

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000584/25
to the Commission
Jean-Paul Garraud (PFE)
(8 February 2025)**

Subject: Increase in criminal acts against Catholic churches

According to a report by the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe, 2 444 anti-Christian hate crimes were documented in 2023, including nearly 1 000 in France (41% of the total in Europe). Of those, 62% were acts of vandalism, 10% were arson, and 7% were acts of physical violence. ⁽¹⁾

The trend took a turn for the worse in 2024, especially in France, where actual and attempted arson attacks against churches increased by more than 30% ⁽²⁾.

In 2015 the Commission appointed an EU Coordinator on combating antisemitism, and in 2018 it appointed an EU Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred. No one has been appointed to combat Christianophobia.

The lack of effective border controls and shortcomings with regard to the integration of certain populations are resulting in hostile behaviour towards the culture and traditions of the host countries.

1. Does the Commission acknowledge that there has been an increase in criminal acts against Catholic churches in Europe?
2. What measures does it have in mind to prevent these attacks in Europe?
3. Is it planning to appoint a coordinator to combat Christianophobia in 2025, or at a later stage?

Submitted: 8.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(8 May 2025)**

The Commission is committed to ensure that there is no place for hate based on religion in the EU. Through its policy instruments to address hate speech and hate crime, the Commission is addressing and monitoring closely the situation on hate based on religion within the EU, including against Christians.

The Commission cooperates with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the context of the Commission's High Level Group ⁽¹⁾. The ODIHR provides regular data on hate crimes targeting Christians ⁽²⁾.

Places of worship have been targeted by acts of vandalism and terrorism in the EU, including Christian churches. Such acts are unacceptable and need to be prosecuted as hate crime by national authorities, who are solely responsible for investigations in the Member States.

The Commission supports strengthening the protection of places of worship ⁽³⁾ ⁽⁴⁾. A quick guide to support the protection of places of worship has been published in 2021 ⁽⁵⁾ to help assess the risks they face and implement measures that increase their protection, in particular against terrorism.

Moreover, under the 2023 PROTECT call ⁽⁶⁾ of the Internal Security Fund ⁽⁷⁾, the Commission will provide EUR 30 million of funding to support transnational and inter-religious projects conducting, among others, vulnerability assessments in places of worship and providing training to faith leaders and communities ⁽⁸⁾.

¹ <https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/publications/oidac-report-2024?>

² <https://fr.aletea.org/2025/02/03/en-2024-moins-dactes-anti-chretiens-mais-plus-dincendies-criminels-deglises?>

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/combating-hate-speech-and-hate-crime_en#the-high-level-group-on-combating-hate-speech-and-hate-crime

⁽²⁾ see <https://hatecrime.osce.org/>

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52023JC0051>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017DC0612>

⁽⁵⁾ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/whats-new/publications/eu-quick-guide-support-protection-places-worship_en#:~:text=This%20guide%20aims%20at%20helping%20smaller%20and%20medium-sized,altering%20the%20nature%20and%20purpose%20of%20the%20space

⁽⁶⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/isf/wp-call/2023-2025/call-fiche_isf-2024-tf2-ag-protect_en.pdf

⁽⁷⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/internal-security-fund_en

⁽⁸⁾ <https://agenceurope.eu/en/bulletin/article/13598/36>