

FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE

Community perspectives and policy recommendations

THRIVE EMPOWERING JEWISH COMMUNITIES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Fostering Jewish life in the EU 3

1.1. The EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life
1.2. Purpose and scope of this paper
1.3. Operationalising the European objective

2. A framework connecting institutions with lived opportunity 6

2.1 Analytical aspects of fostering Jewish life

3. How Jewish communities understand fostering Jewish life 10

3.1. A shared direction with different emphases
3.2. Jewish life across the course of life
3.3. Belonging, affordability and practical access
3.4. Religious practice and freedom of choice
3.5. Diversity within communities
3.6. Youth participation and the transition to responsibility
3.7. Demography, mobility and regional access
3.8. The people and resources that sustain institutions
3.9. Contemporary culture, heritage and Holocaust remembrance
3.10. Safety, confidence and the freedom to remain
3.11. Autonomy and the role of public partnership
3.12. A synthesis of community understandings

4. Transferable practices from national policy frameworks 19

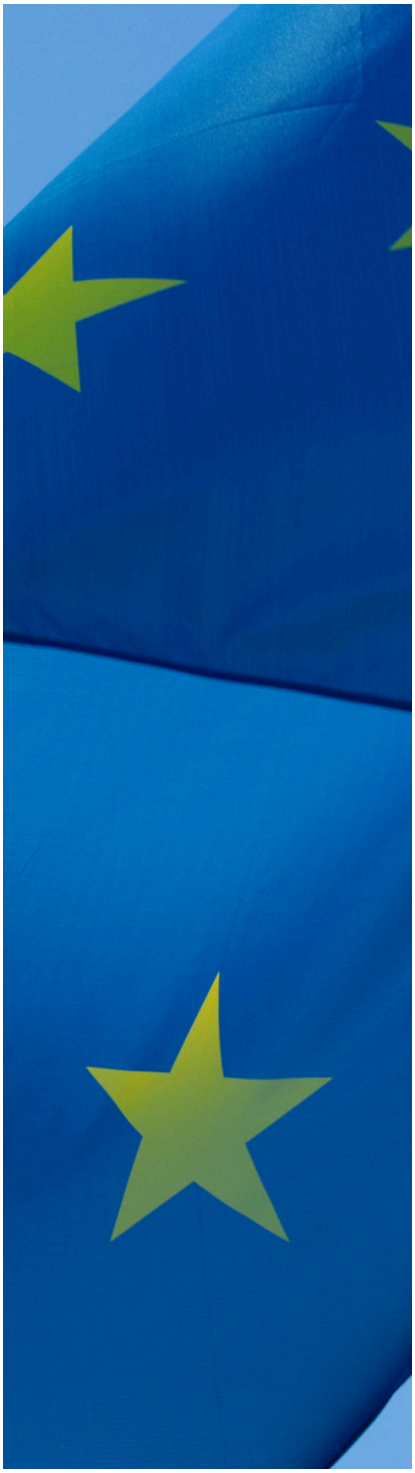
4.1. How the examples should be read
4.2. Treating Jewish life as a policy field in its own right
4.3. Turning religious and cultural freedom into practical measures
4.4. Providing a dependable financial basis
4.5. Funding the full security function
4.6. Including community expertise in policy development
4.7. Relevance for EU policy cooperation

5. Conclusion 23

6. Recommendations for implementation 25

6.1. Define positive Jewish-life objectives with communities
6.2. Support core capacity and predictable operation
6.3. Fund security operators as integral costs
6.4. Address antisemitism in everyday settings and support those affected
6.5. Make religious and cultural rights usable in practice
6.6. Invest in continuity and meaningful youth responsibility
6.7. Adapt provision to scale, geography and changing needs
6.8. Support contemporary culture alongside heritage and remembrance
6.9. Facilitate targeted peer cooperation and expertise
6.10. Evaluate the conditions for participation and learn over time

1. FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE IN THE EU



1.1. The EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life

The EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life 2021–2030, adopted by the European Commission on 5 October 2021, establishes fostering Jewish life as a European policy objective. Its concluding commitment provides the starting point for this report: "Jewish life deserves not only to be protected but to be allowed to flourish in all its diversity."[1]

The Strategy approaches this objective through three interconnected pillars: preventing and combating antisemitism; protecting and fostering Jewish life; and education, research and Holocaust remembrance. Its Jewish-life pillar encompasses security, freedom of religion or belief and heritage. It recognises diverse Jewish identities and connects their flourishing with an inclusive society, public understanding and relationships with other communities. Education about Jewish life and contributions to European society complements Holocaust education and remembrance.

This framework gives fostering Jewish life a constructive aspect alongside the repressive aspect of combating antisemitism. The question for implementation is how that purpose corresponds to the conditions Jewish communities identify as necessary for their present activities and future development.

[1] European Commission, EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life 2021–2030, COM(2021) 615 final, 5 October 2021, Conclusion and sections 2.1–2.3 and 3.1.

1.2. Purpose and scope of this paper

This Policy paper examines how Jewish communities understand fostering Jewish life and what those insights mean for EU policy and its implementation of national strategies in the EU Member states. It also addresses the national and local institutions through which many of those measures are delivered. It examines the relationship between a shared European objective and the different forms of Jewish life, institutional capacity and public partnership found across Member States.

The central question is how public policy can support Jewish people and communities in sustaining and developing the life they choose. It explains how diverse fields, such as religious practice, education, welfare, youth, culture, heritage, security and engagement interact with each other. Just as community protection requirements influence the resources available for programmes; education and youth activity contribute to belonging and leadership renewal; and public recognition is more useful when living communities can participate in it.

The report clarifies analytical categories, illustrates transferable approaches, brings community insights together, examines existing policy practice and develops general recommendations.

1.3. Operationalising the European objective

The Council's declaration of 15 October 2024 on fostering Jewish life and combating antisemitism connects Jewish life with action across public policy. It addresses culture, education and remembrance alongside security, victim support, religious and cultural expression and coordination.[2]

The Commission's first progress report, published in October 2024, reviews action across the Strategy's pillars, including religious freedom, awareness of Jewish life and heritage.[3]

Assessing the contribution to Jewish life also requires evidence about the experience of the people and institutions concerned.

Within the EU Strategy's framework, two complementary dimensions of fostering Jewish life emerge. The internal dimension concerns sustaining and developing Jewish life within communities, including religious practice, education, welfare, culture, youth and the relationships through which people experience belonging and assume responsibility for communal continuity. The external dimension concerns raising awareness and understanding of Jewish life in wider society, including its contemporary diversity, history and contributions, through education, dialogue and public engagement.

[2] Council of the European Union, Declaration on fostering Jewish life and combating antisemitism, 14245/24, approved 15 October 2024, paragraphs 5 and 9–18.
[3] European Commission, First progress report of the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life, COM(2024) 476 final, 14 October 2024, especially sections 3.2–3.3.

These dimensions reinforce one another. Active communal institutions sustain the Jewish life that public initiatives seek to explain, while greater understanding and recognition can support participation and confidence of Jewish communities in society.

Within the internal dimension, the terms internal flourishing and external enabling environment to distinguish these dimensions emerge. The former concerns communal participation, services, internal governance and continuity. The latter includes security, rights, public institutions, support and recognition. Their relationship is explained in subsequent chapters, where a shared understanding of fostering Jewish life is proposed from the evidence.

National frameworks are considered as sources of practical mechanisms rather than models to be adopted uniformly. EU cooperation can help identify lessons, support exchange and improve the use of relevant instruments. Decisions about particular initiatives, protective arrangements and forms of public partnership must also take account of the responsibilities of the competent authorities and the priorities of the communities involved.



2. A FRAMEWORK CONNECTING INSTITUTIONS WITH LIVED OPPORTUNITY



2.1 Analytical aspects of fostering Jewish life

When assessing the conditions that sustain Jewish life, a series of analytical categories emerge.

Institutional capacity concerns the structures and resources through which communities represent interests and provide services. It covers organisational and governance structures, the resources and capacities that sustain communal activity, and arrangements for representation, cooperation and service provision.

Different models can support Jewish life. A unified organisation may coordinate education, welfare, religious services and representation efficiently. A plural network may offer a wider range of identities and institutions, with more coordination required between them. A federated system may preserve local autonomy while pooling expertise. Public policy should work with these differences and avoid assuming that one institutional design is appropriate everywhere.

Capacity has a direct relationship with policy delivery. Communities asked to participate in consultations, collect incident information, host school visits or administer grants require time and specialist skills. When these tasks are added to a small organisation without resources, a formally inclusive policy process can weaken its core services. Capacity support is therefore relevant both to internal flourishing and to the quality of public partnership. It enables communities to contribute expertise without making that contribution depend on an unsustainable workload.

Continuity, youth and participation concerns how Jewish life is transmitted and renewed across generations and stages of life. It includes education, youth movements, student activity, young-adult engagement, leadership succession, family participation and access to elderly care. Continuity combines the preservation of knowledge and relationships with the ability to adapt institutions as needs change.

Community accounts identify a recurring gap between strong childhood or student provision and sustained adult involvement. Education and youth activities can create attachment, yet careers, mobility, family formation and limited time alter the ways people participate. An organisation can therefore have well-attended programmes and still face difficulties recruiting its next board, educator or organiser. Policymakers should consider the pathways linking participation to responsibility.

Demography and geography shape this category. Ageing and emigration can narrow the base available for services; immigration can create new demand and widen the range of traditions and expectations. Concentration in a capital city can sustain specialist provision while leaving regional participants with travel barriers. These conditions influence the form of support required. A growing community may need more school capacity, while a dispersed one may need shared services, visiting educators or support for travel.

Public-authority engagement describes the quality and usability of relationships with government, municipalities, police, education systems and other public institutions. Policy infrastructure describes the formal arrangements through which responsibilities are organised, including strategies, coordinators, consultation bodies, legal recognition, funding instruments and monitoring.

The category is relevant because Jewish life crosses administrative boundaries. Security, education, employment, religious practice, welfare and heritage are rarely handled by one ministry. National and local competences may also differ. A public commitment can consequently remain difficult to implement unless agencies know what competences they are responsible for, who they should consult and where unresolved issues should be referred. Reliable coordination reduces the burden on communities of repeatedly explaining the same problem to different institutions.

Finally, security, antisemitism and visibility concerns protection against threats and violence, together with the arrangements that allow institutions to operate safely. Manifestations of antisemitism range harassment, online abuse or physical violence. Visibility of Jewish life concerns whether Jews and Jewish communities can express identity and participate publicly with confidence. Considering these subjects together connects threat management with its effects on everyday participation.

Physical protection and public confidence do not necessarily move at the same pace. A community may have effective cooperation with police while members remain reluctant to display Jewish symbols, identify themselves in professional settings or attend events. A comparatively low level of reported physical violence can coexist with hostile discourse or discriminatory experiences. These accounts require differentiated responses.

Security also has an operational effect. Protective requirements influence opening hours, staff deployment, access procedures, venue choice and the feasibility of public events. If costs are absorbed by communal budgets, they compete with education, welfare and cultural work.

2.2 Why combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life are linked

Combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life are closely connected through their effects on participation in Jewish communal life. Antisemitism constrains religious, cultural and civic engagement even where services remain available and rights are formally protected. The anticipation of discrimination or intimidation discourages attendance, willingness to assume public responsibilities and visible expressions of Jewish identity. Prevention, protection and effective redress therefore contribute to fostering Jewish life by safeguarding the practical freedom to participate.

Security requirements also affect the institutional capacity available for communal development. Expenditure on protective equipment and operators, together with the administrative demands of threat management and incident response, places pressure on resources needed for education, welfare, youth and cultural provision. Where communities bear these responsibilities without adequate support, maintaining essential protection can limit investment in their future. Security financing consequently forms part of the conditions for sustainable Jewish life, including the recurrent costs of operating protective measures.

The perceived effectiveness of public responses to antisemitism also shapes confidence in institutions and the prospect of a secure communal future. Consistent identification, investigation and prosecution demonstrate that Jewish people can rely on public systems of protection and redress.

Education about contemporary Jewish life can complement these responses by improving understanding of Jewish identities and participation in society. Community involvement should inform such measures, while public authorities retain responsibility for addressing hostility and protecting rights. The importance of effective follow-up is underscored by FRA's 2024 survey, which found that 72% of antisemitic harassment incidents went unreported, with the expectation that nothing would happen or change the most common reason for not reporting.[4]

Effective action against antisemitism establishes essential conditions for Jewish life, while fostering its development requires sustained attention to communal institutions, services, leadership and cultural activity.

[4] European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Jewish People's Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism, 2024, p. 20

2.3 Internal flourishing and the external enabling environment

The distinction between internal flourishing and the external enabling environment brings together the factors shaping Jewish life within communities and in their wider setting. Internal flourishing reflects communal activity, belonging, institutional capacity, internal governance and continuity.

The external enabling environment comprises security, rights, social attitudes, public recognition and access to wider resources and partnerships. The prospects for Jewish life depend on the interaction between these factors, whose relative importance and relationship to communal, public and other actors vary across contexts.

Distinguishing internal flourishing from the external enabling environment clarifies responsibility. This approach encourages tailored responses and avoids treating communities either as collections of deficits or as institutions that can indefinitely absorb additional responsibilities.



3. HOW JEWISH COMMUNITIES UNDERSTAND FOSTERING JEWISH LIFE



The synthesis presented in this section draws on interviews with communal leaders and professionals in 18 Member States, organisational questionnaires covering 17 Member States, interpreted alongside desk research across 20 Member States. The accounts were compared thematically to identify recurring understandings of fostering Jewish life, while retaining differences in priorities and circumstances. Community perspectives are anonymised and brought together around shared themes. The findings reflect the experience and assessments of participating communal organisations and provide a qualitative basis for understanding the concept.

3.1. A shared direction with different emphases

Across Europe's Jewish communities, fostering Jewish life is understood through concrete experiences more often than through a single abstract formulation. Respondents describe the availability of schools, religious services, cultural activity, welfare, youth programmes and social relationships. They also describe the confidence to be Jewish in public, the ability to remain in a country and the expectation that the next generation will have a viable future. These understandings overlap, even where communities assign different priorities to particular institutions or public roles.

This policy paper suggests six interdependent qualities: access to Jewish activities and services; belonging and relationships; continuity across generations; freedom and security; public recognition; and the capacity to shape communal futures. Together, these qualities make a fuller definition possible. Jewish life is sustained through institutions, but it is experienced through people's ability to use them, find meaning in them and contribute to their development.

The accounts also reveal different uses of the expression itself. For some respondents it describes the longstanding work of maintaining schools, welfare, religious life and communal relationships. Others emphasise its public-facing meaning: improving knowledge of contemporary Jewish life and establishing Jewish people as full participants in national and European society. A further emphasis concerns the conditions that allow people to remain, raise families and envisage a Jewish future in their country. These perspectives concern different parts of the same objective, and each has implications for the design of public support.

3.2. Jewish life across the course of life

Several accounts describe Jewish life through a sequence extending from early childhood to old age. Childcare and schooling, youth activity, family life, welfare and burial form a connected system. People maintain relationships with communal institutions throughout life as their needs change.

For instance, education requires more than premises, but also qualified teachers, appropriate materials, leadership. Community accounts connect these services with belonging and mutual responsibility. They should be visible in policy discussion even where security and public-facing culture attract greater attention.

Access to one element can influence the others. If families cannot obtain affordable childcare or Jewish education, their participation may become harder to sustain. If older people lose access to social services, an important part of communal knowledge and belonging may become isolated. Religious and cultural activities provide connections between age groups, but those connections depend on people who organise them and on spaces in which they take place.

For policymakers, this points towards a functioning ecosystem of services. Public support may focus on different elements, yet the combined effect should be considered.

Short-term support for an event will have limited continuity if the organisation lacks the staff or premises to maintain relationships afterwards. Support for a service can have wider value when it strengthens the relationships around it. What allows participation to continue through changes in age, income, family circumstances is the key question.

Community describe practical links between these functions. Welfare, youth activity, early-years education and cultural programming may be delivered through a common communal centre. Such arrangements give people several routes into participation and allow institutions to share staff or premises. They can also concentrate responsibility in a small team. Support for one visible activity should therefore be assessed alongside the organisation's ability to maintain the connected services on which it depends.

3.3. Belonging, affordability and practical access

Community accounts place substantial value on making active Jewish identity an accessible and sustainable choice. Belonging involves opportunities to meet others, celebrate, learn, volunteer and take responsibility. It can develop through formal membership, but also through a school, a youth group, a cultural activity or an informal social network. Institutions that reach beyond existing members can connect with people whose attachment is real even when their affiliation is intermittent.

Practical access includes cost, timing, location, information. A programme may exist but remain difficult to use because fees are high, travel is lengthy or information reaches only established networks. Similarly, an organisation's membership or participation rules may not correspond to the ways younger adults or newcomers relate to communal life. These are questions for communities to consider within their own traditions and governance arrangements.

The policy lesson is to distinguish availability from accessibility. Counting programmes or institutions gives only part of the picture. A useful assessment also asks who can attend, who is missing, what prevents participation and whether the organisation has resources to respond.

3.4. Religious practice and freedom of choice

Religious practice is naturally a central component of Jewish life and a necessary part of a plural communal system. Accounts refer to synagogues, religious leadership, kosher provision, holidays and the ability to maintain traditions. These needs have practical as well as legal dimensions. Recognised freedom may be difficult to exercise if services are unavailable locally, specialist personnel cannot be recruited or routine institutional procedures create avoidable obstacles.

Communities also describe different degrees of observance and different expectations of what a shared institution should provide. An event raising awareness of Jewish life can unintentionally exclude observant participants if scheduling or food provision is unsuitable. Attention to these details helps make plural participation real. It also shows that supporting religious life and enabling wider participation can be pursued.

Public authorities should understand practical needs through dialogue, while applying the relevant policy framework. The exact legal obligations differ between systems and circumstances; this report does not assume a uniform entitlement for every arrangement. Its general recommendation is that competent institutions identify barriers early, consult appropriately and communicate decisions clearly, so that rights can be exercised with greater certainty.

3.5. Diversity within communities

Jewish communities are internally diverse. Religious traditions, levels of observance, linguistic backgrounds, migration histories, ages and relationships to membership vary. There can also be several representative or service organisations operating within one country. Fostering Jewish life should therefore leave room for more than one form of participation.

Plurality can be an asset because it provides different entry points into Jewish life. It also creates coordination needs. The representation model of Jewish communities provides clear responsibilities and agreed channels that helps communities work together.

For policymakers, representative consultation should combine a usable structure with awareness of diversity. A principal umbrella body may be an essential partner, but the relevant expertise for a particular issue may also lie with other actors within the community. Communities should be involved in determining appropriate consultation arrangements.

Jewish life also develops through independent cultural organisations, artistic initiatives, informal networks and forms of participation outside established membership structures. Consultation and support mechanisms should recognise these contributions alongside those of representative institutions, enabling people with different relationships to communal affiliation to help shape the opportunities available to them.

3.6. Youth participation and the transition to responsibility

Youth movements, schools, summer camps and student organisations are important assets to fostering Jewish life. They provide friendships, skills and attachments that can sustain Jewish life. They provide active renewal in leadership and meaningful youth representation. The evidence supports an approach that builds on existing youth capacity while addressing the points at which continuity becomes difficult.

A recurring challenge concerns the period after school or university. Young adults may study abroad, enter demanding careers, move between cities or participate informally. Traditional meeting times, membership expectations and voluntary workloads may fit poorly with this stage of life. Strong childhood participation can consequently coexist with a weak route into adult communal leadership. Re-engagement may occur later through family life, but the years in between matter for institutional renewal.

Young people need opportunities to exercise responsibility as well as attend programmes. Mentoring, paid roles, project budgets, access to decision-making and influence over priorities can make that transition more realistic. Leadership renewal also requires current leaders to make space and institutions to clarify what a role entails. Training alone is unlikely to resolve a system in which there is no opening, no time or no support for using the skills acquired.

3.7. Demography, mobility and regional access

Ageing, emigration, immigration and concentration in major cities produce different needs. In some communities, a limited number of people carry a growing share of institutional responsibility. In others, newcomers or expanding education create additional demand. Movement can weaken local continuity and create opportunities through returning residents or international networks.

Communities experiencing growth may need to integrate people with different languages, traditions and expectations. Existing institutions may require additional capacity, and representation may need to adapt. Communities with a smaller or older population may need flexible services and external expertise to maintain access. In both circumstances, reliable information and welcoming relationships matter. Newcomers need to know how to participate, while people with longstanding connections may need reassurance that institutional change preserves space for them.

Respondents describe the need to preserve local religious and cultural traditions while accommodating newcomers with different practices and expectations. Immigration may expand the range of participants without producing an equivalent increase in formal members or people available for governance. Planning therefore needs to consider both demand and integration work.

Regional access is especially important where specialist services are concentrated in one centre. A national institution can be substantial while distant participants remain poorly served.

Policymakers should avoid using population size alone to allocate support. Small communities face fixed costs, and their legacy responsibilities may reflect a much larger historical population. Equally, growth can create pressures that a static membership count misses. Support should respond to function, access, workload and need, with proportionate assessment that smaller organisations can realistically put in place.

3.8. The people and resources that sustain institutions

Professional staff and volunteers are a recurring concern. Communities need educators, religious personnel, administrators, organisers and security operators. The availability of qualified personnel can therefore be more important than the formal number of institutions.

Reliance on a small group of volunteers creates commitment and local knowledge, but can also make an organisation vulnerable. Professionalisation can improve continuity, yet it requires predictable income and may remain difficult in a small setting. Some functions can be shared or obtained through partnerships; others depend on trusted people with local presence.

For policy, the implication is to recognise operating capacity as a legitimate part of delivery. Salaries, coordination, maintenance and essential administration are integral to the activities they make possible. A grant that funds an event while excluding its organiser's time may create an incomplete intervention. Accountability should establish that resources are used appropriately, with requirements proportionate to the organisation's scale and the value of the support.

3.9. Contemporary culture, heritage and Holocaust remembrance

Communities value their heritage and honor remembrance while emphasising that Jewish life also belongs to the present. Synagogues, cemeteries, archives and museums connect history with contemporary participation. Heritage projects create educational opportunities, local partnerships and public recognition. Their contribution is strongest when the people whose lives they represent can influence interpretation and use.

Communal accounts caution against allowing preservation to become the dominant public understanding of Jewish life. A restored site does not in itself sustain a school or congregation Small communities may also carry responsibility for buildings created by a much larger population before the Holocaust. That responsibility should be understood as part of a wider public and historical obligation, rather than assumed to be manageable from current communal resources alone.

Heritage can also provide infrastructure for contemporary Jewish life. Historic sites, archives and museums can support cultural creation, intergenerational learning and continuing participation when conservation is accompanied by resources for people and programmes. Meaningful Jewish involvement in interpretation and use strengthens this connection. Where no resident community remains, partnerships with Jewish organisations and specialists can help connect local heritage with living Jewish perspectives.

Holocaust education and remembrance remain essential. Communities also seek public understanding of Jewish history, cultural contributions and everyday life beyond persecution. If Jewish people appear in education only as victims or as figures of the past, contemporary identity can remain poorly understood. Teaching about living communities can complement historical education by explaining plurality, continuity and participation in shared society.

Public-facing cultural work must also respect institutional capacity and security. Hosting visits, opening a site or participating in a public festival requires organisers, preparation and protection. Communities should be able to choose the form and extent of engagement. Public institutions can support professional interpretation, maintenance and safe access, while ensuring that heritage initiatives do not consume the resources needed to sustain the living community around them.

Community-led heritage work described in the research includes archives, school visits, museum partnerships and documentation of traditions. Its scope extends beyond buildings to languages, religious and cultural practices, food and other forms of knowledge transmitted between generations. Cultural support should be informed by those priorities and should help living communities interpret and develop their heritage.

3.10. Safety, confidence and the freedom to remain

Communal accounts describe antisemitism as affecting both institutional operations and people's sense of a viable future. The substantial surge in antisemitic incidents across Europe since 7 October 2023 has resulted in growing concern about hostility and concerns about physical safety, and even questioning whether visible Jewish life is still possible today.

Community accounts describe the difficulty of maintaining ordinary civic, cultural and professional relationships in the present environment, and emigration because of concerns of antisemitism is in some communities a daily reality.

Reporting incidents remains a substantial challenge. People may fear exposure and doubt that a complaint will lead to action. In professional and cultural settings, these concerns may limit willingness to report even when formal channels exist. Support must therefore include trusted procedures, clear communication and attention to consequences for those affected. Recorded incidents alone cannot capture the full impact on participation.

The aspiration to remain in Europe and build a future is a particularly broad expression of fostering Jewish life. It combines physical security with confidence in institutions, access to services and the expectation that children can live Jewish identities without disproportionate barriers. Public policy cannot determine an individual's decision to stay or move. It can improve the conditions in which that decision is made and reduce pressures that make Jewish life feel conditional or precarious.

3.11. Autonomy and the role of public partnership

Communities commonly distinguish their own primary responsibility for developing Jewish life from the public responsibility to enable it. They organise services, set communal priorities and transmit identities. Public authorities influence security, rights, education, funding and the wider social environment. The preferred relationship is consequently one in which public support increases practical capacity while respecting community agency.

Different constitutional traditions and communal preferences affect the form of this partnership. Some accounts welcome visible public involvement in cultural or religious occasions; others place stronger emphasis on neutrality, freedom and enabling conditions. These positions can share the same underlying objective: Jewish life should have a secure and legitimate place in society. A general framework should allow different institutional expressions of that objective.

Community-led development also requires space for self-assessment. Organisations may wish to review membership, strategy, values, leadership pathways or service priorities. External support can provide expertise and resources, with decisions remaining within legitimate communal structures. This is particularly valuable where a small team must simultaneously manage day-to-day services, public representation and long-term planning.

International Jewish organisations and peer networks can contribute targeted support. Communities differ in their needs. Cooperation is most useful when it responds to an identified function, builds local capacity and complements relationships that already work.

Civic and interfaith relationships also feature in the accounts as channels for cooperation and public participation. Communities may work with municipalities, schools, museums or other religious organisations while retaining responsibility for their own activities. Public partnership is most useful when it supports an agreed purpose and provides responsive contact. Invitations or expressions of recognition have limited practical value when a community cannot obtain follow-up on the educational, protective or administrative issues it raises.

3.12. A synthesis of community understandings

Taken together, these accounts describe fostering Jewish life as the conditions that allow Jewish identities to be lived, sustained and developed. Schools, religious services, welfare and cultural activities provide practical foundations. Relationships give those activities meaning and connect people to shared responsibilities. Continuity depends on the people who teach, organise, care and lead, and on opportunities for others to take their place. Security, rights and public recognition influence whether this life can be pursued with confidence. The following definition is proposed as a synthesis of these community understandings:

Fostering Jewish life means enabling Jewish people and communities, in their diversity, to sustain and develop the institutions, relationships, practices and forms of participation through which they live Jewish identities, while enjoying security, equal rights, public recognition and the freedom to shape their own future.

This synthesis brings together the different emphases without making them interchangeable. Service provision addresses practical access, belonging concerns relationships, continuity concerns future participation, and public confidence concerns the freedom to engage in wider society. Communities may place different priorities within this shared direction.

Choice and community agency connect its elements. Support should expand the opportunities available to people with different traditions, levels of observance and relationships to formal organisations. The public role is to secure rights, protection and enabling conditions and to support relevant activities through appropriate instruments, respecting the different responsibilities of communal and public institutions. This understanding gives the EU Strategy's commitment to flourishing a practical expression.

4. TRANSFERABLE PRACTICES FROM NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS



4.1. How the examples should be read

The selected examples from national strategies on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life show different ways of making the policy objective operational. Some address Jewish life explicitly; others place relevant measures within antisemitism or wider equality frameworks. The aim is to identify adaptable examples and good practices.

“Good practice” in this chapter means a documented feature with a plausible connection to the needs identified by communities. It does not imply that the entire framework has been evaluated positively or that the feature has achieved a measured outcome. Each example therefore separates the documentary basis from the transferable lesson proposed by this report. Implementation would still require attention to national competences, community priorities, eligibility and proportionality.

4.2. Treating Jewish life as a policy field in its own right

Sweden’s strategy for strengthening Jewish life and combating antisemitism[5] covers 2025–2034. It organises action around knowledge, education and research; culture and cultural heritage; and security and openness. Its implementation provisions involve public agencies and other levels of government, dialogue with the recognised Jewish minority, reporting and evaluation.

[5] Government of Sweden, Ministry of Culture, Strategi för att stärka judiskt liv och motverka antisemitism i Sverige, 2025

The transferable lesson is to give the positive development of Jewish life an explicit place in policy design. This allows education, culture and belonging to have their own objectives while remaining linked to safety. An extended planning horizon can also help institutions consider continuity beyond a single funding year. The practical value depends on translating that horizon into responsibilities and resources that communities can use. This approach should be adapted to the legal recognition and public institutions of each setting. The broader principle of defining what positive Jewish-life outcomes mean and assign responsibility for pursuing them is transferrable.

4.3. Turning religious and cultural freedom into practical measures

The Czech Strategy for combating antisemitism in the Czech Republic 2025–2030[6] includes Jewish life as a distinct objective. Its provisions address religious and cultural traditions, public knowledge, participation in policy, heritage and practical matters such as Jewish holidays in examination scheduling. It identifies responsible actors and provides for action planning and review.

The lesson is that rights-related commitments become clearer when they identify the ordinary settings in which people encounter barriers. Policymakers can use this method to examine recurring obstacles with communities, agree workable arrangements and give the relevant institutions guidance.

[6] Government of the Czech Republic, Strategy for combating antisemitism in the Czech Republic for 2025–2030

Spain's national implementation plan for the EU Strategy[7] covers 2023–2030 and includes the ability of Jewish people and communities to live according to their beliefs and traditions. It connects that objective with the existing cooperation framework and establishes arrangements involving public bodies and the representative Jewish body of the Jewish community for monitoring and follow-up.

This illustrates a complementary mechanism of linking existing recognition or cooperation arrangements to an implementation process that can identify practical needs over time. A framework for dialogue should be able to produce decisions, follow-up and review. The policy value lies in making consultation continuous and actionable, with the relevant expertise available when difficulties arise.

[7] Government of Spain, Plan Nacional para la implementación de la Estrategia Europea de lucha contra el antisemitismo (2023–2030), 2023, National Action Plan on combating antisemitism

4.4. Providing a dependable financial basis

Austria's Jewish cultural heritage legislation[8] provides recurring support connected with Jewish community life, protection, heritage and dialogue. The government also introduced a revised National Strategy against Antisemitism in November 2025, with a wider set of measures and arrangements for reporting and evaluation.

[8] Austrian Federal Chancellery, "Maßnahmen im Kampf gegen Antisemitismus", sections "Bundesgesetz zur Absicherung des österreichisch-jüdischen Kulturerbes (ÖJKG)

The insight is establishing predictable support for functions that recur. Security, cultural activity and institutional continuity require planning across more than one short project. A stable financial basis can allow organisations to retain staff, schedule services and enter partnerships with greater confidence. The form may be a statutory arrangement, a multi-year agreement or another relevant instrument suited to the national context.

Finland's 2024–2027 equality and non-discrimination action plan[9] includes an annual allocation for security of Jewish congregations during the plan period and identifies the responsible public authority. Antisemitism measures sit within a broader government programme, with coordination and follow-up arrangements.

This examples demonstrates that a wider equality framework can contain a specific, resourced response. A standalone strategy is one possible format, but policy usefulness depends on whether Jewish-life and antisemitism needs remain identifiable, funded and owned by a competent institution. Specific responsibilities can make a broad framework easier for communities to navigate and for policymakers to assess.

[9] Finnish Government, A New Boost for Equality in Finland: Government action plan to combat racism and promote equality, Publications of the Finnish Government 2024

4.5. Funding the full security function

The Netherlands opened a security fund for Jewish institutions in July 2026 as part of its National Strategy on combating antisemitism 2024–2030[10]. The official announcement describes structural funding and eligible measures including both physical measures and security operators and covering schools, cultural institutions, religious communities and event organisers.

The transferable practice is to recognise that a security system includes people, advice and operation as well as equipment. A funded access-control installation has limited value if an institution cannot staff the required procedures, maintain the system or provide safe opening hours. Community evidence makes particularly clear that security operators are integral costs of the activity that protection enables.

Funding design should therefore start with an assessed protective function and its operating requirements. Eligibility, co-financing and administrative conditions should be examined for their effect on smaller organisations. Authorities and communities should also consider how protection supports participation, including whether an institution can maintain or expand its activities.

[10] Government of the Netherlands, "Veiligheidsfonds voor bescherming Joods leven geopend

4.6. Including community expertise in policy development

Italy's 2025 updated national strategy[11] was developed through a technical group chaired by the national coordinator and involving public institutions, the Union of Italian Jewish Communities (UCEI) and experts. The official government account describes a process connecting institutional responsibility with community and specialist knowledge, relying on structured participation at the stage when policy is being defined.

Communities can identify practical constraints that are difficult to infer from legislation or institutional inventories. Expert input can strengthen the treatment of education, monitoring, security and other policy fields. The process helps clarify how contributions shape decisions and how dialogue continues during implementation.

[11] Presidency of the Council of Ministers, "Aggiornamento della 'Strategia nazionale per la lotta contro l'antisemitismo'", 21 February 2025

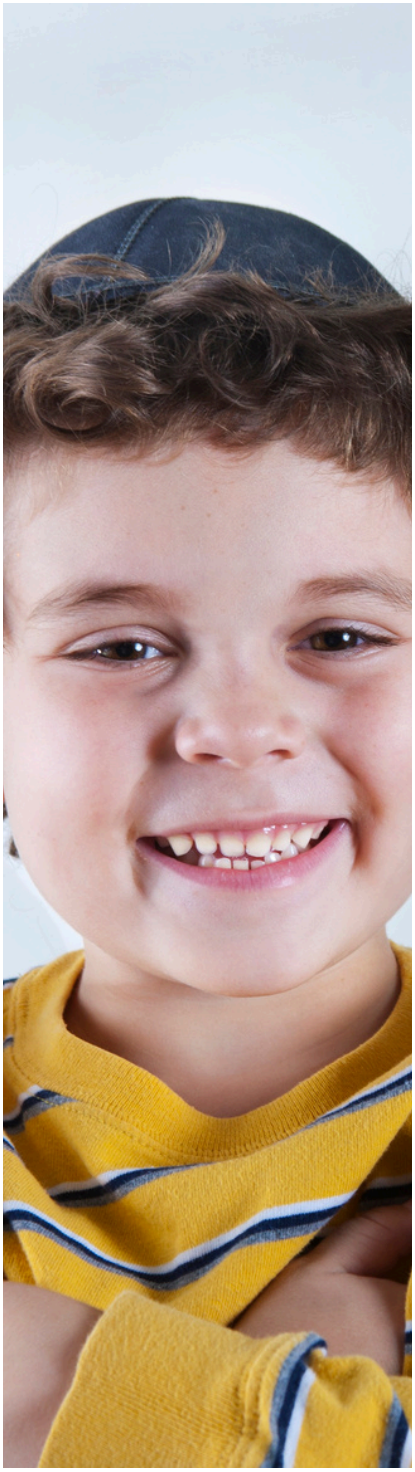
4.7. Relevance for EU policy cooperation

The aforementioned examples show that fostering Jewish life can be operationalised through several forms of public action. What matters for transfer is the function: which need is addressed, who is responsible, what resources are available and how the community can use the measure.

This insight should inform structured exchange between national coordinators, public institutions and Jewish organisations, such as the working Group on the Implementation of the EU Strategy or the SECCA forum. Community experience can help determine which features are useful and what adjustments are needed elsewhere.

Relevant EU programmes can complement national measures where their objectives and eligibility conditions allow. National and local authorities also need to provide continuity for functions that cannot depend on a succession of action grants. Policy coordination should make those respective contributions clear and help organisations identify realistic routes for support. The purpose of exchange is to improve delivery in communities' circumstances, with evaluation of the effects over time.

5. CONCLUSION



The community evidence brings the concept of fostering Jewish life into the ordinary conditions through which people live Jewish identities. Its shared direction is access to institutions, relationships and opportunities that make participation meaningful and sustainable. Public confidence, equal rights and recognition make it possible to participate in wider society and imagine a future within it.

The meanings are intentionally broad enough to accommodate for differences. Some communities place particular emphasis on lifecycle services, some on the next generation, some on public recognition and some purely on the practical freedom to remain. These emphases can be understood together as the ability to sustain Jewish life with agency. A general policy framework should support that ability while leaving communities and individuals free to determine its content.

The analysis shows how that objective depends on connected conditions. Institutional capacity makes activities possible. Continuity renews the people and relationships that sustain them. Public-authority engagement connects needs with decisions and resources. Security protects the freedom to participate.

Combating antisemitism is integral to fostering Jewish life because hostility restricts choice, absorbs resources and weakens confidence in the future. Consistent institutional responses can strengthen trust.

Facilities, programmes and strategies depend on people who operate them. Security operators, educators, administrators and organisers are integral to delivery. Predictable and proportionate support can protect continuity. It can also make participation in public partnership realistic for smaller organisations.

Heritage and remembrance contribute to this future when they connect historical responsibility with living communities. Preserving sites, teaching about the Holocaust and addressing denial and distortion remain crucial.

Education and cultural policy should also explain contemporary Jewish identity and contributions as integral to their respective societies. Public recognition becomes more useful when Jewish people can participate in its design and when living institutions have the capacity to benefit from it.

The national examples demonstrate that the concept can be translated into practical mechanisms. Their value should be tested through implementation and experience. A commitment becomes meaningful when people can use the opportunity it creates.

European cooperation mechanisms connect experience, improve access to suitable instruments and strengthen review. National and local delivery should make the objective usable in the ordinary settings where Jewish life takes place. Success should be considered through the ability to participate, the dependability of services, the renewal of responsibility, the exercise of fundamental rights and confidence in public institutions.



6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

These recommendations are directed primarily to policymakers tasked with combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life and are also relevant to national and local authorities, Jewish communities and civil society. Measures should respond to different institutional models and forms of participation. Support should strengthen communities' capacity to determine their own priorities, while authorities discharge their responsibilities for rights, protection and equal participation.

6.1. Define positive Jewish-life objectives with communities

National and relevant regional or local frameworks should explain what fostering Jewish life is intended to achieve. The definition should be developed with communities and should cover participation, continuity, institutions, cultural and religious expression, public confidence and autonomy. This gives the concept a usable meaning beyond a general commitment to inclusion.

EU policy coordination should ask Member States how the positive development of Jewish life is reflected in their frameworks, which community priorities inform it and which bodies are responsible. A broader equality or antisemitism framework can serve this purpose if its Jewish-life objectives and measures remain identifiable.

Policymakers should identify positive outcomes alongside objectives for combating antisemitism. Examples include more dependable access to services, fewer practical barriers to religious participation and better public understanding of contemporary Jewish culture and history. The appropriate outcomes should reflect local needs and should not prescribe how an individual must express Jewish identity.

Communities should be involved in defining priorities, designing measures, assessing practical barriers and reviewing delivery. Consultation should recognise the relevant range of expertise, including representative organisations, educators, and young people. Appropriate arrangements should be agreed with communities and should respect their representative structures.

At municipal level, a designated contact and regular coordination between relevant departments and Jewish actors can connect these objectives with everyday delivery. Cooperation should cover culture, education, public space and community services alongside security, with agreed responsibilities and follow-up. This provides a practical route for translating national commitments into sustained local relationships and accessible opportunities.

6.2. Support core capacity and predictable operation

Provide routes for dependable support to the people and functions that keep Jewish-life activities running. Eligible costs should, where relevant, include professional staff, essential administration, coordination, maintenance and other operating needs. Multi-year arrangements can help organisations retain expertise and plan services, subject to clear purposes and proportionate accountability. Support should strengthen independent communal decision-making and should allow appropriate combinations of public resources, communal income and partnerships.

Within the scope of relevant EU and national instruments, funding bodies should review whether eligible costs cover the people and operating functions necessary for the supported activity. Guidance should explain those conditions clearly. Support for partnerships, application preparation or shared administrative expertise can help smaller organisations access opportunities where they meet the programme's requirements.

Review support against changes in the costs it is intended to cover. A nominally stable allocation can lose practical value in a crisis when assessed security needs increase substantially. Periodic review should examine service continuity and unmet demand. Dependability requires a realistic relationship between the funded purpose and the cost of delivering it.

6.3. Fund security operators as integral costs

Treat security as an operating function that includes trained people, equipment, maintenance, advice, coordination and necessary procedures. Funding for protective infrastructure should be accompanied by consideration of the staff required to use it. Security operators should be recognised as integral costs where they are necessary for a school, institution or event to function safely.

Design support around assessed need and the activities protection enables. Authorities and communities should review whether protective arrangements allow sufficient opening hours, public access and participation. Stable provision can reduce the diversion of communal resources from education, welfare and culture.

6.4. Address antisemitism in everyday settings and support those affected

Combine protective measures with effective responses in daily-life settings, such as schools, universities, workplaces, cultural institutions and online environments. Relevant institutions should know how to recognise antisemitic conduct, receive complaints, refer matters appropriately and support affected people. Training should be connected to usable procedures and responsibilities.

Include Holocaust denial and distortion, extremist symbolism and contemporary antisemitic narratives in appropriate education and institutional responses. Public bodies should distinguish conduct requiring legal action from material requiring other educational or administrative responses under the applicable framework.

Strengthen trust in reporting through confidentiality, clear communication, accessible support and follow-up. People should understand the available routes and what they can expect after making a report. Responses should take account of concerns about professional relationships, exposure and continued participation. Evaluate these arrangements through the experience of those using them.

6.5. Make religious and cultural rights usable in practice

Review recurring administrative barriers with the relevant community expertise. Education schedules, workplace arrangements, access to services and other practical settings should be considered under the applicable legal framework. Public institutions should seek informed solutions, explain procedures and communicate decisions consistently.

Practical inclusion also depends on institutional calendars and routines. Awareness of Jewish holidays when scheduling examinations, consultations, application deadlines and public events can prevent avoidable barriers. Clear procedures and advance planning can reduce the need for individuals to negotiate arrangements repeatedly, while recognising that Jewish people differ in their practices and requirements.

Recognise diversity of observance and tradition when developing guidance or supported programmes. Within appropriate public responsibilities, policy should enable people to exercise rights with greater clarity and confidence. Community-led institutions should also have access to advice and resources that help them include the participants they seek to serve.

6.6. Invest in continuity and meaningful youth responsibility

Support the pathways connecting childhood and student participation with adult communal involvement. Alongside youth programmes, consider mentoring, project responsibility, leadership training and access to decision-making. Initiatives should give participants a practical route for applying skills and influencing priorities.

Allow communities to adapt engagement to changing patterns of study, work, family life and mobility. Flexible participation, clear roles and support for volunteer time can make involvement more realistic. Leadership renewal should address the organisation's actual situation, including gender and generational participation, and should build on existing strengths. The purpose is to widen the capacity to sustain Jewish life across generations.

6.7. Adapt provision to scale, geography and changing needs

Assess access beyond national totals and central institutions. Consider regional distance, service demand, ageing, newcomers and the concentration of expertise.

Use criteria that recognise fixed costs and the responsibilities borne by small communities. Growing institutions may require additional capacity; shrinking or dispersed communities may require flexible provision to retain access. Population and membership figures should inform planning without substituting for an assessment of practical need and institutional workload.

Digital and hybrid provision can complement local services by connecting geographically dispersed participants with educators, cultural activities and peer networks. Support should include the skills and staff time needed to maintain these relationships, alongside accessible technology and appropriate privacy safeguards. Online participation can widen access while preserving opportunities for in-person encounters and locally rooted activity.

6.8. Support contemporary culture alongside heritage and remembrance

Include contemporary Jewish life in education, cultural programming and public communication. This should cover diversity, ordinary practices and contributions to shared society, alongside Jewish history and the Holocaust. Programmes should be developed with appropriate expertise and should give living communities a meaningful role when their experiences are represented.

Support Jewish cultural creation as a form of participation and continuity in its own right. This includes artists, writers, musicians, languages, independent cultural spaces and emerging forms of expression. Funding should accommodate both activities primarily intended for Jewish participants and collaboration within wider cultural life. Libraries, theatres, museums and festivals can include Jewish creators in their regular programming, with Jewish partners helping to shape how their work is presented.

Provide sustainable arrangements for heritage responsibilities that exceed the resources of current communities. Keep funding for living institutions visible alongside heritage investment, and assess whether a project creates usable opportunities for education, culture or participation. Public recognition should support a living future as well as historical responsibility.

6.9. Facilitate targeted peer cooperation and expertise

Support exchange between communities facing similar operational questions and connect them with relevant expertise. Useful fields include governance, education, youth leadership, security operation and communications. Shared tools and services at the regional can help where communities are small and specialist capacity cannot be sustained locally.

International Jewish organisations can assist by identifying the function a community needs and matching support accordingly. They should also enable more institutionalised communities to contribute expertise.

This learning can be facilitated through relevant cooperation and programme arrangements. Exchanges on a specific delivery problem are particularly useful when they include the officials responsible for implementation and the people operating the service. Lessons should record the conditions under which an approach works, including its resource requirements.

Offer concise, practical briefings on relevant European instruments, funding routes and policy developments. Support should be calibrated to available staff time and should help organisations apply knowledge to an identified task. The usefulness of cooperation rests on what it enables locally.

6.10. Evaluate the conditions for participation and learn over time

Monitor implementation through both delivery information and community experience. Budgets spent, and activities completed should be accompanied by evidence about access, service continuity, confidence, rights and the practical effects of support. Evaluation should be proportionate and developed with the organisations asked to supply information.

Changes should be interpreted in context. More incident reports may reflect better reporting, greater harm or both. Higher participation may reflect new capacity, a changing population or different recording. Stronger consultation may reveal previously hidden barriers before those barriers are resolved. Combining administrative evidence with dialogue helps explain these developments and prevents a single indicator from carrying more meaning than it supports.

Review should also attend to gradual changes that may remain hidden behind stable institutional figures: withdrawal from public activities, reduced willingness to express Jewish identity, weakening partnerships or declining trust in public institutions. Periodic, confidential dialogue can help identify these developments and inform timely responses. Success includes the sustained ability to participate, transmit knowledge, create and experience belonging, as well as the delivery of individual activities.

The overall recommendation is to maintain a cycle of community-informed definition, resourced implementation and review. This allows policy to respond to change while keeping its purpose clear: Jewish people and communities should have the practical freedom, institutional capacity and confidence to sustain and develop Jewish life on their own terms.



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THRIVE aims to strengthen the capacity, resilience and sustainability of Jewish communities across Europe by promoting cooperation, knowledge exchange and community development. Drawing on research and consultations with Jewish communities, this publication contributes to a better understanding of the conditions necessary for Jewish life to flourish and provides recommendations to support more effective and inclusive public policies.