## HATE CRIME – VIOLENCE OF BIGOTRY AND INTOLERANCE (The case of Republic of Macedonia)

#### Abstract

Hate crime can be every criminal act (murder, violence, as well as property damage) when the perpetrator chooses the objective of the penal act on the basis of real or assumed protected characteristics like race, religion, ethnic affiliation, language, etc. In other words, hate crime is every criminal act where the motive for its committing is based on certain prejudice and surely can be destructive to both individual freedoms and community safety. The clarification of the dilemma in terms of the formulation of the hate crime will also result in determining the optimal manners and forms of acting of the police officers in reporting such crimes.

This article is referring to the legislation to combat hate crimes, which is very important. The act must be a crime under the criminal code of the legal jurisdiction in which it is committed. Every country should be able to inform the authorities about existing legislation regarding crimes driven by intolerance and discrimination, and, where appropriate seek their assistance in the drafting and review of such legislation.

In the years to come, hate crimes remains a serious problem, constituting a range of violence from intimidation, threats and vandalism to assault, arson and murder, in spite of all activities that were undertaken to combat discrimination, bigotry and intolerance.

<u>Key words:</u> hate crime, hate violence, discrimination, bias motivation, intolerance.

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#### Introduction

"Hate crimes are terrible crimes that create fear in the victims and their communities. These are crimes that affect society and everybody – police, prosecutors and lawyers, civil society and communities... has to come together to respond to and prevent these crimes."

Alexander Verkhovsky, Director of SOVA, Center for Information and Analysis, Russian Federation.

The functioning of the modern multicultural and plural society could not be imagined without a high level of tolerance, coordination and integration. The existence of situations of intolerance and hatred on national, race, religious and any other basis creates conditions for conflicts which may grow into violence and social disorganisation. The human rights and freedoms, peace, security, stability and prosperity of the society are the main target of the intolerance and hatred.

Therefore, the efficient prevention and reaction against hate crimes implies to a need for the country to provide respect and protection of the human rights and freedoms on the basis of the principle of equal rights.

Hate crimes inspire fear far beyond the boundaries of a municipality or country and, therefore, have the potential to escalate and lead to larger-scale conflicts. Hate-motivated crimes and incidents have a stronger impact on victims than "ordinary" crimes. They send a message to entire communities: that these groups should be denied the right to be part of society.<sup>2</sup>

The responsibility for combating hate crimes lies primarily with state authorities. Nevertheless, every civil society including Macedonia, should play crucial role in this endeavor.

In terms of the provision of adequate recognising, investigating and judgment in the cases of hate crime, i.e. crime motivated by prejudice, a need of awareness necessarily appeared at which the relevant penal provision will be presented before all the relevant parties along with their efficiency and practical application, as well as comparable experiences and practices when dealing with this type of crime.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Preventing and responding to hate crimes, 2009, p.9.

Important decisions in terms of the prevention of the crimes motivated by intolerance towards those certain social groups, were adopted at the meeting of the Ministerial Council of the member-states of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (hereinafter referred to as OSCE) in Maastricht in 2003. The member-states are obliged to examine the application and strengthening, as necessary, of the laws prohibiting discrimination or committing of hate crimes, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as ODIHR) was assigned with the task to encourage and coordinate their activities. In Brussels in 2006, the Ministerial Council adopted a decision for ODIHR to represent a collective point of information and statistical data on the hate crime and the legislation of the member-states and to make them publicly available.<sup>3</sup>

The concept of the rule of law and promotion of tolerance and indiscrimination, as well as the system of affirmation and protection of human rights are the main parameters within the frames of which the countries, as part of the international community, oblige themselves to act adopting and applying adequate legal solutions which prohibit committing hate crimes. These comprehensive activities require adequate coordination which is assigned to the ODIHR. In accordance with the Decision of the Ministerial Council of OSCE in Maastricht in 2003<sup>4</sup> and Brussels in 2006<sup>5</sup>, ODIHR represents a collective point of information and statistical data on the hate crime. The terms of the Office also includes activities directed towards promotion of the legislation, public availability of the collected data, capacity building of the penal justice system, as well as support and providing assistance to the hate crime victims.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For more information see: Камбовски Владо, Лазарова Трајковска Мирјана, Правна анализа на концептот на казнено дело на омраза и говорот на омраза, р. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ministerial Council decision no. 4/03: tolerance and non-discrimination, OSCE, 2 December 2003, available at: <a href="http://www.osce.org/mc/19382?download=true">http://www.osce.org/mc/19382?download=true</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ministerial Council Decision no. 13/06: combating intolerance and discrimination and promoting mutual respect and understanding, OSCE, 5 December 2006, available at: <a href="http://www.osce.org/mc/23114?download=true">http://www.osce.org/mc/23114?download=true</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Conclusions and Recommendations from the Conference on the application of legal provisions to combat hate crime, Skopje, pp.1-2.

With the Decision of the Ministerial Council of OSCE from 2009<sup>7</sup>, Republic of Macedonia obliges to collect data, adopt legislation, build capacities, conduct efficient investigations, as well as to provide protection to the hate crime victims.

For the purposes of the realisation of the established objective, besides the views and recommendations at the annual meetings of the Ministerial Council of the member-state, very instructive documents have been prepared in OSCE, including: OSCE- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR): *Hate Crime Laws: A Practical Guide* from 2009<sup>8</sup> as important tools for assisting and directing the activities of the member-states for meeting their obligations in the prevention of discrimination and hate crimes.<sup>9</sup>

### The concept of hate crime

Numerous countries are unfamiliar with the terminology and the use of the term hate crime itself. There are few characteristics that should be included in a hate crime. Two of them are main elements that need to be comprised, so the crime that is committed could be stated as a hate crime. First element is that an act is committed that constitutes an offence under ordinary criminal law (base offence) and the second element is that the criminal act is committed with a bias motive <sup>10</sup>, towards one or more people or even property of a group that shares a particular characteristics (race, language, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, etc.).

In other words, hate crime is every criminal act where the motive for its committing is based on certain prejudice. This definition again, emphasises <u>the two</u> <u>elements of the hate crime</u>, i.e. it can be every criminal act when the perpetrator chooses the objective of the penal act on the basis of <u>real or assumed protected</u> characteristics. This term should be theorised in a matter that enables it to respond effectively to its tasks, taking to account the diversity of every specific country. As already mentioned, hate crimes are crimes in which the perpetrator is motivated by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ministerial Council decision no. 9/09: combating hate crimes, OSCE, 2 December 2009, available at: <a href="http://www.osce.org/cio/40695?download=true">http://www.osce.org/cio/40695?download=true</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Available at: <a href="http://www.osce.org/odihr/36426?download=true">http://www.osce.org/odihr/36426?download=true</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Камбовски Владо, Лазарова Трајковска Мирјана, Правна анализа на концептот на казнено дело на омраза и говорот на омраза, р. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Hate crime Laws: A Practical Guide, 2009, p.16.

characteristics of the victim that identifies the victim as a member of a group towards which he feels some animosity.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, the term is used to describe wide diversity of behaviour. It can be applied to crimes such as assault and murder but, on the other hand, it can also reflect low - level violations such as vandalism<sup>12</sup>. Typically, it refers to 'violent' acts against the person and property. However, violence includes a range of behaviors that are not limited to physical acts against people and property, and which can incorporate *words*, *harassment and threats*<sup>13</sup>.

The term hate crime is also used to represent violent manifestation of intolerance and discrimination that harm individuals, their property and the group which they identify themselves<sup>14</sup> based on race, sex, language, religion or belief, national or social origin, sexual orientation, disability or other similar grounds. This term is broad enough to cover wide range of manifestations of intolerance.<sup>15</sup>

Legally, the focus is definitely on criminal law, but that doesn't mean that preventive efforts of manifestations of intolerance and bigotry need to approach the hate crime phenomenon from sociological, historical, and specific perspectives, for each country. Hence, the concept of hate crime has its roots in numerous disciplines such as history, criminology, law, sociology, etc.

There is one interesting specification that relates to national legislation and hate crimes. To be exact, countries do not have to enact specific legislation on hate crime to record and respond to hate crimes. It is sufficient to modify only the procedures whereby the police take notice when recording any crime where the victims were chosen because of their belonging or in worst case scenario – their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Combating hate crimes in the OSCE region: An overview of Statistics, Legislation and National initiatives, p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> In this regard, a full and extensive exploration of different manifestations of racist 'violence', as different victim-centred experiences, is lacking in most of the reports as a reflection of limited data and research in this area. For additional information on this Report, see: Racist violence in 15 EU member states - A Comparative Overview of Findings from the RAXEN NFP Reports 2001-2004, p. 32-33. Available at: <a href="http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\_uploads/190-CS-RV-main.pdf">http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\_uploads/190-CS-RV-main.pdf</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The group can be constituted from people that are declared as Muslims, Jews, African or Arab immigrants, Roma, gay or lesbian, or members of any other group.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Combating hate crimes in the OSCE region: An overview of Statistics, Legislation and National initiatives, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

perceived identification with a particular group.<sup>17</sup> The clarification of the dilemma in terms of the formulation of the hate crime will also result in determining the optimal manners and forms of acting of the police officers in reporting such penal acts, and of course, consequently, the manner of acting of the Public Prosecutor in such cases, especially the dilemma in terms of starting a process of negotiating and finding agreements in cases of hate crime.

## National Legislation

Republic of Macedonia must respect the undertaken international obligations to start active steps including a system for registration of hate crime. The Criminal Code<sup>18</sup> does not provide a specific act of hate but *qualified forms of performing of the basic criminal acts* have been provided where such motivations is primary which directs to the use of special definition of this type of crime in the general provisions<sup>19</sup>, and then incorporating this criminal conduct as special qualified view in the existing legal provisions. There is no determination of the group *as victim of hate crime* in the Criminal Code due to which difficulties in the proper identification of the victims of the criminal acts appear.

In terms of the domestic legislation, in 2009, the Republic of Macedonia adopted an amendment to the Criminal Code<sup>20</sup>, although it did not provide explicit definition of the hate crime, more severe punishment of the criminal acts where the perpetrator's motives are due to "national and social origin, political and religious belief, financial and social standing, gender, race or skin colour" was determined. In 2014<sup>21</sup>, the same Article 39, paragraph 5 of the Criminal Code obtained expanded list of protected characteristics by which the number of protected groups enjoying protection against attack due to their features has increased.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Op.cit. p.11-12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 37/1996; 80/1999; 4/2002; 43/2003; 19/2004; 81/2005; 60/2006; 73/2006; 7/2008; 139/2008; 114/2009; 51/2011; 135/2011; 185/2011; 142/2012; 166/2012; 55/2013, 82/2013, 14/2014; 27/2014; 28/2014; 115/14, 132/14; 160/14 and 199 /2014).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> For example Article 122 of the Criminal Code, such as the case of family violence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Criminal Code (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 114/09) adopted in September 2009, as of February 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup>Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 27, (05.02.2014).

#### Aggravating circumstances

*Article 39(5)* 

When determining the sentence, the court shall especially consider whether the crime has been committed against a person or group of persons or property, directly or indirectly, because of his/hers sex, race, color of skin, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnic origin, language, citizenship, social origin, religion or religious belief, other beliefs, education, political adherence, private or social status, mental or physical disability, age, family and marital status, property status, health condition, or any other ground provided in law or ratified international agreement.

In accordance with the adopted formulation, it is not obligatory for the perpetrator of the act to feel hate in order to qualify the act as a hate crime. Given that the hate crime is committed because of what the person, persons or property subject to the crime represent, the perpetrator may not have any feelings towards the particular victim at all. On the contrary, it is only enough for the motive of the committed act to be based on a prejudice. The term prejudice means that the person has ideas with prejudice for certain person or group. In addition, an emphasis must be put on the qualification of the criminal act in the Criminal Code, the intention for committing the crime to be based on prejudice, and the objective of the illegal conduct to be one or more person or property related to certain group whose members share certain protected characteristics according to which the group is recognisable.

However, the generality of the Article 39, paragraph 5 and its' accessory nature do not give an opportunity for easy record keeping and registration of all specific cases of hate crime in which due to the biased motivation the perpetrator is punished more severely than when such motivation is absent. The lack of this special record keeping hides the real picture of the number and nature of the hate crime in the country and disables the development of adequate prevention policies and punishment of the same causing lack of the message which the system needs to send to the perpetrators of such crime. The presented unofficial statistics

indicated to the fact that there are still cases of hate crime in which the incidents on the basis of ethnic affiliation prevail in which the younger population is the most common perpetrator and victim. Therefore, it must be immediately introduced a system for registration of the cases of hate crime.

The action directed towards individuals or groups is essential for the hate crimes. In addition, a review has been made to the legal definitions of the terms perpetrator, victim and group (contained in Article 122 of the Criminal Code), whereupon an emphasis has been made to the fact that in our legislation there is a formulation of group but only as a perpetrator of a criminal act, and not a group as a victim of a hate crime, due to which, when processing such criminal and legal events, and in absence of such legal definition, the attention should be focused on the characteristics and the features of the group as a victim according to which it differs from others, its specific markings and collective rights all in order for proper identification of the hate crimes to be made.<sup>22</sup>

Since the objective of the attack is not a single person or property but a certain part of the society, and indirectly the whole society, the need of stricter sanctioning was emphasised by separating the hate crimes as qualified forms of committing the basic acts and prescribing for them stricter penalties or the above-mentioned separation of the motive itself as aggravating circumstance at sentencing.

#### **Endangering security**

#### Article 144 (4)

- (1) A person who endangers the security of another by a serious threat to attack his life or body, or the life and body of some person close to him, shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of up to six months.
- (2) The person that will commit the activity stipulated in paragraph 1, while performing family violence shall be sentenced to imprisonment from three months to three years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> See: Conclusions and Recommendations as well as presented speeches from the participants at the Conference on the application of legal provisions to combat hate crime, Skopje, Pp.4-5.

- (3) The sanction stipulated in paragraph (2) shall be applied to the person that commits the crime stipulated in paragraph 1 against an official person while performing his duty, or towards several persons.
- (4) Whosoever, by means of information system threatens to commit a crime, being subject to prescribed imprisonment of five years or more serious sentence, against a person because of their belonging to specific sex, race, color of skin, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnicity, language, citizenship, social background, religion or religious belief, other beliefs, education, political affiliation, personal or societal status, mental or physical disability, age, family or marital status, property status, health condition, or on any other ground established with law or ratified international agreement, shall be sentenced to imprisonment from one to five years.
- (5) The prosecution of the crime described in (1) shall be performed on the basis of a private complaint.

## Causing of hate, discord or intolerance on national, racial, religious and other discriminatory ground

Article 319

(1) Whosoever by force, maltreatment, endangering the security, mocking of the national, ethnic, religious and other symbols, by burning, destroying or in any other manner damaging the flag of the Republic of Macedonia or flags of other states, by damaging other people's objects, by desecration of monuments, graves, or in any other discriminatory manner, directly or indirectly, causes or excites hatred, discord or intolerance on grounds of gender, race, color of the skin, membership in marginalized group, ethnic membership, language, nationality, social background, religious belief, other beliefs, education, political affiliation, personal or social status, mental or physical impairment, age, family or marital status, property status, health condition, or in any other ground foreseen by law on ratified international agreement, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of one to five years.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Source: <a href="http://www.legislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/18559">http://www.legislationline.org/documents/action/popup/id/18559</a>).

The adoption of the *Law on Prevention and Protection against* Discrimination from 2010<sup>24</sup>, as well as the completion of the penal and legal model of hate crimes<sup>25</sup> represent an important step forward in the creation of such legal concept in the Republic of Macedonia.

The Law on Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination (hereinafter referred to as "the Anti-Discrimination Law") was adopted in 2010. The Anti-Discrimination Law declares its aim as preventing and protecting against discriminatory conduct in the enjoyment of rights guaranteed by the Constitution, laws and ratified international treaties (Article 1 par 1). Based on this Law, all natural and legal persons shall benefit from the prohibition of and protection against discrimination (Article 2).

Discrimination within the meaning of this law represents any unjustified legal or actual, direct or indirect distinction or unequal treatment or omission (exclusion, limitation or giving priority) in relation to persons or groups on an extensive list of grounds: sex, race, color of skin, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnic origin, language, citizenship, social origin, religion or religious beliefs, also education, political affiliation, personal or social status, mental and bodily disability, age, family or marital status, property status, health condition or any other grounds or characteristics established by law or by ratified international agreements (Article 5).

The Law also contains definitions of harassment (Article 7), sexual harassment (Article 7), discrimination of persons with disabilities (Article 8), inciting to discrimination (Article 9), the disadvantageous treatment of a person who reported discrimination, instigated proceedings on discrimination or testified to such practice during the proceedings (victimization) (Article 10), discrimination in providing goods and services (Article 11), and more serious forms of discrimination such as multiple discrimination (involving more grounds), repeated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, Official Gazette of RM, No. 50 from 13.04.2010, available at:

file:///C:/Users/Userr/Downloads/FYROM\_Law%20on%20protection%20against%20discriminati on 2010 en.pdf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> With the amendments of the Criminal Code from 2004 and 2009.

or prolonged discrimination, or discrimination whose consequences have seriously affected the person concerned (Article 12).

According to the Anti-Discrimination Law, *effective protection* is a system of accessible and effective mechanisms for initiating procedures in case of complaints of discrimination, and the existence of independent and objective structures which act on such complaints, and which will also impose sanctions prescribed by law for particular violations of rights (Article 5).<sup>26</sup>

The list of ratified international agreements signed by the Republic of Macedonia, which are relevant for the fight against the hate crime, includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the additional protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime referring to the criminalisation of the crimes of racist and xenophobic nature committed via computer systems, as well as the Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights.

In *our transition and media conditions* and low culture of the word and its application, this provoking and inciting hate, with no sense of responsibility for the expressed word, appears as main generator of the social climate of intolerance and prejudice on national, ethnical and other basis, which appears as psychological frame for expansion of all forms of the hate crimes – starting from the acts of physical violence to the acts of verbal and psychological violence.

# Education, training and awareness-raising to ensure a comprehensive approach to the tackling of hate crimes

OSCE has taken a comprehensive approach to security since 1975, and the work of the OSCE includes key aspects of the human dimension. The human dimension includes the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Under the Anti-Discrimination Law, the *Commission against Discrimination* (hereinafter "the Commission") is designed as an autonomous and independent body (whose members are appointed by the Parliament), empowered, *inter alia*, to act upon complaints by providing opinions and recommendations in cases of discrimination. Additional information at: <a href="http://www.legislationline.org/topics/topic/84/country/31">http://www.legislationline.org/topics/topic/84/country/31</a>.

promotion of the rule of law and democratic institutions, and tolerance and non-discrimination. The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), is primarily concerned with matters falling within the human dimension.<sup>27</sup> Emphasising the importance of the OSCE and ODIHR activities in the reforms of the penal legislation and the development of the concept of hate crimes it must be pointed out that they go ahead of the common interests of the countries for developing such concept which is adequate response to the requirements of the modern time, thus consisting in confronting the fact of cultural, national, ethnical, religious etc. diversity with the challenges of the information society.<sup>28</sup>

The development of consistent system of prevention and repression of the hate crimes and hate speech demonstrates the determination and the capacity of the country for consistent respect of the human rights and freedoms. Their efficient prevention and punishment sends clear message to the organisers, instigators and perpetrators of such acts that these extreme expressions of discrimination cannot be tolerated. The country and the society which does not respect these postulates cannot be considered as humane, fair and democratic. <sup>29</sup>

The general tendencies in the penal legislations in terms of dealing with the hate crimes and hate speech, Macedonian *de lege lata* and *de lege ferenda* legislation and the application of the penal and legal provisions referring to this type of crime are subject to this analysis. It starts from the basic understanding which determines the methodological basis of any legal concept – that the law is a combination of legal ideas and legal reality, solid structure consisted not only of legal norms, but also of their application (*law in action*), as well as the legal reality created through their application. The achievement of the objective for separation of the hate crimes and hate speech as special legal phenomena: tolerance, indiscrimination, and prevention of violence depends on how much the adopted laws are being applied. Their non-application or selective application means sending the opposite message than the one which is a motive for their adoption: the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Hate Crime Laws, A practical guide, 2009, p.7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Kambovski Vlado, Evaluation of the application of the provisions for hate crimes in the Criminal Code, 2014, pp.4-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

society tolerates hatred, discrimination, enmity and conflict among different social groups, the human rights and freedoms and their equality are not being respected and the society and the country lose their raison d'etre.<sup>30</sup>

#### Conclusion

The hate crime phenomenon differs from the other forms of crime according to the motive of the perpetrator as subjective element which usually it does not represent constitutive element of concrete crime. This means that every criminal act may or may not appear as an act of hate, depending on whether hatred, bias or discrimination of the victim as a member of particular social group is the reason for the committing of the act. The hate criminal represents complex social phenomenon which has a range of singularities in terms of the other criminal phenomena. Violence is experienced by victims as events that impact on their identities according to age, gender, socio-economic status, disability, sexuality, and race/ethnicity. The useful examples of the countries in the region need to be used by the domestic institutions.

Adequate and correct evaluation of the motivation when committing this type of acts is necessary in order to provide stricter punishment.

There is a tendency of increase of hate crime due to which an adequate social agreement of this negative phenomena is necessary through modification of the legal legislation, but also through increased involvement of the police and judicial structures in terms of correct identification, processing and successful court competition of such procedures for which continuous training in this field is necessary. 31

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Kambovski, ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> See also: Conclusions and Recommendations as well as presented speeches from the participants at the Conference on the application of legal provisions to combat hate crime, Skopje. The presented speeches on the Conference refer to the legal provisions for dealing with hate crime and their practical application, the indicators which condition identification and processing of these penal acts, as well as the liabilities of Macedonia to undertake further activities in this field, among other things. Pp.5-6.

Better informing of the entities participating in the detection and dealing with such cases is needed, as well as increasing the involvement of different citizens' associations, education system and influence of the media in terms of the correct informing and preventing this type of crime is needed.

"Hate-motivated crimes and incidents have a stronger impact on victims than 'ordinary' crimes: They send a message to entire communities. The message is that these communities should be denied the right to be part of society."

Stephen Wessler,

Executive Director,

Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence, United State

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