

MORE than half the Orthodox Jews in Britain are worried about being victims of antisemitism.

And, according to the Jewish Policy Research report *Antisemitism in the UK*, released yesterday, they are more than twice as likely as non-Orthodox Jews to have experienced antisemitic harassment or discrimination.

The report is based on a new analysis by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research of data gathered by JPR and Ipsos MORI for the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

Close to two-thirds of Orthodox Jews believe antisemitism to be a problem in the UK, compared with under half of non-Orthodox Jews.

And close to a half avoid certain places out of fear for their safety as a Jew, compared to a quarter of the non-Orthodox.

JPR executive direc-

BY SIMON YAFFE

tor Dr Jonathan Boyd, who co-authored the report, said: "Orthodox Jews in the UK live in a different reality to non-Orthodox Jews when it comes to experiencing and perceiving antisemitism.

Orthodox are more worried by hate

"When we compare them, as a group, to the French Jewish population, they are more likely to have experienced antisemitic harassment and equally likely to feel the need to avoid certain

locations out of fear of antisemitism.

"Given that the UK Jewish Orthodox sector will become an ever larger proportion of the UK Jewish community as a whole, it should be

an issue of grave concern."

But the report also shows that levels of antisemitism in the UK are significantly lower than in other western European countries —

and that Jews in Britain feel noticeably less anxious about it than elsewhere on the continent.

For example, levels of anxiety about antisemitism among

French Jews are dramatically higher than among Jews in the UK, while Jews in Belgium are more likely than any of the other western European Jewish populations investigated to avoid particular locations in the country due to their concerns about antisemitism.

Dr Boyd explained: "It is clear that levels of antisemitism in the UK are considerably lower than elsewhere in Europe.

"But there is no cause for complacency.

"The fact that one in five British Jews experienced some form of antisemitic harassment or discrimination in the 12 months prior to the survey demonstrates that much more needs to be done to address the real concerns the community has."

The report also found that most UK Jews do not regard mere criticism of Israel to be antisemitic.

Whereas only six per cent of respondents would consider non-Jews to be "definitely antisemitic" if they criticised Israel, two-thirds would consider them to be probably or definitely not antisemitic.

However, views change when criticism manifests itself in particular ways.

One-third feel that non-Jews who advocate a boycott of Israeli goods or products are definitely antisemitic, and a further third feels that they are probably so.

Almost half feels that non-Jews who draw any parallel between Israelis and Nazis are definitely antisemitic, with an additional third feeling they are probably so.

Further issues explored in the report include data on how Jews define antisemitism, levels of reporting of different types of antisemitic incidents and attitudes towards legislation on *brit mila* and shechita.

Dr Boyd added: "Going forward, the key challenge for British policy makers is how to continue to build a society based on values that celebrate our common humanity, while simultaneously respecting and honouring our cultural, ethnic and religious differences."



Susan Bookbinder

Heroine Louise leads fight to end female genital mutilation

I WILL be moderating at the Prime Minister's Girl Summit next week where ministers and campaigners from all over the world will gather in London with the aim of eradicating female genital mutilation and enforced marriage within a generation.

One of the leaders in this paradigm change is a Leeds-born Jewish woman — Louise Silverton, director of midwifery at the Royal College of Nursing.

If you listen to Radio 4's *Today* programme or have any interest in the women and girls' debate, you will know the formidable Louise.

The 58-year-old is known for her tireless campaigning in midwifery, but is incredibly modest and refuses to



MY HEROINE: Susan Bookbinder, right, with Louise Silverton

is recognised".

It was a tight-knit family and a happy childhood for Louise as the youngest of three, attending cheder after school and on Sundays, and shul with her grandmother most Saturdays.

Although she loves chopped liver, chicken soup and is known to make great gefilte fish, her husband is a vegetarian, so "we have a kosher, but *milchick* home.

"It makes things easier, except at Pesach, when we decamp to Jerusalem and let someone else do the cleaning."

So has being Jewish affected her career in anyway?

"Not really," she said. "I have usually found my colleagues to be very supportive particularly about time off for yomtov. I only manage, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Pesach.

"I did have some trouble as a student nurse from a patient refusing to be fed by a Jew — but the ward sister wouldn't put up with it."

Louise — who lives in Chiswick with solicitor husband Joseph Mirwitch — feels that midwifery is a privilege and that the career chose her.

She said: "I wasn't considered an academic at school and had planned to leave after O-levels.

"However I did much better than was expected and was marched back to school to study A-levels. As this wasn't planned, I hadn't thought what I might study so found myself studying science, with the idea that I would study medicine."

Louise's grandfather, uncle, brother and niece were/are all doctors as are many more relatives, so medicine is part of the family heritage.

"There were no nurses or midwives — although my husband's step-great-grandmother was a midwife who went down with the Lusitania."

Although Louise applied to medical school and was offered a place, it wasn't "what I fancied and I was told about a new degree in nursing at Leeds Poly.

"I applied and was offered a place. There was a slight problem when I got the grades to get into medical school, so I decided instead to study nursing.

"I enjoyed my studies and wasn't sure what to do next. It was suggested that a year studying midwifery would hold me in good stead."

The then-18-year-old considered going to Israel for a while or even making aliya because "midwifery training was a bit of a culture shock after my nursing studies — from being in an undergraduate set of 14 to sitting in uniform in a classroom with 36 others.

"I didn't really enjoy the training, but once qualified, I loved it and never thought about doing anything else."

Louise — whose 21-year-old daughter Miriam is graduating in social policy this week, — was part of the maternity flying squads in

the Scottish Highlands and once had to deliver a baby in a coal hole after a Presbyterian father locked his 14-year-old daughter in the hole when he discovered she was pregnant.

So having written the first evidence-based midwifery textbook, *Global Standards in Midwifery Regulation*, what is Louise's proudest moment in her career so far?

"My involvement with the Birthplace Study (as a co-investigator) which showed that for women at low risk of complications, birth outside an obstetric unit is a viable option for both mother and baby (subject to a few caveats)," she revealed.

"The proudest bit is seeing the draft NICE intra partum

One patient refused to be fed by a Jew

guidelines, including the recommendations of our work."

She believes the challenge now is whether there will be enough midwives for the mothers of tomorrow and the future.

"Many midwives are approaching retirement and we need to make sure that we keep these midwives as long as possible as well as nurturing younger ones," she said.

Louise says there is not enough time to provide quality ante and post-natal care and caring for more than one woman in labour at the same time and it "takes its toll".

She added: "We need to address this, possibly by enabling more continuity of care, pushing the focus on the women rather than reading the notes."

I am particularly looking

forward to seeing Louise at David Cameron's summit next week because it is with the Royal College of Midwives, under her leadership, that the call for change on FGM began in Britain.

The college ordered a survey of its members more than a decade ago and found they were facing difficulties in how to help women with FGM on a daily basis.

The RCM brought together all the agencies working with women and children to help it bring down the barriers and shields which inadvertently protect the vile practice.

I chaired that symposium at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and remember the palpable sense of frustration — of caring people with the will and skills to help — facing a minefield of barriers, excuses and disconnection.

Since then we have seen the barriers coming down and the agencies working together, to ensure there is a joined-up system from maternity to university, from cradle to grave to ensure that our women and girls are protected and never failed, ignored or mutilated again.

Louise is a pioneer of this movement in which Britain is the leader.

Britain is bringing together ministers from Europe, Africa and the Middle East in the form of the Girl Summit on Tuesday.

Louise will not take the credit for being a key part in this revolution, but I am telling you she is definitely one of its heroines.

Louise's book, *The Art and Science of Midwifery*, is published by Prentice Hall.

■ Susan Bookbinder is a journalist, broadcaster and campaigner.

Midwifery training was culture shock

take any credit for the women and girls 'revolution' (not my term, but that of Conservative Health Minister, Jane Ellison MP) on FGM and enforced and early marriage now underway.

Louise is the highest-ranking Jewish midwife in Britain; being Jewish is not something she is modest about!

"Jewish and proud" is how she describes herself.

Her East Prussian origins and Jewish identity are "very important" to her, she attends shul 20-30 times a year and "loves chazanut and how the passing of the year