

IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism Worldwide Adoption & Endorsement Report

By The Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM)
& The Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary
European Jewry at Tel Aviv University



**COMBAT
ANTISEMITISM
MOVEMENT**



KANTOR CENTER
for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry



IHRA WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM ACHIEVES MAINSTREAM CONSENSUS WITH 865 ADOPTIONS WORLDWIDE

INTRODUCTION

In the half decade since the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted the [Working Definition of Antisemitism](#) -- which was written in 2004, and first adopted by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) a year later -- it has become a barometer in the global fight against Jew-hatred, serving as a comprehensive and well-known tool to monitor, measure, and ultimately combat contemporary manifestations of this age-old societal scourge.

The non-legally binding definition, along with its 11 explanatory examples, was adopted unanimously by IHRA's 31 member states in May 2016, following a lengthy formulation process that emerged from the need to address a wave of "new antisemitism" that was promoted at the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa -- a trend characterized by a growing prevalence of Jew-hatred disguised as anti-Zionism, mounting violence, and the normalization of antisemitic ideas across the ideological spectrum - from the extremes on the right and left, as well as political Islam.

A diverse array of international organizations, national governments, municipalities, institutions, NGOs, universities, athletic clubs, corporations, and other groups have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism as the guiding framework for their policies against antisemitism, and the definition's impact and influence are rooted in the mainstream consensus that has formed around it.



A TOTAL OF
865
ENTITIES
WORLDWIDE

GLOBAL ADOPTIONS AND ENDORSEMENTS OF THE IHRA WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

Through March 2022, a total of **865 entities** have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism since 2016, according to updated research compiled by the **Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM)** and the **Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University**.

In **2021** alone, **200 entities adopted or endorsed the definition worldwide**, nearly 1/4 (23.1%) of the total since the definition's inception.



37
COUNTRIES

COUNTRY ADOPTIONS

Overall, **37 countries**, including most Western democracies, have adopted the definition -- 28 IHRA member states, four IHRA observer states, and five nations unaffiliated with the IHRA. Following nations such as the United States, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, and France, among other previous adoptees, the newest additions to this group in 2021 were Australia, Estonia, Guatemala, Poland, South Korea, and Switzerland, followed by the Philippines in 2022.



320

**NON-FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT
ENTITIES**



NON-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADOPTIONS

320 non-federal government entities (including regional, provincial, state, county, and municipal bodies) have adopted the definition, with **39** doing so in 2021, and 13 so far in 2022. In Europe, this has included major national capitals, such as **London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, and Vienna**.

In the United Kingdom, 204 regional, local, and municipal governments have adopted the definition, as have 61 in the United States, 13 in Canada, 11 in Argentina, 8 each in Germany and Italy, 7 in France, 3 in Spain, 3 in Venezuela, and 2 in Australia.

At the state level in the U.S., there have been **19** adoptions or endorsements, either via executive proclamations by governors or bills passed by state legislatures. In 2021 **Kentucky, Montana, South Dakota, and Texas** adopted the definition, followed by **Alabama, Nevada, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia, Utah, and West Virginia** in 2022, with several more states in the process of doing so through state legislatures. In Canada, the province of **Ontario** adopted the definition in 2020, followed by **Quebec** and **New Brunswick** in 2021.



314
**EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTIONS**

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ADOPTIONS

A key category of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism adoptions has been institutions of higher education, the largest amount being in the UK, where **236** universities, out of a **global total of 314** have adopted the definition.

Unlike in the U.S., where the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism adoptions have primarily occurred at the level of student government resolutions (even though the U.S. Department of Education formally adopted it in 2018), in the UK university administrations have taken the lead on this issue, incorporating the definition into their codes of conduct policies, and diversity, equity, and inclusion manuals.

The initiative for British schools to adopt the definition has been led by Lord John Mann -- the UK government's independent adviser on antisemitism -- and the trend gained momentum during MP Gavin Williamson's tenure as Secretary of State for Education from 2019-2021.

At least **60 education institutions worldwide adopted the definition in 2021**, from the University of Tirana in Albania to La Universidad Nacional de Rosario in Argentina.



194
**INSTITUTIONS &
ORGANIZATIONS**

INSTITUTIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

Furthermore, **194 international institutions, NGOs, corporations, religious organizations, student clubs, political parties, and other groups** have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, including **96 in 2021**.

This includes a rising number of athletic governing bodies, leagues, and teams that have done so. In 2021, **ten sports teams** and **seven governing bodies and leagues** -- from Austria, Argentina, England, Germany, Israel, and Italy -- adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism.

The first, and most prominent, sports team to adopt the definition was **Chelsea FC** in 2020. The **English Premier League**, and the **Argentine Football Association** followed in its footsteps later that year. In 2021, major football leagues in Germany, Austria, and Italy also adopted the definition.



POLICY IMPLICATIONS

At the policy level, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism and its explanatory examples are often used as a benchmark for determining what constitutes antisemitic behavior.

For example, the **European Commission**, which adopted the definition in 2018, cited it multiple times in the first-ever comprehensive [“EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life”](#) that was unveiled this past October.

The definition, the document said, was used by the European Commission as a “practical guidance tool and a basis for its work to combat antisemitism,” driven by a “rights-based and victim-centered approach,” and it urged all EU member states to “adopt and use the IHRA definition of antisemitism and encourage local authorities, regions, cities, and other institutions and organizations to do the same.”

According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, several additional EU member states are formulating strategies to combat antisemitism and will likely incorporate the definition into these plans in the coming years.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism is utilized by the **Organization of American States** in its efforts to monitor and combat contemporary antisemitism in the Western Hemisphere.

The definition has also been endorsed by **United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres**, who in 2018 said, “I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the 31 member countries of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance to agree on a common definition of antisemitism. Such a definition can serve as a basis for law enforcement, as well as preventive policies.”



CONCLUSIONS

This analysis by the Combat Antisemitism Movement and the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at **Tel Aviv University** shows that **when a country takes the step of adopting the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism at the national level, local authorities, organizations, and educational institutions follow suit.** For example, the United Kingdom was the first country to officially adopt the definition in December 2016, and, as of the end of 2021, most institutions of higher education and local authorities in the country had endorsed it as well. This past October, Australia adopted the definition, and since then, numerous Australian towns, states, political parties, and NGOs have done the same.

The IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism is increasingly a **key pillar in government strategies in the struggle against all forms of contemporary antisemitism.** The growing pace of adoptions across all sectors and layers of society is expected to continue in the years ahead, elevating the definition's status as the most widely accepted definition of Jew-hatred, with more and more entities turning to it as they seek to combat the global resurgence of the world's "oldest hatred" in a meaningful and effective manner.



The full set of global adoption data is available here.
