

Far Left Drives 44 Percent Hate Crime Increase Against European Christians

Anti-Christian hate crimes in Europe have risen by 44 percent in just one year, with far-left groups behind a majority of the attacks, according to a shocking new report.

Published in October, the Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination Against Christians in Europe's [Annual Report](#) detailed a wave of violent attacks, church arson, and rising extremism battering Europe's historic Christian communities.

The Austrian group, better known as OIAC Europe, noted that their 60-page report did not have room to address the more than 5,000 cases of "social hostility or threatened religious freedom" archived on their [website](#). However, their latest report did draw attention to 748 anti-Christian hate crimes that took place in 2022/23, up from 519 a year earlier.

A subset of that figure was 105 arson attacks, up from 60 the year prior, representing a 75 percent increase, the majority of which took place in Germany, France, Italy and the UK. Alarming, the report drew attention to "a very common slogan among certain political groups" inciting these attacks: "The only Church that illuminates is the one that burns."

The crimes, which were committed between September 2022 and August 2023, spanned 30 European countries and included 38 instances of physical assault and three murders. OIAC Europe noted that the real figure is probably higher than 748 but remains elusive due to "limited reporting on anti-Christian hate crimes, the 'chilling effect' among victims, and the lack of media coverage."

Researchers warned that after more than a decade of studying

anti-Christian hate crimes, they have continued to witness a steady rise in numbers.

One new trend OIDAC identified was the increasingly overt anti-Christian ideology of the perpetrators, in contrast to prior years when “most [hate] crimes had an unclear motive or were perpetrated by private persons.”

“[O]ur research shows that one of the main sources of aggression are radicalised members of extreme political groups, with a majority of cases coming from far-left political groups, such as Antifa, radical feminists, or LGBTIQ groups,” the report noted.

Satanists and radical Islamist groups were also common sources of persecution for Europe’s beleaguered Christian population.

Christian holidays such as Easter and Christmas were popular times for criminals to target the faithful, while “processions, public celebrations, and events with public decorations and symbols” also provided instances of heightened risk for Christians.

In addition to criminal assault and vandalism, OIDAC identified legal developments that threaten the religious freedom of Christians, such as “vaguely formulated and overreaching laws that would criminalise parents, pastors, and teachers if they express dissenting opinions regarding LGBTIQ-related discussions or discourage their children from undergoing ‘hormone therapies’ because of their religious convictions.”

“New ‘buffer zones’ around abortion clinics are one form of state regulation that has led to the criminalization of Christians for praying silently on the street,” they likewise noted.

Attempts to erase “conscience clauses from legal provisions in the medical sphere” that place undue burdens on religious

adherents, and “underreporting by the media” following the ethnic cleansing of Christians in the majority world were among other injustices highlighted in the report.

The OIDAC Europe report provides a welcome wake-up call to Christian leaders across the Western world—and in the United States, especially—who are guilty of shifting the goalposts on what actually constitutes [persecution](#).

[Biblically speaking](#), persecution is any ill treatment of Christians—whether ridicule, discrimination, physical violence, imprisonment or death—due to their devotion to Jesus Christ.

Persecution is not merely opposition aimed at people who are actively preaching the gospel; nor is it limited geographically to non-Western nations.

In fact, perpetrators of persecution do not necessarily have to harbor ill will toward Christians: Their fanaticism for other agendas—whether medical or sexual, national or globalist, religious or secular—may be the wellspring of their harmful actions. Indeed, in many examples arising in the OIDAC Europe report, it was ignorance, apathy, neglect, or a preoccupation with more fashionable causes—from political leaders especially—that resulted in the suffering of Christians in Europe.

What matters most is whether Christians are punished for living “Christianly”—that is, made to suffer simply for living in accordance with their biblically-informed worldview and conscience.

As Article 9 of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR), quoted in the OIDAC report, states:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with

others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice, and observance.

In their conclusion, the researchers write, “As freedom of thought, conscience, and religion is a cornerstone for free and democratic societies, we hope that states will not compromise on the protection of these fundamental rights, and thus ensure an open and peaceful climate in our societies.”

It’s certainly worrying for Christians in the West. But even for those who are not Christian, this rise in violence should be cause for alarm. If attacks against Christians are normalized, which group will become the next target? As Lutheran Pastor Martin Niemöller famously [wrote](#) in 1946 in the aftermath of Nazi persecution of both Jews and Christians:

*Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me*

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