ODIHR's impact in 2019: Supporting a diagnostic approach to hate crime data collection [1]

27 May 2020
This impact story examines ODIHR's work to help states establish robust hate crime data collection and monitoring systems.
Data collection is the first step towards combating hate crime, as reliable information and statistics are needed to develop targeted policies and customize support for victims. It is therefore essential that OSCE participating States establish robust systems for monitoring and collecting accurate and comprehensive hate crime data in line with their OSCE commitments.

As part of its Information Against Hate Crimes Toolkit (INFAHCT) [2] programme, ODIHR provides technical assistance to improve hate crime monitoring and data collection systems upon the request of national authorities. This assistance is customized based on preliminary diagnostic workshops that draw on local expertise to pinpoint gaps and identify areas for improvement. ODIHR has held diagnostic workshops in 11 participating States, providing tailored follow-up recommendations for each country.

Implementation of these recommendations in 2019 demonstrates the effectiveness of this diagnostic approach. The most widespread improvements relate to the recording of hate crimes, including through changes to IT systems, law enforcement policies and the ability to track hate crimes in the criminal justice system. The following are examples of actions taken by participating States in 2019:

- In Hungary [3], the police chief issued a binding order for police on hate crime recording and investigation, including an instruction on registering bias indicators;

- Spain [4] developed a new template for police to use specifically to record hate crimes. Changes were also introduced to improve how hate crimes are identified and flagged by police; and

- In Portugal [5], the Criminal (Judicial) Police introduced a “hate crime flag” into their
electronic police recording system.

The wide-ranging assistance provided through the INFAHCT programme complements ODIHR’s other hate crime tools, which equip police, prosecutors and civil society organizations with the skills to investigate, prosecute and monitor bias-motivated crime.

“Following ODIHR’s recommendations, we recently introduced changes to how our police categorize and record hate crimes. This has improved our capacity to track hate crime cases, resulting in a more efficient use of police time and resources.”

— Police Lieutenant Colonel Csilla Nagygyőr, national co-ordinator of hate-crime investigations in the Hungarian National Police
#1 CREATE A RECORDING FRAMEWORK
A recording framework provides police and others with the tools they need to effectively identify and record hate crimes.

#2 STRENGTHEN CO-ORDINATION
Institutionalize co-ordination and co-operation among key actors to streamline how criminal justice systems handle hate crime cases and data.

#3 GENERATE STATISTICS
Generate hate crime statistics to enable rapid identification of hate crime cases, customized police response and improved case file flow.

#4 REVIEW DATA
Review data to pinpoint potential shortcomings when hate crime data is first recorded.

#5 PUBLISH DATA
Analyse and publish data to identify how to improve policing, prosecution and victim support.

#6 BUILD CAPACITY
Train police officers, prosecutors and others to effectively identify, recognize, categorize and register hate crime cases.

#7 SURVEY UNDER-REPORTING
Conduct victimization surveys to assess the level and nature of unreported hate crime.

#8 BOOST REPORTING
Seek ways to increase reporting levels, such as through public outreach, civil society co-operation and providing alternative reporting mechanisms.

Training police
Recording hate crimes

Links