



# COMBATING ANTISEMITISM FOSTERING JEWISH life



## THE EU STRATEGY ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE (2021-2030)

ONE YEAR IN ACTION

# WHAT IS THE EU STRATEGY ABOUT?



*"I am proud that (...) the Commission adopted the first-ever 'EU Strategy on Combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life'. With this unprecedented step, we are pursuing three important goals. First, we want to strengthen and expand our fight against antisemitism. (...) Second, we want to foster Jewish life in Europe in all its diversity. (...) Finally, my third point, we promise to preserve the memory of past atrocities. Remembering the Shoah is our shared responsibility. (...) So let me assure you: We will be ambitious when implementing our new Strategy. Because Europe can only prosper if the Jewish communities prosper, too."*

**Ursula von der Leyen**, President of the European Commission  
Malmö, 13 October 2021

The first-ever EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life (2021-2030) was adopted by the European Commission on 5 October 2021. With this Strategy, the Commission is determined to significantly step up the fight against antisemitism to ensure a future for Jews in Europe.

Actions of the Strategy include: curbing antisemitism online, providing funding for the protection of public spaces and places of worship, creating a European research hub on antisemitism and Jewish life, creating a network of sites "Where the Holocaust Happened" and setting up a network of Young European Ambassadors for Holocaust remembrance.

## I. Preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism



## II. Protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU



## III. Education, research and Holocaust remembrance



**Leading the global fight against antisemitism**





*“Antisemitism is incompatible with EU values and with our European way of life. This Strategy – the first of its kind – is our commitment to combat it in all its forms and to ensure a future for Jewish life in Europe and beyond. We owe it to those who perished in the Holocaust, we owe it to the survivors and we owe it to future generations.”*

**Margaritis Schinas**, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life  
Strasbourg, 5 October 2021

**Antisemitism is worryingly on the rise.** Contemporary antisemitism occurs in many forms: old and new, from online hate speech to hate crimes and attacks on Jewish people, their properties and institutions, or desecration of cemeteries and memorials.

For Jews to participate fully in European life, it is essential that they feel safe and can live their lives in line with their religious and cultural traditions. Yet, security and shrinking space for the experience of Jewish life are a key concern for the Jewish community, as reflected in the Second Survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

Despite the long-standing presence of Jews in Europe, the **Eurobarometer** data shows that people have **scant knowledge of Jewish life and Judaism**. Also, Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialisation are increasing and are often used to feed hatred against Jewish people and to rewrite European and Jewish history.

The EU Strategy aims to address these issues.

# FLAGSHIP ACTIONS

The Strategy foresees almost 100 actions for the period of 2021-2030, of which over half have been started and several have been implemented, as illustrated by the following examples.

## I. Preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism

*The Commission **organises twice a year its Working Group on the implementation of the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life**, bringing together representatives from EU Member States and national Jewish communities and umbrella organisations as well as international organisations, to also support the development and implementation of national strategies.*

*The **Better Internet for Kids** strategy adopted on 11 May 2022 makes clear reference to combating **antisemitism on the internet**.*

*Initiated by Austria, in cooperation with the European Commission and European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 11 EU Member States signed the **Vienna Declaration** committing to develop a **common methodology on recording antisemitic incidents**.*

*The Commission supports organisations and projects **to combat and record antisemitic hate speech** and hate crime through the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV), which published new call for proposals covering also antisemitism.*

*The Commission has invited over 200 Jewish civil society representatives to the first **Civil Society Forum on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life** to discuss the implementation of the EU Strategy, funding opportunities, exchange best practices and network.*

## II. Protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU

For the first time, the President of the European Commission **lit one of the candles of a mega public Channukia** on the Schuman Square in the heart of the EU quarter in Brussels. The European Commission also **co-hosted the Euro-Channukah** event at its premises and is committed to host this event yearly.

As of July 2022, **young people** travelling with **DiscoverEU** receive a discount card allowing them to get discounts on **cultural/historic visits** across Europe. Those sites include **Jewish Museums and Cultural Centres**.

In February 2022, the Commission published a new call for proposals on the **protection of public spaces** in the amount of 14.5 mil euro. 9.6 mil euro are dedicated specifically to the **protection of places of worship, which includes Jewish places of worship, schools and communities**.

To address antisemitism in cities, the European Commission has contracted a **guidance manual on addressing antisemitism locally** as well as **trainings for civil servants** in three different municipalities.

The Commission launched a project **protecting Jewish cemeteries of Europe**, capitalising on the results of two previous European Parliament pilot projects on this topic and fostering links between groups interested in the preservation of Jewish burial sites. The project covers Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

The Commission has invited EU Member States authorities, representatives of international and European organisations, representatives of Jewish and Muslim communities, experts, researchers and academia, as well as EU officials to the conference **'Freedom of religion with regard to religious slaughter'** organised in partnership with the Council of Europe, UN and OSCE.

### III. Education, research and remembrance

*The Commission supports education activities, through **Erasmus+** and the **European Solidarity Corps**, aimed at **promoting European values and combating all forms of discrimination and intolerance**, including antisemitism, by fostering civic education and youth participation in democratic life.*

*Horizon Europe research funding includes in 2022 two topics relevant to the EU Strategy: “**Evolution of political extremism and its influence on contemporary social and political dialogue**” and “**Strengthening racial, ethnic and religious equality**”.*

*The Commission supports civil society organisations through the Citizens Equality Rights Values programme to **commemorate the Holocaust** also through the **digitalisations of archives as well as testimonies of Holocaust survivors**.*

*The Commission, as Permanent International Partner of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) has started using the IHRA **definition of Holocaust denial and distortion** in its communications for education and awareness-raising purposes on the Shoah.*



*“The tragedy of the Shoah was a fundamental reason for European integration. If we cannot ensure that Jews see a future for themselves in Europe, the European project will have failed. This Strategy has therefore ultimately two goals: bring an end to antisemitism and ensure that Jewish life can prosper in line with its religious and cultural traditions.”*

**Katharina von Schnurbein,**

Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life  
Brussels, 21 October 2021

## Leading by example

*The Berlaymont building, headquarter of the European Commission, was illuminated for the first time as part of the International #WeRemember campaign. To mark Kristallnacht, the Commission organises yearly training for EU staff on ‘Unmasking modern antisemitism’.*

*A study visit to Israel for Commission staff took place in September 2022, as part of the Commission training for staff on preventing and combating antisemitism.*

## Leading the global fight against antisemitism

*The EU Delegation to the UN in close cooperation with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) organised in June 2022 a Briefing on efforts on combating antisemitism. The Commission presented the EU Strategy and ways were explored to outline a UN system-wide approach to combat antisemitism.*

*Special Envoys and Coordinators on Combating Antisemitism from around the globe met in Jerusalem, marking Yom HaShoah, the Israeli Holocaust Remembrance Day, in April 2022.*

# THE STRATEGY - WIDELY RECOGNISED

Close cooperation with state actors on all levels, the Jewish community and civil society actors is key in addressing antisemitism and ensure the Strategy is effective.

**Leaders from all European Union Member States** welcomed the strategy in the European Council Conclusions of 22 October 2021 and in the Council Conclusions on combating racism and antisemitism of 4 March 2022 they agreed to develop national strategies against antisemitism or insert specific actions on combating antisemitism into their general anti-racism action plans by end 2022, in line with the EU Strategy.

**The Working Group Against Antisemitism (WGAS)** of the **European Parliament** has welcomed the EU Strategy on 5 October 2021.

The **European Economic and Social Committee** adopted a favourable opinion on the EU Strategy on 23 March 2022. The **European Committee of the Regions** presented its opinion on the EU Strategy during its plenary session in July 2022, underlying that the fight against antisemitism is about safeguarding and demonstrating European core values. The Strategy has received positive opinions from **parliaments at national and regional level**.

The Strategy has also been recognised by **international organisations**, including the United Nations (UN), the Organisation of American States (OAS), and the Council of Europe (CoE).

**Jewish international organisations and Jewish communities** in the EU and nationally welcomed the Strategy and the **President of Israel, government and Knesset** also positively received the Strategy.

The EU Strategy has been pledged as an action to combat antisemitism and foster Jewish life in the **'Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism'** by President von der Leyen and Vice-President Schinas.



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