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/united-kingdom

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

1 2021

Summary

The United Kingdom regularly reports hate crime data to ODIHR.

Authorities collaborate closely with civil society, including through Information Sharing Agreements concluded between the police and the Community Security Trust (CST), Galop and Tell MAMA, which enable the exchange of recorded data about incidents. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) regularly convenes an external consultation group (ECG) on hate crime, whose members include community organizations, victim advocacy groups, academics with relevant expertise and others. ECG members scrutinize CPS policies and practices, and suggest where improvements can be made.

In Northern Ireland, the Department of Justice chairs a multi-agency Hate Crime Delivery Group (HCDG) to identify strategic, cross-governmental priorities and develop new approaches to dealing with hate crime. The group meets quarterly and includes representatives of government departments, criminal justice agencies and victim groups. The Department of Justice and Northern Ireland Policing Board jointly fund Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) to engage and consult with the local community, and work with local partners to identify and prioritize local community safety and policing issues and develop initiatives and projects to address these.

In Scotland, there is Independent Police Advisory Council (IPAC). The IPAC sits at a strategic level, acting as a critical friend and partner to support Police Scotland to deliver sustainable improvements to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Human Rights outcomes across the service. The Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021 became an Act of Parliament on 23 April 2021. The Act entered into force on 1 April 2024.

The UK's College of Policing has developed guidelines for police on responding to hate crime, and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has issued relevant guidance for prosecutors and published public policy statements on particular hate crime strands.

Police and prosecution data, which cover the reporting period from April to March of the following year, are regularly published by the relevant criminal justice agencies of England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Hate crime data collection in the United Kingdom
Support for hate crime victims in the United Kingdom

ODIHR's Key Observation

ODIHR recognizes the United Kingdom's efforts to regularly report hate crime data to ODIHR. However, it observes that the United Kingdom would benefit from raising awareness among and building the capacity of criminal justice officials to address hate crime, particularly with regard to some of the more isolated victim groups.

Official Data

Police data represent hate crimes recorded in England and Wales (155,841) and Northern Ireland (2,177). The 2021 police records on Scotland were not available at the time of publishing the 2021 Hate Crime Report. Hate crimes recorded by police include "public order offences", some of which fall outside of the OSCE's definition of hate crime. Prosecution records consists of 5,640 offences prosecuted in Scotland and 344 cases in Northern Ireland. The number of convictions consist of 816 court decisions in Scotland and 116 cases in Northern Ireland in which defendants were convicted for at least one hate crime offence.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2021	158,018	5,984	932

Police data by bias motivation

The disaggregated data below are only for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, but not Scotland. The police and several civil society organizations involved in monitoring hate incidents (including the Community Security Trust, Galop and Tell MAMA) exchange data on a regular basis about recorded incidents. This data sharing is governed by Information Sharing Agreements signed by the police and each of the civil society organizations. As a result, some of the offences presented below (particularly data on anti-Semitic hate crime and hate crime motivated by intolerance against Muslims) are also included in reporting by the relevant civil society organizations elsewhere on this page.



Racist and xenophobic



Anti-LGBTI



Disability



Anti-Muslim



Other hate crime based on religion or belief

A total of 2,471 anti-religious hate crimes were recorded in England and Wales and 54 such offences recorded in Northern Ireland. For England and Wales, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim and anti-Christian hate crimes are monitored as sub-categories of anti-religious hate crime and are presented separately. However, records for Northern Ireland do not monitor the mentioned sub-categories separately, and the relevant records are thus presented here. This category also includes offences for which more than one perceived religion was targeted.



Anti-Semitic



Unspecified

Records under this category were collected by the police in Northern Ireland and relate to "sectarian hate crime". In Northern Ireland, "sectarian hate crime" is defined as "bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican. However, sectarianism can also relate to other religious denominations, for example, Sunni and Shi'ite in Islam."



Anti-Christian

Police data by type of crime

The disaggregated data below are only for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, but not Scotland. The police and several civil society organizations involved in monitoring hate incidents (including the Community Security Trust, Galop and Tell MAMA) exchange data on a regular basis about recorded incidents. This data sharing is governed by Information Sharing Agreements signed by the police and each of the civil society organizations. As a result, some of the offences presented below (particularly data on anti-Semitic hate crime and hate crime motivated by intolerance against Muslims) are also included in reporting by the relevant civil society organizations elsewhere on this page.



Physical assault

This category presents "violence against persons", both with and without injury.



Damage to property

This category includes "criminal damage" excluding "arson". The records provided by police of Northern Ireland under this category also include offences of the desecration of graves, attacks against places of worship and vandalism.



Unspecified crime type

This category has been reported by the police of Northern Ireland and includes the offences of sexual assault, incitement to violence, robbery, and disturbance of the peace.



Theft/ robbery

This category includes "shoplifting".



Threats/ threatening behaviour

This category only includes offences recorded in Northern Ireland and is based on harassment offences.



Sexual assault



Arson



Homicide

National Developments

In December 2021, the **Law Commission** published its final recommendations on improving hate crime legislation, applicable for England and Wales, following a wide-ranging review and public consultation conducted in 2019 and 2021.

In 2021, the **Police Service of Northern Ireland** held a number of awareness-raising activities throughout the year on what constitutes a hate crime, how to report it and support available through the Advocacy Service. Due to COVID-19 restrictions in 2021, social media was widely used for this purpose.

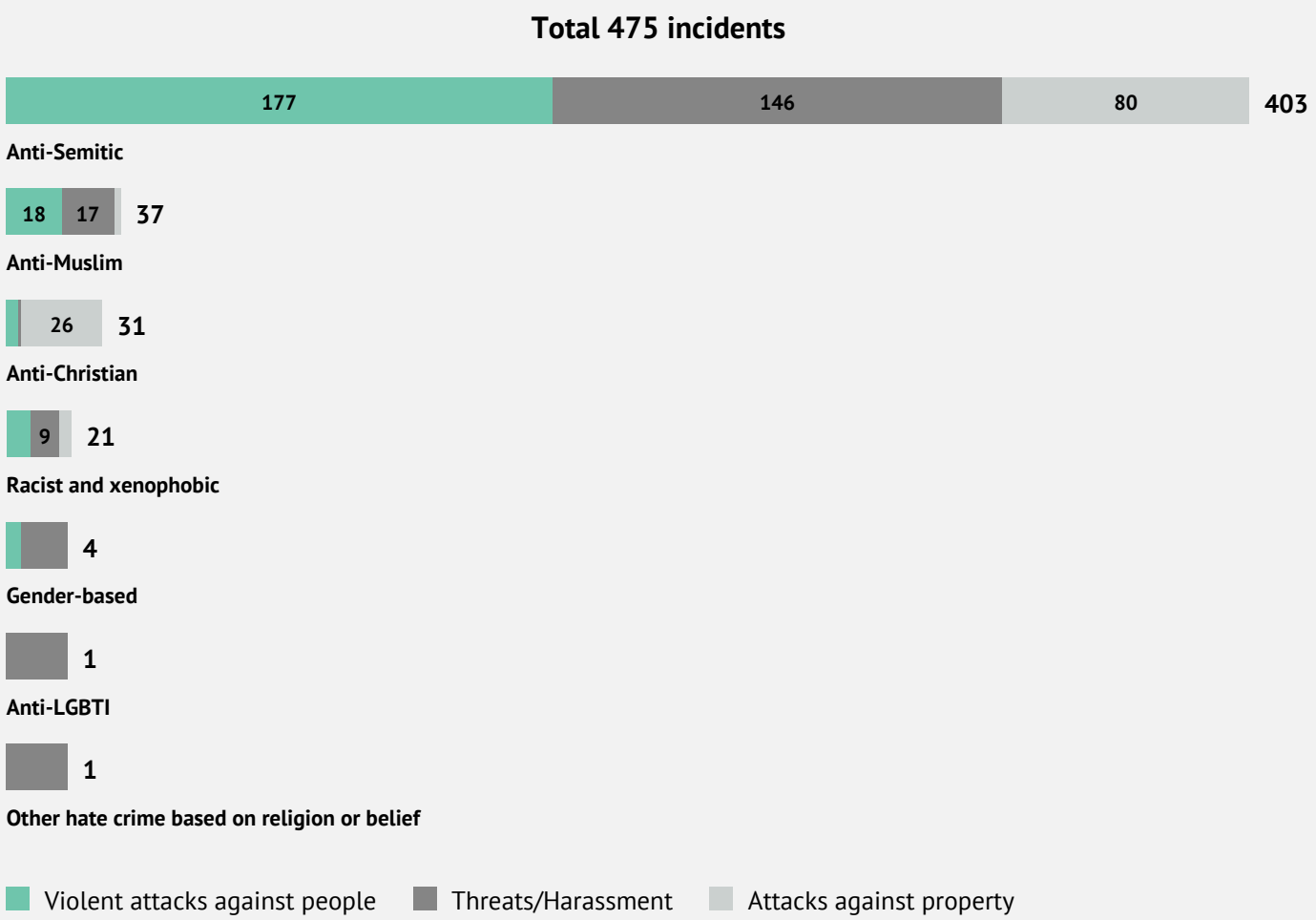
The **Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland** provided a detailed consultation response as part of Judge Marrinan's Review of Hate Crime Legislation. The Service has also provided further responses in relation to proposed legislative changes, and continues to work closely with the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland and other stakeholders on policy development around new hate crime provisions.

In February 2021, the **Scottish Government** published its research report, "A Study into the Characteristics of Police Recorded Hate Crime in Scotland", which presents updated statistics on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland from 2014 to 2020. The study also includes the nature of hate crimes recorded by police in 2018 and 2019, including the characteristics of both victims and perpetrators.

The report showed that since reporting on 2014-15, the number of hate crimes recorded has fluctuated between 6,300 and 7,000 crimes.

In March 2021, the **Scottish Parliament** passed the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill, which extends the list of protected characteristics to include "age" and allows a further extension to include "sex", among other changes.

Incidents reported by civil society



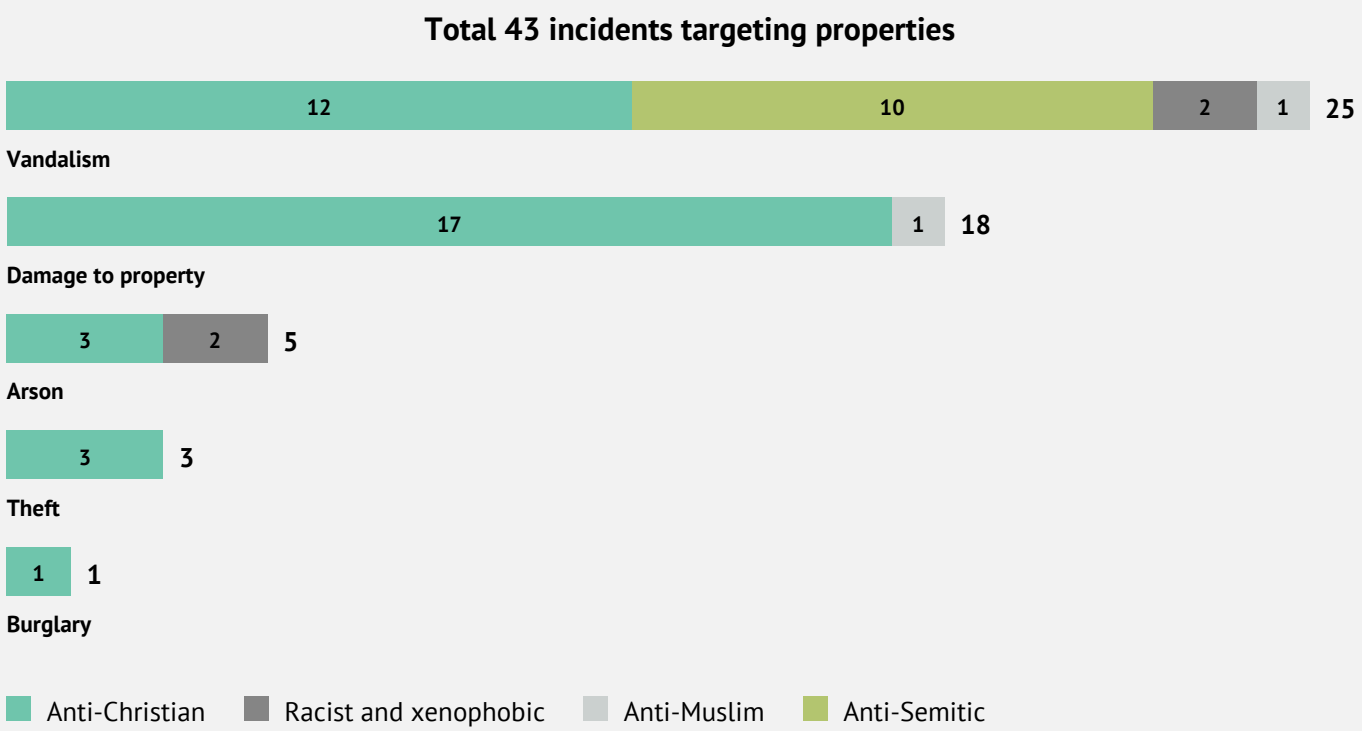
Please note that the total number of incidents may be lower than the sum of incidents presented in the breakdown chart above, as some incidents involve multiple bias motivations.

In addition to incidents summarized below, this graph includes 386 cases of anti-Semitic incidents reported by the Community Security Trust.

Targeted properties



Type of property attack



View civil society incidents for United Kingdom, 2021