OSCE ODIHR
HATE CRIME REPORTING

Information contained in this report was compiled as part of ODIHR's 2024 Hate Crime Report.
For more information, including on previous years' reporting, please visit: hatecrime.osce.org/bulgaria

For more information about ODIHR's Hate Crime Report, visit: hatecrime.osce.org/our-methodology

2024

Summary

Bulgaria regularly reports hate crime data to ODIHR. Bulgaria implemented ODIHR's Training Against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) programme from 2012 until 2017. Bulgaria also took part in ODIHR's project on "Building a Comprehensive Criminal Justice Response to Hate Crime", helping to develop a joint training programme for police and prosecutors that was piloted in the country. Bulgaria has also made efforts to improve hate crime identification, recording and data collection systems through ODIHR's Information Against Hate Crimes Toolkit (INFAHCT) programme. ODIHR completed a review of Bulgaria's hate crime legislation in 2018.

Hate crime data collection in Bulgaria
Support for hate crime victims in Bulgaria
Hate crime capacity building in Bulgaria
Bulgaria's hate crime legislation

ODIHR's Key Observation

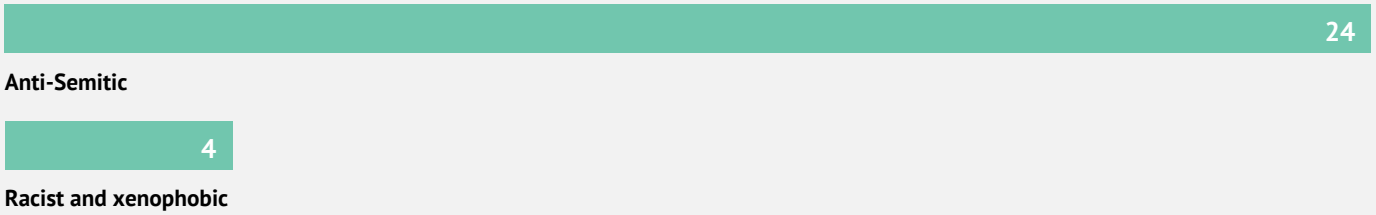
ODIHR recognizes Bulgaria's efforts to report information on hate crime information and statistics to ODIHR. Based on the available information, ODIHR observes that Bulgaria's hate crime recording and statistics do not sufficiently distinguish hate crimes from other crimes. In addition, ODIHR observes that Bulgaria would benefit from raising awareness and building the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice officials to address hate crime.

Official Data

The figures recorded by the prosecution service and courts represent all 'crimes with a discriminatory element, including hate crimes'. As such, some crimes falling outside the OSCE definition of hate crime are included in this figure, but could not be disaggregated. The sentencing figures describe judicial conclusion of the case rather than issuance of a sentencing judgment – as such, they include four cases of acquittal.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2024	28	35	5

Police data by bias motivation



Police data by type of crime

28

Other

National Developments

In 2024, Article 320 of the Bulgarian Criminal Code (agitation to commit a crime) was amended to increase the prison sentence when such acts are "committed for racist, xenophobic or sexual orientation-related motives".

In 2024, the National Institute of Justice organized a remote training on the topic of hate speech, in which 18 prosecutors were trained.

Incidents reported by civil society

For 2024, ODIHR received reports of hate incidents in Bulgaria from the following civil society organizations:

- Office of the Grand Mufti in Bulgaria
- Organization of Jews in Bulgaria "Shalom"
- Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe (OIDAC)
- International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF)

To learn more about these organizations, visit the Contributors page.

All incidents submitted by the above organizations have been analysed by ODIHR. Those that are broadly considered to be hate crimes within the OSCE definition (criminal offence committed with a bias motive) are listed in the tables below according to the bias motivation category. Some incidents involved multiple biases and may be listed in multiple categories.

ODIHR's insights

For 2024, ODIHR received reports of 11 incidents that took place in Bulgaria in the following bias motivation categories: anti-Christian, anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, anti-Semitic and disability, and racist and xenophobic. In addition, a couple of incidents involved multiples bias motivations, such as racist and xenophobic *and* anti-Muslim, and racist and xenophobic *and* anti-Semitic.

While only a low number of incidents were reported in Bulgaria, it can be noted that the anti-Semitic incidents were all threats and harassing behaviour, including one perpetrated by a hate group and one targeting a member of parliament of Jewish origin. In one incident, anti-Semitism intersected with a disability bias when a deaf Jewish man was targeted. In another incident, anti-Semitism intersected with a xenophobic bias motive when a group of Israeli tourists was targeted. An incident in which a Pomak Muslim man was targeted by a law enforcement officer was motivated by both anti-Muslim and racist bias.

It should be noted that ODIHR did not receive any reporting relating to anti-Roma, anti-LGBTI, gender-based or disability hate incidents in Bulgaria. This indicates potential gaps in the information reported here.
Please note that incidents reported here are based on voluntary civil society submissions and as such might not reflect the actual number of incidents or the most targeted communities in Bulgaria.

To address under-reporting, ODIHR encourages any civil society organizations or groups that monitor hate incidents in Bulgaria to report these to ODIHR at hatecrimereport@odihr.pl.

To export an Excel sheet with summaries of all incidents from Bulgaria click here and search by year and country.

View civil society incidents for Bulgaria, 2024