

SHIFTING BOUNDARIES. Definitions, Expressions and Consequences of Antisemitism in Contemporary Norway

Project summary

The research project 'SHIFTING BOUNDARIES. Definitions, Expressions and Consequences of Antisemitism in Contemporary Norway' aims to establish new empirical, methodological and theoretical insights into the manifestations, mechanisms and effects of anti-Jewish attitudes in Norway today. The entire project is informed by the hypothesis that while the open expression of antisemitic ideas has been banned in the public sphere of Western societies after the Holocaust, the phenomenon has not vanished but instead occurs in less visible ways, linked to semantics, broad discourses, and particular channels of communication. This is conceptualised as 'communicative latency'. Through three interconnected work packages, the project will focus on relevant arenas of public discourse and social interaction (new media, public debates and education). Based on a comprehensive set of quantitative data accompanied by a range of qualitative studies, the project sets out to explore the forms and manifestations of antisemitism in contemporary Norway, including the contexts in which these attitudes are expressed, regulated and transformed. In addition, the project will investigate how the concept of antisemitism is negotiated in the public sphere and in what ways the discourse about antisemitism has become a means of legitimising and delegitimising social and political actors and positions. The project will thereby provide well-founded knowledge about the prevalence and acceptance of antisemitic attitudes in contemporary Norway and, in particular, answer the overriding question of whether (and eventually in which ways) the boundaries of 'what can be said about Jews' have shifted in recent years. Findings from the project will constitute a point of reference and a resource for civil society and local and national authorities in Norway as well as internationally, to be used in work to counteract and prevent antisemitism, prejudice and discrimination at all levels in society.