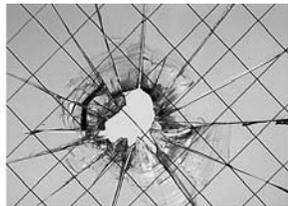


Violence Based on Racism and Xenophobia



2008 Hate Crime Survey

About Human Rights First

Human Rights First believes that building respect for human rights and the rule of law will help ensure the dignity to which every individual is entitled and will stem tyranny, extremism, intolerance, and violence.

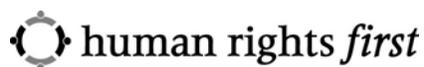
Human Rights First protects people at risk: refugees who flee persecution, victims of crimes against humanity or other mass human rights violations, victims of discrimination, those whose rights are eroded in the name of national security, and human rights advocates who are targeted for defending the rights of others. These groups are often the first victims of societal instability and breakdown; their treatment is a harbinger of wider-scale repression. Human Rights First works to prevent violations against these groups and to seek justice and accountability for violations against them.

Human Rights First is practical and effective. We advocate for change at the highest levels of national and international policymaking. We seek justice through the courts. We raise awareness and understanding through the media. We build coalitions among those with divergent views. And we mobilize people to act.

Human Rights First is a non-profit, nonpartisan international human rights organization based in New York and Washington D.C. To maintain our independence, we accept no government funding.

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Headquarters

333 Seventh Avenue
13th Floor
New York, NY 10001-5108

Tel.: 212.845.5200
Fax: 212.845.5299

www.humanrightsfirst.org

Washington D.C. Office

100 Maryland Avenue, NE
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-5625

Tel: 202.547.5692
Fax: 202.543.5999

HRF's Fighting Discrimination Program

The Fighting Discrimination Program has been working since 2002 to reverse the rising tide of antisemitic, racist, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, and homophobic violence and other bias crime in Europe, the Russian Federation, and North America. We report on the reality of violence driven by discrimination, and work to strengthen the response of governments to combat this violence. We advance concrete, practical recommendations to improve hate crimes legislation and its implementation, monitoring and public reporting, the training of police and prosecutors, the work of official anti-discrimination bodies, and the capacity of civil society organizations and international institutions to combat violent hate crimes. For more information on the program, visit www.humanrightsfirst.org/discrimination or email FD@humanrightsfirst.org.

2008 Hate Crime Survey

Violence Based on Racism and Xenophobia is an excerpt from Human Rights First's 2008 Hate Crime Survey, which includes sections examining six facets of violent hate crime in the 56 countries that comprise the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE): *Violence Based on Racism and Xenophobia*, *Antisemitic Violence*, *Violence Against Muslims*, *Violence Based on Religious Intolerance*, *Violence Against Roma*, and *Violence Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Bias*. The Survey also examines government responses to violent hate crimes in sections on *Systems of Monitoring and Reporting* and *The Framework of Criminal Law* and includes a Ten-Point Plan for governments to strengthen their responses. The Survey also includes an in-depth look at the *Russian Federation*, *Ukraine*, and the *United States* and contains a *Country Panorama* section that profiles individual hate crime cases from more than 30 countries within the OSCE.

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Violence Based on Racism and Xenophobia

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Executive Summary

Racist and xenophobic violence rose in several of the 56 countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2007, according to official statistics and reports by expert bodies and nongovernmental monitors. Although comprehensive and systematic data collection systems are unavailable in most OSCE states, government monitoring systems in a number of countries showed moderate to high rises in the overall numbers of hate crimes in 2006 and 2007—the latest figures available. These include **Finland, Ireland, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States**. Over a longer period of time—between 2000 and 2006—eight European countries experienced an upward trend in recorded racist crime: **Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Slovakia, Finland, and the United Kingdom**.

Information from nongovernmental monitors provided evidence of rising levels of racist violence in 2007 in **Greece, Italy, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, and Ukraine**. Available figures may only be the tip of the iceberg, however. Media and NGO surveys suggest that in many cases violence was not being reported to or recorded by police. This assertion is bolstered by the *2007 European Crime and Safety Survey*, which revealed high levels of hate crimes reported in 2007 by respondents of immigrant background in **Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal**, while there was no relevant official criminal justice data on racist violence and crime from these countries.

Cutting across religious and cultural divides, racism and xenophobia threaten communities distinguished by ethnic or national origin, including both national minorities and people of immigrant origin, citizens and noncitizens, longtime residents and newcomers.

People of African origin, regardless of their citizenship status, were subjected to some of the most persistent

and serious attacks, and were among the principal victims of racist and xenophobic violence in Europe and North America. A series of incidents involving hangman's nooses and burning crosses served as a reminder that racist intimidation and other hate crimes against African-Americans remain a serious problem—and that African Americans continue to be the largest group targeted for hate crime violence in the United States.

In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, people of African origin faced particularly virulent racism and violence. People of Asian origin also faced high levels of racist violence, with racism confronting South Asians often overlapping with and exacerbated by religious hatred and prejudice toward those of a Muslim background, or those perceived to be Muslim. Anti-Muslim violence is addressed in a separate section of the *2008 Hate Crime Survey: **Violence Against Muslims***.

In Western Europe, discrimination and violence targeted in particular the Afro-European descendants of people from the former European colonies in the Caribbean, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Roma and Sinti, who are often described as Europe's largest minority, continued to be particular targets of discrimination and hate crime violence in their countries of citizenship and as immigrants. Immigrant Roma within the expanded European Union faced extraordinary violence in 2007 and 2008. Anti-Roma violence is addressed in a separate section of the *2008 Hate Crime Survey: **Violence Against Roma***.

Immigrants and citizens of recent immigrant origin face particular problems of racism and xenophobia throughout Europe and North America. Anti-immigrant bias is a form of prejudice and hatred founded on multiple forms of discrimination that can attack the physical appearance, religious affiliation, and cultural

characteristics of the victims. Immigrants are often highly visible even in multicultural societies. Refugees and asylum seekers, especially those concentrated in small areas amidst largely homogenous populations, are particularly vulnerable to violent attacks.

In Western Europe, new trends of internal immigration in the expanded European Union have led to an increase in anti-immigrant discourse and violence directed at people from new member states of the E.U. Those targeted for vilification and violence included immigrant workers of Roma background and other immigrants of a wide range of ethnicities and national origins from the new E.U. member states.

In the most extreme examples of the new anti-immigrant discourse in Europe, immigrant groups were made scapegoats in 2007–2008 for social ills ranging from crime to unemployment. In **Germany, Greece, and Switzerland**, new strands of anti-immigrant scapegoating combined with manifestations of racist violence targeting immigrants. In **Italy**, anti-Roma rhetoric in concert with aggressive anti-immigration policies provided the backdrop for incidents of racist violence that occurred at a level unprecedented in recent history.

In the **United States**, recent debates on immigration have polarized society and provided the backdrop for a surge in reported violent assaults against people of Hispanic origin, both citizens and immigrants, in the last several years.

I. Racist Violence: What Available Data Reveals

Government statistics, NGO monitoring, and other surveys paint a picture of racist violence that is either rising or holding steady at historically high levels. Although comprehensive and systematic data collection systems are unavailable in most OSCE states, government monitoring in **Finland, Ireland, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States** showed moderate to high rises in the overall numbers of hate crimes in 2006 and 2007— the latest figures available. In **France**, official figures showed an overall decline in racist and xenophobic hate crimes, even as the proportion of these crimes involving violence and direct threats against persons rose. In **Germany**, official figures released through the third quarter of 2007 showed a significant rise in violent hate crimes, although year end figures showed a slight decline.

Information from nongovernmental monitors provided evidence of rising levels of racist violence in **Greece, Italy, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, and Ukraine**.

A. Data Reported to the Fundamental Rights Agency

Intergovernmental bodies that have focused on hate crime data collection—particularly the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)—have been useful sources of comparative information. FRA has most recently concluded that of the 27 E.U. Member States, only 11 collect sufficiently robust criminal justice data on racist violence and crime to allow for a trend analysis of the problem over time.¹

Based on the data collected by these eleven E.U. governments, FRA noted that between 2005 and 2006, seven of the eleven states had experienced an upward

trend in recorded racist crime: **Germany, Ireland, Austria, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom**. Over a longer period of time—between 2000 and 2006—eight countries experienced an upward trend in recorded racist crime: **Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Slovakia, Finland, and the United Kingdom**.²

In the absence of reliable official data in the majority of E.U. states, the FRA has noted the utility of crime surveys. For example, the 2007 report draws upon the *2007 European Crime and Safety Survey*, which asked respondents of immigrant background whether they or members of their household were victims of a hate crime during the previous year.

The survey revealed high levels of hate crimes reported by respondents of immigrant background in **Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal**, while there was no relevant official criminal justice data on racist violence and crime from these countries. The study found that in a 12-month period, hate crimes were experienced by 14.5 percent of respondents in Spain and by 16.4 percent in Greece. On the basis of this study, FRA observed that in the original fifteen member states of the European Union, “on average 9.9 percent of respondents with an immigrant background indicated that they or a member of their immediate family were the victim of hate crime.”³

B. Countries with Good Monitoring Systems

In **France**, the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH), the official body that reports annually on racist, xenophobic, and antisemitic hate crimes, reported a continuing trend in 2007 toward violent attacks and threats against individuals, even as overall numbers of incidents declined. The proportion of

violent acts directed at individuals increased from 45 percent of total hate crimes in 2006 to 51 percent in 2007; the total number of racist and xenophobic crimes declined by 9 percent.⁴

In **Germany**, between 2003 and 2006, official figures on violent crimes with a “right-wing extremist” motivation increased steadily from 759 in 2003 to 1,047 in 2006. In 2007, for the first time since 2003, the incidence of right-wing violent crimes decreased to 980, although remaining at historically high levels. Similarly, official figures showed a slight decline in violent xenophobic crime—a subset of right-wing violent crime—from 484 in 2006 to 414 in 2007.⁵

Other German sources reported a rise in these crimes in 2007. Uwe-Karsten Heye, the head of the German antixenophobia group *Gesicht Zeigen!* (Show Your Faces!), said in March 2008 that a record number of attacks were reported in 2007—consistent with official reports through the first three quarters of the year. These included incidents in which some six hundred people were attacked by neo-Nazis, as well as systematic attacks on immigrant-run businesses.⁶

In **Sweden**, in 2007, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå), reported 3,536 hate crimes—an 8 percent increase over the 3,259 hate crimes reported in 2006. “Xenophobic” crimes—the majority subset of hate crimes overall—also registered a year-on-year increase, up 13 percent to 2,489 such crimes in 2007 from 2,189 in 2006.⁷

In the **United Kingdom**—the only country to report on incidents (acts which may fall short of criminal offenses) as well as offenses—61,262 racist incidents were reported to the police in 2006/2007, an increase of 3.7 percent over the previous year. Among these, there were 42,551 racially or religiously aggravated offenses, representing a 2.6 percent increase in the number of offenses over the previous year. Just over half of all police forces recorded an increase in the number of offenses motivated by a religious or racial bias.⁸

In Scotland, there were 1,022 incidents of racist violence in Lothian and the Borders regions in 2006/2007, twice the 2002/2003 number.⁹ In Strathclyde, police reported 1,853 hate crimes during the 2006/2007 year, a 7.5 percent rise over the previous year, and an almost 20 percent rise over 2002/2003 levels.¹⁰

C. Good Monitoring Systems with a Data Lag

In some countries where data for 2007 is not yet publicly available, available statistics for earlier periods show a rise in racist violence over 2005 levels.

In **Finland**, there was a steady rise in the incidence of racist crimes and violence between 2004 and 2006.¹¹ In 2006, police filed reports on 748 suspected racist crimes. The most common offence was assault (assaults and attempted assaults accounted for 40 percent of all cases).¹² The police registered 669 and 558 incidents of racial violence in 2005 and 2004, respectively.¹³

In **Ireland**, according to annual police reports, police registered 174 racist incidents in 2006 as compared with 94 in 2005 and 84 in 2004.¹⁴ Early reports from Ireland’s antiracism body—the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)—suggest a further rise in 2007. In March 2008, the NCCRI said that, according to incident reports it had received, the number of reported assaults, cases of harassment, and other types of abuse in 2007 had risen to 99, compared to the 2006 figure of 65.

Incidents monitored by the NCCRI included both crimes of violence—such as an attack by Cork teenagers on a Burundian man—and cases of racist speech, including racism on the internet.¹⁵ The report said that “the most significant victims of racist incidents were black African males,” with others targeted including people of Asian origin and members of the Traveller community. Half of the incidents were reported in the Dublin area.¹⁶

In the **Slovak Republic**, the police in 2006 reported on 188 registered criminal offenses motivated by racial, ethnic, or other intolerance, up from 121 reported offenses in 2005.¹⁷

In the **United States**, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) hate crime statistics are disaggregated to include data on crimes motivated by race (including "antiblack" bias) and ethnicity (including "anti-Hispanic" bias). In 2006, there was a rise in both categories over figures from 2005. In 2006, the FBI reported 4,737 race-based offenses (up from 4,691 in 2005) and 1,233 ethnicity-based offenses (up from 1,144 in 2005).¹⁸

The highest levels of violent hate crime continue to be directed toward members of the African American community and others of African origin, in what the FBI's annual hate crime reports refer to as antiblack bias attacks. In the latest report, covering 2006, the FBI found that over a third of hate crime victims were targeted because of antiblack bias. Local monitors confirmed the statistics. The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, in its annual hate crime report for 2007, found that antiblack hate crimes were not only by far the most numerous—310 of the total of 510—but also increased 21 percent compared to 2006. This represented 58 percent of all hate crimes, although African Americans constitute just 9 percent of Los Angeles County's population.¹⁹

NGO reporting and analysis in the United States added to the picture provided by the FBI statistics. *The Year in Hate*, the Southern Poverty Law Center's annual report for 2007, revealed a 35 percent rise in hate crimes against people of Hispanic origin between 2003 and 2006—based on an analysis of Federal Bureau of Investigation crime reports. An FBI spokesman interviewed by National Public Radio confirmed the 35 percent rise.²⁰

D. Nongovernmental Organizations and the Data Gap

As in some of the aforementioned countries, NGO monitoring can often be a useful supplement to available government statistics. In countries where governments do not record or publicly report specifically on racist violence, NGOs may be the only source of data on hate crimes.

In **Greece**, where no official statistics on hate crimes are available, racist incidents reported by the Hellenic League for Human Rights in 2006 included the stabbing to death of a Georgian and an Albanian immigrant in Crete. There were sixteen other "major" incidents of racist violence against immigrants and refugees, two attacks on Roma, and two on religious minorities. In the annual report for 2007, the Hellenic League for Human Rights reported a steady increase in racist attacks on immigrants and other minorities, while condemning the indifference of Greek law enforcement bodies toward the attacks.²¹

In **Italy**, where no statistics on violent hate crimes are regularly made available by official sources, news media and nongovernmental monitors highlighted a spike of anti-Roma and anti-immigrant violence in 2007 and 2008.

In the **Russian Federation**, the number of violent hate crimes against individuals continues to grow steadily, with 2008 on track to be another record-setting year. According to the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis, the leading nongovernmental monitor of hate crimes, in 2007 there were at least 667 victims of racially motivated violence, including 86 murders.²² In comparison, there were 568 victims of violent hate crimes, including 63 murders, registered in 2006. The beginning of 2008 has shown a dramatic growth of hate violence. Already in the first eight months of 2008, 65 people were killed and 318 injured as a result of racial and other bias-motivated assaults.²³

In **Spain**, the Spanish Commission to Aid Refugees (CEAR) reported three hundred racist attacks in 2006, mostly on people of immigrant origin, and spoke out on continuing racist attacks during 2007 and 2008.²⁴

In **Switzerland**, in June 2008, the Swiss Foundation against Racism and Antisemitism issued the annual review on racism, finding a rise of some 30 percent in racist incidents in 2007 from 2006 levels: from 87 to 118. Incidents recorded included personal assaults, arson or use of gunfire, harassment, and vandalism.²⁵

In **Ukraine**, nongovernmental monitors documented eighty-six bias-motivated attacks on persons in 2007, including five murders, as compared with fourteen attacks, including two murders, in 2006. This constituted a sharp rise over 2005 figures.²⁶ In the first 6 months of 2008, there were at least four murders of foreigners and numerous serious attacks in which there was a suspected racist or other bias motivation.

II. Patterns of Violence Based on Racism and Xenophobia

Particularly pernicious patterns of violence and intimidation in many parts of Europe and North America are driven by racism and xenophobia. Members of minority groups may be victimized because of the color of their skin or other physical attributes, while such prejudice is sometimes exacerbated by religious intolerance or cultural stereotypes.

The principal victims of racist and xenophobic violence are often described as members of “visible minorities,” although this term may be misleading. Even a minority that is not easily distinguished by physical features may stand out as “different” because of language, religion, and a variety of other cultural indicators.

In the 2008 annual report, the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency noted that its national contact points “continue to indicate that visible minorities in Europe, such as Black Africans, Roma, or Muslim women wearing headscarves, are disproportionately vulnerable to racist victimization,” taking into account their relatively low numbers in the population.²⁷

In many cases, discrimination against particular groups combines racism and xenophobia with hatred and prejudice founded on religious intolerance. Distinguishing the forms of discrimination faced by some communities as predominantly driven by either racism or religious bias is sometimes neither possible nor particularly helpful in countering these forms of discrimination.

An overlay of multiple forms of discrimination is present in prejudice and hatred toward immigrants, where fear of the foreign or unknown—a standard definition of xenophobia—blurs together prejudice against differences in appearance, culture, religion, and other factors. But

the same combination of biases is also present with regard to national minorities and other communities that may stand out in their own countries.

Gender bias, too, often combines with racism and xenophobia. Women may be attacked because their customs and dress do not fit gender stereotypes. At times, racist assaults take particularly vicious and gender-specific forms. Women are frequently attacked because their particular gender-specific forms of dress—such as the Islamic hijāb or the long dresses worn by many Roma—are taken as a symbol of difference, or of defiance. In numerous reported cases of racist and religiously motivated attacks in Europe, assailants have shouted obscenities at Muslim women and attempted to tear off their headscarves.

In many countries, and notably in countries of the former Yugoslavia, members of national minorities are similar in appearance and share a common ancestry. But distinct communities within a country or region, defined by custom, language, and religion rather than ethnicity, may be no less “visible” and susceptible to become targets for racist violence.

Attacks motivated because an individual was *perceived* to be a member of a hated group were also frequently based on misconceptions that underscored the broad reach of racism. Non-Muslim people of South Asian origin, including Sikhs and Hindus, have been targeted—particularly in the United States—by attackers shouting anti-Arab and anti-Muslim epithets. Others suffered antisemitic or other bias attacks because they were mistaken for Jews, immigrants, or other “visible minorities.” In one case, a Russian prosecutor accounted for a hate attack on a Russian citizen who *appeared* to be dark-skinned by explaining “in the

nighttime, due to lack of natural and artificial lighting,” the victim was simply “mistaken for a non-Slav.”²⁸

The rise in racist and xenophobic violence in the region has been reported in the context of widespread harassment and intimidation of minority populations through both physical and symbolic means. A range of symbols and slogans have emerged within the specific national contexts of particular countries or regions, from “Russia for the Russians” and “Germany for the Germans” to the more adaptable slogan “Foreigners Out”—a variation on the emblematic antisemitic slogan of German Nazism, “Juden Raus/Jews Out.”

The symbols of German Nazism were used to send a message of hatred and exclusion to members of a broad range of religious and ethnic minorities, even as they retained their particular antisemitic significance when targeting Jewish families and communities. Modern-day adherents of racial supremacy theories painted swastikas on refugee hostels, the offices of human rights organizations, and foreign students’ housing, as well as on Jewish, Christian, and Muslim graves. Combined with the swastikas daubed on homes, memorials, community institutions, and schools, these manifestations of hatred sent a chilling message to all who stand outside the chauvinist ideal of extreme nationalists.

Across the OSCE region, anti-immigrant and antiminority aggression led to incidents of extreme violence and everyday harassment and intimidation. Racist violence often took the form of persistent abuse that held families and whole communities in a pervasive state of fear, even if most abuse fell short of serious threats to life. This was the kind of “low level and mundane racism,” that regularly went unreported, and when reported, often went without response.²⁹ But even low-level violence that persisted day after day—egg throwing, broken windows, threatening graffiti, and verbal abuse—brought with it an implicit threat of more serious violence and crime.

In many cases, police remained unaware of hate crime incidents. A serious shortcoming lies in the failure, sometimes due to unwillingness, of law enforcement agencies to establish relations with particular minority communities, resulting in many crimes not being reported to the authorities. Similarly, some police agencies also fail to appropriately record the evidence of bias attacks when victims do in fact come forward.

III. Victims of Violence Based on Racism and Xenophobia

Racism and xenophobia victimize a wide range of communities across Europe and North America by reason of their origins, and the color of their skin. These communities under threat, often distinguished by their ethnic or national origin, include both national minorities and people of immigrant origin, citizens and noncitizens, longtime residents and newcomers. Among them are Roma and Sinti, often described as Europe's largest minority—a people whose situation is touched upon here but whose unique circumstances are addressed in a separate section in this survey on **Violence Against Roma**. Racism is also a factor in antisemitism and anti-Muslim bias that combines with religious hatred and prejudice. These issues, too, are discussed in separate sections on **Antisemitic Violence** and **Violence Against Muslims**.

A. People of African Origin

Whether citizens or noncitizens, people of African origin stand out as among the principal subjects of racism and xenophobia in many parts of Europe and North America. In the United States, African American citizens continued to represent the largest group of victims of hate crime violence—a legacy of systemic state sanctioned discrimination that began to be remedied only in the 1960's. In Western Europe, citizens of African origin, many of them descended from the people of former colonies, faced ongoing discrimination and violence.

In parts of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, small populations of citizens and immigrants of African origin were highly visible and often vulnerable targets of racism and xenophobia. In the **Russian Federation** and **Ukraine**, where relatively few people of African origin

reside, the rate of violence was extraordinary: African refugees, students, visitors, and the handful of citizens and permanent residents of African origin lived under constant threat of violence.

Numerous incidents of hate crime violence against people of African origin were reported throughout the region.

In September 2007, attackers in Tartu, **Estonia**, threw stones at a dark-skinned French student. Although the head of an association of foreign students there said the incident was part of a larger problem of neo-Nazi violence, a local police officer downplayed the incident, claiming foreign students in the past two years had been caught up in only a few cases of “robbery, fights, or insults.”³⁰

In **Germany**, numerous serious attacks on people of African origin were reported throughout 2007 and 2008.

- On May 24, 2008 in Viersen, in North Rhine-Westphalia, four men with shaved heads and wearing bomber jackets approached a man of African origin, threatened him with knives and an iron rod, and then beat him.³¹
- On March 2, 2008, in Berlin, a 20-year-old woman yelling racial slurs pushed a dark-skinned man into the path of an oncoming train. The 19-year-old victim, assisted by two people, was able to jump up from the tracks in time.³²
- On October 20, 2007, in Berlin Spandau, a group of young men harassed and beat an African-American; four men were arrested and an investigation was reportedly opened.³³

- In June 2007, in Berlin, three attackers assaulted a man of African origin at a subway station and knocked him off the platform; the victim suffered head injuries and was in a coma for several days.³⁴

An acquittal was reported in June 2008, in Potsdam, for an April 2006 attack on a man of Ethiopian origin. This was one of the most widely reported incidents in the lead-up to Germany's hosting of the World Cup that year and had precipitated a national and international debate on racist violence in the country.³⁵

In the **Russian Federation**, despite the small number of people of African origin, foreign students have been particularly vulnerable to attacks.

- In October 2007, in Moscow, an assailant stabbed and seriously injured Cameroonian Vansi Jeanu. Police said a young man had been detained in relation to the attack, which was similarly being investigated as act of hooliganism.³⁶
- On February 4, 2007, in Saint Petersburg, attackers described as skinheads assaulted a postgraduate student from Cameroon at a metro station, causing serious injuries requiring hospitalization. Prosecutors said the attack was under investigation as hooliganism.³⁷

In Bratislava, **Slovakia**, in March 2007, attackers knocked a Nigerian man to the ground reportedly shouting obscenities. The nongovernmental organization People Against Racism (PAR) reported that when police arrived and the man pointed out his attackers, the police officers told him to "shut up."³⁸

The Swiss Foundation Against Racism and Antisemitism, in the annual review on racism in **Switzerland**, reported that the principal victims of racist violence were Muslims, people of African origin, and Jews. Incidents included 15 personal assaults, 5 cases of arson or use of gunfire, 6 of harassment or threats, and 12 of vandalism.³⁹ The foundation's 2006 report said that

one-third of hate crime cases recorded concerned people of African origin.⁴⁰

- On May 1, 2007, in a Zurich suburb, unknown men shouting obscenities about Africans attacked Antonio da Costa, a 43-year-old refugee from Angola. The attackers used chainsaws to rake da Costa's face, neck, and chest, nearly severing his left thumb, and severely slashing one arm; he required six hours of emergency surgery. There were reportedly no arrests, although a prosecutor said video surveillance footage was being used in the investigation.⁴¹
- In Thun, on January 28, 2007, six skinheads assaulted and injured three young people, including a 22-year-old Swiss citizen of African origin, who was told that he had no business being in Switzerland. Police arrived but made no arrests; in April, 2008, a 23-year-old with a record of political extremism was fined for involvement in the attack.⁴²

The African community in Kyiv, **Ukraine** had already held four funerals for victims of racially motivated violence in the first half of 2008, following the murders of a Nigerian, a Sierra Leonean, and two Congolese immigrants in the course of the year. One victim's funeral turned into a march against racism. In an act of protest over the worsening conditions for foreigners in Ukraine, friends and family of the brutally murdered Gbenda-Charles Victor Tator of Sierra Leone walked in a procession through the streets of Kyiv from the morgue to the cemetery.

In the **United Kingdom**, people of African origin continued to be targeted for extreme violence. On May 13, 2007, in Garston, England, four men shouting racial epithets attacked 21-year-old Marlon Moran, who was of mixed race, with a metal bar, a cleaver, sticks, and knives. Moran was killed by a knife wound to the stomach. Four suspects were tried for murder aggravated by racism in November 2007; one was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison on the lesser charge

of manslaughter and the three others were released.⁴³ In the course of the trial, Moran's family protested that in the aftermath of the murder they suffered constant racial harassment and threats.⁴⁴

In the **United States**, people of African descent are most likely to become victims of hate crimes, in line with longstanding patterns of violent hate crimes. The annual hate crime survey produced by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), covering 2006, reported 3,332 victims of antiblack bias crimes, in 2,640 incidents. This represented 66.4 percent of the victims of racial bias crimes, and some 34.5 percent of the 9,652 victims of hate crimes overall.⁴⁵ Antiblack bias crimes were also predominantly violent crimes against persons, in contrast to crimes against property.

B. Immigrants and Citizens of Immigrant Origin

Immigrants and citizens of immigrant origin face particular problems of racism and xenophobia. Singled out because of race or ethnicity, language, culture, and often religion, immigrants and those perceived to be immigrants are often highly visible even in multicultural societies.

Official classifications and data collection agencies often describe members of many minority populations in Europe as "of immigrant origin," although many of them are descendants of people that came to Europe generations ago. Racist and xenophobic prejudices indiscriminately victimize people regardless of their official citizenship or residency status.

Discrimination and racist violence against immigrant foreign nationals is generally both underreported and underrecorded. Many immigrants, both legal and illegal, have fears of encounters with police and public authorities. People without or with uncertain legal residence status may fear that reporting will not only result in retaliation on behalf of the attackers, but will

also draw the attention of immigration services, set in motion by the very authorities from which they seek protection. Accordingly, people with no legal residence status are far more likely to suffer discrimination and violence in silence.

In **Germany**, members of the large Turkish minority—both German citizens and nonnationals—faced harassment and violence in many parts of the country. People of African and South Asian origin were also among the targets of persistent and sometimes extreme violence there. Foreign-owned shops were targeted for vandalism and arson; members of minorities were attacked in the street, at public events, and on public transport. In the state of Brandenburg alone, according to the NGO *Gesicht Zeigen* (Show Your Faces!), there were eleven recorded attacks on immigrant-run businesses, as part of what a representative of the organization called "a strategy to destroy livelihoods and drive out immigrants."⁴⁶ Members of minorities in Germany are routinely referred to as *Ausländer* ("foreigners") regardless of their actual citizenship status.

In **Ireland**, official hate crime monitors and the media reported increased hate crime attacks on immigrants, including immigrant workers from Eastern European countries newly admitted to the European Union. The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) said that "the most significant victims of racist incidents were black African males," with others targeted including people of Asian origin and members of the Traveller community. Half of the incidents were reported in the Dublin area.⁴⁷

In one case in Dublin, on March 14, 2008, a group of youths attacked Cida Jeangros, a 30-year-old Brazilian woman, subjecting her to racist verbal abuse and beating and kicking her. There was no effort to rob the woman—the intent appeared simply to do harm. Jeangros said she had previously been subjected to

verbal abuse, and that many migrant workers live in fear of attacks in Dublin.⁴⁸

In **Latvia**, anti-immigrant discourse was accompanied by racist attacks on immigrants belonging to visible minorities. Although Latvia has adopted legal provisions imposing more serious sentences for bias-motivated crimes, there is little evidence that these amendments are being applied with vigor. In June 2007, a Riga City Court gave suspended sentences to two convicted men, characterized as neo-Nazis, for attacking a Brazilian woman with a bottle while shouting xenophobic expletives.⁴⁹

A major concern in Latvia, identified by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in a 2007 report, is “the widespread denial of the problem of racist violence both on the part of the public and the authorities.” Latvian authorities “tend to remain indifferent and/or undermine the problem by speaking of “isolated cases” without recognizing or being aware of the real number of violent manifestations of intolerance in the country.”⁵⁰

In the **United States**, although the largest number of reported hate crimes continues to be committed against African-Americans, a dramatic rise in anti-immigrant violence accompanied a new mainstreaming of anti-immigrant rhetoric and fears.⁵¹ The rising violence was reflected both in the media reporting and in the statistical data available from annual national hate crime statistics.

The Southern Poverty Law Center revealed a 35 percent rise in hate crimes against people of Hispanic origin between 2003 and 2006, based on an analysis of FBI crime reports. The incidents reported ranged from violent assaults to vandalism and arson.⁵² For example, on October 8, 2007, in Omaha, Nebraska, arsonists set fire to vehicles owned by a family of Hispanic origin, while spray-painting two cars with white power slogans and a swastika.⁵³

In San Diego, California, Deputy District Attorney Oscar Garcia, who specializes in hate crime prosecutions, confirmed that Hispanic Americans were being expressly targeted, with illegal immigrants and U.S. citizens alike victimized in his district. Places at which migrant workers gather to meet employers were particular targets of racist abuse: “day labor sites seem to attract hate mongers who use that as an excuse and hide behind the flag and claim they’re merely trying to express political views.”⁵⁴ According to official statistics from the state of California, anti-Hispanic offenses increased over 7 percent, from 218 in 2006 to 234 in 2007.⁵⁵

There were also important cases in the **United States** in which serious hate crimes led to prosecutions and heavy sentences. Two young men were sentenced in December 2007 for the April 22, 2006 attack near Houston, Texas, on Mexican-American teenager David Ritcheson, who was tortured and verbally abused. The attackers broke his jaw, burned him with cigarettes, attempted to carve a swastika in his chest, and poured bleach on him. The most severe injuries were caused when they violently sodomized Ritcheson with a patio umbrella pole. Ritcheson was hospitalized and required thirty surgeries for his injuries, but never fully recovered from the physical and psychological trauma of the attack. He subsequently collaborated with the Anti-Defamation League in creating an antihate program at his high school, and one year after the attack testified before the U.S. House of Representative’s Judiciary Committee in hearings concerning the strengthening of federal hate crime laws. Three months later David Ritcheson committed suicide.⁵⁶ The accused were sentenced to life imprisonment and ninety years, respectively, for aggravated sexual assault; an appeal by one of the defendants was dismissed in March 2008.⁵⁷

Anti-Immigrant Violence in the Expanded European Union

The expansion of the European Union coincided with racist violence that reflected new patterns of immigration from new member states to other parts of the E.U. At the same time, the new members of the European Union should be held to the E.U. standards in their response to longstanding patterns of racist violence.

On November 24, 2007, in Zlin, in the **Czech Republic**, three young men described as skinheads shouted racist insults and attacked Sri Lankan student Pradeep Manohara Mahadura as he waited with friends at a bus stop. He was beaten and knocked to the ground and then kicked in the stomach and head before a passerby intervened to help.⁵⁸

In **Ireland**, violence against immigrants from Eastern European E.U. states was on the rise, while the criminal justice system has yet to include provisions for penalty enhancement even for the most serious bias crimes.

- On February 22, 2008, in the Dublin suburb of Drimnagh, Polish migrant workers Marius Szwajkos and Pawel Kalite were murdered by a group of youths, suffering lethal stab wounds in the head and throat.⁵⁹ Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, who was on a state visit to Poland at the time of the killings, called the killings a result of “hooliganism,” while the families of the victims said it would probably “never be known” if they were motivated by xenophobia or racism. A 17-year-old and a 19-year-old were charged in relation to the two murders.⁶⁰

In Kosice, **Slovakia**, on November 21, 2007, three men shouting Nazi slogans reportedly attacked a 16-year-old girl of Cuban background. The girl suffered injuries to the head, back, and right arm. A police spokeswoman said: “first they knocked the girl down to the ground. Then all the three started kicking and beating her up, shouting ‘Sieg heil’ and ‘clear off Slovakia’ at her.”⁶¹

In the **United Kingdom**, attacks on Poles, Lithuanians, and other immigrants from the new E.U. member states became a major new component of hate crime violence, particularly in Scotland and Northern Ireland, with one racist murder reported in 2007 in Wales.

- On February 3, 2007, in Edinburgh, Scotland, Polish construction worker Patryk Mních was attacked and beaten in a xenophobic attack causing him severe head injuries and permanent disability. His assailant was charged with inflicting injuries causing permanent impairment and attempted murder. In September 2007, he was sentenced to seven and a half years of imprisonment; although the accused had reportedly called Mních a “Polish bastard,” a jury rejected a charge that the assault was bias-aggravated.⁶²

In June 2007, police in Edinburgh said that following the attack on Patryk Mních they were receiving an average of three reports of hate crime attacks daily, with continuing attacks on Polish and other Eastern European workers representing a high proportion of the attacks. Police said they had dealt with 1,022 racist incidents in the Lothian and Borders regions, which includes Edinburgh, in the 12 months up to April 1, 2008, which was twice the rate of incidents recorded three years before. More than a third of the 900 race hate crimes in Edinburgh took place in the city center, and most of those involved Eastern European victims.⁶³

- In August, in Wales, Glasgow resident Thomas Blue killed Adam Michalski, a Polish immigrant, while shouting xenophobic and racial slurs. Blue was sentenced to life imprisonment, with a minimum 17-year term.⁶⁴

In June 2007, Edinburgh police said that because of the rising numbers of incidents they were considering establishing a system through which Polish victims of hate crimes could report incidents to police anonymously through third parties at a Polish community center there.⁶⁵ A report drawing upon media monitoring

of hate crimes in the U.K., prepared on behalf of the Federation of Poles in Great Britain, documented 50 incidents in 2007 in which Polish immigrants were assaulted. The author of the report, Wiktor Moszczynski, said the assaults occurred “primarily in small towns and in the countryside,” but cited the London Metropolitan police force as having reported that “48 hate crimes against Poles were committed between December 2006 and November 2007.” Many assaults, however, went unreported.⁶⁶

In February 2007, the Lithuanian government announced that it would be establishing a consulate in Northern Ireland to respond to rising attacks on immigrants from Eastern Europe. The Lithuanian ambassador to the U.K., Vygaudas Usackas, said that 64 attacks on Lithuanians had been reported in Northern Ireland within the past year.⁶⁷

- On April 20, 2008, unknown attackers in Cookstown, County Tyrone, threw a petrol-bomb at the home of Lithuanian immigrants; two men and two women escaped unharmed.⁶⁸ Also in April, unknown attackers threw fireworks and bricks through the bedroom window of a Polish couple in Drumahoe, forcing them to flee.⁶⁹ In mid-May, two cars belonging to a Bulgarian family living in Portballintrae were set alight, in what was described as the latest incident in a series of “attacks on the homes, cars and businesses of newcomers.”⁷⁰ On June 12, 2008, unidentified assailants threw bricks and paint at a house in which two Polish families live.⁷¹

An April 2007 study of new patterns of migration to Northern Ireland concludes that racism continues to rise and remains a problem “for all of the different minority ethnic and national communities in Belfast” and is continuing to increase; “while the police data provides some indication of the scale of the problem and some serious incidents get reported in the media, much of the low level and ‘mundane’ racism is not reported.”⁷²

The new patterns of anti-immigrant violence have received attention by police and policy makers in the **United Kingdom**, where detailed monitoring and statistical reporting is the norm. However, similar hate crime incidents are likely occurring elsewhere in Western Europe where governments do not make a similar effort to document and report on such incidents. Although these new immigrants do not stand out dramatically from the majority population because of skin color, their “difference” is sufficient to make them readily identifiable targets for racist violence.⁷³

Anti-Immigrant Scapegoating

Politicians across Europe capitalized on growing public xenophobia, contributing to anti-immigrant rhetoric and blaming immigrants for political, economic, and social problems. In a number of countries, social and political problems were blamed with new vigor on immigrant workers, including those from within the expanded European Union, and in particular on members of the Roma minority. Anti-immigrant scapegoating in **Italy**, **Germany**, **Greece**, and **Switzerland** received national and international attention.

In **Italy**, extraordinary anti-immigrant sentiment exploded into violence toward Romanian immigrants and Roma in general in October 2007. The violence was triggered by the shocking murder of 47-year-old Giovanna Reggiani, for which a Roma man of Romanian nationality was the main suspect.⁷⁴ The government responded with roundups of Romanian immigrants and summary expulsions of some two hundred Roma migrants, in violation of E.U. immigration policy. The Mayor of Rome Walter Veltroni blamed the increase in violent crime overall on the recent immigration of Romanian Roma, asserting that “before the entry of Romania into the European Union, Rome was the safest city in the world.”⁷⁵

Racist violence in the backlash to the murder of Giovanna Reggiani included a November 2, 2007 attack on Roma living in improvised shelters in a parking lot

near the scene of the murder. Up to eight attackers seriously injured three Romanians with metal bars and knives; one of the injured had deep stab wounds in his back.⁷⁶

The violence again surged in early 2008. In May 2008, following claims that a Roma teenager had attempted to kidnap a child, mobs targeted Roma communities for arson attacks even as police rounded up immigrants for summary deportations. Mobs burned Roma communities to the ground as police stood by in the Naples area, forcing hundreds of Roma to flee. Not only Roma were caught up in the anti-immigrant campaign. On May 23, 2008, gangs of youths armed with iron bars and baseball bats rampaged through the fashionable and multicultural Rome district of Pigneto shouting “Get out, bastard foreigners!” The attackers, wearing bandanas blazoned with swastikas and ski masks, smashed the windows of Indian and Bangladeshi-owned shops and beat shopkeepers. The minority owners of shops and such establishments as laundrettes and phone centers expressed fear that further assaults could be expected.⁷⁷

In **Germany**, a heinous criminal act committed by two immigrants gave national impetus to xenophobia and racist violence. A 20-year-old Turkish man and a 17-year-old Greek immigrant were arrested for a December 20, 2007, assault on a 76-year-old German pensioner on the Munich subway. The attackers, both of whom had long police records, verbally abused and physically harmed the victim.⁷⁸

The premier of Hesse state, Roland Koch, a leading member of Prime Minister Angela Merkel’s government, seized upon the subway incident to catalyze a national debate focusing on the involvement of young noncitizens in violent crime. Koch’s declaration that “we have too many criminal young foreigners” was championed by the media, while the statement that “foreigners who don’t stick to our rules don’t belong here” was widely reproduced by advocates of the mass deportations of

foreigners. This pointed to a key problem of integration into German society: the convention by which members of ethnic minorities in Germany “are still widely labeled ‘foreigners’ even if they were born in Germany, even if they have German passports, and especially if they are dark-skinned.”⁷⁹

A series of particularly severe hate crime incidents became the object of national debate and international attention in Germany in the midst of the anti-immigrant debate. Despite the attention given to serious cases involving potentially lethal mob violence, few arrests were reported, and prosecutors in the most notorious cases tended to bring charges only for minor offences resulting in fines.

On August 19, 2007, in Mügeln, Saxony, eight Indian nationals attending a town festival were severely beaten by a mob of some fifty young men shouting “Foreigners out!” and “Germany for the Germans!” Upon seeking shelter in a pizza parlor, the mob attacked the restaurant, breaking the windows, and assaulting the Indians. The incident triggered widespread outrage, with photographs of the bruised faces of Indian men appearing in all major media. Chancellor Angela Merkel said the attack was “extremely grim and shameful,” adding that “it is not acceptable for people in German cities to be chased through the streets and beaten.” She pledged to place the issue high on the agenda of a strategy session of the governing coalition the same day.⁸⁰

Local officials downplayed the racist nature of the attack; both local and national officials were mostly concerned with the possible negative impact that the incident could have on the international reputation of Saxony and Germany. A government spokesman declared that racist incidents were harmful to Germany’s image abroad.⁸¹ Gotthard Deuss, the mayor, insisted that “there are no known right-wing extremists here,” and questioned whether there really could be “a far-right background to this incident.” He had, however,

reportedly been warned in advance that neo-Nazis planned to disrupt the festival. The regional police chief, Bernd Merbitz, was slightly more open to the incident having constituted a hate crime, saying: “We are investigating all possible motives, including the possibility that this was an act aimed at foreigners.”⁸²

Despite the prolonged violence of the incident, and the serious injuries and damage caused, prosecutors mainly focused on hate speech in arguing the case before the court. Charges were brought against only four men. In November, an 18-year-old suspect tried in a closed hearing by a Leipzig court admitted to “xenophobic comments” during the attack and was fined €1,800. Two others were fined for shouting xenophobic slogans.⁸³ In December, a fourth suspect, charged with leading the mob, was convicted of racial incitement and property damage, and was sentenced to eight months imprisonment.⁸⁴ A special 16-member police task force had been set up to investigate the incident.⁸⁵

The M \ddot{u} geln incident was extraordinary because of the size of the mob involved, and the numbers of the victims. On the same night, August 19, 2007, racists attacked two other immigrants who stood out because of the color of their skin at a town festival in Guntersblum, near Mainz.⁸⁶ A Sudanese man, who was working at the festival, was hit on the head with a wine bottle and knocked to the ground; an Egyptian coworker who sought to help the victim was also cut with a broken bottle, losing one finger.⁸⁷ More blatantly racist attacks were reported in three German towns on August 24. Unknown attackers set a dog on an Iraqi man at a tram stop in Magdeberg, and beat him with a baseball bat; others attacked a Ghanaian man in Braunschweig. Also on the same night, a mob in B \ddot{u} tzow of some 40 people attacked market stalls and a business owned by a resident of Pakistani origin.⁸⁸

In the aftermath of the M \ddot{u} geln incident, calls for increased action against extremist violence came from broad sectors of society. Stephan Kramer, the secretary

general of the Central Council of Jews, spoke out about the “apparently dangerous situation” in certain parts of Eastern Germany where foreigners were under attack, adding: “Yesterday, it was people of color, today it’s foreigners, and tomorrow it could be gays and lesbians, or, perhaps, Jews.”⁸⁹

In **Greece**, senior officials in 2007 blamed Roma communities and immigrants for an overall rise in crimes. In December 2007, Supreme Court Prosecutor George Sanidas offered a generalization identifying the perpetrators of crime in one section of Athens as “foreign women of African and non-African origin” and “athinganoi” (a pejorative word for Roma). The ensuing police crackdown in central Athens led to what the Greek Helsinki Monitor group described as harassment of “African women and Roma street vendors.” Robert Varenik of the Open Society Justice Initiative, which combats ethnic and racial profiling in Europe, called the chief prosecutor’s accusations “unprofessional and inexcusable.”⁹⁰

In the context of official discourse blaming immigrants and Roma for crime, a series of incidents were reported in Athens, in which migrant workers were the victims of organized attacks by extremist anti-immigration militants. On December 1, 2007, some twenty-five attackers described as extreme rightists assaulted the house of a group of Pakistani migrants in the Athens suburb of Aigaleo, seriously injuring five. The attackers broke windows and gained entry by kicking down a door, and then used clubs, crowbars, and knives in the assault.⁹¹ This was reportedly the fourth such attack on migrant housing in Athens in the last quarter of 2007. A demonstration protesting the attacks was held in Aigaleo in December. A further incident was nevertheless reported in the second week of January, 2008: attackers threw rocks at a ground-floor residence of Pakistani immigrants, breaking windows.⁹²

In May 2008, a dozen or more attackers reportedly broke into a building used as an unofficial mosque by

the Pakistani Community in the Rendi section of Athens, beating with sticks Pakistani worshippers and a Greek neighbor who protested. The beatings were reportedly accompanied by epithets demanding that “Pakistanis get out of Greece.”⁹³

The Hellenic League for Human Rights reported a steady increase in 2007 in racist attacks on immigrants and other minorities, while condemning what it said was the indifference of Greek law enforcement bodies toward the attacks.⁹⁴

In **Switzerland**, the run-up to the October 2007 parliamentary elections was marked by a vicious anti-immigrant campaign that was denounced by human rights groups and some political leaders as blatantly racist. In August, the Swiss People’s Party placed posters across the country and in the media, depicting cartoon figures of three immaculate white sheep on a Swiss map, kicking a black sheep out of the country. The poster was expressly aimed at supporting a new party platform to throw “foreign criminals” out of Switzerland. President Micheline Calmy-Rey denounced the posters and the broader campaign as “racist,” and intended “to stir up hatred.”⁹⁵ The Swiss Federal Commission against Racism, in a study released in December 2007, said the campaign had propagated stereotypes of foreign nationals and ethnic minorities as the perpetrators of crime, as violent, as having no respect for the law, and as incapable of integrating into Swiss society.⁹⁶ The vice president of the commission, Boël Sambuc, said the election campaign had turned into a “black-white debate.”⁹⁷ In the context of the new anti-immigrant discourse, racist attacks on people of African origin rose, and refugees and asylum seekers of all origins were under renewed threat through several attacks on asylum seekers’ housing.

C. Refugees and Asylum Seekers

In a range of countries, refugees and asylum and refugee seekers were among the principal targets of racist and religiously motivated violence. These immigrants often were distinguished by their appearance, language, religion and customs, particularly in largely homogenous societies. Their vulnerability increased when they were concentrated in a few cities and neighborhoods determined by the policies of national and local authorities, especially when placed in highly visible concentrations in public housing. People living in such areas were in some cases ill-protected against racist harassment and violence. Attacks on individuals and places of residence, such as refugee hostels, were recorded in various parts of Western Europe.

In **Germany**, in March, 2007, two unknown attackers in Cottbus, Brandenburg, shouted racial epithets and physically attacked two asylum seekers from Chad and Cameroon.⁹⁸

In Asker, **Norway**, on July 18, 2008, a gunman repeatedly fired at an accommodation center for asylum seekers, which houses fifteen to eighteen youths. A 16-year-old Somali refugee was severely wounded by a projectile that penetrated the wall of the room in which he was sleeping.⁹⁹ No arrests were reported.¹⁰⁰

In **Spain**, the Spanish Commission to Aid Refugees (CEAR) reported three hundred racist attacks in 2006, mostly on people of immigrant origin, and spoke out on continuing racist attacks during 2007 and 2008. The Valencia office of CEAR was attacked repeatedly in 2007 after having been vandalized three times in 2006. On February 3, 2007, unknown assailants attacked CEAR’s offices with an explosive device that broke windows and damaged window frames. A similar attack took place on May 4, 2007. On May 14, 2007, employees discovered a small explosive device at the front door but managed to extinguish its fuse. On July 2,

2007, the windows in the entrance were shattered by an explosion. CEAR described the situation in Valencia as one of rising racist violence and xenophobia and a climate of impunity.¹⁰¹

In the course of 2007, at least six incidents were reported in **Switzerland** in which assailants attacked housing for asylum seekers with firebombs or gunfire. The incidents received almost no publicity in the national media, but were documented by the Swiss Foundation Against Racism and Antisemitism:

- On January 22, unidentified attackers threw Molotov cocktails at a center for asylum seekers in Birr; on June 3, 2007, gunmen fired seven shots at the same center, breaking windows.
- On March 4, 2007, in Langendorf, two men were seen driving slowly past a center for asylum seekers shortly after midnight. The same vehicle returned shortly afterward and one of its passengers was seen to fire on the building.
- Shortly after midnight on May 27, 2007, in Fällanden, two young men—aged 16 and 20—threw an incendiary device against the wall of a building housing asylum seekers. The fire was put out by residents. The following night, the men returned and threw two Molotov cocktails at the building. The attackers were detained and confessed to having intended to “frighten the residents.”¹⁰²

On June 4, 2007, the Federal Commission Against Racism expressed concern with “a changing political climate.”¹⁰³ Similar attacks continued in 2008.

In **Ukraine**, refugees and asylum seekers suffered harassment and sometimes lethal violence due to racial prejudice and hatred. After the murder of a Nigerian national on May 29, 2008, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) joined the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other prominent groups in demanding the Ukrainian government

investigate the crime—at that time the latest of forty reported racist attacks in 2008, including four murders.

In a statement from its Geneva headquarters on June 3, 2008, UNHCR spokeswoman Jennifer Pagonis described the “increasingly violent attacks on foreigners and non-Ukrainians in Kiev and elsewhere in the country,” and efforts to press Ukrainian authorities for action: “UNHCR and IOM have repeatedly expressed concern over unprovoked attacks, beatings and verbal abuse aimed at asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, foreigners and minorities in Ukraine.”¹⁰⁴ The UNHCR had previously expressed extreme concern with “the number and seriousness of racist attacks against asylum seekers, refugees, and other foreigners in Ukraine,” with reports received “on a regular basis.” The UNHCR described these as “firsthand reports of racially motivated incidents, unprovoked attacks, beatings, verbal insults and other acts of xenophobia against refugees and asylum seekers in different regions of Ukraine.”¹⁰⁵ In a February 2008 statement, the UNHCR said it had received reports from asylum seekers of seventeen incidents of beatings and other serious abuse in Kiev alone in 2007.¹⁰⁶

In the **United Kingdom**, refugees and asylum seekers were the frequent object of violent assaults accompanied by racist epithets, in part because they were highly visible in their areas of placement. Asylum seekers in particular are generally assigned to public housing estates already known for high levels of criminal violence, often in high concentrations in select towns and cities.

A particularly high rate of hate violence toward refugees and asylum seekers was reported in the Strathclyde area of Glasgow, where most of Scotland’s asylum seekers initially reside in public housing.¹⁰⁷ A Scottish Executive study labeled the levels of racial harassment there “shocking,” while 60 percent of people assigned to Strathclyde leave the area once they are granted asylum.¹⁰⁸

On September 28, 2007, unidentified assailants in the Catchcart area of Glasgow verbally abused and stabbed 15-year-old Christopher Ikolo, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on his way to school. The victim was hospitalized with a kidney injury.¹⁰⁹ Ikolo had been featured in a Scottish Refugee Week publication for his participation in a youth hip hop band. Police said there had been “168 race attacks perpetrated by youths” in Glasgow from mid-2006 through mid-2007.¹¹⁰

High levels of violence were also reported in England, affecting both asylum seekers and refugee settlers who had chosen a permanent place of residence. In March 2007, an unknown attacker stabbed and killed 26-year-old Afghan refugee Enayit Khalili, who had lived and worked in Oxford since 2001.¹¹¹ In May 2008, a 21-year-old man was charged with the murder.¹¹²

Section Endnotes

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Headquarters

333 Seventh Avenue
13th Floor
New York, NY 10001-5108

Tel.: 212.845.5200
Fax: 212.845.5299

www.humanrightsfirst.org

Washington D.C. Office

100 Maryland Avenue, NE
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-5625

Tel: 202.547.5692
Fax: 202.543.5999