



# Approaches to addressing antisemitism in European P/CVE

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**RAN**   
Practitioners

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## Acronyms

BMAFJ	Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Family and Youth
CCLJ	Centre Communautaire Laïc Juif
CEJI	A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
CVE	Countering violent extremism
Dembra	Democratic Preparedness against Racism, Antisemitism and Undemocratic Attitudes
EMJD	European Muslim Jewish Dialogue
EU	European Union
FC	Football Club
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
IHRA	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
LICRA	French International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism
NWO	New World Order
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PVE	Preventing violent extremism
RAN	Radicalisation Awareness Network
RWE	Right-wing extremism
SAIRO	Summary analyse of indicators inmate´s radicalization
TAHCLE	Trainings Against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VBRG	Association of Counseling Centers for Victims of Right-wing, Racist and Antisemitic Violence in German
VIE	Violent Islamist extremism
VLWAE	Violent left-wing and anarchist extremism
VRWE	Violent right-wing extremism
WJC	World Jewish Congress
ZOG	Zionist Occupation Government

# 1. Introduction and background: Antisemitism in the European Union

## The place of antisemitism in P/CVE work within the EU

In October 2021, the European Union (EU) published the *EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030)*, a first-of-its-kind strategy based on three pillars: 1) preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism; 2) protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU; and 3) education, research and Holocaust remembrance. It is a comprehensive strategy, spanning education, culture and sport while providing anti-discrimination training for law enforcement personnel, protecting places of worship, and tackling antisemitic disinformation, hate speech and hate crime (online and offline). The emphasis is on using EU-funded targeted actions to achieve transnational solutions for antisemitism in contemporary Europe.<sup>1</sup> Another salient issue in the EU is the combating of all kinds of radicalisation by initiating and supporting programmes for P/CVE by all means.<sup>2</sup>

Although antisemitism and violent extremism are closely linked on many levels, preventive and countering efforts against violent extremism are not well coordinated or integrated with the corresponding efforts against antisemitism; these efforts tend to develop in parallel rather than in synergy. The study addresses this gap by examining to what extent P/CVE programmes take into account and concentrate on antisemitism.

The paper begins by briefly summarising the problem antisemitism poses within the EU, and why it presents a challenge for P/CVE programmes. This is followed by an overview and categorisation of various P/CVE approaches and programmes that either primarily address antisemitism or form part of larger P/CVE programmes with a focus on antisemitism. The study aims at identifying gaps in existing initiatives, and discusses the part potentially played by a lack of diverse approaches in prevention levels or by the geographical or other type of disproportionate distribution of these programmes among EU Member States. Based on this information and providing concrete policy recommendations, the paper defines why and how P/CVE programmes should address the issue of antisemitism more systematically.

## Definition of antisemitism and prevalence in the EU

Antisemitism is defined as a “certain perception of Jews which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews”.<sup>3</sup> It can have both “rhetorical and physical manifestations directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”.<sup>4</sup> Antisemitic attitudes are studied in surveys, while antisemitic violent incidents are collated in reports covering recorded antisemitic acts. Finally, antisemitism at the discursive level is mostly analysed by experts and the media.<sup>5</sup>

According to a representative survey conducted in 16 EU countries from 2019 to 2020, the acceptance of certain antisemitic attitudes increased at the societal level, and 20 % of respondents held traditional antisemitic views.<sup>6</sup> There is, however, a considerable difference in the degree of antisemitism across individual Member States: from Greece (48 %) and Hungary (42 %) being the most antisemitic countries, to Sweden (6 %) and the Netherlands (3 %) having the least antisemitic views. Meanwhile, the results of a recent survey in Germany show that 20 % of adults hold antisemitic attitudes, but this increases to 33 % in young people aged 18 to 29.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See European Commission (2021).

<sup>2</sup> See Stephens (2021). As part of these efforts, the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) was founded in 2011. The revised European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy put a special emphasis on “disengagement and exit strategies” in 2014 (Council of the European Union, 2014). In the same year, a 10-point-plan was introduced on combating extremism and terrorism in the EU (European Commission, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, (IHRA), The working definition of antisemitism, 2015., p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, (IHRA), The working definition of antisemitism, 2015., p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Although many cases of antisemitism in public life fall under the category of hate speech, and therefore of antisemitic violent acts, the former is not always penalised by law but certainly contributes to the normalisation of antisemitic views in society (Félix, 2021).

<sup>6</sup> See Kovács and Fischer (2021).

<sup>7</sup> See World Jewish Congress (2022).

Since the Covid-19 pandemic started in 2019, the number of antisemitic incidents (including attacks against Jewish people and sites) doubled in some countries, reaching a record high compared to recent years.<sup>8</sup> For example, the number of physical violence acts increased by more than a third from 2020 to 2021 in France, while the total number of incidents increased by 29 % in Germany in the same period.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, due to the underreporting of antisemitic incidents, these numbers may be underestimated.<sup>10</sup>

In 2018, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) ran a survey across 12 EU Member States: approximately 16 000 respondents who identify as Jewish were asked about their experience as regards antisemitism in the EU. According to the results, antisemitism is most prevalent on social media (89 %), in public spaces (73 %) and in the media (71 %). In addition, 70 % of respondents face antisemitism in political life.

**Figure 1: Assessment of manifestations of antisemitism against Jewish community as a problem, by EU Member State (%)**

	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	HU	IT	NL	PL	SE	UK	12 country average
Antisemitism on the internet, including social media	85	92	89	71	86	95	81	90	80	92	81	84	89
Expressions of hostility towards Jews in the street or other public places	46	81	80	47	52	91	46	51	71	37	69	52	73
Antisemitism in the media	51	84	68	51	85	80	69	73	63	73	63	61	71
Antisemitism in political life	63	69	61	37	66	67	74	55	49	77	58	84	70
Vandalism of Jewish buildings or institutions	31	68	61	45	45	88	35	48	57	39	60	45	66
Antisemitic graffiti	36	64	53	28	54	83	58	66	38	71	48	45	64
Desecration of Jewish cemeteries	40	53	61	20	31	83	53	51	37	51	48	45	63

Notes: <sup>a</sup> Out of all respondents (n=16,395); country results are unweighted, 12 country average is weighted.  
<sup>b</sup> Question: *Boya. To what extent do you think the following are a problem in [COUNTRY] (Items as listed in the table)?*  
<sup>c</sup> Answers in the table are a sum of answer categories 'a very big problem' and 'a fairly big problem'.  
<sup>d</sup> The items are listed in descending order according to the average of the 12 countries.  
<sup>e</sup> For each country, the three most serious manifestations of antisemitism – as assessed by the respondents – are highlighted in the table.

Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism: Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, 2018*, p. 22.

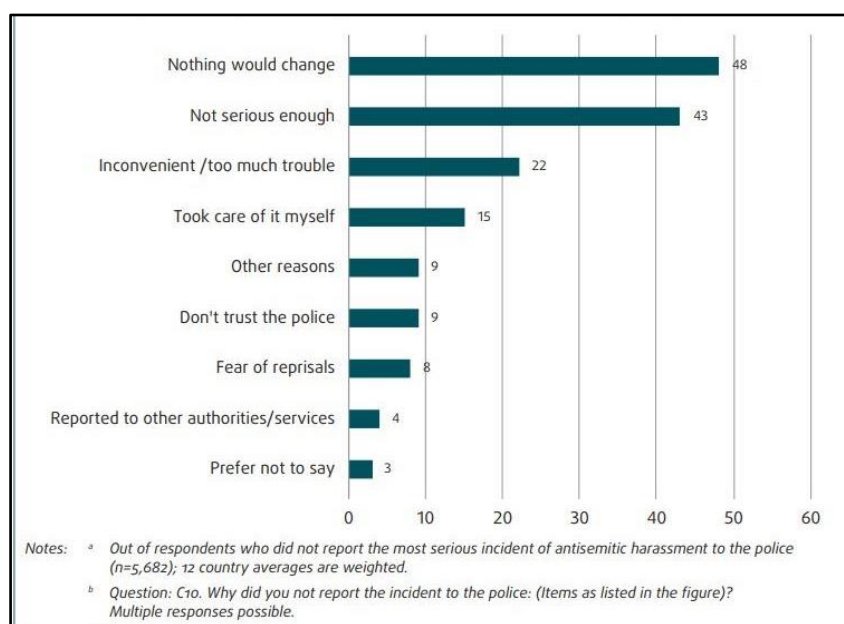
More than one quarter of the respondents experienced harassment of an antisemitic nature personally, while 20 % of them know a family member who has experienced such an attack. According to the results, 8 in 10 victims of antisemitic violence have not reported the incident to the police or other services because they believe that reporting would not make a difference (48 %), because they do not think that the incident was serious enough (43 %) or because they think that reporting would be too complicated.

<sup>8</sup> See Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2022); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2020); *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the expert workshops on the prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred* (Appendix, para. 36) <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/22/17/Add.4>; *Report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief* (Annex II) <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/40/58>.

<sup>9</sup> See Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry (2021).

<sup>10</sup> See United Nations (2019).

**Figure 2: Reasons for not reporting the most serious incident of antisemitic harassment in the past five years to the police, average of the 12 EU Member States surveyed (%)**



Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism: Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, 2018*, p. 57.

Finally, participants described the world view of those from whom they received most antisemitic insults: 30 % faced antisemitism from someone holding an “extremist Muslim” view, 21 % from someone with a left-wing political view and 13 % from someone with a right-wing political view.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 3: Perceptions of the perpetrator(s) in the most serious antisemitic incident of harassment in the 5 years before the survey, by EU Member State (%)**

	AT	BE	DE	DK	ES	FR	HU	IT	NL	PL	SE	UK	12 country average
Someone else I can not describe	23	38	22	22	22	40	30	11	20	30	16	29	31
Someone with a Muslim extremist view	35	34	41	34	17	33	(2)	20	35	(2)	40	22	30
Someone with a left-wing political view	14	19	16	27	34	21	(3)	38	18	(6)	27	25	21
Work or school/college colleague	17	11	20	18	24	16	15	20	19	19	20	11	16
Teenager or group of teenagers	12	24	19	16	9	14	(6)	13	18	11	16	15	15
An acquaintance or friend	19	13	19	13	28	14	18	25	16	14	16	12	15
Someone with a right-wing political view	25	7	20	10	11	7	46	28	6	53	18	11	13
Someone else I can describe	(8)	13	12	21	15	12	17	21	19	18	12	15	13
Customer or client from work	(4)	7	3	(4)	(5)	6	(3)	(4)	7	(6)	5	4	5
Someone with a Christian extremist view	(6)	(4)	5	(1)	(7)	4	18	12	5	34	(3)	3	5

Notes: <sup>a</sup> Out of respondents who experienced some form of antisemitic harassment in the past five years (n=6,486); 12 country average is weighted.  
<sup>b</sup> Question: Co6. Who did this to you? (Items as listed in the figure.) Multiple responses possible.  
<sup>c</sup> Results based on a small number of responses are statistically less reliable. Thus, results based on 20 to 49 unweighted observations in a group total or based on cells with fewer than 20 unweighted observations are noted in parentheses. Results based on fewer than 20 unweighted observations in a group total are not published.

Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism: Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU, 2018*, p. 54.

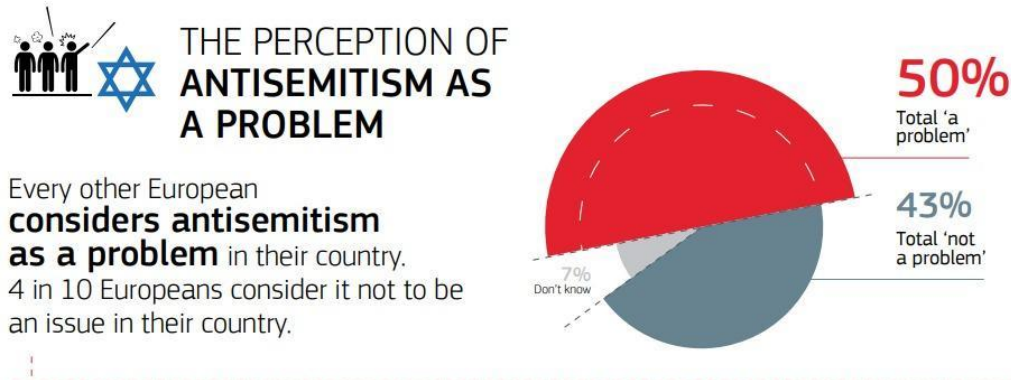
In the same year, 2018, the European Commission’s Special Eurobarometer asked Europeans about their perceptions of antisemitism in their home countries: 50 % of those questioned found antisemitism to be a

<sup>11</sup> See European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2018).



problem, while 36 % said that antisemitism had increased in their country. This is in sharp contrast to the results of the previously presented FRA report in which 9 of 10 Jewish-identifying people believed that antisemitism had increased in the past 5 years.<sup>12</sup> The inappropriate management of the issue is a serious concern.

**Figure 4: Perceptions of antisemitism, December 2018**



Source: European Commission, *Perceptions of antisemitism (Infographics)*, 2019a, p. 1. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/api/deliverable/download/file?deliverableId=67869>

## Antisemitism: Emerging trends and challenges

Throughout history, antisemitism has always been “reinventing itself in new guises”.<sup>13</sup> Recently, antisemitism has increased in the discursive level<sup>14</sup> as well, especially in the form of antisemitic conspiracy myths.<sup>15</sup> The internet and social media platforms in particular were instrumental in disseminating (but also in contesting) the antisemitic narratives intentionally spread by extremist actors.<sup>16</sup> Pandemic-related antisemitic conspiracy theories gained popularity among anti-vax groups who reanimated the traditional antisemitic trope of Jewish people trying to achieve world dominance by creating, spreading or benefiting from a deadly virus.<sup>17</sup>

The question of victimhood was pervasive in anti-vax groups, and was expressed both online and at large demonstrations in almost all European capitals. These groups compared their destiny to the victims of the Holocaust, using a problematic type of analogy known as Holocaust relativisation.<sup>18</sup>

As the data shows, antisemitism is widespread in Europe, in all the forms discussed above. While it is tempting to argue that there is a positive correlation between these manifestations, data suggests the contrary: increased presence of antisemitic incidents does not necessarily imply an increase in antisemitic attitudes in society. Often there are inner contradictions between “ideology” and “practice”.<sup>19</sup> In addition, there is evidence that the level of antisemitism does not have a direct correlation with the size of the Jewish community in a given society.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See European Commission (2019b).

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization & Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2018, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> There are also examples of elected politicians using these narratives. For example, during the latest Polish elections, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, leader of the ruling Law and Justice party, accused his opponent Rafal Trzaskowski of “sell[ing] out” Poland and taking money from Polish families to pay “Jewish interests” (Srulovitch, 2020). Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom, the Labour Party’s antisemitic scandal under Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership has raised concerns among British Jews and wider society who have been supporters of the Party for decades (see Anti-Defamation League (2022)). In 2011, Corbyn appeared on an Iranian propaganda TV channel and accused the BBC of having “a bias towards saying that Israel is a democracy in the Middle East, Israel has a right to exist, Israel has its security concerns”. (Staff, 2018).

<sup>15</sup> See Community Security Trust (2022).

<sup>16</sup> See Community Security Trust (2020).

<sup>17</sup> See Anti-Defamation League (2020).

<sup>18</sup> See Media Diversity Institute (2021).

<sup>19</sup> Although antisemitism often manifests as prejudice that singles out and discriminates against Jewish people, ideologically, antisemitic myths portray Jews as having been immoral, wealthy and powerful for centuries.

<sup>20</sup> See Barna (2017).



In order to tackle antisemitism effectively, these common misconceptions have to be taken into consideration. It must also be acknowledged that this problem is not confined to special subgroups of society. It has various manifestations: verbal, coded expression and behavioural and physical violence and actions “through discrimination, political mobilisation against Jews and collective or state violence”.<sup>21</sup> It does not affect only Jewish people, but damages the structure of society from a human rights, religious freedom and security perspective: it poses a challenge for society overall. Therefore, a “whole society” approach is needed to combat it, both from governments and other relevant actors.<sup>22</sup>

Antisemitism can serve as an entry point to involvement in extremist movements.<sup>23</sup> As noted by a P/CVE expert who responded to the questionnaire for this paper, antisemitic views are among the “risk factors” in some individual cases. This implies that for someone who already harbours antisemitic views, extremist organisations that propagate antisemitism could be a logical choice.<sup>24</sup> But antisemitism can also connect different extremist organisations at an ideological level, by presenting one common enemy: the Jewish people. If antisemitism remains unaddressed, it can also contribute to growing violent extremism.<sup>25</sup> As studies show, antisemitic narratives also form a basis for lone-actor terrorism in Europe.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, a special focus on antisemitism in the field of P/CVE is sorely needed.<sup>27</sup>

Another issue is the lack of knowledge and awareness of the problem among relevant actors in the field of P/CVE, which prevents them from taking action adequately and accurately. One view is that the challenges for P/CVE in tackling antisemitic extremism include a better understanding of the influence and origin of antisemitism, with well-defined concepts and a well-developed methodology as a prerequisite.<sup>28</sup> It is also argued that research is lagging compared to policy, resulting in excessive emphasis on the empirical aspect at the expense of the theory.<sup>29</sup> Another criticism is that the large variety of P/CVE programmes makes it difficult for researchers to compare results and efficacy.<sup>30</sup>

## 2. Antisemitism and extremism

Antisemitism, the “longest hatred”, can take on religious, ethnic, racial-biological and political forms in society.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, it is predominantly part of the ideology of different violent extremist groups. In P/CVE programmes, three main types of extremist groups can be distinguished: 1) autonomous groups (i.e. left-wing extremism, environmentalism and animal rights activism) or also called violent left-wing and anarchist extremism (VLWAE);<sup>32</sup> 2) extreme right or violent right-wing extremism (VRWE) and 3) violent Islamist extremism (VIE). There is no consensus on the definition of these different types of violent extremisms and so for the sake of clarity, this paper uses the following working definitions which indicate their connection to antisemitism.<sup>33</sup>

### Violent Left Wing and Anarchist Extremism (VLWAE)

Contemporary VLWAE is characterised by a politically motivated, anti-system and anti-institutional sentiment which uses protests as a tool to express its beliefs, and utilises violence to a lesser extent compared to the

<sup>21</sup> Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights & United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2018), p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> See United Nations (2019).

<sup>23</sup> See Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. (2020).

<sup>24</sup> See Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. (2020).

<sup>25</sup> See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2018).

<sup>26</sup> See Feldman (2013).

<sup>27</sup> See United Nations (2019).

<sup>28</sup> See Herschinger et al. (2020) and Marsden (2020).

<sup>29</sup> See Baaken et al. (2020).

<sup>30</sup> See Nehlsen et al. (2020).

<sup>31</sup> Wistrich, 1991, p., pp. 16-17

<sup>32</sup> See Pistone et al. (2019).

<sup>33</sup> See Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

other types of extremist groups. However, this does not mean that VLWAE groups' extremist views cannot lead to increased violence in the future.

The central message of this heterogeneous movement, which differs from country to country, is that any form of protest is a reaction to an “unjust social order”, whether socio-economic, political or environmental.<sup>34</sup> Anti-capitalist, anti-neoliberalist, anti-elite and anti-fascist views make up the core of the VLWAE belief system, which aims to intensify social and political tension in order to achieve a form of anarchy.<sup>35</sup>

Anti-capitalism and antisemitism have been intertwined in the idea that Jews profit most from capitalism, which therefore gives them social capital over the rest of society.<sup>36</sup> Antisemitism in VLWAE also features in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Radical left-wing groups are sympathetic to the struggle of the Palestinian people against Israel, due to the latter's greater economic, financial, military and lobby power.<sup>37</sup>

## Violent Right-Wing Extremism (VRWE)

VRWE in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is understood as a transnational non-hierarchically structured movement united by “an ideology of inequality<sup>38</sup>” with the aim to protect the “white race” from Jews, Muslims, immigrants, feminists and other groups, who according to the movement, are all engineering the “Great Replacement”.<sup>39</sup> According to right-wing extremists, the “white race” needs to be fought for with often violent means in order to save it from turning into a “brown race” as a result of an apparent ongoing genocide. The myth that the “white race” needs to be protected is being spread both online and offline at political, violent sport and music events. The goal of these events is often to raise money for their cause, recruit followers, exchange experiences and build connections. Members of this collective are linked by shared values and common perceived enemies, but often they start out as lone perpetrators, comradeships, angry citizens, hooligans or entire RWE parties.<sup>40</sup>

Researchers and practitioners have observed an increase in violent groups and related attacks since 2015. The movement is widespread from western to eastern Europe.<sup>41</sup> A recent concrete example of antisemitic incidents in Europe is the case of the neo-Nazi group, Ordine Ario Romano (Roman Aryan Order), which the police found to be disseminating Nazi propaganda and encouraging violent crimes.<sup>42</sup>

## Violent Islamist Extremism (VIE)

Politico-religious extremism is [a] “form of radicalization associated with a political interpretation of religion and the defence, by violent means, of a religious identity perceived to be under attack (via international conflicts, foreign policy, social debates, etc.). Any religion may spawn this type of violent radicalization”.<sup>43</sup> VIE is considered one of the most pressing cases of politico-religious extremism in Europe.

Antisemitism is used by Islamist terrorist organisations to recruit followers from a minority of the Muslim community. Since the early 2000s, antisemitism – and more specifically, hatred related to the existence of the State of Israel – has led to violent and non-violent attacks on Jews worldwide. Modern Islamist extremism borrows many of the same tropes used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by Nazism as well as religious texts such as the Qur'an in an inappropriate way to justify such hate.<sup>44</sup>

The wave of terrorist attacks in western European countries has also forced much of the Jewish community to rethink their place in current European societies.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, many of the terrorist attacks carried out

<sup>34</sup> See Lenos and Wouterse (2020), and Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

<sup>35</sup> See Lenos and Wouterse (2020), and Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

<sup>36</sup> See Bechter (2013).

<sup>37</sup> See Stoetzler (2019).

<sup>38</sup> See Kiess & Decker, 2016, p. 11-29.

<sup>39</sup> See Davey & Ebner, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Counter Extremism Project, 2020, p. 7-8.

<sup>41</sup> See Counter Extremism Project (2020).

<sup>42</sup> See European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (2022).

<sup>43</sup> Centre for the Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence, Types of radicalization. Politico-religious extremism. n.d., n.p.

<sup>44</sup> See Silva (2017).

<sup>45</sup> See DellaPergola (2015).

in western Europe in the 2010s were not connected to European Jews by chance, but were planned with intent to threaten and attack places with close links to Judaism and Israel.<sup>46</sup>

In general, the different extremisms have very different characteristics. In many aspects, however, antisemitism, also known as the “hatred of Jews”, is connected ideologically to all of them, as well as being a “long-standing shibboleth” of lone-actor terrorism in Europe.<sup>47</sup> Some members of these extremist groups (RWE, VLWAE and VIE) argue that antisemitism is a complicated issue which should not be overemphasised or overly discussed. Their reasoning is that Europeans have already diminished antisemitism in society and faced the consequences of believing in antisemitic ideologies.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, extremists (particularly adherents of VLWAE) often deny the existence of antisemitism among themselves, because left-wing groups are commonly believed to be intrinsically anti-racist.

Similarly, VIE rejects the accusation of antisemitism on the basis that the Muslim community is also targeted by extremists and is therefore itself a victim of hate, and they perceive Jews to be the cause of their economic difficulties. These groups instead blame Jews for fabricating the claim that antisemitism is prevalent.<sup>49</sup> As a result, antisemitism continues to exist among extremist groups, because it is reinforced by antisemitic conspiratorial thinking about powerful Jews. However, another view is that these types of narratives essentially serve as “a refusal to engage critically with the legacies of European, left” and Islamist extremist antisemitism.<sup>50</sup> The antisemitic conspiracy myths shared by all three groups are centralised around the idea that there is a “global elite, often perceived to be led by Jews”<sup>51</sup> which has a malevolent control over the world.<sup>52</sup>

The blood libels of the Middle Ages were based on another notable antisemitic conspiracy myth, according to which Jewish people murdered Christian children for their blood for use in religious rituals.<sup>53</sup> Another milestone in the development of these myths is the antisemitic fabrication dating back to the early 20th century, known as “The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion”. It laid the foundations for the tropes of the Jewish conspiracy of world domination and the killing of non-Jewish people, and later inspired both the historical predecessors of VRWE and Islamist extremists, namely Nazism and the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>54</sup> Both ideologies call for a Jewish genocide, justified by the claim that either the Jewish people or those defined as the group of “us” will be annihilated (e.g. Aryans or Muslims).

Current manifestations of all the extremist groups discussed here promote the enduring conspiracy myth about the Jewish or Zionist conspiracy called the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG) or the New World Order (NWO).<sup>55</sup> This antisemitic fabrication became even more evident during the pandemic as the “Covid conspiracy movement” reached different extremist segments of society.<sup>56</sup>

The three extremist groups share another ideological attribute: they invert the role of victims and perpetrators to justify their conspiratory antisemitic belief system.<sup>57</sup> Islamist extremists believe that Jews and Christians alike are seeking to abolish Islam.<sup>58</sup> VLWAE groups focus on the “global elites” that are believed to plot against the rest of society and seek world domination in the form of a “New World Order”,<sup>59</sup> similarly to VRWE’s “Great Replacement” theory. Compared to VRWE and Islamist extremism, antisemitic conspiracy

<sup>46</sup> See Elman and Grimm (2016). An example of such violent antisemitic attacks is the shooting at a kosher supermarket in Paris in 2015, which left four Jewish hostages dead. The terrorist’s “justification” for the attack was: “The Jews! Because of their oppression, mainly of Islamic State, but also anywhere else. It is for all areas where Muslims are being oppressed. Which includes Palestine!” (FOCUS online, 2015).

<sup>47</sup> See Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. (2020), p.4.

<sup>48</sup> See Stoegner (2016).

<sup>49</sup> See Rensmann (2020).

<sup>50</sup> “To deny the issue of antisemitism in Europe on the grounds that Europe has learned the lesson from the Holocaust, or to deny the issue of antisemitism on the left on the grounds that the left is inherently anti-racist, or to deny the issue of antisemitism within radical Islam on the grounds that Muslims are oppressed within Europe and have a history of tolerance, is in every case a kind of closure, a refusal to engage critically with the legacies of European, left and Muslim antisemitism.” Fine, 2009, p. 477.

<sup>51</sup> See European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (2020), p. 95.

<sup>52</sup> See Feldman (2013).

<sup>53</sup> See Community Security Trust (2022).

<sup>54</sup> See Spoerl (2020).

<sup>55</sup> See Spoerl (2020) and Counter Extremism Project (2020).

<sup>56</sup> Community Security Trust, 2022, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> See Farinelli (2021).

<sup>58</sup> See Farinelli (2021).

<sup>59</sup> Bartlett and Miller, 2010, p. 3

theories in VLWAE do not play an intrinsic part in the ideology. Instead, far-left supporters use antisemitism to demonstrate the struggle experienced by some compared to the few.<sup>60</sup> There are few examples of VLWAE violence being motivated by antisemitism although some American university campuses have seen increasing antisemitic language being used, which often singles out Jews and could result in violent attacks.<sup>61</sup> Violent left-wing and anarchist extremist groups have a long tradition of antisemitism in the form of propaganda and activism which dates back to the Stalin-led Soviet Union.<sup>62</sup> Its current adoption by Western activists draws chiefly from the antisemitic tropes about Jewish bankers who are believed to be influencing the economic system in a way that targets disadvantaged groups.<sup>63</sup>

Apart from the ideological basis, these three violent extremist groups also share common elements in their recruitment strategies. Two crucial elements of their recruitment process are online recruitment and active engagement in various sports, especially football and martial arts.<sup>64</sup> This is discussed further in the recommendations section of this paper.

Israel-related antisemitism is also a common denominator of VLWAE, VRWE and Islamist extremism; however, the three groups justify their reasoning differently. Left-wing extremists take issue with Israel's perceived "imperialist" stance and hence deny the existence of the State of Israel. Meanwhile, Islamist extremists argue that Israel is the enemy of the entire "Muslim world".<sup>65</sup> Finally, right-wing extremists often do not believe that Jews are loyal to the country they live in and claim that they have a stronger allegiance to Israel.

A comparison of the P/CVE programmes addressing the three extremist groups shows that measures targeting VIE are the most well developed. Practitioners also have professional toolkits against VRWE. However, there is much less knowledge on contemporary violent left-wing extremism, both in terms of concrete figures and in terms of the drivers of left-wing radicalisation in the EU Member States.<sup>66</sup> Also, in comparison with the right-wing extremist scene, whose transnational profile is quite well studied and mapped out, the international connections of VLWAE groups are less known.<sup>67</sup> Due to this and also because the core ideology of VLWAE groups is viewed as more aligned with that of wider society than that of the other two, P/CVE practitioners consider the latter a lesser threat.<sup>68</sup>

### 3. Addressing antisemitism in P/CVE: Stock-taking

#### Definition of P/CVE work and research methodology

While certain measures aim to stop violent groups from committing terrorist attacks, measures for preventing violent extremism (PVE) and countering violent extremism (CVE) seek to prevent the radicalisation of individuals and groups.<sup>69</sup> Although there is no consensus among experts on a single definition and these terms are often used interchangeably, PVE may be considered to be more focused on the very foundation of prevention in an interdisciplinary sense.<sup>70</sup> PVE works with actors such as social workers and teachers for the prevention of radicalisation. CVE, on the other hand, refers to measures for deterring those at risk of

<sup>60</sup> See Arnold (2019).

<sup>61</sup> See the Counter Extremism Project (2020) and Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. (2020).

<sup>62</sup> See Hirsch (2017).

<sup>63</sup> See Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. (2020).

<sup>64</sup> See Handle and Scheuble (2021).

<sup>65</sup> Herschinger et al., 2020, p. 11.

<sup>66</sup> See Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

<sup>67</sup> See Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

<sup>68</sup> See Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

<sup>69</sup> These types of programmes started to be developed in some countries as early as the 1980s and 1990s. The Syrian Civil War that started in 2011 boost the creation of these programmes further. See Köhler (2020) and Pistone et al. (2019).

<sup>70</sup> See Stephens (2021).

being radicalised.<sup>71</sup> There is also an intent to use them under the umbrella of P/CVE.<sup>72</sup> This paper employs the latter notion.

Radicalisation is understood by experts as a process of individuals or groups becoming more engaged in conflict or “adopting more radical or extreme positions”, or in other words, “extremist political, social, or religious ideas and aspirations which then serve to reject diversity, tolerance and freedom of choice and legitimise breaking the rule of law and using violence towards property and people”.<sup>73</sup> Violent radicalisation is not only the engagement in violence per se, but also “a willingness to directly support” violent acts.<sup>74</sup>

The reasons behind radicalisation are complex, and include individual and group-level factors as well as factors that lead to engagement in violent extremism. Although radicalisation is a non-linear and dynamic process,<sup>75</sup> different phases can be distinguished.<sup>76</sup> Prevention in P/CVE programmes is carried out in a tripartite division of primary, secondary and tertiary levels.<sup>77</sup> While primary prevention programmes focus mostly on developing democratic values among young people by applying a universalist approach without any specifications to certain extremist groups,<sup>78</sup> secondary programmes target those at risk or already somehow involved in the radicalisation process.<sup>79</sup> There are also programmes that combine the two. Finally, tertiary programmes focus on preventing the return of radicalisation in the long-term.<sup>80</sup>

As antisemitism is present in all three types of the above-mentioned violent extremism, whether in the ideology as an entry point of radicalisation or as a means for further radicalisation,<sup>81</sup> it is crucial to focus on it or incorporate some elements/modules related to it. Educational approaches to antisemitism are linked, among others, with education to prevent violent extremism.<sup>82</sup>

In this mapping, existing P/CVE programmes and projects that concentrate on antisemitism were examined. Projects were included where antisemitism is among the main goals or where some elements/modules addressed the issue in particular. Although there are many admirable initiatives in the EU that target antisemitism by fostering democratic values and diversity, the focus here is only on those including extremism prevention either in the programme/project itself or in the mission of the organisation.

To this end, apart from the desk research and the examination of bigger databases related to the field (Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism and Polarisation (BRAVE), Networks Overcoming Antisemitism (NOA) and the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) database), a P/CVE expert survey was carried out, in order to gather all relevant initiatives from within and outside the RAN expert pool.<sup>83</sup> This short introduction with some good examples is far from exhaustive and the categories are not mutually exclusive<sup>84</sup>; it explores how antisemitism can be targeted in different types of P/CVE initiatives. It is also important to keep contextual differences and the limitations of adopting good initiatives in mind, to avoid “one size fits all” approaches.<sup>85</sup>

The first and most significant finding of this research is that in most cases, initiatives against antisemitism and P/CVE measures are operated by different actors in parallel but without cooperation.<sup>86</sup> As was pointed

<sup>71</sup> See Davies (2018).

<sup>72</sup> See Stephens (2021).

<sup>73</sup> Radicalisation Awareness Network, 2017, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2010, p. 798.

<sup>75</sup> See Jensen et al. (2018) and Köhler (2020).

<sup>76</sup> Even though from a practitioner’s point of view, it does not necessarily make sense to have clear distinctions between different concepts and terms of prevention and intervention strategies, as academics do. See Köhler (2020).

<sup>77</sup> See Caplan (1964).

<sup>78</sup> See Farinelli and Marinone (2021).

<sup>79</sup> See Nordbruch (2016).

<sup>80</sup> See Köhler (2020).

<sup>81</sup> See Meleagrou-Hitchens et al. (2020).

<sup>82</sup> See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2018).

<sup>83</sup> We would like to thank everyone for their contribution to the questionnaire once again.

<sup>84</sup> One of the reasons for this is the lack of transparent communication about the projects, and its evaluation by the organisation carrying out the P/CVE work. It is a problem that is discussed in several papers on the issue. See, for instance, Köhler (2020).

<sup>85</sup> See Köhler (2020).

<sup>86</sup> Participants in our expert survey also highlighted this problem: “Antisemitism is addressed separately from P/CVE”; “The two issues are kept separate and P/CVE focuses very much on jihadism”; “Countering anti-Semitism in the Czech Republic is mostly focused on public education and repression, the work with anti-Semitic extremists is very rare”.



out by one p/CVE expert who completed the survey, initiatives against antisemitism are often led by Jewish organisations and by the Jewish community itself.<sup>87</sup> Meanwhile, P/CVE programmes often do not differentiate between different kinds of hate groups, but rather try to combat all kinds of extremism.

## Antisemitism as a risk factor

Among the P/CVE projects targeting antisemitism to some extent, one type handles antisemitism as an ideological risk factor or as a sign of radicalisation on all three prevention levels. As one of the P/CVE experts from Denmark phrased it in the questionnaire, they are dealing with “antisemitic views as a risk factor in individual cases as one among other risk factors and also try to challenge antisemitic views in prevention and rehabilitation cases”, but there is no specific focus on antisemitism in their activities. In line with the theory, these initiatives consider antisemitism an entry point or a means for further radicalisation.<sup>88</sup>

Another example of antisemitism being viewed as a risk factor is when it is considered alongside another particular aspect, like the adoption of a gender approach in P/CVE work. For example, the Expert Center on Gender and Right-Wing Extremism of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation in Germany recognised the problem of antisemitic, racist and radical attitudes of girls and women in German society.<sup>89</sup> Today the Gender, GMF and Right-Wing Extremism department of the Foundation counters antisemitism together with racism and anti-feminism by providing analyses and background information.<sup>90</sup>

## Antisemitism in educational preventive projects for students

Another subcategory of initiatives with a focus on targeting antisemitism is the combination of educative and preventive work. For example, the Democratic Preparedness against Racism, Antisemitism and Undemocratic Attitudes (Dembra) programme in Norway aims to train schools on the prevention of racism, group-based hostility and antidemocratic attitudes.<sup>91</sup> The participating schools receive training on all existing measures to prevent racism, antisemitism and antidemocratic attitudes in their institutions.

Similarly, the Austrian workshops Against Democracy work with students on extremism, populism and conspiracy narratives and the anti-democratic potential of these phenomena. It explains why people may find these ideologies attractive and the dangers such ideologies pose to societies. It also discusses the active role students can adopt in everyday life against these ideologies.<sup>92</sup>

## Training for different professionals

Most existing projects seek to help teachers with their work by sharing updated knowledge on antisemitism. However, few initiatives provide practical knowledge on how to counter concrete signs of radicalisation connected to antisemitism. The Teaching Aid series of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) reflects on different antisemitic attitudes, spanning “unconscious bias” and antisemitic views as the source of violent attacks.<sup>93</sup> The series offers recommendations based on concrete examples of the occurrence of antisemitism in a school environment. Another initiative, the Anti-Semitism- and Racism-Critical Youth Work project of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, focuses on professionals in the field of youth work.<sup>94</sup> It aims to share updated knowledge on the manifestations of antisemitism as well as on how to

<sup>87</sup> “Sadly, mostly only Jewish associations tackle the problem of antisemitism in Belgium. In Brussels, the Jewish Museum, the CEJI and the CCLJ have programmes on the subject addressed to schools and to the civil society in general.”

<sup>88</sup> Quote from a RAN expert who completed the questionnaire.

<sup>89</sup> See Expert Center on Gender and Right-wing Extremism at the RAN Collection of inspiring practices (Radicalisation Awareness Network (n.d.)).

<sup>90</sup> See Amadeu Antonio Foundation (n.d.).

<sup>91</sup> See Demokratisk beredskap mot rasisme og antisemittisme (n.d.).

<sup>92</sup> See Against Democracy – more information is available at

<https://extremismuspraevention.oead.at/ep/angebote?angebot=qsveiaWpWLDRs1zoKJEy&q%5Baltersstufe%5D=&q%5Bbundesland%5D=&q%5Borganisation%5D=&q%5Bschlagworte%5D%5B%5D=Antisemitismus>.

<sup>93</sup> See Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2022a and 2022b).

<sup>94</sup> More information on the Anti-Semitism- and Racism-critical Youth Work project is available at <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/en/for-anti-semitism-and-racism-critical-youth-work-26667/>.

manage different types of racism in order to confront antisemitism more effectively in youth work. The multiregional pilot project includes the advising, coaching and training of professionals.

Another subcategory of P/CVE-related projects of this type are the training sessions for experts who could utilise knowledge on antisemitism in their work against radicalisation if they were better equipped. The ODIHR runs the programme Trainings Against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) that aims to teach “police skills in identifying, understanding, and responding to hate crimes, and includes anti-Semitic bias indicators. It improves police officers’ skills in preventing and responding to hate crimes, interacting with targeted communities, and building public support, confidence, and co-operation”.<sup>95</sup>

Similarly, the French International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (LICRA) in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers training for police students on issues related to racism, antisemitism and discrimination.<sup>96</sup> The Polish Institute of Social Safety carries out locally focused educational work for different stakeholders like police, schools and local governments.<sup>97</sup> In Germany, the diversified structure of the local Mobile Beratungsteams gegen Rechtsextremismus (Mobile Counselling Team against Right-wing Extremism) provides information and support to organisations and other actors (like administrations and businesses) on how to react to racist acts including antisemitism.<sup>98</sup>

## Projects with a focus on sport activities

A relatively large number of projects are linked to sport activities, either as one element of a bigger project or one activity that focuses solely on sport. One good example is the work of Chelsea Football Club.<sup>99</sup> In 2018, the Club initiated a long-term project to raise awareness about antisemitism in football as well as to educate its players, staff, fans and the wider audience. In another major step, the Club adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.

Another football-related example is the project Changing the Chants. The international cooperation between Borussia Dortmund, Feyenoord Rotterdam, Fare Network and the Anne Frank House aims to “deepen the understanding of approaches that football clubs can use to educate fans on anti-Semitic behaviour in the football stands”. The project also wishes to offer transferable knowledge to other football clubs, with concrete examples of good practices of educational programmes against antisemitism in the football scene. This is a “direct way” to address antisemitism among those at risk of radicalisation.

The other practice is the FULL CONTACT - Democracy and Martial Arts project in Germany, which raises awareness about right-wing extremism in general and focuses on antisemitism by monitoring antisemitic incidents in combat sports, and carrying out research on how to intervene and prevent such incidents as part of group-focused enmity.<sup>100</sup> The project organised a 2-day workshop for those active in the field of martial arts. At the event, the question of diversity and anti-discrimination was discussed, including a primary focus on antisemitism.<sup>101</sup> By partnering the event with the World Jewish Congress, the project ensured the Jewish community’s perspective was incorporated.

A hat trick for inclusion is a project that aims to counter hate speech (which it defines as all kinds of intolerance) in European countries.<sup>102</sup> Learning about hate speech, including antisemitism, can form part of sport activities by creating, testing and experimenting with an educational sport programme. It requires all relevant actors to raise awareness on hate speech including antisemitism, and to create a more inclusive environment in sport.

<sup>95</sup> Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2012, p. 4.

<sup>96</sup> See International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (2022).

<sup>97</sup> More information on the Institute of Social Safety is available at <http://www.fundacjaibs.pl>.

<sup>98</sup> More information from *Inhaltliche und methodische Grundsätze*, Bundesverband Mobile Beratung, Mobile Beratung gegen Rechtsextremismus, is available at [https://www.bundesverband-mobile-beratung.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BMB\\_Grundsatzpapier\\_2021.pdf](https://www.bundesverband-mobile-beratung.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BMB_Grundsatzpapier_2021.pdf).

<sup>99</sup> See Say No to Antisemitism.

<sup>100</sup> J. Pross, personal communication, October 5, 2022. Information available on the Full Contact website: <https://www.vollkontakt.info/>.

<sup>101</sup> See Vielfalt im Kampfsport (2022).

<sup>102</sup> See A hat trick for inclusion (n.d.).



Local Jewish history and antisemitism also feature in sport-focused projects like the cooperation of FC Utrecht with the Anne Frank House. In the project, young fans receive information about the local Jewish community's history, including the period of the Holocaust, and get to meet fans of Jewish heritage.<sup>103</sup>

## Counter-messaging offline and online

A relatively large part of P/CVE projects is dealing with online radicalisation. However, a focus on antisemitism is rare. An exception is the online project of the Polish Never Again Association in partnership with the largest Polish ad platform OLX.<sup>104</sup> Together, they monitor and remove the online sales of racist, fascist and antisemitic propaganda items. The cooperation involves training for the OLX group provided by Never Again on how to identify racist and fascist content.<sup>105</sup> This ensures the organisation is aware of the issue and can identify antisemitic content.

## Helping the Jewish community and supporting victims

In order to support victims of antisemitic hate crimes by radicalised individuals, 15 counselling organisations have been set up in Germany. As part of the Association of Counseling Centers for Victims of Right-Wing, Racist and Antisemitic Violence in Germany, these organisations provide support for witnesses and victims of antisemitic attacks as well as for the local Jewish community at large.<sup>106</sup> Confidentiality, anonymity and local support is essential in this field.

However, antisemitic hate crimes also occur online. Organisations like Gegen Vergessen – Für Demokratie and Hate Aid, both based in Germany, help people face online right-wing extremism and hate crimes including antisemitism.<sup>107</sup> Their aim is to ensure that Internet users can enjoy freedom of thought and democracy.

## Interfaith dialogue

Certain interfaith dialogue initiatives are P/CVE projects with a focus on antisemitism. For example, the European Muslim Jewish Dialogue (EMJD) in Austria and Germany tries to prevent and deconstruct antisemitism in Islamist ideology by organising regular meetings, events, presentations and discussions for Muslim and Jewish multipliers of the two communities, as well as working with students, educators and prison, probation and judicial practitioners.<sup>108</sup>

An example of interfaith dialogue combined with sport activities in the field of martial arts is the project Not In God's Name: this initiative, based in Austria, focuses on countering and preventing radicalisation in vulnerable youth.<sup>109</sup> It involves Christian, Jewish and Muslim students in its activities on the basis of the benefits of the contact hypothesis.

## Country-level initiatives

A good example of the relation between P/CVE work and activities against antisemitism at country level is the Austrian case where cooperation with the Austrian Strategy for Extremism Prevention and De-

<sup>103</sup> More information about the project is available at <https://changingthechants.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CompendiumV2.pdf>.

<sup>104</sup> See 'NEVER AGAIN' Association (n.d.) and OLX (2023).

<sup>105</sup> See 'NEVER AGAIN' Association (2021).

<sup>106</sup> See the Association of Counseling Centers for Victims of Right-Wing, Racist and Antisemitic Violence in Germany (n.d.).

<sup>107</sup> See Gegen Vergessen für Demokratie (n.d.) and Hate Aid (n.d.).

<sup>108</sup> See RAN Collection – Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism. Approaches and Practices, 2015 edition, from the Radicalisation Awareness Network at <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/pdf/servicios-al-ciudadano/plan-estrategico-nacional-de-lucha-contra-la-radicalizacion-violenta/documentacion-del-plan/ran/RAN-Collection-Preventing-Radicalisation-to-Terrorism-and-Violent-Extremism.pdf>.

<sup>109</sup> See Zilbershatz (2020).

radicalisation is embedded in the National Strategy Against Antisemitism.<sup>110</sup> In Austria, the Extremism Advice Centre, supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Family and Youth (BMAFJ), supports those affected by extremism including antisemitism.<sup>111</sup> According to the National Strategy, the Advice Centre will expand its training in future with a module on antisemitism, and will foster the exchange with other advisory services so as to put greater emphasis on antisemitism.<sup>112</sup>

Meanwhile, the German federal programme Live Democracy! run by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth encourages civic engagement “for a diverse and democratic society” including the support of non-governmental organisations that conduct P/CVE work.<sup>113</sup> Antisemitism is one of the thematic areas in which pilot projects, initiated by the programme, are assigned based on the three fields of action: democracy promotion, diversity shaping and extremism prevention.<sup>114</sup>

## Preventive work focusing on antisemitism using the contact hypothesis

Some initiatives, despite not being P/CVE projects per se, target antisemitism in a preventive manner and therefore indirectly target violent extremism as well. A significant subtype of these initiatives is based on the so-called contact hypothesis.<sup>115</sup> The idea behind this hypothesis is that under appropriate conditions, prejudices can be reduced between majority and minority groups in society through interpersonal connections. A concrete example is the work of the Haver Foundation in Hungary, which offers informal educational sessions to young people on Jewish topics.<sup>116</sup>

The Jewish Pathfinder in Norway provides identical programmes to Haver. Volunteers talk to students about the Norwegian Jewish community as well as discuss wider topics such as discrimination, human rights and democracy.<sup>117</sup>

Another example is LICRA, a French organisation which began its fight against antisemitism, racism and discrimination before World War II. LICRA’s activists, numbering more than 3 000, are present in schools and workplaces all over France to embody and spread LICRA’s anti-racist and community-centred approach by facilitating debate and discussion across society.<sup>118</sup>

## 4. Identifying gaps and potential

### Use a clear definition of antisemitism

In order to effectively tackle the problem of antisemitism in relation to violent extremism, a clear definition of antisemitism should be applied both in training and in the development of new projects, as well as in the everyday practice of P/CVE activities. One of the existing definitions by IHRA has been adopted by the EU.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>110</sup> See Austrian Federal Chancellery (2021). Other Member States are also encouraged to develop national strategies according to the EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030).

<sup>111</sup> See Austrian Federal Chancellery (2021).

<sup>112</sup> See Austrian Federal Chancellery (2021).

<sup>113</sup> Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 2020, *Live Democracy!* (flyer). For more information, see [https://www.demokratie-leben.de/fileadmin/Demokratie-Leben/Bilder/A\\_Das\\_Programm/d\\_ENGLISCH/Flyer\\_Live\\_Democracy.pdf](https://www.demokratie-leben.de/fileadmin/Demokratie-Leben/Bilder/A_Das_Programm/d_ENGLISCH/Flyer_Live_Democracy.pdf).

<sup>114</sup> Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, 2020, *Live Democracy!* (flyer). For more information, see [https://www.demokratie-leben.de/fileadmin/Demokratie-Leben/Bilder/A\\_Das\\_Programm/d\\_ENGLISCH/Flyer\\_Live\\_Democracy.pdf](https://www.demokratie-leben.de/fileadmin/Demokratie-Leben/Bilder/A_Das_Programm/d_ENGLISCH/Flyer_Live_Democracy.pdf).

<sup>115</sup> More information on this is available in *Gordon Allport's Contact Hypothesis*, at [https://lah.elearningontario.ca/CMS/public/exported\\_courses/HSP3C/exported/HSP3CU03/HSP3CU03/HSP3CU03A02\\_teacher/facinghistory.org-GordonAllportsContactHypothesis.pdf](https://lah.elearningontario.ca/CMS/public/exported_courses/HSP3C/exported/HSP3CU03/HSP3CU03/HSP3CU03A02_teacher/facinghistory.org-GordonAllportsContactHypothesis.pdf).

<sup>116</sup> More information about the Haver Foundation is available at <http://haver.hu/education>.

<sup>117</sup> Jewish Pathfinder. <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/dd258c081e6048e2ad0cac9617abf778/action-plan-against-antisemitism.pdf>.

<sup>118</sup> See International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (n.d.).

<sup>119</sup> For its practical use, a handbook was also developed: <https://iibsa.org/new-handbook-the-ihra-working-definition-on-antisemitism/>.

### **Include a focus on antisemitism in P/CVE projects when targeting different types and levels of extremism**

As highlighted in the previous chapter, efforts against antisemitism and P/CVE initiatives are often self-contained. Programmes and projects against antisemitism are mainly public awareness campaigns and cultural projects for the wider public, educational initiatives or research and monitoring activities. P/CVE projects have no specific focus on antisemitism, either as a reason for (further) radicalisation or as a target problem in deradicalisation initiatives.

Antisemitism should be incorporated into P/CVE projects: as a contributing factor to radicalisation; as an entry point to further radicalisation at individual and group level; and in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programmes. Based on the research conducted for this analysis, tertiary-level programmes with an antisemitism slant are underrepresented compared to the other two levels.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, the suggestion is to include a focus on antisemitism in projects for tertiary-level prevention.

As demonstrated previously, antisemitism is at the core of all (main) types of violent extremism, and therefore should be consciously incorporated as a defined focus in all initiatives seeking to prevent or counter these types of extremism.

Within the P/CVE field today, initiatives that address the prevention and countering of Islamist extremism are significantly overrepresented, while those that tackle VLWAE feature far less. A similar trend is observed in projects that focus on antisemitism to any extent. Some P/CVE projects against Islamist extremism target antisemitism as well. However, there are fewer initiatives against VRWE and even fewer against VLWAE.

While recognising the danger of antisemitism within the Islamist extremist group, the Muslim community as a whole cannot be treated as “suspect” due to potential radicalisation or antisemitism. A security approach can exacerbate the alienation of vulnerable Muslim communities; therefore, it is important to avoid securitisation when developing initiatives that target antisemitism. One way to do this is to engage existing organisations initiated by Muslim people and founded to prevent and counter antisemitism in certain parts of the Muslim community and that function in the field of interfaith dialogue.<sup>121</sup>

### **Include a focus on antisemitism in the training of future practitioners**

Incorporating antisemitism as a focal point also means that it forms part of the training of (future) practitioners (both social workers and educators) in university modules, and later, also forms part of the training for acting practitioners. One practical takeaway of such training should be that antisemitism serves as a bridging ideology at the heart of many significant contemporary forms of extremism (as discussed in this paper). Therefore, its theoretical and practical aspects should be included in the everyday practice of P/CVE practitioners.

### **Bear in mind and reflect on the regional, country-specific specificities of antisemitism and how it is connected to radicalisation**

There is significant geographical disproportionality in projects in the P/CVE field and in those with a focus on antisemitism. While most of the projects are run in western Europe (mainly Germany), most of the existing initiatives in central and eastern Europe cannot be categorised as P/CVE projects.

Although the “whole society” approach is recommended extensively, practitioners in individual Member States should consider regional differences when developing actions against antisemitism and

<sup>120</sup> One expert mentioned the project called SAIRO from the Czech Republic that focuses on all forms of extremism in prisons and on antisemitism specifically.

<sup>121</sup> One expert mentioned the project called SAIRO from the Czech Republic that focuses on all forms of extremism in prisons and on antisemitism specifically.

radicalisation.<sup>122</sup> For instance, the varying levels of resistance to antisemitism in schools and among teachers must be taken into account, according to how widespread antisemitism is. Therefore, there is greater need for training of teachers and other professionals like “law enforcement, judiciary, clergy, social and healthcare workers” in some Member States than in others.<sup>123</sup> This training should be included in P/CVE initiatives with a focus on antisemitism.

### **Bear in mind and reflect on the local and individual specificities of antisemitism and how it is connected to radicalisation**

Apart from regional and country specificities, there are also local distinctions in radicalisation, its connection to antisemitism and the root causes of antisemitism. Local initiatives are considered the most effective way to tackle the issue of radicalisation, according to the European Commission.<sup>124</sup> Partnership with the local Jewish community and associations is recommended when designing and implementing projects that have a focus on antisemitism. It is essential to be aware of the history and current situation of the local Jewish community, and if possible, to base the project on this knowledge.

When developing P/CVE projects, it is also beneficial to cooperate with local authorities and to harmonise these projects with existing cultural and educational projects that foster cultural dialogue between different groups, and especially with those that aim to foster Jewish life and combat antisemitism.<sup>125</sup> By sharing knowledge and resources with all these partners, the project will more efficiently achieve its aims.<sup>126</sup>

Furthermore, alongside these partners, a “local we” identity can be constructed, where the cultural, educational and prevention/countering work takes into account the history and culture of the local Jewish community. As with radicalisation in general, the role of antisemitism in radicalisation can also vary greatly.<sup>127</sup> Therefore, tools and methods that focus on antisemitism in prevention or in deradicalisation should also be tailored to the specific context.

Additionally, taking into account the “intersections, commonalities and differences between gender, race and other axes of inequality or bias, including anti-Semitism” is key.<sup>128</sup> This approach entails examination and reflection on the possible relations and overlaps between different forms of group-based enmity like anti-feminism, anti-gender narratives and antisemitism, and the creation of interventions that address the complex dynamics between these forms rather than focusing on them separately.<sup>129</sup>

Antisemitism often appears in “new guises” and/or in hidden, coded ways. For this reason, actors conducting early prevention projects should have specialised knowledge of the less obvious signs of antisemitic views and language. Antisemitic conspiracy myths are key parts of the ideologies of the three main violent extremist groups discussed in this paper, and their detection is crucial. Such conspiracy myths are commonly presented as legitimate critiques of different global phenomena or political tendencies, and practitioners should remain abreast of such claims and be ready to counter them appropriately.

An understanding that antisemitic conspiracy myths can vary across regions and countries is key, as is an awareness of the regional- and country-level specificities, e.g. their embeddedness in the specific political climate or the local antisemitic codes in use. As these myths can change over time, regular training should be provided for P/CVE practitioners and police and law enforcement, to keep them abreast of new

<sup>122</sup> See United Nations (2019).

<sup>123</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization & Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2018, p. 62.

<sup>124</sup> See European Commission (2016).

<sup>125</sup> See Puigsech, Didac Amat, Moussa Bourekba, and Blanca Garcés Mascareñas, *Ten Key Principles for a Local Policy to Prevent Violent Extremism* (2018). Also see United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization & Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2018).

<sup>126</sup> See Ramalingam (2014). Cooperation between different partners in countering antisemitism is also part of the Strategy of the European Union. As part of this, the Commission established the Working Group on Combating Antisemitism which includes a wide variety of relevant actors such as civil society organisations, Jewish community representatives and other stakeholders to assist and coordinate the implementation of the Strategy.

<sup>127</sup> See Puigsech, Didac Amat, Moussa Bourekba, and Blanca Garcés Mascareñas, *Ten Key Principles for a Local Policy to Prevent Violent Extremism* (2018). Also see Köhler (2020).

<sup>128</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization & Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2018, p. 34.

<sup>129</sup> See Dzhekova et al. (2022).

manifestations of antisemitism. Furthermore, this knowledge can be of use when new projects are designed, because education about conspiracy myths is crucial in preventing extremism.<sup>130</sup>

### **In order to reduce the acceptance of (antisemitic) conspiracy myths, focus on the root causes**

As research has shown, a feeling of lack of political control can increase the acceptance of conspiracy-induced stereotypes of Jews.<sup>131</sup> Antisemitic conspiracy myths are based on distrust in “established institutions and processes” with an element of “Jewish” involvement.<sup>132</sup> The individuals at risk of being radicalised might experience these uncertainties to a larger extent. Therefore, when designing P/CVE projects, apart from knowing the aspects and key characteristics of such myths, it is also important to consider the fears and anxieties linked to the political, economic and social challenges existing in a given society.<sup>133</sup>

Moreover, it is essential to develop “alternative messages” to provide new narratives.<sup>134</sup> In times of social and political crisis, inclusive language should be promoted instead of fuelling further polarisation.<sup>135</sup>

When individuals or groups promoting P/CVE activities are aware of conspiratorial thinking, cooperation with organisations whose activity is based mostly on the contact hypothesis between Jewish and non-Jewish people can also help curtail the conspiracy myth of “wealthy, influential Jews” by showcasing diversity within the Jewish community.<sup>136</sup>

### **Create and promote alternative narratives to address antisemitism-based radicalisation**

Antisemitism-related radicalisation and antisemitic hate speech are often related to antisemitic conspiracy myths. Therefore, addressing these narratives directly within P/CVE work is vital. When possible, it is preferable to offer an alternative narrative instead of simply countering antisemitism or other forms of hatred. This entails promoting an experience, value or situation that is shared by a bigger group of “us”, rather than concentrating on the exclusion of certain groups or people, even if they are the “haters”. Its aim is to offer something “out of the box”, beyond the classic black/white, good/bad or even minority/majority dichotomies and divisions.

Conspiracy myths are mostly spread online; therefore, to challenge this trend, online interventions are essential. However, it is also important to try to reach out to the target audience in different, creative ways, including a combination of offline and online methods. Antisemitism as a focus can be embedded in the theoretical foundation of these programmes in its complexity, alongside other forms of group-focused enmity. Furthermore, it is necessary to address the contextual factors and tailor the communication to a specific audience, as far as possible.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>130</sup> See the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2018).

<sup>131</sup> See Kofta et al. (2019).

<sup>132</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2018, p. 21.

<sup>133</sup> Some suggestions are the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights & United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2018).

<sup>134</sup> Nordbruch, 2016, p. 11.

<sup>135</sup> See Nordbruch, 2016.

<sup>136</sup> Although it is important to stress that research shows that contact hypothesis can work only in cases when all participants hold a non-competitive, equal status. Therefore, preparation calls for extra attention when targeting those at risk of radicalisation and already harbouring antisemitic attitudes.

<sup>137</sup> See Davies et al. (2016).



### Work with former extremists, with a focus on antisemitism

Many P/CVE initiatives involve former members of violent extremist groups sharing their “first-hand” experiences and special insights.<sup>138</sup> As regards the antisemitism focus, two aspects should be taken into consideration. First, it is important to provide these former members with updated knowledge on antisemitism and conspiracy myths, to render their contribution even more effective. Second, it would also be useful if they could share stories from their extremist pasts when they engaged in antisemitic incidents or harboured antisemitic attitudes.<sup>139</sup>

However, it is crucial to remain aware of the possible risks of working with former extremists: for instance, the unintentional provision of a platform for an extremist who may not have changed his or her world view entirely, or if the activity serves to justify violence.<sup>140</sup>

### Focus on sport-related activities

Sport-related activities are part of the recruiting practices and further radicalisation attempts for many of the violent extremist groups discussed in this paper.<sup>141</sup> These processes are carried out either at single sport activities or at larger sport or cultural programmes. Therefore, P/CVE projects should concentrate on specific sport-related audiences at risk of radicalisation.

As seen in previous chapters, certain sport-related P/CVE initiatives focus on antisemitism to some extent. There is an opportunity here to provide training for the project’s audience on antisemitism and its identification. Promoting diversity in sport also helps challenge extreme masculinity as well as antisemitism and other types of hatred.<sup>142</sup>

It is crucial to cooperate with relevant institutions like gyms, leagues, associations and key figures like gym leaders and coaches. Building on their experiences “from the ground” can be useful in determining the best way for projects to tackle and successfully reduce antisemitism. It is also important to consider the possible intersections when designing sport-related P/CVE activities focused on antisemitism.<sup>143</sup> Depending on the context, an appropriate strategy should be developed with the engagement of men and women, and an awareness of the gender perspective.

Sport-related activities of extremist organisations can have an ideological component, often related to antisemitism.<sup>144</sup> This ideological element should also be considered during the development phase of P/CVE projects. Sport-based P/CVE projects using alternative ways to counter extremist narratives (e.g. thematic hiking tours or races) can run on a more activity-based foundation than a discourse-based one, which might appeal more to the audience.

### Collaborate with decision-makers

As previously noted, it is crucial to build partnerships, not only within the Jewish community and among local leaders, but also with leaders of other faith communities and with elected decision-makers in Member States and at European level. Together, they can address antisemitism by utilising their resources to raise awareness among the international community and recognise antisemitic extremists as a threat to the European, democratic way of life. Dialogue can only be fruitful if participants have up-to-date information

<sup>138</sup> See Davies et al. (2016).

<sup>139</sup> As in the case of former Daesh soldiers who are sharing their stories to deter potential jihadists. See <https://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/64/59> for more detail.

<sup>140</sup> See Parker and Lindekilde (2020).

<sup>141</sup> See Handle and Scheuble (2021).

<sup>142</sup> See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2018).

<sup>143</sup> See Alves dos Reis (2021).

<sup>144</sup> See Dzhekova et al. (2022).

on antisemitic conspiracy theories, online and offline radicalisation, and the harmful impact of extremism on European society.

## Limitations

This paper is based on available sources online and on the results of the expert survey conducted to support the findings. Although the authors tried to cover all existing initiatives, this collection has major limitations and is far from exhaustive. The examples serve to illustrate a point rather than provide best practices per se. The obstacles complicating the research were language barriers and the lack of publicly available data on project documentation and outcomes, which made gathering knowledge on this topic challenging. Although it is understandable that some details on such a sensitive topic cannot be shared for security reasons, more transparency in project documentation is a general recommendation for all future P/CVE projects.

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