

The Jewish People and Antisemitism

What you need to know to help



January 2025

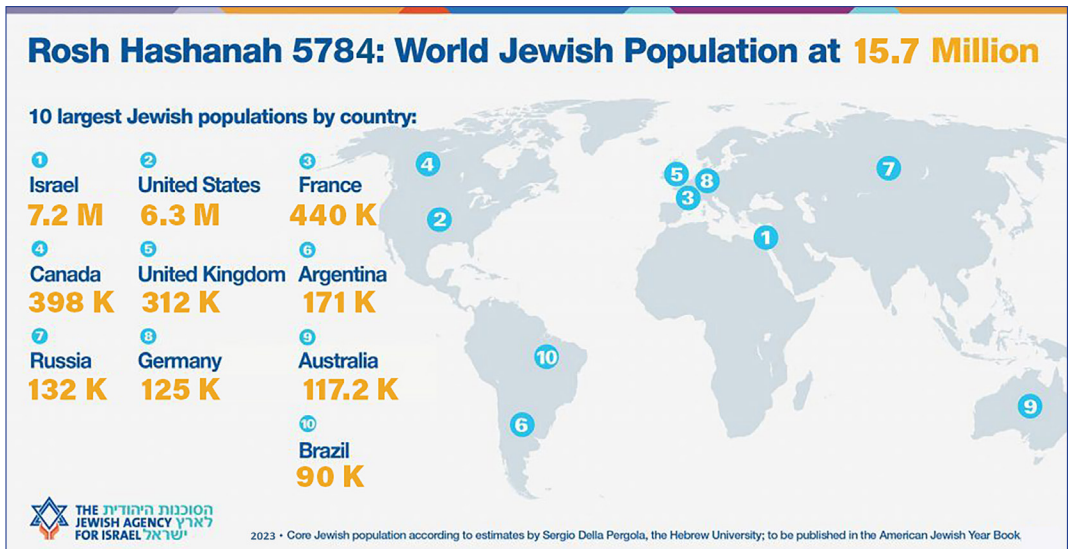


The Jewish Federation of Ottawa is committed to working with local business leaders to reduce antisemitism in the workplace and community. Through our Community Engagement and Advocacy Committee (CEAC), Federation hosts parlour meetings to build allyship and create dialogue. This booklet aims to provide simple facts, figures, and suggestions for how you can help reduce antisemitism and promote a welcoming atmosphere in Ottawa for all people.

Understanding the Jewish Community

- Jews are a People who have a religion.
- A person does not need to be practicing the religion to be Jewish. Judaism is passed through parentage or by conversion.
- Jews are a multinational, multi-racial, multi-ethnic people living in 90 countries worldwide.
- The name “Jew” is taken from the ancient area called “Judea,” which is found in the land of Israel.
- Jews have a well-documented continuous 3,000-year history in the land of Israel. Even during exiles and expulsions, some Jews remained in the land.
- The Jewish population is **15.7 million** people world-wide.
- The total population of Israel is 10 million people, **8 million** are Jews, and 2 million are Israeli Arabs and Israeli Christians.
- The Jewish population of Canada is **402,000**, representing 1% of the Canadian population.
- The Jewish population of Ottawa is **15,000**, representing 1% of the Ottawa/Gatineau community.

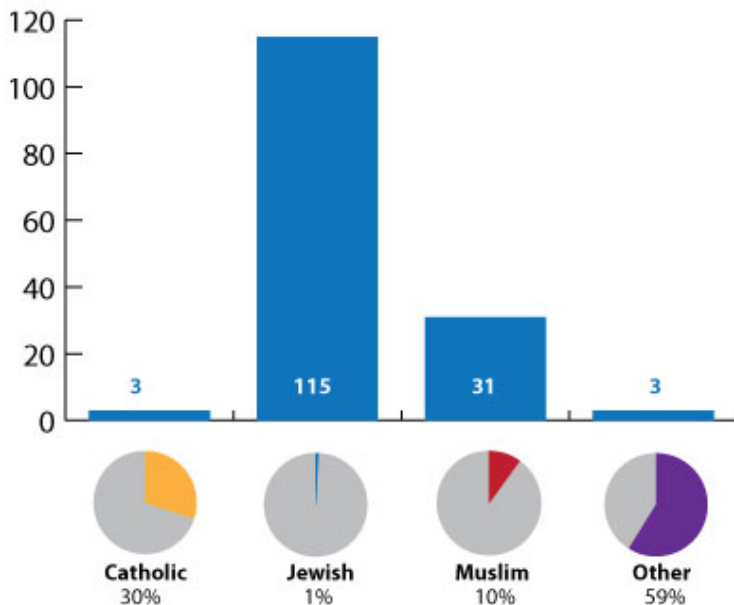
This graphic represents the world-wide Jewish community’s distribution in 2023.



Key statistics pertaining to hate crimes against the Jewish community in Ottawa and Canada

- In 2023, Statistics Canada reported that there were 1,284 religiously motivated hate crimes, 900 targeted the Jewish community representing 70% of the total.
 - This represents a 71% increase from 2022 to 2023.
 - Anti-Jewish hate crime has increased nationwide 172% since 2020.
- In 2023, in Ottawa, the Jewish community was the most targeted of the religious minorities.
- The Jewish community of Ottawa was four-times (4x) more likely to be targeted with a hate crime as the second-most targeted religious minority.

Ottawa - Religiously Based Hate Crimes by Religion



Understanding Modern Antisemitism

Most common type of antisemitism today is *erasive* antisemitism.

- Erasive antisemitism seeks to remove or separate Jewish identity from the Land of Israel.
 - i.e. Denying that Jewish people have a 3,000-year history on the land and in the region that is supported by the archaeological evidence.
- Erasive antisemitism denies that the Jewish community is a minority and is therefore undeserving of equity considerations.
 - i.e. Saying Jews are among the “white privileged” majority and therefore don’t need protection from racism.
- Erasive antisemitism proves the value of having Natan Sharansky’s “3D’s” as a benchmark when people seek to vilify Israel and the worldwide Jewish community.
 - DEMONIZATION of the State of Israel
 - DOUBLE STANDARDS towards the State of Israel
 - DELEGITIMIZATION of the State of Israel
 - i.e. when Zionism is reframed as racist, apartheid, and/or colonialist. (See definition of Zionism, page 4.)
- Erasive antisemitism erases the brutal terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel that included the murder of 1,200 innocent people, as well as the rape, beheading, and mutilation of many others, and the capture of 251 hostages.
 - Erasive antisemitism reframes the Oct. 7 attack as an uprising of an oppressed people that is justified, or it completely denies the events occurred at all and places Israel as the aggressor.

Antisemitism in Canada is seen when Canadian Jews are collectively blamed or seen as accountable for the actions of the Israeli government.

- i.e. The firebombing Jewish schools and synagogues in Montreal and Toronto as an anti-Israel protest.
- Protesting on the Ottawa Jewish campus outside of a long-term care facility and two day care centres.

Key Definitions

Read the full definition here:
<https://holocaustremembrance.com>

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) **definition for antisemitism** has been adopted by the Canadian Federal and Ontario Provincial governments:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.

Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

Zionism: The Jewish right to self-determination in our historic homeland.

What students and teachers are facing in public schools

A high school teen was charged with a hate crime for carrying a sign with a Nazi swastika during an anti-Israel protest.

Jewish and Israeli students were targeted with harassment and humiliation when asked to donate to Gaza fundraisers.

Jewish students were cornered and harassed with shouts of *Free Palestine*, *Kill the Jews*, and *From the River to the Sea* in hallways and schoolyards.

During arts class, students were heard discussing how people should bomb Israel and kill all the Jews.

Students being asked by classmates if they liked bombing hospitals and killing babies.

Jewish students were invited into a classroom only to face a display of Nazi swastikas and other students giving the Nazi salute.

A lunchtime soccer game with a team calling themselves the "Heil Hitlers."

Students being told that "Hitler was right."

Some Jewish students switching schools or leaving the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) because of unaddressed antisemitism.

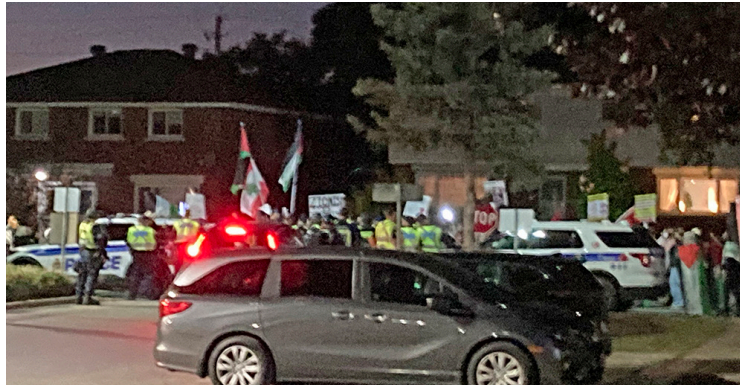
Jewish holidays were ignored by teachers when scheduling exams and project deadlines despite OCDSB policies.

Jewish students having coins thrown on the ground in front of them and hearing, "I know you want to pick that up."

Students found laughing at a Holocaust documentary.

On the Ottawa Jewish Community Campus

In September 2024, a protest of around 300 people, who publicly support Hamas and have been charged with attacking members of the Jewish community in the past, gathered outside Hillel Lodge, a Jewish long-term care centre, and home to Holocaust survivors. During the four-hour protest they lit smoke bombs, threw diapers at seniors, and swarmed one of the senior's cars. Protesters also chanted, "We want bullets and missiles," "Go back to Europe," and threatened that a Hamas leader "will punch you in the eyes." The Ottawa Police Service sent 50 riot officers to protect the campus during the protest, which went late into the night.



The Ottawa Jewish Community Campus was graffitied with a Hamas target symbol, and a Jewish institution near the uOttawa encampment experienced two acts of vandalism.

The red upside-down triangles are a symbol used by Hamas militants on social media to label military targets.



What can you do?

- Write to your politicians at all levels of government and tell them that antisemitism is an assault on Canadian values.
- See that the Jewish community is often the “canary in the coal mine” and that other forms of racism and hate will increase if antisemitism is left unchecked. (i.e. New Orleans attack in January 2025 where an ISIS supporter ran over people as part of an anti-west terror attack.)
- Include mainstream Jewish voices in the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Human Resource conversations at your workplace to ensure equal treatment of all minorities.
 - How is your business making sure that Jews are safe?
- Read between the lines and see that slogans like, “From the river to sea,” “Escalate 4 Gaza,” “By any means necessary,” “Zionism=Nazism,” etc. are all calls for violence or genocide against Jews and the destruction of Israel.
 - Report them as hate crimes to the Ottawa Police Service and let them know how this goes beyond free speech and speaks to the breakdown of Canadian values and morals.
- Separate the actions of the State of Israel from hate crimes against Jews living in Canada.
- Make sure the causes you support, or your business supports, are not funding antisemitism.
 - i.e. Amnesty International or UNICEF
- Report hate crimes to the Ottawa Police Service.
- Check in on your Jewish friends and colleagues. They need to know that you are an ally and a safe person.

Resources

- Books:
- Noa Tishby: *Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth*
 - David Baddiel: *Jews Don't Count*
 - Rabbi Diana Fersko: *We Need to Talk About Antisemitism*
- Online:
- unlearnantisemitism.ca - unlearnantisemitism.ca
 - [The New Antisemitism](http://TheNewAntisemitism.com) - time.com
 - [When is criticism of Israel antisemitic?](http://WheniscriticismofIsraelantisemitic.com) - theconversation.com
 - [The Explosion of Jew hate in Canada](http://TheExplosionofJewhateinCanada.com) - thefp.com

We have neither taken foreign land nor seized possession of the property of others. We have merely reclaimed our ancestral heritage that for a period of time had been unjustly seized by our enemies.

- Maccabees 1 15:34

For more information contact:

Jodi Green, Advocacy and Interfaith Relations Specialist
at jgreen@jewishottawa.com or visit JewishOttawa.com