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Addressing antisemitism through education

A survey of teachers' knowledge and understanding

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SHORT SUMMARY

Learning from teachers' experiences on addressing antisemitism in the classroom

As antisemitism continues to pose an increasing threat to the security of Jewish communities and individuals worldwide, education systems have a moral imperative to address it in all its forms. Teachers are the first line of defence to prevent the spread of hatred. Listening to their experiences and understanding their needs is a first step towards equipping them with the right tools to combat this phenomenon.

This unprecedented study is the first European survey of teachers on the topic of antisemitism. It includes data surveyed from 2,030 educators across the European Union, to examine their knowledge and understanding of antisemitism and explore their preparedness to address it in the classroom. Highlighting the prevalence of antisemitism in school environments, the survey outlines key areas where educational systems can support teachers, including: understanding the challenges they face, enhancing high-quality training opportunities, and developing clear policies and guidance on how to respond to antisemitic incidents.

Above all, the survey provides insights into the potential for research-informed, high quality professional development courses to meaningfully support teachers in recognising and combatting antisemitism.

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"Since wars begin in the minds of men and women it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed"

Addressing antisemitism through education

A survey of teachers' knowledge and understanding

Foreword

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More than eight decades after the Holocaust, antisemitism is once again on the rise in Europe and beyond. This resurgence threatens not only the safety and well-being of Jewish communities but also undermines democratic values that hold our societies together.

At UNESCO we believe that education is the most powerful foundation for preventing and countering antisemitism. It enables us to confront the roots of prejudice, discrimination and hatred, while fostering resilience against the mechanisms that fuel them.

Teachers are at the heart of this effort. They play a decisive role in shaping future generations, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and values required for global citizenship. Yet, many educators report feeling unprepared to address antisemitism in their classroom. Some fear backlash from students or parents, while others worry about unintentionally reinforcing harmful stereotypes even as they seek to challenge them.

This publication brings teachers' perspectives to the forefront. Drawing on the first large-scale survey on educators' perceptions of antisemitism across the European Union, it provides valuable insights into their classroom experiences and their sense of readiness to engage with this sensitive issue.

Building on a sample of over 2,000 respondents across 23 EU countries, this unique resource not only maps the needs, views and challenges faced by teachers but also identifies broader patterns and trends that can inform concrete solutions and recommendations for policy-makers in designing effective responses.

The publication is part of a series that includes an analysis of how Jews, Judaism and antisemitism are represented in European learning materials, as well as a mapping of good and promising educational practices for addressing antisemitism.

Together, these initiatives reinforce UNESCO's mission to build resilient, inclusive and discrimination-free societies, in line with the 2023 UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development.

We hope this resource will support education stakeholders at every level in gaining a clearer understanding of the challenges educators face and in developing effective policies to respond to their needs. By amplifying the perspectives of teachers, it is a call for a stronger, collective commitment to countering antisemitism through education.

Stefania Giannini
Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

Acknowledgement

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UNESCO would like to thank the following individuals who have reviewed this publication at various stages as part of the project's Advisory Group. We are deeply grateful to Milan Mašát, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc (Czech Republic); Richelle Budd Caplan, Director, Global Initiatives Department, International Affairs and Communications Division, Yad Vashem (Israel), Miško Stanišić, director and co-founder of Terraforming (Serbia), Stéphanie Lecesne, Training Director, CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe (Belgium), Michal Bilewicz, Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Warsaw (Poland) and Ruth-Anne Lenga, Programme Director of UCL's Centre for Holocaust Education (United Kingdom).

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Executive summary

Antisemitism continues to pose an increasing threat to the security of Jewish communities and individuals globally. Levels of antisemitism were already high, but after the 7 October 2023 Hamas terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians and the conflict and humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Jewish communities worldwide have been targeted and threatened by levels of antisemitic hate unprecedented in recent decades.

Contemporary antisemitism can be found in Europe in radical and fringe political groups but also in the centre of society. It occurs in the daily lives of Jewish people in the form of casual remarks or actions at work, private conversations, in public places, in the media, sports and culture or when Jewish people are practicing their religion. And it occurs within schools – with both Jewish students and Jewish teachers subject to antisemitism in multiple forms on a regular basis.

This study, collecting data from 2,030 educators across the European Union, sought to examine their knowledge and understanding of what antisemitism refers to and explore their preparedness to address antisemitism when they encounter it. Many troubling findings emerged from the survey. However, it also provides insights into the potential for research-informed, high quality professional development courses to meaningfully support teachers in recognizing and combating antisemitism.

Key findings

1. Just over three-quarters (77.6%) had encountered at least one incident of antisemitism between students at least once or twice. Over a quarter of teachers (27.4%) had witnessed nine or more of these incidents. Almost one quarter of teachers had never encountered any antisemitic incidents. Overall, on average, teachers had encountered 5-6 antisemitic incidents between students at their school.

2. Teachers reported encountering numerous challenges when teaching about antisemitism, with over half of them experiencing two or more of the challenges at least occasionally and over a quarter encountering at least five challenges. The most prevalent challenges that teachers encountered were students demonstrating antisemitic attitudes, tropes and conspiracy theories read on the internet or in the media, and being exposed to this sort of content in the family environment.

3. For those teachers who had encountered antisemitic incidents between students, just over half of them (52.6%) responded by explaining to the perpetrator why the incident was unacceptable. Two-fifths of teachers (41.8%) informed colleagues and/or the headteacher about the incident. Just over a third of teachers gave the perpetrator a verbal warning or spoke to students across multiple classes to warn them that antisemitic incidents were unacceptable. A small proportion of teachers utilized more concerning passive responses which are unlikely to address the issue – for example, ignoring the incident (5.9%), or placing onus on the victim to change their behaviour – for example, telling the victim to avoid the perpetrator(s) in the future (6.6%).

4. Just under half of respondents (47.6%) reported that they taught about antisemitism. Where teachers were not teaching this content, reasons for this tended to be related to curriculum-based decisions about relevancy to the disciplinary subject they taught, rather than them objecting to teaching this content on attitudinal grounds.

5. Content related to antisemitism was most often taught in history, with around two thirds of respondents citing this as the subject in which they taught about antisemitism. Typically, antisemitism was taught with reference to the Holocaust. However, this appeared to contribute to antisemitism being overlooked as a contemporary issue.

6. Overall, teachers had relatively high confidence in their knowledge and ability to discuss, recognize and respond to antisemitism. However, confidence levels did not always reflect their knowledge, with many teachers having misconceptions about what antisemitism refers to. For example, while almost three-quarters (73.3%) of teachers identified that denying Jews the opportunities and services available to other citizens was antisemitic, 6.0% did not think it was antisemitic and 13.8% thought it was dependent on the situation. For comparing Jews to Nazis – while 62.7% identified this as antisemitic, 8.8% said it was not antisemitic, and 20.4% said it depended on the situation.

7. Participation in professional training to recognize and prevent contemporary antisemitism was limited. Less than a third of teachers (29.8%) had participated in training courses about antisemitism offered by specialist organizations from outside their school. Willingness to participate in professional training on antisemitism was generally high, although this was more the case for those who had already done training in this area and were thinking about further opportunities.

8. When talking in generalized terms, around three-quarters of teachers indicated that schools and teachers had a responsibility to address contemporary antisemitism. However, when thinking about this from a personal perspective, just over half of teachers (57.2%) said that it was very important to them personally to recognize and respond to contemporary antisemitism.

Introduction

Context

Antisemitism is posing an increasing threat to the security of Jewish communities and individuals globally. This rise has been felt in Europe, where nine out of ten (89%) Jews considered that antisemitism had increased in their country and 44% of young Jewish Europeans experienced antisemitic harassment, according to surveys from 2018,[1] and 50% of Europeans considered antisemitism to be a problem according to the European Commission Eurobarometer in 2019.[2] As a symptom of broader social and political problems, it is deeply integrated in our societies, affecting them as a whole.

Contemporary antisemitism can be found in Europe in radical and fringe political groups, but also in the centre of society. Contemporary antisemitism occurs in many forms, old and new: from hate crimes and attacks on Jewish people, their properties and institutions, to the desecration of cemeteries and memorials. It occurs in the daily lives of Jewish people in the form of casual remarks or actions at work, private conversations, in public places, in the media, sports and culture or when Jewish people are practicing their religion. Antisemitism is a core element of many violent extremist ideologies. In the last decade, the EU has witnessed violent and lethal attacks such as those on the Ozar Hatorah school in Toulouse in 2012, the Jewish Museum in Brussels in 2014, the Hypercacher kosher supermarket in Paris in 2015, and the Synagogue in Halle in 2019. After the attacks on Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023, and the conflict and humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, Jewish communities worldwide, including in Europe, have been targeted and threatened by levels of antisemitic hate unprecedented in the last decades. By 14 November 2023, just over a month later, there were 1,518 antisemitic incidents (mainly speech-related, but also physical attacks) recorded in France according to the French Interior Minister, and 330 investigations opened for acts of antisemitism.[3] A survey conducted in 2024 by the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) found that 80% of European Jews feel that antisemitism has increased over the last three years, including 83% of French Jews, 86% of German Jews and 82% of Swedish Jews.[4] Jews are also often the first target of hate crimes: for example, a study found that, in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 41% of racist hate crime incidents were directed against Jews, who account for 0.2% of the Dutch population.[5]

1 European Commission, Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism/Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, 2018, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-experiences-and-perceptions-of-antisemitism-survey_en.pdf

2 European Commission, Eurobarometer 484: Perceptions of antisemitism, January 2019, https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2220

3 Le Figaro and AFP, *Antisémitisme : plus de 1 500 actes et près de 600 interpellations recensés en France depuis le 7 octobre*, 14 November, 2023, https://www.lefigaro.fr/politique/antisemitisme-plus-de-1500-actes-et-pres-de-600-interpellations-recenses-en-france-depuis-le-7-octobre-20231114

4 Fundamental Rights Agency, *Jewish People's Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism*, 11 July 2024, https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism-third-survey#publication-tab-3

5 *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 May 2018, https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/netherlands-dutch-antisemitism-racist-hate-crimes-1.464608

In this context, it is even more important to see educational systems as an essential element in any comprehensive effort to address antisemitism and other forms of intolerance and discrimination. Teachers, in particular, can play a significant role in raising young people's awareness of the nature of antisemitism and its effect and in building their resilience to prejudice, extremist narratives, conspiracy thinking, and the toxic ideologies that drive discrimination and hatred. Teachers also have a duty to create school environments that are safe and inclusive of all students, including Jewish students.

The EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life sets out measures focusing on:

1. **preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism;**
2. **protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU; and**
3. **education, research and Holocaust remembrance.**

The strategy sets out the policy framework for the Commission for the period 2021-2030 and aims to support and encourage cooperation between Member States and all stakeholders. It complements other EU frameworks to combat various forms of intolerance and discrimination.

The Strategy stipulates that: 'Every child should learn about Jewish life and antisemitism as an integral part of Europe's history. Education can strengthen young people's resilience to antisemitic ideas and ideologies and to all forms of intolerance and discrimination. Opportunities to engage with Jewish communities and their members as well as with other minorities and religious groups can also foster mutual understanding. The European Year of Youth 2022 will offer new opportunities in this regard. Schools and campuses must be safe places for all. Teachers should be empowered to address antisemitism, the Holocaust, Jewish life and history, also in multicultural classrooms.'

UNESCO, as part of its project to address antisemitism through Education in Europe, funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ programme and implemented in partnership with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), seeks to advance research and to develop guidance and resources to strengthen educational responses to address antisemitism in and through education and to leverage education as a powerful tool to prevent prejudice and discrimination. In support of this goal, UNESCO commissioned the University College London Centre for Holocaust Education to develop an EU-wide survey of educators to assess their preparedness to address antisemitism, the findings of which are reported here.

The aim of this project was to produce knowledge about educators' understanding of what antisemitism refers to and explore their preparedness to address antisemitism when they encounter it. In turn, the results of this research will support ministries of education and other educational stakeholders to ensure that curriculum, pedagogy, teacher training, learning materials, schools or learning environments are respectful of human rights, meaningful in the political and cultural contexts, and free from stereotypes, misinformation and discrimination that may fuel and feed antisemitic attitudes and prejudices.

Methodology

Procedure

The approach of the project was to develop a comprehensive survey for completion by teachers across the twenty-seven states of the European Union (EU-27). The survey sought to build a picture of what teachers across Europe understood about antisemitism, their preparedness to respond to antisemitism when they encountered it at their school and to explore any professional training opportunities they have had for teaching about antisemitism.

Before the study began, ethical protocols were set up. This included providing potential respondents with information about the study, asking educators to complete the survey anonymously and ensuring the secure processing and storage of data.[6]

An online survey was used and mainly comprised of multiple-choice questions, with some open-text questions for teachers to elaborate on their experiences. As outlined below, the survey was carefully developed by the team at the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education, informed by their own work in the field and drawing on relevant literature and pre-existing survey instruments. An advisory group also commented on the survey, and their insights were incorporated into the final version of the survey.

The survey, open between August 2024 and May 2025, was translated into all EU languages and circulated to teachers and school directors across the EU-27 states. Two distinct data collection strategies were employed in order to maximize the reach of the survey and the diversity of the respondents. UNESCO led on one data collection workstream by promoting the survey through official partner governmental channels (such as ministries of education and offices in charge of inclusion and non-discrimination) and affiliate organizations as well as through social media. Using this approach, 1,251 respondents accessed the survey, of which 761 participants from across the EU-27 states proceeded with it.[7]

In order to increase the sample size, UNESCO further commissioned the polling company Public First to run the survey, targeting countries in which response rates were low.[8] Public First used a range of different panel providers who contacted respondents on their behalf. In return for their participation in the survey, respondents were provided with a small financial incentive. This approach generated responses from 1,269 teachers in Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Kingdom of the Netherlands, Poland, and Spain. The additional focus on these countries was chiefly motivated by:

a. Demographic factors: Germany, Italy, Spain and Poland are among the most populous EU countries, and therefore a EU-wide survey needed to encompass them to be representative.

6 Data was collected by Public First and UNESCO, and transferred to the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education for analysis where it was stored and processed according to national GDPR compliant standards.

7 Participant numbers vary on survey questions because not all teachers answered all questions.

8 Public First: https://www.publicfirst.co.uk/

b. Response rates: as the survey aims to take into account all EU Member States, the survey targeted more pointedly countries where the sample size was low compared to the size of the population. As such, countries such as France or Romania were not included as the response rates from the UNESCO-led collection were satisfactory. Instead, response rates from countries such as Ireland and The Kingdom of the Netherlands were boosted.

The two recruitment approaches gave a total sample size of 2,030 (this excludes those who accessed the survey but did not answer any questions). All respondents, irrespective of recruitment method, answered the same questions in the same order. Analysis of the data was conducted by researchers at the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Survey content

The survey was split into the following sections:

Educators' current teaching practices related to antisemitism

This section included questions adapted from research conducted by the UCL Centre for Holocaust education (Pettigrew et al., 2009) to explore why educators might not teach about antisemitism.[9] Additionally, a series of questions was developed to explore why educators might teach about antisemitism and the content they cover in these lessons – drawing on the research of Lenga and Karayianni (2024).[10] Finally, questions adapted from Hale et al. (2023) explored challenges educators may have encountered when teaching about antisemitism.[11]

Responses to antisemitic incidents

The second section of the survey asked about antisemitic incidents teachers may have experienced in their school. Using a series of statements informed by the research of Lenga and Karayianni (2024), educators were asked how frequently they encountered each type of incident *between students* at their school. Additionally, a new scale, informed by the work of Hale et al. (2017), was developed to measure responses to these incidents.[12]

9 Pettigrew, A., Foster, S., Howson, J., Salmons, P., Lenga, R.-A., and Andrews, K. 2009. Teaching about the Holocaust in English secondary schools: An empirical study of national trends, perspectives and practice. Institute of Education. https://holocausteducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Final-Report-Master-Document-19-October-2009-_HIMONIDES_.pdf

10 Lenga, R.A. and Karayianni, E. 2024. Let's talk about Antisemitism: Report of project activities and research findings. Unpublished report. UCL Centre for Holocaust Education.

11 Hale., R., Pettigrew, A., Karayianni, E., Pearce, A., Foster, S., Needham, K., Nienhaus, L., & Chapman, A. 2023. Continuity and Change: Ten years of teaching and learning about the Holocaust in England's secondary schools. UCL. https://holocausteducation.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/Continuity_and_Change_full_report_2023.pdf

12 Hale, R., Fox, C.L., and Murray, M. 2017. 'As a parent you become a tiger': Parents talking about bullying at school. Journal of Child and Family Studies, 26, 7, 2000-2015.

Preparedness to address antisemitism

In this section of the survey, teachers' levels of confidence in recognizing and addressing antisemitism were examined, informed by research by Lenga and Karayianni (2024).

Professional training experiences

Next, a series of questions (adapted from Pettigrew et al., 2009) explored professional development or training that teachers may have participated in to recognize and address antisemitism. Additionally, new questions were developed related to the content of training opportunities, informed by the research of Lenga and Karayianni (2024).

Responsibility for tackling antisemitism

This section of the survey looked at teachers' sense of responsibility to address antisemitism in schools with questions adapted from Lenga and Karayianni (2024).

Knowledge about Jewish people and about antisemitism

This section of the survey sought to explore educators' understanding of antisemitism. These questions were developed following careful study of existing literature and survey instruments. This included drawing on the Generalised Antisemitism Scale (Allington et al., 2022) and the work of Facing History (2022).[13]

Perceptions on the seriousness of antisemitism

In this final section of the survey, teachers were asked about their perceptions on the seriousness of antisemitism. These questions were adapted from questions used by the AJC in their 2023 report *The State of Antisemitism in America.*[14]

Demographics

Respondents were also invited to anonymously share demographic information. Approximately 1,800 teachers responded to this set of questions. Just over half of respondents (57.9%) reported they were female and 41.2% reported they were male (the remainder selected 'prefer not to say').

The survey sample is not nationally representative and responses are analyzed in aggregate across countries. Therefore, the results are not designed to be nationally representative for any individual Member State. The data reflects general directional trends in educators' perceptions

13 Allington, D., Hirsh, D. & Katz, L. 2022. The Generalised Antisemitism (GeAs) Scale: A Questionnaire Instrument for Measuring Antisemitism as Expressed in Relation Both to Jews and to Israel. Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism, 5(1), 37-48. https://doi.org/10.26613/jca/5.1.99

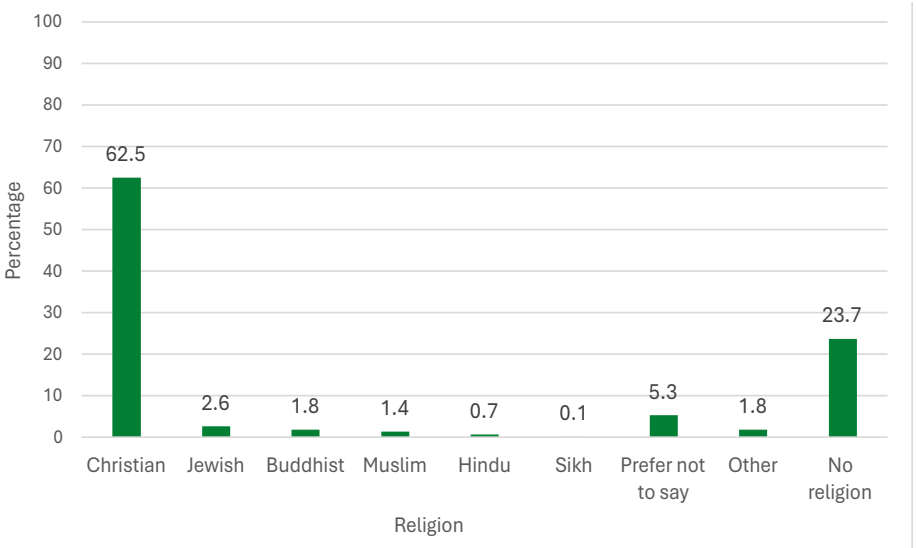
Facing History. 2022. Antisemitic Tropes. https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/Handout_%20Antisemitic%20Tropes.pdf

14 AJC. 2023. The State of Antisemitism in America 2023: Insights and Analysis. https://www.ajc.org/the-state-of-antisemitism-in-america-2023-insights-and-analysis

and experiences of antisemitism within the EU region, rather than precise indicators of teachers' understanding or preparedness to address antisemitism in any one national setting.

As shown in **Figure 1.**, the majority of teachers (62.5%) identified as Christian. Very few teachers identified with other religious groups. Just under a quarter of teachers (23.7%) said they did not identify with any religion.

Figure 1. Breakdown of religious groups, n=1,799 (%)



The majority of teachers (59.0%) were aged 35-54 years old. The teaching experience of teachers ranged from being in the profession for one year up to 50 years. On average, teachers had 16.4 years of teaching experience (SD=10.5) (n=1,768).[15] Respondents were most likely to work in middle secondary education (students aged 14-16 years) and upper secondary education (students aged 16-18 years) (56.7% and 60.9% respectively). Around two-fifths (41.9%) worked in lower secondary education (students aged 11-14 years) and 13.1% worked in primary education (students aged below 11 years).

15 SD refers to Standard Deviation. This is a measure of dispersion and shows how far apart the values are from the mean (average).

Findings

1. Teaching practice

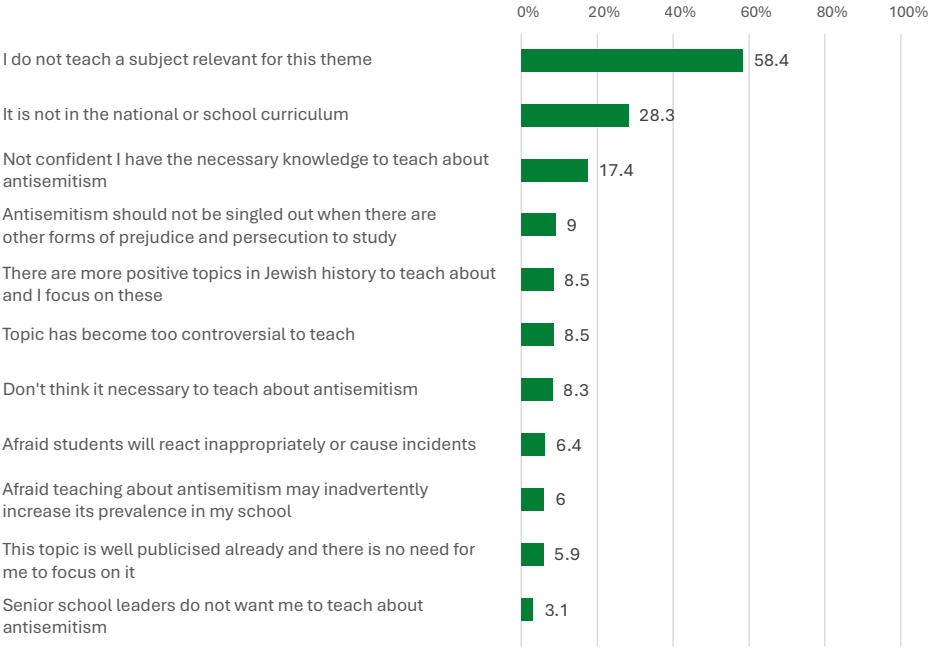
The survey began by asking teachers if they personally taught any content about Jewish life, culture or religion. Additionally, they were asked if they personally taught any content related to antisemitism. **Table 1** presents the findings based on 2,023 teachers who answered both questions. In total, 45.7% of educators taught about Jewish life, culture and religion and 47.6% taught about antisemitism. However, despite these percentages being similar, not all teachers covered both subjects. Of the 2,023 respondents, 37.9% taught both subjects and 41.5% did not teach either of them. The remaining respondents taught one of the subjects or were unsure.

Table 1. The percentage of teachers who personally taught about Jewish life and/or antisemitism (%)

		Personally teach about antisemitism			
		Yes	**No**	**Not sure**	**Totals**
Personally teach about Jewish life, culture or religion	**Yes**	37.9	6.3	1.5	45.7
	No	8.8	41.5	1.2	51.6
	Not sure	0.8	0.4	1.4	2.7
	Total	47.6	48.3	4.1	100.0

For the teachers who indicated that they had not personally taught content related to antisemitism, they were asked to indicate the reason(s) for this (n=937). As shown in **Figure 2,** over half of teachers (58.4%) who did not teach content related to antisemitism consider they were not teaching a disciplinary subject relevant to this content. Just over a quarter of respondents (28.3%) reported that antisemitism was not a topic on the national or school curriculum. Around 17.4% of teachers refrained from addressing the issue of antisemitism due to a lack of knowledge, which points at a need for enhancing teachers' understanding of, and confidence to address, anti-Jewish hatred. Relatively few teachers (less than 10.0%) cited not teaching the topic because of it being too controversial or because they thought it was unnecessary to teach about antisemitism. Thus, for the most part, reasons appeared related to curriculum-based decisions about relevancy to their subject, rather than them objecting to teaching this content on attitudinal grounds.

Figure 2. Reasons for not teaching about antisemitism (%)



In terms of teachers **who were covering content related to antisemitism** in their lessons (n=927), they tended to do this in the following subjects:[16]

- History (64.6%)
- Citizenship (29.1%)
- Politics/social sciences (23.5%)
- Literature (19.5%)
- Religious studies (15.7%)
- Geography (9.7%)
- Foreign languages (7.3%)
- Psychology (6.1%)
- Art (5.5%)

With around two-thirds of teachers covering content related to antisemitism in history lessons, it is likely that this was part of lessons on the Holocaust. Indeed, analysis of their reasons for teaching about antisemitism (described below) showed that 61.5% of teachers reported they taught about antisemitism when teaching about the Holocaust. However, while learning about antisemitism is

16 Subjects in which less than 5.0% of teachers were teaching about antisemitism are not included in this list.

undoubtedly an important element of Holocaust education, literature is increasingly highlighting the potential pitfalls of using this history as the primary or exclusive strategy to teach about contemporary antisemitism.[17] This is because there is little empirical research to evidence that learning about the Holocaust will automatically address contemporary antisemitism.[18] Indeed, it has been argued that because the Holocaust is typically taught through a historical lens, it risks reducing antisemitism to a singular, Holocaust-specific phenomenon that is now relegated to the past. Thus, this narrower focus can have the unintended consequence of overlooking the long history of antisemitism and that it remains a significant, global, modern-day issue.[19]

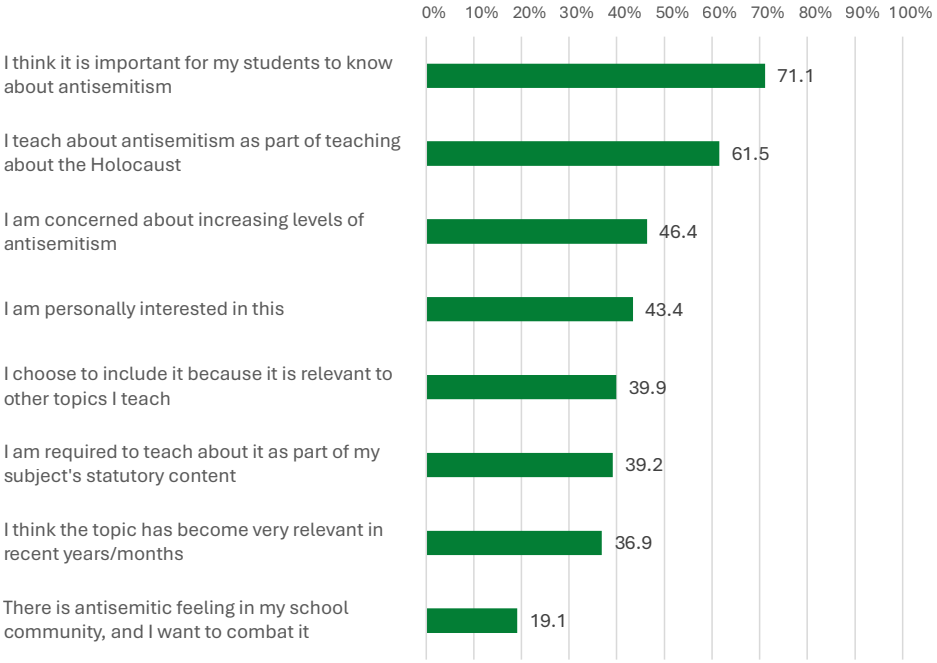
That said, many teachers were committed to raising awareness about what antisemitism refers to. In the survey, they were asked to consider why they were teaching about antisemitism. Eight reasons were presented, and respondents had to select all that applied. The results are presented in **Figure 3** (n=956) and show that almost three-quarters of teachers (71.1%) covered this content because they thought it was important for their students to know about antisemitism. It should nonetheless be noted that less than half of teachers (46.4%) taught about antisemitism because they were concerned about it. This suggests some disconnect between a potentially more abstract view about the importance of a topic versus awareness of the real scale and social impact of the problem. Indeed, the reason least likely to be selected by teachers was 'There is antisemitic feeling in my school community, and I want to combat it' which was selected by 19.1% of teachers.

17 Hübscher, M and Pfaff, N. 2023. Ambivalence and Contradictions in Education against Antisemitism: Exploring the Views and Experiences of Young Germans, *Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 15-28.

18 Pistone, I., Andersson, L.M., Lidström, A., Mattsson, C., Nelhans, G., Pernler, T., Sager, M., and Sivenbring, J. 2021. Education after Auschwitz – Educational outcomes of teaching to prevent antisemitism. University of Gothenburg. https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2021-10/Education%20after%20AuschwitzX_0.pdf

19 Horn, D. 2023. Is Holocaust Education making anti-semitism worse? The Atlantic, May 2023 Issue. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2023/05/holocaust-student-education-jewish-anti-semitism/673488/

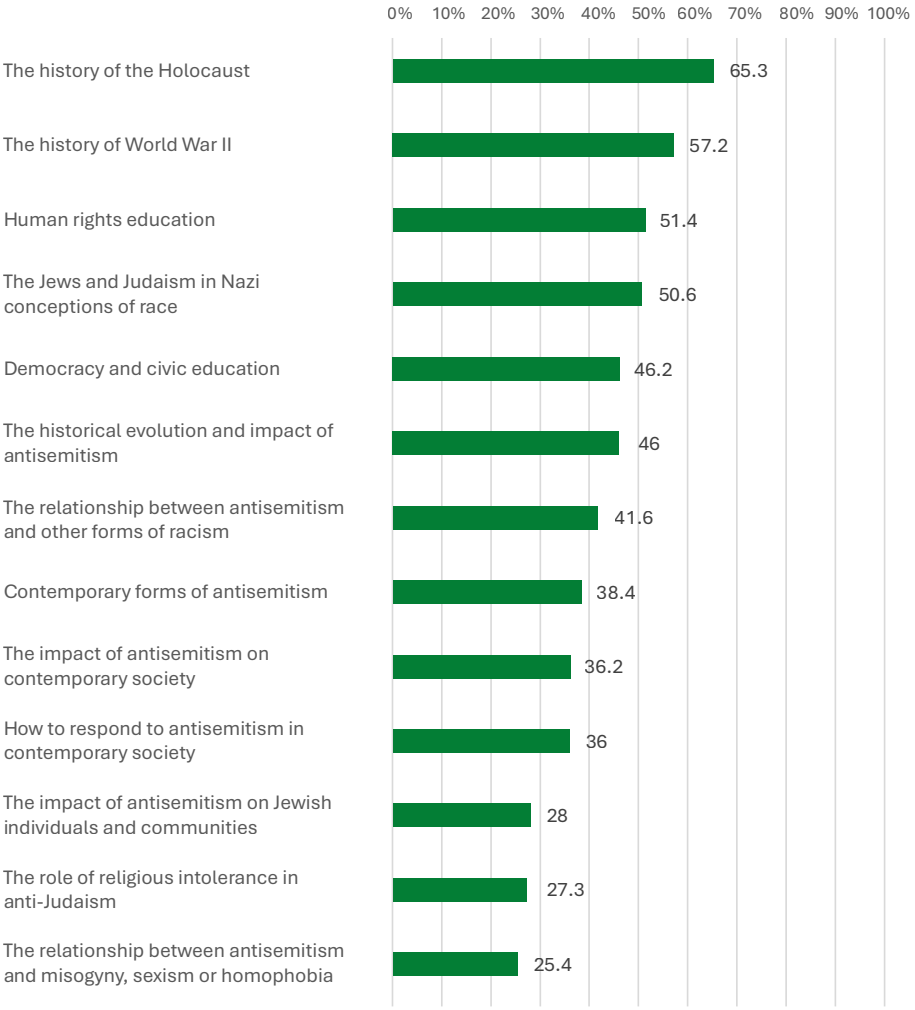
Figure 3. Reasons for teaching about antisemitism (%)



Analysis of the content covered when teaching about antisemitism further highlighted how teachers draw on the Holocaust. The results (n=954), presented in **Figure 4** show that antisemitism was most often taught through a historical lens, with reference to the Holocaust and the Second World War. Teaching about antisemitism in the context of human rights and civics was also quite prevalent. Teachers were less likely to examine the impact of antisemitism and how to respond to it. Only around a quarter of teachers included the role of religious intolerance in anti-Judaism and the relationship between antisemitism and misogyny, sexism or homophobia.

Overall, just over two-thirds of the teachers (68.9%) were teaching at least four topics from the list. On average, teachers reported teaching a little over five topics. While teaching antisemitism as part of Holocaust education was the predominant approach, many teachers appeared to include additional topics which were not necessarily historical in nature.

Figure 4. The content that teachers include (%)



The teachers who indicated teaching content related to antisemitism were asked to indicate how frequently they had personally encountered a series of challenges when teaching about antisemitism. While far from comprehensive, the list provided in the survey, adapted from Hale et al. (2023), covered some of the most serious and specific challenges related to antisemitism that teachers may have faced.

The results are shown in **Figure 5.** In terms of **challenges encountered occasionally or frequently**, the responses highlighted the rapidly changing landscape of contemporary antisemitism, with the digital space singled out as a leading 'incubator' of antisemitism among young people. Indeed, the

most prevalent challenge was students demonstrating antisemitic attitudes, tropes and conspiracy theories read on the internet or in the media. More traditional networks of political socialization were also singled out as 43.7% of respondents encountered students being exposed to antisemitic content in the family environment, frequently or occasionally. This is doubly concerning, not only because students can bring these ideas into the school environment, but also because teachers often need to also manage relationships with parents and families who can harbour prejudicial attitudes and therefore oppose educational interventions on antisemitism. Worryingly, almost half of teachers experienced this at least occasionally, drawing attention to the regularity with which students are exposed to antisemitism beyond the classroom and school environment. Antisemitism amongst colleagues was the least likely challenge to be encountered. Even so, troublingly, almost a quarter of respondents reported experiencing this challenge occasionally (17.0%) or frequently (7.1%). Put another way, almost a quarter of teachers have encountered *other teachers* being antisemitic.

One third of all teachers (33.7%) reported encountering Holocaust denial and distortion among their students occasionally or frequently. This statistic likely mirrors levels of Holocaust denial and distortion found on social media, with UNESCO and the United Nations finding 17% of public content on TikTok that related to the Holocaust featured either denial or distortion (History under attack: Holocaust denial and distortion on social media, 2022). UNESCO provides the following guidance and lesson materials for teachers to support their efforts to address and prevent the denial of the genocide among their students (2025):

- *Countering Holocaust denial and distortion through education: a guide for teachers; available at* https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000392455
- *Countering Holocaust denial and distortion through education: lesson activities for secondary education; available at* https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000392479

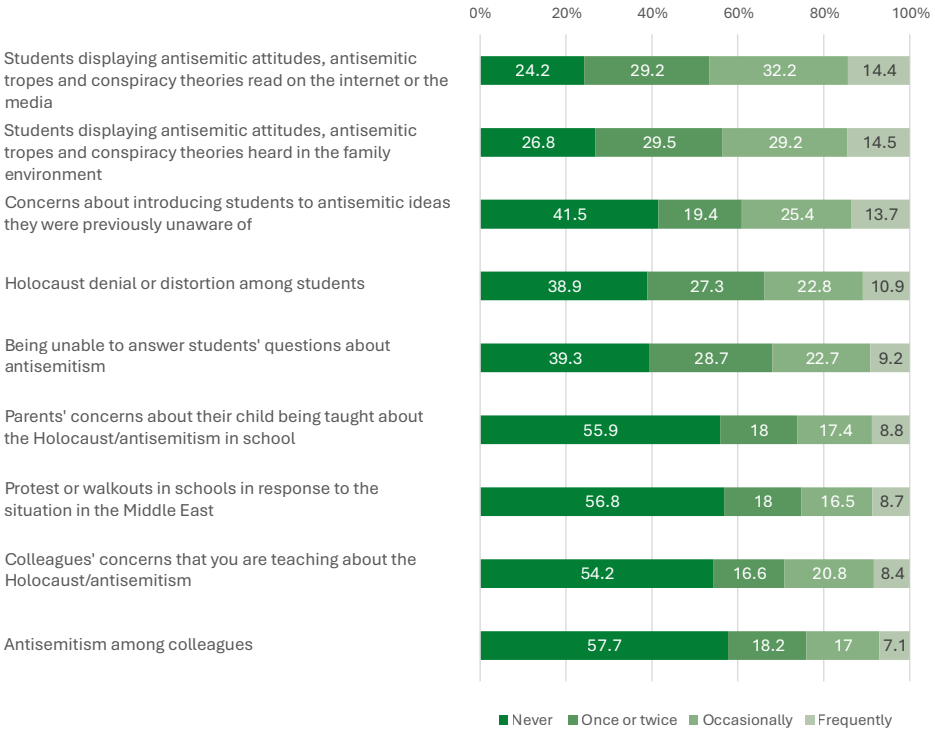
Teachers also expressed concern about introducing their students to antisemitic ideas that they may have been previously unaware of, with this being a frequent concern of 13.7% of respondents. This concern is echoed by Hübscher and Pfaff 2024 whose study of German youth found that young people most often encountered antisemitism ideas and concepts in school lessons, rather than *learning about* and *deconstructing* this form of racism and prejudice, pointing to a need for greater training on how to approach the topic in classrooms.[20] Likewise, a majority of teachers (60.7%) reported that they were unable to answer students' questions about antisemitism at least once or twice.

Four out ten teachers (43.2%) experienced student protests or walkouts in response to the situation in the Middle East. While such protests or walkouts may not be either motivated by antisemitism or propagate antisemitism, the occurrence of such events signals a high degree of emotion among the student body in response to the situation in the Middle East, and the need for specific guidance and support for schools and teachers to manage such events appropriately within school policies and procedures.

20 Hübscher, M. and Pfaff, N. 2023. *Ambivalence and Contradictions in Education against Antisemitism: Exploring the Views and Experiences of Young Germans*. Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism, Vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 15-28.

It is striking that a sizeable proportion of teachers have experienced these challenges at some point, suggesting that these issues are relatively widespread. Indeed, 57.3% of teachers experienced two or more different challenges at least occasionally, with 29.8% encountering at least five different challenges. Overall, this gives troubling insight into how common antisemitic speech and actions are.

Figure 5. Prevalence of challenges that teachers encounter when teaching about antisemitism (%)



2. Responses to antisemitic incidents

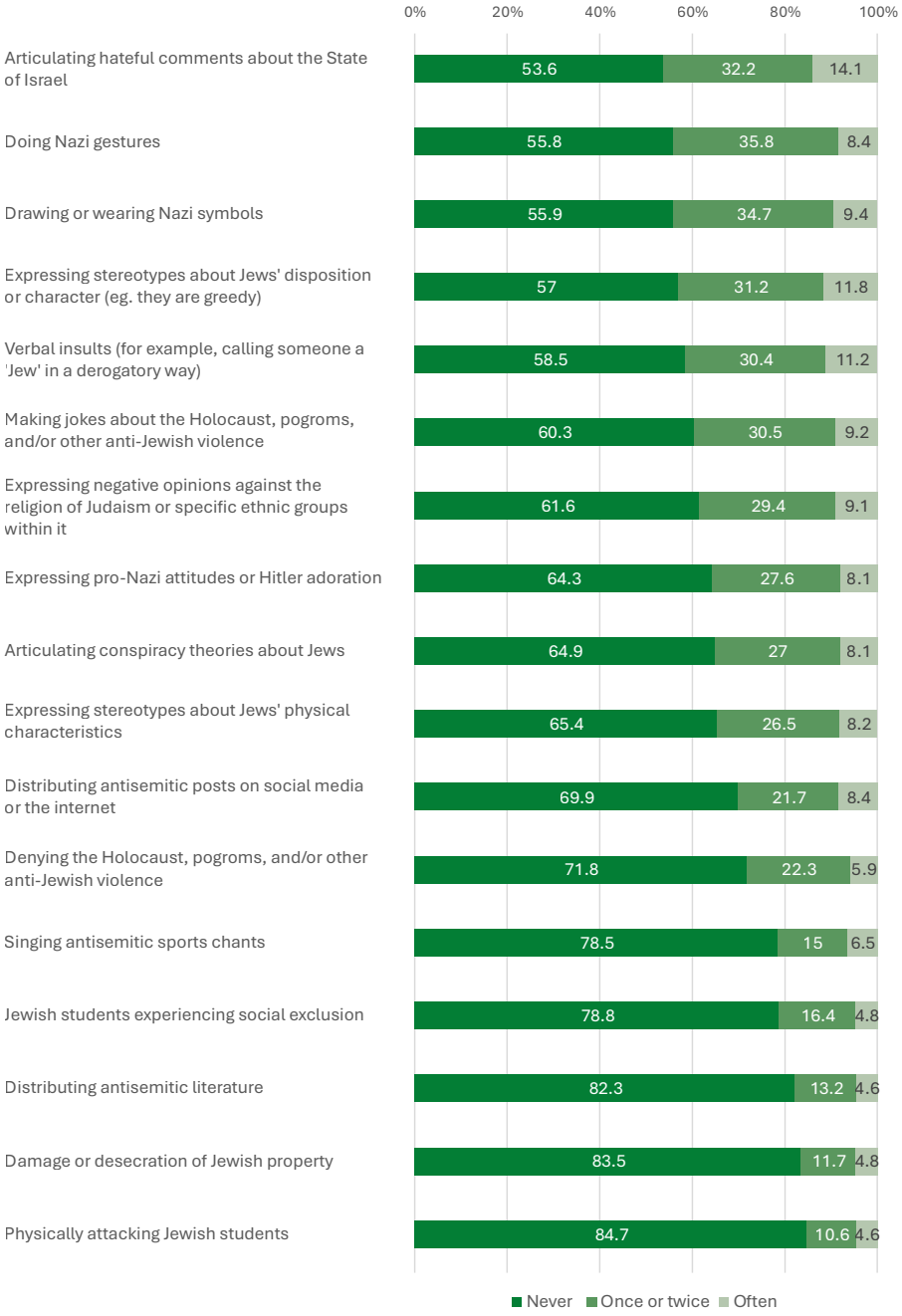
To explore responses to antisemitic incidents, all teachers answering the survey were presented with a list of incidents and asked how frequently (never; once or twice; often) they had encountered each type of incident between students at their school. The results are presented in **Figure 6** (n=1,898-1,910). Almost half of teachers (46.3%) had encountered students articulating hateful comments in relation to the State of Israel either once or twice, or often. It must be noted that hateful comments targeted at the State of Israel might not necessarily be antisemitic and may be motivated by other forms of hostility. However, comments motivated by hate are significantly more likely to include prejudice, or incite further dehumanization and violence. Moreover, the prevalence of emotionally charged comments around the conflict in the Middle East highlights the salience of

this topic and the need for targeted training and guidance for teachers on how to handle difficult conversations in an increasingly polarized environment. Moreover, almost half of teachers had encountered students making Nazi gestures (44.2%) or drawing or wearing Nazi symbols (44.1%). In terms of infrequent incidents, Jewish students being physically attacked was encountered often by 4.6% of teachers, and 10.6% of teachers had experience of this once or twice.

In total, 1,918 teachers engaged with this question and almost a quarter of them (22.4%) had never encountered any of the incidents. Thus, 77.6% had encountered at least one incident at least once or twice, and over a quarter (27.4%) had witnessed nine or more of these incidents. Overall, the mean number of incidents encountered was 5.50 (SD=5.25).

Taken together, the findings suggest that antisemitism between students is relatively common in schools, and these incidents cover a broad range of behaviours and attitudes. And while physical attacks were less frequent compared to some of the other incidents, the fact that they occurred at all is incredibly troubling. It should also be noted that these findings are dependent on teachers both witnessing the incident and recognizing it as antisemitism (rather than some other form of bullying or harassment, or even more troubling, perceiving it as harmless 'teasing' between peers). Thus, it is entirely feasible that incident rates are even higher. As findings later in this report reveal, most teachers in this survey had not participated in professional training about how to recognize and respond to antisemitism. Moreover, many teachers had gaps in their knowledge about what antisemitism refers to. The gaps in training and knowledge could mean that many incidents are missed or dismissed by teachers.

Figure 6. Prevalence of incidents that teachers encounter (%)



The teachers who had encountered at least one antisemitic incident (n=1,488) were asked about how they responded to the incident. **Figure 7** shows the responses of the teachers who answered this question (n=1,326). The most frequently selected action by just over half of the teachers (52.6%) was to explain to the perpetrator why the incident was unacceptable, followed by 41.8% of teachers who informed colleagues and/or the headteacher about the incident. Just over one third of teachers gave the perpetrator a verbal warning (36.6%) and spoke to students across multiple classes to warn them that antisemitic incidents were unacceptable (35.1%).

Teachers were much less likely to engage in passive or avoidance strategies such as telling the victim to avoid the perpetrator, ignoring the incident, or telling the students to sort it out between themselves. It should be noted that while only a small proportion of teachers utilized these approaches, they are problematic for placing onus on the victim to change their behaviour, thus inferring that they are responsible in some way for what happened. Arguably, teachers may respond in a different manner to different incidents, which this question did not explore. However, across all incidents listed in the previous question, certain responses will be inappropriate because they do not address the issue (for example, telling the victim to avoid the perpetrator, ignoring the incident or using humour to diffuse the situation). In contrast, other responses are likely to be more appropriate and meaningful for addressing the issue (for example, explaining to the perpetrator, and all students, why the incident was unacceptable).

Figure 7. Teachers' responses to antisemitic incidents (%)

Furthermore, only one third of teachers (33.4%) said their school had a clear policy and/or guidance for how they should respond to antisemitic incidents in their school or classroom. A fifth of teachers (21.4%) were unsure about whether such a policy or guidance existed, and 45.1% said that there was no such policy or guidance at their school.

Relatedly, just a quarter of teachers (26.3%) said there were specific processes in their school for recording incidents as antisemitic, with 20.2% of teachers being unsure, and 53.5% saying these processes were not in place at their school.

The dearth of specific policies and procedures are a missed opportunity for schools to tackle antisemitism in a systematic way. While the existence of a policy is no guarantee that its protocols will always be followed, it can signify to all stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, senior leaders/

directors, ministries, and the wider community – that antisemitism is unacceptable, and measures will be implemented when such incidences occur. It is an important safeguarding measure and is an opportunity to make schools accountable for tackling antisemitism. Moreover, by recording incidents, senior leaders can gauge the seriousness of the issue in their school, both in terms of how often it occurs and what form(s) it takes.

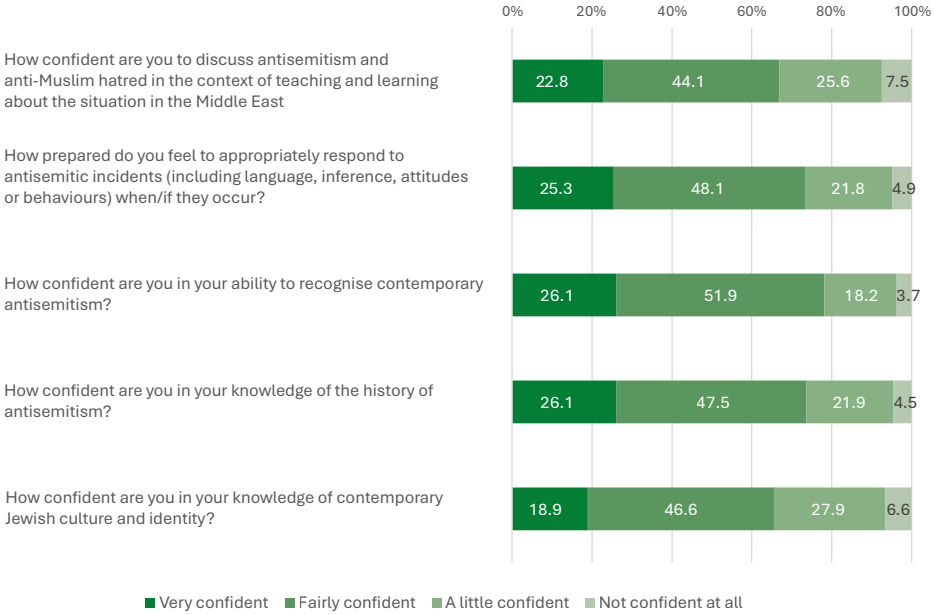
3. Preparedness to address antisemitism

Teachers were presented with five statements related to confidence in their knowledge and their ability to discuss, recognize and respond to antisemitism. Across all five statements, confidence levels were similar and reasonably high with at least two-thirds of teachers reporting they felt fairly or very confident.

A total score for this scale was calculated, with scores ranging from 5 (low confidence) to 20 (high confidence). The mean total score was 14.49 (SD=3.31; n=1,882), further highlighting teachers' relatively high confidence levels.

While encouraging, these robust levels of self-evaluated confidence do not rule out the existence of gaps in teachers' knowledge about antisemitism, as the following sections of the survey describe. Moreover, where teachers feel confident in their ability to discuss, recognize and respond to antisemitism they may be less inclined to seek out professional training opportunities, with the risk that knowledge gaps are not addressed and misconceptions remain unchallenged.

Figure 8. Teachers' confidence in their knowledge and ability to discuss, recognize and respond to antisemitism



4. Professional training experiences

Experiences of training

In the next section of the survey, teachers were asked about their professional training experiences. First, they were asked if they had participated in professional training to recognize and prevent antisemitism (other than Holocaust education training).

As shown in **Figure 9** and **Figure 10**, the majority of teachers reported that they had received no professional training on how to recognize and address contemporary antisemitism (70.2% and 71.9% respectively).

Focusing only on the teachers who had received this training (n=557), 69.5% of them had received training which covered both recognition and addressing contemporary antisemitism whereas 15.6% had received training which looked at recognizing antisemitism, and 11.1% had received targeted training on addressing it. The remainder were unsure if more than one element was covered.

Figure 9. Professional training on how to recognize contemporary antisemitism (n=1,861)

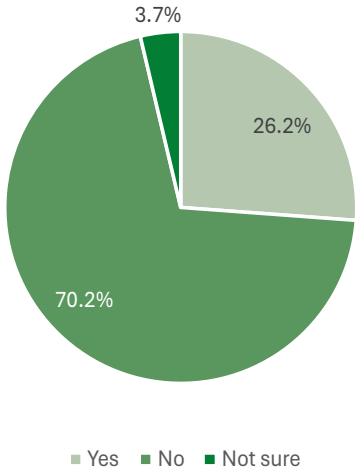
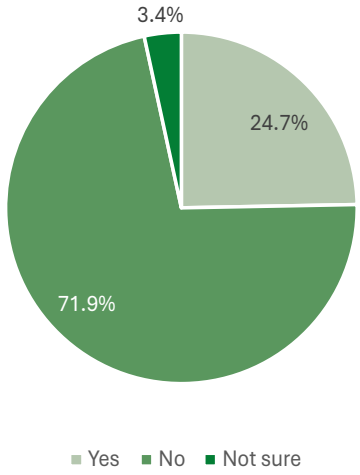


Figure 10. Professional training on how to prevent contemporary antisemitism (n=1,858)



The next question asked about the type of training teachers had participated in. For this question, in contrast to the previous questions, training related to Holocaust education was included and therefore increased the number of teachers who indicated participating in training that was related to antisemitism. Indeed, as described earlier, many teachers typically teach about antisemitism within history lessons as part of Holocaust education. The findings showed that:

- 22.6% had participated in professional development with a specific focus on teaching about antisemitism when they were a trainee teacher.
- As a qualified teacher, 23.3% had participated in training courses created by colleagues at their school to support them in teaching about antisemitism.
- As a qualified teacher, 29.8% had participated in training courses about antisemitism offered by specialist organizations from outside their school.
- As a qualified teacher, 50.1% had taught themselves how to recognize and/or prevent antisemitism.

(n=1,673)

Looking at only those who responded 'yes' to at least one of these forms of training (n=1,026), 40.4% had participated in one form of teacher training, 29.5% had participated in two forms, 17.0% had participated in three forms and 13.2% had participated in all four forms of teacher training listed in the survey.

Time spent on training

The survey also asked teachers to indicate how much time **in total** they had spent in training about antisemitism since becoming a teacher. Focusing on the 869 who had participated in some form of teacher training about antisemitism *and* answered this question, the time spent was as follows:

- Half a day or less: 17.5%
- One to two days: 33.4%
- Three to five days: 23.6%
- Six days or more: 25.5%

It is notable that 49.1% of teachers had completed at least 3 days of professional development related to antisemitism. Arguably, given all the other pressures on their time and curriculum topics they cover, this is quite a significant amount. However, as shown by research into Holocaust education professional development, it is not necessarily the time spent participating in training, which is most significant, but the content and quality of the training.[21] Further research is needed to examine the content and approach of the most prevalent professional development courses which are available and the impact they have on teachers' knowledge and understanding.

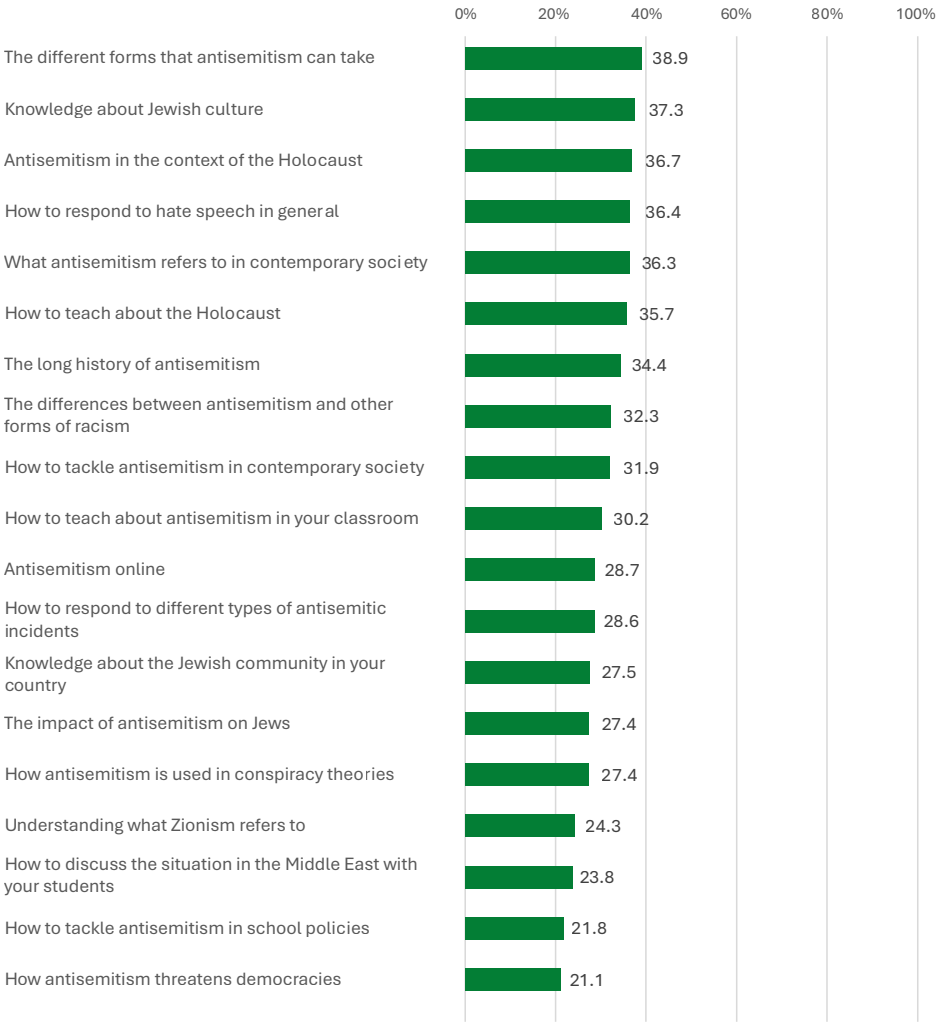
Content of training received

The survey included a question about the content of the professional development courses that teachers had participated in. A list of possible content options where given and teachers were asked to tick all that applied. Overall, 981 teachers provided this information.

The contents of the training appear to be rather fragmented, with no single topic dominating, which suggests that across Europe there is not a unified training curriculum on antisemitism. Overall, teachers were most likely to say their training covered the different forms of antisemitism (38.9%) and knowledge about Jewish culture (37.3%). Less likely to be cited was how antisemitism threatens democracies (21.1%) and how to tackle antisemitism in school policies (21.8%).

21 Hale., R., Pettigrew, A., Karayianni, E., Pearce, A., Foster, S., Needham, K., Nienhaus, L. and Chapman, A. 2023. Continuity and Change: Ten years of teaching and learning about the Holocaust in England's secondary schools. UCL. https://holocausteducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Continuity_and_Change_full_report_2023.pdf

Figure 11. The main things learned during teachers' professional development about antisemitism (%)



Clearly, it may not always be possible for professional training courses to cover all areas in detail, especially as teachers often have limited time to participate in professional development alongside the other demands on their time. However, **Figure 11** lists content that has an important role to play in ensuring comprehensive teacher training about antisemitism, which could be covered over a series of sessions. It also hints at gaps in teacher training that should be addressed. For example, most teachers did not learn about the threat that antisemitism poses for democracies. This is potentially significant; if the threat of antisemitism is not understood, then the importance of

tackling it may also not be grasped and, thus, addressing antisemitism may get lost within the sea of other responsibilities teachers carry in their day-to-day lives.

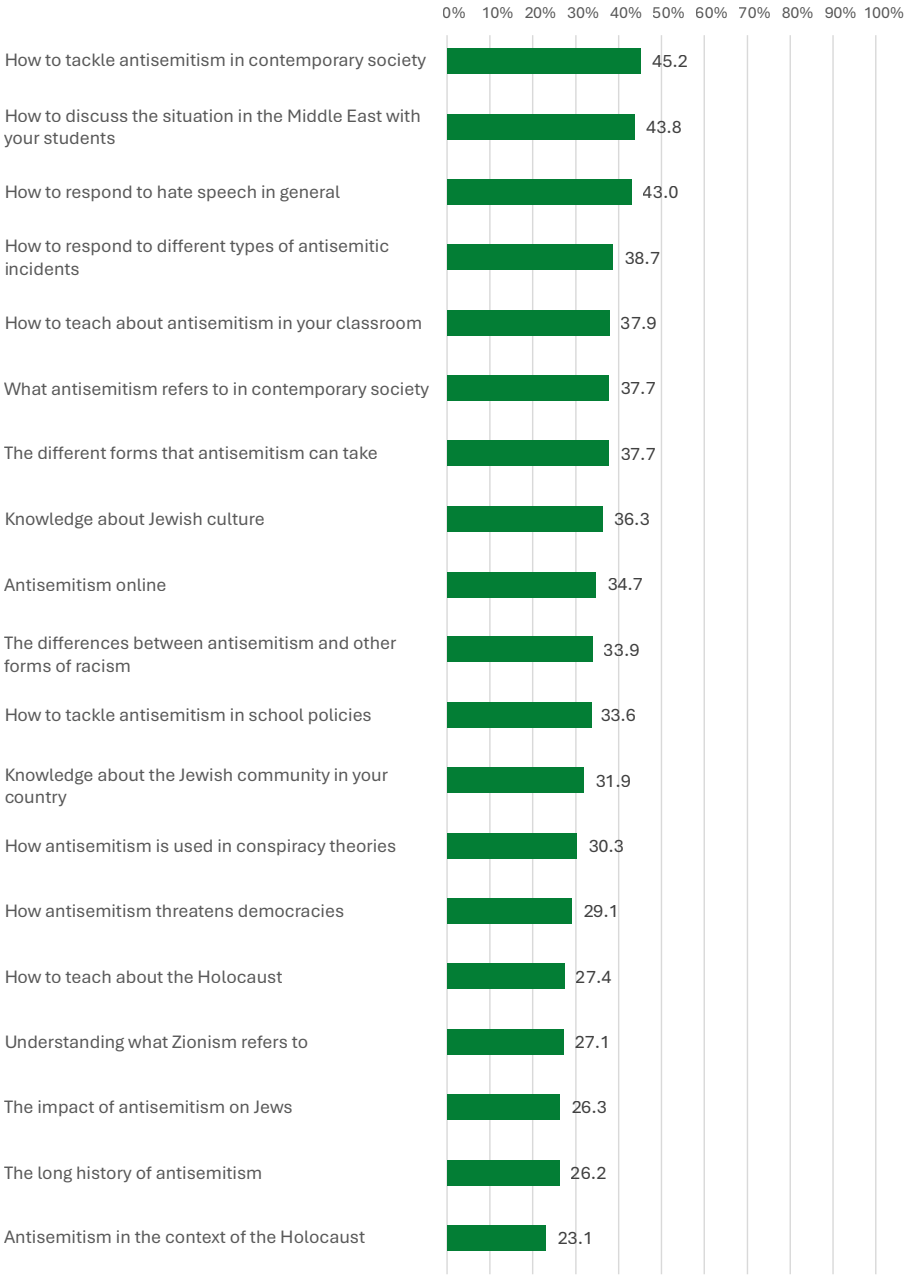
All survey respondents were asked whether they would participate in (further) professional development training to learn about antisemitism and how to combat it, if it was available in their country. Overall, 67.7% of those responding to the question (n=1,854) said that they would. Further analyses showed that 85.3% of those who had already undertaken training indicated they would be willing to do more while only 60.1% of those who had not previously participated in professional training about antisemitism indicated a willingness to do so.

When asked what content they would like this professional development training to include, teachers answering this question (n=1,249) indicated they would most like to learn how to tackle antisemitism in contemporary society (45.2%), how to discuss the situation in the Middle East with their students (43.8%), and how to respond to hate speech in general (43.0%).

At the other end of the spectrum, teachers seemed less interested in content about antisemitism in the context of the Holocaust (23.1%) and the long history of antisemitism (26.2%). This is perhaps because training on such content is already more widely available and teachers responding to the survey have already had some training on that as indicated in previous questions. It is also partly explained by the context within which they may teach about antisemitism.

Only a quarter of teachers (26.3%) reported they would like professional development to include content about the impact of antisemitism on Jews. This is concerning because it is important to acknowledge and understand the experiences of the Jewish community. Indeed, a key element of tackling antisemitism is to understand the profound negative impact it has had, and continues to have, on Jews in many aspects of life.

Figure 12. What content would you like this professional development training to include? (%) (n=1,249)

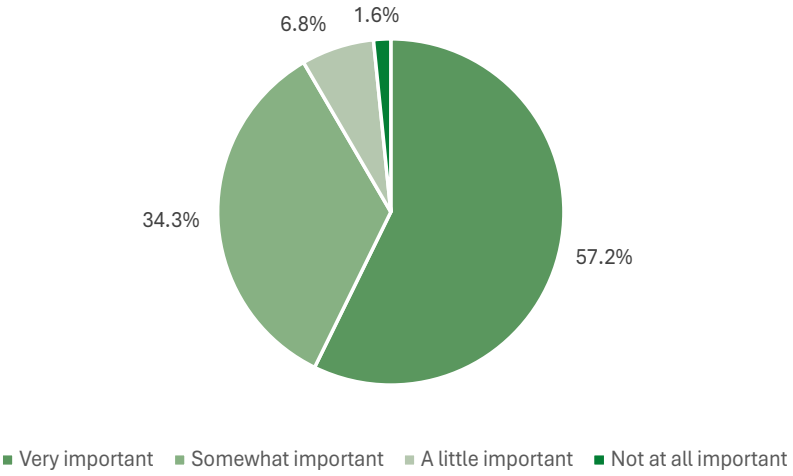


5. Responsibility for tackling antisemitism

The majority of survey respondents thought that schools (in general) had a responsibility to combat contemporary antisemitism (78.1%). A similar percentage, 77.5%, thought that teachers in general had that responsibility as well.

Despite the relatively high percentage in agreement that teachers and schools have a responsibility to address antisemitism, a smaller number of teachers felt it was very important for them personally to be able to do so. Just over half (57.2%) of teachers indicated that being able to recognize and address an incident was 'very important' to them personally and 34.3% indicated this being 'somewhat important'.

Figure 13. How important is it to you personally to be able to recognize and respond to an antisemitic incident (n=1,845)

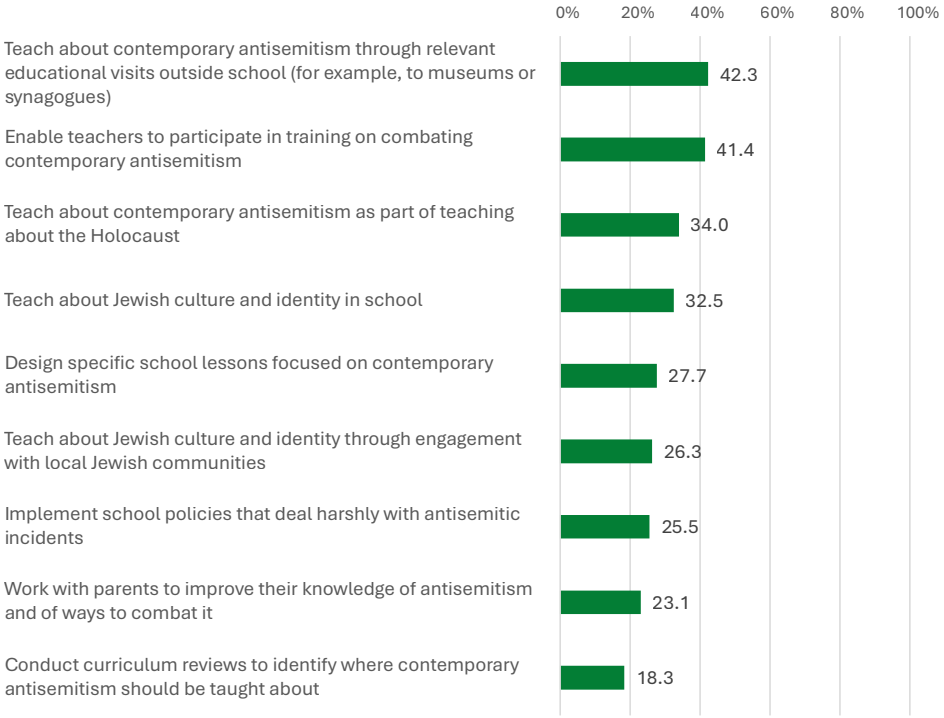


The teachers were asked about the best way to combat contemporary antisemitism. They were presented with a list of nine possible actions that could be utilized and were asked to select the three they thought would be most effective. The most frequently chosen item was for schools to teach about contemporary antisemitism through educational visits (42.3%), and to enable teachers to participate in training on combating antisemitism (41.4%) (n=1,417). The third most frequently selected option was to teach about antisemitism as part of their teaching about the Holocaust (34.0%). However, as discussed earlier, caution is needed with this approach because concerns have been raised about the extent to which learning about antisemitism within the context of the Holocaust is an effective means to combat the many contemporary forms it takes in society.

The items least likely to be selected were 'conducting curriculum reviews to identify where antisemitism should be taught' (18.0%) and 'working with parents to improve their knowledge of antisemitism and of the ways to combat it' (23.1%). While working with parents can be complex,

arguably this is a crucial step in combating antisemitism, especially taking into consideration how frequently teachers indicated encountering the challenge of 'students articulating antisemitic attitudes, antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories heard in the family environment' as described above.

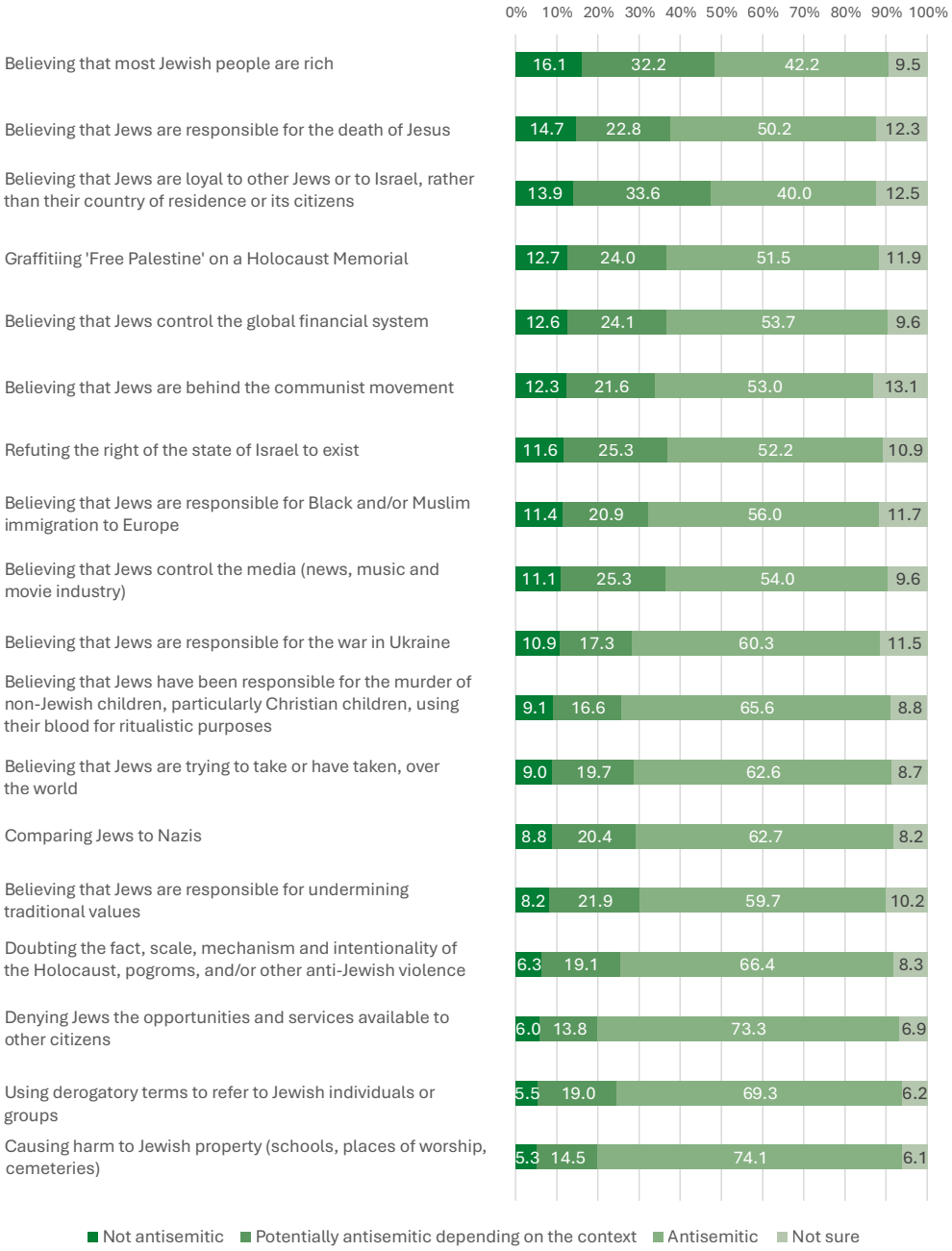
Figure 14. Perceptions of the best ways for schools to combat antisemitism (%)



6. Knowledge about Jewish people and about antisemitism

In the next section, the questions looked at teachers' levels of knowledge about Jewish people and about antisemitism. First, respondents (n=1,814) were presented with a list of statements and asked to indicate whether they were antisemitic, potentially antisemitic depending on context, or not antisemitic. **Figure 15** presents the results.

Figure 15. Knowledge about antisemitism (%)



All statements were examples of antisemitism. The question revealed some very troubling trends in terms of insufficient recognition of this.

The situations most likely to be seen as antisemitic were ones connected to broader patterns of prejudice also seen in other forms of racism, such as material destruction to property, direct discrimination and overt racist language. A large majority of teachers was also able to identify traditional anti-Jewish tropes such as the blood libel or more recent forms of antisemitism such as Holocaust denial:

- Causing harm to Jewish property (74.1%).
- Denying Jews the opportunities and services available to other citizens (73.3%).
- Using derogatory terms to refer to Jewish individuals or groups (69.3%).
- Believing that Jews have been responsible for the murder of non-Jewish children, particularly Christian children, using their blood for ritualistic purposes (65.6%).
- Doubting the fact, scale, mechanism and intentionality of the Holocaust and other anti-Jewish violence (66.4%).

While these are relatively large percentages, the fact that as many as 1 in 4 or more teachers did not recognize these examples as being antisemitic points to the need for more targeted training to fill in the gaps.

Additionally:

- 16.1% did not think believing that most Jewish people are rich is antisemitic and an additional 32.2% thought this depended on context.
- 14.7% thought believing that Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus was not antisemitic, with an additional 22.8% thinking it depended on context.
- 13.9% thought that it was not antisemitic to believe Jews are loyal to other Jews or to the State of Israel rather than their country of residence, with an additional 33.6% thinking this depended on context and only 40.0% indicating this belief as antisemitic.
- 12.7% of respondents did not think graffitiing 'Free Palestine' on a Holocaust memorial was antisemitic. Half of respondents (51.5%) indicated this as antisemitic.
- 12.6% thought that believing Jews control the financial system was not antisemitic, while 24.1% said this depended on context and 53.7% saw this as antisemitic.
- 12.3% thought that believing that Jews were behind the communist movement was not antisemitic, with 21.6% indicating this depended on context and 53% identifying it as antisemitic.
- 11.6% thought that refuting the right of the State of Israel to exist was not antisemitic (only 52.2% saw it as such).
- 11.4% thought that seeing Jews as responsible for black and Muslim immigration in Europe was not antisemitic. Additionally, 20.9% said it depended on context and 56% saw it as antisemitic.

- 11.1% said that believing Jews control the media was not antisemitic, an additional 25.3% thought it depended on context and 54.0% saw it as antisemitic.
- 10.9% thought that seeing Jews as responsible for the war in Ukraine was not antisemitic (17.3% indicate this as depending on context and 60.3% saw it as antisemitic.

As a general trend, these findings indicate that:

- Up to 1 in every 10 teachers (and in some cases more than that) rejected these actions and attitudes as being examples of antisemitism.
- 1 in every 5 teachers thought that these examples may not be antisemitic depending on the context.
- Up to 1 in every 10 teachers were unsure about whether these statements represented antisemitism.

Even if most teachers correctly identified antisemitic statements and situations, the gaps highlighted by these findings have consequences on how the school system addresses antisemitism. Collectively, these findings are extremely concerning. They show fundamental misunderstandings of what antisemitism refers to. If teachers have these attitudes, misconceptions and knowledge gaps, they will be unable to identify antisemitic incidents when they encounter them. It also hinders their ability to meaningfully teach students what antisemitism refers to. Indeed, some teachers may – often inadvertently – reinforce antisemitic attitudes, tropes and conspiracy theories. Consequently, it is more pressing than ever to have a teaching workforce which has sound knowledge about what antisemitism refers to, which understands why it is unacceptable, and has the proficiency to combat it.

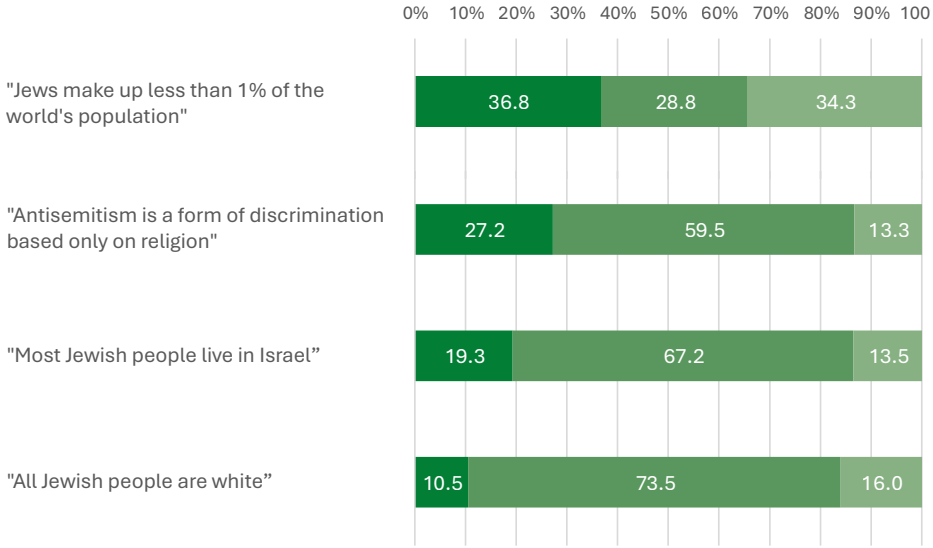
To further explore teachers' knowledge of what antisemitism refers to, total scores were calculated for each teacher. Where an example was selected to be 'antisemitic' a score of 0 was assigned, 'potentially antisemitic' was assigned a score of 1, and 'not antisemitic' was assigned a score of 2. Where teachers had selected 'not sure' they were coded as missing data.

Using this approach, the lowest possible total score is 0 (indicating the teacher identified all examples as antisemitic) and the highest score is 36.0 (indicating the teacher reported all examples as *not* antisemitic). Thus, the higher the score, the more examples that teachers had indicated were not antisemitic. Or put another way, higher scores denoted low knowledge of what antisemitism refers to.

Analyses showed that the mean total score was 8.26 (SD=8.22) (n=1,128). Thus, many teachers had at least a few knowledge gaps about what antisemitism refers to. Indeed, only 15.4% of teachers (174 teachers) indicated that all examples were antisemitic.

Another important aspect of teacher knowledge concerns knowledge about Jewish culture, life and heritage. Therefore, respondents were presented with a list of statements about Jews and were asked to indicate whether they believed the statement to be true or false. **Figure 16** presents the results (n=1,810).

Figure 16. Knowledge about Jews (%)



This question revealed mixed levels of knowledge about Jewish people. A large percentage of respondents knew that most Jewish people do not live in Israel (67.2%).[22] A smaller percentage, but still a majority (59.5%), knew that antisemitism was not only based on religious prejudice. However, only 36.8% of respondents knew that Jews make up less than 1% of the world's population and 1 in 10 respondents believed that all Jewish people are white, signaling a lack of knowledge about the diversity of the Jewish population.[23]

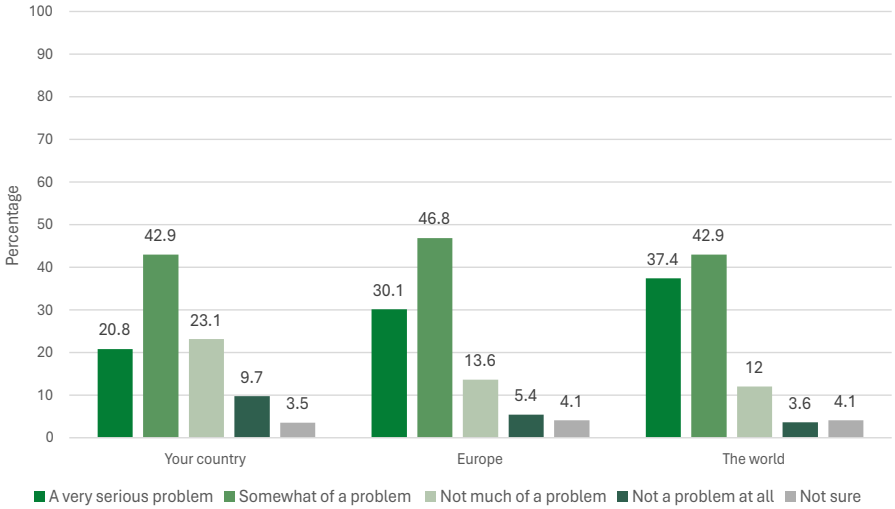
7. Perceptions on the seriousness of antisemitism

The final section of the survey aimed to gauge respondents' assessment of the seriousness of antisemitism. They were asked how serious a problem they considered antisemitism to be in their country, in Europe, and in the world today, selecting from five options: a very serious problem; somewhat of a problem; not much of a problem; not a problem at all; not sure. **Figure 17** presents their responses (n=1,817).

22 The Pew Research Center finds that nearly half of all Jews live in Israel. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2025/06/09/jewish-population-change/#:~:text=Israel%20and%20the%20United%20States,than%202%25%20of%20the%20population

23 https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/sephardic-ashkenazic-mizrahi-jews-jewish-ethnic-diversity/

Figure 17. Perceptions of seriousness of antisemitism in each place (%)



Respondents were generally more likely to see antisemitism as a more serious issue in the world, with 80.3% seeing it as a very serious problem or somewhat of a problem. They were least likely to see antisemitism as a serious issue in their own country, with 63.7% seeing it as a very serious problem or somewhat of a problem. Mean values (ranging from 1 to 4) for each statement, where a high score denoted higher perceived seriousness, also reflected this:

- In the world: 3.19
- In Europe: 3.06
- In their own country: 2.77

Respondents were also asked if antisemitism was taken as seriously as other forms of hate and bigotry. The results (n=1,814) showed that 23.8% thought that antisemitism was taken less seriously; 51.9% thought it was taken as seriously as other forms of hate; and 17.6% thought antisemitism was taken more seriously than other forms of hate and bigotry. The remaining teachers were unsure.

There was also a question to assess perceptions of whether the 7 October 2023 Hamas terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians and the conflict in Gaza have influenced the levels of antisemitism in Europe. Over half of the respondents (54.8%) believed that antisemitism had increased, 28.1% thought antisemitism levels were about the same, and 5.1% believed antisemitism had reduced. The remaining 11.9% of teachers were unsure.

8. The influence of gender

As described earlier, just over half of respondents (57.9%) reported they were women and 41.2% reported they were men (the remainder selected 'prefer not to say'). Analysis in this document compares the responses of those identifying as men and women on salient questions where differences may emerge.

Teaching practice

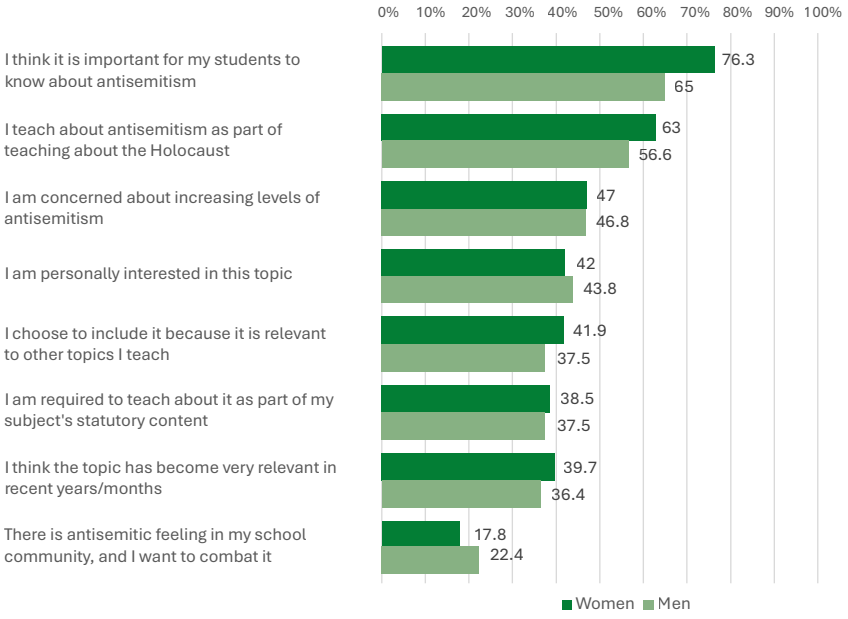
As shown in **Table 2**, there were only marginal gender differences in relation to teaching about antisemitism, and teaching about Jewish life, culture or religion.

Table 2. The percentage of teachers who personally taught about Jewish life and/or antisemitism - by gender (%)

(n=1,791)	Women	Men
Personally teach about antisemitism	47.3	48.1
Personally teach about Jewish life, culture or religion	44.4	47.4

Similarly, as shown in **Figure 18**, there were only marginal gender differences in reasons for teaching about antisemitism with two exceptions. Female teachers were more likely to cite the importance of students knowing about antisemitism, and teaching about antisemitism as part of their teaching about the Holocaust.

Figure 18. Reasons for teaching about antisemitism (%) - by gender



Analysis of the content covered when teaching about antisemitism also showed that there were few gender differences (see **Figure 19**). However, female teachers were more likely to include material related to the history of the Holocaust, the history of the Second World War, and democracy and civic education.

Figure 19. The content that teachers include (%) - by gender

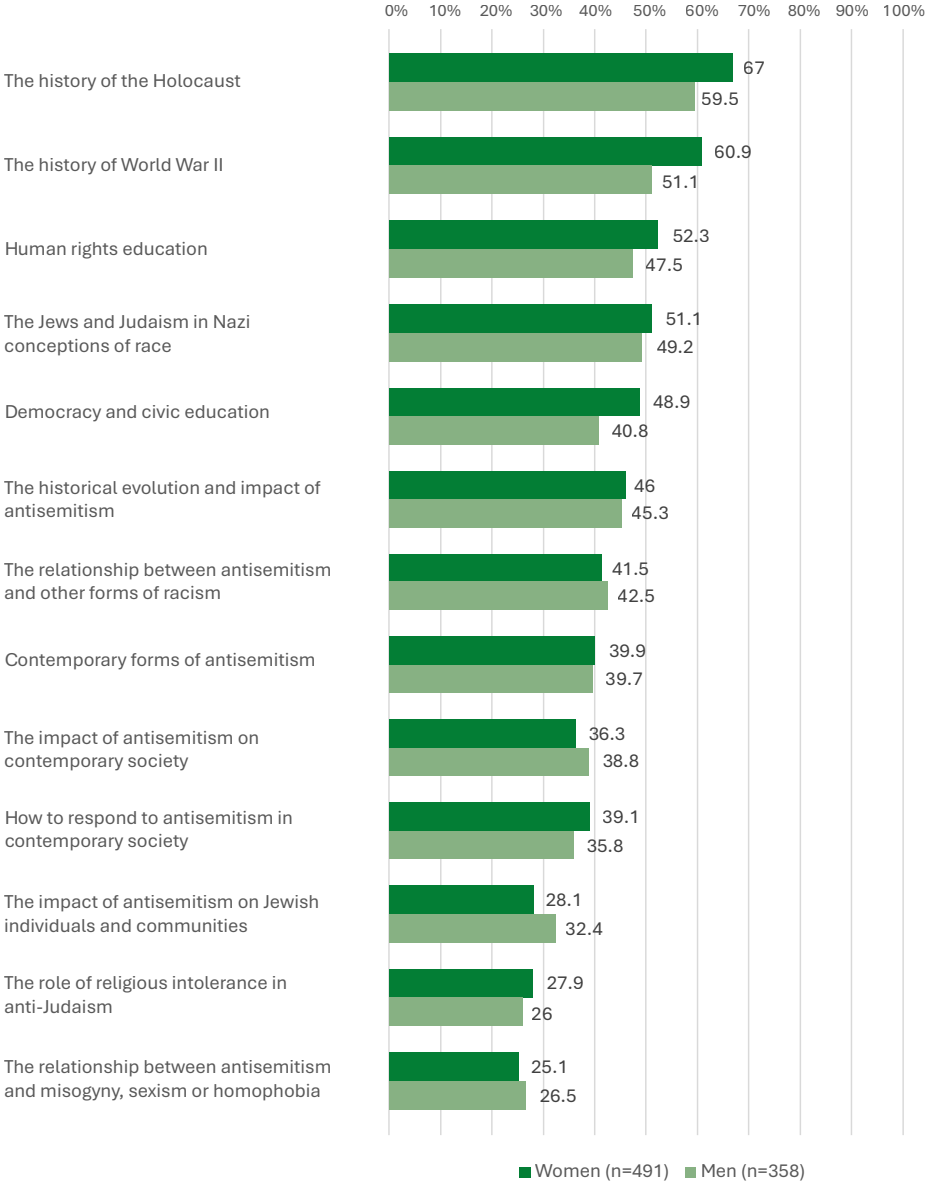


Table 3 shows gender differences in the prevelance of encountering different challenges. As described earlier, response options and scoring for each challenge were as follows: 1=never; 2=once or twice; 3=occasionally; 4=frequently. For most repondents, the challenges were encountered once or twice or occasionally. A trend across the challenges was that male teachers were more likely to report encountering them compared to female teachers. Indeed, when comparing the total number of challenges encountered at least occasionally, on average, women reported 2.68 challenges (SD=0.12) and men reported 3.05 challenges (SD=0.16). An independent samples t-test was performed and showed the difference between the means of the two groups was statistically significant: t(851)=5.43, Sig (2- tailed) $p<0.001$. Thus, male teachers were significantly more likely to report encountering more challenges than female teachers.

Table 3. Prevalence of challenges that teachers encounter when teaching about antisemitism (%) - by gender

	Women (n=488)	Men (n=355)
Students displaying antisemitic attitudes, antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories read on the internet or the media	2.29	2.49
Students displaying antisemitic attitudes, antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories heard in the family environment	2.21	2.50
Concerns about introducing students to antisemitic ideas they were previously unaware of	2.00	2.35
Holocaust denial or distortion among students	1.92	2.31
Being unable to answer students' questions about antisemitism	2.00	2.08
Parents' concerns about their child being taught about the Holocaust/antisemitism in school	1.66	2.04
Protest or walkouts in schools in response to the situation in the Middle East	1.65	2.07
Colleagues' concerns that you are teaching about the Holocaust/antisemitism	1.72	2.06
Antisemitism among colleagues	1.64	1.93

Responses to incidents

For each incident, teachers were asked to indicate how often they had encountered it occurring between students at their school. Mean scores ranged from 1 to 3, where 1=never, 2=once or twice and 3=often. **Table 4** shows male teachers were more likely than female teachers to have encountered these incidents, although often the difference was negligible. However, the gender difference was greater for: students expressing stereotypes about Jews' disposition or character; verbal insults between students; jokes about the Holocaust, pogroms, and/or other anti-Jewish violence; and the singing of antisemitic sports chants.

Looking at the total number of incidents encountered: on average, women reported they had encountered 5.04 incidents (SD=5.02) whereas men had reported 6.43 incidents (SD=5.51). Thus, overall male teachers encountered one or two more incidents compared to female teachers. This difference was statistically significant using an independent samples t-test: t(1779)=5.568, Sig (2-tailed) p<0.001.

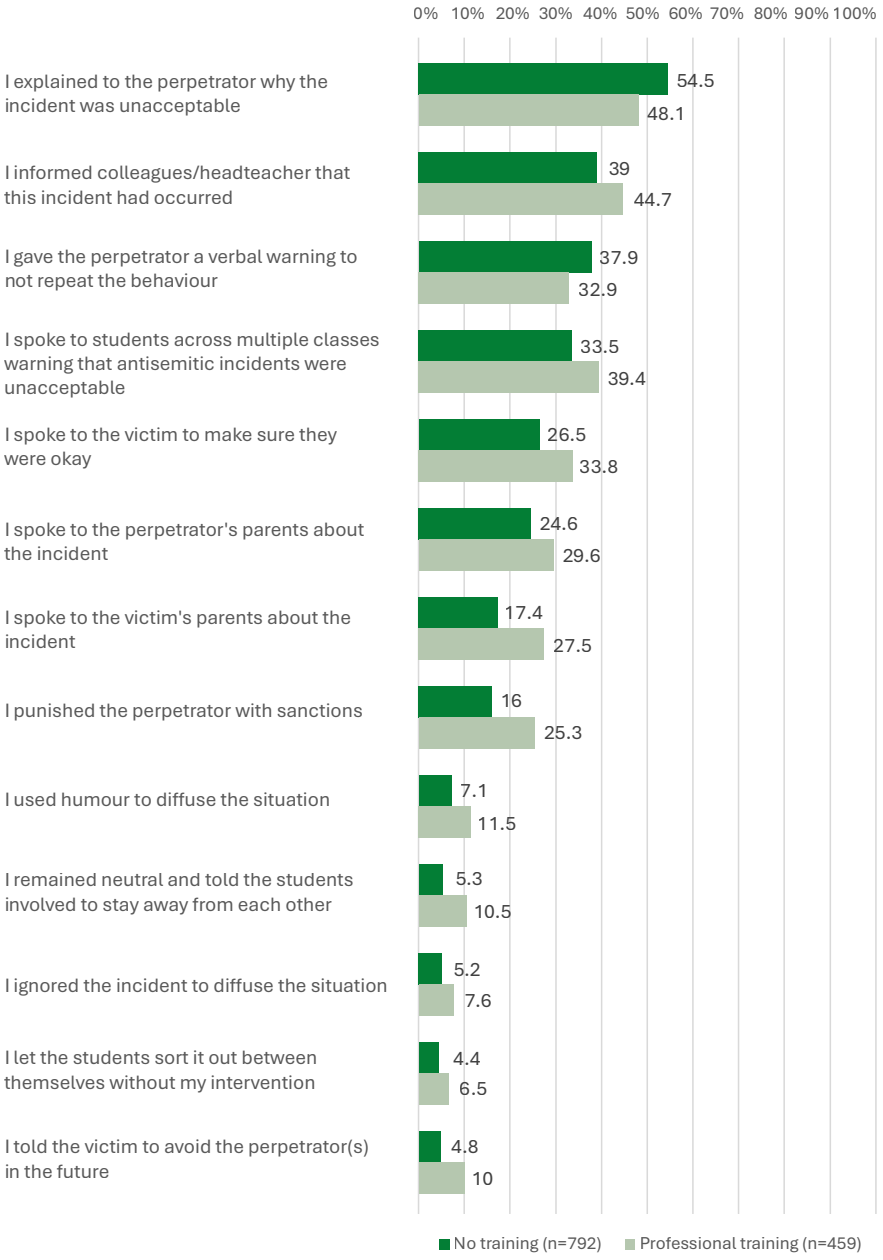
Table 4. Mean scores for the incidents that teachers had encountered - by gender

	Women (n=1,040)	Men (n=743)
Articulating hateful comments about the State of Israel	1.56	1.69
Making Nazi gestures	1.51	1.57
Drawing or wearing Nazi symbols	1.54	1.54
Expressing stereotypes about Jews' disposition or character (e.g they are greedy)	1.49	1.65
Verbal insults (for example, calling someone a 'Jew' in a derogatory way)	1.47	1.63
Making jokes about the Holocaust, pogroms, and/or other anti-Jewish violence	1.43	1.58
Expressing negative opinions against the religion of Judaism or specific ethnic groups within it	1.45	1.54
Expressing pro-Nazi attitudes or Hitler adoration	1.43	1.48
Articulating conspiracy theories about Jews	1.39	1.51
Expressing stereotypes about Jews' physical characteristics	1.40	1.50
Distributing antisemitic posts on social media or the internet	1.34	1.48
Denying the Holocaust, pogroms, and/or other anti-Jewish violence	1.31	1.40

Singing antisemitic sports chants	1.23	1.38
Jewish students experiencing social exclusion	1.22	1.34
Distributing antisemitic literature	1.18	1.30
Damage or desecration of Jewish property	1.17	1.29
Physically attacking Jewish students	1.15	1.28

In terms of the responses utilized when encountering these incidents, gender differences were found in some cases. As shown in **Figure 20,** female teachers were much more likely (59.4%) than male teachers (43.8%) to explain to the perpetrator why the incident was unacceptable. Female teachers were also more likely to inform colleagues/the headteacher that this incident had occurred (45.7% of female teachers did this compared to 35.9% of male teachers).

Figure 20. Teachers' responses to incidents (%) - by gender



Professional development and confidence

The mean scores for each statement pertaining to confidence are presented in **Table 5**. For the individual statements, scores range from 1 to 4, where 1 indicates no confidence and 4 indicates high confidence. Male teachers had higher confidence levels compared to female teachers across all statements.

Table 5. Mean confidence scores - by gender

	Women (n=1,044)	Men (n=744)
How confident are you in your knowledge of contemporary Jewish culture and identity?	2.69	2.91
How confident are you in your knowledge of the history of antisemitism?	2.86	3.10
How confident are you in your ability to recognize contemporary antisemitism?	2.94	3.12
How prepared do you feel to appropriately respond to antisemitic incidents (including language, inference, attitudes or behaviours) when/if they occur?	2.83	3.10
How confident are you to discuss antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred in the context of teaching and learning about the situation in the Middle East?	2.70	3.03

Total confidence scores were also calculated and ranged from 5 to 20, with higher scores indicating higher confidence. The average total confidence score for women was 14.02 (SD=3.36) and for men was 15.26 (SD=2.97). An independent samples t-test was performed using the total mean scores. This showed that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant: $t(1786)=8.037$, Sig (2-tailed) $p<0.001$, showing that in general, men's confidence levels were higher than women's confidence levels.

Professional training experiences

Table 6 shows that men were slightly more likely to have participated in training on how to recognize and prevent contemporary antisemitism compared to women. This trend was further reflected in **Table 7.** where men were more likely than women to have participated in all forms of training, with the exception of training courses about antisemitism offered by specialist organizations from outside my school, where participation of men and women was similar.

Table 6. The percentage of teachers who had and had not received professional training on how to recognize and prevent contemporary antisemitism - by gender

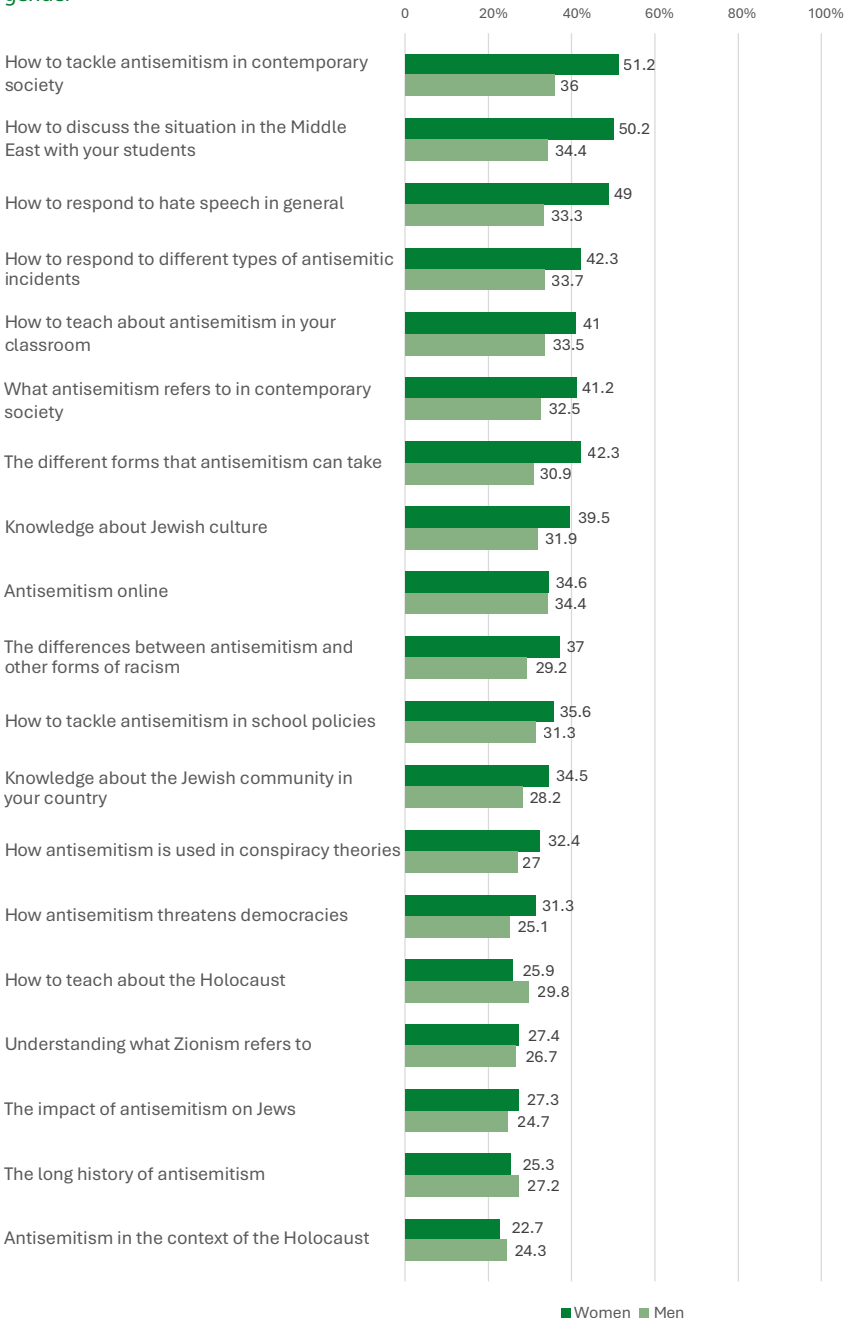
		Women (n=1,045)	Men (n=743)
Have you ever had any professional training on how to recognize contemporary antisemitism (other than Holocaust education training)?	Yes	23.5	30.1
	No	72.5	67.0
Have you ever had any professional training on how to prevent contemporary antisemitism (other than Holocaust education training)?	Yes	21.1	29.8
	No	75.1	67.6

Table 7. The percentage of teachers who had participated in each type of training - by gender

	Women (n=907)	Men (n=694)
When I was a trainee teacher, I received professional training with a specific focus on teaching about antisemitism	19.8	26.9
Since completing my teacher training, I have taken part in training courses created by colleagues at my school to support me in teaching about antisemitism	18.8	29.9
Since completing my teacher training, I have taken part in training courses about antisemitism offered by specialist organizations from outside my school	29.1	30.1
Since completing my teacher training, I have taught myself how to recognize/prevent antisemitism	46.2	55.9

In looking at the content that teachers would like to learn about in future courses about antisemitism, gender differences emerged (**see Figure 21**). Overall, male teachers selected less content than female teachers. Female teachers were more likely to prefer content about how to tackle antisemitism in contemporary society, how to discuss the situation in the Middle East with students, how to respond to hate speech in general, how to respond to different types of antisemitic incidents, what antisemitism refers to in contemporary society and the different forms it can take.

Figure 21. The content teachers would like professional development training to include - by gender



Knowledge about antisemitism

Table 8 provides a breakdown of teachers' knowledge of what antisemitism refers to by gender (based on 1,046 female and 745 male respondents). Overall, there are no sizeable differences in how men and women responded to the statements, with the exception of 'graffitiing "Free Palestine" on a Holocaust Memorial' and 'causing harm to Jewish property (schools, places of worship, cemeteries)'. In both cases, female teachers are more likely to recognize these examples as being antisemitic.

To further explore teachers' knowledge of what antisemitism refers to, total scores were calculated for each teacher. Where an example was selected to be 'antisemitic' a score of 0 was assigned, 'potentially antisemitic' was assigned a score of 1, and 'not antisemitic' was assigned a score of 2. Where teachers had selected 'not sure' they were coded as missing data.

Using this approach, the lowest possible total score is 0 (indicating the teacher identified all examples as antisemitic) and the highest score is 36.0 (indicating the teacher reported all examples as not antisemitic). Thus, the higher the score, the more examples teachers indicated were not antisemitic. Or put another way, higher scores denoted low knowledge of what antisemitism refers to.

Analyses showed that the mean total score for men was 9.24 (SD=8.49) (n=519) which is higher than the mean total score for women, which was 7.49 (SD=7.90) (n=505). Thus, men were more likely to have knowledge gaps about what antisemitism refers to. An independent samples t-test found this difference to be statistically significant t(1112)=3.572, Sig (2-tailed) p<0.001.

Table 8. Knowledge on what antisemitism refers to - by gender (%)

		Not antisemitic	Potentially antisemitic	Antisemitic	Not sure
Believing that most Jewish people are rich	Women	15.8	31.3	42.0	10.9
	Men	16.7	33.6	42.3	7.4
Believing that Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus	Women	13.7	21.5	50.2	14.6
	Men	16.6	25.0	49.9	8.5
Believing that Jews are loyal to other Jews or to Israel, rather than their country of residence or its citizens	Women	12.1	32.3	40.5	15.1
	Men	16.7	36.1	38.8	8.4
Graffitiing 'Free Palestine' on a Holocaust Memorial	Women	11.0	19.9	54.3	14.9
	Men	15.5	30.1	47.0	7.4

Believing that Jews control the global financial system	Women	12.9	22.9	52.9	11.3
	Men	12.4	26.0	54.7	6.9
Believing that Jews are behind the communist movement	Women	9.7	21.1	53.8	15.5
	Men	16.1	22.5	52.0	9.4
Refuting the right of the State of Israel to exist	Women	9.4	23.9	53.2	13.5
	Men	14.7	27.1	51.1	7.0
Believing that Jews are responsible for Black and/or Muslim immigration to Europe	Women	10.3	19.6	56.4	13.8
	Men	13.2	22.7	55.6	8.5
Believing that Jews control the media (news, music and movie industry)	Women	11.0	22.5	54.8	11.6
	Men	11.6	29.0	53.0	6.5
Believing that Jews are responsible for the war in Ukraine	Women	9.3	15.9	61.9	12.8
	Men	13.2	19.4	58.2	9.2
Believing that Jews have been responsible for the murder of non-Jewish children, particularly Christian children, using their blood for ritualistic purposes	Women	7.0	15.4	67.2	10.5
	Men	12.0	18.4	63.7	5.9
Believing that Jews are trying to take or have taken, over the world	Women	7.7	19.1	62.6	10.7
	Men	10.9	20.8	62.6	5.7
Comparing Jews to Nazis	Women	7.6	17.8	65.3	9.3
	Men	10.7	24.0	59.0	6.3

Believing that Jews are responsible for undermining traditional values	Women	7.4	20.4	60.3	11.9
	Men	9.5	24.2	59.1	7.2
Doubting the fact, scale, mechanism and intentionality of the Holocaust, pogroms, and/or other anti-Jewish violence	Women	5.2	16.1	69.4	9.3
	Men	8.0	23.3	62.3	6.5
Denying Jews the opportunities and services available to other citizens	Women	5.2	11.1	75.8	7.9
	Men	7.4	17.8	69.8	5.0
Using derogatory terms to refer to Jewish individuals or groups	Women	4.3	18.2	71.0	6.4
	Men	7.3	20.2	67.2	5.4
Causing harm to Jewish property (schools, places of worship, cemeteries)	Women	4.3	12.3	76.9	6.4
	Men	6.7	17.9	69.9	5.4

Conclusions

In conclusion, the data collected in this survey identified some troubling trends and highlighted the pressing need for research-informed, systematic professional training opportunities for educators.

The majority of respondents who taught about antisemitism were doing so as part of history lessons about the Holocaust. While learning about antisemitism is an important aspect of Holocaust education, literature has highlighted how this approach can inadvertently infer that antisemitism was a Nazi-specific phenomenon confined to the Second World War. Consequently, students struggle to recognize how contemporary antisemitism manifests, develop little understanding about the ongoing scale and nature of contemporary antisemitism and fail to understand the impact it has on the Jewish community and democratic societies around the world. There is little empirical research to evidence that learning about the Holocaust will automatically address contemporary antisemitism.[24] Therefore, it is likely that additional approaches are needed, including lessons in school which fully explore contemporary antisemitism. However, evidence from this survey suggests that teachers need high quality professional development to support them in teaching this content.

The responses of teachers in this survey suggest that where antisemitism is not taught it is more often because of curriculum-based decisions about the perceived relevancy to the disciplinary subject they teach, rather than them objecting to including this content on attitudinal grounds. The wider implications of this are that, if teachers, schools or governments/education ministries want to include content about antisemitism in school curricula, then protected time should be set aside, ideally as part of a school-based policy. This policy would outline how knowledge about antisemitism is being increased across the school community; the measures in place to respond to antisemitic incidents; and how these incidents should be recorded. This would enable senior leaders and education ministries to monitor this issue, and where necessary, implement further safeguards to tackle antisemitism.

Unfortunately, only a minority of schools had a policy or guidance in place for how teachers and senior leaders should respond to antisemitic incidents, and there was a dearth of specific processes in schools for recording incidents as antisemitic. While a policy does not guarantee that it will be implemented effectively, it helps to signify to all stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, senior leaders/directors, education ministries, and the wider community – that antisemitism is unacceptable. It is an important safeguarding measure and makes schools more accountable for tackling antisemitism.

Sadly, teachers' responses suggest that antisemitism is commonplace in many schools. A challenge that teachers regularly encountered was students displaying antisemitic attitudes, tropes and conspiracy theories read on the internet or in the media and/or picked up from the family environment. Three-quarters of teachers had encountered at least one antisemitic incident at least

24 Pistone, I., Andersson, L.M., Lidström, A., Mattsson, C., Nelhans, G., Pernler, T., Sager, M. and Sivenbring, J. 2021. Education after Auschwitz – Educational outcomes of teaching to prevent antisemitism. University of Gothenburg. https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2021-10/Education%20after%20AuschwitzX_0.pdf

once or twice, and over a quarter of teachers had encountered nine or more of these incidents. On average, teachers reported they had witnessed around 5-6 antisemitic incidents between students at their school.

The evidence in this survey indicates variability in how teachers responded to such incidents. The most frequently cited response by just over half of the teachers was to explain to the perpetrator why the incident was unacceptable. Teachers also reported they informed colleagues and/or the headteacher about the incident, they gave the perpetrator a verbal warning, and they spoke to students across multiple classes to warn them that antisemitic incidents were unacceptable. While these are proactive responses, many teachers did not utilize them. The details of each response and the effectiveness it had are also unknown and point to an area of further research.

Clearly, there is much to be concerned about here. As mentioned, systems that support teachers' work to address antisemitism need to be in place, such as through school policies. These findings also reinforce how fundamental professional development for teachers focused on contemporary antisemitism is. An important aspect of such training will be to examine how to confidently and meaningfully respond to different antisemitic incidences. This is especially so as there was evidence of a small proportion of teachers engaging in passive or avoidance strategies such as telling the victim to avoid the perpetrator, ignoring the incident, or telling the students to sort it out between themselves. These are problematic responses as they place the onus on the victim to change their behaviour, thus inferring that they are responsible in some way for what has happened.

Of course, teachers' reports of antisemitic incidents between students are not necessarily the best metric of the scale of the issue in schools. Antisemitic incidents also occur in locations and at times when a teacher is not present. Furthermore, students and parents may not report these events to the school. Additionally, it requires teachers to identify such incidences as antisemitic, rather than more generalized bullying, or even worse, harmless 'teasing' among peers. However, the findings from this survey revealed that teachers had some fundamental misunderstandings about what antisemitism actually is, with up to 1 in every 10 teachers (and in some cases more than that), labelling antisemitic actions and attitudes as not being examples of antisemitism.

Undoubtedly, it is deeply problematic that some teachers, albeit a minority, have these beliefs and knowledge gaps. But it also means they will be unable to identify antisemitic incidents between students when they encounter them. Moreover, it will hinder their ability to teach students what antisemitism refers to. Some teachers may inadvertently, or even purposefully, reinforce antisemitic attitudes, tropes and conspiracy theories.

Overall, the evidence highlights the urgent need for robust, research-informed professional development to be available to teachers across Europe. To date, teachers appear to have had limited access to formal training for teaching about antisemitism. Less than a quarter had participated in this type of professional development as trainee teachers. Less than a third had participated in training courses offered by specialist organizations from outside their school. And while it is encouraging that half of teachers had been motivated to teach themselves how to recognize and/

or prevent antisemitism, this is a vast and complex area, and with so much misinformation available, the accuracy of material they have accessed cannot be guaranteed.

Teachers' experiences of professional development suggested there were no topics that were widely included. Additionally, the time they spent participating in these courses was variable. Further research is needed to examine the most meaningful content and approaches to include in professional development courses, and these should also be context specific. Content may need to be adjusted to reflect the dominant issues and concerns in different countries. Moreover, course developers need to be mindful that teachers often have limited time to participate in professional development alongside the other demands on their time, Thus, it may not always be possible for professional development courses to cover all areas in detail, and certain topics will need to be prioritized. Finally, given how imperative this professional development is, once created, it should be evaluated to explore the efficacy of the course for improving teachers' knowledge of what antisemitism refers to and equipping them with the skills to combat it.

Recommendations

1. The provision of training opportunities across Europe need to expand to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of antisemitism, and to support them to deal with incidents and challenges effectively in classrooms. This should include in-service and pre-service training. This training should be systematic, context-specific and research-informed. Given the complexity and breadth of content that the training should cover, ideally a series of sessions should be created, rather than a one-shot solution. However, greater time spent on training does not necessarily lead to teachers developing better understanding and skills. Instead, course creators need to carefully consider the content and approaches used in the training to ensure it is high quality and impactful. This also means the facilitators delivering these courses must receive robust training and create a gold standard for the in-service and pre-service training they deliver. This should be based on research and feedback from institutions with specialism in addressing antisemitism.

2. Training should include understanding the threat that antisemitism poses for democracies and the impact it has on Jewish communities so that the seriousness of the issue is understood by teachers and the responsibility to address it is taken seriously. Teachers also need to recognize the different forms that antisemitism can take in contemporary society. This is important so that all forms of antisemitic incidents in schools can be identified. Relatedly, guidance is needed on the best ways of addressing incidents so that antisemitism is not tolerated in schools and victims are properly supported.

3. Teachers should receive additional training, guidance and targeted learning materials on how to effectively teach *about* contemporary forms of antisemitism, including antisemitism that manifests on social media, without inadvertently reinforcing prejudice.

4. It should not be assumed that Holocaust education will automatically teach about and combat contemporary antisemitism. Instead, teachers need to set aside specific and sufficient time to examine contemporary antisemitism with their students. This will be more effective if teachers have participated in professional training as outlined above.

5. School leaders need to develop policies and guidance on how to respond to antisemitic incidents in their schools. They also need processes for recording incidents so that the level and seriousness of antisemitism in schools can be assessed. These protocols signify to the school community and beyond that antisemitism is unacceptable. They provide an important safeguarding measure and make schools more accountable for tackling antisemitism.

6. Teachers have to manage numerous demands and may not have the time or motivation to attend a professional development course about antisemitism. To increase participation and underline the importance of this training, education ministries and policy-makers should create expectations and opportunities for all teachers working at all levels of education to participate in this training.

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Addressing antisemitism through education

A survey of teachers' knowledge and understanding

This new, cutting-edge research, supported by the European Commission, represents the first EU-wide survey of teachers focused on antisemitism. Drawing on responses from 2,030 educators across the European Union, it investigates their awareness and understanding of antisemitism, as well as their readiness to address it in the classroom. Highlighting the persistance of antisemitism within school settings, the study identifies key areas where education systems can better assist teachers—such as recognizing the challenges they encounter, improving access to high-quality training, and establishing clear policies and guidelines for responding to antisemitic incidents.

In collaboration with