

A Guide To Understanding And Adopting

IHRA



Working Definition of Antisemitism

**The first step to fighting
antisemitism is to define it.**

The Telegraph

'It is a terrifying time to be a Jew on campus': the rise of anti-Semitism in British universities

FINANCIAL TIMES

An unheard hatred: how anti-Semitism is dangerously ignored

THE JC
THE JEWISH CHRONICLE

North of England MPs sound alarm over rising Jew-hate in their constituencies

The Guardian

It's shocking to see so many leftwingers lured to the far right by conspiracy theories

What is the problem?

Antisemitism: The oldest hatred is a growing threat

In the decades after the Holocaust and nearly all Jews fleeing or being expelled from Arab states, many assumed that hatred against Jews was on the decline. Yet this dangerous virus has emerged again around the globe, including in the United Kingdom.

Cases of assault, harassment, and vandalism against Jews are at near-historic levels in the UK, U.S., and Canada, and worldwide. Despite making up less than 1 percent of the population, Jewish people were targeted in 22 percent of religiously motivated hate crimes (1,288 offences) in the year ending in March 2021 (HM Home Office).

In person and online, across the UK and the world, there are unprovoked attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions. Synagogues and Jewish centers are vandalised, and there are attempts to breach synagogues while worshipers are inside, with the intent to harm. As of 2021, only 59% of British Jews feel they have a long-term future in the UK.

The antisemitic precedent set by former opposition-leader Jeremy Corbyn made British Jews feel more vulnerable than anyone could have imagined. Jewish students—especially those who wear Jewish symbols, support Israel's existence, and refuse to reject their religious, ethnic, and/or national identity—often find themselves subject to discrimination, bullying, and racism.

FINANCIAL TIMES

Return of anti-Semitism requires us all to fight back

Antisemitism Snapshot

ITALY, JANUARY 15, 2021: Zoom bombers shout “Jews to the ovens” at the online launch of a book about the Holocaust.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE, MARCH 2022: Raiding Matthew Henegan’s home, investigators found Nazi paraphernalia. Henegan asserted that Jews masterminded COVID-19 and produced a film claiming that Jews controlled society. He reportedly referred to Jews as “kikes”, and “creatures” and appeared at a hearing at the Old Bailey wearing dark glasses and a swastika armband. Asked during the trial whether he is a National Socialist, Henegan replied: “Yes, “I do not pretend otherwise,” preceding an eight-year prison sentence and with a extended license period.

BBC

NEWS

Chigwell rabbi attack: Two arrests after synagogue assault

BAHÍA BLANCA, ARGENTINA, MAY 18, 2021: A building belonging to the Jewish community was vandalized with graffiti saying, “We are going to kill you” and “Jewish rats,” alongside a Jewish Star of David.

BERLIN, GERMANY, MAY 22, 2021: A visibly Jewish man was approached by three men and punched in the face.

LONDON, MAY 25, 2021: In central London, an anti-Israel protester walked through the streets with a group, shouting, “We’ll find some Jews there!” and “We want the Zionists! We want their blood!” Video footage shows a police officer taking no action in response.

TORONTO, CANADA, MAY 28, 2021: Anti-Israel protesters violently attacked and injured pro-Israel protesters and reportedly sexually assaulted a Jewish woman.

 **INDEPENDENT**

News > UK > Crime

Group of men filmed spitting at bus full of Jewish people on Oxford Street

VIENNA, AUSTRIA, MAY 28, 2021: A non-Jewish woman was harassed and assaulted on the train for reading a book about Jewish history. Police were investigated for

responding to the incident with disinterest and even suggesting she shouldn't have been reading the book.

ESSEX, MAY, 2021: Rabbi Rafi Goodwin subjected to an "unprovoked and cowardly" physical attack outside the Chigwell & Hainault Synagogue

LONDON, DECEMBER 2021: Youths partake in Nazi salutes directed at Jewish passengers traveling by bus for Chanukah. Police have treated the incident as a hate crime.

UK, 2021: Community Security Trust (CST) records more than 2,000 incidents in a single year for the first time, with a total figure 24 per cent higher than the previous record annual total of 1,813 incidents in 2019.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 2022: Grenfell Tower aid volunteer Tahra Ahmed claimed that the victims of the Grenfell Tower fire were "burnt alive in a Jewish sacrifice" and that the inferno profited Goldman Sachs. Ahmed was propagating antisemitic conspiracy theories to her Facebook followers and was sentenced to eleven months in prison.

SURREY, MAY, 2022: Reverend Stephen Sizer faced removal after a Church court hearing, regarding 11 antisemitic incidents between 2005-17. Sizer has shared a platform with Holocaust deniers and has reposted antisemitic social media content.

MailOnline

News

Vicar faces removal from Church of England after being accused of posting anti-Semitic material online and sharing platform with Holocaust deniers

Forbes

Synagogue Attacks And Slurs: Jewish Community Rocked By Rise In Anti-Semitism Amid Israel-Gaza Fighting

Antisemitism Snapshot

These incidents are a very small sample of antisemitism in 2021-2022.

For further information, visit www.standwithus.com/ihra, which contains links to media articles about the above antisemitic incidents.

Skyrocketing antisemitism on social media

The recent spate of antisemitic attacks is being fueled in part by activities on social media, where conspiracy theories spread quickly and easily without being fact-checked. The failure of social media platforms to curtail the spread of hatred against Jews online only serves to fan the flames of a reality in which antisemitic incidents are higher than they have been in decades.



ANTISEMITISM IS A PROBLEM, AND IT WON'T SOLVE ITSELF!

Why is a widely accepted modern definition of antisemitism needed?

1 Antisemitism evolves over time.

Antisemitism “mutates” and can occur in new ways that are hard for leaders and institutions to identify. Anti-Jewish racism was once focused on the religion of Jews, vilifying them for not accepting Christianity or for other aspects of their religious beliefs and traditions that made them different. Then it focused on the notion of race, demonising Jews for being inferior to “pure-white” Aryans. Depending on the source of the hatred, it has focused on economic issues, accusing Jews of being capitalists or communists.

It can connect to nationalism, first faulting Jews for being stateless and later discriminating against Jews for having their own state. It comes from the far left, the far right, Islamist extremist groups, and others. Often, these groups will take the same antisemitic slur or conspiracy theory and change it slightly



to fit their audience's political and cultural biases. We can't fight the antisemitic virus of 2021 if we only recognise the version from 1942. Because antisemitism comes in many forms, people may have no idea when they are witnessing—or even engaging in—antisemitism.

2 Perpetrators attempt to camouflage their antisemitism.

Without a consistent definition, those who perpetrate antisemitism will attempt to define the term to exclude their own bigotry. As famed historian Raul Hilberg noted, “The Nazis did not call themselves anti-Semites.” Those who engage in modern forms of antisemitism are often no different. Perpetrators target Jews for supporting Israel's existence yet claim that their intent was “anti-Israel, not anti-Jewish.” At multiple universities, organisations that oppose Israel's existence—a stance the vast majority of Jews see as antisemitic—have pushed their own “definitions of antisemitism.” Naturally, these self-serving definitions are crafted to exclude the forms of hatred these groups promote.

There are many other deeply disturbing examples of how the line is crossed. For instance, Grafton Thomas, the man guilty of a murderous machete attack in Monsey, NY, googled “Zionist temple near me” to select his target during the Jewish holiday of Chanukah.

ISpeaking in the Commons, Robert Jenrick has outlined that, “you don't have to look very hard to find a pattern of antisemitic behaviour in connection with campaigns promoting a boycott of Israel. Successive studies have shown the single best statistical predictor of anti-Jewish hostility is the amount of BDS activity...”



Ham&High

HAMPSTEAD NEWS

Arrest after swastikas graffitied in Belsize Square



Zionism means support for the basic rights of Jewish people to self-determination in their 3,000-year-old ancestral home. The incidents above highlight the importance of providing communities, organisations, educational institutions, and others with a definition that recognises that for many Jews, Zionism is an inherent component of their identity and not merely a political point of view.

3 Like all groups, Jews define their own experiences of oppression.

Our society generally accepts that each community gets to define its own oppression. One gender doesn't get to tell the other what is sexist toward the latter. One group doesn't have the authority to determine what behaviors are racist toward another group. Jews have the right to define how they experience antisemitism, especially in environments where antisemitic incidents are commonly dismissed. According to a 2019 Jewish Chronicle survey, more than half of adults aged 18 to 24 replied "don't know" when asked to identify antisemitism. Antisemitism cannot be taken seriously if the experiences of its primary targets—Jews—are dismissed. If this hatred is not taken seriously, it will grow unchecked.

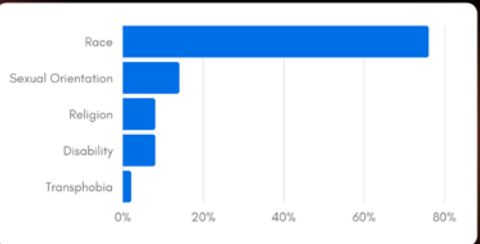
4 Confusion about antisemitism leads to:

A. UNDERREPORTING.

To record and track antisemitism, we need to know what it is. Collecting data about antisemitism is an important tool in fighting this hatred. According to a recently released Jewish Chronicle survey, fewer than half of UK adults understand meaning of 'anti-Semitism.' 47% said they understood the word, but 40% said they did not know its meaning. It was not clear how the remaining 13% answered the question.

Motivating factors toward hate crimes in England & Wales in 2018 / 19

Source: Home Office



B. LACK OF JUSTICE.

Antisemitic acts are often not identified because of a lack of clarity about what antisemitism is.

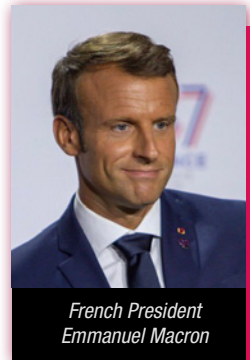
Ilan Halimi, a 23-year-old French Jew, was tied up, stripped naked, gagged, beaten, humiliated, mutilated, and set on fire while still alive. Subscribing to an antisemitic stereotype that all Jews are rich, the perpetrators abducted and held him for ransom. There was no charge of antisemitism as an aggravating factor in this murder case until the trial was in progress and the perpetrator demonstrated his contempt for "Zionist terrorists" and "bearded men wearing kippahs." Only then did magistrates add antisemitism as an aggravating factor.



C. MORE CRIME.

Antisemitism, undiagnosed and unrecognised, has led to increased violence against Jews. On February 19, 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron warned his nation,

“For the first time in many years, antisemitism is killing people again in France,” and acknowledged that French authorities “did not know how to react effectively.”



French President
Emmanuel Macron

The U.K. is finding itself in the same dangerous situation.

5 Lack of understanding leads to unintentional antisemitic activity.

When individuals fail to understand antisemitism, they may engage in antisemitic rhetoric or conduct without meaning to. There are numerous examples of people being publicly exposed for using antisemitic slurs or invoking antisemitic stereotypes only to respond that they did not understand the meaning of a particular antisemitic term or phrase and its harmful impact on Jewish people. Education, including through a consistent definition, allows individuals to self-monitor, curtailing instances of unintentional antisemitism.

A screenshot from a sports broadcast featuring a male athlete with a beard and short brown hair, wearing a white jersey with red trim. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is dark with the word 'STATEMENT' in large white capital letters. Below the title, a quote is displayed in white text. At the bottom of the frame, there is a black bar with white text, a timestamp, temperature, and a channel logo.

STATEMENT

"I AM DEEPLY SORRY FOR USING AN ANTI-SEMITIC SLUR... WHILE I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE WORD MEANT AT THE TIME, MY IGNORANCE ABOUT ITS HISTORY AND HOW OFFENSIVE IT IS TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IS ABSOLUTELY NOT AN EXCUSE AND I WAS JUST WRONG... I AM COMMITTED TO PROPERLY SEEKING OUT PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP EDUCATE ME ABOUT THIS TYPE OF HATE."

JNE DOSE, LIKE SPECIAL SHIPPING EQUIPMENT AND THE MEDICAL SCRUBS AND ID BADGE

5:46 70° 6

antisemitism

Semitism is hostility to and prej-
Jewish people. The extreme right-
Front promoted anti-semitism.



THE IHRA WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

How does the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism meet these needs?

The IHRA Working Definition:

- 1 Takes into account both contemporary and classic antisemitism. The Definition includes examples that describe 11 ways in which antisemitism may manifest today. Six of the examples address contemporary antisemitism involving Israel, often treated as the Jewish collective, either by applying classic antisemitic slurs to the Jewish state itself or targeting Jews collectively for real or imagined connection to Israel. They include:

- 
- Accusing Jews of being more loyal to Israel or to a global Jewish agenda than to their home countries.
 - Denying Jews the right to self-determination or calling Israel a “racist endeavour.”
 - Applying a double standard to Israel that isn’t applied to other countries.
 - Applying classic antisemitic smears, like the blood libel, to Israel.
 - Comparing Israel to the Nazis.
 - Holding Jews collectively responsible for Israel’s actions.

2 Was developed by experts who express the needs of the victims rather than the biases of the perpetrators. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance is an international network of leading academics, museum heads, and nonprofit leaders from 34 countries that promotes Holocaust research and education. In 2016, facing rising antisemitism around the world, IHRA drafted a definition of antisemitism aimed at helping countries, institutions, and organisations recognise, monitor, and record antisemitism.

3 Is the consensus-driven choice of the world’s democracies and has been adopted or endorsed by a wide range of governments, institutions, and organisations. It has been:

- Supported by Her Majesty’s Government since 12 December, 2016.
- Adopted by governments of over 30 countries.
- Signed onto by the 37 governments that are members of IHRA.
- Used by the Justice Ministries of Austria and Germany.
- Adopted by the European Union.
- Adopted by the Global Imams Council.
- Supported in the Houses of Parliament across party lines.

Visit www.standwithus.com/ihra for updates on the adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

ADOPTING AND USING IHRA CAN:

Raise Awareness
ABOUT ANTISEMITISM

Help Identify Cases
INVOLVING ANTISEMITISM

Increase Reporting
OF ANTISEMITIC INCIDENTS

Assess Intent
OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Assist In Data Recording
ABOUT ANTISEMITISM



MISCONCEPTIONS AND MISINFORMATION

What does the IHRA definition *not do*?

There has been controversy, and sometimes intentional confusion, about the IHRA Working Definition. Here are some of the claims made by critics, along with facts and context responding to those claims.

CLAIM 1

*The IHRA Definition is **redundant**; we already have non-discrimination laws.*

RESPONSE

The IHRA Definition is not a law. It is simply a guiding tool for how to apply existing rules and laws where antisemitism may be involved. The IHRA Definition is the international consensus definition of antisemitism; there is nothing else that provides this type of consistency and clarity. Moreover, if current laws were sufficient without a definition of antisemitism, we would not see ongoing confusion about how to identify, report, and address antisemitism.

CLAIM 2

*The IHRA Definition **infringes** upon the right to freedom of speech and expression..*

RESPONSE

The IHRA Definition does not require or prohibit any speech at all. It has no enforcement mechanism. Like any definition in a dictionary, it is a tool for identifying antisemitism, not silencing or punishing any type of speech. Leaders and institutions have their own free speech rights and responsibilities to condemn incidents of hatred and bigotry, and even use them as teachable moments. Referencing IHRA to confront cases of antisemitism in this way does not violate anyone's rights because no one has a right to

be free from criticism for promoting hate. Nor does the IHRA Definition have a “chilling effect” on criticism of Israel, as evidenced by the massive amount of criticism we see in many contexts across the country.

CLAIM 3

*The IHRA Definition **punishes/silences** criticism of Israel by labeling it as antisemitism.*

RESPONSE

This is blatantly false. In fact, the IHRA Definition expressly recognises that criticism of Israel, similar to criticism leveled at other countries, cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Israel-related examples within the IHRA Definition include the use of double standards, demonisation, and/or delegitimation, not mere criticism. As noted previously, nothing in the IHRA Definition punishes or silences any speech, including speech about Israel, whether antisemitic or not.

CLAIM 4

*The IHRA Definition **singles out** Jews for special (i.e., privileged) treatment.*

RESPONSE

The IHRA Definition is not a form of special protection or treatment. It provides an understanding of what constitutes an existing form of bigotry/discrimination that can be difficult to identify because of the many different ways it appears.

CLAIM 5

*Adoption of the IHRA Definition **harms** Palestinians.*

RESPONSE

Identifying bigotry or discrimination against one group does not harm any other group. Those who choose to “support” the Palestinian people by engaging in bigoted speech

against Jews or Israelis may continue those efforts. The IHRA Definition may identify some of that speech as antisemitic, but it does nothing to silence or punish that speech. Moreover, the desire of some to engage in bigoted speech is not a reason to shy away from identifying and condemning that speech for what it is (i.e., racism, sexism, antisemitism, etc.).

CLAIM 6

*The IHRA Definition and/or its supporters are too **rigid** or “dogmatic.”*

RESPONSE

Words matter. The text of the Definition must be the starting point for discussions about fighting antisemitism at an institutional level. The Definition is explicitly worded in non-dogmatic terms, with words such as “may,” “might,” and “could.” None of the examples of antisemitism provided within the Definition are automatically judged to be antisemitism without examining the context. The Definition makes clear that context is key: “Contemporary examples of antisemitism...could, taking into account the overall context, include.”

Take the First Step in Combating Antisemitism!

Have **YOUR** institution, agency, organisation, department, church, synagogue, temple, tribe, mosque, club, city, village, library, school, sports team, and/or business adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

TO START, GO TO

www.standwithus.com/ihra

**For more in-depth reading on this complex subject,
the StandWithUs Center for Combating Antisemitism**

Download booklets at standwithus.com/booklets
Order multiple copies at standwithus.com/shop

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