Antisemitic incidents on rise across US, report finds

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Antisemitism rose in the U.S. in 2022 and shows little sign of abating worldwide as political radicals have gained mainstream popularity, researchers said in a report released Monday.

The report was released by Tel Aviv University’s Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry and the U.S.-based Anti-Defamation League as Israel began observing its annual day of remembrance for the 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust.

Last year’s report found that 2021 set a new high for antisemitic incidents, with the coronavirus pandemic fueling a worldwide rise in antisemitism. This year the researchers said that ‘2022 did not mark a universal reversal of the trend, and in some countries, most alarmingly the United States, it intensified.’

Other countries with large Jewish populations, such as France, Canada, Argentina and the United Kingdom, showed a decrease in antisemitic incidents from the previous year.

The ADL found that the number of antisemitic incidents in the U.S. increased by more than 35% in the past year, from 2,721 in 2021 to 3,697 in 2022. Antisemitic and white supremacist propaganda in the U.S. also hit new levels, the organization said.

Antisemitic hate crimes rose in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, home to the country’s three largest Jewish populations, according to their police departments.

The researchers found that visibly identifiable Jews, particularly ultra-Orthodox Jews, who are also known as haredi Jews, are the primary targets of antisemitic violence in the West.

‘Haredi Jews are the main victims not only because they are easily identifiable as Jews, but also because they are perceived as vulnerable and unlikely to fight back,’ the report said.

The rise in Jew-hatred in the U.S. is not limited to white supremacists. It said that ‘the antisemitism of the far-right and far-left are pushing into the mainstream of American culture and politics from both sides.’

While antisemitism in America is nothing new, since World War II, ‘American Jews have lived securely in the knowledge that civil society and its institutions are a reliable buffer against discrimination, prejudice and violence,’ the report’s authors wrote. ‘Violent attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions in recent years have shattered the perception of exceptionalism.’

In Israel, the report also criticized the new government’s inclusion of the ultranationalist religious Jewish Power party, founded by the successor of the late racist anti-Arab rabbi, Meir Kahane. The paper said the party has ‘polluted Israeli public discourse with chilling racist expressions that would have led to the immediate termination of their political careers in other democracies.’

‘The obvious must be stated: Racism is racism, and Jewish racism is as deplorable as other forms of racism, and should never be excused or tolerated,’ the report said.