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Degree Project  
Fall/Winter 2022

# **The experienced limitations on the right to religious freedom for Jews in Sweden.**

A critical study on the fulfilment on the right to religious freedom in a secular state.

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## **Acknowledgment**

I would like to express my gratitude to all the kind, brave people of the Jewish society who let me interview to them. Thank you for taking the time out of your life to meet me and contribute to this study. Without all of you I would not have been able to complete this study. I hope this thesis will bring you as a group more tolerance from the majority society and love towards the Jewish one. Secondly, I would like to thank my supervisor Ulf Johansson-Dahre and finally I would like to thank my sister for her inputs and advise.

## Abstract

This thesis aims to answer, if and what, limitations Jews experience in a secular state such as Sweden. To answer this question this paper was made through a qualitative method and through the theory about "the other" by Kevin Kumashiro. By applying article eighteen from the universal declaration on Human Rights and the theory of "the other" on actual experiences and limitations this thesis will critically unfold any discriminations and inequality. Main material has been the eight different interviews conducted in autumn of 2022. The following study therefore aim to contribute to increased research on Sweden's commitments and compliance with international conventions and agreements, knowledge, and tools for further work against hate crimes, increased discrimination and xenophobia in Sweden. The study highlights that the basic security affects the propensity for how free one feels to be open about one's identity which results in direct and indirect limitations upon Jewish identity and Jewish life in Sweden.

## Sammanfattning

Denna studie syftar till att besvara, om och vilka, begränsningar judar upplever i en sekulär stat som Sverige. För att svara på denna fråga gjordes denna studie genom en kvalitativ metod och genom teorin om "den andre" av Kevin Kumashiro. Genom att tillämpa artikel arton från den allmänna förklaringen om de mänskliga rättigheterna och teorin om "den andra" på faktiska erfarenheter och begränsningar kommer denna studie att kritiskt synliggöra för diskriminering och ojämlikhet. Huvudmaterialet har varit de åtta intervjuer som genomfördes under hösten 2022. Följande studie syftar därför till att bidra till ökad forskning om Sveriges åtaganden och efterlevnad av internationella konventioner och överenskommelser, kunskap och verktyg för det fortsatta arbetet mot hatbrott, ökad diskriminering och främlingsfientlighet i Sverige. Studien belyser att grundtryggheten påverkar benägenheten för hur fri en känner sig att vara öppen med sin identitet vilket resulterar i direkta och indirekta begränsningar av judisk identitet och judiskt liv i Sverige.

## Keywords

Judaism; Religious freedom; Discrimination; Antisemitism; Human Rights Limitations; Jewish Identity; Jewish Practices; Kosher; Circumcision; Israel-Palestine;

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.2 Introduction to subject

2022 is election year in Sweden and at this writing moment, it is clear that Sweden's second largest political party is Swedish democrats. Swedish democratic party is well known for its antisemitic background, opposition to immigration and individuals who deviate from the "Swedish norm". In a time of war in Ukraine, increased discrimination and a newly formed government in Sweden, it thus becomes increasingly important to publicize the lack of equality, human rights, future and present threats to these. For a long time, Sweden has valued itself highly in terms of gender equality and equality. There is, however, a public debate about whether certain religious affiliation affections should be "accepted" in a secular state like Sweden. As we look around ourselves in public areas, I cannot help but to miss signs of Jewish life in Sweden. I can't remember before, during or after writing this thesis seeing a Jew wearing the Star of David or wearing the kippah. I often see people from different religions, proudly, if not bravely, showing off their religious beliefs through veils or turbans. I cannot help but to ask myself why is that? Why is the synagogue barely visible from outside? There is significant previous research regarding the vulnerability of Jews in Sweden, which will be presented later on, but this research does not answer if, what and how the vulnerability affects the right to religious freedom given by actual interviews or testimonies. That antisemitism is a societal problem is a fact but how does that affect the life of Jews in their everyday life, and does that affect their religious freedom in any way? Until date most studies made are usually based on crime statistics, how antisemitic attitudes have been expressed and how the practitioners as organized groups, have acted rather from the testimony of the Jewish community regarding their experienced limitations on fully enjoying their religious freedom.

## 1.3 Religious freedom accordingly to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Since the United Nations establishment in 1945 and the following Universal Declaration on Human Rights from 1948 the general assembly and the following conventions aim to protect human dignity and equality within and towards every individual. According to the UN and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, every human holds specific rights in which the national state is the main duty bearer to respect, protect and fulfil these rights. Article eighteen in this Declaration states that:

“Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”.<sup>1</sup>

It is thus this interpretation of religious freedom that will guide and dominate this thesis in the following.

## 1.4 The Protection on the right to religious freedom

Freedom of religion is also established in the European Convention, article nine, for which Sweden has ratified and incorporated, and therefore enforced to apply the necessary needs to respect, protect and fulfil. Article nine states that:

“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and this right includes freedom to change religion or belief and freedom to practice one's religion or belief, alone or in community with others, publicly or privately, through worship, teaching, customs, and rituals. The freedom to practice one's religion or belief may only be subject to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society with regard to public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals or for the protection of the freedom and rights”.<sup>2</sup>

Freedom of religion is also constitutionally protected in Sweden through the form of government. The Discrimination Act is thus another Swedish legislation, and lack of equality

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 2016-07, <<https://fn.se/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/eng.pdf>>, p.5.

<sup>2</sup> European court of Human Rights, *European Convention on Human Rights*, <[https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/convention\\_swe.pdf](https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/convention_swe.pdf)>, p. 11.

through discrimination on gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age therefore constitutes an additional strengthened protection for religious freedom in Sweden.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.5 Aim and research questions

Knowing that antisemitism is a society problem and affects Jews in many ways, this thesis aims to answer if, what and how that creates limitations on their religious freedom in Sweden. By applying article eighteen from the universal declaration on Human Rights, and the theory of “the other” on actual experiences and limitations this thesis will critically unfold any discriminations and inequality. To be able to answer my main research question the following five questions were asked to all eight responders. The questions asked has been as followed:

- What does Jewish life mean to you and what does it entail?
- Do you feel limited or restricted in your way of expressing or exercising your religious beliefs? If so, in what way?
- What do you feel is restricting you to be able to feel free to exercise your full religious freedom in Sweden?
- How does the feeling of fear of possible discrimination or hate crime restricting your possibilities to exercise your religious rights?
- How do you see the future and the possibilities of living as a Jew in Sweden?

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<sup>3</sup> Diskriminerings Ombudsmannen, *Diskriminering som har samband med religion eller annan trosuppfattning – en analys av anmälningar*, 2022-03-01, <https://www.do.se/download/18.56175f8817b345aa7651a7e/1646129036985/regeringsuppdraghttps://www.do.se/download/18.56175f8817b345aa7651a7e/1646129036985/regeringsuppdrag-delredovisning->

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1 Method

To be able to answer this, I decided to do a qualitative study unlike previous research, based on main materials from the interviews made. By choosing this method I hope to contribute to further research on the effects of antisemitism and xenophobia in Sweden. I have interviewed eight different people who consider themselves as Jewish and have some relations to the Swedish-Jewish community. The responders have no relationship towards each other and include people of all ages, genders, and professions. There has not been any exclusion of any kind. I have reached out to different Jewish institutions in different cities to try to report on differences or similarities in experiences but due to no response that aspect will not be examined or discussed. I have also reached out in a Facebook group with an invitation to contribute. Why this method was chosen was due to the lack of actual testimonies describing actual experiences. I have also visited Jewish lead seminars, security seminars, Jewish museum in Stockholm, one synagogue and forum for living history in Stockholm. I have gathered several types of content from these observations combined with interviews. In this way I collected and received a broad type of information which will contribute to a wider understanding of present limitations and likely future ones. Interviews have been recorded and transcribed and I have always followed a predetermined list of questions. I chose to do semi structured interviews because of the possibility to ask following questions which vary due to the answers given. The chosen five questions were carefully picked to give the responder room for reflection about their own thoughts and ideas. This list of questions has had the same following throughout every interview even though my counter questions may have differed from the different interviews due to different answers given by the responders. All interviews have been in Swedish and then translated into English. Every interview has taken between 25-60 minutes depending on answers and counter questions. The total amount of recordings measures up to 5 hours and 15 minutes and contains personal and general perceptions. Since some of the information given by the responders is in past tense, some caution is advised regarding due to the influence of memory and other components. From these recordings I have transcribed the interviews and summarized these to be able to identify similarities and deviations, find patterns even though these individuals do not represent the entire Jewish community experience whatsoever. I have then coded and thematized the responses into the various categories shown under results and analysis. To make sure the



responders are as comfortable as possible they have chosen the location for each interview. They have also been informed with their right to retract their statements. Everyone has also been asked if recording their statements have been acceptable. After every interview I have sat down and summarized the statements as soon as possible so that the transcriptions are as up to date and fresh out of my memory. To find possible patterns and similarities in the different statements I have read the answers multiple times and thematically, highlighted the repeated similarities between the responder's answers. I have consistently reviewed my field notes from seminars who are of importance to try to put them in relevance to these repeated statements. The ultimate step has been to analyse the result through my chosen theory and draw conclusions based on this. In this way I have managed to answer my main question which is the name of this thesis.

## 2.2 Limitations

Due to the limited timeframe this thesis will focus on actual testimonies offered by a random selection of Jews living in Sweden. The different people interviewed have no relation with me which will result in an impartial interpretation. Since Jews are a minority in Sweden there will also be a limited opportunity to be able to present a broad and general perception by Jews. Limited by Jews who agreed to let me interview them is also a great limitation this thesis will experience. Furthermore, this thesis will give testimonies of more relevance to the research question and more focus by not articulating the answers offered by everyone. I have also reached out to multiple Jewish organizations and communities but have not received any response unfortunately. This thesis will not further explore the different types and ways antisemitism express itself or configures but the possible limitations this contributes to the Swedish Jews in terms of religious freedom. Even though this aspect on antisemitism would be interesting to further research.

## 2.3 Theory

This study will not focus on intersectionality differences in answers but to seek patterns, likewise feelings and similar experiences. Since both women and men have been interviewed this will not be given in detail but I will name them "Person 1" or "Person 2" and so on without articulating their gender. By applying the theory about "the other" this thesis will reveal deviant values and unequal treatment than what Sweden is bound to uphold by

international, region and Swedish law. As explained in the introduction part the national state, Sweden, is bound to respect, protect and fulfil every individual's human right and through the theory about the other actual discriminations will reveal itself and create a greater understanding for religious limitations.

## 2.4 Theoretical framework

In 2000 Dr. Kevin Kumashiro published a groundbreaking theory based on multiple intersectional perspectives which is the culmination of years of scientific work. Dr. Kumashiro is internationally known as a recognized expert in education and social studies. The theory called “the other” is a model that aims to challenge discriminations and oppressing norms in society by analysing what social connections are a contributing factor to constructing these discriminating norms and attitudes and at the context of oppression and how it is created.<sup>4</sup> To be able to find applicable methods to fight these oppressions and discriminations one needs to make an analysis out of this model. The term “the other” is what Dr. Kumashiro calls the discriminated and neglected groups in society. The theory includes four different components to put the effective theory into practice: Education for the other, which highlights what groups are being discriminated and oppressed. Education about the other, which is about learning that there are actual perceptions about these discriminated and oppressed groups. Critical education regarding privileges and otherfication which focus on knowledge about different structures of power and how this creates and upholds discrimination and oppression. It is thus through these privileges and otherfications throughout society that these are made visible. The last component is education that changes society. It is in this component that challenges society’s reproduction of discriminated hierarchies through acting on perceptions on norm deviations. It is dependent on self-reflection and could result in acting against discrimination and oppression in situations where it is noticeable. To be able to act, Dr. Kumashiro articulates the importance of consciousness regarding the challenges of power structures.

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<sup>4</sup> Kumashiro, Kevin. 2000. *Toward a Theory of Anti-Oppressive Education*, American Educational Research association.

## 2.4 Research ethics

Every individual who offered their time and answers were offered to be anonymous. Some wanted to and some did not mind. Because of the high security risk that Jews face I have chosen to make them all anonymous and name them “Person 1”, “Person 2”, “Person 3” and so on. This is a decision I have made to make sure that these people or their families will not suffer from their contribution to this thesis. Furthermore, the questions asked were carefully selected and articulated by the obvious reason- do no harm. The interview was voluntary, and I assured them all that the recordings are confidential and will not be used in any way other than for this thesis. Lastly, all responders will receive a copy of the study before evaluation.

*Addition:* I would like to express some caution when reading the results of the interviews due to some problematic response articulated by the responders. I have chosen not to comment on this any further due to the aim of being impartial but would therefore like to raise some caution when reading.

## 3. Background

### 3.1 Background

The year 1774 marks the first time a Jew was granted to live and house in Sweden without the demand of conversion by king Gustav III. Even though this was historical it didn't allow Aaron Isaac and the Jews that followed the same rights as the rest of Swedish citizens.

“Judereglementet” or “Jewish regulation” limited and restricted the Jewish populations due to the legislation on who could marry whom, which professions were allowed and in which cities they could settle in. Jews were only allowed to live in Stockholm, Göteborg and Norrköping.<sup>5</sup> Until present time this is still, but also Malmö, where almost all Jews live. As time progressed Jews were given more rights in Sweden until the second world war. At this time Sweden practically closed its borders making it impossible for Jewish refugees to seek shelter in Sweden. To be able to quickly separate Jews from others, Sweden suggested with Switzerland that Jews were to have a big “J” on their passports.

After the second world war Jewish immigrants in Sweden increased. A few years before the millennium the interest for Jewish life and culture reached new levels. This resulted in “Jewish life” which aims to enrich the Jewish cultural life in Stockholm. Following “Jewish life” came a study center, Paideia. This was financially supported by the Swedish government among others and is still a place where Jews can study the Jewish texts. With financial support by the Swedish government, this made it possible for Jews to live a Jewish life in Stockholm and Sweden.<sup>6</sup> Today it is difficult recognizing Jewish properties such as schools, synagogues, elder homes etc. Standing in front of any of these properties there is almost none, if any, artifact or symbol making it hard for people to know where these are located in comparison to churches, mosques or temples. There is plenty of Swedish studies in systematic antisemitism and how it expresses itself in Swedish politics and institutions such as Swedish schools. Antisemitism and hate towards Jews affects the Jewish community but also individual both directly and indirectly. This affects the way these Jewish individuals perceive and experience their religious rights which this study will uncover.

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<sup>5</sup> Notes from the Jewish Museum, Guided tour 2022-11-04, Stockholm.

<sup>6</sup> Dencik, L., 2006, *Judendomen i Sverige En sociologisk belysning*, Uppsala: Studier av interreligiösa relationer 24, p. 23

## 3.2 Defining antisemitism

I will use the definition offered by the sociologist Helen Fein. Fein's definition on antisemitism includes religious, ideological, social, geographical or historical aspects to the definitions which therefore covers the group but also for the individual. Fein defines antisemitism as followed:

“I propose to define antisemitism as a persisting latent structure of hostile beliefs towards Jews as a collectivity manifested in individuals as attitudes, and in culture as myths, ideology, folklore, and imagery, and in actions – social or legal discrimination, political mobilization against the Jews, and collective or state violence – which results in and/or is designated to distance, displace, or destroy Jews as Jews”.<sup>7</sup>

Herein, it is assumed that Jews are socially labelled as Jews as well as people who identify themselves as Jews, regardless of the basis of ascription.<sup>8</sup>

## 4. Previous research

According to Anna Sarri Krantz “*The Third Generation Survivors*”, Lund University, 2018<sup>9</sup> and her research that focuses on the fact that Jews in Sweden are a part of the minority groups.<sup>10</sup> Because of being a part of this specific status of minority Krantz refers mostly to the convention on minorities by the European council and genre specific Anna addresses ‘Third generations survivors’ which is the subject for her thesis. She amplifies the fact that this generations of Jews adopts, forms and create their identity due to the obvious antisemitism they experience.<sup>11</sup> The character called “Ester ” in the thesis witnesses about her experience with antisemitic manifestations which the author uses compelling in a bridge binding way between historic and contemporary situations. Krantz describes the current antisemitism as tangible, present and experienced construction of though in which effects ‘the

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<sup>7</sup> Fein, H, 1987, *Dimensions of Antisemitism: Attitudes, Collective Accusations, and Actions* i (red) Fein, H, *The Persisting Question, Sociological Perspectives and Social Contexts of Modern Antisemitism*, Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 67-85

<sup>8</sup> Ibid p. 67

<sup>9</sup> Sarri Krantz, Anna, *Tredje generationens överlevande En socialantropologisk studie om minne, antisemitism och identitet i spåret av Förintelsen*, 2018,

[https://lucris.lub.lu.se/ws/portalfiles/portal/52569945/e\\_spik\\_Anna.pdf](https://lucris.lub.lu.se/ws/portalfiles/portal/52569945/e_spik_Anna.pdf), p.1–3

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p.16

<sup>11</sup> Ibid p.17

third generation” identity.<sup>12</sup> In terms of content Krantz thesis is in many ways important to my own due to the broad investigation and the amount of time, critical analysis and interviews contributed. She mentions important expressions of antisemitism like antizionism and says that the active antisemitism is current, violent and flourishes in Stockholm. Krantz empirical data shows that Jews feel reserved before talking about their ethnical belonging and some are directly scared of telling.<sup>13</sup> She mentions Jews being greedy as a “classical” previous antisemitic perception. Which also shows itself in my interview results.<sup>14</sup> In summary the study shows that antisemitism and Nazism is a well-known present aspect in Stockholm simultaneously as Jews trying to live their lives as the Swedish law applies to them.<sup>15</sup> Krantz expresses her concern regarding the science on antisemitic history and the fact that there is a lot of research missing in regard to antisemitic history such as who it affects, how it affects and experienced. She says the following: “I miss the testimonies of the people who are always exposed to it namely the Jewish group”.<sup>16</sup>

A study from Örebro University concerning *A study about Jews' experience of hate crimes in Sweden* quickly states that there is a lack of sufficient and comprehensive research on antisemitism in Sweden, especially qualitative studies according to the author himself.<sup>17</sup> The author has conducted ten interviews with Jewish organisations. The results of these interviews are unanimous and suggest that they must keep a "low profile" in order not to be exposed to hate crimes and antisemitism.<sup>18</sup> According to the author, a clear concern emerged on the part of the respondents regarding the future and the possibilities for them to live as Jews. The study highlights past as well as contemporary and future limitations for Jews where this risk being limited in part by the risk of hate crimes through systematic discrimination, contempt and oppression. There are thus direct and indirect problems. Direct

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p.18

<sup>13</sup> Ibid p.40

<sup>14</sup> Ibid p.44

<sup>15</sup> Ibid p.50

<sup>16</sup> Ibid p.54

<sup>17</sup> Örebro Universitet, Institutionen för juridik, psykologi och socialt arbete, Jaqline Carlzon Shoukatian, *Skepnader av antisemitiska hatbrott En studie om judars upplevelse av hatbrott i Sverige, 2021* (<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1581776/FULLTEXT01.pdf>), p.1.

<sup>18</sup> Örebro Universitet, Institutionen för juridik, psykologi och socialt arbete, Jaqline Carlzon Shoukatian, *Skepnader av antisemitiska hatbrott En studie om judars upplevelse av hatbrott i Sverige, 2021* (<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1581776/FULLTEXT01.pdf>) p.3.

through, for example, systematic discrimination and indirectly through the fact that the fear of discrimination causes the individual to avoid, for example, places and change their way of doing things in order not to be exposed to discrimination. It becomes clear through the study that Sweden is not free from antisemitism, it is deeply rooted in society. Through the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, antisemitism has created even more vulnerability for Jews. Many are harassed, threatened or hunted, which all and more creates limitations to living as a Jew in Sweden today, and that fear and insecurity creates a lack of quality of life for Jews.

On behalf of Forum for living history and the Swedish Crime Prevention Council (Brå) *Anti-Semitic Attitudes and Beliefs in Sweden* written by Henrik Bachner and Jonas Ring depicts unpleasant, anti-Semitic figures from 2005. However, it should be added that until then the religious question was not as debated as in recent times. Bachner and Ring agree with the above authors that contemporary antisemitism is a central part of the Israel-Palestine conflict, even if not a fully valid Swedish opinion.<sup>19</sup><sup>21</sup> Initially, the study articulates the increased antisemitic current that once again gained momentum during the 21st century. It resulted in an increased number of attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions. At the same time as antidemocratic extreme groups gained more and more votes. Despite the call for caution when interpreting these alarming figures, the authors believe that "the outcome is nevertheless seen as an indication that anti-Semitism is perceived as a tangible social problem in today's Sweden".<sup>20</sup> Globalization in cases where it is perceived negatively has increased the stimulus for antisemitism through conspiracy theories such as that Jews were behind 9/11 originating in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion is a tsarist falsarium from the beginning of the 20th century that describes a Jewish conspiracy with the aim of achieving world domination. The book is one of the most influential antisemitic writings and played a significant role in Nazi German propaganda".<sup>20</sup>

Same author, Henrik Bachner, and Pieter Bevelander published a new study in 2020 which shows an increasing exposure towards Jews experiencing antisemitism, even though this

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<sup>19</sup> Forum för levande historia, Henrik Bachner, Jonas Ring, *Antisemitiska attityder och föreställningar i Sverige*, 2005, (<https://tandis.odihr.pl/bitstream/20.500.12389/19857/1/03372swe.pdf>), p.10. <sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.14

<sup>20</sup> Forum för levande historia, Henrik Bachner, Pieter Bevelander, *Antisemitism i Sverige – en jämförelse av attityder och föreställningar 2005 och 2020*, <[https://www.levandehistoria.se/sites/default/files/wysiwyg\\_media/rapport-antisemitism-i-sverige2020\\_2.pdf](https://www.levandehistoria.se/sites/default/files/wysiwyg_media/rapport-antisemitism-i-sverige2020_2.pdf)>, p.14

<sup>20</sup> Ibid p.16

study shows a more positive development in terms of general perception of Jews, decrease antisemitic claims and stereotypes.<sup>21</sup> The authors do acknowledge that the numbers shown do not narrate the number of antisemitic acts or other violations that occur for example online. Despite this, this study shows more positive numbers compared to the one made in 2005. They do speak of “latent antisemitic attitude” in similar terms as Anna Krantz.<sup>22</sup>

A report to the forum for living history regarding *racism and xenophobia in Sweden* from 2016 also articulates in this report that research only became interested in these questions of antisemitism and xenophobia in the 1980s. On the other hand, this report believes that since then there has been "much" research on antisemitism and that the subject itself is well established within historical and ideological research.<sup>23</sup> Hugo Valentin made an attempt in 1924 (*The History of the Jews in Sweden*, 1924) to portray in what political ways to limit Jews in their social, economic and political rights. The report discusses numerous examples of how research has had difficulty portraying and interpreting the debates concerning the control of which religious practices should be allowed in Swedish society.<sup>24</sup> A pattern I noticed in my search for previous research is the lack of the actual individual's testimony. Much, if not all previous research that I have found describes the problem based on statistics in, for example, hate crimes, discrimination or threats against ethnic groups, but very little describes the individual who is exposed to these crimes or limitations and therefore does not enjoy their human rights to the fullest.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid p.5

<sup>22</sup> Ibid p.12

<sup>23</sup> Forum för levande historia, Martin Ericsson, *Historisk forskning om rasism och främlingsfientlighet i Sverige – en analyserande kunskapsöversikt*, 2016, [https://www.levandehistoria.se/sites/default/files/material\\_file/historisk\\_forskning\\_om\\_rasism\\_och\\_framlingsfientlighet\\_i\\_sverige.pdf](https://www.levandehistoria.se/sites/default/files/material_file/historisk_forskning_om_rasism_och_framlingsfientlighet_i_sverige.pdf), p. 23

<sup>24</sup> Forum för levande historia, Martin Ericsson, *Historisk forskning om rasism och främlingsfientlighet i Sverige – en analyserande kunskapsöversikt*, 2016, [https://www.levandehistoria.se/sites/default/files/material\\_file/historisk\\_forskning\\_om\\_rasism\\_och\\_framlingsfientlighet\\_i\\_sverige.pdf](https://www.levandehistoria.se/sites/default/files/material_file/historisk_forskning_om_rasism_och_framlingsfientlighet_i_sverige.pdf), p. 51.



While writing this thesis DO (discrimination ombudsman) came out with a relevant report, 1 of December.<sup>25</sup> Their newest report and government assignment on discrimination associated to religion report on similar results as the one I have come to in the later section, result part. The conclusion of the report is this: Those who are visible in their faith are affected the hardest and by hardest they mean discrimination and negative conception about religion.<sup>26</sup> This affects people's living conditions and constitutes an obstacle to individuals' access to equal rights and opportunities. The report also highlights the fact that there are knowledge gaps in this subject, which makes this thesis all more relevant.

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<sup>25</sup> Diskriminerings Ombudsmannen, *Redovisning av uppdrag att utveckla kunskap om diskriminering som har samband med religion eller annan trosuppfattning*, 2022-12-01, <<https://www.do.se/download/18.71c46fcf184c78ffadd7b/1669877965291/regeringuppdragslutredovisning-diskriminering-religion-LED-2021-510.pdf>>.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid p.2

## 5. Result and analysis

The analysis contains collective conclusions from the interviews made. Every person interviewed is mentioned as Person 1 (**P1**), Person 2 (**P2**), Person 3 (**P3**), Person 4 (**P4**), Person 5 (**P5**), Person 6 (**P6**), Person 7 (**P7**) and Person 8 (**P8**). I have taken the most relevant parts of each interview in relevance to the subject, aim and question at issue and will unfold the concluded analysis of these in the following texts. In the following sections, the results of the questions asked will be provided.

### 5.1 Result on research question 1.

1. What does Jewish life mean to you and what does it entail?

#### Jewish identity

During each interview it has been clear that Jewish life can alter in diverse ways, ideas and practices, but each and every one of these people consider themselves as Jewish. Out of the eight responders, two expressed that they follow kosher, four people practice shabbat, three people wear a kippah or the star of David partially showing and two did not express if they follow kosher, wear Jewish attributes or celebrate shabbat. In the following section, this will be presented and analysed. P1 expresses that Judaism is more about what you do. P6 and P7 also spoke in similar terms except that they articulated that Judaism is more a culture thing than religious for them.

**P7:** "(...) we are not a faith, we are an ethnoreligion. What I practice is not faith, it is culture connected with religious practices and they can't be separated. I have actively chosen not to stick to kosher and shabbat because my family don't. Much of my Jewish life is influenced in many ways by Jewish philosophy, mindset and outlook on morals. The Jewish is what I am and why of living and what I do".

This quote shows something that multiple responders expressed. Namely that Judaism is diverse and that it alters itself in different interpretations. The quote also shows an amount of reflection on experiences of norms that have created stereotypical assumptions about Jewish faith and Jewish identity. Similar thought can be found in P2, P3, P4 and P8 since they expressed similar thoughts about Judaism and that it is more about actions and doing good deeds than simply faith. This has resulted in some being more traditional and some more progressive in their Jewish lifestyle. P4 said that:

“Well, my parents haven't really practiced the religion particularly much. They have been more secular like any Swedish family, they see themselves as Christians and might visit the church for baptisms, weddings and that sort of thing, pretty much like that with my family. (...) I visit the synagogue on holidays, celebrate shabbats some weeks but it was at my grand mom and granddad that we were Jews”.

This quote shows a similar approach towards Jewish traditions and practices like many in Swedish-Christian ones. P4 continues by stating that this approach has made it possible for P4 to be able to choose the amount of commitment P4 wants to put into living a Jewish life.

## **Wearing Jewish attributes**

P1, P3, P4, P5, P7 and P8 all had common thought about showing their Jewish identity with visible Jewish attributes. Namely that they sometimes feel uncomfortable, need to or have hidden the attributes due to their surroundings. Some of them have chosen not to wear Jewish attributes at all due to the risk of discrimination or offenses and some use them but carefully, only in specific areas in society.

**P4:** “I don't want to have to think about wearing a kippah or the Star of David in public no matter where I go by subway or train. But that reality does not exist today. And I am limited by my surroundings, even though this environment also consists of my family, who think I should "tone it down a bit". (...) It is about where I publicly show my Jewish identity in particular. I never ride the red metro line south or the blue metro line north with a kippah on my head. Because I know that there are people there that have a very negative perspective on Jews. I would never wear a kippah in public in Malmö or in certain neighbourhoods in Norrköping”.

**P5:** “(...) I walk with the star of David visible, but sure, there have been situations where I've taken the subway late and been in some area where I feel a little extra insecure, so it's actually happened that I hid it so that it's not visible. But I don't think I hid my identity otherwise. (...) It's funny what reactions you get to your identity. I believe that in the case of my family, it is a fear that to some extent guides the choices to visibly wear Jewish attributes. But children probably want to blend in and not stand out, it could be that they adapt their answers”.

Multiple responders have articulated that they consciously remove or refrain to wear Jewish attributes in immigrant dense areas. They expressed that this is a form of limitation due to negative attitudes and thoughts about Jews reinforced by the Israel-Palestine conflict.

These quotes show reflection concerning Swedish norms, social attitudes and the feeling of not being able to “in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance” (Declaration on Human Rights 1948). This, if anything, makes it visible that although there is De Jure legislation for religious freedom, there are indirect factors that make it impossible or prevents compliance with religious freedom. As shown

throughout the interviews it has been repeatedly mentioned by the responders that Jewish identity is especially important. Even though it is diverse and something that is for some challenging to maintain, be public about or/and often hidden in areas in Sweden.

## 5.2 Result on research question 2

2. Do you feel limited or restricted in your way of expressing or exercising your religious beliefs? If so, in what way?

### Jewish practices

Based on the previous question, it becomes clear that being Jewish does not mean you are compelled to perform Jewish traditions or practices regularly. Some consider themselves as more of culture, ethnic or ethno-Jewish which also can affect the look on traditions and practices. Due to different lifestyles, choice of being more traditional or progressive the regularity in practices differ. Despite this, the responders have articulated, as I will present in the following part how, and if any, the responders feel limited or restricted in any way. Yes I feel limited expressed P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 and P8 but due to different reasons. The lack of security from the state of Sweden and the feeling of insecurity was a common response. This would alter itself in not being able to wear Jewish attributes visible, being comfortable with their Jewish identity in society, the limited access to kosher, the threat of not being able to perform circumcision. Swedish norms and traditions also compose an amount of limitation P5 expresses:

“In principle, we have freedom of religion. Where there are restrictions, partly there are direct restrictions because we are not allowed to slaughter kosher in Sweden, so we import. (...) That's not the central thing, what I believe. But on the other hand, I want to be able to do these things regardless of what I believe or not. It is difficult to live a traditional Jewish life in Sweden. It is really difficult”.

When speaking about circumcision P5 also said:

“It is not then that my freedom of religion is directly threatened, but it creates a mark from people who have a certain power in their role, which almost questions my role as a parent. That I would almost feel like I would mutilate my child, that they put a negative value on it. But, on the other hand, they had no problem cutting the baby's tongue without anaesthesia. Why do you place a value on one but not the other and none of the interventions are perhaps medically necessary, but you can argue for that. But the view of pain is suddenly different depending on what you associate it with”.

Similar thoughts are being expressed from P6 who articulates that if Sweden were to ban circumcision that would become a direct threat to Jewish life but also that circumcision is fundamental for Jewish boys. P7 also expressed a great concern regarding circumcision and said:

“Circumcision is also such a limitation; we are not limited by the law right now but the threat is always there. I think that circumcision is very difficult to debate. (...) But it affects and frightens us all the time. And the majority society's misunderstanding is that circumcision, whether society wants it or not, is a cornerstone of Judaism. It is needed for a man to be counted as a Jew. That is to say, if it is not allowed, Jewish men cannot actually be born in Sweden, or the parents are forced to become criminals.

(..)we have the potential laws that could restrict Jewish schools and circumcision”.

Common response when speaking about circumcision is that is incredibly important and a central part of Jewish identity. The overall threat has been due to political reasons and the fact that the Swedish democrats are according to P1:

“Well there is the Swedish democrats who have waved that kosher and circumcision for quite a long time is something no one should do. If they were to ban circumcision, it would feel very harsh and would become a direct limitation”.

When speaking of kosher and the limitations P1, P5 and P7 said it is difficult to get kosher in Stockholm compared to Israel, northern London, New York, Antwerp, Manchester or Paris where one can find kosher restaurants more often. The fact that there is only one place in Stockholm where Jews can buy kosher slaughter meat limit their social life but also Jewish life outside of Stockholm. No I don't feel limited in general stated P4 and P6. P6 said that:

“The only thing is the sheer number of members or the activity in the congregation. If there are enough people, but purely from an institutional point of view, there is what there is. It's a shame that the security situation is the way it is. But that doesn't stop me from living the life I want. I personally don't think there's any point in going around and sort of practicing your Judaism in public, it doesn't make my Judaism better or worse”.

Even though P4 partly shared the same view P4 also said that “I know others who are the same age that you met, and they probably felt more limited because there was some kind of fear in being in public with being a Jew”. P7, P8 and P2 and P5 have expressed that living a Jewish life is difficult and at times limiting due to the thought of Jewish traditions and practices being deviant behaviours according to the majority society which is a shared thought throughout the entire interview. This shows that these responders have compared their situation with others and agreed to that living a more traditional Jewish life means more limitations and restrictions which would affect them even more than they currently are. The potential threat against circumcision and kosher importation will be further presented later on.

## 5.3 Result on research question 3

3. What do you feel is restricting you to be able to feel free to exercise your full religious freedom in Sweden?

During the interviews there has been a common experience on discrimination and racist implication due to media reports on Israel and Palestine conflict. There has also been a common experience and perception on discriminating environment online. This will be presented in the following part and the consequences of this.

### Israel-Palestine

P3, P4, P5, P6 and P8 all spoke of this and the fact that this is where most of their fears and insecurity stands from. People may think that limitations today may stand on right-wing actors but that's not the fact when interviewing my responders. They all spoke of the implications of this conflict between Israel and Palestine but more than half of them, expressed real fear for these implications and the consequences of this. P6 said:

“It is more Israel that I feel absolutely most afraid of. When people find out I'm Jewish, I'm more afraid of being hated for being associated with Israel in some way and Zionism rather than being Jewish. Like religious or ethnicity. It is often when there are conflicts, it is always YOU or why do you do this, or you do this. This collective guilt settlement. You can get direct messages that say, "look here, children are being murdered, why are you doing this?" or “why are you doing this?”. It can get quite heated as well and I don't even have to express any opinions about the conflict, but I automatically get blamed for it. (...) And there I think the most violent part of anti-Semitism comes precisely when it comes to Israel. Then comes the stone-throwing, beatings, social media harassment, so that's definitely the category that I feel the most directly insecure about”.

This is also an experience and concern that P5 and P3 shares. P3 went further and expressed that when this happens, that's a limitation. P3 has had experience of receiving hate messages from people who had misinterpreted the Jewish-Israel relationship and according to both P3 and P4 the main threats does not come from right-wing extremist but from left-wing radicals, Palestine activist or Arabs who believe that accordingly to P3:

“(….)It has certainly been mainly either left-wing radical Palestine activists or Arabs who believe that every single Jew sort of rules Israel and can call Benjamin Netanyahu”.

P4 stated that:

“I have no experience with right-wing extremist groups when it comes to anti-Semitism, but with Palestinians or Arabs. I think that part is significantly worse than the extreme right when it comes to anti-Semitism. Worse because they are closer to the action. They use violence to a

greater extent than the extreme right does. From what I hear, they can as a group express their hatred but otherwise they are quite discreet with what they think and think. They probably have quite a lot of negative thoughts about us Jews, but they don't express it unless they are in large groups together. While Middle Eastern groups and Arabic speakers can on an individual level go to acts of violence even when they are alone. They don't need to be in a group to do anything. Thus, the risk increases in that way. So absolutely one is limited in widely and freely practicing one's religion in this society. The biggest threat right now, in any case, is not from the extreme right-wing movements, but it is unfortunately based on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

They don't see a difference between nation and religion”.

These quotes have resulted in the feeling of being unprotected in their Jewish identity and the general feeling of being unsecure to not wanting, not daring or the interpretation on that it is not a good idea to visibly show or tell their Jewish identity in public, online or in society. This is because of reflection on experienced discriminations and oppression by the public and society in general. This is also similar to what previous research presented (see DO:s report in previous research).

## Social media

P2 and P7 express that they have a fear or might not show off their Jewish online and on social media. They state that if you have a deviant behaviour, you ran a greater risk of discrimination because you can't deviate too much in Sweden even though P2 says that “You have to stand up for what you believe”. Unlike P2 and P7, P6 said that:

“When it comes to social media, I can be quite "vocal" as they say in English. I can easily write my thoughts and reflections about various conflicts online and I have thought a lot about this. I'm public, but my followers aren't that aggressive. Nobody sends me direct threats like that, but on Twitter, on the other hand, you have to be a little careful. Sometimes my posts are shared there by Jews who are a bit more on the right-wing scale, and then you can get really rough comments, and if you look at the lights on twitter, it's pretty catastrophic. But I personally haven't gotten to the point where I'm afraid to use social media, but I definitely see the problem”.

This quote shows a different experience and approach regarding social media use, but it also shows a caution and perhaps an adjustment to the environment online which tell us that P6 is aware of the environment and risk on being public online. P1 however thinks that this risk on social media affects the younger generation more than the older one. P3 expressed the interest in TikTok and during the one month of being on TikTok, P3 have had almost every day disturbing videos that appeared where people call for the murder of Jews etc.

## 5.4 Other challenges

### Security

As presented, there are multiple reasons why the responders may feel unprotected and unsafe in letting the society know about their Jewish identity. P6 and P8 spoke about the threat from the Middle East where P3 and P6 spoke about the founding for security in the synagogue. P5 highlighted the fact that:

“It is very much the feeling of being unprotected that is not directly connected to religious freedom as such but it is very difficult to disentangle that as well. All this basic security affects the propensity for how free one feels to be open about one's identity. Since our identity is so much about doing things, then maybe it is this insecurity that makes you not dare to ask for vegetarian food in the school cafeteria or to explain that you were away that day because we had a Jewish weekend and so it goes something positive from it, instead they say I was sick”.

This quote is chosen because of one sentence namely “All this basic security affects the propensity for how free one feels to be open about one's identity.” During these interviews it has been clear that different people need, expect, and sometimes want different things but this I think summons what they all have said and tried to say. P6 mentions the daily antisemitism and everyday racism as something that makes people uncomfortable in their own city which makes them feel unsafe and unprotected. This is something P6 claims comes from both left groups, right groups and especially from the Middle East. P6 mean that this is not a threat against the religion but a threat at them as individuals and “who I am”. As shown presents these security aspects challenges for the responders which makes them experience the feeling of being discriminated, marginalized, unsafe and unprotected. These challenges could also affect the propensity of how much one is willing and feeling comfortable in showing, telling and acting on one’s Jewish identity. In conclusion, P3 and P6 put forward the importance of crime prevention efforts and not having to be responsible for the security themselves to be able to be safe as a Jew, to live as a Jew and to act as ones want. They also highlight the lack of consequences in situations of any potential hate crime against the Jewish community.

### Schools

The experience of being discriminated is not isolated to outside of Swedish institutions. Swedish schools have also been a common topic during these interviews. In the following part the present and future challenges will become visible. Both P1 and P2 spoke about being active within a support group for Jews and had handled cases of antisemitism in Swedish schools. They highlighted the fact that when these cases were dealt with, the teachers or school didn’t seem to know what to do. Either the teachers did nothing, or they said that they



did not have a guideline to know how to handle antisemitism. The consequences of this are that the offended does not receive any vindication and the perpetrators learn that these crimes go unpunished. This summary shows the lack of acting by the school and in an extension, the state of Sweden, for equality and religious freedom results in an unease about being public or visible Jewish. This also reinforces the feeling of being unsafe and unprotected since no consequences for these crimes are being taken seriously. The lack of not acting is why P2 said that “I think the best thing is to send the children to a Jewish school, it is a safer environment”. P5 spoke about the implication on Jewish life in terms of traditions:

“It becomes very difficult to maintain traditions and holidays during the autumn when the children do not get time off. (...) The children do not get an understanding of this, but the alternative is to miss school and get worse grades. Sometimes I can understand that it's difficult, you can't adapt to every little group that has different interests and habits and stuff like that. But it is not always easy to know when there is a lack of flexibility or when it is so purely practical that it cannot be accommodated”.

This quote shows that the freedom of religion is limited due to the force to accommodate, and in this aspect, to Swedish institution. This also entails that it's dependent on the Jewish individual to take on the fight for their right to “either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”(see right to religious freedom 1.1) or to be in the teachers or schools hand of mercy unlike other holidays where the majority society is off from school which results in the Jewish individual does not take the fight since they feel like it's unnecessary due to the Swedish secular attitude against religion in general.

## 5.5 Result on research question 4.

4. How does the feeling of fear of possible discrimination or hate crime restricting your possibilities to exercise your religious rights?

### Politics

P1 and P2 have similar thoughts about the political situation and express a concern about the Swedish democrats in terms of potential limitation because they question a lot of the Jewish traditions and practices which worries P2. P7 shares these thoughts but adds that V (left-wing political party) also wants to ban kosher importation and use the animal rights as a way of doing this. P7 mentions: “As a Jew, you never know if an incoming government will do something against us. There is always a fear of what new laws or regulations could limit”.

Common for all responders has been the kosher legislation and what that limits even if not all follow kosher. P5 shares a thought about animal welfare which is similar to P7 thought:

“In principle, we have freedom of religion. Where there are restrictions, partly there are direct restrictions because we are not allowed to slaughter kosher in Sweden, so we import. At home we only eat kosher, of course you can be a vegetarian but it becomes a matter of principle that you feel that it is not really fully accepted. It is always difficult to know when a position is based on say animal welfare or animal welfare issues are a way to ventilate a notion or a prejudice about Jews and activate such stereotypical myths about Jews being bloodthirsty or doing strange bloody rituals”.

This shows of a reflection about the majority society stereotypes and attitudes concerning kosher. These perceptions can be a direct or indirect result of actual statements from non-Jews or simply come from the feeling of not being acceptable as you are in society. P5 continues by mentioning that it is not the freedom of religion at the level of the law that is limiting but rather the interpretations of laws and attitudes among people in society. This is partly what P7 speaks of but also the fact that:

“One of the things that I also see as a problem going forward is, as I said, that there is a huge focus right now in Sweden since the 2000s to talk about the Holocaust and anti-Semitism, but there is very little De facto that you want to do before to strengthen Jewish life. You cannot always talk about the holocaust and have moments of remembrance in order to ensure that Jewish life cannot be practiced. (...) Jewish life must also be allowed to flourish”.

What has been shown is that not only legislation is limiting the Jewish life but also how society and institutions interpret these laws. Also, general attitudes and stereotypes can direct and /or indirect affect the full enjoyment of religious freedom.

## 5.6 Result on research question 5.

### 5. How do you see the future and the possibilities of living as a Jew in Sweden?

#### The Future

Looking at the future possibilities and challenges in the light of the current ones P5, P6 and P7 would like to see a normalization process regarding acknowledge other holidays than the Christian ones. This reflection suggests that it would become easier to not book important meetings or a big exam on Yom Kippur which is a direct problem. P5 express that:

“Through legislation there is freedom of religion, but it can be circumvented by the treatment from society and how and what opportunities do you have to make practical use of your

religious freedom”. By normalizing other holidays this would make it easier to maintain and uphold Jewish traditions. P6 mentions the lack of Jewish culture in everyday life and suggest that stores during Christmas may sell Hanukkah decoration too or that matza could be sold in regular stores. This would result in a greater acceptance and a general feel of being allowed to also exist here. P3 and P1 spoke of enlightenment and that would lead to increased tolerance and understanding which according to P1, would result in respect. This enlightenment should teach about daily antisemitism and the ways it occurs and how it alters itself. This would increase the social attitudes and reduce stereotypical perceptions of Jews and result in greater tolerance, respect and equalness. P4 and P8 thinks the future will become even more limited and suggests tougher consequences for those who prevent others from practicing their religious rights. P2 sees the Jewish assimilation as an obstacle in the future and P3 have a positive outlook on the future.

### Suggestions going forward

P1 brought the interview an interesting view upon an almost holy, Swedish tradition vs Jewish one which I would like to add to this. The reason I am adding this is because I want to shed a light upon how we only see our own tradition as something “neutral” and everything else as something alien. P1 said:

“I have full respect for those who don't eat meat but. There is something, however, very holy in Sweden and that's moose hunting. And there was a hunter in this group of pensioners who said, “but that is not as bad”. But hardheartedly, how often is it not that the moose is wounded and then you must search for the moose for a while with dogs after it? Like I said, I have full respect for those who don't eat meat but hunting and slaughter should be on equal terms. If you're okay with hunting, then you should be okay with kosher slaughter”.

P5 also had an experience with a Swedish institution called BVC. Upon this visit P5 wanted to circumcise their son and was met with suspicion. P5 stated that:

“(…) I received a lecture from BVC about the fact that we do have these rules and laws in Sweden. It is not then that my freedom of religion is directly threatened, but it creates a mark from people who have a certain power in their role, which almost questions my role as a parent. (…) I sometimes wonder how much it affects people in their decisions. You are not forbidden, but you will probably still feel that it is uncomfortable or that you are violating a norm. (…) And there are many such signals from different directions, such as at school like at the Lucia celebration. I don't have a huge problem with that. But then it is suddenly the case that if it is the majority cultures practice, then it is neutral. But what we do is by no means neutral. And that you take for granted that what the majority does is normal”.

These experiences had left P1 and P5 with the feeling of that what they practice is alien or foreign and something which in Sweden is to cross a norm. A social norm constructed to not question for example Swedish traditions such as moose hunting. The quotes show a reflection upon their experience of norms that have created oppression. This demonstrates that the norm-critical work is not done in sufficient size regarding full and actual enjoyment of religious freedom. What has become more obvious in the analysis and result of these interviews is that no matter how much each person practices the Jewish traditions, all of them recognize themselves as Jewish. One of the responders told me that this is a common understanding in the Jewish community since being Jewish is not specifically religious. To fully understand how the experienced limitations on religious freedom for Jews entail themselves one needs to understand that there is a wider perception of “being Jewish”. In summary, most of the responders consider the kosher slaughter law to be a kind of limitation. Circumcision is also one of those practices that are not a limitation directly but the common perception by the majority society is that it is barbaric. Which makes the practice seem like something wrongful or harmful and indirectly limits the Jewish community in ways of speaking about it. Circumcision is still lawful unlike kosher slaughtering, but many respondents are still very conscious of a possible change in the law due to the new government. The actual direct limitations include legislations like ban on kosher slaughter, but the indirect limitations are as shown, a whole lot greater. They include adjustment to the Swedish norms, the conscious decision on not show their Jewish identity to avoid discrimination or becoming a victim of antisemitism and the adjustment that requires assimilation and change in way of living to be able to live some kind of Jewish life.

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

In this final part of the study, I will discuss in what way the research questions have been answered and highlight the result of these through the chosen theory and finally connect my conclusion in comparison with previous research. By shown result and analysis it became clear that there are direct and indirect limitations to religious freedom in Sweden. Direct limitations such as: Economic security limitations which is mainly founded by the congregation itself, the kosher legislation with limits the access of kosher in Sweden and politicians who encourage further limitations upon the religious freedom. Indirect limitations such as: Attitudes, norms, interpretations of laws, the non-acting to stop oppression and discrimination. Stereotypical assumptions, lack of knowledge concerning antisemitism and assimilations creates obstacles for Jews to uphold their religious, culture or ethnical traditions since the majority society lacks the knowledge on important Jewish dates or that the Jewish individuals does not have the same opportunity for leave these days as the majority society during, for example, Christmas and Easter.

To locate applicable methods to be able to challenge discriminate and oppression one must make an analysis according to the model offered by Dr. Kumashiro. By applying this theory and its four components as previously presented, this model will challenge discriminatory and oppressive norms in society by analysing which social connections contribute to the construction of these discriminatory norms and attitudes and be made visible for the context in which oppression exists and how they are created.

1. Education for the other, which highlights what groups are being discriminated and oppressed, which in this study is shown to be Jews. 2. Education about the other, which is about learning that there are actual perceptions about these discriminated and oppressed groups. In this component I have shown what indirect and direct limitations Jews experience due to norms, attitudes and other deviant perceptions about Jews. 3. Critical education regarding privileges and otherfication which focus on knowledge about different structures of power and how this creates and upholds discrimination and oppression. This is what my result entails namely that it is partly the kosher law but also how intuitions and society have assumptions, misinterpret or treat Jews as alien etc. Also, the fact that there is no recognition on other holidays then the Christian ones. 4. Education that changes society. This is what my thesis strives to create, further knowledge to be able to create change. Sweden is bound to respect, protect and fulfil religious freedom. According to the answers given by the responders, is Sweden fulfilling its obligations? Can we claim to meet the criteria laws,

norms and societal attitudes if these directly and indirectly force Jews to emigrate for the sense of safety and security? Through the state's direct and indirect implications on Jewish life, through its non-action to enable Jewish life in Sweden. Not acting or not creating the opportunity for Jews to fully enjoy their religious freedom the Swedish state does not meet the international, regional or national duties. Yes, there is De Jure religious freedom in Sweden but laws, norms, and societal attitudes add to the restrictions on Jewish life. The national state must enable for Jewish life to be able to live within Sweden and to respect, protect and fulfil this marginalized groups religious rights, the Swedish state must act accordingly and actively engage and work towards a more tolerant society, where there is room for all and one dares to be different than the national states norm. These conclusions can be connected to previous research and their conclusions in terms of adopting, forming and creating their identity around the antisemitic experiences and also the fact that Jews feel reserved about talking about their ethnical belonging like the research made by Anna Sarri Krantz.<sup>26</sup>In the study from Örebro University, we also find similar conclusions regarding the need to keep a “low profile” in order not to be exposed to hate crimes and antisemitism.<sup>27</sup> There is also a great similarity in the indirect and direct problems offered in this study. The conflict in Israel-Palestine also contributes to limitations and discriminations like Bachner and Ring told. The report by Swedish DO and their conclusions shows the similar conclusions like mine namely the fact that those who are visible in their faith are affected the hardest.<sup>28</sup> Which impacts Jewish living conditions and creates limitations to access equal rights and opportunities. To restrict Jewish life through laws and norms is to make free religious freedom impossible. This means that Sweden works counterproductive against most international conventions that the Swedish state has sign or ratified and partly constitutionally protected. From the demonstrated result it goes, with the theory of the other to conclude is, they are direct limitations through to systematic discrimination and legislation

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<sup>26</sup> Sarri Krantz, Anna, *Tredje generationens överlevande En socialantropologisk studie om minne, antisemitism och identitet i spåret av Förintelsen*, 2018,

<[https://lucris.lub.lu.se/ws/portalfiles/portal/52569945/e\\_spik\\_Anna.pdf](https://lucris.lub.lu.se/ws/portalfiles/portal/52569945/e_spik_Anna.pdf)>, p. 40

<sup>27</sup> Örebro Universitet, Institutionen för juridik, psykologi och socialt arbete, Jaqline Carlzon Shoukatian, *Skepnader av antisemitiska hatbrott En studie om judars upplevelse av hatbrott i Sverige*, 2021

<<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1581776/FULLTEXT01.pdf>>

<sup>28</sup> Diskriminerings Ombudsmannen, *Redovisning av uppdrag att utveckla kunskap om diskriminering som har samband med religion eller annan trosuppfattning*, 2022-12-01,

<<https://www.do.se/download/18.71c46fcf184c78ffadd7b/1669877965291/regeringuppdraglutredovisninghttps://www.do.se/download/18.71c46fcf184c78ffadd7b/1669877965291/regeringuppdraglutredovisning-diskriminering-religion-LED-2021-510.pdf>>, p.2

but also indirectly due to the fear of discrimination or cases where the individual is forced to avoid places or hide their Jewish attributes. The indirect implications also affect the Jewish way of doing things due to the risk of being discriminated or oppressed. The conflict between Israel and Palestine has resulted in increased harassment and threats which also creates a limitation on the possibility to live as a Jew in Sweden. Words that associate Jewish practices with something negative affect the individual and its willingness and propensity to create a societal or private discourse. This creates the feeling of "us" and "them" that the theory of the other highlights. Even though not all Jews interviewed view themselves as limited in their religious freedom, this thesis in summary result in a fear and insecurity that limit the quality of life for Jews today.

Addition: If you experience hate crime, antisemitism or discrimination I urge you to contact the police. There is also support groups and emergency contacts within the Jewish community.

## 7. Explanations of words

All are not paraphrased but almost, if not completely, copied from the link next to it, except from the English translations.

**Zionism:** Zionism, Zionism, political endeavour to bring the return of the Jews to Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel. [sionism - Uppslagsverk - NE.se](#)

**Shabbat:** It is celebrated weekly from Friday evening when the sun sets to Saturday evening when three stars become visible. [Shabbat \(jfst.se\)](#)

**Kosher:** The word kosher means "permitted", "approved". If something is kosher, it may be eaten by Jews which follows kosher rules. It refers to the way food is produced and prepared, mainly if it is of animal origin. When an animal is slaughtered, it must be done so painlessly as possible. It is important that care is taken to make the animal's pain as little as possible. Therefore, for example, the Torah has a law that forbids the slaughter of a calf in its mother's presence. The birds and four-footed animals that are allowed may be eaten only if they have been slaughtered in a special way called shechita. This means that a specially trained butcher (shochet) says one special blessing and then with a razor sharp knife with a single cut cut off both the carotid arteries and trachea of the animal. This causes the animal to lose consciousness immediately or within a few seconds when the blood supply to the brain is cut off immediately. The animals are also slaughtered one by one, i.e. not in sight of each other. This is not to cause stress in other animals.  
[Vad innebär kosher? \(jfst.se\)](#)

**Rosh Hashana:** Rosh Hashana is the Jewish New Year. [Rosh hashana \(jfst.se\)](#)

**Chanukah:** Chanukah, or the Temple Dedication Festival, is a Jewish holiday that lasts eight days. It falls in November or December. The festival commemorates the rededication of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem in 165 BC. [Chanukka \(jfst.se\)](#)

**Kippah:** A Kippah is a headgear for Jews. [What Is A Kippah? | My Jewish Learning](#)

**Jom kippur:** Jom Kippur is celebrated ten days after Rosh Hashanah. [Jom kippur \(jfst.se\)](#)

**Pesach:** Pesach is celebrated for eight days in memory of the exodus from Egypt. [Dokument \(jfst.se\)](#)



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