

Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism

Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU

Factsheet – Denmark

“The way things are now, I experience, for example, that “Jew” is a widespread cuss word in Copenhagen. As a Jew who has grown up in Denmark, I have always avoided showing/telling people I am a Jew.” (Woman, 20–24 years old, Denmark)

“Unfortunately, the development over time has been for the worse. For many years, being Jewish in Denmark was not a problem. In this millennium, we have started to see threats, offending statements and terrorist attack against persons characterised as Jews. The majority of these have been initiated by people of a Muslim background.” (Woman, 55–59 years old, Denmark)

“My biggest problem has been that people use the word Jew as an invective in their daily speech, which I find offensive. Besides, people really like the so-called Jewish jokes and often do not realise how antisemitic many of these are.” (Woman, 20–24 years old, Denmark)

“I am very scared about my children’s future, since “Jew” is an invective in my district, and people hate Jews so much that life means nothing. We are scared that our children will be attacked one way or another.” (Man, 45–49 years old, Denmark)

“I do not feel safe when I go to Jewish events because of the multitude of security checks and measures such as “locks”, etc.” (Woman, 70–79 years old, Denmark)

“One of the fundamentally biggest problems for Jews in Denmark is that we do not dare visibly show our Jewish identity in public, at school, at the gym, etc. for fear of antisemitic statements, unfortunately, in particular from our Muslim neighbours.” (Man, 35–39 years old, Denmark)

“Official Denmark does a lot to prevent antisemitism, but the popular feeling has gone the wrong way.” (Woman, 55–59 years old, Denmark)

“A couple of years ago some people of an immigrant background were watching who was leaving the Jewish House, with some of them harassing and others threatening people. My report to the Jewish community never got through.” (Woman, 55–59 years old, Denmark)

“My Jewish-sounding surname means that people can often guess that I am a Jew. I do not use my surname in the social media, exactly in order to avoid being identified as a Jew.” (Woman, 25–29 years old, Denmark)

“One other time, I was surrounded by a group of young immigrants right next to the synagogue. I got rid of them by giving them my money – and was ready to fight for my life. I was ready to die, and they gave up. But I was shaken afterwards. I did not report it to the police because I do not believe it was worth the effort when “nothing had happened to me”. (Man, 60–69 years old, Denmark)

The survey in a nutshell

The report presents the main findings of FRA’s second survey on Jewish people’s experiences and perceptions of hate crime, discrimination and antisemitism. It analyses data from the responses of 16,395 self-identified Jewish people in 12 EU Member States – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. These Member States are home to over 96 % of the EU’s estimated Jewish population.

The survey was open to individuals aged 16 years and over who consider themselves Jewish – based on religion, culture, upbringing, ethnicity, parentage or any other reason – and who, at the time of the survey, were living in one of the

survey countries. The largest samples were obtained from the two countries which, according to estimates, have the largest Jewish populations in the EU – France (3,869 respondents) and the United Kingdom (4,731 respondents). Samples over 1,000 respondents were obtained in Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. For the remaining seven countries, the sample sizes ranged from 400 to 800 respondents.

In Denmark, 592 respondents filled in the online survey.

Selected results for Denmark

Manifestations of antisemitism

- According to the survey findings, 56 % of the respondents in Denmark consider antisemitism to be a very big or a fairly big problem in their country (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 85 %)
- 85 % of the respondents in Denmark consider antisemitism has increased over the past 5 years (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 89 %)
- 56 % of the respondents in Denmark consider racism to be a very big or a fairly big problem in their country (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 84 %)
- 54 % of the respondents in Denmark consider intolerance towards Muslims to be a very big or a fairly big problem in their country (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 57 %), and 60 % of the respondents in Denmark consider intolerance towards Muslims has increased over the past 5 years (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 72 %)
- A large majority of respondents in Denmark (71 %) consider antisemitism expressed online as a problem in the country (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 89 %)
- A large majority of respondents in Denmark (77 %) believe that antisemitism online has increased over the past five years (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 88 %)
- Most survey respondents in Denmark say they are regularly exposed to negative statements about Jews. A large majority of respondents in Denmark (79 %) identify the internet as the most common forum for negative statements (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 80 %). The most frequent comment made by non-Jewish people in Denmark is according to the respondents the statement: *'Israelis behave "like Nazis" towards the Palestinians'* (55 %)

Safety and security – in Denmark

- A minority of the respondents (28 %) worry about becoming a victim of an antisemitic verbal insult or harassment in the next 12 months, a minority of the respondents (18 %) worry about being physically attacked in that same period (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 47 % and 40 %, respectively)
- Less than half of the respondents (44 %) at least sometimes wear, carry or display items that could identify them as Jewish. Of those respondents who at least sometimes carry or display such items, the majority (81 %) at least occasionally avoid doing so (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 49 % and 71 %, respectively)
- A quarter of the respondents have considered emigrating (25 %) in the past five years because they did not feel safe as a Jew in Denmark (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 38 %)
- A majority of respondents (55 %) believe that the Danish government's efforts to combat antisemitism are not effective. Meanwhile, a large majority of the respondents (78 %) positively assess the Danish government's efforts to ensure the security needs of the Jewish communities (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 70 % and 54 %, respectively)
- 70 % of the respondents said that the Arab-Israeli conflict impacts their feeling of safety in Denmark (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 69%)

Violence against Jews: experiences of harassment

- Almost half of the respondents in Denmark (41 %) experienced some form of antisemitic harassment in the five years before the survey. Almost a third (29 %) encountered such harassment in the 12 months before the survey (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 39 % and 28 %, respectively).
- Comments made in person, and offensive gestures or inappropriate staring, are the most common forms of antisemitic harassment personally experienced by respondents – 19 % and 15 %, respectively, of the respondents in Denmark said they were faced with these forms of harassment in the 12 months before the survey. 9 % said that antisemitic offensive comments were posted on the internet (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 18 %, 16 % and 10 %, respectively).
- When asked to describe the perpetrator of the most serious incident of antisemitic harassment experienced in the five years before the survey – to the extent possible and based on their perceptions – in Denmark, respondents in 34 % of the cases identified the perpetrator as someone with Muslim extremist views, 27 % – someone with a left-wing political view, and 22 % – someone who they cannot describe (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 30 %, 21 % and 31 %, respectively).

Reporting

- The majority of respondents in Denmark (80 %) who experienced antisemitic harassment in the five years before the survey did not report the most serious incident to the police or to any other organisation (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 79 %)
- In 12 surveyed countries, almost half (48 %) of the respondents who did not report the most serious incident to the police said that nothing would have changed had they done so. A similar proportion (43 %) of respondents did not consider the incident to be serious enough.

Rights awareness

- The majority of respondents in Denmark are aware of legislation that forbids discrimination based on ethnic origin or religion – 83 % of the respondents indicated knowing about antidiscrimination law when applying for a job (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 87 %)
- In Denmark, a minority of respondents (13 %) are aware of legislation that forbids denial or trivialisation of the Holocaust (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 65 %).