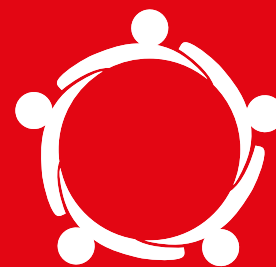


# PART III

## Fostering accessible, equal and inclusive societies free from discrimination and marginalization

ODIHR works tirelessly on promoting equal, inclusive societies, free from discrimination, in every part of the OSCE region. Working closely with national authorities, educators, young people and civil society organizations, ODIHR provides resources, tools and training to counter discrimination and foster inclusion at all levels of society. This year's impact stories highlight the Office's activities in this area, including hate crime prosecution, migrant integration and support for Roma civil society in Ukraine.



# 3.1

## Strengthening social cohesion through migrant and refugee integration in Polish cities

**P**olish cities have been on the frontline of the Ukrainian refugee crisis since 2022, when the invasion by the Russian Federation forced millions to flee. Local administrations have played a crucial role in facilitating socio-economic inclusion while addressing persistent challenges.

A joint project to support the integration of migrants and refugees in Poland has demonstrated the power of collaboration in addressing one of society's most pressing challenges. Coordinated by ODIHR, the Academy on the Integration of Migrants and Refugees in Polish Cities brought the Office together with the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Union of Polish Metropolises. This inter-agency

initiative reflects OSCE commitments to the protection of human rights and the integration of migrants as part of broader efforts to promote inclusive, cohesive societies.

Altogether, the Academy delivered ten tailored training courses over 18 months to 146 participants from 13 Polish cities and towns. The Academy strengthened the skills of local practitioners in supporting migrants and refugees, while encouraging collaboration and knowledge-sharing across Polish cities. The courses covered a range of topics critical to successful integration, including fostering intercultural competence, countering misinformation, strengthening inclusive communication, addressing gender-based violence and building effective multi-stakeholder partnerships.



**TOMASZ FIJOŁEK**  
Director of Legislation of the Union of Polish Metropolises

*We are grateful to all our partners, and of course the participants. The knowledge gained will be useful both professionally and personally."*



**MAGDALENA FURDZIK**  
Municipality of Kraków

*Polish cities have much to share: they have the potential and experience to create open and empathetic communities. At this seminar, we talked about what worked and what didn't, and how to best continue working towards intercultural dialogue. We inspire each other."*



OSCE/Maria Kokce

Training on good practices in migrant integration for Polish cities, part II, Warsaw, Poland, 7 November 2023



Closing event of the Academy on the Integration of Migrants and Refugees in Polish Cities, Warsaw, Poland, 27 November 2024

The Academy's collaborative approach, combining the expertise of international partners with the Union of Polish Metropolises' local coordination, proved highly effective. Inspired by its success, plans are underway to replicate the project in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania over the next two years, showcasing good practices from Polish cities and adapting lessons learned to support migrant and refugee integration in the Baltic states.

Through this initiative, Polish cities have been empowered to meet integration challenges head-on, ensuring that migrants and refugees can contribute meaningfully to their new communities while fostering social cohesion and mitigating tensions. The Academy stands as an example of the power of international collaboration and local action in building inclusive societies.



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**ALBERT MIŚCIORAK**  
 Coordinator, Wrocław Centre for Social Development, City of Wrocław

*Migrant integration is a challenge for cities, that's for sure. One of my big takeaways from this training is the different ways towns and cities are greeting the new members of their community. This kind of symbolic gesture is very important to make the newcomers feel welcome.”*



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**KLAUDIA TOMCZAK-ŁĄTKOWSKA**  
 Municipality of Poznań

*I've taken part in all three ODIHR training courses to exchange experiences with colleagues from other cities and learn about good practices elsewhere. One of the ideas that inspired me was the welcome pack for new arrivals, which we will certainly try to implement in Poznań. I would also like to strengthen intercultural exchanges in our city and conduct new training for city officials about how to make the most of cultural diversity.”*



## 3.2

# Expert guidance and training for building a legal case against hate crime



Launch of the ODIHR Prosecutor's Guide, Vienna, Austria, 14 November 2024

**S**trong hate crime laws help protect our rights and address the harm done when those rights are violated. However, when concepts such as hate crime, 'hate speech' or discrimination are confused or misunderstood, prosecutors may select the wrong charge, depriving victims and entire communities from receiving much-needed protection and support.

Over the past 20 years, ODIHR has worked closely with prosecutors, police, policymakers, legislators, civil society actors and others to strengthen hate crime laws, policies and practices across the OSCE region. In 2024, ODIHR contributed to guidance for prosecutors in Montenegro on responding to hate crime and 'hate speech', drafted by the country's Supreme Prosecutor. This work has given ODIHR experts unique insight into the difficulties of addressing hate crime, revealing the real-life consequences for victims and their communities when hate crimes are not prosecuted as such.

In 2024, ODIHR collated its extensive expertise into a tool for prosecuting hate crimes, entitled *Hate Crime prosecution at the Intersection of Hate Crime and Criminalized Hate Speech: a Practical Guide*.

Drawing on examples from across the OSCE region, the guide assists prosecutors in selecting the correct charge by crystallizing the questions they should ask themselves in the form of a decision tree. The guide also presents strategies for effective hate crime prosecution, from coordinating with police to collecting evidence of bias motive, to working with courts to ensure that tougher sentences are passed. The guide can also be used by decision-makers to assess the effectiveness of policies, practices and legislation to address hate crime, as well as by civil society in advocacy and legal assistance work.

Driven by the needs on the ground and by an overwhelming interest in the guide, ODIHR is working to facilitate

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**KALLIOPI THEOLOGITOU**  
Deputy Public Prosecutor at the Court of Appeal of Athens, Greece.

***Congratulations on the development of the guide for prosecutors; I will share this much-needed tool with all prosecutors working on hate crime in my country and will use it for training purposes.”***



its use across the OSCE region. These include:

- Translating it into multiple languages;
- Presenting it at a regional event for prosecutors, judges, lawyers and policymakers;
- Organizing national workshops on implementing recommendations made in the guide; and
- Setting up a network of prosecutors specializing in effective hate crime prosecution.

However, effective hate crime prosecution goes beyond the work of individual prosecutors. ODIHR supports OSCE states in providing a comprehensive and coordinated response to addressing hate crime, through its broad range of tailored technical assistance and capacity-building programmes organized at the request of states.



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**ALEKSANDAR MARKOSKI**

PhD, Public Prosecutor and Lecturer at the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors, North Macedonia

*Even in countries with solid hate crime legislation, ‘hate speech’ offences and hate crime cases can appear to overlap, resulting in less-than-precise indictments. ODIHR’s new guide undoubtedly helps to untangle these concepts and contributes to the effective and fair prosecution of hate crime. The guide’s ‘Decision Tree’ allows prosecutors like myself to navigate these challenges with ease, while the examples provided keep the guidance grounded in real-life contexts.”*

In May 2024, the Office brought together police and prosecutors in Iceland for two, back-to-back, training workshops on addressing hate crime. The aim was to ensure a consistent approach in how police and prosecutors apply recent amendments to Iceland’s hate crime legislation. ODIHR also trained police in France, Poland and Romania, including follow-up visits to ensure the widest possible uptake of its hate crime training programmes. These sustained efforts have helped to deepen cooperation between criminal justice agencies and establish hate crime as a core part of national training programmes for police and prosecutors.



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**MARGRÉT UNNUR RÖGNVALDSDÓTTIR**

Prosecutor at the Director of Public Prosecutions, Iceland

*ODIHR’s training workshop for prosecutors was both eye-opening and practical, and gave us an understanding of the nature and impact of such crimes on the victims, their communities and our society as a whole. We learned how to recognize and present hate crimes in court, as well as how to share this knowledge with our colleagues.”*



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Joint statement by

**MADALINA MARGINEANU AND BOGDAN BRAN**

Hate Crimes Investigation Office, General Inspectorate, Romanian Police

*ODIHR’s training programme empowers Romanian police officers to recognize, understand and respond to hate crimes, thereby fostering safer communities.”*

**ODIHR’s hate crime training programmes**

The Training against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement (TAHCLE) programme is designed to improve police skills in recognizing, understanding and investigating hate crimes and providing effective support to victims.

The Prosecutors and Hate Crimes Training (PAHCT) programme is designed to improve responses to hate crimes by prosecutors and improve support to hate crime victims.

## 3.3

# Advancing meaningful dialogue between Roma civil society, government and the international community in Ukraine



Conference on Mapping the Challenges faced by Ukrainian Roma in War Time and Overcoming the Obstacles through Policy, Advocacy and Empowerment, Warsaw, Poland, 6-7 March 2024

**T**he war in Ukraine has exacerbated the socio-economic inequalities facing Roma, increasing the risk of discrimination and abuse. Forcibly displaced Roma often experience prejudice in accessing shelter, protection, aid, labour and other services. Women are especially vulnerable to intersectional discrimination, exploitation and human trafficking.

These are complex challenges requiring coordinated action, and Roma civil society, the Ukrainian authorities and the international community work together on this issue. ODIHR, with a specific mandate to support OSCE participating States and civil society in addressing the concerns of Roma and Sinti, including in crisis situations, has helped to foster this cooperation.

In March, in partnership with the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, ODIHR organized a [conference](#) that mapped out war-related challenges experienced by Ukrainian Roma and discussed cooperation to ensure better protection. The event brought together 50 representatives of central and local government, civil society and the international community, and the [conference report](#) details the key concerns and jointly agreed proposals for overcoming the challenges. This meeting is an excellent example of how constructive dialogue can strengthen stakeholder collaboration to advance the rights of Roma both in times of conflict and peace.



**IHOR LOSSOVSKYI**  
Deputy Head of the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience

*Despite tough circumstances, the Ukrainian Government continues with its commitments towards the Roma population. The support provided by ODIHR adds to the current efforts and helps authorities find efficient solutions for the difficulties experienced by this community.”*







**VIRA DRANHOI**

representing the Roma Human Rights Centre, Odesa

***Roma civil society plays a pivotal role in ensuring that the rights of Roma are protected and promoted, including during the ongoing war. Achieving this goal is possible through dialogue with state authorities and international partners for cooperation. ODIHR has been crucial in nourishing such cooperation.***

Under the auspices of the 'Advancing the Human Dimension of Security in Ukraine' project, ODIHR is conducting **human rights monitoring of Roma in Ukraine**. The Office also continued its training programmes for Roma and pro-Roma human rights advocates on human rights monitoring, digital safety and security, wellbeing, and gender mainstreaming and empowerment.



Piotr Markowski

Training on Digital Safety and Security for Ukrainian Roma and pro-Roma Human Rights Defenders, Warsaw, Poland, 10-12 October 2024

The subject was discussed again in detail during the 2024 Warsaw Human Dimension Conference. Representatives of OSCE participating States, Roma civil society and international partners for cooperation highlighted that Roma experience compounded inequalities that require both substantial efforts to counter and better coordination among the actors involved.

At the same time, ODIHR has invested significant resources in developing stronger and sustainable relationships with the state agencies dealing with the issues faced by the Roma community, such as the State Service of Ukraine for Ethnic Affairs and Freedom of Conscience and the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. These relationships are critical to providing effective responses to the complex human rights challenges experienced by Roma, through the swift and continual exchange of information and ideas. It allows joint priorities to be set and resources to be optimized to enable positive change.



Piotr Markowski



Piotr Markowski

Conference on Mapping the Challenges faced by Ukrainian Roma in War Time and Overcoming the Obstacles through Policy, Advocacy and Empowerment, Warsaw, Poland, 6-7 March 2024

## 3.4

# Making Roma voices heard in genocide remembrance and education



Tea Jaliashvili, ODIHR First Deputy Director, addresses the 2024 European Holocaust Memorial Day for Roma and Sinti, Oświęcim, Poland, 2 August 2024

**T**he general public still knows little about the genocide of the Roma by the Nazis during the Second World War. It is estimated that nearly half a million Roma and Sinti men, women and children became victims of genocide by May 1945. Among young people, awareness of the tragedy of the Holocaust is falling, and they are increasingly exposed to Holocaust denial and distortion, particularly online. At the same time, there are ever-fewer Holocaust survivors still alive to share their stories. This is why commemoration and education are vital to raise awareness about the devastating consequences of prejudice and hate and counter current forms of discrimination, racism and exclusion.

The 2003 [Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area](#) calls for the inclusion of Roma history and culture, and in particular the genocide of Roma and Sinti, in educational materials. ODIHR increases awareness of the Roma genocide through a range of activities, ensuring that countries across the OSCE region honour the Roma and Sinti who lost their lives during the Second World War. ODIHR also contributed to the recently adopted [Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Persecution and Genocide of the Roma during the Nazi Era](#) developed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

On 2 August 2024, ODIHR joined international partners at the former Nazi extermination camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau to honour the memory of all those who were murdered in the Roma genocide 80 years ago. As part of the commemorations, ODIHR organized a workshop to explore the experiences of those who are affected by anti-Roma discrimination and discuss what policymakers and institutions can do to ensure inclusive education for Roma today, as well as continued commemoration and preservation of the memory of the Roma and Sinti victims of the past





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**OLENA VAIDALOVYCH**

Senior Adviser on Legal Affairs and Advocacy, 'Foundation Towards Dialogue'

*Knowledge about the Roma genocide and the atrocities that the victims of the Nazi era went through is essential. Both Roma and non-Roma must understand that what happened during the Holocaust was deeply wrong and that there can be no justification or excuse. This is obviously an important message for non-Roma; not least because, without that understanding, the discrimination and abuse of Roma today cannot be addressed.”*



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**SATU FLORIN**

Board member of Ternype Roma Youth Network

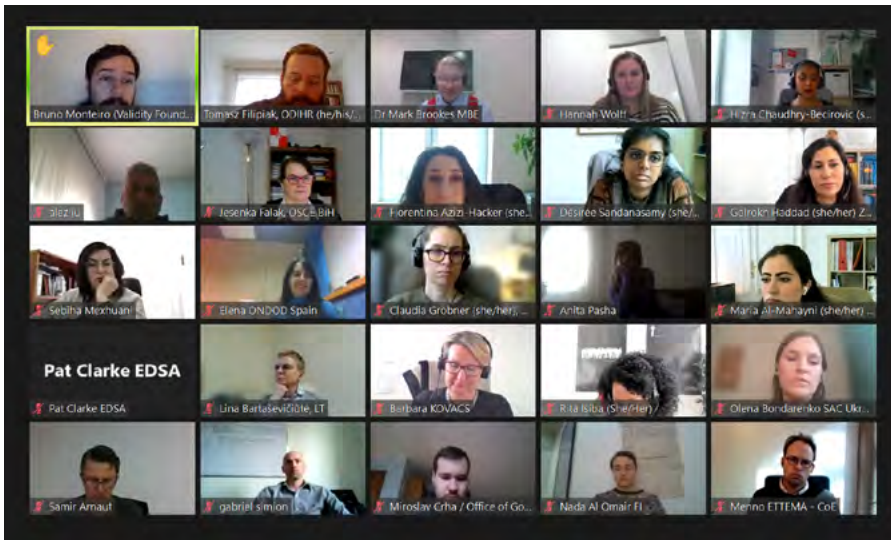
*Being aware of the history of Roma has helped me to understand and strengthen my own identity, and anything that aims to increase the knowledge of Roma history and culture among a broader audience is equally important. Getting more educational materials helps local organizations to educate society, locals and different actors.”*



Central Council of German Sinti and Romani / Jaroslav Praskiewicz

# 3.5

## Fostering dialogue to improve support for hate crime victims



**DR MARK BROOKES MBE**  
Advocacy Lead, Dimensions UK  
and Churchill Fellow 2024

*Disability hate crime continues to be normalized in society and remains drastically under-reported. It is vital that we raise awareness within disability communities and share our lived experiences through resources, training and events, including ODIHR’s webinar series, so that disability rights — our human rights — are no longer ignored. Working with ODIHR enables us to work collaboratively with the international community, finding solutions to the barriers we face in our daily lives.”*

**T**oo often, the people most affected by human rights violations are left out of conversations that affect them. By supporting states to include victims’ perspectives in policy and practice, ODIHR ensures that victims have the opportunity to contribute to policy that makes a positive difference to their lives.

In 2024, ODIHR applied this approach in a series of nine webinars on tackling specific areas of hate crime victim support. The webinars gave researchers, practitioners and those directly affected by hate crime the opportunity to test their ideas and initiatives to improve the support currently available to victims.

Covering a range of topics, from the psychological consequences of hate crime to specialist support for victims with learning disabilities, the webinars enabled some 475 participants to consider the needs

and viewpoints of different victim groups. Participants took the opportunity to present innovative solutions, such as using virtual reality to increase awareness of victims’ experiences, or the role of strategic litigation in building support for hate crime victims. ODIHR’s network of experts on hate crime victim support participated in the events, providing a channel for experts and practitioners to present their recommendations to policymakers.

ODIHR’s regular, direct engagement with hate crime victim support practitioners makes it well placed to develop practical measures and support effective partnerships at both the national and regional levels. One example of this is ODIHR’s continued coordination of the Working group on hate crime victim support within the European Commission’s High Level Group on Combating Hate Crime and Hate Speech.





**PROF. DR. EVA GROSS, DR. ANABEL TAEFI AND PROF. DR. ULRIKE ZÄHRINGER**

of the Hamburg Institute for Interdisciplinary Crime and Security Research

*By sensitizing police to the lived experiences of hate crime victims, virtual reality technology can strengthen trust in police and boost reporting by victims. The ODIHR webinar provided our team with a valuable opportunity to examine both the challenges and benefits of using immersive technologies in police training while discussing our findings with a knowledgeable audience.”*

**STARS: Comprehensive Support for Hate Crime Victims**

ODIHR’s STARS initiative has three main aims:

- Develop policy guidance on hate crime victim support;
- Train first responders and support providers to assist hate crime victims; and
- Build platforms for dialogue and facilitate the exchange of good practices.

STARS has published a practical guide, *Including the voices of hate crime victims in policymaking and policy implementation* which sets out 10 key principles for including hate crime victims in policy initiatives.

Including hate crime victims in the policymaking process helps to ensure that systems, policies and programmes are tailored to the needs of victims, helping them to recover from their experiences while upholding their rights to redress and support.



STARS is implemented in close cooperation with the European Commission and is funded by the European Union, Bulgaria and Italy.



Anna Chmiel, Mateusz Barski, Ka Ka Films

Illustrations from ODIHR’s Hate Crime Training videos



## 3.6

# Empowering communities to address anti-Muslim intolerance

Intolerance and hate crimes targeting religious communities have regrettably intensified in many parts of the OSCE region. In the United Kingdom, widespread riots in summer 2024 were fuelled by racism and anti-Muslim hatred. In response to this and other crises, ODIHR stepped up its support to states and communities affected by anti-religious prejudice, using its numerous resources and wide-ranging convening powers to develop and deliver actionable solutions.

The Office organized roundtables and consultative meetings to learn more about communities' experiences of anti-religious intolerance and assist with the use of its practical resources. ODIHR also participated in a number of events organized by partners to share feedback from these communities, discuss examples of good practices, and strengthen institutional frameworks to counter intolerance and hate crime.

Findings from ODIHR's [Hate Crime Report](#) indicate that Muslim women are particularly vulnerable to hate crime and intolerance. In November 2024, ODIHR partnered with the Forum for Peace UK and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims to organize a roundtable at the House of Commons in London. The event brought together senior policymakers, parliamentarians, Muslim women activists, community organizers and academics to examine women's experiences of anti-Muslim hatred and empower them to take action against intolerance.

The roundtable gave voice to Muslim women's experiences of discrimination, providing an opportunity to engage with community activists and representatives as well as policymakers. The discussions resulted in actionable initiatives such as designing hate crime reporting mechanisms and advocating for research into the psychological needs of hate crime victims, with a focus on Muslim women victims.

ODIHR will follow up on this event in 2025 by giving young Muslim women space to discuss the intolerance they face while contributing to sustainable solutions.

All participants acknowledged that under-reporting remains a pervasive obstacle to addressing anti-Muslim hatred, and they welcomed ODIHR's many resources on the subject, including the practical guide to address the security needs of Muslim communities, and its annual hate crime report and victim support work.

ODIHR's resources on Anti-Muslim hate crime include practical guides to address the security needs of Muslim communities targeted by hate crime. They provide guidance on how to support communities and prevent their hate crime victimization, and are designed for use by communities, police, policymakers, legislators and others.



**SHAHIEN TAJ OBE**

Hon. DUniv, Trustee of the Forum for Peace UK and Founder and Former Executive Director of the Henna Foundation, United Kingdom

***This event served as a vital platform for Muslim women from across the United Kingdom to explore meaningful solutions to counter anti-Muslim hatred in a collaborative and inclusive environment. The invaluable insights and resources shared by ODIHR provided a foundation for understanding how inherent traits like negativity bias are perpetuated by modern mechanisms, such as social media and artificial intelligence.***

