

**HATE CRIMES REPORTED TO THE
POLICE IN FINLAND, 2008**

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FOREWORD

The amount of racially motivated crime reported to the police has been compiled into statistics in Finland during the last ten years. These statistics are regarded as comprehensive by international comparison. They have been compiled annually through data collection from the police information system, partly through classification methods for 'racist cases' used by the police and partly by other methods. However, very little scientific research data has been available on the amount of, for example, discrimination or violence against groups other than ethnic or national minority groups, on the basis of a person's membership of that specific group. Furthermore, the police have no classification methods for such cases. The purpose of this project has been to expand the compilation of statistics on racially motivated crime reported to the police by also taking account of suspected crimes motivated by the victim's religion, sexual orientation, membership of a gender minority, or disability. These crimes are classified as 'hate crime'. The aim is to conduct more extensive monitoring of hate crime on an annual basis.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Police College of Finland and the Ministry of the Interior's Police Department have been monitoring the development of racially motivated crime in Finland for approximately ten years (Ministry of the Interior 1998; 1999; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; Keränen 2005a and 2005b; Ellonen 2006; Nojonen 2007; Joronen 2008). Such monitoring has been based on police report data. The purpose of this project has been to develop the racist crime monitoring system in Finland into a more extensive system for monitoring hate crime.

The term 'hate crime' originated in the United States and is now used more frequently in EU countries to describe crimes motivated by the victim's membership of a reference group based on, for example, his or her national or ethnic origin, religion, or sexual orientation. Therefore, the concept also includes racist crime. International human rights treaties require signatory states to produce reports on the amount of hate crime and trends therein; i.e. in practice, they are required to produce statistical data on the phenomenon. This statistical data enables the more efficient prevention of the development of prejudices and extremist phenomena. Correspondingly, national legislation imposes a more severe punishment for crimes motivated by a person's membership of a population group on the basis of national, racial, ethnic, or some other, similar characteristic.

It is difficult to give a precise general definition of hate crime, since doing so would entail dealing with particularly strong ties to the community's political, cultural and social environments. It is not easy to determine what constitutes unacceptable hate or unacceptable prejudice. Hate crimes bear the common characteristic of being committed through the individual against the whole group to which the person belongs, and thus the consequences of the crime are more widespread than those experienced by the individual. Hate crime strengthens feelings of prejudice, fear and hostility between population groups. (Perry 2001, 7–10; Hall 2005, 1–21.)

The Criminal Code of Finland does not contain definitions for the terms 'racist crime' or 'hate crime'. For this reason, the racist crime monitoring system in Finland has been based partly on the classification methods used by the police, and partly on other criteria. The contents of the online form for reporting an offence to the police include various criteria based on which the police must classify the report when filing it. These criteria include racism. The system instructions state the following: "A report of an offence is classified as a racist case when a person has been targeted as the victim of a crime because his or her colour, race, or ethnic origin differs from that of the offender. In order to identify racist characteristics, special attention must be paid to the offender's behaviour and choice of words prior to committing the crime (insults and name-calling)."

The police use this racism code to classify reports of an offence in only half of cases with racist characteristics. Correspondingly, the monitoring system for racist crime has been developed further in order to enable the compilation of statistics on as many suspected crimes with racist characteristics as possible from reports of an offence filed by the police, even where the classification code for racist crime has not been used. Cases with racist characteristics have been collected from the police information

system, for example, through the use of various search terms. In addition to racism, however, no wider-ranging hate crime classification is used in the police information system. Therefore, other types of suspected hate crime have had to be collected from the police information system, solely through the use of various search terms.

Since the purpose of this project is to develop the compilation of statistics on hate crime in Finland, it is necessary to begin with a discussion of the definition of hate crime and to determine what it refers to in this report. Who can fall victim to hate crime in Finland? What aspects typify a hate crime? What crimes committed against which target groups should be included in statistics? Chapter 2 includes a discussion of various definitions of hate crime and problems in the definition process. Furthermore, statistical methods used in other countries are described. Methods for the compilation of statistics on hate crime in Sweden are described in more detail, since the methodology utilised there is very similar to that of the Finnish racist crime monitoring system.

Chapter 3 discusses what is known on the basis of statistics and previous reports on the number and status of population groups predisposed to hate crime in Finland. Chapter 4 describes the development process for the statistical method employed by this project. The development process is based on previous methods used in the compilation of statistics on racist crime utilised by the Police College of Finland, as well as experiences of using an expanded system for the compilation of hate crime statistics used in Sweden. In Chapter 5, the outcome of the development process is presented; i.e. the practical implementation of the project. Since the data collection method for racist crime has been developed further for the purposes of this project, the research findings here are not entirely comparable to those of the reports on racist crime conducted between 2003 and 2007.

In Chapter 6, suspected crimes with racist characteristics are described in a similar manner to reports for previous years; according to the number of suspected crimes, the locations and times of the incidents, the regional breakdown of the cases, and the injured parties and the suspected offenders. Furthermore, there is a discussion of how the changes implemented in the system have affected the figures on racist crime. Lastly, other types of hate crime reported to the police are discussed. Chapter 7 contains a comparison between the research findings and Swedish hate crime statistics. The research findings and the research method employed by the project are discussed in Chapter 8.

2 DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF 'HATE CRIME'

This chapter deals with various issues pertaining to the definition of hate crime as a concept. Later on, the types of hate crime statistics compiled in various countries are discussed – i.e. the way in which the definition of the concept has been resolved in practice – as well as how the concept should be defined in Finland.

2.1 The development of the concept

The term hate crime (also: bias crime) was first popularised in the United States during the 1980s. It was created as a blanket term for referring to the widely publicised acts of violence against Jews, blacks, and Asian people. (Green et al. 2003, 27–28.) A hate crime policy was born in the United States when organisations representing ethnic and religious minorities began promoting these minorities' rights. As a consequence, specific laws were imposed in the US against racially and religiously motivated crimes. The purpose of these laws was to impose severer punishments on crimes motivated by, for example, the ethnic origin or religious background of the victim. Gradually with time, the sexual orientation, disability and gender of the victim, for example, have also been taken into consideration by legislation as motivation for hate crime. The development of hate crime legislation, hate crime policy, and the hate crime concept itself, has been gradual. (Grattet & Jennes 2003a.)

The concept grew more popular in Europe during the 1990s, and was applied in reference to racist and anti-foreigner violence. Current definitions of hate crime have expanded to cover not only ethnic and national minorities, but also various other target groups, types of offence, and motivations for offending. No commonly recognised general definition of the concept exists. (Green et al. 2003.) The concept has been defined in a range of separate instances; legislation, scientific fields, and human rights organisations and movements. For instance, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights operating under the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) defined hate crime as broadly as possible, to encompass many different target groups and crimes.¹

Since population groups based on ethnic, racial and religious characteristics were the first groups to become protected by law in the United States, the theoretical definition process underlying the concept has been conducted from the point of view of these particular target groups. For this reason the so-called 'core' of the definition was formed with reference to such groups. The term 'hate crime' is therefore best suited to describing crimes committed against ethnic and religious minorities in particular. And so, by contrast, crimes motivated by, for example, a person's gender or disability are not always easily perceived as hate crime. (McPhail 2002; Grattet & Jennes 2003b.)

¹ "A) Any criminal offence, including crimes against persons or property, where the victim, premises, or target of the crime are selected because of their real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support, or membership of a group as defined in Part B. B) A group may be based on a characteristic common to its members, such as their actual or perceived race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or other similar factor." (OSCE/ODIHR 2007, 9)"

‘Hate’ is a powerful word, and many people find it difficult to relate it to, for example, crimes committed against disabled people. It is difficult to believe that a disabled person has been targeted as a victim of a crime simply because of ‘hatred’ towards disabled people. (Quarmby 2008, 32.) Overall it is difficult to determine the motivation for crimes committed against disabled people: is this a symbolic message of hate for that particular population group, or is it perhaps because they cannot defend themselves and are therefore easy targets? Visually impaired people, for example, may be targeted for robbery because they find it harder to defend themselves, ask for help, or testify in court. The victims are chosen because of their vulnerability or dependency on others, and less because of what they represent. (McMahon et al. 2004, 73.) For similar reasons, disabled people may be sexually assaulted in their own home or in an institution. On the other hand, mere vulnerability does not account for crimes committed against disabled people. It may also be that disabled people are perceived as less valuable human beings and therefore considered ‘more justifiable’ targets for crimes. (Quarmby 2008, 32.)

The traditional definition of hate crime also entails the notion that there is no prior relationship between the offender and the victim. Hate motivation is easier to understand in connection with crimes committed by extremist groups; i.e. in instances where the suspect and victim do not know each other and the suspect’s only agenda is to harm the victim on the basis of his or her membership of a specific group. This traditional definition, however, is not suitable for describing all crimes committed against minorities that include prejudice against a group. Crimes or harassment can also occur between people who already know one another, and such acts are not always based on one particular hate motivation. (Tomsen 2009, 39.) Members of sexual minorities, for example, may experience harassment or violence motivated by their membership of a minority group and committed by their co-workers, neighbours, or even family members (e.g. Jarman & Tennant 2003; Herek et al. 2002).

Can gender be defined as a motivation for hate crime? There has been much discussion on this topic especially in the United States, and arguments have been presented both for and against. In her article, Beverly A. McPhail (2002) has discussed arguments both for and against the inclusion of gender as a target criterion for hate crime in legislation, statistics, and research. Although the title has the word ‘gender’ in it, in her article McPhail only discusses hate-motivated crimes committed against women, and not those against men. (Ibid.)

Excluding women as a target group has been justified based, for example, on the offender often being the victim’s spouse or partner in crimes committed against women. In such cases, the motivation for the crime may be some other kind of conflict situation between two people rather than ‘hatred’ for the opposite sex. Spousal violence is more difficult to perceive as hate crime because it has been typically regarded as violence between individuals, whereas the definition of hate crime stems from group membership. On the other hand, inclusion of women as a target group may be explained by the historically unequal status of women in relation to men in many countries. Domestic violence and marital rape, for instance, have long been condoned. Even today, rapes of women that occur in public locations may increase the fear of being raped for all women – similarly to racist crime increasing fear, for example, within an immigrant community. (See Ibid.)

Definition of both the concept of hate crime and the protected target groups is made more complicated by the binary quality of each target group. For instance, if the victim's ethnic origin is defined as the protected characteristic, it may then refer to both 'white-on-black' and 'black-on-white' attacks. (Green et al. 2003, 29.) Furthermore, inclusion of gender as a target group for hate crime means that such crimes can be committed against men as well. Moreover, hate crime is not always necessarily based on only one motivation. It may be difficult to determine whether the victim was targeted for hate crime based on his or her ethnic origin, religious background, or gender – or the combination of all of these characteristics.

Alongside the concept of hate crime, the terms homophobia and islamophobia are commonly used in reference to prejudice or violence against certain population groups. The concept of islamophobia became popular in 1997 following the publication of the British report *Islamophobia - A Challenge for Us All* (Runnymede Trust 1997). This concept is used as a general reference to a fear or phobia of Islam or Muslims. The increase in islamophobia in the Western world has been linked to the September 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States. A comparative study conducted in Britain showed that Muslims were experiencing more discrimination and harassment because of their religion and ethnic origin after the terrorist attacks than prior to them. (Sheridan 2006.)

The concept of homophobia refers to a negative attitude towards both homosexuality and homosexual people. This concept has been criticised for, among other things, the individualisation of the problem and prejudices, as well as its reference to involuntary 'fear'. The concepts of heterosexism and heteronormativity have been considered more suitable expressions on account of their more extensive reference to the structures of discrimination prevailing in society against non-heteros and non-heterosexuals. Culture, language and laws, for example, help maintain the distinction between heterosexuality and homosexuality, as well as the notion that the former is better or more normal than the latter. These cultural structures create and maintain prejudice against sexual minorities. (Herek 2004.) However, the term 'homophobia' is used rather generally in reference to prejudice, discrimination or hate crime committed against sexual minorities (Chakraborti & Garland 2009, 55–58).

As with a number of other types of offence, not all hate crime are reported to the police. Whether or not a crime is reported to the police may be influenced by, for example, the extent to which different minority groups trust the police, and what kind of experiences they have had of dealing with the police. The motivation for hate crime committed against minority groups on the basis of sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority may remain hidden to the police in some instances, because the victim does not wish to reveal his or her sexual orientation. The victim may also be afraid of having to experience the same prejudices when reporting the crime that he or she had to experience during the incident. (Paterson et al. 2009; Jarman & Tennant 2003; Williams & Robinson 2004.) Disabled people, on the other hand, are not necessarily able to personally file a report of an offence to the police, and more often than others, disabled people may have to rely on others in this situation. Some of the crimes committed against disabled people are never reported to the police, because the incidents often occur at home or in an institution where the victim may be dependent

on the offender (McMahon et al. 2004; McClintock et al. 2007b, 27). In addition to veritable differences, the variation between different target groups in the number and characteristics of crimes may be based on how well different types of crimes are being reported to the police.

2.2 Compilation of statistics on hate crime in different countries

The sections below discuss the methods used in various countries for the compilation of statistics on hate crime. The statistical method used in Sweden is described in more detail, because it is very similar to the Finnish racist crime monitoring system.

2.2.1 *Introduction to statistical methods*

Most countries that collect statistical data on hate crime provide information on the number of racist crimes reported to the police. However, the compilation of statistics on hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation or disability is not as common. (McClintock et al. 2007a, 15.) The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) regularly assesses the methods for the compilation of statistics on racist crime used in its member states. According to the latest report, of the 27 member states, the statistics of 12 states can be considered good; i.e. information is available on the number of racist crimes reported to the police. Among these 12 states only three – Britain, Sweden and Finland – also provide more extensive information on racially motivated crime, including details of the locations of the incidents, the victims and suspected offenders. Direct comparisons between member states cannot be conducted because crime statistics are compiled according to different criteria from state to state. Some member states do not collect statistical data at all. (FRA 2009a, 24–28.)

In the United States, statistics on hate crime are compiled on both state and federal level. There are differences between states in terms of the target groups with respect to which more severe punishments are administered for hate crime, as well as which cases are included in data collection. The statistics for New York City, for example, include crimes motivated by the victim's race, colour, national origin, ancestry, religious persuasion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. (Hall 2008; 2005, 118–120.) The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the United States is responsible for the compilation of statistics on hate crime at federal level, and for collecting police report data recorded by the states. Providing data, however, is voluntary, and statistics are not available for every region. (McClintock et al. 2007a, 11.) According to the FBI's statistics, 7,624 hate crime incidents involving 9,006 offences were reported in the US in 2007. More than half of these offences were motivated by prejudice against the 'race' of the victim. The remainder of the cases can be categorised according to motivation with decreasing frequency as follows: religious background (16%), sexual orientation (16%), ethnic or national origin (14%), and disability (1%). Some of the incidents were multiple-bias, i.e. the incidents included more than one offence type, of which at least two offence types were motivated by different biases. (FBI 2008.)

In Britain, annual statistics are compiled by England and Wales on suspected crimes motivated by racism or religious background and reported to the police. These statistics, however, do not draw a distinction between the two motivations. Instead, they draw a distinction between racist incidents and racially aggravated crimes. Information is also available, for example, on the number of prosecuted cases arising from racial incidents. (Riley et al. 2009.) Several individual police departments, such as the Metropolitan Police Service in London, compile their own comprehensive statistics on hate crime reported to the police (McClintock et al. 2007a, 7).

Statistics from various countries vary substantially according to the precise definitions of hate crime as well as in accordance with the instances based on which statistics are compiled. In the United States, the federal police instructions state that crimes motivated in whole or in part by the offender being biased against, for example, the ethnic or national origin of the victim, are to be classified as hate crime. For the purposes of this classification, it is considered sufficient if the offender has perceived the victim as belonging to a certain population group, such as homosexuals. In order to classify the case as hate crime, though, sufficient objective evidence of the offender's motivation must be presented. Such evidence may include oral comments, written statements, or physical gestures by the offender which indicate bias against the population group to which the victim belongs. Attention can also be drawn to the criminal background of the offender, the offender's membership of a 'hate group', or the crime coinciding with a date of particular significance related to the population group to which the victim belongs (e.g. Martin Luther King Day). (FBI 1999.)

In Britain, the police are guided to classify as hate crime all hate incidents, which constitute a criminal offence and which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate based upon victim's race, sexual orientation, faith, or disability. The guidance also includes instructions on how to separate hate crime from hate incidents which do not necessarily constitute a criminal offence. (ACPO 2005, 9–11.) Behind this broad definition is a report published in 1999, which criticised the actions of the Metropolitan Police Service in London with regard to the investigation of the racist murder of a young man named Stephen Lawrence, who belonged to an ethnic minority. The report revealed the institutionalised racism prevalent within the police service. As a result of the criticism, the police have been instructed to pay special attention to the victim's own perceptions of the motivation for the crime. (Macpherson 1999: The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, see: Hall 2005, 7–8, 168–189.)

Based on differences in methods of definition, the numbers included in hate crime statistics in the United States and Britain differ substantially (see also: Hall 2008; 2005). In England and Wales, for instance, the police recorded approximately 38,000 hate crimes motivated by racism or religious background during one year (2007/8), whereas in the United States only around 9,000 offences were recorded in 2007 (Riley et al. 2009; FBI 2008). It is also noteworthy that the latter statistic covers several hate motivations, including offences other than racially or religiously motivated crimes.

In Sweden, statistics on hate crime have been compiled since 1993. These statistics are not based on classification methods used by the police, because the hate crime code was included in the police information system in 2008. The researchers at the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention conduct annual statistical data collection from

the police register. Hate crime cases are collected from the police information system through the use of various search terms. Because the Swedish methods for the compilation of statistics on hate crime bear many similarities to the Finnish racist crime monitoring system, the next section describes the Swedish methods in more detail.

In some countries, data for hate crime statistics is also collected via regularly conducted victimisation surveys. These surveys may supplement incomplete records held by the authorities as well as providing a more extensive view of the phenomenon. Victimisation surveys may also provide data on cases that have not been reported to the police. In Britain and Sweden, for example, national victimisation surveys help with data collection on the interviewees' experiences of hate crime (see e.g.: Jansson 2006; Irlander & Wigerholt 2009). The Swedish victimisation survey asks interviewees who have fallen victim to certain crimes, to evaluate whether the crime was motivated by hostility towards immigrants or homophobia, and then the results are annually compared with the number of hate crimes reported to the police (see: Klingspor & Molarin 2009a).

In several countries, non-governmental organisations monitor hate crime, collect data on hate crime cases, and conduct research in the hate crime field. Extensive surveys conducted by various instances, in order to analyse experiences of crimes committed against, and the harassment of, members of sexual minorities and disabled people, have been published in recent years. These surveys have also collected data on the extent to which the respondents have reported these cases to the police or other authorities. (See Stahnke et al. 2008, 162–163; Dick 2008; Maneo 2008; Mencap 2007; Mind 2007.)

The National Research Institute of Legal Policy in Finland conducts national victimisation surveys regularly, a few years apart, with the latest completed in 2006 (Sirén et al. 2007). However, these surveys have not collected data on whether the motivation for the victimisation of the respondents has been, for example, their ethnic origin or religion. Only separate and more limited surveys on crimes committed against various minorities have been conducted in Finland. These surveys are introduced in more detail in Chapter 3.

2.2.2 Compilation of statistics on hate crime in Sweden

In Sweden, the Security Police (Säpo) were responsible for compiling statistics on hate crime between 1993 and 2004. In 2006, this responsibility was transferred to the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå), which conducted the surveys between 2005 and 2008. In the latest Brå report, recorded hate crime cases include suspected crimes reported to the police and motivated by the victim's ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or membership of a gender minority. The definition of hate crime includes any criminal acts against a person, group, property, institution, or representative thereof, motivated by fear, hatred or hostility towards the victim's real or perceived membership of a reference group. In Sweden, statistical compilation methods have been developed over the years; for instance, data collection on crimes motivated by islamophobia began in 2006. (Klingspor & Molarin 2009a.)

A list of search terms is a key component in the collection of data from the incident descriptions included in reports of an offence in order to establish the motivation for the crime. In addition to racist expressions, included in the list of search terms are words with anti-religious references, including anti-Semitism (swastika, Hitler) or islamophobia (Taliban, suicide bomber, terrorist, September 11). Data has been collected on hate crime committed against sexual and gender minorities using search terms such as 'gay', 'lesbian', and 'tranny'. Brå intends to keep the list of search terms abreast of any new social phenomena by updating it whenever required. 265 search terms were used in the report conducted in 2008, and in 2009 the number was 354. If multiple hate motivations are indicated in a report of an offence, the motivation perceived as the most prominent must be included in the statistics. (Klingspor & Molarin 2009a, Klingspor et al. 2008.) A more detailed description of Brå's methods is given in Chapter 4, which discusses the development process for the compilation of statistics on hate crime in Finland.

According to the latest report, 5,900 hate crimes reported to the police were recorded in Sweden in 2008. The number of crimes motivated by hostility towards foreigners (i.e. racist crimes) was by far the largest, accounting for 72 per cent of all suspected incidences of hate crime. 18 per cent of the cases were motivated by the victim's sexual orientation (for instance, homosexuality) and 10 per cent by the victim's religion. Only 0.2% of the cases included in the data were motivated by the victim's membership of a gender minority. These cases included, for example, crimes committed against trans-genders. In approximately one tenth of all crimes reported to the police it can be concluded that the offender was operating on the basis of an express ideological motive, such as right-wing extremist values. (Klingspor & Molarin 2009a.)

The Swedish police have been using a hate crime code since 2008. This code is mandatory, and the police must use it to classify each crime reported to them in terms of whether or not it is a hate crime. However, since no unified national instruction manual exists on the use of the code, different police departments follow different instructions. In 2008, throughout the entire country, the police marked 10,000 reports of an offence with the racism code. According to a comparative study by Brå, 7,600 of these reports could not have been located from the police information system through the use of Brå's search terms. Furthermore, according to Brå's criteria, 95% of these 7,600 reports of an offence could not be classified as hate crime cases on the basis of the incident descriptions included in the reports. In some of the cases, hate motivation was considered possible, and more details were requested from the police for classification purposes. The hate crime code had been used to classify, for instance, cases that included honour-related violence, or crimes committed by animal rights activists, and cases where the suspect was recorded as having said he or she 'hated' the victim of the crime, but the motivation could not be identified more precisely. Among all cases Brå classified as hate crime in 2008, only 3% were included in the statistics solely on the basis of the police classification code for hate crime, and these could not have been found through the use of Brå's other search criteria. (Klingspor & Molarin 2009a, 2009b.)

2.3 Definition of the concept for the purposes of this report

As discussed in the previous section, most countries that compile statistics on hate crime keep records of crimes motivated by the ethnic or national origin of the victim. Classification methods vary in regards to other target groups. Since the aim is to develop methods for the compilation of statistics on hate crimes in Finland, it is important to begin by determining which target groups should be included in the statistics and on what grounds.

One way to justify the statistical method would be to rely on the national legislation and determine the target groups on the basis of potential victims of hate crime as defined by the legislation. However, the Criminal Code of Finland does not include definitions of the concepts of racist crime and hate crime. Instead, a more severe punishment may be imposed for a crime committed against a person who belongs to a national, racial, ethnic, or other population group due to his or her membership of such a group as prescribed in 2003, with grounds for increasing the punishment (the Criminal Code of Finland: chapter 6, section 5, paragraph 4). These grounds for increasing the punishment take into account racist or other hate motivations for a crime. The Government Bill related to the Criminal Code notes that other groups to be protected may include certain religious communities and sexual minorities (Government Bill HE 44/2002). Neither the Criminal Code nor the Government Bill mention other target groups, such as disabled people or gender minorities.

Crimes classified as racially motivated crime in the Criminal Code of Finland on the basis of certain characteristics include ethnic agitation, discrimination and work discrimination (Criminal Code: chapter 11, sections 10 & 11, and chapter 47 section 3). Ethnic agitation refers to 'statements or other information among the public where a certain national, ethnic, racial or religious group or a comparable population group is threatened, defamed or insulted'. The definition has been left open by referring to 'some other population group'. The Criminal Code's section on discrimination lists more target groups. Discrimination based on 'race, national or ethnic origin, colour, language, gender, age, family ties, sexual preference, state of health, religion, political orientation, political or industrial activity or another comparable circumstance' is forbidden.

Another way to justify the statistics would be on the basis of phenomena manifested around the country – such as racism or hostility towards certain religions. These phenomena are often visible, and may lead to retaliation between groups, which in part also justifies the monitoring of the phenomena. Not all hate crime is as visible, however, and hate crime incidents may be hidden, inside homes or institutions. The mere visibility of hate crime does not, therefore, justify the gathering of statistics.

As mentioned earlier, crimes typically committed against women, such as rape and domestic violence, are not so readily perceived as cases of hate crime. On the other hand, at least rape and other violence against women are included on the list of crimes on which statistics and victimisation surveys are already conducted in Finland in terms of numbers and characteristics. The numbers and characteristics of these crimes are already recorded and reported by various publications, such as the Crime and Criminal Justice surveys of the National Research Institute of Legal Policy (see: The National Research Institute of Legal Policy in Finland 2009).

Additionally, from the theoretical point of view, the definition of the concept of hate crime should also take some practical aspects into consideration; such as the types of hate crime to which data collection can actually be applied. This concept also requires strict limits for the practical purposes of statistical compilation. Since the police in Finland do not use the hate crime code, reports of an offence must be collected from the police information system through the use of various search terms. Thus, during the data collection phase it must already be clear what types of offences the search is directed at, and what types of search terms are likely to help locate them.

For the purposes of this report, gender is not included among the hate crime target groups. Gender is excluded from the statistics for practical reasons; it would be very difficult to set limits for the number of reports of an offence to be reviewed, if the list of motivations for the crime included the gender of the victim: male or female. On the other hand, very little statistical data or previous reports exist on crimes committed against disabled people in Finland. This provides one good reason for compiling statistics on crimes motivated by the disability of the victim.

For the purposes of this report, the concept of hate crime is defined as follows (partly based on the definition of hate crime used in Sweden; see: Klingspor & Molarin 2009b, 12):

Hate crime is a crime committed against a person, property, institution or a representative of these, motivated by prejudice or hostility towards the victim's real or perceived ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, membership of a gender minority, or disability.

The core of the definition is that, in addition to individual persons, the crime can be committed against a certain group, an institution, or property. Furthermore, it is essential that the concept of hate crime also includes crimes committed on the basis of the offender's perception of the victim's membership of one of the groups mentioned above, even if the perception is false. The difference between this and the definition currently used in Sweden is the inclusion of the disability of the victim as motivation for a crime. Hate crime motivated by ethnic and national origin correlates with cases that have been defined as suspected racist crimes in the previous annual reports.

3 GROUPS PREDISPOSED TO HATE CRIME IN FINLAND

The following chapter discusses what is known on the basis of previous research and statistics on the number of groups particularly subject to hate crime, and on violence or discrimination committed against such groups in Finland. The aim is to collect data on the types of crimes committed against these groups, and to assess what should be taken into consideration in the development of methods for the compilation of hate crime statistics.

3.1 Ethnic and national minorities

Racism and racist crimes are most commonly committed against so-called ‘visible minorities’; i.e. people whose physical characteristics or language separate them most clearly from the majority population. According to surveys involving the collection of data on experiences of racism and discrimination by the immigrant population, persons with a Somali background experience most racist violence (Honkatukia 2005; Jasin-skaja-Lahti et al. 2002). Surveys conducted between 1987 and 2007 by Magdalena Jaakkola on the Finnish people’s attitudes towards immigrants also reveal the same phenomena: Finnish people have a particularly reserved attitude towards minorities whose origins are in the less-developed countries, and whose physical appearance and culture differ from theirs (Jaakkola 2009). In addition to people with an immigrant background, members of traditional ethnic minorities, such as the Roma, may fall victim to racism. Members of the majority population may also fall victim to racism. Furthermore, the family and friends of a minority group member, and people who speak openly against racism, may encounter racism and harassment (Keskinen et al. 2009, 13–14).

Up-to-date information on discrimination and racism against ethnic and national minorities is available in the findings of a survey conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in 2008 that monitored 45 minorities of EU countries. 484 respondents with a Somali background and 562 respondents with a Russian background participated in the survey in Finland. In other countries, the experiences of Roma, Iraqis and Turks, for example, were surveyed. According to the report on the main findings of the survey, Somalis in Finland are one of the groups that experience the most discrimination and racism among the respondents. Among Somalis in Finland, 47% said they had been discriminated against in the last twelve months, and 34% had fallen victim to a racist crime. Among all the respondent groups, the Roma had experienced the most discrimination in general within the EU countries that participated in the survey. The Roma in Finland, however, were not included in the survey. (FRA 2009b; FRA 2009d.)

The number of racist crimes reported to the police has been analysed in annual reports in proportion to the number of minority groups resident in Finland. In this way, it is possible to assess which groups are most often subject to racially motivated

crime. However, no information is available on the number of different ethnic groups in Finland, because the Personal Data Act prohibits keeping records of sensitive personal data, such as ethnic origin. Statistics on the number of persons with an immigrant background can be obtained on the basis of country of birth, nationality, and native language.

By the end of 2008, there were 143,256 foreign citizens resident in Finland, or approximately 3% of the population. The number of foreign citizens grew by 10,548 during 2008. The largest groups of foreign citizens came from Russia (26,909), Estonia (22,604), Sweden (8,439), and Somalia (4,919). The number of persons born abroad, but resident in Finland, was 218,626 at the end of 2008. Of the population of Finland, 4,844,047 persons (90.9%) spoke Finnish, 289,951 persons (5.4%) spoke Swedish, and 1,778 persons (0.03%) spoke Sami as their native language. Some 3.6% of the population spoke a native language other than Finnish, Swedish or Sami. The largest foreign-language groups spoke Russian (48,740), Estonian (22,357), English (11,344), Somali (10,647), and Arabic (8,806). (Statistics Finland 2009.)

Table 1. Largest groups of foreign citizens in Finland in 2008 based on nationality and country of birth

Nationality	N	%	Country of birth	N	%
Russia	26 909	18.8	Former Soviet Union	45 799	20.9
Estonia	22 604	15.8	Sweden	30 640	14.0
Sweden	8 439	5.9	Estonia	19 174	8.8
Somalia	4 919	3.4	Russia	6 702	3.1
China	4 620	3.2	Somalia	6 352	2.9
Thailand	3 932	2.7	China	5 982	2.7
Germany	3 502	2.4	Former Yugoslavia	5 831	2.7
Turkey	3 429	2.4	Germany	5 572	2.5
Iraq	3 238	2.3	Thailand	5 394	2.5
United Kingdom	3 213	2.2	Iraq	5 294	2.4
India	2 736	1.9	Turkey	4 470	2.0
Former Serbia and Montenegro	2 637	1.8	United Kingdom	4 213	1.9
Iran	2 508	1.8	Vietnam	3 969	1.8
The United States (USA)	2 282	1.6	Iran	3 803	1.7
Vietnam	2 270	1.6	The United States (USA)	3 761	1.7
Others	46 018	32.1	Others	61 670	28.2
Total	143 256	100	Total	218 626	100

Source: Statistics Finland 2009

3.2 Religious communities

The majority of Finns are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. At the end of 2007, members totalled 82% of the population. One per cent of the population of Finland are members of the other national church of Finland, the Finnish Or-

thodox Church. The number of other religious communities in Finland has increased rapidly since the mid-1990s, especially as a result of immigration. Nevertheless, the number of their members has remained low; only approximately 66,800 Finns (1.3%) belong to another religious community. These figures do not reflect the actual number of persons belonging to different religious groups in Finland, because the majority of, for example, Muslims and members of smaller religious communities are not official members of any specific community. Approximately 16% of Finns do not belong to any religious community. (Ketola 2008, 338–347; Statistics Finland 2008, 102.)

The Catholic Church in Finland currently has seven parishes and the number of official members was 9,200 at the end of 2007. The Jewish communities in Finland are located in Helsinki and Turku, and combined have approximately 1,300 members. A vast number of other churches and communities exist in Finland, including the Laestadians, the Free Church of Finland, the Pentecostal Church, the Mormons, and the Jehovah's Witnesses. The largest branch of Laestadianism is the Conservative Laestadians (or the Laestadian Lutheran Church), which is most prominent in Northern Finland. In the recent decades, four Buddhist communities, one Hindi community and one Sikh community have been registered in Finland. (Ketola 2008.)

The number of Muslims resident in Finland has increased, especially in the 1990s. The new Muslim population also has attracted much more attention than its predecessors. According to a survey by Tuomas Martikainen, there were approximately 40,000 Muslims in Finland in 2006. This number includes immigrants and their children, Finnish converts, and Tatars. For the most part, Muslims resident in Finland have a background as either fugitives or asylum seekers. It is estimated that the largest groups of Muslims are Somalis, Arabs, Kurds, Albanians from Kosovo, Turks, Iranians, and Bosnians. Approximately 40 organised mosque communities operate in Finland, and some of these are registered as religious communities and some as ordinary societies. (Martikainen 2008, 148–151.)

Among religious minorities in Finland, Muslims have attracted attention, although the majority of immigrants are Christians (Lepola et al. 2007, 156). This is because of the increased significance of religion in reference to certain ethnic groups in recent years. This 'religiousness' refers to the way in which very diverse issues can be interpreted through religion. The 'Muslimism' of a person or group easily becomes the one and only significant factor and, for example, the significance of education, generation, social background, and economic status is then forgotten. At the same time, it eradicates the differences, backgrounds, and conflicts between Muslim groups. Muslimism appears to define the public identities of the Somali, the Kurd, and the Arabic people in particular. (Martikainen 2008, 145–146.)

Little research information is available in Finland on how commonly Muslims or members of other religious minorities experience harassment or discrimination motivated by their religion. The Finnish people's attitudes towards Islamic people have been surveyed in 1993, 1998 and 2003. According to the survey, in 2003 one in four Finns totally or partially agreed that 'practising the Islamic faith should not be allowed in Finland, because it threatens our culture'. Only less than half of the respondents completely disagreed with the statement. (Jaakkola 2009.)

3.3 Sexual and gender minorities

The aim of this report is to analyse crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority. In particular, individuals who differ from the majority population by breaking the traditional roles of men and women in the expression of their sexual orientation or gender may become particularly subject to hate crime. The concept of sexual minorities refers to gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals who engage in romantic or sexual relationships with members of their own sex, even though they would not use these terms themselves to define what they are. The concept of gender minorities refers to persons who experience or express their gender in a non-traditional way. The term transsexual refers to a person who, for example, is born physically a boy, but perceives himself as a woman, and alters his physical appearance through sex reassignment surgery. The term transvestite refers to a man who occasionally wants to express his femininity. The term transgender refers to a person who permanently exists between manhood and womanhood. Intersexual persons are born with both male and female physical features, and are forced into one gender role, often in infancy. It is estimated that sexual minorities constitute 5–15 per cent of the population. The estimated number of gender minorities comprises less than this. It is estimated that there are 50,000 transvestites and 5,000 transsexuals throughout the country. Around 25–50 intersexual children are born each year. (Lehtonen 2006, 12–15.)

Little research has been conducted on violence and discrimination against sexual and gender minorities in Finland (Lehtonen 2007, 23). The first comprehensive survey on the lifestyles and living conditions of homosexuals is from the early 1980s (Grönfors et al. 1985). This survey was conducted to determine how gay and bisexual people had organised their lives, to what extent and from whom they had to hide their sexual orientation, and also whether they had experienced discrimination in the workplace, in their immediate environment, or by the authorities. A total of 1,051 responses were received. Among the respondents, 12% of women and 21% of men had experienced discrimination or name-calling on the basis of their real or perceived membership of a homosexual minority at some point during school. The researchers emphasised that the majority of homosexuals hid their sexual orientation from their environment because of fear of discrimination and that this had to be taken into consideration in the interpretation of the figures. (Ibid.) In the 21st century, however, hiding one's sexual orientation is unlikely to be as common as in the early 1980s.

The most recent extensive survey directed at sexual minorities is from 2002–2003, the topic of the survey being working life. Among other issues, the survey explored minorities' experiences of discrimination in the workplace. Unlike 20 years earlier, the survey strove to persuade gender minorities to respond, in addition to sexual minorities. The survey generated 726 responses from members of sexual minorities, and 108 responses from members of gender minorities. (Mustola & Vanhala 2004a.) According to the survey, 12% of the respondents who belonged to sexual minorities and 8% of the respondents who belonged to gender minorities had personally experienced harassment based on their membership of a minority group in their current or previous workplace. Some 6% of women and 8% of men who belonged to a sexual minority, as well as 8% of respondents who belonged to a gender minority, had been targets of discrimination based on their membership of a minority group. One third had experienced name-call-

ing targeted at sexual and gender minorities in the workplace. Name-calling referred to, for example, 'homophobic name-calling', 'transsexual name-calling', and calling a man 'missy'. People who were open about their sexual orientation experienced bullying and discrimination more often than those who hid it. (Mustola & Vanhala 2004b, Mustola 2004.)

The Finnish AIDS Council conducted research in the late 1990s on sex between men and the risks involved. 64 men were interviewed for this research, and questions were also asked about their experiences of violence. 17% of the respondents answered that they had experienced violence motivated by their sexual orientation, and even more respondents had been threatened with violence. Assaults had occurred, for example, in popular meeting places for gays, and in the near vicinity of such places. (Lehtonen 1999a.)

With respect to homosexuality, name calling appears to be more common than physical violence. This came up in Jukka Lehtonen's research as well. He interviewed 30 non-heterosexual young people for his dissertation. All 13 men interviewed said they had experienced 'homophobic name-calling' at school. Most regarded the experience as negative. Homophobic name-calling occurred in situations of aggression as well as in group situations where one of the boys broke some behavioural pattern, for example, by acting too femininely, childishly, or stupidly. The term gay is used in a derogatory sense, and not necessarily in reference to a person who actually is homosexual. The term lesbian is not similarly used as a general term of abuse or as a synonym for the word stupid, but instead is a more direct reference to being lesbian than the term 'gay' is to being homosexual. For girls, a more common form of name-calling is being called a whore, or some other form of derogatory verbal abuse targeted at women. According to Lehtonen, homophobic name-calling and bullying associated with sexual discipline form part of the strategies of becoming a man in school. In particular, young people who break norms associated with gender are more often subject to alienation and violence. (Lehtonen 2003; 1999b.)

3.4 Disability

As with sexual and gender minorities, it is difficult to present precise figures for the number of disabled people. The number can be estimated through research on the numbers of persons eligible for certain benefits or services. Disability allowances paid by the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, for instance, were received by 240,300 persons at the end of 2007, which is approximately 5% of the entire population (the Social Insurance Institution of Finland 2008, 10). The numbers also depend to a great extent on the definition of disability. According to Ilka Haarni, estimations of the number of disabled people are still often made on the basis of the numbers presented in the 1980s, which suggest that approximately one per cent of the population have severe disabilities, approximately five per cent of the population have limited disabilities, and approximately ten per cent of the population are disabled in a wider sense. (Haarni 2006, 14.)

There are various levels of disability; a person can be born with a disability, or a person's disability may be the result of an accident or illness. Permanent disability

is not the same as temporary disability. People who live with permanent disability encounter various obstacles and difficulties in various life situations. Also, gender or membership of a minority group based on language may affect the social status of disabled people. The difficulties disabled people face also indirectly affect the lives of those around them. (Haarni 2006, 13–15, 29.)

Not much research has been done on violence against disabled people in Finland. Additional data on the living conditions and social status of disabled people is also scarce, and has been collected only at random. There is no data available on the status of several groups of disabled people. (Ibid., 12.) The lack of data on the lives of disabled people in general can increase prejudice towards disabled people to such an extent that, for example, people cannot or dare not approach a disabled person in a relaxed manner (Konttinen 2007, 68).

Most discrimination experienced by disabled people involves types of discrimination that are structural and indirect. The Threshold Association, a civil and human rights organisation for disabled people, collects reports through its website on situations where disabled people have experienced discrimination. Most of these reports involved the accessibility of the environment and buildings. Some were on discrimination experienced when applying for a job, while others involved unclear or illegal determinations of employment. There have also been reports of inappropriate behaviour or negative attitudes towards disabled people. In most cases, the discrimination was not reported to the police. On the other hand, not all disabled people even have the opportunity to personally defend their rights and report on the discrimination they have experienced. In cases like these, the responsibility to report often lies with family members, friends, or organisations. (Konttinen 2007, 97–98.)

One of the few studies to be conducted on violence in Finland is by Vappy Viemerö (2004), who has studied violence against disabled women. Newspaper ads were used to search for interviewees for the study. Based on these ads, contact was made by disabled women themselves as well as their assistants or family members. 20 physically disabled women of different ages, who had contacted the researcher themselves and were able to tell about their experiences personally, were selected to be interviewed for the study. The women recounted that they had experienced psychological, physical, and sexual abuse. Examples of psychological and physical abuse included being left without care, preventing the use of assistive devices, name-calling, and disrespect. A few had been victims of financial abuse. In many cases the abuser was a spouse or partner. (Ibid.)

3.5 Multiple-bias hate motives

Below, the statuses of various minority groups in Finland have been discussed separately. No person, however, has only one identity, but instead simultaneously represents more than one reference group. A person is not only disabled, but also, for example, female, Finnish, and middle-aged. Occasionally, it may be difficult to determine the motivation for discrimination or some other type of offence committed against a person in a certain situation. Also, a person's own perception of the motivation for the incident may vary. For instance, according to a survey directed at sexual minorities, homosexual

men perceive the discrimination they experience in the workplace to be motivated by their sexual orientation, whereas lesbians and bisexual women perceive it to have more to do with their gender (Mustola & Vanhala 2004b). According to a survey conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, many Muslim respondents in European countries who had experienced discrimination perceived it to be motivated by both their ethnic or national origin and their religion, whereas only one in ten perceived the discrimination to be motivated by their religion only (FRA 2009c).

The legislation in force does not handle multiple-bias discrimination, because it handles the various grounds for discrimination separately. In addition, with respect to the compilation of statistics, taking the unified effect of several motives into consideration is difficult. Many cases have to be simplified and classified into categories according to their most prominent characteristics, which means that incidents of intersectional discrimination remain hidden.

4 THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF THE STATISTICAL METHOD

The compilation of statistics on racist crime has been conducted by the Police College of Finland through the use of the same method since 2003. The beginning of the next section describes this statistical method, which has been used in recent years. Thereafter, the developments applied herein to the statistical method for the purposes of compiling statistics on racist crime and other types of hate crime are discussed. In the development of the method for compiling statistics on hate crime, it is important to begin by discussing methods of locating reports of an offence in the police information system, and secondly, how to classify a particular offence as a hate crime.

4.1 Racist crime data collection and classification between 2003 and 2007

Data for annual reports on racist crime has been collected from the national police information system (PATJA) by searching for reports of an offence, using specific criteria. The data collection process for reports between 2003 and 2007 was conducted in the same way each year. Data collection was conducted in three phases; the first phase involving the collection of raw data:

- all reports of an offence which the police have marked with the racism code;
- all reports of an offence classified as discrimination, work discrimination, or ethnic agitation
- all reports of an offence, which are most likely to contain crimes² with racist characteristics, and in which at least one of the targets of the crime is a foreigner or of foreign origin, i.e. his or her nationality and/or country of birth as reported is other than Finland, and
- all reports of an offence that contain the letter combinations ‘racist’ or ‘racism’ in the incident description

In the second phase of the data collection process, the principal data was collected from the raw data through the use of various search terms. Search terms included various abusive terms included in the reports (see: Appendix 2). In the third phase of the data collection process, all reports “fished out” through the use of the search terms were reviewed. The final data consists of all reports of an offence that meet at least one of the following criteria:

² A list of crimes included in the data collection between 2003 and 2007 is available in Appendix 3.

- The police have marked the report of an offence with the racism code
- The report of an offence included obvious racist insults
- The suspected offender stated that the motivation for the crime was xenophobia (hatred of foreigners), and the victim belonged to an ethnic minority
- One of the injured parties or the police perceived the motivation of the crime to be racist.

The most recent report – for 2007 – included a review of 978 reports of an offence in the second phase of the collection process. Some 454 of these reports of an offence were included in the final data; i.e. they were classified as racially motivated crimes. The police had marked approximately half of the 454 reports with the racism code. Therefore, the other half of the collected reports of an offence were included in the final data based on other criteria. In most instances, the report was chosen for inclusion in the final data on the basis of including obvious racist insults, or because one of the interested parties included in the report had perceived the motivation of the crime as racist. More rarely, the offender had personally stated that the crime had been motivated by racism or xenophobia. (Joronen 2008, 22.)

4.2 Development of the racist crime data collection process

Some problems exist in the data collection process described earlier and this project attempts to resolve them. The first phase of the data collection process excludes all reports of an offence with racist characteristics where the nationality of the injured party is Finnish and the country of birth is Finland, but the police have not marked the reports with the racism code and the reports do not contain the letter combinations ‘racism’ or ‘racist’. In such cases, the injured party may belong to a traditional Finnish ethnic minority, such as the Roma, or he or she may be a second generation immigrant. Since the number of second generation immigrants is already high, and will increase in the near future, many reports may end up being excluded during the data collection process. (Joronen 2008, 24.) This report will simplify the racist crime data collection process so that it is no longer based on the immigrant background of the injured party (i.e. nationality other than Finnish or country of birth other than Finland).

In reports for previous years, data collection has mainly focused on specific crimes against life and health. The researcher for the latest report, Mikko Joronen, has suggested adding two new crimes to the data collection. These two crimes are breach of the sanctity of religion and membership of a criminal organisation. Searching for breaches of the sanctity of religion could result in a more comprehensive collection of incidents motivated by, for instance, islamophobia or anti-semitism. Adding membership of a criminal organisation to the list could result in the collection of reports of an offence where the suspected perpetrators of racist crime have acted as members of a criminal organisation, such as neo-Nazis. (Ibid., 24.) It is also necessary to discuss what other crimes the data collection should focus on. What types of crimes do racist motivation

or other hate motivation cover? In Section 4.3.3, the grounds for modifying the list of crimes for the purposes of this report are discussed.

4.3 The development of the data collection and classification of other types of hate crime

Since the police information system only includes a classification code for racism, data collection on hate crime committed against minorities other than ethnic or national ones had to be conducted through the use of search terms only. The previous annual reports on racist crime used 37 search terms. For the purposes of data collection on hate crime, the list of search terms had to be expanded.

The list should include search terms that efficiently help locate police reports on suspected hate crime. In this way, as much hate crime as possible is included in the data. On the other hand, the search terms should not locate too many crimes that are clearly non-hate crime, because that would make the number of reports to be reviewed unnecessarily vast. The quantity of collected reports of an offence must be taken into account when choosing the search terms, and an evaluation should be performed on whether it is possible to review all of the collected reports within the time frame allowed for the project.

The use of search terms is not without problems: namely, because reports of an offence that do not contain the specific search terms will end up excluded in the data collection process. It is difficult to determine how this affects the comprehensiveness of the data. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that not all reports on suspected crimes with racist characteristics, or other types of hate crime include, for example, insults motivated by ethnic origin or religious background. Furthermore, some reports of an offence may contain statements or insults not included in the list of search terms.

The aim is also to classify different types of hate crime into separate categories on the basis of suspected motives. Has the crime been motivated by the victim's religious background, sexual orientation, membership of a gender minority, disability, or perhaps ethnic or national origin? It is quite probable that, in general, determining the motive for crimes based on a police report is far from easy. On the other hand, the police report may reveal multiple motives for a crime. For instance, it may be difficult to determine whether a person with an immigrant background has been targeted on the basis of his or her religious background or ethnic origin, or the combination of the two. Since the motive can seldom be clearly determined from the content of the police report, the classification of the case must rely on various 'clues'. These clues, as well as the criteria for classification of the incidents, are discussed in the following two sections.

4.3.1 *Criteria for the definition of racist crime and hate crime*

As mentioned earlier, the final data for the annual report on racist crime has been compiled through the review of reports of an offence collected using search terms. From these, reports of an offence that included at least one of the criteria listed below have been chosen:

- The police have marked the report of an offence with the racism code
- The report of an offence included obvious racist insults
- The suspected offender stated that the motivation for the crime was xenophobia (hatred of foreigners), and the victim belonged to an ethnic minority
- One of the injured parties or the police perceived the motivation of the crime to be racist.

The definitions are therefore quite precise, although various interpretations of ‘obvious racist insults’ are likely to exist.

In Brå’s reports in Sweden, the narrative incident description recorded by the police and included in the reports of an offence has been utilised in the classification of hate crime (see: Klingspor & Molarin 2009a; 2009b). A case is primarily classified as hate crime by Brå if a report of an offence states that the victim has perceived the crime as motivated by hate – for example, if the victim suspected that the assault against him or her was motivated by his or her colour. In reference to Brå’s methods, in addition to the narrative incident description by the injured party, the classification of a case can be based on the following information:

- *The suspected offender’s written or oral statements.* If, during the incident, the suspected offender says ‘darkie’, the offence is classified as hate crime. Also terms such as ‘tranny’ and ‘gypsy’ may indicate hate crime, if the word appears in an unusual context, such as written on someone’s front door. In addition, scrawlings on walls or, for example, leaflets with statements such as ‘gypsies get out’ are interpreted as hate crime.
- *Information gathered from cases related to the report of an offence.* Some reports of an offence refer to other reports involving the same injured party or the same suspected offender. These reports may contain information that assists in the classification of the case.
- *Additional information from the police.* When incidents are difficult to classify, the Brå researchers may request additional information, for example, from the investigators who handled the incident. For the purposes of the latest report, approximately 500 incidents required requests for additional information.
- *Media.* In some cases, the media has drawn attention to the hate crime aspect of the incident. This information can also assist in the classification of the case.
- *The names of the injured party and the suspected offender.* This information can be used to assess a person’s background.
- *Description.* The description of a suspected offender can be utilised in the classification, for example, if the suspected offender has been described as ‘a skinhead’.

Some of Brå’s assessment methods are similar to those used in previous annual reports on racist crime in Finland. In Finland and Sweden, a particular focus has been placed on the perception of the injured party in terms of the motivation for the crime as well as insults uttered by the suspected offender.

In contrast, however, in Finland no additional information has been requested from the investigators in regard of incidents that have been difficult to assess, and this is not likely to be considered necessary in the future, either. In terms of methodology, a clearer way to conduct classifications is on the basis of the content of the reports of an offence. Otherwise, it may be difficult to draw the line between cases where additional information is requested and where it is not. In Sweden, information provided by the media has been utilised, for example, in homicide cases where the motive for the crime has not been established until the latter stages of the criminal justice process³. The Finnish racist crime monitoring system has not utilised information provided by the media. No systematic monitoring of information provided by the media is possible for the purposes of this report, either.

4.3.2 Tests for search terms and specification of criteria for hate crime classification

Before beginning the actual data collection process, various search terms have been tested and evaluated in terms of how efficiently they help locate hate crime from the police information system. The search term tests began with expressions similar to those used in Brå's report on hate crime in 2007 (Klingspor et al. 2008). During the tests, attempts were made to identify additional expressions included in the incident descriptions of reports of an offence, which could be added to the list of search terms. This search was directed at all reports of an offence recorded by the police and added to the police information system in 2008. The search was not restricted to include, for example, only certain crimes against life and health. The intention was to determine what types of crimes may include hate motivation.

In conjunction with the search term tests, there has been a discussion of the criteria for the hate crime classification of individual cases. The aim was to develop criteria for the classification of cases that make the methods for handling and coding material as straightforward as possible. It is also important that such criteria are readily available so that anyone examining the statistics will understand what the numbers presented in the report in question actually reveal. Below is a description of the phases of the development process for the list of search terms, by target group.

Crimes motivated by religious background

The tests on search terms began with words used in Brå's reports that refer to Islamic or Jewish origin ('Muslim', 'Islam', 'veil', 'mosque', 'Jew') and to hostility towards these religious groups ('swastika', 'Hitler', 'Nazi', 'anti-semitism'). These search terms helped locate some cases that clearly appear to include hate crime motivated by religious background. All of the following cases, for instance, include insulting or offensive expressions towards the religious group to which the victim belongs. The list of crimes includes assault, defamation, and criminal damage.

³ Klara Klingspor, via email in February 2009.

*Assault and defamation: A man tore the **veil** from a woman's face and insulted her **religion** by shouting, among other things, 'you're not allowed to use those here in Finland'.*

*Defamation: A man has received a letter containing a cartoon sketch offensive towards **Muslims**. The sketch included a man wearing a **turban** with a bomb in his hands.*

*Criminal damage: A window on the front door of a **mosque** was broken, and a '**Muslim** genocide' sticker was stuck on another window.*

The purpose of this report is also to compile statistics on crimes committed against religious groups other than Jews and Muslims. Relevant search terms might therefore include words that refer to other religious communities, such as 'Pentecostal', 'Orthodox', 'Mormon', 'Laestadian', 'Lutheran', 'chapel', 'Christian'. Words that refer to religiousness in general, such as 'parish', 'infidel', and 'heresy' might also be included.

The use of these search terms helps locate a large number of reports of criminal damage committed against buildings under the ownership of religious communities in particular. The word 'parish' alone, for example, helps locate approximately 400 reports on incidents of criminal disturbance or criminal damage recorded in 2008. These incidents involve knocking down headstones, damaging parts of buildings, or scrawlings on the walls of buildings. However, most of the reports bear no indication as to the motivation for the crime, such as perceptions on the matter by the injured party or the police, or perhaps a note left at the scene. If the motivation for the crime is unknown, the incident cannot be classified as hate crime – even though the crime was committed against a religious location, such as a church or a cemetery. Although various search terms that refer to religion ('parish', for example) produce a much larger number of cases that are not hate crime-related, they are included in the data collection anyway, because the real potential of these search terms cannot be verified before all of the raw data has been reviewed.

Crimes motivated by sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority

Crimes committed against members of sexual minorities can also be located through the use of search terms utilised in Brå's reports. These search terms include both words that refer to a person's sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority, as well as abusive words that refer to the persons directly ('gay', 'lesbian', 'hetero', 'queer', 'bisexual', 'tranny').

The most prominent of these search terms is 'gay' which alone brings up over 400 reports of an offence recorded in 2008. Whereas the word 'gay' is a commonly used expression in police reports, other expressions referring to sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority are very rare. For instance, expressions such as 'male couple', 'female couple', 'queer' or 'pride' do not appear in any police reports recorded in 2008. 'Sexual orientation' and '(membership of a) gender minority' are also mentioned in only a few police reports.

A review of the reports reveals that the word 'gay' is used in very different situations. In several cases it is difficult to determine whether the incident should be classified as hate crime or not. Is 'mere' name-calling in reference to homosexuality enough to classify an incident as hate crime? Should the report of an offence also indicate whether the suspect has perceived the victim as a member of a sexual minority? Not all incidents that involve 'homophobic name-calling' can be classified without a doubt as hate crime. Below are some examples:

*Menace: A teacher reported an unlawful threat incident that had occurred in class. ... A student had said to the teacher: 'Fuck you, **fag!** I'm gonna beat you to death. I'm gonna beat you to death with an axe!'*

*Menace: Some threatening messages were left in the student association's mail box intended for Christmas greetings. The messages were hand written, and included statements such as 'The school will blow up on January 16' and 'Christmas wishes to [the principle] your school will blow up, you fucking **fag!**'*

In some reports of an offence, the motivation for the crime is evident, as indicated by the following incident description:

*Assault: X has been assaulted... According to X, the assault was motivated by his **sexual orientation**. The suspect had repeatedly stated, among other things, 'let's beat the **queer** out of you'.*

The use of abusive words that refer to homosexuality in a derogatory sense says something about us as a society. The word gay, for example, is used in a similar manner as the word 'idiot' in verbal abuse. For this reason it would be justifiable to include all cases that contain homosexual verbal abuse in the statistics. In the classification of racist crime, all reports of an offence that include obvious racist insults have been classified as suspected racist crimes. Racist verbal abuse as a whole has been regarded as so insulting that the suspect's mere choice of language combined with the injured party's immigrant background has provided sufficient indication of the racist nature of the crime. On the other hand, if verbal abuse in reference to sexual orientation were regarded as criteria for hate crime similarly to racist expressions with respect to racist crime, there would be a danger of over-reporting the amount of hate crime. Since determining the motivation for crimes overall is highly open to interpretation in terms of the reviews of the incident descriptions included in the reports of an offence, it is considered preferable for the classification criteria not to be defined too broadly.

In Sweden, in the category of suspected crimes with homophobic characteristics Brå primarily includes all reports of an offence where the victim has been the target of homophobic name-calling, regardless of his or her real sexual orientation, or the suspect's perception of the sexual orientation of the victim.⁴ The definition of

⁴ Exceptions to this are, for example, cases where the victim has been the target of name-calling with several different abusive terms, and which indicate that the word 'gay' has been used in a similar manner to the word 'idiot' (Klara Klingspor, via email in February 2009).

hate crime states, after all, that the motivation for the crime is the *real or perceived* sexual orientation of the victim. In theory, this is therefore the definition of hate crime for the purposes of this report as well, and the aim is to compile statistics on hate crime motivated by both the real and the perceived sexual orientation of the victim. In practice, however, this proves much more difficult, because on the basis of the majority of incident descriptions included in reports of an offence, it cannot be determined whether the suspect has only perceived or has actually known that the victim is, for example, homosexual, or whether name-calling targeted at the victim was motivated by something else. Brå's classification has been validated by categorising name-calling overall as an insult to sexual and gender minorities, even when it is not directly targeted at a member of the minority in question (Sporre et al. 2007, 27–28).

The reviews of the Finnish reports of an offence show that it would be sensible to form categories on the basis of the strength of the motivation for the crime manifested during the course of the reviews of the reports. A report of an offence may include information on, for example, name-calling only, or it may also include the suspect's perception of the victim's membership of a sexual or gender minority.

Crimes committed against disabled people

A search for hate crime committed against disabled people has been conducted through the use of search terms that refer to disabilities ('disabled', 'wheelchair', 'assistance dog'), or are abusive towards disabled people ('invalid', 'handicapped'). The most common words describing disabilities bring up a variety of search results from the police information system. However, most of these search results do not refer to hate crimes, and the incidents in question are therefore easy to exclude from the data. In the following cases, for instance, the terms do not refer to the motivation of the crime, but instead there is a reference to disabilities in other contexts included in the reports:

*threatened to cause **brain damage**
the mother of the suspect was **deaf**
a man in a **wheelchair** had taken out the valve of the bike*

The search terms also help locate a variety of police reports where the victim of the crime is described as a person with a disability (e.g. 'blind person' or 'uses a wheelchair'), but the reports do not reveal the motivation for the crime, for example, in terms of insults targeted at the victim comparable to reports of a racist crime. Nevertheless, several suspected crimes can be perceived as crimes where the victim has been chosen on the basis of his or her disability and because he or she is an easy target. Below are some examples of such crimes:

*Robbery: The suspect forcibly entered the apartment of a **physically challenged** person, and used violence to obtain money.*

*Sexual abuse: The care giver is suspected of the sexual abuse of a woman with a mild **mental disability**.*

A few reports of an offence located through the use of search terms include indications of possible hate crime. The hate motivation is apparent, for example, in a report of an offence where the suspect called the victim abusive names because the victim uses a wheelchair.

Racist crime

In recent years, 37 search terms have been used in data collection on racist crime. The effectiveness of these words should also be tested. No data has been collected in previous years on how effective the search terms in question have been and the list of search terms has not been updated. On account of this, search terms that refer to racism should not be excluded in this report – at least not at this point. During the tests on the search terms, however, some new expressions arose that could be used to locate crimes with racist characteristics, such as ‘xenophobia’, ‘back to Africa’, and ‘go back where you came from...’.

Additionally, during the tests some reports of an offence with racist characteristics came up that included crimes such as theft or robbery. The collection of data for previous reports on racist crime has not been directed at these crimes against property. The next section contains discussions on which crimes the search should be directed at.

4.3.3 Search terms and types of offence - estimates on the number of reports of an offence to be reviewed

When planning the data collection process, the quantity of the reports of an offence located through the search criteria must be taken into account as well as whether it is possible to review all the police reports located within the time frame allowed for the project. To this effect, estimates must be made of the number of reports of an offence to be reviewed when the search is directed at specific types of crimes and is implemented through the use of specific search terms. Appendix 2 includes a list of the search terms that refer to racism used in previous years as well as some newly added search terms that refer to hate crime. A list of the types of crimes is included in Appendix 3. Below are some search findings:

- Types of crimes included in the search in previous years and search terms that refer to racism used in previous years (37 words)
 - approximately 2,800 reports of an offence
- Types of offence included in the search in previous years as well as all old search terms that refer to racism and new search terms that refer to hate crime (ca. 200 search terms in total)
 - approximately 5,200 reports of an offence

- Types of offence included in the search in previous years + some crimes against property (theft, petty theft, embezzlement, robbery, and extortion) as well as all previous search terms that refer to racism and new search terms that refer to hate crime (ca. 200 search terms in total)
→ approximately 11,200 reports of an offence

The numbers indicate how the addition of certain crimes against property to the data collection criteria significantly increases the number of police reports to be reviewed. In practice it is not possible to review so many – over 10,000 reports – within the time frame allowed for this project. On the other hand, none of the search terms can be excluded, because the quality of the statistics would suffer. It is better to conduct a thorough review on a more limited number of crimes than to be forced to review too many reports of an offence in a short period of time.

The search was also tested after the addition of certain types of crimes to the list of crimes used in previous years (see: Appendix 3). Also added to the list were, for example, more sexual crimes, breach of the sanctity of religion, breach of the sanctity of the grave, and crimes committed at the workplace. However, crimes against property were not included in this particular search. Approximately 6,000 reports of an offence were collected when the search criteria also included new search terms referring to hate crime (Appendix 2). It would appear, then, that the addition of certain crimes against property (robbery, theft) to the list of search terms significantly increases the number of police reports to be reviewed. This is most probably due to the large number of crimes against property that are reported each year.

Some of the search terms provide a lot of hits, and some only a few. The term gay, for example, is a very common word, and is presumably included in the majority of cases where the crime has been motivated by the victim's sexual orientation. Then again, some other search terms do not seem very effective; i.e. many of the cases these words bring up should clearly not be classified as hate crime. Furthermore, some of the words or expressions are so uncommon that they only bring up a single case; nevertheless, the cases in question appear to be suspected hate crime. Since the more extensive compilation of statistics on hate crime is now being conducted for the first time, it would be sensible to include a selection of search terms which is as broad as possible. Search terms that are clearly ineffective can be excluded in the following year. The review of the reports may also generate ideas for implementing various specifications of the list of search terms, for example: physically challenged * NOT ethically challenged.

5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter describes the practical implementation of the project phase by phase; collection and exclusion of raw data, classification of reports of an offence as hate crime, and formation of different variables on the basis of the incident descriptions included in reports of an offence. Lastly, the problems regarding the methods used in this project are discussed.

5.1 Collection and exclusion of raw data

Raw data collected for the purposes of this project consists of all reports of an offence recorded by the police in 2008 that have been collected from the police information system through the use of the following search criteria – i.e. the first to be included in the raw data were:

1. All reports of an offence that include one of the crimes mentioned in Appendix 3 AND one of the search terms mentioned in Appendix 2 (216 search terms in total).
2. All reports of an offence classified as discrimination, work discrimination, extortionate work discrimination, or ethnic agitation.
3. All reports of an offence that include the letter combinations ‘racist’ or ‘racism’ in the incident description.
4. All reports of an offence the police have marked with the racism code.

Data collection implemented through the use of the search criteria listed in categories 3 and 4 was not directed at certain types of crimes, and this criteria may therefore have brought up reports of an offence that include crimes other than those mentioned in category 1. For instance, the police who filed the report may have marked a robbery case with the racism code. Category 3 constitutes a separate search criteria category, because the letter combinations ‘racism’ and ‘racist’ have proven very effective criteria for the purposes of this particular data collection process.

The search terms helped locate 6,084 reports of an offence for review. During the first phase of the review, reports of an offence were roughly classified into three categories:

1. Not hate crime
2. Possible hate crime
3. Is hate crime

The process of reviewing the reports was facilitated by the fact that the search terms appeared in bold, so the reports did not have to be reviewed word for word. Below are some excerpts from some reports of an offence where it was clear at a glance that they could not be classified as hate crime:

henkilö istui kyyryssä (not 'Russky' or reference to a person of Russian origin)
*the couple lived next door to a **Pentecostal** church building*
*a fight in front of the **Orthodox** Church*
*the contents of the closet had not been dragged **out of the closet***
*a person had received a silent call (referred to in Finnish by '**mute**')*

After the first phase of the review approximately 70% of the 6,084 reports were excluded from the data.

5.2 Further sampling of reports and definition of criteria for classification of hate crime

In the second phase of the review, the cases in the 'possible' and 'is' categories were read through again more thoroughly and a decision was made on which cases to include in the final data. The classification of a case as involving hate crime is based on the narrative incident descriptions recorded by the police and included in the reports of an offence. A report of an offence was primarily classified as hate crime if one of the injured parties or the police considered the motivation for the crime to be the victim's real or perceived membership of a reference group on the basis of, for example, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, membership of a gender minority, or disability. The classification of cases is therefore heavily based on the injured party's own statement on the incident. Not all reports of an offence even include the suspect's perception of the motivation for the crime, for example, if the suspect remains unidentified, or if the investigation of the case was concluded before hearing the suspect. If the report of an offence includes contradictory information on the motivation for the crime – for example, the injured party claims the crime was motivated by racism and the suspect claims it was not – then the case is classified as hate crime. It is important to remember that these statistics include suspected hate crime reported to the police only. Only a court of law can decide whether a criminal offence has been committed, as well as draw the ultimate conclusions on the motivation for the crime and any contradictory statements.

The classification of a case can also be based on other clues included in the police report with respect to the motivation for the crime. These clues are described in more detail below according to various motivations for hate crime. Some typical borderline cases located with the help of the search terms, which have not been classified as hate crime for the purposes of this report, are also described in terms of each individual motivation for hate crime.

Ethnic or national origin (suspected racist crime)

1. Racist insults: The suspect has verbally abused the victim of the crime, for example, as 'Russky' or 'negro', or a fight has broken out because of racist comments.
2. The racism code. If the police have marked the report of an offence with the racism code, the case is classified as a racist crime, even though the racist characteristics of the crime are not apparent by reviewing the report of an offence in question. Five cases marked with the racism code are classified as hate crime motivated by religion, because the insults and other indicators included in them specifically refer to the religion of the victim.
3. Reports of an offence not classified as racist crime include reports where
 - one of the injured parties was called racist or denoted by a similar term,
 - the suspect was described as, for example, a skinhead or neo-Nazi,
 - a picture of a swastika was scrawled, for example, on the injured party's car, and no additional information about the motivation for the crime was available.

Religion

1. Insults: if the report of an offence includes a statement that, for example, the suspect's 'insulting remarks referred to religion', the case is classified as hate crime.
2. The classification of hate crime has been applied to cases motivated by the victim not belonging to the church, for example, or by the victim not being a member of a specific religious group.
3. Reports of an offence not classified as hate crime include cases where
 - one of the injured parties was reported as being a member of a specific religious group, but the report does not indicate whether this information is related to the motivation for the crime.
 - the crime appeared to concern honour-related violence between family members or relatives.
 - headstones were knocked down or damage was done to other property under the ownership of religious communities, and the motivation for the crime was not revealed (e.g. in a note left at the scene).

Sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority

1. Insults: Verbal insults that refer to sexual orientation alone, such as 'homophobic name-calling', do not constitute sufficient evidence of hate crime.
2. This classification can be used on the basis of insults that refer to sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority if a report of an offence indicates in some other way that the suspect has acted on the basis of the victim's real or

perceived membership of a sexual or gender minority. For instance, a case where the suspect has called a female victim ‘man’, ‘tomboy’, and ‘lesbian’ has been classified as hate crime because all of these words refer to the victim’s perceived sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority.

Disability

1. Insults: This classification can be made on the basis of insults and offensive terms that refer to disability, if the report of an offence indicates that the suspect has acted on the basis of the victim’s real or perceived disability.
2. Cases where a person has been discriminated against on the basis of his or her health have not been classified as hate crime.

None of the motivations for hate crime mentioned above require that the suspect is a member of the majority population and the victim of the crime is a member of a minority group. Also ‘crimes committed against the majority by the minority’ or ‘crimes between minority groups’ can be classified as hate crime. Classification of hate crime can be applied to a case, for example, where a person of Russian origin has reportedly assaulted a member of the Roma on the basis of his or her ethnic origin, or where an Islamic person has verbally abused a Christian person on the basis of his or her religion.

In comparison to the countries mentioned previously in Section 2.2, in practice the definition of hate crime in Finland used for the purposes of this report is closer to the recommended definition used by the police force in the Britain, rather than that used by the federal police in the United States. In Britain, the classification of hate crime includes all cases that the victim or any other person considers a hate crime – i.e. the motivation for the crime is the suspect’s prejudice against, for example, the ethnic or national origin of the victim. According to FBI instructions, sufficient objective evidence of the offender’s motivation must be presented before the case can be included in statistics. For the compilation of statistics in this report, there are no requirements for sufficient objective evidence, but instead, the perception of the victim, the police or any other interested party constitute sufficient grounds for classification.

One distinction with the Swedish system is that in Finland cases classified as racist crimes by the police are also included in the statistics, even when the racist characteristics of the crime are not apparent from a review of the report of the offence in question. In Finland the racism code is not mandatory and, for the most part, the police probably use the code only when they undoubtedly perceive the case as a racist crime. In Sweden, different police departments follow different instructions on how to use the code, and no unified national instruction manual exists on how to do so. Furthermore, the code is mandatory; i.e. when they use the system the police must indicate whether the crime reported to the police is classified as hate crime or not. Therefore, cases primarily marked by the police with the hate crime code can be considered to fulfil Brå’s criteria for inclusion in the statistics only through the review of reports of an offence (see: Section 2.2.2).

5.3 Classification of variables

The final data includes a total of 859 reports of an offence classified as hate crime. 755 of these reports were classified as cases with racist characteristics. In 2008, the police had marked 306 reports of an offence with the racism code, out of which 296 were included in the final data. Excluded were eight cases marked with the racism code deemed to be cases of taking a person into police custody on account of the Police Act and which were not suspected crimes *per se*. A typical case would be a drunken person shouting racist insults in a public location.⁵

For all reports of an offence, information on suspected crimes, injured parties and suspected offenders was recorded and converted into numeric variables. The categories of variables used are primarily the same as in the reports on racist crime between 2003 and 2007. Some of the variables were collected from the police information system as is, such as the location of the incident, the time of the incident, and the personal information of both the injured party and the suspect, including: date of birth, gender, nationality, and country of birth. Some of the variables had to be reconfigured (time of the incident) and some had to be determined on the basis of the information included in the reports (location of the incident, relationship between the victim and the suspect).⁶

A single report of an offence may include several injured parties and suspected offenders as well as various types of crimes. The same person can be the injured party in one or more suspected crimes, and the same person can be the suspected offender for more than one crime. In fights involving more than two parties it is typical that the same person is both a suspect and an injured party. In a similar manner to previous years, in this report the analysis is focused on the most severe type of offence against the injured party; i.e. the so-called principal suspected offence. The principal suspected crimes classified as the most severe are crimes against persons. These crimes, listed by decreasing degree of severity include: homicide and attempted homicide, sexual crimes (rape), physical violence (assaults), threatening with violence (menace), discrimination, defamation, invasion of domestic premises, and criminal damage.

In addition to the variables listed above, a new category added for the purposes of this report is classification based on the narrative incident description recorded by the police and included in the reports of an offence. Altogether, there are six different categories, and the classification is based on the incident description recorded by the police and included in the report. A more detailed description of the variable is included in Appendix 4.

5.4 Problems with the method

Problems with the statistical method have been noted in previous chapters and are described in brief in Figure 1. This figure presents the relationships between hidden crime and crime reported to the police, as well as the relationship between hate crime in general and statistics on hate crime. Section A of the figure represents all crime not

⁵ Also omitted were two reports of an offence marked as racist, which overlapped with earlier reports of the same incident.

⁶ A more detailed categorisation of the variables is given in Appendix 4.

reported to the police, and section B represents hate crime not reported to the police. A crime may be left unreported for several reasons. According to an immigrant survey conducted in 2001, 71% of respondents who had experienced a racist crime did not report it to the police. The reasons given were the minor nature of the offence, and scepticism with respect to the outcome of reporting the offence. (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. 2002.) Section C of the Figure represents hate crime reported to the police but not classified as hate crime for the purposes of this report. Many reports of an offence may be excluded from the statistics due, for example, to the following reasons:

- the report of an offence does not include any information on the motivation for the crime or the insults uttered during the incident (often e.g. criminal damage where the offender is unknown)
- the report includes certain search criteria, but there is a typing error in the text (e.g. ‘racist’ motivation has been typed ‘racicist’ motivation)
- the motivation for the crime has been described using expressions not included in the list of search terms
- the report of an offence only includes types of offence not included in the search criteria (e.g. robbery)

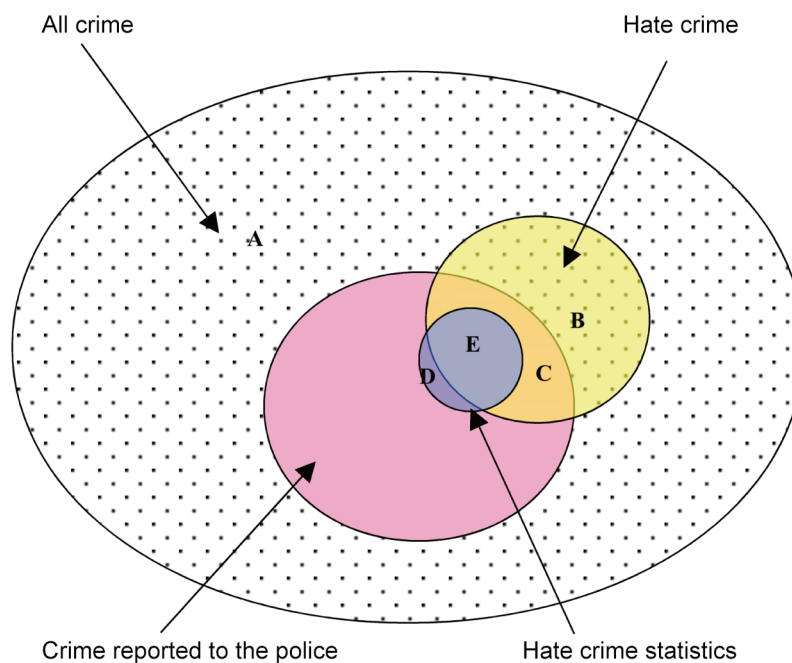


Figure 1. The hate crime statistics of this report in proportion to all crime and crime reported to the police

Some reports of an offence may have been incorrectly classified as hate crime in this report, although in reality the motivation for the crime was not prejudice against the real or perceived reference group to which the victim belongs (Section D). These cases have been classified on the basis of the reviews of the narrative incident descriptions recorded by the police and included in reports of an offence: in some cases it has been difficult to determine whether or not the incident should be classified as hate crime. The statistics also include all reports of an offence the police have marked with the racism code and some of these markings may be incorrect. Section E of the figure represents hate crimes reported to the police that have been correctly classified as hate crime in this report.

6 REPORT FINDINGS

6.1 All motivations

A total of 859 cases classified as suspected hate crime were collected from the police information system. The majority of these are cases with racist characteristics, 755 cases in total, or 88% of all reports of an offence (Figure 2). Only a few cases of other types of hate crime were reported to the police. 6% (n=53) of reports of an offence included crimes motivated by the victim's religious background, 3% (n=23) included crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority, and another 3% (n=28) included crimes motivated by the victim's disability. The following sections describe the different types of hate crime in more detail, respectively.

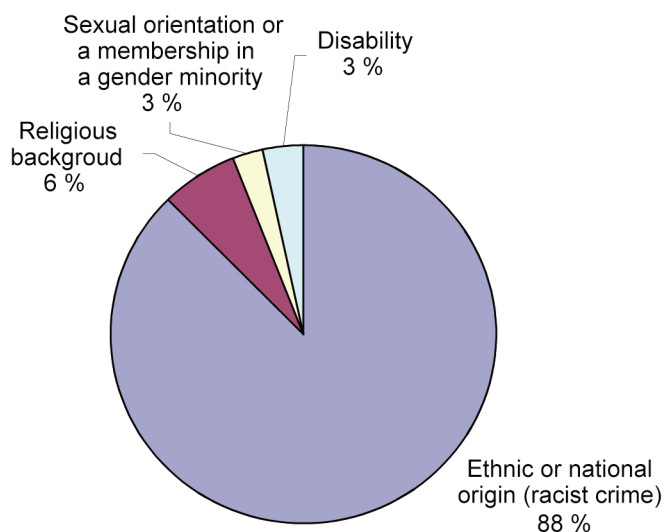


Figure 2. Shares of different types of hate crime included in reports of an offence classified as hate crime in 2008 (%)

6.2 Suspected crimes with racist characteristics

In 2008, the data included 755 reports of an offence with racist characteristics (Figure 3). This number is substantially higher than in previous years. Changes in the statistical method used are partly responsible for this increase: broader search criteria have been applied to data collection for the purposes of this report, resulting in a more comprehensive number of reports of an offence with racist characteristics (see: Chapters 4 and 5). On the other hand, the increase cannot be solely due to changes to the statistical method, since the number of reports made to the police has also increased significantly. That is to say, 606 reports of an offence included in the data would have been located

through the use of the search criteria used in the previous years as well. Even so, there is an increase of 152 reports of an offence compared to the previous year, when earlier the annual increase reached 30 reports at most. Comparatively speaking, the number of suspected crimes included in reports of an offence has also increased significantly. In 2008, reports of an offence included a total of 1,163 principal offences. In 2007, the number of principal offences was 698, and in 2006 it was 748.

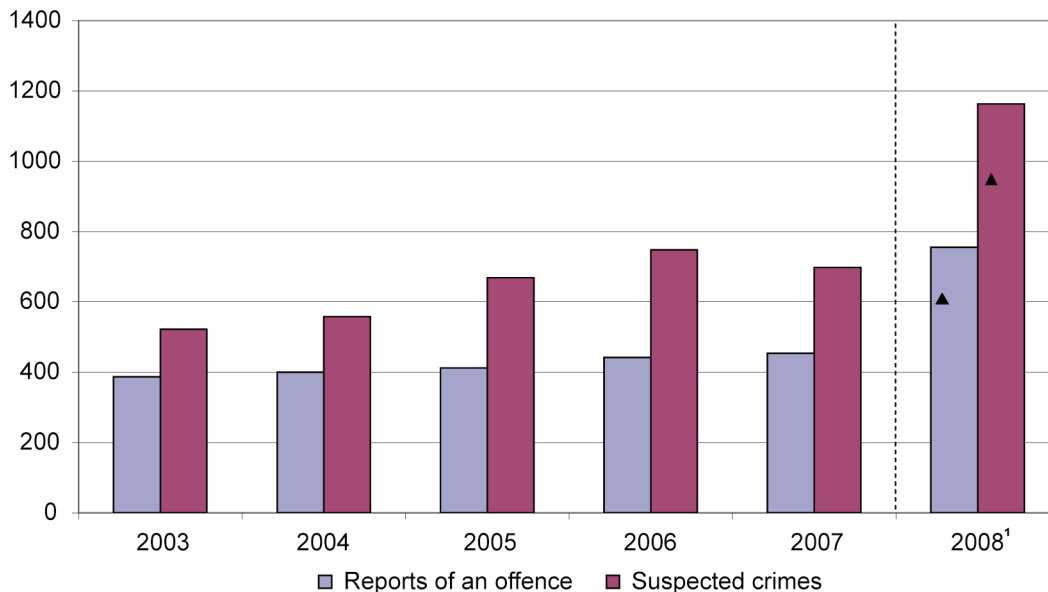


Figure 3. Numbers of reports of an offence with racist characteristics and suspected racist crime between 2003 and 2008

¹ The numbers for 2008 are not comparable with those for previous years. The triangle in the figure indicates how many cases would have been located through the use of the search criteria used between 2003 and 2007.

6.2.1 Characteristics of cases located through the use of new search criteria

Between 2003 and 2007, one of the search criteria for the collection of reports of an offence was the immigrant background of the injured party (see: Section 4.1). This means that only cases, where at least one of the injured parties' nationality was other than Finnish or their country of birth other than Finland, were collected from the police information system. The statistics did not therefore include cases where the victim was a second generation immigrant (Finnish citizen, born in Finland) or a member of an ethnic or national minority (e.g. the Roma), and no specific mention is made of racist characteristics (search terms 'racism' and 'racist'). In this report, the immigrant background of the injured party has not been included in the search criteria. Furthermore, more search terms were used than in previous years (see: Appendix 2). A total of 149

reports of an offence with racist characteristics recorded in 2008 were collected from the police information system that could not have been located through the use of the old search criteria. Below is a description of the characteristics of these reports of an offence.

Almost a third (n=43, 29%) of the reports of an offence located through the use of the new search criteria included a person with an immigrant background who had been provoked by racist name-calling targeted at him or her, and as a result had committed an assault. This means that the incidents have included obvious racist insults, but that the cases could not have been located through the use of the search criteria from previous years, because the report of an offence indicates that the injured party of the crime is Finnish. For similar reasons, five reports of an offence involving a fight between Finnish and foreign persons have been located where persons with an immigrant background have been listed only as suspects and all persons listed as injured parties have been native Finns. These cases have been included in the statistics in this report, because they are classified as crimes with racist characteristics. According to the incident descriptions included in the reports of an offence, these cannot exactly be classified as racially motivated assaults, but instead are cases that include racist verbal provocation or fights.

In one fourth of the reports of an offence (n=36), the injured party has been targeted for name-calling with terms such as 'gypsy' or 'gyp' during the crime. Some of these cases include a statement that the injured party was in fact a member of the Roma, while some only mention the insults targeted at the victim and not his or her ethnic origin. It is possible, then, that in some cases only a person perceived as a member of the Roma and not an actual member has experienced name-calling. On the other hand, this does not matter, because the definition of hate crime includes the notion that the victim has been targeted on the basis of real or perceived membership of a reference group. Additionally, eight reports of an offence involved fights where members of the Roma were involved and insults were targeted at them.

All in all, 16 reports of an offence (11%) have been located through the use of the new search terms, such as one report of an offence where the suspect was reported to 'hate foreigners'. Included in the cases located through the use of the new search terms, five reports of an offence have been located by chance, for example, with the help of search terms that refer to sexual minorities, but then after a more detailed review they have turned out to be cases bearing racist characteristics.

If the reports of an offence only include the personal information of the suspect, the cases cannot be located through the use of the old search criteria, even though the crime included racist characteristics. 11 such reports of an offence were located among the data. In one case, for example, the doorman of a restaurant had been targeted for racist name-calling when he had told a drunken customer to leave the premises. In this case, however, the target of the name-calling had not been recorded as the injured party of the crime in the police report.

A total of 16 (11%) reports of an offence included a Finnish injured party born in Finland who had experienced racist name-calling. It cannot be determined whether the suspect had known or assumed that the victim was a member of an ethnic or national minority, or whether the racist words had been used for some other reason in these

cases. Some of the reports of an offence include an injured party with a name that 'sounds foreign', which obviously cannot be used as a basis for determining the ethnic origin of the injured party. In spite of uncertain aspects these reports of an offence have been included in the data. The small number of this type of cases suggests, however, that certain racist expressions (e.g. 'darkie') are not very often used to verbally abuse persons perceived as members of the majority population. They are not therefore classified as name-calling in general.

In four cases the suspected offender targeted the verbal abuse at minorities in general, and not the injured party of the crime in particular. For instance, one report of an offence included the suspect's statement about threatening to shoot all 'gypsies and refugees' in the region. Nine reports of an offence included the victims being targeted for the crime because a person close to them or in their company at the time had an immigrant background. Only a single report of an offence was clearly a case where the victim of the crime was a second generation immigrant who was born in Finland and was a Finnish citizen. In this particular case, the victim's immigrant parents had not been recorded as injured parties in the report and that is why the case would not have been located using the old search criteria.

Therefore, the use of new search criteria has helped locate a significant number of reports of an offence that include cases with racist characteristics. On the other hand, the classification of cases has become more difficult and not all cases located using the new search criteria can simply be classified as racist crime. In previous years, reports of an offence have been easy to classify as such cases if the injured party was a person with an immigrant background who had been targeted by racist name-calling. The classification becomes more difficult when a Finnish person born in Finland is so targeted (with jibes such as 'negro') and there is no data on the ethnic origin of the victim.

6.2.2 Most common types of offences involving suspected racist crime

In accordance with previous years, assault was the most common type of principal offence in 2008 (Table 2): it was the principal offence in one third of suspected racist crime. Other common principal offences included defamation (13%), menace (11%) and petty assault (11%). Criminal damage cases were recorded significantly less frequently during the target year in comparison to the previous year. They amounted to only 7% of all principal offences, when in 2007 their share was 17% and they were the second most common principal offence. By contrast, the number of cases of discrimination has increased slightly. During the target year, 74 cases of suspected discrimination were reported to the police, when during 2007 the number was 47. On the other hand, the number of discrimination cases has fluctuated significantly in previous years as well. The numbers of invasion of domestic premises cases (3%) and petty criminal damage cases (2%) remained similar to those in the previous year.

The table below indicates that 'other investigation' has been reported as the principal offence in connection with 33 injured parties. An incident reported to the police is classified as 'other investigation' if it did not include the characteristics required of a crime. One incident that involved a dispute between neighbours, for example, had been

classified as other investigation. Some of these kinds of reports had been concluded by the police after it had been determined that no crime had been committed.⁷

Nine cases of ethnic agitation were reported to the police in 2008. The number of cases did not increase greatly from the previous year, when 10 reports of an offence including ethnic agitation were filed by the police. Similarly to the previous year, in 2008 most of these cases included reports of Internet sites with racist characteristics. Additionally, one report of an offence was filed on the campaign material of a local election candidate, and another on threatening letters that had been sent to a school.

Table 2. Most common types of principal offences in suspected racist cases in 2008

Type of offence	N	%
Assault	374	32
Defamation	155	13
Petty assault	133	11
Menace	128	11
Criminal damage	77	7
Discrimination	74	6
Invasion of domestic premises	35	3
Other investigation	33	3
Petty criminal damage	21	2
Aggravated assault	15	1
Other crimes	118	10
Total	1 163	100

In addition to principal offences included in reports of an offence to the police during the target year, there were 275 secondary offences (Table 3). In accordance with previous years, the most common secondary offence included in police reports was defamation, which constituted 36% of the secondary offences during the target year. Cases of defamation were most frequently included in police reports on assaults and menace. Other common types of secondary offences in 2008 include invasion of domestic premises (13%) and menace (12%). Menace was committed alongside assaults. Cases of invasion of domestic premises occurred alongside defamation and menace, as well as assaults.

⁷ 'Other investigation' is not included as a type of offence in the data collection. The cases were located through the use of the letter combinations 'racist' and 'racism' which have been utilised as separate search criteria regardless of the crime (see: more on search criteria in Section 5.1). The cases classified as 'other investigation' include, for example, a case where the victim mentioned his or her suspicion that the crime had been motivated by 'racism'.

Table 3. Most common secondary offences among cases with racist characteristics in 2008

Type of offence	N	%
Defamation	100	36
Invasion of domestic premises	36	13
Menace	33	12
Assault	22	8
Criminal damage	17	6
Petty assault	7	3
Petty criminal damage	6	2
Theft	6	2
Other	48	18
Total	275	100

6.2.3 Incident descriptions included in reports of an offence

This section discusses reports of an offence to the police in terms of the descriptions of incidents they included. Any individual incident with racist characteristics reported to the police can include several suspects and victims as well as several types of crime. Mere examination of the number of crimes does not provide a thorough picture of the nature of incidents with racist characteristics. For the purposes of this report, reports of an offence to the police have been classified into six categories according to the most prominent characteristic of the incident description (Table 4).

Approximately half of all reports of an offence include assault. These cases can be divided into three types. All of the cases may also included verbal insults and threats or crimes against property. One fourth of reports of an offence could be classified as so-called one-sided assaults; i.e. they were incidents where the victim of the assault did not reciprocate the violence. Some of the cases (16%) were incidents where crimes were committed by parties on either side. Often the cases involved a fight between two or more people provoked by racist name-calling. Approximately 10 per cent of reports of an offence include incidents where the crime was motivated by racist verbal provocation. An example of this would be an incident where a member of the majority population was assaulted in a public location. According to a witness, prior to the assault the victim and the suspect (who had an immigrant background) had engaged in a ‘dispute over the suspect’s nationality’, which had resulted in the suspect’s assault against the victim. The victim of the assault had also told the police that he was partly to blame for the attack, because he had shouted ‘damn nigger’ at the man who had an immigrant background.

Approximately one third of reports of an offence included incidents where the suspect was reported to have offended or threatened the victim verbally without resorting to physical violence. For instance, one report of an offence included an incident description of how a customer in a restaurant had insulted the restaurant owner, who had an immigrant background, based on his ethnic origin, and had also threatened him with violence and burning down the restaurant.

Approximately one tenth of the police reports only included crimes against property, mainly criminal damage. These incidents did not therefore include any physical violence or defamation. In one of these incidents, the suspected offender had thrown a bicycle stand through the window of a pizzeria owned by a Turkish person. Included in the reports of an offence are also a couple of cases of theft and one robbery. Since data collection was not focused on these crimes per se, such incidents were located during the data collection process, for example, because the police had marked them with the racism code, or through the use of the letter combinations ‘racist’ and ‘racism’ in the search, (see: details on the search criteria in Section 5.1). Various cases of discrimination also make up approximately one tenth of all reports of an offence. Most of these involve denial of access to a restaurant or a store on the basis of a person’s ethnic origin.

Table 4. Incident descriptions included in reports of an offence classified as racist cases

Incident description	N	%
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	241	32
One-sided assault	184	24
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	119	16
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage)	72	10
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	71	9
Discrimination cases	68	9
Total	755	100

6.2.4 Use of racism code for reports of an offence

According to the police instructions, a report of an offence is classified as a case with racist characteristics when a person has been targeted as the victim of a crime because his or her colour, race or ethnic origin differs from that of the offender. The police information system also includes various other categories, such as domestic violence crimes, drug-related crimes, and financial crime. Classification of a report of an offence is not mandatory, and the system allows the user to ignore the code.

In 2008, the police marked 291⁸ reports of an offence with the racism code, which accounts for 39 per cent of all reports of an offence with racist characteristics. In previous years, the racism code has been used for approximately half of reports of an offence with racist characteristics. However, we cannot conclude from this that the police’s coding accuracy is worse than before. When the number of police reports marked with the racism code is compared to those located through the use of the old search criteria, the ratio is approximately 48%, which is almost identical to the ratios between 2003 and 2007. On the other hand, this coding accuracy has not improved either, and from 2005 onwards the number of cases marked with the racism code has continued to fall.

⁸ In addition to these, five other reports of an offence were marked with the racism code, and in this report these cases have been classified as hate crime motivated by religious background.

According to a case study conducted in 2008, classification of reports of an offence with the racism code is not difficult, but just easily forgotten by the police. The interviews with the police conducted for the study showed that remembering to use the code was not considered important, because the code is utilised for statistical purposes only, and information on the various classifications is not included in the pre-trial investigation documents submitted to prosecutors. (Peutere 2008.)

Table 5. Use of racism code for reports of an offence between 2003 and 2008

		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 ¹	2008 ²
Amount	Racism code	202	203	242	242	240	291	291
	Racism classification	185	197	170	200	214	315	464
	Total	387	400	412	442	454	606	755
%	Racism code	52	51	59	55	53	48	39
	Racism classification	48	49	41	45	47	52	62
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹ Reports of an offence located through the use of the old criteria

² Reports of an offence located through the use of the new criteria

Table 6 presents the use of the racism code for a variety of reports of an offence. The racism code has been used most frequently in connection with crimes against property; 65% of these having been marked with the code. Approximately half of cases of one-sided assault have been marked as racist, and a little less than half of discrimination cases (41%). Only a third of reports of an offence that include verbal insults and threats, as well as a third of reports that include fights, have been marked with the racism code.

The police have used the code with least frequency where the crime was motivated by racist verbal provocation, with only approximately one in ten of such cases marked with the code. Such cases are typified by a person of immigrant background being insulted, for example, on the basis of his or her colour, provoking the insulted party to assault the name-caller. To be more precise, according to police instructions, these cases should not even be classified as racist, because the instructions state that a report of an offence is classified as a racist case when the victim has been targeted because his or her colour, race or ethnic origin differs from that of the offender. However, cases of assault motivated by verbal provocation have been included in the statistics as racist cases in the annual reports on racist crime. This also partly explains why the police have failed to mark all cases with racist characteristics, which have been classified as racist cases for the purposes of the annual reports on racist crime by the Police College of Finland, with the racism code.

Other explanations can also be found for why the police have not used the racism code to mark all cases with racist characteristics, as classified for the purposes of this report. In this report, all reports of an offence that included obvious racist insults have been classified as racist cases. It is possible that the police have left such cases unclassified, if despite the insults involved, the motivation for the crime has been something

other than racism. Furthermore, there may be differences in interpretations in terms of what is considered racism in the first place. According to a the case study conducted in 2008, some of the police officers interviewed considered only crimes committed by the majority population against minority groups as racism, whereas this report also classifies crimes committed between two minority groups and crimes committed by minority groups against the majority population as racism (Peutere 2008, 40–41).

Table 6. Use of racism code in various reports of an offence (%)

	Marked with racism code	No racism code	%	N
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage)	65	35	100	72
One-sided assault	52	48	100	184
Discrimination cases	41	59	100	68
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	33	67	100	119
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	31	69	100	241
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	10	90	100	71
All	39	61	100	755

6.2.5 Location of incidents involving suspected racist crimes

In accordance with previous years, the most common locations of incidents involving suspected crimes with racist characteristics were public locations, such as roads, streets, or squares, and bars, restaurants or dance venues (Figure 4). Nearly half of all suspected racist crime occurred in these locations. In one fourth of reports of an offence, the location of the incident was listed as the victim’s apartment, or the yard or staircase of the victim’s building. More unusual incident locations include a school or school area, public transport, someone else’s apartment, and the Internet, similarly to previous years. Each of these was listed as the incident location of the principal offence in less than 5 per cent of the cases.

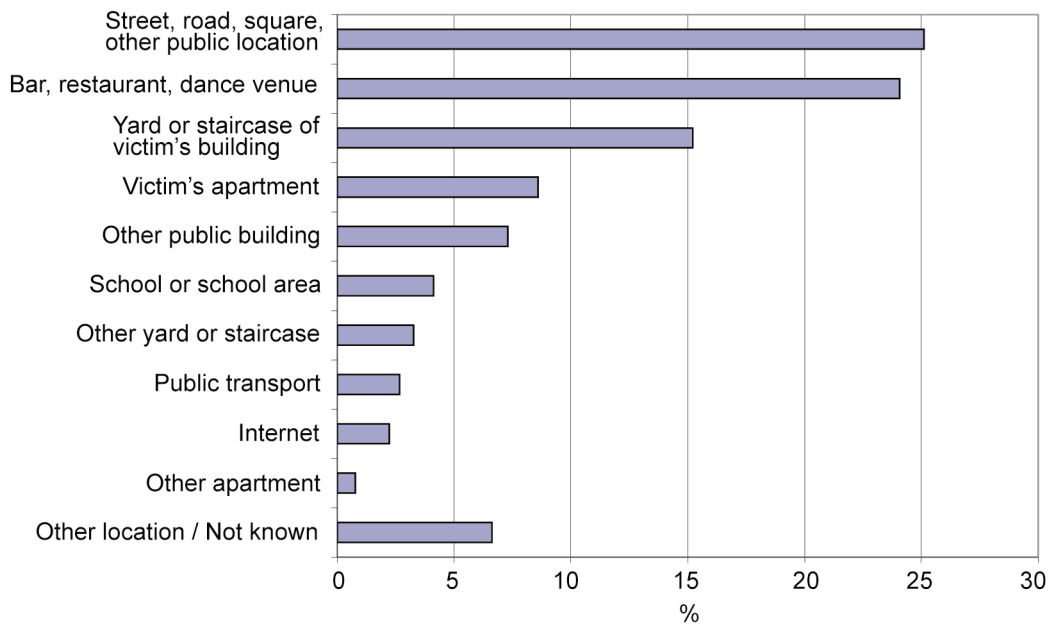


Figure 4. Location of the incident involving suspected racist crime in 2008, % (N=1163)

Table 7 lists the locations of the incidents involving suspected crimes by different types of crime. For the purposes of this report, the various degrees of assault (petty assault, assault, aggravated assault) and attempted assault have been classified as belonging to the same category. A similar classification method has also been applied to various degrees of crime against property and defamation. The discrimination case category includes incidents of work discrimination, and the category 'others' includes all other types of crimes.

Most assaults (38%) occurred in public locations, such as roads or streets, and a little over one fourth occurred in bars and restaurants or in front of them. Additionally, most discrimination cases occurred in restaurants or bars (44%). A little over one fourth of discrimination cases occurred in other public locations, such as stores and offices, and 28% in other locations, such as when trying to rent an apartment. Most suspected cases of criminal damage occurred in the yard of the building in which the victim lived, and in bars and restaurants. The latter locations were restaurants owned by persons with immigrant backgrounds. Approximately one third of cases of both menace and defamation occurred in the vicinity of the victim's home; inside the apartment, or in the staircase or yard. Most breaches of domestic peace also occurred inside the victim's home or in its vicinity.

Table 7. Locations of incidents involving suspected racist crime according to type of offence in 2008 (%)

Location of the incident	Assault	Criminal damage	Defamation	Menace	Invasion of domestic premises	Discrimination	Other	All
Victim's apartment	2	10	12	20	60	-	11	9
Other apartment	1	-	1	1	-	-	2	1
Yard or staircase of victim's building	11	32	23	25	34	1	6	15
Other yard or staircase	4	1	2	4	6	-	3	3
School, school area	6	2	3	5	-	-	4	4
Bar, restaurant, dance venue	27	33	14	19	-	44	15	24
Other public building	5	3	12	5	-	27	4	7
Street, road, square, other public location	38	12	13	14	-	-	28	25
Public transport	3	4	2	2	-	-	3	3
Internet	-	-	4	2	-	-	14	2
Other location / Not known	2	3	14	4	-	28	11	7
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	538	100	157	128	35	82	123	1 163

In the report for 2007, a separate category for one additional location, the victim's place of work, has been included in the classification, and 8 per cent of the suspected crimes were reported to have occurred there (Joronen 2008). This workplace classification was not included in Figure 4 and Table 7, because it would have intersected with several other categories of incident locations. However, this report has also collected data on reports of an offence where the location of the incident was the victim's workplace or work situation elsewhere. 137 injured parties (12%) have experienced this type of crime. In most such incidents (62%), the location was a bar, a restaurant, or a dance venue, where the injured party was working at the time, for example as a waiter. 13 per cent of the injured parties have fallen victim to a crime while at work driving a bus or taxi. Other cases included, for example, a postal worker who had fallen victim to a crime while at work.

6.2.6 Time of incidents involving suspected racist crimes

Over half (56%) of all suspected racist crime occurred during the evening or night (Figure 5). Approximately 5 per cent of suspected racist crime occurred during the morning, and 14 per cent occurred during the day. The category 'other time' has been used for suspected racist crime that occurred during a period longer than one day. Such incidents accounted for 18 per cent of suspected crimes. For instance, crimes that occurred on the Internet have been classified under this category. The time of the incident was unknown in 5 per cent of suspected crimes.

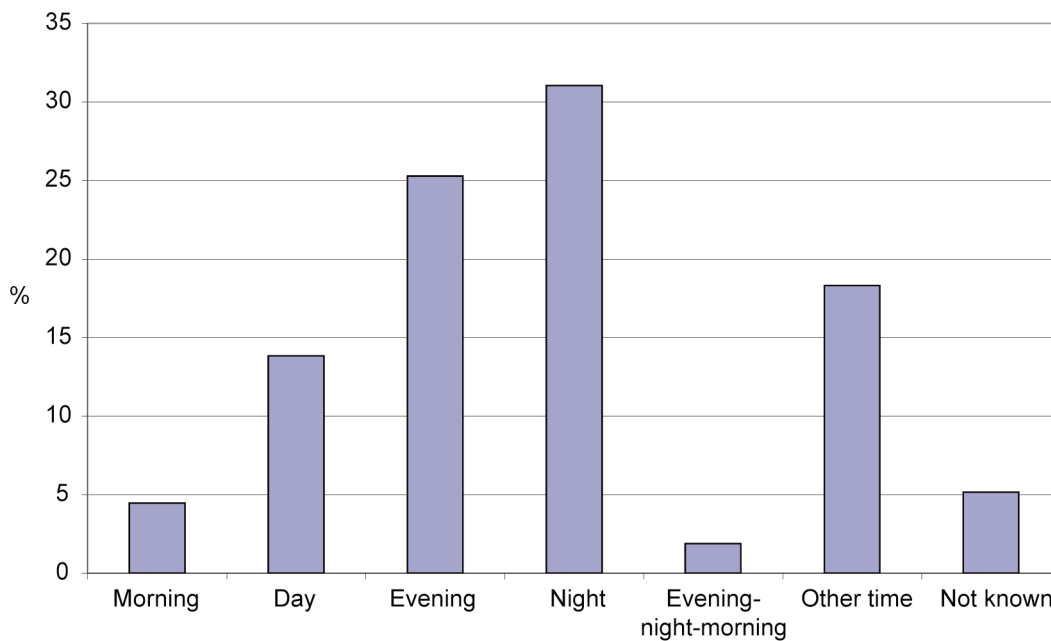


Figure 5. Time of incident involving suspected racist crime in 2008 (%)

Table 8 lists the time of the incident of suspected crimes by type of crime. In accordance with previous years, most suspected assaults were committed in the evening (27%) and at night (49%). Most criminal damage incidents also occurred in the evening and at night, and in one fifth the time was not known. In invasion of domestic premises cases, the time of the incident was most often classified as other time (60%). Typically, these cases involved a neighbour who had been causing a disturbance to the injured party for a prolonged period. Discrimination cases generally occurred in the evening (28%). Additionally, in 37% of discrimination cases the time of the incident was classified as other time. In such cases, the report of an offence has been filed as a consequence of a longer lasting chain of events. For instance, the injured party may have been denied access to a restaurant or a store on several occasions. Cases of both menace and defamation were committed most often during the day or in the evening. Additionally, some cases of defamation (39%) and unlawful threats (25%) were classified as incidents that had lasted for a longer period of time.

Table 8. Time of incident of suspected racist crime according to type of offence in 2008 (%)

Time of incident	Assault	Criminal damage	Defamation	Menace	Invasion of domestic premises	Discrimination	Other	All
Morning	4	5	4	3	3	10	7	4
Day	14	6	19	21	9	12	8	14
Evening	27	16	18	31	26	28	25	25
Night	49	30	8	13	3	11	24	31
Evening-night-morning	-	18	1	-	-	-	2	2
Other time	5	3	39	25	60	37	30	18
Not known	1	22	10	7	-	2	3	5
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	538	100	157	128	35	82	123	1 163

6.2.7 Regional breakdown of suspected racist crime

The regional breakdown of suspected crimes with racist characteristics shows that reports of an offence are distributed unevenly among Finland's provinces. In 2008, over half (57%) of crimes with racist characteristics were recorded in Southern Finland, and a little over one fourth in Western Finland (Table 9). The number of suspected racist crimes recorded in Åland was 5.

A comparison between regions must take account of the fact that varying numbers of members of ethnic and national minorities live in different provinces. Most foreign citizens live in Southern Finland, and fewest in Åland and Lapland. Most cases of racist crime in proportion to the number of foreign citizens resident in the provinces were recorded in Eastern Finland and Lapland. In Eastern Finland, 12 racially motivated crimes were recorded per thousand foreign citizens, and 11 in Lapland. In both Western Finland and Oulu the number was nine, and in Southern Finland it was seven. In addition, according to this comparison, the lowest amount of racist crime was committed in Åland; two suspected crimes per thousand foreign citizens were recorded there.

Table 9. Suspected racist crime by province in 2008

Province	N	%	Suspected crimes / 1,000 foreign citizens
Southern Finland	659	57	7
Western Finland	325	28	9
Eastern Finland	90	8	12
Oulu	54	5	9
Lapland	29	2	11
Åland	5	0	2
Total	1 162	100	8

In accordance with previous years, the largest share (30%) of suspected crimes with racist characteristics by municipality was recorded in Helsinki (Table 10). In other large municipalities – namely Vantaa, Turku, Tampere, and Espoo – an approximately 5–7% share of all suspected racist crime was recorded in each. The remainder of suspected crimes were spread more evenly between different municipalities. With respect to smaller municipalities, it should be borne in mind that only a single report of an offence with multiple injured parties is enough to affect the overall level of suspected racist crime.

Table 10. Number of suspected racist crimes by municipality in 2008

Municipality	N	%
Helsinki	351	30
Vantaa	76	7
Turku	61	5
Tampere	60	5
Espoo	54	5
Lahti	26	2
Kuopio	22	2
Oulu	21	2
Jyväskylä	20	2
Lappeenranta	18	2
Nokia	18	2
Järvenpää	15	1
Joensuu	13	1
Lohja	13	1
Mikkeli	13	1
Pori	13	1
Raisio	13	1
Kokkola	12	1
Nurmes	12	1
Rovaniemi	12	1
Kouvola	11	1
Ylöjärvi	11	1
Hyvinkää	10	1
Kajaani	10	1
Kotka	10	1
Pietarsaari	10	1
Other	258	22
Total	1 163	100

In comparison to the previous year, the number of suspected crimes increased the most in Helsinki. In 2007, a total of 152 suspected crimes with racist characteristics were recorded in Helsinki, when the number in the target year was 351 (Table 11). Therefore, the number has more than doubled. This increase is not merely the consequence of the

expansion of the search criteria, since the number of suspected racist crimes reported to the police in Helsinki would almost have doubled – to 292 in total – even if the old search criteria had been used. Previously, between 2003 and 2007, the number of suspected crimes reported to the police in Helsinki has never been subject to such dramatic annual growth. In 2006, the number of suspected crimes in Helsinki was 181, which is slightly more than in 2007.

The number of suspected crimes has also increased in proportion to the number foreign citizens resident in Helsinki; in 2007, four suspected crimes were recorded per thousand residents, but in 2008 the number had increased to nine. In Vantaa, the corresponding number was seven, in Espoo it was four, in Turku eight, and in Tampere the number was nine in 2008.

Table 11. Suspected racist crime in the largest municipalities in 2008 and 2007

Municipality	New search criteria 2008		Old search criteria 2008		2007	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Helsinki	351	30	292	31	152	22
Vantaa	76	7	67	7	52	7
Turku	61	5	48	5	47	7
Tampere	60	5	47	5	27	4
Espoo	54	5	52	5	50	7
Other	561	52	451	47	370	53
Total	1 163	100	957	100	698	100

6.2.8 Number of suspected racist crimes between 2003 and 2008

Figure 6 represents the development in the number of suspected racist crimes, by different types of offence between 2003 and 2008. Comparative to previous years, more assault cases in particular have been reported to the police. In the target year, 538 cases of assaults and attempted assaults of varying degrees were recorded, when in 2007 the number was 271. This increase in the number of assault cases is not merely a consequence of the changes to the statistical method and the expansion of the search criteria, since the old search criteria would also have helped locate significantly more assault cases than those identified in the previous year (426). Also, the ‘other crimes’ category has expanded compared to previous years. This is mainly a consequence of the increase in the number of reports of an offence where the case was classified as ‘other investigation’ and not as actual suspected crimes. In the target year, 33 such cases were recorded in total.

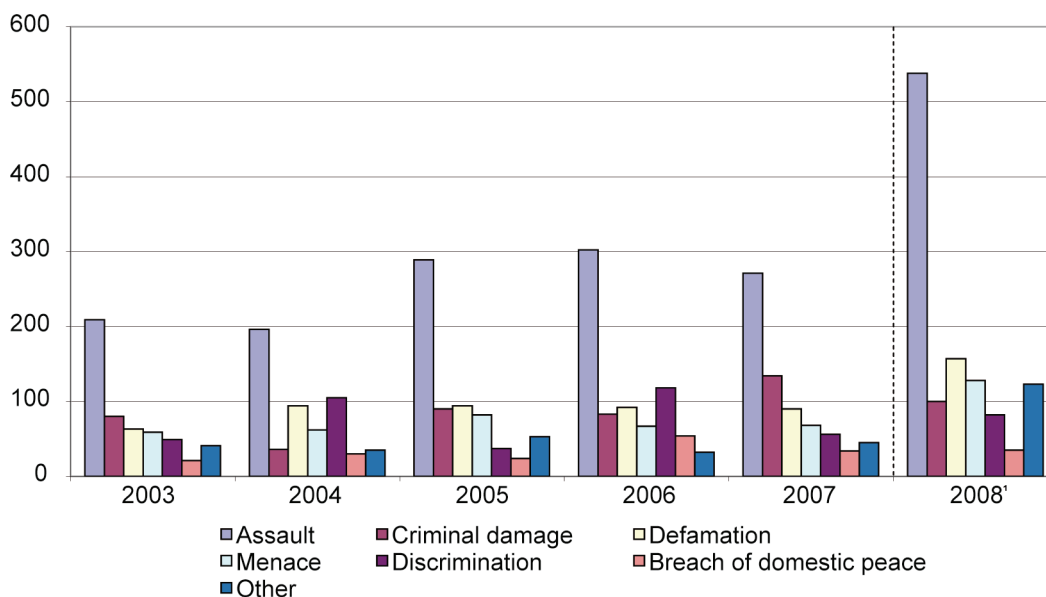


Figure 6. Development in the number of suspected racist crimes by type of offence between 2003 and 2008

¹ The figures for 2008 are not comparable to those for the period between 2003 and 2007 because of the changes to the statistical method.

6.2.9 Injured parties of suspected racist crime in 2008

This section discusses the injured parties of suspected racist crime. The injured party of a crime does not always refer to the victim. In some cases of criminal damage, for example, the owner of the targeted apartment is recorded as the injured party, whereas the resident of the apartment is recorded as only an interested party. In some cases of assault, the report may only include suspected offenders and not a single injured party, if the development of the incident has remained unclear. In cases of ethnic agitation there is usually no record of injured parties. If the victim of the crime is a child under 18 years old, the child's parents are often also recorded as injured parties.

For the purposes of this report, the concept of injured party refers to all persons and instances included in the report of an offence and recorded by the police as injured parties. However, this does not include the parents of children who have fallen victim to a crime. If the parents were included in the list of injured parties, the analysis of the numbers of injured parties according to age, for example, would become misleading.

In the target year, reports of an offence included a total of 1,104 injured parties. Among these were 62 injured parties other than natural persons, including businesses and housing corporations. Therefore, natural persons accounted for 1,042 injured parties. Among these, three persons were recorded as the injured party in three separate reports of an offence, and 28 persons were included in two separate reports. A total of 1,008 separate natural persons were recorded as injured parties.

Injured parties' nationality and country of birth

The majority of injured parties of racist crime are Finnish citizens (Table 12). Their share of the injured parties has increased by 12 percentage units compared to the previous year. 26 per cent of Finnish citizens were born in a country other than Finland. After Finnish citizens, citizens of Russia were the largest group of injured parties of racist crime, whereas in previous years the nationality to come second has been Somalis. On the other hand, the nationalities of injured parties at the top of the list have been the same since 2003, although the order of the list has varied somewhat.

Table 12. Injured parties of suspected racist crimes, by nationality between 2003 and 2008 (the most common nationalities in 2008, N=1 042)

	Nationality	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
N	Finland	215	253	298	395	313	649
	Russia	27	34	35	25	29	51
	Turkey	23	28	24	33	26	46
	Somalia	58	57	51	42	51	37
	Iraq	23	26	19	11	23	27
	Iran	19	16	16	20	26	26
	Estonia	5	5	6	6	11	18
	Afghanistan	6	10	22	11	19	15
	Sudan	4	8	16	14	10	15
	Nigeria	5	1	4	5	12	12
	Morocco	4	5	8	3	10	9
	Former Yugo- slavia	15	10	10	6	11	7
	Ruanda	1	1	1	0	1	6
	Angola	0	3	1	3	2	5
	Other	91	87	92	132	82	119
		Total	496	544	603	706	625
%	Finland	43	47	49	56	50	62
	Russia	5	6	6	4	5	5
	Turkey	5	5	4	5	4	4
	Somalia	12	11	9	6	8	4
	Iraq	5	5	3	2	4	3
	Iran	4	3	3	3	4	3
	Estonia	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Afghanistan	1	2	4	2	3	1
	Sudan	1	2	3	2	2	1
	Nigeria	1	0	1	1	2	1
	Morocco	1	1	1	0	2	1
	Former Yugo- slavia	3	2	2	1	2	1
	Ruanda	0	0	0	-	0	1
	Angola	-	1	0	0	0	0
	Other	18	16	15	19	13	11
		Total	100	100	100	100	100

The over-representation of certain nationalities among victims of racist crime is indicated by Table 13, where the number of nationalities of the injured parties is compared to the number of foreign citizens resident in Finland. This table indicates that, in comparison to the number of residents, Russians had not fallen victim to racially motivated crimes very frequently. Approximately two crimes had been committed per thousand Russian citizens. In proportion to the entire population, citizens of Turkey had experienced racially motivated crimes with the greatest frequency; i.e. 13 crimes per thousand citizens resident in Finland. Next on the list were citizens of Iran, Iraq, and Somalia, for whom the number of crimes in proportion to the entire population was 10, 8, and 8 per thousand citizens respectively.

Table 13. Largest groups of foreign citizens resident in Finland and their experiences of suspected racist crimes in 2008

Nationality	Number in Finland in 2008 ¹	Suspected crimes in 2008	Suspected crimes / 1000 citizens
Russia	26 909	51	2
Estonia	22 604	18	1
Sweden	8 439	5	1
Somalia	4 919	37	8
China	4 620	1	0
Thailand	3 932	5	1
Germany	3 502	2	1
Turkey	3 429	46	13
Iraq	3 238	27	8
United Kingdom	3 213	3	1
India	2 736	1	0
Former Serbia and Montenegro	2 637	0	-
Iran	2 508	26	10
United States	2 282	3	1
Vietnam	2 270	4	2

¹ Source: Statistics Finland 2009

Table 14 represents a list of the countries of birth of the injured parties between 2003 and 2008. With respect to Finnish citizens, the share of persons born in Finland has also increased in comparison to previous years. The share of injured parties born in Finland in the target year was approximately half, whereas in the year before it was less than a third. A partial explanation for this lies in the changes to the statistical method; the share of persons born in Finland among the injured parties related to reports of an offence located using the old search criteria was only 37 per cent. Next on the list of injured parties by country of birth were Somalia (8%) and Turkey (5%).

Table 14. Injured parties of suspected racist crimes by country of birth between 2003 and 2008 (the most common countries of birth in 2008)

	Country of birth	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
N	Finland	114	152	180	295	190	499
	Somalia	70	81	79	59	84	82
	Turkey	31	31	33	41	37	53
	Iraq	37	31	19	21	32	35
	Russia	26	17	28	25	30	35
	Iran	27	18	24	24	35	33
	Sweden	8	15	10	13	7	28
	Former Soviet Union	17	21	20	7	11	24
	Estonia	6	7	8	7	6	20
	Morocco	9	7	13	6	18	18
	Sudan	4	8	21	15	15	14
	Nigeria	7	1	5	5	14	12
	Afghanistan	5	9	19	9	16	11
	Ethiopia	4	9	10	4	2	10
	Other	131	137	134	175	128	168
		Total	496	544	603	706	625
%	Finland	23	28	30	42	30	48
	Somalia	14	15	13	8	13	8
	Turkey	6	6	6	6	6	5
	Iraq	8	6	3	3	5	3
	Russia	5	3	5	4	5	3
	Iran	5	3	4	3	6	3
	Sweden	2	3	2	2	1	3
	Former Soviet Union	3	4	3	1	2	2
	Estonia	1	1	1	1	1	2
	Morocco	2	1	2	1	3	2
	Sudan	1	2	4	2	2	1
	Nigeria	1	0	1	1	2	1
	Afghanistan	1	2	3	1	3	1
	Ethiopia	1	2	2	1	0	1
	Other	26	25	22	25	20	16
		Total	100	100	100	100	100

Injured parties' age and gender

As in previous years, most of the injured parties (69%) were men. However, the share of men as injured parties has decreased in comparison to the previous year, when they accounted for 76% of injured parties. The median age of injured parties was 28 years, which means that half were under 28 and half over 28 years old. The breakdown by age of the injured parties is similar to 2007; nearly one third was aged between 15 and 24 years old, whereas the smallest group (5%) was formed by persons over 55 years old (Table 15). The breakdown by age is similar in the case of women and men – only a slightly larger share of women were aged over 45 years old.

Table 15. Gender of injured parties to suspected racist crimes by age in 2008⁹

Age group	Men		Women		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Under 15 years	62	9	28	9	90	9
15–24 years	231	32	83	26	314	31
25–34 years	171	24	67	21	238	23
35–44 years	152	21	72	23	224	22
45–54 years	69	10	42	13	111	11
Over 55 years	27	4	25	8	52	5
Total	712	100	317	100	1 029	100

Suspected racist crime committed against women bore some differences to those committed against men (Table 16). Men were mainly targeted in cases of assault, whereas women were more often the injured party in cases of defamation and discrimination.

Table 16. Gender of injured parties to suspected racist crimes by type of offence in 2008

Type of offence	Men		Women		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Assault	409	57	118	37	527	51
Criminal damage	43	6	12	4	55	5
Defamation	81	11	74	23	155	15
Unlawful threat	78	11	47	15	125	12
Invasion of domestic premises	20	3	14	4	34	3
Discrimination	40	6	38	12	78	7
Other	49	7	19	6	68	7
Total	720	100	322	100	1 042	100

Table 17 shows that assaults were especially common among the younger age groups – under 15 year olds, and 15 to 24 year olds. Over 60% of the members of these age groups had been recorded as an injured party in an assault case. Assault was also the most common crime directed at all other age groups. Cases of defamation, invasion of domestic premises, and discrimination were most common among the older age groups.

⁹ Reports of an offence for the target year included 1,042 natural persons as injured parties, but the age of only 1,029 injured parties was recorded.

Table 17. Age of injured parties to suspected racist crimes, by type of offence in 2008 (%)

Type of offence	Under 15 yrs	15–24 yrs	25–34 yrs	35–44 yrs	45–54 yrs	Over 55 yrs	All
Assault	63	67	50	39	31	31	51
Criminal damage	2	2	7	10	5	4	5
Defamation	13	6	16	20	22	27	15
Menace	12	11	10	11	16	17	12
Invasion of domestic premises	-	1	3	6	5	6	3
Discrimination	2	7	7	8	12	12	7
Others	7	5	7	7	10	4	6
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	90	314	238	224	111	52	1 029

Relationship of the injured party to the suspected offender

A variable describing the relationship of the injured party to the suspected offender has been determined on the basis of the incident descriptions included in reports of an offence. Determination of the relationship of the victim to the suspected offender is often difficult and on most occasions this is not clearly evident from the incident descriptions included in reports of an offence. As in previous years, all unclear cases have been classified in a separate category of ‘unable to determine’.

Table 18 describes the relationship of the injured party to the suspected offender between 2004 and 2008. In the target year, approximately one fourth of injured parties did not know the suspected offender, but approximately one fifth did. Almost the same percentage (18%) involved cases where the relationship could not be determined on the basis of the information included in the report of an offence. The share of co-workers was small (1%), as in previous years.

In the target year, as well as in previous years, unknown suspected offenders account for the greatest share. Otherwise, there are major differences in the shares of various categories from year to year. In the target year, the share of known suspected offenders was 19 per cent, when in the previous four years it had been only around 9–12 per cent. Furthermore, in 2007 the ‘unable to determine’ category had a much smaller share (7%) than in previous years (17–22%) as well as thereafter (18%). In 2007 and 2005 the suspected offender was not known at all in many more cases than in 2004, 2006 and 2008. It is difficult to determine the cause of these differences. It is possible that they are at least partly due to variations in classification methods, because in each year represented in the table a different person has been responsible for the report. The coders of the data may have used different rules of thumb for what constitutes a sufficient indication of a ‘known’ or an ‘unknown’ suspected offender in the incident description included in reports of an offence.

Table 18. Relationship of the injured party to the suspected offender of a racist crime between 2004 and 2008 (%)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Unknown	29	21	29	40	26
Known	9	12	11	12	19
Unable to determine	17	20	22	7	18
Customer relationship	22	15	22	13	16
Neighbour	13	12	8	11	15
Not known at all	8	19	7	17	6
Co-worker	3	2	1	2	1
%	100	100	100	100	100
N	558	603	706	626	1 042

In a large portion of the assault cases (38%), the suspected offender was unknown to the victim (Table 19). Most discrimination cases (85%) naturally occurred in a customer relationship between the injured party and the suspect. The suspected offender was classified as a known person in 10 per cent of the discrimination cases. Such cases included, for example, incidents of work discrimination. In cases of invasion of domestic premises, the suspected offenders are most commonly a neighbour (56%) and a known person (32%). Suspected offenders in criminal damage cases were, for the most part (56%), were not known at all. In cases of defamation and menace, no specific type of offender was as clearly prevalent as with other cases; instead, various types of suspected offenders existed.

Table 19. Relationship of the injured party to the suspected offender of a racist crime by type of offence in 2008 (%)

Suspect	Assault	Criminal damage	Defamation	Menace	Invasion of domestic premises	Discrimination	Other	All
Unknown	38	9	6	23	9	-	29	26
Customer relationship	8	11	19	13	-	85	10	16
Known	17	2	27	28	32	10	15	19
Co-worker	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	1
Neighbour	9	9	30	25	56	1	10	15
Unable to determine	27	13	12	4	-	1	24	18
Not known at all	-	56	6	6	3	1	12	5
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	527	55	155	125	34	78	68	1 042

6.2.10 Suspected offenders of racist crime in 2008

Reports of an offence filed by the police in 2008 included 817 suspected offenders. One report can include several suspected offenders, and the same person may be suspected of one or more crimes in one or more reports. Not all reports of an offence include information on the suspected offender, if the person who committed the crime has remained unidentified. Included among suspected offenders were 23 persons recorded as suspects in two different reports of an offence, and three persons recorded as suspects in three different reports of an offence. The highest number of suspects recorded in a single report of an offence was nine.

Approximately 83 per cent of suspected offenders were Finnish citizens, and 76% of suspected offenders' country of birth was Finland (Tables 20 and 21). Citizens of Russia and Somalia were next on the list of most common suspected offenders of racist crime. In the most typical cases of this type, the incident involved a fight that began with name-calling targeted at persons with immigrant backgrounds, and resulted in assaults committed by parties on both sides.

Table 20. Nationality of suspected offenders in racist crimes in 2008

Nationality	N	%
Finland	676	83
Russia	24	3
Somalia	20	2
Afghanistan	9	1
Iran	9	1
Turkey	8	1
Estonia	8	1
Iraq	5	1
Other	58	8
Total	817	100

Table 21. Country of birth of suspected offenders in racist crimes in 2008

Country of birth	N	%
Finland	625	76
Somalia	30	4
Sweden	16	2
Iran	14	2
Russia	14	2
Soviet Union	13	2
Turkey	9	1
Estonia	9	1
Other	87	11
Total	817	100

In accordance with previous years, in 2008 most suspected offenders in cases of racist crime were men (79%). The median age of suspected offenders was 25 years, which means that half of them were under 25 and half of them over 25 years old. The largest age group of suspected offenders was 15 to 24 year-olds, who constitute approximately 40 per cent of all suspected offenders (Table 22). This age group was most common in the case of both women and men.

Table 22. Gender and age of suspected offenders in racist crimes in 2008¹⁰

Age group	Men		Women		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Under 15 years	49	8	18	11	67	8
15–24 years	261	41	56	35	317	40
25–34 years	144	23	31	19	175	22
35–44 years	90	14	19	12	109	14
45–54 years	48	8	24	15	72	9
Over 55 years	41	6	13	8	54	7
Total	633	100	161	100	794	100

Both women and men were most frequent suspected as offenders in assault cases. Suspected offenders in such cases included 60% of the men and almost half of the women reported (Table 23). Women were most often suspects in defamation cases, whereas men were typically suspected of criminal damage. Only one woman was suspected of criminal damage.

Table 23. Types of offence by gender of the suspected offenders in a racist crime in 2008

Type of offence	Men		Women		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Assault	388	60	83	49	471	58
Criminal damage	25	4	1	1	26	3
Defamation	57	9	42	25	99	12
Menace	63	10	15	9	78	10
Invasion of domestic premises	12	2	10	6	22	3
Discrimination	24	4	14	8	38	5
Other	77	12	6	4	83	10
Total	646	100	171	100	817	100

¹⁰ The total number of suspected offenders was 817, but the age of only 794 of them was included in the report of an offence.

Members of the youngest age groups were most often the suspected offenders in assault cases (Table 24). The older the age group in question, the less common a suspected case of assault. The breakdown by age is quite similar to that of the injured parties; being targeted as the victim of an assault also occurs more frequently for members of younger age groups (see: Table 17). Representatives of older age groups – between 45 and 54 years, and over 55 year-olds – were suspected offenders in cases of defamation, menace, and discrimination more often than young people.

Table 24. Types of offence by age of suspected offender in a racist crime in 2008 (%)

Type of offence	Under 15 yrs	15–24 yrs	25–34 yrs	35–44 yrs	45–54 yrs	Over 55 yrs	All
Assault	66	70	62	52	29	28	59
Criminal damage	1	4	4	3	1	-	3
Defamation	13	5	8	15	24	31	11
Menace	3	4	14	14	18	15	9
Invasion of domestic premises	3	2	2	1	8	9	3
Discrimination	-	2	2	7	11	13	4
Other	13	13	9	8	8	4	10
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	67	317	175	109	72	54	794

6.2.11 Progress of suspected racist crimes to consideration of charges

In accordance with previous years, this final section on racially motivated crime analyses the status of the pre-trial investigations in suspected racist crimes and their progress to the stage at which charges are considered. The decisions of the prosecutor and the court are not discussed here, since the process of combining the registers of two separate authorities would be difficult and could not be achieved within the timeframe allowed for this project. The progress of suspected racist crimes within the criminal justice process was analysed by a local case study for the Police College of Finland in 2008 (Peutere 2008). This study covered suspected crimes reported to the police in Helsinki in 2006.

Figure 7 shows the stages of the criminal justice process up to the consideration of charges. The threshold for recording reports of an offence is low. A pre-trial investigation authority is obliged to file a report of an offence on any incident reported by the victim or any other interested party, which the party who reports the incident considers a criminal offence. The threshold for the launch of a pre-trial investigation is much higher than for filing a report of an offence. A pre-trial investigation is launched if there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed. During the pre-trial investigation, it is essential to determine whether the incident reported to the police is in fact a

criminal offence, as well as who is or are the injured party and the suspected offender. A pre-trial investigation may not take place if the punishment for the crime in question is not expected to be more severe than a fine, and the incident as a whole is considered a minor offence. Another prerequisite is that the injured party of the case does not present any demands. On the request of the head of the investigation, the prosecutor can also decide in certain situations that a pre-trial investigation will not take place or that it will be discontinued. With the injured party's consent, a limited pre-trial investigation can be conducted in cases that are simple and clear-cut, if the expected punishment for the crime is no more than a fine. The case can then be resolved without filing charges, i.e. the court will impose a fine on the suspected offender. (Helminen et al. 2005.)

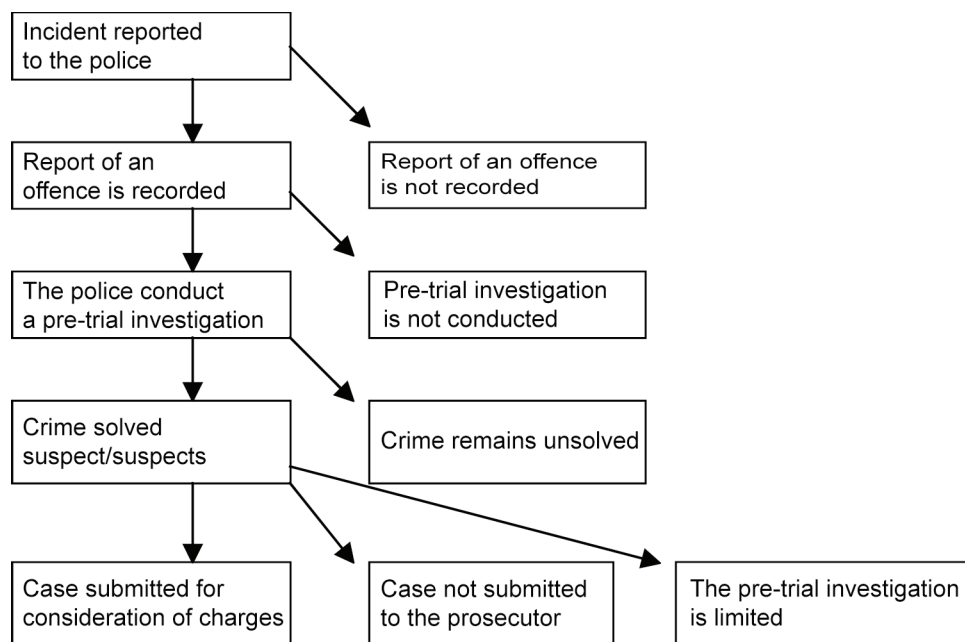


Figure 7. The progress of the criminal justice process, from police to prosecutor. (Source: Helminen et al. 2005).

Table 25 presents the status of the pre-trial investigation of the suspected racist crime discussed in this report. In accordance with the reports on previous years, only crimes reported to the police during the first six months of 2008 are included in the analysis, because the pre-trial investigation is most likely to have been concluded in such cases. The pre-trial investigation had been concluded by March 2009 for 72 per cent of all suspected racist crimes reported to the police during the first half of the target year (between 1 January and 30 June, 2008). On the other hand, it was still ongoing (open case) in 13 per cent of such crimes, and in 14 per cent of cases the investigation had been discontinued. A discontinued investigation means that the police are not actively trying to solve the case. If something relevant to the case arises later, the crime investigation can be re-opened.

During the target period, a total of 545 crimes were reported to the police, half of which included attempted assaults and assaults of various degrees. In three quarters of these, the pre-trial investigation had been concluded. The largest number of discontinued investigations involved cases of criminal damage, i.e. there was insufficient evidence in approximately half of the cases. In most such cases, the suspected offenders had not been located and the investigation had been postponed indefinitely. In discrimination cases, none of the investigations had been discontinued, but 14 per cent were still ongoing.

Table 25. Status of pre-trial investigation of suspected racist crimes by type of offence (%; crimes reported to the police between 1.1. – 30.6.2008)

	Assault	Criminal damage	Defamation	Menace	Invasion of domestic premises	Discrimination	Other	All
Open case	13	14	8	13	35	14	14	13
Investigation discontinued	12	52	8	7	12	-	20	14
Investigation concluded	75	33	83	80	53	86	66	72
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	264	42	72	56	17	35	59	545

Once the pre-trial investigation has been concluded, the case is primarily submitted to the prosecutor for consideration of charges. The case is not submitted to the prosecutor if the pre-trial investigation has shown that the incident does not fulfil the characteristics of any criminal offence. Furthermore, it is not submitted if no persons can be prosecuted or any other demands presented. This would be the procedure, for example, if the suspected offender was under 15 years old, or if the injured party had no demands in regard of the matter and the offence did not constitute a public-prosecution crime, or if the offence's statute of limitations had expired. (Helminen et al. 2005.)

The pre-trial investigations of 394 suspected offences reported in the target period had been concluded. 65% of these had been submitted to the prosecutor for consideration of charges (Table 26). The share is a little less than for the previous year, when 73% of suspected offences were submitted to the prosecutor. The share of assault cases submitted was approximately the same as in the previous year, 77%. For other types of offence, the share was smaller, between 36–72%.

Of discrimination cases for which the pre-trial investigation had been concluded, it is surprising to note that only 37% (n=30) had been submitted for consideration of charges. In the previous year (2007) the corresponding share was 72% (n=29), and the year before that 95% (n=62). The apparent trend has therefore been for an increasing number of discrimination cases to end with the pre-trial investigation.. Since discrimination is a public prosecution crime, consideration of charges should primarily be

conducted, even if the injured party of the crime does not demand it. In regard of some cases, the police have determined that the incident in question does not fulfil the characteristics of discrimination, and in regard to others, the pre-trial investigation had been limited, for instance, due to the minor nature of the offence. A ‘non-criminal offence’ decision had been taken, for instance, in one case where the injured parties had been the targets of discrimination in a store, on the basis of their ethnic origin. According to the report of an offence, the sales clerk suspected of the crime had informed the police that the parties in question had entered the premises to sell their own products there without requesting permission, and the sales clerk had asked them not to do so.

Table 26. Progress of the suspected offence to consideration of charges by type of offence in 2008 (%; crimes reported to the police between 1.1.–30.6.2008)

Submitted to the prosecutor	Assault	Criminal damage	Defamation	Menace	Invasion of domestic premises	Discrimination	Other	All
No	23	64	52	36	67	63	28	35
Yes	77	36	48	64	33	37	72	65
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	197	14	60	45	9	30	39	394

6.3 Hate crime motivated by religious background

One of the aims of this project was to determine the number of suspected crimes motivated by the victim’s religion and reported to the police in 2008. Since suspected hate crimes motivated by religious background are not classified separately for the purposes of the police information system, these cases could be located and collected only through various search terms (see: Appendix 2). These search terms helped locate a total of 53 reports of an offence, where the crime was at least partly motivated by the victim’s religion. Five of these reports had been marked with the racism code. However, through a review of the reports it was possible to determine that these cases were motivated by the victim’s religious background rather than ethnic or national origin.¹¹

In most of these cases, the crimes were committed against Muslims. A total of 17 such cases were included in the data. Reports of an offence on crimes committed against members of religious groups other than Islam appeared as single, separate cases only. Most victims in these cases were members of a Christian sect. In 16 reports of an offence, it was impossible to determine which religious group the victim belonged to.

¹¹ Additionally, among the cases with racist characteristics described in Section 6.2, 5 included hostility towards the victim’s religion in addition to racist motivation. For instance, according to one report of an offence, the victim had stated that the suspect had insulted the victim’s ‘skin colour and religion’.

6.3.1 Description of reports of an offence

Since hate crime motivated by religious background is being compiled into statistics for the first time in Finland, reports of an offence are first described on the basis of the incident descriptions they incorporate (Table 27)¹². This provides a comprehensive picture of the cases included in this category. The number of reports of an offence is so small that it would not be reasonable to describe them in detail, for example, by type of offence, as with racially motivated crimes in the previous sections.

Among all reports of an offence, most cases included verbal insults or threats (23), one-sided assaults (12), and criminal damage (11). Only single separate cases of fights involving crimes committed by both parties, assaults motivated by verbal provocation, and discrimination were included in such reports.

Also, the majority of reports on crimes committed against Muslims (10) involved verbal insults and threats (Table 27). One of the cases, for instance, involved a restaurant owner, who had filed a report of an offence after being targeted for defamation and breach of the sanctity of religion. For example, cartoon sketches offensive towards Muslims had been pasted on the window of the restaurant. Another case involved an unknown man who had shouted death threats on the street to some women with an immigrant background, and had called them abusive names, such as ‘Islamic whores’. Two incidents involving a fight had begun with verbal abuse targeted at Muslims, including comments of the type, ‘When in Finland, do as the Finns do.’ One case of criminal damage included a broken window in a mosque and the words ‘Muslim genocide’ scrawled in English.

Table 27. Incident descriptions included in reports of an offence on suspected crimes motivated by religious background in 2008

Incident description	Committed against Muslims	Religion not known	Religions separately	All religions
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	10	9	4	23
One-sided assault	2	7	3	12
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage)	1	-	10	11
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	3	-	-	3
Discrimination cases	1	-	1	2
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	-	-	2	2
Total	17	16	20	53

¹² For more on the classification of variables, see Appendix 4.

In reports of an offence where the victim's religion could not be determined, nine cases involved verbal insults and threats, and seven were cases of one-sided assault. Incidents that involved verbal insults and threats had been described, for example, by stating that 'the suspect had criticised the religious background of the injured party, and insulted the injured party in front of other people'. Other cases included descriptions of the suspect committing defamation against the injured party with comments such as 'damned believers' and 'crazy believers'. In the assault cases, motivation for the crime included the suspect not 'approving of' or 'liking' the religion of the injured party.

Most cases involving suspected crimes against a certain, cited religion were crimes against property. Reports of an offence had been filed on, for example, criminal disturbance against a Christian school, damage to the premises of the Free Church, and the burning of the Bible in front of an Orthodox Church. Reports filed on these crimes against property do not include information on whether the suspect was a member of a religious group other than the one against which the criminal damage was committed. In some criminal damage cases, the suspect was not even known. In three reports of an offence, the injured parties had stated that they had experienced threats from Muslims because they themselves had converted from Islam. One report of an offence, for example, described how Muslims verbally abused the injured party and the injured party's children by calling them 'sinners and impures', and how they had tried to convert the children of the injured party to Islam. One report of an offence involved a discrimination case filed on the basis of the person not being hired to work at a church on account of having personally resigned from the church.

6.3.2 Suspected crimes' locations, injured parties and suspected offenders

Table 28 presents the locations of suspected hate crimes motivated by the religious background of the victim. The most common locations were religious sites, such as churches and mosques. Common locations also included the victim's apartment, and outdoor public locations, such as streets, roads, and squares. Two incidents were reported to have occurred on the Internet; one of these involving ethnic agitation and the other an insulting e-mail. In nine reports of an offence, the location of the incident was unknown, or could not be classified as any of those listed in Table 28. This classification includes incidents that were reported to have lasted for a longer period of time, as well as cases for which one specific incident location could not be determined.

In reports of an offence where the crime was motivated by the victim's religion, the number of injured parties included a total of 54 natural persons. Approximately half of these were women (28). For most of the injured parties, the suspected offender was a person they had known prior to the incident (32). For 12 injured parties the suspected offender was a person they had not known prior to the incident, and in 10 cases the suspected offender was not known at all. The number of suspected offenders mentioned in the reports of an offence was 39. The majority of these were men (33), and belonged to the age group between 35–54 years old (22). The majority of both the suspected offenders and the injured parties were Finnish citizens.

Table 28. Locations of the incidents of suspected hate crime motivated by religious background in 2008

Location of the incident	N
Religious location (e.g. a church, a mosque)	14
Victim's apartment	11
Street, road, square, or other public place	9
Other location / Not known	9
School or school area	2
Internet	2
Bar, restaurant, dance venue	2
Yard or staircase in the victim's building	1
Other yard or staircase	1
Other apartment	1
Public transport	1
Other public building	0
Total	53

6.4 Crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority

The data included a large number of reports of an offence that included insults based on sexual orientation. The search term 'gay' alone helped locate over 400 reports of an offence recorded in the target year from the police information system. Although 'homophobic name-calling' was included in hundreds of reports of an offence, only 23 reports of an offence were located among the data that could be identified as crimes motivated by the victim's perceived sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority. In these cases, the suspicions, of either the victim or the police who filed the report, about the motivation for the crime had been recorded in the report of an offence, or could be determined on the basis of other information included in the report. These cases are described in more detail below. Lastly, reports of an offence are discussed that have not been officially classified as hate crime against sexual or gender minorities, but included homophobic name-calling. This type of name-calling can be regarded in general as derogatory to sexual and gender minorities, even though its specific intention may not be to offend any member of a minority group.

6.4.1 Description of reports of an offence

Since suspected hate crimes committed against sexual and gender minorities were so few in number, it would be best to review each case individually according to the incident descriptions included in the reports of an offence. Most reports of an offence involved one-sided assaults against the victim (10), and verbal insults and threats (7) (Table 29).

Table 29. Incident descriptions of suspected hate crime motivated by sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority in 2008

Incident description	N
One-sided assault	10
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	7
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	3
Discrimination cases	2
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage, theft)	1
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	0
Total	23

The majority of reports of an offence reveal that the victim was a member of a minority group based on his or her sexual orientation or gender. In some, this information is revealed in the incident description section, which will become a public document after the investigation of the case has been concluded, with certain limitations imposed by the Act on the Openness of Government Activities. In these cases, the victim or one of the interested parties has informed the police of their suspicion that the motivation for the crime was, for example, the victim's homosexuality. In one of the reports, for instance, a female couple had told the police how someone they knew had threatened them with violence, and had 'made derogatory remarks about their sexual orientation'. In some cases, the police officer who filed the report of an offence has recorded information on sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority in a police investigation document which will not be made public at any point. These documents may include the police officer's own suspicions of the motivation for the crime.

In a few cases, the motivation for the crime was determined on the basis of the development of the events described in the incident description included in the report of an offence. In one of the assault cases, for example, an unknown man in a restaurant had inquired about the sexual orientation of the person who filed the report. When the victim had told him he was homosexual, the unknown man had hit him. In another case, an assault outside a restaurant had been committed against a man. The victim had told the police that when he came out of the restaurant, an unknown man had hit and kicked him, and called him 'fag'. The suspect had admitted to the assault, and stated that the motivation for the assault had been that the victim had 'pawed' him in the restaurant. In one other case, two boys had been assaulted at a house party after they had hugged each other.

In some cases, the motivation for the crime was determined on the basis of what the suspected offender had said during the incident. For instance, an incident that involved a fight had begun after one of the suspected offenders had stated 'I hate gays'. The motivation for the crime could be clearly determined as the perceived membership of a gender minority of the victim in one of the 23 reports of an offence. This involved an assault case where the suspected offenders had called the victim 'tranny', and asked whether the victim was 'a man or a woman'.

The data for the target year included two reports of an offence where the injured parties had experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation. One of these incidents occurred in a restaurant, and the other involved discrimination in connection with making reservations for accommodation. In both cases, the injured parties suspected that the discrimination had been motivated by their relationship with a person of the same sex.

6.4.2 *Description of borderline cases: cases with homophobic characteristics*

This section describes all reports of an offence that include insults motivated by homosexuality. On the basis of reports of an offence, it is not possible to determine whether these cases can be classified as hate crime or some other phenomenon. There were 442 reports of an offence in total, and the case contents varied greatly – in some cases, motivation for the crime may well have been the suspect's prejudice against the victim's real or perceived sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority. Some cases included 'homophobic name-calling' in addition to other types of abusive name-calling; i.e. the word 'gay' had been used in a similar manner to other abusive terms. It is also possible that in some cases the name-calling was committed against a boy or man, who in some way was perceived as violating the traditional role of a man, for example, by acting in too feminine a manner.

The majority (43%) of these borderline cases included verbal insults and threats (Table 30). Reports of an offence had been filed on the following incidents:

*Two unknown men had stopped the complainant on the street. They had shouted threats against the complainant, such as 'damn **fag**' and 'ought to be killed'. The complainant had felt that his life was in danger and that he had been defamed.*

*A school principal had received an email message from someone threatening to shoot him. The message content included terminology such as 'fucking asshole principal damn **fag**'.*

*A complainant was defamed at a bar in a restaurant. Someone had loudly called him 'a **queer** and a **fag**'.*

*Friends at school have verbally abused a 13-year-old boy on several occasions. He has been called 'a **queer**' and 'a geek' and 'a motherfucker'.*

In some defamation cases the injured party perceived the name-calling as offensive, because the incident had 'labelled' him gay, even though he was not gay. Another striking aspect of the data was that a specific Internet website containing gay male pornography provoked 27 reports of an offence in the target year. The website in question includes an address field that produces any type of text on the website. The reports of an offence had been filed after the injured parties had been sent links to the website with their own names appearing next to some pictures on it.

Table 30. Incident descriptions of reports of an offence that include name-calling motivated by homosexuality in 2008

Incident description	N	%
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	189	43
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage)	126	29
One-sided assaults	68	15
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	34	8
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	25	6
Discrimination cases	0	-
Total	442	100

In addition to verbal insults and threats, the next most common crimes are crimes against property, such as criminal damage. These cases constitute 29 per cent of reports of an offence. The most typical cases included damage and marks on the injured party's car. For instance, the car had been deliberately scratched during the night, and the word 'gay' had been written on its side. In most cases, there was no knowledge of the offenders. In some, the same text had been scrawled on the wall of the complainant's home, on a school building, or on other public buildings. Sometimes all that was written was the word 'gay', on other occasions there were also some additional words. For instance, schools had filed reports on criminal damage incidents that involved scrawlings on the walls, such as 'principal is gay' or 'pekka is gay'.

In all, 15 per cent of cases were one-sided assaults during which the victim had been verbally abused with terms such as 'fag' or 'queer'. Assault incidents have been described in reports of an offence as follows:

The man said he had been at a restaurant enjoying an evening out with his girlfriend when an old acquaintance had approached them. The complainant had attempted to greet the acquaintance, but the acquaintance had started calling the complainant 'fag' and 'woman beater', after which he had assaulted him.

*Two women had been sitting outside a restaurant in the evening when a group of unknown people had walked past them. One man in the group had seen the women and started calling them **lesbians**, among other things. One of the women had wondered out loud why they were being insulted although they had done nothing. Then the name-caller had started to physically assault the woman. Once the woman was able to ask why he was doing so, the man assaulting her replied 'because you look like an idiot'.*

The boy has been harassed mentally and physically at school throughout the semester. He has been kicked, beaten, and called various abusive names, such as 'fag, four-eyes, and geek.'

In addition to one-sided assaults, 8 per cent of cases involved assaults motivated by verbal provocation, and 6 per cent included reports of mass brawls. A report of an offence had been filed, for example, on an assault which occurred during school hours and was preceded by a verbal dispute between the parties involved. According to witnesses, the blows were preceded by mutual grappling and the verbal abuse of the suspect included the term 'fag'. An example of a fight incident is a report of fight that led to injuries to both parties and occurred between two men unknown to each other prior to the incident. The fight had begun when one of the parties had called the other one 'queer'.

6.5 Crimes motivated by the victim's disability

The search terms helped locate 28 reports of an offence related to cases that could be determined as being at least partially motivated by the victim's disability. Since there are only a few such cases, the reports of an offence are described on the basis of the incident descriptions they incorporated. After this, some borderline cases are described. In the borderline cases, the victim was reported to have some sort of disability, but the motivation for the crime could not be determined on the basis of the reports of an offence.

6.5.1 *Description of reports of an offence*

In the majority of cases (10), the report of an offence included verbal insults and threats against disabled people (Table 31). In one of the reports, for example, a person on disability retirement had been called abusive names such as 'retard' over the Internet, and had been urged to get a job. Another case involved the name-calling of a woman with the term 'cow on wheels', because she was in a wheelchair. A report of an offence had also been filed against a man who had breached the honour of the injured parties by shouting 'hang the retards' at them in a public location.

There were nine reports of an offence on discrimination motivated by disability. One involved denying a blind person access to a restaurant with an assistance dog, and another involved a taxi driver who had refused to take a man in a wheelchair. Furthermore, a report of an offence had been filed against a health centre, where the injured party had experienced discrimination motivated by disability on account of being denied access to a fitness class.

Six reports of an offence were filed on assault cases. The incident description of one of these reports included the long-term psychological and physical abuse of a student. Other students had called the injured party abusive names such as 'retard' and 'fatso'. The report revealed that some limitations in terms of gym class participation had been imposed on the student due to a previous impairment. Another report of an offence involved a man who became the target of an assault in a shopping centre. Prior to the assault, the suspect had uttered the phrase 'dependent on the society' in reference to the injured party.

Table 31. Incident descriptions of hate crime committed against disabled people in 2008

Incident description	N
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	10
Discrimination cases	9
One-sided assaults	6
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	2
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	1
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage)	0
Total	28

6.5.2 Description of borderline cases

Search terms helped locate 218 reports of an offence from the police information system, in which the victim was reported to have some sort of impairment. However, these cases cannot be classified as hate crimes as such, because the reports made no mention of the motivation for the crime or, for example, of insults against the victim. Nevertheless, some of the reports revealed that the victim had been in a weak position compared to the suspect, or dependent on the suspect. In some reports of an offence, the disability of the victim arose in another context.

The majority of these borderline cases (59%) were one-sided assaults (Table 32)¹³. This percentage also includes reports of an offence involving abandonment. Reports of an offence filed on cases of abandonment included, for example, a case where the parents were suspected of neglecting to medicate their disabled child and leaving the child without care. 17% of reports of an offence did not include physical violence, but verbal insults and threats against the victim. For instance, one such report included a man suspected of threatening to kill his physically impaired acquaintance. The victim had stated that it would have been impossible to get away, had the suspect decided to go through with his threat.

Approximately 12% of cases included suspected sexual crimes. For instance, one of the reports of an offence included suspicions of a personal assistant having raped a woman with cerebral palsy in her own apartment. The victim stated that because of her disability she had been unable to prevent the incident. Approximately 9% of the cases included only crimes against property. In one case, a disabled woman had been robbed in the street. Another case involved a visually impaired man being robbed at a metro station. According to the report of an offence, unknown men had tricked the victim into giving them money by pretending to be ticket inspectors.

¹³ The classification of the variables is described in Appendix 4. Additionally, sexual crimes have been separated into their own category here.

Table 32. Incident descriptions included in reports of an offence, where the injured party is a disabled person in 2008

Incident description	N	%
One-sided assaults (including abandonment)	128	59
Verbal insults and threats, harassment	37	17
Sexual crimes	27	12
Crimes against property (e.g. criminal damage)	19	9
Fights involving crimes committed by both parties	5	2
Discrimination cases	2	1
Crimes motivated by verbal provocation	0	-
Total	218	100

7 COMPARISON OF FINDINGS TO HATE CRIME IN SWEDEN

Experiences of the expanded compilation of statistics on hate crime in Sweden were of great help in the development of the statistical method used. In addition to racist crime, the numbers of other types of hate crime reported to the police have also been monitored in Sweden for longer than in Finland. Data collection on reports of an offence is conducted in Sweden in a similar manner to Finland, i.e. through the use of search terms, the final decision on the classification of a case as hate crime being based on the narrative incident description recorded by the police and included in the report of an offence. Because the statistical methods in Finland and Sweden are so similar, a comparison between the two countries is of interest. However, such a comparison is necessarily superficial since, for the purposes of this report, a more detailed examination of the differences and similarities between the two countries, or factors that impact on reporting crimes to the police, was not possible.

Table 33 presents the number of hate crimes reported to the police in Finland and in Sweden in 2008. For both countries, the number of reports of an offence is represented rather than the number of individual crimes, rendering the numbers comparable in that respect. The table shows that over five times more racist crimes were reported to the police in Sweden than in Finland. This difference seems understandable, since many more citizens with an immigrant background are resident in Sweden than in Finland.

The number of hate crimes motivated by religious background and reported to the police in Sweden in 2008 was also clearly greater than Finland's. Comparisons of hate-motivated offences experienced by followers of Islam can be made in a separate category, followed by an examination of the findings in proportion to the size of the Muslim population in both countries. In Sweden, the number of Muslims is estimated to be approximately 350,000, whereas in Finland the number is approximately 40,000 (For these estimates, see: Klingspor et al. 2008, 21; Otterbeck & Bevelander 2006, 8; Martikainen 2008). A rough estimate gives 8 reports of an offence per 10,000 members of a particular religious group in Sweden in 2008, whereas the number in Finland is 4. Using this method of estimation, the difference does not seem so great.

In relation to sexual minorities, the greatest difference in the numbers of hate crimes can be found. One reason for this lies in the classification criteria of reports of an offence. Cases in which the victim had been for the target of 'homophobic name-calling' through the use of terms such as 'fag', but where the motivation for the crime could not be otherwise determined, were not classified as hate crimes for the purposes of this project. In Sweden, however, the classification criteria is broader in regard to this particular matter, so there are more statistics on hate crime.

In addition to the differences in classification criteria, it is difficult to determine a reason for more hate crime being committed against sexual minorities in Sweden than in Finland. In Sweden, legislation was amended to become more permissive towards homosexuals much earlier than in Finland. In Sweden, homosexuality was classified as a crime until 1944, and in Finland until 1971. On the other hand, a more permissive atmosphere may be the reason why people report hate crime cases to the police more

readily in Sweden than in Finland. Moreover, people in Sweden may be more ready to inform the police of their suspicions of the crime's motivation. The amount of hidden crime experienced by sexual minorities may therefore be larger in Finland than in Sweden.

On the other hand, if cases that only included homophobic name-calling and were reported to the police in Finland are compared to Sweden in proportion to the entire population, the difference is no longer so great. Approximately one crime per 10,000 citizens would have been reported to the police in 2008 in both countries. However, these numbers are not entirely comparable, either. Not all of the 442 cases that included only name-calling reported in Finland would have been necessarily included in statistics on hate crime in Sweden, based on Sweden's hate crime classification criteria.

Table 33. Hate crimes reported to the police in Finland and in Sweden in 2008

Type of hate crime	Finland	Sweden
Motivated by racism / xenophobia	755	4224
Motivated by religious background (of which islamophobic / committed against Muslims)	53 (17)	602 (272)
Motivated by sexual orientation (reports that include only homophobic name-calling)	22 (442)	1 055 ¹
Motivated by membership of a gender minority	1	14
Committed against disabled people	28	No statistics
Total	859	5 895

¹ 99% of cases reported in Sweden were motivated by homophobia, and approximately one per cent by heterophobia or biphobia.

8 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The amount of racist crime reported to the police has been monitored in Finland over the last ten years. Monitoring has now been expanded to include other types of crimes motivated by the victim's membership of a certain reference group. These crimes are often classified as 'hate crime'. Hate crime classification is conducted under several instances, such as legislation and various scientific fields; however, no commonly recognised general definition of the concept exists. Huge variation exists, particularly in terms of the groups that can be considered the targets of hate crime. For the purposes of this project, hate crime has been defined as a crime against a person, group, property, institution or a representative of these, motivated by prejudice or hostility towards the victim's real or perceived ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, membership of a gender minority, or disability.

The Criminal Code of Finland does not contain definitions of the concepts 'racist crime' or 'hate crime'. For this reason, monitoring of racist crime has been partly based on the racist crime classification methods used by the police, and partly on other methods, such as the use of search terms. The starting point for the development of the statistical method used was based on the Police College of Finland's previous reports on racist crime. Additional assistance was received from Sweden with regard to experiences of the more wide-ranging compilation of statistics on hate crime.

The police only have classification methods for racist crime, and not for hate crime. Therefore, various search terms have formed an essential part of the compilation of statistics. Through the use of search terms, data collection has been implemented on the national police information system, in order to locate reports on offences motivated by the victim's ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, membership of a gender minority, or disability. Classification as hate crime based on reports of an offence located through the use of the search criteria has referred to the narrative incident descriptions included in the reports and recorded by the police who filed them. This refers to suspected crimes, not crimes, since no decisions made by the prosecutor or court in relation to these cases are available.

In the target year, 859 reports of an offence were located through the data collection process and classified as suspected hate crime. 88 per cent of these reports were classified as cases of racist crime. Cases of hate crime motivated by the religious background of the victim constituted 6%, hate crime motivated by sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority 3%, and hate crime motivated by disability constituted 3% of cases.

8.1 Racist crime

In compliance with previous annual reports, for the purposes of this report the classification of racist crime includes all suspected crimes the victim, the police, or any other interested party perceive as racist, or which include obvious racist insults. Methods of data collection on racist crime have been changed, however, and this needs to be taken into consideration in comparisons with the findings of reports for previous years con-

ducted between 2003 and 2007. The expansion of search criteria was implemented in order to identify a more comprehensive collection of suspected racist crime from the police information system.

In the target year, a total of 755 reports of an offence on cases with racist characteristics were recorded. This number is substantially higher than in previous years. Such an increase is not solely due to changes in the statistical method, since 606 of these reports would have been included in the statistics through the criteria used in previous years as well. But even this means 152 more reports of an offence than in the previous year, when 454 reports were recorded. The number of suspected racist crimes reported to the police in Helsinki more than doubled.

The reasons for this increase in the number of reports of an offence are numerous. They may be related to increased reporting of suspicions about the motivation for a crime to the police, or to an actual increase in the amount of crime itself. It is also possible that racially motivated crime is reported to the police more frequently than before. On the other hand, the police may have started to record the characteristics of racially motivated crime more thoroughly than before, meaning that more cases can be located from the police information system. Despite these reasons, there remains the question of why the number of reports of an offence increased so much in 2008 in particular?

Factors in 2008 included, on one hand, the deterioration of the economic situation, and on the other, for example, the significant increase in the number of asylum seekers compared to the two previous years (Finnish Immigration Service 2009). According to attitude surveys, the attitudes of Finns towards immigrants and refugees was at its most negative during the last recession and period of mass unemployment of the early 1990s (Jaakkola 2009). It is possible that attitudes have turned more negative again. In 2008, there was also significantly more public discussion of immigration policy and immigration problems. During the municipal election held in the Autumn of 2008, the opinions of candidates opposing immigration in particular attracted the attention of the media. Also, other media discussions focused primarily on the hazards of immigration as well as its financial advantages and disadvantages. (Keskinen et al. 2009; Keskinen 2009.) In part, this public discussion may have fuelled hostility towards immigrants as well as impacting on the amount of racially motivated crime.

Reports of an offence classified as racist included 1,163 so-called principal offences; i.e. the most prominent offence committed against a particular injured party. In accordance with previous years, the most common suspected crimes were assaults, which constituted approximately one third of all principal offences. Other common principal offences included defamation (13%), petty assault (11%) and menace (11%). Attempted assaults and various degrees of assault cases constituted a little under half (46%) of the principal offences. The most common locations of the incidents of suspected racist crimes were outdoor public locations, such as roads, streets, or squares, as well as restaurants and areas in front of restaurants. As in previous years, the majority of racist crimes were committed in the evening and at night.

The majority (62%) of injured parties of suspected racist crimes were Finnish citizens. The share of Finnish citizens has increased steadily since 2003, when it was 43%. In the target year, 26% of the Finnish injured parties were born in a country other than

Finland. Among foreign citizens resident in Finland, citizens of Russia, Turkey, and Somalia most commonly fell victim to such crimes. The majority of injured parties were men (69%). The majority of both male and female injured parties belonged to the age group of between 15 and 24 years old. In accordance with the previous year, men were most commonly targets of assault, whereas women were most typically targets of discrimination and defamation. The majority of the suspected offenders were Finnish citizens (83%), men (79%), most commonly aged between 15 and 24 years old.

Over half (57%) of suspected racist crimes were recorded in Southern Finland, where the majority of Finnish citizens with an immigrant background are resident. Less than one third (30%) were recorded in Helsinki and 41% in the Helsinki metropolitan area.

8.2 Hate crime motivated by religious background

The search helped locate 53 reports of an offence involving cases motivated by the victim's religion and recorded in the target year. 17 of these reports included crimes committed against Muslims, in 16 cases the victim's religion was not revealed, and the other 20 reports had been filed against members of individual religious groups. The classification of the cases was primarily based on either the victim's own perception of the motivation for the crime, or on slander uttered by the suspect during the incident. The majority of the reports included verbal insults and threats, and crimes against property. Two reports of an offence were filed on discrimination motivated by religion. Some of the suspected crimes occurred in religious locations, such as churches and mosques.

In a few of the reports of an offence it seemed that the victim had been targeted on the basis of his or her ethnic or national background as well as religion. The reports stated, for example, that the suspect had verbally abused the injured party 'because of his or her colour and religion'. However, these types of cases were few in number and, on the basis of the incident description included in the reports, most could be classified as hate crime motivated by either ethnic or national origin or religious background.

8.3 Hate crime motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority

On the basis of the information included in the reports of an offence, the classification of suspected crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority was difficult. According to the definition of the concept of hate crime, the category was supposed to include cases motivated by the victim's real or perceived sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority. Although several hundred reports of an offence included name-calling targeted at homosexuals, only a few of these cases could be determined as ones in which the suspect had perceived the victim as a member of a sexual or gender minority. For this reason, in this report only cases where

this perception could be determined in some way were classified as hate crime. Reports of an offence that included only so-called 'homophobic name-calling' were described separately.

In the search, 23 reports of an offence on hate crime against sexual and gender minorities recorded in the target year were located. The classification of many cases was based on the victim's own suspicions that the motivation for the crime was his or her sexual orientation. The majority of cases included assaults as well as verbal insults and threats. One of the reports of an offence was clearly a case where the victim had been targeted on the basis of his or her membership of a gender minority while others seemed to be motivated by the real or perceived sexual orientation of the victim. Two reports of discrimination had been filed.

In addition to cases classified as hate crime in the target year, 442 reports of an offence involving cases of homophobic name-calling were located. Most of these included verbal insults and threats; for example, the victim being called 'fag or queer'. Also rather common were assault cases where the victim had been verbally abused, and cases of criminal damage that included the word 'fag' scrawled on the walls of public buildings, in a school area, or on cars.

8.4 Hate crime motivated by the victim's disability

A total of 28 reports of an offence recorded in the target year 2008, where the motivation for the crime could be determined as the disability of the victim, were located. The majority of these included cases of verbal insults and threats and discrimination. Some included a description that indicated that the crime had been motivated by the disability of the victim, whereas in others the motivation was determined on the basis of insults against the victim during the incident.

Furthermore, the search located a couple of hundred reports of an offence where the victim had reported that he or she was disabled, but the report did not include information on the motivation for the crime and therefore could not be classified as hate crime. In some of these reports, the victim was described as being in a weak position compared to the suspect and unable to defend him or herself.

8.5 Comparison of various types of hate crime

According to the report findings, a clear majority (88%) of suspected hate crime reported to the police in 2008 was committed against ethnic and national minorities. Only a small number of cases included crimes committed against religious groups, disabled people, or members of sexual or gender minorities. However, the findings do not support claims, for example, that members of sexual or gender minorities or disabled people in Finland seldom experience crimes committed against them on the basis of their membership of a reference group. It is possible that the differences in the numbers of cases reported to the police also partly indicate how various minority groups tend to report their experiences of crime. Differences may also occur based on the extent to

which victims of crime express their own suspicions of the motivation for the crime when filing a report of an offence, as well as how the police handle these cases, and what kind of reporting methods the police use.

Different challenges are included in the classification methods of reports of an offence between various groups of victims. Racially motivated crime has been compiled into statistics for over ten years now, and classification criteria for reports of an offence have become standard. For the same period, the police have been using the racism code and the concept of racist motivation is becoming standard in Finland too. There is no previous experience of the compilation of statistics on other types of hate crime in Finland. Based on the findings of this report, identifying hate crime committed against members of sexual and gender minorities and disabled people on the basis of the incident descriptions and other information included in reports of an offence is much more difficult than identifying racially motivated crime. Therefore, in addition to the annual reports on racist crime, there is a need for victimisation surveys that analyse the personal experiences of members of minority groups who are targeted as victims of hate crime.

8.6 Evaluation of the research method

Although the aim of this project was to develop the method for the compilation of statistics on hate crime in Finland, the problems discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5 remain. On the whole, the expansion of the search criteria has significantly increased the amount of manual labour. For the purposes of this project, approximately 6,000 reports of an offence were reviewed and approximately 14% of these reports were classified as hate crime. More limited search criteria have been utilised in previous years, when many fewer 'useless' reports were located.

During the review of this report, suspicions arose on how reliable the information included in the statistics could possibly be, when partly based on a selection of colloquial search terms. It is impossible to devise a list of search terms comprehensive enough to capture every single report of an offence. On the other hand, tests on the search terms and classification of the research data gave the impression that certain typical expressions were repeated in various reports of an offence. It is unlikely that the statistical method would have systematically excluded a large number of reports where the motivation for the crime could have been determined by a review of the report's content, but which could not have been located with the help of the search terms. Reports of an offence where the motivation for the crime has been recorded in a way that does not include any of the search terms are most likely to be random instances. Greater problems are associated with the interpretation of reports located using search terms, as well as the decision on the grounds according to which they will be classified as hate crime. Then again, experiences of the racism code in Finland, and those of the expanded hate crime code in Sweden, have shown that the use of search terms provides a more comprehensive picture of hate crime than relying solely on how the police have classified cases.

Insofar as problems with the classification of hate crime are conceptual in terms of the compilation of statistics, with respect to the practicalities of the work done by the police, prosecutors, and judges, these professionals require more information on the motivation for crimes if they mean to implement the grounds for increasing the punishment. The criminal justice system must determine which characteristics of a crime provide sufficient evidence for determining that the crime has been motivated by, for example, the victim's real or perceived sexual orientation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Collection of research data for the report between 1997 and 2008

- **Report for 1997:** the research data included reports of an offence where at least one of the injured parties' nationality was other than Finnish or the country of birth was other than Finland. Only a specific group of crimes (68 crimes) was included in the data collection. Furthermore, also included in the research data were all reports of an offence involving criminal disturbance, ethnic agitation, or discrimination. The number of police reports included in the original research data was 1,276. All of these police reports were reviewed.
- **Report for 1998:** the research data included all reports of an offence where a foreign citizen or a person born outside Finland was the victim of the crime (nationality other than Finnish and country of birth other than Finland). The number of police reports included in the original research data was 4,101. All of these police reports were reviewed.
- **Report for 1999:** the research data included all reports of an offence where a foreign citizen or a person born outside Finland was the victim of the crime (nationality other than Finnish and country of birth other than Finland). The data collection only included a specific group of crimes. The number of police reports included in the original research data was 3 547. All of these police reports were reviewed
- **Reports between 2000 and 2002:** the research data included 1) all reports of an offence that included crimes most likely to include racist characteristics, where at least one of the injured parties' nationality was other than Finnish or the country of birth was other than Finland; 2) all reports of an offence involving cases of discrimination, work discrimination, or ethnic agitation; and 3) all reports of an offence the police had marked with the racism code. The next phase was to review all of these police reports. The number of police reports included in the original data was 4,090 in 2000, 3,762 in 2001, and 4,122 reports in 2002.
- **Reports between 2003 and 2004:** the data collection included 1) all reports of an offence the police had marked with the racism code; 2) all reports of an offence involving cases of discrimination, work discrimination, or ethnic agitation; 3) all reports of an offence that included crimes most likely to include racist characteristics, where at least one of the injured parties' nationality was other than Finnish or country of birth was other than Finland; and 4) all reports of an offence where the incident description included the letter combinations 'racism' or 'racist'. These data collection criteria were the same as in the reports between 2000 and 2002, except for the last one. The number of police reports in the original data was 4,784 in 2003, and 5,121 reports in 2004. Not all of these police reports were reviewed, but the final data was collected from the research data through the use of search terms. The aim of the changes to the data collec-

tion methods in 2003 was, on the one hand, to include cases possibly excluded from the data earlier ('racism' and 'racist' criterion for the collection of the raw data), and on the other, to reduce the number of reviewed police reports that could be located through the use of specific search criteria, but which did not involve racism (for this purpose, search terms were utilised in the second phase of the data collection).

- **Reports between 2005 and 2007:** the research data was collected using the same method as in 2003 and 2004. The number of police reports included in the original data (raw data) was 5,441 in 2005, 5,969 in 2006, and 6,755 reports in 2007.
- **Report for 2008:** Changes have been made to the data collection method in 2008, so the findings of the report are not comparable to reports for previous years. The raw data for the report includes reports of an offence collected from the police information system according to the following criteria. 1. All reports of an offence that include one of the crimes mentioned in Appendix 3 AND one of the search terms mentioned in Appendix 2 (216 search terms in total). 2. All reports of an offence classified as discrimination, work discrimination, extortionate work discrimination, or ethnic agitation. 3. All reports of an offence where the incident description included the letter combinations 'racist' or 'racism'. 4. All reports of an offence the police had marked with the racism code. Through the use of these search criteria, the number of police reports included in the raw data in 2008 was 6,084, and all the reports were reviewed.

Appendix 2. Search terms

The words in italics have been included in the data collection for the annual reports on racist crime in previous years (between 2003 and 2007).

* indicates cut-off word

and.s indicates that words appear in the same sentence

text= indicates that the search is only targeted at the incident description included in the police report (not, for example, personal or address information)

not excludes expressions that follow it

(ulkomaalai* and.s viha*)	<i>ähl*</i>	gay*
pilakuv	bapdis*	hinttari*
pilapiirro	buddha*	hintti*
<i>apina*</i>	(vapaa* ajattelij*)	homo*
ennakkoluulo*	*lestadio*	homppel*
<i>etni*</i>	*laestadi*	lepak*
fasis*	*luterilai*	lesbo*
go home	text=(<i>*muslim*</i>)	lespo*
<i>hakaris*</i>	*seurakun*	miespari*
heil	*uskovai*	naispari*
<i>hitler*</i>	advertis*	pride*
ideologi*	al gaida*	puppel*
<i>ihonväri*</i>	al qaida*	queer
<i>jew*</i>	allah*	(rekisteröi* and.s parisuh*)
<i>jutku*</i>	antisem*	(seksuaal* and.s suuntautu*)
<i>jutsku*</i>	apartheid*	(seksuaali* and.s taipumu*)
<i>juutalai*</i>	arbeit macht frei*	text=(seta*)
kinkke*	arjalai*	(sukupuol* and.s korjau*)
kinkki*	ateist*	(sukupuol* and.s suuntautu*)
kinuk*	auschwitz	(sukupuol* and.s vaihdo*)
klux	bin laden*	transihmi*
<i>kuulapä*</i>	burkha*	transmie*
<i>laku*</i>	fatwa*	transnai*
<i>maahanmuuttaj*</i>	harhaop*	transseksu*
text=(<i>manne</i>)	helluntai*	transvest*
mannei*	hindu*	ulos kaapista
mannej*	huivi	aivovamma*
menkää sinne mistä	hunnu*	autist*
<i>mustalai*</i>	text=(huntu* not huntus)	asperger*
mustilai*	imaami*	epilep*
<i>mutakuon*</i>	text=(islam*)	text=(<i>*invalid*</i>)
<i>mutiai*</i>	jeesu*	text=(<i>*invaliid*</i>)
muukalaisviha*	jehova*	*pyörätuol*
<i>nahkapä*</i>	(jumala* not jumalauta)	*rollaattor*
<i>natsi*</i>	katoli*	*rullatuol*
text=(<i>neeker*</i>)	koraani*	*sokea*

negro*
nekru*
nigger*
painua sinne mistä
pakolai*
palata sinne mistä
pilotti*
polttopul*
(molotov* koktail*)
(molotov* cocktail*)
racis*
rasism*
rasist*
rodullinen
romaani*
text=(romane*)
text=(romani*)
romsk*
text=(rotu*)
ryssittel*
ryssä*
rättipä*
saame*
skin*
text=(somali*)
suomi suomalaisille
svedu*
takaisin afrikkaan
takaisin sinne mistä
torakka*
valkolai*
valkonaam*
venakko
white
vihariko*
vinosilm*
vähemmistö*

krishna*
kristilli*
kristinusko*
kristit*
metodis*
mormon*
mormooni*
moske*
ortodoks*
ortodox*
osama
pelastusarmeija*
text=(profeet*)
text=(raamat*)
rukou*
sikhi*
sharia*
taliban*
terrorist*
turbaan*
uskonno*
uskonto*
vakaumu*
vapaakirk*
vääräuskoi*
(ääri* and.s islam*)
hetero
transsu
transu
bimie*
binai*
biseksu*
bi-seksu*
fag
fags
fägär*

syndrooma
syndrom
(*vammai* not asennevammai*)
(cp* and.s vamma*)
erityislaps*
heikkolahjai*
huonokuulo*
text=(inva*)
jälkeenjään*
kehar*
kehityshäiriö*
kuulolait*
kuulovamma*
kuuro*
kääpiö
liikuntaestei*
liikuntavamma*
lyhytkasvui*
text=(mielisaira*)
mykkä
näkövamma*
oireyhtym*
opaskoir*
pakkoliik*
(psyykki* and.s saira*)
(puhevi* NOT puheviest*)
rajoittei*
text=(rampa)
text=(vajaamieli*)
vajaaälyi*
text=(vajak*)
vammanen
text=(viittomakiel*)
änkyt*
syrijintä

Appendix 3. Types of offence included in the data collection

Types of offence included in the annual reports on racist crime in previous years (between 2003 and 2007).	
Types of offence excluded in this report have been marked by strikethrough.	
Abandonment	Defamation
Aggravated assault	Deprivation of personal liberty
Aggravated criminal damage	Discrimination
Aggravated criminal mischief	Dissemination of information violating personal privacy
Aggravated defamation	Ethnic agitation
Aggravated deprivation of personal liberty	Grossly negligent bodily injury
Aggravated invasion of domestic premises	Grossly negligent homicide
Aggravated invasion of domestic premises	Imperilment
Aggravated invasion of public premises	Infanticide
Aggravated rape	Invasion of domestic premises
Aggravated sexual abuse of a child	Invasion of public premises
Arrangement of illegal immigration	Killing
Assault	Manslaughter
Attempted aggravated assault	Menace
Attempted aggravated criminal mischief	Murder
Attempted aggravated rape	Neglect to rescue
Attempted aggravated sexual abuse of a child	Negligent bodily injury
Attempted aggravated unauthorised use	Negligent deprivation of personal liberty
Attempted assault	Negligent homicide
Attempted coercion into sexual intercourse	Petty assault
Attempted criminal mischief	Petty criminal damage
Attempted infanticide	Rape
Attempted killing	Sexual abuse of a child
Attempted manslaughter	Unauthorised taking of the custody of a child
Attempted murder	Unlawful attempted foeticide to oneself
Attempted rape	Unlawful attempted foeticide without the consent of the woman
Attempted sexual abuse of a child	Unlawful foeticide
Brawling	Unlawful foeticide to oneself
Coercion	Unlawful foeticide without the consent of the woman
Coercion into sexual act	Violation of restraining order
Coercion into sexual intercourse	Work discrimination (extortionate work discrimination)
Criminal damage	
Criminal disturbance	
Criminal mischief	

Types of offence included in the data collection of this report

<p><i>Individual types of offence</i> Abuse of public office Attempted aggravated assault Attempted criminal damage Breach of the sanctity of religion Breach of the sanctity of the grave Participation in the activity of a criminal organisation Public incitement to an offence Violation of official duty</p> <p><i>Sexual offences</i> Abuse of a victim of prostitution Aggravated pandering Attempted abuse of a victim of prostitution Attempted aggravated pandering Attempted pandering Attempted purchase of sexual services from a young person Attempted sexual abuse Pandering Purchase of sexual services from a young person Sexual abuse</p>	<p><i>Workplace offences</i> Attempted violation of the right to organise Employment agency offence Unauthorised use of foreign labour Violation of the right to organise Violation of the rights of an employee representative Work permit offence Work safety offence Working hours offence</p>
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Appendix 4. Classification of variables

- **Location of the incident.** Incident locations were classified into 12 categories: 1) the victim's apartment, 2) other apartment, 3) the yard or staircase of the victim's building, 4) other yard or staircase, 5) school or schoolarea, 6) bar, restaurant, dance venue, 7) other public building, 8) road or street, square or other outdoor public location, 9) public transport, 10) victim's workplace, 11) the Internet, and 12) other location / not known. Incidents classified as having occurred in the victim's apartment included crimes committed inside the victim's apartment and crimes targeted at the victim's apartment from the outside, such as breaking a window or a door, as well as letters, phone calls, and SMS-messages received by the victim. Incidents classified as having occurred in other apartments included crimes committed inside the apartment of a person other than the victim. Incidents classified as having occurred in the yard or staircase of the victim's building included crimes committed in the yard, the parking lot, or the staircase of the victim's building, or in the laundry room located in the victim's building. The 'other yard or staircase' category included crimes committed in the yard of someone else's building, or in a staircase of an unfamiliar building. Incidents classified as having occurred in school or a school area included crimes committed inside a school building or in the school's yard. The 'bar, restaurant, dance venue' category included crimes committed inside these locations or in front of them. Incidents classified as having occurred in other public buildings included crimes committed inside, for example, stores, shopping centres, and public office buildings. The 'road or street, square or other public location' category included all crimes committed in an outdoor public location, such as a street, a square, or a park. This category also included crimes committed in public transport stations. Incidents that occurred in 'public transport' included crimes committed inside a bus, on a train, on the subway, on a passenger ship, or in a taxi. The 'victim's workplace' category included crime committed in the workplace of the victim. The majority of workplaces were so-called ethnic restaurants, and the category also included crimes targeted at the restaurant from the outside, such as broken windows and scrawlings on the walls. The 'Internet' classification included crimes committed on the Internet. Incidents that occurred in locations that were not known or could not be classified into any of the categories listed above were included in the last category, 'other location / not known'. In the categories listed above, only the victim's apartment or other apartment constitute private locations. The classification of hate crime motivated by religious background includes a separate incident location category for religious locations, such as churches and mosques.
- **Time of the incident.** The time periods for when the incident occurred were divided into seven categories: 1) morning, 2) day, 3) evening, 4) night, 5) evening-night-morning, 6) other time, and 7) not known. Crimes committed between 5.00–10.59 were classified as incidents that occurred in the morning, crimes committed between 11.00–16.59 were classified as incidents that occurred dur-

ing the day, crimes committed between 17.00–22.59 were classified as incidents that occurred in the evening, and crimes committed between 23.00–04.59 were classified as incidents that occurred at night. The category ‘evening-night-morning’ included crimes committed sometime between the evening and the morning, but the exact time of the incident was not known. The category ‘other time’ included, for instance, crimes committed between morning and evening, as well as crimes that could not be classified into the categories listed above that included, for example, crimes committed over longer periods of time. The ‘not known’ category included crimes for which the time of the incident could not be determined.

- **Relationship of the victim to the suspect.** ‘The relationship of the victim to the suspect’ was classified into seven categories. The category ‘unknown’ included cases where according to the report of an offence the suspect was unknown to the victim or where the suspect was ‘later identified as X’. This category also included all cases where it could be determined in some way that the suspect was probably unknown to the victim. The customer relationship category included cases where some type of customer relationship was formed between the victim and the suspect; for example, the victim was a customer at a restaurant where the suspect was an employee, or vice versa. Cases where the victim claimed to have known the suspect or at least to have known the suspect by appearance or by name prior to the incident were classified as ‘acquaintance’. Young people who went to the same school were also classified under this category. Incidents that involved people who were employed in the same workplace were classified as crimes committed by a co-worker. The category ‘neighbour’ included cases where the victim and the suspect were next-door neighbours or lived in the same building or in buildings within close proximity to each other. Cases where the relationship of the victim to the suspect could not be determined were classified as ‘unable to determine’. This category included cases where the relationship of the victim to the suspect could not be determined because there was no precise victim for the crime (for instance, ethnic agitation cases). Cases where the suspect was not known at all were included in the category ‘not known at all’.
- **The age** of both the victims and the suspects was classified into six categories: 1) under 15 years, 2) 15–24 years, 3) 25–34 years, 4) 35–44 years, 5) 45–54 years, and 6) over 55 years.
- **Type of offence.** The types of principal offences of suspected racist crimes have been classified into seven categories. Attempted assaults and various degrees of assault (petty assault, assault, attempted aggravated assault and aggravated assault) have all been included in the category ‘assault’ and various degrees of criminal damage (petty criminal damage, criminal damage and aggravated criminal damage) have been included in the category ‘criminal damage’. The category ‘discrimination’ includes cases of discrimination, work discrimination and extortionate work discrimination, and the category ‘defamation’ includes cases of defamation and aggravated defamation. The category ‘invasion of domestic premises’ includes invasion of domestic premises cases as well as cases

of aggravated invasion of domestic premises. Menace forms a category of its own, and the remainder of types of offences have been included in the category 'other'.

- **Incident description included in the report of an offence.** Reports of an offence to the police have been classified into six categories according to the most prominent characteristic present in the incident description.
 1. One-sided assaults: the victim of the assault did not reciprocate the violence. These incidents may also include other types of offences, such as verbal insults and crimes against property.
 2. Fights: two or more people have assaulted one another. These incidents may also include other types of offences, such as verbal insults and crimes against property.
 3. Verbal insults and threats: one-sided verbal act that does not include physical violence, but which may include crimes against property.
 4. Discrimination cases (discrimination and work discrimination): also reports of an offence classified as 'other investigation' where it can be determined on the basis of the incident description that the case involved discrimination.
 5. Crimes against property (criminal damage, theft, robbery, embezzlement): these incidents do not include physical violence or verbal insults or threats, only crimes against property.
 6. Crimes motivated by verbal provocation: incidents where the assault has occurred as a result of verbal insults or provocation.

SUMMARY

Studies on the number and characteristics of racist crimes reported to the police in Finland have been conducted since 1997. The statistics are based on the police reports retrieved from the national police information system using specific criteria. The purpose of this project was to develop the system of compiling statistics on racist crime into a more extensive system of monitoring hate crime. The aim of the project was to create a research instrument that would make it possible to search offences based not only on the victim's ethnical or national background but also on the victim's religious background, disability, sexual orientation or membership of a gender minority.

The Finnish Criminal Code was amended in 2003 to allow for increased punishments in racially motivated crimes. Grounds for increasing punishment include circumstances where "*the offence has been directed at a person belonging to a national, racial, ethnic or other population group due to his/her membership in such a group*". The Government Bill indicates that crimes against members of certain religious groups and sexual minorities may be considered comparable to racist crimes. Crimes whose essential elements involve racism as defined in the Criminal Code of Finland include discrimination on ethnic or national origin and ethnic agitation. Discrimination is criminalised on many grounds, involving, for example, sexual orientation or religion. The concept of hate crime itself is not defined in the Finnish Criminal code.

Since 1997, the police have been required to enter a 'racism code' in the report of an offence if the case has racist characteristics: i.e. if the victim has been targeted because of his/her skin colour, race or ethnic origin that differs from that of the offender. So far, the Finnish police have a code only for racist crime, not for hate crimes more broadly. Therefore the selection of suspected hate crimes from the police information system must be conducted by using search terms.

In previous reports on racist crime the selection of the cases has been partly based on the racism code marked by the police, and partly on a search for different abusive terms. The search terms have been insulting words commonly used during racist offences (e.g. *negro, gipsy*). For the present study, the list of search terms has been extended to find other than racist hate crimes, too. Altogether about 200 different search terms were used, and about 6,000 police reports were selected from the police register and read through. Generally, a case was classified as a hate crime if any one of the parties involved or the police thought the offender's motivation was based on prejudice against a specific population group or if it included insults against a population group (ethnic and national groups, religious groups, people with disabilities or sexual or gender minorities). Also, the methods used to compile racist cases from the police information system were extended, and the figures are not directly comparable to the previous reports on racist crime.

The method described has a lot of weaknesses. Many of the police reports do not include any information on the motive for the crime or descriptions of the possible insulting words used during the incident – and therefore some cases are not found by using the search terms. In many cases the motive for the crime is very difficult to identify from the police report, and the coding system of the cases is open to various interpretations.

A total of 859 incidents reported to the police during 2008 were classified as hate crimes. Most of them (88%) included racist elements. The number of suspected racist crimes (755) was notably larger than in previous years. A partial reason for the increase is a change in the methods compiling the statistics. The proportion of hate crimes based on the victim's religion was 6%, sexual orientation 3% and disability 3%. Only one of the incidents against a person belonging to a gender minority was identified as a hate crime.

In total, 23 suspected hate crimes against sexual or gender minorities were identified. Most of these cases included assaults or verbal insults or threats. Out of the 53 cases identified as hate crimes based on religion, 17 were targeted against Muslims, and in 16 cases the victim's religion was not specified. The number of hate crimes based on the victim's disability was 28.

The 755 police reports included altogether 1,163 different offences identified as racist cases. As before, assault was the most common type of offence, making up a third of all offences. The second most common types of offences were defamation, petty assault and menace. More than half of the suspected offences were recorded in Southern Finland, where the majority of the population with a foreign background live.

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