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Report on the action taken by the federal government to combat antisemitism in Switzerland

1. Background

The Federal Council views its constant and systematic efforts to combat all forms of racism and antisemitism as a permanent obligation. During its 2014 Chairmanship of the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (OSCE), Switzerland introduced a self-assessment procedure that encourages member states to take a critical look at their efforts to combat antisemitism. With the aim of establishing a self-assessment methodology that would henceforth become adopted as standard, the *Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights* (SCHR) was tasked with examining the extent of Switzerland's endeavours to implement its commitments and identifying areas in which there remains a need for action.¹ This report is based on the SCHR's examination and provides an overview of the activities pursued systematically at the federal level. It was prepared in collaboration with the agencies directly involved.²

Antisemitic attitudes are still encountered in Switzerland today, and at times of conflict they can spill over into verbal or physical aggression.³ Antisemitism encompasses racially motivated criminal acts such as attacks on the physical integrity or property of Jewish people and institutions, and spoken and written communications that attack Jewish people and institutions.⁴ The steps taken to register and prosecute criminal offences motivated by anti-Jewish or antisemitic sentiment represent only a fraction of the measures required to combat

¹ Belser, Eva Maria, Egbuna-Joss, Andrea: *Der Schutz vor Antisemitismus in der Schweiz. Zur rechtlichen Situation der jüdischen Gemeinschaft und zur Umsetzung der Erklärung des OSZE-Ministerrates gegen Antisemitismus*. Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights (SCHR), 6 December 2015 (in DE).

² The first version of the report was published on 1 November 2016. The current version was updated on the basis of the SCRA's new "Report on racial discrimination in Switzerland" (2016) and takes account of the latest developments as reported by the following agencies: FDFA: Directorate of International Law (DIL), History Unit; FDHA: Federal Statistical Office (FSO); FDJP: Federal Office of Justice (FOJ), Federal Office of Police (fedpol); EAER: Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG); DDPS General Secretariat, Federal Intelligence Service (FIS), Defence; and the Swiss Security Network (SSN) and the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK).

³ Racial discrimination in Switzerland – 2016 report of the Service for Combating Racism.

⁴ Acts and statements motivated by hatred towards a certain section of the population are referred to as 'hate crimes' or 'hate speech'.

antisemitism. Hostile convictions, prejudices and stereotypes can also be considered antisemitic when they manifest themselves – clearly or otherwise – within a culture or society or in the actions of its members in a manner intended to establish that culture or society's superiority over Jews as a group, or to insult, humiliate or disadvantage Jewish individuals or Jewish institutions.⁵ That is why efforts to combat antisemitism must take place in every area of life – at the federal, cantonal, communal and, above all, individual level.

2. Historical context

Followers of the Jewish faith are known to have been present on the territory of what is now Switzerland since Roman times. However, frequent persecution and expulsions meant that the number of Jews living in the country remained exceedingly low until well into the 19th century. The Federal Constitution of 1848 failed to meet their demands for equality. It was not until revisions were made to the constitution in 1866, after being approved by the electorate and the cantons, that the Jewish population gained full legal equality and the right to settle freely. The complete revision of the Federal Constitution in 1874 finally saw freedom of religion and conscience and freedom to worship being granted to all members of the different religious communities. Nevertheless, negative attitudes towards Jews remained widespread – as witnessed by the ban on the ritual slaughter of animals (*schechita*) imposed in 1893. Antisemitic tendencies increased in Switzerland during the 1930s too. The work of the *Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland – Second World War*, which was set up by the Federal Council in 1996, has shown that the country's restrictive admission policy regarding Jewish refugees during that period was partly based in antisemitic sentiment.

Today, there are some 18,000 people of the Jewish faith living in Switzerland (mainly in Zurich, the Lake Geneva region, north-western Switzerland and the Swiss Plateau)⁶, around 80% of whom are Swiss citizens. Jewish communities (especially those in the cities) run synagogues and prayer houses, Jewish nurseries and schools, and there are Jewish burial grounds in almost half of all cantons. Jewish communities are officially recognised under public law in six cantons (Basel-Stadt, Bern, Fribourg, St Gallen, Zurich and Vaud) at present. In the other cantons, they take the form of associations (although the communities in Zurich and Vaud have retained their status as associations under private law).

⁵ This formulation is based on that used in the SCHR study. It corresponds to and expands on the definition provided by the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance* (IHRA): "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."

⁶ In the 2015 census, 17,250 members of the permanent resident population aged 15 and over indicated that they belonged to the Jewish religious community. A large number of followers of the Jewish faith live in the cities of Zurich (around 4,000), Geneva (around 2,000) and Basel (around 1,000). www.bfs.admin.ch > Statistiken finden > Bevölkerung > Sprachen und Religionen > Religionen (in DE/FR/IT)

On acceding to the Council of Europe's *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (Framework Convention) in 1988, Switzerland recognised the Jewish community as a national minority.

3. Available data and monitoring

Data on racist attitudes and acts is gathered by a large number of public and private organisations.⁷ The SCRA collates the data available for Switzerland every two years to create a big picture overview.⁸ Its "Report on racial discrimination in Switzerland", the third edition of which was published in October 2017, devotes a separate chapter to hostility towards Jews.

The antisemitism report published by the *Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities* (SIG) in partnership with the *Foundation against Racism and Antisemitism* (GRA) recorded 26 antisemitic incidents in German-speaking Switzerland in 2016 and 15 in 2015. The report compiled by *Coordination Intercommunautaire Contre l'Antisémitisme et la Diffamation* (CICAD), an NGO based in western Switzerland that fights antisemitism and defamation, disclosed 153 incidents in French-speaking Switzerland in 2016 and 164 in 2015 (following a peak of 271 cases in 2014).⁹ The FCR's collection of legal cases also showed fewer legal rulings being handed down on matters of antisemitism in the 2010-2014 period (1 to 4 decisions a year). That figure rose to 36 in 2015, before dropping back down to 14 in 2016. Most of these incidents occurred on social media.

According to the *Beratungsnetz für Rassismuskritiker*, 26 advice centres for victims of racism that have come together to form a network with its own data recording system (DoSyRa), there has been relatively little change in the number of cases of hostility towards Jews over time; they are also fewer in number than other forms of discrimination (such as hostility towards Muslims and anti-black racism). These generally low figures can partly be explained by the fact that some cases are never recorded as victims do not always confide in an advice

⁷ This is rounded out by reports prepared by organisations abroad. Examples include; the reports issued by the Council of Europe and the OSCE (ODIHR); the annual "Antisemitism Report" of the Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism; the "Global Anti-Semitism Report" of the US Department of State and the "Report on International Religious Freedom" of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom.

⁸ The data summarised here is presented and commented on in greater detail in the 2016 edition of the SCRA's "Report on racial discrimination in Switzerland". See also motion 14.3968 "*Monitoring zu Rassismus, Antisemitismus und Antiislamismus*" on monitoring racism, antisemitism and anti-Islamism submitted by Nadine Masshardt and interpellation 14.3921 "*Antisemitismus und Rassismus. Stand der Dinge*" on antisemitism and racism submitted by Luc Recordon (in DE/FR/IT).

⁹ The SIG antisemitism report covers antisemitic incidents in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The figures were documented by the SIG in 2008 and 2009; the report has been published jointly by the SIG and GRA since 2010. It takes account of directly reported cases as well as incidents reported in the media. Incidents taking place in social networks were actively researched and included in 2011, however, since 2012 they have been taken into consideration only if they spark media attention. In contrast, the CICAD report actively researches incidents on the internet and records them as a separate category. There are further differences in the way the two reports are compiled and evaluated.

centre that is part of the reporting network, preferring instead to turn either to someone they trust or a counselling centre operated by the Jewish community itself.

Additional data can be found in the FSO's 2016 survey on diversity and coexistence in Switzerland (VeS).¹⁰ Of the 12% of respondents stating they had been discriminated against in the preceding 5 years because of their religion, 5% were Jewish. However, the proportion of respondents who stated that the presence of people from a different faith made them feel uncomfortable in their everyday lives, in their neighbourhood or at work, does not give any indication of the prevalence of antisemitic sentiment in particular as this figure encompasses all religious denominations; in addition, antisemitism can also involve aspects other than religion.

It should be noted that the FOS survey on diversity and coexistence generally explores attitudes rather than incidents. Hostile attitudes directed specifically towards Jews are measured through a series of standardised questions. Negative opinions of Jewish people ('jointly responsible for their persecution', 'too much influence on world events', 'exploitation of the Holocaust', 'loyalty first and foremost to Israel', 'too much influence on Switzerland', 'all Jews should go to Israel') were combined to form an index. In the 2016 survey, 8% of respondents agreed with the negative statements with which they were presented. 12% also agreed with the suggested negative stereotypes (Jews are 'greedy for money', 'successful in business', 'hungry for power' and 'politically radical'). On the other hand, 95% of those questioned agreed with the statement that Jewish people 'have good and bad points like everyone else' and 15% refused to even express an opinion on the negative stereotypes.

However, it will not be possible to identify any trends and conduct an in-depth analysis until 2020, when the data from the first three FSO surveys (held in 2016, 2018 and 2020) becomes available.

4. Legal protection

Recognition as a national minority under the Framework Convention confers certain rights on the Jewish community, such as the right to preserve its identity. It also imposes certain obligations on Switzerland, including that of providing adequate protection against intolerance and discrimination.¹¹ Switzerland generally fulfils all of the undertakings it has given at the international level to pursue legal action in cases of racially motivated offences, including those arising under the *UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial*

¹⁰ www.bfs.admin.ch > Look for statistics > Population > Migration and integration > Diversity and Coexistence in Switzerland.

¹¹ The Federal Council adopted the country's fourth report on its implementation of the Framework Convention on 15 February 2017. The threats faced by minority groups, especially the Jewish community, are addressed in detail.

Discrimination. The introduction of the prohibition of racism and racial discrimination under Art. 261^{bis} of the Swiss Criminal Code (SCC) and Art. 171c of the Military Criminal Code (MCC) in 1995 was one of the requirements for ratifying the Convention.

Criminal law provision on racism

The Federal Council fulfilled a postulate by Martin Naef (12.3543 “*Bericht zum Recht auf Schutz vor Diskriminierung*”) on 25 May 2016 by presenting its report on the right to legal protection against discrimination. This was based on a study into access to justice in cases of discrimination, conducted by the *Swiss Centre of Expertise in Human Rights* (SCHR) and published at the end of July 2015.¹²

- With regard to racism, the SCHR comes to the conclusion that although Article 261^{bis} SCC prohibits and punishes racist acts, it nevertheless does not go far enough: for example, it only applies to statements made in public that serve to spread racist ideology and fails to grant associations the right to bring a group action, thus restricting access to justice.
- As far as the SCHR is concerned, the requirement that such acts be of a public nature makes it more difficult to penalise antisemitic statements on the internet, as it is not clear whether such opinions are being expressed in the private sphere (i.e. intended only for family and friends) or whether they can be classed as ‘public’.
- The SCHR also finds that the notion of ‘dissemination’ allows racist opinions and gestures (e.g. the Hitler salute) to go unpunished if they occur among like-minded people and are not intended as propaganda.
- Given the fact that there are very few Holocaust survivors or their immediate relatives still alive, the inability of associations to bring a group action restricts access to justice.

The Federal Council is not in favour of granting associations the right to bring a group action in respect of the prohibition of racism (Art. 261^{bis} SCC) as neither criminal law nor the law of criminal procedure provides for redress of this kind; therefore, it argues that introducing such a solution specifically for offences of this nature would run contrary to the whole criminal justice system.¹³ Moreover, the public prosecutor’s office is already specified by law as the authority with official responsibility in this area for safeguarding general rights that apply to everyone. Consequently, it is obligated *ex officio* to commence and conduct prosecution proceedings. If the public prosecutor’s office does not institute proceedings of its own accord, there is nothing to prevent any individual or association of individuals from reporting their

¹² www.skmr.ch >Themenbereiche >Geschlechterpolitik >Publikationen > Studie “Zugang zur Justiz in Diskriminierungsfällen” (in DE/FR; executive summary in EN).

¹³ This demand has already been debated on several occasions, for example when drafting the new Swiss Criminal Procedure Code, (cf. BBI 2006 1085, 1163) or in connection with previous parliamentary procedural requests (motion 00.3268 “*Rassendiskriminierung. Beschwerdelegitimation*” on complaints of racial discrimination, submitted by Jean Christophe Schwaab; motion 01.3288 “*Völkermord. Überlebende als Privatkläger*” on allowing the survivors of genocide to appear as the private claimant, submitted by Patrice Mugny).

suspicions that an offence of this kind has been committed to the police, thereby prompting a criminal investigation. Introducing procedural rights for associations would undermine the principle enshrined in Swiss law whereby only the accused, the private claimant and the prosecuting authority officially appointed by the state qualify as parties to procedural acts. The Federal Council believes that admitting further parties to the proceedings would complicate the latter in a manner disproportionate to any advantages that might be gained.

Elsewhere, the National Council followed the Federal Council's arguments when it decided on 13 March 2017 to reject the parliamentary initiative (15.460) put forward by Manuel Tornare "*Bekämpfung von Rassendiskriminierung, Antisemitismus und Homophobie. Beschwerderecht für Minderheitenschutzorganisationen*" on combating racial discrimination, antisemitism and homophobia, in which he proposed introducing a right of appeal for minority rights organisations in connection with offences under Article 261^{bis} SCC.

Following the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) decision in the case of *Perinçek*, a parliamentary initiative submitted by Yves Nidegger (16.421 "*Fall Perinçek gegen die Schweiz. Artikel 261^{bis} StGB soll mit den Menschenrechten vereinbar sein*") demanded that the 4th paragraph of Article 261^{bis} SCC should either be deleted or reworded in such a manner that it only applies to a genocide that has been recognised as such by a competent international court of justice. On 11 May 2017, the Legal Affairs Committee of the National Council decided the initiative should be pursued, whereas on 8 September 2017 the Legal Affairs Committee of the Council of States found no reason to call Article 261^{bis} para. 4 SCC into question. The initiative has been referred back to the Legal Affairs Committee of the National Council.

Federal Supreme Court decisions

The Federal Supreme Court has handed down a number of groundbreaking decisions in the last two years on how Art. 261^{bis} SCC is to be interpreted. These rulings show that, despite certain difficulties in its application, the article nevertheless allows effective action to be taken to counter current manifestations of racism, including on the internet and social media. They also demonstrate why the Federal Council does not consider it necessary to amend the wording of the provision at present.

- In Federal Supreme Court ruling 1B_320/2015 of 31 January 2017, the Court expresses itself for the first time on the question of who has the right to bring an action for racial discrimination and who does not. The Federal Supreme Court makes it clear that if an entire group of people is being denigrated (in this case, the Jews), the individual members of that group cannot be considered to have 'suffered harm' and therefore are not admissible as a party to the proceedings. It finds the situation comparable with that of

offences against personal honour, where an undifferentiated statement targeting a group of people is also insufficient. The Federal Supreme Court fears that if all of the members of the group were to be accorded the status of injured party, this would be equivalent to an '*actio popularis*' that could be brought by anyone. The Court does not believe it to be the legislators' intention to allow anyone and everyone to go to court in cases of suspected racial discrimination. However, it can imagine the right of recourse for organisations involved in the fight against racism being introduced in future law, but leaves this decision up to the legislator.

- In its decision 6B_43/2017 of 23 June 2017, the Federal Supreme Court confirms the public nature of racist remarks made in a blog and finds that the way of thinking expressed by the accused on social media “appears to correspond precisely to what could be defined as racism”. The Court goes on to highlight the fact that the accused follows several people on Twitter whose profile and hashtags make deliberate reference to Nazi ideology – a further indication of his leanings.
- Federal Supreme Court ruling 6B_734/2016 of 18 July 2017 declares the use of the ‘quenelle’ salute outside a Geneva synagogue to be punishable under Art. 261^{bis} para. 4 SCC. It finds the gesture to be offensive and derogatory at the very least, even although it can be interpreted in different ways depending on the circumstances and views being expressed. In this case, the fact that it was performed outside a synagogue indicates to the Court that an impartial third party would interpret the gesture as a hostile and discriminatory act directed at people of the Jewish faith. The ruling also stated that the polemic surrounding the ‘quenelle’ means that its antisemitic connotations are generally well known among the Geneva public. The court also found that the fact that those involved lined up, dressed in military clothing and with their faces partially covered, was proof of their attitude and intentions and thus dismissed the appellant’s argument that the gesture signified nothing more than “schoolboy humour”.

Prohibition of discrimination

The SCHR study notes that there is no particular provision under civil law prohibiting racial discrimination. While it is true that individuals who are discriminated against because of their ‘race’ on the labour market or as tenants have recourse to the general provisions of civil law and the Code of Obligations (e.g. protection of legal personality, ban on unlawful termination of the employment relationship, rules on when notice of termination becomes null and void and rules on extending a tenancy agreement), difficulties in producing proof of the facts, fear of exposure (in the workplace, for example) and the costs involved in pursuing legal action often act as barriers to effective protection against discrimination. This is reflected by the fact that there are only a few documented court cases in these areas. In one of the few known cases of its kind, a complaint regarding the employer’s obligation to protect the employee’s

personality rights (Art. 328 para. 1 Code of Obligations) was upheld. The complainant had had to defend himself against defamatory remarks, which he considered to be antisemitic, at his place of work.

To date, any proposals to create an anti-discrimination act and legislation ensuring equal treatment for all have been consistently rejected by the National Council and Council of States.¹⁴ The Federal Council recalls that the existing legislation and case law afford sufficient protection against discrimination.¹⁵ However, it is prepared to look into further areas of life in which additional anti-discrimination norms might be necessary (e.g. the labour market, tenancy law, general contract law, etc.). Thus, for instance, the question of extending the right of associations to bring a group action to all areas in which discrimination occurs is to be examined in the context of the motion put forward by Prisca Birrer-Heimo on promoting and expanding the instruments for the exercise of collective rights (13.3931 “*Förderung und Ausbau der Instrumente der kollektiven Rechtsdurchsetzung*”), and a solution to the problems in applying Article 89 of the Civil Procedure Code is to be considered in connection with the motion submitted by the Legal Affairs Committee of the Council of States on amending civil procedures (14.4008 “*Anpassung der Zivilprozessordnung*”).

Lastly, on 15 March 2017, the National Council rejected a motion put forward by its Legal Affairs Committee, calling for the creation of an action plan that would extend protection against discrimination (16.3626 “*Konkreter Aktionsplan für den Schutz vor Diskriminierung*”).

Defining when hate crime and hate speech constitute a crime

Despite calls at the international level, such as those made by the OSCE, Switzerland’s criminal law contains no statutory definition of the elements that would qualify an offence committed with racist motives as a ‘hate crime’, which would then be specifically investigated, recorded as a distinct category, and subject to stricter penalties when prosecuted. Criminal courts nevertheless have a certain latitude in determining the punishment to be imposed for racially motivated crimes (specifically when determining the perpetrator’s guilt and when there is a joinder of offences).

In the absence of a precise legal definition, combating hate crimes and hate speech and recording them as such by means of criminal law becomes very challenging. Nevertheless the Swiss Criminal Code does contain a number of provisions suitable to prosecuting hate speech: Art. 111 et seq. “Offences against life and limb”, Art. 173 et seq. “Offences against personal honour”, Art. 261^{bis} “Racial discrimination” and Art. 261 “Attack on the freedom of faith and the freedom to worship”.

¹⁴ Cf. interpellation 09.3242 “*Diskriminierungsschutz*” submitted by Bea Heim and the parliamentary initiative submitted by Paul Rechsteiner 07.422 “*Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz*” (in DE/FR/IT).

¹⁵ Cf. “*Bericht zum Recht auf Schutz vor Diskriminierung*”, point 4.2.1.

In civil law, protection of legal personality in accordance with Art. 28 of the Civil Code is applicable. What all forms of hate speech have in common is the general intention to denigrate, insult, disparage, exclude, disadvantage or even incite violence against certain people or groups of people through spoken words or acts resulting from them. Hate speech thus offends the victims' personal honour and may even constitute an attack on their mental and physical integrity, both of which are protected under criminal law.

5. Prosecution

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are increasingly being used to disseminate hate speech. Racism has found a new outlet on the internet via social media platforms and the online comments sections of newspapers. The perceived anonymity of the internet lowers inhibitions about posting racist and discriminatory comments. In addition, users provoke one another into making even more exaggerated statements, which can result in a new, and often young, audience being mobilised.

The federal and cantonal authorities have not turned a blind eye to this situation. The cantons are responsible for prosecuting the improper use of ICT. As the national coordination body, fedpol is mandated to coordinate investigations by the various police forces into cybercrime and to look into suspicious online content reported by members of the public. As racial discrimination constitutes an offence that is prosecuted *ex officio*, fedpol notifies the competent cantonal prosecution authority whenever a statement by an identifiable author appears to fall under Art. 261^{bis} SCC.

Although antisemitism is not the primary consideration when combating cybercrime and prosecuting hate crimes and hate speech, it nevertheless falls within the scope of the *National Strategy for the Protection of Switzerland against Cyber Risks* (NCS). The fight against cybercrime is an important element of this strategy, in particular when it comes to terrorist threats against Jewish people and institutions. Alongside the sharp rise in economic cybercrime and cyber paedophilia, the focus lies on the misuse of ICT by organised crime groups with terrorist links.

Data gathering

The number of reports of online hate crime received by fedpol from the general public has remained relatively low for the last few years (0.3% to 0.9% of all reports, i.e. around 30-80 reports each year). Events in the Middle East saw a temporary upsurge in antisemitic and anti-Israeli outpourings on social media sites from the summer of 2014. The volume of reports received by fedpol regarding online racial discrimination was also markedly higher in 2015 and 2016 than in previous years. In 2015, 389 reports fell into the category of

'extremism' (3.3% of the total). This high figure is partly attributable to changes in the way data is recorded.¹⁶ 'Racial discrimination' will once again be recorded as a separate category as of 2017 in order to create a better picture of hate crime. Work on these changes is already under way. No clear trend can be distinguished in the first few months of 2017.

The offences registered by the police authorities are published in a national report on police crime statistics (PCS). Some of the criteria to be recorded regarding the circumstances of the offence, the accused and the injured parties is mandatory, some optional. If a crime is motivated by political ideology or racism, for example, it is possible to record this in the form of additional information about the circumstances of the offence. However, recording the motive is not an absolute requirement. It would nevertheless make sense to include hate crime in the police crime statistics – and to publish this data – in order to gain a better understanding of the magnitude of this particular issue. For the reasons outlined above, the Federal Council proposed doing precisely that in response to the interpellation on recording statistics for sexually-motivated hate crimes submitted by the Liberal Democrat Group (15.3403 "*Statistische Erfassung von hate crimes aufgrund der sexuellen Orientierung*"). At the same time however, the Federal Council came to the conclusion that it would be difficult to roll out an efficient and uniform data recording system that was binding on all cantons; it would also require considerable investment that would need to be weighed up against the quality and usefulness of the statistics. This was the context in which the 2016/2017 evaluation of the PCS, conducted jointly with the *Conference of Cantonal Justice and Police Directors* (KKJPD), considered to what extent gathering data on hate crimes could be institutionalised and made binding.¹⁷ The consultation has now been completed by the FSO and all the cantons have provided a response. Given the results of this consultation procedure, the guidelines for recording the motive of the crime will remain voluntary in their application and will not be expanded to include additional information. The KKJPD General Secretariat has been informed of the outcome of the consultation and agrees with the FSO. The Liberal Democrat Group's interpellation was abandoned on 16 June 2017 after it had remained pending for more than two years.

International police cooperation

Fedpol coordinates the investigations conducted by the various police forces and is responsible for international police cooperation, including in the fight against internet crime. Europol and INTERPOL are the two main channels through which fedpol shares information with its police partners abroad. Europol, which is headquartered in The Hague, supports and

¹⁶ The categories of 'racial discrimination' and 'extremism', which were recorded separately until 2014, have now been combined under the new heading of 'Racial discrimination (Art. 261^{bis} SCC)/Extremism'. The latter category also includes reports regarding Art. 259 SCC (public incitement to crime or violence) and reports of jihadist websites or 'Islamic State' videos, for example.

¹⁷ Although the survey followed the wording of the interpellation and specifically asked about hate crimes vis-à-vis homosexuals and transsexuals, the results can be transposed to the recording of all hate-induced motives.

strengthens Europe's law enforcement agencies in their joint efforts to prevent and fight organised crime, terrorism, and other serious forms of crime such as cybercrime. Fedpol is the national point of contact in matters of cybercrime for foreign police authorities that perform similar tasks. As most punishable content discovered on the internet is located on servers elsewhere, the Swiss authorities have no power to take direct action, nor can Switzerland force the country in question to take measures. Additional criminal law provisions would do nothing to change this situation. However, fedpol does report material that incites violence or hatred towards a particular group or religious community to the respective providers (e.g. YouTube, Facebook). Fedpol participates in the YouTube 'Trusted Flagger' programme, which means any content it reports is prioritised for review.

The *Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime* entered into force in Switzerland on 1 January 2012. As the first international treaty to address computer and internet crime, it regulates, among other things, the collection and storing of evidence in the form of electronic data for the purpose of investigating a crime. It particularly seeks to ensure that the investigating authorities have rapid access to electronic data to prevent the modification or destruction of such data during criminal proceedings.

6. Protection against discrimination; provision of advice

Victims of racial discrimination, no matter what form it takes, have a basic right to receive advice and support as well as legal redress, wherever possible. Counselling services must be provided for everyone living in Switzerland, regardless of the number of incidents that occur. Although rare, verbal and physical attacks on people owing to their actual or supposed Jewish faith do happen.

As part of the *cantonal integration programmes* (CIPs) that were set up in 2014, the federal government and cantons undertook to improve the advisory services available to all victims of racial and antisemitic discrimination. Measures taken in this area by all the cantons encompass raising awareness among the employees of the relevant authorities, providing training for advice centre staff, encouraging the existing advice centres to build a network and creating new specialist services. In 2017, 26 of these specialist advice centres throughout Switzerland came together to form the *Beratungsnetz für Rassismuskritiker*, a network for the victims of racism of which the FCR is also a member and whose projects receive financial support from the SCRA. The network's annual report not only serves as a source of data for the SCRA's own report, it also includes an analysis of the advisory cases with information on the form of discrimination (e.g. antisemitism), area of life, context and nature of the conflict.

7. Security

Following the terrorist attacks in several European countries, Switzerland also faces a heightened threat level, which particularly applies to Swiss citizens of the Jewish faith and Jewish and Israeli interests in Switzerland.¹⁸

The constitutional right to the protection of personal freedom gives rise to the state's obligation to take appropriate legislative and other measures to prevent attacks on the life and security of individuals, ward off threats and dangers, punish attacks and require the police to intervene whenever the life and limb or property of certain people or institutions is threatened. If there are indications that the Jewish community, individuals or institutions could become the target of violent attacks, the state – i.e. the federal government and cantons – has a duty to protect them and guarantee their personal safety, even if this entails an increased use of financial and personnel resources.

The state's duty to protect also arises from Art. 6 para. 2 of the Framework Convention, which stipulates that the authorities must take all appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence as a result of their belonging to a minority group.

Intelligence service and police activities

Overall, the jihadist threat to Switzerland has increased. The country forms part of the Western world, which the jihadists generally brand as Islamophobic. This makes it a potential target for terrorist attacks. Even on Swiss territory, Jewish and Israeli citizens and institutions are among the most vulnerable potential targets of jihad-motivated terrorism. The *Federal Intelligence Service* (FIS) assesses the threat to Jewish institutions and communities in Switzerland on an ongoing basis. It works on the assumption that the risk of copycat attacks on targets of this kind will rise temporarily after each attack in Europe. The current situation on the world stage means the jihadist threat will remain a pressing issue in future.

The FIS keeps the competent federal and cantonal agencies up to date with the latest developments and takes the necessary steps whenever it is presented with a concrete lead.¹⁹ Fedpol remains in direct contact with the SIG Security and Crisis Management Officer, especially if an incident occurs. Moreover, both the FIS and fedpol hold regular meetings with SIG representatives, at which they discuss the current threat level and general security issues.

¹⁸ FIS: *Switzerland's Security, Situation Report 2016 of the Federal Intelligence Service*, 2 May 2016, p.45

¹⁹ Interpellation 17.3174 entitled "*Neonazi-Konzert in Unterwasser. Lehren für Politik und Justiz*", submitted by Barbara Gysi (in DE/FR/IT).

Protective measures

Responsibility for maintaining public security and order generally falls to the cantons. The federal government has few powers of its own in matters of internal security.²⁰ According to the current allocation of competences between the Confederation and the cantons, the federal government's obligations to protect are derived from international law and security policy and extend no further than ensuring the protection of federal dignitaries, parliamentarians, employees of the Federal Administration, federal buildings, and persons and institutions afforded protection under international law (individuals with diplomatic status, diplomatic representations etc.) These tasks are performed either by fedpol or the local police on behalf of fedpol, or by the armed forces on a subsidiary basis. A broader duty of protection falls to the Confederation, in a subsidiary sense, only in exceptional circumstances, namely if the cantons are unable to provide the necessary protection within the scope of their powers.

The federal nature of the police system, whereby the cantons and communes are responsible for ensuring public security, has the advantage of allowing officers to become familiar with the community they serve and the environment in which victims and offenders move. It is often far easier for local police units to gauge the threat to the security of certain individuals or institutions and take rapid action.

Protecting Jewish institutions is nevertheless a matter of national importance. The federal government supports the cantons in their constitutional task of ensuring public security and order within the scope of its powers.²¹ This requires effective cooperation between Jewish organisations and the authorities at every level of state.

Several parliamentary procedural requests were submitted at the end of 2016 demanding better protection for minority groups, and specifically the Jewish minority:

- Motion 16.3945 "*Schutz religiöser Gemeinschaften vor terroristischer und extremistischer Gewalt*" on protecting religious communities from terrorism and extremist violence, submitted by Daniel Jositsch to the Council of States, and motion 16.4062 "*Schutz von Minderheiten vor terroristischer und extremistischer Gewalt*" on the same kind of protection for minorities, presented by Yvonne Feri, both call on the Federal Council, together with the cantons, to show what further measures could be taken to ensure the safety of religious minorities and what kind of statutory framework, if any, would be needed to implement such measures. The Federal Council recommended that both motions be accepted. The Jositsch motion was approved by the Council of States on 9

²⁰ Cf. Federal Council report in reply to postulate 10.3045 "Innere Sicherheit. Klärung der Kompetenzen" requesting clarification of internal security responsibilities, submitted by Peter Malama on 3 March 2010 Security (in DE/FR/IT).

²¹ Cf. statement of the Federal Council in reply to interpellation 15.3515 "*Jüdische Einrichtungen. Schutz, Koordination, Finanzen*" submitted by Yvonne Feri and postulate 16.3650 "*Schutz von Minderheiten vor terroristischen Angriffen*" put forward by Daniel Jositsch (in DE/FR/IT).

March 2017 and still has to be discussed by the National Council. The Feri motion has since been withdrawn.

- Citing the threat posed to Jewish institutions by violent extremism, postulate 16.4081 “*Schutz vor gewalttätigem Extremismus und das Beispiel der gefährdeten jüdischen Einrichtungen*” put forward by Guillaume Barazzone calls on the Federal Council to present a report on the state’s responsibility to protect threatened groups and the division of tasks between the federal government and the cantons, with particular regard to the passive protection of institutions under threat.²² The Federal Council recommended that Barazzone’s postulate be rejected, partly because the questions raised have already been addressed in detail in the report issued in reply to the postulate submitted by Peter Malama (10.3045 “*Innere Sicherheit. Klärung der Kompetenzen*”) calling for clarification of internal security responsibilities, and partly because it does not see any reason to make changes to the current division of tasks, even with respect to combating violent extremism. The Federal Council expressed its intention to step up the current coordination of efforts at the federal and cantonal level in accordance with Art. 57 para. 2 of the Federal Constitution. In doing so, it emphasises that ensuring internal security and the protection of particularly threatened communities and individuals must remain a matter of priority at every level of state.

As promised in its statements on the Jositsch und Feri motions, the Federal Council has strengthened coordination between the competent agencies at the federal, cantonal and communal level and between these and representatives of the communities that are most under threat at present. The political platform of the Swiss Security Network (SSN) asked its delegate to produce a concept for measures to protect minorities particularly at risk, involving the federal government, cantons and stakeholders (Jews and Muslims) in the process. This does not require any changes to the existing division of tasks between the federal government and the cantons in matters of internal security. The security concept includes a risk assessment. It also proposes reviewing the measures already in place and how they are financed, as well as determining what general framework and prevention measures are needed, and who should be responsible for implementing and financing them. The foremost objective is to create a framework for protecting particularly vulnerable minorities that has the support of the federal government and cantons and can be adapted to the situation on the ground at the local level. Work on the plan should be finished by the end of 2017.

²² Referring to an unclear wording in the SCRA report of 1 November 2016, Barazzone also queries whether the Federal Council is of the opinion that threatened groups should bear the costs of ensuring their own security. The Federal Council makes it clear in its response that neither it nor the authors of the report hold this view, as was also stated by the Head of the FDJP when the Council of States debated the Jositsch postulate (16.3650) on 14 December 2016.

The fight against terrorism is also a priority in the FDJP's crime strategy for the 2016-2019 period. Although the national action plan and crime-fighting priorities speak in terms of violent extremism and terrorism, antisemitic activities can be included in this category.

Financing

Measures to protect the Jewish community and its institutions depend on sufficient personnel and financial resources being made available. The question of which levels of state are obliged to provide support in the form of funding for protective measures is determined by the division of powers and responsibilities in the field of internal security, as set out in the Federal Constitution. Ensuring security within the country falls within the remit of both the Confederation and the cantons (Art. 57 para.1 Cst.). While the cantons are primarily responsible for upholding public security and order on the ground (a task assigned to the police), the federal government is required to take security precautions to counteract terrorism and violent extremism (Art. 2 para.1 Internal Security Act [ISA]). It also has obligations under international law to ensure protection. In addition, the federal government is responsible for coordinating efforts in respect of internal security (Art. 57 para.2 Cst.). The federal government can make a financial contribution to measures that fall – at least partly – within its constitutional remit, provided it has more than marginal competence in the matter. To be eligible, any such measures must also have a national dimension.

Strengthening the coordination of efforts to protect particularly vulnerable minorities is in keeping with the constitutional mandate vested on the Confederation and cantons to protect the population. Consequently, the working group on protecting particularly vulnerable minorities headed by the SSN is to review the measures already in place, including how they are financed, and determine what general framework and prevention measures are needed and who should be responsible for implementing and financing them.

8. Awareness-raising

The FCR first published a report on antisemitism in Switzerland in 1998. In 2017, it devoted issue 39 of its "*Tangram*" bulletin to this particular subject to mark the 150th anniversary of Jews in Switzerland being granted equal civil rights. In a wide range of articles, it looks at current manifestations of antisemitism and how these are being spread via modern means of communication; analyses the impact on Switzerland of historical events and the conflict in the Middle East; and discusses effective awareness-raising and prevention measures.

Awareness-raising and prevention take on great importance in the context of the internet, as it has created a new virtual environment that young people especially tend to inhabit. That is why Switzerland took part in the Council of Europe's 2014-2015 "*No Hate Speech*"

campaign. The Federal Council also put the *Young People & Media* programme being run by the *Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO)* on a secure, long-term footing.

The FCR raises public awareness of racism specifically by means of campaigns, public appearances, publications and press work that tackle disparagement and racial discrimination on social media. The FCR also supported and participated in the Council of Europe's "*No Hate Speech*" campaign, and has continued the movement beyond the campaign's official conclusion. In 2015, the FCR launched a campaign of its own entitled "*Bunte Schweiz*" with the aim of alerting young people to the issue of racial discrimination, online hate speech and the need to combat such phenomena. It will draw on the lessons learned from this campaign when developing and promoting further awareness-raising activities.

Lastly, the national action plan to prevent and combat radicalisation and violent extremism, which is scheduled for publication by the end of 2017, will include prevention and awareness-raising measures alongside protection efforts.

Schools

School is not only a place where knowledge and skills are imparted, it is also a social space in which tensions within society find expression and children and young people learn how to live together peacefully. Swiss schools and higher education institutions run a large number of projects that seek to raise awareness about racism, combat antisemitism and keep memories of the Holocaust alive. The SCRA regularly supports projects devoted to antisemitism and Holocaust remembrance in schools. Raising awareness of social cohesion issues and promoting tolerance, especially on social media, also forms part of the curriculum in each of the country's linguistic regions (*Plan d'études romand, Piano di studio del Canton Ticino, Lehrplan21*), which are at different stages of implementation at the moment.

Holocaust Remembrance Day was launched on 27 January 2004 by a decision of the *Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK)*. The Federal Council marks this occasion each year with a message honouring the victims of the Holocaust and acknowledging its responsibility for the future.²³ The EDK's information and documentation centre (IDES) has put together a guide that will help teachers get to grips with the subject. This was revised and updated in 2016 along with other material available online.

²³ Motion 17.3400 "*International Roma Holocaust Memorial Day (2. August) anerkennen*" on marking the genocide of the Roma during WWII, submitted by Martina Munz (in DE/FR).

Teacher education

Teaching professionals cannot teach the subject in an appropriate manner unless they themselves have received proper training. The *universities of teacher education* tackle the subject of antisemitism in the form of workshops and special theme days. The School of Education at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland has been holding a symposium entitled “Remembrance – Responsibility – Future” each January since 2009 with support from the SCRA. The French-language website *e-media.ch* hosts a selection of educational material on the Holocaust and other genocides. The University of Teacher Education Lucerne held a conference and learning workshop on the Holocaust and National Socialism in 2016. The International Research Conference on Education about the Holocaust, the final event of the IHRA’s research project on teaching and learning about the Holocaust, held in Lucerne from 14–17 February 2016, was partly financed by Switzerland.

Integration policy

The integration policy pursued by the federal government, cantons, communes and cities does not directly affect the Jewish community. However, the growing diversity within Swiss society calls for action to promote peaceful coexistence and combat discrimination. Special measures aimed purely at people with a migrant background are not desirable from a socio-political viewpoint as they can lead to exclusion. Embedding the principle of non-discrimination within the established structures ensures that any action taken benefits all the population groups potentially affected by discrimination, including – in this case – the Jews.²⁴

Protection against discrimination is one of the main action areas of all the *cantonal integration programmes* (CIPs) implemented since 2014. The CIPs encompass raising awareness among the employees of the relevant authorities, providing training for advice centre staff, encouraging the existing advice centres to build a network and creating new specialist advisory services for the victims of racial discrimination. These anti-discrimination measures, launched within the established organisational framework under the Foreign Nationals Act, benefit every section of the population.

A comprehensive integration policy also creates the opportunity to strengthen social cohesion on the basis of the values espoused in the Federal Constitution and promote mutual respect and tolerance between all the population groups. The CIPs represent the first set of clear rules for living together to have been drawn up and disseminated at the national level on the basis of the Federal Constitution. Those who have newly arrived in the country are systematically provided with information about living conditions and the legal system in Switzerland, with integration agreements being concluded if necessary.

²⁴ *Bericht zur Weiterentwicklung der Integrationspolitik des Bundes*, 5 March 2010, p.3 (Übersicht; in DE/FR/IT).

Implementing the integration programmes presents considerable challenges for all involved; however, regular evaluations show how consistent and successful this process has been. The second CIP phase runs from 2018-2021.

Interfaith dialogue

In preventing discrimination and promoting religious tolerance, state actors are required to encourage understanding between different religious communities by fostering mutual respect and tolerance. Although interfaith dialogue remains a matter for the religious communities themselves, the state can help facilitate their interactions.

While responsibility lies first and foremost with the cantons (Art. 72 Cst.), in so far as they are competent a number of federal agencies also take part in activities that seek to establish a constructive exchange between and with religious minorities. A 2015 survey of the integration agencies in the cantons, cities and communes revealed that most programmes, projects and activities with a bearing on religion being conducted at the cantonal and communal level do not form part of the framework of integration measures, despite the fact that migration movements of recent years have given rise to new realities in this area, thus calling for a more intense dialogue and improved awareness-raising.

9. Right to practice one's religion

The federal government and the cantons share responsibility for preserving public peace between the members of different religious communities and upholding freedom of religion and conscience (Art. 72 Cst.). The federal government fulfils this mandate in the areas that fall within its remit.

In 2017, the FDJP decided to create a coordination office for religious issues in order to improve the Federal Administration's handling of matters closely connected to religion. As a unit of the *Federal Office of Justice* (FOJ), this office is also intended to serve as a contact point. Its precise mission is to build bridges between the various federal agencies that deal with different aspects of religion-related topics and facilitate the exchange of information between them. Networking the agencies in this way should create a uniform approach within the Federal Administration to matters of religion. The FOJ will also serve as a touchpoint for religious communities wishing to contact the federal authorities with their concerns. Nothing will change in terms of who takes the lead in dealing with the individual matters and queries. The main aim is to establish a clear point of contact to which the churches and religious communities, cantonal authorities and other interested groups can turn for information. By taking this step, the FDJP is following a recommendation made in the SSN report entitled

“Measures to prevent radicalisation – the current situation in Switzerland”, published on 4 July 2016.

Religious symbols

In the report of 9 June 2017 produced in response to postulate 13.3672 “*Abklärung religiöser Fragestellungen*”, submitted by Thomas Aeschi and requesting clarification of several matters related to religion, the Federal Council concludes that there is no need to introduce legislation on the wearing or display of religious symbols. The report states that the federalist approach to matters of religion is firmly established in Switzerland and has, on the whole, stood the test of time. It finds that conflicts surrounding the wearing of religious symbols and those displayed on public buildings and facilities are mostly resolved in a pragmatic fashion by the institutions in question, without recourse to a court of law. According to the report, in the few cases in which legal action is taken, the courts generally succeed in finding a sensible balance between the fundamental rights of the individual and the interests of society. It also states that case law, specifically that of the Federal Supreme Court, provides the cantons, communes and institutions with an excellent frame of reference when defining or clarifying their practices in guidelines or handouts.

Armed forces

Art. 95 of the *Service Regulations of the Swiss Armed Forces* (SR 04, SR 510.107.0) governs freedom of religion and conscience during military service and sets out the principles to be observed by commanding officers at every level.

An information leaflet produced by the Armed Forces Chaplaincy provides guidelines for handling the faith-based needs of military personnel. The need to practice their religion and receive spiritual assistance is taken into account wherever possible during training and active service. Requests to take leave during particular religious festivals can be approved by the commanding officers if military service so allows (Art. 55 para. 1 and 2 SR 04). Special arrangements can be made on a case-by-case basis for certain members of the armed forces. It is thus possible to grant servicemen and women who observe *Shabbat* for religious reasons leave from Friday afternoon, which they then compensate through Sunday duty.

Military personnel who do not eat meat or certain types of meat for religious or ethical reasons, are generally offered ovo-lacto-vegetarian dishes if they notify their needs sufficiently in advance. Commanding officers may also permit certain personnel to take their meals elsewhere for religious reasons and compensate them for doing so, providing this does not significantly interrupt the service routine (Art. 45 of the *Organisation of Training Services Regulations* [ODA]).

Chaplains are responsible for the spiritual well-being of all the military personnel in the unit to which they are attached, including those who are not of the same denomination or religion. If necessary, chaplains can liaise with civilian religious, e.g. Jewish, organisations. Chaplains support the commanding officers by advising them on matters of spiritual care and helping them find mutually agreed solutions. It should be noted that penal sanctions may be imposed if the rights of a serviceman or woman are unduly violated.

The new *Ordinance on Compulsory Military Service* (CMSO) is due to enter into force on 1 January 2018. From then on, it will be possible to recruit non-Christian chaplains, provided they satisfy clear criteria that apply to all candidates. It will also be possible to assign specialist (limited duty) officers to support the military chaplains in their work. However, it will be left up to the chaplaincy service to define how Jewish or Muslim religious professionals are to become involved. One essential principle that is taken for granted within the armed forces must be observed: everyone involved in the provision of pastoral care through the military chaplaincy service must demonstrate great openness in addressing soldiers of all faiths and none, and must play a part in fostering mutual understanding and religious peace.²⁵

Kosher meat

The ritual slaughter of animals (*schechita*) was banned following a popular initiative in 1893.²⁶ Today, the slaughter of animals without prior stunning is prohibited by the Animal Welfare Act (TSchG; SR 455). The *European Court of Human Rights* (ECtHR) has reviewed the prohibition of ritual slaughter and found it to be lawful provided members of the Jewish community are able to obtain supplies of kosher meat that satisfies the requirements of their faith from abroad.

The great importance attached to freedom of religion and conscience justifies permitting kosher (and halal) meat to be imported so as to ensure the religious communities in question have sufficient supplies to meet their needs. The right to import and procure such products is reserved for members of the Jewish and Muslim communities and associated legal entities and partnerships (Art. 14 para. 1 TSchG). Certain sub quotas are set aside for kosher meat under the tariff rate quotas; no change is envisaged at present.²⁷

²⁵ See also the Federal Council's response to the interpellation submitted by Lorenzo Quadri (17.3279; "*Militär-Imame. Der Bundesrat soll seine Haltung darlegen*") asking it to clarify its position on military imams and the interpellation on the same subject submitted by Beat Arnold (17.3278; "*Wie ernst ist es dem Bundesrat mit der Einführung von Armee-Imamen?*"); in DE/FR/IT.

²⁶ Cf. the Federal Council's response to the interpellation on importing meat slaughtered in a manner that is outlawed in Switzerland (16.3464; "*Einfuhr von Fleisch von Tieren, die auf eine in der Schweiz verbotene Weise geschlachtet wurden*"), submitted by Jean-Luc Addor (in DE/FR/IT).

²⁷ Cf. motion 08.3154 submitted by Reimann on the duty to declare ritually slaughtered meat "*Deklarationspflicht für Schächtfleisch*", interpellation 13.3502 submitted by Luc Barthassat on labelling such meat "*Systematische Kennzeichnung von Halalfleisch von betäubungslos geschlachteten Tieren*" and motion 13.4090 submitted by Yannick Buttet "*Einfuhr von Halalfleisch von Tieren, die ohne Betäubung geschlachtet wurden*" on imports of halal meat from animals that are not stunned before slaughtering (in DE/FR/IT).

In May 2017, the National Council approved the initiative (*“Einfuhr von Halalfleisch von Tieren, die ohne Betäubung geschlachtet wurden”*), submitted by Yannick Buttet, proposing improvements to the system for importing halal meat from animals that are not stunned before slaughtering. In the following summer session, member of the Council of States Anita Fetz put forward a motion (17.3618; *“Deklarationspflicht für importiertes Fleisch von Tieren, die ohne Betäubung geschlachtet werden”*) calling on the Federal Council to make a declaration of the provenance of all imported meat from animals that are not stunned before slaughtering compulsory. The Federal Council opposed the motion, which has subsequently been withdrawn.

Circumcision

Interpellation 17.3499 (*“Knabenbeschneidung versus Recht auf einen unversehrten Körper”*), submitted by Bernhard Guhl, argues that the practice of circumcising boys violates the right to physical integrity (Arts. 10 and 11 of the Federal Constitution) and seeks to ban it on the grounds that it amounts to wilful bodily harm punishable under criminal law (Art. 122, 123 SCC).

The Federal Council does not see any reason at present to review its position on this issue. It sees it as a matter of weighing up the interests of the parents as holders of parental responsibility and the right of the child to physical integrity.²⁸ The parents’ rights include that of permitting medical interventions that interfere with the child’s physical integrity. Two conditions must be satisfied: firstly, that the child is not yet capable of forming his or her own views and secondly, that the parents are acting in the child’s best interests. The more invasive a procedure is, the greater the benefits to the child must be for this second condition to be satisfied. When it adopted Art. 124 SCC in 2011, thus making female genital mutilation a punishable offence, Parliament refused to extend application of the provision to include the circumcision of boys. Guhl’s interpellation has not yet been debated by the National Council.

10. International cooperation

Efforts to counter racism and antisemitism must be closely coordinated with partners at the international level. Switzerland makes a concerted effort to fulfil the commitments it has entered into. Only the most recent activities are mentioned here:

- During its Chairmanship of the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (OSCE), Switzerland organised a conference on antisemitism in Berlin in November 2014 to mark the 10th anniversary of the Berlin Declaration condemning all manifestations of

²⁸ See also interpellation 12.3920 submitted by Jacqueline Fehr *“Schutz der körperlichen Unversehrtheit von Kindern am Beispiel von kosmetischen Genitaloperationen und Knabenbeschneidungen”* on protecting the physical integrity of children with reference to cosmetic genital surgery and the circumcision of boys (in DE/FR/IT).

antisemitism. On 4 December 2014, the OSCE Ministerial Council unanimously adopted a declaration which called upon states to enhance their efforts to combat antisemitism. Switzerland also used its Chairmanship of the conference as an opportunity to develop a self-assessment procedure for member states, leading the way by publishing a report on its own performance.

- The results of the self-assessment, which the SCHR had been asked to conduct, were presented on 1 December 2015 at a conference organised in cooperation with the Council of Europe on the situation of the Jewish minority in Switzerland. The conference was opened by the head of the FDFA and co-hosted by the FDFA (DIL) and FDHA (SCRA) with the close involvement of the SIG. The event presented an opportunity to draw attention to the situation of the country's Jewish community and raise public awareness of the challenges it currently faces. It also served to highlight the wide range of activities taking place, especially in relation to schooling.
- In March 2017, Switzerland took over the chairmanship of the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance* (IHRA), an intergovernmental organisation with 31 member states, for one year. The IHRA was able to adopt its first strategy framework at its Plenary Meeting in Geneva that year. Preventing and combating Holocaust denial and antisemitism is one of the main goals of this strategy. During its chairmanship, Switzerland made education, young people and social media its priorities, and supported a number of projects that sought to expose pupils and students to first-hand accounts of Swiss Holocaust survivors and their fate.²⁹

11. Concluding remarks

Swiss society is continually required to cope with the changing face of diversity in order to guarantee peaceful coexistence. Current efforts to raise awareness, prevent racism and antisemitism, protect from attacks on life and limb, intervene when incidents occur and provide the victims with support must be pursued rigorously and built on, wherever possible.

The need to afford protection to various sections of the Swiss population – and even more so, their perceived need for protection – has risen over the last few years. This applies in particular to highly exposed minorities. Ensuring the security of Jewish people and institutions in Switzerland requires effective cooperation between Jewish organisations and the authorities at every level of state. This is just one of the objectives of the working group headed by the *Swiss Security Network* in which the federal government, cantons, communes

²⁹ More information on Switzerland's chairmanship of the IHRA can be found at: www.eda.admin.ch >News>Dossiers >Archive >Switzerland's Chairmanship of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in 2017.

and representatives of the population groups in question are looking at the protection of particularly vulnerable minorities.

Politicians and agencies at the federal, cantonal, city and communal level must speak out against antisemitic acts, promptly and resolutely. Civil society stakeholders, particularly the organisations representing those concerned, as well as politicians, the media and culture professionals are all urged to play their part.