





OIDAC Europe

July 2026

Monthly Analysis



1. Summary

During July 2026, the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe (OIDAC Europe) recorded **40 anti-Christian hate crimes** targeting Christian places of worship, religious symbols, cemeteries, clergy, worshippers, Christian converts, and other Christian individuals.

The recorded incidents comprise **18 cases of vandalism**, **8 arson-related attacks**, **7 cases of desecration**, **2 cases of physical violence**, **2 cases involving threats**, 2 thefts targeting religious objects, and 1 case involving vandalism combined with violence.

Particularly serious incidents included an **ISIS-inspired plan to carry out an arson attack** against a Christian church in **Hamm**, Germany; the assault of a **Christian asylum seeker in Regensburg** after being confronted about wearing a Christian cross; the **deliberate burning of a liturgical book** inside Holy Cross Church in Kelheim; and the **desecration of Saint-Symphorien Church near Tours**, where consecrated hosts were scattered on the floor and excrement was left inside the church. In Tramore, Ireland, a woman was stabbed and injured while praying before Mass, although the motive remains unconfirmed and criminal proceedings are ongoing.

The highest number of recorded incidents occurred in **Germany (15),** followed by **France (10), Italy (5), Poland (2),** and **Austria (1), Denmark (1), Finland (1)** and **Ireland (1).** Outside the European Union, incidents were recorded in the **United Kingdom (3)** and **Turkey (1).**

In addition to the **8 recorded arson-related hate crimes**, OIDAC Europe documented **6 further fires affecting churches** or Christian property whose causes remained under investigation and were therefore not included in the statistical total.

2. Trends: Continued High Number of Recorded Cases, Vandalism Most Prevalent

With 40 recorded anti-Christian hate crimes, July continued the consistently high level of incidents documented throughout 2026. The most notable development in July was the high number of recorded **vandalism cases**, with **18 recorded cases, doubling compared with June**. Churches, religious monuments, crosses, cemeteries, church interiors and liturgical furnishings were targeted, with several attacks resulting in church closures, restricted opening hours or the relocation of religious services.

By contrast, **fewer arson-related attacks** were recorded than in June, although the incidents that occurred remained among the **most serious of the month**. They included repeated fires inside churches, attempted arson attacks and the burning of

liturgical items. Furthermore, the disclosure of an **ISIS-inspired plot for an arson attack** on a Christian church in Germany raised concerns.

July also continued the pattern of **repeated targeting of churches** observed in previous months. Several congregations experienced repeated vandalism or multiple attacks within a short period, requiring increased security measures and **affecting the normal exercise of religious life.**

A further noteworthy development concerned attacks against Christian individuals. The assault on a **Christian asylum seeker in Regensburg** highlighted a form of anti-Christian hostility that remains comparatively **under-reported**. The case also raised wider concerns regarding the **recognition of religious motives** in official assessments, as the reported attack began after the victim was confronted about wearing a Christian cross but was nevertheless described by the authorities as only secondarily religious. The incident illustrates both the particular vulnerability of Christian asylum seekers and the importance of adequate religious literacy when identifying and recording anti-Christian hate crimes. The **stabbing during prayer in Tramore**, Ireland, was another worrying attack although the motive remains under investigation as criminal proceedings are ongoing.

3. Hate Crimes by Countries

Germany

A total of 15 anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded in Germany, including 7 cases of vandalism, 3 cases of desecration, 3 arson-related attacks, 1 case involving threats, and 1 case of physical violence.

Particularly serious was the disclosure that a teenager in Hamm had allegedly **planned** an **ISIS-inspired arson attack** against an independent Christian church after scouting it as a target.[1]

Three **arson-related attacks** were recorded. In **Kelheim**, unknown perpetrators **set fire to a liturgical book** inside Holy Cross Church.[2] In **Wolfegg-Molpertshaus,** seat cushions inside a chapel were deliberately set alight.[3] Repeated suspected arson inside St John the Baptist Church in **Ichenhausen** prompted the installation of surveillance cameras.[4]

[1] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11723
[2] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11716
[3] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11669
[4] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11662

Several churches were repeatedly **vandalised** or temporarily closed following attacks. Incidents affected churches in **Bad Dürrheim**[5], **Weil am Rhein**[6], **Rheine-Hauenhorst**[7], **Amerang**[8], **Stolberg-Zweifall**[9], **Neuenkirchen**[10] and **Hohenwarthe**[11].

Desecration incidents included **dog faeces deliberately placed before the altar** of a church in Wörth am Rhein[12], **urine poured into the holy water font** in Abenheim[13], and the **desecration of the altar** of St Martinus Church in Neuss-Holzheim during the theft of relics and a Missal[14].

Reports on an **assault on a Christian asylum seeker in Regensburg**[15] after he was confronted about wearing a cross is particularly noteworthy. Besides illustrating the **vulnerability** of Christian converts and asylum seekers, the case has prompted discussion about whether the **religious dimension** of such attacks is sufficiently recognised in official hate-crime assessments.

Germany also recorded approximately 12 further thefts and break-ins, numerous incidents of property damage that were not included because anti-Christian bias could not be clearly established. One church fire in Essen remains under investigation and a separate arson attack against the Syrian Orthodox Church in Leimen was likewise not included after prosecutors stated that the suspect suffered from severe mental illness.

France

A total of 10 anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded in France, including 3 arson-related attacks, 3 cases of vandalism, 3 cases of desecration, and 1 case involving threats.

One of the most serious incidents involved the **desecration of Saint-Symphorien Church** near **Tours**, where consecrated hosts were scattered on the floor and **excrement** was left inside the church[16], and the anarchist-related threat ***"The only church that illuminates is the one that burns"*** discovered inside Sancta Maria in Albis Church in Breil-sur-Roya[17].

[5] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11715
[6] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11756
[7] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11709
[8] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11702
[9] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11679
[10] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11700
[11] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11677
[12] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11734
[13] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11733
[14] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11776
[15] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11711
[16] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11753
[17] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11738

Three arson-related attacks were recorded, affecting Saint-Éloi Protestant Church in **Rouen**[18], Notre-Dame Church in **Le Relecq-Kerhuon**[19], and Saint-Pancrace Chapel in **La Palme**[20].

Further incidents included repeated vandalism affecting churches and cemeteries in **Écommoy**[21], **Évreux**[22], **Lille**[23] and **Plan-de-la-Tour**[24] and the desecration of Saint-Pierre Church in **Nevers**, where tabernacles were damaged and a historic painting was slashed[25].

France also recorded approximately six further thefts and break-ins affecting churches that were not included because anti-Christian bias could not be established.

An additional important incident occurred at **Saint-Étienne Church in Mulhouse**, where extensive damage was caused to the altar cross and several confessionals. The incident was, however, not included after reports indicated that the suspect had been admitted for psychiatric treatment.

Italy

A total of 5 anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded in Italy, including 3 cases of vandalism, 1 case of desecration, and 1 theft targeting religious objects.

Incidents included the **vandalism** of San Giuseppe Church in **Saronno**[26], the vandalism of the bust of Pope John XXIII in **Venetico**[27], and damage to liturgical furnishings together with an attempted opening of the tabernacle in **Ca' Cappellino**[28].

A tabernacle containing consecrated hosts was stolen from the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in **Porto Sant'Elpidio**[29], while another incident involved the theft of eleven crucifixes from a church in **Catania**[30].

Italy also recorded approximately ten further thefts and break-ins affecting churches and religious property, including the theft of a historic church bell in Arquà Polesine, that were not included because anti-Christian bias could not be established. A major fire affecting the Mother Church of Santa Maria Assunta in Torchiarolo remains under investigation.

[18] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11721
[19] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11672
[20] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11742
[21] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11739
[22] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11782
[23] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11667
[24] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11746
[25] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11759
[26] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11763
[27] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11731
[28] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11666
[29] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11691
[30] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11747

Poland

In Poland, two anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded: The vandalism of a **roadside shrine near Brzyno** before removing a statue of the Virgin Mary[31] and an incident where **anti-Christian graffiti** was sprayed on a church and **damage** was caused to a parish cemetery and memorials[32].

Austria

One anti-Christian hate crime was recorded in **Austria**, where historic **religious statues** at St Oswald Parish Church in Deutschlandsberg were deliberately destroyed.[33]

During the month of July, the Austrian **Ministry of Interior** also published its annual Hate Crime Report[34] for the year 2025, which showed a **20% increase in anti-Christian hate crime** compared to the previous year, with **vandalism** and **dangerous threats** recorded among the most frequent forms of anti-Christian hate crime.

Additional incidents in EU countries

One particularly severe incident was recorded in **Ireland**. A woman was **seriously injured in a knife attack while praying** before Mass at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Tramore[35]. The accused subsequently declined a psychiatric evaluation. Criminal proceedings remain ongoing and, at the time of writing, the motive has not yet been established.

Furthermore, one incident was recorded in **Finland**, where **suspected arson caused extensive damage** to the parish building of Munkshöjden Church in Helsinki[36]. In **Denmark**, a cross and other items were stolen from St Nikolai Church in Vejle[37].

Further incidents outside the European Union

United Kingdom

A total of 3 anti-Christian hate crimes were recorded in the United Kingdom, comprising 1 arson-related attack, 1 case of vandalism, and 1 case involving vandalism combined with violence.

In **Stoke-on-Trent**, a deliberately started fire caused extensive damage to the former St Bernadette's Church[38]. In **Cornwall**, repeated acts of vandalism targeting churches in Mevagissey led St Peter's Church to suspend its long-standing open-door policy[39]. In

[31] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11722
[32] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11713
[33] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11704
[34] https://www.bmi.gv.at/408/projekt/start.html
[35] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11720
[36] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11693
[37] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11703
[38] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11742
[39] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11686

Sheerness, repeated suspected catapult attacks against a church damaged windows and created safety concerns, forcing the congregation to relocate Sunday services to a local café[40].

In Leicester, a **major fire partly destroyed the historic St Andrew's Anglican Church**. The cause remained under investigation and the incident was therefore not included. A further church fire in Southgate also remained under investigation.

The United Kingdom also recorded three further thefts and break-ins affecting churches that were not included because anti-Christian bias could not be established.

Turkey

In Istanbul, the cemetery of the **Armenian Surp Karapet Church** was vandalised[41] shortly before the reconsecration of the church, prompting renewed concerns within the local Christian community.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In **Medjugorje**, a Marian statue on Apparition Hill was defaced with a blasphemous inscription, the altar of St James' Church was set on fire, and hostile messages directed against the Medjugorje seers were displayed.[42] Although the incident had a significant impact on one of Europe's best-known pilgrimage sites, it is currently not included in the statistical total because the available information about the perpetrator does not allow the anti-Christian bias motive to be established with sufficient certainty.

4. Conclusion

The 40 anti-Christian hate crimes recorded during July 2026 confirm the continued high level of anti-Christian hostility documented throughout the first seven months of the year. The month was characterised above all by a large number of attacks targeting **churches**, **religious symbols** and **Christian property**, while also including several serious incidents involving **violence**, **terrorist threats**, **arson** and **desecration**.

The most striking development was the marked **increase in recorded vandalism**, which frequently resulted in the temporary closure of churches, the relocation of religious services, or additional security measures. At the same time, several of the month's most **serious incidents**—including the planned ISIS-inspired plot against a Christian church in Germany, the stabbing during prayer in Ireland—demonstrate that anti-Christian hostility continues to manifest itself in forms extending well beyond property damage.

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[40] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11757
[41] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11725
[42] https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=11751

The **assault on the Christian asylum seeker in Regensburg** deserves particular attention. Besides highlighting the vulnerability of **Christian migrants and converts from Islam**, the case raises broader questions about the recognition of religious motives in official investigations. Ensuring that the **religious dimension of attacks is correctly identified** is important both for effective victim protection and for the reliable recording of anti-Christian hate crime.

Repeated attacks against individual churches also remained a defining feature of the July dataset. Congregations in Germany, France and the United Kingdom reported **repeated vandalism that disrupted religious life**, restricted access to churches and required additional protective measures, illustrating the cumulative impact that repeated incidents can have on local Christian communities.

As in previous reporting periods, the figures presented reflect **only incidents documented by OIDAC Europe** at the **time of the reporting** and therefore cannot capture the full extent of anti-Christian hostility in Europe. Nevertheless, the July data continue to demonstrate a persistent pattern of attacks affecting Christian places of worship, religious symbols, Christian communities and visible expressions of the Christian faith across Europe.