

OBSERVATORY ON
INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN EUROPE

www.IntoleranceAgainstChristians.eu

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Cases

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Statue of Jesus Beaten and Beheaded

(12.05.2012) A 2-meter-tall statue of Jesus was attacked at a cemetery in Pausa/Saxony. The vandals beheaded the statue and hit the head until it broke into pieces...

Cross Put on Fire in Strunjan

(10.05.2012) On Thursday, the 10th of May, Dean Verzel, together with a few adherents, set the XVIIth century votive cross of Strunjan on fire. The artist Dean ...

Christian Graves Vandlized in Canohès

(04.05.2012) Four Christian graves were vandalized and tagged with anti-Christian wordings the cemetery of Canohès in the Easter Pyrenees...

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Reports and Documents

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Vatican at UN: Parents have the Right to Homeschool

(01.05.2012) Parents "have the right and duty to choose schools inclusive of homeschooling, and they must possess the freedom to do so, which in turn, must be ...

Turkey Named as One of World's Worst Religious Freedom Violators

(26.03.2012) Turkey has been named as one of the world's worst violators of religious freedom, along with countries such as Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Saudi Arabia...

OSCE/ODIHR on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians

- June 26-27, 2012, OSCE/ODIHR on the role of civil society in combating Hate Crimes against Christians
- September 12, 2011, OSCE High-Level Meeting on Preventing and Responding to Hate Incidents and Crimes against Christians
- July 2009: OSCE Parliamentary Assembly urges states to combat intolerance and discrimination against Christians in the West
- March 4, 2009: OSCE Round Table in Vienna on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians
- 2005, 2006 and 2007: the Ministerial Council of OSCE emphasizes to combat intolerance against religion, including Christianity

Christians also face social hostility and marginalisation:

On November 3, 2010, the French Minister of the Interior wrote to the Council of Europe:

„84% of the vandalism in France in 2010 was directed against Christian sites.“ (French Ministre de l'intérieur, 3/11/2010)

„48% of all clergy had suffered from some form of violence in the past 12 months in the UK in 2006.“ (CLERGYsafe Survey March 2006, National Church Watch)

Christians in the UK Feel More Sidelined Than Ever (ComRes, 2011)

74% say: „There is more negative discrimination against Christians than people of other faiths.“

More than 60% feel that the marginalisation of Christians is increasing in the government, in the workplace (61%), and in the public (68%).

71% perceive an increase in the marginalisation of Christians in the media.

Tensions with regard to rights of Christians arise in these areas:

Freedom of Religion – collective / individual

Freedom of Conscience

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of Assembly

Discriminatory Equality Policies

Parental Rights

A public debate on the problem is beginning to rise:

- “Recent attacks on Christian communities have highlighted the necessity to address the problem of intolerance against Christians with a specific focus on hate crimes.” OSCE, Rome, 12.09.2011
- “Christians [in the UK] continue to voice concern about the ability to express their faith in the workplace.” Report on International Religious Freedom of US state department, Nov. 2010
- “Christianity is under pressure from a form of secularism, particularly in Europe... It seems that there is a fear of allowing religion to play a role in public life.” UN Economic and Social Council, 13.12.2004
- “We often hear about Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and very little is said about Christianophobia, which is gaining strength in many European countries.” Russian-Orthodox Metropolitan Hilarion, 25.01.2008
- “I am not Catholic, but I think there is prejudice and especially major anti-clericalism that is taking on enormous proportions in Europe.” Bernard-Henri Lévy, 24.09.2010
- “I imagine many Christians today feel under threat... We don’t have to agree with them, but we must recognise their right to disagree with us.” Roger Helmer, 19.09.2010
- “These are worrying signs of a failure to appreciate not only the rights of believers to freedom of conscience and freedom of religion, but also the legitimate role of religion in the public square.” Benedict XVI, 17.09.2010
- “We need to create a country in which people can be unashamedly proud of their faith – where they don’t feel that they have to leave religion at the door.” Baroness Warsi (a Muslim), 01.11.2011

OSCE / Parl. Assembly took the problem up and answered by recommending:

that a "**public debate** on intolerance and discrimination against Christians be initiated and that the **right of Christians to participate fully in public life** be ensured" (12);

that "in view of discrimination and intolerance against Christians, that **legislation** in the participating States, including labour law, equality law, laws on freedom of expression and assembly, and laws related to religious communities and right of conscientious objection **be assessed**" (13);

and "encourages the media **not to spread prejudices** against Christians and to **combat negative stereotyping**" (15).

(adopted unanimously in Belgrade, July 2011)