

MOTIVATION AND TYPOLOGIES OF INCITEMENT TO HATRED OFFENDERS



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MOTIVATION AND TYPOLOGIES OF INCITEMENT TO HATRED OFFENDERS

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1. Introduction

In an effort to highlight the serious consequences of hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in partnership with the Atlantic Initiative, and with the support of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), conducted a comprehensive report on motivation of incitement to hatred offenders. With this report, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees is fulfilling one of the activities outlined in ‘Mapping responses to hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A situational analysis and mapping report’¹

This document was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 27 November 2023, on the proposal of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The mapping exercise, the development of which was facilitated through the EU and Council of Europe, provides a comprehensive overview of the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, setting out a clear roadmap and priority measures in addressing hate speech on a systemic level. Moreover, the mapping document aims to deepen the understanding of the specificities of hate speech and available remedies in BiH, to establish a basis for dealing with the problem more efficiently. It was developed through the inclusive active involvement of 34 relevant entities.

Exploring the motivations for perpetrators to commit incitement to hatred offences offers deep insights into the driving forces behind individual behaviour.

¹ Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH. (2022). *Mapping responses to hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A situational analysis and mapping report*. Council of Europe. Available at: http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/ljudska_prava/Mapping%20responses%20ENG_11.04.pdf

Understanding these motives is not just theoretically interesting but has practical applications as well. By applying the principles of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, McClelland's theory of needs, Vroom's expectancy theory, Adams' equity theory etc., theorists have been able to further investigate perpetrators' motivations behind acts of incitement to hatred, as well as create typologies that help us better understand what drives individuals to commit these types of crimes.

In addition to an overview of the theoretical frameworks, in this study we have sought to analyse the motivations and characteristics of incitement to hatred offenders by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. We analysed existing case law in all four jurisdictions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) from 2018 to 2022, using an absolute sample of incitement to hatred court cases.² The sample questioned consisted of 17 cases of incitement to hatred with a total of 24 perpetrators. One case was acquitted, while 16 cases (23 perpetrators) resulted in conviction.

This unique quantitative and qualitative approach allows us to dive deeper into personal motivations and individual circumstances that led to committing a criminal offence. Those findings can lead to improvement in prevention strategies, investigation, prosecution and punishing of incitement to hatred cases and offenders in BiH.

² The sample was selected according to evidence presented by the OSCE Mission of BiH on Hate Monitors, and in accordance with their records an absolute sample is achieved. Based on the records from Hate Monitors we sent a request to the respective prosecutors' offices and courts for access to cases.

2. Motivation and Typologies of incitement to hatred offenders

Who are the convicted perpetrators of incitement to hatred in general, and in BiH in particular?

In order to understand the nature of incitement to hatred it is helpful to understand more about the types of people who commit such criminal offences. In criminal cases of incitement to hatred, as well as in cases of hate crime, the biggest challenge is to determine whether a crime is committed from motives of race, ethnicity, religion, gender etc, and possibly due to prejudice regarding difference. Therefore, the crucial question concerning those criminal offences is the perpetrator's motivation.

Motivation is a general term that covers the state of mind of the individual, under the influence of which it deals with certain aspects of its environment. As a result, the behaviour of the person becomes stimulated and focused.³ That is, the perpetrator's motivation relates to the complex mental processes that stimulate, regulate and direct their behaviour, and led the perpetrator to commit a certain offence.⁴

In psychological literature motivation is often described as the impetus that gives purpose or direction to behaviour and operates in humans at a conscious or unconscious level.⁵ This, and similar definitions, are often followed with a variety of motivation theories. These theories can generally be categorised into two main types: content theories and process theories. Each category approaches motivation differently, focusing either on the factors that motivate behaviour or the cognitive processes that play a role in motivational dynamics.⁶

3 Skinner, Ch.E. (1971) *Educational Psychology (Psychologia wychowawcza)*, PWN: Warszawa

4 Marcinkiewicz, P. M. (2011). Motywacja sprawcy czynu zabronionego jako przesłanka odpowiedzialności karnej. *Prokuratura i Prawo*, 5, 24-38.

5 APA Dictionary of Psychology. <https://dictionary.apa.org/motivation>

6 Bandhu, D., Mohan, M. M., Prashanth Nittala, N.A., Jadhav, P., Bhadauria, A., Saxena, K.K. (2024). Theories of motivation: A comprehensive analysis of human behaviour drivers. *Acta Psychologica*, 244. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001691824000544>

Content theories focus on the specific factors that motivate individuals; these theories primarily aim to identify which needs or desires drive human behaviour. While process theories focus on the psychological and cognitive processes that affect motivation levels; such theories might explore how hard or not people choose to work based on their expectations, goals, and perceptions of fairness.

Psychologists also describe different types of motivation as either extrinsic or intrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is an incentive to engage in a specific activity that derives from pleasure in the activity itself (e.g., a genuine interest in a subject studied) rather than because of any external benefits that might be obtained.⁷ Extrinsic motivation is an external incentive to engage in a specific activity, especially motivation arising from the expectation of punishment or reward (e.g., completing a disliked chore in exchange for payment).⁸

Furthermore, the arousal theory of motivation suggests that people are motivated to engage in behaviours that help them maintain their optimal level of arousal.⁹

For a better understanding of the motivation of incitement to hatred offenders it is important to look at the particular research on hate crime offender motivations and typologies. Although incitement to hatred is an aggravated form of hate speech and not a hate crime, the fact that both criminal offences are bias motivated allows us to draw parallels in offender typology.

Other research on offender motivation for committing hate crimes in the field of social psychology is related to ideas of prejudice. Since the term “hate” in Criminal Codes (CCs) in BIH (present in definitions of hate crime and incitement to hatred) essentially represent behaviour motivated by prejudice, it is worth considering how prejudice itself has been understood in academic research, and how it can help us to explain the phenomenon of incitement to hatred.

A concise definition of prejudice has been provided by Brown who defines it as “any attitude, emotion or behaviour towards members of a group which directly or indirectly implies some negativity or antipathy towards that group.”¹⁰

But why do people hold prejudiced attitudes, emotions and behaviours? Social psychological theories offer several explanations for why perpetrators target people belonging to certain minority groups, ranging from the purely psychological (in

7 APA Dictionary of Psychology. <https://dictionary.apa.org/intrinsic-motivation>

8 APA Dictionary of Psychology. <https://dictionary.apa.org/extrinsic-motivation>

9 Hockenbury, D.H. and Hockenbury, S.E. (2011). *Discovering Psychology* (5th ed.). Worth Publishers.

10 Brown, R. (2010). *Prejudice: Its Social Psychology*. Wiley-Blackwell. Cited on p.7 in: Walters, M.A., Brown, R. and Wiedlitzka, S. (2016). *Causes and motivations of hate crime*. Equality and Human Rights Commission Research Report 102. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-102-causes-and-motivations-of-hate-crime.pdf>

terms of personality or cognitive processes), to actions based on education and familial and group influences (learning prejudiced attitudes at school, at home or from peer groups), to intergroup perspectives (where prejudice is seen as the result of conflicts or tensions that exist between groups of people).¹¹

One interesting and important approach offers theories and research relating to perceptions of threat and socio-economic factors that includes intergroup threats and intergroup emotions as motivating factors. Indeed, recent research has focused more on intergroup factors in explaining prejudice. Theories on intergroup threats state that the perceived threat that certain groups of people pose to one's own ingroup are crucial in explaining prejudice. They distinguish between "realistic" and "symbolic" threats,¹² and many surveys and experimental evidence support the link between perceived threats (both realistic and symbolic) and outgroup prejudice.¹³ Regarding intergroup emotions, the approach at its centre is the idea that threats arouse specific emotions which cause certain behaviours.¹⁴

Some criminologists also offer structural explanations of hate crime in which they argue that to understand the causes of hate crime it is necessary to understand the structures in society within which it manifests itself. Perry states that hate motivated crimes are extreme forms of discrimination that have emanated from a history of segregation, discrimination and marginalisation of people who are seen as somehow "different". Perry establishes that social hierarchies in society are formed through dominant identity characteristics by which individuals with the most social and political power claim their own identity as possessing the characteristics on which society should base its ideal identity. Those who fall outside those ideals are viewed as "different".¹⁵ Some perceive out-groups as potential threats that import foreign norms and values that could disrupt the local order.¹⁶ Therefore, perpetrators of all acts motivated by hate are likely to be those who are most inspired by general expectations of what is society's ideal identity. They then enforce the identity ideal through verbal and physical violence against those seen as breaking dominant norms. By abusing those who are "different", perpetrators of hate crime send a clear message to certain "others" that they are not welcome in society. Behind these individual acts of violence sit stereotypes that have become culturally and systemically

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- 11 Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswick, E., Levinson, D. J. and Sanford, R. M. (1950). *The Authoritarian Personality*. Harper & Brothers. See also: Duriez, B., Van Hiel, A. and Kossowska, M. (2005). Authoritarianism and social dominance in Western and Eastern Europe: The importance of the sociopolitical context and of political interest and involvement. *Political Psychology*, 26(2), 299–320; Forscher, P. S., Cox, W. T. L., Graetz, N. and Devine, P. G. (2015). The motivation to express prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 109, 791–812. All cited in: Walters. M.A. et al (2016) Causes and motivations of hate crime.
 - 12 Stephan, W. G., Stephan, C. W. (2000). An integrated threat theory of prejudice. In S. Oskamp (Ed.), *Reducing prejudice and discrimination* (23-45), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Cited in: Walters. M.A. et al, (2016).
 - 13 Brown, R. (2010) *Prejudice*.
 - 14 Mackie, D. M., Devos, T. and Smith, E. (2000). Intergroup emotions: Explaining offensive action tendencies in an intergroup context. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(4), 602–16. Cited in Walters. M.A. et al, (2016).
 - 15 Perry, B. (2001). *In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes*. Routledge.
 - 16 Gadd, D. (2009). Aggravating racism and elusive motivation. *British Journal of Criminology*, 49(6), 755–71.

ingrained in social structures and which are used to justify violent behaviour.¹⁷ The motivation to protect old ways is directly tied to the desire to keep your own group cohesive and intact.¹⁸

Connected to the theories and research on causation that we have presented are studies that have explored the typologies of perpetrators who commit hate crimes. There are multiple social, psychological and structural causes of hate, and many of those factors can affect a perpetrator's decision to commit a hate crime. Therefore, researchers have additionally examined the motivations underlying hate crime offending¹⁹ where the most prominent factor was the typology of hate crime perpetrators, as first developed by Levin and McDevitt in 1993 and updated in 2002.

In 1993 Levin and McDevitt indicated that hate crime offenders could be grouped into three major categories according to the motivation of the offenders involved.²⁰ Based on interviews with police officials, victims, and several hate crime offenders, Levin and McDevitt developed a typology that identified three primary motivations: offenders who committed their crimes for the excitement or thrill; offenders who saw themselves as defending their turf; and finally a small group of offenders whose life's mission had become to rid the world of groups they considered evil or inferior. However, in 2002 the authors conducted a new study in which they proposed that the category "retaliatory" be included within the hate crime offender typology. In retaliatory hate crimes offenders act in response to a hate crime against either themselves or an individual in the group to which the offender belongs. Some of the hate crimes examined were committed after rumours circulated about a hate crime against the offender's group, regardless of whether the rumour was true. Therefore, retaliatory motivation has been added to this typology.²¹

17 Burnett, D. (2015, June). How same-sex marriage could ruin civilisation. *The Guardian*. Cited in: Walters, M.A. et al, (2016)

18 Roberts, C., Innes, M., Williams, M., Tregidga, J. and Gadd, D. (2013). *Understanding who commits hate crime and why they do it*. Welsh Government Social Research.

19 Byers, B., Crider, B. W. and Biggers, G. K. (1999). Bias crime motivation: A study of hate crime and perpetrator neutralization techniques used against the Amish. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 15(1), 78–96.; Sin, C. H., Hedges, A., Cook, C., Mguni, N. and Comber, N. (2009). *Disabled people's experiences of targeted violence and hostility* (Research Report 21). Equality and Human Rights Commission; Williams, M. and Tregidga, J. (2013). *All Wales Hate Crime Project*. Race Equality First and Cardiff University. All cited in: Walters, M.A. et al, (2016).

20 Levin, J., McDevitt, J. (1993). *Hate Crimes: The Rising Tide of Bigotry and Bloodshed*. Springer.

21 McDevitt, J., Levin, J., Bennett, S. (2002). Hate Crime Offenders: An Expanded Typology. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(2), 303–317.

For a better overview Walters and associates²² have presented these findings as follows:²³

Type of Perpetrator	Motivations	Other causal factors can include:
Thrill Seeker	Excitement; boredom; dislike of outgroup	Peer pressure; alcohol; machismo; male/peer bonding
Defensive	Protecting territory or geographical 'turf' of ingroup by 'othering' newer communities	Perception of threat to ingroup's socio-economic security; socioeconomic deprivation; anger; internalised shame
Retaliatory	Seeking revenge for a (perceived) attack against ingroup	Perception of threat/change to social and cultural norms
Mission	Ideological/worldview; desire for power	Extremist/hate group links; influenced by masculinity; socioeconomic deprivation; anger; internalised shame

They also recognised that those typologies refer almost exclusively to hate crimes committed *in vivo*, while there are plenty of hate-based offences that occur online (referring to hate speech). There is only limited research on the motivations for hate crime and hate speech (incitement to hatred) in the online sphere. The most comprehensive research has been developed by Awan,²⁴ who created an online typology of anti-Muslim hate crime perpetrators and concluded that this typology shows that offenders present some key underlying characteristics and motivations behind their actions.

22 Walters, M.A. et al. (2016).

23 Table reproduced from Walters, M.A. et al. (2016).

24 Awan, I. (2014). Islamophobia and Twitter: A typology of online hate against Muslims on social media. *Policy & Internet*, 6(2), 133-50. <https://www.open-access.bcu.ac.uk/9860/1/Islamophobia%20and%20Twitter.pdf>

Awan established a typology of offender characteristics as follows:²⁵

Type	Characteristics
The trawler	Someone who has gone through other people's Twitter accounts to specifically target people with a Muslim connection
The apprentice	A person who is fairly new to Twitter but nonetheless has begun to target people with the help of more experienced online abusers
The disseminator	Someone who has tweeted about and retweeted messages, pictures and documents of online hate that are specifically targeting Muslims
The impersonator	A person who is using a fake profile, account and images to target individuals
The accessory	A person who is joining in with other people's conversations via Twitter to target vulnerable people
The reactive	A person who following a major incident, such as Woolwich, or issues on immigration, will begin an online campaign targeting that specific group or individual
The mover	Someone who regularly changes their Twitter account in order to continue targeting someone from a different profile
The professional	A person who has a huge following on Twitter and regardless of consequences has and will launch a major campaign of hate against an individual or group of people because they are Muslim. This person will also have multiple Twitter accounts all aimed at targeting Muslim communities

Finally, it is important to stress that adequate offender typologies, and understanding of offender motivations, is crucial for the creation of prevention strategies and the investigation of incitement to hatred cases, prosecution and punishment.

²⁵ Table reproduced from Awan (2014).

3. Case study from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Having given the theoretical background, this section looks more closely at a case study conducted specifically for BiH. It entailed quantitative and qualitative research using the following methodology:

This case study is a multi-method project that examines the characteristics, motivations, and behaviours of a sample of individuals who committed incitement to hatred crimes in BiH from 2018 to 2022. The study includes a dataset from an absolute sample of incitement to hatred court cases.

The study was organised around three key phases of activity:

- ▶ A structured review of published academic and policy-related research to enhance understanding of what is known about the characteristics of people who engage in hate motivated crimes (incitement to hatred and hate crimes) and their motivations for doing so.
- ▶ Quantitative analyses of demographic and personal characteristics of offenders that may be related to their motivations for committing a crime.
- ▶ Interviews conducted with perpetrators who have been convicted for a criminal offence of incitement to hatred.

Quantitative analyses of demographic and personal characteristics of offenders were conducted from data obtained and presented in verdicts. In analysing the

obtained data, the study relied on thematic analysis,²⁶ complemented with content analysis where appropriate.²⁷

In addition to analysing quantitative data from verdicts, the intention was to conduct interviews with perpetrators convicted for incitement to hatred.²⁸ The research was organised using a case study approach with in-depth investigation of one convicted case of incitement to hatred. As an empirical inquiry, the case study approach is suitable for investigating a social phenomenon within its real-life context, and it permits the use of multiple sources of evidence.²⁹ Since the case study approach is useful in understanding issues in greater depth, it was suitable for undertaking comprehensive analysis of the motivations of incitement to hatred offenders.

Using a database created from verdicts as explained above, we identified convicted perpetrators and conducted extensive searches for them on a variety of social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X). Since the number of identified perpetrators on social networks was low, an invitation letter was sent via post (addresses were known from verdicts). At the end of this process, though the study was carefully explained in a non-threatening way, we managed to find only one perpetrator willing to be interviewed, and that interview provided key data for this section of the study.

The interview was a semi-structured qualitative interview based on a series of open-ended questions and topics carefully prepared in advance. The questions were used to open discussion and provide further prompts, rather than restricting the interviewee's responses.³⁰ A qualitative interview facilitates the smooth flow of communication and thus allows for the investigation of sensitive topics³¹ related to the case. The interviewee was asked for permission to record the interview but he declined; instead copious notes were taken during the interview.

Finally, the validity of the research was achieved by using the strategy of triangulation, which is one of the most popular techniques in achieving trustworthiness of results.³² Interview data was complemented with analysis of the results of quantitative research. The corroboration of multiple techniques and sources of data increases the validity and reliability of the findings.

26 Miles, M., Huberman, M., (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

27 Content analysis runs the risk of ignoring context and multiple meanings; its combination with thematic analysis reduces this problem.

28 Tonkiss, F., (2006). Using focus groups. In C. Seale (Ed.), *Researching Society and Culture* (2nd ed., Ch. 15). Sage Publications.

29 Yin, R., (1989). *Case Study Research*. Sage Publications.

30 Bryman, A., (2004). *Social Research Methods* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

31 Byrne, B., (2006). Qualitative interviewing. In C. Seale (Ed.) *Researching Society and Culture* (Ch. 14).

32 Steinke, I., (2004). Quality Criteria in Qualitative Research. In U. Flick, E. von Kardorff & I. Steinke (Eds.), *A Companion to Qualitative Research* (Ch. 4.7). Sage Publications.

4. Key findings of the quantitative research

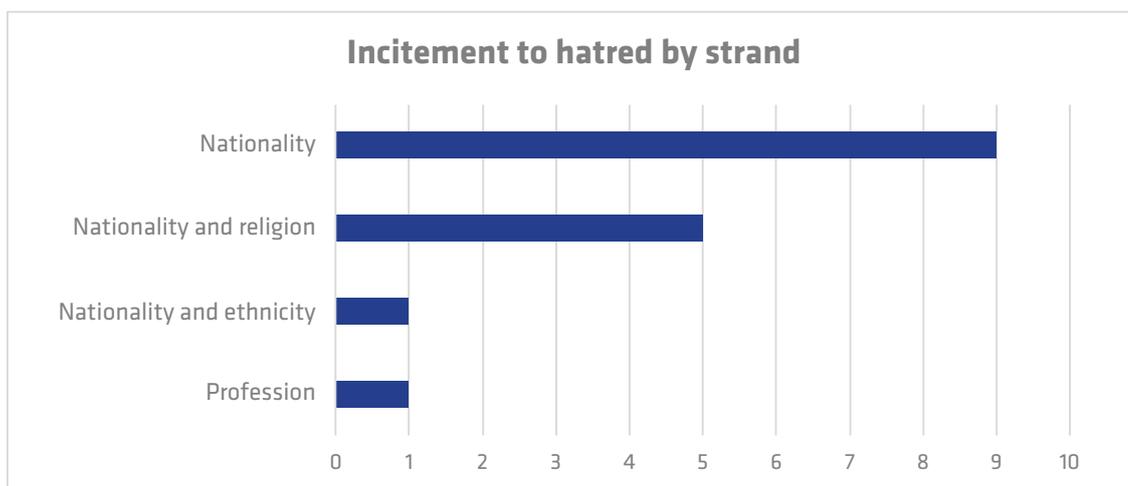
4.1. Sample

The sample examined consisted of 17 cases of incitement to hatred in total, involving 24 perpetrators. One case was acquitted while 16 cases (23 perpetrators) resulted in conviction. We analysed the 16 cases that resulted in conviction, while the acquitted case is not part of the study.

4.2. Incitement to hatred by strand

At the very beginning of the study the analysis of incitement to hatred by strand of hate crime was conducted.³³

33 In Criminal Code (CC) of BiH and CC of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina incitement to hatred is related to nationality, race and religion as strands of hate crime, while in CC of Republic of Srpska and CC of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina incitement to hatred is related to national, racial, religious or ethnic affiliation, skin colour, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, origin or other properties as strands.



The results show that 56.25% of all convicted cases were based on national hatred. Hatred based on profession³⁴, or on a mixed motivation of national and ethnic hatred, appeared only once each, while a mixed motivation of religious and national hatred appeared five times.

4.3. About the offenders

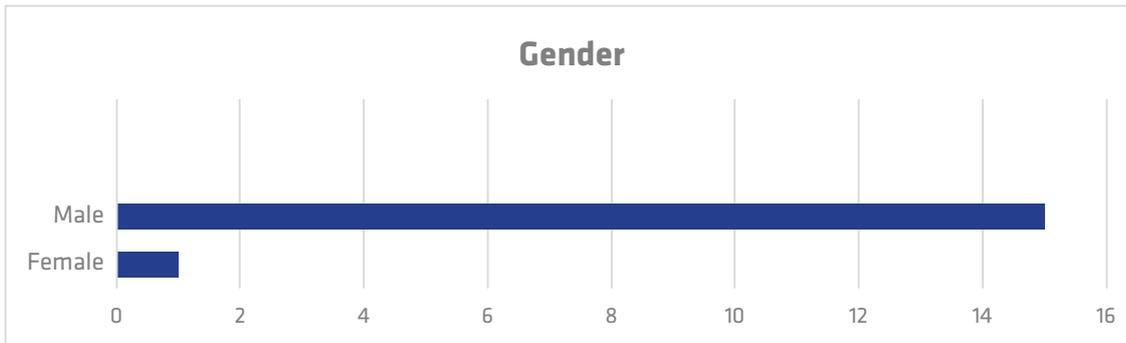
Who were the perpetrators convicted of incitement to hatred? In order to understand the nature of hate motivated crime it is useful to understand more about the types of people who commit such crimes. Age, gender, religion and ethnic background are all important factors in understanding the types of people who commit hate motivated crimes. The following tables provide detailed information on the convicted perpetrators of incitement to hatred.

Gender

We begin our breakdown with offenders' gender:

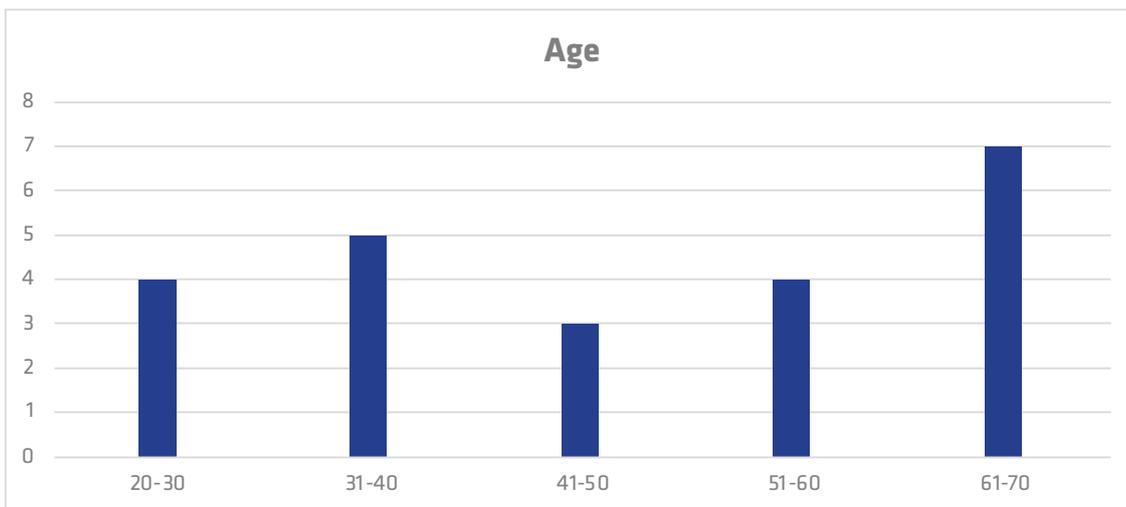
The dataset revealed that 95.65% of accused perpetrators were male and only 4.38% were female. It should be noted that the only female perpetrator committed the offence with her husband as an accomplice; there was not one female perpetrator who committed the offence as the solo offender.

³⁴ In the CC of Republic of Srpska (Article 359) the list of protected characteristics is open ("*or other properties*"), leaving the possibility that any other characteristic can be considered as a protected one. As such, in one case the protected characteristic attacked was that of profession (police).



Age

The average age of convicted perpetrators is 47 years (47.47). The largest number of perpetrators belong in the category 61 to 70 years (30.43%) while the lowest number is found in the category 41 to 50 years (13%).³⁵



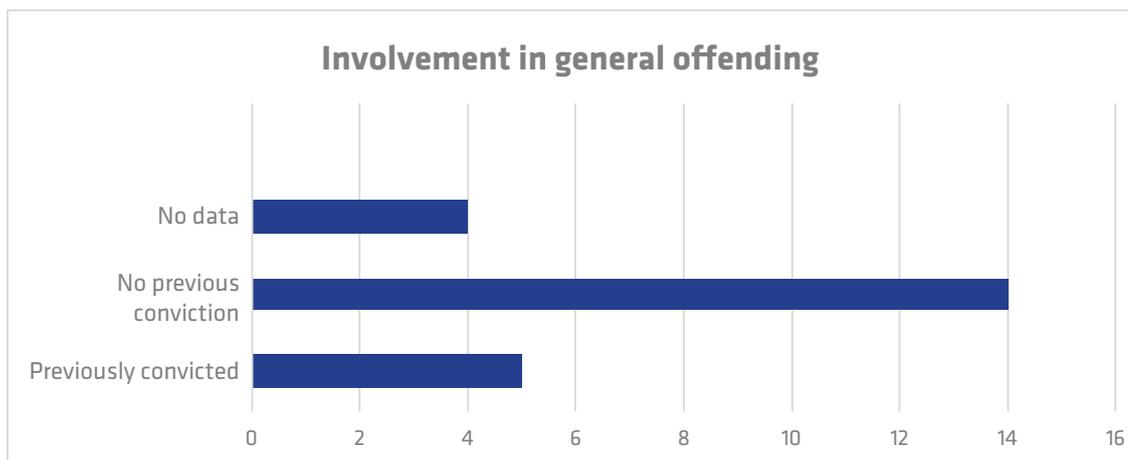
Involvement in general offending

A range of research suggests that offenders of hate motivated crime tend to have previous convictions, with higher proportions of offenders convicted of racially aggravated offences holding previous convictions, and perpetrators involved in extremist groups having extensive histories of violent offending.³⁶ By analysing data from verdicts in BiH, it can be seen that more than half of perpetrators (60.87%) were not previously convicted; around one quarter of perpetrators (21.73%) were

35 In the period concerned there were two cases involving minors, but due to potential issues with qualitative aspect of the research it was decided not to include those cases in the study.

36 Walters, M et al, (2016).

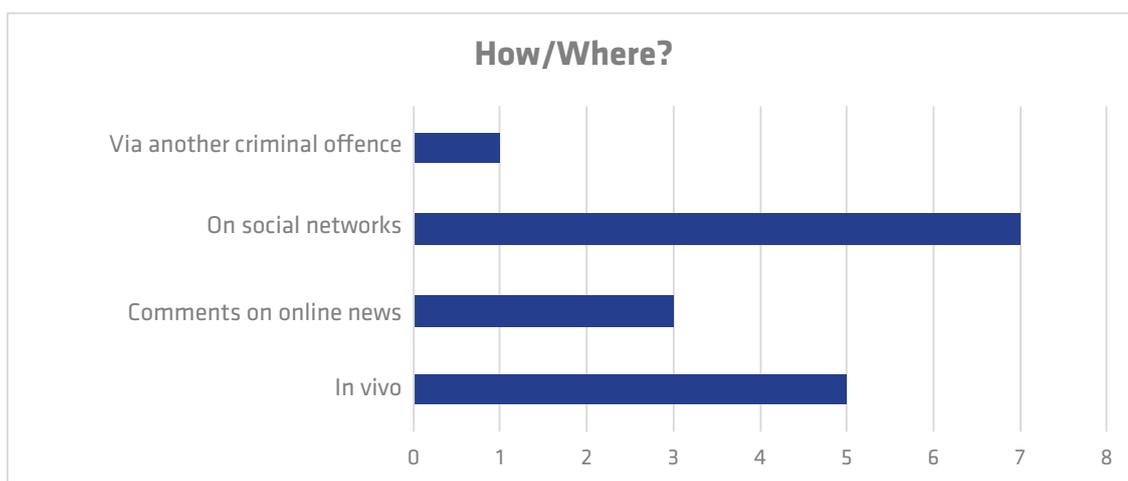
previously convicted; while for four perpetrators (17.39%) there was no data in the verdicts regarding previous involvement in general offending.



4.4. About the crimes

Background information on perpetrators provides part of the picture that helps us to better understand incitement to hatred offences. We also need to understand which types of behaviour are most common when committing the crimes.

How and where offences were committed

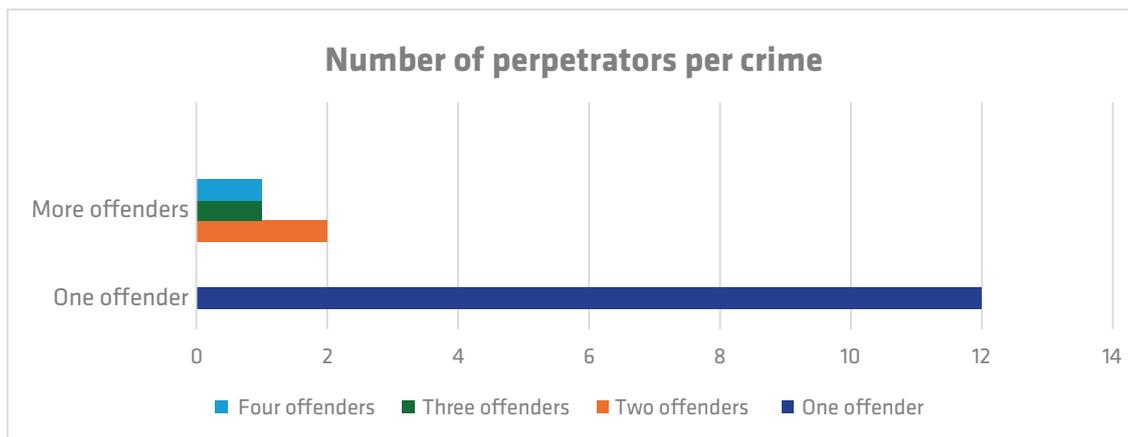


Regarding the manner or place of committing offences, in most cases crimes were committed on social networks. In five cases the perpetrator used Facebook, in one case Instagram and in one case Telegram. In five cases (31.25%) of cases the acts were committed in vivo with direct verbal contact with the victims. Three times (18.75%) perpetrators committed the offence through commenting on the news

on websites. On one occasion (6.25%) the act was committed via another criminal offence (an aggravated form of incitement to hatred).

Regarding the temporal pattern and previous acquaintance of perpetrators and victims there were no significant results.

Number of perpetrators per crime



In most cases perpetrators acted alone (75%), while in 25% of cases they acted with accomplices. Two cases involved two offenders, in one case there were three offenders and in one case there were four offenders. We can conclude that in most cases the criminal offence of incitement to hatred in BiH is committed by one perpetrator acting independently.



5. Key findings of the qualitative research³⁷

5.1. Description of the case

News about the celebration of the religious holiday Velika Gospojina³⁸ in Blagaj, which gathered more than three hundred believers and persons of other religious and national beliefs, was published on the website *Top portal*. After the news was announced four persons posted in the comments section below the line. The first comment posted was as follows:

"I can tolerate the first incident of harassing Muslims, but after that, they will think twice about appearing here. Isn't it true that Muslims are harassed in Gacko on Eid, but you come here without any problems? It doesn't work [smile emoji]. For now, you are welcome in my courtyard, and as long as you don't touch my people, no one will touch you [smile emoji]. It's up to you, so welcome [smile emoji]. Just like Branimir Borovčanin, listen, priest! We all know where the shitstorm in the Balkans came from—from your Church and your Academy of Sciences. The whole world knows this; surely no one is foolish enough to believe a different story now. Priest, you are in my courtyard; don't fool yourself, and the foundations are in every mosque courtyard, from the one in Blagaj, to Sutina. My one you destroyed first, burned everything, and killed people in the name of your god. Even my grandfather, an imam over seventy years old, priest. A man who fed more Serbian mouths than you will in three lifetimes. And that is halal. And yes, priest, you are in my courtyard; don't forget that.

37 Verdict no. 58 0 K 223171 20 K (06.12.2022.)

38 A religious holiday celebrated by the Orthodox Church (in BiH this is mostly celebrated by Serbs).

It doesn't make sense to me, priest, that one should be afraid to go and pray on Eid in Gacko because regularly, before Eid celebrations, your people sing Chetnik songs about slaughter and killing. And you know that, priest. You know this well...such things aren't organised at drunken gatherings. Priest, people shouldn't be harassed; why would they be [smile emoji]? Of course, just like my people in Gacko shouldn't be harassed, right? And, priest, is anyone harassing you here? No, priest, no one has ever said a single word to you, yet you give yourself some right to what - to be offended or pretend to be the protector of the heavenly people? There's no need to write to me in Messenger; everything I have to say, I'll say here. Priest, that is democracy. Without any threats [smile emoji]."

After posting his comment other perpetrators—also convicted in this verdict—left their own comments as well.

5.2. About the perpetrator

The perpetrator is a male who was born in Trebinje. At the time of committing the crime he was 37 years old. He finished secondary school, works as a television engineer, and is divorced with two children. He was living in Blagaj, in the municipality of Mostar, at the time of committing the crime, and remains there still. He is of Bosniak nationality. He was previously convicted for the criminal offence of endangering security.

5.3. About the crime

Regarding the manner and site of the crime, it took place online in the comments section of a website. The perpetrator acted alone when leaving a comment. Following his comment three other perpetrators, unknown to him, also left comments related to his.

5.4. Perpetrator's perspective

The interviewee began his story by talking about his childhood and the war in BiH. He was born in Trebinje (where the only hospital for that region was located), but he lived in a small village in Gacko, East Herzegovina. He comes from a patriarchal family where his paternal relatives were devout Muslims, while his maternal relatives were less religious. He is from a patriarchal family where the family members on his father's side were Muslim believers, while some family members on his mother's side were less so. His grandfather was an Imam. When he was ten years old the war in BiH broke out. At the very beginning of the war, an attack on his village killed his grandfather and a cousin. His father was taken to a war camp by his work colleagues:

“That day he went to work, and on his lunch break some of his colleagues changed their clothes into uniforms, went back, arrested him, and sent him directly to the camp while the women and children were forced to leave.”

As they were leaving the only brother of his mother, and two more cousins, were killed in front of them. After being forcibly displaced they went to Macedonia. Once his father was exchanged from the camp the family came back to BiH and settled in Blagaj, where the interviewee lives now. He stated that those experiences marked him for life, but that he understands that the war was a political game that equally affected every *“little ordinary man”* in BiH.

Since then he has continued his life in Blagaj where, as he is aware, his nationality (Bosniak) and religious beliefs (Muslim) define him as belonging to the dominant population in the area. He stated that regardless of his childhood experiences he does not think that all Serbs are the same (i.e. bad, aggressors, war criminals etc.), and that he has coworkers and friends who are Serbs and/or Orthodox.

However he also stated that even 35 years after the war he does not feel welcome in his childhood home of Gacko, where he still likes to go to mosque during Ramadan and Eid. He says that there are always some tensions when Bosniaks/Muslims come to Gacko to celebrate religious holidays.

“I want my children to visit places where my entire family came from, to get to know their roots, their great, great grandfather’s land, and to feel safe and respected, which is not the case now. [I want them to] be as free to be what they are in Gacko as in Blagaj and to practise what they want freely.”

He declared that he will never forget what happened to him and his family, and that he condemns crimes from *“all sides”* regardless of who committed them.

Asked about the comment he posted on the website news item, he said that his reaction is connected to, and in a way provoked by, recent occurrences in Gacko. Namely, on several occasions an unidentified person left faeces on the doorstep of a local mosque in Gacko. On another occasion another unidentified person left a pig’s head on the fence of the same mosque. At the time the perpetrators were unknown, and those cases were unsolved. Moreover, the news about Velika Gospojina was published at the same time as the anniversary of the great suffering and displacement of Bosniaks from Gacko. In those circumstances, when the interviewee saw the news about the Orthodox holiday, he reacted impulsively. He explained his post as highlighting a purely factual situation without any intention to insult, provoke or incite anything, but to merely point out the truth.

“It is unjust that Bosniaks and their religion is treated like that in Gacko while Serbs can freely celebrate their religious holidays in Blagaj. Why do Serbs in Gacko not treat Bosniaks the same way that Bosniaks treat them in Blagaj? It is not fair. And I only wanted to point that out. That what, as a matter of fact, is the truth.”

He asserted that from his point of view his post was not threatening in any way, that he had no idea that it could incite others to any kind of hostile action, verbal or physical, and that he was surprised when that happened. Especially given that the website concerned does not have high visibility. He highlighted once again that from his point of view his statement was not hateful, and especially that it was not an incitement to hatred, but just an observation of something that is a truth.

Furthermore, he pointed out that he had a previous encounter with the reverend to whom he addressed his comment. About a year and a half prior to this incident, they had met at a business gathering in the local municipality where the reverend verbally attacked one of his colleagues, who is a Serb. At that time the interviewee defended his colleague and argued with the reverend, but he said that previous incident did not have any influence on his comment.

When asked to reflect on how the reverend and the Serbs who live in this municipality might have felt after reading his comment, the interviewee said that he does not understand why anybody would feel scared or threatened by a comment of this kind, since everything he said is true. He also pointed out that Serbs are more than welcome in Blagaj and Mostar, and that many Serbs from Nevesinje work in Mostar and that they do not have any problems in those areas.

“Nevesinje lives from Mostar [referring to Serbs who are working in Mostar], while 100 kilometres from Mostar a Bosniak cannot even go to mosque on service without provocations and problems.”

He also pointed out that he previously left a similar comment on a website regarding the killing of Croat children in Konjic by Bosniaks, condemning that crime and those who committed it, but said that since he is also Bosniak that was not “a big deal”.

“I am against every type of wrongdoing regardless of nationality or religion. If something is wrong, it should be named like that.”

Asked for his opinion about how negative and hateful narratives fuel further animosity among citizens of his municipality and across BiH, he stated that he is aware of that possibility but added that we are exposed to far worse narratives from politicians in the news, on TV etc., every day; he saw this kind of vocalisation as having become the new normal.

At the end of the interview, he once more pointed out that, even now, he does not see his words as hate speech or incitement to hatred (regardless of what the other commenters wrote following his original post). He insisted that spreading hate or inciting hatred was not his intention, but that he was simply stating the facts, and that he will tell the truth regardless of the nationality or religion of those involved.



6. Discussion and conclusions

This final section seeks to draw together the key findings. The aim of the analysis was to establish a robust overview about what is known about the perpetrators and perpetration of incitement to hatred in general, and what the situation is in BiH. The research strives to examine the characteristics, motivations, and behaviours of incitement to hatred perpetrators in BiH. To do this, a review of the literature was carried out and quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted.

Based on the structured literature review it appears that less attention has been directed towards the perpetrators of incitement to hatred than perpetrators of hate crimes. While there are general motivational theories that can be used to question and explain the motivation of incitement to hatred perpetrators, there is an urgent need for more profound understanding and interrogation of motivational factors leading to incitement to hatred. For now, there are general motivational theories, theories on motivations of hate crime perpetrators and on related typologies, including of online offenders, that can be used to question incitement to hatred as well, since all these behaviours are motivated by hate. But future research should result in a typology of incitement to hatred that will aid understanding of the motivations and characteristics of this type of offender.

In the second part of the study, we examined the demographic and personal characteristics of offenders which can be related to their motivation for committing a crime, and certain characteristics of the crime itself. Based on results from this part of the research, we can offer a profile of the most common perpetrator of incitement to hatred, and the most common types of behaviour when committing the crime. Looking at incitement to hatred by strand, it is most likely that it will relate to a victim's nationality. In terms of the offender's demographic and personal

characteristics, as well as characteristics of the crime, we can conclude that the crime will most likely be committed by a male perpetrator within the age range 61 to 70 years. He will not have prior involvement in general offending, and he will act alone, most likely using social networks as the media or manner of committing the crime.

Perpetrator and crime profile	
Gender	Male
Age	61-70
Prior involvement in general offending	No prior involvement
How?/Where?	On social media
Number of perpetrators per crime	Acting alone

In the last part of our research, using the case study approach and an in-depth interview with a perpetrator convicted for the criminal offence of incitement to hatred, we try to map perpetrators' typologies. Analysing the data achieved in this interview through the prism of previously discussed motivations and typologies of perpetrators, we established that this perpetrator, according to the typology established by Levin and McDevitt and presented by Walters and his associates, is of a partially defensive and partly retaliatory type of offender. While, according to the Awan typology of offender characteristics, he belongs to the reactive type who, following a major incident, will begin an online activity targeting that specific group or individual.

Unfortunately, because we only conducted one interview, we cannot develop a profile of incitement to hatred perpetrators in the context of BiH that can be generalised.

Finally, with all the limitations that we faced during this research, the presented results can still bring important insight into perpetrators' motivations that can be used for better understanding of those negative social phenomena, and for improvement in prevention strategies, investigation, prosecution and punishment.

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