



ODIHR's Efforts to Counter Hate Crime



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"Hate crimes can undermine the security of societies by creating or exacerbating wider tensions. These, in turn, can trigger larger conflict across communities, intensifying civil disturbances and even causing acts of violence."

– ODIHR Director Michael Georg Link

What is a hate crime?

A hate crime is a crime that is motivated by bias towards a certain group within society. For a criminal act to qualify as a hate crime, it must meet two criteria:

- The act must be a crime under the criminal code of the legal jurisdiction in which it is committed and
- The crime must have been committed with a *bias motivation*.

"Bias motivation" means that the perpetrator chose the target of the crime on the basis of *protected characteristics*.

A "protected characteristic" is a fundamental or core characteristic that is shared by a group, such as race, religion, ethnicity, language or sexual orientation.

The target of a hate crime may be a person, a group of people or property associated with a group that shares a protected characteristic.

Why is the OSCE involved?

The OSCE has given particular attention to hate crimes because they are one of the most serious manifestations of intolerance.

The OSCE's Ministerial Council has repeatedly reaffirmed the threat that hate crimes pose to the security of individuals and to social cohesion, as well as their potential to lead to conflict and violence on a wider scale.

How is ODIHR involved?

As the OSCE institution focusing on the human dimension of security, ODIHR's support for efforts to address intolerance and foster a climate of peace lies at the core of its mission.

Accordingly, OSCE participating States have given ODIHR the task of assisting them in the struggle against hate crime.

ODIHR's mandate comprises:

- Helping participating States to design and draft legislation that effectively addresses hate crimes;
- Building the capacities of justice systems in participating States and of the law-enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges that staff them;
- Raising awareness of hate crime among governmental officials, civil society and international organizations; and
- Supporting efforts by civil society to monitor and report hate crimes.

The partnership principle

ODIHR knows it cannot hope to tackle hate crime alone. Our partners include:

- Participating States — each participating State appoints a National Point of Contact on Hate Crimes (NPC) to collect and report information on hate crimes;
- Civil society groups - which play a crucial role in monitoring and reporting hate crimes; and
- International organizations — ODIHR works with OSCE field operations, UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Association of Prosecutors and other bodies in joining forces to respond to hate crimes.

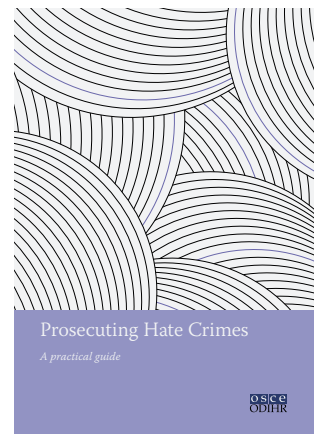
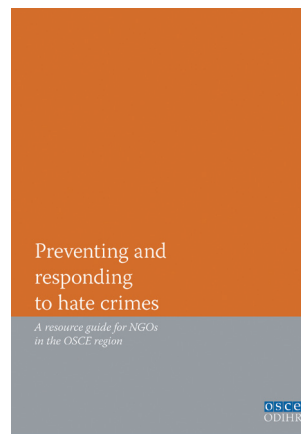
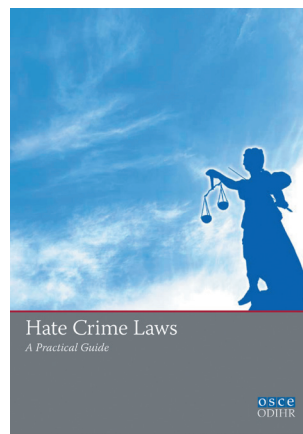
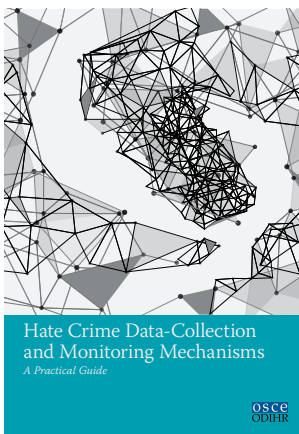
Tools for change

To help ensure that participating States can properly recognize, define and confront hate crimes, ODIHR has developed a series of seminars, workshops and capacity-building programmes for police, prosecutors, judges, civil society and international organizations.

To back up its efforts, ODIHR has designed a series of programmes and resources:

- **OSCE Hate Crime Reporting Website** – this website provides annual data on hate crime and developments reported by participating States, civil society and international organizations. Users can cross-reference and search for data by country and bias motivation. Users can find information, news and analysis related to ODIHR's work in countering hate crime. Visit hatecrime.osce.org for more information.

- **Training against Hate Crime for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE)** – This programme is designed to improve police skills in recognizing, understanding and investigating hate crimes. Implementation of the programme should improve police skills in preventing and responding to hate crimes, interacting effectively with victim communities, and building public confidence and co-operation with law-enforcement agencies.
- **Prosecutors and Hate Crime Training (PAHCT)** – This comprehensive training programme is designed to improve responses to hate crimes by prosecutors. It was created to help prosecutors effectively investigate and prosecute hate crimes and complements existing efforts to train law enforcement personnel.
- **Hate Crime Data Collection and Monitoring: A Practical Guide** – this guide sets out 'Ten Practical Steps' that may be taken to improve recording systems, to understand the extent of under-reporting and to encourage victims to report hate crimes. It aims to contribute to efforts to fill data gaps and gain a better understanding of the prevalence and impact of hate crime across the OSCE region.
- **TANDIS** – The Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Information System provides information such as international standards and instruments, country reports and annual reports from participating States and intergovernmental organizations. Visit <http://tandis.odihr.pl> for more information.



More information:

For detailed information about ODIHR's hate crime initiatives and to view its full range of resources and publications, please visit www.osce.org/odihr

or contact ODIHR at:

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