OSCE ODIHR
HATE CRIME REPORTING

Information contained in this report was compiled as part of ODIHR's 2021 Hate Crime Report.
For more information, including on previous years' reporting, please visit: hatecrime.osce.org/finland

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

1 2021

Summary

Finland regularly reports hate crime data to ODIHR, and has conducted victimization surveys to measure unreported hate crime incidents. The Finnish police closely co-operate with the Finnish Human Rights League, the Finnish Red Cross and Finnish Victim Support to develop a co-ordinated response to combat hate crimes. These organizations, along with the national police and other key authorities, form a network tasked by Finland's Ministry of Justice with monitoring hate crimes in Finland and developing effective preventative measures.

In 2017, Finland implemented ODIHR's Training Against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) programme, training over 1,000 police officers. The programme's hate crime modules have since been integrated into pre- and in-service training for police.

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

ODIHR's Key Observation

ODIHR recognizes Finland's efforts to improve its hate crime recording, data collection mechanisms, and local co-operation practices, as well as the submitted data on hate crime. However, based on the available information, ODIHR observes that Finland would benefit from raising awareness among and building the capacity of prosecutors to address hate crime.

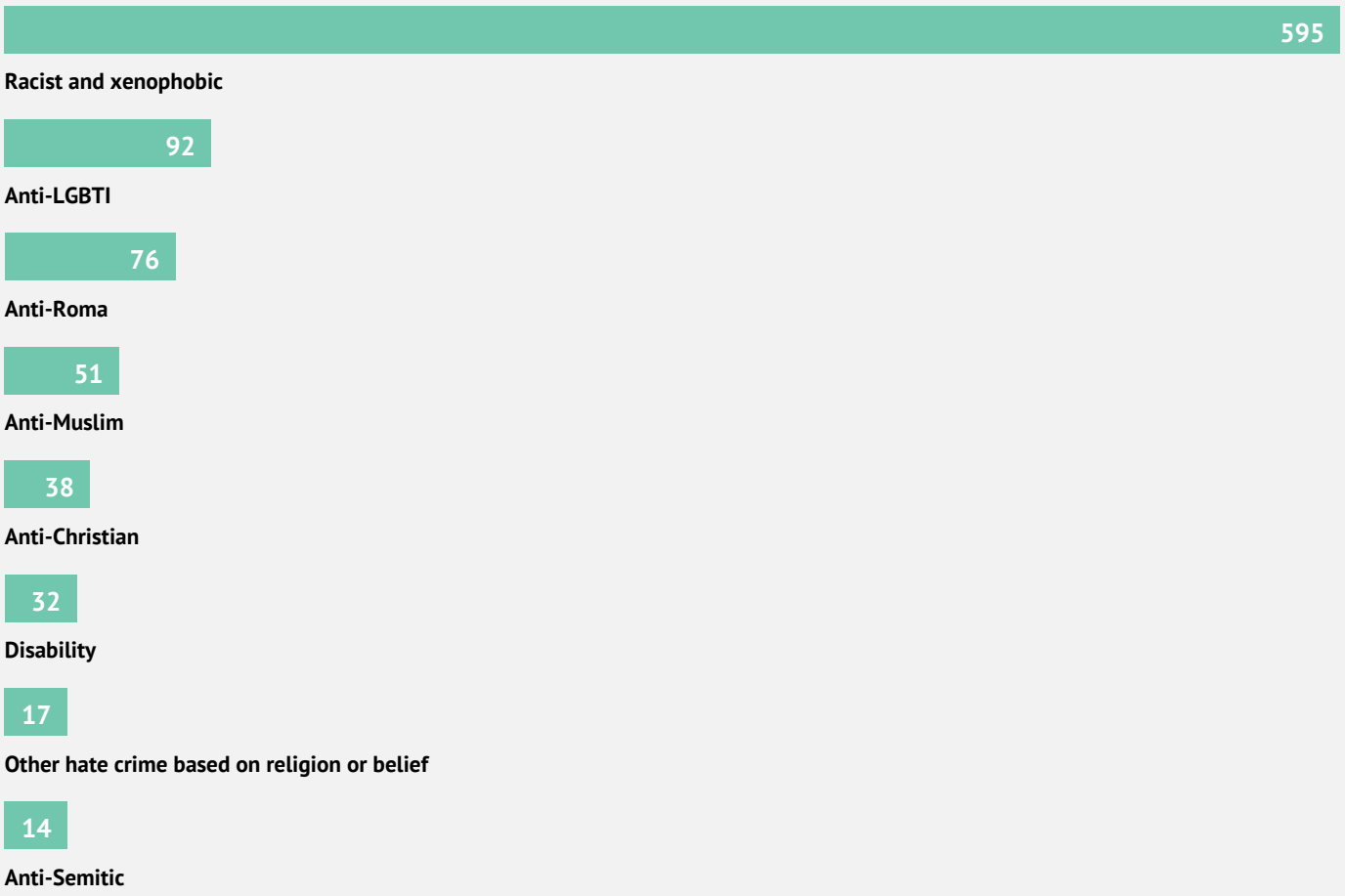
Official Data

In addition to hate crimes, police also record criminal forms of intolerance, such as defamation and criminal discrimination. These data are reported to ODIHR but are not included in the overall figure or in the breakdown below. The discrepancy between police records and the number of prosecuted and sentenced cases is due to the fact that only approximately 20 per cent of all hate crime cases recorded by the police were flagged using a specific hate crime code in the Police system. Only flagged cases are dealt with as hate crimes by court prosecutors.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2021	1,390	44	30

Police data by bias motivation

Cases of defamation and discrimination were also reported to ODIHR. These fall outside of the OSCE definition of hate crime and are not included in the breakdown below. With the consent of the Roma community, hate crimes against Roma people have been included as a separate category from Racism and Xenophobia.



Police data by type of crime

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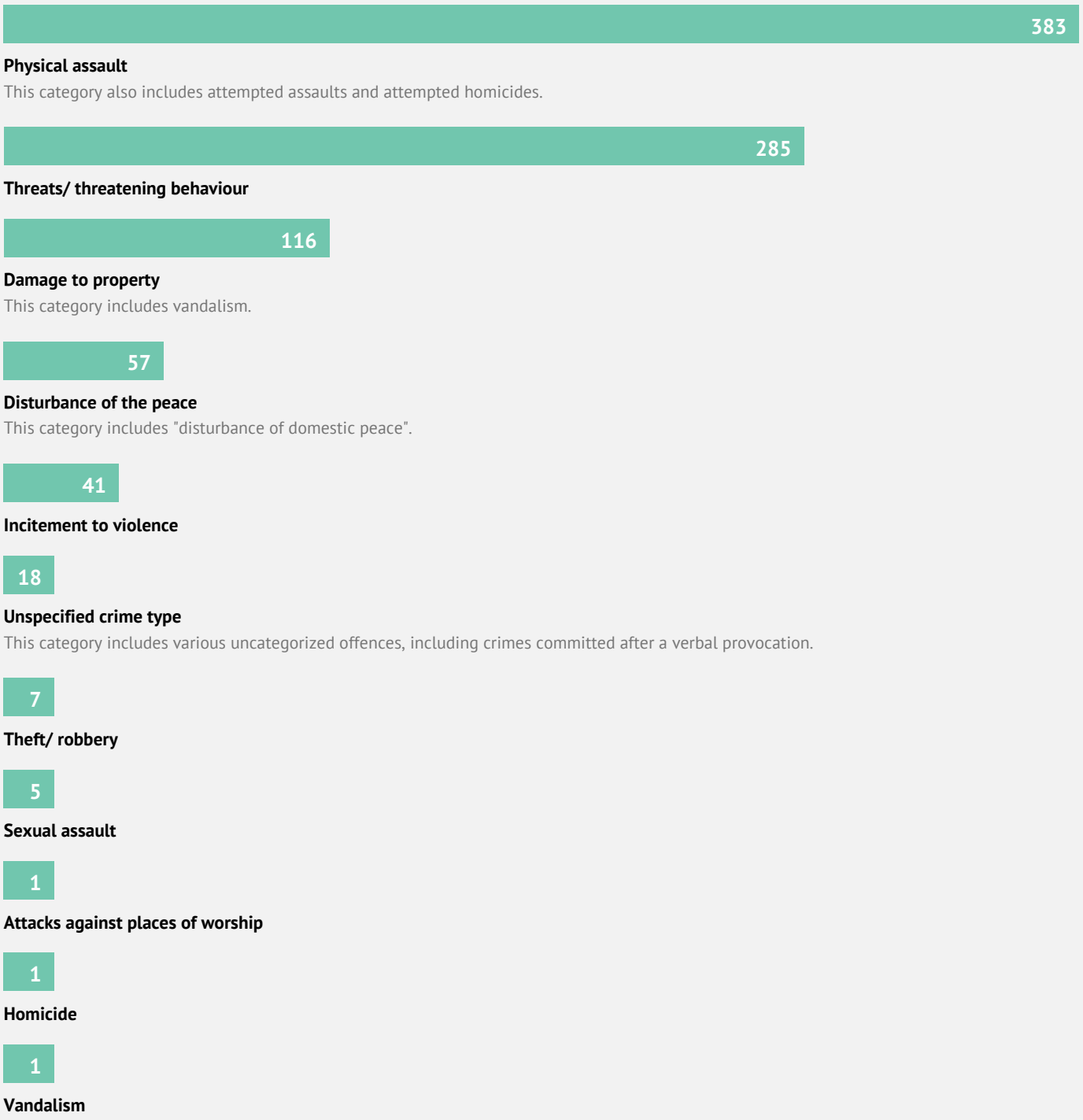

National Developments

In 2021, the Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups was drawn up (published by the Ministry of Justice in January 2022). The Action Plan is based on a situation assessment, and it includes eight key objectives and 52 measures to be carried out in different branches of government in 2021–2023. The Action Plan aims to dismantle structural inequalities in society, promote non-discrimination in the Finnish working life, strengthen the authorities' equality competence, raise awareness of racism and its various forms – including hate crime – and develop research and data collection on the matter. The programme includes measures to tackle hate crime.

In April 2021, the Ministry of Justice launched a two-year project, Osaavat (Competent Actors), funded by the European Commission's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. The project aims to strengthen actions to combat hate crimes and harassment, especially through developing the competence of professionals in various fields. Project partners are the Ministry of the Interior, the Office of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and Anti-Racist Forum NGO. The objective of the project is to improve national co-ordination and information exchange, strengthen the competence of professionals, develop data collection and strengthen the role of civil society in working to combat hate crimes. This is done by conceptualizing a Centre of Excellence for work against hate crimes and discrimination, and by piloting the Centre's activities. The project will also assess the functioning of the concept and activities of the Centre of Excellence. The project also aims to strengthen the competence of authorities in the field of education and law enforcement. To this end, the Ministry of Interior organized 11 training sessions for police (one in each police district). Furthermore, a training for police chiefs was organized and the material was published.

In 2021, the Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy (ICLP) of the University of Helsinki conducted a hate crime victimization survey among Finnish adolescents. While previous studies in the country had explained hate crime victimization using lifestyle-routine activities theory and social disorganization theory, this survey examined the effects of multiple individual-level factors and neighbourhoods' economic status, residential instability, and ethnic heterogeneity on hate crime victimization. Survey data on Finnish adolescents aged 15–16 and geographically referenced data on the neighbourhoods were used. The results found that some public lifestyle factors, such as delinquent behaviour, were associated with hate crime victimization and community-level characteristics did not predict hate crime directly, but individuals with an immigrant background faced a lower risk of hate crime victimization in more diverse neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, as part of the Facts against Hate project, the Ministry of Justice published a study that investigated how hate crimes are identified at the different stages of the criminal procedure; how the suspicion of a possible hate motive is relayed from the police to the prosecutor; and how it affects the severity of the sentence. Hate crimes reported to the police in 2017 were followed up as cases progressed from pre-trial investigation to the prosecutor, ending up in district courts. The study found shortcomings in the identification and processing of hate motives in criminal procedure. It is proposed, among other things, that it should be compulsory to code certain reports of offences as hate crimes and that collaboration in criminal investigation should be intensified and the instructions on police interrogation updated. The Facts against Hate Project, implemented together with the Ministry of the Interior, the Police University College, and Anti-Racist Forum (a Finnish CSO), the Centre for Peace Studies (a Croatian CSO), and INAR (an Irish CSO), concluded in November 2021.

Incidents reported by civil society

Total 1 incidents



Anti-Roma

Violent attacks against people

Please note that the total number of incidents may be lower than the sum of incidents presented in the breakdown chart above, as some incidents involve multiple bias motivations.

View civil society incidents for Finland, 2021