



OIDAC Europe

May 2026

Monthly Analysis









Anti-Christian Hate Crimes in Europe

OIDAC Europe, May 2026

1. Summary

During the month of May 2026, the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe (OIDAC Europe) **recorded 37 anti-Christian hate crimes** targeting Christian places of worship, religious symbols, religious spaces, Christian institutions, and Christian individuals.

The recorded hate crimes comprise **13 arson-related attacks**, **10 cases of vandalism**, **3 cases of desecration**, **3 cases of physical violence**, **3 thefts targeting religious objects**, 3 cases of vandalism and violence, 1 case of incitement, and 1 disruption of worship. Particularly serious incidents included the violent attack on a nun in Poland, the assault on Catholic fraternity students in Austria, the firing of steel and plastic balls at a church during Mass in Germany, and several arson or suspected arson attacks in Germany, France, Italy, Ireland, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

The highest numbers were recorded in **Germany (10)**, **Italy (8)**, and **France (8)**. Further incidents were recorded in **Poland (3)**, **Ireland (2), Austria (1), Portugal (1), Spain (1), Greece (1), the United Kingdom (1)**, and **Bosnia and Herzegovina (1).**

In addition, OIDAC Europe recorded a considerable number of further incidents affecting churches and Christian property whose anti-Christian bias could not be clearly established and which were therefore not included in the statistical total. These included 8 thefts targeting religious objects, 27 other thefts, 24 break-ins or attempted break-ins, 14 cases of vandalism, damage, or graffiti, and **9 fires under investigation** or with unclear causes.

In May 2026, figures[1] submitted to the Greek Parliament by the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports indicated that **4,409 incidents involving Orthodox Church properties** were recorded in Greece between **2015 and 2024**, accounting for 96.05% of all recorded incidents involving religious sites in the country. The data cover attacks, vandalism, thefts, desecrations, burglaries, and other incidents affecting religious properties.

2. Trends: Highest Number of Recorded Arson-Related Attacks in 2026

The most striking feature of the May 2026 dataset is the high number of arson-related attacks. With **13 recorded arson-related incidents**, May represents the **highest monthly figure recorded so far in 2026**. Arson-related attacks were recorded across several countries, with Germany accounting for four cases, Italy for four cases, and France for three cases. Additional incidents were recorded in Ireland and the United Kingdom. The incidents ranged from fires deliberately set inside churches and parish buildings to attacks targeting religious objects and church interiors. In Genoa, Italy, anti-clerical graffiti on the Basilica of San Siro included calls to "burn churches". This

[1] https://spzh.eu/en/news/92944-in-greece-over-4-000-attacks-on-orthodox-churches-recorded-in-10-years

continued prevalence of fire-setting against Christian sites remains one of the most serious patterns documented during the year.

A second notable trend was the continued occurrence of **incidents involving direct violence, intimidation, or serious danger to persons**. In Austria, two Catholic fraternity students were assaulted and seriously injured by alleged left-wing extremists in Innsbruck. In Poland, a nun was attacked, insulted, and had a cross torn from her neck. In Germany, unknown perpetrators fired steel balls at the Holy Spirit Church in Hanau while approximately 200 worshippers were attending Mass inside the building, causing windows to shatter. These incidents illustrate that anti-Christian hostility continues to extend beyond property damage.

A recent case in Leipzig, Germany, revealted the persistence of **repeated and sustained** campaigns targeting Christian institutions. A **Christian-run café in Leipzig** had to close after its operators reported **26 attacks over a period of two and a half years**, including repeated vandalism, graffiti attacks, damage caused by butyric acid, and other forms of harassment. According to the operators, the attacks were carried out by individuals associated with the far-left extremist scene and ultimately made the continued operation of the café financially impossible. The case illustrates how repeated acts of hostility can cumulatively force Christian institutions to cease their activities.

3. Hate Crimes by Countries

Germany

A total of **10 anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded in Germany** in May 2026, including 4 arson-related attacks[2], 2 cases of vandalism[3], 1 case of desecration[4], 1 theft targeting religious objects[5], and 2 cases involving vandalism and violence[6].

These included arson-related attacks in Marbach, Munich, Delmenhorst, and Gladbeck; desecration in Knittelsheim, where consecrated hosts were scattered across the altar; and **satanic graffiti** at the Barbara Chapel in Penzberg. In Bad Oeynhausen, church bells and live power lines were deliberately damaged, creating **potential physical harm**. In Hanau, **steel balls were fired at a church during Mass** while approximately 200 worshippers were inside the building. In Leipzig, a Christian-run café had to **close down after its operators reported 26 attacks** over a period of two and a half years, including vandalism, graffiti, and other forms of harassment.

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[2] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11511, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11503, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11431, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11458

[3] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11394, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11455

[4] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11430

[5] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11436

[6] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11525, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11442

Germany also recorded numerous additional non-counted thefts, break-ins, damage incidents, and fires under investigation.

Italy

A total of **8 anti-Christian hate crimes** were recorded in Italy in May 2026, including 2 arson-related attacks[7], 4 cases of vandalism[8], 1 case of desecration[9], 1 case of incitement.[10]

These included the desecration of the parish of San Paolo della Croce in Rome, and the vandalism of the Church of Sant'Angelo Magno in Ascoli Piceno, **where a crucifix, sacred statues, and a seventeenth-century organ were destroyed**. Genoa, the Basilica of San Siro was defaced with anticlerical and anarchist graffiti, including **calls to burn churches.**

Italy also recorded several additional thefts, break-ins, damage cases, and fires under investigation. Mental-health-related incidents in Padua and Rovato were recorded but those incidents were not counted as anti-Christian hate crimes due to uncertain bias.

France

A total of **8 anti-Christian hate crimes** were recorded in France in May 2026, including 3 arson-related attacks[11], 2 cases of vandalism[12], 1 case of desecration[13], and 2 thefts targeting religious objects[14].

In Pont-du-Casse near Agen, the Church of Saint-Pierre-ès-Liens was ransacked during Pentecost. In Paris, a **crucifix was broken** and a figure of Christ stolen from Saint-Germain-des-Prés. In South Gironde, several churches were targeted in a wave of burglaries, altar desecration, and tabernacle profanation. In Saint-Martin-la-Sauveté, Christian statues were torn from graves, while in Poleymieux-au-Mont-d'Or near Lyon, a **statue of Mary holding the infant Jesus was beheaded**. France also recorded several arson-related incidents, including **suspected arson at a parish hall** in Tergnier while **children were inside** and an arson attack at the Church of Notre-Dame de l'Assomption in Lentigny.

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[7] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11506, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11369
[8] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11375, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11420, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11499, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11452
[9] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11505
[10] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11408
[11] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11405, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11471, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11461
[12] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11491, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11491
[13] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11473
[14] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11425, https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11480

Poland

A total of **3 anti-Christian hate crimes** were recorded in Poland in May 2026, including 1 arson-related attack[15], 1 case of physical violence[16], and 1 case of vandalism[17].

In Bielsk Podlaski, a **nun was assaulted** at a bus stop, insulted, and had a **cross torn from her neck**. In Krosno, a chapel was desecrated and an **attempted arson** damaged the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, several chapels were vandalised with physical damage and **satanic inscriptions**.

Additional Significant Cases

In Austria, two **Catholic fraternity students were seriously injured** in an attack in Innsbruck[18]. Ireland two churches were affected by vandalism and an **arson-related attack**.[19] In Spain, the Church of the Verge de la Pau in Òdena was vandalised, its altar damaged, a **Bible page burned**, and equipment stolen[20]. In Portugal, a **priest was held captive** for around 90 minutes during a robbery at a church and parish house in Cantanhede.[21] In In Greece, a **shotgun attack** damaged a historic church bell tower in Chania.[22] In the United Kingdom, police launched an **arson investigation** after fires were discovered inside a disused church in Warrington.[23] In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbian Orthodox Church of St George in Tuzla was again **vandalised** after forced entry.[24]

4. Conclusion

The May 2026 data show that anti-Christian hate crimes continued to affect churches, Christian institutions, clergy, religious persons, and lay Christians across Europe.

The most notable development was the **exceptionally high number of arson-related incidents**. With 13 recorded cases, May represents the **highest monthly figure documented by OIDAC Europe so far in 2026**. These incidents were reported across multiple countries and included attacks on churches, chapels, parish buildings, and other Christian property.

The incidents recorded this month also illustrate that anti-Christian hostility is not limited to attacks against church buildings. Several cases targeted Christian individuals, religious communities, and organisations directly, demonstrating that **visible expressions of Christian faith** and Christian presence in public life can themselves become **targets of aggression** or intimidation.

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[15] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11485,
[16] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11414
[17] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11378
[18] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11484
[19] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11494,
https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11432
[20] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11475
[21] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11514
[22] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11406
[23] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11387
[24] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11457

Particularly noteworthy was the **closure of a Christian-run café in Leipzig** after its operators reported **26 attacks over a period of two and a half years**, including vandalism, graffiti, and other forms of harassment. While the case is exceptional in its intensity, it reflects a broader pattern repeatedly documented by OIDAC Europe in recent years, namely the **pressure faced by Christian individuals and organisations** that publicly uphold **traditional Christian beliefs and values**. It also demonstrates that sustained hostility can have consequences extending beyond physical damage, potentially forcing Christian organisations to dis**continue charitable, educational, or community projects** and thereby reducing their presence in public life.

The figures presented in this report reflect only documented cases known to OIDAC Europe and therefore cannot capture the full extent of anti-Christian hostility in Europe. Nevertheless, the incidents recorded during May 2026 point to a continuing pattern of attacks affecting Christian places of worship, religious symbols, and Christian organisations across a broad range of European countries.