

Jewish Life in Denmark

English summary



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1 Summary

This report presents the results of a survey of the conditions and experiences of Jews in Denmark, conducted by the Danish Institute for Human Rights. The survey is based on a questionnaire aimed at Jews in Denmark. The questionnaire was distributed by means of Jewish communities, institutions, associations, and individuals in March and April 2025. In total, 465 people answered the questionnaire.

In the report, we explore how and to what extent Jews in Denmark experience antisemitism, understood as “prejudice against, or hatred of Jews”,¹ and how antisemitism is expressed, for instance as personal attacks and in the form of discrimination. In addition, the questionnaire includes questions about Jewish identity and practices, safety, and regulation of behaviour as well as about barriers to living a free Jewish life in Denmark. The survey touches upon several key human rights, particularly the right not to be discriminated against, freedom of religion or belief, and freedom of expression.

It is estimated that the Jewish population in Denmark amounts to between 6,000 and 7,000 persons. There is no public register of the religious affiliation of the Danish population, and the demographic characteristics of the Jewish population (such as gender, age and geography) are unknown. It is therefore not possible to draw a random sample of Jews in Denmark for statistical purposes. In other words, we do not know to what extent the group of respondents is representative of all Jews in Denmark. Therefore, the results of the survey cannot be assumed to apply to all Jews in general. However, the study shows some clear tendencies and is the most comprehensive empirical study of Jewish life in Denmark since 1973.²

The key findings of the survey are highlighted in the following sections.

Jewish practices among the respondents are multifaceted

Almost all of the respondents (94 %) practise Jewish religion, culture or traditions in different ways and to different degrees. This might involve hosting Shabbat dinners for family and friends, preserving and developing Jewish culture (including literature, music, and food), observing certain Jewish holidays, or continuing the Jewish tradition of circumcising male infants.

Although almost all respondents practise Jewish religion, culture or traditions in one or more ways, it is not everybody who are formally members of a Jewish religious community. Thus, 61 % of the respondents indicate that they are members of a Jewish religious community. Culture, upbringing, family, and a sense of belonging to the Jewish people are among the aspects of Jewish life that matter most to the respondents. Religion is the least important aspect (40 %) in the respondents’ self-understanding, although many of the traditions practised, such as the Shabbat, are linked to religion.

Downplaying Jewish identity and a lack of acceptance in non-Jewish settings

94 % of the respondents indicate that they have identity markers which can lead people to assume that they are Jewish. Such markers may include wearing Jewish jewellery and symbols or having a Jewish name. It can also relate to involvement in organisations or participation in the public debate. Identity markers can be a positive way to express oneself. However, they can also evoke perceptions and prejudices in others that can lead to conscious or unconscious discriminatory behaviour. For this reason, the survey includes questions about visibility aspects.

64 % of the respondents indicate that it is easier to be accepted in a non-Jewish environment if they hide or downplay their identity, for example at their place of education or at work. Being Jewish is experienced as difficult in relation to non-Jewish environment. This is in particular the case after Hamas' attack in Israel 7 October 2023 and the subsequent war in Gaza (hereinafter referred to as "the attacks of 7 October 2023 and the subsequent war in Gaza"). For example, the respondents experience that they are being held accountable for the actions of the Israeli government by people around them, or they feel pressured to have an opinion on the conflict in the Middle East.

During the period after 7 October 2023 many have been more active in seeking out Jewish communities. 63 % of the respondents say that they have actively sought out Jewish communities in the time after 7 October.

18-59-year-olds respondents are more likely to experience that their non-Jewish surroundings display a certain reluctance to accept Jews - compared to respondents aged 60+ - and are also more likely to actively seek out Jewish communities. The answers may reflect that the younger age groups move in circles where the war in Gaza and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have a strong presence which affect community dynamics, for example at universities or work places.

Antisemitism is difficult to avoid

The respondents find it difficult to avoid antisemitism, whether online or in physical and public spaces. In this survey, antisemitism is understood as prejudice against or hatred of Jews, and may be expressed in, for instance, incitement to violence against Jews, conspiracy theories about Jews, or anti-Jewish slogans and Nazi symbols. Thus, 96 % of the respondents state that they have experienced or witnessed antisemitism in the past 12 months, for example on social media, news sites, on the street, or in public transport. In elaborative comments, some respondents indicate that they experience antisemitism as significant in their daily life. The extent of experienced antisemitism found in this survey is similar to the results of a survey conducted by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) among Jews in a number of EU countries, including Denmark, before the 7 October 2023 attacks and the subsequent war in Gaza.³

The two most common forms of antisemitism, experienced or witnessed by the respondents, relate to the state of Israel. First, Jews are held collectively responsible for the actions of the Israeli state, and second, the use of, for instance, anti-Semitic symbols, stereotypes, and images in relation to the state of Israel. Anti-Jewish slogans and Nazi

symbols, derogatory, offensive, or hateful comments about Jews or negative stereotypes - for example about the power, influence, or appearance of Jews - are also widely experienced or witnessed. In this connection, it should be noted that criticism of the state of Israel is not in itself antisemitism.

The attacks on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent war in Gaza are experienced by many respondents as a catalyst for antisemitism, legitimising traditional antisemitic stereotypes and messages.

Antisemitism often derives from people you don't know – but not always

The respondents experience that antisemitism most often derives from people they do not know, whether online or in physical public spaces. In the physical and public space, however, 15 % of the respondents who have experienced antisemitism say that it derived from acquaintances, friends, or neighbours. 14 % of the respondents say that the latest incident derived from a colleague, and 6 % that it derived from fellow students.

A fifth (22 %) of the respondents who had experienced or witnessed antisemitism believe that the person expressing antisemitism also held other extreme views than antisemitism.

Personally directed antisemitism in the form of e.g. name-calling, threats, harassment, or violence

Antisemitism can be directed towards both individuals and groups as well as towards Jewish institutions and cemeteries. 39 % of the respondents indicate that they have experienced name-calling, threats, harassment, or violence that was personally directed at them in the past 12 months - incidences which they believe took place because of their Jewish identity. Respondents were most often subjected to condescending or threatening comments or name-calling. 4 % have experienced to be hit, pushed, kicked, or shaken.

12 % of the respondents indicate that they have experienced threats, violence, or vandalism in the past year, incidences which they believe took place because they are Jewish. Such incidences may be characterised as experienced hate crimes. The younger respondents as well as those respondents who indicate several visibility factors (identity markers), were more likely than the other respondents to indicate that they have experienced threats, violence, or vandalism.

Although these incidents may constitute a criminal offence, few respondents have reported them to the police. A little less than a fifth (17 %) of the respondents has contacted The Department for Mapping and Knowledge-sharing of Antisemitic Incidents (AKVAH) – a department under the auspices of the Jewish Community - where such incidents are registered. The large majority (77 %) of those who have experienced personally directed antisemitism in the form of name-calling, threats, harassment, or violence – incidence which they assess happened because they are Jewish – did not report the most recent incident. The main reason for not reporting an incidents to the police is that the respondents do not believe that it will make a difference.

Discrimination and social exclusion

17 % of the respondents have experienced discrimination because of their Jewish background within the last 12 months, most often in the form of poorer service in shops or being treated less favourably in the workplace. For example, several respondents have experienced that the management at their workplace do not know how to handle the Israeli Palestinian conflict in relation to their Jewish employees. In some cases, inappropriate handling by management can lead to employees being discriminated against or their freedom of speech being curtailed, for instance by way of instructing employees not to talk about the conflict. A number of respondents have experienced refusal of services or the rejection of a job application, explicitly because of their Jewish background.

Social exclusion is a common experience among the respondents, both in social contexts and in educational institutions and workplaces. Around half of the respondents have experienced social exclusion, for instance in the form of prejudice (42 %), insults or degrading jokes (29 %), or exclusion from a community (11 %). Many have experienced multiple forms of social exclusion.

Fear and regulation of behaviour

The respondents have experienced an increased sense of insecurity since 7 October 2023. 85 % indicate that they have had an increasing sense of insecurity, and only 42 % feel safe as Jews in public spaces.

A large majority of the survey respondents find it difficult to live out their Jewish identity vis-à-vis their surroundings in the way they wish. Thus 83 % indicate they regulate their behaviour in public spaces or with other people because of their Jewish background. The most common behavioural change is to avoid wearing Jewish symbols such as the Star of David. In addition, 58 % of the respondents indicate that they avoid talking about topics that could lead people to assume they are Jewish, for fear of reactions from those around them.

The sense of insecurity also manifests itself in the need to establish security measures in the home. Over half of the respondents (58 %) say that they had taken some kind of security measures around their home. Younger respondents are more concerned about their safety than older respondents.

A significant proportion of the respondents are considering moving because they are feeling unsafe being Jewish. One in five respondents (19 %) has considered leaving the city or neighbourhood where they live. Around a third (36 %) has considered emigrating.

Freedom of expression and self-censorship

72 % of the respondents report self-censoring due to fear based on their Jewish background. Self-censorship can manifest itself as refraining from participating in public debates, either in the physical public space or online. This is notable because, in fact, the majority (74 %) of the respondents have voiced their opinion in public debates. This suggests that the respondents consider whether or not to take part in the debate in each and every concrete situation due to the risk of negative reactions because of their Jewish background.

Self-censorship is likely linked with the tone of the public debate. Almost all respondents (91 %) agree that the public debate on the Israeli Palestinian conflict is unbalanced, and that the rhetoric is aggressive. In elaborative comments, several respondents write about experiences of threats and harassment after having expressed themselves publicly, for example by posting on social media. Several respondents also express the view that the rhetoric is so polarised that they feel there is no room for them to express their opinions or get involved in activities concerned with the conflict.

The main barriers to a free Jewish life

More than half (58 %) of respondents believe there are significant barriers to living a free Jewish life in Denmark. Only one in four respondents (24 %) indicate that there are no significant barriers to a free Jewish life. Almost all of those citing barriers point to the current security situation that has resulted in police or military presence at Jewish institutions and events. Similarly, antisemitism is cited as one of the main barriers to living a free Jewish life. Specific groups' opposition to Jews as well as a lack of understanding of Judaism in society in general are cited as key barriers by just over one in three respondents.

Differences can be observed across age groups. While 67 % of the 18-39-year-olds and 64 % of the 40-59-year-olds agree that there are significant barriers to living a free Jewish life in Denmark, fewer 60+year-olds (44 %) share this view.

Only 35 % of the respondents believe that there is a high degree of religious freedom for Jews. On the other hand, the vast majority of the respondents consider that both Muslims and Christians in Denmark enjoy a high degree of religious freedom (82 % and 97 %, respectively).

Three out of four respondents believe that potential future bans preventing the practice of key Jewish traditions would constitute a restriction on a free Jewish life. This includes circumcision of male infants and the import of kosher-products that allows for compliance of kosher rules.

2 Conclusion and recommendations

Jews, and thus Jewish religion and culture, have been a part of Denmark for more than 400 years. This survey indicates that Jewish culture is still very much alive: Almost all of the survey respondents indicate that they practise Jewish traditions and have a strong and vibrant Jewish identity.

Yet the survey also sends a different message: Jews in Denmark face significant barriers to living a free Jewish life in the way they would like.

The results from this survey show that the biggest barrier to living a Jewish life is rooted in antisemitism. The survey indicates that antisemitism is widespread and takes many forms, in some cases manifesting itself in personal attacks in the form of name-calling, threats, harassment, and violence. Antisemitism has an impact on how Jews are present and act in the public sphere, in the workplace or place of education, and even among friends and acquaintances. Antisemitism can have major psychological consequences and result in fear, both for those directly affected, but also for those who know someone who has experienced antisemitism. The fear of being exposed to antisemitism affects individuals, their family and friends, as well as Jewish communities and institutions. Antisemitism restricts the space for living a Jewish life, including the possibility to assemble and the possibility to express oneself, to stand by one's Jewish identity, and to practise Jewish culture and religion. Antisemitism has major consequences, especially for the younger respondents of the survey.

An overriding theme in the respondents' answers is the current security threat, which has been on the rise for the past 10 years. Today, the synagogue on Krystalgade and other Jewish locations are under constant military and police guard. Similarly, many events must be held under police protection. There are no other minorities in Denmark living under the same level of security threat.

To sum up, Jews in Denmark have in some areas limited possibilities for living a Jewish life.

Recommendations

The Danish state is obligated by the Danish Constitution and international human rights conventions to ensure that its citizens are not subjected to hatred or discrimination, including hatred and discrimination rooted in antisemitism. The state is also obligated to ensure that all citizens can enjoy their rights on an equal footing with others. In recent years, several international bodies have pointed out that Denmark should do more to strengthen religious pluralism. For example, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief has recommended that Danish lawmakers and authorities do more to promote tolerance and inclusion of religious and ethnic minorities. The EU has also developed a two-stringed strategy that calls on all Member States to combat antisemitism and "foster Jewish life", in the sense that states must actively support conditions for Jewish life to thrive.

Based on the results of the present survey, the recommendations of the Danish Institute for Human Rights to the government are presented below. The recommendations address antisemitism as well as other barriers where the state has an obligation to break down such barriers, thereby strengthening Jewish life.

Initially, it should be noted that the recommendations do not include state security measures in response to the security threat to Jews and Jewish institutions. The security situation is handled by the police, The Danish Security and Intelligence Service, and other state bodies. It is beyond the scope of this report and the Institute's mandate to advise the government in this field.

Evaluation of the Action Plan and selection of initiatives to be made permanent

There are no easy solutions when it comes to combating antisemitism and discrimination, and strengthening Jewish life. A multifaceted effort is needed to ensure that Jews can live a free Jewish life. Accordingly, the government launched an Action Plan against Antisemitism in 2022. The action plan included 15 initiatives and involved seven ministries and many other actors, including civil society. To complement the action plan, a political agreement with further initiatives was reached in 2024.

The majority of the initiatives will conclude by the end of 2025. However, combating antisemitism requires not only a multifaceted effort, but also a long-term commitment. To ensure this, key aspects of the action plan and the political agreement should be made permanent.

A prior and thorough evaluation of the efforts made so far is necessary to target and strengthen future and permanent efforts. In this regard, inspiration may come from the other Scandinavian countries. In Norway, a thorough evaluation of the Norwegian National Action Plan Against Antisemitism 2016–2023 was carried out in 2023,⁴ whereas the National Strategy for Supporting Jewish Life in Sweden, to be implemented in the period from 2025 to 2034, includes the recommendation that the implementation of the strategy be evaluated halfway through.⁵

Recommendation: The Action Plan should be evaluated and selected initiatives made permanent

The Danish Institute for Human Rights recommends that the government:

1. Initiates a systematic evaluation of the initiatives in the Action Plan against Antisemitism and the political agreement, centralising the evaluation, for instance with the national coordinator appointed in the Action Plan.
2. Ensures, based on the evaluation, that central parts of the action plan and political agreement are made permanent. A priority should be educational and awareness-raising initiatives as well as bridge-building activities for children, young people as well as adults.

A need for stronger action among children and young people

The results of the survey demonstrate significant generational differences with regard to the respondents' views on Jewish life in 2025. Particularly the younger respondents between the age of 18 and 39 experience barriers to living a free Jewish life.

First, the young respondents indicate that they identify as Jewish in more ways than the older respondents. Second, they are more likely to find it difficult to be accepted in non-Jewish settings and as a direct result they have more often sought out Jewish environments. Third, a higher proportion of younger respondents indicate that they have experienced discrimination, and social exclusion as well as threats, violence, and vandalism. They exercise greater regulation of their behaviour and are more likely to indicate that there are significant barriers to living a Jewish life.

The exact reasons for the inter-generational differences are difficult to pinpoint. General societal trends may play a role, such as lower well-being and greater anxiety among young people influenced by social media and for instance the climate crisis. Young people are also more aware of their identity and are more likely to be in places where discrimination can occur, such as educational institutions, workplaces, shopping, and nightlife.

There are also special circumstances at play for Jewish youth. Many have lived half their lives in the period following the terrorist attack and the killing of a Jewish guard at the synagogue in 2015. Currently, after 7 October 2023, they are confronted with the increase of antisemitism. The survey results emphasise how young Jews are increasingly facing challenges at a time when the conflict in the Middle East and the war in Gaza have penetrated many different spheres of everyday life, from education to the workplace and social media.

The survey also shows that more than one in three respondents states that a lack of understanding of Judaism in the general population constitute a significant barrier to living a free Jewish life. This finding is supported by research showing that Judaism and Jewish history in the Danish educational system is under-prioritised.⁶

An early intervention is thus crucial in order to combat antisemitism as well as preparing children and young people to citizenship and democracy. When making initiatives from the Action Plan against Antisemitism permanent, special focus should therefore be placed on the educational sector, primary as well as secondary education, see recommendation 2. For example, this applies to the continuation of the Ministry of Children and Education's efforts to train teachers so that they are equipped to prevent conflicts in schools and promote a respectful atmosphere devoid of antisemitism.

The efforts to combat antisemitism and disseminate knowledge about Jewish life across the school and education sector could benefit from being coordinated by an antisemitism coordinator – similar to the coordinator concerning hate crimes at the police. Such a coordinator may be tasked with coordinating efforts to prevent and combat antisemitism and ensure dissemination of information in schools and educational institutions.

Recommendation: Antisemitism coordinator for schools and youth education

The Danish Institute for Human Rights recommends that the government:

3. Appoints an antisemitism coordinator for schools and youth education, for example anchored in the Ministry of Children and Education or the Danish Agency for Education and Quality. The coordinator should ensure the prevention of antisemitism in schools and youth education, and ensure that knowledge about Judaism and Jewish life in Denmark is disseminated to schools.

Actions to combat antisemitism, discrimination, and conflict in workplaces and educational institutions

The Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination and harassment based on, *inter alia*, ethnicity, nationality, and religion in workplaces and educational institutions. This includes prohibiting less favourable treatment on the basis of origin, religion, or belief in relation to employment, pay, and other working conditions. For example, an employer cannot reject a job applicant because they are Jewish, or discriminate on the basis of religious beliefs. The law also protects against harassment that involves degrading behaviour, such as insulting remarks or jokes directed at a person's Jewish background.

The survey results show that antisemitism is also present in workplaces and educational institutions such as universities. Furthermore, 14 % of those who experienced or witnessed antisemitism in public or physical spaces in the past year indicate that the perpetrator was a colleague, 37 % say they are less able or unable to be open about their Jewish identity with colleagues to the extent that they would like to be. Of those who had experienced hate-motivated attacks in the form of name-calling, threats, or harassment in physical or public spaces, 13 % said the perpetrator was a fellow student. A study from FRA also found that Jews are most likely to experience discrimination in the workplace, including when applying for jobs.⁷

Similarly, the qualitative responses from respondents show that the conflict in the Middle East creates challenges in the workplace and can be difficult for management to handle. In some cases, management decisions can be inappropriate and lead to discrimination and restriction of employees' freedom of speech.

Recommendation: Initiatives targeting workplaces and educational institutions

The Danish Institute for Human Rights recommends that the government:

4. Launches initiatives targeting workplaces and educational institutions to ensure that they have the tools to address antisemitism as well as conflicts related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, so that workers and students do not face discrimination, social exclusion, or stigmatisation. Such initiatives can for instance be carried out under the auspices of the Danish Working Environment Authority.

Establishment of a centre for the prevention of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance and the promotion of citizenship

There is currently no independent centre tasked with collecting and disseminating research and knowledge about antisemitism, with the aim of combatting and preventing antisemitism in Danish society.⁸ These tasks were to some extent handled by the Danish Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies between 2003–2012, subsequently by the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) until around 10 years ago.

In a report on international research on antisemitism, the Centre for Documentation and Counter Extremism identifies a normalisation of antisemitism among the general population, particularly through social media and antisemitic narratives.⁹ The present survey suggests a similar trend as far as Denmark is concerned: the antisemitism experienced by the respondents can be found in all areas of life, including in the public sphere, on social media, and at the work place. The survey also indicates that the attacks on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent war in Gaza have worsened the situation.

The survey indicates that antisemitism has major consequences for those exposed to it. But antisemitism also has consequences for our society as a whole. The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief stated in his report on antisemitism of 2019 that “[a]ntisemitism is toxic to democracy,” and that if states do not actively and effectively combat antisemitism, this will pose a risk not only to Jews but also other minority groups, undermining peace and security for all.¹⁰

The statement of the Special Rapporteur should be seen in connection with international research which shows that antisemitism is a mainstay of extremist beliefs and groups and that it both legitimises and promotes violence in various ways.¹¹ As a result, Jews are not the only target; other minorities may also be targeted.

The fight against antisemitism must therefore be seen as part of a larger effort to strengthen the understanding of democracy, citizenship, and tolerance among children, young people, and adults. This necessity is underpinned by the Special Rapporteur, who recommends that UN member states adopt a human rights approach to combating antisemitism. This includes taking steps to create a society of citizens who “collectively reject antisemitism and other forms of intolerance and discrimination.”¹²

This survey has highlighted that antisemitism as a barrier to Jewish life goes hand in hand with a lack of knowledge about Judaism and Jewish culture in Denmark. For example, more than one in three of the respondents express the view that a lack of understanding of Judaism in the population is a significant barrier to living a free Jewish life in Denmark. Thus, there is a need, not only for a strengthening of the democratic resilience of the Danish population but also for a deepening knowledge about Danish Judaism and culture as a part of the Danish history as well as of today’s society.

Inspiration for the establishment of a centre may be gathered from our neighbouring countries, for instance Sweden, where history is seen as an important tool in creating a society free of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance. In 2003, the Swedish government established the Living History Forum, mandated to promote democracy, human rights, and equal worth. The Living History Forum works to combat intolerance

in society at large, including through learning from the Holocaust and history, through exhibitions and studies, for instance on the conditions and experiences of Jews and antisemitism in Sweden.¹³

Recommendation: Establishment of a centre for the prevention of antisemitism and other forms of intolerance and the promotion of citizenship

The Danish Institute for Human Rights recommends that the government:

5. Establishes an independent centre with the mandate to combat – in collaboration with researchers, educators, and other actors - antisemitism and other forms of intolerance as well as strengthening citizenship through education, information, and dissemination of research. It is recommended that prior to the establishment of the centre, a consultative group is formed in order to include the relevant actors.

A need for better knowledge and an ongoing focus on Jewish life conditions

This study is the first major empirical study of the conditions and experiences of Jews in Denmark since 1973. The study does not provide an exhaustive answer to what barriers Jews in Denmark experience and how to prevent them from existing, but should be seen as a first step that highlights the need for more knowledge.

In order to address and meet the challenges experienced there is a need for thorough knowledge of Jewish life in Denmark and a possibility to monitor the development over time. It is the hope that this study can inspire further research into Jews' conditions as well as experiences of antisemitism and discrimination.

Recommendation: Better knowledge about the conditions and experiences of Jews

The Danish Institute for Human Rights recommends that the government:

6. Ensures that periodic surveys of Jews' conditions and experiences are conducted with a focus on experiences of antisemitism and discriminatory treatment in Denmark. The aim should be to create a strong knowledge base about Jewish life in Denmark with the aim of combatting antisemitism and strengthen Jewish life.

A need for better knowledge and improved registration of hate crimes

Jews as well as other religious and ethnic minorities, are protected from hate crimes by law and the state is obligated to prevent hate crimes from happening. In this survey, 12 % of respondents state that in the last 12 months they have experienced or witnessed incidents that could be categorised as perceived hate crimes (threats, violence, or vandalism). That

number is even higher among respondents with more visible characteristics that could lead people to assume they are Jewish.

However, many respondents state they have not reported the most recent antisemitic incident to the police, even though they view the incident as potentially a criminal offence.

Our findings are supported by reports from AKVAH, which recorded a sharp increase in antisemitic incidents in 2024,¹⁴ and by the Danish Police, who filed a very large number of charges (59) for hate crimes related to Judaism from 7 October 2023 onwards and received far more reports over the same period.¹⁵

However, statistics on this area show that there is still a significant discrepancy between the extent of reported experienced hate crimes in the Ministry of Justice's victim surveys and the amount of registered hate crimes as reported to the police. This may be due both to victims not reporting a hate crime as well as to victims reporting a hate crime which is subsequently not registered by the police as such. For example, there may be cases where the incident is registered and investigated as a violent crime without a hate motive. In Denmark hate crimes are not classified as a separate crime type but rather as an aggravating factor.

In other countries, the registration of hate crimes has been strengthened in order to bring more cases to the attention of the police and to strengthen the trust between minority groups and the police. In England, the police are required to mark a report as a hate crime if the victim - or others who had witnessed the incident - views the incidence as a hate crime. In other words, it is a model based on the victim's own experiences of the incident (or the experience of others who witnessed the incident). The case will then be investigated. It follows that a marking in itself does not provide the legal basis for classifying the incident as a hate crime. In Sweden, a pop-up box appears in the internal registration system for all reports, and the police officer receiving the report must indicate whether the case may be a hate motive. The registration of the case can only be completed when the police officer has made this determination. The marking can be added or deleted in the investigation that follows. The Swedish police registered 2,695 hate crimes in 2022 whilst 487 cases of hate crimes were registered in Denmark. If one adjusts for the size of the population, it corresponds to more than three times as many hate crimes being registered in Sweden as in Denmark.

In Denmark, there is no similar registration practice. Registration therefore depends more on whether the victim themselves states that the incidence has a hate motive and feels safe reporting the case as such, and whether the police register the case as a hate crime. Due to the lack of systematic registration, it is difficult to investigate both how victims experience reporting hate crimes and how the cases progress through the justice system.

A more effective registration of hate crimes will enhance the chance of victims of hate crimes to experience that it is worthwhile to report an incident. It will strengthen the investigation and combat hate crimes as well as ensuring that the victims have trust in the justice system.

In addition, we know very little about where the hate crimes take place, who are behind them, and what happened in the situation. Substantial insight into these aspects of hate

crimes is crucial to prevent similar cases. This also applies to insight into the conditions under which antisemitic attitudes may escalate into hate crimes.

Recommendation: Improved registration and more knowledge about hate crimes

The Danish Institute for Human Rights recommends that the government:

Makes it mandatory for the Danish Police to register a case as a potential hate crime when a victim reports a case as such, similar to the practice of, for instance, Sweden and England.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice initiates a review of experienced hate crimes, cases registered by the police as hate crimes, and convictions of hate crime in courts, the aim being to improve knowledge and enable targeted efforts of prevention of hate crimes.

Endnotes

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