

JOINT COMMITTEES  
I (on Constitutional, Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Interior Affairs)  
and III (on Foreign and European Union Affairs)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Final Report  
of the Fact-Finding Inquiry on Anti-Semitism**

## Index

The Sub-Committee of Inquiry into Anti-Semitism. ....	3
Inquiry programme and objectives .....	5
Context of the inquiry .....	6
Summary of the hearings .....	8
Related debates and other parliamentary action .....	15
Definition of anti-Semitism .....	17
Racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, anti-Zionism, anti-Israelism. ....	18
Anti-Semitism in the international context .....	20
The Italian case .....	22
Anti-Semitism and the right to criticise the State of Israel .....	25
Online anti-Semitism .....	26
Young people and anti-Semitism .....	28
Islamic Fundamentalist anti-Semitism .....	29
A Strategy for Combating anti-Semitism .....	30
Working proposals .....	32
THE MAIN DATA GATHERED IN THE COURSE OF THE INQUIRY ...	33

JOINT COMMITTEES  
I (on Constitutional, Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Home Affairs)  
and III (on Foreign and European Union Affairs)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Final Report  
of the Sub-Committee of Inquiry into Anti-Semitism**

*“Erinnern, das ist vielleicht die qualvollste Art des Vergessens und vielleicht die freundlichste Art der Linderung dieser Qual.”, Erich Fried<sup>1</sup>*

*“If Auschwitz did not cure the world of anti-Semitism, what can?... What have we learned from the past, then? We have learned that racism is stupid and that anti-Semitism is an infamy. We have learned that humanity is defined by our attitude to the otherness of others, that we have a clear choice between falling into provoking the enemy and our moral duty towards one another, the choice between nihilism and sense, meaning, between fear and hope. This is a choice that belongs to each one of us.”, Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Laureate, speech to the Chamber of Deputies on Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2010.*

**The Sub-Committee of Inquiry into Anti-Semitism**

At the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, according to the figures published by the main international agencies concerned, there appears to be a strong resurgence of anti-Semitism in European societies, and the phenomenon is widespread in the international community. In Italy, too, the situation is a source of concern, even though it is less alarming here than in other leading countries of the European Union.

In line with the heightened commitment of the Italian Parliament to combat all forms of racism and intolerance in the cause of international peace and security and the protection of human rights, and on the basis of the resolutions of the Parliamentary Committees concerned, the Bureaus of the Committees on Constitutional, Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Interior Affairs and on Foreign and European Union Affairs - with the participation of the representatives of the Parliamentary groups - unanimously decided at their meeting on 8 October 2009 that it would be appropriate to conduct a joint fact-finding inquiry into the phenomenon of anti-Semitism.

It was also decided to set up a Sub-Committee of inquiry to organise the work, while the two Committees would examine the results of the inquiry and adopt the final document in plenary session.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Remembrance is perhaps the most painful way of forgetting, and perhaps the kindest way of soothing this pain.”  
(unauthorised translation)

The decision to set up an *ad hoc* Sub-Committee was highly innovative both in procedural terms and with regard to its political substance, and was certainly due to a common resolve to raise the profile of the fight against anti-Semitism so as to increase public awareness of the magnitude of the phenomenon and adopt appropriate measures to address it.

Based on an agreement with the President of the Chamber of Deputies [pursuant to Rule 144 (1) of the Chamber's Rules of Procedure,] on 28 October 2009 the Committees on Constitutional Affairs and Foreign Affairs jointly resolved to set up the inquiry, and adopted the programme of work for this purpose. Originally, the deadline for completing the inquiry was set at 31 December 2010, but in the course of the proceedings the deadline was extended first to 30 April 2011, then to 30 June 2011, and finally to 30 September 2011.

At their next meeting, the Bureaus of the two Committees - with the participation of the representatives of the Parliamentary groups - held on 10 December 2009, adopted a resolution establish the Sub-Committee of Inquiry into Anti-Semitism, initially with 26 members to guarantee equal representation of the two Committees and proportional representation of the Parliamentary groups.<sup>2</sup>

Fiamma Nirenstein (PdL - People of Freedom), Vice-Chair of the Foreign and European Union Affairs Committee was appointed to chair the Sub-Committee. The other members of the Sub-Committee Bureau were Michele Bordo (PD-Democratic Party), as Deputy Chairperson, and Raffaele Volpi (LNP- Northern League Padania), as Secretary, both of whom are members of the Constitutional Affairs Committee.<sup>3</sup>

### **Inquiry programme and objectives**

The objective of the inquiry programme, as jointly decided by the Committees, was to monitor anti-Semitism and analyse it in depth at both international and national level in order to produce policy guidelines.

The inquiry was specifically designed to highlight the new features that anti-Semitism has acquired in addition to the traditional ones, with particular reference to ethnic and religious hatred, fuelled by fundamentalism, as well as its tactical links with anti-Zionism and the aberrancy of Holocaust denial.

It was felt that the resurgence of anti-Semitism throughout the world, and particularly in Europe, together with its complex relationship with the events in the Middle East, made it important not to play down the significance of the incidents of intolerance that had also occurred in Italy, and to approach the whole problem in a manner that combined the international and national dimensions.

---

<sup>2</sup> Following the establishment of new Parliamentary groups: Future and Freedom for the Third Pole and People and Territory, the number of sub-Committee members was raised to 30.

<sup>3</sup> Michele Bordo (PD) replaced Pierangelo Ferrari (PD) as Deputy Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on 19 November 2010. The other members of the Sub-Committee of Inquiry were: representing the Constitutional Affairs Committee, Isabella Bertolini, Maurizio Bianconi, Fabrizio Cicchitto, Beatrice Lorenzin and Giorgio Clelio Stracquadanio representing the People of Freedom group; Olga D'Antona and Pierangelo Ferrari, subsequently replaced by Doris Lo Moro, representing the Democratic Party group; Manuela Dal Lago, subsequently replaced by Pierguido Vanalli, representing the Northern League Padania group; David Favia representing the Italy of Values group; Pierluigi Mantini representing the Centre Union for the Third Pole group; lastly, the Mixed group appointed Pino Picicchio, subsequently replaced by Linda Lanzillotta. Following the establishment of the new Parliamentary groups, further members were appointed to the Sub-Committee: Carmelo Briguglio, representing the Future and Freedom for the Third Pole group and Maria Elena Stasi, representing the People and Territory group. For the 3rd Committee, the People of Freedom group appointed Margherita Boniver, Renato Farina, Gennaro Malgieri and Enrico Pianetta; the Democratic Party group appointed Furio Colombo, Paolo Corsini and Francesco Tempestini; the Northern League Padania group appointed Roberto Cota, who was subsequently replaced by Marco Giovanni Reguzzoni and Gianluca Pini; the Centre Union for the Third Pole group appointed Ferdinando Adornato; the Italy of Values group appointed Leoluca Orlando, while the Mixed group appointed Gianni Vernetti. Following the establishment of the new Parliamentary groups, the following members of the Sub-Committee were appointed: Roberto Menia, representing the Future and Freedom for the Third Pole group, and Michele Pisacane, representing the People and Territory group.

In particular, the purpose was to ascertain the level of awareness in public opinion, in the mass media, and in the education system, the adequacy of national structures and legislative measures, as well as the provisions of the international Conventions, and, lastly, the effectiveness of the agencies responsible for combating anti-Semitism.

It was felt that the inquiry would be able to produce useful pointers as to how to tighten up the regulatory framework in both preventive and enforcement terms, including with reference to the new means being used to disseminate anti-Semitism, such as the Internet. Generally speaking, the programme for the inquiry set out to approach anti-Semitism in the context of human rights and ethnic and religious discrimination.

In line with the programme, the inquiry was based mainly on hearings of people of particular relevance to the issues being addressed.

These included the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the Interior and Education, and senior civil servants in their ministries; representatives of international organisations and the European institutions; foreign parliamentarians and members of the European Parliament sitting on committees on combating anti-Semitism; representatives of relevant associations and non-governmental organisations; members of the judiciary and senior police officers; representatives of the mass media, education and sport; academics, scholars and experts from research establishments and institutes, and representatives of faith communities and religious organisations.

Lastly, pursuant to Rule 144 (1) of the Chamber's Rules of Procedure, in the course of the inquiry the Committees decided to expand the programme to include a hearing of the Minister for Youth.

### **Context of the inquiry**

According to the findings recorded in 2008 by the Jewish Contemporary Documentation Centre (CDEC), 44 percent of Italians express attitudes and opinions in some way hostile to Jews and 12 percent are fully-fledged anti-Semites. These figures have helped to refute the idea that anti-Semitism is of negligible proportions in Italy. They have been cited on several occasions by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini, to illustrate a phenomenon that is widespread not only in European society, but also internationally.

However, the Italian figures have to be seen in the context of Europe as a whole, where there has been a powerful resurgence of anti-Semitism and, consequently, a renewed focus on monitoring its manifestations by the main human rights agencies and bodies combating all forms of racism and intolerance.

The 2003 OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism marked a milestone in the process of defining and understanding the phenomenon. In January 2009, in the light of the new data available, the Organization's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), once more concerned at the increasing number of anti-Semitic incidents in European countries, embarked on a massive strategy for the education of young people and provided input for a debate on anti-Semitism in public discourse, culminating in a Conference convened in 2011.

At the level of the European Union, in 2010 the Vienna-based Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), which conducts an annual inquiry into the state of anti-Semitism, published a report covering the period 2001-2009. It showed that anti-Semitism had increased constantly over the past decade and had remained at rather high levels in Italy in comparison with the previous survey conducted in 1991.

The rise of anti-Semitism in Europe has been further confirmed by the authoritative Jewish Agency which documented the exponential increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents in Western Europe in 2009, an "*annus horribilis*" in terms of anti-Semitism – the worst since the end of the Second World War. According to the Agency's report, in the first three months of 2009 alone, the number of anti-Semitic attacks outnumbered the total for the whole of 2008; the worst affected countries were the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands. This increase, according to the

authors of the report, was linked to reactions to Israel's military intervention in the Gaza Strip. The attacks consisted of acts of vandalism, physical assaults and even the murder of Jews. Their main ideological themes were denial of the right of the State of Israel to exist and denial of the historical truth of the *Shoah*.

A recent study conducted by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Germany) in eight European countries including Italy found that a significant percentage of interviewees concurred with the statement "Considering Israel's policy, I can understand why people do not like Jews". Yet the percentage of affirmative replies of this type in Italy – 25 percent – was lower than in Germany and the United Kingdom (35 percent), the Netherlands (41 percent), Portugal (48 percent) and Poland (no less than 55 percent).

Furthermore, the tragic events in Oslo in July 2011 demonstrate the horrific potential for violence inherent exists in extremist, and particularly neo-Nazi, groups, although the particular forms it takes may vary with the national context.

It was on the basis of these alarming statistics and the above analysis of the global context – in which Jewish communities in Italy and the rest of the world and the legitimacy of the State of Israel and its right to exist within secure borders come under frequent attack, even in the most prestigious international fora – that the inquiry into anti-Semitism was launched.

One major stimulus to conducting the inquiry came from the meeting, held in Rome on 11 September 2009 and chaired by Fiamma Nirenstein, of the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism (ICCA), which actively promotes inquiries into anti-Semitism by national parliaments in the West, particularly in countries like Canada and the United Kingdom.<sup>4</sup> At the meeting, the representatives of the ICCA also met the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Gianfranco Fini. Among other things, the Coalition promoted a similar inquiry by the Canadian Parliament, entrusted to the Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism, which completed its work in July 2011 with the publication of a report.<sup>5</sup>

In this connection the inquiry conducted by the British Parliament should also be mentioned. It concluded in 2006 with the adoption of a final report, which represents an essential benchmark amongst the Parliamentary inquiries on the subject.<sup>6</sup> Another noteworthy initiative has been the signing by the Canadian Government of the Ottawa Protocol adopted by the ICCA.<sup>7</sup>

The final impetus for the enquiry came from the preparatory work for the Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony held on the Floor of the House on 27 January 2010 as part of the initiatives taken by the Chamber of Deputies to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the law instituting the Day of Remembrance.<sup>8</sup> The event was held in the presence of the President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, with an address by the 1986 Nobel Peace Laureate Elie Wiesel, an Auschwitz survivor. The historic nature of the day was emphasised by the address to the

---

<sup>4</sup> The founding conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism (ICCA) was held in London on 16-17 February 2009. It was supported by the British Parliament and the Foreign Office and was attended by 95 parliamentarians representing some 35 countries (as well as 50 experts) who adopted the *London Declaration on Combating Anti-Semitism*. This document constitutes a fully-fledged 35- paragraph programme of action. Among other things it calls on the Council of Ministers of the European Union to convene a special session on combating anti-Semitism. The Declaration also urges governments to take the necessary measures to prevent television broadcasting of explicitly anti-Semitic programmes. The objectives of the ICCA include exchanging experiences and best practices to achieve the best results in countering anti-Semitism in all its manifestations and to draft recommendations. In December 2008, Fiamma Nirenstein became one of the six members of the Coalition Management Board.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Report of the Inquiry Panel - Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Anti-Semitism*, [http://www.cpcca.ca/CPCCA\\_Final\\_Report\\_English.pdf](http://www.cpcca.ca/CPCCA_Final_Report_English.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism*, <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm70/7059/7059.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> See below.

<sup>8</sup> Law no. 2011 of 20 July 2000 "establishing a Remembrance Day in memory of the extermination and persecution of the Jewish people and of the Italian soldiers and civilians deported to Nazi camps". Italy's legislative initiative is one of many others enacted in European and non-European countries, contributing to the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Resolution on the Holocaust Remembrance (A/RES/60/7, 1 November 2005).

Bundestag by the President of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres, and the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the Rome synagogue on 17 January 2010, testifying to a common vision of the values of knowledge and remembrance.

It was on the basis of these crucial factors that the Chamber of Deputies' Committees on Constitutional and Foreign Affairs unanimously voted in favour of conducting a joint inquiry into the various aspects of anti-Semitism in order to gauge ascertain the adequacy of existing national and international legislative instruments and measures and the effectiveness of the agencies responsible for combating the phenomenon.

Moreover, this initiative of the Italian Parliament corresponds to the specific concerns of the Head of State, Giorgio Napolitano, who has never failed over the years to insist on the crucial importance of combating anti-Semitism and the need to cultivate remembrance of the *Shoah*, especially among the younger generations. A fresh boost was given to this idea at the beginning of 2011, the year in which Italy celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its unification, when, in his address commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day, the President of the Republic evoked *"the liberal and democratic spirit, the secular and modern convictions and the devotion to the principles of freedom, independence and self-determination of peoples which inspired the Jewish patriots of the Italian Risorgimento"*; he thus emphasised the contribution made to Italian history by Italian Jews - the very men and women who, under the 1938 Fascist "race" laws, were stripped of their rights and fundamental guarantees by a persecutory racist policy. The Head of State also spoke of intolerance and the demonisation of otherness as being the first destructive seeds which, in Europe's recent history, led to the criminal degeneracy of Nazi, Fascist and Stalinist totalitarianism.

### **Summary of the hearings**

On 27 January 2010, Holocaust Remembrance Day, the inquiry began with the hearing of the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini.

The Minister's testimony centred around the alarming data on the spread of anti-Semitism in Italy which had emerged from the research conducted by the Jewish Contemporary Documentation Centre. The Foreign Minister emphasised the grim fact that 44 percent of Italians have hostile attitudes towards Jews, and 12 percent of them are fully fledged anti-Semites. He then spoke of his long-standing commitment to this issue, beginning with his initiatives as Vice-President of the European Commission, with particular reference to his support for an enquiry by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), which was replaced by the present Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in 2007.

The Minister emphasised the importance of identifying and understanding the phenomenon in order to be able to effectively combat it. He specifically mentioned the danger inherent in a new insidious form of anti-Semitism, coming in addition to the "traditional" form. It was, he said, based on apathy and uncritical acquiescence to claims asserting Jewish "control" over politics, the media and the economy, and used rhetorical arguments to camouflage anti-Semitic prejudice. From these "passive" attitudes it was easy to move on to positions which, compounded with criticism of Israeli policies, developed into forms of incitement to view Israel as a "racist state", going so far as to advocate its destruction. Emblematic in this regard were the statements made by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmud Ahmadinejad, or the outcome of the United Nations Conferences in Durban in 2001 and 2009. The Minister recalled that numerous surveys and enquiries had demonstrated the link between the tension in the Middle East and hatred for Jews.

On 25 February 2010 a hearing was held for the representatives of the Jewish Contemporary Documentation Centre (CDEC) and its Observatory on Anti-Semitism, which collects data and testimonies on anti-Jewish prejudice in Italy, adopting a general approach whereby hostility towards Jews is seen as only one aspect of the mechanism of prejudice.

For this reason, in 2008 the CDEC conducted a wide-ranging enquiry into anti-Semitism through the ISPO - *Istituto per gli studi sulla pubblica opinione* (Institute for Public Opinion

Surveys) - to gain an understanding of the features of different forms of prejudice and the reasons underlying them, of which a succinct illustration was provided.

At that hearing, the researchers Adriana Goldstaub and Betti Guetta provided an updated account of anti-Semitic incidents in Italy. These include acts of vandalism, fortunately few in number, offensive graffiti and abusive letters addressed to the Jewish communities. They offered a well-documented analysis of the anti-Semitic stance adopted by a number of extremist political forces on the right and on the left, and also touched on Catholic integralism and Islamic fundamentalism. According to the research conducted by the CDEC, anti-Semitic behaviour in Italy is restricted to small extremist groups. Anti-Semitic attitudes are quite another matter, and action needs to be taken before they lead to violent behaviour and actions.

On 15 April 2010, representatives of the Italian Jewish communities were heard as witnesses. In particular, Renzo Gattegna, President of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, emphasised the fact that anti-Semitism comes from many sources and is a multi-faceted phenomenon, but ultimately it stems from a generic cultural bedrock of hatred and distrust of those who are different, a condemnation of those who wish to hold on to their own culture and traditions yet live in society and not be excluded from it. According to Gattegna, anti-Semitism and prejudice, which still persist in various ways and at different levels of society, can only be eradicated through culture and knowledge. But anti-Jewish prejudice is being fuelled today by anti-Israeli arguments, encouraged by various media that are prejudiced against the Jewish State and hostile to it. In these cases, the borderline between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism becomes blurred. And there can no longer be any doubt about this when people deny the right of the State of Israel to exist, and threaten to wipe it out. As for current developments, the Sub-Committee's attention was drawn to the electoral success of the ultra-right wing Jobbik party in Hungary, which uses propaganda and language strongly reminiscent of the racist ideologies developed in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s, and to the dramatic surge in anti-Semitic incidents, particularly in the United Kingdom and France, following the military conflict in Gaza.

Riccardo Pacifici, the President of the Rome Jewish Community, touched on the issue of anti-Semitism on the Internet and the difficulty of combating it. He highlighted the threat posed by the new anti-Semitism that takes the form of anti-Zionism, and the violence being perpetrated by Muslim immigrants in Europe. Recalling some of the ideas broached by Robert Wistrich, Professor of European and Jewish History at Jerusalem University, he drew attention to the close connection which exists between certain Muslim organisations and neo-Nazi groups and which underpins attacks on Jewish communities, synagogues, schools and cemeteries, and also underlies the boycotts of sports events (as for instance in March 2009, when the Davis Cup match between Sweden and Israel in Malmö, Sweden, had to be played behind closed doors because of vehement anti-Israeli demonstrations. The national Israeli Tae Kwon Do team was also forced to cancel its visit to Scandinavia "on security grounds"). He urged the adoption of specific measures directed at immigrant Muslim communities in Europe, to isolate organisations with links to Islamic fundamentalism from those who are ready to uphold the fundamental values of equality and tolerance. He went on to stress the importance of strengthening ties between Jewish communities and other communities and improving academic cooperation between Italian and Israeli universities in order to provide a civilised response to those who advocate a cultural boycott of Israel.

Rabbi Benedetto Carucci, the Principal of the Rome Jewish School, began by talking about the different forms of anti-Semitism, but noted that while a theoretical distinction could be drawn between them, in practice actual events fall between these definitions. He was of the view that one of the deep-seated causes of anti-Semitism was an "uneasiness" about the fact that Jews have an extremely strong sense of their identity, yet are not easily identifiable. In some cases, anti-Semitism is due to ignorance, while in others it is based on ideologically constructed and wholly wilful attitudes which are more serious and more difficult to overcome. It was therefore important, but not sufficient, to disseminate culture and information. He also feared that there was a risk that events focusing solely on remembrance of the *Shoah* might create the impression that Judaism was all



about extermination, which is an unacceptable principle for Jews, who do not intend to be recognised purely as descendants of victims, or as survivors.

In view of the widespread dissemination of anti-Semitic material on the Internet and its substantial impact on young people, the Sub-Committee considered that this issue should be investigated further, and on 22 April 2010 it held a hearing of experts on the subject of online monitoring of anti-Semitism.

The researchers concerned, Stefano Gatti from the CDEC Observatory on Anti-Semitism and the Australian researcher André Oboler, Chief Executive Officer of Zionism on the Web, spoke about the work conducted in 2009 by the working group of the Global Forum to Combat Anti-Semitism. They both observed that the main threat came more from the social networks than from the traditional, blatantly anti-Semitic websites, of which they provided a rapid overview – although these can also whip up hatred and they have been growing exponentially. They emphasised that the social networks play a far greater role than the traditional channels in spreading information and opinions, particularly among young people, and they offered examples of how even simple operations such as browsing the Internet can involve the dissemination of anti-Semitic, or at least distorted, messages. On Facebook or Twitter, an environment is created in which anti-Semitism and other types of hatred become socially acceptable, even though the ideas may not necessarily be endorsed, and this makes it more likely that the stimuli from the online community will affect actual behaviour.

Online anti-Semitism must be seen as a global issue, to be countered with a global and unwavering response; the witnesses made a number of suggestions about how to do this, bearing in mind the structure of the Web and the rules governing the social networks and other online sites for exchanging information.

The urgent need to follow up on these points was confirmed, particularly in the wake of this hearing, by a number of specific attacks and threats posted on racist and anti-Jewish websites against the members of the Inquiry Sub-Committee, particularly Chairperson Nirenstein. One motivation for this was undoubtedly the fear that the inquiries might lead to proposals for legislation to put a stop to online anti-Semitism.

On 11 May 2010 Professor Renato Mannheimer, the President of the *Istituto per gli studi sulla pubblica opinione* (ISPO), testified before the Sub-Committee and presented the results of an opinion poll conducted on behalf of the CDEC in 2008. The findings showed that 10 per cent of interviewees agreed with statements attributable to "traditional" anti-Jewish prejudice of a religious nature; 11 per cent agreed with the "modern" xenophobic prejudice that the Jews are an organised group concerned only with their own interests, helping only members of their own community and plotting against the rest of society; 12 per cent subscribed to the "contingent" prejudice linked to a distorted judgment about Israel. A further 12 per cent declared that they agreed with all the anti-Jewish statements put to them, and can therefore be defined as pure anti-Semites. The research also gathered information on the age, academic qualifications, and political allegiances of those who expressed various forms of prejudice.

The question of the online dissemination of anti-Semitic and racist materials, which the Sub-Committee considered to be of crucial importance, was taken up on 25 May 2010 at the hearing of Domenico Vulpiani, Director-General of the Italian State Police and coordinator of computer security and the protection of critical computerised infrastructure nationwide.

In this connection, Vulpiani noted that until quite recently anti-Semitic and Holocaust denial propaganda had been confined to niche publications, but it had found in the Internet an easy and cheap means of propagation. Law No 205 of 25 June 1993 enacting "Urgent provisions in the matter of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination" (also known as the "Mancino Law"), which came into force before the Internet became widespread, had suffered from a number of limitations on its application. Nevertheless, the postal police had successfully tackled a number of cases, of which he provided some examples.

The social networks presented a more complex situation because they could not be closed down. At present, he said, the networks were cooperating informally to ensure the removal of any criminal material. However, this was not easily done in the case of racist or anti-Semitic statements because there was a problem with censoring the expression of personal opinions, however debatable they might be. He therefore reiterated the importance of throwing down a value-based cultural challenge in parallel with law-enforcement measures.

In the course of Vulpiani's hearing a request was made for the government to adopt urgent measures to make good Italy's failure to initial the Additional protocol to the Convention on cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems, which was opened for signature in 2002 and came into force in 2004.

Under the Council of Europe's International Convention on Cybercrime, which was adopted in 2001, came into force in 2004 and was ratified by Italy with Law No 48 of 18 March 2008, States undertook to regulate this field for the first time. The 2002 Additional Protocol urges States to criminalise the dissemination of racist and xenophobic material through computer systems, using two instruments: harmonising criminal law and improving international cooperation to combat the phenomenon. The Protocol expands the scope of the Convention on Cybercrime to include crimes involving racist or xenophobic propaganda. It offers the Parties the possibility of using the international cooperation channels and resources specified for this purpose in the Convention.

On 19 October 2010, Professor Dina Porat, Director of the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism at Tel Aviv University, provided an analysis of new forms of anti-Semitism that had developed in the past ten years and reported on the emergence of an Islamist form of anti-Semitism. Professor Porat said that the new forms of anti-Semitism are marked by the fact that they overlap with anti-Zionism, and by a tendency to attack Jewish communities outside Israel because of their association with that country. At the same time, the extremist groups are not only anti-Semitic: they target anyone who does not share their identity or culture. Professor Porat provided figures on the evolution of anti-Semitic incidents over the past 20 years, by year and by individual country, showing the correlations with specific events. On the whole, Italy is not one of the countries in which anti-Semitic incidents occur most frequently.

She too stressed the importance of educating young people in order to give them adequate means of properly interpreting historical and contemporary events. She addressed the issue of how to draw the line between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism and analysed the dynamic that leads to a denial of the right of the State of Israel to have a "normal" existence. On the subject of criticism, Professor Porat referred to the 2004 European definition of anti-Semitism established at the Berlin Conference, according to which anti-Zionist movements become anti-Semitic when they deny the Jewish people the right to self-determination to which every people is entitled, or when they apply double standards by making demands on Jews and Israel that they do not make on other peoples and States. Criticisms equating Israeli policy with Nazi policies, or accusing Jews throughout the world of being responsible for the actions of the State of Israel, were certainly anti-Semitic, she said.

She pointed out that criticism of Israel is no different from criticism of any other country when it has to do with particular events or specific policies at a specific time. But when the criticism is expressed in anti-Semitic terms and then applied to Jews in general and to the Jewish State, it ceases to be criticism and becomes anti-Semitism.

To examine the issue of the spread of anti-Semitic prejudice among young people, on 16 November 2010 the Sub-Committee heard the testimony of Alessandro Cavalli and Enzo Riso, in their respective capacities as President and Director of the IARD (*Istituto Ricerche politiche e socioeconomiche* - Institute for Political and Socio-Economic Research), who presented the results of an enquiry conducted on behalf of the Observatory on Xenophobia and Racism instituted at the Chamber of Deputies during the term of the present Parliament.

The findings showed one particularly important fact, namely, that 22 percent of young people aged between 18 and 29 expressed hostility to Jews, with greater and above-average hostility

being exhibited by males resident in Northern Italy, young people with a lower level of education, individuals who felt rooted in their local territory, and those who saw themselves as excluded from society. It was noted, at all events, that Jews are not the minority which is targeted by the most gross forms of intolerance at present. The link between intolerance and anti-Semitism was therefore highlighted again.

On 27 January 2011 there was a further opportunity to reflect on the dynamics of the younger generation's world at the hearing of the Minister of Education, the University and Research, Mariastella Gelmini. She spoke of the numerous initiatives currently underway in Italy's schools to preserve the historical memory of racial persecution and to educate young people to counter anti-Semitism in its many different and insidious forms. Referring to a motion adopted by the government when approving the reform of the universities, she expressed her concern at the appeals and measures adopted by Italian universities to boycott Israeli universities and academics. During the hearing, attention once again focused on the new type of anti-Semitism - less overtly racist, and therefore more subtle and insidious - that was now developing, particularly through the social networks. In the course of the debate it was suggested that teachers should be trained to explain not only the *Shoah* and the Jewish faith, but also the history of the State of Israel and Zionism, so as to equip the younger generations with adequate tools for interpreting the situation.

Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE on Combating Anti-Semitism and delegate of the United States government to the first OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism, testified on 4 May 2011. It should be recalled that the OSCE, as a specialised security and co-operation agency, takes a comprehensive approach to these issues, relating them to human rights, the protection of minorities and democratisation. From this point of view, the Organisation organised a Conference on anti-Semitism in Vienna in 2003 in response to the revival of anti-Semitism in Europe from 2002 onwards. In 2004, the follow-up Conference was held in Berlin and attended by most of the governments of the OSCE countries. It led to the establishment of a Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for combating anti-Semitism and similar posts for combating discrimination against Muslims, Christians and religious intolerance in general. The Conference adopted the Berlin Declaration, which explicitly affirms that anti-Semitism has taken on new forms and is being manifested in new ways, and that there is an ongoing process of demonising Israel, intended to call its legitimacy into question. In March 2011, at a meeting in Prague on anti-Semitism in public discourse, it was noted that even when the political leadership recognises that anti-Semitic pronouncements are unacceptable, no adequate action is taken to combat them, and that the media play a key role in disseminating negative messages.

Baker began with a short historical reconstruction of the development of the new forms of anti-Semitism over the past decade, since the failure of the Middle East peace process and the outcome of the 2001 Durban Conference. As a result of this, the Jewish communities in various Western countries have had to deal for the first time with a new atmosphere of insecurity, the result of physical assaults, but also, and above all, of a new cultural climate. Additionally, efforts to obtain the restitution of property confiscated by the Nazi regime or nationalised by the Communist regimes have provoked anti-Semitic reactions, which in turn have caused uncertainty among governments about how to deal with them.

During the hearing, a great deal of time was devoted to the frequently-addressed issue of defining anti-Semitism, particularly where the policies pursued by the State of Israel are concerned. In reply to a question put by Mr Corsini, MP, Baker noted that one had to be very careful about labelling statements as anti-Semitic, and leave a great deal of room for criticism, even harsh criticism. But there were also positions, such as the denial of Israel's right to exist, that went beyond the limits of the acceptable – limits which, although perhaps difficult to define exactly, are clearly

recognisable when breached.

According to Baker, knowledge about Jews tends not to come from direct sources, but more often from the media, which therefore play a crucial role. He noted that it was easier to define good practices than it was to enact laws: for example, one could encourage providers to monitor and filter more effectively the material disseminated through their servers, and to black out sites which are vehicles for the brutal expression of hatred. In more general terms, there should be a rapid reaction to any manifestation of anti-Semitism, which should be declared taboo and have no right to a place in public discourse. There was scope here for Parliamentary action.

The Minister for Youth, Giorgia Meloni, testified on 18 May 2011. She began by noting that anti-Semitism in Italy rarely took violent form, but was more of a cultural phenomenon which had to be combated at the same level. She explained what her Ministry had been doing to disseminate information raise awareness as a means of combating all forms of racial hatred and, above all, anti-Semitism.

She noted that the new mass media could be used for positive ends as a means of disseminating "counter-information" rather than merely putting up with their negative use, and expressed doubts regarding the effectiveness of any legislative solutions. In her view, efforts had to be made to foster the education of young people, who had to be made sufficiently aware of the need to combat expressions of racism and anti-Semitism on the Internet, so that the opinions of a vocal minority did not gain the upper hand.

On 15 June 2011, the hearing of Professor Gert Weisskirchen, member of the Steering Committee of the Interparliamentary Coalition for Combating Anti-Semitism (ICCA), and former Personal Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, expanded the scope of the inquiry to embrace international current affairs, including the revolutions taking place in many parts of the Arab world. He emphasised the risks of an Islamic fundamentalist insurgency which might have dangerous repercussions for Jews. On the subject of the Arab Spring, it was noted that the forces fighting for democracy should be helped, with economic and institutional assistance offered subject to respect for human rights and the promotion of a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict. Concerns were once again voiced about the development in Hungary and in other European states of large anti-Semitic movements, which are becoming institutionalised in mainstream parties in their countries' political landscape.

The Minister for Home Affairs, Roberto Maroni, was the witness at the last hearing of the inquiry, held on 26 July 2011. He focused on the work of the agencies dedicated to preventing and combating anti-Semitism, including its dissemination through the Internet.

He assured the meeting that the police were devoting the closest possible attention to all manifestations of intolerance and racial, ethnic and religious discrimination, and drew attention to the importance of the OSCAD – Observatory for Security against Acts of Discrimination – established in September 2010 and chaired by the Deputy Chief of Police. OSCAD's remit was to monitor and analyse all information on acts of discrimination against individuals on the grounds of ethnic origin or religion, and to design local strategies for action and facilitate the filing of complaints. Furthermore, a Protocol of Understanding had been concluded between OSCAD and the National Office to Combat Racial Discrimination (UNAR) at the Department of Equal Opportunities. The Protocol defined methods for exchanging information when handling cases of discrimination brought to their attention, whether of a criminal nature or not.

Minister Maroni said that, unlike other European countries, Italy did not suffer from frequent outbreaks of anti-Semitism or protests against the State of Israel, pointing out that "Unexpected Israel" had been staged without incident in June 2011 in Piazza Duomo in Milan.

Minister Maroni stated that he was deeply committed to preventing the dissemination of

anti-Semitic propaganda on the Internet and that he too wanted Italy to sign the Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention as soon as possible. In operational terms, he recalled that social network providers had been raising difficulties and objections about removing discriminatory postings on the basis of mere reports from the postal police. Consequently the latter were monitoring the sites and reporting cases to the courts, which then served orders on the providers, who although under no obligation to do so, particularly when based abroad, generally complied with them.

### **Related debates and other parliamentary action**

Between 2009 and 2010, while the inquiry was taking place, Parliament was at the same time conducting several important surveys and research projects relating to issues of relevance to the inquiry. These activities, in which large numbers of parliamentarians and distinguished representatives of the Italian institutions, academe and civil society committed to combating anti-Semitism took part, helped to heighten public awareness of the work of the Inquiry Sub-Committee and to take its contribution beyond the bounds of the political establishment into society at large.

It was decided to mention them in this report because of the input and stimuli they have contributed to the inquiry.

As part of the fact-finding survey of violations of human rights worldwide conducted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, a hearing was held on 16 June 2009 for the Honorary Chairman of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries, Irwin Cotler, and David Meghnagi, a lecturer at “Roma Tre” University, Rome. The hearing focused on the question of the massive exodus of Jews and Palestinians as a consequence of the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. Irwin Cotler, former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, international humanitarian law expert and Nelson Mandela’s legal counsel, renowned for his commitment to the anti-apartheid cause, recalled that the events of 1948 had not only given rise to the Palestinian *Naqba*, but also the less known exodus of an even larger number of Jewish refugees - about 850,000. That exodus/exile was caused by the rejection of the nascent state of Israel by the leadership of many Arab states, and the victims were citizens of Jewish descent. Recognition of the rights of the Jewish refugees is one of the issues involved in the Middle East question, which should be resolved in the context of the peace negotiations. As for the question of compensation, rather than arguing in terms of return, it would be more appropriate to reason in terms of restoring memory, truth and justice – concepts which form part of the notion of compensation under international law. The hearing then led to a proposal to consider November 29 – the day on which the United Nations commemorates the tragedy of Palestinian refugees every year – as the anniversary of the forced exodus of the two peoples, serving as the first step towards achieving mutual recognition of the tragedy suffered by both.

In his testimony, David Meghnagi put forward a picture of a modern Arab society marked by the experience of nationalism, culminating in the late 1960s, which wiping out the tradition of ethnic pluralism and the model of coexistence between Islamic and non-Islamic communities that had existed, at least partially, before the birth of the nation states in that region. Frictions with the Jewish presence in the region and intolerance towards the State of Israel should also be interpreted in the light of this development, the disappearance of “otherness”.

On the issue of anti-Semitism, the hearing also highlighted the fact that in the debate on the forced exodus of the two peoples, expressions borrowed from the experience of the *Shoah* were used with reference to Israel, not only to delegitimise that State, but also to deprive its people of their specific identity and historical experience.

A further opportunity to examine the question was provided by the Seminar, promoted by

the Inquiry Sub-Committee, entitled "Why anti-Semitism? The questions of history" held on 5 July 2010, with contributions from Robert Wistrich, Mario Toscano, Piero Craveri, David Meghnagi, Marcello Pezzetti, and Giulio Meotti. The Seminar opened with an address by Ruth Halimi, the mother of Ilan, a young Parisian Jew murdered in 2006 by a gang of anti-Semites. The Seminar examined the historical and social origins of anti-Semitism in European society. In his paper, David Meghnagi highlighted the fact that anti-Semitism was not only a right-wing phenomenon. According to the historian Piero Craveri, anti-Semitism was fuelled by the British and French appeasement policies practised in the 1930s to placate Hitler's expansionist objectives and to avoid military intervention against Germany. The circumstances of the kidnapping and killing of Ilan Halimi were reminiscent, according to the historian Mario Toscano, of the anti-Semitic prototype of the wealthy Jew, and possessed all the features of contemporary anti-Semitism, including the Israel question and the international political role of the Soviet world. According to Marcello Pezzetti, historian of the *Shoah* and director of the *Shoah* Museum in Rome, the reasons for anti-Semitic hatred have ancient roots and are not only found in left-wing and right-wing political environments. In a teleconference call from Jerusalem, Wistrich said that "*Anti-Semitism is a barbarous activity within society, a kind of new jihad which has spread from the meeting places of Nazi-Fascist groups to the universities, newspapers, television, among those who have the means at their disposal for keeping anti-Jewish prejudice at a distance*". Wistrich said that a major part of the problem was the climate of suspicion about Israel amongst academics and in the media, and the trivialisation of anti-Semitism, which is no longer viewed as a threat. It was therefore necessary to appeal to the media to show a sense of responsibility, bearing in mind that Jews constitute a yardstick by which to gauge a society's tolerance levels.

Another speaker at the Conference was MP Volpi, who said that it was important for the work of the Sub-Committee of Inquiry to come up with concrete proposals and, if possible, legislative proposals.

Another event of relevance here was the participation of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Second Interparliamentary Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism organised by the ICCA in Ottawa on 7-9 November 2010. The Conference was also attended by MP Fiamma Nirenstein, in her capacity as Vice-Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and MP Paolo Corsini. The Conference ended with the adoption of the Ottawa Protocol, which laid down a set of guidelines for future action to combat the spread of anti-Semitism.

As the hearing of Domenico Vulpiani had done, the Conference also raised the issue of Italy's failure to sign the Additional Protocol to the Convention on cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems. In this regard, the Foreign Affairs Committee subsequently adopted, on 14 December 2010, Resolution No 7-00445, submitted by MP Fiamma Nirenstein and MP Corsini, committing the government to signing the Protocol as a necessary instrument for stepping up international coordination and introducing more streamlined procedures for combating xenophobic and racist crimes using computer systems.

### **Definition of anti-Semitism**

The inquiry was conducted on the basis of the working definitions established at international level by the OSCE and the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), the Vienna-based European Union agency for human rights, renamed the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in 2007.

The impetus for the OSCE and the European Union to embark on initiatives and create opportunities to study this issue came at the end of the Durban Conference Against Racism, which convened in New York in September 2001, just a few days before the Twin Towers attack in New York and following a Regional Conference in Teheran equating Zionism with racism.

The first landmark event was the 2003 OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism in Vienna, which identified new forms of anti-Semitism in comparison with the better-known traditional forms.

In 2004 the Second Conference on Anti-Semitism was held in Berlin and attended by high-level representatives of the governments of OSCE member states. It adopted a Declaration on new forms of anti-Semitism, namely demonising Israel and casting doubt on its legitimacy through criticisms levelled against the government of the Jewish State for its actions in the context of the Middle East crisis. The Declaration emphasised that developments in the Middle East could never justify anti-Semitic statements.

Between 2002 and 2003 the EUMC embarked on its first survey of anti-Semitism in the European Union in order to monitor incidents of anti-Semitism and the attitudes and convictions of the European population. In 2005 the EUMC, in conjunction with the OSCE-ODHIR, produced a working definition which has now been adopted as a benchmark for the whole of the international community, and which it is appropriate to cite here in its entirety:

“Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Anti-Semitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of anti-Semitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

Making mendacious, dehumanising, demonising, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.

Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

Examples of the ways in which anti-Semitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.

Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

Using the symbols and images associated with classic anti-Semitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterise Israel or Israelis.

Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic.

Anti-Semitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of anti-Semitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are anti-Semitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Anti-Semitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, anti-Zionism, anti-Israelism**

From the beginning of the inquiry, convinced that, as MP Corsini emphasised, “the need for serious and well-founded classification of the terminology also has to do with the dignity of political language”, the Sub-Committee perceived it to be a matter of urgency and crucial importance to differentiate between racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism.

To define these differences, repeated reference was made to the contributions of the scholar Pierre-André Taguieff and the historian Robert Wistrich.

In scientific terms one might say that there are three forms of anti-Semitism: religious, in the sense of being anti-Jewish; racial, in the sense of anti-Semitic; and anti-Israeli, which may be partly equated with anti-Zionism.

Recalling the definitions established at European level, the concept of anti-Semitism was further debated in the course of the inquiry, with repeated interventions by MPs Boniver, Pianetta and Tempestini. It was observed that anti-Semites are anti-Semites because they base their belief that a Jew remains a Jew, even if secularised or converted, on racist and nationalist, rather than religious, grounds. Furthermore, while it could also be said that all anti-Semites are racists while not all racists are anti-Semites, it is beyond doubt that a racist mentality is what it is because it is based on categories of thought centring around the idea of a "different" form of humanity, qualitatively superior or inferior, which therefore accept anti-Semitic theories as possible and justifiable.

As evidenced in the testimony given by Minister Frattini, knowledge is the first condition for ensuring that the whole world, and not only Europe, will never again see any attempts to physically annihilate the Jewish people. As the Minister recalled, it is essential to identify direct and indirect forms of anti-Semitism: the direct forms are actions committed by the extremist fringe groups of neo-Nazi inspiration which are once again emerging, and mostly come from juvenile subcultures. Conversely, indirect anti-Semitism takes the form of Holocaust denial or historical revisionism by certain Heads of State, distinguished academics and religious leaders.

As far as anti-Judaism is concerned, historically speaking it indicates an aversion to Jews backed up by a religious ideology, although the reasons for the hostility are not exclusively of a religious nature. According to the anti-Judaic position, the only "remedy" is the religious conversion of the Jews. Christian hostility towards Jews has ancient roots and is also linked to the dissemination of the “substitution doctrine” according to which the Jews were no longer the chosen people, because they were guilty of “deicide”, as demonstrated also by the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and the repression of the Jewish uprising in the following century. According to this doctrine, the Covenant between God and Israel was replaced by the Covenant with the

<sup>9</sup> European Forum on Anti-Semitism.



followers of Christ, and the New Testament took the place of the Testament referred to as “Old” rather than “Ancient”, to signify that it had in some way been superseded.

With regard to relations with the Catholic Church and the situation in Italy, a historical turning point occurred under the pontificate of John XXIII, with the Second Vatican Council and the Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions or "*Nostra Aetate*". The decisive shift came with the pontificate of John Paul II, who gave a new direction to relations between the Church and the State of Israel by establishing genuine dialogue between Catholics and Jews and setting diplomatic cooperation in motion. Talks between the Vatican and the State of Israel were formally inaugurated on 11 March 1999 pursuant to the Fundamental Agreement between the Holy See and the Jewish State of 30 December 1993. In addition to recognising the State of Israel, John Paul II also asked for forgiveness for the shortcomings and sins of Christians against their "elder brothers" over the centuries when he made the first ever papal visit to the Rome Synagogue.

Generally speaking, Christianity and Judaism have preferred, if not chosen, within the institutional systems in which they have developed, the democratic model based on the principle of accountability and the inviolability of the human person.

Anti-Zionism is distinguished by its radical opposition to the Zionist movement which came into being at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, based on the right of peoples to self-determination, with the object of establishing a State of Israel on the territory which became part of the British Mandate in Palestine. Anti-Zionists reject the right of the Jewish people to self-determination; they reject the legal basis for the 1920 Treaty of San Remo and United Nations Resolution No 181 of 1947, the basis of the birth of the State of Israel; they therefore deny the right of return of the Jews of the Diaspora, and therefore have fundamental objections to the Jewish presence in Israel. Contemporary anti-Zionism also falsely holds that the State of Israel was created in retaliation for the *Shoah* and as compensation to the Jewish people by Europe, to the detriment of the powerless Arab communities that had settled in Palestine, forgetting the magnitude and the far earlier origins of the Zionist movement.

The most convinced anti-Zionists often argue for the illegitimacy of Israeli statehood by drawing comparisons between Israel and apartheid South Africa, a State that was formerly sidelined by the international community, and persist in using anti-Jewish clichés such as the blood libel published in a 2009 article in the Swedish daily *Aftonbladet*, which accused the Israeli military of involvement in the trafficking of organs removed from young Palestinians.

But the fact remains that most anti-Zionists today hold authentic anti-Semitic views, which means that anti-Zionism appears to be a form of the new anti-Semitism. This has been proven in studies conducted by the CDEC, for example; there is a correlation between anti-Jewish prejudice and anti-Zionism. Not all anti-Zionists are anti-Semitic, but some of those who criticise Israel also hold stereotypical anti-Jewish views. The anti-Semitic websites also tend to replace the term "Jew" with "Zionist" even though there are also Jews who criticise and attack Zionism. Anti-Zionist issues provide a powerful bond for extreme right and left wing groups, who conflate their Holocaust denial with advocacy of the elimination of the State of Israel.

While it is easy to differentiate between them in theoretical terms, manifestations of anti-Semitism nevertheless overlap and combine in a loosely defined negative attitude towards Jews. Arguing that the State of Israel has no right to exist legitimises two other dimensions of anti-Semitism, one of which is apparently only ethnic in character, while the other is apparently only religious. But when a State such as Iran seeks to give international legitimacy to the idea that the Israeli State can be abolished, it links up with the classic anti-Semitic positions, starting with *Shoah* denial.

The phenomenon is very complex, based not only on ignorance but, above all, on ideological attitudes. The particular animosity shown towards Jews can be explained in historical terms by the uneasiness that people feel because Jews are not usually identifiable externally, although they belong to a group with a very powerful sense of identity.

## Anti-Semitism in the international context

According to many observers, anti-Semitism is the most ancient form of hatred of a particular people. One may not agree that it holds this "record", but there can be no doubt that the *Shoah* was the greatest tragedy in the history of humanity. It was not the only case of genocide, but it was certainly a "unique case of genocide", to quote the words of David Bidussa and Bernard Bruneteau, in the sense that it comprised all the features of all the genocides, and every manifestation of anti-Semitism is a grave crime against fundamental human rights.

The absolute novelty that is emerging on the international stage, which the inquiry has helped to bring to light, is the element of genocide, which consists in asserting that the Jews may face another *Shoah*. This became immediately obvious in the words of the Iranian leader Ahmadinejad when he addressed the United Nations General Assembly, which have been echoed in Europe by many extremist groups on both the right and the left, and have not been which are not adequately contradicted or condemned by the international community.

The new anti-Semitism, which is rooted in traditional anti-Jewish sentiments and prejudice, draws parasitically and with particularly brash cynicism on the persistence of international crises for new arguments, and is acquiring features that are more difficult to identify, refute and rebut. As the inquiry has shown, when this issue is raised at international level, it must be related to the specific status of Israel as a state from which public opinion – Italian, European and international – usually demands more than it does from other members of the international community. There is a widespread perception that Israel is considered a special country, a "State of the Jews", which should therefore be "better" than others and which is often criticised and condemned as a matter of course. It is the only case in which the legitimacy of a State depends on ethical and subjective parameters, often entrusted to the judgment of its enemies in the international fora.

One of the indirect forms of anti-Semitism can be observed in international political debate: the biased criticism of what Israel is doing in the developing situation in the Middle East. The process began with the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action in 2001. This provided the basis for the pronouncements of international leaders - and first and foremost the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmud Ahmadinejad, who is allowed to speak out in all the international fora, and even from the podium at the United Nations General Assembly - denying the genocide and advocating the annihilation of the State of Israel, in blatant violation of the UN Convention. These threats have since been followed by others of a genocidal nature. With regard to these pronouncements, measures should be considered to fully implement the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; thought should also be given to the advisability of supporting initiatives at international level to refer the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ahmadinejad, to the International Criminal Court for the crime of incitement to genocide.

As for the so-called "Arab Spring" the inquiry revealed concern at the increase in the number of fundamentalist Islamist parties, not only in Egypt, which could upset a balanced approach to Israel and hence lead to a deterioration in Israel's security in the region. The situation has been further aggravated by the agreement between Fatah and Hamas, the latter being an anti-Semitic organisation whose founding charter looks forward to the destruction of all Jews. This agreement was concluded without any evident initiatives to show Europe's opposition to it. Other concerns have been raised by the statements of candidates for the Egyptian general election scheduled for autumn of 2011, which favour revising the Peace Treaty with Israel, hitherto considered the keystone to a balanced Middle East. In addition to the negative model of Iran following the overthrow of the Shah, uncertainty still remains regarding the outcome of the unrest and uprisings, considering the wide variety of different contexts, the different roles played by the military in the countries concerned, and their differing political traditions and cultural orientations.

There is no doubt that the greatest attention must be focused on the situation in Egypt, given its role and weight in the region.

The situation is further aggravated by a lack of cohesive action on the part of the European Union which, after the failure of the Franco-Egyptian project to establish the Union for the Mediterranean, is finding it hard to use the resources of the Neighbourhood Policy to promote the consolidation of democratic institutions in its neighbouring states. So far, the European Union has earmarked little financial assistance for the aid plan launched by the Deauville G8 Summit.

Another source of European concern is the emergence in Hungary of the extreme right-wing party, Jobbik, which is now the third largest party in the country with 15 percent of electoral support, and appears to be backed by broad sections of Hungarian society and politicians, as well as similar groups in other European Union countries. In all these extremist groupings that are emerging on the European political stage there is a strong element of racist anti-Semitism which must be countered by both cultural and political means.

All the anti-Semitic movements have drawn new lifeblood and strength from the Internet, which offers virtually infinite possibilities for the propagation of distorted information.

In recent years Italy has provided visible and tangible evidence of its commitment to combating anti-Semitism by supporting the development of good relations between Israel and the European Union, promoting European Commission study initiatives for young people and giving a powerful boost to Italian relations with Israel involving and leading European partners in the process, beginning with Germany.

At the international level, too, measures must be taken to combat what Minister Frattini has called "civil habituation" and relativism: combating anti-Semitism is an absolute value in itself, and no kind of dialogue or debate can weaken it or cause people to give it up, because it forms a non-negotiable part of Europe's identity. Dialogue between Israel and the Arab world and peace in the Middle East are further essential objectives, but they cannot be attained by sacrificing the absolute value of combating anti-Semitism and Israel's right to its existence and security.

Knowledge, culture, information and the involvement of all tiers of government in a kind of national plan for education about the collective memory offer a possible solution, at national and also international level. It is important not to yield to the "rogue teachers" who construct theories of hatred in Italy and abroad based on such arguments as the economic crisis and social marginalisation, or which downplay the role of the Internet in the dissemination of anti-Semitic ideas.

### **The Italian case**

Representatives of the Jewish community in Italy explicitly acknowledge that our country has noticeably changed, mainly following the enactment of the Mancino Law and the institution of the Day of Remembrance, for which all the political parties voted unanimously and which came about as a result of the legislative initiative of MPs Furio Colombo and Athos De Luca. There is no other country in the world that has taken so many initiatives as Italy has throughout the country, in its institutions, schools, trade unions, and even in military environments, to familiarise people with Judaism and issues relating to the defence of Israel.

Yet Italy is also involved in the European revival of anti-Semitism, according to the findings of the surveys and inquiries referred to above, and is not immune to traditional or more modern forms of anti-Semitism. As the Minister of Education rightly pointed out at the hearing held on Remembrance Day in 2011, in Italy, as in the rest of Europe, *"remembering the drama of the Jews is a tribute of truth paid to the victims, and to ourselves, and above all to the Italians of the Jewish faith who, in the Risorgimento, fought side-by-side with other Italians in the cause of national unity"*. This is the important connection made between the Jewish world and the celebrations of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Italian Unification, in line with the course proposed by the President of the Republic. It might be appropriate to mention at this point that in 2010 a plaque was set up at the

Chamber of Deputies deploring the adoption of the race laws by the Italian Parliament, to mark the responsibility of the institutions, as well as individuals and society as a whole, for creating favourable conditions for the implementation of the extermination project.

Italian anti-Semitism can be put down to a number of very clearly identifiable sources, beginning with certain, even authoritative, Catholic circles, in both the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century traditions. It is also a legacy of Fascism, the neopagan tradition, and certain areas of right-wing and left-wing radical culture.

As evidenced by the 1938 race laws and racial defence measures in Italian schools, anti-Semitic racism was enacted in law in Italy as a result of Fascist initiatives and ideology. Doing away with that mindset goes hand in hand with the internalisation of the constitutional values according to which being "anti-anti-Semitic" is part and parcel of the patriotism enshrined in the Constitution.

In Italy, as in other countries, data on anti-Semitism is gathered by monitoring the printed and broadcasting media and the Internet, taking up reports submitted by private individuals, institutes and communities, and through opinion polls. Anti-Semitism is described in terms of factual data, social attitudes and prejudice, the latter being political and also commercial in character (as in the case of the boycott of products from Israel by a certain supermarket chain, the controversies surrounding the "Unexpected Israel" exhibition in Milan in 2011, and the 2008 Turin Book Fair).

The factual data consist of acts of vandalism, physical assaults of a more or less serious nature, desecrations of Jewish cemeteries, offensive graffiti, and abusive e-mails sent to individuals or institutions considered to be representatives of the Jewish community. Although there has been a decline in anti-Semitic incidents at sports events in recent years, there have nevertheless been a number of cases such as the repeated online publication of a list of 162 reputedly Jewish lecturers and professors, described as a "lobby" and accused of "manipulating students' minds" and controlling Italian universities. Another publication listed the names of Jewish (or allegedly Jewish) members of the judiciary and gave an updated list of commercial outlets, restaurants, butchers, and cake shops owned by Jews. In academic circles there have also been initiatives such as the decision, adopted in March 2010 by three Italian universities (Pisa, Rome "La Sapienza" and Bologna) and supported by individual lecturers and professors, to hold an "Israeli Apartheid Week" on the theme "Boycott, disinvestment, sanctions", with the intention of advocating punitive measures against Israel of the kind once taken against South Africa under the apartheid regime.

This initiative was also mentioned in a motion taken up by the government and submitted in the course of the debate on the University Reform Bill, which called on the government to take all necessary steps to prevent any future actions of this kind which ran contrary to respect for peoples, and in particular respect for the Jewish people (motion no. 9/3687-A/18, tabled by MPs Fiano, Fassino, Tempestini, Veltroni, Franceschini, Nirenstein, Vaccaro, and Ruben).

With regard to anti-Semitic attitudes, in addition to the figures, which may not reflect the full magnitude of the phenomenon, and so may mislead public opinion, the Sub-Committee analysed the background in order to identify sound information strategies. Believing that anti-Semitism is an attitude shared by large numbers of people may lead to its acceptance. It has been found that anti-Semitic attitudes go hand in hand with a lack of knowledge of Jews (only 15 per cent of anti-Semites base their attitude on knowledge of Jews).

According to the survey conducted by the CDEC and ISPO, one Italian in three considers Jews to be "not very nice", and one in four does not consider them to be fully Italian. About 10 per cent have a more traditional anti-Jewish prejudice, religious in nature; 11 per cent accept a "modern", more xenophobic, prejudice; 12 per cent have a "contingent" prejudice often linked to their opinion of Israel. Then there are a further 12 per cent, driven by pure anti-Jewish sentiment: these are the interviewees who declare their agreement with all the anti-Jewish statements in the questionnaire.

The current situation in Italy reveals an increase in anti-Jewish prejudice in far-left circles, irrespective of gender and across all age groups. This can be seen from the repeated arguments and analyses demonising and delegitimising the State of Israel, defined as a state based on apartheid against the Palestinians. The underlying assumption is that the victims of the past have become today's executioners. Consequently any attacks on Israeli citizens are portrayed as legitimate actions of partisan resistance, and this has repercussions on the Jews of the Diaspora, including Italian Jews.

Denial of the *Shoah* is absent from the culture of these environments, even though the comparison drawn between the extermination of the Jews and what is improperly defined as the "Palestinian Holocaust" can lead to relativisation of the genocide of the Jews. Anti-Jewish prejudice in this connection is based on the argument that all Jews pursue power and wealth by manipulating the institutions and centres of power.

Anti-Semitic Holocaust denial in Italy is a marginal issue, "confined" to the Internet, where few websites are dedicated to it. The most important references are to the writings of Mattogno and Faurisson. Nevertheless, these should not be underestimated, and it is therefore to be hoped that the debate on instruments to combat this phenomenon will be developed further.

In Italy, thanks to the commitment of the Catholic Church, which in 1965 and again in 1986 definitively shelved the centuries-old anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic tradition of the Catholic world, religious anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism would appear to be limited to a few Internet sites and extremely isolated episodes, however outrageous. The anti-Jewish sites use very violent arguments, which also target the post-Conciliar ecclesiastical hierarchies.

One aspect less thoroughly studied in Italy, not least because of the language barrier, is Islamist anti-Semitism. Nevertheless there have been cases of intolerance and aggression targeting Jews by fanatics from the Islamic communities in Italy. It should be recalled that in 2006 the Union of Italian Islamic Communities (UCOII) took out paid advertisements in a number of Italian daily newspapers comparing the bombing of Gaza with the Marzabotto massacre. The *Unexpected Israel* exhibition in June 2011 also led to tensions between the organisation of Young Italian Muslims and its Jewish opposite number organisation because the former considered that the event was designed to commemorate the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

### **Anti-Semitism and the right to criticise the State of Israel**

During the course of the inquiry one central question was where to draw the line between anti-Semitism and the legitimate right to criticise the State of Israel, like any other State, with particular reference to Israeli policies in the context of the Middle East crisis. Under what circumstances can criticism of Israel take on anti-Semitic tones?

In this matter, which was especially highlighted by MPs Corsini and Volpi, particular attention should be devoted to concerns about new forms of anti-Semitism, mostly in extreme left and extreme right wing circles, which favour the Palestinian cause on the basis of anti-Jewish prejudice.

This matter was addressed boldly and unambiguously by the Italian Head of State on 27 January 2009, on Remembrance Day, a few days after the conclusion of the Israeli military operation in the Gaza Strip. He declared, "*In response to unscrupulous terrorist tactics that have for so long targeted the territory of Israel, placing the people of Gaza in jeopardy, Israel has undertaken an act of war whose scope and consequences have given rise to some controversy, even in Israel and among Israel's friends. But it is precisely when action by the Government of Israel may appear controversial and may be legitimately challenged that a clear and unambiguous distinction must be drawn between any critical stances with respect to the policies adopted by whoever governs Israel at a given time, and the denial, whether explicit or insinuated, of the historic rights of the State of Israel and its right to existence and security, and its democratic character. It is precisely at such times that we must be more vigilant, and react more clearly,*

*against the reproduction of the virus of anti-Semitism and the emergence of new forms of opportunism and aggressive campaigns against Jews and against the Jewish State*". In a previous address on Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2007, President Napolitano had raised this point by declaring that anti-Semitism had to be combated even when it was camouflaged as anti-Zionism *"because anti-Zionism is tantamount to denying the source of inspiration of the Jewish State, the rationale underlying its birth, yesterday, and its security, today, regardless of the governments that succeed each other at the helm"*.

The international efforts to provide a working definition of anti-Semitism produced a number of benchmarks, according to which anti-Semitism is a denial of the right to self-determination of the Jewish people, by those who hold that supporting the existence of the State of Israel is an act of racism; applying double standards by making demands on Israel that are not made on other states in the international community; using symbols or images of traditional anti-Semitism (for example the charge of deicide, the blood libel or the conspiracy theory) to characterise Israel and the Israelis; drawing comparisons between Israel's present policy and Nazi policies; considering all Jews to be collectively responsible for the actions taken by the State of Israel.

In themselves, criticisms are not a form of anti-Semitism and it is certainly necessary to be very cautious before labelling criticism, even anti-Zionist criticism, as anti-Semitic. Yet one limit to this freedom of expression must certainly be questioning the right of the State of Israel to exist, and its legitimacy, resorting to traditional stereotypes such as the blood libel, or the Jewish conspiracy theory, which was inaugurated in the modern age by the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion and ended up holding the Jewish "lobby" responsible for such disastrous events as the Twin Towers attacks or the current international economic crisis.

In the course of the inquiry useful input on the right to criticise Israel, and further clarification in this regard, was provided at the hearing of Professor Porat, the Director of the Stephen Roth Institute for the study of contemporary anti-Semitism and racism at Tel Aviv University. In the course of the debate, and at the request of MP Corsini, Professor Porat summarised the definition provided by the EU and the OSCE, pointing out that *"so long as criticism of Israel coincides with criticism of a single incident or a specific policy at a given moment, it is legitimate criticism, just like criticism of the policy of any other country. When such criticism employs anti-Semitic expressions, consciously used as such, and does not refer to the present moment but is aimed at Israel and Jews in general, it is no longer criticism, but anti-Semitism"*.

Contemporary anti-Semitism is therefore inherent in denying the Jewish people the right to self-determination, applying double standards, using symbols and images of traditional anti-Semitism to criticise Israel and making undue and unacceptable comparisons between Israeli policy and Nazi policies.

### **Online anti-Semitism**

The starting point here is the statistic on the number of anti-Semitic sites that have been identified: 5 in 1995 and 8,000 in 2008. There are two essential features of the new manifestations of anti-Semitism. The first is incitement using the mass media, and manipulating them to disseminate false messages. Among the countless examples, mention was made of the publication in Germany of a large circulation magazine whose cover pictures alluded to the Jewish warmongering influence on the policies of the American neoconservatives during the Presidency of George W Bush and the Iraq war.

The second is online anti-Semitism. The advent of the Internet has shifted and amplified beyond imagination what was previously only a residual phenomenon, limited to graffiti on city walls and certain niche publications. But with the advent of the social networks (such as Facebook and Twitter) there has been a specific amplification of the phenomenon which André Oboler has called *"anti-Semitism 2.0"*, by allusion to the transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 in 2004 with the foundation of Facebook.

To understand the extent of this phenomenon one must begin by noting that Google is the most popular site worldwide (about 42 per cent of surfers visit Google every day). The second most popular site is Facebook, with 32 per cent of preferences. Among the top ten there are no information sites, but only search engines and social networks. The largest circulation daily newspaper in United States has a readership of only 2 per cent of YouTube users, and a video on YouTube has an impact 50 times greater than an advertisement published in America's most popular daily. In Italy, the number of racist sites rose between 2008 and 2009 from 836 to 1,172.

What is novel is the ability of these sites to gradually make the demonisation and dehumanisation of the Jewish people acceptable. The purpose is not to convince people to convert to anti-Semitism, but rather to make anti-Semitism "socially" acceptable within the online community, by removing the equation *anti-Semitism=racism*. The first consequence is that being anti-Semitic is reduced to a generic partisanship, not very different from being a football fan, which can also be taken up even playfully, and which does not give rise to any kind of sanctions.

As the expert on online anti-Semitism, André Oboler, said at his hearing, *"the danger is not so much that people might read content inspired by anti-Semitism, but rather that they may be induced to accept it as a valid point of view, a fact of life, or something with which one may or may not agree, but not something whose dissemination one should oppose. This is where the risk lies. Some people will feel affected by it and will want to do something against anti-Semitism, but others will remain passive and consider it normal, humdrum, legitimate. And this gives rise to a culture in which hatred, racism and antisocial behaviour are able to spread, posing huge risks to law and order and to security"*.

Paradoxically, the presence on the Internet of Holocaust denial sites is less worrying, even though they also use the social networks, because there are fewer of them and they are frequently removed and blacked out by the providers themselves.

In Italy, the Mancino Law, which had the merit of leading to the disappearance of skinhead movements from Italy, is still a sound instrument, but it is inadequate: it was enacted before use of the Internet and the social networks became widespread and, in the absence of any international *ad hoc* instruments, any sites that are closed down can be opened up again with the same content in other States. Even with adequate legal instruments available, the failure of police forces to cooperate in this regard makes it impossible to do anything about them.

A number of clear indications emerged from the hearings on anti-Semitism:

- online anti-Semitism must be considered a global issue, which must be countered by a global reaction;

- any legislative measures to combat it must take account of the level of interactivity of the different websites, so that the most serious penalties must hit the sites and providers that do not permit reaction to anti-Semitic statements or hold the authors liable;

- best practices must also be defined and providers must be encouraged to monitor and close down any sites that carry crude expressions of hatred. In many cases the providers already do this spontaneously and voluntarily (in 90 per cent of cases in the Netherlands, for example).

Another point which emerged from the debate was the sensitive issue of the relationship between punishing "hate crimes" and protecting freedom of expression, invoked by those countries which refuse to take direct action on the Internet or against the providers. There is no doubt about the role of a good cultural education and "cultural militancy" in preventing and combating a distorted use of the Internet and the social networks, including anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression, anchored in the United Nations Charter, cannot be separated from the principle of responsibility. What is therefore essential is to ensure that the authors of posts on the Internet are identifiable, resisting any form of protection of anonymity, to make authors responsible for what they write, and make sure that the positions expressed there can be rebutted interactively.

In this respect, the paramount role of Parliament was emphasised, followed by the judiciary and then society as a whole.

As far as specific enforcement measures are concerned, the removal of specific content from the Internet requires the goodwill and cooperation of governments and providers, which first and foremost should share standard instruments for combating opinion crime.

In Italy, the “Mancino Law” has made it possible to impose penalties for instigating racial or ethnic discrimination in general terms. Article 1(1) deals with the case of propagating ideas based on racial and ethnic superiority and hatred. Since nothing is said about the media through which this propaganda is disseminated, the Mancini Law can also theoretically apply to the Internet, but the problem of identifying "ideas based on racial hatred" remains a complex matter. The reason why the law is difficult to enforce is that it targets individuals who instigate or commit acts of discrimination on racial grounds, whereas in Italian criminal law, as in other democratic countries, the conduct to be sanctioned must be objective and immediately identifiable and not generic.

The second paragraph of Article 1, on the other hand, governs the case of inciting violence, rather than instigation or propaganda, and is therefore less applicable to what happens on the Internet.

Domestic law should also provide an instrument similar to Law No 38 of 6 February 2006 for combating online paedophilia, which enables the Italian police to interact directly with the provider, reporting criminal sites and ordering them to be closed down.

A sound legal basis is provided internationally by the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime adopted by the Council of Europe in 2001, and already signed and ratified by Italy by Law No 48 of 18 March 2008. This Convention provides procedural and investigative tools appropriate to the Internet, which link investigators throughout the world and, even without letters rogatory being issued, enables them to take action by requesting the seizure of sites or the freezing of data. Its implementation nevertheless depends on ratification of the Additional Protocol concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2003, which Italy has not yet signed (there are currently 34 signatory states, of which 17 have also ratified it). Among other things, the Protocol requires the signatory states to adopt domestic legal provisions providing for the prosecution of any genocide denial. In this process, the United States of America is a crucial party, hosting as it does 70 per cent of the world's servers, but so far it has only ratified the Budapest Convention, which is also open to countries that are not members of the Council of Europe.

### **Young people and anti-Semitism**

The spread of anti-Semitism among young, and very young, people throughout Europe, including Italy, is the outstanding political issue which should cause the greatest alarm. This issue, which was raised in particular by MP Volpi, also because it is closely bound up with Internet use, has recently been the object of international and national studies and must be considered in close connection to the forms of anti-Semitism which draw their strength from contingent political events.

The results of the survey conducted by the *Istituto Ricerche politiche e socioeconomiche* (IARD, Institute of Political and Socio-economic Research) on behalf of the Chamber of Deputies' Observatory on Xenophobia and Racism indicate that 22 per cent of young Italians feel antipathy towards Jews, 6 per cent of whom are radically hostile. Of these young people, 80 per cent know nothing about, and have had no contact with, the Jewish world; 75 per cent have never had the opportunity to do so, and 7 per cent would not take the opportunity if offered, preferring to remain ignorant and hostile. Most of these young people were male, poorly educated and living in the northern Italian regions. The reasons for their declared dislike of Jews were historical and cultural for 22 per cent of them, on the grounds that Judaism had a bad influence on Christian culture, while 38 per cent held that Jews were more loyal to their own community than to their country.



Anti-Semitism among young people is mostly intellectual and political: they confuse it with criticism of Israel and Zionism, with the result that the Jew of their imagination is merged with the image of an Israeli soldier.

Schools therefore have a crucial role to play in preventing the spread of anti-Semitic attitudes among young people, not only through the numerous praiseworthy activities, reported to the Sub-Committee by Minister Gelmini, aimed at preserving the memory of the Shoah and racial persecution, but, in more general terms, by providing useful tools for understanding the complexity of the contemporary world, including through closer attention to the present and the past of Zionism and the State of Israel within the context of the Middle East.

The growing conviction of the central importance of the younger generations that emerged in the course of the inquiry led, among other things, to the decision to call the Minister for Youth, Georgia Meloni, to give testimony. At that hearing it was emphasised several times that active strategies were needed to combat racism and anti-Semitism, including initiatives based on online "counter-information", to prevent the expression of feelings of intolerance by a small but persistent minority from helping to create a general climate of acceptance of prejudice among the younger generation, in a system of relations which now makes it possible to communicate extremely fast and often superficially.

### **Islamic fundamentalist anti-Semitism**

It has often been noted that, in European societies, anti-Semitism is always a sign of an involution towards racist methods and practices which also have consequences in public discourse and in every-day decisions.

Anti-Semitism has its own specific definition in the rhetoric of militant Islam and in a tradition which is based on an anti-Semitic interpretation of texts, exemplified by Ahj Amin Al Husseini and Al Bann, which has emerged from the decades-long crisis between Israel and the Arab world.

Incidents of anti-Semitic intolerance are spreading in the Islamic communities in Europe, with murders and physical attacks on Jews, of which the best-known case was the kidnap and killing of the young French Jew, Halimi, as well as frequent incidents in the Netherlands where, following the Nazi deportations, the Jewish community rebuilt after the war numbers barely 50,000. In Sweden, which has one of the largest Muslim communities in Europe, the Jewish communities spend 25 per cent of their funds on security measures.

Against this alarming background, which has been studied in suitable depth by the most important living historian of anti-Semitism, Robert Wistrich, it might be appropriate to pursue this argument in terms of security and prevention, and of cooperation with moderate Islamic circles, as was also recommended at the hearings on online anti-Semitism. In general, cultural initiatives should be taken to foster mutual knowledge between faiths, bearing in mind that such initiatives cannot proceed without government action to tackle racism and anti-Semitism.

### **A Strategy for Combating Anti-Semitism**

Mainly as a result of the impetus provided by the ministers in their testimonies before the Sub-Committee of Inquiry, the central role that education for the younger generations must play in any effective and sustainable action against anti-Semitism has become clear. Every European country must include some reference to the phenomenon in their education strategy, which should include learning projects further study at European level, beginning with study visits to the sites of Remembrance, with particular reference to the Memorial to victims of the Holocaust in Berlin.

In Italy in particular, anti-Semitism is more cultural in nature, associated with the political debate rather than based on violent and organised action. The counterstrategy to be adopted should therefore be above all cultural in kind. Thus Remembrance Day should not merely be seen as a ritual event but serve as a culminating point for the research and study which should go on in schools at every stage, following a pedagogical approach which could draw on the works of Raffaele Mantegazza.

In the light of the information provided on the younger generation, knowledge and the meeting of minds appear to be the two main strategic approaches to adopt. In dealings with young people in particular, in addition to a strategy that makes repeated use of symbols (the celebration of Remembrance Day) it will also be appropriate for educators to develop the capacity to "tell stories", identifying and avoiding the use of depersonalising and "anaesthetising" rhetorical methods. In so doing, prominence must be given in particular to positive stories, according to the philosophy of the "Righteous among Nations" (Italy has 484 of which Giorgio Perlasca, Angelo Rotta and Giovanni Palatucci were named in particular, the last of whom is on the path towards canonisation by the Church). The purpose of this is to highlight the opportunity available to everyone to act according

to their own lights and to decide when it is ethically appropriate to swim against the tide and resist the attractions of a herd mentality. A large number of tools must be provided, from history, literature, music, sport, and travel, giving pride of place as far as possible to an interdisciplinary approach.

In the case of Memorial visits, the most important moment should be the "return home", that is to say the moment in which the experience is handed back, drawing on the results and lessons of the journey, and then becomes the experience of a broader community of individuals in a school that is open and engages in dialogue.

However, there must be no truck with the idea that Judaism boils down to the issue of extermination: this principle is unacceptable to Jews, who do not see themselves only as the descendants of the victims, or as survivors, as shown by the testimony of MP Renato Farina. An overemphasis on "remembrance", which relieves consciences, should be avoided, and more should be done to promote information initiatives about contemporary Judaism

As for the question of biased criticisms of Israel, which disseminate anti-Semitic stereotypes even in schools and falsify interpretations of current events, schools, knowing that anti-Semitism is also the result of biased and one-sided interpretations of geopolitical issues, should foster the study of the history of Israel, the values of Israeli democracy and in general the culture of fundamental rights and freedoms. Teaching of the history of Israel should aim to provide an understanding of the historical and current situation of the Jewish communities, seeking to transmit a positive image, based on the recognition that diversified societies are enriched by the contributions made by different minorities.

However, memory and knowledge alone do not constitute the full range of instruments and counter-measures. While anti-Semitism, even in its most odious forms of Holocaust denial and historical revisionism, is preached by university professors and brilliant intellectuals, vigorous action is needed in terms of social condemnation, cultural deterrence and discrediting on anti-Semitism: anti-Semites must be held in contempt by the community. To achieve this, a systematic media and communications strategy has to be put in place, based on direct and easily understandable messages. Parliamentarians and national élites in general can also contribute to this through public speeches and a targeted presence in public discourse.

Doubts emerged in the course of the inquiry regarding the effectiveness of dealing with anti-Semitic hatred by legislating against it. The legislative approach is essential for defining hate crimes and perhaps increasing the penalties, but it must always be the commitment and responsibility of the whole community to raise awareness and educate consciences.

For the Internet, an approach must be developed whereby it is used actively to inform and counter-inform, along the lines of the initiative launched by the Yad Vashem Museum which "declared war" on-line against Holocaust deniers and opened a YouTube channel in Farsi to reach Iranian surfers. In this way, social networks can become essential allies rather than problematic interlocutors. Furthermore, schools should adapt to the times and put their activities on the Net, as well as engaging in online dialogue with students.

The question of penalties raises the difficult issue of standardising the prosecution and punishment of opinion crime at international level. Cohesive action by the international community and by providers would be necessary to achieve this. Many countries oppose the idea, thereby furnishing the conditions for anti-Semitic sites open, while site providers like Google and social networks such as Facebook are very reluctant to take action in this regard.

At international level, including in the light of the debate in the United Nations regarding the creation of a Palestinian State, it is necessary to work for real, lasting peace, keeping the

negotiations within a multilateral framework and encouraging serious negotiation by both sides. At European level, greater efforts ought to be devoted to working out a common European stance.

Europe's response, based on the idea of solidarity and a non-national approach to global issues, must necessarily include addressing the issue of immigration, in order to prevent the victims of poverty and war from being infiltrated by supporters of anti-Semitism.

As for the upheavals currently taking place in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Arab countries (with Syria to the fore), political decisions must strike a balance, looking at the opportunities and not only the risks. Support must therefore be given to the groupings within the Arab revolutions that are working in the direction of democracy. It is to be hoped that an international parliamentary initiative can be taken in this regard.

The European Union must be more active and show greater conviction in using the European Neighbourhood Policy to offer Arab civil societies tangible means of pursuing the democratisation of their institutions and staving off developments similar to those in Iran.

In general, we need to engage with civil society in those countries enter into serious dialogue. European national parliaments should urge their governments to back the changes taking place in the Maghreb and the Middle East. Democracy must remain the central issue. In this context all assistance programmes must apply strict conditionality, founded on compliance with democratic standards and humanitarian law, beginning with gender equality; on the use of major infrastructure facilities, such as the Suez Canal, in a manner that is consistent with maintaining peace in the Mediterranean; and on the commitment to recognise the State of Israel and maintain peaceful relations.

### **Working proposals**

A number of specific working proposals which emerged from the inquiry have already been mentioned but are worth recalling here:

- establish measures to implement the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and incitement to genocide;

- support the proposal of Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel for the adoption of a United Nations resolution declaring terrorism to be a crime against humanity;

- advocate the signing and ratification of the Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime of 2003, if possible through a parliamentary legislative initiative;

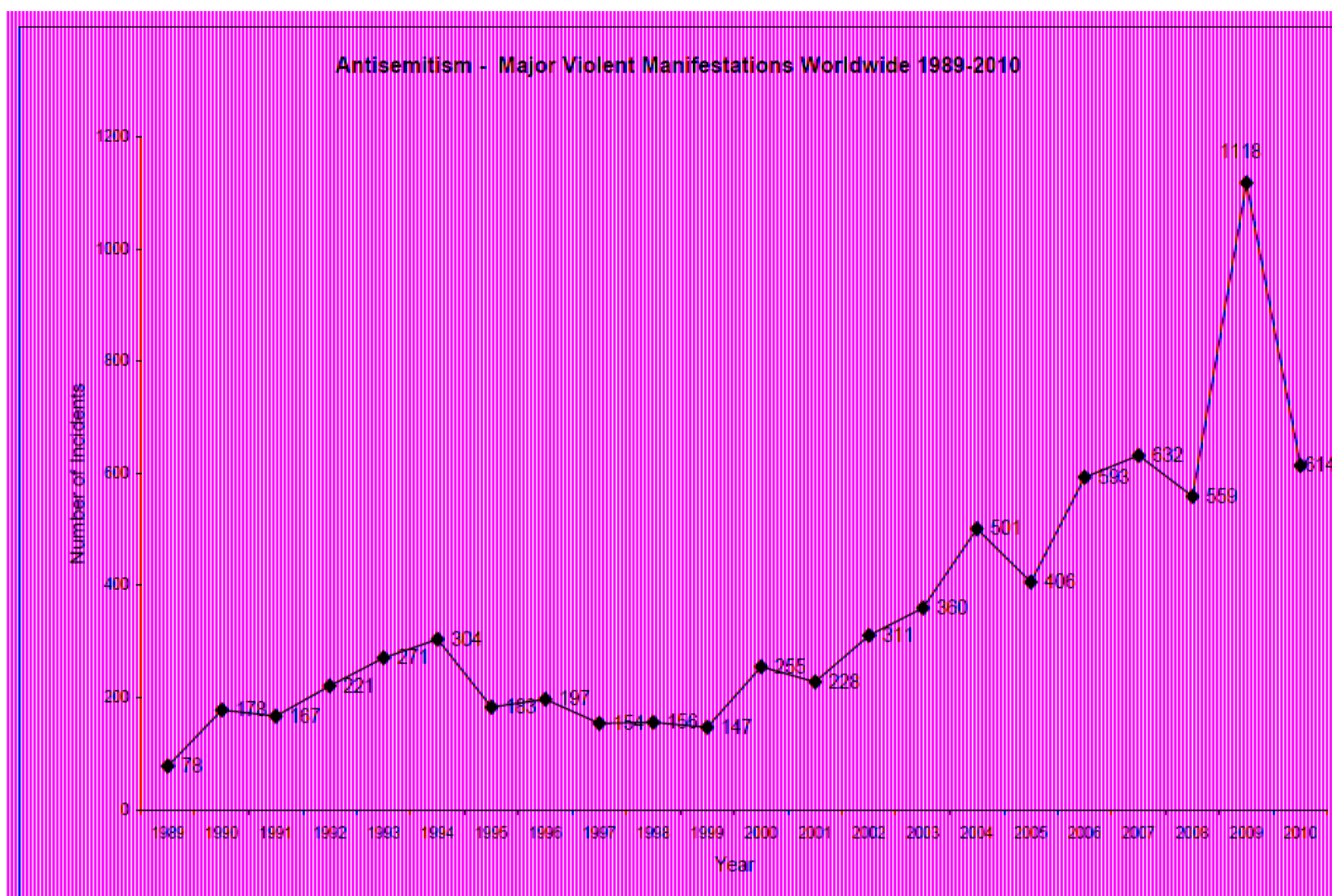
- start a debate on the effectiveness of measures to combat Holocaust denial and historical revisionism;

- monitor the international initiative to refer the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmud Ahmadinejad, to the International Criminal Court for incitement to genocide.

## MAIN DATA GATHERED IN THE COURSE OF THE INQUIRY

### New types of anti-Semitism

In the wake of the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, 2009 was the year in which the largest number of anti-Semitic incidents were recorded since the Second World War (*according to the Report by the **Stephen Roth Institute** for the study of contemporary anti-Semitism and racism, Tel Aviv University, entitled “Anti-Semitism Worldwide 2010”, which was presented at the hearing of Professor Dina Porat, on 19 October 2010*).



**Table 5: Anti-Semitic statements (agreement in percent)**

No.	Item	D	GB	F	NL	I	PT	PL	EU
7	Jews have too much influence in [country].	19.7	13.9	27.7	5.6	21.2	19.9	49.9	69.2
8	Jews try to take advantage of having been victims during the Nazi era.	48.9	21.8	32.3	17.2	40.2	52.2	72.2	68.1
9	Jews in general do not care about anything or anyone but their own kind.	29.4	22.5	25.8	20.4	26.9	54.2	56.9	50.9
10	Jews enrich our culture.	68.9	71.5	60.6	71.8	49.7	51.9	51.2	57.3
<b>Additional statements</b>									
11	Considering Israel's policy I can understand why people do not like Jews.	35.6	35.9	-	41.1	25.1	48.8	55.2	45.6
12	Israel is conducting a war of extermination against the Palestinians.	47.7	42.4	-	38.7	37.6	48.8	63.3	41.0

Table published in the report entitled “Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination – a European Report” by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, March 2011

**Trends in recorded anti-Semitic crime**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% change 2008-09	% change 2001-09
<b>Austria</b>	3	20	9	17	8	8	15	23	12	-47.8%	+9.1%
<b>France</b>	219	936	601	974	508	571	402	459	815	+77.6%	+0.4%
<b>Germany</b>	1,629	1,594	1,226	1,346	1,682	1,662	1,561	1,496	1,520	+1.6%	+0.3%
<b>Sweden</b>	115	131	128	151	111	134	118	159	250	+57.2%	+10.3%

Table published in the Report on “Anti-Semitism – Summary Overview of the situation in the European Union 2001-2010”, by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights, April 2011

## Online anti-Semitism

In 2008-2009 a disturbing and constant increase was recorded in the number of racist sites on Internet platforms and social networking sites: the number of racist sites recorded rose from 836 in 2008 to 1,172 in 2009, an increase of 40 per cent (*data provided by the Coordinator of computer security and the protection of critical computerised infrastructures nationwide, hearing of Dr. Domenico Vulpiani, on 25 May 2010*).

If one considers only Internet sites and ignores the social networks, about 50 sites dedicated entirely to disseminating anti-Jewish hatred were found which, despite having been closed down previously, had managed to evade Italian law by registering their domains abroad (*data supplied by Stefano Gatti, a researcher at the CDEC, in the course of the hearing held on 22 April 2010*).

The crucial role played by the new mass media, particularly among young people, was exemplified by the fact that in 2009 the total readership of the 10 largest-circulation US national dailies was equivalent to only 2 per cent of the 400 million YouTube users, or a slightly larger percentage of the 250 million Facebook users (*data reported by André Oboler, Chief Executive Officer of 'Zionism on the Web', at the hearing on 22 April 2010*).

## Audience size

### Top 10 US newspapers by circulation:

- USA Today: 2,293,137
- Wall Street Journal: 2,011,882
- New York Times: 1,037,828
- Los Angeles Times: 794,705
- New York Daily News: 681,415
- New York Post: 667,119
- The Washington Post: 635,087
- Chicago Tribune: 559,404
- Houston Chronicle: 502,631
- Newsday: 387,503

As at October 2009



Facebook was 110M in May 2009

All together the top 10 newspapers reach an audience that is only 2% YouTube's users

### Italians and anti-Semitism

The "Anti-Jewish Prejudice Inquiry" conducted in 2008 by the CDEC and the ISPO (*data supplied at the CDEC hearing on 25 February 2010*) revealed that:

Some 44 per cent of the Italian population harbour some prejudice or have a hostile attitude towards Jews. They can be broken down into four subgroups.

The first group (10 per cent) holds the "traditional" anti-Jewish stereotypical views, such as that "Jews are not fully Italian", "you can never really trust them" and "when it comes down to it, they have always lived at the expense of others", but reject the "contingent" prejudices (towards Israel and the *Shoah*).

The second group (11 per cent of the population) only approve of the "modern" stereotypical views, rejecting the "traditional" and "contingent" ones. They consider that "the Jews are rich and powerful", "they control and direct politics, the media and the banks" and moreover "they are more faithful to Israel than to the country of their birth".

The third group (12 per cent) hold "contingent" convictions ("all Jews use the *Shoah* to justify Israeli policy"), "they talk too much about their own tragedies disregarding other people's", "Jews behave like Nazis with the Palestinians"), but they do not share the "traditional" prejudices.

The fourth group are the "pure anti-Semites" (12 per cent of Italians), that is to say, those who hold all the stereotypical views listed above, from the "traditional" to the "contingent".

### Opinions and attitudes towards Jews

The persons interviewed were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed with 16 statements relating to Jews. These statements represent certain characteristics of prejudice: some refer to traditional prejudice, others to modern prejudice, and others to contingent prejudice, relating to Israel.

	Agree	Neutral (grey area)	Disagree
<b>YOU CAN NEVER FULLY TRUST JEWS</b>	18.9	48.4	32.7
<b>JEWS ARE MORE LOYAL TO ISRAEL THAN TO THE LAND OF THEIR BIRTH</b>	26.0	56.8	17.2
<b>JEWS HAVE CHANGED FROM BEING A RACE OF VICTIMS TO A RACE OF AGGRESSORS</b>	26.4	51.6	22.0
<b>JEWS HAVE MADE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO DIFFERENT AREAS OF ITALIAN SOCIETY</b>	27.1	58.6	14.3
<b>JEWS ARE DOING TO THE PALESTINIANS WHAT THE NAZIS DID TO THE JEWS</b>	21.6	48.6	29.4
<b>BASICALLY JEWS HAVE ALWAYS LIVED</b>	15.1	52.4	32.6



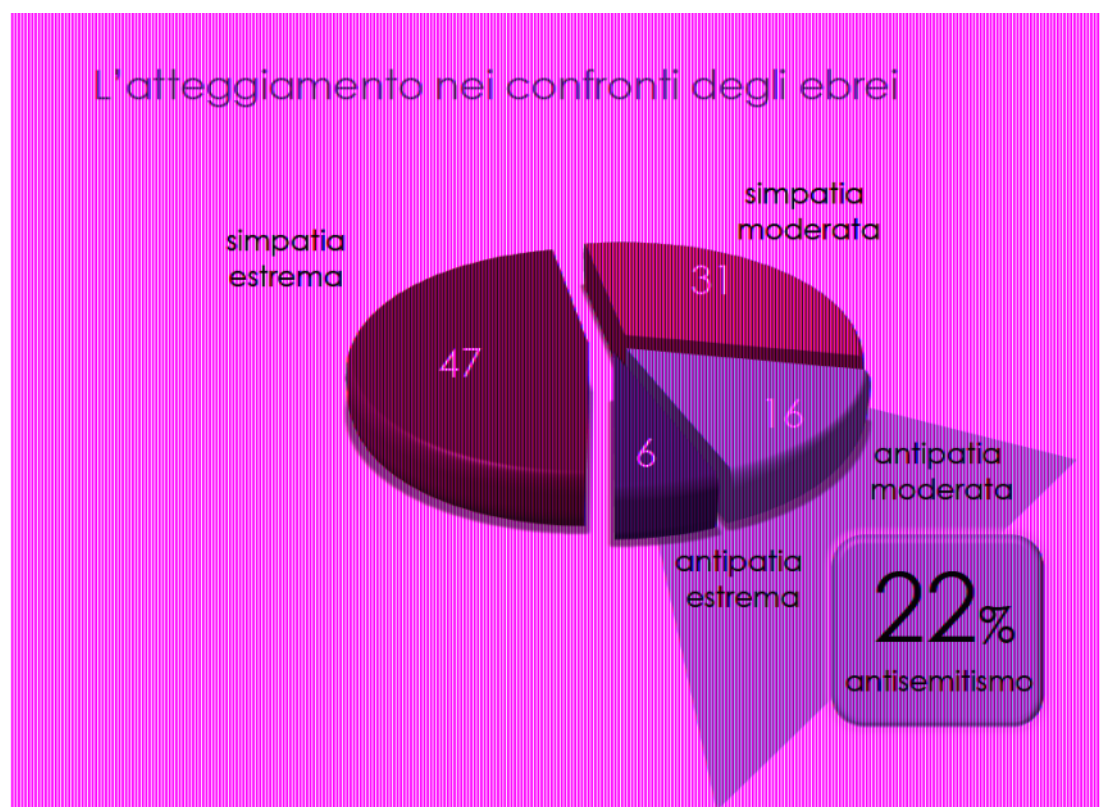
<b>AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHERS</b>			
<b>JEWES CONTROL THE MASS MEDIA IN MANY COUNTRIES</b>	25.3	55.6	19.1
<b>JEWES ARE NOT FULLY ITALIAN</b>	23.1	44.0	32.8
<b>MODERN SCIENCE WOULD NOT BE WHAT IT IS WITHOUT THE CONTRIBUTION OF JEWISH SCIENTISTS</b>	26.8	57.0	16.3
<b>JEWES RUN THE WORLD'S BANKS FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT</b>	31.7	50.0	18.2
<b>JEWES ALWAYS MANAGE TO WIELD DISPROPORTIONATE POLITICAL POWER</b>	27.1	53.0	19.9
<b>DESPITE THE CONFLICT, JEWES ARE SENSITIVE TO THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE</b>	23.3	56.3	20.4
<b>WESTERN CULTURE OWES A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO JEWISH CULTURE FOR MANY FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS</b>	22.6	60.8	16.7
<b>JEWES TALK TOO MUCH ABOUT THEIR OWN TRAGEDIES AND IGNORE OTHER PEOPLE'S</b>	30.3	49.8	19.8
<b>WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, THE JEWES ALWAYS HOLD THE PURSE-STRINGS</b>	26.7	49.3	24.0
<b>JEWES EXPLOIT THE NAZI EXTERMINATION TO JUSTIFY ISRAEL'S POLICIES</b>	24.5	50.7	24.8

A very high percentage – sometimes more than half the sample – did not agree or disagree with these statements. This, apparently neutral, grey area is sometimes due to a lack of knowledge about the issue, or the specific argument put to them, and the interviewees here came from the more marginal sections of the population. But sometimes there seems to be an underlying prejudice.

## Young Italians and anti-Semitism

*(Data supplied at the hearing of 16 November 2010 based on the survey conducted by the Istituto IARD and presented in 2010)*

This survey covered young people aged between 18 and 34, of whom 60 per cent were students or graduates. 22 per cent of these young Italians were shown to be anti-Semitic, and yet 71 per cent of them had never had any direct contact with Jews.



The intolerance shown by the anti-Semitic section of young Italians is also manifested in their negative attitude to certain situations, particularly the idea of having a daughter with a Jewish partner (51 per cent). This figure falls slightly (48 per cent) in the case of a son with a Jewish partner, or working under a Jewish boss (38 per cent), while they are easier with the idea of having a Jewish colleague (29 per cent). They do not much like the idea of Jewish neighbours (25 per cent) or sitting at the same dinner table (29%), but are more tolerant of these situations:

