



From Kristallnacht to Jasenovac - Countering Antisemitic Discourse in Southeast Europe

A report on online antisemitism in Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania,
Serbia and Slovenia

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping triangles in shades of green and orange, arranged in a horizontal line.

ט"ז תשרי ה'תשפ"ד

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About Fighting Online Antisemitism

Fighting Online Antisemitism (FOA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to combating rising online antisemitism, ensuring antisemitic content is promptly removed, and preventing its further dissemination. Founded in Israel in 2020, our international network of volunteers make a difference on a global scale. FOA collaborates with Israeli academic institutions and municipalities, international NGO, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Israeli Ministry for Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism, and social media platforms. To date, FOA is the only Israeli member of the International Network Against Cyberhate (INACH) and is a member of the Canadian Maspik! Coalition.

FOA published a range of reports on online antisemitism, which include: "Expression of Holocaust Denial on Social Networks," "Antisemitism on the Social Platform VKontakte," "Manifestations of Antisemitism on Social Media Following the Invasion of Ukraine," "The Sound of Hate: Antisemitism on Spotify," and "Anti-Israel Hate Content on LinkedIn Report," among others.

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Executive Summary

This study explores expressions of antisemitism in the digital space, in the countries of South-Eastern Europe: Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.

The research focuses on detecting antisemitic expressions in the digital space, especially on social media, mainly TikTok and X (formerly and hereinafter Twitter), and to a certain extent Instagram, and analyzing quantitative findings qualitatively.

The monitoring process of online Jewish discourse was done manually by a group of local, trained researchers from the five countries, as well as computer-generated search by a leading Israeli social threat intelligence company, Cyabra.

In order to make a comparison between each language and country, the search was based on 27 similar keywords and hashtags which are generally indicative of antisemitic discourse and that were translated by the researchers from English into the local equivalent in Slovenian, Croatian, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Romanian. When the English-origin hashtags were less relevant for certain languages in the antisemitic discourse, more relevant keywords for the search were used. (See list of keywords in Appendix II).

Since Meta (Facebook and Instagram) blocks companies like Cyabra from searching on the platform, those platforms were not included in the survey; however, a few dozens of links on Instagram are part of the search.

The search was conducted over the last three months, July - September 2023, flagging a total of 28,262 content items.



FOA then used local, trained researchers to manually review samples in each language and assess whether the material was antisemitic, based on the IHRA's International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism.

Main Findings

1. Most of the perpetrators of antisemitic discourse in all countries surveyed identified as nationalist, extreme right, and Nazi sympathizers. The most common antisemitic trope was of an international Jewish conspiracy or plot of Jews to take control locally or internationally.
2. Like in other countries, Twitter is the leading mainstream international social media platform for antisemitic content. (The exception to this was in Romania, where there was little to no antisemitic content of the flagged items; rather in Romania, antisemitic content was found on TikTok and YouTube.)
3. Whereas in the English-speaking countries and Western Europe anti-Israel antisemitic content makes up a significant part of the overall antisemitic content, in the countries surveyed here, it made up only a very small fraction of antisemitic content. Generally, less than 5% of the content found to be antisemitic in the countries surveyed was anti-Israel, this compared with nearly double that amount in similar content in English.¹ The overall international average of anti-Israel content within antisemitic content is around 33%.²
4. The lack of visibility of antisemitic content on TikTok in this study is not an indication that youth in these countries are not involved in producing antisemitic content. Rather, the hashtags searched in

¹ See data table, p. 35, below

² Fighting Online Antisemitism, 2022 Annual Report, p. 5
<https://foantisemitism.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Fighting-Online-Antisemitism-Annual-Report-2022-.pdf>

this survey were more blatant and, unlike Twitter, screened effectively by TikTok. More coded language, like the hashtag “never lose your smile” appeared on TikTok in Romanian. Additionally, teens and young adults are more fluent in English and are more likely to use English than older adults on these international online platforms. Thus, there remains the need to focus on education in public schools on subjects including the Holocaust, antisemitism and Jewish culture. Additionally, since TikTok is relatively responsive to removing antisemitic content from its platform,³ the company should be engaged in these countries to both remove content and to engage in educational campaigns that highlight tolerance and inclusivity of Jews and other minorities.

Online Antisemitism by Country/Language

In all countries surveyed antisemitic content was disseminated mostly by individuals with nationalist, far-right leanings, but the prevalence of the content differed between languages/countries (particularly on Twitter)⁴ and this gives an indication of the prevalence of online antisemitism in these countries, as follows:

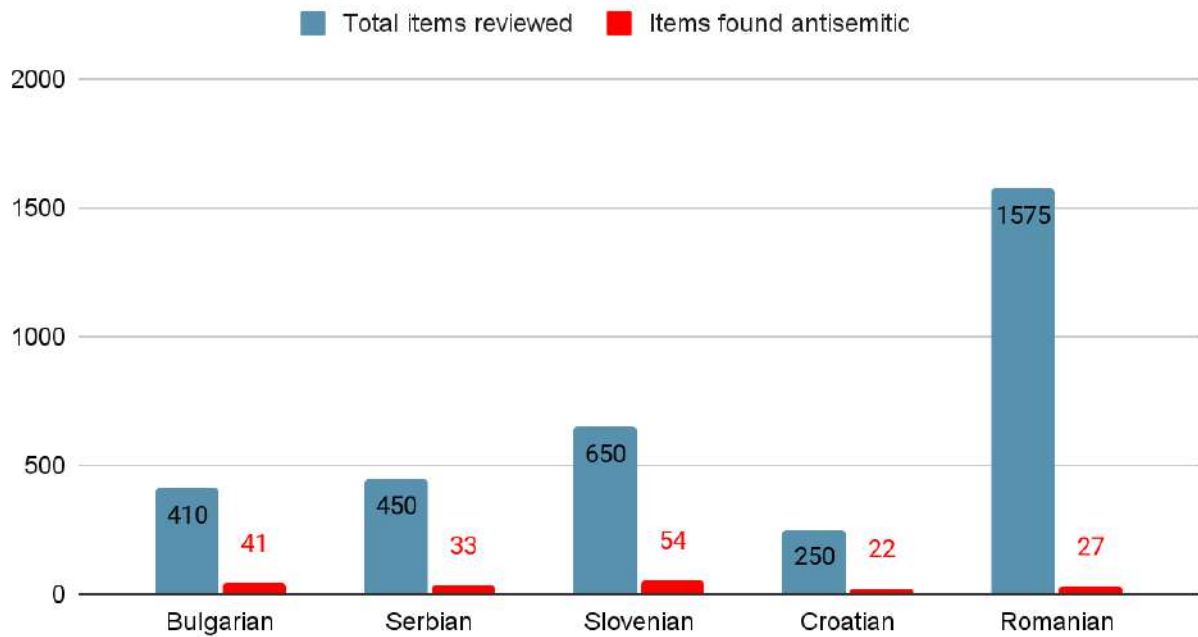
High Online Antisemitism: Bulgaria	Medium Online Antisemitism: Serbia, Slovenia. English for comparison	Low Online Antisemitism: Romania, Croatia
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The following graph shows the content items reviewed by the researchers by language and the number of those items they found to be antisemitic.

³ Ibid, p. 8

⁴ See data table, p. 35, below

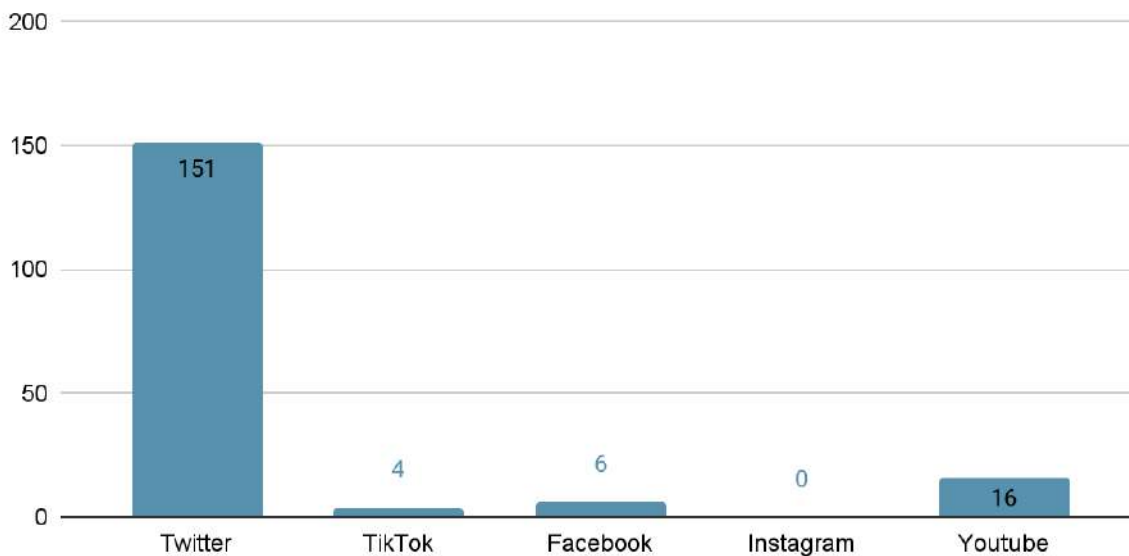
Items reviewed and items antisemitic by language



Online Antisemitism by Platform

Although limited by the inability to do a significant automated search on Meta platforms (Facebook and Instagram), the following reflects all the antisemitic content identified by local researchers, and gives a good sense of the prevalence of antisemitic content per platform:

Items of Antisemitic Content in all Surveyed Languages by Platform (July - September 2023)



As the findings indicate, even with a small Jewish population in Southeast Europe, there exists an online discourse marred by antisemitism. This discourse, similar to the far-right discourse elsewhere in Europe, is shaped by historically antisemitic stereotypes, the enduring legacy of Nazi antisemitism, and, on rare occasion, anti-Zionist narratives common in Western and Islamic countries. Furthermore, in specific instances—most notably in Serbia—one can discern the influence of antisemitic rhetoric originating from Russia.

While the study did not find many antisemitic statements in reviewed sources in comparison to the discourse in comparable countries, it did confirm the use of antisemitism in local politics and the use of international antisemitic narratives as a means of amplifying other political narratives.

Legal and law enforcement limitations, as well as the accessibility of extremist literature, could contribute to the rapid growth of antisemitism. The engagement of local Jewish communities is crucial to achieving policies that protect minorities and promote public discourse.



This report represents an important first step in monitoring and analyzing online antisemitic content in five countries. It is to be hoped that this will serve to increase awareness among politicians, members of parliament in the European Parliament and in the national governments, Jewish leaders, Jewish communities, European and international Jewish NGOs, and other key actors combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life in Southeast Europe.

In addition to raising public awareness about online antisemitism in Southeast European countries, it is imperative to encourage activists and volunteers to monitor social media regularly in these countries and engage with social media companies. It is crucial to ensure consistent monitoring and reporting of antisemitic content across social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, VKontakte and others.

Introduction

Throughout history, antisemitism has been a constant and persistent presence; it is still considered the oldest form of hatred in the world. Over the course of human history, antisemitism has taken many forms and manifested itself in many ways⁵.

The advancement of technology and the evolution of communication methods have significantly amplified human capacity to disseminate hate. Social media has become a popular venue for antisemitic factions to express their extreme views and find others who share them. Through social media platforms, individuals who hold antisemitic views are able to conceal their identities and gain rapid visibility for the antisemitic theories they propagate, which includes conspiracy theories, incitements of violence against Jews, denial and manipulation of the Holocaust, as well as the so-called "new antisemitism" which targets the State of Israel.

It is evident that online antisemitism can cause real harm in the real world, where human lives are at stake. In recent years, we have witnessed an increase in threats, violence, and discrimination against Jews originating from online calls for their harm. The 2018 synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh, involved a man who posted antisemitic content online on the social media platform GAB⁶.

Each post that spreads antisemitism or advocates for harm against Jews is like a ticking bomb that has the potential to explode into real-world consequences. Moreover, the presence of antisemitic content on such a large scale may lead to the normalization of these ideas and an increase in the motivation to commit hate crimes against Jews.

⁵ R. Wistrich, *A lethal obsession: antisemitism from antiquity to the global Jihad*, New-York 2010

⁶ Silverstein, J. (2018, October 27). Robert Bowers, Pittsburgh shooting suspect, was an avid poster of anti-Semitic content on Gab. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/robert-bowers-gab-pittsburgh-shooting-suspect-today-live-updates-2018-10-27/>



In this report, we examine current expressions of antisemitism in Southeast Europe - Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia - each impacted by their own historical backgrounds, political climate, and cultural influences. While each country's story is unique, common threads are evident: prejudice, politics, and social media's role in perpetuating harmful stereotypes.

The roots of modern antisemitism go deep into history. Especially in Croatia, we note the Ustasha regime's relationship with Nazi Germany. While legislative measures have been implemented to curb overt expressions of antisemitism, this issue remains a source of division within the Croatian political arena and is often linked with nationalist sentiments. This is also true for the other countries discussed in this report, where historical backgrounds have an impact on current trends.

These local factors play out alongside other general factors, such as the instrumentalization of stereotypes and terminology based on them for political needs, the ease of spreading ideas (especially superficial and catchy ideas) through social networks, as well as a lack of awareness and the potential danger of the usage of offensive terminology and negative stereotypes.

This report examines instances of antisemitic expressions and terminology in the discourse across various social platforms. through a careful monitoring of these expressions and terminology. For the basis of the monitoring and analysis, we use rely on the IHRA working definition of antisemitism⁷. Based on the findings, it is apparent that despite the minor presence of the Jewish population in Southeast European countries, antisemitic expressions continue to exist in the discourse on social media and that additional effort is required in order to raise awareness of the situation and develop effective tools to combat it.

⁷ IHRA working definition of Antisemitism
<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

A review of recent antisemitic incidents in Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia

Croatia

Antisemitism in Croatia has strong historical ties to the Ustashe movement and the Independent State of Croatia, primarily because of its association with Nazi Germany⁸. The Independent State of Croatia was founded on 10 April 1941, with the full support of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. During the four years of its existence, the Independent State of Croatia was ruled by the Ustasha movement and its leader (Poglavnik), Ante Pavelić. Since the coming to power of the Ustasha movement had been entirely dependent on the policies of the Third Reich and, initially, of Fascist Italy, Pavelić and his closest colleagues were under the domination and complete influence of these states.⁹

The Ustashe regime operated the Jasenovac concentration camp¹⁰, as well as a dozen other camps across the country¹¹. One of the first decrees of the Ustasha was to embark on a campaign "to purge Croatia of foreign elements." Hundreds of thousands of Serbs were expelled or viciously murdered in camps established by the Ustasha. The concentration of Jews in camps began in June 1941. By the end of that year, about two-thirds of Croatia's Jews had been sent to Ustasha camps, where most of them were killed on arrival.¹² The regime also assisted in the deportation of Jews to other concentration camps within Nazi-controlled territories.

⁸ Kralj. (n.d.). *Rezension zu: Historiography of the Ustasha Movement*. H-Soz-Kult. Kommunikation Und Fachinformation Für Die Geschichtswissenschaften. Retrieved August 28, 2023, from <https://www.hsozkult.de/review/id/reb-25216>

⁹ Jasenovac memorial site,
<https://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=9813>

¹⁰ Editor, Remember. org. (2022, May 3). *Jasenovac Concentration Camp*. The Holocaust History - A People's and Survivor History - Remember.Org.
<https://remember.org/jasenovac-concentration-camp.html>

¹¹ Jasenovac memorial site
<https://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6877>

¹² The Holocaust in Croatia, Yad Vashem,
<https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/the-holocaust-in-croatia.html>

The salute "Za dom spremni" (Ready for the homeland) is intrinsically linked to the Ustashe and mimics the Nazi salute "Heil Hitler." Individuals and organizations in Croatia who use this greeting are frequently labeled antisemitic. The use of the "Za dom spremni" salute is illegal in Croatia, and violators are subject to legal penalties¹³.

Marko Perkovic, widely known as "Thompson" for the British machine gun he carried as a Croatian soldier in the 1990s, is a leading figure in Croatia's music scene¹⁴. He has drawn criticism for his ultranationalist lyrics and explicit glorification of Croatia's World War II Ustasha regime. His concerts frequently open with the banned Ustasha salute "Za dom spremni," thereby transforming what could be uplifting celebrations of Croatian culture into neo-fascist events. Disturbingly, the audience, often including prominent individuals, eagerly sings along¹⁵.

During legislative debates over the law banning the Ustasha salute "Za dom spremni," significant differences emerged within the Croatian parliament. Right-wing parties largely opposed the law's passage¹⁶. Given the historical context, it can be inferred that these parties indirectly support antisemitic sentiments by endorsing the controversial salute.

Croatian politician Anto Đapić also publicly supported the Ustasha greeting "Za dom spremni¹⁷." Following this incident, he was expelled from his party and briefly withdrew from politics. However, he later reentered the political landscape, becoming a prominent figure once

¹³ Croatia. (2021, March 1). United States Department of State. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/croatia/>

¹⁴ B. E. Zuroff, 'Failure to sincerely and honestly confront Ustasha crimes'. *The Jerusalem Post* (2018, July 31) <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/failure-to-sincerely-and-honestly-confront-ustasha-crimes-563879>

¹⁵ B. E. Zuroff, 'Failure to sincerely and honestly confront Ustasha crimes'. *The Jerusalem Post* (2018, July 31) <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/failure-to-sincerely-and-honestly-confront-ustasha-crimes-563879>

¹⁶ Most citizens would not ban Ustasha salute. (2019, January 22). <https://euractiv.jutarnji.hr/euractiv/most-citizens-would-not-ban-ustasha-salute-8298731>

¹⁷ Contributors to Wikimedia projects. (2023, June 1). *Anto Đapić*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anto_%C4%90api%C4%87

again. In 2003, Đapić distanced himself from the Ustashe movement by labeling it a "loser," thereby formally renouncing his earlier stance.

According to the most recent crime data and the 2020 ombudsman's report, overt acts of antisemitism are relatively low in Croatia¹⁸. However, more subtle forms of antisemitic sentiment, such as attributing deceitful traits to Jews in financial matters, are prevalent in online conversations. These subtle biases gain momentum through global conspiracy theories that target an alleged "Jewish lobby."

This narrative claims that Jews and the influential figures they supposedly control are behind multiple global crises, ranging from financial and political instability to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the primary antisemitic views expressed within Croatia's digital media primarily originate from international sources. These narratives focus on a variety of issues, including Israeli politics, Palestinian conflicts, general Middle Eastern tensions, and broader Jewish or Zionist conspiracy theories. Figures like George Soros, the left-wing Hungarian-born Jewish-American philanthropist, are often named as representative leaders of these conspiracies. As global narratives blend with local context and history, antisemitic commentary and conspiracy-related bias increase.

However, it should be emphasized that on the 1st of March 2023, the Republic of Croatia took over the presidency of the **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)** from Sweden¹⁹, two months after the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted IHRA's non-legally binding working definition of Antisemitism²⁰. Ambassador Terezija Gras, State Secretary for European Affairs, International

¹⁸ Antisemitic Discourse in the Western Balkans: A Collection of Case Studies. (2021, April 21). International Republican Institute.
<https://www.iri.org/resources/antisemitism-remains-a-key-obstacle-to-democratic-transition-in-western-balkans/#footnote145>

¹⁹ International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), March 2023,
<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/press-releases/croatia-takes-over-ihra-presidency>

²⁰ Narodne Novine, NN 8/2023, January 2023,
https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2023_01_8_162.html



Relations and EU Funds, and Sara Lustig, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for Holocaust Issues, Combating Antisemitism and Relations with Jewish Organizations, are the Co-Chairs of the Croatian IHRA Presidency.

On that occasion, the Prime Minister of Croatia, Andrej Plenković, spoke about the Future of Remembrance Initiative: *“The aim of this Initiative is to give the IHRA greater visibility, while at the same time safeguarding contemporary memory by developing digital technological solutions, promoting tolerance and the IHRA definitions, and combating hate speech in sport. This will make Holocaust remembrance, combating antisemitism and anti-Roma discrimination more accessible and relevant to all generations, despite their age and locality”*.²¹

²¹ Croatia takes over the IHRA Presidency from Sweden. (n.d.). IHRA. Retrieved September 26, 2023, from <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/press-releases/croatia-takes-over-ihra-presidency>

Bulgaria

Bulgaria has a rich Jewish history spanning hundreds of years, primarily comprised of Sephardic Jews seeking refuge following the Spanish Inquisition²². During World War II, the majority of Bulgaria's Jews were spared from deportation to Nazi concentration camps, thanks in large part to interventions by non-Jewish Bulgarians, including clergy and liberal intellectuals. However, this narrative has a darker aspect; Jews residing in Bulgarian-occupied Thrace and Macedonia were deported to German death camps, raising issues of accountability that persist to this day.²³

During World War II, the government enacted the "Law for the Protection of the Nation²⁴," which stripped Jews of citizenship rights and confiscated property. Although the majority were spared from deportation, their treatment was nonetheless appalling. Approximately 90% of Bulgarian Jews emigrated to Israel after World War II, leaving behind a smaller but vibrant community represented today by **Shalom**, an organization that advocates for Jewish rights and combats antisemitism¹¹.

Bulgaria underwent a democratization process starting in 1989, after the fall of communism²⁵. This newfound freedom also gave rise to far-right groups, notably the "Attack" party in 2006, led by Volen Siderov, a known antisemite. In recent years, the "Revival" party has emerged as a similarly concerning force, with leaders making openly antisemitic remarks and

²² *Sephardic Jews in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece*. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2023, from <https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/sephardic-jews-in-yugoslavia.html>

²³ *Sephardic Jews in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece*. (n.d.). Retrieved August 29, 2023, from <https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/general/sephardic-jews-in-yugoslavia.html>

²⁴ Accelerator, A. (2023, August 23). Law For Protection Of The Nation. *Academic Accelerator*.

<https://academic-accelerator.com/encyclopedia/law-for-protection-of-the-nation>

²⁵ *Refworld*. (n.d.). Refworld. Retrieved August 29, 2023, from <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a6084.html>

drawing insensitive historical comparisons, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic²⁶.

Shalom, as the recognized representative body for Bulgarian Jews, often finds itself at odds with these far-right groups. Disturbingly, Revival's leader, Kostadin Kostadinov, has been involved in antisemitic propaganda, drawing parallels between the green vaccination certificate and the yellow star Jews were forced to wear during WWII. This act was met with heavy criticism, yet the party refused to issue an apology, further igniting tensions.

In recent years, Bulgaria has experienced a disturbing surge in public hate speech and antisemitism. This trend has intensified under the cover of freedom of expression, as populist factions persistently exploit this right in order to undermine tolerance and foster a climate of hostility. The rise in hate speech has been the cause of great concern and fears of the normalization of antisemitic rhetoric and behavior. The most recent incident involves a former minister of Jewish origin being labeled a traitor. Meanwhile, a photo collage was shared in the Telegram group of the Revival Party; it depicts another former minister of Jewish origin, known for his pro-Euro-Atlantic views, with accompanying text that suggests releasing gas on him for opposing Russian gas.²⁷

Recent incidents, such as the vandalizing of a Sofia craft beer store and a Jewish cemetery in Plovdiv, as well as an arson attack on a Jewish community center, have heightened concerns.

²⁶ Todorov, S. (2023, July 17). *Bulgaria's Pro-Russia Revival Party Investigated Over antisemitic Image*. Balkan Insight. <https://balkaninsight.com/2023/07/17/bulgarias-pro-russia-revival-party-investigated-over-antisemitic-image/>

²⁷ *Parliamentary question*. (n.d.). European Parliament. Retrieved August 29, 2023, from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2023-002325_EN.html



Today, the Jewish community in Bulgaria ranges from approximately 2,000 to 6,000 citizens²⁸. While they enjoy a degree of stability, especially when compared to the past, rising antisemitic incidents in 2023 have raised alarm bells, indicating that the struggle against antisemitism remains an ongoing issue that demands proactive measures from the Bulgarian government. Critics insist that beyond mere condemnations, the government needs to adopt an exhaustive strategy encompassing education and awareness campaigns to root out antisemitism from Bulgarian society^{29,30}.

²⁸ *Bulgaria*. (n.d.). JPR. Retrieved August 29, 2023, from <https://www.jpr.org.uk/countries/how-many-jews-in-bulgaria>

²⁹ Congress, W. J. (n.d.). *Community in Bulgaria*. World Jewish Congress. Retrieved August 29, 2023, from <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/BG#demography>

³⁰ *Bulgaria*. (2023, May 23). Global Project Against Hate and Extremism. <https://globalextrémism.org/bulgaria/>

Romania

The problem of antisemitism in Romania is a multifaceted and complex issue with historical roots that extend over centuries³¹. This includes the harmful policies adopted during World War II and modern challenges brought about by the internet and social media platforms. In the early 20th century, Romania had one of the most significant Jewish populations in Eastern Europe³². Yet, alongside this prosperity was a growing tide of antisemitism, manifesting itself in pogroms, discriminatory legislation, and negative public opinion. This was particularly between the two world wars³³.

During the Second World War, Romania aligned itself with Nazi Germany and actively participated in the Holocaust, resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of Jewish lives³⁴. At present, Romania has a small community of fewer than 10,000 Jews, primarily of an older generation³⁵. While the country has taken some steps to recognize and memorialize its role in the Holocaust, it still grapples with issues like Holocaust denial, historical revisionism, and the idolization of fascist symbols.

After the war, antisemitism transformed into a form of anti-Jewish anti-communism. This shift was shaped by the notable presence of Jews in the pre-war Communist Party and the post-war Sovietization led by Ana Pauker. During this time, pervasive antisemitism, combined with the

³¹ McGrath, B. S. (2019, April 14). *antisemitism threatens Romania's fragile Jewish community*. BBC News.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47865369>

³² Congress, W. J. (n.d.). *Community in Romania*. World Jewish Congress. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from

<https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/ro>

³³ Carsocsea, R. (n.d.). *Antisemitism in Romania: Historical Legacies, Contemporary Challenges*.

https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/185286/Working_Paper_81.pdf

³⁴ *The Holocaust in Romania*. (2019, October 23). Musée de l'Holocauste Montréal.

<https://museeholocauste.ca/en/resources-training/the-holocaust-in-romania/>

³⁵ Congress, W. J. (n.d.). *Community in Romania*. World Jewish Congress. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from

<https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/ro>

state's policy of atheism, prompted many Jews to adopt Romanian-sounding names and abandon their faith to better integrate into the new Romanian political landscape.³⁶

After the fall of communism, Romania initiated a process of liberalization but also retained an integration policy that fueled rampant antisemitism among the emergent communist elite. The policies implemented by the new secretary, Nicolae Ceaușescu, in 1965 allowed Jews to make Aliyah, with over 200,000 departing between 1968 and 1988, when the arrangement concluded. This right of return stigmatized those who chose to remain in Romania past the revolution, branding them as traitors³⁷.

In the years following the revolution, Romanian antisemitism diversified, largely rooted in traditional myths such as blood libel. Accusations ranged from claims that Israel-funded clinics were kidnapping children to allegations of unethical business practices in the wake of laws governing privatization and the restitution of goods and property seized by the Communist Party. Additionally, notions of global Jewish dominance gained traction, fueled in part by rumors regarding the Jewish origins of Ion Iliescu and exacerbated by misinformation disseminated by the newly established free press.

Acknowledgment of Romania's role in the Holocaust is inconsistent³⁸. Some administrations have openly admitted to the nation's past³⁹, while others have been more reserved, leading to domestic and international

³⁶ *Cum s-a românizat România - Lucian Boia- 2015- editura Humanitas.*

³⁷ The Forward. (2005, February 11). The Cold War's Strangest Bedfellows How Romania Sold Its Jews to Israel, and What It Got in Return
<https://forward.com/culture/2923/the-cold-war-e2-80-99s-strangest-bedfellows-how-romania/>

³⁸ Taylor, A. (2015, July 27). Why Romania had to ban Holocaust denial twice. *The Washington Post*.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/07/27/why-romania-had-to-ban-holocaust-denial-twice/>

³⁹ AGERPRES. (n.d.). *Ciuca: Romania's commitment to combating antisemitism, preserving memory of Holocaust does.* Actualizează Lumea.
<https://www.agerpres.ro/english/2023/05/02/ciuca-romania-s-commitment-to-combat-ing-antisemitism-preserving-memory-of-holocaust-does-not-tolerate-any-compromise--1100920>

skepticism⁴⁰. Notable landmarks, such as the Iasi Pogrom Museum⁴¹, indicate both the struggle with this troubling history and the ongoing efforts for improvement. Prominent officials, including former Prime Minister Nicolae Ciucă, have publicly committed to combating antisemitism and preserving Holocaust memory—a commitment underscored by the global rise in antisemitic sentiment⁴².

Meanwhile, Romania's Secretary of State has appraised the nation's advancements in battling antisemitism, portraying Romania as a model in the region⁴³. Silviu Vexler, an MP and representative of Romania's Federation of Jewish Communities, has sounded the alarm⁴⁴ about increasing antisemitic discourse online and urged enhanced educational initiatives. Maximilian Marco Katz, the founding director of the Centre for Monitoring and Combating Antisemitism in Romania, asserted that antisemitism remains a pervasive cultural phenomenon, evidenced by frequent vandalism of Jewish burial grounds and monuments⁴⁵.

Despite political promises and legal measures, such as the Wiesel Commission⁴⁶ forbidding the honoring of those convicted of crimes

⁴⁰ M. G. Barbera, (2023, January 4). *Bucharest city council rejects plan to remove bust of pro-Nazi minister*. The Times of Israel. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/bucharest-city-council-rejects-plan-to-remove-bust-of-pro-nazi-minister/>

⁴¹ *The Iasi Pogrom Museum — Iasi*. (2022, February 20). Iasi.

<https://destinationiasi.ro/places/the-iasi-pogrom-museum/>

⁴² AGERPRES. (n.d.). *Ciucă: Romania's commitment to combating antisemitism, preserving memory of Holocaust does..* AGERPRES • Actualizează Lumea.

<https://www.agerpres.ro/english/2023/05/02/ciucă-romania-s-commitment-to-combating-antisemitism-preserving-memory-of-holocaust-does-not-tolerate-any-compromise--1100920>

⁴³ *Speech by Mrs. Daniela Gîțman, state secretary, at the Lauder Conference in Diplomacy and International Affairs for High School Education*. (n.d.). Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from <https://www.mae.ro/en/node/36488>

⁴⁴ McGrath, B. S. (2019, April 14). *antisemitism threatens Romania's fragile Jewish community*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47865369>

⁴⁵ Touma, A. M. (2017, May 2). *Smashed Graves Highlight Romania's Lingering antisemitism*. Balkan Insight.

<https://balkaninsight.com/2017/05/02/smashed-graves-highlight-romania-s-lingering-antisemitism-05-01-2017/>

⁴⁶ *Wiesel Commission*. Wikipedia. (2021, May 17).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiesel_Commission#:~:text=The%20Wiesel%20Commissio n%20was%20the,the%20public%20on%20the%20issue.

against humanity⁴⁷, the effectiveness of these measures remains inconclusive. The refusal by Bucharest City Council to remove a bust of Mircea Vulcanescu shows the obstacles still standing on Romania's path toward reconciliation with its history⁴⁸.

The majority of online antisemitism in Romania is displayed through stereotypes, conspiracy theories, and derogatory language⁴⁹. Online hate speech is a significant driver behind the increase in antisemitic incidents⁵⁰. In alignment with the worldwide online discourse, conspiracy theories blamed Jews for the COVID-19 pandemic and accused them of manipulating the media and the economy⁵¹. According to a study released by the Wiesel Institute in July 2022, several articles published online between November 2021 and April criticized an initiative to introduce Holocaust history as a course in the high school curricula and claimed that Jews or the state of Israel were behind the measure. According to the same study, most antisemitic hate speech on social media included Jewish conspiracy theories. Bucharest ranked third in a top of cities where most antisemitic messages are posted on Facebook and Twitter, according to data from Israel's Diaspora Ministry⁵².

⁴⁷ *Holocaust Legislation Criminalizing Denial and Promotion of Nazism*. (n.d.). Retrieved September 9, 2023, from <https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/holocaust-antisemitism/holocaust-denial-laws.html>

⁴⁸ i24NEWS. (2023, January 4). Bucharest city council refuses to remove the bust of a pro-Nazi minister. *I24news*. <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/europe/1672825274-romania-bucharest-city-council-refuses-to-remove-the-bust-of-a-pro-nazi-minister>

⁴⁹ McGrath, B. S. (2019, April 14). *Antisemitism threatens Romania's fragile Jewish community*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47865369>

⁵⁰ BUDA, D. (n.d.). *Parliamentary question*. European Parliament. Retrieved September 9, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2022-001839_EN.html

⁵¹ Mutler, A. (2020, May 21). *COVID-19 pandemic sees a rise in online antisemitism in Romania, Holocaust group says* * *Universul.net*. Universul.Net. <https://universul.net/covid-19-pandemic-sees-a-rise-in-online-antisemitism-in-romania-holocaust-group-says/>

⁵² irina.popescu0. (2018, January 30). *Bucharest in top three cities with most antisemitic posts on social media*. Romania Insider. <https://www.romania-insider.com/bucharest-antisemitic-posts>

Serbia

According to the most recent census carried out in the autumn of 2022, a total of 602 individuals identified Judaism as their religious affiliation in Serbia⁵³. Most government and international assessments on the state of antisemitism in Serbia indicate that while antisemitic incidents do occur, overt public expressions of antisemitism are comparatively infrequent. However, online platforms continue to serve as a persistent medium for antisemitic sentiment^{54,55}.

In February 2023, a group of about 50 neo-Nazis – members of the group **Zentropa Serbia** – gathered in Belgrade to commemorate the 77th anniversary since the death of Milan Nedic, leader of a Nazi-backed Serbian puppet government during World War Two. Human rights organizations called for state to ban the gathering, but the event took place nonetheless⁵⁶. For years, right-wing groups have been commemorating the death of Nedic. In 2018, the prosecution office in Belgrade took legal action by filing criminal and misdemeanor charges against multiple participants who exhibited Nazi and fascist symbols during these commemorations⁵⁷.

⁵³ Population according to religion, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <https://data.stat.gov.rs//Home/Result/3104020301?languageCode=en-US>

⁵⁴ Antisemitic Discourse in the Western Balkans: A Collection of Case Studies, International Republican Institute, <https://www.iri.org/resources/antisemitism-remains-a-key-obstacle-to-democratic-transition-in-western-balkans/>

⁵⁵ 2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Serbia, US Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/serbia>

⁵⁶ Neo-Nezis mark the death of Milan Nedic in Belgrade, Radio Free Europe, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/srbija-beograd-godisnjica-milan-nedic/32255660.html>

⁵⁷ Rudic, F. (2018, February 14). *Prosecutions Urged for Nazi Salutes at Serbian Rally*. Balkan Insight. <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/02/14/complaints-filed-for-nazi-salutes-at-serbian-rally-02-14-2018/>

On 30th January 2023, antisemitic graffiti (swastika and crossed Star of David) was sprayed at the entrance of the Jewish cemetery in Belgrade⁵⁸. Similar antisemitic symbols were written on a bus station in the Serbian northern town of Sombor just two days earlier⁵⁹.

In November 2022, the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia issued a press statement alerting the public to plans by Blood and Honor, operating under the front organization Klub 28, to hold a two-day neo-Nazi music festival in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. Reportedly, the event was planned covertly, and the organizers had identified multiple backup venues in case their plans were publicly exposed. However, Serbian media later reported that the organizers abandoned their plans for Belgrade and opted to relocate the gathering to Hungary instead⁶⁰. In December 2022, an antisemitic message was scrawled on a wall in Novi Sad, Serbia's second-largest city. The inscription, written in black marker, read "Novi Sad Jugend Serbian Nazi Organization."

Serbian media noted that this marks the third occasion on which Blood and Honor has attempted to stage an event in Serbia. Each attempt was shrouded in secrecy, but ultimately, the events were prohibited by Serbian police⁶¹. The first unsuccessful attempt by Blood and Honor to host an event in Serbia was scheduled for October 20th, 2018, Belgrade's liberation anniversary. A second attempt was made in 2020 when the group aimed to hold a festival at a popular venue in Belgrade. However,

⁵⁸ Antisemitic graffiti on Jewish cemetery in Belgrade, Federation of Jewish Communities of Serbia, <https://www.savezjos.org/sr/vest/antisemitizam/antisemitski-grafiti-na-jevrejskom-groblju-u-beogradu>

⁵⁹ Antisemitic symbols on bus stop in Sombor, Federation of Jewish Communities of Serbia, <https://www.savezjos.org/sr/vest/antisemitizam/antisemitski-simboli-na-autobuskoj-stanici-u-somboru>

⁶⁰ Nova.rs reveals: Neo-Nazis gave up on organizing music festival in Serbia, Nova.rs, <https://nova.rs/vesti/drustvo/nova-rs-saznaje-neonacisti-odustali-od-odrzavanja-muzickog-festivala-u-srbiji/>

⁶¹ PREPARATIONS FOR SECRET NEO-NAZI GATHERING IN BELGRADE Fascist, racist, Hitler admirers from all over the world are planning dark festival, behind it is one of THE MOST EXTREME ORGANISATIONS in Europe, daily Blic, <https://www.blic.rs/vesti/drustvo/sprema-se-tajni-skup-neonacista-u-beogradu-fasisti-rasisti-postovaoci-hitlera-iz/hh98t4r>

following strong public backlash, Serbian police intervened and prohibited the event from taking place.

At that time, Radio Free Europe published a report indicating that bands promoting ideologies of Nazism, antisemitism, nationalism, and glorifying Serbian convicted war criminals were actively performing at closed events across Serbia. According to the report, these bands avoided mainstream social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, opting instead to reach their audiences through alternative platforms such as Bitchute and VKontakte. In an effort to maintain anonymity, band members routinely conceal their identities; when photos of them appear online, their faces are deliberately blurred⁶².

In August 2022, a memorial plaque that had been placed just four months prior at the site of a synagogue in the town of Sremska Mitrovica was destroyed, marking 80 years since the synagogue's original presence. In July 2022, a Holocaust remembrance open-air exhibition in Novi Sad was vandalized. Several informational panels were demolished and defaced with neo-Nazi and pro-Russian symbols^{63,64,65}.

The 2022 Human Rights Report by the U.S. Department of State on Serbia highlights reports from leaders within the Jewish community about the dissemination of antisemitic literature translated by ultranationalist groups and conservative publishers. Notorious texts like the forged "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" can be acquired⁶⁶ through informal sellers, used bookshops, or online platforms. Several right-wing websites

⁶² Music bands in Serbia promote Nazism with impunity, Radio Free Europe, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bendovi-u-srbiji-nekaznjivo-promovišu-nacizam/30944285.html>

⁶³ Warning regarding the demolition of the memorial in Sremska Mitrovica, The Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, <https://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/en/warning-regarding-the-demolition-of-the-memorial-in-sremska-mitrovica/>

⁶⁴ Disgrace! Memorial plaque commemorating killed Jews demolished, <https://www.ozon.rs/vesti/2022/sramota-srusena-spomen-ploca-postavljena-u-znak-secanja-na-postradale-jevreje/>

⁶⁵ 2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: Serbia, US Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/serbia>

⁶⁶ <https://veselaknjiga.com/product/protokoli-sionskih-mudraca/>



and chat rooms, although many are inactive, also serve as channels for promoting antisemitic ideas and literature.

Further, there are a number of publishers⁶⁷ that specialize in issuing works by well-known fascists. This includes writings by François Duprat, co-founder of France's far-right National Front party; Corneliu Codreanu, the Romanian far-right leader who established the Iron Guard movement in 1930; and Dimitrije Ljotic, who founded the Serbian fascist movement 'Zbor' in 1935.

The International Republic Institute's report titled "Antisemitic Discourse in the Western Balkans: A Collection of Case Studies" observes that although mainstream media mostly report on antisemitic incidents, the majority of antisemitic rhetoric is found in comments beneath articles, indicating a prevalent undercurrent of this discriminatory sentiment⁶⁸.

⁶⁷ In a Belgrade Bar, 'Forbidden' Books Fan Far-Right Flames, Balkan Insight, <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/04/06/in-a-belgrade-bar-forbidden-books-fan-far-right-flames/>

⁶⁸ Antisemitic Discourse in the Western Balkans: A Collection of Case Studies, International Republican Institute, <https://www.iri.org/resources/antisemitism-remains-a-key-obstacle-to-democratic-transition-in-western-balkans/>

Slovenia

Slovenia is a small country with a population of approximately 2 million people, situated in south-central Europe. It was one of the first former Yugoslav republics to join the European Union in 2004⁶⁹.

World War II and the Holocaust devastated Slovenia's Jewish community, leaving only about 200 survivors. Many chose to emigrate, resulting in years of dormancy within the community. The onset of the Yugoslav Civil War in 1991 further strained the lives of Jews across the central Yugoslav republics, compelling many to flee and resulting in the loss of numerous Jewish landmarks. The international recognition of Slovenia as an independent state in 1992 marked a turning point for the country. The Jewish community promptly began rebuilding, establishing a community center and fostering better nationwide connections. These revitalization efforts have persisted to the present day, culminating in a well-organized Jewish community that plays an active role in Slovenia's social and political landscape⁷⁰.

The socialist regime in former Yugoslavia was undeniably autocratic, inhumane, and deficient in many fundamental human rights and civil liberties. However, its solid secular orientation and strong opposition to religious extremism also deserve credit as factors that successfully prevented religious hatred from spreading throughout its population⁷¹.

Broadly speaking, antisemitic sentiment in Slovenia can be divided into two primary categories: left-wing antisemitism and right-wing

⁶⁹ News, B. (2012, May 2). *Slovenia country profile*. BBC News.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17846376>

⁷⁰ Contributors to Wikimedia projects. (2023, May 21). *History of the Jews in Slovenia*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Slovenia

⁷¹ *The Atheist Civil Religion in Communist Yugoslavia: the Broken Covenant of Tito's People*. (n.d.). *Kommunismusgeschichte.De*. Retrieved August 30, 2023, from <https://www.kommunismusgeschichte.de/jhk/jhk-2005/article/detail/the-atheist-civil-religion-in-communist-yugoslavia-the-broken-covenant-of-titos-people>

antisemitism.⁷² The latter has been steadily rising in recent decades. This increase is largely attributable to the growing popularity of far-right political parties and social media influencers, many of whom maintain their own YouTube channels.

Additionally, the rise can be linked to far-right organizations and informal groups that cannot achieve official registration at the national level. Their inability to register is often due to their extremist ideology and overt hatred, which disqualifies them from formal recognition.

However, this does not mean that those groups that have managed to successfully register do not hold dangerous beliefs. Besides that, there is always a possibility that these people simply move their toxic activities online, where the necessary regulations and laws against all forms of hate speech are very often much less strict or completely absent⁷³.

During the past few years, there have been many instances of antisemitic discourse and profound anti-Jewish hatred that have been mostly spread online by individuals like Aleš Ernecl, Urban Purgar, Boštjan M. Zupančič, Sašo Vidovič, Bernard Brščič, Marko Šket, Alen Koman, Domen Mavrič, Mitja Ličen, and others. The particularly disturbing fact is that many of these people have previously held numerous high-ranking positions not only in Slovenia but also abroad, like, for example, Boštjan M. Zupančič, who served as a judge in the European Court of Human Rights.⁷⁴ Notable positions in Slovenia have also held Aleš Ernecl, who was the CEO of a media house called *National Broadcasting Agency* (NTA), Urban Purgar, who was Ernecl's successor at NTA, and Bernard Brščič, who was a chief secretary of the Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša⁷⁵.

⁷² *Modern European antisemitism*. (n.d.). Jewish Community of Slovenia. Retrieved August 30, 2023, from <https://jewish-community.si/?p=687>

⁷³ II, D. (2021, October 17). *Slovenian PM publishes tweet with antisemitic connotations*. European Jewish Congress.

<https://eurojewcong.org/news/communities-news/slovenia/slovenian-pm-publishes-tweet-with-antisemitic-connotations/>

⁷⁴ Contributors to Wikimedia projects. (2023, August 25). Boštjan Zupančič. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bo%C5%A1tjan_Zupan%C4%8Di%C4%8D

⁷⁵ The Algemeiner. (2023, May 24). *Antisemitism in Slovenia's State-Sponsored Media Is a Major Problem* - *Algemeiner.com*.



However, it's important to highlight that in recent years, left-wing antisemitism has perhaps become even more intense and damaging, affecting not only the Jewish community but also the broader Slovenian populace and their perception of Jewish people. Notable individuals propagating this form of antisemitic bias include Boris Vasev, Erik Valenčič, Gorazd Grošelj, Lars Podkrajšek, and Kaja Sajovic, among others.

This is because it often masquerades under the pretense of criticizing the State of Israel as a "collective Jew," advocating for the human rights and freedoms of the Palestinian people, and unjustly blaming Jews for Israel's actions⁷⁶.

<https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/05/24/antisemitism-in-slovenias-state-sponsored-media-is-a-major-problem/>

⁷⁶ The Algemeiner. (2023, May 24). *Antisemitism in Slovenia's State-Sponsored Media Is a Major Problem* - *Algemeiner.com*.

<https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/05/24/antisemitism-in-slovenias-state-sponsored-media-is-a-major-problem/>



Monitoring Online Jewish and Antisemitic Discourse

Methodology

The monitoring process of online Jewish discourse was done manually by a group of local activities from the five countries, as well as automatically by a leading Israeli social threat intelligence company - Cyabra⁷⁷.

Cyabara focuses on uncovering malicious, authentic, and fake online conversations. Cyabra breaks down the billions of conversations taking place online and across social media and detects fake profiles, bot networks, coordinated campaigns, and other threats. By breaking down narratives and tracking the source of disinformation, it provides actionable insights and real-time alerts to protect businesses, products, people, and places. Enterprise brands and public sector agencies trust Cyabra to uncover risks and attacks emerging from the online space.

Cyabra's cutting-edge technologies gather publicly available data from social media platforms, employ machine learning algorithms to process this data, utilize AI to assess and map the authenticity of social media accounts while applying a Cyabra's distinctive NLP model for sentiment analysis

In order to make a comparison between each language and country, the search was based on 27 similar keywords and hashtags that were translated by the activists from English into the following languages: Slovenian, Croatian, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Romanian (appendix II). However, as some of the words are not popular in those countries in the antisemitic discourse, keywords more relevant for the search were used.

The search focused on the leading platforms: TikTok, Twitter and YouTube. Due to the fact that Meta (Facebook and Instagram) blocks

⁷⁷ <https://cyabra.com>.



companies like Cyabra from searching on the platform, those platforms were not part of the process. However, a few dozens of links on Instagram are part of the research due to manual checks.

The keywords reflect discourse related to Jews (and to Israel in the Jewish context) in general and not only to antisemitic expressions, and by individual analysis of a large sample of the Jewish-related expressions there is a detection of distinct antisemitic cases.

Findings

The search was conducted between July - September 2023, yielding a total of 28,262 mentions across all three platforms. The bulk of the content monitored by FOA was published on TikTok, accounting for 18,487 items, followed by Twitter with 8,335 items, Instagram with 815 items, Facebook with 500 items and YouTube with 125 items. These numbers reflect the overall discourse concerning Jews, the State of Israel, and antisemitism online, encompassing both positive and negative sentiments. However, it should be noted that there was a smaller proportion of links that were explicitly antisemitic or anti-Israel in nature.

FOA researchers reviewed 10% of the content in each language and assessed whether the material was antisemitic, using the working definition of antisemitism provided by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).⁷⁸ The experts within the IHRA's Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial have successfully forged an international consensus around a non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism, which was subsequently adopted by the Plenary. Every country addressed in this report has also embraced the IHRA definition.

⁷⁸About the IHRA non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism.
<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

Online antisemitic content can be divided into a few categories: incitement to offline violence against Jews and calling for the deaths of Jews, Holocaust denial, traditional antisemitic tropes, conspiracy theories, delegitimization and demonization of the State of Israel and neglect of its right to exist. All these exist in the online discussions relating to Jews on social media conducted in the native South European languages. Examples are provided in Appendix I.

It can be clearly seen that, in total, most of the results of the automated search with the hashtag chosen were found on the TikTok social media app, less on Twitter, and considerably less on Instagram. The language can be an obstacle to exposure to different content on social media, including Jews-related content. However, living in a global society includes knowledge and widespread usage of English as the primary language.

That is likely one of the reasons for another finding of this study - Jewish-related content expressed in native languages relevant to this study is relatively low while compared to Jewish-related content expressed in English. It can be explained by the relatively low Jewish population in the relevant countries⁷⁹, and therefore, by the relatively low noticeable Jewish presence in the public sphere (both offline and online). That is in contrast to the relatively noticeable Jewish presence in the public sphere in Central and Western Europe, where the Jews are treated as a political factor in public discourse (offline and online alike)⁸⁰. The

⁷⁹ See - Jewish Population by Region (2022), online - <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jewish-population-of-the-world>

⁸⁰ See - S. Eilam, A. Kantor, T. Eshed, T. Cohen, *Contemporary Antisemitism in the Political Discourse of Five Western European Countries: Germany, France, Britain, Spain, Ireland: Memorandum 214* (2021), Tel-Aviv 2021
https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Memo214_11.pdf



same is true to a large degree also to East European countries such as Russia and Ukraine⁸¹.

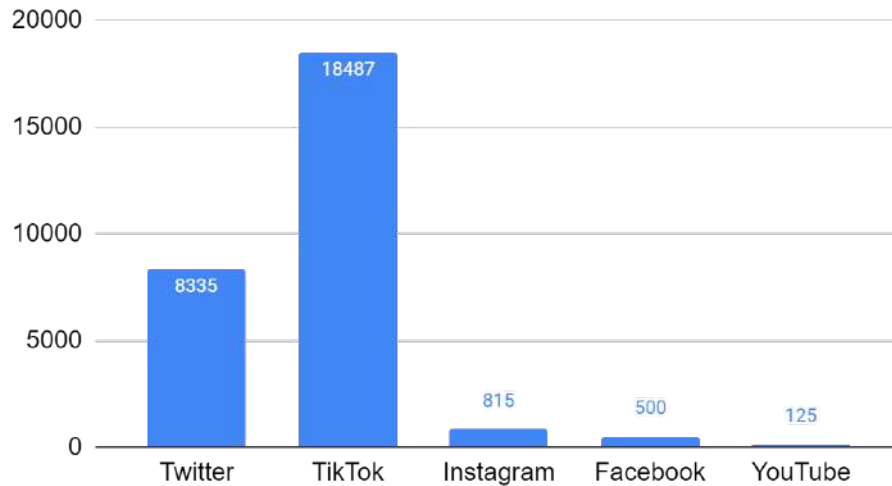
It seems that Jewish-related discourse is influenced by combination of historical factors (such as the particular stereotypes of the Jews in the relevant countries and conspiracy theories related to Jewish power and control, historical experience of the Jewish presence in the relevant countries, the Holocaust in the relevant countries, etc.) alongside with global trends (such as far-right anti-minority sentiment), as well as particular influences (such as Russian influence in the case of discourse in Serbia). These influences can be seen in examples provided in Appendix I.

The data below shows the number of Jewish-related content in the languages relevant to this study according to the social media platforms on which they appeared.

⁸¹ L. Gershovich, *antisemitism in the Propaganda and Public Discourse in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus during the Russia-Ukraine War (February – August 2022)* – ACTA (2023), online - <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/actap-2023-2001/html>

Data

AUTOMATED FLAGGED CONTENT (ALL LANGUAGES)



**PREVALENCE OF ANTISEMITIC CONTENT (MANUALLY DETERMINED)
WITHIN FLAGGED CONTENT (AUTOMATED) ON TWITTER BY
LANGUAGE**

Language	Prevalence of antisemitic content	Prevalence of anti-Israel content
Serbian	75% (unique user prevalence 40%)	5%
Bulgarian	70%	<2%
Slovenian	~50%	4%
Croatian	15%	4%
Romanian	<5%	<2%
English (for comparison)	55%	7%



Conclusions

This report is one of the first to address antisemitic and Jew-related discourse in Southeast Europe. It covers five countries and their languages, along with two major social media platforms (TikTok and Twitter).

As the findings indicate, even with a small Jewish population in the Southeast European countries, discourse marred by antisemitism exists across all the nations studied and is evident on social media platforms. This discourse is shaped by historically-developed antisemitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories, the enduring impact of Nazi racist antisemitism from World War II, and, to a very limited extent, anti-Zionist narratives common in Western and Islamic countries. Furthermore, in specific instances—most notably in Serbia—one can discern the influence of antisemitic rhetoric originating from Russia.

At the same time, compared to Jewish-related content expressed on the same social media in English, it seems that Jewish-related content expressed in native languages relevant to this study is relatively low. It can be explained by the relatively low Jewish population in these countries, and therefore the limited Jewish presence in the public sphere, compared to the relatively noticeable Jewish presence in the public sphere in Central and Western Europe, as well as in some Eastern European countries.

Online antisemitism can be potentially dangerous: thus, the perpetrators of major antisemitic attacks in 2019 were active in disseminating antisemitic propaganda online, through international networks of



like-minded activists⁸². Jew-related online discourse is clearly interconnected with offline discourse. Words lead to actions, and what starts as verbal, or more precise textual, antisemitic expressions online can end in different forms of bias and harassment offline, including violent actions. Therefore - actions must be taken both for raising awareness and effectively combat the expressions of antisemitism and hatred in general.

⁸² T. Naamat (ed.), *Antisemitism Worldwide 2019 and the Beginning of 2020 - Report by the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry*, Israel 2020, p. 6, online - https://cst.tau.ac.il/wp-content/uploads/old_website/Kantor%20Report%202020_130820.pdf



Suggestion for Future Action

This report is the first of its kind and should be followed up with local initiatives. It's imperative that the concerns highlighted in this report are communicated to local government officials and politicians, members of the European Union parliament, Jewish leaders and communities, as well as local, European, and international Jewish NGOs, and other key stakeholders in the domain of combating antisemitism and nurturing Jewish life in Southeast Europe⁸³.

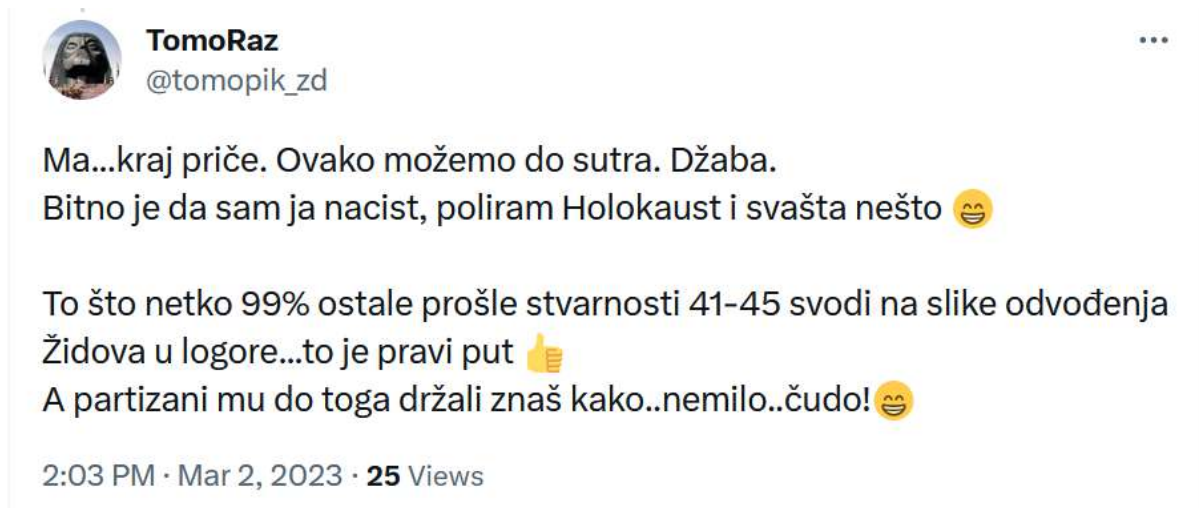
In addition to raising awareness and shedding light on the discourse in Southeast European countries, it is important to recruit local activists and volunteers. Their involvement is key for ensuring consistent monitoring and reporting of antisemitic content across various social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, V Kontakte, and others. Moreover, the inclusion of new volunteers will enable monitoring and reporting in languages not previously covered in the report, such as Bosnian, Russian, Ukrainian, and Moldovan.

Additionally, it is essential that the monitored content be promptly reported to the platforms for immediate removal. Some of the platforms featured in this report (TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) have already established ties with NGOs, and FOA is acknowledged as a "Trusted Flagger"—recognized NGO 'which can report content through direct channels. Recognized as a "Trusted Flagger" by these platforms, FOA collaborates closely with the European Jewish Association (EJA) to report antisemitic content that violates the platforms' hate speech policies directly to them and is available to assist local organizations in finding and reporting antisemitic online content.

⁸³ European Commission presents first-ever EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life.
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_4990

Appendix I: Examples of Online Antisemitic Content

Examples in Croatian



The item was monitored on Twitter, and published on 2nd March 2023.

Translation from Croatian: "Well... end of story. We can do this until tomorrow. For nothing. The important thing is that I'm a Nazi, I'm polishing the Holocaust, and all sorts of things. That someone reduces 99% of the rest of the past reality from 1941 to 1945 to images of Jews being taken to camps... that is the right way. And the Partisans kept him up to that, you know how... pitifully... a miracle."



EKTOPLAZMA
@mf_toomp



Nisam hitler al mrzim židove

 **veni_vidi_vici** @HuzejrovicA · May 9, 2021

 #Palestina

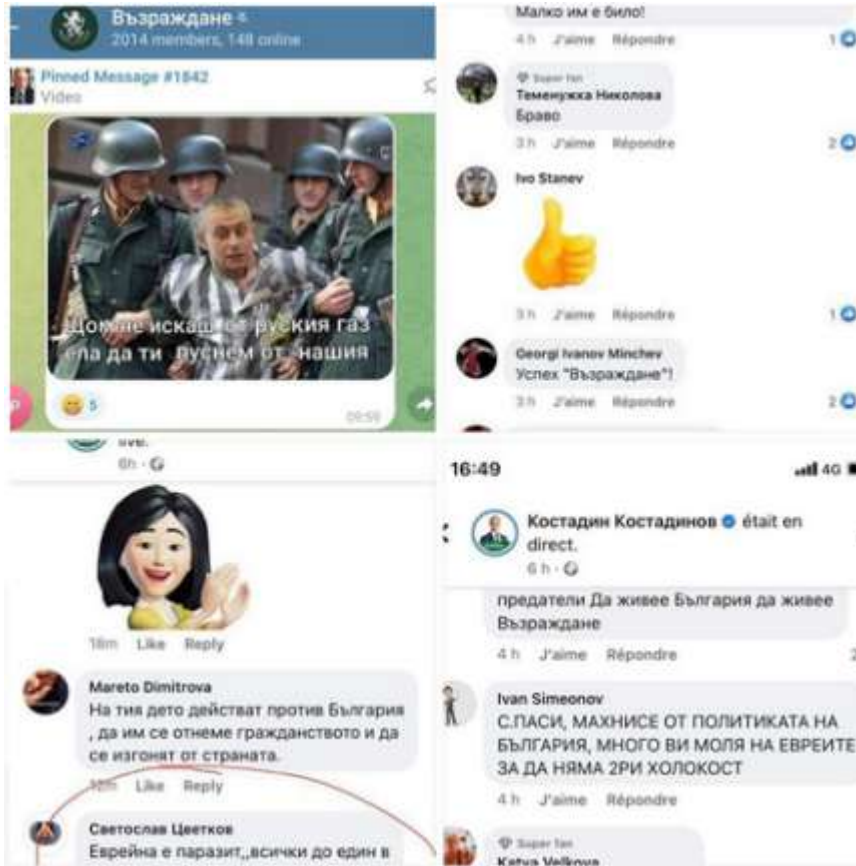
Izraelski vojni napadi na Palestinske žene sistemska je politika koju odobrava najviši vojni i politički nivo u okupacionom entitetu.
Zar je svijet slijep?



The item was monitored on Twitter, and published on 9th May 2021.

Translation from Croatian: “I’m not Hitler, but I hate Jews”.

Examples in Bulgarian



The item was monitored on Telegram, and published in September 2023.

The photo shows Nazi soldiers taking Solomon Passy, a Jewish Bulgarian politician.

Translation from Bulgarian: "If you don't want the Russian gas we will give you our gas" (gas chamber).



The item was monitored on Facebook, and published in September 2023.

Translation from Bulgarian: “In the parliamentary session, the vice-chairperson of the Wasserzhdana party made allegations against Daniel Laurer, a politician with Jewish heritage, suggesting that he may have allegiance to a country other than Bulgaria (Israel), insinuating that Jews may not exhibit loyalty to their country of residence”.

Examples in Romanian



CezarB
@cezargeorgeb



Bolsevicii rusi ce au actionat in Romania pana prin anii 60 au fost in mare proportie evrei, apoi maghiari. Ei au fost conducatorii organelor de securitate. Acestia au ras de pe fata pamantului intelectualitatea romana. Rusii de azi sunt doar prosti.

[Translate post](#)

9:54 PM · Sep 19, 2023 · **665** Views

The item was monitored on Twitter and published in September 2023.

The tweet shares A conspiracy theory about the Jews.

Translation from Romanian: "The Russian Bolsheviks who acted in Romania until the 60s were mostly Jews".



199 comments

The item was monitored on TikTok, and published in April 2023.

The video presents a conspiracy theory about the Jews acting to take over the world, corrupt all the blood of all the races of Europe and that communism was the Jewish plan to do so.

Examples in Serbian



rudolph mesarosh
@Ranger_Rudolph



facebook.com/rudolfmesaros7... "AJDE MARŠ ODAVDE GOVNO
ŽIDOVSKO DOK TI NISAM JEBO MATER PREVARANTSKU I LOPOVSKU!"



12:09 AM · Aug 18, 2017

The item was monitored on Twitter, and published in August 2017

Translation from Serbian: "MARCH OUT OF HERE JEWISH SHIT UNTIL
I'M NOT F**KED YOUR MOTHER (who is) FRAUD AND THIEF!" (reaction
about Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook).



bratemili.maranata 🇷🇺 1244 🇷🇺 🇷🇺 🇷🇺 СПЦ
@Bratemilim

изворима) је умрло од 10 до 13 милиона људи!

Емигрирало - до 2 милиона!

Број деце бескућника 1922. године био је 7 милиона!

Руководство „ГУЛАГ-а“ се састојало САМО ОД ЈЕВРЕЈА!

[Translate post](#)



8:53 PM · Jan 29, 2023 · 285 Views

The item was monitored on Twitter, and published in January 2023.

Translation from Serbian: “The Jews were leading and managing the camps in the Gulag in Russia/USSR”.



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@BratemilIM

Јевреј, Морис Фишберг

"Међу Јеврејима је несразмерно велики број душевних болесника,
идиота и имбецила".

(Морис Фишберг јеврејско-амерички физички антрополог који се
специјализовао за етнологију Јевреја)



[Translate post](#)



9:21 PM · Dec 20, 2022 · 388 Views



The item was monitored on Twitter, and published in December 2022

Translation from Serbian: "Among the Jewish population, there is a relatively higher representation of individuals facing mental health issues, cognitive impairments, and intellectual disabilities. Also Maurice Fishberg".

Examples in Slovenian

 **Marko Sket, AR**
@MarkoSket

Verjetno je prav strah Melonijeve pred Sorošem in židovsko Globomafijo razlog No1 zakaj kljub predvollilnim obljubam, da bo zaustavila Invazijo kar naprej izdaja Italijane in Italijo. Ter Evropejce in Evropo.

Ne kvasi pa take ko ona židovska baraba Golob.



revolver.news
Globalists are cooking up a gigantic "diversity stew" in Italy... - Revolver News
This recipe is all too familiar.

11:26 AM · Sep 19, 2023 · 150 Views

The item was monitored on Twitter, and published in September 2023. There is a conspiracy theory in the tweet regarding Giorgia Meloni, the Italian prime minister, and Jewish control of the country.



SlavaSloveniji  
@alesernecl



"Nacisti so jo iskali po širnem taborišču, ona pa je uspela v skritih, temnih kotičkih rojevati male Žide in omogočila preživetje naroda." Židovske zgodbe, ki več niso niti laž, ker jih drugače kot humor ne moremo označiti.

[Translate post](#)

 **Domen Mavrič** @kosher_mavric · Sep 14

Replying to @alesernecl

V Aušvic tudi po nasvete za večanje rodnosti?



3:25 PM · Sep 14, 2023 · 737 Views

The item was monitored on Twitter, and published in September 2023, Holocaust Denial is exhibited in the tweet, as the story about the Auschwitz midwife (Stanislawa Leszczy) is a joke.

Appendix II: Keywords and Hashtags

English	Croatian	Bulgarian	Slovenian	Serbian	Romanian
#6MWE	židovi su krivi za teroristički napad 11. rujna	#6МЕНБД	#6milijonovni ibilodovolj	#јеврејисукри визатерорист ичкинапад11.с ептембра	#6MWE
#911wasdone bythejews	kripto židovi	#9/11беше сздадено тевреи	#11septembe ržidovskodel o	#јеврејисукри виза11септемб ар	#911afostfăc utdeevrei
#CRYPTOJEWS	smrt svim židovima	#криптоев реи	#kriptožid	#криптојевреј и	#CRYPTOEV REI
#deathtoall kikes	smrt svim židovima	#смъртзав сичкичифу ти	#smrtvsemži dom	#смртсвимјев рејима	#moartetutu rorjidanii
#deathtoall kikes	lažni židovi	#фалпивие вреи	#lažnižid	#смртсвимјев рејима	#moartetutu rorjidanii
#FAKEJEW S	otrovati židove plinom	#газзаевре ите	#zaplinimoži de	#лажнијевреји	#EVREIFALȘ I
#gasthejews	Gaza pod napadom	#ГазаПодА така	#Gazanapad	#убитијевреје плином	#gazeazăevr eii
#GazaUnder Attack	Genocid u Gazi	#ГеноцидВ Газа	#GenocidvG azi	#НападНаГазу	#GazaAtacat a
#GenocideinGa za	poslušaj Gazu	#ЧуйГаза	#kalergijevpl an/#kalergij evnačrt	#ГеноцидуГаз и	#Genocidin Gaza
#heargaza	holokaust prevara	#Холоизма ма	#židovskilob i/#židovskilo bij	#послушајГазу	#auzigaza
#ННХ6	holokaust prevara	#Холохоук с	#bojkotirajm ožide	#холокаустпр евара	#ННХ6

#holofraud	da sam ja nacist	#mosad	#	#холокаустпр евара	#holofrauda
#holohoax	mrzim židove	#evrein;	#hitlerjeimel prav	#дасамнацист а	#holofarsa
#ifiwereana zi	židovska mafija	#evrei	#izraelvhag/ #izraelnasod išče/ #icc4israel	#мрзимјевреје	#dacaaşfina zist
#ihatejews	židovska privilegija	#chifut	#nacističniiz rael	#јеврејскамаф ија	#urâscevrei
#jewishmafi a	židovi su zli	#cionisti	okupacija	#Јеврејскапри вилегија	#mafiaevrei ească
#jewishpriv ilege	židovi su sranja	#cionist	Palestinci	#јеврејисузли	#privilegiul evreiesc
#jewsareevi l	židovi su kradljivci	#евреин;	#izraelskidrž avniterorize m/ #izraelterori stičnadržava	#јеврејисугов на	#evreiiisuntr ăi
#jewsareshi ts	židovi su krivi za teroristički napad 11. rujna	#еврейн	#teroristični zrael	#јеврејисулоп ови	#evreiiisuntr ahaturi
#jewsarethi efs	ubij židove	#чифут	#združenipr otiizraelu	#јеврејисукри виза11септемб ар	#evreiiisunth oți
#jewsdid911	naci pokret	#ционисти	#izraelonacis ti	#убијјеврејина	#evreiiiaufăc ut911
#jewZLM	naci cionizam	#мосад	oderuh	#лажимува	#evreuZLM
#killthejews	Netanyahu je terrorist	#ционист	židovje	#национизам	#ucidepeevr ei



#LiesOfThe Flies	protiv židova	#израел	žid	#нацициониза м	#Minciunile Mustelor
#nazionism	ponosni dečki	#израел	#smrtžidom	#Нетанјахујет ерориста	#nazionism ul
#nazionis m	praviti se žrtvom	#izrael	#židovskilob i	#нејеврејима	#sionismuln azist