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Region: Europe



The recently launched MDI project “Get the trolls out!” will counter incidents of antisemitic speech with arts, satire, and fact-based messages all across Europe.

Antisemitism in Europe is on the rise. In 2014 there was a dramatic increase in insults and physical attacks on Jewish people and institutions, with number doubling in several countries, a just released [report](#) by ECRI revealed. Antagonism against the Jewish community escalated in coincidence with the flare up of the conflict in the Middle East last summer. But antisemitism does not always take the obvious forms of violence. A [poll](#) by YouGov earlier this year showed that almost half of British population holds antisemitic view.

Not all the forms of discrimination are equal,” said Eric Heinze, law professor at Queen Mary, University of London, and adviser of the programme. “The discourse of inferiorisation does not apply to Jewish people. Jews are not portrayed as disadvantaged, but rather as all too powerful.”

During the next 14 months, the Programme Team will monitor media in Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary, and the UK to understand the recurring forms of antisemitism on one side, and to check on the media behaviour on the other. Do newspapers echo antisemitic speech without challenging it or do they reproduce old stale stereotypes about Jews? When media are found to behave irresponsibly, we will react by filing official complaints to national regulators, by writing letters to the editor, or by exposing stereotypical statements in blogs and magazines.

The identified key themes in antisemitic discourse will be used to tailor our comebacks responses. We'll use the causticity of the pen for cartoons in Hungary and the UK, the immediacy of the videos in France, the insight of the interviews in radio shows in Greece, and the power of arts in France with theatre plays and film screenings. The initiative will raise awareness on the threat that antisemitism poses to the cohesion of our societies and the danger of overlooking it.

Young people, especially vulnerable to dangerous ignorance and indifference about antisemitic attitudes, will be engaged in this programme so that they will continue in being actively involved in combatting antisemitism through different participative forms such as online media and campaigning, civil society movements or political parties.

The project is managed by the MDI and the International Center for Journalists ([ICFJ](#)) and implemented locally by A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe ([CEJI](#)) in Belgium, International League against Racism and Antisemitism ([Licra](#)) in France, [Symbiosis](#) in Greece, Center for Independent Journalism ([CIJ](#)) in Hungary, and the Media Diversity Institute ([MDI](#)) in the UK.

You can read more about the project by visiting the [official website](#) .

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