

Jewish Employees Say Workplace DEI Functions Are Failing to Address Antisemitism, New Research Finds

Tuesday 27 October, 2026

Related Sectors:

Business & Finance :: Education & Human Resources ::

Related Keywords:

Antisemitism :: Antisemitism At Work :: DEI :: Diversity :: Equity :: Inclusion :: Discrimination :: Racism :: Psychological Safety :: DEI Practice :: DEI Function ::

Scan Me:



More than seven in 10 Jewish employees have avoided raising antisemitism concerns because they were unsure how they would be received.

New research from business psychology consultancy Pearn Kandola has found that many Jewish employees believe their organisation's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) functions have been inconsistent in its approach to antisemitism.

The research, based on a survey of **1,002 Jewish employees**, reveals a significant gap between organisations' stated commitments to tackling racism and discrimination and the confidence Jewish employees have in raising antisemitism concerns.

While **87.0%** of respondents agreed that their organisation expressed a clear commitment to tackling racism and discrimination, **75.5%** said their organisation's DEI approach was not consistent in its response to antisemitism.

More than **seven in 10 respondents (70.8%)** said they had avoided raising concerns about antisemitism because they were unsure how those concerns would be received. Just **15.9%** said they felt able to raise such concerns.

The findings follow Pearn Kandola's 2024 research into antisemitism and Islamophobia at work, which found that antisemitism in workplaces had **increased by almost 50%** after 7 October 2023. Participants in that research described feeling misunderstood by their employers, uncertain that their concerns would be recognised and increasingly reluctant to speak openly about their Jewish identity at work.

In May 2026, Pearn Kandola held **Antisemitism at Work Week**, a series of webinars examining antisemitism in workplaces. Jewish attendees described a lack of responsiveness from DEI teams, prompting the consultancy to investigate whether these experiences reflected a wider organisational pattern.

The new research indicates that, while DEI functions are often visibly active on issues of racism and discrimination, Jewish employees may not experience the same recognition or support when antisemitism is raised. Eighty-three per cent of respondents agreed that their organisation's DEI function was visibly active on racism and discrimination.

Interviews undertaken as part of the research found that the arguments used to minimise antisemitism were the same as those used to dismiss other forms of racism. These included denial, questioning whether an incident was discriminatory, explaining away behaviour, treating concerns as misunderstandings, and acknowledging prejudice without taking meaningful action. What made this particularly troubling was that some of these responses came from DEI functions whose purpose is to recognise and challenge precisely these forms of discrimination.

Pearn Kandola's research argues that these responses can create a situation in which silence becomes a rational choice for Jewish employees who do not believe they will be listened to without judgement.

"One of the most striking findings was that the arguments used to minimise antisemitism were the very same arguments that have long been used to dismiss racism. These are arguments that DEI professionals should recognise and challenge, yet Jewish employees were encountering them from the very people responsible for promoting inclusion.

"This is not simply a question of whether people feel psychologically safe to speak. It is also about whether organisations have the capability to listen, understand what they are being told and take appropriate action. No employee should have to repeatedly prove that their experience matters before it is taken seriously."

Professor Binna Kandola OBE, Co-founder and Senior Partner, Pearn Kandola

The research cautions that DEI teams should not assume that a broad commitment to equality automatically equates to expertise or even interest in antisemitism. It argues that some commonly used

frameworks, particularly those centred exclusively on power, privilege and representation, make it more difficult to recognise Jewish vulnerability where stereotypes about Jewish influence, wealth or success remain unchallenged.

Pearn Kandola has made six recommendations to help organisations respond more effectively. These include reviewing DEI practice independently of the DEI team itself; developing specific expertise in antisemitism; separating representation from inclusion; clarifying the role of Employee Resource Groups; building organisational listening into DEI capability; and introducing reflexive practice to help DEI teams examine their own assumptions.

The consultancy stresses that its findings are intended to strengthen, rather than undermine, DEI.

“DEI has an essential role to play in creating fair workplaces. But any function concerned with reducing bias must also recognise its own capacity for bias. Strengthening DEI means being willing to examine where established methods, models or assumptions are preventing people from being heard.”

Professor Binna Kandola OBE, Co-founder and Senior Partner, Pearn Kandola

The full report, **“Yes but...”: Antisemitism and the Limits of Workplace Inclusion**, is available to download from Pearn Kandola's website www.pearnkandola.com.

About Pearn Kandola

Pearn Kandola LLP is a business psychology consultancy that has been transforming leaders, teams and organisations globally since 1984. For more than four decades, the firm has worked with organisations to apply evidence-based insight to make workplaces fairer and more effective.

Company Contact:

Pearn Kandola LLP

E. info@pearnkandola.com

W. <https://pearnkandola.com/>

Additional Contact(s):

Grace Cleere grace@pearnkandola.com

Emily Reynolds ereynolds@pearnkandola.com

[View Online](#)

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:

<https://www.pearnkandolaresearch.pressat.co.uk>