

COUNTERING ANTISEMITISM

FROM NATIONAL STRATEGIES TO LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

SUMMARY

While forms and manifestations of antisemitism vary widely, and the perpetrators are also very different, policy recommendations to combat one of humanity's oldest enemies are often quite similar across sectors and their communities. Therefore, an improved, unified, and strategic approach is needed to effectively combat antisemitism in universities, the arts and culture sector, in sports and on digital platforms. The focus must be on data collection, education, adoption of the IHRA definition, accountability, and community empowerment.

From December 11–12, 2024, the second international expert conference “**Actions Matter – THE SUMMIT**” took place in Vienna. Under the title “Countering Antisemitism: From National Strategies to Local Implementation,” the conference brought together **170 decision-makers, experts, and representatives** from politics, academia, culture, and civil society from more than thirteen countries.

For the first time, the summit was jointly organized by the **European Leadership Network (ELNET)** and the **Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM)**. Keynote speakers included prominent figures such as **Katharina von Schnurbein**, European Commission Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life, **David Roet**, Israeli Ambassador to Austria, and **Dr. Felix Klein**, Federal Government Commissioner for Jewish Life in Germany and the Fight against Antisemitism.

Further contributions came from, among others, **Yael Arad**, President of the Israeli Olympic Committee; **Michal Cotler-Wunsh**, Special Envoy for Combating Antisemitism at Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and **Dr. Ariel Muzicant**, President of the European Jewish Congress.

On the eve of the conference, **Tomer Tzadik**, survivor of the October 7 attack on the Nova music festival, delivered a deeply moving keynote that set a reflective tone for the days ahead.

In his welcome address, Ambassador David Roet emphasized that Jew-hatred must neither be ignored nor downplayed. Combating antisemitism, he underlined, was not merely a duty toward those directly affected, but a service to society as a whole.

Panels, Workshops, Action Plan: An Interdisciplinary Approach

Over the course of two days, the summit created a space where policymakers, practitioners, and civil society leaders could engage across sectors and disciplines. Two panels framed the discussions with a broad perspective, while four workshops translated these debates into practical recommendations.

The opening panel, “Antisemitism Post-October 7 – Facts, Numbers and Challenges,” offered a sobering look at the current reality. Participants examined recent data on antisemitism in Europe and reflected on the challenges that have emerged since October 7.

Building on this, the second panel, “Spotlight: What’s the Problem Anyway? – Antisemitism in All Its Forms and Manifestations,” explored how antisemitism continues to adapt and appear in different guises, underscoring the need for awareness

that reaches far beyond traditional understandings.

As a whole, the summit's strength lay in its ability to connect analysis with action. Drawing on policy briefings prepared by ELNET and CAM, as well as the intensive workshop discussions, an **Action Plan** (see pages 3-4) was developed. It contains concrete recommendations intended to guide both policy-makers and civil society actors in countering antisemitism more effectively.

Challenges and Solutions Across Key Sectors

A central element of the summit was its focus on the arenas in which antisemitism is most visibly shaping public life today.

Universities, often seen as spaces of free debate, were discussed as environments where antisemitism is frequently underestimated or insufficiently documented. Participants highlighted how the absence of clear reporting structures leaves Jewish students vulnerable and distorts the perception of the problem. **Independent reporting offices, centralized databases, and designated antisemitism commissioners** were among the measures proposed to ensure accountability and safety on campuses.

The **digital sphere** emerged as another urgent field of concern. Antisemitic narratives are increasingly spread through video games, social media, and encrypted online communities. Extremist actors exploit technological loopholes, coded language, and weak moderation systems to amplify hate. Discussions emphasized that legislation has not kept pace with technological development, making stronger platform accountability, AI-supported detection tools, and transparent moderation standards essential.

Sports, with its unique social reach, was also identified as a powerful arena for both risk and opportunity. Participants stressed the importance of

systematic data collection, education for coaches and referees, and the adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism as a shared standard. **Fan outreach and long-term educational initiatives** were seen as particularly effective in shaping awareness beyond the playing field.

Finally, the **arts and cultural sector** was addressed as a space where antisemitism can surface in subtle but impactful ways. While post-Shoah antisemitism is widely recognized, Israel-related antisemitism remains far less discussed. Participants raised concerns about Jewish artists and those speaking out against antisemitism facing professional and personal repercussions. Recommendations included **stronger protection for Jewish cultural events, state coverage of security costs, and clearer institutional standards grounded in the IHRA definition**.

Across all discussions, one message became clear: while antisemitism manifests differently in each sector, effective counter-strategies share common foundations — **reliable data, education, accountability, and empowered communities**.

Conclusion

The second "Actions Matter – The Summit" in Vienna received exclusively positive feedback from participants. The opportunity for cross-sectoral international networking was perceived as particularly enriching and highlighted the differences between countries in research and professional engagement. The exchange of knowledge, strategies, and best practices between politics, academia, culture, and society creates synergies and strengthens cooperation — decisive factors for combating antisemitism sustainably and effectively.

With its combination of reflection, dialogue, and concrete impulses for implementation, "Actions Matter – The Summit" stands as a powerful contribution to strengthening democratic resilience and safeguarding Jewish life across Europe.

ACTION PLAN

1. Strengthening Data Collection and Monitoring Efforts

Strengthening data collection and monitoring efforts is critical for identifying, understanding, and responding to antisemitic incidents. **Periodic, scientifically validated reports** will ensure transparency and guide interventions. Ensuring the **accessibility of this data for academic research** is essential. A centralized oversight body should monitor the discovered trends and allocate resources efficiently, allowing for timely responses. Such body could be established within the team of a National Antisemitism Commissioner and should also implement and supervise reporting opportunities in all realms of life (e.g. sports, universities) to support the scientific research but also create safe spaces if necessary. Existing opportunities for data collection should be utilized, such as the Maccabi (Youth) Games within the sports realm.

In addition to collecting data on antisemitism, a second aspect must be considered: **Tracking and exposing financial flows** that support antisemitic organizations, networks and activities is crucial to effectively disrupt these activities. By identifying the sources of funding, the beneficiaries and the financial supporters, accountability can be established and the resources that support antisemitic campaigns can be cut off.

To **combat the spread of antisemitic content online, a dual approach combining Artificial Intelligence (AI) and human moderation of content** must be pursued. AI systems should be developed and trained to identify, flag, and remove harmful content in real-time, including antisemitic language, images, videos, and coded symbols.

2. Raising Awareness and Education for Key Stakeholders

Raising awareness and education among stakeholders across key sectors must be a priority. Comprehensive training programs should target university faculty staff, and students, artists as well as institutions within the arts and culture sector, and in

sports, athletes, coaches, fans, as well as social media moderators, users, not to mention technology leaders.

Curricula should focus on recognizing antisemitism, decoding manifestations — such as Israel-related antisemitism — and providing practical tools for prevention and intervention. **Integrating the history and current realities of antisemitism into training and certification programs** will promote understanding, inclusivity, and resilience across all levels of society. The implementation of educational programs must be **firmly embedded in institutional structures** to ensure long-term sustainability, awareness, and effectiveness.

3. Definition of Antisemitism

A crucial step in ensuring unified standards is the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism by all sectors of society. This internationally recognized standard provides clarity on identifying and addressing antisemitism, including its modern manifestations, and ensures that policies and initiatives are rooted in a shared understanding. By **anchoring the IHRA definition in institutional structures**, it becomes a standard reference point for preventing antisemitism in all its forms.

Government-funded projects must adopt this definition to ensure they uphold the values of inclusion, diversity, and human dignity with respect to Jewish life. By embedding the **IHRA definition in criteria for public funding** but also in the policies of institutions (e.g. universities and major soccer clubs), clear guidelines can be established to identify antisemitism in all its forms and prevent its perpetuation.

Wherever institutionalized antisemitism commissioners are not an option, **IHRA ambassadors from the respective sectors can help to promote the adoption of the IHRA definition**, raise awareness, and implement best practices tailored to the respective industry.

4. Ensuring Accountability and Enforceable Measures

Ensuring clear accountability and enforceable measures is crucial. Institutions must adopt and **implement codes of conduct with specific anti-discrimination provisions**, ensuring clear consequences for antisemitic behavior. Universities, sports organizations, cultural institutions, and digital platforms must be held accountable through consistent enforcement of policies and existing legal frameworks. For tech companies, **failure to address antisemitic content should result in financial penalties**, with fines redirected to NGOs actively working against antisemitism.

To promote a safer and more inclusive **digital environment, reward systems should be introduced to encourage positive user behavior**. Platforms can implement mechanisms that recognize and reward users who actively contribute to fostering respectful, inclusive, and antisemitism-free online

spaces. This could include incentives such as badges, reputation scores, or access to educational opportunities for users who consistently demonstrate constructive engagement and adherence to community standards.

5. Empowering Civil Society Initiatives and Jewish Communities

Finally, **empowering civil society and Jewish community initiatives** is crucial. Existing civil society organizations fighting antisemitism must receive targeted support and resources to expand their initiatives. Jewish student organizations and fan-led support groups in sports clubs should be officially recognized and enabled to create safe spaces, engage in educational activities and lobby effectively. Promoting positive representations of Jewish culture and pride, both online and offline, will promote visibility and strengthen Jewish communities.

ELNET
ELNET Deutschland e.V.
Tel.: +49 (0) 30 3087 5964
deutschland@elnetwork.eu
elnet-deutschland.de
@ElnetD
@ELNET.DACH

COMBAT ANTISEMITISM MOVEMENT
Combat Antisemitism Movement
Combat Hate Foundation
PO Box 957 Moundridge, KS 67107
combatantisemitism.org
@combat-antisemitism-movement
facebook.com/CombatAntisemitism

Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community
Federal Chancellery Republic of Austria
MEETING DESTINATION VIENNA
NOW • TOGETHER
Zukunftsfonds
der Republik Österreich
media partner
nu