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/serbia

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

2024

Summary

Serbia regularly reports data on hate crimes to ODIHR. In 2018, the Office of the Prosecutor General, with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and ODIHR, developed *Guidelines for the prosecution of hate crimes in the Republic of Serbia*. A network of contact persons working on hate crime within the prosecution services was established and, with the OSCE Mission's assistance, Serbia's Judicial Academy has developed, integrated and implemented a hate crime training plan and programme.

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

ODIHR's Key Observation

ODIHR recognizes Serbia's efforts to regularly report hate crime information and statistics to ODIHR. However, based on the available information, it observes that Serbia's recording and statistics do not sufficiently distinguish hate crimes from other crimes. In addition, ODIHR observes that Serbia would benefit from building the capacity of police and prosecutors to address hate crimes.

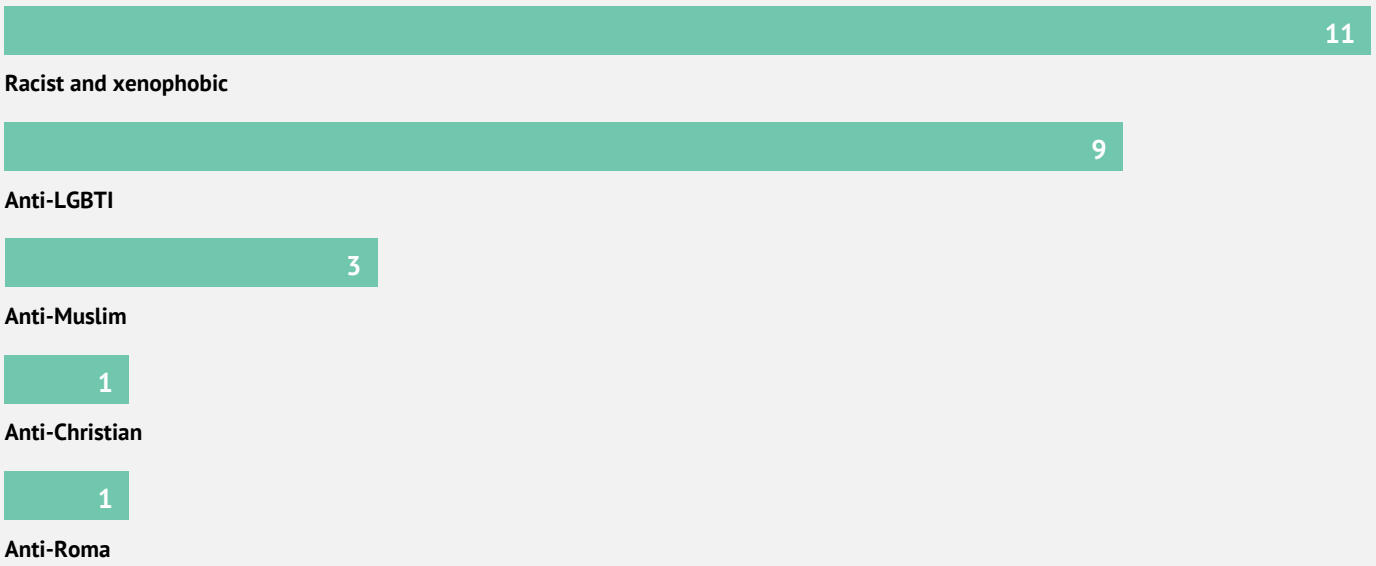
Official Data

The above data refer to the number of reported, indicted and convicted persons, not the number of criminal acts. The above figures include offences of incitement to hatred, violence at sport and discrimination/violation of equality, most of which fall outside the OSCE hate crime definition.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2024	47	18	11

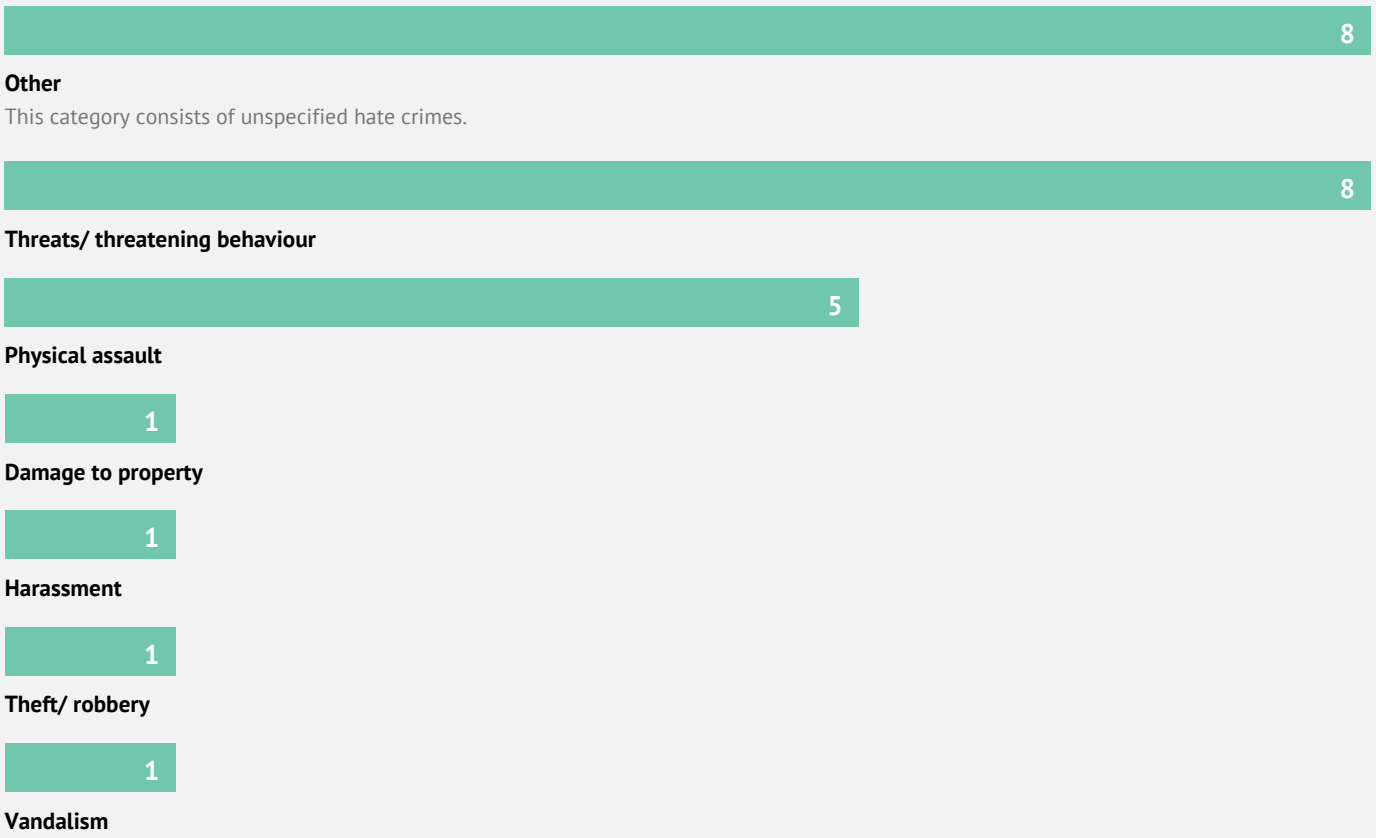
Police data by bias motivation

Some of the crimes reported to ODIHR were excluded from the breakdown below as they fall outside the OSCE hate crime definition.



Police data by type of crime

Some of the crimes reported to ODIHR were excluded from the breakdown below as they fall outside the OSCE hate crime definition.



National Developments

On 20 and 21 November 2024, Serbia's Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue delivered an opening speech at the beginning of the Regional Conference on "Combating Hate Crimes and Hate Speech in the Digital and Real Spheres in South-Eastern Europe – Strategies and Policies". The conference programme focused on ways to improve the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes and criminalized hate speech. Special attention was paid to the differences between offline and online crimes. The conference was attended by representatives of state institutions and OSCE field operations from Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, as well as members of the academic community and civil society organizations from South-Eastern Europe. Experts from Germany and the OSCE presented experiences and examples of good practice related to improving the investigation and prosecution of bias-motivated crimes.

The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, organized and held a Co-ordination Meeting of Representatives of Competent State Authorities and Civil Society Organizations for the Prevention of Hate Crimes in the Republic of Serbia on 20 and 21 June 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to continue co-operation, exchange experiences, and explore opportunities for establishing co-operation among competent state authorities and civil society organizations that have previously carried out activities to tackle hate crimes in Serbia.

Notable case:

A criminal complaint was filed with the Higher Public Prosecution Office in Novi Sad against two men on suspicion rape, abuse and torture.

After the investigation, the Higher Public Prosecution Office in Novi Sad filed an indictment charging the defendants with having, on two occasions, in the victim's apartment, committed numerous humiliating acts of psychological, physical, and sexual abuse of the victim motivated by bias against his sexual orientation.

In April 2024, the Higher Court in Novi Sad found the defendants guilty, sentencing each of them to nine years of imprisonment for committing the criminal offences of rape (Art. 178 of the Criminal Code) and abuse and torture (Art. 137 CC in conjunction with Art. 54a CC). The appeal procedure is ongoing.

Incidents reported by civil society

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

- European Roma Rights Center (ERRC)
- Federation of Jewish Communities in Serbia (SJOS)
- Association Da se zna!
- European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses
- The 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. In addition, the OSCE Mission to Serbia reported incidents based on its general monitoring of developments in the country.

All incidents submitted by the above organizations have been analysed by ODIHR. Those that were 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 are listed in multiple categories.

ODIHR's insights

For 2024, ODIHR received reports of 64 incidents that took place in Serbia in the following bias motivation categories: racist and xenophobic, anti-Christian, anti-LGBTI, anti-Muslim, anti-Roma, and anti-Semitic. In addition, several incidents involved multiple biases, such as anti-LGBTI *and* disability, anti-LGBT *and* gender-based, anti-Roma *and* anti-Muslim, and anti-Roma *and* gender-based.

ODIHR observes that a significant number of incidents targeted the LGBTI community in Serbia, including several incidents perpetrated by on-duty police officers. Around half of the anti-LGBTI incidents reported were serious physical assaults while the other half involved threats or threatening behaviour. The LGBTI community was less likely to be targeted in attacks against property.

The anti-Roma incidents reported to ODIHR included violent attacks against Roma men working as street cleaners, and incidents targeting Roma women and children in places of sanctuary, including at home or in a hospital setting. ODHIR also observes anti-Semitic incidents targeting well-known Jewish public figures for reasons related to the conflict in the Middle East.

ODIHR received only a low level of reporting on Serbia relating to anti-Roma and anti-Muslim incidents and did not receive any reports on incidents targeting other religions or belief or disability hate incidents. 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 Serbia.

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

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

View civil society incidents for Serbia, 2024

