(English version)

Question for written answer E-002611/24
to the Commission
Tomasz Froelich (ESN)
(21 November 2024)

Subject: Commission's ignorance of hate crimes against Christians

According to the Austrian NGO OIDAC, the number of hate crimes against Christians has increased by 44% and arson attacks on or in churches by 75% compared to 2021. For 2022, OIDAC documented 748 anti-Christian hate crimes in 30 different countries, ranging from arson attacks to threats ([1]). Astonishingly, the Commission makes no mention of this in its communication entitled 'No place for hate: a Europe united against hatred', though it does discuss hate against other religions or sexual minorities ([2]).

1. Why is absolutely no mention made of the significant increase in hate crimes against Christians in the Commission's communication entitled 'No place for hate: a Europe united against hatred'?

2. What data analyses and databases on the backgrounds and motives of those who incite hatred against Christians — in any form — does the Commission have?

3. If not currently available, does the Commission intend to collect such data in future?

Submitted: 21.11.2024

Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(24 January 2025)

The Commission is committed to ensure that there is no place for hate in the EU, whatever form it takes and regardless of whom it is directed to.

The Joint Communication on 'No Place for Hate: a Europe united against hatred' ([1]) states that every individual, every community, and every faith deserves equal respect and calls to combat hatred, scapegoating, and the denigration of any person due to their racial and ethnic origin as well as their faith.

The 2008 Framework Decision on combatting racism and xenophobia ([2]) requires Member States to criminalise hate speech, defined as the public incitement to violence or hatred, on a number of protected grounds, including religion.

Under the Commission's High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime ([3]), the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights leads a working group to improve hate crime reporting, recording and data collection through standardised methodologies that enable the identification of possible bias motives ([4]).

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), which is an active partner in the High Level Group, collects hate crime data provided by both public authorities and civil society organisations.

The 'Hate Crime Report 2023' ([5]), published in November 2024, indicates that on a total of 9 891 reports by civil society organisations and international organisations from 47 OSCE participating states, 583 were cases of anti-Christian hatred.

The Commission will continue prompting harmonised systems for hate crime and hate speech data collection across Member States, with a view to produce comparable data on all grounds of hate speech and hate crime.

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1 [1]https://www.katholisch.at/aktuelles/146105/zahl-von-osze-dokumentierten-hassverbrechen-deutlich-gestiegen
2 [2]https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52023JC0051
([1]) https://commission.europa.eu/document/c60c451c-ccd2-406a-be3a-ef65123f2bb6_en
([2]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expression of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law OJ L 328, p. 55 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32008F0913
([3]) https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combatting-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-hate-speech-and-hate-crime_en
([4]) https://fra.europa.eu/en/themes/hate-crime
([5]) https://hatecrime.osce.org/hate-crime-data?year=2023