The main subject of our research in this project were discriminatory structures and practices, which contribute to the dehumanization of Jews, Roma and Sinti, reduce them to the level of a negative stereotype, and later allow for discriminatory action to be taken against them. We have analysed existing research on antisemitism and antigypsyism in Poland, with the aim of gathering data, identifying existing trends, mechanisms, direct and indirect causes of antisemitic and anti-Roma actions, as well as the connections between antisemitism, antigypsyism and wider phenomena of xenophobia, racism, bias and discrimination. We have also monitored different manifestations of antisemitism and antigypsyism in various fields and based our recommendations upon it. Furthermore, we have identified civil society institutions and actors that are engaged in the fight against antisemitism and antigypsyism, to learn from them about their strategies and best practices.

In our research we have used the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliances (IHRA) definition of antisemitism from 2016, according to which “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.” When it comes to antigypsyism, we have used the definition recommended by the Alliance Against Antigypsyism, according to which:

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“Antigypsyism is a historically constructed, persistent complex of customary racism against social groups identified under the stigma ‘gypsy’ or other related terms, and incorporates: 1. a homogenizing and essentializing perception and description of these groups; 2. the attribution of specific characteristics to them; 3. discriminating social structures and violent practices that emerge against that background, which have a degrading and ostracizing effect and which reproduce structural disadvantages.3”

We did not aim at analysing the existing definitions of antisemitism and antigypsyism, although it would have been an important exercise from an academic point of view, especially in the context of antigypsyism, a term whose genealogy and meaning have not yet been sufficiently explored. Nevertheless, the literature review we have conducted allowed us to state that the array of manifestations which can be categorized as antisemitic or antigypsyist is much wider than what is covered by these two definitions that is much wider than plain hostility towards Jews and Roma. Applying Wolfgang Benz’s conception of antisemitism4 to antigypsyism we can claim that both phenomena are dormant cultural codes which, when awaken, can take up a variety of forms. They can serve a redefinition of popular worldviews, or as communication codes allowing common understanding of different realities. With the help of antisemitic or antigypsyist language, a group can strengthen its identity by defining a common enemy and opposing itself to it – an important strategy, especially in times of political and social crises.

In the next stage of activation, the cultural code evolves into an ideology, and later into action targeted against the imagined enemy. This process can take the form of scapegoating, which throws responsibility for everything that is bad in the group on the imagined enemy. It can also take the form of putting the discriminated minority in the role of “surrogate victim” – discriminatory action against it from the side of authorities are supposed to function as a warning to other groups5.

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The mechanism of scapegoating has been more often used against Jews, whereas the surrogate victim mechanism – against Roma. Nevertheless, in both cases we witness the discrimination of stigmatized groups as a means of strengthening the identity of the majority. This process is based on differentiation – emphasizing evident or imagined differences between the majority and the group of outsiders⁶.

The search for a common enemy in order to build one’s own identity is particularly typical of societies undergoing a crisis of identity – according to different authors, this is the chronic state of Eastern-European nations. In the words of Vladimir Tismaneanu, in Eastern Europe the nation is defined not through affirming what it is, but through rejecting what its members define as foreign and can therefore be defined as the nation’s “significant other”. It is in this exact spirit, explains Tismaneanu, that the phantoms of “Jews, critical intellectuals, Gypsies, liberal free thinkers, Freemasons, women, homosexuals”⁷ functions in the region.

The need for an enemy has been clearly diagnosed in sociological research recently conducted in Poland. According to Maciej Gdula there are two significant others for Polish identity: the first are the “elites”, located above the national mainstream; and the second are “pathologies”, situated below the mainstream and incapable of belonging to it⁸. Antisemitic motives are often used to describe hostile cosmopolitan elites, whereas elements from the antigypsyist glossary are often used to depict “pathologies” who cannot be considered part of the Polish nation. In this case, to the mechanisms of scapegoating and surrogate victim we should add a third mechanism, in which the Roma become an emblem and symbol of the break of social order and of the threat to the majority.

Defining Roma as a threat to public security and order can be defined as a process of “securitization”, which is conducted by institutions as well as by individuals and often includes openly racist content. The securitization of Roma people coincides with the recent fear of refugees, mostly Muslims, arriving to Europe. In Poland there are no refugees, but the majority of Poles nevertheless fears them and supports the current government’s policy not to accept any refugees. In such situation, Polish citizens who are often excluded from the ethnically understood Polish nation, may be demonized as the representation of “threatening other”.

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The concepts mentioned above served as theoretical background for our research. In our work, however, we have focused rather on the phenomena themselves, not digging any deeper into the causes, mechanisms and functions. The time frame of our research was the years 2014-2017, but we often had to make reference to earlier cases. We have adopted an interdisciplinary approach, combining historical and legal analysis, literature review, and media analysis. The main outcomes of our work were the following:

- Gathering and digitalizing the most important text from global literature on antigypsyism.
- Analysing existing research on antisemitism and antigypsyism in Poland.
- Conducting a study of qualitative approaches to antisemitism in Polish social sciences.
- Conducting a historical analysis of the state of Roma and Jews in post-war Poland.
- Analysing a database of antisemitic and antigypsyist incidents run by the “Open Republic” foundation.
- Analysing the content of Poland’s two most important dailies – “Gazeta Wyborcza” and “Rzeczpospolita”, in search of the frames of the content related to Jews and Roma, including linguistic stereotypes.
- Analysing the content of selected websites in search of the instances of hate speech directed against Roma and Jews.
- Analysing legal interventions conducted by the Association of Roma People in Poland against legal discrimination of Roma.
- Analysing the effectiveness of the Polish Government’s “Roma programs”, whose main aim is to improve the living conditions of Roma communities in Poland.
- Making recommendations.

When it comes to antisemitism, during our research we have detected:

- A rise in sympathy and decline in dislike towards Jews in recent years (charts 2, 4)
- A decline in the role of traditional antisemitism, based on religious anti-Judaism.
- The emergence of “new antisemitism” (based on anti-Israeli opinions and on the belief that Jews instrumentalize their position as Holocaust victims to gain material and political goods).
- A significant rise in hate speech, both online and offline.
• A significant rise in “secondary” antisemitism (meaning, expressions of antisemitism hidden in the form of defence against unjust Jewish accusations)
• A significant level and tolerance and lack of reaction to antisemitic hate speech from the side of authorities.

As for antigypsyism, we have detected:

• A rise in hate speech, both online and offline.
• A significant level and tolerance and lack of reaction to hate speech and acts of aggression against Roma, from the side of authorities.
• A very slow rise in sympathy (chart 1) and decline in dislike (chart 3) towards Roma (at least until 2010) measured in public opinion polls. However, Roma still remain one of the most disliked groups in Poland, second only to Arabs (chart 5).
• A development in the mechanisms of antigypsyism: from scapegoat, through surrogate victim, to open racism and securitization of the Roma as a symbol of the break of social order and of a threatening other.
• Presence of hidden antigypsyism in governmental programs for the Roma communities – the programs almost always stigmatize Roma as passive recipients of social welfare, strengthening stereotypes against Roma in society.
• Presence of antigypsyism in the Polish law and order institutions, who are not eager to implement anti-discriminatory policies in Roma-related cases.

Chart 1

Chart 2

Chart 3

Source: CBOS, *Stosunek do innych narodów. Komunikat z badań nr 21/ 201*

Chart 4
Antipathy towards Jews (%)


Chart 5

THE MOST DISLIKED GROUPS IN 2017 (%)

Recommendations:

- Deriving from our research, we recommend applying social and institutional pressure on the government and legal authorities (particularly courts and prosecutors) to provide with more effective implementation of the existing legal regulations on antisemitism and antigypsyism. In this context, imperative is the work of the Ombudsman, who shows an exceptional understanding of the importance of anti-discriminatory work.

- We recommend a more effective monitoring of media (online and offline) in order to improve the fight against hate speech. This requires better coordination and exchange of information between non-governmental actors and the administrators of major web portal, to increase the portals’ understanding and sensitivity to antisemitic and antigypsyist hate speech.

- We suggest cooperation and exchange of best practices between local authorities, who often appear to be the most effective in combating manifestations of antisemitism and antigypsyism.

- We recommend a revision of welfare programs aimed specifically at Roma communities, as these stigmatize the Roma and increase hostility towards them. More effective and less controversial would be the implementation of welfare programs that are not based on ethnic affiliation, from which Roma people could benefit as equal citizens.

- We also suggest the revision of the so-called “integration programs” addressed at Roma communities, since the ideas of integration promoted by these programs are often based on stereotypes and bias, and their main goals are usually reduced to complete assimilation.

- Finally, we recommend the intensification of educational activities aimed at transferring information on Roma people to different sectors of society.

2. State of the research on antisemitism

Since the democratic changes in 1989, much research has been conducted on the attitude of Poles towards Jews, by both local and international researchers, as well as academic and government institutes. Among the most researched topics are the appearance of antisemitic speech in public opinion and the attitudes of Poles towards the common Polish-Jewish past.
2.1. Positive and negative attitudes towards Jews

One of the most well-known institutions researching the attitudes of Poles towards Jews is the Polish Centre for Public Opinion Research, CBOS. The Centre conducts regular polls, focusing mostly on the level of sympathy and dislike towards Jews and other nations. The main conclusion of these polls is that throughout the last decades, the relation of Poles towards Jews has improved\(^9\).

CBOS polls show a decline in the level of dislike towards Jews, from 51% in 1993 to 27% in 2010, and a rise in the level of sympathy, from 15% to 31% respectfully\(^10\). In 2008 the level of sympathy overpassed the level of dislike for the first time since research on the topic has begun\(^11\).

Other research, conducted by the Centre on Prejudice of the University of Warsaw, shows that a large number of Poles are nevertheless not yet ready to accept Jews in their surroundings. In the polls, 12% of respondents said they would not want to work with a person of Jewish descent, 14% would not want to have a Jewish neighbour, and 24% wouldn’t accept the marriage of a relative with a Jewish person\(^12\).

2.2. Manifestations of antisemitic prejudice

According to Polish researcher Alina Cała, all researches conducted up to 2008 confirm a trend of polarization in the relations of Poles towards Jews: on the one hand, rise in the number of those who hold antisemitism as an ideology, and on the other hand those who reject antisemitism\(^13\).

The series of polls conducted under the leadership of Ireneusz Krzemiński, titled “Antisemitism, xenophobia and national stereotypes” is among the most influential in the field. Polls were conducted in 1992, 2002 and 2012, and based on a series of statements, expressing antisemitic views or stereotypes, differing between traditional, modern and new antisemitism, with which respondents can agree or disagree. According to Krzemiński’s research, in 1992 17% of Poles agreed with statements expressing modern antisemitism, and 11.5% - traditional

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\(^11\) A. Sulek, Zwykli Polacy patrz na Żydów, „Nauka” 2010, No. 1, p. 11.


\(^13\) Cała, op. cit., p. 631.
antisemitism. These numbers rose in 2002 to 27% (modern antisemitism) and 11.6% (traditional antisemitism), but fell back in 2012 to 20% (modern) and 8% (traditional)\(^\text{14}\). Krzemiński concluded from these results that democracy has weakened support of antisemitic views: the number of their supporters declines and the number of those rejecting them rises. However, these results do not necessarily correspond with those of other research, such as the one conducted in 2005 by the American Anti-Defamation League, which shows that 39% of Poles agreed that Jews were responsible for the death of Christ\(^\text{15}\). A 2013 research conducted by the Center for the Research on Prejudice also shows a significant support (23% of respondents) to traditional antisemitism, a rise of 8% from the results of a similar research conducted in 2009\(^\text{16}\).

In his 2002 and 2012 polls, Krzemiński found no evidence of new antisemitism. Yet the study by the Center for the Research on Prejudice shows that 65% of respondents agreed with the statement that “Israel does not avoid any type of action when trying to achieve its goals”, over 70% of respondents agreed that Jews do not deserve to have their homeland in Israel, and a little over 40% agreed that Israel’s actions against the Palestinians is no different than the ones of the Nazis during the Second World War\(^\text{17}\). A regression analysis shows correlations between views critical of Israel and antisemitic worldviews.

2.3. Secondary antisemitism and the question of memory

The most important element defining Polish-Jewish relations are matters of memory. The historical debate on the Holocaust is very much present in public and political life since 1989. What is more, in recent years the politics of memory has become a key factor in the political program of different parties and in public debate as a whole. This debate concerns sensitive issues and events, provokes strong emotions, and is itself source of much prejudice, negative attitude and hate speech. It is also the reason why secondary antisemitism, based on the negation of Jewish suffering during the Second World War and on a belief in a Jewish conspiracy to exploit the memory of the Holocaust, has become the most prominent, the most ardent and the most popular form of antisemitism in Poland.


\(^{16}\) Bilewicz, Winiewski, Soral, op. cit., p. 2.

A report by the Stefan Batory Foundation titled “Hate speech – a report on verbal violence against minorities” shows that in the case of the Jewish minority, the most common cases of hate speech were those blaming Jews for the suffering of Poles. Such comments usually deny their own antisemitic character, while at the same time dismissing the gravity of crimes committed against Jews and portraying the memory of the Holocaust as a tool in the hands of Jews to gain reparations.\footnote{M. Winiewski et al.,* Mowa nienawiści, mowa pogardy. Raport z badania przemocy werbalnej wobec grup mniejszościowych.* Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego, Warszawa 2017, p. 23, 29.}

Secondary antisemitism is connected to other types of antisemitism in an interesting way. Arguments from the different types of antisemitism support each other mutually. For example, secondary antisemitism explains antisemitic incidents by denying their antisemitic character and explaining them as acts of revenge or defence against Jewish plots aiming to harm the Polish nations. In a similar way, new antisemitism uses terms taken from the glossary of secondary antisemitism, claiming that Jews abuse the guilt of European nations to justify their actions against the Palestinians.

An immensely important role in shaping public debate on Polish-Jewish relations has been played by J. T. Gross’s book “Neighbours” (published in Polish in 2000). The public discussion on the behaviour of Poles towards Jews during the Second World War, sparked by the publication of the book, has led to the creation of two main camps: an accepting one, which accepts Gross’s accusations and aims at promoting a critical self-perception of Poles’ behaviour during the war; and a negating one, which questions the legitimacy of Gross’s claims and holds a more apologetic perception of Poles’ behaviour during the war. Member of the latter find accusations of Polish crimes during the war repulsive and perceive them as a threat for the positive self-perception and identity of the Polish nation. This, in turn, may be related also to a competition over the role of main victim of the war: as authors of the Stefan Batory Foundation report state, for many Poles this role belongs solely to the Polish nation.\footnote{Ibid., p. 23.}

2.4. Antisemitic stereotypes

Antisemitic stereotypes are deeply rooted in Polish culture, which means that some Poles may hold certain negative images of Jews, which may be evoked under certain circumstances, without necessarily expressing negative attitudes towards them in their everyday
life. These images are unconscious: they are part of the cultural resources to which people reach instinctively when thinking or speaking of Jews.

A traditional antisemitic stereotype of a Jew includes three dimensions: religious, social-economic, and political. The approach to these stereotypes is ambivalent and has allowed a multiple, sometimes positive and sometimes negative, reading of the same stereotypical characteristics. For example, the stereotype of the Jew as a lender, banker, cheating tradesman who gets rich at the expense of others, derives from the fact that most of the contact between Jews and non-Jews was of a commercial nature. This was the negative side of the stereotype, but the positive side was a great appreciation of the Jews’ knowledge of business and finance. The same double-faceted way, Jews were mocked and persecuted for their different faith, but at the same time respected for their religious devotion and inward solidarity. Yet still, in moments of crisis, when the majority of society felt threatened, negative stereotypes prevailed.

2.5. Violence and hate speech

Batory Foundation’s “Hate Speech” report presents important data on the state of hate speech in Poland. According to the report, in the years 2014-2016, the number of people who witnessed hate speech in the media, in daily life situations, and especially online, has significantly increased. In 2014, roughly half of young Poles encountered antisemitic, islamophobic or anti-Ukrainian hate speech; in 2016, already 75% of youth declared that they encountered antisemitic content online, 80% - islamophobic, and 71% - anti-Ukrainian. One of the explanations provided in the report is the polarization of political discourse in Poland: in 2015, parliamentary and presidential elections were held in Poland, and election campaigns were fertile ground for political messaging based on fear of immigrants, refugees and Muslims, which often involved antisemitic discourse.

Importantly, the report shows that constant encounters with hate speech online lead to a desensitization of the user – today, a significantly lower percentage of Poles finds anti-Semitic,
anti-Roma or islamophobic content as offensive. This means that antisemitic hate speech has not only become more popular, it has become more tolerated.

Does this mean that the rise in hate speech leads also to a rise in violent antisemitic incidents? Not necessarily. According to Poland’s Ministry of Justice, in the years 2013-2016 64 hate crimes targeted at the Jewish community were recorded, all of them related to hate speech (of which 41 cases were online), but none of them included physical violence. According to the Ombudsman for Equality and Civil Society, the number of complaints against discrimination on a national, ethnic or religious basis is constantly decreasing, and in the years 2013-2015, discrimination on antisemitic basis accounted for as little as 3.5% of all cases dealt with in this time. Hate speech has indeed become more popular and tolerated, but for now it seems that it remains limited to speech, and in particular to the virtual world.

2.6. Role of the Church

The attitude of the Catholic Church in Poland to Judaism and to Jews is complex. On the one hand, one can mention many important voices who called to oppose antisemitism, relying mostly on the Vatican’s policy, and in particular on the “Nostra Aetate” declaration. On the other hand, there are also large groups within the church who support nationalist views of antisemitic character and take an apologetic approach on historical questions of Polish-Jewish relations. It is hard to determine which one of these two voices is the dominant one.

Father Stanisław Musiał, a Jesuit who was personally involved in matters of interfaith dialogue, claimed that the Catholic Church indeed tried to combat antisemitism, but it lacks an organised plan, as well as the agility to react quickly to antisemitic manifestations and the ability to use special occasions (such as Judaism days) to touch the topic. These lack lead Musiał to define Catholic-Jewish dialogue in Poland as “anaemic”, and compare the actions of the Catholic Church against antisemitism to the work of fire-fighters: putting of fires when a conflict erupts, but without any preventive strategy.

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22 Ibid., p. 6.
23 https://wiadomosci.ws.pl/najwiecej-osadzonych-przestepstw-antysemickich-to-wpisy-w-internecie-6084078181450881a
3. **State of research: antigypsyism**

Unlike antisemitism, antigypsyism has not been widely researched in Poland. Even the term itself is little known, and appears in very few works on the topic. Usually, Roma issues are mentioned “by the way” in researches of larger scope devoted to hate speech, racism, xenophobia and discrimination. In any case, all researches show the same: Poles don’t like Roma, and the stereotype of the Roma as a lazy thief is stronger than any other. Indeed, it has not always been like this. Until the 1970s, the Roma stereotype was ambivalent, and though dominated by negative elements, it included also positive characteristics, usually connected to romanticism, anti-modernism, and the image of the Roma as the embodiment of the ideal of freedom. In Poland, the image of the “free Roma” also had a political context, rooted in Polish 19th century literature and poetry – longing for freedom was then perceived as a “Polish” feature, but as Polish writers could not speak of Poles longing for freedom, because of the occupiers’ censorship, they transferred this role to the Roma.\(^{25}\) Under the communist regime a similar context arose, and the “freedom-loving Roma” was again a symbol of opposition against the oppressive regime.

This double-edged stereotype began to change in the 1960’s as a result of the government’s policy of forced settlement of the wandering Roma, as well as of the economic migration of settled Roma. These led to a change in the relations between the Roma minority and the rest of the population\(^{26}\) – negative elements of the stereotype gained strength in the 1970s and 80s as a result of worsening economic conditions, a sense of social instability, and the general social crisis that accompanied it. According to the very rare public opinion polls conducted in this era, Roma were the only ethnic or national group to be less liked and more disliked by Poles in 1991 than in 1974 (drop of 10 percentage points in sympathy, rise of 15 percentage points in dislike). In the same timeframe, attitudes towards most other minority groups (and particularly Jews) improved. What is more – whereas in 1974 “Gypsies” were the least disliked and most liked among the disliked groups, in 1991 they became the most disliked of all minorities\(^{27}\).

In the 1980s and 1990s a series of attacks against Roma communities took place in the towns of Konin, Oświęcim and Mława, accompanied by a worsening of the public image of the Roma. This had to do with the scapegoating of Roma, whereas Roma became perceived as

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responsible for the growing sense of insecurity, but also with the mechanism of “surrogate victim”, related to the fear of the upcoming social and economic changes in the country\textsuperscript{28}.

These mechanisms were accompanied by the effect of the “naturalization of difference”. In polls conducted in 1991 among Polish university and high school students, Roma did not get much attention and were only attributed with two characteristics – dirt and dishonesty\textsuperscript{29}. This shows a significant combination of social and physical stereotypes, which may hint us that the imagined features of Roma are of both behavioural and biological dimension.

Similar results were achieved in an ethnographic research conducted in the years 1994-1995 by Ewa Nowicka in three villages in the south of Poland, in which Roma and non-Roma coexisted for centuries. Non-Roma residents perceived their neighbours mainly in social categories, emphasizing their low social status and the closed nature of their community. This perception was reinforced by racist terminology, through which they presented their Roma neighbours as “black” and “unpleasantly smelly”. Somewhere in between the racial and the social aspects they also mentioned that the Roma have “a different mentality” – according to the non-Roma residents, Roma were uncappable of planning their lives responsibly or of making any long-term efforts. This was an unacceptable difference of life-styles, in the eyes of the non-Roma; the Roma culture, source of this “mentality”, was perceived as primitive and ridiculous. Nevertheless, respondents also mentioned the positive sides of this culture, such as hospitality, ingroup solidarity, and joyfulness\textsuperscript{30}.

Later researches\textsuperscript{31} point at a radicalization of these views – positive elements of the Roma culture disappeared from the catalogue of stereotypes used by the majority. Respondents underlined the otherness of the Roma culture and its incommensurability with European values. It is interesting that, according to respondents, Roma constituted the biggest symbolic threat to Polish values.

The contemporary opinion on Roma is complex and double-faceted. On the one hand, the racial element, which stood at the base of the attacks in 1980s and 1990s and of the social


construction of difference enhanced the mechanism “surrogate victimization” during the democratic transformation, solidified in the first decade of the twenty-first century and found itself a new, fertile ground – the internet. On the other hand, polls show a rise in positive attitudes towards Roma. In public opinion polls conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research, CBOS, in 1994, only 6% of respondents declared sympathy towards Roma; in 2012 – 24%. The level of dislike towards Roma dropped from 75% in 1994 to 50% in 2012. Roma remained the most disliked of all national and ethnic groups, but the tendency is nevertheless positive, and it is stronger than the average for other groups. Yet still, recent polls unfortunately show a slow rise in the level of dislike towards Roma since 2011, as can be seen in the chart:


The 2017 numbers are most probably an exceptional anomaly that we cannot explain – in the most recent survey from 2018, CBOS noted 59% of dislike to Roma and only 12% sympathy. The tendency observed in 1994-2010 makes the consolidation of the racist discourse something surprising but the gradual increase in dislike since 2010 may be correlated with the growth of racism which we can see predominantly in the online content.

According to Ewa Werner\textsuperscript{34}, three main negative categories of content prevail in the Polish online discourse about Roma. The first consists of social functioning features such as lack of will to work, educate children and assimilate, privileged access to social welfare, exploitation and begging as a way of life. The second category consists of social disfunction features, such as stealing, lack of hygiene, insolence and even paedophilia. The third category is the racial one, and includes reference to the Roma as racially, genetically or culturally predestined to certain behaviours and life styles. Cultural determinism appears here together with biological determinism, suggesting a primordial, inevitable and hereditary character of this culture. In this category we find, among others, “dirt”, which has been previously mentioned as a perceived part of the “Gypsy nature”.

In Werner’s analysis, the racist discourse serves to support views according to which Roma should not be assisted in any way, since they cannot be changed: their lifestyle is dictated by their genetic “nature” or by their unchangeable culture. The cultural and the racist arguments are very similar, but the racist argument nevertheless prevails – statements such as “Gypsies have a stealing gene” are more popular than statements such as “Gypsies were not a problem when they used to wander around, I would have no problem with that if it weren’t for their ‘stealing culture’”\textsuperscript{35}. Online, the racist discourse appears either as an independent argument or as a deeper expression of the cultural and behavioural arguments. What is more, the positive aspects of Roma stereotypes, which were once popular and still exist among the residents of some villages in southern Poland, are completely absent from online comments. In Werner’s analysis not a single positive opinion on Roma was found\textsuperscript{36}. This is one major difference between the status of Roma and of Jews. Opinions on the latter are divided and polarized, which means that at least by some they are perceived positively. In the Roma case, there unfortunately seems to be no group of people showing any sympathy towards them, for example by condemning racist comments on the web.

Existing research leads us, if so, to the conclusion that attitudes towards Roma people in Poland have evolved from an ambivalent stereotype to racist hate speech. At the heart of this process are the scapegoating and “surrogate victim” mechanisms, which have intensified their


\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
impact during the financial, social and political crises of the 1980s and early 1990s. Both these mechanisms require a social construction of difference that portrays the “Gypsies” as radically and inherently different from the majority. This process involves “naturalization of difference” and is later used and enhanced by the racist argument, especially online.

The impact of online discourse is double-folded. On the one hand, anonymity allows users to express opinions which would have been difficult to express in public (for legal reasons, for example). It also allows racists to seek and find support for their opinions. On the other hand, it may function as a safety valve for views that otherwise could have been activated in a violent way in real life. It also allows for a quick and effective identification of potential threats. In the end, however, it seems that the online popularization of the antigypsyist cultural code, assists in its generalization, and turns the “Gypsy” stereotype into a negative symbol, emblematic of any type of cultural or ethnic difference.

4. Analysis of incidents: the “Open Republic” association database

4.1. Incidents of antisemitic character

Open Republic (Otwarta Rzeczpospolita) is an association combating antisemitism and xenophobia in Poland. In 2014 the association founded the “Report hate” portal. The portal enables users who have encountered manifestations of hate speech or hate crimes to report them. Later on, the reported hateful act is analysed by the association’s experts and different types of reactions are taken. The portal keeps an open database of all reports, so readers can follow them and check their current status.

An analysis of the open database reveals that since the portal’s foundation in 2014 and till March 2017, 144 incidents of antisemitic character were reported, out of which 128 took place online (on different websites and portals, whether as independent articles or as comments in blogs, forums or social networks). Only 16 incidents took place offline. These numbers confirm the Batory Foundation’s conclusion in its 2017 report, that the main stage for hate speech in our days is the internet.

Antisemitic incidents reported on the portal can be divided into several types: content inciting to violence against Jews; content supporting acts of violence against Jews; content

37 http://zglosnienawisc.otwarta.org/o-projekcie, 03.07.2017
38 M. Winiewski et al., Mowa nienawiści...
inciting to hatred against Jews; content disseminating antisemitic stereotypes; content disseminating Holocaust denial; and content expressing support towards discrimination and extermination of Jews by the Nazis.

The most popular category is the one inciting to violence. These are comments such as “kill a Jewish parasite”, “it’s about time we finish with this Jewish occupant and enemy”, “Jews to the gas [chambers]” or “a good Jew is a dead Jew” (all quotes taken from the data base). These constitute 26% of all antisemitic incidents reported on the portal. A very similar category is the one of content supporting violence – the main difference is that these are positive comments on acts of violence against Jews, but without the inciting element. Examples are: “I support, I support, everything Jewish should be destroyed” or “let ISIS f*ck them all over there in Israel and we’ll have peace”. 14 such comments were reported to the portal, constituting almost 10% of all incidents.

Another popular type of content is one disseminating antisemitic stereotypes, deriving either from traditional antisemitism (for example: “the Jewish plague has always oppressed Christians, they killed Jesus”; “the Jew loves to steal and to lie, this is what the Talmud teaches him”) or from its modern, political version (for example suggesting the existence of “the Jewish political lobby in Poland”). These are 21% of incidents on the portal. Content of the next category, inciting to hatred, does not necessarily make use of stereotypes, but simply contains anti-Jewish expressions, for example: “F*ck Jews”, “you Jewish plague, take your museums and f*ck off from this country”, “are you f*cking mad, that we should mix our blood with this dirt”. It also stands for 21% of reported incidents.

Holocaust denial content is the least popular category – only 7% of the reported content belongs to this type. On the other hand, content supporting Nazi policy against the Jews is more than twice as popular – 15% for comments such as “Adolf knew what he was doing” or “Hitler had a good plan for the Jews, it’s a shame he didn’t manage to realize it, now we’re stuck with the mess”.

4.1.1. Reaction to antisemitic content

Staff of the “Report Hate” portal offers four types of reactions to antisemitic content. It either: (a) reports it to the police / prosecutor’s office; (b) reports it to local authorities (in the case of offline incidents); (c) reports it to webmasters and portal owners (in the case of online
incidents); or (d) reports it to other NGOs dealing with hate speech. Only the first type of reaction has a legal character, while the three remaining reactions have a rather practical and direct goal, such as removing content from the website or painting over an offensive mural.

The legal path was nevertheless the preferred one for the association. 133 out of 144 incidents were reported to the prosecutor’s office. However, the practical solutions seemed to be much more efficient: out of 11 remaining incidents, 5 were reported to local authorities (all were murals in public places vandalized with antisemitic content), of which 4 were painted over or removed. Three online incidents were reported to webmasters, and one of them was removed from the website. In comparison, of all 133 cases reported to the police, 66 cases were opened (the other half either remained unanswered or was rejected), and no case whatsoever led to a criminal lawsuit, neither against the creators of the content, nor against the owners of the hosting portals. Many reasons were given to refusals of launching investigation or to closing of cases – unknown offender, qualification of the offence as a civil rather than penal matter, offender located abroad, and others.

4.1.2. Summary and recommendations

An analysis of incidents on the “Report hate” portal shows how complicated the fight against hate speech currently is. The first difficulty is already at the monitoring stage. The number of reported cases on the portal is only the tip of the iceberg, and there is no possible way of monitoring all internet content in search for hate speech. Later, at the reaction and intervention stage, a second difficulty arises. From information available on the portal we learn that authorities have no will or capability to take any action against the sources of hate speech. Practical solutions, based on cooperation of those who run the public sphere (whether online or offline), turned out to be more effective. It is therefore surprising that in so few cases the association decided first to contact webmasters instead of going directly to the police.

Precedent cases in the Polish legal systems have already set the rule that the owner of a web portal is responsible for content it hosts, regardless of who the author is. It is therefore in the interest of webmasters to work with organizations such as “Open Republic” to remove hateful content – apart from possible legal consequences, there is also the risk of losing readers. Thus, it is recommended to cooperate with the biggest national portals and control, together, hateful content online. A similar situation occurs in the case of local authorities and
organizations when it comes to offline content. They have the proper resources that allow quick and effective removal of hate speech in the public sphere.

4.2. Antigypsyist incidents

The Open Republic association has taken action on 62 cases of antigypsyist content, most of them related to online posts and comments containing hateful content, inciting to violence and extermination, or supporting violence and extermination. A second category was the offline content of similar character, such as popular songs, graffiti, or banners exposed by fans during football matches.

4.2.1. Reactions

All cases reported by the association to the police or prosecutors office were investigated. 16 cases were closed due to lack of capability of identifying the aggressor; 23 cases were closed without being given any explanations; 7 cases were closed for lack of ability to identify illegal activity. None of the cases resulted in a penal process.

4.2.2. Summary and recommendations

The activities of the Open Society foundation are important, and should enjoy wide public support. The lack of reaction and support from the side of authorities and media is surprising. Page administrators are unpunished and act against the “netiquette” followed by most web users. Lack of reaction from their side can be read as consent for the spiral of hate and violence of which the Roma are victims.

5. Analysis of articles on antisemitic incidents and Polish-Jewish relations in Polish media

In order to complement the information gathered during the analysis of the “Open Republic” database and to get a better image of the state of hate speech in the public sphere in Poland, we also analysed articles related to Polish-Jewish relations and to antisemitic incidents in Polish media. The main goal of this analysis was to understand how such incidents are portrayed and presented in the newspaper articles.
For this aim, we analysed several hundred articles published in the last three years on two of Poland’s most important daily newspapers: “Gazeta Wyborcza” and “Rzeczpospolita”. The final results give us an empirical reflection of public debate in Poland and the list of issues which Poles perceive as most important when it comes to their relations with the former neighbours. What we see is a tendency to focus on events from the past, instead of conducting a real debate on the current state of Jews in Poland. The number of articles dedicated to political history is several times bigger than the ones devoted to current events.

It seems that the media discourse does not reflect properly the state of antisemitism in Poland, and media outlets do not inform their readers about antisemitic incidents and leave them unaware of the true dimensions of the phenomenon. The negative outcome of it is that if people don’t know that antisemitism in Poland is alive and kicking, it makes it harder to act against it.

Antisemitic incidents are by and large ignored by Polish media, which can be understood as a certain level of acceptance towards them. This is in line with the 2017 Batory Foundation report, according to which Poles don’t see a problem in antisemitic hate speech. Polish media are also going through a process of desensitization and don’t see the need to report on antisemitic incidents. At the same time, organization such as “Open Republic” are making a huge effort to counter the hate wave, and don’t get the proper support of the government and of traditional media, who are too busy trying to restore the ideal historical image of their own nation.

Our analysis shows that Polish media focus almost solely on historical matters: they argue with international media that use the term “Polish camps”; they hale Polish war heroes and Righteous Among Nations; and they explain the context of Polish pogroms during the Second World War. But they do not ask themselves one main question – what are Poles doing today in order to maintain good relations with the Jewish minority, combat antisemitism and protect Jewish cultural heritage in Poland. When they already ask themselves this question, they tend to present positive answers, portraying Polish initiatives in a positive light and presenting Polish society as one who cares about its Jewish heritage. All positive news are praised and highlighted, while antisemitic incidents are swept under the rug.

This obsession with “Poland’s good name” is problematic from the point of view of a historical debate. Under the government’s influence, journalists take the role of historians, state new historical truths and maintain an apologetic narration of history. Particularly alarming are

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results of the analysis of articles in “Rzeczpospolita”. The authors appeared to be little critical, often accepting without questioning the government’s narrative, even when it is opposed to existing historical research. Defending the honor of the Polish nation, some journalists do not hesitate to use language bordering with antisemitism, accusing “Jewish circles” of supporting Soviet crimes and conspiring against Poland internationally. This kind of media debate grows a narcissist, uncritical society. “Gazeta Wyborcza”, in comparison, also focused mainly on the topic of political history, but was more open and presented more balanced opinions and arguments.

It seems that public debate on Polish-Jewish matters has little to do with Jews. This is a debate around the question “who are the Poles”, in which Jews are limited to the role of “others” against which Poles build their own self-perception. The media debate is a reflection of identity-building processes taking place in Poland, based upon the popular myth of Poland as a “Christ of nation”, a noble nation who paid a high price for its righteousness, and still encounters ingratitude from the side of those nations whom it helped. These processes are so strong that it is hard to spot a chance for changing them. In media debate, opening up for other approaches would demand a lot of courage from journalists.

6. Antigypsyism in Polish media

“Gazeta Wyborcza”, presenting a more liberal-democratic view, holds a negative stand towards any manifestation of nationalism, antisemitism or antigypsyism in Poland. A review of articles shows that no article in this daily included stigmatizing or inciting content against Roma. A particularly positive connotation is found in articles about Roma art, music and dance. This, however, does unfortunately strengthen the stereotype of the Roma as a romantic, easy-going people who do little but party, sing and dance, which can later be translated negatively into a stereotype of the Roma as lazy. Reading these articles one gets the impression that authors know nothing else positive about Roma culture and communities, so they hold strong to the only topic they know and find “safe”.

A second category of articles are informative texts about initiatives for the Roma community by different stakeholders. Particularly important are articles on so-called “best practices” in supporting the Roma community, for example anti-discrimination projects or the “assistants” who support the school education of Roma children.
The majority of articles, however, were related to the daily life of Roma and their functioning in society. The most important topic is the “residential question”, which completely dominates the attention of journalists. Out of 68 articles on Roma, 37 spoke about Roma encampments and the difficult living conditions in them. Some articles were dedicated to conflicts with local residents in cities such as Wrocław, Poznań or Limanowa, who did not want to see the Roma as their neighbours. These articles criticize the lack of action from the side of authorities, NGOs and other institutions. Their intentions are good, but the final result is more stereotypes: Roma are portrayed as helpless and dependent on external support. Unfortunately, negative stereotypes of Roma people have grown deep roots in the subconsciousness of journalists, who pass them forward, directly or indirectly, to readers.

This is especially visible in articles from “Rzeczpospolita”, in which Roma issues are treated very superficially. Under the disguise of “caring for the Roma”, articles call for their integration in society, but forget to discuss what this integration would look like. Usually, it simply means assimilation. Roma who broke the barriers and became an integral part of Polish society are presented, but in a way that promotes only the assimilation of the Roma, not their integration. Integration, as we understand it, means access to social structures while maintaining the right for cultural uniqueness.

7. Content analysis of selected websites in search of Jewish-related topics

Content related to Jewish people or culture on the most popular Polish websites can be segregated according to four main categories: content of educational character, telling about Jewish culture in Poland (11 out of 111 analysed posts); “news” content, presenting information about antisemitic incidents in Poland (5 posts); posts related to history, political history, memory and the Holocaust (27 posts); and posts disseminating antisemitic stereotypes (11 posts). A fifth, additional category is the one of “other” posts, which were difficult to code into one of the four categories; these usually take the form of unrefined jokes.

Trends online are similar to the ones from traditional media. Most importantly, the fact that Poles focus on their own historical image, and the internet becomes the main platform for discussions on historical events and their interpretation. Even in the so called “entertainment” portals, the topic of political history permanently returns and is more dominant than the topic of stereotypes. Although many posts express prejudice or dislike towards other national groups (not exclusively to Jews), only few of them can be marked as inciting to hate or violence; most
of them seem to be, after all, within the borders of freedom of speech. We should, however, remember that only part of the most popular posts was analysed.

8. **Content analysis of selected websites in search of Roma-related topics**

Ten websites were analysed, and a total of 3510 posts on Roma issues were found. Their analysis reveals how widespread the stereotype of Roma as lazy and thieves is. It is practically impossible to find any positive content on Roma online, and the very few positive posts are effectively dissed by other users. Web users’ opinions on Roma people are evidently emotional, and negative.

Anonymity and lack of direct personal confrontation with other users enable verbal aggression. Analysing the quantity and quality of Roma-related comments online, there is no doubt that the internet has become a space in which decency rules have stopped functioning. Users seem to have no boundaries or brakes, and administrators very rarely block any content, even when it clearly violates the law. Roma are denied of human dignity, and subject to racist comments and aggression, including expressions of support and incitement to their extermination.

9. **Legal interventions by the Association of Roma People in Poland**

Having analysed legal acts regarding national and ethnic minorities in Poland, we can agree that they are satisfying and follow international standards. What is not satisfying is their implementation. During the course of the last three years, the Association of Roma People in Poland has reported to the Prosecutor’s Office over twenty cases of possible violations of the Polish Penal Code (articles 119, 256 or 257 regarding discrimination and hate crimes), out of which only one case was brought to court. One gets the impression that prosecutors ignore their obligations whenever it comes to Roma people. The Association intervened regarding the following cases:

- Polish court decisions that revealed the Roma descent of perpetrators although this is not practiced regarding people of other ethnicities.
- Actions by Polish sanitary-epidemiologic authorities, informing publicly about refusals of Roma people to vaccinate their children while illegally disclosing their ethnicity.
• Actions by Polish educational institutions, including concrete schools and teachers, who disseminate anti-Roma stereotypes.
• Restaurants refusing to serve Roma.
• Hate speech against Roma by civil servants, including MPs.
• Actions by local authorities who try to prevent Roma from settling in their territories.
• Hate speech against Roma by particular journalists, as well as web masters who do not react to hate speech on their websites.

10. Hidden antigypsyism: the problem of “Roma programs”

An issue which deserved independent treatment in our analysis is the question of the so-called “Roma programs” – welfare programs addressed to Roma communities and aimed at improving their living conditions and assisting in their social integration. These programs are often criticized for their lack of effectiveness and for how they stigmatize Roma as dependent on social welfare, thus strengthening their negative public image\textsuperscript{40}. At the same time, they also maintain an image of the Roma as a homogeneous community, of which all members are poor, dependent and incapable, and who require constant help. As a result, Roma are viewed as a burden on the state and its budget.

All spheres of social assistance and all rules for receiving such assistance, are set by those who provide the resources – politicians, bureaucrats and so-called “experts” become the authors of what they see as a better future for the Roma minority. They do not see Roma representatives as fit and competent enough to participate in this process, and blame internal conflicts within the community for blocking any attempts to work together on different solutions. In the end, all decisions are taken unilaterally. These programs are not based on any in-depth research on the state of Roma, but on superficial, subjective and stereotypical observations of the decision makers. Neither is there any system of objective evaluation of the programs, meaning that no one can measure their effectivity.

Most importantly, however, is that the Roma programs, developed to integrate the Roma in society, effectively identify “integration” with “assimilation”. Their hidden assumption is that some cultural qualities of the Roma block their integration and prevent it, and therefore should be gotten rid of. This orientalist view, typical of European societies, sees the Roma culture as inherently opposed to modern civilization, and therefore one cannot be a Roma and a member of modern civil society at the same time. This way, the so-called “integration” promoted by the programs effectively becomes assimilation and forces the Roma to resign from their own culture.

11. General recommendations

- Deriving from our research, we recommend applying social and institutional pressure on the government and legal authorities (particularly courts and prosecutors) to provide with more effective implementation of the existing legal regulations on antisemitism and antigypsyism. In this context, imperative is the work of the Ombudsman, who shows an exceptional understanding of the importance of anti-discriminatory work.
- We recommend a more effective monitoring of media (online and offline) in order to improve the fight against hate speech. This requires better coordination and exchange of information between non-governmental actors and the administrators of major web portal, to increase the portals’ understanding and sensitivity to antisemitic and anti-gypsy hate speech.
- We suggest cooperation and exchange of best practices between local authorities, who often appear to be the most effective in combating manifestations of antisemitism and antigypsyism.
- We recommend a revision of welfare programs aimed specifically at Roma communities, as these stigmatize the Roma and increase hostility towards them. More effective and less controversial would be the implementation of welfare programs that are not based on ethnic affiliation, from which Roma people could benefit as equal citizens.
- We also suggest the revision of the so-called “integration programs” addressed at Roma communities, since the ideas of integration promoted by these programs are often based on stereotypes and bias, and their main goals are usually reduced to complete assimilation.
Finally, we recommend the intensification of educational activities aimed at transferring information on Roma people to different sectors of society.

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