



NOA



National Report Card on Government Measures to Counter Antisemitism and Foster Jewish Life

THE NETHERLANDS



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ABOUT THE NOA PROJECT

NOA – Networks Overcoming Antisemitism offers a pioneering approach to tackling the problem of rising antisemitism in Europe. With its unique partnership of major Jewish networks, it benchmarks EU Member States' policies across areas and helps them to develop holistic national action plans to address and prevent antisemitism and foster Jewish life. For more information, see: www.noa-project.eu

ABOUT CEJI - LEAD PARTNER, NOA PROJECT

CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe stands with people of all backgrounds to promote a Europe of diversity and respect. A Jewish voice at the European level, our activities include delivering diversity education and enhancing interfaith and intercultural dialogue while advocating in the EU against antisemitism and discrimination of all kinds. For more information, see: www.ceji.org

NATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNER FOR THE NETHERLANDS

CIDI – Center for Information and Documentation Israel



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FOREWORD FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION COORDINATOR ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE

We at the European Commission are proud to support the NOA-Networks Overcoming Antisemitism project, a unique partnership of six European Jewish organisations that came together in 2019 with the aim of supporting holistic policy and practice to overcome antisemitism and foster Jewish life. Its pragmatic approach pairs security, education, and support for Jewish life with preventive and interventive measures at transnational and national levels. The NOA partners bring complementary expertise, tools, and engagement techniques, drawing on hundreds of affiliate members as well as their own networks. Their vision is to advance an inclusive and democratic Europe where Jewish communities thrive.

The NOA project echoes and contributes to the European Commission's objectives to end antisemitism and foster Jewish life, as specified in its first-ever EU Strategy on the topic, presented on October 5, 2021.

NOA's long-term goals include mapping efforts to combat antisemitism; equipping educators with training and teaching tools; diffusing positive narratives through socio-cultural educational activities; garnering commitments from sporting authorities to ensure the creation of inclusive environments; and evaluating impact to improve and sustain the project's activities over time.

This Dutch National Report Card is the third in a series and provides a nuanced snapshot of the current policy landscape in the selected areas and highlights the existing gaps as well as opportunities for further responses, which will no doubt evolve over time.

It is our hope that this benchmarking tool will aid in the development and implementation of National Action Plans to counter antisemitism.

I would like to thank the partners and stakeholders who contributed to this report for their openness, expertise, and valuable contributions. I am confident that it is an important step along the journey to countering antisemitism and fostering healthy and dynamic Jewish life.

Europe celebrates its diversity. Europe thrives when its Jewish communities thrive.



Katharina von Schnurbein

European Commission Coordinator on
Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish life

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF CEJI – A JEWISH CONTRIBUTION TO AN INCLUSIVE EUROPE

Every European Union country has its own unique story of Jewish life, dating back to ancient Greece and the Roman Empire and continuing through centuries that saw the emergence of Christianity, colonisation and development of the nation-state and democracy. The Jewish diaspora moved across the continent through waves of persecution from the Inquisition to the pogroms of the Middle Ages and the 19th Century and, in the still living memory of some, the Holocaust.

Despite periods of greater or lesser persecution, European Jewish communities have shown themselves to be resilient, capable of regeneration and integration. From craftspeople to merchants, artists and educators to philosophers and scientists, the history of Judaism in Europe is intertwined with the history of the region itself.

Today there are systems in place to monitor antisemitic attitudes, hate speech and hate crime, which is essential for responding to the warning signs of escalating anti-Jewish sentiment with measures of protection and prevention. The NOA project is doing something complementary but different and unique. We are monitoring what countries are doing to prevent antisemitism through their government institutions.

This research is a tool, perhaps not yet a perfect one, to help provide a realistic sense of the opportunities to strengthen policies and ensure governments are accountable to their international human rights commitments, reinforcing structural changes to break vicious cycles of hate. We hope that this policy-benchmarking mechanism will prove useful not only for preventing and addressing antisemitism but also in developing national action plans against racism and all other forms of discrimination as a flourishing life for marginalised communities is an indicator of safety and freedom for all.

We would like to thank our partners from across Europe: the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ), B'nai B'rith Europe (BBE), the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ), and the World Jewish Congress (WJC), in collaboration with their local affiliates and networks.

We express our great appreciation for the trust and support we have received from the European Commission for this work, which is a natural extension of the multiple initiatives taken by the European Union on antisemitism and racism in recent years.



Alain Philippson
President, CEJI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NOA-Networks Overcoming Antisemitism project, launched in 2019, is an innovative effort to develop new public-civil society partnerships and enhance collaboration within the nongovernmental sector to support the European Council's Declarations on fighting against antisemitism and fostering Jewish life on the continent.¹ This report showcases the current policy landscape in 10 areas: culture, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, and sport. The research demonstrates that there is still much the Dutch government can and should do to combat antisemitism.

KEY FINDINGS

1. There is a dynamic culture of grassroots initiatives in the country. The government relies heavily on the expertise of civil society organisations in the fields of Holocaust remembrance, dialogue, culture and education about Judaism and antisemitism. This means that government expertise is sometimes under-developed.
2. A significant trend is the tendency of successive governments to primarily link antisemitism to the Holocaust.
3. The country is strongest in legislation addressing religious freedom and security. Laws addressing the more serious and escalated forms of antisemitism, such as those concerning hate crimes and hate speech, are also substantial, however, implementation needs improvement. Concerning the ability to practice Judaism, the country is doing relatively well. Further, the country is now a positive example in the field of restitution.

¹ See: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/12/06/fight-against-antisemitism-council-declaration/> and <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/12/02/antisemitism-council-declaration-on-fighting-antisemitism/>

4. The policy area that scored the lowest is education. This finding indicates a considerable opportunity for positive growth and development with long-term impact.
5. The State is addressing antisemitism as a specific type of hate worthy of targeted interventions, as demonstrated by the creation of the office for the National Coordinator for Combating Antisemitism (NCAB) and the introduction of a corresponding work plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DUTCH POLICY-MAKERS

1. Disseminate the IHRA working definition of antisemitism² in keeping with the Dutch Parliament resolution of 2018. A tool helpful in identifying, investigating, prosecuting and understanding antisemitic incidents, the IHRA definition can help raise awareness with law enforcement, anti-discrimination bureaus, prosecutors, the judiciary, educational leaders and others. Trainings and other activities should be undertaken.
2. Improve the current system for recording hate crimes. It should include more possibilities for analysing data based on bias motivation and type of incident or crime; monitoring of hate crime cases through the criminal justice system from complaint to sentencing; and establishing third-party reporting agreements with civil society organisations (CSOs) trusted by the communities. CSOs should also be given resources for the staff required to register complaints, write reports and provide victim support through the criminal justice process.

² See: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

3. Build on existing good practices at the local level by putting into place an infrastructure that supports learning or local actions through funding and scaling up effective initiatives.
4. Invest in education as a key mechanism for transmitting knowledge regarding the fight against antisemitism, racism and all forms of hatred, with particular attention to expanding the compulsory history curriculum so that all students are reached.
5. Invest in public communications, which increase positive awareness of the presence of Dutch Jews in the social fabric of the Netherlands throughout the centuries and today.

CONCLUSION

Regrettably, antisemitism has played a significant role in recent Dutch and European history. Like racism and other forms of hatred, it can only be overcome by recognising and understanding its specific nature and manifestations. By acknowledging existing gaps and opportunities in current national policy and making a concerted, coordinated effort to prevent, address and eradicate antisemitism, a clearer path can be opened towards a more inclusive and democratic Europe.

INTRODUCTION

The NOA-Networks Overcoming Antisemitism project is an effort to innovate and develop new public-civil society partnerships and enhance collaboration within the nongovernmental sector. Backed by European Union funding,³ a consortium of six European Jewish organisations came together to develop concrete and effective initiatives to combat antisemitism. NOA developed a series of work streams that range from creating training and teaching tools to developing socio-cultural activities to promoting inclusion in sport. The project takes a holistic approach that marries policy and practice, security and education, and transnational and national actions.

This is the third publication in a series of five NOA National Report Cards⁴ which support the European Council's Declarations on the fight against antisemitism.⁵ Through these Declarations, EU Member States committed to mainstreaming the prevention and countering of antisemitism in all its forms across policy areas, recognising that antisemitism is a pan-European challenge. Further, they make clear the need to engage in policy formation at local, national, and European levels. An initial Declaration was published in 2018, revised and refined in 2020, and confirmed again in March 2022,⁶ at which time a slightly broader scope was approved to include "countering antisemitism and fostering Jewish life" in order to create a diverse and inclusive Europe where Jewish communities thrive.

The National Report Cards have been created to serve as a benchmarking tool to aid in the development and implementation of National Action Plans to counter antisemitism in

Member States. They take the measure of how well European countries are doing compared to the goals set by the Declarations. This Dutch National Report card reflects a multi-year project of stakeholder engagement to achieve the highest standard of research to evaluate the level of governmental compliance. This report should therefore assist the Netherlands in developing and implementing new policies by highlighting current strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the research provides a wealth of socio-cultural educational resources that will contribute to combatting antisemitism.

Nine areas of life are included in the Council Declarations and serve as the basis for NOA's scoring process. The research team added an additional area, "religious freedom", because some partners felt this has a direct bearing on Jewish communities' ability to thrive.⁷ The ten policy areas that the researchers assessed are: culture, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, and sport. In addition, other policy areas are touched upon within these ten areas, such as youth, discrimination, and integration policies; they each merit further attention in possible future iterations of this monitoring tool.

As this report's main focus is the State's role and obligations, measures taken by civil society organisations (CSOs) and local communities are mentioned only in as much as they are relevant to the State's role. Further, researchers primarily examined the existence of state policies and practices and did not undertake a qualitative assessment of their measurable impact.

This brief report does not include the full scope of evidence gathered to inform the researcher's assessments of the key indicators. A detailed description of evidence is available upon request through the NOA website contact form.⁸

³ The project was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020).

⁴ The other countries in this project are Belgium, Hungary, Austria and Italy.

⁵ See: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/12/06/fight-against-antisemitism-council-declaration/> and <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/12/02/antisemitism-council-declaration-on-fighting-antisemitism/>

⁶ See: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/03/04/council-adopts-conclusions-on-combating-racism-and-antisemitism/>

⁷ The EU cannot take a position on this topic because it is a national competence.

⁸ See: <https://www.noa-project.eu/report-cards/>

METHODOLOGY

The 2018 European Council Declaration on the fight against antisemitism was the starting point for the development of NOA's research methodology.⁹ The Declaration briefly mentions its expectations in multiple policy areas. Building on this, the NOA project partners—each expert in their field—explored how these broadly-worded directives could translate into measurable indicators. First, existing standards were compiled in order to set up a framework for assessment. Then a scoring system was developed to evaluate the key indicators. NOA's lead researchers gathered information to support these assessments through several methods. These included desk research, interviews, and focus groups to gain a holistic picture of the national policy landscape as they relate to the established indicators.

This project is a first foray into establishing a new set of European benchmarking norms, and every effort has been made to respect the highest ethical standards in this research. The researchers endeavoured to avoid bias in the design, data analysis, data interpretation, and other aspects of this research and honestly report results based on the available evidence. While some risk of subjectivity remains in the interpretation of results, it is important to remember that the purpose of this Report Card is to provide a snapshot of the current policy landscape in order to strengthen government measures to prevent and counter antisemitism going forward.

NOA Standards inform the roles and responsibilities of national governments. They are based on international norms established through regulations, directives, resolutions and other documents adopted by inter-governmental organisations such as European Union institutions, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and UNESCO.

NOA Indicators are markers of relevant policies and practices related to the fight against antisemitism. Thematic experts crafted key monitoring questions to measure the presence or absence of such policies in various areas.

The NOA Scoring System was developed to offer an easy-to-understand numerical representation of the current state of affairs in each policy area. Thematic experts assigned a maximum value to the key indicators, then the researchers assigned a percentage score measuring how well the policies and practices in place corresponded to each, based on the information available. The scoring system is designed to:

- Enable users to easily identify existing gaps and policy areas that require significant attention from state actors
- Provide benchmarks to compare future development of policies

Assessments were made according to the experience and knowledge of the researchers in the field. In order to ensure depth and nuance, a multi-faceted approach to the final scoring was undertaken, including:

- Interviews with both government and civil society representatives
- A stakeholder workshop with key government and civil society representatives who reviewed a detailed description of the evidence justifying the assigned scores and discussed and validated the overarching results

⁹ For further information on the standards, indicators and scoring system, see: <https://www.noa-project.eu/report-cards/>.

METHODOLOGY

1



STEP 1 Creation of NOA Project Partnership

NOA project partnership is created with Jewish experts and representatives to provide guidance on the topics, issues and needs to be addressed. The 10 policy areas to be researched are determined.

2



STEP 2 Creation of Indicators

Key research questions are developed for each policy area which are then translated into indicators, based upon existing international standards. For each of the 10 areas, multiple indicators are assigned, with input from thematic experts for transnational consistency and sustainability.

3



STEP 3 Collection & Analysis

Policy documents, legislation, national publications, and guidelines are collected and analysed.

4



STEP 4 Input & Interviews

To provide context and additional input, **28** people are consulted, including:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 10 government representatives | 5 community representatives |
| 8 civil society organisation representatives | 5 academics |

5



STEP 5 Scoring

Initial scoring of indicators is undertaken by the research team, given in percentages. Scoring system is developed to:

- ▶ compare national policies and practices with established standards
- ▶ enable overview for each policy area providing for future benchmarking
- ▶ assess each policy area to identify existing gaps and create points of reference

6



STEP 6 Validation

Consultation phase/stakeholder workshop:

- ▶ a select group of representatives from civil society and public authorities give feedback and validate scoring

7



STEP 7 Dissemination

National public events are organised to discuss findings, share good practices and provide policy recommendations.

European conference 2023

THE NETHERLANDS: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

The Netherlands is a small country with a population of 17.8 million and is the second-most densely populated country in the European Union.¹⁰ It hosts several important global organisations, including the International Court of Justice, and is home to the largest port in Europe. It has been a parliamentary constitutional monarchy since 1848 and the monarch, King Willem Alexander, is the head of state, although he plays a mostly ceremonial role. The Second Chamber, the House of Representatives, constitutes the Dutch legislative power and consists of 150 members of 20 parties and individuals. There are twelve provincial assemblies, the States-Provincial, which are also directly elected every four years. The members of the provincial assemblies elect the 75 members of the Senate, which has the power to reject laws, but not to propose or amend them.

The Prime Minister, usually the leader of the biggest party in the government, heads the Council of Ministers which forms the country's executive power. The government is made up of a coalition of several political parties.¹¹ The Netherlands is considered to be a model of consociationalism, which favours cooperation amongst political elites and promotes the idea of consensus democracy.¹² At the same time, Dutch society has retained a legacy of "pillarisation," a term which refers to the 19th and 20th-century tradition of religious-political groups (protestants, Catholics, socialists, etc.) founding their own institutions, including schools and media. There is a long history of social tolerance

¹⁰ Immigration is substantial, with 228 000 immigrants, including approximately 90 000 Ukrainians, recorded in 2022.

¹¹ Currently, the coalition includes the Liberal Party (VVD), Progressive Liberals (D66), Christian Democrats (CDA), and Christian Union (CU). The current Prime Minister is Mark Rutte, the leader of the VVD. In office since October 2010, he is the longest serving Prime Minister in the Netherlands.

¹² For more information on consociationalism, see: Consociationalism in the Netherlands: Polder Politics and Pillar Talk. Bogaards, Matthijs, 2020, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347712696_Consociationalism_in_the_Netherlands_Polder_Politics_and_Pillar_Talk

in the country. However, like with most other countries in Europe, polarisation is on the rise, and far-right political parties are gaining traction as the political centre erodes.

DUTCH JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Jews have lived in the Netherlands since the 12th century.¹³ Following the Spanish inquisition in the 16th century, many fled the Iberian peninsula for the more tolerant Dutch provinces, which allowed them to practice their religion openly. Jews from Portugal migrated mainly to Amsterdam, where in 1675, they built the world-famous Portuguese Synagogue, which is still in use today. As the Portuguese Jews became established, they bolstered trade and brought new navigation techniques, which helped usher in the so-called "Golden Age" of Dutch trade, wealth, arts, and science, but also of colonialism.

In the 17th century, the Dutch Republic was at the forefront of granting Jews more rights, including in matters of trade and work. This period of enlightenment allowed Jews to flourish. Inspired by the French Revolution, the Dutch National Convention granted full civil rights to Jews on September 2, 1796.¹⁴ From that time until 1940, Jews participated fully in Dutch society, and no pogroms or major violent antisemitic incidents were recorded in the Netherlands. Prior to the Holocaust, approximately 140 000 Jews lived in the country, including around 25 000 German refugees,¹⁵ and Jews comprised one-tenth of Amsterdam's population.¹⁶ Many Dutch Jews, who were part

¹³ See: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-netherlands-virtual-jewish-history-tour>

¹⁴ The National Convention proclaimed: "No Jew shall be excluded from rights or advantages which are associated with citizenship in the Batavian Republic, and which he may desire to enjoy."

¹⁵ The policy of the Dutch Government on refugees was very restrictive at this time. Wilhelmina, queen of the Netherlands from 1890 until her abdication in 1948, refused to establish a refugee centre for German Jews in the vicinity of her palace in Apeldoorn. Ultimately, one was built in Westerbork near the German border, but the Dutch Jewish community had to pay for its costs. For more information, see: <https://eurojewcong.org/communities/the-netherlands/>

¹⁶ See: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/amsterdam>

of the proletariat class, participated in socialist or communist organisations and political parties. Although only a minority considered themselves religious, membership in Jewish congregations was substantial. However, their position changed radically with World War II and the Nazi occupation.

About 75% of the Dutch Jewish Community perished during the war, 102 000 people in total. This is the highest death rate in Western Europe.¹⁷ Most Jews were rounded up by Dutch policemen, transported by the Dutch Railways to the transition camp Westerbork, and then killed in Auschwitz or Sobibor. Around 25 000 Dutch people reportedly helped shelter Jews, but Dutch participation in the SS was also one of the highest in Europe.¹⁸ The Queen, who was in exile in London, paid hardly any public attention to the fate of Dutch Jews.¹⁹ It took 75 years after the war for a member of the royal family to criticise this behaviour in a speech to the nation.²⁰ That same year, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte apologised “on behalf of the government for the conduct of the Dutch authorities at that time.”²¹

About 32 000 Jews survived the war,²² although few had any family or friends remaining, and survivors were left traumatised and robbed of their possessions. Dutch authorities were reputedly cold and bureaucratic in their dealings with survivors, as studies attest.²³ During the war, some 16 000 homes were confiscated and it took years to return them to their rightful owners.²⁴ Jewish survivor and historian Isaac

Lipschits called the ten-year period after the war “the little Shoah.”²⁵ During this time, about 10 000 Dutch Jews emigrated to Israel, the USA and Australia.

With regard to stolen assets, claims were settled through negotiations between the Central Jewish Board (CJO) and the government, banks, insurance companies and others. Approximately €350 million was restituted by 2020 to the Jewish community. About €50 million was used to create the MAROR foundation, which supports Jewish projects in the Netherlands. Another €23 million was put into the Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund, which supports projects in Central and Eastern Europe, contributing to the continuation of Jewish life there. The restitution process still continues in three areas: payment of life insurance policies for heirs of Holocaust victims; the refund of city taxes on Jewish property during the war; and the restitution of looted Jewish art.

However, the Dutch Jewish community proved to be resilient, and gradually it has grown over the years, welcoming immigrants from Israel, Russia and Iraq. There are two academically sound estimates concerning the number of Jews in the Netherlands today, which put the figure between 52 000 and 63 000.²⁶ More than half of these live in Amsterdam, with the next largest communities in Amstelveen and the Hague. Jews participate significantly in Dutch politics, science, literature and the arts.

There are about 50 working synagogues throughout the country, including the progressive community of Amsterdam,²⁷ and the modern orthodox community Amos,²⁸ which opened in 2022. However, only 18% of Dutch Jews belong to a Jewish congregation,²⁹ and assimilation remains a concern for the future of the Jewish community. Knowledge about

¹⁷ For more information, see: <https://www.annefrank.org/en/anne-frank/go-in-depth/netherlands-greatest-number-jewish-victims-western-europe/>

¹⁸ For more information, see: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/Country%20Report%20The%20Netherlands%20-%20Version%20for%20IHRA%20website%202021.pdf>

¹⁹ Her public radio speeches made no mention of the plight of the Jews.

²⁰ Speech by King Willem Alexander on May 4, 2020. See: <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/king-willem-alexander-offers-moving-words-at-remembrance-day-speech-5-4-2020>

²¹ See: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/prime-minister-netherlands-issues-historic-apology>

²² See: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-netherlands>

²³ See, for example: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-25839-13.html> and [Judging_the_Netherlands_27_4_11.pdf\(jcpa.org\)](https://www.jcpa.org/jcpa/press-releases/judging-the-netherlands-27-4-11.pdf)

²⁴ In the past decade, the Netherlands has embarked on the restitution of property stolen or confiscated from Jews during the Holocaust. For more information, see the Culture and Heritage section.

²⁵ *De kleine sjoa: joden in naoorlogs Nederland*, Lipschits, I., 2001, Mets & Schilt.

²⁶ See demographic research from the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI), an independent scientific institute: <https://nidi.nl/en/about-us/affiliated-and-guest-researchers/> and the Institute of Jewish Policy Research, which bases its criteria on the Israeli Law of Return: <https://www.jpr.org.uk/countries/how-many-jews-in-the-netherlands>

²⁷ See: <https://verbond.eu/en/>

²⁸ See: <https://chabadamsterdamcenter.com/en/synagogue/amos-synagogue/>

²⁹ See: <https://publ.nidi.nl/demos/2010/demos-26-07-vansolinge.pdf>

Jewish habits, tradition and religion is fading, and communities outside Amsterdam are gradually dwindling. Jewish education is seen as a priority by the community as a whole.

In terms of the structure of the community, most civil and religious organisations are part of the Central Jewish Board (CJO), an umbrella organisation established in 1998, which serves as the representative body to the government. The oldest Jewish religious organisation is Nederlands Israelietisch Kerkgenootschap (NIK), an umbrella organisation of orthodox communities.³⁰ Another significant organisation is the Dutch Union for Progressive Judaism (NVPJ), which consists of 10 congregations.³¹ These are followed in size by other smaller Sephardic and Chabad communities.

Jewish civil society is vibrant and independent of religious affiliation or practice. Youth groups like Haboniem,³² Bne Akiwa,³³ Netzer,³⁴ and the sports organisation Maccabi³⁵ are very active. WIZO,³⁶ a Zionist Federation, Stichting Bij Leven en Welzijn (BLEW),³⁷ the Jewish security agency which protects buildings and events, and many other Jewish-led civil society initiatives dedicate themselves to cultural and artistic life as well as a variety of human rights concerns. In addition, there are three Jewish schools, two elder care homes, a welfare organisation (JMW),³⁸ and one Jewish hospital. The most influential advocacy body for monitoring antisemitism in the country is the Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel (CIDI),³⁹ established almost 50 years ago and located in the Hague.

OVERVIEW OF ANTISEMITISM

While the Netherlands prides itself on a tradition of freedom and tolerance, Jews continue to face antisemitism in many aspects of their life. According to a 2018 survey, 73% of Jews in the Netherlands regard antisemitism to be a fairly big or very big problem.⁴⁰ In the same survey, 70% of Jews indicated they at least sometimes avoid wearing symbols that could identify them as Jewish in public, such as a kippah.

In recent years, there has been an uptick in antisemitic incidents.⁴¹ In May and June 2021, a surge in bullying incidents against Jewish children was recorded, corresponding to the escalation of conflicts between Israel and Hamas.⁴² Instances of written expressions of antisemitism, the majority of which appear on social media, are also high. Research commissioned in 2022 found over 200 000 posts expressing antisemitic content on Dutch social media.⁴³ Antisemitic rhetoric also occurs in politics and at sporting events, with significant consequences.

Regarding the younger generation's knowledge or understanding of Holocaust history, a recent widely circulated survey from the Claims Conference raises concerns. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of respondents in the Netherlands, including 32% of Millennials and Gen Z, say they know at least a few people who believe the Holocaust did not happen. Additionally, nearly one-quarter (24%) of these, and 11% of all respondents, believe the Holocaust is a myth or greatly exaggerated.⁴⁴ While there may be some methodological issues associated with the report, there is no denying the fact that

³⁰ The NIK is represented in the European Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress. Its largest branch, located in Amsterdam, is the NIHS. There are also congregations in the Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Eindhoven, and Haarlem. See: <https://www.nik.nl/>

³¹ The biggest congregation is in Amsterdam. The one in The Hague is situated in the former Portuguese Synagogue. For more information, see: <https://verbond.eu/aangesloten-organisaties-organogram/>

³² See: <https://www.haboniem.nl/>

³³ See: <https://www.bneakiwa.nl/>

³⁴ See: <https://www.netzer.nl/>

³⁵ See: <https://maccabi.nl/>

³⁶ See: <https://www.facebook.com/nl.wizo/>

³⁷ See: <https://www.blew.nl/>

³⁸ See: <https://joodswelzijn.nl/english>

³⁹ See: <https://www.cidi.nl/over-cidi/english/>

⁴⁰ Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism - Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU. Fundamental Rights Agency. March 2019, p. 17. See: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism-second-survey-discrimination-and-hate>

⁴¹ In 2021, there were 183 recorded incidents of intimidation and harassment, up from 135 the previous year. See: <https://www.cidi.nl/antisemitisme/antisemitisme-monitors/>

⁴² For more on the effect on Jewish schoolchildren, see: <https://niwv.nl/mijn-kind-niet-meer-joods-zijn/>

⁴³ This report was the first of its kind and follow-up studies are needed to gauge if this number is accurate. See: <https://www.cidi.nl/onderzoek-nederlands-antisemitisme-online/>

⁴⁴ January 25, 2023 Claims Conference - Netherlands Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness Survey. See: <https://www.claimscon.org/netherlands-study/?fbclid=IwAR39-KDz1EzdeczvshRQsxsxrTAyWKgLnLEFRL5vybNBMkYugR4h4po3dk>

the current education system is not doing an adequate job of imparting knowledge about the Holocaust, which raises alarm bells for the future.

The government official in charge of discrimination issues in the Netherlands is the Minister of Justice.⁴⁵ In the Dutch penal code, the main article related to the fight against antisemitism and racism is article 137 c-e,⁴⁶ whereas in the civil code, article 6:162 is often used to fight antisemitic incidents.⁴⁷ In response to the growing threat to Jews and Jewish life in the Netherlands, members of Parliament Dilan Yesilgöz-Zegerius (VVD) and Gert-Jan Segers (CU) initiated a series of measures in 2019 to

encourage the government to take action to turn the tide of rising incidents.⁴⁸ Notably, the office of the National Coordinator for Combating Antisemitism (NCAB) was launched on April 1, 2021. It brings together expertise in the area of combatting antisemitism, connects the government and civil society, and supports initiatives related to this issue in the Netherlands and Europe. The NCAB also signals emerging developments in the field of antisemitism.⁴⁹ The NCAB work plan was sent to the Dutch House of Representatives in October 2022, and a second series of measures was introduced in December 2022 by members of Parliament Ulyse Ellian (VVD) and Gert-Jan Segers (CU).⁵⁰

NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR COMBATING ANTISEMITISM PRESENTS WORK PLAN TO DUTCH HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES⁵¹

October 6, 2022

Today, Minister of Justice and Security Dilan Yesilgöz-Zegerius sent the work plan of the National Coordinator for Combating Antisemitism (Nationaal Coördinator Antisemitismebestrijding, NCAB) to the Dutch House of Representatives. In this plan, the NCAB sets out its mission statement and provides a starting point for concrete actions in the continuing fight against antisemitism.

The work plan is grouped around three pillars:

1. Monitoring and follow-up
2. Education and prevention
3. Remembrance and celebration

Among other things, the NCAB wants to make it easier to punish online antisemitism. The government must catch up to tackle antisemitism on new media platforms. Antisemitic statements too often remain on these platforms without

consequences, as our system is still too focused on violations in the physical space.

The NCAB would also like to see a stricter approach to antisemitic chants in football stadiums. This includes broader use of new technologies like facial recognition, better documentation of incidents, immediately stopping matches and helping clubs to maintain crowd control in stadiums. The effect of these chants penetrates deep into the daily lives of children and adults at school and in the workplace.

A third priority is education about Judaism. Around 102,000 Dutch Jews lost their lives in the Holocaust. As a result, there are now fewer Jews who can propagate their culture. Unfamiliarity breeds suspicion, unfortunately. Cherishing and promoting Jewish life therefore play an important role in the NCAB's work plan.

⁴⁵ The current Minister of Justice is Dilan Yesilgöz-Zegerius (VVD).

⁴⁶ See: <https://melaproject.org/sites/default/files/2019-01/The%20Netherlands%20Criminal%20Code%20-%20Section%20137c%20and%20137d.pdf>

⁴⁷ Article 6:162 of the Dutch Civil Code states that the party who commits a tort towards another is obligated to compensate the losses, which the other party suffers as a result. In order to succeed, an action on grounds of a tort must meet five requirements: unlawfulness, attributability, loss, causality and relativity, see: <http://www.dutchcivillaw.com/legislation/dcctitle6633.htm>

⁴⁸ See: 35164 - [Initiative paper on a more effective approach to anti-Semitism - Parliamentary monitor \(parlementairemonitor.nl\)](https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/documenten/35164), Yesilgöz-Zegerius and Segers, March 2019

⁴⁹ See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-justitie-en-veiligheid/organisatie/organogram/nationaal-coordinator-antisemitismebestrijding-ncab>

⁵⁰ See: 36272 - [Initiative Paper on tackling anti-Semitism – the next steps](https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/documenten/36272), Ellian and Segers, December 2022

⁵¹ See: <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2022/10/06/nationaal-coordinator-for-combating-anti-semitism-presents-work-plan-to-dutch-house-of-representatives>

THE NETHERLANDS – ALL POLICY AREAS



Culture and Heritage



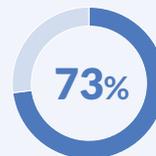
Intercultural Dialogue



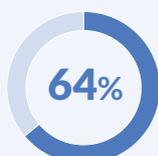
Education



Media



Hate Crimes



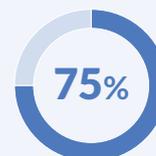
Religious Freedom



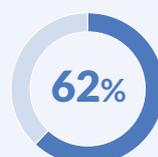
Hate Speech



Security



Holocaust Remembrance



Sport



KEY GENERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Disseminate the IHRA working definition of antisemitism⁵² in keeping with the Dutch Parliament resolution of 2018. A tool helpful in identifying, investigating, prosecuting and understanding antisemitic incidents, the IHRA definition can help raise awareness with law enforcement, anti-discrimination bureaus, prosecutors, the judiciary, educational leaders and others. Trainings and other activities should be undertaken.
2. Improve the current system for recording hate crimes. It should include more possibilities for analysing data based on bias motivation and type of incident or crime; monitoring of hate crime cases through the criminal justice system from complaint to sentencing; and establishing third-party reporting agreements with civil society organisations (CSOs) trusted by the communities. CSOs should also be given resources for the staff required to register complaints, write reports and provide victim support through the criminal justice process.
3. Build on existing good practices at the local level by putting into place an infrastructure that supports learning or local actions through funding and scaling up effective initiatives.
4. Invest in education as a key mechanism for transmitting knowledge regarding the fight against antisemitism, racism and all forms of hatred, with particular attention to expanding the compulsory history curriculum so that all students are reached.
5. Invest in public communications, which increase positive awareness of the presence of Dutch Jews in the social fabric of the Netherlands throughout the centuries and today.

⁵² See: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

BREAKDOWN OF POLICY AREAS



CULTURE AND HERITAGE



KEY INDICATORS



Culture and Heritage

OVERVIEW

The importance of protecting Jewish heritage in the Netherlands cannot be overstated given its history.⁵³ Nonetheless, it is not automatically included in national strategies in a robust manner.⁵⁴ Local authorities are mostly responsible for physical heritage sites in their areas, and many old synagogues have been restored and now host museums or centres for dialogue and other community services. The Jewish Museum in Amsterdam⁵⁵ plays an important role in preserving culture, although some have remarked that its visibility overshadows grassroots revitalisation efforts. There is concern that Jewish heritage is too often associated with the Holocaust as opposed to the long history of Jews in the Netherlands. The area of culture and heritage includes art and therefore concerns the treatment of works looted during WWII. In 2021, the Dutch Jewish community achieved a major breakthrough when the State promised to relinquish all remaining confiscated Jewish art in its

possession.⁵⁶ In a unique development, cultural objects whose original owners or their heirs cannot be traced will be returned to the Jewish community. Deciding which institutions will acquire ownership of the “orphaned” objects will be determined in consultation with the CJO. If ownership of a piece cannot be established, the CJO will safeguard it for educational purposes rather than selling it.⁵⁷

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Preservation of Jewish Heritage:** In 2021, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science committed a substantial budget to restoring 250 historical Jewish cemeteries throughout the country.⁵⁸ Since 2019, the Jewish Cultural Quarter⁵⁹ in Amsterdam has received subsidies from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science under the

⁵³ A 2018 policy paper specifically mentions the importance of protecting the country’s Jewish heritage See: Heritage Counts. The Meaning of Heritage for Society, p. 14: <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2018/01/01/erfgoed-telt>

⁵⁴ This may be partly due to the fact that heritage often involves multi-layered identities and determining what constitutes Jewish culture is often complicated.

⁵⁵ See: <https://jck.nl/en/node/963>

⁵⁶ This decision by the Council of Ministers concerns 3 208 works of art from the so-called NK collection which were stolen from Jewish owners and forcibly sold then recovered from Germany after the war. Of the original objects – paintings and drawings, but also furniture and tableware – 457 have been returned to the original owners or their heirs over the years.

⁵⁷ See: <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2021/06/25/more-looted-art-to-be-returned-to-rightful-owners>

⁵⁸ See: <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/actueel/nieuws/2021/11/26/grootste-herstel-en-restauratieoperatie-van-joods-erfgoed-ooit#:~:text=Maar%20ook%20arme%20of%20ongelletterde,waarin%20de%20grafstenen%20zijn%20geplaatst>

⁵⁹ The Jewish Quarter encompasses the National Holocaust Museum, the Portuguese Synagogue, the National Holocaust Memorial Hollandsche Schouwburg and the Jewish Museum (formerly Jewish Historical Museum) in Amsterdam.

heritage law,⁶⁰ allowing the Jewish Museum to take a leading role in expanding its collection.⁶¹

- 2. Promotion of Jewish Culture:** The University of Amsterdam now offers classes in Yiddish and has recently appointed a chair of Jewish studies, with a special focus on Amsterdam—the first full-time chair of Jewish history in the Netherlands. A recent exhibit at the Jewish Museum entitled “Are Jews White?”⁶² has been a success in reaching out to new audiences.
- 3. Promotion of Jewish Heritage:** State support for the Jewish Cultural Quarter in Amsterdam has been a main vehicle for the promotion of Jewish heritage, and many initiatives are supported by local municipalities. Examples include walking tours or the package of proposals passed by the Hague’s municipal council⁶³ to structurally protect and promote Jewish heritage in the city.⁶⁴
- 4. Recognition of Jewish Culture:** The influence of Jewish culture on Dutch society is widely recognised by government authorities but it could be better integrated into non-Jewish specific museums, events and public communications. Jewish participation could also be considered with more sensitivity when scheduling cultural events, i.e., avoiding Shabbat and High Holidays. For instance, as the King delivers a speech every Christmas, good wishes could also be extended around a major Jewish holiday. A symbolic act of this type would help raise awareness of the Jewish presence within the general population.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that the portrayal of Jewish heritage is not limited to the legacy of the Holocaust. While the Holocaust should rightly be remembered, it should not be portrayed as the primary or only aspect of Jewish history in the Netherlands. Jews have contributed to Dutch and European history for centuries and this should be emphasised.
2. Encourage Jewish participation in youth leadership initiatives through targeted funding of non-formal education. Promotion is also achieved through peer influence.
3. Encourage and support Dutch participation in the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes programme, including the European Routes of Jewish Heritage and European Days of Jewish Culture. Use these programmes to promote Jewish culture and heritage as valued parts of national history and contemporary diversity.

⁶⁰ See: https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037533/2021-03-20/#Hoofdstuk3_Paragraaf1_Artikel3.2

⁶¹ The Cultural Heritage Agency can assist the Jewish Museum in the retention or acquisition of heritage at risk. See: Onvervangbaar en Onmisbaar, Commissie Collectie Nederland, 2022, p. 22: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/erfgoed/documenten/rapporten/2022/02/15/advies-onvervangbaar-en-onmisbaar>

⁶² See: <https://jck.nl/en/node/4672>

⁶³ See: <https://www.cidi.nl/haagse-raad-stemt-in-met-herwaardering-joods-erfgoed-en-aanpak-antisemitisme/>

⁶⁴ The Netherlands is not a member of the Council of Europe’s Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes. Nevertheless, there are recognised cultural routes present in the Netherlands, none of which are associated with Jewish culture. For more, see: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/epa-member-states> and <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/netherlands>



EDUCATION



KEY INDICATORS



Education

OVERVIEW

Education policy in the Netherlands has well-defined legal obligations concerning what should be taught while also giving schools a high degree of freedom regarding the content of lessons. This applies to both traditional public schools and schools whose teaching reflects a particular religion or pedagogical approach, such as Christian or Montessori education, which are state-funded. There are three Jewish schools in the country: a primary school, a high school and an orthodox school combining both levels. All three are situated in Amsterdam and receive state funding. Overall, a wide selection of social and cultural outings to museums and memorial sites, led by CSOs, are offered in schools and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science can encourage these activities by providing subsidies. Teaching about the Holocaust is part of the mainstream history curriculum, but it should be noted that in vocational secondary schools, history is not a requirement in the upper years.⁶⁵ In addition,

⁶⁵ "Teachers: make history compulsory subject at vmbo" by Emile Kossen, 7 Jan 2023. See: [Leraren: maak van geschiedenis verplicht vak op vmbo | Telegraaf.nl](https://www.telegraaf.nl/nieuws/665298741/leraren-maak-van-geschiedenis-verplicht-vak-op-vmbo) <https://www.telegraaf.nl/nieuws/665298741/leraren-maak-van-geschiedenis-verplicht-vak-op-vmbo>

the content of textbooks varies widely, with little mention of pre-Holocaust antisemitism, despite this being crucial to understanding the uniqueness of antisemitism as both a historical process and a current phenomenon.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

1. Civil Society Partnerships: Successful collaborations, such as the state-funded Platform WO2,⁶⁶ include the participation of leading museums and education centres.⁶⁷ Some foundations and municipalities help finance these costs. Interfaith dialogue or visits to synagogues are more difficult to arrange. Existing initiatives include peer education programmes offered by Diversion⁶⁸ and the well-known "Get to know your Neighbors"⁶⁹ project, which invites vocational school students to visit the Amsterdam liberal Jewish community synagogue.

⁶⁶ One ambition voiced by the Platform is that all students visit at least once a museum or historical site relating to World War II. See: <https://www.tweedewereldoorlog.nl/over-deze-portal/>

⁶⁷ The field of education pertaining to WWII was explored in a 2018 study by SLO. See: <https://www.slo.nl/@4601/tweede-wereldoorlog/>

⁶⁸ See: <https://www.diversion.nl/>

⁶⁹ See: <https://nos.nl/nieuwsuur/artikel/2317440-bruggenbouwers-leer-je-buren-kennen-bestrijdt-antisemitisme>

2. Classroom Teaching and Assessment:

In practice, each school chooses which teaching materials to use, and testing is often primarily based on textbooks; government agencies have no direct influence. Some experts believe that there is not sufficient academic rigour regarding content on antisemitism.

3. Curriculum: The compulsory history curriculum⁷⁰ includes themes such as extremism, genocide (including the Holocaust) and racism in the context of WWII, particularly the targeting of Jews. Teachers can use citizenship lessons as opportunities to address contemporary antisemitism if they wish. Various CSOs are advocating for additional mentions of antisemitism as a non-Holocaust-specific phenomenon in the official curriculum.⁷¹

4. Higher Education: Universities and higher education institutions enjoy far-reaching independence. Most have standards and policies to ensure an inclusive environment.⁷² Universities have established a network of “confidants”,⁷³ easily accessible people to whom unsafe situations, including discriminatory incidents, can be reported. However, students appear to lack information on reporting procedures⁷⁴ and there is no shared definition of antisemitism for reporting purposes. In higher education, religious accommodation is not mandatory and therefore, decisions about holiday observances are left to each professor’s discretion.

5. Holocaust Education: Structures are in place to encourage collaboration between policy makers and educational practitioners, for instance, through

Platform WO2.⁷⁵ Government authorities encourage or support initiatives in Holocaust education to some degree. For instance, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport supports “Why, What, and How to Teach about the Holocaust,”⁷⁶ a project by the Jewish Cultural Quarter to promote the IHRA guidelines among educators and textbook publishers. In addition, some municipalities play a supporting role in Holocaust education. For example, the Amsterdam municipality has an action plan which includes efforts to help schools teach about the Shoah and “the history of the Jews in the Netherlands and Amsterdam in particular”.⁷⁷

6. Incident Response: Reporting mechanisms for antisemitic incidents exist within schools. However, data on these reports are not centralised unless incidents are also reported to an external organisation such as CIDI, whose annual report records school-related incidents separately. Recent data shows that school-based antisemitic incidents increase when tensions rise in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.⁷⁸ The Ministry of Education has a crisis help desk available to assist teachers with conflicts and controversial issues, although the extent to which they are contacted about antisemitism-related incidents is unknown.

7. School Leadership/Governance: A 2021 law on civic education obliges school governing boards to actively foster a culture in accordance with values including democracy, equal treatment under the law and pluralism.⁷⁹ School personnel and parents of school children are theoretically represented in mandatory participatory

⁷⁰ For an overview of the Dutch curriculum per subject, see: <https://leerplaninbeeld.slo.nl/regulier-onderwijs/c63858da-23e4-4e1e-8456-b4aa13a6a826?subject=>

⁷¹ See: <https://www.cidi.nl/oproep-cidi-neem-antisemitisme-op-in-het-curriculum/>

⁷² See, for example, “Code goed Bestuur universiteiten”, Association of Universities in the Netherlands: https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Governance/VSNU_CodeGoed-Bestuur_Nederlands_definitief_11122019.pdf

⁷³ See: <https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/sociale-veiligheid-binnen-de-universiteiten.html>

⁷⁴ See: <https://eenvandaag.avrotros.nl/item/meldingen-van-discriminatie-op-universiteiten-meer-dan-verdubbeld-in-2-jaar-tijd/>

⁷⁵ See: <https://www.tweedewereldoorlog.nl/over-deze-portal/>

⁷⁶ See: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/education-al-materials/summary-why-what-and-how-teach-about-holocaust>

⁷⁷ See: “Een 9 punten-plan in de strijd tegen antisemitisme in Amsterdam,” 2019, available at: <https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/gemeenteraad/instrumenten-raad/initiatiefvoorstel/initiatiefvoorstel19/>

⁷⁸ See: ‘Grote stijging meldingen antisemitisme sinds oplaaen conflict’, May 2021: <https://www.cidi.nl/grote-stijging-meldingen-antisemitisme-sinds-oplaaien-conflict/> A similar conclusion was reached by researchers in 2015 in a study exploring antisemitism among youngsters, see: <https://advalvas.vu.nl/nieuws/uitkomsten-onderzoek-naar-antisemitisme-schokkend>

⁷⁹ See: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2021-320.htm-#d17e296>

councils, a pre-existing framework put forth as an implementation mechanism for citizenship and diversity policies, but which are rarely exploited by school leaders.⁸⁰

8. **Teacher Training:** Although new teachers are expected to teach about the Holocaust, courses on Jewish history, antisemitism or the history of the Holocaust are not compulsory components of any teacher training degree.⁸¹ Pre-service and in-service teacher trainings are mostly provided by CSOs, such as the Anne Frank House, the Jewish Museum or CIDI. Many of these CSOs receive project subsidies from national and/or local government agencies. Civic education courses address discrimination but not necessarily antisemitism.
9. **Textbooks:** No official body is mandated to review textbooks. As a result, their content varies widely despite the guidance provided by the core curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Address antisemitism in the school curriculum. Antisemitism and racism in their specificities should be explicitly addressed in the civic education goals of the curriculum, accompanied by recommended resources and guidelines.
2. Encourage textbook publishers to better address antisemitism as a pre- and post-Holocaust phenomenon in the context of learning about international human rights. Call for a formal review of textbooks to consider opportunities to include more varied Jewish content.
3. Improve training for teachers so they can recognise and prevent antisemitism in its contemporary forms, as well as provide them with the tools they need to improve digital literacy and resist conspiracy theories.
4. Map and review existing education initiatives to maximise their reach and identify gaps to be filled. While many good initiatives exist, their impact is often local, and they tend to be under-resourced. Focusing on evaluating their impact will enable policy-makers and practitioners to create effective approaches.
5. Strengthen mechanisms to monitor, respond and prevent incidents in schools and universities. The IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism should be communicated throughout the incident-response system as a reference. Training for contact people will be important to recognise and respond to incidents.
6. Clarify university policy towards religious accommodation.

⁸⁰ See <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0020685/2022-08-01>

⁸¹ HAN University of Applied Sciences offers an optional module on Holocaust and genocide education, but no other universities offer specific courses on the subject.



HATE CRIMES



KEY INDICATORS



Hate Crimes

OVERVIEW

Certain expressions of hate against specific groups, including Jews, are prohibited under the criminal code,⁸² with similar provisions as in other EU countries.⁸³ However, Dutch legislation on “discrimination incidents” does not include a definition of what constitutes a “hate crime.”⁸⁴ The public prosecutor’s office has a centre of expertise which advises on hate crime cases. These cases are often seen as complex due to perceived contradictions with far-reaching laws concerning freedom of expression. In addition, there are multiple challenges in the way hate crime data is collected.⁸⁵ When it comes to countering online hate speech, the government has few regulations beyond EU-wide agreements with social media companies. A 2018 victim survey by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) revealed a lack of trust among Jews in the Netherlands concerning hate crime reporting to the police,⁸⁶ a problem also identified by CIDI.⁸⁷

The Amsterdam municipality is funding police seminars on Holocaust education, but structural training on recognising different forms of antisemitism is not part of a national strategy on hate crimes. The police have informal networks of officers from particular backgrounds who can advise on hate crimes against a specific group, including the Jewish Police Network (JPN). Police officers can also voluntarily participate in trainings on different types of discrimination.⁸⁸ A new law, pending a vote in parliament,⁸⁹ should strengthen the ability of the judiciary to recognise the discriminatory nature of crimes and allow harsher sentences to be issued.⁹⁰ However, questions remain regarding priorities within the judicial and law enforcement systems, which are overloaded and under-resourced. Indeed, 75-80% of all crimes in the Netherlands remain unsolved⁹¹ and court cases generally take a long time.

⁸² See: <https://www.government.nl/topics/discrimination/prohibition-of-discrimination>

⁸³ Articles 137c through 137g as well as 429quater. For official instructions to prosecutors concerning possible cases of hate crimes, see “Aanwijzing discriminatie”: <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0041649/2019-01-01>

⁸⁴ See: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/national-frameworks-netherlands>

⁸⁵ See the OSCE ODIHR Report on the Netherlands: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/national-frameworks-netherlands>

⁸⁶ “Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism - Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU,” see: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism-second-survey-discrimination-and-hate>

⁸⁷ See: <https://www.cidi.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CIDI-Monitor-antisemitische-incidenten-2021.pdf>

⁸⁸ Offered at the Anne Frank House, see: <https://www.annefrank.org/nl/educatie/trainingen-voor-professionals/trainingen-voor-politie/>

⁸⁹ See: https://www.eerstekamer.nl/wetsvoorstel/35709_initiatiefvoorstel_ellemeet

⁹⁰ See: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2021Z00958&did=2022D34966>

⁹¹ According to official crime statistics available from 2021, 754 460 total crimes were registered but only 185 445 were prosecuted. Of these, only 26.3% of discrimination cases were prosecuted. For more information, see: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/83648NED/table?fromstatweb>

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Investigation and Prosecution:** The police have begun employing investigators specialised in discrimination cases.⁹² Judicial expertise is concentrated in the Landelijk Expertise Centrum Discriminatie (LECD), which internally advises on discrimination cases and trains prosecutors. The LECD publishes an annual report on the number and types of discrimination cases.⁹³ However, judges are not obligated to indicate whether sentencing reflects a discriminatory aspect or motive, making these cases difficult to trace.
- 2. Legislation on Hate Crimes:** Legislation criminalises “deliberately insulting” expressions against certain groups.⁹⁴ Prosecutors can push for higher sentences when so-called common crimes (such as vandalism) have a discriminatory motive.
- 3. Recording of Hate Crimes:** Police record hate crimes, including antisemitism, and publish data annually in a joint report along with several other official anti-discrimination bodies.⁹⁵ There have been requests from policy makers and from within the police itself to improve the accuracy in reporting.⁹⁶ However, there is no explicit policy regarding “perception-based recording,” an approach recommended by several international organisations that makes it more likely evidence of bias motivation will be identified and secured.⁹⁷ As a result, victims and witnesses often struggle to

ensure that the antisemitic aspect of a crime is recognised when filing a report with the police. People can also report hate incidents to anti-discrimination bureaus (ADV's).⁹⁸

- 4. Victim Support:** There appears to be no specific training on interviewing victims of perceived hate crimes. Treatment of victims depends very much on the officer involved. Victim surveys are carried out by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP). However, finding a large enough sample of respondents identifying as Jewish has proven to be challenging. As a result, the SCP draws on numbers collected by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.⁹⁹ Victims who report antisemitic incidents to the police are sometimes contacted by a victim support service,¹⁰⁰ although many Jewish victims turn to Jewish organisations for such reporting and support.¹⁰¹

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Appoint a national task force with a mandate to strengthen the current system for recording hate crimes. Develop a “systems map” in order to help strengthen mechanisms for cooperation, such as those developed by the Facing Facts Network.¹⁰² All stakeholders, including prosecutors and the judiciary, should participate.
2. Improve training for police officers on specific bias indicators, including antisemitism, as well as other bias motivations. Collaborate with CSOs to put into place trainings that help police to recognise all manifestations of antisemitism and orient them to the IHRA Working Definition on Antisemitism as a reference.

⁹² This is still in a pilot phase. See: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2022D34487&did=2022D34487>

⁹³ For the latest report, see “Cijfers in Beeld 2021”: <https://www.om.nl/documenten/publicaties/discriminatie/lecd/cijfers-in-beeld/2021-cijfers-in-beeld>

⁹⁴ For the original description of the law, see: https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0001854/2017-09-01#BoekTweede_TiteldeelV_Artikel137c

⁹⁵ The figures are based on keyword system searches, which may limit their accuracy. For the latest report, see “Discriminatiecijfers 2021”: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2022/05/24/discriminatiecijfers-in-2021>

⁹⁶ See, for instance: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2022Z24971&did=2022D53717>

⁹⁷ See: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-11-on-combating-racism-and-racia/16808b5adf>, <https://www.osce.org/odihr/datacollectionguide> and <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/hate-crime-recording-and-data-collection-practice-across-eu>

⁹⁸ These are places where people can turn to for help with incidents that may not be criminal but are still problematic. Representatives of these offices meet with police regularly.

⁹⁹ See: <https://jonet.nl/scp-doet-geen-onderzoek-naar-joden-in-onderzoeksproject-over-discriminatiegevoel/>

¹⁰⁰ See: <https://www.slachtofferhulp.nl/>

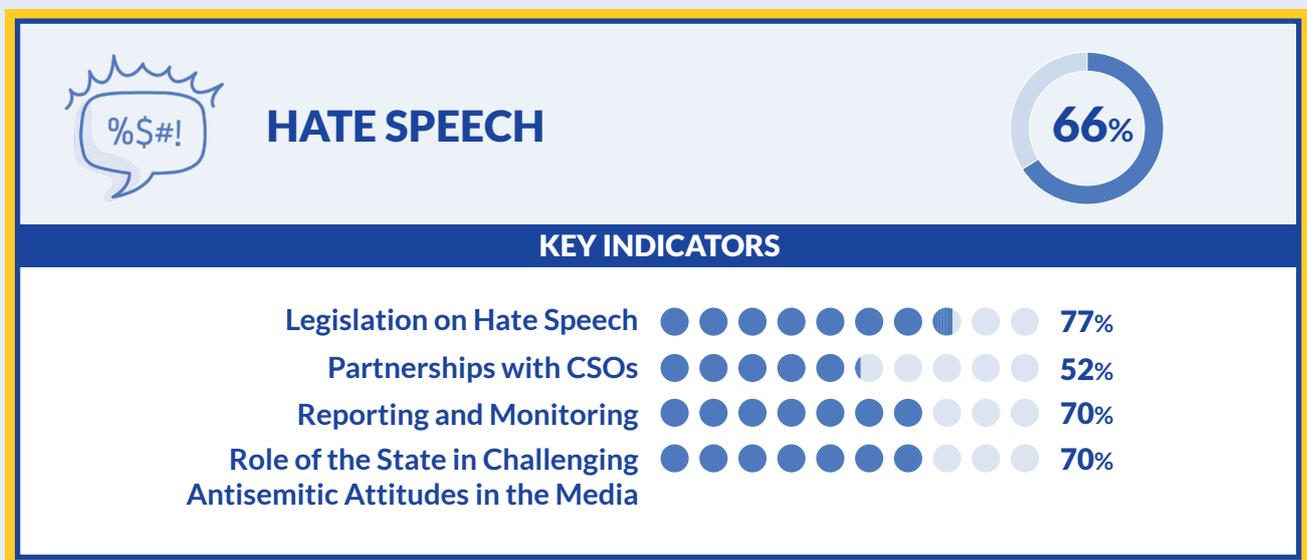
¹⁰¹ See: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/country-study-victim-support-services-nl.pdf

¹⁰² Examples of system-mapping can be found in several other EU countries via the Facing Facts Network, the European Commission's Framework Partner for the Working Group on Hate Crime Training. See: <https://www.facingfacts.eu/country-reports/>

3. Improve the police incident recording system so it is more user-friendly and the check-box for antisemitic reports (“vinkje”) becomes more visible. Ensure incidents are recorded on the basis of victim or witness perception as well as police identification of bias indicators. Make it possible to differentiate hate crimes, hate speech and discrimination cases and to disaggregate specific bias motivations.
4. Develop “third-party” reporting agreements with CSOs. This would entail a referral and data-sharing agreement between the

police and community-based civil society organisations that are already trusted by communities and provide victims with the support they need.

5. Set up regular, ongoing work meetings to review all antisemitic data with the new national task force to assess if there has been adequate follow-up of hate crime incidents from investigation through prosecution and sentencing.



Hate Speech

OVERVIEW

Certain expressions of hate speech against a group of people because of their religion are punishable under the criminal code.¹⁰³ Despite this, in June 2021, the European Commission found that the Dutch legal system “still fails to criminalise the specific forms of hate speech mentioned in the Framework Decision, namely the public condoning, denial or gross

trivialisation of international crimes and the Holocaust.”¹⁰⁴ In response, a tightening of article 137 against genocide denial was undertaken.¹⁰⁵ As legislation against discriminatory speech is frequently seen as a challenge to freedom of expression, prosecutors tend to be more conservative in bringing cases before a judge, especially in instances where chances of conviction are uncertain and acquittal could embolden suspects. However, criminal law is not the only safeguard against hate speech. For example, a civil court case was brought by

¹⁰³ Article 137c states: “Anyone who, in public, orally, in writing or by image, deliberately insults a group of people on account of their race, their religion or beliefs, their heterosexual or homosexual orientation or their physical, mental or mental disability, shall be punished with imprisonment of a maximum of one year or a fine of the third category. See: https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0001854/2023-01-01/#BoekTweede_Titeldeel_V_Artikel137c

¹⁰⁴ See: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_21_2743

¹⁰⁵ See: <https://www.cidi.nl/eu-stelt-nederland-in-gebreke-wegens-zwakke-wetgeving-tegen-holocaustontkenning/>

CIDI and CJO in 2021 against a politician who compared the coronavirus to the Holocaust for political gain. As a result, the politician was ordered to remove the offending tweets and was threatened with fines if he persisted in making such statements.¹⁰⁶

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Legislation on Hate Speech:** Hate speech is punishable by law. The prohibition of Nazi imagery, for example, is based on a law citing “deliberate insults”, but prosecution depends to a great extent on jurisprudence and context.
- 2. Partnership with Civil Society Organisations:** The main antisemitism monitoring body in the Netherlands, CIDI, has a working relationship with the police to facilitate filing reports on antisemitic incidents. It also regularly consults with anti-discrimination bureaus on trends and incidents. The Jewish welfare organisation JMW regularly assists the Jewish police network JPN when advising on victim support. JPN has informally published an information booklet with an accompanying video on antisemitism aimed at helping colleagues,¹⁰⁷ but it is not known to what extent this material is distributed to police officers.
- 3. Reporting and Monitoring:** Hate speech can be reported to the police, any local anti-discrimination bureau, or the reporting point for online discrimination, MiND.¹⁰⁸ In some cases, the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights,¹⁰⁹ an independent monitoring organisation, takes up cases of antisemitic hate speech. In addition, CIDI is a well-known advocacy group that collects reports of antisemitism.¹¹⁰ Some experts have suggested there are perhaps too many points of reporting rather than too few, and the system should be streamlined in order to ensure data collection is thorough and accurate.

4. Role of the State in Challenging Antisemitic Attitudes in the Media:

Leading figures of government tend to condemn antisemitic narratives in media or politics when high-profile incidents occur. The law establishing the public broadcasting system formulates its mission in broad terms, citing democratic values and pluralism among its guiding principles.¹¹¹

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promptly set up the necessary government mechanisms for full implementation of the Digital Services Act. This will ensure that expertise on hate-related content will be integrated into a national hate crime response system. Bring policies in line with EU legislation currently underway¹¹² through better data collection and research.
2. Provide structural support to CSOs who perform a critical monitoring and response function in relation to hate speech, including online. The government can make use of CIDI’s well-known reporting hotline by making a third-party reporting agreement with them, ensuring reliable and accessible reporting in the future.
3. Ensure that training for the law enforcement community dealing with hate speech includes the capacity to identify contemporary forms of antisemitism, which are known to mutate along with current events. Professional training to recognise them should include modern-day examples and not be limited to the more familiar Nazi-era symbols and speech.
4. Consider new legislation that would hold internet platforms accountable for repeated hate speech incidents by the same users on their platform. Online and social media responses to hate speech are much more problematic than print media, which tends to respect more established journalism ethics.

¹⁰⁶ For the official report of the proceedings, see: <https://deeplink.recht-spraak.nl/uitspraak?id=ECLI:NL:RBAMS:2021:7392>

¹⁰⁷ See: <https://jonet.nl/politie-komt-met-spoorboekje-voor-dienders/>

¹⁰⁸ See: <https://www.mindnederland.nl/>

¹⁰⁹ See: <https://www.mensenrechten.nl/english>

¹¹⁰ See: <https://www.cidi.nl/antisemitisme/meld-antisemitisme/>

¹¹¹ See article 2.1 of the law establishing the public broadcaster: https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0025028/2022-07-01#Hoofdstuk2_Titeldeel2.1

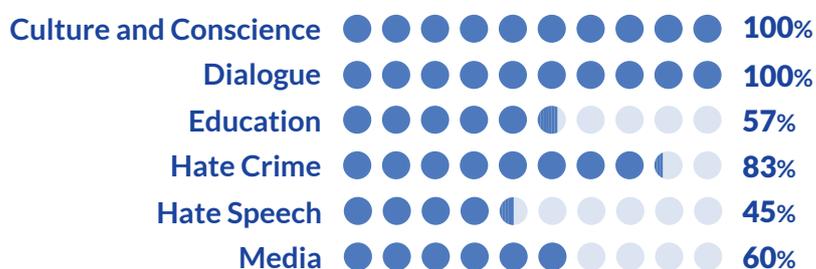
¹¹² See: https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/1_1_178542_comm_eu_crimes_en.pdf



HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE



KEY INDICATORS



Holocaust Remembrance

OVERVIEW

There is a strong culture of remembrance in the country, primarily expressed through supporting grassroots initiatives run by CSOs. Currently, with the loss of older generations who lived through the Holocaust and who provide first-person testimony, many would like to find new ways to keep the memory of this tragic period alive. A prime example of this is the construction of the National Holocaust Names Memorial, a monument unveiled in 2021 containing the names of all 102 220 Jews, Sinti and Roma from the Netherlands who were murdered during the Holocaust.¹¹³ A National Holocaust museum is also now under construction, the first and only museum to tell the entire story of the persecution of the Jews of the Netherlands.¹¹⁴ Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed every year and is covered in the media.

Regarding restitution, a related topic, the Dutch government continues to take significant steps which can serve as good practice examples for other countries. Despite these efforts, there remains a significant discrepancy in the way

the Holocaust is taught in traditional secondary schools compared to vocational ones, which affects roughly half of the students in the country and is a missed opportunity to engage on the topic of antisemitism.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Culture and Conscience:** There is specific legislation regarding the maintenance of monuments,¹¹⁵ and new efforts, such as a national monument and the upcoming national museum, attest to the State's commitment to remembrance. Restitution funds have been used to support the revitalisation of Jewish life in the Netherlands and Central and Eastern Europe.¹¹⁶ Since 2021, the Dutch Council of Ministers has taken significant steps to strengthen its restitution policy for cultural items looted during World War II,¹¹⁷ and all procedures regarding restitution are publicly available.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ See: <https://www.holocaustnamenmonument.nl/en/home/>

¹¹⁴ See: <https://jck.nl/en/location/national-holocaust-museum>

¹¹⁵ See Heritage Act: <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037521/2021-08-01> and Environmental Act: <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2016-156.html>

¹¹⁶ See: <https://www.government.nl/topics/second-world-war/support-for-victims> and the Jewish Humanitarian Fund <https://www.jhf.nl/>

¹¹⁷ See: <https://www.government.nl/documents/parliamentary-documents/2021/06/25/strengthening-of-restitution-policy-for-cultural-items-looted-during-the-second-world-war>

¹¹⁸ See: <https://www.restitutiecommissie.nl/en/recommendations/>

2. **Dialogue:** Interfaith remembrance of WWII victims is effectively institutionalised by the national committee in charge of organising the annual commemoration. Each year, on a rotating basis, a speaker on behalf of a particular religious group is invited to participate in an official ceremony prior to the national commemoration.
3. **Education:** There is a large network of museums, formal sites connected to the Holocaust and other educational institutions that can support schools. However, the place of Holocaust education in the curriculum varies widely. Further, some experts have noted that factual knowledge of the Holocaust does not guarantee an understanding of its historical or moral dimensions, which should be essential components of teaching about genocide.¹¹⁹
4. **Hate Crime:** Desecration of memorials is widely condemned and prosecuted as dictated by law.
5. **Hate Speech:** A law banning the denial of genocide is currently being reviewed with the intention of strengthening it.¹²⁰ Online expressions of Holocaust denial can be prosecuted. Official instructions from the Public Prosecution Service inform police officers how to record illegal online hate speech cases.¹²¹ Challenges remain, however, due to the global nature of internet infrastructure and a lack of capacity to pursue offenders and hosting platforms.
6. **Media:** War commemorations, including Holocaust Remembrance Day, receive regular media attention.¹²²

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve the penal law on hate speech to align with European legislation vis a vis Holocaust denial and ensure that prosecutors are trained to identify and explain mechanisms of contemporary antisemitism, including the role of hate speech.
2. Improve history and democratic citizenship education in vocational schools, supported by adapted pedagogical materials and delivered by trained teachers.
3. Support research on the impact of different educational techniques on the desired learning outcomes for Holocaust education so that the factors for success can be strengthened.
4. Encourage Dutch participation in the new network of Young European Ambassadors, launched as part of the European Year of Youth 2022, to help young people learn how to access and share accurate information about the Holocaust, commemorate it in their local communities, and recognise and counter Holocaust distortion online.¹²³

¹¹⁹ See, for instance, this statement by the Anne Frank Foundation: https://www.annefrank.org/nl/downloads/filer_public/8d/d9/8dd96535-d3fe-4935-a6b8-519afc846fbf/reactie_reactie_anne_franc_stichting_op_marc_van_berkel_han.pdf

¹²⁰ Articles 137c through 137g: <https://www.om.nl/documenten/publicaties/discriminatie/lecd/cijfers-in-beeld/2021-cijfers-in-beeld> For more information, see section on Hate Speech.

¹²¹ See paragraph 2.4. of the following document: <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0041649/2019-01-01>

¹²² The annual ceremony is broadcast live on public television.

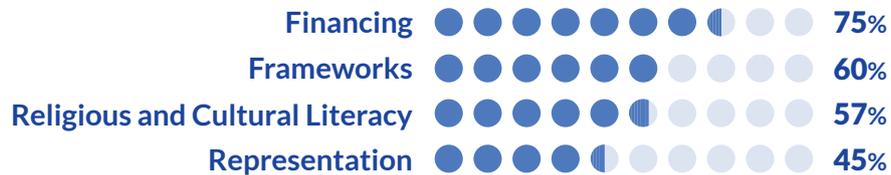
¹²³ See: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/de/mex_22_6968



INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE



KEY INDICATORS



Intercultural Dialogue

OVERVIEW

Despite a continuing trend of secularisation in the Netherlands, religious life remains one of the foundations of Dutch society. In this context, intercultural dialogue has the potential to reach a large audience. Some intercultural meetings are institutionalised,¹²⁴ and there is a “Minister of Worship,” a ceremonial portfolio overseen by the Minister of Justice and Security, who attends some religious ceremonies on behalf of the government.¹²⁵ The national government encourages and sometimes contributes to grassroots initiatives but does not primarily subsidise long-term efforts, which tend to be supported at the city level, notably in Amsterdam and the Hague. A successful example of a programme it does support is OJCM, a grassroots dialogue group with representatives from Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities, which trains local groups to build successful outreach projects between religious communities.¹²⁶ Intercultural exchanges can also improve government and civil society responses in times of crisis, as was seen during the Covid-19 pandemic when the

Minister of Justice revived a pre-existing forum for exchange amongst religious leaders. This forum engaged in the mobilisation of preventive health measures and welfare assistance across all religious communities and was highly constructive and productive. Unfortunately, the structure seems to be dormant now that the crisis has waned.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Financing:** Local governments provide subsidies for grassroots initiatives but usually not enough to maintain long-term programmes. One noteworthy exception is the project “Get to Know your Neighbors,” where pupils from a vocational school receive a tour of a synagogue in Amsterdam.¹²⁷
- 2. Frameworks:** The State often favourably engages with intercultural or interfaith dialogue events, but most dialogue frameworks depend on grassroots initiatives that are required to lobby the government and others for financial support.
- 3. Religious and Cultural Literacy:** A comprehensive guide aimed at helping local government officials tackle discrimination,

¹²⁴ One example is the celebration of Prinsjesdag, to which representatives of different ethnic and faith groups are invited. See: <https://prinsjesdagviering.nl/prinsjesdagviering-2022>

¹²⁵ See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2021/05/11/minister-van-eredienst>

¹²⁶ The government has recognised OJCM’s effectiveness in reducing inter-communal tensions. See: https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2020D47593&did=2020D47593

¹²⁷ The project’s effectiveness was researched in 2014, see: https://www.academia.edu/11378521/De_effecten_van_het_LJG-project_LEER_JE_BUREN_KENNEN_volledig_rapport_Research_into_the_effects_of_an_interreligious_dialogue_project_of_the_Liberal_Jewish_Congregation_Amsterdam_full_report_with_literature_and_all_statistical_analyses

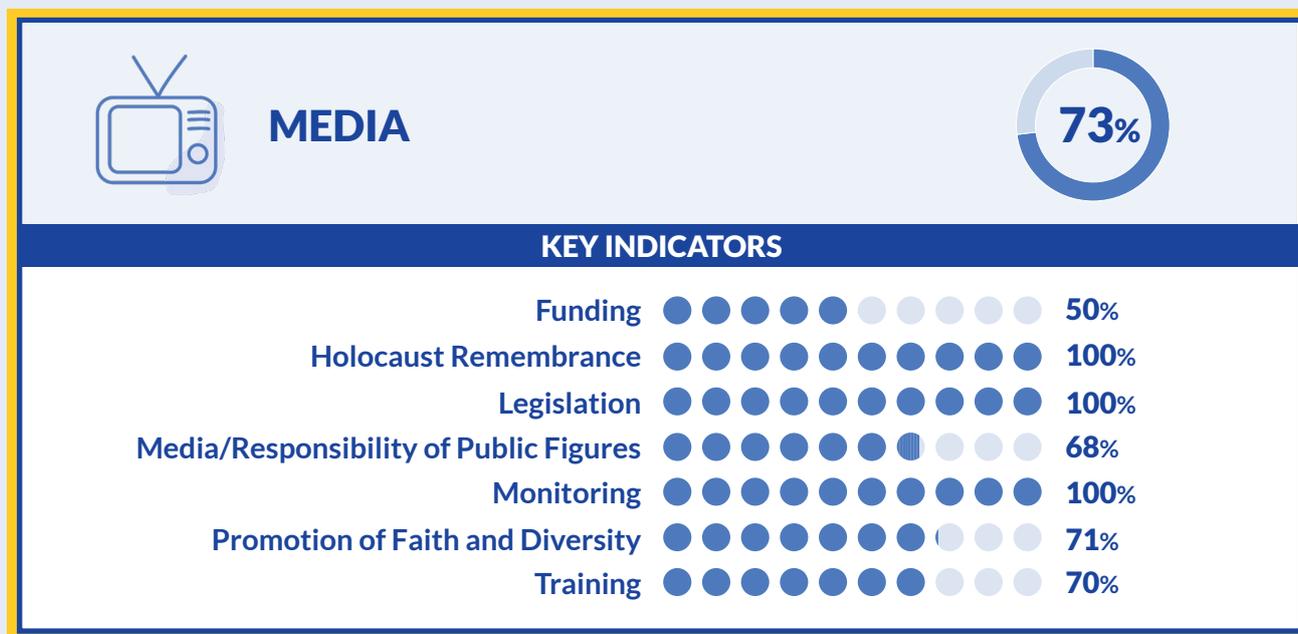
including antisemitism, has recently been compiled at the initiative of several ministries.¹²⁸ Cultural literacy does not appear to be part of compulsory training for officials or front-line workers.

4. Representation: It is not known to what extent religious leaders of other faiths are taught about Judaism, antisemitism or other religions and convictions in general. Regarding connections across religious communities, there appears to be a range of interactions, from institutionalised ties to informal relations.

¹²⁸ See: <https://www.movisie.nl/publicatie/geen-ruimte-discriminatie>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strengthen existing frameworks for interreligious and intercultural exchange by investing in their continuity and expanding their impact beyond the main urban centres.
2. Increase exchanges and trainings between religious leaders and educators, and address matters such as the place of interreligious dialogue and multireligious literacy in the school curriculum.
3. Support young leadership development initiatives that include intercultural dimensions. This will increase Jewish participation enabling Jewish life to thrive in the Netherlands long-term.



Media

OVERVIEW

The Netherlands has both a commercial and a public broadcasting system. The public system is dedicated to providing a “neutral” source of information. In addition to these, there are multiple member-based broadcasting associations that share common facilities, each defined by a particular religious, political or ideological mission.¹²⁹ The representation of

these groups is guaranteed by the Dutch Public Broadcaster (NPO),¹³⁰ and the Dutch Media Authority¹³¹ allocates national airtime for their programming.¹³² Regulatory documents for broadcast channels tend to emphasise the importance of taking a pluralistic approach to conveying multiple viewpoints.

¹³⁰ See: <https://over.npo.nl/organisatie/about-npo/our-organisation>

¹³¹ See: <https://www.cvdm.nl/english-summary-dutch-media-authority>

¹³² For more information, see: <https://cmpf.eui.eu/media-pluralism-monitor/mpm-2016-results/netherlands/>

¹²⁹ This is the legacy of pillarisation, as mentioned in the Netherlands Background section.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Funding:** A Jewish TV channel is an integrated element of the public broadcasting group, with 23 hours of television airtime per year.¹³³ Other Jewish media include independent (online) platforms which cater to the Jewish community. The public broadcaster NOS¹³⁴ produces content on antisemitism and Judaism-related issues within their regular programming, such as “explainer videos” available on YouTube.¹³⁵
- 2. Holocaust Remembrance:** International Holocaust Remembrance Day is covered prominently by large media outlets.
- 3. Legislation:** Editorial independence is guaranteed under media laws, which specify freedom from governmental and commercial influence, including for public broadcasters.¹³⁶ A broadcaster may be blocked if it is repeatedly convicted of breaching anti-discrimination laws.
- 4. Media/Responsibility of Public Figures:** Most media outlets have ethical codes around reporting. Public broadcasters may be fined if internal reviewers determine they have breached existing codes with hateful or extremist rhetoric.¹³⁷
- 5. Monitoring:** The journalistic integrity of public broadcasters is ensured by an ombudsman, who reviews complaints from the public and renders non-binding advice. The Media Authority monitors the implementation of media laws, which govern organisational questions surrounding both public and private broadcasters.
- 6. Promotion of Faith and Diversity:** The media does not tend to cover Jewish holidays. Reporting about Jews or Judaism is most often related to antisemitism, World

War II or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Further, there is little diversity concerning who from the community is invited to speak.

- 7. Training:** Journalism schools include training on diversity in culture and its impact on shaping journalistic work. However, information about specific cultures, including Judaism, depends on the specific course. Analysts suggest there is increasing attention in the media on diversity, but this tends to focus on race. As a result, Jews are often seen as part of the white majority rather than being recognised as having a unique identity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage research to identify effective media-related anti-bias strategies. This will support the existing general commitment to diversity in the Dutch broadcasting ecosystem and inform approaches to the greater challenge of combatting hate speech on social media.
2. Engage media outlets in developing media and information literacy in the educational system to promote critical thinking skills. Promote intergenerational exchanges to multiply efforts with a transversal approach that could involve schools, journalism training institutes, and media outlets. Encourage more Jewish-related content beyond the Holocaust, including on the public broadcaster NOS Youth News¹³⁸ and on School TV.¹³⁹
3. Encourage journalism schools to focus on the importance of diversity and the dangers of hate speech in their curriculum. For example, higher education institutes with journalism courses and/or courses on diversity and inclusion, such as Fontys,¹⁴⁰ can be supported with more interdisciplinary research-action projects.

¹³³ See: <https://www.eo.nl/programmas/joods-bij-de-ee>

¹³⁴ See: <https://over.nos.nl/organisatie/about-nos/>

¹³⁵ See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHGx8G2alc4>

¹³⁶ See: <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epm-j1ey0/vi3k9uwb56z1>

¹³⁷ See: <https://nltimes.nl/2022/09/16/right-wing-broadcast-crossed-line-story-claiming-less-exposed-aspect-racism-npo>

¹³⁸ See: <https://jeugdjournaal.nl/>

¹³⁹ See: <https://schooltv.nl/voortgezet-onderwijs/vakken/>

¹⁴⁰ See: <https://fontys.nl/Over-Fontys/Wie-we-zijn.htm>



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



KEY INDICATORS



Religious Freedom

OVERVIEW

Despite its Christian roots, the country is understood to be “neutral” in its approach to religion, and overall the constitution grants wide-ranging freedom to practice Judaism.¹⁴¹ In practical terms, however, Jewish beliefs and traditions may not be widely known, putting the burden on observant Jews to request special accommodations when appropriate. This may be due to the Dutch understanding of religion as a belief (*geloof*) first and foremost and less as a conviction requiring specific actions (or the absence of specific actions), which is particularly important in Judaism. Although the constitution stipulates the right to practice religion and not solely to believe, ignorance about Judaism plays a role in these difficulties, even if interviewees indicate that this is not deliberate. Concerning the ability to engage in specific religious practices, there are no restrictive laws in the Netherlands. In 2011, an initiative to prohibit religious slaughter was not passed despite having a majority in parliament as it was not approved in the Senate. An agreement was reached to impose stricter rules on stunning animals during slaughter while nevertheless allowing kosher and halal rites to continue.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ See, for instance, “The practical importance of freedom of religion for the Jewish community”: <https://eurojewcong.org/news/news-and-views/op-ed-by-ruben-vis-neutral-and-therefore-not-secular-the-practical-importance-of-freedom-of-religion-for-the-jewish-community/>

¹⁴² See: <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/ministerie-bereikt-akkoord-over-rituele-slacht~b8fe3807/>

Regarding the issue of male circumcision, there have been some calls to prohibit the practice, but this has not led to any legislation.

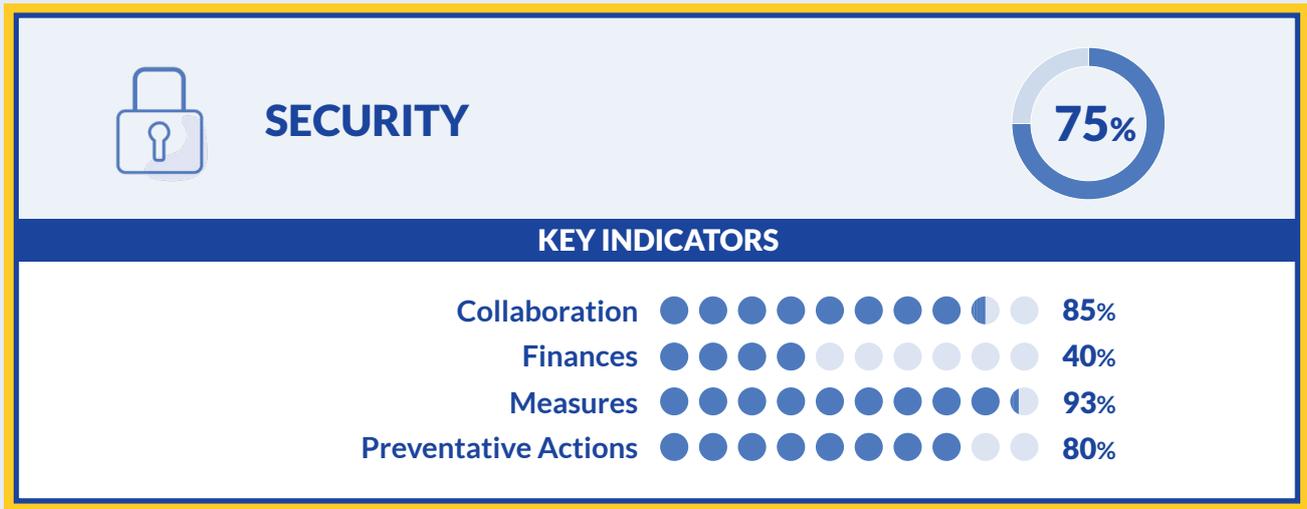
ASSESSMENT KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Equal Treatment:** Equal treatment of religious groups, including Jews, is protected by the constitution. There are Jewish chaplains in the army and in prisons, and Jews have the right to kosher meals in detention centres.
- 2. Freedom of Thought or Conscience:** The constitution protects the freedom to manifest one’s religion. Ritual slaughter for kosher meat and religious male circumcision are permitted. Practising Jewish rituals in public may entail security risks, but this situation is not connected to questions of religious freedom per se. In terms of religious practice, a lack of knowledge about Jewish holidays, shabbat and dietary restrictions may curtail the participation of religious Jews in public life.
- 3. Freedom to Manifest:** The constitution protects freedom of thought and conscience.¹⁴³

¹⁴³ See articles 1 and 6 of the constitution: https://www.denederlandseg-rondwet.nl/id/vi3ak47ajhgk/de_nederlandse_grondwet

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to treat religious freedoms as fundamental freedoms. The establishment of a standing interreligious consultation mechanism (as recommended in the Dialogue section) should support this value.
2. Provide cultural awareness training for public authorities to ensure sensitivity and more inclusive practices.
3. Improve communications to increase knowledge of Jewish culture and its contributions to Dutch culture. Although they have been established in the Netherlands for centuries, Jews are still sometimes regarded as outsiders.



Security

OVERVIEW

Much like in other Western European countries, antisemitism manifests itself as a security threat. While the Netherlands has been spared major antisemitic terror attacks in recent years, such as those in Halle, Paris, Toulouse or Brussels, there have been violent incidents and threats to people and institutions. Reports issued by the domestic intelligence and security services AIVD¹⁴⁴ and NCTV¹⁴⁵ indicate that antisemitism and antisemitic groups remain a security threat in the country. To operate successfully, Jewish schools, community centres and synagogues rely on protection from BLeW,

¹⁴⁴ See: <https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/ronl-065cfb636daae-587f75538abe4f5fc21c8c31b26/pdf>

¹⁴⁵ See: <https://www.nctv.nl/onderwerpen/dtn/documenten/publicaties/2022/11/07/dreigingsbeeld-terrorisme-nederland-57>

the Jewish volunteer-run security agency, and in some cases, from the local or military police (KMar).¹⁴⁶ There have been disagreements about how much the Jewish community should pay for its own security. For example, in 2019, some 10% of restitution funds in Amsterdam were earmarked for security purposes,¹⁴⁷ which engendered widespread criticism from the community.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ See: [https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/justice--security/royal-netherlands-marechaussee#:~:text=The%20Royal%20Netherlands%20Marechaussee%20\(in,deployed%20all%20over%20the%20world](https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/justice--security/royal-netherlands-marechaussee#:~:text=The%20Royal%20Netherlands%20Marechaussee%20(in,deployed%20all%20over%20the%20world)

¹⁴⁷ The fund distributes tax money unfairly collected from Holocaust survivors in the post-war years.

¹⁴⁸ See: <https://www.trouw.nl/binnenland/joodse-gemeenschap-moet-zelf-betalen-voor-beveiligen-instellingen-bf3d583d/>

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Collaboration:** Authorities communicate closely with leaders of Jewish institutions on security policy¹⁴⁹ and are discreet about this engagement. Interviewees for this report are generally positive about the nature of the collaboration.
- 2. Finances:** According to experts, Jewish schools and religious organisations spend between eight and ten per cent of their budget on security measures. This is handled mostly by the Jewish security agency BLeW, with some military police protection. Recently, a small portion of government restitution funds have been allocated for Jewish community security.
- 3. Measures:** Jewish schools and some synagogues are guarded by military police who communicate with BLeW and coordinate practical decisions with the local police and municipalities. Recently, new security concepts were introduced to ensure that efficiency is improved.¹⁵⁰ This included modifying the status of security measures around Amsterdam’s Jewish organisations from “static” to “dynamic,” entailing more tailor-made solutions.¹⁵¹ The counter-terrorism unit NCTV constantly monitors threats and keeps its partners informed.¹⁵²
- 4. Preventive Actions:** Military police guard or patrol certain “high profile” Jewish locations such as schools or synagogues when they are crowded. When there are no military police, the municipality is responsible for allocating police resources in accordance with security needs.

¹⁴⁹ See: <https://amsterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/document/11106535/1#-search=%22beveiliging%20joodse%22>

¹⁵⁰ See: <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2022/04/20/continued-investment-in-security-and-surveillance---guardians-of-the-rule-of-law>

¹⁵¹ Experts agree there is no indication that security has been compromised. For more information, see: <https://www.telegraaf.nl/nieuws/1741532504/geen-koninklijke-marechausse-meer-voor-joodse-panden>

¹⁵² See: https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2021D43330&did=2021D43330

RECOMMENDATIONS

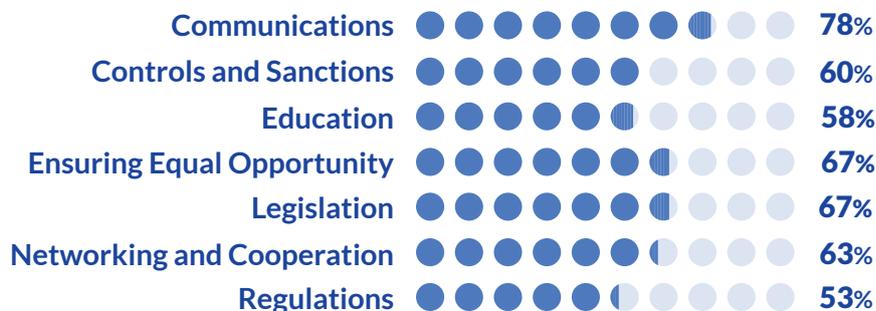
1. Continue collaborating with Jewish security organisations and Jewish organisations more broadly about safety. Organise more preventive actions, such as annual crisis exercises with the police and the Jewish security agency BLeW.
2. Despite the potential positive impact of dynamic and quickly evolving government measures, the threat of violent antisemitism persists. Therefore, authorities should increase direct funding for Jewish security infrastructure, which would ease the burden on communities, freeing up resources for proactive community-building initiatives.



SPORT



KEY INDICATORS



Sport

OVERVIEW

Concerning sport and antisemitism, football is by far the most significant challenge, and there are incidents involving both players and fans. As an example, the Amsterdam team Ajax is nicknamed “the Jews.” This leads to a complicated situation which can fuel hate speech. Although “the Jews” is a badge of pride for their fans,¹⁵³ supporters of rival teams sometimes engage in antisemitic slurs. These chants can then find themselves repeated in schools and on local football fields. In 2020, the government and the national football association KNVB presented a plan against discrimination¹⁵⁴ in response to a racist incident during a match that caused widespread outrage.¹⁵⁵ The plan is generally considered very ambitious, and the extent of cooperation between KNVB and the government is probably unique in Europe. Awareness of discrimination issues seems to have grown since the plan was introduced.

¹⁵³ For more information, see: <https://www.nssmag.com/en/sports/18438/super-jews-yid-army-ajax-tottenham>

¹⁵⁴ See: <https://www.knvb.nl/themes/sportiviteit-en-respect/diversiteit/aanvalsplan-tegen-racisme-en-discriminatie>

¹⁵⁵ See: <https://nos.nl/artikel/2378349-geen-vervolgving-voor-racistische-spreekkoren-bij-fc-den-bosch-excelsior>

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Communications:** KNVB has a diversity policy¹⁵⁶ which has been particularly outspoken on LGBTIQ+ inclusion, as seen in its “OneLove” campaign during the World Cup in Qatar. Yet there is more that can be done to develop public communications that address antisemitism and racism, building on examples from civil society or EU initiatives, such as the Anne Frank House’s “Changing the Chants” project.¹⁵⁷
- 2. Controls and Sanctions:** There are procedures in place during matches to identify discriminatory expressions and act on them, for instance, by shutting down matches or intervening with offenders. Professional clubs are required to have a security coordinator present during matches, and KNVB is currently training them to recognise discriminatory incidents or chants as part of a range of security offences they can act upon. Outside the stadium, there are a number of institutionalised networks of stakeholders (including the public prosecutor, clubs and municipalities) that aim to both identify

¹⁵⁶ See: <https://www.knvb.com/themes/new-laws-of-the-game/diversity-in-football>

¹⁵⁷ See: <https://changingthechants.eu/pilot-interventions/>

risks ahead of problematic matches and help punish offenders.¹⁵⁸

- 3. Education:** There are several educational initiatives for students as well as players who hope to tackle racism in football.¹⁵⁹ The Fair Play Workshop, for example, involves participants undertaking an intensive programme to learn about the effects of discrimination on peers from their own club; it serves as a model for many clubs abroad. KNVB publishes an annual security monitoring report detailing progress to counter discriminatory behaviour among fans.¹⁶⁰
- 4. Ensuring Equal Opportunity:** KNVB aims to ensure diverse representation within its own ranks as a positive example for football culture, although there are no specific diversity initiatives known at this time. This may be because minorities tend to be well represented in football already, as it is widely understood to be a vehicle for social mobility.
- 5. Legislation:** A so-called “football law” is in place to enable authorities to prevent vandalism related to football matches. Although there are no specific clauses in this law about discrimination, it enables authorities and prosecutors to take action against a range of offensive expressions, including racist ones.¹⁶¹
- 6. Networking and Cooperation:** Every municipality that has a professional football club has an institutionalised dialogue group with representatives from all relevant stakeholders, including the government. Furthermore, KNVB engages in formal dialogue with multiple anti-discrimination CSOs as well as the Anne Frank House.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ For a monitoring update by the ministry of Justice and Security, see: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/06/14/tk-voortgangsbrief-voetbal-en-veiligheid>

¹⁵⁹ This includes two projects carried out by the Anne Frank Foundation, see: <https://www.annefrank.org/nl/educatie/trainingen-voor-professionals/trainingen-voor-voetbal/>

¹⁶⁰ For the 2021-2022 season, see: <https://www.knvb.nl/downloads/bestand/27474/veiligheidsmonitor-2021-2022>

¹⁶¹ For an evaluation of the law, see: https://hetccv.nl/fileadmin/Be-standen/Onderwerpen/Wet_bestrijding_voetbalvandalisme_enoverlast/Eindrapport_-_Tweede_evaluatie_Wet_MBVEO.pdf

¹⁶² See: <https://footballmakeshistory.eu/anne-frank-house-enters-the-football-field-to-tackle-anti-semitism/>

KNVB regularly shares best practices with football associations in other countries.

- 7. Regulation:** In recent years, the government and KNVB have introduced stronger policies against racism with new regulations that are monitored by the Ministry of Justice and Security. A programme manager was hired to help develop policies.¹⁶³

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Municipalities should make better use of the tools available to prevent unsafe situations or expressions of discrimination during football matches.
2. Engage fans in awareness campaigns and in finding solutions. Antisemitic sentiments expressed in football stadiums are often (though not always) the result of group behaviour rather than individual belief. Bottom-up initiatives which achieve positive results are ultimately the most effective.
3. Invest more in highly successful initiatives such as the “Fancoach Project,” from football club Feyenoord and the Anne Frank Foundation.¹⁶⁴ This project, aimed at offenders, highlights the Jewish connection to a football club’s fanbase. Ideally, projects like this should be open to all fans.
4. Fund research and evaluations to support the desired impact and continuous improvement of the role of sport in strengthening social cohesion and countering discrimination of all kinds.
5. Encourage all sports federations to show leadership with an accessible reporting mechanism in place for victims of discrimination or harassment and the development of inclusive diversity practices. Expand the developments in football to other sports.

¹⁶³ See: <https://www.knvb.nl/downloads/bestand/21568/0436-voetbal-van-iedereen>

¹⁶⁴ See: <https://www.annefrank.org/nl/over-ons/onderzoek/so-ciaal-onderzoek/onderzoek-naar-antisemitisme/het-fancoach-project/>

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Jewish communities have a long history in the Netherlands, although many may not know the extent to which they have helped shape the country and continue to do so. While recognising the past and remembering those lost in the Holocaust is important, facing up to the current challenges Jews face today is also essential. According to a 2018 survey, 73% of Jews in the Netherlands say antisemitism is a big or fairly big problem, and 79% believe that Dutch government efforts to combat antisemitism are not effective.¹⁶⁵

This NOA National Report Card demonstrates that the Dutch government can and should do more to address antisemitism. Experts and government representatives interviewed for this research indicate willingness on the part of the State to pass specific measures and to honour commitments made at the national or EU level. The creation of the office of the National Coordinator (NCAB) is a positive step and will ensure the holistic nature of the still-emerging Dutch National Action Plan on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life.

However, interviewees also underscore that the government tends to rely on the excellent network of effective CSOs to maintain and promote social cohesion. As a result, benchmarking for this report reveals lower government expertise in the fields of education, remembrance, dialogue, and culture, indicating a potential gap between intentions and the implementation of measures that can produce concrete results.

The Netherlands has made progress in acknowledging the mistakes of the past, and there has been notable progress in the fields of security, higher education and sport. However, education about antisemitism still tends to focus on the Holocaust and its impact rather than on more contemporary forms of

antisemitism. For substantive progress to be made, systemic approaches to prevent and track discrimination are required, particularly in the fields of education and hate crime/hate speech monitoring.

Further, in addition to the targeted recommendations for each of the ten policy areas, some courses of action apply transversally. This is notably the case for youth and anti-discrimination policies, both of which are inextricably linked to education. These areas merit further research and possible inclusion in updates to this report. Indeed, ensuring that Jewish traditions, history, and the problem of antisemitism are consistently addressed in schools in an age-appropriate manner is a key element of fostering Jewish life in a safe and inclusive country.

Regrettably, antisemitism has played a significant role in recent Dutch and European history. Like racism and other forms of hatred, antisemitism can only be overcome by recognising and understanding its specific nature and manifestations. The European Union has required and supported the Netherlands and other Member States in developing monitoring and response systems. Unfortunately, the policy areas which have the most potential to prevent the escalation of hate are those areas in which the EU has the least authority to demand change: education, culture, dialogue, and social media. This makes it all the more important that Member States engage effectively at the national level. By acknowledging existing gaps and opportunities in current national policy and making a concerted, coordinated effort to prevent, address and eradicate antisemitism, a clearer path can be opened towards a more inclusive and democratic Europe.

¹⁶⁵ Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism Second Survey, Fundamental Rights Agency, March 2019, p. 34.

ANNEX – STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED FOR THIS REPORT

With gratitude to the many people and institutions who contributed to this research

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NOA - Networks Overcoming Antisemitism
www.noa-project.eu



CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
www.ceji.org

