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/switzerland

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

2024

Summary

Switzerland regularly reports hate crime data to ODIHR. Switzerland's Criminal Code contains no hate crime provision, and hate crimes are addressed under anti-discrimination criminal provisions. The Federal Commission against Racism partners with the association 'humanrights.ch' in the Counselling Network for Victims of Racism, which publishes annual analytical reports on cases of racism reported to the Network.

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

ODIHR's Key Observation

ODIHR recognizes Switzerland's efforts to report hate crime information and statistics to ODIHR. However, based on the available information, it observes that Switzerland's recording does not sufficiently distinguish hate crimes from other crimes, law enforcement agencies do not record the bias motivation of hate crimes, and Switzerland has not reported data on hate crimes recorded by prosecution to ODIHR. In addition, ODIHR observes that Switzerland would benefit from reviewing the existing legal framework to ensure that bias motivations are effectively acknowledged and appropriate penalties can be imposed on the perpetrators.

Official Data

The above figures consist of offences registered by police as well as convictions relating to Article 261bis of the Swiss Criminal Code (Discrimination and Incitement to Hatred). Therefore, the numbers include offences that fall outside the OSCE hate crime definition. Disaggregation of police data by bias motive is not available. A breakdown of sentencing judgments by bias motivation was reported to ODIHR.

Year	Hate crimes recorded by police	Prosecuted	Sentenced
2024	595	not available	104

National Developments

In March 2024, a conference organized by the University of Berne and the Swiss Police Institute took place on the topic of hate crime. A representative of ODIHR presented the progress of and challenges with hate crime responses in the OSCE region. Many representatives of the police were also present.

Based on a parliamentary postulate, a survey was conducted on how racist hate crimes are recorded within and outside the police force. The results will be published in 2025.

The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) discussed options for recording hate crimes at the national level at a conference with cantonal police authorities. The FSO will prepare a report for the Conference of Cantonal Directors of Justice and Police Departments.

Incidents reported by civil society

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

- Association of Islamic Organizations in Zurich
- Consultation Network for the Victims of Racism, humanrights.ch
- LGBTIQ Helpline
- Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities (SIG)
- International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF)
- Intercommunity Co-ordination against Anti-Semitism and Defamation (CICAD)
- 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.

In addition, some incidents were recorded as part of ODIHR's ongoing monitoring across the OSCE region.

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 may be listed in multiple categories.

ODIHR's insights

For 2024, ODIHR received reports of 202 incidents that took place in Switzerland in the following bias motivation categories: racist and xenophobic, anti-LGBTI, anti-Christian, anti-Muslim, gender-based, anti-Semitic, and disability. Almost one third of incidents were reported in the anti-LGBTI category, while a significant number of racist and xenophobic, anti-Semitic, and both gender-based *and* anti-LGBTI incidents were reported. Several multiple bias incidents were reported in the categories of racist and xenophobic *and* anti-LGBTI, racist and xenophobic *and* anti-Muslim, anti-Muslim *and* gender-based, and racist and xenophobic *and* disability.

ODIHR observes that anti-LGBTI incidents frequently involved physical assaults, threats, and harassment of same-sex couples and visibly queer persons in public spaces, often around LGBTI-Pride events. Many cases included repeated theft or vandalism of pride symbols, arson, and online threats. Gender-based and anti-LGBTI incidents disproportionately affected trans and non-binary people, who faced sexual and physical assaults and public threats. ODIHR further notes that anti-Christian incidents in Switzerland mainly targeted Jehovah's Witnesses, including physical assaults, threats, repeated vandalism of Kingdom Halls, and an arson attempt against a church. Anti-Muslim incidents included physical assaults and harassment of visibly Muslim women and their children, disruptive behaviour at mosques, and the attempted murder of two 14-year-old girls. ODIHR also noted numerous anti-Semitic incidents, with synagogues, schools, and private homes vandalized with swastikas, Holocaust references, and slogans linked to the conflict in the Middle East. Finally, racist and xenophobic incidents disproportionately targeted people of African descent, including children, who faced repeated harassment, assaults, and threats in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, with several cases involving police as perpetrators. Victims of Arab, Asian, and Turkish origin were also targeted, alongside threats related to pro-migrant and pro-Palestinian expression.

It should be noted that ODIHR did not receive any reporting related to hate incidents targeting the Roma community and other religions or beliefs in Switzerland, and only a single incident of disability hate crime. This indicates potential gaps in the information reported here.

In addition, one reporting organization submitted 48 statistical incidents motivated by anti-Semitic bias, for which descriptions are not available in the tables below.
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 Switzerland.

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

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

View civil society incidents for Switzerland, 2024