



# An Integrative Measurement of European Anti-Semitism

## Gauging Anti-Semitism for Informed Jewish People Policy

Surely, one of the most disturbing recent trends in the Jewish world and in the consciousness of the global Jewish community has been the resurgence of anti-Semitism. The outbreak is far from pandemic. Yet, the trend clearly must be monitored and courses of action should be explored, both at the Jewish community level as well as that of the Jewish people as a whole, to understand how best to curb the contagion or limit its effects. JPPI is embarking on a multi-year effort to contribute to this effort.

Precisely because the Jewish people has true enemies who wish to do it harm, paranoia is a luxury it can ill afford. What is required is a better understanding of the nature and origin of renewed anti-Semitic expression to determine where true danger may lie. Anti-Semitism must be monitored from a perspective relevant to Jewish people policies, actions, and interests. At best, this would mean developing a capacity to distinguish among that which must receive the priority attention of the Jewish people,

that which may be regarded as disturbing but not threatening, and those threats which are more apparent than real. This is not an easy task because, like a disease, anti-Semitism may assume different guises and morph into different forms.

## Focus on Europe

In recent years, negative attitudes toward Jews have increased in many Western European countries, with France situated at the front of this worrying shift. The expansion of populations who hold anti-Semitic views in Europe is leading to the spread of anti-Jewish stereotypes in the general public discourse. Many European Jews today hide their Jewish identities and are considering emigration.

However, the available data for examining negative attitudes toward Jews do not provide a sufficiently broad or accurate picture of the situation. The tools used by organizations (such as the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) or the Pew Research Center), although thorough and reliable, only give partial glimpses, and at times

can even be confusing in understanding anti-Semitic trends in the world. This is because they focus, each in their own way, on only one piece of the anti-Semitism puzzle. Some organizations only look at public opinion. Others only track the number of reported instances of violence or harassment against Jews. Moreover, each organization has defined its own metrics and definitions, which differ from country to country. One European organization (FRA) examines how anti-Semitism is perceived by the Jews themselves. Therefore, the Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) developed an integrative measurement that takes into account all the variables.

## **The Purpose of JPPI's Integrated Index**

In the shadow of recrudescing anti-Semitism in Europe, and in the light of EU governments' keen efforts to confront the phenomenon, there is a need for an integrative dashboard. This will provide local communal leaders, Israeli policy-makers and world Jewry leaders with a standardized measurement mechanism and a policy tool to gauge the level of threat to Jewish communities, monitor developments, ease decision-making, and assess the efficacy of undertaken interventions. To give this policy tool a global applicability, there is a need to standardize definitions regarding incidents and their severity, and to adopt a standardized measurement mechanism.

## **Public Opinion Toward Jews**

Public opinion polls examining attitudes toward Jews have shown, time and again, contradictory findings regarding the state of anti-Semitism in queried countries. For example, a 2013 Pew Research Center survey found that 87 percent of Europeans held positive views of Jews. In contrast, a 2014 ADL survey found negative attitudes toward Jews in Europe at an all-time high – 24 percent held anti-Semitic views (that is, 79 million Europeans). In France, the gap between the outcomes was even more pronounced: Pew assessed that 7 percent held anti-Semitic views and found an overall decline in anti-Semitism, while the ADL survey showed a rise in anti-Semitic views from 35 to 51 percent.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the level of negative opinions among the general population does not reflect the gravity of the situation, because it does not take into account the influence of social standing on those surveyed. However, complementary information regarding social status can be found in fieldwork, such as focus groups conducted recently by pollster Stanley Greenberg among French elites uncovered views such as: "Jews are controlling, manipulative and with split loyalties to France." They think they have a monopoly on "suffering." Many similar descriptions resounded in the Greenberg groups, often said in candid off the cuff speech.

## Scope of anti-Semitic Incidents

A simple look at data showing either a rise or drop in anti-Semitic incidents does not provide a wide enough picture about the state of anti-Semitism. One also needs to take into account the nature and distribution of incidents. Thus, for example, if most anti-Semitic acts are carried out by a small group in a specific area, one cannot claim that the entire Jewish population is threatened. Naturally, the approach will differ if violence against Jews is widespread throughout a country, or committed by a large number of actors. Similarly, a singular terrorist act in a specific city is not the same as a situation in which hundreds of extremist jihadi fighters return from the Middle East to their European places of residence and are absorbed with open arms into the local Muslim community. When we observe a significant number of resentful anti-Jewish youngsters, even if the highly reputed Pew survey indicates a very low level of negative attitudes among the general population (11 percent in France), Jewish policy planners would be irresponsible if they told the local Jews there was no need for worry and that they can feel safe in their home country.

## Jews' Perceptions of anti-Semitism in their Countries

An anti-Semitism metric can be neither precise nor complete if it does not take into account how Jews experience reality in their own countries. Does an increase in negative attitudes toward Jews prevent them from living

full professional lives? Does it tear at the fabric of the local Jewish community? Does a rise in anti-Jewish incidents lead to the desire to emigrate? And from another perspective, we may ask, “Are Jews paranoiac, and how seriously should their feelings of discomfort be taken?”

A three-dimensional index would allow and encourage us to more closely and accurately investigate the various measures of anti-Semitic attitudes and incidents as well as Jewish feelings to assess their true import, and to obtain a more accurate picture. Each measure is in relationship with, and compared with, the others so as to arrive at its true significance.

Applying JPPI's three-dimensional index to Europe shows this. The three-dimensional measurement examines anti-Semitism in several European countries and comes to unique conclusions:

- While the scope of anti-Semitic incidents in Great Britain is higher than in France (for every 1,000 Jews), French Jews are more worried about what is happening around them.
- Although the scope of violent anti-Semitic rallies in Germany is larger than in any other European country, German Jews feel safe and do not see anti-Semitism as a serious problem in their country.
- Some 49 percent of French Jews are considering emigration — they no longer feel safe as Jews in their country — German Jews trust the German government to protect them.

These feelings correspond with the low rate of negative attitudes toward Jews in Germany, and the fact that anti-Semitic acts and opinions come from the fringes of German society and are not widespread among the elites. In contrast, there is widespread anti-Semitic discourse among elites in France, and deeply entrenched anti-Semitism

in large segments of the population (84 percent of Muslims). Thus, taken together with recent extremely violent incidents (the attack on the Jewish school in Toulouse or the kosher grocery in Paris), French Jews do not trust their government to protect them, and feel excluded from full civil participation in the country.

Findings about anti-Semitism in Western Europe	Trend	Europe Average	France %	UK %	Germany %
<b>Public opinion towards Jews (negative views)</b>					
ADL <sup>2</sup> 2009/2012/2014	▲	24	33/35/51	15/20/11	21/22/33
Pew Center in Europe <sup>3</sup>	▼	13	7	7	9
French Government (CNCDH) 2013/2014 <sup>4</sup>	▼		21/17		
Field studies by European institutes <sup>5</sup>	▲		21	10	18
Anti-Semitic attitudes among Muslims <sup>6</sup>	▲	62	83		
<b>Scope of anti-Semitic incidents</b>					
Incidents /year for every 1000 Jews <sup>7</sup>	▲		6	10	9
Rise in number of reported violent incidents (%) <sup>8</sup>	▲	+70	+130	+100	-10
Rise in number of serious strikes (%) <sup>9</sup>	▲	+40	+90	+100	-10
Percent of incidents reported of all anti-Semitic incidents <sup>10</sup>		77	72	73	72
<b>Jews' sense of anti-Semitism in their countries<sup>11</sup></b>					
Anti-Semitism has risen over the past five years	▲	76	89	68	68
Anti-Semitism is a very or fairly big problem	▲	67	86	48	25
Have considered emigration because they do not feel safe in their country	▲	32	49	19	26
Avoid places in their neighborhood because they would not feel safe there as a Jew	▲	27	20	35	28

## Directions for Action

The integrative dashboard presented here on Europe is part of a multiyear JPPI project that aims to provide local communal leaders, Israeli policy-makers, and world Jewry leaders with a policy tool to measure the threat level in Jewish communities, monitor developments, define priorities, ease decision-making and assess effectiveness of the efforts taken. To allow this dashboard to be built at the global level and allow a global perspective about priorities and policy, there is a need to produce the three dimensional raw data and standardize the measurements.

1. **Produce reliable data in every large Jewish community.** While some data in Europe and the United States are available about attitudes, incidents, and perceptions, this tri-dimensional data is not yet available in other Jewish communities, such as Australia, South Africa or Latin America. The methodology developed by the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency may inspire the development of further measurement mechanisms with respect to Jewish perceptions of anti-Semitism.
2. **Standardized measurements.** For historical reasons, each local organization has developed its own system of measurement. What one organization defines as serious harassment is defined elsewhere as a minor incident. Consistent standards will have to be established through a consensus building process under the umbrella of international Jewish organizations and existing Israeli

governmental agencies in charge of monitoring and combating anti-Semitism.

3. **Development of a monitoring methodology, a deliberative mechanism, and a policy tool.** JPPI has started a large project to grasp anti-Semitism in all its complexity and develop a methodology to produce a comprehensive policy tool. The three gauges presented above provide policy-makers with a more complex perspective about the situation in the region and, through a process of deliberation, define priorities and required actions. The results presented here are certainly a work in progress and an invitation for further reflection.

# AN INTEGRATIVE MEASUREMENT OF EUROPEAN ANTI-SEMITISM

## ATTITUDES TOWARD JEWS



Anti-Jewish Attitudes in 2014

Sources: ADL, Pew, CNCDH, Fondapol, CAA, WZB

## ANTI-JEWISH INCIDENTS IN 2014



Number of incidents per 1,000 Jews, and Change from last year (%)

Sources: CNCDH, JPR, SPCJ, CST

## PERCEPTIONS AMONG JEWS



Jews who contemplate emigration

Source: FRA European Union Fundamental Rights Agency

## Endnotes

1. The discrepancy arises, in part, because while Pew asked direct questions about attitudes toward Jews, ADL surveyed beliefs about Jews.
2. Proportion of people saying that the statement 'Jews have too much power in the business world' is 'probably true'. Anti-Defamation League (2014). ADL Global 100: An Index of Anti-Semitism, Executive Summary. (<http://global100.adl.org/>) See also Anti-Defamation League (2012). Attitudes Toward Jews In Ten European Countries, March. ([http://archive.adl.org/anti\\_semitism/adl\\_anti-semitism\\_presentation\\_february\\_2012.pdf](http://archive.adl.org/anti_semitism/adl_anti-semitism_presentation_february_2012.pdf)).
3. Bruce Stokes (2015). "Faith in European Project Reviving," Pew Research Center, 2 June. (<http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/06/02/faith-in-european-project-reviving/eu-report-17/>)
4. CNCDH (2015), Rapport annuel sur le racisme, l'antisémitisme et la xénophobie. (<http://www.cncdh.fr/fr/actualite/rapport-annuel-sur-le-racisme-lantisemitisme-et-la-xenophobie>).
5. For UK, see local national surveys such as Sunday Times, CAA, All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry in Antisemitism. Quoted in Boyd, Jonathan and L. Daniel Staetsky (2015.) "Could it happen here? What existing data tell us about contemporary antisemitism in the UK", Institute for Jewish Policy Research, May. ([http://www.jpr.org.uk/publication?id=4032#.VWT\\_Ap3n-zc](http://www.jpr.org.uk/publication?id=4032#.VWT_Ap3n-zc)). For France, see Reynié, Dominique (2014). *L'antisémitisme dans l'opinion publique française. Nouveaux éclairages*, FONDAPOL – Fondation pour L'Innovation Politique, Novembre. (<http://www.fondapol.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/CONF2press-Antisemitisme-DOC-6-web11h51.pdf>). For Germany and other continental European countries see *Annual Report on Antisemitism for 2014*, Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry, p. 51. (<http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/general-analysis-2014>).
6. For anti-Semitism among European Muslims, see Koopmans, Ruud (2013). "Fundamentalism and out-group hostility Muslim immigrants and Christian natives in Western Europe." WZB Berlin Social Science Center, *WZB Mitteilungen*. ([http://www.wzb.eu/sites/default/files/u6/koopmans\\_englisch\\_ed.pdf](http://www.wzb.eu/sites/default/files/u6/koopmans_englisch_ed.pdf)). As the overall majority of violent actions against Jews are perpetrated by Muslims in France, Germany, Belgium and Holland (and a significant part in UK and other European countries), assessing the level of resentment and the level of sympathy to Islamist fundamentalism among the general Muslim population is of special interest. As it appears in the mentioned Fondapol and WZB surveys, fundamentalist Islam and anti-Jewish resentment are widely spread among Europe's Muslims. While many believe that anti-Semitism is limited to fringe and marginal parts among the general Muslim populations, these studies demonstrate that anti-Semitism is far from being a marginal phenomenon. This finding resonates with the concern and worry indicated in the FRA's study about the perceptions of anti-Semitism and the will to emigrate among large parts of the Jews in Europe.
7. JPR, op. cit. p. 12.
8. For UK, see CST – Community Security Trust (2015). *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2014*. London. For France, see SCPJ – Service de Protection de la Communauté Juive (2015.) *Rapport 2014 sur l'antisémitisme en France*, Paris.
9. CST and SPCJ, op. cit.
10. FRA – Fundamental Rights Agency (2013), "Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU: experiences and perceptions of antisemitism", November, European Union. <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-discrimination-and-hate-crime-against>
11. FRA, op. cit.