

Introduction

Content-related context

In January 2012, the *Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism* presented its report on antisemitism in Germany to the *German Bundestag*. The Expert Group, whose members were academics as well as civil-society actors, had been commissioned in 2009 to prepare this report with the goal of presenting recommendations for action to fight antisemitism in German society¹ that were then to be taken up and implemented by political actors. The first expert report made clear how deeply antisemitism is still anchored in society. A package of measures was set out as well, but it was hardly taken up in the political and public discourse.²

In December 2014, roughly four years after the first Expert Group was appointed, an *Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism* was again installed, in response to a motion by the Bundestag factions of the CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP and *Alliance 90/The Green Party* and in agreement with *Die Linke (The Left)*.³ The incidence of antisemitism, which is still widespread, the fact that the recommendations for action stated in the report have hardly been implemented up to the present⁴, and the motivation to conduct research and to report »on this topic regularly and comprehensively«,⁵ which was already the basis for the first motion of the Bundestag factions, were taken as the starting point for a new motion. Events such as the Gaza conflict in 2014 and the demonstrations related to it in Germany, which were accompanied by massive antisemitic slogans and crimes, reinforced the calls for a second Expert Group and a new expert report.

The assignment: »To fight antisemitism forcefully and to continue to support Jewish life in Germany sustainably«⁶

In its motion to establish a second *Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism* (UEA), the *German Bundestag* referred to persisting antisemitism and Germany's special responsibility to confront it forcefully and to protect and support Jewish life in Germany. The assignment was to prepare a new expert report that was to fulfill three key requirements: (1) to view »antisemitism in Germany as a particular form of hostility to groups of people and to focus on specific points,« (2) »to make concrete proposals for measures to fight antisemitism against the background of the experiences from the previous reporting period« and (3) to focus particular »attention... on measures that can be implemented at the federal level.«⁷

Given Germany's federal structure, many necessary measures for fighting antisemitism cannot be implemented at the federal level alone, but also and above all concern the states (education, policing, judiciary, etc.). The Expert Group has disregarded this limitation on its remit in some areas, or has explicitly referred to the difficulties that a clear differentiation between measures at the federal level and those at the Länder and municipal levels entails.

¹ »The German Bundestag calls on the federal government to continue to intensively support and protect Jewish life in Germany in all its forms, by 1. commissioning an expert body consisting of academics and practitioners to prepare a report on antisemitism in Germany at regular intervals and to include recommendations how programs for fighting antisemitism can be developed and further developed« (German Bundestag Document 16/10776 (new) and 16/10776 of 4 November 2008), p. 3, <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/16/107/1610776.pdf> (last accessed: 13 October 2016).

² Cf. on this, e.g., Neues Deutschland, Uneinheitlich und unkoordiniert, 18 October 2012 (last accessed: 2 November 2016), or also taz, Die verschenkte Chance. Desinteresse an Antisemitismus-Studie, 17 October 2012 (last accessed: 2 November 2016).

³ German Bundestag Document C of 11 June 2013, <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/138/1713885.pdf> (last accessed: 14 October 2016).

⁴ The great willingness of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) to take up and implement the proposals in the expert report, especially in the area of prevention, through the federal program »Demokratie leben!«, should be highlighted here.

⁵ German Bundestag Document C of 11 June 2013, <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/138/1713885.pdf> (last accessed: 14 October 2016), p. 2. But also see German Bundestag Document 16/10776 (new) and 16/10776 of 4 November 2008, p. 3.

⁶ German Bundestag Document C of 11 June 2013, <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/17/138/1713885.pdf> (last accessed: 14 October 2016), p. 1 f.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Composition of the second Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism

The second UEA was appointed by Federal Minister of the Interior Dr. Thomas de Maizière following the December 2014 Bundestag decision and held its inaugural meeting on 19 January 2015. The members of the Expert Group were academics as well as actors from civil-society organizations concerned with researching and preventing antisemitism, as was also true of the previous Expert Group. Directly following the appointment of the new UEA, there was public criticism from many sides regarding its composition: None of its members were Jewish.⁸ The Jewish perception and analysis of antisemitism in Germany and the experiences they entail would have remained marginal with this composition of the Expert Group, and they could have been obtained and integrated in the report only through external expert reports. Jews would not have had a direct voice in setting the topics and participating in preparing the report, and a key perspective would have been excluded in this way.⁹ The Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Bundestag responded to the public criticism: In consultation with all the factions represented in the Bundestag, Thomas de Maizière then appointed two Jewish members to the UEA.¹⁰ The UEA, which has prepared the present report jointly, has had the following members since then:

Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism:

(in alphabetical order)

Prof. Dr. Werner Bergmann (retired)

Sociologist; Professor of Research on Antisemitism
Center for Research on Antisemitism, Technische Universität Berlin

Marina Chernivsky

Behavioral scientist and psychologist; Director, »Competence Center for Prevention and Empowerment«
Central Welfare Office of the Jews in Germany (ZWST)

Aycan Demirel

Co-founder and Director, Kreuzberg Initiative against Anti-Semitism (KIgA e.V.)

Dr. Elke Gryglewski

Political scientist; Deputy Director and Head, Educational Department
House of the Wannsee Conference Educational and Memorial Site (GHWK)

Prof. Dr. Beate Küpper

Social psychologist; Professor of Social Work and Education in Group and Conflict Situations
Hochschule Niederrhein, University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Applied Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Andreas Nachama

Historian; Rabbi; Director,
Topography of Terror Foundation

Prof. Dr. Armin Pfahl-Traugber

Political scientist and sociologist; Professor, Department of Public Safety
Federal University of Applied Administrative Sciences, Brühl

Patrick Siegele

Philologist and Musicologist; Director,
Anne Frank Zentrum (AFZ), Berlin

Dr. Juliane Wetzel

Historian
Center for Research on Antisemitism, Technische Universität Berlin

⁸ Cf. e.g.: taz, Grüne fordern jüdische Experten, 12 February 2015, <http://www.taz.de/!5020516/> (last accessed: 3.11.2015); Der Tagesspiegel, Jüdische Verbände rügen Zusammensetzung einer Expertenrunde, 10 February 2015, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/kampf-gegen-antisemitismus-juedische-verbaende-ruegen-zusammensetzung-einer-expertenrunde/11354814.html> (last accessed: 3 November 2015); Spiegel Online, Innenministerium will Antisemitismus erforschen – aber ohne Juden, 10 February 2015, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/antisemitismus-juedische-wissenschaftler-kritisieren-innenministerium-a-1017791.html> (last accessed: 3 November 2016);

⁹ A summary of the debate: <http://mediendienst-integration.de/artikel/kritik-an-zusammensetzung-antisemitismus-expertenkreis.html> (last accessed: 15 June 2016). It refers in particular to the problem that others often speak about minorities, but not with them, and that their experiences are not taken into account in the deliberations.

¹⁰ Cf. on this also <http://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2015/05/erweiterung-expertenkreis-antisemitismus.html> (last accessed: 17 November 2016).

Initially, Dr. habil. Klaus Holz, sociologist and Secretary-General, *Protestant Academies in Germany e.V.* (EAD) was also a member of the Expert Group, but he resigned in July 2015 for private reasons.

The members of the Expert Group voted consensually to assign Patrick Siegele and Dr. Juliane Wetzel to coordinate its work. The coordinating office of the Expert Group was located at the *Anne Frank Zentrum* (AFZ) and supported in terms of organization and content by Dr. Christina Herkommer as an academic staff member.

Goals of the second Independent Expert Group on Antisemitism

The second UEA defined three key goals for its new report:

(1) *Timeliness and new topics*

Priority is given to changes since the first report of January 2012, and they are included in all areas and topics. This timeliness is generated by taking up new empirical data and research findings as well as through references to current topics, such as refugees, migration and new political movements. Moreover, the present report examines additional topics that were discussed only marginally or not at all in the first report.

(2) *Context*

Current events and the ways in which they are discussed at various levels of society are presented, mostly in the form of examples making clear that antisemitic incidents and discourses cannot be regarded in isolation and, in particular with a view to comprehensive prevention of antisemitism, must not remain limited to individual target groups and contexts (e.g., school students).

(3) *Demands*

In place of a large number of small recommendations for action as in the first report, the present report also makes more comprehensive demands. They are directed toward decision-makers who are necessary to or responsible for their implementation (ministries, institutions of the federal government or the Länder, civil-society organizations, etc.).

The report is considered a contribution to (policy) advice and is intended to support decision-making at the political and administrative levels as a template: Antisemitism is to be presented as a problem of all of society, research needs are to be made concrete, and models and measures for prevention and intervention are to be proposed.

Practical implementation

The second UEA used various working methods to prepare the new expert report.

Regular work meetings

The UEA convened at regular intervals for one- to two-day meetings that took place at the *Federal Ministry of the Interior* (BMI) and were organized and prepared in collaboration between the coordinating office and the BMI. A total of 16 meetings, three of which were two-day retreats, took place over a period of two years. During these meetings, the Expert Group members agreed on the structure of the report and its key topics, discussed the approach and the UEA's self-understanding, assigned tasks and performed content-related work.

During the work of the Expert Group, it became apparent that the experts from the various academic disciplines and civil-society contexts use different terminology for the same or similar phenomena, and also apply different interpretations of the same terminology. The discussions were constructive and the members attempted to find language for the Expert Group that was as uniform as possible. Where this was not possible, the experts agreed to add footnotes with the relevant explanations on their understanding and use of the terms and to mention possible disagreements, as appropriate. The Expert Group agreed that gray areas regarding some parts of the debates about antisemitism exist which cannot be defined clearly and must be assessed differently, depending on the perspective from which they are viewed, even within the Expert Group.

Commissioning of external expert reports

External expert reports on certain topics were commissioned to complement the meetings and the work performed by the experts on the various parts of the report.

External expert reports

- (1) Prevalence of antisemitism in the German population. Report on the findings of current representative surveys
Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, Bielefeld University
- (2) Antisemitism from a Jewish perspective. Study on the perceptions, experiences, and assessments of Jews in Germany
Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, Bielefeld University
- (3) Antisemitism and hate speech on the Internet
Amadeu Antonio Foundation and no-nazi.net/Julia Schramm
- (4) Antisemitic conspiracy theories: The example of the film »Mastermind«
- (5) Survey of imams on antisemitism in Muslim congregations
Empati gmbH/Dr. Chaban Salih
- (6) Antisemitism in Protestant church congregations: The example of the *Kirchentage* and the »Slenczka debate«
Goethe University Frankfurt/Prof. Dr. Christian Wiese
- (7) Antisemitism in Catholic congregations: The example of the Good Friday prayer
University of Augsburg/Prof. (retired) Dr. Hanspeter Heinz
- (8) Evaluation of existing measures to prevent antisemitism
Socius e.G./Kerstin Engelhardt and Christian Baier
- (9) Evaluation of measures to prevent antisemitism in Muslim youth milieus
Empati gmbH/Dr. Rosa Fava
- (10) Handling of the topic of antisemitism in school textbooks
Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research/Dr. Falk Pingel
- (11) Antisemitism and fleeing
Berlin Institute for Integration and Migration Research/Dr. Sina Arnold
- (12) The circumcision debate
Elke Wittich, Berlin
- (13) Antisemitism and sports: The example of soccer
Florian Schubert, Hamburg

Guest lectures

In addition to commissioning written external expert reports, the Expert Group also invited experts to hold guest lectures on individual topics at its meetings:

Guest lectures

- (1) 2 June 2015: The system of definitions »Politically motivated crime (PMK)«
Richard Reinfeld (MinR, Project group »National Socialist Underground (NSU)« at the BMI)
- (2) 25 September 2015: BMFSFJ measures against right-wing extremism, violence, and group-focused enmity
Thomas Heppener/Anne Molls (Department »Democracy and diversity,« BMFSFJ)
- (3) 22 January 2016 Antisemitism in the National Socialist Underground (NSU)
Dr. Patrick Spitzer (»Terrorism/Extremism« Department)

- (4) 24 February 2016 Antisemitism and hate speech on the Internet
Julia Schramm (Amadeu Antonio Foundation/no-nazi.net)
- (5) 24 February 2016 How the Ministry of Justice deals with hate speech on the Internet/Report on the Task Force
Dr. Eberhard Schollmeyer (BMJV Task Force)
- (6) 15 April 2016 Antisemitism and fleeing – Exploring the research field
Dr. Sina Arnold (Berlin Institute for Integration and Migration Research)
- (7) 1 July 2016 Evaluation of existing measures to prevent antisemitism
Kerstin Engelhardt and Christian Baier (Socius e.G.)
- (8) 25 August 2016 Antisemitism in the Catholic Church: The example of the Good Friday prayer
Prof. (retired) Dr. Hanspeter Heinz (Catholic Theological Faculty, University of Augsburg)
- (9) 28 September 2016 Antisemitism in the Protestant Church: The example of the *Kirchentage* and the »Slenczka debate«
Prof. Dr. Christian Wiese (Faculty of Protestant Theology, Goethe University Frankfurt)
- (10) 28 September 2016 Survey of imams on antisemitism in Muslim congregations
Dr. Chaban Salih (Empati gGmbH)

Discussions

External guests were invited to Expert Group meetings as another way to include additional specialized knowledge and to take up positions as diverse as possible. The goal of these discussions was to present the Expert Group's modus operandi and content-related focal areas as well as to exchange views about demands and recommendations. The following guests participated in meetings:

Discussions with guests in the context of Expert Group meetings

(in alphabetical order)

Deidre Berger

Director, AJC Ramer Institute for German-Jewish Relations, Berlin

Anetta Kahane

Founder and Chairwoman, Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Berlin

Dr. Felix Klein

Special Representative of the German Government for Relations with Jewish Organisations and Anti-Semitism, Federal Foreign Office

Katharina von Schnurbein

Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism, European Commission

Prof. Dr. Julius H. Schoeps

Director, Moses Mendelssohn Zentrum, Potsdam

Dr. Josef Schuster

President, Central Council of Jews in Germany

Besides the discussions during the Expert Group meetings, consultations were held outside the regular meetings as well. Such consultations were held with:

Consultations

(in alphabetical order)

Susan Corke

Director Antisemitism and Extremism, Human Rights First, New York (USA)

Natascha Engel

Member of Parliament, Labour Party, London (UK)

Paul Giannasi

Manager, Cross Government Hate Crime Programme, Ministry of Justice, London (UK)

John Mann

Member of Parliament, Labour Party; Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism, London (UK)

Dr. Klaus Müller

Representative for Europe, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington (USA)

Sally Sealey

Senior Policy Adviser, Department for Communities and Local Government, London (UK)

Tad Stahnke

Director, Initiative on Holocaust Denial and Antisemitism, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington (USA)

Relations with international actors

The United Kingdom plays a special role in the political and societal confrontation with antisemitism in Europe. For many years, a number of people and institutions have been dedicated to fighting antisemitism at various societal levels and are trying to anchor this dedication internationally as well – for example through the conferences of the *Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA)*.

Two members of the Expert Group traveled to London on a fact-finding tour and visited a number of institutions that deal with antisemitism in the most varied ways.

Institutions visited in London

All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism (APPGAA)

All-Party Parliamentary Group directed by MP John Mann. Regularly presents reports on antisemitism in the UK and attempts to create nonpartisan coalitions in the fight against antisemitism at the national and international levels.

Discussion partner:

Danny Stone, Secretary, APPGAA; Director, PCAA Foundation

Community Security Trust (CST)

Not-for-profit Jewish organization dedicated to the security of Jews in the UK. The CST provides security concepts for Jewish institutions, works closely with law enforcement agencies, and plays an important role in reporting antisemitic incidents.

Discussion partner:

Michael Whine, MBE (Director of Government and International Affairs)

Jonny Newton (Public Affairs and External Relations)

Institute for Jewish Policy Research

Research institute studying not only antisemitism, but above all Jewish life and Jewish identity in the UK. Has coordinated and conducted important studies on Jewish perceptions of hate crime, among other activities.

Discussion partner:

Dr. Jonathan Boyd (Executive Director)

Richard Goldstein (Director of Operations)

Tell Mama

Directed against anti-Muslim discrimination. Was established in 2012 following the model of CST and with its support. Also seeks to collaborate closely with governmental security agencies to counter the skyrocketing numbers of incidents of anti-Muslim discrimination and violence in the UK.

Discussion partner:

Fiyaz Mughal, OBE (Founder and Director)

The purpose of the visits to the various institutions on the ground was to enable insights into their structures and work in order to assess whether similar models could be implemented in Germany as well. Current questions, for example about fears within the Jewish community in the UK relating to refugees and the issue of »imported antisemitism,« and how the Jewish community is dealing with such fears, were raised in this context and put in relation to the situation in Germany.