Comparative report on the phenomena of online antisemitism

Camille Lhopitault, LICRA

Table of Contents

About the project

Analysis of hate data collected by members of the International Network Against Cyber Hate, INACH, in Europe has shown that there are strong and documented links between current online hate phenomena and hate-slurs, prejudices and practices that have been propagated in the Third Reich.

To transform these worrisome findings into effective warnings, especially since remembrance and knowledge on the Holocaust and its horrors are fading, the project Remember and ACT! (Re-ACT) is putting a special focus on researching how "old" concepts of antisemitism and antigypsyism are being re-enacted by concerted hate campaigns and where they originated from. Starting from there, Re-ACT will develop, collect, and provide educational materials and tools for the prevention of racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance.

These self-generated sets of information plus a curated collection of high-quality educational materials will build the foundation for the establishment of an online prevention-hub at INACH.

Introduction

In 1952, Frantz Fanon wrote this message, as true today as it was then and ever: "*When you hear someone insulting the Jews pay attention; he is talking about you.*[1]" By these words, the intellectual warned people how antisemitism is a plague not only for Jews but for the whole society. History has engraved a key-lesson: antisemitism as a warning symptom of a larger problem for our human societies. The French Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur explained that "*antisemitism is never an isolated hatred but the first symptom of a coming collapse. Antisemitism is the first exposure of a larger loophole, but it is rarely interpreted as a harbinger when it strikes*"[2].

Antisemitism is an age-old form of hatred. According to the work of the former European Union Monitoring Centre (EUMC) and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) the working definition adopted by the European Parliament on 1 June 2017, antisemitism is defined as "*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*"; It is also "*Manifestations [which] might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.*"

European History is full of sinister manifestations of antisemitism: violence, hostility, and discrimination against the Jewish community led to the horrors of the Holocaust. Yet it is still present nowadays as if it were not possible to learn the lessons of the past. Furthermore, the global context of crisis aggravates the situation. The rise of antisemitism appears online and in the everyday life. The evidence of this rise cannot be ignored. In recent years, there have been deadly

---

[1] Frantz Fanon, "Black sins, White Masks" (1952).
[2] Delphine Horvilleur, « Réflexion sur la question antisémite », Grasset, (2019). Available at: https://www.grasset.fr/livres/reflexions-sur-la-question-antisemite-9782246815525 (last accessed 31.08.2020)

attacks in Denmark, Belgium, France, and Germany. These terrible acts founded their roots on words and various discourses quite prevalent online: from the spread of antisemitic conspiracy theories and myths about the Covid-19 on alternative platforms and obscure blogs to the massive dissemination of the hashtag #Hitlerwasright on mainstream social media such as Twitter. Online antisemitism has become disturbingly "normalised".

According to a Tel Aviv University Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry report, antisemitism is "*no longer an issue confined to the activity of the far left, far right and radical Islamists triangle -it has mainstreamed and become an integral part of life*"[3]. The European continent is particularly affected by this reality. On the 2019 Anti-Defamation League survey (conducted since 1964), 25% of Europeans gave antisemitic responses to a majority of the 11 questions: "*It is deeply concerning that approximately one in four Europeans harbour the types of antisemitic beliefs that have endured since before the Holocaust*" according to Jonathan Greenblatt, ADL's Director[4]. The situation is even more serious in Central and Western Europe where conspiracy myths are prevalent. Jews are perceived as the "perfect" scapegoat responsible for "why things go wrong".

Almost every societal event or problem may cause the rise of online antisemitic conspiracy theories. Furthermore, the popularity of the "anti-elites" and "anti-system" speeches have a direct impact on the spread of traditional conspiracy theories such as the "New World Order". In addition to the online diffusion of a supposed global conspiracy, there is an increasing influence (online and offline) of far-right groups and governments as well as a general increase in the violence (also online and offline) of public discourse. For all these reasons, it is urgent to "take back the digital streets" since it has a direct impact on our "real" streets.

---

[3] "Anti-Semitic attacks rise worldwide in 2018, led by U.S., west Europe: study", Reuters, May 2019. Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-antisemitism/anti-semitic-attacks-rise-worldwide-in-2018-led-by-us-west-europe-study-idUSKCN1S73M1 (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[4] The survey, which drew on 11 questions the ADL has used in global polling since 1964, queried over 9,000 adults in 18 countries in Europe, Canada, South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil between April and June 2019. Available at: https://global100.adl.org/about/2019 (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Throughout this comparative report, we would like to present the main drivers regarding the rise in online antisemitism in Europe while seeking to understand what the main challenges are in addressing antisemitism considering countries 'specificity. This report includes case studies from several European countries that illustrate and underline the impact of transnational trends on the phenomenon of online antisemitism.

Online antisemitism: Resurgence of a European recurring phenomenon?

A rise of antisemitism - online and offline - in Europe

Antisemitic violent hate crimes have dominated the news this past decade ranging from dramatic murders in France, to a terrible terrorist in Copenhagen, to recent strikes against a synagogue in the city of Halle to the Pruchnik antisemitic event in Poland by far-right members[5]. The consequences are particularly harmful for Jewish European communities, "*the kind of antisemitism that permeates these societies makes Jews feel they cannot live like others and that they cannot live as Jews in their home countries*"[6]. It gives the dramatic impression that antisemitism as deep-rooted phenomenon as it is, has become an almost "normal" component of society. Recent researches and studies both pursue and demonstrate the rising antisemitism in Europe.

In the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency poll of Jewish European people from 12 different countries, published in 2019, 89% of the 16,395 people surveyed said that antisemitism had significantly increased over five years[7]. Moreover, 80% of the young Jews surveyed believe that antisemitic discrimination is "*a problem in their countries*", and that it has "*increased over the past five years*". Another alarming figure is the 38% of people surveyed have contemplated emigrating "*because they no longer feel safe as Jews*". The EU agency notes finally that antisemitic hate speech, harassment, and an increasing fear of being recognised as Jewish were becoming the new normal. This situation is not limited to a select few countries. Such animosity is seeping through and permeating the

---

[6] "Antisemitism is Alive, Pervasive, and Underreported in Europe, In most member states, it's on the rise along with anti-Jewish attacks", Eupinions, December 2019. Available at: https://eupinions.eu/de/blog/antisemitism-is-alive-pervasive-and-underreported-in-europe (last accessed 31.08.2020)

[7] "Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States: experiences and perceptions of antisemitism », European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), July 2019. Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2019/fras-antisemitism-survey-dataset-now-available (last accessed 31.08.2020)

very fabric of the entire European continent. In January 2019, The European Commission published the results of a Eurobarometer survey on antisemitism: More than 27,000 people from 28 European Member states were interviewed about their perception of antisemitism[8]. The results of the Eurobarometer underline an important gap: while 89% of Jews consider that antisemitism has significantly increased over the past 5 years, only 36% of the public do so. The results also draw differences in perception between countries due to the size of their Jewish communities such as in France, the UK, Germany, or the Netherlands where antisemitism is perceived more frequently as a problem within their country.

Today's European antisemitic threat is first physical, despite the increasingly common and pervasive online abuse. Registered antisemitic violence increased in numerous European countries. Most of the troubling incidents of antisemitism were taking place in Western European countries such as in France, in the United Kingdom or in Germany. France reported a 74% increase in antisemitic offences in 2018. From 2018 to 2019, it continued to increase by 27%: 687 antisemitic acts were registered compared to 541 the previous year[9]. Additionally, the United Kingdom experienced a 25% increase in antisemitic violent assaults, and 1,805 incidents recorded according to the Community Security Trust, the highest number ever logged in a calendar year. In 2019, nine Labour members of Parliament quit their party in part over the cloud of antisemitism hanging over the leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn. German authorities reported a 10% rise in documented antisemitic acts from 2017 to 2018, including a 70% increase in violent acts[10]. A prejudice not limited to physical altercations, in Italy, more than 15% of respondents to a poll, part of the annual Eurispes Italy Report, said the

---

[8] Eurobarometer survey on antisemitism in Europe, European Commission, 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_19_542 (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[9] « Antisémitisme en France : des faits en hausse et une menace prégnante », France Culture, Eric Chaverou, January 2020. Available at : https://www.franceculture.fr/societe/antisemitisme-en-france-des-faits-en-hausse-et-une-menace-pregnante (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[10] « Gewalt gegen Juden drastisch gestiegen", Der Tagesspiegel, Frank Jansen, February 2019. Available at: https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/antisemitische-kriminalitaet-gewalt-gegen-juden-drastisch-gestiegen/23980318.html (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Holocaust never happened, therein depicting additional fissures on an intellectual basis[11].

Nonetheless, Central and Eastern Europe are also facing a vast augmentation surrounding antisemitism including infiltrating political discourse, namely in Hungary and in Poland. Right-wing nationalist politicians spread and use antisemitism as a political tool. The Hungarian and the Polish governments have rehabilitated their wartime criminals as well as voted decisions and laws to minimize their country's guilt in the Holocaust[12]. In 2018, for example, an Amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance was signed into law by Polish President Andrzej Duda. It criminalized false public statements that ascribe to the Polish nation collective responsibility in Holocaust-related crimes, crimes against peace, crimes against humanity, or war crimes, or which "grossly reduce the responsibility of the actual perpetrators". The legislation was amended four months later. The results of the aforementioned ADL global survey of 2019 underline that both countries are among the most prominent examples of a European collectivity in which antisemitic attitudes are the most prevalent. Shockingly, 48% of the Polish people and 42% of the Hungarians gave antisemitic responses to the poll. Other Central and Eastern European countries are also affected by the prevalence of antisemitic tropes such as Greece, Ukraine, and Serbia. Regarding Greece, with 69% of the Greeks harbouring antisemitic views, this construction of "Jewish Danger" is widely seen in significant parts of the Greek society, in higher levels than in most of the European countries. In the Czech Republic, antisemitic incidents have been consistently rising during the past decade: 347 incidents were recorded in 2018 while less than 30 acts recorded in 2008. Although in this country, sometimes the most obvious form of antisemitism,

---

[11] "15% of Italians say Holocaust never happened", The Times of Israel, Cnaan Lipshiz, February 2020. Available at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/15-of-italians-say-holocaust-never-happened-poll-finds/ (last accessed 31.08.2020)

[12] "What's behind Europe's surge in anti-Semitism", Politico, William Echikson, April 2019. Available at:
https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-anti-semitism-surge/ (last accessed 31.08.2020)

physical attacks are marginal: "*antisemitic hate speech online accounts for nearly 93% of all the recorded incidents*"[13].

It appears that there is an evident crossover of antisemitic acts – increasingly online but offline as well – that result in a potent and dangerous surge of hatred. Therefore, it is crucial to seek and to focus on antisemitic words, speech and theories disseminated mainly on the online sphere. It is worth noting however that online phenomena cannot be isolated due to the reciprocity between on and offline behaviours. Antisemitic hate speech online is the reflection of centuries of stereotypes, stigmatisation, discrimination, and violence. On the other hand, antisemitism "*in the everyday life*" is the manifestation of online hateful contents: these events are a kind of "acting out". Concisely synthesized by the French sociologist Michel Wievorka, physical acts are fuelled by "*an enabling context*" coupled with a "*liberation of hate speech – mostly on the internet but also in public*"[14].

Quantifying online antisemitism

Centuries-old antisemitic stereotypes and myths have reappeared using a constant conspiracy element: "Jews" are the "interior enemy" responsible of what is going wrong in society. In summary, events, crises, or issues that have nothing to do with Jewish people suddenly orient around them, and blame falls squarely upon their shoulders.

Indeed, antisemitic conspiracy theories – regardless of how irrational and "old" they are – continue to be widely spread nowadays and even have gained a "second youth" by the global development of the internet (specifically social media and phone applications). It is quite complex to obtain a global estimation of the amount of antisemitic online content. As any type of hatred, it is particularly hard to quantify because of its prevalence on diversifying platforms – private and public -

---

[13] Anti-Semitism on the rise in Czech Republic", Kafkadesk, July 2019. Available at: https://kafkadesk.org/2019/07/04/anti-semitism-on-the-rise-in-the-czech-republic/ (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[14] "Why is France facing an upsurge in anti-Semitic attacks?", France 24, Henrique Valaderes, February 2019. Available at: https://www.france24.com/en/20190213-france-surge-anti-semitism-jews-hate-speech-yellow-vests-far-right (last accessed 31.08.2020)

its mutable and changing aspect – the use of codes or new-expressions for addressing algorithm monitoring - and its propension of exponential growth. Additionally, quantifying antisemitism approves to be a particularly challenging task because of the renouncement of victims to rebuke incidents. Moreover, according to the antisemitic rhetoric, Jews are said to portray themselves as victims. This hateful belief contributes to lessen the credibility and the impact of the analyses presented proving the former. Nonetheless, some recent studies offer a partial but pertinent overview of the "quantification" of the online antisemitic content such as the 2016 World Jewish Congress' report titled "The rise of antisemitism on social media"[15]:

"*Overall, 382,000 anti-Semitic posts were monitored in social media over the course of 2016 […]. This means that more than 1,000 such posts were published on all social media platforms daily, at an average of 43 posts per hour, or one post every 83 seconds*". On the report, it appears that the most instances of antisemitic speech on social media is the United States, with 68% of the total. A 2018 Anti-Defamation League study on "Quantifying hate: a year of antisemitism on Twitter" monitored 4.2 million antisemitic Tweets disseminated in English for one year (from January 2017 to January 2018)[16]. This report is "*an effort to gauge the prevalence of one of these destructive prejudices – anti-Semitism*" by underscoring "the powerful harassment that exists and the ease with which a relative handful of users can infect our shared social media environment with negative stereotypes and conspiracy theories about Jews"[17].

In Europe, Germany, the United Kingdom and France are countries leading in instances of online antisemitic content. Regarding Germany, antisemitic publications are mainly found on mainstream media and refer to denialist

---

[15] "The rise of antisemitism on social media", World Jewish Congress in partnership with Vigo Social Intelligence, 2016. Available at:
http://www.crif.org/sites/default/fichiers/images/documents/antisemitismreport.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

[16] "Quantifying hate: A year of anti-Semitism on Twitter", Anti-Defamation League, 2018. Available at: https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/quantifying-hate-a-year-of-anti-semitism-on-twitter (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[17] Idem.

theoriesas well as to Third Reich and Nazi ideology apology. In 2018, the cognitive scientist Dr. Monika Schwarz-Friesel has run from 2014 to 2018 a long-term study, on "the articulation, perpetuation, spread and manifestation of antisemitism in the digital age" funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). The research project studied 300,000 pieces of German online content, with a special focus on social media. The results underline not only a massive increase of antisemitic online content but also an extremism in the content. In addition, several phenomena were observed: the impact of social media as "*primary multiplier and perpetuator of antisemitism*", the normalisation and the everyday online antisemitism where "*the old phantasm of the 'Eternal Jew' is dominant*"[18]. The study notes that antisemitism is not confined to radical and extremist groups, but rather permeates mainstream society. Online antisemitism is also prevalent in countries with larger numbers of Jewish communities in Europe. On the report 2019 "Cartographie de la haine en ligne", the Online Civil Courage Initiative France used machine learning and identified confidently just under 7 million instances of online hateful speech. Within the total amount, French Anti-Semitic keywords selected for this report returned 79,289 results. It appears that the increase in online antisemitic conversation was connected to the Yellow Vests incidents as well the emergence of the critiques of Israeli policy in Palestine as a key theme[19]. According to the WJC 2016 report, another prevalent trend is the Holocaust-related imagery and rhetoric. Regarding the United Kingdom, the Community Security Trust (CST) published an analysis about UK Google searches and queries. The results show that an average of 170,000 Google searches with antisemitic content are made per year. Approximately 10% of these searches involve violent language or intentions. The analysis noted a 79% rise in antisemitic Google searches in April 2018, most of which occurred on the day after Jewish community representatives

---

[18] "Antisemitism as a cultural constant and collective emotional value in the digital age" – A long-term study", German Research Foundation, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Monika Schwarz-Friesel, 2018. Available at:
 https://www.research-in-germany.org/news/2018/8/2018-08-03_Antisemitism_2.0__Antisemitism_on_the_internet_has_increased_significantly#0 and https://www.linguistik.tu-berlin.de/menue/antisemitismus_2_0/ (last accessed 31.08.2020)

[19] "Cartographie de la haine en ligne », ISD, Cooper Gatewood, Cécile Guérin, Jonathan Birwell, Iris Boyer and Zoé Fourel, 2019. Available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Cartographie-de-la-Haine-en-Ligne-eng.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

met Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn. In Czech Republic, according to the Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic, antisemitic hate speech online represents nearly 93% of all the recorded incidents. Most of the antisemitic content is often found on far right or pro-Russian disinformation websites. Websites such as these continue to be spread traditional stereotypes and conspiracy theories about Jews, including regarding their alleged secret control of the world's governments, media, and finances.

Beyond the countries' specificities, transnational trends especially in the European context offer key-elements to understand and therefore address the phenomenon of antisemitism – online and offline. One key-transnational constant of the rising of online antisemitic speech is that what "would have been unacceptable in the past is now an everyday occurrence and democratic debate is being undermined by polarised opinions"[20].

---

[20] "ECRI annual report: Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance are on the rise in Europe", Council of Europe, ECRI, 2020. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/ecri-annual-report-racism-racial-discrimination-xenophobia-anti-semitism-and-intolerance-are-on-the-rise-in-europe (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Online antisemitism: manifestations and efforts to combat it

Manifestation of online antisemitism and impact of social media

The growth and the easy access of the Internet and social media provided new platforms for conspiracy theorists to circulate antisemitic stereotypes more broadly. Antisemitic conspiracy theories are originating from different perpetrator groups, from the Neo-Nazis, far-rights extremists to the Islamists, the extremist left-wing and others. According to the European Jewish Congress, "Antisemitism in Europe today knows no difference between left or right political creed, origin or religion". If it seems to be impossible to quantify antisemitic content, nonetheless, it is easily proved that it has fostered in non-traditional places, such as popular websites and mainstream social media, in this way rapidly becoming 'normalised'. A report published in 2017 by the Israeli government found that antisemitic content on social media deals primarily with four issues: incitement to offline violence against Jews and calling for the deaths of Jews (5%), Holocaust denial (12%), traditional antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories (49%) and attacks on the State of Israel (34%)[21].

The phenomenon of online antisemitism is composed of several trends that can be identified as transnational on a European level. For these reasons, it is crucial to focus and comprehend the makeup of these trends, as well as which terms and expressions are connected to them and used in the antisemitic language and rhetoric. Antisemitic hate speech is not only spread via posts, videos and images, but also memes and GIFs are shared on platforms and in social media groups.

Online manifestations of antisemitism take different forms based on a classical constant: Jews are "responsible" or "behind" what is going wrong in society. Regarding the religious and cultural level of online antisemitism, it can be through

---

[21] "Measuring the hate: the state of antisemitism in social media", Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism, Online Hate Prevention Institute, 2016. Available at: https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/AntiSemitism/Documents/Measuring-the-Hate.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

the resurgence of old and classical antisemitic myths developed during the Middle Ages such as the blood libel and the theory of Jews as killers of Jesus. Indeed, these conspiracy myths based on sinister and irrational stereotypes that became popular especially in the context of societal and health crises. These myths re-appear on a frequent basis in blogs, websites online videos. In many European countries such as Italy, Slovenia or Croatia, the term "Jew" is used for describing a greedy person whether he or she is Jewish or not.

Online antisemitism also manifests through the spread of conspiracy theories quite prevalent on social media: Jews are presented as the people who try to control the world thanks to lobbies which pull the strings of political field and economic and finances. Jews are accused of being "everywhere" not only in sectors of influence: banks, the political scene, finances, media, or in the film industry. They are also accused of being the perpetrators behind world conspiracies, leading to the antisemitic stereotype of influential and powerful Jews "manipulating" politicians. Jewish names and public figures such the Rothschild family or Georges Soros are fundamental elements of conspiracy theories and are being "used" as prove that the "Jewish octopus" or the "Jewish mafia" exist. In many European countries, these online theories also refer to the traditional concepts of Judeo-Masonic conspiracy and of Jewish Bolshevism.

There is also a "moral" level in online antisemitism trends with the permeation of denialist and revisionist "theses" presenting Jews as using their victimization in the "presumed" Holocaust for making business and finally dominate the world. Denialist key-concepts promoted on many social media platforms throughout Europe are the "Holohoax", the "memorial porn" or the "Holocaust industry". The online publications state denialist content such "concentration camps were only labour camps" or approve of crimes against humanity through hashtags and memes like "Hitler did a good job" or "Hitler was right".

Another main transnational trend is the prevalence of the "traditional" antisemitic far-right rhetoric based on Nazi ideology embedded nowadays in newer far-right movements, e.g. skinheads, White supremacist embodiment, the Alt right and the identitarian movements. The popularity of the extremist concept of "White genocide" has revealed the impact of forums such as Gab and 8chan ('Hatechan')

where white supremacist and antisemitic hatred is pervasive. The Community Security Trust (CST) highlighted in their recent report "Hate Fuel: the hidden online world fuelling far right terror" that Gab, Telegram, BitChute and 4chan were violent antisemitic content is shared by far-right extremists who have migrated from mainstream platforms. This violent antisemitic rhetoric constitutes a "*growing danger of far-right terrorism against British Jews"*[22]. Unanimous concern raised by another report published by the Cornell University noted that platforms like GAB (The Free Speech Network), 4Chan, and Twitter provide a forum for people who are geographically distant from one another to create networks in which they are able to share extreme antisemitic views. This study of online antisemitic hate speech found on Twitter in English revealed 4.2 million antisemitic tweets in one year alone, not including tweets of images or emojis[23]. The situation is also alarming in other European countries such as Germany, Belgium, or France where the QAnon conspiracy theory is gaining more popularity thanks to mainstream and alternative platforms[24]. Antisemitism online includes far-right tropes that Jews spearhead feminist, LGBTIQ, and immigration movements as a method to perpetrate a "white genocide": conspiracy theories that have been repeated in the online manifestos posted by far-right terrorists prior to mass shootings in synagogues. Published by the Antisemitism Policy Trust, UK, a study of the neo-Nazi web forum, Stormfront, found that more than 9,000 threads related to feminism had been established since its inception[25].

Another online growing trend is named "new antisemitism": "*this concept sees classical antisemitism has gone through a transformation and tending to be*

[22] "Hate fuel: the hidden online world fuelling far right terror", Community Security Trust, June 2020. Available at:
https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2020/06/11/hate-fuel-the-hidden-online-world-fuelling-far-right-terror (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[23] "A quantitative approach to understanding online antisemitism", Cornwell University, Savvas Zannettou, Joel Finkelstein, Barry Bradlyn, Jeremy Blackburn, November 2019. Available at:
https://arxiv.org/abs/1809.01644 (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[24] "QANON and the growing conspiracy theory trend on social media", Media Diversity Institute, June 2020. Available at:
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ee500d316a2470c370596d3/t/5f1813b4c9031f13d52ad25f/1595413465022/QAnon+Report.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)
[25] "Hidden hate: What Google searches tell us about antisemitism today", Antisemitism Policy Trust, 2020. Available at: https://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/APT-Google-Report- 2019.1547210385.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

supported today also by a new base of the more left-wing, antiracist, anticolonialist spectrum"[26]. This "new antisemitism" has ground some of its roots of very "traditional" and old conspiracy theories and concepts. It is in part connected to the expansion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Focusing on this new trend, the border between antisemitism and anti-Zionism remains unclear[27]. Anti-Zionism cannot be entirely associated to antisemitism. Nonetheless, some anti-Zionist trends are composed of antisemitic rhetoric and conspiracy theories. For example, the use of the word "Zionist" is part of this trends vocabulary and is quite frequent on social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

Another underlying trend is the proliferation of the concept of the "double standards" popularised with the public debate of what constitutes freedom of speech. The general idea behind this concept is that the Jewish community is protected. Therefore, it is forbidden to "criticize" them, "use humour" or any kind of provocation. However, it is perceived as not the same rules for other communities such as the Muslim community. The phenomenon is very complex because the segment of the population who might be attracted by this "concept" can also be victims of racist online speech[28].

These trends need to be understood as interconnected. For example, conspiracy theories endeavour from traditional myths and directly influence new antisemitic trend which also ground some roots on Nazi ideology. Almost all major events may potentially lead to antisemitic content online. The context of the Covid-19 pandemic offers many elements corroborating this consideration. Even when

---

[26] "Antisemitism in Europe today: the phenomena, the conflict", Jewish Museum Berlin, Werner Bergmann, 2013. Available at: https://www.jmberlin.de/sites/default/files/antisemitism-in-europe-today_1-bergmann.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

[27] ADL definition of "anti-Zionism: "anti-Zionism is a prejudice against the Jewish movement for self-determination and the right of the Jewish people to a homeland in the State of Israel. It may be motivated by or result in anti-Semitism, or it may create a climate in which anti-Semitism becomes more acceptable. Anti-Zionism can include threats to destroy the State of Israel (or otherwise eliminate its Jewish character), unfounded and inaccurate characterizations of Israel's power in the world, and language or actions that hold Israel to a different standard than other countries". Available at: https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/what-is-anti-israel-anti-semitic-anti-zionist (last accessed 21.09.2020)

[28] "Manifestations of online hate speech", INACH, 2016. Available at: http://www.inach.net/wp-content/uploads/Manifestations_of_online_hate_speech-short-final.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

conspiracy theories do not involve Jews at the beginning, they end almost every time with blaming them.

What efforts can be made to combat online antisemitism

Identifying, analysing, and confronting the multi-phases regarding the phenomenon of antisemitism is crucial for tackling all forms of hatred. With the rise of antisemitism in Europe, the fight against it has intensified, both among European civil society, citizens, and their politicians, on a national and a European level. Nonetheless, the increase and above all the dramatic impact of antisemitic content are still growing. The European Commission's coordinator against antisemitism, Katarina von Schnurbein insisted "*we will do everything we can for Jews to have a future in Europe*"[29]. Therefore, what efforts need to be made for combatting in an efficient way online – and offline – antisemitism? On the international   level, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, identified several steps for addressing antisemitism, such as "*to recognize antisemitism as a problem to be addressed internationally*"; "*to develop education programmes that address antisemitism in a framework of human rights and global citizenship*"; and "*to build the capacity of educational systems to address antisemitism, conspiracy theories and all other forms of hate speech*".

Civil society has been in the forefront of reporting online antisemitic content in cooperation with mainstream platforms as well as with national and European authorities. They have identified, analysed, and developed strategies on a national level but also on a transnational level. Collection of data, analysis, and reports clearly underline the transnational aspect of online antisemitism. For these reasons, it is crucial to apply similar rules, legal framework and definitions of antisemitism. The model of definition that should be adopted by all stakeholders is the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition which

---

[29] "Europe's Jews Are Resisting a Rising Tide of Anti-Semitism", TIME, Vivienne Walt, June 2019. Available at: https://time.com/longform/anti-semitism-in-europe/ (last accessed 31.08.2020)

addresses all the aforementioned forms and manifestations of antisemitism. European Institutions as well as more and more EU member states, cities and student organisations have adopted and made use of their working definition. Another major step would be the integration and the implementation of this definition by social media networks and platforms. It would also be helpful to flag antisemitic content on a transnational and continuous approach. It will also help to provide resources - when it is valuable - to reported antisemitic content by educating online users about antisemitism today and its diverse manifestation. From a European perspective, a transnational legislation dealing with antisemitism is fundamental in order to apply and enforce existing legislation against hate speech. A mid-term step could be for social media platforms, regardless of their size, to join the European Union Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online of 2016. Indeed, platforms need to increase their efforts to remove illegal content notified to them in a timely manner and engage in direct and continuous communication with relevant stakeholders.

Additionally, more education is definitely the key for addressing online antisemitism. For helping to tackle the growing tendency towards conspiracy material online, of course, education needs to be delivered from an early age. Nonetheless, it should not only be directed to youth and students but also to all stakeholders involved in the fight against antisemitism: from teachers to policemen and judges: "*Educating people from different backgrounds and ages is a major asset in the fight against cyber hate. It is essential to keep the focus on all those affected or who have an effect on the fight. For instance, educating the police as to what is legal and what is not makes the process much more efficient for everybody. Educating young people also takes care of the fact that those people are the most susceptible to cyber hate or to suffer from its effects. Giving them the power back and the knowledge of what is acceptable and what is not and what to do about it is an immense step forward*"[30]. Thus, it is fundamental to learn through educational courses and trainings about antisemitic representations,

---

[30] "Strategic Paper – Policy Recommendations to Combat Cyber Hate", INACH, Tamas Berecz and Charlotte Devinat, 2017. Available at: http://test.inachbase.net/wp-content/uploads/Policy_Recommendations_to_Combat_Cyber_Hate.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

extremist speech and anti-democratic calls, and how to debunk conspiracy theories: to be able to identify these elements thanks to civil society work as well as to media and information literacy. Another key-element is also to learn about antisemitism in the framework of – online – hate speech since it is also associated to other forms of racism such as anti-Muslim hatred or Afrophobia. Furthermore, antisemitism is "always a prelude to general violence" according to the French Rabi Delphine Horvilleur[31]. Addressing antisemitism may be more efficient by recognizing and deconstructing it in the whole realm of global hate speech.

---

[31] "'Antisemitism is always a prelude to general violence French' rabbi says", France 24, Eve Irvine, February 2019. Available at: https://www.france24.com/en/20190213-perspective-delphine-horvilleur-france-rabbi-rise-anti-semitism-acts-prelude-violence (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Conclusion

There is no question than antisemitism is on rising today. The global context of multidimensional crisis contributes to aggravate even more the situation. The resurgence of antisemitism appears online and in the everyday life including in European countries, in the Western, Central and Eastern parts of the continent.

It appears that antisemitic acts – online and offline – are directly connected and result in a potent and dangerous surge of hatred. Therefore, it is crucial to seek and to focus on antisemitic words, speech and theories disseminated mainly on the online sphere. Antisemitic hate speech online is the reflection of centuries of stereotypes, stigmatisation, discrimination, and violence.

How difficult it is to estimate the amount of antisemitic content, social media, blogs, and platforms have widely contributed to disseminate and foster violent and dangerous antisemitic myths, conspiracy theories and speech. Almost all major events may potentially lead to antisemitic content online. The actual context of the Covid-19 pandemic offers many elements corroborating this consideration. Therefore, the multifaced aspect of online antisemitism needs to be identified, analysed, and explained to public audience to tackle it efficiently. All these manifestations need to be understood as interconnected and prevalent on a transnational level.

For these reasons, it is crucial to address antisemitism through a common strategy based on education and transnational rules and definition. Civil society has been in the forefront of reporting and tackling online antisemitic content in cooperation with mainstream platforms as well as with national and European authorities. Establishing a new transnational legislation dealing with antisemitism is fundamental to apply and enforce existing legislation against hate speech. Platforms need also to increase their efforts to remove illegal content notified to them in a timely manner and engage in direct and continuous communication with all relevant stakeholders.

Another key-element for tackling antisemitism is to make available easily accessible high-quality educational materials and tools to relevant stakeholders such as young people but also teachers, educators and people directly concerned by addressing online and offline hate speech and hate crimes.

Resources

Anti-Defamation League "Quantifying hate: A year of anti-Semitism on Twitter", 2018. Available at: https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/quantifying-hate-a-year-of-anti-semitism-on-twitter (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Anti-Defamation League, ADL Global 100: An index of anti-Semitism, Global Survey 2019. Available at: https://global100.adl.org/about/2019 (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Antisemitism Policy Trust, "Hidden hate: What Google searches tell us about antisemitism today", 2020. Available at: https://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/APT-Google-Report- 2019.1547210385.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Bergmann Werner, Jewish Museum Berlin, "Antisemitism in Europe today: the phenomena, the conflict", 2013. Available at: https://www.jmberlin.de/sites/default/files/antisemitism-in-europe-today_1-bergmann.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Community Security Trust, "Hate fuel: the hidden online world fuelling far right terror", June 2020. Available at: https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2020/06/11/hate-fuel-the-hidden-online-world-fuelling-far-right-terror (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Cornwell University, Savvas Zannettou, Joel Finkelstein, Barry Bradlyn, Jeremy Blackburn, "A quantitative approach to understanding online antisemitism", November 2019. Available at: https://arxiv.org/abs/1809.01644 (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Council of Europe, ECRI, "ECRI annual report: Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance are on the rise in Europe", 2020. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/ecri-annual-report-racism-racial-discrimination-xenophobia-anti-semitism-and-intolerance-are-on-the-rise-in-europe (last accessed 31.08.2020)

European Commission, Eurobarometer survey on antisemitism in Europe, 2019. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_19_542 (last accessed 31.08.2020)

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), "Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States: experiences and perceptions of antisemitism", July 2019. Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2019/fras-antisemitism-survey-dataset-now-available (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Frantz Fanon Frantz Fanon, "Black sins, White Masks" (1952)

Get the trolls out! Media Diversity Institute, "QANON and the growing conspiracy theory trend on social media", June 2020. Available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ee500d316a2470c370596d3/t/5f1813b4 c9031f13d52ad25f/1595413465022/QAnon+Report.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Horvilleur Delphine, « Réflexion sur la question antisémite », Grasset, (2019)

International Network Against Cyber-Hate (INACH , "Manifestations of online hate speech", INACH, 2016. Available at: http://www.inach.net/wp-content/uploads/Manifestations_of_online_hate_speech-short-final.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

International Network Against Cyber-Hate (INACH), Tamas Berecz and Charlotte Devinat, "Strategic Paper – Policy Recommendations to Combat Cyber Hate"2017. Available at: http://test.inachbase.net/wp-content/uploads/Policy_Recommendations_to_Combat_Cyber_Hate.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Institute for Strategic Dialogue, Cooper Gatewood, Cécile Guérin, Jonathan Birwell, Iris Boyer and Zoé Fourel, "Cartographie de la haine en ligne », 2019. Available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Cartographie-de-la-Haine-en-Ligne-eng.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Online Hate Prevention Institute, "Measuring the hate: the state of antisemitism in social media", Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism, Online Hate Prevention Institute, 2016. Available at: https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/AntiSemitism/Documents/Measuring-the-Hate.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)

Schwarz-Friesel Monika, German Research Foundation, "Antisemitism as a cultural constant and collective emotional value in the digital age" – A long-term study", 2018. Available at:
 https://www.research-in-germany.org/news/2018/8/2018-08-03_Antisemitism_2.0__Antisemitism_on_the_internet_has_increased_significantl y#0 and https://www.linguistik.tu-berlin.de/menue/antisemitismus_2_0/ (last accessed 31.08.2020)

UNESCO, "addressing anti-Semitism through education: guidelines for policymakers", 2018. Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000263702 (last accessed 31.08.2020)

World Jewish Congress in partnership with Vigo Social Intelligence,
 "The rise of antisemitism on social media", 2016. Available at:
http://www.crif.org/sites/default/fichiers/images/documents/antisemitismreport.pdf (last accessed 31.08.2020)