

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR JEWISH STUDENTS GUIDE



European Union
of Jewish Students



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **Introduction**
 - What is EUJS?.....Page 3
 - Why this guide?.....Page 4
 - A Guide to the Guide.....Page 4
- **Universities and Combatting Antisemitism**
 - Acknowledging Antisemitism.....Page 5
 - Adopting the IHRA definition of Antisemitism.....Page 7
 - Creating efficient reporting systems.....Page 10
 - Ensuring antisemitic speakers have no platform.....Page 10
 - Evaluating current systems.....Page 11
 - Implementing Trainings.....Page 11
 - Sanctioning antisemitic behaviour.....Page 12
 - The Code of Conduct.....Page 12
- **Universities and Fostering Jewish Life**
 - Accommodating the Jewish Schedule.....Page 13
 - Commemorating International Holocaust Memorial Day.....Page 16
 - Increasing accessibility to kosher food.....Page 16
 - Supporting your local Jewish Student Group.....Page 17
- **Conclusion:**
 - Building Inclusive curricula and incorporating Jewish narratives.....Page 20

What is EUJS?

About us

The European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS) is the democratic and peer-led umbrella organisation of 36 national Jewish student unions in Europe. Founded in 1978, EUJS works to empower young Jews to participate actively in their community and society, and to develop the Jewish people's religious, spiritual, cultural and social heritage and contribution to Europe. We place a particular emphasis on peer education, combating racism, interfaith dialogue, and minority rights.

Vision

EUJS aims for a vibrant and sustainable Jewish future in Europe, achieved by empowering Jewish youth in order to make a positive contribution to European society.

Mission

EUJS seeks to strengthen Jewish communities and European society through Jewish student activism and advocacy. Therefore, EUJS connects peer-led, independent Jewish student unions throughout Europe and supports them in fulfilling the aspirations of Jewish people - developing Jewish religious, spiritual, cultural, and social heritage and ensuring continuity in a European context.



Why this guide?

For the most part, the issues faced by Jewish students are issues which are faced by all Students: fees, housing, problems with their courses, their exams, and so on. However, Jewish students, like any other minority, face unique issues as well.

These issues are related to the dangerous rise in antisemitism we have seen across the continent. According to a survey conducted by the European Commission and the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency on the suggestion of EUJS, 44% of young Jewish Europeans experienced antisemitic harassment, which is 12% higher than their elders. 80% of young victims do not report harassment to the police or any other authority.

Universities should be a safe and inclusive space, free from any kind of discrimination. One aspect of this guide is focused on what can be done to address and fight antisemitism.

In order to ensure that universities are more inclusive of Jewish students, we do not need to just fight antisemitism, but also address other issues crucial to Jewish students. These include ensuring education is not clashing with religious observance, incorporating Jewish narratives in diverse subject matters, and creating spaces where Jewish voices are able to be heard on campus.

A Guide to the Guide

The first part of this guide explores the role of Universities in combatting antisemitism. This details a range of ways in which this can be done, and should be included in the code of conduct or comparable rules of European Universities, and/or to be adopted by the student bodies of Universities.

The second part of this guide explore the role of Universities in fostering Jewish life. It includes a set of recommendations that should be implemented in universities so to ensure inclusion, safety, and prosperity of Jewish students.

UNIVERSITIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Acknowledging Antisemitism

Antisemitism and its manifestations contradict fundamental values as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Antisemitism reflects deep-rooted prejudice in society against Jews, which will only be overcome by increased awareness-raising efforts among the population and strong political condemnation.

Historically, manifestations of antisemitism have shown how prejudice and intolerance can lead to systematic harassment, discrimination, and, ultimately, mass killings and genocide.

Still today, persisting stereotypes, insults, and physical violence are experienced daily by members of the Jewish community across Europe.

These worrying trends are reflected in the Jewish community's perception of antisemitism as mirrored in 2013 and 2018 surveys of the Fundamental Right Agency.

Awareness-raising, in-depth understanding, and commitment to act are key elements in bridging this gap.

In response to such findings, the European Commission has issued a plan for 2021 to 2030 to combat antisemitism and foster Jewish life across Europe.

The plan is divided into three key prongs that will define the commissions effort to support their Jewish constituents:

- 1 Preventing and combating all forms of antisemitism
- 2 Protecting and fostering Jewish life in the EU
- 3 Education, research and Holocaust remembrance

Within all of these frameworks, universities are a key actor, as they hold a formative role, foster freedom of thought, and incubate young adult talent.

Universities must acknowledge the extent and scope of antisemitism prevalent in society today, and that can be addressed through education.

Relevant Data Sources

- **Young Jewish Europeans: Perceptions and Experiences of Antisemitism:** https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-young-jewish-europeans_en.pdf
- **Antisemitism - Overview of data available in the European Union 2008-2018:** <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2019/antisemitism-overview-2008-2018>
- **Discrimination and hate crime against Jews in EU Member States: Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism:** <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/technical-report-fra-survey-discrimination-and-hate-crime-against-jews-eu-member>
- **EU Strategy on combatting antisemitism and fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030):** https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/eu-strategy-combating-antisemitism-and-fostering-jewish-life-2021-2030_en

It is important to acknowledge both the prevalence of antisemitic incidents and the effects of living in perceived fear that such incidents may occur.

Universities must make an explicit commitment to address ideologies conducive to antisemitism within the university space and among university personnel, students, and third parties. These include, but are not limited to, far-right and Islamist ideologies.

Adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of Antisemitism

To tackle antisemitism, it must be defined. Universities should use, as a reference point in defining antisemitism, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism (including its examples), which is used by EUJS, the World Jewish Congress, the European Jewish Congress, and almost every other mainstream Jewish organisation. This has also been adopted by a number of non-Jewish organisations and institutions.

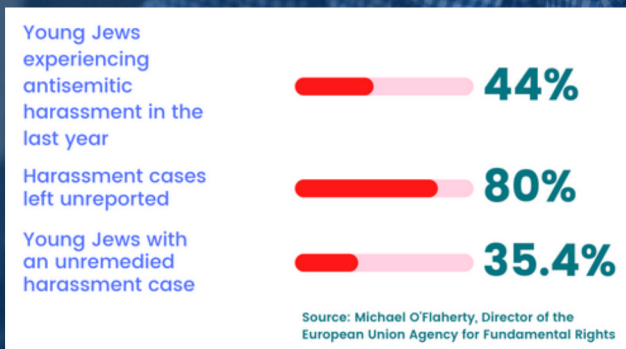
The IHRA definition has been:

- Agreed upon by **35 participating states** to the IHRA
- Endorsed by the **European Parliament**, the **Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres**, the **European Council**, and the **European Commission**
- Formally adopted by **15 governments**, as well as **universities**, the **European Students Union (ESU)**, the **European Youth Forum**, **national and local Student Unions**, **police departments**, **political parties**, and other bodies.

As such, it represents the most widely agreed-upon definition of what constitutes antisemitism existing today globally

To formalise the use of the definition, universities should formally adopt it in their bylaws, and Student Unions should adopt it as Policy. The definition (only complete with all of its examples) states, that:

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



Attached to the definition is a list of contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere.

These are detailed on the next page.

These could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- 1 Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (for example, 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).
- 5 Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- 6 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.
- 7 Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, for example, by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- 8 Applying double standards by requiring of Jews a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- 9 Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (for example, claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterise Israel or Israelis.
- 10 Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- 11 Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Creating an efficient reporting system

Staff and students who experience antisemitic discrimination, harassment, or vilification, and/or who witness antisemitic speech or behaviour of any kind, **should be encouraged to report it and seek assistance**. This means that students must feel safe and encouraged to report, confident they will be treated seriously, and that there will be no retaliation against them. It also means procedures for reporting as well as the steps following reporting should be clear and well-known to students and staff.

Such reporting can follow the standard existing complaint procedures of each university as long as these are well-known and comfortable to use. **It's crucially important that the complaint procedures are widely publicised among the student's population and staff**. Additionally, individuals responding to complaints must have undergone antisemitism training.

Ensuring antisemitic speakers have no platform

If a person is allowed to speak on campus, but the local Jewish Student Union has raised concerns, or the speaker is known to have engaged in antisemitic language in the past, there are a few steps you can take to ensure antisemitism has no place:

- Have independent moderators, ensuring opposing views can be heard.
- Film the event to avoid unlawful speech.
- Request to see any promotional material in advance.
- Ensure attendance of university / Student Union officials at the event

If the speaker engages in antisemitic language, the event should be stopped.

Evaluating your current systems

In order to deal with a wide range of ethical considerations, universities will often have an ethics body/committee to evaluate complaints. This will most often be comprised of members of university leadership, potentially alongside student leadership. However, more often than not, specialised expertise will not be included.

To help correctly evaluate complaints regarding antisemitism, the university should partner with an external expert. This can be through a formal or informal collaboration agreement with either national or international Jewish organisations specialised in addressing antisemitism.

Implementing Antisemitism trainings

To best address and prevent instances of antisemitism, as well as also to properly react when dealing with cases of antisemitism, members of university ethics committees (or similar bodies) and at least one Student Union representative should undergo mandatory antisemitism training. Additionally, there should be an option for interested students and members of the faculty to undergo such training.

In this guidebook, a list of national Jewish student unions can be found. Together with EUJS, they are the best points of contact to find an organisation that can provide antisemitism training.

If you want more information on how to facilitate an antisemitism training, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@eujs.org.



Sanctioning antisemitic behaviour

Proven antisemitic behavior warrants severe penalties. The consequences of a proven breach should depend on its seriousness, and this should be analysed by an expert in the field.

Consequences ought to range from, but should not be limited to, an apology and commitment to not repeat the behaviour, through to disciplinary action, dismissal, suspension, or expulsion.

Particular attention should be paid to antisemitic instances among lecturers.

There should be a **zero-tolerance policy** for professors or teacher's assistants engaging in antisemitic rhetoric.

Reframing your code of conduct

To formalize the commitment to address antisemitism, acknowledge its multiple manifestations and specify action steps, we encourage universities to adopt, officially, in their bylaws, a policy on antisemitism reflecting the above-mentioned points.

A model of such a code of conduct has been developed across the UK and can be found here as a model at the University of Edinburgh: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/respect/antisemitism>

UNIVERSITIES AND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE

Accommodating the Jewish Schedule

An issue that observant Jewish Students face is that, often, lectures or exams are scheduled on Shabbat (Saturday) or Jewish festivals (Yom Tovim).

The Jewish community enjoys a number of holidays throughout the year. Alongside those, Jews also celebrate Shabbat (the Jewish day of rest) every week from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. On Shabbat, observant Jewish students cannot use electricity or technology, write, travel (besides walking) or handle money.

Different holidays have different requirements: Some require a similar level of obligations as Shabbat (no technology, no writing, etc.), some require fasting, and others have less strict requirements. The holidays that require the same level of observation as Shabbat are called Yom Tov/Yom Tovim (plural). On these dates, observant Jewish Students will be unable to attend lectures, write exams, or submit work.

Some Universities allow Jewish students to write exams or attend lectures, scheduled on Jewish Holidays or Shabbat, at an alternate date. That, however, is not the case everywhere, and often Jewish students are dependant on the goodwill of their individual lecturers/professors.

EUJS recommends

- 1 Have a clear and easily accessible procedure that allows Jewish students to take exams/lectures scheduled on Yom Tovim or Shabbat on alternate days. Additionally, the university may want to consult the calendar of Jewish festivals and Shabbat, and take these into account when scheduling the exam schedule for the year.
- 2 Provide videos/lecture materials of lectures happening late Friday afternoon or Saturday, so Jewish Students don't have to choose between their religion and their education.
- 3 Provide Jewish Students with alternate deadlines for submitting pieces of work if the deadline is on Friday or Saturday afternoon/night.

Important to keep in mind:

There are varying levels of observance within the Jewish religion, so a solution that works for one student might not work for another. Listen to each student's individual requirements to find a suitable solution.

Shabbat and holidays always begin a short time before sunset and end with sunset on the last day. Shabbat, therefore, lasts approximately 25 hours, while most Yom Tov / Yom Tovim last 50 hours. Times of commencement of Shabbat and Holidays will vary according to the seasons. For example, Shabbat starts and ends earlier in December than in June. In order to properly observe Shabbat / Yom Tov, one needs to be home early enough to finish preparations.

These restrictions also apply to young Jews that are working, not just those studying at University.

Jewish Holidays: 2023, 2024 & 2025

In the following table, you can find the dates for all the Jewish holidays in the next three years. Dates of Yom Tovim, where observant Jews are not allowed to use technology, are in italics.

| HOLIDAY | DATE 2023 | DATE 2024 | DATE 2025 | DESCRIPTION |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fast of Esther | Mar. 6 | Mar. 23 | Mar. 13 | Fast Day |
| Purim | Sundown Mar. 6 - Sundown March 7 | Sundown Mar. 23 - Sundown March 24 | Sundown Mar. 13 - Sundown March 14 | Joyous Holiday |
| Pesach (Passover) | <i>Sundown Apr. 5 - Sundown Apr. 8, Apr. 9 - 11, Sundown Apr. 12 - Sundown Apr. 13</i> | <i>Sundown Apr. 22 - Sundown Apr. 24, Apr. 25-26, Sundown Apr. 28 - Sundown Apr. 20</i> | <i>Sundown Apr. 12 - Sundown Apr. 14, Apr. 15-18, Sundown Apr. 18 - Sundown Apr. 20</i> | Celebrating the exodus from slavery |
| Tisha B'Av | July 27 | August 13 | Aug. 3 | Fast day commemorating the destruction of the two temples |
| Rosh Hashanah | <i>Sundown Sept. 15 - Sundown Sept. 17</i> | <i>Sundown Oct. 2 - Sundown Oct. 4</i> | <i>Sundown Sept. 22 - Sundown Sept. 24</i> | Jewish New Year |
| Tzom Gedaliah | Sept. 18 | Oct. 5 | Sept. 25 | Fast Day |
| Yom Kippur | <i>Sundown Sept. 24 - Sundown Sept. 25</i> | <i>Sundown Oct. 11 - Sundown Oct. 12</i> | <i>Sundown Oct. 1 - Sundown Oct 2</i> | Fast Day, Holiest Jewish Holiday |
| Sukkot | <i>Sundown Sept. 29 - Sundown Oct. 1, Oct. 2 - 6</i> | <i>Sundown Oct. 16 - Sundown Oct. 18, Oct. 19 - 23</i> | <i>Sundown Oct. 6 - Sundown Oct 8, Oct. 9 - 13</i> | Feast of the Tabernacles |
| Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah | <i>Sundown Oct. 6 - Sundown Oct. 8</i> | <i>Sundown Oct. 23 - Sundown Oct. 25</i> | <i>Sundown Oct 13 - Sundown Oct. 15</i> | Celebrating the Receival of the Torah |
| Channukah | Dec. 7 - 15 | Dec. 25 - Jan. 2 | Dec. 14 - 22 | Festival of Lights |

Commemorating International Holocaust Memorial Day

January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, is International Holocaust Memorial Day. According to a recent study by CBS, 34% of young Europeans know little to nothing about the holocaust. At the same time, the number of survivors able to give testimony is declining every year. Therefore, taking into consideration Holocaust remembrance is crucial.

Under the umbrella of the #WeRemember Campaign, we have put together a toolkit for Universities and Student Unions on how to organise a Holocaust commemoration on campus and bring speakers, particularly Holocaust survivors, to Universities. It is absolutely essential to remember the past in order to fight for a more tolerant and inclusive future.

If you want to organise a Holocaust commemoration (year-round), please get in touch with EUJS under info@eujs.org.

Increasing accessibility to kosher food

Observant Jewish students are often limited in their choice of which University to attend because only a few Universities offer kosher food. Cognizant of the fact that providing kosher food is not possible or sensible everywhere in Europe, Universities should, nonetheless, make an effort to make campuses more welcoming to Jewish Students.

Under <https://rabbiscer.org/kashrut-europe/> you can find a list of kosher products available in non-kosher supermarkets across Europe.

If you want to get in touch with a supplier of kosher food in your country, get in touch with us at info@eujs.org

















Supporting your local Jewish Student Group

The Jewish students attending your university are the real experts in what is needed to make them feel more included. Listen to the concerns Jewish students raise and take them seriously. Let Jews - like all other minorities - define what discrimination against us looks like.

If you have a Jewish Student Group on your campus or in your city, attend one of their events to understand the needs of Jewish students better. Many Jewish Student Unions host traditional Friday night dinners or other similar activities, where you can connect with Jewish students in a social setting.



On the next page you will find a list of all of EUJS' national affiliates. If you'd like EUJS to introduce you to Jewish student groups on your campus, get in touch with us at info@eujs.org

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Austria | Jüdische Österreichische Hochschuelerinnen (JÖH) |
|  | Belarus | Jewish Youth Union of Belarus |
|  | Belgium | Union des Etudiants Juifs de Belgique (UEJB) |
|  | Bosnia | Student Organization of The Jewish Community of BiH |
|  | Bulgaria | Union of Jewish Students and Youth in Bulgaria |
|  | Croatia | Croatian Union of Jewish Youth (CUJY) |
|  | Czech Republic | Ceska Unia Zidovkej Mladeze (CUZM) |
|  | Denmark | Dansk Judisk Ungdomssamenslning (DJUS) |
|  | Estonia | Union of Jewish Students in Estonia |
|  | Finland | Jewish Organization of Young Adults (JOY) |
|  | France | Union des Etudiants Juifs de France (UEJF) |
|  | Germany | Jüdische Studierendunion Deutschland (JSUD) |
|  | Greece | Hellenic Jewish Students (ENE) |
|  | Hungary | Zsidó Fiatalok Magyarországi Egyesülete (MAZSIHISZ) |
|  | Italy | Unione Giovani Ebrei d'Italia (UGEI) |
|  | Latvia | Union of Jewish Students in Latvia |
|  | Lithuania | Lithuanian Union of Jewish Students |
|  | Luxembourg | Union des Jeunes Gens Israélites du Luxembourg (UJGIL) |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------|
|  | North Macedonia | Jewish Youth Club of Macedonia |
|  | Moldova | Jewish Union of Moldova |
|  | Netherlands | Dutch Union of Jewish students (IJAR) |
|  | Norway | Norsk Judisk Studentforening (NJS) |
|  | Poland | Zydowska Ogólnopolska Organizacja Młodzieżowa |
|  | Portugal | Jewish Youth of Portugal (JYP) |
|  | Romania | Organizația Tinerilor Evrei din România |
|  | Russia | Russian Union of Jewish Students (RUJS) |
|  | Serbia | Unija jevrejskih studenata Srbije |
|  | Slovakia | Slovenská Únia Židovskej Mládeže (SUZM) |
|  | Slovenia | Jewish Union of Slovenia |
|  | Spain | Federación de Jóvenes Judíos en España (FEJJE) |
|  | Sweden | Judiska Ungdomsförbundet i Sverige (JUS) |
|  | Switzerland | Swiss Union of Jewish Students (SUJS) |
|  | Türkiye | Turkish Union of Jewish Students (TUJS) |
|  | Ukraine | Ukrainian Union of Jewish students (UUJS) |
|  | UK and Ireland | Union of Jewish Students of the UK and Ireland (UJS) |

Building Inclusive Curricula and Incorporating Jewish Narratives

Currently, in Europe, the conversation on Jewish communities, Jewish students, and Jews more broadly focuses on two topics: Antisemitism and the **Shoah (Holocaust)**. These are without a doubt – as you can see in this guide – two of the most important issues, and fighting against all forms of antisemitism and drawing lessons from the horrors of the Shoah is crucially important. But Jewish communities **and** Jewish students are more than just these two issues. There is thriving Jewish life all over Europe.

To make universities, and society more broadly, genuinely inclusive, we must include Jewish narratives beyond history and antisemitism. We need to talk about Jews in arts, culture, and ensure that Jews are perceived as part of Europe's civil society. This can be achieved by **changing and adapting existing curricula** and approaches to education to include Jewish narratives, but also can be achieved by strengthening democratic citizenship, encouraging critical thinking, and adopting a broader anti-racist approach.

For further reading on this approach read the new B'nai B'rith, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, and UNESCO resource **"Online Antisemitism: A Toolkit for Civil Society"** <https://www.bnaibrith.org/bnai-brith-and-the-institute-for-strategic-dialogue-unveil-new-resource-online-antisemitism-a-toolkit-for-civil-society-in-partnership-with-unesco/>.

Let's make Europe's Universities
spaces where every Jewish student
feels welcome!