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Counting Antisemites versus Measuring Antisemitism

An “Elastic View” of Antisemitism

WERNER BERGMANN

ABSTRACT In a recent study on “Antisemitism in Contemporary Great Britain”, Daniel Staetsky introduces a promising new way of thinking about the level of antisemitism in society, which exists at different levels of intensity.¹ By differentiating a more or less coherent “learned antisemitism” (the diffusion of antisemitic ideas and images) from open dislike of Jews, he proposes the concept of an “elastic view”. In this chapter, Staetsky’s concept and the different ways to measure antisemitic ideas and open dislike of Jews, as well as anti-Israelism and the relationship between antisemitism and anti-Israelism are used to analyse the data of the Norwegian Survey “Attitudes toward Jews and Muslims in Norway 2017”. Furthermore, this chapter will also examine how the legitimization of violence against Jews is influenced by the levels of antisemitism and anti-Israelism. Lastly, although the Norwegian and the British studies mainly do not use the same questions to measure antisemitism and anti-Israelism, the results for Norway will tentatively be compared with the results of the British study by looking at the underlying patterns and correlations instead of the numerical data.

KEYWORDS antisemitism | stereotypes | antipathy | anti-Israelism | justification of violence | Norway | Great Britain

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, studies on antisemitic attitudes have revealed all over Europe a big gap between the findings of surveys about attitudes toward Jews and the perception of the Jews themselves concerning the spread of antisemitism. While the non-Jewish populations do not consider antisemitism to be a widespread phenomenon, and while surveys on antisemitic attitudes in many European countries attitudes even show a slight downward trend, Jews assess the situation quite differently: a large majority of them rates antisemitism to be a very widespread and growing problem.² In order to tackle this problem, L. Daniel Staetsky proposes to differentiate between a more or less coherent “learned antisemitism” (antisemitic ideas) from open dislike of Jews, which “exists in society at different levels of intensity and with different shades to it”.³ Many studies have shown that on a cognitive level there are a large number of people believing in a small number of antisemitic ideas without being consciously hostile or prejudiced toward Jews on the emotional/affective and behavioural level. Therefore, the “elastic view” takes these possibilities explicitly into account:

Some people may be strongly antisemitic, others less so; and while others may not fit into either of these categories, they may still hold certain negative ideas about Jews – even if these are small in number and weak in intensity – that have the potential to make Jews feel offended or uncomfortable. Thus, no single figure can capture the level of antisemitism in a given society.⁴

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2. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Discrimination and Hate Crime against Jews in EU Member States: Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism*, 2013; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism. Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU*, 2018. Andreas Hövermann et al., *Jüdische Perspektiven auf Antisemitismus in Deutschland*. Studie des Instituts für Konflikt und Gewaltforschung der Universität Bielefeld für den Unabhängigen Expertenkreis Antisemitismus, Bielefeld 2016.
 3. L. Daniel Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain. A study of attitudes towards Jews and Israel* (London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research, September 2017), 3.
 4. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 3. Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb used a similar approach by measuring antisemitic attitudes in their cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions, and have also worked with three broadly defined antisemitism scales. For the first time they also developed an anti-Zionism scale; *Der Antisemitismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1945–1989. Ergebnisse der empirischen Forschung* (Opladen: Leske+Budrich, 1991); Enlarged English edition: *Anti-Semitism in Germany. The Post-Nazi Epoch since 1945* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Publishers, 1997).

In this chapter, Staetsky's approach to measuring the different dimensions of anti-semitism is used to analyse the data of the Norwegian Survey "Attitudes toward Jews and Muslims in Norway 2017".⁵ A one-on-one comparison between the Norwegian and the British studies is not possible mainly because they do not use the same questions to measure antisemitism and anti-Israelism. The following chapter does not directly compare the quantitative results, but the results for Norway can tentatively be compared with the results of the British study by looking at the underlying patterns and correlations instead of the numerical data.⁶

2. COUNTING ANTISEMITES VERSUS MEASURING ANTISEMITISM

How widespread are negative feelings and opinions about Jews in Norway?⁷ In both the Norwegian and the British studies, there are findings on the emotional, the cognitive and the behavioural level. Following Staetsky, the most straightforward approach is used in "clarifying the extent of negativity toward Jews [...] by

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5. The survey consists of a representative sample of the Norwegian population (N=1,575). Since there are 13 Muslims among the 1,575 respondents, these are not included in the questions concerning the attitudes towards Muslims, so that in these cases the sample comprises only 1,562 respondents. Christhard Hoffmann and Vibeke Moe (eds.), *Attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in Norway 2017. Population Survey and Minority Study* (Oslo: Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities, 2017).
 6. In order to make comparisons of the British and Norwegian study possible, some of the indexes for measuring antisemitism and anti-Israelism in the Norwegian study are aligned with those in the British study. Thus, they differ from the construction of the indexes in the report of the Norwegian study and the other chapters in this volume.
 7. Recently in social psychology the importance of specific emotions for research on prejudice has been stressed. See Eliot R. Smith, "Social Identity and Social Emotions: Toward New Conceptualizations of Prejudice", in *Affect, Cognition, and Stereotyping. Interactive Processes in Group Perception*, ed. Diane M. Mackie and David L. Hamilton (New York: Academic Press, 1993), 296–315; Diane M. Mackie, Thierry Devos and Eliot R. Smith, "Intergroup Emotions: Explaining Offensive Action Tendencies in an Intergroup Context", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79, no. 4 (2000): 602–616. The only survey in which emotions play an important role in analysing antisemitism and anti-Israelism is a Swiss study from 2007: *Kritik an Israel von antisemitischen Haltungen unabhängig. Antisemitismus-Potenzial in der Schweiz neuartig bestimmt*. Schlussbericht zur Studie *Anti-jüdische und anti-israelische Einstellungen in der Schweiz*, by Claude Langchamp et al. (Bern, 2007). A factor analysis shows that emotions towards Jews as "respect, admiration, incomprehension, disappointment, rejection, anger, contempt, envy and hatred" load on two dimensions: a positive dimension with respect and admiration, and a negative dimension of incomprehension, disappointment, rejection, anger, contempt, envy and hatred. "On an emotional level, Jews are perceived by respondents with little differentiation", according to the authors of the study (p. 2).

presenting people with a direct question about their feelings toward Jews”.⁸ In the Norwegian study, participants were asked two questions concerning their emotional attitudes towards Jews compared to those towards Muslims.

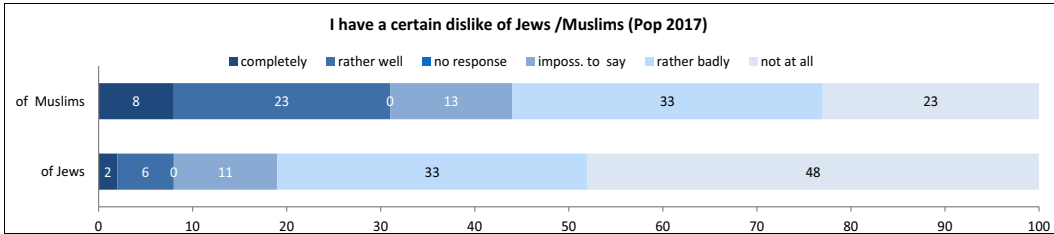


FIGURE 5.1. Dislike of Jews and Muslims (Percent. Population sample).

Only a minority of 7.5% of the Norwegian population show an openly declared negative attitude toward Jews, and those who declared their opinion strongly (opinion fits completely/dislike a lot) are an even smaller group (1.6%). Accordingly, 81% disagree with the “dislike” item. As Fig. 1 shows, an unfavourable view/dislike of Muslims is more widespread compared with Jews.

A second question, “I have a particular sympathy for Jews/Muslims”, also asked the other way round about the spread of a positive emotional attitude towards Jews and Muslims. In this case “a particular sympathy” for Jews is clearly more widespread compared with Muslims: 27% of the Norwegian population have “particular sympathy” for Jews, compared to only 14% for Muslims. Twenty-three per cent (for Jews) and 20% (for Muslims) chose the “no response” and “impossible to say” option.

Another way to measure attitudes towards other groups is to measure the social distance between them.

Concerning the attitude toward Jews, we can again identify a group of 7% in the general population harbouring an aversive attitude. The proportion of those opting out by choosing the “don’t know” or “no response” option is very small (4%). The “elastic view” includes two groups “marked by varying intensities of anti-Jewish attitudes”, which amount to about 7% of the Norwegian population: about 2% show a hard-core negativity in relation to Jews, while another 5% hold a “somewhat unfavourable” view.

Looking at this rather small proportion of respondents showing their negative emotional attitude towards Jews openly, it would be hard to understand why Jews in Norway see antisemitism as a very widespread and rising phenomenon. Given

8. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 16.

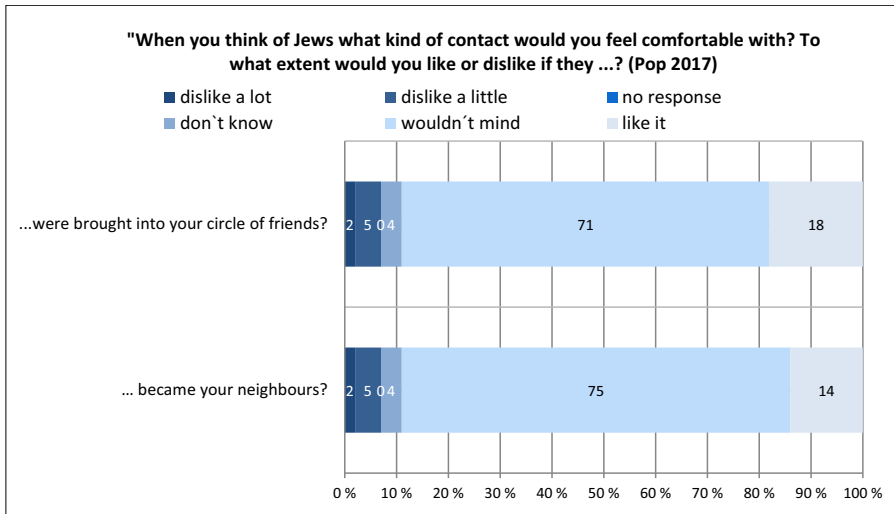


FIGURE 5.2. Social distance towards Jews (Percent. Population sample).

that unfavourable attitudes towards Jews in Norway as well as in Britain are minority phenomena, and that there exists only a loose connection between violence and negative attitudes in the sense that the threat against Jews is not necessarily dependent on the prevalence of negative attitudes, it can be concluded in line with Staetsky that “the real meaning of this level – i.e. is it dangerous for the Jewish population [...] or what level does it have to reach to become socially or politically problematic or dangerous – remains unclear.”⁹

3. IDEAS AND IMAGES OF JEWS

To give an answer to this question, Staetsky suggests widening the view by looking to the other dimension of prejudice since the attitudes toward Jews (and other groups) are not limited to a simple emotional characterisation, but rather also have a cognitive dimension. “People may have a favourable or unfavourable opinion of Jews, but they may also have absorbed some specific ideas about what Jews are or are not in terms of their pattern of behavior, their loyalties, or their political tendencies”,¹⁰ which need not necessarily be linked to strong negative feelings.

In the Norwegian study the same items were used that are common in other surveys on antisemitism.

9. *Ibid.*, 20.

10. *Ibid.*

Opinions held by the Norwegian population on specific statements about Jews, including three positive items: family oriented, artistically gifted and more intelligent than others.

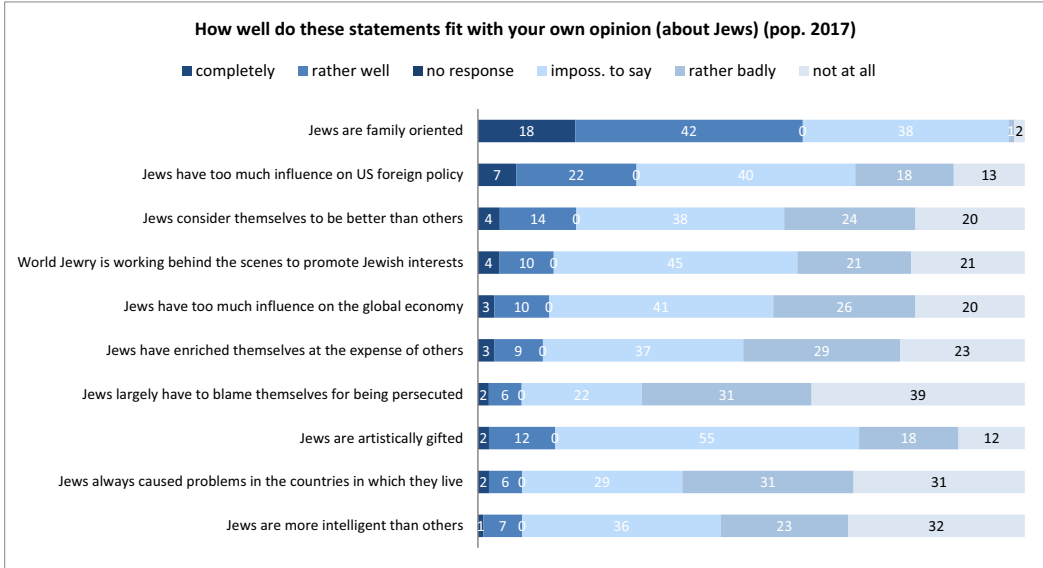


FIGURE 5.3. Opinions about Jews (Percent. Population sample)

On average, the percentage of those who agree with the six prejudice items in Norway is 12% (range is from 8%–18%).¹¹ To agree with just one of these antisemitic ideas may not be a good indicator of a pronounced antisemitic attitude. Therefore, it will be useful to look at the distribution of the volume of antisemitic ideas. In a first step, it is possible to clearly differentiate those respondents who do not agree with any of the antisemitic statements presented to them from those who agree to at least one statement.

11. In addition to the three positive items, we also decided to exclude the item “Jews have too much influence on US foreign policy” from consideration, since the significantly higher approval rate compared to the other items indicates that many respondents perceived it more as a matter of political opinion rather than a negative verdict on Jews. Perhaps the approval of this item may be primarily referred to the US Middle East policy – that is, it may be more of an anti-Israeli than anti-Jewish statement. If this item was included in the Prejudice against Jews index, it would increase the measured prevalence of antisemitism among the Norwegian population considerably. On average, the percentage increases from 9.1% to 12.7% (the range increases from 8% to 29%).

In the Norwegian case, 69.2% do not agree with any antisemitic statement, while 30.8% agree with at least one of the six statements: 14.5% agree with one statement, 5.7% with two, 3.2% with three, 2.8% with four, 2.7 with five and 2% with all six statements. This means that 7.5% of the respondents agree with the majority of at least four out of the six items. This amounts to the same quantity that was determined for the emotional dimension of antisemitism (7.5%).

To determine the association of emotional attitudes and cognitive ideas, Staetsky proposes to cross-tabulate the answers to one's opinion of Jews (dislike/don't dislike or neutral – Fig.1.) with the volume of specific antisemitic ideas.¹² In the Norwegian survey there is a clear association between the emotional and cognitive dimension.

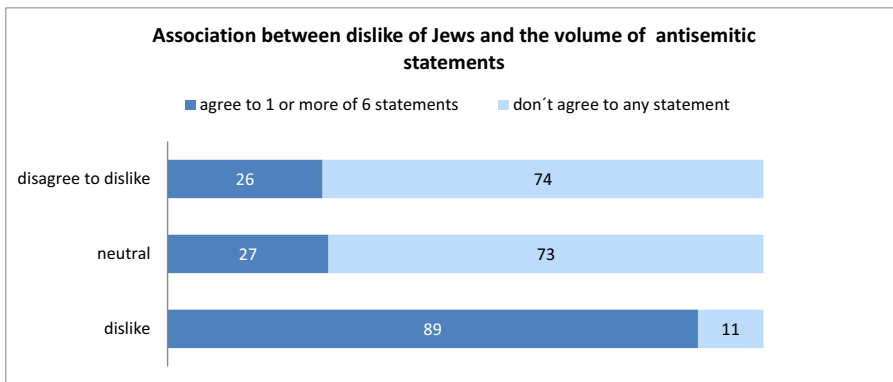


FIGURE 5.4. Feelings toward Jews and support of antisemitic statements (Percent. Population sample)

For the Norwegian population, we get the same pattern of association between the emotional dimension (like/dislike) and antisemitic ideas as in Britain. Three quarters of those who disagree to the dislike item did not agree to any antisemitic statement, compared with just one-tenth of those who held an unfavourable view, i.e. who dislike Jews. This means that among the Norwegian population the association between dislike of Jews and the agreement to antisemitic ideas is quite close. Only one in ten (11%) of those who have a certain dislike of Jews did not agree to any antisemitic idea and only very few of the neutral respondents may have chosen this option out of social desirability (latent antisemitism). Given that 11.3% of the sample chose the neutral option, of whom 27% agree with at least one antisemitic statement (2.9% of the total population), and another 26% of those who

12. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 22.

disagree with having a certain dislike of Jews nevertheless agree with at least one antisemitic statement (this is 21.1% of the total population), one can say that 24% of the Norwegian population disagree with disliking Jews, although they agree to one or more antisemitic statements. To this number we have to add the 89% of those among the respondents who have a certain dislike of Jews (8%) who also agree to at least one antisemitic statement. This is another 6.6% of the total population.

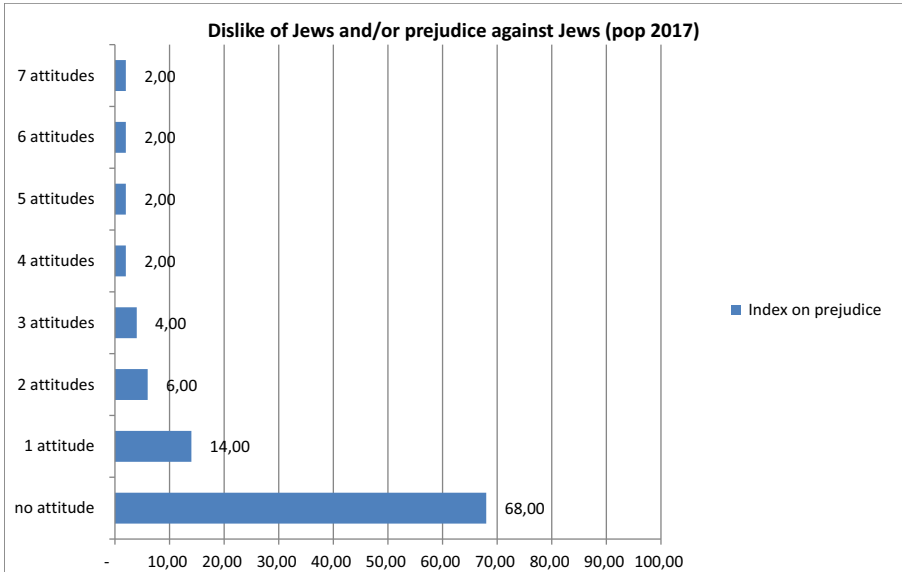


FIGURE 5.5. Additive Index of the Prejudice against Jews (6 statements) and expression of dislike (one statement) (Percent. Population sample)

Following Staetsky’s suggestion to adopt a “multifaceted view of the prevalence of antisemitism”, we include in the calculations of prevalence all people “who *either* hold an unfavourable opinion of Jews *or* who endorse at least one antisemitic statement”.¹³ Accordingly, one can say that 30.8% of the Norwegian population endorsed at least one antisemitic statement. Of those 7.5% of the Norwegian population, who hold an unfavourable opinion of Jews (see Fig. 1) one in eleven (0.8%) does not agree with any antisemitic statement (see Fig. 4) Integrating these respondents into an enlarged 0–7-point index, the numbers *together* add up to 31.6% of the Norwegian population, which in Staetsky’s view marks a boundary of the *diffusion* of antisemitic ideas in society. It is important to keep in mind,

13. *Ibid.*, 24.

however, that Staetsky interprets this figure “not as the proportion of antisemites that exists (...)”¹⁴ but rather as a boundary of the *diffusion* of antisemitic attitudes in society.”¹⁵ The new term *diffusion* is of great analytical significance to him because it signals “a shift in emphasis from counting antisemitic individuals to quantifying the spread of attitudes that Jews consider to be antisemitic” and which may be a source of discomfort or offence to many Jews.¹⁶ This view is supported by the fact that in Norway, one-half of those who agree to antisemitic statements agree to only one of them (13.8% – see Fig. 5); another 6.3% agree to two statements. From this fact one can conclude that these persons do not have a closed antisemitic world view.

This assumption is supported by the result presented in Figure 5.6. In the Norwegian survey the sympathy/antipathy (dislike) dimension is split into two items: on the one hand, we asked about antipathy (dislike) to Jews. However, those who have rejected this need not necessarily have a special affinity with Jews. That’s why we asked a second question about particular sympathy towards them.¹⁷

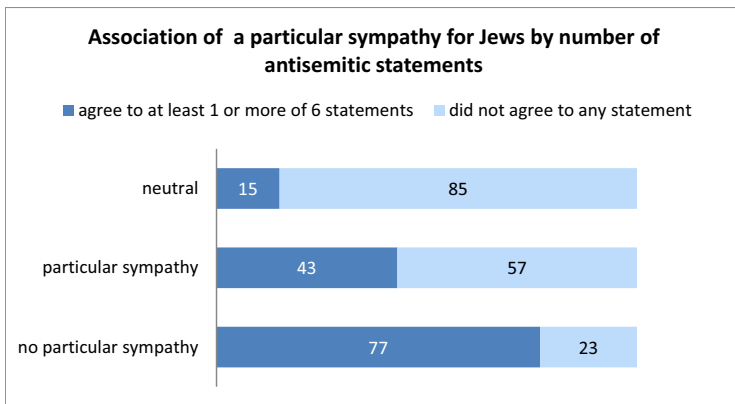


FIGURE 5.6. Sympathy towards Jews and support for antisemitic statements (Percent. Population sample)

14. This claim would in Staetsky’s view “simply not stand up to any reasonable scrutiny” (*Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 24).

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. In the survey, some interviewees agreed to have a “certain dislike” of Jews as well as to harbour a “particular sympathy” toward Jews. Unlike in Ottar Hellevik’s chapter (3.1), where the approval of the “dislike” item of these respondents was not counted for the “index for dislike of Jews”, here all those who agreed to the “dislike” item are included in the calculation, even if they also responded positively to the “particular sympathy” question. The same applies to those who agreed to the “particular sympathy” question, even if they agreed to the “dislike” question too.

The figure shows that among respondents considering themselves to feel a *particular* sympathy for Jews (27% of the sample), 43% nevertheless agree to at least one antisemitic statement. The self-assessment of being especially attached to Jews hardly corresponds with being a staunch antisemite. The finding that out of the large neutral group of respondents (23% of the total sample), far less agree to at least one antisemitic statement than the sympathetic respondents (15% to 43%), is harder to explain. One explanation may be that the “neutral respondents” also use the “impossible to answer” option for the prejudice questions or do not respond to them.

With the data of the Norwegian survey, it is possible to compare the pattern of association between the dislike of Jews and the dislike of Muslims and the respective antisemitic or anti-Muslim (Islamophobic) statements.

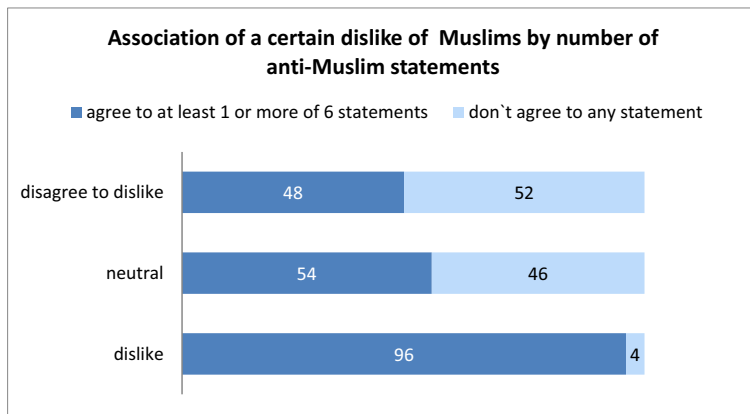


FIGURE 5.7. Feelings towards Muslims and support of anti-Muslim statements (Percent. Population sample)¹⁸

It is obvious that the emotional attitude toward Muslims is less closely connected with the approval or rejection of Islamophobic ideas than the dislike of Jews with antisemitic ideas. Though almost all of those who dislike Muslims also agree to a least one Islamophobic statement (96%), which is quite similar to the quantity of respondents who dislike Jews (89%), half of those who take a favourable or neutral stance toward Muslims agree anyway to a large portion to at least one Islamophobic statement (48% and 54%), compared to just a quarter of respondents in the case of attitudes towards Jews (26% and 27%). Therefore, we can conclude that agreeing with anti-Muslim prejudices seems to be relatively independent of a

18. In this case, N=1,562. See footnote 4.

negative emotional attitude toward Muslims. Such opinions about Muslims seem to be understood more as a description of a social reality rather than a pejorative prejudice and are therefore considered more acceptable and quite compatible with a positive or neutral attitude towards Muslims.¹⁹

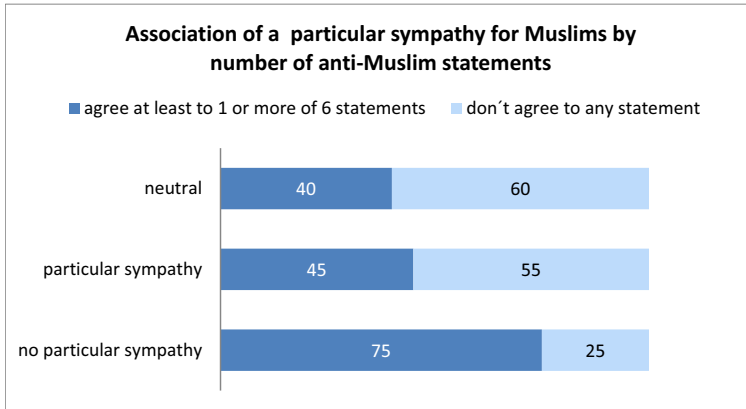


FIGURE 5.8. Sympathy towards Muslims and support of anti-Muslim statements (Percent. Population sample)²⁰

When respondents are asked about their “particular sympathy toward a group”, the picture depicted for Jews and Muslims is rather similar, with just one exception. While those who have a particular sympathy and no particular sympathy agree to the same amount to at least one antisemitic (43% and 77%) or anti-Muslim statement (45% and 75%), those who take a neutral stance agree more often to at least one Islamophobic statement (40%) compared to those agreeing to at least one antisemitic statement (15%). This result may confirm the supposition that the emotional attitude toward Muslims has less influence on the cognitive dimension of prejudice than in the case of the attitude toward Jews. It means people have prejudices toward Muslims without strong anti-Muslim feelings.

19. See in this volume the debate on the relation between (realistic, acceptable) descriptions and prejudice in terms of characterisations of Muslims, in Claudia Lenz and Vibeke Moe, “Negotiations of Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Group Conversations among Jews and Muslims” chapter 10. For the connection between events such as the Rushdie affair and the terrorist attacks of 9/11, 2001 with the framing of Muslims as “a threat to civilisation”, see also Cora Alexa Døving, “A Growing Consensus? The History of Public Debates on Islamophobia in Norway”.

20. In this case N=1,562. See footnote 4.

4. ANTI-ISRAELISM

In many other European countries, Jews have a deep emotional and religious attachment to Israel. Therefore “negativity toward Israel expressed by non-Jews is likely to be a cause for significant concern and apprehension among many Jews”.²¹ In the FRA Study and in a German study on “Jewish perspectives”, it becomes clear that a large majority of Jews evaluates the comparison of Israeli politics toward the Palestinians to be like that of the Nazis toward Jews, the support of the boycott of goods from Israel and a “distorted presentation” of Israel’s politics in mass media as an expression of an antisemitic attitude.²² For many years now there has been a lingering debate about the relationship between antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes. Some scholars even believe that antisemitism today comes mainly in the guise of hostility to Israel. Since the beginning of the 21st century, some speak therefore of a “new antisemitism”, treating Israel as a kind of “collective Jew”.²³ So on the one hand it is important to examine the extent to which antisemitism and anti-Israelism overlap, but on the other hand – as the following results show – respondents with a very negative attitude toward Israel do not agree to any of the antisemitic ideas and it is therefore necessary to decide if their anti-Israel statements should be classified as antisemitic or as a “pure” hostility directed only against the state of Israel, but not against Jews in general.

Our study follows Staetsky’s proposal to explore the attitude of the population toward Israel “along the same lines as their attitudes toward Jews: first, at the level of favourable or unfavourable opinion, and second, testing the prevalence of specific ideas about Israel”.²⁴ The connection between antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes is treated here as an open research question.²⁵

Unlike the British study, the Norwegian survey does not include a direct sympathy/dislike question like for the attitude toward Jews.²⁶ As a makeshift, the survey uses the positioning of respondents on either the Israeli or Palestinian side as an indicator of sympathies or antipathies towards Israel.²⁷ It is clear that this replacement is not without problems and that it is less suitable for measuring the emotional attitude compared to the direct favourable/unfavourable item in the British survey. In Norway the respondents showed less indifference or uncertainty compared to the British respondents, since nearly half of them side with one of the

21. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 27.

22. FRA, *Discrimination and Hate Crime against Jews in EU Member States*; Hövermann/Jensen/Zick/Bernstein/Perl/Ramm, *Jüdische Perspektiven auf Antisemitismus in Deutschland*, 12 and 16.

23. Brian Klug, “The collective Jew: Israel and the new antisemitism”, *Patterns of Prejudice* 37, no. 2 (2003): 117–138.

24. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 27.

conflicting parties (in Britain only 24%). This may support our choice of attitude towards the Middle East conflict as a measure of emotional rejection of Israel. Therefore, we suppose the 32% siding with the Palestinians to have an unfavourable opinion of Israel, especially those 22% of them who chose the option solely or mostly, while 14% have a favourable opinion of Israel (9% solely/mostly; 5% to some extent). One third of the respondents do not tend to either side (32%) and 22% don't have an answer.

The next problem that makes a comparison between the British and Norwegian results difficult is the fact that while the British study used twelve specific positive and negative statements about Israel (eight of them negative), the Norwegian study only used six items, and only two of them are clearly negative. That is why we can construct only a very short index of anti-Israel attitudes of two items. The large difference in the length of the scales may affect the comparability of the results.

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25. There are already a few studies investigating the link between antisemitism and anti-Israel attitudes. Edgar H. Kaplan and Charles Small, "Anti-Israel sentiment predicts anti-Semitism in Europe", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 4 (2006): 548–61, used the data of the Antidefamation League survey, *Attitudes toward Jews, Israel and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict in Ten European Countries* (New York: ADL, 2004); for Germany, see the study by Aribert Heyder, Julia Iser, and Peter Schmidt, "Israelkritik oder Antisemitismus? Meinungsbildung zwischen Öffentlichkeit, Medien und Tabus" in *Deutsche Zustände, Folge 3*, ed. Wilhelm Heitmeyer (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 2004): 144–165. The most comprehensive study to date is by Wilhelm Kempf, *Israelkritik zwischen Antisemitismus und Menschenrechtsidee. Eine Spurensuche* (Berlin: Verlag Irena Regener, 2016). For a discussion of these and some other studies (on Sweden and Switzerland) see Werner Bergmann, "Is there a 'New European Antisemitism?' Public Opinion and Comparative Empirical Research in Europe", in *Politics and Resentment. Antisemitism and Counter-Cosmopolitanism in the European Union*, ed. Lars Rensmann and Julius H. Schoeps (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 83–115, here 89ff.; see for an early example also Bergmann and Erb, *Anti-Semitism in Germany. The Post-Nazi Epoch since 1945*, Chapter: Antizionism and Antisemitism, 182–191. Bergmann and Erb, "Antizionism and Antisemitism", in *Anti-Semitism in Germany. The Post-Nazi Epoch since 1945* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 83–115.
26. The British study uses the item "I'd like you to consider how you feel about certain countries overall. Please tell me if you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable, very unfavourable opinion of the following countries" (List of seven countries) to measure an anti-Israel attitude.
27. In the British survey, both measures – the favourable/unfavourable item, and the sympathies in relation to the Middle East conflict – differed considerably: while 33% show an unfavourable opinion toward Israel, only 18% side with the Palestinians. As far as a negative attitude towards Israel is concerned, among Norwegians this may also be determined by the political orientation of the Israeli government, as the country has been ruled by a right-wing coalition government for several years.

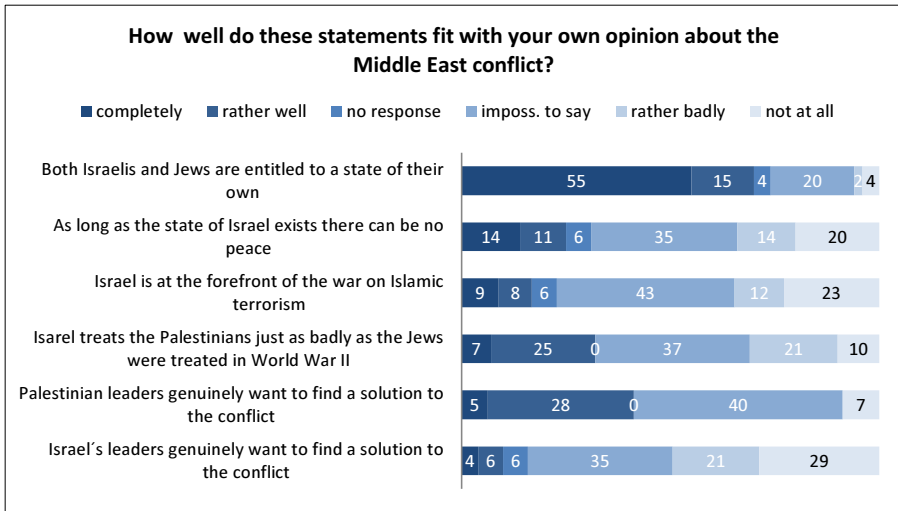


FIGURE 5.9. Opinions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Percent. Population sample)

Negativity towards Israel is significantly more common among Norwegian respondents than negativity toward Jews. While the level of endorsement of anti-semitic statements is in the range of 8–18%, anti-Israel statements range between 25–32%.

In the Norwegian population the difference between those agreeing to at least one antisemitic statement (30.8%) and those agreeing to at least one anti-Israel statement (40%) is not very large. This may be partly because of the fact that in this case, the anti-Israel Index consists of only two items.

Parallel to the connection between the emotional and the cognitive dimension in the case of attitude toward Jews, we can do the same for the attitude toward Israel. All in all, the pattern for both attitudes is rather similar: the large majority of those holding a favourable opinion of Israel (93%) does not agree with any anti-Israel statement, and again, as was the case with attitudes toward Jews, the profile of those who claim neutrality in relation to Israel, or who did not respond to a question, is much closer, with 79%, to those with a favourable opinion of Israel than to those with an unfavourable opinion.

As already mentioned above, using the positioning of respondents on either the Israeli or Palestinian side as an indicator of sympathy or antipathy towards Israel in the Norwegian study is not without problems, because the partisanship for one of the conflicting parties does not necessarily mean having a decidedly unfavourable view of the other party. Compared with the British study, an even larger majority of those supporting Israel in the Middle East conflict (14% of the sample)

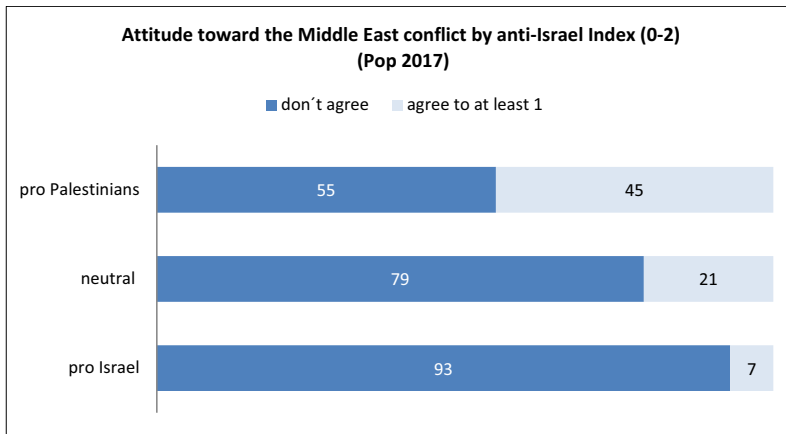


FIGURE 5.10. Opinions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and support for Israelis or Palestinians (Percent. Population sample)

does not agree with any anti-Israel statement (93%), and as was the case with attitudes toward Jews, the profile of those who claim neutrality in relation to the Middle East conflict is even much closer to the pro-Israel camp than to those who side with the Palestinian cause. Even a small majority of those who claim to be pro-Palestinian does not agree to any anti-Israel statement. This may be due to the fact that the indicator for an “unfavourable opinion” (to be pro-Palestinian) used in the Norwegian study is too closely connected with a partisanship in the Middle East conflict. The positioning on the part of the Palestinians in the Middle East conflict is only partially motivated by negative attitudes toward Israel.

5. ATTITUDES TOWARD JEWS AND ISRAEL: ARE THEY LINKED?

The question of the extent to which antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes are linked (or are almost identical) is the most hotly debated issue in recent research on antisemitism.²⁸ So far, no consensus has emerged. For Staetsky, a “strictly empirical social scientific approach to this question requires an ‘overlap-test’”.²⁹ The finding that negativity towards Israel is significantly more common than negativity

28. Robert Fine, “Fighting with phantoms: A contribution to the debate on antisemitism in Europe”, *Patterns of Prejudice* 43 (2009): 459–479; David Feldman, “Antizionismus und Antisemitismus in Großbritannien”, *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 23 (2014): 43–49; Klug, “The collective Jew”, 117–138.

29. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 33.

toward Jews in Norway (and in Great Britain as well) gives a first hint that it cannot be expected to find a complete overlap between the two.³⁰

The findings show that in the Norwegian survey, more respondents agree to the negative statements concerning Israel than those concerning Jews.

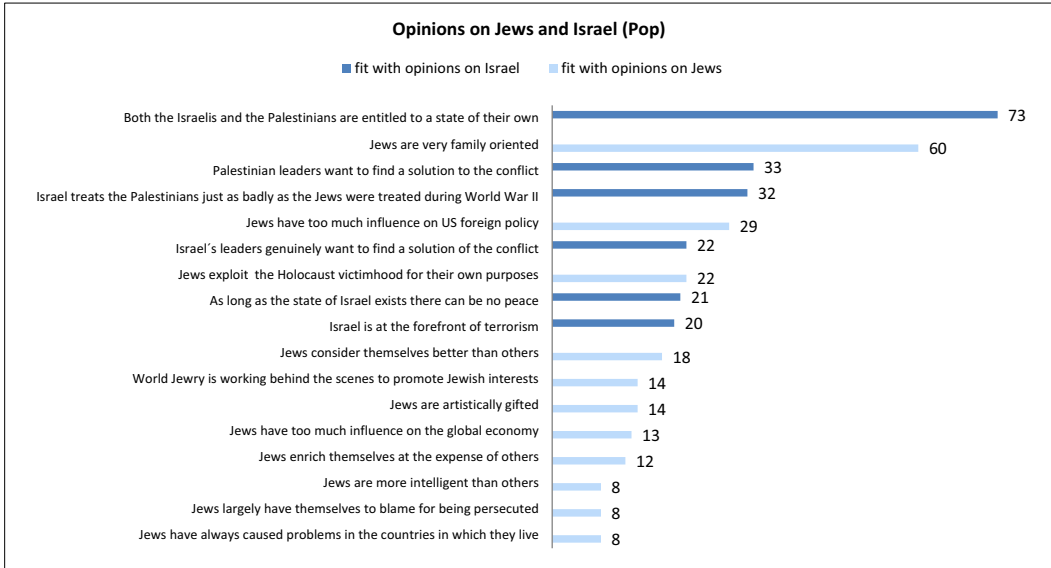


FIGURE 5.11. Opinions about Jews and Israel (Percent finding that the statements fit completely or rather well with your own opinion (Percent. Population sample).

To test how antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes are linked, Staetsky proposes comparing the degree of endorsement of antisemitic opinions in the general population with that of those respondents holding anti-Israel attitudes. We can see that both attitudes are connected since holding anti-Israel attitudes has a reinforcing influence on antisemitic attitudes. Those holding strong anti-Israel attitudes on the enlarged anti-Israel index (0–3/N=339)³¹ also clearly agree more often with antisemitic statements than the general population (Figure 12).

On average, the agreement of the general population to the eight items in Figure 5.12 is 16%, while those holding strong anti-Israel attitudes agree on average to

30. For the British case, the correlation between the antisemitic and the anti-Israel index is statistically significant: the Pearson correlation (r) is 0.48; and 23% of variation in the anti-Israel index is explained by variation in the antisemitism index (Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 35, Footnote 24). In the Norwegian survey, the Pearson correlation of the anti-Israel index and the prejudice against Jews index is smaller ($r= 0.31$) than in the British study.

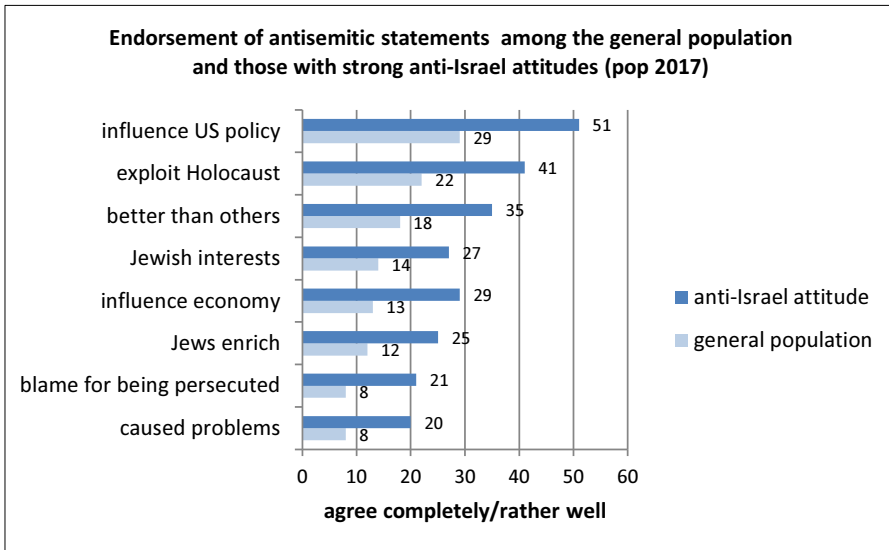


FIGURE 5.12. Antisemitic statements held by the general population compared to those who strongly agree on the anti-Israel Index (2+3 points) (Percent. Population sample).

31%.³² The ratio between the general population and those harbouring anti-Israel attitudes in Norway is 1 to 2.

In the British survey, Staetsky added those who have an unfavourable view of Israel but do not agree to any of the eight statements on the anti-Israel index to create an index that increases from an eight-point to a nine-point scale. In the Norwegian case, a comparable question (unfavourable opinion of Israel) does not exist, so we measured the attitude toward Israel by asking for the partisanship in the Middle East conflict instead. One can expect that those taking sides with Israel will be antisemitic less often than those siding with the Palestinians.

31. The enlarged anti-Israel index is composed of the two anti-Israel statements (“Israel treats the Palestinians just as badly as the Jews were treated during World War Two”; “As long as the State of Israel exists there can be no peace”) and those who solely/mostly side with the Palestinians in the Middle East conflict. Those who agree to two or all of the three items are labelled as having strong anti-Israel attitudes.

32. The increase in support for the eight antisemitic statements is eight percentage points lower using the extended anti-Israel index (0–3) compared to using the anti-Israel index (0–2). In addition to the two anti-Israel statements of the shorter index (0–2), the enlarged anti-Israel index (0–3) also contains those respondents with a strong sympathy for the Palestinian side in the Middle East conflict. This may be due to the fact that the Palestinians’ support is less often associated with antisemitic prejudices than the two strong anti-Israel statements.

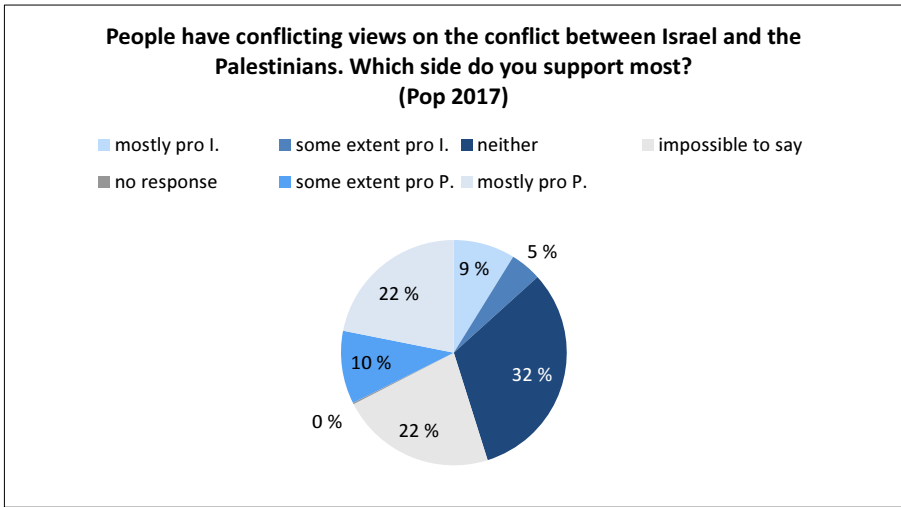


FIGURE 5.13. Support for Israelis or Palestinians (Percent. Population sample).

From those who side with the Palestinians, only those for the anti-Israel index, who do so “solely/mostly” (22%) were selected because one can rather assume that it is more likely that they will have a negative image of Israel compared to those who answered only “to some extent”. We then cross-tabulated the enlarged anti-Israel index (0–3) with the enlarged prejudice against Jews index (0–7). Although in the Norwegian case the anti-Israel index is quite short, we find the same pattern of connection between antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes, but it could be that the level of those harbouring anti-Israel prejudice is underestimated because of the shorter index compared to the British one.

Of the Norwegian respondents, 43.7% agree neither to any statement on the prejudice against Jews index, nor to any on the anti-Israel index. One can see by comparing the columns that the higher the percentage of anti-Israel opinions, the higher the percentage of people with antisemitic attitudes. Based on this approach, Staetsky’s conclusion “that the existence of an association between the antisemitic and the anti-Israel attitudes tested, is unambiguous”³³ can be approved.

Two-thirds of those who exhibit only a low level of an anti-Israel attitude (score 1) score 0 on the prejudice against Jews index (62%), while those who exhibit a high level of anti-Israel attitudes (2–3) show a low level of those scoring 0 on the prejudice against Jews index less often (46% and 35%), and 19% and 32% score highly on the antisemitism index (4–7).

33. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 33.

TABLE 5.1. Prejudice against Jews and anti-Israel attitude (Percent. Population sample)

	Anti-Israel index and mostly pro-Palestinian				
Prejudice against Jews 0–7	0	1	2	3	Total
0	82	62	46	35	
1	11	14	21	14	
2	3	10	9	13	
3	2	6	5	6	
4	1	3	8	3	
5	1	2	4	8	
6	0	2	5	7	
7	0	1	2	14	
Total %	100	100	100	100	
N	841	393	238	101	1,575

From the sample of 1,575 Norwegian respondents, 12.3% score highly on the anti-Israel index (score 2–3) and also hold at least one antisemitic attitude. However, 38% of those scoring 1 on the anti-Israel index also show a least one antisemitic prejudice (this is 9.5% of the total sample), and 18% of those scoring 0 on the anti-Israel index hold at least one antisemitic prejudice (9.6% of the total sample), while a clearly larger proportion of 24.6% of the Norwegian population agrees to one or more anti-Israel statements, but to none of the antisemitic statements. If we understand antisemitism and anti-Israelism in a softer sense (23% being labelled as antisemitic or 46.5% as anti-Israel, when agreeing with at least one negative item on both indexes), both kinds of prejudice overlap in 21.8% of the Norwegian population.

If focussing on those scoring highly on both indexes (2–3 on the anti-Israel index (21.5% of the total sample) and 4–7 on the antisemitism index (8% of the total sample) – 3% are just antisemitic and 16.6% are just anti-Israel. Both attitudes overlap in this case by 4.9%. This means that 75.5% of the Norwegian respondents do not harbour very strong antisemitic or anti-Israel attitudes.

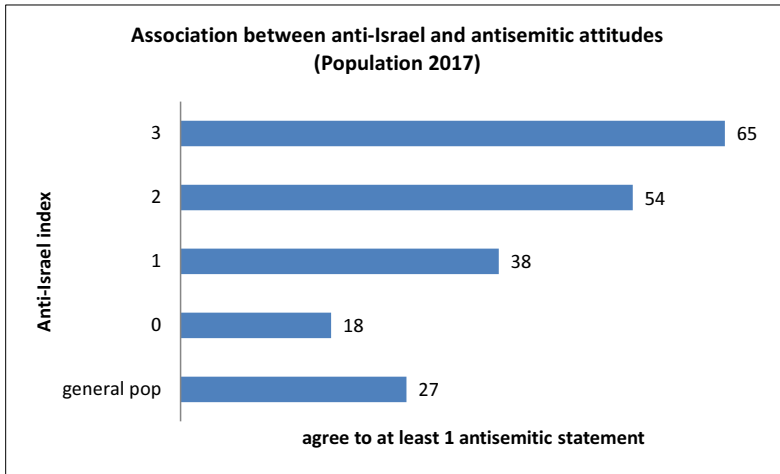


FIGURE 5.14. Anti-Israel attitude and agreement to a least one antisemitic statement (Percent. Population sample).

But Staetsky is right with the restriction that this association between antisemitic and anti-Israel attitudes is demonstrated here at “a population level, not at an individual level”. “An individual holding even the highest volume of anti-Israel opinions is not *necessarily* antisemitic; rather it indicates that the *probability* of such an individual of being antisemitic is considerably higher than an individual who does not hold anti-Israel opinions”.³⁴ On the basis of our data, it is not possible to answer the question of causal direction: Is being critical of Israel caused by antisemitic attitudes, or are antisemitic attitudes a result of critical attitudes towards Israel?

6. VIOLENT ORIENTATIONS: DO ANTISEMITIC OR ANTI-MUSLIM ATTITUDES COINCIDE WITH THE JUSTIFICATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST JEWS OR MUSLIMS?

A third dimension of attitudes is called conative or behavioural, i.e. meaning the behavioural tendencies of a person toward a particular object, such as acceptance, readiness to help but also withdrawal and aggression (for example, the readiness

34. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 35. The statistical analysis cannot solve the problem of political communication – whether in a specific case an anti-Israeli statement actually justifies the assumption that the speaker is antisemitic or not – although there exists a certain probability.

to use or excuse violence against an individual group). Of course, there is no direct and unambiguous connection between the existence of a cognitive and emotional prejudice with violence, because many other factors come into play (psychological dispositions, cultural context, situational factors etc.).³⁵ Readiness to use or excuse violence takes us, as Staetsky has phrased it, “metaphorically ‘half-way’ between attitudes and behavior, and somewhat closer to an empirical assessment of the potential for violence”.³⁶

In the Norwegian survey, we measured the readiness to justify harassment or violence against Jews by asking “Considering how Israel treats the Palestinians, harassment and violence against Jews is justifiable”. This operationalisation is, of course, somewhat problematic due to the connection with the Middle East conflict, because although it is explicitly asked about violence against “Jews” and not against “Israelis”, it could also be understood as if it were about the use of violence by Palestinians against Israeli Jews in the context of the conflict.³⁷ So it could be that some Norwegian respondents who consider violence against Jews to be justifiable do not want to justify violence against Jews outside Israel, but in the Antisemitism survey of 2012, 4% of Norwegians agreed that the shooting incident at the Oslo Synagogue in 2006 to be justifiable given Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians.³⁸ So, we can assume that at least a part of the 12% consider harassment and violence against Jews in Norway or other countries to be justifiable.

35. Howard Schuman and Michael P. Johnson, “Attitudes and Behavior”, *Annual Review of Sociology* 2 (1976): 161–207; Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein, *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson, 1980); Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein, “The influence of attitudes on behavior”, in *Handbook of attitudes and attitude change*, ed. Dolores Albarracín, Blair T. Johnson and Mark P. Zanna (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 2005), 173–221. Mackie, Thierry and Smith, “Intergroup Emotions: Explaining Offensive Action Tendencies in an Intergroup Context”, 602–616.

36. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 39.

37. However, the British study, in which the justification of violence against Jews is not asked in the context of the Middle East conflict, shows that in Great Britain violence against Jews is often or sometimes considered justified by 4.1%, while a further 9.8% consider it “rarely justified”. When asked about violence against Zionists or Israelis, the values are very similar (4.4%/10.1% and 4.8%/10.4%) (Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 40). The question was asked in the British survey as follows: “Thinking about Britain today, to what extent do you feel that using violence against any of the following groups or institutions would be justified in order to defend your political or religious beliefs and values?”

38. HL-senteret, *Antisemitism in Norway? The Attitudes of the Norwegian Population towards Jews and Other Minorities*, Oslo 2012, p. 23, Fig. 5 (“Considering how Israel treats the Palestinians, such acts are justifiable”).

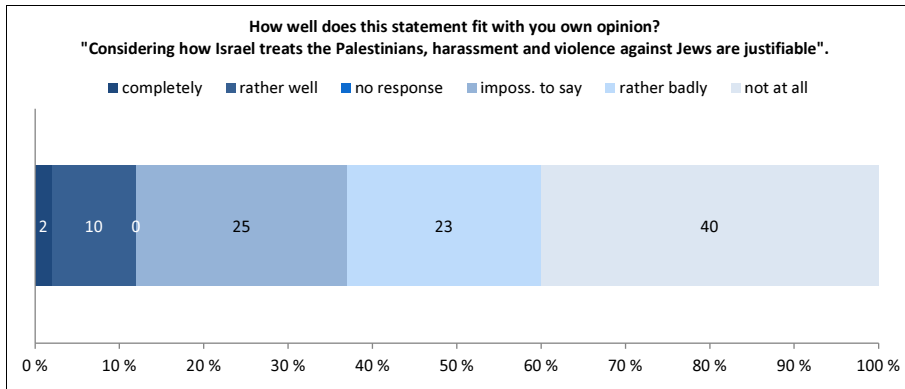


FIGURE 5.15. Attitude towards Israel and justification of harassment and violence against Jews (Percent. Population sample).

Almost two-thirds of the Norwegian population (63%) reject this opinion fully or mostly; 25% say it is impossible to answer/or did not respond, and only 12% agree to it “completely or somewhat”. If we cross-tabulate the answers to this question with our prejudice against Jews index (0–7), the percentage of those agreeing to four and more items of this index increases from those who reject this statement fully (3.1%) over those who reject it somewhat (8.4%) to those who agree somewhat (23.9%) and those who agree completely (48.9%). Among those who chose the option “impossible to say”, 5.9% agree, so they rank between those who reject the question fully or somewhat. Of the Norwegian respondents, 4.3% show a high level of antisemitic prejudice and legitimise harassment or violence against Jews, but 3.2% of those respondents rejecting the question fully or somewhat also show a high level of antisemitic prejudice. Therefore, a high level of antisemitic prejudice does not necessarily lead directly to a legitimization of violence, but we can see that there is a closer connection between prejudice and legitimization of violence among those who show a high degree of antisemitic prejudices than among those who show no or only a small degree of prejudice.

The proportion of those respondents who justify harassment and violence against Jews “completely or somewhat” grows with the increasing number of antisemitic prejudices, and among the high-scorers on the antisemitism scale (4–7) between one-third to two-thirds justify harassment and violence.

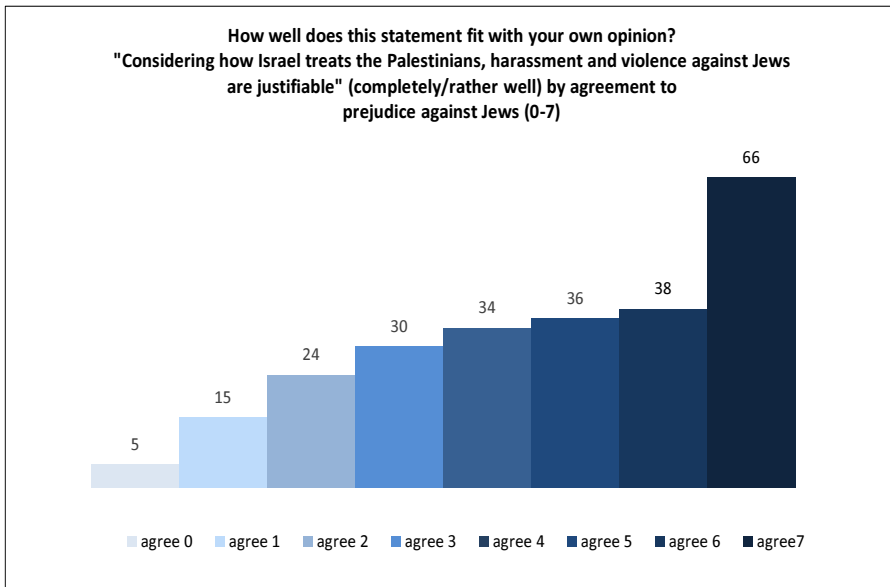


FIGURE 5.16. Justification of harassment and violence against Jews and level of anti-semitic prejudice (Percent. Population sample).

Norwegian population: Those justifying harassment and violence completely/rather well, N=182
 Agree 0 N=58; agree 1 N= 34; agree 2 N=24; agree 3 N=16; agree 4 N=13, agree 5 N=11 agree 6 N=11
 agree 7 N=15

When we look at those respondents who justify harassment and violence against Jews “completely or somewhat”, we can see that their proportion also increases with the increasing number of anti-Israel prejudices. Among those who do not agree to any anti-Israel item, 5.4% justify harassment and violence against Jews “completely or somewhat”, the proportion increases among those who agree to one anti-Israel statement up to 11.3%; among those who agree to two statements it increases to 19%, while the percentage of those who agree to all three items of the anti-Israel index increases to even 34% justifying harassment and violence.

Among the Norwegian respondents, about the same proportion justifies harassment and violence against Jews (12%) as against Muslims (10%), while they reject violence against Muslims (73%) more often than against Jews (63%).

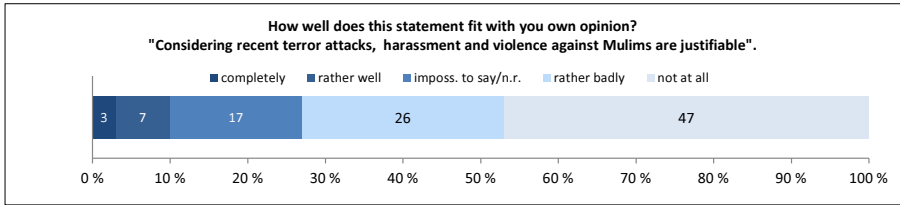


FIGURE 5.17. Recent terror attacks and justification of harassment and violence against Muslims (Percent. Population sample)³⁹

The following Figure 5.18 shows a clear connection between anti-Muslim prejudice and the readiness to justify the use of violence against Muslims in Norway. The higher one scores on the anti-Muslim prejudice index, the greater the likelihood that one justifies violence against Muslims. While only a small proportion of those who do agree to violence are among those who agree 0–3 times on the anti-Muslim index, their share increases with those who agree 4–6 times with each stage and reaches a peak with half of those who agree to all items on the anti-Muslim prejudice index.

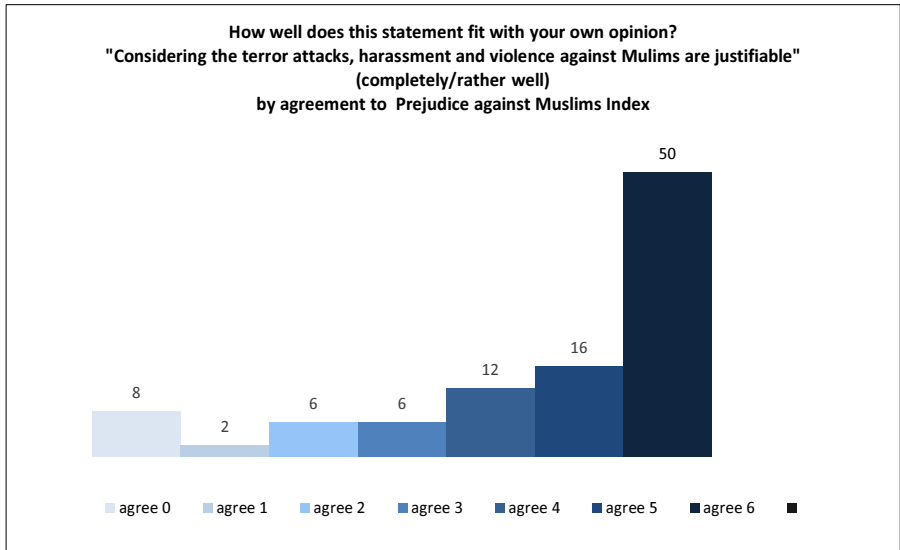


FIGURE 5.18. Justification of harassment and violence against Muslims and level of anti-Muslim prejudice (Percent. Population sample).⁴⁰

Norwegian population: Those justifying harassment and violence completely/rather well, N=156
 Agree 0 N=12; agree 1 N=4; agree 2 N=10; agree 3 N=9; agree 4 N=19; agree 5 N=25; agree 6 N=77

39. In this case N=1,562. See footnote 4.

40. In this case N=1,562. See footnote 4.

For Norway (as for Great Britain too), the readiness to justify violence against Jews, Muslims and other groups is a minority position that is more likely to occur among people with highly biased attitudes.

Among the Norwegian respondents, 24% of those who “somewhat” justify harassment and violence against Jews also justify violence against Muslims (somewhat or completely) and even 36% of those who completely justify harassment and violence against Jews also justify violence against Muslims (somewhat or completely). This group amounts to 3% of the total sample (N=47 out of 1,562). For comparison: only 5% of those who do not justify harassment and violence against Jews at all do justify violence against Muslims “completely or somewhat”.

7. COMPARING NORWAY WITH GREAT BRITAIN

The present analysis followed the procedure used in Daniel Staetsky’s survey on contemporary antisemitism in Great Britain. Finally, the results of the Norwegian survey will now be compared with those of the British study. A one-on-one comparison between the Norwegian and the British study is not possible, mainly because they do not use the same questions to measure antisemitism and anti-Israelism. Due to this, it was not possible to compare the quantitative results directly, but the results for Norway can be tentatively compared with the results of the British study by looking at the underlying patterns and correlations instead of the numerical data.

The Norwegian findings corroborate what Staetsky has determined for Britain – that “an unambiguous, well-defined antisemitism is distinctly a minority position”.⁴¹ By combining different ways of measuring attitudes toward Jews, we found that approximately 8% of the Norwegian population (see Figure 5.5 – those agree more than 3 times the 7–point index) “hold attitudes of a kind and intensity that would qualify them as being called antisemitic”.⁴² In the Norwegian case, this

41. *Ibid.* These results are in line with the results of many surveys on antisemitism in which the UK and the Scandinavian countries have the least prevalence of antisemitic prejudice in Europe (Antidefamation League, *Global 100. An Index of Anti-Semitism* (New York: ADL, 2014) – <http://global100.adl.org/>).

42. In the study Hoffmann and Moe, eds., *Attitudes towards Jews and Muslims in Norway 2017*, Figure 5.13, a combined index on antisemitism is used, which includes items on prejudice, social distance and antipathy. On this scale 5.5% of the respondents are labelled as “high scorers”, while 86.7% score zero on this index. 7.9% show a lower degree of antisemitic attitudes. See the discussion in Ottar Hellevik’s chapter of where the limit for “high” scores on the anti-semitism scale should be drawn. His analyses provide a good argument to draw the boundary between low and high scorers elsewhere, which would result in an increase of the proportion of high scorers to 12.4%. This would argue for a greater spread of antisemitic attitudes in Norway.

value more or less matches the proportion of those who openly admitted to having a “certain dislike of Jews” (7.5%). In Great Britain 5.4% declared having a “very or somewhat unfavourable view” of Jews,⁴³ and 6.1% agree with more than 3 items on the combined antisemitism scale (ranging from 0 to 8).⁴⁴ In both countries, the proportion of those who declare this opinion very strongly (very unfavourable/dislike completely) is even smaller (1.6% in Norway, and 2.4% in Great Britain). To come back to the “elastic view” concept, the 8% of the Norwegian population that can be counted as “antisemites” are not the whole story, since another, larger part of the population endorse a number of antisemitic statements. Among British respondents, 28% agree with at least one out of seven antisemitic statements, while in Norway 30.8% agree with at least one out of six antisemitic statements, which “a majority of Jews are likely to perceive or experience as antisemitic”.⁴⁵ If we take the presence of an unfavourable opinion (emotional dimension) and/or the endorsement of at least one antisemitic statement (cognitive dimension)⁴⁶ together, the maximal diffusion of antisemitic attitudes for the British population is about 30%, of which 6.1% are to be qualified clearly antisemitic, while the other 23.9% express some degree of prejudice towards Jews. For the Norwegian case, we determined the widest diffusion of antisemitic attitudes at 31.6%, 8% of which are to be qualified as antisemitic persons, with the other 23.6% showing some degree of prejudice toward Jews. In this regard, the degree of agreement and the ratio of convinced antisemites to those who agree with only some antisemitic statements are also quite similar for Norway and Great Britain.

In light of these findings, it is surprising that a larger part of the Norwegian respondents (12%) justify harassment and violence against Jews, 2% of them even completely.⁴⁷ This 12% go beyond the 8% that were classified as clearly antisemitic. In Britain, the percentage of those who agree to anti-Jewish violence is

43. Because 47.9% of the British respondents opted for “neither favourable nor unfavourable” and “Don’t Know/Refused” Staetsky omitted the “neither favourable nor unfavourable” option in an additional question. Under this condition another 7.2% went to the unfavourable side, so that Staetsky added to 5.4% another 7.2% of respondents with a “latent negativity towards Jews”. So the range of people with an unfavourable view of Jews is between the minimum of 5.4% and the maximal estimate of 12.6%.

44. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 24, Figure 5.8.

45. *Ibid.*, 63.

46. This means that to the 7-point index of the British study and the 6-point index of the Norwegian study, which measured antisemitic ideas and images, those were added who do not agree to any of these ideas but nevertheless harbour an unfavourable view of Jews, so that we get an 8-point index and a 7-point index respectively.

47. The consent to violent acts against Jews (and Muslims) belongs to the behavioural or conative dimension of attitudes.

within the range of those with strong antisemitic attitudes (4%). The higher approval in the Norwegian case is probably due to two factors: to refer to the treatment of Palestinians by Israelis in measuring the justification of harassment and violence against Jews is connecting Jews with Israel's policy, therefore the much more widespread anti-Israel attitudes among the Norwegian population come into play here. In addition, it is likely significant that the British study asked for the justification of violence, while in Norwegian study it is asked for the justification not only of violence but also of the less harmful harassment.

Among the Norwegian respondents, about the same number justifies harassment and violence against Jews (12%) and Muslims (10% – see Figures 5.15–5.18), while respondents reject violence against Muslims (73%) more often than against Jews (63%). In contrast, in Britain violence against Jews is less often justified (4% “often or sometimes”; another 9.8% say “rarely”) than against Muslims (7.5% “often or sometimes”; another 10.8% say “rarely”). Correspondingly, violence against Jews (71.2%) is rejected somewhat more frequently than violence against Muslims (67.1%).⁴⁸ Overall, however, the differences in the approval of violence and harassment against Jews and Muslims in both countries are only small. Moreover, that which survey research has found in the context of prejudice against various minorities⁴⁹ also applies to the willingness to justify violence, since the results of the British study confirm that “strongly antisemitic people showing relatively high levels of justification for violence against other targets”, such as Muslims and immigrants but also against banks, big business and British military personnel.⁵⁰ Because these other targets do not seem to indicate the existence of a coherent ideological worldview, Staetsky concludes from the non-exclusive tendency to justify violence that these respondents may be “simply more likely to consider violence to be an acceptable method of protest *in general*”.⁵¹

Attitude towards Jews cannot be considered without reference to the attitude towards Israel and the Middle East conflict, since in Norway a strong negative attitude toward Israel is more widespread (21.5%) than a strong negative attitude towards Jews (7.9%). As in Great Britain too, the proportion of those who agree with anti-Israel statements is higher than the proportion of those who agree with

48. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 40, Figure 5.20.

49. The Group-Focus-Enmity project; see: Andreas Zick, Beate Küpper and Andreas Hövermann, *Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination. A European Report* (Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2011); Wilhelm Heitmeyer, ed., *Deutsche Zustände, vol. 1–10* (Frankfurt/Main, Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2002–2012).

50. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, 40.

51. *Ibid.*

antisemitic statements. This is proven also by the different level of endorsement between antisemitic statements and anti-Israel statements. While the range of antisemitic statements is 2–15% in Great Britain, it is much higher in the case of anti-Israeli statements (9–24%). The same pattern exists in Norway, but the level of endorsement is higher for both antisemitic statements (range of 8–18%) and anti-Israel statements (between 25–32%). These differences may in part be due to the fact that the wording of negative items concerning Israel is harsher in the British compared to those in the Norwegian survey. What applies to the cognitive dimension of antisemitism can also be observed in regard to the emotional dimension of anti-Jewish prejudice. Of the British respondents, 33% have a “very or somewhat unfavourable” view of Israel (17% have a “very or somewhat favourable view”) compared with only 5.4% harbouring a “very unfavourable or somewhat unfavourable” view of Jews, and only 6% declare that their sympathies lie with the Israelis, while 18% lean on the side of the Palestinians. However, in general Staetsky characterises the attitude of the British population towards Israel “as one of uncertainty or indifference, but among those who hold a view, people with sympathies toward the Palestinians are numerically dominant”.⁵² Uncertainty and indifference are also characteristic of the attitude of the Norwegian respondents, since 54% of them answered the question on which side they are in the conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians with “impossible to say” or opt for “neither side” (Figure 5.13). However, compared with the British respondents, the Norwegian respondents showed less indifference or uncertainty since nearly half of them take sides with one of the conflicting parties (in Britain only 24%).

The proportion of British respondents agreeing to at least one anti-Israel statement is 47% higher than in the case of antisemitic statements (28%). This means that half of the British population “agrees to some extent with at least one in the eight anti-Israel statements”.⁵³

In the Norwegian population, the difference between those agreeing to at least one antisemitic statement (30.8%) and those agreeing to at least one anti-Israel statement (40%) is much smaller. This may be partly due to the fact that in this case the anti-Israel index consists of only two items, compared to eight in the British survey. It is surprising that Staetsky did not include the fact of this greater dissemination of anti-Israeli attitudes in his considerations as to why Jews perceive widespread antisemitism. As the FRA Study has shown, many Jews evaluate negative comments about Israel – especially in the mass media – as an expression of

52. *Ibid.*, 28. 76% do not declare their sympathy for one of the conflicting parties; in Norway the proportion is much smaller: 46%.

53. *Ibid.*, 30.

antisemitism.⁵⁴ To explain the paradox with regard to the feelings among Norwegian Jews of rising antisemitism while at the same time the spread of antisemitic attitudes among the Norwegian population decreased, this may be partly due to the fact that anti-Israel attitudes are playing a role here. Yet, it is also possible that internet communication and media have a greater influence on the Jewish perception than public opinion (see below).

8. CONCLUSIONS

Staetsky discusses these findings from a Jewish perspective. He states that even if only 5% as in the British case, or 8% as in Norway can be labelled with the extremely negative label “antisemite”, and while this label could not be used indiscriminately in relation to the remaining quarter of the population, which holds some antisemitic attitudes, the latter group nevertheless plays an important role in the Jewish perception. Jews may not meet regularly with extreme antisemites, but they encounter people much more frequently who hold – and may sometimes even express – opinions about Jews or Israel that make Jews feel uncomfortable or even offended. In a single encounter, it is difficult for a Jewish individual to assess whether a complete antisemitic worldview stands behind a single expressed negative opinion toward Jews, or whether it is just an isolated opinion that is only of minor importance to the person in question.⁵⁵

In this circumstance, Staetsky explains the fact that while in many European countries Jews continue to perceive widespread antisemitism, the number of pronounced antisemitic persons is not very high. While 30% of the population in Britain and 31.6% in Norway “holding potentially uncomfortable or upsetting views from a Jewish perspective, anxieties among Jews about widespread antisemitism become more understandable”.⁵⁶ The chances of meeting a hard-core antisemitic individual is about one in twenty in Britain, or one in about fourteen in Norway,

54. FRA, *Discrimination and Hate Crime against Jews in EU Member States*, Figure 5.3.

55. For the estimation of the spread of antisemitic or racial attitudes in the majority population, however, the corresponding expectation of members of the minority also plays an important role. As social psychological studies of intergroup contact show, “members of majority status groups typically involve being perceived as prejudiced by individuals of lower status groups, whereas the concern of members of minority status groups involve becoming the target of prejudice from individuals of higher status groups”; “Intergroup attitudes of minority group members are often based in the anticipation of prejudice by majority group members” (Linda R. Tropp and Thomas F. Pettigrew, “Relationships Between Intergroup Contact and Prejudice Among Minority and Majority Status Groups”, *Psychological Science* 16, no. 12 (2005): 951–52).

56. Staetsky, *Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain*, p. 64.

but it is about one in three if we refer to the diffusion of antisemitic ideas in the populations of Britain and Norway.

If one considers what Staetsky has not done in his analysis, that anti-Israel attitudes are more widespread and some of them are also perceived by the Jews as antisemitic, then the likelihood of meeting an individual with strong anti-Israel attitudes or a person who makes anti-Israel remarks increases even further. In the British case, the probability of meeting a person with a strong anti-Israel opinion (9.2% of the population) is almost one in ten, but it is one in two if we refer to the diffusion of anti-Israel statements (56%). In Norway, the probability of meeting a person with a strong anti-Israel opinion (21.5% of the population) is even one in five, but—like in Britain—it is one in two if we refer to the diffusion of anti-Israel statements (53.4%).

With the concept of the elastic view, Daniel Staetsky offers an interesting and at least a partial explanation for the gap between the Jewish perception of the dissemination of antisemitism and the number of convinced antisemites. This is important for the public debate because it helps to better understand that there is a difference between a small number of convinced antisemites and a larger number of people who harbour one or the other negative stereotype about Jews without holding a negative attitude towards Jews.

However, the perception on the Jewish side is not determined solely by personal contacts with persons making antisemitic remarks. The FRA study shows that the communication on the internet and media coverage plays an especially big role here.⁵⁷ In order to explain the gap between Jewish perception of antisemitism and the results of survey research, not only personal communication, but also the role of public communication on the internet and in the media must be included. It is not only the occurrence of antisemitic remarks experienced by Jews themselves, but also the reporting on antisemitic occurrences, discussions about antisemitism in Parliament, on talk shows, publications by the government or the police, and even programs to combat antisemitism that greatly influence the perception of the dissemination of antisemitism in society.

57. In the FRA Study, *Discrimination and Hate Crimes against Jews*, figure 5.3, 75% of the respondents in eight EU countries see antisemitism on the internet as a problem, 59% choose antisemitism in the media, while 54% see antisemitic remarks in public space as a problem. In 2018 the second FRA survey, *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism*, 21, Table 2, an even larger majority of respondents in 12 EU member states consider antisemitism expressed online as a problem in the country they live in. In the German survey *Jüdische Perspektiven auf Antisemitismus in Deutschland* by Hövermann et al., 87% of the respondents agree that antisemitism on the World Wide Web and social networks is a concerning problem, and 84% agree that the distorted media coverage about Israel is a concerning problem, while 74% agree that antisemitic remarks in personal contacts (at school, at the work place etc.) are a concerning problem.

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