



Antisemitism among Muslims in Germany before and after October 7, 2023

An analysis based on an unexpected event during survey design

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Abstract October 7, 2023 is regarded as the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Shoah and marks a historical turning point. Since then, the repercussions of this terrorist attack and the subsequent Hamas-Israel war have been intensely debated. Antisemitic and violence-glorifying incidents in certain Muslim-migrant milieus have triggered emotionally charged debates on so-called “Muslim antisemitism.” However, little is known so far about the broader impact of October 7 and the war on the Muslim population in Germany. This study is based on a secondary analysis of the dataset *Muslim Faith in Germany*, collected between July 2023 and April 2024, and allows for a quasi-experimental before-and-after comparison in line with the Unexpected Event During Survey Design ($N = 712$ before, $N = 1119$ after October 7). The findings indicate that antisemitism among Muslims in Germany has changed significantly but only marginally since October 7, 2023, with consistently high approval rates between 30% and 35% for pronounced traditional antisemitism and between 23% and 19% for pronounced Israel-related antisemitism. Striking is the notable increase in radicalization potential: antisemitism—particularly in its Israel-related form—is significantly more strongly associated after October 7 with willingness to participate in unauthorized demonstrations, readiness for self-sacrifice, sympathies for Islamist actors, and acceptance of violence and terrorism as a means to enforce Muslim interests. Regression analyses show that especially lacking political integration, high fundamentalism, and threat perception are significantly associated with antisemitism after October 7. Implications for research and practice are discussed,

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regarding the strengthening of political trust, the dismantling of fundamentalism, and the reduction of collective threat perceptions.

Keywords Antisemitism · Hostility towards Israel · Muslims · October 7, 2023 · Unexpected Event During Survey Design

Antisemitismus unter Muslimen in Deutschland vor und nach dem 7. Oktober 2023

Eine Analyse auf Basis eines „Unexpected Event during Survey Design“

Zusammenfassung Der 7. Oktober 2023 gilt als das schwerste Massaker an Jüdinnen und Juden seit der Schoa und markiert daher eine Zäsur. Seither werden die Auswirkungen dieses Terroranschlags und des anschließenden Hamas-Israel-Krieges intensiv diskutiert. Insbesondere antisemitische und gewaltverherrlichende Vorfälle in bestimmten muslimisch-migrantischen Milieus haben emotional aufgeladene Debatten über den ‚muslimischen Antisemitismus‘ ausgelöst. Über die Breitenwirkung des 7. Oktober und des Krieges auf die muslimische Bevölkerung in Deutschland ist bislang jedoch wenig bekannt. Die Studie basiert auf einer Sekundäranalyse des Datensatzes ‚Muslimischer Glaube in Deutschland‘, erhoben von Juli 2023 bis April 2024, und erlaubt einen quasi-experimentellen Vorher-Nachher-Vergleich im Sinne des Unexpected Event During Survey Designs ($N=712$ vor, $N=1119$ nach dem 7. Oktober). Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass sich der Antisemitismus unter Muslim*innen in Deutschland seit dem 7. Oktober 2023 zwar signifikant, jedoch nur marginal verändert hat, mit weiterhin hohen Zustimmungsraten zwischen 30 und 35 % für ausgeprägten traditionellen Antisemitismus und zwischen 23 und 19 % für ausgeprägten israelbezogenen Antisemitismus. Auffällig ist jedoch ein deutlich gestiegenes Radikalisierungspotenzial: Antisemitismus – insbesondere in seiner israelbezogenen Form – steht nach dem 7. Oktober signifikant stärker im Zusammenhang mit der Bereitschaft zur Teilnahme an nicht genehmigten Demonstrationen, zur Selbstaufopferung, mit Sympathien für islamistische Akteure sowie mit der Akzeptanz von Gewalt und Terror zur Durchsetzung muslimischer Interessen. Regressionsanalysen zeigen, dass insbesondere mangelnde politische Integration, hoher Fundamentalismus sowie Bedrohungswahrnehmung nach dem 7. Oktober mit Antisemitismus zusammenhängen. Aus diesen Befunden werden abschließend Implikationen für Forschung und Praxis abgeleitet – insbesondere mit Blick auf die Stärkung politischen Vertrauens, das Aufbrechen fundamentalistischer Religiosität sowie die Reduktion kollektiver Bedrohungswahrnehmungen.

Schlüsselwörter Antisemitismus · Israelfeindlichkeit · Muslime · 7. Oktober 2023 · Unexpected Event During Survey Design

1 Introduction

On the morning of Saturday, October 7, 2023, a massive rocket attack by Hamas from the Gaza Strip on Israel began. At the same time, thousands of armed terrorists breached the border installations from the Gaza Strip into Israel. What followed was one of the deadliest terrorist attacks in recent history: civilians—including women, men, children, and elderly people—were systematically assaulted, raped, and mutilated. Approximately 1200 people were killed in often gruesome ways, and over 5000 were injured, some severely. Numerous individuals were abducted—some alive as hostages, others dead as macabre trophies—and taken into the Gaza Strip, where they were publicly displayed and subjected to dehumanizing humiliation by enraged crowds. The perpetrators recorded many of their actions on video and deliberately circulated them via social media as a ‘heroic operation’ (Barnea 2024). This terrorist act, referred to as the “Black Sabbath,” represents the deadliest massacre of Jews since the Shoah and marks a historical turning point, as it signifies a “completely new dimension of eliminatory hostility toward Israel” (Jikeli and Glöckner 2025, p. 7, translated by the authors).

Since October 7, 2023 (synonym: October 7), the effects of this terrorist attack, as well as the ensuing acts of war, have been discussed intensively and controversially both in Germany and worldwide. The reactions were marked by shock, grief, and revulsion (Halioua et al. 2025)—far beyond the Jewish diaspora. In Germany, large parts of both political decision-makers and civil society actors expressed their solidarity with the victims in Israel and with their relatives around the world (Jikeli and Glöckner 2025).

At the same time, however, voices also emerged in Germany that openly celebrated the terrorist attack. For example, the Islamist organization *Samidoun* celebrated the attack in the Berlin district of Neukölln, a neighborhood strongly shaped by Muslim-migrant communities, by handing out sweets (Tagesschau 2023b). In parallel, a perpetrator-victim reversal took place: Hamas was increasingly portrayed as a legitimate resistance organization, while Israel was delegitimized as a state whose existence was allegedly based on the destruction of the Palestinian people (Ourghi 2025). The terrorist attack seemed to act as a catalyst, encouraging antisemites to express their hatred publicly. At pro-Palestinian demonstrations, in which numerous Muslims in Germany continue to participate, antisemitic slogans and symbols were repeatedly displayed openly (RIAS North Rhine-Westphalia 2025), as well as acts of violence being committed (Kanol et al. 2025; RBB 2025). This mobilization was also reflected in a drastic increase in antisemitically motivated crimes, which began immediately after October 7, i.e., even before the start of the Israeli ground offensive in Gaza on October 28 (Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism 2023; Jikeli 2024).

Such incidents in certain Muslim-migrant milieus, in particular, have triggered emotionally charged debates about so-called “imported antisemitism” or “Muslim¹ antisemitism”—terms that are met with references to anti-Muslim racism (see Öztürk

¹ Some scholars, such as Ourghi (2023), advance the view that antisemitism is specifically “Muslim” or “Islamic,” a position that has been subject to extensive critique because it assumes an intrinsic Qur’anic

and Pickel 2024a). Despite the visible mobilization on the streets, little is so far known about the broader impact of October 7 and the subsequent Hamas-Israel war on the Muslim population in Germany. In view of the societal controversies, however, it would be of central importance to examine whether the terrorist attack on October 7 led to a widespread increase in antisemitism among Muslims, or whether the pro-Palestinian protests primarily represent radicalized, activist fringe phenomena.

The present study is a secondary analysis of the dataset Muslim Faith in Germany (Pollack et al. 2024a), collected as part of the project “Ressentiment as an Affective Basis of Radicalization”, within the survey period from July 2023 to April 2024, thus encompassing October 7, 2023. The dataset is unique for Germany: with a large sample of Muslims with a migration background, it measured not only traditional and Israel-related antisemitism but also social structure, country of origin, religiosity, experiences of discrimination, and numerous indicators of radicalization. This data therefore allows a rare quasi-experimental before-and-after comparison with regard to October 7. Before the analysis is deepened using the framework of the Unexpected Event During Survey Design (Muñoz et al. 2020), the social-scientific empirical state of research on antisemitism among Muslims is first presented, focusing on prevalence, possible explanatory factors, and changes.

2 Definition and theoretical differentiation of antisemitism

In many scientific studies, antisemitism is defined in accordance with the definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (2016), which states: “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.” Such perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes can serve as a starting point for violent actions, which may be expressed in attacks on Jews and their property, on religious facilities, community institutions, or even the state of Israel, which antisemitic individuals perceive as the embodiment of Jewish self-determination. According to Adorno (2003), antisemitism is not limited to the level of attitudes alone but can lead to devaluation, discrimination, exclusion, murder, or even genocide against Jews.

Antisemitism is a mutable phenomenon (Bergmann and Erb 1991). Current research usually distinguishes between three forms: traditional (also: primary), secondary, and Israel-related antisemitism (Kiess et al. 2020). Traditional antisemitism is based on the notion that Jews possess excessive power and are characterized by particular cunning, destructive influence, and a pronounced internal cohesion. Such attributions often have conspiratorial features and serve societal devaluation and exclusion (see Öztürk and Pickel 2024a). Secondary antisemitism has so far been

hostility toward Jews. In contrast, others, including Arnold and Kiefer (2024), use the term “Islamized antisemitism” to highlight that anti-Jewish attitudes are not inherent to Islam but have been shaped within particular historical and ideological contexts.

understood as a characteristic of post-national-socialist German society. This form of antisemitism is marked by the refusal to acknowledge German responsibility for the National Socialist crimes and is fueled by a need to relativize or repress one's own perpetrator history. It can also manifest in reinterpretations of historical contexts, for example in perpetrator-victim reversals, ahistorical equations of the consequences of war and the Holocaust, as well as in calls to 'finally close' the memory of the NS crimes (Bergmann and Erb 1991). Lastly, Israel-related antisemitism appears in disproportionate criticism of Israeli policies that far exceeds legitimate debate. Unlike justified criticism of the Israeli government, a double standard is applied, Israel is demonized, or even its right to exist is denied (Sharansky 2004).

It remains questionable whether secondary antisemitism refers exclusively to the specific German situation after the Second World War. In particular, it is unclear whether common items (e.g., "It makes me angry that the expulsion of Germans and the bombing of German cities are always considered lesser crimes," see Öztürk and Pickel 2024a) can validly capture antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background. Due to partly uncertain measurement validity, the present dataset does not include items on secondary antisemitism. The focus in the following is therefore solely on traditional and Israel-related antisemitism.

3 State of social-scientific research

3.1 Prevalence of antisemitism among Muslims in Germany

The prevalence of antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany has been examined in several studies (e.g., Czymara et al. 2025; Demmrich and Şenel *in press*; Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Fischer et al. 2024; Kleinschnittger et al. 2025; Öztürk and Pickel 2023; Şenel and Demmrich 2024). Approval rates for traditional antisemitism vary between just over 20% (Kleinschnittger et al. 2025) and well above 50% (Friedrichs and Storz 2022; Öztürk and Pickel 2024a). In the few studies that also measure Israel-related antisemitism among Muslims in Germany, approval rates range between 37% (Öztürk and Pickel 2022) and around 70% (Bertelsmann Foundation 2023; Öztürk and Pickel 2024a). At the same time, differentiating tendencies can be observed within the Muslim community in Germany: compared to the overall Muslim population, lower approval rates with Israel-related antisemitism are found among young Muslims (Fischer et al. 2024) as well as among Muslim students (Hinz et al. 2024).

The sometimes considerable ranges in the prevalence rates of both forms of antisemitism can be attributed to a variety of methodological differences—such as the specific items used to measure antisemitism, the breadth of the response scales and their analysis, and the criteria by which individuals were classified as "open to antisemitism," "latent," "pronounced," or "strongly" antisemitic. Added to this is the question of the representativeness of the respective datasets: Muslims are often included only as a subsample and in some surveys constitute very small subgroups (e.g., Bertelsmann Foundation 2023; Hinz et al. 2024, 2025).

Independent of these operationalization and representativeness issues, it is consistently evident that both traditional and Israel-related antisemitism are considerably more pronounced among Muslims in Germany than in the general German population, where corresponding prevalence rates are around 10% (traditional; Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Wetzels 2024) and 20% (Israel-related, Hinz et al. 2024; Öztürk und Pickel 2024a).

3.2 Explaining factors of antisemitism among Muslims

Two main sources are usually cited to explain the elevated prevalence of antisemitism among Muslims: First, narratives from the countries of origin—or the countries of origin of the parents or grandparents, respectively—geographically close to Israel, i.e., the Middle East or the broader MENA region, are considered causal (Hinz et al. 2024; Öztürk and Pickel 2022). These narratives are frequently transmitted within families and educational institutions in many societies of this region (Arnold and König 2016) and can solidify into societal norms (Jikeli 2025). Consequently, studies on Muslims in Germany also attempt to include origin-related variables, foremost the migrant generation (first versus second/third generation) or the region of origin of the Muslims (or their parents or grandparents). Regarding migrant generation, findings indicate that antisemitism is more widespread in the first generation than in the second or third generation, i.e., among those Muslims socialized in Germany (e.g., Koopmans 2015; Friedrichs and Storz 2022; Jikeli 2024). With respect to region of origin, however, results are contradictory: while some studies found a correlation between antisemitism and a migration background from the MENA region (Bertelsmann Foundation 2023; Arnold and König 2016; Czymara et al. 2025; Friedrichs and Storz 2022), others found no significant relation (Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Öztürk and Pickel 2024a). It is critical that the studies reporting significant correlations are mostly based on very small subsamples (with the exception of Friedrichs and Storz 2022, whose data were also reanalyzed by Czymara et al. 2025).

As a second cause of elevated prevalence of antisemitism among Muslims, religious sources are frequently cited, ranging from antisemitic verses in the religious texts of the Qur'an and Sunna to their Islamist instrumentalization (Fischer et al. 2024; Öztürk and Pickel 2022). Previous empirical findings indicate a correlation between antisemitism and Muslim religious affiliation (Czymara et al. 2025; Hinz et al. 2025; Höbl 2020; Öztürk and Pickel 2023, 2024a). Moreover, studies suggest that the relationship between antisemitism and individual religiosity (Bertelsmann Foundation 2023; Czymara et al. 2025; Friedrichs and Storz 2022) is most likely attributable to higher levels of fundamentalism among highly religious individuals (Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Hinz et al. 2024, 2025; Jikeli 2024; Öztürk and Pickel 2022, 2024a). In addition, collective religiosity—particularly the frequency of mosque attendance (Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Jikeli 2024), but also affiliation with Turkish-Islamic mosque associations (Demmrich and Şenel *in press*)—is associated with antisemitism. Finally, antisemitism appears to co-occur with radicalization, for example with Islamist positions that endorse violence (Demmrich and Şenel *in press*).

The discrimination hypothesis is considered rather controversial. It assumes that experiences of discrimination, which many Muslims face, can provide a breeding ground for antisemitism (Öztürk and Pickel 2024a; Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism 2017). Such a relationship is often explained through a notion of victim competition: Muslims may get the impression that antisemitism is taken more seriously in German society than prejudice against Muslims, and react to this perception with antisemitism. Some qualitative studies on antisemitism among refugees in Germany, who are predominantly Muslim, even show reverse relationships: discriminated minorities may express solidarity with other discriminated groups and thereby develop fewer prejudices toward them (Arnold and König 2016; Jikeli 2017, 2025). Other studies, however, find no correlations: discrimination does not appear to be decisive for antisemitism among Muslims in Europe and the USA, as shown by Jikeli (2024) in his analysis of 33 empirical studies. Similarly, the team around Wetzels found no corresponding relationships among Muslims in Germany (Fischer and Wetzels 2023, 2024; Fischer et al. 2024), nor did Demmrich and Şenel (*in press*). Yet Öztürk and Pickel (2022, 2023, 2024a), mostly based on data from the Leipzig Authoritarianism Study, found positive correlations between antisemitism and perceived discrimination.

A key to clarifying these contradictory findings may lie in distinguishing between concrete experiences of discrimination on the one hand and vicarious discrimination narratives, perceptions of marginalization, or feelings of threat on the other hand: while concrete experiences are probably not associated with antisemitism (Demmrich and Şenel *in press*), positive, sometimes strong correlations are observed with vicarious discrimination, which targets identification with the collectively perceived discriminated group of Muslims (Arnold and König 2016), as well as correlations with feelings of threat and rather diffuse anxieties (Öztürk and Pickel 2024a; for a comparative perspective see Öztürk *in press*).

Other explanatory factors, which largely overlap with general research on antisemitism (see Beyer 2015) but cannot be considered in the present study, include authoritarianism (Öztürk and Pickel 2022, 2023, 2024a) and conspiratorial thinking. Previous studies have demonstrated particularly robust links between antisemitism and conspiracy mentality or belief in conspiracy myths, showing that both narratives mutually reinforce each other (Öztürk and Pickel 2023, 2024a). This pattern is also evident beyond Muslim samples (Fischer and Wetzels 2024). Furthermore, Demmrich and Şenel (*in press*) showed that high in-group entitativity and a lack of intra-Islamic critical capacity are significantly correlated with antisemitism among prospective Islamic theologians and religious teachers.

Compared to the general population, Muslims show only weak or no correlations between antisemitism and socio-structural characteristics such as education, gender, or age (Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Jikeli 2024; Wetzels 2024). However, Czymara et al. (2025) were able to identify an education effect.

3.3 Changes in antisemitism among Muslims

While knowledge gaps or false beliefs can be relatively easily corrected through education or arguments, an antisemitic worldview is characterized by strong emo-

tional rooting and a conspiratorial charge (Jikeli 2025). It serves the construction of personal and social identity *ex negativo* (see Beyer 2015), so a certain stability of antisemitism among Muslims (and other groups) can be assumed. At the same time, empirical studies indicate that the prevalence of antisemitism among Muslims in Germany does appear to be subject to change over time.

This includes, first, the length of residence of the first migrant generation. Jikeli (2025) shows in his qualitative, partly longitudinal studies of Syrian-origin refugees (predominantly Muslims) that antisemitic beliefs among those with a firmly established antisemitic worldview changed little over a four-year period. Nevertheless, a decrease in intensity and virulence is observable. For example, fewer pro-Nazi statements are recorded, while secondary antisemitism becomes more prominent in forms similar to those in the German majority society. In places where there had previously been adaptation to the antisemitic norm in Syria, a stronger adaptation to the indirect communication patterns within German society now becomes visible. Similarly, a quantitative cross-sectional study by Czymara et al. (2025) indicates a tendency toward lower antisemitism among Muslims with longer residence of the first generation, although this is not statistically significant.

Second, this includes possible changes in antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background as a whole group. The survey “*Menschen in Deutschland (People in Germany)*” found a significant increase over the three survey waves conducted so far (2021, 2022, and 2023) in agreement with one of two measured items of traditional antisemitism among Muslims (Fischer and Wetzels 2024). Specifically, there was a significant increase in agreement with the item “One cannot trust Jews,” from 12.6% in 2021 to 18.6% in 2023. In addition, the authors report in a further publication (Brettfeld et al. 2025) a renewed increase to 24.3% for 2024. However, this increase from 2021 to 2023 was not robust for the second item, “Jews have too much influence in Germany.” The authors attribute the increase in the first item to the Middle East conflict, which was particularly salient in 2021, and refer to a study by the same research team (Richter et al. 2022).

This quasi-experimental study by Richter et al. (2022) shows that antisemitism can change in relation to salient events in Israel and Gaza. The 2021 wave of the aforementioned survey “*Menschen in Deutschland (People in Germany)*”, which included an oversample of Muslims, coincided with the beginning of the 2021 Gaza war. Comparing the group surveyed before April 29 with the group surveyed after May 10 revealed a significant increase in agreement with the statement “One cannot trust Jews” (from 5% to 8%) and a doubling of agreement with the statement “Jews have too much influence in Germany” (from 11% to 22%) *in the general population*. In more detailed analyses, it emerged that affiliation with Islam was the strongest explanatory factor for the increased agreement with both statements. For one of the antisemitism items (“Jews have too much influence in Germany”), the survey period was also an explanatory factor. The authors concluded from this “that part of the effect of the survey period is attributable to the fact that the approval rate for this item changed particularly among Muslims” (Richter et al. 2022, p. 240, translated by the authors). A critical point in this comparison is the strongly unequal subsample sizes: the experimental group comprised only 15% of the total sample, while 85% had to be assigned to the control group. In addition, the experimental

group consisted almost entirely of migrants, which, according to the authors, limits comparability.

Finally, a recent analysis of the survey “*Menschen in Deutschland: International (People in Germany: International)*” confirmed the stability of traditional antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany (Kleinschnittger et al. 2025). This study examined changes in pronounced traditional antisemitism before and after October 7, 2023. Across the three survey waves in January, April, and July 2023 and the three waves in April, July, and September 2024, no significant change in traditional antisemitism was observed in the Muslim subsample, with 23.6% versus 22.0%. A critical point is the long-time span of the comparison, which increases susceptibility to macrostructural confounding factors, making it difficult to draw a concrete conclusion about the influence of October 7 and its subsequent war-related consequences on antisemitism among Muslims in Germany (see Muñoz et al. 2020). Moreover, as in Richter et al. (2022), only traditional antisemitism was measured, not Israel-related antisemitism, which, however, is of exceptional relevance in the current debate (see Fischer et al. 2024; Schwarz-Friesel 2025).

4 The current study

Against the background of statistical literature on the possibilities and limitations of natural experiments (see Muñoz et al. 2020), we aim to conduct an in-depth analysis of antisemitism among Muslims before and after October 7, 2023, using the dataset already mentioned. The data allow particularly good comparability of respondents surveyed before and after October 7 for two reasons: First, due to the sampling procedure, it is not assumed that there are strong biases in the sociodemographic composition between the two groups (i.e., no oversampling of specific groups occurred at any point; cf. Richter et al. 2022). Second, 37.3% of respondents participated before and 59.7% after October 7, which allows for the comparative consideration of two sufficiently and similarly sized groups. Furthermore, our analysis includes not only traditional but also Israel-related antisemitism.

Our first research question is:

1. How did the prevalence of traditional and Israel-related antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany change before versus after October 7, 2023?

Our investigation aims to go far beyond analyzing the relationships between antisemitism and sociodemographic variables. The dataset contains information on a wide range of radicalization variables, such as willingness to participate in authorized and unauthorized demonstrations, various indicators of radicalization with and without violence, and sympathies for Islamist actors. Although previous studies have shown that antisemitism and fundamentalism are correlated (e.g., Öztürk and Pickel 2024a) and that fundamentalism among Muslims is a significant predictor of their radicalization (e.g., Demmrich and Hanel 2024), there is so far a lack of studies examining the relationship between antisemitism and radicalization. The few existing

studies show that antisemitism is strongly associated with pro-violence Islamist and other anti-systemic attitudes (Öztürk and Pickel 2024b). Whether this has changed in the context of the terrorist attack on October 7 is questionable. From this arises our second research question:

2. Have the relationships between antisemitism and radicalization among Muslims in Germany changed before versus after October 7, 2023?

Finally, we examine the explanatory factors for antisemitism before and after October 7. In doing so, we build on previous studies and include not only sociodemographic variables but also origin-related variables, integration indicators, religious factors, as well as experiences and perceptions of discrimination. Thus, the third research question is:

3. Have the explanatory factors (social structure, origin, integration, religion, discrimination) for antisemitism among Muslims in Germany changed after October 7, 2023?

5 Method

5.1 Data collection and sample

The survey was conducted between July 2023 and April 2024 by the Institute for Applied Social Sciences GmbH (infas). The target population consisted of adults living in private households. The sample was drawn from an onomastically² pre-qualified gross sample based on randomly selected municipalities and registration offices (195 sampling points in 178 municipalities). The final selection was based on self-reported Muslim identity and migration background, with either the respondent themselves or at least one parent or grandparent having to originate from a country other than Germany.

The survey was conducted by sending personal invitation letters to participate in an online questionnaire (computer-assisted web interview, short: CAWI), supplemented by reminder letters and the option to complete a paper questionnaire (paper-pencil interview, short: PAPI). Contact with the target persons was made in three waves, with the initial invitations sent on the following dates: Wave 1 on July 19, 2023, Wave 2 on November 16, 2023, and Wave 3 on February 20, 2024. Participants were free to complete the questionnaire in one of the offered languages—German, Turkish, Arabic, or French. To correct for biases due to unequal selection probabilities resulting from the sampling design and selective nonresponse, a multi-step weighting procedure was applied. First, a design weighting of the municipal sample and the selection of individuals was performed based on the general

² The onomastic procedure is based on the assumption that a person's regional origin can be inferred from their name with a certain probability. As part of the prequalification, first and last names from the registration office sample were therefore filtered for associations with countries of Muslim background.

population aged 18 and over. This was followed by a design weighting of the onomastic prequalification. Finally, a nonresponse adjustment was applied to the design weights.

The weighted dataset contains information on $N=1887$ Muslims with a migration background, including 43.6% women and 0.4% individuals with diverse gender identity. The mean age is 39.3 years. 82.5% of respondents identify as Sunni, 5.4% as Shia. The remaining proportions are as follows: 3.4% Alevi with Muslim identity, 1.5% Ahmadiyya, 1.1 % Alawite, 3.4% other, and 2.7% no specification. The methodological report by infas as well as the codebook containing the categories of all collected variables (Pollack et al. 2024a) are available from the corresponding author upon request.

5.2 Measurements

Antisemitism Traditional antisemitism was measured using the item “Jews have too much power and influence in the world” (Swami 2012), which was answered on a six-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. Israel-related antisemitism was assessed with the item “The state of Israel actually has no right to exist,” using the same response format.

Socio-structural variables In addition to gender (male, female, diverse), age (in years), and unemployment (0=no, 1=yes), education was measured using the highest school-leaving qualification obtained in Germany or abroad and classified according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED, UNESCO 2012) (0=no degree, 2=lower secondary, 3=upper secondary, 4=post-secondary and non-tertiary [A-level], 5=university degree).

Origin-related variables Were assessed using migrant generation (if self-immigrated at age 8 or older=1st generation; otherwise 2nd/3rd generation) and the region of origin or parental/grandparental origin (1=of Turkish descent, 2=roots in the MENA region, i.e., North Africa and the Middle East excluding Turkey, 0=other origin).

Integration Linguistic integration was measured with the item “In your own assessment, how well do you understand German?” (Haug et al. 2009) on a scale from 1 = *not at all* to 6 = *very well*³. Emotional integration was assessed following Pollack et al. (2016) using attachment to Germany (“To what extent do you feel connected to Germany?”) and attachment to the country of origin (“To what extent do you feel connected to your country of origin or that of your parents/grandparents?”) on a scale from 1 = *not connected at all* to 6 = *very strongly connected*. Social integration was measured both by the frequency of contact with non-Muslims (“Thinking of your personal contact with non-Muslims, how often do you interact with this group on a scale from 1=no contact to 6=very frequent contact?”) and the quality of these

³ Such a self-assessment is considered a valid indicator (Haug et al. 2009) and also correlates highly in our survey with the interview language (1 = German, 0 = all other languages), $r=0.37***$.

contacts (“How would you evaluate your contacts with non-Muslims overall?”) on a six-point scale from *1 = very negative* to *6 = very positive*. Political integration was measured using two attitudes toward democracy: “Democracy is a good form of government” (reflecting the dimension of legitimacy) and “All in all, I am satisfied with the way democracy works in Germany” (as an indicator for performance assessment; Pickel and Pickel 2021) as well as trust in public institutions and authorities, using a mean scale of six items (“Please indicate how much you personally trust each of the following public institutions or groups of people”—“The Federal Parliament,” “The Federal Government,” “The Judiciary,” “The Police,” “The European Parliament,” “The Media,” from the European Social Survey, see European Union 2021) on an eleven-point scale from *0 = do not trust at all* to *10 = fully trust* ($\alpha = 0.92$).

Religiosity Subjective religiosity was measured with the item “How religious would you describe yourself?” (Pollack et al. 2016) on a seven-point scale from *1 = not at all religious* to *7 = deeply religious*. The frequency of mosque attendance was assessed with “How often do you visit the mosque or Cem house?” (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2013) on a six-point scale from *1 = never* to *6 = every week or more*. Orthodox religiosity (see Pollack et al. 2024b) was calculated as the mean of three items ($\alpha = 0.72$): “I believe in God,” “I follow the religious rules,” and “I believe that everything described in the Quran is true and valid for every age,” all answered on a six-point scale from *1 = strongly disagree* to *6 = strongly agree*. Fundamentalism was measured using the scale from Pollack et al. (2024b), consisting of four items (e.g., “Only Islam is able to solve the problems of our time”) answered on a four-point scale from *1 = strongly disagree* to *4 = strongly agree* ($\alpha = 0.85$).

Discrimination experiences and perceptions Individual experiences of discrimination were assessed with the question: “At this point, we are interested in whether you have had the following personal experiences in the past 12 months.” A mean scale of six items with dichotomous responses (1 = yes, 0 = no; $\alpha = 0.80$) was used: “Have you been disadvantaged as a Muslim by authorities, e.g., the police or immigration office?”; “Have you been deliberately insulted, verbally abused, or harassed by other people because you are Muslim?”; “Have you been physically attacked, e.g., hit, kicked, or otherwise assaulted on the street because you are Muslim?” (adapted from Brettfeld and Wetzels 2007); (for those wearing a headscarf only): “Have you been insulted because of your headscarf?”; “Has your employer or educational institution restricted your religious practices, such as praying or fasting?”; “Have you been accused of being violent because you are Muslim?”. Proxy discrimination was measured using a mean scale of four items: “We Muslims are disadvantaged in Germany”; “As Muslims, we constantly have to justify ourselves in Germany”; “We are constantly suspected by society because we are Muslims” (self-formulated items); and “All over the world, we Muslims experience more discrimination and violence compared to Western people” (Mashuri et al. 2015). The response scale was six-point, ranging from *1 = strongly disagree* to *6 = strongly agree* ($\alpha = 0.88$). Perceived threat was measured using a mean scale (Back and Echterhoff 2018) of six items

(e.g., “As a Muslim in Germany, one must fear social exclusion”; $\alpha = 0.86$) on a six-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*.

The operationalization of radicalization can be found in the notes to Table 3.

5.3 Intervention variable

For time marking, the date of receipt was used for PAPI cases (see Richter et al. 2022) and the date of answering the two antisemitism items for CAWI cases. All participants who completed the questionnaire in the CAWI format answered both antisemitism items on the same day. Since the terrorist attack on October 7, 2023, began at around 5:50 a.m. German time (Barnea 2024) and national as well as international reporting only started later in the morning⁴, CAWI cases that completed the antisemitism items on October 7, 2023, were excluded from the analysis (2.2%; see Muñoz et al. 2020). Furthermore, CAWI cases that started the questionnaire before October 7 but completed the antisemitism items only after October 7, 2023, were excluded (0.4%), as this could violate the statistical ignorability assumption (see Statistical Analysis and Robustness Checks). In addition, PAPI cases from the first tranche (mailing date: July 19, 2023) that were returned after October 7, 2023, were excluded, since it was unclear whether the questionnaire had been completed before, on, or after October 7 (0.4%). This resulted in an intervention variable coded as 0 = *before October 7, 2023* (control group, $n = 712 \hat{=} 37.7\%$) and 1 = *after October 7, 2023* (experimental/treatment group, $n = 1119 \hat{=} 59.3\%$).

5.4 Statistical analysis and robustness checks

The statistical analysis follows the best-practice strategies of the “Unexpected Event During Survey Design” (UESD) by Muñoz et al. (2020). This research design is described as one that “exploits the occurrence of an unexpected event during the fieldwork of a public opinion survey to estimate its causal effect on a relevant outcome by comparing responses of the individuals interviewed before the event $t_i < t_e$ (control group) to those of respondents interviewed after the event $t_i > t_e$ (treatment group).” (Muñoz et al. 2020, p. 187). The UESD provides higher external validity than laboratory experiments because it relies on naturally occurring events. At the same time, it offers higher internal validity, as the exogenous (time-based) assignment of respondents to experimental and control groups helps reduce bias from unobserved confounders or reverse causality. Additionally, it allows for particularly precise conclusions about the immediate effect of the event, as macrostructural confounders weigh less than in longitudinal studies or multiple survey waves around the event (see study by Kleinschnittger et al. 2025).

In order to realize these advantages, certain model assumptions must be satisfied. It should be emphasized that in social science research, key assumptions are rarely fully met—no research design allows for a perfect, bias-free estimation. The

⁴ *Al Jazeera* (2023), a prominent media outlet in the Middle East and the Muslim diaspora, reported at 8:46 a.m. that Hamas had declared an “operation.” From around 10:15 a.m., German media also began reporting on the terrorist attack (Tagesschau 2023a).

objective, therefore, is to minimize potential biases as far as possible, so as to draw robust inferences about the impact of October 7, 2023, and its subsequent military consequences, while ensuring high internal and external validity (Muñoz et al. 2020).

A central model assumption is that the event occurs unexpectedly, that is, unpredictably. Only under this condition are the key assumptions of the UESD design satisfied: *excludability*, which presumes that only the event accounts for changes in the dependent variable, and *ignorability*, which assumes that the unexpected event assigns respondents randomly to the control and treatment groups, meaning that this assignment is not systematically driven by other observed or unobserved factors. The unpredictability of the event must ensure that participants cannot strategically time their survey participation—that is, they cannot control whether they belong to the control or treatment group. This requirement of unpredictability is met in the vast majority of terrorist attacks, including the one under study here, which was not anticipated even by the Israeli government, intelligence services, or the military (Barnea 2024). Indeed, the UESD design has primarily been employed to analyze the consequences of terrorist attacks (Muñoz et al. 2020).

5.5 Addressing the assumption of excludability

Collateral event Central to the assumption of excludability is that no collateral event occurred that could have influenced antisemitism levels among Muslims with a migration background in Germany. In this context, the start of the Israeli ground offensive in Gaza on October 28 is frequently mentioned. However, existing statistics on violent crime and other antisemitic incidents indicate that these rose sharply after October 7, 2023, and not only after October 28 (Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism 2023; Jikeli 2024). Additional collateral events might include the explosion at Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza on October 18 or the pogrom-like riots in Dagestan on October 29, 2023. Accordingly, the potential effects identified in this study should be framed as *consequences of October 7, 2023, and the subsequent Hamas–Israel war on antisemitism among Muslims in Germany*.

Non-compliance to treatment Since October 7, 2023, was a highly salient event with enormous media coverage—globally and particularly for Muslims—we assume that Muslims in the treatment group were, with very high probability, in fact exposed to the event. Nevertheless, we cannot state with certainty that all respondents were actually exposed; hence, we interpret the potential effects as *intent-to-treat effects*. The intent-to-treat effect refers to the difference in average outcomes between the group exposed to the event (treatment group) and the group not exposed (control group)—regardless of whether the event was actually perceived or not.

Time trends As previous qualitative, partly longitudinal studies (Jikeli 2025) and quantitative studies (Kleinschnittger et al. 2025) have shown, antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany exhibits a certain degree of stability. The only increase recorded so far was identified in the analyses of Fischer and

Wetzels for the period 2021 to 2023. This increase was attributed to the escalating Hamas–Israel conflict in April 2021 (see Richter et al. 2022). It cannot be assumed that antisemitism increases over time in the absence of corresponding events. This is also confirmed by our placebo test: for this purpose, the control group was split into two halves at the median of the date variable of the antisemitism items (available only for CAWI cases), July 25, 2023. No significant differences emerged between the group before the median ($n=276$) and the group after ($n=311$)—neither for traditional antisemitism ($F[1,553]=0.50$; $p=0.48$) nor for Israel-related antisemitism ($F[1,541]=1.24$; $p=0.27$).

Effects of the event on other variables To test variables that should not have been affected by the event, we examined German language proficiency and headscarf wearing (among female and diverse Muslims). No differences were found between the control and treatment groups (German language proficiency: $F[1,1806]=2.91$; $p=0.09$; wearing headscarf: $F[1,792]=0.47$; $p=0.50$).

5.6 Addressing the assumption of ignorability

Ignorability is considered a central assumption in causal inference research and posits that the event is assigned randomly, rather than systematically depending on other factors that might also influence the outcome. Since, in this natural quasi-experiment, a randomized assignment of respondents to groups is not possible, the timing of participation should be as random as possible to allow for an unbiased estimation of the causal effect. This means that respondents were neither selected according to specific criteria nor able to assign themselves to the treatment group (Muñoz et al. 2020). The issue of self-assignment was already addressed above in the description of the intervention variable through the exclusion of specific cases. The first potential source of bias—the possibility that confounding factors affected the assignment of respondents to groups—concerns sample selectivity. Sample selectivity occurs when, in the process of sample recruitment, certain individuals are favored or more likely to be included than others. As described in the methods section, the sample was collected in three waves, but without oversampling of specific subgroups at any point in time (in contrast to Richter et al. 2022).

Balance test To assess the comparability of the subsamples before and after the intervention, sociodemographic characteristics were examined for significant differences. No significant differences were found between the subsamples with regard to gender ($F[1,1824]=0.54$, $p=0.46$), nationality (German vs. other; $F[1,1832]=3.40$, $p=0.07$), migration background (Turkey: $F[1,1829]=0.00$, $p=0.99$; MENA: $F[1,1829]=0.06$, $p=0.82$; other: $F[1,1829]=0.08$, $p=0.78$), full-time employment ($F[1,1781]=0.00$, $p=0.996$), part-time employment ($F[1,1781]=0.00$, $p=0.998$), retirement status ($F[1,1781]=0.75$, $p=0.39$), and non-employment due to housework or other reasons ($F[1,1781]=1.25$, $p=0.26$). However, significant differences emerged in several characteristics: respondents in the treatment group are, on average, older ($F[1,1783]=10.79^{***}$), more frequently belong to the first migrant generation ($F[1,1835]=18.21^{***}$), have lower levels of education ($F[1,1609]=6.03^*$),

Table 1 Distribution of traditional Antisemitism scores before versus after October 7, 2023

Answer scale	Traditional antisemitism before October 7				Traditional antisemitism after October 7	
	%	Disagreement (1–3)/ Agreement (4–6)	Strong disagree-ment (1–2)/ Openness (4)/ Strong agreement (5–6)		Disagreement (1–3)/ Agreement (4–6)	Strong disagree-ment (1–2)/ Openness (4)/ Strong agreement (5–6)
1	24.5				24.1	
2	10.0	47.5	34.5		8.3	45.5
3	13.0				13.1	32.4
4	15.8		15.8		11.9	11.9
5	10.1	45.4	29.6		10.4	46.7
6	19.5				24.4	34.8
Missing values	7.0				7.8	

Note. Answer scale: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. Significance tests: Strong disagreement: $F(1,1829)=0.91$; Disagreement: $F(1,1829)=0.71$; Agreement: $F(1,1829)=0.26$; Openness: $F(1,1829)=5.86^*$; Strong agreement: $F(1,1829)=5.29^*$; Missing values: $X^2(1)=0.37$

* $p < 0.05$, all others not significant

are more often unemployed ($F[1,1781]=7.07^{**}$), and are less frequently students or apprentices ($F[1,1781]=10.54^{***}$).

One way to address such undesirable effects is through re-weighting (Muñoz et al. 2020), which aims to align the distribution of the subsamples before and after the intervention with that of the original weighted full sample in terms of the weighting variables (age⁵, education, migrant generation, unemployment). To achieve this, the existing weighting variable (see data collection and sample section) was modified separately for the two subsamples using an iterative procedure (raking; see Deming and Stephan 1940; Kalton and Flores-Cervantes 2003). During the iterations, the distribution of each variable was individually adjusted to the expected distribution using the modified weight. For both subsamples, the distributions of the weighting variables converged after four iterations to the point where the number of cases in each category matched the number expected from the distribution of the full sample, or further iterations no longer improved the distribution. All results presented below are based on these re-weighted subsamples.

Power analysis The split of the sample into the treatment ($n=1119$) and control group ($n=712$) reduces statistical power. For this reason, post-hoc sensitivity analyses were conducted for two-tailed independent-samples t-tests. The subsample sizes reported above are sufficient to detect a small effect of $d=0.17$ with a power of 0.95.

Attrition Attrition concerns nonresponse to the antisemitism items and should not be systematically biased. Infas noted in their methods report that—apart from the

⁵ Since student/apprentice status is highly correlated with age ($r=-0.50^{***}$), we did not apply re-weighting for this socio-structural variable.

first items in the questionnaire—the highest number of dropouts occurred for the question on the legitimacy of Israel’s existence ($n=22$). Before October 7, 2023, only four dropouts were recorded for this item. While this is an interesting finding, we assume that the 18 dropouts after October 7, 2023, are negligible given the total sample size of $N=1887$ and the treatment group of $n=1119$. The number of missing values in the treatment and control groups did not change significantly (see Tables 1 and 2). Therefore, there is no reason to assume a systematic bias in the antisemitism measures due to nonresponse after October 7, 2023. Missing values are not imputed in the following analyses but are treated as missing.

6 Results and discussion

To address the first research question regarding changes in antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany, Tables 1 and 2 present the distribution of all responses (1 to 6) as well as the rates of agreement (responses 4–6) and disagreement (responses 1–3) for both antisemitism variables before versus after October 7, 2023. In addition, following Fischer and Wetzels (2024), strong agreement (responses 5–6) is interpreted as pronounced antisemitism, while a response of 4 is interpreted as openness to antisemitism. Conversely, strong disagreement (responses 1–2) is considered in the opposite direction.

Regarding traditional antisemitism, there is a slightly significant increase in strong agreement (responses 5–6) from 29.9% before to 34.8% after October 7. This increase is driven solely by the slightly higher agreement at the scale endpoint, with response 6 (“strongly agree”) ($F[1,1829]=6.06^*$). At the same time, openness to traditional antisemitism (response 4) decreases slightly significantly, indicating that what was previously moderate openness appears to have shifted toward more pronounced antisemitism after October 7. However, these shifts are so small that they do not affect the overall response distribution for traditional antisemitism ($M_{\text{before}}=3.38$, $SD_{\text{before}}=1.88$ vs. $M_{\text{after}}=3.54$, $SD_{\text{after}}=1.95$; $F[1,1691]=2.56$, ns.).

A similarly small effect, this time in the form of a slightly significant decrease in strong agreement, is observed for Israel-related antisemitism, from 23.0% before to 18.7% after October 7. This decrease is driven solely by the slightly lower agreement at the scale endpoint, with response 6 (“strongly agree”) ($F[1,1829]=5.70^*$). This decline also accounts for the slightly significant lower scores in the overall response distribution for Israel-related antisemitism ($M_{\text{before}}=2.84$, $SD_{\text{before}}=1.96$ vs. $M_{\text{after}}=2.63$, $SD_{\text{after}}=1.87$; $F[1,1647]=4.75^*$). Additionally, there is a slight tendency toward higher levels of strong disagreement with Israel-related antisemitism, as well as slightly more missing values after October 7, although both differences are not significant.

Overall, the changes in both traditional and Israel-related antisemitism are small and only marginally significant. This largely aligns with findings from the survey “Menschen in Deutschland: International (People in Germany: International)”, which also observed stability in traditional antisemitism among Muslims after October 7 (Kleinschnittger et al. 2025). We can similarly conclude that Israel-related antisemitism remained relatively stable.

Table 2 Distribution of Israel-related Antisemitism scores before versus after October 7, 2023

Answer scale	Israel-related antisemitism before October 7			Israel-related antisemitism after October 7		
	%	Disagreement (1–3)/ Agreement (4–6)	Strong disagreement (1–2)/ Openness (4)/ Strong agreement (5–6)	%	Disagreement (1–3)/ Agreement (4–6)	Strong disagreement (1–2)/ Openness (4)/ Strong agreement (5–6)
1	39.3			40.9		
2	7.2	61.0	46.5	10.3	62.8	51.2
3	14.5			11.6		
4	7.1		7.1	7.7		7.7
5	5.2	30.1	23.0	5.0	26.4	18.7
6	17.8			13.7		
Missing values	8.7			10.7		

Note. Answer scale: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. Significance tests: Strong disagreement: $F(1,1829) = 3.73$; Disagreement: $F(1,1829) = 0.55$; Agreement: $F(1,1829) = 3.00$; Openness: $F(1,1829) = 0.22$; Strong agreement: $F(1,1829) = 5.02^*$; Missing values: $X^2(1) = 2.79$

* $p < 0.05$, all others not significant

Antisemitism is widespread at a high level among Muslims with a migration background in Germany, both before and after October 7, with agreement rates between 45.4% and 46.7% for traditional antisemitism and between 26.4% and 30.1% for Israel-related antisemitism. While the prevalence of traditional antisemitism aligns with previous research (particularly Friedrichs and Storz 2022), our sample shows a notably lower prevalence of Israel-related antisemitism, both before and after October 7. In the few studies available to date, agreement rates for Israel-related antisemitism range from approximately 35% to 70%. This wide range appears to be related to the operationalization of Israel-related antisemitism: for example, identifying Jews with Israel yields agreement rates around 35% (Öztürk and Pickel 2022, 2024a), whereas equating Israeli politics with National Socialism produces much higher agreement rates, from 53% (Öztürk and Pickel 2022) to 68% (Bertelsmann Foundation 2023). Items on double standards fall in the mid-range, with around 40% agreement (Öztürk and Pickel 2024a). The operationalization used here—the delegitimization of the State of Israel—has not previously been measured in studies among Muslims in Germany and likely represents a particularly strong statement, which, compared to other measures of Israel-related antisemitism, elicits substantially lower agreement.

To address the second research question regarding potential changes in the relationships between antisemitism and radicalization before versus after October 7, partial correlations were calculated, controlling for sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, migrant generation, education, and unemployment). Fisher's z was then used to test whether the correlations differed significantly between the control and treatment groups (see Table 3).

Fundamentalism, as a form of religiosity associated with radicalization among Muslims (e.g., Demmrich and Hanel 2024), shows moderate to very strong correlations with antisemitism, confirming previous studies (Fischer and Wetzels 2024;

Hinz et al. 2024, 2025; Jikeli 2024; Öztürk and Pickel 2022, 2024a). Beyond prior research, the results of the present study demonstrate that this relationship has strengthened significantly after October 7, particularly with regard to Israel-related antisemitism.

A comparable pattern is observed for a range of other radical positions, whose correlations with antisemitism also increased significantly after October 7. This concerns traditional antisemitism to some extent, but especially Israel-related antisemitism: after October 7, the association between antisemitic attitudes and the willingness to participate in unauthorized demonstrations to advance Muslim interests becomes markedly stronger. Similarly, significantly stronger correlations emerge between Israel-related antisemitism and self-sacrifice (i.e., the willingness to defend a position perceived as a “good cause” despite opposition from close others, or even to give one’s life for it), sympathies for transnational Islamist actors (Erdoğan, IS, Taliban, Muslim Brotherhood), the acceptance of reactive and proactive violence, and the understanding and acceptance of terror and violence to advance Muslim interests.

No significant differences between the treatment and control groups are observed for the radical positions that violence is necessary for societal change, or for the intention to commit violence oneself. Nevertheless, for both positions—both before and after October 7—there are highly significant correlations of moderate size with Israel-related antisemitism. Likewise, the temporally stable significant, albeit weaker, correlations between these radical positions (with the exception of the belief that violence is necessary for societal change) and traditional antisemitism should not be neglected.

While previous research has already demonstrated associations between antisemitism and radical positions among Muslims (Demmrich and Şenel *in press*; Öztürk and Pickel 2024b), the present study further extends this evidence: antisemitism—particularly Israel-related antisemitism, and to a lesser extent traditional antisemitism—appears to have considerable mobilization potential for unauthorized demonstrations after October 7. Even before October 7, 2023, antisemitism was associated with fundamentalist beliefs, willingness for self-sacrifice, sympathies for Islamist actors, and a range of radical attitudes, such as the acceptance of terror and violence in the name of Islam. After October 7, however, Israel-related antisemitism in particular seems characterized by an increased radicalization potential: although the proportion of Muslims with a migration background in Germany exhibiting pronounced Israel-related antisemitism has slightly decreased, the associations between Israel-related antisemitism and the aforementioned radical positions have almost uniformly increased.⁶

Overall, the increased radicalization potential of antisemitism after October 7 points to an urgent need for action on the part of policymakers and civil society. It is therefore all the more important to systematically investigate the key explanatory factors for antisemitism in the changed context following October 7. With regard

⁶ These significantly stronger associations between antisemitism and radicalization are remarkable given that the indicators of radicalization presented in Table 3 do not differ in their scores before versus after October 7.

Table 3 Partial correlations between traditional and Israel-related antisemitism with radicalization before and after October 7

	Traditional antisemitism			Israel-related antisemitism		
	Before (N= 573)	After	Fisher's z	Before (N= 563)	After (N= 867)	Fisher's z
Fundamentalism	0.22***	0.34***	-2.43*	0.39***	0.53***	-3.28***
Willingness to						
Authorized demonstra- tion	0.13**	0.20***	-1.33	0.25***	0.35***	-2.02*
Unauthorized demon- stration	0.06	0.18***	-2.26*	0.29***	0.42***	-2.74**
To defend a cause despite disapproval	0.10	0.12	-0.38	0.20***	0.31***	-2.16*
Give one's life for a good cause	0.15***	0.20***	-0.95	0.18***	0.35***	-3.36***
Sympathies for transna- tional Islamist actors	0.16***	0.21***	-0.95	0.23***	0.42***	-3.86***
Acceptance of reactive violence	0.29***	0.19***	1.96	0.30***	0.40***	-2.09*
Acceptance of active violence	0.10*	0.13*	-0.06	0.17***	0.29***	-2.34*
Violence necessary for social change	0.09	0.03	1.12	0.24***	0.20***	0.77
Understanding and ac- ceptance of terror and violence	0.13**	0.10*	0.56	0.17***	0.29***	-2.34*
Intention to use violence oneself	0.11*	0.13***	-0.38	0.20***	0.24***	-0.77

Note. Control variables: age, gender, migrant generation, education, and unemployment. *Willingness to participate in authorized demonstrations*: "I would participate in an approved demonstration for the interests of Muslims."; *Willingness to participate in unauthorized demonstrations*: "I would participate in a demonstration for the interests of Muslims, even if it is not approved" (adapted from Moskalenko and McCauley 2009). *Defending a cause despite disapproval from loved ones*: "I would defend a good cause that I feel strongly committed to, even if my loved ones disapprove of it"; *willingness to give one's life for a good cause*: "I would be willing to give my life for a good cause that is extremely important to me" (both self-sacrifice items adapted from Bélanger et al. 2014). *Sympathies for transnational Islamist actors*: mean score of four self-constructed items ($\alpha=0.69$): "Some Muslims sympathize with the following persons or groups. To what extent do you agree or disagree? The following persons or groups give us Muslims self-confidence"—"Recep Tayyip Erdoğan," "Muslim Brotherhood," "Taliban," "Islamic State (IS)". *Acceptance of reactive violence*: "The threat to Islam from the Western world justifies that Muslims defend themselves with violence"; *acceptance of active violence*: "Violence is justified if it concerns the spread and enforcement of Islam" (both items adapted from Brettfeld and Wetzels 2007). *Violence as necessary for social change*: "Violence is necessary to achieve social change" (Bélanger et al. 2019); *understanding and acceptance of terror and violence*: mean score of four items ($\alpha=0.85$): "I understand groups that advocate for Muslims' interests, even if they sometimes use violence," "I think it is right that groups advocate for Muslims' interests, even if they sometimes use violence" (both self-constructed items); "I understand if Muslims achieve their goals, if necessary, even through terrorist attacks," "I think it is right if Muslims achieve their goals, if necessary, even through terrorist attacks" (both items adapted from Pfeiffer et al. 2018). *Intention to use violence oneself*: "I would advocate for the interests of Muslims, even if I sometimes have to resort to violence" (self-constructed item). All items were measured on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. For measurement of other variables, see the Methods section

*** $p \leq 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$; Rest not significant

to the final research question—namely, the extent to which explanatory factors (sociodemographics, origin, integration, religion, discrimination) for antisemitism among Muslims in Germany have changed after October 7—regression analyses were conducted (Tables 4 and 5).

Regarding sociodemographics, only minor effects on both forms of antisemitism are observed before October 7 (see also Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Jikeli 2024; Wetzels 2024). After October 7, these former small effects almost completely disappear: traditional antisemitism is no longer predominantly a male phenomenon, nor is Israel-related antisemitism particularly prevalent among younger respondents, as had previously been the case. Other sociodemographic variables, such as education and unemployment, also show no significant associations with antisemitism in the multivariate analyses, both before and after October 7.

With respect to origin-related variables, a more pronounced prediction on traditional antisemitism is observed after October 7: traditional antisemitism increasingly becomes a phenomenon of the first migrant generation (similar to findings before October 7 by Friedrichs and Storz 2022) and—independent of migrant generation—a phenomenon among Muslims with roots in Turkey. While the association with origin from the MENA region was already observable before October 7 (consistent with, e.g., Bertelsmann Foundation 2023; Czymara et al. 2025; Friedrichs and Storz 2022)—and often explained by the fact that people with family ties to this region link societal and political conflicts with Jews or with Israel as a Jewish state (see Arnold and König 2016; Jikeli 2025)—after October 7, significant associations with a Turkish migration background additionally emerge. The antisemitism openly articulated by the Turkish government, especially after October 7 (see Demmrich and Şenel *in press*; Öztürk and Pickel 2024a), thus appears to have reached Turkish-origin Muslims in Germany as well.

Nevertheless, it is primarily a lack of (political) integration, certain forms of religiosity, and perceptions of discrimination that account for the largest share of the variance in both forms of antisemitism. The explained variance for both measured forms of antisemitism further increases after October 7—for Israel-related antisemitism, it rises overall to 42%.

Regarding integration variables, low linguistic integration was a minor predictor of traditional antisemitism before October 7. Low emotional integration and more negative attitudes toward democracy, in terms of its legitimization, also emerged as weak to moderate predictors of Israel-related antisemitism. After October 7, the association between low linguistic integration and traditional antisemitism persists, whereas the relationship between the legitimacy of democracy and Israel-related antisemitism no longer reaches significance. In addition, a new, highly significant predictor emerges: low trust in public institutions and authorities⁷. In the full multivariate regression model, this factor becomes the strongest predictor of traditional antisemitism and the second-strongest predictor of Israel-related antisemitism.⁸ The

⁷ No mean differences are observed regarding trust in public institutions and authorities before versus after October 7 (before: $M = 5.76$, $SD = 2.44$; after: $M = 5.69$, $SD = 2.62$; $F[1,1811] = 0.34$, $p = 0.56$).

⁸ All other significant predictors show only very small effects ($\beta < 0.10$). Attachment to the country of origin (of parents/grandparents, respectively) and less frequent contact with non-Muslims should therefore

Table 4 Multivariate hierarchical regression on traditional antisemitism before and after October 7, 2023

	Traditional antisemitism			
	Before October 7 (<i>N</i> = 662)		After October 7 (<i>N</i> = 1032)	
Binary gender (1 = <i>m</i> , 2 = <i>f</i>)	-0.13**	-0.18***	0.00	-0.02
Age	-0.07	-0.01	-0.05	0.00
Education	-0.07	-0.01	0.00	0.03
Job seeking (0 = no, 1 = yes)	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.03
Migrant generation (1 vs. 2./3.)	-0.09*	-0.04	-0.10*	-0.12**
Origin:				
Turkey	0.11	0.08	0.17***	0.14***
MENA (ref: other)	0.15**	0.15**	0.09*	0.13***
Knowledge of German language		-0.17***		-0.11**
Connectedness to Germany		0.03		0.08*
Connectedness to country of origin		0.03		0.03
Frequency contact to non-Muslims		-0.04		-0.03
Quality contact non-Muslims		0.05		-0.05
Legitimacy of democracy		-0.08		0.03
Satisfaction with democracy in Germany		-0.04		-0.07
Trust in public institutions and authorities		-0.10		-0.25***
Subjective religiosity		-0.07		-0.10*
Frequency mosque attendance		-0.05		0.01
Orthodox religiosity		0.15**		0.15***
Fundamentalism		0.10		0.18***
Individual discrimination		-0.05		-0.08*
Proxy discrimination		0.23***		-0.08
Threat perception		-0.04		0.02
<i>R</i> ²	0.04***	0.16***	0.02**	0.22***
<i>R</i> ² _{change}		0.12***		0.20***

Note. No multicollinearity since VIF ≤ 2.86

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* ≤ 0.001. Rest not significant

fact that the correlation between variables relating to political integration has shifted from the general cultural level (legitimacy) to the more concrete level of the regime or authorities (trust) probably also has something to do with the vagueness of the legitimacy indicator, which is easy to agree with and, moreover, does not refer to specific state institutions and actors. Earlier studies showed that low institutional trust increases the likelihood of adopting populist or extremist positions. Far-right movements often benefit more from distrust in institutions, as their narrative directly targets “system criticism” (Lubbers and Scheepers 2000; Norris 2011).

not be overinterpreted but rather understood as associations close to zero. The same applies to attachment to Germany in relation to traditional antisemitism and to German language proficiency in relation to Israel-related antisemitism: both predictors are not only near zero but also exceed the significance threshold of *p* < 0.05 only minimally.

Table 5 Multivariate hierarchical regression on Israel-related antisemitism before and after October 7, 2023

	Israel-related antisemitism			
	Before October 7 (N= 650)		After October 7 (N= 999)	
Binary gender (1 = m, 2 = f)	-0.01	0.03	0.00	-0.01
Age	-0.38***	-0.26***	-0.18***	-0.07*
Education	-0.13***	-0.07	-0.05	-0.04
Job seeking (0 = no, 1 = yes)	-0.01	0.01	0.00	-0.03
Migrant generation (1 vs. 2./3.)	-0.05	-0.02	0.07	-0.01
Origin:				
Turkey	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.02
MENA (ref: other)	0.04	0.10*	-0.05	0.04
Knowledge of German language		-0.02		0.07*
Connectedness to Germany		0.02		0.02
Connectedness to country of origin		0.12**		0.08**
Frequency contact to non-Muslims		-0.01		-0.08**
Quality contact non-Muslims		-0.03		-0.02
Legitimacy of democracy		-0.21***		-0.01
Satisfaction with democracy in Germany		-0.01		-0.05
Trust in public institutions and authorities		0.01		-0.16***
Subjective religiosity		0.02		-0.04
Frequency mosque attendance		0.08		-0.03
Orthodox religiosity		-0.08		0.02
Fundamentalism		0.31***		0.40***
Individual discrimination		-0.06		-0.02
Proxy discrimination		0.04		-0.04
Threat perception		0.04		0.22***
R ²	0.13***	0.36***	0.05***	0.42***
R ² change		0.23***		0.37***

Note. No multicollinearity since VIF $\leq$ 2.86

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$. Rest not significant

Regarding religiosity indicators, both orthodox and fundamentalist religiosity positively predict traditional antisemitism after October 7, with orthodox religiosity showing this association even beforehand. After October 7, a slightly protective effect of subjective religiosity also emerges but only when controlling religious fundamentalism. Similarly, for Israel-related antisemitism, fundamentalism remains the strongest predictor, with its influence increasing further after October 7 ($\beta = 0.40$). These findings confirm earlier results by Öztürk and Pickel (2022, 2024a; see also Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Hinz et al. 2024, 2025): it is not Muslim religiosity per se that is associated with antisemitism, but rather fundamentalism as a particular form of religiosity that asserts exclusivist, superior, and universalist claims and seeks the restoration of a (supposed) Golden Age (Pollack et al. 2024b).

No effects of frequency of mosque attendance on antisemitism could be uncovered in this study (cf. Fischer and Wetzels 2024, for traditional antisemitism; Jikeli 2024). Further analyses suggest that the relationship between frequency of mosque attendance on antisemitism after October 7 is accounted for by orthodox religiosity—a form of religiosity that has not previously been captured in antisemitism studies.⁹ However, the effect of orthodox religiosity on Israel-related antisemitism is absorbed by the strong effect of fundamentalism. These results suggest that, especially after October 7, it is not mosque attendance per se, but rather orthodox and fundamentalist religiosity, that increases the likelihood of holding an antisemitic worldview.

Finally, the inclusion of experiences and perceptions of discrimination shows that the originally observed multivariate association between proxy discrimination and traditional antisemitism completely disappears after October 7. Individual discrimination experiences do not play a role either, confirming previous findings (Demmrich and Şenel *in press*; Fischer and Wetzels 2024; Fischer et al. 2024)¹⁰. In contrast, for Israel-related antisemitism, a moderate association emerges after October 7 with the perception that Muslims are culturally threatened, unwelcome in the labor market, and must fear violence and social exclusion (similarly, Öztürk and Pickel 2022, 2023, 2024a). Even after October 7, the distinction between individual *experiences* of discrimination and subjective *perceptions* of discrimination remains relevant, as antisemitism is associated exclusively with the latter (see also Öztürk *in press*).

7 Conclusions and implications for research and practice

Antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany has changed since October 7. With regard to prevalences, pronounced traditional antisemitism increased by 4.9 percentage points, while Israel-related antisemitism decreased by 4.3 percentage points. However, these changes are only barely significant and, in terms of overall magnitude, rather slight, as antisemitism remains highly prevalent—with rates of 34.8% for pronounced traditional antisemitism and 18.7% for pronounced Israel-related antisemitism among Muslims. However, it is not so much the quantity but the quality of antisemitism that has changed: the associations between antisemitism—particularly in its Israel-related form—and radical anti-system attitudes have shifted markedly. Since October 7, antisemitism has not only emerged as a significant mobilization potential for unauthorized demonstrations, but it is now also more strongly linked to radical positions, such as fundamentalism, willingness for self-sacrifice, sympathies for Islamist actors, acceptance of violence, and understanding of terrorist attacks aimed at advancing Muslim interests.

⁹ This applies to Israel-related antisemitism before and after October 7 as well as to traditional antisemitism after October 7.

¹⁰ Only a very weak, near-zero, and barely significant negative association with individually experienced discrimination is observed. This effect, similar to the small effects mentioned in Footnote 7 ($\beta < 0.1$), is not further interpreted.

The increase in antisemitism, as perceived after October 7 among certain population groups, such as Muslims, cannot be explained by a rise in antisemitic attitudes per se, but rather by its increased visibility and willingness to be expressed. Jikeli and Glöckner (2025) similarly note that since October 7, the issue has been less about a rise in antisemitism than about its heightened visibility, for example through antisemitic slogans and symbols at demonstrations, as well as an increase in antisemitic incidents and crimes (see also Jikeli 2024). The report by the Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism (2023) also describes the events of October 7 as an opportunity structure for antisemitism. Such opportunity structures are not the cause of antisemitic attitudes but provide a situational context in which pre-existing antisemitism is more likely to be expressed—through public statements or acts of violence, for instance. Existing antisemitism thus exists within a new political context that can act as a mobilizing factor. At the same time, the report points to a qualitative shift: alongside the statistical increase in antisemitic incidents in Germany, a new level of escalation has emerged since October 7, particularly in the form of more frequent violent attacks. This development indicates a growing connection between antisemitic attitudes and radical, anti-system positions, as well as an increasing willingness to translate these attitudes into violent actions. The present analysis thus explains the paradox between the relatively stable prevalence of antisemitic attitudes on the one hand and the increase in antisemitic incidents on the other, through the heightened radicalization potential of antisemitism among Muslims with a migration background in Germany.

Given this increased radicalization potential, particularly of Israel-related antisemitism, it seems likely that the slight decline in pronounced Israel-related antisemitism among Muslims observed after October 7 is related to some Muslims feeling repelled by the associated radical positions and consciously distancing themselves from them. This relationship may explain the very slight, though not statistically significant, increase in strong rejection of Israel-related antisemitism. In addition, there is a similarly slight (and also non-significant) increase in the proportion of respondents who no longer answered the same item. Future studies should take socially desirable responding more into account when measuring antisemitism (Czymara et al. 2025; Öztürk and Pickel 2024a), either through targeted operationalization or through experimental designs less prone to it (e.g., Implicit Association Test, Bogus Pipeline). Moreover, in light of the turning point of October 7, it seems sensible to examine changes in the forms of antisemitic expression among Muslims, in line with the development of the “change of antisemitism” thesis (Bergmann and Erb 1991). For example, Ourghi (2025) argues that certain forms of secondary antisemitism have been adapted among some Muslims, particularly in the form of a perpetrator–victim reversal, in which, for instance, Hamas is portrayed as a liberation movement. Future research should empirically test this hypothesis.

A central limitation of this study lies in the measurement of the two forms of antisemitism, each represented by a single item, which increases the likelihood of measurement error. Although both items are well established in antisemitism research, their levels of difficulty differ considerably: the item on traditional antisemitism exhibits a relatively low difficulty, whereas the one on Israel-related antisemitism is substantially more demanding, limiting the comparability of prevalence rates. Future

research should employ multi-item scales covering various forms of antisemitism to ensure balanced item difficulty and improved comparability of agreement levels. Nevertheless, a separate consideration of these two forms based on the limited indicators used here remains informative, particularly regarding their sensitivity to external events.

The increased radicalization potential of antisemitism after October 7 highlights an urgent need for action on the part of politics and civil society. It is important to derive practical implications from the central explanatory factors. Regarding the weak influences of the origin of Muslims with a migration background (or their parents/grandparents)—and particularly given that origin plays no role in Israel-related antisemitism—the frequently cited thesis of “imported antisemitism” appears only partially tenable. This thesis is often promoted by right-wing populist and extremist actors to divert attention from antisemitism within their own ranks (see Öztürk and Pickel 2022, 2023). The findings rather point to a deficit in political integration, which since October 7 manifests in the association between low trust in public institutions and authorities on the one hand, and both traditional and Israel-related antisemitism on the other. For the prevention of antisemitism, it is therefore essential to foster political integration—particularly in terms of trust in the Federal Parliament, the judiciary, or the police. This requires not only integration policy efforts at the individual level but also institutional accountability: political communication must be transparent, public discourse should occur on an equal footing, and state institutions must be perceived as reliable, fair, and accessible (The Expert Council on Integration and Migration 2022). Nevertheless, it is also plausible that antisemitic worldviews contribute to a sense of alienation from the political system—a dynamic that warrants more systematic investigation in future antisemitism studies.

Religiosity plays an ambivalent role in relation to antisemitism, depending on its form. Subjective religiosity may have a slightly preventive effect on traditional antisemitism, whereas orthodox religiosity tends to reinforce this form of antisemitism. Of particular note is fundamentalism, which exerts a clearly strengthening effect on both traditional and Israel-related antisemitism. Islamic theology—especially in the context of religious education within families, mosque communities, and schools—should promote a form of religiosity that, in contrast to fundamentalism, encourages critical thinking and a contextual understanding of religious teachings (Şenel and Demmrich 2024). It is especially important to counter a fundamentalist perspective on out-groups (Koopmans 2015) with a progressive and inclusive narrative (Khorchide 2025). For future research, the development of concepts and corresponding scales for orthodox religiosity among Muslims is needed, as most existing measures were designed for Christian contexts (e.g., Fullerton and Hunsberger 1982) and therefore overlook the orthopraxic aspects prevalent in Islam (see Pollack et al. 2024b).

Ultimately, since October 7, it has become evident that, in particular, subjective perceptions of threat—such as the belief that Muslims are at risk in their cultural identity, disadvantaged in the labor market, or must fear violence and social exclusion—represent a central explanatory factor for Israel-related antisemitism. Notably, in our data, all recorded experiences and perceptions of discrimination have slightly

decreased after October 7. Contrary to widespread assumptions, there is thus no evidence that Muslims, in response to the increase in antisemitic prejudice or incidents (CLAIM 2024), experience heightened competition as victims and consequently develop stronger antisemitism (see also Öztürk and Pickel 2024a; Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism 2017).

Rather, it appears necessary to consider threat narratives in a nuanced way and to critically question potential generalizations. This includes, in particular, not interpreting threat perceptions in a blanket manner but examining the underlying issues to allow for alternative interpretations. Narratives of a collective threat to the Muslim in-group should not be adopted uncritically but analyzed in terms of their social functions and related to actual experiences of discrimination. The aim should be to expand interpretive frameworks, differentiate perspectives, and thereby counter both the emergence of enemy images and dichotomous victim-competition dynamics (Bokler et al. 2025).

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