OSCE ODIHR
HATE CRIME REPORTING

Information contained in this report was compiled as part of ODIHR's 2022 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 2022

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 and to address hate crime in a comprehensive manner. 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 in respect of some of the more isolated victim groups.

Official Data

Police data represent hate crimes recorded in Northern Ireland (2,233) and England and Wales (145,214). Hate crimes recorded by police include "public order offences", some of which fall outside of the OSCE's definition of hate crime. Police figures from England and Wales do not include data for Devon and Cornwall Police Force Area due to the updates to the new force IT systems. Prosecution records consists of 296 prosecutorial decisions in Northern Ireland recorded using the definition applied by the Lawrence Inquiry which sets out 6 motivation types: racist incidents; homophobic incidents (sexual orientation); sectarian incidents; faith / religious incidents (non-sectarian); disability incidents; and transphobic incidents. No figures on hate crime prosecution and sentencing from England and Wales, and on sentencing from Northern Ireland were submitted. The data on hate crime cases for 2022 from Scotland were not available at the time of publishing ODIHR's 2022 Hate Crime Report. Data on sentenced cases from Scotland were submitted after the launch of the 2022 Hate Crime Report and were added to this website in October 2024. Sentenced cases comprise of 1,107 cases from Scotland. Sentenced data is taken from Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2021-22 that covers the 2021-22 financial year and represents a count of people convicted with a hate crime aggravator against the main charge.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2022	147,447	296	1,107

Police data by bias motivation

The disaggregated data below are only for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, but not Scotland. A single hate crime may involve one or more hate motivations; therefore, the figures below do not add up to the above total.



Racist and xenophobic



Anti-LGBTI



Disability



Other hate crime based on religion or belief

Hate crimes recorded in this category include 33 offences in Northern Ireland and 5,250 offences in England and Wales. This category includes offences motivated by anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, anti-Christian bias, bias against members of other religions and bias against people who hold no religious belief.



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."

Police data by type of crime

The disaggregated data below are only for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, but not Scotland. A single hate crime may involve one or more hate motivations; therefore, the figures below do not add up to the above total.



Disturbance of the peace

This category only represents records from England and Wales and includes "public order offences", some of which may constitute criminal forms of hate speech that fall outside of the OSCE hate crime definition.



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.



Theft/ robbery



Sexual assault



Threats/ threatening behaviour

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



Arson



Unspecified crime type

This category only includes offences recorded in Northern Ireland and includes the offences of sexual assault, incitement to violence, robbery, disturbance of peace, and other miscellaneous crimes against society, and thus can include offences that fall outside of the OSCE hate crime definition.



Homicide

National Developments

In 2022, the Government asked the Law Commission to conduct a wide-ranging review into hate crime to explore whether current legislation could be made more effective, and if additional protected characteristics should be added to the hate crime legislation. The Law Commission's review examined the adequacy and parity of protection offered by the law relating to hate crime and the current range of offences and aggravating factors in sentencing.

In 2022, the UK Government continued to fund True Vision, an online hate crime reporting portal, designed so that victims of hate crime do not have to visit a police station to report. The UK Government also continued to fund the National Online Hate Crime Hub, which is a central capability designed to support individual local police forces in dealing with online hate crime. The Hub provides expert advice to police forces to support them in investigating these offences.

In February 2022, the UK Parliament voted against adding sex and gender to the list of protected characteristics covered by hate crime legislation. This followed the Law Commission - a statutory independent body that reviews laws and produces recommendations for their reform in England and Wales - recommending that sex or gender should not be added as a protected characteristic for the purposes of aggravated offences and enhanced sentencing. In its review of hate crime legislation published in 2021, the Law Commission found that adding sex or gender to hate crime laws may prove “more harmful than helpful” and “counterproductive”.

In 2022, the Online Safety Bill began its passage through Parliament. Hate crime is a “priority offence” in the Bill, which will become law in 2023. Under new legal duties of care, technology companies will need to prevent, identify and remove illegal content and activity online. This means less illegal content - including content that incites hate on the grounds of race, religion or sexual orientation - will appear online and, when it does, it will be removed more quickly.

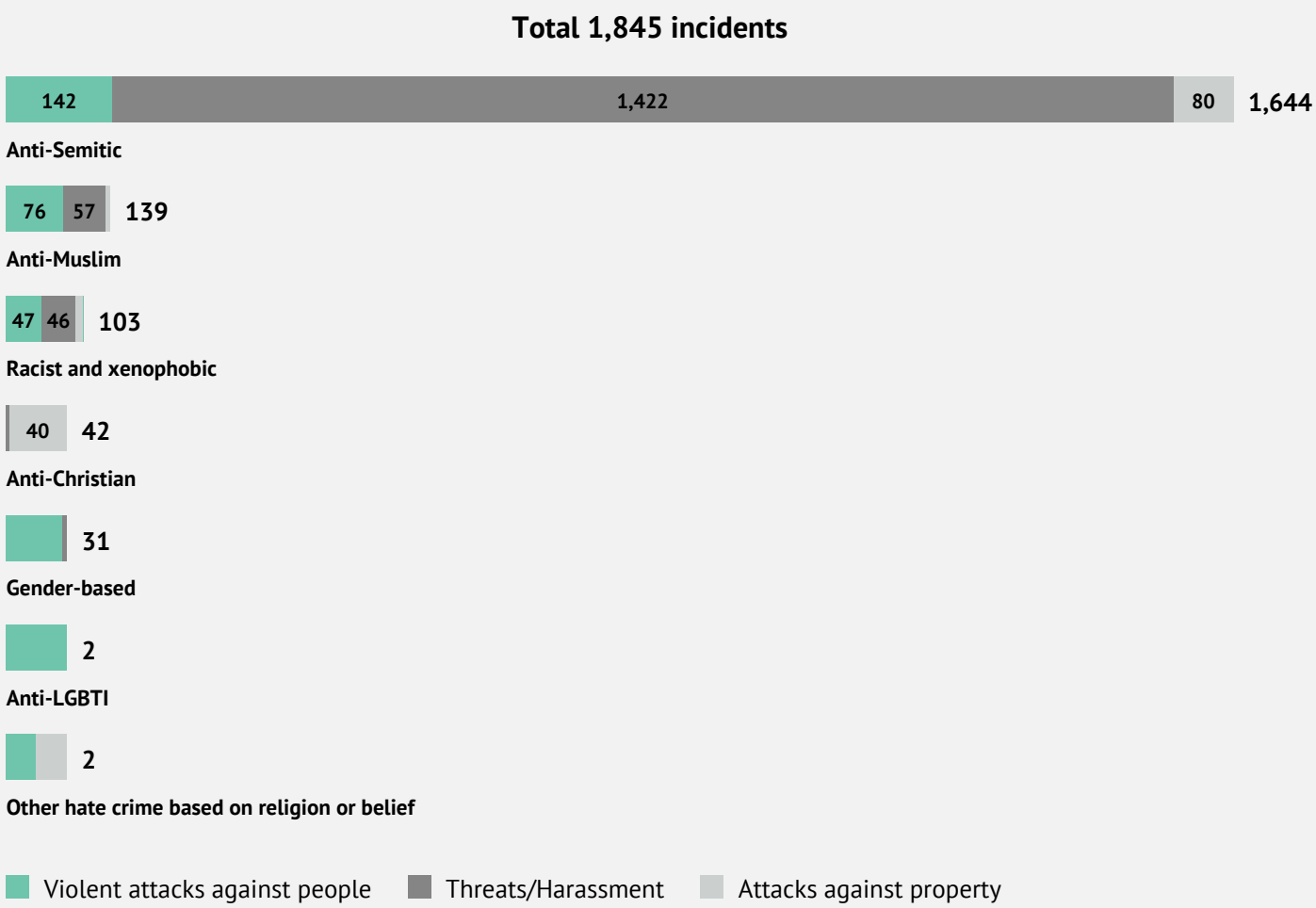
Also in 2022, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill became an Act of Parliament. It included a provision which enables the Home Secretary to issue a code of practice relating to the recording of personal data in non-crime hate incident records.

Scotland

In April 2022, the Scottish Government convened the Hate Crime Strategic Partnership Group in order to provide a multi-agency and collaborative approach to the development of a new Hate Crime Strategy for Scotland, for publication in early 2023. Members have a range of expertise in tackling prejudice, building cohesive communities and advancing human rights.

Prior to the end of 2022, members of the Hate Crime Strategic Partnership Group also commenced engagement with people who have lived experience of hate crime, to inform the strategy's commitments.

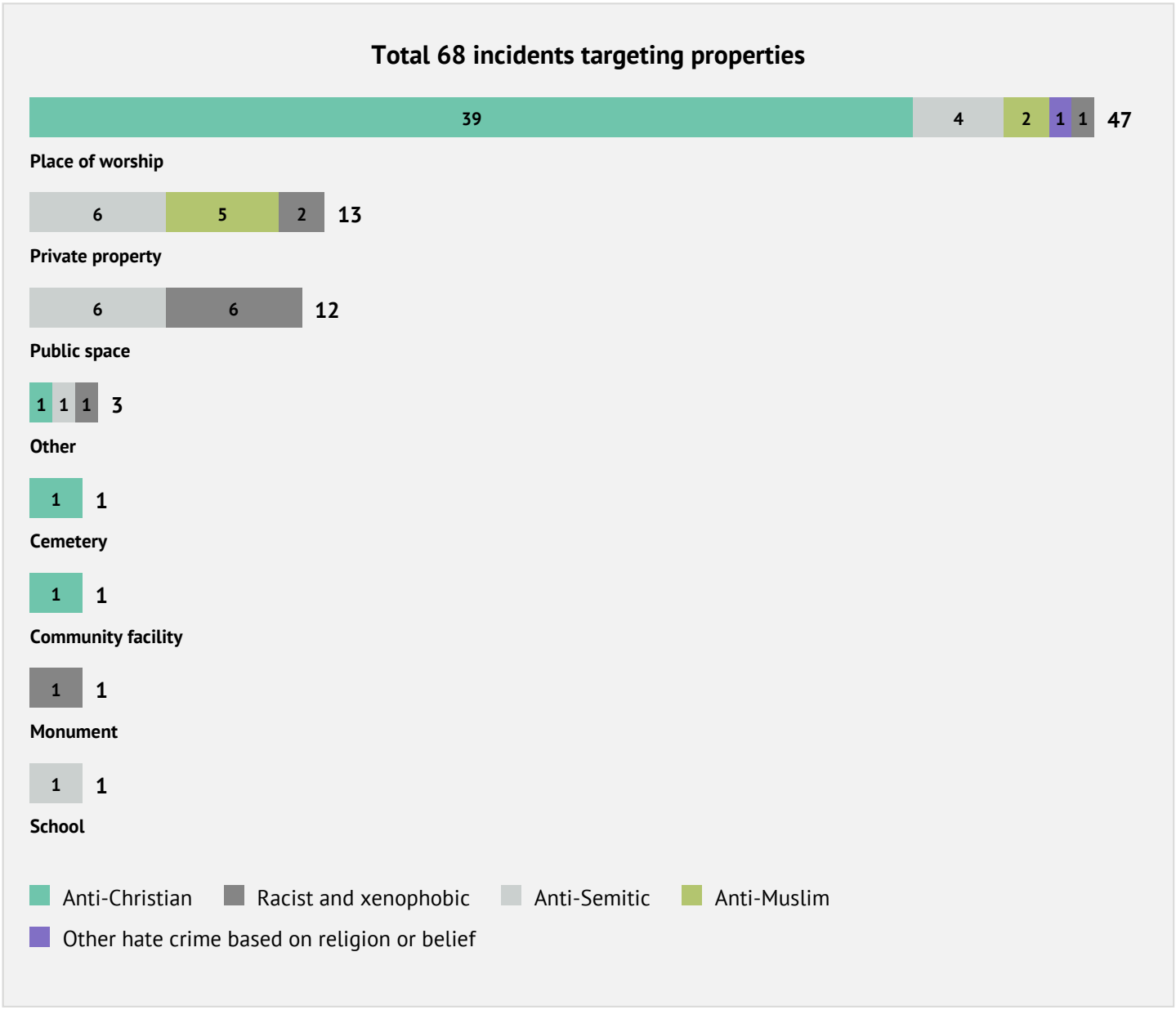
Incidents reported by civil society



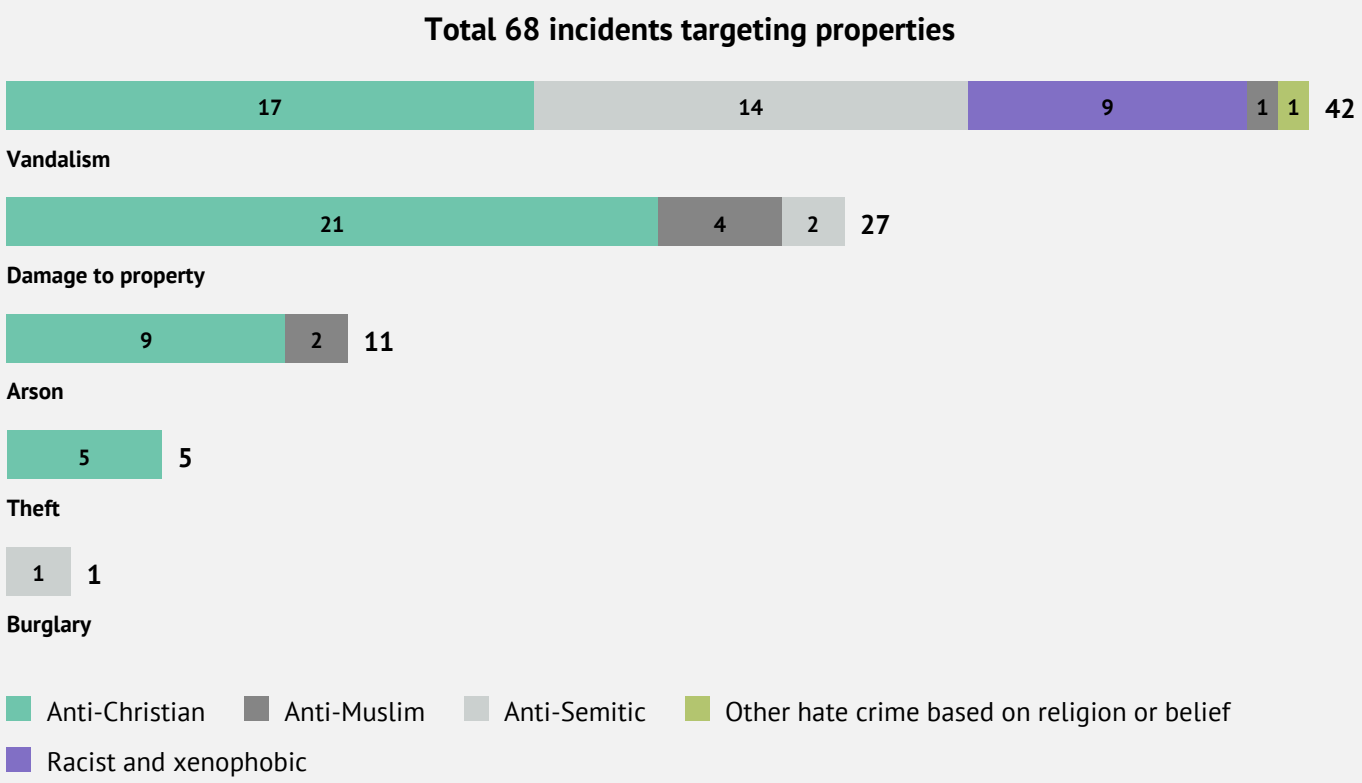
Please note that the total number of incidents may be lower than the sum of incidents presented in the breakdown chart above, as some incidents involve multiple bias motivations.

In addition to incidents submitted with detailed descriptions, this graph includes 1,621 anti-Semitic incidents reported as statistics by the Community Security Trust (CST).

Targeted properties



Type of property attack



View civil society incidents for United Kingdom, 2022