



STUC St Andrew's Day Anti-Racism Brochure 2014

A Future Free From Racism?

Launching the findings of our Scottish Government funded inquiry into [Being Jewish in Scotland](#), we said, "If, twenty years from now, a future Scottish Government were to commission a future SCoJeC to conduct a similar study, we would hope to be able to report a drop in levels of intolerance, a greater sense of mutual understanding between Jewish and non-Jewish people." Fourteen months on, sadly, the signs are not encouraging.

Then, despite some reports of ignorance, ill-will, and blatant antisemitism, most people's experience was largely positive. But the recent dramatic upsurge in antisemitism has had an effect – more than 50 incidents were reported between July and September 2014 in comparison to 14 in the whole of 2013. Increasingly, people tell us that the extent to which they, as Jews, are held responsible, targeted, and even demonised for the actions of the State of Israel – whatever their personal views on the Middle East – has left them worried, depressed, and unsafe. Several have said they would no longer wear a *kippah* or Star of David in the street, feel forced to hide their Jewish identity in the face of hostility, and no longer feel welcome in Scotland. Most tellingly, the person who had previously told us that "*Scotland is a darn good place to be a Jew*", now writes, "*Feel alienated and no longer Scottish first, then Jewish. Feel Jewish only. Have to be very guarded when speaking to people. ... My son asked on Friday evening if we could leave Scotland.*"

A Scotland that is free from racism because it has made minorities unwelcome would not be worthy of celebration. The First Minister reassures us that "we will not tolerate any form of racial or religious prejudice", and One Scotland envisages a country in which "individuals and minority groups feel valued", but sadly that's not our experience – it remains an aspiration, not a fact.

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