



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

ESTONIA



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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 various areas and helps them develop and implement holistic national action plans to address and prevent antisemitism, as well as 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. CEJI's activities include delivering diversity education and enhancing interfaith and intercultural dialogue, while advocating in the EU against antisemitism and all forms of discrimination. For more information, see: www.ceji.org

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NOA PARTNERS

[Association for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage and Culture \(AEPJ\)](#)

[European Union of Jewish Students \(EUJS\)](#)

[World Jewish Congress \(WJC\)](#)

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ABBREVIATIONS

CSO	Civil society organisation
EADSE	Estonian Anti-Doping and Sports Ethics Foundation
EHRC	Estonian Human Rights Centre
EIHM	Estonian Institute of Historical Memory
EJM	Estonian Jewish Museum
EOC	Estonian Olympic Committee
ERR	Estonian Public Broadcasting
ESER	Estonian Code of Sports Ethics Rules
ETA	Equal Treatment Act
FRA	Fundamental Rights Agency
HARNO	Education and Youth Board
IHRA	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
INACH	International Network Against Cyber Hate
INSA	Integration Foundation
JCE	Jewish Community of Estonia
JCC	Jewish Community Center
KAPO	Estonian Internal Security Service
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PC	Penal Code
PPA	Police and Border Guard Board
SKA	Social Insurance Board
TTJA	Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority

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 European Jewish organisations that came together in 2019 with the aim of supporting holistic policy and practice to overcome antisemitism and foster Jewish life. The project aligns with and contributes to the European Commission's objectives, as outlined in its first-ever EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, presented on October 5, 2021, and reiterated in the Council Declaration on October 15, 2024.¹

NOA provides a pragmatic approach and framework that 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.

NOA's long-term goals include monitoring Member States's policies and actions to counter antisemitism and foster Jewish life through their government institutions, mapping efforts to combat antisemitism; equipping educators with training and teaching tools; diffusing positive narratives through socio-cultural educational activities to ensure the creation of inclusive environments; and evaluating impact to improve and sustain the project's activities over time.

The first phase of NOA included reports on Belgium, Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria and Italy.² The second phase, known as NOA-2, covers two new countries, Estonia and Spain. NOA-2 offers several important innovations, including a substantial revision of the scoring methodology and the addition of youth as a new policy area to complement the previous 10 areas: culture & heritage, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, and sport.

These changes aim to enhance the National Report Cards' ability to provide a nuanced, holistic snapshot of EU Member States' policies, highlighting existing gaps as well as opportunities for further responses. We are pleased that this benchmarking tool has already supported the development and implementation of National Action Plans to counter antisemitism and foster Jewish life and will continue to do so.

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

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-antisemitism/eu-strategy-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-jewish-life-2021-2030/about-eu-strategy_en#:~:text=Actions%20of%20the%20Strategy%20include,sites%20%E2%80%9Cwhere%20Holocaust%20happened%E2%80%9D

² <https://www.noa-project.eu/national-report-cards/>

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

For more than thirty years, CEJI has stood with individuals and organisations of diverse religions, cultures, and backgrounds to promote an inclusive and democratic Europe. Our activities, including training, education, dialogue and advocacy, are based on a human rights framework that has guided intergovernmental institutions since the mid-20th Century. This framework was established by the United Nations, affirmed by the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), reinforced and enforced by the European Union, and transposed into national law by all EU Member States as a guarantor of Jewish life, both present and future.

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, the spread of colonisation and the 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 Shoah.

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 various systems in place to monitor antisemitic attitudes, hate speech and hate crime in Europe, developments which are essential for responding to rising antisemitism with measures of protection and prevention. NOA's approach is different yet complementary. The project not only benchmarks government measures but also offers concrete and actionable recommendations to strengthen them.

We are proud that the first phase of NOA has been widely disseminated and is proving to be useful not only in preventing and addressing antisemitism but also in developing national action plans against racism and all other forms of discrimination. Indeed, 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), the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), 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 Philippon
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 non-governmental sector to support the Council of the European Union's Declarations on fostering Jewish life and combating antisemitism on the continent.³ This report showcases the current policy landscape in eleven areas: culture & heritage, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, sport, and youth.

This report demonstrates that Estonia has a generally strong legal framework and a proactive approach to human rights and minority protection. However, challenges remain in institutional implementation, monitoring and collaboration with the Jewish community.

KEY FINDINGS

1. The state actively works to combat antisemitism and foster Jewish life, often in collaboration with the Jewish community and international organisations.
2. Post-October 2023, the country has observed an increase in antisemitic incidents, primarily manifesting as hate speech. However, current limitations regarding hate speech legislation present a challenge to prosecuting offences.
3. The policy areas that scored the lowest are hate crime and hate speech.
4. The policy areas that scored the highest are Holocaust remembrance and security.
5. The majority of Jews reside in Tallinn, with smaller active communities in other areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

1. Strengthen legal frameworks for hate speech and discrimination by expediting the adoption of proposed amendments to Article 151 of the Penal Code. These would broaden the scope of hate speech criminalisation beyond the current definition. Specific legislation to address Holocaust denial and trivialisation, aligning with broader European efforts, should also be considered.
2. Provide the National Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life with the necessary support for policy implementation. Ensure the smooth functioning of the task force and working groups. Efforts should be made to distribute resources to smaller regional communities.
3. Improve systematic data collection of antisemitic incidents to allow for more detailed analysis of trends, better targeted interventions, and increased accountability. Ensure that police recording systems include the mandatory flagging of bias motivations.
4. Formalise and strengthen cooperation between law enforcement, the prosecutor's office, and Jewish community organisations for consistent reporting, investigation, and prosecution of antisemitic hate speech incidents. Allocate resources to the Department of Religious Affairs within the Ministry of the Interior and to the Prosecutor's Office to support training for justice professionals.
5. Expand education initiatives to incorporate various aspects of Jewish history, traditions, and culture, and do not focus solely on World War II and the Holocaust. Training of teachers, youth workers, and school leaders should address contemporary forms of antisemitism, including online manifestations and subtle biases. Actively initiate or fund public discussions and campaigns beyond educational settings to raise awareness about hate speech and antisemitism in all its forms.

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47065/st13637-en20.pdf>; <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14245-2024-INIT/en/pdf>

CONCLUSION

Estonia has a strong foundational commitment to human rights and minority protections and does not face as much antisemitism as in some other EU Member States. Nevertheless, there has been an observable rise in antisemitic hate speech in the past two years, underscoring the need for sustained vigilance and proactive measures. Moving forward, policy-makers should focus on strengthening legal frameworks and ensuring consistent policy implementation through formalised inter-ministerial cooperation. Future efforts will benefit from expanding and deepening educational and public awareness initiatives, securing dedicated and sustainable funding for Jewish community needs, and establishing robust data collection and monitoring mechanisms to inform future policy adjustments. By addressing these areas, Estonia can actively and effectively combat antisemitism, foster Jewish life, and open a clearer path towards a more inclusive and democratic Europe.

INTRODUCTION

NOA-Networks Overcoming Antisemitism is an innovative and forward-thinking project that provides Member States with recommendations for the development and implementation of national action plans to counter antisemitism and foster Jewish life.

Backed by European Union funding, a consortium of significant European Jewish organisations came together in 2019 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.

The first phase of the project, NOA-1 (2020-2023), covered five countries: Austria, Belgium, Hungary, Italy, and the Netherlands. The flagship activity was the publication of National Report Cards (NRCs), which are designed to support the Council of the European Union's Declarations on fostering Jewish life and combating antisemitism.⁴ 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. Furthermore, they emphasise the importance of engaging in policymaking at local, national, and European levels.⁵

The second phase of the project, NOA-2, began in May 2024 and encompasses two new countries: Estonia and Spain. It reflects multiple years of stakeholder engagement to achieve the highest standards in evaluating the level of governmental compliance and benchmarking progress.

This Estonian report is intended to assist the country in developing and implementing new policies by highlighting current strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it provides a wealth of socio-cultural educational resources that will contribute to combating rising antisemitism.

As this report's focus is the state's role and obligations, measures taken by civil society organisations (CSOs) and local communities are mentioned only to the extent that they are relevant to the state's role. Researchers primarily examined the existence of state policies and practices and only undertook a limited qualitative assessment of their impact.

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

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47065/st13637-en20.pdf>; <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14245-2024-IN/IT/en/pdf>

⁵ Based on the recommendations from the first five reports, NOA has developed a set of practical guidelines for cities and municipalities, "The Guidelines for Fostering Jewish Life". For more information, see: <https://www.noa-project.eu/guidelines-resources/>

METHODOLOGY

The 2018 Council of the European Union's Declaration on the fight against antisemitism⁶ was the basis for the development of NOA's research methodology. The Declaration sets out its expectations in multiple policy areas. Using this as a starting point, the NOA team explored how these broadly worded directives could translate into measurable indicators. Nine areas of life are included in the Council Declarations. The initial research team added an additional area, "religious freedom," because some partners felt this has a direct bearing on Jewish communities' ability to thrive.⁷ NOA-2 has expanded the scope further to include youth policy, previously considered a transversal element, to acknowledge its importance and provide more detail.

With the launch of the NOA-2, the NOA partners have reflected on the previous process and revised their approach. This updated theoretical framework offers significant refinements to enhance consistency, usability, and objectivity.⁸ Currently, the eleven policy areas addressed are: culture & heritage, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, sport and youth. Once the policy areas were chosen, existing standards were compiled to establish a context for assessment. They are based on international norms established through regulations, directives, resolutions and other documents adopted by intergovernmental organisations such as European Union institutions, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and UNESCO.⁹

The new methodology assesses five transversal indicators that apply across all policy areas, each given equal weight (20%):¹⁰ basic rights/

legislation, implementation and enforcement, monitoring mechanisms, resources/financing, and stakeholder engagement. This consolidation enables researchers to focus more on objective criteria, such as legal documents, strategies, bylaws, and guidelines, which enhances the credibility and defensibility of the findings. Furthermore, a clear distinction has been introduced between legislative provisions and implementation practices, ensuring that the full range of state actions is taken into account. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the current national landscape, the author of this report card gathered information through desk research and interviews, as well as a stakeholder workshop.

This improved methodology establishes a stronger foundation for assessing government measures, forming a crucial step toward developing achievable and concrete recommendations for Member States to effectively combat antisemitism and foster Jewish life.

⁶ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15213-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

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

⁸ The NOA partners would like to thank Dr. Başak Yavcan, Head of Research for the Migration Policy Group, for her expert contributions in indicator development and methodology.

⁹ For more information about the methodology, see: <https://www.noa-project.eu/noa-methodology-standards-indicators-and-scoring-system/>

¹⁰ In NOA-1, a different weighting system was used.

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 11 policy areas to be researched are determined: culture & heritage, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, sport, and youth.

2



STEP 2 Creation of Indicators

Based on existing international standards, key research questions are developed for each policy area, which are then translated into five transversal indicators:

- Basic rights/legislation
- Implementation and enforcement
- Monitoring mechanisms
- Resources/financing
- Stakeholder engagement

3



STEP 3 Collection & Analysis

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

4



STEP 4 Input & Interviews

To provide data and input, **25** people are consulted, including:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 8 government representatives | 14 community representatives |
| 1 civil society organisation representatives | 2 academics |

5



STEP 5 Scoring

A scoring system is implemented, enabling the comparison of national policies and practices with established standards, facilitating future benchmarking, and identifying existing gaps and opportunities.

A stakeholder workshop is undertaken with the research team and a select group of representatives from step 4 to assign final scores. Each indicator is given the same weight (20%) and is assessed on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest score.

6



STEP 6 Production of Report

7



STEP 7 Dissemination

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

ESTONIA: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Estonia is a parliamentary democracy that is structured around three primary levels of power. Legislative authority is vested in the unicameral Parliament (*Riigikogu*), which comprises 101 members elected for four-year terms.¹¹ Executive Power is held by the Government of the Republic and consists of 14 ministers, including the prime minister.¹² Judicial power is ensured by an independent judiciary, including the Supreme Court (*Riigikohus*), the highest court which oversees the enforcement of laws and constitutional compliance.

The head of state is the president, elected by the parliament or an electoral body. The president has a primarily ceremonial role but retains certain powers, such as nominating the prime minister and representing Estonia internationally. Estonia has 79 municipalities, and local authorities have autonomy to manage regional matters, including education, infrastructure, and social services. There are regional disparities in the country, with approximately one-third of the population residing in greater Tallinn, the capital. The next largest cities are Tartu, Narva, Pärnu, and Kohtla-Järve, which reflect a mix of historical, economic, and cultural importance.

JEWISH COMMUNITIES

Historical archives have records of individual Jews living in Estonia as early as the 14th century, and the Jewish community was established in the early to mid-19th century.¹³ In 1721, Estonia became part of the Russian Empire, but was situated outside the Pale of Settlement. The establishment of Jewish congregations in Estonia was initiated by the so-called Nikolai soldiers, or cantonists, who

were deployed following the imperial decree permitting the conscription of Jews into military service.¹⁴ In 1883, the first synagogue in Tallinn was opened on Maakri Street.¹⁵ The cornerstone of the synagogue in Tartu was laid in 1899, and the building was completed in 1903.¹⁶ Both synagogues were destroyed in a Soviet air raid in March 1944.

Today, the majority of Jews live in Tallinn, while smaller active communities are in Ida-Virumaa, Narva, Pärnu, Rakvere, Tartu, Valga, Viljandi, and Võru. However, before World War I, Tartu was the centre of Jewish life, largely due to the presence of the University of Tartu. The university attracted Jewish students, scholars, and professionals from across the Russian Empire and beyond, especially after restrictions on Jewish education and mobility were eased in the late 19th century.

The Jewish population in Estonia is relatively small. As of 1 January 2024, according to information from the population register, there are 2 013 Jews living in the country, which constitutes 0,15 % of the total population of 1 374 687. In 1934, there were 4 434 Jews (0,4 % of the population), and during the interwar period, the number of Jews remained fairly constant.

By the early 20th century, Estonia had a well-established Jewish community with synagogues, schools, and cultural institutions.¹⁷ In comparison with other East Central European countries, the treatment of minorities at the time was almost exemplary. Although Estonia was not the first state in Europe to grant its Jewish minority cultural autonomy, that autonomy was never revoked or curtailed, unlike in neighbouring Lithuania and Latvia.¹⁸

¹¹ The next parliamentary elections planned for 2027.

¹² Areas of Government Ministries are stipulated in Subchapter 4 of the Government of the Republic Act, RT I, 30.12.2024, 4, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/516012025002/consolide>

¹³ Jokton, K. (1992). *Juutide ajaloost Eestis (On the History of Jews in Estonia)*, Tartu Ülikool, p. 56; Tambur, S. (2022). Remembering the once vibrant Jewish community of Estonia, Estonian World, 27.01.2022, <https://estonianworld.com/life/remembering-the-once-vibrant-jewish-community-of-estonia/>

¹⁴ Tiido, A. (2018). Where Does Russia End and the West Start? *E-International Relations*, 3-4, <https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/73665>

¹⁵ <https://www.muis.ee/museaalview/2078283>

¹⁶ <https://www.muis.ee/museaalview/2404272>

¹⁷ Prior to 1940, Jews had their own high schools in Tallinn and Tartu, as well as a primary school in Valga; Jewish Tallinn, <https://museum.jewish.ee/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/tingimargid.pdf>

¹⁸ Weiss-Wendt, Anton. 2008. "Thanks to the Germans! Jewish Cultural Autonomy in Interwar Estonia." *East European Jewish Affairs* 38 (1), pp. 89-104.

The University of Tartu opened a chair of Jewish studies in 1934. In 1939, there were 32 different Jewish organisations active in Estonia.¹⁹ In 1940, Estonia was incorporated into the Soviet Union, and the communist authorities ended Jewish cultural autonomy, prohibiting the activities of Jewish public organisations. In June 1941, a mass deportation took place in Estonia, affecting various groups, including approximately ten percent of the country's Jewish population, who were sent to Siberia.²⁰ Many of them never came back.

Estonia's Jewish population was further decimated during the Nazi occupation of World War II, with nearly all its members either killed or forced to flee.²¹ In July-August 1941, approximately 3 000 Estonian Jews fled to other parts of the USSR to escape the advancing German forces. Once Germany occupied Estonian territory, nearly all the Jews who remained were killed.²²

During the Soviet occupation that followed WWII, maintaining one's Jewish identity became extremely complicated, as organised cultural activities came to a complete halt. Nonetheless, many Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union moved to Estonia during this period, as systematic antisemitism was less rampant and there were better opportunities for education.²³ In 1945, only 1 500 Jews resided in Estonia, but by 1959, there were 3 714 in Tallinn alone. Even more Jews came from other parts of the Soviet Union to Estonia during the ensuing three decades, although many later left for Israel. In 1989, there were 4 631 Jews (0,3 % of the total population).²⁴

¹⁹ Tambur, S. (2022), 'Remembering the once vibrant Jewish community of Estonia', *Estonian World*, 22.01.2022, <https://estonianworld.com/life/remembering-the-once-vibrant-jewish-community-of-estonia/> (14 November 2024).

²⁰ Whole families were deported without trial. Men were generally imprisoned and most of them died in Siberia in Gulag camps. Women and children were resettled in forced settlements in Omsk and Novosibirsk Oblasts, Krasnoyars, Tajikistan, Altai Krai, and Kazakhstan.

²¹ Weiss-Wendt, A. (2009), *Murder Without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust*. Syracuse University Press, p 502; Weiss-Wendt, A. (2017), *On the Margins: Essays on the History of Jews in Estonia*. Central European University Press, pp. 332, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt1pq342v>

²² The names of 974 Holocaust victims have been identified, according to data from the Estonian Jewish Museum, director Gennadi Gramberg.

²³ Weiss-Wendt, A. (2008), *Murder Without Hatred: Estonians and the Holocaust*. Syracuse University Press, pp. 502.

²⁴ Eesti Entsüklopeedia. Rahvuskosseis Eestis (Ethnic Composition in Estonia), <http://entsyklopeedia.ee/artikkel/rahvuskosseiseestis>

The Jewish community tends to be dominated by secular Jews, most likely due to Soviet era persecution, generational changes, and the overwhelming trend towards secularisation in Europe. The legislative body of the Jewish Community is a 15-member Council.²⁵ The Jewish Religious Community is led by Chief Rabbi Shmuel Kot. The Jewish Cultural Center, the Estonian Jewish Museum, and Tallinn's synagogue, which reopened in 2007, are central to community life, providing services, cultural events, and educational programmes.²⁶ There is a Jewish school in Tallinn²⁷ and various Jewish-run NGOs.

There are several NGOs which regroup Jews from the Baltic region. The Baltic Jewish Network, founded in 2014, is an initiative of local young professionals who identified the need for connecting with others of Jewish origin. The very first Limmud Baltics²⁸ conference took place in 2017, launching a new Jewish educational and social gathering in the Baltic states. Another regional NGO is the Baltic Jewish Forum (BJF), a non-profit organisation that focuses on social, medical, material, and cultural aid and support to Jews in need. Managed from Sweden in cooperation with international aid organisations, the BJF helps and supports Jews in need in the Baltic countries.

OVERVIEW OF ANTISEMITISM

Legal frameworks

Estonia is historically known for its relatively benevolent treatment of ethnic minorities, including Jews. The country officially recognises the Holocaust and participates in international initiatives to combat antisemitism, ensuring awareness and education about Jewish history

²⁵ <https://jewish.ee/structure/>

²⁶ The Tallinn Synagogue Beit Bella, designed by KOKO Architects seats 180 worshippers, expandable to 230 for concerts and events. Its soaring semi-circular roof symbolizes the ebb and flow of Jewish life in Estonia. The synagogue complex includes a mikveh, and kosher restaurant, <https://www.muis.ee/museaalview/2644269>

²⁷ The Tallinn Jewish School was reopened on 1 September 1990 as the Jewish Basic School with Russian as the language of instruction, marking the reestablishment of Jewish education in Estonia after Soviet-era closures. Since 1991, it has been known as the Tallinn Jewish School and is administered by the Tallinn Education Department. The Jewish Private School "Eshkol" was active in 2020-2025. From 2013-2025, the AVIV kindergarten was run by the NGO Jewish Kindergarten with the support of the Jewish Community.

²⁸ <https://limmudbaltics.eu/limmud-baltics-2024-overview/>

and rights. On 29 April 2021, the Government adopted a “Concept for Measures against Antisemitism” (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Concept’), which creates a comprehensive system enabling the development of clear and unambiguous guidelines for action against antisemitism in the Estonian context. It applies the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.²⁹

Estonia’s equality laws are grounded in its constitution and relevant legal frameworks, which ensure equal rights and protection against discrimination for all individuals. The Estonian Constitution (adopted in 1992) guarantees equality before the law, prohibits discrimination based on nationality, race, religion, or other characteristics, and protects the right to preserve one’s identity and culture.³⁰ The Equal Treatment Act prohibits discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, nationality, and other factors in various areas, including employment, education, and access to services. It also establishes legal remedies for victims of discrimination.³¹ Incitement to hatred, violence, or discrimination, including actions targeting Jews or other minority groups on the basis of religion or ethnicity, is strictly prohibited and constitutes a violation of fundamental human rights and anti-discrimination laws. Supporting or justifying international crime and violations of equality are also criminal offences.³²

The perestroika era of the mid-1980s, when Estonia was still part of the USSR, and the subsequent Estonian independence movement laid the foundation for the revival of cultural societies and organisations of national minorities. Article 50 of the Constitution establishes that minority groups have the right to create self-governing institutions for national cultural interests, subject to the conditions and procedures set forth in the National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act, which came into force

on 28 November 1993.³³ The Act guarantees the right to establish national organisations, organise education in one’s mother tongue, organise cultural events, promote the culture and education of minority groups, and establish and award funds, scholarships, and prizes.

Overall, Estonia upholds a legal framework that fosters equality and combats antisemitism, aligning with international human rights standards. However, some challenges remain in addressing subtle or systemic biases.

State policies

The Estonian government developed an Internal Security Development Plan for the period of 2020–2030³⁴ to promote a secure society where people can contribute to the life of the community. The most important activities of the development plan include creating a preventive and safe living environment, providing prompt and professional assistance, ensuring internal security, managing population efficiently, and implementing smart and innovative internal security measures. As part of the plan, the Ministry of the Interior was tasked with drafting the policy document, the Concept for Measures against Antisemitism.³⁵

The Concept covers three key areas: ensuring the security of Jewish organisations and individuals of Jewish origin; integrating the Holocaust and antisemitism into educational frameworks; and enhancing the detection and response to antisemitic crimes and misdemeanours. On 19 August 2021, in accordance with the Concept, a working group consisting of representatives from various ministries and the Jewish community was formed.³⁶ The chair of the working group submits a written annual report on the activities of the working group to the Minister of the Interior. The Department of Religious Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior supports the working group.

²⁹ Ministry of the Interior (2021), Concept for Measures Against Antisemitism (*Antisemitismivastaste meetmete kontseptsioon*); see page 13.

³⁰ Articles 12, 49, 50 of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, RT I, 15.05.2015, 2, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/530122020003/consolide>

³¹ Equal Treatment Act, RT I, 22.10.2021, 11, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/507032022003/consolide>

³² Penal Code, RT I, 12.12.2024, 6, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/529122024005/consolide>

³³ National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act, adopted on 26 October 1993, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/504042019005/consolide>

³⁴ Internal Security Strategy 2020–2030 (*Siseturvalisuse arengukava 2020–2030*), <https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2025-01/Siseturvalisusearengukava2020203048lkfinalENG.pdf>

³⁵ Ministry of the Interior (2021), Concept for Measures Against Antisemitism (*Antisemitismivastaste meetmete kontseptsioon*).

³⁶ Siseministri käskkiri nr. 1-3/76 (19.08.2021) “Antisemitismivastaste meetmete kontseptsiooni eesmärkide saavutamiseks töörühma moodustamine” (*Minister of the Interior’s Directive No. 1-3/76 of 19 August 2021 about Establishment of a Working Group to Achieve the Objectives of the Antisemitism Measures Concept*).

CONCEPT FOR MEASURES AGAINST ANTISEMITISM: OVERVIEW – 2021

This document was prepared by the Ministry of the Interior and addresses measures to combat antisemitism in Estonia. The objective of this concept is to create a comprehensive system that enables the development of clear and unambiguous guidelines for action against antisemitism in the Estonian context. The concept covers several areas, including ensuring the security of Jewish organizations and people, addressing the Holocaust and antisemitism in education, and detecting and recording crimes motivated by antisemitism.

General Principles:

- The definition of antisemitism is based on the non-legally binding working definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).
- Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. It can be directed towards Jewish and non-Jewish individuals and their property, Jewish community institutions, and religious facilities.
- Antisemitism can manifest in various forms, including verbal and physical attacks, discrimination, dehumanizing claims, and conspiracy theories.

Problems and Solutions:

- Antisemitism is present in various political and religious ideologies, with extremist Muslims and leftists being the main sources of threat.
- Antisemitism is also prevalent online, including social networks and conspiracy theories.
- Compared to other EU member states, antisemitism is less prevalent in Estonia. However, it must be considered that antisemitism exists, and its threat is not non-existent.
- According to surveys, many people consider the Holocaust topic to be insufficiently addressed in schools.

Measures Against Antisemitism:

1. Ensuring Security:

- Regular meetings between the Police and Border Guard Board (PPA) and the Jewish community to exchange information.
- Cooperation between the PPA and Jewish communities to ensure the security of community buildings and events.

- Joint exercises between the PPA and the Jewish community to respond to possible sudden events.

2. Addressing the Holocaust and Antisemitism in Education and Culture:

- Providing up-to-date educational materials and developing educational programs for museums.
- Cooperation with the Yad Vashem Center, the Estonian Jewish Museum, and the Jewish community.
- Translation and provision of practical recommendations and guidance materials.
- Ensuring the continuity of Holocaust commemoration events and maintenance of memorials.
- Providing training to the PPA and the Prosecutor's Office to identify manifestations of antisemitism.

3. Detection of Crimes Motivated by Antisemitism:

- Providing training to the PPA and the Prosecutor's Office.
- Compiling hate crime statistics, including statistics on crimes motivated by antisemitism.














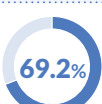





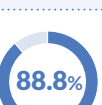


4. Strengthening the Jewish Community:

- Supporting Jewish culture, education, and religious traditions.

Important Aspects:

- The Ministry of the Interior is primarily responsible for implementing the concept, but other ministries and agencies contribute.
- Cooperation with Jewish organizations in Estonia is essential.
- The Ministry of the Interior will create a working group consisting of representatives from various ministries and agencies to ensure a common information field. Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Police and Border Guard Board (PPA), Estonian Jewish Community, and Estonian Jewish Religious Community are the members of the working group.
- The measures are horizontal and affect multiple areas.

ESTONIA – ALL POLICY AREAS

	Culture & Heritage			Media	
	Education			Religious Freedom	
	Hate Crime			Security	
	Hate Speech			Sport	
	Holocaust Remembrance			Youth	
	Intercultural Dialogue				

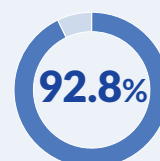
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESTONIAN POLICY-MAKERS

1. Strengthen legal frameworks for hate speech and discrimination by expediting the adoption of proposed amendments to Article 151 of the Penal Code. These would broaden the scope of hate speech criminalisation beyond the current definition. Specific legislation to address Holocaust denial and trivialisation, aligning with broader European efforts, should also be considered.
2. Provide the National Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life with the necessary support for policy implementation. Ensure the smooth functioning of the task force and working groups. Efforts should be made to distribute resources to smaller regional communities.
3. Improve systematic data collection of antisemitic incidents to allow for more detailed analysis of trends, better targeted interventions, and increased accountability. Ensure that police recording systems include the mandatory flagging of bias motivations.
4. Formalise and strengthen cooperation between law enforcement, the prosecutor's office, and Jewish community organisations for consistent reporting, investigation, and prosecution of antisemitic hate speech incidents. Allocate resources to the Department of Religious Affairs within the Ministry of the Interior and to the Prosecutor's Office to support training for justice professionals.
5. Expand education initiatives to incorporate various aspects of Jewish history, traditions, and culture, and do not focus solely on World War II and the Holocaust. Training of teachers, youth workers, and school leaders should address contemporary forms of antisemitism, including online manifestations and subtle biases. Actively initiate or fund public discussions and campaigns beyond educational settings to raise awareness about hate speech and antisemitism in all its forms.

BREAKDOWN OF POLICY AREAS



CULTURE & HERITAGE



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	90%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	94%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	100%

Culture & Heritage

OVERVIEW

While there isn't a specific legal definition or a separate action plan solely for Jewish heritage, Jewish cultural organisations are treated on an equal basis to other cultural institutions, receiving grants and project-based support for various activities and events. These include festivals, educational programmes, and exhibitions, often in collaboration with state and municipal bodies. The Estonian National Heritage Board, under the Ministry of Culture, is responsible for implementing policies related to heritage conservation. They have achieved notable successes, such as the restoration of the Old Jewish Cemetery in Tallinn. The National Registry of Cultural Monuments contains information on all monuments under state protection, including those of Jewish heritage.

The Jewish community in Estonia continues to thrive culturally and religiously. Institutions such as the Tallinn Synagogue, inaugurated in 2007, serve as centres for religious practice and cultural events. The community organises festivals, educational programmes, and cultural exhibitions that celebrate Jewish heritage, often in collaboration with state and municipal

bodies.³⁷ Restitution laws enacted after 1991 allowed the Jewish Religious Community to reclaim properties confiscated during the Soviet era, while the Heritage Conservation Act provides broad protection for Jewish cultural and historical sites. During World War II and under the Soviet regime, both the tangible and intangible Jewish cultural heritage were destroyed. In recent decades, memorials and plaques have been erected to commemorate what once existed, and traditions and recollections are being documented. Digital platforms are also being used to archive materials and increase broader visibility.³⁸

The Estonian Institute of Historical Memory (EIHM)³⁹ contributes significantly to Jewish heritage and life in Estonia by educating students and teachers through dedicated programmes on antisemitism, Holocaust history, and Jewish culture. EIHM supports national remembrance ceremonies and the creation of memorials to ensure public awareness and commemoration. It conducts academic research on Estonia's totalitarian past, including Jewish persecution, and maintains an authoritative historical record. Additionally, it collaborates with educational

³⁷ <https://jcc.jewish.ee>

³⁸ <https://nazismvictims.ee/>

³⁹ <https://mnemosyne.ee/en/>

institutions, museums, government bodies, and global organisations to sustain Jewish heritage and community life.

The Estonian Jewish Museum (EJM)⁴⁰ is a member of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and the Association of European Jewish Museums (AEJM). EJM plays a vital role in preserving, documenting, and showcasing Jewish history and culture in Estonia. The Estonian National Archives has a digital collection of Jewish resources,⁴¹ while the Estonian Folklore Archives has actively collected and preserved Jewish folklore since the 1920s, including over 1 400 records.

Estonia is part of UNESCO and Council of Europe conventions and regularly fulfils its reporting obligations.⁴² The country actively participates in the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes programme, and efforts are underway to promote Jewish traditions and customs as part of intangible cultural heritage through collections and publications. However, there is no consistent mainstreaming of Jewish issues in state-sponsored media, educational curricula, or broader cultural institutions, and some heritage sites lack consistent funding.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

1. Basic Rights and Legislation: Estonia has a robust legal framework for the protection of cultural heritage, which broadly encompasses Jewish heritage. The restitution laws allowed for the return of confiscated properties, and there's a general commitment to preserving diverse cultural heritage. However, the absence of a specific legal definition or dedicated framework for Jewish heritage means it's not explicitly prioritised within the broader system.

2. Implementation and Enforcement:

The Estonian Jewish Museum actively documents and exhibits Jewish history and serves as a consultation centre for schools. The state provides grants and project support for promoting Jewish traditions, customs, and arts as intangible cultural heritage, with institutions like the Tallinn Synagogue serving as cultural hubs. Digitising Jewish folklore archives ensures they will be accessible for generations to come.

3. Monitoring: While the National Heritage Board identifies and registers cultural monuments, and the Jewish Museum acts as a consultation centre, there are no specific, regular monitoring mechanisms solely focused on assessing measures to foster Jewish life in the cultural sphere.

4. Resources and Finances: Jewish cultural organisations receive grants and project-based support from the state and local governments. The Estonian Jewish Museum receives operating support from the state budget. However, there is no separate budget line specifically for Jewish heritage, and funding can be inconsistent.

5. Stakeholder Engagement: The restoration of the Old Jewish Cemetery involved collaboration between the Tallinn City Government and the Jewish community. The Jewish Museum functions as a consultation centre for schools, and a representative is part of the Estonian delegation to the IHRA. The Jewish Community of Estonia works to involve members outside Tallinn in its activities.

⁴⁰ For more information, see: https://www.aejm.org/members/estonian-jewish-museum/?utm_source=chatgpt.com; <https://www.facebook.com/estonianjewishmuseum>; <https://jewish.ee/juudi-muuseum/>

⁴¹ <https://latvia.jewishgen.org/research/archival-resources/overview-estonian-resources/estonian-jewish-museumestonian-jewry-archive>

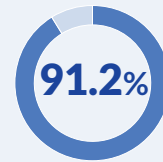
⁴² Recent reports: Estonian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. (2024). *Country report of Estonia 2024: For the years 2016–2024*; Government of Estonia. (2024). *Estonia's sixth report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (ACFC/SR/VI (2024)007).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a specific legal definition for “Jewish heritage” to ensure its explicit recognition and prioritisation within national cultural heritage policies.
2. Create a dedicated, system-wide strategy and action plan for the preservation, promotion, and recognition of Jewish heritage, ensuring consistent implementation across regions and institutions.
3. Increase consistent and earmarked funding for Jewish heritage sites and cultural initiatives. Provide resources and technical support to the adviser of the Cultural Diversity Department at the Ministry of Culture, who participates in the Ministry of the Interior’s working group on combating antisemitism.
4. Enhance the mainstreaming of Jewish topics and cultural contributions within national art and history museums, festivals, and official heritage websites to increase public awareness.
5. Establish formal monitoring mechanisms to regularly assess the effectiveness of measures aimed at fostering Jewish life in the cultural sphere.



EDUCATION



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	86%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	90%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	100%

Education

OVERVIEW

Estonia has a robust legal and policy framework for addressing antisemitism and integrating Jewish studies within its formal education system. General anti-discrimination policies are rooted in the Equal Treatment Act and the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, prohibiting discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, or worldview in educational settings. Holocaust education is a mandatory topic in history classes, teaching students about antisemitism, Nazi ideology, and the genocide of Jews as part of broader lessons on World War II and human rights. Estonia adheres to international frameworks, such as IHRA commitments, and integrates them into its national educational and anti-discrimination strategies.

The Ministry of Education and Research actively supports teacher training and the development of educational materials on the Holocaust and antisemitism, often in cooperation with the Estonian Institute of Historical Memory (EIHM) and international partners like Yad Vashem.⁴³ The Education and Youth Board (HARNO) provides teacher training programmes addressing antisemitism, hate speech, and discrimination. Digital toolkits and lesson plans are developed in collaboration with experts from the EIHM and Jewish community organisations.

Public schools follow national curriculum frameworks that promote civic education, democratic values, and inclusion, aligning with common European values. Schools are expected to address issues like racism, xenophobia, and antisemitism as part of social studies and history teaching. Teacher training includes modules on intercultural competence and managing diversity, including recognising early warning indicators of violence. Anti-bullying policies and collaboration with child protection and law enforcement are in place.

At major teacher training institutions such as the University of Tartu and Tallinn University, students in history and social studies programmes are introduced to the Holocaust within the broader context of World War II and totalitarian regimes, as well as the ethical and civic dimensions of genocide education, including human rights and prevention of discrimination. Antisemitism—both historical and contemporary manifestations—is covered as part of diversity and inclusion modules. Teacher training includes methodologies for addressing sensitive history and diversity. Participation in European education programmes promotes cross-cultural learning and democratic citizenship. Civil society organisations, including the Jewish Community of Estonia and Estonian Jewish Museum, often act as partners in providing awareness-raising materials and offering support or training to schools.

⁴³ <https://www.yadvashem.org/>

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** Estonia has strong anti-discrimination laws, such as the Equal Treatment Act and the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act. Holocaust education is explicitly integrated into the national curriculum as a mandatory topic in history classes, and education about antisemitism is incorporated through cooperation between ministries and educational bodies. This includes the development of teaching materials and training for educators.
- 2. Implementation and Enforcement:** Estonia does not have a standalone national policy exclusively for antisemitic incidents, but these are addressed under broader national education, anti-discrimination, and hate crime frameworks. Schools are required to respond to incidents by reporting to authorities, engaging support staff, taking disciplinary actions, and initiating educational or restorative measures.
- 3. Monitoring:** The Estonian Ministry of Education and Research oversees the national curriculum, which mandates the teaching of the Holocaust. Curriculum committees, composed of educators, subject experts, and occasionally NGO representatives, guide updates and quality assurance in how the Holocaust is framed. Revisions to the national curriculum are conducted through consultative processes, ensuring broad input.⁴⁴ Estonia adopted the Concept for Measures against Antisemitism in 2021, which was coordinated by multiple ministries and includes self-assessment components and evaluation mechanisms for education. Schools and public institutions are encouraged to reflect on how they address diversity, tolerance, and antisemitism. Annual reports on hate incidents and discrimination are published by authorities like the Internal Security Service and the Education and Youth Board.
- 4. Resources and Finances:** The Education and Youth Board, under the Ministry of Education and Research, funds training programmes and materials for teachers and school leaders addressing antisemitism,

hate speech, and discrimination, and develops digital toolkits and lesson plans in partnership with experts. These programmes cover global citizenship education, human rights, and diversity awareness.

- 5. Stakeholder Engagement:** There are strong partnerships with expert institutions such as the EIHM, the Estonian Jewish Museum, and international organisations like Yad Vashem and UNESCO. These partners provide expertise, training for educators, and input on materials. Estonia sets a positive example in involving local and international stakeholders in antisemitism and Holocaust education efforts.

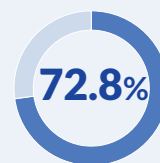
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Explicitly integrate requirements for universities to adopt anti-discrimination policies that specifically address racism and antisemitism and ensure the safety and inclusion of Jewish students.
2. Continue to strengthen teacher training programmes, focusing not only on historical aspects of the Holocaust but also on equipping educators with the skills to identify and effectively address contemporary forms of antisemitism, including online manifestations.
3. Provide school leaders and support specialists with training to recognise incidents of ethnic hatred and equip them with effective tools to address such cases.
4. Improve systematic data collection on antisemitic incidents within all educational settings, including universities, to enable more detailed analysis of trends, better targeted interventions, and increased accountability.
5. Establish dedicated and transparent funding for human rights and antisemitism education. While many initiatives are supported, creating a clear, dedicated, and transparent budget line specifically for antisemitism and Holocaust education would ensure long-term planning, sustainability, and enable more comprehensive and impactful projects.

⁴⁴ Major overhauls occur roughly every seven to ten years (2002, 2011, 2014, 2022).



HATE CRIME



KEY INDICATORS



Hate Crime

OVERVIEW

Estonia's main strategy for addressing hate crime is outlined in the Internal Security Development Plan 2020-2030. By combining prevention, capacity-building, legal reform, and data-driven monitoring, including the involvement of civil society, Estonia aims to create a holistic approach to countering hate crime over the next decade. In April 2022, the Penal Code was amended to include Article 151.1,⁴⁵ which criminalises the public display of symbols related to acts of aggression, genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes when such display is intended to support or justify those acts.

Crimes motivated by antisemitism are classified as hate-motivated acts if they meet the criteria set out in the Penal Code, particularly when the perpetrator has deliberately targeted the victim based on characteristics such as Jewish identity. However, incidents motivated by antisemitism are generally prosecuted as misdemeanours, which limits the scope of legal response unless they escalate to more serious criminal offences. There is currently no legal clarity on whether manifestations of antisemitism can be considered an aggravating circumstance, and no established case law.⁴⁶ Bill 232 SE

proposes amendments to the Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Code of Misdemeanour Procedure to criminalise public incitement to hatred, violence, or discrimination based on nationality, race, skin colour, sex, disability, language, origin, religion, sexual orientation, political views, or financial and social status. The bill is currently pending and has not yet passed its second reading in Parliament due to disagreements within the ruling coalition.

While there are identified hate crime cases, detailed statistics on prosecutions and convictions are not publicly available. According to data from the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), there is a very low number of reported antisemitic incidents in Estonia: none in 2022, one in 2021 (a misdemeanour), and two in 2019.⁴⁷ Law enforcement agencies, including the Police and Border Guard Board (PPA), are responsible for investigating hate crimes; however, the lack of a comprehensive legal framework remains a significant limitation. The Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs cites a lack of resources as the reason for not conducting more in-depth research into xenophobia and the specific challenges faced by people of different races.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Penal Code, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/522012015002/consolide/current>

⁴⁶ The "Concept for Measures Against Antisemitism" (2021: 13) states that the manifestations of antisemitism can also be regarded as an aggravating circumstance under subsection 58 (1) of the Penal Code.

⁴⁷ FRA (2023), Overview of antisemitic incidents recorded in the European Union 2012–2022, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/antisemitism-overview-2012-2022>

⁴⁸ Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner (2024), *Eriarport: Rassiline diskrimineerimine Eestis* (Special Report: Racial Discrimination in Estonia), https://www.volinik.ee/volinik-live-web-prd/s3fs-public/2024-12/Report_2024-ENG.pdf

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

1. Basic Rights and Legislation: Holocaust denial and antisemitic acts are not explicitly criminalised. Pursuant to Article 58(1) of the Penal Code, self-interest or another base motive constitutes an aggravating circumstance, but there is no clear legal provision that automatically treats crimes motivated by hate or bias similarly.⁴⁹ Legal experts are debating whether this provision is applicable in such contexts or whether a distinct and clearer clause is needed, given the absence of case law, to justify tougher penalties.

2. Implementation and Enforcement: The Department of Religious Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior and the Prosecutor's Office offer training on antisemitic crimes. The Estonian Academy of Security Sciences, a key training body under the Ministry of the Interior, has integrated the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism into its compulsory "Internal Security and Crisis Management" curriculum since February 2020. This programme is mandatory for first-year cadets and covers hate speech and radicalisation. The PPA has increased contact with the Jewish community to better identify antisemitism-motivated crimes and misdemeanours.

3. Monitoring: The Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs is responsible for compiling an annual report on crime in Estonia. Hate crime statistics based on the PPA database and antisemitism-motivated law violations are forwarded to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). There are guidelines for recording hate crimes, but reporters of incidents are not required to flag bias motivations.

4. Resources and Finances: Resources are invested in training criminal justice professionals on hate crime investigation, prosecution, and sentencing, including modules on radicalisation and antisemitism for PPA officials and the Prosecutor's Office. Victim support services are available through the Victim Support Act, though

not specifically tailored for hate crime victims. Crime victims receive support and trauma recovery services through the Social Insurance Board (SKA).

5. Stakeholder Engagement: There is cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior and the Prosecutor's Office for training, and annual meetings are held between the police and the Jewish Community to discuss issues and improve planning. The Integration Foundation (INSA)⁵⁰ has an advisory committee, but it does not include representatives of the Jewish community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

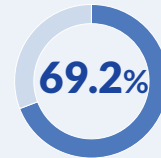
1. Adopt amendment to the Penal Code that explicitly criminalise manifestations of antisemitism, Holocaust denial, and gross trivialisation of the Holocaust and other genocides.
2. Make mandatory the flagging of bias motivations in police recording systems to improve data collection and foster a better understanding of the prevalence of hate crime.
3. Develop specialised support services and guidelines tailored specifically for victims of hate crimes and increase awareness among law enforcement and support service providers.
4. Enhance and formalise cooperation mechanisms between the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, Police and Border Guard Board, and civil society organisations, including the Jewish community, to ensure consistent and effective responses to hate crimes.
5. Allocate resources to the Department of Religious Affairs within the Ministry of the Interior and to the Prosecutor's Office to support training on identifying and prosecuting incidents motivated by racism, including antisemitism.

⁴⁹ <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/507052025001/consolide>

⁵⁰ <https://www.integratsioon.ee/>



HATE SPEECH



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	66%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	70%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	60%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	70%

Hate Speech

OVERVIEW

Article 151 of the Penal Code (PC) is Estonia's legal framework for hate speech, which criminalises public incitement to hatred. However, this provision has been criticised for requiring proof of danger to a person's life, health, or property, making prosecutions challenging. A draft law to amend Article 151, removing this qualifying clause, is pending in Parliament, but the legislation's progress has stalled. The proposed new provision has also encountered criticism. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has expressed concern that, due to the broad and vague wording, the provision may not meet the legal requirements under international human rights law, and its enforcement would amount to a violation of the right to freedom of expression.⁵¹

In November 2023, during a demonstration in support of Palestine, five people who used the slogan "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" were detained by police, interrogated and fined under Article 151.1. In pre-event communications, the police referenced the slogan and advised that it should not be used during the rallies. The Estonian Human Rights Centre (EHRC) represented four of the

protesters as part of a strategic lawsuit, arguing that being fined for using a slogan widely chanted at international protests threatened the right to freedom of expression in Estonia.⁵² The lower court found Article 151.1 applicable, but the Supreme Court ruled that it cannot be used to prohibit the slogan.⁵³ Sanctions imposed by the police were subsequently annulled, with the Supreme Court affirming the primacy of freedom of expression.

Estonia does not have specific laws criminalising Holocaust denial or the trivialisation of Nazi crimes, focusing instead on broader legislative measures to maintain public order. Further, online antisemitic hate speech is a significant challenge.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** Article 151 of the Penal Code criminalises incitement to hatred if it poses a danger to public order. There are ongoing legislative efforts to broaden the scope of the provision. Holocaust denial and trivialisation are not specifically criminalised.

⁵¹ Further information on the legal debate and pro-Palestine rallies in Estonia in 2023 is available at: OSCE/ODIHR (2025), Report: Monitoring of Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in Selected OSCE Participating States (May 2022 – June 2024), https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/6/585436_0.pdf, pp. 15-16

⁵² Grossthal, K. (2025), Supreme Court Acquits Protester: Freedom of Expression Upheld in Estonia, <https://humanrights.ee/en/2025/05/riigi-kohtu-otsus-kaitseb-sonavabadust-ja-oiiguriiki/>

⁵³ Supreme Court of Estonia, Judgment of the Criminal Law Chamber, No. 4-23-4296 of 5 March 2025. Available in Estonian at: <https://www.riigikohus.ee/et/laheidid?asjaNr=4-23-4296/32>; Supreme Court of Estonia, Judgment of the Criminal Law Chamber, No. 4-23-4298 of 30 May 2025. Available in Estonian at: <https://www.riigikohus.ee/et/laheidid?asjaNr=4-23-4298/83>

2. Implementation and Enforcement:

Training on radicalisation and extremism, which includes antisemitism, is provided to police officers and prosecutors.

A specialised unit within the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board (PPA), known as the Internet police or “web police”, monitors and responds to online threats, illegal activity, and harmful content. Their activities are a part of Estonia’s broader commitment to cybersecurity, digital safety, and public order in the online environment.

3. Monitoring: The Estonian Internal Security Service and the PPA play a role in monitoring and investigating hate speech, particularly in relation to national security. The EHRC actively monitors hate speech on social media platforms.⁵⁴

4. Resources and Finances: Ministries support campaigns and training sessions led by NGOs and human rights organisations on hate speech prevention. There are no specific media campaigns focused solely on antisemitism.

5. Stakeholder Engagement: Cooperation exists between the Estonian government, social media platforms, and the Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority (TTJA)⁵⁵ to address online hate speech. The EHRC was actively involved in the SafeNet project, an EU-wide initiative against online hate speech hosted by the International Network Against Cyber Hate (INACH).⁵⁶ Monitoring occurs in two-month cycles, with a unified methodology across 21 countries.⁵⁷ The Jewish Community of Estonia monitors public discourse and issues statements,⁵⁸ but its media monitoring is irregular.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Expedite the adoption of the proposed amendments to Article 151 of the Penal Code to broaden the scope of hate speech criminalisation, especially concerning antisemitism and Holocaust denial/trivialisation, without requiring a direct threat to life, health, or property.
2. Provide clear legal definitions (as required by the European Court of Human Rights) for the scope of hate-speech offences, to avoid a situation where the state’s discretion to prosecute for such offences becomes too broad and potentially subject to abuse through selective enforcement.
3. Increase the visibility and impact of awareness-raising campaigns specifically targeting antisemitic hate speech in both online and offline environments.
4. Formalise and strengthen cooperation between law enforcement, the prosecutor’s office, and Jewish community organisations to ensure consistent reporting, investigation, and prosecution of antisemitic hate speech incidents.

⁵⁴ Grossthal, K. and Vähi, M.-L. (2022), Study on the scope of hatred in Estonian social media, https://humanrights.ee/app/uploads/2022/11/Study-on-the-scope-of-hatred-in-Estonian-social-media.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁵⁵ <https://www.ttja.ee/en>

⁵⁶ CEJI is a member of INACH and was a partner in the SafeNet project. For more information, see: <https://www.inach.net/safenet/>

⁵⁷ https://humanrights.ee/en/2023/06/hate-speech-in-estonian-language-social-media-targets-refugees-and-sexual-minorities/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁵⁸ <https://jewish.ee/category/news/>



HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	100%

Holocaust Remembrance

OVERVIEW

Official recognition of the Holocaust has included public apologies from the highest levels of government. The President, members of Parliament, and ministers have expressed regret for the atrocities committed on Estonian soil, acknowledging the state's moral responsibility to remember and educate about these events. Estonia is a member of the IHRA and adheres to its recommendations.

The Estonian Institute of Historical Memory (EIHM) investigates international crimes and human rights abuses committed by totalitarian regimes in Estonia, as well as the ideologies underpinning these regimes.⁵⁹ Its research findings are publicly accessible and widely used. The EIHM website includes an overview of repression of the German occupying regime in Estonia 1941–1944, a list of victims, and survivor testimonies.⁶⁰

Tallinn University carried out a project titled “Estonian Holocaust Sites Mapping Application,”⁶¹ whose aim was to identify and document Holocaust-related sites and to create a digital map-based application marking these locations with GPS coordinates and photographs. The

application enables individuals to visit and access these sites independently. Over the last decade, WWII remembrances in Estonia have increasingly served to raise awareness about human rights in the present.⁶²

Holocaust education is part of the national curriculum for both basic and upper secondary schools, integrated into history and civic education, and covered through cross-disciplinary approaches. There are guidelines for Holocaust education, with training for educators provided in cooperation with institutions like Yad Vashem and the EIHM. The state actively oversees the observance of International Holocaust Remembrance Day and allocates funding for memorial initiatives and educational programmes that promote historical awareness. Commemoration ceremonies also take place annually at historical killing sites like Klooga and Kalevi-Liiva, involving government representatives, the Jewish community, and the diplomatic corps.⁶³

⁵⁹ Research and Education on Totalitarian Regimes and Ideologies, <https://mnemosyne.ee/en/activities2/education-and-public-awareness/>

⁶⁰ nazismvictims.ee.

⁶¹ Project portfolio in Estonian at: <https://elu.tlu.ee/sites/default/files/2024-12/ELU%20PROJEKTI%20PORTFOOLIO.pdf>.

⁶² Laanes, E. (2017). *Transnationalisation of the Estonian memory culture*. In T. Tammaru (Ed.), *Estonian Human Development Report 2016/2017: Estonia in the Age of Migration*, pp. 231–238. Tallinn: Estonian Cooperation Assembly. <https://www.2017.inimareng.ee/en/estonias-cultural-changes-in-an-open-world/transnationalisation-of-the-estonian-memory-culture/>; Laanes led the the ERC project “Translating Memories: The Eastern European Past in the Global Arena” (2020–2024).

⁶³ <https://news.err.ee/1609464838/80-years-on-remembering-the-horrific-events-at-klooga>; 2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: Estonia, <https://2021-2025.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/estonia/?safe=1>; https://mzv.gov.cz/tallinn/en/czech_estonian_relations/commemoration_of_the_victims_of_the.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** The state officially commemorates International Holocaust Remembrance Day and Holocaust education is part of the national curriculum.
- 2. Implementation and Enforcement:** Educational and commemorative activities are consistently supported by the Ministry of Education and Research, in collaboration with relevant institutions. Teacher training and resource development are ongoing, and commemoration ceremonies are regularly held at significant historical sites. Estonia President Lennart Meri announced the formation of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity (also known as the Max Jakobson Commission) in 1998.⁶⁴ The EIHM, which has adopted the UN General Declaration of Human Rights as the basis of its work, is continuing the work of the Max Jakobson Commission in researching the Soviet era in Estonian history.⁶⁵
- 3. Monitoring:** The state actively monitors the observance of Holocaust Remembrance Day and reports on its efforts to international bodies. However, comprehensive, publicly available data on the effectiveness and reach of all educational programmes and awareness campaigns is not explicitly detailed.
- 4. Resources and Finances:** Increased funding from state and local budgets is dedicated to commemorating, educating about, and researching the Holocaust. Specific projects, memorial renovations, and activities for students and teachers receive financial support.
- 5. Stakeholder Engagement:** There is strong collaboration between the government, the local Jewish community, relevant museums, and the EIHM. The Jewish Community, including the Chief Rabbi, actively participates in remembrance activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

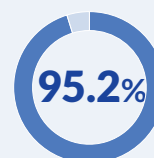
1. Explore new avenues for digital engagement with Holocaust remembrance, expanding beyond existing virtual exhibitions to reach broader audiences, especially younger generations.
2. Continue to provide substantial and consistent funding for all aspects of Holocaust remembrance, including research, preservation of sites, and educational initiatives.
3. Systematically collect and publish data on the reach and impact of Holocaust education programmes to assess their effectiveness across different age groups and regions.

⁶⁴ <https://mnemosyne.ee/en/the-max-jakobson-commission/>.

⁶⁵ <https://mnemosyne.ee/en/activities2/research/>; Estonian Institute of Historical Memory (2023). Annual Report 2022, https://mnemosyne.ee/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/EMI-aastaaruanne-2022_F2.pdf.



INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	90%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	86%

Intercultural Dialogue

OVERVIEW

Estonia has legal frameworks to promote rights for religious minorities, with the Constitution guaranteeing freedom of religion and assembly, and relevant acts regulating religious organisations. The Cohesive Estonia Strategy 2021-2030 highlights civil society's role in social cohesion, aiming to increase the role of religious associations in community activities, and implementation of the Strategy is regularly monitored through annual reports.⁶⁶ Dialogue mechanisms exist between different religions and cultures, involving the Jewish Religious Community, though largely through bilateral cooperation and broader civil society initiatives rather than a single, formal platform. The state encourages religious educational institutions to teach about all religions and fundamental rights. Intercultural competencies are promoted through various instruments and initiatives in culture, youth, and employment policies, and support for diverse workplaces.

National authorities provide financial support for community-led projects that promote intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity, involving local NGOs and initiatives like "Multicultural Cafés" and "Culture School for

National Minorities".⁶⁷ National Minorities Day, celebrated on September 24, has seen strong participation from the Jewish communities of Ida-Virumaa and Narva, who have been active champions of the event. While interfaith dialogue is generally supported, there are few formal, centralised mechanisms specifically for evaluating its impact.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** Strong constitutional and legal foundations protect religious freedom and minority rights, providing a solid basis for intercultural dialogue. The Cohesive Estonia 2030 strategy explicitly supports social cohesion and the role of religious associations.
- 2. Implementation and Enforcement:** Estonia's national curriculum for general education (including upper secondary education) promotes religious literacy, tolerance, and respect for diversity. It includes civic education modules, and optional religious studies may present an overview of different belief systems (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, etc.) with a focus on critical thinking, ethical reflection, and intercultural competence. While confessional religious institutions have autonomy over their

⁶⁶ Cohesive Estonia Strategy 2021-2030, https://www.kul.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2022-02/cohesive_estonia_strategy.pdf.

⁶⁷ <https://www.integratsioon.ee/en/culturally-diverse-estonia-here-stay>; <https://www.integratsioon.ee/en/estonian-language-cafes>; <https://www.artun.ee/en/interior-architecture-students-designed-language-cafes-for-the-tallinn-tartu-and-viru-prisons/>

own curricula, the state encourages, via guidelines and cooperation frameworks, educating students about other religions and convictions beyond their own and to integrate fundamental rights education, including the freedom of religion or belief.

- 3. Monitoring:** The Cohesive Estonia Strategy 2030 includes general monitoring and annual reports. Every three years, the government also implements integration monitoring, measuring, among other things, the frequency of contact between people belonging to different language groups. The impact of participation in national cultural activities on the ethnic identity of Estonia's national minorities is studied. The strategy and its programmes are reviewed and updated as necessary during the process of preparing the State Budget Strategy and draft state budgets. However, there are few formal, centralised mechanisms solely dedicated to evaluating the impact of funded interfaith activities.
- 4. Resources and Finances:** Estonia actively promotes intercultural dialogue and diversity through various initiatives, supported by national authorities like the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Integration Foundation (INSA), and KÜSK Civil Society Endowment.⁶⁸ These initiatives are part of Estonia's strategy for integration, social cohesion, and respect for minority cultures, which are aligned with national and EU frameworks. The Jewish Community of Estonia, as a member of the Estonian Union of Nationalities, also receives modest operational support from INSA.
- 5. Stakeholder Engagement:** There is active involvement of religious communities and cultural associations in advisory bodies and policy discussions. INSA facilitates intercultural dialogue. However, formal and sustained partnerships with all religious communities across all social sectors could be strengthened.

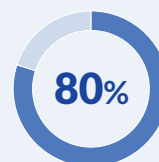
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a formal, permanent national platform for interfaith and intercultural dialogue, mandated by law, to ensure consistent and structured cooperation between public institutions, religious communities, and humanist groups.
2. Promote comprehensive inter-religious literacy and dialogue skills within public service training, including for educators, healthcare workers, and social workers.
3. Incentivise local governments and organisations to initiate and consistently fund interfaith and intercultural dialogue projects, perhaps through matching grants or recognition programmes.
4. Facilitate regular meetings with representatives of various religious organisations to foster joint efforts in countering hate.
5. Conduct specific impact assessment research on funded interfaith activities to inform effective strategies for fostering mutual understanding and social cohesion.

⁶⁸ <https://kysk.ee/en/>



MEDIA



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	90%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	70%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	80%

Media

OVERVIEW

Estonia has strong civil, administrative, and criminal legal frameworks in place to address antisemitic media content and to ensure editorial independence and freedom of the press. The media experiences relatively low levels of political and commercial interference and has earned the public's trust. It ranks second in the 2025 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF).⁶⁹ Alongside its Baltic neighbours and Nordic peers, Estonia demonstrates that it is possible to maintain a high standard of press freedom even amid global turbulence.

The state encourages fostering Jewish life through the media, supporting cultural events and providing coverage for Jewish topics and commemorations. Various initiatives in Estonia use both traditional and digital media to preserve and promote Jewish life through radio broadcasts, storytelling, film, youth networks, and public cultural events.⁷⁰

The EU Digital Services Act (DSA) has been implemented,⁷¹ with the Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority (TTJA) acting as the Digital Services Coordinator, responsible for addressing illegal online content. Social media is playing an increasingly important role in media consumption, and the Russian-speaking population of Estonia is simultaneously influenced by local Russian-language media, Russian media, and, to a lesser extent, Estonian-language media, often receiving contradictory information. The Jewish Community Centre in Tallinn (JCC Tallinn) conducts trainings on media literacy and cyber safety, aiming to improve critical thinking and encourage the vetting of sources.

Anti-bias training for journalists is promoted through various associations and university programmes. Media monitoring bodies exist, including the Press Council and the TTJA. The state supports media projects aimed at combating hate and antisemitism through public broadcasting initiatives and grants.

⁶⁹ Tambur, S. (2025), Estonia climbs to second in global press freedom index, <https://estonianworld.com/security/estonia-climbs-to-second-in-global-press-freedom-index/>.

⁷⁰ The Estonian Jewish Education Center and JCE produce digital newsletters, blog posts, and social media content highlighting educational programmes, holiday events, and community milestones. The annual Jihad Forum is widely promoted in newsletters, press releases, and community websites. In addition, the Estonian Jewish Museum regularly features thematic exhibitions.

⁷¹ The DSA regulates online intermediaries and platforms such as marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, and online travel and accommodation platforms. Its main goal is to prevent illegal and harmful activities online and the spread of disinformation, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/digital-services-act_en

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** Estonia has established civil, administrative, and criminal legal frameworks to address antisemitic media content, including the Law of Obligations Act and specific articles in the Penal Code. The Media Services Act explicitly prohibits media service providers from inciting hatred, violence, or discrimination based on characteristics like religion, especially if it poses a threat to life, health, or property. The Constitution of the Republic of Estonia explicitly enshrines freedom of expression (Article 45) and access to information (Article 44), which underpins editorial independence. The Media Services Act and the Estonian Public Broadcasting Act further support this. The Estonian Press Council handles complaints related to journalistic ethics, including instances of antisemitism, and the media adhere to a Code of Ethics that emphasises accuracy, fairness, and human rights.⁷²
- 2. Implementation and Enforcement:** Estonia engages in multiple initiatives to raise awareness about antisemitism through public media, commemorative campaigns, and educational projects. The government collaborates with Jewish organisations and NGOs to support Holocaust remembrance events, educational content, and media programming. Educational videos and materials addressing antisemitism and hate speech are widely used in schools and online platforms, often supported by EU and national funding. Anti-bias training for journalists is promoted through workshops by media associations, state-supported university curricula, and editorial standards at Estonia's public broadcaster (ERR).⁷³ Professional networks such as the Estonian Association of Journalists and the Young Journalists' Association support ethical journalism, inclusion, and cooperation with international partners.

⁷² A press council was initially established by the Estonian Newspaper Association in 1991 and remained active until 2001. It was then restructured into the current Press Council, which continues to operate today. For more, see: https://www.asn.org.ee/english/in_general.html; <https://meedialiit.ee/pressinoukogu/>

⁷³ <https://news.err.ee/>

- 3. Monitoring:** The Press Council has ten members, including six from the media sector and four lay members from the non-media sectors.⁷⁴ It is a member of the Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe (AIPCE). The “web police” offer guidance and intervene when necessary, while the TTJA enforces media regulations.⁷⁵
- 4. Resources and Finances:** ERR is state-funded and promotes diverse content. Grants are available for media projects combating hate and antisemitism.⁷⁶ However, there is no dedicated funding for comprehensive, long-term media campaigns against antisemitism.
- 5. Stakeholder Engagement:** Cooperation has increased between the government, social media platforms, and relevant authorities. Law enforcement cooperates with minority communities, including the Jewish community, on hate speech issues. CSOs monitor and report on hate speech, but as project-based activities.⁷⁷

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement dedicated, long-term media campaigns specifically focused on combating antisemitism, utilising various platforms to raise public awareness and promote counter-narratives.
2. Increase targeted funding for media projects that specifically address antisemitism, promoting interfaith dialogue and cultural exchange through diverse media content.
3. Strengthen collaboration between public authorities, media outlets, and civil society organisations to develop clear protocols for reporting and addressing antisemitic content, including anonymous channels and specialised support for victims.

⁷⁴ <http://vana.meedialiit.ee/pressinoukogu/index-eng.html>; <https://accountablejournalism.org/press-councils/Estonia>

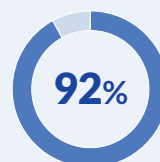
⁷⁵ <https://www.politsei.ee/en/web-constables>

⁷⁶ https://humanrights.ee/en/2020/09/human-rights-centre-produced-short-videos-about-hate-crime/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁷⁷ <https://humanrights.ee/en/2023/08/the-main-target-of-hate-speech-in-estonia-continues-to-be-sexual-minorities/>



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	90%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	70%

Religious Freedom

OVERVIEW

Estonia's Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, belief, and conscience, allowing individuals to practice their religion privately or publicly. The Churches and Congregations Act further regulates religious organisations, ensuring their autonomy and equal legal standing. Religious communities, including Jewish ones, can obtain "legal personhood" and engage in interfaith dialogue and cooperation with public authorities. While there are no specific benefits solely for clergy, the Equal Treatment Act ensures non-discriminatory access to benefits and social protections for all individuals. Public institutions are encouraged to permit religious accommodation, though specific guidelines for Jewish practices are not consistently detailed.⁷⁸ The Ministry of the Interior fosters Jewish religious life through small grants, and equality bodies monitor the enforcement of anti-discrimination law.

ASSESSMENT KEY INDICATORS

1. Basic Rights and Legislation: Estonia has a robust legal framework that guarantees religious freedom and prohibits discrimination based on religion, including for Jewish communities. The laws are inclusive and egalitarian, allowing religious organisations to register and operate freely.

2. Implementation and Enforcement: Public institutions often rely on internal diversity and inclusion policies or guidance issued by human rights bodies, which may include flexibility for Jewish holidays (e.g., Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur) and permission for wearing religious attire (e.g., a kippah). There are no challenges to having kosher food available.

3. Monitoring: Equality bodies, such as the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, monitor anti-discrimination law, but there is no specific, regular monitoring mechanism dedicated to assessing the practical exercise of religious freedom or the effectiveness of any religious accommodations.

4. Resources and Finances: The Ministry of the Interior provides modest annual grants to religious communities, including the Jewish community. However, this support is generally small and project-based, lacking substantial, consistent funding for comprehensive religious life support or specific religious accommodation initiatives. The Jewish Religious Community owns property and, in addition to donations, generates income through services and other activities.

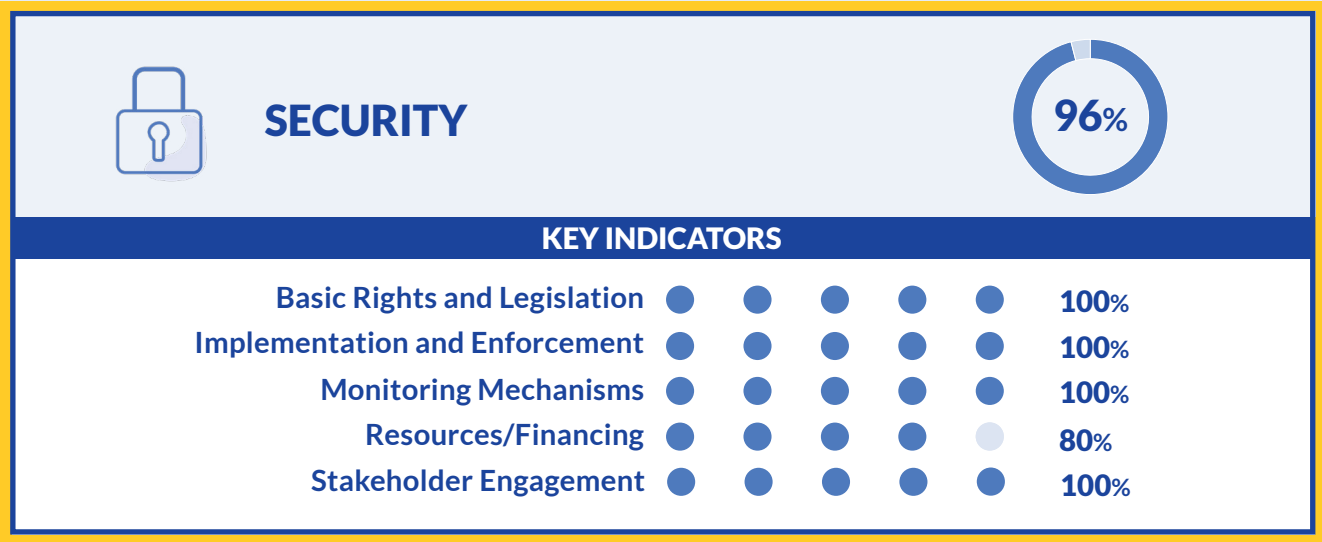
⁷⁸ Article 10(1)(5) of the Animal Protection Act (APA) permits slaughter of an animal for religious purposes (amended in 2012). Article 17 of the APA explores provisions concerning religious slaughter practices. APA, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/505102023013/consolide>.

5. Stakeholder Engagement: There is cooperation between the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research and Jewish religious and cultural communities, including regular meetings. The Estonian Institute of Human Rights⁷⁹ has an advisory committee but the Jewish community did not apply to be part of it, indicating room for broader engagement.

⁷⁹ <https://www.humanrightsestonia.ee/wp/en/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and disseminate clear guidelines and best practices for public institutions (e.g., schools, hospitals, prisons, workplaces) on religious accommodation for Jewish practices, including kosher food and holiday observances.
2. Strengthen the involvement of Jewish community representatives in relevant advisory committees of human rights institutions and government bodies to ensure their perspectives are heard and needs are addressed.
3. Increase earmarked funding for the Jewish community to support essential needs.



Security

OVERVIEW

Estonia’s approach to security for Jewish organisations and individuals focuses on physical security and cooperation between the Police and Border Guard Board (PPA) and the Jewish Community of Estonia. Regular meetings and joint activities, including threat assessments and exercises, are conducted. The Ministry of the Interior established a working group to achieve the objectives of the Concept for Measures Against Antisemitism, aiming for coordinated efforts across ministries and agencies. Despite a relatively low number

of antisemitic incidents compared to other EU Member States, there is recognition that antisemitism is on the rise in Europe and that extremist ideologies and conspiracy theories further its spread.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

1. **Basic Rights and Legislation:** The Concept published by the Ministry of the Interior aims to create a comprehensive system for measures against antisemitism, ensuring security for Jewish organisations and individuals.

2. Implementation and Enforcement:

The PPA and the Jewish Community of Estonia cooperate on practical steps to increase security for facilities and enhance information exchange. Joint exercises are conducted to improve response capacity. The Ministry of the Interior has provided funding for security enhancements, such as reinforcing windows.

3. Monitoring:

Threat assessments are prepared with emphasis on input from the Jewish community regarding their perception of the threat level.⁸⁰ Regular meetings between the PPA and the Jewish community are held to exchange information.

4. Resources and Finances:

The state provides modest financial assistance to religious associations, including the Estonian Jewish Congregation and the Jewish Community of Estonia (as property owners), to support their activities and infrastructure, which can include security measures. The Ministry of the Interior has also provided direct support for security enhancements.

5. Stakeholder engagement:

Cooperation between relevant ministries and agencies and Jewish organisations is an integral part of the Concept. A working group to combat antisemitism, composed of representatives from different ministries, agencies, and Jewish organisations, has been established by the Minister of the Interior.

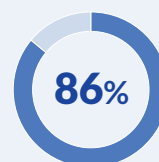
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase dedicated funding for physical security measures for Jewish community buildings and events, recognising perceived threat levels and the need for sustainable security infrastructure.
2. Explore additional methods for public reporting on the implementation and impact of security measures against antisemitism, similar to other countries that produce annual reports.
3. Strengthen the resilience against imported antisemitism by expanding awareness-raising campaigns on various extremist ideologies and conspiracy theories.
4. Ensure the consistent and formalised functioning of the inter-ministerial working group on antisemitism, with regular meetings and clear responsibilities to maintain a holistic and coordinated approach.

⁸⁰ Several national institutions, in cooperation with the community, are involved in ensuring the safety and conducting risk assessments for the Jewish community. The main responsible bodies are the Ministry of the Interior and the Police and Border Guard Board (PPA).



SPORT



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	90%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	80%

Sport

OVERVIEW

Estonia has established a comprehensive legal framework and various initiatives to promote fair play, safety, and non-discrimination in sports. The overarching goal is to ensure the physical and mental well-being of the nation and facilitate the personal development of young people. Ethical rules are considered an integral part of the sport movement and apply to all levels of activity, from recreational to elite competitive sports. The Estonian Anti-Doping and Sports Ethics Foundation (EADSE) provides safety training, including an e-course on abuse prevention launched in late 2023 and updated in March 2025. Coaches must receive professional training that covers child protection and conflict resolution.

The Estonian Code of Sports Ethics Rules (ESER)⁸¹ provides a core ethical framework for clubs, requiring them to report unethical behaviour, including discrimination, to sport organisations or EADSE, and to the police in the case of criminal offences. ESER defines racist and discriminatory behaviour as any exclusion, where the equal recognition, exercise, or enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms is limited. It resolves violations through the internal disciplinary bodies of sports federations.

⁸¹ Estonian Code of Sports Ethics Rules (2024), <https://www.eok.ee/organisatsioon/spordiregulatsioonid/eesti-spordieetika-reeglid>.

The Jewish sport association Maccabi Estonia was initially established in 1920 but was dissolved in 1940 by the Soviet regime. It was reestablished in 1991 and has achieved significant success in international competitions. The organisation remains committed to fostering community-based sports, promoting inter-generational engagement, and strengthening Jewish identity through athletic and cultural activities. It currently hosts active clubs in tennis, football, and chess, with plans underway to expand into table tennis and basketball.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** Estonian legislation and national equality laws penalise racism and discrimination in sports, with Chapter 10 of the Penal Code providing a legal basis for action. The Sports Act establishes legal foundations, requiring coaches to ensure training on safety. Estonia adheres to international conventions aimed at preventing discrimination, abuse, and harassment, including those established by the Council of Europe and the UN. Article 4.1 of ESER mandates respect for human rights and prohibits discrimination based on various characteristics. The Estonian Sport Charter emphasises sports education and requires professional certification for educators to ensure participant safety.⁸²

⁸² Available in Estonian at: <https://www.eok.ee/organisatsioon/spordiregulatsioonid/eesti-spordi-harta>.

2. Implementation and Enforcement:

National equality bodies, such as the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner and the Chancellor of Justice, promote equal opportunities. Unethical behaviour, including discrimination, must be reported to sport organisations or EADSE, and the police in the case of criminal offences. EADSE provides sport safety training, including an e-course on abuse prevention, and coaches are required to receive professional training that covers child protection and conflict resolution. Victims of hate have access to support services like the Child Helpline and mental health support.⁸³ Clubs participate in anti-hate campaigns, such as the “Word Has Power” campaign, launched by the Estonian Olympic Committee (EOC) and EADSE, to prevent verbal abuse.⁸⁴

3. Monitoring: Guidelines are in place for clubs to monitor their anti-discrimination measures. EADSE employs a Safeguarding Officer and a Chief Investigative Officer to protect athletes and conduct investigations. The Ministry of Culture also submits annual reports to parliament on the implementation of the Sport 2030 Strategy.

4. Resources and Finances: The Ministry of Culture supports EADSE’s work to promote ethical and non-discriminatory sport, as outlined in the Sport Programme 2025–2028. EADSE has an investigator and safeguarding officer, with established referral procedures. It also offers in-person and online trainings. Financial support is provided to organisations registered in the national sport database.⁸⁵

5. Stakeholder Engagement: Sports clubs collaborate with EADSE, local governments, schools, social workers, victim support, and

child rights organisations to foster a safe and inclusive environment. Many clubs have their own anti-discrimination codes of conduct with reporting mechanisms. The Estonian Human Rights Centre (EHRC) works with local and international bodies to promote human rights and equality, monitoring hate speech and providing legal aid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that all stakeholders, particularly coaches, referees, and club officials, receive ongoing and comprehensive training on recognising, preventing, and addressing all forms of discrimination. The e-course on abuse prevention is a good example to expand upon.
2. Actively promote awareness of reporting channels, including anonymous ones, to encourage victims and witnesses to come forward without fear of reprisal. Regularly review and simplify these procedures to ensure accessibility and effectiveness.
3. In conjunction with ESER, which clarifies racist and discriminatory behaviour, establish robust mechanisms to collect detailed data on all reported incidents across different sports and levels. This data can inform targeted interventions and measure progress more accurately.
4. Continue to invest in and strengthen the roles of the Safeguarding Officer and Chief Investigative Officer within EADSE, ensuring they have adequate resources and authority to carry out their preventive and investigative functions effectively.
5. Provide continued and increased financial and resource support to sports organisations, clubs, and CSOs that are actively engaged in anti-discrimination campaigns, educational programmes, and the development of their own codes of conduct. Collaborate with Maccabi Estonia when appropriate.

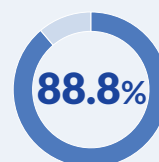
⁸³ <https://www.lasteabi.ee/en>; <https://www.palunabi.ee/en/about-victim-support>.

⁸⁴ Available in Estonian at: <https://eadse.ee/sõnalonjoud/>.

⁸⁵ The Estonian Foundation of Sports Education and Information was established by the Estonian Olympic Committee and the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research. The Foundation has several responsibilities and is an authorised processor of the Estonian Sport Register, the state sports information system which is under the supervision of the Estonian Ministry of Culture. The information system comprises the sub-databases of sport organisations, schools, facilities, coaches, athlete scholarships and athlete grants and sport results. For more information, see: https://www.eose.org/project/estonian-foundation-of-sports-education-and-information/?utm_source=chatgpt.com.



YOUTH



KEY INDICATORS

Basic Rights and Legislation	●	●	●	●	●	100%
Implementation and Enforcement	●	●	●	●	●	94%
Monitoring Mechanisms	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Resources/Financing	●	●	●	●	●	80%
Stakeholder Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	90%

Youth

OVERVIEW

Estonia has a comprehensive approach to youth development, underpinned by a framework that promotes democratic citizenship, human rights, and religious freedom. The nation's commitment to youth engagement is deeply ingrained in its constitutional provisions and national policies, ensuring that young individuals are not only protected but also actively participate in shaping societal development. At the core of this approach is the integration of civic education throughout the national curriculum, covering essential themes such as human rights, equality, democracy, the rule of law, diversity, and tolerance. This emphasis on education is complemented by practical, project-based learning experiences, including simulations and youth parliaments, which provide hands-on exposure to democratic processes.

The Estonian Constitution and the Equal Treatment Act (ETA) serve as foundational legal instruments, prohibiting discrimination and safeguarding the freedom to practice and express religion in both educational institutions and public spaces. This commitment extends to national policies, notably the Youth Sector Development Plan 2021–2035, which explicitly emphasises inclusivity and the strategic support for marginalised youth. While the plan adopts an overarching inclusive stance rather than

explicitly naming specific religious groups, its broad scope ensures that all young people, regardless of their background, benefit from youth work and services.

Beyond formal education, Estonia encourages youth empowerment through various channels, supporting youth organisations in policy-making processes and fostering cultural self-government for national minorities. Additionally, optional, state-funded religious studies are available in schools, providing a general introduction to different faiths. This multifaceted approach aims to equip young Estonians with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to become active, engaged, and responsible citizens within a diverse society.

ASSESSMENT OF KEY INDICATORS

- 1. Basic Rights and Legislation:** Estonia offers comprehensive legal protections under the Equal Treatment Act and the Estonian Constitution, safeguarding the rights of youth, including freedom of religion and protection from discrimination. The Youth Sector Development Plan 2021–2035 outlines a robust long-term strategy for youth inclusion, education, and participation. Education laws actively promote equality, democratic values, and civic responsibility through the national curriculum. Minority groups, including religious ones, are granted the right

to establish and organise cultural self-governments. Legal frameworks offer robust support for youth participation, protection, and inclusion, aligning strongly with international human rights standards.

- 2. Implementation and Enforcement:** Estonia recognises the importance of supporting national minorities. The government has facilitated the establishment of cultural societies and self-governments for various minority groups, providing them with platforms to preserve their heritage and engage in societal development. These structures offer youth from marginalised backgrounds avenues for participation and representation. Youth councils and student unions empower young people to express their opinions, shape policy decisions, and cultivate leadership skills. Estonian public and private schools offer optional religious instruction funded by the state. These courses provide a general introduction to different faiths, and attendance is voluntary. All students, regardless of their religious affiliation or non-affiliation, may attend religious schools. Attendance at religious services in these schools is voluntary.
- 3. Monitoring:** National evaluations and participation in international assessments (e.g., OECD PISA Global Competence and Civic Knowledge modules) provide valuable insights into youth civic competence, with Estonian students consistently scoring highly. The Education and Youth Board (Harno) coordinates data collection and supports effective collaboration among schools and youth organisations. Civil society organisations also contribute through independent monitoring and feedback. An ongoing evaluation of youth-centred policy development is organised in cooperation with the Estonian National Youth Council.⁸⁶
- 4. Resources and Finances:** Stable funding is allocated to youth participation structures, civic education programmes, and teacher training initiatives. The Integration Foundation (INSA) has played a pivotal role in funding and supporting initiatives that foster social

inclusion through culture, targeting youth from diverse ethnic backgrounds, to enhance mutual understanding and cohesion. Jewish community institutions and interfaith initiatives benefit from some private foundation and EU/public funding. However, there are no dedicated or transparent national budget lines specifically for interfaith or religious diversity education.

- 5. Stakeholder Engagement:** There is effective collaboration between the government, the Jewish Community of Estonia, educational institutions, and civil society. In general, NGOs focused on youth, diversity, and human rights education receive financial support and other resources. Young people actively engage in Holocaust remembrance initiatives, civic activities, and wider public discourse. Estonia maintains strong partnerships with international institutions such as Yad Vashem and participates in various EU programmes, enhancing the depth and reach of its engagement efforts. The country demonstrates exemplary inclusive and meaningful youth involvement, ensuring that state bodies, civil society, and communities work together to uphold shared democratic values and foster active participation.

⁸⁶ <https://enl.ee/en/about-the-organization/organization/>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure specialised training for educators/ youth workers and young people on identifying and addressing contemporary manifestations of antisemitism that may arise in discussions or from external influences. This would equip them with practical tools to address real-time challenges.
2. Encourage broader integration of Jewish history, culture, and contributions into the general curriculum and public awareness campaigns, not only in the context of the Holocaust. This would present a more holistic and positive narrative of Jewish life in Estonia.
3. Formalise mechanisms for regular consultation and collaboration with Jewish youth organisations on policy development and the sharing of best practices. This could include broader civic engagement, anti-discrimination initiatives, and cultural programmes.
4. Enhance structured long-term planning and dedicated funding for minority and interfaith youth work to increase stability and impact.
5. Bolster monitoring mechanisms with a deeper focus on disaggregated data, specifically related to the participation, experiences, and challenges faced by religious minority youth (including Jewish youth). This provides more nuanced insights and informs better-targeted interventions and resource allocation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

This NOA Report Card on government measures to counter antisemitism and foster Jewish life in Estonia reveals a strong foundational commitment to human rights and minority protections, yet also highlights areas for continued development. While Estonia does not face as much antisemitism as in some other EU Member States, recent increases in antisemitic incidents—primarily manifesting as hate speech post-October 2023—underscore the need for sustained vigilance and proactive measures.

Estonia joined the European Union in 2004 and adheres to all relevant international conventions. It has laid important groundwork for countering antisemitism and fostering Jewish life through its constitutional protections, the Equal Treatment Act, and the 2021 Concept for Measures against Antisemitism. These commitments demonstrate political will and recognition of historical responsibilities. In addition, policy-makers are receptive to adopting specific measures and honouring commitments at the national and EU levels. This creates a positive environment for further action. While commemorating the Holocaust remains essential, equal attention must be given to the challenges Jews face today. Supporting and celebrating Jewish culture and heritage is vital for fostering positive, contemporary narratives that can counter bias, prejudice, and hatred. At the same time, legal measures must be strengthened, including broadening the scope of hate speech legislation and considering specific provisions against Holocaust denial and trivialisation.

Sustained progress will depend on coordinated and systemic implementation. The establishment of a inter-ministerial working group and the appointment of a National Coordinator are encouraging steps. Still, they require adequate resourcing, clear responsibilities, and regular engagement with Jewish community representatives, including new generations of leaders. It is also imperative that combating

antisemitism not be treated only as an implicit element of wider antidiscrimination work—as has sometimes been the case in areas like sport—but addressed as a priority in its own right. Cross-cutting issues such as anti-discrimination policy and systematic hate crime data collection are particularly important. Investment in training, research, and evaluation will allow policy-makers to learn from experience, adapt approaches, and ensure that funding and programmes are evidence-based.

Education and awareness are central to fostering inclusion. Education about the Jewish people must be expanded beyond the Holocaust to cover contemporary forms of antisemitism, online hate, and subtler biases, while also reflecting Jewish history, culture, and traditions in an age-appropriate way. Increasing public awareness-raising campaigns will further strengthen social resilience.

By closing gaps in legal frameworks, encouraging inter-ministerial cooperation where appropriate, supporting evidence-based policy-making, and deepening educational and awareness efforts, Estonia will counter antisemitism while actively fostering Jewish life. Antisemitism is a structural pillar of racism, and racism cannot be eradicated without addressing it. This requires recognising its specific nature and manifestations, identifying gaps in national policy, and making a coordinated effort to prevent, address, and eliminate it, paving the way for a more inclusive and democratic Europe.

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

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