

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NOA-Networks Overcoming Antisemitism project, launched in 2019, is an innovative effort to develop new public-civil society partnerships and enhance collaboration within the nongovernmental sector to support the European Council's Declarations on fighting antisemitism and fostering Jewish life on the continent.<sup>1</sup> This report showcases the current policy landscape in 10 areas: culture, education, hate crime, hate speech, Holocaust remembrance, intercultural dialogue, media, religious freedom, security, and sport. The research demonstrates that there is still much the Italian government can and should do to combat antisemitism.

## KEY FINDINGS

1. The country is strongest in legislation addressing the more serious and escalated forms of antisemitism, such as laws concerning security, hate crime, and hate speech. It is weakest in implementation measures aimed at preventing discrimination that targets Jewish people and communities.
2. The policy area that scored the highest is religious freedom, with a long-standing framework of policies in place despite a legislative landscape that is not fully defined. This is likely a reflection of the particular nature of Church-State relations in Italy.
3. The two policy areas that received the next highest scores are security and Holocaust remembrance. This demonstrates meaningful steps have been taken towards the country's recognition of its responsibility towards its Jewish citizens throughout history and today.
4. The areas with the most opportunity for improvement and impact are education, culture, sports, intercultural dialogue, media, and the monitoring of hate speech and hate crime. These policy areas are essential to building societal resilience to extremism and preventing the escalation of antisemitism.
5. Coordination and communication are frequently identified as "weak spots" in implementing Italy's National Strategy against Antisemitism. This indicates a considerable opportunity for positive growth and development with long-term impact.

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/12/06/fight-against-antisemitism-council-declaration/> and <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/12/02/antisemitism-council-declaration-on-fighting-antisemitism/>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITALIAN POLICY-MAKERS

1. Provide the necessary resources to the Office of the National Coordinator for the Fight against Antisemitism to fulfil its mandate. Bring together the relevant ministries, agencies and civil society organisations to monitor progress and develop future activities.
2. Ensure coordination of a holistic, intersectional strategy that supports and enriches current and future iterations of the National Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and the National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR).
3. Provide funding to sustain, improve and scale up existing good practices so that activities can achieve their desired impact. Establish a framework for governmental institutions and agencies to support the work and projects of civil society organisations and community-based organisations by jointly applying to European Union funds available to public bodies.
4. Facilitate cooperation across policy areas to maximise the use of resources.
5. Embrace Italy's unique Jewish heritage and cultural capital as a positive resource for countering antisemitism and fostering Jewish life. Encourage the use of cultural sites, centres and programmes as vectors for local intercultural dialogue, cooperation and consciousness-raising with accurate, diverse and non-stereotypical representations of Jews and Judaism.
6. Invest in empirical research to inform policy-makers on how best to identify and counter antisemitism and foster Jewish life.

## CONCLUSION

Antisemitism is a structural pillar of racism, and racism will not be eradicated without overcoming antisemitism. The Italian government and society have taken important steps to combat and tackle antisemitism and other forms of discrimination, but more should be done to reckon with the country's past regarding fascism, colonisation and racial laws and their impact on today's society. By acknowledging existing gaps and opportunities in current national policy and making a concerted, coordinated effort to prevent, address and eradicate antisemitism, a clearer path can be opened towards a more inclusive and democratic Europe.