

How does the survey define antisemitism and Islamophobia?

Antisemitism can be defined as hostile attitudes towards and acts directed against Jews or anyone perceived as "Jewish" based on specific images of Jews. These images have a long history in Europe, and cover a broad spectrum of ideas, some of them self-contradictory. A common feature is the way in which Jews collectively are attributed inherent (primarily) negative traits. Certain basic themes are recurrent, such as belief in the idea that Jews represent a foreign and hostile element in a community, and that they pose a threat to society. Islamophobia can be defined as widespread prejudice, acts and practices that attack, exclude or discriminate against people because they are – or are assumed to be – Muslim.

Negative perceptions of Islam and Muslims are rooted in different historical periods, such as the religiously inspired enemy images of the Middle Ages and the colonial portrayals of Muslims as an inferior race. Nevertheless, the scope of this phenomenon has grown considerably in recent decades.

There are many differences between antisemitism and Islamophobia. Examples of such differences include antisemitism's deep historical roots and its role in the persecutions that culminated in the genocide of the European Jews during World War II. The content of some prejudicial constructs also display clear differences. Nevertheless, some parallels can be found throughout history; for example, in the fear of a minority having a hidden agenda to take over society. A structural feature common to both antisemitic and Islamophobic ideas is the tendency to attribute Jews and Muslims with inherently negative traits. The current survey shows that antisemitism and Islamophobia are related through their connection with xenophobia.