



THE PR OFFICE ^{PRO}

Conference of European Rabbis

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It is with deep dismay that the Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) has heard of recent developments in Austria which could lead to the country's withdrawal from the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID).

The Board of Directors of the MJLC has worked with KAICIID closely over the last three years to launch the first European network for interreligious dialogue between Muslim and Jewish religious leaders. Under the MJLC, the two groups meet, build trust, and coordinate common actions to promote a culture of respect and to protect European minority rights.

After six meetings hosted and chaired by KAICIID, the MJLC was founded as an Austrian NGO in October of last year- itself a historical moment for Austrian interfaith work. At present, the assembly comprises

nearly forty representatives of Muslim and Jewish communities from twenty countries determined to work through education and advocacy to stamp out Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism and support the ongoing process of harmonizing traditional needs (such as clothing and dietary requirements) with the priorities of modern European society.

Political polarization has made Europe an increasingly difficult environment for religious minorities. Both Muslim and Jewish citizens have experienced a rise in discrimination, as well as a raft of legal measures which restrict the free practice of their religion. In Austria only last month, we witnessed a Holocaust memorial display being repeatedly defaced in a gesture of neo-Nazi intimidation. At that time, Viennese religious organizations and others came together to mend the pictures and to guard against further damage in a move which did credit to Austrian society.

Nonetheless it is clear that Muslim and Jewish communities need every opportunity to stand in solidarity and to work with European national and international organizations to ensure our perspectives are taken into account. The potential of networks like the MJLC is vast, but MJLC entirely relies on the support and coordination of reliable, neutral and generous organizations like KAICIID which act far beyond the normal realm of their individual member states. It is a shame that KAICIID, which cannot by nature represent any country's foreign policy, has once again been pulled into local political manoeuvres ahead of the coming elections, which have nothing to do with its core mission.

We call upon the Austrian authorities to reconsider their support for the Centre, the loss of which would leave a gaping hole in Austrian interfaith work which other organizations would be hard-pressed to fill, and would damage the trust between the state and those faith communities which have been helped by KAICIID's work.





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Co-Chairs

Pinchas Goldschmidt, Chief Rabbi of Moscow

Dr. Nedžad Grabus, Grand Mufti of Slovenia

Deputy Co-Chairs

Imam Yahya Pallavicini, President of Comunità Religiosa Islamica Italiana

Rabbi Lody B. van de Kamp, Director of Jehoeda Services

Secretary

Chief Rabbi Schlomo Hofmeister, Rabbi of the Viennese Israelitische Kultusgemeinde

Treasurer

Imam Tarafa Baghajati, Founder of "Initiative Muslimischer ÖsterreicherInnen" (IMÖ)

<https://www.kaiciid.org/news-events/news/european-muslim-jewish-leadership-council-expresses-support-kaiciid>



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317-year-old Italian Jewish wedding document found - by accident

What does ketubah from 1702 reveal about history of Jewish wedding practices?

Contact Editor Arutz Sheva Staff, 18/06/19 15:10



The corner of the Ketubah

Courtesy of the Jewish community in Italy

A magnificent *ketubah*, written over 300 years ago in Florence, Italy, has been exciting Jewish collectors and the Jewish community in Italy over the last few days. The *ketubah* is dated 14 Nissan, 5462, which is Passover eve – surprisingly when the wedding ceremony took place in Florence.

Rabbi of Rome and Vice President of the Conference of European Rabbis, Rabbi Shmuel Di Segni, relates that he was surprised when he initially heard that weddings in Rome were generally concentrated to the day before Passover. "For a few years now I've been researching this phenomenon, whereas Jewish communities in Rome would customarily conduct a large number of weddings and related festivities specifically on the eve of Passover. Until now, I thought this was only in Rome, but now I see that in Florence and Urbino wedding ceremonies were also conducted on the evening before Passover."



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Rabbi Di Segni adds that according to his research, the reasons for this were "because this is the last day before *sefirat ha'omer*, when it becomes halachically prohibited to conduct wedding ceremonies. Also, the poverty at the time prompted them to conduct as many weddings as possible so that they could utilize the *chametz* in their possessions before they needed to burn it." He adds, "I am guessing that these wedding ceremonies were held in the evening; meaning, on the night of *bedikat chametz* and not on the actual fourteenth."

The exceptionally magnificent *ketubah*, which was accidentally discovered in the archives of a Jewish organization in Florence, is both large and impressive, and written on parchment. The organization transferred it to the King David Auction House, where it will be offered for auction within a few days for a starting price of \$20,000. The Auction House estimates that it will sell for about \$40,000-50,000.

The *ketubah*, dated 14 Nissan 5462 (April 12, 1702), is decorated with colorful embellishments, many of them gold, and adorned with beautiful illustrations of a bride and groom wearing festive Italian clothing as well as graceful horses and lions. The groom's name is "Shlomo Menachem, son of... Shmuel Meir of Urbino," and in keeping with Jewish tradition, the witnesses' signatures were added to the bottom of the beautiful document.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/264746>





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ISRAEL HAYOM
This is where we stand

49% of Israelis fear anti-Semitism while traveling abroad

Poll finds 71% of Israelis believe European Jews are not safe, 91% think they should immigrate to Israel. Conference of European Rabbis calls on Jerusalem to formulate action plan to tackle anti-Semitism across continent.

by Hanan Greenwood — Published on 2019-06-21 10:02 — Last modified: 2019-06-21 11:25



An Israeli flag is held during a rally against anti-Semitism in Berlin on April 25, 2018 | Photo: Reuters / Fabrizio Bensch

Half of Israelis surveyed say they worry about encountering anti-Semitism while vacationing abroad, this according to a new survey commissioned by the European





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Conference of Rabbis, which represents hundreds of Jewish communities across the continent.

The Sapio Research and Strategy firm carried out the poll of 502 Israelis about their concerns over rising anti-Semitism in Europe in April.

The survey found that 49% of Israelis were worried about anti-Semitism while traveling in Europe, as compared to 51% who said it was not an issue. Of the Israeli parents surveyed, 55% said they were worried about the possibility of an anti-Semitic attack.

Seventy-one percent of Israelis believe European Jews are not safe in their countries of residence, while 29% said they believed they were in fact safe.

Asked whether Europe's Jews should make aliyah, 91% of respondents said they should immigrate to Israel. Just 9% said they should remain where they are.

Of those surveyed, 91% of Israelis surveyed said they care about the anti-Semitic incidents taking place across Europe, while 9% said the events were of no interest to them.

As far as the assistance the Israeli government provides Jews, just 22% said Jerusalem was doing enough to help European Jewry, 48% said it was helping Europe's Jews to a moderate extent, and 30% said it was not doing enough.





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"The anti-Semitic incidents across Europe are intolerable and painfully reminiscent of the dark events of the previous century. They are attacking Europe's freedom and its values," said European Conference of Rabbis President and Chief Rabbi of Moscow Pinchas Goldschmidt.

"We are waging a daily struggle for freedom of religion and against anti-Semitism and its messages of hate," he said.

Ahead of the upcoming elections in Israel, Goldschmidt said: "I call on the Israeli government and election candidates to consolidate a broad strategy for action on the subject."

<https://www.israelhayom.com/2019/06/21/49-of-israelis-fear-anti-semitism-while-traveling-abroad/>

