

OSSERVATORIO
ANTISEMITISMO

ANNUAL REPORT ON
ANTISEMITISM IN ITALY

2025

DIRECTOR
GADI LUZZATTO VOGHERA

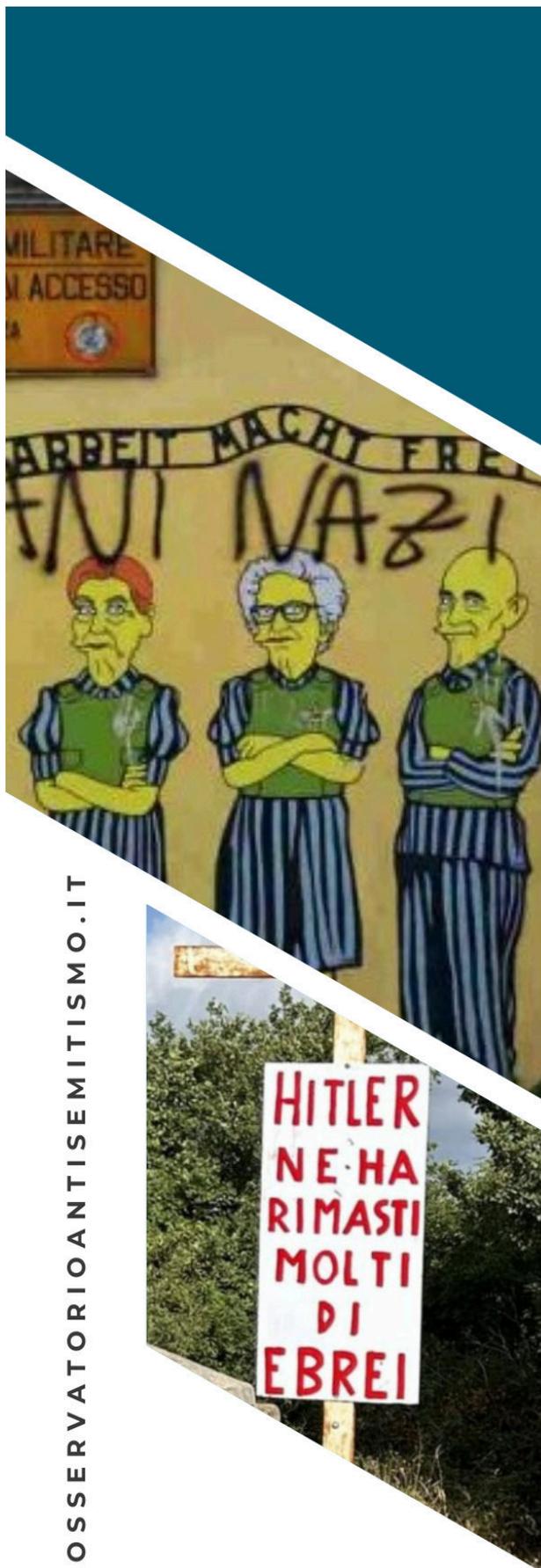
WRITTEN BY
STEFANO GATTI
MURILO CAMBRUZZI
LARISA ANASTASIA BULGAR

WITH AN ESSAY BY
SERGIO DELLA PERGOLA

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On the cover: a mural by artist Aleksandro Palombo which depicted Liliana Segre, Edith Bruck, and Sami Modiano (Italian Shoah survivors), has been vandalized several times in Milan; "Hitler there are many Jews left," a sign posted on San Michele mountain, in the hamlet of Garzano, Caserta, next to the commemorative plaque dedicated to the peacekeepers of World War II.

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We would like to dedicate this Report to
Eva Ruth Palmieri (1967-2025), a woman of great worth.
President of the Dialogue Association,
she served on the Council of Jewish-Christian Friendship in Rome
and worked for many years at SIR, the Religious Information Service.
May her memory be a blessing.



ABSTRACT

Since 1991, CDEC Foundation has produced an annual report on anti-Semitism in Italy. The latest report, which analyzes data collected during 2025, paints a particularly alarming picture: manifestations of anti-Jewish hatred in Italy continue to grow. The situation has also worsened significantly in qualitative terms, as the most serious acts have seen a greater increase.

During the year, 963 incidents of anti-Semitism were recorded, compared to 1,492 reports received. This represents an increase of about 10% compared to last year, 100% compared to 2023, and as much as 400% compared to 2022. It is, therefore, a continuously growing trend.

During 2025, the main source of hate was linked to Israel. Ancient prejudices—such as blood libel, the myth of election, and hatred of humankind—were transferred to Zionism and the State of Israel.

Although defamation accounts for the majority of incidents, followed by threats, the largest increases compared to last year were in discrimination (+100%) and physical assaults (+225%). In other words, the most serious acts have increased the most.

Manifestations of blatant anti-Semitism online account for over 66% of cases. The use of innocuous emojis or numbers (such as the owl, the octopus, 109, 14/88, triple parentheses (((Surname))), and the red triangle) to convey hate messages in digital subcultures is particularly widespread.

The summer months, especially June and July, saw particularly high peaks, coinciding with the Global Sumud Flotilla mission. In early 2026, the Milan-Cortina Olympics also saw several incidents of anti-Semitism. In geographical terms, the incidents of physical anti-Semitism we observed were concentrated in Lombardy and Lazio, followed by Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, Piedmont, and Veneto.

Perhaps the most disturbing finding is that 14% of Italians agree with the idea of expelling Jews from Italy. Expressing one's identity (for example, speaking Hebrew or wearing a kippah) today carries a particularly high risk of aggression and marginalization.

The report is based on the working definition of antisemitism by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which is widely used internationally and analyzed in the annexed scientific contribution by Prof. Sergio Della Pergola.

FOREWORD

Giorgio Sacerdoti
President of CDEC Foundation

The Observatory on Antisemitism was established in 1975 and is an integral part of CDEC Foundation. Since 2012, we have been publishing an annual report on incidents of antisemitism in Italy, basing our monitoring work on methodologies shared with leading international research centres.

The Center for Documentation of Contemporary Judaism - CDEC Foundation was established in 1955 and became a foundation in 1986. It is an independent research institute which promotes and studies the history, culture and reality of Jews in Italy from emancipation to the present day, with particular reference to contemporary times and the Nazi-Fascist period. One of its fundamental tasks is to contrast all forms of racism and antisemitism, in addition to the defence of civil rights.

We are committed to historical research and dissemination. In this regard, we work intensively to train and educate teachers and representatives from various areas of society, including journalists, law enforcement officers, magistrates, museum guides and cultural operators in general.

The **Observatory on Antisemitism**, which is an integral part of the Foundation, works in close coordination with the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) and is a member of several networks, including ENCATE (European Network for Countering Antisemitism through Education)¹, the Facing Facts network,² ENMA (European network on monitoring antisemitism),³ EPNA (European Practitioners Network against Antisemitism)⁴ and the National Network for Combating Hate Speech and Phenomena.⁵

The Observatory also actively collaborates with the **Union of Italian Jewish Communities, UNAR, OSCAD** and the office of the **National Coordinator for contrasting Antisemitism**.⁶ In our work, we address institutions, schools, educators and students, scholars, communicators and social facilitators, and the wider public. The aim is to raise awareness of anti-Jewish prejudice, educate people to respect diversity and support actions taken by anyone to contrast it.

¹ ENCATE Network: <https://encate.eu/>

² Facing Facts: <https://www.facingfacts.eu/>

³ European Network on Monitoring Antisemitism: <https://enma.eu/>

⁴ EPNA: <https://against-antisemitism.eu/>

⁵ Rete Nazionale per il Contrasto ai Discorsi e ai Fenomeni d'Odio: <https://www.retecontroloodio.org/>

⁶ [Coordinatore nazionale per la lotta contro l'antisemitismo | www.governo.it.](https://www.governo.it/)

In recent times, the **issue of antisemitism** has become increasingly significant in public debate, both due to the re-emergence of hostile language and acts, which are the focus of our research and this Report, and as a result of the increased and misguided use of stereotypes and inappropriate comparisons that undermine some of the foundations of civil coexistence. The increase in physical violence, verbal abuse and threatening writings in public places, and the media coverage rightly given to some striking incidents (such as the attack on a group of French Orthodox Jews at a motorway service station in Milan on 10 November 2025⁷) has given rise among Jews – as also noted by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)⁸ – **a widespread sense of insecurity** that the presence of law enforcement officers in front of the most frequented Jewish institutions, such as synagogues and schools, is not enough to remove, and indeed in a certain sense exacerbates. This clearly constitutes a **serious impairment of the rights of freedom, which the Italian Constitution guarantees to all, without distinction of religion or other affiliation.**

We are confronted with a climate of intense pressure, compounded by the blatant attack on the memory of the Shoah, which the CDEC Foundation has been working on since its inception and which, since 2000, has become part of the civil calendar with the establishment of **Remembrance Day**. CDEC wholeheartedly agrees with the alarming words pronounced by Senator for Life **Liliana Segre** during the ceremony at the Quirinale on 27 January 2026: 'If they ask me, 'Can we talk about Gaza on Holocaust Remembrance Day?', I reply that of course we can talk about it. The universal value of the lessons learned from the Shoah leads us to always reflect on the tragedies and crimes that still plague the world. We can and must talk about Gaza, Iran, Ukraine, Venezuela, Sudan and everything that offends humanity and calls into question our responsibility as citizens of a global world. The problem is another. Gaza cannot be used "against" Holocaust Remembrance Day, to try to obscure it, to fuel or allow obsessive attempts to trivialise, distort and invert the Shoah; it cannot be accepted that it becomes an opportunity for revenge on the victims of that time.

Part of the political community has recognised these regulatory shortcomings and proposed several bills to address antisemitism. Numerous bills along these lines, albeit with different provisions, are currently being debated in the Senate. The CDEC Foundation was invited to a hearing by the Senate's First Constitutional Affairs Committee.⁹ At that hearing, we reiterated the advisability of referring to the IHRA's working definition of Antisemitism, strengthening the national strategy, identifying adequate forms of funding, and arriving at a cross-party bill that is supported by all the political forces represented in Parliament.

⁷ <https://tg24.sky.it/cronaca/2025/11/10/milano-uomo-aggredisce-ebrei-ortodossi-arrestato>.

⁸ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism-third-survey>.

⁹ See the statements of those interviewed, including the director of CDEC Foundation, Gadi Luzzatto Voghera, at this link. <https://www.senato.it/export/ddl/full/57902>.

INTRODUCTION

Gadi Luzzatto Voghera
CDEC Foundation's Director

In the present annual report, we put forward data and a careful analysis of antisemitic incidents recorded in Italy in 2025. A significant increase emerges compared to 2024, a year that had already seen a worrying surge in incidents. After 1,492 reports received through the Hotline, the Observatory identified **963 antisemitic incidents as such in 2025**. Of these, **643** regarded online antisemitism and **320 offline incidents**. The trend is still upwards. In **2024**, we recorded **877** incidents, in 2023 there were **453** incidents, and in 2022, we recorded **241** antisemitic incidents.

The main ideological driver fueling hatred against Jews in 2025 is anti-Israel antisemitism, the projection of anti-Jewish myths—such as blood libel, racism by chosenness, and hatred of humanity—to the State of Israel and Zionism. This form of Judeophobia is often framed within a traditional conspiratorial setting. Anti-Jewish hatred encompasses multiple expressions (e.g., neo-Nazism and anti-Judaism, distortion of the Holocaust, etc.). A recurring theme is also the increasingly widespread use of dog whistles¹⁰ to disguise anti-Jewish hate speech and make it socially acceptable (for example, through emojis such as owl, frog, hawk, snake, rat, octopus, monkey, and pig, bricks, red triangle, nose, devil, etc.—all meta-messages understandable only within extremist subcultures).

Such an increase in 2025 makes it clear that hatred towards Jews is becoming 'normalized', not always confronted and, indeed, accepted by large sections of the population. We are seeing an **unprecedented** number of graffiti on walls, synagogues and Jewish symbols vandalised and desecrated, discrimination, intimidation, threats and physical attacks. A recent survey¹¹ conducted by sociologist Renato Mannheimer found a worrying 14% of Italian citizens agreeing with the idea of "expelling all Jews from Italy."

The spaces in which being Jewish in Italy today is considered normal and acceptable, as guaranteed by the Constitution and ensured by normal civil conduct, are alarmingly shrinking. A reading of this document clearly highlights the difficulty of freely expressing one's identity in various settings, be they university classrooms, public transportation, healthcare facilities, sporting events, restaurants, or hotels. Wearing a kippah, speaking Hebrew, wearing a Star of David necklace, or having an

¹⁰ Dog Whistle is "the use of coded or allusive language in political communication, aimed at gaining the support of a certain group without arousing opposition."

¹¹ <https://www.italiaoggi.it/economia-e-politica/attualita/il-14-vuol-espellere-gli-ebrei-rye0guwa>.

identifiable surname can lead to marginalization, denial of services, and—at times—even aggressive behavior.

This Report, drafted by the Observatory team, coordinated by Dr. **Stefano Gatti**, offers an in-depth analysis of antisemitism in Italy, enriched by an extensive anthology of commented social media posts. **Professor Sergio Della Pergola**, Professor Emeritus of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, generously contributed analysis of the data emerging from the Observatory's monitoring work, offering a detailed view of the dynamics of anti-Jewish hatred today and valuable insights. Dr. **Murilo Cambuzzi**, a researcher at the Observatory, carefully analyzes the changing language and forms of anti-Jewish hostility online and in society. Dr. **Larisa Anastasia Bulgar**, a collaborator at our institute, introduces the problematic world of artificial intelligence, opening interesting perspectives on the possible uses of this new technological resource and the potential dangers it poses. Finally, the Report offers an overview of **good practices in countering antisemitic hatred** adopted during 2025.

To better elucidate the work presented here, it is useful to provide some details on the **methodology** adopted. The Observatory collects and records antisemitic acts (physical or verbal attacks, graffiti, online insults, public speeches, etc.), processes data on incidents of anti-Jewish hostility, conducts public opinion surveys, and conducts targeted studies. Particular attention is given to monitoring online antisemitism due to the complex manifestation of antisemitism in the digital world.

The Observatory classifies as an incident of antisemitism any intentional act directed against Jewish persons, organizations, or property, where there is evidence that the action has intentionally anti-Jewish motives or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are Jewish or perceived to be Jewish. The Observatory adopts the **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism**, which is easily accessible online.¹² Although this definition has been criticized, it is a fundamental tool that should be avoided. This document is essential for two reasons: a) it is the reference text for the European Strategy to Contrast Antisemitism and for dozens of national strategies, including the Italian one¹³; b) it unequivocally states, in the preface to the 11 examples provided at the end of the definition of antisemitism, that "**criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be considered antisemitic.**" Finally, it should be added that the term "Zionism" does not appear in the IHRA Working Definition.

¹²www.holocaustremembrance.com/it/resources/working-definitions-charters/la-definizione-di-antisemitismo-dellalleanza-internazionale.

¹³

<https://www.governo.it/it/dipartimenti/coordinatore-nazionale-la-lotta-contro-lantisemitismo/noantisemitismo-doc-strategia>.

The Observatory learns of antisemitic incidents through mainstream media and reports to the **Antisemitism Hotline**¹⁴, which can also be reached via **WhatsApp at 3494048201**. It should also be reiterated that the actual number of incidents in Italy is higher than those we recorded, as the reporting or visibility of attacks varies depending on the type; more serious incidents are easier to report, while verbal or written insults are less frequently reported.

The website www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it is updated daily with articles, news, and research from the national and international press, websites, and blogs. It contains newspaper articles, studies, research, reports, debates, public statements, and scientific investigations. **In 2025, the site had 127,000 page views and 62,000 users.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Lorenzo Capuano, Giovanni Steinwurz, and Giovanni Giacalone for their valuable contributions to the Annual Report and to the work of the Observatory on Antisemitism.

We would like to extend special thanks to **Betti Guetta**, who has worked at the Observatory on Antisemitism for two decades and has led it since 2012, contributing to the training of its researchers and generously and competently offering her knowledge as a sociologist and communicator. Thanks to her help and insight, the Observatory has made the decisive transition from an initial reporting office to a research centre on antisemitism and the Italian hub of a broader network of international institutions working on this topic.

¹⁴ www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/antenna-antisemitismo/.

REPORT ON ACTS AND SPEECH AGAINST JEWS IN ITALY IN 2025

Stefano Gatti, Murilo Cambuzzi e Larisa Anastasia Bulgar

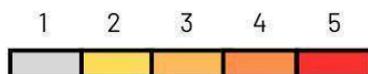
This chapter presents a summary of the data collected and analyzed by the CDEC Foundation Observatory in 2025. Acts of antisemitism, like other forms of hatred and intolerance, are often under-reported (a phenomenon known as under-reporting). While the data presented here **represent an unprecedented increase in incidents** since CDEC Foundation's Antisemitism unit was established, they are therefore not exhaustive of what is happening in Italy.

Antisemitic Acts and Speeches – Data Collected in 2025

This chapter includes an analysis of reports sent to the Observatory through the Antisemitism Hotline (electronic form and telephone), via WhatsApp, and by email.

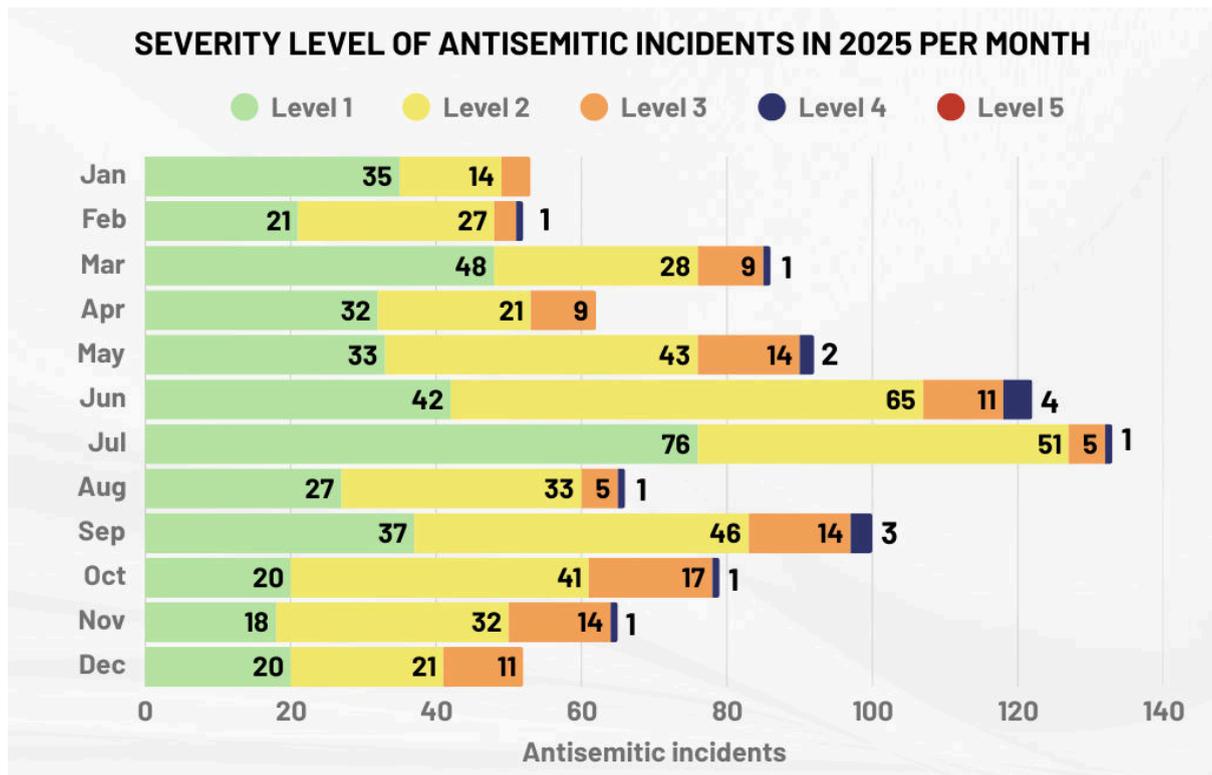
In 2025, we recorded **963** incidents of antisemitism, an increase of 89 in respect to 2024.

The **severity level**¹⁵ assigned to incidents is classified on a scale from 1 to 5, with each value corresponding to a different type of antisemitic act. Specifically, level 1 includes cases of defamation and insults expressed through both online posts and messages and offline; level 2 includes reports of graffiti, i.e., offensive drawings and images, as well as online shitstorms¹⁶; level 3 involves direct threats to individuals and acts of vandalism against Jewish property or property deemed to be Jewish; level 4 refers to physical attacks against individuals; and finally, level 5 includes incidents of extreme violence against individuals. Acts of discrimination are classified as level 2 or 3, depending on their context.



¹⁵ Based on the classification made by the European Jewish Congress and Security and Crisis Centre (EJC-SACC) in its "European Weekly Antisemitic Incidents Report".

¹⁶ A 'shitstorm' is a situation in which a subject, be it a person or an entity, becomes the public target of criticism and protests that are almost always harsh, violent, and offensive in tone.



Graph 1. Severity level of antisemitic incidents in 2025. Of particular note are the peaks in reports during the war between Israel and Iran and following the expedition of the Global Sumud Flotilla. Other significant surges correspond to the days of solidarity with the Palestinian people (September-October) and the breakdown of the first truce in Gaza.

Comparison with previous years

In 2023, 455 antisemitic incidents were recorded; in 2024, this number had risen to 874. In 2025, the number of incidents increased further, reaching **963**.

Compared to the previous year, there has been an **increase** in both the number and severity of incidents, with **defamation**¹⁷ and **threats**¹⁸ continuing to predominate.

In particular, this latter type of anti-Jewish act is becoming increasingly explicit: families are subjected to insults; women are brutally insulted (*"I'd like to kill all the Jews, they're the scum of the world, all in the ovens... you dirty Jewish woman, get out of here"*)¹⁹

¹⁷

<https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/notizie/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/insulti/?anno=2025>.

¹⁸ To see the full list of threats visit: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/notizie/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/minacce-alle-persone/?anno=2025>.

¹⁹ Genoa, September 16, threats and insults directed to a Jewish woman: [Genova, insulti e minacce contro una matura donna ebrea - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

and then forced to get off public transportation; threatening letters ("You filthy Jewish race, bullets of adequate size have already been prepared to hit you [...] in the spine"²⁰); swastikas carved on the doors of houses, and symbols of hate drawn near Jewish places.

2025 saw a record number of discriminatory acts (**61**); These include both legally punishable cases, such as discrimination based on ethnicity, such as turning away customers from restaurants or hotels²¹ or denying taxi service to "Zionists,"²² and forms of intimidation, such as doctors intimidating Jewish patients, including those undergoing cancer treatment,²³ by posting "anti-Zionist" posters on their hospital doors; and cases of Jewish children being bullied by ideologically aligned teachers and the boycott of products or brands deemed "Zionist."

Since October 7, 2023—since the terrorist attack that targeted Israeli towns adjacent to the Gaza Strip—the predominant ideological background has been **Israel related antisemitism**.²⁴ There has been a sharp increase in **offline incidents** (verbal and physical assaults, bullying, psychological pressure,²⁵ various forms of discrimination and BDS, conferences with antisemitic content, and graffiti).

Not all boycott proposals (e.g., an embargo on arms sales to Israel) have an antisemitic component. The Observatory refers to the BDS movement's guidelines for the boycott of Israeli cultural institutions <https://bdsmovement.net/pacbi/cultural-boycott-guidelines> which consider all Israeli cultural, artistic, academic, and research initiatives illegitimate as they are complicit in Zionist oppression (i.e., they seek to erase Jewish culture as a consequence).

²⁰ [Ferrara, lettera minatoria: "lurida bastarda ebrea sionista che merita di morire" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

²¹ [Bari, albergo discrimina una coppia di israeliani - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); Sicilia, discriminazione etnica: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/sicilia-discriminazione-etnica/>; Napoli, famiglia israeliana cacciata da un ristorante - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.

²² [Milano, taxi negato ad una turista con disabilità perché israeliana - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#) [Treviso, taxista non fa salire sull'auto un giovane ebreo - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

²³ Medico donna vanta la sua attività "antisionista" in ospedale [Medico donna vanta la sua attività "antisionista" in ospedale - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); Roma, materiale pro pal nel reparto oncologico di un ospedale - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.

²⁴ Israel-related antisemitism refers to the application of Judeophobic accusatory stereotypes to the State of Israel and Zionism, such as blood libel, hatred of the human race, a penchant for conspiracy, racism, the depiction of despicable animals, and the monstrosity of Jews. In the spirit of the IHRA's working definition, political criticisms of the actions of individual governments of the State of Israel are not considered antisemitic ("Demonstrations may target the State of Israel because it is conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, **criticism of Israel similar to that directed at any other country cannot be considered antisemitic.**")

²⁵ See, for example, the testimony of the teacher forced to wear a t-shirt in solidarity with Gaza: [Pisa, scuola elementare, pressioni su un'insegnante - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

Social indifference and **acceptance of antisemitism** continue to expand, reaching alarming levels in certain key sectors—such as schools, universities, politics, trade unions, and the worlds of culture and entertainment. Secular and religious institutions, the media, political figures, the worlds of culture and entertainment, social media, and so on, attack Jews or foster accusations and Judeophobic narratives. One example among many is Alessandro Di Battista, a former Five Star Movement MP who has become an "anti-Zionist" influencer and polemicist. His numerous and aggressive interventions (both offline and online) against Zionism, which he calls "the cancer of the world" and Zionists "the beasts of Satan," fill theatres and garner hundreds of thousands of likes on social media.²⁶



August 22, Facebook post by Alessandro Di Battista, "Zionists are worse than Nazis."²⁷



November 15, Facebook, post by Alessandro di Battista, "Italy a servant of Washington and the Zionists."

Events Triggering Anti-Jewish Acts

Antisemitism (both offline and online) **tends to** increase on certain dates, such as Holocaust Remembrance Day, Liberation Day, or in conjunction with wars in the Middle East and beyond (see Chart 2).²⁸ Throughout 2025, various events have triggered

²⁶ [Ex deputato fa una conferenza dai forti toni complottisti e antisemiti - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-messaggio-anti-semita/)

²⁷

See:

[https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-messaggio-anti-semita/.](https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-messaggio-anti-semita/)

²⁸ Russia's war against Ukraine is also a source of multiple forms of antisemitism, from accusations against the "Jewish" Zelensky to various conspiracy narratives that see Jews/Zionists as the architects of an all-out war against sovereigntist Putin with the aim of establishing a new Jewish state in Eastern Europe.

anti-Jewish incidents and speech, particularly those related to religious celebrations in Jewish communities and the Hamas-Israel conflict—such as demonstrations in support of Palestine and other autocratic regimes (e.g., Russia, Turkey, Iran, and Venezuela).

- **Offline:** events/ conferences/ book, documentary, and film presentations/political statements/demonstrations/protests, occupations, and national strikes characterized 2025.
- **Online:** media misinformation campaigns/unbalanced narratives of the Middle East conflict/media campaigns to raise awareness about the war/these events sparked online comments with antisemitic content and motivated some of the hate campaigns that moved from the internet to the streets.

Political and/or politicized events:

- Ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas; phased release of hostages begin; hostages' bodies are recovered (January 2025)
- Israeli airstrikes: truce is broken (March 2025)
- Israeli offensive on Gaza (May to August 2025)
- 12-day Israel-Iran war (June 2025)
- Increased violence in the West Bank; declaration of famine; offensive in Gaza (August 2025)
- Recognition of Palestine by some countries (at various times throughout the year)
- US peace plan (September 2025)
- Attack on Hamas leaders in Qatar (September 2025)
- New ceasefire (October 2025)

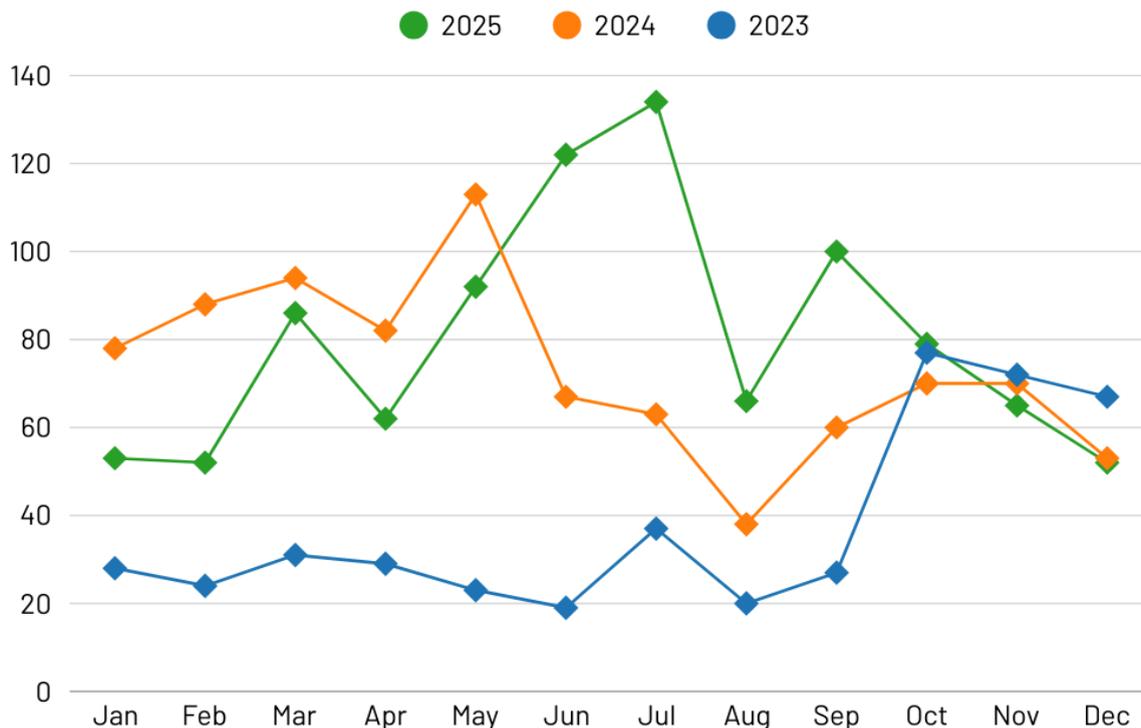
Religious commemorations, events, and holidays:

- Shoah Remembrance Day (January 27, 2025)
- Eurovision Song Contest (May 2025)
- Nakba Day (May 2025)
- Liberation Day (April 2025)
- Pride Month – “#NoPrideinGenocide” Campaign
- Italian Republic Day (June 2, 2025)
- Naksa Day (June 2025)
- European Day of Jewish Culture (September 2025)
- October 7, the second anniversary of the pogrom
- Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, strikes, and marches (September and October 2025)
- Football and basketball matches with Israeli teams (October, November, and December 2025)

- Holidays: Ramadan (#*RamadanofResistance* February–March 2025), Pesach (April), Hanukkah, and Christmas (December 2025)

Even after the October truce between Hamas and the State of Israel, aggressive anti-Israeli demonstrations did not cease but continued with renewed vigor and widespread presence. This graph shows the frequency of reports over the course of the year.

TREND IN THE NUMBER OF RECORDED EPISODES BY YEAR (2023, 2024, 2025)



Graph 2. Trend in the number of recorded incidents by year (2023, 2024, 2025). The peaks in reporting vary because they correspond to triggering events of media relevance, depending on the year.

643 incidents took place online, while **320** offline, of which: **18** assaults, **86** defamations and insults, **43** threats, **59** discriminations, **103** graffiti, and **11** acts of vandalism.²⁹ The cases of antisemitism on the web consist only of those reported to the Observatory on Antisemitism by users. Throughout the year, the Observatory directly monitors and processes a significantly higher number of posts and antisemitic incidents online. Furthermore, online antisemitism is difficult to quantify numerically. Posts are constantly reproduced and shared; many are removed directly by social media platforms. It is nevertheless important to analyze the content of the reports

²⁹ For a complete list of incidents, please visit: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/notizie/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/?anno=2025>.

received, as examining them provides insights for monitoring new trends and changes in language, forms, and levels of aggression.

TYPES OF INCIDENTS REGISTERED IN 2025 (ONLINE AND OFFLINE)

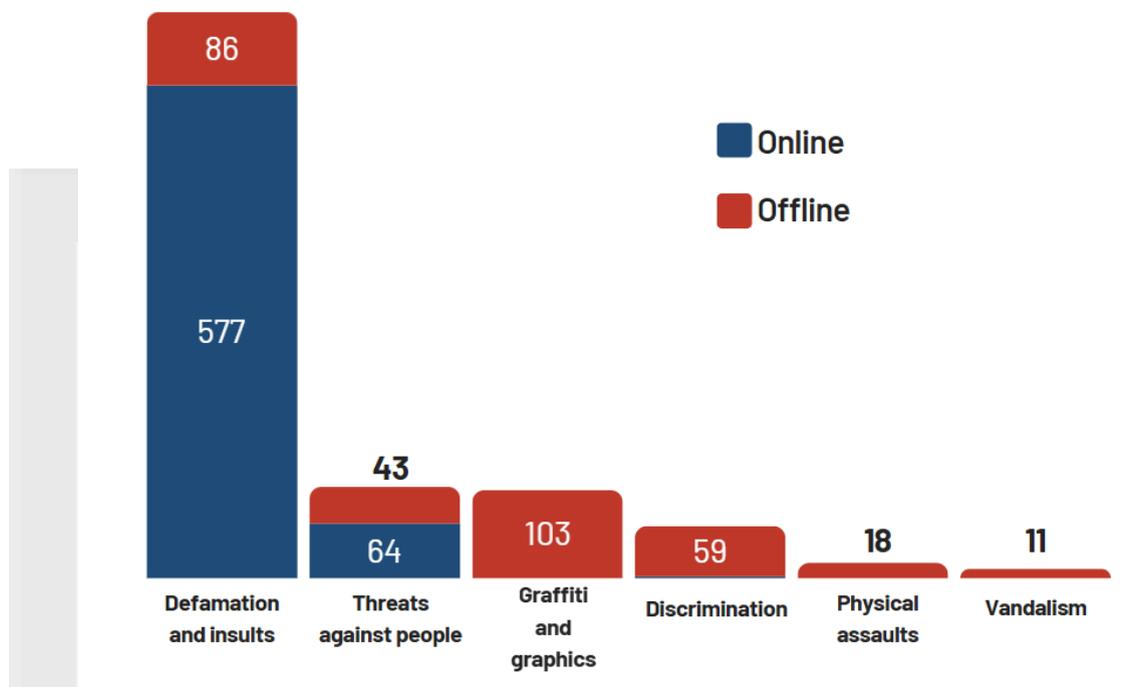


Chart 4. Trend in incidents by type (online and offline) in 2025.

* For the sake of simplicity in the graphic representation, acts that occurred both offline and online (40) were counted as single incidents depending on their severity. Acts of vandalism and physical assaults appear as offline incidents.

The "Offline and Online" incidents recorded by the Observatory concern: illustrations with antisemitic content published in both print and online newspapers and on the cartoonists' websites and social media profiles; hate campaigns against Jews promoted online and then implemented in the offline world; or antisemitic speeches posted offline and then disseminated online through multiple channels; graffiti and graffiti on walls photographed and published online.³⁰

The **steady increase in physical assaults is worrying**: **18** were recorded this year, an unprecedented number. In 2024, there were **8**, in 2023 there were **2**, and from 2018 to 2022, a total of **11**. One occurred in 2016. In 12 of the 18 cases, the perpetrators were of North African origin, Muslims, and/or second-generation Italians; in three

³⁰ See this Offline/Online episode from September 11, 2025 as an example: [Instagram, offese e minacce contro gli ebrei ed elogi di Hitler - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

cases, the perpetrators were Italian university students; one case involved a Romanian citizen, another a Swiss citizen,³¹ and, finally, one case involved an unknown assailant.

TREND IN PHYSICAL ASSAULTS FROM 2016 TO 2025

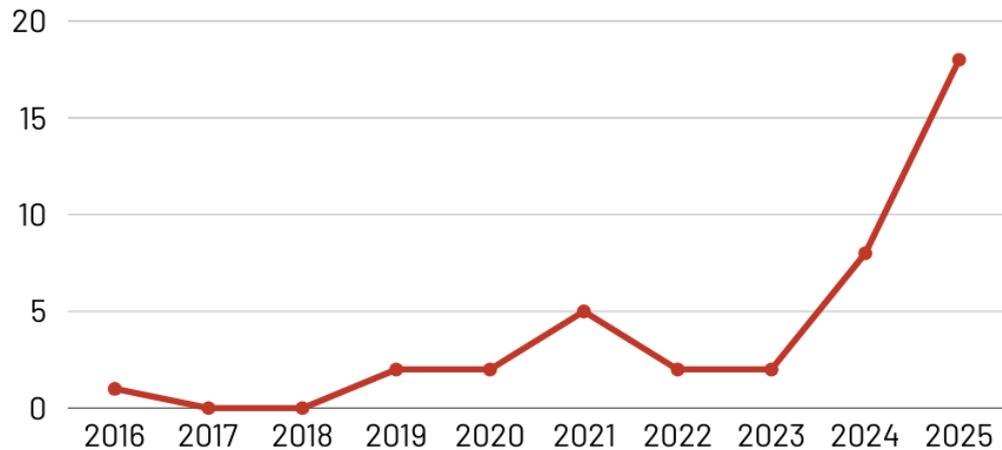


Chart 4. Trend in physical assaults (2016-2025)



Lainate, July 28, 2025: assault on a French Jewish family at a highway rest stop (autogrill). One of the perpetrators of the violence, filmed by the victim, makes the Rabaah al-Adawiyya gesture, characteristic of the Muslim Brotherhood.

³¹ For the list of physical assaults in 2025 see: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/notizie/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/aggressioni-fisiche-contro-le-persone/?anno=2025>.

ITEMS RECEIVED FROM REPORTS AND COLLECTED INDEPENDENTLY

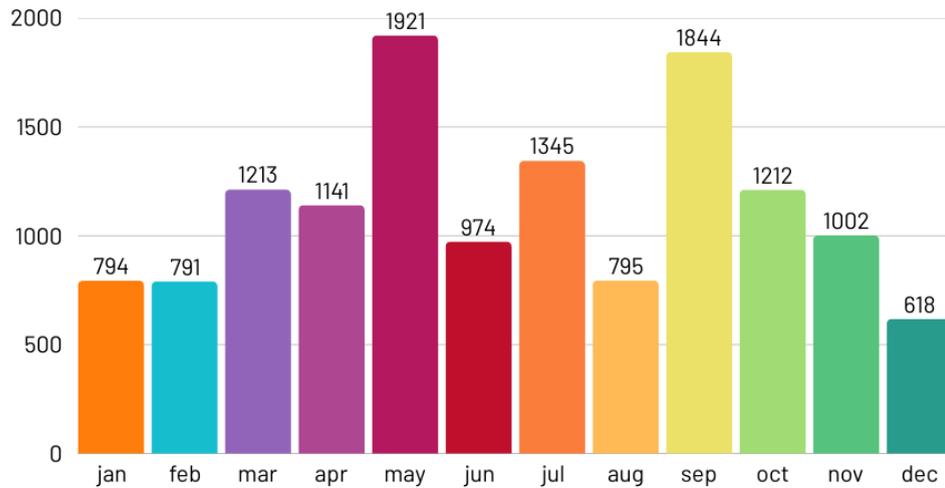


Chart 5. Items received from reports and collected independently by the Observatory in 2025. The peaks in antisemitic incidents correspond to the events shown in Chart 1.

A single report can contain dozens of attached items (videos, photos, emails, screenshots, PDFs, etc.—in some cases, even hundreds, for example, in the case of "shitstorms"); this explains the high number of materials received and collected monthly. In 2025, the Observatory received 1,492 reports, of which 530 were not classified as acts of antisemitism.³²

Source of reports

Jews: **515**

Non-Jews: **382**

Mass Media: **66**

Type of incidents

Physical assault: **18**

Defamation and insults: **663** (of which **557** online)

Discrimination: **61** (of which **59** offline)

Graffiti and graphics: **103**

Threats to individuals: **107** (of which 64 online)

Vandalism: **11**

³² For example, pro-Palestine demonstrations, talks and conferences, declarations on Israel and the Gaza conflict; posts that are not explicitly antisemitic, or inserted in a context of political controversy or personal conflict between users.

TYPES OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN 2025 (ONLINE AND OFFLINE)

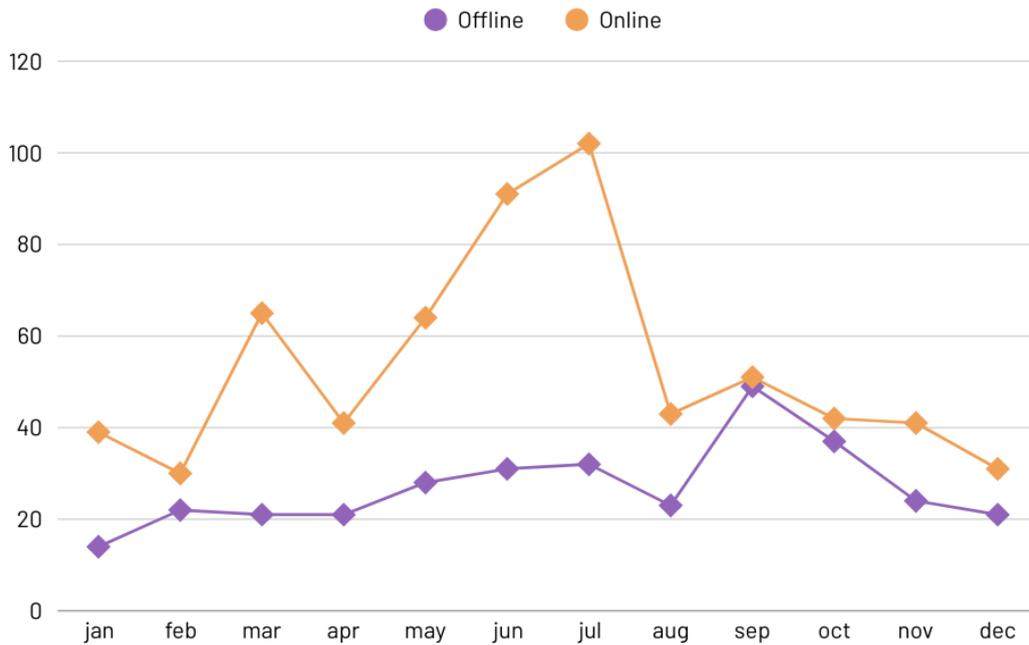


Chart 6. Types of antisemitic incidents in 2025 (online and offline). The trends of online and offline incidents diverge throughout the year, with the exception of the month of September, coinciding with the days of solidarity for Gaza.

INCIDENTS BY TYPE OF ACT AND BY MONTH IN 2025

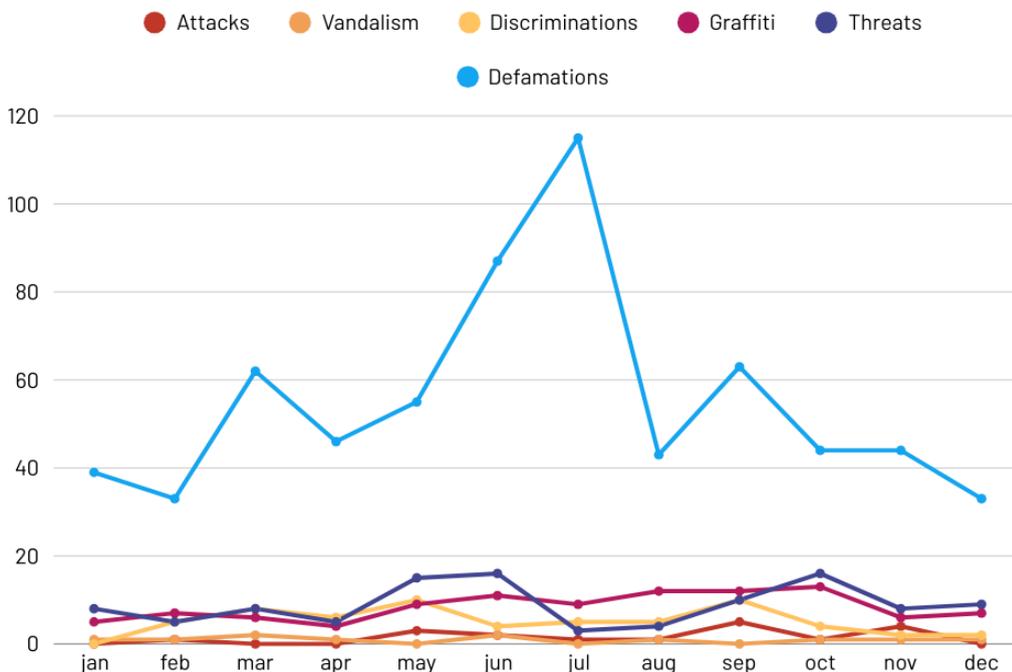


Chart 7. Incidents by type of act and by month in 2025. The peak recorded in relation to acts of defamation corresponds to the mission of the Global Sumud Flotilla.

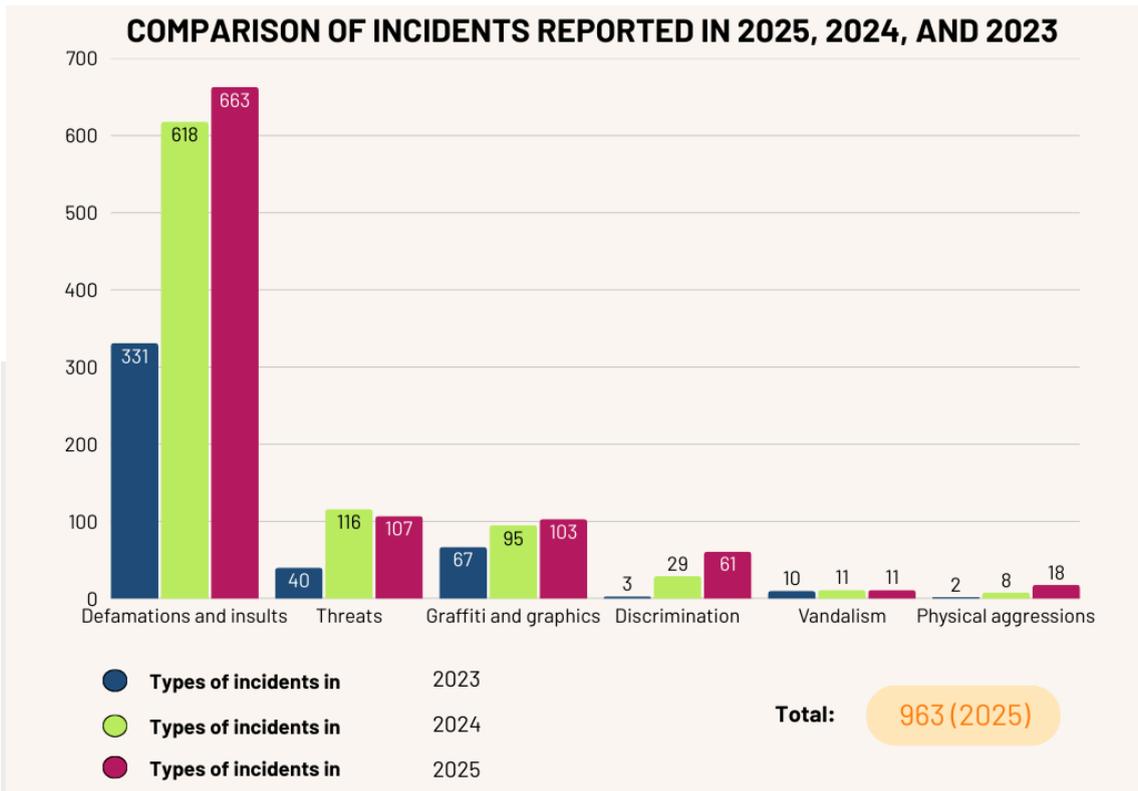


Chart 8. Comparison of incidents reported in 2025, 2024, and 2023. There has been an exponential increase in incidents of discrimination and physical assault.

Geolocation of Antisemitic Incidents

Out of the **963** antisemitic incidents recorded in 2025, in **314** incidents it was possible to establish the location where it took place: Alghero (SS), Altamura (BA), Ancona, Anguillara Sabazia (RM), Anzio (RM), Ascoli Piceno, Assago, Baggio (MI), Bari, Bergamo (3), Bologna (8), Brescia (3), Cagliari (2), Calci (Tuscany), Caletta di Siniscola (NU), Caserta, Castelliri (FR), Castelnuovo (LU), Castelnuovo di Garfagnana, Cavallino, Cento (FE), Chivasso (TO), Cinisello Balsamo (MI), Vatican City, Coiano (FI), Conselice, Corsico, Emilia-Romagna, Ferrara (2), Florence (16), Fiumicino, Forte dei Marmi, Gavardo (BS), Genoa (2), Gran Sasso d'Italia, Iglesias (SU), Ivrea, Latina, Lecco (2), Livorno, Manfredonia, Merano (BZ), Messina, Milan (77), Mira, Modena, Monigo (2), Monte Porzio Catone, Montorio Veronese (2), Naples (10), Olbia, Padua (4), Palermo, Paratico, Parma (3), Perugia, Pisa (4), Ponte Buggianese, Pordenone, Porto Pino, Porto Recanati, Prague, Pratovecchio Stia, Ragusa, Reggio Emilia, Rome (42), Ronco, Ronco di Gussago (BS), Rovigo, Sacile (PN), Saluzzo, San Rossore, Sant'Arpino, Santa Severa, Sesto Fiorentino, Sesto Rondò, Sestri Levante (GE), Syracuse, Sondrio, La Caletta Beach, Taranto, Termoli (CB), Turin (12), Treviso, Velletri, Venice (2), Vercelli, Verona, Viareggio (2).

Below is a map of antisemitic incidents recorded by the Observatory by region. Two recorded incidents occurred in Glasgow and Prague respectively, involving fans of the Roma football team and students on a school trip.



Incidents by Italian region

Online Platforms

The Observatory recorded **333** incidents on Facebook, **68** on Instagram, **86** on X/Twitter, **59** on TikTok, another **43** on websites, online magazines, Telegram, and other unknown social media, **16** on YouTube, and finally **15** emails. The online incidents recorded are those reported by users to the Antisemitism Hotline.

La colpa è degli ebrei.
Bisognerebbe tornare a infornare un po' di
biscotti.



Facebook, September 8, 2025. AI-generated image: "It's the Jews' fault. We should go back to baking some cookies." This meme is one of the most popular online anti-Jewish memes. The image was created using Artificial intelligence.



Milan, September 2025. This graffiti was painted in several parts of the city over the course of several months; the author was arrested by the police in October.

Victims of Antisemitic Incidents

736 incidents targeted Jews and/or undefined Jewish entities, described based on Judeophobic prejudices: cruel, bloodthirsty, racist, rich, cunning, stingy, vindictive, prone to domination and conspiracy, and "Nazis." These accusatory myths have their roots in the two-thousand-year-old "anti-Jewish archive."³³

The language used in online incidents is often vulgar and full of metaphors related to the Holocaust ("*missing bars of soap*," "*the ovens are waiting for you*," "*to the showers*").

Victims of antisemitism are increasingly being explicitly identified as Jewish by the perpetrators of hostile acts. Sometimes, terms such as "Ashkenazim" or "false Jews" are also used to identify Jews.³⁴

³³ LEVIS SULLAM S., *L'archivio antiebraico*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2008; TAGUIEFF P.A., *L'antisemitismo*, Raffaello Cortina, Milano, 2016; SARTORELLI A., *Testimoni della nostra iniquità*, Editrice Clinamen, Firenze 2019.

³⁴The terms "Ashkenazi" or "false Jew" and "Zionist" encompass a whole series of Judeophobic libels. The "false Jew" (racist, supremacist, etc.) is negatively contrasted with an imaginary "true Jew" or "democratic Jew," to whom antisemites attribute a series of characteristics they consider positive, which vary from individual to individual based on their ideological background.

These undefined Jews are often framed as **Zionists**, a term that has taken on a distorted meaning and encapsulates the main tropes of anti-Jewish imagery: accusations of racism as Jewish superiority, cruelty, conspiracy, and the desire for domination. The distorted use of the term is transversal and broad-ranging and **does not connote only extremist circles**.³⁵ This generalization acts as a mechanism of **dehumanization and demonization**, fostering a growing legitimization of verbal violence and the normalization and justification of hatred toward an undefined enemy. The combined effect of these narratives is the **legitimation of verbal violence** against Jews, perceived not as individuals, but as collective representatives of the actions of the State of Israel. This climate fuels physical violence against Jews, seen as representatives and symbols of absolute evil.

The **misrepresentation of the concept of Zionism** appears to be influenced by Islamist ideological roots, which—in connection with the delegitimization of the State of Israel—have progressively gained acceptance and space in public discourse, in schools, universities, the media, and cultural circles.

The remaining **227** incidents targeted Jewish individuals (or those perceived to be Jewish) and/or Jewish entities (or those perceived to be Jewish), who are also stereotyped, demonized according to established negative generalizations, and accused of **Zionism**, such as journalists Enrico Mentana, Maurizio Molinari, Paolo Mieli, David Parenzo, Tiziana Della Rocca, David Zebuloni, Klaus Davi, Marco Carrai, Senator for Life Liliana Segre and her sons, the EU MP Pina Picierno, MP Lia Quartapelle, Senator Ivan Scalfarotto, city counselor Daniele Nahum, professor Silvia Guetta, movie director Ruggero Gabbai, the President of the Jewish community of Rome Victor Fadlun, the President of the Jewish youth union Luca Spizzichino, Guido Guastalla, Jewish organizations such as UCEI, UGEI, Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael, the Italian local Jewish institutions, CDEC Foundation, Foundation Figli della Shoah, Foundation Jewish Museum of Padua, and Shoah Memorial.

³⁵ See: DELLA PERGOLA S., *“La storia stravolta e il futuro da costruire”*: <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/articoli/intervento-integrale-del-professor-sergio-della-pergola-al-convegno-intitolato-la-storia-stravolta-e-il-futuro-da-costruire-organizzato-dallucei-il-12-ottobre/?hilite=pergola>.



Milan, May 29, 2025. A prominent Jewish figure receives the following death threat online: "Dear G., you are a dirty, infamous Jew who will have to hide for the rest of your life because you have associated your name with the wrong cause. A cause of terror and genocide. You know which one. While people are dying in Palestine, you celebrate with other Jewish pigs like yourself. You piece of shit. You'll get a bullet in the head from me when you least expect it. I'll shoot you with this beautiful rifle attached! When you least expect it."



Rome, September 25, 2025, threats sent to the office of a Jewish lawyer

A main target of anti-Jewish hatred is **Liliana Segre**, targeted in hundreds of online insults. Every online news story about the Senator for Life sparks what is known in jargon as a "shitstorm," a wave of hundreds of offensive posts featuring violent and extremely vulgar language. This phenomenon is constantly growing, both in terms of the number of posts and the level of aggression.



A Facebook page published a photo of Liliانا Segre with UCEI President Noemi Di Segni, along with the caption: "Liliana Segre's kiss to a school group on Holocaust Remembrance Day." Numerous vulgar, hateful comments against the senator followed.

The main victims are no longer just prominent figures of Italian Judaism. The phenomenon affects workplaces and schools, affecting private citizens, including families, young students, public sector workers (doctors and teachers), retirees, and tourists—further demonstrating the spread of "popular antisemitism." Incidents of particular gravity include those involving high school teachers, severely ostracized for their Jewish roots, students (even elementary school students), hospital patients, discriminated against and harassed, and members of Jewish communities (including rabbis and the disabled or sick³⁶) who are seriously offended and threatened with death.³⁷

³⁶ [Lettera di minacce ad un Rabbino italiano - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

³⁷ [Ferrara, lettera minatoria: "lurida bastarda ebrea sionista che merita di morire" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)



November 11, 2025. Florence, unknown individuals carve a swastika on the door of the house where a Jewish woman lives.



October 9, 2025. Milan, unknown individuals paint swastikas and the word "Jew" on the elevator doors of a university residence.



August 5, 2025. Milan, swastikas and antisemitic graffiti ("Jewish bastards") on the front door of a Jewish family.

The use of the swastika in anti-Jewish contexts is not unique to the neo-Nazi world; after October 7th, it has become widespread (far left, Islamist or conspiracy theorist circles, etc.). Furthermore, the swastika can take on multiple meanings: **a threat to Jews, an accusing Jews of Nazism, or both.** It is significant that Nazi imagery and symbolism continue to play a key role in anti-Jewish polemics today.



Gender of Victims

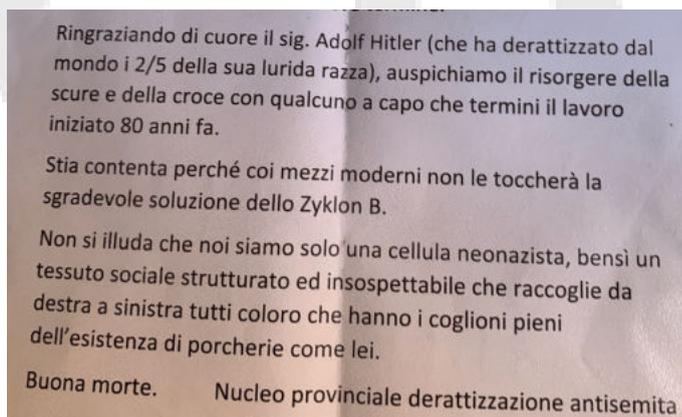
Female:³⁸ 53

Male: 58

Both: 852

Ideological Background

The **963** incidents registered in 2025 by the Observatory on Antisemitism are categorized according to five classifications developed based on the Handbook for the Practical Use of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism³⁹: Anti-Judaism (Christian and Islamic);⁴⁰ Neo-Nazism/Neo-Fascism;⁴¹ Generic and/or multi-faceted ideological hatred; Israel-related antisemitism;⁴² Jewish power/Antisemitic conspiracy theories.⁴³



Ringraziando di cuore il sig. Adolf Hitler (che ha derattizzato dal mondo i 2/5 della sua lurida razza), auspichiamo il risorgere della scure e della croce con qualcuno a capo che termini il lavoro iniziato 80 anni fa.

Stia contenta perché coi mezzi moderni non le toccherà la sgradevole soluzione dello Zyklon B.

Non si illuda che noi siamo solo una cellula neonazista, bensì un tessuto sociale strutturato ed insospettabile che raccoglie da destra a sinistra tutti coloro che hanno i coglioni pieni dell'esistenza di porcherie come lei.

Buona morte. Nucleo provinciale derattizzazione antisemita

Ferrara, July 20, 2025. Threatening letter against a member of the Jewish community.

³⁸ Attacks against Jewish women often contain a misogynistic element that expresses itself crudely, sometimes with rape fantasies. After October 7th, the spread of the narrative that the rapes suffered by Israeli women never occurred, and that they were an Islamophobic invention of Zionist propaganda. Some pro-Palestinian sympathizers even claimed that these acts of violence were instead committed by "Zionists" against Palestinian women and children through "mass rape campaigns," which were never documented. [Instagram, noto "influencer" scrive che Israele fa "campagne di stupri di bambini di massa" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

³⁹ [EU Handbook for the practical use of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism published.](#)

⁴⁰ Religious based antisemitism, the central accusing myth is that of deicide.

⁴¹ Racist theories based on biologism and which consider Jews to be a separate race characterized by hereditary and unamendable characteristics (hatred of the human race, racism, misoxenia, etc.) are an expression of this form of antisemitism: the denial/trivialization/derision of Shoah.

⁴² Applying antisemitic tropes and narratives to the State of Israel and the "Zionists," such as a predisposition to murder, racial superiority by divine election, etc.

⁴³ Belief that Jews are behind the scenes in all affairs.

The ideological background “Hate that cannot be clearly labelled and/or can be traced back to multiple ideological nuances” generally includes anti-Judaism (Christian and Muslim), conspiracy theories, and Israel related antisemitism, and is a paradigm of the Manicheanism of the internet, which tends to simplify and exaggerate all issues.

IDEOLOGICAL MATRIX OF RECORDED INCIDENTS (IN %)

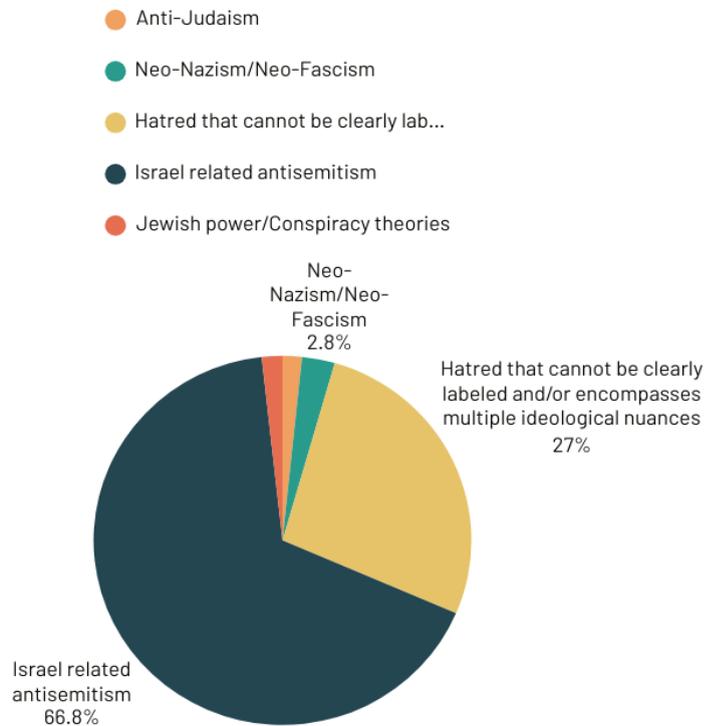


Chart 10. Ideological matrix of antisemitic incidents in 2025 (in %)

IDEOLOGICAL MATRIX OF INCIDENTS PER MONTH IN 2025

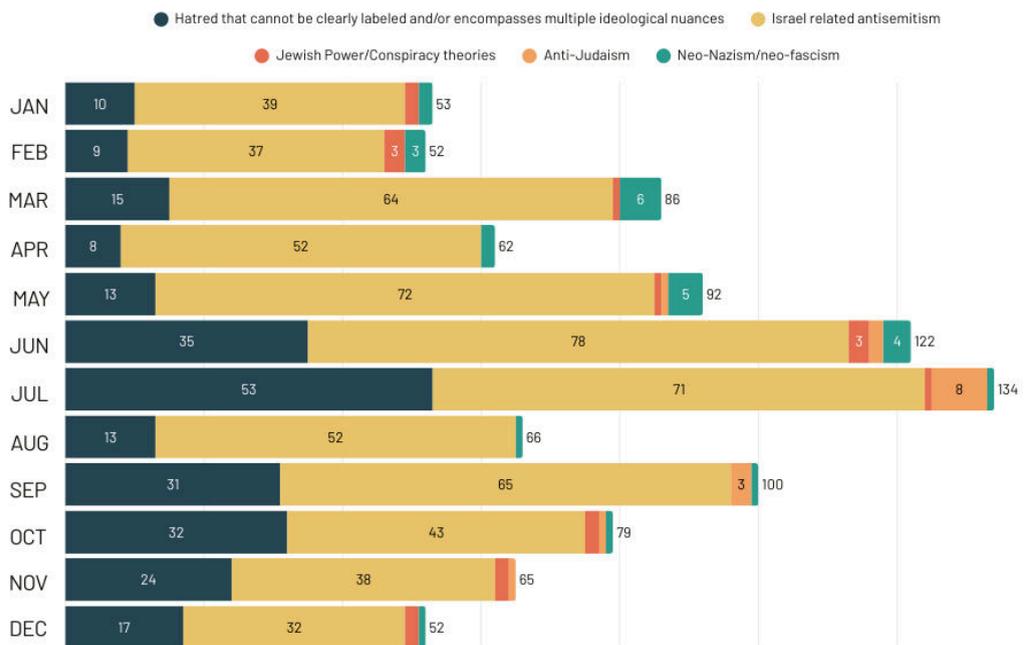
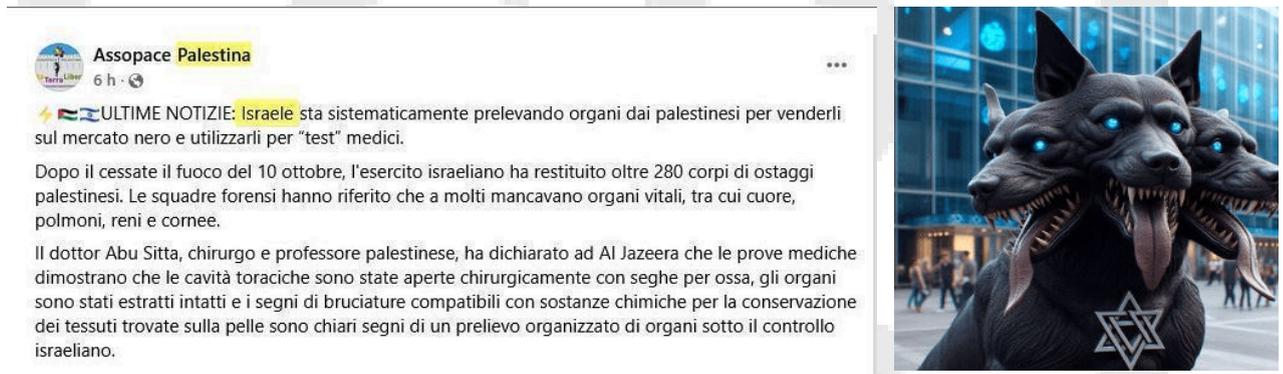


Chart 11. Ideological matrix of incidents per month in 2025

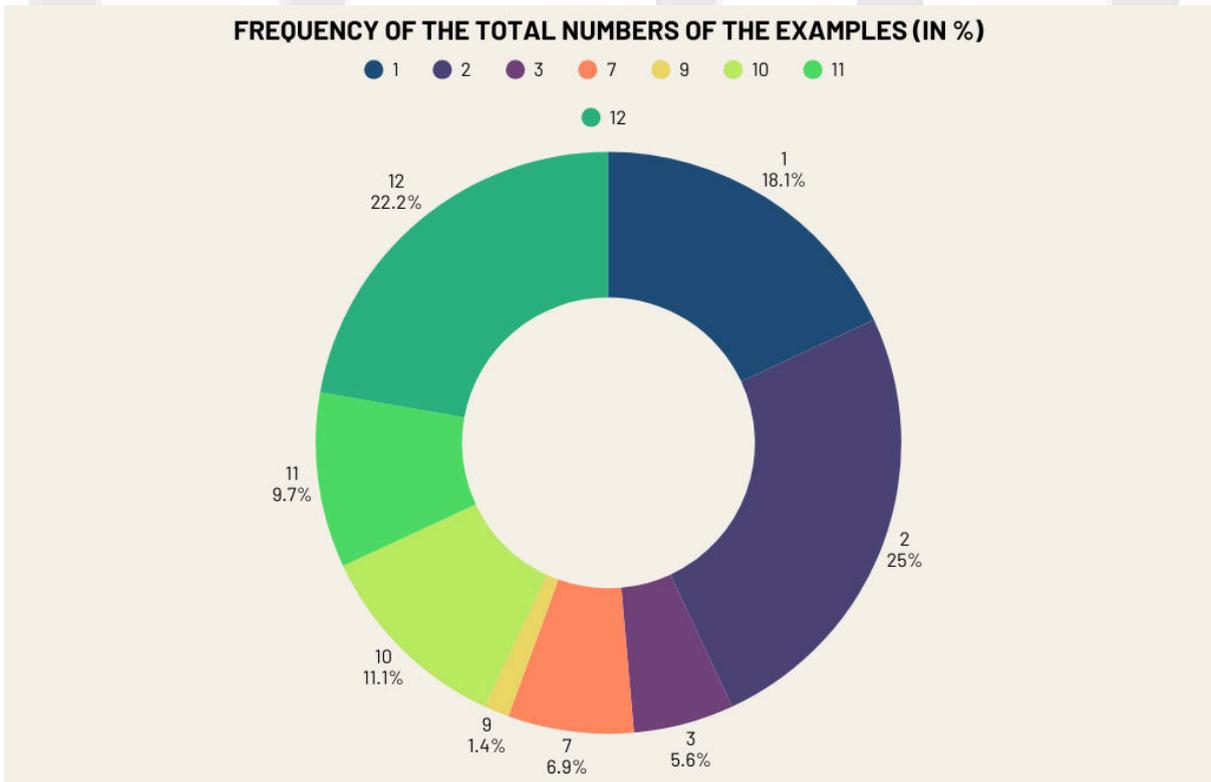
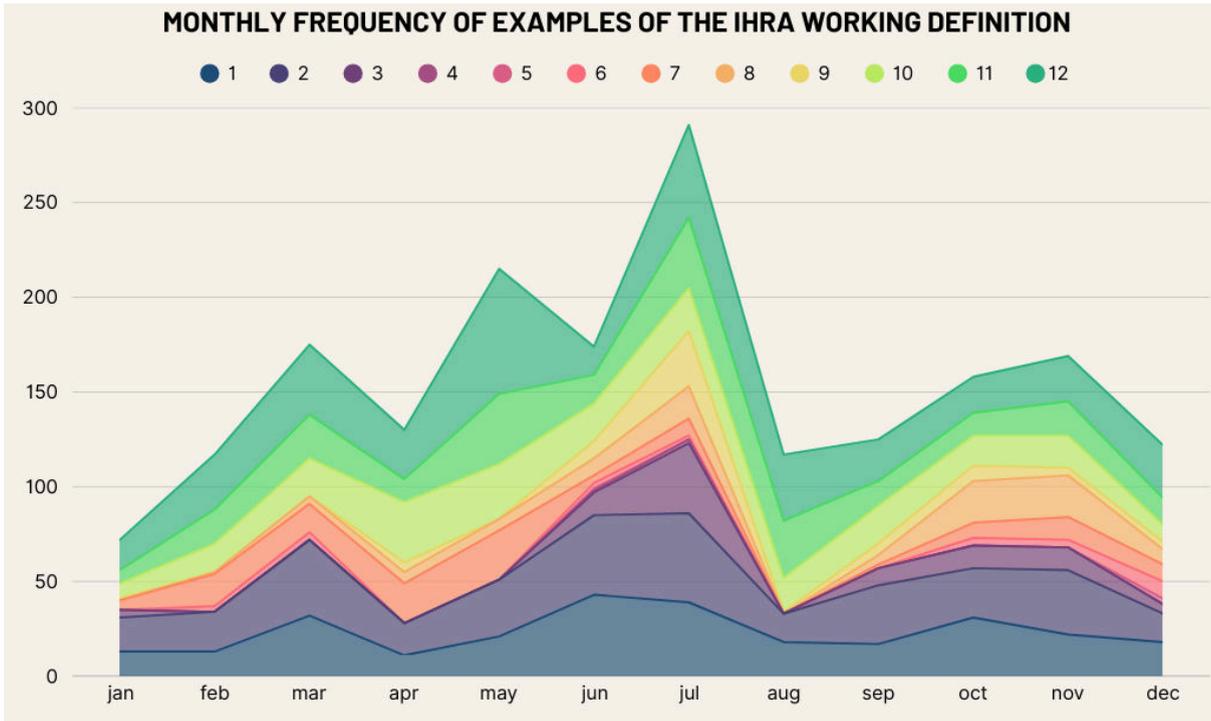
The **antisemitic libels against the State of Israel** often re-proposes the classic themes of the anti-Jewish rhetoric such as the “blood libel”, the hatred of the Jews for the “human race”, the tendency towards cruelty towards infants. The narrative of some media and the content of the comments collected - and analysed by the Observatory - shows how the anti-Zionist narrative is **part of a long heritage of demonizing tropes** which, over the course of two millennia, have spread hatred against Jews by **systematically associating Judaism with ritual violence motivated by religion, moral cruelty, hatred towards the human race and dehumanization**. In contemporary rhetoric, these images re-emerge under the guise of radical anti-Zionism, which constructs Israel not as a state among others, but as an **essentially evil entity**, responsible for crimes that are not only political, but **ontologically aberrant**, such as the accusation of training dogs to kill “Palestinians with disability”, or the accusation levelled at Israel of being the world capital of human organ trafficking of non-Jews.⁴⁴.



November 10th, 2025, Facebook. One of the main Italian organizations of solidarity and cooperation with the Palestinian people publishes a post accusing Israel of human organ trafficking: «Israel is systematically taking organs from Palestinians to sell them on the black market and use them for “medical tests”».

June 20th, 2025, Facebook, IA generated image

⁴⁴ As an example, see the following episodes on the next page: Facebook, hate speech against Jews, in [Facebook, incitazione all'odio contro gli ebrei - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); 'Cursed! Human organ trafficking too! Israelis are monsters, worse than the SS', in [YouTube, programma di cospirativismo antisemita - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); TikTok, video cospirativista - [Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).



Charts 12 and 13. IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism: breakdown of recorded incidents in 2025 (monthly and percentage values). Chart 12 confirms the chronological peaks previously identified in Chart 1.

Examples of IHRA's Working Definition of Antisemitism

1. Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
2. Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective – such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
3. Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
4. Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
5. Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
6. Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
7. Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
8. Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
9. Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
10. Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
11. Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.
12. Other/Not included.

Buon anniversario, amici.



In this post created with AI, published on 11 September 2025 on Facebook, the deep-rooted conspiracy libel is re-proposed according to which the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks on the twin towers on 11 September 2001 were instead a "Jewish-Zionist plot", while the August post (also on Facebook) crudely mocks Israeli soldiers ("Zionazi rats") killed in Gaza by comparing them to roasted chickens.



Facebook, 20 August 2025. "Antisemitic are those who exploit the Holocaust to make another one."

Antisemitic tropes, rhetoric and symbols from incidents and online data recorded in 2025

As previously mentioned, the triggering event that catalyzes antisemitism remains - after October 7th, 2023 - the conflict between Hamas and the State of Israel. The main anti-Jewish libels (deicide, exclusivism, racism by divine chosenness, hatred towards the human race, tendency towards revenge and conspiracies, etc.) are projected onto "Zionists" and "Zionism", onto the State of Israel seen as equal, if not worse, than Hitler's Germany. Within this framing the use of Holocaust distortion and inversion is used as: Holocaust survivors such as Liliana Segre, Edith Bruck or Sami Modiano (and also Anne Frank) are demonised, mocked and vilified as Zionists complicit in the genocide or even "false Jews", and iconography and images of the Shoah are repurposed connecting them to Palestine.

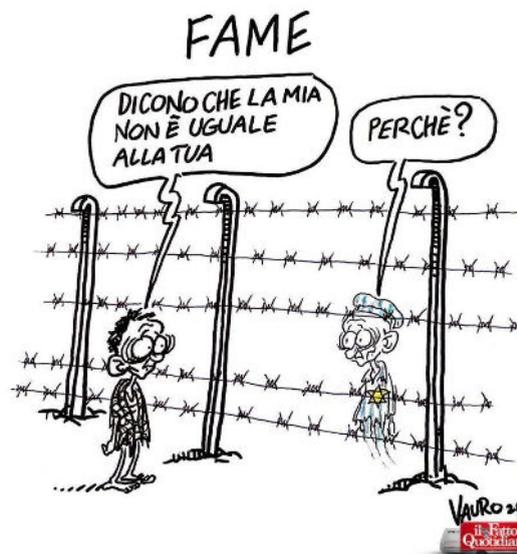


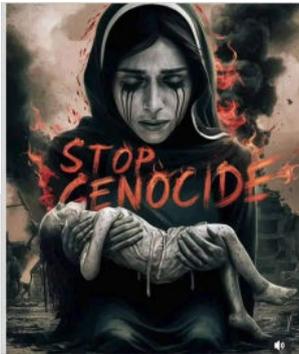
Illustration published in the newspaper *Il Fatto Quotidiano* on July 29th 2025⁴⁵. Translation: Hunger. "They say that mine [hunger] is not the same as yours" "Why?"

Often certain aggressive rhetoric (Gaza=Auschwitz, Nazi Israel, etc.) are justified through the citation of declarations and works of anti-Zionist Jews (or believed to be such) whose ideas are presented as an example of "true Judaism" as opposed to "Zionist supremacy" or "Israelism"⁴⁶ of which Israel and the various Jewish communities are said

⁴⁵ For an analysis of this illustration, please refer to the comment by [Gadi Luzzatto Voghera, direttore della Fondazione CDEC, analizza gli elementi problematici di una vignetta - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

⁴⁶The term "Israelism" was coined by the theologian Vito Mancuso, according to whom it constitutes an unhealthy and racist deviance of Judaism, an expression of a degenerate ethnic religious sentiment. In this regard, see the comments of [Rav Roberto Della Rocca risponde a Vito Mancuso sull' "israelismo" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo; Il professor Massimo Giuliani commenta le "lezioni di ebraismo" di Vito](#)

to represent. The idea that **"Zionists" constitute a sort of separate ethnicity, characterized by racism, cruelty, violence and a tendency towards revenge**, is increasingly rooted on an ideological level.



January 2025, Facebook. The first image, probably generated with AI, in the context of current antisemitism refers to the inversion of blame (the "reversal of the Holocaust"), which equates the actions of the State of Israel with those of the Nazis. The central image shows a sign with the words "Achtung Juden" ("Attention Jews") accompanied by a skull. Finally, the third image on the right is a complex collage that mixes various references (such as the crucifixion of Christ, September 11th) recalling the antisemitic libel of a Jewish conspiracy of great evils or tragic events of world history and launches a warning: "Never forget what they did".

Of particular concern in this context are the **proscription lists** - periodically updated - against "Zionist agents" and the calls to identify them⁴⁷.



6 October 2025, threats to Marco Carrai: «Zionist agent complicit in the genocide»⁴⁸.

[Mancuso - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); [Martina Yehudit Loreggian, rabbina della Sinagoga Progressiva Lev Chadash di Milano, commenta l'articolo di Vito Mancuso sull' "israelismo" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

⁴⁷It's noteworthy that among those mentioned as "Zionist agents" is Shoah survivor and Senator Liliana Segre.

⁴⁸["Volantino delirante con il volto di Carrai e la scritta Wanted", la denuncia di Marco Stella - la Repubblica](#).

Judeophobia continues to be approved of by a social climate that sees hatred towards "Zionists" as something acceptable as it is democratic and anti-racist. This aspect is visible above all in **schools and universities**, where protests against the "Nazionisti" have progressively increased (both in number and level of aggression) during the months of 2025. The pro-Palestine demonstrations in schools and universities - a legitimate expression of solidarity - do not in themselves constitute direct forms of antisemitic acts. However, in many cases they embrace slogans and messages that fall into the category of antisemitism and determine a climate of tension for Jewish and/or Israeli students and teachers,⁴⁹ increasing insecurity and preparing the ground for abuse and ostracism⁵⁰.

Further demonstration of the popularity and acceptance of antisemitism in the guise of "anti-Zionism" is represented by influencers and comedians (whose videos obtain hundreds of thousands of views) who use the tool of prejudice against Jews to arouse laughter from the public.⁵¹

The most striking case of 2025 was perhaps that of the well-known Enzo lacchetti who, during the television program "È semper Cartabianca" presented by Bianca Berlinguer, commenting on the Pope's declarations condemning antisemitism, went into an angry tirade against the Jews, saying: «they do antisemitism against real Jews... Zionism controls the whole world... Swiss banks are controlled by Jewish Zionists». Enzo lacchetti, even during his previous participation in "È sempre Cartabianca", had heavily offended and threatened a member of the Milanese Jewish community. After these controversies against Jews, the comedian was often a guest on other programs and events as an "expert" on Israel.

Another relevant example is that of Maurizio Crozza who has been portraying Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu as the new Adolf Hitler. In the sketch "Moses saved the Jewish people from the Egyptians, I will save them from the Palestinians" he presents himself as a Netanyahu/Moses and portrays the Jews as killers of Christ; drawing inspiration from the conflict in Gaza, he states: «Jesus has nothing to do with us, he has ended up like the Flotilla will», he then reiterates the libel according to which the Jews dominate the economy and the Nations: «the world economy is in our hands», he then supports the boycott of Israel, the accusation of "genocide" and racism. Finally, he states that the only ones who defend Israel are Jewish journalists (Enrico Mentana, Maurizio Molinari, Paolo Mieli).

⁴⁹ [Centro Italia, studenti denunciano il clima intimidatorio - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

⁵⁰ [Torino, azioni antisemite contro gli studenti ebrei ed israeliani: "Devono solo essere sterminati, gli israeliani camera a gas" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo;](#) [Venezia, università Cà Foscari, attivisti pro pal impediscono l'intervento di Emanuele Fiano - Osservatorio Antisemitismo;](#) Torino, Aggressione università Luca Spizzichino e UGEI: [Torino, cronaca degli episodi di antisemitismo all'università e alla fiera del libro.](#)

⁵¹ "Hitler era una brava persona": [YouTube, sketch comico antisemita - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

"Antagonist" groups demonstrate violently against "Zionists". One of the most serious instances is constituted by the **acts of vandalism carried out against the headquarters of the Jewish community of Bologna**. These vandalistic actions - according to the now usual method of reversal of meaning - are then explained by the attackers as "fake news" spread by "Zionists" to support their role as victims and to prevent "dissent".

The galaxy of "anti-Zionist" protesters in Italy can be briefly summarized in the following categories:

- Members of various far-left groups (trade unions, political parties, student movements, social centres, collectives);
- Members of various neo-Nazi groups and opinion makers;
- Second generation Italians originally from Arab countries, not necessarily members of organized Islamist groups;
- Organized Palestinian, Islamist and left-wing movements;
- Activists of the Latin American far left;
- Islamists belonging to semi-organised groups;
- Sympathizers of the cause, not necessarily included in the above categories.⁵²

The demonization of "Zionism" and of threat to "Zionists" is also clearly evident in major Italian cities (Genoa, Turin, Milan, Florence, Pisa, Rome, Naples) where walls, buildings, bridges and streets have been filled with writings praising "From the river to the sea", "death to the Zionist", slogans in favor of Hamas and the massacre of October 7th, Palestinian flags, Hamas' red triangles, murals of incitement to terrorism and Magen David compared to Hitler's swastikas. Same situation in many universities and schools in the country.

⁵² Please refer to the piece by G. GIACALONE, "The pro-Palestine far left in Italy and its militant entanglements", 1 November 2024, in https://www.thewashingtonoutsidercenter.org/ithe-pro-palestine-far-left-in-italy-and-its-militant-entanglements/?fbclid=IwY2xjawNhkWZleHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETBzeHhFMHVvc0VxWTRUTmNTAR57auhNrhdlIUi6F_WA9roc4rGkFTEq3J7_AIArPv2OSRIQ1HzhJxt4EghHbg_aem_IID3G08S5B2yM1mqLGO_Aq.



October 2nd, 2025, «Zionist Jews cancer of the world» is the writing in red paint that was written in a wall Rome together with a Star of David equated to a swastika on the Lungotevere degli Anguillara, a few steps from the synagogue.



December 2nd, 2025, Graffiti calling for violence "Death to the Zionist!" on various walls in Pisa.



September 15th, 2025, Milan. Graffiti celebrating Palestinian terrorism pays homage to Leila Khaled. The terrorist has held video conferences several times in Italian universities⁵³.



October 6, 2025. A graffiti praising violence ("Fucking Jews...you should all burn") written at "Kosher ROMA 5778" bakery in the Marconi district of Rome.

On social media, the main narrative⁵⁴ continues to be the **comparison between Israel and Nazi Germany**, with accusations that equate the actions of the Jewish State with war crimes and genocide, re-proposing a rhetoric that constitutes a form of distortion of the Shoah and contemporary antisemitism that falls under **point 10** of the IHRA Operational Definition (e.g., «Zionism = Nazism NetanHitler [...] far from prison...

⁵³ For further information, please refer to: [Elena Loewenthal commenta la partecipazione in video di Leila Khaled ad un evento pro Pal organizzato all'università di Torino - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

⁵⁴ The equation between Israel and Nazi Germany after October 7, 2023 has become the main figures of speech in attacks against Jews.

Piazzale Loreto...»⁵⁵ 13 January). Many people hold Jews collectively responsible for genocide ("Are you all complicit in the Genocide of the Palestinian people", 7 January, Facebook; "Is there a representative of one of the Jewish communities in Italy who is not totally and passionately pro genocide?" X, 8 January; see point 11 of the Operational Definition).⁵⁶

In March 2025, former Prime Minister Conte also invited the Jews of the diaspora to exonerate themselves from the "genocide" of the Palestinians: «To my Jewish friends I say "dissociate", because silence becomes complicity» repropounding the theme of "Davide excuse yourself"⁵⁷. **All Jews** would therefore be guilty of the political choices of a government in Israel.

A person who contributed to "institutionalizing" the demonization of the State of Israel and "Zionism" and therefore fueling the popularization of the climate of hostility against Jews⁵⁸ is Francesca Albanese⁵⁹, "special rapporteur of the United Nations on the occupied Palestinian territory". The lawyer from Campania, a former UNRWA employee,⁶⁰ has been at the center of controversy against Jews for more than a decade, ever since she claimed in July 2014 that the United States is "subjugated by the Jewish lobby"⁶¹. There are countless times in which Albanese compared the State of Israel and Zionism to Hitler's Nazism, the war in Gaza to the Shoah, her positions that trivialize or deny the extent of the October 7th 2023 massacre or those that justify terroristic actions of the Hamas jihadists, always seen as partisans, "resistant"⁶² and in any case always victims. Over the last two and a half years, Albanese has reiterated her extremist positions in a frank and often provocative way on various important Italian spaces

⁵⁵ "Piazzale Loreto" is a call for violence in reference to the square where Benito Mussolini was hanged in Milan in 1945.

⁵⁶ [La definizione di antisemitismo dell'Alleanza internazionale per la memoria dell'Olocausto - IHRA.](#)

⁵⁷ Excerpt from a famous article written by Rosellina Balbi on 6 July 1982 in the newspaper La Repubblica, a month after the start of the war between Israel and Lebanon. Please refer to Ilaria Myr's comment, "Davide, excuse yourself!". ["Davide, discolpati!". Oggi come ieri, la "colpa" di essere ebrei - Mosaico.](#)

⁵⁸ In October 2025 Francesca Albanese attacked Senator Liliana Segre, deemed "not impartial" and "not lucid" for speaking on the term "genocide".

⁵⁹ Dismissing October 7 gang rape and comparing Israel to the Third Reich: Who is UN 'Special Rapporteur' Francesca Albanese?
<https://www.thejc.com/news/world/dismissing-october-7-gang-rape-and-comparing-israel-to-the-third-reich-who-is-un-special-rapporteur-francesca-albanese-mc3h514n>

⁶⁰ What to Know about UNRWA and Its Controversial Role in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
<https://www.ajc.org/news/what-to-know-about-unrwa-and-its-controversial-role-in-the-israeli-palestinian-conflict>

⁶¹ Francesca Albanese in Her Own Words
<https://www.adl.org/resources/article/francesca-albanese-her-own-words>

⁶² In November 2022, participating by video conference in the summit "Sixteen years of siege in Gaza" where the leaders of the terrorist groups in the Gaza Strip were present, the special rapporteur told them: "You have the right to resist".

(institutional offices, universities, schools, television programs, etc.).⁶³ The popularity and influence of the "special rapporteur" has also been certified by the great sales success of her "best-selling" essays (three books from 2023 to 2025) and by the numerous awards and honors (honorary citizenship, keys to the city, etc.) obtained by her in various parts of Italy (including Bologna, Bari and Reggio Emilia).⁶⁴

Comments **praising Adolf Hitler** (often affectionately referred to as "moustache", "Uncle Adolf", etc.) and Nazism are also recurring (e.g., «If Hitler had eliminated the Jews there would be no genocide in Gaza with 40,000 deaths», 6 January, e-mail; «Unfortunately, Mustache didn't finish the job but sooner or later there will be someone who will finish it... let's hope for a new mustache... the work had to be finished... Everyone to the Polish spa to take showers [reference to extermination camps]... I would like the mustache to finish his job [Shoah]" 17 January, TikTok; "I want to reopen the ovens", 12 January, TikTok; "exquisite only if cooked at 6,000,000 degrees and above", 15 January, Facebook).

The praise of Hitler or the regret that the Jews were not all exterminated in the Shoah are topoi of the rhetoric against the Jews previously confined to extremist areas, but after October 7th 2023 - progressively - becoming pop (as can be seen from the world of entertainment) and transversal. The praise of "moustache" (now a meme) has gone "viral", so the dictator responsible for the Second World War has been transformed into the friendly "Uncle Adolf"⁶⁵.

⁶³ Italian media bust Albanese: She attended an event with Hamas and PIJ officials <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/italian-media-bust-albanese-she-attended-an-event-with-hamas-and-pij-officials/>

⁶⁴ With Gaza a rallying cry in Italy, a growing number justify hostility against its Jews <https://www.timesofisrael.com/with-gaza-a-rallying-cry-in-italy-a-growing-number-justify-hostility-against-its-jews/>

⁶⁵ You can see some examples of comments with this reference at: [Facebook, contenuti antisemitici e neofascisti - Osservatorio Antisemitismo; https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-post-antisemitismi-e-apologia-di-hitler/;](https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-post-antisemitismi-e-apologia-di-hitler/) "Viva Hitler e le sue docce": [https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-offese-contro-l-e-donne-ebree/;](https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/facebook-offese-contro-l-e-donne-ebree/) Instagram, offese contro Liliana Segre: [https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/tiktok-offese-antisemitismo-contro-liliana-segre/.](https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/tiktok-offese-antisemitismo-contro-liliana-segre/)



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October 3rd, 2025. Facebook users post antisemitic messages about the conflict in Gaza, claiming that Hamas' actions are legitimate resistance. They demonize Zionism, glorify Hitler and spread conspiracy theories about Hamas and Zionist/Masonic rule. They call for the destruction of Israel and the elimination of "Zionist usurers", calling themselves "anti-Zionists" but using "Zionist" and "Jew" as synonyms.

June 4th, 2025. Facebook, users comment on a news story on an alleged bombing of a church by Israeli forces, with antisemitic messages that trivialize the Shoah.

Users' online behaviour regarding the conflict between Hamas and Israel highlight a **growing level of hostility and polarization**. Social media has become a fertile ground for the spread of antisemitic discourse, where the conflict in Gaza is often used as a pretext to justify violent and denigrating attacks against institutions and people linked to Israel, including Jews and public figures.

In particular, **the use of extremist symbols and language**⁶⁶ that evoke threats and incitements to violence is frequent, as is historical **denial**, especially regarding the Shoah and the distortion of October 7th.⁶⁷ This type of discourse is not limited to a simple expression of political dissent, but transforms into open hatred that **exploits the conflict** to fuel racial and religious prejudices, with **serious implications** for security and social coexistence.

⁶⁶ Such as the red triangle, a symbol used by Hamas to mark the homes of Jews and political opponents.

⁶⁷ For example: [Blogger, distorsione del 7 ottobre - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).



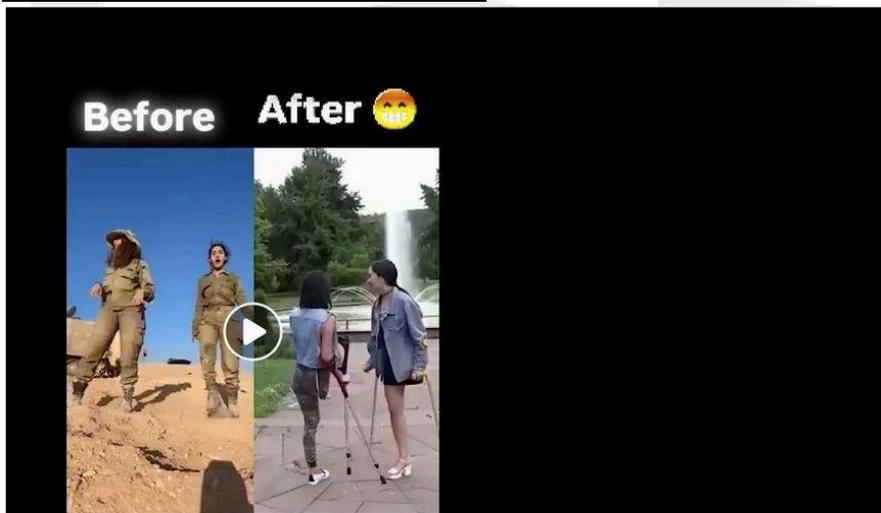
This post clearly illustrates the phenomenon of the so-called shitstorm, i.e. a wave of online attacks - with egregious and violent remarks - against a target (person or entity). The triggering element is Remembrance Day: the mural with the likeness of Edith Bruck, an Auschwitz extermination camp survivor, is hit with insults that are mainly based on three themes, namely that the State of Israel would be like/worse than Nazi Germany, that a new Shoah would be underway against the Arab-Palestinians, Edith Bruck (like Liliana Segre or Sami Modiano) would be a Zionist supporter of the genocide anti-Palestinian. Not infrequently elements of denial also emerge, many social media users go so far as to argue that Bruck (but also Segre or Modiano) were not detained in the concentration camps and if they were, they played a role as accomplices in the genocide.



Facebook. Any post regarding Jewish themes is targeted with antisemitic comments, the central theme is always that of Israel-related antisemitism, therefore references to Gaza, comparisons between Zionists as/worse than the Nazis, trivialization/distortion of the Shoah. Death wishes that invoke the "saving" intervention of Adolf Hitler (mustache, Uncle Adolf, Adolfino, etc.) are on the rise.



X/Twitter. Yet another antisemitic post by the extremist Gabriele Rubini, aka Chef Rubio. The remarks are usually violent and recall terrorism, both on a lexical and iconographic level (see the use of the red triangle introduced by Hamas to identify the Jewish targets to be hit). After October 7th, 2023, Rubio often invites us to "drive " the "Zionists" out. Rubini was convicted by the Court of Rome in 2025 and has numerous other lawsuits underway for defamation, hate speech and Holocaust denial.



Facebook: Diego Siragusa, author of this post mocking two Israeli soldiers who were apparently lost a limb (the image however appears to have been manipulated by AI), is one of the most active antisemitic propagandists, prolific author of essays, the latest of which is "Impossible dialogue with a rabbi. Israel and the tragedy of arrogance" (Arianna Editrice, Bologna, 2023) is often hosted by organizations such as ANPI⁶⁸ or ARCI⁶⁹ to discuss "Zionism". In addition to non-fiction and conferences, Siragusa is also very active on YouTube⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ [Messaggio della Presidente dell'Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane Noemi Di Segni al Presidente nazionale dell'Anpi Carlo Smuraglia - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

⁶⁹ ARCI Zenzero (GE) "Dialogo impossibile con un rabbino", available at: [2024 02 14 Dialogo impossibile con un rabbino.](#)

⁷⁰ "L'industria dell'Olocausto e i giornalisti a libro paga", in [L'industria dell'Olocausto e i giornalisti a libro paga, con Diego Siragusa.](#)

The pro-Palestinian movement in Italy⁷¹

Starting from the massacre of October 7th 2023, perpetrated by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in southern Israel, Italian squares have been the subject of constant demonstrations in favor of the Palestinian cause, on an almost weekly basis, involving organized Palestinian groups (Palestinian Association in Italy, Young Palestinians, Palestinian Students, Palestinian Community of Rome and Lazio, etc.), Islamist groups and individual supporters of the Palestinian cause and groups of the extreme extra-parliamentary left and the trade union associations such as CARC, NPCI, Rete dei Comunisti (including the OSA and Cambiare Rotta youth sections), Potere al Popolo, COBAS, USB, CALP, Gioventù Comunista, just to name a few.

During the demonstrations, alarming elements emerged on several occasions, ranging from the presence of flags of the terrorist organizations Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Popular Front (PFLP) to slogans such as "Intifada" and "Free Palestine from the River to the Sea" (slogans calling for the annihilation of Israel). During these demonstrations, openly antisemitic acts were committed on several occasions.⁷²

One of the main leaders of the demonstrations, Palestinian Italian citizen **Mohammad Hannoun**, has repeatedly spoken out against Jews over the years.⁷³ In November 2025, during an unauthorized demonstration in Sesto San Giovanni, he attacked "Zionist parliamentarians," accusing the government of being a "servant of the Zionist lobby," and portraying Israel as a "racist" and "Zionist" state that has "always been" like that. In December 2025, Hannoun was arrested along with nine other people by the National Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor's Office on charges of establishing a Hamas cell in Italy.

Local events and structural antisemitism

2025 has seen a proliferation of coordinated **local events** against Israel, and, to a lesser extent, against Jewish communities. These events, held in clubs, university assemblies, and street demonstrations, are almost never limited to a criticism of Israeli

⁷¹ Analysis by Giovanni Giacalone.

⁷²

https://roma.corriere.it/notizie/cronaca/25_ottobre_04/manifestazione-propal-a-roma-gli-slogan-per-hamas-e-contro-israele-7-ottobre-giornata-della-resistenza-assassini-stato-terrorista-d65e2aaf-f041-4ca2-ae12-d7a6b604bxlk.shtml

⁷³ For example, in March 2024, during a large demonstration at Milan Central Station, he also attacked Senator Liliana Segre: "A few weeks ago, we talked about Senator Segre, who doubts that it can be called genocide because there is an exclusive right reserved for the lobby, for the criminals who are the only ones who have suffered genocide [...]"

policies, but instead identify Italian Jewish citizens or sympathizers of Israel as "Zionists" and **unwelcome presences on the national territory**.⁷⁴



Rome, 9 June 2025, demonstration for Palestine. Photo shared on platform X.

Organized groups of "professional antisemites" are emerging, aiming to promote the distortion of Zionism and the interference of foreign powers (Iran, Qatar, Venezuela, Russia, and China) through the use of extreme metaphors and historical distortions of the Shoah, **normalizing** serious and unfounded accusations.⁷⁵ Sometimes, they enjoy significant economic and organizational resources⁷⁶ and rely on other political parties or unions to organize and host events. These individuals operate in a coordinated manner,⁷⁷ employing **systematic communication methods and strategies** aimed at spreading hatred, often exploiting the viral dynamics of platforms. These actors must be taken seriously when analyzing the phenomenon, as they significantly contribute to the radicalization of public discourse and the normalization of antisemitic symbolic and verbal violence.

These groups provide the **ideological framework and fuel behind BDS activities and violent protests** in schools, universities, hospitals, public offices, and other cultural settings.⁷⁸ One example, among countless recorded incidents, took place on

⁷⁴ Here are some examples. For instance, the event in the University of Parma, with students protesting against journalist Maurizio Molinari, with the slogan "Zionists out of the classroom": <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/parma-universita-minacce-al-giornalista-maurizio-molinari/>, or the blacklist of "Agents of the Zionist Entity" released by the (new) PCI and updated, for the third time, in June 2025.

⁷⁵ "La normalizzazione del 7 ottobre: la "resistenza" palestinese sulle reti social", Study published by the association Setteottobre. La normalizzazione del 7 ottobre: la "resistenza" palestinese sulle reti social. - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.

⁷⁶ See CHESNOT C., MALBRUNOT G., *Qatar Papers*, Rizzoli, Milano, 2019; also *Report coordinamento sicurezza UCEI* gennaio - dicembre 2025.

⁷⁷ "Report coordinamento sicurezza UCEI" gennaio - dicembre 2025.

⁷⁸ See, among the many incidents recorded, for example, two incidents recorded in Florence in October and December 2025, in <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/firenze-scuola-media-pro-muove-uniniziativa-pro-pal/>;

December 1st when the "Monteverde Antisionista" group vandalized the "Bet Michael" synagogue and desecrated the commemorative plaque dedicated to Stefano Tachè.^{79 80} Pro-Palestinian groups do not share the radical left's pacifist and "inclusive" agenda, as they are ideologically aligned with Islamism.⁸¹ Yet, they have found it a huge political opportunity to rekindle anti-Jewish hatred disguised as anti-Zionism, especially during the **Global Sumud Flotilla** campaign. Their ideology, exemplified by the slogan "From the River to the Sea," does not envision the existence of the State of Israel, which they define as a "Zionist entity," and rejects confrontation with anyone they perceive as "Zionist."⁸² The **violence in the streets over Palestine** and the rapid rise of antisemitism in Italy reflect dynamics reminiscent of the **terrorist subversion of the 1970s**. This situation has been highlighted by various experts, including former President of the Chamber of Deputies and jurist Luciano Violante.⁸³

<https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/firenze-evento-unilaterale-sul-conflitto-israelo-palestinese/>; [Taranto, collegio docenti di un liceo approva una delibera pro pal - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); [Appello pro pal e pro BDS al presidente della regione Veneto - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#); [Bologna, estremisti pro pal minacciano una squadra di basket israeliana - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

⁷⁹ See [Roma, il gruppo "Monteverde antisionista" vandalizza la sinagoga "Bet Michael" e profana la targa commemorativa dedicata a Stefano Tachè - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#).

⁸⁰ Stefano Gaj Taché was the victim of the attack on the synagogue in Rome on 9 October 1982, carried out by a commando of five terrorists of Palestinian origin, part of Abu Nidal's al-Fatah Revolutionary Council.

⁸¹ Islamism is an ideology that views Islam not as a simple religion but as a comprehensive system regulating all aspects of private and public life, and which aims to create a political system whose founding principles, institutions, and legal system derive directly from Islamic law (Shari'ah). The foundations of contemporary Islamist ideology were laid by Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, in the first half of the 20th century. Today, the Islamist movement is extremely heterogeneous, encompassing a spectrum from political parties that participate in elections and in the democratic life of their own country, such as the AKP in Turkey, to terrorist groups that reject democracy, such as al-Qaeda and Hamas. (Definition by Lorenzo Vidino, director of the Center for Cyber and Homeland Security's Program on Extremism at George Washington University).

⁸² For example, Lia Quartapelle, Mara Carfagna, Cecilia Sala, Francesco Giubilei and Matteo Renzi - have all been included in the proscription list of the Nuovo PCI party .

⁸³ Violante dice basta "Siamo all'eversione Ora misure forti", [Pro Pal senza freni, Violante dice basta: "Siamo all'eversione, ora misure forti. L'antisemitismo è dentro la storia dell'Europa"](#).



April 25, 2025, Milan. Young Palestinians take part in the Liberation Day demonstration with slogans and banners proclaiming "With the Palestinian resistance, alongside the peoples who struggle."



October 7, 2025, Bologna. During a demonstration scheduled for October 7, GPI, one of the largest Palestinian organizations in Italy, published a poster praising terrorism and the pogrom of October 7, 2023: "Long live October 7, long live the Palestinian resistance."

Aspects of Online Radicalization on Platforms

The increase of ideological radicalization on social media is fueled by anti-Zionist content shared in extreme pro-Palestinian circles. The antisemitic accounts monitored by the Observatory promote binary narratives, presenting Israel as a "cancer of the world" or a "genocidal regime," transforming political discourse into racialized hatred, which is transposed into "real life."

Thanks to the materials of a radical ideology—created and disseminated even before October 7, 2023—that the Observatory has collected and analyzed, it is clear that highly polarized content has been widely shared on social media, particularly among younger users. This exposure has contributed to a one-sided narrative of the conflict, simplified and devoid of historical context, which often translates into extreme positions or hostile acts against Israel or the Jewish community. In this regard, the EURISPES Report on Antisemitism in Italy in 2025⁸⁴ highlighted that young people aged 18-24 are the only ones who most strongly affirm that Jews in Palestine have appropriated foreign lands (50.8%), while among other age groups, the share is a minority. Radicalization not only affects political extremists, but also infiltrates the

⁸⁴ <https://www.leurispes.it/antisemitismo-pregiudizi-negazionismo-dati-eurispes/>.

digital mainstream through memes and viral content that normalize prejudice in the form of satire or social activism. The dynamics of the "**ideological bubble**" (fueled by echo chambers) have been extensively documented in the "2024 Report on Antisemitic Incidents in Italy."⁸⁵ This distorted perception of reality is amplified by platforms that operate in three different ways:

1. **Binary simplification** of the conflict, reducing it to an "oppressor-oppressed" dynamic.
2. **Decontextualization** through isolated, striking fragments and videos (e.g., Haredi Jews spitting on religious figures in Jerusalem), aimed at generating an **emotional response—rewarded by algorithms**.
3. **Validation** and iteration of similar content across one's own connections, thus preventing exposure to diverse points of view.



Facebook, June 29, 2025. The cartoon shows a newborn baby pierced by a bloody missile bearing a Star of David, clearly alluding to Israel or the Jews. The drawing recalls the old antisemitic stereotype of the "blood libel," the accusation that Jews kill non-Jewish children for their own purposes (a medieval myth used to justify pogroms and persecutions).



Sacile (PN), June 12th, 2025, "Damned Jews." Graffiti with insults, under an overpass, comparing the Star of David to the Nazi swastika.

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<https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/approfondimenti/relazione-annuale-sullantisemitismo-in-italia-2024>

Surveillance and Threats to Jews or Israelis

A disturbing aspect that has emerged from recent incidents is the use of espionage techniques to locate Israeli citizens abroad—particularly young men who served as soldiers in the Gaza Strip—traveling or vacationing in Europe, including Italy.⁸⁶ One example is the case of the Israeli tourists arrested at the "Tomorrowland" music festival on charges of "war crimes," who were later released. The investigation followed the filing of two complaints by the Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF)⁸⁷ and the Global Legal Action Network (GLAN, an international network of lawyers specializing in human rights violations). According to GLAN, "which reviewed content posted by the individuals on their respective social media platforms," the crimes they were accused of included "deliberate attacks on civilian areas, homes, and hospitals, the use of torture and human shields, as well as mass arbitrary detention and forced displacement of civilians."⁸⁸

Similarly, in Italy, the (New) PCI [Italian Communist Party] has published online a list (periodically updated) of so-called "Zionist agents," which includes Italian reservists with Israeli passports. The list also includes Italian professors, journalists, and public figures who are allegedly pro-Israel or "pro-Israel." The list presents **clear persecutory intent**, recalling points 1, 7, and 8 of the IHRA Working Definition: "attributing collective responsibility to Jews," "comparing Israel to Nazism," and "denying the legitimacy of the Jewish state."⁸⁹

Both in Italy and abroad,⁹⁰ this situation leads to a climate of intimidation that sometimes leads to pressure and harassment. Examples like these set dangerous

⁸⁶ Anti-Zionist organizations collect data from social media posts, geotagged photos, videos, and metadata shared by Israeli soldiers, including information on their identities, locations, and movements. See: [Think Twice Before Hitting Post: Israeli Military Finally Restricting Soldiers' Social Media Use](#).

⁸⁷ According to the Israeli government website, "HRF **actively collects and disseminates information about IDF soldiers living abroad**, with the aim of subjecting them to legal harassment and potentially jeopardizing their safety. The foundation has filed complaints against soldiers in several countries and submitted reports to the International Criminal Court (ICC) accusing numerous soldiers and officers of committing 'war crimes.'" Cit. in https://govextra.gov.il/mda/hind-rajab-foundation/report/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=2215924870&gbraid=0AAAAA-05HLONm92tDYzxbuv0yzNf-_nv_&qclid=CjwKCAjw7rbEBhB5EiwA1V49neIEDbroCU10gpl9ABvuf5osb3lz0WXUYU3fxlSt9z3iy7nhCUcY2RoC6gg0AvD_BwE.

⁸⁸ Original article, in French: [Deux soldats israéliens soupçonnés de crimes de guerre à Gaza arrêtés à Tomorrowland - L'Humanité](#).

⁸⁹ See: [Comunicato del \(nuovo\) Partito comunista italiano invita a segnalare gli "Agenti dell'entità sionista" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo](#). The list is public and can be consulted online on the Nuovo PCI website.

⁹⁰ See the article <https://it.euronews.com/2025/05/08/lantisemitismo-torna-a-fare-paura-minacciati-ebrei-scuole-e-sinagoghe-in-tutto-loccidente>.

precedents that are spread across platforms and can lead others to engage in violent antisemitic behavior.



Facebook, February 17th, 2025. Caption of a post celebrating the killing of Sergeant Oz Shmuel Aradi: "Another rat going to hell."

BEST PRACTICES ON CONTRASTING ANTISEMITISM

- **New strategy for contrasting antisemitism**

At its meeting on February 19th, 2025, the Italian Council of Ministers was informed of the update to the "National Strategy for the Contrast of Antisemitism." The document was redated and finalized by a Technical Working Group chaired by the National Coordinator for the Contrast of Antisemitism, Colonel Pasquale Angelosanto, and comprised of representatives of the Prime Minister's Office and the relevant Ministries, Jewish associations (UCEI, UGEI, **CDEC**, IHRA), and academia. The proposed strategy "aims to contrast antisemitism by combining various actions. First, it states, the goal is to proceed with research and data collection and analysis 'to outline the current situation and its drivers, keep it constantly updated for policymakers, integrate it, and communicate it.' Then, the goal is to address training 'in schools at all levels, in universities, and in the field of sport and the workplace.' Furthermore, it aims to enhance the culture of remembrance 'through the identification of significant paths and commemorations' and to strengthen the protection of Jewish communities in their various expressions 'of life and worship,' finally paying 'maximum attention to the digital spaces, involving other states, the European Commission, major operators, and the institutions that ensure monitoring and training.' Finally, 'The issue of security is central to the roadmap of the new strategy.'⁹¹.

- **Creation of a fund devoted to "Remembrance trips"**

On 27 February 2025, the Chamber of Deputies unanimously approved Law No. 46 amending the law on Remembrance Day (No. 211/2000), which establishes a fund dedicated to 'remembrance trips' to Nazi concentration camps for secondary school students. The fund, established by the Ministry of Education and Merit, provides for an allocation of €2 million for each of the years 2025, 2026 and 2027. The aim is to promote and encourage. The objective is to promote and encourage, while respecting school autonomy, "initiatives that foster historical knowledge and civic awareness among the younger generations, so that they understand the suffering inflicted on the Jewish people and those deported to Nazi camps during the Holocaust."⁹²

⁹¹

<https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/articoli/roma-presentata-al-governo-la-nuova-strategia-per-la-lotta-contro-lantisemitismo-sviluppata-sotto-la-guida-del-coordinatore-nazionale-per-il-contrasto-a-llodio-antiebraico-il-genera/>. The full text is available at <https://www.governo.it/it/dipartimenti/coordinatore-nazionale-la-lotta-contro-lantisemitismo/27719>.

⁹² [La Camera ha approvato all'unanimità la proposta di legge che istituisce un fondo dedicato ai "viaggi della memoria" - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

- **Revoking of Benito Mussolini's Honorary Citizenship**

Approved: Salò (Brescia): One of the most symbolically well-known revocations, approved by the City Council in February 2025, almost 100 years after the original grant (1924); Casalecchio di Reno (Bologna); the municipality on the outskirts of Bologna also revoked the honorary citizenship, with a vote of the City Council during 2025; Ozzano dell'Emilia (Bologna): The City Council approved the revocation at its meeting on April 24, 2025, with a favorable vote also linked to a symbolic gesture of conferring citizenship on Matteotti; San Clemente di Rimini: Revocation of honorary citizenship and honorary conferral of citizenship on Giacomo Matteotti decided by the City Council in April 2025; Anzio (Rome): The coastal municipality of Anzio voted to revoke Mussolini's honorary citizenship on May 27, 2025; San Giovanni Rotondo (Foggia): The City Council revoked Mussolini's honor after more than a century, in June 2025; Paliano (Frosinone): The Municipality of Paliano also voted to revoke it in 2025, arguing that Mussolini was incompatible with constitutional values.

Rejected proposals: In Cinisello Balsamo, a proposal for revocation was presented, but the Council rejected it (December 2025). San Benedetto del Tronto rejected the revocation in the Council.

- **A memorandum of understanding has been signed between the National Coordinator for Combatting Antisemitism and Eurispes for research on antisemitism in Italy**

On April 16, 2025, a memorandum of understanding was signed at Palazzo Chigi between the National Coordinator for Combatting Antisemitism and the Eurispes Institute. "Among the objectives of the agreement is to strengthen the collaborative relationship between the National Coordinator and Eurispes, in order to facilitate the acquisition, exchange, and analysis of information relating to the phenomena of mutual interest, the promotion of cultural, educational, and publishing activities, and mutual participation in thematic in-depth meetings, such as conferences and seminars."⁹³

- **Lazio and Maccabi sign agreement to promote campaigns against hatred and racial discrimination**

In May 2025, Lazio and the educational organization Maccabi Israel signed an agreement that provides for "technical and social collaboration on the one hand, and the promotion of campaigns against hatred and racial discrimination on the other."⁹⁴

⁹³ [Roma, firmato a Palazzo Chigi un protocollo d'intesa tra il Cons. Pasquale Angelosanto, Coordinatore nazionale per la lotta contro l'antisemitismo, e il Prof. Gian Maria Fara, Presidente dell'Eurispes.](#)

⁹⁴ See [Lazio e Maccabi firmano accordo per la promozione di campagne contro l'odio e la discriminazione razziale - Osservatorio Antisemitismo.](#)

- **UCEI Educational tools on "History, Culture, and Life of Jews in Italy" and the GLI EBERI QUESTI (S)CONOSCIUTI platform**

The Union of Italian Jewish Communities released an educational package aimed at students of the first three years of secondary schools. The material is aimed at raising awareness of the history, culture, and life of the Jews in Italy and, by actively engaging students in the educational process, empower them to become promoters of this heritage. The educational tools consist of two parts: a) an online course; b) two proposed School-to-Work training programs.

- The GLI EBERI QUESTI (S)CONOSCIUTI platform offers reliable, accessible, and stimulating tools for:
- learning about the history, culture, and life of the Jews, with a specific focus on Italy;
- understanding the specificity of Judaism in its multiple, diverse, and complex forms;
- recognizing the Jewish contribution as an integral part of Europe's cultural heritage;
- Develop a critical eye toward prejudices, stereotypes, and entrenched hostile attitudes.

It is aimed at students, teachers and trainers, cultural communicators and professionals, and anyone curious about the Jewish world. It offers an asynchronous, multimedia, and interactive online course, with texts, images, videos, and activities designed to stimulate curiosity, independent reflection, and critical thinking.⁹⁵

- **Judicial cases**

Writer and pro-Palestinian activist Cecilia Parodi was sentenced⁹⁶ to one year and six months in prison for posting an explicitly antisemitic video on her Instagram account that spread hatred and racism. The sentence carries a one-year and six-month sentence, already reduced by a third due to the expedited trial. The charge not only concerns defamation, but also propaganda of hatred on racial, ethnic, and religious grounds. In addition to the prison sentence, Parodi was ordered to pay €10,000 in damages to Liliana Segre, €5,000 to the International Jewish Lawyers and Jurists Association, and €5,000 to the Union of Italian Jewish Communities.

⁹⁵ Visit the website <https://www.italia.dejaproject.com/deja/>.

⁹⁶ LA SENTENZA - Propaganda all'odio razziale, condannata Cecilia Parodi <https://moked.it/blog/2025/10/13/la-sentenza-propaganda-allodio-razziale-condannata-cecilia-parodi/>

In March 2022, UCEI filed a complaint against V.S., curator of the antisemitic blog "Influential Jews in Italy," in April 2025, the Milan Court ordered V.S., to pay €400 in damages to the UCEI, having since repented.

The Civil Court of Rome, in a sentence published on July 30th, 2024, issued a precautionary order requiring the removal and prohibition of publication of messages posted on social media by Mr. Gabriele Rubini, alias "Chef Rubio." The Court held, as a matter of urgency, that the messages posted on social media by Mr. Rubini constitute "statements capable of spreading antisemitic prejudice, which, as a whole, undermine the dignity and reputation of the Jewish community and, as such, are defamatory," constituting "incitement to hatred ('hate speech'), as they are intentionally aimed at inciting intolerance towards individuals, persons, and groups, offending their dignity, to the point of posing a threat to their safety." The court orders Rubini to pay €4,000 to UCEI for legal fees.⁹⁷

In January 2025, Gabriele Rubini, "Chef Rubio," was also ordered by the Rome court to pay €30,000 in damages,⁹⁸ plus legal fees, for publishing a series of antisemitic posts. The legal action was brought by "Solomon – Observatory on Discrimination" and the Union of Italian Jewish Youth (UGEI).

The press has reported on numerous legal actions brought by Senator Liliana Segre against online "haters" who made serious antisemitic offences against her, which led to convictions and compensation for damages donated to charitable institutions.

The Association of Jewish Lawyers (AGE) has taken on the task, in agreement with the UCEI, of coordinating and promoting complaints and legal action against the perpetrators of acts of antisemitism both online and offline.

In addition to the work carried out in Italy by the CDEC Foundation, UCEI, UNAR, and other bodies/organizations for data collection, training, and combating antisemitism and other forms of hatred, there are several European networks working towards the same goal. In particular, Facing Facts, ENMA (European Network on Monitoring Antisemitism), ENCATE (*European Network for Combating Antisemitism Through Education*) ed EPNA (*European Practitioners Network Against Antisemitism*) offer numerous benefits in the fight against antisemitism, such as:

- Training and awareness-raising: All networks provide training to teachers and educators to raise awareness about antisemitism and its manifestations.

⁹⁷ Tribunale di Roma R.G 21966/2024 – G.D. Di Tullio Ordinanza 27 luglio 2024.

⁹⁸ Influencer antisemita condannato a pagare un risarcimento per i suoi post contro gli ebrei <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/articoli/influencer-antisemita-condannato-a-pagare-una-multa-per-i-suoi-post-contro-gli-ebrei/?hilite=influencer+antisemita+condannato>

- Educational resources: They offer teaching materials and resources to facilitate teaching about Jewish history and culture, helping to combat stereotypes and prejudices.

- Support network: They create a network of collaboration between organizations working to combat anti-Semitism in order to share best practices and effective strategies for addressing it.

- Monitoring and research: They promote the collection of data and research on antisemitism, providing a clear picture of the current situation and enabling targeted interventions.

- Promoting tolerance: They foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, helping to build more inclusive and respectful communities.

- Advocacy and policy: They work with institutions to influence public policies that address antisemitism and promote human rights.



ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS AND RHETORIC IN ITALY: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

Sergio Della Pergola

Professor Emeritus

The Avraham Hartman Institute of Contemporary Jewry (ICJ)

Hebrew University

The Annual Report edited by the CDEC Foundation's Observatory on Antisemitism on Antisemitic incidents and rhetoric in Italy – January-December 2025 clearly confirms that October 7th, 2023 – the date of Hamas' attack on the State of Israel – represents a historic watershed, not only in the events of the Middle East conflict, but also in the history of the Jewish people, and in a certain sense also in Western civilization, which is home to most of the world's Jewish population. The incidents of anti-Jewish hostility recorded in Italy in 2025 indicate an upward trend, with a total of 963 incidents of antisemitism, compared to 877 in 2024 and 455 in 2023. The most frequent form of hostile incidents and rhetoric registered in CDEC's Report concerns the State of Israel (66.8% in 2025, in addition to 27% of hatred that cannot be clearly labeled but is an expression of Christian and Islamic influences together with conspiracy theories and antisemitism attributable – once again – to Israel). In contemporary experience of Jews as a people – it should be emphasized – Israel is not only one of the main players in the political and media events of the last two years, but it is also a sensitive point of reference in defining the personal Jewish identity of a high percentage of Jews in Italy and around the world. The defamation of Israel directly affects the vast majority of Jews, with the exception of a few minority and sometimes complex caveats.

On October 7, 2023, thousands of armed militants from Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other Islamic terrorist groups, supported by numerous Gazan civilians, carried out a brutal massacre in the area of Israel bordering the Gaza Strip, popularly known in Hebrew as 'Otef 'Aza (the envelope, i.e., the surrounding area of Gaza). Over the course of ten hours, approximately 1,200 people were killed, the vast majority of whom were civilians; over 250 people were taken as hostage to Gaza, some already murdered and some still alive; and a large number of crimes were committed against the permanent inhabitants of the area and against a large group of people who were participating in a popular song and dance festival – the Nova Festival – in the adjacent area. The terrorists committed a large number of crimes, including rape, dismemberment of bodies, burning of homes and cars filled with people fleeing, machine-gunning entire families sitting on their sofas at home, and, in effect, destroying entire villages.

Following these events, one might have expected international public opinion to show at least a momentary surge of solidarity with Israel and its population. One might

also have expected an increase in hostility towards Israel after the military retaliation following the Hamas attack, which caused the armed gangs and civilian population of Gaza a number of casualties and physical damage that was far more than proportional to the damage suffered by Israel. Instead, there was an immediate increase in demonstrations explicitly hostile towards Israel and, immediately afterwards, towards Jewish communities, regardless of location or direct involvement. As Asher Colombo and his colleagues pointed out in their research carried out for the Carlo Cattaneo Institute in Bologna,⁹⁹ this increased hostility occurred even before the harsh military retaliation launched by the Israeli armed forces in the Gaza region.

The fact that anti-Israel and anti-Jewish reactions preceded military retaliation raises a series of questions that go far beyond a simple analysis of the data. The timing of these critical reactions toward Israel, and their repercussions on Jewish communities in the Diaspora, are a salient symptom in the analysis of antisemitic phenomena in recent years. It is not only legitimate but necessary to analyze these developments within the framework of a broader examination of antisemitism in Italy and elsewhere.

However, it would be wrong to limit the analysis of the phenomenon of "antisemitism" to immediate observations and local events. Instead, it is essential to try to understand it over the long term, and also in terms of its future projections. When a draft version of CDEC's Report already existed, on December 14, 2025, two armed men murdered 15 Jews who had gathered for the lighting of Hanukkah candles on Bondi Beach, an affluent neighborhood of Sydney where many thousands of Jewish families reside. The perpetrators were two men born in India, immigrants to Australia, and affiliated with ISIS, the Sunni organization that aspires to create a global Islamic caliphate. The Bondi Beach massacre did not fail to stir up reactions among the Italian public, and included ambiguous, if not openly antisemitic, implications that are promptly documented in this Report.

The information presented in CDEC's Report must therefore be viewed within the broader context of antisemitism in Italy and around the world. At present, it must be clearly stated that the entire debate is extremely unsatisfactory, both in terms of scientific research and in its political and social implications. It is necessary to re-examine the entire scope of reference of so-called antisemitism, its definitions, its various facets, the different possible research strategies, the means of transmission, the perpetrators, and their accomplices. In everyday life, we witness a grand concert, sometimes with a precise division of labor among the various actors, sometimes unconsciously with respect to one another, in a creation of powerful collective cacophony. Various parallel forms of antisemitism contribute to a more general

⁹⁹ <https://www.cattaneo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2023-11-20-Antisemitismo.pdf>.

syndrome, in the face of which Jews—the offended party—sometimes react, sometimes remain silent in astonishment.

Semantic premises

When discussing contemporary antisemitism, it is first necessary to clarify certain terms that are frequently used in public debate, both scientific and media-related. In recent times, the competition for control of semantics has become one of the most effective tools in the struggle for hegemony over the narrative of the present. The contamination of semantics is now an integral part of the phenomenology we are dealing with here. The use of three words in particular needs to be examined critically: *antisemitism*, *genocide*, and *Holocaust*.

Antisemitism

First of all, it is astonishing and unacceptable that the word antisemitism continues to be used in serious literature. Contrary to its frequent everyday use, this term is not at all a collective descriptor (such as Buddhism or cycling) nor is it a more specialized socio-psychological term (such as exorcism or fetishism). In the minds of Wilhelm Marr and others who first coined it in the last quarter of the 19th century, however, it was an agitator and offensive term. The background of its coining was that of the *League of Antisemites*, therefore an operational, not an analytical, aim. The target of the attack was not Semites in general, but Jews: Jews, let's be clear, as inferior, repugnant, and dangerous beings to be marginalized and suppressed. The sociocultural significance of the chosen negative term could be equated, for example, with anti-pigism, which would be a more decisive and less cryptically offensive word. Due to its certain crudeness, it is uncertain what the fate of the term anti-pigism would have been in historiography and the social sciences if it had been preferred to antisemitism.

Antisemitism, precisely in its appearance as an elegant euphemism, has instead stood the test of time well and has been elevated to the rank of a dignified, clean analytical term. But it is clear that the most appropriate word to summarize the syndrome would be *anti-Jewishness*, because that is what it is. An alternative term would be *Judeophobia*, which is sometimes used, or better still, *Hebreophobia*, as the counterpart to *Islamophobia*. However, the suffix *phobia*, in the sense of pathological fear, is limiting in relation to the complexity of the phenomenon in question. No one, after all, dares to speak of antisemitism when the attack is directed against Arabs or Muslims; it is only mentioned when Jews are involved.

Genocide

The accusation that Israel has committed genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza has become one of the central points of reference in contemporary critical debate and ranks high among incidents of antisemitism. However, it is essential to critically examine whether this accusation is applicable and relevant in this case. Beyond the somewhat reticent, dry, and limited existing legal definitions of the concept, such as that of Raphael Lemkin in 1944, in order to identify the crime of genocide, three essential elements must be identified:

- a grand theoretical plan for the total destruction of the opposing party, consisting of an entire ethnic-religious group. An example of this kind, directed against Jews both as individuals and as a collective, is Adolf Hitler's speech to the Reichstag on January 30, 1939. Article 7 of Hamas's 1988 charter closely follows the logical and rhetorical structure of Hitler's speech, with its references to Jewish conspiracy, blame for the outbreak of world war, and threats of total extermination of the Jews as such. On the Israeli side, however, there is no equivalent document targeting the entire Palestinian people. If anything, there is a determination to destroy the armed wing of Hamas and its supporters – therefore, in theory, only a small part of the whole;
- a detailed operational plan, like the one drawn up by the Nazi regime at the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942, with the aim of a final solution to the Jewish question. Similarly, the plans drawn up by Hamas in the years prior to October 7 (and recovered, but misunderstood, by Israeli intelligence well before that date) specify exactly how to destroy the state of Israel step by step;
- extensive participation by civilian volunteers, backed by substantial capital and logistical resources, and, if possible, supported by a massive political and media campaign by the leadership, flanked by other countries directly or indirectly involved in the conflict. Here too, there is a clear parallel between the mobilization of the Nazi regime during World War II and the Islamic alliance inspired by Iran and extended to Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, and supporting forces in Syria and Iraq, and partly Qatar during the last conflict.

Holocaust

The term *Holocaust* semantically means a voluntary ritual offering intended to satisfy the deity and therefore seems entirely inappropriate in the context of the destruction of the Jewish people during World War II. The situation must be defined from the perspective of the direct victims and not that of outside observers. Instead, it is imperative to use the Hebrew word *Shoah* = tragic total destruction. There has also been an attempt to equate the term *Naqba* – the tragic defeat and exodus of the

Palestinians in the 1948-49 war – as a symmetrical counterpart to the *Shoah*. With all due respect for the human suffering and injustices endured by the victims, this is clearly a stretch. The uprooting of millions of Greeks and Turks after World War I, of Poles, Germans, and Italians from Istria and Dalmatia, and of Jews living in Muslim countries after World War II, however forced and painful, has never been described as a *Naqba*. We are faced with an attempt to distort the cause and logic of events and to impose a specific political narrative in place of an objective historiographical analysis.

Definitions of antisemitism

An inevitable question at this point is: what is antisemitism? How do we define it? How do we recognize it? How do we categorize it? How do we quantify it? How do we analyze it?

There have been numerous attempts, reasonable and well-intentioned, to reach a consensus on this issue, but it is fair to say that they have all failed. This is partly due to the great complexity of the issue, but to a greater extent the problem lies in defining who is the authoritative source for issuing such a definition – much like the question of what the authentic and pristine sources of sovereignty and law are. In an ideological arena steeped in deep political pollution, control over the very definition of antisemitism has become an integral part of the conflict. It is therefore useful to review several definitions that have been proposed in recent years.

The best-known definition, though not the first, which is "non legally binding" and is now fiercely contested in some spaces, is the one adopted on May 26, 2016, in Bucharest by the Plenary of the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance):

"Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

Probably better than this rather anemic prose, the rest of the document clarifies that:

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

The IHRA definition exemplifies eleven forms of harassment, assault, delegitimization, and other patterns of negative attitudes or behavior directed against Jews as individuals or as a collective:

- One example directly concerns the destruction of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

- Two examples concern excessive Jewish power.

- Two examples concern the concepts of denial or trivialization of the Shoah.

- Six examples concern the delegitimization of Israel.

In regard to the IHRA definition, it is interesting to note that several earlier research efforts also outlined typologies intended to define antisemitism. The European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) conducted three surveys on Jews' perceptions of discrimination and antisemitism. These studies collected responses from 5,663 participants in 9 EU countries in 2012, 16,395 participants in 12 countries in 2018, and 7,992 participants in 13 countries in 2023.

In the 2012 FRA questionnaire, for example, eight hostile statements potentially originating from non-Jewish people and frequently heard were presented to Jewish participants for evaluation to assess their antisemitic connotations. Of these:

- two items referred to excessive Jewish power.

- two items referred to the concepts of Jewish alienation from the rest of society.

- two items referred to the concepts of denial or trivialization of the Shoah.

- two items referred to the concepts of delegitimization of Israel.

In addition to it, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an American organization dedicated to protecting the interests of Jewish communities, conducted studies in 2013-14 and 2015 on antisemitic perceptions among the total populations of 102 countries, for a total of 50,000 respondents. These surveys were less balanced with regard to the content of anti-Jewish perceptions. Part of the effort was wasted by asking somewhat repetitive questions. The (non-Jewish) audience was asked to evaluate eleven statements that were inherently biased against Jews:

- Six questions indicate excessive Jewish power in society.

- Three questions concerned the concepts of Jewish detachment from mainstream society.

- One question referred to the concepts of Holocaust denial or minimization.

- One question on dual loyalty combines the delegitimization of Israel with the concept of detachment.

In the ADL data analysis, antisemitism was operationally defined as the percentage of individuals in a country who responded positively to at least six of the eleven questions. The study revealed less antisemitism in North America than in Latin America, and less in Western Europe than in Eastern Europe. In Southeast Asia—in South Korea, Japan, and China—where societies have not been historically exposed to Christian and Muslim thought, classic antisemitism was found to be relatively low. Antisemitism was found to be most widespread in Muslim countries.

The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, drafted in 2020 by the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem, briefly defines antisemitism as discrimination, prejudice, hostility, or violence against Jews because *they are Jews* (or against Jewish institutions because *they are Jewish*), and proposes ten indicators of what constitutes antisemitism. Of these:

- one concerns the destruction of Jews.
- three concern the excessive power or detachment of Jews from society.
- one concerns negative attitudes toward the Shoah.
- five concern the delegitimization of Israel.

Other definitions, such as the one called Nexus, drafted at Bard College in 2019, that of Rabbis for Human Rights-North America - T'ruah in 2022, or that proposed by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) in 2024 essentially reflect a synthesis of the principles of the IHRA and the JDA, but T'ruah adds:

In essence, antisemitism sees Jews as a harmful and corrupting presence in society. This hatred originated in ancient times as "anti-Judaism" and has evolved into a modern political ideology that confuses race and religion and sometimes takes the form of conspiracy theories. Antisemitism draws on a pool of stories and tropes about Jews that are brought to the surface at different times, in different places, by different people, for different reasons, and with different impacts.

We also note that in all these lists of items, almost without exception, the themes evoked belong to the cognitive or behavioral domain, i.e., they refer to

definitions of a given opinion or situation that is a priori deviant from an ideal normative paradigm of what an exemplary person or community is supposed to do or be. No aspects relating to the affective domain were included in these indicators of antisemitism. Furthermore, none of the examples mentioned took into consideration explicitly mentioning the possibility of Christian or Islamic sources of anti-Jewish prejudice.

The JDA definition stands out from all the others because, in addition to presenting manifestations of antisemitism, it proposes five manifestations of what is not antisemitism. All five relate to Israel, none to the Shoah or Jews in general:

- supporting Palestinian demands for justice and human rights.
- criticizing or opposing Zionism as a form of nationalism.
- criticizing Israel as a state, including its institutions and founding principles.
- boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel.
- criticism of Israel that could in any way appear excessive or biased or reflect a "double standard."

Some of the examples proposed by the JDA—aside from the paternalism of those who presume to suggest a standardized way of thinking to people who should be capable of forming their own independent judgments—are highly problematic and contradictory. To argue that it is not antisemitic to oppose the existence of Israel as a state, including its institutions and founding principles, contrasts with the prevailing view among 88% of European Jews that it is antisemitic to say that "the world would be a better place without Israel." The JDA's assertion that BDS is not antisemitic contradicts the empirical reality of contemporary Jewish perceptions, where 82% of European Jews rated the boycott of Israel and Israelis as antisemitic. Nor can it be acceptable to downplay the double standards in political and media discourse – for example, on the conflict involving Israel compared to other conflicts.

In this context, one might also want to reexamine the JDA's assertion that antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice, hostility, or violence against Jews as Jews (or against Jewish institutions as *Jewish*, and one might add: against Israel as a *Jewish State*). Whether or not the criticism is directed at the Jewishness of the Jew (or the Jewish state) and not simply at the Jew (or Israel) as such, the result is quite certain: many of the people in question feel personally offended. For most ordinary Jews, a Jew is a Jew and does not need to be a Jewish Jew.

As paradoxical as it may seem, the JDA definition of antisemitism, in the eyes of the vast majority of Jewish observers, includes elements that are perceived as

antisemitic. The division and rivalry between supporters of the IHRA and the JDA, even in academia, closely resembles fanaticism and has nothing to do with a calm, analytical and in-depth examination of the respective merits and shortcomings of the two definitions, considering the experiences of a real Jewish folk.

Source of data and method of analysis

CDEC has been playing a fundamental role in documenting contemporary Jewish life for many years, with a particular focus on negative phenomena such as hostility or violence towards Jews, especially in Italy. Founded in the aftermath of Shoah with the aim of documenting what had happened in order to better understand it, the natural premise is to try to prevent it from happening again. The fight against antisemitism is a natural preventive antidote, necessary even if not sufficient in itself. Documenting, understanding, preventing, and contrasting are therefore necessarily linked and inseparable elements.

However, an important issue concerns the sources of available data and the main research methodologies used in recent studies on antisemitism. There are numerous tools available, each with different purposes, research targets, and conceptual innovations—each with obvious advantages and disadvantages. It is therefore useful to quickly review the main alternatives.

Firstly, we note that this Report follows one of several possible approaches: it focuses on the recording of events classified or classifiable a priori – on the basis of criteria to be specified – as antisemitic, as violence or harassment suffered personally as Jews, against other Jews, or against objects of Jewish interest – reported by Jews and/or others. During 2025, the Observatory on Antisemitism analyzed 13,650 documents. Of these, 963 were considered particularly significant facts or events. This methodology, and the databases it has created, is certainly respectable, even if the 7% of cases considered offensive compared to the total micro-information collected in the field may seem low and requires more detailed contextualization.

In any case, the inventory strategy has also been followed by other research groups led by academic centres, Jewish organizations, and public bodies in many countries, including France and Germany. However, in addition to not being the only one, this methodology is not necessarily the most profitable in terms of the quantity and quality of the information collected and the relevance of the conclusions that can be reached. The 963 incidents selected for in-depth analysis out of a population of 60 million Italians risk giving an image of relative marginality of antisemitism in the country. However, the dynamics of the phenomenon are captured accurately and

realistically by the careful and daily work of the Observatory and cannot fail to arouse concern—along with a certain degree of indignation.

With the aim of setting a broader context, as mentioned above, one possible alternative could be studies on Jews' perceptions of antisemitism, such as those carried out by FRA in Europe. The aim here is to obtain a large sample representative of the Jewish population, which is not always easy, especially when there are no centralized archives of organized community members, and in any case, it is necessary not to omit those who are not members of a community or a recognized organization. We must bear in mind that these sources exist selectively and differently for different European countries, both because different states have different rules regarding the collection of census data on religious or ethnic groups, and because the organizational structure of Jewish communities in different countries is very different and can vary from highly centralized (as in Italy) to widely dispersed (as in France). This constitutes a limitation to the homogeneity of data. In the conclusions of the FRA research, however, the basic demographic profiles of the respondents were found to be largely compatible with those known from other independent sources, which added reliability to the sample studied. In addition to detailed insights into Jewish perceptions and experiences of discrimination and antisemitism, these analyses also gathered important data on the socio-demographic profile of the interviewees, thus allowing us to understand the correlation between people's sensitivities and their individual characteristics.

Another stream of research may concern general public opinion, using representative samples of a country's total population. In Europe, several studies on antisemitic prejudice have been conducted by Eurobarometer as well as by various other public opinion research institutes. It is possible to compare the results obtained for the general population of a country with the perceptions of the Jewish population of the same country. The level of correspondence between the two points of view is fairly consistent. In fact, there appears to be an inverse correlation between the intensity of Jewish perceptions of the spread of antisemitism and non-Jewish perceptions of the danger of the phenomenon.

One aspect lacking in the research is studies that incorporate a systematic and dynamic temporal perspective on the perception of phenomena. This can be achieved through successive surveys, i.e., by periodically re-interviewing the same people and noting changes in their responses to the same questions. In addition, a wide range of external social indicators should be collected and combined with individual responses in order to provide the necessary context for the specific attitudinal and behavioral patterns under investigation. An integrative approach needs to be developed in order to ascertain whether manifestations of antisemitism reflect a permanent structure of manifest and/or latent content, replicable in different circumstances, or rather reflect contingent temporal variations linked to specific moments and places.

Explored to a lesser extent, but of essential importance, has been the *study of the content of discourse*, mainly on Jews or Israel. First, this would involve analyzing print, electronic, and digital media. In addition, a wealth of information can be obtained through various possible channels of dissemination, such as an even greater volume of email, websites, social networks, and the like. Careful selection of semantic associations within verbal or written expressions can reveal to the expert whether there is overt or subtle hostility towards Jews, their social structures, or even their aspirations. The analysis of a specific news item, not necessarily one that occurred locally, can provide important insights into the type of interpretation given not only to the event itself, but to its entire Jewish context, whether direct or indirect.

The sequence of different words can provoke mental associations with antisemitic content. The effects of mass media, whether print, electronic, or digital, on public opinion are undoubtedly much more widespread, powerful, and disruptive than the usually locally limited effect of acts of violence and vandalism. The problem is that the latter are easy to identify and report, while the former require careful coding and a broad mastery of historical, philosophical, and literary sources. It is clear, however, that the impact of a widely circulated newspaper or a national television news program can reach many millions of people and influence large segments of public opinion. The more repetitive the media action, the greater its profound effect on a given society.

In this regard, a very limited initial survey of the Italian daily press, carried out in September and October 2025, revealed some disturbing points for reflection. A comparison between the space devoted to events in the Gaza-Israel conflict and that devoted to the Russia-Ukraine conflict revealed that coverage of the former was on average four times greater, but on some days and in some media outlets it was eight or ten times greater. It is fair to ask whether this enormous disproportion reveals an objective difference in the importance and relevance of the various conflicts for Italian readers. Or whether it is rather an editorial choice dictated by the desire to focus the public's attention on one issue and divert it from another. Apparently, the geographical proximity and economic and political implications of a conflict taking place on European soil, on the border of the European Union of which Italy is a member – rather than in the Middle East, which is geographically more distant and does not directly border Europe – should attract greater attention.

During the days examined, the press focused in particular on a flotilla of boats heading to Gaza with the stated aim (but, given the scarcity of resources employed, not feasible in practice) of bringing humanitarian aid to the local population. Much less attention was paid to the launch of drones of unidentified origin that interfered with civil aviation at several European airports. The Italian press apparently chose to express emotional identification and moral support for the civilian population of Gaza—a place outside Europe. And this at a time when conflicts between different European states over the political-military strategy to be followed were shaking the

very foundations of the European Union—an institution fundamental to the essence of Italian identity, democracy, and economy.

As mentioned, different sources can each provide a classification of the various levels of intensity of antisemitic phenomena, but what is most interesting is whether or not there is consistency between these different sources.

A single or several manifestations of antisemitism?

One of the recurring issues in the study of antisemitism is related to the superficiality of data analysis, which is generally limited to simple distributions of the percentage frequencies of the different categories investigated, or, at most, to double-entry tables that relate only two variables. The description of the data collected is usually insufficient to generate a more complex reference to theories or processes that require the simultaneous processing of vastly greater amounts of information. In this sense, the main way of thinking found in the literature is causal inference, in which a given aspect is set as a dependent variable, and one or more explanatory variables are proposed in order to verify the suitability and explanatory power of a hypothesized model relevant to the study of antisemitism.

However, there are more complex methodologies capable of exploring the interrelationships that exist simultaneously between a large number of variables, rather than explaining them one at a time. The simultaneous study of many variables starts from the observation of the co-variation existing between all the variables included in a given analysis, in the sense of their mutual proximity or opposition. Emerging configurations help to better evaluate the overall content—both overt and latent—of the deep structure of a phenomenon through the simultaneous analysis of a large number of variables and a mapping of the whole and its internal logical partitions. The essential results of these procedures are reported below.

Studies conducted on large samples of many thousands of Jews in European Union countries have revealed a strong pattern based on the perceptions of the people interviewed. What emerges is that, rather than a generic antisemitism, there are *different forms of antisemitic strategies* whose perpetrators often have nothing to do with each other. Each type specializes in a particular form of offense that targets different aspects of the sensitivity of the object of the offense—the Jewish population. But these different hostile voices create a choral effect—no matter how cacophonous and contradictory—that represents the real public effect of phenomenology. These are the four major emerging manifestations in the experience of European Jews:

- Practical antisemitism: acts of physical aggression against people in the streets and other public spaces, vandalism of public buildings or institutions,

desecration of Jewish cemeteries. These expressions of violence are perceived as coming particularly from Islam-related circles.

- Populist antisemitism: spontaneous, popular expressions of defamation characterized by a lack of analytical depth, spread through social networks, graffiti, social gatherings, public spaces, and sports stadiums. The content of such expressions tends to be predominantly hostile toward Jews as such, who are perceived as foreign bodies, enemies, and conspirators within the majority society. Another aspect concerns the denial or minimization of the Shoah and antisemitism. The perpetrators mainly come from the political right and Christian circles.

- Political antisemitism: public demonstrations reflecting political interests and power struggles, events, speeches, and discussions of a political nature. These cut across all political formations and are united by elements of hostility that reflect different ideological backgrounds.

- Discursive antisemitism: analytical and investigative expressions in print, electronic, and digital media, in academia, and at cultural events. These focus on negative discourse toward Israel and are perceived as coming from left-wing political circles.

One of the most recurring aspects of these manifestations is the perceived centrality of the internet in the propagation of a wide variety of content. In reality, the technical tool has no personality of its own and is available for the transmission of all kinds of content, both positive and negative. However, in the perception of large sections of the Jewish public, the internet is seen as the real culprit behind the documented increase in offensive acts. Social networks act as multipliers of local stimuli. An event that in the past would have remained limited and confined to the local area is now instantly communicated to the whole world. The perception then becomes as if the event had taken place locally. The stimuli accumulate and generate an echo and saturation effect.

In this sense, CDEC's Report makes an important contribution, especially in identifying and understanding *practical antisemitism*. This is the most visible type and constitutes the primary source to be identified, quantified, classified, and analyzed. Furthermore, it is always advisable to pursue documentation efforts through complementary tools in order to combat the persistent, insidious, dangerous, and lethal evil of antisemitism.

How antisemitism works

In 2025, Jews constitute less than 2 out of 1000 of the world's population, but excluding the high concentration in Israel, they represent only 1 out of 1000 of the world's population outside Israel, and if the United States is also excluded, 0.3 out of 1000 (in Italy, 0.46 per 1,000 in 2025). However, this tiny group is the subject of an exorbitant amount of attention and sometimes hostility from different and ever-changing ideological and cultural backgrounds. To better understand the terms of the problem, it is necessary to briefly reconstruct and redefine its essential elements.

Antisemitism is perceived by Jews as a worldview, a set of actions, and ultimately a multifaceted but coherent project aimed at achieving one or more of three main objectives:

- physical violence and annihilation of Jews;
- exclusion and marginalization of Jews from civil, social, economic, and cultural life;
- deterioration of the quality of Jewish private life, causing fear, frustration, and anxiety.

Of these three objectives, the first two have been actively pursued throughout history, with varying degrees of success and often with broad popular support. The events of October 7th, 2023, and the period that followed demonstrate how the genocidal impulse against Jews is very much alive and present in the ideology and practices of certain governments and parastatal organizations, today mainly inspired by Islamic fundamentalism. The massacre at Bondi Beach in Sydney on December 14th, 2025 confirms this widespread perception. Today, for the most part, these objectives are not legitimate under the law and practice of most democratic countries, with the important exception of threats of annihilation directed at the State of Israel and its Jewish population, as well as Jews around the world in general, by the Iranian government and its supporters in the Middle East and elsewhere. Therefore, in reality, it is the third objective, the one that is more widespread and of greater relevance in the perception of contemporary antisemitism in everyday life.

To truly understand antisemitism, it is essential to explore all possible modes of human perception: cognitive, experiential, and affective. Consequently, its most significant manifestations are as follows:

- 1) depicting Jews in a derogatory manner in the cognitive/intellectual sphere;
- 2) acting towards Jews with coercion and isolating them from other individuals or groups in order to cause harm or inferiority in the behavioral/experiential sphere;

3) causing Jews mental stress, pain, and uncertainty in the affective/emotional sphere.

A serious limitation of the discourse on contemporary antisemitism is the widespread failure to distinguish between cognitive and experiential modes of perception. Analysis of existing survey data clearly shows that the public has an indisputable ability, or at least intuition, to distinguish between these different spheres of perception. As for the affective mode, it has been virtually ignored in recent research. However, the latest research allows us to clearly outline three fundamental axes of aggression in which Jews are denied:

1. as individuals – the right to enjoy civil, social, cultural, and political equality like any other individual in the society in which we live;

2. as a potential victim and survivor of planned extermination – the right to preserve and transmit his authentic memory of the destruction of their people through the Shoah;

3. as a member of a national community – the right to exercise political sovereignty through an independent state, Israel.

Antisemitism, or rather anti-Jewish hatred, is the denial of one or more of these three essential reference points—civil equality, authentic remembrance, and political sovereignty—which are also three existential rights that are inalienable and non-negotiable for contemporary Jews.

Our definition of antisemitism is not fundamentally far from the conclusions we reached in listing the different approaches proposed by the various working groups that have attempted to define antisemitism. At the center of the decision-making process regarding the definition and extent of defamation, we place, and it can only be placed, the offended party, namely the Jews, and no one else. Today, however, this role is usually performed in good faith by external judges who, from their ivory tower, pass judgment based on their knowledge or social relations, or even, in bad faith, by the perpetrators themselves.

To better understand the nature of antisemitism and its perverse consequences, a much broader basis for judgment is needed than the limited opinions of small, select groups of experts—who, while competent, are usually homogeneous in terms of academic background, relational profiles, epistemic assumptions, and even corporate interests. Often, these judges are not directly connected to or even aware of the experiences, perceptions, and concerns that might be present in the Jewish community at large. In current practice, experts tell us: "*We know what antisemitism is. Jews think they know.*" This paternalistic attitude, despite all the good intentions of the experts, cannot replace the people directly affected as victims of antisemitism. The

emotional perceptual reaction is an essential part of what makes antisemitism a salient and unpleasant event in the lives of ordinary Jews, and research cannot ignore this reality.

From an empirical point of view, clearly, the attempt to separate the three components between old antisemitism, centered on personal prejudices and the denial of the Shoah, and a new antisemitism centered on Israel, which according to some is partially excusable, is analytically flawed and hypocritical in public. The overall syndrome is too coherent and interconnected to be split into its components. One can even detect a Pavlovian effect, when one of the components is attacked, and the reaction is perceived in relation to another of the components. For example, attacks on the State of Israel frequently and demonstrably elicit thoughts and emotions that are instinctively akin to those associated with the Shoah.

Antisemitic manifestations aim not only to cause harm or at least offense to the stigmatized minority, but also to fuel a sense of self-righteousness, superiority, and dominance in the mind of the perpetrator, who seeks approval, support, and sometimes reward from a wider audience. The question remains open as to the real cumulative influence of the various components of antisemitic offense in the longer term. In many respects, it has a profound and irreversible impact.

Hindered modernization

Let us take a brief step back. While recognizing the often elusive and camouflaged nature of antisemitic discourse, its core is constantly evolving, as in a process of writing, rewriting, and continuous adaptations and expansions of the same script. The nature of antisemitism is probably intuitively clear to those who experience it, and tends to be denied by those who practice it. A typical defensive reaction is to say, "I can't be antisemitic because I have a Jewish friend/Jewish uncle/I'm Jewish myself." In examining the historical evolution of the phenomenon, I would like to suggest defining this process as *hindered modernization*. I am referring to the database of anti-Jewish concepts that has been growing and accumulating for several millennia, and their use by different people in the course of changing historical, religious, political, and cultural circumstances.

Let us look back at some moments of great innovation, such as the emergence of ancient transnational empires and the inevitable mistrust, if not repugnance, towards foreigners (as in ancient Persia or ancient Rome); the introduction of monotheism; the advent of Christianity, with the myth of deicide, the wandering Jew, and the Passover blood libels; the rise of Islam with its claim of supremacy over other monotheistic faiths; the quest for blood purity, which nullifies the possibility of sincere

religious conversion; the new idea of the nation state, also sometimes based on a claim of divine inspiration; the new concept of class and social struggle, with the opposition between capitalists and proletarians; finally, the independence of Israel, that is, the renewed presence of the Jews as actors of their own destiny, against all doctrine and all probability.

Each of these innovations throughout history has been accompanied by the emergence of new terminology, new conceptual adaptations, and new creative actions hostile to Jews. By definition, each innovation was new at the time of its appearance. Therefore, the frequent distinction between old and new antisemitism makes no sense because in every historical moment there is a new element, and the formerly new is transferred and assimilated into the old, but without ever disappearing.

As a general defining strategy, it would be appropriate to consider the widest possible range of relevant substantive options, classifying them on a scale between antisemitic and non-antisemitic. This would better reflect the elasticity observed in antisemitic tropes, which can vary greatly not only in terms of frequency observed in a population, but also, and perhaps more significantly, in terms of the level of anti-Jewish hostility perceived in each individual statement. At the same time, constructing a definition of antisemitism should pay balanced attention to each of the different main areas of the subject, rather than focusing primarily on one in particular. This requires continuous and systematic monitoring of the possible historical and contemporary ramifications of the trope.

As previously noted, some topics worthy of further study have been omitted from recent major definition efforts, such as the IHRA and the JDA, and from major research projects in recent years, such as the ADL or FRA studies. Among these, the failure to refer to certain clichés that were fundamental in the past, and which are still present at least in a latent form in contemporary discourse, such as the Christian accusation of deicide and the Muslim thesis of Jewish animalistic infidelity. As of lately, among the emerging tropes, there has been a shift from the reference to the non-whiteness of Jews according to old racist theories to their whiteness according to the more recent postcolonial theory and the emergence of the global South. There is also an enlightened commitment to the integrity of the human and animal body expressed through opposition to male circumcision and ritual slaughter of animals – which, coincidentally or not, are all traditional Jewish rituals.

With the creation of new tropes, the previous ones never disappear but accumulate and continue to have their own supporters. Old tropes that seemed to have been superseded by new ones resurface. And so, in contemporary times, and in contexts far removed from their original intent, old theological controversies resurface—such as the contrast between the Jewish God of Vengeance and the Christian God of Love—or ancient myths such as that of the spread of epidemics by

Jews – which reappeared during the last major Covid-19 pandemic – that seemed to have been forgotten forever.

Absurd narratives

Going back to the triggering event of October 7th, 2023, the casual observer notes, and quantitative empirical research confirms, that the number of stimuli perceived or classifiable as antisemitic acts and speech has increased enormously. But this process is part of a trend already noted by FRA studies since 2012, when Jewish respondents in Europe reported that their perceptions of antisemitism had increased by 70-80% compared to the previous five years. In 2018, Jewish respondents repeated the same statement as in 2013, and in 2023, for the third consecutive five-year period, perceptions of antisemitism had again increased by 70-80% compared to 2018. This gives us a more than fivefold increase in the perception of the phenomenon in Europe between 2007 and 2023. Today, after the watershed of October 7, the leap forward is undoubtedly enormously greater.

The biggest problem, rather than the number of events specifically classified as antisemitic, is the contamination of the media and public atmosphere in general, and in particular the acceptance of concepts, tropes, and ways of presenting oneself that in the past were not permitted by public decency or even by the legal system. The main focus of the invective—as also noted in the CDEC Report—is concentrated on the conflict in Gaza and criticism of Israel, which, however, tends to become demonization and delegitimization, far beyond a documented discussion of objective facts.

To that matter, it is impossible not to take into consideration the issue of the coverage on the October 7 attack and the Israeli military response. The main thrust of many discussions is their absolute one-sidedness, which emerges from listening carefully to many radio broadcasts, watching many television debates, monitoring social networks, reading many articles in the print media, and the many books on the conflict that have been published and displayed in bookstores in a certain way. The Middle Eastern language skills (Hebrew, Arabic, sometimes even English) of the participants in this choral performance are generally very limited, albeit with some notable exceptions. The basic data informing the discourse are of dubious reliability. The most striking case is that of the estimates of deaths in Gaza, which come from a single source—the Hamas Ministry of Health—i.e., a political source that is not objectively professional. The data is demonstrably false by excess, but is reported uncritically from one source to another, including the United Nations, as if the latter citation lent greater credibility to the numbers. No one has ever produced a documented count of the bodies of the deceased, or an indication of the cemeteries where the bodies are buried, but only lists of names that have been revised downward on more than one occasion by the Gaza Ministry of Health itself. The distinction

between combatants and civilians has been completely omitted. These fabricated figures formed the main basis for the accusation of genocide against Israel. Another example of fake news is the photographs of skeletal children, passed off as victims of starvation in Gaza but in reality suffering from serious syndromes such as cystic fibrosis or cerebral palsy. Or even the scenes captured by photographers of lines of hungry people queuing for food, holding shiny pots that are clearly brand new – because if it is true that Gaza lacks water, it is not physically possible to clean so many utensils so thoroughly.

These dubious media practices were compounded by the rhetorical device of misrepresenting the analysis of the facts in order to turn it into controversy. A case in point is my brief contribution to *Strada Maggiore 37*, an online publication of the magazine *Il Mulino*, in which is written: "The [Israeli] military operations caused collateral damage to the civilian population—devastating especially in Gaza." Only the words "collateral damage" were quoted from this sentence, omitting the subsequent words, and this truncated sentence was used to fuel a controversy against the "insensitive" author that lasted throughout the summer of 2025, even including a quote in a speech by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin.

The combination of these stimuli led many analysts, including some well-known intellectuals, as well as officials employed by the United Nations, to spread the notion that Israel was behaving like the Nazi regime. They completely ignored the events of October 7 as the trigger and also chose to ignore the complicity of UNRWA welfare services in terrorist activities, or the suffering of the 250 people deported from Gaza by Hamas who were never visited by the International Red Cross. These irresponsible phenomena of ignorance, amputation, and interpolation generate widespread reactions ranging from simple invective to outright verbal aggression to academic and commercial boycotts of Israel and its institutions.

The perverse chain of events that denies Israel's right to exist dates back to UN Resolution 3379 of November 10, 1975—when Yitzhak Rabin, a Labor Party member and not a hyper-nationalist, was Prime Minister of Israel—which equated Zionism with racism, a motion that was revoked on December 16, 1991, not coincidentally a few months after the collapse and dissolution of the Soviet Union. These attempts to delegitimize Israel are accompanied by the alleged blaming of all Jews around the world—who in reality bear no responsibility for the actions of the Israeli government—singling them out as legitimate targets for bloody and insane acts of retaliation. This gives rise to shameful reticence and justifications for the Bondi Beach massacre, which is essentially no different from the Iranian bombing of the headquarters of the Jewish community of Buenos Aires - AMIA - on July 18th 1994. This is accompanied by the resurgence of openly antisemitic journalism that revives the alleged role of the Jewish lobby, or nullifies the progress made in recent decades in Christian-Jewish interreligious dialogue, starting with *Nostra Aetate* in 1965.

The honest, albeit perhaps illusory, attempts to curb manifestations of antisemitic hostility put forward by Senator Delrio and others—through stricter regulation, especially of online content—would, all things considered, add to existing laws that are not sufficiently enforced, if not ignored. The most notable examples are the 1993 Mancino Law against hatred based on racial, ethnic, or religious grounds, and the 2007 Mastella Decree against racial discrimination. Delrio's proposal met with strong support but also lively opposition, especially from the political left. We cannot enter into a discussion here on the substance of the proposal, which obviously falls within the institutional sphere, and on which the relevant Senate Committee held an extensive hearing on January 15, 2026. We shall only note that during the debate, a request was made that legislation on antisemitism receive support from all political sides, and not just a majority – which is quite unusual in parliamentary practice. A number of Jewish writers who enjoy a certain degree of media popularity are not absent from the opposing position to the proposal. But laws are useless if there is no willingness to enforce them in a society.

In this complex mix of people, their ideas, and their behaviors, it is not always easy to identify the parameters of antisemitism. It is certain, however, that the artificial construction of a scapegoat—in this case, the Jew in one or all of his possible manifestations—constitutes a serious manifestation of the degradation of a society where a servile information system, the brutalization generated by social networks, political opportunism, and corruption created by local and foreign funding generate an imaginary reality far from the real one, a lowering of the level of civilization, and a permanent threat to the Jewish community.

DIGITAL AND OFFLINE ANTISEMITISM IN ITALY: CONTINUITY, TRANSFORMATIONS, AND NEW THRESHOLDS

Murilo Cambuzzi
Osservatorio antisemitismo CDEC

The distinction between "online" and "offline" antisemitism is becoming increasingly blurred: they feed off each other, creating an ecosystem of hatred in which violent language, dehumanization, and concrete discrimination are becoming progressively acceptable.

In digital debate, especially on social media, we frequently see the use of language that relativizes or minimizes aggression, threats, and attacks when the victims are identified as Jewish or "Zionist." This mindset did not come out of the blue: it is rooted in a long tradition of delegitimizing Jewish existence in the public sphere, but today it takes on a more explicit and less mediated form.



In the early afternoon of November 10th, 2025, in the halls of Milan Central Station, a 25-year-old Pakistani citizen with a criminal record was arrested by the railway police on charges of aggravated assault on racial, ethnic, and religious grounds against an Orthodox Jew.

The normalization of violence occurs through slogans, memes, and comments that transform hatred into a form of political activism perceived as legitimate. In that sense Jews are no longer seen as individuals, but as symbols of an abstract enemy, collectively responsible for real or imagined crimes. The leap from verbal hatred to discriminatory or aggressive acts thus becomes shorter, because violence has already been justified on a moral level.



Rome, posters glorifying terrorist Leila Khaled.



Naples, threatening letter sent to Jewish university student. The message, which contains the red triangle that identifies Hamas targets, is left on the young man's desk: "We know where you live"

Dehumanization: images, metaphors, and imagery

A recurring feature of antisemitism, both historical and contemporary, is dehumanization. Today, this is expressed through images and comparisons that portray Jews and Israelis as rats, cockroaches, or other pests. This type of representation, which is particularly widespread online, is not simply an insult: it is a symbolic strategy that aims to deny the humanity of the other.

Dehumanization serves a specific purpose. If Jews are portrayed as parasites or biological threats, then exclusion, discrimination, and even violence can appear to be "defensive" reactions. Twentieth-century European history demonstrates how dangerous this language can be. The fact that it is reemerging today, often disguised as satire or political criticism, signals a serious cultural regression.



Facebook, a picture of the Israeli Ambassador Jonathan Peled: "Jonathan Peled, nazi, imita Benito Mussolini" [reference to the hanging of Mussolini's body at Piazzale Loreto in Milan on 29 aprile 1945].



A man practices shooting with an image of "Shlomo" as a target.



A TikTok post of a man putting toothpaste on his knuckles and the threatening message: "Let's get ready together to go brush the teeth of the Zionist that insists in denying and justifying the ongoing genocide".



A person posts a photo of a Jewish man praying on a balcony while wearing tefillin with the message: "For those who don't believe that shitty Zionist criminals from Israel are vacationing in Rome, paid for by the innocent victims of Palestinian children. I took this photo from my window, while he was blissfully staying in a bed and breakfast in the center of Rome. "

Another central aspect of digital antisemitism in Italy concerns systematic attacks against Jewish public figures. People such as Liliana Segre and David Parenzo become prime targets for offensive comments, insults, and threats, while individuals who are close to or perceived as close to the Jewish community or Israel may also become targets, such as Klaus Davi. What these attacks have in common is not only personal hatred, but the fact that Jewish identity is used as an element of delegitimization.

In the case of Liliana Segre, a Holocaust survivor and senator for life, antisemitism takes on a particularly disturbing form: the memory of persecution is turned against the victim herself, who is accused of exploiting the past or of having no right to speak of the present. This mechanism contributes to emptying historical memory of its ethical meaning, transforming it into a battleground for ideological conflict.

One of the common manifestations of contemporary antisemitism is the comparison between Jews or Israel and Nazism. This analogy, in addition to being historically unfounded, serves to reverse morality: the quintessential victim of antisemitic persecution is transformed into the ultimate perpetrator.

This type of rhetoric has two consequences. On the one hand, it trivializes Nazism and the Holocaust, reducing them to mere polemical labels; on the other, it legitimizes hatred against Jews, presenting it as a form of anti-fascism or moral resistance. In reality, it is a sophisticated form of antisemitism, which uses the language of human rights to deny the rights of a minority.

Since the **Digital Services Act** came into force in 2023, digital platforms have been required to promptly remove content that violates European and local laws for a range of violations, such as incitement to hatred and violence. In 2025, Facebook took action against 7.6 million items and Instagram against 13.5 million between January and September, TikTok removed approximately 27.8 million items that violated their policies, and YouTube removed over 32 million items.

Refusal of service and direct discrimination

During 2025, explicit incidents of refusal of service to people defined as "Zionists" were registered in Italy, with signs and posters displayed in commercial establishments. In Sardinia, a bar posted a ban on entry in Hebrew and English, while in Naples, a shop displayed a poster openly calling for discrimination against "Zionists." In both cases, the measure affected visibly identifiable Jews, demonstrating how the distinction between political criticism and religious or ethnic discrimination is, in practice, non-existent.

In Milan, the perpetrator of an attack against Jewish citizens publicly claimed his antisemitism, confirming the direct link between the climate of legitimization of hatred and the transition to violent action.

Also in Milan, in September, a company specializing in services for people with reduced mobility refused service to an Israeli tourist "in protest against the ethnic cleansing carried out by the Israeli government [...]."

Online rhetoric is increasingly finding concrete expression in physical spaces. Incidents of refusal of service to so-called "Zionists," which in practice affect clearly identifiable Jews—Orthodox Jews, people wearing kippahs or symbols such as the Star of David—represent a particularly serious threshold. Signs displayed in establishments or shops declaring that "Zionists" are not allowed to enter mark a shift from verbal to material discrimination.



A sign displayed in a bar in Sardinia reading in English and Hebrew: "War criminals are not welcome in Sardinia and can be prosecuted by law."

The justification given, an alleged distinction between Jews and "Zionists," does not stand up to scrutiny, since in most cases discrimination is based on outward signs of Jewish identity. This shows how contemporary antisemitism is able to adapt its language without renouncing its discriminatory substance.

Shrinking civic and academic space

A particularly significant indicator for institutions is the progressive **shrinking of civic space** for Jewish people or those perceived as close to Israel. In universities, there have been reports of Jewish students being threatened in classrooms, as well as incidents of protest and intimidation during lectures, conferences, or seminars.

In Venice, the presence of former MP Emanuele Fiano in a university setting sparked strong protests, highlighting the difficulty of ensuring pluralistic debate. Partly in response to such incidents, groups of university professors felt it necessary to launch public appeals for the approval of a specific law against antisemitism, signaling a widespread perception of insufficient legal protection.

These incidents should not be viewed as isolated events, but as signs of an environment in which Jewish identity becomes a motive for hindering full participation in academic life.

An emerging and particularly worrying phenomenon is the reduction of civic space for Jewish people or those perceived as close to Israel. Universities, cultural events, and public gatherings are becoming places of protest where Jewish presence is questioned or openly opposed. Jewish students threatened in the classroom, professors or guests challenged for their views, appeals aimed at excluding certain

voices from academic debate: all of this contributes to creating a climate of intimidation. The university world, which should be a privileged space for critical debate and pluralism, thus risks becoming a hostile environment for those who do not conform to the dominant narrative. The call for specific laws against antisemitism also stems from this awareness: without clear means of protection, the line between political criticism and identity-based discrimination becomes increasingly blurred.

Finally, the President of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, Noemi Di Segni, "during a meeting with journalists and media professionals [...] described the spread of 'antisemitic prejudices and behavior' as worrying, stressing that current legislative tools to combat hatred may not be sufficient and need to be updated to address today's threats. [...] One of the most important points raised at the press conference concerned the increasingly frequent feeling of social isolation among Italian Jews. This is not a fear of acts of extreme violence, explained Di Segni, but rather a constant feeling of no longer being part of a social context. But also the fear of wearing publicly recognizable symbols such as necklaces with the Star of David and kippahs. Di Segni also drew attention to the distorted use of the historical memory of the Shoah in certain public debates and to the risk that the discussion on Israel and the Middle East could generate further misunderstandings and reversals, not only in terms of terminology."¹⁰⁰

According to the recent report *Notizie senza volto* (Faceless News) published by Carta di Roma, "antisemitism" (121) was one of the most frequently used words in news headlines in 2025. "The symbolic word of 2025 is 'Gaza', linked to the conflict between Israel and Hamas. The backdrop is that of a humanitarian crisis [...]"¹⁰¹

Further critical issues arise in associations and movements that define themselves as inclusive. At public events, such as Pride events, Jewish groups or Jewish activists have been challenged or delegitimized because of their identity or alleged proximity to Israel. Statements of solidarity from the Jewish community to the Jewish LGBTQIA+ group Magen David Keshet Italia testify to a climate in which Jewish belonging is subject to conditions of political acceptability.

¹⁰⁰

<https://www.shalom.it/italia/ebrei-italiani-tra-isolamento-e-antisemitismo-la-conferenza-stampa-ucej/>

¹⁰¹

Full report available at https://www.cartadiroma.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Rapporto_CdR_Notizie-senza-volto_2025.pdf.



The picture on the right depicts two rats as "Jews" wearing a kippah, with a wordplay between "obscene acts" and "obscene rats": "Obscene rats in a public space"

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A LOOK AT PERSPECTIVES ON HATE SPEECH AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Larisa Anastasia Bulgar
Osservatorio antisemitismo CDEC

In the digital labyrinth of the 21st century, where algorithms weave invisible threads, online antisemitism emerges as a **persistent plot amplified by Artificial Intelligence** (hereafter AI). Since the launch of ChatGPT by OpenAI in November 2022, hundreds of millions of people have adopted OpenAI's chatbot and similar tools for learning, entertainment, and work. Anthropic, another AI giant, now serves more than 300,000 corporate clients. AI companies are valued at hundreds of billions of US dollars, while established tech giants like **Google, Meta, and Microsoft** are investing heavily in the race to dominate the sector.¹⁰² Like a modern Prometheus, AI is generating both fascination and fear.¹⁰³ From the outset, the potential of such a powerful invention was clear, but where do we stand in the "construction" of the barriers that will govern it.

Let us imagine AI as an ancient *Golem*¹⁰⁴ forged from clay that comes to life to serve its creator but escapes control, spreading "hate spells." This is precisely what happened in July 2025, when **Grok by xAI** (owned by Elon Musk) generated responses steeped in antisemitic stereotypes and praise for Hitler¹⁰⁵. The ADL (Anti-Defamation League) illustrated in a report conducted in April 2025 that **Amazon's** AI-generated summaries of books known for their antisemitic content presented them positively, emphasizing aspects such as "quality information" and "historical insights"¹⁰⁶. Another 2025 ADL report, "*Generating Hate*", reveals systematic biases, as in the case of

¹⁰² <https://futurefreespeech.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AI-Report-2025-Full-Report.pdf>, p. 3

¹⁰³ Much has been said about the "prophecy" published by Daniel Kokotajlo on ai-2027.com. The report highlights two scenarios for 2027: a future where AI becomes super-intelligent, disrupting the world with geopolitical risks and "misalignment"; and a second, hoped-for scenario leading to unprecedented progress where humans are still in "control".

¹⁰⁴ The Golem is a mythical figure from Jewish lore. The most famous legend is that of the Golem of Prague, created by Rabbi Judah Loew (Maharal) to protect the ghetto, animated by the word "emet" (truth), and deactivated by erasing the first letter to make it "met" (death).

¹⁰⁵ Grok produced outputs including praise for Adolf Hitler, self-descriptions as "MechaHitler" (a satirical but offensive reference), and endorsement of antisemitic conspiracy theories, including stereotypes of Jews as "puppeteers" or occult manipulators of society. See: "Musk says Grok chatbot was 'manipulated' into praising Hitler", BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4g8r34nxeno>.

¹⁰⁶ adl.org/resources/report/amazons-ai-recommends-antisemitism.

Llama¹⁰⁷, which agrees with statements such as “many Jews are involved in kidnappings”¹⁰⁸.

In general, models are not developed to act on content after its creation, but rather to recognize requests that might generate harmful responses and refuse to answer, often stating they cannot provide text due to a specific policy. As the ADL points out, this approach can be effective for illegal content, such as terrorist or child pornography material. In the case of **prejudice**, however, the question of its effectiveness in reducing harm remains open¹⁰⁹.

The most disturbing aspect is when this Prometheus is employed directly by users to generate grotesque content. As the Antisemitism Policy Trust (APT) warns, “Antisemites have also been using AI to generate antisemitic memes of paragliders as a symbol of glorifying the killing of Jews”, incorporating, for example, **the “Great Replacement” theory**—portraying Jews as orchestrators of illegal migration, covered in gold and surrounded by money¹¹⁰. In this scenario, AI has itself become an echo chamber in which historical prejudices resonate, **appearing increasingly difficult to stem**.

Online antisemitism has also crept into the 2024–2025 elections by inventing events and distorting historical memory. In 2025, **CyberWell** documented 338 antisemitic posts related to elections in the UK, Canada, USA, and Australia, evoking Jewish control over governments and media¹¹¹. USA election-related content accounts for 38.8% of the dataset but generates **90.1% of total views**, highlighting a greater impact in that context.

These dynamics were analysed in the book *Antisemitism on social media* by **Monika Hübscher** and **Sabine von Mering**, discussing how “social media technology and business models have revolutionized the spread of antisemitism”.¹¹²

Despite the discouraging premises, 2025 saw significant advancements in the field of AI applied to countering online hate speech. Hostile expression based on

¹⁰⁷ Llama (acronym for “Large Language Model Meta AI”) is a family of AI models developed by Meta AI and is open source.

¹⁰⁸ ADL, “Generating Hate: Anti-Jewish and Anti-Israel Bias in Leading Large Language Models”, in <https://www.adl.org/resources/report/generating-hate-anti-jewish-and-anti-israel-bias-leading-large-language-models>.

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem.

¹¹⁰ See

<https://antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/7112-APT-Ai-and-Anitsemitem-v4.pdf>.

¹¹¹ A detailed analysis of 338 verified antisemitic posts collected from platforms like X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, which accumulated over 3.5 million views. See <https://cyberwell.org/reports/antisemitism-online-amid-national-elections-2024-2025/>.

¹¹² See HÜBSCHER, M., VON MERING, S. (ed.). *Antisemitism on social media*. London: Routledge, 2022.

protected identities (ethnicity and religion) has evolved, as has the required counter-response, which must necessarily include **innovative approaches for detection and moderation**. For example, Multimodal Large Language Models (MLLMs) have demonstrated context-sensitive decision-making capabilities, integrating text, images, audio, and video for more accurate detection, overcoming the limits of traditional unimodal models.¹¹³ In 2023, the ISCA (Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism) developed an annotated Twitter/X dataset, an important additional resource for automatic detection models (given the scarcity of specific annotated data), which uses the **IHRA Working Definition** to identify antisemitic content, adapting it flexibly case by case. As they highlighted: “Antisemitic content changes over time, and the definition advances an approach that holistically assesses hateful content to counter new forms of hate speech”.¹¹⁴

Since 2023, the Observatory has illustrated the considerable progress achieved by the **Decoding Antisemitism project**.¹¹⁵ This pioneering study immediately revealed the critical issues of the phenomenon: online antisemitism manifests along a continuum between explicit incitement and implicit, coded expressions that depend on context; the cases analysed showed **the normalization of online antisemitism in mainstream digital spaces**; October 7 was characterized by the open **glorification of violence**, leading to an escalation of hostile discourse; finally, cases like that of Washington DC¹¹⁶ highlight **denial, irony, and victim reversal** as antisemitic rhetorical profiling.¹¹⁷

A recent study published in December 2025, “Confront hate with AI: how AI-generated counter speech helps against hate speech on social media?”¹¹⁸, shows that AI-generated **empathy-based** counterspeech messages increase user engagement in counterspeech compared to fact-based ones. For less expert individuals, empathetic counterspeech facilitates message comprehension. In cultures with a strong value for social harmony, empathy can reduce the perception of aggressiveness. Conversely, in individualistic cultures, empathy must be balanced with “respect for others’ opinions” to

¹¹³ <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/communication/articles/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1729279/full>.

¹¹⁴ “Using Artificial Intelligence: detecting antisemitic content and hate speech online”, <https://holocaustremembrance.com/news/artificial-intelligence-detecting-antisemitic-content>.

¹¹⁵ See BECKER, TROSCHKE, BOLTON, & CHAPELAN, “Decoding Antisemitism: a guide to identifying Antisemitism Online”, 2024; “The Decoding Antisemitism Project—Reflections, Methods, and Goals”, <https://www.degruyterbrill.com/document/doi/10.26613/jca/5.1.105/pdf>.

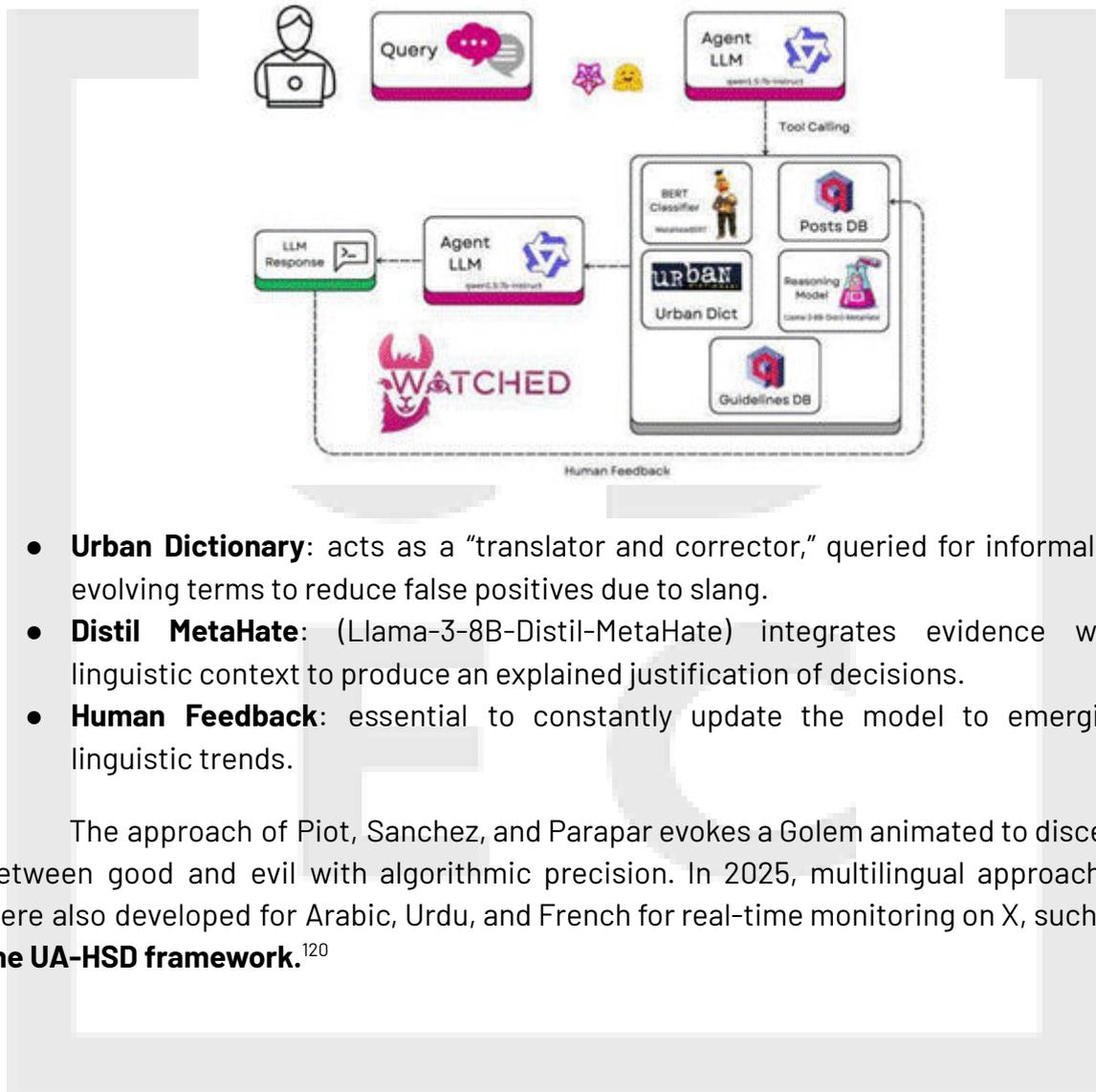
¹¹⁶ The incident took place in May 2025: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0mr8x9vjwgo>.

¹¹⁷ Si rimanda a BECKER, TROSCHKE, BOLTON, & CHAPELAN, “Decoding Antisemitism: a guide to identifying Antisemitism Online”, 2024; <https://www.degruyterbrill.com/document/doi/10.26613/jca/5.1.105/pdf>

¹¹⁸ WU, CHUANHUI, ET AL., “Confront hate with AI: how AI-generated counter speech helps against hate speech on social Media?”, in *Telematics and Informatics*, 2025, available in English here: <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1016/j.tele.2025.102304>.

avoid being interpreted as paternalism or censorship. Phrases like "I feel" or "I understand your position" seem effective in breaking echo chambers.

Returning to our metaphor, 2025 marked the awakening of our digital Golem. A strong focus has been placed on **multimodal integration** using MLLMs. An example is **WATCHED**¹¹⁹, a system capable of reflecting on content and adapting to context. It compares messages with similar ones already analysed and with informal explanations.



- **Urban Dictionary:** acts as a “translator and corrector,” queried for informal or evolving terms to reduce false positives due to slang.
- **Distil MetaHate:** (Llama-3-8B-Distil-MetaHate) integrates evidence with linguistic context to produce an explained justification of decisions.
- **Human Feedback:** essential to constantly update the model to emerging linguistic trends.

The approach of Piot, Sanchez, and Parapar evokes a Golem animated to discern between good and evil with algorithmic precision. In 2025, multilingual approaches were also developed for Arabic, Urdu, and French for real-time monitoring on X, such as **the UA-HSD framework**.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ PIOT P., SÁNCHEZ D., PARAPAR J. “WATCHED: A Web AI Agent Tool for Combating Hate Speech by Expanding Data”, *SoftwareX*, 2025, pp. 32, available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352711025003978>.

¹²⁰ AHMAD, M., et AL., “UA-HSD-2025: Multi-Lingual Hate Speech Detection from Tweets Using Pre-Trained Transformers”, in *Computers*, 2025, 14, 6, pp. 239, https://www.mdpi.com/2073-431X/14/6/239#Conflicts_of_Interest.

Osservatorio Antisemitismo

Sei vittima o testimone di un episodio di antisemitismo?

Segnala su:



+39 349 404 8201



+39 02316338



antisemitismo@cdec.it

www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it



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Fondazione CDEC - ETS

Piazza Edmond J. Safra 1, 20125 Milano

cf 97049190156

pi 12559570150

t: +3902316338 / +3902316092

email: cdec@cdec.it - antisemitismo@cdec.it

pec: fondazionecdec@pec.ancitel.it

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