

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

27 January 2025

English only

CCJ statement on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day

On the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camps, the [Advisory Council on Youth](#) of the Council of Europe solemnly remembers the six million Jews and millions of other victims—including Roma and Travellers, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and others—who were persecuted and murdered during the Holocaust. The horrors of the Holocaust serve as a powerful reminder of the depths to which hate, violent extremism, fascism, and antisemitism can plunge humanity. Today, as we honour their memory, we reflect on our collective responsibility to ensure that 'Never Again' is not just a promise but a commitment to action.

Sadly, the lessons of the Holocaust feel ever more urgent. In recent years, antisemitism has surged in society. We note this particularly in places like university campuses which are spaces meant to foster critical thinking, inclusion, and tolerance. Instead, many environments have become increasingly hostile to Jewish students, preventing them from participating fully in academic and social life. This upsurge of hate contradicts the principles underpinning democratic societies and the human rights framework championed by the Council of Europe, including the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The Council of Europe has long been at the forefront of combating hate and intolerance, including through initiatives like the **No Hate Speech Movement (2013-2017)**. The recently adopted **Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)5** on passing on remembrance of the Holocaust and preventing crimes against humanity and **Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16** on Combating Hate Speech strengthen the framework by guiding member states on addressing and criminalising hate speech and preventing crimes against humanity. Moreover, the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) [General Policy Recommendation No. 9](#)** offers guidance and calls for action on combating antisemitism in Europe. This recommendation emphasises the need for coordinated policies, education, protection of Jewish communities, and the robust prosecution of antisemitic hate crimes. ECRI also encourages the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism as a non-legal tool to identify and understand antisemitism.

The Advisory Council on Youth calls upon all Member States and their ministries of Education to take immediate, concrete action to commit to educating current and future generations about the dangers of indifference. We must ensure that all institutions, including university and high school campuses, and non-formal learning environments are proactive in combating the scourge that is antisemitism as well as all other forms of discrimination. Young people must be able to learn and grow in safe, peaceful inclusive environments, free from fear and persecution.

In this spirit, The Advisory Council commits to continuing to advance youth rights, combat discrimination and intolerance, and promote awareness through education and peaceful dialogue. We stand ready to support Member States in their efforts to combat hate and safeguard the memory of those lost in the Holocaust, ensuring a future where 'Never Again' becomes a reality.

The statements of the Advisory Council are published for the purpose of informing the public about the activities of the statutory bodies of the Council of Europe youth sector. The statements reflect the opinions and positions of the Advisory Council and its members. The views expressed therein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council of Europe.