



Executive Council of Australian Jewry

הוועד הפועל של יהודי אוסטרליה

MEDIA RELEASE

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ECAJ Annual Report on Antisemitism in Australia

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ), Australia's peak elected national Jewish roof body, has released its annual Report on Antisemitism in Australia for 2022. It can be accessed via the ECAJ website at [ECAJ Antisemitism Report](#).

The following are the principal findings:

During the twelve-month period, from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022, there were **478 antisemitic incidents** logged by the ECAJ and its constituent and associated organisations. Overall, this represents a 41.9% increase in the number of antisemitic incidents in Australia over the last two years, made up of a 35% increase during the year ending 30 September 2021, and a further 6.9% increase during the year ending 30 September 2022.

The average number of reported antisemitic incidents in recent years was 298. As such, the total number of reported incidents in 2022 is above that average by 180 incidents.

During the year ending 30 September 2022, the number of antisemitic postering and stickering incidents in Australia increased by 70% over the previous year (from 72 to 123). Graffiti incidents were up by 18% (from 106 to 125).

There were decreases in three categories: physical assault (down from 8 to 5), verbal abuse (down from 147 to 138), and messages (down from 103 to 76). Vandalism remained the same at 11.

Julie Nathan, ECAJ Research Director, and author of the ECAJ Antisemitism Report, said that these incidents are “*the tip of the iceberg*”, as many go unreported.

“A study by Monash University in 2017 showed that almost one in ten adult Jews (9%) had said they witnessed or experienced verbal insults and harassment or worse over the previous 12 months. This would suggest that the actual number of antisemitic incidents in any one year could be up to 17 times the number reported.”

Ms Nathan attributed the significant 70% increase in incidents in the poster category (which includes hate propaganda material such as banners, clothing, flags, leaflets, posters, placards and stickers) to two factors.

“Firstly, the COVID-19 regulations which produced mass street protests, particularly in Victoria, and the antisemitic conspiracy theories associated with the anti-vaxxer, anti-lockdown camp, resulted in large numbers of antisemitic placards at protests and antisemitic stickers on the streets.

Secondly, there was an increase in neo-Nazi activity, propagating antisemitic propaganda material in the form of posters, stickers and the like.”

Ms Nathan expressed increasing concern at the rise in neo-Nazi activity and the proliferation of neo-Nazi groups.

“Most of these groups are connected to each other and share propaganda material, especially posters and stickers”, Ms Nathan said.

“Many neo-Nazis are becoming brazen in their activities. Over the last 12 months, groups of young men performed Nazi salutes outside a Holocaust Museum in Adelaide and held their neo-Nazi flag in a public park in Sydney. They also targeted synagogues with antisemitic posters and stickers. Neo-Nazis are not just a threat to the Jewish community but also to Australian democracy and our tolerant and liberal way of life.”

Ms Nathan also accused anti-Israel activists of undermining the fight against antisemitism by campaigning against adoption of the internationally recognised and accepted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism by parliaments, universities, and community organisations.

“This campaign has falsely claimed that the IHRA Definition prohibits any criticism of Israel, despite the fact that the Definition states explicitly that “criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic”.

Ms Nathan explained: *“To fight antisemitism, you first need to define it. With antisemitism on the rise, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism is a vital educational tool in identifying and calling out contemporary antisemitism in all its forms.”*

Ms Nathan commended the University of Melbourne, Australia’s highest-ranked university, for its recent [decision](#) to adopt the IHRA Working Definition. She called upon political leaders, the media, law enforcement, other Universities, educators, faith leaders, and others in positions of power or influence, to *“show leadership and take decisive action against antisemitism by personal example, including the adoption of the IHRA Working Definition, and through education.”*

Ms Nathan said: *“We need education not only about World War II and the Holocaust but also about contemporary antisemitism and the multiple forms that it takes, as well as anti-indigenous, anti-African, anti-Asian (east and south), anti-Muslim, anti-Hindu and anti-LGBTIQ+ animosity. These are commonly-held prejudices in Australia and we can only begin to address them when students learn about the specifics of each of them and why they are false and harmful to all of us.”*

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