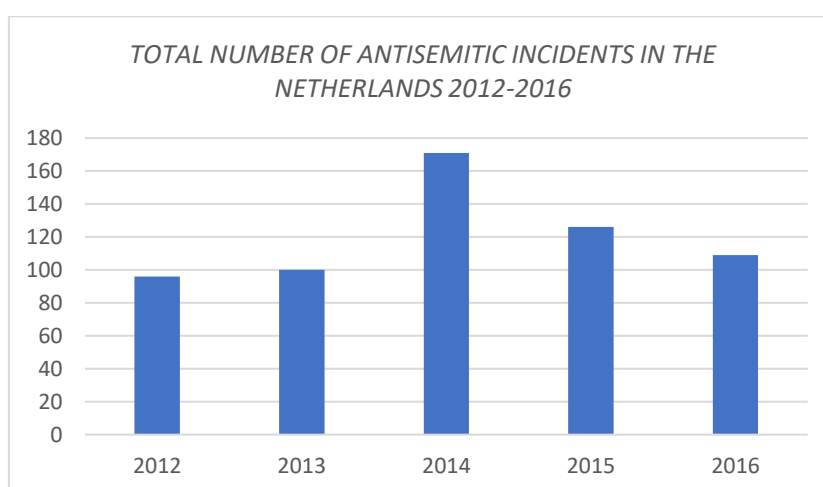# Netherlands: Light decline in the number of reported anti-Semitic incidents

Introduction

Centre Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI)[1] has been publishing the yearly report on anti-Semitic incidents in the Netherlands since 1983. This document provides a short English summary of the main findings and conclusions of the 2016 report[2].

TOTAL NUMBER OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS 2012-2016

Methodology

The *Working Definition of anti-Semitism*[3] is used to determine whether an incident is Antis-Semitic. In short, Anti-Semitism is defined as "*Treating Jews—individually or as a group—differently than other individuals or groups, and especially in a way which is hostile or violent, and is founded in prejudice."*

Anti-Semitic incidents are *acts that are motivated by negative emotions toward Jews, and committed with the intent of targeting the (assumed) Jewish identity of the victim.*

Incidents concerning criticism of Isreal are *not* registered as anti-Semitic, unless something offensive is said about Jews or about the Israelis as a population.

CIDI considers a related series of crimes against one individual as a single incident; equally, a series of incidents perpetrated against various individuals by a single perpetrator is, again, counted as one single incident. Please note that anti-Semitic incidents on the internet have *not* been included in this report.

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1 CIDI is a Dutch NGO establish to combat racism and antisemitism and to broaden and deepen the knowledge about Israel and its inhabitants in the Netherlands, thus contribute to peace between Israel and the Palestinian people. www.cidi.nl

2 CIDI Monitor Antisemitische Incidenten in 2016 in Nederland

3 as published by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. http://www.antisem.eu/projects/eumc-working-definition-of-antisemitism/

The findings

The number of Anti-Semitic incidents registered in 2016 is 13% smaller than in 2015 Table 1 below presents the incidents according to their domains. The decline is mainly due to a smaller number of e-mail. Noteworthy is the decline in the number of incidents in and around schools, for the first time in three years. The number of sports-related incidents, mainly soccer, is still high. Unfortunately, since the beginning of 2017, we see a significant increase in this category. Also noteworthy is an increase in the number of verbal-abuse incidents, as well as the number of incidents in the 'traditional' media (newspapers, radio and TV.). Vandalism and physical-abuse are still a great concern.

The prominence of Internet, and particularly the social media as means of communication is rapidly growing.

The decline of the number of e-mails is partially due to shift to social media as a means of communication. These platforms influence strongly the behaviour in the "real" world.

As in previous years, the CIDI-monitor does *not* include incidents on the Internet in this compilation. A government sponsored Dutch body – MIND – is responsible for battling discriminatory-incidents on the Internet. Starting in 2017, CIDI is taking an active role on the monitoring of these platforms. In particular, CIDI handls all Anti-Semitic reports on abuse on social media concerning individuals.

Security for Jewish institutions.

Since 2014, Jewish institutions in the Netherlands have been put under special security measures by the government. Intelligence states that the threat is still severe: the Jewish communities and individuals are still targeted, and are high on the "hitlist" of terrorist organisations. This exemplifies the need to maintain the current security measures around Jewish institutions.

Scolding.

Last but not least, CIDI is concerned about the degradation of the word "Jew". This word has become increasingly 'normal' in scolding. A striking example is the use of the curse "Kankerjood"[4] against the police in a demonstration in front of – and in support of - the Turkish embassy. Are these signs of returning to the period of Jews as the Scapegoats of society?

Graffiti in a tunnel: "Hamas Hamas Jews to the Gaz"

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[4] Literally: "Cancer Jew". Variations with the word Cancer are often used in curses.

The Numbers:

➢ In **2016**, CIDI registered **109** anti-Semitic incidents, as compared to 126 in 2015. In 2014, the year of the Gaza-war, we registered 171 incidents. The EJC reports a decline of 12% in all- over Anti-Semitic incidents. In France the decline was 61% (CRIFF) . The CST, on the other hand, reports an increase of 36% in the number of registered Anti-Semitic incidents in Great Britain.

➢ While the total number of registered incidents declined, CIDI registered an increase in the number of incidents in the (traditional) **media** (newspapers, radio, TV). In 2015 we registered 1 incident, in **2016 4**.

➢ The number of incident in and around **schools has decreased** from 16 in 2015 to **10 in 2016**. **Verbal abuse and assault** in the public space shows a slight increase, from 24 incidents in 2015, to **25 in 2016**. In 2014, 40 incidents were recorded.

➢ 2016 saw a significant decline in hate-email, from 12 in 2015 to 7 in 2016. In 2014, 29 incidents were recorded. Some analysts attribute the decline to the shift of activities to social media, in particular Facebook, Twitter and What's-App.

➢ Incidents in the category sport show a slight change. 9 incidents in 2016 as compared to 10 in 2015 and 5 in 2014. Unfortunately, In the first months of 2017 indicate an increase in this category.

➢ CIDI counted 21 vandalism incidents in 2016, one more than in 2015 and 3 incidents of physical violence, as compared to 5 In 2015. This is a concerning development.

Main recommendations

In recent years, CIDI has advocated revisiting the way schools teach about diversity, discrimination, demo-cratic values, the attitude to minority as well as teaching the history of World War Two, the Holocaust, and Anti-Semitism. We believe these subjects must be taught from a very young age, in the regular as well as the less-formal educational environment.

Teachers should be trained in the challenges of social media, complot theories and how to provide the pu-pils with a safe environment. Abuse through social media happens increasingly "outside the walls" (of space and time) of school, but should be equally addressed by the educators.

The governments should take measures in order to protect people from Internet abuse, even when do-mains are not registered in the own country. Freedom of speech must be limited when it results in insulting or threatening individuals and groups.

Social media companies and Internet-provides should take active measures to prevent internet-abuse, which unfortunately "flows" easily from the virtual into the real world.

Police should be trained to recognize specific discrimination acts and hate crimes, recognizing the specific sensitivities and act accordingly. A swastika on a car is not "just" vandalism, it is also sending a very specific message, which police should understand.

Sport organisations, soccer clubs in particular, must take active measures to stop discrimination in and around matches. Zero-tolerance on the one hand, education to supporters on the other.

CIDI also recommends investing in dialogue projects between minority groups, particularly between Jewish and Muslim religious organizations, as well as projects involving youths.

Some examples of incidents

Threats
June 20th. A Jewish man in is shopping at a supermarket in Utrecht. Two -as he puts it- "Dutch boys" take notice of his kipa. One of the boys hides his face behind a scarf and says loud and clear to his friend: "Look, there's a Jew. Ein Jude. Hashtag wildlife, hashtag bullet." His friend responds that he's going too far by using the word 'bullet'. The man hides his kipa under a cap for weeks following the incident. He had been scolded often before and does not bother to report all the incidents anymore.

Physical abuse
September 9th. A mother calls on behalf of her son (David* name has been changed). David* attends a get-together with two friends in his neighborhood in Amsterdam. Everyone knows he is Jewish; according to his father, he looks like an "Israeli". David and his friends are chatting in the street, next to a house where the inhabitants are throwing a party. Two men exit this particular house and one of them ask David what he's doing there and calls him a "f*cking kike". David replies that he doesn't like to be called names. The man scolds David again. The second man attacks David, pushing him to the ground and hitting him in the eye. David manages to escape with injuries to his face and leg. He needs to be treated in a hospital and reports the incident to the police. David has been scolded before.

Damages/descecration
May 25th. On the walls of an abandoned building next to the house of a Jewish family someone smeared with black paint the following lines: "Jew = Israel = Nazi" (Jew equals Israel equals nazi.) and "Jew has to die burn him."
The Jewish father of the family reports to the police to the house. There was no clue who did this. A couple of weeks later the abandoned building was torn down.

Statistics

Table: 1 Incidents according to domain

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Violence and assault	1	4	3	6	5	3
Threats	3	2	1	3	0	4
Damage Jewish objects	3	1	2	2	2	1
Desecration Jewish objects	6	3	4	5	4	2
Other damages/ desecration	13	10	4	15	14	18
Verbal abuse	28	14	21	40	24	25
Phone	1	1	3	5	4	4
Letter/fax/flyer/sticker	4	3	3	9	9	4
E-mails	17	23	10	29	12	7
Neighbors/ neighborhood	11	8	8	10	12	10
School	5	5	11	15	16	10
Work	8	3	8	5	8	1
Sports/other chants	5	13	6	5	10	9
Media	3	4	9	2	0	3
Demonstrations	0	1	1	8	3	3
Extreme right – Nazi symbols			3	8	2	4
Art/ Culture	5	1	3	2	0	0
Music	0	0	0	2	1	1
Total	**112**	**96**	**100**	**171**	**126**	**109**