

## **Hate Crimes and Human Rights: Making Sense of Violence in Europe after 1990 Research Report**

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### **Project Overview**

The primary purpose of my residence at the Open Society Archive was to conduct research for my second book project, titled *Hate: The International Making of a Crime*. The project asks the question of how the concept of “hate” became a useful way of making sense of violence in North America, Europe, and Australia during the 1990s and 2000s. More specifically, it investigates the interconnections between activists, lawmakers, human rights advocates, and law enforcement in the production of new laws regulating both hate crime and hate speech. I therefore arrived at OSA with the intention of determining how these laws were negotiated and implemented at the European and international level, and how human rights advocates marshalled the category of hate in different ways to discuss bias motivated violence – from right-wing attacks to the breakup Yugoslavia – that followed the formal end of eastern European state socialism.

### **Research Overview**

In order to answer my central research question, I focused primarily on the collections of the International Helsinki Federation, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe/Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. These collections not only provided insight to the processes of the two corresponding organizations, but also offered access to the role of state actors, activists participating in parallel activities, and other human rights groups and non-governmental organizations. I paired this work with more limited research into the subject files of Radio Free Europe in order to provide background, largely in the form of media reporting, to discussions of national, racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities prior to 1990. In so doing, I consulted the following boxes:

#### CSCE/OSCE

HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 1  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 2  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 3  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 4  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 5  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 6  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 7  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 8  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 9  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 10  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 11  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 12  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 17

HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 21  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 22  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 23  
HU OSA 318-0-7 Box 25

International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights

HU OSA 318-0-2 Box 5  
HU OSA 318-0-2 Box 9  
HU OSA 318-0-2 Box 13  
HU OSA 318-0-4 Box 12  
HU OSA 318-0-4 Box 32  
HU OSA 318-0-5 Box 170  
HU OSA 318-0-6 Box 18  
HU OSA 318-0-6 Box 21  
HU OSA 318-0-6 Box 22  
HU OSA 318-0-6 Box 36  
HU OSA 318-0-6 Box 37  
HU OSA 318-0-8 Box 17  
HU OSA 318-0-8 Box 29

Radio Free Europe

HU OSA 205-4-201 Box 159  
HU OSA 205-4-201 Box 260  
HU OSA 205-4-206 Box 81  
HU OSA 300-55-10  
HU OSA 300-80-2 Box 26  
HU OSA 300-85-12 Box 265

Publications of the Human Rights Watch

HU OSA 341-0-1 Box 30  
HU OSA 341-0-1 Box 34  
HU OSA 341-0-1 Box 45

Index on Censorship

HU OSA 301-0-2 Box 5  
HU OSA 301-0-2 Box 9  
HU OSA 301-0-2 Box 13

Digital Repositories

HU OSA 300-80-2\_026

**Results**

While I am still processing the wealth of materials that locate at OSA, I was able to develop some preliminary conclusions, which I explained during my presentation on July 16. First, the structures that the CSCE created in during the late 1980s, specifically the articulation of the “human dimension,” complete with a mechanism to mediate potential human rights violations, offered new avenues to discuss the position of minorities. Second, these avenues became crucial to the discussion of violence in the aftermath of the Cold War. Not only did (renewed) commitments to democracy render politically necessary the protection of minorities within CSCE countries, but it also set up new tensions between minority protections and freedom of expression in the context of hate speech legislation. As NGOs like the International Helsinki Federation and the Human Rights Watch monitored the propagation of hate speech in places like Yugoslavia, often drawing on national laws concerning incitement to define the parameters of hate speech, they struggled to maintain simultaneous commitments to freedom of expression. Third, it was during this period of the early 1990s that discussion hate became ensconced in human rights frameworks, particularly the human dimension. Finally, both minority rights and condemnations of hate-motivated speech and violence became during the 1990s sites of contestation over geopolitical concerns that often had little to do with the actual status of minorities. As of July 2024, I am currently developing this research into an article, which will form the basis of the fourth chapter of the book project.