

Jana Rosenfeld
Stefan Schmid-Heher
Romina Wiegemann

PREVENTING ANTISEMITISM THROUGH EDUCATION

Recommendations for the implementation
of the national strategy against antisemitism
for the Austrian educational administration
and teacher training institutions

COMMISSIONED BY

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Managing Director:

Jakob Calice, PhD

Authors:

Jana Rosenfeld, Stefan Schmid-Heher, Romina Wiegemann

Project team and editorial staff OeAD:

Axel Schacht, Patrick Siegele

Project team BMBWF:

Manfred Wirtitsch, Jan Sisko, Moritz Wein

Editing: Nikolaus Lutz

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Authors:

Jana Rosenfeld is a political scientist and works as a consultant for historical-political and antisemitism-critical education at the Anne Frank Centre in Berlin. Before that she worked in the field of diplomacy at the Austrian Embassy in Tel Aviv and at the German Foreign Office.

Stefan Schmid-Heher is a university lecturer at the PH Vienna and works there at the Centre for Political Education. Before that he worked as a vocational school teacher and in extra-curricular historical and political education. He studied history and teaching for vocational schools.

Romina Wiegemann is the head of the educational programs at the Competence Centre for Prevention and Empowerment (ZWST e.V.). Her work focuses on education and counselling critical of antisemitism and discrimination. She studied Government and Middle Eastern History in Israel and Holocaust Studies in Berlin.

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Dear Sirs, Madams,
Dear readers!



Ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Martin Polaschek
Federal Minister for
Education, Science
and Research

Education, science and research are key instruments against antisemitism. We at the BMBWF are very aware of the danger and challenge of antisemitism, and the latest figures from the Jewish community on antisemitic incidents are alarming. These high numbers do not leave me, my colleagues in the department, the colleagues in the education departments and committed teachers throughout Austria and in all types of schools untouched. We will therefore intensify and further develop our commitment against antisemitism. With the recommendations it contains, the present strategy paper supports the entire education administration in taking suitable measures.

In 2021, the Federal Government adopted the National Strategy against Antisemitism and is working on its implementation. It is an ambitious but necessary programme. Ten of the 38 measures of the strategy are the responsibility of the BMBWF - and thus also of the education departments, the school management and all teachers. At this point I would like to thank all educators for their ongoing commitment to preventing antisemitism.

The Ministry of Education has been intensively involved in the prevention of antisemitism for more than 20 years, above all through *_erinnern.at_*, the program for teaching and learning about National Socialism and the Holocaust, which was run by the BMBWF until 2022 and now by the OeAD. *_erinnern.at_* not only offers professional support for teachers and excellent further training, but also develops learning materials against antisemitism that have received international education awards. With *_erinnern.at_*, Austria has a program that enjoys a high reputation and is considered "best practice" internationally. These recommendations for educational authorities, school quality management and school management to prevent antisemitism through education were developed as part of a European project involving experts from several countries. They support existing anti-semitism prevention measures and encourage further development with specific recommendations. This strategy paper will be a valuable support for all of us in creating the basis for future generations in schools and in effectively combating antisemitism.

FOREWORD



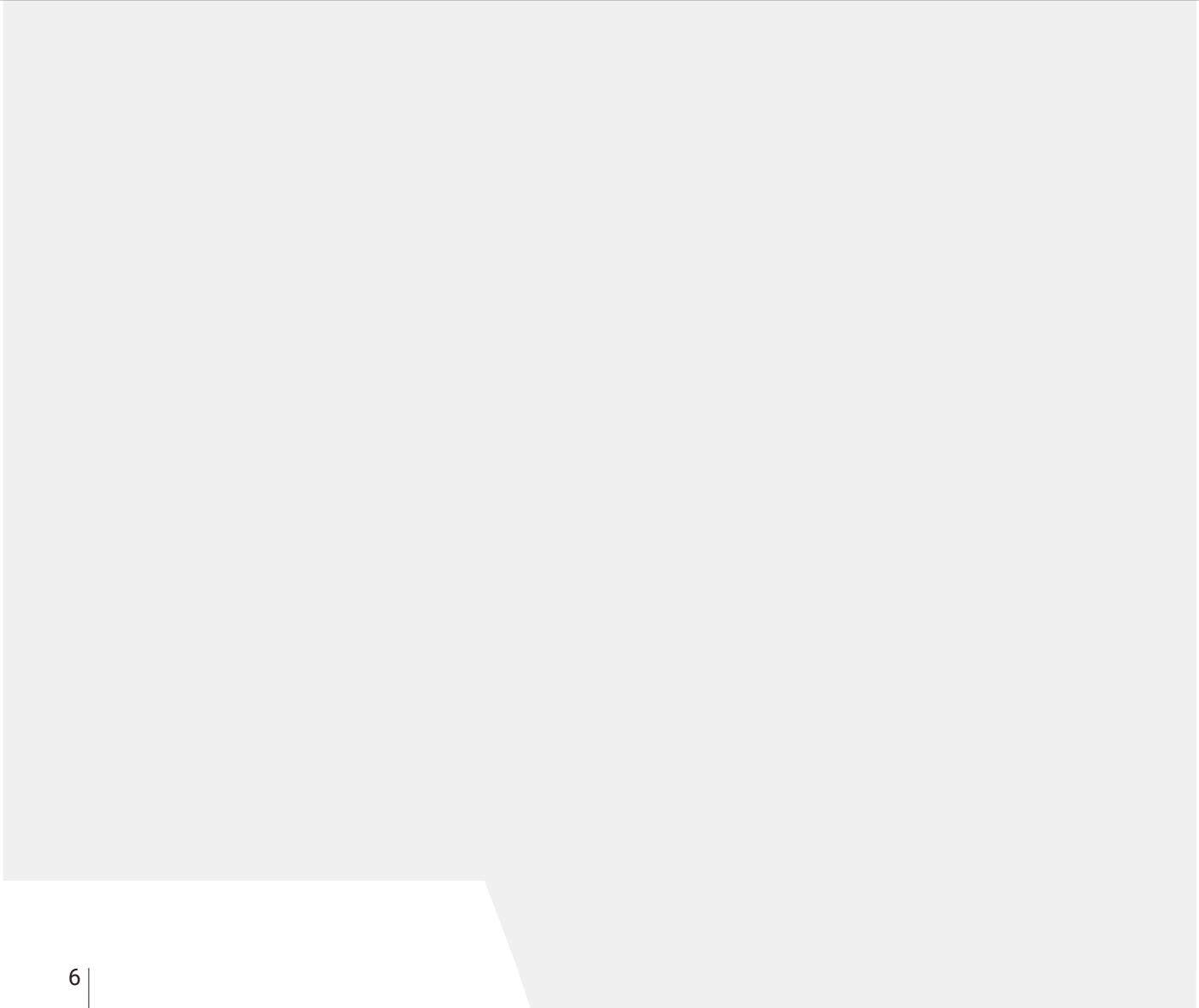
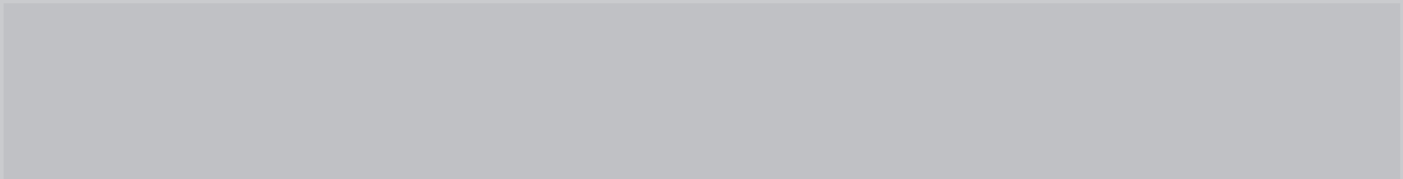
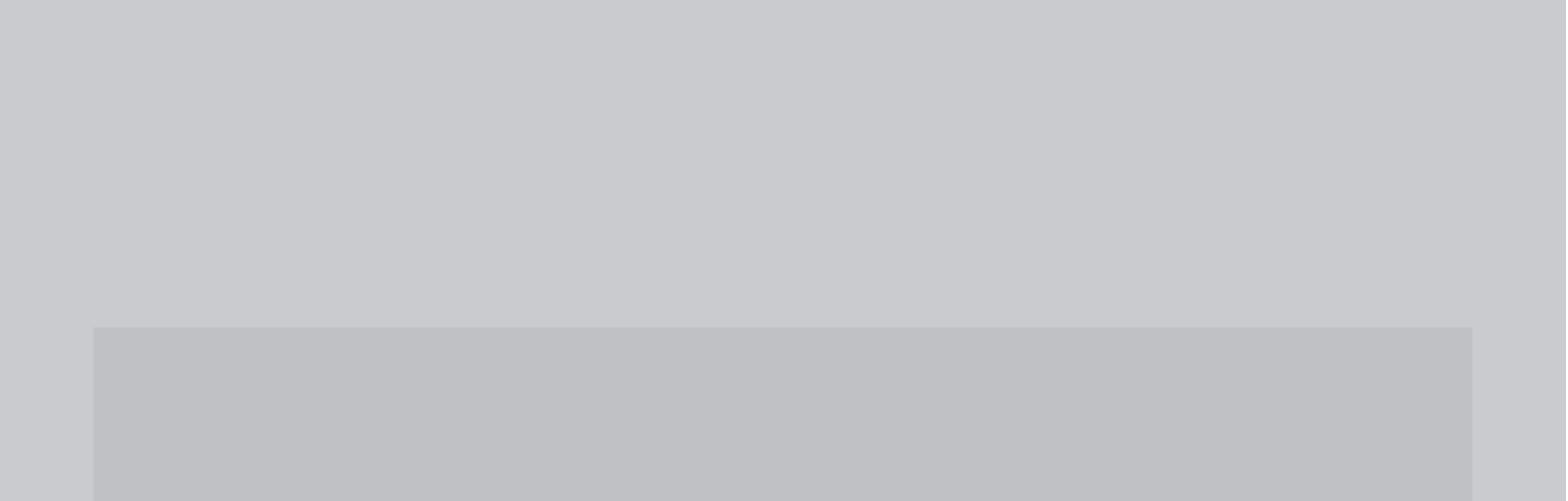
Jakob Calice, PhD
Managing Director
OeAD

Since 1 January 2022, *_erinnern.at_* and the OeAD have been working together. The program for teaching and learning about National Socialism and the Holocaust run by the OeAD, *_erinnern.at_* sets standards in teaching these topics in schools. It promotes the transfer of historical and methodical-didactical knowledge as well as the reflection of its significance for the present. This also includes considering antisemitism not only as a historical phenomenon, but also providing answers to the current challenges in dealing with antisemitism in the school context.

At the OeAD we are now also committed to values that have been important to us for many decades: namely the promotion of diversity and equal opportunities and standing up for European values. In order for teachers to be able to deal competently and confidently with antisemitism, but also with other misanthropic attitudes, they need appropriate framework conditions and support from education policy and administration. The aim of this strategy paper and the recommendations formulated within, is to improve these conditions for the benefit of those affected.

I would like to thank the authors and the team from *_erinnern.at_* for the good cooperation on this joint paper, as well as the Ministry of Education for the trust they have placed in me. Numerous experts contributed with their knowledge and experience to the development process. This has resulted in a strategy that, for the first time in Austria, is systematically and systematically approaching the challenges of combating and dealing with antisemitism in the school context.

Antisemitism endangers democracy and combating it is a task for society as a whole. The OeAD must and wants to address this in the future.



ABSTRACT

This strategy paper is intended to be a contribution to the concrete implementation of the National Strategy against Antisemitism of the Republic of Austria, which was adopted in January 2021. The aim is to permanently anchor the discussion and prevention of antisemitism in the Austrian education system.

Having adequately defined antisemitism, the following outlines current manifestations of antisemitism, their functions, and their intersections with other ideologies of inequality, particularly racism. This is followed by a description of important prerequisites for a reflected educational approach to antisemitism. In addition to specific technical and didactic skills, this requires above all a strengthening of one's own perception of antisemitism, self-reflective practice, an understanding of the teachers as learners as well as orientation towards those affected by antisemitism.

Finally, based on these theoretical considerations, recommendations are made for the different levels of educational administration, educational management and teacher training. They aim to strengthen skills in dealing with antisemitism and to create the best possible framework for the prevention of antisemitism in the Austrian education system. Structured according to the respective addressees, proposals for measures and the desired goals are presented for

- 1 strategic overall control
- 2 specialist departments of the Ministry of Education,
- 3 the Education Directorates,
- 4 the teacher training colleges and institutions for teacher training at universities and
- 5 formulated for Headmasters.

The focus is on antisemitism-critical school development and educational processes as well as imparting professional skills in dealing with antisemitism in teacher training. This includes the active engagement with antisemitism-critical education or training, further education and further training of all educators, teachers in pedagogical training and executives. The anchoring of professional ethical standards or pedagogical guiding principles that address interdisciplinary expectations of educational staff also play an important role. Just like the development of guidelines and processes for dealing professionally with antisemitism and other forms of discrimination, they are crucial both for school development and in pedagogical training.

Another prerequisite and therefore also a focus of the recommendations is the discussion of antisemitism-critical education at all levels of school administration. These concern, among other things, the revision of curricula and textbooks, the professionalisation of the advisory skills of contact persons and offices for those affected by antisemitism, and the reporting and documentation of antisemitic incidents.

Effective planning and coordination as well as suitable monitoring by the Ministry of Education, the education departments and the political decision-makers responsible for education are decisive for the success of the strategy paper presented here. The provision of the necessary resources and the involvement of experts for criticism of antisemitism and antisemitism-critical education as well as advice and reporting centres and representatives of those affected are decisive for this.

An important basis for dealing with antisemitism in the Austrian education system is, in addition to various laws on protection against discrimination, Article 14 paragraph 5a of the Federal Constitutional Law.

This strategy for preventing antisemitism through education is the result of a long-term process to combat antisemitism at both European and national level. The following policy milestones should be highlighted.

On 17 March 2015, the Paris Declaration of the Education Ministers of the Member States of the European Union was adopted. It included measures to strengthen the role of education in “promoting citizenship and the shared values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination”. On 6 December 2018, the “Declaration of the Council of the European Union on combating antisemitism and on the development of a common security concept for better protection of Jewish communities and institutions in Europe” was adopted under the Austrian EU Council Presidency. Following this declaration, the EU Commission presented the “Strategy to combat antisemitism and promote Jewish life” in October 2021. It provides information about the implementation of national strategies by the EU member states and promises funds to support these and other measures and projects. In the area of education and schools, member states should strengthen the implementation of reforms dealing with discrimination and antisemitism in schools. Member States are required to report and document antisemitic incidents in schools and to train teachers and school administrators in dealing with them.

Even before the publication of the EU strategy, the Austrian federal government passed a national strategy in January 2021 with the aim of “curbing antisemitism in all its forms and creating awareness for recognising everyday antisemitism”. Education, training and research form one of the six strategic pillars in which various measures are to be implemented. These focus, among other things, on the professionalisation of training and further education for educators, the revision of teaching materials and the professional handling of antisemitic incidents. For example, training curricula and further training events “on the topics of antisemitism, the Holocaust and National Socialism as well as anti-racist educational work” should be evaluated and, like existing teaching materials, “revised to meet current challenges relating to the topic of antisemitism”. Improved coordination between the various actors involved in antisemitism education is also one of the measures laid down.

The *_erinnern.at_* program implemented by the OeAD carried out two projects in 2021 and 2022, which support the BMBWF in implementing these measures and contribute to the concrete implementation of the strategy. The aim of the projects with international cooperation partners was to anchor approaches and basic principles of antisemitism prevention in the Austrian education system in the long term. On the basis of numerous consultations, the project partners developed recommendations for key role players in education administration and management, which should strengthen their ability to deal with antisemitism in schools and create better framework conditions for the prevention of antisemitism. In addition, an evaluation of some selected training curricula and discussions with experts from many fields of competence took place in 2021. On this basis, an international project team developed a catalogue of qualifications and measures for appropriate training and further education of teachers in the field of antisemitism-critical educational work and Holocaust education.¹

The projects were a cooperation of *_erinnern.at_* with the BMBWF (Dept. V/8), the Lucerne University of Education and the Antisemitism Commissioner of the Bavarian State Government on the one hand and between *_erinnern.at_* and the BMBWF (Dept. I/1) on the other. They were financed in the first project with funds from the “International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance” (IHRA) and in the second with funds from the EU (“Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme”). Both projects were co-financed with funds from the BMBWF.

The recommendations described here build on the knowledge and experience gained in the projects, as well as the suggestions of experts from Austrian educational practice, the educational administration, providers of extracurricular educational work and the Jewish community (IKG). With their goal of creating more sustainable and institutionally better anchored framework conditions for dealing with or preventing antisemitism, they are explicitly aimed at the different levels of education administration and education

management as well as at teacher training institutions, but not at teachers or students directly. An important basis for dealing with antisemitism in the Austrian education system is, in addition to various laws on protection against discrimination, Article 14 paragraph 5a of the Federal Constitutional Law, according to which schools are based on the basic values of “democracy, humanity, solidarity, peace and justice as well as openness and tolerance towards people”. This is followed by Section 2 of the School Organisation Act (SchOG) with the target definition that schools have “in the development of young people’s abilities according to moral, religious and social values as well as the values of the true, the good and the beautiful”. The basic decree on political education underlines the role of political education in dealing with antisemitism, among other things. For this policy paper, this decree is relevant, as well as some international guidelines and recommendations, such as the publications published by UNESCO and the OSCE in 2019 and 2020, respectively “With education against antisemitism. A Guide for Policy-makers” or the four-part handbook “Addressing antisemitism in Schools: Training Curricula”, authoritative reference documents.

¹ The results of the project funded by the IHRA can be read here: Kumar, Victoria et al. (Ed.) (2022): *Antisemitisms. Explorations in the education sector*, Frankfurt a. M.

2

2. DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT

An adequate definition of antisemitism includes an understanding of its essence as well as knowledge of the forms in which it currently appears, what functions it fulfils and what effect it has on those affected.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism provides a good guide to how antisemitism manifests itself. According to this non-legally binding definition, antisemitism is “a particular perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Antisemitism, in word and deed, is directed against Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, as well as against Jewish community institutions and religious establishments”.² To clarify this core definition, eleven examples of possible manifestations of antisemitism follow. The working definition was adopted by the Austrian Council of Ministers in 2017. Since then, Austria and the other 33 member states of the IHRA as well as numerous other federal states, parliaments, city administrations, authorities, organisations and civil society and educational institutions have had a uniform, practice-oriented definition of antisemitism, which is a helpful tool for better recognition and documentation.

Antisemitic sentiments have been passed down through generations and are more than a collection of prejudices.

Going beyond the working definition, in order to deal effectively with antisemitism it must be taken into account that it has a specific function for the non-Jewish majority society and is strongly emotionally anchored. Antisemitic sentiments have been passed down through generations and are more than a collection of prejudices. Antisemitism creates meaning and identity for the non-Jewish majority society and provides a world-view that is used to explain complex social and global problems through supposedly simple friend-enemy images. Antisemitism thus serves to reduce complexity, offers an effective valve for relief and aims to enhance one’s own identity by distancing and devaluing Jews.

As a changeable and adaptable phenomenon, antisemitism is articulated in a wide variety of social contexts. At the same time, antisemitic images and motifs show a great deal of continuity over the course of history, as is clearly shown, for example, in the antisemitic topoi of conspiracy or demonisation.

After Christian anti-Judaism in the Middle Ages, anti-Jewish resentment based on religion had been dominant, since the 19th century new, modern forms of antisemitism. What they have in common is that they ascribe special political or economic power to Jews in the sense of an ideological claim to universal explanation. Also in the 19th century and in the context of the emergence of racism, a biologically based form of antisemitism developed, in which Jews were devalued because of characteristics ascribed to them as natural and unchangeable. Racist antisemitism became a central part of the state ideology under National Socialism.

As a result of its general social taboo, antisemitism after the Shoah often manifested itself through detours, comparisons and in the form of codes; in many cases it expresses itself latently. This is shown not least by the results of the empirical studies carried out in 2018 and 2020 on behalf of the Austrian Parliament on the spread of antisemitic attitudes in the Austrian population: openly antisemitic statements receive far less approval than those whose antisemitic content is revealed in a covert and cyphered form.

² The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s full working definition of antisemitism is attached.

Whether open or latent – in the study “Experiences and perceptions in connection with anti-semitism” conducted by the “Fundamental Rights Agency” in 2018, 85% of the Jews surveyed said antisemitism was a very or fairly big problem. In Austria it was 73% of the Jews surveyed, with 75% perceiving an increase in anti-semitism in Austria in the last five years. Participation in National Socialist crimes has given antisemitism in Germany and Austria since 1945 a specific emotional and affective dynamic that underlies almost all of its manifestations. The so-called “post-Shoa antisemitism” appears explicitly, for example, in the defence against the memory of or guilt for the National Socialist crimes, the demand for an end to the confrontation with the past, a perpetrator-victim reversal, the relativisation or denial of the Holocaust in appearance.

In current debates on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israel-related antisemitism often appears under the guise of criticism of Israeli policies. Antisemitic interpretations shape the perception of the conflict by projecting the corresponding enemy images onto the state of Israel as a Jewish collective. The existence of the State of Israel is viewed as illegitimate, its actions assessed with double standards or demonised per se. Despite the multiple links to racism, antisemitism is not a sub-form of racism. A specific feature of antisemitism is that Jews are not only marked and devalued as “different”, but at the same time they are attributed special power, superiority and collective action for their own benefit.

On an individual level, antisemitism can occur as part of or as part of a cohesive antisemitic world-view, but also fragmentarily in the form of set pieces or diffuse resentment, sometimes even in the form of supposedly positive ideas about Jews. The broad anchoring of antisemitic “knowledge” in society, however, points to a structural disposition that is also reflected in its various institutions, including the educational system.

In the education system, antisemitism represents a balance of power and violence that is not only articulated among students, but also includes all levels of key role players as a phenomenon in society as a whole. Antisemitic violence manifests itself not only physically, but also in the form of antisemitic statements in words and pictures, in the use of the word “Jew” as a swear word, in subtle insinuations and allusions in which Jews are made into “others”. From “jokes” to explicit hate speech. In addition, when teaching about National Socialism and the Shoah in the classroom, Jewish students are often not considered, and Jewish perspectives are not taken into account. Antisemitic attacks are also increasingly taking place in digital space.

The broad anchoring of antisemitic “knowledge” in society, however, points to a structural disposition that is also reflected in its various institutions, including the educational system.

3

PEDAGOGICAL PREREQUISITES FOR ANTISEMITISM-CRITICAL ACTION IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Education critical of antisemitism is therefore faced with the pedagogical challenge of dealing with forms of defence, taboos and distancing that have existed for decades.

Antisemitism is a problem affecting society as a whole in Austria. Contrary to the widespread view, it does not only appear in the form of (accumulating) individual cases, but occurs in all social spheres and institutions - and thus structurally. This poses a major challenge, especially in the field of education, which is associated with certain tasks and expectations.

Conscious and unconscious antisemitic ideas are still being passed on from generation to generation in families and society. At the same time, National Socialism and the Shoah as well as the ambivalent handling of the past have an impact on the present. For the majority of society in particular, dealing with current antisemitism is therefore in a context that can be characterised by uncomfortable emotions or affects. In this morally charged field of tension, certain self-images and images of society are called into question. This results in the widespread dismissal of accusations of antisemitism across the board. Education critical of antisemitism is therefore faced with the pedagogical challenge of dealing with forms of defence, taboos and distancing that have existed for decades.

The omnipresence of these dynamics makes it necessary for teachers to also see themselves as learners. Especially in this subject area, it cannot be assumed from the outset that educators are equipped with a sufficiently critical awareness of the problem. Therefore, contrary to common practice, it is important that all those involved in antisemitism-critical educational processes use the opportunity for topic-related self-reflection and the exchange about it. This self-questioning, guided under certain methodical and didactic standards, makes it possible to recognize one's own unconscious involvement in antisemitic structures, to endure them and to be able to work on them.

The educational process aims at strengthening one's own perception and interpretation of antisemitism as a prerequisite for well-founded antisemitism-critical action. By expanding one's own scope for action, practices can be overcome that trivialise antisemitism (Bernstein 2018) and classify it as an adolescent syndrome, behaviour typical of young people or as an interpersonal conflict (Chernivsky/Lorenz 2020) and instead

to protect and prioritise the perspective of those affected. The participation of the teachers and key role players in the educational administration in this form of discussion as well as the practice of permanent self-reflective practice in dealing with antisemitism are basic requirements in order to promote antisemitism-critical awareness in others. This is the only way to adopt a position that, on the one hand, does not require a standpoint of moral superiority and, on the other hand, makes it possible to experience the significance of antisemitism for society as a whole (Messerschmidt 2013).

Challenges of antisemitism-critical education

Education critical of antisemitism is an independent field of action in which certain quality criteria have been established (Chernivsky 2021). It aims to deal effectively with antisemitism in society and its institutions. In contrast to a shortened understanding, it focuses on a comprehensive view of the phenomenon and is more and different than conveying Jewish history and Holocaust education. Education critical of antisemitism understands antisemitism as a social power relationship and considers its respective individual and collective functions over time. The focus is on the effects that antisemitic manifestations have on those affected. In order to deal effectively with antisemitism in the educational sector, the question arises as to which forms of antisemitism are actually perceived or interpreted accordingly before dealing with options for action. Apart from interventions critical of antisemitism and the general promotion of awareness of antisemitism, educational practices that can reproduce antisemitism should be considered, as will be explained in more detail below.

Countering the historicisation and reproduction of antisemitism

The reason why antisemitism is often perceived as a historical phenomenon that has been overcome is because it has been taught in schools for decades exclusively as part of the historical-political education on National Socialism and the Shoah is discussed. The perception and recognition of current antisemitism can be made even more difficult by this orientation towards the historical dimensions.

Antisemitism can also be conveyed as a current social phenomenon and as an individual experience if the subject of National Socialism and the Shoah is supplemented by a perspective critical of antisemitism. Through a targeted examination of centuries-old continuities as well as the specific psychological functions that antisemitism took on after 1945, a fundamental understanding of its current forms can be promoted. Dealing with the effects of antisemitism and the perspectives of those affected must be a central point of reference.

In addition, the work material used in the educational context must be subjected to appropriate consideration. This includes, for example, the analysis of (image) language when stereotypical depictions of Jews (e.g. in the form of antisemitic caricatures) or National Socialist terminology are introduced or used without reflection. An antisemitism-critical consideration of which aspects and information are emphasised and which are left out also applies, for example, to ideas and images that are conveyed in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the Middle Ages (cf. Rickert 2019).

Due to the structural anchoring of antisemitism, in addition to the examples mentioned, situations can arise at various points in school lessons that require a critical approach to antisemitism. Criticism of antisemitism should therefore be integrated into one's own basic pedagogical attitude in such a way that it can enable professional action. This can create a counterbalance to the ongoing reproduction of antisemitic ideas in society.

Education critical of antisemitism understands antisemitism as a social power relationship and considers its respective individual and collective functions over time.

Limits of cognitive approaches, the transfer of knowledge about Judaism and encounter projects

Various educational offers focus on strengthening knowledge about Judaism or on encounter projects with Jewish youth groups. Events of this kind are particularly valuable when the participants are not perceived as representatives of certain “groups” but as individuals with diverse identities and a wide variety of life experiences. Encounters in which the participants are not reduced to certain parts of their identity can therefore make an important contribution to diversity-oriented educational work; they can open up different perspectives on Jewish life, promote dialogue and enable a deeper examination of antisemitism.

When designing encounter offers, it is important to bear in mind that antisemitism has nothing to do with Jews (and the characteristics and behaviour ascribed to them) or with gaps in knowledge about the Jewish religion. Antisemitism is not a “cognitive deficit” but rather an emotional need. Pedagogical approaches that primarily focus on bridging (supposed) information gaps are therefore reaching their limits. From an educational perspective that is critical of antisemitism, the aim should rather be to impart knowledge about how antisemitism works within society and to counter antisemitic world-views with alternative perspectives. As a rule, these requirements go beyond what can be achieved and expected within the framework of conventional encounter projects.

Pedagogical approaches that primarily focus on bridging (supposed) information gaps are therefore reaching their limits.

Antisemitism and Racism: intersections and differences

Like antisemitism, racism in Austria is a phenomenon affecting society as a whole and always manifests itself as a relationship of power and violence. Both ideologies are closely intertwined, but still have differences that require specific analysis and pedagogical engagement. Due to the simultaneity with which both phenomena occur in educational spaces, it is not possible to work on one without being sensitive to the other. This is most evident when antisemitism and racism are intertwined and antisemitic content is explained using racist constructions, for example. For example, on the one hand, reference is often made to the antisemitism of “Muslims”, “refugees”, “migrants” in order to negate the spread of antisemitic structures within the majority society. On the other hand, the antisemitism of those who are constructed as “different” is often explained in a likewise racist way as an invariable part of “culture” or “religion”.

The embedding of antisemitism and racism-critical educational work in a discrimination-critical and intersectional³ overall strategy for the education system results not least from the pedagogical significance, experiences that people as affected by different ideologies or relations of power and violence do not create hierarchies. At the same time, people are affected multiple times when people experience antisemitism, racism and other forms of discrimination cumulatively. The principle of antisemitism criticism, which is primarily based on the effects of the experiences of those affected, results in the need to always orientate corresponding educational work to be critical of racism and discrimination. One’s own experiences of exclusion can be starting points for empathy or for the development of an awareness of different ideologies of inequality.

³ The concept of “intersectionality” goes back to the American lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw. It describes the overlapping and simultaneity of different categories of discrimination.

Incorporating Jewish perspectives in antisemitism

The social traditions outlined here have not only led to antisemitism being perceived by the majority as a phenomenon of the past, but have also shaped the way Jews are treated in Austria. Jews are often exclusively associated with the violent history of National Socialism and the Shoah as well as with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They are regularly co-opted in questions related to the politics of memory, but also in questions related to the present, and instrumentalised, for example, as representatives of a “Christian-Jewish West”. Such functionalisations cannot counteract antisemitic constructions of difference, because they in turn serve the needs of the majority of society to distinguish themselves from “the others”. This goes hand in hand with the danger of reproducing antisemitism and thereby defining Jews in certain roles. At the same time, the perspectives of Jews on current antisemitism are largely ignored, resulting in a gap in education and research.

In Germany, it was empirically proven just a few years ago that the assessment of the virulence of antisemitism from a Jewish perspective differs massively from that of those who are not personally affected by it. For Jews, antisemitism is an everyday constant, while the majority of society considers it to be of little relevance (Zick, Bernstein et al. 2017).

Empirical studies that ask about the experiences of Jews in the Austrian education system can bring key findings to light regarding the spread or forms of expression of antisemitism in society. Being guided by a Jewish perspective means, both for education and for research, that the social, historical and family biographical backgrounds against which Jewish experiences with current antisemitism occur must be taken into account.

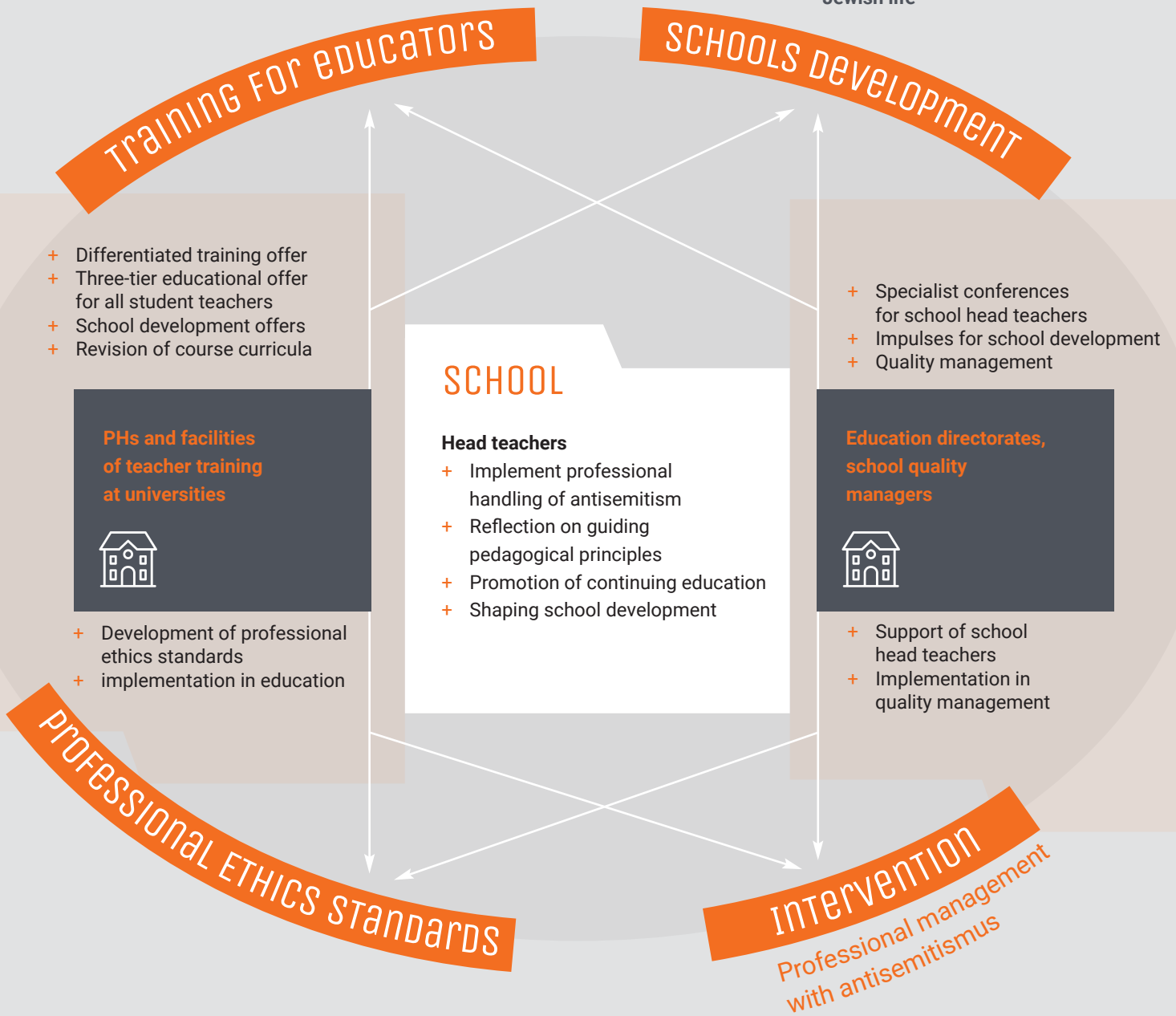
For Jews, antisemitism is a cross-generational, biographical constant (Chernivsky 2020). This goes hand in hand with individual and collective strategies on the part of the Jews, such as dealing with antisemitism in private or playing it down due to habituation effects. These strategies are also based on experiences in which antisemitism was misjudged, trivialised or even approved by third parties. The history of the impact of National Socialism and the Shoah, which also left its mark on the descendants of the survivors, places the current experiences in a particularly violent context. When dealing with antisemitism in the educational sector, there is therefore a fundamental need to align professional action with the experiences of those who are affected by it and to consider the presence of Jews or Jewish perspectives in the teaching and learning spaces without considering them condescendingly or in to apprehend in an objectifying way.

For Jews, antisemitism is an everyday constant, while the majority of society considers it to be of little relevance.

(Zick, Bernstein et al. 2017)



PREVENTING ANTISEMITISM THROUGH EDUCATION – SCHEMATIC OVERVIEW



Departments in the Ministry of Education

- + Extension of textbooks and curricula with regard to antisemitism-critical education
- + Further development of the ombudsman's office to become an additional contact point for those affected
- + Offers for professional sensitization of school psychologists

BVG Art. 14 | Para. 5a, teaching principle of political education, basic decree 2015 | Section 2 School Organisation Act

Recommendations and guidelines of the OSCE, UNESCO, IHRA and other international organisations

(SELF)REFLECTION

with regard to antisemitism in their own environment and challenges/approaches of antisemitism-critical education

4

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are aimed at all levels of school administration and all employees in the area of training, further education and further training for teachers working in schools. They aim to professionalise the handling and prevention of antisemitism in education. The focus is on the one hand on teacher training and the training and further education of recreational educators and on the other hand on school development.

Activities in these two areas are to be intertwined, as is the necessary discussion of antisemitism-critical education at the various levels of educational administration and in the area of pedagogical training. All content is based on the constitutional core values of the school (BVG Art. 14. Paragraph 5a), their task according to Section 2 SchOG and the basic decree (2015) on the teaching principle of political education. The following recommendations are structured according to the respective addressees. In the beginning, the four cornerstones are outlined, which will be referred to below.

Basic courses are compulsory courses for all students on a teacher training course amounting to around half an hour per week.

1 Training for educators

Imparting professional skills for dealing with antisemitism to all student teachers plays a central role. For this purpose, three-tier educational offers – so-called basic, extension and deepening offers – are to be created at teacher training colleges and universities (Kumar et al. 2022). Basic courses are compulsory courses for all students on a teacher training course amounting to around half an hour per week. They address the skills required for all teachers to deal with antisemitism in view of the basic values of the school. Students will be able to recognise current manifestations of antisemitism, such as antisemitism to avoid blame or Israel-related antisemitism. They reflect on how antisemitism works against the background of their own influences, ideas and attitudes.

In this context, similarities and differences to other ideologies of inequality, especially racism, are discussed. The students acquire basic skills in dealing with antisemitic incidents or statements at school. Extension offers are compulsory courses for students in the fields of history and political education and are also open to all interested student teachers. They include specialist and didactic in-depth study, primarily in those areas in which antisemitism frequently manifests itself or is the subject of controversy and which at the same time relate to important educational content in history or political education.

These include, for example, conspiracy theories, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, politics of remembrance and post-colonial discourses. In-depth offers are elective courses and are aimed at particularly interested students of all disciplines. They can be held in the form of regular courses or as excursions. Also conceivable are, for example, offers to accompany qualification work, research seminars or applied project work. The implementation of such an offer requires that, if possible, all teachers and senior staff at teacher training colleges and universities actively deal with antisemitism and antisemitism-critical education and expand their skills in this regard.

For this purpose, a comprehensive and differentiated further training offer must be developed for this target group, whereby external experts should be included. In the area of advanced and further training for teachers, a wide range of events on aspects of antisemitism-critical education should be created, which takes into account the different previous knowledge in the target group. Corresponding focal points in the training and further education of educators in school day care are also of great importance.

2 School development

Democracy demands constant further development. It has to be learned and in all democratic societies the school is of essential importance. Any form of antisemitism is fundamentally opposed to democracy. Education critical of antisemitism and school development with the appropriate focus is by no means limited to imparting knowledge about and positioning against antisemitism. It can and should oppose authoritarian world explanations and promote political maturity and empathy. School development in this sense means further training events that are geared towards a sustainable strengthening of these principles of antisemitism-critical education at the school location. Antisemitism-critical school development always addresses other forms of discrimination and works out similarities and differences between antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality. The implementation of antisemitism-critical school development understood in this way requires the active support of the school supervisory board and also demands that school quality managers reflect on current professional discourses in this area.

3 Professional ethics standards in education

The demands on schools in democratic societies result in numerous demands on teachers that go far beyond technical and didactic qualifications. These professional expectations are essential for an environment conducive to learning and should therefore be anchored in the training of educators as well as in the school culture as professional ethical standards. Such standards of professional ethics specify interdisciplinary expectations of student teachers, lecturers at PHs and universities as well as employees in education management.

They reflect the responsibility of teachers towards learners as well as the importance of school as a socialization authority and as a central institution of political education for a democratic society. Professional ethics standards developed at the respective educational institutions, recorded in writing and communicated as expectations make it unmistakably clear that pedagogical work requires a self-commitment to democratic values, norms and attitudes. Among other things, these standards address the role of educational staff in dealing with antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality.

Any form of antisemitism is fundamentally opposed to democracy.

4 Professional handling of antisemitism and intervention

Antisemitism emerges as a challenge for society as a whole at various points in the education system and requires competent and responsible action. The following principles must be observed when dealing professionally with antisemitism or during interventions and also applied to incidents in connection with other ideologies of inequality. It must be borne in mind that antisemitic experiences are particularly effective in the context of school, because attending school and thus dangerous situations on the part of those affected cannot be avoided.

- + In any antisemitism-critical intervention, the protection and strengthening of those affected who have been attacked or devalued by antisemitism are the top priority. Those affected must be given the opportunity to express their wishes and needs and retain the power to interpret what is happening. You will be made aware of the possibility of taking advantage of a specialised counselling service, which under certain circumstances can also be offered outside the school.
- + Antisemitic statements or actions must never be tolerated, ignored or trivialised, regardless of whether those directly affected are in the room.

- + Every educational institution must ensure that there are suitable opportunities for those affected or witnesses to report antisemitic incidents. In the educational sector, antisemitism does not only affect pupils and students or does not only come from them. Any imbalances in power must therefore be structurally taken into account. Antisemitism in the form of physical or psychological violence as well as damage to property must be documented immediately by the educational staff and passed on to designated bodies in the educational institution, such as contact persons.
- + Antisemitic incidents must not be equated with personal or social conflicts in the procedural handling. Antisemitism must be recognised and addressed as an ideologically motivated relationship of violence and inequality.
- + Scandalisation must be avoided. When dealing with schoolchildren, when antisemitism is discussed, it is important not to take a hasty judgemental attitude. This is achieved through the separation of person and action, which allows one level of conversation to be kept open. At the same time, motivation and effect must be considered separately. Antisemitism hurts, even if it was unintentional or unconscious. This does not affect the need for solidarity with those affected inside and outside the room.
- + In addition to short-term intervention, preventive and after-care measures should be planned, possibly with the help of external antisemitism education organisations.⁴

These professional expectations are essential for an environment conducive to learning.

⁴ List of measures based on an unpublished workshop concept of the Competence Centre for Prevention and Empowerment (ZWST) and OFEK e.V.: "What to do in case of antisemitic incidents?"

STRATEGIC OVERALL CONTROL

GOAL

The implementation of the recommendations listed below and their political relevance should be made clear to the public. A comprehensive picture of the problems that arise and concrete work steps and the dialogue with experts from the field of antisemitism-critical education and antisemitism research should be sought. The efforts in the respective areas of responsibility are agreed and coordinated in a suitable form.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + The Ministry of Education works with the directors of education in joint formats to deal with and prevent antisemitism in the education sector. These will be widely communicated to the schools, teacher training colleges, etc. after the decision has been made.
- + In each federal state, stakeholder conferences are held to which the education departments, the rectorates of teacher training colleges in the federal state, the head of the university institution for teacher training in the federal state, if necessary, and other representatives from the school and university sector, are invited. With the involvement of experts on antisemitism, the programmatic foundations of local and regional measures against antisemitism are discussed in a regional governance process. In connection with the planned measures, both the content and organisational distribution of tasks is determined.
- + The education departments commission the responsible persons in their area of responsibility to create a further training offer on how to deal with and prevent antisemitism for all pedagogical professions. The content and goals of these advanced training courses are based on the recommendations for training in these professions. Reflecting on one's own attitudes, influences and experiences, current manifestations of antisemitism and the relationship between antisemitism and racism are of central importance. Experts in education critical of antisemitism are significantly involved in the planning and implementation.
- + The progress and problems in the implementation of the measures are documented in a suitable form, and the effectiveness is also checked in the context of an evaluation once the measures have been established.

1

Departments responsible for curricula**GOAL**

The curricula of all subjects in secondary schools that include history or political education should explicitly address antisemitism. The discussion of antisemitism only in connection with the Shoah should be avoided. In the technical context of history, antisemitic continuities that go further back and antisemitism after 1945 are also to be worked out. Furthermore, the depiction of Jewish life in Austria cannot be reduced to the persecution of Jews. In civic education, antisemitism is to be addressed as a contemporary political phenomenon, with current manifestations of antisemitism in Austria and the relationship between antisemitism and racism being taken into account. The curricula are not aimed at simply imparting knowledge about antisemitism. In particular, the students should be able to critically reflect on their subjective attitudes, ideas and imprints and to counter antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality on the basis of democratic values.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- + In the course of the revision of curricula, the responsible departments of the Ministry of Education make binding specifications for the experts involved regarding the appropriate implementation of measures for dealing with antisemitism.

2

Department responsible for textbooks**GOAL**

The approved textbooks should be highly suitable for education critical of antisemitism. For this purpose, the textbooks for subjects that include history or political education must meet the above points. In addition, the portrayal of Jews, Judaism and the State of Israel is of central importance. This also applies to school books for geography and atlases as well as school books for religion and German for all school levels and school types. All representations of Jews, Judaism and Israel must be suitable to counteract antisemitic stereotypes. This means, for example, that Jews are not presented as "others/foreigners" or are only mentioned in connection with persecution. For this purpose, reference is made to the recommendations of the Austrian-Israeli textbook committee (2022) for the subject areas of history and geography and they are also to be applied analogously to the textbooks for religion and German.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- + The specialist department responsible for the textbook commissions ensures that the recommendations of the Austrian-Israeli textbook committee are known to the commissions for the appraisal of textbooks for the above-mentioned items and are taken into account in the appraisal.

3
Department responsible for school psychology

GOAL

The school psychologists are familiar with individual and social psychological aspects of antisemitism, can recognise the beginnings of antisemitic orientations and counteract them in their work with the students. They support those affected by antisemitism or other forms of discrimination and can work with those students who make antisemitic or other forms of discrimination.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- + The specialist department responsible for school psychology in the Ministry of Education and the responsible departments in the education directorates make a specific offer for professional training for school psychologists in their area of activity.

4
Ombudsman for schools in the Ministry of Education

GOAL

The Ombudsman for schools is a low-threshold contact point for those affected by antisemitism and other forms of discrimination in the school sector, whose problems have not been adequately dealt with at the school itself. All employees of the Ombudsman who deal with abuses in schools know the various forms of antisemitism and other forms of discrimination in connection with ideologies of inequality. Those affected can thus be supported in a suitable manner.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + The Ombudsman will contact the registration office of the Jewish community in Vienna (IKG), the IKG's psycho-social centre ESRA, the extremism/BOJA counselling centre and, if necessary, other institutions that are contact points for those affected by antisemitism or other forms of discrimination (e.g. ZARA – civil courage and anti-racism work).
- + Against the background of the experiences of the above-mentioned institutions, further training measures are implemented to professionalise the advisory competence for the employees dealing with grievances.
- + The Ombudsman is developing a plan for how it can become known and active as a contact for those affected by antisemitism and other forms of discrimination and what resources or, if necessary, structural changes are necessary for this.
- + Specific grievances are named, documented and published anonymously in the annual reports.



EDUCATION DIRECTORATES

1 Education directors and heads of the educational service

GOAL

The school quality managers know the different forms of antisemitism and are aware of the democratic-political importance of dealing with antisemitism and the importance of appropriate prevention.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + A qualification offer for dealing with the goals, challenges and topics of antisemitism-critical education is being developed for school quality managers with the involvement of experts.
- + The education departments ensure that antisemitism-critical education is implemented in their own federal state and ensure that problems and challenges are identified in good time so that appropriate measures can be taken to respond to them. There are reports in established formats to the Ministry of Education.

2 School Quality Managers

GOAL

The school quality managers (SQM) recognise the critical examination and dealing with antisemitism as an indispensable element of a school that is committed to basic democratic values within the meaning of BVG Art. 14 (5a), SchOG Section 2 and the basic decree for the teaching principle of political education. They promote and accompany reflective debates on antisemitism in the context of other ideologies of inequality in the context of school development and, if necessary, also demand this.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + School quality managers ensure that head teachers in their educational region are familiar with measures to combat antisemitism. They involve experts and provide space for discussion of content and organisational aspects. The SQMs help to ensure that any problems and challenges are addressed quickly and that the effectiveness of the measures is evaluated.
- + Each SQM works to ensure that specific projects in the area of antisemitism-critical education are carried out in secondary schools in his/her area of responsibility.

- + The SQMs work to ensure that standards of professional ethics are reflected in the context of the pedagogical principles of each school in their area of responsibility. In the area "quality dimensions of learning and teaching" reference is made to the democratic-political tasks of the Austrian school. An environment conducive to learning requires a professional approach to antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality, as well as consideration of the perspectives of those affected. Teachers of all subjects and the school administration react in the event of perceived antisemitism and other forms of discrimination and support those affected professionally.

TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES (PHS) AND TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS AT UNIVERSITIES

1

Rectorates of teacher training colleges

GOAL

The rectorates of teacher training colleges, together with the heads of the teacher training institutions at universities, coordinate the implementation of an educational offer on dealing with antisemitism in teacher training and a corresponding offer as part of further training at all teacher training colleges. Comparability of this offer in terms of content and organisation is guaranteed. For this purpose, structures for cooperation are created that can take into account the requirements and framework conditions in teacher training courses for different school types. Each rector is responsible for a comprehensive process of dealing with professional ethics standards at the university location, with professional handling of antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality playing a central role.

- + The rectorate of each teacher training college initiates a suitable process for dealing with ethical standards and ensures that teachers from as many disciplines and courses as possible are actively involved. As a result of this process, professional ethical expectations are published and addressed in suitable courses.
- + Each rectorate is responsible for developing guidelines and processes for professionally dealing with antisemitism and other forms of discrimination. The focus should be on supporting those affected. The establishment of contact persons or the qualification of existing contact persons for those affected by discrimination in the field of antisemitism criticism is recommended.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + The rectorates coordinate the process of developing an educational offer for all student teachers. For this purpose, cross-university working groups are set up and specific goals and a timetable for implementation are specified. The structure of the working groups takes into account the specific requirements of the school type and the need for cooperation in the respective network for the area of general secondary education.

2**Teacher training institutions at the universities****GOAL**

The teacher training institutions at the universities and the teacher training colleges in a network are equal partners in the implementation of an educational offer on how to deal with antisemitism for all student teachers in the area of general secondary education. The aim is to reach agreement with the rectors of the PHs in the network about the framework conditions of the process. As described above, the institutions for teacher training at the universities deal with the professional ethical expectations of their students and teachers and with how to deal with antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality in their organisational framework.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + The head of each institution for teacher training at a university designates at least one person with primary responsibility who is equally involved in the design and implementation of a three-part educational offer for all students in the area of secondary general education in the network, as well as goals and a schedule coordinated with the PHs.
- + Each head is responsible for dealing with professional ethical expectations of students and teachers within the framework of the respective institution and their publication. In the course of this, guidelines and processes for the professional handling of discriminatory incidents are being developed. The establishment of contact persons or the qualification of existing contact persons for those affected by discrimination in the field of antisemitism criticism is recommended.

3**Heads of institutes at the PHs and heads of teacher training institutions at the universities****GOAL**

The managers of these institutions work actively to ensure that both the educational offer on dealing with antisemitism and the professional ethics expectations are supported by all teachers. They ensure that all lecturers are informed about the background, objectives and structure of the educational offer for the students right from the start. The heads of the institutes concerned at the PHs and the corresponding managers at the universities initiate a broad professional discussion of concepts, goals and challenges of antisemitism-critical education and related areas of antisemitism research, in which all teachers take part, at least in part. Training courses on a smaller scale and with broader topics are aimed in particular at those teachers who have hardly dealt with antisemitism to date. School-type specific advanced training events, especially at primary level, address the specific framework conditions and challenges of antisemitism-critical education in this area. In larger events, which are aimed at all teachers, more specific subject areas are explored.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + In service meetings, the managers provide information about the process that has started to implement a wide range of offers on how to deal with antisemitism for all student teachers.
- + The managers commission employees to create a differentiated range of further training measures for dealing with antisemitism, which is aimed at all teachers.

4

Heads of institutes or coordinators at the teacher training colleges responsible for in-service teacher training

GOAL

The actors involved in the planning of teacher training at the PHs coordinate a broad and differentiated range of training courses on antisemitism-critical education, taking into account the requirements of the specific school type. The content of this is based on the offer for student teachers at PHs and universities. The advanced training offer includes events of a fundamental nature that are aimed at all teachers as well as those that focus on teachers of certain disciplines or on specific aspects of dealing with antisemitism.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + The organisational units or employees at the individual PHs involved in planning further training events for teachers, evaluate the further training events offered at the location in the last three years, taking into account the number of registrations and the existing feedback.
- + A comprehensive and differentiated range of advanced training events on antisemitism-critical education is developed at each PH, including all organisational units and employees involved in advanced training. The entire offer for a school year is summarised taking into account school type-specific events and sent to the school management via the responsible SQMs for distribution to the schools.

5

Key role players in school development counselling at the PHs

GOAL

With the involvement of experts, those involved in school development counselling create adaptable offers for school development processes that address antisemitism in connection with racism or other forms of ideologies of inequality. These offers take up the democratic-political demands on the Austrian school. They aim at the sustainable promotion of framework conditions for the development of a reflected, democratic political awareness (competence structure model Krammer 2008) at the school location. The most relevant conditions for success include the (self-)reflection and professional as well as pedagogical-didactical qualifications of the teachers, the elaboration of important subject-related learning content and goals as well as relevant aspects of the interdisciplinary educational mandate to promote political maturity and finally the further development of a democratic school culture. The basic decree for the teaching principle of political education (2015) is a relevant reference document in this context.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- + At each PH, at least one concrete offer is made to accompany school development processes, which includes relevant aspects of antisemitism-critical education.

Key role players in the university courses “Professional Management of Schools”

GOAL

Teachers who wish to qualify for leadership positions must be able to take responsibility for dealing with and preventing antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality. This results in the need for executives to recognise antisemitism as a problem in democratic politics and to have basic skills in dealing with antisemitism. Persons with managerial positions at schools should be able to react appropriately to specific incidents and, in addition, promote and, if necessary, demand a critical examination of antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality at the school location.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- + In the first training phase (pre-qualification), participants in the university courses “Professional management of schools” are taught basic skills for dealing with antisemitism. Within the framework of the existing curricula, the “understanding of leadership” module raises awareness of the democratic-political tasks of the school, including how to deal with and prevent antisemitism. The module “Personnel Management and Personnel Development” addresses how appropriate professional ethics can be promoted and, if necessary, demanded by teachers. The “School Quality” module shows perspectives and starting points for the further development of democratic school quality, taking into account offers of antisemitism-critical education.

University courses for leisure time education: Lecturers, leaders and coordinators

GOAL

Educators in school day care are essential pillars of pedagogical work in schools. They assume responsibility for the education and upbringing of the children in terms of basic democratic attitudes and play an important role in connection with the social fabric of a class. It is therefore necessary for these pedagogical professions to be able to recognise, classify and competently deal with antisemitism and other ideologies of inequality. The decisive basis for this is the ability to critically reflect on one’s own attitudes, cultural imprint and experiences. These requirements must be given central importance within the framework of existing curricula. In view of the importance of this requirement area and the short duration of the training, it is recommended that future curricula specifically emphasise basic knowledge of antisemitism as well as reflection on one’s own influences. The relationship between antisemitism and racism should be of central importance.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + Those responsible for the university course for training pedagogical professions in school day care at the respective PHs analyse the curriculum, taking into account its current implementation, with the aim of bindingly planning the teaching of basic knowledge about antisemitism, reflection on one’s own influences and the pedagogical handling of antisemitism. Differences and similarities between antisemitism and racism are taken into account in each case.
- + The course leaders ensure that competent people in the field of antisemitism-critical education hold relevant courses or parts of them.
- + The course leaders at the respective PHs exchange the results of their analyses and write a report on the implementation of dealing with antisemitism in the course to the rectorate.

Key role players in the courses for counselling teachers

GOAL

Counselling teachers are, among other things, contact persons for pupils, but also for other teachers with a wide variety of problems. If antisemitism or other ideologies of inequality such as racism play a role in such contexts, counselling teachers must be able to recognise and name antisemitism or racism, for example, and reflect on their own influences and perspectives. Otherwise, they will not be able to adequately grasp the situation and will not be able to competently advise those affected or those who are the source of discrimination or bullying, for example, or participate in solving the problem.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- + The curricula of the courses for counselling teachers at the PHs are evaluated with regard to dealing with discrimination, whereby current practice in the courses is also reflected.
- + Those responsible for the courses at the PHs contact institutions such as the IKG registration office, the ESRA psychosocial centre or the ZARA counselling centre, which advise those affected by antisemitism or other forms of discrimination, and obtain an overview of relevant cases in the school sector. Particular attention is paid to the competencies required for advice in such cases. A nationwide coordination of those responsible for the courses mentioned, including the ombudsman for schools, should be sought.
- + As a result of this process, the curricula are revised in such a way that dealing with discrimination is expressly provided for.

Further courses at teacher training colleges

The above recommendations regarding courses at teacher training colleges should be applied to other courses if this appears appropriate in the specific context and makes sense for dealing professionally with antisemitism in the educational sector. This is particularly the case if the school's basic values according to BVG Art. 14 (5a) or dealing with discrimination in a course is of significant importance.

HEAD TEACHERS

GOAL

Head teachers are ultimately responsible at the school location for ensuring that education and upbringing are based on fundamental democratic values (BVG Art. 14 para. 5a; SchOG Section 2). Any form of antisemitism or other ideology of inequality is directed against these values. Head teachers play a key role in ensuring the quality of the teaching and the quality of the pedagogical work, the further democratic development of the school culture and dealing with hurtful situations between students and teachers. This responsibility requires, among other things, a basic knowledge of antisemitism and of the approaches, goals and challenges of antisemitism-critical education. Head teachers must be able to recognise antisemitism, take a stand against antisemitism and support affected students and teachers. In addition, they should be aware of the importance of critically examining antisemitism and other forms of discrimination with regard to the basic values of Austrian schools and should give these aspects of pedagogical work appropriate importance in school development.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

- + Head teachers communicate professional ethical expectations, especially with regard to the professional handling of ideologies of inequality, clearly and openly to all educators at the school location and adopt a (self-) reflective basic attitude.
- + Head teachers set initiatives in the field of school development, which include the focus on antisemitism-critical education. Particular attention should be paid to the reflective examination of current antisemitism, to the similarities and differences between racism and antisemitism and to promoting political maturity. For example, the support and encouragement of attendance of further training events (including reed offers) by teachers and the promotion of projects in the classroom are possible. Cooperation with extracurricular institutions that are competent in this area is supported.
- + School head teachers initiate the development of pedagogical guiding principles that openly address the handling of problems and provide guidelines for this.
- + Head teachers ensure that antisemitic, racist or other harmful incidents can be reported by those affected or witnesses in such a way that support can be guaranteed.

The potential success of anti-semitism-critical education largely depends on the extent to which links with other ideologies of inequality, such as racism, are considered.

The broad implementation and professionalization of antisemitism-critical education in Austrian schools is a holistic and challenging project. The present recommendations aim to enable the best possible framework and conditions for preventing and dealing with antisemitism in schools. This requires active support and, in addition, specific technical skills from those involved in education administration and in the training of educators at all levels.

Against the background of the history of anti-semitism in Austria, there is an understandable need in politics and society to position oneself as far as possible from antisemitism. However, such a distancing can shift the necessary focus on the broad anchoring of antisemitism in the non-Jewish majority society. On the one hand, this happens when only certain forms of antisemitism, such as particularly violent and explicit ones, are perceived as antisemitic at all and, on the other hand, when antisemitism is only recognised and addressed in certain “groups”. However, the reflective examination required for antisemitism-critical education must take into account all manifestations of antisemitism and its functions in all areas of society, especially in one’s own environment. The perspectives of those affected by antisemitism must also play a central role. Addressing antisemitism that ignores these aspects is to be criticised as an attempt at instrumentalisation.

Critical engagement with antisemitism in society calls for further research on antisemitism in education. Qualitative studies on the perceptions and manifestations of antisemitism among students and teachers can make a significant contribution to the recording and classification of widespread antisemitic ideas and actions apart from superficial distancing. Research work on the perception of antisemitism by those affected in schools and society is also necessary.

Antisemitism primarily affects Jews. It constantly demands certain forms of interaction from them. At the same time, antisemitism is not only their problem, but one of society as a whole. Therefore, there is also a responsibility for society as a whole to strengthen the perception of the perspectives of those whose everyday life is shaped by antisemitism. In the Jewish community, antisemitism has often been and still is treated as a private matter for generations. With an increasing awareness of antisemitism in politics and society, the empowerment of those affected must also go hand in hand. In the area of school and extracurricular education, measures to raise awareness and have a stronger position against antisemitism must be developed in cooperation with the IKG and Jewish youth organisations. In addition to high-quality educational offers that are critical of antisemitism, specialised counselling offers for those affected by antisemitism, especially in the context of school, should be recorded, evaluated and, if necessary, expanded. The networking of the educational institutions or the educational administration with advice centres and the IKG reporting office, which documents antisemitic incidents, is a decisive factor for the quick and sustainable support of those affected.

The potential success of antisemitism-critical education largely depends on the extent to which links with other ideologies of inequality, such as racism, are considered. In this context, the reference to the living environment of the addressees is of central importance. In order for antisemitism, with its specific forms and functions, to be understood as violence against Jews in the present, references to and examination of other forms of devaluation and dehumanisation are necessary. In a society permeated by various forms of violence and discrimination, any hierarchisation of different concerns is just as obstructive as the misleading reduction of antisemitism to a form of racism. Antisemitism in particular is a versatile and changeable projection surface for the construction and devaluation of "the other" and therefore often occurs in connection with other constructions of difference. In addition, antisemitic and other forms of discrimination also overlap for those affected.

The implementation of the strategy presented here has the potential to set milestones for the sustainable anchoring of approaches critical of antisemitism in the Austrian education system. In doing so, it makes a "significant contribution to shaping society and to the realisation and further development of democracy and human rights" in accordance with the basic decree for the teaching principle of political education (2015). The present paper should therefore also be regarded as providing impetus for the National Action Plan against Racism and Discrimination.

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**The working definition of antisemitism
by the International Holocaust Remembrance
Alliance (IHRA)**

“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.”

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- + Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- + Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, 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.
- + 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.

- + Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. 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).
- + Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- + 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.
- + Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- + Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- + Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- + Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- + Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

