Figures and Trends:

Anti-Christian Violence and Discrimination in Europe

OIDAC Europe

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1. Anti-Christian Hate Crimes in Europe: 2024 Figures and Background

In its *Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians in Europe Report 2025* OIDAC Europe identified **2,211 anti-Christian hate crimes** in Europe in 2024. This total figure results from triangulating **official police statistics, OSCE/ODIHR data**, and **OIDAC's independent research**, while avoiding double counting by choosing the most accurate data for every country. (See Annex 1 for the numbers for all countries.)

While the majority of attacks were directed against Christian churches and religious sites, total of **274 personal attacks** (again avoiding double counting), including threats and physical violence, were recorded across Europe. (See Annex 2 for all countries.)

The countries, which ranked highest in total numbers (police / civil society data) were **France** (770/139), the **United Kingdom** (502/47), **Germany** (337/134), **Austria** (116/26), **Spain** (0/91), **Italy** (0/86)**, Poland** (1/78) and **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (21/23).

Country	Police Data	Civil Society Data
France	770	139
United Kingdom*	502	47
Germany	337	134
Austria	116	26
Spain	-	91
Italy	-	86
Poland	1	78
Bosnia and Herzegovina	21	23

1.1. Country comparisons and under-reporting

As **police recording methodologies vary considerably** across European countries, data collected by civil society organisations should be understood as an indicator of potential dark figures. Comparative examples from France, the United Kingdom, and Austria illustrate that, where **police recording** systems are relatively **well developed**, law-enforcement authorities register between **five and ten times as many incidents** as civil society organisations. This discrepancy is largely attributable to the police's exclusive access to criminal records and official complaint data.

By contrast, cases such as **Germany, Poland, Italy, Spain**, and **Bosnia and Herzegovina** demonstrate that where police statistics are weak, inconsistent, or altogether absent, **civil society data** may approach or even **exceed official figures**. This pattern strongly suggests that the true number of anti-Christian hate crimes in these countries—if systematically and reliably recorded by law-enforcement authorities—would be significantly higher than what is currently reflected in official statistics.

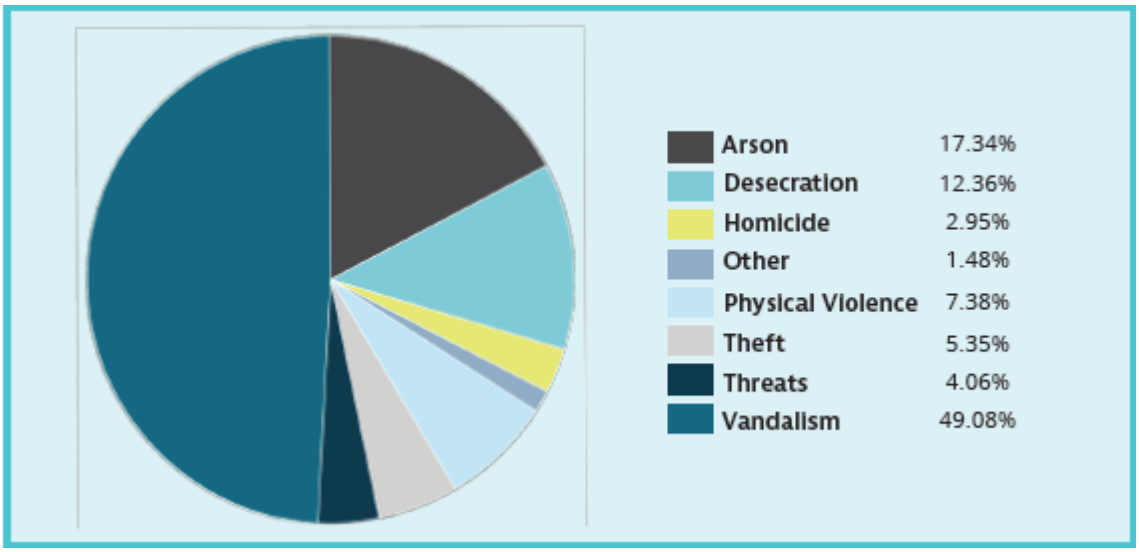
This under-recording of anti-Christian hate crimes in Europe is also confirmed by recent opinion polls. In Poland, a recent survey by the statistical institute ISKK[1] showed that **49.7% of surveyed priests** had **experienced aggression** in the past year, yet **over 80% did not report** the incidents to the police. If extrapolated nationwide, this would suggest that as many as 14,000 priests may have experienced aggression in Poland alone within the last 12 months.

Likewise, a survey by the *Observatory for Religious Freedom and Conscience in Spain*[2] among Spanish Catholic priests and found that 67% of them had experienced insults or mockery, and 48% reported vandalism of church property, indicating that actual numbers on church vandalism are significantly higher than reported cases.

1.2. Kinds of Incidents

OIDAC Europe **independently** recorded **516 anti-Christian hate crimes** in Europe in 2024. Those cases were submitted to the OSCE and are integrated into the total number of incidents.

Of the 516 anti-Christian hate crimes documented by OIDAC Europe, the most frequent form of violence was **vandalism (50%)**, followed by **arson attacks (15%)**, acts of **desecration (13%)**, **physical assaults (7.5%)**, **theft of religious objects (5.5%)**, and **threats (4%)**. OIDAC Europe also recorded **12 terrorism-related incidents**—including cases in Russia and Turkey—most of which were fortunately prevented by national security services. These figures do not include monetary theft and break-ins at religious sites, which amounted to nearly 1,000 additional cases (see Annex 3 Excel Spreadsheet).



[1] Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego (2025): "RAPORT ISSK: Niebezpieczna misja? Agresja wobec osób duchownych, miejsc i obiektów kultu w Polsce", URL: https://iskk.pl/raport-iskk-niebezpieczna-misja-agresja-wobec-osob-duchownych-miejsc-i-obiektow-kultu-w-polsce/, last visit: 28.10.2025.

[2] Observatorio para la libertad religiosa y de conciencia (2025): "Discriminación y ataques a sacerdotes católicos", URL: https://libertadreligiosa.es/discriminacion-y-ataques-a-sacerdotes-catolicos/, last visit: 28.10.2025.

1.3. Perpetrators and Motives

Identifying the motives and perpetrators behind anti-Christian hate crimes remains challenging, as offenders are often not apprehended. As a result, only **limited information** is available regarding the motives behind most incidents.

Nevertheless, experts and affected communities frequently cite **anti-clericalism**, **religious intolerance**[3], **religious extremism**[4], negative **media** portrayals, and broader **political or social tensions**[5] as key drivers. Among the 93 cases documented by OIDAC Europe in which the perpetrators' motives or affiliations could be established, the most common were linked to radical **Islamist ideology (35)**, radical **left-wing extremism (19)**, radical **right-wing ideology (7)**, and other **political motives (11)**. Additionally, 15 incidents featured satanic symbols or references.

2. Trends 2023-2024 Hate Crime Numbers

The slight decrease of the total number of **2,444 in 2023** to **2,211 in 2024** – obtained by OIDAC Europe with the same methodology of combining police and civil society data – appears to be largely linked to **lower figures reported by UK police**, which excluded cases from London in its 2024 statistics. A modest decline in recorded incidents in **France** also contributed to the overall drop. However, figures from the first half of 2025 showed a renewed increase in incidents in France.

Despite the general decrease, **personal attacks rose** from 232 in 2023 to 274 in 2024—even though no official data on personal attacks was available from France and the UK for 2024. When it comes to discrimination and religious freedom restrictions, pressure on Christians who voice publicly express their believes seems to be on the rise.

3. Discrimination and Religious Freedom Restrictions

Beyond hate crimes, OIDAC Europe identified numerous **cases of legal and social restrictions** affecting Christians across Europe in 2024–2025 as well as indications for growing hostile attitudes towards Christians in the society.

3.1. Legal Developments

In the past years, a growing number of individuals have faced legal prosecution for peacefully expressing their Christian faith. In the UK, several individuals were prosecuted under "buffer zone" laws for **prayer near abortion facilities**. In one case,

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[3] Patrimoine Religieux (2024): "Incendies dans les églises", URL: https://www.patrimoine-religieux.fr/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Incendies-dans-les-eglises-CD.pdf, last visit: 28.10.2025.

[4] Die Tagespost (2025): "Stärkerer Kirchenvandalismus seit Flüchtlingskrise? DBK-Sprecher widerspricht", URL: https://www.die-tagespost.de/kirche/aktuell/staerkerer-kirchenvandalismus-seit-fluechtlingskrise-dbk-sprecher-widerspricht-art-266624, last visit: 28.10.2025.

[5] Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego (2025): "RAPORT ISSK: Niebezpieczna misja? Agresja wobec osób duchownych, miejsc i obiektów kultu w Polsce", URL: https://iskk.pl/raport-iskk-niebezpieczna-misja-agresja-wobec-osob-duchownych-miejsc-i-obiektow-kultu-w-polsce, last visit: 28.10.2025.

UK army veteran **Adam Smith-Connor** was convicted by a British court because his head was slightly bowed in **silent prayer** while he stood within 100 metres of a clinic.

In Finland, the Supreme Court heard the case of MP **Päivi Räsänen** in October 2025, prosecuted for alleged "hate speech" after **quoting a Bible verse** in 2019 to question her church's stance on Pride events.

A growing number of Christian educators are reporting discrimination or legal challenges. In **February 2025**, the UK Court of Appeal ruled in favour of **Kristie Higgs**, a Christian teacher dismissed for expressing concerns about sex education content. While the Court reaffirmed that **traditional Christian views on marriage and sexuality**—such as opposition to transgender ideology, gender fluidity, and the redefinition of marriage— **are legally protected beliefs**, similar cases remain pending across Europe.

Other cases show that governments sometimes **intervene even in internal church practices** when these do not align with postmodern secular norms regarding gender or inclusivity. The Spanish Constitutional Court condemned the **male-only religious brotherhood** *Real y Venerable Esclavitud del Santísimo Cristo de La Laguna* in Tenerife for **refusing to admit a woman as a member**, claiming that the association's internal statutes allowing only men as members violate the Spanish Constitution. This decision could have far-reaching implications for Christian churches across Spain that maintain traditional practices of male-only priesthood or leadership.

The Spanish Ministry of Equality has also launched an investigation against seven Catholic dioceses over alleged **breaches of the Trans Equality Law** when offering **pastoral care**. In September 2025, the Spanish public prosecutor even opened a preliminary investigation into **Bishop José Ignacio Munilla** of Orihuela-Alicante, following a radio interview in which he criticised a draft law that sought to criminalise so-called "conversion therapies." Munilla warned that, because of its extremely broad wording and the absence of clear legal criteria, the bill—which outlawed any action aimed at "modifying" a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, even with their consent—would risk criminalising therapists and Christian counsellors who accompany individuals experiencing same-sex attraction and support them in their personal struggles. In a paradoxical confirmation of his concerns, he now finds himself before the courts merely for voicing this warning.

In a similar case the Christian singer and charity worker **Matthew Grech** is facing court trial in Malta being charged with promoting **"conversion practices"** during a TV interview in which he **shared his personal journey** of **leaving a homosexual lifestyle and embracing evangelical Christianity**. Although Grech spoke only about his own experience and how faith shaped his views, and did not promote therapy of any kind, he now faces over two years of legal proceedings and a possible five-month prison sentence.

In a particularly striking parental rights case, Spain's Constitutional Court rejected the appeal of an evangelical father seeking to share his religious beliefs with his son. The Court upheld earlier rulings that **prohibited** him from **taking the child to church** or **reading the Bible** with him, grating the secular mother exclusive authority over the child's religious upbringing until the age of twelve, thereby effectively **privileging a secular moral framework** over a religious one for the formative years of the child.

3.2. Discrimination and indications for societal pressure

While only a limited number of Christian individuals and church communities across Europe are faced with legal proceedings for expressing their Christian faith, there is a widespread perception among Christians and in the wider society that hostility towards Christianity is becoming more widespread.

According to a representative survey[6] from **Germany**, 36.5% of the general population, **48.6%** of respondents **under 30** years and **65.8%** of **Evangelical Christians** said **hostile attitudes towards Christians are widespread** in Germany.

Additionally, **75.5%** of all respondents said people in Germany often refrain from expressing their opinions out of fear of negative consequences. This suggests a **rising atmosphere of self-censorship**, which may disproportionately affect Christians.[7]

According to the report *The Cost of Keeping the Faith*[8] from the **UK, 56% of Christian respondents** and 61% of those under 35 years reported having experienced **hostility or ridicule** for expressing religious beliefs and **22%** of those at the age of professional activity reported having **been disadvantaged at work** due to religious beliefs.

A survey of the **Polish** ISKK[9] among Catholic priests found that **85.9%** said **aggression towards clergy has increased** over the past decade.

While these forms of social hostilities remain hard to measure and might not always reach the threshold of criminal violence, the **personal experiences of Christians** across Europe confirm the problem of **growing hostilities** towards Christians and intolerance towards any **expressions of biblical teaching** which is not aligned with postmodern secular ethics.

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[6] INSA Consulere, Survey conducted by INSA Consulere, 25.04 - 28.04.2025.

[7] Voice for Justice UK (2024): "The Costs of Keeping the Faith", URL: https://ijrf.org/index.php/home/article/view/362/372, last visit: 28.10.2025.

[8] Voice for Justice UK (2024): "The Costs of Keeping the Faith", URL: https://vfjuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/The-Costs-of-Keeping-the-Faith-Report.pdf, last visit: 28.10.2025.

[9] Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego (2025): "RAPORT ISSK: Niebezpieczna misja? Agresja wobec osób duchownych, miejsc i obiektów kultu w Polsce", URL: https://iskk.pl/raport-iskk-niebezpieczna-misja-agresja-wobec-osob-duchownych-miejsc-i-obiektow-kultu-w-polsce/, last visit: 28.10.2025.

Appendix 1-2 – Anti-Christian Hate Crimes Police and Civil Society by Country

Numbers per Country		
Country	**Police**	**Civil Society**
Armenia		1
Austria	116	26
Azerbaijan		3
Belarus		2
Belgium	2	7
Bosnia and Herz	21	23
Bulgaria		2
Croatia		6
Cyprus		1
Czech		2
Denmark	15	12
Europe		1
Finland	23	2
France	770	139
Georgia		6
Germany	337	134
Greece		5
Iceland	1	1
Ireland		8
Italy		86
Kosovo		3
Latvia		13
Lithuania		4
Montenegro		1
Netherlands		13
North Macedonia		2
Norway		4
Poland	1	79
Portugal		2
Russia		8
Romania	6	
Serbia	1	5
Slovakia		4
Slovenia		1
Spain		91
Sweden		11
Switzerland		7
Turkey		17
Ukraine		23
United Kingdom	502	47
	1795	**802**

(Total without avoiding potential double counting = **2,597**)

Total Number per Country	
Country	**Incidents***
Armenia	1
Austria	116
Azerbaijan	3
Belarus	2
Belgium	7
Bosnia and Herz	23
Bulgaria	2
Croatia	6
Cyprus	1
Czech	2
Denmark	15
Europe	1
Finland	23
France	770
Georgia	6
Germany	337
Greece	5
Iceland	1
Ireland	8
Italy	86
Kosovo	3
Latvia	13
Lithuania	4
Montenegro	1
Netherlands	13
North Macedonia	2
Norway	4
Poland	79
Portugal	2
Russia	8
Romania	6
Serbia	5
Slovakia	4
Slovenia	1
Spain	91
Sweden	11
Switzerland	7
Turkey	17
Ukraine	23
United Kingdom	502
total	**2211**

*Colour Coding:

Police Data (not submitted to OSCE)
OSCE Police Data
OSCE NGO Data, including OIDAC Europe
OIDAC Europe Data only

Appendix 1-2 – Anti-Christian Hate Crimes Police and Civil Society by Country

Numbers on Attacks on Persons (physical / threats)			
Attacks on Persons	**Police**	**Civil Society**	**Integrated Total**
Austria	24	13	24
Armenia		1	1
Azerbaijan			1
Belgium	0	1	1
Belarus			
Bosnia and Herz	14	2	14
Croatia		0	0
Cyprus			
Czech		2	2
Denmark	2	8	8
Estonia			
Finland	20	0	20
France		43	43
Georgia		5	5
Germany	48	4	48
Greece		0	0
Hungary			0
Ireland		1	1
Italy		12	12
Iceland		0	0
Kosovo			0
Latvia		1	1
Lithuania		0	0
Lichtenstein			
Luxemburg			
Malta			
Moldova			
Monaco			
Montenegro		1	1
Netherlands		4	4
North Macedonia		0	0
Norway		2	2
Poland	0	14	14
Portugal		0	0
Romania	0		0
Serbia		3	3
Slovakia		4	4
Spain		25	25
Sweden		4	4
Switzerland		2	2
Turkey		7	7
Ukraine		19	19
United Kingdom		8	8
TOTAL	186	108	**274**

(total without avoiding double counting = **294**)