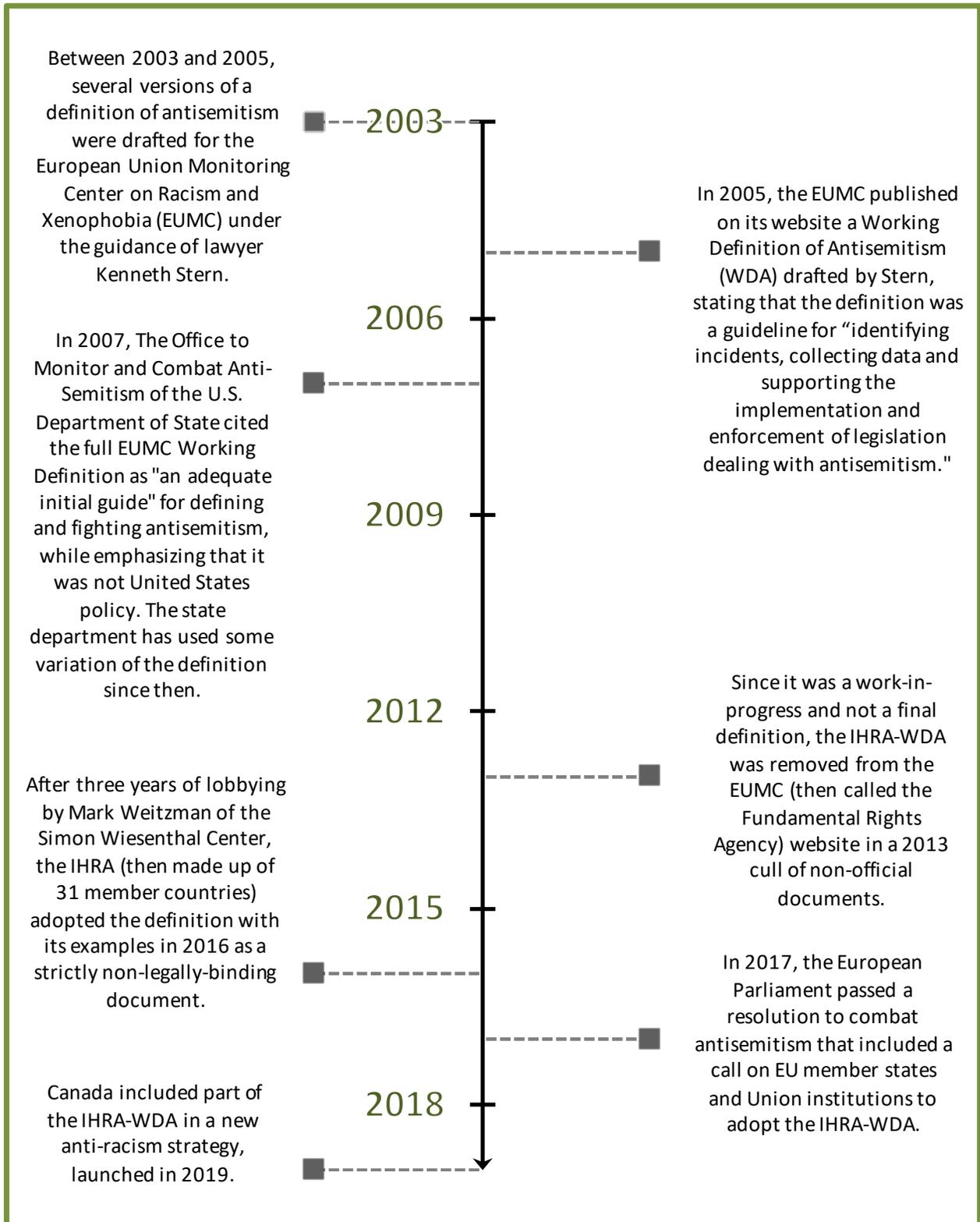


International Holocaust Remembrance Association Working Definition of Antisemitism Fact Sheet

- Antisemitism is hatred of, discrimination against, or prejudice towards Jews because they are Jews. Israel lobby groups like the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) want to expand that definition to include criticism of Israel and of Zionism.
- The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism (IHRA-WDA) is the tool that Israel lobby groups are using to expand the definition of antisemitism and suppress support for Palestinian rights.
- The IHRA is a 33-country intergovernmental organization focused on remembrance of and education about the Holocaust. Canada joined in 2009.
- The IHRA adopted a pre-existing working definition of antisemitism in 2016 (see timeline below) due to lobbying efforts by Mark Weitzman of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. The IHRA was the first intergovernmental body to adopt this working definition.
- The IHRA-WDA definition is 38 words long, followed by 11 examples which have an ill-defined relationship to the definition: the IHRA-WDA document states that the examples “may serve as illustrations” of antisemitism.
- The definition is vague and fails to identify antisemitism as a form of prejudice or racism, instead calling antisemitism “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.”
- 7 of the 11 examples refer not just to Jewish people, but to the state of Israel, a deliberate rhetorical strategy to label criticism of Israel and of Zionism antisemitic.
- The IHRA-WDA has been adopted by 17 countries worldwide, as well as a number of organizations, including the European Union and the Organization of American States.
- Since the IHRA-WDA remains a “non-legally binding” definition, it is unclear in most cases what adoption of the definition means, either for organizations or countries.
- Canada included the 38-word definition in the Terminology section of its June 2019 Anti-Racism strategy, and in a footnote referenced the full definition, with its examples.
- Israel lobby groups are pushing all levels of government, and other institutions, to adopt the IHRA-WDA so that they may use its adoption as leverage to silence criticism of Israel and support for Palestinian rights across Canadian society.
- Since the IHRA-WDA remains a “non-legally binding” definition, it is unclear in most cases what adoption of the definition means, either for organizations or countries.
- There are already numerous examples, both in Canada and internationally, of the IHRA-WDA being invoked in order to brand support for Palestinian rights and criticism of Israel as antisemitic. The definition is used to censor legitimate political discourse while real antisemitism, often in the form of white supremacy, continues unchecked.

International Holocaust Remembrance Association Working Definition of Antisemitism Timeline



For sources and to read the full IJV report on the IHRA-WDA, please visit www.noihra.ca.