OSCE ODIHR
HATE CRIME REPORTING

Information contained in this report was compiled as part of ODIHR's 2025 Hate Crime Report.
For more information, including on previous years' reporting, please visit: hatecrime.osce.org/belgium

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

2025

Summary

Belgium regularly reports hate crime data to ODIHR. Recent initiatives to improve hate crime identification, recording, and data collection have been implemented through ODIHR's Information Against Hate Crimes Toolkit (INFAHCT) programme. In particular, Belgium has implemented the programme's recommendations on the operational practice of police, prosecutors, and equality bodies.

Crime victimization surveys and research are frequently conducted in Belgium. "Safe.brussels", the Brussels public service responsible for crime prevention and security within the Brussels-Capital Region, conducts surveys on the perception of security and crime victimization among the general public every two years.

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

ODIHR's Key Observation

ODIHR recognizes Belgium's efforts to strengthen the institutional response to hate crime through the establishment of specialized co-ordination mechanisms, designated police officers and magistrates, and an inter-institutional working group to support the effective implementation of policies on investigating and prosecuting hate crime.. Based on the available information, ODIHR observes that Belgium's hate crime recording and statistics do not sufficiently distinguish hate crimes from other crimes, and that Belgium does not report hate crime sentencing data to ODIHR. Otherwise, ODIHR observes that Belgium has met most of its OSCE commitments on hate crime.

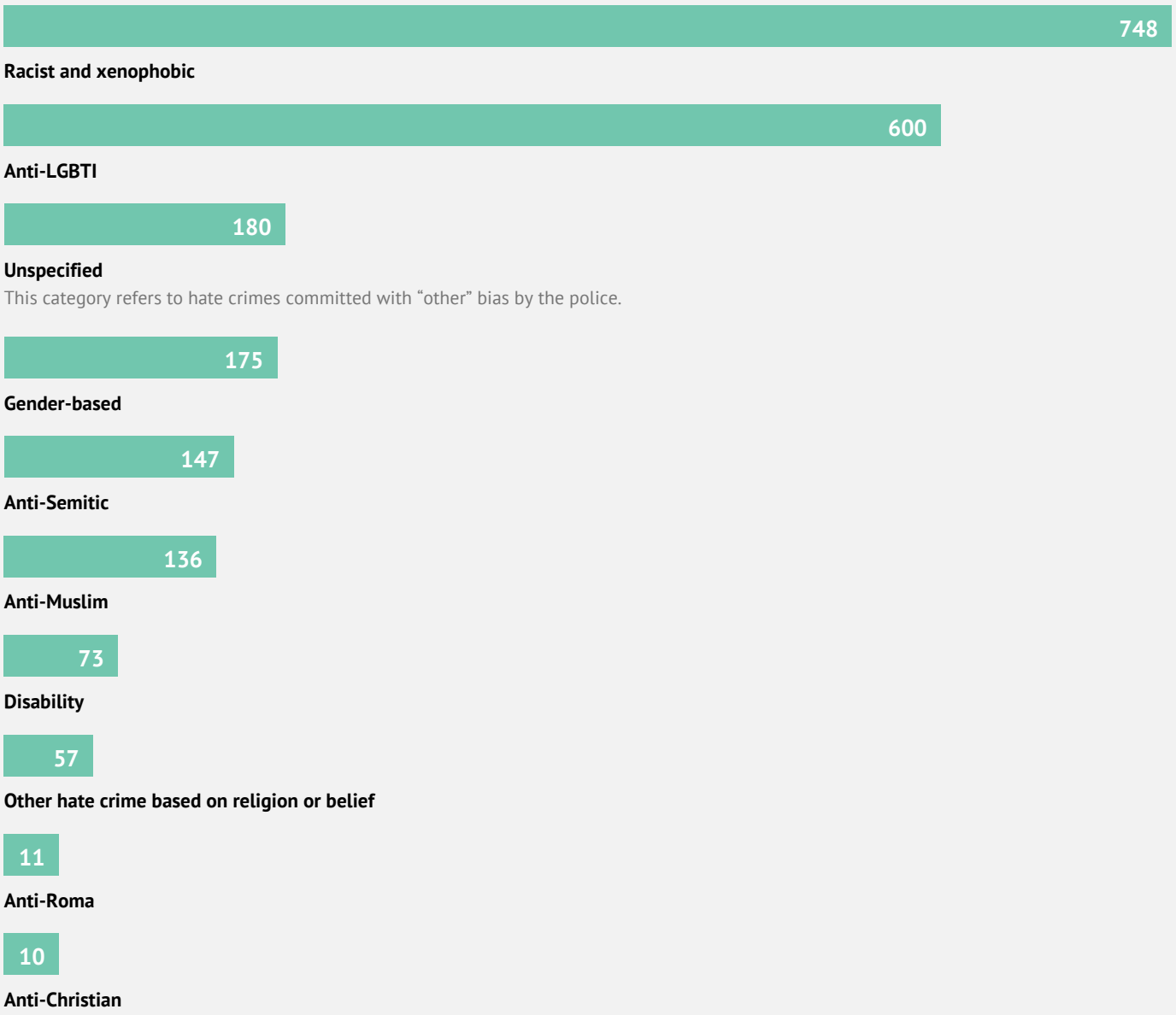
Official Data

Police-recorded hate crimes refer to criminal cases with a discriminatory motive. Prosecution statistics refer to case proceedings, which may involve more than one defendant. Discrimination and hate speech offences that fall outside the OSCE hate crime definition are included in these statistics. Data on sentencing, including for hate crime cases, are not available due to the registration delay of sentencing in the central criminal record.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2025	2,137	775	not available

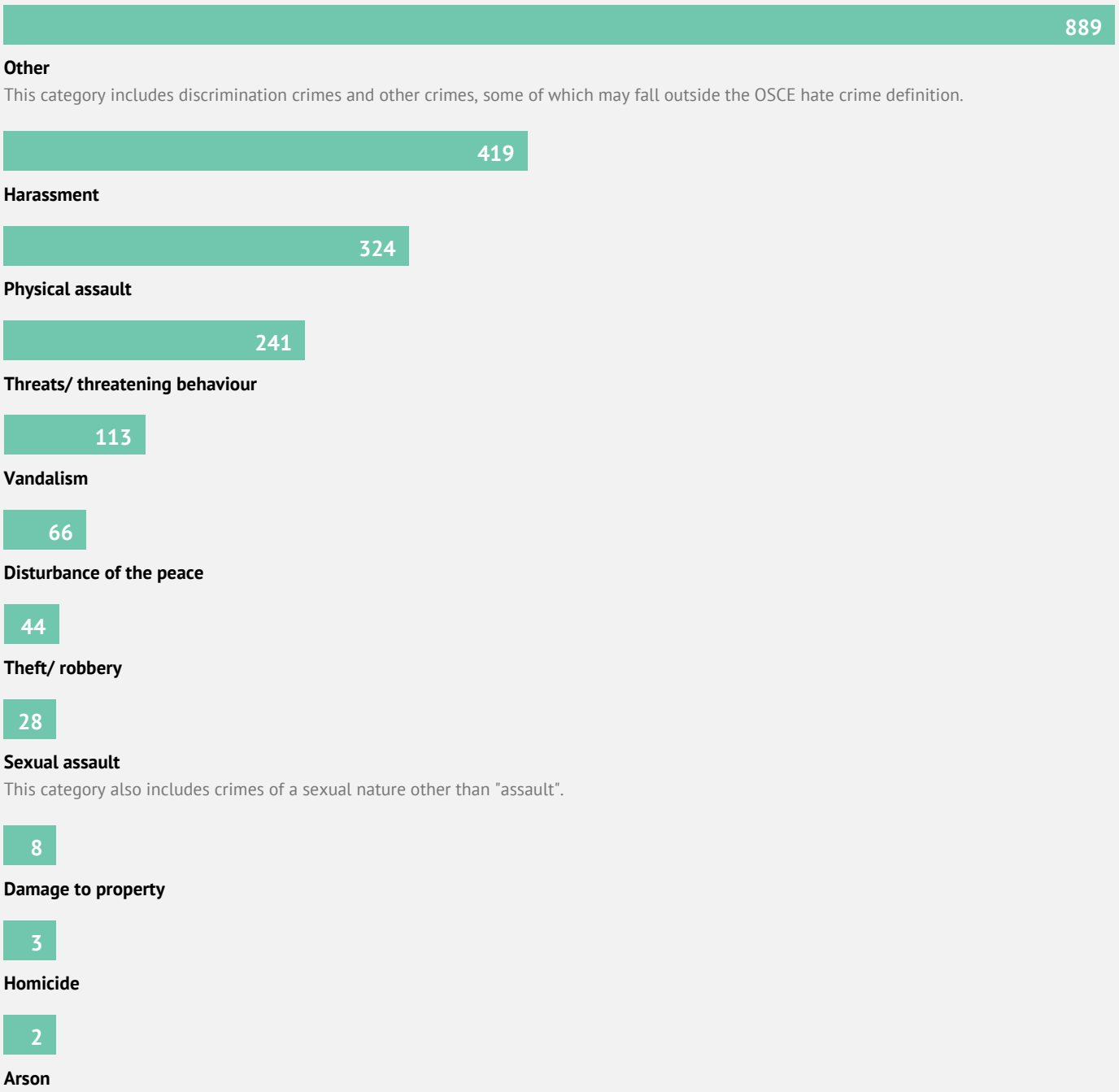
Police data by bias motivation

The chart below only presents police-recorded cases by bias motivation, and may include criminal offences that fall outside the OSCE definition of hate crime but could not be separated from the total number.



Police data by type of crime

The chart below only presents police-recorded cases by bias motivation, and may include criminal offences that fall outside the OSCE definition of hate crime but could not be separated from the total number.



National Developments

The revised Belgian Criminal Code entered into force on 8 April 2026. The revised Criminal Code changes the key notion for hate crime definition from "aggravating circumstances" to a slightly different notion of "aggravating element".

The 2024 revision of COL 13/2013 – the joint circular for police forces and public prosecutors on the investigation and prosecution of discrimination and hate crime cases – led to the establishment of several new entities working on hate crimes:

- A specialized network led by a 'co-ordinating magistrate' responsible for the implementation and development of hate crime policy;
- The appointment of specialized 'reference police officers' and 'reference magistrates' associated with the prosecutor's office for discrimination and hate crime cases; and
- The establishment of a working group consisting of magistrates from the public prosecutor's office, reference police officers, experts from the Ministry of Justice, and representatives of equality bodies Unia and the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men. The 'COL 13' working group is tasked with following up on the joint circular COL 13/2013.

In October 2025, the Interministerial Conference on Equal Opportunities, Disability and Combating Racism began its work. The aim of the Conference is to adopt Federal Action Plans to address discrimination and racism, including hate crime. The plan will facilitate close co-operation with civil society organizations, equality bodies, and other relevant stakeholders.

At the end of 2025, Ghent University published a research report on "Support for people with disabilities following sexual violence", which was commissioned by the Flemish Community. Among other issues, the study demonstrated that such victims often face significant barriers when seeking help, such as limited knowledge, inaccessible information, and insufficiently tailored support. The study highlighted structural shortcomings in both specialized services and mainstream support systems, including ableism and a lack of expertise and collaboration.

Incidents reported by civil society

For 2025, ODIHR received reports of hate incidents in Belgium from the following civil society organizations:

- Collective for Countering Islamophobia in Europe (CCIE);
- European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses;
- The Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe (OIDAC)

To learn more about these organizations, visit the Contributors page.

Individual incidents submitted by CSOs have been analysed by ODIHR. Those that are 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 may be listed in multiple categories.

ODIHR's insights

For 2025, ODIHR received reports of eight hate incidents that took place in Belgium targeting six victims in the anti-Christian and anti-Muslim bias motivation categories. ODIHR observes that a low number of incidents were reported in Belgium for 2025.

ODIHR observes six anti-Christian incidents, most of which targeted members of the Jehovah's Witness and included physical assaults and threats against victims engaged in religious activities in public. ODIHR observes two anti-Muslim incidents, including one case of harassment targeting a hijab-wearing Muslim woman at her workplace.

It should be noted that ODIHR did not receive any reporting on Belgium related to anti-LGBTI, anti-Roma, anti-Semitic, disability, gender-based, racist and xenophobic, and other based on religion or belief. 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 do not reflect the actual number of incidents or the most targeted communities in Belgium.

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

To export an Excel sheet with summaries of all incidents from Belgium click here.

View civil society incidents for Belgium, 2025