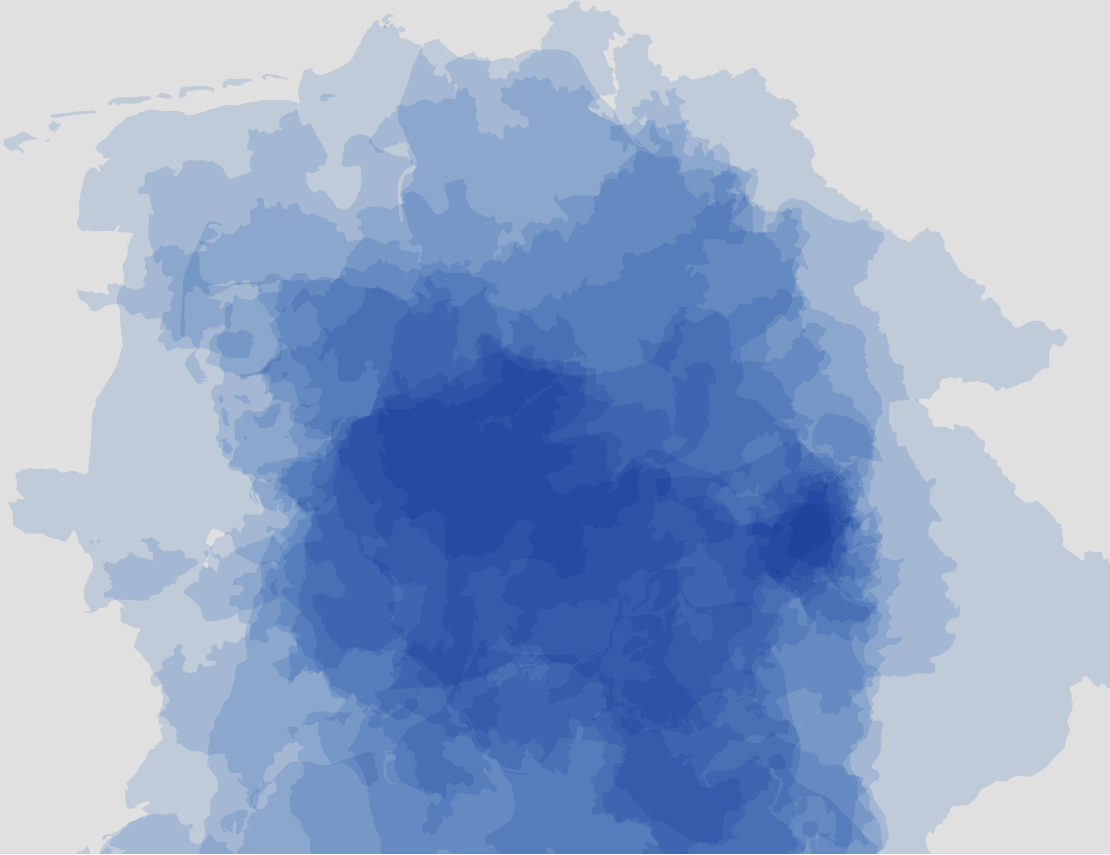




**Federal Association RIAS e.V.**  
Federal Association of Departments for  
Research and Information on Antisemitism



Annual

# **Antisemitic incidents in Germany 2021**

# Legal Notice

## **Publisher**

Federal Association of Departments for  
Research and Information on Antisemitism e. V.  
(Federal Association RIAS)

Gleimstraße 31, 10437 Berlin,  
Phone: +49 30 817 985 818,  
Email: [presse@report-antisemitism.de](mailto:presse@report-antisemitism.de)

**V.i.S.d.P.** Benjamin Steinitz,  
Federal Association RIAS

## **Concept and editing**

Federal Association RIAS

**Layout and graphics** gegenfeuer.net

**Editing** Dr. Lars Breuer

**Translation** Alexandra Berlina

**Image credits** The rights remain with the Federal Association RIAS e. V.; for photos on pages 11 and 17, the rights remain with the Association for a Democratic Culture in Berlin (VDK e. V.).

**Copyright** © Copyright 2022 Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism e. V. (Federal Association RIAS). All rights reserved. This publication is made available free of charge for non-commercial purposes.

The publisher reserves the copyright. Distribution or reproduction, even in part, is only permitted with the express written consent of the publisher. In addition, the source must be correctly acknowledged and a copy sent.

**Disclaimer** The information in this report has been formulated to the best of our knowledge and belief. The publisher cannot guarantee that the information is complete and up to date. This publication contains links to third-party websites over whose content the publisher has no influence. Therefore, the publisher cannot assume any liability for these external contents. The respective provider or operator of the pages is always responsible for the content of the indicated or linked pages. The publication does not represent an expression of opinion by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Home Affairs (BMI). The authors are responsible for the content of their statements.

# Content

<b>4</b>	<b>Antisemitic incidents in Germany 2021</b>
7	Antisemitic incidents characterise everyday life
9	Manifestations of Antisemitism
14	Political-ideological background
16	The COVID-19 pandemic and the Arab-Israeli conflict as occasions for antisemitic incidents
19	Conclusion
<b>20</b>	<b>Statistics at a glance</b>

# Antisemitic incidents in Germany 2021

The RIAS reporting offices have recorded a total of 2,738 antisemitic incidents in Germany for the year 2021, averaging over seven antisemitic incidents per day – including some violent ones. Throughout Germany, two events sparked manifestations of antisemitism: the COVID-19 pandemic and the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict in May 2021.

The RIAS reporting offices distinguish between six types of antisemitic incidents, depending on type and severity. For 2021, RIAS documented six cases of extreme violence, 63 assaults, 204 cases of targeted damage to or desecration of property, 101 threats, 2,182 cases of abusive behaviour (including 449 gatherings) and 182 mass mailings. The total number of antisemitic incidents recorded was 2,738, almost 40 % higher than in 2020 (1,957 incidents).<sup>1</sup>

The analysis of the incidents shows that, in 2021, people continued to use certain occasions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Arab-Israeli conflict, to express their antisemitism – sometimes violently. For the victims, this meant an increase in potential danger. In 2021, the RIAS offices documented significantly more cases of violent antisemitism than in the previous year, including incidences of extreme violence. Under this category, RIAS subsumes physical assaults or attacks that may result in loss of life and/or lead to grievous bodily harm as well as attempts to commit the above. In two incidents of extreme violence involving Israel-related antisemitism, the victims suffered grave injuries. In September, a Jewish participant of a vigil for Israel and against antisemitism in Hamburg was beaten up by a passer-by, who called him *Hurensohn* (“son of a bitch”). The victim suffered injuries that required hospital treatment. Prior to the assault, someone had shouted “Free Palestine” and “Fuck Israel”, addressing the gathering. In October, three youths demanded that a man shout “Free Palestine” in a street in Berlin. When he refused, they kicked and punched him until his life was in danger. Jewish communities were also affected by cases of extreme violence: In August, during cleaning work at a Jewish community centre in Berlin, it was discovered that a window had been shot through with a rifle or pistol. Fortunately, the bullet had not hit anyone. In September, detailed plans for an attack on a synagogue became known in Hagen. Upon this discovery, on Yom Kippur, the highest Jewish holiday, hundreds of police cordoned off the synagogue.<sup>2</sup>

In the framework of modern antisemitism – a group within which RIAS subsumes e.g. antisemitic conspiracy myths – the reporting offices documented two cases of extreme violence. In September, an employee of a petrol station in Idar-Oberstein asked a man from the conspiracist milieu to wear a face mask when paying. Upon this, the man shot and killed the employee. When questioned by the police, the

---

1 The figures for 2020 mentioned in this report also include information received after the publication of the annual report “Antisemitic Incidents in Germany in 2020”, which thus were not yet included in it.

2 More details can be found in the following article (in German): Ullrich, Helmut: Anschlag auf Synagoge in Hagen: Bewährungsstrafe für Täter. In: Westfalenpost, 28.03.2022. Online at [www.wp.de/staedte/hagen/anschlag-auf-synagoge-in-hagen-bewaehrungsstrafe-fuer-taeter-id234935115.html](http://www.wp.de/staedte/hagen/anschlag-auf-synagoge-in-hagen-bewaehrungsstrafe-fuer-taeter-id234935115.html) (last accessed on June 11th 2022).

perpetrator justified his act by saying that he could not get within shooting distance to “Soros and Merkel” themselves: The Jewish philanthropist and Shoah survivor George Soros serves as a frequent enemy image in conspiracist circles, which hold him responsible for many phenomena including the COVID-19 pandemic.

In December, a man murdered his wife and three children before killing himself in Königs Wusterhausen. According to the Federal Ministry of the Interior, he justified this act with his belief in a Jewish world conspiracy: he had been convinced that the state-organised vaccinations against the COVID-19 virus were part of a secret plan to establish a new world order under Jewish dictatorship.

In addition to cases of extreme violence, the RIAS reporting offices documented a total of 63 assaults in 2021. Almost 60 % (37 cases) were classified as antisemitic othering – this is, the victims were antisemitically confronted because of their (assumed or actual) Jewishness or addressed as not belonging to the respective in-group. One such incident occurred in October in Gelsenkirchen: A woman was on her way back from a memorial event for the attack on the synagogue in Halle in 2019, carrying a cloth bag with a Star of David on it, when she was approached by a group of youths who immediately began spitting at her.

The number of incidents in the categories “targeted damage to or desecration of property” (204 incidents) and “antisemitic threats” (101 incidents) that took place in 2021 was also high. For instance, the following cases of targeted damage or desecration were reported to RIAS Berlin: In May, a Jewish man discovered that the door of the flat he was renting had been pelted with eggs. In the same month, the doorbell of another Jewish person’s office had been smeared with the letters “HH” – a common abbreviation for “Heil Hitler” in the right-wing extremist scene. An antisemitic threat was reported in Heidelberg in November: A man entered a restaurant and approached the tables, asking for some money. When a group declined to give him any (as had others, too), he asked a member of this group who was wearing a necklace with a Star of David pendant whether he was Israeli or Jewish. Receiving no response, the man became aggressive, saying, among other things, “I’ll kill you! I’m Hitler!” Other diners eventually escorted the man out of the restaurant.

However, most often antisemitism is expressed in a more low-key fashion, as shown by the persistently frequent cases of abusive behaviour. With 2,182 incidents, this category accounted for almost 80 % of all documented antisemitic incidents in 2021. It includes antisemitic statements but also damage to or smearing of non-Jewish property with antisemitic symbols or slogans. For example, in Leipzig in November, someone shouted *Juden raus!* (“Out with Jews!”) at the back of a man on his way home from the synagogue. In May, the spray-painted slogan

*Der Tod für Israel* ("Death to Israel") along with a Star of David was discovered in several locations in Lüneburg, including an advertising pillar. In Berlin in the same month, a number of antisemitic stickers appeared carrying the slogan (in English) "No Pride in Israel Apartheid. Stop using queer\* rights for state propaganda: say no to pinkwashing!"

## Antisemitic incidents characterise everyday life

In 2021, antisemitism remained an everyday experience for those concerned, as shown not only by the constantly high number of low-key incidents but also by the locations where these took place: Victims can encounter antisemitism anywhere – and thus are often unable to avoid confrontation with it in their everyday lives. In 2021, most antisemitic incidents reported took place online and on public streets (951 and 883 cases respectively). RIAS only records antisemitic statements on the internet as antisemitic incidents if they are directly addressed to individuals – for example, in emails or messages on social networks. In addition, 128 antisemitic incidents were reported in the direct living environment of those involved. Such incidents are often particularly disturbing for the victims.<sup>3</sup> A person in Magdeburg described how hearing noises outside his door in a block of flats on a Saturday evening in October. Afraid to look, he didn't leave his flat. The next day, he discovered that the mezuzah attached to his door had been stolen.

In addition to the location, the RIAS reporting offices also record the medium used to convey antisemitic content. As mentioned before, almost 40 % of the documented incidents occurred online (951 cases). This includes 465 incidents on social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. A further 441 incidents involved antisemitic statements made in personal conversations, i.e. face to face. This figure is crucial, as direct personal confrontation with a person expressing antisemitic views is often particularly stressful for the victims.

In 2021, institutions were also frequently affected (944 cases). In 521 cases, the institutions concerned were Jewish or Israeli; in 220 cases, they were memorial sites and memorial initiatives; 86 cases involved civic institutions. Among the 964 incidents involving individuals, 634 were aimed at persons who were – or were perceived as – Jewish or Israeli. Compared to the overall population, men are overrepresented among the victims.

---

3 Cf. The following RIAS publication (in German): „Das bringt einen in eine ganz isolierte Situation – Jüdische Perspektiven auf Antisemitismus in Deutschland 2017 – 2020“, Berlin.

### Antisemitic incidents in 2021; individuals affected (by gender)

men	470
women	223
not specified/unknown	271
total	964

In regard to perpetrators, RIAS distinguishes between groups and individuals. In 2021, the number of documented antisemitic incidents originating from a group was 360. In 956 cases, the perpetrators were individuals. Just like the victims, they were significantly more likely to be male compared to the general population.

### Perpetrators of antisemitic incidents in 2021 (by gender)

men	723
women	160
not specified/unknown	73
total	956

It should also be noted that antisemitic incidents often occur in conjunction with other ideologies of inequality. In total, RIAS recorded 349 incidents where antisemitic stereotypes were intertwined with other such ideologies. The most frequent entanglement (204 incidents) concerned racist stereotypes. Sexism played a role in 91 incidents – for instance, in May in Bochum, when a woman was insulted online as a *Zionisten Schlampe* (“Zionist bitch”) by an unfamiliar person.

### Entanglements of antisemitic incidents with other ideologies of inequality in 2021

racism	204
sexism	91
hostility toward LGBTQI	36
antigypsyism	6
other ideologies	12



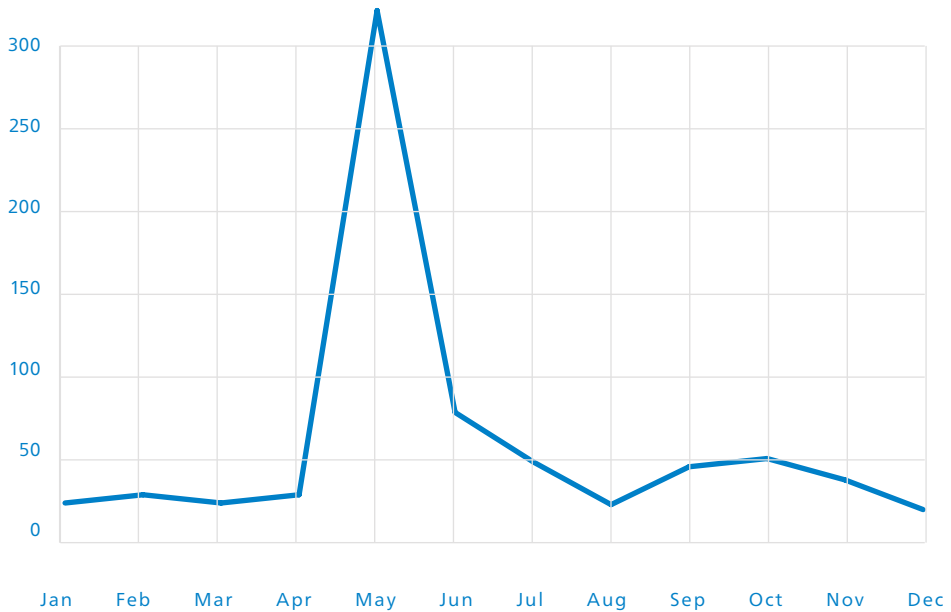
## Manifestations of Antisemitism

The RIAS reporting offices group both verbal and non-verbal manifestations of antisemitism into five categories depending on their content. Many incidents can be assigned to two or more categories, either because different antisemitic stereotypes are expressed in one incident or because one statement fulfils the criteria for different contents.

Therefore, the number of attributions is significantly higher than the number of incidents. In regard to the 2,738 registered antisemitic incidents in 2021, there were 3,819 attributions, i.a. 1.4 attributions per incident on average. Two categories were particularly common in 2021: post-Shoah antisemitism and Israel-related antisemitism. Post-Shoah antisemitism refers to certain forms of dealing with Nazi atrocities, such as trivialisation or rejection of remembrance. Israel-related antisemitism involves antisemitic statements directed against the Jewish state of Israel – for example, when it is denied legitimacy.

First, we will consider Israel-related antisemitism – a frequent subject of public debate, which usually seeks to distinguish it from non-antisemitic criticism of Israeli policy. In 2021, 723 incidents (26 % of all recorded antisemitic incidents) were classified as Israel-related antisemitism. Thus, compared to the previous year, both the absolute number of such incidents and their share of the total number increased (in 2020, there was a total of 391 cases – 20 % of all recorded incidents). A noticeable increase in Israel-related antisemitism was observed during the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict in May 2021. 322 of the 723 incidents occurred in this month alone. During the same period, there were numerous antisemitic assaults, cases of targeted damage to or desecration of property and gatherings with antisemitic statements nationwide (more on this later, under the subheading “COVID-19 protests and the Arab-Israeli conflict as occasions for antisemitic incidents”).

## Incidents of Israel-related antisemitism in 2021 (by month)



Israel-related antisemitism was distributed across all incident types. It was involved in two incidents of extreme violence, 18 assaults, 27 cases of targeted damage to or desecration of property and 31 threats. Unfortunately, this confirms once again that Israel-related antisemitism is not only expressed in slogans. Often enough, it is used as a reason or justification for acts of violence – sometimes grave ones. The concrete expression of Israel-related antisemitism in the incidents varies greatly. For example, in May, a Twitter user wrote to a civic organisation (in German): “Why should a racist apartheid state have a right to exist? Just like apartheid South Africa, the Zionist regime should be ended. Only a state in which all people have equal rights can be legitimate. And apartheid Israel is certainly not that.” The author denies Israel the right to exist by describing the state as racist and therefore illegitimate. His accusation of apartheid is not a concrete criticism of racism in Israeli society. Rather, he demonises Israel by equating it with the apartheid regime in South Africa, insinuating that the state is racist by the very fact of its existence. Moreover, the argument features a double standard: the lack of equal rights for all people – which should exist in all states – is taken as an opportunity to deny legitimacy to Israel alone, as a “Zionist” (meaning: Jewish) state. Ambivalent aspects of modern nation-statehood are here projected exclusively onto the Jewish state. Moreover, the formulation that the “regime” in Israel “should be ended” implies the threat of violence.

Israel-related antisemitism often goes hand in hand with other anti-Jewish manifestations. It is most often expressed in connection with post-Shoah antisemitism, for example, when Israeli policies are equated with the Shoah. Such statements simultaneously demonise Israel and relativise the Nazi mass crimes. For example, in Würzburg in May, a confrontation took place between participants in a rally against COVID-19 protection measures and counter-protesters. The latter accused the former of not distancing themselves sufficiently from right-wing extremist groups. One woman replied that the Holocaust was long over and that Israel was committing a Holocaust right now. Another protester supported her by saying that Jews in the ghettos were better off back then “than we are today”. The woman’s statement equates the current situation in Israel with the industrial mass extermination of Jews in Nazi Germany – a frequently used stereotype of Israel-related antisemitism. The man cynically portrays the situation in Germany in 2021 as worse than the Shoah. This not only trivialises the Nazi crimes, but also stylises today’s Germans – mostly descendants of its perpetrators – as victims of an even worse crime. In antisemitism research, this trope is called “perpetrator-victim reversal”.



**Berlin, June 2021:** In a large-scale graffiti, Jews are equated with Nazi Germany.

Links between Israel-related antisemitism and antisemitic othering are also observed. In May, a Jewish woman posted a picture of a boardgame night with her family on Instagram, along with the Hebrew greeting *Shavua Tov* ("have a good week"). A person unknown to her responded to the post with the following statement in mistake-ridden German: "Palestine forever you Israeli bastards I hope god punishes you sons of bitches". The victim was clearly identifiable as Jewish on her Instagram profile – however, it did not feature any references to Israel.

In this context, antisemitic othering means that Jews living in Germany are held responsible for the behaviour of the state of Israel and thus marked as not belonging to German society. This othering goes hand in hand with Israel-related antisemitism if the image of Israel is shaped by antisemitic ideas.

As in previous years, the most frequent content manifestation in 2021 was post-Shoah antisemitism: 1,489 incidents (54 % of all cases). Both the absolute number of incidents in this category and its proportion in the total increased compared to 2020 (with a total of 933 post-Shoah incidents constituting 48 % of all recorded cases). Post-Shoah antisemitism played a particularly large role in incidents related to protests against COVID-19 protection measures (851 incidents, equalling 84 % of the post-Shoah incidents). A typical and frequent example of this is the claim of an analogy between state-organised COVID-19 vaccinations and the Nazi extermination policy. It appears, for example, in the slogan *Impfen macht frei* ("Vaccination makes you free") – an allusion to the Nazi motto *Arbeit macht frei* ("Work makes you free"), which was displayed on the entrance gates of the Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps. In the context of COVID-19, the slogan was often found on posters, flyers, stickers and in graffiti – an antisemitic form of guilt deflection that trivialises the Shoah. Post-Shoah antisemitism frequently manifested itself in other contexts, too. 40 % of the incidents in this category also involved another antisemitic content, forming the highest degree of content overlap among all categories.

The following table shows the content attribution overlap for all antisemitic incidents recorded in 2021.

**Content attribution overlap for all antisemitic incidents recorded in 2021 (in absolute numbers).**

	antisemitic othering	anti-Judaic antisemitism	modern antisemitism	Israel-related antisemitism	Post-Shoah antisemitism
antisemitic othering	421 <sup>4</sup>	50	124	200	210
anti-Judaic antisemitism	50	28	73	56	95
modern antisemitism	124	73	156	113	300
Israel-related antisemitism	200	56	113	298	240
Post-Shoah antisemitism	210	95	300	240	883

The level of modern antisemitism remained almost unchanged: 21 % of all registered incidents. This is, the proportion of antisemitic conspiracy myths – recorded by RIAS as modern antisemitism – has not increased further in the past year but stagnated, albeit at a significantly higher level than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

4 The highlighted numbers show the incidents of the respective manifestation that were not assigned to any other manifestation.

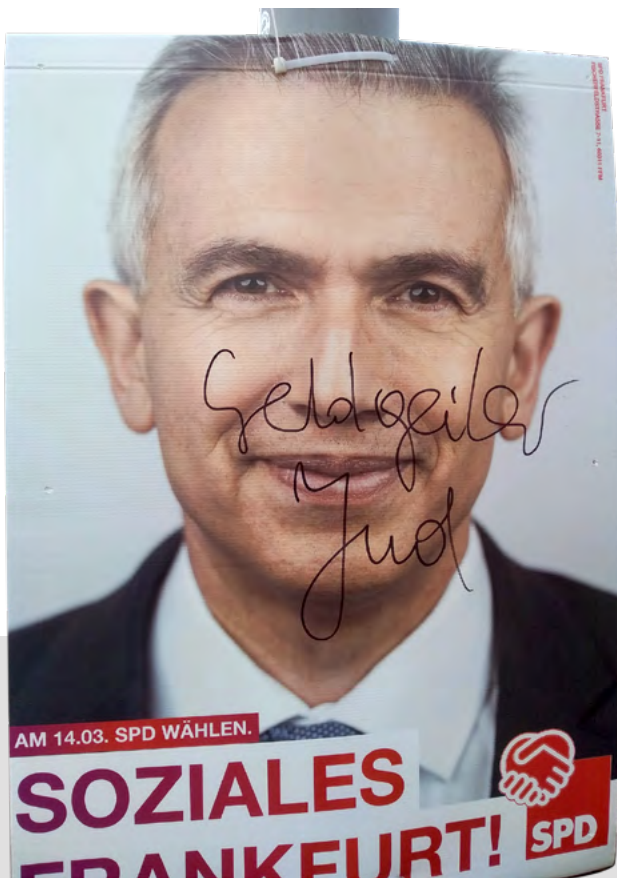
## Political-ideological background

The RIAS reporting offices assign antisemitic incidents to political-ideological backgrounds – but only if this background can be clearly deduced from the incident itself, for example, from the self-designation of the perpetrators, from the stereotypes used or from the context of the situation. In principle, all forms of antisemitic content are distributed across all political and ideological backgrounds. Therefore, the RIAS explicitly refrains from automatically assigning any content manifestations to particular backgrounds. In 2021, as in previous years, 54 % of all incidents – ranging from extreme violence to abusive behaviour – could not be assigned to a specific background. For example, in March a man who could be identified as Jewish by his kippah was descending the stairs to an S- and U-Bahn station in Munich when another middle-aged man called him a *dreckiger Scheißjude* (“dirty fucking Jew”) and spat at him. None of the bystanders reacted. An attribution to a political-ideological background was not possible here, as the perpetrator did not say anything else and did not wear any recognisable symbols (e.g. on his clothes). From the perspective of the victims, too, such perpetrators cannot be assigned to a clearly delineated milieu – which is why incidents like this contribute to the impression that antisemitism is lurking everywhere in Germany, constituting an everyday experience for Jewish people.

In 2021, as before, of all antisemitic incidents with an identifiable political-ideological background, this background was right-wing extremist (464 incidents; almost 17 % of all cases). The incidents were distributed across all contents, although post-Shoah antisemitism predominated with just under 61 % of all incidents with a right-wing extremist background. In terms of content, 29 % of the 464 incidents were attributable to modern antisemitism, 28 % to antisemitic othering and 19 % to Israel-related antisemitism. Thus, right-wing extremists express antisemitism in all its content facets.

In the second year of COVID-19, like in the first one, the RIAS reporting offices recorded significantly more antisemitic incidents with a conspiracist background than before the pandemic. In 2021, these constituted 434 incidents, most of which manifested post-Shoah antisemitism and/or modern antisemitism (76 % and just under 48 % of all incidents with a conspiracist background respectively).

A total of 236 incidents (just under 9 % of all cases) were assigned to anti-Israel activism. In 2020, the number had been significantly lower, namely only 79 incidents (4 % of all cases). This increase is likely to be related to the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict in May.



Frankfurt am Main, March 2021: a poster of a Jewish politician was smeared with the words *Geldgeiler Jud* (Money-grubbing Jew).

## The COVID-19 pandemic and the Arab-Israeli conflict as occasions for antisemitic incidents

As stated before, almost half of all antisemitic incidents recorded by the RIAS reporting offices in 2021 were connected to the COVID-19 pandemic and/or the Arab-Israeli conflict. These were, at least for some periods, the focus of media attention and apparently increased the number of antisemitic statements and actions. A total of 851 antisemitic incidents (31 % of all registered cases) were explicitly or implicitly related to COVID-19, i.e. either mentioned the pandemic or were enabled by it (for example, antisemitically motivated disruptions of a Jewish service, which was broadcast online due to the lockdown). 353 antisemitic incidents (just under 13 % of all cases) were related to the intensification of the Arab-Israeli conflict in May.<sup>5</sup>

Antisemitic incidents related to the pandemic took place throughout 2021, predominantly involving abusive behaviour (765 out of 851 incidents). For example, in Mannheim in August, a graffiti was reported at a tram stop that read *Cov-19 Lüge von Juden. Widerstand oder Tod* ("Cov-19 lie by Jews. Resist or die"). In addition to such antisemitic conspiracy myths blaming Jews for the pandemic or claiming that it is a lie they spread, many Shoah-relativising incidents were also recorded in this context. In September, for example, a motorway bridge near Bochum sported a flag with a so-called "Jew star" – a yellow star with the inscription *Jude*, as forced upon Jewish people by the Nazis – and the inscription "unvaccinated". The star depicted on the flag is a well-known symbol of the Nazi extermination policy.

Some grave antisemitic incidents were also recorded in relation to COVID-19. In addition to the two cases of extreme violence described before, the RIAS offices documented five assaults, three cases of targeted damage to or desecration of property and 13 antisemitic threats. As far as the political-ideological background and the content is concerned, the situation remained similar to 2020: a large part of the incidents could be attributed to the conspiracist spectrum, with expressions of post-Shoah antisemitism and modern antisemitism predominating.

---

5 The Federal Association RIAS, together with the International Institute for Research & Education on Antisemitism (IIBSA), has published an analysis on Israel-related antisemitism in May 2021. Among other things, it describes the role of Islamist campaigns in Europe, which had begun before the renewed escalation of the armed conflict in May 2021, in Israel-related antisemitism in connection with the conflict. Cf. (in German) [https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/Bundesverband\\_RIAS\\_-\\_Mobilisierungen\\_von\\_israelbezogenem\\_Antisemitismus\\_im\\_Bundesgebiet\\_2021.pdf](https://report-antisemitism.de/documents/Bundesverband_RIAS_-_Mobilisierungen_von_israelbezogenem_Antisemitismus_im_Bundesgebiet_2021.pdf).



**Berlin, December 2021:**

A "Jewish star" with the inscription "unvaccinated" smeared over a large area is discovered at the Savignyplatz S-Bahn station.



What is striking, however, is a sharp increase in incidents towards the end of the year: almost 44 % of all documented incidents related to the pandemic occurred in November and December of 2021. This increase is partly due to a large number of online incidents documented by RIAS Thuringia. In addition, the number of protests against COVID-19 protection measures increased sharply from November 2021 onwards in the course of the debate about a general vaccination obligation and in view of the far-reaching social restrictions for the unvaccinated. The number of antisemitic incidents in the context of these protests increased respectively.

From around August 2021 on, incidents related to the pandemic were dominated by post-Shoah antisemitism (just under 89 % of all cases from August to December). In 2020, post-Shoah antisemitic stereotypes were used in 59 % of all COVID-19-related incidents. Modern antisemitism was only attributable to 26 % of all incidents between August and December 2021. From January to July 2021, this form made up 40 % of all incidents related to protests against COVID-19 protection measures; in February, the number had been as high as 58 %, and in the previous year, 64%. Thus, fewer antisemitic conspiracy myths were documented in incidents related to the pandemic in 2021 than in 2020, and their proportion continued to decrease over the course of the year. On the other hand, the number of self-victimisations relativising the Shoah – such as equating the unvaccinated with victims of the Nazi extermination policy – increased. So-called "Jew stars" with the inscription "unvaccinated" or changing the Nazi slogan *Arbeit macht frei*

("Work makes you free") to *Impfen macht frei* ("Vaccination makes you free") constitute iconic examples of this tendency. While the thematic focus in 2021 differed from 2020, these statements can be understood as antisemitic reactions to state measures against the pandemic, similar to the previous year.

The second event that led to a sharp increase in antisemitic incidents nationwide was the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict in May 2021. 60 % of all antisemitic incidents recorded in that month (315 out of 518) were related to the conflict. The overall number of recorded incidents categorised as Israel-related antisemitism also sharply increased in May: in the week from 3 to 9 May, there were 20 incidents; in the following one, 193. Subsequently, the number dropped again. At the beginning of June, it arrived at a level close to the annual average: 14 incidents per week.

Overall, antisemitic incidents related to the Arab-Israeli conflict could be attributed to all political-ideological backgrounds and all manifestations of antisemitism, but incidents with a background in anti-Israeli activism and expressing Israel-related antisemitism dominated. The latter accounted for more than 90 % of all incidents in the context of the conflict, with almost 30 % of incidents also attributable to post-Shoah antisemitism. This shows that forms of guilt deflection continue to play a major role in relation to Israel-related antisemitism.

The sharp rise in the number of antisemitic incidents in May meant a particularly threatening situation for potential victims: in the week from 10 May onwards alone, the RIAS offices documented ten assaults, 16 cases of targeted damage to or desecration of property and 14 threats related to the conflict. In Berlin, on 22 May, unknown men attacked a person who was recognisable as Jewish by his kippah. After insulting him antisemitically, they punched him in the face. The man had to be taken to hospital for treatment. On 11 May, the synagogue in Bonn was pelted with stones; on 13 May, the synagogue in Mannheim. In addition, a large number of anti-Israel gatherings took place in May. In that same week, the RIAS documented 62 gatherings with antisemitic incidents nationwide. In the following week, there were 20 more gatherings; subsequently, they petered out. To sum up, the number of antisemitic incidents related to the Arab-Israeli conflict increased sharply in May 2021 but decreased just as quickly.

## Conclusion

In 2021, the RIAS reporting offices documented significantly more antisemitic incidents than in the previous year (which is, however, partly attributable to a changed frame of survey). In particular, more incidents were recorded that were highly dangerous for the victims, such as cases of extreme violence and assaults. There was more targeted damage to or desecration of property, too. However, low-key antisemitic incidents remained the most frequent in 2021. Antisemitism manifested itself in many ways: implicitly and explicitly, in many different locations and by perpetrators with different political-ideological backgrounds. The analysis of antisemitic incidents in 2021 shows again that antisemitism can be directed against Jews as well as non-Jews. For Jews, the confrontation with antisemitism is an experience that shapes their everyday lives – and that can include direct violence. Two phenomena had a crucial influence on antisemitic incidents in 2021: the continued COVID-19 pandemic along with the ongoing associated protests, and the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict in May. These two events provided an occasion or opportunity structure for numerous individuals to express themselves antisemitically. Despite all the differences, both contexts show one tendency: in the course of antisemitic incidents, Jewish people in Germany are repeatedly held responsible for developments with which they have nothing to do.



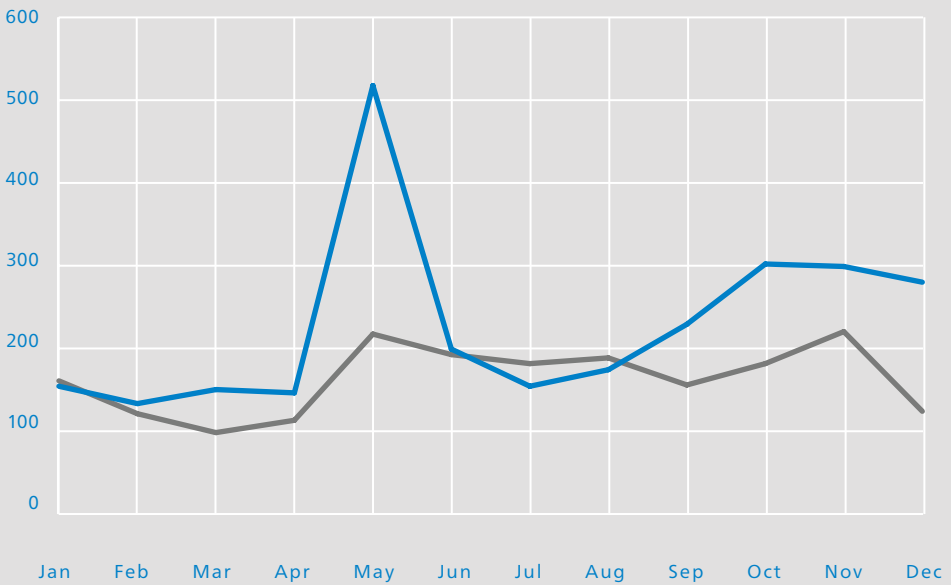
**Siegen, December 2021:** On an information poster for a study tour, the inscription *Arbeit macht frei* ("Work makes you free") on an entrance gate to the former Dachau concentration camp is changed to the slogan *Impfen macht frei* ("Vaccination makes you free"), trivialising the Shoah.

# Statistics at a glance

## Antisemitic incidents by incident type

	2020	2021
extreme violence	1	6
assaults	39	63
damages or desecrations of property	170	204
threats	104	101
abusive behavior	1.483	2.182
mass mailings	160	182
<b>total</b>	<b>1.957</b>	<b>2.738</b>

## Antisemitic incidents by month in 2020 and 2021



## Victims of antisemitic incidents

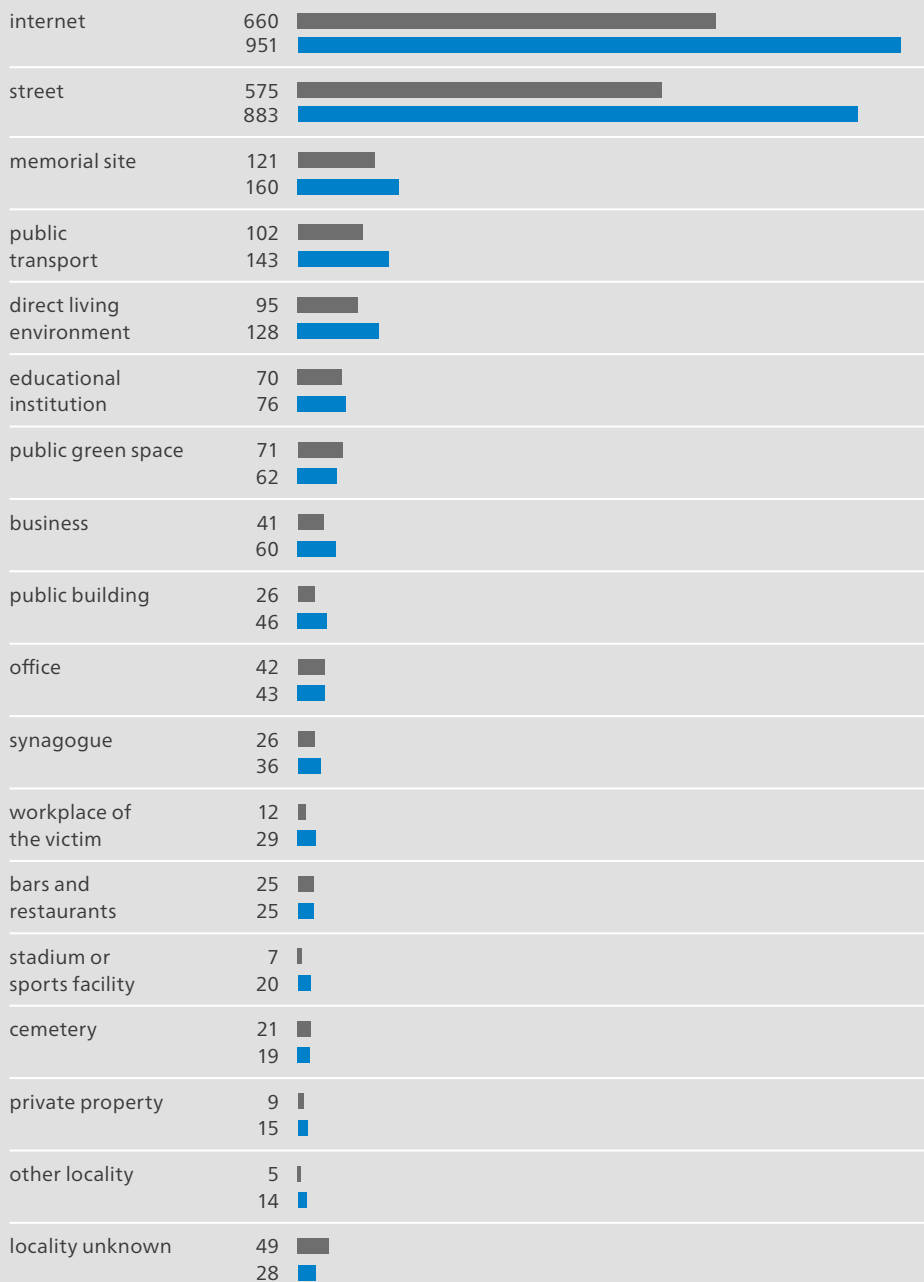
### Victims of antisemitic incidents in 2020 and 2021 (number of cases)

	2020	2021
Jewish/Israeli institutions	463	521
memorials/memorial initiatives	120	220
civic society	48	86
institutions addressed as Jewish/Israeli	10	12
parties	15	38
police	6	5
press	2	1
other non-Jewish institutions	23	60
unknown institutions	0	1
<b>total</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>944</b>

### Victims in 2020 and 2021 (number of cases)

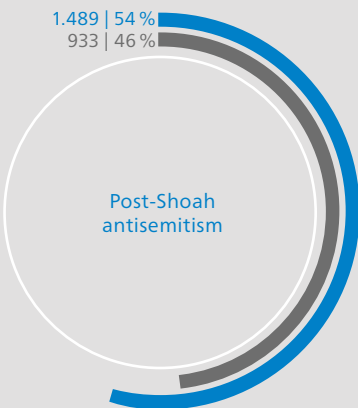
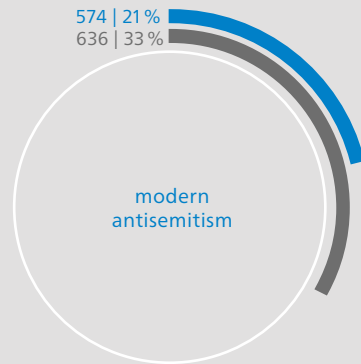
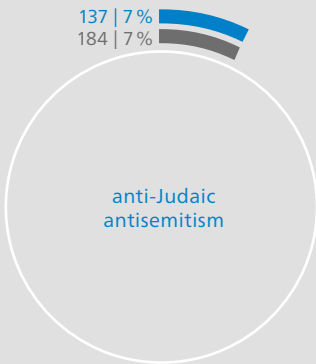
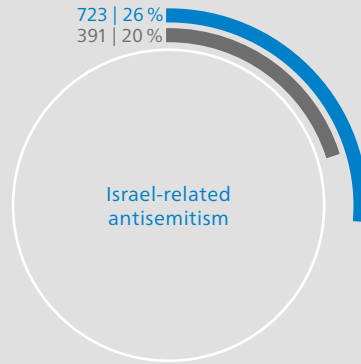
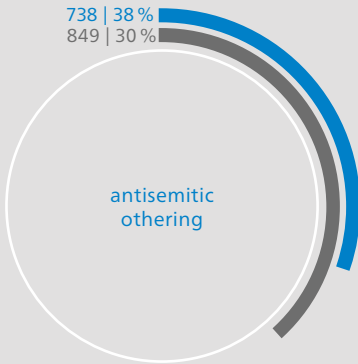
	2020	2021
Jewish/Israeli individuals	316	518
individuals addressed as Jewish/Israeli	104	116
persons addressed as political opponents	26	80
politicians	20	21
representatives of civic society	19	22
representatives of memorial initiatives, e.g. memorials to victims of Nazi	2	14
police officers	11	5
members of the press	10	5
other non-Jewish persons	98	110
unknown individuals	111	73
<b>total</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>964</b>

## Locations of antisemitic incidents in 2020 and 2021



# Manifestations of antisemitism in 2020 and 2021<sup>6</sup>

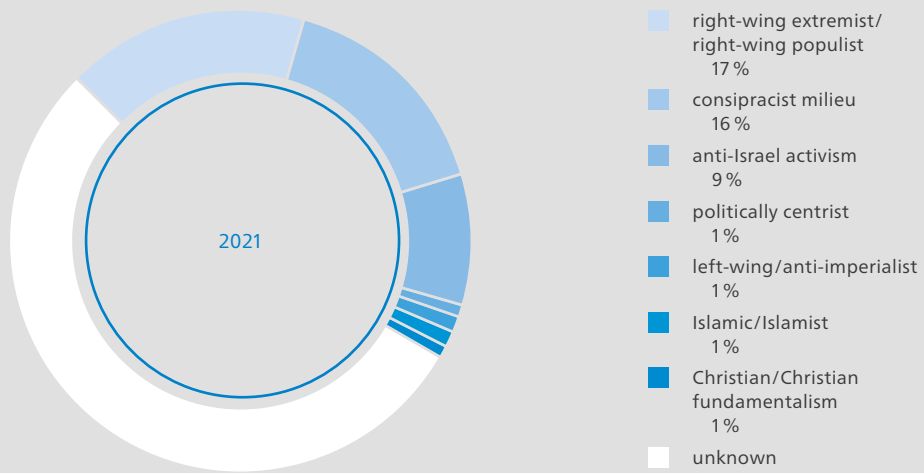
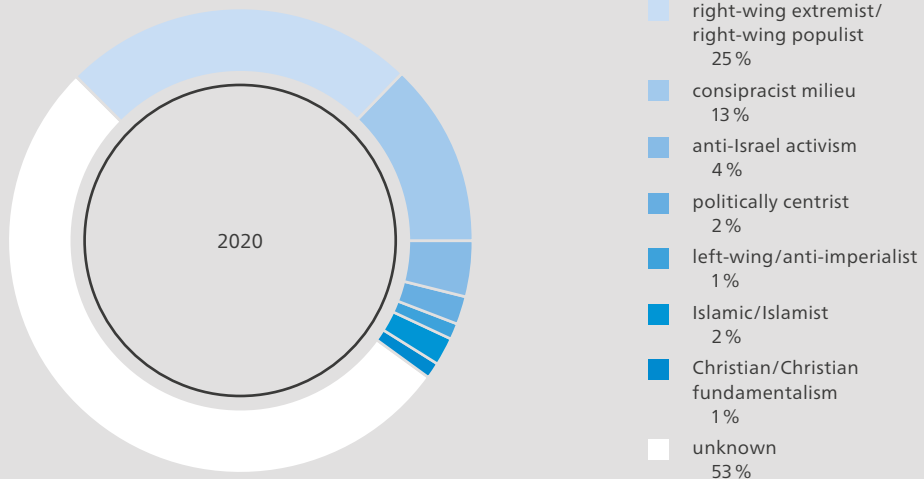
Proportion of incidents with the respective content in the total number of incidents



<sup>6</sup> In the content manifestation category, an antisemitic incident can be assigned more than once, so that the total sum of percentages can exceed 100 %.



## Political-ideological background of antisemitic incidents in 2020 and 2021





**Federal Association RIAS e.V.**  
Federal Association of Departments for  
Research and Information on Antisemitism

You can report your experiences and observations of antisemitic incidents at any time via **[www.report-antisemitism.de](http://www.report-antisemitism.de)**.

## Federal Association RIAS on the Internet:

[www.report-antisemitism.de](http://www.report-antisemitism.de)

[instagram.com/riasbundesverband](https://www.instagram.com/riasbundesverband)

[facebook.com/BundesverbandRIAS](https://www.facebook.com/BundesverbandRIAS)

[twitter.com/Report\\_Antisem](https://twitter.com/Report_Antisem)

The publication "Antisemitic Incidents in Germany in 2021" was financed by the Federal Government Commissioner for Jewish Life and Against Antisemitism.

Gefördert durch:



Beauftragter der Bundesregierung  
für jüdisches Leben und  
den Kampf gegen Antisemitismus

aufgrund eines Beschlusses  
des Deutschen Bundestages