

Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism

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

Factsheet – Germany

“Antisemitism in Germany today is just like it was 30 years ago. For the past 12 years, antisemitism has no longer been a taboo in Germany, and so it occurs more often – verbally and physically, on German streets and in social media.” (Woman, 60–69 years old, Germany)

“Especially on Facebook there are many antisemitic and antiisraeli comments with an antisemitic character. If you report them to Facebook, they respond almost automatically ‘it meets our standards’.” (Man, 55–59 years old, Germany)

“My largest concern are the ‘alternative’ media like YouTube-channels, Twitter, Facebook or social media groups: racist and antisemitic insults are stated (apparently anonymously) and crude, insane, often antisemitic conspiracy theories are spread.” (Woman, 45–49 years old, Germany)

“Often people react like ‘Really? You are Jewish? That’s very cool’, even though it shouldn’t matter, who I am and you shouldn’t have to stress that you are not antisemitic (keyword: positive discrimination). Often you are exposed to jokes about Jews that are not meant antisemitic at all and that should be funny, but jokes about concentration camps or about prejudices are not funny, if you have lost a relative because of them.” (Man, 16–19 years old, Germany)

“You rather experience antisemitism in Germany when you are out/openly visible.” (Woman, 30–34 years old, Germany)

“Usually, I don’t like to self-identify as a Jew in a public space in Berlin or among strangers in Berlin because I’m afraid of ignorance, negative reactions, and threats.” (Woman, 60–69 years old, Germany)

“Politically, one shouldn’t only act on a national level but also clearly on a state and local level.” (Man, 25–29 years old, Germany)

“Nowadays, antisemitism is unfortunately mostly present in Muslim and left-wing circles. Sure, right-wing hatred against Jews exists as well, that’s not a question.” (Man, 25–29 years old, Germany)

“Keeping it a secret is also an approach not to be discriminated.” (Woman, 35–39 years old, Germany)

“The problem is that many people are afraid to identify as such due to the strong antisemitism. I would never openly wear a Star of David as jewelry or wear a T-shirt with a Hebrew text or with ‘Israel’ on it. Thus, the question about discrimination is null and void, because the problem is already much bigger.” (Woman, 30–34 years old, Germany)

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 Germany, 1,233 respondents filled in the online survey.

Selected results for Germany

Manifestations of antisemitism

- According to the survey findings, 85 % of the respondents in Germany consider antisemitism to be a very big or a fairly big problem in their country (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 85 %)
- 89 % of the respondents in Germany consider antisemitism has increased over the past 5 years (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 89 %)
- 76 % of the respondents in Germany 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 Germany 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 76 % of the respondents in Germany consider intolerance towards Muslims has increased over the past 5 years (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 72 %)
- A large majority of respondents in Germany (89 %) consider antisemitism expressed online as a problem in the country (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 89 %)
- A large majority of respondents in Germany (87 %) believe that antisemitism online has increased over the past five years (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 88 %)
- Most survey respondents in Germany say they are regularly exposed to negative statements about Jews. A large majority of respondents in Germany (82 %) 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 Germany is according to the respondents the statement: *'Israelis behave "like Nazis" towards the Palestinians'* (63 %)

Safety and security – in Germany

- More than half of the respondents (59 %) worry about becoming a victim of an antisemitic verbal insult or harassment in the next 12 months, almost half (47 %) worry about being physically attacked in that same period (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 47 % and 40 %, respectively)
- More than half of the respondents (54 %) 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 (75 %) at least occasionally avoid doing so (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 49 % and 71 %, respectively)
- Almost half of the respondents have considered emigrating (44 %) in the past five years because they did not feel safe as a Jew in Germany (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 38 %)
- A majority of respondents (74 %) believe that the German government's efforts to combat antisemitism are not effective. Meanwhile, a minority of the respondents (49 %) positively assess the German government's efforts to ensure the security needs of the Jewish communities (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 70 % and 54 %, respectively)
- 73 % of the respondents said that the Arab-Israeli conflict impacts their feeling of safety in Germany (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 69 %)

Violence against Jews: experiences of harassment

- More than half of the respondents in Germany (52 %) experienced some form of antisemitic harassment in the five years before the survey. More than a third (41 %) 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 – 29 % and 24 %, respectively, of the respondents in Germany said they were faced with these forms of harassment in the 12 months before the survey. 15 % 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 Germany, respondents in 41 % of the cases identified the perpetrator as someone with Muslim extremist views, 22 % – someone who they could not describe, and 20 % – someone from work or a school/college colleague (averages in the 12 surveyed countries: 30 %, 31 % and 16 %, respectively).

Reporting

- The majority of respondents in Germany (79 %) 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 Germany are aware of legislation that forbids discrimination based on ethnic origin or religion – 81 % of the respondents indicated knowing about antidiscrimination law when applying for a job (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 87 %)
- In Germany, the majority of respondents (83 %) are aware of legislation that forbids denial or trivialisation of the Holocaust (average in the 12 surveyed countries: 65 %).