

## Report Finds Large Number of Cases of Intolerance and Legal Restrictions Affecting Christians in Europe



Vienna / European Union, May 22, 2013. The Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians releases 41 examples of national laws with adverse effects on Christians in more than 15 European Countries. Additionally, 169 cases of intolerance against Christians in the EU – area in 2012 are portrayed.

The report was presented on May 21 at an OSCE High Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-discrimination held in Tirana, Albania, in a keynote speech delivered by the Observatory's director Dr. Gudrun Kugler.

[Read the full speech here](#)

[The report](#) has 69 pages and contains two parts: First, legal restrictions affecting Christians in Europe and secondly, the most striking cases of intolerance and discrimination throughout Europe in the year 2012.

The basis of the research for the first part was an expert survey the Observatory conducted in over 30 countries in 2012.

Problems were highlighted especially in these areas:

- Limiting Conscientious Objection (especially in: Belgium, France, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Ireland);
- Curbing Free Speech by Hate Speech Legislation (France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom);
- Violations of Freedom of Assembly and Association (Germany, France, Netherlands, Austria, and Spain),
- Discriminatory Equality Policies (EU, United Kingdom, Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands, and Spain) and
- Limiting Parental Rights (Belgium, France, Germany, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden).

UK based former politician Ann Widdecomb recently said: „If the small beginnings are not resisted then they grow into something bigger.“

Dr. Gudrun Kugler: „I am glad that finally, the problem of intolerance against Christians in Europe comes to light: The Council of Europe, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the European Institutions have begun to work on it.“



Kugler continues: „Sometimes I get asked, how can a majority be discriminated against? Well, it is not the nominal Christian who is fully aligned to society's mainstream, who suffers discrimination. It is those who strive to live according to the high ethical demands of Christianity, who experience a clash. Those are not the majority. And even if they were: History has shown that a leading minority can discriminate against a peaceful majority, as we saw in the striking example of apartheid.“

The Observatory recommends to policy makers to look for „reasonable accommodation“ when it comes to the clash between people of faith and a mainstream which seems to be at unease with religion. It calls upon countries to disaggregate data also with a view to hate crimes against Christianity.

[Press Kit](#) (Fotos; Logo; CV)

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## Interesting Quotes

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