

The background image is a photograph of a building's entrance, likely a synagogue, with a dark wooden door and stone steps. The walls are light-colored and feature decorative elements. There is graffiti on the walls: 'ebrei sono i novi' on the left and 'razzisti e fascisti' on the right. The image is framed by a white border.

Annual report on antisemitism in Italy

2022

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Osservatorio
antisemitismo

**“ Antisemitism is a threat to Jewish people
but also a threat to our
democracies & values. A threat to all of us**

Ursula von der Leyen,

*President of the European Commission*¹

¹ <https://twitter.com/vonderleyen/status/1445382312775008265>

Observatory on Antisemitism mission, goal and methodology

The Observatory on Antisemitism (Osservatorio Antisemitismo) is a department of the Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea - CDEC founded in 1975, which monitors antisemitism in its many manifestations daily, paying particular attention to the different manifestations of the phenomenon. The monitoring activity ensures coverage of the entire national territory. In Italy, the department offers a unique service and is employed for historical, sociological and journalistic studies and surveys.

The department collects and records acts of antisemitism (physical or verbal aggression, writing and graffiti, online insults, public speeches, etc.), processes data on incidents of anti-Jewish hostility, conducts public opinion surveys and carries out specific studies. Particular attention is paid to the monitoring of online antisemitism in order to capture the new complex reality of antisemitism 2.0.

The Observatory classifies as an incident of antisemitism any intentional act directed against Jewish people, organizations or property where there is evidence that the action has antisemitic motivation or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are Jewish or are thought to be Jewish. In this sense, the Observatory endorses the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance - IHRA's ¹working definition of antisemitism.

The methodology for recording and cataloguing acts of antisemitism, the typologies within which the Antisemitism Observatory rubrics the episodes, are the result of a codified system of analysis shared with other international institutions such as the Centre for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University and the Community Security Trust in London.

This methodology is shared by the Office of the National Coordinator for Combating Antisemitism.

The Observatory becomes aware of incidents of antisemitism through the mainstream media and reports to the Antisemitism Hotline (Antenna Antisemitismo). The actual number of antisemitic incidents is thought to be higher than the number recorded, since the reporting or visibility of incidents varies according to type; it is easier to hear about the more serious ones while verbal or written offences are more rarely reported.

The Observatory has the richest library of antisemitic texts in Italy published from 1945 to the present day. It also holds numerous collections of antisemitic magazines, a large collection of photographs, audio and video recordings.

The website www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it is updated daily with articles, news and research from the national and foreign press, Internet sites and blogs. It features newspaper articles, studies, research, reports, debates, public statements and scientific surveys.

The work carried out by the Observatory is aimed at institutions, schools, educators and students, scholars, social communicators and facilitators and the wider public. Its aim is to raise awareness of anti-Jewish prejudice, to educate on respect for diversity and to support actions to combat it.

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The social, economic and cultural context

The report on antisemitism in Italy in 2022 is introduced by some statistical data on the economic, social, security and welfare conditions of the population for the reason that, if in latent conditions antisemitism occupies circumscribed social and cultural territories, a situation of economic crisis and malaise can create a climate favorable to the re-emergence of racist, xenophobic and antisemitic attitudes.

ISTAT¹ describes a country that has undergone profound demographic and social changes in recent years. The Italian population continues to decline and is increasingly older due to the low fertility of the younger generation and the longevity of the elderly.

The important stages of life — leaving home, marriage, procreation — are being delayed.

The Covid health emergency has changed people's habits, with important consequences on various aspects of life and the labor market.

The unemployment rate in the European Union is 6% and in Italy it is 7.8%.²

The labor market has changed, casual employment and hybrid ways of working (short-term or part-time contracts) have led to lower wages.

Over the last ten years, absolute poverty has progressively increased, with 1.9 million affected households (7.5% of the total), about 5.6 million people.

Italy is at the first place in Europe on young people who neither study nor work, **NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)**: 23.1% of 15–29-year-olds, increasing to 32.2% in the South.

Italy is going through years of crisis. In 2019, the Censis spoke of “a collectivity that has lost the sense of investment in the future”. In 2020, the year of Covid19, Italians feel frightened: 73.4% of them indicated fear of the unknown and consequent anxiety as the prevailing sentiment. In 2021, again the Censis spoke of “an eternal present” that does not make one think about the future.

In 2022, Censis described a country “living in a state of latency”. Demos speaks of a ‘suspended’ time, a ‘time without time’. The war in Ukraine, inflation, and the energy emergency have added to previous concerns.

New “fears” are on the rise: 84.5% of Italians, especially young people and university graduates, believe that even geographically distant events could change their lives (Censis, 2022); 61% fear that the third world war could break out, 59% the atomic bomb, 58% that Italy itself would go to war. They think anything could happen.

Italians believe that the main global risks capable of affecting lives in the near future are: wars (46.2%), economic crises (45.0%), viruses and new biological health threats (37.7%), global market instabilities (26.6%), and catastrophic weather events, scorching heat and heavy rainfall (24.5%). 66.5% of Italians (more than 10 percentage points higher than before Covid) feel insecure when thinking about their own and their family's future.

1 National Institute of Statistics of Italy

2 <https://www.openpolis.it/la-disoccupazione-in-ue-dopo-lemergenza-sanitaria/>

Conspiracy thinking and new fears

In a social context of growing worries and disorientation, conspiracy thinking is gradually spreading. Conspiracy thinking affects many of those who feel victims of the present chaos and the distressing future: ***“The crisis of democracy nurtures distrust and suspicion of dark, manipulative powers. And all this is the product of a shattered community. There is no unexpected event that does not provoke a tremor of distrust: environmental disasters, terrorist attacks, unstoppable migrations, economic meltdowns, explosive conflicts, political reversals. (...) Who is behind it? Who is pulling the strings? Who has concocted the scheme? We are looking for the people responsible for catastrophes, poverty, wars, inequalities, but also for the thousands of abuses, the lack of ethics, the widespread discomfort, the loss of meaning”***.³

Conspiracy is a simple model of explanation, given its often mono-causal and dichotomous logic. Conspiracy theories are believed by those who are hostile to institutions and the system, those who think journalists, politicians and scientists are corrupt. They are widespread especially in the areas of right-wing extremism but also left-wing extremism, they convey discourses of revenge against the system they want to demolish. Conspiracy often finds its answers in antisemitism.

The world of disinformation

In 2022, surveys on the use of media were carried out to understand how citizens in an increasingly complex situation inform and orientate themselves, and thus how opinions are formed; the results point to major problems of understanding and credibility of the media.

According to Censis, 97.3% of Italians in the last year have searched for news on all off and online sources. The interest to keep oneself informed concerns the entire population with effects that also translate into the construction of parallel realities to the official ones, capable of affecting the opinions and behavior of millions of people. This is the case of the no-vax theories, the circulation of fake videos and images to corroborate unfounded news about the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and articles questioning the veracity of climate change. 83.4% of Italians have come across at least one piece of fake news about the pandemic, and 66.1% have come across fake news about war.

The spread of fake news is worrying because the number of people surfing the web is growing and includes many children: 69.1% of children under 14 and 61.7% of those under 12 surf the internet.

Today, 57.7% of Italians complain that they have a very or fairly confused idea of what is happening and what the repercussions might be in the coming months.

During the vaccination campaign, fake news about viruses and vaccines impacted on a frightened minority of society, with 10.9% of Italians claiming that the vaccine is not effective and 5.9% convinced that Covid-19 does not exist.

56.5% of Italians (73% among those with a medium-low educational qualification) are convinced that there is a global caste of superpowers that controls everything. 62% think that the majority of the population relies on official information without questioning it, an opinion shared by all age groups and educational status.

3 Il complotto al potere, Einaudi 2021 Donatella Di Cesare

A Demopolis survey also highlights the crisis of trust affecting both the traditional media and the web and social networks. Today, less than half of citizens, 45%, say they know how to distinguish real news from fake news; 42% admit they do not always know how to spot fake news. 38% of citizens claim to have doubts about the quality of information. 42% of Italians say they often doubt the credibility of news in the traditional media. But the percentage of those who doubt the reliability of information rises by more than 30 points, to 75%, among Facebook and social network users.⁴

With these socio-cultural premises and challenges in understanding the dynamics of the increasingly complex and interdependent contemporary world, the overall situation is worrisome.

Antisemitism

“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”⁵

Antisemitism is a broad concept that can be manifested through prejudices and negative stereotypes, and physical acts against Jews or people who are believed to be so.

Jewish people, in the collective imagination, often represent power and wealth, cohesion; in times of crisis and the search for culprits, antisemitism reawakens and reconnects with old stereotypes about money, power, and commercial proficiency.

The lowering of the taboo threshold and the increasingly widespread verbal radicalization on social media increase the spread of intolerance and antisemitism.

According to surveys in Italy a non-negligible percentage of the population espouses antisemitic feelings (about 10%)⁵, but there is still an extensive area of prejudice, ignorance, attitudes of intolerance or resentment towards Jews that accompanies the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. Sometimes even in the absence of Jews.

The group cohesion and supposed economic power attributed to them makes Jews a target by blaming them for conspiring against the rest of the world. Antisemitism dredges up old stereotypes about money, power, Jewish perfidy.

The ideologies that feed antisemitism in Italy are conspiracy, neo-Nazism, anti-Zionism as well as a widespread generic and abstract antipathy towards Jews.

In recent years, antisemitism has grown worldwide at a time when epochal changes are underway: economic crisis, uncertainty, the fragility of systems of representation, globalization as a threat to identity.

Several studies highlight the strong generalized, transnational and explicit revival of antisemitic themes, and the media reports daily about its effects on Jews. One in two Europeans believes that antisemitism is a problem; nine out of ten Jews believe that antisemitism has increased in their country, but what has changed is the increasing use of social media and the language it conveys. For Sergio Della Pergola, a renowned Italo-Israeli demographer, ‘the perceptions of the victims are the only ones that should really count when assessing the extent of an offence. Today, Jewish communities live almost exclusively in democratic and constitutional countries where their human and civil rights are well preserved.

⁴ <http://www.rainews.it/archivio-rainews/media/Indagine-Demopolis-per-Radio1-Rai-gli-italiani-informazione-la-fiducia-nei-media-le-fake-news-in-era-Covid-38dfed32-695a-4904-ab89-6cea497af327.html>

⁵ <https://archive.jpr.org.uk/object-2408>

But there is a worsening of the quality of Jewish life through the creation of fear, frustration and anxiety'. For Della Pergola, the data show that there is a gap between perception and experience of antisemitism, but nevertheless it is worrying: according to the FRA (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights) survey, one third of Jews in Europe have experienced at least one incident.⁶

JDC's 2021 survey of European Jewish community leaders⁷ also indicates the rise of antisemitism as a worrying threat to the future of Judaism in one's own country.

While violent acts of anti-Jewish hostility concern extremists (right, left, Islamists), the belief in stereotypes and prejudices is transversal.

Israel, often described as a 'racist' State has a role on the antisemitism rhetoric present in civil society. The difficulty of understanding Israel, the intertwining of historical paths has shifted social aggression from Jews to the Jewish state.

The trivialization of the Shoah is no longer exclusive to radical right-wing sympathizers. Through the web, the space for the expression of antisemitism and the visibility of antisemitic sentiments have grown; the perpetrators of major antisemitic attacks in recent years have spread antisemitic propaganda online through international networks of activists. And networks that spread hate speech, whatever the ideology behind it, can have a direct impact on the lives of targeted groups.

Social media amplify minority voices, take users' opinions to extremes, increase aggression due to the speed of reactions, and make language more violent.

According to the academic Enzo Campelli, "the rhetorical and iconographic apparatus shows alarming continuities with what the Nazi propaganda of the past century and that of the fascist, supremacist and racist culture of this century has accustomed us to. The same stylistic motifs, the same images, the same well-known, sinister, hooked profile of the happy merchant smugly rubbing his hands, stubbornly return. The feeling is that this paraphernalia of images, content, stories and narrative modes has ended up in the new online, social media universe. If ongoing research into the forms and channels of today's antisemitism is essential to know and counter it, the new credibility of antisemitism must be investigated 'among the people', in the broader terms of cultural and social analysis. It is necessary to try to clarify the reasons why these contents, which are to a very large extent the same as they have always been, are now showing an extraordinary capacity to form a system, i.e. to weld and resonate with the great disturbing factors of the present time, and to validate each other in a network, not only in the media, but also in a cultural, psychological and existential network".⁸

Speaking of 'people's' beliefs, it is very interesting to read the results of the latest survey carried out on a national sample of Italians on the meaning of the Holocaust Remembrance Day and the perception of antisemitism in Italy. Carried out by SWG with the collaboration of the editorial staff of Pagine Ebraiche,⁹ this is a survey that started ten years ago and is repeated yearly. It is an important tool to grasp the evolution of the perception of January 27th, of Remembrance in general and of antisemitism.

61% of Italians know the meaning of the date 27 January, this is the highest percentage recorded in the last ten years. Compared to the last two years, however, there is an increase in the number of people who say they are little or not at all involved in the initiatives promoted for the Holocaust Remembrance Day (35%).

6 <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/articoli/analisi-del-professor-sergio-della-pergola-su-ebrei-di-europa-e-antisemitismo/>

7 <https://www.jdc-iccd.org/publications/fifth-european-jewish-leaders-survey-2021/>

8 <https://moked.it/blog/2022/02/10/la-nuova-maschera-dellantisemitismo/>

9 <https://moked.it/blog/2023/01/25/gli-italiani-e-il-giorno-della-memoria-piu-consapevoli-ma-meno-coinvolti/>

There is also an important drop with respect to the perception of the prevalence of antisemitism in Italy: whereas in 2021 55% considered it to be quite widespread, by January 2023 the percentage had dropped to 42%. It can be assumed that priorities such as Covid and War in Ukraine have led to a decrease in sensitivity to antisemitism.

Over the last ten years, the interest and attention shown by Italians towards the celebration of Holocaust Remembrance Day has had ups and downs, both in terms of knowledge and interest and participation.

Since 2014, Remembrance Day has gone from being perceived as a 'dutiful' and 'educational' occasion, regarded with emotional detachment, to being valued as a 'proper and necessary' moment in the civic calendar. These last two elements represent an important attribution of moral value. 27 January is considered 'fair' by 40% of Italians, 'formative' by 37, and 'dutiful' and 'necessary' by 34%. On the other hand, 11% call it 'rhetorical', while 7% call it 'useless': a small but worrying increase compared to 2022. The percentage of Italians (22%) who consider Holocaust Remembrance Day an anniversary that "serves no purpose" remains high.

According to the survey, on average over the last decade, slightly more than 60% of those interviewed thought that Italians had little interest in the anniversary and just under 40 admitted little interest. These data are also confirmed in the 2023 survey, with a trend showing an increasing disinterest, especially at a collective level.

Italians' perception of the phenomenon was more fluctuating, with a clear reduction in the last two surveys in the percentage of those who believed that antisemitic sentiment was widespread in Italy (-13 percentage points, from 55 to 42%).

Part two:

Antisemitic incidents and discourse

During 2022, the CDEC Foundation's Observatory on Antisemitism received 327 reports. After careful analysis, 241 of these were classified as acts against Jews.¹⁰ The data for 2022 show an increase compared to 2021 (226 incidents).

164 antisemitic incidents took place on the internet, while **77** occurred physically, including **two** assaults, **10** cases of threats and a serious act of vandalism against the synagogue of Trieste.¹¹

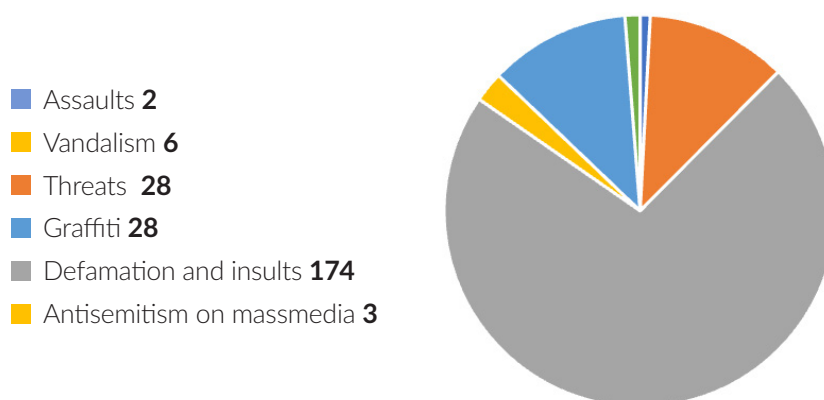
incidents recorded from january to december 2022

Month	Number of incidents
January	26
February	19
March	20
April	17
May	26
June	15
July	12
August	16
September	23
October	21
November	29
December	17
Total	241

For a complete list of antisemitic incidents, see

<https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/notizie/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/?anno=2022>

Types of episodes:



¹⁰ 86 reports were not registered because they referred to incidents that had already been reported or were not considered antisemitic.

¹¹ The synagogue in Trieste had already been vandalized in October 2019, when a young man broke a glass window with a blunt object.

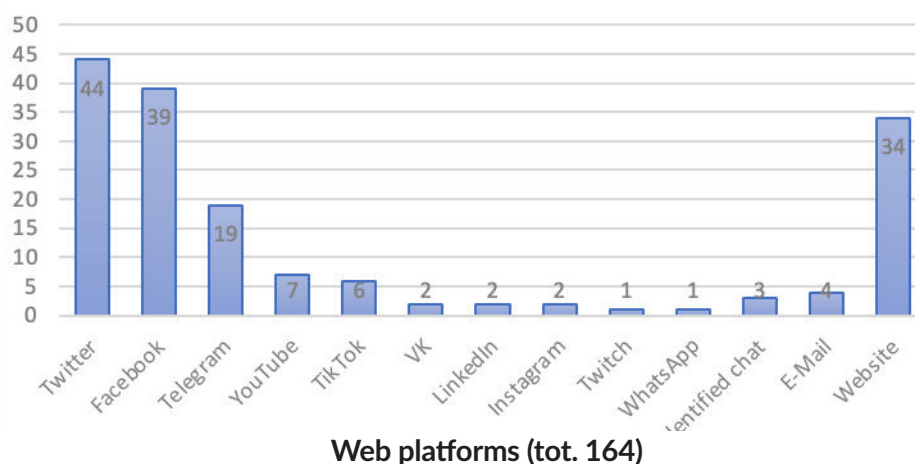
Reported by:

Non-Jewish or not declared as such	155
Members of Jewish communities	68
Media (e.g. Il Corriere della Sera, Repubblica.it)	18
Total	241

Place of the incident:

Of the 241 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2022, in 85 cases it was possible to locate the cities where they took place:

Alba Adriatica (TE), **Bagnolo in Piano** (RE), **Bari**, **Bassano del Grappa**, **Bellante** (TE), **Belmonte Castello** (FR), **Brescia**, **Busto Arsizio** (VA), **Cagliari**, **Campoli** (TE), **Castano Primo** (MI), **Cervia** (RA), **Colico** (BG), **Cremona**, **Dervio** (LC), **Firenze** (4), **Gallarate** (3), **Genova** (4), **Guidonia**, **L'Aquila**, **Livorno**, **Montecelio** (RM), **Meta di Sorrento** (NA), **Milano** (12), **Montesole** (BO), **Napoli**, **Pistoia**, **Poggio a Caiano** (Prato), **Castiglione e Fraine** (Molise), **Olcenigo** (VC), **Peschiera Borromeo** (MI), **Pisa**, **Pordenone** (2), **Rapallo**, **Rimini**, **Roma** (13), **Rossiglione** (GE), **Samarate** (VA), **Sassari**, **Sesto San Giovanni** (MI), **Siena**, **Tavarnuzze frazione di Impruneta**, **Termoli** (CB), **Torino**, **Trieste** (2), **Valmadrera** (LC), **Varese**, **Venezia**, **Verona**, **Venturina Terme** (Livorno), **Vergiate** (VA).



List of the most significant incidents

Venturina Terme (LI) 23 January

A twelve-year-old Jewish boy went to the Altobelli Park in Venturina to meet one of his classmates, his classmate arrived with other teenagers, among them two 15-year-old girls. The 12-year-old greeted the group and that's when one girl told him to shut up, because his voice annoys her. The boy told her no, and soon after: "The two started insulting him, 'f*cking Jew, you must die in the crematorium'. Then they started spitting at him, kicking him, hitting

him on the head." None of those present defended the assaulted boy.

Milan 20 May

Piazza XXIV Maggio, in the center of Milan, lawyer Davide C., identifiable as a Jew by the kippah he wears on his head, heads home to change clothes before going to the synagogue for Friday evening prayers. Two young men, who were talking in Arabic, approach him and ask: "Yehudi?" (Jew?). C. answers affirmatively,

Victims of antisemitic attacks

182 incidents involve Jews and/or **undefined** Jewish institutions, described by negative stereotypes: racist, rich, greedy, prone to domination and conspiracy, 'Zionists', Ashkenazis, Kazari, Talmudists.

The use of the adjective **Ashkenazi** to refer to and demonize Jews in a generic way is frequent. In recent years, this word has progressively lost its original meaning¹² to take on that of an evil and all-powerful Jew who plots his schemes behind the scenes of the international ruling powers. Mario Draghi, Alain Elkann, Maurizio Molinari, Jacob Rothschild, George Soros and Volodymyr Zelensky are said to be members of the 'Ashkenazi cabal' or the 'Kazari mafia'.

The anti-Jewish hostility is not only directed against Jews, but also against Zionists, Ashkenazis, Kazaris, Talmudics, described, however, according to the premises (murderers, racists, greedy, conspirators, etc.) of a worn-out Judeophobic polemic that refers to the infamous Protocols of the Elder Sages of Zion.

59 concern Jewish individuals and/or Jewish institutions, which are also demonized and stereotyped according to established negative stereotypes that, on the web, take on the character of memes. In some cases, the victims are not Jewish but believed to be.

Here is the list of victims (some of them have been repeatedly targeted):

Liliana Segre, Emanuele Fiano, Ariel Dello Strologo, Walker Meghnagi, a rabbi from Milan, Davide Parenzo, Paolo Mieli, Enrico Mentana, Simone S., Davide C., a 12-year-old Jewish boy from Livorno, a 13-year-old

¹² Jews who, after the Diaspora, settled in central, northern and, later, eastern Europe and developed Yiddish as a spoken language.

the two men spit at him and start following him, shouting 'f*ck you Yehudi! F*ck you!' Bystanders follow the scene with indifference but soon after other young people of Arab origins approach the first two to join in the vulgar mockery.

5 January

Nicola Franzoni, a neo-Nazi with a long criminal record, posts delirious antisemitic, conspiratorial and anti-vaccinationist videos on his Telegram channel with around 10,000 subscribers, railing and threatening Jews ('shitty Jews who caused the pandemic'), accusing them of being the puppeteers of the pandemic, the owners of the pharmaceutical companies that make money from vaccines, and the architects of European ethnic substitution.

Pistoia, 27 January

In a middle school, a Jewish boy is subjected to provocation (Nazi salutes) and harassment (swastikas drawn on his schoolbag) for a month by three classmates.

Tavernuzze, a hamlet of Impruneta (FI), 30 January

In a middle school, a Jewish student is subjected to neo-Nazi harassment (Nazi greetings and insults such as: "We hope your cousins and aunt die because they are Jewish; I am Hitler's son, long live Auschwitz") by some classmates.

Rome, 1 February

During a workshop about Jews in the Italian Renaissance with public access on Zoom, unidentified individuals interfere electronically drawing swastikas and making rape threats to a lecturer's children.

27 May

A Roman publisher specialized in children's literature publishes a fairytale written by the neo-Nazi activist and kindergarten teacher Manuela M., with apologia for Nazi-Fascism and antisemitic undertones.

Verona, 12 September

Palestinian woman heavily insults a group of young disabled Israelis on a trip to Italy.

Jewish boy from Florence, a group of Israeli disabled people on a trip to Italy, Serena D. N. and her children, daughter of Sara D. S., Leone C., Franco H. and family, Alex A., doorman of a building, Volodymyr Zelensky, 'Jewish oligarchs' (Abramovich, Friedman, etc.), UCEI, UGEI, Jewish Community of Venice, Jewish Community of Trieste, Alessia Piperno, Roberto Saviano, Carlo Calenda, Enrico Letta, David Puente, David Sassoli, Roberto Speranza, Elly Schlein (the latter are not Jewish but are considered as such).

Liliana Segre continues to be the main victim of direct attacks, **each** of her public statements are received with insults and threats.

Gender of the victims:

Female: 26
Male: 27
Generic Jews: 188

Misogynistic components often emerge in the attacks against Jewish women (the victims are sometimes called 'c*nt', 'b*tch', etc.) and sometimes take on the connotations of rape fantasy.

Ideological framework

The **241** incidents recorded in 2022 by the Observatory on Antisemitism fall into the following five classifications based on the Handbook for the practical use of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

Milan, 19 October

Two university students point at a rabbi, laugh loudly and scream insults at him, after bumping into him in Via Chiaravalle.

24 October

The neo-Nazi extremist Sergio L. posts short videos on his Facebook profile in which he comments on politics, news, and economics with trivial language, full of threats and harsh insults. Among his favorite targets are the Jews, always defined as pigs, on whom he pours threats and death wishes. In one video, he wishes 'those Jewish pigs' to be killed.

Rome, 7 November

During a football match between Roma and Lazio, Lazio hooligans intoned an antisemitic chant eight times (four in the pre-match, three during the match and one at the end): "Go to the synagogue and pray, I will always scare you away, f*ck you Romanist...".

During 2022—several times—the hooligans of Inter, Juventus and Lazio sang antisemitic chants without incurring concrete sanctions by the Federazione Italiana Gioco Calcio. Acts of racism and antisemitism (chants, banners, etc.) are widespread in the football world, despite general condemnations by some leaders of the football federation and club presidents, are not seriously counteracted with sanctions and educational programs.

23 December

The publication "il Settimanale di Padre Pio" in the special issue dedicated to Christmas features an article that accuses the Jews of practicing ritual murders of non-Jews for magical medical purposes. Here is an excerpt: 'Their (the Jews', ed.) hatred was poured out against the person and figure of Jesus Christ our Lord and, not infrequently, against his faithful...as Passover approached, murders were committed of little Christian children, to use their bodies and above all their blood for macabre rituals'.

Traditional anti-Judaism: **7**

Neo-Nazi/neo-fascist antisemitism, denial and trivialisation of the Shoah: **50**

Israel-related antisemitism: **28**

Hatred of Jews as such: **86**

Antisemitic conspiracy theories: **70**

Events triggering acts against Jews and Judeophobic controversies on the Web from January to December 2022

There is an increase in antisemitic acts and speech when Jews (or alleged Jews) are the focus of media attention, regardless of what they do.

In 2022, the pandemic and the invasion of Ukraine by Russia were the main topics feeding into anti-Jewish hatred. The coronavirus is still considered something “created” by the Jews to enrich themselves and hold the world in check, the war against Ukraine, speculatively, is interpreted as yet another Jewish deception to hold the planet in check and harm one of the few who tries to curb their power, President Putin.

Coronavirus (January to December)

War against Ukraine (February to December)

Various statements by Liliana Segre (January to December)

Death of David Sassoli (January)

The Betrayal of Anne Frank: *An Investigation, a controversial book by Rosemary Sullivan, which attributes the arrest of Anne Frank's family to the report of a collaborationist Jewish lawyer* (January)

Italian Liberation Day events - 25 April (April)

Death of a young Jew in France (April)

Statements on the Jewishness of Adolf Hitler made by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov during a television program broadcast by Rete4 (June)

Killing of Palestinian journalist Sheerin Abu Akleh (June)

Roma's football match in Israel against Tottenham (July)

Conflict in Gaza (August)

Rising energy costs (September)

Awarding of Prime Minister Draghi in the USA by a Jewish organisation (September);

Alessia Piperno detained in an Iranian prison (October)

Elly Schlein candidate for the leadership of the Partito Democratico (Democratic Party) (October)

Killing of a young Palestinian by the Israel Defence Forces (December)

Antisemitic discourse, rhetoric and symbolism in 2022

The most serious acts of physical violence and threats against Jews took place in middle schools and were perpetrated by people inspired by neo-Nazism. The use of symbolism, slogans and references to the Third Reich experience is frequent.

The ideologies fueling most of the incidents reported to the Antisemitism Hotline are inspired by conspiracy thinking and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and transfer these antisemitic tropes onto major events (e.g. the coronavirus pandemic and the war against Ukraine).

The libels used against Jews are the most archaic and sinister ones, the omnipotence of the Jews, their

innate cruelty, their tendency to conspire for world domination. This also leads to a form of para-racism since all Jews, according to them, have these negative characteristics that would be passed on through inheritance.

The 'Zionist' Evil is countered by the Good of societies that want to free themselves from the New World Order. Currently, the paradigmatic figure of this Good is identified in Putin's Russia and the '*democratures*'. Covid continues to be the main source of inspiration for antisemitism, but since February the war in Ukraine has progressively assumed (especially with the rise of energy costs since September) the role of Judeophobic trend topic and always framed in a conspiratorial dimension: e.g. in Ukraine, Zionist-US bacteriological weapons laboratories are said to be active, the same ones that allegedly created Covid-19.

This controversy modernizes the archaic libel of the poisoner Jew. The bloodthirsty trope that was previously projected onto the pandemic is now turned to the war against Ukraine; Zelensky replaces (or joins) Bourla and the vaccinists as a symbol of 'Jewish' evil.

April 25th, Liberation Day, as usual, has been the occasion for the propagation of online hate speech and graffiti (swastikas, insults, etc.) and vandalism against monuments and targets of remembrance of anti-fascism and the deportations. In the past few years, there has been a steady increase in acts of vandalism against monuments and targets in memory of the victims and the resistance to Nazi-fascism, which are smeared or broken.

Another trigger event of antisemitism, especially online, was the false claim of Hitler's Jewishness by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov on the TV channel Rete4.

Events related to the State of Israel often unleash a fierce antisemitism that demonizes the 'Zionists' as Nazis, child murderers, natural-born killers, to which Arab-Muslims, not only Palestinians, are contrasted as victims of the 'Zionists' uncontrollable bloody hatred. Emblematic in this regard is the figure of Chef Rubio, whom some in the mainstream media continue to define as a defender and/or activist of the Palestinian cause, despite the antisemitic undertones that emerge in some of his tweets.



Trieste synagogue, "Jews are the new racists and fascists".

Survey of observatory on antisemitism with high school students¹³

The survey we are presenting here is part of a “school-work alternation” project on antisemitism in which three high schools in Rome have been involved for the school year 2021-2022 together with the referent teachers of the “Progetto Memoria”.

Among the objectives of the project is the promotion of a cognitive process on the causes and dynamics of prejudice and antisemitism.

After a psychosocial and statistical training phase, with the help of the Observatory’s researchers, the students proposed an anonymous questionnaire aimed at assessing the degree of knowledge about Jews and the presence of prejudice and stereotypes towards them.

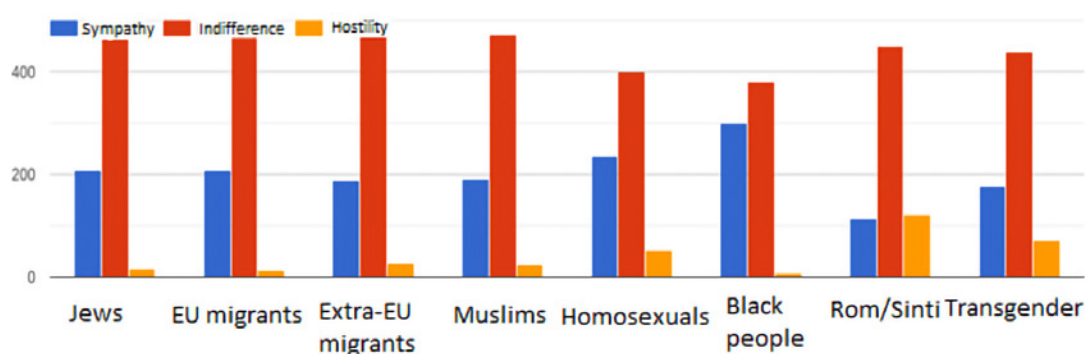
The survey, consisting of 13 questions, was held via Google Forms, between April and May 2022, by the students of the two high schools that participated in the “Progetto sull’Antisemitismo” (Project on antisemitism), one high school in downtown Rome and another in Ciampino.

The survey was carried out with first-year high school students and final-year students to try to estimate (hypothetically) whether the (five-year long) school course would have an impact on the knowledge and impression of Jews. A total of 689 questionnaires were completed.

Empathy towards minorities

The first question of the survey measures students’ *empathy* towards certain minority groups, possible targets of hostility. Young people show indifference towards the majority of groups, somewhat less towards black people and homosexuals who are often the object of hate speech and even physical violence. Regards to hostility, Roma/Sinti (18%) hold the record, followed by trans people (10%). The feeling of indifference may highlight a lack of interpersonal knowledge, or it may hide distrust or prejudice.

2. Please indicate if you feel sympathy, indifference or hostility to the following groups:



Jews are liked by 30% of the students, indifferent to 67% and disliked by 2%. **Muslims** are liked by 27% and disliked by 3%, very similar numbers to Jews.

Towards **homosexuals**, feelings are more polarized, both liking and disliking are higher than towards Jews and Muslims. Homosexuals are liked by 34% but disliked by 8%.

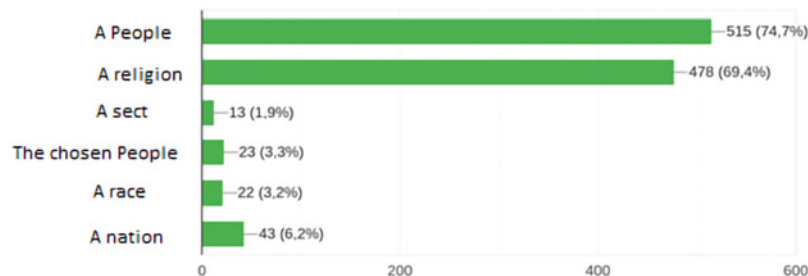
¹³ <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/approfondimenti/nuova-indagine-quantitativa-sullantisemitismo-tra-gli-studenti-liceali/>

Who are the Jews?

Knowledge about Jews is good, students gave correct answers in most cases: People, religion, nation. A minority (8%) indicated negative answers: Sect or race.

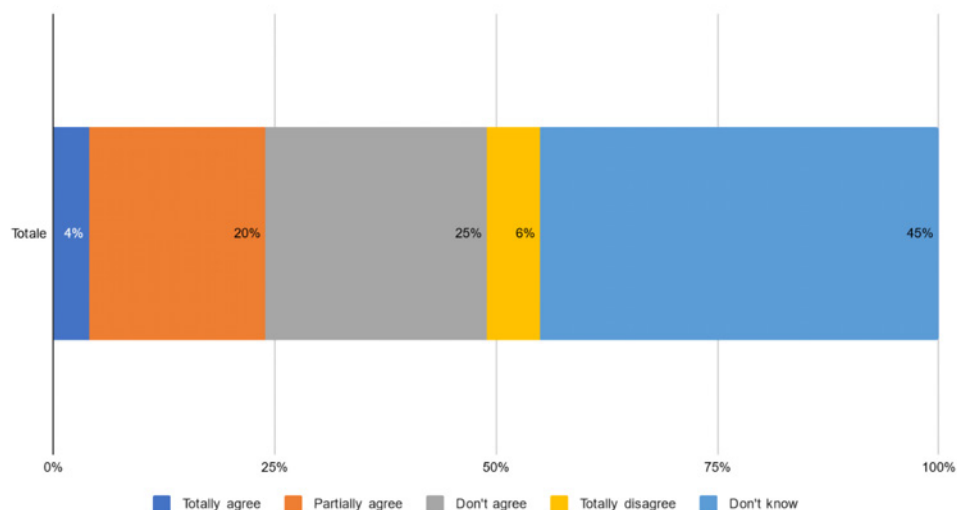
3. Who are the Jews according to you? (max. 3 answers)

689 answers



Finding out that a friend or acquaintance is Jewish in the vast majority of cases (78.5%) does not arouse embarrassment/negative emotions or leaves one indifferent (17.6%). In 6.6% of cases, however, the discovery arouses negative emotions.

10. Some people think that Jews have a lot of power and influence in the world of world finance and politics. You:



Anti-Jewish prejudices and stereotypes

27.7% of young students partly or fully agree with the idea that Jews are the owners of **huge possessions**. 44% say they do not know whether the statement is true.

The question on **power and influence** in the world of finance and politics finds 24% of them in agreement. A high number of students state that they do not know whether this statement is true (45%).

For 53.7% of students, being Jewish and Israeli is not the same thing, while very few, 4%, think the two terms are interchangeable. However, a significant percentage (27.4%) answered that they do not know. There are differences between younger and older students.

This data show on the one hand that there is a considerable number of students who are able to distinguish between being Israeli and being Jewish, and on the other hand document the need for clarification about who Jews are, about Israel, and about Jewish identity.

Perception of antisemitism and Holocaust Remembrance

64% of students believe that there is antisemitism in Italy, 20% believe this statement is an exaggeration. Comparing these figures with those of the most recent Observatory on Antisemitism/IPSOS survey on the Italian adult population,¹⁴ no major differences emerge, except among those who say that this statement is exaggerated (21% vs. 37% in 2017).

When asked whether hostility towards Jews is driven by anti-Jewish or anti-Israeli sentiments, 25% report anti-Jewish sentiments, 5% anti-Israeli sentiments, and 30% both. There are important differences between age groups on this issue, with a higher percentage of younger people responding that they do not know.

Comparing this data with that of the study conducted by the Observatory on Antisemitism, respondents in 2022 believe that hostility is driven more by anti-Jewish sentiments (26% vs. 13% in 2017) than by anti-Israeli sentiments (5% vs. 24% in 2017), while the percentage of those who believe it is both (31%, 28% in 2017) and those who do not know (38%, 35% in 2017) are similar.

9 out of 10 students think it is important to remember the Holocaust, and more than 7 out of 10 think it is very important. This is an extremely positive and encouraging result compared to the work done so far by governments, institutions and schools on the value of remembering the Holocaust.

The survey data highlights strengths and weaknesses of the work carried out by the government and educators. While time and effort devoted to Holocaust Remembrance Day and teaching about the Holocaust seem to have had a positive effect, there is a need to make people more aware of who Jews are and what identity traits distinguish them.

14 <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/approfondimenti/nuova-indagine-sociologica-a-cura-di-osservatorio-antisemitismo-cdec-ed-ipsos-sulle-opinioni-ed-i-sentimenti-degli-italiani-nei-confronti-degli-ebrei/>

Antisemitism on social media

2022 was marked by big changes in the world of social media:

Facebook, the leading social globally, saw a decline in user number and revenues.¹⁵

The tycoon Elon Musk bought Twitter and immediately made several decisions that provoked astonishment and negative reactions from governments, international organizations¹⁶ and a large part of its users, many of whom decided to unsubscribe from the platform in protest or to create an account on other platforms such as Mastodon.¹⁷ In addition, some organizations claim to have measured an increase in hate content posted on the platform after its purchase.¹⁸

BeReal has become Generation Z's¹⁹ favorite social network and was chosen as Apple's app of the year,²⁰ because it promotes real-life authenticity over other social networks. "In an era dominated by the compelled sharing of beauty, BeReal is surprising for its willingness to eliminate two of the most distinctive - and criticized - elements of the platforms that enable it: filters and likes."²¹

At European level, the Digital Services Act (DSA) has come into force with the aim of "creating a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users of digital services are protected"²² by creating obligations for digital platforms.²³ This law will have a strong impact on how platforms available in the EU market behave and, on their policies, in addition, the law will lead to greater transparency and accountability from these platforms towards governments and society.

According to a study carried out by We Are Social and Hootsuite, in February 2022, 58.4 per cent of the world's population are social media users. In Italy, this percentage rises to 71.6% of the population (43.2 million), while the average daily use of social is 1 hour and 47 minutes. Excluding messaging apps, Facebook is the most used platform (78.6%), followed by Instagram (71.4%), Telegram (45.3%),²⁴ TikTok (28.9%) and Twitter (28.2%).²⁵

According to data collected by the Observatory, social networks remain the main "space" for spreading antisemitism. This is not an Italian characteristic, but a global phenomenon. Several studies underline the fact that social networks are very important for the spread of antisemitism and other forms of hatred, for radicalization and the creation of "communities or networks of hatred."²⁶ All the above-mentioned platforms monitor the content published by their users, each has its own policies and different levels of moderation. From January to September 2022, Meta (Facebook and Instagram) removed 39.2 million posts;²⁷

15 https://www.repubblica.it/tecnologia/2022/02/04/news/e_la_fine_di_facebook_-336410504/

16 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-63996061>; <https://www.euractiv.com/section/platforms/news/germany-asks-eu-to-rein-in-twitter/>

17 <https://www.agi.it/economia/news/2022-11-27/twitter-utenti-in-fuga-verso-mastodon-18970739/>

18 <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/12/02/tech/twitter-hate-speech/index.html>

19 <https://www.ilriformista.it/bereal-e-la-generazione-z-325026/>

20 <https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2022/11/app-store-awards-celebrate-the-best-apps-and-games-of-2022/>

21 <https://www.wired.it/article/bereal-autenticita-realta/>

22 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/it/policies/digital-services-act-package>

23 https://www.ansa.it/europa/notizie/sviluppo_sostenibile_digitale/2022/11/18/entra-in-vigore-il-digital-service-act_2fadf5dc-3080-4e55-8a54-fc58752b94f2.html

24 Telegram is a hybrid of social media and messaging app.

25 <https://wearesocial.com/it/blog/2022/01/digital-2022/>

26 https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/approfondimenti_category/rapporti-e-studi/

27 <https://transparency.fb.com/it-it/policies/improving/content-actioned-metric/>

Twitter did not make data on 2022 available, but in 2021 between July and December it required users to remove 4 million tweets that violated their rules;²⁸ Telegram, a low-moderation social, removed 15 million posts in 2022;²⁹ between January and September, TikTok removed 327 million posts.³⁰ The reasons behind the removal of these posts are various (hate speech, fake accounts, pornography, spam, copyright infringement), giving an idea of the complexity of the phenomenon.

In 2022, the Observatory's researchers collected and manually archived more than 4000 items including posts, tweets and comments published on the most used social networks in Italy (Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, VKontakte and LinkedIn). The content ranges from generic antisemitism ("Jews are the evil of the world"), to insults aimed at Senator Liliana Segre, Holocaust denial and trivialization, neo-Nazism, and Israel-relate antisemitism.

Our monitoring reveals a growing level of aggression and extremism on the part of some users. A network of antisemitic trolls who enjoy posting antisemitic memes and photomontages, conspiracy theories, insults, etc. has been created on Facebook. For these users, antisemitism seems to be a hobby. Many of these trolls have multiple profiles, always with blatantly false names (Shlomo is the go-to name), in which they pretend to be Jewish or belong to other minorities in an attempt to evade the platforms' moderation and be free to post hateful content. Being blocked by platforms for them is like receiving a badge of honor, it is a sign that they are on the 'right path,' and while one profile is blocked, they use others to continue spreading hate. These trolls include working professionals, teachers, ex-military, etc., who often post their faces on profiles as an expression of their banter.

In a Facebook post, one of these trolls illustrates their way of thinking (and perhaps also their level of uneasiness):

"It's not something that I've chose, slowly the social fabric in Italy has deteriorated, more than in other countries, there has been a real divide, what the left used to call a 'climate of hatred', it all coincidentally began when we discovered Salvini. [...] Facebook became politicized, and therefore for more than two years, I started opening these troll profiles, with fake names, Shlomo or similar, actually the first one was [X], with profile picture ridiculing certain categories, provocative posts.

The banter is fun and is OK, but a lot of them go too far and I get fed up with it, that's why I take a break sometimes and close the account, for my own sanity. [...] these accounts are a magnet for other trolls, who immediately recognize someone who 'thinks like them', but not only many troubled people, charity cases, lonely people who don't even have a photo, I don't even know what they look like, sometimes I imagine them maybe in a wheelchair, or with physical deformities, so always locked up at home and with all their time to devote to the Internet, also many cultured and imaginative people and some fanatics. [...] **As you well know, those who use Facebook in the right way, that is, to have fun and receive constant bans,** every time you open a new one, you start off with a list of interesting friends and then a whole bunch of them start to join, which you may be sorry to reject, some because you know them, others because you know it is a second life for them [...]."

As for years now, antisemitism is often linked to conspiracy theories and old antisemitic tropes (Jewish power). The complexity of today's world makes people take shortcuts to make sense of reality (too complex, with different nuances, too many actors involved), and blaming all the wrongs in the world on a group hated for centuries helps to make sense of this reality (" *[...] meanwhile it is history that whenever humani-*

28 <https://transparency.twitter.com/en/reports/rules-enforcement.html#2021-jul-dec>

29 <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2225236/media>

30 <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/en-us/community-guidelines-enforcement-2022-3/>



ty runs serious mortal dangers Jews are always in the middle of it as the main protagonists"). The Jews, and now also the Zionists, Kazars, Ashkenazis, Talmudists, etc., are the perfect enemy: visible and invisible, secular and religious, victims and torturers.

First Covid, and now the war in Ukraine, inspire several conspiracy theories in which the culprit par excellence is always the Jew. In the first months of the war, theories already emerged on social media claiming that the war was part of a Jewish plan to create a Greater Israel or a Heavenly Jerusalem in Ukraine.³¹ This theory was first spread on Telegram abroad, and then also arrived in Italy. The theory was mainly shared by antisemitic and pro-Russian users to justify the Russian invasion. Volodymyr Zelens'kyj, president of Ukraine and a Jew, has often been targeted by antisemites on social media.

Liliana Segre continues to be the "favorite victim" of online haters (the senator in 2022 decided to report them to the authorities).³² The senator is often insulted for her commitment to human rights, and every public statement becomes an opportunity to insult her as a Jew, as a woman, as an elder woman, or to wish her death. Both the senator's invitation to Chiara Ferragni to visit the Shoah

Memorial in Milan and the visit itself have triggered antisemitic and conspiratorial polemics on social networks: "support for Zion is always good for your career", "Mrs Segre is more Nazi than the person who exterminated her people", "they have decided to update their victimhood marketing", a person already convicted of terrorism wondered on Facebook if "Ferragni and Miss Shoah will also be there' at Fedez's³³ concert". Several users wished for her death: "it was better if she went through the chimney", "[...] next time you see that Jewish b*tch called Liliana Segre you have to kill her, in front of everyone. In national view. [...]", "I would send her to take a shower, one of those gassed ones...", "be careful about turning on the gas at home". Often these comments are linked to statements made by Segre regarding vaccines or sanitary measures taken by the government to combat covid. Death wishes and extreme violence are not only directed at Senator Segre, but also at Jews in general.

Another Judeophobic 'trend topic' has been that of alleged 'Jewish subversion'. Several users have posted texts, photomontages, articles, etc., claiming that there is one (or several) Jewish plan underway (or Zionist, Kazari, Ashkenazi, etc.) to subvert the Western world through the phantom ideology of gender, feminism, the promotion of immigration and population hybridization. In these posts one finds both elements taken from stereotypes from the beginning of the last century ('Elders of Zion', Nazi theories) and modern or modernized myths centered on conspiracy.

31 https://www.isdglobal.org/digital_dispatches/an-antisemitic-conspiracy-theory-is-being-shared-on-telegram-to-justify-russias-invasion-of-ukraine/

32 <https://www.open.online/2022/12/07/liliana-segre-denunce-minacce-insulti-online/>

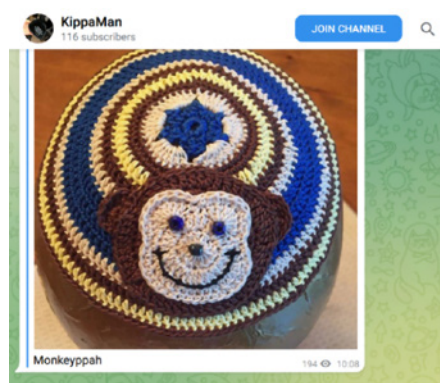
33 Fedez is an Italian singer and is married to Chiara Ferragni.

Several journalists have been targeted on social media because they are Jewish or considered to be Jewish: David Parenzo, David Puente, Roberto Saviano, etc. As for the Italian media, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's false statement about Hitler's Jewish origins during an episode of Mediaset's TV program Zona Bianca³⁴ in May led to a strong reaction from Jewish organizations and journalists both in Italy and abroad. The interview also incited the publication of several antisemitic and conspiratorial comments on social media: *"I don't think so, since the Zionist elite sold its poor citizens to the Shoah. Few powerful Jews ended up in the camps," "Lavrov has cast light on a story that scares many, the origins of Hitler and who really financed the Holocaust," "Hitler is Jewish even if they want to deny it now, of course and Zionist Jews financed WW2. With proven evidence."*

In June, the news website Dagospia used a meme from the Italian movie "The Marquis of Grillo" to illustrate a tweet in which they talked about the Jewish community in Italy.

Remaining in the entertainment world, a comedian commenting on the controversy surrounding the new Little Mermaid film made an unfortunate joke on Facebook: *"And by the way Ariel is a Jewish name. We want a greedy little mermaid."*

Among emerging social networking sites, Telegram has become a favorite space for extremists and trolls to share illegal and discriminatory content given the platform's low level of moderation, which treats content on channels and groups as private content,³⁵ moreover, the platform's rules on hate speech are very lax, and only content that incites violence or pornography is deleted.³⁶ A recent study conducted by Patria Indipendente³⁷ shines a spotlight on a considerable number of Italian extremist groups active on the platform, and in 2022, several people were investigated or arrested for posting illegal and hateful content (including antisemitism) on the platform.³⁸ The Observatory tracked several antisemitic groups or groups with antisemitic content on the platform, most of which are still available. There are several groups whose purpose is to share antisemitic memes or other forms of hate; this material is often later republished in mainstream platforms.



34 <https://www.agi.it/estero/news/2022-05-02/parole-lavrov-hitler-ebreo-hanno-fatto-infuriare-israele-16580001/>

35 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382159>

36 <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/20563051221138758>

37 <https://www.patriaindipendente.it/persone-e-luoghi/inchieste/la-galassia-nera-su-telegram/>

38 <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/?s=telegram&submit=Cerca>

Good practices 2022 and combating antisemitism

Public institutions are constantly engaged in combating antisemitism through education, surveillance, and prevention. Politicians, institutional representatives and public figures openly express their condemnation of any act of antisemitism and participate in the main secular and religious events promoted by UCEI and local Jewish Communities.

The police protect Jewish institutions and are attentive to their needs. In June, the Observatory for Security against Discriminatory Acts (OSCAD), an unit of the Central Management of the Criminal Police of the Department of Public Security, organized at the Shoah Memorial in Milan a conference on antisemitism, hatred towards people with disabilities (ableism), homotransphobia and bullying, which was attended by the Minister of the Interior Luciana Lamorgese, Senator Liliana Segre, and the Chief of Police Lamberto Giannini.³⁹

The President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella, as well as his predecessors, and all major political leaders, spoke out against antisemitism, including Israel-related antisemitism.

Former Prime Minister Mario Draghi and the current Giorgia Meloni have repeatedly condemned hatred against Jews and the State of Israel on official occasions.

The leaders of the Catholic Church, the Pontiff in primis, make their voices heard against racism and antisemitism.

On January the 27th on Holocaust Remembrance Day, President Mattarella⁴⁰ condemned antisemitism, racism, discrimination and intolerance, recalling that: ***“knowledge, information and education play a key part in promoting a fair and united society.”***

In February, the Senate unanimously approved the bill on memorial journeys in remembrance of the extermination and persecution of the Jewish people and of Italian military and political deportees to Nazi camps.⁴¹

In June, Prime Minister Mario Draghi, in a visit to the Italian Temple in Jerusalem, delivered a speech condemning past and present antisemitism: ***“The Government is committed to strengthening the memory of the Shoah and to opposing discrimination of all kinds against Jews. We do this with the National Strategy, coordinated by Professor Santerini, and with the Extraordinary Commission chaired by Senator Segre. We have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of antisemitism to address prejudices and stereotypes, from schools to public administration. We want to promote knowledge of Jewish culture in Italian museums and cultivate dialogue between religions and confessions to foster mutual understanding. These efforts are essential to protect human dignity, fight ignorance and defeat indifference. In times of crisis, of uncertainty, of war – like the one we are currently experiencing – it is even more important to firmly oppose the political use of hatred. We must promote tolerance, mutual respect, love of neighbor – these are the real ingredients for lasting peace. The history of your community is an example to look back on with pride.”***⁴²

39 Oscad a Milano per parlare di vittime dell’odio: <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/oscad-a-milano-per-parlare-di-vittime-dellodio>

40 <https://moked.it/blog/2022/01/27/il-messaggio-del-capo-dello-stato-non-abbassiamo-mai-la-guardia/>

41 <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/articoli/il-senato-ha-approvato-allunanimita-il-disegno-di-legge-sui-vaggi-della-memoria/>

42 <https://moked.it/blog/2022/06/13/storia-comunita-italiana-disraeleesempio-da-guardare-con-orgoglio/>

Also in June, data on hate speech were made public by the Extraordinary Parliamentary Commission “*for the fight against the phenomena of intolerance, racism, antisemitism and incitement to hatred and violence*” chaired by Liliana Segre, from which it emerged that “*the spread of hatred ‘has been increasing exponentially’, with an increasingly disturbing proliferation online and in the social media sphere.*”⁴³

In August, Milena Santerini, national coordinator for the fight against antisemitism, invited all political parties to adhere to the National Strategy for the fight against antisemitism⁴⁴ and in October the coordinator kicked off in Rome a series of seminars to be held in all Italian regions introducing the guidelines for the fight against antisemitism in schools.⁴⁵

Throughout the year, the National Coordination for the fight against antisemitism took the lead in many actions to combat hatred against Jews,⁴⁶ including the launch in January of the website Noantisemitismo.governo.it of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers,⁴⁷ which contains the national strategy for the fight against antisemitism based on the definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. At the end of January 2023, Prefect Giuseppe Pecoraro was appointed as the new National Coordinator for the fight against antisemitism, replacing Milena Santerini.⁴⁸ In an initial assessment of her term of office, Professor Santerini pointed out the centrality of the Guidelines against antisemitism for schools, the training of magistrates and police forces, and the fight against online antisemitism:

“The Guidelines do not deal only with Holocaust remembrance, but explain how to deal with children’s unconscious prejudices, prejudice against Israel, and ignorance about Judaism. We have encouraged the training of judges and policemen, holding courses with the *Scuola superior della magistratura* and the Ministry of Interior. On social media, then, the problem is still open. In general, as we know, it is very difficult to intervene on large platforms; there is a need for regulatory intervention, both at the European and the national level. I hope that the Italian parliament acts on the moderation and forces platforms to contrast hate speech. We have worked with Google, Amazon, Tik Tok, to remove antisemitic content quickly. With Google, we have developed a lexicon that contains typical antisemitic expressions, so today when certain searches are made (e.g.: ‘Protocols of the Elders of Zion’), the platform highlights sites that make it clear that this is a falsehood, rather than those that spread lies. Finally, on the religious level, we have trained religion teachers, together with the heads of diocesan offices, by presenting guidelines. Of course, then there are some points on which much work still needs to be done.”⁴⁹

Culture Minister Gennaro Sangiuliano, speaking in November at the opening of the UCEI’s State of Union,⁵⁰ announced several projects, including the immediate restart of work on the Shoah Museum in Rome and — at Liliana Segre’s request — the installation of signs to highlight the presence of the Shoah Memorial in Milan’s central station.

43 <https://moked.it/blog/2022/06/23/discorsi-dodio-situazione-allarmante/>

44 <https://www.shalom.it/blog/italia/milena-santerini-alle-forze-politiche-a-aderire-alla-strategia-nazionale-contro-la-antisemitismoa-b1120131>

45 <https://moked.it/blog/2022/10/27/linee-guida-contro-lantisemitismo-al-via-la-nuova-fase-per-le-scuole/>

46 <https://www.governo.it/it/noantisemitismo/il-coordinatore-nazionale-la-lotta-contro-l-antisemitismo/18979>

47 <https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/articoli/online-la-pagina-noantisemitismo-governo-it-della-presidenza-del-consiglio-dei-ministri/>

48 <https://moked.it/blog/2023/01/26/pecoraro-coordinatore/>

49 <https://riflessimenorah.com/ecco-il-bilancio-del-mio-mandato/>

50 <https://www.shalom.it/blog/news/il-ministro-della-cultura-gennaro-sangiuliano-agli-stati-general-ucei-a-nei-prossimi-giorni-un-tavolo-per-realizzare-il-museo-della-shoaha-b1124001>

In December, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, speaking at the unveiling of the memorial plaque for Jewish journalists persecuted by the racial laws, strongly condemned contemporary antisemitism and fascism.

For combating antisemitism, it is essential to revitalize knowledge, education for diversity and respect towards others.

Countering antisemitism requires:

Study antisemitism and other forms and expressions of discrimination and racism;

Promote the study of Jewish culture and religion at school;

Promoting training on new online media and digital literacy;

Combat antisemitism and racism in sport, especially in football;

Contrast the spreading of hatred and antisemitic with the use of counter-narrative tools;

Strengthen the laws against antisemitism, other forms of discrimination and apology of nazi-fascism.

Current european union funded projects in which the CDEC's Observatory on antisemitism is involved

RELATION

(Research, Knowledge, Education against antiSemitism) - 2022-2023

"Relation"⁵¹ is a project **funded by the European Union** (Citizen, Equality, Rights and Values Programme - CERV) that aims at defining an innovative strategy against Modern Antisemitism, starting from a better knowledge of the Jewish history and traditions as part of the common European history/traditions. This is a two year project that puts in place a set of educational activities in Italy, Spain, Romania and Belgium as well as online actions in order to tackle this phenomenon. European partners: CEJI - A Jewish contribution to an inclusive Europe, Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca (FCSVM), Institutul Intercultural Timișoara (IIT), University of Milan, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC), Comunitat Jueva Bet Shalom De Catalunya (Bet Shalom).

HIDEANDOLA

(Hidden Antisemitism and Communicative Skills of Criminal Lawyers and Journalists) - 2022-2023

Hideandola⁵² is an EU-funded project (CERV-2022) that aims to implement equality through the improvement of the way criminalization choices and attitudes of law enforcement agencies in relation to antisemitic behavior are elaborated and then communicated, especially by journalists. To reach this object, we have established a multidisciplinary research group composed by jurists and sociologists, bringing together four universities (Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna di Pisa, Università di Pisa, Università degli studi di Firenze and Università degli studi di Palermo) and two high-profile centers with expertise in the field (CDEC Foundation's Observatory on Antisemitism and Osservatorio di Pavia).

FADE

("Fight against Antisemitism through training and awareness raising activities") - 2023-2024

The F.A.D.E. project aims to improve the ability of public authorities to identify, prosecute and condemn incidents of discrimination and antisemitic hatred in a timely and effective manner. The FADE project also intends to strengthen victim support through dissemination activities aimed at improving public awareness of rights and complaint mechanisms, in order to increase the number of complaints of incidents of discrimination and antisemitic hatred; to improve cooperation and information exchange between public authorities, and between them and other actors, such as civil society organizations, in order to combat incidents of discrimination and antisemitic hatred more effectively; and to strengthen the relevant registration and data collection system. Partners: Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Union of Italian Jewish Communities - UCEI, CEJI, Reflect - Research Evaluation Training Technical Assistance S.R.L.

⁵¹ <https://www.relationproject.eu>

⁵² https://www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/approfondimenti_category/il-progetto/



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