

FACT SHEET: Antisemitic Violence

2008 Hate Crime Survey

- ◊ Antisemitic violence continued to rise across many parts of Europe and North America in 2007, as levels of violence motivated by anti-Jewish prejudice remain **historically high**.
- ◊ The 2008 Hate Crime Survey examines incidents of antisemitic violence against persons or property, analyzes official and nongovernmental data, and assesses government performance in response to antisemitic violence in the 56 European and North American countries that comprise the Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Antisemitic Violence in 2007:

- **United Kingdom:** official data presented by the Community Security Trust identified 2007 as the worst year on record for violent assaults since monitoring began in 1984, 114 personal attacks in 2007.
- **Germany:** the official Committee for the Defense of the Constitution figures showed a 37 percent rise in “right-extremist antisemitic crimes of violence,” from 43 in 2006 to 59 in 2007.
- **Canada:** B’nai Brith’s League for Human Rights reported an 11.4 percent rise in overall incidents from 2006 to 2007, with levels of violent incidents remaining much the same. 1,042 incidents reported in 2007 nearly double the 584 mark of 2003.
- **Russia:** The SOVA Center for Information and Analysis reported that violent incidents targeting Jews “increased dramatically” in 2007, as nine crimes affecting at least thirteen individuals were reported.
- **Ukraine:** nongovernmental monitors have recorded an overall rise in incidents of antisemitic violence in 2007, including both violent personal assaults and attacks on synagogues, memorials, and Jewish institutions.
- The proportion of antisemitic incidents involving violent attacks on persons held steady in **France**, even as overall levels of antisemitic incidents there dropped significantly.
- In **Belgium**, the **Netherlands**, **Sweden**, and the **United States**, antisemitic crimes of violence declined in 2007.
- ◊ The Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism shows a **11.8 percent rise** in reported antisemitic incidents in Europe, North America, and the Former Soviet Union, from 510 in 2006 to 578 in 2007; incidents involving weapons, arson, or an intent to kill—“**major attacks**” — increased nearly four-fold from 17 in 2006 to 51 in 2007.
- ◊ Between 2000 and 2005, levels of antisemitic violence fluctuated significantly in direct relation to events in the Middle East, which provided a new impetus for those already predisposed to antisemitism in Europe. Since 2005, this pattern has to some extent changed, with month-by-month patterns of antisemitic violence leveling off. But the threat has not diminished as the new norm is for very high levels of antisemitic violence throughout the year.
- ◊ The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) reports that only five EU countries—**Austria**, **France**, **Germany**, **Sweden**, and the **United Kingdom**—collect data on antisemitic crime in such a way that allows for a trend analysis over time. Of those that do, **France**, **Sweden**, and the **United Kingdom** experienced a general upward trend in recorded antisemitic crime between 2001–2006.

- ◊ Of the OSCE countries outside of the EU, only the **United States** and **Canada** have established systematic official governmental monitoring and reporting on antisemitic violence.
 - While local nongovernmental organizations and community leaders provide information on antisemitic crimes, these initiatives are no substitute for state authorities addressing the problem directly.
- ◊ In 2007 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe resolved that it “remains deeply concerned about the persistence and escalation of antisemitic phenomena” and noted that “**no member state is shielded from, or immune to, this fundamental affront to human rights.**”
- ◊ The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) acknowledged in its annual report on hate crimes that antisemitic incidents and crimes continued **to threaten stability and security** in the OSCE region.
- ◊ Antisemitic violence targets Jewish **individuals, including religious leaders**, as well as **places of worship, community centers, schools, and communities**. Since 2005, both official and nongovernmental statistics show that **physical attacks on individuals** constitute a growing proportion of overall antisemitic incidents.
- ◊ Attackers have targeted and identified victims based on distinctive clothing and jewelry, or facial features. A result is a **constant pressure to conceal one’s identity**. But for many Jews, and in particular those of Orthodox faith, a concealment of identity is neither possible nor desirable.
- ◊ Enhanced security can be credited for a reduction in attacks on Jewish sites and property in **France, Germany, and the United Kingdom**, where successive governments have made a strong commitment to protect the Jewish community. However, the need for such security is a powerful indicator of the revival of antisemitism in recent years.
- ◊ Human Rights First is aware of at least 40 attacks on synagogues and over 60 attacks on cemeteries and Holocaust memorials in Europe and North America in 2007.
- ◊ There is a need for immediate initiatives to fight antisemitic violence. Human Rights First has recommended the implementation of our **Ten-Point Plan** to combat hate crime, which calls for:
 - **Vigorous law enforcement response to individual incidents;**
 - **Cooperation between the police and affected communities;**
 - **Systematic official monitoring, data analysis, and public reporting.**