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ANALYSIS OF **ANTI-SEMITISM** IN FRANCE

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January 2020

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ANALYSIS OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN FRANCE

The increase in anti-Semitic acts since the early 2000s raises questions about the extent to which this phenomenon exists in France. What is the proportion of French people of Jewish faith or culture who have been victims of an anti-Semitic act? What are these victims' profiles? What is the overall feeling of French Jews regarding the prevalence and evolution of anti-Semitic acts? How does society as a whole view anti-Semitism in France?

The statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior cannot claim to provide exhaustive answers to these questions, as existing data are based primarily on filed complaints that are only the "tip of the iceberg". In this context, the Fondation pour l'innovation politique and AJC have carried out a quantitative survey (administered by Ifop) which aims to make an acute and objective analysis of this phenomenon. The survey is based on the overlapping perspectives of French people of Jewish faith or culture (a sample of 505 people was selected) and the general public (a sample of 1,027 people was selected). The survey provides new quantitative data on this phenomenon. Here are the main findings.

OUR PREVIOUS WORK ON ANTI-SEMITISM

Dominique Reynié and Simone Rodan-Benzaquen, *Anti-Semitic attitudes in France: New insights*, Fondation pour l'innovation politique and AJC, November 2014.

Dominique Reynié, *Future Memories*, Fondation pour l'innovation politique and Fondation pour la mémoire de la Shoah, January 2015.

Mehdi Ghourigate, Iannis Roder and Dominique Schnapper, Foreword by Dominique Reynié and Simone Rodan-Benzaquen, *France : les juifs vus par les musulmans. Entre stéréotypes et méconnaissances*, Fondation pour l'innovation politique and AJC, May 2017.

Johannes Due Enstad, *Violence antisémite en Europe 2005-2015*, Fondation pour l'innovation politique, September 2017.

METHODOLOGY

With which tools and according to which principles did Ifop question this population, which is particularly complex to investigate because of its small weight in the French population as a whole?

- **The target of the survey**

For this survey, Ifop chose an approach based on religious and cultural affiliation to Judaism. Ifop has thus chosen to question not only French people who declare themselves to be of Jewish faith but also those who have at least one parent of Jewish faith or culture.

- **The sampling method**

Because of the ban on the collection of data about religion in metropolitan France (the last official census of religious affiliations dates back to 1872), official statistics (from INSEE, INED) do not provide the sociodemographic structure of people of the Jewish faith. In this context, Ifop chose to isolate a sub-sample of 505 French people declaring to be of Jewish faith or culture, apart from the cumulative representative national samples corresponding to a total of 33,670 people representative of the French population aged 18 and over. The representativeness of the cumulative sample was ensured by the quota method (sex, age, occupation of the respondent) after stratification by region and type of agglomeration.

- **The method of collection and field of investigation**

Interviews were conducted via self-administered online questionnaires and face-to-face questionnaires from 14th October to 19th November 2019.

- **The implementation of a “control” sample**

In order to be able to put the feelings of French people of Jewish faith or culture into perspective (in terms of security, optimism...), Ifop asked certain questions in parallel to a “control” sample of people representative of the French population as a whole. The representativeness of the general public sample was ensured by the quota method (sex, age, occupation of the respondent) after stratification by region and type of agglomeration.

PART ONE - THE ANALYSIS

I. THE FEELING THAT ANTI-SEMITISM IS PRESENT AND ON THE RISE IS AS PREVALENT AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC AS IT IS AMONG FRENCH PEOPLE OF JEWISH FAITH OR CULTURE.

■ **Anti-Semitism: a phenomenon perceived as important and on the rise by French people of Jewish faith or culture as well as by the general public.**

The perceptions of French people of Jewish faith or culture and of the general public converge regarding the prevalence and perceived resurgence of anti-Semitism. The dominant opinion, both among Jews and the general public, is that there is a lot of anti-Semitism in France: 67% of Jews and 47% of the general public believe that there is a high level of anti-Semitism in France (compared to 22% and 27% who believe that there is a low level of anti-Semitism in France, and 11% and 26% who chose not to answer). This phenomenon is also perceived to be growing: 77% of Jews and 53% of the general public believe that it is increasing (compared with 12% and 18% who believe it is decreasing and 11% and 29% who did not respond).

■ **A third of French people of Jewish faith or culture feel threatened because of their religious affiliation.**

Only 42% of Jews report that they never feel threatened in their daily lives because of their religious affiliation. Conversely, 34% said they feel threatened often or from time to time. This proportion is much higher than that observed in the French population as a whole (8%). The sense of threat is even more prevalent among Jews under the age of 35 (43%) and among those who declare themselves to be observant (45%).

Jews in France are also more likely to indicate that they feel threatened because of their ethnic origins (19% compared to 10% of the total French population). The sense of threat associated with gender (16%) or sexual orientation (8%), on the other hand, is comparable to that observed among the general public (15% and 6%).

II. A VERY PROBLEMATIC EXPERIENCE IN THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF SOME FRENCH PEOPLE OF JEWISH FAITH OR CULTURE.

■ **In addition to the feeling of a phenomenon that is present and on the rise, 70% of French people of Jewish faith or culture say they have been victims of at least one anti-Semitic act in their lifetime.**

The results of the survey make it possible to measure the extent of this phenomenon in France: a total of 70% of Jews indicate that they have been victims of at least one anti-Semitic act in their lifetime. Beyond this general indicator, the survey focused on assessing this phenomenon in a multifaceted dimension. In order to do so, respondents were asked about the various anti-Semitic acts to which they may have been exposed (verbal or physical aggression, theft or degradation, etc.). The survey highlights the very high exposure of Jews in France to various forms of verbal abuse. In total, almost two-thirds of respondents report having experienced at least one verbal anti-Semitic attack (64%). Nearly one in two Jews report that they have been repeatedly subjected to mockery or upsetting remarks (44%) and a total of 63% have experienced it at least once. One out of two respondents also indicated that they have been insulted because they were Jewish (48%, including 25% claiming it has occurred repeatedly). Finally, 22% of French people of Jewish faith or culture state that they have received threats against themselves or their property because of their belonging to the Jewish community.

French Jews are not spared from physical violence: 23% of them report having been victims of physical abuse at least once, with 10% reporting having been confronted by this physical violence on several occasions.

A detailed analysis of the victims' profiles reveals an overexposure of certain segments of the surveyed population to anti-Semitic violence. This is particularly the case for young people who appear to be "on the frontline". For example, 84% of 18-24 year-olds reported having experienced at least one act of anti-Semitism (compared to 70% of all respondents), 79% reported being the victim of a verbal assault (compared to 64%),

1. "Le regard des étudiants sur l'antisémitisme", a survey conducted by Ifop for the UEJF (French Jewish students association) in March 2019.

and 39% reported having been victim to a physical assault. These data thus corroborate the results of the Ifop-UEJF survey carried out in March 2019 among 405 Jewish students, which revealed an overexposure of young people to anti-Semitic acts in the context of student life .

The analysis of the victims' profiles also highlights an enhanced phenomenon among the most observant Jews. Among them, 74% reported having experienced at least one case of verbal anti-Semitic abuse (compared to 64% of all respondents). The most observant Jews are also often those who display a dress code that expresses their belonging to Judaism and are thus more easily "identifiable" as Jews.

■ More than one French citizen in five has already heard someone close to them denigrate Jews.

As a sign that anti-Semitism is not a marginal phenomenon, 22% of the French indicate that they have already heard someone in their entourage speak ill of Jews. This is a stable proportion compared to 2016 and 2014. Moreover, 40% of French people say they have witnessed jokes and discussions conveying prejudice about or implicating Jews or the Shoah. Another 16% and 9% reported having seen verbal and physical abuse against a person of the Jewish faith because of his or her identity. It should be noted that this proportion is almost twice as high among French people describing themselves as supporting the "Yellow Vests" (28% and 17%).

■ Schools and public spaces: the main areas in which anti-Semitic violence takes place.

Two spaces appear as salient places for the act of anti-Semitic violence: on the street and in schools. More than one out of two respondents reporting verbal abuse indicated that they had been insulted or threatened on the street (55% of whom 32% had been insulted or threatened several times). Moreover, it is on the street that physical abuse most often occurs: 59% of victims claim to have been physically assaulted in this space.

Moreover, anti-Semitic violence also takes place in schools: 54% of respondents who had been verbally attacked explained that they had been insulted or threatened in a school or during extracurricular activities.

Schools are not immune to anti-Semitic physical violence, with 26% of victims claiming to have experienced at least one of such acts in a school environment.

Beyond public spaces and schools, no place seems to be completely free from anti-Semitism. For example, the workplace - although seemingly more regulated - is cited by almost one in two victims of verbal abuse (46%) as a place of aggression.

■ Faced with violence, French people of Jewish faith or culture apply strategies of avoidance and concealment.

This climate leads some French people of Jewish faith or culture to avoid certain places (43% for all those questioned and 55% for those who have suffered an anti-Semitic attack) but also to adopt a strategy of invisibility. One-third avoid displaying symbols such as mezuzahs as an expression of their belonging to Judaism (37% and 47% for victims) or wear clothing that expresses their Jewish culture (33% and 40%). Furthermore, a quarter of the respondents (and a third of the victims) state that they have already avoided revealing their belonging to the Jewish community in their workplace.

Fear of or exposure to anti-Semitic violence leads some French people of Jewish faith or culture to consider changing neighbourhoods (22% and 31% for victims), or even to a lesser extent, moving to another city (17% and 24%) or region (15% and 21%).

■ More than one French citizen of Jewish faith or culture out of two has already considered leaving France.

52% of French Jews have considered leaving France, 21% because of fears about the future of the Jewish community, 12% for economic reasons, 13% because of fears about the future of France and 6% for cultural reasons. This inclination to emigrate is corroborated by the figures communicated by the Jewish Agency concerning the departures of French Jews to Israel. In 2014, 7,231 French Jews made their "Alya", making France (in that record year) the leading source of emigration to Israel.

III. THE OPINIONS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND FRENCH PEOPLE OF JEWISH FAITH OR CULTURE DIVERGE ON THE ROOT CAUSES OF ANTI-SEMITISM.

■ Anti-Semitism, a phenomenon perceived as having multiple causes.

Prejudices about Jews are seen by the general public as the main cause of anti-Semitism in France (58%), followed by Islamism (36%), which is more often cited by French people of Jewish faith or culture (45%). They rank prejudices second (42%). They also mention, almost at the same level, ideas of the far-right (26%) and ideas of the far-left (23%). On this point, we observe a significant divergence with the general public, who identify far-right ideas much more than far-left ideas as the cause of anti-Semitism (30% versus 9%).

IV. AN AWARENESS OF ANTI-SEMITISM AS A PROBLEM THAT CONCERNS SOCIETY AS A WHOLE.

■ Anti-Semitism is perceived as much by the general public as by French people of Jewish faith or culture as a problem that concerns society as a whole.

The general public and the Jews of France are in fairly broad agreement that anti-Semitism is everyone's problem and concerns society as a whole. This opinion is shared by 73% of the general public and 72% of French people of Jewish faith or culture. On the other hand, only 21% of the latter believe that it is exclusively Jewish people's problem. This opinion is even less pronounced among the general public (8%).

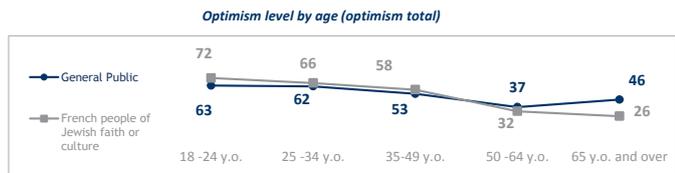
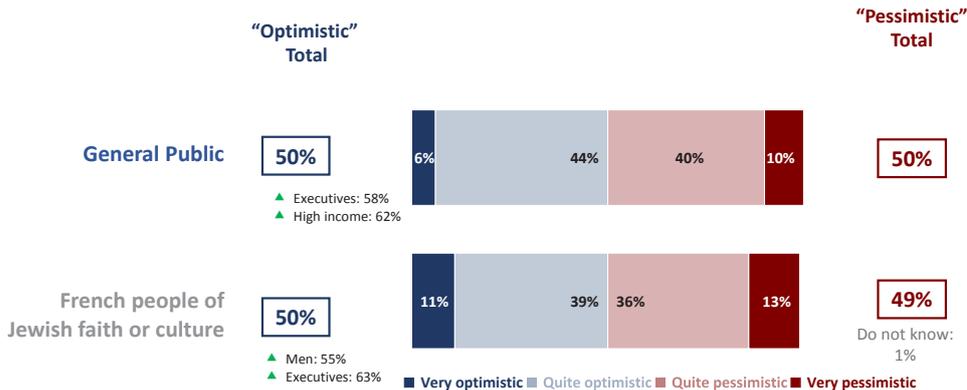
The results of this survey highlight the fact that anti-Semitism in France cannot be reduced to a few sordid events. Beyond the feeling of a phenomenon perceived as present and on the rise, this study reveals that a significant portion of French people of Jewish faith or culture have already been exposed to anti-Semitic acts over the course of their lives. This climate of fear pushes some of them to implement avoidance strategies, or even to consider exile from the national territory. Nevertheless, this survey reveals an encouraging fact: an awareness among the general public that anti-Semitism cannot be limited to the Jewish community alone, but concerns society as a whole.

PART TWO- THE RESULTS

I. SENSE OF INSECURITY

The level of optimism regarding the future

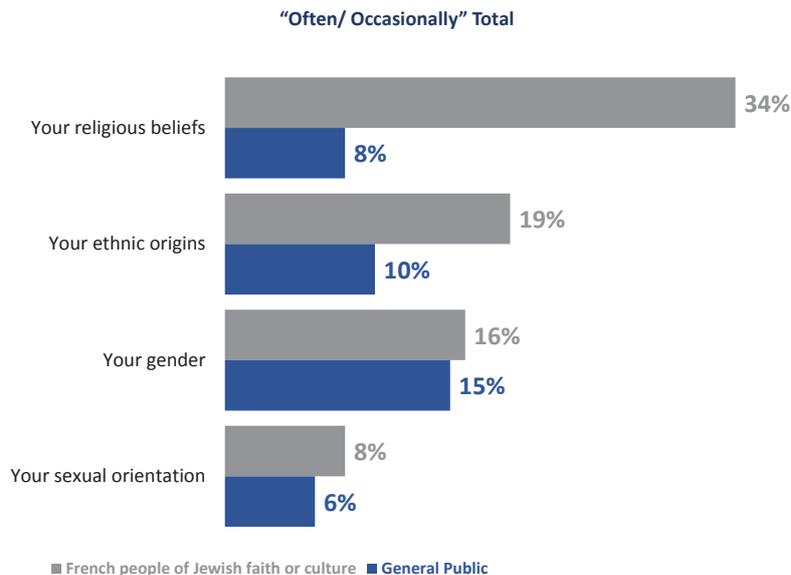
Question: Generally, regarding the future, would you say that you are...?



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The feeling of being threatened due to religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender or origins

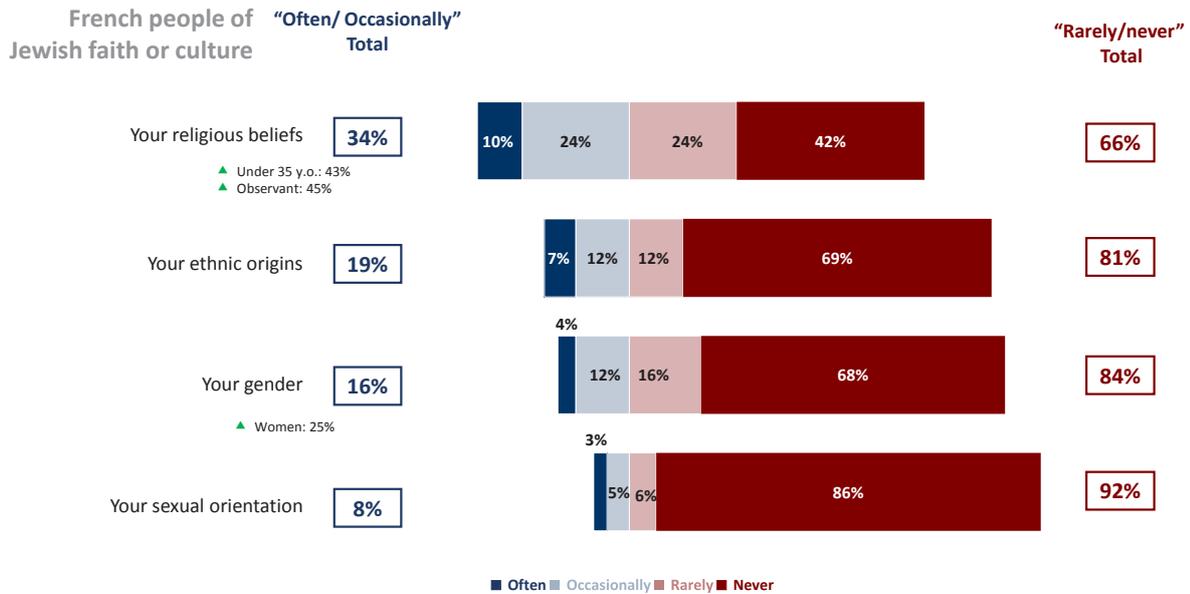
Question: On a daily basis, do you feel threatened due to...?



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The feeling of being threatened due to religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender or origins

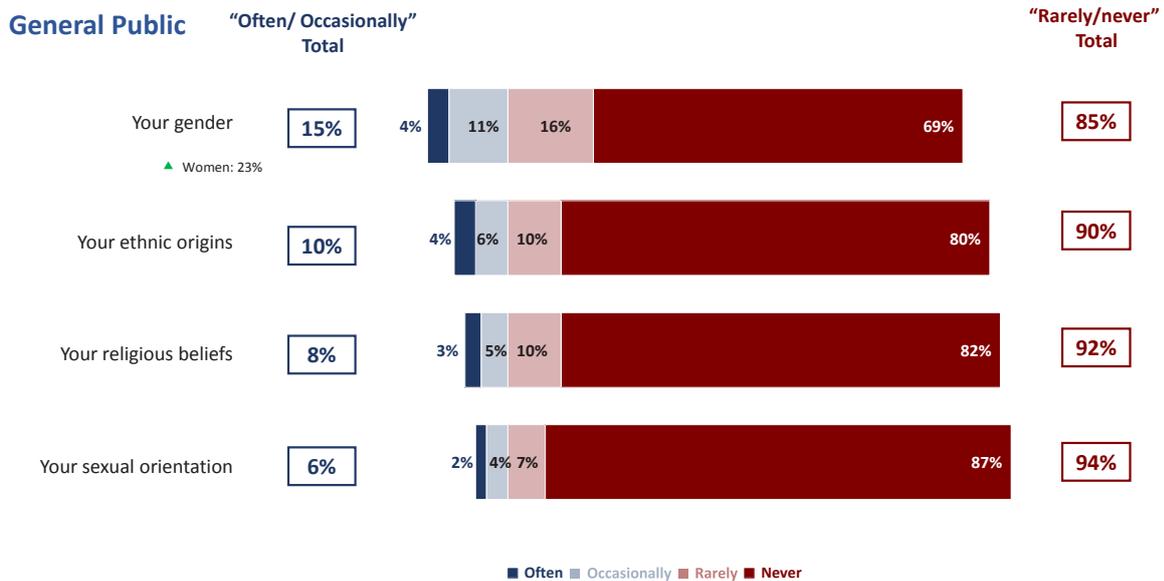
Question: On a daily basis, do you feel threatened due to...?



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The feeling of being threatened due to religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender or origins

Question: On a daily basis, do you feel threatened due to...?

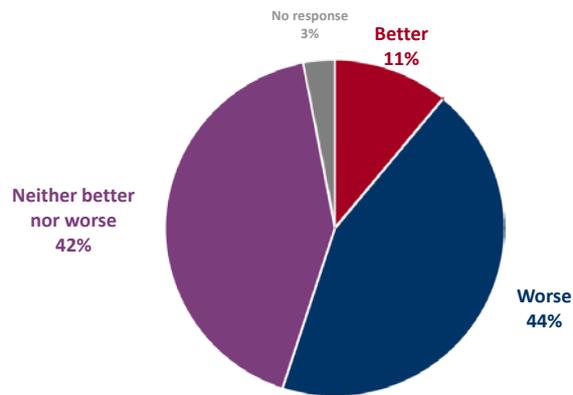


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The feeling that the situation for French Jews has improved, worsened or is no better or worse than during the previous year

Question: In comparison with last year, would you say that the situation for French people of Jewish faith or culture in France in terms of safety is...?

French people of Jewish faith or culture

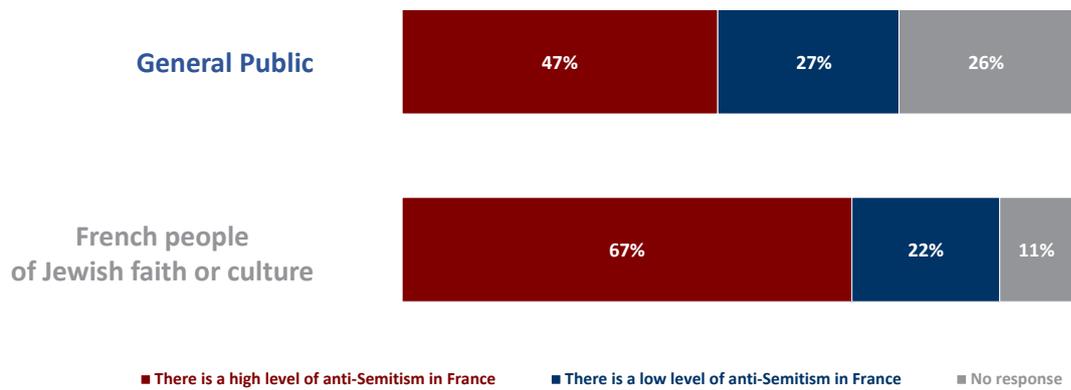


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II. PREVALENCE AND PERCEIVED EVOLUTION OF RACISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM

The feeling that there is a high or low level of anti-Semitism in France

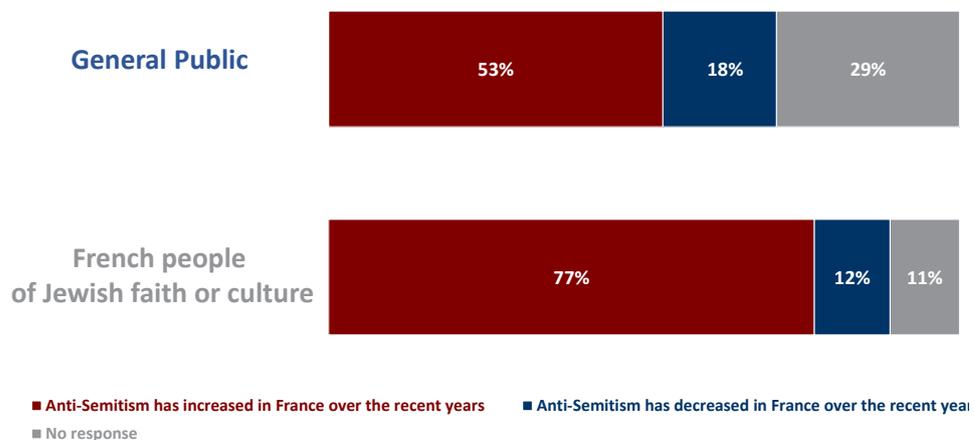
Question: With which of the following statements do you most agree?



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The feeling that anti-Semitism is increasing or decreasing

Question: With which of the following statements do you most agree?



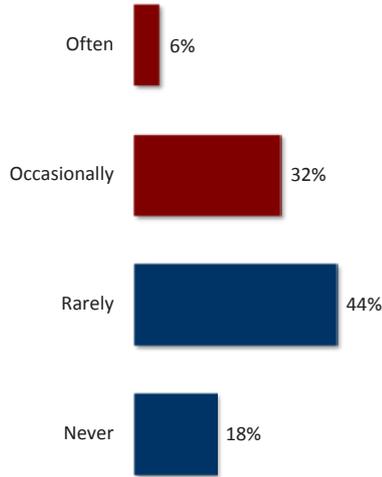
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III. ANTI-SEMITIC BEHAVIOUR: OBSERVATIONS AND VICTIMISATION

Witnessing anti-Semitic remarks by people in one's immediate circle

Question: Have you ever heard someone, in your immediate circle, denigrate Jewish people?

General Public

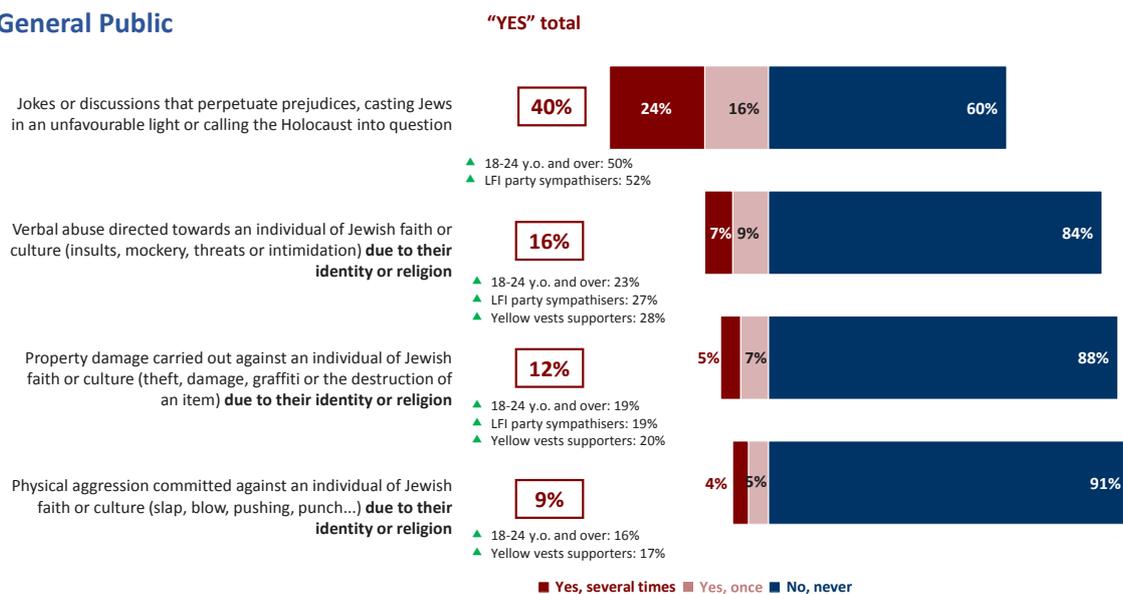


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Observation of anti-Semitic acts

Question: At any point in your life, have you witnessed any of the following behaviours?

General Public

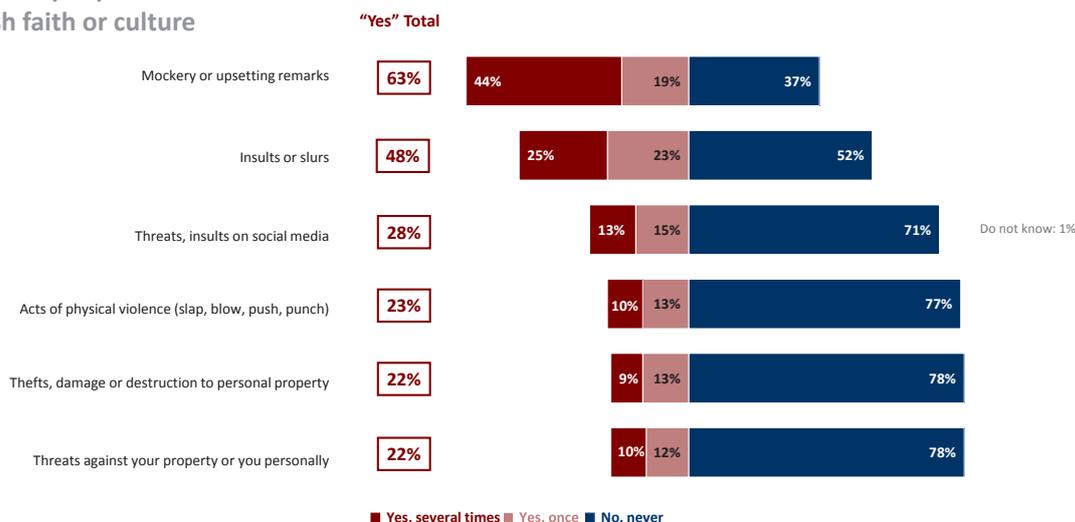


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Experience of anti-Semitic acts

Question: At any point in your life, have you personally been subjected to any of the following as a result of being part of the Jewish community...?

French people of Jewish faith or culture



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Experience of anti-Semitic acts

Detailed results

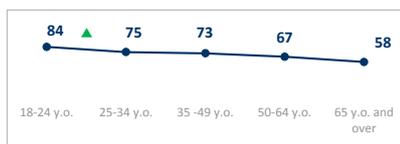
Question: Over the course of your life, have you personally been subjected to any of the following as a result of being part of the Jewish community...?

Victim of at least one anti-Semitic act: 70%

By gender



By age



By religious practice

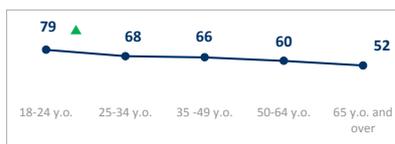


Victim of at least one act of verbal abuse: 64%

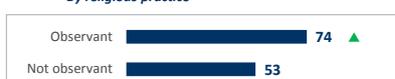
By gender



By age

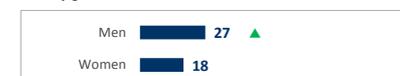


By religious practice

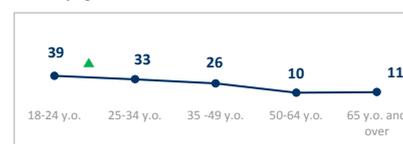


Victim of an act of physical abuse: 23%

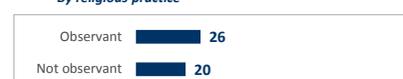
By gender



By age



By religious practice

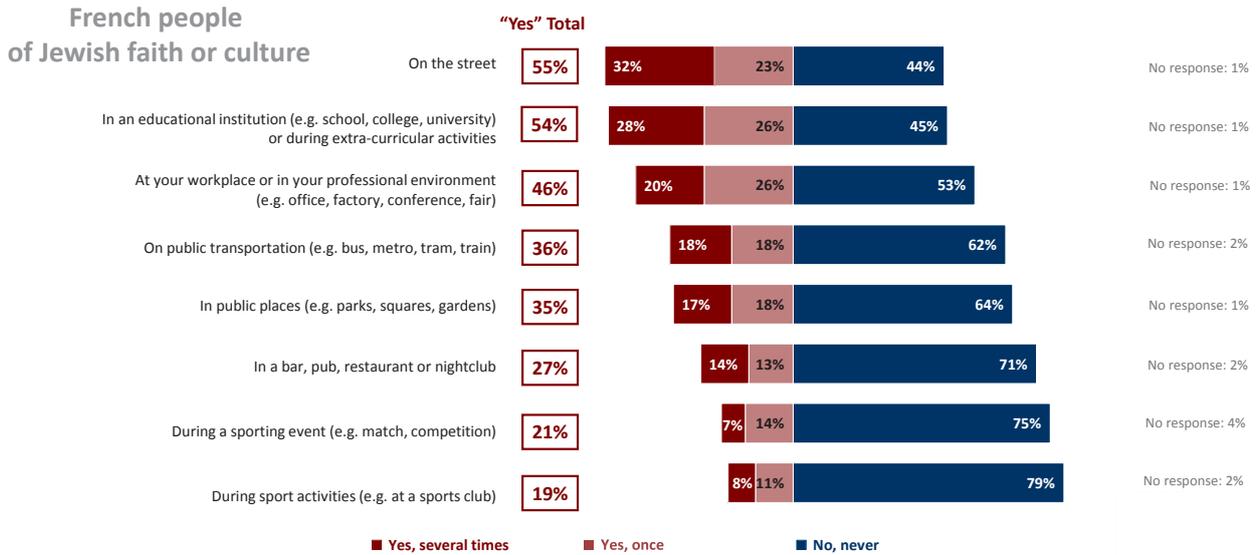


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Locations where anti-Semitic verbal abuse has taken place

Question: Have you been subjected to insults or verbal threats in any of the following places as a result of being part of the Jewish community?

Basis: question asked to individuals who have suffered verbal abuse, namely 64% of the sample

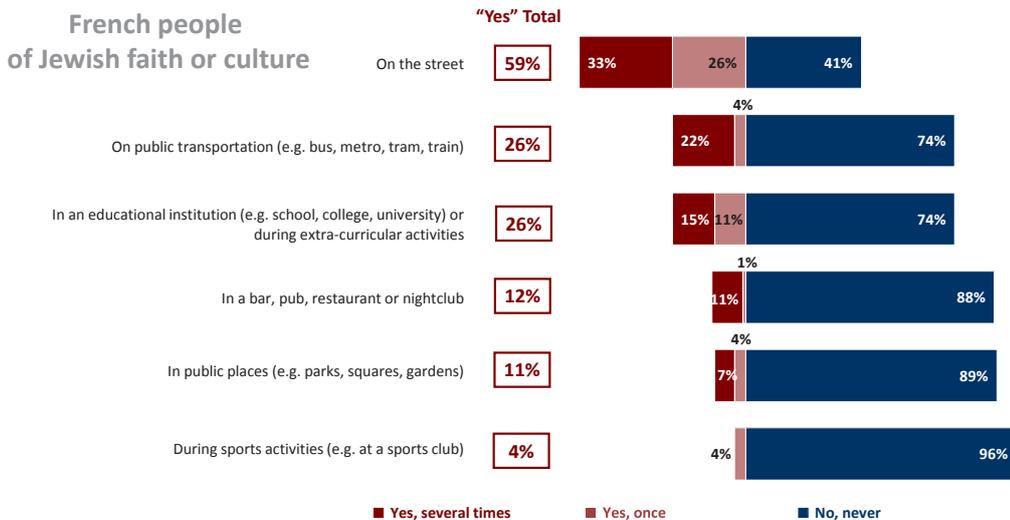


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Locations where anti-Semitic physical abuse has taken place

Question: Have you been personally subjected to physical abuse in any of the following places as a result of being part of the Jewish community?

Basis: question asked to individuals who have suffered physical abuse, namely 23% of the sample



No respondent mentioned physical abuse occurring at their place of work or during a sporting event

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Adoption of evasive behaviour

Overview: "Yes" Total

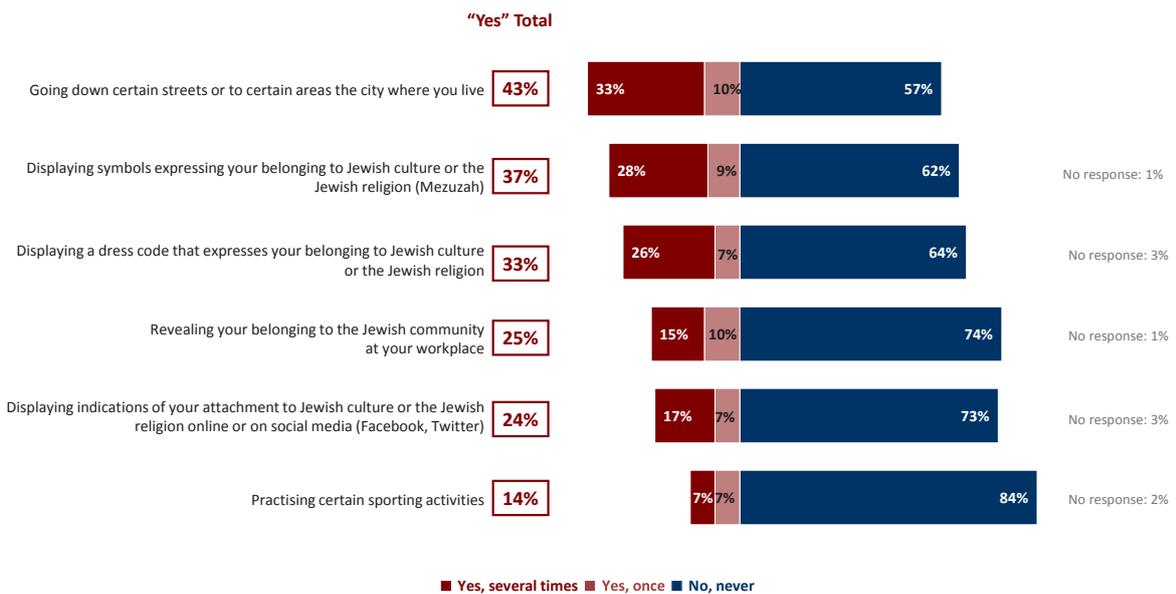
Question: Over the course of your life, out of fear (or having been a victim) of mockery, insults or abuse, have you ever avoided any of the following...?



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Adoption of evasive behaviour

Question: Over the course of your life, out of fear (or having been a victim) of mockery, insults or abuse, have you ever avoided any of the following...?

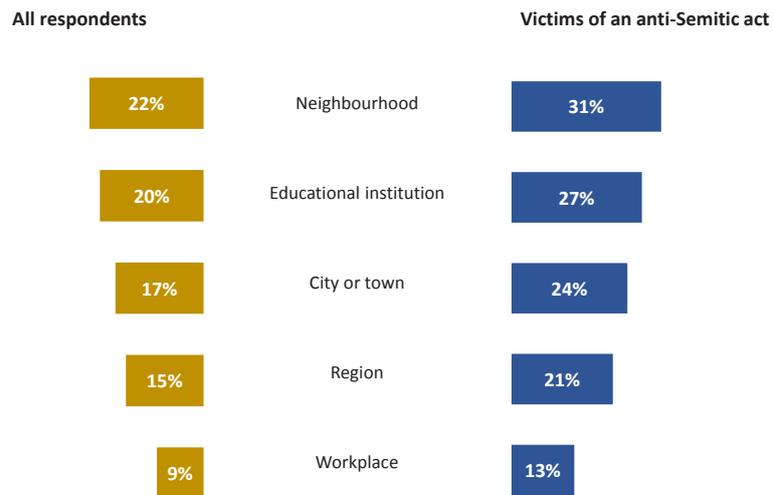


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Intentions to change place of residence due to anti-Semitic acts, either suffered or anticipated

Overview: "Yes" Total

Question: Over the course of your life, out of fear for you or your children (or having been a victim) of mockery, insults or anti-Semitic Abuse, have you ever considered moving to a different...?

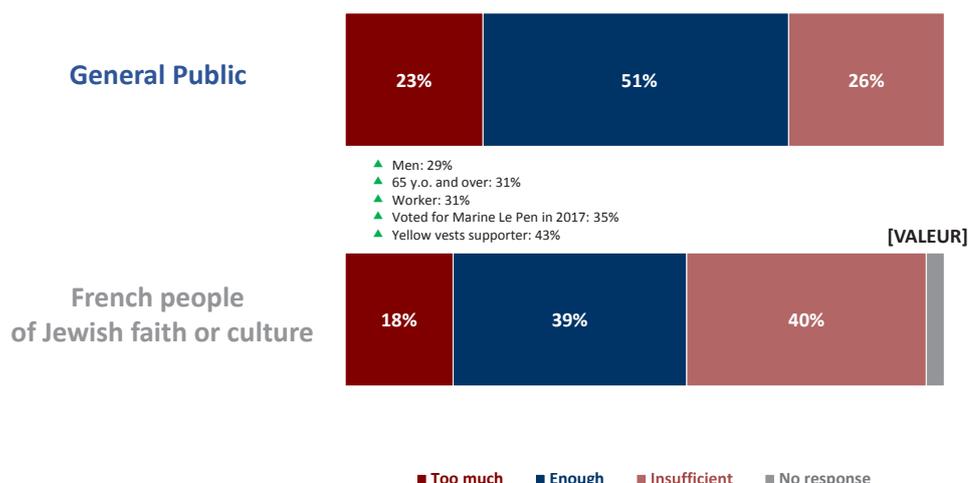


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IV. PERCEPTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY'S AND THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES' MOBILISATION

The feeling that the problem of anti-Semitism receives too much, enough or insufficient attention

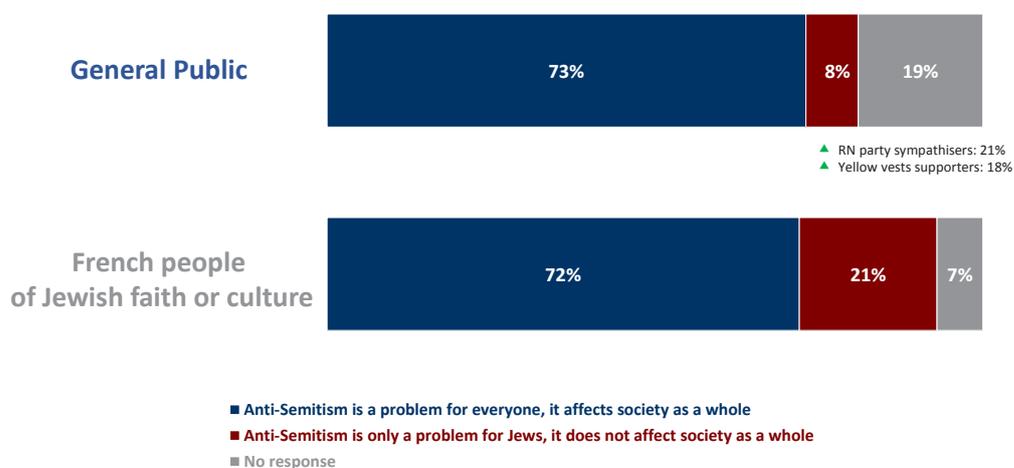
Question: In your opinion, does the problem of anti-Semitism receive too much, enough or insufficient attention in France?



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The feeling that anti-Semitism only concerns Jews or, by contrast, society as a whole

Question: Which of these two opinions are you most closely aligned with?

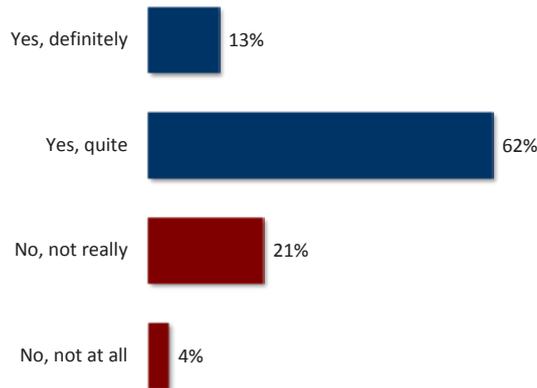


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The feeling of being personally worried about anti-Semitism

Question: Do you feel personally worried about anti-Semitism in France?

General Public

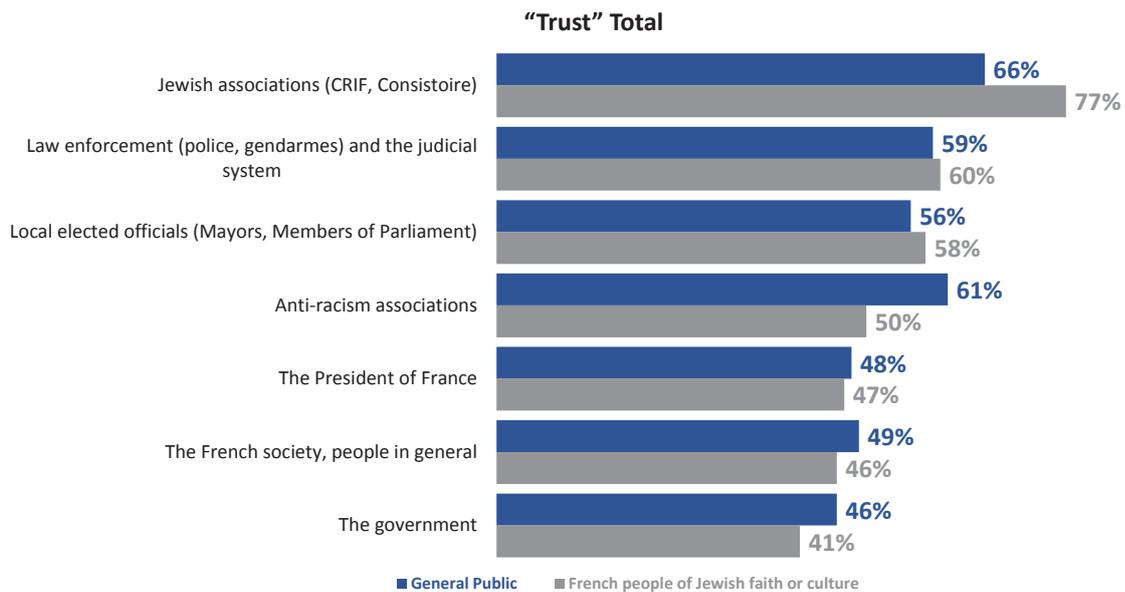


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Trust in different stakeholders to combat anti-Semitism

Overview: Trust Total

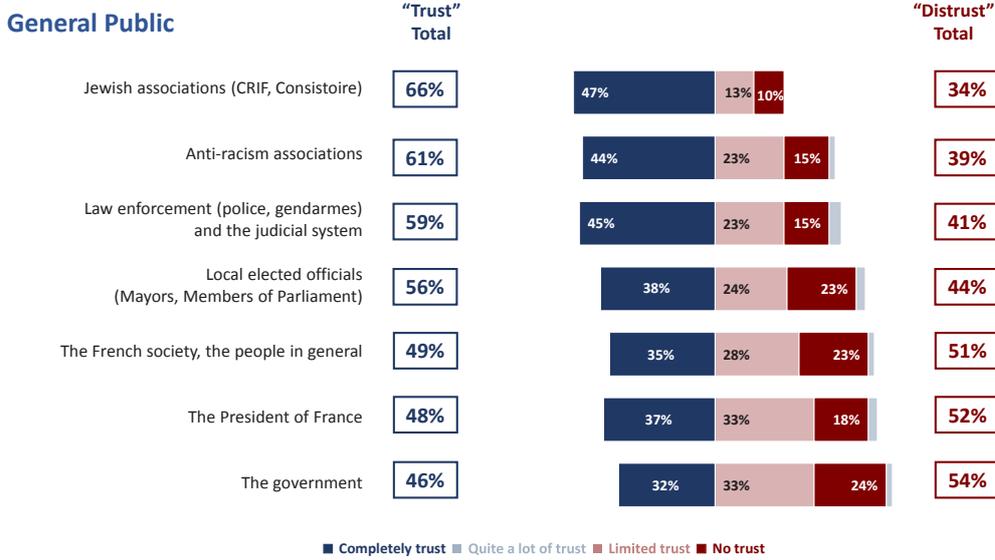
Question: Do you trust each of the following stakeholders to tackle anti-Semitism in France?



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Trust in different stakeholders to combat anti-Semitism

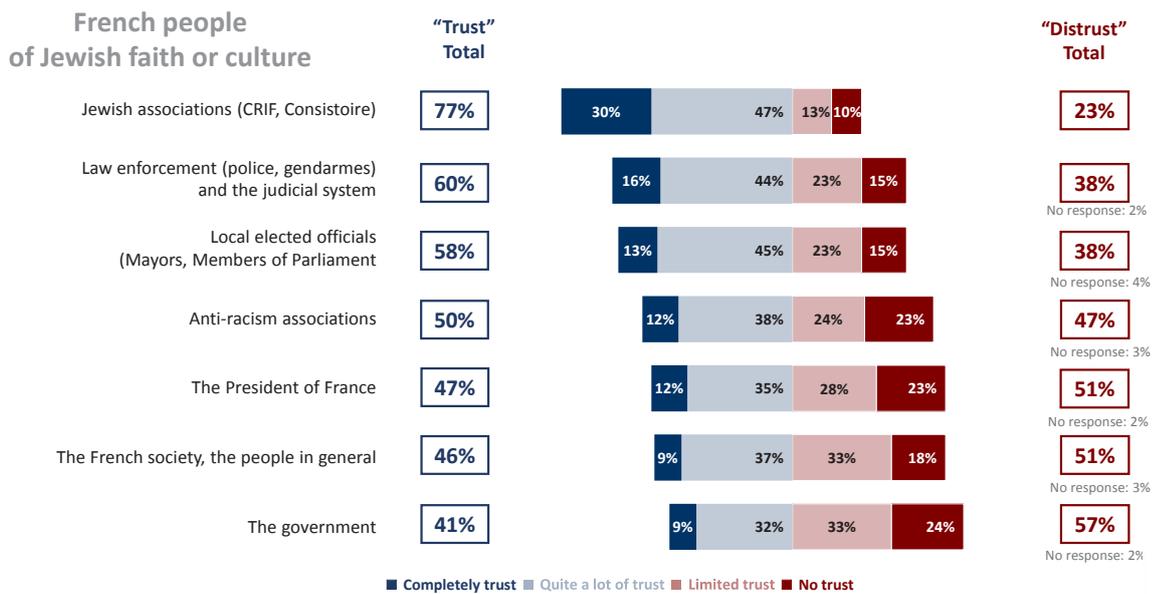
Question: Do you trust each of the following stakeholders to tackle anti-Semitism in France?



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Trust in different stakeholders to combat anti-Semitism

Question: Do you trust each of the following stakeholders to tackle anti-Semitism in France?

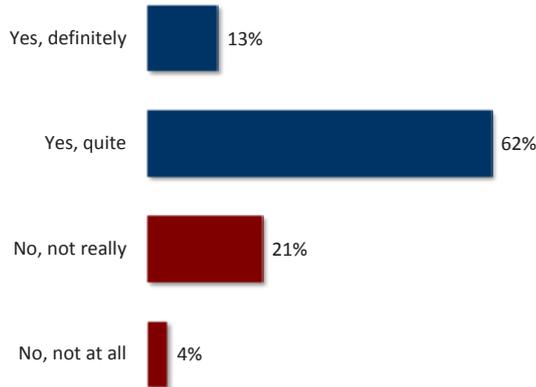


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The feeling that French Jews are safe in France

Question: Do you believe that French people of Jewish faith or culture are safe in France?

General Public

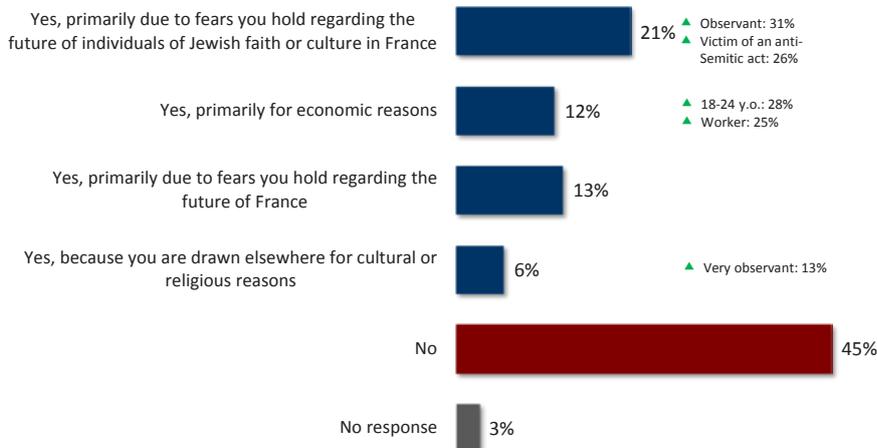


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Outlook on the future and the future of Jews in France

Question: Have you ever considered leaving France?

French people of Jewish faith or culture



52% Have considered leaving France

Recap AJC Spring 2019: 53%

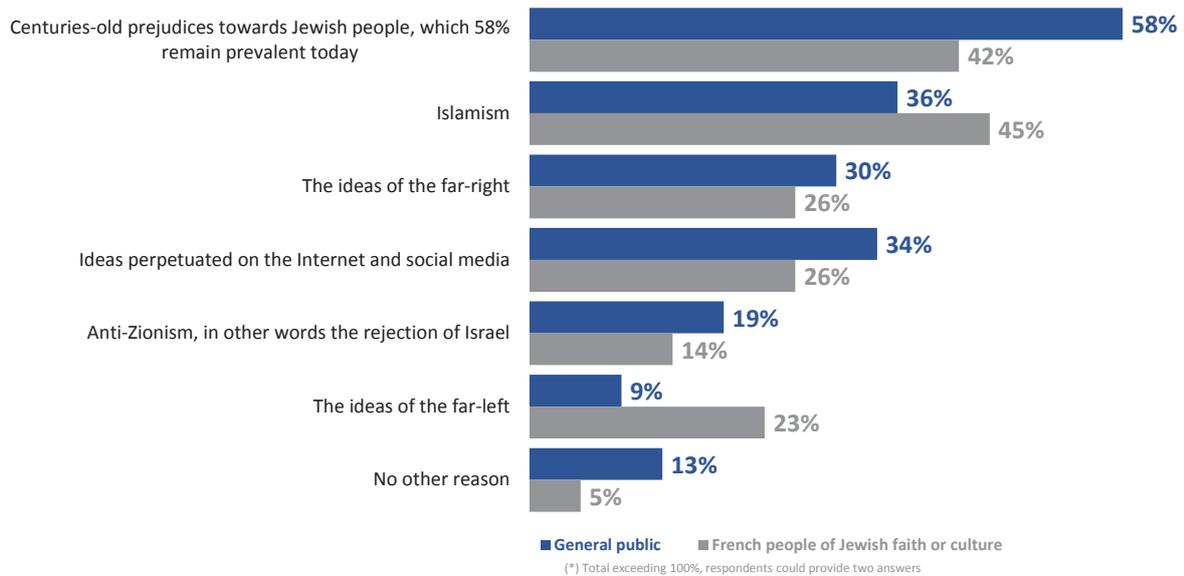
- ▲ 18-24 y.o.: 68% (versus 27% of 65 y.o. and over)
- ▲ Observant: 68%
- ▲ Often or occasionally feel threatened due to their religious beliefs: 76%
- ▲ Victim of an anti-Semitic act: 61%

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The perceived causes of anti-Semitism in France

Overview: Total answers

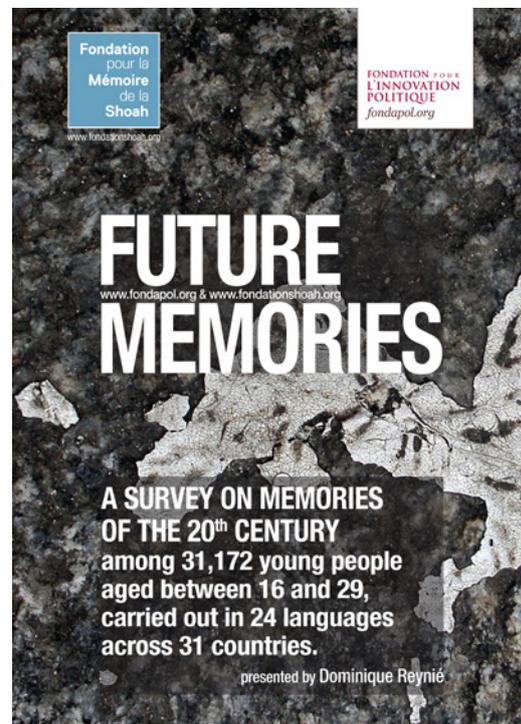
Question: In your opinion, what is the cause of anti-Semitism in France? Firstly? Secondly?



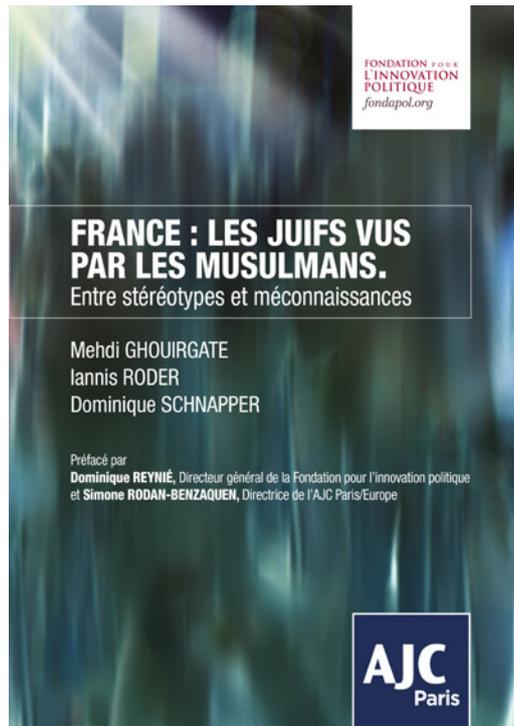
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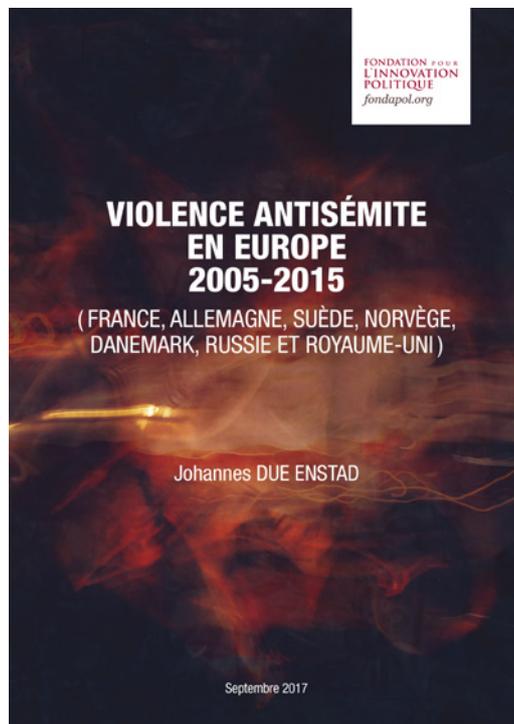
Anti-Semitism in French public opinion. New insights
 Dominique Reynié and Simone Rodan-Benzaquen, Fondation pour l'innovation politique and AJC, November 2014.



Future Memories
 Dominique Reynié, Fondation pour l'innovation politique and the Fondation pour la mémoire de la Shoah, January 2015.



France : les juifs vus par les musulmans. Entre stéréotypes et méconnaissances
Mehdi Ghouirgate, Iannis Roder and Dominique Schnapper, Preface by Dominique Reynié and Simone Rodan-Benzaquen, Fondation pour l'innovation politique and AJC, May 2017.



Violence antisémite en Europe 2005-2015
Johannes Due Enstad, Fondation pour l'innovation politique, September 2017.

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AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

IN A FEW WORDS

AJC is the largest American Jewish organisation internationally. Transpolitical, its objectives are the defence of human rights, democratic values, pluralism, the promotion of transatlantic relations and the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and all forms of discrimination.

Its European branch, AJC Europe, is headed by Simone Rodan-Benzaquen and is represented in France, Germany, Belgium, Poland and Italy.

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The increase in anti-Semitic acts since the early 2000s raises questions about the extent to which this phenomenon exists in France. What is the proportion of French people of Jewish faith or culture who have been victims of an anti-Semitic act? What are these victims' profiles? What is the overall feeling of French Jews regarding the prevalence and evolution of anti-Semitic acts? How does society as a whole view anti-Semitism in France?

The statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior cannot claim to provide exhaustive answers to these questions, as existing data are based primarily on filed complaints that are only the "tip of the iceberg". In this context, the Fondation pour l'innovation politique and AJC have carried out a quantitative survey (administered by Ifop) which aims to make an acute and objective analysis of this phenomenon. The survey is based on the overlapping perspectives of French people of Jewish faith or culture (a sample of 505 people was selected) and the general public (a sample of 1,027 people was selected). The survey provides new quantitative data on this phenomenon. Here are the main findings.



January 2020