



Anti-Semitism Summer Seminar Factsheet – 2019

Overview of Anti-Semitism

There is no doubt: anti-Semitism is reemerging as a significant threat to the global Jewish community. In some countries in Europe, verbal and physical attacks against Jews in the streets have become so common that Jews fear wearing religious symbols in public. Politicians and activists use anti-Semitic language for political gain. Nationalists hail Nazi collaborators as national heroes. Criminals vandalize cemeteries and synagogues. Whole sections of soccer stadiums sing anti-Semitic chants. Anti-Semitic hate crimes are increasing in number and severity, spurring Jews in some European countries to contemplate whether they should move to Israel.

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Definition

“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.”

Adopted by an increasing number of countries, multinational organizations, law enforcement agencies, and religious institutions, the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism provides a framework for authorities to use when working to oppose anti-Semitism in their communities. The [definition and its accompanying examples](#) offer criteria that can inform and standardize hate crime reporting. Unified reporting methods across countries and regions would produce more accurate data on anti-Semitic crimes that could be used to combat anti-Semitism more effectively.

IHRA Examples of Anti-Semitism

- “Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as [a] collective— such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.”
- “Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.”
- “Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g., gas chambers), or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).”
- “Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.”
- “Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.”

Sources of Anti-Semitism

Today's European anti-Semitism arises from three distinct sources: the far-right, the far-left, and Islamist ideologies. Though adherents of these three ideologies may have very different political views, the motivations of their anti-Semitism are often similar: prejudiced views that Jews have too much power globally, that Jews exploit the Holocaust for their own benefit, that Jews are responsible for conflicts in the Middle East, or that Jews are an existential threat to non-Jewish societies.

Extreme far-right anti-Semitism is rooted in white supremacist, nationalist, and neo-Nazi conceptions of Jews as an inferior class. This type of anti-Semitism is prevalent in Europe, where far-right political parties and politicians use blatant anti-Semitic language or coded "dog whistles" as political tools to garner votes.

2/19/2019: Vandals desecrated about 80 headstones with swastikas and neo-Nazi imagery in a Jewish cemetery in the eastern French village of Quatzenheim.

Far-left anti-Semitism is often intertwined with opinions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Opponents of Israeli policies and the Zionist movement use rhetoric similar to that of far-right anti-Semites, but also deploy criticism of Israel that crosses the line into anti-Semitism, such as holding all Jews responsible for Israeli policies. Far-left proponents of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement are routinely accused of making anti-Semitic statements, of applying double standards to Israel, and comparing modern Israel policy with that of the Nazis.

3/28/2019: A man threw a Molotov cocktail at the Bet Israel Synagogue in Izmir, Turkey. He said that his motivation was to protest Israel.

Islamist anti-Semitism is based on religious, territorial, and political disputes that have been amplified by the founding of the State of Israel and the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The arrival of increased numbers of Middle Eastern and North African asylum seekers from countries where anti-Semitism is pervasive has alarmed Jewish communities across Europe.

3/23/2018: Two men, one of whom was Muslim, brutally murdered Mireille Knoll, an 85-year-old Jewish woman living in Paris.