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# Report on Antisemitism 2023 – Summary

**During the reporting year, the SIG recorded 155 antisemitic incidents in the German, Italian and Romansh language areas of Switzerland (not including online incidents). This represents a massive and unprecedented increase compared to the previous year (2022: 57). This is mainly due to the period following the Hamas attacks of 7 October 2023. The incidents included 10 physical assaults, 47 incidents of verbal abuse, 42 pieces of offensive graffiti, 38 comments, ten posters/banners and eight public acts. Online, mainly on social media and in media comment sections, 975 incidents were recorded, an increase of 14% compared to 2022 (853). The total number of incidents reported and observed during the investigation period is 1,130 (2022: 910).**

It can be said that in 2023, antisemitism in Switzerland has manifested itself in the real world. Such an accumulation of assaults, offensive graffiti, verbal abuse and antisemitic incidents during demonstrations in such a short period of time is unprecedented in our period of investigation. The content of the graffiti and letters, with death threats and Shoah extermination fantasies, has also reached an as yet unknown intensity. This leads to the assumption that people with antisemitic ideas gave free rein to their hatred after the attacks by using stronger forms of expression than statements alone.

The recorded incidents (real world and online) are divided into four categories: general antisemitism (310 incidents), Shoah denial/trivialisation (43), antisemitism related to Israel (179) and current antisemitic conspiracy theories (443).

In previous years, antisemitic incidents often occurred due to “triggers”. Triggers are international or national events, including media reports, that cause a spike in the number of antisemitic incidents for a limited period (usually a few days). This has changed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the monitoring of Telegram groups. There were and are now two long-term triggers (“Covid” and “the war in Ukraine”), which directly or indirectly perpetuate antisemitic incidents. The attacks of 7 October and Israel’s subsequent war against Hamas were also a very powerful trigger that led to a massive increase in antisemitic incidents for a few weeks. As a result, the proportion of antisemitism related to Israel rose sharply: from 6.4% in 2022 to 20% in 2023.

Telegram continues to account for the majority of observed and reported incidents, although the percentage decreased slightly from 75% (2022) to 68%. The proportion on X (formerly Twitter) remained the same at 17%. Facebook’s share rose slightly from 5.5% (2022) to 7.3%. Unfortunately, the proportion of cases in comment sections on online media almost doubled to 3.2% compared to the previous year. However, these incidents are spread throughout the year. There is no link to 7 October.

Telegram continues to be the platform in Switzerland on which open antisemitism is possible without posts being deleted and users blocked. This is where the anti-state, anti-society and conspiracy-theory subculture described in last year’s antisemitism report continues to operate, in which antisemitism is practised almost unopposed. In terms of content and appearance, it adapts to current issues, be it Covid, the war in Ukraine or, most recently, Israel’s war against Hamas.



Most of the same Telegram groups were observed as in recent years. This also makes it possible to compare figures and themes. As with the war in Ukraine, when many of these groups turned from opponents of Covid policy into Putin propagandists, a new shift to pro-Palestine and anti-Israel took place after 7 October 2023. However, the basic idea of these people remains the same: they are against the mainstream, against the West and believe that all crises and wars are orchestrated by an elite in order to turn humankind into mindless slaves once and for all.

The number of antisemitic incidents in the Telegram groups remained steady in the first nine months, with some fluctuations. In October, a huge peak followed the Hamas terror attacks. Since then, the number has been falling again.

The most serious incidents in 2023 were:

- In April, a Jewish pupil was called a “fucking Jew” at a secondary school in the canton of Basel Landschaft and was also beaten.
- A Jewish tourist was verbally abused by a local in a car park in Saas-Fee in the canton of Valais in August. The latter then got into his car and tried to run over the tourist.
- A pupil in a district school in the canton of Aargau was insulted (Nazi salute, “You should be gassed”), shoved, beaten and had his trousers pulled down.
- Two devout siblings were both punched without warning by a man at Zurich Airport station.
- After an argument over an incorrectly parked car in November in the city of Zurich, a man was choked, threatened and asked if he was Jewish by two other men.
- In November, a woman walked past the empty Shabbat tables in memory of the Hamas hostages in a square in the city of Zurich and shouted at people, “Fucking Jew, it’s just because of you fucking Jews that they closed the square.”

- A condominium owner in the canton of Graubünden received a letter in March stating that the condominium owners’ meeting had decided that he may no longer rent his apartment to Jewish people in the future.
- In October and November, “Death to the Jews” was sprayed several times on walls in the city of Zurich.
- At pro-Palestinian demonstrations in various cities, the slogan “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” was displayed on banners and signs. There were also Nazi and Holocaust comparisons, and signs such as “Well done Israel, Hitler would be proud” were observed.

## Contact

### **Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities SIG**

Gotthardstrasse 65 | PO Box | 8027 Zurich  
+41 43 305 07 77 | [info@swissjews.ch](mailto:info@swissjews.ch)

[swissjews.ch](http://swissjews.ch)

### **GRA Foundation Against Racism and Antisemitism**

PO Box | 8027 Zurich  
+41 58 666 89 66 | [info@gra.ch](mailto:info@gra.ch)

[gra.ch](http://gra.ch)

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