



MINISTERSTVO VNITRA  
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY

# **REPORT ON EXTREMISM AND PREJUDICIAL HATRED IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN 2023**

**Ministry of the Interior  
Security Policy Department  
Prague 2024**

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## 1. Introduction

The Report on Extremism and Prejudicial Hatred on the Territory of the Czech Republic in 2023 (hereinafter "the Report") is submitted on the basis of Government Resolution No.316 of 3 May 2023.

The document does not cover all racist and xenophobic manifestations registered in the Czech Republic in 2023. In addition to members or sympathizers of extremist groups, the report also mentions other hateful entities and phenomena that do not meet the qualifying characteristics of the term extremism used by the Czech Interior Ministry. For the Ministry of the Interior, the politological aspect is not so essential, it is rather the hateful element that is based on the prejudiced generalisation of certain social groups. The reports are based on an established methodology. The document uses the definitions of terms mentioned below, and has a clearly defined process of elaboration and approval.

The Report is written by the Ministry of the Interior. Background materials were provided by contributors from the intelligence services, the Police of the Czech Republic, the Ministries of Justice and Defence, the Prosecutor General's Office and the General Inspectorate of Security Forces.

The Ministry of the Interior addresses spectator violence, also known as hooliganism, separately.

The Report is written annually. New measures are adopted based on its findings

The first section on the "domestic scene" is based, in particular, on data provided by the Security Information Service and the Police of the Czech Republic, specifically by specialists on extremism of the National Headquarters against Terrorism, Extremism and Cybercrime of the Criminal Police and Investigation Service and regional directorates of the Police of the Czech Republic.

Statistical data in the following section were provided by the Police of the Czech Republic, the General Inspectorate of Security Forces, the Ministry of Defence, the Prosecutor General's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Probation and Mediation Service.

## 2. Definition of Terms

According to the Ministry of the Interior, the term **extremism** refers to distinct ideological positions that deviate from constitutional and legal norms, and that are characterized by elements of intolerance, and attack the basic democratic constitutional principles as defined in the Czech constitutional order. These principles include:

- respect for human and civil rights and freedoms (Article 1 of the Constitution),
- a sovereign, unitary and democratic state governed by the rule of law (Article 1 of the Constitution),
- the immutability of the essential elements of a democratic state governed by the rule of law (Article 9(2) of the Constitution),
- sovereignty of the people (Article 2 of the Constitution),
- free competition of political parties respecting fundamental democratic principles and rejecting violence as a mean of asserting their interests (Article 5 of the Constitution),
- protection of minorities in the decision-making of the majority (Article 6 of the Constitution),
- freedom and equality of people in dignity and rights, the inherence, inalienability, illimitability and irreparability of fundamental rights and freedoms without distinction of sex, race, colour of skin, language, faith, and religion, political or other conviction, national or social origin, membership of a nationality or ethnic minority, property, birth, or other status (Article 1, Article 3 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms).

Extremist attitudes can develop into activities that have a destructive effect, either directly or in the long term, on the existing democratic political-economic system - they seek to replace the democratic system with a non-democratic one (totalitarian or authoritarian regime, dictatorship, anarchy). This type of activity is dealt with by the Security Information Service based on Act No. 153/1994 Coll., pursuant to Section 5(a).

The Ministry of the Interior documents are therefore based on a uniform concept of extremism as a breeding ground for activities against the constitutional establishment and the values protected by it. Extremism usually uses the following instruments: historical revisionism, social demagogy, activism, promotion of verbal to physical violence against opponents and against a priori defined social groups, and conspiracy theories. In the global political science literature, a distinction is usually made between left-wing and right-wing extremism, as well as religious, ecological and (in some cases) nationalist (regionalist) extremism. The last three forms of extremism occur only sporadically, or not at all, in the Czech Republic, so the Report focuses mainly on right-wing extremists (inspired by and using primarily national, racial, and ethnic resentment, sympathising with historical fascism or Nazism) and left-wing extremists (motivated primarily by social, class and anti-cultural resentment, sympathising with historical communism or anarchism).

Although in the ideal right-left models, left-wing and right-wing extremism form the opposites, the reality is more complicated because of the role of the socio-cultural and historical context against which these ideal types manifest themselves. This leads to the fact that these counterpoints can manifest themselves in different areas of unconstitutional action with very different intensities, and in different sensitivities of the social danger of these opposites.

There is no legal definition of extremism. Particularly in the context of racially motivated crime, we may encounter the term extremist crime or crime with extremist subtext. Under this term, the Ministry of the Interior understands those forms of criminal activity which there is reason to believe have been motivated or influenced by extremist attitudes. Alternatively, the term “crime motivated by racial, national or other social hatred” may also be used. These activities fulfil the elements of a criminal offence or misdemeanour and are motivated by an a priori hatred arising from the victim’s affiliation to a race, nationality, religion, class, or other social group. Attacks against symbols or representatives of an existing social system, if motivated by an a priori hatred of that system, are also a specific type of crime that can be classified in this category.<sup>1</sup>

Not all entities mentioned in the Report engaged in illegal activities in 2023. From a long-term perspective, they nevertheless fulfil the criteria to be described as extremist, as defined by the Ministry of the Interior.

In addition to the concept of extremism, the Report uses the concept of “**prejudicial hatred**“. This responds to the fact that the influence of traditional extremist entities is weakening, and their rhetoric and activities are gradually being taken over by other entities that cannot be unequivocally described as extremist.

Manifestations of prejudicial hatred refer to a behaviour that is motivated by intolerance and social biases against a particular population. In general, these are groups defined by race, nationality, ethnicity, religious, sexual orientation, political or other persuasion, social origin etc. It does not have to concern a real affiliation to a particular group, but it can refer to an alleged affiliation (e.g. if a person is mistaken for a Roma for their darker skin tone). Such manifestations do not necessarily imply a criminal offence. It can be physical violence, verbal attacks, or the use of offensive symbols. Manifestations of prejudicial hatred differ from the extremist ones particularly by the fact that they do not have to be associated with any of the anti-democratic or unconstitutional ideologies. Persons who engage in such manifestations do not necessarily have to be members or supporters of extremist movements. They also lack a clear call for the overthrow of the system of pluralist democracy and its replacement by a non-democratic system.

The risks of manifestations of prejudicial hatred are in many areas similar to the dangers posed by extremists. They are listed below. Entities that engage in such manifestations:

- Do not seek the immediate destruction of the democratic system but gradually weaken it.
- Do not respect the concept of fundamental human rights.
- Incite others to hate activities.
- Spread fear in society.
- Fragmentise society causing antagonisms.
- Downplay the fate of victims of totalitarian regimes and victims of hate crime.
- Use disinformation and conspiracy theories to communicate with the public.
- Become an instrument of influence of countries and groups that do not respect the principles of pluralist democracy.

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<sup>1</sup> The full text of the definition of extremism is available here: <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/co-je-extremismus.aspx>.

Manifestations of prejudicial hatred can be detected in members or supporters of a wide range of political or other social entities. However, the Report mentions only those entities for whom such manifestations represent the dominant component of their rhetoric and activities. In practice, these are for example groups in which intolerant attacks against Roma, immigrants, Muslims, or homosexuals continually prevail. Other ideological agendas may be completely absent or can only represent a complementary component

For the Ministry of the Interior, the politological categories (e.g., whether it is a neo-Nazi or neo-fascist entity) are not so important. What is relevant is the aspect of dissemination of hatred arising from a generalising prejudice. Hate speech is the most immediate threat to certain groups of the population..

Two other groups are closely related to hateful actors, namely paramilitary and domestic militia groups, and media spreading prejudicial hatred.

Anarchist and orthodox communist groups are included in the left-wing extremist spectrum.

The chapter dedicated to religiously motivated extremism addresses hate speech ideologically based on extremist interpretations of various religious concepts.

## **3. Report on Extremism and Prejudicial Hatred in the Czech Republic in 2023**

### **3.1. Summary**

The year 2023 played into the hands of the so-called anti-system movement, which completely overshadowed the traditional extremist or xenophobic populist subjects. It was a continuation of the trend set in motion by the pandemic crisis, when a number of new personalities emerged, especially in the online space, who won their own supporters. This movement represents a kind of a melting pot of citizens dissatisfied with a range of social, political or economic events. Formally, it uses a patriotic label, but in reality it absorbs elements more fitting to the Kremlin regime's hybrid activities.

The weakness of this anti-system movement was its fragmentation and the absence of any political programme. A number of personalities could not agree on concrete cooperation. Some entities used various conspiracy theories to mobilise their supporters, in some cases even giving them a spiritual or esoteric dimension. Despite the lack of vision and the "wildness" of the ideas they spread, many activists managed to win the confidence of dissatisfied citizens.

The anti-system movement and extremist and xenophobic entities are made up largely of middle-aged and older people who have existential fears and feel alienated. The long-term and continuous flow of misinformation and disinformation has left them unable to critically reflect on various conspiracy theories and other often purposefully altered or outright fabricated content, and in many cases they tend to believe them unconditionally.

Since October, the Middle East conflict has complemented the thematic mix of these subjects, including price increases, the energy and migration crisis, the Russian aggression against Ukraine and anti-pandemic measures.

Traditional right-wing extremist structures have ceased to be relevant political players. There were individual incidents perpetrated by supporters of neo-Nazi ideas.

Prejudicial hate speech against Muslims, migrants, Roma, Ukrainians, Jews and the LGBT+ community continued to appear, especially in online spaces. As a result of real or alleged situational conflicts, tensions between some Roma and Ukrainians temporarily increased.

Anarchist groups suffered from a complete lack of public interest. Manifestations of so-called insurgent anarchism almost disappeared. The conflict in the Middle East has led to a certain revival for anarchists. At the same time, some of them condemned the actions of both the Israeli state and Hamas, arguing that their leaders must be toppled.

Orthodox communists operated in their social bubble reflecting historical anniversaries or selected events from home or abroad. However, they did not comment on the crimes committed against opponents of the communist regime, which were the subject of the Police of the Czech Republic or the judiciary. In response to the Hamas terrorist attack,

statements were made attempting to explain the action by previous Israeli activities. Reflection on the specific crimes of the terrorists was marginalized by the communists.

Media outlets spreading hateful prejudice worked diligently throughout the year and generated anti-Semitic, anti-migrant, anti-Muslim and other xenophobic content on a daily basis. In response to the Hamas attack in October, various new conspiracy theories about Jews and Israel began to emerge. However, the anti-Muslim line and the Islamization of Europe thesis remained.

Despite the calls for violent action by Islamist terrorist organizations after 7 October, no indications have been registered in the Czech Republic that they will be heeded domestically. In connection with the Hamas terrorist action, the Police of the Czech Republic initiated criminal proceedings in several cases for manifestations of anti-Semitism.

Threats and alarmist messages have still been spread. In this context, some persons were prosecuted.

Individuals who deviate from traditional extremist stereotypes pose a potential risk. They are very young people, often suffering from some form of social isolation, sexual deprivation or psychological disorders. Their links to the extremist scene are loose, and their particular extremist ideology forms only an additional component of their self-radicalisation process.

In 2023, the Police of the Czech Republic detected 181 hate crimes. In addition, the police recorded a total of 98 persons prosecuted for hate crimes. A total of 90 persons were charged for crimes committed for racial, national and other hate motives. A total of 50 persons were convicted.

### **3.2. Right-wing extremists**

Older veterans of the neo-Nazi movement were not publicly vocal. In fact, they were active only within their subculture. Their mobilisation potential is low, and often limited by alcoholism or the use of other addictive substances. Concerts attended by tens or even lower hundreds of people have been registered. Nationalists have increasingly focused on cooperation with foreign counterparts. The working-class youth became increasingly vocal about neo-Nazism through internet messages.

*National Democracy and the Workers' Party of Social Justice have completely lost their relevance. They can be described as a small piece in the mosaic of groups whose manifestations are in line with the hybrid action of the Kremlin regime.*

Despite the decline and aging of the domestic right-wing extremist and neo-Nazi movement, young sympathizers of the new movements which are spreading through international online communities appear in the Czech Republic as well. These communities use more modern and punchier presentations. They often encourage violent direct action, including instructions for so-called disenchantment.<sup>2</sup> Experience has shown that their supporters and members can be individuals without criminal histories and without other than virtual ties to neo-Nazi structures. An example of this worldwide trend is the case of the preparation of the terrorist attack on three embassies in Prague. One young man was given a

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<sup>2</sup> Getting rid of moral inhibitions to take violent direct action.



30month sentence suspended for three years by the High Court of Appeal in Olomouc in March. The case of his co-accused colleague was heard by the Regional Court in Brno in November.

In the period under review, the judiciary also dealt with cases of the publishing houses Bodyart Press and Naše Vojsko. Hedvika Fiksová, managing director of Bodyart Press, filed an appeal to the Supreme Court against the guilty verdict for the publication of the book *The Myth of 6 Million*.<sup>3</sup> The Supreme Court rejected her appeal.

The same court also upheld a complaint by the Minister of Justice in the case of *Our Troops*, which sold items with Nazi themes. The case, in which the publishing house and its director faced charges of founding, supporting and promoting a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedoms and rioting, was returned to the public prosecutor for further investigation. The public prosecutor subsequently filed a third indictment in the case. The case was then heard by the District Court for Prague 5.

### ***3.3. Manifestations of prejudicial hatred***

In 2023, xenophobic and racially motivated manifestations by persons with no clear connection to the right-wing extremist environment were registered. They have traditionally been targeted against immigrants, Roma and other minorities. Anti-Ukrainian discourse and attacks on Ukrainians or their property also continued.

In the period under review, relations between some parts of the Ukrainian and Romani communities also escalated. This was caused by real or imaginary situational conflicts that resonated in the social media. Some persons tried to purposefully foment these tensions.

The trend of accepting various anti-Semitic conspiracy theories also continued. Such theories began to appear more frequently after the Hamas terrorist attack.

To a lesser extent, antigypsy and homophobic texts were posted. Hate speech also affected other communities, such as the homeless community..<sup>4</sup>

The quasi-media scene and particular individuals who fill the online space with often half-true or completely fabricated information about various incidents or injustices contribute to the escalation of tension. Some of the alarming reports have been dealt with by law enforcement authorities. The quasi-media scene and specific individuals who fill the online space with often half-true or completely fabricated information about various incidents or injustices play a significant role in escalating tensions. Some of the alarming reports have been dealt with by law enforcement authorities. Often, this content is supported by manipulative messages about the Russian Federation, where law and justice allegedly still function and where the state protects its population and 'traditional values' from minorities and decadence.

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<sup>3</sup> In connection with the publication of David Hoggan's pseudo-historical book, the District Court in Žďár nad Sázavou sentenced Fiksová to a fine of CZK 15 000 for the crime of denying, questioning, approving and justifying genocide. Her publishing house, Bodyart Press, was fined CZK 45,000. The Regional Court in Brno subsequently confirmed the amount of the fine.

<sup>4</sup> Police in Opava have charged a man with attempted murder for assaulting a homeless couple. He stabbed the man, particularly on the head and the upper half of his body. The woman suffered injuries of a minor nature. His motive for the crime was to try to "clean up" the city of homeless people.

### **3.4. Paramilitary and militia groups**

Paramilitary organisations did not engage in significant public activities in the period under review. They have long been paralysed by mutual disagreements and fear of sanctions from the authorities. Nevertheless, a few more organisationally capable individuals continued to organise conscription exercises, focusing on shooting training, protection against weapons of mass destruction or topography. The militiamen were influenced by various conspiracy theories. Some of them expect the collapse of the democratic system and have the ambition to become part of the armed forces of the new regime.

Thus, only the criminal cases associated with their leaders have attracted public attention. Officers of the National Centre for Counter-Terrorism, Extremism and Cybercrime of the Criminal Police and Investigation Service have filed a motion with the High Public Prosecutor's Office in Prague to indict five persons of the group Czechoslovak Soldiers in Reserve for Peace for the crimes of terrorist attack, financing terrorism or support and promotion of terrorism.<sup>5</sup> Prague criminal investigators have finished the pre-trial proceedings and have submitted to the prosecutor of the Prague 4 District Public Prosecutor's Office the file on the case of Nela Liskova, a former representative of the National Militia, who on her Twitter account called for the de-Ukrainianization and de-Nazification of the Czech Republic.<sup>6</sup>

### **3.5. Anarchist scene**

Anarchist groups have completely lost their social relevance. The closed community of anarchists is stagnating. Its attempts to engage a wider audience are diffuse, unconceptual, haphazard and unsuccessful..

In the period under review, some anarchists travelled abroad to support the public actions of their comrades.

Manifestations of insurgent anarchism were practically non-existent, they could only be traced in the online space.

The Regional Court in Ústí nad Labem overturned the acquittal in the "Phoenix 2" case, in which five anarchists faced charges of supporting and promoting a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedoms. The case, which is linked to the so-called Network of Revolutionary Cells, has been reopened by the District Court in Most.

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<sup>5</sup> The High Public Prosecutor's Office in Prague subsequently returned the case to the police for further investigation.

<sup>6</sup> The public prosecutor then filed a petition with the court to punish Liskova for the crime of incitement of hatred against a group of persons or restriction of their rights and freedoms.

The conflict in the Middle East has become a new topic for anarchists. Some of them condemned the actions of both the Israeli state and Hamas. They saw the solution to the conflict in the overthrow of the leaders of both entities.

### **3.6. Orthodox communists**

Orthodox communists represent a community that profiles itself primarily by spreading pro-Kremlin narratives. They are also characterized by downplaying communist crimes and commemorating important anniversaries and personalities from the era of communist totalitarianism. Some of them participated in various protest rallies organised by other subjects in the period under review.

Most orthodox communists are still associated with the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia. The other entities are of little importance and have a small membership base. They differ in the extent of the radical nature of their manifestations.

In the first half of the year, one of the most visible personalities was Josef Skála, who is moving away from purely communist ideas, focusing more on the so-called anti-system movement and cooperating with the quasi-media scene. Skála, along with Vladimír Kapal and Juraj Václavík, was given an eight-month suspended sentence with a five-year probationary period by the Prague 7 District Court for a discussion on the so-called Svobodné Radio for questioning historical facts about the so-called Katyn massacre.<sup>7</sup>

Some of the criminal proceedings associated with the communist officials in connection with the shooting of border guards at the border were dropped due to their high age and health condition.<sup>8</sup> At the end of June, the Office of Documentation and Investigation of Crimes of Communism of the Criminal Police and Investigation Service charged Colonel Jan Muzikar, a senior official of the Main Administration of Border Guard and State Border Protection, with abuse of official authority for endangering, injuring and killing several people during an attempted escape across the Czechoslovak border.

Some communist groups have been active in commenting on events in the Middle East following the Hamas terrorist attack. There were statements by some communist leaders seeking to explain this action because of previous Israeli actions and finding sympathy for Palestinian resistance. The Communists' reflection on the specific crimes of the terrorists was marginalized.

Police officers have begun investigating on suspicion of committing the offense of denying, questioning, approving or justifying genocide in the case of the display of a Russian flag with the letter Z at an event held by the Nymburk communists.

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<sup>7</sup> In 1940, the Soviet NKVD massacred thousands of Polish citizens near the village of Katyn. Communist propaganda blamed the massacre on the Nazis. The Municipal Court in Prague then confirmed the eight-month sentence for the offence of denying, questioning, approving and justifying genocide, but reduced the probationary period to 18 months. Skála filed an appeal to the Supreme Court.

<sup>8</sup> Lubomír Štrougal and Vratislav Vajnar died. According to expert assessments, Karel Kincl and Jan Fojtík are unable to understand the content and meaning of procedural acts in criminal proceedings.

### 3.7. Media spreading hateful prejudice <sup>9</sup>

The quasi-media scene continued to use the dissemination of hateful prejudices as one of its proven tools for influencing public opinion. Its representatives tried to use real events to stir up tensions. In many cases, they invent conflict events or theories or adopt such fabrications from other sources.

The xenophobic content is structured to fit the Kremlin's narrative. The following table illustrates some of the simple hate messages that the quasi-media scene continuously delivers to the Czech public.

Type of hate message	Content of the message	Follow-up messages related to the West and Russia
Islamophobic, anti-migrant	Muslims, immigrants are terrorists, they commit crime, they abuse welfare. Muslims and immigrants impose their beliefs, customs and traditions on us..	The weak West is gradually Islamised. Western elites deliberately favour Muslims and migrants. Only Russia can defend itself and protect traditional Christian values.
Anti-Semitic <sup>10</sup>	Jews all over the world seek to gain power and wealth, and to that end they try to undermine non-Jewish nations.	The West is controlled by Jewish elites, hence the "treasonous" behavior of Western governments. Russia is able to resist the Jewish lobby and pursue its own interests.
Anti-Ukrainian	Ukrainians commit crime, are ungrateful to Czech citizens, and sympathize with (neo)Nazism. The situation in Ukraine is not so bad that Ukrainians have to flee.	The West needs to stop supporting Ukraine so that Russia can more easily pursue aggressive military operations.
Homophobic	The LGBT+ community is corrupt, not benefiting society.	The West is decadent and in decline. In Russia there is no problem with the LGBT+ community, the society there is built on a "healthy" traditional family.

The quasi-media scene can also use hate messages against other groups purposefully. It undermines the system of liberal democracy as such, challenging the government and the government's position within the international democratic community. The narrative of various "traitors" who have allegedly sold the Czech Republic abroad, are foreign puppets, etc., is often used.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The report focuses on media outlets that have a history of producing hate messages, and this type of content makes up a significant part of their output.

<sup>10</sup> Anti-Semitic content intensified after the Hamas terror attack. This was largely due to the West siding with Israel.

<sup>11</sup> The views of President Petr Pavel, for example, do not fit into the mosaic of ideas of the quasi-media scene. In connection with the presidential election, a lot of misinformation was generated against him.

The Prague 4 District Court has imposed a 10-month suspended sentence with a probationary period of 20 months on Radek Velička, the publisher of *Vlastenecké noviny*, for the crime of violence against a group of residents and against an individual. Velička published death threats on the internet addressed to several people.

### **3.8. Religiously motivated extremism**

After the coronavirus pandemic, the Muslim community began to resume its public activities. However, it remained rather wary of the majority society. The Muslim, and especially the Arab community, did not take it well that the Czech public received the Ukrainian refugees and migrants from Muslim countries. Some individuals criticized this fact in social networks.

As in previous years, cases of individual radicalization have been registered, especially in the online environment. Adolescents and minors are particularly at risk. The registered cases show that radicalisation is not only affecting practising Muslims, but also converts and people who were not previously religiously oriented.

But the Muslim community has remained largely moderate and has not responded to the calls of the proponents of extremist forms of Islam.<sup>12</sup> Only individuals have shown sympathy for the Salafist or Wahhabi form of Islam.

The Hamas terrorist attack was reflected in the Czech Republic, as in other countries around the world. The Czech Republic has clearly sided with Israel and condemned this act. Czech police officers have initiated criminal proceedings in the case of the death of a citizen with Czech and Israeli citizenship who was the victim of terrorists. The victims included a woman who was born in Czechoslovakia and was imprisoned in Terezín. The conflict in the Middle East has also sparked anti-Semitic incidents, particularly in the online space. Some of them were also dealt with by the Czech Police.<sup>13</sup> In response, the Jewish community began to express concern for their safety.<sup>14</sup> The security forces were obliged to increase the protection of Jewish sites, intensify the exchange of information and pay increased attention to relevant public gatherings. There are reasonable concerns that negative events in the Middle East should not spill over into communities living in the Czech Republic.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Including, for example, calls for attacks on Jewish targets after the Hamas terror attack in October.

<sup>13</sup> At one of the pro-Palestinian rallies in Prague, one of the participants wore a sweatshirt with the words "Olympics 1972" on it, which could be interpreted as a reminder of the anti-Israel terrorist attack during the Munich Olympics by the Palestinian organization Black September. The tearing down of posters depicting persons abducted by Hamas has been registered. The case of a Turkish kebab seller from Plzeň, who posted anti-Jewish leaflets on the entrance to his establishment, has received media coverage.

<sup>14</sup> These concerns were voiced by Jewish communities, the Lauder Schools and Israeli Jews studying at Czech universities.

<sup>15</sup> Typically, this involves the potential impact on Czech communities in the event of the death or injury of a relative or loved one in the Middle East conflict.

During the reporting period, police officers also paid attention to the activities of sects and quasi-religious groups operating with various disinformation narratives.

### **3.9 Other relevant events related to extremism and terrorism**

The rather stagnant traditional extremist and xenophobic subjects were replaced by the so-called anti-systemic movement<sup>16</sup>, composed of diverse protest groups. A number of politicians or activists have sought the favour of dissatisfied citizens. To this end, they organised public meetings and toured Czech cities. They used disinformation and conspiracy theories to win supporters.<sup>17</sup> They received active support from the quasi-media scene. Some of them express sympathy for the Kremlin regime.

Within the anti-system movement, the idea that the Czech Republic is not a legitimate state has been spreading.<sup>18</sup> The most famous proponents of this invention are the members of the Community of Legitimate Creditors of the Czech Republic. But over time it was adopted by more and more individuals and loosely associated groups active in the anti-system movement. Groups of this type have also been detected with an overlap into the New Religionism.<sup>19</sup>

In the Czech Republic, the proponents of the concept of so-called sovereign citizens have so far focused on coercive actions against the authorities or ignored their appeals. Some of them have publicly shown disrespect for the Czech state and its institutions, describing the Czech Republic as a "corporation" with which it is possible to break a "contract" and become completely independent of it..<sup>20</sup> Their activities culminated in excesses in the courts, when these individuals attempted to block specific trials of defendants who were portrayed as victims of an illegitimate system.<sup>21</sup>

Some personalities of the anti-system movement have earned the attention of law enforcement authorities for publicly presenting threats and other hateful content, or for other criminal activities. The best-known case was that of Tomáš Čermák, convicted of several crimes, including support and promotion of terrorism. This disinformation worker did not serve his prison sentence and was subsequently caught by the police in Poland. He was then

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<sup>16</sup> A group of dissatisfied citizens who distrust the government, the democratic system and disagree with the foreign policy course of the country. These people do not identify themselves with the current value system, do not feel support in it, and do not feel that it is beneficial to them. They are therefore looking for an alternative with which they can sympathise and in which they can find a sense of protection, security and stability. They often adore the current regime in the Russian Federation.

<sup>17</sup> An example is Ladislav Vrabel. He was given a four-month suspended sentence by the Prague 1 District Court for spreading the alarm message that the Czech Republic wanted to use nuclear weapons against Russia to provoke retaliation..

<sup>18</sup> According to this conspiracy theory, the Czechoslovak Federal Republic was illegally dissolved. The current Czech Republic is therefore illegitimate and its citizens should not be subject to Czech laws and should not be obliged to comply with the instructions of the Czech authorities.

<sup>19</sup> At the same time, it can be assumed that some activists use this construct only to gain popularity, financial donations, or to avoid responsibility for their actions..

<sup>20</sup> In the past, for example, they have destroyed their personal documents, bailed out of alleged contracts with this "corporation" or carried out so-called "seizures of property". The seizures consisted of a group of activists occupying the building of a specific public institution, marking it as their property and giving threatening ultimatums to their representatives.

<sup>21</sup> More about the sovereign citizens movement can be found here: <https://www.mvcr.cz/chh/clanek/hnuti-suverennich-obcanu-a-jejich-aktivity-v-ceske-republice.aspx>.

portrayed as a hero and martyr in his community of supporters and a fund raising campaign was organised in his favour.

However, the aggressive manifestations associated with the anti-system movement were not just a matter of the virtual environment. Police officers have charged eight people with criminal disorderly conduct who took part in the May riots during the trial of former journalist Jana Peterkova.<sup>22</sup> The Prague 1 municipal authority has fined persons who violently attempted to tear down the national flag of Ukraine from the National Museum during the March demonstration in Prague's Wenceslas Square and were subsequently detained.

Part of the admiration for the current Russian regime has been to downplay Russian crimes in Ukraine, to accuse Ukraine and Ukrainians of various crimes and misdeeds, and to accuse NATO countries of warmongering. Calls for 'peaceful solutions', however, in reality mean an ambition to get the Czech Republic out of the transatlantic defence community and to stop supporting resisting Ukraine. Law enforcement authorities continued to deal with those cases.<sup>23</sup>

Some activists who won attention at the time of the spread of the Covid 19 disease have shifted their focus to new issues and become supporters of the Kremlin narrative. Some individuals who were radicalised at the time of the pandemic gained the attention of law enforcement authorities through their violent activities or spreading alarmist messages. They were then portrayed in the anti-system movement as "victims of the system" or "fighters for the truth".

Various threats against politicians, opponents, journalists and others have become a regular part of the police's activities. Their radicalism is increasing. They often target family members of opponents. Criminal investigators are also dealing with various alarmist messages.

A number of conspiracy theories and disinformation have begun to emerge in connection with the shooting at the Faculty of Arts. Some of them had anti-Ukrainian or anti-Semitic overtones. Dozens of these contents related to the December shooting were investigated by the police.

Law enforcement authorities also looked into facts related to events in Ukraine. Czech police officers joined an international initiative to investigate Russian war crimes. In 2023, the courts also dealt with cases of volunteers who joined the conflict in Donbas on the side of the self-proclaimed separatist republics.

Throughout the year, the Czech Republic faced a number of activities falling under the Russian hybrid influence. Most of these activities are in response to the Czech support for Ukraine and are related to the efforts to take this state out of the international democratic community and make it weaker.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The police charged five of those persons with violence against a public authority and one person with contempt of court. Subsequently, they filed a motion for indictment against seven persons, while the eighth person could not be charged due to his medical condition..

<sup>23</sup> For example, the law enforcement authorities also addressed the public presentation of symbols of the so-called Wagner Group.

<sup>24</sup> More on hybrid effects can be found in the findings of the Security Information Service (<https://www.bis.cz/>) or the Centre against Hybrid Threats (<https://www.mvcr.cz/chh/>).

Terrorism threat level 1 remained in force.<sup>25</sup>

#### **4. Extremism and Prejudicial Hatred from the Perspective of the Prosecutor's Office**

Pre-judicial crime has not undergone fundamental changes in terms of the way it is committed. The vast majority of hate speech is made via social networks or other virtual platforms. The most frequent targets are Ukrainians, Jews, Russians and Roma.

There is a continuing phenomenon of threatening e-mails and statements on the Internet against government officials and the media, motivated by the government's support for defending Ukraine or its position in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

At the end of 2023, there was a noticeable increase in prejudicial criminal activity against students or teachers of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, but also more generally against people with higher education, in connection with the shooting attack at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague on 21 December 2023. Prosecutors pay due attention to the investigation of individual cases. In several cases, criminal prosecutions were immediately initiated.

Despite the high number of Ukrainian refugees, the number of crimes related to hate crimes against people of Ukrainian origin is relatively low. Hate attacks against Russians are also rare. Only isolated cases of anti-Semitism have been investigated in connection with the Hamas attack; no prosecution has yet been initiated in any of the cases with "anti-Semitic overtones" following the Hamas attack.

Only sporadically does brachial violence accompany prejudicial crime (a combination of the legal qualification as a misdemeanour of violence against a group of citizens and an individual pursuant to Section 352 of the Criminal Code and one of the offences punishing a possible or occurring bodily injury, or even the offence of rioting pursuant to Section 358 of the Criminal Code). However, as in previous years, according to information from the public prosecutor's office, there were no racially (or otherwise prejudicially) motivated attacks causing death in 2023.

The content of criminally defective verbal expressions also remains basically unchanged. Often, it consists of a complex of derogatory references to individual groups ("jew-pigs", "Muslim/Jewish swine", "ziopigs", "jewish curveballs"), accompanied, for example, by a caricature of people wearing a yarmulke and a kaftan, described as "Jews". This is followed by statements such as 'Palestinians are apes', 'Jews are Satan's chosen pigs', 'Jude und Schwarz raus aus, Sieg Heil' (and a swastika depicted)'.

The perpetrator often justifies his or her own life situation with statements (e.g. "they are taking our jobs"; "they make everything expensive"; "we will kill them to protect our people"; "if they can kill our people, we will kill them", etc.). Not infrequently, one

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.mvcr.cz/cthh/clanek/stupne-ohrozeni-terorismem.aspx>.



perpetrator expresses several criminally defective attitudes at the same time (e.g. anti-Semitic and anti-Ukrainian).

The current expression of sympathy for a contemporary movement within the meaning of Section 403(1) of the Criminal Code (Section 404 of the Criminal Code), most often a neo-Nazi movement, is no exception. It is very common to simultaneously endorse genocide, crimes against peace or war crimes within the meaning of Section 405 of the Penal Code, e.g. by saying "I don't see a problem with concentration camps", "they deserve nothing but to be nuked", or by calling for the gassing of a certain group of the population, whether by referring to the so-called Nazi final solution to the Jewish question, e.g. with statements such as "Adolf would have solved it best", "it is best to send them to the gas chamber", "they deserve to be gassed," "they belong in the gas chambers", "all men and women should be gassed", etc.

In combination with incitement to hatred, there have been cases of incitement to commit a crime (§ 364 of the Criminal Code), e.g. "let's throw their children off the bridge", "let's kidnap their children too", "hang them by the neck on the candelabra", "throw them off the bridge", "let every gypsy go and kill one Ukrainian". The increase in this criminal activity can be traced to the spread of an alarmist message (Section 357 of the Criminal Code), e.g., about the criminal activities of a person from a certain community, or more specifically, "about a vehicle with Ukrainians driving around the city and kidnapping Roma children for organs", or that "the murderer from Klánovice is a Ukrainian and the media is hiding it", etc.

The subject of criminal proceedings were also relatively numerous cases of damaging the property of other persons because of their actual or alleged race, ethnic group, nationality, political beliefs, religion or because they are actually or allegedly without religion (Article 228(1), (3)(b) of the Criminal Code), e.g. denting or scratching the carbody of vehicles or puncturing the tyres of vehicles with Ukrainian international licence plates.

When imposing sentences, all the considerations under section 38 et seq. of the Criminal Code are consistently taken into account. Due to the nature of prejudicial criminal activity and the fact that it is not infrequently committed by persons who have not yet been punished, alternative sentences not linked to the direct execution of a prison sentence are imposed in the vast majority of cases (most often a fine and a suspended prison sentence), or forms of diversion from criminal proceedings are used, mostly in its qualified form (Article 179g(1), (2)(b) of the Criminal Procedure Code, Article 307(1), (2)(b) of the Criminal Procedure Code).

There have been no major changes in the area of extremist crimes either. Like in 2022, they were represented by expressions of sympathy to Nazi or neo-Nazi movements as defined in Section 404 of the Criminal Code, in particular in the form of marching to simultaneous verbal statements of "Sieg heil", as well as cases of public presentation of other related symbols (swastika, SS symbols), without any significant development or deterioration of the situation in this respect. The Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office does not currently have any information on the use of the flag of the Palestinian militant movement Hamas, which is included in the list of terrorist organisations in the annex to Common Position of the Council of the European Union of 27 December 2021 on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism No 2021/931/CFSP. The pre-trial authorities carefully examine whether the symbol used in each suspected case corresponds to the official symbols that can be linked to Hamas.

In 2023, there was not a single case of application of Section 403a of the Criminal Code. In view of the recent judicature, namely the Supreme Court's resolution of 22 November 2022, Case No. 3 Tdo 982/2022, the redundancy of this provision is thus further confirmed.

As regards the offence of denying, questioning, approving and justifying genocide under section 405 of the Criminal Code, in addition to the above-mentioned cases, the offence also consisted of the use of symbols representing support for the Russian Federation in its attack on Ukraine, thereby approving crimes against peace or war crimes committed on the territory of Ukraine. The most frequent cases of the use of symbols of the so-called The most frequent use of the signs of the Wagner Group, which is perceived primarily as a military group that actively participates/participated in the illegal Russian war aggression in Ukraine, or in war crimes and other crimes under international law committed there, which are the subject of investigations by the United Nations and the International Criminal Court, and in connection with which unprecedented financial and other sanctions have been imposed on the Russian Federation and the Wagner Group by most of the world's states, the European Union and various international organizations (e.g. patches or stickers in black, red and white with the image of a skull and the inscription 'PMC Wagner Group'). The depiction of a white letter 'Z' in a black field with a white border, used on military equipment of Russian troops operating mainly in eastern Ukraine in the Donbas and Luhansk regions, also in conjunction with the depiction of the so-called 'St. George's ribbon', consisting of three black stripes with two orange stripes between them, which is currently considered a symbol of support for Russian and pro-Russian

From the point of view of both the facts and the accused person, the pending prosecution of a former elementary school teacher for statements she made during Czech language lessons about Russian aggression in Ukraine seem to be a rarity.

### **Methodological recommendations, important court decisions and legislation**

As regards hate crime, the main risk factor is the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine and the increasing number of attacks on Ukrainian refugees in the Czech Republic. In this context, the Opinion of the Prosecutor General's Office on Selected Criminal Aspects of Approval of Armed Actions in the Context of the War in Ukraine of 2 March 2022 continues to play an important role in advancing the application practice case No. 1 SL 117/2022, which clearly defines the aspects that should be evaluated when assessing hate crimes.

On 7 October 2023, the Islamist movement Hamas attacked military and civilian targets in Israel. The possible criminal activity generated in connection with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Prosecutor General's Office responded on 30 November 2023 by issuing an opinion on the possibilities of legal assessment of hate speech in connection with the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel and the ensuing Israeli-Palestinian armed conflict (Case No. 1 SL 732/2023). In the opinion, in addition to the historical and political context, the Prosecutor General's Office pointed out the crucial criminal law aspects that must be considered when assessing hate speech against either side in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It examined in detail the issue of hate crime and extremism from the perspective of the various offences that are relevant in the context and analysed in more detail the nature of the slogan "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" and its criminal law aspects. This opinion is

publicly available at [https://verejnazaloba.cz/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/1\\_sl\\_732\\_2023\\_14\\_male\\_stanovisko.pdf](https://verejnazaloba.cz/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/1_sl_732_2023_14_male_stanovisko.pdf).

From a jurisprudential point of view, it is desirable to mention the absolutely crucial resolution of the Grand Chamber of the Criminal Division of the Supreme Court of 20 September 2023, No. 15 Tdo 513/2023 - 335, in the case of securing the translation and subsequent sale of the book "The Myth of the Six" by David L. Hoggan (which belongs to the discourse of Holocaust denial), by which the Supreme Court responded to the often discussed resolution of the Eighth Chamber of the Supreme Court of 12 June 2019, Case No. 8 Tdo 314/2019. 15 Tdo 513/2023 concluded that the public disclosure of such a work does not fulfil the elements of the offence of denying, questioning, approving or justifying genocide or other listed crimes, it must be accompanied by an integral part expressing not only the publisher's rejection of the specific content of the work, but also a commentary reflecting the demonstrable historical facts relating to the subject matter of the work and corresponding to the current state of scientific knowledge of the subject matter as concluded by historical science; such commentary should then be proportionate to the scope of the work. It further concluded that no other so-called facultative feature, i.e., an objective (purpose), motive, intent or intention exceeding the objective aspect of the offence under Section 405 of the Criminal Code, is required to fulfil the subjective aspect of the offence. Therefore, the motive of the perpetrator, e.g. property motive, to publicly deny, question, approve or justify genocide and other crimes against humanity, war crimes or crimes against peace is not essential for the fulfilment of the characteristics of the offence.

Another jurisprudential decision worthy of attention is the Supreme Court Resolution of 21 March 2023, Case No. 7 Tz 5/2023, in which a violation of the law was found in favour of the accused, insofar as the lower courts argued that the reference to existing contemporary neo-Nazi movements could not be considered sufficiently specific in relation to the fulfilment of the characteristic of "*a movement which demonstrably aims at the suppression of human rights and freedoms or advocates racial, ethnic, national, religious or class hatred or hatred against another group of persons*". In contrast, the Supreme Court has stated that in order to fulfill the aforementioned characteristic, it is not necessary to identify precisely (by individual name) any of the current neo-Nazi (or neo-fascist) organizations that the perpetrator should specifically promote. A more general manifestation may also be sufficient if it refers to a movement which clearly follows Nazism (fascism) in a modified form (neo-fascism, neo-Nazism) and uses, for example, ideologies, symbols, greetings and other attributes of the original movement. In other words, according to Section 403 of the Criminal Code, it is undoubtedly possible to punish the making known of a movement or its ideology to (in this case) the neo-Nazi movement, as it is undoubtedly an existing movement, while it is not necessary to identify precisely one of the current neo-Nazi organisations, but it is sufficient to mention the aforementioned actions in relation to the neo-Nazi movement en bloc. The aforesaid decision represents a retreat from the requirements for proving the existence of a neo-Nazi movement, contained in the opinion of the Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of 13 December 2006, Case No. Tpjn 302/2005, and in particular from the completely excessive decision of the Supreme Court of 12 June 2019, Case No. 8 Tdo 314/2019.

There were no legislative changes regarding extremism and prejudicial hatred in 2023.

At the end of 2023, the Ministry of Justice approached the Prosecutor General's Office with a request for an analysis of the possible extension of criminal law protection for persons threatened by so-called prejudicial hatred. With regard to the date of preparation of this

report, it can be noted that in early January 2024, the Prosecutor General's Office prepared an "Analysis on the question of possible extension of criminal sanctions for perpetrators of crimes committed out of prejudicial hatred against LGBTI+ persons and persons with disabilities" (file no. 1 SL 136/2023). The analysis in question contains an analysis of the criminal legislation, points out unsuccessful attempts at amendment in the past, and mentions the international obligations of the Czech Republic. It also includes references to the relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights and a brief insight into the criminal legislation of selected European countries. The analysis also includes the findings and proposals of the public prosecution authorities. The analysis summarises some problematic points and at the same time attempts to outline possible legislative changes.

**5. Hate crime statistics <sup>26</sup>**

**5.1. Nationwide police statistics**

For the following statistical evaluation, acts of the selected tactical-statistical classifications marked with the extremism symptom were counted as acts with hateful overtones.

In total, 181,417 crimes were registered in the Czech Republic in 2023. Hate crimes accounted for 0.1% of this figure. In 2023, 181 hate crimes were recorded by the Police of the Czech Republic. In a year-on-year comparison, there was an increase of 32 detected hate crimes..

Of the above-mentioned crimes, 45.9 %, i.e. 83 (in 2022 it was 46.3 %, i.e. 69 crimes) were solved.

In 2023, a total of 98 prosecutions were registered for hate crimes.

**The overall number of hate crimes registered in the Czech Republic between 2016 and 2023**

Year	Recorded Criminal Offences	Share in Total Crime Figures(%)	Solved Criminal Offences	Prosecuted Persons
2016	143	0,07	99	X
2017	153	0,08	102	132
2018	179	0,09	107	136

<sup>26</sup> The figures do not reflect latent crime, they do not take into account crimes that for various reasons have not been detected, reported and therefore recorded..

<b>2019</b>	170	0,09	96	122
<b>2020</b>	134	0,08	61	92
<b>2021</b>	108	0,07	61	99
<b>2022</b>	149	0,08	69	73
<b>2023</b>	181	0,1	83	98

Source: Police of the Czech Republic

## 5.2. Police statistics by acts

### Criminal offences

Tactical-statistical classification	1.1.-31.12.2023	
	registered	solved
Intended Bodily Harm (Sections 145 - 146a)	16	11
Violence and Threats Against Group of People and Individuals (Section 352)	42	21
Dangerous Threatening (Section 353)	17	8
Damaging other's property (Section 228)	7	2
Disorderly Conduct at sports and public events (Section 358)	2	1
spraying (Section 228/2)	14	1
Defamation of Nation, Race, Ethnic or Other Group of People (Section 355)	25	20
podněcování k národ. a rasové nenávisti (§ 356)	58	19
Support and Promotion of a Movement (Sections 403, 404, 405)	0	0
<b>CELKOVÝ SOUČET</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>83</b>

### Prosecuted persons

Tactical-statistical classification	1.1.-31.12.2023
	Prosecuted Persons
Intended Bodily Harm (Sections 145 - 146a)	12
Violence and Threats Against Group of People and Individuals (Section 352)	23
Dangerous Threatening (Section 353)	7
Damaging other's property (Section 228)	3
Disorderly Conduct at sports and public events (Section 358)	1
spraying (Section 228/2)	1
Defamation of Nation, Race, Ethnic or Other Group of People (Section 355)	19
Instigation of Ethnic and Racial Hatred (Section 356)	19

Support and Promotion of a Movement (Sections 403, 404, 405)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>

There are 181 hate crimes recorded for 2023. Of these, 83 were solved. The most frequent crimes in this period were violence against a group of citizens and violence against an individual with 42 offences.

The Police registered a total of 98 prosecutions for hate-motivated offences in 2023. The most frequent cases were violence against a group of persons and violence against an individual with 23 persons.

### 5.3. Police statistics by regions

#### Criminal Offences

Region	1.1.-31.12.2023	
	registered	solved
Prague	92	38
Central Bohemian	9	3
South Bohemian	4	3
Pilsen	11	8
Ústí nad Labem	22	6
Hradec Králové	4	3
South Moravian	7	2
Moravian Silesian	14	9
Olomouc	6	3
Zlín	0	0
Vysočina	3	2
Pardubice	2	2
Liberec	4	3
Karlovy Vary	3	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>83</b>

#### Prosecuted Persons

Region	1.1.-31.12.2023
	Prosecuted

	Persons
Prague	47
Central Bohemian	3
South Bohemian	2
Pilsen	9
Ústí nad Labem	6
Hradec Králové	3
South Moravian	3
Moravian Silesian	10
Olomouc	3
Zlín	1
Vysočina	2
Pardubice	3
Liberec	5
Karlovy Vary	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>

In 2023, the highest number of hate-motivated offences was registered in Prague (92), followed by the Ústí nad Labem Region (22). The highest number of persons prosecuted for hate-motivated acts was registered in Prague (47), followed by the Moravian-Silesian Region (10) and the Pilsen Region (9).

#### **5.4. Criminal activity motivated by hate against selected groups**

##### **Number of offences by victims (persons assaulted)**

Targeted Group	1.1.-31.12.2023
	Registered
Jews	18
Roma	25
LGBT+	13

In 2023, 18 crimes with anti-Semitic overtones were registered. Compared to 2022, there was a decrease by seven offences. Crimes with an anti-Semitic overtone accounted for 9.9% of the total number of crimes with an extremist overtone in 2023. In 2022, it accounted for 16.8%.

A total of 25 crimes motivated by anti-Roma hatred were registered during the reporting period. This is an increase by five offences compared to the previous year. In 2023, these crimes accounted for 13.8 percentage points of the total number of crimes with extremist overtones. In 2022, the figure was 13.4%.

In addition, 13 offences motivated by hatred towards the LGBT+ community were registered, which is the same number as in 2022.

### **5.5. Crime committed by members of the security forces**

*The General Inspectorate of Security Forces did not initiate any prosecution for an extremist offence in 2023. The General Inspectorate of Security Forces investigated three cases containing signs of extremism, two of which were referred to the Internal Control Department of the Police of the Czech Republic for disciplinary proceedings, and one case is still under investigation.*

### **5.6. Crime committed by members of the Army of the Czech Republic**

In the past year, the Military Intelligence (MI) did not register any activities by members of the Czech Armed Forces and employees of the Ministry of Defence that would indicate an increase in extremist activities. No significant elements of radicalisation have been detected within the legal scope of the Military Intelligence.

In 2023, no soldier was dismissed from service for supporting, promoting or sympathising with a movement that demonstrably aims at suppressing human rights and freedoms or advocates national, religious or racial hatred or hatred against another group of persons (Section 19(1)(m) of Act No. 221/1999 Coll., on professional soldiers, as amended).

### **5.7. Court Statistics**

In 2023, the courts of the Czech Republic convicted a total of 51,399 persons (in 2022 - 50,196, in 2021 - 49,647, in 2020 - 48,556, in 2019 - 55,594, in 2018 - 54,488, in 2017 - 55,069, in 2016 - 61,399, in 2015 - 65,569, in 2014 - 72,854, in 2013 - 77,976, in 2012 - 71,471, in 2011 - 70,160) which represents an increase by 1,203 persons, i.e. 2.40%, compared to 2022. Of this number, a total of 50 persons were convicted in 2023 for racially motivated offences. This number represents only 0.10% of the total number of convictions in that year.

Compared to 2022, there was a decrease in the number of persons convicted of a racially motivated crime (by 11 persons, i.e. In the previous year 2022, a total of 61 persons were convicted for such offences, in 2021 - 67 persons, in 2020 - 74 persons, in 2019 - 49 persons, in 2018 - 54 persons, in 2017 - 47 persons, in 2016 - 77 persons, in 2015 - 54 persons, in 2014 - 52 persons, in 2013 - 71 persons, in 2012 - 83 persons). It is clear from the above data that the share of these offences in the total number of convictions in the Czech Republic remains very low. In absolute numbers, it has oscillated in recent years between about 50 and 100 offenders..

Offenders were convicted of the following crimes in 2023<sup>27</sup>:

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<sup>27</sup> The sum is higher than 50 because one person can be (and often is) convicted of multiple offences



Criminal Offence	Provisions of the Criminal Code (CC)	Convicted persons for racially motivated crime, (CC 40/2009)
Bodily Harm	Section 146	1
Endangering the Child's Upbringing	Section 201	1
Robbery	Section 205	1
Damage to Another's Property	Section 228	1
Illicit production and other disposal of narcotics, psychotropic substances and poisons	Section 283	1
Threat to influence an official person	Section 326	1
Obstruction of the execution of an official decision and eviction	Section 337	1
Violence against a Group of Persons and an Individual	Section 352	12
Dangerous Threats	§ 353	2
Defamation of a Nation, Ethnic Group, Race or Religion	§ 355	11
Instigation of Hatred towards a Group of Persons of Suppression of their Rights and Freedoms	§ 356	6
Spreading Alarm Messages	§ 357	1
Disorderly conduct	§ 358	19
Establishment, Support and Promotion of Movements Aimed at Suppression of Human Rights and Freedoms	§ 403	2
Expressing Sympathies for Movements Seeking to Suppress Human Rights and Freedoms	§ 404	22
Denying, questioning, approving and justifying genocide	§ 405	9

In 2023, the perpetrators of these offences were most often convicted for the offence under Section 404 of the Criminal Code, namely, "Manifestation of sympathy for a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedoms" - 22 persons. This was followed by convictions for the offence under Section 358 of the Criminal Code - 19 persons, Violence against a group of citizens and against an individual under Section 352 of the Criminal Code - 12 persons and Defamation of a nation, ethnic group, race and religion under Section 355 - 11 persons.

For the above-mentioned racially motivated offences, 4 persons received unconditional prison sentences. Of the persons convicted of racially motivated offences, two were classified by the courts as repeat offenders. In 2023, the courts finally imposed suspended prison sentences on 33 persons. A sentence of community service was imposed in 2 cases. A fine was imposed on 8 persons. 1 juvenile offender and 3 women were sentenced.

## 5.8. Statistics of the Prosecutor General's Office

According to statistical data provided by the Ministry of Justice, a total of 30,981 persons were prosecuted in the Czech Republic in 2023 (39,393 persons in the case of short pre-trial proceedings). In 2023, a total of 27,206 persons were prosecuted (for 37,169 persons a punishment proposal was filed).

The attached data in Table 1 indicate that the share of racial, national or other hate crimes in the total volume of crime was rather minimal in 2023. The share of persons prosecuted (+ summary proceedings) for racial, national or other hate crimes in the total number of persons prosecuted (+ short pre-trial proceedings) was 0.17%. In the case of persons accused (+ submitted motions for punishment) for racially motivated, national and other hate crimes, the proportion of the total number of persons accused (+ submitted motions for punishment) was 0.14%. Although this is a low proportion, this type of crime should not be underestimated under any circumstances.

### Overview of criminal offences motivated by racial, ethnic, and other hate crimes between 2016 and 2023<sup>28</sup>

Offences motivated by racial, ethnic, and other hate crimes	Persons prosecuted in total	Persons charged in total
2016	95 (+33 SCP)	92 (+30 SCP)
2017	98 (+31 SCP)	90 (+29 SCP)
2018	144 (+33 SCP)	128 (+31 SCP)
2019	98 (+16 SCP)	89 (+15 SCP)
2020	95 (+29 SCP)	81 (+14 SCP)
2021	86 (+25 SCP)	58 (+14 SCP)
2022	98 (+30 SCP)	78 (+ 24 SCP)
2023	59 (+62 SCP)	43 (+ 47 SCP)

In 2023, there was a slight decrease in the total number of persons prosecuted for racial, national and other hate crimes compared to 2022 (a total of 121 persons prosecuted; -7 compared to 2022). The number of persons indicted also decreased (90 indicted in total; -12 compared to 2022). For the 2016-2023 reporting period, the year 2023, with a total of 90 persons charged, ranks among the years with the lowest number of persons charged for this crime. The statistical data in Table 1 further indicate that in 2023 more than half of the persons prosecuted were subject to summary pre-trial proceedings (62 persons prosecuted, +32 compared to 2022), which represents a change from previous years. There were 47 motions for punishment in 2023 (+23 motions for punishment filed compared to 2022). The time in which a police authority is able to process a case plays a crucial role in the preference of the law enforcement authorities for a summary pre-trial procedure. The vast majority of the crimes in question are perpetrated in the internet environment, i.e. the perpetrator is not identified when the criminal proceedings are initiated. More frequent use of the CID therefore indicates an improvement in the work of the Police of the Czech Republic in detecting

<sup>28</sup> This is the number of persons prosecuted and charged for whom the indicator "racial, national or other intolerance" was ticked. The abbreviation "SCP" in the table stands for "shortened pre-trial proceedings".

perpetrators of this crime and good methodological guidance. The evolving case law also plays a significant role.

**Tables 2: Data on the number of persons prosecuted and charged for racial, national and other hate crimes in 2023<sup>29</sup>**

CZ	Sec 140/3g		Sec. 145/2f		Sec.146/2e		Sec 175/2g		Sec 228/3b		Sec 352/2		Sec 352/3	
	Prosecuted.	Defendant.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.
2023	0	0	1	1	3(+1)	3(+1)	1	0	2(+4)	2(+4)	19(+17)	14(+16)	3(+3)	2(1)

	Sec 355		Sec 356		Sec 403		Sec 403a		Sec 404		Sec 405	
	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.	Pros.	Def.
2023	8(+12)	4(+9)	12(+18)	7(+14)	1	1	0	0	20(+14)	16(8)	10(+11)	8(+6)

Comment to Tables 2: In 2023, the most frequent offences committed for racial, national and other hate motives were:

- Violence against a group of persons and against an individual under section 352(2) of the Criminal Code (36 persons prosecuted, 30 persons charged).
- Manifestation of sympathy for a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedoms under Section 404 of the Criminal Code (34 prosecuted persons, 24 accused persons).
- Incitement to hatred against a group of persons or to restriction of their rights and freedoms under Section 356 of the Criminal Code (30 prosecuted persons, 21 accused persons).
- Denial, questioning, approval and justification of genocide under Section 405 of the Criminal Code (21 prosecuted persons, 14 accused persons).
- Defamation of a nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons under Section 355 (20 prosecuted persons, 13 accused persons).

In 2023, in the category of offences perpetrated for racial, ethnic and other hate motives, the most frequent offence was violence against a group of persons and against an individual under section 352(2) of the Criminal Code (36 persons prosecuted, 30 persons charged). Compared to 2022, there was an increase of +13 prosecuted persons, +10 accused persons. Apart from the continuing high number of cases of hate crimes against Ukrainians, the increase may be due to the greater emphasis of the prosecution system on full legal qualification, which prosecutors are consistently encouraged to do as part of their methodological work, in particular by drawing attention to the possibility of the concurrence of the offence of violence against a group of persons and against an individual under Section 352 of the Criminal Code with the offence of defamation of a nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons under Section 355 of the Criminal Code or with the offence of incitement to

<sup>29</sup> Number of persons prosecuted and accused under criminal code classifications - one person may appear in more than one classification. Data in brackets refer to summary pre-trial criminal proceedings.

hatred against a group of persons or to restriction of their rights and freedoms under Section 356 of the Criminal Code.

The crime of violence against a group of persons and against an individual pursuant to Section 352(2) of the Criminal Code was replaced in 2023 by the crime of expressing sympathy for a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedoms pursuant to Section 404 of the Criminal Code, which has long been at the top of the statistics for this crime. In 2023, 34 persons were prosecuted for the offence under Section 404 of the Criminal Code and 24 were indicted (-12 prosecuted persons, -18 indicted persons compared to 2022).

A slight increase in the number of prosecuted and indicted persons was registered for the offence of incitement of hatred against a group of persons or restriction of their rights and freedoms under Section 356 of the Criminal Code (30 prosecuted, 21 indicted; +6 prosecuted persons, +14 accused persons compared to 2022), the crime of damaging other's property under Section 228 of the Criminal Code (+6 prosecuted persons, +6 accused persons compared to 2022), the crime under Section 405 of the Criminal Code (+5 prosecuted persons, +1 accused person compared to 2022) and the crime under Section 355 of the Criminal Code (+5 prosecuted persons, +7 accused persons).

In 2023, no one was prosecuted for homicide under Section 140(3)(g) of the Penal Code, but there was one case that was classified as grievous bodily harm under Section 145(2)(f) of the Penal Code (+1 accused person compared to 2022). However, the proceedings before the court failed to prove that the attack against the victim of Ukrainian nationality was motivated by hatred. An increase of +1 accused person compared to 2022 was also detected for the offence of bodily harm under Article 146(2)(e) of the Criminal Code (in 2023, a total of 4 persons were prosecuted and they were also charged).

Given the above, a certain shift of criminal activity can be traced to those crimes that are qualified as violence against a group of persons and against an individual (Section 352(2) of the Criminal Code), although brachial violence accompanies prejudicial criminal activity rather sporadically. In addition, cases of damage to other's property have been newly reported in the context of prejudicial hatred (Section 228(3)(b) of the Criminal Code). The offence of damaging the property of the other because of his or her actual or alleged race, membership of an ethnic group, nationality, political opinion, religion or because he or she is actually or allegedly of no religion has been practically non-existent since 2019 (1 accused person in 2020). Before 2019, however, the offence under section 228(3)(b) of the Criminal Code was regularly featured in the statistics (3 accused persons in 2016, 5 accused persons in 2017, 2 accused persons in 2018).

The increased number of persons prosecuted for the crime of denial, questioning, approval and justification of genocide under Section 405 (21 prosecuted persons, 14 accused persons; +8 prosecuted persons, +4 accused persons compared to 2022) can be linked primarily to cases approving Russian aggression against Ukraine.

On the contrary, a decrease, in single cases, is registered for the offence of defamation of a nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons pursuant to Section 355 of the Criminal Code (-4 prosecuted persons, -6 accused persons compared to 2022), and for the offence of establishment, support and promotion of a movement for suppression of human rights and freedoms pursuant to Section 403 of the Criminal Code (-2 prosecuted persons, -1 accused persons). No person was charged with the crime of extortion under Article 175(2)(g) of the Criminal Code.

## 5.9. Statistics of the Probation and Mediation Service

The number of cases related to extremist offences at the Probation and Mediation Service has long been very low. In 2023, there were 67 new cases across the country (this is an estimate, the number of new cases is 58 in the November data). Since 2002, the proportion of these crimes has ranged from 0.2% to 0.7% of new cases per year. In 2023, this proportion reaches 0.3% of all new cases (21,429 cases). The proportion of cases with extremist overtones has thus remained stable year by year.

Number of cases of crimes with extremist overtones in each judicial region and the Czech Republic in 2019-2023

Počet případů / Kraj	2019			2020			2021			2022			11/2023			2023 (odhad)		
	Extremistický podtext	(%)	Celkem	Extremistický podtext	(%)	Celkem	Extremistický podtext	(%)	Celkem	Extremistický podtext	(%)	Celkem	Extremistický podtext	(%)	Celkem	Extremistický podtext	(%)	Celkem
Praha	12	0,5	2463	11	0,5	2338	4	0,2	2139	9	0,4	2097	6	0,3	2047	7	0,3	2047
Středočeský	8	0,2	3298	7	0,2	2903	5	0,2	2673	4	0,1	2730	8	0,3	2745	9	0,3	2745
Jihočeský	2	0,1	1796	4	0,3	1473	0	0,0	1481	3	0,2	1680	10	0,6	1685	11	0,7	1685
Západočeský	8	0,3	2712	12	0,5	2403	3	0,1	2372	5	0,2	2304	8	0,4	2162	9	0,4	2162
Severočeský	13	0,3	4738	8	0,2	4055	11	0,3	3658	22	0,5	4076	7	0,2	3850	8	0,2	3850
Východočeský	5	0,2	2616	9	0,4	2199	2	0,1	1969	5	0,2	2184	7	0,3	2150	8	0,4	2150
Jihomoravský	3	0,1	3549	4	0,1	3117	2	0,1	3066	8	0,3	3140	8	0,2	3293	9	0,3	3293
Severomoravský	7	0,1	5208	15	0,3	4737	17	0,4	4421	7	0,2	4661	8	0,2	4547	9	0,2	4547
ČR	54	0,2	25122	70	0,3	22122	41	0,2	20517	57	0,3	21655	58	0,3	21429	67	0,3	21429

Data source: data export probation register AIS PMS 11/2023

**Note:** these are extrapolation values for 2023 from the identified values for January-October/November 2023. This is due to data migration and transition to the new PMS agenda information system. The figures are adjusted for the transfer of files between the individual regions and centres of the Probation and Mediation Service.

Extremist offences in the statistics of the Probation and Mediation Service are defined as cases in which the offender has been registered for one of the extremist offences (Sections 352, 355, 356, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll.) or an extremist subtext (racially motivated, religious, political, other) was recorded in the context of other criminal activity).

In terms of the structure of the offences (more than one offence may be recorded in one registered case), the group of cases of an extremist character consisted mainly of perpetrators of the offence of inciting hate against a group of persons or restricting their rights and freedoms, Section 356 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll. (6.9% of the offence) and the offence of violence against a group of persons and against an individual, Section 352 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll. (14.5% of the offence).

The offence of defamation of a nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons, Section 355 of Act No.40/2009 Coll., was also present in 10.3% of cases. Other offences with extremist overtones (§ 401-402 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll.) did not occur in 2023. Extremist context was also recorded in connection or in combination with other crimes. It was most

often associated with the offence of disorderly conduct, Section 358 of Act No. 40/2009 Coll. (17.9% of the offences).