



## ORA JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT

### Muslim-Jewish encounter, diversity & distance in urban Europe: Religion, culture and social model

## Information Sheet

### What is the topic and aims of the project?

This information sheet outlines the subject and questions of our research project which is called “Encounters”. Encounters studies real life connections and understandings of Jews and Muslims in urban Europe. We look at culture, ethnicity and religion as they are understood by individuals, communities, historically and in policy. Academic research shows that people who have negative attitudes to Jews tend to also have negative attitudes towards Muslims and vice versa. However, contemporary public debates instead emphasize growing antagonism between Jews and Muslims. For example, commentators have pointed to Muslims as perpetrators of antisemitism and to Jewish communities as increasingly close to alt-right anti-Muslim rhetoric. But social scientists researching how people live in their day to day lives suggest that relations in urban neighbourhoods are often more complex: everyday commercial exchange, the music and arts scenes, interfaith initiatives, nostalgia for earlier periods of conviviality, and contact in the street are among the many, not necessarily conflictual, forms these encounters can take.

### Where does the study take place?

Encounters is a comparative study, looking at how the patterns are different or similar in the largest European populations of these two groups in France (Paris/Strasbourg), Germany (Berlin/Frankfurt) and the UK (London/Manchester). On the face of it, these three countries have followed different national models in policy for majority-minority relations. At the national scale, this includes an examination of different migration and colonial histories, and of the classical models often attributed to European countries e.g. British “pluralism”, French “republicanism”, and German “federalism”. At the same time, the project is grounded in specific urban sites: two city-regions in each country, with diverse populations, including significant Jewish and Muslim populations or histories, distinctive patterns of settlement, and different approaches to urban governance.

### What is the methodology and what are the actors involved in the project?

To address the lack of research dedicated to comparative study of these two minorities, we bring together quantitative attitudinal data (surveys) with qualitative research (interviews, observation and analysis of text and speech). We want to better understand how different types of positive, neutral and negative relations might arise.

Our collaboration across six leading European research universities, involves sociologists, anthropologists, urbanists, historians and migration policy experts. The project will also foster dialogue across academic disciplines and with stakeholders in civil society, drawing on local urban knowledges and skills from the cities and their neighbourhoods. Public engagement is vital to the research too, given scholarship's potential to address the silo working among Muslim and Jewish community stakeholders, and the urgent need to foster better relations.



## Who is funding the project and what are the ethical standards ?

The project is funded by the national research councils: Agence nationale de la recherche in France, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft in Germany and the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK.



The project adheres to strict data management, data collection, and ethics standards at national, EU and university level. This means that we will ask you for written or oral (recorded) consent before your interview or participation and allow you to remain un-named unless you state otherwise. The data we gather will therefore not contain any markers of identity and will be rigorously anonymised (names of people and places will be changed in any publications associated with the project).

### Summary

- The research project “Encounters” studies real life connections and understandings of Jews and Muslims in urban Europe. It focuses on everyday life relations in urban neighbourhoods, for instance commercial exchange, the music and arts scenes, interfaith initiatives or contacts in the street.
- It aims at questioning contemporary public debates that emphasize growing antagonism between Jews and Muslims by showing a more complex reality.
- Encounters is a comparative study that takes place in six cities of the three European countries counting the largest European populations of these two groups: France (Paris/Strasbourg), Germany (Berlin/Frankfurt) and the UK (London/Manchester).
- We bring together quantitative attitudinal data (surveys) with qualitative research (interviews, observation and analysis of text and speech).
- The project will foster dialogue across academic disciplines (sociology, anthropology, urbanism and migration studies) and with stakeholders in civil society
- The project is funded by the national research councils of each country and adheres to strict data management, data collection, and ethics standards at national, EU and university level.

Details of the project’s research team are listed below. Please feel free to get in touch with us with any questions at any point or to withdraw from the research.

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