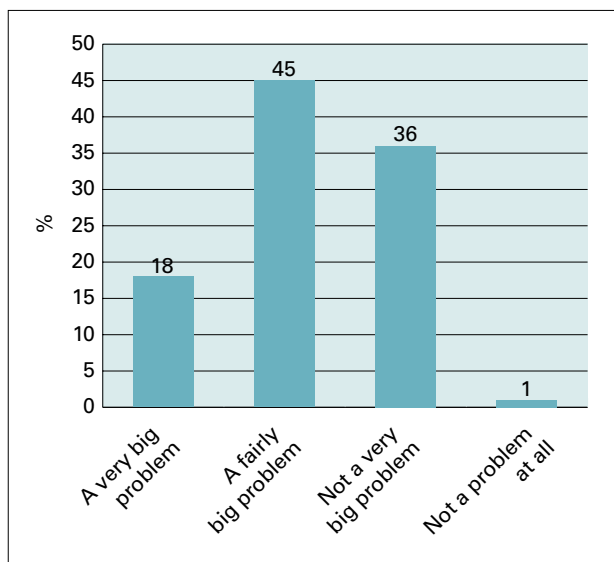
A majority of respondents (just under 70%) felt that antisemitism had increased in the past five years, and, among them, about one quarter of all respondents believed that it had increased a lot (see Figure 19). One quarter thought antisemitism had remained constant, and a small minority (about 6%) said that antisemitism in Italy had decreased in the past five years.

Respondents were also asked about specific antisemitic activities (antisemitic graffiti, desecration of Jewish cemeteries, vandalism of Jewish buildings and institutions, antisemitism in the media, political life and on the Internet), and questioned about whether these constitute a problem and whether or not these activities had changed in the past five years (see Figures 20 and 21).

Antisemitism on the Internet, antisemitic graffiti and antisemitism in the media are the three types which are considered most problematic. About 90% indicated that antisemitism on the Internet is a problem, with about 60% thinking it is a very big problem. For antisemitic graffiti and antisemitism in the media the corresponding percentages are approximately 60% and 20%. A small minority of 1% to 5% thought that antisemitism on the Internet, antisemitic graffiti and antisemitism in the media are not problems at all. The desecration of Jewish cemeteries, vandalism of Jewish buildings and institutions, and antisemitism in political life were considered a problem by about 40% of the respondents, and 10-15% of the respondents considered these types of antisemitism to be a very big problem. Hostility towards Jews in public places was considered a problem by about one third of respondents, and 8% of respondents considered these activities to be a very big problem in Italy.

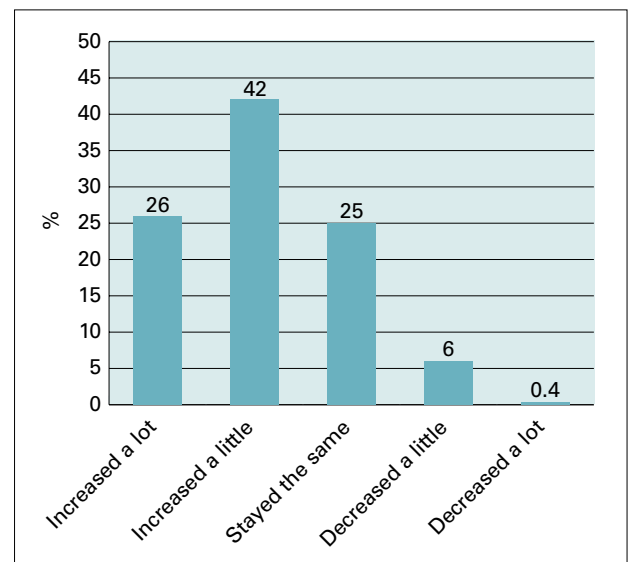
The largest proportions of respondents also perceived the three types of antisemitism which were considered to be the most problematic (i.e. antisemitism on the Internet, antisemitic graffiti and antisemitism in the media), to have increased in the past five years (Figure 21). About 90% of

Figure 18. Perceptions of antisemitism as a problem in Italy, %



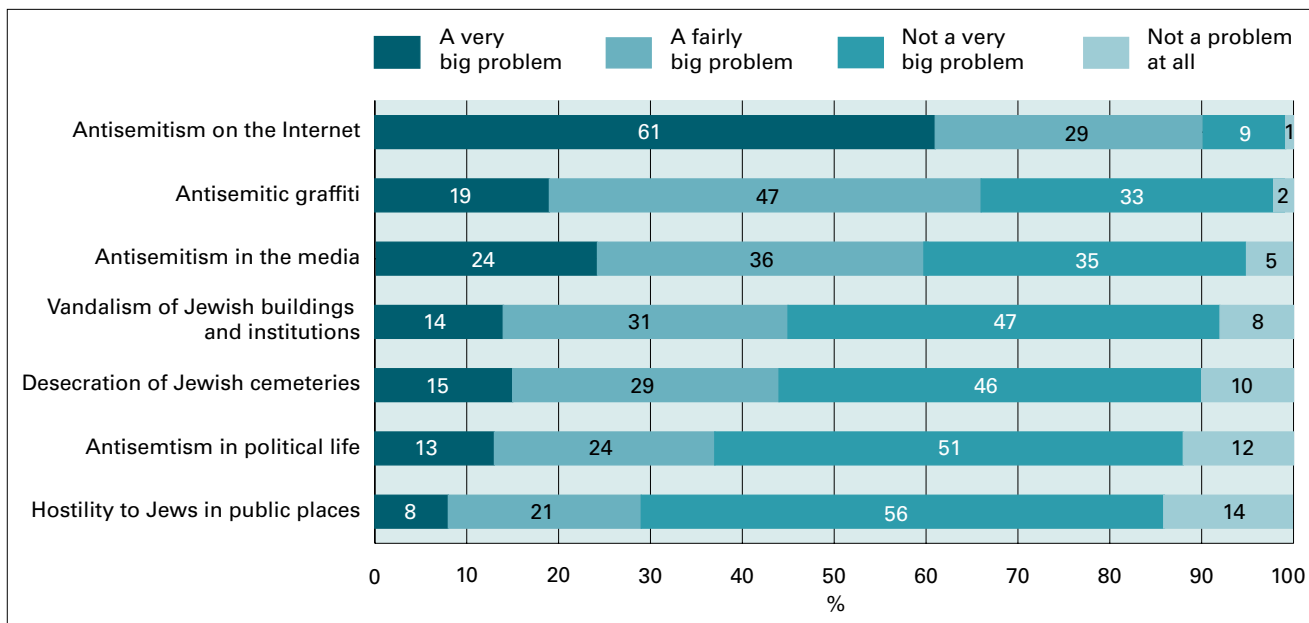
N=650, with 4 respondents (0.6%) answering 'Don't Know'. These cases are excluded from the calculation of percentages.

Figure 19. Perceptions of change in antisemitism in Italy in the past five years, %



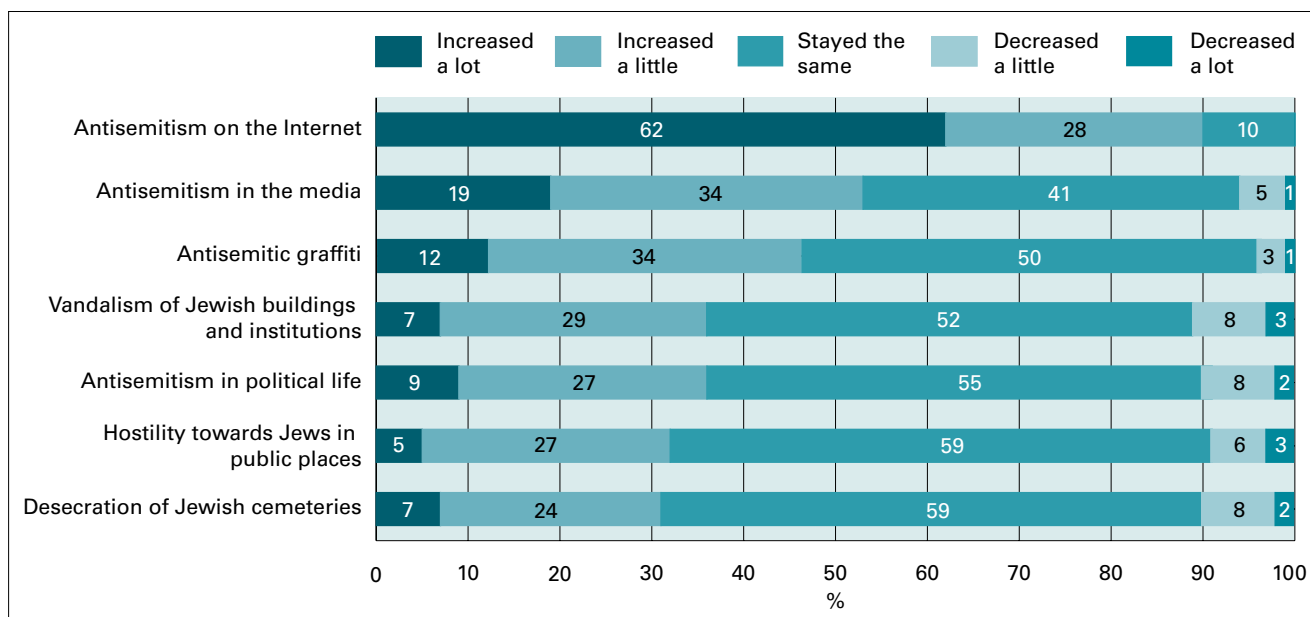
N=650, with 10 respondents (1.5%) answering 'Don't Know'. These cases are excluded from the calculation of percentages.

Figure 20. Perceptions of the extent to which specific manifestations of antisemitism are a problem in Italy, if at all, %



N=650, respondents answering 'Don't Know' are excluded from the calculation of percentages. These ranged from <1% to 4% depending on item investigated.

Figure 21. Perceptions of change in specific expressions of antisemitism in the past five years, %



N=650, respondents answering 'Don't Know' are excluded from the calculation of percentages. These ranged from 3% to 9% depending on item investigated.

the respondents thought that antisemitism on the Internet had increased in the past five years and about 60% thought that it had increased a lot. Over 50% of the respondents thought that

antisemitism in the media had increased and one fifth thought that it had increased a lot. For antisemitic graffiti, the corresponding numbers were 46% and 12%. Between 2% and 5% of

respondents thought that antisemitism on the Internet, in the media and antisemitic graffiti had decreased.

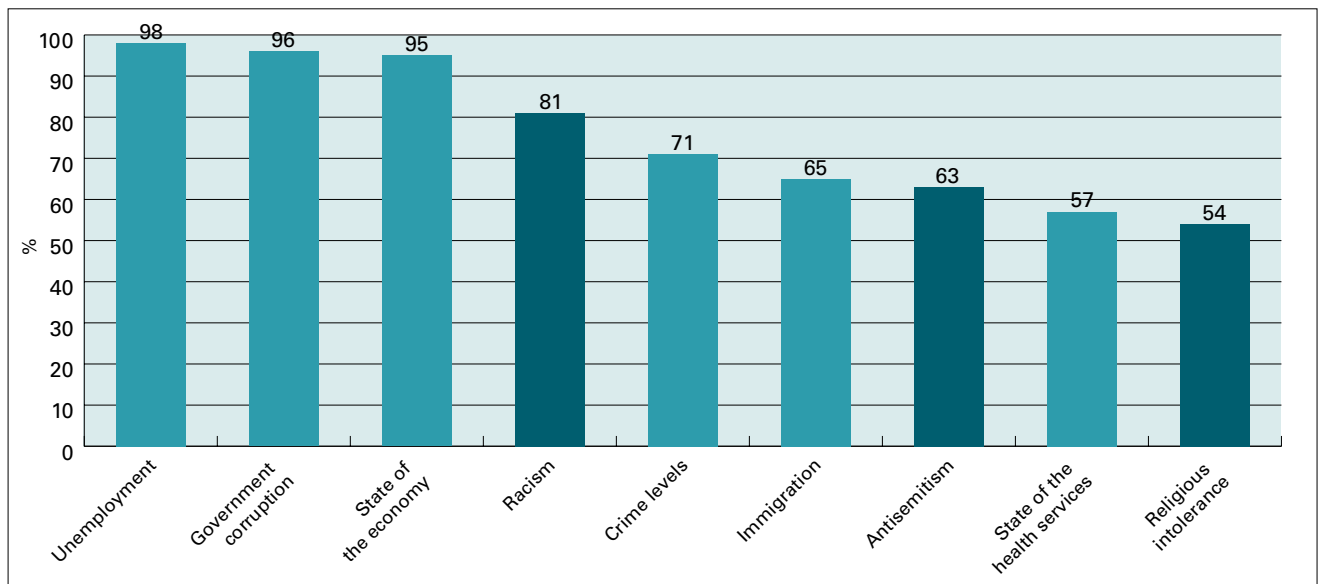
About one-third of respondents thought that hostility towards Jews in public places had increased in the past five years, and a similar proportion thought that there had been an increase in desecration of Jewish cemeteries, vandalism of Jewish buildings and institutions and antisemitism in political life.

Antisemitism does not operate in a social vacuum but needs to be measured against respondents' understanding of other social and economic problems (see Figure 22). It is apparent that antisemitism is not the only issue that worries them, and that there are other social and economic problems which are seen as equally or more important by a large proportion of respondents. In fact, at the top of the list of

concerns for the Italian respondents stood unemployment, the state of the economy and government corruption, each with a 90%-100% rating. These social issues attracted much higher attention than the proportion of respondents who thought that antisemitism was a very big or a fairly big problem (63%). Interestingly, racism was perceived as a problem by a larger proportion of the respondents (81%) than antisemitism, with levels of concern regarding crime levels and immigration inbetween.

However, respondents gave a different assessment to the question of whether the level of racism had changed over the past five years: 44% of the respondents said that racism had increased a lot in the past five years while about 30% said this in relation to antisemitism; 3% of the respondents said that racism had decreased and 6% said this in relation to antisemitism (results not shown graphically).

Figure 22. Respondents saying that selected social and economic issues represent a very big or a fairly big problem in Italy today, %



N=650, respondents answering 'Don't Know' are excluded from the calculation of percentages. Depending on the question, the proportion of respondents answering 'Don't Know' is in the range 0.2%-1.2%.

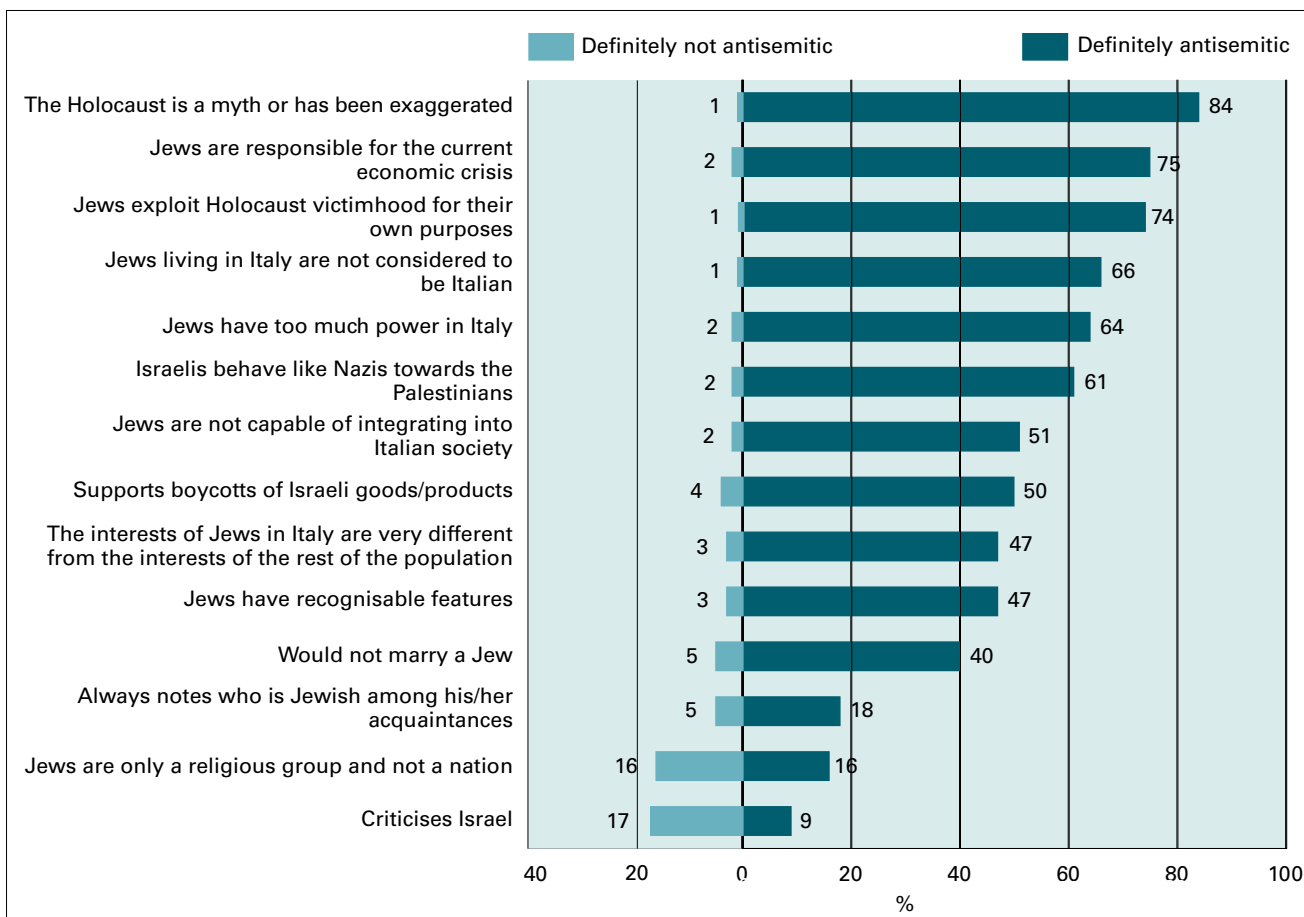
4 Defining antisemitism

There is much debate, both within and beyond the Jewish community, about what should and should not be defined as antisemitism. One established method of determining whether a belief, behaviour or incident is racist, is to ask the victims whether they believe it to be so. In that spirit, the survey presented respondents with a list of fourteen statements or attitudes relating to Jewish history, the place and role of Jews in contemporary Italy, their relationships with non-Jews, and the State of Israel. It then asked them whether they would consider a non-Jewish person to be antisemitic if he or she expressed these statements or displayed these attitudes in accordance with the following four-point scale: “definitely” antisemitic; “probably” antisemitic; “probably not” antisemitic, and “definitely not” antisemitic.

The statements which were considered unambiguously antisemitic by the largest proportion of the respondents (75%-85%) are that “the Holocaust is a myth or has been exaggerated”, “Jews exploit Holocaust victimhood for their own purposes” and a statement allocating responsibility for the current economic crisis to the Jews. A clear majority of the respondents (above 60%) thought that a non-Jew is definitely antisemitic if he or she says that “Jews have too much power in Italy”, that Jews living in Italy are not considered Italians, and that Israelis behave “like Nazis” towards the Palestinians.

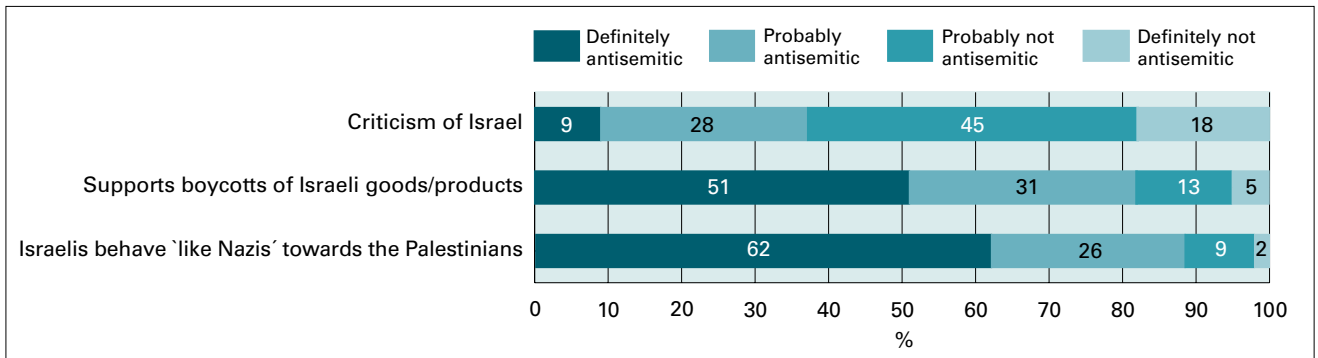
Criticism of Israel is considered to be definitely antisemitic by a minority of 9% of the respondents. Perceiving Jews as only a religious group and not a nation, as well as noting who is

Figure 23. Respondents who think that a non-Jew is definitely antisemitic if he or she makes the following statements/displays the following attitudes, %



N=650, respondents answering ‘Don’t Know’ are excluded from the calculation of percentages. Depending on the question, the proportion of respondents answering ‘Don’t Know’ is in the range 0.3%-5.6%.

Figure 24. Respondents who think that a non-Jew is antisemitic if he or she makes selected statements about Israel and Israelis, %



N=650, respondents answering 'Don't Know' are excluded from the calculation of percentages: 17 (3%), 9 (1.4%), and 8 (1.4%) cases, accordingly.

Jewish among one's acquaintances, are considered definitely antisemitic by about 20% of the respondents (see Figure 23).

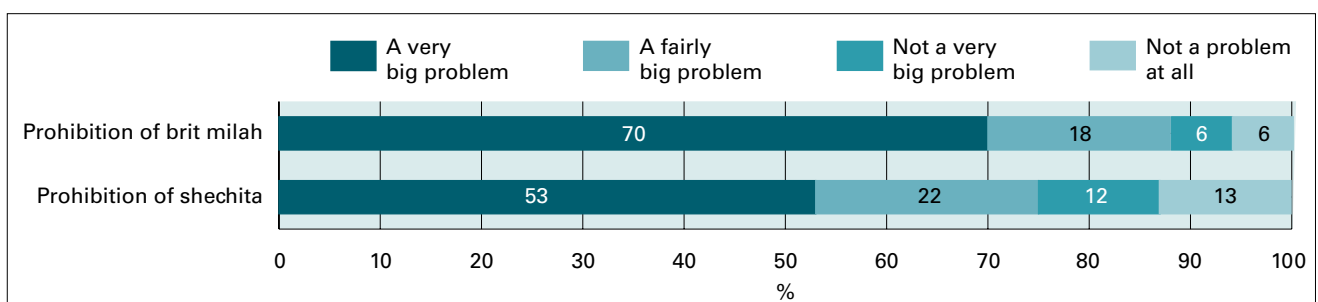
The question of whether or not criticism of Israel is antisemitic and what kind of criticism can be considered as legitimate are issues of great contention in the contemporary Italian Jewish community and beyond. This subject merits more detailed investigation, and the respondents in this survey provide a number of interesting insights.

As stated above, criticism of Israel by a non-Jew is considered to be "definitely antisemitic" by just 9% of respondents, and an additional 27% of respondents stated that it is "probably antisemitic." Thus, a clear majority (63%) feels that it is either definitely not, or probably not, antisemitic. However, when that criticism manifests itself in particular ways, respondents' views become more acute. For example, half of all respondents consider someone who boycotts Israeli goods and products as "definitely" antisemitic, and a further third "probably antisemitic." Bringing together Israel and

Holocaust imagery raises alarm bells still further: close to two-thirds of all respondents think that when non-Jews state that Israelis behave "like Nazis" towards the Palestinians they are "definitely antisemitic", and a further quarter thinks that they are "probably antisemitic" (see Figure 24). In short, criticism of Israel in and of itself is not seen as a factor that makes a non-Jew antisemitic in the eyes of most survey respondents; rather, it is the precise content and tone of the criticism that matter.

In view of the continuing debates around the acceptability of certain traditional Jewish practices in several European countries (though not specifically in Italy), the respondents were asked to what extent the prohibition of circumcision (brit milah) or the methods used to kill animals to produce kosher meat (shechita) would represent a problem for them. It is important to point out that, in contrast to the previously reviewed statements, the respondents were not asked to characterise negative attitudes towards questions focusing on circumcision and traditional slaughter as antisemitic or otherwise. Instead, they were asked to describe

Figure 25. Respondents who think that the prohibition of circumcision and traditional slaughter would represent a problem, %



N=650, respondents answering 'Don't Know' are excluded from the calculation of percentages: 15 (2.4%), and 21 (3.4%) cases, accordingly.

the impact that the possible prohibition of these practices was likely to have on them (Figure 25). A clear majority of the respondents (about 75-90%) indicated that they would consider

the prohibition of circumcision and traditional slaughter as problematic, with the prohibition of circumcision (currently very unlikely in Italy) definitely the more problematic issue.

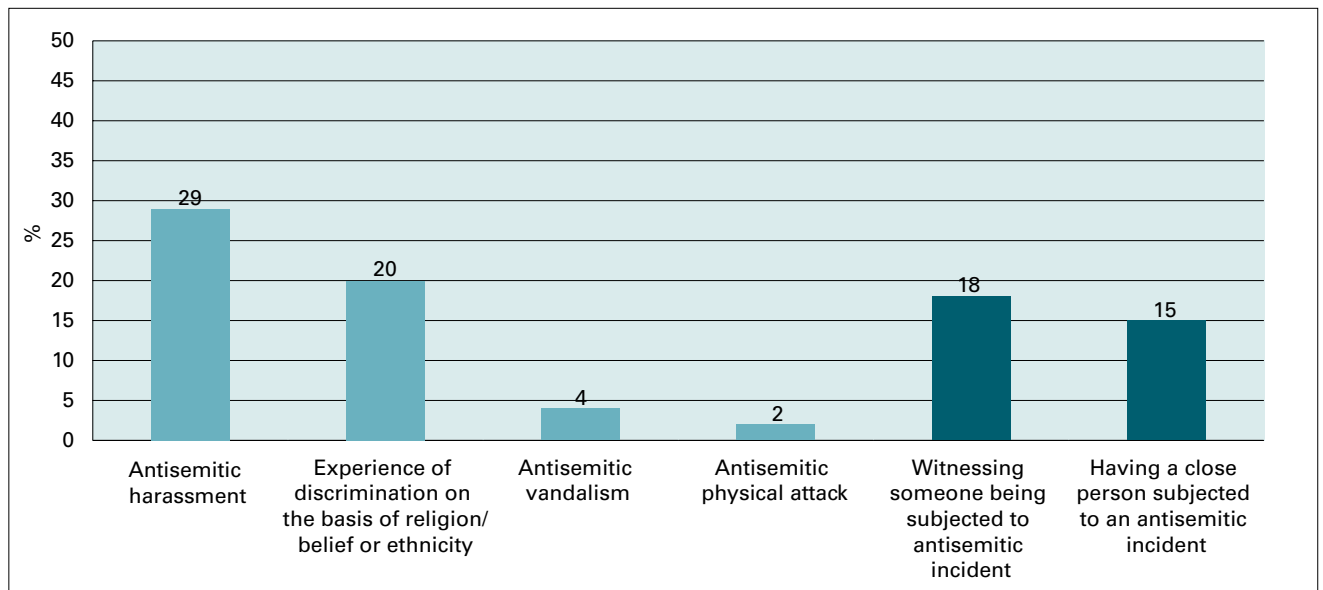
5 Experiences of antisemitism

In addition to exploring respondents' perceptions of what antisemitism is and whether or not it has increased in Italy, the study was also keen to gather data on the extent to which people have experienced antisemitic incidents, and the nature of these cases. A number of questions in the survey related to the respondents' direct experiences of antisemitic harassment (receiving emails, messages and comments of an antisemitic nature), vandalism and physical violence, and discrimination. Other questions related to indirect experiences of expressions of antisemitism (verbal and physical violence directed at others in their

family or among their friends, or antisemitic verbal and physical violence witnessed by the respondent). Figure 26 shows the prevalence of four types of direct antisemitic experiences in the twelve months preceding the survey.

About one-third of respondents said that they had at least one experience of antisemitic harassment in the past twelve months (e.g. they had received antisemitic comments in person or online, received offensive calls, messages or letters or were followed or waited for in a threatening way). About one-fifth said that they had experienced

Figure 26. Proportion of respondents saying that they had experienced antisemitic harassment, a physical attack, vandalism and/or discrimination on the grounds of religion/faith or ethnicity at least once in the past twelve months, %



N=650.

What do these categories mean?

Respondents were given examples of the types of incidents that might fit into these different categories as follows:

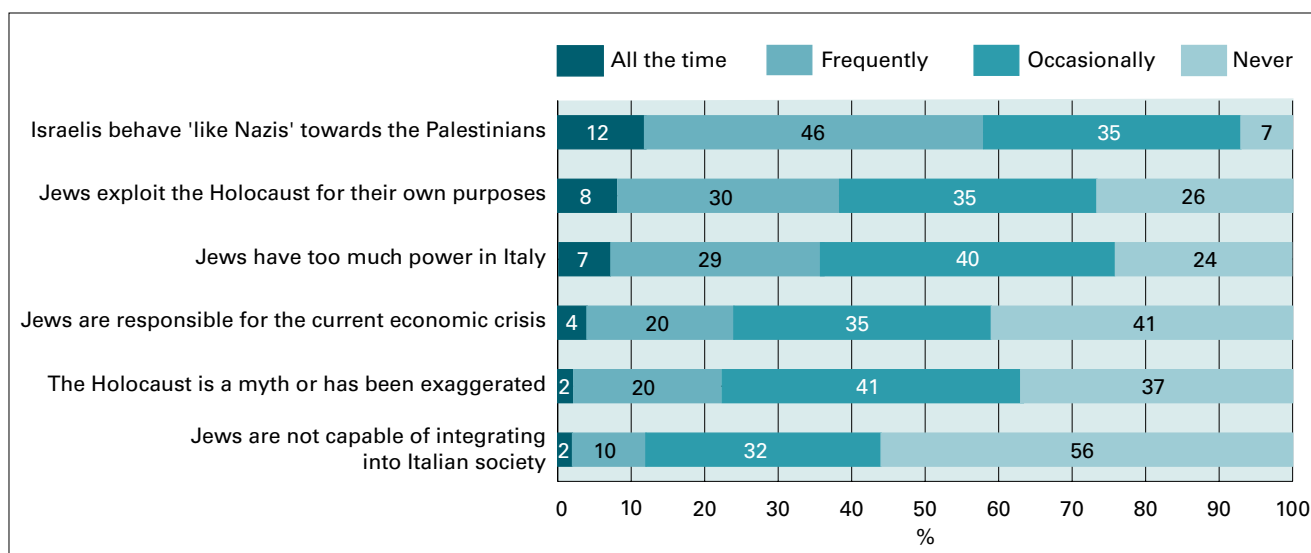
Antisemitic harassment: receiving emails, text messages, letters or cards that were offensive or threatening; receiving offensive, threatening or silent phone calls; having someone loiter, wait for you, or deliberately follow you in a threatening way; having offensive or threatening comments made to you in person; having offensive comments about you posted on the Internet (including social networking sites), because you are Jewish.

Antisemitic discrimination: feeling discriminated against due to your religion, Jewish beliefs or Jewish ethnic background.

Antisemitic physical attack: being physically hit, pushed or threatened at home, on the street, on public transport, in the workplace or anywhere else, because you are Jewish.

Antisemitic vandalism: having your home or car deliberately damaged in some way because you are Jewish.

Figure 27. Proportion of respondents saying how often, in the last twelve months, they had heard or seen non-Jews saying, %



N=650.

discrimination on the basis of their religion/faith or ethnicity in the past twelve months. A small minority of 2-4% said that they had experienced an antisemitic physical attack or an act of vandalism.

Being a direct victim of antisemitism is obviously a distressing experience, but witnessing someone else experiencing such an incident can also be deeply disturbing. About one fifth of the respondents said that they had witnessed someone else being subjected to an antisemitic verbal and/or physical attack, and 15% said someone close to them had been subjected to such an attack.

The respondents were asked how often they had heard selected statements, which the majority of respondents defined as antisemitic, from non-Jews in the last twelve months (Figure 27). Statements that the Holocaust is a myth, that Jews exploit Holocaust victimhood, that Jews are responsible for the current economic crisis, and that Jews have too much power, were heard all the time or frequently in the last twelve months by a significant minority of the respondents (20-40%). The suggestion that Israelis behave 'like Nazis' towards the Palestinians was heard frequently or all the time by more than half of the respondents. About 10% of the respondents heard frequently or

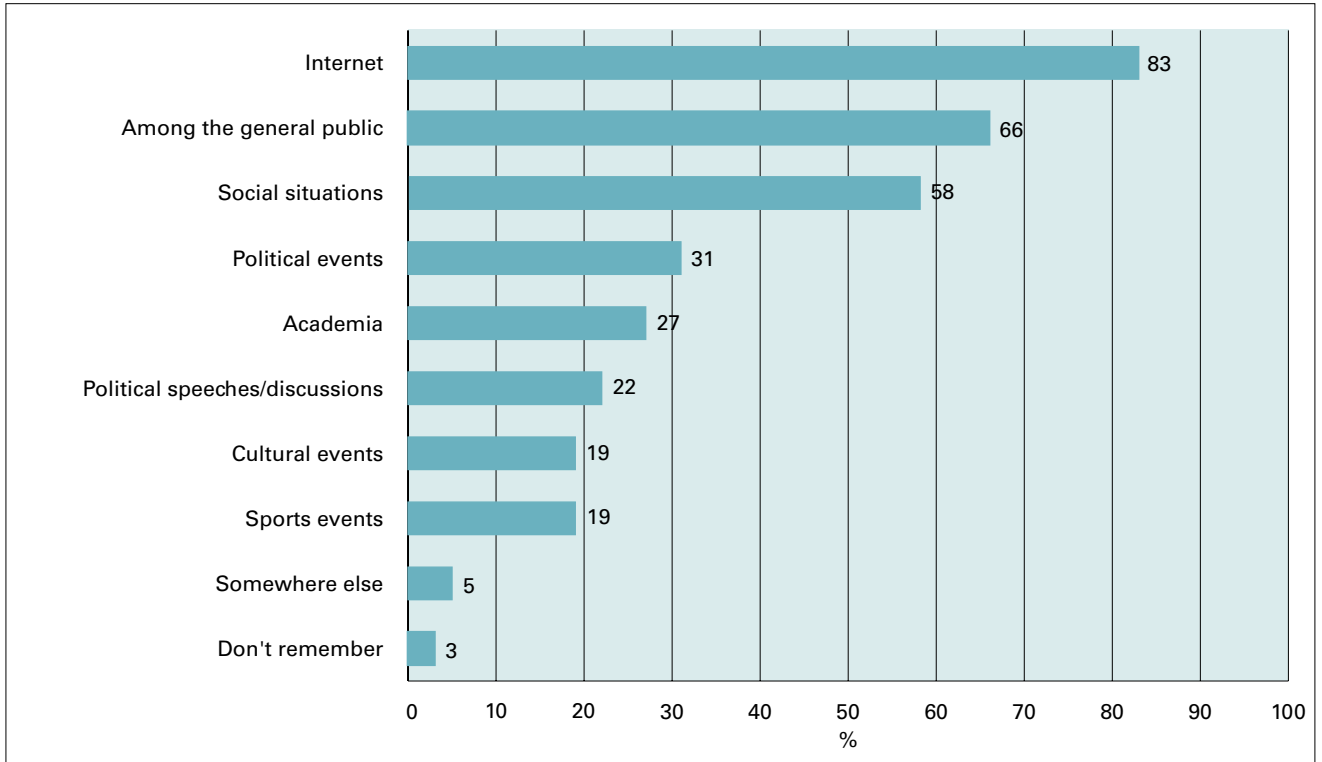
all the time that Jews are not capable of integrating into Italian society.

In addition to considering how frequently Jews in Italy had heard these types of comments, the survey also investigated the contexts in which they had been heard (see Figure 28). In answering the question, respondents could select more than one of the options if applicable. The main contexts where antisemitic statements were heard or seen were on the Internet (over 80% of all respondents), among the general public (two-thirds of all respondents), and in social situations (close to 60%). These three contexts stood out noticeably among those listed, although political, academic, cultural and sporting contexts featured for 20-30%.

The respondents were asked two additional questions in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict and their feeling of safety as Jews in Italy (Figure 29). About one third of respondents said that the Arab-Israeli conflict impacted greatly on how safe they feel in Italy, and another 43% said that the conflict had 'a fair amount' of impact on their feelings of safety. However, a quarter said it had little or no impact.

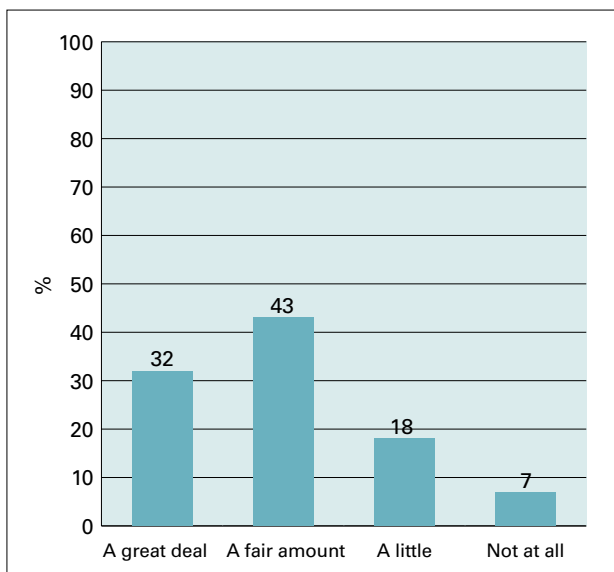
The survey was also eager to develop a better understanding of whether Jews in Italy feel

Figure 28. Contexts in which antisemitic statements were heard or seen by Jews in the last twelve months, %



N=633. Question asked only of persons who stated that they heard one or more of the selected antisemitic statements in the last 12 months.

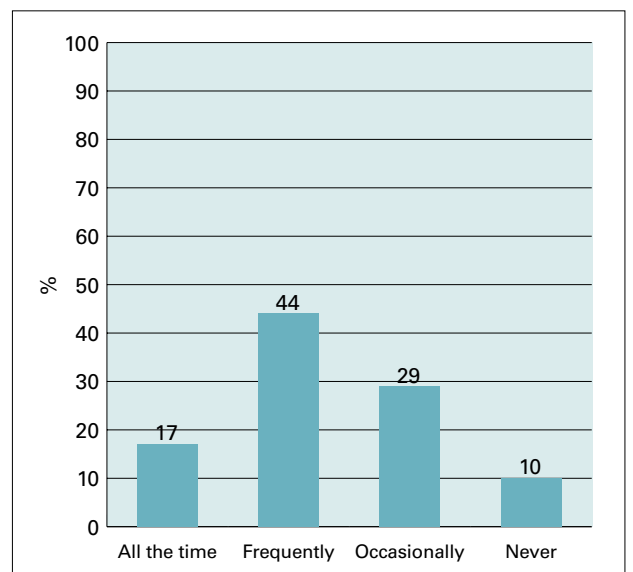
Figure 29. Respondents saying to what extent the Arab-Israeli conflict impacts on how safe they feel as Jews in Italy, %



N=650.

blamed by others for anything done by the Israeli government, simply because they are Jewish. As shown in Figure 30, about 60% of respondents said this happens frequently or all the time. Only 10% said this never happens.

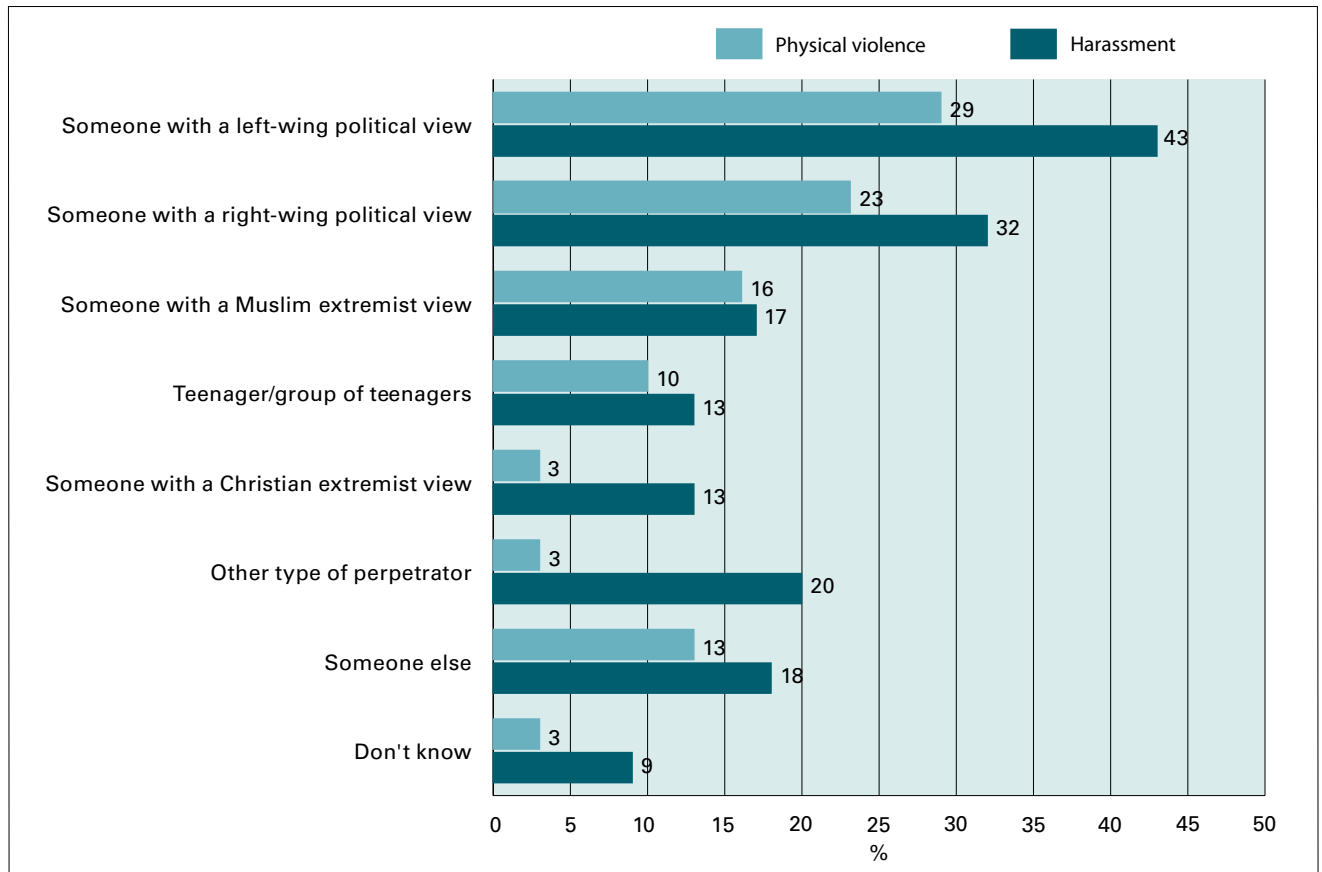
Figure 30. Frequency of respondents feeling that people in Italy accuse or blame them, because they are Jewish, for anything done by the Israeli government, %



N=650.

Finally, the respondents were asked to characterise the identity of the perpetrators of the antisemitic harassment or antisemitic physical violence. The respondents were presented with a list of fourteen pre-specified types of

Figure 31. Perpetrators of specific cases of antisemitic harassment or physical attack in the past five years, as perceived by respondents, %



N=211 (harassment) and N=33 (physical violence). Category 'Other type of perpetrator' includes the following: family/household member; a customer, client or a patient; doctor, healthcare worker; police officer or border guard; public official (e.g. civil servant); private security guard.

perpetrators and an option of providing an additional type, if the original list did not include the relevant category. Multiple responses were allowed for this question: the respondents could characterise the perpetrator(s) using more than one response category. Figure 31 presents the most frequently occurring types of perpetrators' identity. More than 10% of respondents mentioned each type in relation to either harassment or physical violence.

The political and ideological background of perpetrators was highlighted both in relation to harassment and to physical violence. A left-wing political view was mentioned by approximately 30%-40% of the respondents, while perpetrators with a right-wing political view were mentioned by about 20%-30% of the respondents. About a sixth of all respondents mentioned someone with a Muslim extremist view as a source of harassment and physical violence. Perpetrators with a Christian extremist view were mentioned by 13%

in relation to harassment and 3% in relation to physical violence. These findings are significant in view of the widespread influence of political orientations in the media, public opinion, and cultural life in Italy.

Besides politics, ideologies and religious background, a teenager or a group of teenagers was quite a commonly mentioned category (13% for harassment and 10% for physical violence). About 10-20% of respondents could not categorise the perpetrators using any of the suggested types and answered 'Someone else'.

Whilst all of these categories are deliberately broad and the responses are based on victims' perceptions of the perpetrator rather than a more objective assessment, the findings for Italy differ somewhat from other Western European Jewish populations – notably France, UK, Belgium and Sweden – where the top two categories are "someone with a left-wing political view" and

“someone with a Muslim extremist view.” By contrast, in Hungary, the top two categories are “someone with a right-wing extremist view” and “someone with a Christian extremist view.” This suggests that, in the experience of Jews in Italy,

antisemitic incidents are motivated partly by a spill-over of incidents in Israel and the Middle East, and partly by a continuing tendency for anti-Jewish hostility from the political right (see more below).

6 Emotional and behavioural responses

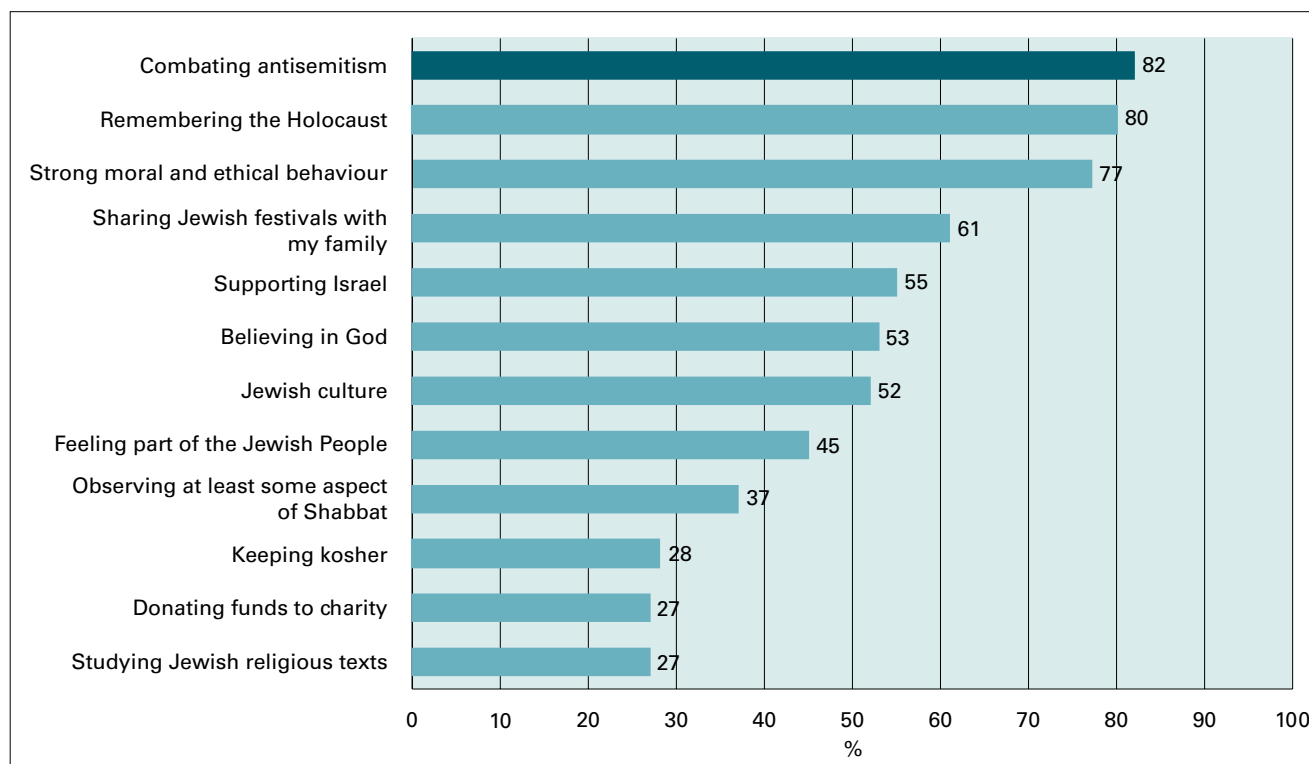
A perception or experience of antisemitism in society can have a significant effect on how Jews feel. The survey investigated this, and explored how respondents react when they encounter it.

Italian Jews clearly feel that combating antisemitism is a key priority for them. When looking at the incidence of different Jewish identity options among the respondents, it came at top of the list. Over 80% defined it as a very important component of their Jewish identity. The second highest item was remembering the Holocaust, followed by strong moral and ethical behaviour. A lower layer of Jewish identity options, all commanding respondents' support above 50%, included sharing Jewish festivals, supporting Israel, believing in God, and being interested in Jewish culture. A third layer, still above 30%, included feeling part of the Jewish people and observing at least part of Shabbat. Finally, less than 30% of respondents defined as very important keeping kosher, donating funds to charity, and studying Jewish religious texts (Figure 32).

The emphasis on combating antisemitism may partly be explained by the fact that a significant minority among Jews in Italy worry about the possibility that they themselves might become a victim of an antisemitic act in the next twelve months. Indeed, over 40% are worried about an act of verbal abuse or harassment, and close to 25% are worried about an act of physical violence (Figure 33). A further 45% are worried about a family member or another close person becoming a victim of antisemitic verbal abuse or harassment, and almost a third of respondents is worried about a family member or another close person becoming a victim of antisemitic physical abuse (Figure 34).

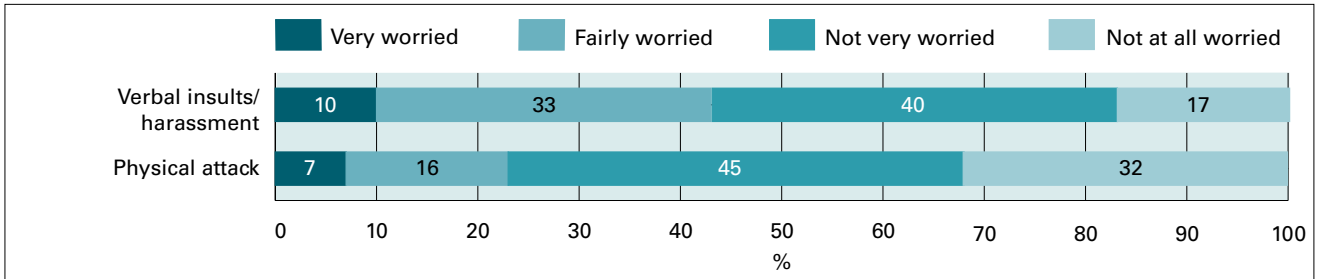
Nonetheless, the overwhelming majority (87%) of respondents said that they never avoid Jewish events or sites out of fear for their safety as Jews; equally, an overwhelming majority said that they never avoid such places in their neighbourhood. It is important to note, however, the existence of a significant minority of about 15% of respondents

Figure 32. Proportion of respondents reporting 'very important' about selected Jewish identity options, %



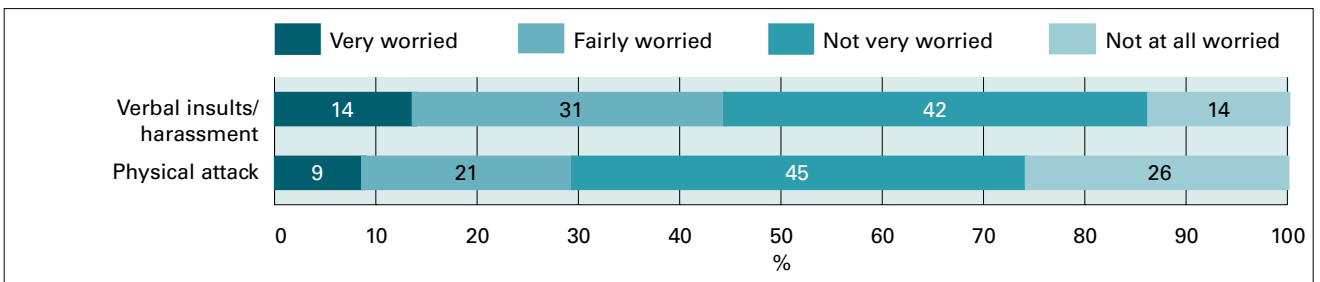
N=650.

Figure 33. Extent to which respondents are worried about themselves becoming a victim of an antisemitic act in a public place in Italy in the next twelve months, %



N=650.

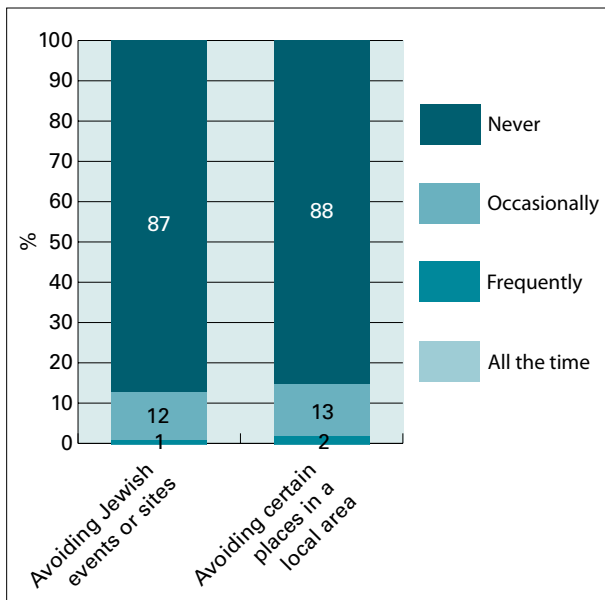
Figure 34. Extent to which respondents are worried a family member or friends might become a victim of an antisemitic act in a public place in Italy in the next twelve months, %



N=650.

who do avoid Jewish events and certain places in their neighbourhood, at least occasionally, due to concerns for their safety as Jews (Figure 35).

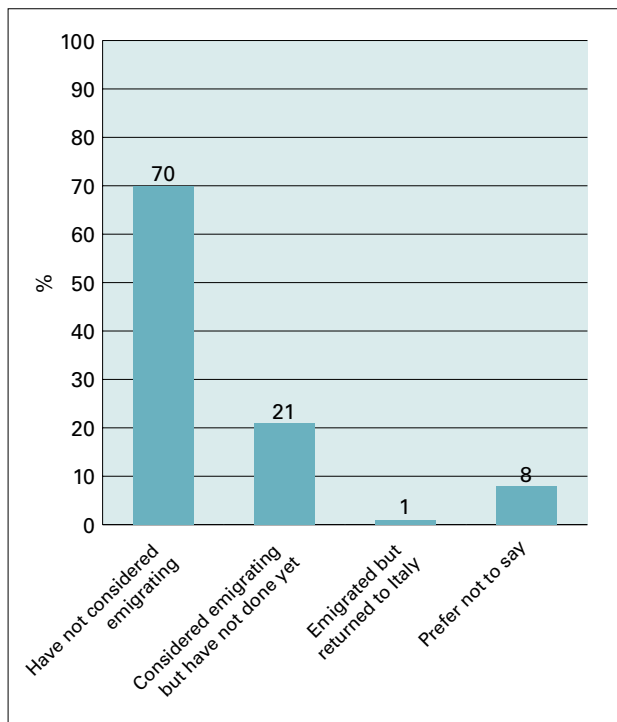
Figure 35. Respondents by avoidance of Jewish events or sites and/or certain places or locations in their local area because they do not feel safe as a Jew there or on the way there, %



N=650.

One possible response to high levels of antisemitism in any country is to leave. The survey explored this option, asking respondents if they had considered emigrating from Italy as a result of not feeling safe as a Jew living there (Figure 36). Just over a fifth (21%) of respondents said they had considered emigration, in addition to a small number (1%) who had actually emigrated but subsequently returned to Italy. Another 8% preferred not to say. However, most (70%) said they had not considered emigrating. It should be recalled that there are fewer than 30,000 Jews in Italy, so one in five would amount to about 6,000 people. Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that Jews in Italy are emigrating in these proportions, it is worth noting that actual levels of emigration from Italy to Israel in 2012 and 2013 reached the highest level for forty years: 137 in 2012 and 133 in 2013. Furthermore, 228 new immigrants arrived during the first ten months of 2014. To these should be added several tens of returning migrants and immigrant citizens (the children of Israeli citizens born abroad and arriving in Israel the first time). Additional figures should be added for other countries of emigration, especially to North America and other European countries, and the primary role of economic motives should be

Figure 36. Extent to which respondents have considered emigration from Italy in past five years due to not feeling safe as a Jew, %



N=650.

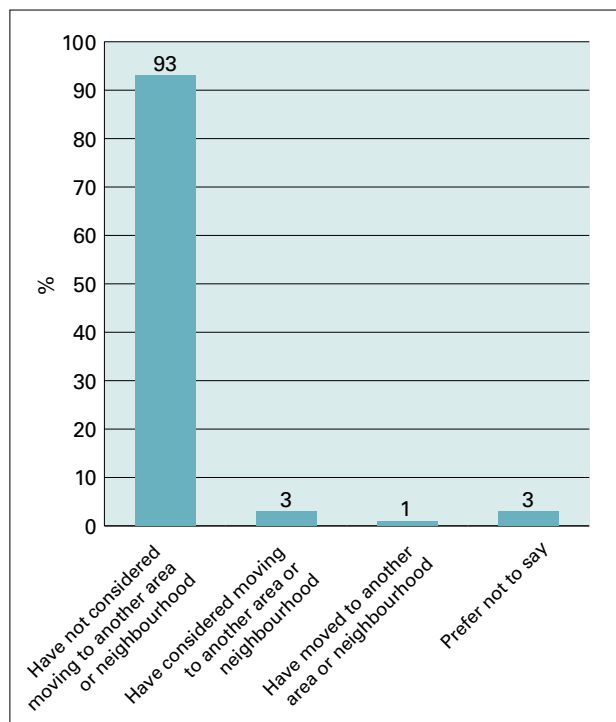
taken into account as a background to migration. Nevertheless, the indications on potential emigration stand among the more disquieting responses to perceptions of antisemitism in Italy.

In contrast to the previous findings on potential emigration, only a very small minority of 4% of respondents had moved to another area in Italy or considered doing so because of concerns about their safety as Jews in their original place of residence (Figure 37).

Another indicator of anxiety about antisemitism is the avoidance of displaying certain symbols that might identify the individual as Jewish to someone else. As can be seen in Figure 38, about 30% of the respondents said that they avoid displaying Jewish items (such as a *kipah* [skullcap], star of David, specific clothing, or displaying a *mezuzah*¹) frequently or all the time. A similar proportion said they avoid displaying Jewish things occasionally.

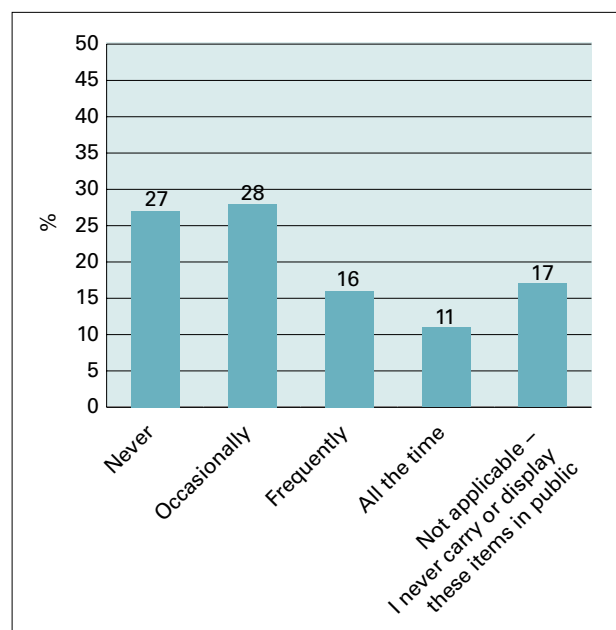
1 A *mezuzah* (lit. 'doorpost') is a piece of parchment, typically contained within a decorative case, inscribed with specific Hebrew verses from the Torah (Deut. 6:4-9 and 11:13-21) which together comprise the 'Sh'ma', one of the most central prayers in Jewish liturgy. It is affixed to the doorposts of Jewish people's homes

Figure 37. Extent to which respondents have considered moving to another part of Italy in the past five years, because they do not feel safe as a Jew in their current area, %



N=650.

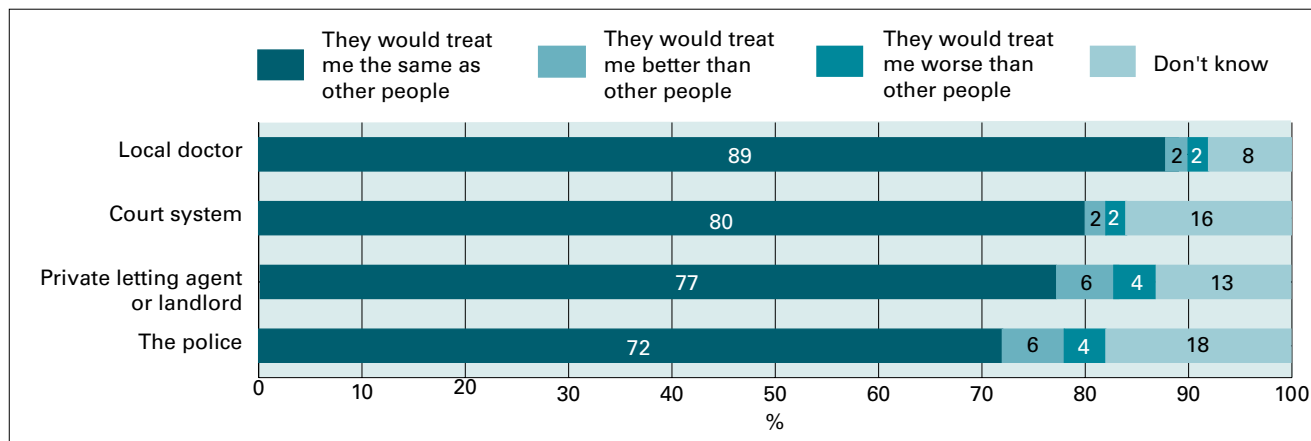
Figure 38. Avoidance if displaying Jewish items in public, %



N=650.

Antisemitism can manifest itself in multiple ways. Historically, it was not uncommon for Jews to be treated by official bodies (the police, courts, etc.) in a prejudicial fashion, particularly during

Figure 39. Respondents by kind of treatment that they expect to receive from selected bodies/institutions in Italy, %



N=650.

the Fascist period. However, the evidence shown in Figure 39 indicates that discrimination of this type in Italy is quite rare today. Less than 5% of the respondents expected to be treated worse than others due to their Jewishness by the police, landlords/private agencies, the courts, or a local doctor’s surgery. However, interestingly, in two out of the four instances explored (i.e. in relation to the police and the court system) a not insignificant minority said they did not know whether to expect worse, better or the same treatment.

Reporting

When antisemitic incidents occur, victims may elect to report them to the police or another authority. However, do they do so? This question

is important for a number of reasons. First, it allows us to estimate the completeness of police and other records of antisemitic offences. Second, it provides an indication of the relative value of different organisational records: if people demonstrate a greater willingness to report to a certain type of authority rather than another, it is possible to make an assessment of which records are likely to be the most complete. Third, it provides an indication of which authorities are regarded by respondents to be the most trustworthy.

Table 1 presents the respondents’ answers in relation to reporting of three kinds of antisemitic incidents: harassment, vandalism and physical violence. Between 50% and 80% of all incidents

Table 1. Reporting of incidents of antisemitic harassment, vandalism and physical attacks in relation to the most serious incident in the past five years, %

	Vandalism	Physical violence	Harassment
No, it was not reported	68	53	80
Yes, it was reported (total)	31	45	19
– to the police	20	24	9
– to the police and another organisation	11	5	2
– to another organisation	0	16	8
Don't know if it was reported	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100

N=211 (harassment), N=16 (vandalism), N=33 (physical violence).

remain unreported, with the lowest proportion of unreported incidents involving physical violence (53%) and the highest proportion in cases of harassment (80%). Only about 10% of incidents of harassment and about 30% incidents of vandalism and violence are reported to the police.

When asked why incidents are not reported, the most common response among Jews in Italy was that “nothing would happen or change” as a result of doing so. This finding is not unique to Jews in Italy; it was found among the Jewish populations of all countries investigated, and is similarly the most common response given by other minority groups across Europe when presented with the same question. Yet, evidently,

Jews in Italy appear to lack confidence in the ability of public authorities, including Jewish community organisations, to do anything meaningful following incidents of this type. The slightly higher rates of reporting of vandalism or physical violence may be related to the issue of the burden of proof – incidents that leave visible marks are easier to demonstrate to authorities than cases of verbal harassment. It is also possible that reporting in cases of vandalism are in some way related to insurance claims; reporting is typically required in order to make a claim for damages against one’s property. Again, this finding is not unique to Jews in Italy or Jews anywhere else; it is commonly found across all minority groups and European Union Member States.

7 Do different types of Jews perceive and experience antisemitism differently?

Different groups in the Jewish population tend to have somewhat different experiences and perceptions of antisemitic events. This variation may be related to the different types of antisemitism particular population groups do or do not experience, or to different perceptions of the same phenomena among people with different demographic characteristics, social status, life history and experiences, education, and level of religiosity. All these factors are likely to affect perceptions, for example, by making some people more or less sensitive or attentive to particular kinds of social events. These factors are also likely to impact on people's actual experiences, by shaping their environment on the one hand (e.g. the type of neighbourhoods they live in) and by making certain people's Jewishness more recognisable (e.g. due to their distinctive dress, strictly Orthodox Jewish men are typically more visible than secular Jews).

We examined the relationships between seven measures/indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism and selected socio-demographic variables: place of residence, sex, age, education, and level of religiosity. We focused on the following measures of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism: (1) thinking that antisemitism is a problem in Italy; (2) thinking that antisemitism has increased in the past five years; (3) reporting experience(s) of antisemitic harassment in the past twelve months; (4) reporting experience(s) of discrimination on the basis of religion/belief or ethnicity in the past twelve months; (5) worrying about becoming a victim of an antisemitic act in a public place in the next twelve months; (6) reporting avoidance of Jewish events or sites and/or certain places or locations in their local area due to fear for their safety as Jews; and (7) considering emigrating or actual emigration in the past five years.

Community of residence

Differences between cities of residence – i.e. local Jewish communities – are of primary interest in the context of Italian Jewry because of several

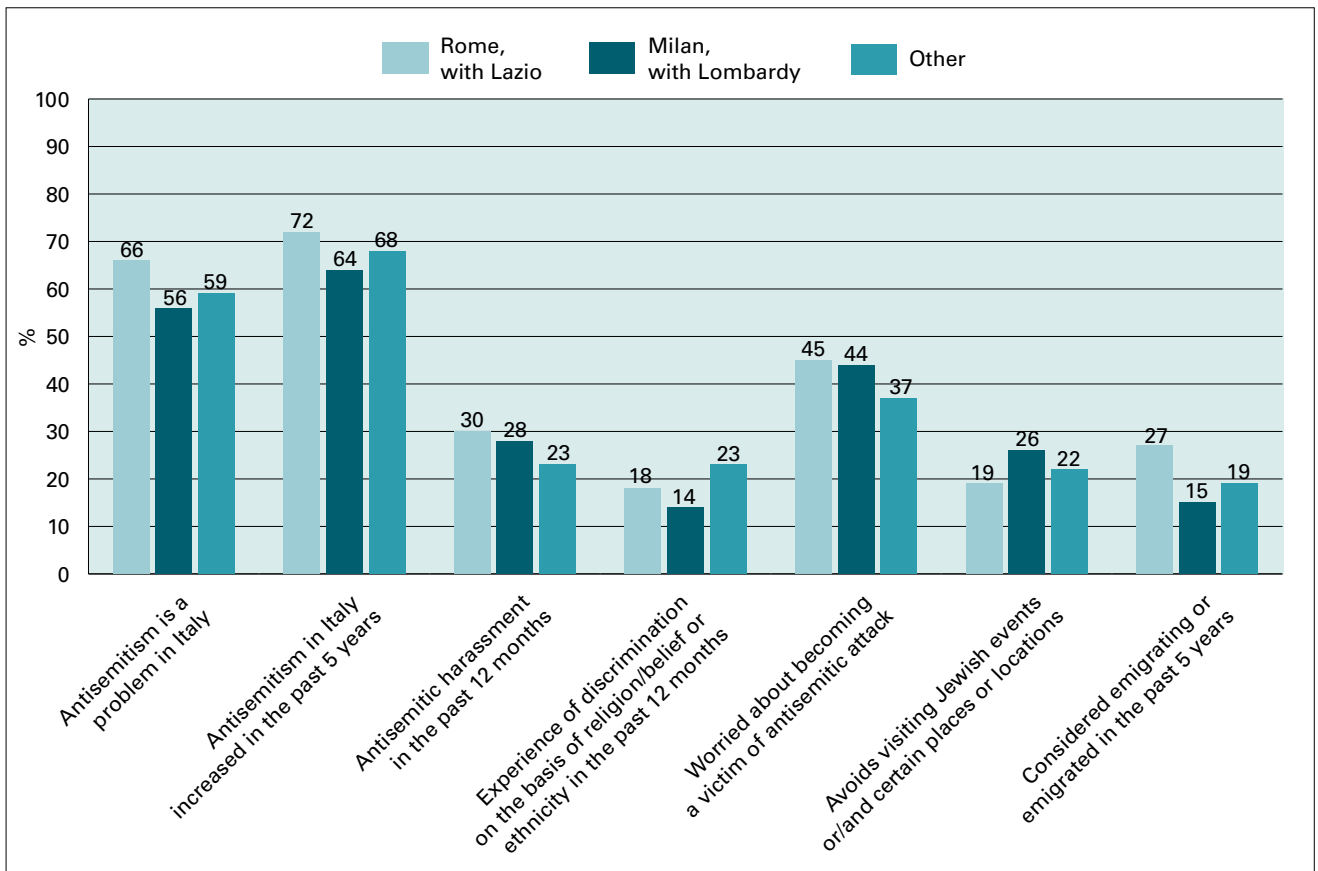
factors, notably the significant variation in the size of these populations and the proportion of Jews in the total urban population, and the different political orientation of different regions and towns in Italy. In this section, we sub-divide the survey respondents into three groups: residents of Rome (including a few in the surrounding region of Lazio), the major Jewish community in Italy; residents of Milan (including a few in other parts of the Lombardy region), the second largest community; and residents of all other parts of Italy, including smaller Jewish communities.

Figure 40 compares seven indicators of perceptions of antisemitism. All in all, differences are not striking across different Jewish communities, but some are worth noting. On five out of seven indicators, the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews from Rome are higher than among Jews from other parts of Italy. These are: perception of antisemitism as a problem; perception of an increase in antisemitism over the last five years; antisemitic harassment over the last twelve months; worry about becoming a victim of an antisemitic act; and considered emigrating or have emigrated during the last five years. Milan is the highest regarding the avoidance of visits to Jewish places or events, but rates the lowest on four of the seven indicators. Smaller communities are highest regarding experiences of discrimination on the basis of religion, ethnicity or belief.

Perceptions of a significant growth in antisemitism and in racism are shown together in Figure 41 by place of residence. Whereas concern about an increase in antisemitism is highest in Rome and in smaller communities, concern about an increase of racism is highest in Milan.

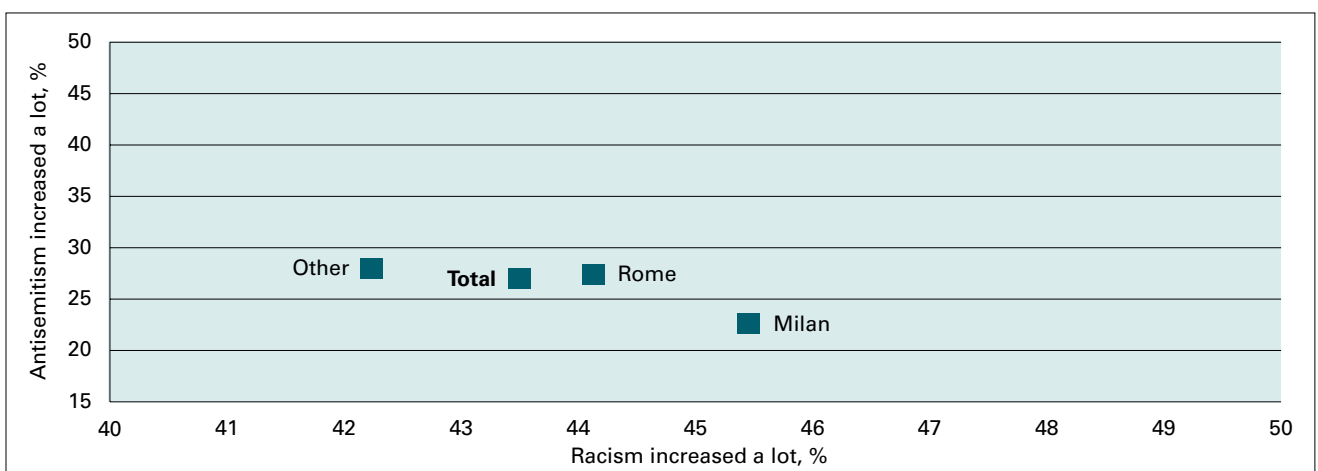
As already noted, the varying ideological bases of antisemitism may differ across Italian regions and cities because of both the different political traditions of such areas and the different incidence of recent international migration to Italy affecting the ethnic composition of each locality. Figure 42

Figure 40. Differences between places of residence on selected indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Italy, %



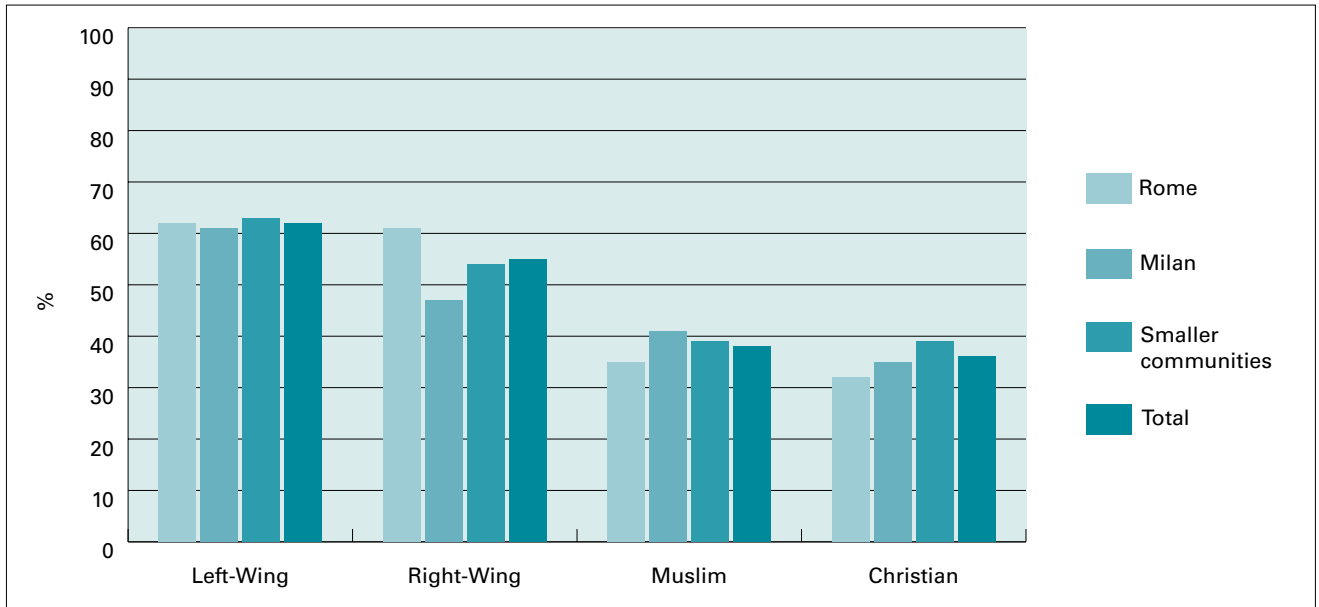
N=650.

Figure 41. Perceptions of significant growth in antisemitism and racism, by place of residence, %



N=650.

Figure 42. Ideological sources of antisemitism, by place of residence, %



N=633.

Table 2. Perpetrators of antisemitic harassment in the past five years, by place of residence, %

	Someone with a right-wing political view	Someone with a left-wing political view	Someone with a Christian extremist view	Someone with a Muslim extremist view
Rome, with Lazio	30	41	12	17
Milan, with Lombardy	26	48	14	12
Other	27	37	18	18

N=211 (harassment).

portrays the differential incidence of perceived ideological sources of antisemitism, while Table 2 shows the difference in actual antisemitic harassment. Regarding the ideological sources of antisemitism, the political left features most strongly in each community (over 60% of respondents). The political right is the source for about 55% of the respondents nationally, but it is definitely above average in Rome where it matches the political left. In Milan, right-wing antisemitism is somewhat less frequently reported. Muslim and Christian sources of antisemitism are reported with similar frequency nationally (both slightly above 35%), but Muslim antisemitism is a greater concern in Milan, and Christian antisemitism in smaller communities.

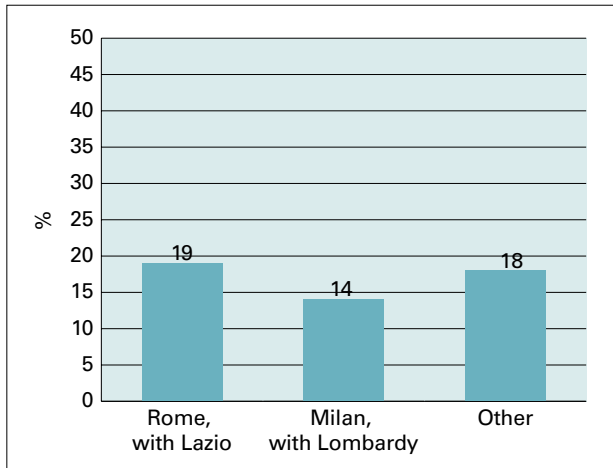
While rightist ideological sources of antisemitism are strong in Rome, antisemitic

harassment is consistently most common from the political left in all areas of Italy (Table 2).

Respondents in Rome are marginally more likely than those living elsewhere in the country to witness others experiencing antisemitic incidents (Figure 43).

The overall impression is that Rome, the capital city, the seat of governmental institutions, and the home of the largest and most visible Jewish community in Italy, is the place in the country where antisemitism is felt with the greatest intensity. This may, in part, be due to the higher visibility of many public demonstrations that naturally happen to be organised in the city. Another factor may perhaps be that Rome has a traditionally right-wing electorate.

Figure 43. Witnessing other Jews being subjected to antisemitic verbal harassment or physical attack, by place of residence, %



N=650.

Sex

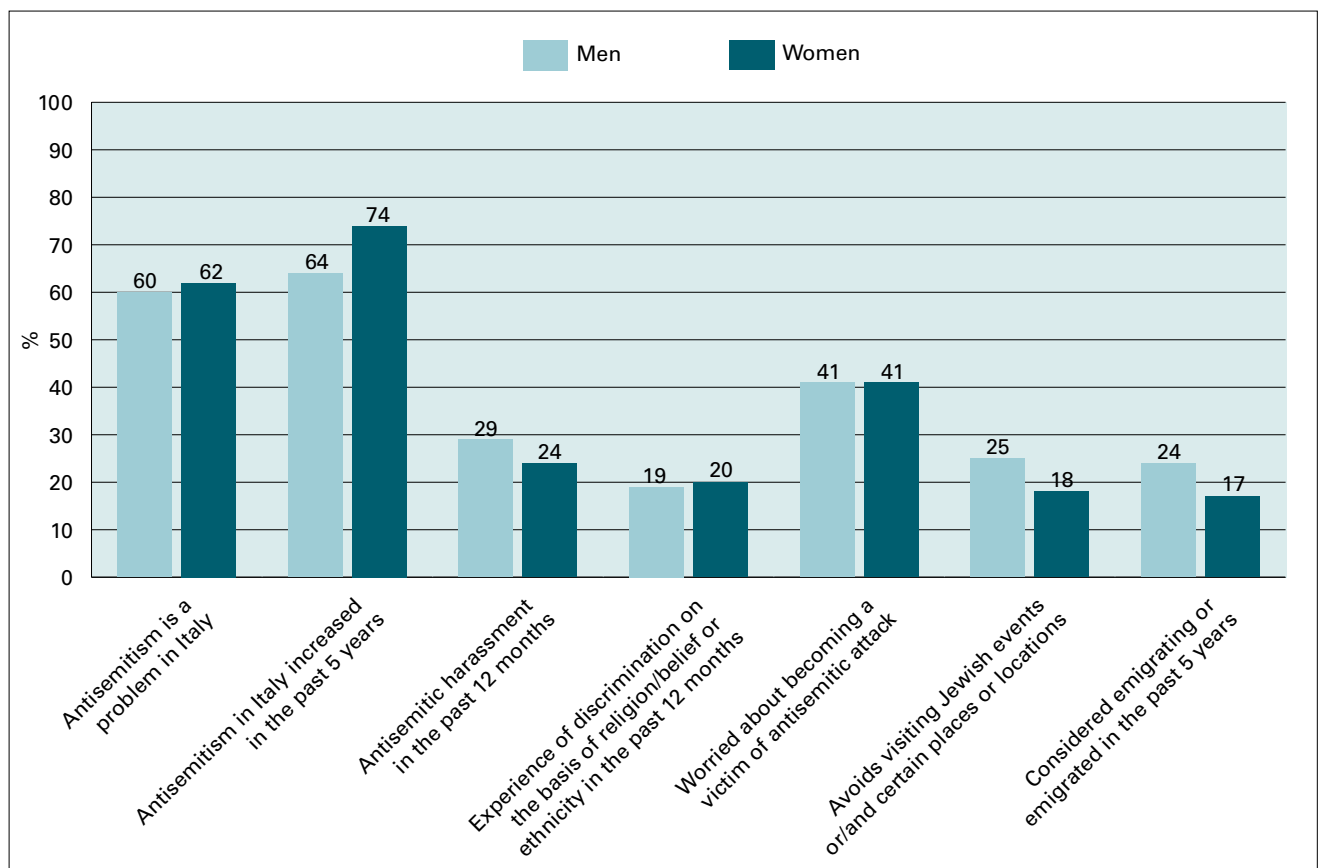
Differences in perceptions of antisemitism by gender do not produce very significant trends.

Of seven indicators, men demonstrate higher levels of concern than women on three, women demonstrate higher levels of concern than men on another three, and on one there is no difference (Figure 44). However, most of these differences are minor. The main difference can be observed in different perceptions about whether antisemitism in Italy has increased over the past five years: 74% of women feel it has, compared to 64% of men.

Age

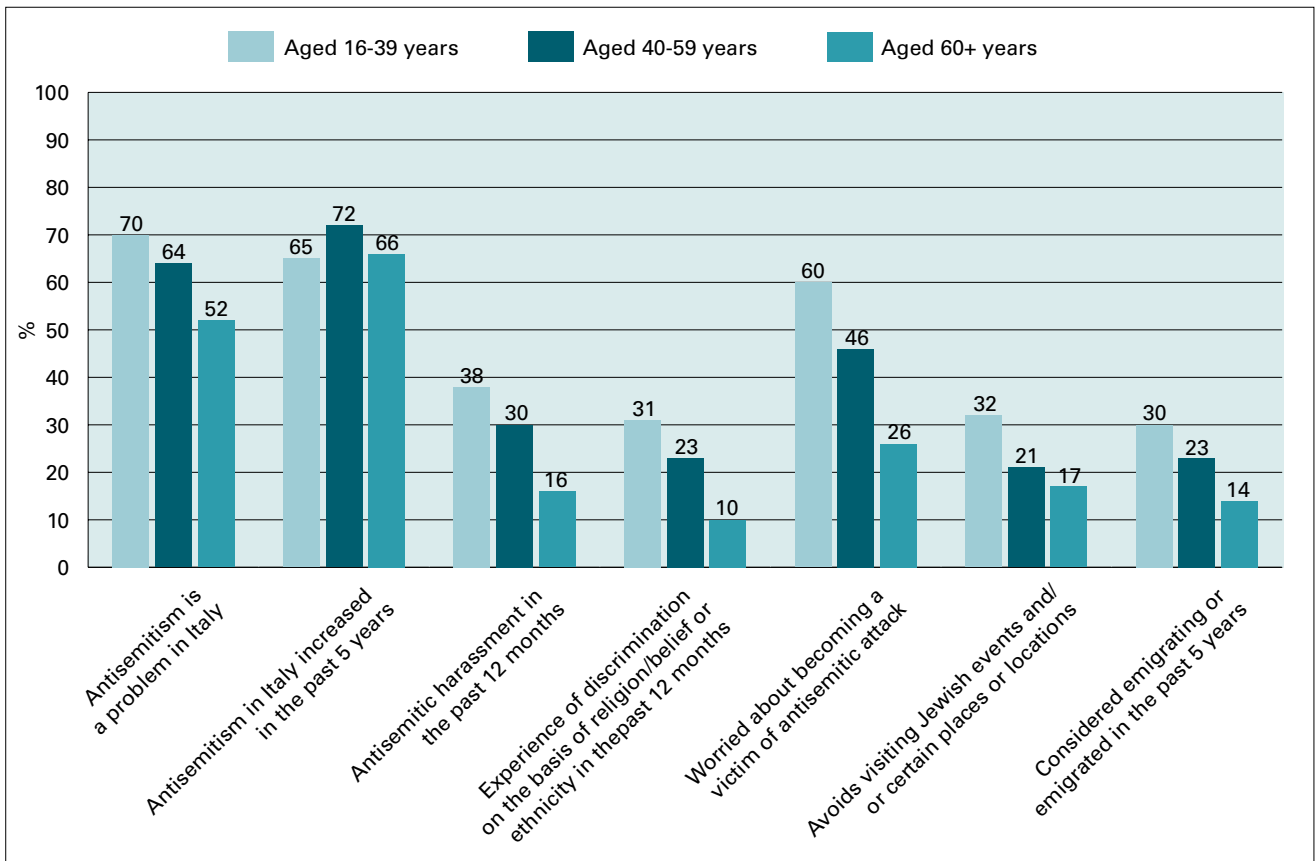
Perceptions of antisemitism tend to be different across major age groups (Figure 45). In six out of seven indicators, the most concerned are those aged 16-39 years, followed by those aged 40-59 years, and then by those aged 60+ years. The only exception to this pattern can be seen in relation to perceptions about whether antisemitism in Italy has increased over the past five years, where those aged 40-59 come highest among the three age bands. This very clear age pattern, namely the increased sensitivity among

Figure 44. Differences between men and women on selected indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Italy, %



N=650.

Figure 45. Differences between age groups on selected indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Italy, %



N=650.

the younger, seems to reinforce the impression of an escalation of antisemitic expressions and events in Italian society. Nonetheless, it should be recalled that the response rate among younger people was lower than average, and those who did respond may be more sensitive than others.

Education

Differences in perceptions of antisemitism can be assessed in relation to the level of educational attainment of the respondents (Figure 46). Here, with no exceptions, people with a lower educational level seem to be more sensitive to antisemitism. Particularly noteworthy is the differential regarding the possibility of emigration from Italy. Observing the composition of actual recent immigration to Israel tends to confirm the impressions from the present survey.

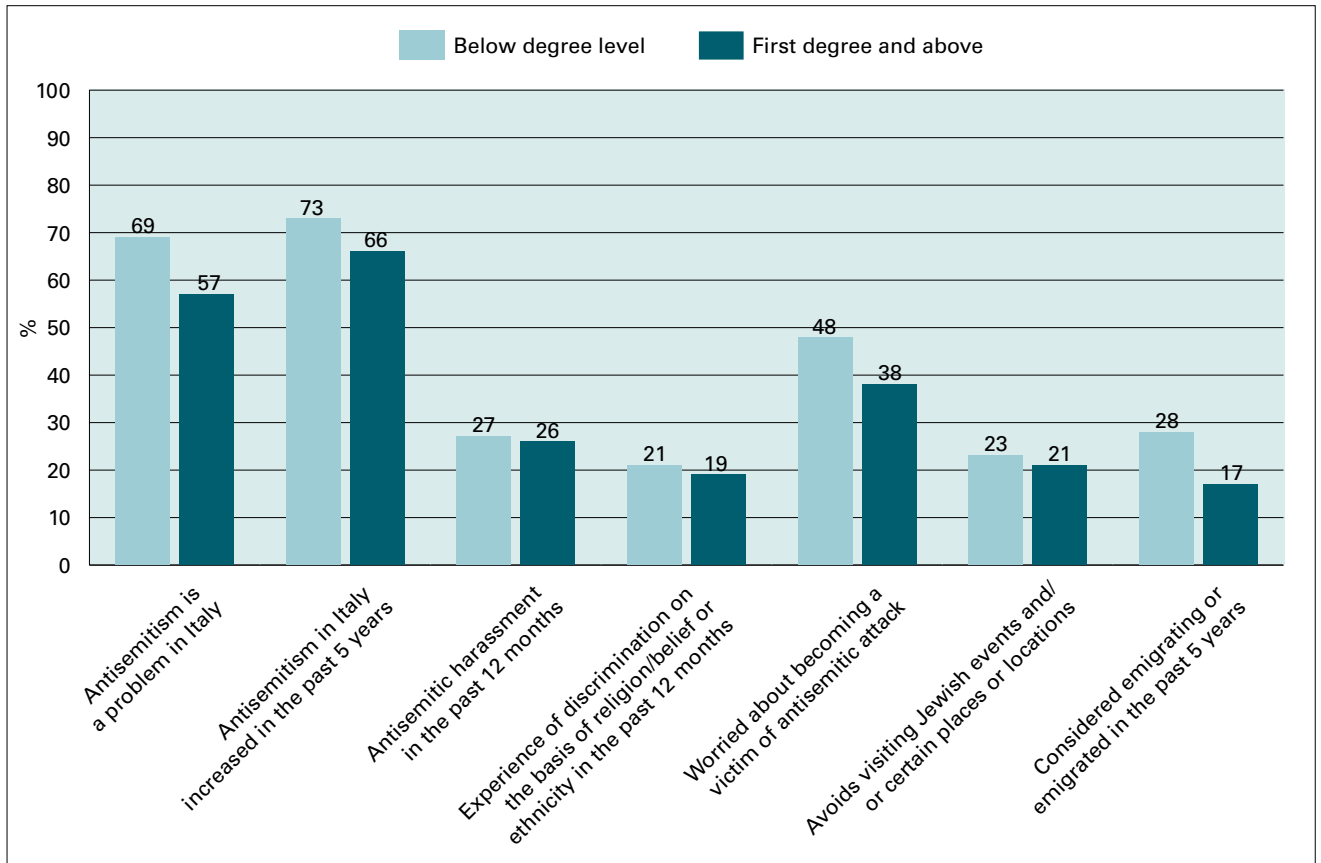
Level of religiosity

Levels of religiosity are also plausibly related to perceptions of antisemitism (Figure 47). If

we rely on a simplified dichotomy between Orthodox/Haredi and non-Orthodox/Haredi, the former are consistently much more sensitive to antisemitic manifestations. The gaps are particularly notable regarding three indicators: antisemitic harassment actually experienced, anxiety about becoming a victim of an antisemitic incident, and considering emigration from Italy.

Among all variables examined here, the most consistent and unambiguous relationship is between the respondents' level of religiosity and their perceptions and experiences of antisemitism. A greater degree of religiosity is associated with more antisemitic experiences and more anxiety about their possible occurrence. This finding arises from all seven indicators, and in relation to all seven indicators the correlations are statistically significant. The most obvious explanation for this is that more religious Jews are more visibly identifiable as Jews. However, it could also be that Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews exist in rather different

Figure 46. Differences between educational groups on selected indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Italy, %

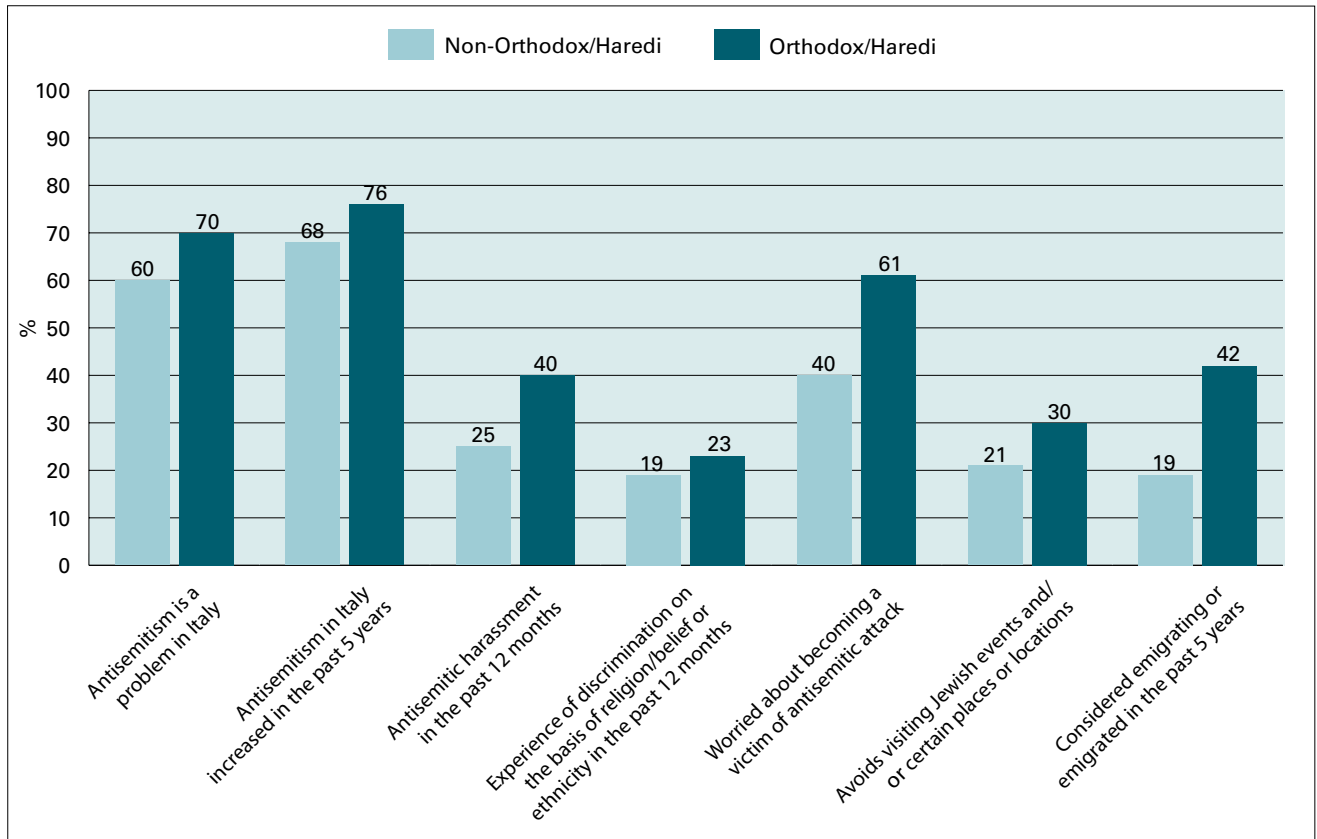


N=650.

mental worlds from one another, which shape and influence their perceptions and experiences of antisemitism. These data cannot confirm or deny either of these hypotheses, and both

would need to be explored through more in-depth research or with reference to other survey findings before one can draw any firm conclusions.

Figure 47. Differences between Orthodox/Haredi respondents and non-Orthodox/Haredi respondents (traditional, reform/ progressive, just Jewish) on selected indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Italy, %



N=650.

8 How does Italy compare to other countries in Europe?

Ten measures of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism

How do the perceptions and experiences of Italian Jews compare to those of Jews in other European countries covered by the survey? The results of the survey allow us to draw a number of comparisons. In this section, ten measures or indicators of perceptions and experiences of antisemitism are presented in cross-country perspective:

- i) thinking that antisemitism is a problem;
- ii) thinking that antisemitism in Italy has increased in the past five years;
- iii) having experience/s of antisemitic harassment in the past twelve months;
- iv) having experience/s of antisemitic vandalism in the past twelve months;
- v) having experience/s of antisemitic physical attack in the past twelve months;
- vi) having experience/s of discrimination on the basis of religion/belief or ethnicity in the past twelve months;
- vii) worrying about becoming a victim of an antisemitic act in a public place in the next twelve months;

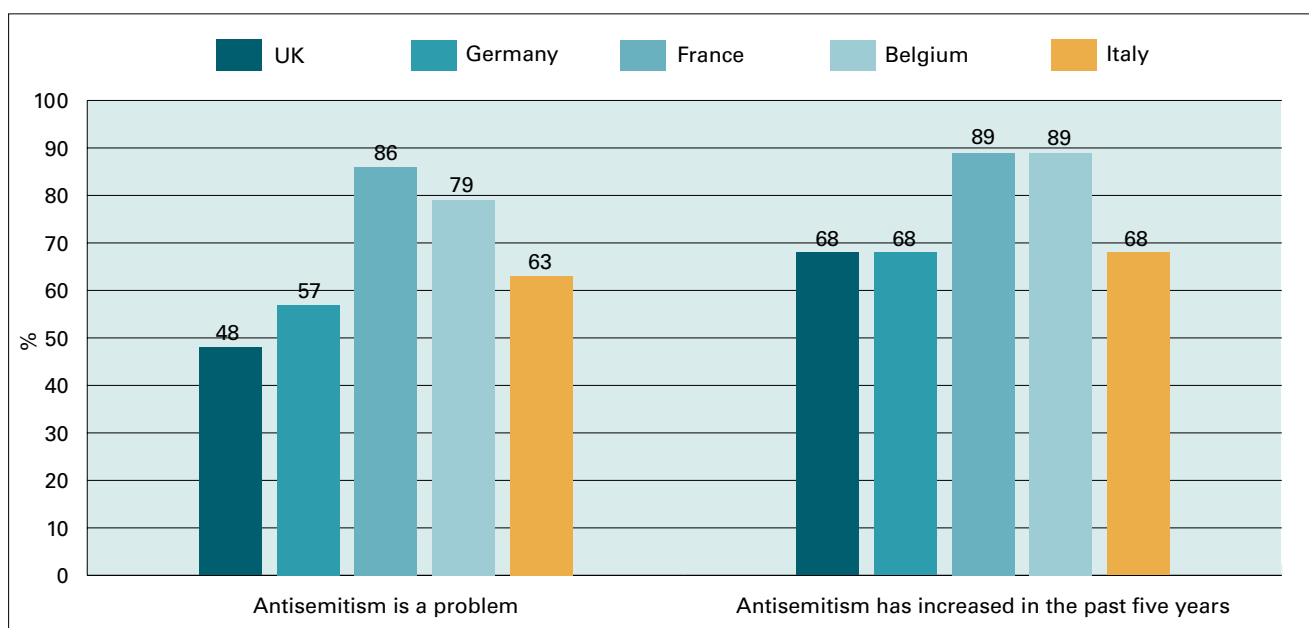
- viii) avoiding Jewish events or sites and/or certain places or locations in one's local area due to fear for one's safety as a Jew;
- ix) considering emigrating or actual emigration in the past five years;
- x) avoiding displaying one's Jewishness in public.

Below the Italian sample is compared to the samples generated by the survey in Germany, France, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

Italy emerges from this comparison as a country with a moderate level of antisemitism. The proportion of Italian respondents who believe antisemitism to be a problem (63%) is lower relative to levels registered in France and Belgium but higher than in Germany and the United Kingdom. The proportion of Italian respondents who think that antisemitism has increased in the past five years is identical to proportions found in Germany and the United Kingdom, but lower than in France and Belgium (Figure 48).

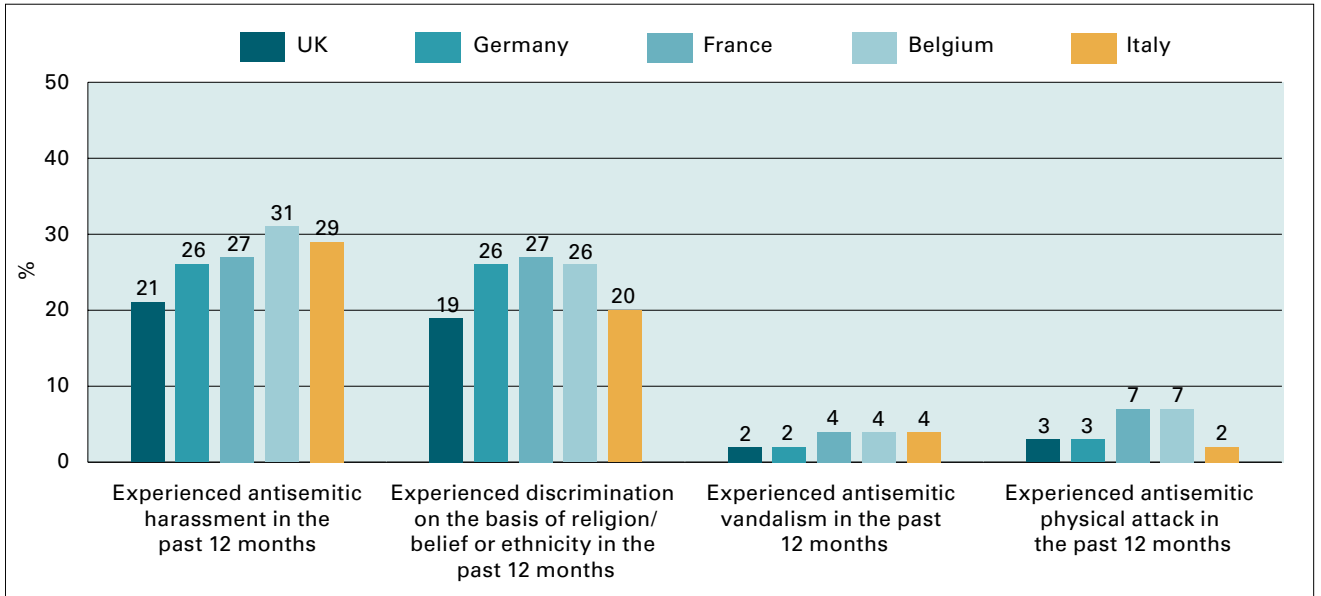
Experience of antisemitic harassment in the past twelve months in the Italian sample is rather high in this comparison (29%), and it is second only to Belgium. Experience of discrimination on the

Figure 48. Pattern of response to the question whether antisemitism is a problem, %



N: UK=1,468, Germany=609, France=1,193, Belgium=438, Italy=650.

Figure 49. Proportion of the respondents saying that they had experienced antisemitic harassment, a physical attack, act of vandalism and/or discrimination on the grounds of religion/faith or ethnicity at least once in the past twelve months, %

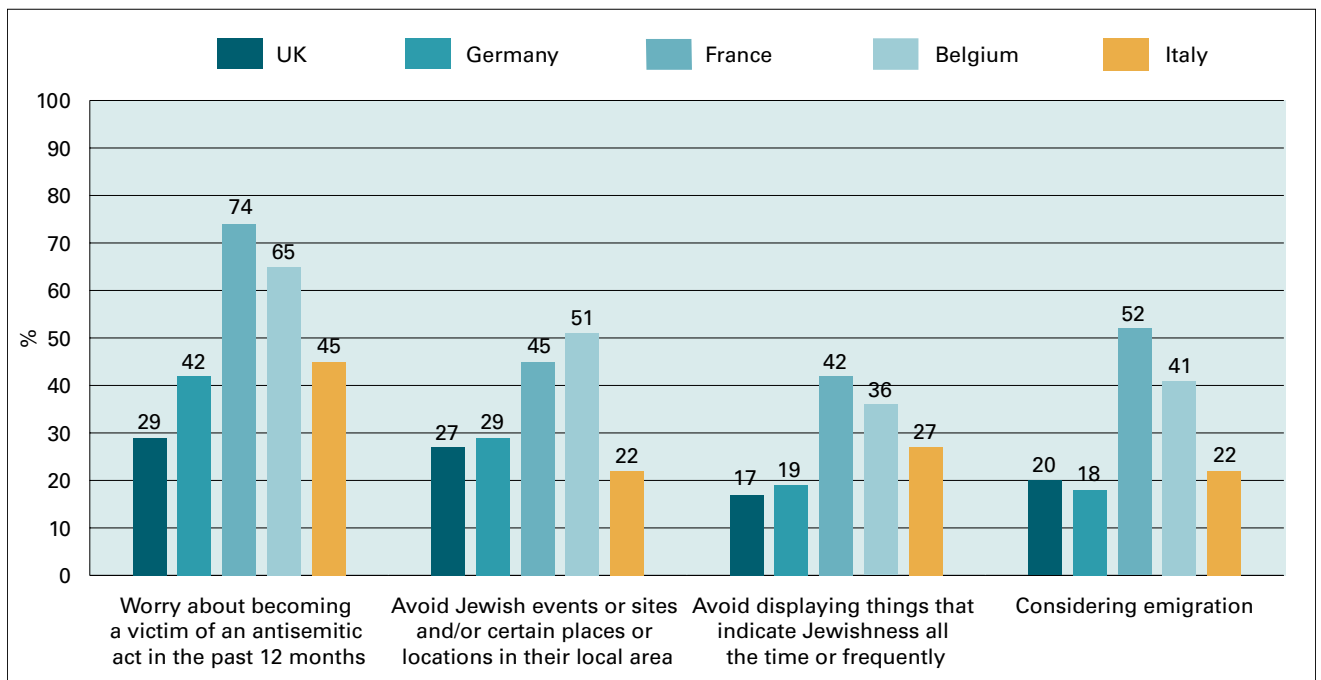


N: UK=1,468, Germany=609, France=1,193, Belgium=438, Italy=650.

basis of religion/belief or ethnicity is reported by 20% in the Italian sample, a level very close to the level registered in the United Kingdom (a country with the lowest level of reported discrimination). Experience of antisemitic physical violence in the Italian sample is the lowest in this comparison (2%) (Figure 49).

Italy also exhibits intermediate levels on measures such as worrying about becoming a victim of antisemitic attack in the next 12 months, avoiding displaying items that indicate Jewishness and considering emigration (Figure 50).

Figure 50. Proportion of the respondents exhibiting particular emotional and behavioural responses to antisemitism, %



N: UK=1,468, Germany=609, France=1,193, Belgium=438, Italy=650.

Table 3. Berry index for nine survey countries: primary identification patterns of Jews

Country	Jewish yes Country yes Integrated	Jewish yes Country no Separated	Jewish no Country yes Assimilated	Jewish no Country no Marginal	Total	N
Total	65	21	11	4	100	5,770
France	74	15	10	1	100	1,165
UK	74	15	10	2	100	1,454
Romania	74	15	5	6	100	66
Sweden	70	13	15	2	100	802
Italy	66	21	9	4	100	631
Belgium	58	31	7	4	100	419
Hungary	53	22	20	5	100	516
Latvia	38	40	6	15	100	142
Germany	35	44	10	10	100	575

Other measures

Table 3 uses Berry’s index of acculturation to explore the extent to which Jews from the nine countries involved in the study identify with their Judaism and their country of residence. Strong identification with both is interpreted as integration, while identification with neither indicates marginalisation. The two intermediate options are assimilation, if identification with country prevails on Jewish identity, and separation, if the opposite combination is true. Among the total EU nine country sample, 65% of Jews appear to be integrated, 11% assimilated,

21% separated, and 4% marginal. Among the Italian respondents, proportions are nearly identical: 66%, 9%, 21%, and 4%, respectively.

Perceptions of antisemitism and racism, particularly with regard to whether they have increased recently or not, vary widely across the nine EU survey countries (Figure 51). The two appear to be strongly correlated across Europe. The highest incidence of mounting racism is perceived in Hungary, while the highest perception of rising antisemitism can be found in France. Italian respondents are

Figure 51. Perceptions of growth in racism and antisemitism, nine survey countries, %

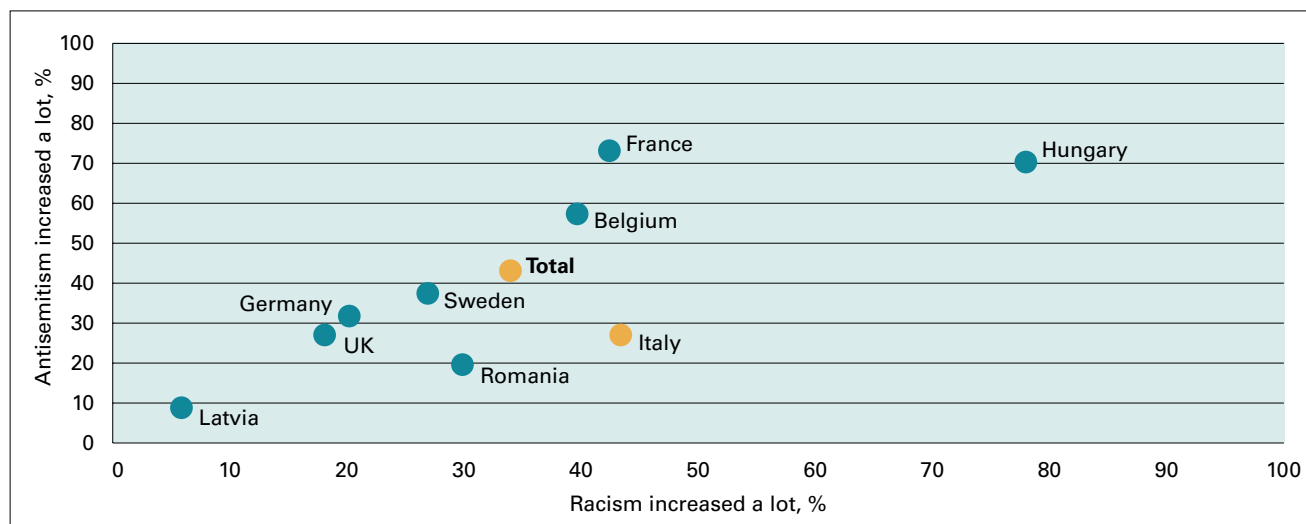
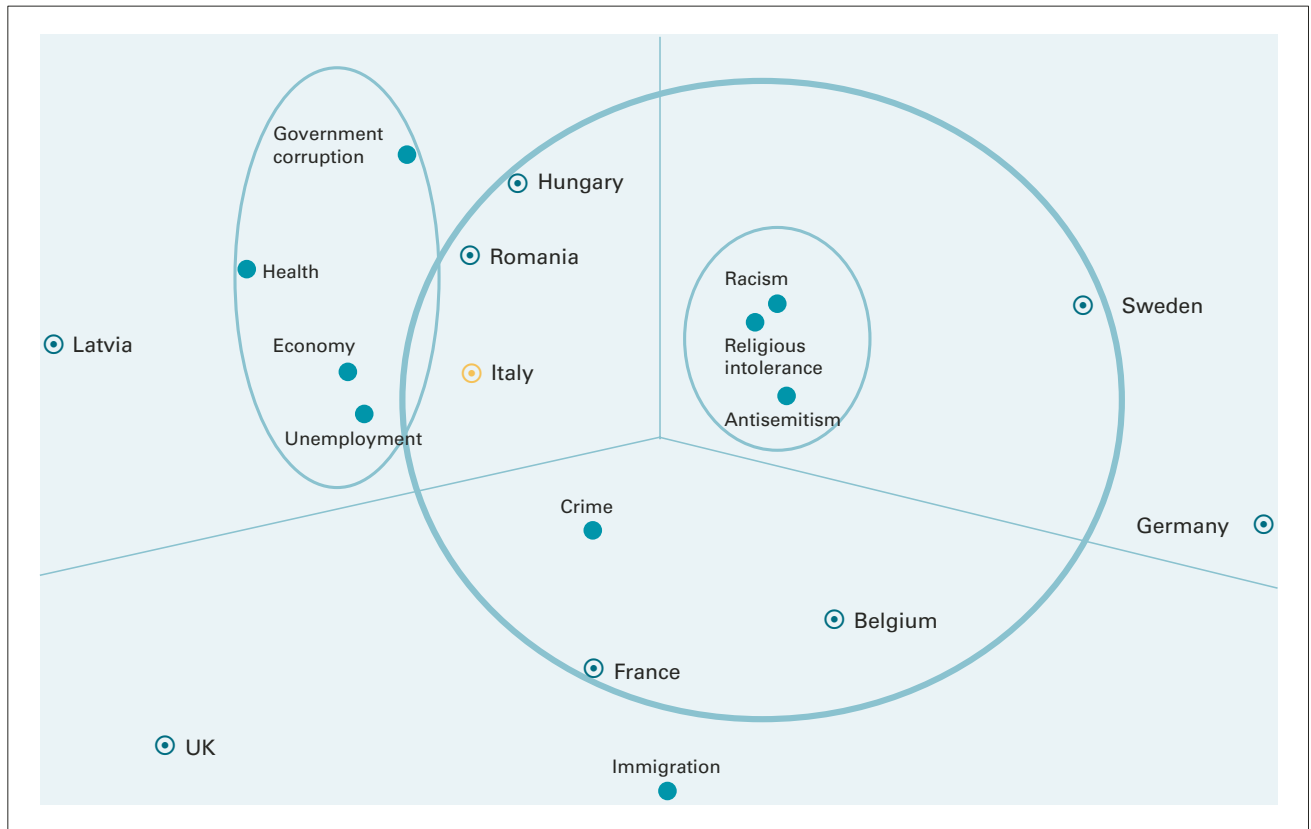


Figure 52. Configuration (SSA) of nine main societal concerns with countries as external variables

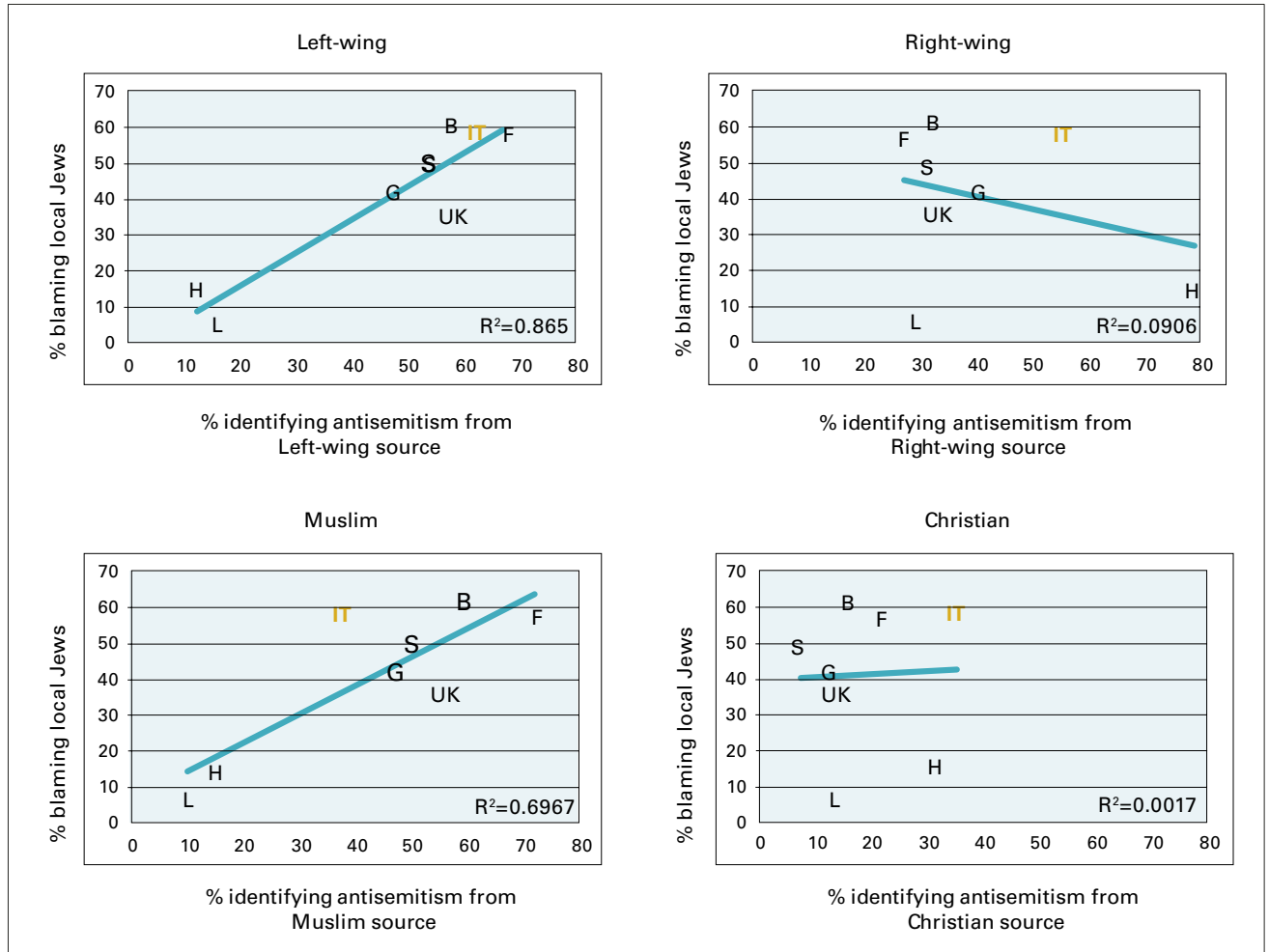


among those who most perceive the increase in racism, and in this respect they are second to Hungary and are slightly ahead of France and Belgium by a small margin. On the other hand, regarding perceptions of rising antisemitism, Italy comes sixth out of nine countries, after Sweden and Germany and the three countries already mentioned.

The position of antisemitism among other major societal concerns is assessed in Figure 52, where nine items are graphically correlated with the nine survey countries through Similarity Structure Analysis (SSA). There are two ways to look at Figure 52. The first is to look at the distance of each country from the central complex of concerns about antisemitism, racism, and religious intolerance. Here Jews in Italy, together with Jews in Romania, Hungary, France, Belgium and Sweden, belong to the circle of countries where these concerns are greater. Three other countries, the UK, Germany, and Latvia, belong in a broader, more distant, circle, demonstrating rather less concern about antisemitism.

A second way to look at the typology of the countries covered in this survey concerns their proximity to each of the major issues of national concern. Each type of issue is represented in a different sector of the graphical display. This too helps to better understand Italy's peculiar position in the broader European context. Perceptions of problems in Italy, as in Hungary, Romania and Latvia, appear in the sector connected with the economy, unemployment, public health and government corruption. Perceptions of problems in France and Belgium, on the other hand, appear in the sector connected with crime and immigration. Concerns with antisemitism, racism and religious intolerance appear in the sector which includes Sweden and Germany. These data should be interpreted in the sense that in countries where other more general issues appear to be very dominant, they – more than antisemitism – stand at the centre of the respondents' concerns as well. But where other more general concerns are of comparatively lesser import (as in Sweden and especially Germany), the preoccupation with antisemitism stands out as a relevant concern.

Figure 53. Blaming local Jews because of Israeli government’s actions, by ideological background of antisemitism across all countries surveyed



The relationship between the diverse political and ideological sources of antisemitism and the tendency to blame European Jews for the actions of the government of Israel (already explored in Figure 30) is analysed in greater detail in Figure 53. There are four separate graphs, each of which focuses on a different source of antisemitic incidents – i.e. whether victims of antisemitism in each of the countries investigated identified their assailant/s as coming from the political left, the political right, a Muslim extremist position or a Christian extremist position. In each case, proportions of types of perpetrators are plotted against the proportions of those who said they felt they were blamed by non-Jews for the actions of the Israeli government, thereby providing a view of the correlation between them. This is important because, in terms of the contemporary manifestations of antisemitism, this artificial association is one of the major sources of unease

among Jewish communities. In the hypothesis that the given type of ideological background determines the intensity of anti-Israeli attitudes, the strength of the relationship is demonstrated by the R2 value, called the ‘coefficient of determination’, in the lower right corner of each diagram. The line in each graph also enables the reader to assess the relationship: a steep incline indicates a strong correlation between the two, a decline suggests a negative correlation, and a flat line suggests no correlation.

Clearly the strongest correlation can be found between antisemitism from the left and the tendency to blame European Jews for the actions of the Israeli government ($R^2 = 0.865$, or an explanation power of the relationship equal to 86.5%). Italy strongly contributes to such high correlation, having the second highest perception of a left-wing background of perpetrators to the

anti-Israeli form of antisemitism. The correlation is also high between antisemitism from Muslim sources and the tendency to blame Jews for the actions of the Israeli government ($R^2 = 0.6967$, or 69.7%), but on this account Jews in Italy have weaker perceptions in comparison with other countries. On the other hand, while there is a very weak correlation between antisemitism from the right and the tendency to blame Jews for the actions of the Israeli

government ($R^2 = 0.0906$, or 9.1%), Italy stands out among European countries as the country with the second highest perception of right-wing antisemitism after Hungary. Finally, there is no correlation between antisemitism from Christian sources and the tendency to blame Jews for the actions of the Israeli government ($R^2 = 0.0017$, or 0.2%), but again, Jews in Italy have the stronger perception of this kind relative to those in other countries.

9 Conclusions

The 2012 FRA survey provided a new assessment of the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism amongst Jews in nine European Union countries. This report deals with the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism in Italy. While this is not the first study of the extent of antisemitic ideas and events, it is the first time antisemitism had been assessed through the eyes of the victims of harassment, discrimination, and physical violence. The main lesson, consistent with studies of a general cross-section of Italian respondents, is that in recent years, antisemitism has been on the increase and constitutes a growing concern within the Jewish community.

Among the main findings from the survey are the following:

- Over one half of survey respondents (six in ten) think that antisemitism in Italy is a problem, and approximately one in five think that it is a very big problem.
- A majority of the respondents (seven in ten respondents) indicated that antisemitism had increased in the past five years, and about one quarter of the respondents said that it had increased a lot.
- Antisemitism on the Internet, antisemitic graffiti and antisemitism in the media are the three types of antisemitism which are considered by respondents to be the most common and problematic.
- Yet, when compared to other socio-economic issues in Italy (e.g. unemployment, government corruption and the state of the economy) antisemitism is not seen as the primary problem. The former issues are perceived as more of a problem by over 90% of respondents.
- Statements by non-Jews which were considered unambiguously antisemitic by the largest proportion of survey respondents (about eight in ten) are: (1) that ‘the Holocaust is a myth or has been exaggerated’; (2) that ‘Jews exploit Holocaust victimhood for their own purposes’; and (3) attributing responsibility for the current economic crisis to the Jews.
- Criticism of Israel is considered to be definitely antisemitic by a minority of 9% of the respondents. At the same time, six in ten respondents thought that when non-Jews state that Israelis behave ‘like Nazis’ towards the Palestinians they are definitely being antisemitic. In short, criticism of Israel in itself is not seen as a factor that makes a non-Jew antisemitic in the eyes of the survey respondents; rather, it is the precise content and tone of the criticism that matter.
- Approximately one in three respondents said that they had at least one experience of antisemitic harassment (e.g. they had received antisemitic comments in person or online, received offensive calls, messages or letters or were followed or waited for in a threatening way) in the past twelve months. One in five said that they had experienced discrimination on the basis of their religion/faith or ethnicity in the past twelve months. A small minority of 2% and 4%, respectively, said that they had experienced an antisemitic physical attack or an act of vandalism.
- More than half of antisemitic incidents remain unreported to the police or any other organisation. The low propensity to report such incidents reflects the widespread feeling among Jews in Italy was that “nothing would happen or change” as a result of doing so.
- There is a large gap between actual personal experiences of antisemitism and the general feeling of diffused antisemitism in society. There is no common feeling either of actual discrimination from government or other public institutions.
- Both in relation to harassment and to physical violence, someone with a left-wing political view, followed by someone with a right-wing political view, are the two most frequently-mentioned categories of perpetrators. About 40% of respondents who had experienced antisemitic harassment, and about one in three of those who had experienced antisemitic violence, described the perpetrator as someone with a left-wing political view. Perpetrators of antisemitic harassment and violence with a Christian extremist view or with a Muslim extremist view were mentioned by a smaller proportion of the respondents: less than one in ten and less than one in five, respectively.

- Three-quarters of respondents said that the Arab-Israeli conflict impacted a great deal or a fair amount on how safe they feel in Italy. Furthermore, six in ten respondents said that people in Italy accuse or blame them all the time, or frequently, for actions taken by the Israeli government.
- A significant proportion of the respondents worry about the possibility that they themselves may become a victim of an antisemitic act in the next twelve months: about 40% are worried about becoming a victim of an act of verbal abuse or harassment and about one in five is worried about becoming a victim of an act of physical violence. On the other hand, less than 5% of the respondents expected to be treated worse than others due to their Jewishness by the police, landlords/private agencies, the courts, or at a local doctor's clinic.
- About one in ten respondents avoids Jewish events and certain places in their neighbourhood, either all the time or from time to time, due to concerns for their safety as Jews. Further, about one in four respondents said that they avoid displaying Jewish items (such as a skullcap, star of David, specific clothing, or displaying a *mezuzah*) frequently or all the time.
- Among the different regions and cities of Italy, Rome emerges as the site of more frequent manifestations of antisemitic prejudice, harassment and violence.

- Finally, about one in five respondents has considered emigration from Italy because they do not feel safe in Italy as Jews.

All in all, when comparisons are drawn with others countries investigated, Italy does not constitute the most antisemitic environment in contemporary Europe. Actual anti-Jewish physical violence and discrimination in the public sphere are the two most dangerous and intolerable manifestations of antisemitism, and neither was reported as a high profile concern by the Italian respondents. However, there is a significant perception that levels of antisemitism are high and rising, and this causes deep concern. More than in other European societies, antisemitism in Italy comes from many political and ideological strands. What is particularly disturbing is the recurrent appearance of three types of antisemitic slurs in public and political discourse – Holocaust denial or trivialisation, prejudice concerning the alleged excessive power of Jews in society, and delegitimisation of Israel. The Italian government has actually been very explicit in condemning and preventing such problematic expressions, but it has stopped short of approving a law sanctioning Holocaust denial as a crime. Unless the current economic and institutional crisis in the country is solved quickly and efficiently, the situation does not augur well for Italian Jewry in the years to come.

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11 Appendix: Data collection and weighting

Organisations targeted for distribution of the survey

The survey was announced and launched in the Jewish media in Italy in late April/early May 2012. In addition, JPR built an email distribution list of individuals involved in major Jewish organisations and communities throughout Italy. In the course of September 2012 all of these people were contacted directly with pre-designed emails in Italian inviting them to complete the survey and forward the details through their Jewish networks. Organisations and communities reached through this approach included the 21 officially constituted Jewish communities throughout Italy, rabbis, presidents and administrators, and the Unione Giovani Ebrei d'Italia (Union of Young Jews of Italy).

Also, during September 2012, the survey was directly promoted to the members of the database of the umbrella organisation of Italian Jewish communities (UCEI). Table 4 summarises all measures taken by this organisation at JPR's request. It is worth noting that the numbers of subscribers listed are the figures provided by the organisation. We have no way of verifying these. For this reason, the total number of people contacted through email campaigns, before the snowballing effect occurred, is unknown, but it is lower than the total number of addresses held by the organisations. There is also an unknown degree of overlap between different lists, i.e. UCEI, official Jewish communities, and other Jewish organisations throughout Italy.

On the basis of figures provided to us by the organisations taking part in promoting and distributing the survey, we estimate that, in total, up to 24,000 emails were sent out. However, this is

not an indication of the number of people reached. Our experience of work with administrative databases teaches us that the quoted figures are likely to be over-estimates, and, additionally, because of the unknown degree of overlap between different organisations' memberships, the actual catchment pool is smaller. In addition to the email campaign, information about the survey was promoted to people on organisational websites and by other indirect means. In sum, the true exposure of Italian Jews to the survey may be significant, surely more than in other countries with less centralized Jewish community services, but we cannot be certain of its precise scope.

Data collection

The target population for the survey was those aged sixteen or over who self-identify as Jewish and live permanently in Italy. Data were collected through a web-based questionnaire in an open survey. The sample was created by a 'snowballing' process starting with a list of email addresses belonging to the members/subscribers which was provided by the central Jewish community organization and various other Jewish organisations across Italy. The resulting sample is, effectively, a non-probability convenience sample. It was not possible to use a random probability sampling approach for this study because a suitable sampling frame for the total Jewish population, including non-members of officially constituted communities, is not available in Italy.

Guided by our previous experiences of survey-taking work among Italian Jews, we identified a number of the most influential Jewish organisations or media outlets able to reach the optimum number of Jews by email, and approached them to support the survey and

Table 4. Main sources of survey data collection in Italy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCEI - Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane (umbrella organisation of Italian Jewish communities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 email campaigns Banner on website and daily electronic newsletter 'Moked' Pagine Ebraiche monthly newspaper. Articles in Italian on survey with survey link
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Community of Rome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shalom: monthly of the Jewish community of Rome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Community of Milan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bollettino: monthly of the Jewish community of Milan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Community of Turin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hakehillà: bi-monthly of the Jewish community of Turin

actively assist with its distribution. Consenting organisations were equipped with online material in Italian in different formats: (1) a pre-designed email that they were asked to send to their distribution lists; (2) an advertisement and a “Frequently Asked Questions” document, which they could incorporate into an existing email/electronic newsletter; and (3) a banner advertisement, tailored to their chosen dimensions, with the weblink to the survey.

The survey was launched on 3 September 2012 and closed on 3 October 2012. 650 persons in total took part in the survey in Italy. Organisations and media outlets were asked to send out the pre-designed email three times (the first on Tuesday 4 September, with follow up emails on Monday 10 and Friday 14 September). Most complied with these dates, although in certain instances, the dates were altered slightly due to organisations’ practical or operational limitations. They were also asked, immediately prior to, and for the duration of the open web survey, to place the advertisements and banners publicising the survey directly on their websites, in their printed newspapers, and/or electronic newsletters/publications. It should be noted that major Jewish holidays took place during the period of data collection (the Jewish New Year on 17-18 September 2012, Yom Kippur on 26 September 2012 and Sukkot on 1-2 October 2012), and this may have affected response levels.

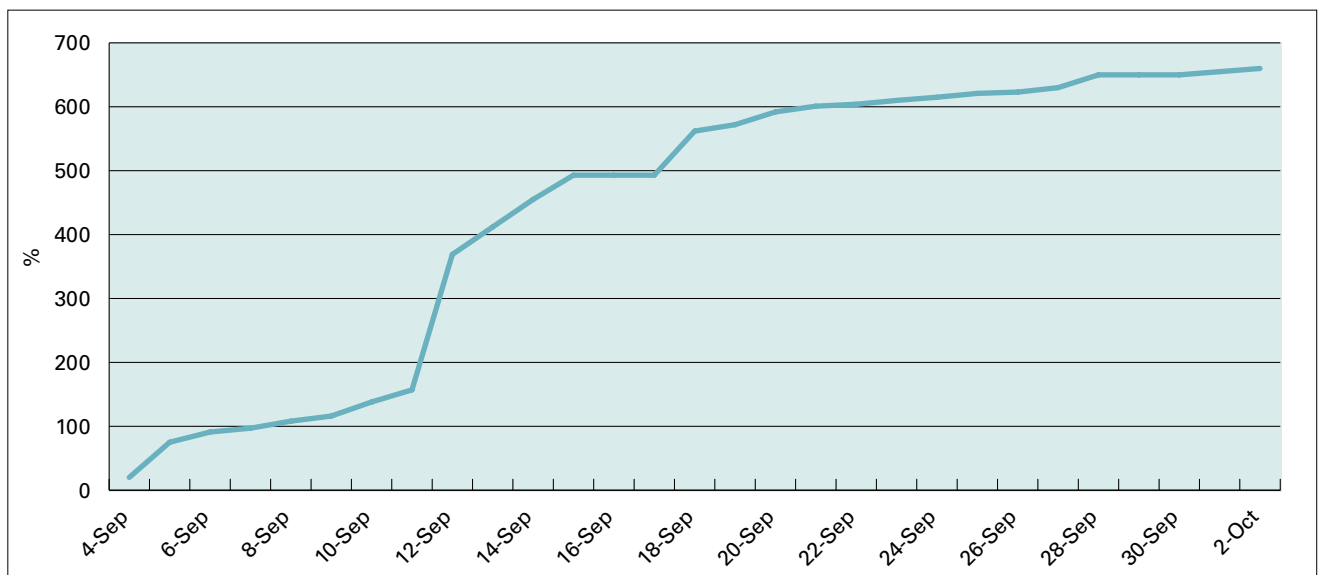
Figure 54 below shows the development of the response rate to the survey. The number of respondents increased steadily and plateaued in the last few days of fieldwork. Sharper increases after 9 September and 17 September accord well with the timing of reminders.

Weighting the sample: rationale and results

The first question that had to be asked in relation to data collected in the survey was: how do the characteristics of the respondents in the sample compare to the characteristics of Italian Jews? Does the sample represent them? Unfortunately, due to the nature of the sampling process, namely the use of the Internet as the channel for data collection, we cannot conduct a formal test of representativeness. Probability sampling (e.g. sampling based on random selection, giving everybody in the Italian Jewish population a known probability of inclusion in the survey) would be a prerequisite for such a test. That, in turn, would require a master list of all Italian Jews or their addresses, which is not currently available. Available lists do cover the vast majority of Jews in Italy, but the voluntary character of the response introduces a self-selection bias which can be assessed but not eliminated.

A formal test would include: (1) a calculation of confidence intervals for each sample characteristic (socio-demographic and other variables in this section, as well as the

Figure 54. Number of survey respondents, by day of fieldwork



perceptions and experiences of antisemitism presented in the following sections); and (2) a comparison of the confidence intervals for socio-demographic characteristics in this section with true population values, information on which can be obtained in Italy from Jewish community membership registers. In addition, confidence intervals for the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism can be assessed, not in comparison with true population values (as no such values exist for many characteristics), but on their own, in order to get an impression of where the true population values are likely to be found, with given probability.

It is clear, for example, that because the survey utilised membership and subscribers lists held by Jewish community organisations as a first port of call (followed by referrals made by people on these lists), those Jews on the community lists may have had a higher, albeit unknown, probability of inclusion in the sample. Moreover, it is reasonable to suspect that among members, the communally

uninvolved may be under-represented in the survey.

Is there any way to assess the representativeness of the convenience sample? Without resorting to formal tests, based on confidence intervals, one can still compare the distributions of selected socio-demographic variables in this sample to the community register-based distributions of the same variables. In fact, at the questionnaire development stage, we included a number of such variables with the specific purpose of allowing some assessment of representativeness.

A brief summary of such comparisons can be found in Table 5. There are five variables in this section for which community register-based results are available for comparison: community membership, religion, sex, age, and community of residence. By definition, all members of Jewish communities in Italy must be Jewish. Data on sex, age and geographical distribution were

Table 5. Comparison of selected socio-demographic characteristics in Italian sample and Jewish community records

Variable	Italian sample	Community records	Comments
Community membership			
• Yes	68%	100%	
• No; Don't know	32%	0%	
Religion			
• Jewish	92%	100%	
• Not Jewish; Don't know	8%	0%	
Sex			
• Males	58%	48%	In population aged 16+
• Females	42%	52%	
Age			
• 16-24	5%	13%	In population aged 16+
• 25-34	8%	13%	
• 35-49	24%	26%	
• 50-64	38%	23%	
• 70+	25%	25%	
Place of residence			
• Rome	35%	55%	
• Milan	20%	25%	
• Rest of Italy	45%	20%	

obtained from community registers as of 31 December 2011.

A first observation concerns the declared community membership and the religious identity of the respondents. By definition, Italian Jewish communities only register membership of Jews. In the survey, notwithstanding a warning in the introductory section of the questionnaire that the survey was only open to Jews, 8% declared they were not Jewish or did not know. Those 8% could not be members according to the prevailing rules, which extend to the broader issue of community membership and survey participation. The 32% of respondents who said they are not community members is much higher than community officers would have allowed in their estimates of the rate of non-membership in the Italian Jewish community. This can be explained either by an inaccurate perception of the situation by those community insiders, or by the emergence of a growing circle of people who are Jewishly-connected in some way without being community members – possibly through participation in non-Orthodox congregations that are not recognised by the official Jewish community in Italy.

Regarding gender and age, men were significantly more responsive to the survey than women: they constituted a clear majority of the sample (58%) against their real weight of 48% in the total Jewish population. Response biases regarding age were somewhat counterintuitive, as it might have been expected that younger adults are comparatively more attuned to the Internet than older people. In reality, people below 50, and especially below 35 were underrepresented in the survey, while those aged 50–64 were significantly overrepresented. Perhaps surprisingly, the proportion of people aged 70 years and above in the sample matched exactly their proportion in the population registered with Jewish communities.

Finally, quite a significant discrepancy appears regarding the geographical spread of respondents versus the Jewish population in community registers. The survey did not attract sufficient attention in the largest Jewish community of Rome, perhaps due to the lower socioeconomic level of many in that Jewish community and their presumed lower levels of access to Internet, or lack of time available to complete the questionnaire. Participation in Milan, too, was somewhat lower than expected given the size of that community. On the other hand, respondents from smaller communities participated in the survey very actively and were definitely overrepresented in the original sample.

Do these deviations from the expected composition impact on the pattern of response to the questions on the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism? We conducted a detailed assessment of representativeness and its impact on the results. This assessment included the development and implementation of survey weights adjusting the sample composition to the actual population composition of Jewish community members in terms of the following variables: sex, age, and place of residence. Detailed data tabulations were prepared, both weighted and unweighted. The result was that the implementation of weights has relatively negligible impact on the patterns of response about the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism at Italy's national level. Nevertheless, we decided to weight the sample throughout this report. In our view, the weighted findings more reliably reflect the perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Italian Jews.

Finally, regarding statistical significance of the data, its reporting is only appropriate in the case where a sample is generated by a true random process, which is not the case in internet open access surveys.

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Published by Institute for Jewish Policy Research

ORT House, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NE

e-mail jpr@jpr.org.uk

website www.jpr.org.uk

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