ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 9 (Revised) on preventing and combating Antisemitism

Adopted on 1 July 2021
ECRI GENERAL POLICY
RECOMMENDATION NO. 9
(REVISED)

ON PREVENTING AND COMBATING
ANTISEMITISM

ADOPTED ON 1 JULY 2021

Strasbourg, 14 September 2021
I. Preamble

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance,

Having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Having regard to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;

Having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights and in particular Article 14;

Having regard to Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights which contains a general clause prohibiting discrimination;

Having regard to the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist or xenophobic nature committed through computer systems;

Having regard to the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, the Court of Justice of the European Union and national courts with respect to incitement to antisemitism and to hate speech, including Holocaust denial, distortion, minimisation, approval and justification, such as blaming the victims;

Recalling ECRI’s General Policy Recommendations No. 1 on combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance; No. 2 (revised) on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level; No. 6 on combating the dissemination of racist, xenophobic and antisemitic material via the internet; No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination; No. 10 on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education; No. 12 on combating racism and racial discrimination in the field of sport; and No. 15 on combating hate speech;

Having regard to the Resolution 2106 (2016) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for a renewed commitment in the fight against antisemitism in Europe and to its Resolution 2309 (2019) on the preservation of Jewish cultural heritage;

Having regard to the European Parliament Resolution of 1 June 2017 on combating anti-Semitism, to the European Union’s Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, to the European Union’s Council Declaration 15213/18 on the fight against antisemitism and the development of a common security approach to better protect Jewish communities and institutions in Europe, to the European Union’s Council Declaration 13637/20 on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy areas and to the work of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in the field of combating antisemitism;
Recalling the OSCE’s Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism in 2004, the Conclusions by the OSCE Swiss Chairmanship on 12-13 November 2014, following the 10th Anniversary Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism, as well as the OSCE’s Basel Declaration of 2014 on Enhancing Efforts to Combat Anti-Semitism;

Noting the report on Antisemitism of 20 September 2019 by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief;


Recalling the work of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), and in particular the 2000 Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, the 2013 Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion, the 2016 Working Definition of Antisemitism, and ECRI’s 2020 Opinion on the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism;¹

Recalling the 2018 UNESCO-OSCE/ODIHR guidance entitled Addressing Anti-Semitism through Education: Guidelines for Policymakers;

Noting the appointment in a number of Council of Europe member States of national coordinators or advisers for combating antisemitism, as well as the appointment of a special representative, coordinator or focal point for this problem within the Council of Europe, the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations;

Recalling the principles contained in self-regulatory instruments of political parties;

Recalling that the legacy of Europe’s history is a duty to remember the past by remaining vigilant and actively opposing any manifestations of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance;

Paying homage to the memory of the victims of the systematic persecution and extermination of Jews in the Holocaust as well as of the other victims of policies of racist and homophobic persecution and extermination during the Second World War;

Paying homage to the Jewish victims of killings and systematic persecution under totalitarian regimes following the Second World War, as well as other victims of these policies;

Stressing in this respect that the Council of Europe was precisely founded in order to defend and promote common and just values – in particular the protection and promotion of human rights – around which Europe was rebuilt after the horrors of the Second World War;

Recalling that combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance is rooted in and forms part of the protection and promotion of human rights;

Profoundly convinced that combating antisemitism, while requiring actions taking into account its specificities, is an integral and intrinsic component of the struggle against racism and intolerance;

Noting that hatred and persecution of Jewish people has persisted for centuries across Europe;

Observing the increase of antisemitism in many member States of the Council of Europe, and stressing that this increase is also characterised by contemporary forms of antisemitism and by the spread of antisemitic hatred online;

Noting with concern the growing trend of gendered antisemitic abuse against women, particularly those active in public life or who identify as Orthodox Jews;

Observing that terrorist attacks and other forms of violence against Jews and Jewish institutions have risen dramatically since ECRI first published its General Policy

¹ See Appendix No. 1 (ECRI’s Opinion, 2020) and Appendix No. 2 (IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, 2016).
Recommendation No. 9 in 2004, and that they originate among different ideologies and political and religious areas, and that it is the responsibility of governments to protect their population, without any discrimination, against harm;

Noting that these manifestations have also closely followed contemporary world developments such as the situation in the Middle East;

Underlining that these manifestations are not exclusively the actions of extremist groups, but are often mainstream phenomena, including in schools, that are becoming increasingly perceived as commonplace occurrences;

Observing the frequent use of symbols from the Nazi era and references to the Holocaust in current manifestations of antisemitism;

Stressing that these manifestations originate in different social and ideological groups and different sectors of society;

Noting that the internet has increasingly been used as a vehicle for spreading antisemitism and that the social networks have failed to take effective measures to prevent this dangerous misuse of their platforms;

Observing that the victims of racism and exclusion in some European societies, themselves sometimes become perpetrators of antisemitism;

Noting that in a number of countries, antisemitism, including in its contemporary forms, continues to be promoted, openly or in a coded manner, by some political parties and leaders, including not only extremist parties, but also certain mainstream parties;

Noting that the perceptions of the Jewish population among politicians and other citizens sometimes have unintentional antisemitic overtones, which highlights the danger of mainstreaming these ideas;

Believing that an adequate response to these phenomena can only be developed through the concerted efforts of all relevant actors in European societies, including representatives of different communities, religious leaders, civil society organisations and other key institutions, notably those in the educational, cultural and political areas;

Stressing that efforts to counter antisemitism should include the thorough implementation of legal provisions against racism and racial discrimination in respect of all perpetrators and for the benefit of all victims, with special emphasis on the provisions against incitement to racist hatred and violence, as well as racial discrimination;

Convinced furthermore that these efforts should also include the promotion of dialogue and cooperation between the different segments of society on the local and national levels, including dialogue and cooperation between different cultural, ethnic and religious communities;

Emphasising strongly the role of education and particularly education about the Holocaust in the promotion of tolerance and respect for human rights, and thereby also in the struggle against antisemitism;

Underlining the need for governments to proactively address antisemitism through education, ensuring that education systems build students’ resistance to antisemitism and other forms of prejudice, and to respond effectively to instances of antisemitism in educational settings;

Decided to renew its General Policy Recommendation No. 9 on the fight against antisemitism in accordance with its Roadmap to Effective Equality drawn up on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.
II. Background and Context

General Comment

1. It is ECRI’s mandate and the intention of this General Policy Recommendation (GPR) to prevent and counter public manifestations of antisemitism. In this context, it is also important to emphasise that while ECRI’s GPRs are addressed to the national authorities of Council of Europe member States, preventing and combating antisemitism should be understood as a responsibility of all members of society.

2. Such manifestations include discrimination and hate speech, including denial and distortion of the Holocaust and threats, as well as acts of violence. Antisemitic attacks range from the desecration of Jewish cemeteries, monuments and synagogues, to physical assaults, even in public, against Jews or those believed to be Jews (persons wearing visible signs of the Jewish religion, such as the kippah, are particularly vulnerable), to murder and deadly terrorist attacks.

3. There is a wide range of perpetrators of antisemitic acts. They include neo-Nazis, right-wing extremists, religious extremists, in particular violent Islamists, as well as certain left-wing extremists. On several occasions, ECRI also noticed increasing attempts to rehabilitate or trivialise World War II collaborationist regimes and their actions, including in some cases occupation governments’ complicity in the machinery of the Holocaust.

Historical Development of Antisemitism

4. Hatred against Jews is an age-old problem in Europe that emerged during antiquity and was also linked to developments within Christianity. The modern roots of antisemitism as a complex form of racism date back to the second half of the 19th century. The then growing trend in Europe to categorise and typologise natural phenomena was also increasingly applied to human beings and their societies and cultures. The concept of “semitism” is itself a racist invention from that period, building on earlier linguistic terminology, by those who developed a pseudo-scientific basis for their hatred and politics to blame Jewish people and also to stigmatise left and liberal movements by associating them with the Jews as allegedly alien to the values and political life of the majority. This concept was deeply rooted in racist theories and carries notions of unchangeable character traits that all Jewish people share irrespective of their actual nationality, culture, social class, language, or other factors. It thus attempted to define and impose, from the outside, a static and biologised category of “the Jews” that was to be used in the emerging political discourse and framework of “race” and racial hierarchies.

5. This process also marked an important point in the history of anti-Jewish hatred. Antisemitism was no longer limited to hatred of the Jewish religion but extended by means of an invented “semitic race”. In medieval and early modern Europe, Jews were discriminated against, marginalised and subjected to hatred and violence mainly

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2 ECRI strongly emphasises that this should not be misunderstood or wrongly interpreted in any way as justifying prejudice, discrimination or hatred against Muslims (see also ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5).


4 A note on spelling: ECRI spells the term “antisemitism” without a hyphen. Using a hyphen would imply the existence of a “semitism” that one could be opposed to. However, the concept of “semitism” itself is a racist invention by those who wanted to develop a new basis for their hatred of Jewish people (see main text).


6 Since all human beings belong to the same species, ECRI rejects theories based on the existence of different “races” (see also ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 7, footnote 1).
because of their religion, for example based on accusations of deicide or superstitions of blood libels. However, a Jewish person converting to Christianity or Islam, depending on the region in Europe, was therefore, at least in theory, no longer subjected to these forms of intolerance.

6. With the invention of “semitism”, it was no longer only the religion that was seen by antisemites as a problem, but something they believed to be pre-determined and hereditary and that could not be altered by the individuals concerned. As a result, for example, the National Socialist (Nazi) regime also murdered persons of Jewish descent whose families had become Christians. In the views of those propagating anti-Jewish hatred, “Semitism” replaced “Judaism”, or more simplistically speaking: “blood replaced religion”.

7. Antisemitism has been described variously as a poison or a virus. Antisemitism may alternatively be seen as accommodating a reservoir of negative ideas about Jews which has been replenished over the millennia and which can be drawn on, sometimes unintentionally and at others, intentionally. This may happen when stereotypes about Jews intersect with concerns such as the functioning of capitalism in society or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These ideas may therefore provide a simplistic and persuasive answer to concerns.

Contemporary Forms of Antisemitism

8. Contemporary forms of antisemitism can differ from traditional forms of prejudice against Jewish people, but both forms can also exist in parallel. Nowadays, antisemitism can also be expressed in certain criticism of Israel that is baseless. For example, denying Jews their right to a national homeland, holding the State of Israel to a different standard of behaviour than other states, or demonising the State of Israel and viewing it and its people as inherently evil or racist, may be regarded as antisemitic. However, ECRI strongly emphasises that any attempts to stifle, or stigmatise as antisemitic, legitimate criticism of Israel and its policies, in particular towards the Palestinian people and in the context of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, will jeopardise efforts to combat antisemitism and should therefore be rejected.7

9. Although anti-Israeli rhetoric also comes from anti-Zionist groups, ECRI notes that anti-Zionism cannot simply be equated to antisemitism. Zionism is a Jewish national political movement founded in the late 19th century as a response to growing antisemitism in Europe with the aim of political emancipation of Jewish minorities and establishing a Jewish nation-state. There has always been a Jewish presence in their ancestral land and their longing to return as a people formed an essential part of their daily religious ritual. This aim was ultimately achieved with the foundation of the State of Israel, which was established in accordance with the UN Partition Plan for Palestine in 1948. Anti-Zionism is the opposition to this movement and to Jewish nationalism. There have been and still are also different political and religious groupings of Jewish people opposed to the idea of Zionism. However, it cannot be overlooked that today’s antisemitism can be camouflaged as anti-Zionism in order to pretend to be a purely political view and not a form of racism. This can be found, for example, amongst those who are not per se opposed to nationalism and nation-states, but only to a Jewish nation-state. In this case, the different treatment of Jews and their national aspirations, and the singling out of Jewish people for applying other standards to them, constitute forms of antisemitism. ECRI notes that the Secretary-General of the United Nations has characterised “attempts

to delegitimize the right of Israel to exist, including calls for its destruction" as a contemporary manifestation of antisemitism.8

10. Neither anti-Zionism nor antisemitism are monolithic views but include often contradictory and heterogeneous positions. It is widely accepted that the line between these two phenomena is not clear-cut. However, it can be noted that while anti-Zionists are not necessarily antisemitic, the vast majority of antisemites are also anti-Zionists. In this regard, it is the intention of this General Policy Recommendation to encourage and enable governments of Council of Europe member States to deal more effectively with the overlapping sections of anti-Zionism and antisemitism. In order to assess whether specific comments or statements are only anti-Zionist or also antisemitic, it is necessary to look at them in their broader context (e.g. made by whom, why, when, how, where and to what audience). This approach is, for example, also reflected in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism.

11. In this context, growing antisemitism as a result of the influence of some radicalised Islamists on members of immigrant communities, but not exclusively on them, in western Europe and elsewhere has also been of concern.9 In its monitoring work, ECRI has observed that whenever tensions rise in the wake of any renewed violence in the Middle East conflict, sweeping generalisations against all Jews and antisemitic violence are on the rise in Europe.10 ECRI has repeatedly pointed out that too often insufficient emphasis is placed on the need to distinguish between legitimate criticism of the actions of Israel, to the extent that the latter is held to the same standards as any other state, and the public expression of racism and hatred of Jewish people in general.11 Public condemnation of such racist rhetoric and actions is often insufficient. ECRI has also expressed its concern about the widespread view that attacks on Jewish persons or property could be considered as justifiable reactions to policies or actions of the Israeli government.12 ECRI underlines that such condoning and indirect support for antisemitic racism needs to be strongly condemned and prevented.

12. Examples of contemporary forms of antisemitism may involve traditional stereotypes and conspiracy theories but apply them to modern-day phenomena. This includes examples such as accusing “the Jews” of controlling or undermining the international financial system, global governance structures, the media, state institutions, causing wars and armed conflicts, deliberately spreading illnesses or being the “hidden hand” in a variety of other doomsday scenarios. This has again become visible also with the spread, especially through social media, of antisemitic conspiracy theories in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

13. Antisemitism, while being a form of racism, is also characterised by other unique elements. Antisemitism shares the standard racist worldview that rejects the existence of one common humanity and instead sub-divides human beings into different “racial” categories, which are usually not viewed as equal. Notions of unbridgeable divisions between “us” and “them” that are inherent in racism can also be found in antisemitism. However, antisemitism is nearly always also characterised by conspiracy theories that

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9 See for example: ECRI Annual Report 2014: § 13; ECRI Annual Report 2015: § 24. However, ECRI strongly emphasises once more that this should not be misunderstood or wrongly interpreted in any way as justifying prejudice, discrimination or hatred against Muslims (See also ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5).
attribute certain sinister intentions and hidden powers to Jews. In this sense, antisemitism deviates from usual racist stereotypes in which the “other” is portrayed as inferior by nature. Contrary to this, antisemitic prejudice is often based on assumptions of special superior powers (political, financial, globalised networking) that Jews are suspected of holding and of using against non-Jews. These age-old stereotypes are used to incite fear and hatred against Jews and can be mobilised flexibly in different times and especially during moments of crisis. On the one hand, antisemitism reflects an array of deeply intertwined resentments and is an example of an intersectional form of racism, but, on the other hand, it is also not only a form of racism. Jewishness is, depending on the context, demonised in conjunction with other identity markers, such as social status (wealth, education), professional background (academics, artists, bankers) or political ideology (liberalism, socialism), which conveniently creates the nexus needed to feed the conspiracy theories that are relevant at any given time. As is typical for conspiracy theories, it becomes irrelevant that the different accusations at some point even contradict each other (for example Jews as “controlling global finance” and Jews as “master-minds of communism”).

14. ECRI notes the increased harassment of Jewish women, particularly online, on the grounds of their gender and their religion. Women politicians and women in public life are targeted, abused and threatened with violence, and visibly Orthodox women have been physically assaulted.

15. Another disturbing example of contemporary forms of antisemitism is the resurgence of Holocaust denial and distortion in Europe, including the malicious falsification of the historical facts of the Holocaust and in some cases even the rehabilitation of pro-Nazi parties.

Holocaust Denial and Distortion

16. Attempts to deny or intentionally distort the reality of the Holocaust seek to minimise the crimes of the National Socialists and their collaborators, rehabilitate Nazism and antisemitism, prolong the trauma suffered by the victims and their families, deny their identity as victims and promote ideologies that invite genocide and crimes against humanity.

17. ECRI notes that the European Court of Human Rights has held that Holocaust denial is not protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. In one of several cases brought before it where applicants had pleaded that their right to free speech was compromised, it judged that the applicant had intentionally stated untruths in order to defame the Jews and the persecution they had suffered.¹³

18. ECRI also notes that the UN General Assembly condemned without any reservation any denial of the Holocaust and urged all member States unreservedly to reject any denial of the Holocaust as an historical event, either in full or in part, or any activities to this end.¹⁴

19. ECRI further notes that the Additional Protocol to the 2003 Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime requires State Parties to prosecute Holocaust denial if the offence is committed with the intent to incite hatred, discrimination or violence online, and that the 2008 European Union Framework Decision requires the member States concerned to punish hate speech and the public condoning of denial, or gross trivialisation of crimes

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¹³ European Court of Human Rights, Pastörs v. Germany (ECtHR 2019, no. 55225/14).
¹⁴ UN General Assembly Resolution no. 61/255 (2007).
of genocide, including the Holocaust, as criminal offences.\textsuperscript{15} In this context, ECRI also refers to its own General Policy Recommendations Nos. 7, 9 (2004) and 15.

20. ECRI welcomes the IHRA \textit{Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion} agreed by its member States in 2013, which provides contexts in which distortion appears and clarifies what is meant by the terms.\textsuperscript{16}

\textit{Holocaust Remembrance}

21. The Council of Europe was founded in the aftermath of the Second World War in order to defend and promote common and just values, and in particular to protect and promote human rights.

22. Remembrance of the planned murder and destruction of Jewish communities as an essential element of the Nazi regime’s attempt to conquer Europe is therefore a duty for all Council of Europe member States, as is the preservation and safeguarding of Jewish heritage sites, which are testimony to the long tradition of Jewish life in Europe.

23. This duty was recalled by the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe in her address to the IHRA Ministerial Conference on 19 January 2020, when she stated that “ECRI has long drawn attention to the need for determined action against this scourge. … remembrance is important. It is a tribute to the millions of victims of the Holocaust. It is imperative to our dignity. Remembrance is also important because it helps us to understand the genesis of evil, its potential to return and the fragility of our democracies. It is essential to stability and peace, for living together in Europe”.

24. In particular, ECRI has drawn attention to the training of teachers in cultural understanding in order to curb various manifestations of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance in its General Policy Recommendation No. 1, and that homage should be paid to the memory of the systematic persecution and extermination of Jews during the Holocaust, as well as other victims of racist persecution and extermination during the Second World War in its General Policy Recommendation No. 9 (2004).

\textsuperscript{15} EU Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.

\textsuperscript{16} See also IHRA (2021): Recognising and Countering Holocaust Distortion – Recommendations for Policy and Decision Makers.
III. Recommendations

ECRI notes that the levels of antisemitism and the forms in which it is expressed vary considerably among Council of Europe member States. The following recommendations, which also take relevant findings from ECRI’s country monitoring work into consideration, should not be understood as a “one-size-fits-all” approach. They are intended as a list of actions which governments are invited to consider and, if necessary, to adapt to their country’s circumstances in cooperation with the communities concerned.

ECRI recommends that the governments of member States:

A. Policies and Institutional Coordination

1 - give a high priority to the fight against antisemitism, taking all necessary measures to combat all of its public manifestations, regardless of their origin;

2 - ensure that actions aimed at countering antisemitism are consistently given their due place amongst actions aimed at countering racism, as a separate action plan or alternatively integrated into an overall action plan against racism;

3 - ensure that the fight against antisemitism is carried out at all administrative levels (national, regional, local) and facilitate the involvement of a wide range of actors from different sectors of society (in particular political, legal, economic, social, religious, educational and cultural) in these efforts;

4 - enact legislation aimed at combating antisemitism taking into account ECRI’s recommendations in its General Policy Recommendation No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination;

5 - ensure the inclusion of the principle of intersectionality in all equality policies, especially those also dealing with antisemitism, to avoid discrimination based on a combination of protected characteristics;

6 - where appropriate, appoint national coordinators, as well as coordinators at decentralised level, to supervise and coordinate efforts to combat antisemitism, who will act as a bridge between government, law enforcement agencies and other relevant public bodies (for example in the fields of education and culture) and Jewish communities and institutions, and who will also coordinate with other national coordinators to ensure that member States pursue consistent coordinated policies;

7 - fully involve the national equality bodies in the process of countering, monitoring, data collection, hearing and considering complaints and petitions on antisemitic acts, as well advising the legislative authorities on adoption of relevant legislation, along the lines set out in ECRI’s revised General Policy Recommendation No. 2 on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level;

8 - for those member States that have not already done so, to sign and ratify the 2003 Additional Protocol concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime;

9 - support the coordination and exchange of best practices in the area of preventing and combating antisemitism between different organisations at the international level, such as the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the European Union and the United Nations;
B. Prevention / Education

10 - encourage political actors, opinion leaders and other public personalities to take a firm public stand against antisemitism, speaking out against its various manifestations, including all its contemporary forms, and making clear that antisemitism will never be tolerated;

11 - encourage and support research projects and independent monitoring of antisemitism;

12 - take into account the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism as a non-legal tool to understand and identify expressions of antisemitism, including contemporary forms, in line with ECRI’s Opinion on this document;

13 - ensure that criminal justice agencies collect data on antisemitic incidents and crimes in the disaggregated form agreed as best practice by European agencies and other international organisations in order to provide consistent and continuous data suitable for crime reduction policies;

14 - regulate internet companies, including social media networks, telecom operators and internet service providers, in order to establish effective systems to monitor and stop antisemitic hate speech online in line with international human rights standards;

15 - ensure continuous training at local, regional and national levels for police officers, prosecutors and the judiciary on preventing and combating antisemitism, including recognising and recording antisemitic hate crime, agreed as best practice by European agencies and other international organisations;

16 - promote learning about Jewish life and Jewish history as well as the positive contribution of Jewish persons, communities and culture to European societies, also by taking into account Jewish heritage sites, where relevant;

17 - cooperate with all relevant actors and the Jewish community with a view to including a specific module on antisemitism in integration and inclusion policies and in activities aimed at civic education;

18 - ensure that school directors, teachers and other personnel are adequately briefed to effectively address antisemitic harassment and attacks that take place in schools and other education establishments, including institutions of higher learning, through targeted training and materials;

19 - plan relevant and effective educational activities in order to (i) better understand antisemitism, (ii) prevent antisemitism through education, (iii) educate pupils and students about antisemitism, and (iv) respond to antisemitic incidents;

20 - ensure that education efforts to prevent and combat antisemitism include as main learning outcomes (i) a capacity for critical thinking, (ii) resistance against antisemitism, (iii) ability to contextualise antisemitism and to challenge antisemitic prejudices and stereotypes, and (iv) empathy for victims of antisemitism;

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17 See also ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating hate speech, especially recommendation 4.g
18 See also Recommendation 23 below.
19 ECRI’s Opinion on the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism (2020), in particular § 7
20 See for example the OSCE/ODIHR Information Against Hate Crimes Toolkit.
21 See also the OSCE/ODIHR programmes entitled Training Against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) and Prosecutors and Hate Crimes Training (PAHCT).
21 - include education about antisemitism in the mission statements of educational establishments, relevant plans of action, curricula and codes of conduct; and develop high-quality educational methodologies and materials, such as textbooks and digital tools, on this topic;\(^{23}\)

22 - ensure that education about antisemitism is made available across relevant disciplines to all pupils and students at the appropriate age, in formal and non-formal education, including in adult education and teacher training,\(^{24}\) by facilitating, supporting, monitoring and evaluating antisemitism education;

23 - support scientific research aimed at supporting individuals and groups who are at a particular risk of becoming victims of antisemitism, and make use of narratives based on publicly articulated contemporary experiences of antisemitism in addition to available historical documentation;

24 - promote learning about the Holocaust, and the developments leading up to it, within schools, in education in general, and ensure that teachers are adequately trained in order to address this issue in a manner whereby pupils and students also reflect upon current dangers and how the recurrence of such events can be prevented,\(^{25}\) including by visiting places of remembrance, where they exist;

25 - officially commemorate 27 January as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, as recommended by the initiative of the Ministers of Education of the member States of the Council of Europe in October 2002 and the Resolution 60/7 of the General Assembly of the United Nations of November 2005;

26 - promote learning and research into the systematic persecution and murder of Jewish and other persons under totalitarian regimes following the Second World War;

27 - pay particular attention to the need for public awareness-raising in the context of property restitution to Jewish individuals or communities, where this takes place, in order to avoid an increase in antisemitic sentiments, stereotypes or hate speech;

28 - encourage debate within the media professions on their role in combating antisemitism, and on the particular responsibility of media professionals, in this context, to report on all world events, particularly with regard to the State of Israel, its policies in the occupied territories and its relations with its neighbours, in a manner that avoids perpetuating antisemitic stereotypes and prejudices;

29 - support the activities of non-governmental organisations, which play an important role in combating antisemitism and promoting appreciation of diversity;

30 - support common anti-racist actions between different ethnic and religious communities and promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue and tolerance through sustained efforts and broad outreach involving a wide range of societal actors at all levels, including through providing financing and establishing relevant institutional fora;

31 - ensure that persons of the Jewish faith are in a position to exercise their right to freedom of religion without discrimination, including by public institutions making provision in their everyday practices for the reasonable accommodation of religious requirements;

32 - encourage religious leaders at all levels to take responsibility for teachings at the grassroots level and avoid fuelling antisemitism;

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\(^{23}\) See also Recommendations 16, 24 and 26; as well as UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR (2020): Addressing Anti-Semitism in Schools: Training Curricula. See also the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture.

\(^{24}\) See also Recommendation 24 below.

\(^{25}\) See also UNESCO (2017): Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide: A policy guide.
33 - encourage all local, national and international sports bodies to promote action against antisemitism, and all manifestations of racism, at sporting events and in their publications;

34 - condemn activities that promote boycotts of the State of Israel, its nationals or Israeli companies and institutions if such activities incite violence, hatred or intolerance;26

C. Protection

35 - ensure the protection of Jews, Jewish communities and their institutions by promoting cooperation between them and local as well as national law enforcement and security authorities, while acknowledging the primary responsibility of the state, based on established best practices and guidelines; as well as evaluate the measures taken and exchange best practices with other governments;27

36 - improve cooperation with Jewish communities in order to determine and implement the necessary security measures as well as ensure financial support for those measures. Where appropriate, take any necessary steps to contribute actively to ensuring the safety of Jewish persons, Jewish religious, educational and cultural buildings, places of remembrance and Jewish community life, in close cooperation and dialogue with Jewish associations and others engaged in the fight against antisemitism;28

37 - ensure support for victims of antisemitic, and all other racist acts, according to existing legal instruments,29 guidance 30 and good practices such as developing a victim-centred approach; ensuring that victims of hate crime are treated sensitively and receive appropriate support (including psycho-social counselling) before, during and after criminal proceedings; establishing networks consisting of all those who work to prevent and tackle discrimination of members of the Jewish community;31

38 - ensure that victims of antisemitic discrimination are aware of the possibility of referring cases to the national equality body;

39 - ensure that victims of antisemitic acts are aware of their rights to redress through civil, administrative and criminal proceedings and are not prevented from exercising them through fear, insufficient knowledge, physical or emotional obstacles or lack of means;

40 - avoid over-interviewing victims and make use of technology and other tools to protect them from re-victimisation;

26 See judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the case Baldassi and others v. France, in which the Court held that the promotion of a boycott for political reasons is protected by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Freedom of Expression) as long as it does not incite violence, hatred or intolerance (ECtHR 2020, no.15271/16; see in particular § 79). In this context, see also ECtHR judgment in the case Willem v. France (ECtHR 2009, no. 10883/05; in particular §§ 34-42).

27 See for example the OSCE/ODIHR project “Turning Words into Action to Address Anti-Semitism” and OSCE/ODIHR (2017): Understanding Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Jewish Communities: A Practical Guide.

28 See also the EU Council Declaration on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy areas (2020) and the EU Council Declaration on the fight against antisemitism and the development of a common security approach to better protect Jewish communities and institutions in Europe (2018).


31 See EU-FRA Compendium of practices for hate crime.
D. **Prosecution / Law Enforcement**

41 - ensure that the legislation enables law enforcement agencies and prosecution services to combat antisemitism effectively, taking into account ECRI’s recommendations in its General Policy Recommendation No. 7 on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination;

42 - ensure that the law provides that, for all criminal offences, racist motivation constitutes an aggravating circumstance, and that such motivation covers antisemitic motivation;

43 - ensure that criminal law covers antisemitism and penalises the following antisemitic acts when committed intentionally:

   a. genocide, racial discrimination or racist offences;
   b. preparation for genocide, racial discrimination or racist offences;
   c. public incitement to discrimination, violence or hatred against a person or a group of persons on the grounds of their Jewish identity or origin;
   d. use of violence against another person or damaging his/her property because of his/her actual or presumed Jewish identity or origin;
   e. the creation or the leadership of a group which has set itself the objective to propagate or incite discrimination, violence or hatred, or use of violence against another person or damage his/her property because of their Jewish identity or origin;
   f. membership of a group or organisation which sets itself the objectives mentioned in point e) above;
   g. participating in a group-attack against a part of the population, individual citizens or their property in connection with their actual or presumed Jewish identity or origin;
   h. public insults and defamation of a person or a group of persons on the grounds of their actual or presumed Jewish identity or origin;
   i. threats against a person or group of persons on the grounds of their actual or presumed Jewish identity or origin;
   j. the public expression, with an antisemitic aim, of an ideology which depreciates or denigrates, or which incites hatred against a group of persons on the grounds of their Jewish identity or origin;
   k. the public glorification, denial, distortion, trivialisation, justification or condoning of the Holocaust;
   l. the public glorification, denial, distortion, trivialisation, justification or condoning, with an antisemitic aim, of crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes committed against persons on the grounds of their actual or presumed Jewish identity or origin;
   m. the public dissemination or public distribution, or the production or storage aimed at public dissemination or public distribution, with an antisemitic aim, of written, pictorial or other material containing manifestations covered by points c), h), i), j), k) and l) above;
   n. desecration, destruction or damaging with an antisemitic aim of a synagogue, house of prayer, sanctuary, place of remembrance or other Jewish community institutions, such as schools, cultural centres or cemeteries, or their symbols;
   o. hindering by force or threat Jews from freely practising their faith or from performing their religious rituals and services, which do not violate the laws of the country, the public order and morality;

44 - ensure that antisemitic crimes committed online are punished just as crimes offline and are adequately addressed by means of effective prosecution and other measures. Illegal antisemitic hate speech must be removed promptly and consistently by internet service providers, in accordance with the relevant legal and non-legal framework;

45 - ensure that the law provides for an obligation to suppress public financing of organisations which promote antisemitism, including political parties;
46 - ensure that the law provides for the possibility of disbanding organisations that promote antisemitism;

47 - take the appropriate measures to ensure that legislation aimed at preventing and sanctioning antisemitism is effectively implemented;

48 - implement the recommendations made in section III.B (Prevention/Education) above on data collection (§ 13) and training for police officers, prosecutors and the judiciary (§ 15);

49 - implement the recommendations made in section III.C (Protection) above on victims’ rights (§ 39) and avoiding re-victimisation (§ 40);

50 - promote the effective participation of victims of antisemitic acts in the civil, administrative or criminal proceedings, in accordance with the country’s procedures;

51 - police and prosecution services should designate contact persons for vulnerable groups targeted by hate speech and hate crimes, including antisemitic. These contact persons should receive continuing training on the investigation of hate speech and crimes and build up and maintain regular dialogue with these groups in order to ensure adequate reporting, investigation and prosecution of hate speech and hate crimes;

52 - police and prosecution services should thoroughly investigate all cases of alleged antisemitic hate crime and hate speech and ensure that the possible existence of a bias motivation is consistently taken into consideration in police reports and investigations, as well as in any further judicial proceedings.
APPENDIX I
ECRI’s Opinion on the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism
(adopted at ECRI’s 84th plenary meeting on 2 December 2020)

1. ECRI notes that there is currently no final and absolute definition of antisemitism. Academic discussions have reflected a wide range of different approaches, but without a conclusive result.

2. In 2004, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC, the predecessor of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency – FRA) encountered problems in accurately compiling data on antisemitic incidents due to the complete or partial absence of official state monitoring in this area. Guidelines for recording such incidents were often ambiguous if they existed at all, which led to under-reporting by police and other relevant authorities. Combating the growing problem of antisemitism in Europe was thus severely hindered by the absence of an operational definition which could adequately describe traditional forms of antisemitism, with their origins in racial, religious, economic, and extremist political theories, as well as various contemporary forms of antisemitism expressed as demonisation of Israel as a Jewish state but which masqueraded as mere anti-Zionism. In order to remedy the situation, the EUMC commissioned a working definition, which was agreed with representatives of Jewish organisations and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This working definition was not designed to be legislated, but to provide operational guidance to relevant public authorities. The EUMC working definition provided the basis for further work in this area, although it was not finally adopted due to the fact that neither the EUMC, nor its successor FRA, were standard-setting bodies but research agencies advising the Commission of the European Union.

3. Subsequently, in 2016, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted the non-legally binding Working Definition of Antisemitism which is largely based on the previous work of the EUMC. This Working Definition has since been gaining increasing support in the international community and has been adopted by 27 states (as of November 2020), including 23 member states of the Council of Europe, and been endorsed or recommended for usage by various international actors, such as the European Union and the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion and Belief.

4. However, there has also been criticism of the Working Definition. Inter alia, it has been argued that the Working Definition does not reflect a consensus within academic scholarship. Others pointed out though that the Working Definition was not designed as an academic exercise and should be understood as an operational tool.

5. Another criticism is that the Working Definition is not suitable as a legal text for various reasons, in particular its lack of precision. Proponents argue that this was never the purpose or intention of the Working Definition and that it was explicitly meant to be a non-legally binding text that aims at providing practical guidance to governments to support them in their efforts to prevent and counter the different forms of antisemitism more effectively.

6. Concerns have also been expressed that the Working Definition would regard all criticism of Israel as antisemitic and would stifle free speech, in particular in the context of

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32 See also ECRI Annual Report 2018: § 17.
protests against violations of human rights committed by the Israeli authorities. At the same time, the Working Definition states that “criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic”.

7. In this context, ECRI has also repeatedly underlined that criticism of Israel cannot be considered per se antisemitic, as long as it is expressed in the same way as criticism against other states. ECRI strongly emphasises that any attempts to misuse the Working Definition and its examples to stifle, or stigmatisé as antisemitic, legitimate criticism of Israel and its policies, in particular towards the Palestinian people and in the context of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, will jeopardise efforts to combat antisemitism and should therefore be rejected. ECRI must reiterate, however, that it is unacceptable when criticism of the Israeli government is used to stir up hatred against all Jewish people in Israel and elsewhere, including by allegations of a “Jewish conspiracy” at a global level. This image, which builds on century-old stereotypes, fuels resentment against all Jewish persons.33 ECRI has noted in its Annual Reports that surges of antisemitic hatred are frequently witnessed across many European countries in the wake of renewed violence in the Middle East. In the ensuing public discourse, insufficient emphasis is placed on the need to distinguish between criticism of the actions of Israel and the public expression of hatred of Jewish people and racism towards them in general.34 Jewish institutions, such as synagogues, community centres and cemeteries, are often vandalised, also in reaction to events in the Middle East. The view that attacks on Jewish persons and property could be considered as justifiable reactions to policies or actions of the Israeli government is, regrettably, widespread and not only held by members of extremist groups.35

8. Keeping in mind the above observations, ECRI welcomes the non-legally binding IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism in the sense that it aids and promotes a better understanding of antisemitism. Notably, the Working Definition is based on a concept that also includes various contemporary forms of antisemitism without trying to delegitimise criticism of Israel to the extent that the latter is held to the same standards as any other state. While not being a definition contained in an international treaty, or meant to be used in court proceedings, nor representing a universally approved academic definition, ECRI considers that it can be a positive tool and encourages Council of Europe member states to take it into account, in particular in the areas of data collection, education and awareness-raising.

APPENDIX II

Working Definition of Antisemitism of the
International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)
(adopted by the IHRA Plenary on 26 May 2016)

“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.”

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.
Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.
APPENDIX III

Links to documents referred to in parts I-III

Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist or xenophobic nature committed through computer systems (CETS No. 189)
https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008160f

Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, Revised Guidelines on the Protection of Victims of Terrorist Acts
https://rm.coe.int/protection-of-victims-of-terrorist-acts/168078ab54

Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 2309 (2019) on the preservation of Jewish cultural heritage
http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=28247

Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 2106 (2016) for a renewed commitment in the fight against antisemitism in Europe

Council of Europe, Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture

Council of the European Union, Declaration 13637/20 on mainstreaming the fight against antisemitism across policy areas

Council of the European Union, Declaration 15213/18 on the fight against antisemitism and the development of a common security approach to better protect Jewish communities and institutions in Europe

Council of the European Union, Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32008F0913

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 1 on combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 2 (revised) on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level
http://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-/16808b5a23
ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 5 on combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 6 on combating the dissemination of racist, xenophobic and antisemitic material via the internet
http://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-6-on-combating-the-dissemination/16808b5a8d

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 7 (revised) on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination
https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-7-revised-on-national-legislation/16808b5aae

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 10 on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education
http://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-10-on-combating-racism-and-racia/16808b5ad5

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 12 on combating racism and racial discrimination in the field of sport
http://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-12-on-combating-racism-and-racia/16808b5ae7

ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating hate speech
http://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-15-on-combating-hate-speech/16808b5b01

ECRI Annual Reports
https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/annual-reports

ECRI, A Historical Introduction (Prepared for ECRI’s 25th Anniversary)
https://rm.coe.int/historical-introduction-/1680972f42

ECRI Roadmap to Effective Equality
https://rm.coe.int/ecri-roadmap-final-version-/168097e13d

ECRI’s Opinion on the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism
https://rm.coe.int/opinion-ecri-on-ihra-wd-on-antisemitism-2755-7610-7522-1/1680a091dd

European Convention on Human Rights (European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) (CETS No. 005)
https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/convention_eng.pdf

European Convention on the Compensation of Victims of Violent Crimes (CETS No. 116)
https://rm.coe.int/1680079751
European Parliament, Resolution of 1 June 2017 on combating anti-Semitism

European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, Compendium of practices for hate crime

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust
https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/about-us/stockholm-declaration

IHRA, Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion
https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-holocaust-denial-and-distortion

IHRA, Working Definition of Antisemitism
https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism

IHRA, Recognising and Countering Holocaust Distortion – Recommendations for Policy and Decision Makers
https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/reports/recognizing-countering-holocaust-distortion-recommendations

OSCE, Conclusions by the Swiss Chairmanship on 12-13 November 2014, following the 10th Anniversary Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism

OSCE, Declaration on Enhancing Efforts to Combat Anti-Semitism
https://www.osce.org/mc/130556

OSCE/ODIHR, Understanding Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of Jewish Communities: A Practical Guide
https://www.osce.org/odihr/317191

OSCE/ODIHR Information Against Hate Crimes Toolkit
https://www.osce.org/odihr/INFAHCT

OSCE/ODIHR Prosecutors and Hate Crimes Training (PAHCT) programme
https://www.osce.org/odihr/pahct

OSCE/ODIHR Training Against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) programme
https://www.osce.org/odihr/tahcle
Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (CETS No. 177)
https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/search-on-treaties/-
/conventions/rms/0900001680080622

United Nations General Assembly, Resolution no. 61/255, 2007

United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech
mobilizing/Action_plan_on_hate_speech_EN.pdf

United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship

United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism

United Nations Secretary-General, Remarks made at the UNESCO High-Level Event on the Power of Education for Countering Racism and Discrimination: The Case of anti-Semitism (New York, 26 September 2018)
https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-09-26/secretary-generals-remarks-high-
level-event-power-education

United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Report on Antisemitism of 20 September 2019
https://undocs.org/A/74/358

UNESCO, Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide: A policy guide
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248071

UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR, Addressing Anti-Semitism in Schools: Training Curricula
framework-curricula-teacher-trainers and https://www.osce.org/odihr/470712

UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR, Addressing Anti-Semitism through Education – Guidelines for Policymakers

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
ECRI is a human rights body of the Council of Europe, composed of independent experts, which monitors problems of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination on grounds such as “race”, national/ethnic origin, colour, citizenship, religion and language (racial discrimination); it prepares reports and issues recommendations to member States.

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