



European Network Against Racism
Réseau européen contre le racisme



ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPE: Time to act

January 2015

Anti-Semitism is not new to Europe. Unfortunately, it is still a reality for many European Jews, who experience higher rates of insults, discrimination, harassment, attacks against properties, desecration of places of worship and cemeteries, and physical violence. Anti-Semitism has led to the exclusion and dehumanisation of Jews – seen as outsiders by some, as representatives of Israel by others – and many feel forced to hide the fact that they are Jewish or have a Jewish background.

A European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' [unique survey](#) on Jewish people's experience and perceptions of discrimination, hate crime and anti-Semitism reveals that "in the 12 months following the survey, close to half of the respondents (46 %) worry about being verbally insulted or harassed in a public place because they are Jewish, and one third (33 %) worry about being physically attacked in the country where they live because they are Jewish". Furthermore, 75 % of respondents consider anti-Semitism online to be a problem, while another 73 % believe anti-Semitism online has increased over the last five years.

The percentage of respondents indicating that anti-Semitism has increased over the past five years was especially high (about 90 %) in Belgium, France and Hungary.

In **France**, a 2013 [report from the French National Human Rights Institution](#) reveals that anti-Semitism is not always understood properly, is often seen either as a phenomenon of the past or as isolated acts from either fundamentalist terrorists or neo-Nazi groups, but is rarely seen as a structural phenomenon. French Jews tend to feel increasingly worried, following the 2012 killings in a Jewish school near Toulouse, as they face widespread prejudice and daily incidents of anti-Semitism. The January 2015 anti-Semitic attack leaving four killed in a Kosher supermarket in Paris adds to the ongoing fears of European Jews. Jewish schools are under increasing military or police protection. French Jews are currently the biggest immigrant group to Israel and [projections show an increase in the number of Jewish people leaving France in 2015](#).

In **Belgium**, a series of incidents have made headlines in 2014 as Belgian Jews face similar issues as those in France. The killing of four people in May 2014 at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, on the eve of the European elections, was a particularly stark reminder of the insecurity faced by Jewish institutions. Other non-fatal but shocking events these last months include:

- In Antwerp, a woman was refused service in a shop for being Jewish, and another was [refused medical treatment](#), while just this November, [an orthodox Jewish man was stabbed while crossing the street](#).
- In Liege, Belgium, [a café owner put up a sign](#) stating that dogs were welcome, but Jews were not allowed.
- In Brussels, while placing a plaque at the Holocaust Memorial in Anderlecht, anti-Semitic insults, rocks and glass bottles were hurled at the gatherers.

The extent of anti-Semitism in **Hungary** came to the forefront when, in November 2012 a Jobbik member called in the Hungarian Parliament for a list of Jewish civil servants, after which there was no immediate outcry from other government officials. Similarly in **Greece**, extremely anti-Semitic rhetoric and literature have been associated with elected members of the Golden Dawn party. There is a dichotomy in Hungary and Greece, which feature high levels of indigenous anti-Semitism and neo-Nazi activity, but lower levels of physical violence than countries such as France and Belgium in which anti-Semitism is much less socially acceptable, but violence is more common.

In 2014, in particular during **the war in Gaza** over the summer, a worrying number of violent acts were committed against Jews and/or synagogues across Europe.

- In the UK, the [Community Security Trust \(CST\)](#) reported around 100 anti-Semitic incidents in July 2014, double the usual number.
- A [synagogue](#) was targeted by firebomb in Germany in July 2014.
- Racist slogans invoking "death to the Jews" were heard during protests against the war in Gaza in several European cities, especially in France and Belgium.
- Numerous [shops were defaced with anti-Semitic graffiti throughout the historic Jewish quarter in Rome](#).
- Many Jewish organisations and representatives received threats and many have been under police protection and [ENAR has called for action over the summer](#).

EU hate crime legislation (Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA) falls short of providing detailed indications on how law enforcement and judicial authorities should investigate and prosecute hate crimes. According to the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, only five Member States collect comprehensive data on hate crime (Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and Spain). Member States should therefore make sure that bias is properly investigated and prosecuted in cases of hate crime against Jews and should collect data on racist and anti-Semitic crime, including through the use of victimisation surveys, as well as data on how victims have accessed the rights set out in the EU Victims' Rights Directive (Article 28).

ENAR also calls for the full implementation of the Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia, including sanctions against the public condoning, denying or grossly trivialising of crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, when it constitutes an incitement to hatred.

Existing legal instruments and policy measures are not enough to ensure well-being and equality of outcome. These must be reinforced by a comprehensive effort on the part of policy makers and civil society to tackle anti-Semitism and promote full equality and inclusion.

ENAR therefore calls on the European Commission to propose a framework for national strategies to combat anti-Semitism and address discrimination affecting European Jews in a comprehensive way. Based on reliable data collection on anti-Semitism, Member States should draft national strategies addressing discrimination in all fields of life and combat hate crime.

Strategies should include Member States' obligation to promote education on past abuses and ensure that education about the Holocaust is integrated into human rights education and history curricula, while ensuring it is strongly connected to the current situation of Jewish communities and other minority communities at risk of discrimination and violence. Strategies should encourage inter-community and inter-faith dialogue as a way to combat both anti-Semitism and other forms of racism. It is crucial to build strong coalitions between communities like Jews, Muslims, Roma and people of African descent to bolster more effective resistance against hate speech and violence. Full equality for all the groups who struggle to have their rights respected can only be achieved through solidarity; when all groups join forces to advance racial equality and social justice. Showing a united front will counter the rise and appeal of far-right ideas and policies as well as of jihadist type of violence, and prevent these from exploiting stereotypes to polarise communities.

ENAR calls Members of the European Parliament to take their responsibilities in calling for measurement and unity and refraining from stigmatisation. National/European political parties and political groups in the European Parliament must ensure dissuasive and proportionate sanctions against any politician(s) using racist discourses in their parliamentary work. Appropriate disciplinary and self-regulatory mechanisms should be introduced based on legislative frameworks, building on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

For further information, contact Claire Fernandez, Deputy Director – Policy (claire@enar-eu.org)

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of vibrant NGOs working to promote equality and solidarity for all in Europe. We connect more than 150 local and national anti-racist NGOs throughout Europe and voice the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in European and national policy debates.

CEJI-A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe is an active member of ENAR and the leading European Jewish organisation in the promotion of diversity and confrontation of all forms of discrimination.



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GROWING ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EUROPE: Recent developments in Germany, Sweden and France January 2015

Islamophobia is a specific form of racism that refers to acts of violence and discrimination, as well as racist speech, fuelled by historical abuses and negative stereotyping and leading to exclusion and dehumanisation of Muslims, and all those perceived as such.

A European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights' [survey](#) indicates that on average 1 in 3 Muslim respondents stated that they had experienced discrimination in the past 12 months. Those Muslim respondents who had been discriminated against stated that they had experienced, on average, 8 incidents of discrimination over a 12-month period (EU MIDIS 2009).

ENAR's yearly shadow reports on racism in Europe have provided evidence of discrimination and stigmatisation of Muslims and in particular as the result of hate crime, racial profiling, counter-terrorism policies, discriminatory laws preventing access in some areas of life like education and employment, and populist discourses by politicians and in the media.

Recent events seem to confirm worrying trends in the number of Islamophobic incidents:

In Germany, the Pegida movement (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West) has been holding weekly Monday night marches since October 2014, with the [highest turnouts in the eastern city of Dresden, reaching 18,000 people on 5 January](#). Although the group has banned neo-Nazi symbols and slogans at its rallies, [critics have noted the praise and support it has received from known neo-Nazi groups](#).

- **Reactions from local or national authorities:** Angela Merkel took position against the protests, calling for a large gathering in Berlin on 13 January. Lights of major monuments, public administrations, museums and private homes across the country turned off to protest against Pegida demonstrations.
- **Reactions from citizens and NGOs:** [Counter-demonstrations were organised](#) in Stuttgart, Hamburg, Cologne, Dresden and Berlin, reaching 30,000 participants taking a stand against Pegida marches.
- **Reactions from the media:** [Bild, Germany's biggest-selling newspaper published an appeal against Pegida signed by 50 prominent German figures](#).

In Germany, Muslims constitute the second largest religious group. ENAR's shadow report 2011-2012 on Germany provided evidence of cases of discrimination, especially in education, employment, policing but also of hate crimes targeting Muslims.

In Sweden, [three attacks took place in two weeks against mosques in Eskilstuna, Eslov and Uppsala at the end of 2014](#). At least five persons were injured during the attacks.

- **Reactions from local or national authorities:** Sweden's Culture and Democracy Minister condemned the attacks, the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven ordered to reinforce security around mosques and around places of worship and Sweden's Minister for Public Administration took a stand against Islamophobia.
- **Reactions from citizens or organisations:** Anti-racism rallies took place in Sweden's major cities between Christmas Day and New Year's Day; anti-racism campaigners claimed that the rise of the nationalist Sweden Democrats party is to blame for increasing Islamophobia; [hundreds of red hearts were placed on the door of a mosque](#) after anti-Muslim insults were scrawled on the walls; anti-racism demonstrators in Stockholm waved banners with the words "Don't touch my mosque".

In January 2015, a building used by an Islamic association in Borås in southern [Sweden was attacked](#), with the words "Viva La France" sprayed and a pig head left near the entrance.

In 2013, the Swedish government [recorded](#) a total of 327 islamophobic crimes.

In France, following the terrorist attack on the French newspaper Charlie Hebdo and against a Kosher supermarket, which ENAR condemned, [there have been attacks against mosques and Muslim individuals](#). At least 50 incidents [have been recorded](#). A man threw two concrete blocks on a mosque in Créteil. [In Le Mans, a mosque has been the target of attacks](#) perpetrated with three grenades as well as a gunshot on a window. In Port-La-Nouvelle, a Muslim prayer room was targeted by gunshots. [In Villefranche-sur-Saône](#), a restaurant located in the extension of a mosque, where members of the mosque usually gather, exploded. [In Poitiers and Liévin](#), mosques were desecrated, featuring tags such as “Death to Arabs”. Several [attacks on individuals have also been reported, including on Muslim women](#). A man was [stabbed to death](#) in Vaucluse in what appears to be an Islamophobic attack. **For the whole of 2014**, the Collective Against Islamophobia in France (CCIF), the main NGO recording Islamophobic acts, collected 691 verified acts. Aggressions against individuals increased by 53.11% compared to 2012.

Fears in France and in the rest of Europe, following the deadly attacks, of further retaliation against European Muslims should be a signal that we need more unity, equality and justice. In Italy, following the Paris massacres, the Presidency of the Veneto region [issued a discriminatory circular](#) calling schools to condemn the terrorist attacks, and in particular Muslims and ‘foreigners’ who are indirectly blamed for terror.

EU hate crime legislation (Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA) falls short of providing detailed indications on how law enforcement and judicial authorities should investigate and prosecute hate crimes. According to the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, only five Member States collect comprehensive data on hate crime. Member States should therefore make sure that bias is properly investigated and prosecuted in cases of hate crime against Muslims and should collect data on racist and Islamophobic crime.

The specific direct and structural discrimination faced by Muslims in fields such as of justice, policing, employment and education and increasing numbers of racist attacks imply that existing legal instruments and policy measures are not enough to ensure equality of outcome. These must be reinforced by a comprehensive effort on the part of policy makers and civil society to tackle Islamophobia and promote full equality and inclusion.

ENAR calls for national strategies to combat Islamophobia and promote the inclusion of Muslims, based on the model of the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) adopted by EU Member States in 2011. The framework will serve as a means to ensure that Member States take policy measures to combat Islamophobia and protect the rights of Muslims in Europe. ENAR recommends the following elements to be put in place by Member States, in order to ensure the success and efficiency of the national strategies:

- **Recognition:** Politically recognise Islamophobia and the consequences of past abuses and stereotypes on Muslims today.
- **Equality data collection:** Collect comparable sets of data on structural racism and discrimination, disaggregated by ethnicity and religion, in respect to EU data protection safeguards, and in order to support equality, social inclusion and non-discrimination policies.
- **Participation and empowerment:** Involve Muslim communities in the design, implementation and evaluation of policy initiatives. Support for the full participation of Muslims in public life, stimulation of their active citizenship and development of their human resources are therefore essential.

Europe is increasingly composed by a diversity of ethnicities, cultures, religions and beliefs, etc. where dialogue between all Europeans is crucial for social cohesion and peace. **ENAR calls political representatives and especially Members of the European Parliament to take their responsibilities** and play their role in calling for measurement and unity, but also to sanction incitement to hatred in particular by politicians. National/European political parties and political groups in the European Parliament must ensure dissuasive and proportionate sanctions against any politician(s) using racist discourses in their parliamentary work. Appropriate disciplinary and self-regulatory mechanisms should be introduced based on legislative frameworks, building on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

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The Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisation (FEMYSO) is a network of 34 member organisations representing Muslim youth in 23 European countries.