

Council's Conclusions on Combating Racism and Antisemitism

Anna Pinggen



News

On 4 March 2022, the Council of the European Union adopted [Conclusions on combating racism and antisemitism](#). They endorse the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life and invited Member States to develop national action plans and/or strategies in this regard. The conclusions follow the [declaration](#) of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union to make the counteracting of racism and antisemitism one of the political priorities of its current presidency.

The Council censures the alarming increase in racist and antisemitic incidents in the Member States as well as the exacerbation of racist and antisemitic hate crimes and hate speech, Holocaust denial and distortion, and conspiracy myths - both online and offline. It notes that racism and antisemitism may lead to and have led to forms of violent extremism and terrorism.

The Council welcomed the Commission's creation of the Subgroup for the national implementation of the EU Anti-racism [Action Plan 2020-2025](#), which brings together the Member States' representatives and the EU permanent forum for anti-racism civil society organisations. It also welcomed the creation of a permanent structure bringing together the Member States, representatives of the Jewish communities, and relevant interested parties in the form of a working group. The working group will address how to implement the strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life and organise an annual civil society forum on antisemitism.

Bearing in mind the principle of subsidiarity, the Council invites Member States to:

- Develop national action plans and/or strategies, as envisaged in the 2020 EU Anti-racism Action Plan and the [2021 EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life](#) (adopted by the European Commission);
- Endorse and use the non-legally binding working definitions of antisemitism and of Holocaust denial and distortion adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (the IHRA-Definition) as guidance for education and training purposes, including guidance for law enforcement and judicial authorities;
- Raise awareness among the Member States' populations on the fight against all forms of racism and antisemitism by upholding the duty to remember the victims of racist and antisemitic violence and hate crimes, including educating the general public on the historic and contemporary expressions of racism, slavery, and the Holocaust;
- Promote (including financially) education, research, and knowledge of Jewish life, antisemitism, and the Holocaust as well as of racism and slavery;

AUTHOR

Anna Pinggen 

Researcher
Max Planck Institute for the
Study of Crime, Security and
Law

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- Consider developing a common methodology for quantifying and qualifying racial and antisemitic incidents and comparing them both over time and between Member States;
 - Ensure that national coordinators or coordination mechanisms for combating racism and antisemitism, public bodies and institutions, equality bodies as well as relevant stakeholders, such as the social partners, civil society organisations/groups involved work closely together in developing preventive measures and evaluating the effectiveness of such measures;
 - Strengthen the ability of national investigative and judicial authorities to prosecute illegal online, racist and antisemitic hate crimes and hate speech, in compliance with freedom of expression, including the establishment of measures such as national online monitoring centres and platforms where people can report hateful content.
 - Condemn all forms of discrimination based on real or perceived ethnic origin or religious beliefs; ensure an adequate judicial response in compliance with Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.
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